

Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP)

Thirtieth Session
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REPORT ON WOMEN AND IP: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES, STRATEGIC DIRECTION

prepared by the Secretariat

1. The Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP) at its twenty-sixth session, held from July 26 to 30, 2021, while discussing the topic “Women and IP” under the agenda item IP and Development, took the following decision:

“The Committee considered the Follow-up Proposal by Mexico on “Women and IP” contained in document CDIP/26/10 Rev.. The Committee approved the proposal contained in that document” (para. 7 of the Summary by the Chair)

2. The mentioned Follow-up Proposal by Mexico, *inter alia*, requested the Secretariat to undertake a series of actions and decided *“to revisit the issue of “Women and IP” periodically, when WIPO Secretariat deems to be necessary, under the IP and Development agenda item, starting at the CDIP spring session of 2023”*.

3. This document, together with document CDIP/30/13, seeks to facilitate the Committee’s revisiting of the issue of “Women and IP” at the present session. While document CDIP/30/13 reports on the compilation and sharing of sex-disaggregated data in the field of IP, this document reports on WIPO’s strategic action plan for supporting and empowering women in the field of IP, as well as provides an overview of the complementarity of WIPO’s internal and externally-facing activities. The reporting period covers the years 2021 and 2022.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

4. WIPO recognizes that the equal participation of women and men in the innovation ecosystem – and in the structures and organizations that support it – is cardinal to the success of its work and mission. To address the complex and pressing current problems faced globally, the talents and innovative potential of all groups must be utilized. A lack of diversity in the organizations of the IP system, WIPO included, limits the maximization of its benefits, and perpetuates systemic inequalities.

5. This vision has been embraced by the goals and strategic objectives of WIPO's Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) 2022-2026¹ and Human Resources (HR) Strategy 2022-2026.² The WIPO's MTSP explicitly refers to improving outreach toward and engagement with underrepresented groups so that all can benefit from the IP system, within and outside WIPO. For example, inventor teams with women are more likely to create gender responsive innovations, such as crucial women's health products.³

6. The MTSP also states the importance of creating an organizational culture that is truly diverse and inclusive. Diversity, belonging and inclusion are foundational to an innovative, forward-looking and creative workplace and workforce that can contribute to “a world where innovation and creativity from anywhere is supported by intellectual property for the good of everyone”. Research has found that diverse perspectives make organizations more resilient⁴ and help them better navigate through crises.⁵ Advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women are therefore fundamental to WIPO's mission.

7. WIPO has drafted a new Strategy on Gender Equality that provides a framework to guide WIPO's efforts related to gender equality and the empowerment of women for the period 2023 – 2026. The draft strategy is aligned with the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP 2.0), the requirements of the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity⁶ and other relevant UN system-wide guidance, such as the Enabling Environment Guidelines for the United Nations system.⁷

8. The UN-SWAP is an accountability mechanism approved by the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) that measures progress in gender mainstreaming in organizational functions. It consists of an indicator framework, against which UN entities report annually. In 2021, WIPO met and exceeded more indicators than the average for technical entities.⁸ WIPO exceeded the requirements for three indicators, the largest share since the start of UN-SWAP 2.0 implementation in 2018.⁹ Further progress toward meeting requirements is anticipated with the launch of the new Strategy on Gender Equality in 2023.

¹ The Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) 2022 – 2026 is available at:

www.wipo.int/meetings/en/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=541373

² The Human Resources (HR) Strategy 2022-2026 is available at:

www.wipo.int/meetings/en/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=548453

³ See Koning, R., Samila, S. & Ferguson, J. 2020. Inventor Gender and the Direction of Invention. AEA Papers and Proceedings, 110: 250-54.

⁴ See Duchek, S., Raetzke, S. & Scheuch, I. The role of diversity in organizational resilience: a theoretical framework. Bus Res 13, 387–423 (2020), available at: doi.org/10.1007/s40685-019-0084-8

⁵ See Zenger, J & Folkman, J, “Research: Women Are Better Leaders During a Crisis”, Harvard Business Review, December 30, 2020, available at: hbr.org/2020/12/research-women-are-better-leaders-during-a-crisis

⁶ The requirements are available at: www.un.org/gender/content/strategy

⁷ The draft strategy is undergoing internal consultations and will be finalized and complemented with an Implementation Plan in 2023. The consultation process has generated high-level interest and discussions are ongoing to further incorporate gender equality and the empowerment of women in the Program and Budget for the 2024/25 biennium.

⁸ See [UN Women's 2021 report for WIPO](#). 2022 results will be available later in 2023.

⁹ Further progress toward meeting requirements is anticipated with the launch of the new Strategy on Gender Equality in 2023.

