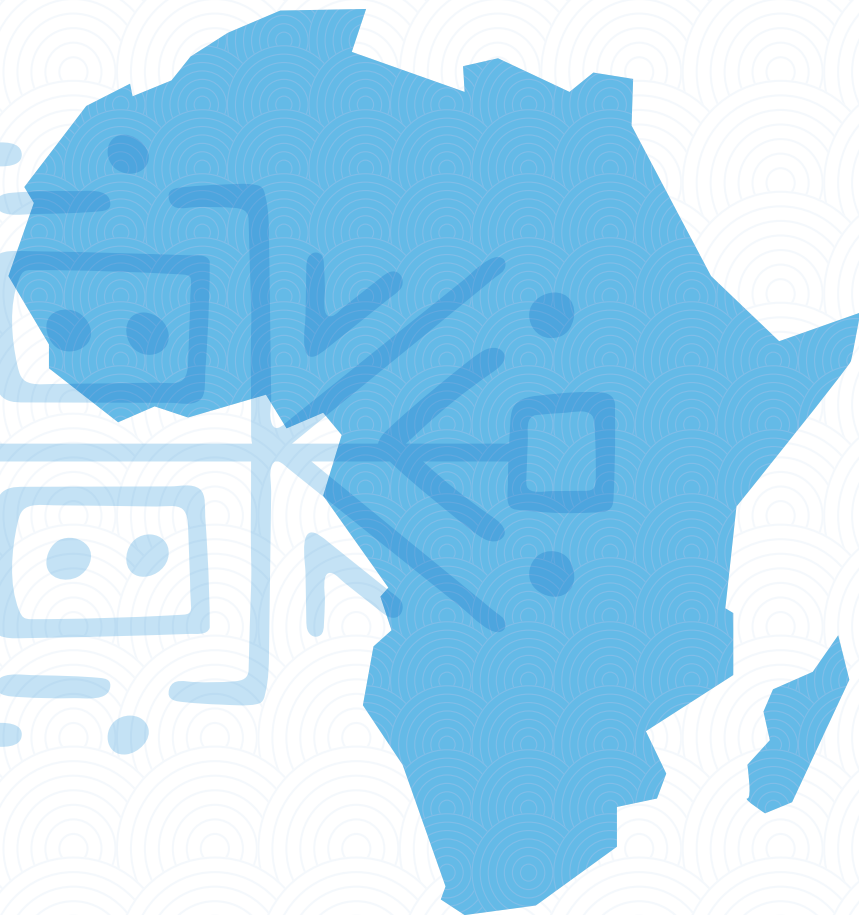


Japan FIT/IP Global Activities in Africa and LDCs – 2019



JPO
Japan
Patent Office





**The history of
Japan FIT/IP for
Africa and Least
Developed Countries
(LDCs), and
Japan FIT/IP Global**

From Japan FIT/IP for Africa and LDCs to Japan FIT/IP Global

Around the time of the third and fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD III and IV), one of the most debated issues in the international fora dealing with intellectual property (IP) was the development implications of IP. In 2007, the **WIPO Development Agenda** was formally established by its Member States, including the adoption of 45 recommendations.

In particular, recommendation 2 urges to: “Provide additional assistance to WIPO through donor funding, and **establish Trust-Funds or other voluntary funds within WIPO specifically for LDCs**, while continuing to accord high priority to finance activities in Africa through budgetary and extra-budgetary resources, to promote, inter alia, the legal, commercial, cultural, and economic exploitation of intellectual property in these countries.”

In 2008, a year after the establishment of WIPO Development Agenda, the participants at TICAD IV, while acknowledging the positive trends that had emerged across the African continent in general, identified boosting economic growth as one of the priority areas. The “Yokohama Action Plan”, the outcome of TICAD IV, encouraged all stakeholders, including the private sector, to act together in accelerating economic growth.

