

Importance of Communication and Behavioural Change in Circular Economy

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Today's Topics

- 1** Barriers and Challenges in Circular Economy
- 2** Importance of Communication in Circular Economy
- 3** Ways to communicate Circular Economy

Barriers and Challenges in Circular Economy

Main types of barriers: **cultural**, **market**, **regulatory**, **technological** and **funding** issues.

Cultural barriers currently the most pressing.

Consumer and companies' **lack of awareness / willingness to engage**



Importance of Communication in Circular Economy

Communication strategies lead to change in **consumer** behaviours:



Consume less

Green purchasing

Collaborative consumption

Preference to product life extension (repair, refurbish, remanufacturing)

Waste segregation, recycling and recovery

Communication strategies can inspire **regulators** to:

Set up economic instruments

Introduce laws on EPR/ waste management

Enforce stricter product/manufacturing requirements



Communication strategies can influence **investors** to:

Support start-ups

Invest in Circular projects

Mandate reporting on Circularity



Importance of Behaviour Change in Circular Economy

CE being a new paradigm, there is a need to change consumer behaviours apart from creating infrastructure and economic instruments.

Example – E-waste sector

Users' behaviour and decision making during purchase, use, and end of life management stages have direct implications to the success of reuse, repair, resource recovery and recycling.

E-waste also depends on consumer behaviours such as investing in more durable products and/or engaging with circular business models, opting for repair and reuse of functional broken products and timely and proper disposal of products with no reuse potential.



Communication vs Behaviour Change

- Interlinked concepts
- Successful communication leads to intended behaviour change
- One off actions are communication whereas prolonged repeated actions are behaviour changes

Example:

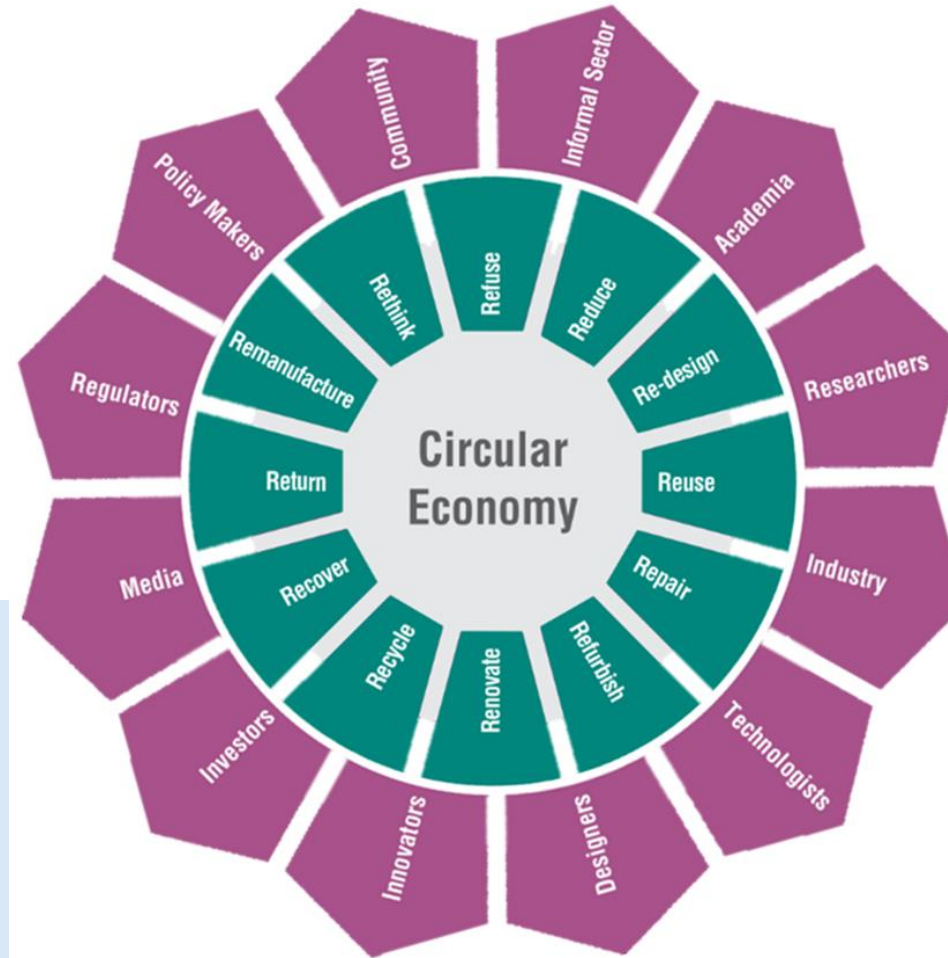
Campaign for waste management is a form of communication. Behaviour change is the sorting of waste by citizens as a result of the campaign



Examples on Behavioural Change through Communication

Building a community – Kromkommer, created a community by telling the story of lost fruits and vegetables in overproduction

Leading by example, proving feasibility - Circular Valley in the metropolitan area of Amsterdam supports circular initiatives and start-ups with funding and coaching



Facilitating the dialogue - Finnish organisation SITRA carried out practical experiments, compiles cross-boundary networks and develops CE roadmaps for the government

Using the right strategy – Consultants and advisors, like GateC promote CE models so that consumers are aware and more willing to switch

Eco-Labeling

Eco-labels mark resource efficient and environment-friendly products

Eco – labelling bodies communicate sustainable practices to be followed by manufacturers

Example of Eco-labels in Asia: Japan's Eco Mark, Republic of Korea's Eco-Labeling Programme, Singapore's Green Label and Thailand's Green Label

EU Ecolabel

- Every stage of an EU Eco-labelled product is checked to assess the main environmental impacts.
- Despite the COVID-19 crisis, majority of EU Ecolabel product groups (21 out of 24) have witnessed an increase in the number of products in respect to March 2020.



