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Consumer action in a Third World context

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Title of practice or experience

Consumers' Association of Penang: Consumer action in a Third World context

1.2 Category of practice/experience and brief description

Innovative consumer and public citizen group with development, needs-oriented and environmental dimensions. The Consumers' Association of Penang in Malaysia is probably the leading consumer organisation in the developing world. It has creatively adapted consumer issues and action to suit the needs and priorities of people living in the Third World, linking people's basic needs to the fight for consumer rights and environmental protection.

1.3 Name of person or institution responsible for the practice or experience

Consumers' Association of Penang

1.4 Name and position of key or relevant persons or officials involved

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1.5 Details of institution

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1.6 Name of person and/or institution conducting the research

Consumers' Association of Penang

1.7 Details of research person/institution

As in 1.5 above

2 THE PROBLEM OR SITUATION BEING ADDRESSED BY THE PRACTICE/INNOVATIVE EXPERIENCE

Within Third World countries, the basic needs of large sections of people (in some cases perhaps two-thirds of the population) have yet to be satisfied. In many countries, the numbers of people living below the poverty line have increased significantly, despite moderate rates of economic growth. The degree of income inequalities between income groups has also increased as growth fails to solve the basic-needs problems of the poor. Planners and politicians often strive for a style of national development which imitates the models set up in industrialised countries and which have been widely recognised recently as environmentally unsustainable. Much in the name of development goes towards the creation and sustenance of artificially high lifestyles imported, with some minor modifications, from the West.

This "transfer of taste" is not confined to the elites of the Third World, as high-powered advertising and aggressive sales campaigns by transnational corporations (TNCs) ensure that the imported consumer culture penetrates and permeates through every corner of the land. Through the impact of such promotions, the traditional lifestyles and cultures of the local people are transformed to foreign tastes that divert away valuable resources to wasteful and even dangerous consumption habits. Junk-food and fast-food culture at the expense of locally available and wholesome foods, bottle-feeding at the expense of breastmilk, cigarettes, alcohol, cosmetics, disposable and throw-away products etc. are all part and parcel of a wasteful and unsustainable lifestyle.

The pattern of development has also resulted in environmental crises of startling proportions. The very basis of development and indeed human survival itself has been undermined by environmental destruction and degradation.

It is this scenario of the present and future problems of the world that provides the background to the activities of the Consumers' Association of

Penang (CAP). Its objective is to awaken the consciousness of the people to the present style and rate of development which destroys the environment and produces things which are useless or harmful to health, without satisfying the basic needs of the majority of people. CAP believes that only when development serves the needs of people and not the other way around will real progress be achieved.

For this to come about, the awareness of people must be awakened. As an organisation oriented towards consumer protection and social reform, CAP sees its role as bringing up important development issues and generating public consciousness on these issues.

The CAP model, when it developed in the 1970s and 1980s, pioneered a new approach of consumer activities that were adapted to the needs of people and communities in developing countries. The consumer movement had originated in the Western countries, where “Value for money” had been the slogan, and testing of products (to determine the relative performance of various brands) had been a major objective. CAP coined the slogan “Value for people” to symbolise that in the Third World context, the consumer movement should be oriented towards meeting the needs and articulating the rights of ordinary consumers, such as the right to food, housing, employment, a clean environment, safety in products, good business practices and an efficient bureaucracy.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE/INNOVATIVE EXPERIENCE AND ITS MAIN FEATURES

CAP is an independent and non-profit organisation set up in 1970. It is based in Malaysia, which has been a high-growth Third World country (until the East Asian financial crisis that began in 1997) which faces all the contradictions of development described above.

It has a council of 10 members, many of whom are community leaders, former teachers, university academics and professionals. Its activities are carried out by a staff of about 60, most of whom are young people interested in contributing to social progress.

CAP is organised into various sections, each of which reflects an important aspect of its approach to development work, which seek to inform, educate, mobilise and represent the public on basic issues. The various sections are as follows:

(a) Complaints Section

This Section seeks to protect the public's right to redress and compensation in the face of unfair market practices, cheating, exploitation or neglect on the part of producers, middlemen or government departments. A wide variety of complaints is lodged by the public at CAP'S office either personally or through the post.

