Decolonizing the Internet's Structured Data: join the conversation!

An invitation from Whose Knowledge?, Wiki Movimento Brasil, and Wikimedia Deutschland

Tweet about it using the hashtag #DecolonizingStructuredData and tag us at @whoseknowledge

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Decolonizing the Internet's Structured Data: join the conversation!

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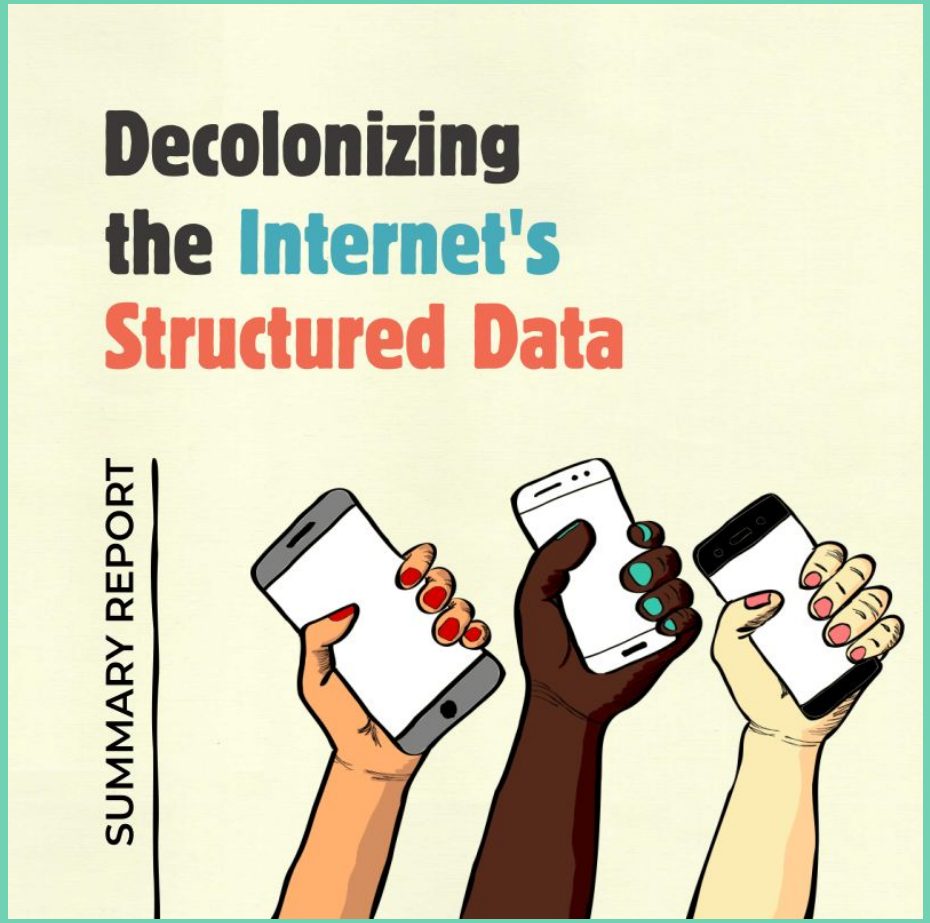
Saturday, August 13 (19:15-20:00 UTC)

Welcome!
The conversation just started...

On October 2021, over 40 participants from around the world started a conversation about Decolonizing the Internet's Structured Data:

- mostly female-identifying (71%)
- in/from the Global South (66%)
- Indigenous/Black/ people of color(s) in origin (82%)

At WikidataCon pre-conference organized by Whose Knowledge?, Wikimedia Deutschland, and Wiki Movimento Brasil.



