

Third Expert-Level Roundtable on Fostering South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Intellectual Property and Development

"South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Entrepreneurship"

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WIPO

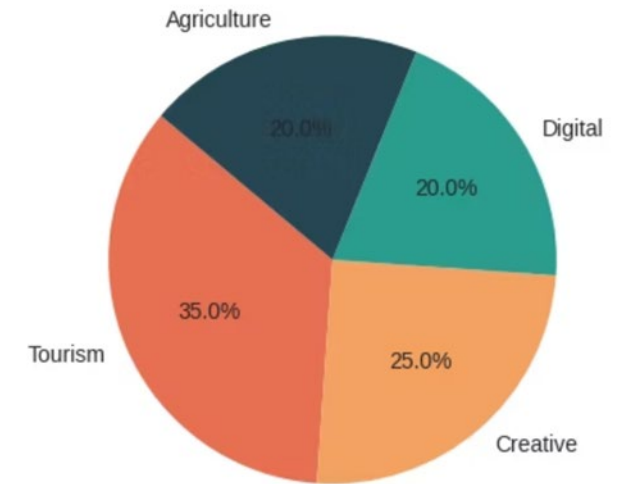
The Case of Cabo Verde

- Small island developing state (SIDS)
- Population: ~550,000
- Youth unemployment: 20.6% (2023)
- Entrepreneurship as a strategic pillar for economic diversification

Entrepreneurship Landscape

- 90% of businesses are micro or small enterprises
- Informal sector employs ~40% of workforce
- Growing interest in digital, creative, and tourism-based ventures

Entrepreneurship by Sector in Cabo Verde (2025)





Strategic Importance of SSC for Cabo Verde

- Shared challenges with other SIDS and African nations
- Opportunity to access adapted technologies and business models
- Strengthens regional integration and resilience

Triangular Cooperation in Action

- Cabo Verde + Brazil + WIPO: IP training for creative entrepreneurs
- Cabo Verde + China + FAO: Agricultural entrepreneurship and algae farming
- Cabo Verde + EU + Mozambique: Digital innovation hubs



Creative Economy and IP

- Music, fashion, gastronomy: key sectors
- IP protection remains low: <5% of creative works registered
- WIPO support critical for formalization and global reach

Institutional Partners

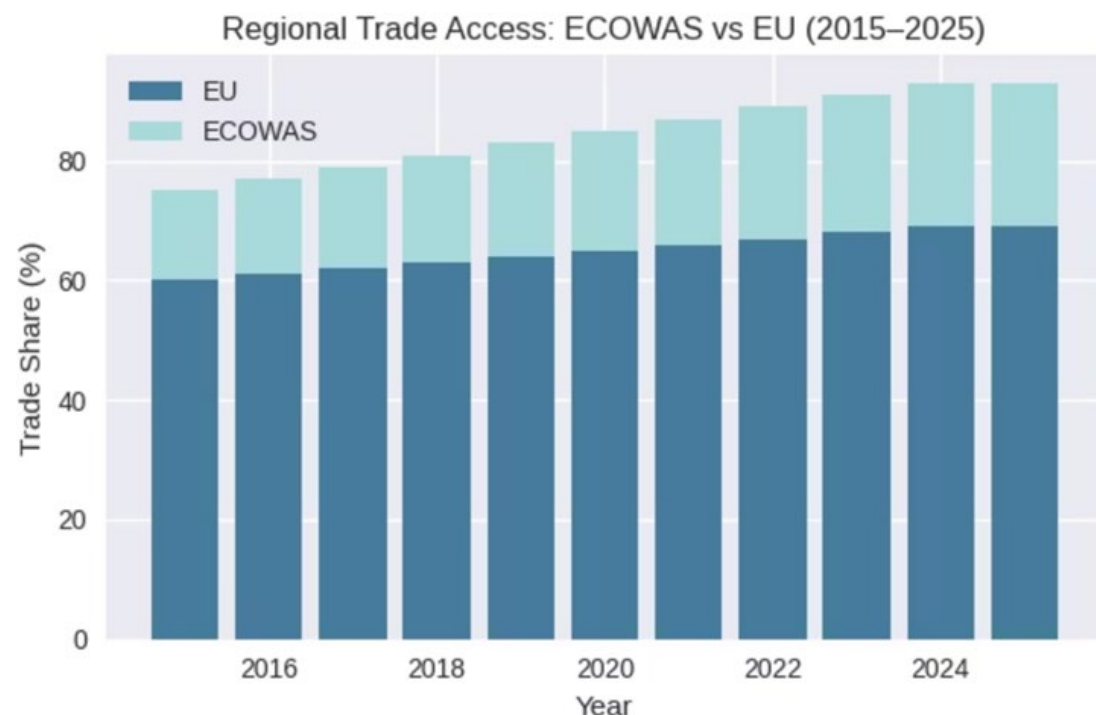
- WIPO: IP training, digital tools
- CPLP: Lusophone business networks
- African Union: Regional entrepreneurship strategy
- European Union: Funding and technical support

