

TRANSLATION  
COMMONS



2019 | INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF  
**Indigenous Languages**

**IMUG - IYIL October 17th 2019**



# International Year of Indigenous Languages 2019

## Organizers

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Main  
Facilitator



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

With support



United Nations  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs



# IYIL2019

**In collaboration with:** UN Human Rights and Permanent Forum for Indigenous Languages

**With UN Partners:** UN DPI, UN Information Center, UN Food and Agriculture Organization, WIPO

**11 Governmental Partners**

**22 Social - Civil society Partners**

Social – Civil society partners

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# Why Indigenous Languages?



## knowledge

Unique systems of knowledge and understanding of the world.



## peace

Sustainable development, investment, peace building and reconciliation



## rights

Fundamental human rights and freedoms for indigenous peoples



## inclusion

Social inclusiveness, literacy, poverty reduction and international cooperation



## diversity

Cultural values, diversity and heritage

# Main Objectives

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## Focus global attention on

- the critical risks confronting indigenous languages
- their significance for sustainable development, reconciliation, good governance and peacebuilding



## Target steps that will

- improve quality of life
- enhance international cooperation
- strengthen intercultural dialogue
- reaffirm cultural and linguistic continuity



## Increase the capacity

of all stakeholders to take measures that will support, access and promote indigenous languages in accordance with the legitimate rights of the people who speak them





# Why Indigenous Languages?

## Broadband Commission Report, 2019

- The ITU estimates for each 10% increase in the penetration of digital services a country can expect 1.3% growth on GDP per capita.
- By 2022 another 1.2 billion users will be coming online
- In Africa 60% of young people are not yet online and the least developed countries globally at least 70% of young people are not online



# Social – Civil society partner

## TC - IYIL Projects

- Language Technology Development
- University Events for Indigenous Languages
- Social Media Campaign



The screenshot shows the Translation Commons website. At the top left, the logo for 'TRANSLATION COMMONS' is displayed next to the text 'International Year of Indigenous Languages...'. To the right of the logo are navigation links: 'Home', 'University Events', and 'Contact', along with a search icon. The main content area features a large banner with the text 'IYIL 2019 Group' in white over a blurred background of a crowd. To the right of the text is a logo for '2019 | INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF Indigenous Languages'. Below the banner is a section titled 'Supporting Indigenous Languages – TC and Partnership With IYIL 2019'. The text in this section states: 'Translation Commons' motto is "No language and no linguist ever left behind." IYIL2019 represents a great opportunity to put our values into practice, and donate our highly committed team's time in benefit of indigenous people. To support efforts to protect all indigenous languages, Translation Commons has formed a civil social partnership with [IYIL2019 initiative](#). [More details](#) on UNESCO's Action Plan and Five Areas of Intervention. At the bottom of the page, a small icon and text state: 'Translation Commons is mobilizing all language professionals to show support for indigenous languages and'.

"No language and no linguist ever left behind."



# Languages of the World

Incredible diversity:

- 6500 - 7200 languages now spoken
- But half of the world's people use only 23 of them
- The long tail: 2,000 spoken by fewer than 1,000 people
- 40% are endangered and may be gone in this century
  - Africa, Americas, Asia, Australia, Europe, Oceania

Digital technology: both a *threat* and an *opportunity*





# Language Technology Development

Enable indigenous communities to use internet technology

- Employ modern media in their preferred languages, oral / written
- Engage speakers and especially young learners to appreciate and honor their languages and culture
- Identify technology for educating in indigenous languages
- Encourage speakers to create content and community with digital tools and standards



# Creating a guide for language communities

- **Evaluate** their language's situation with respect to digital support
- **Suggest approaches** to develop basic digital language support
- **Encourage practical usage** of language tools, even without formal language documentation, grammar, and educational standards
- **Point indigenous communities to available tools** and techniques to build digital capabilities.
- **Engage community members** in decisions and process
- **Connect communities to standards** and technology professionals



