

# STATE OF GLOBAL CONSUMER ADVOCACY 2023 KEY INSIGHTS



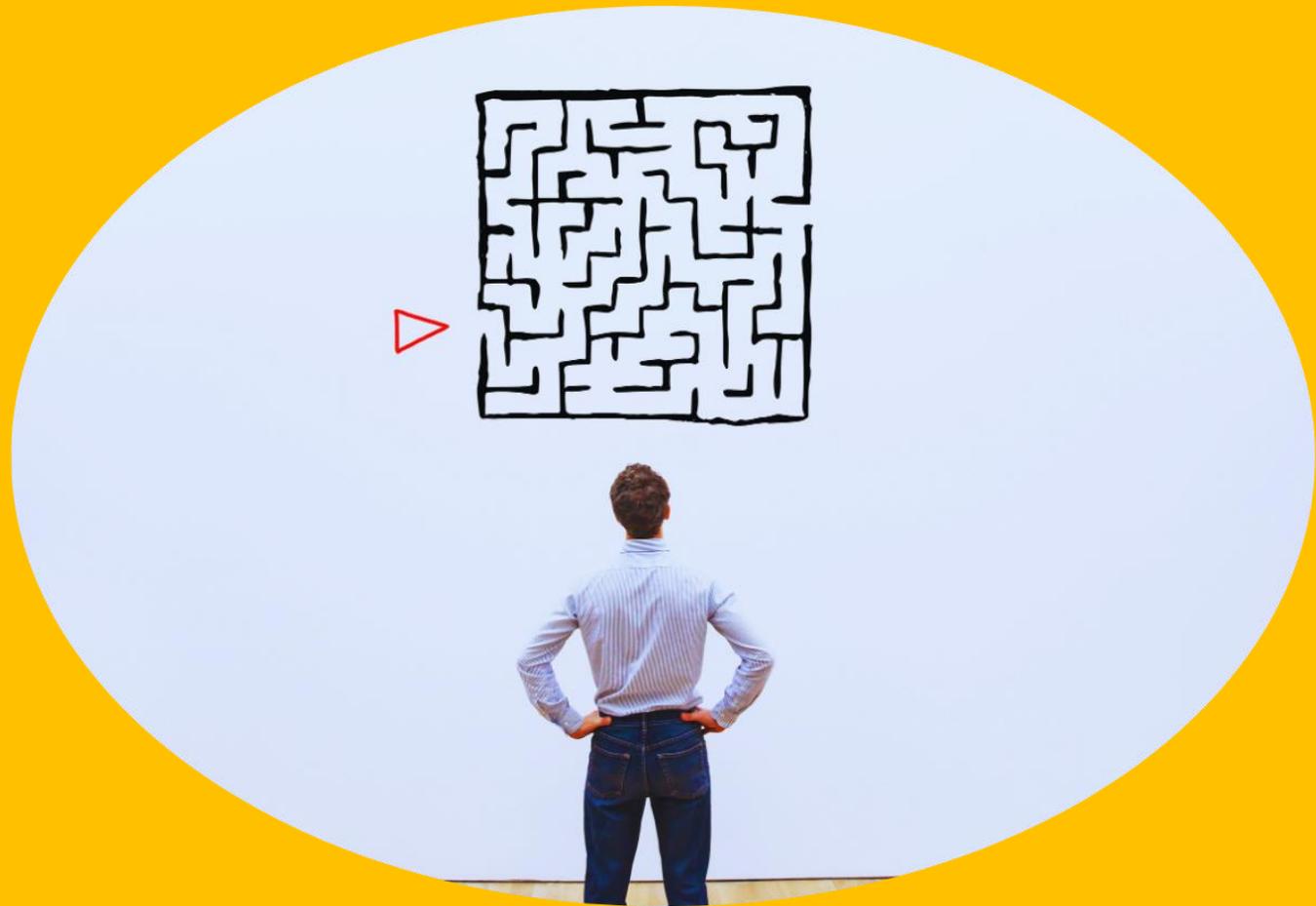
**CONSUMERS  
INTERNATIONAL**



# KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. In 2023, top-3 areas of focus in consumer protection were: sustainable consumption, digital rights and green energy transition.
2. In 2023, key challenges faced by consumer groups were: engaging consumers and financial viability.
3. 86% of surveyed consumer groups are independent of any control of governments. 14% limited or not being recognised by governments
4. Consumer group participation is limited in working groups and committees with governments. With limited participation in consumer redressals, policy design – where we could participate further.
5. There is a 39% alignment between consumer protection and government priorities across the regions surveyed.
6. The highest interaction between government and consumer groups is on food standards (47%) and monitoring product safety (44%). Regulating emerging technologies (39%) and transition to green energy (36%) are the areas where consumer groups have least interaction with government.
7. For 2024, the key areas for consumer protection are identified as: cost of living crisis, sustainable consumption, food prices and data protection & privacy.
8. The highest rating under Consumer Protection & Empowerment Index was given for Consumers making informed choices (3.4/5) vs lowest in sustainability and technology & innovation (2.9/5)
9. In 2030, the biggest impact in Consumer Protection & Empowerment would be in the areas of: need for better digital solutions & systems (2.8/3), improved consumer access to redressals (2.6/3) and funding shortfalls (2.5/3)
10. Governments & global institutions can ensure support for consumer groups by building capacity through leadership development & education around UN guidelines, knowledge through networks and financial sustainability.

