Ms. Premila Kumar
Consumer Council of Fiji
Who is a consumer?

- A person who buys goods and services for his or her own use
- Anyone who pays for goods and services for their own personal/household/family use
Why Consumer Protection?

- Traders and Service providers are well organized (Chamber of Commerce)

- Strong organizations and associations to protect and safeguard their interests
Consumers

• consumers are disorganized and are unaware of their rights;
• consumer protection agencies that should assist them fail to provide the assistance as expected;
• the redress mechanism is limited or unavailable in some instances and other alternatives are expensive; and
• there is an absence of competent and swift machinery for enforcement of existing laws.
Roles and Functions of Consumer Council of Fiji
Role of the Consumer Council

- Safeguard Consumer’s interests;
- Educate consumers on their rights and responsibilities; and
- Empower consumers towards a fair and safe marketplace
Services offered by Council

• Campaigns, Education & Media Services
• Research and Policy Analysis
• Consumer Advisory & ADR Services
* What consumer council will not deal with:

- The council will not deal with these issues:
  - Labour issues
  - Human Rights issues
  - Criminal Issues
  - Corruption Issues
  - Issues before the courts
Cont...

- Internal family disputes
- Trader issues
- Or issues out of our jurisdiction.
- We will only deal with consumer issues.
THE COUNCIL PROVIDES...

• the external pressure as a **watchdog** to create a fair and just delivery of goods and services
• represents and protects the rights and interests of consumers by identifying and articulating the policy issues that are of importance to the consumers.
• conducts rigorous research and policy analysis on key consumer issues
Job of Consumer Council

- Protect consumers’ interests;

- Educate consumers on their rights and responsibilities; and

- Empower consumers towards a fair and safe marketplace

- Assist consumers with their complaints

- Provide advice and information to consumers (and others)
Consumer Rights in the marketplace

- Right to BASIC NEEDS
- Right to SAFETY
- Right to be INFORMED
- Right to CHOOSE
- Right to be HEARD
- Right to REDRESS
- Right to CONSUMER EDUCATION
- Right to a HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT
- Right to QUALITY SERVICES
Your CONSUMER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Critical awareness
- Action
- Social Concern
- Environmental Awareness
- Solidarity
TYPE OF COMPLAINTS WE CAN INVESTIGATE

- NOT EVERYTHING!
- ONLY THOSE THAT HAVE CONSUMER ISSUES!

Consumer means – you either in a buying, hiring or leasing position. Or a potential user of any service rendered for fees or reward.