WLM DEI Interim Report

A. Background

Over the years, the expansion of Wiki Loves Monuments (WLM) to countries across the world has brought to the forefront different issues and gaps which hinder the implementation of a more diverse and inclusive photo competition.

These issues range from issues of accessibility and disparity of resources to local governmental or bureaucratic restrictions to participation. These roadblocks have resulted in gaps in both the content that is gathered and the way we organise and outreach for Wiki Loves Monuments. To address this WLM has currently undertaken a Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity research to ascertain various national and region specific roadblocks and find collaborative and sustainable solutions for the same.

The WLM team believes it is imperative to initiate movement-wide, multi-viewpoint conversations on what needs to be and what can be changed, whilst collating ideas, frameworks, guidelines or policies that would ensure diversity and inclusion across this global project.

As part of this process, initial conversations were held with members of the WLM international team to understand general concerns and expected review points. Based on the concerns shared by various team members and suggested points of focus research objectives to map the following aspects of the Wiki Loves Monuments photo competition were drafted:

- Diversity (gender, race, ethnicity etc) in the national team and jury panel
- Existing resources and access to the same at the national level - lists, funds, skills, affiliates and user groups
- National level communication (with participants) and outreach matrix
- Local understanding and movements around Cultural Heritage and Monuments
- Inclusivity in contest rules and heritage lists

B. Findings and Suggested solutions

For the purpose of the DEI research the consultant has used a mixed method approach. This included

a. Primary research through interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and general conversations with various WLM stakeholders;
b. Secondary research though available online resources, such as contest landing pages and documents

Primary Research:

One on one interviews with national level WLM organisers were conducted between November 2021 - March 2022. During this process national volunteers from different countries, who have either organised or helped organise WLM in their own country or linguistic regions, were virtually interviewed. A pre-prepared questionnaire (Annexure I) was used as a template for enquiry into their experience of organising WLM in their specific regions. However, since the interviews were semi-structured, the questionnaire was used as a guide and the consultant tweaked, added or

eliminated any questions that she found inapplicable to the interviewee's experience or country. Simultaneously, FGDs during the WLM office hours and conversation with other WLM stakeholders from the international team and Wikimedia network were held. In total, 20 one on one interviews and 2 office hours were held for the purpose of the primary research.

These are some suggested approaches to diversity concerns by national organizers, for national organizers: . the suggested solutions mostly consist of methods that have worked for national organisers in the past. However, they also include a few solutions where the national organisers felt the need for support from the International team. While it is understood that these solutions may not be applicable to all countries, national organisers can pick the suggestions that work best according to their cultural context.

Issues raised in the interviews	Suggested Solutions - according to the interviewed organisers	Specific applicable Countries[1]
Resources		
Some of the jury and participant tools are quite slow and can't handle multiple data sets. Participants face issues logging in from mobile phones and are sometimes blocked by Wikimedia Commons	Can integrate wikidata with WLM in a better way - make accessing heritage lists easier and more comprehensive. Need a system for easy uploads and scraping photos	South Africa, Philippines, Brazil, Portugal, Spain, UK
Participants from countries with issues of access to the internet or those who can not afford a Digital Camera face issues in uploading photos from their smartphones. This also leads to submission of low quality images that don't serve the purpose of documentation.	Need tech that can be compatible with mobile phones (mobile app) would make things easier for participants. Workshops/ online how-tos can help guide participants in clicking better photos with their smartphones. Collaborating with professional photographers and photography clubs Organise upload sessions at multiple locations. The WLM organisers can set up portable internet routers at multiple locations where participants can come and submit/upload their photos to the Competition page.	Ghana, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Brazil, Venezuela
Heritage Lists, Definition and Rules		
Organisers face issues in accessing lists from government agencies and cultural organisations as they are either outdated, incomplete or not digitised. Bureaucratic hurdles such as seeking permissions, apathy of the administrative bodies and request for payments to access lists also add to the problem. This issue becomes even more pronounced in conflict prone areas as the physical lists and	Allow the use of any and all available lists curated by reliable sources. Need to manually curate alternate inclusive lists. Using lists curated by other non-government organisations in the heritage sector, along with other available local/municipal level lists might help.	Ghana, Ukraine, Israel, Palestine, Croatia, South Africa, Brazil, Lebanon, Qatar, Portugal, Spain, Surinam, Venezuela, Argentina