Under the Yokohama Action Plan, the Government of Japan made concrete proposals for private sector development. **The Japan Patent Office (JPO), in cooperation with WIPO, proposed to establish a new Trust-Funds arrangement (Funds-In-Trust: FIT) for industrial property dedicated to the development of Africa and LDCs.** The proposal had a clear objective: to support African countries to facilitate the growth of local industries through better use of their intellectual property systems and the increase of investments from the rest of the world through improvement of the trade and investment environment.

The proposal was welcomed by the two regional IP organizations in Africa: the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO) and *l'Organisation Africaine de la Propriété Intellectuelle* (OAPI). **In the field of IP, the JPO became a partner of Africa.**

In 2013, TICAD V confirmed that private sector-led growth is necessary for Africa's growth. **Japan committed itself to support Africa's efforts** in improving the local investment environment, which is essential to expand trade and investment by the private sector. As one of the initiatives in this priority area, Japan FIT/IP for Africa and LDCs was incorporated into the evolved “Yokohama Action Plan 2013-2017”, which will assist Africa in the development of IP infrastructures and human resources.

Since 2008, the Government of Japan has **contributed 1.1 million Swiss francs** a year to the fund. In 2015, Japan **increased its contribution to 1.6 million Swiss francs** so as to respond to growing needs from an emerging Africa.

In 2016, in the opening session of TICAD VI, Prime Minister Abe announced that for a period of three years from 2016 to 2018, **Japan will invest for the future of Africa**, such as the human resource development of 10 million people ("Empowerment"), by making use of the strength of Japan ("Quality"). As a part of that commitment, **Japan will provide training to 1,000 people** to promote public awareness of intellectual property in Africa for a period of three years from 2016 to 2018. Japan FIT/ IP for Africa and LDCs was incorporated into the implementation of this plan, and the commitment was achieved by providing training to more than 1,000 people.

In 2018, Japan FIT/IP for Africa and LDCs marked its **10th anniversary** and a commemoration event including exhibition was held in Geneva, from September 24 to October 2, 2018. On September 25, the opening ceremony took place and was followed by cultural performances and a reception.



H.E. Ken Okaniwa, Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva (Photo: WIPO)

“The trust fund has contributed a great deal to helping people in Africa and other LDCs understand how intellectual property helps their livelihoods and their development.” – H.E. Ken Okaniwa, Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva



As a cultural performance, a fashion show took place, which was the result of collaborative work between a Cameroon-born designer and a well-known Japanese kimono maker. (Photos: WIPO/MARTIN)



Performance by African musicians (left) and Performance of Japanese drums and guitars (right) (Photos: WIPO/Martin)



Kagami-Biraki ceremony: From the left, Mr. John Kabare, Intellectual Property Operations Executive of ARIPO, Mr. Marc Séry-Koré, Director of Regional Bureau for Africa, WIPO, H.E. Ken Okaniwa, Dr. Francis Gurry, Director General of WIPO, Ms. Naoko Munakata, Mr. Denis Bohoussou, Director General of OAPI (Photo: WIPO/Martin)

In 2019, Japan FIT/IP for Africa and LDCs was merged with Japan Funds-in-Trust for Industrial Property for Asia and Pacific, whose annual contribution in 2018 was 3.83 million Swiss francs, into a **Global Funds-in-Trust in the field of industrial property** so that the Japanese Funds-in-Trust can cover the whole world. Further, the Government of Japan increased its contribution by 350 thousand Swiss francs, and now it amounts to 5.78 million Swiss francs in total.