## What it's not...

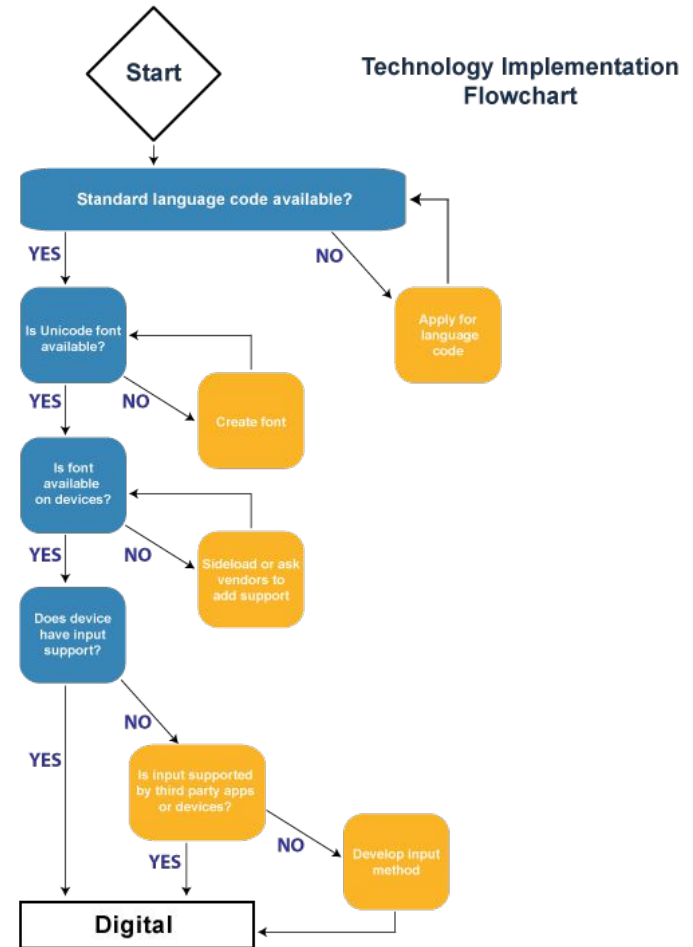
- Not a set of formal requirements for documenting
- Not academic research project
- Not a complete list of what can be done
- Not a guarantee of full support for all digital tools and services

And now that you don't have  
to be perfect, you can be  
good.

- John Steinbeck

# Basics: determining status

- A flowchart of Yes / No questions for evaluating current situation
- Concrete actions for each response
- A guide to perform specific tasks
- Pointers to resources and tools
- Suggestions for next steps



# Some of the questions

- Is the language currently used actively by a community of speakers?
  - Yes: go to IS\_LANGUAGE\_WRITTEN
  - No: go to LANGUAGE\_REVITALIZATION
- IS\_LANGUAGE\_WRITTEN: Does your language have a written form?
  - Yes: go to WRITTEN\_LANGUAGE
  - No: go to ORAL\_LANGUAUGE
- WRITTEN\_LANGUAGE:
  - ...
- ORAL\_LANGUAUGE...
  - ...





## Oral language - 3,000 or more

Encouragement: **Use your language** in audio and video

- Employ existing platforms and social media
- Use for teaching and engaging communities
- Connect with academic linguistics departments and tech people

Guidance: **Make the resources discoverable**

- Suggest that any recordings include a language tag or code
- Allows automatic indexing to find and point to these data.
- Important: use standard language tagging schemes, e.g, [BCP-47](#).



# Written language - 4,000 (maybe)

## What is a writing system?

- A set of rules for using one or more scripts to write a particular language.
- Note: some use multiple scripts. Examples:
  - Serbian in both Cyrillic and Latin
  - Japanese kanji, hiragana, katakana

## Follow-up questions:

Does the language use at least one writing system in a consistent way, including spelling?

