

Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP)

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COMPLETION REPORT OF THE 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. The Annex to the present document contains the Completion Report 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. The report covers the entire period of the project implementation, from January 2019 to December 2022.

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

[Annex follows]

PROJECT SUMMARY	
<u>Project Code</u>	DA_1_10_12_19_31_01
<u>Title</u>	Increasing the Role of Women in Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Encouraging Women in Developing Countries to Use the Intellectual Property System
<u>Development Agenda Recommendation</u>	Recommendations 1; 10; 12; 19; and 31.
<u>Project Budget</u>	Total project budget: 415 000 Swiss francs allocated for non-personnel resources.
<u>Project Duration</u>	48 months
<u>Key WIPO Sectors/Areas Involved in the Project Implementation</u>	Implementing Sector: IP and Innovation Ecosystems
<u>Brief Description of Project</u>	<p>The project aimed at increasing the participation of women inventors and innovators in the national innovation system by supporting them in making better use of the IP system.</p> <p>To this end, the project sought to assist and support women inventors and innovators to broaden their awareness, knowledge and use of the IP system through better support programs, access to mentorships and opportunities to network. The core of the project was to create or strengthen national capacities to provide IP support to women inventors.</p> <p>The project had two broad groups of activities, namely:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. The first group was general and foundational in nature and was not focused on any particular country. It included a literature review on the challenges faced by women inventors in using the IP system, a guide on startups and the IP issues of relevance to them, stories of women inventors from around the world, and a collection of good practices and models to support women inventors. ii. The second group was nationally focused. In this group of activities, the focus was on the four pilot countries: Mexico, Oman, Pakistan and Uganda. In each pilot country, a national assessment was conducted to determine the situation of women inventors, their use of the IP system, the challenges they face, potential support systems, <i>etc.</i> Based on the information gathered, recommendations were made on the nature of IP support that should be provided to

	<p>them, and how that support should be structured and delivered.</p>
<p><u>Project Manager</u></p>	<p>Ms. Tamara Nanayakkara, Counsellor, IP for Business Division, IP and Innovation Ecosystems Sector</p>
<p><u>Links to Expected Results in the Program and Budget</u></p>	<p>Program and Budget 2018/19 and 2020/21</p> <p>E.R. III.2. Enhanced human resource capacities able to deal with the broad range of requirements for the effective use of IP for development in developing countries, LDCs and countries with economies in transition.</p> <p>E.R. IV.2. Enhanced access to, and use of, IP information by IP institutions and the public to promote innovation and creativity.</p> <p>E.R. III.6. Increased capacity of SMEs, universities and research institutions to successfully use IP to support innovation.</p> <p>Program and Budget 2022/23</p> <p>E.R. 4.4. More innovators, creators, SMEs, universities, research institutions and communities leverage IP successfully.</p>
<p><u>Overview of the Project Implementation</u></p>	<p>Following the adoption of the project in May 2018, work began by taking the necessary steps to identify suitable experts to deliver the project outputs and activities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activities falling in the first group (not focused on any particular country). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selection of experts was finalized during the first three months of 2019, and contracts were issued for the preparation of the literature review; the development of the guide; the collection of good practices; and stories of women inventors and innovators on their experiences in protecting and bringing to market their inventions and innovative outputs. • By the end of June 2019, the Challenges for Women Inventors and Innovators in Using the Intellectual Property System - A Literature Review was completed. By December 2020, the Policy Approaches to Close the IP Gender Gap - Practices to Support Access to the Intellectual Property System for Female Innovators, Creators and Entrepreneurs was completed. 2. Activities falling in the second group (focused on beneficiary countries). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the selection criteria contained in the project document (CDIP/22/14 Rev.), three pilot countries (in addition

to Mexico) were selected, namely: Oman, Pakistan and Uganda.

- National experts, for undertaking an assessment on the situation of women inventors in each of the pilot countries, outlining the challenges they face, identifying initiatives that support them, mentorship possibilities, legal and financial support and a center or a focal point that can coordinate the delivery of IP based support to women inventors were identified by June 2019 and the reports completed by December 2020.

Following the completion of these reports, meetings were organized for the benefit of each country to present the findings of the reports and to discuss with the stakeholders the way forward. In view of the situation related to the global health pandemic, these meetings were organized in an online environment. The first half of the virtual meeting focused on the presentation of the findings of the challenges faced by women inventors and a more in-depth discussion of the findings by a panel of women inventors. The second half focused on the recommendations made, and a discussion of possible networks of potential providers of support and concluding the meeting with a discussion on how a system of support could be set up in the country.

An expressed need during these events was for greater awareness of the patent system in general and on the use of databases and patent claim drafting in particular. Accordingly, a training program was held online focusing on these areas and attracting over 700 participants.

By February 2021, institutions/centers/focal points to support women inventors/innovators were identified in the pilot countries. Except for Oman, all opted to house the service in the IP Office, whereas Oman chose to do so in the Sultan Qaboos University. It should be mentioned that the original vision of the project was that these focal points would be organizations or institutions that focused on women inventors, entrepreneurs and that they would be provided with IP knowledge and skills. The decision to house such a service in the IP office meant that there was less need to provide such skills.

In the context of the elaboration of country reports, a list of stakeholders, relevant institutions, organizations and individuals active in the field were identified.

In June 2021, a guide on the IP issues in taking a patent based product to market was completed. "Enterprising Ideas" A Guide to Intellectual Property for Startups was published and translated into all UN languages plus Japanese. The Guide is available at: <https://www.wipo.int/publications/en/details.jsp?id=4545&plang=EN>

In addition, an infographic, following the contours of the guide in

	<p>an attractive user-friendly format, was completed and made available at: https://www.wipo.int/sme/en/enterprising-ideas/.</p> <p>To complement the identification of local mentors and to support the eventual opportunities for mentoring in the pilot countries, an international pilot mentorship program was implemented from November 2021 to February 2022. The Program brought together 30 mentors and 30 mentees from four sectors: health, information and communications technology (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:</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>By June 2022, the collection of stories of women inventors was completed. The collection of stories will progressively be featured on a special WIPO website presenting the work done under this project. The website was created and made available in November 2022. See at: https://www.wipo.int/women-inventors/en/index.html</p>
<p><u>Key Results and Impact of the Project</u></p>	<p>The broad objective of the project was to increase the participation of women inventors and innovators in the IP system. It sought to do so through the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Understanding the problems faced by women inventors and innovators in using the IP system; b) Identifying mechanisms for providing more targeted support to women inventors and innovators to enable them to make more effective use of the IP system; c) Creating focal points in the countries that could provide or connect IP related support services to women inventors and innovators; d) Establishing or expanding a network of women inventors and entrepreneurs, and organizing networking events for women inventors and innovators; e) Establishing or expanding opportunities for mentorship; f) Establishing or expanding access to legal support. <p>The description of the achievements and results of the project is set out below structured in line with the expectations of the project listed above.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Understand the problems faced by women inventors and innovators in using the IP system. <p>One of the important achievements of this project was that it created a high-level discussion on the absence of women inventors in the IP system and the immense gap it created in the innovation potential of countries. It</p>

raised awareness from the highest level of policymakers down to those at the operational level, highlighting that this was a real problem and that it needed to be addressed. One can see that during the implementation of this project, the scale and scope of activities focused on women inventors and innovators have significantly increased in WIPO.

While it can be said that all of the project deliverables have contributed to this phenomena, there are deliverables that distinctively contributed to this. These are:

- The Challenges for Women Inventors and Innovators in Using the Intellectual Property System - A Literature Review – a review of academic articles on the subject that established the baseline of research on the issue;
- Policy Approaches to Close the IP Gender Gap - Practices to Support Access to the Intellectual Property System for Female Innovators, Creators and Entrepreneurs – a review of existing project, policies and initiatives from around the world to support women inventors and innovators;
- Stories of women inventors and innovators on their experiences in protecting and bringing their invention and innovative outputs to market; and
- The four national assessment reports on the situation of women inventors in Oman, Uganda, Pakistan and Mexico, as well as the meetings that took place with each country to present and discuss the report with the stakeholders.

b) Identifying mechanisms for providing more targeted support to women inventors and innovators to enable them to make more effective use of the IP system.

The above activities served to identify the support required by women inventors and innovators to enable them to access the IP system and use the tools of the system in bringing their innovative products to market.

Some of the issues concerned awareness of the IP system, particularly the patent system, and of the resources available, lack of support, cost and the perceived complexity of the system.

An easy to understand guide on the IP issues to be considered through the course of a startup journey was developed. It illustrates examples of women inventors who have successfully taken their invention to the market:

<https://www.wipo.int/publications/en/details.jsp?id=4545&plang=EN>.

This was complemented by an interactive infographic, which is available at: <https://www.wipo.int/sme/en/enterprising-ideas/> .

- c) Creating focal points in the countries that could provide or connect IP related support services to women inventors and innovators.

Each country identified a focal point that could provide these services or at least connect women inventors to existing services in the country. In Uganda, Mexico and Pakistan the focal point was the IP Office and in Oman the focal point was the Sultan Qaboos University. In the national assessments, the resources available in the country were mapped so that the focal point was informed of all that was available in the country. This included information on potential mentors and providers of legal support.

- d) Establishing or expanding a network of women inventors and entrepreneurs, and organizing networking events for women inventors and innovators.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic there was no opportunity to organize networking events as such, but during the online mentoring program, effort was made to create virtual rooms where mentees from different countries were put together in discussion groups so that they may get to know each other and understand that they were not alone in the problems they may face.

- e) Establishing or expanding opportunities for mentorship.

In addition to identifying potential local mentors in the assessment exercise, an international mentorship program was implemented from November 2021 to February 2022, where the women inventors engaged in this project were given an opportunity to work with a group of international mentors that would support them in their efforts to bring their inventions to the market. International IP experts recruited from law firms, incubators, and companies provided mentorship support on a volunteer basis. The Program brought together 30 mentors and 30 mentees from four sectors: health, ICT, agriculture, and mechanical engineering. Over the course of the program, opportunities were created for mentees in each country to meet each other and to meet the WIPO team. A methodology, including a comprehensive set of materials, was developed, which can form the basis for mainstreaming such a program within WIPO at the end of the project implementation, if appropriate. For more information, please see:

https://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=571474

- f) Establishing or expanding access to legal support
Increased capacity to provide IP support services to women.

- The assessment identified legal support providers, who would be willing to provide legal support on a *pro bono* or at discounted rates.

	<p>Three out of four beneficiary countries provided a closing report on what they had done under the project to the Project Manager.</p>
<p><u>Experience gained and lessons learned</u></p>	<p>(i) The project started in January 2019 and most of the year was focused on doing the more foundational work, including the national assessments, the global studies, and the guide. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic hit when the project was set to move to a more national phase and all activities moved online. This had a profound effect on the uptake, energy and progress of the project. Without actually interacting with those that were on the ground, as opposed to those that were present in Geneva, it was extremely difficult to create interest and momentum for the project in the beneficiary countries. As much as the pandemic taught us that many things can be effectively accomplished online, it has also shown that for some things nothing can replace human contact and this was an important lesson learned.</p> <p>(ii) Many IP offices, particularly in developing countries, lack resources and are hard pressed to deliver on their basic mission of providing IP registration services. As such, there is a lot of work that needs to be done to reach potential clients irrespective of their gender. While the pilot countries made an effort to meet their commitments under the project to reach women inventors and make their services more accessible to them, it was evident that such an effort and more would be required for all stakeholders, and reaching out to women only could almost be considered a luxury that they could ill afford. The lesson learned is that while the project served to bring the issue of gender up to the surface, there was a fine line to be drawn between committing resources to be more inclusive, and at the same time ensuring that it was not at the cost of their overall program delivery.</p> <p>(iii) Another lesson learned is that it is paramount to ensure that the project proposals initiated in Geneva are fully coordinated with and have the support of the actual beneficiaries in the countries. In other words, thorough stakeholder analysis and involvement in the project design, as well as at the stage of requesting a project is key to its success. That will ensure that the project outputs and outcomes are fit-for-purpose and respond to the needs and priorities of beneficiaries. It is also important to ensure that the gap that sometimes exists, between those presenting and negotiating a project proposal in Geneva with those ultimately benefitting from it is narrowed.</p> <p>(iv) Beneficiary countries should be selected following strict criteria and their involvement in deciding on the project implementation plan in their respective countries is key to ensure ownership.</p> <p>(v) Moreover, in order to maintain the sustainability of project</p>

results, beneficiary countries should ensure that they also dedicate certain resources. For example, by nominating a national focal point or team, to coordinate and be involved in the implementation of the project on the ground, and hence, learn and be able to take that experience further. It is equally important to plan and discuss a sustainability strategy of the project outputs and outcomes with each beneficiary country, since the very beginning of the project implementation.

