

## **Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP)**

**Twenty-Eighth Session**  
**Geneva, May 16 to 20, 2022**

**SUMMARY REPORT ON THE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM HELD IN THE CONTEXT OF THE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA PROJECT ON INCREASING THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP, ENCOURAGING WOMEN IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO USE THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY SYSTEM**

*prepared by the Secretariat*

1. One of the deliverables of the Development Agenda (DA) project on “Increasing the Role of Women in Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Encouraging Women in Developing Countries to use the Intellectual Property System” (document CDIP/21/12 Rev.) was to establish a mentorship program for women inventors and entrepreneurs from the project’s beneficiary countries.

2. The Annex to this document contains a summary report on the above-mentioned mentorship program, held between November 2021 to February 2022.

3. *The CDIP is invited to take note of the information contained in the Annex to this document.*

[Annex follows]

## **Summary Report on the Mentorship Program Delivered in the Context of the Development Agenda Project on Increasing the Role of Women in Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Encouraging Women in Developing Countries to Use the Intellectual Property System**

An international intellectual property (IP) mentorship program was piloted from November 2021 to February 2022 in the context of the WIPO Development Agenda project on [Increasing the Role of Women in Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Encouraging Women in Developing Countries to Use the Intellectual Property System](#).

One of the activities undertaken in the context of the above-mentioned project was to conduct national assessments in each of the pilot countries (Mexico, Oman, Pakistan, and Uganda) on the situation of women inventors in terms of their use of the IP system and the availability of support. The assessments were expected to identify, amongst others, potential mentors in each country and to build a roster of local mentors. To complement this effort and to support the women inventors that are engaged in this project, it was decided to offer them an opportunity to work with a group of international mentors that would support them in their efforts to bring their inventions to the market. The goal of this pilot initiative was to build skills and the IP management knowledge that the participating mentees can apply to commercializing their inventions.

The mentees were put forward by the participating national IP offices. A group of international IP experts recruited from law firms, incubators, and companies were brought together as mentors to provide support to the mentees on a volunteer basis. There were two mentors identified by each of the participating countries, who also joined the cohort of international mentors.

The Program brought together 30 mentors and 30 mentees from four sectors: health, ICT, agriculture, and mechanical engineering. Each mentor was matched with a mentee, based on the information provided in questionnaires submitted at the outset by both mentors and mentees. They were each provided with a framework that included: (a) homework to be done by the mentee to prepare for the meeting, and (b) guidance for the mentor in conducting those meetings. The mentors and mentees had a period of four months to conduct four one-on-one sessions of an hour each.

To kick off the program, WIPO hosted an online opening session to which all mentors and mentees were invited. The objective of this session was to introduce the program, indicate some ground rules as to how the program would run and to encourage and motivate the participants. Following the launch, the mentees made their appointments with their mentors and following the structure provided to them, participated in the meetings and discussed with the mentors on some preliminary steps for managing their IP in order to take their inventions to market.

Over the course of the program, opportunities were created for mentees in each country to meet each other and to meet the WIPO team. Feedback about the program was solicited at regular intervals. This provided valuable information as to how the program was unfolding. At the end of the program, the mentors and mentees were requested to respond to an evaluation questionnaire.

The program attracted exceptionally qualified IP professionals from around the world to give of their time on a voluntary basis. The evaluations 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. There was a general endorsement for repeating the program.

A methodology, including a comprehensive set of materials, was developed by the Project Manager. It can form the basis for mainstreaming such a program within WIPO at the end of the project implementation, if appropriate.

[End of Annex and of document]