

Program and Budget Committee

Fortieth Session
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WIPO ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

prepared by the Secretariat

1. WIPO's **mission** is to lead the development of a balanced and effective international intellectual property (IP) system that enables innovation and creativity for the benefit of all. In implementing its mandate, the Organization maintains accountability for achieving the Expected Results as approved by Member States in the Program of Work and Budget and the effective management of its resources, adhering to the highest ethical standards.
2. This third version of the WIPO Accountability Framework is an update of the 2019¹ framework that includes an articulation of WIPO's Accountability Compact illustrating the levels of accountability, and a review of each component reflecting current organizational approaches. It underscores the Organization's structured results-based management approach, which relies on risk-based decision-making to deliver on the Program of Work and Budget (PoW&B).
3. The following decision paragraph is proposed.
 4. *The Program and Budget Committee (PBC) took note of the WIPO Accountability Framework (document WO/PBC/40/11).*

[Annex follows]

¹ WIPO Accountability Framework (2019) ([WO/PBC/29/4](#))

WIPO ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

1. This document serves as a comprehensive framework that lays down the **principles of accountability** and integrates the essential elements that ensure WIPO operates within its regulatory framework with adequate oversight mechanisms, transparency, reliability and professionalism.
2. The concept of accountability is defined in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution (A/RES/64/259) in paragraph 8 as follows:

“Accountability is the obligation of the Secretariat and its staff members to be answerable for all decisions made and actions taken by them, and to be responsible for honoring their commitments, without qualification or exception.”
3. The WIPO Accountability Framework is **informed by best practice**, notably the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission’s (COSO) Internal Control - Integrated Framework and structured by the five COSO components, tailored to WIPO’s environment², and 17 principles.
4. The Framework also draws on the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit’s (JIU) Review of Accountability Frameworks in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2023/3), issued in 2023, which includes guiding benchmarks.

JIU Benchmark 1: existence of an accountability framework.

ACCOUNTABILITY COMPACT

5. The **Accountability Compact**, illustrated in Figure 1, is the agreement between parties, specifying who is accountable to whom and for what. Three accountability compact objectives are pursued in parallel:
 - i) **Implementation of WIPO’s mandate** – the WIPO Convention establishes and defines the Organization’s mandate and together with the 27 additional WIPO-administered Treaties forms the legal basis for WIPO’s activities. To effectively implement its mandate, WIPO focuses on the achievement of Expected Results and on the broader impact of its workplan activities. This is assessed through the WIPO Performance Report (WPR).
 - ii) **Effective use of resources** – responsible stewardship of financial and human resources as well as tangible and intangible assets. WIPO continues to enhance its systems and processes to ensure not only compliance with its regulatory framework, but also to set the highest standard in ensuring the judicious use of resources in the pursuit of Expected Results. This is demonstrated by delivery in line with the approved PoW&B as reported in the WPR.

² COSO component ‘Risk Assessment’ renamed ‘Results-Based Planning and Risk Assessment’ to reflect WIPO’s approach.

- iii) **Ethical behavior** – requires adherence to the ethical values and principles expressed in the WIPO Code of Ethics, and the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service (“ICSC Standards of Conduct”), applying to all staff members pursuant to Staff Regulation 1.5(c). Ethical obligations are also included in the contracts of non-staff personnel, including interns, fellows, Young Experts (YEPs) and individual contractors. WIPO’s policies explicitly prohibit actions such as fraud, corruption, harassment, abuse of authority, discrimination and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). Ethical conduct extends beyond compliance; it entails upholding our ethical values of integrity, honesty, impartiality, and respect in all professional interactions. Reporting is through an Annual Report by the Chief Ethics Officer.

Accountability Compact			
Objectives	Implementation of WIPO’s mandate	Effective use of resources	Ethical behavior
	Organizational Accountability The Director General is accountable: (i) to Governing Bodies to deliver on the approved PoW&B (ii) to provide world class Global IP services to IP Offices and customers and in accordance with Treaty obligations		
	Individual Accountability All designated officials are accountable to the Director General for the implementation of the PoW&B and the achievement of Expected Results for which they have been delegated authority Each employee is accountable to perform their duties with the highest standards of ethical values and principles in line with the WIPO Code of Ethics		
	Accountability Foundation Key agreements that underpin organizational and individual accountability include the WIPO Convention, WIPO-administered Treaties, and the Agreement between the United Nations and WIPO. WIPO’s accountability foundation also includes the Staff Regulations and Rules, Financial Regulations and Rules, and the ICSC Standards of Conduct		

Figure 1 - Accountability Compact

JIU Benchmark 2: accountability pillars.

JIU Benchmark 3: accountability compact objectives.

JIU Benchmark 4: accountability compact stakeholders.

JIU Benchmark 16: organizational accountability.

JIU Benchmark 17: individual accountability.

WIPO ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW

6. WIPO's Results Framework, as articulated in the PoW&B and the Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP), guides the implementation of WIPO's program of work. Within that guiding approach, the WIPO Accountability Framework (see Figure 2) outlines organizational accountability in accordance with the five COSO internal control components.

