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EQUITABLE GROWTH, FINANCE & INSTITUTIONS INSIGHT

Investment Promotion Agency Advocacy for Investment Climate Reform: Good Practice Principles and Case Studies

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Abbreviations

CINDE	Coalición Costarricense de Iniciativas de Desarrollo
EIC	Ethiopian Investment Commission
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FTZ	Free Trade Zone
GMA	Greater Metropolitan Area
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IPA	Investment Promotion Agency
ITC	International Trade Centre
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PPD	Public-Private Dialogue
SSR	State Startup Ranking
TG	Toronto Global
TRBOT	Toronto Region Board of Trade
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WAIPA	World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies



Acknowledgments

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The authors would like to thank World Bank peer reviewers Soujanya Chodavarapu, Senior Private Sector Specialist, and Alejandro Espinosa-Wang, Senior Private Sector Specialist, for their advice and valuable comments.

A particular thanks goes to the senior investment promotion executives in the investment promotion agencies (IPAs) featured in this note that reviewed and provided approval for the inclusion of their good practice case studies, including the Ethiopia Investment Commission, Toronto Global, Invest India, and CINDE (the IPA of Costa Rica). The team is also grateful for review of the country case studies by relevant regional colleagues, including Fantu Farris Mullela and Berkessa Geleta, of the International Finance Corporation (IFC).

This note and the case studies it includes were made possible thanks to the collaboration between the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA) and the World Bank Group, which designed the competition and produced the [2021 Awards for Strengthening IPA Advocacy Services](#). The authors would like to thank the joint team that led the competition, and Ahmed Omic in particular for having been part of the joint WAIPA-World Bank team which worked on the 2021 Awards, and for making the submissions available to the authors with the permission of the IPAs involved.

Lastly, thanks to Nick Younes for editing support and Bruna Sofia Simoes for design and production services.

This publication was made possible through the financial support of the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.



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Executive Summary

Investment promotion agencies (IPAs) use advocacy services to help their countries improve the quantity and quality of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) they can attract, retain, and grow in the future. Successful IPA advocacy persuades governments to use targeted public reforms, expenditures, services, and convening power to attract, retain, and expand FDI in greater quantities and with higher positive development impact. This instructive note aims to present IPAs and their governments with insights on conducting advocacy effectively by providing an overview of key principles for advocacy and defining the systematic process involved in IPA advocacy services. The three steps in this process are 1) issue identification, 2) solution formulation, and 3) advocating reform adoption and implementation.

This note also provides four illustrative case studies of IPAs that successfully advocated key investment climate enhancing reforms, using information collected from among the winners and other distinguished entrants of the [2021 Awards for Strengthening IPA Advocacy Services](#), jointly held by the World Bank Group (WBG) and the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies. Each illustrative case study is structured to showcase the manner in which the IPA undertook these three steps.

The first three are examples of proactive advocacy driven by the strategic objective of attracting new FDI to sectors believed to be competitive but underperforming. The Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC) found it could immediately unlock new sectors with a single, high-level reform. Toronto Global used institutionalized, high-level dialogue to facilitate a broad reimagining of its economic future. And the Indian national IPA found a way to motivate most of the country's subnational governments to reform themselves in support of start-ups. The fourth case, that of Costa Rica's CINDE, is an example of responsive advocacy, whereby the IPA's standing mechanisms for investor issue intake led to a regulatory reform during the COVID-19 pandemic, which allowed established investors to quickly shift to remote work. While the three steps of issue identification, solution formulation, and advocacy can be seen in each case, their cases differ substantially in terms of the IPAs' objectives, their starting circumstances, and how these differences led each IPA to a unique solution offering both high impact to, and importance for its location.



Introduction

The World Bank Group's (WBG's) Comprehensive Investor Services Framework outlines four categories of investment promotion services: marketing, information, assistance, and advocacy.¹ The first three are investor-facing services, equivalent to the salesmanship and customer service that private firms use to win, facilitate, and retain business. IPAs use these services to market their locations, making investors aware of a given location's superiority over alternative locales for particular sectors and business functions. Imbued with an IPA's local knowledge and connections, the services also make it easier for investors to navigate start-up and operations in the unfamiliar settings that often confront foreign investment. WBG found that around 90 percent of responding multinational companies considered at least one IPA service to be important or critically important, and that a given IPA's role in improving the business environment (what we refer to as advocacy) was the most-valued IPA service.²

Marketing, information, and assistance help to promote a location as it is, but a location's particular advantages and disadvantages presently limit the types and numbers of FDI projects that it can attract, retain, and grow. Advocacy, on the other hand, is the means by which IPAs help their countries to improve the quantity and quality of FDI they hope to attract, retain, and grow in the future. At its best, advocacy persuades officials to take actions likely to create new potential for the two high-level IPA objectives of:

1. **Better retention and expansion of existing investors** for whom new or unexpected obstacles threaten continued operations or the ability to grow; and
2. **Attraction of new investors and better kinds of investment** than the current investment ecosystem can entice or sustain—as not all forms of FDI contribute equally to growth and transformation with large differences in impacts across sectors³—as well as attracting and enabling FDI in sustainable sectors, a key development priority for many countries.

In addition to investment climate reform, successful advocacy has the added benefit of strengthening the IPA's other services. Its well-connected advocates are better positioned to secure information and assistance from partners and are themselves a selling point that markets

1. Heilbron, Armando, and Yago Aranda-Larrey. 2020. *Strengthening Service Delivery of Investment Promotion Agencies: The Comprehensive Investor Services Framework*. Finance, Competitiveness and Innovation in Focus. Washington, DC: World Bank. doi: [10.1596/33498](https://doi.org/10.1596/33498)

2. Heilbron, Armando, and Hania Kronfol. 2020. "Increasing the Development Impact of Investment Promotion Agencies." *Global Investment Competitiveness Report 2019/2020*. Washington, DC: World Bank. doi: [10.1596/978-1-4648-1536-2_ch5](https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-1536-2_ch5)

3. Alfaro, Laura, and Andrew Charlton. 2007. "Growth and the Quality of Foreign Direct Investment: Is All FDI Equal?" *SSRN Electronic Journal*. doi: [10.2139/ssrn.981163](https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.981163)

the location. The term investment ecosystem refers to all local characteristics that affect the ease, or difficulty, of conducting business in a given locale. Such characteristics include:

- Macroeconomic factors like political and economic stability and risks, economic growth, exchanges rates, inflation, tax rates, and openness to FDI and trade.
- Market-related factors, such as the size and growth rates of the consumer market and the sectoral composition of activities in the market.
- Laws, regulations, and their public administration with respect to companies, banking and finance, private investment, contracts, commerce, real estate, construction, labor and immigration, international trade, and taxes, among others.
- Infrastructure, which is provided by government, the private sector, or some combination of the two and which is dependent on public policy, expenditure, services, administration, and regulation. This includes power, water, waste, telecommunications, and transportation and logistics.
- Availability and quality of productive inputs and enabling services, such as those related to land, workforce, suppliers, and innovation and technology. Even though most of these factors are privately provided, all can benefit from an array of government support, for example, through the creation of special economic zones, workforce education programs, SME development services, and funding for research.
- Scale, scope, quality, and overall ambition of public-private collaboration and coordination on these points.

Successful IPA advocacy persuades governments to use targeted public reforms, expenditures, services, and convening power to attract, retain, and expand FDI in greater quantities and with higher positive development impact. In this way, a good advocate is both a champion of investors and of national development objectives, bridging a public-private gap in a way that is valuable to both sides.

Many laws establishing national IPAs include the task of advising the government on how to improve the investment ecosystem among the IPAs' assigned functions. This demonstrates governments' appreciation of and need for investor-friendly perspectives that support continual improvement in the quest for more and better FDI. Investors, too, highly value investment ecosystem advocacy. WBG's 2019 Global Investment Competitiveness Survey reports that investors consider advocacy to be the most important service offered by IPAs.⁴

IPAs advocate on behalf of investors. This advocacy is informed by the pressures faced by investors and as such, IPAs provide a service to them at large. However, unlike an IPA's other services, its advocacy is government-facing. Advocacy is often complicated by the involvement of multiple stakeholders with varied interests and levels of commitment. Advocacy can also become politically charged, as it often involves difficult reforms or controversial expenditures. As such, it requires a skill set very different from those demanded by other IPA services. This can be even more challenging for IPAs that have mixed regulatory-promotional mandates, as this places them in the incompatible, dual role of regulating investors while also championing their investment.⁵ Consequently, many IPAs may struggle in their capacity as advocates. According to the WAIPA 2019 survey of IPAs, 35 percent of those surveyed recognize that they fail to engage in advocacy.⁶

For these reasons, this note aims to present IPAs and their governments with insights into effective advocacy. Section 2 presents key principles for effective advocacy and describes a simple but systematic process for its execution. Section 3 illustrates the implementation of this process with several case studies. These case studies have been selected from among the winners and other distinguished entrants of the [2021 Awards for Strengthening IPA Advocacy Services](#), jointly held by the WBG and the WAIPA.

4. Heilbron and Kronfol (2020)

5. Whyte, Robert, Celia Ortega Sotes, and Carlos Roberto Griffin. 2011. *Investment Regulation and Promotion: Can They Coexist in One Body?* Investment Climate In Practice. Washington, DC: World Bank. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/832851474483734837/Investment-regulation-and-promotion-can-they-coexist-in-one-body>

6. WAIPA. 2019. *Overview of Investment Promotion: Report of the Findings from the WAIPA Annual Survey of 2018*. Geneva: WAIPA. <https://waipa.org/waipa-content/uploads/Overview-of-Investment-Promotion-2019.pdf>



Key principles and a systematic process for effective advocacy

2.1 Key principles underlying effective advocacy

To be maximally effective, advocacy should be **strategic**, **systematic**, and held **accountable**.

The operations of any public IPA should be guided by a strategy to generate positive development impacts through activities and tools tailored to target investors for specific objectives.⁷ Advocacy is one of these tools. In the WBG’s 2017 global IPA survey, 95 percent of respondents said they engaged in “analysis or policy advocacy to improve the investment climate”—more than for any other single activity. The WBG’s operational experience indicates that this work may be weighted more heavily toward analysis than to proposing specific remedies or advocating their adoption and implementation. Frequently, IPA advocacy is limited to participation in reform initiatives led by other offices (“contributory advocacy”) or to advocacy in response to issues raised by individual investors (“responsive advocacy”). These are important channels for advocacy, but they are not sufficient, in that none are stimulated by the IPA’s own strategic objectives.