Major events in the history of Japan FIT/IP for Africa and LDCs

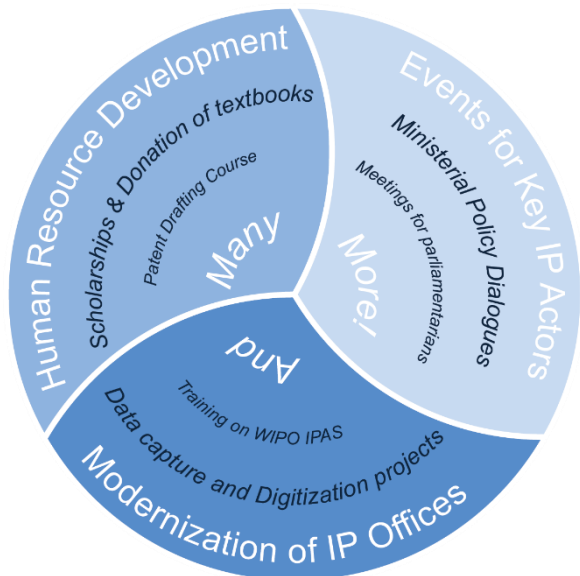
2008	TICAD IV / <i>Japan FIT/IP for Africa and LDCs was established in WIPO</i>
2013	TICAD V
2015	<i>Japan FIT/IP increased its contribution from 1.1 million CHF to 1.6 million CHF</i>
2016	TICAD VI
2018	<i>Japan FIT/IP for Africa and LDCs marked its 10th anniversary</i>
2019	<i>Japan FIT/IP for Africa and LDCs was merged with that for Asia and Pacific into Japan Funds-in-Trust Industrial Property Global. The annual contribution from the government of Japan for Japan FIT/IP Global in 2019 is 5.78 million CHF.</i>

Activities under Japan FIT/IP for Africa and LDCs (FY 2008-2018)

Japan FIT/IP has **three pillars** in its activities in Africa. The first pillar is to organize **events for key IP actors** such as high-level policy dialogues for African ministers. Japan FIT/IP facilitates the use of IP system for development by supporting key actors in Africa.

The third pillar is **human resource development** in the field of IP. Human resource development has always been the focus of Japan's assistance in the TICAD process. Japan FIT/IP supports Africa to develop human resources who are able to use the IP system for development.

The second pillar is the **modernization of IP offices**. The ICT system and database are the fundamental infrastructure for a modern IP office. Japan FIT/IP supports IP offices in Africa to handle more and more IP files.



1 Events for Key IP Actors

Policy Dialogue on the Role of Intellectual Property in Economic, Social and Cultural Development

Japan FIT/IP contributes to organizing fora at which high-level policymakers, officials from IP offices, and representatives from the private sector can discuss IP policies and IP-related development issues. Such **policy dialogues help leverage the IP system in Africa and LDCs to drive innovation and creativity forward.**

High-level panel “Intellectual Property, Innovation and Branding: Strengthening Business Competitiveness in Africa”, November 21, 2018, Windhoek (Namibia)



(Photo: Business and Intellectual Property Authority (BIPA))

This was held as a part of 10th anniversary commemoration event of Japan Funds-in-Trust – Africa and LDCs, within the context of the Forty–Second Session of the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO) Administrative Council, aiming at enhancing and strengthening the collaboration with African countries for future activities.



Mr. Fernando dos Santos, Director General, ARIPO (the center) (Photo: BIPA)



Mr. Kunihiko Shimano, Deputy Commissioner, JPO (Photo: BIPA)

“Africa has many strengths, such as abundant raw materials, rich human resources, wonderful nature, diversified needs based on its specific circumstances, and passion for the future. I believe that when these strengths are connected with certain technologies for achieving innovations, intellectual property will play an important role in the process.” – Mr. Kunihiko Shimano, Deputy Commissioner, JPO

“There’s a lot of innovation and creativity happening in Africa, but we are not using intellectual property to harness that innovation and creativity. And I believe this should be our focus in a discussion to see how we can change this.” – Mr. Fernando dos Santos, Director General, ARIPO

During the discussion, it was proposed that WIPO, in cooperation with the JPO, to implement Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) related activities such as capacity building targeting SMEs and chambers of commerce.

