Global South introduction
What is the “Global South”?

~80% of the world population
~60% of Internet users
~20% of Wikipedia contributors
~30% of Wikipedia page page edits in 2014
What is the “Global South”?

It’s not a monolith
Each community has different challenges and opportunities
Why do we care?

Our Vision:

“Imagine a world in which every single human being can freely share in the sum of all knowledge.”
Why do we care?

Our Mission:

“Empower and engage people around the world to collect and develop educational content under a free license or in the public domain, and to disseminate it effectively and globally.”
Why do we care?

There are \(~2.5\text{ billion}\) online but unreached today; over half are in the Global South.
## WMF activities to date: little integration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wikipedia Zero</th>
<th>Language Engineering</th>
<th>Ad-hoc tech-focused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Begun in 2012. Working in 48 countries with 56 partners today</td>
<td>Incl. supporting content translation, fonts, display, and input methods</td>
<td>E.g. Hackathons in India</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wikipedia Education Program</th>
<th>Catalyst programs in India and Brazil</th>
<th>Mentorship &amp; support for individuals and groups</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Begun in 2010. 70+ programs today of various size &amp; activity, 47% of which are in the GS today</td>
<td>Begun in 2011. India program transitioned to partnership with CIS in 2012; Brazil program ended in 2014.</td>
<td>South Africa; Pakistan; India; Armenia; Serbia; Ukraine; ...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From all of these activities, we are assembling our collective knowledge -
“What do we know today?”
Agenda

Global South Introduction
Siko Bouterse - 15 minutes

What do we know: Readers & their environment
Smriti Gupta — 10 minutes

What do we know: Contributors and communities
Asaf Bartov — 10 minutes

Suggested takeaways and What’s next
Asaf Bartov - 5 minutes

Discussion / Questions
10 minutes
What we know: Readers & their environment

**Current** readers: an affluent minority

**Prospective** readers:
- Access the internet primarily through **mobile**
- Need relevant **local language content**
- Lack WP **awareness**
- Face multiple **access barriers**
Access + Awareness + Local Content
Across Asia, Wikipedia page views in English
What’s going on in India?

- Low Wikipedia awareness among regional language speakers
- Prepaid mobile data use limited
- Indic fonts not supported on all phones

By Victorgrigas (Own work) [CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons]
But there was one success story in Bangladesh
Access + Awareness + Local Content
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What we know about: Contributors

A complex language landscape affects editing:

- More than one language; context matters
- Education, secondary sources, media, technological support all vary by language
But enabling contribution in all languages is critical

1. Already done: Universal Language Selector

2. Just deployed: Content Translation

18% of contributors said* they frequently translate articles into their language, with the highest in Egypt at 55%

*From 2014 Global South Survey (n=47000)
What we know about: **Contribution**

**Low-bandwidth-friendly UX** remains an inhibitor

User:ViswaPrabha is a longtime Malayalam Wikipedian, with more than **36,000 edits**.

"I could have made at least double [my edits], if clicking Edit (wikitext) took less than 30 seconds to get to the editable area, on my low-bandwidth connection. While I wait, I switch over to the tab with Facebook…

...two hours later, I realize I wanted to edit something on that page… but what?"
Interpretation of **notability, reliable sources** may create bias

- **The policy is fine!**
  - Good-faith **policy**-compliant contributions rejected
  - WP:RS interpreted narrowly
- Existing **non-western traditions** of knowledge hard to cite
- **Oral** knowledge uncitable
(Literally) Five minutes later!
What we know about: Communities

Communities are **geographically dispersed** both in and out of country, with **editorship not necessarily following viewership**

**Examples of out-of-country dispersion**

- In **Turkey** (~500 active editors), editors live in many of Turkey's ~80 cities. **They do not meet up or conduct off-wiki activities**, even in Istanbul or Ankara.

- In **Brazil** (~1500 active editors), editors live all over the country. **Only the São Paulo community meets up, 2-3 times a year**. Sporadic off-wiki programmatic work by individuals or small teams.

**Examples of in-country dispersion**

*Source: [http://stats.wikimedia.org](http://stats.wikimedia.org) for Dec 2014*
But there are evolving forms of on-wiki communication, varying by community size.

