

Bugema University - Advanced Training on African Business Models with Free and Open Source Software (FOSS)

Uganda, 22-25 August 2010

Training Report Summary**1. Basic Information**

1.1 Name(s) of trainer and co-trainers

Name	Duties	Institution`
Nkambwe Robert	Trainer and Organiser	Bugema University
Richard Okuti	Co-Trainer	East African Centre for Open Source Software (EACOS)
Wire James	Co-Trainer	Linux Solutions

Venue: Bugema University, Kampala Uganda**1.2 Time & location of Training**Dates: 22-25th August, 2010 at Bugema University Main Campus**1.3 Number of people trained**

The total number of participants trained was 35.

1.4 Mode of training (class room based, online, blended)

The mode of training was blended i.e. classroom, online, group discussions and presentations.

1.5 Objectives of the training

- ✓ To sensitize the public on the use and benefits of FOSS as compared to other licensed software.
- ✓ To promote and support FOSS-based business in the country and regions as may be required by our customers from time to time and gain a basic understanding of FLOSS.
- ✓ To introduce participants to FOSS General Knowledge.
- ✓ To discover how African SMEs can make business using FOSS
- ✓ To get skills in how to develop a business plan or business proposal based on FOSS.
- ✓ To learn how to organize and hold trainings on FOSS Business Models for local SME.
- ✓ To learn from others through exploring African based FOSS case studies.

2. Syllabus Information

2.1 Modules Covered

Module 1: Introduction to Emerging FOSS Business Models

Module 2: African FOSS Business Models: Case Studies

Module 3: Communicating FOSS

Module 4: Introduction to General Business Skills

Module 5: FOSS Specific Business Knowledge and Skills

Module 6: FOSS Training

2.2 Localized versions of Modules

All our presentations were based on the original African FOSS Business Syllabus, however slides were tailored to fit the targeted audience.

2.3 Course Syllabus

MODULE 1: Introduction to Emerging FOSS Business Models

This module sets the scene for the “Advanced African FOSS Business Models for ICT-based SMEs” by providing a basic introduction to the phenomenon that has come to be known as FOSS. As an introductory module, the sub-modules herein cover FOSS concepts and principles which may be seen as prerequisites for building a sustainable ICT business based on FOSS. Sub-modules to be covered under this module will include General FOSS Concept, FOSS Business Globally, Evolution of FOSS Communities and Software Markets, FOSS Licensing Models, Leading FOSS resources for keeping current on the FOSS eco-space.

Overall Objectives

A participant who completes this module should have basic understanding of FOSS and be able to build or grow a business with the help of some of the FOSS business concepts in Modules 4 and 5 and lessons to be learnt from the case studies in Module 2.

The learning objectives for this Module are as follows:

- To gain a basic understanding of FOSS.
- To understand and appreciate how FOSS projects and communities work.
- To develop confidence in their ability to run FOSS business.
- To understand the changing nature of FOSS business.
- To understand the types of existing and emerging FOSS business models.
- To be able to identify the potential local markets for FOSS business.
- To gain knowledge of the leading online resources to keep current in the FOSS eco-space.
- Identify the FOSS licensing models

MODULE 2: African Business Models: Case Studies

The case studies give practical advice based on reported experiences of a cross-section of FOSS business enterprises. This module contains the following sub-modules; The OpenWorld Ltd. The case of GIS Global Image Ltd. Revitalizing software resources through FOSS. Training Linux Users in South Africa. The Linux Solutions Experience. The Amest Santim Systems PLC CENFOSS - Using FOSS for Business. Taxonomy of FOSS Business Models.

The learning objectives for Module 2 are as follows:

- To understand the various services and solutions offered by ICT-Based SMEs in Africa.
- To know the types of FOSS clientele and how their issues can be addressed in the African context.

