

THE FIRST FIVE YEARS OF THE WIPO JAPAN
FUNDS-IN-TRUST FOR INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY
(JAPAN FIT/IP) FOR AFRICA AND LEAST
DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (LDCs):

A PRODUCTIVE COLLABORATION WITH THE JAPAN PATENT OFFICE (JPO)



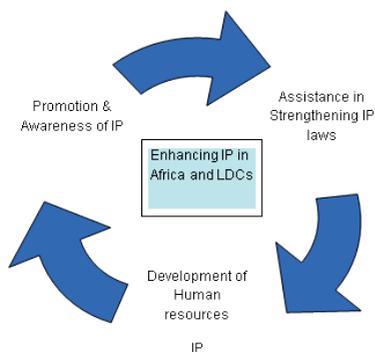
2008 - 2013: The first five years of the Japan Funds-in-Trust for Africa and Least Developed Countries (LDCs)

In 2008, the Government of Japan established a voluntary Funds-in-Trust for Industrial Property (Japan FIT/IP) for Africa and LDCs with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The Japan FIT/IP offers opportunities to fund intellectual property (IP) projects and activities in Africa.

The establishment of the Japan FIT/IP was discussed at the Conference on Assistance for Africa in the Field of Intellectual Property, organized by the Japan Patent Office (JPO), the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), in Tokyo, on January 28, 2008. The Director General of the African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI), the Director General of the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO) and representatives of WIPO's Director General participated in this groundbreaking conference.

The Japan FIT/IP for Africa and LDCs has three main objectives:

- » **Promoting** awareness of the importance of the industrial property system for economic and technological development and of the benefits to be derived from effective use of the system;
- » **Assisting** developing countries and LDCs in establishing or strengthening their industrial property laws and institutions; and
- » **Developing** human resources in the areas of industrial property system administration and use, in close cooperation with OAPI and ARIPO.



Target Region: Activities under the Japan FIT/IP are targeted to countries in Africa and to LDCs, in particular those countries whose economic and technological growth require an effective framework for the development of IP and transfer of technology.

Financing and Annual Budget: The Government of Japan contributes 1.1 million Swiss francs annually to the Japan FIT/IP for Africa and the LDCs.

Administration and Management: The Japan FIT/IP is administered by the Regional Bureau for Africa at WIPO.

Achievement and activities implemented under the Japan FIT/IP for Africa and LDCs (2008 – 2013)

POLICY DIALOGUE ON THE ROLE OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY FOR ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT



Activities under this theme aim to provide a forum for dialogue where IP policymakers, IP office officials, international organizations and senior representatives of the business community can exchange information on successful experiences in linking IP and business to promote an intellectual creation cycle.

High level fora and conferences have brought together over **250 participants**, including **African ministers**, representatives of African Regional Economic Communities (RECs), senior policymakers and entrepreneurs from 32 African countries.

- » Under the patronage of His Excellency Dr. Jakaya Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, more than 20 African ministers, senior policymakers, IP administrators and entrepreneurs gathered to discuss the role of IP in stimulating innovation and development (in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, March 2013);

The United Republic of Tanzania's President and African Ministers at the Conference on Innovation and IP in Dar es Salaam (March 2013)

- » In 2011, a Policy Forum on partnership between WIPO, the JPO and the African RECs on Leveraging IP for Economic Development brought together 30 participants from 14 African countries (in Lusaka, Zambia);
- » In 2010, a High Level Forum on the Global Intellectual Property (IP) Infrastructure for the Promotion of Innovation brought together 14 participants from 8 African countries (in Tokyo, Japan).

SUPPORT FOR IP OFFICE MODERNIZATION

The Japan FIT/IP also assists national and regional IP offices/authorities in streamlining IP administration through rationalization of administrative procedures, use of information technology and office automation, promoting dissemination of IP information through the use of computer networks, and increasing efficiency in granting industrial property rights.

As part of this program, the Japan FIT/IP has supported over 80 officials, including IP office officials in 20 African countries.

PROMOTING INVENTIVE AND INNOVATIVE ACTIVITY

The Japan FIT/IP supports national IP offices in:

- » Setting up efficient mechanisms to assist IP users – particularly research and development (R&D) institutions and start-ups – in promoting use of the IP system;
- » Facilitating technology transfer and licensing by promoting national, regional and global IP exchange and transaction markets;
- » Promoting dissemination of IP information for inventive and innovative activity for the creation of IP within universities; and
- » Assisting inventors and innovators in drafting patent claims.

Key activities include:

- » Training on patent search techniques: More than 300 participants from five African countries have benefited from such training, and some of these countries have adopted information and communication technology (ICT)-based tools to facilitate access to patent information, innovation and non-patent documents (scientific and technical literature).

- » In the framework of the WIPO Re:Search program – which aims to stimulate further R&D for new and better treatment options to address neglected tropical diseases, malaria and tuberculosis – training programs on successful technology licensing (STL) for the African Network for Drugs and Diagnostic Innovation (ANDI) were offered to 14 African scientists and technology managers from research institutions from 10 African countries.
- » In December 2012, 15 participants from 15 African countries attended the Seminar on Leveraging Innovation and Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) for Local Development for Sub-Saharan African Countries, in Rehovot, Israel.
- » Regional workshops for patent examiners on using examination results for IP offices took place in Cameroon and Zimbabwe and brought together participants from 34 African countries.

PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR COOPERATION

This program provides opportunities to:

- » Exchange views on the strategic use of IP rights in the technology transfer process (for IP managers/directors of universities, R&D institutions and technology management offices (TMOs));
- » Identify the obstacles and challenges in establishing and managing viable technology transfer systems, including presentation of case studies; and
- » Identify best practices to strengthen the organization and functioning of TMOs.

In April 2010, a WIPO Regional Workshop on Technology Transfer based on the strategic use of the patent system took place in Casablanca, Morocco, and brought together participants from 21 African countries. Other support and training on IP have been provided to many participants from Africa to offer insight and understanding on how to use IP to develop IP portfolios and gain competitiveness in the marketplace.



IP EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RESEARCH

Education is an important element for the Japan FIT/IP, in particular developing human capital in the field of IP.

Activities under this theme emphasize :

- » The benefits of IP education, training and research, including through comprehensive studies to promote close ties between educational institutions in the field of IP;
- » General and specialized training for government officials and IP professionals, in cooperation with OAPI, ARIPO and other regional educational institutions;
- » Opportunities for human resource development and capacity-building through IP training and teaching for those who teach IP and do research at universities and other institutions; and
- » Short-term fellowships for IP managers and experts on the practical applications of IP and the benefits to be derived from its use in specific fields.

The Japan FIT/IP is a key partner in building human capacity in the field of IP.

A landmark Master's program in IP was created in Mutare, Zimbabwe, in cooperation with ARIPO and Africa University, in 2008. A similar program has been developed with OAPI in cooperation with the University of Yaoundé II.

- » **Each year up to 20 graduate students** are granted fellowships for IP education programs through the WIPO-administered Japan FIT/IP for Africa and LDCs. Through these programs, several IP professionals (university lecturers, lawyers, young professionals and graduate students, IP stakeholders) have graduated to become resource persons at national/regional institutions and in the private sector. Other IP education programs include cooperation with the University of Turin, the Lisbon School of Economics and Management (ISEG) and the University of South Africa (UNISA) in Pretoria.
- » Other activities include training courses for government and IP professionals at the JPO. The Japan FIT/IP also supports activities to develop the national capacity of African countries to address counterfeiting and piracy.

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