Strengthening
National Intellectual Property Policy and Legal Frameworks
in Eastern and Southern Africa

African Technology Policy Studies Network

A Communication Strategy

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This paper should be cited as:

The African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS) is a multi-disciplinary network of researchers, private sector actors and policy makers promoting the generation, dissemination, use and mastery of science, technology and innovation (ST&I) for African development, environmental sustainability and global inclusion. ATPS intends to achieve its mandate through research, capacity building and training, science communication/dissemination and sensitization, participatory multi-stakeholder dialogue, knowledge brokerage, and policy advocacy.

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List of Acronyms

ASARECA   -   Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research
                       in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA)
ATPS   -   African Technology Policy Network
ABS   -   Access and Benefit Sharing
BTA   -   Biotechnology Trust Africa
IP   -   Intellectual Property
TK   -   Traditional Knowledge

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1. Introduction

African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS) in partnership with Biotechnology Trust Africa (BTA) are implementing a project on strengthening national Intellectual Property (IP) policy and legal frameworks in Eastern and Southern Africa in eight countries between 2009 and 2012. The target countries are Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique.

The goal of the programme is to strengthen policy and legal framework development for Traditional Knowledge (TK), Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) and effective IP Systems in the Eastern and Southern Africa. The purpose of the programme is to promote stakeholder participation in policy and legal framework development for TK, ABS and effective IP systems and to encourage knowledge sharing at all levels. The immediate purpose is to generate and disseminate on the current environment at national level and to determine how best each country can promote participation. The specific objectives are:
- To enhance knowledge sharing and collaboration by establishing and coordinating a regional and national networks for TK, ABS, and effective IP systems to enable institutions and end users to contribute to policy and legal framework development and international negotiations.
- To generate, disseminate and maintain an interactive database and body of knowledge on TK, ABS and effective IP in eight countries in Eastern and Southern Africa.
- To promote awareness on TK, ABS, and effective IP systems at the grassroots level through institutions in order to encourage the integration of their concerns into national IP policy making processes.

Based on the above, the programme is meant to influence the development of IP policy and legal framework and to achieve that, there is need to have a communication strategy. Given the needs assessment of 2002, most countries had no policies or legal frameworks on IP and there was a huge gap in awareness on the importance of TK, ABS and effective IP in development. This calls for a strategy to help communicate to different stakeholders at both regional, national and grassroot levels to create awareness to influence the development of IP policies and legal frameworks.

1.1. Objectives of the communication strategy
- To raise awareness to stakeholders on the importance of TK, ABS and effective IP systems in development.
- To communicate the impacts of TK, ABS and effective IP and the need to protect TK and ABS.
- To communicate study findings from regional and national projects to provide evidence to influence policy and legal framework development.

Therefore, the strategy aims at ensuring that communications programme plans, executes and measures to ensure that the study findings are well understood by its key stakeholders and maintain dialogue to get feedback and other inputs into IP policy and legal framework development. It is assumed that communication is fundamental to innovations that encourage institution's flexibility and cultural change and must have a strategic focus in addition to have capacity that can respond quickly and creatively to exploit new opportunities in influencing policy and legal framework development.

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1.2   Principles

The programme staff aim to work smart, different, responsively and cost effectively to ensure their communication activities makes increasingly bigger impact at regional and national levels and also on internal and external communication and communicating the study results more effectively, with relevant and timely products for different stakeholders and have productive engagements with stakeholders and their wider constituencies.

There are five principles that can be followed in communicating:

Openness and inclusiveness - All information is communicated in an open and honest manner, and the positive aspects are emphasized and clearly communicated.

Relevance and clarity – The information should be clearly relevant to the audience being addressed. The communication content and channels should be demand driven as well as supply driven. The needs of the audience should be put first in all communications and information should be tailored to ensure that it is relevant to different audiences.

Simplicity and quality – Simple straightforward language should be used in all written and verbal communications. Messages should be carefully thought out and constructed so that the point is clearly brought out. All aspects of communication processes, activities and materials should be consistently of high standard/quality.

