

COMPETITION POLICIES AND CONSUMER WELFARE

Corporate Strategies and Consumer Prices
in Developing Countries

Edited by **Lahcen Achy**, National Institute of Statistics
and Applied Economics (INSEA), Morocco and
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*'This excellent study is a useful and interesting analysis of how
competition works at ground level for basic products in poorer
countries. As such, it is both a good read and an important contribution to an under-
researched area.'*

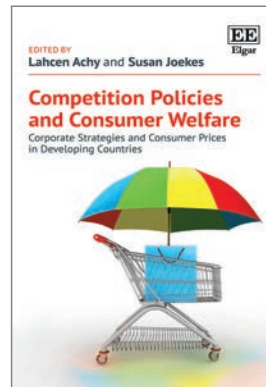
— Allan Fels, University of Melbourne, Australia

The fundamental goal of competition law is to support productivity and innovativeness; in fact, the short-term effect of enforcement actions is often a reduction in product prices. This comprehensive book reports the findings of consumer market studies into a range of goods and services in developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

These country case studies demonstrate the important role that competition authorities can have in assessing the nature of markets and making recommendations to policymakers to improve them. When competition is weak or compromised, extra costs are imposed on consumers. The authors investigate this issue for a wide range of key markets serving consumers individually or collectively, looking also at the hinterland of the distribution chain behind retail sales. They find a pervasive lack of competition in those markets, which not only softens a firms' incentive to improve the efficiency of their operations and the quality of their products, but also reduces the standard of living of consumers, including poor and vulnerable groups. This book concludes by noting the follow-up actions taken in each country in response to the research recommendations.

Graduate students of economics, political science and law will find this book invaluable for its practical case studies, and analysts will find much of interest in the nuanced analysis of markets, policy interventions and reform options. Eminently practical, *Competition Policies and Consumer Welfare* is an ideal resource for competition practitioners and policymakers seeking to improve current competition regimes.

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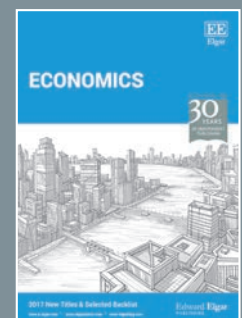
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