- Yes: go to [CONSISTENT](#)
- No: go to [NOT CONSISTENT](#)

ABCD 天地玄黃  
色は匂へ ॐ ॐ ॐ ॐ

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Writing\\_system#/media/File:Writing\\_Systems\\_Template\\_Image.svg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Writing_system#/media/File:Writing_Systems_Template_Image.svg)

# Practical advice and references

Tools for using language online:

- Fonts
- Keyboards
- Webfont technology



Pointers to tools to implement:

- Free font editors
- *How-to-use* mobile fonts
- Keyboard development tools
- *How-to* guides for language-friendly sites



Cherokee

	13A	13B	13C	13D	13E	13F
0	D	I	G	F	ϣ	β
	13A0	13B0	13C0	13D0	13E0	13F0
1	R	Γ	Λ	℄	ϣ	ϑ
	13A1	13B1	13C1	13D1	13E1	13F1
2	T	Ϫ	h	R	P	h
	13A2	13B2	13C2	13D2	13E2	13F2
3	Ꭰ	W	Z	l	C	G
	13A3	13B3	13C3	13D3	13E3	13F3
4	Ꭱ	Ꭲ	Ꭳ	W	Ꭶ	B



# How to standardize

- Language tags - don't guess
  - Standard language codes, e.g., “de”, “zh-Hans”, “pt-BR”, “eu”
  - Tags and standard practices, e.g., BCP-47
- Unicode support: [unicode.org/](https://unicode.org/)
  - Unicode probably supports writing already
  - Otherwise, create a proposal for Unicode standardization
- Common Locale Data Repository (CLDR)
  - How-to for adding a language and resources
  - <http://cldr.unicode.org/>





# Examples of communities doing the work

- Cherokee (United States)
  - Standardized script; Unicode and CLDR; artists created many Unicode fonts
  - Coordinating with tech companies on keyboards, translations, etc.
  - Immersion schools, high school curriculum, remote learning
- Fulfulde / Pulaar in Adlam script (African Sahel)
  - Two brothers built a phonetic script, fonts for publishing books, newspapers, texts
  - Unicode (2017); coordinating with tech on keyboard, fonts, mobile devices
  - Adlam Conferences promoting literacy across 24 countries of the Sahel
- Chakma (Bangladesh, India)
  - Script in Unicode (2012), Unicode fonts, and keyboard on mobile devices
  - Training to write in Chakma & creating content with books, social media, schools
  - Politically complicated



# Additional language support

These require updated applications and libraries:

- Breaking between characters, words, sentences, lines
- Language detection: analyzing text to figure out the language tag
- Dictionaries for word processing
- Translated user interfaces
- Labeling the language of audio or video content

Some need language-specific data, e.g., CLDR

- Using non-ASCII digits for dates/times, numeric output, e.g., “Eastern” Arabic (٠١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩)
- RTL or vertical text direction
- Names and formats for days, months, countries, units, etc.

# Advanced language technology: harder still

- Optical character recognition (OCR) for paper documents
- Speech <-> Text
- Automated transcription of recorded data
- Machine translation / automated speech recognition



**The good news:** publicly available tools for these tasks are now appearing, available to tech-savvy language enthusiasts.

*DIY language is becoming a reality!*





# What Translation Commons is doing today

- The team: passionate volunteers and professionals
- The document:
  - “Indigenous Languages: Zero to Digital”
  - [translationcommons.org](https://translationcommons.org)

## Next:

- Our request for feedback on the guide
- Help us connect to indigenous communities

# Language Technology

Your language on the internet may be closer than it may appear.





# University Events

We have asked universities around the world to host classroom presentations, lectures, workshops and conferences during Fall 2019 to discuss cultural diversity, focusing on indigenous languages.