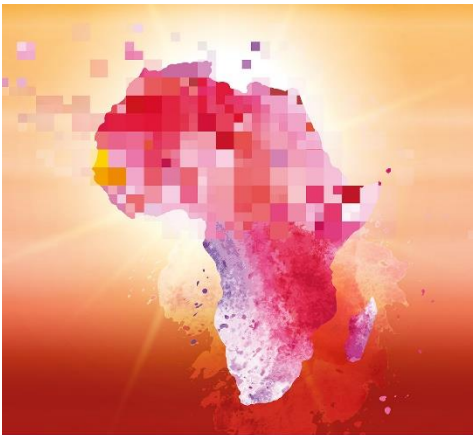
African Ministerial Conference, November 3 to 5, 2015, Dakar (Senegal)

This is an **IP forum of unprecedented size** where African ministers, IP experts from Africa and other continents, and participants from the private sector discussed IP policies to promote an intellectual creation cycle **for an Emerging Africa**.

The conference brought together over 400 participants, including around 50 ministers responsible for intellectual property, trade and culture as well as private sector members to adopt a plan for boosting the uptake of intellectual property tools to help stimulate economic and social development across Africa.

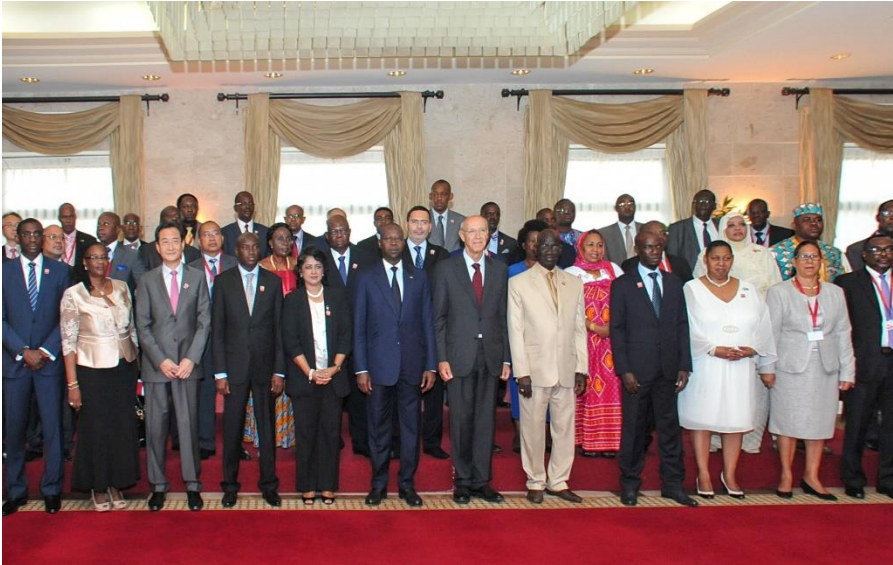
The Dakar Declaration on Intellectual Property for Africa was adopted by ministers, establishing the elements of an action plan on exploiting IP system for fostering innovation and creativity in Africa for coming years.

This conference was organized in cooperation with the African Union and the Government of the Republic of Senegal.



H.E Mrs. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim,
President of the Republic of Mauritius
(Photo: WIPO/Cheikh Saya Diop)





H.E Mrs. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, President of the Republic of Mauritius, H.E Mr. Mohammed Dionne, Prime Minister of the Republic of Senegal, Mr. Martial De-Paul Ikounga, Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology of AU, H.E. Mr. Takashi Kitahara, Ambassador of Japan to Senegal, Dr. Francis Gurry, Director General of WIPO, Mr. Kunihiko Shimano, Director-General, Trial and Appeal Department of JPO, Ministers and Organizers (Photo: WIPO/Cheikh Saya Diop)

Developing IP Knowledge among Law-makers

Japan FIT/IP contributes to organizing events that help keep law-makers up-to-date with the very latest developments in the field. **Law-makers play a key role in the establishment of an IP system.** The more they know about how a modern IP system functions, the better they are able to build the constructive partnerships that underpin such systems.

