



INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

RIGHTS & INNOVATION IN AFRICA



Intellectual property refers to intangible creations of human mind and is one of the key tools for companies to generate returns on their investments in knowledge, innovation and creativity.

IP Rights refer to a wide range of assets, such as patents, trade marks, copyrights, plant varieties or geographical indications. From a company brand to furniture design, all these products are protected thanks to intellectual property.

A strong intellectual property environment will boost the participation of African countries in the world's economy. It will also stimulate innovation and competitiveness in the private sector. Therefore, sound national IP rights systems are the backbone of innovative countries, thus favouring economic growth.



/ What types of IPRs are there?

TRADE MARKS

A trade mark is the symbol your customers use to pick you out - it distinguishes you from your competitors. You can protect and build upon your trade mark if you register it.

DESIGNS

Designs specify what a product looks like (lines, contours, colours, shape, texture and/or materials of the product itself and/or its ornamentation).

PATENTS

Patents give inventors the right, for a limited period of time, to prevent others from making, using or selling their invention without their permission.

PLANT VARIETY RIGHTS

PVRs protect new varieties of plants and give the breeder exclusive control over the propagating (seed, cuttings, divisions, tissue culture) and harvested (cut flowers, fruit, foliage) materials.

COPYRIGHT

Copyright (or author's right) is a legal term used to describe the rights that creators have over their literary and artistic works. Works covered by copyright range from books, music, paintings, sculpture, and films, to computer programs, databases, advertisements, maps, and technical drawings.

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS

GIs protect products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.

ABOUT AFRIPI

AfrIPI is an international cooperation project funded and directed by the European Union and implemented by the EUIPO. It has an initial duration of 5 years starting from February 2020.

AfrIPI's objective is to facilitate economic growth in Africa. It aims to promote, enhance and protect IPRs across Africa, in support of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

1/ Type of activities



TYPE OF ACTIVITIES

- Legal & Technical assistance
- Studies
- Workshops & Trainings
- Conferences
- IPR SME Helpdesk
- IP Tools

2/ Project Steering Committee and Stakeholders



PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

- ARIPO
- OAPI
- African Union
- European Commission
- EPO
- WIPO



STAKEHOLDERS

- IP Offices
- Policymakers
- IPR enforcement bodies (judiciary, prosecutors, customs)
- MSMEs
- IPR practitioners
- General public

OBJECTIVES



1 / **Promote** international agreements

in the area of IPR and reinforce cooperation between EU and Africa.



2 / **Strengthen** national and regional IP

institutions, networks and tools to create more efficient and user-friendly IP protection and enforcement systems.



3 / **Raise** awareness

of the importance and value of IP (GIs) among African micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), the productive sector and society.



4 / **Geographical Indications**

Support the implementation of the African Union's Continental Strategy for Geographical Indications in Africa.

DID YOU KNOW?

On 30 May 2019, the AfCFTA entered into force.

It will unleash the potential of integrating the economies of the 54 countries that signed the agreement.

- Phase I negotiations have been completed on trade in goods, trade in services and dispute settlement.

- Phase II negotiations covering IP, investment, competition and digital trade are ongoing.



African trade mark and design registrations in the EU (2016-2020)



Type of African GIs registered in the EU



Top 5 African countries per number of registration



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