Create awareness through university events and further outreach



# University Events - Project Stages

- Gathering information
- Campaign creation
- Pilot
- Campaign Launch

# University Events - Gathering Information

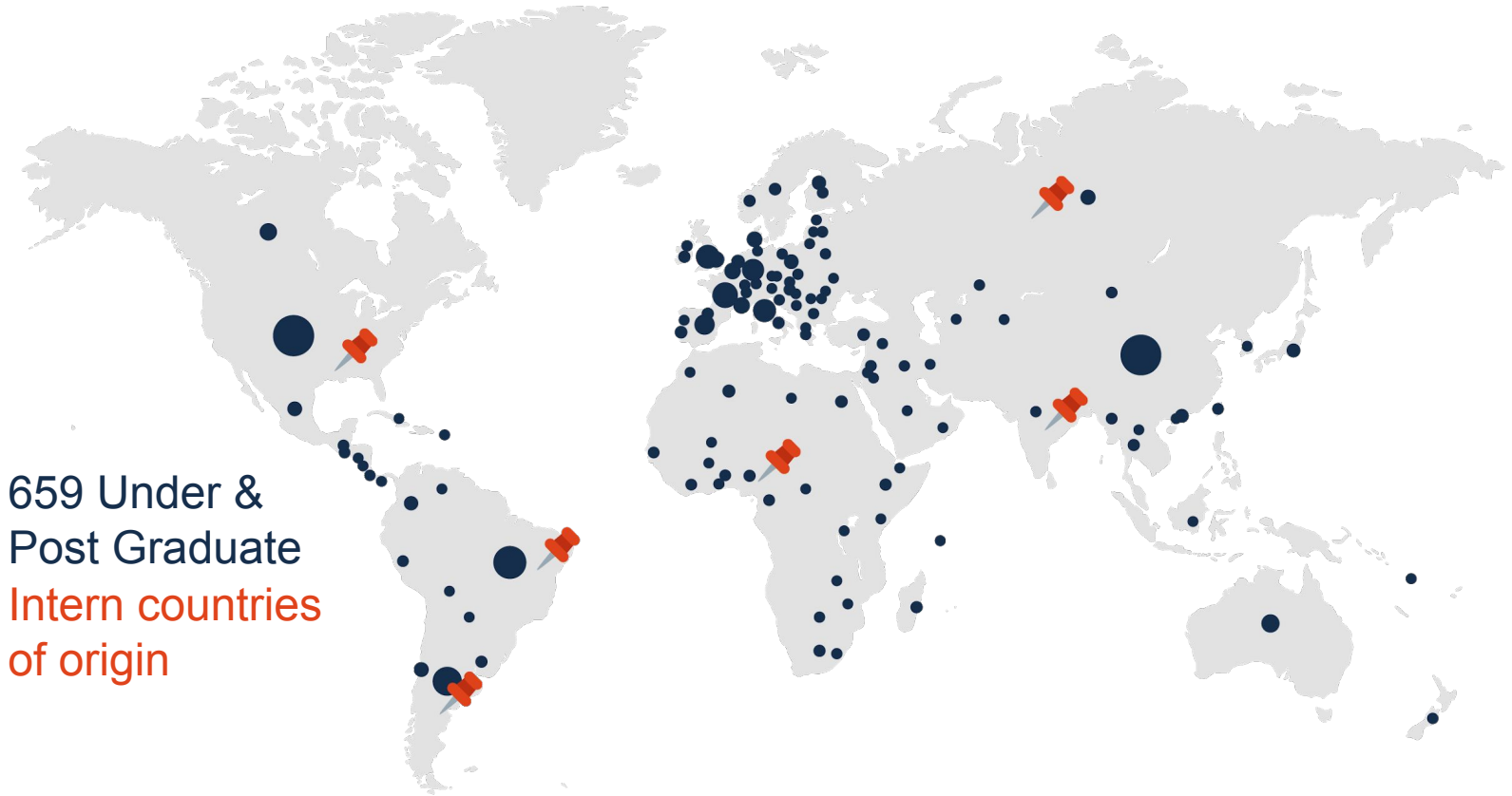
## Internship:

Translation Commons and MasterWord partnered with the Village School, a Nord Anglia School

- 6 Students
- Benefits
- Take away and feedback



# University Events - Gathering Information



659 Under &  
Post Graduate  
Intern countries  
of origin





# University Events - Gathering Information

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International Year of Indigenous Language...

Home ▾

University Events ▾

Contact



## Guidelines

# Guidelines

## IYIL 2019 University Events

- Why are as many as half of all languages considered to be endangered languages, at risk of extinction by the end of the century? Why is there a global counter current that is causing a resurgence of interest in indigenous and linguistic minority cultures on every continent, especially in their languages and writing systems?
- What is the relationship between language and identity? Language and the spread of technology, especially digital technologies? Language and economic globalization? Language and human rights? Language and art? And above all...
- Why do indigenous languages matter to *everyone*?

As you can see, these are not simply language or linguistics issues: a thoughtful multi-disciplinary discussion of the Year of Indigenous Languages touches on the entire range of the humanities, and even business and information technology. Our hope is to inspire informed, campus-wide discussion - to start a fermentation of ideas that your own faculty can continue to feed both in and out of the classroom.