Communication through Eco-labels

Raw material sourcing – sustainable / ethical purchase

Recycled Product Content

Product Recyclability / Biodegradability

Sustainable manufacturing – health and safety, fair-pay, dignity

Environmental Product Declaration (EPD)

- Independently verified and registered document
- Communicates information on life-cycle environmental impact
- Currently limited to EU countries



Carbon Oriented Eco-labels

Carbon label describe the carbon dioxide emissions during manufacturing, transporting, consumption or disposing of consumer product

World's first carbon label, the Carbon Reduction Label, introduced in UK in 2006

Japan, Republic of Korea and Thailand adopted a carbon footprint programme on trial, voluntary or mandatory basis



Communication and Behaviour Change by Society

Versova Beach Clean up

- World's biggest beach clean up
- A young lawyer from Mumbai, Afroz Shah headed out with gloves and a bag to start picking up trash in October 2015
- He spread awareness about the importance of cleaning up the beach and rallied volunteers - friends, neighbours, fishermen, children, Bollywood film stars.
- More than 12,000 tonnes of plastic have been removed from the 3-km stretch of beach since 2015
- United Nations recognized Afroz Shah as a 'Champion of the Earth' in 2016.



Plogging

- Fitness trend which originated in Sweden in 2016
- Combination of **'jogging'** and **'plocka upp'** which means 'pick up' in Swedish
- **Eco-conscious fitness fad** across the globe
- Clean your community while you walk, jog, trek, squat etc.
- **Bengaluru based ploggers** made it to the Guinness Book of World Records by collecting **33,355.6kg of plastic in a 12-hour drive** organised on Gandhi Jayanthi day in 2018



Communication and Behaviour Change by Businesses

Corporate Sustainability Reports/ Circular Economy Reports, communicate their sustainability progress, gaining consumer trust.

Using strong media communications (websites, social apps, etc.) can influence consumer perception of refurbished and reused items.

Example: Amazon Renewed

- Amazon has published thorough guidelines for refurbished goods sold on its website
- This not only encourages consumers to buy refurbished items, but also encourages repair companies to improve their quality checks



Bisleri Bottles For Change

Bisleri engaged with Parisar Bhagni Vikas Sangh (NGO), Sampurna Earth (social enterprise) and Dalmia Polypro Industries Ltd. (recycler). They are associated with the plastic agents/kabadiwala groups in Mumbai.

Initiative aims to

- Educate citizens & bring awareness about plastic disposing ways.
- Create a channel for plastic agents to collect used but clean plastic (hard as well as soft) through various stakeholders.
- Sort clean plastic at the segregation center and directly sending it for recycling.
- Provide plastic agents hygienic working conditions, eventually uplifting their economic status.



Communication and Behaviour Change by Governments

Measuring indexes useful to transition to CE (e.g. raw material consumption, waste generated)

Publishing of reports and roadmaps to transition to a CE

Awareness campaigns and educational programs (e.g. sustainability literacy tests)

Examples of National Roadmaps for a Circular Economy:

- Colombia - National Development Plan: “Pact for Colombia, pact for equity”
- Finland - National Road Map to a Circular Economy
- Slovenia - Roadmap towards the Circular Economy in Slovenia

Sustainable Literacy Test (SULITEST)

- Created after the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Cop21) and designed to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals
- In October 2016, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development, proposed a collaboration with Sulitest
- 30 minutes online multiple choice question assessment for university students
- Assessment ensures that future graduates have basic knowledge on sustainable development and both individual and organisational sustainability and responsibility.
- More than 650 universities worldwide are registered and 70,000 candidates took the test

Illustrative Communication Design Strategies

Consumer Factor	Communication Design Strategies	Example
Contamination/ disgust/ newness	Importance, rephrasing and renaming, emotional engagement, empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of pre-retail dry cleaning for issues of contamination • ‘Better than New’ to rephrase and rename old garments for reuse
Cost/ Financial Incentive/ Value	Encouragement, importance, scarcity, framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘limited edition’ language indicating scarcity and framing • ‘save cost per wear’ language for sustainable clothing indicating importance
Environmental impact	Transparency, obtrusiveness, framing, emotional engagement, importance, direction, encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frame sustainability as responsibility and customer care, to encourage responsible consumer behaviour <p>“we make high-quality stuff that lasts for years and can be repaired, so you don’t have to buy more of it”</p>



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