

WIPO Inputs to the thematic review of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), in 2022

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) joined the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) on January 1, 2022.

WIPO's Secretariat submits this report to the 2022 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), in response to the invitation by Mr. Collen Vixen Kelapile, President, UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

The UN General Assembly defined the theme of the 2022 HLPF to be "Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2020 Agenda for Sustainable Development."

This report reflects the work carried out by WIPO up to the end of 2021 (before WIPO became a member of the UNSDG) in relation to, as requested, SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 14 on life below water, SDG 15 on life on land, and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals set by the UN Member States.

This contribution takes into consideration the fact that WIPO's core business is not under in-depth consideration in 2022, but, given the interlinkages across SDGs, a long list of activities was carried out in 2021, with links with the Agenda 2030 on SDGs. In fact, a big part of WIPO's activities are cross cutting, and have a horizontal effect on almost all SDGs.

The activities implemented by WIPO cover a wide range of topics under Intellectual Property (IP) in general, and WIPO believes that the UNSDGs will be of high importance in building a coherent, effective, collaborative and coordinated effort by all parties involved.

The Impact of COVID-19

The coronavirus pandemic has had a strong impact in all Member States of the United Nations, being developed countries, developing countries or least-developed countries (LDCs). The entire world population has suffered consequences of the pandemic itself, either directly through contamination or indirectly, through the effects the pandemic has had in the economies of every country.

Most of the economies contracted, and the effects of the reduction resulted not only in the loss of lives, but also in a significant reduction of jobs available. It has increased fiscal deficits and debt levels, mainly due to the measures adopted by several governments with a view of alleviating the effects of the pandemic within their respective populations.

Despite the enforced lockdowns and the reduced demand all over the world, one aspect which remained in balanced levels, was the area of the core business of WIPO: the importance of innovation and, therefore, research and development continued, due in good part to the need to

develop ways and means for reducing the level of coronavirus contamination. As a result of it, patent filings in general have so far remained at reasonable levels.

Activities carried out by WIPO in 2021:

SDG 4: Quality Education

Several sectors of the Organization deal with Quality Education.

1. The WIPO Academy offers a range of IP education and training courses and services to support the development of IP knowledge and skills for a wide variety of participants, particularly from developing countries, LDCs and countries in transition. As well as providing targeted training for government officials, the WIPO Academy also offers courses for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups, entrepreneurs, local communities and indigenous communities, women and youth, aiming to build knowledge and skills, which reflect the importance of IP for economic growth, job creation and sustainable development. The Academy has also adapted its general distance-learning course to facilitate access to basic IP knowledge for persons who are blind, visually impaired, or otherwise print disabled.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the WIPO Academy adapted quickly to support the Organization's commitment to achieving the UN SDGs, responding to the training needs of Member States by switching to online and distance learning programs. In 2021, WIPO Academy's program attracted approximately 130,000 participants in up to 15 languages. The WIPO Academy's IP4Youth&Teachers project introduces IP to school curricula helping young people understand the main aspects of IP and its relationship to innovation, creativity and other broader issues of interest to them.

The Academy's distance learning program also serves as a partner and member of the UNSDG: Learn - Steering Committee, an initiative established by UNITAR to provide a common gateway to eLearning resources on the topics associated with SDGs. The WIPO Academy's courses are designed and delivered in partnership with national and regional IP offices, universities and a global network of academics and IP experts. To further empower countries to design and deliver IP trainings at the national level, the Academy has organized in 2021, over 1230 training activities, for approximately 94,000 participants.

2. The WIPO Traditional Knowledge Division (WIPO TKD) carried out several activities in relation to SDGs 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15 and 17. Specifically on SDGs 4 and 5, referring to Quality Education and Gender Equality, and the promotion of development-oriented policies that support productive activities, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, as well as the protection of cultural heritage, the TKD's training activities and information resources contributed towards the empowerment of indigenous peoples and facilitated their access to life-long learning opportunities that help them acquire the knowledge and skills needed to exploit opportunities and to participate fully in society in line with the SDGs framework. The TKD continued the mentoring phase of the WIPO training, Mentoring and Matchmaking Program on Intellectual Property for Women Entrepreneurs from Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) (the WEP), and

the second cycle of the WEP started in October 2021. The program aims to encourage women entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity related to traditional knowledge (TK) and traditional cultural expressions (TCEs) by strengthening the capacity of indigenous and local community women entrepreneurs to make strategic and effective use of IP tools in support of their entrepreneurial activities. The TKD organized webinars on the emerging opportunities and challenges that the digital economy raises for IPLCs during the Covid-19 pandemic. The TKD supported or contributed to virtual activities on the protection of TK and TCEs in various regions and countries.

In 2021, the WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC) met once and recommended to the WIPO General Assembly that the mandate of the IGC be renewed for the 2022-2023 biennium. In October 2021, the WIPO General Assembly agreed on the renewal of the IGC's mandate for the 2022-2023 biennium. The IGC will continue to expedite its work with the objective of finalizing an agreement on an international legal instrument(s), without prejudging the nature of outcome(s), relating to IP, which will ensure the balanced and effective protection of GRs, TK and TCEs.