9. Some examples of gender mainstreaming activities during the reporting period include the following:

- (i) In 2022, WIPO integrated gender and IP considerations and guidance into several aspects of work planning for 2023 and beyond. During a mid-year work planning session for all WIPO management and project managers, IP and gender, as well as gender and diversity topics were discussed during a dedicated session. For the first time, during the year-end organizational work planning meeting, a dedicated session on IP and gender and diversity was held as a “cross-sectoral” presentation during which planning for 2023, as well as the 2024/25 biennium were discussed. All WIPO Sectors were provided guidance for incorporating IP and gender considerations and concrete activities into their workplan proposals for 2023. Similar high-level internal guidance was also developed for teams to consider for the 2024/25 biennium program of work and budget.
- (ii) In 2021, WIPO finalized the Guidelines on Inclusive Language and a Toolkit of Basic Principles for Gender-sensitive Communication. The Guidelines were prepared in collaboration with the translators/revisers of the Language Division, and consulted extensively internally. They take into consideration similar guidelines prepared by other entities in the UN system. The Guidelines are available in the six official languages used at WIPO¹⁰ and include two modules: one on gender inclusive language and one on disability inclusive language. The document has been designed to be easy to read and use, with practical references and examples that are often found in the communication pieces produced by WIPO. The Guidelines are modular so that more modules can be added in the future. The Foreword to the Guidelines has been signed by the Director General. The Guidelines have been disseminated to the entire WIPO workforce. The Toolkit was designed to be practical, user-friendly and concrete, and presents the basic principles for gender-sensitive communication, whether written, oral, audio, or visual. The Toolkit includes a checklist, examples, tips and techniques, and a compilation of useful terms. The Toolkit also includes a compilation of the most frequently encountered points of resistance to gender-sensitive communication, with corresponding responses for advocacy.
- (iii) The Secretariat has been collecting data regarding the gender balance at the WIPO Assemblies – an important part of the IP ecosystem – for the past five years and will begin also compiling data regarding gender balance at Standing Committee meetings and at the Chair and Vice-Chair level roles. Data from the Assemblies revealed a positive trend toward more gender balance among member state delegations with female participation growing from 36.7% in 2018 to 41.7% in 2022. However, a disparity at the head of delegation level still existed with 64.9% male head of delegation *versus* 35.1% female indicated at the 2022 Assemblies.
- (iv) WIPO has established and consistently monitored gender parity targets at the P4 and above levels. The targets established for the 2022/2023 biennium are as follows:

Grades	Target
D2	33%
D1	41%
P5	35%
P4	50%

¹⁰ Namely, English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese and Russian.

As of December 2022, WIPO had achieved the target for the P4 level, ahead of the 2023 deadline. These improvements have been supported by targeted action in recruitment, which are covered in WIPO's Annual Report on HR.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION ON IP AND GENDER

10. WIPO established its new Intellectual Property and Gender program in 2022, with the appointment of a Senior Advisor and a Fellow to join the WIPO IP and Gender Champion. During 2022, the IP and Gender team developed the IP and Gender Action Plan (IPGAP), WIPO's first strategic plan framing the organization's work to support and advance women's engagement in all aspects of IP, and representing WIPO's contribution to overarching and worldwide efforts toward achieving economic equality and empowerment for women and girls. Implementation of the IPGAP commenced in 2022 and dovetails with WIPO's 2022–2026 MTSP timeline. It has been created to flow from and complement the MTSP pillars of work, allowing all WIPO Sectors an opportunity to plan and budget accordingly for the IPGAP and related activities in the Work and Budget programs. The vision of the IPGAP is "a world where innovation and creativity by women anywhere are supported by IP for the good of everyone." Through the IPGAP, WIPO will be focusing its work through three pillars:

- (i) Providing support to governments and policymakers with integrating a gender perspective into IP legislation, policies, programs, and projects;
- (ii) Driving research to identify the scope and nature of the gender gap in IP and ways to close the gap; and
- (iii) Continuing existing and piloting new gender-oriented projects and initiatives in the IP environment designed to enhance the IP skills of women and the institutions that support them.

11. To implement the IPGAP, WIPO will be: (i) strengthening and evolving its internal and external collaboration; and (ii) effectively communicating the full range of the Organization's work on IP and gender through a customer-oriented external communications strategy.

12. WIPO has engaged in a range of activities aimed at encouraging women's participation in the international IP system, including piloting projects that help build IP capacity and networking opportunities for women entrepreneurs. Many examples follow in this report. The Organization will be exploring new opportunities to broaden engagement with national entities and other international organizations intersecting with women, innovation, and entrepreneurship to provide WIPO's expertise in IP knowledge and skills to women entrepreneurs, innovators and creators across all industries and regions.

13. WIPO started to develop policy and legislative advice and support for national policymakers aimed at bringing more women and girls into innovative and creative activities, for example, through creating a database of legal provisions and models of policies being implemented or considered relating to IP and gender. A new IP and Gender Integration Seminar is being developed as an introductory program to assist Member States at the beginning stage of exploring policies and practices to encourage and support women's participation in the IP system.

