



# International Open Source Network

*Software Freedom for All*

The International Open Source Network (IOSN) is a Centre of Excellence for FOSS in the Asia-Pacific Region. It shapes its activities around Free/Open Source Software (FOSS) technologies and applications. IOSN is tasked specifically to facilitate and network FOSS advocates and human resources in the region.

FOSS presents itself as an access solution for developing countries. It represents an opportunity for these countries to adopt affordable software and solutions toward bridging the Digital Divide. Only the use of FOSS permits sustainable development of software; it is technology that is free to learn about, maintain, adapt, and reapply.

## Objectives

The overall objective of IOSN is to:

- Serve as a clearing house for information on FOSS in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Strengthen current FOSS capacities.
- Assist with the development of needed toolkits and resource materials, including localization efforts.
- Assist in the coordination of FOSS programmes and initiatives through information sharing and networking in the Asia-Pacific region.

## What is FOSS?

Free/Open Source Software refers to computer programmes that users are free to run, copy, distribute, study, change and improve on. Anyone can take the programs, understand how they work, use them and redistribute copies without asking for permission. The “open” concept allows further customization of the software to users needs. The well-known GNU/Linux operating system is an example of FOSS software. Other examples include the OpenOffice.org productivity suite and the Firefox web browser.

**“Member States from the Asia-Pacific region have been at the forefront of the trend towards more use of OSS. They have benefited from the very active IOSN programme run by UNDP/APDIP which, besides fostering awareness raising and information sharing about OSS policies within the region, made a valuable contribution through training and provision of OSS modules.”**

Joint Inspection Unit, United Nations

**“The IOSN team have done excellent work in raising awareness and understanding of open source with UN agencies and more broadly within government and civil society in Asia.”**

Ian Pringle, UNESCO Communication and Information Sector, Asia Pacific Regional Bureau for Communication and Information, New Delhi, India

## Why FOSS?

- Universal access to software without restrictions.
- Less dependence on imported technology.
- Freedom to share and collaborate on development efforts.
- Freedom to customize software to local languages and cultures.
- Development of local software capacity.
- Open standards and vendor independence.

## Increasing Access to ICT

FOSS increases access to ownership, and control of information and communication technologies. It provides a copyright and licensing framework, and global collaborative methodology that can be applied in all areas of development theory and practice. FOSS development methodology fosters new forms of knowledge production in a collaborative, non-hierarchical, peer-to-peer manner.

## Portal

<http://www.iosn.net>

The IOSN portal serves as a comprehensive, online resource center providing information on FOSS, FOSS news, wikis, blogs, and online discussion forums, and acts as a means for the FOSS community to collaborate and interact. It is managed by FOSS advocates throughout the region.

## Primers

<http://www.iosn.net/foss-primers>

The IOSN is producing a series of primers on Free/Open Source Software. The primers serve as introductory documents to FOSS in general, as well as covering particular topics in greater detail. Their purpose is to raise FOSS awareness, particularly among policy-makers, practitioners and educators. The following primers are available at present:

- FOSS: A General Introduction Primer
- FOSS: Education
- FOSS: Government and Policy
- FOSS: Licensing
- FOSS: Localization

## Training and Capacity Building

IOSN produces FOSS open content training materials and organizes training sessions to assist countries in developing human resources skilled in the use and development of FOSS.

### GNU/Linux Desktop Guide for End Users

<http://www.iosn.net/training/end-user-manual>

This introductory guide is for users interested in running the Linux operating system on their personal computer. It serves as a self-learning guide on how to use a modern Linux desktop system. It is available in print, online, and interactive formats.

### GNU/Linux System Administration Training

<http://www.iosn.net/training/system-administrator>

IOSN supports open content system administration training for FOSS trainers in the region. It has run a successful pilot training programme in Vietnam and will organize further training of trainers programs that, in conjunction with open content training materials, will start a sustainable programme of human resource development of certified GNU/Linux trainers and system administrators.

## Research and Development

### Localization

<http://www.iosn.net/l10n/localization-guide>

IOSN works towards facilitating localized FOSS solutions for the Asia-Pacific region and provide packaged information in the form of 'toolkits' to aid

the process of localization by indigenous researchers and developers in the region.

### Competitive Grants

<http://www.iosn.net/country/pacific-islands/usp-microgrants>

To facilitate and encourage FOSS development, IOSN is operating a competitive grant scheme in conjunction with the University of South Pacific in Fiji for the development of original and innovative FOSS software applications.

Four projects have been supported thus far, namely:

- i) A Point of Sale System suitable for use in a retail environment in the Pacific Islands
- ii) TikiMaps inside TikiWiki.org Content Management System
- iii) An adaptive mass conservative streamline tracking software for two-dimensional flows
- iv) Fijian Spell Checker for OpenOffice

## Further Information

For further information, please contact IOSN at [info@iosn.net](mailto:info@iosn.net), or visit our website at <http://www.iosn.net>

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