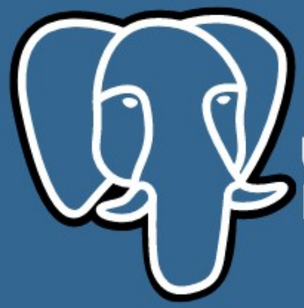


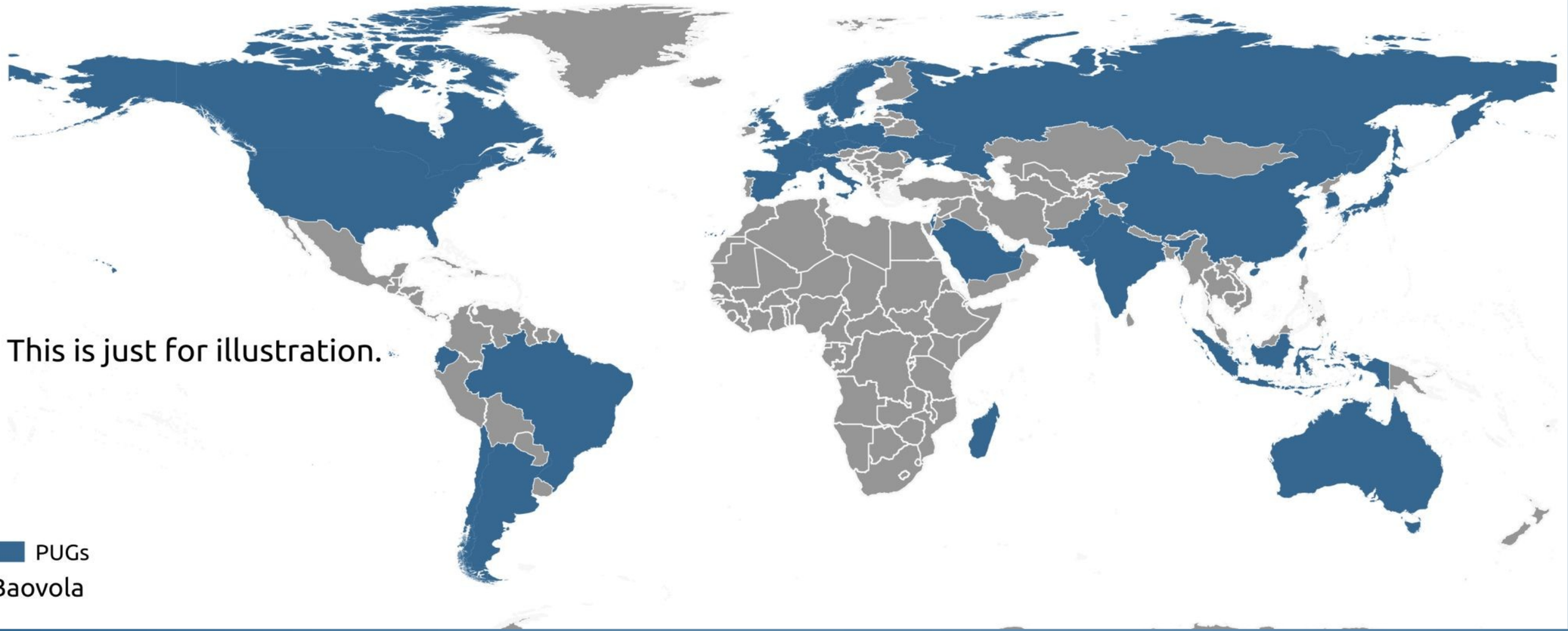
The Power of Feedback: Building a Thriving PostgreSQL Community in Madagascar

PGDay Chicago, USA
April 25, 2025

Baovola, co-founder of PostgreSQL User Group Madagascar

marieannabvl@gmail.com

PostgreSQL Local User Group



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Who am I?

PostgreSQL Users Group Madagascar

Marie Anna BAOVOLA, Co-founder of PUG Madagascar

GIS database manager, educator, open source advocate

Computer Scientist with 11 years in geomatics, national & international teaching experience.

Based in Antananarivo, Madagascar

Passionate about building tech capacity in my country, and in Africa

Why I am here?

Passionate about PostgreSQL, but did not see it around me in Madagascar

I believed a community could change that

I started one – with no big organization, just curiosity and feedback.