3. The Intellectual Property Business Division (IPBD) has also acted on several fronts, covering SDGs 4, 5, 8, 9, 13 and 17. With reference to SDG 4, the IPBD organized, or contributed to a series of regional and national meetings on IP Management for SMEs and SMEs support institutions, raising awareness on the importance of the use of IP in business, such as training for trainers, colloquium for teachers of IP and training on IP for SMEs. The IPBD Division is also implementing a project approved under the WIPO Development Agenda, on increasing the Role of Women in Innovation and Entrepreneurship, encouraging women in developing countries to use the IP system. This program has completed its second year of implementation.

SDG 5: Gender Equality

Since the introduction of its Policy on Gender Equality in 2014, WIPO has worked, through different sectors and divisions, with a two-pronged approach to gender equality that combines gender-specific and gender mainstreaming actions. This approach, which has developed in accordance with good practices and lessons learnt at the international level, expands across all areas of WIPO's work.

On the one hand, gender mainstreaming is the strategy for implementing greater equality for women in relation to men chosen by the United Nations system and the international community. It consists in assessing any planned action, policy or program, to determine their implications for women and men. It is a way to make women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs so that all benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated.

On the other hand, gender-specific actions target one group (generally either men or women) to bridge disparities, sensitize and engage, with the purpose of lifting up that group from its position of disadvantage and providing equal opportunities for everyone to enjoy.

WIPO's Policy on Gender Equality governs and provides a general direction to these efforts. It recognizes that WIPO has both internal (to its personnel) and external (to its partners and stakeholders) opportunities and obligations related to gender equality, and needs to operate with coherence between the two levels.

This two-pronged approach is reflected in the SDGs, where gender equality is addressed as an explicit priority in a stand-alone goal and is mainstreamed across all other goals.

Within SDG 5 targets, WIPO focuses its action in particular on Target 5.5 "Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life". In addition, WIPO supports UN system-wide contributions to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the context of the SDGs through i) women's economic empowerment and ii) knowledge generation and dissemination.

In this context, WIPO is working on gender equality in IP on multiple fronts.

Most recently, WIPO launched two workshop series on gender mainstreaming in IP Offices in the Latin American region. The series focused on creating a common understanding of gender equality issues and awareness-raising among IP practitioners about the gender gap in IP. It built knowledge on gender mainstreaming, successful inclusive practices and practical tools and initiatives that can be applied to all the areas of work of an IP office.

To cast light on the determinants of the low participation of women in the IP ecosystem, WIPO embarked in a multi annual research and capacity building project to increase the role of women in innovation and entrepreneurship. The project has produced desk reviews (for example, [Policy Approaches to Close the IP Gender Gap](#)) at the global and country level (Mexico, Oman, Pakistan and Uganda), facilitating the engagement of women inventors and creators to discuss challenges in a multi-partite way. For each pilot country, an analysis of obstacles to the use of the IP system has been prepared. In 2021, a pilot global mentorship program was launched.

The lack of sex-disaggregated data in IP is a major obstacle to determine the extent of the gender gap in IP. Different methodologies have been developed to solve this gap. In 2021, WIPO expanded its Name Dictionary, making it publicly available to the global community. The new Name Dictionary ([wipo_pub_econstat_wp_64.pdf](#)) provides increased accuracy and is foundational to the statistics prepared by WIPO.

In 2021, three global conferences on "Closing the Gender Gap in IP" featured speakers from the global IP and innovation communities and highlighted gaps, lessons learnt and good practices in bridging the gender gap in IP. More than 700 participants among Member States, practitioners, researchers and advocates took part.

In addition, to develop capacities to support gender equality in IP, WIPO:

- includes a gender mainstreaming component in IP courses targeting IP practitioners, for example, i) the international course on genetic resources, and ii) the advanced international training program on intellectual property for LDCs;

- offers dedicated courses through the WIPO Academy. In 2021, 56% of course takers were women, indicating that a critical mass of female practitioners has had their capacities strengthened.

SDG 14: Life below water and SDG 15: Life on land

The Global Challenges Division (GCD) of WIPO's activities related to several SDGs, including SDGs 14 and 15.

The initiative called WIPO GREEN makes tangible contributions to achieving the SDGs. It brings together key players to catalyze green technology innovation and diffusion through its database, network and acceleration projects.

WIPO GREEN supports green tech innovation, infrastructure and innovators, particularly in developing countries. It connects those seeking cutting-edge, environmentally sustainable solutions with technology and service providers – particularly in developing countries. These connections are facilitated by a free, online database of green technologies, needs and expertise, as well as through a broad range of activities undertaken in collaboration with partners.

