

COMMUNITY TRANSLATION PROPOSAL

for **HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH** *by* **KD&T Enterprises**

Over the past decade, the translation industry has seen a significant shift in how content is translated. Professional translators still play a crucial role in the industry, but more and more companies and organizations are reaping the benefits of non-professional translation by what is commonly referred to as “the crowd”. These contributors, while not professionally trained, often help to accomplish even more than what a traditional Language Service Provider (LSP) could accomplish; it is not that LSPs are not capable, but an estimated 99% of web-based content remains untranslated, and it is impractical to assume that LSPs can be relied on to translate the entirety of that 99%.

As the Human Rights Watch’s mission is to advocate for justice and combat abuses of power, we will define global contributors as “the community”, rather than “the crowd”. In this proposal, we define the community as individuals who volunteer their time to translating content related to Human Rights Watch in order to propagate the reach of the many impacts made by activist organizations.

This community (or communities, if discussing communities based on region) can be readily tapped into for your translation needs. The amount of content that HRW produces cannot, at the moment, be matched by your capacity for translation. However, you already have people willing to translate on your behalf – they just need the means to do so.

We at KD&T propose a system with which volunteers around the world can take small bits of content at a time – whether it be articles on your website, promotional materials, or subtitles – and translate them. This community could leverage HRW’s existing connections domestically to recruit leaders that can act as a liaison between HRW staff and the online community. Using this system (a translation tool, in essence), HRW would be able to engage a vast number of global volunteers; so long as the creation of this tool is financially feasible for HRW, we see it as something that will more than pay-off once you have tapped into the talents of these communities.

We think that this system can take some common crowdsourcing techniques and tweak them to match HRW’s mission. For example: a challenge that many humanitarian efforts face is knowing where exactly a country, town, or family needs help. We propose that HRW’s crowdsourcing tool include a progress bar that fills up as volunteers translate. When this bar reaches 100%, the aforementioned community leaders will propose various needs in their community (e.g. a new well, a school, repairs to roads, food), and the

members of the community can vote on which to carry out. Ideally, this progress bar would fill frequently and allow HRW to better assess the priorities of the people you want to help. It should be made clear that failure to complete enough translations to fill the progress bar **does not** mean that aid is not given. Rather, the progress bar and voting simply allows the community's voice to be heard and for it to have a measurable and immediate impact on humanitarian efforts.

Ultimately, caveating the success of this model, we propose that HRW consider taking this tool beyond the restrictions of a simple translation tool. Of the individuals in the world who are active in justice and humanitarian movements, many of them are surviving victims of some of the atrocities that HRW campaigns against. These communities that you can engage are likely to contain individuals who are willing to share their stories and experiences through your organization. Thus, you would actually create content and already have a perfect tool to translate it into various other languages. More importantly still, you would be giving a voice to survivors who otherwise would not have a voice. By adopting our proposal, you would have the potential to find a solution to your untranslated online materials *and* compile a trove of valuable content to your site via these communities.

In addition to this proposal, you will find additional documents on how to ensure quality and quantity when engaging non-professional translators. At your leisure, please read through them and express any questions or comments you have by contacting us at kdt@globalhorizons.com. We hope that our ideas can help HRW continue to advocate for global justice, and eventually lead to a world where linguistic barriers do not impede progress.