When undertaken strategically, advocacy will be proactive and have clear, quantified, target outcomes—ones derived from the overarching objectives and priority sectors of the IPA’s institutional strategy (“proactive advocacy”). This advocacy may be sector-targeted, aimed at realizing specific development outcomes, or otherwise designed to further the IPA’s strategic goals. Yet, even proactive advocacy cannot single-handedly address critical issues, if these issues are not anticipated in the IPA’s strategy.

Therefore, the IPAs with the most effective advocacy leverage their influence via all three of these channels:

1. **Proactive:** Advocacy in the proactive pursuit of strategic objectives (See Sections 3.1-3.3 for the cases of the Ethiopian Investment Commission, Toronto Global, and Invest India.)
2. **Responsive:** Advocacy in responsive handling of issues raised by investors and other investment ecosystem stakeholders (See Section 3.4 for the case of CINDE.)
3. **Contributory:** Advocacy through the contribution of insight and clout to the reform initiatives of others by, for example, sitting on a presidential committee for business environment reform.

7. Sawaqed, Lina, and Carlos Griffin. 2022 *Planning for Success: Strategies of Investment Promotion Agencies*. Equitable Growth, Finance & Institutions Insight. Washington, DC: World Bank.

The first three case studies presented in Section 3—the gold, silver, and bronze winners of the *2021 Awards for Strengthening IPA Services*—are all examples of proactive advocacy. The fourth and final case study is an example of responsive advocacy.

Advocacy outcomes can take months or, more typically, years to materialize, and an effective advocate is likely to be working on several issues simultaneously. This means an IPA’s advocacy must be both sustained, and remain coherent, over time. This is a complex undertaking, which requires systematic management. A good advocacy management system consists of:

- A combination of **parts** forming a complex whole, including personnel, organization, tools such as investor and stakeholder databases and questionnaires, and processes that rationalize the identification of issues and decisions over which to pursue;
- A coordinated **plan** with clearly articulated steps, timeframes, and responsible parties, both for working on individual issues and for managing an overall agenda of prioritized issues; and
- Consistent **implementation** of the plan, facilitated by tools, such as checklists, flowcharts, and customer relationship or process management software.

This is complex and not sufficiently understood by many IPAs themselves, let alone the offices tasked with holding those IPAs accountable. As will be discussed in Section 2.4,

persistent, sophisticated, multi-pronged follow-up is necessary for any advocacy project to succeed and sustain successes. When an IPA is not held strictly accountable for setting and meeting its objectives, it is easy for an IPA to neglect this taxing aspect of advocacy work. Many IPAs will only issue polite recommendations for reform without advocating them, and there is rarely a strong expectation of actual reform even from individual investors raising issues, irrespective of accountability. Ensuring full and effective advocacy requires good supervision. An IPA with a mixed public-private board of directors is best suited to holding advocates accountable for their outcomes.⁸ As the office with primary responsibility for holding the IPA accountable (for example, line ministry or head of government) may itself be an object of the IPA’s advocacy, the responsibility for holding the IPA to account for its performance as an advocate shifts more toward its board of directors. Yet, as the board itself is also likely to have members selected precisely for their representation of other investment-related government offices, these too may be the object of the IPA’s advocacy, and the board’s private sector representation therefore becomes even more crucial to driving advocacy and demanding outcome targets be met.

The optimal design for a system of accountability with respect to an IPA’s advocacy depends on its objectives and local circumstances. However, key principles apply to any IPA, as outlined in Figure 1, and three essential steps for effective advocacy may therefore be generalized, as seen in Figure 2.



Figure 1. Key principles underlying effective advocacy

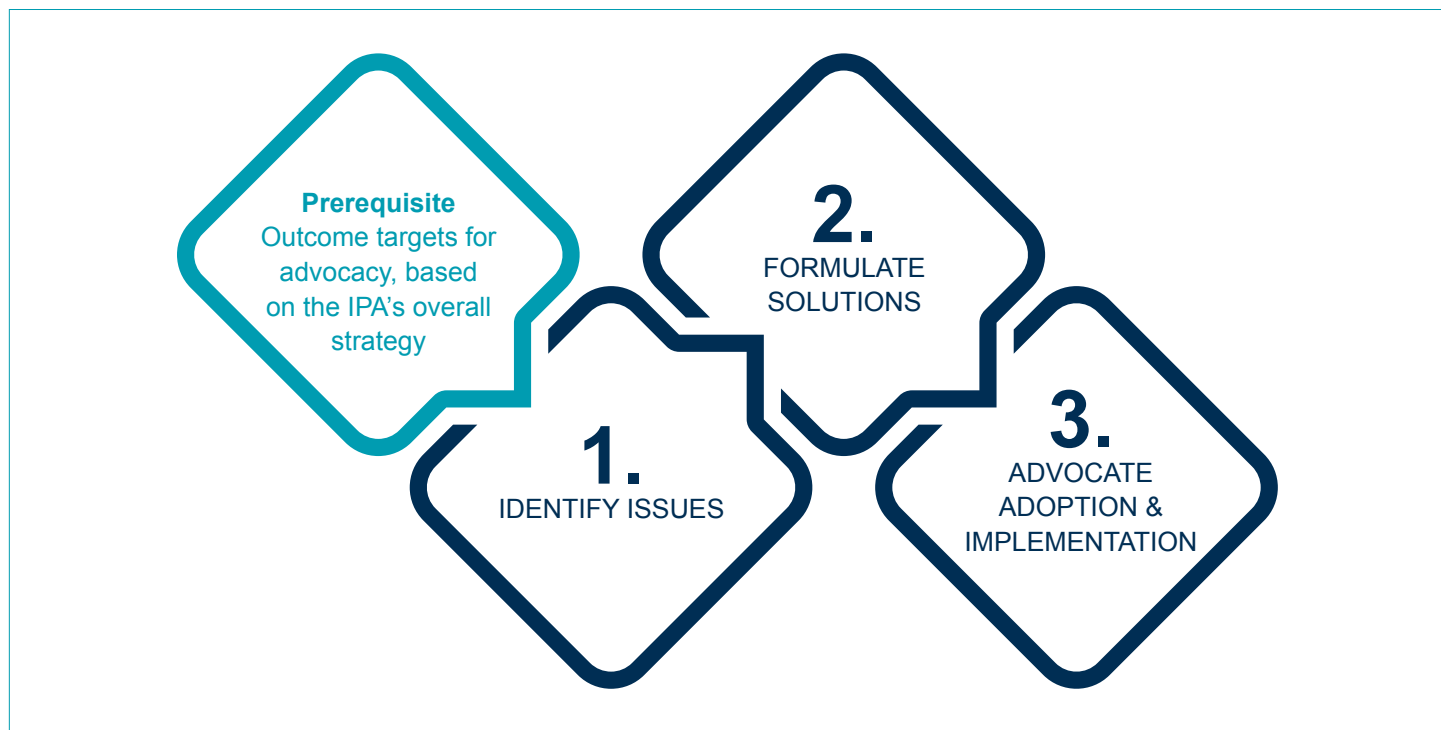


8. Morisset, Jacques. 2003. *Does a Country Need a Promotion Agency to Attract Foreign Direct Investment: A Small Analytical Model Applied to 58 Countries*. Policy Research Working Paper 3028. World Bank, Washington, DC. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/18230>

Where the key principles above are institutionalized, advocacy is more likely to take root as an integral part of an IPA's work. Where they are not institutionalized, the IPA staff members tasked with advocacy may still accomplish much alone by following the three steps to systematic advocacy presented in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Three steps to systematic advocacy



The single verb “advocate” belies the multiple steps its successful application requires. For an IPA to improve the investment ecosystem, it must identify problems, formulate solutions, and persistently advocate their adoption and implementation. These are three distinct steps, each with its own skill and tool requirements. Each step may be shared among multiple staff members internally and requires the involvement of many actors, some external to the IPA.

2.2 Issue identification

Sources for issue identification. The issues faced by investors vary greatly—by sector, business activity, market, subnational location, factor intensities, and any number of firm characteristics that interact in various ways with the

different elements of an investment ecosystem. The best sources for information on issues impeding investment, as well as on proposals for remedies and a sense of the likely impact on the investment ecosystem, are investors themselves. Established mechanisms for issue intake, such as those of a formal investor grievance-handling mechanism (for example, an investment ombudsman’s office), are useful sources. Studies also show that strong IPA advocates tend to interact frequently with the private sector, either directly (for example, through aftercare) or through surveys, which often allows them to identify issues.⁹ Yet, while investors may render individual issues with great detail and sensitivity, each investor may only provide a very narrow piece of the national picture. Stakeholders with a high-level view, such as chambers of commerce, may give a more comprehensive view of the issues afflicting an investment ecosystem but with correspondingly sparser detail with respect to the

9. de Crombrugghe, Alexandre. 2019. *Supporting Investment Climate Reforms through Policy Advocacy*. OECD Investment Insights. Paris: OECD. <https://www.oecd.org/daf/inv/investment-policy/Supporting-investment-climate-reforms-through-policy-advocacy.pdf>

ground-level effect on each investor or the impact a given remedy may produce. Somewhere in between, for example, a government office (for example, ministries of agriculture, energy, ICT) or international organization dedicated to the development of particular sectors (for example, World Bank, IFC, UNCTAD, OECD, UNIDO, FAO, ITC), one can expect medium breadth but richer detail on sector-specific issues and their impacts. These reports typically have the added benefit of expert recommendations for remedies and, occasionally, the FDI outcomes which might be expected from them.

A balance must be struck between collecting precise knowledge of particular issues and comprehending the full breadth of investment ecosystem-wide issues. Such a balance has three important implications for an IPA and its government:

1. Third-party analyses of investment ecosystem issues and subsequent recommendations tend to be based on conformity to international best practices without judging their suitability for the particular government's development objectives.
2. No matter how expert or well-meaning, a single source of information cannot simultaneously provide the depth and breadth needed for a full picture of an investment ecosystem.
3. The IPA, as the connector between investors and governments, and the lead body for investment ecosystem advocacy, is best positioned to gather the analytical pieces needed to compile a full picture of the ecosystem and process analyses and recommendations for maximization of the government's development objectives.

