



Competition and Consumer Protection Economic Cooperation



The effective enforcement and advocacy of competition and consumer protection policy and law is fundamental to fostering well-functioning markets, supporting confident consumers, protecting against harmful practices and enabling competitive cross-border trade within the AANZFTA region.

Under the AANZFTA Implementation Support Program (AISP) component of the Regional Trade for Development (RT4D) initiative, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) delivered the Competition Law Implementation Program (CLIP) Phase VI and the Consumer Affairs Program (CAP) Phase III.

Across 24 competition and consumer protection activities delivered between July 2023 and January 2025, CLIP and CAP facilitated technical cooperation and supported capacity development in ASEAN to:

- Strengthen enforcement and advocacy of competition policy and law; and
- Promote effective consumer protection implementation in the region.



CLIP VI – Competition Law Implementation Program

ASEAN's competition authorities recognise the emergence of new challenges as digital transformation accelerates, and cross-border cases grow more complex. Targeted technical assistance strengthens national competition laws and institutions and improves enforcement practices. These capabilities are key to ensuring the upgraded AANZFTA supports a fair and competitive regional market.

The sixth phase of the Competition Law Implementation Program (CLIP VI) equipped ASEAN competition agencies with knowledge, practical tools and increased capacity to implement and advocate for more effective enforcement of competition laws and policies.

What Was Delivered?

Capacity building to strengthen knowledge and skills on digital, merger and enforcement related issues.

- Three webinars on generative AI, agency data units and tactical intelligence, engaging 123 participants from eight ASEAN Member States (AMS).
- Three on-site trainings on digital forensics, hypothetical mergers and remedies for competition law infringements, engaging 73 officials from eight AMS.
- CLIP delivered this workshop in collaboration with the UK Competition and Markets Authority's (CMA) Digital Forensics Unit supporting and enhancing collaboration across jurisdictions.

Tailored support to strengthen engagement, knowledge exchange and cross border coordination.

- Eight officers from seven AMS completed secondments to the ACCC and the New Zealand Commerce Commission from February to March 2024.
- Mentoring support tailored to the needs of five ASEAN competition officials and one Commissioner.
- A six-week placement of an ACCC expert to support the Malaysia Competition Commission (MyCC) communications team.
- Hybrid assistance to the Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) that included a three-day in-person workshop (24 participants) and a webinar (19 participants).

Research to increase AMS confidence to enforce competition law and policy

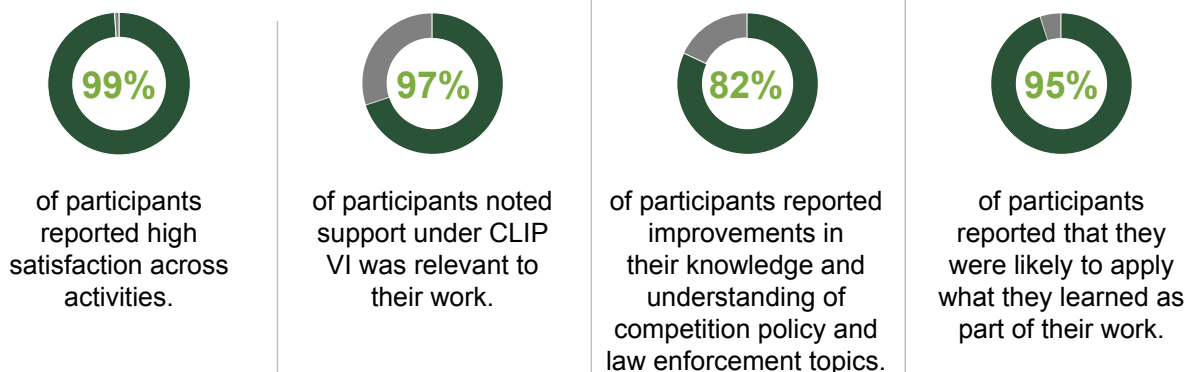
A study assessing competition law approaches to Vertical Agreements in the ASEAN Economic Community.



What were the Outcomes?

CLIP VI activities enhanced regional cooperation across competition agencies in the AANZFTA and improved the knowledge, confidence and capacity of officials to effectively implement and enforce competition laws.

Improvements in participants' knowledge, confidence and capacity across all activities delivered.



Strengthened confidence and practices of participating competition agencies. Examples include:

- Expert placement contributed to enhanced strategic communication efforts in MyCC including building and maintaining relations with media professionals.
- Mentoring and secondments boosted investigative confidence and leadership skills, with participants reporting greater confidence in case management and decision-making.