# OUR CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES



# IN 2023, FINANCIAL VIABILITY IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE FOR CONSUMER GROUPS

## Our top challenges in 2023 (in percentages of responses)



**2 out of 3 organisations listed achieving financial viability a key challenge for them today.**

In the current economic slowdown, the need for consumer organisations to address marketplace protection and equity is highly important. Effective engagement with consumers and influence in the marketplace will only be addressed by finding different viable economic models for these organisations.

More broader discussions and brainstorming is needed to address the challenge of financial sustenance. We must explore ways to build more authority for consumer groups at various regional and local forums and improve their engagement with consumers.

*Responses are in % of response counts across the categories*

# THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ENFORCING CONSUMER PROTECTION LAWS ARE PERCEIVED TO BE WEAKER THAN DESIGNING THEM

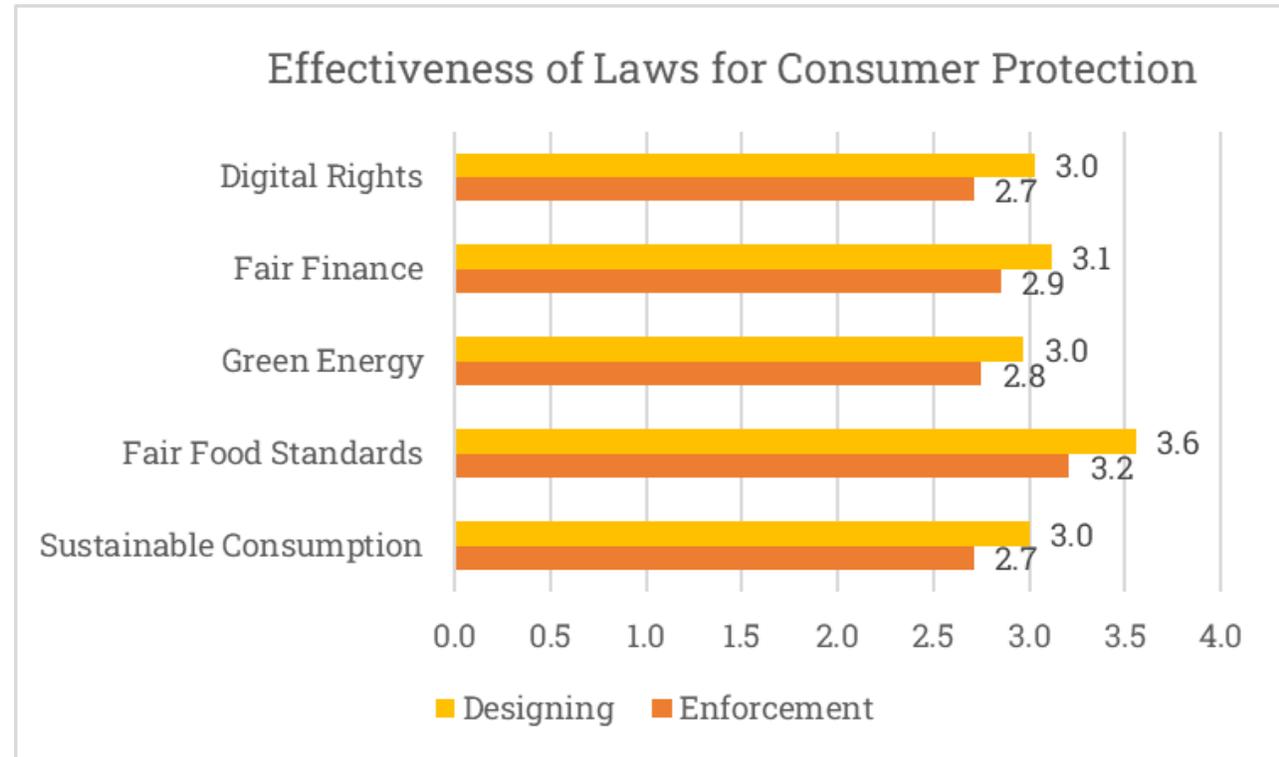
Across the different change agendas, laws have been designed to be effective (with a rating of 3.2), however, globally we have found their enforcement to not be as effective (with a rating of 2.9).

**Green energy, sustainable consumption and digital rights have the lowest ratings** to have effective laws designed and enforced across regions.

**The highest ratings on laws being effective have been under fair food standards,** where laws designed are rated at 3.6 and enforcement being around 3.

Though the **major gap in designing and enforcing laws has been rated under fair finance services & fair food standards.**