High Level Meeting for Members of Parliament of the ARIPO Member States, March 25 to 27, 2015, Kampala (Uganda)



Parliamentarians with H.E. Kahinda Otafiire, Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Uganda (center) and Mr. Kunihiko Shimano, the Director-General of the Japan Patent Office (right)
(Photo: WIPO)

“It is a well-known fact that no country has ever effectively developed without the use of intellectual property. Therefore, it is imperative that you as policymakers quickly adopt laws in our respective countries which will facilitate the use of intellectual property.” – H.E. Kahinda Otafiire, Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Uganda

“For the purpose of improving IP legislation, it is indispensable to gain cooperation and support from the members of the legislative branch” – Mr. Kunihiko Shimano, Director-General, JPO

The meeting brought together 35 African parliamentarians from Member States of ARIPO. The objective was to learn more about the importance of the IP system and new treaties on topics from copyright to industrial and cultural development in Africa.

The highlight of the meeting was the introduction to the Marrakesh VIP Treaty, provided by experts who themselves were visually impaired. Their passion and desire for books in accessible formats was a strong message that resonated with the audience.



Ms. Beatrice Guzu, Chief Executive Officer, Uganda Disability Council, giving her presentation with notes in Braille, an accessible format (Photo: WIPO)

2 Modernization of IP Offices

Japan FIT/IP undertakes modernization projects to help bring the operations and services of national and regional IP offices into the digital age. The major strand of modernization projects focuses on **data capture^(*1) and digitization^(*2) of paper IP files**, which allow IP offices to **handle IP files in an efficient manner**.

(*1) Project to capture bibliographic data from paper documents and to enter the data into the system.

(*2) Project to scan paper documents and to store the digitized data in the system.

Data capture and Digitization

In most IP offices in Africa, IP files are still in paper form. It is a time-consuming task to find a specific document from shelves of thousands of paper documents. There is also a risk of damage or loss of documents. Data capture and digitization **streamline and speed up** the business processes, which benefits both IP offices and users.

As the African economy is growing, the number of IP files is growing. Data capture and digitization are becoming more and more urgent. Japan FIT/IP will contribute to this transformation of IP offices.



Information technology and office automation
(Photo: WIPO)

Data Capture, Validation and Verification

- 2018 – Uganda (ongoing)
- 2017 – Eswatini (ongoing)
- 2016 – Nigeria, Namibia (ongoing), Zambia (ongoing)
- 2015 – Botswana, Zanzibar
- 2014 – Nigeria
- 2013 – Zimbabwe
- 2012 – Mauritius

Digitization

- 2016 – Egypt, OAPI (ongoing), Botswana (ongoing), Malawi (ongoing), Mozambique
- 2015 – ARIPO, Kenya, Zimbabwe
- 2014 – OAPI
- 2013 – Ethiopia

Training on Industrial Property Administration System (IPAS)

WIPO IPAS is a workflow-based and highly customizable system that supports all the major business processes of an IP office. IPAS offers IP offices end-to-end solution to automate the entire registration process of Industrial Property applications, from filing up to the grant of rights, including formalities, examination, publications as well as post-grant actions such as amendments, assignments and licenses. Training for IP office employees on IPAS is offered by Japan FIT/IP to help them provide fully paperless, digitized services to their users.

Training workshops are organized every year:

- In September 2018, in Harare, Zimbabwe
- In July 2017, in Gaborone, Botswana
- In July 2016, in Maputo, Mozambique

- In October 2015, in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe
- In April 2015, in Walvis Bay, Namibia
- In October 2013, in Harare, Zimbabwe

Deployment of IPAS

IPAS Deployment mission is also supported by Japan FIT/IP

- 2017 – Ethiopia (ongoing)

Text Conversion

Japan FIT/IP also supports a proof-of-concept project in Egypt to convert image data of patent documents in Arabic language into text format so that they can be integrated in the automation platform for the use by officers in Egyptian Patent Office and local community online. The project will also make the text data available to Patentscope, which has a translation function.