- i) **Control Environment:** Establishes the Organization's mandate and its commitment to delivering results for Member States, users of WIPO's services, and other stakeholders.
- ii) **Results-Based Planning and Risk Assessment:** Ensures that WIPO's Results Framework is clearly defined and that the Organization systematically addresses risks.
- iii) **Control Activities:** Emphasizes addressing risks to Expected Results through mitigation actions and effective internal controls.
- iv) **Information and Communication:** Uses high-quality data – both financial and non-financial – that is relevant, timely, accurate, and accessible to support control objectives.
- v) **Monitoring:** Focuses on monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of internal controls.

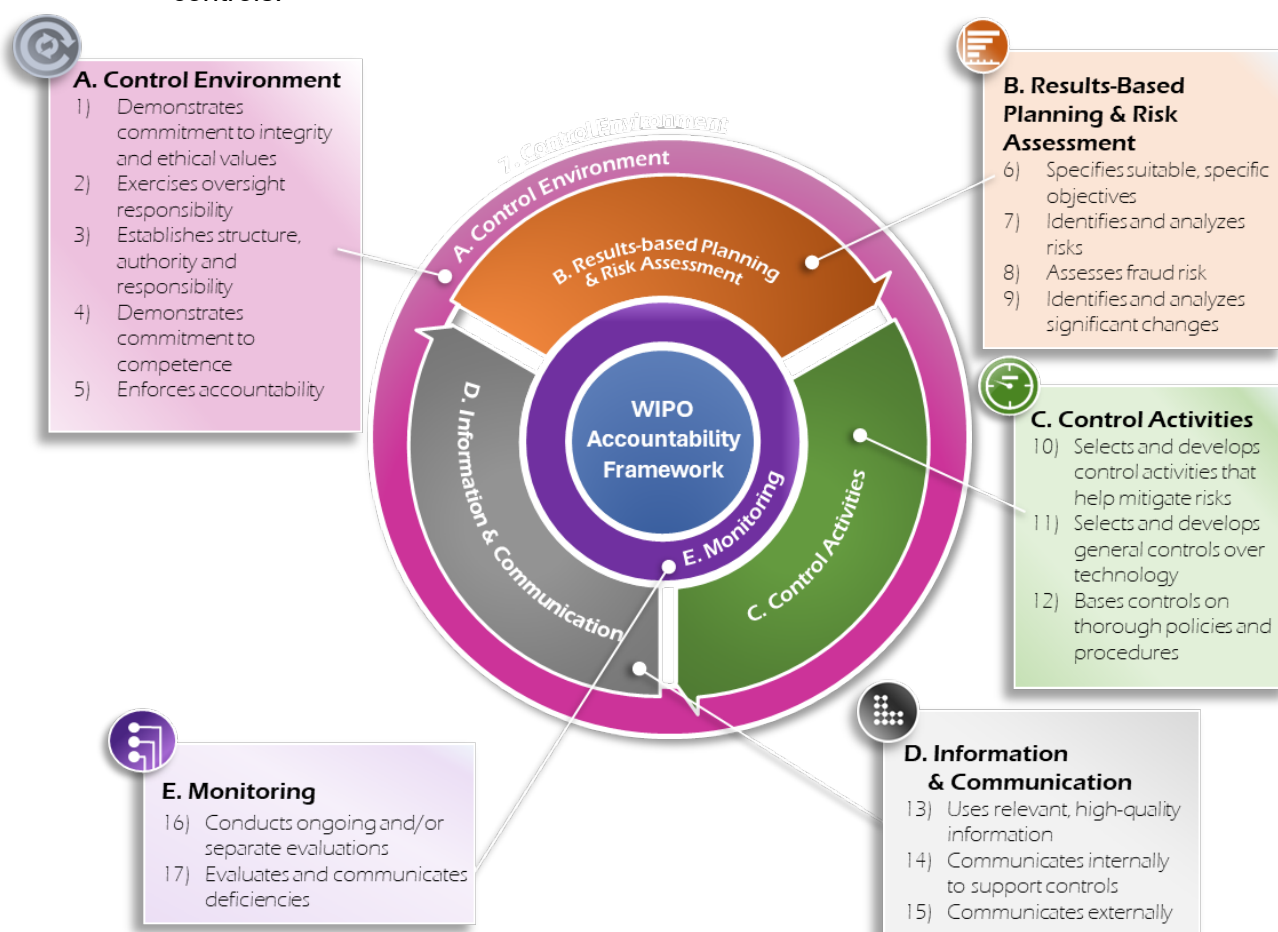


Figure 2 - WIPO Accountability Framework

7. WIPO continuously enhances its accountability components to respond to evolving internal and external factors as referenced under the sections below.