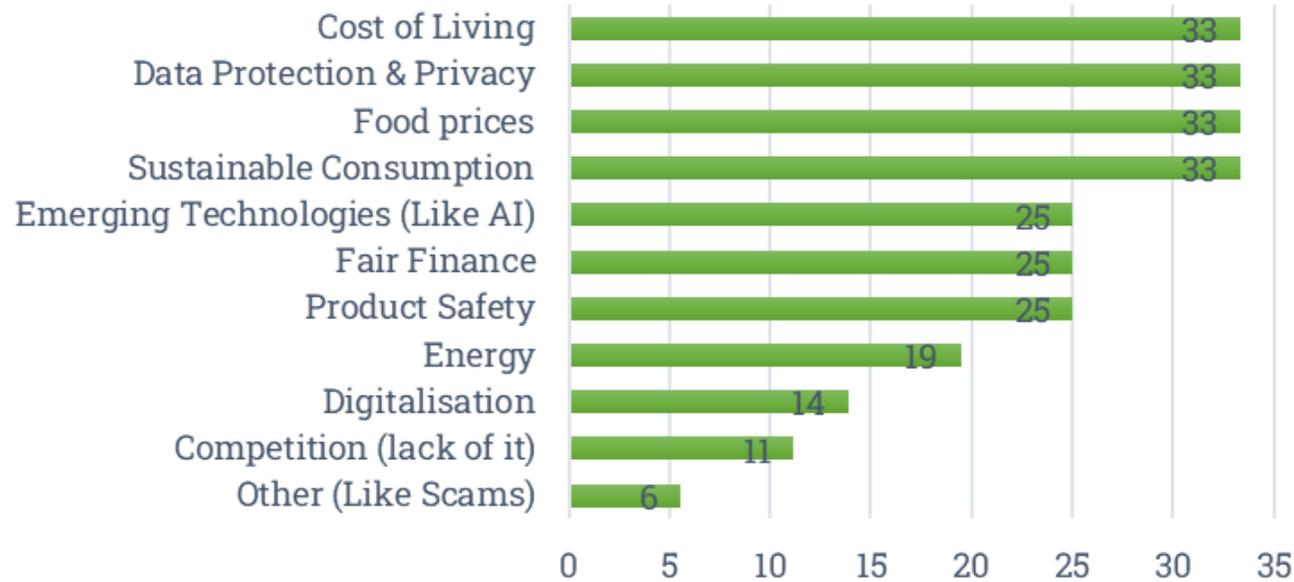
We would need to advocate through different forums to ensure these gaps are addressed for consumer protection.



*Responses are on a rating scale from 0-5  
5 being Highly Effective  
0 being Least Effective*

# 4 KEY AREAS IDENTIFIED FOR STRONGER CONSUMER PROTECTION IN 2024

## Ranking of Top Consumer Issues in 2024 (by number of responses)



*Responses are in % of response counts across the categories*

Our 2024 focus will need to align to these areas with clear emphases on:

- 1. Cost of Living crisis**
- 2. Data Protection & Privacy**
- 3. Food prices**
- 4. Sustainable Consumption**

We need to come together to build resilience across these areas in the marketplace for consumers in 2024.

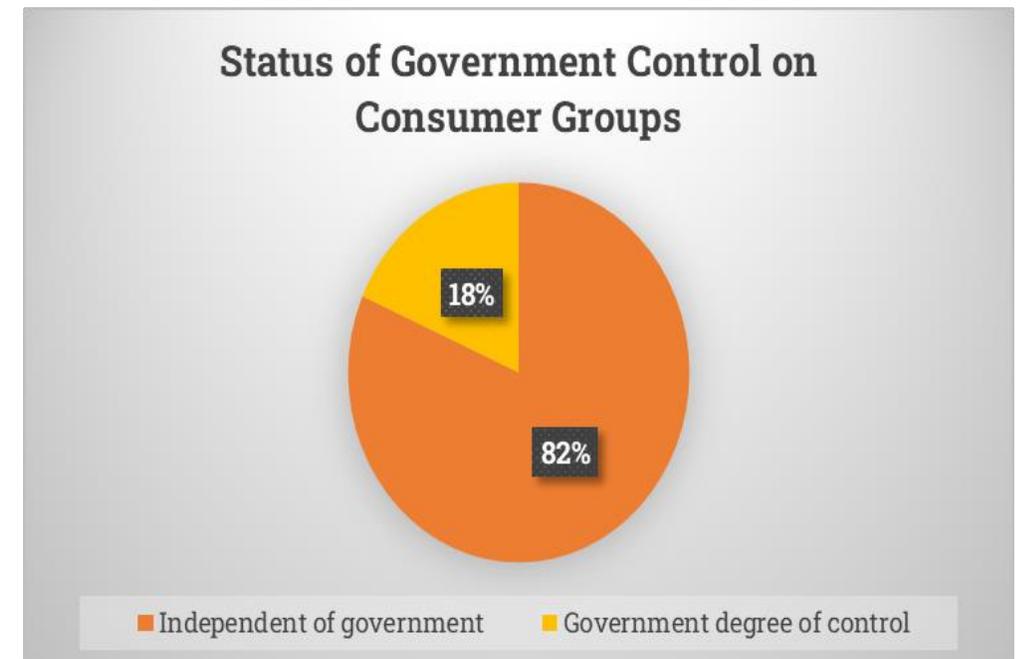
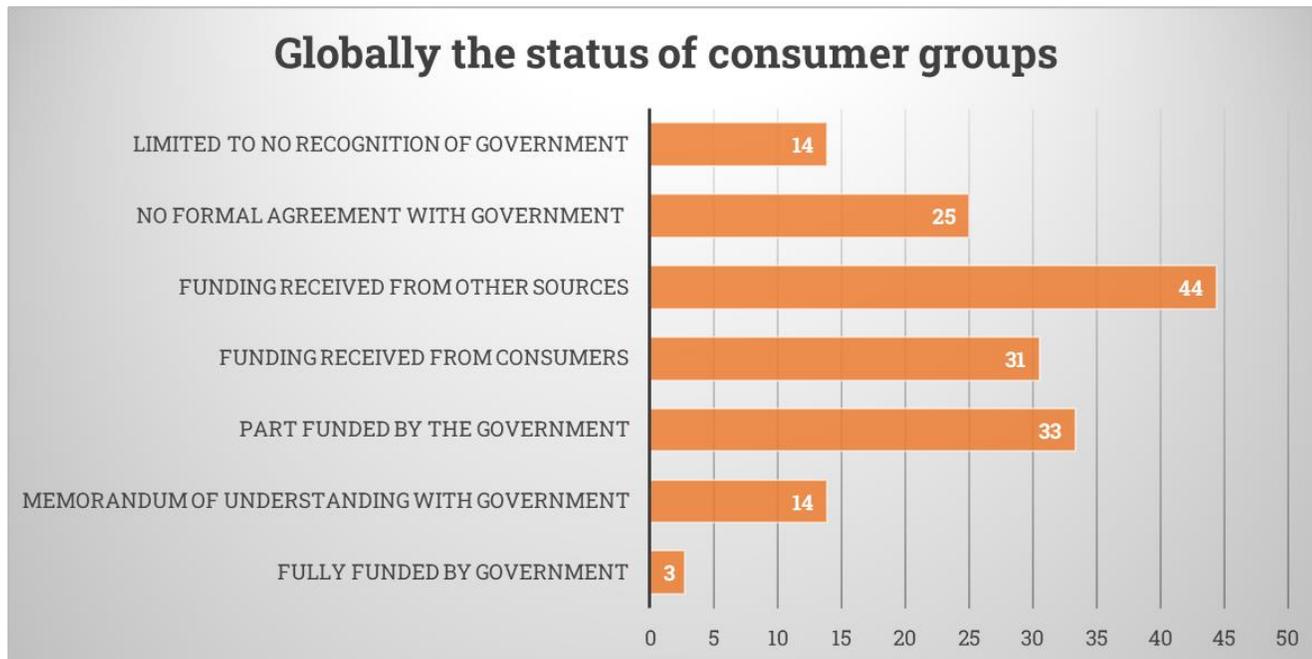
**GOVERNMENT &  
CONSUMER ADVOCACY**



