

**SIXTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME
PRIORITY 2
INFORMATION SOCIETY TECHNOLOGIES**



FLOSSWORLD

**Free/Libre and Open Source Software: Worldwide
Impact Study**



D40: Workshop Report Africa 2

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The FlossWorld Regional Workshop for Africa was held at the University of the Western Cape on the 29- 30 March 2007. This is a summary of the workshop as well as some of the results of the the Flossworld Impact study conducted by UWC and CSIR. These two institutes presented their research findings at the workshop. The CSIR focused on e-government, whereas UWC conducted the Higher Education Institutes impact study. A relative number of FLOSS participants gathered to discuss future of FLOSS in the country and the possibility for collaboration with the European Union.

The workshop comprised a diverse range of guest speakers from the Department of Science and Technology; CSIR, translate.org.za, Impi Linux, Rhodes University, AVOIR, CITI, UWC, etc. The highlight of the event was the recent approval of the FLOSS policy by the cabinet. Aslam Rafee from DTS articulated that the South Africa government is the major employer in the country that comprises a huge number of the IT personnel. He stated that the major problem as far as moving to open source in government is that government is locked into long term contracts with the proprietary software companies. These contracts are a challenge for the speedy adoption of FLOSS. Rafee further argued that the use of FLOSS in government is not a new concept; FLOSS has been in existence in government for a while, but this was never recognised, since there was no official policy. As evidence of this, Rafee stated that FLOSS is present in almost all government administration systems.

This event was not only about the results of the study, it also initiated diverse interactions and networks for future research prospects. Organisations working on FLOSS-related projects presented their work and their successes with FLOSS. Rhodes University, through Eyethu Project shared their ideas on ICTS in education, Translate.org also spoke of their involvement through translation of OpenStandards

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Day One: 29 March 2007

	Session 1. Presentation of the Flossworld Project- Pop Ramsamy
	<p>Summary on Flossworld 3 global empirical studies Human Capacity Building Software Development – other contries His observations on the business, organisational technical viewpoint E-Government Policy</p>
	Session 2. Report on the previous FlossWorld Idlelo 2-Enver Ravat
	<p>Reporting on the 1st workshop: 2005 at Meraka The two workshops dealt with similar themes and were for raised awareness They were a strong focus- globally & locally HE government development focus was less global and more local (Africa) Attended by Jimmy Wales, director of WP attended the workshop The workshop had a strong focus on ICTs in africa, developers defined regional & interregional projects and later produced a report by designing the survey questionnaire, mini surveys beyond FLOSSWorld</p>
	Session 3 Report on the Government Impact Study- Pumeza Ceza
	<p>25 respondents by the time of the workshop so far list of government departments who participated in survey <u>how is the survey viewed by participants?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ questions too long & daunting ➤ time consuming ➤ flossworld websites was down periodically ➤ ZA governments use of FLOSS ➤ some departments are using FLOSS ➤ others are still using proprietary software ➤ DST, DOC, DPSA are hands-on with FLOSS migration ➤ contributed to FLOSS projects in country ➤ involved in drafting government FLOSS policy ➤ most questionnaires completed before the adoption of official government policy on FLOSS

Background on FLOSS in government

a summary of the NACI document GITOC & FLOSS Strategy document as well as the 2006 IBSA (india/brazil/za) summit- which was an agreement that govts of the IBSA countries would collaborate around FLOSS

Open Standards and the GITOC strategy

OSS in government has expanded- included openstandards, source, content, services, hardware

GITOC moved away from pilots to implementation of the FLOSS Policy cabinet assured that if it was not for the mass adoption of standards like ODF, they would have been locked out

22nd feb government adopted enhanced policy:

1. 1. need to choose FLOSS or justify when they cannot
2. 2. migrate systems to FLOSS if FLOSS equivalent exists
3. 3. content should be open unless secret is NB
4. 4. ZA government will encourage use of FLOSS elsewhere

2. Programme office

-single point of ref on FLOSS in government that aims to guide, facilitate
-Policy adoption and implementation drive