“The activities and budgetary support under Funds-In-Trust (FIT) Japan for Africa has had tremendous impact on administration and service provision for Industrial Property (IP) in IP Offices across the Africa Continent. Over CHF 2 million has been spend on digitization of paper documents, data capture, validation, and verification, and capacity building. Exceptional improvements have been achieved in search and examination, online publication, and data exchange. For example, in Zimbabwe IP Office, search takes less than 2 minutes due to automation. Before complete automation of the IP registry, search used to take approximately 4 to 5 days.” – Mr. Gregory SADYALUNDA, Project Manager, IP Office Delivery and Support Section, IP Office Business Solutions Division, Global Infrastructure Sector



Japan FIT/IP has contributed to modernization projects in these IP Offices

3 Human Resource Development

Education is a key element for Japan FIT/IP. Through scholarships, donation of textbooks, training opportunities and other activities, Japan FIT/IP supports Africa's efforts in developing human resources and building capacity in the field of IP.

Master's degree in Intellectual Property

A landmark Master's program in IP was created in Africa University in Mutare (Zimbabwe), in cooperation with ARIPO and the WIPO Academy in 2008. A similar program has been developed in the University of Yaoundé II in cooperation with OAPI and the WIPO Academy. The objectives of the programs are to address the shortage of human resources in the Africa region by educating students and young professionals in the field of IP and to train trainers of IP for the region in order to meet the regional needs and perspectives.

Each year selected students have been granted scholarships to study MIP degrees. **Up to 10 (from 2019 academic year, the number of scholarships was increased to up to 12) students are selected per program for scholarships by Japan FIT/IP.**



Students learning about IP issues
(Photo: © Africa University)

Through these programs, 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.



MIP graduation ceremony
(Photo: © Africa University)



Patent agents working on a practical exercise in small groups (Photo: WIPO)

Japan FIT/IP donates textbooks to MIP students.



Japan FIT/IP supports MIP students (Photo: WIPO)

Patent Drafting Course for Patent Agents and technology intermediaries in Africa

In October 2014, Japan FIT/IP sponsored an unprecedented meeting that took place in Harare (Zimbabwe), bringing together 36 African patent and trademark agents from 15 ARIPO Member States. The aim was to explore ways to improve their current business procedures and to work together on bettering the IP system in Africa. In the meeting, the participants expressed needs for training in patent drafting, which will help them **go the extra mile for their clients to protect IP and open up the industry** in their countries.

Responding to the needs, in 2015, Japan FIT/IP supported the **launch of brand-new Patent Drafting Course in ARIPO**, which aims to enhance the drafting skills of patent agents in Africa. In 2017, the second Patent Drafting Course at ARIPO took place in September.

In 2018, the Course was organized targeting **technology intermediaries** who have technical background and are involved in technology and innovation management at universities and public research centers, Technology and Innovation Support Centers (TISCs), as well as government agencies involved in innovation support.

Support for Technology Transfer

Japan FIT/IP supports training workshops and study programs to promote innovation and facilitate technology transfer based on the strategic use of IP in Africa. Japan FIT/IP promotes technology transfer of green technologies by supporting WIPO GREEN.



Capacity Building for Researchers, Entrepreneurs and Youth

Japan FIT/IP supports activities aimed at building capacity for researchers, entrepreneurs and youth.

In November 2017, a Regional Forum featuring African women researchers and entrepreneurs took place in Casablanca (Morocco), bringing together over 200 women researchers and entrepreneurs, including youth, actively engaged in the agricultural and agribusiness sector.

“Unfortunately, because we're failing to utilize a tremendous amount of the intellectual resources of 50% of our population, Africa is failing to derive maximum benefit from the innovation fire power of its women.” – Dr. Wanjiru Kamau-Rutenberg, Director, African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD)



Dr. Wanjiru Kamau-Rutenberg, Director, AWARD
(Photo: WIPO)

The aim was to provide a platform for African women researchers and entrepreneurs to: (i) help them better understand the relevance of intellectual property (IP) in agriculture and agri-business; (ii) to learn innovative ways to work and do business in order to effectively use the IP system for economic development and wealth creation; and (iii) to apply what they have learnt in their respective areas of work.

