

UGANDA'S PATENT SYSTEM & ITS USES BY BUSINESS & RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS

Presentation to Members of Parliament of ARIPO Member States

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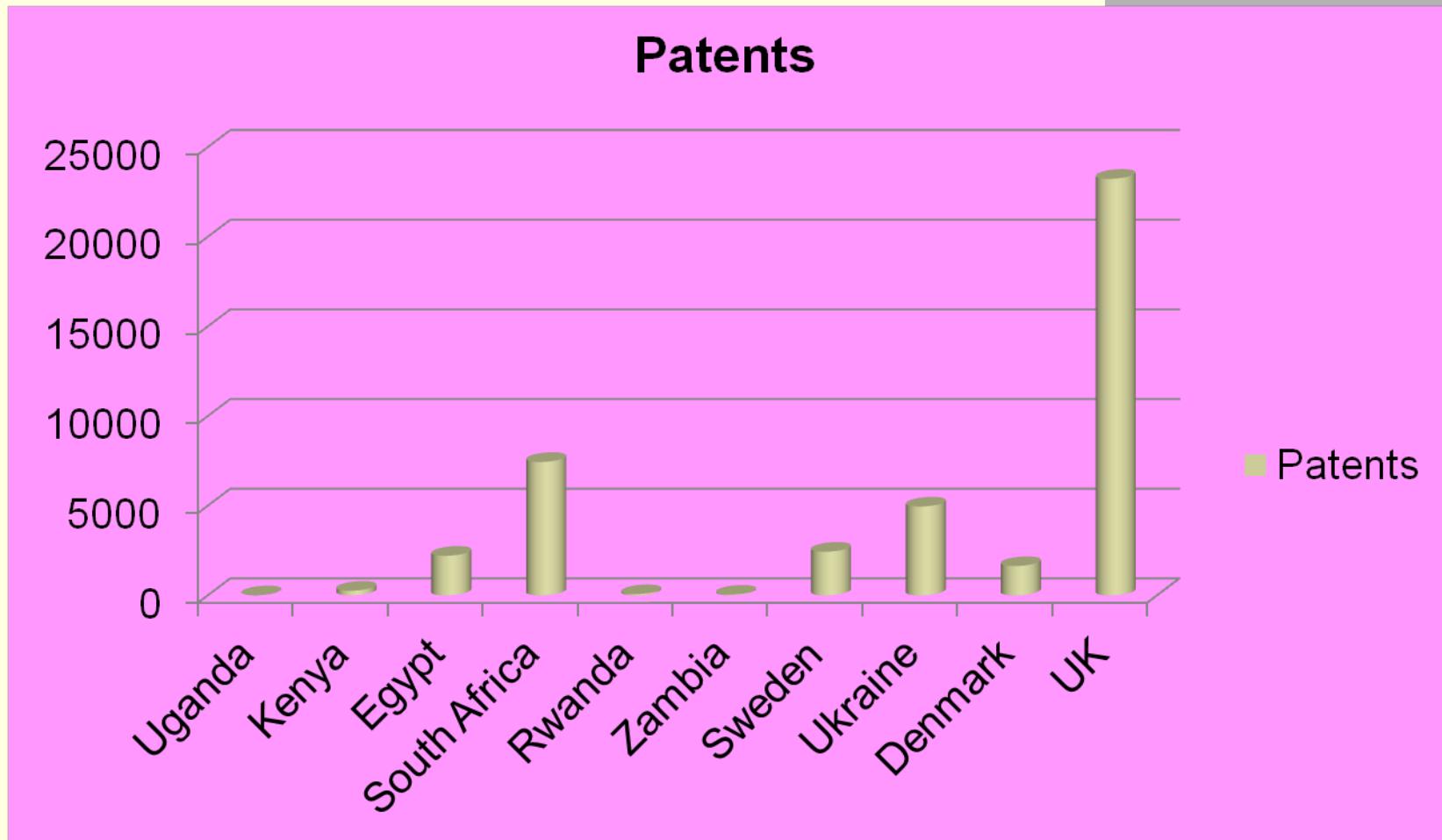
1. PATENT SYSTEM IN UGANDA

The Patent system In Uganda is administered by the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB), a Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs institution.

