

TOPACE Europe Awarded Person 2013

Anwar Fazal

The TOPACE Jury carefully reviewed and proudly acknowledged his outstanding merits. It was unanimously decided to award Anwar Fazal for his lifetime achievement, which is greatly appreciated by the community of Consumer Educators in Europe and world wide and will be long remembered into the future.



f.l.t.r. (center): Anwar Fazal, Marimuthu Nadason, Heiko Steffens

In various functions, for instance President of the International Organisation of Consumers Union (IOCU; now Consumers International) 1978 to 1984, Anwar Fazal transformed the consumer movement into a leading player in global civil society resulting in several global international consumer protection codes. He gave the consumer movement a triple vision – value for money, value for people and value for the environment. In 1983, he initiated the World Consumer Rights Day which is now celebrated worldwide annually.

Very early in the rising of the consumer activism he highlighted the role of consumer education not only in words but also in action. To him there is no future without educating and empowering the young. In 1969 he founded the Consumers Association of Penang, one of the most active groups in the Third World. Remarkably, nearly all the high schools in the state of Penang had Consumer Clubs. 1981 Anwar established the pioneering Consumer Educators Network (CEN) in Penang as an informal global network of relevant people working with IOCU on consumer education. CEN published the CEN-TER Folder (1985-89), which was a pack of reports, resource materials and activity sheets. CEN became the prototype of the European Network of Consumer Educators (ENCE) and NICE-Mail (1994-2007). Anwar also co-authored with the late Bishan Singh the book “Consumer Education-A Resource Handbook” published by IOCU in 1991.

Driven by the initiative and support of Anwar Fazal, the first edition of the book “Promoting Consumer Education in Schools” by Grada Hellman was published in 1985 by the IOCU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Penang. In his Foreword Anwar wrote: “... consumer education is about two important things – living and sharing and involving both personal and social responsibility...” Anwar also initiated in 1985 the publication by Sheila Harty of the book "The Corporate Pied Piper" about unconscionable commercial infiltration of schools. Currently as Director of the Right Livelihood College at the Universiti Sains Malaysia USM, a pioneering and innovative university change-maker initiative, he has defined his mission as follows “Through engagement in education, practical activities and scientific research with universities and students, the laureates of the Right Livelihood Award (popularly known as the ‘Alternative Nobel Prize’) will share their vast knowledge, passion and experience with the young scholars”.

Anwar continues in his efforts in what he calls "nurturing the future". He highlights: “little people doing little things in little places can change the world”.

Prof. Dr. Heiko Steffens

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