Therefore, IPAs need to consult and collect information from a diversity of sources chosen for their knowledge of the IPA's priority sectors, some of which may be well established and some of which may be aspirational. Although there is likely overlap, the issues impeding the retention and expansion of established FDI may be fundamentally different from those impeding the attraction of new FDI.

To adequately understand and address issues, it is not enough to identify an investor's general complaint. Rather, advocates must identify the issue's root causes, the mechanisms by which this issue proceeds from its root cause to affect investors, and the downstream consequences it has once reaching the individual investor. For example, "Customs

procedures are too slow" is merely a symptom, and this brief formulation of the issue does not illuminate the root cause(s) of the problem. That scarcity of detail and lack of depth then serves to hamper IPAs when they attempt to formulate appropriate and effective solutions. The root causes of this example issue might include the existence of an obsolete customs infrastructure built to accommodate much lower trade volumes, the limited availability of customs officers, or customs officers inadequately trained with regard to the application of tariff codes. Each of these causes implies a different solution.

Understanding issue impact. Issue identification also requires a degree of impact identification. "Customs procedures are too slow" does not provide any information on how much time is lost by adherence to them or the impact they have on a given business's bottom line. This makes it difficult to determine the relative importance of the issue and whether it should be prioritized above others for resolution. A more useful characterization might be "Export procedures at Port X are four days longer than the regional average and eight days longer than the regional leader. For each day shaved from export procedure times, the location's fruit exporters (HS0803-HS0810) would save an estimated \$3 million in spoilage and be more competitive in premium markets." The monetary value detailed in this statement of the issue is much more likely to give stakeholders a sense of importance and move them to urgent action. The mechanism describing how customs leads to a particular loss (in this example, spoilage and slowness to market relative to competitors) allows advocates and their partners to conceive of more solutions, such as cold storage at ports and focusing customs reforms on capacity building surrounding phytosanitary procedures.

Collection and management tools. Typical issue collection methods for established investors include a combination of periodic surveys, regular direct contact through the IPA's aftercare work, public-private dialogue (PPD) forums, the grievance-handling mechanism, and other business-to-government feedback loops. However, discerning impediments to the attraction of investors in aspirational sectors is more difficult, as the IPA has little to no relationship with investors who have not inquired about or visited the location. Sector studies from research organizations and benchmarking studies from consulting firms can provide IPAs with a good understanding of what is driving FDI to

other locations and how the IPA's location compares in terms of the driving factors. Issues in aspirational sectors can also be explored through interviews or questionnaires circulated to potential investors during an IPA's targeted promotional campaign or after an investor contacts the IPA with an inquiry. However, this information may be scant. Surveys of target investors might also be conducted in target markets,

particularly where the IPA can rely on the facilitation of an overseas office or a partner in government, such as a diplomatic mission.

The tools needed for information collection are outlined in Figure 3.

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Figure 3. Outline of necessary tools for information collection

- 1) An internally unified **set of investment ecosystem topics and definitions**;
- 2) **A database of existing and targeted investors**;
- 3) **Personnel charged with implementation and supervision** of advocacy plans, questionnaires, and means of delivery in person or online (for example, Survey Monkey, Google Forms);
- 4) **Standard operating procedures for seeking and recording inputs** about the ecosystem when contacting investors;
- 5) **Partnerships** with similarly interested stakeholders (for example, sector associations, office of an investment ombudsman, chambers of commerce, binational chambers) to coordinate information collection and the other advocacy steps;
- 6) **A schedule for recurrent fact-finding** (for example, surveys, PPD meetings, on the sidelines of informational or matchmaking events);
- 7) **A customer relationship management software (CRM)**. A CRM is normally used to record issues raised by individual investors and may sometimes be used to analyze them in aggregate, which requires agreement among IPA managers and partners on what information is to be tracked and how it is to be reported.

Prioritization and agenda-setting. An IPA's limited time and resources will not allow it to fully pursue resolution of all issues simultaneously, and it should therefore pursue the issues of greatest consequence to its own strategic objectives. Easily resolved, high-impact issues are the best place to start advocacy. As impact and/or ease of resolution decrease so would an issue's priority level. An annual IPA plan to advocate solutions could only include some top number of issues. This is the IPA's "advocacy agenda." Issues may be added to or dropped from the agenda as advocacy advances and priorities or circumstances change, but at any given moment the advocacy agenda gives a

full sense of everything the IPA wants to achieve through its activity. This helps advocates and their partners find synergies across issues, when formulating solutions and advocating them.

When asked to name their issues, investors may present a long list, but not all items on that list will be of equal consequence for them. Therefore, an IPA's issue identification should establish a baseline of investors' issues today, the expected situation if the given issues are not resolved, and the expected situation if they are resolved. This leads us to a set of questions as outlined in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Key questions for issue identification and prioritization

<p>1. Type of firm:</p> <p>What sector/ business activity is your firm in?</p>	<p>2. Firm’s local impact:</p> <p>What has been your (i) capital expenditure, (ii) annual revenue, (iii) number of employees, (iv) annual export value, and (v) value of domestically procured inputs?</p>	<p>3. Issues (root causes):</p> <p>What issues are impeding your business? How (please quantify)?</p>	<p>4. Firm’s present trajectory:</p> <p>Assuming the issue remains unchanged, in five years do you expect your business to have (i) expanded, (ii) remained more or less stable, (iii) shrunk, or (iv) been completely divested?</p>	<p>5. Anticipated effects of issue resolution:</p> <p>If the issue were resolved to your complete satisfaction, how would that affect the types of local impacts listed in Question 2, if at all? How would it affect your trajectory, if at all?</p>
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These questions are keyed to individual firms but may be adapted for representatives of larger groupings, such as sector associations or subnational authorities.

2.3 Solution formulation

Each issue may have many possible solutions, so this note cannot offer a comprehensive typology of solutions. Instead, it provides observations on how solutions tend to vary when (i) they emanate from proactive advocacy versus responsive advocacy, and (ii) they are aimed not at specific issues but at the business environment more generally.

Tailored solutions arising from the proactive approach. The issue identification described in 2.2 is IPA-driven, deliberate, and comprehensive. It is designed to identify root causes of investment ecosystem issues and quantify their impacts. This allows the IPA to guide stakeholders through a process of articulating what the satisfactorily-resolved situation would look like and then formulating options for an action or set of actions meant to achieve the contemplated resolution. To continue the example of slow customs clearance from Section 2.2, identifying limited staff and infrastructure capacities at border crossings as a root cause allows the formulation of targeted solutions, such as adopting the UN’s Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA), adding two lanes for commercial vehicles at Border Crossing X and corresponding staff, and shifting from

entry-by-entry reviews to account-based reviews. This is an idealized process best suited to the proactive approach.

Although the IPA may frame the debate with studies and position papers, the process is highly consultative. The IPA presents issue analysis and any preliminary list of solution options arising from the analysis to the anticipated beneficiaries of the resolution and the actors whose cooperation would be needed to achieve resolution. The IPA may lend impetus and provide input to the formulation of the final solution, but the details of the solution are ideally agreed by enactors and beneficiaries. In this way, solutions are more likely to be enacted and have their intended effect with a minimum of opposition and unexpected obstacles. These discussions may be held with all stakeholders at one time in one place (synchronously), or the IPA may consult them in turn (asynchronously).

With adequately high-level stakeholder representation, the direct debate enabled by synchronous consultations is most efficient. In fact, issue identification and solution formulation can sometimes be achieved at a single event. High-level, synchronous consultations may reveal issues and give quick endorsement to the outline of a solution, before turning the details over to a lower-level working group. These high-level consultations may be arranged ad hoc, but with many issues to address and the recurring need for high-level consultations, these meetings may be more reliably arranged as part of a standing public-private dialogue platform, with the IPA’s advocacy agenda feeding into it.¹⁰

10. Reichel, Marc, Robert Whyte, and Armando Heilbron. 2022. *High-level Structures Supporting the Institutional Framework for Foreign Direct Investment Promotion*. Equitable Growth, Finance & Institutions Insight. Washington DC: World Bank.

When logistics do not permit synchronous consultations or when issues are of interest only to narrower audiences, asynchronous consultations may be more useful, as the IPA processes proposals, objections, and counterproposals one bilateral or small multilateral meeting at a time. The IPA has a larger responsibility in this case, as shepherd to the evolving solution and the only actor with a full, current view of a solution's journey to adoption. This is especially important considering that stakeholder expressions of buy-in made to the IPA bilaterally or at a lower level may have less weight than expressions made publicly.

In cases where there are no public-sector champions of reform or where the solution is very clear, the IPA may find it especially practical to formulate the solution itself, without stakeholder consultation. In these cases, it may be particularly helpful for the IPA to arm itself with a succinct position paper laying out the solution(s) with ample use of objective figures and citations from well-respected sources.

Stakeholder-raised issues with preconceived solutions.

When an IPA receives an issue identified by others, it is likely to be less refined and often comes with some expectation of a particular solution. A special economic zone authority, for example, may complain that “We need better incentives to attract more tenants.” This suggests the location is not generally feasible in its own right, that the most important difference between it and its competitor locations is the incentives offered, that some adjustment to the incentive regime will attract previously unattainable FDI inflows, that the benefits of this additional FDI will outweigh the cost of the incentives (particularly as afforded to companies which would have come without the incentives), and that the advantage gained through these new incentives will be sustainable. This is a large array of suppositions. Although some may be astute, if any are incorrect, they can lead to suboptimal, or even erroneous, “solutions.” Before accepting such a preconceived solution wholesale, the IPA should subject it to the same intellectual scrutiny as with an issue it has identified itself.

Pushing back on a preconceived solution can be difficult for an IPA, especially when it comes from a line ministry or head of government's office. However, it is necessary if the IPA is to serve as a technical expert and knowledge resource for the investment ecosystem, and thereby guide other stakeholders to better collective results, rather than simply amplifying the

preferences of a supervising office that may or may not be equipped to balance issue analysis and the formulation of nationally optimal solutions. At a minimum, this requires that the IPA personnel in contact with that office understand well the principles laid out in this note, are able to get their counterparts to search jointly for root causes and their most effective solutions, and have the authority within the IPA to do so.

