



for excellence in ICT

News

December 2004

A great step forward it@ab update in Maputo

The latest it@ab update workshop was conducted successfully in Maputo, Mozambique from November the 15 - 20 November 2004. A great step forward for the it@ab network.

Before the main workshop started the members of the business task force met for a three-day preparatory workshop. During this pre-workshop the tasks force with the assistance of an InWEnt consultant prepared the workshop, developed detailed plans for the business plan and collected first ideas for possible marketing measures.

The main workshop started on the evening of the 19th of November with an informal opening function. This

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event gave all of the members and IT experts the chance to pre-discuss key issues.

The main workshop saw the participants during six days of hard work. The official opening was attended by high level officials. Later during the week even the Hon. Prof Lidia Brito, Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology, Mozambique, faced the workshop with her participation.

The results of the workshop are highly encouraging. The network agreed on definitions of it@ab products, defined the roles of the network secretariat and the it@ab Ltd. and developed marketing measures for the it@ab network and its products.

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All results are summarised in a project planning matrix (PPM) developed during the workshop. It will be included in the business plan for it@ab.

This PPM will serve as a to-do-list for members, the secretariat, and the Ltd. with defined deadlines. This will ensure that all necessary activities will be carried out on time and that the network will start to practically market the it@ab services and products.

Photos of the it@ab workshop



Use of it@ab logo

It was agreed during the latest it@ab update workshop, that all members shall use the it@ab logo and slogan on their business cards and letter head as well as web-site showing that they are “proud members of it@ab”.

The more links to the web-site and the more often the logo is seen in the SADC region, the stronger the network will grow - for the benefit of all members. Latest files with the logo can be downloaded from CLE.

New Slogan and Logo

During the it@ab update workshop in Maputo the management board and the members agreed on a new slogan for it@ab.

The it@ab network, including the NGO and it@ab Ltd., will market its services and products under the new headline:

“it@ab - for excellence in ITC”

This slogan combines it@ab vision and mission statement thus showing potential customers the unique selling proposition with state of the art ICT solutions.

The it@ab logo includes this new slogan from now on as follows:



it@ab databases brought on their way

Active marketing for it@ab products and services

it@ab will market its products and service more pro-active in future. Databases will make available the services and fields of expertise for customers.

It was agreed during the it@ab update workshop in Maputo that the network and the Limited of it@ab will get more active in marketing the network's services and products.

Databases to be published on the it@ab web-site and/or the Collaborative Learning Environment (CLE) will enable customers and members of the network to get most up-to-date information on the offers.

Apart from the existing database on open source software a products and service database as well as a members register with detailed company profiles of all members and a database with project references of the members and the network, will be made available to the public. In addition an experts database with the CVs of IT specialists of the network will be made available on CLE.

The databases will serve customers needs and assist interested firms and individuals in finding the right partner to develop an ICT solution or training.

Furthermore the open source software database and the existing blended learning products will be linked to the offers of the members and thus be used as offensive marketing tool.

All members and IT specialists are requested to submit their CVs to the secretariat as soon as possible in the official EU format which is available under CLE.

Contribute !

A network can only be as strong as its members! It is on you, the it@ab members, to contribute to the network.

Which web sites do you visit regularly? Right, those that are interesting, that are up-to-date and updated regularly... what about the it@ab web-site? You can contribute to the it@ab web site. Post your news, post your findings and post your ideas, solutions and experiences.

Which newsletters do you read? Right, those that are... make the it@ab newsletter one of those and send in your articles on new developments in ICT in SADC, new products and service and the experiences you gained marketing the it@ab products and services.

Contribute to you network, your newsletter and your web site!

Highest Level

Mozambican Minister speaks during workshop

During the it@ab update workshop in Maputo the Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology, Mozambique, Hon. Prof Lidia Brito emphasized the importance of knowledge networks like it@ab.

The Minister, who is one of the most active fighters for “ICT for Development”, spoke on the fourth day of the workshop. She was excited by it@ab and emphasized the importance of ICT to combat poverty.

She also pointed out the need of partners to work together with government and the private sector to

bring competitive and affordable IT to Mozambique and the SADC Region in general.

She emphasized on the importance of the knowledge network like it@ab and linkage with other networks for ICT development and its applications to the social economic development in general.

The Minister indicated that Mozambique is also establishing the knowledge networks for example for institutions where research outputs will be shared by communities through primary schools.

She pointed out that the markets of the individual countries are small and the size of SADC market in contrast.

Last not least she indicated the need of ICT services to go to remote areas and mentioned the example of Nyasa Province where people themselves are asking for such services.

The speech of the Minister was not only an honour for it@ab and the workshop but also very encouraging for all members and the network.



(Minister Hon. Prof Lidia Brito)

Evaluation Report in CLE

The final evaluation report of it@ab training programmes is now available in CLE. Please visit CLE2 at www.cle2.it-inwent.net, login and download the report to see the results.

Long- term vision for building IT skills and capacity for Africa

By Ms. Fausta Nguzo and Mr. Ricardo Taca

The IT world is slowly shifting from the commercial Operating Systems to the open source. Germany has taken great steps and is now making sure that many countries, specially African, gain all the benefits for no cost.

We are 21 it@ab - Business related IT Consultancies (8 women & 13 men) coming from different countries of Africa, here at the InWEnt gGmbH Training Institute in Saarbrücken – Germany, since October 2004, dedicated and acquiring knowledge and expertise that will make us part of the Open Source Movement. As part of the it@ab Network we want to help develop our home countries towards building IT skills and capacity.

On our arrival in Germany, we were given lap tops as our working tools and build up our Linux Servers. It was not a good time for Microsoft Operating System since it was time to say goodbye to the commercial software . "Listen that XP tone for the last time" that was the words of Hans Peter when we were rebooting our windows machines to start SUSE installation. The Junior Managers have dived to the Open Source Software where they are able to swim with no end.

We agree that the world needs to have a fair and competitive market for computer software so we carry projects designed for our countries needs. That makes the New African Generation, it@ab 2004/2005 pride for having the opportunity of creating and making new things with Open Source Software - where everyone is invited.



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Introducing the Free and Open Source Software Foundation for Africa

By **Nicholas Kimolo (FOSSFA)**

FOSSFA is an organisation that was formed to promote, through advocacy and supporting the developer community, the use of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) in Africa. FOSSFA was formally constituted in Geneva on February 2003 during WSIS Prepcom II and its Action Plan was adopted and endorsed by the Committee on Development Information (CODI) in May 2003.

The FOSSFA's Vision is engraved in the collective vision by Africans to reduce the digital divide through the use of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS). Since its inception FOSSFA has grown to include 50 corporate members and over 3000 members in Africa as part of its movement to advocate and popularise FOSS.

FOSSFA advocacy work revolves around promoting common perspectives and positions to Governments and other stakeholders across the African Region. FOSSFA believes that African Governments can benefit more through using FOSS and adopting Open Standards other than through the use of closed and proprietary software. It is our understanding that software alone cannot solve African ICT problems and there is need to ensure cooperation with hardware and telecommunication services providers. We advocate for the

use of FOSS to reduce over-dependency on a particular vendor and generally avoid monopolies that discourage fair competition.

For more information visit the FOSSFA web-site at www.fossfa.net

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