

Large Pan-Asian event opens in Indonesia to share knowledge on Free/Open Source Software

by [Sunil Abraham](#) — last modified 2007-01-29 03:32 PM Asia Source II



Over 130 IT professionals of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from more than 27 countries gathered today at Sukabumi, Indonesia for a nine-day Free/Open Source Software (FOSS) conference and training camp called "ASIA SOURCE II." The key objective is to promote the use of FOSS for social and economic development and to build a network of FOSS practitioners and trainers with Asia.

Asia Source II is jointly organized by UNDP's International Open Source Network (UNDP-IOSN) through its ASEAN+3 Centre of Excellence, InWEnt - Capacity Building International (Germany), Tactical Technology Collective (Netherlands), Aspiration (USA), and ICTWatch (Indonesia). The event is supported by The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Hivos and UNDP's Asia-Pacific Development Programme (UNDP-APDIP).

The Indonesian Minister for Research and Technology, Mr. Kusmayanto Kadiman officially inaugurated the event by welcoming the participants to Indonesia. He emphasized the social and economic benefits and impacts of FOSS to the NGO and SME sectors and introduced the participants to "Indonesia, Go Open Source" (IGOS), an initiative of the Indonesian government which promotes the adoption of FOSS.

James George Chacko from UNDP's Asia-Pacific Development Programme (UNDP-APDIP) noted that although the FOSS movement has achieved significant progress in the Asia-Pacific region and has visibly demonstrated the socio-economic benefits of FOSS' innovative solutions, regional cooperation remains a key issue, which they seek to address through events such as Asia Source and through their IOSN-network. He added that 'the networking sessions and the thematic practical sessions will greatly benefit and expose the regional participants to the full range of possibilities and opportunities available and facilitated by FOSS through peer-learning'.

Balthas Seibold, senior project manager of InWEnt - Capacity Building International of Germany said: "For SMEs worldwide, FOSS holds considerable promise: As it is adaptable to local needs and languages, it can help to grow a local service industry. However, often the necessary skills are not available. This is, why we help to build capacities through events like Asia Source II, which is part of our it@foss programme." He also pointed out that using FOSS does not prevent the use of proprietary software and therefore it was up to each organisation to find the right combination of technologies to optimize productivity and enhance efficiency. ICT/Media Programme Officer Shita Laksmi from Hivos, Netherlands reiterated that strategic technologies like FOSS empower citizen in developing countries - especially the poor and marginalized - to express their voice and to be heard without being hindered by technical and economical barriers such as high license cost. Bona Simanjuntak, senior researcher of ICTWatch of Indonesia pointed out that Asia Source II is a most timely opportunity for the Indonesia FOSS community to showcase their achievements to the global community.

The main focus at Asia Source II is open publishing and broadcasting, alternative hardware and access, and migration and information management. There will also be special technical sessions on localisation, cryptography, mobile phone and VOIP and non-technical session on FOSS for women, effective communication, campaigning and advocacy strategies,

disaster management, FOSS business models, etc.

Facilitators at Asia Source II include Onno Purbo, IT Specialist from the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB). Fran Boon from Oxfam, United Kingdom, who has established many wireless networks in developing countries. Farzaneh Sarafranz from Iran who developed Sharif Linux with support for Persian Language. Ravindra De Silva from the Lanka Software Foundation who worked on the Sahana Disaster Management System. Natasha Primo from Women's Net from South Africa who has helped many African organisations shift from proprietary software to FOSS. Sayamindu Dasgupta from Free Software Foundation, India and Jamil Ahmed from Bangladesh Linux User Group who have jointly contributed to the development of Ankur, a Bengali language distribution of Linux. There are also participants from the National ICT Development Authority of Cambodia, the Philippine Linux User Group, Free Software Foundation of Pakistan and the Ministry of Law and Human Rights in Indonesia and many other organizations.

Asia Source II is a follow up event to Asia Source I which was held on January 2005 in Bangalore, India.

For more information on the event such as agenda, organisers, please see <http://www.iosn.net/regional/asiasource-2007>

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See original at: <http://www.iosn.net/regional/asiasource-2007/asiasourceii-press-release>