Policy Exchange on Energy-Efficient Appliances and Equipment — *Consumer Information and Engagement*

20 March 2025, 12:30-14:00 CET

Objective: Share experiences on stimulating wider adoption of energy-efficient appliances and equipment through information and engagement programmes aimed at supporting consumer choices.

Speakers:

- **Saudi Arabia:** Mohammed Alsultan, TAQA
- **European Commission:** Niels Ladefoged, Directorate-General for Energy
- **Ghana:** Hubert Zan, Energy Efficiency Commission
- **Scene-setting presentation:** Sophie Attali, IEA
- **Featured presentation:** Nicole Kearney, CLASP

This Policy Exchange Workshop was held exceptionally as a public webinar.

Summary: Electricity consumption of appliances and equipment is growing, especially in emerging economies. Governments use a range of policies to encourage improved energy efficiency, including Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS), energy labels, and measures promoting demand-side flexibility potential of appliances. Consumer engagement can help stimulate wider adoption of energy-efficiency appliances. Simple and effective consumer information is an essential part of energy efficiency policies. Awareness campaigns utilising traditional and social media can reach broader viewership.

The workshop highlighted the range of policies put in place by the European Commission, Ghana, and Saudi Arabia, including MEPS and energy efficiency labels. These countries have encouraged the adoption of efficient appliances through campaigns and mobile applications.

Other topics warranting further discussions including:
- Databases that allow consumers to compare efficiency,
- Management of misinformation and misleading claims, and
- Communication of savings in an accessible manner to consumers.

Scene-setting presentation by Sophie Attali, Analyst, IEA

- The potential to improve efficiency is large: between 10% and 30% of energy could be saved using more efficient appliances, which are not always the most expensive in shops.
- More and more countries are developing new policies, and defining and updating new MEPS and labels.
- Policies and messages can be quite complex. Policies should therefore be accompanied by effective communication to inform and engage consumers, whose choices are based on various factors, including knowledge of energy and the environment, cultural context, and advertisement. Messages should be simple, intuitive, and connect with consumers on an emotional level, while clearly communicating economic and environmental savings.
- Information programmes are most effective when implemented long-term, since appliances are not often replaced. Consumers should receive information at the time of purchase and be tailored according to their habits.
- Policy makers should find ways to incorporate energy efficiency into the priorities of wholesalers and retailers.

Discussion and Member Remarks:

Saudi Arabia

- The Saudi Energy Efficiency Center (SEEC) promotes energy efficiency by establishing necessary regulations to improve energy performance in buildings and industry.
- SEEC informs people about the benefits of efficiency and the meaning of the energy labels through various methods:
  - Information campaigns are conducted through traditional media (TV, radio, newspapers) and social media. The SEEC thoroughly monitors campaigns and assesses their results. Two surveys are conducted each year to understand the habits of citizens in energy consumption, cars, appliances, and thermal insulation.
  - Smart phone applications show product energy labels and allow people to report counterfeits. The application tracks downloads, reports, and the number of scanned QR codes.
- TAQA has several programmes targeting families and decision makers in buildings and industry. TAQA launched a campaign targeting children between 4 and 12 years old, with adapted graphics and cartoons. In total, 31 campaigns have garnered more than 6 billion social media impressions. Campaigns feature real-life scenarios: one promotional video depicts a day in the life of a household, showing the impact of efficient appliances on the monthly bill.

European Commission

- The European Union's Ecodesign Directive sets minimum efficiency requirements based on minimum life-cycle costs for consumers.
- Energy labels for appliances have been in use since 1994. The third and current generation of labels covers appliances in heating, cooking, electronics, and cleaning devices. Labels are more thorough, such as those for smartphones, which now include a repairability index.
- The Energy Efficient Products Portal website is a one-stop shop for detailed product information on appliance efficiency developed for consumers, suppliers, retailers, and policy makers.
- Labels now include a QR code linked to EPREL, a multilingual database of more than 1.8 million products, drawing an average of 1 million visits every month. EPREL allows consumers to compare products across energy classes and report suspicious information to market authorities.
- The European Commission publishes an annual Eco Design Impact Accounting report based on data from 340 products from 41 product groups, organised in 12 functional groups: space heating, space cooling, water heating, ventilation, lighting, electronics, food preservation, cooking, cleaning, industry components, transport (tyres), and the energy sector (utility transformers).

Ghana

- Ghana imports subpar and ineffective appliances, and therefore relies on Minimum Energy Performance Standard (MEPS) to ensure product quality. Ghana has imposed MEPS for air conditioners and 17 other appliances.
- The government has published energy efficiency ratings of appliances on the GH Certified Appliance app, where importers and manufacturers can verify the efficiency of market competitors' products. The application also lists vendors, their location, and their level of compliance to government standards. The government tracks the application's downloads and are planning an update on the application, which allows for product comparison.
- The MEPS and database application were inspired by best practices and policies from other Hub Members, including the European Commission, adapted to the local context in Ghana.

- Communication channels include both traditional media and social media. Campaigns feature journalists, policy makers, and renowned Ghanaian actors from soap operas, and include radio programmes awarding energy-efficient appliances to the winners of quizzes.

Featured remarks by Nicole Kearney, CLASP

- A diversity of approaches can engage consumers to stimulate the uptake of energy efficiency appliances.
- Energy labels that are recognisable can build trust and credibility with customers, helping them make informed purchases. Intermediaries, from consumer organisations to retailers and installers, must first be aware of the benefits of appliance efficiency and the energy labels in order to share their knowledge with customers.
- Indonesia has launched a series of consumer engagement efforts, helping to increase the recognition and understanding of energy labels from 5% to 70%. CLASP organised a workshop on the national energy efficiency labelling program for junior journalists. Over 20 articles were published afterwards in newspapers across the country, covering topics relating to energy efficiency and featuring local establishments that have saved money as a result of efficient products.
- Brazil launched the Programa Brasileiro de Etiquetagem, inspired by the Energy star programme.
- India publishes national alerts to inform potential buyers via their star label website about products that have failed compliance testing.
- Messages to consumers must be sensitive to cultural contexts, such as existing climate scepticism and financial privilege.

Selected background materials:

- IEA - Appliances
- Users Technology Collaboration Programme - CampaignXchange Task .

Video Recording:

Visit Energy Efficiency Hub's event page to video the video recording of the workshop.

Contact us: If you have any questions, please direct your inquiries to secretariat@energyefficiencyhub.org