The Plenary Session discussed the catalytic role of IP rights (IPRs) in fostering innovation and included inter alia discussions on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for the transformation of agriculture in Africa and the importance of empowering African Women in Agri-business.

The participants appreciated their first exposure to IPRs and understanding how the strategic use of IP tools can enhance their research and improve their business competitiveness. They also requested WIPO to assist in elaboration and implementation of institutional IP policies and strategies for universities and research institutions including the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), for better use of IP for competitiveness.



Participants came from more than 50 African countries, representing diverse national and regional institutions as well as the private sector (Photo: Moroccan Industrial and Commercial Property Office)

Technology and Innovation Support Centers (TISCs)

Japan FIT/IP has sponsored numerous seminars and workshops for TISCs, which aim to enhance the capacity of researchers and inventors in Africa and LDCs to use IP information in their innovation activities.

- 2018 – Benin, Gambia, Burkina Faso, Malawi, Rwanda, Cote d'Ivoire, Botswana, and ARIPO
- 2017 – Senegal and Uganda
- 2016 – Tanzania, Zanzibar, Nigeria, and Botswana
- 2015 – Rwanda, Burkina Faso, and Ghana
- 2014 – Tanzania, Zanzibar, Zambia, Senegal, and Sao Tomé and Príncipe

Empowering Local Actors through Training

Japan FIT/IP supports and trains local actors, building their knowledge of IP and branding. **The “Taita Basket” branding project empowers women basket-weavers to protect and promote their traditional craftwork through the IP system.**

A family art

“Taita Baskets” are sisal baskets made by women in Kenya’s Taita Taveta County. The baskets are laboriously crafted in a unique traditional way from hand-twisted thin sisal fibers dyed with natural plants. They are remarkably soft, thanks to their tightly woven fine mesh, and are resistant to color fading. The knowledge of basket-making has been passed down through the generations, from mother to daughter.



Basket weaving in a local village (Photos: WIPO)



Unlocking the power of IP

The first step in the project was a training workshop, which took place on February 17 and 18, 2016 in Voi (Kenya). It brought together 30 female basket weavers from surrounding villages to learn the importance of the trademark system, standards and quality control for branding products. Through lectures and exercises, the participants learned the importance of standards and quality control.

During subsequent on-site training sessions in two villages, the trainees shared with other group members what they had learned and discussed in the workshop: IP knowledge, standards, quality control and how to form an association.



Lecture on quality improvement by basket-making experts

A trainee shares her knowledge with other basket weavers in her village



Photos: WIPO

Birth of a new association

In June, 2016, during week-long events in two local villages, some 450 basket weavers gathered – 300 in Kasigau and 150 in Sechu – to establish their association and formally agree on obtaining a collective mark to develop their regional brand. They discussed:

- the makeup of their new association;
- the logo design for their proposed collective mark;
- regulations on the use of the mark; and
- quality standards to be adopted.

Following the discussions, the basket weavers voted by majority to adopt all of the documents necessary to found their regional association and take the project forward. This represents the first



Considering logo options

step towards the development of the regional “Taita Basket” brand.

The Hon. Eng. Elijah Mwandoo, County Executive for Industrialization, Energy, ICT and Research, opened the meeting by proudly referring to the sisals of the region as among “the best in the world” and emphasizing the importance and relevance of the branding project to his county.



Discussion on the constitution of the association, presided over by the leader of the groups.



Mulling over basket designs in small groups (Photo: WIPO)

Collective mark

This multi-step branding project on sisal baskets wrapped up at an event in March, 2017, in Taita Taveta County (Kenya). Thanks to support from WIPO, this community of basket weavers has come together to form an association, acquire a collective mark and, ultimately, develop their livelihoods.