Agenda

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BACKGROUND

CHALLENGES

FEEDBACK LOOPS

WINS & LESSONS

WHAT'S NEXT

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No Local Community

Low visibility

Language Barriers

Few learning resources

No role models / Mentors

PostgreSQL In Madagascar Before 2024

CHALLENGES I NOTICED

Lack of Network

→ Developers and DB admins were working in silos
→ No space to share PostgreSQL experiences or ask questions
→ No local mentors or PostgreSQL « champions » to lead the way

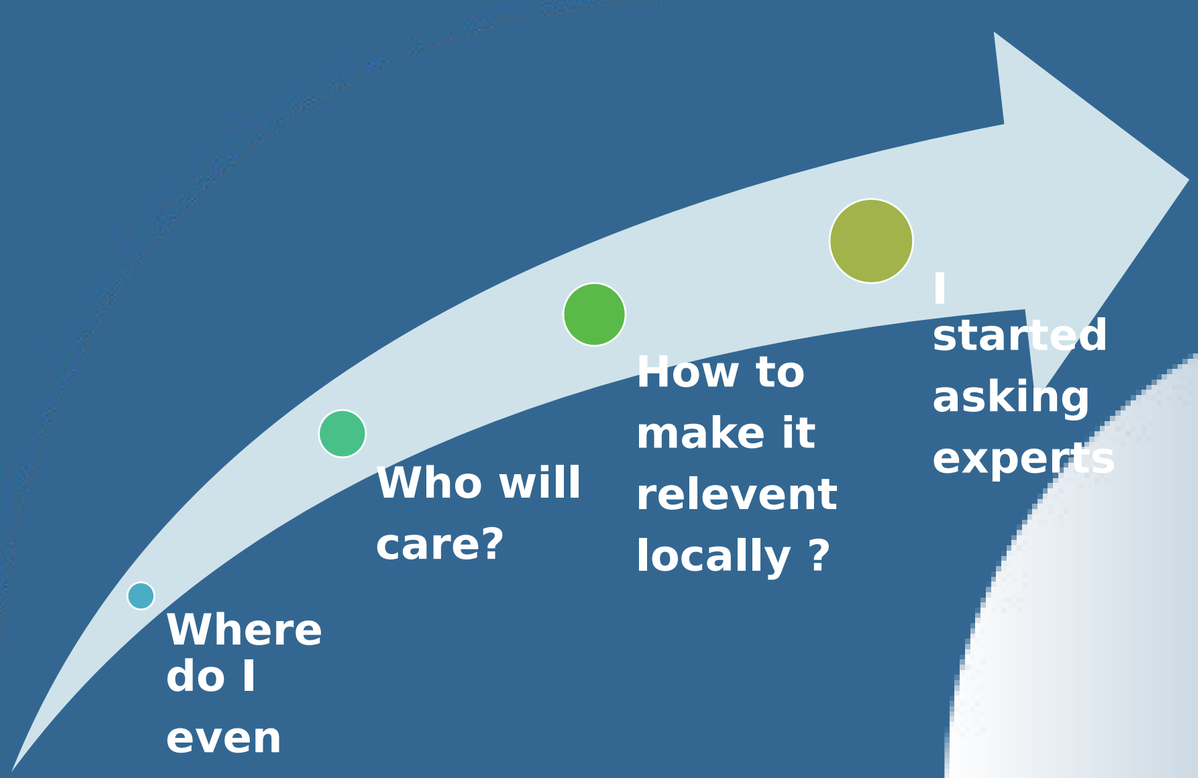
Isolation

→ Those interested in PostgreSQL felt alone
→ No community to validate or encourage their learning
→ Hard to stay motivated without feedback or peer support

Limited Exposure to Open Source Culture

→ Community contribution to felt far away
→ No events to connect Malagasy developers to the global open-source movement

Initial Questions I had



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Reaching Out to the Global Community

