



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



Distr.
LIMITED
E/ESCWA /2019/...
2019
ORIGINAL:
ENGLISH

**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)
Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa
(AARINENA) iPARK at the Royal Scientific Society**

Workshop on Intellectual Property Rights for Innovation in Industrial and Agricultural Sectors in Support of Economic Development
Kempinski Hotel, Amman, Jordan, 14-15 December 2019

Information Note

1. Background

Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) are essential for stimulating innovation and technological progress as they protect inventors and innovators.¹ Efforts to strengthen IPRs have increased significantly in many countries, especially after patent protection and the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court *Diamond v. Chakrabarty*, 447 U.S. 303 (1980). Intellectual property management provides incentives to individuals (research scientists, inventors, breeders, etc.) and institutions (companies, universities, investors, etc.) for their creative efforts, while pro-active management of IP seeks to ensure the proper balance in collaboration between inventors, their participating institutions, commercialization opportunities and public interest. Intellectual property rights (IPRs) and their management are tremendously important aspects of global policy for agricultural research and innovation. For instance, research and innovation in plant breeding are essential to meet sustainable agricultural demands for a growing world population and to mitigate against the effects of climate change. Academic institutions and research centres, play an important role in the area of agricultural research and must benefit from their research so they could invest more in this frontier research and technology development and acquisition. These institutions are usually public and must be encouraged to bridge and build partnerships between the private and public sectors, in the hope of fostering innovation and improving sustainability. Collaboration should be nurtured between life sciences industries, governments and other private entities that acquire and develop the technology. This is a well-motivated argument for why the development of institutional policies and supportive communities for IPR practitioners play important roles in the implementation of IP management and innovation. The growth of strong IP laws and the attention towards IPRs in life sciences increased after the enactment of the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement under World Trade Organization (WTO) as it called on countries to protect intellectual property.

The protection of IP in general and the industrial property specifically, contributes to social and economic development and has an important role in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It has a positive impact on industrial competitiveness, economic growth and job

¹ <https://www.unescwa.org/events/egm-intellectual-property-systems-arab-region>

creation through the protection of innovations and entrepreneurs.² Although all Arab countries have IP laws, and most of them signed related international treaties, the enforcement and the applications of the IPRs are still weak in many Arab countries, and this has negative effects on the level of innovation, invention, entrepreneurship and competitiveness of SMEs and hence the economy.³ Accordingly and as part of the recommendations of the 8th Board of Governors meeting of the ESCWA Technology Centre (ETC), held in Amman, Jordan, on 15 November 2018, members of the Board (Tunisia, Libya and Oman) requested a workshop on management of intellectual property and its impact on socio-economic development.

On the other hand, the Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa (AARINENA) is going through a restructuring process to institutionalize agricultural research and innovation systems to better serve and support its members. AARINENA with its partners (GFAR, FAO, CGIAR, and other research centres in the region) are supporting national agricultural research centres, among others, by building capacity in member countries so they could benefit and take advantage of IPRs to better tackle the critical and unprecedented challenges of growing population, increasing food demand, decreasing water resources, eroding soil resources and changing climate and land use.

Within this context, ESCWA through ETC and Sustainable Development Policies Division (SDPD) is collaborating with AARINENA and iPARK at the Royal Scientific Society to conduct a workshop on management of intellectual property rights to support technology transfer and innovation in agriculture, and their importance to socioeconomic development. The workshop program will provide research scientists, national technology transfer officers, and research managers an exposure on intellectual property rights management, the International Union for Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) system or plant breeders' rights, case studies on patents, evaluating and managing patent, and intellectual property licensing and commercialization.

2. Scope and objectives

The specific objectives are to:

1. Build capacity in different types of intellectual property rights and explore its role in promoting economic development, particularly in industrial and agriculture sector;
2. Draw attention to the importance of intellectual property (IP) management and intellectual property rights (IPRs) in global policy for agricultural research and innovation;
3. Explore the opportunities and challenges facing agricultural innovators, to strengthen regional innovation performance;
4. Provide transparent means and channels for facilitating the technology and knowledge transfer to industry and business and enhancing the role of entrepreneurship and innovation; and
5. Facilitate networking and partnerships for effective intellectual assets management at national, regional and international levels.

² https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/events/files/egm-intellectual-property-systems-arab-region-information-note-en_2.pdf

³ https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/events/files/egm-intellectual-property-systems-arab-region-information-note-en_2.pdf

3. Topics

- The economic role of innovation and intellectual property
- Intellectual property landscape (industry and Agri-food)
- Intellectual property, innovation, and commercialization
- Technology transfer and IP policies
- Legal and tactical considerations
- Regional and global considerations for intellectual property partnerships

4. Outcomes

The expected outcomes of the meeting are:

1. Developing a set of recommendations for improving agricultural innovation for economic development and food security.
2. Increasing awareness of IP management issues in industrial and agricultural innovation.
3. Building knowledge on key global and national legislations and legal practices pertaining to intellectual property in agricultural research and innovation.
4. Supporting effective IP and technology transfer management in public and private research institutions.
5. Enabling multi-disciplinary knowledge sharing and promoting new research partnerships.

5. Participation and registration

Participants will include research scientists, national technology transfer officers, policy makers, agri-business specialists and administrators and international organizations.

6. Organization, format, venue and dates

This workshop is organized by ESCWA Technology Centre, in cooperation with Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa (AARINENA) and iPARK at the Royal Scientific Society, Jordan. It will take place on 14-15 December 2019 at the Kempinski Hotel, Amman, Jordan.

7. Working language

Arabic and English are the working languages of the workshop.

8. Travel and accommodation

All participants are to inquire about their **visa requirements from Jordan** and secure one ahead of their anticipated travel date.

ESCWA will cover the travel and daily subsistence allowance (DSA) of the participant from invited organizations in selected countries, especially those coming from least developed countries.

9. Address inquiries and requests for additional information to:

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