

World Consumer Rights Day



THEME: Making Digital Marketplaces Fairer?
15th March, 2018
CUTS Accra Conference Room

Highlights

- Introduction
- Why World Consumer Rights Day?
- Building a trustworthy financial Services for consumers
- Building a digital world consumers can trust
- Conclusion

We are all consumers!



Why World Consumer Rights Day?



Is a day to promote the basic rights of all consumers

It was first observed on 15 March 1983

It has since become an important occasion for mobilising citizen action.

Consumer Concerns in the financial sector

- 
- High interest rate
 - Unfair contract terms on loans and mortgages
 - ATM fees
 - Hidden charges
 - Security issues
 - Privacy concerns

Consumer Concerns

- Banks charge high interest rates but pay little on savings as interest
- ATM charges (both intra and intra)
- Banks do not inform customers about fee changes
- Some banks do not disclose full information on some of their products offerings
- How secured are calls to verify cheques issued by customers?
- Privacy of costumer data

Consumer worries with ATM

Some banks charge flat rate per month, others per transaction.

Should I pay flat rate when I do not even use my card?

ATM breaks down and customer needs to make withdrawal. Customer incurs charge.

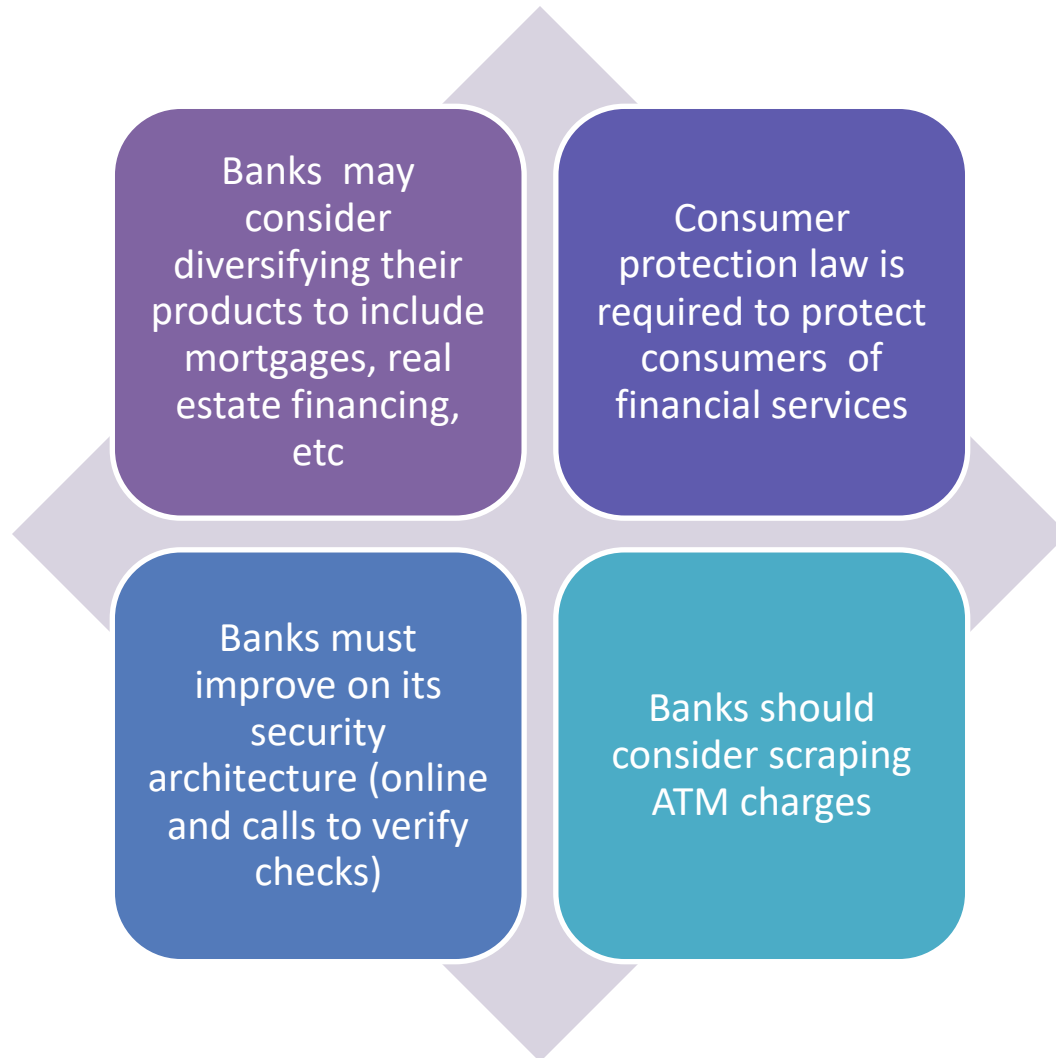
ATM machines do not indicate how much you would be charged if you want to use a third party ATM card