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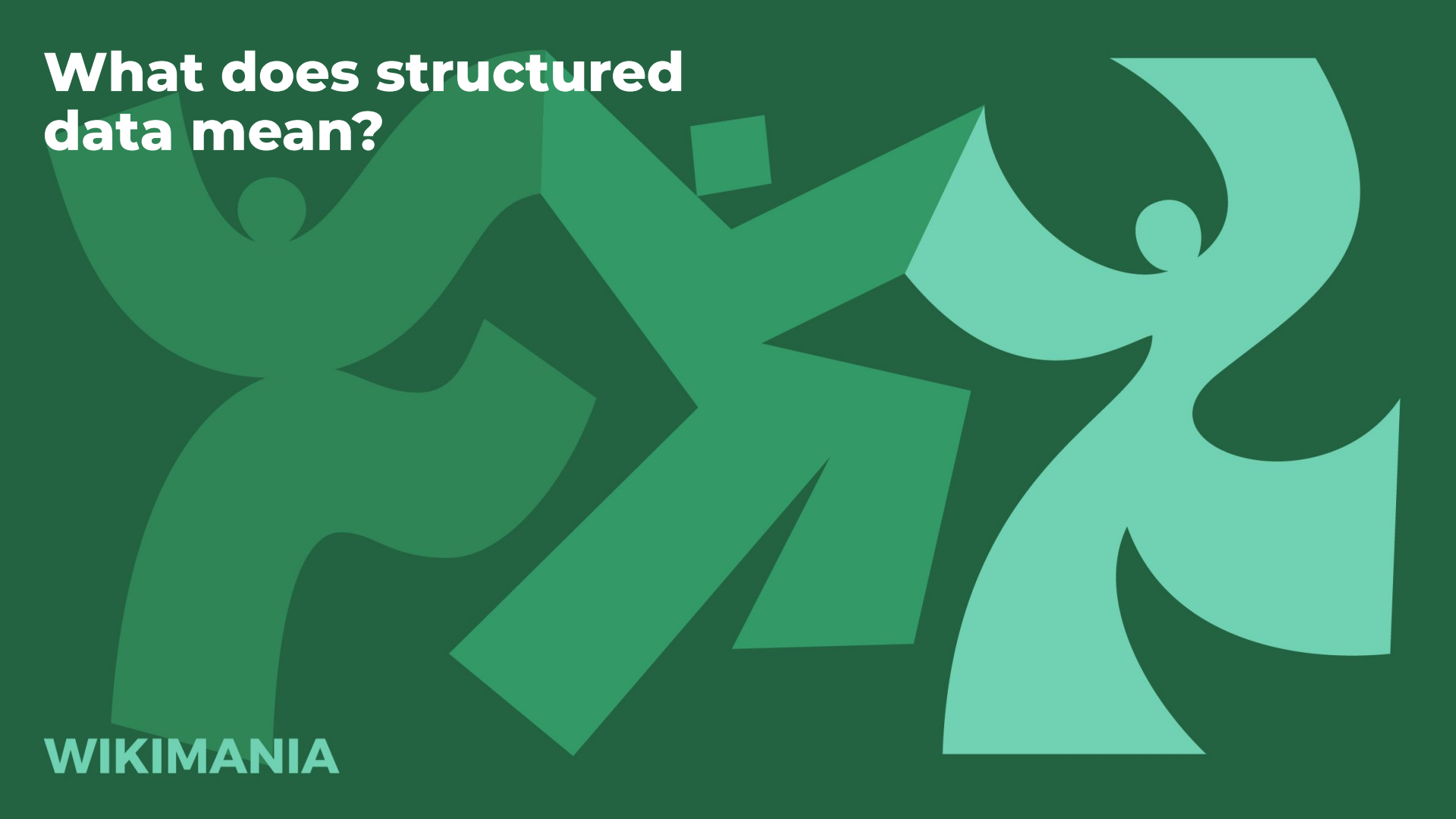
What does structured data mean?



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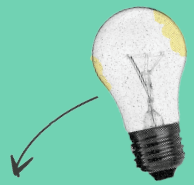
What does structured data mean?

- Pieces of information that can be easily read, understood, and processed by machines.
- Countless apps, tools and platforms are built upon such structured data systems, from Google to Wikidata.