Among the complaints are: poor quality of goods; defective and dangerous products; cheating and malpractice by housing developers, insurance companies, shopkeepers and moneylenders; negligence in the provision of professional services by lawyers and doctors; the problems of tenants and workers; the inefficiencies of government departments; poor services at hospitals; inadequate and poor public transportation, sewerage and garbage services; and the absence of proper drainage and flooding in urban areas.

On average, the Section handles about 2,000 to 3,000 complaints a year and manages to settle about **80%** of the complaints to the satisfaction of the complainants. The value of the complaints service goes beyond the solving of individual problems. In newly independent countries where the "colonial mentality" still prevails, people have for too long been used to the passive acceptance of life's injustices. The successful lodging of a complaint changes the perception and attitude of individuals who now see that redress can be obtained if one is willing to do something positive about it. The complaints service thus becomes an effective means and channel through which the public is able to exercise its rights to fight business malpractices and to press for fair and better services from companies and government departments, as well as to demand protection of these rights from the authorities.

In addition, from studying the complaints received, CAP is able to assess whether existing laws adequately protect consumers or whether there are loopholes in the legislation which need to be rectified. In situations where there is no law at all to protect the consumer, the data from the Complaints Section will provide the basis for calling for policy changes and legal reform. The Complaints Section is especially useful to the poorer sections of the community who are usually not articulate or confident enough to take on grievances on their own, and who are not able to afford legal services.

(b) Rural and Community Section

In its work with communities through the Rural and Community Section, CAP is involved in two main types of issues: first, basic needs and amenities; and second, environmental problems and the disruption of livelihood in the rural areas.

(i) Basic needs and amenities

In the area of basic needs and amenities, CAP staff members conduct educational programmes in villages and estates (rubber and oil-palm plantations) during which basic principles of nutrition, health, budgeting, credit and other topics are discussed with families, usually the women in the household. At such sessions, the villagers also bring up pressing problems that they face, such as the high prices for goods charged at the only shop in the village or the irregularity of the village bus service.

These complaints are discussed with the villagers in a group, and the staff helps the community to act on the problems by, for example, writing to the bus company concerned or by getting the villagers to talk to the shop-owner to rectify the problems. Such actions are sometimes successful, but they usually require a prolonged period of continuous pressure on the part of the villagers. What is important is that the community begins to recognise its common problems, takes action to overcome them, and thus educates itself in justly demanding its rights.

From addressing such “simple” problems, the community is prepared to take on other bigger issues such as the lack of basic facilities and amenities like proper drinking water and sanitation facilities, improved roads and drainage systems, better irrigation facilities in rice-growing areas, public telephones and so on. In a country where much of the development allocations are urban-biased, the complaints of the communities in the rural areas are critical in bringing about a more equitable distribution of resources. Demands for meeting these basic needs are made through petitions signed by the villagers to the authorities concerned. In significant cases, press conferences are also held to draw attention to the plight of the communities. Responses from the authorities in such instances further empower the communities to address other concerns in the village or estate. Where no response is received, further representations are made to higher authorities, including the locally-elected representatives.

(ii) Environmental problems and dislocation of communities' livelihood

An even more serious type of problem in rural communities concerns environmental issues and the dislocation of sources of livelihood.

Traditional fishing communities in many parts of the country are affected by the invasion of trawl fishing which destroys the coastal marine resources. The fishery resources are further destroyed by the pollution of the waters from industries and other land-based sources, as well as from the destruction of fish habitats such as mangrove forests for other projects, including shrimp aquaculture. CAP works with the fishing communities to take up their plight with the government authorities and the media. The fisherfolk are also organ-

ised to form their own organisations, so that they can articulate their grievances independently.

The Section has also assisted several communities who have been affected by the impacts of industrial pollution, wastes and hazardous factories, sited in the vicinity of these communities. In such instances, the health and safety of the community is impacted, apart from the impact on the crops and livestock maintained by these communities.

Similarly, with the introduction of development projects such as dams, highways, industrial estates, resorts and golf courses, many food-producing rural communities face displacement. **CAP** works with the affected communities so that they can make their concerns known. Activities include the conduct of meetings, investigation into the nature of the project, studies on the possible environmental and social impacts, the presentation of petitions and memorandums to the authorities, media coverage, and, where necessary and appropriate, legal redress in court. Such efforts are necessary to ensure that in national planning, the voices of local communities, vulnerable groups and those facing social dislocation are heard.