WIPO ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK COMPONENTS

A. CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

Principle 1. Demonstrates Commitment to Integrity and Ethical Values

8. WIPO staff are expected to uphold the highest ethical standards in line with the ICSC Standards of Conduct which emphasize loyalty, integrity, impartiality, discretion, personal accountability, respect, and proper management of conflicts of interest. The Organization maintains zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, or abuse and extends ethical expectations to suppliers through a Supplier Code of Conduct and a Vendor Sanctions policy.
9. Staff conduct is guided by the WIPO Code of Ethics, with mandatory training provided by the Ethics Office. Policies govern the acceptance of gifts and favors, engagement in outside activities, protection against retaliation, and the Chief Ethics Officer, in an independent role, is responsible for policy development, outreach, staff advice, and implementation.
10. Sector Leads support the Director General in reinforcing a “Tone at the Top” that emphasizes the importance of ethical decision-making, rigorous internal controls, timely resolution of weaknesses, and continuous improvement of the internal control system.
11. WIPO’s **Core Values**³ – *Shaping the Future, Acting Responsibly, Delivering Excellence, and Working as One* – foster a culture of accountability throughout the Organization.
12. WIPO is committed to a culture of trust and transparency. Annual employee engagement surveys provide insights on culture. Each organizational unit reviews survey results and implements improvements that strengthen the organizational culture.

JIU Benchmark 5: Culture

Principle 2. Exercises Oversight Responsibility

13. Independent oversight at WIPO is provided by four bodies, each with a specific mandate. **Quality assurance reviews** are held periodically by the oversight bodies in accordance with their Terms of Reference.
14. The **Independent Advisory Oversight Committee** (IAOC) serves in an independent expert advisory capacity, assisting the WIPO General Assembly and the Program and Budget Committee (PBC) in fulfilling their oversight responsibilities (Financial Regulations and Rules (FRR), Annex III). Its members are experts in their field, appointed by the PBC for a maximum of six years through a competitive selection process (FRR, Annex IV).
15. The **External Auditor** audits WIPO’s accounting records. Audits cover the annual financial statements, compliance with the FRR, securities and monies on deposit, adequacy of internal controls, and the effectiveness of procedures applied to the recording of all assets, liabilities, surpluses and deficits. As defined in the FRR, Annex II, the External Auditor provides an opinion on the financial statements and may conduct performance audits. To ensure independence and expertise, the External Auditor is the Auditor General of a Member State, appointed by the General Assembly for a six-year term.

³ https://www.wipo.int/erecruitment/en/pdf/core_values_and_competencies.pdf

16. The **Internal Oversight Division** (IOD) represents WIPO's 'third line'⁴, as per the three lines model. Its mission (FRR Annex I) is to provide independent and objective audit, evaluation and investigation services that enhance operations, governance, risk management, and internal controls, supporting the Organization's mission and objectives. The Director of IOD issues an annual opinion on WIPO governance, risk management and control processes. The IOD Director is independent and is selected and appointed through an international competitive process for a non-renewable term of 6 years. The IAOC provides input to this process.

17. The **JIU** serves as the UN system's independent external oversight body, conducting system-wide evaluations, inspections, and investigations. Inspectors, appointed by the UN General Assembly based on their national or international administrative and financial expertise, serve in a personal capacity for five-year terms, renewable once.

JIU Benchmark 13: Independent oversight

Principle 3. Establishes structure, authority, and responsibility

18. WIPO administers 28 treaties, including the WIPO Convention, ordered into three general groups:

- i) The first general group of treaties defines internationally agreed basic standards of IP protection.
- ii) The second general group, known as the global protection system treaties, ensures that one international registration or filing will have effect in any of the relevant signatory States. The services provided by WIPO under these treaties simplify and reduce the cost of filing applications in all the countries in which protection is sought for a given IP right.
- iii) The third general group is the classification treaties, which create classification systems that organize information concerning inventions, trademarks and industrial designs into indexed, manageable structures for easy retrieval.

19. WIPO's agreement with the United Nations establishes its status as a UN specialized agency. Additional arrangements with international organizations provide the framework for WIPO's collaboration with these entities.

20. WIPO and Switzerland maintain a long-standing **host country agreement** that establishes the legal framework for WIPO's headquarters in Geneva. Switzerland provides WIPO and its staff with specific privileges and immunities, enabling the Organization to fulfill its mandate effectively.

21. **WIPO's governance framework** (see figure 3) places the WIPO General Assembly as the main policy and decision-making body, supported by Assemblies, committees, and working groups. The Program and Budget Committee, constituted by the General Assembly, oversees program, budget, premises, and finance matters. The General Assembly convenes at least annually, while the PBC holds one annual session in off-budget years and two sessions in budget years.

⁴ The Institute of Internal Auditors' (IIA) Three Lines model, defines operational management as the first line, management support functions as the second line, and internal audit as the third line.

22. Governing body meetings follow a detailed, documented procedural framework, with documents prepared and distributed in a timely manner, posted on the WIPO website. Most sessions are accessible via public webcast, ensuring transparency and stakeholder engagement.

