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Federal Department of Economic Affairs,  
Education and Research EAER  
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO



## Swiss-Ghanaian Intellectual Property Project, Phase II (SGIP II)

*The objective of the SGIP II project was to strengthen the use of intellectual property rights in Ghana in order to contribute to higher competitiveness, add more value to Ghanaian products, and have a positive impact on Ghana's economic development.*

### Project background and context

Cooperation between Ghana and Switzerland in the field of intellectual property rights (IPRs) started in early 2009 with the launch of the Swiss-Ghanaian Intellectual Property Project (SGIP I).

Comprehensive policy advice, mainly provided through a National IP Policy Committee, contributed significantly to an enabling legal framework for IPRs, including the revision of the main laws on IPRs.

The Government of Ghana, based on the achievements of SGIP I, expressed a strong desire to benefit from further Swiss support in order to consolidate and build on the positive results of SGIP I. While Ghana's legal and institutional framework in the field of IPRs was already well developed, challenges remained. As in many other developing countries, institutional constraints continued to impede the effective enforcement of IPRs. Furthermore, rights holders had not yet fully exploited the potential of these rights. Both of these challenges were in part the result of limited public awareness of IPRs. Promoting the use of those types of IPRs which would allow Ghana to capitalise on its internal strengths was of particular interest to the Government of Ghana.

### Goals and objectives

Selected goals and objectives of high relevance to Ghana to be achieved by SGIP II included:

- An enabling IP environment is in place and improved services are provided to IP users.
- Research institutions and SMEs are increasingly commercialising their IPRs.
- The protection and enforcement of IPRs are improved for the higher economic benefits of rights holders and for safeguarding consumers against substandard goods.
- Legal protection and market access of high quality agricultural products and handicraft products are improved for the benefit of rural and artisanal communities.



*One of the activities of SGIP II involved strengthening the general knowledge of research institutions on IPRs and their importance for innovation.*

### Quick project facts

#### Project duration

January 2016 – September 2021

#### Total budget

CHF 1,400,000

#### Donor agency

Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs – SECO

#### Implementing partners

Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property – IPI  
Ghana Ministry of Trade and Industry - MoTI  
Ghana Ministry of Justice - MoJ

#### Ghana country context

Population: 26 million  
Area: 238,533 km<sup>2</sup>  
Annual GDP growth: 4.0% (2014)  
Annual income per capita:  
USD 4,100 (2014)

## Activities

Considering the relatively advanced stage of Ghana's system of IPRs, the niche approach of SGIP II of "filling specific gaps" was going to add the most value and thus seemed to be the best strategy to achieve sustainable results.

SGIP II provided the opportunity to **consolidate, broaden and deepen the results achieved by SGIP I**. The continuation of support – with a shifted focus to the practical implementation of the newly established policy framework – would translate prior achievements into tangible, sustainable outcomes that would directly benefit key stakeholders.

Within selected thematic areas, the activities mainly consisted of **technical capacity building through training, workshops, education programmes and expert input**, to be led by national and international consultants. These activities were to **increase the capacity** of relevant IP-related organisations to deliver professional services. Furthermore, SGIP II envisaged supporting the pilot registration of selected geographical indications (GIs) products, which were to be determined during the implementation of the project. The registration of these local specialty products as GIs was expected to **increase the income of local producers**.

## Alignment with Ghana's general development priorities

Strong IPR protection was becoming increasingly important for Ghana's ability to attract investments in modern technologies, which are needed to **improve the quality of local products and add value to them**. Ghana already had great capacity in establishing new brands, e.g. for the export of fruit, cacao beans, coffee, and shea butter. Higher **competitiveness** and **more value added** to these and other products were expected to result in a positive impact on the country's socio-economic development. An effective and **well-balanced IPR system** encourages technology transfer, **research and development**, and the building of strong local brands, which would be crucial for increasing the international competitiveness of Ghanaian companies. Better protection and **use of GIs** for marketing local specialties would benefit rural areas in particular and enable Ghana to leverage its internal strengths and allow for more balanced growth. The protection of GIs, as well as the better enforcement of other IPRs in Ghana, would contribute to the safeguarding of the rich cultural **tradition and heritage of the country**.

## Beneficiaries

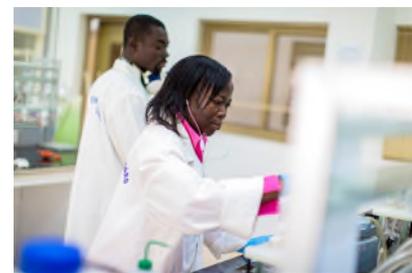
The main beneficiaries of SGIP II were the Industrial Property Offices at the Registrar General's Department (RGD) and the Copyright Office under the Ministry of Justice and the Attorney General's Department (MoJ). Both benefited through direct technical capacity building. Additionally, **local small and medium enterprises and relevant associations** benefited from tailor-made workshops and training, while other economic actors as well as the wider Ghanaian public benefited indirectly through the improved services of the RGD, and the improved quality and **competitiveness of Ghanaian products**. The impact of SGIP II also extended to the more vulnerable segments of the Ghanaian population such as rural communities, mainly through the use of GIs for marketing local specialties.



*Ghana is proud of its traditional textiles with unique ornaments. Traditional production is threatened by pirated products. The project trained customs and police officials in enhancing the enforcement of IPRs.*



*Ghana's potential for using GIs to add value to agricultural products is high. The project supported the pilot registration of selected products.*



*Research institutions were advised on how to establish a proper mechanism to protect and commercialise their IPRs through different instruments (licensing, spin-offs, joint ventures, etc).*

**Photos: SECO**

**For more information, contact**

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