Deadline is end of April 2007

Objectives of the Programme Office

- to build expertise
- positioning ZA as a world class FLOSS tech hub
- services build
- technical support
- training
- R&D
- policies & guidelines
- knowledge bank
- communication & change management

the challenge now is not that government is holding back, but that they're

DST migration

DST minister has asked for the target dates

start date 2004-12, target 2007-12

government departments have their own migration strategy

opendap, pilots, infrastructure, desktop, backoffice

they have pockets of excellence- exim, freebsd

infrastructure- web, proxies, dns, dhcp, nms, tacacs, ntp, asterisk for pabx

Challenges

desktop issue is the difficult part and training is still a problem

its not easy to get people to attend

evolution -- shared calendars was a problem

OOo -- MS templates

user interface

proprietary formats: DVD,

3G, SyncML

backoffice

Why focus on ICT in education?

- social imperatives
- since emergence of Internet & available computers, expectation of educational benefit increased
- government's 2004 statement
- not aware of any provincial policy doc from DoE
- Eastern Cape DoE in process of developing provincial policy—still sketchy

process of integrating computers into education needs guidance and theoretical support

use of computers as "cognitive tools" can be good, but often only marginal benefit is achieved

Challenges

inadequate planning for implementation

computers donated to schools before planning to integrate them into curriculum

donation dumped at school

curriculum integration is haphazard

the first step is to get computers, then plan

planning for teacher training not done with ICT in mind

unrealistic time tables

from a CS perspective-which to address?

social imperatives/research/adequate planning empowerment/skills access to info research

development skills uplifting teacher literacy and basic systems admin socio-economic empowerment

training for local communities ICT services to local communities

telecommunication legislation

restrictive, non-competitive high prices

give breaks for schools ICT in education legislation

Why focus on Grahamstown?

The ICT programme in Grahamstown was started by Nathaniel Nyaluza. It links up with schoolnet SA—all these schools wanted one or more computers
disparity

Rhodes University has the microcosm of ZA schools all different types

13 secondary, 20 primary, 20 farm schools in area

computer:learner ratio differs from 3:1 to 778:1

they partner with affluent schools and they have experience of running lab

outreach potential: can provide courses to other schools

Albany SchoolNet offer mail, hosting, DNS

e-Yethu

Ubuntu in action: "humanness"

sharing vs donating (dumping)

bottom-up vs top-down

inclusive vs exclusive

Good program even if you've not touched a computer before

Aims

need schools to teach literacy so that students have a foundation

sharing of expertise

educators, workers at private institutions, retirees all assist

	Session 6: Paul Scott AVOIR

build human capacity
worldclass software & services
create ecosystem
developed out of the nettel@africa project
don't get many PHP coders coming in
Avoir is a network of African Universities working on a learning management system
The system is one of the best in the world
Avoir is a good example of a collaborative, distributed open source project
main aim of Avoir is to build capacity
The system is designed to support low bandwidth environments and uses active
dynamic mirroring to update content amongst all the nodes
Uses PHP 5 coding
Avoir makes use of a unique internship program
more people have perl/python experience

Q & A SESSION and a Roundtable discussion: The way forward to reinforcing FLOSS in tertiary institutions

This has been summarised in a form of a dialogue where the participants were posing and responding to questions from each other. Pop from Fundecyt presented that the survey shows there are few women in IT apart from Malaysia

always at least one woman at executive level and this has been the case for South Africa until recently. Black females in IT were less than 1% previously, but that has changed

A suggested way which would help to increase the number of women in IT was would be for the country to target students individually and not through institutions, but that seems to be impossible since the institutions are centre base for education in the country. FLOSS studies need to be reinforced at tertiary level mostly, even though its wise for IT students to get FLOSS background from early education (primary and secondary).

Universities like UWC are at an advantage because they already know about FLOSS. The anticipated solution should be to target first year students by channeling social activist energy towards FLOSS. Further to this the debate was that, tertiary institutions only wants to encourage projects if it will bring them more money and students

not just pure research, the new buzzword is money. Universities get funding on throughput (not input) and at postgrad level, companies approach them who want to fund specific research, mostly which does not support FLOSS.

