



WASLI SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMME 2011

With your assistance, WASLI was able to fully or partly fund the following interpreters to our 2011 conference in Durban. This is our feedback to you on what these participants saw as the highlights of their experience, what things they want to achieve arising from that experience now they have returned to their homes, how they plan to share their experience with their colleagues and what actions/outcomes they might seek to achieve together.

(We apologise for the poor quality of some of the photos which is due to the file conversion process.)

A list of other interpreters who were sponsored by other organisations is given at the end.

Awoii Patrick Michael

- Uganda, Africa -



Awoii previously attended the inaugural 2005 conference at Worcester, South Africa. He has maintained strong links with WASLI and was elected WASLI's secretary for 2011-2015. Like many at the conference, he enjoyed the Country Report sessions which "bring out the experiences and interpreter situation from the different countries". Another highlight for Awoii was the "presentation from the keynote speaker, which clearly brought out the conference theme and a good learning note to adopt in our work."

Three things he wants to achieve arising from the conference:

- Strengthen the capacity of UNASLI [Uganda National Association of Sign Language Interpreters] using the experience from the already well established associations e.g. RID
- Meeting with the Kyambogo University as interpreter training institution and sharing a possibility of introducing BA in interpreting
- What will I do differently to see WASLI grow into a big organization

When asked how he would share his conference experience with colleagues and what actions/outcomes they might seek to achieve together, he replied:

- Sharing: Shared a report with the executive/board of UNASLI and I intend to visit the interpreter trainees at Kyambogo University to share with them the different topics/presentations from the conference
- Actions / Outcomes: Together with the executive of UNASLI, Deaf association UNAD and other partners lobby to the government to employ/pay for services of sign language interpreters. This is already in progress

Yahya Jabbi
- The Gambia, Africa -



Yahya has been hoping to attend each WASLI conference, and was successfully in getting funding this year. He, too, appreciated the country reports, the opportunity to meet with the other African delegates as well as networking with many others.

“I think sponsoring interpreters to attend the meeting is a great idea; interpreters from the poorest part of the world are given the opportunity to attend such a big gathering and meet professionals in the field of interpreting is just wonderful. Taking myself as an example, without the sponsorship package I wouldn't be able to attend and this is the case for many. We stayed in one of the best hotels in South Africa with a massive support from the hotel staff.”

Three things he wants to achieve arising from the conference:

- Set up a national association of SL interpreters in my country
- Organize awareness-raising on the importance of SL interpreters, once every six months. I was inspired by what is happening in other countries
- Encourage National Deaf association to work closely with interpreters' association and agencies

When asked how he would share his conference experience with colleagues and what actions/outcomes they might seek to achieve together, he replied:

- Upon my return, I prepared a report and this was sent to all interpreters in my country. 4 trained and 3 are on training. I also organized a day session with my colleagues to share my experiences and learning from the conference.
- We have agreed to set up a national association of SL interpreters
- Carry out awareness raising campaign on the importance of interpreters
- More collaboration with fellow interpreters from around the world, more particularly Africa region, to know what is happening in their countries. We are already in close contact with Nigeria and Ghana.

“I want take this chance to encourage donors to support WASLI cause in uplifting the profession of sign language interpreting all over the world. It is not an easy job to bring hundreds of people together all over the world and sponsoring many people out of the participants. Please support and donate to WASLI.”

Robert Manso

- Ghana, Africa -



For Robert, getting to the conference nearly didn't happen. In spite of applying for his entry visa to South Africa in plenty of time, it wasn't issued until the afternoon of the day he was due to fly out. The highlights for him included the country reports, the election of the new board and the networking opportunities.

"The sponsorship package was so wonderful that even the conference administrator had to work so hard for me to get through my visa acquisition. I can say you did well to choose the best hotel to accommodate us and I really enjoyed staying in the hotel because of how the organisers entertain each one of us. This made me feel at home during my stay outside my home land."

Three things he wants to achieve arising from the conference:

- Register our interpreters association and link to WASLI
- How to get funding to organise training for the local interpreters
- Mobilising my local interpreters and feed them with what I got from the conference.

When asked how he would share his conference experience with colleagues and what actions/outcomes they might seek to achieve together, he replied:

- Sharing - As I intended to do, I luckily had an opportunity to brief some few interpreters who participated in our just-ended third training workshop. And I am planning to let each of them know what happened at the conference.
- Actions:
 - To send conference report to all local members via email
 - To inform local members the need to come together as one body
 - To educate local members on what WASLI is expecting from us
- Outcomes:
 - All members are well informed of the 2011 conference update
 - All members have come together as well formed and registered association
 - All members well equipped with WASLI's activities and understand the importance of joining WASLI.

I will use this opportunity to thank my sponsors for making it possible for me to attend such a wonderful conference. I would not be able to participate without their support. I am well enlightened about working with the Deaf through the conference. May we live to see another surprising package at the next conference. Long LIVE WASLI.

