ODR for REFUGEES

PROJECT OUTLINE

…we need to offer refugees an easy mechanism to prevent & resolve everyday conflicts…through an app free and easy for all to use …in a process without formalities… with technology serving peace…

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OUR CONCERN

Refugees have been through very dramatic experiences. They have risked their lives, they are away from home, they found themselves in uncharted waters and they are living in poor conditions. They are vulnerable, frightened, desperate and exhausted. It is very normal that their judgment and patience have also been affected and they may overreact to daily problems. The last thing they wish is to be burdened with a dispute. That is why we need to offer them an easy mechanism to resolve tensions and misunderstandings before these escalate to serious conflicts and harm them and the community as a whole.

THE IDEA

Our idea was to create a **dispute resolution smartphone application** for refugees who are on the move or reside temporarily in refugee camps all over the world.

EASY ODR

The application focuses on what we call **"easy ODR"**, meaning easy online access & use of ADR mechanisms.

WHY SMARTPHONE

We have been monitoring the refugee crisis in Greece for the past two years and we have noticed that refugees **had no access** to dispute resolution mechanisms BUT they all had third generation **smartphones!** So, we thought that smartphones could be the "fourth" party in offering refugees online dispute resolution services.

AREAS OF CONFLICT

The app will help refugees resolve disputes arising from having to **share space and facilities in refugee camps**, disputes of **cultural, religious and social context**, disputes **between refugees and people from local communities** which often occur for reasons such as discrimination, poverty & lack of communication and disputes **between refugees and camp administration officials** which often arise due to daily routine issues such as overcrowded camps, poor facilities, rules & regulations and so on.

PREVENT & RESOLVE

The app will **prevent** and not just resolve conflicts! We offer refugees an easy mechanism to avoid tensions and misunderstandings **before they escalate to serious conflicts** which could harm them and their community. That is why we plan not only on making a dispute resolution app but also a dispute prevention app.

FREE FOR REFUGEES

Download and use of the application will be **FREE** for all refugees.

EASY TO USE

The app is very easy to use even for those who have limited knowledge of the full functions of a smartphone. The **system practically guides the refugee** through simple steps, in a language he speaks and by clicking or selecting options. So, there is no need for training for the users. They only need to download the app in their smartphone and start using it.

MAIN FEATURES

The main features of the application include **personalized texts, language selection, dispute menu, automatic appointment of mediator, case filing, video, audio & text communication, mediation notifications, digital meetings, animation videos for the value of ADR, geolocation, statistics** and many more.

COMMUNICATION

As smartphones will be our communication channel, the user will be **free to choose** the preferable way of communication from a variety of tools like email, Viber, SMS, what's up, messenger, Facebook, live chat, video conferences etc. The application will also send **mediation notifications** promoting peace-making and information about penalties for most frequent offences of the host country.

THE PROCESS

Refugees **are guided by the application** to select from a list the type of the dispute and to

describe the issue in a couple of lines. Then they will add their contact details and those of the other side. The system processes all the data and **appoints a mediator** from a list of mediators (matching several criteria such as nationality, language, area, topic, gender etc) who communicates with both sides. The whole mediation process can be conducted online through their smartphones by video conference (in joint or separate sessions), through a chat tool and in many other ways.

NO FORMALITIES

The process will have **no formalities, no minutes, no agreement to mediate, no settlement agreement in writing.** Only a shake of hands if they are face to face or meet at a later stage, or a mutual apology or compromise reached on the smartphone screen. An online notification that an agreement has been reached will be send to both sides calling them to honor it and praising them for their contribution to a peaceful dialogue.

MEDIATORS

The application will be supported by a **wide network of mediators** located in several countries. Mediators who will be qualified through a selection process will attend an advanced training program which will include mediation for refugees disputes, intercultural mediation, diplomacy and negotiations. We will also **use many mediators from the refugee community** who will have the same training.

ADMINISTRATION

The idea is to run the project **ONLINE** and limit the need to open offices in other parts of the world. Central offices, administration, IT and maintenance and coordination services will all be located in Greece with **a few "regional" offices** established in countries where there is a high number of refugees.