Capacity Building Initiatives

WIPO Academy courses for Cabo Verdean entrepreneurs

Exchange programmes with Brazil, India, Mozambique

Local incubators supported by triangular partnerships



Innovation and Digital Entrepreneurship

Mobile penetration: 95%

Internet access: 70%

Potential for fintech, e-commerce, and digital services

Challenges to Overcome



Limited Access to Finance

Entrepreneurs face significant barriers in accessing startup and growth capital. Traditional banking requirements exclude many informal operators, while venture capital and angel investment networks remain underdeveloped. Collateral requirements are prohibitive for young entrepreneurs.



Fragmented Support Ecosystem

The entrepreneurship support system lacks coordination among government agencies, training providers, and financing institutions. Information gaps prevent entrepreneurs from accessing available resources, and overlapping mandates create inefficiencies in service delivery.



Low IP Awareness

Most entrepreneurs remain unaware of intellectual property rights and their commercial value. This knowledge gap results in unprotected innovations, lost revenue opportunities, and vulnerability to exploitation in domestic and international markets.



Regional Market Integration

Despite proximity to West African markets, trade barriers, regulatory differences, and limited logistics connectivity constrain regional expansion. Entrepreneurs struggle to navigate cross-border regulations and access distribution networks beyond national borders.

Strategic Opportunities Ahead



Scale Inclusive Business Models

Leverage South-South cooperation to replicate and adapt proven inclusive business models that have succeeded in similar contexts, creating employment while addressing social challenges such as youth unemployment and informal sector integration.



Access Global Expertise

Utilize triangular cooperation mechanisms to tap into specialized global expertise while maintaining South-South principles. This hybrid approach combines technical know-how with contextually appropriate implementation strategies.



Atlantic Creative Hub Positioning

Position Cabo Verde strategically as a creative and digital hub in the Atlantic region, serving as a bridge between Africa, Europe, and the Americas. The country's unique location, cultural heritage, and political stability create competitive advantages for this positioning.

Impact Goals (2025–2030)

- Train 5,000 entrepreneurs
- Increase IP registrations by 300%
- Launch 3 regional innovation hubs
- Reduce youth unemployment by 10%

- Cabo Verde's active participation in regional and international organizations provides a unique platform for advancing its development goals.
- Focus areas: entrepreneurship, innovation, and economic diversification.



 Strategic Alliances for
Growth

ECOWAS: Regional Integration

- Access to a market of over 400 million people.
- Promotes free movement of goods, services, and people.
- Supports youth and SME programmes for digital inclusion.
- Enhances regional competitiveness and cross-border collaboration.

EU Special Partnership

- Preferential access to EU markets and private sector support.
- EU funds modernise infrastructure and promote green entrepreneurship.
- Joint programmes strengthen education and innovation.
- A model of triangular cooperation with global support.

CPLP & African Union

CPLP:

- Linguistic and cultural affinity fosters Lusophone business networks.
- Promotes youth entrepreneurship and diaspora engagement.