# MAJORITY OF CONSUMER GROUPS REMAIN INDEPENDENT OF GOVERNMENT

In current times, **86% of the members** have confirmed that Consumer Groups are **independent of Government**, with **33% groups may be partially funded by government**.

A key concern is that **14% of members have shared that they have limited to no recognition from government in their region**.



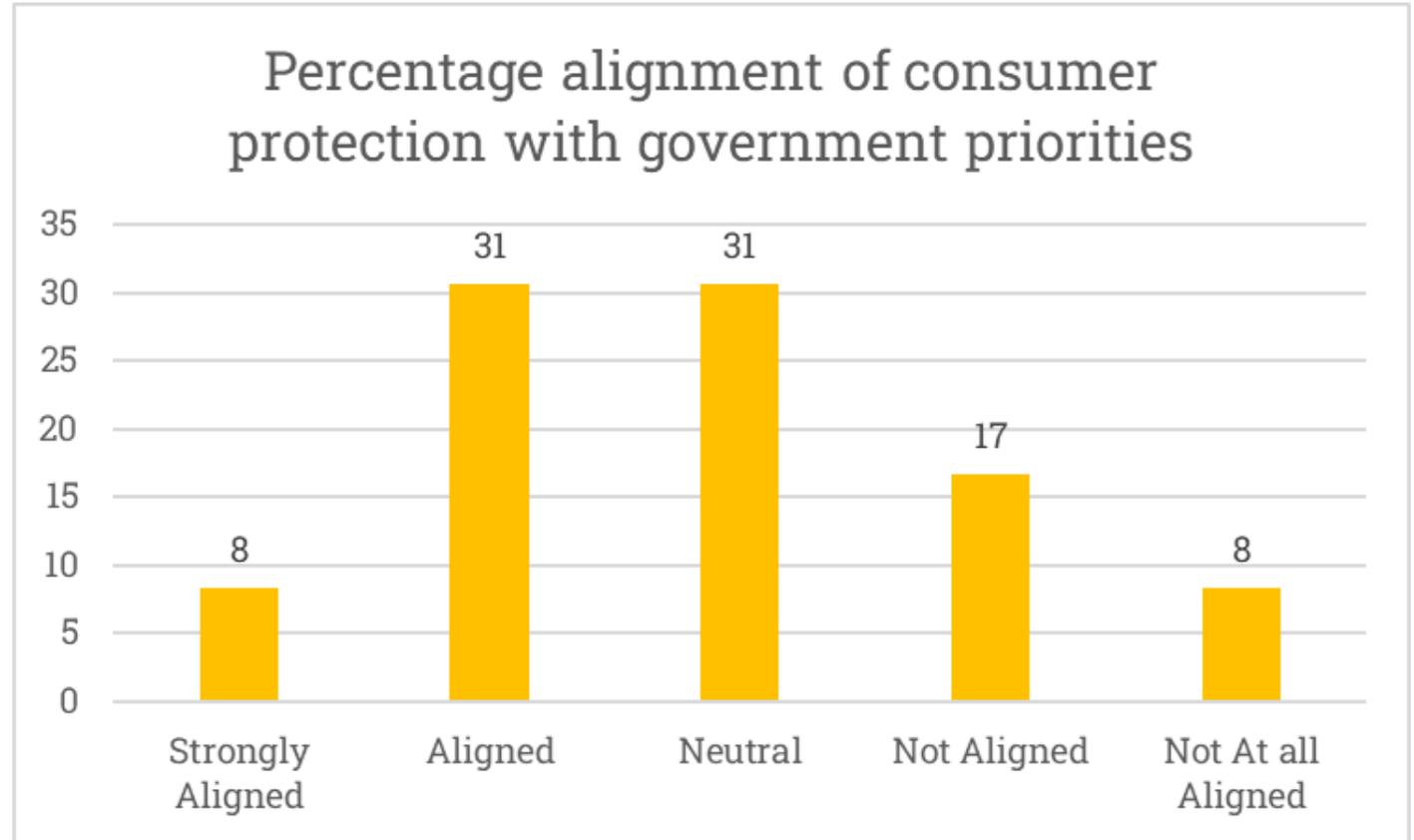
*Responses are in % of response counts across the categories*

# 39% ALIGNMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION WITH GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

We see a bell curve in the alignment between consumer groups and government priorities.