Structured Data on Wikimedia projects

Structured data on Commons:
Media files (Commons) + multilingual concepts (Wikidata)

book, boek, libro, panka, መጽሐፍ
Q571



lámpara eléctrica, light bulb, lampe électrique, lampadina
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kombutadóra
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feminist strike of 8 March 2018
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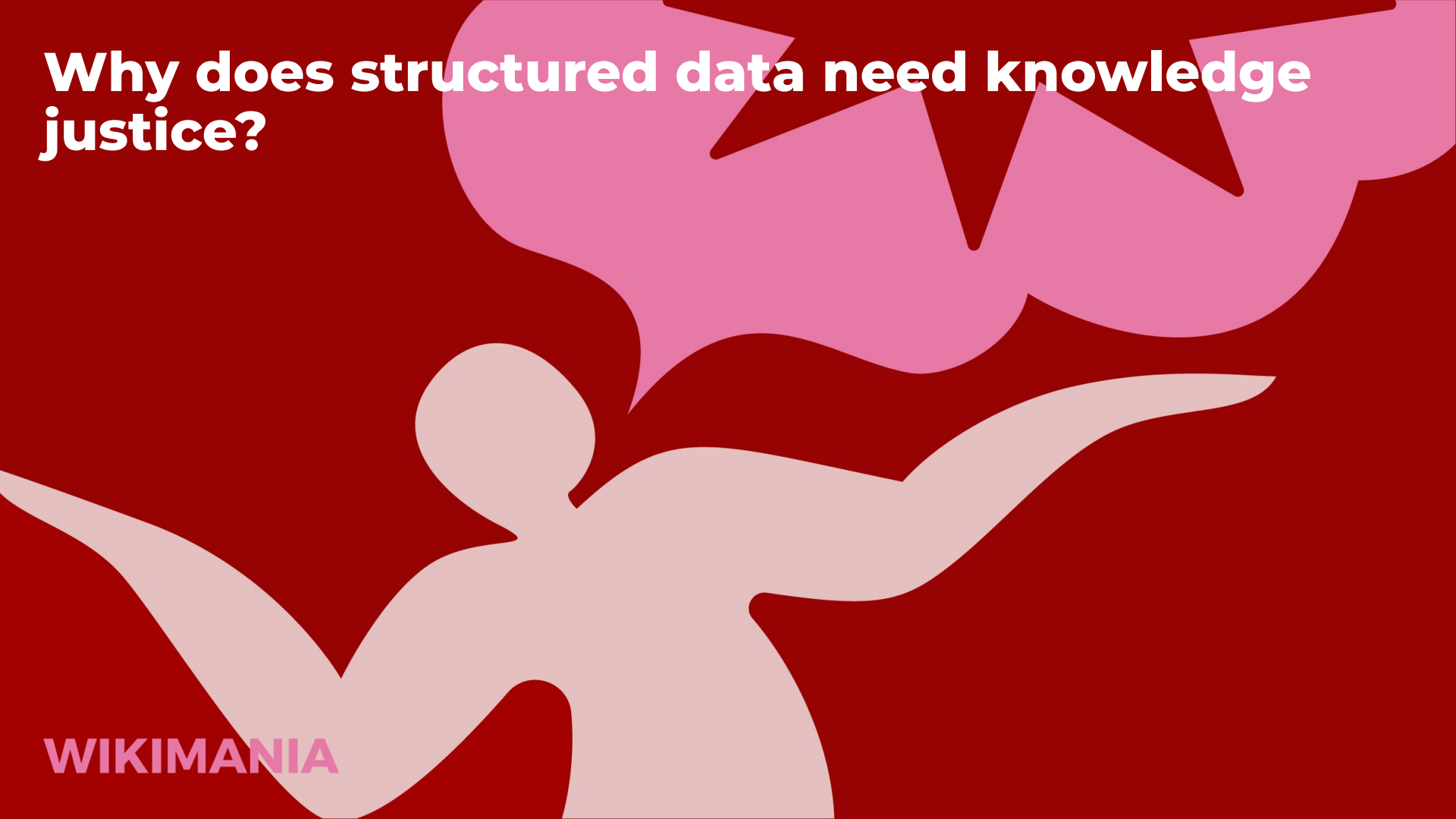
Source: “Estructurando datos para revertir brechas en Wikimedia Commons”. Mariana Fossatti, Constanza Verón

Why does structured data need knowledge justice?