Status;

- 3 well trained Patent examiners
- Automated Patent registry
- Functional Technology & Innovation Support Centre (TISC)
- The Patents Act Cap 216, 1993
- The Patents (Amendment) Act, 2002
- The Patent Regulations

Uganda's Patent Registration Profile



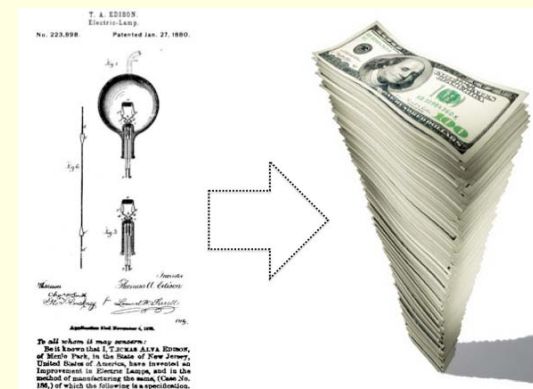
Benchmark of Uganda's IP Registration Statistics

Country	Patents	Utility Models	Trademarks	Industrial Designs
Uganda	2		1,288	
Kenya	259	68	4,193	103
Egypt	2,211		10,660	1,455
South Africa	7,444		34,604	2,361
Rwanda	70	12	517	78
Zambia	38		4,090	12
Sweden	2,436		24,231	814
Ukraine	4,955	10,217	64,251	6,958
Denmark	1,635	187	12,764	465
UK	23,235		93,522	
USA	542,815		428,687	32,799
China	652,777	740,290	1,651,785	657,582

Summary of IP applications for Uganda, as benchmarked against selected countries for the year 2012. (Source WIPO, 2013)

1.2 Why the low levels of IP Registration in Uganda?

- Entrenched Culture of secrecy
- Low level of awareness
- Limited access to Patent information
- Application process long and costly
- General uncertainty on benefits
- Few success stories



Impact of the Patent System on R&D in Uganda

Following the amendment of the Patent Act in 2002.....

- Researchers are more motivated about prospects

The number of registered research projects nearly tripled between 1997/1998 and 2006/2007, from 109 project registrations to 335

- Confidence has been engendered among funders

R&D expenditures nearly tripled between 2003/04 (UGX. 31,870 million) and 2007/08 (UGX. 82,249 million).

Challenges faced by R&D institutions in using Patent Information

- Lack of dedicated IP Offices to facilitate Patent related activities
- “Technical language” in which Patent Information (PI) is presented is not familiar to researchers
- The activity of “Patent Searching” requires some training to enable researchers access the right information
- Online access to PI remains plagued by poor/intermittent internet connectivity

Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI) - Case Study

MANDATE

To undertake applied research and to develop and/or acquire appropriate technology in order to create a strong, effective and competitive industrial sector in Uganda.

MISSION

To catalyze the socio-economic transformation of Uganda and the Region through enhanced technology use.