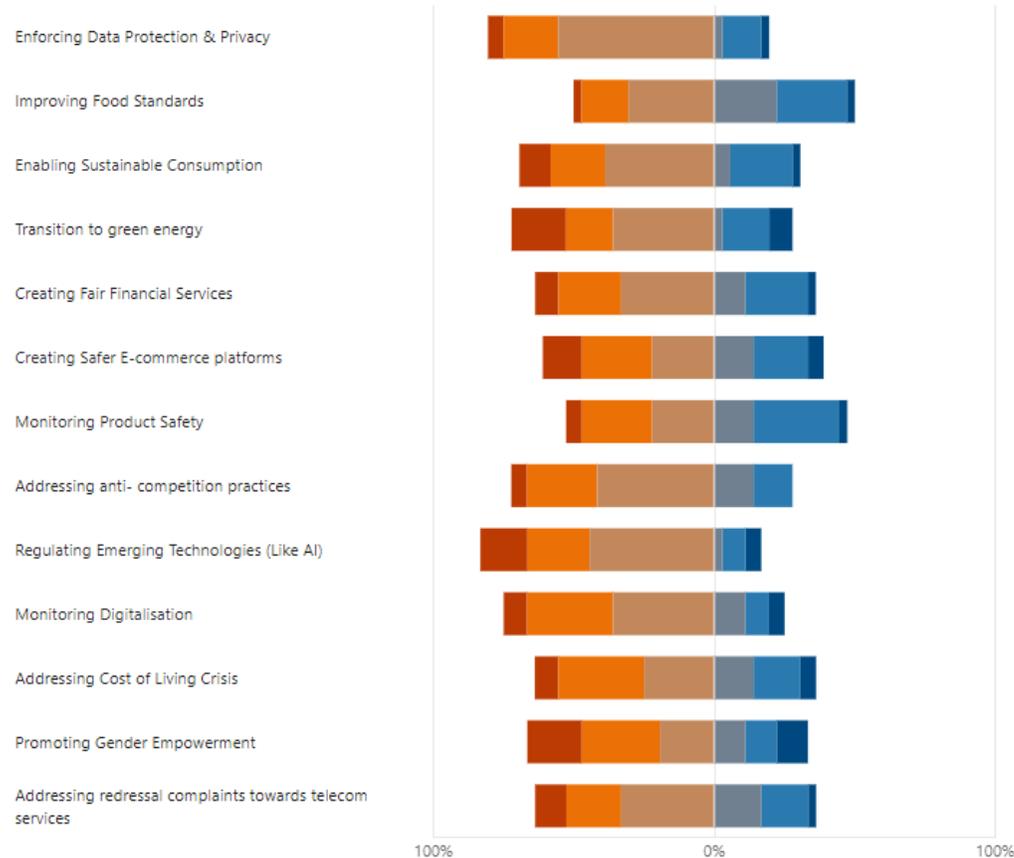
Across regions we have witnessed **1 in 3 consumer groups feeling aligned with the government priorities.**

However, there are **1 in 4 consumer groups that have stated that the government priorities don't align with them.**



*Responses are in % of participant responses across alignment scale*

# WE ARE STRONG IN OUR INTERACTIONS AROUND FOOD STANDARDS & PRODUCT SAFETY. MORE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK ON SAFER E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS, GREEN ENERGY & EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES



Across our key areas of consumer protection, we observed that interactions between consumer organisations with government has been on a limited to need basis or complete avoidance of interaction.

Areas where **interactions have been regular and proactive have been around improving food standards (47.2%), monitoring product safety (44.4%).**

But there's **very limited interactions and no recognition of consumer groups when discussing creating safer e-commerce platforms (38.9%), transition to green energy (36.1%) and regulating emerging technologies (38.9%).**

Addressing this gap in interaction with government across different processes will be imperative for us to tackle the key challenges we are facing in consumer protection in 2024 and for our roadmap across 2030.

- Does not recognise consumer organisations
- Avoids engagement as much as possible
- Reacts to actions on an as need basis
- Interaction because it is mandatory by legislation
- Proactive and regular engagement, regardless of immediate interest
- Don't know

# WE ARE STRONG IN OUR INTERACTIONS WITH GOVERNMENT ON WORKING COMMITTEES, OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE ON REDRESSALS, STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT & POLICY DESIGNS

