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WORLD INTELLECTUAL
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**WIPO REGIONAL SEMINAR ON SUPPORT SERVICES FOR
INVENTORS, VALUATION AND COMMERCIALIZATION OF
INVENTIONS AND RESEARCH RESULTS**

organized by
the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
in cooperation with
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WIPO'S COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, CONCERNING
THE ENCOURAGEMENT AND PROMOTION OF INVENTIVE
AND INNOVATIVE ACTIVITY

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Promotion of inventive and creative activity all over the world through recognition and protection of intellectual property rights is among the principal mandates of WIPO.

But this will remain only a nice slogan, if we do not try to bring the intellectual property system closer to the users, in particular those in developing countries, who are individual inventors, small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), R&D organizations or university researchers.

An individual or a company will be able to benefit fully from the advantages offered by the intellectual property system, only if they understand the functioning of the system and how to use it.

The 1998-1999 WIPO Program and Budget commits WIPO to further extend its programs aimed at encouraging and rewarding inventive and creative endeavor particularly in developing countries, the promotion of such endeavor being the very *raison d'être* of the intellectual property system. The main task and objective of the Innovation Promotion Section will be to implement and translate into action that commitment.

The recent WIPO Assemblies of Member States emphasized the importance of developing the intellectual property system in such a way that it could maximize economic and social benefits and which takes full account of a nation's current and potential intellectual property assets. In this context, the cooperation for development will extend to broader economic and trade interest, as well as to other matters of interest and concern to developing countries, such as indigenous cultures, traditional knowledge, biodiversity, licensing and other technology-transfer arrangements, use of industrial property information for research, development and technology transfer, new or innovative approaches to alternative dispute resolution and more effective IPR enforcement mechanisms.

Greater possibilities for using intellectual property in industrial, social, cultural and environmental development, and the broadening user base, have accentuated calls on intellectual property offices to modernize, simplify and expand public services, and to provide access to technological, legal and other information.

While focusing on the long term, it should be interesting to develop activities that create indigenous capacity to meet future challenges. These activities will seek, facilitate and encourage integration of intellectual property systems into national economic, cultural, technological and social development, to create sustainable institutions and to deepen national expertise.

The WIPO Program responds to the growing international awareness and recognition that effective protection and the proper use of IPRs contribute to fundamental economic and developmental processes, manifested through successful access to global export markets, enhanced domestic competitiveness and productivity, increased transfer, creation and application of new technologies, and more effective incentives for investment, creativity and innovation.

As a key element of the national infrastructure for long-term industrial, commercial and technological viability, a sound intellectual property system must link a country's innovative and productive energies with technological and commercial activities, thus promoting, in the long run, stable sustainable economic growth and human development.

Special effort will be undertaken to bring into the mainstream of intellectual property users the disadvantaged groups, such as women, youth and other members of the community, who can also benefit from intellectual property protection.

The use of modern and widely accepted business and commercial practices and state-of-the-art information technology will be fostered, in consultation with the intended beneficiaries, particularly SMEs, R&D organizations, technology managers.

These activities will aim at encouraging technology transfer and development, improving the conditions for development and commercialization of inventions and other intellectual property creations.

In respect of the promotion of innovation, inventions and creativity, the WIPO Assemblies of Member States have approved the following activities to be undertaken during the period 1998-1999:

- development and promotion of industrial and social uses of intellectual property, by assisting traditional and new target groups of users to exploit the intellectual property system for their individual and collective benefit, and for overall national development; promoting the use of industrial property information; promoting protection and valorization of indigenous creations and innovations; establishing and strengthening user organizations; and promoting public knowledge and the national skills base, including the capacity for teaching and training.
- exploitation of intellectual property assets for national development, through commercialization of innovations, licensing and other technology transfer schemes, developing the use of trademarks, geographical indications and industrial design for product and market development, identification and selection of technological strategies based on patent information, collective management of copyright, and promotion of SME-related activities.
- strengthening user organizations (inventors, patent and trademark agents, copyright collecting societies, broadcasters, artists, performers, chambers of commerce and industry, etc.) with complementary activities to develop information materials and disseminate them through all available media, and targeted projects to identify and involve those beneficiary groups yet to be involved in development of the intellectual property system.
- development of new intellectual property teaching and training curricula, courses and materials, tailored for use in schools of law, engineering and business administration.

- promotion of innovative and inventive activities through cooperation with national authorities, inventors' associations and IFIA.
- development of partnerships with national agencies concerned with assessment, valuation and commercialization of inventions.

