

ODK Central Translation Guide

Thank you for participating in the translation of ODK Central! ODK produces open-source tools for data collection in resource-constrained settings. Making tools available in multiple languages helps broaden their impact and this is only possible thanks to community members. This style guide aims to provide support for volunteer translators. We also have a forum category [for discussing translations](#).

ODK Central users manage data collection projects or access data for analysis. Those users may not be highly technical and Central is designed to provide context and documentation directly within its user interface. You should aim for a **professional but friendly** tone. For example, in languages that have pronouns of different formality, you should generally use formal pronouns to refer to the user but the sentence structure should be casual and friendly. Aim for words and sentence structures that are like daily conversation.

The interface aims to be **easy to skim** so translations should use simple and clear language. The Transifex interface provides “developer notes” directly below the translation box which provide context for how the strings are used. Please use those to guide the wording you choose. For example, button or column header text should be as short as possible.

The English text in ODK Central uses capitalization to draw attention to key terms such as “Form” or “Role”. You should only use this style if it is accepted in your language. In general, English uses capitalization more than most other languages. Please use context to guide whether capitalization is appropriate in your language. For example, in English, every word in a section header is capitalized but this shouldn't be the case in French.

The words “ODK” and “Central” should never be translated.

Some languages use gender in their grammar. If that is the case in your language, please favor sentence structures that avoid using a specific gender for Central or the user.

We have created [a glossary](#). Please use it to ensure consistent wording across your translations. We encourage you to fill in translations in the glossary before starting to translate ODK Central. Transifex will then give you the option of using the glossary translations when they come up in ODK Central text that needs to be translated. When you see an underlined word or phrase in the English text, click on it to automatically fill in the corresponding translation.

We try hard to use a single set of translations for a language so that more people can benefit from the translation effort. Please avoid regionalisms and try to think of words and sentence structures that would be familiar to any speaker of your language, including ones from different countries. If you'd like to check whether a particular translation is common, we recommend [Linguee](#).

To get started, [join this project on Transifex](#), request your language, and start translating!

We sometimes send important messages about translations through Transifex, so make sure you remain subscribed to those notifications.

Interested in translating ODK Collect? See this [translation guide](#).