### Class Event (50 - 90 minutes)



You can choose to dedicate one of your regular classes during October 2019 by creating activities to present IYIL2019. Normally

# University Events - Gathering Information

## Resources

- Videos
- Articles
- Blogs
- Websites
- Visuals



The screenshot shows the website for Translation Commons, titled "International Year of Indigenous Languages". The navigation bar includes "Home", "University Events", and "Contact", along with a search icon. The main heading is "Resources", set against a background image of a crowd at night. Below the heading, a paragraph states: "This section contains resources that can be used in preparation for the event. Feel free to use them as well as to research on your own! If you know of other resources, please [let us know](#) so we can add them to our list." The section is titled "Video and Audio Materials" and lists seven items:

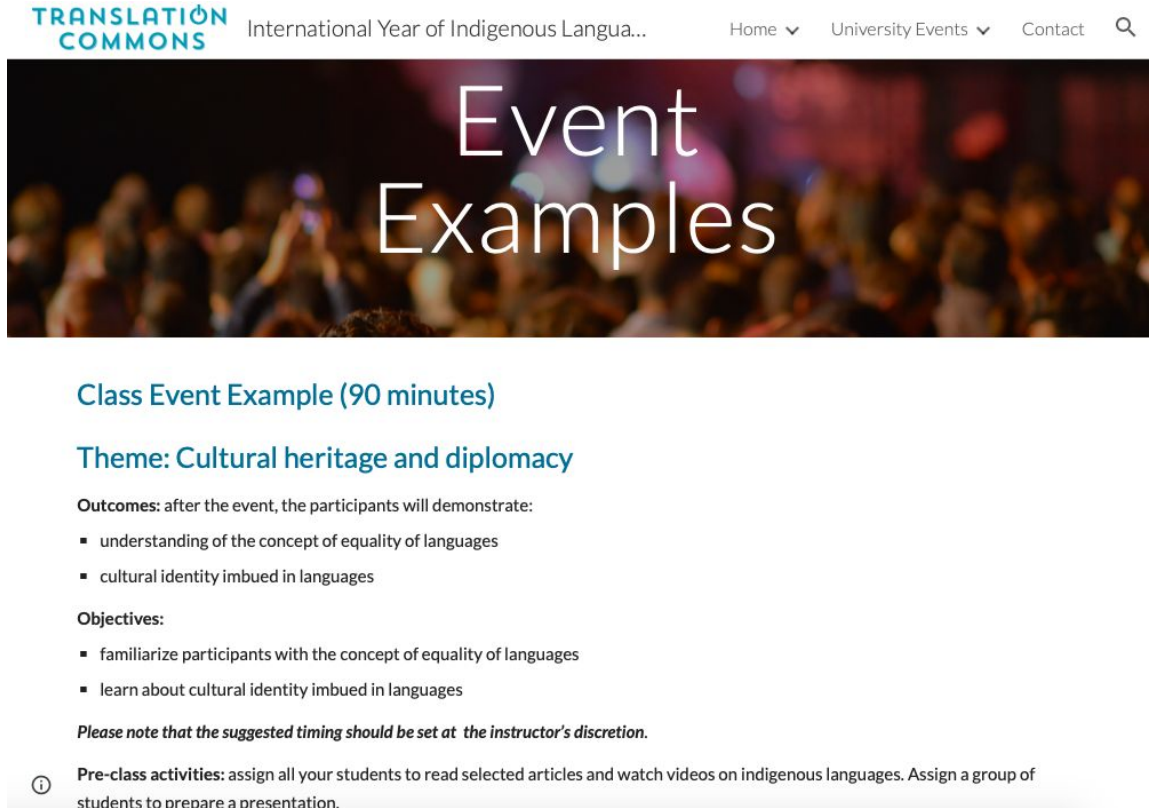
1. [Online Indigenous Film Festival](#) (Multilingual Play list)
2. Video/ audio: [Rare audio of indigenous languages saved a century later](#)
3. [Indigenous Australian languages are dying; sleeping languages; new language is arising](#); wellbeing and identity - article with good videos
4. [Dimas speaking Osing](#)
5. [Chingis speaking Tatar](#)
6. [A Catalog of Every Language in the World](#)
7. [Global News Canada: Indigenous Languages: articles and videos:](#)

At the bottom left of the page, there is a small circular icon containing the number 1.

