

# Advocacy Working Group (AWG)

## Short Form Annual Plan

*The mission of the Advocacy Working Group (AWG) is to improve the effectiveness of ICN members in advocating the dissemination of competition principles and to promote the development of a competition culture. The AWG develops practical tools and guidance and facilitates experience sharing among ICN member agencies.*

*The Working Group is co-chaired by the Superintendence of Industry and Commerce of Colombia, the Philippine Competition Commission, and the Competition Authority of Kenya.*

### 2024 – 2025 Projects

In accordance with the long-term strategic goals of the 3-year plan, the Advocacy Working Group will work on the following projects during the 2024-2025 ICN year:

1. The 2024 ICN-WBG Competition Advocacy Contest
2. Interactions between Sector Regulators and Competition Authorities
3. Evaluating the Effectiveness of Advocacy Initiative
4. Assessing Progress in Development of Successful Advocacy Strategies to the Judiciary

#### **Project 1. The 2024 ICN-WBG Competition Advocacy Contest**

This contest aims to highlight the key role Competition Agencies play in promoting competition through showcasing advocacy success stories. This project has attracted the attention of both younger and experienced agencies and has positioned itself as an important incentive to promote advocacy actions throughout the world.

Following the success of the past joint editions between 2014 and 2023, the ICN and the WBG will send the call of interest of the ICN/World Bank Advocacy Contest in **March 2024**.

For this year's contest, the themes are:

- Theme 1: Fostering job opportunities and firm growth through competition advocacy
- Theme 2: Competition advocacy to leverage new technologies while limiting the risks for markets
- Theme 3: Embedding competition in industrial policies through advocacy
- Theme 4: Raising awareness on competition by communicating on impact and results

## Milestones/timelines for ICN Year

March 2024	Launch of the ICN/World Bank Advocacy Contest
May 2024	Announcement of the winners of the 2024 ICN/World Bank Advocacy Contest

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## Project 2. Interactions between Sector Regulators and Competition Authorities

Traditionally, there has been a debate on how Competition Authorities should interact with Sector Regulators in discussions of deregulation in areas such as natural monopolies. In this regard, in recent years, attention has been focused on the involvement of Competition Authorities and Competition Policy in the environmental area against the backdrop of growing concern for GHG emission, and also in areas related to the data collection from the perspective of personal data protection. On the other hand, Sector Regulations have broader objectives, and this may make them incompatible with Competition Policy in some cases. Inconsistent decisions by Sector Regulators and Competition Authorities can create uncertainty for market participants.

Based on the above background, this Project aims to collect experiences on how Competition Authorities have been interacting with Sector Regulators in terms of advocacy. What frameworks are most effective as a form of interaction, including Joint Guidelines, MOUs and legally backed frameworks, and what are the advantages of each when advocacy is the main objective?

The project is still under discussion.

## Milestones/timelines for ICN Year

April - June 2024	Prepare key elements of the survey
July - August 2024	Collect comments from co-chairs
September - October 2024	Call for input from member agencies
November - December 2024	Drafting
January 2025	Circulation of the draft
February 2025	Finalization of report

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### **Project 3. Evaluating the Effectiveness of Advocacy Initiatives**

The Project will look at how effective the advocacy initiatives of young and mature competition agencies are in reaching and engaging specific stakeholders, most importantly in the grassroots, where the small- and medium-sized enterprises (which account for majority of firms in most countries) operate.

Tied to the Advocacy Workshop to be organized by the Competition Authority of Kenya in February 2024, this Project will have two phases. The first is the gathering of case studies and/or experience sharing of competition agencies based on the following sets of questions:

- a) What was/were your objective/s for the competition advocacy initiatives that your agency has implemented in the past years?
- b) How do you (competition agencies) evaluate the effectiveness of your advocacy initiatives? What information/date do you require in doing the assessment? What performance metrics are being used?
- c) In your agency-level scorecards, are there any outcome-level indicator/s being measured? If so, what are these outcome indicators?
- d) How are the advocacy initiatives of young and mature competition agencies faring vis-à-vis their targets? Are there plans to revisit/refine the advocacy objectives, initiatives and/or performance metrics?

