

UNDERSTANDING AND SHAPING CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN THE NEXT NORMAL

OCTOBER
26, 2022

14:00-16:00 (Bangkok Time)

BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic deeply disrupted global economic and social systems, imposing heavy burdens on many in the Asian region. Global supply chains were fractured and, in some cases, broken, with significant impacts on livelihoods. As countries develop and implement post-pandemic recovery strategies and seek to create buffers against future crises, the promotion of sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns must be a central pillar of government and corporate policies, as well as civic action. Similarly, the development of sustainable and secure systems of local resiliency must become a priority, recognising that pandemics are by no means the only crises faced by communities in the Asian region on a regular basis.

The prolonged experience of the pandemic revealed and deepened many disparities in secure access to vital products and services, especially for geographically disadvantaged nations, the economically poor, minorities, marginalised groups, and women and children. These impacts deeply impeded the ability of individuals, families, and communities to move toward realizing sustainable lifestyles and livelihoods. Reconsideration of resource and waste flows thus became a necessary exercise for many during the pandemic.

These experiences emphasise the reality that post-pandemic recovery and long-term sustainable development strategies must account for and reverse these inequities, particularly for issues such as food, waste, health, employment and other livelihood opportunities, and local resilience. These are all essential solution spaces for both human flourishing and environmental

and economic sustainability and resilience. To close the access and security gaps for all and create the enabling conditions for sustainable lifestyles and livelihoods, it is therefore necessary to reconsider standard approaches to sustainable local resilience, including the localisation and relocalisation of supply chains.

As a response to the pandemic's impact on lives and livelihoods, many governments, businesses, and communities innovated locally to meet basic needs and maintain livelihoods for workers across multiple sectors. Through these experiences, many lessons were learned about the importance of local resilience in the context of disasters and ensuring that no one is left out of access to resources and a secure livelihood. The post-pandemic recovery thus presents a unique opportunity to apply these lessons and advance SCP in the context of local livelihoods and resilience, as well as national actions to address climate change.

For the recovery to result in substantive progress toward SCP and local resilience, it must start from the central promise of the Sustainable Development Goals to "leave no one behind". This approach places emphasis on eradicating poverty, ending exclusion and discrimination, and reducing the vulnerabilities and inequalities that undermine human flourishing and capabilities. Such an inclusive and holistic approach places more agency in the hands of local actors, empowering individuals and communities to play an active role in charting their own locally relevant and responsive pathway to sustainable resiliency.

With these factors in mind, there is a need to convene experts from government, business, and civil society to discuss the opportunity space presented by the post-pandemic recovery to build sustainable local resilience. This discussion must consider how stakeholders from

different groups can work together to ensure that the costs and benefits of the recovery process and emerging post-pandemic 'next normal' are equitably shared across stakeholder groups and leave no one behind.

OBJECTIVES

This 2-hour workshop webinar, *Understanding and Shaping Consumer Behaviour in the Next Normal*, organised by the SWITCH-Asia SCP Facility, will bring together Asian and global sustainability experts from government, business, and civil society to exchange perspectives, experiences, and learnings that can support the creation of a sustainable and resilient 'next normal'. The goal is to think together about how to create a more equitable, sustainable, and stable post-pandemic world through the fostering of deeper, more intentional SCP systems that leave no one behind.

The key topics for the workshop will explore the potential for changing consumption practices in several core areas of everyday life to advance locally resilient SCP systems. This includes examining purchasing decisions, capacity and processes for production and services, waste

management, and resource recovery (reuse, repair), among others.

Key questions include:

- What are the challenges and opportunities for enabling sustainable living and livelihoods in the context of the post-pandemic recovery?
- What are the key opportunities that have emerged and are emerging to leverage the recovery to advance SCP and local resilience?
- What role can be played by various stakeholders and instruments (e.g., national, provincial, and local government policies; business models and policies; formal and informal education; community initiatives)?

AGENDA

14:00	Welcome EU SWITCH-Asia Programme
14:05	Keynote Address
14:10	Introductions
14:15	Theme 1: Responses to crises
14:40	Theme 2: Post-crisis strategies for sustainable resilience
15:05	Theme 3: Building resilient, inclusive, sustainable livelihoods
15:30	Open Discussion and Q&A
13:50	Reflections and Closing