



UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

MIND

The

GAP

Let's talk about

OPEN SOURCE

Concept Note

Most of today's projects involving software have high chances to be based on open source software built through the Open Source Initiative's (OSI) key parameters and protected by a standard Open Source License.

The open source definition includes key criteria that goes well beyond the technical representation of the software artifact, and impinges on real-world social behavioral concepts that inform the Open Source Culture. The term open source has expanded beyond the software sector to cover other open content including open data, open science open learning partnerand other forms of open collaboration. All around the world, companies and public services are using these collaborative methods to innovate and build new solutions.

The true nature of open source culture embodies the ideals of the United Nations and fully resonates with UN mandates and values as it rests on openness, transparency, inclusivity, equality and collaboration. The open source approach comes with very low entry barriers allowing for ICT professionals and future generations of technologists from developed, developing as well as least-developed countries alike, to collaborate with existing and new global technology communities and build strong and sustainable capacity.

Recognizing that open source plays a critical role in the United Nations' ability to innovate and engage in partnerships, it is therefore key to build strong internal capacity in the organization on open source software and the broader open technologies. This will be a significant factor in the efforts to successfully implement the UN mandate in the areas of peace and security, development and human rights.

Objective of the initiative

Mind the Open Source Gap Initiative is a comprehensive program designed to build the capacity of UN staff to use and engage with open source technologies. Through a series of interactive workshops and presentations, participants will learn about the principles, practices, and benefits of open source, as well as the various open source licenses and their implications.

The initiative will also provide opportunities for participants to engage with and contribute to open source projects, giving them hands-on experience with the open source development process and the opportunity to make meaningful contributions to the open source community. In addition, the initiative will include resources and support for participants to explore and adopt open source software in their work.

The primary objectives of the Open Source Capacity Building Initiative are as follows:

- To provide a comprehensive introduction to open source software and its principles, practices, and benefits.
- To familiarize participants with the role of open source in the modern software ecosystem. This will include a discussion of the various types of open source software, as well as the benefits and challenges of adopting open source within an organization.
- To provide hands-on experience with open source development processes and opportunities to contribute to open source projects. This will include practical exercises and guided projects, as well as support and resources for participants to engage with open source projects on their own.
- To support the adoption of open source software within the United Nations. This will include guidance on selecting and implementing open source solutions, as well as resources and support for participants to explore and adopt open source software in their work.

In addition to these primary objectives, the initiative also aims to:

- Foster a sense of community and collaboration among participants. By engaging with open source projects and the global open source community, participants will have the opportunity to learn from and collaborate with a diverse group of individuals and organizations.
- Enhance the technical skills and knowledge of participants. Through hands-on experience with open source projects and exposure to the latest developments in open source software, participants will have the opportunity to develop and improve their technical skills.
- Promote the adoption of open source software within the United Nations. By building the capacity of UN staff to use and engage with open source software, the initiative aims to encourage the wider adoption of open source within the organization.

Format:

Mind the Open Source Gap will consist of a series of interactive workshops and presentations, held over the course of one day to take place on a bi-monthly basis.

The sessions will be held by experts from within the UN as well as subject-matter experts from academia, private sector and other international organizations. They will cover a range of topics, including the history and evolution of open source, the various open source licenses and their implications, and the role of open source in the modern software ecosystem.

In addition to the workshops and presentations, the initiative will also provide opportunities for participants to work on and contribute to open source projects, giving them hands-on experience with the open source development process and the opportunity to make meaningful contributions to the open source community.

The initiative will also include resources and support for participants to explore and adopt open source software in their work, including guidance on selecting and implementing open source solutions and access to a network of open source experts

Sessions will be recorded and made available to all UN Staff.

Audience

“Mind the Open Source Gap” is targeted at all UN Staff who are interested in learning about open source, regardless of their level of technical expertise. The initiative is open to anyone who wants to learn more about open source and its role in the software ecosystem, including developers, managers, and non-technical professionals.

Evaluation

At the conclusion of the **“Mind the Open Source Gap”** initiative, participants will be asked to complete a survey to provide feedback on the program and their experience. The survey will cover topics such as the usefulness of the material covered, the effectiveness of the delivery methods, and the overall satisfaction with the program. Based on the feedback received, the initiative will be evaluated, and improvements will be made as needed.

In addition to the survey, the impact of the initiative will also be evaluated through metrics such as the number of participants who contribute to open source projects, the adoption of open source software within the organization, and the overall impact on participants' technical skills and knowledge.