



Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme
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UNDP ICT for Development in Asia-Pacific
Programme Officers/Focal Points Workshop

REPORT

March 2004
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

REPORT

Workshop for ICT Programme Officers/Focal Points in UNDP Country Offices in Asia-Pacific

Executive Summary

UNDP's Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme (APDIP) organized a workshop entitled "UNDP ICT for Development in Asia-Pacific: Programme Officers/Focal Points Workshop II (POW II)", in Kuala Lumpur, 12-14 February 2004. The first, similar workshop was also organized in Kuala Lumpur 9-13 December 2002.

UNDP-APDIP organized the workshop with financial support from the UNDP ASIA-PAC/South East Asia & Pacific Division, Regional Bureau for Asia-Pacific (RBAP). The workshop received in-kind support from the Bureau for Development Policy (BDP), UNDP Malaysia, SURF Bangkok, and UNDP Regional HIV and Development Programme

Fourteen (14) out of a total of twenty-five (25) UNDP Country Offices within Asia-Pacific participated in the workshop. A total of thirty-one (31) participants, including ICT focal points from Country Offices, APDIP staff, and internal resource persons, met for two-and-a-half days and discussed issues and topics relating to changes in corporate UNDP ICT for Development policies; regional support for ICT for Development; knowledge management and communication strategies; Country Office level programming and challenges; mechanisms for networking and information sharing among Country Offices and ICT regional programmes; and new opportunities in ICT4D – including Free/Open Source Software (FOSS), ICT and Small-Medium-Micro-Enterprises (SMMEs), and low-cost access solutions such as wireless technologies.

The recommendations and discussions of the workshop are highlighted in this report - please refer to the "Working Groups" and "Discussions/Highlights" sections of this document for more details. In summary, the key recommendations from the workshop are as follows:

- "ICT is no longer a Practice Area" and/or "Mainstreaming ICT" are misleading messages. It is recommended that UNDP presents ICT4D as cross-cutting and conveys the change in policy through a more positive message, as in "the integration of ICT4D in all practice areas".
- While it is often stated that ICT4D will be delivered through the good governance and poverty reduction practice areas, we recognize the application of ICT in potentially all of development interventions by UNDP. We submit that like gender, ICT4D truly does and should cut across all areas; that ICTs are enabling tools by which efforts in our practice areas are enhanced and delivered; that ICTs are tools to support crisis prevention and recovery, energy and environmental management, combating HIV/AIDS, etc. This is indeed in line with current practices and activities in the UNDP Country Offices in the Asia Pacific region.
- Now that ICT4D is 'no longer a practice area' and there are only two service lines dedicated to it, resource allocation/mobilization for ICT may become a challenge. Problems have occurred even within COs in making available funds allocated for ICT activities. We recommend the development of services lines in each of the practice areas, in order to not only 'lock' ICT solidly as a cross-cutting issue, but to also provide mechanisms for resource mobilization/allocations of UNDP resources and to attract and mobilize resources from donor partners.
- It is recommended that UNDP headquarters produce a Resource Mobilization Kit that is a standardized package of guidelines and examples for raising funds for ICT4D projects.
- To ensure that we are all communicating the same messages to governments and partners, it is recommended that UNDP corporate develop a policy paper (perhaps one page) describing UNDP's official position on ICT4D.

- Similarly, comprehensive practice notes (perhaps up to 20 pages) focussing on development themes and the application of ICT would assist focal points in communicating not only to external parties but to fellow colleagues as well.
- To ensure consistent promotion, ICT4D focal points should design and allocate resources for dissemination strategies for every project – focusing on disseminating lessons learned in each project.
- ICT4D focal points should be advocates in stressing the need to include ICT in not only governance and poverty reduction, but all other practice areas. This applies not only to projects and other activities but also any publications and other documentation produced or commissioned by the country office.
- At the country level, Country Offices could identify existing projects and find ways to integrate FOSS and wireless technologies, where appropriate.
- While there is plenty of innovative work being done on the ground, there is a need to ‘regionalize’ national networks of experts and groups working with innovative new technologies. As with IOSN’s efforts, perhaps a similar regional hub or sub-regional hubs could be established for Research and Development of low-cost technologies focused on practical work.
- It is recommended that UNDP Country Offices consider setting up small grant schemes to implement pilot projects to promote local capacity building, foster demonstration projects (FOSS and wireless) that would be attractive for the international community and government to replicate on a larger scale. A small grant scheme would also enable COs to establish new linkages with the local community of researchers and developers.

Background – POW I to POW II

Date: 12-14 February 2004
Duration: 2.5 Days
Venue: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Organizer: UNDP's Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme
Participants: ICT Focal Points of Asia Pacific, BDP, UNDP Regional HIV and Development Programme, SURF Bangkok, UNDP Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries

The first "UNDP ICT for Development in Asia-Pacific: Programme Officers/Focal Points Workshop (POW)" was organized by UNDP's Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme (APDIP) in Kuala Lumpur between the 9th and 13th of December 2002.

UNDP-APDIP organized the workshop with financial support from the UNDP ASIA-PAC/South East Asia & Pacific Division. The workshop received in-kind support from the Bureau for Development Policy (BDP), the Regional Bureau for Asia-Pacific (RBAP), UNDP Malaysia, Asia-Pacific SURF offices in Bangkok and Kathmandu, and Regional Information Managers of Asia-Pacific, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), and the UNDP Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC).

