

## Introduction

This brochure has been developed as part of the **Consumer Education Programme** of the **Communications Commission of Kenya**.

## What is the Consumer Education Outreach Programme?

A Consumer Education Outreach Programme is an educational programme that has been devised to meet the informational needs of the Kenyan consumer of communications products and services which 'reaches out' to Kenyan communities to share its message with the largest number of consumers possible.

## What is consumer education?

Essentially, consumer education aims to; change the behavioral patterns of the consumer, initiate and enhance consumer responsibility and offer information on the general rights of the consumer. It is also instrumental in strengthening the society as a whole, since an informed, articulate and effective consumer creates a fair, competitive and responsible marketplace.

## Is there a need for a Consumer Education Outreach Programme?

Having substantially realized the liberalization of the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector in Kenya and, thereby enhanced competition and broadened the choices now available to the Kenyan consumer, the Communications Commission of Kenya has indentified the need to redirect the focus of its attention towards consumer protection. Such a move is in line with global trends in view of the fact that regulators worldwide are now placing ever-increasing emphasis on the need to redress the imbalances (economic and educational) now facing the consumer.

## What is consumer protection?

Consumer protection is based on the concept that the consumer must be protected against undesirable and unfair trading practices. Whilst a substantial amount of protection can be offered to the consumer by the national legal framework, and by such bodies as the Communications Commission of Kenya, research has proved that one of the best ways of protecting the consumer is to empower them via the provision of consumer education. Essentially, consumer education relates to the development of those skills, attitudes and knowledge that enable the consumer to make informed and responsible choices.

## Does the Kenyan consumer need protection and education?

According to a recent survey carried out by the Communications Commission of Kenya, such a need does exist. The survey illustrated the need for the provision of; a comprehensive framework to ensure consumer satisfaction, coherent product and service marketing, an efficient complaints resolution mechanism and concise information on consumer rights and responsibilities. The survey also illustrated the need for a general expansion of the services offered by the Communications Commission of Kenya.



## What the consumer education programme will deliver

The current education programme is scheduled to run for the period of one year and will take the form of an intensive media and outreach campaign. The scope of the program is national and is mainly targeted at the youth, adults, parents /guardians of both female and male gender. This program has been designed to target the mobile and internet user.. Its objectives are to:

- Enable consumers to obtain optimum value-for-money
- Enable consumers to comprehend, interpret and analyze the information offered to them in the market place – thus allowing them to make informed decisions
- Promote responsible consumer practice in terms of; acquisition of information; the need for responsible market research; the requirement for careful consideration before purchase; the full comprehension of terms, conditions and guarantees; and the need for administrative responsibility (retention of documentation, receipts, warranties)
- Educate the consumer as to their basic rights and responsibilities
- Impart the skills required to negotiate, complain effectively and resolve problems satisfactorily
- Offer advice on where support, guidance and complaint resolution may be sought
- Enable consumers to appreciate the wider social and economic implications of their decisions
- Promote assertiveness and enable consumers to protect themselves against exploitation

## The materials offered by the Consumer Education Outreach Programme

The Consumer Education Outreach Programme will make use of a broad range of materials including; fact sheets, brochures and flyers. The areas to be covered are as follows:

- Electromagnetic energy and human health
- What to know about the Internet services
- Internet security and privacy
- Internet services options
- Children and the use of the Internet
- Productive use of the Internet
- Wireless phone technology
- Mobile phone security
- Buying a mobile phone
- Choosing a mobile phone service
- Mobile phone etiquette
- Children and mobile phones
- The role of the Communications Commission of Kenya in consumer protection
- The Consumer Education Outreach Programme
- Warranties and Service Level Agreements
- Telecommunication tariffs
- Premium Rate Services (PRS)
- Quality of Service
- Consumer rights and responsibilities
- How to make a complaint regarding communications equipment or service
- The Glossary of Terms

In the interest of making the information offered as easy to understand as possible, the Communications Commission of Kenya has compiled a Glossary of Terms (a simple reference manual), which offers simple explanations of the most commonly-used terms. The Glossary can be obtained by contacting the Communications Commission of Kenya: