

# WIPO

## **Progress Report on the Implementation of the World Intellectual Property Organization Deliverables in the Context of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries**

Responding to the special needs of the Least Developed Countries, in particular assisting them to elaborate policies for effectively implementing and utilizing intellectual property systems to meet their development objectives, has become increasingly pressing given the special needs of LDCs to build intellectual property institutions.

At the Third United Nations Conference on LDCs member states decided on the five WIPO deliverables to be implemented during the current decade by WIPO. The implementation of the five deliverables will enhance the ability of public administration and the private sector to formulate appropriate intellectual property policies and strengthen managerial and technical capacities to provide the service infrastructure for the building of intellectual property institutions in LDCs. In this context, since the beginning of the implementation of the WIPO deliverables, June 2001, the following were accomplished for the benefit of LDCs.

### I. The WIPO Global Information Network (WIPONET)

WIPONET will facilitate access to intellectual property data and will also serve as a platform to establish new services and to further streamline and automate the basic business functions of intellectual property offices worldwide. A key feature of the network will be its ability to provide for secure end-to-end transmission of confidential intellectual property data. This attribute will generate significant efficiency gains for users of WIPO's international registration services while at the same time giving them access to each other's intellectual property information.

In order to empower LDCs to better reap the benefits of global IP information resources, WIPONET will equip LDCs' IP offices with internet connectivity and basic equipment. Implementation of WIPONET in LDCs commenced in September 2001 with Chad and Cambodia being the first to benefit from WIPO deliverables. Since then, WIPONET has been installed in 21 intellectual property offices (IPOs) in 19 LDCs, bringing the total number of IPOs with WIPONET facilities to 28 in 23 LDCs.

### II. The WIPO Worldwide Academy

The development of human resources has become a vital strategic component in the effort to modernize and use the IP system effectively for economic, social, and cultural development in the LDCs. In this connection, the WIPO Worldwide Academy assists the LDCs through its specially tailored programs, in acquiring the specialized knowledge and skills with which to take advantage of the IP system. The Academy plays a central role in providing teaching, training, advisory and research services in intellectual property for LDCs. It creates a forum for policy and decision-makers in the LDCs to debate the importance and

implications of IP in the economic and social development of their countries. In this context, since June 2001, under WIPO Academy, 85 professionals from 17 LDCs benefited from training on industrial property, copyright and related rights.

### III. Collective Management of Copyright and Related Rights

Collective management organizations are an important link between creators and users of copyrighted works because they ensure that as owners of rights, creators receive payment for the use of their works. The current work in LDCs in this area involves the progressive implementation of a number of activities. These are related to the development and improvement of legislation and the initiation of a mechanism for national, sub-regional and regional collective management organizations to start work to create and upgrade a set of collective management societies for copyright and related rights and link national societies of the LDCs via the internet to a sub-regional or regional center so that the hardware, software, management and data resources required by each society may be shared with support services common to all the societies being served by the center.

Between June 2001 and December 2002, collective management societies for copyright and related rights have been established in Tanzania, Guinea Bissau, Chad and Mozambique. Initiation work to upgrade the Collective Management Society in Nepal and the establishment of regional collective management societies has also started in the Pacific Island LDCs.

### IV. Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore

The LDCs are considered to be rich in genetic resources, traditional knowledge and expressions of folklore which are an important part of their cultural and natural heritage. In this context, as decided at the Brussels Ministerial Meeting (UN-LDC III), the need for the protection of genetic resources, traditional knowledge and expressions of folklore should be viewed within the context of their larger socio-economic and cultural development.

It was also decided that WIPO is the proper forum within which to develop internationally acceptable and equitable solutions to the intellectual property issues related to genetic resources, traditional knowledge and expressions of folklore.

With regard to traditional knowledge, folklore and genetic resources LDCs have been participating in a number of national regional and interregional meetings including the WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on this subject. Pacific Island LDCs have established a regional model *sui generis* law on the protection of traditional cultural expressions.

### V. Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)

Small and medium-sized enterprises in the LDCs are often the driving force behind invention and innovation activities. Their innovative and creative capacity is not always fully exploited. Furthermore, many SMEs are not sufficiently informed or are hesitant to seek protection for their inventions, brands and designs and fail to take full advantage of the IP system. In order to facilitate access to information on IP for SMEs in LDCs, WIPO took the following measures:

To improve access to information on IP for SMEs, a CD-ROM was prepared based on the content of the SMEs web site in three languages (English, French and Spanish). It contains over 300 HTML pages of practical information on IP for SMEs and SME support institutions. The CD-ROM has been distributed to all LDCs. A number of national, sub-regional and regional seminars/workshops on IP for SMEs were organized in which representatives of SME associations and government focal points for SMEs, business consultants, entrepreneurs and investors from LDCs participated.

In addition, WIPO participated in the organization of two regional Workshops-one in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, for African LDCs and Haiti and one in Dhaka, Bangladesh, for the Asia and Pacific LDCs and Yemen. The Workshops provide clarification to 230 participants from ministries of trade, industry and justice, of their obligations and commitments under the TRIPS Agreement and the Doha Declaration. Participants at the Workshops indicated that the program of the Workshops was timely and relevant to their work. The presentations were considered to have been to the point, well argued and useful. They expressed their appreciation and satisfaction on the organization, conduct and management of the Workshops.

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