Cross-cutting solutions to non-specific issues. There are times when a solution can be identified without a specific issue. Simple improvements in government efficiency, for example streamlining government procedures for business, may have broad, if difficult-to-measure, benefits to the general business community, with little to no downside. This is easily understood as facilitating most investment projects without the analytical rigor of a cost-benefit analysis.

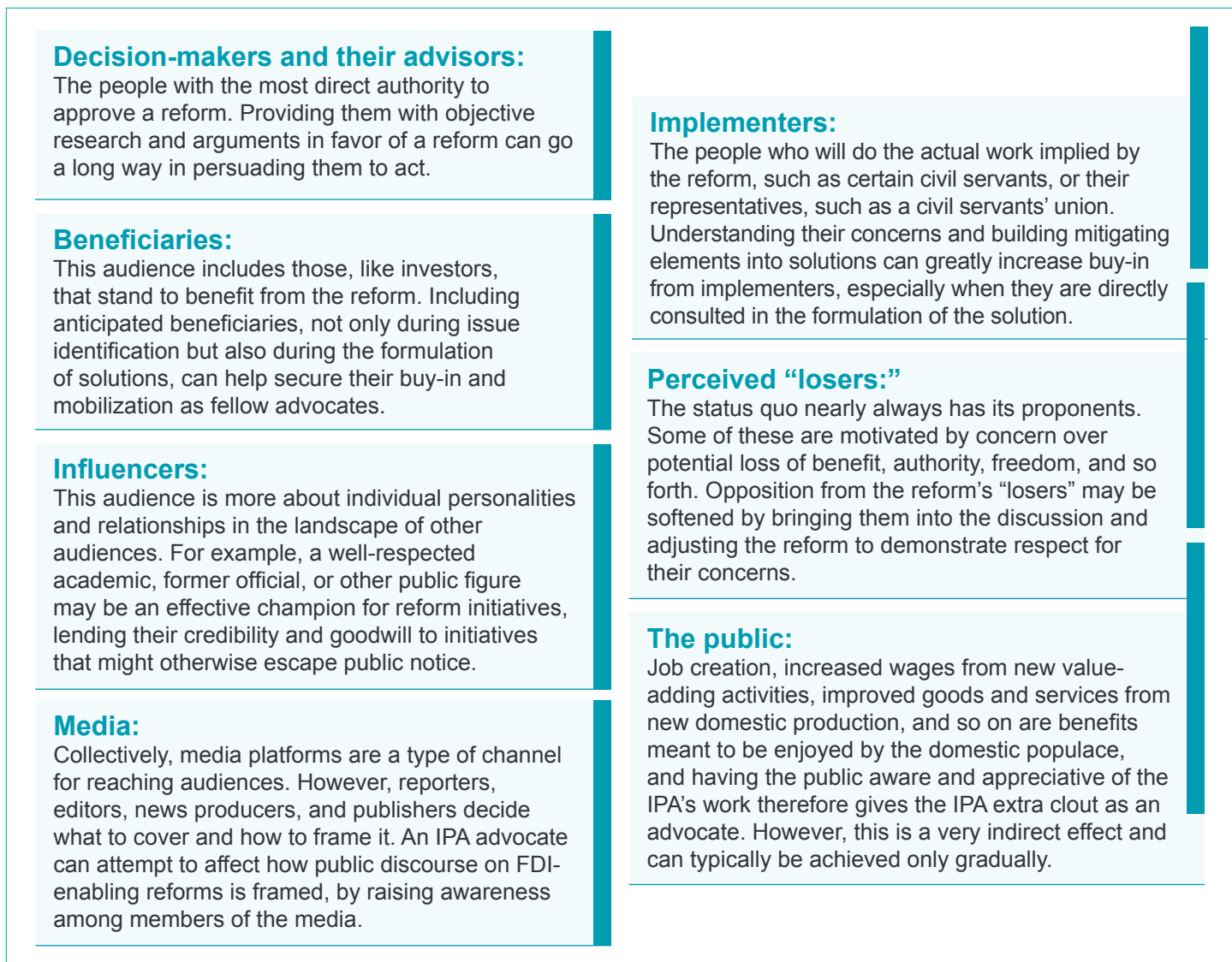
2.4 Advocating adoption and implementation

Effective advocacy is fundamentally project management for a political environment. It may be required not just for adoption of measures but, afterwards, to ensure that measures are implemented as intended and with the anticipated effect. It requires a plan with intermediate steps, key decision-makers and implementers, messaging content, communication channels, allies to be mobilized, and material requirements. It designates responsible parties and timeframes for the steps individually and collectively.

The IPA, as the “project manager,” designs this roadmap and shepherds stakeholders through its stages. If unexpected obstacles arise or targets are missed, the IPA takes note and works with partners to get the roadmap back on track. The IPA can do this alone or as one advocate among several working in coordination. These alliances may vary by issue, but the more an IPA's advocacy is backed by an influential coalition, the easier it becomes to win even broader support.

The audiences for advocacy are, therefore, many and varied. Because of this diverse audience, the IPA's objectives and approaches with respect to each can vary greatly. Some typical audiences and objectives for advocacy with each are outlined in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Common audiences for advocacy and some typical objectives with each



A successful plan takes full account of typical obstacles, such as institutional inertia, vested interests, resource and capacity constraints, reluctance of stakeholders to deal with the work implied by reforms, and even the dynamics of corruption. This demands a high level of diplomatic skill, to sympathize with the objects of one’s advocacy, to help them find ways to “yes,” to engage others as allies, and to build political capital for the long run by ensuring that target outcomes have a shared value and by sharing credit for their achievement.

As an IPA’s advocates are typically at work on multiple issues simultaneously, the IPA may benefit from a master plan-of-plans to create synergies and streamline its work. For example, a semiannual, high-level PPD forum may be the ideal place to quickly present a number of issues, gather diverse inputs

on solutions, and accomplish weeks’ worth of advocacy all at once. In the same way that pre-existing forums can facilitate advocacy on multiple tracks simultaneously, so too can pre-existing relationships. A shared history of joint action for mutual benefit is an excellent lubricant for the otherwise slowly-turning gears of awareness-raising and consensus-building. The longer-standing, stronger, and better institutionalized a relationship, the less time and effort are needed to achieve shared understanding of issues and agreement of solutions. Although advocacy can be conducted on an ad hoc basis, it is more effective and better sustained through clear institutional arrangements and fixed mechanisms. There is no template for institutional arrangements into which all countries should or can fit. Rather a good IPA advocate seeks to understand the institutional and political environment in which they are working

and advocate the investment climate reform partnerships and mechanisms to fit.

For this reason, an IPA's work should be viewed as having two distinct tracks: direct and indirect. The direct track advances solutions for specific issues. The indirect track advances relationships and resources, so that later advocacy can be made more effective. Advocacy should have explicit, quantitative objectives, whose achievement serves to establish an impact narrative that the advocates and their partners can use to demonstrate success and build further support for future advocacy.





Illustrative cases from the 2021 Awards for Strengthening IPA Advocacy Services

Of the four cases that follow, the first three come from the IPAs which placed in the top three spots in the competition: Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC), Toronto Global, and Invest India. All are examples of proactive advocacy driven by the strategic objective to attract new FDI in sectors believed to be competitive but underperforming. While the three steps of issue identification, solution formulation, and advocacy can be seen in each case, their cases differ substantially in terms of the IPAs' objectives, their starting circumstances, and how these led each IPA to a unique solution of high impact and importance to its location. EIC found it could immediately unlock new sectors with a single, high-level reform. Toronto Global used regular, institutionalized, high-level dialogue to facilitate a broad reimagining of its economic future. In India the national IPA found a way to motivate most of the country's subnational governments to reform themselves in support of start-ups.

The fourth case, that of Costa Rica's CINDE is an excellent example of responsive advocacy, whereby the IPA's standing mechanisms for investor issue intake led to a regulatory reform during the COVID-19 pandemic, which allowed established investors to quickly shift to remote work.

**2021
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**STRENGTHENING
IPA ADVOCACY SERVICES**



3.1 Ethiopian Investment Commission: Unlocking new sectors for FDI



[Ethiopian Investment Commission's Advocacy Award Video](#)

CONTEXT

From 2004 to 2017, Ethiopia experienced rapid GDP growth with annual rates ranging from 9 percent to 14 percent. FDI inflows also expanded greatly during this period from an annual average of \$345 million in the 2004-2012 period to \$1.9 billion in 2013-15 and an impressive \$4.1 billion in 2016-2017. Between 2012 and 2017, Ethiopia witnessed a 14-fold increase in annual FDI inflows, and by 2017 Ethiopia had emerged as an important FDI destination with a growing industrial base and myriad opportunities for infrastructure development.¹¹ Yet, as FDI inflows had increased, the country's evolving regulatory environment had become relatively more difficult. Broadening interest from foreign investors was meeting an increasingly challenging environment for business entry and operation. In 2018, Ethiopia's GDP growth fell to 6.8 percent, the lowest since a 2003 recession, and annual FDI inflows fell 18 percent, the first substantial decline since the 2012-2017 boom.

ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

In 2019, following these declines, the Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC), the country's lead agency for investment promotion, sought to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the country's obstacles to business entry and operation. During a six-month period, EIC undertook seven diagnostic and benchmarking studies to see how the country's investment policy and sector regulation compared to international best

practices. The diagnostic studies were undertaken in partnership with the World Bank and IFC, leveraging various global reports of the WBG, UNCTAD and ITC and benchmarking studies of 10 "best-performing countries" as comparators.

This allowed EIC to leverage vast global technical expertise in its efforts to conduct issue identification. This approach had two key benefits. The issue analysis came with recommended solutions, and both the analysis and recommendations had inherent credibility as the products of internationally recognized, third-party experts.

One critical issue that emerged from all seven studies was Ethiopia's approach to setting restrictions on the sectors open to foreign investment. Most countries forbid FDI in some sectors for security reasons (for example, nuclear energy, arms manufacturing), to protect domestic constituents from competition, or because they are deemed the exclusive purview of the government. Where the rules are transparent and administered predictably, investors in unrestricted sectors know they can proceed without government objection, and investors in restricted sectors do not need to waste time and money to discover this fact. To achieve this, international best practice argues for the use of a "negative list," whereby all forbidden sectors are explicitly stated, and anything not on the list is permitted by default. Ethiopia, on the other hand, was using a "positive list," whereby only those sectors explicitly stated were permitted by default, and anything else required project screening and special permission, a process which investors had found to be opaque and unpredictable. The number and variety of Ethiopian sectors piquing investor interest were growing, but the government's positive-list approach was impeding conversion of that interest into potentially lucrative projects.