14. At the external communication strategy level, the IPGAP will help continue to build awareness and knowledge of the resources and tools available to entrepreneurs, innovators, and creators and grow understanding of why IP is integral to helping women in their entrepreneurial journeys. A Women and IP Feature Series will be included in the WIPO Magazine. Inspiring and educational success stories featuring innovative women will continue to be featured on WIPO's web and social media platforms. WIPO continued to strengthen its

outreach and collaborations with stakeholders, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), IP associations, academic institutions, and with international organization partners to raise awareness of the IP gender gap and the range of WIPO's efforts and resources to help close the gap.

EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

15. WIPO continued to support women's increased use of the IP system on several fronts and significantly broaden the Organization's initiatives in 2022. This expansion of work followed strengthened internal awareness and wide interest from Member States and the IP community for WIPO to further enhance its services and projects for women entrepreneurs and for policymakers interested in bringing more women into the innovation and IP ecosystem. In addition to the development and kick-off of WIPO's first strategic action plan focused on women and IP described above, WIPO continued to expand its direct on-the-ground activities with women entrepreneurs, national small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) support institutions, and women's associations to provide concrete IP skills knowledge development and training as part of broader economic empowerment and entrepreneurship projects.

THEMATIC ACTIVITIES

Sharing Sessions on Women and IP

16. Following a decision by the CDIP, a forum to raise awareness on the importance of empowering and increasing women's participation in the IP ecosystem was established in 2021 through a series of sharing sessions on "*Closing the Gender Gap in IP*". In addition to raising awareness, the objective of these sessions was to promote the results of WIPO's work in this area, and to bring together stakeholders from various regions to share their experience and practices in addressing the constraints faced by women and girls in accessing the IP system. Three such sessions were held in 2021. At its twenty-eighth session in May 2022, while considering the Report on the Sharing Sessions on Women and IP,¹¹ the Committee expressed appreciation for the successful convening of those three sessions, which looked at the barriers that women face in accessing the IP system, as well as explored good practices and existing multi-stakeholder initiatives in this domain. In 2022, one such session on Women, IP and Tourism took place on November 15, 2022.¹² Through practical examples from local handicraft production and wine tourism through to astrotourism and agritourism, the women experts and entrepreneurs across different regions highlighted how IP rights can be used to support the growth of tourism-related businesses and to encourage women's participation in and contribution to the sector. More than 300 participants from over 110 countries attended the sharing session. This series of sessions will continue with other topics that could help bridge the gender gap in IP.

Mentoring and Matchmaking

17. The year 2019 marked the launch of the WIPO Training, Mentoring and Matchmaking Program on Intellectual Property for Women Entrepreneurs from Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (WEP) Program,¹³ which aims at encouraging women entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity related to traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions by strengthening the capacity of indigenous and local community women entrepreneurs to strategically use IP tools in support of their entrepreneurial activities. The WEP is typically delivered within a one-year period. It has a practical approach and consists of a training phase,

¹¹ See document CDIP/28/8, available at: www.wipo.int/meetings/en/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=569442

¹² Further information can be found at: www.wipo.int/women-and-ip/en/news/2022/news_0006.html

¹³ The project is implemented by the Traditional Knowledge Division of the WIPO Global Challenges and Partnerships Sector.

as well as a mentoring and matchmaking phase. The WEP is delivered in partnership with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the International Trademark Association (INTA). The WEP successfully ran for the first time from 2019 to 2021 (Global WEP 1), followed by a second cycle from 2021 to 2022 (Global WEP 2). In 2022, a regional edition was offered¹⁴ to women entrepreneurs from indigenous peoples and local communities from four countries in the Andean region, namely, from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. Since its inception, the WEP has already supported over 67 women entrepreneurs across the globe.

18. In the context of the WIPO Development Agenda project “*Increasing the Role of Women in Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Encouraging Women in Developing Countries to Use the Intellectual Property System*”, launched in January 2019, a mentorship program was piloted from November 2021 to February 2022. By consulting directly with an international group of expert IP mentors, the program aimed to help a group of female inventors from the pilot countries gain a better understanding of how different IP management strategies may enhance their ability to bring their inventions to market. The program brought together 30 exceptionally qualified IP professionals as mentors and 30 mentees from four sectors: health, information and communications technology, agriculture, and mechanical engineering. Evaluations at the end of the mentorship pilot program revealed that most mentors and mentees had a positive experience, as the mentees gained an understanding of how IP management can be used to support their overall commercialization objectives. Materials and results of the four-year pilot project, which ended in December 2022, are available on a project overview webpage.¹⁵

Skills and Knowledge Building

19. The WIPO Academy strengthened its efforts to close the gender gap in IP knowledge. Between 2016 and 2022, WIPO Academy posted a positive record on gender parity, having continuously reported an overall gender balance in favor of women participants (51-55%) in relevant course offerings. In 2021, at the height of COVID-19, 116,351, and in 2022, 95,112 women enrolled in the WIPO Academy Programs under its Professional Development, Summer Schools, Master’s and IP Colloquia, IP Training Institutes, and Distance Learning.