Nineteen (19) out of a total of twenty-five (25) UNDP Country Offices within Asia-Pacific participated in the workshop. A total of thirty-nine (39) participants, including ICT focal points from Country Offices, and internal and external resource persons, met for five days and discussed issues and topics relating to UNDP Corporate ICT for Development policies, the ICT for Development Thematic Trust Fund, Country Office level programming and reporting, communications strategies, mechanisms for networking and coordinating information among Country Offices and ICT regional programmes, and a variety of topical ICT for Development trends.

For more information on the December 2002 workshop, including list of participants, programme, final report, and resources, please visit:

URL: www.pow.apdip.net
Login: pow
Password: dec2002

This was the first time in the history of RBAP that its ICT4D Focal Point had come together in a workshop of this type and the general consensus among participants was that the workshop proved useful for their work – sharing experiences and the discussions on internal UNDP ICT frameworks and reporting helped to clarify roles and responsibilities - while the opportunity to meet and discuss with regional programmes and peers allowed for new linkages.

Much of the discussions in POW I related to UNDP's corporate framework for ICT4D, more accurately, the lack of a comprehensive, holistic, and consolidated framework from which UNDP Country Offices could adopt for programme and project development, and for mainstreaming ICT4D into other practice areas.

On the reporting side, there was plenty of discussion on how best to capture the ICT4D work, for knowledge management and for outreach purposes – there was a distinct divide between those who felt that ICT4D required its own separate reporting and those who felt that existing reporting mechanisms were sufficient.

On specific ICT4D areas, the participants of POW I identified Open Source as a major potential area of work for UNDP; while it was agreed by all that gender issues should cut across all ICT4D work. In support of developing positions on ICT4D issues, it was recommended that APDIP work on notes to support Country Office work, specifically on poverty alleviation, open source, and gender.

In opening POW II, APDIP summarized the findings and recommendations from the first workshop for the benefit of new colleagues and to provide everyone with a context for discussion. Following the feedback from the first workshop, APDIP has initiated the International Open Source Network (IOSN) – indeed, IOSN held its first regional consultation just before POW II (-please refer to the “Free and Open Source Software Asia Pacific Consultation” section). Beyond developing practice notes, APDIP has, since POW I, commissioned or drafted in-house an e-Primer on ICT for Poverty Alleviation, a primer on general issues relating to Free and Open Source Software under a series of FOSS primers, and a primer on ICT and gender.

Changes in UNDP ICT4D Policy

A great deal of the discussions during the first workshop revolved around institutionalization of ICT for Development - at the corporate, regional, and country office levels. Although discussions during this POW II also focussed on UNDP’s positions on ICT4D, the context was quite different to the first workshop, given that UNDP has decided that ICT for Development is no longer one of its core practice area but rather a cross-cutting theme for poverty alleviation and governance.

In contrast, over a year ago, UNDP Country Offices were meeting the challenge of incorporating ICT for Development into their programming activities. Collectively, participants at POW I were struggling with how best to best approach ICT4D, in terms of project implementation, upstream versus downstream programming (-and balancing the two), internal institutional frameworks and structure, reporting, strategies for outreach and raising the profile of ICT4D at the country office level. On the corporate level, Country Offices were seeking guidance on what exactly constituted UNDP’s framework for ICT4D – between the Digital Opportunities Initiative and the ICT Thematic Trust Fund services lines.

Workshop Objectives

The POW workshops (I & II) were organized to promote dialogue between focal points and regional colleagues. The primary objectives were:

- To facilitate networking so that participants may share experiences, best practices, and lessons learned in assisting with their respective governments with ICT for development initiatives and policy/strategy formulation.
- To raise awareness on the trends and topical issues relating to ICT development and ICT for development, by providing overviews on such topics as Free/Open Source Software (FOSS), wireless connectivity, and other new technologies.

Agenda

Although the objectives were quite fixed, the approach has been participatory, allowing participants the flexibility to raise issues and agree to discussion topics, prior to and during the workshop.

The agenda (-please see “Annex II – Agenda” for full details) was divided into three main parts for the two-and-a-half days.

The first part took stock of initiatives and established a baseline for the workshop – it consisted of a report on the first workshop and the follow-up actions, an update on UNDP-APDIP past year activities and possible directions, and individual country office presentations on the what is on the ground and the challenges and success stories.

The second part of the agenda dealt with thematic ICT areas, which consisted of presentations on ICT and MDGs, wireless technologies and opportunities, ICT and SMMEs, and Free and Open Source Software.

The third part of the agenda allowed time for open discussions on items raised during presentations and other issues participants wished to table or present to the plenary group. Working groups were formulated according to interest and a final wrap-up plenary session allowed for discussions on working group presentations. Please refer to the “Working Groups” and “Discussions/Highlights” sections of this document for more details.

Participants

UNDP ICT for Development Programme Officers and/or Focal Points of the Asia-Pacific region were invited to attend the workshop. UNDP-APDIP requested UNDP Country Offices of Asia-Pacific to nominate (up to two) programme officers who are responsible for managing the ICT for Development portfolio for their respective UNDP Country Office.