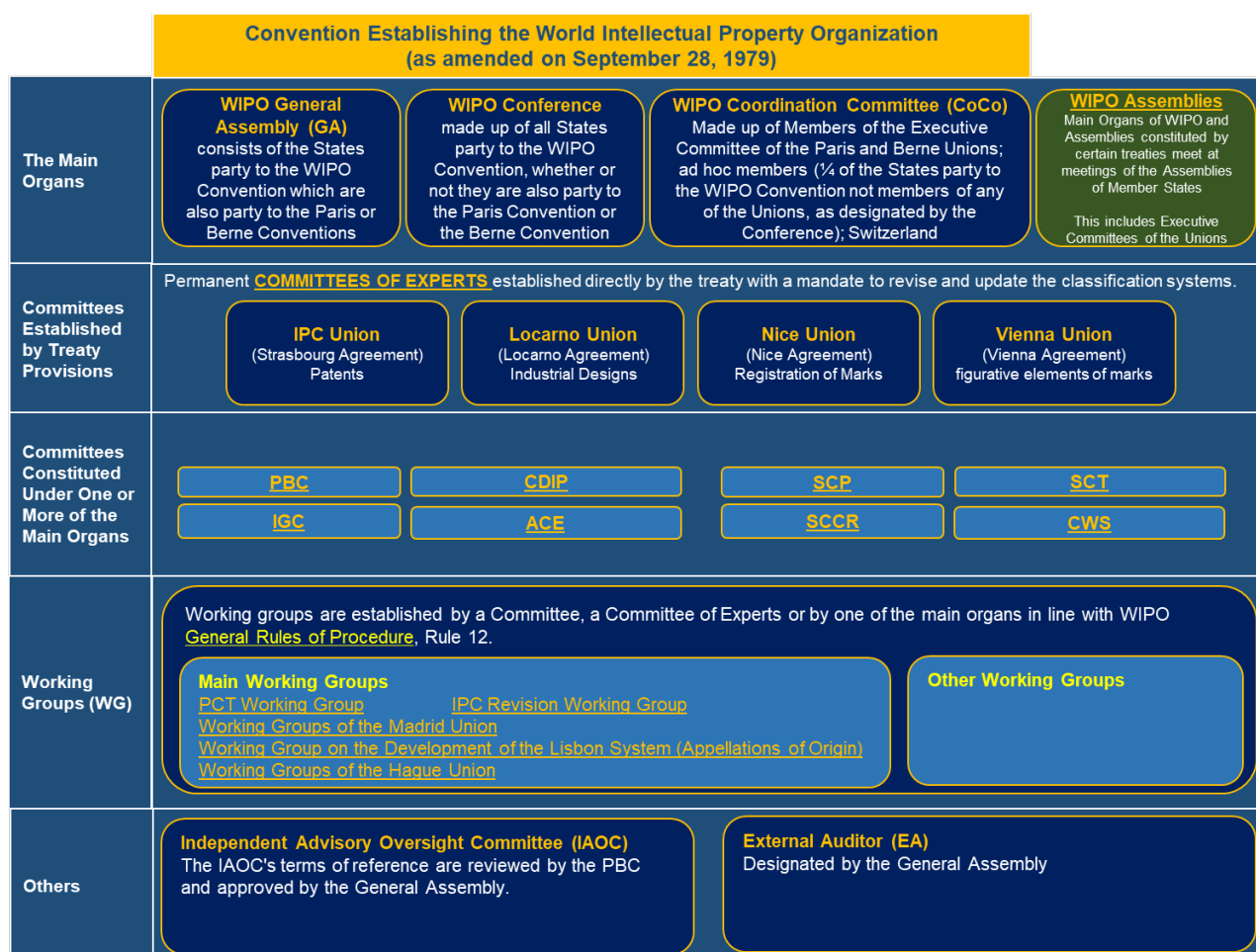


Figure 3: WIPO Governance Framework

23. The FRR provide for a structured delegation of authority that enables the Organization to achieve its Expected Results effectively. Accountability is reinforced through clearly defined responsibilities and **delegated authorities**, integrated into the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system via the e-Designation module, which requires staff to formally accept their budgetary authority.

JIU Benchmark 8: roles, responsibilities, delegations of authority and other legal agreements.

JIU Benchmark 21: role of legislative organs and/or governing bodies.

Principle 4. Demonstrates Commitment to Competence

24. WIPO's **Human Resources (HR) Strategy** is built around six interdependent objectives that reflect the Organization's evolution from a compliance-driven function to a strategic enabler of organizational change.

25. WIPO's **workforce structure** encompasses all sectors and their respective resource needs. The Organization employs a blended workforce model consisting of a core workforce – staff holding fixed-term, continuing, or permanent appointments – and a flexible workforce that includes temporary staff, individual contractors, agency workers, external service providers, fellows, and interns.

26. Strategic **workforce planning** is integrated into the PoW&B cycle to align staffing with strategic priorities. Through strategic workforce planning, including skills-gap assessment, WIPO recruits and develops a workforce whose skills and competencies reflect the Organization's core values and objectives (see Principle 3). WIPO approaches **succession planning** as a readiness strategy rather than a direct placement process. It relies on talent reviews, where staff potential beyond current performance is evaluated. To ensure broader geographical representation, the Geographical Diversity Action Plan (GDAP) was adopted at the 82nd session of the Coordination Committee in 2023. Gender parity remains a high organizational priority, with progress reported to the Coordination Committee and publicly.

