

OBJECTIVES OF NDP III AND HOW THEY AID IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL IP POLICY, 2019

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Uganda's **National Development Plan (NDP)** (NDP III) runs from 2020/2021- 2024/2025. It is based on the vision to transform Uganda from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years. NDP III looks at an overall vision of increasing household incomes and improving quality of life for Ugandans. It considers inclusive growth, employment and wealth creation. The vision for Uganda based on NDP III is for a modern centered, independent, integrated, resilient, self-sustaining economy.

NDP III can be seen as Uganda's blueprint to achieving transformation of the country and the guide for all government bodies and public sector as they set out their key objectives and policy strategies. With a focus on the key sectors of energy, ICT, transport, health and education, agriculture, minerals and oil and gas the objectives of NDP III are namely, to enhance value addition in key growth opportunities, strengthen the private sector to create jobs, consolidate and increase the stock and quality of productive infrastructure, enhance the productivity and social wellbeing of the population; and, strengthen the role of the state in guiding and facilitating development.

The IP Policy 2019, on the other hand does align itself with the objectives of NDP III. It firstly recognizes intellectual property at the center of innovation and creation and the vital importance of intellectual property to achieve the goals set out in NDP III. It is important to consider each of the 5 objectives set out in NDP III and how the IP Policy, 2019 subsumes practical implementation steps to operationalize the objectives of Uganda's NDP III.

Firstly, the objective of enhancing value addition in key growth opportunities means that the sectors of agriculture, industry, knowledge-based economy, ICT, minerals and oil & gas can be developed by utilization of IP. The subject matter of IP exists in each of these sectors and as we continue to harness innovation and creativity, then IP will be a key element to grow each of these sectors. For example, innovation in agriculture through agro- tech and registration of more patents or utility models in agro tech means more Ugandans will appreciate the role of technology in agro industrialization to move us to an agro- industrialized economy. The ICT sector's focus on local technology development within the country and tech deployment from abroad means the IP subsisting in this technology can be commercialized to benefit the owners. Technology can be transferred, licensed and or assigned even for research and development purposes in institutions. The IP Policy considers strengthening of intra governmental coordination so that specific ministerial sectors can integrate IP and technology in their policy implementation. This will inform policies such as the National Health Policy that can utilize IP in its sector delivery.

Regarding the second objective, strengthening the private sector to create jobs means realization of the importance of IP in these sectors. The private sector presents a vital platform for job creation and innovation through creativity output. The IP policy realizes the need for IP oriented goals to be subsumed into ministerial interventions to meet their objectives. For example, IP deployed technology in sectors such as transport, health and agriculture can aid development. The practical implementation steps will mean efforts towards changing behavioral attitudes in these specific sectors for Ugandans to firstly understand IP and then protect it. The IP

policy has key strategies for changing behavioral attitudes to IP among Ugandans. These include institutions formulating IP policies that guide on the development, protection and commercialization of IP related products, effective monitoring of royalties generated, awareness campaigns for IP- which the URSB- Directorate of Intellectual Property is running through various online platforms where discussions are held to make the public aware of the IP regimes recognized in Uganda, easement of registration processes, use of IP as collateral, rolling out of the online filing system for trademark applications among others. These implementation steps will aid the public become more aware of what constitutes IP and how it can be commercialized.

Thirdly, the objective of consolidating and increasing the stock and quality of productive infrastructure means strategically exploiting the IP enhanced technology in different sectors in order to deploy infrastructure that causes the sectors of agriculture, industry, oil & gas to more effectively meet their key strategies. Deployment of infrastructure means that there has to be intentional resource deployment for IP related aspects of these sectors for IP generation. In addition, support from regional and international IP organizations such as ARIPO and WIPO, means technical support in IP development for government institutions. Technology based infrastructure also means appreciating the role of IP in local technology development to aid the issue of limited infrastructure and build technical capacity.

Fourthly, the objective of enhancing the productivity and social wellbeing of the population means that this NDP III goal speaks into the need to intentionally change the culture and behavioral attitudes towards IP protection and enforcement in the public. This will then create awareness of the existence of IP as a property right and encourage the public to come forward to register their IP creations where registration confers validity. In addition, it means the public is more empowered to commercialize their IP regardless of the size of their enterprise. This also informs into practical steps that the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs as the implementation ministry is taking towards IP awareness such as efforts towards automation of IP registration processes, staffing of IP departments at the branch offices and further stakeholder engagements.

Fifthly, the objective of strengthening the role of the state in guiding and facilitating development means that strategies by the Ministries should intentionally implement IP. This includes integration of IP in the different sectors from ministerial levels such as deployment of IP based technology and implementation of IP policies for government institutions.

From these objectives, NDP III provides a strong framework that informs into implementation of policy strategies in the IP Policy. What is important is to channel resource mobilization towards IP related aspects and policy monitoring to be able to steer the IP Policy towards meeting the objectives of NDP III.