

Introduction to Open Source

Developed Mark Surman and Jason Diceman,
The Commons Group, for APC

Workshop presented by: <add name>

What is open source?

- **Free:** The software doesn't cost anything to obtain – although there are costs involved in configuring and maintaining it.
- **Open:** Because the software code is open it can be modified by anyone ... allowing for the translation into local languages or the addition of new features.
- **Collaborative:** People who improve or modify programs must give the software back to the open source community.

Who's using open source?

- **SchoolNet Namibia** uses open source operating systems, e-mail clients and office tools to provide Internet access and training to the nation's schools.
- Human rights organizations have begun to adopt the **Martus** open source software to securely document incidents of abuse.
- The **APC** uses open source for a wide variety of applications including its global network of web mirrors that fight corporate censorship.

Why use open source?

- **Lower information technology costs:** Especially for organizations who need advanced servers, databases and web applications.
- **Flexible software solutions:** Allowing civil society organizations to meet local needs.
- **Better security:** Mature open source applications are more secure than proprietary tools.
- **Collaborative, cooperative values:** Open source is based on collaborative and cooperative values.

Open source landscape

- **Server software** – open source very strong in here. Majority of Internet runs on open source. *e.g. Apache, SendMail.*
- **Desktop software** – getting better here but still compatibility issues. *e.g. OpenOffice.org, Evolution.*
- **Web applications** – open source very useful here as flexibility very important. However, quality of applications varies. *e.g. ActionApps, PHPCollab.*

Introduction to Open Source

Developed Mark Surman and Jason Diceman,
The Commons Group, for APC

Workshop presented by: <add name>