27. New employees are onboarded through an **induction program**. All fixed-term staff complete an introductory IP course delivered by the WIPO Academy to ensure a shared foundational understanding of the global IP ecosystem.

28. The performance accountability and recognition framework reflects the accountability of managers and staff in managing individual performance. The **Staff Performance System** iPerform records work objectives for every staff member using goal setting that helps ensure that goals directly contribute to the Organization's Expected Results. It seeks to foster a collaborative, accountable, and learning-oriented environment that drives continuous improvement, strengthens motivation, and recognizes holistic performance based on both the results delivered and the demonstrated behaviors that cultivate a culture of respect, psychological safety, integrity, collaboration and innovation.

29. **Learning at WIPO** is continuous, embedded, and data-driven. WIPO promotes a 70-20-10 model whereby 70% of learning is through experience (learning by doing), 20% thought exposure (learning from others) and 10% education (formal learning). This structured, formal course work is managed through the Learning@WIPO platform.

JIU Benchmark 20: knowledge and learning.

Principle 5. Enforces Accountability

30. The **Accountability Compact** (See Figure 1) outlines the commitments made across all levels of the Organization. A range of policies and internal controls set out the consequences of failure to meet organizational and individual expectations (see Principle 17).

31. WIPO's **Policy on the Disclosure of Financial and Other Interests** promotes transparency, accountability, and public trust in the integrity of the Organization. It assists in managing actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest through disclosure, mitigation, and prevention. Staff in designated roles are required to submit financial disclosure and declaration of interest statements and/or IPSAS disclosure statements. The policy has been significantly expanded to proactively address the risk of exposure of confidential IP information.

32. Staff members have a **duty to report** possible wrongdoing. Such reports must be submitted to the Director of IOD or to a supervisor, who is then required to inform IOD. Reports may be submitted in person, by telephone or in writing, including anonymously through an external, independent platform.

33. IOD **investigates any allegations** of wrongdoing received, affecting WIPO's assets, projects, activities, staff, or contractors. Upon receiving an allegation, the Investigation Section conducts the necessary inquiries and if the allegation is substantiated, issues an investigation report.

34. The Policy to **Protect Against Retaliation** provides a comprehensive framework safeguarding personnel who report misconduct in good faith or who cooperate with authorized audits or investigations. The policy ensures that individuals are protected from retaliation when their actions support the integrity and governance of the Organization.

35. The **performance accountability and recognition framework** (see Principle 4) reinforces accountability for delivering results. Management also undertakes performance assessments of suppliers, ensuring that corrective action is taken when required.

B. RESULTS-BASED PLANNING AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Principle 6. Specifies suitable, specific objectives

36. The WIPO **Results Framework** – articulated in the PoW&B – provides the structured architecture that underpins decision-making across the Organization. It links strategy, financial and human resources, performance and risk to clearly defined outcomes. The Results Framework comprises Strategic Pillars and the Foundation, cascaded into Expected Results, ensuring a focus on results and accountability.

37. Member States approve the biennial **Program of Work and Budget**, which assigns resources to Sectors for the achievement of Expected Results. Each Sector defines implementation strategies and associated risks. Sector contributions to Expected Results are measured through performance indicators with biennial baselines and targets. **Biennial planning** is operationalized through the **Annual workplanning** process, supported by the WePerform Enterprise Performance Management system. Annual workplans are designed to ensure full alignment with the Expected Results and undergo rigorous review by the Director General before approval for implementation.

38. WIPO adheres to established **professional standards and frameworks**, integrating best practices into its policies and procedures. The Annual Financial Statements are prepared and audited in accordance with the FRR and International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). Where relevant – such as for buildings related work – WIPO complies with applicable national regulations.

39. Investments are conducted in line with the WIPO Policy on Investments overseen by the **Advisory Committee on Investments**. Investment objectives are designed to balance risk and return over the time horizon in support of the respective fund purposes.

40. The principles governing the **procurement of goods and services** are defined in the FRR and align with the three objectives of the Accountability Compact: implementation of WIPO's mandate, effective use of resources, and adherence to ethical behavior.

JIU Benchmark 9: other preventative controls.

