

## *YOUNG PROFESSIONALS EXIT INTERVIEW*

Ms. Tabitha Gacembui served at the Authority's as a Young Professional for a period of 1 year from January to December 2021 .

Her educational background is in Law. She holds a Bachelor of Law degree, a Diploma in law from the Kenya School of Law and a Master of Law in International Trade and Investments.

In this fourth issue of the Knowledge Hub, Tabitha tells us about her experience at the Authority; including the legal work procedures she was involved in, her experience in the different technical departments, how she carried out research and used information and knowledge resources, and, challenges and lessons learnt during her assignment with the Authority as a Young Professional.

*Enjoy the read!*



# TABITHA GACEMBUI

**W**hat roles did you undertake at the Authority?

The first three months of the attachment, I was attached to the Buyer Power (BP) department. Here, I was engaged in various matters mainly carrying out research especially from a legal angle as this was my area of specialization. Next, I worked at the legal department carrying out various legal responsibilities including attending court hearings. I loved the experience though I felt like the duration was limited and I could have been engaged much more based on my background in Law. I then moved to the Enforcement and Compliance department where I was exposed to assignments that majorly had an economic angle which was a new experience for me. It was my first time learning about issues such as market definitions and market shares. In addition I learnt about sector screenings and was also involved in carried out field research activities.

Lastly, I moved to the Mergers and Acquisitions department where I learnt a lot on Merger issues but more specifically how to look at Mergers from the legal and the economic angle. In that one year, I learnt quite a lot especially in the economics sector which is an area that I wasn't exposed to.

Which resources (hard copy and/or web based) did you first turn to when looking for information to enable you perform your tasks?

When I was at Buyer Power, I relied heavily on previous materials done by the case officers, preliminary reports and any other report just to learn how the department works. The manager also shared with me articles from other jurisdictions.

At the Enforcement and Compliance department, I also relied on the previous works done by the department and other secondary materials that the manger used to share with me like books and articles in soft copy. There are times where I also had one on one discussions with the relevant manager. Basically, my first source of resources in all the departments was what the individual departments had previously done and then the secondary resources would come next.

How often did you use each of the following as you carried out your assignments?

## Document Management System

I used to access it daily.

## Department operated database such as the network folder or files

I would access resources from here monthly.

## Organization policy/ procedures manual or guidelines

During the departmental meetings or any time I would be working on a case, I would make reference just to ensure I'm within the timelines

Tell me, how did you source for information to assist you complete a task where you did not have critical knowledge or information?

This wasn't a major challenge since whenever I would be assigned a case, it would be in collaboration with an economist or a senior officer who would guide me.

Which additional knowledge or skills did you gain during your period at the Authority?

Having come from a legal background, Competition Policy was a key learning area for me where I gained numerous knowledge that I previously didn't have. I was able to improve my skills in report writing and research skills. My presentation skills have also become better though I was also able to improve this at the department level and I didn't get the chance to do it with external stakeholders.

Did you face any constraints in accessing or sharing knowledge?

The systems like the CMS and DMS were a bit intimidating and complicated for me at the beginning, but with time I learnt how to use it comfortably. As a YP, there are some folders you can't access but most of the time the case offices would assist to ensure access to the folders.. The colleagues I encountered were all friendly and ready to help me and this was quite instrumental in ensuring that I easily accessed and shared whatever knowledge or skills I had.

How did you find your way around the CMS and DMS?

We were taken through an orientation program when I joined the Authority however, it still seemed a bit complex. To find my way around whenever I felt challenged, I would usually approach my colleagues to assist.



**In your opinion, which critical knowledge is at risk of being lost in the departments you worked in and what should be done to ensure that this knowledge is accessed and shared?**

I didn't notice any knowledge that was at risk of being lost as most of the processes are well documented and there are platforms that allow for knowledge exchange.

My suggestion would be for the Mergers department to have a data base for previous transactions carried out in the department as this will enable ease in information retrieval.

**What gaps/areas of improvement have you identified in yourself and how do you plan to fill this gap?**

I realized that my focus was so much on legal aspects yet there is a lot to learn from the field of economics and how these two sectors work together. To properly comprehend Competition Policy there is need to understand the economic aspects.

**What do you think the Authority would have done differently to fill this gap?**

The authority should consider having brief sessions where new staff who have a legal background or have a limited economics background are taken through basic or relevant areas of economics before they are assigned cases.

**Which suggestions would you give to encourage the flow of knowledge within the departments you were assigned to?**

May be to reiterate on the need for the case officers or senior officers to work with the YPs or interns whenever they are assigned to a case and guide them.

**Which training and development of knowledge exchange session did you find helpful?**

There was a COMESA training I attended which was helpful to me in understanding more the economic side of the competition policy and the authority's annual training and symposium was also quite useful.

**Which training and development would you have liked or needed that you didn't receive?**

Having come from a legal background, a training on competition economics would have been good just to understand the concept or the meaning of certain terms.

**Do you have additional comments?**

Unfortunately, the time period was short and being assigned to several departments ensures you learn more about competition policy, however this has its pros and cons.

I would like to suggest that the department be reduced to only three to allow a stay of four months in each department, to ensure that the learning process is not rushed. I loved my experience as a YP, I came in without any exposure to economics and being at the Authority has increased my interest in the field hence its an area I'm now willing to expand my knowledge on.

I would like to appreciate the Authority for the opportunity and to thank my colleagues especially the case officers for their support at all times.

**THANK YOU!**

