

# CWS/ATR/PI/2022/AP

## Annual Technical Report on Patent Information Activities in 2022 submitted by African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO)

Please provide links to your website where the requested information can be found in English, French, or Spanish. Alternately, you may provide text responses instead of URLs if desired. If the information is not available on your website in an ATR language, then please provide text.

URLs in responses should meet the following requirements:

- Link to pages with information in English, Spanish, or French
- The URL will remain stable over time (at least three years, preferably more)
- Goes to the specific information requested, not to a general homepage
- If the URL goes to a long PDF document such as an annual report, please indicate which sections or pages contain relevant information.
- Provide additional instructions for using the URL if needed. For instance, if the page requires the user to login first, or if the requested information requires selecting certain options or filters on the page that can not be included in the URL.

### I. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN PATENT INFORMATION ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE OFFICE

Information on the following topics is desired:

1. **Outline of main policies and plans aimed at development of patent information activities and expected time frames for their realization** - Policies are guided by the ARIPO Strategic Plan 2022-2026 which underscores delivery of quality IP rights as a priority. To support this a number of initiatives have been taken such as; the establishment of the ARIPO e-learning service for capacity building activities and e-service platform for administration of IP rights as well as the ARIPO IP Digital Library,
2. **New projects launched or resumed this year in the context of the policies and plans mentioned above, short description: aims, partners, tasks** - The ARIPO Member States Module aimed at linking ARIPO POLITE+ database with the member states IP administration databases. In partnership with WIPO.
3. **Main areas of patent information activities and related information and communication technology (ICT) practices which were in the focus of attention last year** - The ARIPO Member States (MS) module that allows for online data exchange between the IP Administration systems of ARIPO Secretariat (POLite+) and that of the Member States (IPAS) was implemented in a total of 13 member states by end of 2022 with the support of WIPO; The phased upgrading of the ARIPO POLite+ system continued in 2022 with the completion of phase 2; ARIPO has virtualized its server environment to reduce operating costs, minimize downtime, improve efficiency and disaster recovery. The project was initiated in 2021 and successfully completed in 2022;
4. **Statistics: changes in terms of application filings and grants with respect to previous year; trends or areas experiencing rapid changes** - A total of 873 patent applications were filed in 2022 compared to 833 filed in 2021, an increase of 4.8%. The monthly average was 73 applications per month; The number of patents granted during the reporting period rose from 568 in 2021 to 640 in 2022, an increase of 12.7%. The average rate of grant was 53 patents per month. 96% of all the patent applications received at ARIPO in 2022 were filed online.
5. **Other matters and useful links (URLs): annual report of the Office, news page, statistics, etc.** - The African Journal of Intellectual Property (AJIP) - <http://ajip.aripo.org/>, E-Service - <http://eservice.aripo.org/pmi/PMIMain.do>, The ARIPO Industrial Property Journal - <http://eservice.aripo.org/ppb/pjd/PPBJournalViewList.do>.

### II. SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES RELATED TO PATENT INFORMATION CARRIED OUT BY THE OFFICE

Information on the following topics is desired:

1. **Information and support provided by the Office to applicants regarding filing on paper and/or e-filing (instructions, seminars, etc.)** - URLs - E-Service Platform for online filing of IP - <http://eservice.aripo.org/pmi/PMIMain.do>; Provided an online user guide to assist users on online filing processes, fees payment, notifications - <http://eservice.aripo.org/pif/pue/PIFUserGuideList.do>; ARIPO filing procedure brochures - <https://www.aripo.org/aripo-filing-procedures/>
2. **Availability of the application dossier in electronic form** - Availed ARIPO application forms in electronic form to be filled and submitted electronically - <http://eservice.aripo.org/pif/pfd/PIFEFormList.do>.
3. **Classification<sup>1</sup>, preclassification<sup>2</sup> (if applicable), reclassification<sup>3</sup> activities; classification systems used (e.g., International Patent Classification (IPC)); matters concerning indexing of patent information** - Use of the IPC; ; the ARIPO Regional Patent Examiner Training (ARPET) program Phase B was successfully conducted in Zanzibar from 11th to 15th July 2022 in partnership with EPO and IP Rights & Innovation in Africa project (AfrIPI). ARPET is part of ARIPO's mandate to build the much-needed intellectual property human capital in the field of patent examination.
4. **Abstracting, reviewing, and translation of the information contained in patent documents**
5. **Other activities**