[1] Interviews with Ukraine were conducted before the full-scale Russian invasion.

the monuments stand a chance of being destroyed and military occupation causes fear in participants to photograph the monuments. Sometimes the available lists are not inclusive of monuments representative of minority or marginalised communities.	Can use the 'official' lists as a guideline for the competition and allocate dummy numbers as indicators for submission that are not on the list. Ask/mobilise local people to reach out to their municipal councils to add their heritage to the list	
Some states and regions do not have heritage lists due to apathy of the government.		Portugal, Some of the Canary Islands
The current heritage and monument definition used by WLM does not capture the essence of heritage spaces in certain countries, as their understanding of monuments differ. It tends to highlight the colonial understanding of monuments while classifying indiginous monuments as a separate category (WLE). This not only affects participation, but also the way monuments are judged and scored.	Need different mediums to capture monuments - video, audio etc. Need to broaden the scope of what is accepted as a monument in the international competition, make it more universal. Hold online discussions and webinars to think about what a monument means in different countries Can have a combined competition for nature, folklore and monuments Capturing relationship between people and monuments in different ways through special photo categories.	Spain, Uganda, Australia, Philippines, Brazil, Portugal, Venezuela, Zimbabwe
Documenting monuments that are taken down due to political reasons, reclaiming heritage movements or destroyed due to conflict or passage of time is difficult	Having a special category for submissions of old personal or historic photos Collaborations with local photo archives	Brazil, Ukraine, South Africa
Funding and Manpower		
Organisers, especially new organisers, struggle with securing funding for the competition - awards and administrative needs	Need help with writing grants and clarity of what kind of funding can be secured. Collaborating with neighbouring affiliates in the region can help ease into the process.	Zimbabwe, Philippines, Egypt, Venezuela
Collaborating or engaging with professional photographers for the competition is difficult due to the limited funds available. Professional photographers feel they need better monetary or professional incentives (that add to their CV) to participate in the competition.	Publishing their selected photos in an online accessible album or catalogue	Portugal, UK, Ukraine, Zimbabwe
It becomes difficult to engage dedicated volunteers, with little or no compensation, as the work is time consuming.	A monetary incentive/compensation for dedicated work hours may help.	Uganda, Venezuela, Zimbabwe
The technological and communication aspects require a lot of time and money investment.		Spain, Brazil, Portugal, Ukraine

Due to lack of dedicated manpower the progress in this front has been slow.		

Outreach and Communication

Countries and regions which are new to Wikimedia or do not have any active user-groups face a lot of issues in getting people involved in the competition at various stages - volunteer/organising, outreach and participation. This also makes collaboration with local bodies/institutions difficult. This is also applicable to certain countries with well established user groups.	Office hours or workshops and mentoring sessions with organisers from different parts of the world could help. Thematic engagement or issue based engagement will help organisers share and learn from each other's experiences. These sessions would be more fruitful if held a few months before the competition begins so that organisers can take stalk of what worked and what did not work in the previous year and plan for the coming year accordingly	Zimbabwe, Australia, Brazil, Uganda, Spain, Northern Ireland, Venezuela
Organisers face difficulty in building communication and partnership networks, promoting the competition and retaining participants each year.	A document sharing comprehensive social media strategies to engage audiences/participants would be helpful. This can be adapted by local organisers according to their local cultural and communication needs Collaborations with local news networks help in getting the word out about the competition and generate interest. Organising workshops and walk-a-thons in monument dense areas help engage participants.	South Africa, Israel, Brazil, Portugal, Spain
There have been complaints about transparency from certain users in certain countries.	Publishing different stages of the judging process can help build faith in the process	Croatia, Israel
Unless organisers are part of the Wikimedia/Wikipedia network, either through an affiliate or a thematic group, it is difficult for them to get involved in organising the competition. This limits the scope of hosting WLM in countries that don't have a strong affiliate or thematic group presence.	Social media and whatsapp/telegram groups can be used as an alternative means of getting interested people onboard for the competition.	Kenya
Language barrier creates an issue with communication within the WLM network	Translating main documents and pages	Venezuela