The second phase of the Project will be a report that consolidates the best practices of competition agencies in monitoring and evaluating their advocacy initiatives. Similar to the 2018 AWG work product titled, "Assessing Competition Advocacy Strategies," this report may also inform both young and mature competition agencies of the different ways the effectiveness of advocacy initiatives can be measured and/or evaluated, as well as identify common practices and trends despite the varying methodologies in monitoring and evaluation among competition agencies.

#### **Milestones/timelines for ICN Year**

Q3 2023	Selection and invitation of panelists for the Session on Evaluating the Effectiveness of Advocacy Initiatives in the 2024 Advocacy Workshop in Kenya
Q1 2024	Conduct of the Session on Evaluating the Effectiveness of Advocacy Initiatives in the 2024 Advocacy Workshop in Kenya
Q2 2024	First Draft Report – based on the discussions from the Kenya Advocacy Workshop Session on Evaluating the Effectiveness of Advocacy Initiatives, featuring success stories and national experiences. The report will be routed for inputs from AWG Members and NGAs;

Q2 2024	Second Draft Report will be circulated to members for further review and additional inputs/comments, if any. Finalization of the draft report.
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**Project 4. Assessing Progress in Development of Successful Advocacy Strategies to the Judiciary**

This project will look whether young and developing competition authorities have been successful in formulating advocacy strategies to the judiciary, building on the work done by the ICN in 2006 – 2007. Depending on the outcome of the project, we suggest that a second phase could be undertaken to look at how those strategies can best be further developed, with a particular focus on young and developing agencies.

In 2006, the ICN produced a report on a survey it had conducted. The survey of ICN member authorities focused on the relationship between competition authorities and the judiciary. This was followed up with a series of case studies, which were presented in a further report in 2007.

Both the survey and the follow up case studies indicated that young and developing agencies reported certain problems with their relationship with the judiciary, including a lack of specialist competition knowledge within the judiciary. The case studies briefly addressed measures that young and developing agencies had taken to try to address these issues.

As this work was undertaken some time ago (2006 – 2007), this project will focus on three questions which will ultimately allow us to develop a work product focused on successful advocacy strategies to the judiciary, with particular focus on young and developing agencies.

1. Are young and developing competition authorities now experiencing similar issues in their relationships with the judiciary as were reported by young and developing agencies in 2006?
2. Have those agencies surveyed in 2006 – 2007 and that were at that time young and developing materially overcome the problems they reported in 2006 – 2007 or are they still experiencing the same problems to the same extent?
3. If they are still experiencing the same problems to the same extent, why have the advocacy strategies to the judiciary that they were developing in 2006 – 2007 been unsuccessful, in their view? If they are not still experiencing the same problems to the same extent, to what extent is this attributable to the advocacy strategies they have developed? Which strategies have been successful and why?

By obtaining survey evidence on these questions, we will be able to:

- a) understand which strategies (if any) were successful for agencies that were “young and developing” in 2006 (but which are now more mature agencies); and
- b) move on in a second phase of the project to address how (more) successful strategies can be formulated and/or developed.

We will need to:

- a) Develop a questionnaire that is closely based on the 2006 questionnaire. It would be extremely useful to have access to the 2006 questionnaire and the responses.
- b) Issue a call to ICN members to complete the questionnaire.
- c) Analyse the responses.
- d) Produce a report addressing the three questions outlined above.
- e) Consider second phase of project as appropriate, depending on the responses received, which will look at development of successful advocacy strategies.

**Milestones/timelines for ICN Year**

November – December 2023	Obtain previous version of questionnaire and responses.
Q1 2024	Prepare new questionnaire
Q1 2024	Call for response to questionnaire and send out questionnaire
Q2 2024	Analysis of responses to questionnaire
Q3 2024	Circulate first draft of report to respondents and AWG Steering Group for comments
Q4 2024	Produce final report

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