Long delays in reversal of disputed or aborted transactions

Building a trustworthy financial world

- Appropriate product design and delivery
- Prevention of over indebtedness
- Transparency
- Responsible pricing
- Fair and respectful treatment of clients
- Privacy of clients data
- Mechanism for complaint resolution

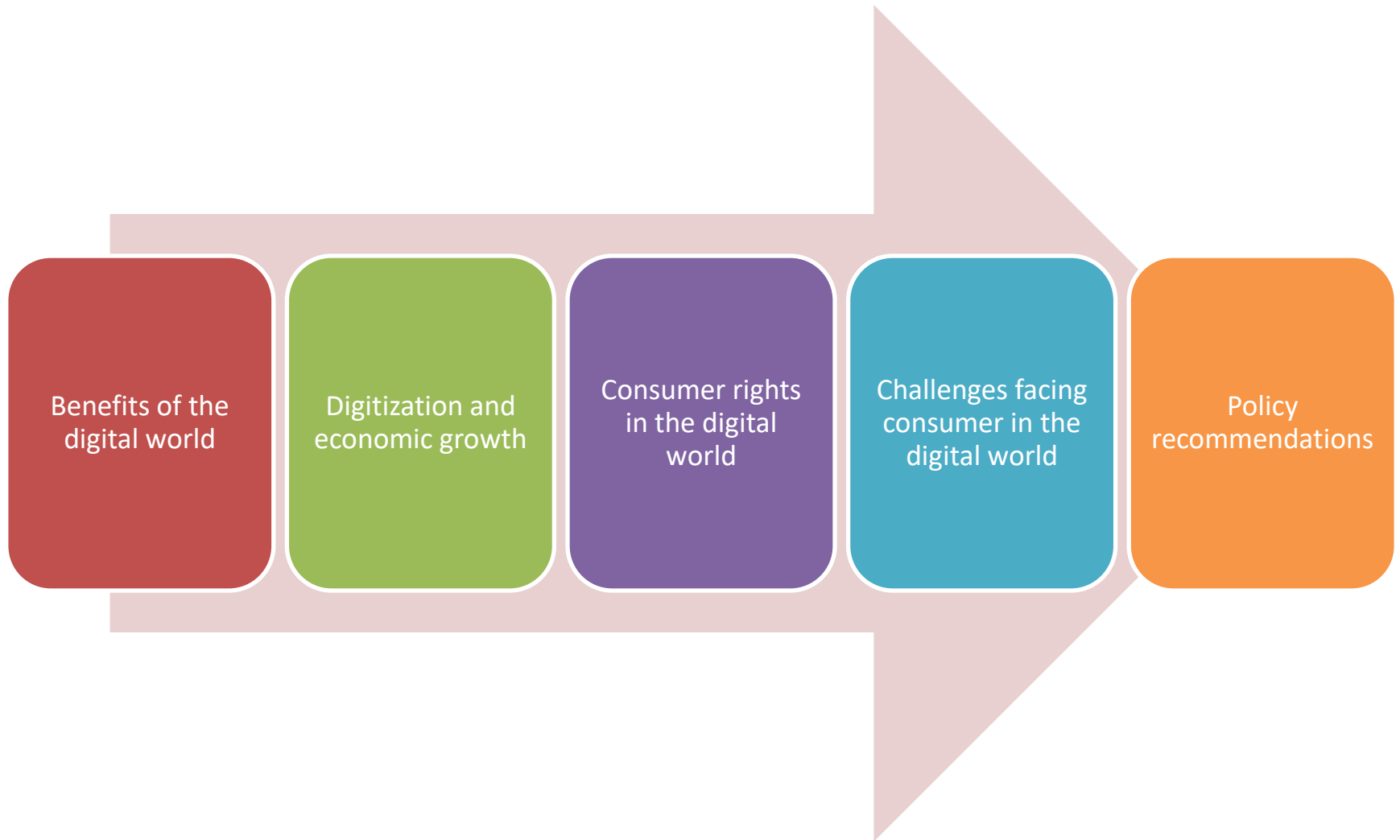
Recommendations



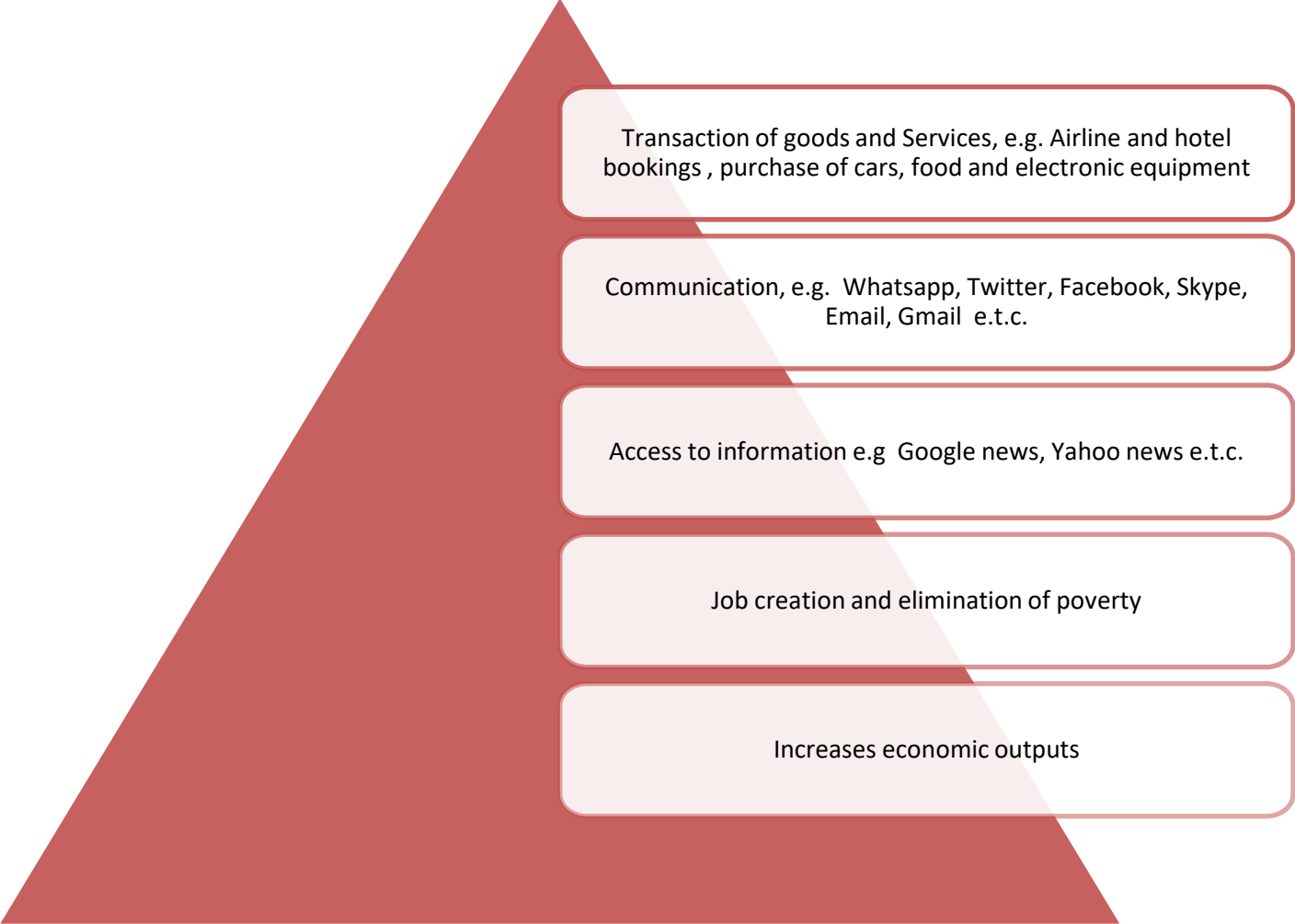
Building a Digital World Consumers can Trust