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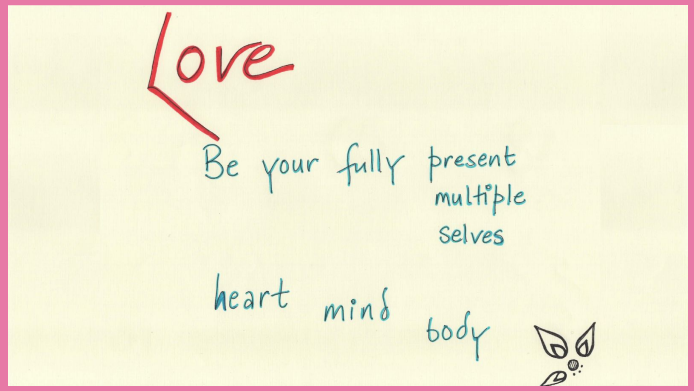
Why does structured data need knowledge justice?

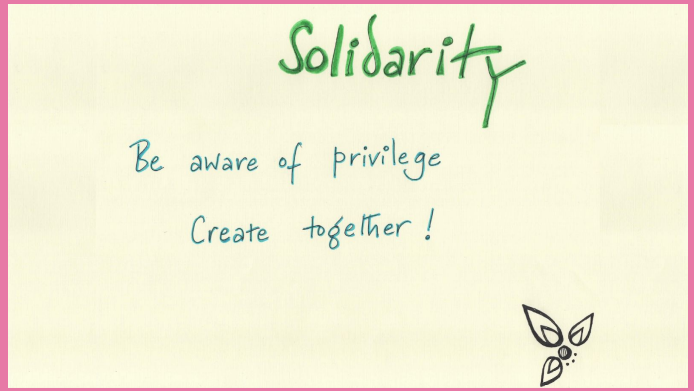
- Structured data is at the core of how the internet works
- It is far from “neutrality”!
- Women, people of color(s), LGBTQIA+ folks, Indigenous communities, and peoples from the Global South are the ones most impacted by how structured data is used, or abused.
- Urgent need for centering those who are often marginalized.

Guiding principles for this conversation



We wanted participants to be aware of their positionalities and privileges, and to be able to be their full, multiple selves during the whole session.

Privacy, safety and wellbeing.



Language justice

What did we do, and how did we do it?

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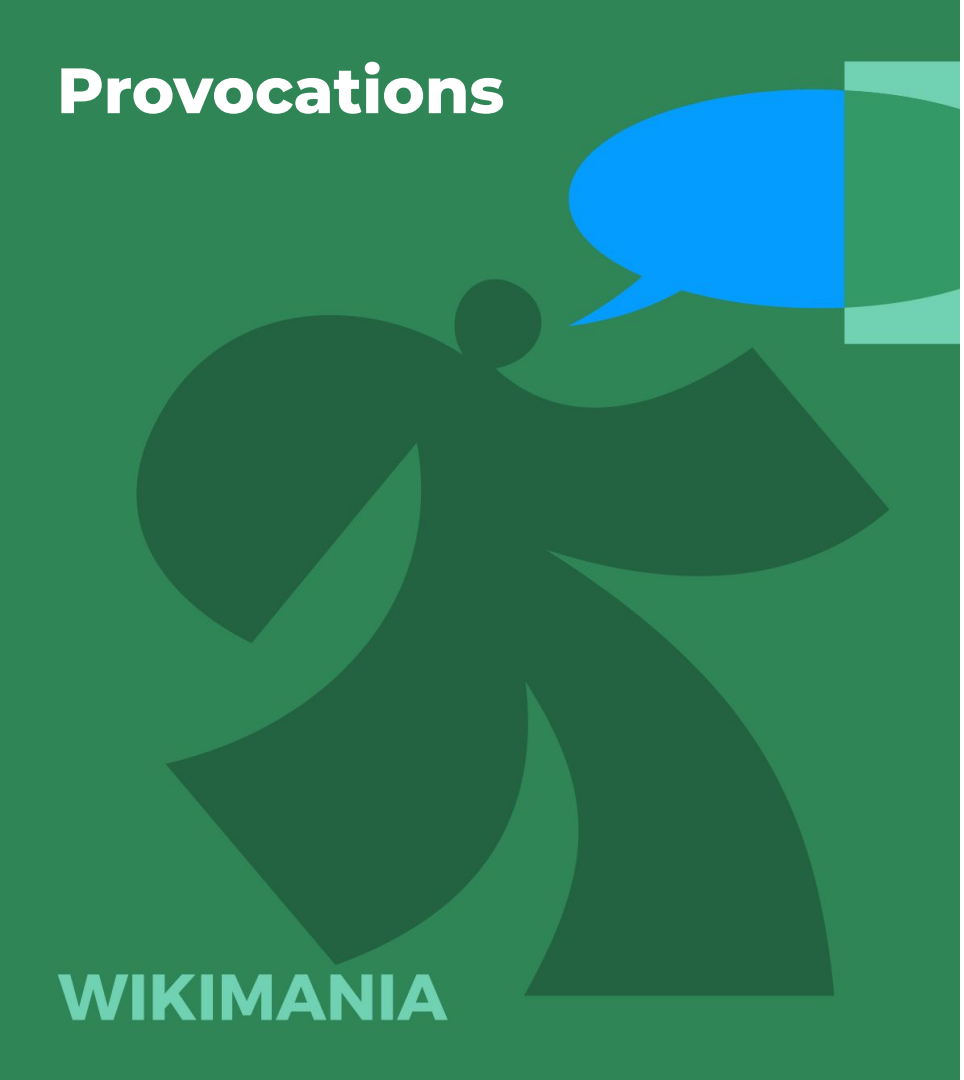
Perspectives and provocations (panel).