Further, documentation of the problems of these communities also exposes the shortcomings in current planning processes, which do not adequately take into account the impact on communities of development projects, or give adequate opportunity and access to communities to take part in the decisions affecting their lives. Thus, from these experiences, **CAP** continues to advocate changes in policy and law at the national level so that current development planning integrates economic objectives as well as environmental and social concerns.

Apart from facilitating activities in communities as above, the Rural Section is also involved in conducting education and training programmes for rural communities on a wide range of issues, including the right of communities to a fair share of the fruits of development. Through such regular training programmes, the rural folk are trained to be more aware of their environment and to act for themselves to fulfil their rights.

(c) Legal Section

Following from the work of the Complaints Section and the Rural Section, the Legal Section was established in 1982. It is organised as a professional legal firm and is run by three full-time lawyers to undertake public-interest cases. It was the first full-time public-interest law firm in the country and has established itself as a specialist in environmental and consumer protection law, administrative and constitutional law, and land and tenancy law, including native customary land rights and other aspects of community rights.

The Legal Section has pioneered many landmark legal cases in the country, especially in the area of environmental and land law, and these cases have led to the emergence of the concept of public-interest litigation in Malaysia.

Apart from taking cases to court on behalf of consumers and communities, the Section is also involved in undertaking legal research which is then translated into memorandums to government authorities, advocating legal reforms. The Section also conducts training programmes for students in law schools in the country, with the aim of inculcating social responsibility and commitment among future lawyers. It also works with the faculty members of the law schools in encouraging the introduction of public-interest courses within the respective faculties. Such courses include consumer and environmental law as well as law and society.

The Section is also involved in the building of international alliances with public-interest lawyers around the world and was a founder member of Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide (E-Law).

(d) Education Section

This Section provides training and educational services for many groups, including school children, teacher-trainees, university students, youths, women and workers.

CAP has helped to establish several hundred consumer and environmental clubs and societies in both primary and secondary schools in the country. What began as ad hoc efforts in schools by CAP has now become established practice, with the Ministry of Education encouraging and promoting the establishment of consumer clubs in schools. Students in such clubs are trained to investigate pollution problems in the neighbourhood, make surveys on canteen food safety and other public services, conduct health campaigns on junk food and cigarettes, and hold debates, quizzes, dramas, exhibitions and other activities on consumer and environmental themes.

Teachers are also encouraged to use consumer and environment articles and publications in their teaching, so as to spread greater awareness among students at all levels of education. Further, discussions are also held with the Ministry of Education to encourage the establishment or integration of consumer and environmental education into the school curriculum. Education programmes are also run for women and youth organisations, workers and trade unions, residents' associations and other voluntary groups.

(e) Survey and Testing Section

This Section is responsible for carrying out basic research and alerting the public and authorities to such problems as unfair price increases, misleading advertisements, unscrupulous sales tactics and practices, the marketing of dangerous foods, drugs and pesticides, inadequate and poor medical and transport services, poor conditions of housing, lighting and roads, and so on.

The Section carries out regular surveys of market prices of essential commodities such as rice, meat, fish, vegetables, fruits, sugar, cooking oil, flour, bus fares, text books, medical fees and so on. Any irregularities in the market, whether of price, quality or supply, are immediately made known to the public through the mass media. Details of the problem as well as concrete proposals to reduce or solve it are also forwarded.

Where testing activities are concerned, CAP focuses on determining the safety, cleanliness, purity and quality of products that are commonly used. Tests are also carried out on short-weighting and other forms of exploitation which producers and traders practise on consumers.

CAP's findings in the past have revealed dangerous levels of dyes, heavy metals and additives in popular foodstuff and drinks; fresh fish and seafood containing high levels of animal and human wastes; meat containing commonly prescribed antibiotic residues; poor-quality and defective consumer products and so on. These findings are widely publicised in the media and are followed up with the respective government agencies in relation to the non-enforcement of laws or lack of laws in protecting consumer interests.

In the area of environment, at the request of communities, tests are also conducted to detect water pollution and quality, radiation levels in the neighbourhood stemming from industrial activity and other such problems. These findings are used to support the communities in demanding action from the authorities.