Planned and timely – Information should be prioritized and planned so as to avoid information overload, duplication, or long periods of non-communication. To this end, a communication strategy which outlines how specific information will be communicated to target audiences via appropriate channels of communication is essential.

Two-way hierarchical and network communication – One way communication is boring and ineffective in bringing about behavioral change. It should be two way and based on horizontal communication network and not just vertical communication hierarchies for effective flow of information. All communication should ensure that there are as many opportunities for listening and questioning as there are for sending messages. In this way, communication will be positively encouraged and audiences are more likely to adopt the expected or planned behaviors/procedures.

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2. The Organizations' Communications Departments

ATPS has a communications department and it is headed by a Senior Communications Officer with expertise in Information and Communications technology (ICT) etc. It has a traditional library though small; ATPS Website; content and reviews of publications which are published; systems designs to enhance internal communications and design and production of multi media based training materials for purposes of capacity building, knowledge dissemination and exchange. The department is also involved in maintaining the website and producing persuasive print and online corporate materials i.e. annual reports, briefs, articles etc. BTA has neither communications staff nor section hence the programme will rely on the communications department of ATPS.

The communication strategy will adopt a strategic and systematic approach comprising of the following elements:
* Mainstream communications work throughout ATPS with a focus on the IP-Programme for this strategy.
* Raise the reputation of ATPS and BTA through consolidating public awareness activities, producing more flagship products.
* Transform ATPS information and communications department to exploit the existing opportunities of new information and communications technologies to develop holistic electronic communications strategy and plan to transform the ATPS website for internal and external communication.

3. Stakeholders and Products for Communication

Following consultations during the needs assessment for IP in 2002 by BTA in Eastern and Southern Africa, prime stakeholders were determined. These are matched with communication products out of the IP programme suiting each stakeholder group with primary dissemination channels for each group. The consultations identified: scientists involved in Science and Technology; Policy makers; Development intermediaries; End users at grassroot levels; Media and Public and Development professionals.

3.1   Scientists in Science and Technology
This will include scientists in national Universities, National Institutes, Regional Organizations such as ASARECA, etc. This group is served by the following communications:
* Specialized scientific publications, including refereed journal articles;
* IP- Programme study reports;
* Conference or workshop proceedings.

Circulation of the above will be largely via print and on-line scientific channels with scientific abstracts, posters, newspapers, brochures, books and papers posted on the ATPS website.

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3.2   Policy makers

This group of stakeholders will include: decision or opinion leaders, senior government officials, politicians, global knowledge networks, regional organizations (ASARECA, COMESA) public affairs programmes etc. The group will be served by the following re-purposed/policy oriented communications:

- Technopolicy briefs;
- Stakeholder workshops, roundtable workshops;
- Speeches and presentations at high profile fora.

The circulation is primarily via brochures, tailor-made information packages, ATPS website, and broader learning platforms e.g. on-line interactions, e-conferences, paid for advertisements, oral briefings, slide presentations and video conferencing.

3.3   Development intermediaries

This group covers NGOs, CSOs, women groups, CBOs and other change agents, government officials involved in outreach, national media, service providers, entrepreneurs, private industry, development and research providers. These stakeholders are served by the following advisory/advocacy oriented communications:

- Issue and policy position briefs;
- Multi-institutional brochures
- Multi-media productions

The circulation is largely via website top page displays; handouts at workshops, conferences, major events, and mix and match information kits created on demand.

3.4   End users at grassroots

This group will consist of farmers, traditional healers, art and craft makers, local knowledge networks or associations, local teachers etc. The stakeholders here are served by the following:

- Radio interviews and shows;
- Media (newspaper inserts);
- Training manuals and guides;
- Questionnaires and surveys.

The circulation is largely via radio programmes, hands on videos, open days and training courses (TOTs) by the downstream outreach development partners.