# University Events - Gathering Information

## Examples

- 50 or 90 min class
- 3 h workshop
- conference



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Translation Commons website. The logo 'TRANSLATION COMMONS' is on the left, followed by the text 'International Year of Indigenous Languages'. To the right are links for 'Home', 'University Events', and 'Contact', along with a search icon. Below the navigation is a large banner image of a crowd at night with the text 'Event Examples' overlaid in white. The main content area below the banner is titled 'Class Event Example (90 minutes)' and 'Theme: Cultural heritage and diplomacy'. It lists 'Outcomes' and 'Objectives' for the event, and includes a note about suggested timing and pre-class activities.

TRANSLATION COMMONS International Year of Indigenous Languages... Home ▾ University Events ▾ Contact 🔍

## Event Examples

### Class Event Example (90 minutes)

#### Theme: Cultural heritage and diplomacy

**Outcomes:** after the event, the participants will demonstrate:

- understanding of the concept of equality of languages
- cultural identity imbued in languages

**Objectives:**

- familiarize participants with the concept of equality of languages
- learn about cultural identity imbued in languages

*Please note that the suggested timing should be set at the instructor's discretion.*

**Pre-class activities:** assign all your students to read selected articles and watch videos on indigenous languages. Assign a group of students to prepare a presentation.

# University Events - Gathering Information

## Support

- Before
- During
- After
- Social Media

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International Year of Indigenous Languages

Home ▾

University Events ▾

Contact



2019 | INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF  
**Indigenous Languages**

## Support

Navigating through the logistics of creating events is not easy and we have several volunteers willing to help you. Even if you don't need help with organizing the event, feel free to contact our support volunteers. They can help by adding your information in all relevant websites and ensure social media exposure. They can also help you record by setting up a streaming video on the TC youtube channel. Just ask and we will find solutions for you.

### Before the Event

Let us know of what you plan to do and when:



- Gianina Jaramillo: [gjaramillo@translationcommons.org](mailto:gjaramillo@translationcommons.org) for events administration

# University Events - Campaign Creation

## Audience:

- Pilot: 60 professors
- Main campaign:  
650 universities

## Campaign Elements:

- Newsletters
- Social media

## Organize a Classroom Event

and let us know by filling this [form](#)



2019 | INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF  
**Indigenous Languages**





# University Events - Campaign Launch

- Events added to the UNESCO IYIL site





# University Events - Next Steps

- Ongoing campaign until end of 2019
- UNESCO meeting with Professors, November 26 and 27
- Best Practices and Knowledge Sharing



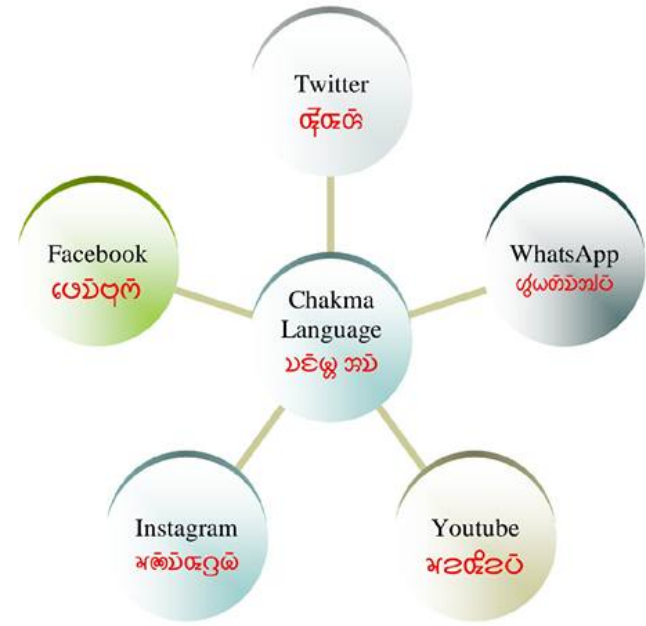
# UNESCO and Sustainable Development Goals

