



Webinar on Technical Assistance in times of COVID - Challenges, Opportunities and Lessons Learned

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Impact of COVID-19 on WIPO's Capacity-Building

■ Challenges:

- Cancellation of all in-person training and education courses.
- Travel bans for participants and experts.
- Ensuring WIPO meets its duty of care to WIPO Academy course participants and experts including through repatriating participants.
- Need to shift quickly to online/hybrid teaching and supporting external partners with this shift which was most challenging in many developing and least developed countries.
- Need to employ new teaching methodologies for online education and training.
- Meeting the demand for significant increase in applications for WIPO distance learning courses.
- Providing the Academy's elearning platform and expertise to support other areas of WIPO in shifting their capacity-building activities online.

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■ Opportunities:

- Opportunity to accelerate the digital transformation of IP education and training.
- Chance to reflect on what we offer and how we can enhance practical IP skills-building as part of our courses.
- Reaching out to a wider range and variety of participants on the national and regional levels and with no financial implications.
- Recognition of the need to add value by integrating certification and accreditation to our services.
- Opportunity to redesign professional development training and other course content to meet the requirements of our user community.
- Savings were invested in our IT platform with increased functionalities and accessibility.

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■ Lessons Learned:

- Pandemic generated an increase in the number of people looking to participate in online learning.
- Within WIPO there was a shift across the house to providing capacity-building online instead of in-person leading to an increase in demand for the Academy's eLearning platform and expertise in remote learning.
- Advantages and disadvantages to online learning:
 - Advantages – increased access to IP education and training for global participation, reduced costs and affordability of elearning, compatible with different learning styles.
 - Disadvantages – reduced networking, lack of social interaction, managing time zone differences, resistance from some partners and participants to shift fully online, difficulty in organizing discussions particularly for large gatherings, language barriers and lack of simultaneous interpretation at initial stages, technology and internet connectivity issues .

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■ Lessons Learned:

- Different skill set required by partners and experts to teach and train online and the need for more sharing of appropriate methodologies for the online environment.
- Importance of focusing on women and youth and all other categories of individuals that were affected by the pandemic.
- Work more closely with economic actors on the national level to assist in post-COVID economic recovery.
- Need to scale up investments in IT infrastructure and learning/teaching platforms and to make greater use of new technology developments such as AI.
- Value in expanding “virtual” networks for more effective use of resources through partnerships.

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- WIPO's COVID-19 Response – Support package for Member States:
 - Providing technical assistance and legislative advice to Member States, upon request.
 - Supporting countries in building technology transfer capacity and knowledge, including support through the WIPO TISC Network.
 - Providing resources and capacity building to Member States on the use of patent information and patent analytics.
 - Technical assistance and capacity building for Member States in the area of post-COVID economic recovery e.g.:
 - Support for women exporters and entrepreneurs.
 - Assistance in the use of trademarks and GIs.
 - Strengthening human capacity through the practical IP skills-building courses and training offered by the WIPO Academy and national IP Training Institutions, especially for SMEs, entrepreneurs, women and youth.
 - Facilitating access to IP educational materials in digital format.