

Debian: coding for human rights?

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1. Justification

It is not a secret that computers and their programs control almost all the spheres of our modern life. Indeed, we can establish that every day our life depends more on informatics codes. In this scenario free software acquires vital importance for accomplish human rights and this is even more valid for those who live in poverty and social exclusion.

Human Rights defenders (*"human rights world"*), often don't reflect in the role of informatics in human rights promotion, as a tool to reach fully access to certain rights or as a tool for policy actions.

Debian is a protagonist actor in the free software arena, and its volunteer's produces tools that habilitate the exercise of human right, yet, are they aware of it? Are we, as human rights defenders, aware of it? Are the impacts and scope of the Debian product systematized and properly analyzed?

Free software, often is related with access to knowledge, culture and information, one could not agree more on that, but our premise is that its contribution goes beyond.

This paper intends to identify and analyzed the "windows" that Debian's projects helps to open in the human rights field and to explore how Debian's volunteers acknowledge and recognize their role in the promotion of human rights.

2. Methodology.

In order to gather all the information required to accomplish this papers goal, we will apply the following researches techniques:

A. Interviews

The interviews will be the primary source of information for this analysis. The Debconf gathers a huge number of people related with the development of free software, especially Debian's

products. That to say, the interviews will be carried out to the following actors.

- Interviewing Debian's Leads
- Interviewing Debconf participants that contributes in specific projects
- Interviewing Debconf participants selected randomly

B. **Secondary sources**

Academic research regarding free software, Debian projects and human rights:

- Past Debconf reports
- Journals
- Articles
- Etc.

3. Submission of the research report

The report elaborated with the information gathered will be sent to the Debian Project Leader for its distribution among Debian's volunteers. The research will finalize on October 2011.

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