



Context Factors of Sustainable Consumption

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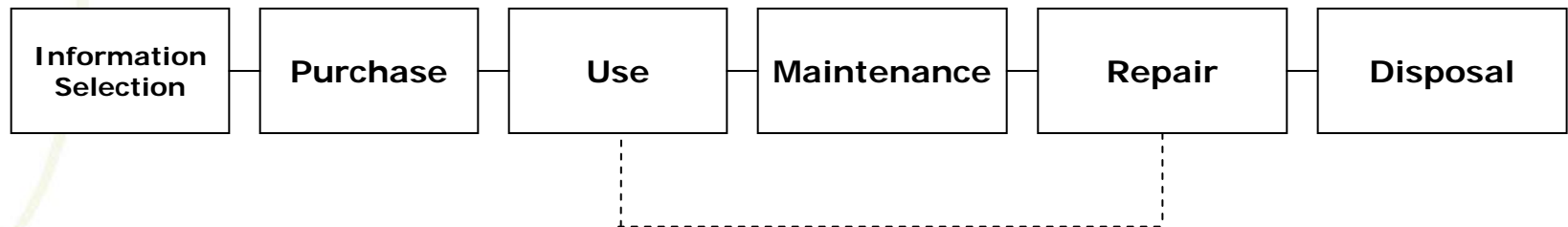
Outline of presentation

- ◻ Consumption in everyday life
- ◻ Gender aspects of consumption
- ◻ Conclusions for SC instruments

Consumption in everyday life

Consumption

- as complex social practices
- framed by collective routines, lifestyles and life stages
- embedded in a social context (household, family, community life)
- governed by the need to integrate different duties and consumption practices to maintain a coherent organization of everyday life



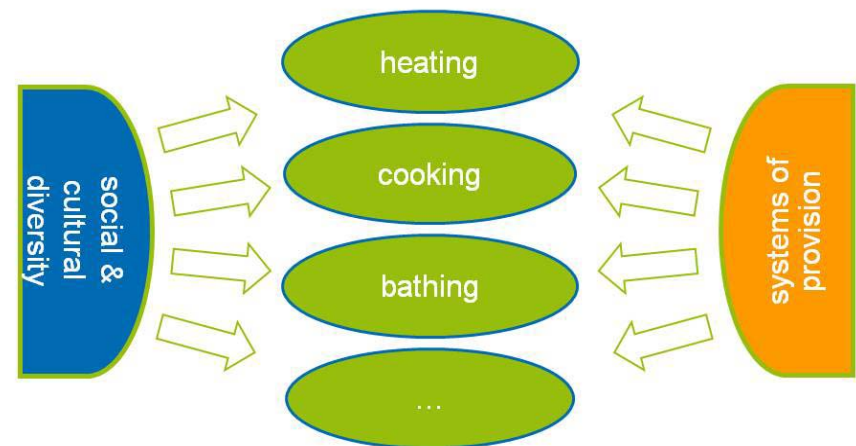
- Diversity of consumption needs and practices in everyday life!

Gender & social and cultural diversity

- Gender as “eye-opener” to identify commonalities and dissimilarities between the needs of different consumer groups.
- Gender is relational, gender roles and characteristics do not exist in isolation but are defined in relation.
- Agency of consumers emerges at the intersection of gender with other aspects of cultural diversity and social differences.
 - Considerable differences within gender groups!
 - Life stages, e.g. birth of a child / young families, the elderly
 - Formal education!

Consumption in everyday life

- Consumer choices in everyday life are shaped by socio-technical systems of provision,
 - providing access to and availability of goods and services
 - defining opportunities and restrictions for individual and collective consumption practices
 - enabling and limiting options for sustainable consumption
- Two main types of context factors:
 - Social & cultural diversity
 - Material infrastructures of consumption.



Focus on Gender

- ◻ Increasing participation of women in the labour market.
- ◻ Erosion of traditional gender roles, but a persisting core of care responsibilities and housework is still assigned to women.
 - ◻ Compared to men, women suffer more from time scarcity and have a less generous access to leisure time.
- ◻ Need for relief strategies of household-managers, strategies which help to simplify everyday life.

Food consumption



- ❑ Gendered responsibilities, consumption and income allocation preferences:
 - ❑ Women tend to buy consumer goods (food, hygiene articles, health and clothing),
 - ❑ men are more likely to buy alcohol and tobacco, transport and sport and expensive goods as cars and electronics.
- ❑ Women are key decision makers in the food area,
 - ❑ tending to have higher food literacy (depending on age and nutrition style),
 - ❑ spending more time with food preparation
- ❑ Men tend to eat considerably more meat.

Energy use

- Responsibility for energy saving and sustainable energy use in the household does not appear to be assigned along gender differences.
 - However, women are more prone to changing everyday life practices in order to reduce their carbon footprint,
 - while men rather invest in green technology.
- Women tend to initiate energy conservation in the household.
- Information on energy use is usually targeted to men, because they are still seen as more technologically oriented.

Conclusions for SC instruments

- ❑ SC instruments can be more effective, if they
 - ❑ consider the needs of different target groups,
 - ❑ are sensitive to the different consumption-related responsibilities and competencies of woman and men,
 - ❑ improve the access and availability of sustainable consumption options (systems of provisions),
 - ❑ enhance the agency of different consumer groups (including women and men).

- ❑ Above all communicative instruments
 - ❑ should provide target group specific communication,
 - ❑ should avoid gender stereotypes in communication by addressing specific gendered groups,
 - ❑ should not work with general recommendations.



Conclusions (2)

- Accurately-fitting SC instruments need sound knowledge on the *responsiveness to political instruments* of different social groups.
- This knowledge about diverse consumer groups can improve the implementation of the SC instruments.
- Thus, gendered groups (as mothers and fathers with little children, women with migrant background, old women etc.) should be integrated into the making of SC instruments.