Another suggestion was that tertiary institutions also have the responsibility to lobby FLOSS companies and if possible to collaborate with research institutes in order to get more funding for research

From government side a proposal has been made, to get tertiary institutions to come up with a declaration to state that they support FLOSS. Organisations like Translate.org will be highly useful to push such declarations

What is localization?

translate.org.za FLOSS in ZA

FLOSS is setting trends, not following proprietary, but leading

Neville Alexander: "an english-only policy condemns most people to a state of mediocrity," same applies to computer software.

PANSALB has taken initiative away from communities to protect their own languages

what motivates translate.org.za

computer as a tool, achieve some objective, it practically promotes multilingualism

early mothertongue access to technology increases language pride—ethnolinguistic vitality"

Translate started 2001 through funding from TSF and translated KDE. They were translating one program at a time, ad hoc, but started to formulate goals about what gets translated should be end-user focussed crossplatform (to target all people stuck on windows). Translate.org uses donor money, so result of work should be open. There are already universities who are translating proprietary stuff—some validation about going FLOSS route. they could do what they wanted and didn't need to get e.g. MS approval where they would have to beg ("vriende van afrikaans" did that) or go ahead ourselves.

Educating language practitioners has been the hardest thing they don't know much about licenses ("download for free" doesn't cut it)

Community aspect

Coming from FLOSS background always wanted to create community body of translators but this hasn't emerged.

Gathering translators into a room doesn't turn them into a community

Afrikaans vibrant, but not black languages: no zulu speakers

smallest languages:

-3 venda

-1 ndebele

bottom of the pile more likely to volunteer

approaches to foster community

pootle (works, but few come)—others are using it

wordforge; bittorrent—no relation to rosetta, it isn't FLOSS

translatathons

few people work better than a big group

there's opportunity for more QA, individual attention

big group creates a good vibe, but the translations are not that good

just because they speak the language doesn't mean they can translate

First one at UCT

Neville Alexander: "the drafters of the freedom charter sat around kitchen tables"

Xhosa firefox—helping to improve through something like pootle -- like a style guide

existing translations influence new ones

2004-2005 grant: Translate to take a giant leap

-firefox & thunderbird in all official languages

Translate was the first to do african language translations

mappe **How FLOSS has progressed overseas & in ZA?**

History

Obsidian, Thawte started in 1995

first Linux UG 1996

Nando's adopted linux in 1997 (obsidian)

lots has been happening

2001 Eskom, Pick'n'Pay

2002 local electronics company

2003 government published FLOSS strategy doc

2004 go-opensource .. bringing FLOSS to consumer

Abraham has personally seen many people who wouldn't have known about FLOSS otherwise

So, what does this mean, are we prepared?

at FrogFoot we're FLOSS ISP, do outsourcing. things are changing rapidly

2005: busier than ever, can't keep up

everyone I talk to in FLOSS has their hands full.

tip of iceberg: only now that the corporate world is starting to pay attention to FLOSS

still have desktop war looming

haven't even scratched the icing of the cake

suppliers are starting to ship FLOSS my concern: corporates & public sector is huge, you only get one chance, which if you mess it up, they won't touch you or your technology again.

You have to be very careful not to create change management issues down the line.

lots of small companies going for it, hungry

big risk that they can mess up everything down the line

Corporates

arrivia has got 1600 people

two clients: eskom, ...

t-systems 1000

sanlam biggest client

gijima 3000

OSS

obsidian, frogfoot, even Novel -- miniscule

South Africa needs big IT companies that can serve govts

we need 1000s of people just for government alone

other factors causing skills shortages

Amazon, Google, IBM come to ZA and hire in bulk

All the FLOSS companies in ZA can serve maybe one financial institution

existing companies actively looking for FLOSS skills

how many highly skilled FLOSS people do you actually know?

look at LUGs—8 active ones

CLUG largest, 10% active, less than that really skilled

other LUGs are a fraction, but x8 is only 800 people!

what can we do to address this?