3.5   Media and public

This group will encompass local and international media and the general public. This group of stakeholders is served by the following popular/lay communications:

- News releases and feature stories;
- Video clips of staff interviews;
- Newsletters, bulletins etc.

The circulation is via mass and specialized media, media launches, panel discussions, other high profile fora, website home page, e-mail newsletter, media packs and other printed handout; national television and radio programmes.

3.6   Development professionals

The groups consist of donor agencies, development experts, development media, and policy analysts, national bureau of statistics, research councils, professional societies etc. The group is best served by the following authorative communications.

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- Annual reports, institutional brochures and other corporate handouts
- Special reports (high-profile white paper on international public goods)
- Study reports
- Discussion papers

The circulation is via expert consultations, information packages, one on one distribution by directors for visitors and those visited, ATPS Website Home Page and via postings on donor and partner websites.

4. Strategies Employed

4.1   Communication Products
- Increased quantity, quality, relevance and utility of information available to IP stakeholders.
- Well established internet-based database of basic information on the IP Programme.
- Research or study projects outcomes.
- High quality stories and images for annual reports.

4.2   Dissemination
- Shift from print to on-line communications for bigger and more cost effective impacts and devolve responsibility for posting information on ATPS website to a distributed system, for the programme.
- Institutionalize e-publishing systems that facilitate communication products published for a wider assortment of users.
- Disseminate new knowledge widely and quickly using the electronic systems.

4.3   Internal communications services
- Develop publishing and branding guidelines that will enable all programme staff adopt an approved and unified style in their communication.
- Strengthen the communications skills of project coordinators (regional and national) in synthesizing and putting study reports into relevant products and policy recommendations and documents.

4.4   External communications
- Provide information that encourages not only adoption and adaptation of TK, ABS and effective IP systems but also feedback on their use.
- Exploit global news and events to highlight the importance of TK, ABS, and effective IP Systems for economic development, based on case studies under the IP Programme.
- Develop products that are story-driven rather than information-driven to attract audiences to the TK, ABS and effective IP Systems.

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5. Communination Channels and Media

The information needs should be addressed in different ways using communication channels or media that are appropriate to the target audiences based on the situation analysis. Some of the key information channels are: publications, e-mail and internet, press conferences, newspapers, radio, television, videos, animation and cartoons and workshops.

5.1 Publications
The first publication should be the IP- Programme brochure that introduces the project and provides the project profile, its vision, statement of goals and objectives as well as the planned activities. The project summary of IP Programme provides all the information needed to produce this publication.

The second publication of the IP- Programme will be the bi-annual newsletters, which provides highlights and milestones of the project, until the end of the project.

The third publication of the programme will be the annual report which could be on its own or as an ATPS annual report for DGIS support.

The other publications of the IP Programme will be the regional study report country case study reports and their technopolicy briefs. These publications can serve different audiences as it was indicated in 3.0 above.

5.2 E-mail and Internet
E-mails will be the main channel of sharing information within the programme since most centres have e-addresses including some of the key IP stakeholders. Secondly, the ATPS website has the IP – Programme web-page and all publications mentioned will be posted on it including other materials that could be of interest to the programme in particular posters of the IP score sheets for target countries, general posters of the IP – Programme. Possibilities should be explored to link the ATPS internet website to those of target countries, so that information can be exchanged via internet.

5.3 Press conferences, e-conferencing and video conferencing
These channels are of major importance to policy makers involved in key events e.g. during stakeholders workshops or roundtable workshops, press conferences could be organized for key policy makers to be interviewed. Programme staff could also hold press conferences to brief the stakeholders on the IP Programme.

If technology allows, e-conferencing and video conferencing could be organized for policy makers in some of the target countries for exchange of information for several audiences at the same time, in the region.