08/25

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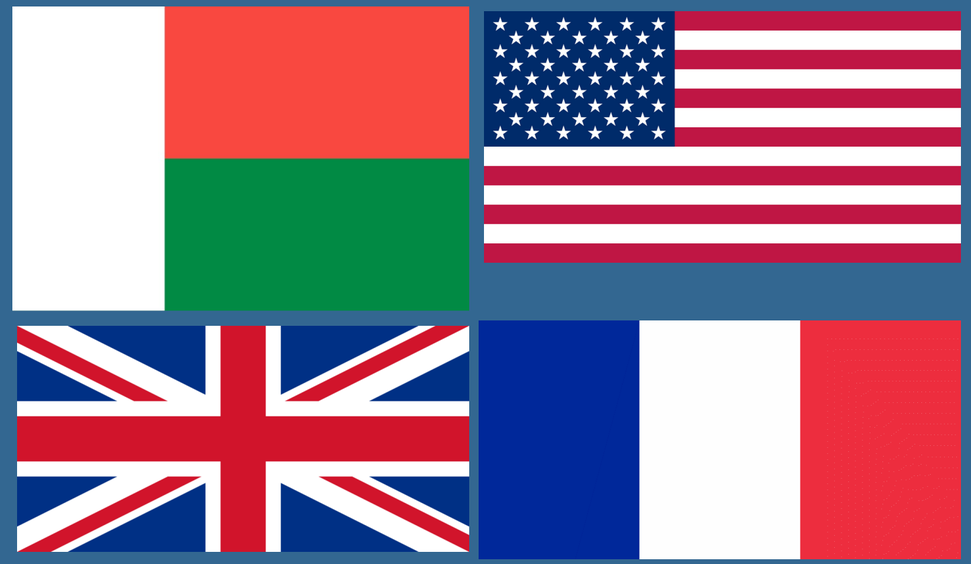

Looking beyond Madagascar

How I reached out?

Support and motivation from experts.

You don’t need permission to start. You just need people.

Start Small, But Start Now.

09/25

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ADVICE THAT CHANGE EVERYTHING

Surveying the community

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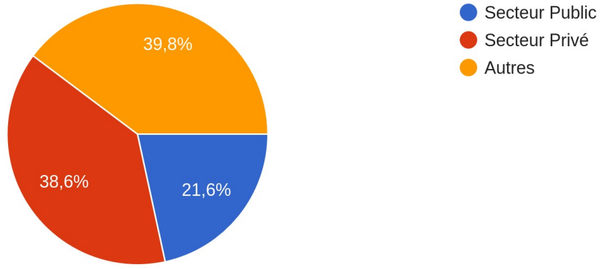
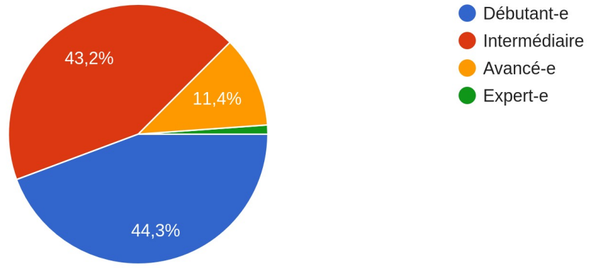
Type d'organisation

88 réponses



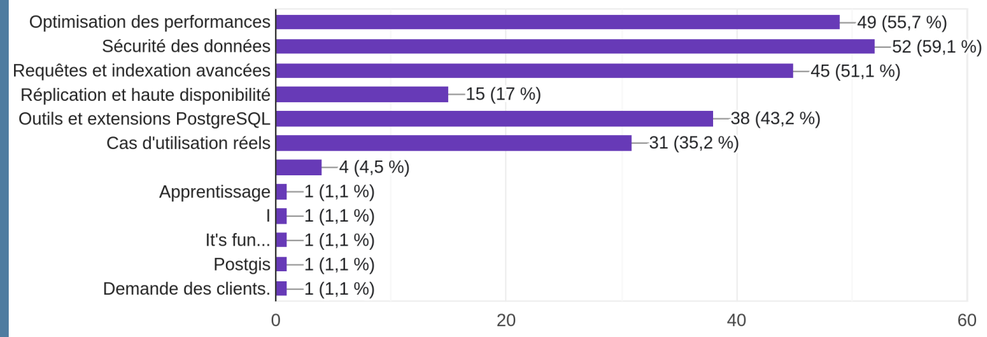
Votre niveau d'expérience avec PostgreSQL

88 réponses



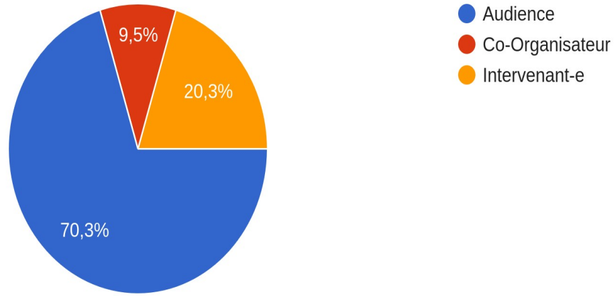
Raisons principales pour l'utilisation de PostgreSQL

88 réponses



Quel rôle préférez-vous prendre pour participer à ces sessions ?