Principle 7. Identifies and analyzes risks

41. **Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)** is embedded within WIPO's results-based management approach and applied across all organizational functions to ensure the achievement of results set out in the PoW&B, in alignment with the Organization's regulatory framework and ethical standards. The WIPO Risk Policy, operationalized through the WIPO Risk Handbook, defines three levels of risks and corresponding response measures, each supported by appropriate delegation of authority, approval processes, and targets. Risk mitigation plans are developed and costed as part of annual workplanning.
42. Understanding risks and risk appetite is essential to achieving WIPO's vision, mission, and Expected Results. WIPO's **risk appetite statement** is innovative in explicitly linking each Expected Result to a defined level of tolerated risk. This appetite informs implementation strategies and decision-making across the Organization. WIPO fosters a risk-aware culture that values calculated risk-taking, transparency, and learning from both successes and failures.
43. **Organizational risks**, typically strategic or pervasive operational risks, may impact WIPO as a whole. The Director General chairs the **Risk Management Group (RMG)**, which evaluates internal and external factors to determine the Organization's risk landscape, response strategies, and methodologies. The RMG monitors key risk indicators, identifies early warning signals, and oversees the most significant risks, which are also reported to the IAOC.
44. **Sector risks** are owned and managed by the respective Sectors and may affect the achievement of results within those areas. Project- or operational-level risks are managed by their designated owners and escalated to the Sector level when warranted by their severity.
45. The continued advancement of **Risk Management capabilities** is considered in the RMG and the IAOC, using the UN High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) Reference Model for Risk Management to track WIPO's risk management maturity, and identify areas that can continue to be strengthened.
46. The WIPO **Organizational Resilience Strategy** prioritizes critical business processes and operations identified by the RMG. WIPO has adopted the UN Secretariat's Policy on the Organizational Resilience Management System (ORMS), a unified emergency management framework used across the UN system.
47. The WIPO **Security Management System** provides continuous safety and security risk management services as part of its broad Duty of Care obligations to WIPO employees working across its operations, in alignment with the UN Security Management System policy and procedures.
48. The **Partnerships Review Committee** undertakes due diligence on proposals on partnerships with entities other than multilateral, governmental or UN System entities that involve transfer of financial resources.

Principle 8. Assesses fraud risk

49. WIPO maintains robust anti-fraud controls designed to prevent and detect fraud. The Policy on Preventing and Detecting Fraud and Other Prohibited Acts sets clear expectations for personnel, affirms the Organization's commitment to preventing, detecting, and responding to allegations of fraud, and outlines reporting obligations, disciplinary measures, and available remedies.

50. Personnel are required to complete **fraud awareness training** to strengthen awareness of potential fraud risks and ensure understanding of reporting mechanisms. Personnel are trained to recognize fraudulent activity and report concerns through established channels (see Principle 5).

51. As a management-led initiative, a comprehensive external **fraud risk assessment** is conducted on a periodic basis to ensure that all types of fraud risks are appropriately identified, assessed, mitigated, and controlled. Identified internal and external fraud risks are analyzed and incorporated into the ERM System. Advisory recommendations resulting from the assessment are considered by management, implemented accordingly, and reported to the IAOC.

Principle 9. Identifies and analyzes significant changes

52. The RMG assesses the risks of changes in the internal and external environment. Demand and income forecasts for WIPO's Global IP Services are systematically prepared by the Chief Economist. The RMG reviews projected trends and income in relation to PoW&B estimates. The mandatory reserves are maintained at the level prescribed by the WIPO Policy on Reserves, approved by the WIPO Assemblies, to cover payment obligations in case of an economic downturn.

53. **Change management** is an integral component of initiatives and projects aimed at organizational transformation. Culture at WIPO serves as a strategic lever for performance, collaboration, and innovation. Digital transformation is enhancing our digital operations, products, and tools. Large-scale initiatives may include a designated change or transformation manager to ensure effective implementation.

54. WIPO has **mainstreamed the use of AI** across the Organization, supported by a clear governance framework to ensure responsible and secure adoption. This governance framework includes the Responsible Use of AI at WIPO guidelines and active oversight by the InfoTech Board.

55. **Changes to WIPO's Information Technology** environment are rigorously controlled to safeguard the confidentiality, integrity, quality and availability of systems. A comprehensive project approval process evaluates expected benefits, risks, initiation and lifecycle costs, and approach to software development. The Architecture Solutions Group and Architecture Design Task Force provide architecture governance, defining best practices and assessing all solutions for architecture and security compliance before they reach production status.

56. The process of **selecting a Director General** is governed by the WIPO Convention and the 2019 Procedures for the Nomination and Appointment of Directors General of WIPO. The Director General appoints Deputy Directors General after approval by the WIPO Coordination Committee. Appointment of Assistant Directors General is governed by WIPO's Staff Regulations and Rules (SRR) which provide that the Director General takes into account the advice of the WIPO Coordination Committee.

C. CONTROL ACTIVITIES

Principle 10. Selects and develops control activities that help mitigate risks

57. WIPO has established a comprehensive, clear and concise **system of Key Controls** that covers all 17 principles of the COSO internal control integrated framework. These controls are assessed annually for effectiveness and recorded in the ERM system, creating an evidence base for the Director of IOD's opinion which underpins the Director General's Statement on Internal Control.

58. WIPO maps and assesses **controls organization-wide**, including in the areas of finance, procurement, IT and human resources. Organizational Resilience controls provide for business continuity in adverse conditions, while Safety and Security controls align operations with the Organization's risk appetite.

59. All purchases of goods and services follow structured **procurement processes**. The Contracts Review Committee reviews high-value procurements for compliance, funds are encumbered prior to contractual commitment and contract clause controls ensure that essential protective provisions are included, in accordance with the FRR and administrative issuances.

60. WIPO fully supports the principle of mutual recognition and applies it where it aligns with organizational needs. The Organization regularly collaborates with other UN agencies on joint procurement and shared services initiatives, including the UN Security Management System, medical services, and IT services, integrating mutual recognition into its operational model.