5.4 Mass media (Newspapers, Magazines, etc.)
This is an important channel for advocacy materials which can be developed and sent to newspapers for a wider audience. This costs money hence it must be planned in such a manner that the articles are not too big. The other way is to get a journalist to come with his or

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her own feature and the cost of this could be small or none at all. Depending on the objective, the feature could also be paid for. Sometimes specific journalist could be called for interviews (briefing seriously) and the interview could be in the newspaper or magazine to enlighten the audience. Key focus could be on areas of Biopiracy where journalists will take it as great news. Depending on cost, such programmes could be twice in a year.

5.5   Radio programmes
This channel is critical for the grassroot audiences, particularly if the national or local languages are used. The programme can book for talk shows on popular programmes. Sometimes interviews could be conducted in the field or offices depending on the opportunities available with radio presenters. Important briefing could be conducted on the importance of TK or ABS and the need for its protection. Issues like Biopiracy are excitedly received and such stories could be used to attract radio stations for shows, interviews etc. Depending on cost, it could also carry the stories quarterly or half a year. The radio could also be used for advertising important events in the countries.

5.6   Television
The use of television can be done without incurring too much cost. TV stations can be invited in key activities like launching of NSC or Regional committees, stakeholders workshops, roundtable workshops especially for policy makers.

Secondly, the programme could organize with the TV stations to have an interview for briefing the audience on the IP Programme, its outcomes and the need for policy and legal frameworks in IP.

5.7   Videos, animation, cartoons
These are tools that can be extremely important with the grassroot audiences. As it is known, "seeing is believing", this could enable the local audiences to come up with the needed pressure to influence leaders for policy and legal framework development to protect TK and benefit from their genetic resources. This could however require expertise within ATPS and the Chapters.

5.8   Workshops
This is a method that could be used in various activities, launching of events e.g. steering committees, stakeholders' workshops, roundtable workshops, training workshops especially at the grassroot level.

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Table 1: Implementation Plan for the IP Communications Strategy

OBJECTIVES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	ACTIVITIES	METHODS	COMMUNICATION TOOLS	TIME FRAMEWORK
1.0 To Enhance knowledge sharing and collaboration	Enhance national and regional networks for information sharing and coordination of activities.	1.1 Establishment of a regional network	(i) Invitation of regional and international institutions to join network.	Letters through e-mails Telephone Calls, brochures	April to July, 2009
			(ii) Hold workshop/ meeting to launch the network	Media interviews, emails, Telephone	July to Nov. 2009
		1.2 Establishment of national networks in 8 countries	(ii) Workshops to launch reports.	Regional reports, policy briefs, newsletters, booklets, study reports	July to November 2009
2.0 To generate, disseminate and maintain an interactive database and body of knowledge on IP Policy environment.	Increase knowledge on and regional IP environments for better policy making processes	2.1 Establish current status of existing IP gaps and incoherencies with International treaties on IP and between the treaties through assessments.	(i) Desk study with information from Chapters on the IP environment based on checklists, questionnaire etc.	E-mails, telephone, media interviews	July to Nov. 2009
			Roundtable work-shops for policy makers	Policy brief, Media Interviews, Radio Interviews.	June 2010 to Dec. 2012
			(iii) Present a paper in International Conferences	Power point presentation and presentation report.	June–Dec. 2010
		2.2 Develop case studies on TK and ABS in the eight target countries	(i) Grants to con-duct case studies/ surveys	National reports, Policy Briefs, Newsletters and Booklets	Nov/ 2009 To Dec. 2010
			(ii) Workshop to launch the case study reports.	E-mails, Telephone, Media Interviews, Radio Adverts	Dec. 2010 to June 2011
			(iii)Roundtable workshops for policy makers.	Policy briefs, Newsletters, Media Interviews, Radio Inter-views, brochures.	January 2011 to December 2012