Freedom of Panorama/ restriction to photography

Countries with no freedom of panorama face issues of clicking and uploading the photos of certain monuments. This sometimes leads to lack of motivation to host the competition and affects participation rate in certain regions of the country.	Organisers could personally seek permission at an institutional level to hold photowalks in the heritage sites and monuments. An official letter from the International team might help speed up the process of gaining permission. Partnering with local government agencies and organisations working in the heritage sector might help in advocating for changing the copyright laws.	Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, Philippines, Argentina

Some monuments located in high security areas or in private spaces are difficult to photograph due to restricted access.		Uganda
Other		
Some countries find it difficult to engage audiences and participants from across the country. This is mainly due to lack of local networks and resources like the internet in these regions. However, fewer or non-listed heritage sites and monuments in these locations also seem to demotivate locals from participation.	Personal initiatives to explore these regions have helped certain organisers discover new heritage sites and increase participation from the region. Grants for travelling to heritage sites and monuments located outside the city space can be helpful. Can organise smaller regional versions or have specific prize categories for monuments photographed in the region lacking participation. Mark government and cultural committees on the posters so that they can find people to contribute photos Having regional prize categories can motivate people to participate despite restrictions.	Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, Israel, Croatia, Argentina
The ongoing pandemic has created multiple roadblocks in the successful organisation of the competition. Lockdowns have further restricted access to monuments and limited photowalks	Online events to keep participants engaged	Ghana
Finding dedicated and adept judges at the national level is sometimes difficult. The judges sometimes request for monetary compensation	Allowing non-participating WLM organisers to be part of the jury	Uganda, Zimbabwe, Portugal

Secondary Research:

As part of the secondary research various available resources for the participants and organisers such as documents and WLM regional national landing pages were reviewed.

1. *WLM contest pages*

The following criteria was kept in mind while analysing the WLM landing pages -

Readability - structure, flow, time taken to navigate the page
Accessibility - rules for the contest, help desk/contact info, languages the page is visible in, outreach and communication
Inclusivity and Diversity - heritage lists (language and type of heritage), Clarity of process, organisers and jury panel, prize categories, sample images included on the page

The findings of the research are as follows:

- Some pages had a help us section with links to social media handles which helps create more engagement with participants and reach a wider audience.
- Some pages had useful videos/GIFs explaining step by step how to upload a photo on the page. - Uganda and Israel had GIFs and Youtube videos respectively
- The language of rules of the competition are vague and sometimes a little technical. This might be intimidating to new participants especially those who are not used to the wiki structure. - explanatory videos especially for copyright licence and uploading
  - Some pages don't have a section explaining the rules for selection and rejection of photos.
  - More information on prize categories can be added.
  - Can also have a FAQ page
- The lists are not always translated into regional languages. This may be a hindrance to participation in countries which are multilingual.
- Adding contact information for people to reach out in case they face issues is important. Email ids or social media platforms which are accessed and checked regularly by the organisers are good alternatives to a Commons id as most new participants may not know how to use Commons ids/email to send in queries.
- Readability of the page is an important factor in retaining interested participants. This means uncluttered page format where there are clear sections for each information.
- Could have a section with pointers on what is heritage/monuments as per the culture of their country and region. This will help eliminate confusion and encourage more inclusive and diverse submissions

2. *WLM Onboarding Document*

- Translating the document text into some of the major languages will help people from different linguistic regions make use of the onboarding document to its fullest.
- The document can add detailed step by step description on the process of creating an account and uploading photos. Links to existing informational videos uploaded by various WLM national organisers on their WLM landing pages can be added here to save the effort of translation and creating resources from scratch.
- As most of our volunteers and WLM organisers are non English speakers, using shorter sentences and simpler words would help make the language less intimidating.
- Use of different kinds of monuments photographers, from across different continents, as sample images in the document would help create a sense of belonging for new organisers. This would also help them imagine the various possibilities that photographing a monument holds. For example,
  - Photographs of a monument in ruins - Brazil
  - Natural Heritage officially recognised as monuments - Australia and Uganda
  - Monuments that have been taken down or that don't exist anymore - Ukraine
  - Old photos of monuments - Brazil
  - People interacting with Monuments - India and Argentina
  - Photograph of monuments in different weather conditions - the UK
- The document can have a section that informs new organisers about the kind of financial grants available for the competition, what kind of costs are covered and share a general template for a grant application.
- A section on general outreach strategies can be included in the document to give new organisers an idea of the kind of platforms where they can engage with potential participants and how to do so. Also, the different kinds of institutions and organisations at the local level they can possibly collaborate with.