(vi) It is also important that projects not only deliver the expected benefits to the countries participating in them but that they also enrich, advance and deepen the work programs of the respective work units responsible for managing these projects. Projects should therefore seamlessly be integrated into the portfolio of work of the recipient unit and provide an opportunity for those implementing it to be enriched. However, if projects are on top of, and distinct from the mandate and responsibilities of the unit managing it, there is a risk that the project will not contribute to the work mandate of that unit. In this case, the project will not benefit from the experience and knowledge of the respective unit, resulting in the project being managed outside the normal work program of the managing unit. Thus, efforts should be made so that projects can be a “win-win” for both the beneficiaries and the implementers.

(vii) The impact of the pandemic on the implementation of the project cannot be overstated. The envisaged face-to-face interactions with the pilot countries were rendered impossible. The meetings to present the report, which would normally have been an opportunity to fully engage with the pilot countries were done online. Similarly, the training program was done online and collectively for all the countries (here the online environment provided some advantages as more participants were able to join). The drawbacks of such online meetings was that they didn't provide any opportunities for face-to-face engagements between the project manager and the pilot countries, which affected and perhaps even nullified the momentum and uptake of the project.

(viii) Finally, as indicated earlier, the original vision of the project was that the appointed national focal points would be from women's organizations or institutions that focused their work on women inventors, entrepreneurs and the like, and that they would be provided with IP knowledge and skills. The reasoning behind that was that it was easier and more intuitive to bring IP to women in an environment where support was already being provided to women. Whereas, when an IP Office is the focal point for such projects, the dynamic shifts, and in order to bring more women to use IP, the IP Office needs to find ways of attracting women to use its services which is harder to do. The decision by the countries to take this responsibility to the IP Office meant that there was less of a need to build the IP skills of the national

	focal points as was originally envisaged.
<u>Risks and Mitigation</u>	<p>The following two risks, identified in the project document, were faced during the project implementation and were addressed through the adapted mitigation strategies, namely:</p> <p>Risk 1: Sustained collaboration with national authorities and focal points is key in determining the level of support provided from the pilot countries, smooth running of activities and timely implementation of the project.</p> <p>Mitigation 1: In order to mitigate risks, the project manager undertook careful consultations and requested full involvement of local partners in the implementation of activities. However, as mentioned in the report, the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on that.</p> <p>Risk 2: Conditions in a selected pilot country may impede the project implementation.</p> <p>Mitigation 2: Due discussions should be pursued. Should such discussions be unsuccessful, the project in the country may be suspended or postponed.</p> <p>In addition, for some of the reasons expressed above there is a risk for project's sustainability, more specifically that it will be difficult to sustain the focus on women inventors and the support to be provided to them.</p> <p>To mitigate this risk WIPO, as well as national governments may consider finding ways to recognize and acknowledge those who are making an effort to support women inventors to incentivize them to continue to do so, and to create a more sustainable service.</p>
<u>Project Implementation Rate</u>	The budget utilization rate as per the end of the project implementation was of: 65 % ¹
<u>Previous Reports</u>	Previous reports are contained in Annex II of document CDIP/24/2, Annex I of document CDIP/26/2, and Annex III of document CDIP 29/2.
<u>Follow-up and dissemination</u>	As a follow-up, WIPO and its Member States may consider building on the knowledge and resources developed under this project and work with the focal points that were identified to develop a program of targeted support to help them deliver IP-related services to women inventors.

¹ The budget implementation rate is low in view of the fact that many project activities have had to be re-adapted due to the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. All project outcomes foreseen in the project document have been delivered, as described in this report.

In this regard, the pilot countries may consider adapting the guide for startups “Enterprising Ideas” developed under this project to their local context. The adaptation might include local examples and case studies of local women inventors. They may supplement this with any other relevant WIPO tools and materials. Based on these, a follow-up training to the focal points and women inventors may be organized.

A further follow up could be to repeat the mentorship program that was piloted, where the methodology is available and is therefore replicable.

The project may be implemented with necessary changes for other countries that may be interested.