In April, 2017, the Kenya Industrial Property Institute officially registered the “Taita Basket” collective mark. The new mark comes with responsibilities as well as rights. These responsibilities include certain quality standards adopted by the basket weavers. Since the

introduction of these standards, more than 400 of the female basket weavers have been trained by skilled experts to improve and harmonize the quality of their baskets.



One of the Taita baskets, featuring the tags produced in conjunction with WIPO (Photo: WIPO/Shingo Tsuda)

Collaboration by Association

Basket weaving groups from different villages are now working together under the umbrella of the officially registered “Taita Baskets Association” – the official owner of the collective mark. The basket weavers have succeeded in obtaining a valuable IP tool for branding – the first step in an exciting journey to build the “Taita Basket” brand. They are united in their aim to develop a strong, recognizable and profitable regional brand by using the mark.

The association and the collective mark will help the predominantly female community of basket weavers become more competitive in the market. By collaborating to procure raw materials in bulk, they are now able to reduce the cost and enjoy the benefits of economies of scale. Thanks to the collective mark, their baskets will be easy to distinguish from similar products and the quality standards associated with the mark will help increase faith in the products, as well as drive sales and expansion.

“One of the problems that affected the marketability of the baskets was that there was no identity. You could not tell which came from Taita and which came from elsewhere. Another issue was that the quality was not consistent from village to village, and from individual to individual. I want to take this opportunity to thank WIPO for coming on board and facilitating the process of acquiring a collective mark and, through training opportunities, making sure that, collectively as an association of basket weavers, they have quality standards acceptable to them and then that shall be used for marketing. This is for me a huge step. The next step is how to market the baskets. We use every opportunity to market new baskets that have an identity and a label.” – H.E. John Mruttu, Governor of Taita Taveta County



The Governor of Taita Taveta county (left) and participants (Photo: WIPO/Shingo Tsuda)



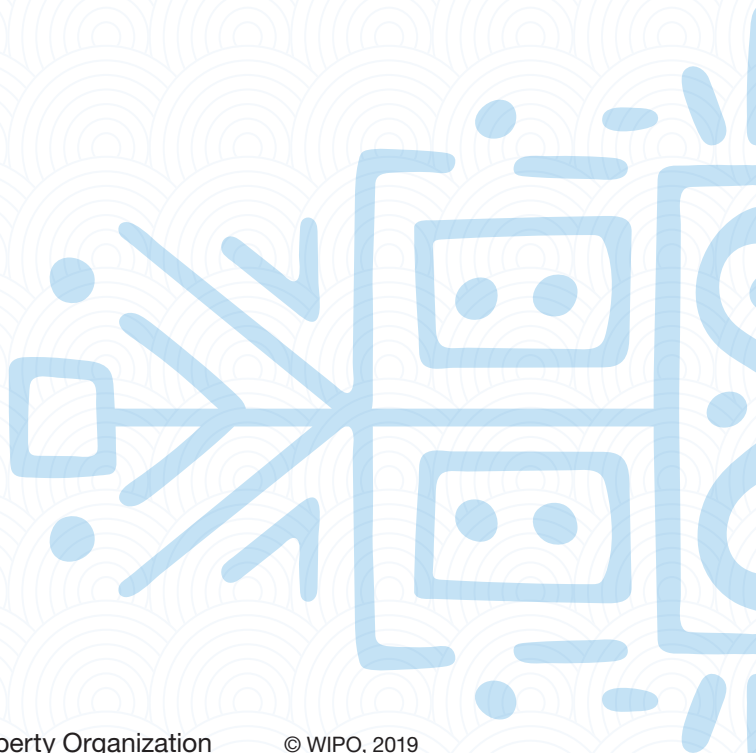
(Photo: WIPO/Shingo Tsuda)



Demonstration of how to attach a tag to a basket (Photo: WIPO/Shingo Tsuda)

Japan FIT/IP Global (Africa and LDCs)

www.wipo.int/cooperation/en/funds_in_trust/japan_fitip



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