C. Roadblocks faced so far

The main roadblock in the research process has been lack of sufficient responses, from the national level organisers, towards participation in interviews. There have been various reasons for the same:

1. Language barrier - The fact that the proposed interviews were to be conducted in English has been a hindrance in getting in touch with organisers in non English speaking countries, especially in Latin America
2. Lack of time or mindspace to engage - As most of the WLM organisers are volunteers it becomes difficult for them to find space to engage in the process
3. Outdated contact details - In countries where WLM has not been hosted consistently the contact information for the organisers sometimes might be outdated or might no longer be active.

However, with help from the international team and other wikimedians we were able to reach out to surpass some of these barriers in communication and get in touch with some of the national level organisers.

Given that Wikimedia Commons has a huge collection of data and various collaborative projects and resources related to WLM exist in isolation, it becomes difficult to find said material. This has made the process more time consuming and scattered, and sufficiently added to the learning curve of the competition.

D. Next steps and implementation plan

1. Draft structures establishing pilot collaboration network

As a pilot operation the international team will set up a collaborative network consisting of 7-8 countries and 2-3 international partners, to begin with. The initial set of countries shall be selected based on common issues faced. The international organisations will include affiliates or thematic groups from within the network and international institutions working in the area of heritage and monument documentation and preservation.

The international partners shall help national organisers build and strengthen their local networks of communication and partnership and aid in overcoming the everyday bureaucratic hurdles of organising the competition.

2. Work on evaluating existing image corpus

The existing WLM image corpus on Wikimedia Commons shall be evaluated by the consultant from a DEI perspective. Interviews and conversations shall be held with relevant stakeholders to understand their needs, requirements and issues with the existing metadata structure. The consultant shall then pick a sample from the WLM image corpus and in consultation with experts draft a metadata and image archiving structure that suits the community's requirements.

3. Finalising the WLM onboarding document

The consultant shall provide content and DEI support in completing the WLM onboarding document. This included writing and structuring content, providing complementary visual content and final editing.

E. Annexure I

Questionnaire

Diversity

- What is your understanding of heritage and monuments? What is the national approach towards defining cultural heritage?
- What kind of Heritage/monument list are referred to for the WLM competition?
- Who curates these lists?
- Are the lists easily accessible to the public? What is the process to access them?
- Which communities are commonly left out of the list? Do they have a pre-existent heritage/monument list?
- Do you know of any organisations/groups/individuals who work with these communities?
- Are there any active movements around reclaiming or redefining Cultural Heritage in your country?
- Are you aware of any alternate (unofficial) heritage/monument lists being curated in your country/city? If yes, who is curating them?
- How can we involve the community in curating their own heritage/monuments list? What skills and resources would they need to do so?
- How many members does your WLM national team have? How diverse is it in terms of Gender, Race, Disability, Age, Language, Ethnicity, Religion, Education (What is the representation ratio in the team and jury? - Gender, Race, Disability, Age, Language, Ethnicity, Religion, Education - need to re-frame the question)

Equity

- What helpful resources does the WLM national team already have access to? - Lists, Reports, Funders, Local Wiki Affiliates
- What skills and knowledge are important for organising WLM in your country?
- What are some issues faced by the national level organisers while organising WLM? What kind of help would the national team need from the International Team?
- What are the barriers that marginalised communities face in participating in the competition?
- What are the various local award categories introduced by the organisers?
- How many photos do you receive from local uploaders as against tourists/foreigners?
- Rules for participation and choosing a winner - technical requirements, reach, help etc.
- Has the pandemic in any way affected participation in your country?

Inclusivity

- What ways do you engage with participants - online and offline?
- What are the common/recurring issues raised by WLM participants ?
- What are the local communication/outreach networks used to amplify and promote WLM?
- In your opinion, how can we create a sense of belonging in the WLM community? (Participant community - platforms for discussion and sharing)
- How does one become part of the national team? Are there any general requirements?
- What does the onboarding process entail?

- What are the copyright laws that govern the photo competition in your country? How does that affect participation?
- Is there anything else that you would like to share or suggest I have a look at?