ICT Managers (i.e. LAN managers) belonging to the operations unit of the country office were not invited, unless such persons also had been designated by the country office to also take on the dual responsibility of looking after the country office ICT for Development programme.

All Country Offices were encouraged and invited to attend the Free and Open Source Software Asia Pacific (FOSSAP) Consultation that was held before POW II at the same venue.

Funding for country office participation for FOSSAP and POW II was provided for by respective country offices.

Participating Regional Programmes/Offices

- UNDP BDP/ICT for Development
- SURF Bangkok
- UNDP Regional HIV and Development Programme

Building the Community

One of the key outcomes of the two workshops (POW and FOSSAP) has been the building of a community among ICT4D Programme Officers and focal points in the Asia-Pacific region. For those who attended the POW workshop, this workshop reinforced this sense of community and mutual support; while for new ICT focal points, this was an opportunity for them to interact for the first time with their peers from other country offices from the region, formally and informally. Participants agreed on the importance of such an opportunity to engage each other and to share ideas and thoughts on corporate issues and as well as specific country level initiatives.

At the regional level, POW is a crucial get-together for UNDP-APDIP – it provides UNDP-APDIP with an opportunity to share and brainstorm its ideas and future directions with our colleagues who are on the ground.

POW also allows UNDP-APDIP and all participants within the discussion forum, pow@apdip.net, to initiate discussion, share ideas and information, identify areas for co-operation, etc. Exchanges throughout the past year on the pow@apdip.net mailing list, which is hosted and maintained by UNDP-APDIP, show an increase in interaction between ICT4D POs as they share queries, information, and advice. Immediately following the workshop, focal points have already begun to pursue specific areas and possibilities for cooperation. UNDP-APDIP is committed to continue hosting online discussions between ICT focal points and provide facilitation where necessary.

Participants agreed on the need and importance of meeting annually and again recommended that UNDP-APDIP organize the next POW in 2005.

Discussions/Highlights

While working group discussions allowed participants to concentrate on more specific areas of interests, there were plenty of issues and questions raised throughout the workshop, during question and answer periods of presentations and in open plenary discussions. The following are the highlights from those interactions:

UNDP's Corporate Positions

- On ICT4D no longer being a UNDP practice area – participants were divided on the issue of whether it will be business as usual for country offices, in terms of ICT4D work. On the one hand, integrating ICT into either governance or poverty units provides avenues for continued work – business as usual for some focal points. Indeed, some argued that concentrating on governance and poverty (which attract greater resources) allows for even greater opportunities for resource mobilization. On the other hand, some worry about the resource mobilization for ICT4D, and internal and external perceptions. If ICT4D is no longer an official UNDP practice area, only after two years, the question of perceived credibility by government and partners may be an obstacle in formulating new initiatives. Internally, focal points already face challenges in promoting ICT4D at the country office and with fellow programme officers – this corporate change may present even greater challenges.
- On Free and Open Source Software – in light of UNDP's recent negotiations with Microsoft on a global initiative, participants questioned whether not our advocacy work on (-IOSN at the regional level and initiatives at the country office level) could be seen as being diametrically opposed to the Microsoft partnership. While UNDP-APDIP acknowledges FOSS and proprietary software as tools for accomplishing goals – although FOSS benefits are better for developing countries in the long run – it is not necessary for UNDP to take a corporate stand on FOSS or any particular technology. Others disagreed and felt that FOSS should not only be promoted officially but implemented and used in UNDP itself.

Regional Restructuring

- UNDP-APDIP and SURF Bangkok provided participants with information on the planned Regional Centres (Bangkok and Kathmandu) and the consolidation of SURF services and regional programmes of RBAP.
- UNDP-APDIP announced that there will be a down period, during its transition to Bangkok, that initiatives that are underway will be completed for 2004 and efforts will be made to ensure that joint efforts with country offices will continue during the transition; however, UNDP-APDIP may not be as active in pursuing new possibilities. UNDP-APDIP assured participants that the move is a physical one and that support to country offices will remain as before – perhaps with new staff, but UNDP-APDIP will still be in operational.
- In a similar vein, SURF Bangkok was awaiting clearer indications from headquarters and are interested in knowing country offices expectations.
- Participants were interested in the work allocation between SURF policy advisors and regional programmes. How will things work? Although the details are still being worked out, the main concept is the practice team. Policy advisors and regional programme staff will work through practice teams, with advisory panels to support them. At one time, policy advisors were required to spend 60% of time responding to country office requests. The other 40% was devoted to knowledge management – developing knowledge products, maintaining links with BDP, writing papers, etc. Regional programme staff were to spend 70% of time implementing programmes and 30% of time responding to country office requests and knowledge management. Now there is a move to combine these two schemes; however, it was pointed out that over the past three years UNDP-APDIP has already been performing SURF-like functions and that a large aspect of its programme is devoted to knowledge management and dissemination both within UNDP and outside, as evidenced by the e-Primers, Digital Review of Asia Pacific and other publications UNDP-APDIP has brought out.
- On linkages with UN-ESCAP – it was noted that nothing more is known other than UN-ESCAP is making room (physical space) for regional programmes and SURF. Although UN-ESCAP has recently put together its own ICT4D team, it has not been

made clear any official linkages with UNDP as a whole – in any case, it will be very likely that there will be synergies given the proximity between the Regional Centre in Bangkok and UN-ESCAP. As far as APDIP is concerned, **Mr. Xuan Zengpei**, Chief, Information, Communication and Space Technology Division (ICSTD), UN-ESCAP, already serves on its international advisory panel.