More details on possible dissemination strategies are contained in the dissemination note, available at:

https://dacatalogue.wipo.int/projects/DA_1_10_12_23_25_31_40_01

PROJECT SELF-EVALUATION

Key to Traffic Light System (TLS)

****	***	**	NP	NA
Fully achieved	Strong progress	Some progress	No progress	Not yet assessed/discontinued

<u>Project Outputs⁴</u> (Expected result)	<u>Indicators of Successful Completion</u> (Output Indicators)	<u>Performance Data</u>	<u>TLS</u>
1. Better understanding of the extent and scope of problems faced by women inventors and innovators and possible solutions gained.	I. Delivery of a review of the existing literature on the situation of women inventors, and innovators and entrepreneurs.	Delivered	****
	II. Delivery of a catalog of best practices, models and examples of programs and initiatives designed to support women inventors and innovators in the access to, or use of, the IP system.	Delivered	****
	III. Collection of a set of individual stories of women inventors and innovators on their experiences in protecting and bringing to market their invention and innovative outputs	Completed	****
2. Established national baseline in four participating countries	I. Delivery of four (4) national situation reports (one in each of the pilot countries), identifying challenges and obstacles faced by women in their access to, and use of, IP system.	Delivered	****
	II. Focal points identified in each of the four (4) pilot countries, together with a list of stakeholders, relevant institutions, organizations and individuals active in the field.	Identified	****

<p>3. Increased awareness of stakeholders on the role of the IP system in protecting and commercializing inventions</p>	<p>Four (4) events such as, conferences, roundtables, seminars or web-based groups, organized in the pilot countries (one in each).</p>	<p>A collective training program was held for women inventors of three of the four pilot countries. Mexico did not request such a training program.</p>	<p>****</p>
<p>4. Developed materials for training women inventors and innovators</p>	<p>I. Delivery of a guide on the IP issues in bringing a patent-based product to market and/or in creating a start-up.</p>	<p>Guide was published. In addition, an infographic complementing the Guide was developed and published online.</p>	<p>****</p>
	<p>II. Delivery of a presentation material for use in workshops.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>****</p>
	<p>III. Develop a compilation of existing relevant material in WIPO.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>****</p>
<p>5. Increased capacity to provide IP support services to women</p>	<p>I. Four (4) institutions/centers/organizations (one in each pilot country) identified with a dedicated unit and/or focal point, to support women inventors/innovators.</p>	<p>Identified.</p>	<p>****</p>
	<p>II. Four (4) training programs completed (one in each pilot country) in the identified centers.</p>	<p>For a number of reasons arising mainly from the situation imposed by the global pandemic, the project had not reached at the time of its closure the level of maturity and readiness to undertake the envisaged training programs. More direct engagement with each country is needed, as well as more groundwork, such as the localization of materials should be undertaken. As such, it is proposed that the trainings envisaged in output five be delivered as a follow up, as suggested above. It is subject to the approval of the CDIP.</p>	<p>***</p>

<p>6. Network of leading women inventors and entrepreneurs established in the selected countries; core group within the network identified to function as mentors</p>	<p>Establishment of a roster of leading women inventors, innovators and entrepreneurs in each of the pilot countries, and from amongst those a core group willing to be mentors.</p>	<p>Each pilot country identified potential women mentors. In addition, a pilot international mentoring program was implemented and innovators and entrepreneurs from Uganda, Pakistan and Oman participated as mentors.</p> <p>In Mexico, IMPI reported to have established a roster of mentors, which is populated on a semiannual basis. From July to December 2021, they had 100 mentors registered.</p> <p>Uganda provided a list of 24 mentors.</p> <p>Pakistan has established a roster of 11 mentors.</p>	<p>****</p>
<p>7. Established network of leading lawyers in the selected countries who agree to provide free legal support services.</p>	<p>Establishment of a roster of those willing to provide legal support in each of the pilot countries.</p>	<p>In Mexico, the roster of mentors includes legal mentoring and advice.</p> <p>Pakistan has identified 11 legal practitioners willing to provide <i>pro bono</i> assistance to women inventors.</p> <p>Uganda provided a list of 19 legal practitioners willing to provide legal support.</p> <p>No data was provided by Oman</p>	<p>***</p>
<p>8. Developed toolkit that can be used for conducting a similar project in other countries.</p>	<p>Publication of a toolkit, which includes the methodology followed in the implementation of the project, lessons learned and the materials developed during the project.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>****</p>

[End of Annex and of document]