Academy Program	Female participation 2021	Female participation 2022
Professional Development Program	83	148
WIPO Summer Schools	1,233	837
WIPO Joint Master’s Degrees and IP Colloquiums	117	407
Distance Learning	50,883	47,145
Intellectual Property Training Institutes	64,035	46,575
Overall Female Participants	116,351	95,112

20. Specialized training initiatives were designed and implemented in 2022 to support women in the field of IP:

- (i) Women in Science: Since 2018, the Academy has collaborated with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)-L’Oréal “For Women in Science” Programme to offer a women-only course on the relevance of IP in scientific research. The first post-pandemic edition of the Training Course on IP and the Sciences for the L’Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science Programme was conducted in

¹⁴ In coordination with the Division for Latin America and the Caribbean of the WIPO Regional and National Development Sector.

¹⁵ The webpage can be accessed at: www.wipo.int/women-inventors/en/index.html

Paris on June 24-25, 2022. This annual collaboration was redesigned as a Leadership Program for Women in Science with the support of Funds-in-Trust Korea and comprises IP management workshops and case studies.¹⁶

(ii) Women Entrepreneurs: In 2021, the Academy scaled-up its masterclass and mentoring services to support women entrepreneurs wishing to use IP in their business journeys. In 2022, with the facilitation of the WIPO Global Challenges and Partnerships Sector, the Academy joined United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) eTrade support for women digital business entrepreneurs and started a masterclass series on *IP and eTrade*. Fifty women across 14 countries in East and West Africa participated on October 6 and December 7, 2022. The interactive skills-building lectures on trademarks and business opportunities were conducted online in French and face-to-face in English, addressing the paradigm shift in commercial sectors and the opportunities presented to promote, expand and reach customers more directly and conveniently.¹⁷

World IP Day

21. Work is underway for the 2023 WIPO World IP Day, the theme of which is "*IP and Women: Accelerating Innovation and Creativity*". It aims to celebrate women inventors, creators, and entrepreneurs around the world, as well as their ground-breaking work. The campaign encompasses a diverse range of endeavors and initiatives to raise awareness and promote more inclusive and diverse IP ecosystems to accelerate innovation, creativity and business growth for the benefit of everyone, everywhere. The 2023 campaign has been rolled out in collaboration with Member States and is promoted through WIPO's digital media platforms, website, and with amplification by worldwide partners. World IP Day 2023 will offer opportunities for public engagement, such as through a Video Competition showcasing the theme "*When women enter the IP universe, we accelerate innovation and creativity, and everyone's a winner*", or through interacting with the Gallery, featuring inspiring messages from high-level personalities, endorsing the campaign and encouraging women and girls to engage with the IP system to support their ambitions and goals. World IP Day will also provide a forum for supporters around the world to share information about IP training and/or mentoring opportunities for women to build IP knowledge, skills and networks, and to widely promote their own World IP Day events.

International Women's Day

22. WIPO continued to celebrate International Women's Day on March 8. The occasion has been used to highlight the importance of IP in fostering women's entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity, which in turn contributes to technological advancement, cultural enrichment, and economic growth. In 2022, for the theme, "*Gender equality for a sustainable tomorrow*", WIPO joined over twenty IP offices from around the world in a joint message pledging support for women in creativity and innovation, and renewing commitment to gender equality in the innovation ecosystem. As well, the WIPO Academy offered thirty scholarships for its hybrid courses to female applicants from developing countries, least developed countries, and countries in transition on each occasion of International Women's Day and the International Day of Women and Girls in Science. Similarly, in 2023, WIPO and other IP offices will come together to make a joint message recognizing the theme "*DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality*" and to commit to working together to support and empower women and

¹⁶ In 2023, the Leadership Course will be held in Geneva during the week of the World IP Day. The course includes interactive lectures and group discussions ranging from practical aspects regarding patents and the protection of biotechnology, to using patent information for decision-making in the life sciences.

¹⁷ Work is underway with UNCTAD's eTrade, and International Trade Center (ITC) Academy to further develop knowledge on the benefits that eCommerce brings, as well as new challenges related to safeguarding brands, logos, Internet domain names, designs and the content of women-led websites.

girls to inclusively access the innovation and creative economy to achieve their economic aspirations through the use of IP systems.

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

a) Africa

23. A project in the Chobe district in the Kasane region¹⁸ of Botswana was implemented. Although the baskets woven in this region are the main source of livelihood for many families in the area, the basket weavers design and trade individually, without adhering to any strict production standards. Therefore, they were not obtaining the full commercial potential of their products. Upon request from the national IP authority, WIPO assisted a group of 50 women in Chobe with a number of actions to build their commercial capacity, namely, by: (i) forming an association; (ii) developing their own quality production regulations/standards; (iii) designing the elements of their collective mark; (iv) training users and potential users of the mark to weave according to the new standards; (v) and registering this mark with the IP authority. At the official launch of the mark, the members of the collective attested to improved sales and subsequent impact on their livelihoods. In partnership with Funds-in-Trust Japan, the baskets have gained access to Japanese markets. In collaboration with the Botswana tourism authority, producers were poised to gain access to other markets. Requests for WIPO's assistance were received from neighboring communities to emulate the example of the Chobe collective.