(f) Research Section

The Research Section undertakes in-depth studies on important issues which usually arise from the activities of the other sections. Some of the major areas of CAP's long-term research work include food and nutrition, health and sanitation, housing, habitat and transport, the sale of dangerous products, unethical business practices, the adverse effects of the consumer culture, degradation of the quality of the environment and natural-resource depletion, hazardous technologies including genetic engineering, social problems such

as drug addiction and alcoholism, and the promotion of appropriate technology.

The studies involve a combination of desk research and field research, including interviews with ordinary people and professionals. The aim of the research is to deepen the public's knowledge on basic and critical issues and, on the basis of this increased awareness, to advocate for social reform.

(g) Publications Section

Armed with the wealth of information from the various sections of CAP, the Publications Section of CAP is responsible for producing a monthly newspaper called *Utusan Konsumer* (Consumer Voice), with four editions in English, Malay, Chinese and Tamil languages. It has a very wide circulation among the general public. The newspaper is influential in providing information on a wide range of consumer and public issues, and in shaping public opinion. In addition to this, a special monthly newspaper for children is also produced, called *Majallah Pengguna Kanak-Kanak* (Child Consumer's Magazine). This paper stresses on environmental education for the young.

The Section also produces a wide range of publications (books, pamphlets, educational kits, posters, etc.) on various themes for the use of the general public. Such books are crucial in developing consumer and environmental awareness, in addition to educating ordinary citizens on their rights and role in society as active and concerned people.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE INSTITUTION RESPONSIBLE AND ITS ORGANISATIONAL ASPECTS

Please see 3 above.

5. PROBLEMS OR OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

At some stages of CAP'S development, it had to strike a delicate balance in its relations with the government authorities and bureaucracy, as the organisation established its role as a civil society group representing consumer and public interests. Some policy-makers accepted this as a healthy role, but others were uncomfortable with having to deal with an independent source of information and advocacy. However, through the years, CAP has now estab-

lished itself as a legitimate and important part of national public life and is invited to participate in several governmental processes and committees. It however retains its independent and critical approach.

6. EFFECTS OF THE PRACTICE/INNOVATIVE EXPERIENCE

Through the various efforts of CAP, much has been achieved over the years, particularly in effecting changes to government policies and laws at the national level. Further, at the community level, there have been significant successes, where communities have been able to defend their interests, for example in getting certain development projects reviewed, or obtaining compensation for loss of resources or income arising from adverse effects of projects. Some examples of these positive effects are provided below.

(a) Effect on national policy and law

(i) Government ban or restrictions on toxic drugs

CAP had conducted several studies on commonly used pharmaceutical drugs which have been banned or put under restricted use in other countries. These studies exposed the double standards employed by drug corporations in the international marketing of their products. These studies were sent to the Ministry of Health for action. Following such studies, the Drug Control Authority of the Ministry of Health ordered a ban or restrictions on seven drugs covered by the studies.

(ii) Shelflife for foodstuff

For a long time, Malaysia had no shelflife for food items, which meant that such products did not have expiry dates and yet could be sold to consumers. As a result of CAP's representations, the Ministry of Health introduced the Food Regulations in 1985 which made it mandatory for such expiry dates to be stated for perishable food products.

(iii) Ban on cigarette advertisements and smoking in public places

Through CAP's anti-smoking campaigns, the government in 1992 imposed a ban on cigarette advertisements. Subsequently, through the introduction of regulations, smoking has been banned in public places. The Ministry of Health now also undertakes anti-smoking campaigns, following CAP's initial efforts.

(iv) Better living conditions for plantation workers

For years, CAP has been calling for improved living conditions in the plantation sector where workers do not have adequate housing, clean water and sanitation. CAP had conducted surveys in the estates and exposed the poor living conditions. Several other organisations had also organised activities on behalf of the workers. In 1990, the government revised the Workers' Minimum Standards of Housing and Amenities Act to improve the living conditions of the workers by requiring all estates to supply piped water and electricity to workers, as well as provide childcare centres, recreational and medical facilities, and libraries. The Act also specifies the minimum standards for workers' houses.

(v) Improved benefits for workers

In 1985, CAP urged the government-managed Employees Provident Fund (EPF) to increase its interest rates as well as to pay interest on a monthly basis on the mandatory contributions made by employers and employees. In 1988, the EPF started to pay interest rates on a monthly basis and also improved the interest rates for contributions.