<b>1</b> NO POVERTY 	<b>2</b> ZERO HUNGER 	<b>3</b> GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 	<b>4</b> QUALITY EDUCATION 	<b>5</b> GENDER EQUALITY 	<b>6</b> CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 
<b>7</b> AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 	<b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	<b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	<b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES 	<b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	<b>12</b> RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 
<b>13</b> CLIMATE ACTION 	<b>14</b> LIFE BELOW WATER 	<b>15</b> LIFE ON LAND 	<b>16</b> PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 	<b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 	 <b>SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS</b> 











# Indigenous Languages in Social Media

1. Campaign overview
2. Findings and implications for the language industry
3. Indigenous speakers as an emerging market

Hashtags: *#Indigenouslanguages*,  
*#WeAreIndigenous*, *#IYIL2019*,  
*#Universities4IYIL*





United States	Canada	Europe
 <p><b>Johanna Behm</b> <i>Marketing Lead</i></p>  <p><b>Silvia Pinheiro</b> <i>Paid Ads &amp; Social Media</i></p>  <p><b>Mette Attar</b> <i>Graphics Design</i></p>  <p><b>Esther Perez</b> <i>Social Media</i></p>  <p><b>Amy Liu</b> <i>Social Media</i></p>  <p><b>Brenda McLaughlin</b> <i>Social Media</i></p>  <p><b>Gia Jaramillo</b> <i>Social Media</i></p>	 <p><b>Coralie Morin</b> <i>Campaign Director, Social Media &amp; University Events</i></p>	 <p><b>Tanbir Johal</b> <i>Social Media</i></p>  <p><b>Adriana Bardolet Capdevila</b> <i>Social Media</i></p>
<p><b>Campaign Results</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● +200K reach</li><li>● 6%-10% engagement</li><li>● Top locations: USA, Saudi-Arabia, Egypt, UK, Bangladesh</li></ul> <p>No formal budget; all time, effort, and ad spend were donated.</p>		

# Content Strategy - “Sharing inspiration”

- Helping indigenous groups to inspire each other
  - Language education
  - Leveraging modern technology
  - Cultural pride and resilience
- Inspiring the audience to see the potential of indigenous speakers
  - Entrepreneurship and innovation
  - Indigenous knowledge (sciences, historical knowledge)
  - Successful language revitalization projects

*“Is anyone interested?”*





**130M**





Translation Commons

@TranslationCom1

Cherokee Nation language technology specialist Wade Blevins [youtu.be/YBtBUdxjKaA](https://youtu.be/YBtBUdxjKaA) via [@CherokeeNation](#) [#Indigenouslanguages](#) [#WeAreIndigenous](#) [#IYL2019](#) [#Universities4IYL](#) [#I10n](#) [#i18n](#)



Cherokee Nation language technology specialist Wade Blevins Cherokee Nation language technology specialist Wade Blevins has been appointed to an Oklahoma State Department of ... [youtube.com](#)

9:26 AM · Sep 12, 2019 · [TweetDeck](#)

[View Tweet activity](#)

1 Retweet 1 Like



Sep 12

Replying to [@TranslationCom1](#) and [@CherokeeNation](#)

Would love to see involvement from the Cherokee Nation in more open source projects like Firefox!



1



20 September at 13:04



Translation Commons

20 September at 08:42

[Like Page](#)

What is knowledge? Let indigenous knowledge systems explain it to us!  
[#Indigenouslanguages](#) [#WeAreIndigenous](#) [#IYL2019](#) [#Universities4IYL](#) [#I10n](#) [#i18n](#)  
<https://www.ibmastery.com/.../indigenous-knowledge-systems-no...>



Like

Comment

Share





### Translation Commons

Published by Sílvia Lima Pinheiro [?] · 19 September at 07:32 · 🌐



"Empoderar a las lenguas indígenas mejora el intercambio universal de conocimientos" Translation Commons es una ONG cuyo lema es "Ningún idioma ni ningún lingüista se queda atrás". Este año, TC colabora con la UNESCO para celebrar el Año Internacional de las Lenguas Indígenas e invita a todas las universidades a organizar eventos para crear conciencia sobre la importancia de estas lenguas. Háganos saber acerca de su próximo evento completando el siguiente formulario (en inglés) al menos dos semanas antes del evento: <https://sites.google.com/.../university-.../october-2019-events...> Una vez que nos haya informado, nos aseguraremos de que su evento se publique en el sitio web oficial de la UNESCO IYIL2019 y en el sitio web de CT. Nuestro equipo estará encantado de ayudarlo con las redes sociales y el marketing.

