# Increasing Language Diversity on Wikimedia projects

Language Diversity Hub

User:Shahadusadik - onsite
User:Iyumu - onsite
User:SGill (WMF) - online

**WIKIMANIA
SINGAPORE**

# Agenda

About the Wikimedia Language Diversity Hub

Background

Method

Findings

Next steps

# Language Diversity Hub

Initiative started late 2021, building upon the existing Wikimedia Language Diversity network which was started in 2012.

Purpose: Support and connect affiliates and volunteers to new and smaller language versions of Wikimedia projects.

**WIKIMANIA SINGAPORE**

# Steering committee

- Amire80
- Amqui
- Iyumu
- Jon Harald Søby (WMNO)
- Mali Brødreskift
- Oscar
- Satdeep Gill (WMF)
- Shahadusadik
- Smirkybec
- Yupik

**WIKIMANIA SINGAPORE**

# Research

What is limiting the
contributors to the new
language editions of
Wikipedia?

WIKIMANIA
SINGAPORE

# Method

Semi-structured interviews with contributors in the different communities.

Four types of barriers:

- **Technical**
- **Economic**
- **Social**
- **Education and knowledge**

Open questions: invite for conversation and exchange of information via zoom and in-person.

**WIKIMANIA SINGAPORE**

# Language Communities

Criteria:

-Having some level of activity

- Global representation

- Likelihood to be able to find

someone to interview

WIKIMANIA
SINGAPORE

| Language | ISO-code | Region | Status in 2022 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Angika | anp | South Asia | Incubator |
| Dagbani | dag | Middle East and Africa | Wikipedia |
| Wayuunaiki | guc | LATAM and the Caribbean | Incubator (published 2023) |
| Gurene | gur | Middle East and Africa | Incubator (published 2023) |
| Igbo | ig | Middle East and Africa | Wikipedia |
| Kashmiri | ks | South Asia | Wikipedia |
| Mon | mnw | EASAP | Wikipedia |
| Nahuatl | nah | LATAM and the Caribbean | Wikipedia |
| Nigerian Pidgin | pcm | Middle East and Africa | Wikipedia |
| Paiwan | pwn | EASAP | Wikipedia |
| Quechua | qu | LATAM and the Caribbean | Wikipedia |
| Tachelchit | shi | Middle East and Africa | Wikipedia |
| Inari Sámi | smn | Northern and Western Europe | Wikipedia |

# The interviews

- Some in person - videos are available on YouTube at **tinyurl.com/LDHR2023**

- Most were online interviews.

- Goal was to make someone as close as possible to the communities to do the interviews.

- As much as possible let contributors use their own language in interviews.

- Interviews were done between August and November 2022

**WIKIMANIA SINGAPORE**

# Motivation

Bringing knowledge about the language and culture to the next generation and to the rest of the world.

Conserving the knowledge about culture, history and traditions.

Revitalizing their language.

Doing something for their culture and their people.
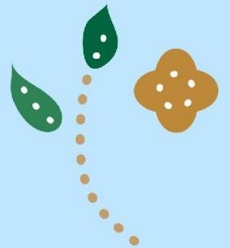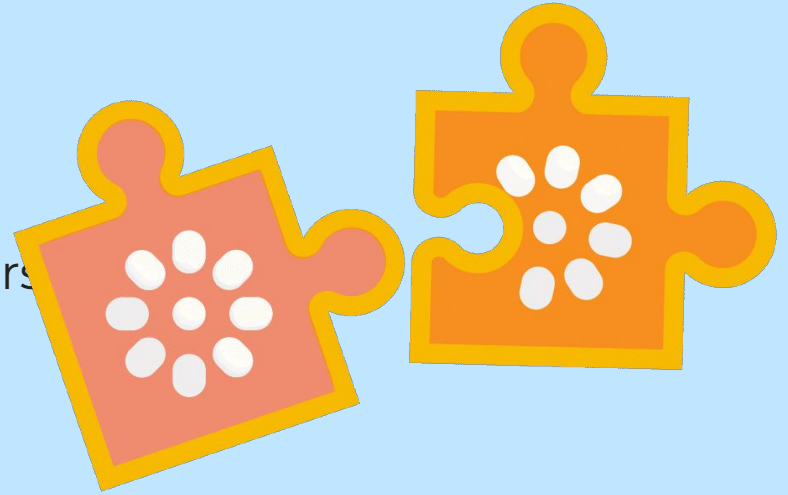
# Barriers

Barriers experienced by contributors to small language versions of Wikipedia:

Technical barriers
Economic barriers
Social barriers
Education and knowledge related barriers

# Technical barriers

**Language technology -
Keyboards, translation tools**

**Wikimedia Incubator**

**Need for more training**

# Economic barriers

**Unemployment**

**Cost of internet data, equipment**

**lack of interest in volunteering**

# Social barriers

**Too few contributors – a challenge for all communities**

**Gender imbalance already at early stages of many editions**

WIKIMANIA
SINGAPORE

# Education and Knowledge related barriers

**The language is not taught in schools, or is only taught to a limited degree**

**There is no standardized written version of the language**

**Challenges with language knowledge in the community**

# Summary

- The work done by the contributors to small language versions is remarkable and should be recognized and celebrated.

- The largest barriers for many emerging Wikipedia communities are outside the Wiki-projects.

- Linguists and language technologists outside the Wikimedia movement can have a professional interest in this work

- Within the movement we have most of the resources needed to support emerging communities, the Hub can help connecting the dots.

**WIKIMANIA SINGAPORE**

# What next?

-Grant Proposal:
[Building the Language Diversity Hub](#)
-keep building structure

-More regular meetings

-Foster collaboration among
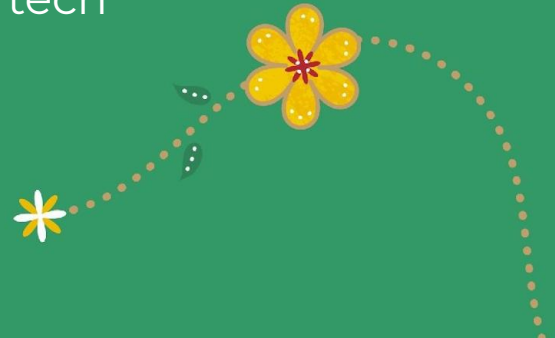
-language communities

-provide Technical support to language communities

**WIKIMANIA**
**SINGAPORE**

# Key focus areas

*Needs assessment: how can local user groups/chapters better support community building.

*Improving the Wikimedia Incubator

*Network of linguists and language technologists, with Wikitongues

*Expanding on this work: keep doing interviews to document and build network

*Defining governance and the role of the hub

*Building on infrastructure for keyboards and language tech

WIKIMANIA
SINGAPORE

# Let's discuss

Questions/feedback?

Are we missing something? Should we be focusing on something else?

How can we better support different communities?

Interest in joining hands with the hub? (Individuals and affiliates)

**WIKIMANIA SINGAPORE**

# Thank you!

JOIN US!

Meta:

https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikimedia_Language_Diversity_Hub

Telegram group:

https://t.me/joinchat/EOHX3_N47Fzz_3ZR

YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/@wikimedialanguagediversity4327

WIKIMANIA
SINGAPORE