

# REPORT ON AFRICA SOURCE II CONFERENCE IN UGANDA FROM 8<sup>th</sup> TO 16<sup>th</sup> January 2006



VERSION	by
Final version	Chaulere, Priscilla, Tiwonge, Soyapi, Consuela, Ndapewa and Wilfred

## **AFRICA SOURCE 2**

The year 2006 started with an inspired bang indeed for some of the it@ab members who had a chance to attend Africa Source 2 (AS2) at Kalangala Island (an 8hrs trip from Kampala) in Uganda. AS2 is a follow up meeting to the Africa Source conference, which took place in March 2004.

### **CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES**

The main objectives, of the Source conferences which are organized by Tactical Technology Collective (a organisation from the Netherlands) and its partners, are to promote the use of Free/Libre Open Source Software (FLOSS) in the African context as well as to form a FLOSS support network within Africa and promote the many projects that use FLOSS in Africa.

The AS2 conference, which run from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> of January 2005, attracted 140 plus participants and facilitators from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, India, Netherlands, Germany, Poland, United Kingdom, and the USA. Present at the conference were a cross-section of software developers, trainers, consultants, project coordinators, and journalists just to mention a few.

Through InWent sponsorship, the following IT specialists represented the it@ab network at the conference: from Zambia Mrs Consuela Mwembeshi, from Tanzania Mr. Wilfred Warioba, from Namibia Miss Ndapewa Hangula and from Malawi Mr. Soyapi Mumba, Mr. Tiwonge Manda, Miss Priscilla Maliwichi and Miss Chaulere Malenga.



### **CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS**

The day's activities were split into 3 categories, the Morning and the Afternoon sessions and later the Skill share sessions. For the morning sessions, the group was split into 3 tracks.

## **The Morning sessions**

The 3 Tracks were Education, NGO Migration and Information & Publishing tracks. Every morning in each of the tracks, the members looked at relevant case studies within Africa and discussed how such initiatives can be adopted in other countries.

### ***The Education track***

This track mostly looked at the available specialized education Operating Systems (OS) for example Edubuntu, a special distribution of Ubuntu OS with a lot of education packages, OpenLab, an OS used by Schoolnet Namibia and other available FLOSS that can be successfully used in an educational institution. Priscilla, Wilfred and Tiwonge attended this track. Some of the more specific topics covered in this track included:

- Technology and migration planning for educational institutions.
- Criteria for choosing a suitable software distribution
- Techniques for advocating FOSS to stakeholders, for example the education ministries, members of staff, students, communities of parents and school governing councils
- E-learning software and content. This focused on Learning Management Systems (LMS), Learning Content Management Systems (LCMS), content authoring tools, open learning content, repositories, and referatories (like eduforge.org and merlot.org)
- Troubleshooting steps
- Desktop applications selection
- The importance of ICT policies for education in African countries
- The importance of having a FLOSS policy in different African countries

### ***The NGO Migration track***

NGO Migration track, as the name suggests, among other things looked at ways on how an NGO can migrate to using Open Source Software, some of the challenges that are faced during the process and the support that is available within Africa for those who have migrated or are considering migration. Soyapi attended this track.

### ***The Information and Publishing track***

The third track - information and publishing, looked at how to disseminate information in campaigns and projects in the sense of which media was most effective, the steps to evaluate the whole dissemination process and a look at some of the available FLOSS that can help make the whole process a lot easier. Chaulere, Consuela and Ndapewa attended this track. The following are some of the topics covered in this track:

- A look at the Open source audio editing software called Audacity in detail,
- Some open source Content Management Systems (CMS) - Drupal, Mambo/Joomla and Typo3,
- Blogging as a way of getting feedback from the target audience.

- Copyright issues, the group received a detailed presentation on copyright policy from representatives from Creative Commons ([creativecommons.org](http://creativecommons.org)).
- Streaming radio and Podcasting (Ipod broadcasting)
- Different ways of using sms in information dissemination

### **The afternoon sessions**

The topics for these sessions were wide; from security, video production techniques, software PBX systems- Asterisk at home for example, Linux GUI software development (done by Soyapi), Firefox extensions development( done by Soyapi), the ins and outs of GIMP (done by Chaulere) to software localization. During these sessions, the participants were free to attend whichever topic they found interesting.

### **The skills share sessions**

Skills share sessions were the closing sessions for each day. During the first few days, participants were encouraged to write on a big sheet of paper what skills they wanted to learn from others or what skills they could offer others during the conference. In these sessions training was based on the topics outlined on the sheet of paper. Here participants had the opportunity to share with others their knowledge in Open Source solutions.

More information about the conference and some documentation can be found on the conferences' Wiki: <http://wiki.africasource2.tacticaltech.org/>

## **BEYOND AFRICA SOURCE II**

At the end of the conference, all the participants received 6 sets of Ubuntu 5.10 distribution and NGO in a box, which is a collection of a selection of FOSS applications, guides and resources covering different areas of need. The collection has 9 CDs:

- \* **Edubuntu** - Education Ubuntu
- \* **OpenLab** - Specialised Operating System used by Schoolnet Namibia on their education labs
- \* **Sahana Africa Source II** - Taprobane GNU/Linux Version 0.4 (live CD)
- \* **Materials** - A collection of some of the FLOSS discussed/used during the conference, some documentation for some selected topics covered during the afternoon sessions, documentation from some track sessions, photos, a copy of the wiki that was used for the conference and lots more

### **\*NGO in a box Security CD -**

This is the Security Edition of the NGO-in-a-Box (sBox) project. Its purpose is to provide a variety of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) for those organizations and individuals who help NGOs define and execute their technology, strategy and usage. This CD contains Password tools, Encryption tools, firewall tools, internet connection and communication tools, data storage, backup and destruction tools just to mention some of the useful tools packaged.

### **OpenCD -**

TheOpenCD is a collection of high quality Free and Open Source Software. The programs run in Windows and cover the most common tasks such as word processing, presentations, e-mail, web browsing, web design, and image manipulation. This is also an Ubuntu live CD.

**\* MARTUS** - Human rights bulletin system is a software tool that allows users to document incidents of abuse by creating bulletins, uploading them at the earliest opportunity, and storing them on redundant servers located around the world.

**/DSL- Damn small Linux:** A business card size (50MB) Live CD Linux distribution.

**/SME - SME server:** A safe, simple and easy to administer Linux distribution targeted at the SME market (Small to Medium Enterprise).

### **UNDP IOSN (Ubuntu) live CD -**

The Ubuntu Live CD can be booted into, but also has more opensource software for Windows available for installation if the CD is opened under windows OS. This selection includes Open Office, Mozilla Firefox, Mozilla thunderbird (A safe and easy email client), Audacity, GIMP, Abiword and more.

### **Alternative access -**

A collection of wireless software for Linux and Windows Operating Systems plus documentation on wireless internet access, thin clients and Cluster computers.

**\* Photos** - A collection of conference photos.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE

The [it@ab](#) network can also change on how to conduct its workshops. For the Alumni programme which is ahead of us, we can concentrate on sharing ideas. There are a lot of things that has been learnt, so it is now time to share them out. If we can put up a skills share sessions in our workshops, then everyone would greatly benefit from the same. Discussing the projects that we are doing in our organisations, in a form of case studies would also be great.

As a network, we also need a formal discussion mailing list and a Wiki, which we can use to share knowledge and keep in touch after training.