74 réponses



Surveying the community

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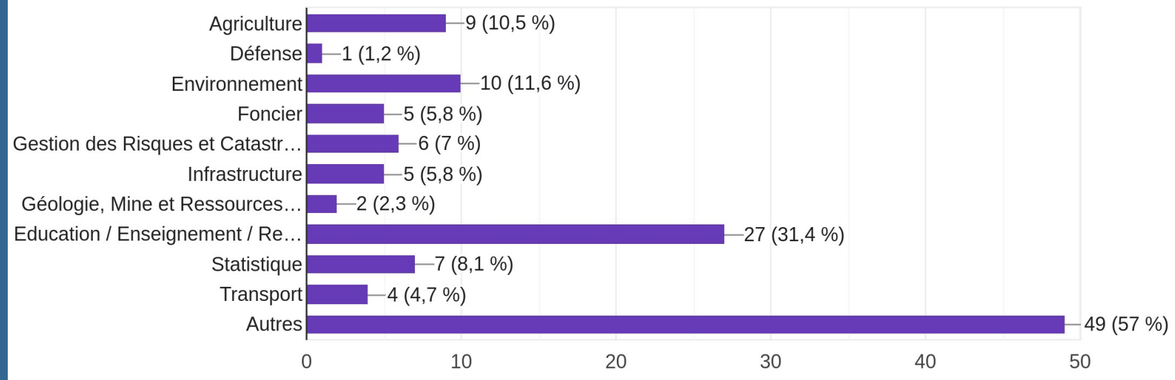
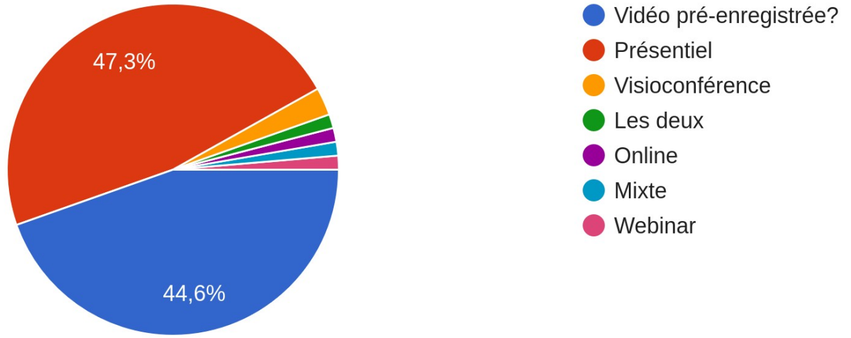
Votre secteur d'intervention / activités

86 réponses



Quel format préférez-vous?

74 réponses



PostgreSQL Users Group Madagascar

To build a vibrant, inclusive, and locally rooted PostgreSQL community in Madagascar by sharing knowledge, empowering learners, and connecting people.

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THE LAUNCH OF POSTGRESQL USER GROUP MADAGASCAR

PostgreSQL Users Group Madagascar

The venue & Speakers

(from survey and by emailing them)

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NIC-MG
Network Information Center Madagascar