AU:

- Alignment with Agenda 2063 and AfCFTA.
- Supports women-led enterprises and digital entrepreneurship.
- Positions Cabo Verde in pan-African dialogues on resilience and innovation.

Conclusion

Cabo Verde's multilateral engagements are strategic levers for:

- Scaling inclusive entrepreneurship.
- Accessing global expertise and funding.
- Strengthening its role as a creative and digital hub in the Atlantic.

Why Intellectual Property Protection Matters

- 🔒 Secures Innovation: Entrepreneurs can safeguard their inventions, brands, and creative works, ensuring exclusive rights and market advantage.
- 💼 Attracts Investment: Registered IP assets enhance business credibility and investor confidence.
- 🌐 Enables Global Reach: IP protection facilitates international expansion and participation in global value chains.
- 🎨 Empowers the Creative Economy: Artists, designers, and cultural entrepreneurs can monetise their work and preserve cultural identity.
- 📈 Drives Economic Growth: IP fosters a knowledge-based economy, stimulating productivity and job creation.

“Protecting creativity is not a luxury — it is a necessity for building resilient, competitive, and future-ready entrepreneurship.”

African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and Intellectual Property: Implications for Cabo Verde

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) includes a Protocol on Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) that holds significant implications for Cabo Verde and its entrepreneurs. Key Provisions of the AfCFTA IP Protocol:

1. Harmonization of IP rules across African Union member states to facilitate intra-African trade and innovation.
2. Emphasis on protecting local creativity and innovation while ensuring access to knowledge and technology transfer.
3. Flexibilities in adapting international IP regimes to suit African development contexts.
4. Regional cooperation to strengthen national IP systems and institutions.
5. Safeguards to prevent IP protection from becoming a barrier to trade and development.

Implications for Cabo Verde:

Implications for Cabo Verde:

- Cabo Verde has ratified the AfCFTA and is implementing a National Strategy for Integration, supported by UNECA and the African Union.
- The country sees opportunities to internationalise local IP-protected products, such as trademarks, patents, and geographical indications.
- Challenges include logistical connectivity and rules of origin compliance.
- The Institute for Quality Management and Intellectual Property (IGQPI) plays a key role in aligning national IP systems with AfCFTA requirements.

Recommendations:

1. Strengthen IGQPI's regulatory and technical capacity.
2. Educate entrepreneurs on IP benefits within the AfCFTA framework.
3. Develop support mechanisms for internationalizing IP assets.
4. Engage actively in AfCFTA negotiations and forums on IP.
5. Promote culturally and commercially valuable local products music, fashion, gastronomy, and crafts with appropriate IP protection.

The Instituto de Gestão da Qualidade e da Propriedade Intelectual (IGQPI) plays a pivotal role in advancing strategic intellectual property (IP)

IGQPI oversees the National Quality System and the National IP Protection System, ensuring alignment with international standards. It leads the implementation of the National IP Policy and Strategy (PENPI), integrated into the country's sustainable development framework.

Through partnerships with WIPO, ARIPO, and INPI Brazil, IGQPI facilitates international registration of trademarks, patents, and industrial designs. It also promotes IP awareness and training across universities, incubators, and research centers.

IGQPI spearheads legal modernisation, including the development of a new Industrial Property Code that protects traditional knowledge and plant varieties. Its efforts empower businesses to protect and commercialize IP assets, enhance competitiveness, and expand into global markets.

By fostering innovation and facilitating access to IP systems, IGQPI strengthens Cabo Verde's entrepreneurial ecosystem and supports inclusive economic growth.

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“We invite our partners to co-invest in Cabo Verde’s entrepreneurial future. Together, we can protect creativity, foster innovation, and build inclusive prosperity.”

Lenila Alice Oliveira de Sousa Costa - a Cabo Verdean public servant with notable experience in regional cooperation and integration. She was officially appointed as Secretary to the Minister Adjunct of the Prime Minister for Regional Integration, as published in the Boletim Oficial n.º 35, II Série, on 31 May 2018.



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