- To see the advantages and challenges FOSS can present to clients and start-up businesses.
- To understand barriers of entry into FOSS business in Africa.
- To know some profitable service sectors.
- To understand the importance of networking with FOSS strategic partners and communities.
- To understand what the FOSS business risks are and how to mitigate them.
- To identify FOSS business models in use by ICT-based SMEs in Africa.

MODULE 3: Communicating FOSS

Communicating FOSS is one of the most important components of a viable FOSS Business model since it relies on innovative and cost effective techniques and methodologies one should employ to grasp public attention and potential customers.

In business, the link between demand and awareness is a well recognized and established relationship. With regard to FOSS, lack of awareness, absence of a favourable policy environment, and inability to create and retain new markets accounts for some of the key barriers for those wishing to engage in FOSS business.

This module, therefore, aims to assist SME gain the necessary knowledge and skills to successfully undertake these important business tasks. This module contains the following sub-modules: Public Relation and Advocacy Strategies. Advocating FOSS. Online Advocacy tools. Creating a FOSS market and brand in Africa.

The learning objectives for Module 3 are as follows:

- To understand the core benefits of FOSS migration for existing businesses and government.
- To understand the importance of a coordinated FOSS marketing plan.
- To appreciate the significance of PR in raising public awareness.
- To learn how to use cost effective media campaigns.

MODULE 4: Introduction to General Business Skills

The module builds on already established FOSS concepts covered in module 1. It makes use of the relevant FOSS business experiences covered in the case studies in module 2, and the communicating FOSS skills and knowledge developed in module 3. Equipped with introductory business skills in these modules, participants will then be able to have specific FOSS business skills (in module 5) which may be appropriate for establishing FOSS business in their specific countries or regions. This module contains the following sub-modules: Starting a Business. Defining Target Market. Leadership. Organizational Structuring. FOSS Proposals and Contracts.

The learning objectives for this module are as follows:

- To understand how to establish a solid business foundation.
- To know the various leadership styles of an effective business.
- To develop knowledge in key areas such as management, sales, and accounting.
- To understand the significance of tenders, contracts and procurement.

MODULE 5: FOSS Specific Business Knowledge and Skills

In essence, operating a FOSS business does not differ from operating any other business. The same basic principles do apply in terms of understanding user needs; project and product implementation; service delivery and support. There are, however, differences. It is often experienced by FOSS service providers that potential clients are so used to (or locked in) to proprietary solutions that challenges exist convincing potential clients of the value and merits of FOSS solutions. Furthermore, FOSS development harnesses the volunteer contributions of community of developers and users distributed in diverse geographical locations. This may mean that companies doing business in FOSS have to rethink and develop specific skills to deal with FOSS communities. This Module contains the following sub-modules: How FOSS business is different from other types of businesses. FOSS Communities. Competition, Cooperation – Coopetition. Marketing FOSS. FOSS Strategies. Innovation in FOSS Business.

The learning objectives for this module are as follows:

- To understand the main differences between running a FOSS business and running a proprietary software business, as well as non-software types of service businesses.
- To become familiar with the strategies of cooperation and coopetition that are typical for FOSS.
- To know the specific challenges in marketing FOSS, and how to overcome them.
- To have a basic understanding of the role of innovation in FOSS business.

MODULE 6: FOSS Training

FOSS Training has become a novel business opportunity for new and existing businesses as FOSS is becoming more and more mainstream. As more mature FOSS applications emerge, businesses which want to use them require training. Growing investment in FOSS applications are expected to continue in the following years leading to growing training needs and opportunities. This module contains the following sub-modules: How to be a FOSS Trainer. FOSS Training as a Business. Organising Trainings. Open Educational Resources & Open Content and Communication Skills.

The learning objectives for this module are as follows:

- To understand some of the requirements for becoming a FOSS trainer.
- To be able to identify and seize the opportunities that exist for FOSS training as a business.
- To gain the knowledge and skills required to organise and provide FOSS training.
- To appreciate the benefits of peer production of Open Educational Resources and Open Content.
- To understand the crucial role of communication.