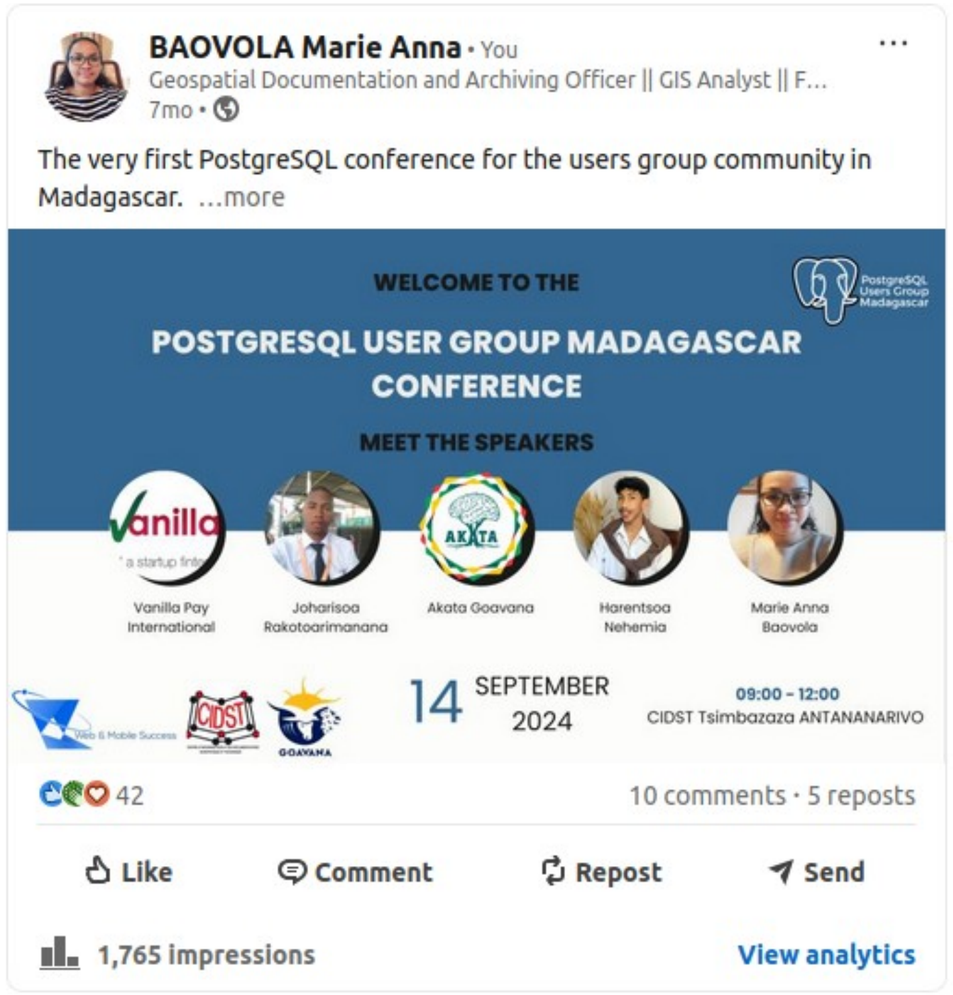
INSTITUT NATIONAL SUPERIEUR D'INFORMATIQUE
INSI

CIDST
CENTRE D'INFORMATION ET DE DOCUMENTATION SCIENTIFIQUE ET TECHNIQUE

Our sponsors

Web & Mobile Success

Our first meetup



Category	Value	%
Industry	Software Development	32 %
Industry	IT Services and IT Consulting	29 %
Seniority	Senior	36 %
Seniority	Entry	31 %

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Communication tools

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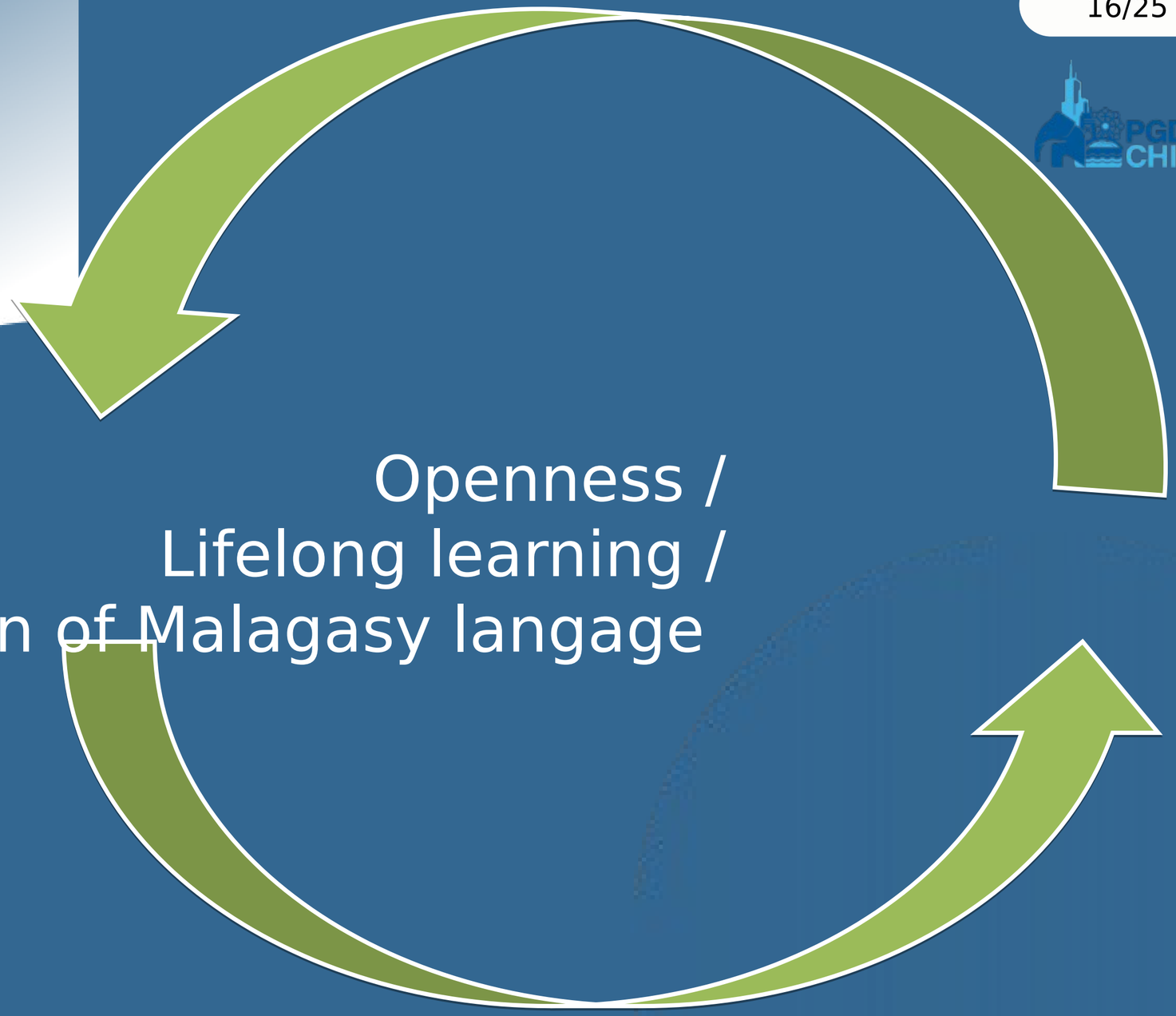