**LEGEND**
- Each circle represents a user.
- Each line represents a user-to-user interaction (on a user’s talk page).
- Color represents the # of connections to other users (red = few connections).

**Swahili**

**Tamil**

**Arabic**

**French**

**Increasing number of Wikipedia editors**

Note: Social maps generated from interactions on User talk pages only; the more connections with other users, the closer a user is brought toward the center; Data notes: Article count as of Dec 2014; (*) Average calculated over Sept 2013 to Sept 2014
But similarities in community size aren’t enough to draw conclusions

**Tamil community**
- Specific opportunities: State-level institutional partnerships
- Specific challenges: Increasing volunteer pool; retention

**Hindi community**
- Specific opportunities: Nat’l-level partnerships; mass campaigns
- Specific challenges: Geographic dispersion; large turnover.

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Suggested takeaways

Access + Awareness + Local language content

Native language contribution is complex but crucial

There is no one context to rule them all

We need to scale and customize carefully

We need diversity of language/community models in Product thinking
Where can you learn more?

**WMF Tech Talk: Wikipedia Zero**  
Week of February 16, 2015  -  Time/Date TBD

**Research showcase: Global South survey by Haitham Shammaa**  
**Feb 18, 2015  11:30AM PST - 6th Floor Collab + Hangout**

**Documentary: People are Knowledge by Achal Prabhala**  
**March 4, 2015  4-5:30PM PST - 6th Floor Collab + Hangout**  
Viewing of 45m video, followed by Q&A with journalist and filmmaker Achal Prabhala

**Panel discussion on Global South activities to date -**  
“What we have done so far, have we tried $IDEA, and can I haz links?”  
March 2015 - Time/Date TBD  
Q&A with Asaf Bartov, Amir Aharoni, Carolynne Schloeder, Jan Eissfeldt, and Quim Gil
Discussion
Notes & Sources

[1] **Note:** Population and Internet users estimates as of July 2014  
**Source:** [Internet Live Stats](https://liveinternet.net) (Elaboration of data by ITU, United Nations Population Division, Internet & Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), World Bank)


[3] **Note:** Population estimates as of July 2014  
**Source:** [Internet Live Stats](https://liveinternet.net) (Elaboration of data by ITU, United Nations Population Division, Internet & Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), World Bank)

[4] **Note:** Assumes proportion of readers from the GS follows proportion of page views (~30% of total page views from Global South)


[6] **Note:** The number Ethnologue 2013 supports is 1200M (1.2B) English speakers, 400M native + 800M L2 speakers.  
**Source:** [Ethnologue, 17th edition, 2013.](http://www.ethnologue.com)
Biggest opportunity for WMF to affect largest number of people is with GS non-readers online today

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access &amp; Infrastructure</th>
<th>Current Contributors</th>
<th>Current Readers</th>
<th>Not currently Readers</th>
<th>Not yet online today</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>~70K</td>
<td>~0.5B</td>
<td>~2.5B</td>
<td>~4.2B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global South</td>
<td>~14K (20%)</td>
<td>~0.15B* (30%)</td>
<td>~1.6B (64%)</td>
<td>~4B (95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sufficient but variable access &amp; infra. to contribute</td>
<td>Sufficient but variable access and infra. to read</td>
<td>Sufficient but variable access and infra. to read</td>
<td>No or nascent access &amp; infrastructure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Adequacy of awareness**
- Exposure and understanding of the projects
  - Adequately aware of the Wiki projects, potentially more broadly than their home wiki
  - Adequately aware of the Wiki projects they read
  - Largely unaware of the Wiki projects
  - Largely unaware of the Wiki projects; very small group using Offline WP

**Motivation**
- Interest in engaging in the content or the movement
  - Motivated to contribute content
  - Interested in reading; multiple dimensions involved in conversion to editors
  - Lack of awareness inhibits motivation
  - Potential obstacles in: cultural/behavioral norms, perception of reliability

Note: Population estimates as of July 2014; (*) Assumes proportion of readers from the GS follows proportion of page views (~30% of total page views from Global South)

Source: Internet Live Stats (Elaboration of data by ITU, United Nations Population Division, Internet & Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), World Bank)