2.4 Online Training Facilities & Online Location of Course Materials

URL to online course materials: <http://www.ict-innovation.fossfa.net/e-learning/main/document/document.php?cidReq=BUNT>

URL s to online learning environments: <http://www.ict-innovation.fossfa.net/e-learning/> and <http://www.bugemauniv-elearning.net/>.

URL to media report about the training:

<http://www.monitor.co.ug/Magazines/Jobs%20&%20Career/-/689848/978152/-/67m4tjz/-/index.html>

URL to TV media news: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Py_9iusSXV0

3. Summary of Training and Experiences

- **Achievement of objectives**

This training achieved all its objectives as stated above. This wouldn't have been possible without support from ict@innovation, inWent, FOSSFA, OSISA and members of the mailing lists. The ideas generated all around helped me in the pre-workshop preparations rendering a successful completion of the Advanced Training. The well organised study materials from ict@innovation and family gave momentum to the training because learners could rehearse what they have learnt in class while in their respective homes, bridging the learning gap brought about by lack of internet access in many households in Uganda. Bugema University also played a big role in making this training successful. The Administration availed the venue and allowed me to use my work time to plan and organise for this training.

- **Divergence from planning**

Core aspects of the proposed plan remained the same such as set goals, objectives of training, location, targeted audience, method of recruiting participants, number of modules to be covered, sustainability plan, monitoring and evaluation procedure. Adjustments were made in the scheduling and budget due to unforeseeable circumstances. We had anticipated starting 11th August 2010. However, in order to avoid interfering with registration of new students at the University, the workshop began 22nd and ended on 25th August 2010. We involved the print and television media to create public awareness of the Advanced Training in order to capture the qualifying targeted audience thus stretching our budget a little further.

- **Report on training conducted**

In order to reduce on time usually associated with manual application processes, we launched an online application on the advert page of our website and on the Bugema e-learning platform. These efforts resulted in more than 40 applicants from which 35 were selected to attend the FOSS training. See advert <http://www.bugemauniv.ac.ug/foss/> and online application can be accessed here <http://www.bugemauniv.ac.ug/foss/Application-form.html>

The training started with a welcome message from the organiser, Mr Robert Nkambwe who then invited the Head of Department Computing and Technology, Mr. Francis Lowu to give a keynote address and invite the Vice Chancellor of Bugema University, Professor Dr. Patrick Manu, to address the participants and to officially open the workshop.

- **Tutoring**

The method used all through in tutoring was participatory. Well organised slides were projected on the wall and trainers sought to engage participants in sharing experiences. Modules were tailor made to suit audience and according to Uganda's ICT market demands. Both trainers and learners had some aspects to share at least from each module. We formed three group discussions in order to solicit contributions from individual participants. Results of group discussions can be accessed in the [Course Directory](#) at ict@innovation e-learning platform.

- **Motivation of participants**

Participants were highly motivated to learn how FOSS could help them generate income and maximise returns on their IT investments. It was motivating for them to see that among trainers was the founder of Linux Solutions, an indigenous company in Uganda, standing amidst African case studies they were yet to learn from. Exposure to a list of Open Source e-resources available freely in the Internet made the participants to realize how much time they had wasted while underutilising the Internet resource.

- **Assessment of participants for future involvement in FOSS Business (e.g. are the participants likely to open up their FOSS Business? If not, what is missing?)**

The verbal interviews we made at the end of the workshop and views expressed by participants being interviewed by the TV media indicated readiness of our participants to start business around FOSS and those already in IT business to harness the power of open source to improve or expand their businesses.

- **Occurrences**

Right from the start, training went on smoothly as planned up to the end without any major occurrence apart from power interruptions of about 3-5min. This is the time the University is changed from the national electricity grid to the generator supply as the change over system is still manual.

- **Recommendations for future trainings**

In my opinion, I would recommend the voucher system to be extended for three similar trainings in a time frame of 1 year until a significant critical mass of FOSS advocates is created in our respective localities.