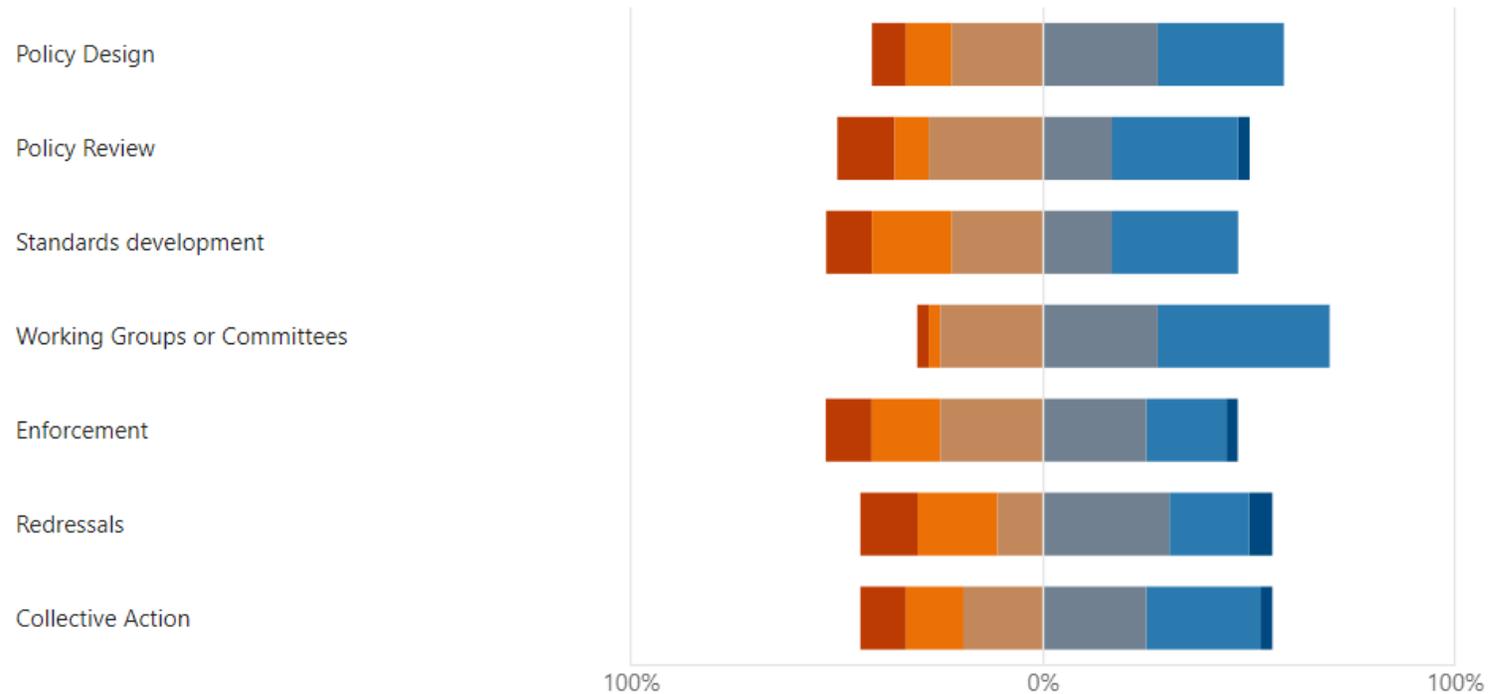
We are participating across government processes.

However, **consumer groups participate in Working groups or Committees 69.5%.**

With more participation needed across processes like **Redressals (33.3%), Standards Development (30.5%) Collective Action (25%) and Policy Design (22%).**

With our participation in working groups & committees we can focus more on addressing the challenges consumers face in the marketplace.