Timothy Tinat
- Nigeria, Africa -



Tim has been a key person in the interpreting profession (ASLIN) in Nigeria for many years. He was overwhelmed with his conference experience: "This is my first time of attending an international program of this awesome repute, my feelings are beyond the explanation of words, but just to say that it was a wonderful opportunity to meet the world of Sign Language Interpreters." The specific highlights for Tim were:

- The General Membership Meeting at which everybody's opinion was respected - starting from the general assembly meeting to voting.
- The presentations also provided me with the idea of what is happening around the world in the profession of sign language and making it relevant to situation in my country.
- The environment was also awesome, in spite of the theoretical and practical presentations which would have made participants tired, the environment gave us the relaxation to go on and on.

Three things he wants to achieve arising from the conference:

- I got home worrying about sustainability of everything about the conference; can the future of the conference carry everybody along? We have a lot of lessons to learn from WFD if we are really going to make impact to developing communities.
- I also wonder if we can generally look at developing countries where absence of sign language cause a lot of violation of deaf rights this create the social value to this noble profession.
- Africa countries should be sub-regionalised if WASLI will make any impact in Africa.

When asked how he would share his conference experience with colleagues and what actions/outcomes they might seek to achieve together, he replied:

- Nigeria National Association of the Deaf (NNAD) and Association of Sign Language Interpreters of Nigeria (ASLIN) will witness the international day for the Deaf in Nigeria on the 24th to 30th September, 2011. I am making the first presentation on the conference in Durban
- Formalising interpreters' relations with the Deaf will be in line with the values of WASLI.
- I expect the report on our International Deaf week will bring all the actions and outcomes to WASLI conference team.

Peaceway Zvomunyika
- Zimbabwe, Africa -



After spending three days and nights on a coach travelling from Harare, Zimbabwe, to Worcester, South Africa, to reach WASLI's 2005 conference, Peaceway holds a special place in WASLI. Happily, this time the TV station where he interprets the news provided him with a return flight ticket. In spite of the on-going troubles in his country, Peaceway has been able to contribute to the work of the WASLI task group which has produced the Guidelines on Sign Language Interpreter Education and Training programmes.

On this occasion, his highlights were the country reports (especially with regard to the development of interpreter training in many countries), networking and "also learning about other peoples cultures in Durban and see for myself the powerful waves at the beaches for the first time in my life. I really missed the waves!"

Three things he wants to achieve arising from the conference:

- Establish and register our Association
- Advocating and lobbying our government to consider and preserve sign language interpreting as a profession which needs to be developed
- promote unity among Interpreters and the Deaf community and work as a team

When asked how he would share his conference experience with colleagues and what actions/outcomes they might seek to achieve together, he replied:

- Sharing: I have communicated with many interpreters in Zimbabwe and held a meeting where I share with them what transpired in Durban. However I managed to meet those who reside in Harare, our capital city, where I also live. But those in other cities I communicate with them through the phone and email. Interpreters now realise that its high time we put our house in order because the corporate world and the Government is willing to render support towards training interpreters.
- Actions / Outcomes: We agreed as Interpreters to move ahead with the registration of our Association. Currently we did the requirements for registration like having fingerprint vetted by the Criminal Investigation Department and other related issues.

I want to thank WASLI for sponsoring me to attend the conference. I am so happy that WASLI has a commitment for the development of Interpreting in Zimbabwe.

David Penn

- Cameroon, Africa -



Because of delays in the issue of his entry visa to South Africa, David only managed to have one full day of the conference experience and yet that did not diminish his level of participation. For him, the presentations, the networking and the country reports were the highlights.

Three things he wants to achieve arising from the conference:

- Establish CASLI (Cameron Association of Sign Language Interpreters)
- Work in close collaboration with existing Interpreter Associations to train interpreters in our country and promote the profession of SL interpretation in Cameroon
- During this Conference, I was chosen to be WASLI sub-regional representative (Central Africa) to promote the profession of Sign Language Interpreter in francophone countries. I am working on getting in touch with interpreters within my sub-region and hope that before our next WASLI Conference much would have been accomplished.

When asked how he would share his conference experience with colleagues and what actions/outcomes they might seek to achieve together, he replied:

- Sharing: I am already sharing ideas with my interpreter friends on how to start our Cameroon Association and also organise some training sessions within our sub-region.
- Actions / Outcomes: We want to get hearing adults, children of the Deaf who already know how to sign, and encourage them to consider the profession of Sign Language interpretation.
- We will soon hold meetings with the few interpreters we have to start our own Association before the end this year.

“WASLI Conference in Durban SA this year was a great success. Even though I was part of it for only 36 hours, I must say it was worth it. I left SA with a greater determination to advance the profession of SL interpretation in Cameroon. I was greatly challenged by the reports from other countries and really appreciated the time I spent sharing experiences with other conference participants. Thank you WASLI.”