Principle 11. Selects and develops general controls over technology

61. Within the ERM framework, WIPO conducts proactive and continuous **Information Security Risk Management**, supported by the ongoing maintenance of its ISO/IEC 27001 certification, which covers all Global IP Services and is verified annually by independent certification bodies. The Information Security Operations Center provides 24/7 monitoring, detection, and response to security incidents, enhancing WIPO's ability to rapidly identify and contain threats. Information Security policies and standards guide the secure management of information assets, and staff awareness is reinforced through an annual information security training and education program.

62. **WIPO's IT General Controls (ITGCs)** comprise the foundational policies, procedures, and activities that ensure the secure development and maintenance, operation, support, and management of its IT systems. Key ITGCs include access management, change management (see Principle 9), backup and recovery, and system operations. These controls help prevent errors, fraud, and data breaches, forming the basis for sound application of controls and supporting strong overall IT governance.

Principle 12. Bases controls on thorough policies and procedures

63. WIPO's controls are grounded in a comprehensive framework of policies, procedures, and guidance. As an international organization, WIPO relies on its **Regulatory Framework** as its legal basis. This framework includes the FRR, the SRR, and administrative issuances, all of which are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

64. WIPO has a **defined process for issuing new policies and procedures**, including broad consultation for best practice, coherence, and legal review. Resource implications are assessed during development. New or revised policies are communicated to all staff through announcements, and superseded policies are clearly marked as voided while remaining accessible. An **internal portal** serves as the repository for all administrative issuances.

65. **Compliance monitoring** is conducted by the second line, utilizing business intelligence tools to automate monitoring activities, with exceptions reported as appropriate. The Chief Compliance Officer in the Office of the Legal Counsel ensures that WIPO's technical assistance and project activities do not violate UN sanctions in countries subject to such measures.

66. **Quality control activities** are carried out across the Organization, tailored to specific functions. For example, Global IP Services rely on operational metrics and monitoring, while oversight functions include periodic peer or expert reviews (see Principle 2).

Benchmark 6: guidance, training and advice.

D. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Principle 13. Uses relevant, high-quality information

67. Data governance remains a priority at WIPO as the Organization continues to strengthen its capacity to manage data as a strategic asset. The Data Governance Framework establishes principles, roles and processes for the effective management of data across the Organization. Supporting capabilities – such as Key Data Management, the enterprise data catalogue and the enterprise data platform for analytics – promote data quality, accessibility and consistency, enabling trusted information and evidence-based decision-making. Efforts to strengthen data literacy further support the responsible use and interpretation of data across the Organization.

68. WIPO places strong emphasis on the information entrusted to it via the **security of its IT infrastructure**. A mature and robust information security framework, supported by strong governance, ensures alignment between security activities and organizational needs. An information classification and handling policy, supplemented by detailed guidelines, supports a consistent understanding of information confidentiality levels.

69. WIPO is upgrading its comprehensive ERP system to a next-generation platform that will strengthen the secure management and integration of financial, HR, and performance data. The ERP system ensures that high-quality, reliable information continues to be maintained within a robust and secure environment supporting operational efficiency, governance, and strategic decision-making.

70. WIPO is strengthening its **Customer Relationship Management (CRM)** through the establishment of a cross-organizational CRM platform, designed to be a trusted source of customer information. Concrete steps have been taken to transform service quality across our global IP systems, including the establishment of key account managers for customers of the PCT and Madrid systems, upgrading of customer-facing digital platforms and enhanced contact center opening hours. A set of standardized customer service processes guides and supports service consistency and quality.

71. Systems supporting organizational performance management and risk management are integrated through a **Business Intelligence** solution that delivers accurate and reliable data, enabling timely and transparent decision-making.

JIU Benchmark 7: data, assets and tools.

Principle 14. Communicates internally to support controls

72. A comprehensive **internal communication approach** is followed to support a culture of accountability and continuous improvement. Communication channels include Town Halls, workplan seminars, informational emails, internal newsletters, and management briefings. Knowledge management is facilitated through tools including Microsoft SharePoint and the Intranet.

73. Workplan implementation, financial monitoring and risk reports are made available to the RMG, Sector Leads and staff through business intelligence reports and related tools, providing up-to-date information to support informed management decisions.

74. Annual reports are issued by the Ethics Office, the Office of the Ombudsperson and the WIPO Appeal Board. (See Principle 17).

JIU Benchmark 14: impact mitigation.

JIU Benchmark 18: internal communication.

Principle 15. Communicates externally

75. **External communication** of organizational information follows a broad and comprehensive strategy that extends well beyond statutory reporting. WIPO provides extensive information to Member States, stakeholders, users of its services and the general public through its website, social media channels, publications and other platforms, with performance indicators reflected in the PoW&B.

76. WIPO ensures transparent, timely and accurate **formal information exchange with Member States** at Standing Committee meetings, the PBC, the Coordination Committee, and the WIPO Assemblies. Informal engagements with Ambassadors and Group Coordinators and take place on a continuous basis.