- It was noted that a RBAP/BOM mission from New York was coming to Kuala Lumpur to discuss UNDP-APDP's move to Bangkok and that more would be known after this visit.

Pacific Islands

- Given its unique geographic position, the Pacific Islands require specific support from UNDP-APDIP. In discussion with RBAP and country offices of the Pacific Islands, it was agreed that it would be desirable to establish an UNDP-APDIP post in UNDP Samoa that could serve the island nations. In principle, RBAP is committed to this special consideration for the Pacific Islands, and is in principle willing to commit financial support for UNDP-APDIP presence.
- On e-Pacifika – the project has completed strategy workshops in eight Pacific island countries. The project has assisted in formulating ICT priorities for various member countries; however, no country at the moment has an approved ICT policy/strategy, although Fiji is close to producing its first draft. One of the main hindrances has been the shifting of the ICT portfolio between ministries in various countries.
- One key area for the region is the development of telecom regulatory frameworks. In the Samoa case, the existing telecom regulatory framework was borrowed from New Zealand and is now out of date. ITU has a telecom sector reform project and completed a report on telecom sector reform covering 12-14 countries. The ITU concentrated mainly on splitting regulatory bodies and operators.
- Given the unstable weather conditions in island nations, another priority area is the application of ICT in disaster management.

UNDP-APDIP's Research and Development Grants Programme

- It was recommended that UNDP-APDIP should engage country offices more in its Research and Development programme. Although UNDP-APDIP does provide a bi-annual "snapshot" of all of its activities, including the projects under the R&D Grants Programme, UNDP-APDIP will provide project information to respective country offices so that they are aware and may wish to monitor or use outputs for further outreach and/or replicate.
- It must be noted that while UNDP-APDIP will follow the participants' recommendation, it must work within agreements reached with its partners (APNIC in Brisbane, IDRC of Canada, and ISOC in Geneva) of the grants programme.

Working Groups

As mentioned, sharing and discussions are the rationale for the workshop. While focal points were given time and besides UNDP-APDIP's own presentations, the second half of the workshop was dedicated to plenary discussions on common issues and to working group discussions based on issues agreed to by the entire group.

In the first workshop, the group decided on the following working groups: (A) UNDP corporate issues; (B) ICT for Development as a practice area; (C) Open Source; and (D) Harmonizing donor efforts/partnerships.

This year the group decided to focus on three main issues: (A) Integrating ICT4D in the New UNDP; (B) Knowledge Management and Communications; and (C) New Opportunities – Free and Open Source, wireless and other low-cost innovative technologies.

Working Group A – Integrating ICT4D in the New UNDP

In light of the significant change in UNDP's corporate policy on ICT for Development – that it no longer is an official UNDP practice area – discussions on the implications ranged from

concerns about integrating ICT into other practice areas, to continuing efforts at the country level (within the country office and with partners and governments), to the nature of regional support for ICT4D. The following are the key issues and recommendations as presented by the Working Group A for plenary discussions:

UNDP's New Policy on ICT4D and Its Implication

- “ICT is no longer a Practice Area” and/or “Mainstreaming ICT” are misleading messages. It is recommended that we support the recognition of ICT4D as cross-cutting and convey our change in policy in a more positive message, as in “the integration of ICT4D in all practice areas”.
- While it is often stated that ICT4D will be delivered through the good governance and poverty reduction practice areas, we recognize the application of ICT in potentially all of development interventions by UNDP. We submit that like gender, ICT4D truly does and should cut across all areas; that ICTs are enabling tools by which efforts in our practice areas are enhanced and delivered; that ICTs are tools to support crisis prevention and recovery, energy and environmental management, combating HIV/AIDS, etc. This is indeed in line with current activities in the UNDP Country Offices in the Asia Pacific region.
- To ensure the successful integration of ICT4D into existing practice areas, we take from the lessons learned and best practices as experienced with the integration of gender and human rights.
- Institutional arrangements for ICT4D activities vary from country office to country office, perhaps due largely to human and financial resources. Many COs have placed ICT focal points in Governance or Poverty Units, while others have ICT focal points in PSUs or HD Groups. In general, focal points face obstacles due to the lack of awareness of ICT4D issues within the programme staff of country offices. Hence, the need to work in teams and engage other programme staff in designing/implementing projects with ICT activities. ICT focal points should be proactive in advocating and raising awareness of the importance of ICT, demonstrating its usefulness through successful examples and engaging programme staff in designing viable projects that have ICT activities.
- Now that ICT4D is ‘no longer a practice area’ and there are only two service lines dedicated to it, resource allocation/mobilization for ICT may become a challenge. Problems have occurred even within COs in making available funds allocated for ICT activities. We recommend the development of services lines in each of the practice areas, in order to not only ‘lock’ ICT solidly as a cross-cutting issue, but to also provide mechanisms for resource mobilization/allocations of UNDP resources and to attract and mobilize resources from donor partners.
- In view of these emerging issues/challenges, clear corporate messages on the role of ICT4D and guidance on how to integrate ICT in the practice areas would greatly assist country offices in maintaining its positive work in ICT4D. This would be important not only for UNDP’s programme staff but also for UNDP’s partners. Perhaps some common points for a Terms of Reference for ICT focal points could be developed to ensure that there is, *inter alia*, advocacy for ICT4D and the promotion of ICT activities across country office programmes – sharing of existing models from various country offices would be useful in this respect.