In 2021, the new WIPO GREEN database went live. Over 125,000 green technologies, needs and experts from over 156 countries are currently listed in the database. 17 private and public institutions joined WIPO GREEN in 2021, bringing the total number of partners to 136. The number of registered database users grew to over 2,000. Since its 2013 launch, the platform has facilitated more than 800 connections among network members.

The following 17 organizations joined WIPO GREEN in 2021:

- Ajinomoto Co., Inc.
- Amazon Web Services
- Astamuse company, Ltd.
- Austria Wirtschaftsservice Gesellschaft mbH (aws)
- Furukawa Electric Co., Ltd
- Global Mobility Service Inc.
- HINODE SANGYO CO. LTD.
- Kai Corporation
- Kyushu Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI)
- Mitsubishi Electric Corporation
- PONS IP
- Portuguese Institute of Industrial Property
- Ricoh Company, Ltd.
- The University of Tokyo
- Tohoku University
- Tokyo Institute of Technology, Open Innovation Platform
- Yamagata University

In collaboration with WIPO's IP for Business Division (IPBD), WIPO GREEN hosted an IP Management Clinic, providing expert advice to eight green technology SMEs, including two

companies from Brazil and one from Ukraine. As a project outcome, an [IP management checklist for SMEs](#) was published.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

Under SG 17, several sectors and divisions of the Organization deal with partnerships.

With reference to WIPO's COVID-19 response, the Organization continues to strengthen its cooperation and partnerships with the UN, IGOs and NGOs in support of the SDGs. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of WIPO's continued cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) in global policy areas at the intersection of health, trade and IP.

In June 2021, the Directors General of WHO, WIPO and WTO agreed to the creation of the 'Trilateral Technical Assistance Gateway'; a 'one stop shop' for technical assistance in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and future global health emergencies. The Gateway will coordinate and combine the three organizations' services to offer holistic support to members, including the creation of a new dedicated website and a single point of contact. Support will include tools for building innovation ecosystems, advice on trade policy and work to improve health infrastructure.

In addition, WIPO is committed to deliver bilateral technical assistance to Member States through its COVID-19 response package. An allocation of three million Swiss Francs will support the implementation of COVID-19 related activities in 2022 and 2023, providing targeted support to Member States in their efforts to address the pandemic, build back better and ensure a sustainable economic recovery.

WIPO, through the TKD undertook many activities with partners such as the International Trademark Association (INTA), the International Labor Organization (ILO), the International Trade Center (ITC), the Women Entrepreneurs from Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (WEP), the partnership with SIDA for training on IP and genetic resources, partnership with indigenous organizations, UNFCCC, youth groups and the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFI).

Another WIPO project of high relevance to the SDGs is WIPO Re:Search. 2021 marked the tenth anniversary of WIPO Re:Search, a pioneering consortium to fight Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs), malaria and tuberculosis. WIPO Re:Search continued to advance the SDGs throughout 2021. Significant provisions of SDG 3 (good health and wellbeing), and SDG 17 (partnerships) are built into the WIPO Re:Search framework, and underlie all Consortium activities. Additionally, the Consortium prioritizes engagement of scientists and institutions in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) in its collaboration and fellowship activities. By providing LMIC partners with access to Research and Development (R&D) resources and know-how not readily available in their countries, WIPO Re:Search enhances their capacity to conduct innovative research in furtherance of SDG 9 (innovation and infrastructure).

WIPO Re:Search counted 144 members in 2021, representing 46 countries from six continents, including more than 60 members based in LMICs. So far, WIPO Re:Search has brokered 173 collaborative research projects.

The following 11 organizations joined WIPO Re:Search in 2021:

- Anchor University Lagos (AUL);
- Global Healthcare Innovation Alliance Accelerator (GHIAA);
- Institute of Science and Technology (INSTech);
- Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW);
- National Hansen's Disease Program (NHDP);
- Public Health Institute (PHI);
- Universidad de Antioquia;
- Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia;
- University of Nebraska Medical Center;
- University of Rwanda (UR);
- University of the Republic of Uruguay.

Key messages for inclusion in the ministerial declaration of the 2022 HLPF:

In short, the key messages should be:

- it is important to emphasize the principle of 'leaving no one behind' in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic;
- it is essential to invest in Quality Education, learning for all and skills development.
- prioritize gender equality;
- inclusive and coordinated partnerships as an important force towards sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda;
- adequate IP protection to serve as a powerful engine towards development and innovation.

In conclusion, with the joining of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group on January 1, 2022, WIPO strongly believes that establishing and, subsequently, maintaining and strengthening partnerships, in line with SDG 17, will be a key factor in achieving the objectives set out for the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

WIPO exceeded the target number of initiatives in partnership with UN and other IGOs for the implementation of the SDGs. Following the recommendations of WIPO's Program and Budget Committee, and approval by WIPO's General Assembly in September and October 2021 respectively, WIPO joined the UNSDG on the 1st of January 2022. The discussions and decisions on this initiative provided greater Member State interaction on the SDGs, and will ensure greater coherence and synergies within the UN system.