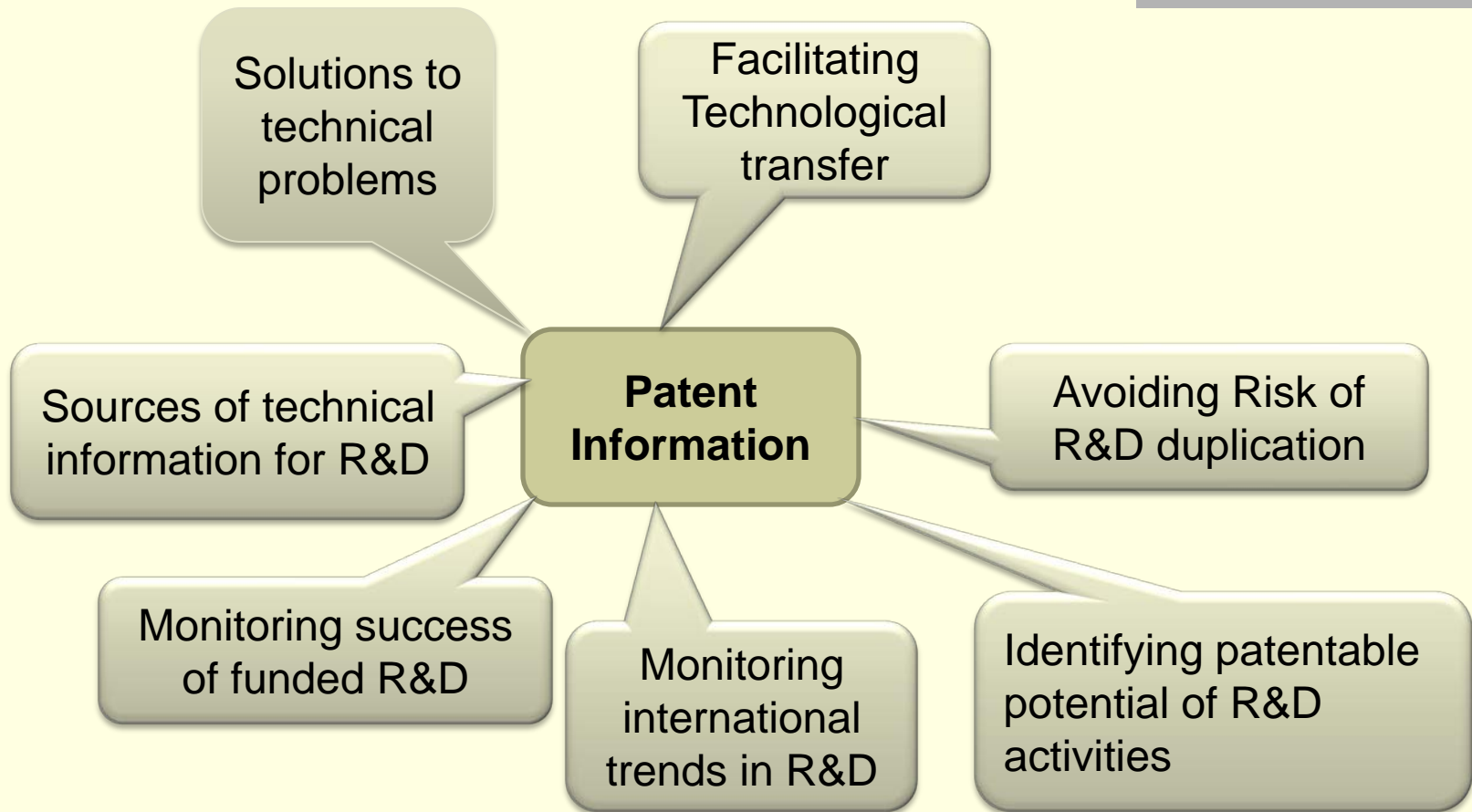
VISION

To be a model Institution and a centre of excellence for the incubation of industry; and to be a pioneer of self-financing Research and Development (R&D) to elevate the level of technology development in Uganda and the region

UIRI Institutional Development Strategies

- Conducting market-driven Research for Development
- Active technology transfer, adaptation & development
- Provision of core product development services
- Transfer of research outputs to communities & enterprises
- Provision of technological business incubation services
- Provision of industrial skills training services
- Establishment of model value addition, processing and production Centres

How UIRI uses Patent Information for Strategy Implementation



Uses of Patent Information by Ugandan Businesses

Though still very limited, the following are emerging;

- Identifying technology-based business opportunities
- Identifying competing innovations, products and markets
- Monitoring of trends in technology development as relates new product innovations

Technical Relevance of Uganda's Patent System to SMEs

- Growing need for cost-effective and appropriate technology
- Increasing competition among same niche market products
- Need for new or alternative products and services
- Growing diversification of raw materials base for production processes

Legal Relevance of Uganda's Patent System to SMEs

- Some SMEs are developing novel and patentable products, though many remain unaware of the value of their innovations
- Some SMEs are willing to access key technologies through licensing, though most do not know or understand the process
- Some SMEs are paying for rights to unprotected public domain technologies, due to lack of awareness
- Some SMEs waste time and money developing already existing and protected products

Example of Ugandan Business benefitting from the Patent System

Afribanana Products Limited is using a patented technology for the production of Fresh vacuum sealed Matooke, a Ugandan staple food for foreign markets



Future Prospects

- It is widely expected that Uganda's IP application and utilization situation will greatly improve over the next 5 years, following the impending launch of the long awaited **National Intellectual Property Policy and Strategy** that the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB) is currently developing with the support of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

THANK YOU

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