77. WIPO publishes the annual **WIPO Performance Report**, which provides performance and financial information for Member States and the public. The ensuing performance dialogue with Member States enables lessons learned from each period to inform future planning and implementation, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. The performance data in the WPR undergoes an independent validation on a biennial basis.

78. The WPR reports on a set of **key performance indicators** measuring organizational performance. These indicators enable management and governing bodies to assess whether the Organization is effectively delivering its Expected Results in a resource-efficient manner.

79. Two-way communication with stakeholders – including innovators, creators, designers, IP offices, local communities and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) – provides valuable feedback that informs and strengthens WIPO's work.

80. WIPO actively participates in **United Nations inter-agency fora** and coordination mechanisms, including the Chief Executives Board, the HLCM, the High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP), and numerous networks and working groups. It holds chairing roles and contributes, as appropriate, to system-wide initiatives, while staying abreast of emerging practices and developments across the UN system.

JIU Benchmark 10: self-assessments.

JIU Benchmark 19: external communication.

JIU Benchmark 22: effectiveness indicators.

JIU Benchmark 23: efficiency indicators.

E. MONITORING

Principle 16. Conducts ongoing and/or separate evaluations

81. **Management oversight** is exercised through first- and second-line monitoring mechanisms. Performance monitoring is conducted centrally and within Sectors throughout the budget period, enabling timely remediation in response to unexpected changes. The Director General conducts regular reviews of workplan implementation, and Sector Leads are accountable for progress against approved plans.

82. WIPO undertakes a wide range of self and **external assessments** across risk, performance, controls, information security and fraud. The frequency of self-assessments is determined based on objectives and risk levels.

83. **Feedback** mechanisms for Member States include surveys on: WIPO official meetings, satisfaction with training and capacity building activities, services and technical advice, and direct engagement with the Secretariat through meetings and informal consultations.

84. The Director, IOD (see Principle 2) provides an independent **opinion on WIPO's governance, risk management and control environment**.

85. **External oversight bodies** (see Principle 2) operate independently of the WIPO Secretariat and are accountable to the PBC and/or the General Assembly.

86. **Customer complaint resolution** is provided primarily through the WIPO Contact Center, customer service teams and infolines within Sectors ensuring that quality issues are appropriately addressed and resolved. AI-powered feedback analytics now monitor service performance in real time, helping us continuously improve the user experience.

JIU Benchmark 11: management oversight.

JIU Benchmark 12: feedback from stakeholders

JIU Benchmark 13: independent oversight.

Principle 17. Evaluates and communicates deficiencies

87. The Director General is accountable for ensuring timely **responses to all oversight recommendations**, in accordance with the FRR. Recommendations may be accepted and implemented or not accepted based on considerations such as value, applicability, or changed circumstances.

88. Responses to External Auditor and IOD recommendations are recorded in a centralized repository, reviewed by the issuing entity, and reported to the PBC in their **respective annual reports**. JIU recommendations are maintained in the JIU reporting system and likewise reported to the PBC. The IAOC receives regular updates on implementation status and submits an annual report to the PBC. During the year, there are regular follow-ups with recommendation implementation owners.

89. Internal control deficiencies are communicated through the annual control self-assessment, the annual assurance report, and Sector Leads' representations, culminating in the Director General's Statement on Internal Control (see Principle 10).

Conflict Resolution

90. WIPO has established a guide to a respectful and harmonious workplace and provides conflict management training. WIPO personnel have access to both **Informal and Formal Conflict Resolution Mechanisms**:

- i) The Office of the Ombudsperson provides neutral, independent, and confidential assistance to help resolve workplace issues.
- ii) The Ethics Office advises on ethical issues, manages conflict-of-interest and anti-retaliation policies, delivers training, and supports policy development to promote a strong ethical culture.
- iii) The Staff Counsellor offers confidential counselling and psychosocial support.

91. The WIPO Staff Council is the body representing all staff before the Director General and the Administration on matters affecting staff welfare and personnel administration.

92. **Procurement-related disputes**, including those involving non-staff resources such as ICS consultants and external providers, are resolved in accordance with applicable contractual terms, including WIPO's General Conditions of Contract.

Administration of justice

93. A staff member found to have engaged in misconduct may be subject to **disciplinary measures** pursuant to Chapter X of the SRR. Staff members are given the opportunity to present their defense, and any disciplinary measure must be proportionate, taking into account aggravating and mitigating factors.

94. The SRR establish formal mechanisms for a staff member to contest an administrative decision pursuant to Chapter XI of the SRR. The WIPO Appeal Board, composed with staff participation, advises the Director General on appeals, and issues its own annual report to staff.

95. After having exhausted all means available to them under the SRR, a staff member has the right to appeal to the **International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal** (ILOAT) under the conditions set out in its Statute.

96. The Director General's annual **report on the administration of justice** provides summary information on cases handled, including staff profiles, case characteristics, outcomes, as well as the rate of conversion of legal challenges to the next level.

JIU Benchmark 15: system improvements.

Review and Revision

97. This framework will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it is accurate and up to date. Significant revisions to the framework will be presented to the PBC.

[End of Annex and of document]