OUR VALUES

FROM SOLO EFFORT TO SHARED LEADERSHIP

→ Co-hosts
→ Graphic design & communications
→ Tech support

GROWING THE TEAM

Visibility – Inspiration - Connection

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THE PURPOSE OF THE FIRST CONFERENCE

Planning challenges

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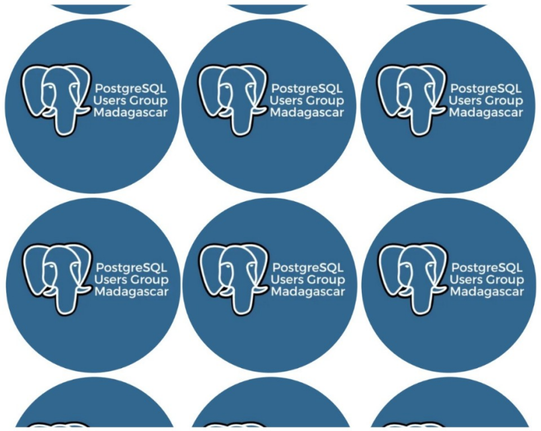
Steps while planning the event

- Finding the right venue (University, Company, Research center)
- Juggling logistics (coordinating schedules – introduction for sponsors)
- Conference project
- Sending project to potential partners & sponsors
- Clear roles & constant communication



What we learned

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Feedback received	
Positive impact	**Notes**
The friendly and inclusive vibe	People felt welcomed, even first-timers
Seeing local speakers on stage	Inspired others to believe « I can do this too »
Live demos and beginner-friendly sessions	Simple language, live example, local use cases
Networking opportunities	Breaks and casual discussions were highly valued

What we can Improve	
Challenge	**Action next time**
Some talks ran long	Add a timekeeper
Wi-Fi issue	Have a backup plan
Some people / companies did not hear about the event	Start earlier with promotion, contact partners directly
No livestream / No replay	Record sessions

LEADING THROUGH UNCERTAINTY : from fear

Impostor syndrome

Who am I to lead a PostgreSQL community?

Feeling alone at first

No need to have all answers

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Leadership through feedback : to confidence

Listening builds trust
Leadership as co-creation : do not do it alone!
Making space for everyone

WHAT'S NEXT?

Online conference in 28th of June, 2025
Planning for in person event
Documentation for beginner
Edition of book in our language
Participation in international conference

PostgreSQL Users Group Madagascar

GLOBAL MESSAGE

Spreading the vibe around Africa

Listening, adapting, and acting on feedback helped us build Madagascar’s first PostgreSQL community.

Time to explore and expand the community!

PostgreSQL Local User Group

https://www.linkedin.com/in/baovola-gis-data/

THANK YOU