Presentation Highlights



Digital world benefits



Transaction of goods and Services, e.g. Airline and hotel bookings , purchase of cars, food and electronic equipment

Communication, e.g. Whatsapp, Twitter, Facebook, Skype, Email, Gmail e.t.c.

Access to information e.g Google news, Yahoo news e.t.c.

Job creation and elimination of poverty

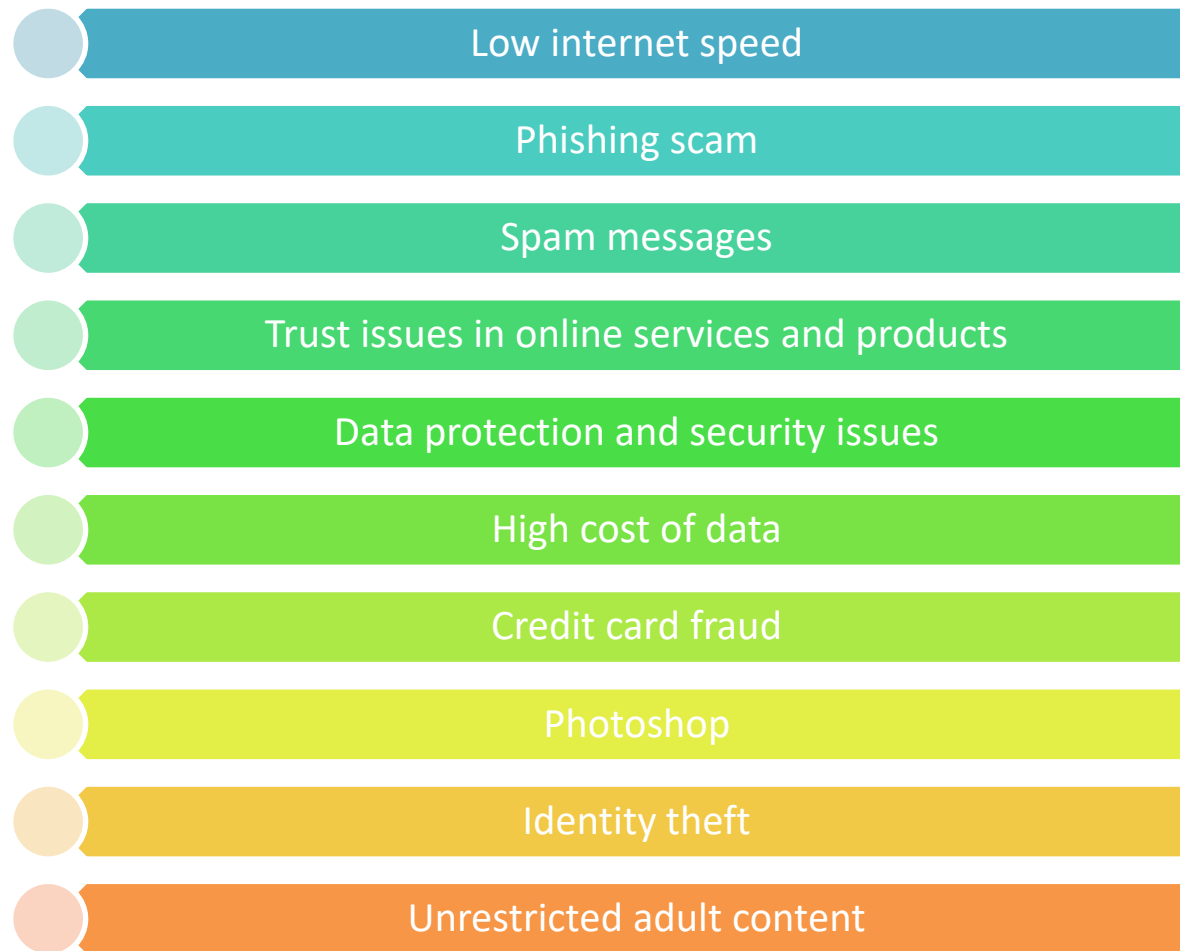
Increases economic outputs

Internet Penetration & Speed

- Ghana internet penetration is about one third of the population, data speed is among the best in Africa.

Country	Population	Internet Usage	Percentage of Internet Usage	Date
Algeria	41,063, 753	15,000,000	36.50%	Jun-16
Angola	26,655,513	5,951,453	22.30%	Jun-16
Benin	11,458,,611	1,232,940	11.50%	Dec-2014
Botswana	2,343,981	690,000	29.40%	Jun-16
Burkina Faso	19,173,322	1,894,498	9.90%	Jun-16
Ghana	28,656,723	7,958,675	27.80%	Jun-16
Nigeria	191,835,936	91,880,032	47.90%	Jun-16
South Africa	55,436,360	28,580,290	51.6%	June-2016

Major consumer concerns in the digital world



SECURITY AND PRIVACY ISSUES

- SPAM: Unsolicited commercial electronic messages
- Phishing: The process of counterfeiting a legitimate website in order to obtain credit-card numbers, banking information, passwords and other sensitive information
- Spyware: Software that collects information about a user without user's knowledge or consent
- Malware: Malicious software such as computer viruses, worms and Trojans

Welfare issues in e-Commerce

- Fair business and marketing practices
- Clear and transparent information disclosures
- Ways to confirm/ cancel a transaction
- Secure and easy –to-use payment mechanisms
- Privacy
- Education and awareness

Consumer rights in the digital world

- Right to access digital media information
- Right to secure networks and services
- Right to privacy and data protection
- Right to barrier-free access and equality
- Right to access neutral networks

The Emerging E-commerce Marketplace

Challenges for Consumers

Fair advertising and commercial practices

- How to distinguish commercial advertising from consumer endorsements?

Payments (including all mandatory charges)

- What kind of redress if the product does not work (bought with a pre-paid card or charged on mobile phone bill) ?

Digital content

- Is it possible to copy, share, format-shift a product?
- What kind of redress if a kid purchased a product when playing an online game, thinking it was part of it – while parents did not know/consent to it ?

Policy Recommendations

- Relevant information must be disseminated to consumers to inform decision making and transparency
- Accountability in service delivery needs to be ensured
- Internet-based service providers should provide consumers of sensitive online services such as online banking and online auctions with regular and timely information concerning current security risk and effective protective measures.

Summing Up

- Providers of financial and digital services ensure consumer welfare
- Contract terms should be fair and just for consumers
- Terms of services should be simplified without compromising on content
- Regulators need to constantly monitor the operations of service providers
- It is still not too late for the Consumer Protection Law to be passed

- End of Presentation

THANK YOU