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Global management of Intellectual Property:

Closing the capacity divide?

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Elements of the global knowledge-based economy

- *Information infrastructure* – storage, distribution and circulation of items...
- *Appreciative systems* – sourcing, valuing and producing items for (re-)production, marketing and use...
- *Global governance* – national and global institutions, negotiations, agreements...

An example: The international IP regime...

- To promote investment in scientific and technological innovation and technology transfer...
- Contributing to economic development of participating countries...
- By regulating the commercial use of intellectual property...

A tool for development?

- Effective in most developed countries...
- In its present form, it doesn't serve the needs of developing countries...
- For developing countries, benefits from participation generally do not outweigh the costs...

Why not? Asymmetry in R&D spending...

In OECD countries:

- The per capita number of scientists and engineers in R&D is 12 times that of low income countries...
- The number of scientific journal articles published per capita is 25 times greater...
- The number of patents filed by non-residents as compared to residents is 3.3 to one, in low income countries it is 690 to one...

Why not? Drawing benefits is hard ...

- Patents often render products unaffordable to people and governments in poor countries...
- No incentives for investing in patents for small, imperfect developing markets...
- Poor countries can seldom protect their own traditional knowledge and innovations...
- And they have nothing to negotiate with...

A level playing field?

“A single set of minimum rules may seem to create a level playing field, since one set of rules applies to all. But as currently practiced, the game is not fair because the players are of such unequal strength, economically and institutionally.” (UNDP HDR 2001)



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What capacities do DC need to be able to benefit from IPR?

- Capacity to administer and comply...
- Information services on IP matters...
- Capacity to protect own intellectual resources...
- Capacity to develop policies and negotiate international deals...
- Adequate research and innovation systems...

What do donors invest in most?

- Mostly, in technical assistance for a smooth introduction and capacity to comply...
- Much too little in developing the developing countries' capacity to research and protect their own IPR and to innovate and draw commercial benefits from it...
- Intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations gradually take the lead in addressing the latter part...

Some conclusions:

- Global management of Intellectual Property is a key development issue; not just trade-related IP should be a vital part of the MDG8 debate...
- Intergovernmental organisations should be empowered to act more effectively in enhancing institutional capacities for IP protection and management in low income countries...
- Information services should be encouraged to focus on providing adequate information on development-related IP issues, including asymmetries...
- Research on the relationships between current asymmetries in capacities to manage as well as in benefits drawn from the global IP regime, should be intensified...

A question to Information Managers...

While global asymmetries persist, what are information managers/researchers in Europe doing to assist their Southern partners to strengthen their IM capacity?



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*Thank you for your attention and
have a good workshop!*

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