Several other issues were highlighted across the analyses, including:

- A cumbersome visa regime
- The number of onerous start-up procedures
- Weak coordination between the federal and regional governments
- Gaps in intellectual property protections
- The absence of private-sector representation on the Ethiopian Investment Board (EIB), the prime minister-chaired policy and supervisory body overseeing EIC and implementation of the national investment law
- An undefined process for investor grievance handling

11. Data on FDI inflows from UNCTADstat database, UNCTAD, Geneva. <https://unctadstat.unctad.org/wds/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=96740>

SOLUTION FORMULATION

For ease of consumption, EIC consolidated the findings of the seven reports into two in-depth, technical reports, one on the investment administration process and another on options for opening more sectors to investment. To process these assessments, get at root causes, and formulate the most appropriate solutions for Ethiopia, EIC established a technical working group of its staff and other experts.

Among the many potential solutions, it was clear that the shift from positive listing to negative listing would require a change in the law. Although many of the other reforms might be achieved by other means, a legal change would be more permanent.

The working group proposed that multiple solutions be addressed in a single legal change. Namely:

- Eliminating the minimum capital requirement for reinvestment in any business
- Establishing a coordination platform for the federal and subnational governments
- Granting a 5-year multiple entry visa for investors
- Granting work permits to cohabitating spouses of investors
- Recognizing intellectual property rights as investments
- Expanding the number of services offered through EIC's one-stop shop
- Adding private sector representatives to the Ethiopian Investment Board

From these, one can see that the natures of issues themselves limit the types of solutions that are possible. For example, some issues:

- Have one solution state, as when switching from a positive listing policy to a negative listing policy
- Have one solution but in degrees, such as putting private sector representatives on the EIB or granting work permits to spouses.
 - The number of representatives and the number of years may be set at different levels, so the government will wish to choose a number that satisfies complaints but still balances any competing interests. For example, 50 percent of EIB seats may go to the private sector but not 100, and spouses may get five-year work permits but not permanent work rights. Five years may be on the longer side, by international comparison, but matches the number of years given to investors themselves.
- Are non-specific and multifaceted, such as “lack of coordination among different levels of government,” which lend themselves to non-specific, multifaceted solutions, such as “institutionalized intragovernmental communication,” which can take many forms.

Before advocating a revision of the law, EIC presented its findings and recommended solutions to a number of investor groups to validate the proposals as likely to generate the intended FDI outcomes.

ADVOCATING REFORM

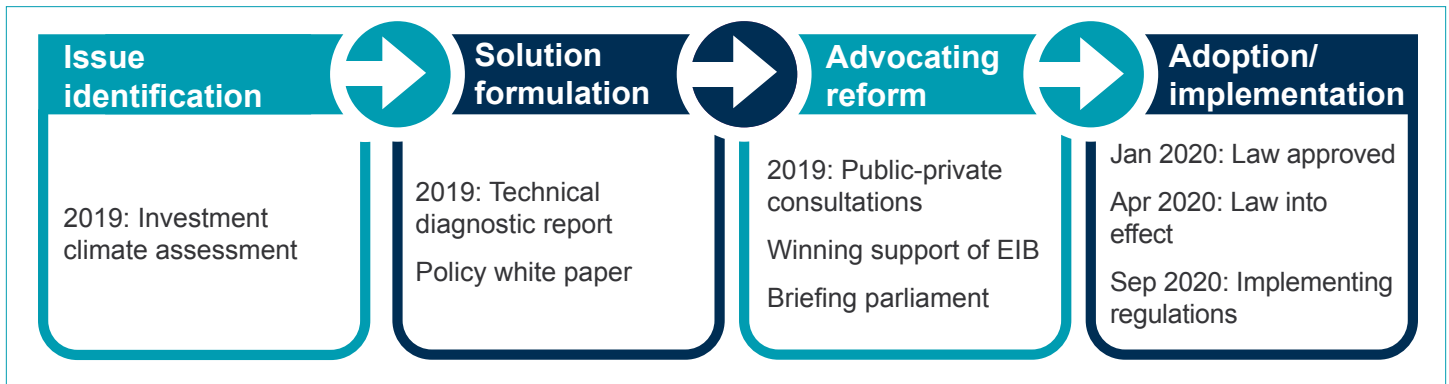
After validating the anticipated effect of its proposed reforms with investors, EIC began the work of advocating reforms. Instead of relying on the two detailed technical reports it had on hand, EIC prepared for advocating reform by drafting a short position paper. The high-level summary of issues, details of their negative impacts, specification of clear reform recommendations, and listing of anticipated positive outcomes was better suited to persuading busy policymakers.

EIC started its advocacy measures with the Ethiopian Investment Board. Its members were the crucial stakeholders from whom initial buy-in was most highly-sought, because the proposal included a potentially sensitive change to the composition of the board itself, and because any disagreement with EIC's supervising body would amount to internal incoherence. After all, how could EIC expect to win the support of others if its own supervisors were not supportive?

The board approved of the proposed reforms to the national investment law. An impatient, short-sighted advocate might have taken that high-level approval as a green light to go directly to parliament. However, EIC understood that while parliamentary passage was necessary, it was not sufficient for the fullest implementation of reforms. Cooperation would be needed for implementation from stakeholders with legitimate reasons for preferring the status quo. Consulting them and earning their buy-in would be more easily done before passage of the new law. To this end, EIC held five consultation workshops for public and private stakeholders, hearing their concerns and brainstorming on the fine details needed for the law and subsequent implementing regulations.

The process also allowed EIC to engage with stakeholders who were willing to act as champions of the reform and amplify EIC's advocacy messages. While EIC lobbied the national cabinet and parliament for the new law's enactment, these champions reinforced the message with key decision-makers and in public discourse. In the end, EIC achieved not only passage of *Investment Proclamation No. 1180-2020*, which included the advocated changes, by April 2020, and its implementing regulations five months later, but also achieved widely-shared enthusiasm for their implementation and the FDI benefits they would afford the country.

Figure 6. Timeline of EIC’s advocacy reform



IMPACT OF REFORM

Since this achievement, several sectors that were previously dominated by state-owned enterprises have been fully opened, and entry for all FDI projects is much more transparent, straightforward, and fast.¹² Six months after implementation of the new investment law specific impacts attributed, at least in part, to EIC’s successful advocacy include:

- Three new investment projects in cement manufacturing and management consultancy, two wholly-foreign invested and one foreign-domestic joint venture, amounting to \$650 million in capital and 1,500 jobs.
- One telecom operation license for the Global Partnership for Ethiopia consortium has been issued, bringing \$850 million alone in license fees, potential additional investment of over \$1 billion, and generation of over a million jobs with ten years of operation. This represents a transition from the long-time state monopoly of the sector to an open telecom sector.
- 51 investment projects in the pipeline — with over \$5 million already invested and \$162 million in committed capital and the potential to create over 5,250 jobs.
- Improved investor satisfaction with transparency in the delivery of government services.

As development benefits of FDI in new sectors become reality, the shared credit for these proven results will make it easier the next time EIC is building support for reform.

3.2 Toronto Global: Leveraging a pre-existing mechanism for collaborative advocacy to reboot a regional economy



[Toronto Global’s Advocacy Award Video](#)

CONTEXT

In the decade before 2019, the Toronto metro area experienced tremendous population growth of 15 percent, adding more than 700,000 people.¹³ However, infrastructure and public services lagged, and socioeconomic disparities grew. The percentage of affordable housing shrank, with 40 percent of the population spending more than 30 percent of their incomes on housing. While the regional transit system added the equivalent of 20 percent more kilometers of scheduled service, ridership increased by 36 percent, and the transit authority itself recognized system expansion as too slow to match demand.¹⁴ While the devolved nature of the Canadian government allows the 34 municipalities of the Toronto region to set their own priorities for housing, public transit, and economic development, it also adds a layer of complexity to the formulation of regional solutions.

12. WAIPA. Gold Award | WAIPA - World Bank Strengthening IPA Advocacy Services 2021 Awards. (Geneva, CH, 2021), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dd8Qlcy-PuzY&t=1s>
 13. Macrotrends, 'Toronto, Canada Metro Area Population 1950-2022', Macrotrends, 2022, <https://www.macrotrends.net/cities/20402/toronto/population>.
 14. Tess Kalinowski, 'Toronto Has Seen Huge Growth in the Last Decade. The Challenges Ahead Are Just as Huge', The Toronto Star, 27 December 2019, sec. GTA, <https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2019/12/27/toronto-has-seen-huge-growth-in-the-last-decade-the-challenges-ahead-are-just-as-huge.html>.

ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

When the pandemic struck in early 2020, it lent impetus to major reviews of economic policies at all levels of government. Toronto Global (TG), the Greater Toronto Area's IPA and one of the few organizations with a regional mandate, supported voices calling for a long-term reimagining of the regional economy, instead of limiting the economic policy debate to short-term pandemic recovery measures. TG partnered with the like-minded Toronto Region Board of Trade (TRBOT), a 13,500-member chamber of commerce, to co-chair two tracks of its *Shaping our Future* project. The project's public-private steering cabinet included executives of sector-leading companies, public service providers (such as a postal system or airport), economic development authorities, universities, promotional authorities for trade and tourism, and representatives of the national, provincial, and municipal governments.

TG, TRBOT, and their partners began issue identification with several data reviews, surveys, and consultations meant to reveal the region's growth patterns, competitive sectors, investor needs, and how policy best practices might be leveraged within this context. TG analyzed the critical site selection requirements of existing and potential investors by reviewing more than 120 of its landed investments and hundreds of unrealized projects for which it had received inquiries. TRBOT used data from the national statistics bureau to produce a granular map of the region's economic activities and employment, identifying sectoral corridors, interdependencies, and commuter patterns.

With this context in hand, the *Shaping our Future* project team leveraged the services of a consulting firm to survey key companies, chambers of commerce, and boards of trade.¹⁵ The issues they raised concerning the Toronto Region's investment ecosystem were assessed for importance and prioritized.