In 1982, CAP conducted research showing that the government-managed Social Security Organisation (SOCSO) was paying inadequate rates of compensation to workers suffering from work-related injuries and illnesses. SOCSO manages a compulsory insurance scheme for workers which covers occupational injuries and diseases. Following CAP's research, which received prominent coverage in the local media, SOCSO has improved the rate of benefits to workers over the years.

(vi) Protection of tenants

In 1987, CAP assisted a large community of tenant-farmers in Penang in their fight to prevent eviction by force by the landlords and developers. CAP and several communities campaigned for changes to the law to ensure that developers and landlords are not allowed to evict tenants by force but instead they should obtain a court order should they wish to evict their tenants. In 1991, a major amendment to the law was made which now bars eviction of tenants by force. This improved the legal status of tenants.

(vii) Protection of house-buyers

Prior to 1982, house-buyers who entered into sale and purchase agreements with developers were not protected adequately as housing agreements were one-sided and benefited the developers. Through CAP's Complaints Section, a litany of cases was documented to call for a standard housing agreement which would be fair to both parties. CAP's proposals were accepted by

the Housing Ministry and the housing law was amended to introduce, for the first time, a standard housing agreement which protects the interests of house-buyers.

(viii) Establishment of the Department of Environment

CAP was one of the first groups in the country to highlight environmental problems. As early as 1970, major seminars were held by CAP to push for government policy on the environment and for the introduction of laws to protect the environment. Following such efforts, a Division of Environment was set up in 1975 which was subsequently upgraded to the present Department of Environment (DOE), under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment. The Environment Quality Act was also passed and many regulations followed. CAP continues to pressure for improved legislation and enforcement of the laws to safeguard the environment.

(b) Effects at community level

Through the years, CAP has assisted numerous communities whose livelihood and health have been adversely affected by development projects or government policies. In the case of certain mega-projects which were perceived as being detrimental to the environment and people, the organisation has successfully campaigned to stop such projects. Some significant examples of these are as follows:

(i) Factory producing radioactive wastes stopped

Next to a village called Bukit Merah New Village with a population of 10,000 people near Ipoh, Perak, a factory producing radioactive wastes, was set up in 1982. This plant, known as Asian Rare Earth (ARE), was a joint venture between Japanese giant, Mitsubishi Chemicals, and a local Malaysian company. The villagers were alerted to the dangers posed by the radioactive wastes, which were dumped around the factory's vicinity. With assistance from CAP and other organisations (such as *Sahabat Alam Malaysia* or Friends of the Earth, Malaysia), the villagers, who had formed an ad hoc organisation called the Perak Anti-Radioactive Waste Committee, invited scientists and doctors to the village to conduct radiation monitoring and carry out health surveys. The studies revealed high levels of radiation exposure, and impacts on the community were visible. Such health effects included high miscarriage rates among mothers, incidences of childhood leukemia, effects on blood-cell counts of children and so on. Despite petitions, representations and demonstrations held by the local people urging both the federal and state governments to close down the company, the factory continued its operations. With

assistance from CAP'S Legal Section, the people then sued the company and succeeded in the High Court to shut down its operations. On appeal to the Supreme Court, **ARE** had the stop order reversed. Nevertheless, the people continued their campaign, and the company eventually voluntarily closed down its operations due to these pressures.

(ii) Villagers stop charcoal factory pollution

For over 10 years, 1,500 residents of a village in Taman Jaya, Bahau, Negeri Sembilan were subjected to massive smoke, dust and haze throughout the day and night as a result of a factory producing charcoal. The factory belonged to Malayawata Steel, which is partly owned by Japanese interests. The villagers had been appealing to the various authorities to curb the pollution and nuisance of the factory, but nothing materialised. With CAP's assistance in 1989, representations to the authorities were stepped up and the company's operations were finally shut down by the Department of Environment in 1991. Some of the villagers also sued the company for damage to their rubber trees and livestock as their livelihood and health were severely affected. CAP's lawyers succeeded in obtaining compensation for the people when the company was found to be liable by the High Court for causing a nuisance.