The objective of WIPO's activities aimed at encouraging the promotion of inventive and creative activity, is to create and widen opportunities for inventors, researchers and SMEs of developing countries to offer the results of their creative work (inventions, research results, software, services, etc.) to national industries and thus to contribute to the economic and social progress, and, at the same time to better protect and commercialize their intellectual property in the international marketplace.

The main objectives of the WIPO programs and activities are:

- to promote protection and valuing of indigenous creations and innovations;
- to establish and strengthen user organizations;
- to develop public knowledge of intellectual property;
- to offer skills and knowledge enabling users to assess the commercial or market value of inventions and others creations;
- to equip user organizations with the right information, tools, techniques and strategies for protecting and exploiting their intellectual property assets;
- to expand and improve the quality of the public's knowledge of intellectual property.

It is expected that the program will produce the following results:

- greater use of industrial property information in research and development;
- facilitation of the commercialization of inventions;
- stronger user organizations, in particular inventors' associations and copyright collective management societies;
- improved public knowledge and greater integration of an informed approach to intellectual property in a wide range of economic and social sectors.

These activities are developed and implemented by the Innovation Promotion Section in cooperation with the WIPO Regional Bureaus and other divisions and units of the organization.

The activities of the Innovation Promotion Section are demand driven. The services offered focus on the users of the intellectual property system in developing and countries in transition, including inventors, SMEs, business men, investors, innovation managers, technology managers and researchers. Special efforts are made to facilitate the use of the intellectual property system by disadvantaged groups such as women, youth and other members of the community who should also benefit from intellectual property protection.

Special attention is given to the creation of awareness about the benefits and use of the intellectual property system. The objective is to encourage active use and management of intellectual property rights, including assessment of intellectual property rights and resources, development of inventions and technology transfer, improving conditions for development and commercialization of indigenous inventions and other intellectual property creations. Strengthening users' organizations, such as inventors associations, innovation centers, patent and trademark agents, chambers of commerce and industry, etc., is another aspect of the activities of the Section.

In implementing the various activities, the staff of the Section will make increasing use of information technologies, the IPDL (Intellectual Property Digital Libraries) and the Internet.

In line with the mandate of WIPO, and the objectives of its program, the Innovation Promotion Section will be responsible for implementing the program and activities related to:

- design, develop and implement cost-effective activities with a long-term focus on creating indigenous capacity to meet future national development challenges, in particular, to enhance the management of intellectual property rights by creators, inventors, researchers and SMEs of developing countries;
- develop and implement programs and projects aimed at the creation of national and regional invention and innovation support structures, which will provide legal and technical support to inventors, researchers, R&D organizations and innovative SMEs in developing countries;
- assist in establishing and strengthening user's organizations such as inventors associations or innovation centers, associations of SMEs or chambers of commerce, maintains contacts and develop cooperation with national and regional associations of inventors, including cooperation with the International Federation of Inventors' Associations (IFIA) and other Association of Innovation Centers (e.g. Association of University Technology Managers);

- establish contacts with and develop cooperation among innovation centers, inventors' support structures, university innovation centers, national or local chambers of commerce and industry and similar organizations in industrialized and developing countries;
- provide assistance in setting-up national creativity and innovation promotion programs and funds (in cooperation with government authorities, banks, financial institutions, venture capitalists, existing innovation funds, chambers of commerce and industry, etc.);
- provide assistance in establishing structures for the assessment and valuation of inventions and research results (at the national level), their technical feasibility, market and commercialization potential;
- provide assistance to and cooperate with organizers of exhibitions of inventions and new technologies, competitions for inventors, book fairs and creativity contests at the national and/or regional levels;
- encourage and assist in the exploitation of intellectual property assets for national development (including identification and selection of technological strategies based on patent information, patenting strategies for SMEs, commercialization of innovations and inventions, licensing and transfer of technology, use of trademarks, geographical indications and industrial design for product development and market penetration);
- develop and operate specific IP services for individual inventors and SMEs (facilitate access of inventors, researchers and SMEs in developing countries to patent information, advise on technological information services related to industrial property and available on the Internet, etc.);
- operate and further develop the WIPO Gold Medal Awards Scheme for Inventors and Innovative Enterprises;
- explore the feasibility and propose the creation of specific WIPO Awards schemes for encouraging organizations active in the protection and promotion of copyrights (related to authors, composers, painters, sculptors, etc.) and related rights (performers and producers);
- coordinate and develop cooperation with the Association for Teaching and Research in Intellectual Property (ATRIP);
- prepare and publish studies, analyses, directories, publicity and awareness, creating publications and other reference material on matters related to promotion and encouragement of creative, inventive and innovative activities; explore the possibility of publishing a periodical information newsletter, included on the Internet.

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