Imaginations and Implementations (small groups).

Listening and Learning (plenary): listeners from each group to report back.

Provocations



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- **What does structured data mean,** and why is it important that we talk about it?
- **What does it mean to have multiple knowledge frames,** multiple epistemic frames, or epistemologies at the heart of structured data?
- **How can we re-imagine structured data,** especially from a feminist and anti-colonial lens?
- **What is one thing you would like to see done differently** in structured data today, that will help us come to that space of emancipation and liberation?

What emerged: key insights

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- **ACCESS AND CONTROL OF DATA**
  control and governance, fully access to knowledge and tools, profits vs. human rights
- **AGENCY/ENGAGEMENT**
  diversity of contexts and epistemologies / right to refuse datafication
- **DISTRIBUTED DATA**
  smaller and connected datasets governed by marginalized communities
- **PLANET-CENTERED REDESIGN**
  environmental impacts of data infrastructure / questioning purpose
- **PLURALITY OF DATA**
  model based on different knowledges and communities complexities / go beyond text / local specificities / listening

What is next?

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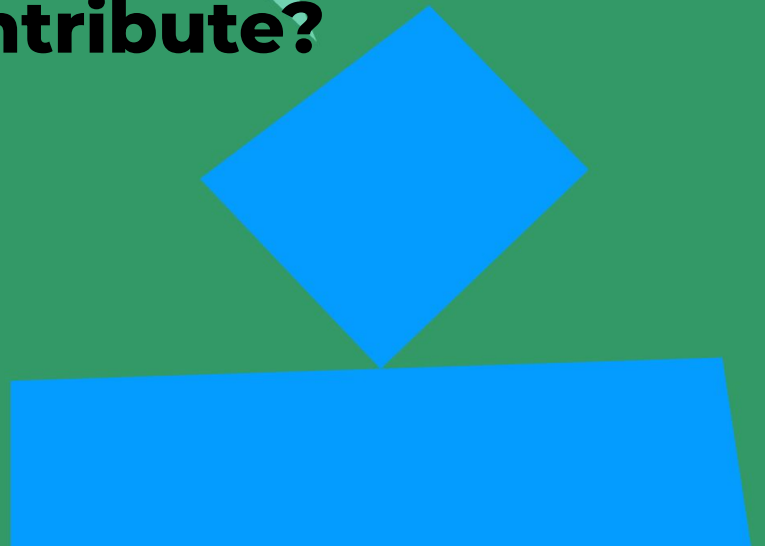
We are keen to create and convene more opportunities to radically reimagine and redesign the internet's structured data through a feminist, anti-colonial, anti-racist lens.

What can we do as wikimedians?

What would you like to see happen next, to move from conversation to action?

How would you like to contribute?



Moving forward

Imagine radical possibilities

Concrete steps towards emancipatory practices

More collective spaces

Stay connected

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Decolonizing the Internet's Structured Data – Summary Report

https://whoseknowledge.org/resource/dti-structured-data-report