DATA & SECURITY FEATURES

The personal data of refugees who will use the application to resolve their disputes is **limited to their names and communication details** and will be processed with due respect to all applicable laws. The application could also monitor the location of refugees, for as long as they have the refugee status, **for purposes of security, administration and response to their needs**, with due respect to all relevant laws.

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

We have **already set up the mechanism for supporting the development of the app**. We have installed and configured a BPM tool, written down and depicted the ODR procedure and started fine-tuning it. The system is set up in own Windows servers, using the latest available technologies. We are developing a user-friendly, multi- language interface for PCs, so as to be able to test the whole process, address its shortcomings and come up with the proper mechanisms for resolution. We will be testing all related roles and their participation and run a number of tests. In order to minimize the risks during the development of the app, we will run simulations and perform integration testing among the various components of the system (workflow engine, database, forms, document management mechanisms, administration tools, reporting tools, etc), system testing and an initial Acceptance testing, using focus groups of potential users. Immediately after testing we will transfer a major part of the functionality of this system into a mobile application (available for the most popular mobile operating systems), reconsider and reconfigure parts of the resolution process, so as to be readily usable through a smartphone, taking into account all of its limitations. Several tests will take place to ensure the ability of the application to work in networking austere environments, while providing the maximum flexibility and adaptability to the needs of the potential users. The system will then be gradually translated in several languages, consistent to the expected user languages, and all tests run again, before the final deployment. We are also in the process of creating the app design and we expect to release the first screen shots of the application by the end of this year.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PROGRAM

The Odr4refugees project invites large companies worldwide to embrace it and place it under their **corporate social responsibility programs** displaying their commitment to **the use of technology in resolving disputes, to help refugees and to promote peaceful settlement.** As smartphones will be used for online dispute resolution, telecommunication companies and internet providers have an important role to play mainly in providing devices and connectivity for those needed.

APP CAMPAIGN

The Odr4refugees project is expected to **gain global recognition** both in terms of publicity and use of the app. An extensive campaign will take place through social media, press releases and TV and **we expect to have many followers and contributors**. A special campaign will be targeted to all points of entrance in countries where there is a flow of refugees and to all refugee camps & communities.

SUPPORT

Odr4refugees is a big global project. **It was first announced at the Paris 2017 ODR conference in June** and the world ODR community and many organizations have already embraced it and expressed their interest to support it and to contribute in any way they can to give the project a wider global exposure. A roadshow has already started to inform governments, private corporations, international organizations, NGOs and major stakeholders worldwide to support the project while we have also initiated communication **to place our project under the auspices** of the European Commission and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

ODReurope ADVISORY BOARD

ODReurope has an Advisory Board consisting of **prominent members of the global ADR-ODR community**, academics, negotiations and mediation professionals as well as lead experts in Online Dispute Resolution and has close cooperation with leading ODR centers such as the National Center of Technology & Dispute Resolution (USA), ODR Latinoamerica etc. It is an integral part of ADR point-Center for Alternative Dispute Resolution which is an **official ADR body** approved by the Greek Ministry of Economy & Development, notified to the European Commission and registered to the EU ODR platform.

FUNDING & SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

The Odr4refugees app involves many stages on a **technical, training, marketing and administrative** level. A whole mechanism of experts has been set up to think and take care of every little detail. Some of the main expenditure include, development of the application (IT, design, localization, interoperability etc), annual cost of maintenance (contracts of technical support etc), offices & facilities (central & regional), administrative staff, legal consulting & coordination, telecom appliances & connectivity to refugees, training of mediators, printing & other advertising material, social media & other campaign costs, expenses to set up the mediators' network etc. Although we do have some volunteers running parts of the project, **it still requires a lot of financing and resources.** This is the part where organizations and companies can offer us their sponsorship, the necessary exposure to the world community and their commitment to our common vision.

If you wish to be part of this project please ask for our SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMS at odr4refugees@odreurope.com

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