Expectations for UNDP-APDIP

- Continued support through regional projects and initiatives that can be jointly identified and agreed upon with country offices.
- Continued effort in promoting knowledge management through the collection/sharing of good practices, the circulation of new publications/study reports (-not only for supporting CO programmes but for staff itself), etc.
- Strengthened advocacy and awareness raising through regional workshops with the participation of programme staff other than ICT focal points, helping them to realize the important role of ICT in their practice areas. Awareness raising efforts, be it workshops or during missions, could be thematic in nature, i.e. ICT in environment management.

Working Group B – Knowledge Management and Communication Strategies

POW participants recognize that knowledge management – at all levels, including country office, regional, and corporate level – greatly contributes and enhances all aspects of our work in ICT4D. While there was great interest in discussing UNDP's new knowledge management implementations (-namely, Atlas), the group agreed to speak on more general knowledge management and communication strategies (-internal and external), and practical recommendations, for strengthening ICT4D work and raising the profile of UNDP's efforts in the field. The following are the key issues and recommendations as presented by Working Group B for plenary discussions:

ICT4D Internal

- In an effort to ensure that ICT activities are incorporated into UNDP's development interventions at the country level, each country office should establish internal ICT4D working groups to identify and review interventions in projects.
- ICT4D focal points could facilitate ICT4D email groups in the country office to share best practices, case studies, etc. for raising awareness.
- Country office intranet systems should include up-to-date space with local information and database of ICT experts, with links to UNDP global resources/databases on ICT4D. This internal resource should also include ICT activities/projects, policies, research papers and findings (-UNDP and external).
- ICT4D focal points should continue to be active in UNDP's ICT4D Practice Network, POW list, etc., but also encourage colleagues in other programme areas to participate. ICT4D focal points should act as a filter to disseminate relevant information to colleagues in the country office.

ICT4D External

- UNDP Country Office websites are the one main avenue for communicating to the rest of the world the work that UNDP does in ICT4D. ICT4D should focus on developing and maintaining comprehensive pages on their country office website – UNDP Fiji and UNDP Vietnam are good examples.
- In many countries where national level email discussion groups do not exist, UNDP Country Offices could establish, facilitate, and even host mailing lists. Where such mailing lists exist, UNDP ICT4D focal points should take it upon themselves to be active in discussions to establish linkages with local ICT4D communities.
- To ensure consistent promotion, ICT4D focal points should design and allocate resources for dissemination strategies for every project – focusing on disseminating lessons learned in each project.
- ICT4D focal points should be advocates in stressing the need to include ICT in not only governance and poverty reduction but all other practice areas, as well as in all relevant documentation and publications produced or commissioned by the country office.
- Where possible, country offices should promote ICT4D efforts on national TV programmes and/or radio programmes.
- UNDP-APDIP could play a key role, with assistance from every country office, in developing a regional newsletter, and a data bank of case studies, on UNDP's ICT4D projects and initiatives.
- Linkages with regional ICT4D portals/gateways could be leveraged to publish UNDP case studies and stories.

Country Office to Produce

- Country offices must put effort into producing success stories and standardized briefs on projects. UNDP-APDIP could play a role in consolidating and communicating these stories.
- Country offices to facilitate external mailing lists on ICT4D, involving NGOs and educational channels.

What Country Offices Require

- It was recommended that UNDP-APDIP facilitate and produce an analysis of comparative studies based on country office projects. While efforts to collect data from the country offices for the first POW workshop resulted only in a small number of country offices responding to questionnaires, UNDP-APDIP agreed to take on the effort as long as country offices provide the necessary information.
- It is recommended that UNDP headquarters produce a Resource Mobilization Kit that is a standardized package of guidelines and examples for raising funds for ICT4D projects.
- To ensure that we are all communicating the same messages to governments and partners, it is recommended that UNDP corporate develop (1) a policy paper (-perhaps one page) describing UNDP official position on ICT4D.
- Similarly, comprehensive practice notes (-perhaps up to 20 pages) focussing on development themes and the application of ICT would assist focal points in communicating not only to external parties but to colleagues as well.