24. Another project in the region¹⁹ was launched in June 2022 to support Namibian women entrepreneurs with generating IP and with leveraging its value for their businesses' competitiveness. The project, "*Namibian Women Entrepreneurs: From Generation to Commercialization of IP Assets*" aims at supporting entrepreneurs with training and mentoring to improve their understanding and use of IP. Fifty entrepreneurs were selected for the project and a tailor made program was developed to be delivered through online and onsite training sessions.²⁰ To ensure sustainability of the project, representatives of Namibia Women in Business, National Youth Council of Namibia, National Commission on Research, Science and Technology and Namibia Trade Forum will also participate in the training.

b) Arab countries

25. Two projects in the Arab region²¹ were launched to support a selected group of women entrepreneurs in local communities in Jordan and Egypt to leverage the use of IP to their product development/branding/packaging, as well as one-on-one mentorship on IP for business use. Both projects are expected to create a local support system to facilitate the registration, management and commercialization of IP rights by female-headed enterprises in local communities and to establish sustainable linkages between their production enterprises and IP.

c) Asia and the Pacific

26. The Asia-Pacific Women Innovators and Entrepreneurs Program²² was launched in 2022, with 12 episodes of weekly webinars, attended by 50 participants every week from Sri Lanka, Nepal, Viet Nam, India, and China, reaching a total of 150 women entrepreneurs and inventors. The program was later expanded to Indonesia with a kick-off session "*IP Conversations with Women Innovators and Entrepreneurs in Indonesia*", with participation by 80 women. The

¹⁸ The region is known for intricate handcrafted baskets woven mostly by women.

¹⁹ The project is managed by the Projects Team of the Regional and National Development Sector (RNDS). The RNDS's restructuring in February 3, 2022, which entailed the establishment of the RNDS Projects team, was carried out with a view to implementing IP cooperation initiatives requested by WIPO Member States high-level authorities.

²⁰ Training will begin in March 2023.

²¹ Both projects are managed by the RNDS Projects Team and are ongoing.

²² Further information is available at: www.wipo.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting_id=71368

weekly interactive one-hour sessions took participants through the different phases in a typical innovative/entrepreneurial journey through the lens of IP, from ideation to experimentation to the launch, development and growth. Participants also benefited from speed mentoring, matchmaking activities, networking, and workshops with experts from WIPO and the region.

27. In parallel to the training and mentoring activities, over 30 interviews were conducted with inspiring women entrepreneurs, innovators and founders of women support groups, whose stories and examples would help inspire other women. These stories, featuring women from Bhutan,²³ Papua New Guinea,²⁴ Nepal,²⁵ Indonesia,²⁶ Cambodia,²⁷ India²⁸ and many other countries from the region, were published in the WIPO website and promoted through social media channels. A special edition of the regional newsletter dedicated to women in IP was published in March 2022.²⁹

d) Latin America and the Caribbean

28. In this region, WIPO's gender-related activities have been governed by the Regional Program on IP, Innovation and Gender Equality,³⁰ which aims to: (i) link the existent or foreseen gender-oriented public policies to the IP ecosystem, in order to encourage gender equality and empower women by promoting their innovative potential; and (ii) include gender sensitive managerial practices in the work of IP Offices of Latin America. Since its inception, four Regional Meetings on IP, Innovation and Gender Equality have been held.³¹ During the last meeting in 2022, attended by the Directors of 11 Latin American IP Offices, UN Women and a regional gender expert also participated in the session. The event allowed for the exchange of views on the need and importance of incorporating a gender perspective in public policies related to innovation, IP, and development. The participants highlighted the importance of advancing actions in the IP offices in the collection of IP data with a gender perspective and the formulation of indicators that collect more details of the participation of women in the IP ecosystem.

29. The Latin American Network of IP and Gender was created through a memorandum of understanding among four IP Offices in the region in 2021. In 2022, six additional offices joined the Network, bringing its total membership to ten.³² An additional three countries have formalized their incorporation.³³ WIPO proposed the conceptual approach of the Network, including its structure and functions. WIPO also facilitated and participated in the General Assembly meetings of the Network, and supported the development of actions in the context of its Technical Committees, in particular, the organization of a contest for innovative women. In addition, support was provided for the development of the Network's webpage, as well as for the inclusion of Portuguese and English languages.

30. Another leading program on IP and gender piloted in the region is the *Online Course: Introducing the gender perspective in the functions of Industrial Property Offices in Latin America*. Two editions of the Course have been developed with participation from 15 IP Offices. There were 35 participants in 2021 and 36 participants in 2022. The Course aimed at

²³ The story is available at: www.wipo.int/ipadvantage/en/details.jsp?id=12454

²⁴ The story is available at: www.wipo.int/ipadvantage/en/details.jsp?id=12386

²⁵ The story is available at: www.wipo.int/ipadvantage/en/articles/article_0288.html

²⁶ The story is available at: www.wipo.int/ipadvantage/en/details.jsp?id=12545

²⁷ The story is available at: www.wipo.int/ipadvantage/en/details.jsp?id=12462

²⁸ The story is available at: www.wipo.int/ipadvantage/en/details.jsp?id=12503

²⁹ mailchi.mp/wipo.int/special-edition-on-women-in-asia-pacific

³⁰ This program was launched in 2017 to support the implementation of WIPO's Policy on Gender Equality.