SOLUTION FORMULATION

As a founding member of C40 Cities, a group of megacities agreeing to climate action in partnership with the UN and the Clinton Climate Initiative, Toronto enjoyed a pool of stakeholders with deep commitment, experience, and technical capacity for forward thinking in urban development planning. The *Shaping our Future* project's steering committee, which was co-chaired by TG and TRBOT, had been recruited from among such stakeholders, and this was the body tasked with solution formulation.

Committee members reviewed the economic structure map, survey, interview results, global location decision criteria, and best practices with the objective of developing a strategic master plan. Beyond simply addressing existing problems for investors, the plan would guide policy and promotion in overcoming existing issues and avoiding new ones in the medium term, putting the region on the path to fulfilling long-term growth and development objectives. To this end, solution formulation did not start with the issues, but rather with a consensus vision for the long term and then worked backwards through the key measures the government and its partners would need to realize that vision.

The consensus vision was that a regional geographic area known as the Toronto Innovation Corridor should “be a high-growth, integrated, economic zone that attracts top talent and investment due to its diversity, livability, future-oriented infrastructure planning, and overall global competitiveness.” If this was the “Where we want to go” of a new regional strategy, the details of “How we get there” fell under the headings of three necessary transformations:

1. The economy being equitable, integrated, and high-growth.
2. Infrastructure funding being regionally coordinated and future-oriented.
3. Municipal governments being responsive, coordinated, and welcomed as collaborators.

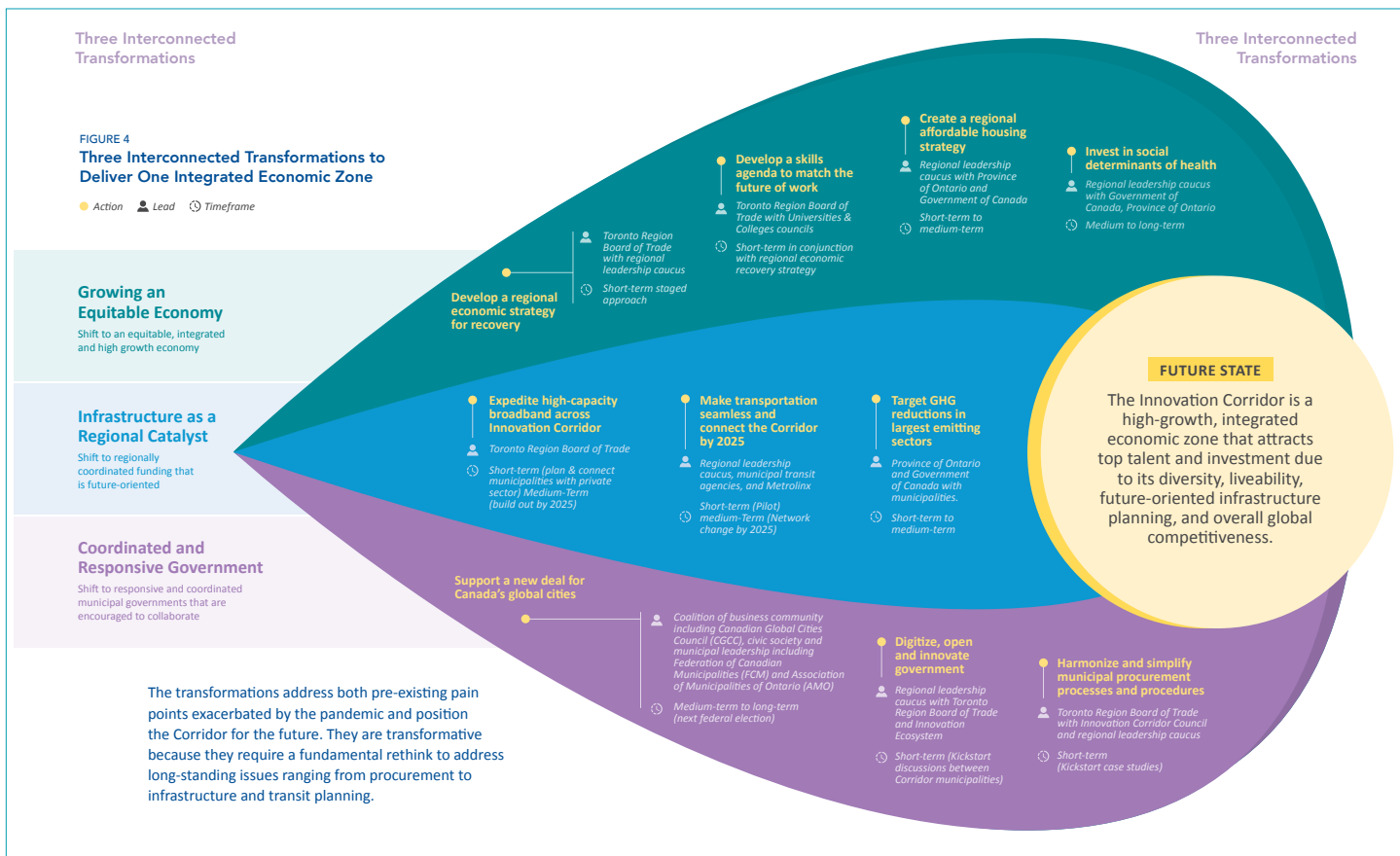
These transformations would address pre-existing issues exacerbated by the pandemic and position the region strategically for the future. During the spring and summer of 2020, the steering committee met to formulate a detailed “playbook” of specific actions to realize the transformations. The result was a 10-point action plan touching on a range of issues, including workforce skill development, affordable housing, high-capacity broadband access, transportation across the innovation corridor, greenhouse gas reductions in the largest emitting sectors, a digitized and innovative government, harmonized public procurement, and a “new deal” for socioeconomic equity.

The actions were designed to work synergistically, helping stakeholders advance the “triple bottom line” of profit, people, and planet. For example, the integrated transportation system envisioned would connect more people to more job opportunities, allow businesses to better attract talent with easier commutes, remove transportation as an obstacle to labor force participation by low-income and marginalized communities, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions regardless of where they live. The 10 actions to achieve the three transformations are summarized in Figure 7.

15. In this instance the firm retained was Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Ltd.



Figure 7. A reimagined economy: Toronto’s playbook of 10 actions to achieve 3 transformations



Source: Toronto Region Board of Trade, 2020. "Shaping Our Future: A Playbook for Rebooting and Reimagining the Regional Economy in Ontario's Innovation Corridor." p. 18.

ADVOCATING REFORM

The high-level and inclusive nature of the steering committee gave TG and TRBOT a tremendous advantage in their advocacy. This was not merely good luck or even good issue-specific advocacy; it came from the good institutionalization of public-private policy dialogue in the Toronto Region. As discussed in Section 2.4, pre-existing high-level forums and relationships can facilitate advocacy on multiple tracks simultaneously. The shared history of joint action for mutual benefit builds trust, which allows for quicker, more far-reaching action. What might be impossible or take years in another environment may be done in months or weeks in an environment where investment ecosystem analysis and reform is well institutionalized.

Because of the project’s high-level, public-private participation, the same stakeholders who might normally be the object of

IPA advocacy were the ones collaboratively formulating the solutions. In this sense, TG and TRBOT needed to actively advocate much less than they might have otherwise. TG and TRBOT, nevertheless, diligently solidified the playbook’s buy-in by broadening consultation even wider than the already-highly-representative steering committee and by ensuring endorsement at the federal level. In stakeholder consultations at the beginning of the project and through the formulation of solutions, TG and TRBOT were able to secure the agreement of an audience of the region’s CEOs and civic leaders in all sectors with respect to the project’s parameters for discussion and to periodically review the work in progress. Then, as the broad outlines of the playbook became clear, TG met with the federal deputy minister of infrastructure to ensure alignment of the Toronto playbook with federal priorities.

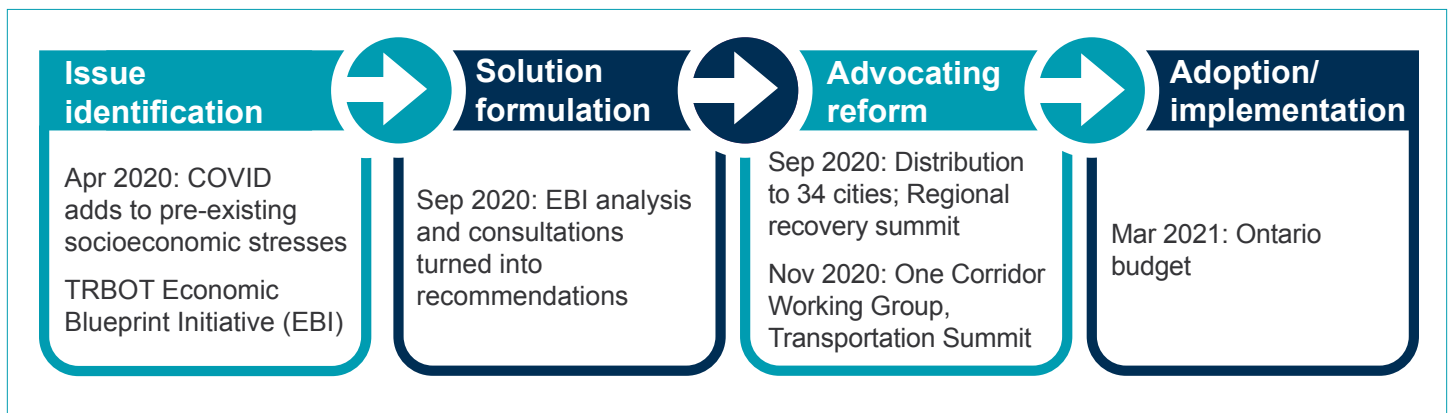
Then, after the playbook was adopted in September of 2020, TG and TRBOT immediately began advocating

implementation. All 34 municipal councils received a copy of the playbook highlighting the participation of their own senior city officials in its development. The region’s municipal-level economic development officials were briefed on the playbook’s implications for their cities, as were key implementing organizations, such as the Urban Land Institute, the Greenbelt Council, and Toronto Pearson International Airport. TG and TRBOT or their partners made sure that other initiatives on related topics took the playbook into account by, for example, presenting it at regional summits on pandemic recovery and transportation, as well as at the One Corridor Working Group, a roundtable of federal deputy ministers and municipalities touching on the innovation corridor running through Toronto.