Working Group C – New Opportunities

Working Group C focused on the new opportunities, and as points of entry for their discussions, they based their discussions on the topical presentations, on Free and Open Source Software (FOSS), wireless connectivity, and ICT and SMMEs. The result was some recommendations for possible initiatives based on common needs within the region. From experience, discussions on new directions have assisted both UNDP-APDIP and country offices to further refine programme ideas and project implementation. The development of UNDP-APDIP's International Open Source Network is a good example of this, as focal points in the first workshop provided valuable input in defining parameters and scope of work. The following are the key issues and recommendations as presented by the Working Group C for plenary discussions:

- Caveat 1: While the technological-frills of ICT4D often become the focus of much literature and discussion time, we must maintain and remind ourselves that our work is development, concretely expressed in the Millennium Development Goals. The focus is not on technology but on the effective deployment of technology for achieving development goals. UNDP country offices should assist first in defining and setting up goals and short-term targets.
- Caveat 2: Given that ICT4D is now perceived to reside mainly in governance and poverty reduction, focusing on technology runs the risk of ICT being not accepted in either governance or poverty reduction.
- In both the areas of good governance and poverty reduction, the major obstacle is the access to technologies – where high costs prohibit widespread access and implementation. Hence, UNDP should focus on deploying proven, cost-effective ICTs.
- One recommended area to pursue is a telecentre model that combines wireless technology and FOSS, focusing on SMME development and training, using the Grameen micro-grant and Grameen phone models to encourage microentrepreneurs.
- At the country level, Country Offices could identify existing projects and find ways to integrate FOSS and wireless technologies, where appropriate.
- While there is plenty of innovative work being done on the ground, there is a need to regionalize national networks of experts and groups working with innovative new technologies. As with IOSN's efforts, perhaps a similar regional hub or sub-regional hubs could be established for Research and Development of low-cost technologies focused on practical work.
- It is recommended that UNDP Country Offices consider setting up small grant schemes to implement pilot projects to promote local capacity building, foster the demonstrative projects (FOSS and wireless) that would be attractive for the international community and government to replicate on a larger scale. A small grant scheme would also enable COs to establish new linkages with the local community of researchers and developers.

- While UNDP-APDIP ePrimers and other publications are very useful in disseminating information and promoting ICT4D in general, it is recommended that UNDP-APDIP and COs consider the development of multimedia based ePrimers. For example, radio and video programmes on FOSS targeting to decisions-makers could be developed and distributed through the country offices to raise awareness.

Free and Open Source Software Asia Pacific Consultation (FOSSAP)

UNDP-APDIP organized a “Free and Open Source Software Asia-Pacific Regional Consultation (FOSSAP)”, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 9-11 February, 2004) under the auspices of its International Open Source Network (www.iosn.net). This regional consultation provided an opportunity for FOSS advocates and policy-makers to network and brainstorm on present and future prospects for FOSS in Asia Pacific, and develop a regional agenda and action plan.

The FOSSAP consultation was planned back to back with POW II to maximize resources and allow UNDP ICT4D Programme Officers to benefit from the gathering of regional experts on FOSS. Interested Programme Officers were invited to all the sessions of the FOSSAP consultation prior to POW II. Nine of the total number of POW II participants also attended FOSSAP.

For information on the findings and recommendations of the consultation, please see “Annex III – FOSSAP Findings and Recommendations”.

POSTSCRIPT: UNDP-APDIP’s Move to Bangkok

A mission from top management of RBAP/BOM met with UNDP-APDIP in Kuala Lumpur, on 26-27 February 2004 to discuss UNDP-APDIP’s transition to Bangkok. On 2 March UNDP-APDIP advised the entire POW discussion list that the following tentative decisions had been reached by the RBAP/BOM team:

1. APDIP’s Building Capacities Programme Specialist (Phet Sayo) to be placed in Bangkok 1 August 2004 depending on the status of the Regional Centre setup in Bangkok.
2. APDIP’s Programme Coordinator (Shahid Akhtar) and Access Programme Specialist (James George Chacko) to be placed in Bangkok by 1 October 2004.
3. APDIP to be partially operational in Bangkok 1 August 2004 and fully operational by 1 October 2004.
4. Contract extensions for existing administrative staff will continue to 30 September 2004 in Kuala Lumpur.
5. IOSN to remain operational from the UNDP Malaysia office till 31 December, 2004.
6. Technical transfer of APDIP servers and other equipment to Bangkok will begin in July-August 2004 but this depends on the status of the Regional Centre setup in Bangkok.

Annex I – Participants

UNDP Country Offices of Asia Pacific

Afghanistan	Humayoon Rasaw ICT National Project Coordinator
Bangladesh	Saleh Khan ICT Specialist
	Madhukar Katakam ICT/Gender Specialist
Bhutan	Chris Faris ICT Focal Point
Fiji	Edo Stork Regional Coordinator (e-Pacifika)/ ICTD Analyst
India	Mithulina Chatterjee Programme Analyst
Indonesia	Gi-Soon Song UNV Specialist in ICT4D
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Mongolia	Toshiya Nishigori ICT and Private Sector Development Officer
Nepal	Deepak Shrestha Programme Officer
Papua New Guinea	Klaus-Peter Glatzel ICT4D Programme Officer
Samoa (Apia)	Joyce Yu Resident Representative
	Moana Luamanuvae Assistant Resident Representative (Operations)/ICT Focal Point
Sri Lanka	Joy Daniel ICT Development Advisor
Vietnam	Phan Duc Thang Senior Assistant Resident Representative/ICT Focal Point