³¹ Namely, Colombia in 2017, Uruguay in 2018, Peru in 2019, and Chile in 2022.

³² Namely, Chile, Peru, Costa Rica, Colombia, joined by Argentina, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico and Uruguay, with WIPO as an honorary member.

³³ Cuba, Panama and Paraguay.

increasing the understanding of the most relevant elements of gender equality in IP Offices, and at promoting the exchange of information and good practices on this matter. Three modules were delivered on: (i) Fundamentals for work on gender equality in industrial property offices; (ii) Mainstream gender content within IP offices; and (iii) Gender indicators. The training included not only theoretical content, but also case studies. In 2020, only one IP office (Peru) had a Policy/Plan related to gender. At the time of preparation of this report, six Offices had a policy and/or structure linked to gender issues; two Offices were working on the design of such instruments. Additionally, six Offices have incorporated gender data collection mechanisms associated with the filing of IP rights.³⁴

31. Since 2021, a Project on IP for Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers has been implemented. In total, 83³⁵ women have been beneficiaries in six Member States.³⁶ This project focuses on creating IP skills for professional women in the field of STEM, enabling them to increase the value of their creations, according to their business needs (tailor-made training). The project also provides mentoring to incorporate IP management as part of their development/business/innovation plans. As of December 2022, the project produced the following consolidated results/impact: three patent applications, two patent drafting, one patent licensing agreement draft, one contract draft to create a spin-off company, one trademark registration, and one software protection drafting.

32. In 2022, the development of the Project on IP for Women Entrepreneurs: Creating Value through IP was started. The project has benefited 40 entrepreneurial women from four countries in Latin America.³⁷ The objective is to empower a group of women entrepreneurs in each beneficiary country, by raising their awareness of the important role of IP protection and its strategic use in their enterprises. The Pilot aims to build IP skills of the participating women, provide them with simple and practical IP tools, support these women entrepreneurs in using IP for product development, and strengthen their business capacities. The project includes a set of speedy mentoring and advice for women entrepreneurs to effectively incorporate IP into their business strategy.

33. In 2022, a similar project for women entrepreneurs was launched for the Caribbean, with Jamaica as the pilot country, in cooperation with the Jamaica Intellectual Property Office (JIPO) and the Jamaica Business Development Cooperation (JBDC). The project began with a needs assessment report of the Jamaican landscape for women entrepreneurs. The aim is to build skills and to promote links between institutions that support women entrepreneurs and innovators to raise awareness of IP, provide access to peer-to-peer networking, and create partnerships between them and potential professional networks/partners. It will also provide practical mentoring, with participation of ITC's *SheTrades* initiative, to be launched in the Caribbean, UN Women, and Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) initiatives. Over 32 women will benefit from the program.

e) Least Developed Countries (LDCs)

34. The Organization has started to implement a program for women entrepreneurs and IP in LDCs since 2021, starting with a pilot Project on IP for Women Entrepreneurs for 70 women in Uganda.³⁸ The innovative approach included mentoring support and training of stakeholders throughout the IP journeys of the 70 mentees to use IP for their product development and commercialization. As a result, 70 trademark certificates were registered with the Uganda

³⁴ Peru, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Colombia, Mexico and Chile.

³⁵ 35 women for the pilot in 2021, and 48 women for the second edition in 2022.

³⁶ Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Mexico and Peru.

³⁷ Namely, Argentina, El Salvador, Panama, and Paraguay.

³⁸ The program is implemented by the Division for Least-Developed Countries of the WIPO Regional and National Development Sector.

Registration Services Bureau for products, ranging from fashion wears, cosmetic products, packed food products through to liquid detergent, solid soap and wines.³⁹ The Project's practical mentorship phase on commercialization and entrepreneurship focused on impacts on the ground, namely: (i) amplifying business opportunities for women entrepreneurs by promoting their brands and connecting them to more manufacturers and customers; (ii) increasing the sale of the products; (iii) contributing to alleviating poverty by creating local jobs; and (iv) strengthening business networking among the 70 women entrepreneurs. The pilot project also enabled the beneficiary women entrepreneurs to share their experiences and to inspire others to garner the potential of IP for the growth of their businesses.

f) Transition and Developed countries

35. In order to promote more active engagement of women in IP in the Central Asian, Caucasus and Eastern European Countries, several practical regional and national webinars for SMEs and other stakeholders were organized on the Madrid and Hague Systems with focus on women and on youth. The participation was open to all countries in the region and also welcomed participants from other regions. The overall participation of women was higher than 60 %.