(iii) Campaign to conserve Penang Hill

Sometime in 1991, the Penang state government announced plans for converting the upper parts of Penang Hill into a major Disneyland-type development. CAP pointed out that the environmental impacts of such a project would have been damaging, as Penang Hill is the site of many watersheds and water-catchment areas **for** the island. Apart from its importance as a major water source for the island, the Hill is also highly regarded as a conservation area and nature park for the people of Penang, with its beautiful natural environment, and its tranquil and peaceful atmosphere. CAP, together with other public-interest groups, formed a network, "Friends of Penang Hill" to campaign against the project. The DOE was inundated with over 1,000 letters from members of the public, criticising the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report submitted by the company. CAP and Friends of Penang Hill submitted a detailed critique of the development proposals and highlighted the adverse environmental impacts which would result should the project be allowed.

In an unprecedented move, members of Friends **of** Penang Hill, including CAP, were invited to sit on the Review Panel of the DOE for assessing the EIA for the project. Eventually, the DOE rejected the EIA. The state government also invited Friends of Penang Hill to brief it on their views and eventually, the state shelved the proposed plan.

(iv) Plans for mammoth development shelved

In 1993, the Kedah state government announced proposals for a mammoth project called the Jerai International Park (JIP). The proposed development involved the acquisition of over 10,000 acres of prime food-producing land in rural Kedah, belonging to ordinary villagers. The JIP was mooted as a major tourism plan to convert the agricultural lands into golf courses, resorts and theme parks, modelled after several European cities. There was an outcry from numerous villagers who were to be affected and with CAP's help, the community voiced their concerns to the government authorities. This led to the cancellation of the proposed plans.

(v) State returns land to farmers

About 500 pioneer farmers in Sabak Bernam, Selangor, had been applying for land titles for several years from the state government. Though they had initially been promised the land, they were unsuccessful. Since 1988, their land had been handed over to a government agency to be converted into an oil-palm scheme and given to other people. The agency concerned applied to court to evict the farmers who then sought CAP's help to defend them. The Supreme Court ruled in favour of the farmers as it was shown that they were not mere squatters or trespassers on the land but had in fact been previously promised land titles. Following this, the farmers also filed actions in court asking the state government to fulfil its promise by issuing the titles. In an out-of-court settlement, the state government finally issued the land titles to the farmers who now carry on their farming activity without fear of eviction.

7. SUITABILITY AND POSSIBILITY FOR UPSCALING

Not applicable.

8. SIGNIFICANCE FOR (AND IMPACT ON) POLICY-MAKING

The activities of the organisation have a significant effect on policy-making at the various levels of decision-making. At the community level, fishermen, farmers and urban settlers who have been adversely affected by projects or by pollution have, with the assistance of CAP, managed sometimes to alter or influence government decisions and policies. At the national or state policy-making level, the experiences and knowledge of the organisation have provided inputs to policy-makers on many issues. As shown above, many of the representations made by CAP were translated into policy and changes to the

law.

CAP is now frequently invited to participate in various government fora to help provide inputs into government decision-making. Such fora include the annual dialogues organised by the Ministry of Finance to obtain suggestions for drawing up the National Budget, annual dialogues with the Minister of Environment, participation in the National Economic Consultative Council to evaluate Malaysia's development policy, participation in the Penang State's Environment Council which is chaired by the Chief Minister, and participation in the Penang Consumer Council, formed to promote the rights of consumers.

9. POSSIBILITY AND SCOPE OF TRANSFERRING TO OTHER COMMUNITIES OR COUNTRIES

The social and environmental conditions which prompted CAP to undertake its activities are also prevalent in almost all Third World countries. Therefore the kinds of issues raised by CAP and the range of its activities are also relevant to these countries. The innovative approach taken by CAP in making consumer and environmental action relevant to the needs of developing countries can be replicated in almost all parts of the Third World.

Given the social effects of the present globalisation process, the activities of CAP provide helpful lessons or models for consumer and social organisations in the South that may wish to address these social effects. The CAP model of consumer education and action questions the present systems of production and consumption and advocates alternative systems. The CAP approach of linking local actions to global problems is particularly innovative and can be usefully adopted.

Another lesson from the CAP experience is that it is very useful to combine a wide range of issues as well as activities, such as publications, legal activism, education, community mobilisation, research and so on.

Over the years, CAP has encouraged organisations and individuals from other parts of the developing world to undergo training and attachment programmes with the organisation to learn about its activities and how they can be implemented in their own countries. Further, with its wide range of publications comprising books, newspapers, pamphlets and audio-visuais, much information can be obtained, shared and used without major difficulties in various countries, since many of the issues are common and universal.