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Annex II – Agenda

Day One – Thursday, 12 February 2004

8:30 - 9:00	Registration
9:00 - 9:15	Welcome and Workshop Agenda Phet Sayo, Programme Specialist, UNDP-APDIP
9:15 - 9:30	Logistics and daily announcements, UNDP-APDIP Team
9:30 - 10:00	Participant Self-introduction
10:00 - 10:30	Reporting on the first Programme Officers Workshop Presentation highlighting the issues that were addressed, the recommendations that were submitted, and the follow-up work and outcomes. Phet Sayo, Programme Specialist, UNDP-APDIP Q&A
10:30 - 11:00	Break
11:00 - 11:30	UNDP-APDIP, an update on past programmes, initiatives, and what is planned Shahid Akhtar, Programme Coordinator, UNDP-APDIP Q&A
11:30 - 13:00	Free Time and Lunch <i>Vogue Café (Ground Floor, Renaissance Wing)</i>
13:00 - 15:30	UNDP ICT Programme Officers' Presentations with Q & A Presentations by POs on respective country and UNDP CO's activities, highlighting best practices, strategic frameworks, and lessons learned, particularly in balancing upstream and downstream programmes; POs should present insights that have not been captured in reference materials provided for the workshop and should also focus on problems, issues, and needs as seen from the perspective of the CO; in keeping with the themes of the workshop, POs should, where applicable, focus on Free/Open Source initiatives, wireless and other innovative connectivity/access technologies, and ICT and SMEs.
15:30 - 16:00	Break
16:00 - 17:00	UNDP ICT Programme Officers' Presentations with Q & A continued
19:30	Dinner and Cultural Show <i>Saloma Theatre Restaurant, within walking distance of the hotel</i>

Day Two – Friday, 13 February 2004

9:00 - 9:05	Logistics and daily announcements, UNDP-APDIP Team
9:05 - 9:45	ICT and MDGs: Findings from the Regional Human Development Report (Promoting ICT for Human Development in Asia 2004) www.apdip.net/rhdr/preview-event/default.asp James George, Programme Specialist, UNDP-APDIP
9:45 - 10:30	Wireless Connectivity: the Technologies, Solutions, and Possible Opportunities Phet Sayo, Programme Specialist, UNDP-APDIP
10:30 - 11:00	Break

11:00 - 12:00	ICT and SMEs in Asia Pacific James George, Programme Specialist, UNDP-APDIP
12:00 - 13:00	Lunch <i>Tempts Restaurant (Ground Floor, New World Wing)</i>
13:00 - 14:30	Free/Open Source Software (FOSS): A Regional Perspective on the Issues and Policies, and the Role of IOSN <i>Presentation includes a demonstration of the IOSN Portal</i> www.iosn.net Tan Wooi Tong and Ken Wong, Programme Specialists, UNDP-APDIP
14:30 - 15:30	UNDP and ICT for Development: Trends and Issues (Plenary discussion) - <i>UNDP BDP/ICT for Development</i> - <i>Developments and the Impact of Regional Restructuring</i> - <i>Pacific Island Countries</i>
15:30 – 15:45	Break
15:45 - 16:00	UNDP and ICT for Development: Trends and Issues (Plenary discussion) continued Identify Working Group Topics

Day Three – Saturday, 14 February 2004

9:00 - 10:30	3-4 Working Groups* on topics Identified by Workshop Participants
10:30 - 11:00	Break
11:00 - 12:10	Working Group Presentations and Discussions - The Way Forward
12:10 - 12:30	Closing
12:30	Lunch <i>Vogue Café (Ground Floor, Renaissance Wing)</i>

Annex III – FOSSAP Findings and Recommendations

For participants:

The IOSN is particularly interested in:

- 1) Regional FOSS needs
- 2) Priority areas where work should be undertaken over the shorter term (next 12-24 months)
- 3) Interested parties in working groups that are prepared to pursue (individually or in partnership) identified initiatives/priority areas

Summary of findings

Recommendations/needs are in bold

Introduction to FOSS

- Savings appear to be amazing but for LDC's, it is about capacity. e.g. Samoa does not have capacity to use, develop and innovate. What change management plans are there?
- Governments need to invest in education and training
- **Roadmap needed for developing FOSS capacities. Change management plan for those with existing proprietary software infrastructure.**
- Cost savings of FOSS do not apply when piracy levels high, e.g. FOSS does not compete well with \$3 CDs.
- FOSS compensation models currently give software away free, charge for services. Analogy: a chef gives away his recipes, ingredient list and methods. However, he charges for actually cooking a meal.
- FOSS development community stays together via peer review and granting of project privileges and rights based on merit and contribution
- FOSS software, especially on the server, is more efficient on older hardware. However, proprietary software is fast catching up on stability and efficiency. Newer FOSS distributions are not as efficient.
- Security on FOSS systems is better as a whole. The open nature of code allows malicious crackers to find and exploit security holes, but also allows developers to find and fix security holes.