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					Timeframe
2.3		Develop a communication strategy for the IP Programme.	(i) Website development for the IP Programme	Interactive website page and its details and connectivity to chapters' online discussion forum.	Oct. 2009 to March 2010
			(ii) Publications	Newsletters, Posters, IP score sheets for target countries, booklets on programme activities.	March 2010 To Dec. 2010
3.	To promote aware-ness on TK, ABS and effective IP Sys-tems at grass root levels to encourage the integration of their concerns to National IP Policy and legal framework making	3.1 Improve ability to contribute to policy and legislative frameworks	i) Training of Trainer - (TOTs) to train communities at grassroots.	Establish the cur-riculum and a train-ing programme.	Curriculum, booklets, Newslet-ters, Training manuals etc.	July 2010 To Dec. 2010
				Develop a training manual to be used for creation of awareness.	Training manual, posters, Newsletters, booklets, videos for creation of awareness, radio programmes.	Jan. 2011 To Dec. 2012
			(ii) Training workshops and Seminars for the grassroot stake-holders to create awareness		
			(iii) Dissemina-tion strategies and advocacy through NGOs on TOTs.	Use outreach programmes in the country.	Newsletters, Posters, Videos, Booklets, Radio Programmes.	
4.	Cross cutting activi-ties		Monitoring and Evaluation	Develop indicators for monitoring	Progress reports	April 2009 To Dec. 2012
			Regional con-ference on IP Programme	Organize the con-ference	E-mails, Presentations, Book-lets, Newsletters, Policy Briefs and Proceedings	Oct 2012

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Table 2: Performance Indicators for the Plan

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	EXPECTED OUTCOME	PROPOSED ACTIVITIES	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
1. To enhance knowledge sharing and collaboration	Effective national and regional networks for information sharing and coordination of activities	Hold workshop with proposed collaborators and stakeholders to determine and agree the way forward Invite regional and international institutions to join knowledge network Oversee the creation of national networks in select countries Hold annual conferences at regional level for stakeholders Launch events of national/regional steering committee meeting – eight countries , March to June 2010	1.3.1 One quality stakeholder workshop held 1.3.2 A regional network up and running with clear guidelines for operation 1.3.3 National networks created in the select countries 1.3.4 Successful annual networking and information sharing conferences 1.3.5 Radio messages in local languages to advertise the launch of the programme. May 2010 1.3.6 Policy roundtable with state institutions on IP and key stakeholders. March to December 2010. 1.3.7 Story telling workshops on traditional knowledge. June to December 2010.
2. To generate and disseminate knowledge on the IP policy environment	Increased knowledge on national and regional IP policy environments for better policy making processes	Conduct an assessment of the current regional IP environment and select countries to be included Conduct detailed assessments of the IP environments in the select countries Develop a communications strategy	2.1.1 A detailed report on the current regional and international policy environment in the area of TK, ABS and IP 2.1.2 At least 2 policy briefs published and disseminated on important issues, emerging issues 2.2.1 Detailed reports on the policy environments, needs assessment and gaps of the select countries 2.2.2 At least 1 policy brief published and disseminated on important national issues, emerging issues 2.3.1 Communication strategy for the programme detailing the necessary publications, website and other communication strategies 2.3.2 Development of an IP score sheet for African countries. 2.3.3 An IP programme brochure due March 2010. 2.3.4 IP programme newsletters. June 2010.
3. To promote awareness at the grassroots levels, on issues of TK, ABS and effective IP systems	Improved ability to contribute to policy and legislative frameworks	Training of trainers workshops, policy roundtables, seminars	3.1.1 Training of trainers' workshop on Science Communication for creative artists. 3.1.2 Cartoons on the importance of Tradition Knowledge and Access and benefit Sharing. March 2010. 3.1.2 Online (You Tube) animations on special interest areas of agriculture, health and environment. Oct 2010 3.1.3 Edited videos
4. To sustain long term sustainability of communication on IP programme	Improved ability to contribute to international discourses on IP, policy and legislative frameworks	Training of trainers' workshops, policy roundtables, seminars	4.1.1 An IP programme website. March 2010 4.1.2 Online discussion forum on TK & ABS. May 2010. 4.1.3 Monthly programme pod casts – May to Dec 2010 4.1.4 Social media tools – July – Dec 2010

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