■ Never ■ Rarely ■ Sometimes ■ Occasionally ■ Always ■ Don't know



*Responses are in % of response counts across the categories*

**GLOBAL CONSUMER  
PROTECTION &  
EMPOWERMENT**

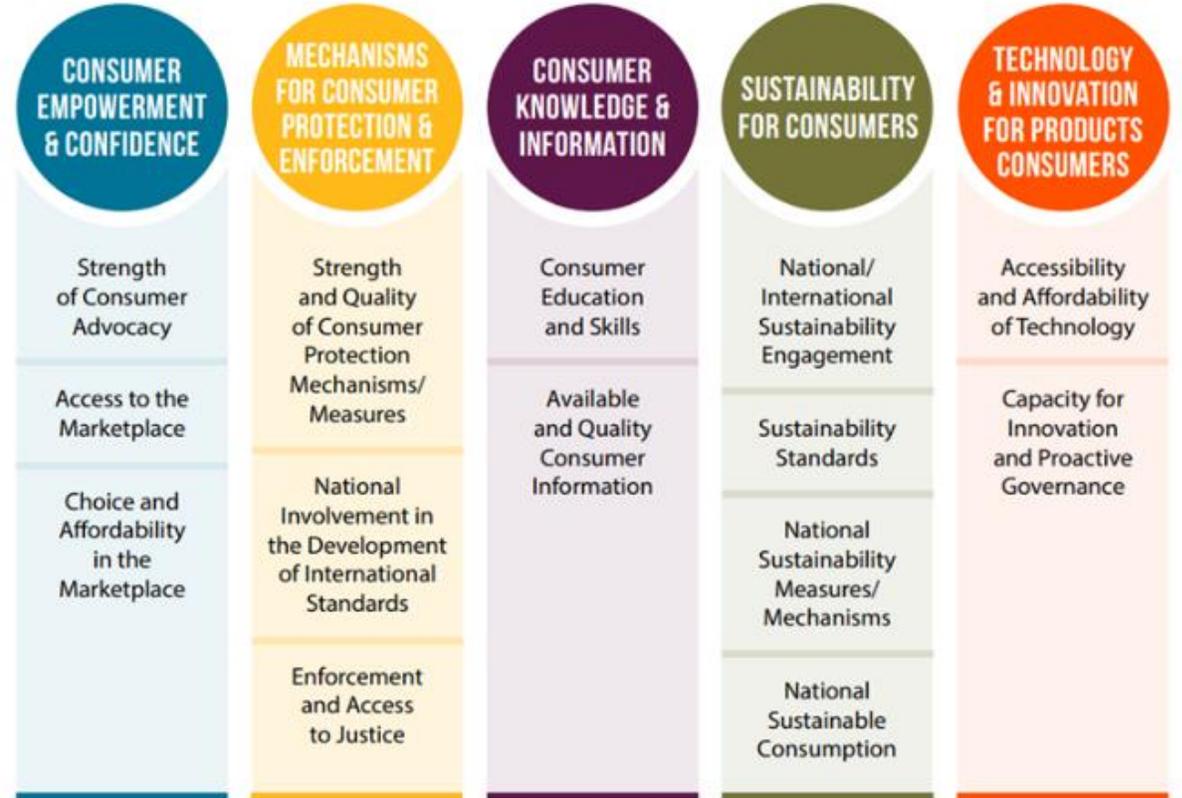


# OVERVIEW OF CONSUMER PROTECTION & EMPOWERMENT INDEX:

Consumer protection and empowerment is critical in making the markets work for trade, businesses, governments and consumers. When effective protections are in place, consumers have confidence in the market. Coupled with fair competition, this results in more innovation and more choice for consumers.

Despite the rise of e-commerce catalysing our global marketplace, there is still no global measure on the level of consumer protection and empowerment across countries. Existing consumer indices are carried out at either national or regional level and they are frequently conducted by companies instead of independent entities. Such a tool is vital for national and international leaders. First, it is needed to give national leaders a collective view of consumer protection across diverse sectors. Second, it provides global decision-makers with a comparator of priority countries and pressing concerns. When shown upfront both aspects stimulate change.

From 2020 - 2021 we produced a pilot Index to fill this knowledge gap. We worked closely with our Members and experts to build our Consumer Protection & Empowerment Index to help shine a light on priority areas, guide consumer advocates on where we need to focus and to demand better from decision-makers.



Pillars of the Consumer Protection & Empowerment Index

Link to [the report](#)

# OUR MEMBER ASSESSMENT OF THE STATUS OF CONSUMER PROTECTION & EMPOWERMENT

We mapped the current trends across consumer groups for the 5 key pillars of our Consumer Protection & Empowerment Index, namely:

1. Consumer empowerment & confidence,
2. Mechanisms for consumer protection & empowerment,
3. Consumer knowledge,
4. Sustainability of consumers
5. Technology & innovation for products

Across the key pillars, we find the ratings to be low with **average of 3.2** (out of a possible 5)

**Consumers making informed choices had the highest rating of 3.4.**

**The lowest rating of 2.9 on Sustainability of consumers and technology & innovation for products.**

There is not much movement across the trends since the last survey in 2021-22.

■ Never ■ Rarely ■ Sometimes ■ Very Often ■ Always ■ Don't know

Digital & financial skills training is accessible to consumers

Consumer complaints on online platforms are recorded by the Government

Sustainable Consumption is measured and reported by the government

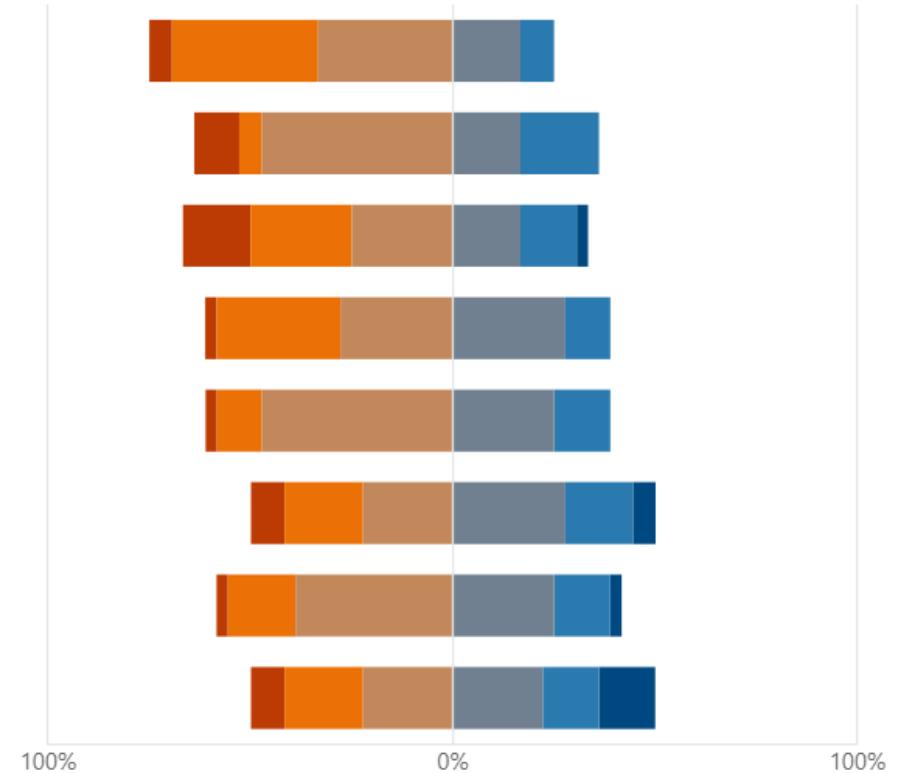
Lawmakers prioritise to enforce laws protecting the consumers in the marketplace