FOSS Policies

- Using the analogy of private homes linked by public transportation infrastructure, it is not possible to have software either all public or all private. However, public funds should not be used to build private infrastructure
- Regional FOSS activities are impressive and encouraging. Sadly, most regional efforts appear to target Asia, rather than the Pacific. **There needs to be more focus on Pacific countries.** Pacific countries may be able to watch and learn from the experience of early adopter countries, but will never catch up in development if this trend continues.
- While FOSS is preferable, Open Standards is easier to implement. **Standards and formats should be published, free of excessive licensing fees and restrictive patents.**

FOSS & Governments

- Indonesia recognizes FOSS as a means of bridging the digital divide. However, existing systems already use proprietary systems and integration/migration are major issues. There also questions concerning long-term developer motivations and business models
- Singapore does not have a national policy. Current thinking focuses on fit for purpose, value. However, FOSS adds to number of choices and options in the market and should not be ignored. Current procurement strategy is decided at the departmental level.
- ICT Agency of Sri Lanka set up recently. Tasked with setting up infrastructure, building ICT capacity, building opportunities for investment. Government currently does not have official policy but has recently signed an MOU with Microsoft to set up technology training and localization efforts.
- Vietnam is building ICT industries but has highest rate of software piracy in the world.

- FOSS is well recognized. Vietnam needs a clear policy and roadmap for FOSS.
- Suggested that the costs of licensing proprietary software for operating system and desktop alone for all of India's estimated 1-2 billion PCs would consume 1/3 of India's software exports. If all systems were legal, India's imports may exceed its famous export industry.
- Key factors identified for countries that have strong FOSS policies are:
 - Compelling incentive (reducing imports, piracy) that forces detailed scrutiny of FOSS benefits
 - Top level support and backing for FOSS policy
- Noted that Microsoft is donating US\$1 billion to UNDP and has many other initiatives underway. Lack of FOSS companies making similar efforts
- It is easy to accidentally "lock-in" countries by making the wrong choice in the beginning.
- Problem of many donor agencies give proprietary software or even mandate proprietary software in their development assistance.
- Students believe jobs in proprietary software pay more. Hard to get jobs with FOSS skills.
- **There is a need for more examples, successful case studies and other information about FOSS**
- Lack of local capacity in FOSS deters governments from implementing FOSS projects
- However, we cannot wait till all problems are solved. Governments must press ahead even if there are obvious difficulties, otherwise opportunities will be lost.

FOSS & Education (Day 2)

- Mongolia's experience – in education, there is a lack of capacity among teachers. Mongolia has project which distributes computers with localized Linux pre-loaded to 25% of Mongolia's schools, including primary level.
 - Lessons learned: there is no significant difference between Linux and Windows. Linux is high quality enough to use in education.
 - Use of Linux is critical to decrease student to computer ratio. Money saved on licensing costs buys additional hardware
 - Universities use Linux and find Linux more stable
- Indonesia – Create FOSS to fit people's needs, do not allow donor dollars to artificially distort choices and decisions. Users will use FOSS only when it suits their needs.
- Malaysia – Employers look for students with transferable skills, not technology specific skills
- From 1977 – 2001 Indian-owned patents were 900. US patents was 500,000. Nation of 1 billion people (India) cannot compete or catch up under this situation. Situation keeps Indians as operators, not scientists. When cheaper outsourcing location is found, all work outsourced to India will move to cheaper location.
- In certain cases among participants, students new to FOSS learned to use it within 1 week.

Licensing and Legal Issues

- Lack of knowledge among legal profession of FOSS licensing and issues
- Questions asked regarding specific circumstances:
 - If using embedded linux in mobile phones, PDAs, etc, manufacturers must make available source code to embedded linux. However programs that run on top of linux do not need source released unless they incorporate GPL code themselves. e.g. Java games on Linux phones do not have to release source code
 - License does not define exactly how source code is to be distributed. Placed on website is considered acceptable. Distribution is ONLY to those who have the binary. Those who do not have binary have no right to demand source code
- Software produced using development funds should be usable by all, including proprietary software companies. Case in point – display methods and algorithms for local language.

Localization of FOSS

- Bhutan – localization of FOSS attractive and viable
- Technical work of localization can sometimes be very limited. Khmer language was significantly localized to Linux by 1 programmer working in spare time for 1 month

- Sometimes localization can be critical. Cambodia has no database that is able to sort data, so all data comes out disorganized
- Much localization work is technology neutral. Both FOSS and proprietary systems will benefit.
- **Regional forum to discuss localization needed**
- **Needs to be roadmap/guidelines for policy makers on localization**
- **There is a large gap between technologists and policy makers. There needs to be a bridge between them.**
- Minimal localization can be done fairly easily yet allows users to use the system comfortably. For standard user navigation, translation can be as few as 1,000 words. Complex banking system may require around 10,000 words.
- Full localization takes much longer. 5-10 year effort, large budget

FOSS Infrastructure and Security

- China experience – Linux desktop is not quite as capable as proprietary equivalents for now. Not just GUI but OpenOffice.
 - Compatibility also a problem.
- Problem exists with hardware manufacturers not releasing FOSS drivers. **Should there be a regional initiative that requires hardware manufacturers to not release drivers?**
- Limited tools exist to combat Denial of Service Attacks. No foolproof countermeasures.
- FOSS systems have yet to be attacked by a virus. Speculation that this may be because of limited popularity of system.
- Any computer on the Internet is attacked constantly. Over 2,000-3,000 attacks over 24 hour period on average, mostly by automated robots or viruses.
- FOSS systems are frequently targeted as well. Choice of systems not a guarantee. Secure computing concepts must be employed.