36. In 2022, an umbrella project on *Bridging the Gaps in the IP Ecosystem in developed countries* was launched. In this context, one project focuses on IP and Women Entrepreneurs. A webinar launching the project, held on October 27, 2022,⁴⁰ brought 1,504 registered and 538 active participants from over 107 countries, with an estimated 81% women attendees. The post-event survey indicated an overall satisfaction rate of 98%. Follow-up activities will include studies on IP filing behaviour, individualized support interactions, and specialized IP clinics integrated in the form of workshops. A first workshop was held on December 8, 2022 discussed the IP Diagnostic Tool.⁴¹

THE WAY FORWARD

37. WIPO will continue to strengthen its efforts to achieve greater gender equality in the field of IP. To this end, new initiatives and projects are underway and in planning, such as:

- (i) In Africa, women comprise almost half the labor force in Agriculture. In collaboration with the regional IP organizations and the African Union Commission, WIPO will organize a conference in 2023, targeting African women in agribusiness. Based on deliberations at the Conference, a coaching and mentoring project will be launched with 30 competitively selected women from across Africa. The project is expected to empower participants over a 6-12 month period with tailored-IP knowledge, tools and resources needed for their businesses to thrive. It will enhance participants' IP portfolios to improve capacity for regional and international registrations, and to enhance their access to market opportunities created by regional and continental trade arrangements, such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).
- (ii) Together with the League of Arab States (LAS), a virtual regional Arab meeting on Innovation and IP Ecosystems in the Arab region and Women Entrepreneurs is scheduled to take place in 2023. The Meeting will address the role of the innovation and IP ecosystems in advancing Arab women's entrepreneurship skills and offer practical and user-friendly tools on how to use the innovation and IP ecosystem to

³⁹ The pilot project in Uganda will be completed end of March 2023.

⁴⁰ Further information can be found at: https://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting_id=73128

⁴¹ The next workshop is scheduled on March 9, 2023.

their advantage. It will also provide an opportunity for networking and sharing of best practices among women entrepreneurs in the Arab region.

- (iii) A virtual one-day meeting is envisaged for Iraqi women entrepreneurs, following the conclusion of the IP and SMEs Intermediaries Project for Iraq, which is on-going and expected to be concluded before the end of 2023.
- (iv) Following the expression of interest from Djibouti, an initiative on IP and Women Entrepreneurs in Djibouti is being planned in 2023. Consultations are underway with the relevant officials in Djibouti for the identification of the Djiboutian Association of Women Entrepreneurs as the main partner in the initiative. Once this partner is identified, the specific scope and outcome of this initiative, as well as the targeted beneficiaries are expected to be discussed by WIPO with the relevant Djibouti stakeholders.
- (v) In Asia-Pacific countries, the weekly program for women entrepreneurs and inventors will be continued in more countries, with expert clinics and mentoring sessions to follow thereafter. In-country and in-person meetings, training and networking sessions will be commenced in 2023 to strengthen the linkages and deliver the message of IP in a more tangible manner. A women in video-gaming session will be organized in cooperation with other regions. WIPO will engage the countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to establish a task force to work on women-focused programs through the national IP Offices. Branding assistance sessions for women entrepreneurs in ASEAN, as well as in Bhutan, Mongolia, Nepal, and the Pacific islands will also be conducted. In addition, WIPO will embark on a women in STEM on-the-job training pilot program, focusing on technology management and deployment in three countries, working with local interlocutors and technical universities in Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka. The physical engagements will be supported by and feed into an online community for Asia Pacific to continuously reach more women and provide a steady stream of IP materials and information through social media. Inspiring stories of women using IP and benefiting from WIPO services will be gathered and published throughout the year.
- (vi) As a follow-up to the Regional Program on IP, Innovation and Gender Equality in Latin America, the next Regional Meeting will be organized in San Jose, Costa Rica, on April 19-21, 2023. The main objective is to continue the exchange of views on the need and importance of incorporating a gender perspective in public policies related to innovation, IP and development, as well as to establish regional collaborative actions to strengthen the Latin American Network of IP and Gender. It also seeks to advance actions in the IP offices for the collection of IP data with gender perspective and the formulation of indicators that will provide more details on the participation of women in the IP ecosystem.
- (vii) In the second half of 2023, the First WIPO Regional Forum on IP and Women in STEM: Building a community of women in IP in the LAC region will be organized with the support of the Funds-in-Trust Japan. The objective of this Forum is to create a network of women who have participated in the two editions of the WIPO project on IP and Women in STEM careers, developed between 2020 and 2023. The network will allow participants to exchange experiences, best practices and enhance the IP knowledge acquired during the implementation of the project. These exchanges not only will take place among peers, so that they can discover new ways of applying IP to the development of their projects, but will also include groups of other stakeholders who can facilitate access to funding opportunities, information and technical support. The ultimate goal will be to build community, promote innovation and women's leadership in the context of technological innovation.

Finally, the Forum will be a suitable space to establish inter-institutional and/or international links (mainly with Japan) in relation to supporting initiatives of women innovators in science.