TG and TRBOT’s follow-up work is the mark of agencies which strictly evaluate their own performance based on real outcomes and not simply activities undertaken. Today, TG and TRBOT continue to monitor regional indicators of growth and equity (for example, GDP per capita, Gini coefficient, shelter consumption affordability ratio) as measures of the success or failure of the *Shaping our Future* project. TG and TRBOT’s follow-up work also promotes long-term advocacy success by continually building stakeholder awareness of and enthusiasm for its advocacy. A summary of the steps taken by TG to secure this advocacy can be seen in Figure 5, below.



Figure 8. Timeline of TG’s Advocacy Reform



IMPACT OF REFORM

Specific impacts attributed at least in part to TG and TRBOT’s successful advocacy include:

- Playbook recommendations incorporated into the recent budget of the Government of Ontario
 - Funding to support in-demand skill development
 - The largest single investment in broadband
 - \$1 billion in financial relief to municipalities
 - The announcement of a two-way, all-day GO train service by 2025
 - \$61.6 billion over the next 10 years to support priority transit projects, including the Metrolinx GO Rail

- Expansion program which will offer two-way, all-day service between multiple regional hubs by 2025
- TG closed 39 new international investments in 2021-22, creating the highest number of annual jobs and capex to date, with approximately 40 percent of those investment benefits distributed regionally, outside the City of Toronto.¹⁶

16. WAIPA. Silver Award | WAIPA - World Bank Strengthening IPA Advocacy Services 2021 Awards. (Geneva, CH, 2021), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NY4kqbp-J5w&t=1s>

3.3 Invest India: Advocacy to support the scaling of an innovation and start-up ecosystem



[Invest India's Advocacy Award Video](#)

CONTEXT

Projected to become the world's most populous country within the next few years, India is vast and diverse. It is ranked 3rd in the world for number of “unicorns”—start-ups valued at more than \$1 billion.¹⁷ In 2016, seeing start-ups as a driver of sustainable economic growth and large-scale employment, the national government undertook the *Startup India* initiative with an action plan for the national government in the three areas of (i) simplification and handholding, (ii) funding support and incentives, and (iii) industry-academia partnership and incubation.¹⁸ As the national body responsible for promotion of foreign and domestic investment, Invest India was designated the *Startup India* Hub. This made Invest India both a direct service provider to entrepreneurs and the lead coordinator for collaboration among the central and 36 state governments, Indian and foreign venture capitalists, angel networks, banks, incubators, legal partners, consultants, universities, and R&D institutions.

State governments in particular were viewed as essential partners because it was at the local level that entrepreneurs would receive the most public support and services, such as institutional support, simplified regulations, public procurement from startups, incubation support, funding support, and awareness-raising. However, varying governance capacities among the states and varying degrees of policy alignment with the central government made for formidable challenges in getting states to actively improve their support. When the initiative was launched, India had 471 startups based on

2016 data and only 4 of the 36 Indian state governments had policies specific to support startups.¹⁹ To overcome these challenges, Invest India adopted a comprehensive approach based on the notion of competitive federalism: By creating a national ranking of start-up-friendliness Invest India would incentivize states to augment the quality of their start-up support. This was done by relying on a given state's desire to rise in the rankings and then to provide capacity-building assistance to states that sought it out. This process is detailed in the Solution Formulation subsection, below.

ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

In this context, the growth opportunities that needed to be identified were the misalignments between existing and best practices with respect to each of the state government's support for start-ups. These issues would need to be objectively assessed annually so that state governments can build a more cohesive support system on a yearly basis. The first year of this project would necessarily also be tasked with developing the benchmarking methodology to be used.

At its core, this required expert definition of the characteristics of good government support for start-ups and developing a feasible and objectively applicable scoring key. To do this Invest India looked to international benchmarking methodologies—such as the World Bank Group's *Ease of Doing Business* ranking—for structure and process and held multiple roundtables and workshops with stakeholders for substance. These stakeholders included state government officials, start-ups, and key ecosystem enablers, such as incubators, angel investors, and venture fund managers. This yielded inputs from more than 200 stakeholders in 31 states.

In its first year, 2018, this outreach produced a framework with seven areas of government support and 38 action points that would be expected of the most supportive governments and a scoring key with criteria for allocating up to 100 points across all action items. Beneficiary feedback led to a revised set of 30 criteria in 2019, presented in Table 1, below.

17. Statista, 'Unicorns by Country 2021', Statista, 2022, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1096928/number-of-global-unicorns-by-country/>.

18. StartupIndia, 'Action Plan' (Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi: StartupIndia, 16 January 2016), <https://www.startupindia.gov.in/content/dam/invest-india/Templates/public/Action%20Plan.pdf>.

19. Today there are over 74,000 startups and policies for 31 states and/or union territories.

Table 1. Invest India's benchmarking criteria for state support of start-ups

Area of support	Benchmarking criteria (points for each criterion given in parentheses, total = 100)
1. Institutional support	Start-up policy (3), nodal department, officer, and team (1), online implementation system (4), mentor network (2), intellectual property support (1), partnerships (2), women entrepreneurship (6), support from various departments (5)
2. Simplifying regulations	Business compliance information system (4), invite or identify regulatory issues (2), amendments in rules, regulations, or acts for supporting (6)
3. Easing public procurement	Relaxation in "prior experience" criteria (1), relaxation in "prior turnover" criteria (1), relaxation in "submission of EMD" criteria (1), preference in public procurement (1), number of start-ups awarded work orders (8), grievance redressal mechanism (2)
4. Incubation support	Setting up of new and upgrading existing incubators (12), number of seats (3), subsidized incubation (4), acceleration programme (4)
5. Seed funding support	Seed funding guidelines (2), online system for seed funding (2), seed funding beneficiaries (7)
6. Venture funding support	Support to venture fund (2), Start-ups funded from venture funds (6)
7. Awareness and outreach	Bootcamps (2), hackathons or grant challenges (2), angel investment workshops (2), national or international events (2)

Note: EMD stands for Earnest Money Deposits. The reform submission notes that 'Startup India spearheaded several key amendments to enhance the growth of startups by opening doors to new avenues for startups in public tenders. Currently, all Startup India recognized entities are exempted from submission of Earnest Money Deposits (EMD)/ Bid Security under public procurement, thereby addressing a substantial barrier of capital locking while participation in tendering processes.' Additional information is provided online.²⁰

20. <https://doe.gov.in/sites/default/files/Amendment%20to%20Rule%20170%28i%29%20of%20General%20Finance%20Rules%20-GFR%202017.pdf>

With this framework in hand, a team from Invest India introduced the framework to each of the 36 states, of which 30 chose to participate in the initiative's inaugural year. Each participating state was assigned a dedicated Invest India staff member to advise on submitting evidence of the state's qualifications. This was processed into a score for each state, as well as a report of its efforts and shortcomings in the seven areas of government support for start-ups.

SOLUTION FORMULATION

The state initiatives were then summarized in a national benchmarking report, the State Startup Ranking (SSR), and a compendium of 166 “best practices” conceived and implemented at the state level under a variety of circumstances. In this way, the SSR initiative stimulated 30 states to formulate and implement their own solutions. In the federal system of government, states have been called laboratories of democracy. Many state governments mean the simultaneous innovation and parallel testing of a wide variety of policy solutions to a wide variety of problems. The most successful results from this campaign of real-world testing can then be implemented at the federal and state levels without the time, expense, and pain of having to come up with and then validate each solution themselves.

By recording, analyzing, and disseminating the states' 166 best practices for start-up support, Invest India offered states a menu of options from which they could choose the measures they found best suited to their own circumstances. The same Invest India staff member dedicated to helping each state submit evidence of their qualifications was also tasked with advising the state on the implementation of new policies and initiatives, ensuring that the best practices were utilized in the provision of tailored advice.

ADVOCATING REFORM

Invest India's novel appeal to the inherent competition within a federal system flipped advocacy efforts upside down. Instead of the typical “push” of solutions onto stakeholders by an advocate, the desire of individual states to move up rather than down in the ranking created a “pull” of states seeking out advice on how to close the gaps between themselves and

better-ranking states, providing the momentum for a “race to the top.” This has the inherent advantage of strong buy-in from reforming states.

Invest India's advocacy retained a push aspect in its awareness-raising campaign to notify all stakeholders of the issues and available options, as well as in its follow-up with individual states. Specifically, Invest India took five steps.

First, its state-specific reports included policy recommendations (“action points”), which if implemented would allow states to close their gaps with top performers.

Second, Invest India hosted regional capacity-building and knowledge exchange workshops after each annual release of the rankings. Hosted in the top-performing regions of Kerala, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan, the two-day workshops allowed officials from other states to engage in insightful policy discussions, exchange best practices, and meet with start-ups, investors, and incubators in the leading states.

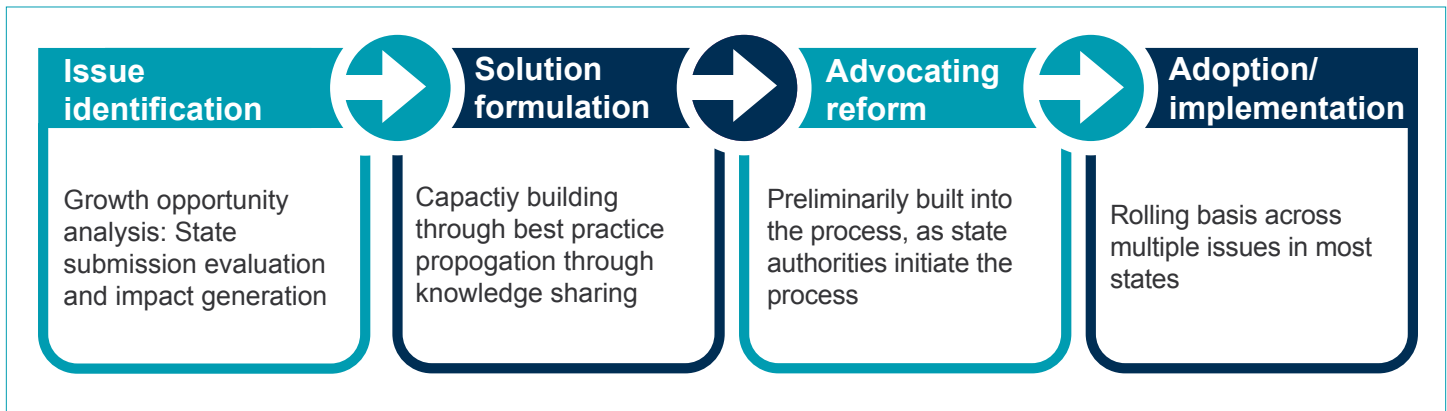
Third, international capacity-building and exposure trips were organized for more than 35 state officials to the U.S., Israel, and Germany with the aim of raising the national bar, so that even India's top-performing states could find ample room for improvement as they learned to compete at the international level of proficiency.