### III. SOURCES OF PATENT INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE OFFICE

Information on the following topics is desired:

- **Main types of publications of the Office (patent applications, full text, first pages, abstracts, bibliographic data, granted patents, etc.), medium (on paper, on CDs, online - URLs)** - Patent applications stored in digital formats with access to bibliographic information through the IP Digital Library - <http://regionalip.aripo.org/wopublish-search/public/home;jsessionid=1DD5A3D8901B9AFC4DFB1C0C17BF7167?0>
- **Official Gazettes: main types of announcements, frequency of publication, medium (on paper, on CDs, online - URL), etc.** - The monthly ARIPO Industrial Property Journal - <http://eservice.aripo.org/ppb/pjd/PPBJournalViewList.do>; ARIPO Annual Report - <https://www.aripo.org/annual-reports/>; ARIPO Newsletter.

- **Information products and patent document collections (coverage, medium, etc.) available to examiners, including external collections and databases** - ARIPO Regional IP Database - <http://regionalip.aripo.org/wopublish-search/public/home.jsessionid=1DD5A3D8901B9AFC4DFB1C0C17BF7167?0>; POLITE+ - <http://192.168.10.2/si/ss/signinScreen.do>; Espacenet, PatentScope, freepatents online, aRDi, Googlepatent, etc.
- **Information products and patent document collections (coverage, medium, etc.) available to external users, conditions of access (e.g., free of charge, subscription, etc.)** - Free access to the ARIPO Journal including downloading. ARIPO IP Digital Library - <http://eservice.aripo.org/pd/pah/advancedSearchScreen.do>; ARIPO IP Journal - <http://eservice.aripo.org/ppb/pjd/PPBJournalViewList.do>
- **Legal status information (kind of information, coverage, medium, etc.)**
- **Other sources**

## IV. ICT SUPPORT TO SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES RELATED TO PATENT INFORMATION CARRIED OUT BY THE OFFICE

Information on the following topics is desired:

1. **Specific software tools supporting business procedures within the Office: general description, characteristics, advantages, possible improvements** - ARIPO E-service platform, Member States Module to facilitate data exchange between ARIPO and the Member States implemented in 13 Member countries, online library management software, ARIPO patent databases
2. **Hardware used to supporting business processes of the Office** - Network servers (on site and cloud), Desktops, Laptops, printers, scanners, telephones, smartphones
3. **Internal databases: coverage, updates, interlinks with external sources** - ARIPO IP Digital library; POLite+ database linked to the member states systems
4. **Establishment and maintenance of electronic search file: file building, updating, storage, documents from other offices included in the search file**
5. **Administrative management electronic systems (register, legal status, statistics, and administrative support)** - The ARIPO website and the social media channels have been used to promote Innovation and IP and publish success stories from the Region. The available online platforms are; The e-service platform, ARIPO online library - <http://library.aripo.org/liberty/libraryHome.do?>; social media platforms such as Twitter - [https://twitter.com/\\_aripo](https://twitter.com/_aripo), Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/ARIPOSecretariat/>, YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCshGop4R31G57G1s7v0DKow>; LinkedIn.
6. **Other matters**

## V. PROMOTION ACTIVITIES AIMED TO SUPPORT USERS IN ACCESS AND EFFICIENT USE OF PATENT INFORMATION

Information on the following topics is desired:

1. **Patent library: equipment, collection management, network of patent libraries in the country, cooperation with foreign patent libraries** - Anderson Ray Zikonda Library - <http://library.aripo.org/liberty/libraryHome.do>; ARIPO IP Digital Database - <http://regionalip.aripo.org/wopublish-search/public/home.jsessionid=CE272586CE134B84F32715FA19BBCDB5?0>,
2. **Publications related to different business procedures and patent information sources available to users, for example, books, brochures, Internet publications, etc.** - <https://www.aripo.org>; <https://www.aripo.org/aripo-filing-procedures>; <https://www.aripo.org/general-information>; <https://www.aripo.org/ip-services/patents/>; <https://www.aripo.org/protocols/>.
3. **Office's initiatives on providing foreign patent information in the local language(s) (e.g., machine translation tools, translation of abstracts)**
4. **Cooperation with universities, research centers, technology and innovation support centers, etc.** - Offer a Masters Degree in Intellectual Property at 3 universities; Africa University (in partnership with WIPO), University of Dar es Salaam and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology; Delivered awareness lectures at and organized training workshops with several tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe; ARIPO-EPO University Outreach Project - aimed to build the capacity of the participating Universities in conducting patent search, particularly on the importance of the intellectual property and patent systems, patent information and patent search tools. Eighteen (18) universities from the ARIPO region participated in the pilot phase in June 2022. The training also builds the capacity of the academics, researchers, and technology transfer officials in the Universities to retrieve relevant patent information; The PATLIB project to operationalize knowledge transfer between the European network of PATLIB and similar institutions in the ARIPO membership.
5. **Education and training: training courses, e-learning modules (URLs), seminars, exhibitions, etc.** - Participated at trade exhibitions in our Member States namely, Zimbabwe (ZITF2022), Zambia (ZITF2022), Tanzania (Sabasaba); published an updated Directory of Intellectual Property Graduates. The Directory provides a rich pool of expertise from which the Organization and National IP Offices can draw resource persons for training programmes and other IP related activities; ARIPO participated in the global WIPO IP Training Institutions (IPTI) training titled *e-Learning and Online Teaching Methodologies*; Establishment of IP Clubs in ARIPO Member States' Secondary Schools and providing awards for outstanding schools' clubs (WIPO-Korea Funds); The ARIPO-EPO University Outreach Project was established and brought together selected universities in the Member States of ARIPO in an initiative that would build the capacity of the participating Universities in conducting patent search, utilization of the intellectual property systems, patent information and patent search tools. The training also builds the capacity of the academics, researchers, and technology transfer officials in the Universities to retrieve relevant patent information. Eighteen (18) universities from the ARIPO region participated in the pilot phase which ended in June 2022.
6. **Other activities**

## VI. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF PATENT INFORMATION

Information on the following topics is desired:

1. **International exchange and sharing of patent information in machine-readable form, e.g., priority documents, bibliographic data, abstracts, search reports, full text information** - ARIPO Industrial Property Journal for free access and downloading; Sent CD-ROMs to EPO and EUIPO.
2. **Participation in international or regional activities and projects related to patent information** - IP awareness workshop on patents and innovation for ARIPO countries in the context of the Patent Libraries (PATLIB) Project with the EPO; In partnership with WIPO, ARIPO held a Conference of Heads of IP Offices (HIPOC) in Ezulwini, Kingdom of Eswatini from 8th to 10th June 2022 to promote

cooperation and dialogue amongst ARIPO Member States and sharing best practices and experiences in IP administration in the region; ARIPO delivered IP Awareness Seminars for academic and research institutions in the Kingdom of Lesotho and The Gambia. The seminars were intended to enhance IP awareness among researchers; staff and students from academic and research institutions with a view to promoting the creation, protection and utilization of research results using IP tools for socio-economic and technological development; ARIPO and WIPO jointly organized a Virtual Regional Meeting on Developing the Regional TISC Network that was held in March 2022 to encourage Member States to use TISC resources concretely to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the region.

3. **Assistance to developing countries** - Offer patent search services and patent drafting training courses to nationals from our member states and patent attorneys.
4. **Other activities** -

## VII. OTHER RELATED MATTERS

Please include any other relevant information here.

1. Classification is allotting one or more classification symbols (e.g., IPC symbols) to a patent application, either before or during search and examination, which symbols are then published with the patent application.

2. Preclassification is allotting an initial broad classification symbol (e.g., IPC class or subclass, or administrative unit) to a patent application, using human or automated means for internal administrative purposes (e.g., routing an application to the appropriate examiner). Usually preclassification is applied by the administration of an office.

3. Reclassification is the reconsideration and usually the replacement of one or more previously allotted classification symbols to a patent document, following a revision and the entry into force of a new version of the Classification system (e.g., the IPC). The new symbols are available on patent databases.