"empowering indigenous languages improves the universal exchange of knowledge " Translation Commons is an ngo whose motto is " no language or any linguist is left behind ". this year, tc collaborates with unesco to celebrate the international year of indigenous languages And invites all universities to organize events to raise awareness about the importance of these languages. Let us know about your next event by completing the following form (in English) at least two weeks ...  
See more

⚙️ · Hide original · Rate this translation



Empowering indigenous languages

improves universal knowledge sharing.

40,159 People Reached

3,469 Reactions, comments & shares ⓘ

2,693 Like  
2,616 On post  
77 On shares

206 Love  
195 On post  
11 On shares

19 Haha  
18 On post  
1 On shares

8 Wow  
8 On post  
0 On shares

3 Sad  
3 On post  
0 On shares

2 Angry  
2 On post  
0 On shares

43 Comments  
36 On Post  
7 On Shares

495 Shares  
494 On Post  
1 On Shares

321 Post Clicks

128 Photo views  
34 Link clicks ⓘ  
159 Other Clicks ⓘ

#### NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

1 Hide post  
0 Report as spam  
0 Hide all posts  
0 Unlike Page

Insights activity is reported in the Pacific time zone. Ad activity is reported in the time zone of your ad account.

# Few words about the audience

- **Twitter followers:** 43% male, 57% female,
  - Top three locations: **Saudi-Arabia**, USA, UK
- **Facebook followers:** 35% male, 64% female
  - Top four locations: **Egypt**, USA, **Bangladesh**, UK
- **LinkedIn followers:** Media and Communication, Information Technology
  - Top three locations: USA, Spain, UK
- **Social listening project:** Internet conversation is already active



**TweetDeck**



extinct languages  
indigenous education  
indigenous knowledge  
indigenous technology  
indigenous people definition  
languages of the world  
cultural diversity  
indigenous people  
native language  
linguistic minority  
indigenous tribes  
indigenous knowledge systems  
indigenous rights  
indigenous peoples  
endangered languages  
indigenous languages  
indigenous studies  
language diversity



# What is next?

UNESCO:

- Outcome Report
- Action Plan 2020-2021

*Our task has just started*



# Indigenous Languages as an Emerging Market

## India

- +176 million smartphone users in next 5 yrs
- 97% access internet via mobile (one of the devices)
- 4 keyboards per user
- 35% internet user growth over past year
- Nearly 900 million people still offline
  - English as a main UI language is hindering the growth
  - Local providers are creating operating systems in multiple Indian languages and winning the emerging market
  - Accessibility in local languages is a key differentiator between providers



# Indigenous Languages as an Emerging Market

## Africa

- Fastest growing mobile economy with CAGR 4.6%
- +167 million mobile users by 2025
  - Only half of the population (600 million) will be online
- Mobile is the primary way of getting online
- Internet adoption lagging behind due to language barrier (Internet Society)
  - High linguistic diversity, ~2000 spoken languages
  - 460 million people covered by mobile broadband don't use it
  - Internet is about to add \$300 billion growth in Africa's GDP within next decade (McKinsey)



# What would the world look like if we were all online?

UNICEF's GIGA Project, Broadband Commission and Corporations are working towards 100% connectivity.

## We asked them: In what language?

They heard us and want to know more! In the next 6 months we will be meeting with all agencies and organizations ensuring that digital language support will be a priority and our community is involved.





# Enable indigenous communities to use internet technology

- Employ modern media in their preferred languages, oral / written
- Engage speakers and especially young learners in appreciating and honoring their languages and culture
- Identify technology for educating in indigenous languages
- Encourage speakers to create content and community through digital tools and standards
- Provide sustainable job opportunities and training through language translation



Join us

**for a world where all people have equal  
opportunities in their own language**

**by**

**enabling communities in emerging countries to use  
and benefit from internet technology**