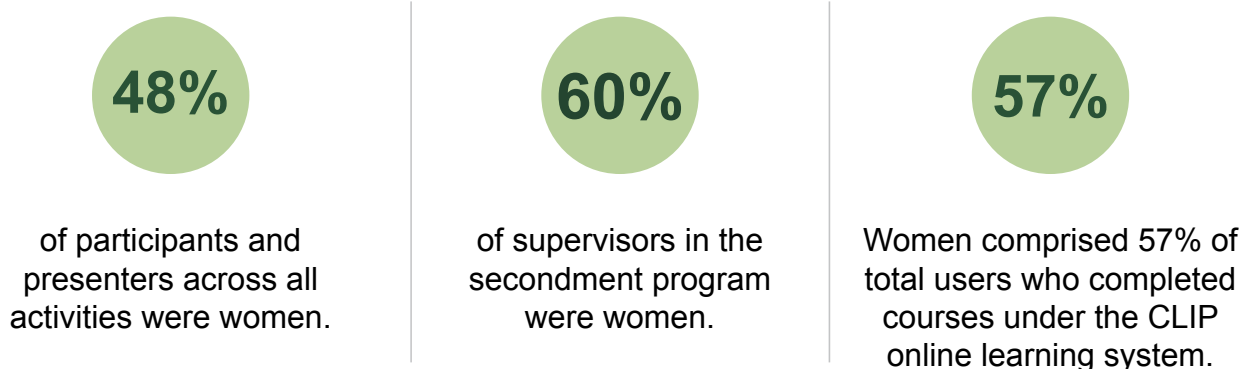


The mentoring sessions have proven to be highly beneficial. They provide an excellent platform to connect with other commissioners, gain insights from their experiences, and expand my knowledge in the field of competition law. This program significantly enhances professional growth and fosters a deeper understanding of regulatory practices.

— Participant Feedback, CLIP VI



Prioritised the engagement and support of women across its activities



CAP III – Consumer Affairs Program

National consumer protection authorities in AANZFTA countries support well-informed, confident consumers and protect them from misleading, deceptive or unfair trade practices as well as unsafe goods and services. Targeted technical assistance strengthens laws and enforcement tools that support safe and transparent markets and build consumer trust—ensuring the upgraded AANZFTA delivers benefits without harming vulnerable consumers.

The third phase of the Consumer Affairs Program (CAP III) strengthened the capacity of ASEAN consumer protection authorities to address emerging issues in consumer protection such as scams, greenwashing and the sale of unsafe products online.

What was Delivered?

Training and capacity-building support to increase knowledge and skills on topics relevant to effective consumer protection administration.

Topic	Location	Date	No. of participants
Sustainability	Viet Nam	Oct 2023	23 (9 AMS)
E-Commerce	Philippines	May 2024	23 (10 AMS)
Product Safety	Thailand	Jun 2024	23 (10 AMS)
Consumer Guarantees and Warranties	Lao PDR	Nov 2024	30 (10 AMS)

Support to strengthen engagement, knowledge exchange and cross border coordination with AMS consumer protection officials

- Hybrid university course at the University of Melbourne between March – April 2025 supported 20 officials from 10 AMS.
- A two-person secondment from the Philippines hosted by ACCC.
- Placements of three ACCC staff to Lao PDR and Indonesia.

Digital resources and research support to strengthen knowledge and awareness of consumer law and enforcement.

- Delivery of bi-monthly Competition and Consumer Law newsletter to 733 subscribers.
- Sponsored two AMS to participate in OECD empirical research on dark patterns and sustainable consumption.
- Developed CAP Academy modules contained in CAP's online learning system called CAP Academy.

What were the outcomes?

CAP III strengthened officials' knowledge and capacity across ASEAN to protect consumers and foster trustworthy and inclusive markets.

Improvements in participants' knowledge, confidence and capacity across all activities delivered¹.



Note: Figures represent a snapshot of post-activity, self-reported improvements and are not intended for definitive interpretation.

Fostered changes in the approaches and systems of participating consumer protection agencies. Examples include:

- Expert Placement in Lao PDR resulted in the development of a Standard Operating Procedure and Terms of Reference for establishing a Consumer Consultative Committee.
- Expert Placement in Indonesia resulted in recommendations for the Directorate of Consumer Empowerment (DCE) regarding its website structure and efforts to have the content to be more user-focused.
- Philippine secondees proposed an ACCC-style enforcement model for the consideration of their domestic authority.

Integrated Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) considerations into activity design and delivery



¹ Excluding the Competition and Consumer Law newsletter

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About RT4D

The \$48.7million Regional Trade for Development (RT4D) initiative, funded by both the Governments of Australia and New Zealand, assists ASEAN Member States (AMS) in meeting their commitments and realising the advantages offered by the Agreement establishing the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA), and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). RT4D supports AMS in benefitting from an open, free and rules-based trading system.

Through the AANZFTA Implementation Support Program (AISP) and the RCEP Implementation Support Program (RISP), RT4D provides tailored support to enhance the capabilities of ASEAN Member States by strengthening skills, building networks, facilitating policy options and ensuring that trade benefits everyone, including Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), women and people with disabilities.

The Regional Trade for Development Initiative:

- provides ASEAN with access to world class technical expertise to support economic cooperation activities.
- delivers economic cooperation activities, working closely with ASEAN Member States and ASEAN Secretariat.
- has a strong focus on less developed ASEAN economies to ensure that it responds to the different needs and readiness of ASEAN.
- facilitates implementation of the provisions of selected FTAs to support inclusive development outcomes.



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