

Advisory Committee on Enforcement

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IMPACT CAPACITY-BUILDING PROJECT: BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ENFORCEMENT MECHANISM

Document prepared by the Secretariat

ABSTRACT

This document highlights the main features of the IMPACT Capacity-Building Project (IMPACT Project), which comprises a blended course format (online and in person) to be delivered through consecutive phases, each tailored to the participants' needs. The IMPACT Project consists of six stages – Member State identification and commitment, selection of trainees, online training programs, in-person workshops, assessment, and strategy evaluation and refinement.

The pilot phase of the IMPACT Project has been launched in six countries. Following the completion of the required online courses by a cohort of market inspectors from the Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property (SAIP), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and SAIP organized an in-person workshop in December 2024, the first such event under the IMPACT Project. The other five participating countries are at various stages of the online components.

I. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

1. In early 2023, WIPO's Building Respect for IP (BRIP) Division developed a new strategy for conducting capacity-building activities aligned with Expected Result 4.3 "Increased IP knowledge and skills in all Member States". This strategy aims to enhance the capacity of law

enforcement officials responsible for enforcing intellectual property (IP) rights in a more sustainable and impactful manner. It focuses on customizing training activities to meet the specific needs of WIPO Member States and their broader development goals.

2. The strategy is being implemented through the IMPACT Project, which began in early 2024 and includes six pilot countries representing all geographical regions, in collaboration with the WIPO Regional and National Development Sector (RNDS). The six countries are: the Dominican Republic, Kazakhstan, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Tanzania and the United Arab Emirates.

3. In essence, the approach involves gradually shifting towards impact-driven training, which consists of a blended course format (online and in person) delivered through consecutive phases, each tailored to meet the participants' needs.

II. THE FRAMEWORK

4. The IMPACT Project is comprised of six stages, as will be described below:

A. PHASE I MEMBER STATE IDENTIFICATION AND COMMITMENT

5. Recipient Member States are selected either upon self-identification (i.e. the more traditional, demand-driven approach) or by the BRIP Division in the course of its bilateral engagement with Member States. The final selection is determined through consultations with the RNDS regional divisions responsible for the candidate Member State(s). Once selected, recipient Member States must commit in writing to keeping officials who have successfully completed the training in their positions for at least two years.

B. PHASE II SELECTION OF TRAINEES

6. Next, the recipient Member State sends the BRIP Division a list of candidates with a short bio of each confirming that they are currently working in IP enforcement roles. Following an internal review of the list of candidates, the BRIP Division notifies the Member State of the candidates' suitability for enrollment in the training program or requests further clarifications if necessary.

C. PHASE III ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAMS

7. The completion of certain online learning modules is a prerequisite for all candidates before the in-person training phase. In particular, candidates must successfully complete the WIPO Academy 001 Distance Learning course¹ and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) International IP Crime Investigators College (IIPCIC) Introductory Curriculum – Level 1² and any specialized courses relevant to their particular job function. For example, customs officials will also be required to complete the IIPCIC

¹ See https://www.wipo.int/academy/en/courses/distance_learning/

² See <https://www.iipcic.org/curriculumL-intro.php#contentTop>

Specialized Curriculum for Customs,³ and prosecutors will also be required to complete the IIPCIC Specialized Curriculum for IP Prosecutors.⁴

8. After successfully completing the above online courses, the trainees are eligible to participate in the subsequent in-person training workshops. The BRIP Division, in coordination with the recipient Member State, will then organize an online discussion after the online courses mentioned above to respond to any inquiries from the trainees and to develop the in-person workshops based on the specific needs of the participants.

D. PHASE IV IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS

9. Building upon the general IP enforcement knowledge acquired through the online training programs, the in-person workshops are designed to meet the specific needs of the cohort based on the national legal framework, thus making it relevant and sustainable. Experts from the World Customs Organization, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and INTERPOL, among others, participate as trainers. Furthermore, upon request of the recipient Member State and subject to the availability of funding, the BRIP Division can organize additional online and in-person training programs focused on more advanced topics, such as IP infringement in the digital environment.

E. PHASE V ASSESSMENT

10. The final evaluation includes WIPO Performance Assessment tools to measure the skills and knowledge acquired (Satisfaction – Level 1), (Learning – Level 2) and (Behavior – Level 3).

11. In line with the practice of the WIPO Academy, the BRIP Division develops and administers a tool to measure the trainees' acquired level of knowledge and skills (Learning – Level 2). Trainees are also required to complete a survey to assess their satisfaction level (Reaction – Level 1) with the training before they receive their certificates of completion. Finally, three to six months after the training program, the trainees and their supervisors are requested to complete the WIPO post-survey questionnaire to gauge whether the trainees are applying their acquired skills in their work (Behavior – Level 3). As stated above, additional areas and levels of training could be identified and then developed based on the survey results.

F. PHASE VI STRATEGY EVALUATION AND REFINEMENT

12. The effectiveness and impact of the strategy is then evaluated based on the results of Phase V. A thorough examination and analysis of the implementation and outcomes of each phase will be conducted for this purpose.

13. If any gaps are identified, the implementation of the strategy will be adjusted through a refinement process. This process may require meetings with the recipient Member State and the responsible RNDS regional division to develop solutions.

³ See <https://www.iipcic.org/curriculumL-customs.php#contentTop>

⁴ See <https://www.iipcic.org/curriculumL-prosecutors.php#contentTop>

14. If the strategy is demonstrated to be successful, opportunities for expanding and strengthening its impact will be considered. The image below illustrates the IMPACT Project cycle.



III. CURRENT STATUS – THE EXPERIENCE OF SAUDI ARABIA

15. As mentioned above, Saudi Arabia is the first country to finish Phase V except for the survey on (Behavior – Level 3), with the remaining participating countries at various stages of the online components (Phase III).

16. Saudi Arabia, represented by the SAIP, has advanced the furthest in the IMPACT Project. After completing the required online courses, the cohort of SAIP market inspectors attended the in-person workshop organized by the BRIP Division in December 2024. This workshop, held in collaboration with SAIP, was the first event of its kind under the IMPACT Project (Phase IV).

17. The workshop was designed in consultation with SAIP to meet the participants' needs and was in line with the national legal framework of Saudi Arabia. As a result, the workshop addressed topical issues related to IP enforcement, focusing on enhancing the knowledge and skills of the SAIP participants in their work as market inspectors, and included two practical training scenarios of investigating trademark counterfeiting. These topics piqued the interest of many of the participants, as evidenced by the numerous questions and comments during the sessions. At the end of the workshop, a test was administered to gauge the participants' acquired level of knowledge and skills.

18. Based on the evaluation forms received from the participants, the workshop successfully met its goal of building IP enforcement capacity among the SAIP cohort of market inspectors. The overall satisfaction rate reported by the participants was at 96 percent. The participants also reported that the workshop (and the broader project) was very useful in enhancing their knowledge and skills to fulfill their market inspector roles and to identify opportunities for future

investigations of IP crimes. The SAIP leadership expressed satisfaction with both the outcome of the workshop and the progress made on the IMPACT Project.

IV. WAY FORWARD

19. As per Phase VI of the IMPACT Project, the BRIP Division will evaluate the effectiveness and the impact of the project based on the results of Phase V.

20. Starting in 2026, Member States will have the opportunity to join this project, and countries that have completed it will be encouraged to share their experiences with the Advisory Committee on Enforcement.

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