-to prevent FLOSS from disintegrating

educate more people, much faster

in primary & secondary education: Tuxlab are too many one/two man shows serving niches

educate the public about where can this make them to get jobs

Every FLOSS company needs to do learnerships and fund bursaries
people need to be inspired to go for FLOSS
an average person doesn't think that there is a career in FLOSS and we need to
nurture & fund LUGs
companies need easier access to certified LPI graduates
there is a huge opportunity for FLOSS recruitment agencies

A brief history of Impi

began 2001 as community project

1st version released in 2002

at that stage TSF were working on their own

only condition to build on debian, but impi declined

2005 Impi became company

Shuttleworth invested R10 million into Impi, venture capital

it's not a community project

business venture

Impi is a pilot for a commercial version of Ubuntu

taking a free linux and building a profitable company on services around that
OSS happening?

"yeah right you said that 5 years ago"

since 2001, we've been saying "this is the year!", but looking good now ..

3 year turnaround time working with SITA

in terms of policy, we can't do any better than what we have

more & more we're seeing from customers:

IT policy says we should implement FLOSS, but we haven't, now we're late, we
need help on the things learnt so far.

with business it's not so much a matter of selling, they already have it

meeting with bank, introduced ourselves

response:

How big is our team? our's is 119! (Impi is 10.)

There is not much value that we can add there ..

desktop is still a big battle

we need to know our competitors better

OSS guys know only their technology they don't know about the stuff they're
trying to replace.

IMPI realised we can't just focus on desktop, there is a need to complete the loop
with backend.

Groupware hired some kolab guys to put in complete stack that works together
even MS has evolved and leaked website "**how to win against linux the smart
way**" **how to win over linux customers** -- trying to get BACK IN
capacity??

Impi has grown from 3 to 6, we need to triple it. That is the bare minimum we
need right now

carte blanche to hire as many as possible

Regarding training: my company managed Freedom League (LPI training) on
behalf of TSF

Impi needs to convince training providers to deliver LPI but they say there's

there's no demand because there's no skills so Freedom League did certification at cost price

60 level one

only 15 level two!

and that was at cost, flying out to everyone who wanted to write

no one else wanted to

there is a need to force or convince universities to offer LPI training
technicians have academies sponsored by Cisco, Microsoft

We need to sponsor a FLOSS academy in South Africa

The university needs to take care of that themselves to meet future demand

Session 4: CITI (Cape IT Initiative)-Viola Manuel

CITI would prefer to be a cluster rather than a not hub, their objects are growing and there is an issue of bandwidth Barn:65 companies in Bandwidth Barn: shared services, reception

The aim is to promote and transform FLOSS

what have we done with FLOSS community?

survey with tectonic confirms that now there is a database of 75 FLOSS companies in the Western Cape

Commissioned FLOSS census-formation of FLOSS committee

quarterly events, average of 50 users, 6 areas of intervention for promoting FLOSS

growing cluster enhancing skills development.

application development opportunities

creating website & knowledge bank

2007: theme: money

what commercial models should we look at?

CITI will drive FLOSS forum with more events topics. Our focus will be:

development; pricing; marketing; contracts with bigger companies; and

big deals with the government departments – We need to assess

their needs. We also looking for also pl need to involve larger corporations who want to partner with SMEs. Through this we this we anticipate exciting new opportunities globally(Latin America) and America) and natio nationally

CITI ICT has conducted a census through telephone interviews with 650 companies on mapping IT in WC

Q & A SESSION

A concern was voiced that the country cannot even adequately cater for local demands so it appeared impossible to go abroad at this stage, but CITI reassured that they are not just going international for FLOSS, they are aware of the need to expose all local company to global markets. South Africa is not seen as

Traditionally the company is aware that they are supposed to go local first, but thinking internationally is crucial

CITI has done well through inviting people to join forum on their mailing list

END OF THE WORKSHOP