- (viii) The success of the women entrepreneurs and IP project implementation in the LDCs has allowed WIPO to build a sustainable project model, resulting in its replication in other LDCs, such as Sudan, Cambodia, and Bhutan. The Gambia, Liberia, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, and the United Republic of Tanzania have also expressed interest in replicating the model.
- (ix) A regional edition of the WEP Program for women entrepreneurs from local communities in the Central European and Baltic States region (CEBS WEP) has been developed and will be launched in 2023. The CEBS WEP is designed to support tradition-based women's entrepreneurship, innovation, and creativity and will focus on traditional textiles and designs, including lace, embroidery, carpet making, and blueprinting. The project will commence with a five-day practical workshop scheduled to take place from March 6 to 10 March, 2023. The project aims at providing a mentoring and matchmaking phase through January 2024. Through the WEP, communities are expected to build capacity in IP, including in the digital economy, and acquire basic knowledge of related fields useful in an entrepreneurial context, such as business modelling, marketing, social media strategy, digital storytelling, project management, as well as partnership building (e.g. with fashion industry designers). Participants will benefit from the support of a mentor to further develop and implement their IP strategy, as well as their tradition-based businesses and projects. In addition, becoming a part of a region-wide community of WEP, participants will be able to amplify networking opportunities among themselves, as well as with experts, industry representatives, WIPO partners and colleagues.
- (x) A report on the Transformation of the Economy *via* Design – Women and Innovation is underway. The report, expected in the middle of 2023, will explore the engagement of women in design creation in the Central European and Baltic States (CEBS).
- (xi) A project on Videogame Development: A Quest for IP is scheduled to be launched in March 2023. The project was developed with inclusion and diversity in mind. The two co-hosts of the podcast interviews are women (Ms. Allison Mages and Ms. Micaela Mantegna - a Women in Games Ambassador) and two of the interviewed companies are represented by successful women. Additionally, a side event on Women in Gaming is planned on April 28, 2023 as part of the World IP Day celebrations. The event will showcase success stories and advice in the context of IP and marketing. Steps are being taken to explore if IP-related research results could be presented on diversity in the videogame industry.
- (xii) In collaboration with performers' organizations, including AISGE in Spain, WIPO will examine the gender gap in the audiovisual sector. Venues of collaboration with ITC *SheTrades* are also being explored. The aim is to deliver a series of webinars on Gender and IP in developed countries, with a focus on Textiles and Apparel.
- (xiii) Several projects⁴² designed for women entrepreneurs are underway, including:

⁴² These projects are managed by the RNDS Projects Team.

- a) Women in STEM: Based on the experience gained in Latin America and using a similar template, a project for women in STEM in selected Lusophone countries is being developed. Discussions have commenced with Portugal, and engagement with other Lusophone countries is planned. This project is expected to help drive inter-regional cooperation involving Europe, Latin America and Africa. The project envisages empowering women in STEM careers by developing their IP skills, enabling them to create value from their technological developments. The project outline will vary according to the Member State's reality and needs. For instance, Portuguese Authorities highlighted Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a field of interest.
 - b) IP and Women Project for Women Entrepreneurs in Embroidery and Related Crafts Business in Pakistan: The project aims to empower through IP women entrepreneurs in embroidery and related handicraft businesses in selected regions of Pakistan. In particular, it will aim at raising their awareness of the value of IP, and providing them with useful IP tools to create their own brands and designs. The project will be implemented during the whole year of 2023 in different phases, comprising a training component, mentoring component, and hands-on guidance. The RNDP Projects Team is working closely with the IP Organization of Pakistan on this project. A consensus has been reached on the framework and implementation strategy of the project.
 - c) Use of IP by Women-led SMEs in Bangladesh: The pilot project will support a small group of women entrepreneurs (e.g. those in home-based small handicraft businesses) to use IP (primarily trademarks and industrial designs) to improve the branding and packaging of their individual products. Through an IP training and hands-on mentorship approach, the project will aim to improve product value, competitiveness and facilitate access to new markets. In addition, the project will also support Bangladesh's envisaged graduation from the LDCs category in 2026, by facilitating the use of IP as a tool for growth and development. Discussions have commenced with a national project group comprising of relevant ministers and SMEs to finalize the implementation strategy.
- (xiv) In collaboration with UNESCO, a selected group of scientists from the UNESCO-L'Oréal "for Women in Science" Program will be invited to the inaugural "Leadership Workshop on IP, Science and Innovation for Women Scientists" at WIPO in Geneva, Switzerland between April 25 to 28, 2023. The workshop will focus on the potential journey of their research from "concept to market," and how IP rights can be leveraged as a tool for commercial success. Participants will interact with established female scientist-entrepreneurs, learn from their success stories and engage in immersive problem-solving exercises. The workshop will also comprise a Roundtable with leading female innovators and IP professionals on the side-lines of World IP Day on April 26, 2023. Steps will be taken to build on the collaboration with UNCTAD by continuing to offer the Masterclass series on IP and eTrade for Women Digital Entrepreneurs, and special scholarships for follow-up/continual training through WIPO Academy courses.

38. *The Committee is invited to take note of the information contained in this document.*

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