

# Google Code-in 2017: Working With The Mifos Initiative

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I still remember that day a few weeks ago, when I suddenly remembered about Google Code-in, the online competition that Google hosts starting around November of one year till January of the next. I had read about it back in early 2017 in the final days of that year's competition, and I told myself that next year, I would join and participate in GCI. I have always had an appreciation for open source software, and organizations that use and promote these. In contrast to big corporations that only have profit in mind, these groups of people—the Linux Foundation, the Document Foundation (creators of LibreOffice), etc--promoted software that was community-oriented, programs that were beneficial for everyone, and not just for those who could afford a license fee.

Fast forward back to late December 2017 when I remembered Code-in and my commitment to help one of these open source organizations in one way or the other. I registered for the contest and saw that once again, I failed to start the competition on time. However, this time, I had more than a few days remaining, and I decided to take advantage of this by looking for an organization with meaningful tasks that did not require a lot of programming skills, an area that I consider myself quite lacking at the moment. Because I did not have the time to train and refresh my C++ and Java skills, I searched for more documentation or research related tasks that I could be an effective participant in, not just earning points in the competition, but actually helping an organization. That's where I found The Mifos Initiative.

When I limited Code-in's search filters to just tasks from Mifos, I saw that there were a lot of doable tasks for someone with my limited skill set. However, before I started to work, I read up on this organization first. After all, I did not want to work for an organization that I knew nothing about.

When I saw Mifos' mission and their initiatives, I was immediately inspired to start working on some of their tasks. A non-profit that strives to eliminate poverty? Check. Do this through software? Check again. Do this through open source software? Check check check!

For most of the next few weeks, I worked on many of Mifos' tasks that included research about smaller tech organizations in Africa. I compiled profiles and details about TechHubs, Incubators, and Accelerators. I'll admit, at times it could be boring. It was a somewhat mechanical job: search this, copy this, paste that, and so on. But when I looked deeper into the information I was compiling, I was able to read stories. Stories of smaller groups of people around the world who had the same innovative and change-making goals and mindset that Mifos had. These people had smaller reaches, and were mostly only concentrated in a locality. But here I was, combing the Internet for relevant information that would make these people known to Mifos, and to the world. Through this, they are being given the potential to expand their positive influence and to connect with other like-minded people to create a wave of innovation and development in communities around the world.

There's less than a week left, a few more days of helping Mifos help others around the world, a few more days of helping Mifos drive closer to its goals. More tasks up ahead for me to do, more of the world for Mifos to impact.