Fourth, over 12 months, states were supported by their Invest India focal points in the implementation and documentation of reforms. Using a dedicated online portal, states could securely share published policies, lists of beneficiary start-ups, acknowledgment letters, proof of release of funds, event reports, and other evidence to improve their positions for the next year's ranking.

And finally, Invest India undertook extensive validation work directly with the beneficiaries of each state's reported efforts. For the 2019 ranking, Invest India made more than 60,000 calls in 11 languages to secure survey responses from more than 6,500 entrepreneurs to determine their ground-level perspectives of each state's services and improvements over the previous year.

A summary of the steps taken by Invest India can be seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Timeline of Invest India's advocacy reform



IMPACT OF REFORM

Impacts attributed to the SSR Initiative in its first two years include:

- The percentage of India's 718 districts with at least one start-up increased to 85 percent
- The number of Indian unicorns increased from 21 to 32 in 2020
- 18 states have provided seed funding to more than 1,300 start-ups
- 19 states offer special incentives to 1,200+ women entrepreneurs
- 610+ amendments have been made in rules and regulation to support start-ups
- More than 300 incubators have been upgraded by state governments
- 10 states offer an interactive portal to startups which include online registration and related activities
- 14 states have established partnerships with more than 190 institutions or business enterprises for supporting startups²¹

The States' Startup Ranking exercise was further conducted in 2021 for a consideration period from October 1, 2019 to July 31, 2021. The third edition exercise built on the founding principles of the previous two editions and also streamlined reform areas to adapt to the development of the startup ecosystem in India. The innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem were pivotal in tackling the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The exercise has also rationalized

the impact of this ecosystem through inculcating these lessons in the support provided to the states and updates made to the framework. Indian states adapted to these challenges and their efforts have been recognized in the States' Startup Ranking Exercise 2021. [The comprehensive report for the exercise can be found online.](#)²²

3.4 CINDE: Rapid-response advocacy to support economic growth in the face of COVID-19

Proactive advocacy, of the type demonstrated by EIC, TG, and Invest India is admired for its ability to attract new investors and better kinds of investment than that which the current investment ecosystem has so far enticed. The Costa Rican IPA, Coalición Costarricense de Iniciativas de Desarrollo (CINDE), also has a record of proactive advocacy, most famously when it successfully advocated the conditions that allowed it to attract key and strategic industries, such as semiconductor assembly and test, with Intel as anchor company.²³ However, this section features a case of CINDE's responsive advocacy. The constantly-changing global landscape alters the terms that most effectively address issues raised by existing investors, and this is also an essential component of full-fledged advocacy work. Existing investors are the largest global source of new FDI (that is, reinvestment) making investor retention and expansion as important an objective as attraction of new investors.²⁴ Expansions offer potential for more jobs, exports, and tax revenues from the same business

21. WAIPA. Bronze Award | WAIPA - World Bank Strengthening IPA Advocacy Services 2021 Awards. (Geneva, CH, 2021), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivOm3COyaJI>

22. Link to report available here: <https://www.startupindia.gov.in/srf/result-2021.html>

23. Spar, Debora. 1998. *Attracting High Technology Investment: Intel's Costa Rica Plant*. Washington, DC: World Bank. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/949541468770676701/pdf/multi0page.pdf>

24. OECD data for 2018-2021

lines but also the prospect of higher skills and value addition from new business lines. As a result, advocacy efforts should also prioritize improving and strengthening business climate conditions, taking into consideration the global trends that impact company operations.

CONTEXT

During the past twenty years Costa Rica has typically ranked among the top 20 or 30 countries in the world for FDI per capita.²⁵ The number of foreign investors makes it challenging to keep abreast of them individually. However, waiting for individual investors to raise issues risks CINDE's missing relevant issues, discovering some too late, having a poor sense of the sector- or economy-wide severity of an issue, missing others entirely, or focusing too much on the most noticeable issues. CINDE avoids these problems by building strong communication channels with its investors through standing mechanisms for the regular, systematic receipt and processing of issues elicited from large samples of investors in high-priority areas; as well as keeping a close watch on transformative trends that impact businesses. CINDE uses regular listening sessions on global tendencies, surveys of investors and participation in a number of public-private dialogue platforms. The deep insight CINDE has developed into its investor community over the years has positioned it as a strategic partner, earning invitations to sit on public and private sector-related committees and task forces, including the government's emergency task force for dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

One of CINDE's standing mechanisms for obtaining investor issues is its seat on the government commission overseeing Free Trade Zones (FTZs), an investment promotion regime credited with winning substantial FDI, export diversification, and quality employment, and which has been fundamental to the country's economic transformation.

Considering the changing global landscape, particularly as accelerated by the pandemic, CINDE closely monitors the operational needs of its existing investor base, including those situated in FTZs, through periodic surveys and meetings of topic-specific working groups, such as human resources,

talent development, and facilities. As FTZs are geographic designations within the boundaries of which companies enjoy special incentives, remote work had proven to be only a mild issue over the years, but CINDE's issue intake mechanisms flagged that the issue had become critical during the pandemic.

As originally designed, and as a condition of the customs exemption they enjoyed upon import to the FTZ, the FTZ regime prohibited productive assets other than laptops from being deployed outside the FTZ. However, in the decade since the FTZ regulations were updated in 2009, companies world-wide trended toward more digitalization and remote work. By 2019, FTZ companies surveyed by CINDE reported an average of 20 percent remote work modality and that the asset movement restrictions posed an operational challenge. From the perspective of the government's development objectives, too, a wider scope on remote work within the FTZ Regime was viewed as an enabler of FDI attraction to the country's regions external to the Greater Metropolitan Area (GMA). Nevertheless, the relatively low percentage of companies requesting an amendment, and, more importantly, the relatively low intensity of the issue kept it from rising to the top of CINDE's advocacy agenda.

Then, in mid-March 2020, the government declared a state of emergency due to the pandemic. In the days and weeks to come, CINDE used surveys to monitor the impact of emergency regulations on investors and the evolution of remote work. Soon, the number of FTZ-based companies reporting a need to move all manner of equipment outside of the FTZs, in order that staff could continue operations during lockdowns in compliance with social distancing guidelines, rose by 60 percent.

SOLUTION FORMULATION

CINDE's continual close contact with investors and monitoring of their issues meant that the solution to the immediate issue had already been clearly established as permission to move several assets outside of the FTZs, as might be necessary to conduct remote operations. The urgency of the situation under the pandemic meant that this would have to be adopted as an emergency regulation.

However, CINDE's long awareness of this issue and constant monitoring of global trends made it clear that the emergency

25. Excluding pass-through economies, tax havens, and economies of under half a million people. Based on data at unctadstat.unctad.org.

regulation should eventually be made permanent, and that a fuller framework for remote work under the FTZ was needed. This was done in consideration of the irreversible change in work models, and the importance of remote work as a tool to enable both more inclusive employment and FDI opportunities in regions located outside of the GMA.

ADVOCATING REFORM

As soon as the state of emergency was declared, CINDE reached out to its network of partners in advocacy, including the Ministry of Foreign Trade and its customs authorities, to communicate the urgent need for an emergency regulation. Within the emergency task force set up to deal with the pandemic, CINDE worked with relevant technical experts in drafting the regulation. External to the task force, CINDE acted as the strategic liaison between the committee and the investor community, gathering feedback on the adequacy of the draft regulation. As a result of this close public-private collaboration and the successful highlighting of the urgency of the issue to be resolved, the regulation was passed within a week of the state of emergency being declared, greatly promoting continuity of business during a turbulent period.

IMPACT OF REFORM

During the next year and a half, CINDE continued to collect feedback from investors through its surveys and working groups, with the aims of properly monitoring their business transformation. Discovering that, overall, remote work and hybrid models have been incorporated as part of the investors dynamic in many sectors—because of its positive impacts on productivity and employee satisfaction—CINDE was able to advocate successfully for it to be made permanent and for the government to develop a modern framework for remote work under the FTZ.

The formalization of this regulation as part of the FTZ provided a more comprehensive approach towards remote work and has allowed companies to implement a more ambitious recruiting process in areas outside of the GMA. As a result, during the first year of the pandemic, two important projects were announced in regions outside of the GMA under the FTZ regime, with over 2,000 open positions and a relevant remote work component.

Today, CINDE continues to monitor the global trends on work transformation and keeps in close communication with all stakeholders, including the government, in preparation for the next big change.



Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

These examples demonstrate the varying ways in which successful IPA advocacy can positively impact a country or region's investment ecosystem, and the diversity of approaches, audiences, and partners involved and contexts within which such reforms can take place. From CINDE and EIC's more specific issues to the broader, intergovernmental bundles of solutions in the TG and Invest India cases, these examples illustrate the variety of methods for handling advocacy cases as well as the enormous potential scope of benefit such advocacy can provide.

There is no single template for success in this field. Further, the exact steps and timelines involved in issue identification, solution formulation, and advocacy may change based on the context of the necessary reform, though all of these components are clearly present in each example. All of these cases demonstrate that the key to being a good advocate is to be both a champion of investors and of national development objectives, bridging a public-private gap in a way that is valuable to both sides. The length of time that may be required to successfully advocate impactful reforms also demonstrates the importance of IPAs dedicating multi-year commitments to advocacy efforts and advocacy programs. It is also clear that partnerships and established relationships with key stakeholders within the private sector, relevant agencies and organizations is critically important for the success of advocacy efforts. Proactive aftercare programs are also a clearly important source for gathering investor insights and identifying reform issues.

Lastly, these cases provide useful examples of how the various types of interventions and methods of issue identification can be tailored to local contexts, data constraints, and levels of development through innovative solutions. Advocacy services play a key role within an IPA's overall mandate and make a critical contribution to improving the IPA's "product" by enhancing their location's investment ecosystem, attractiveness to investors, and competitiveness for investment promotion.

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