Consumers can make informed choices in the marketplace

Gender equity is considered by the Government when designing policies

Enforcers prioritise to enforce laws protecting the consumers in the marketplace

Telecom regulators monitor fair telecom pricing



*Responses are in a rating format, with a scale of 0-5. Percentages have been put for graphical purposes.*

# CONSUMER ADVOCACY IN 2030



# CONSUMER PROTECTION IN 2030 IS EXPECTED TO BE IMPACTED BY DIGITAL SOLUTIONS & SYSTEMS, IMPROVED CONSUMER REDRESSALS & FUNDING SHORTFALLS

*The habits and behaviours of young consumers will result in reduced dependence on consumer associations*

*Consumer associations will regularly use new technologies (e.g. virtual worlds, AI) to advocate for and communicate with consumers*

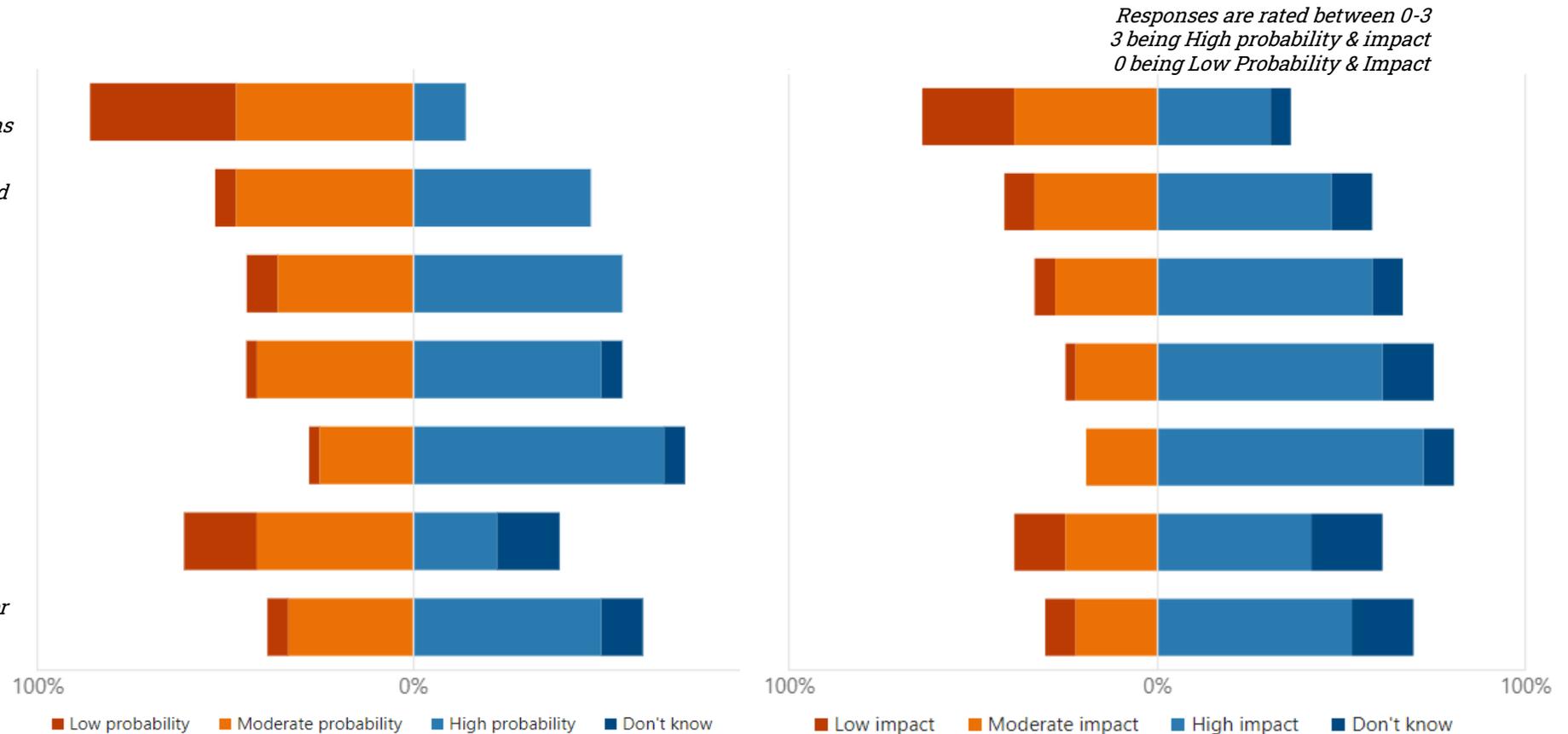
*Funding shortfalls will reduce the effectiveness of consumer associations*

*Consumers will have improved access to redress mechanisms*

*Digital solutions & systems will be needed to sustain Consumer advocacy movement*

*Government support of independent consumer organisations will reduce and weaken*

*Increase in mobile connectivity will improve consumer engagement with local advocacy groups*



Across the various challenges and trends, we observe in 2023 and next year, the trends for 2030 were observed to be similar but more pronounced around:

**The habits & behaviours of young consumers was rated the lowest probable (1.8) & impact in 2030 (2)  
The highest probable and impact trends would be of need for digital solutions & systems (2.8), improved consumer access to redressal (2.6), funding shortfalls (2.5)**

**THANK YOU**