Dino Hassan
- Malaysia, Asia -



Dino is a Deaf Singaporean, now living in Malaysia. His interpreting experience is as a Relay Deaf Interpreter (DI) at many Deaf events in Malaysia (1998 - 2010) and at the biennial YMCA International Deaf Youth Camp (2000 - 2010). He uses International Signs (IS) for his interpreting work in International events. This particular interest in International Sign formed his focus for the conference.

He highlighted the fact that on the panel of conference interpreters there was no one from Asia and he would like to see this changed in the future.

“For me, WASLI has helped me to know other people in my position from other countries. I'm very proud to be able to communicate and share with them. While here, I learnt a lot more of other country's sign languages. If WASLI would invite me to be an interpreter for a Deaf community in another country (eg. Thailand, Nepal, etc) I would be glad to help.

“For me, it was a wonderful and never to be forgotten about experience at *Think Globally - Act Locally* in Durban, South Africa.”

Monica Punjabi
- India, Asia -



Monica is president of the Indian Sign Language Interpreter Association. For her, the highlights of the conference included the country reports, the presentations, getting to know the board members of WASLI and the organisation itself, and the fact that it was held in proximity (both time and location) of the Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf. She found the team work between Deaf and hearing interpreters a learning experience. Monica would like to develop links with other interpreters in the Asian region (including through interpreters' meeting following the WFD AP conference), would be willing to host any WASLI event in India, and would like to bring more delegates from her association to the next WASLI conference.

ISLIA has subsequently signed a joint statement with the All India Federation of the Deaf. Plans are to seek more formal training using international contacts.

“Thank you so much WASLI for supporting developing countries to be part of such a conference. It boosts the participants and so their country.”

**Sophon
Chaiwatthanakunwanich**

- Thailand, Asia -



Sophon is a working interpreter, president of the Thai sign language interpreters association and a lecturer on the SL interpreting course at Mahidol University, Bangkok. For him the highlights of the conference were:

- Recognizing the condition of living, the situations and the challenge of working in the case of interpreters in developing countries
- New knowledge from studies, research, direct working experiences and instructors
- Teamwork spirit of hearing interpreters and deaf interpreters. All of them are professional

Five things he wants to achieve arising from the conference:

- Develop my knowledge and experience
- Sharing my knowledge and experience
- Develop my association so all of them are professional
- The opportunity to develop knowledge and experiences about sign language interpreting training courses
- Training for the sign language interpreting trainer

When asked how he would share his conference experience with colleagues and what actions/outcomes they might seek to achieve together, he replied:

- Sharing: I'm sharing knowledge and experiences with member of the National Association of Thai Sign Language Interpreters (NATSI) and sign language interpreter students.
- Actions / Outcomes: Through the conference, I acquired more knowledge. I also have the opportunity to talk and exchange some experiences with interpreters from many countries and developing countries. My impression is that I could see the power of interpreters as I have never seen it before. There was a great deal of interpreters who assembled there. At the same time, besides, they develop themselves endlessly. And another objective more important is the development of deaf people's lives. The more the interpreters can develop, the more the deaf can also develop.

"I was excited and happy to have the opportunity to see interpreters from many countries and some developing countries."

Arun Rao
- India, Asia -



Arun might be seen as a pioneer in developing the sign language profession in India. But the task is an enormous one, so it is no wonder that the three highlights for him were those contributions that he believes he can draw on:

- The country reports from all over the world fascinated me and fill me with ideas of how to adapt the work that is being done in other parts of the world to the situation in India
- The Ugandan presentation by Awoii was a particularly interesting paper on how the work in Uganda has been shepherded through the problems and real progress has been made.
- The paper on adapting codes of ethics from other organisations was also very relevant for us here in India. The work on ethics is still to really take off here and the ideas put forward were very interesting.

“The Ugandan experience and programme was a good model for us to put into our strategic planning. We will be certainly looking at this very closely.”

When asked how he would share his conference experience with colleagues and what actions/outcomes they might seek to achieve together, he replied:

- ASLI India is currently involved in developing the profession in India and we are training interpreters across the country in a series of 10 day programs. This is in addition to setting up an interpreter training program in the newly formed Indian sign language research and training centre which we were instrumental in conceiving. The learning’s from WASLI are being shared with all the trainees and the members through these programs in a continuous activity.
- The activities we are currently involved in are to set up a pool of interpreters in all major cities. The pool will form a base for providing access to the local deaf community and also receive training and inputs from ASLI. The advocacy process to put this in place has been operational for the past 4 years and the success of the project has been so far limited to the capital. After the WASLI conference and the keynote presentation on the UNCRPD by Colin Allen, we are inspired to accelerate our efforts in this area.
- The activity will be legal action through Public interest petitions in the 18 high courts in India to establish a pool of interpreters for access to the justice system which we see as the main area of need. The NAD has already launched the advocacy program to create position for interpreters in govt service agencies and this has recently come to a positive conclusion with the courts giving orders to the Govt to hire interpreters to provide equal access to deaf persons. The actual execution may take up to 2 -5 years and in the interim the work of ASLI will be very relevant.
- The outcomes we are looking for is the establishing of pools of interpreters with basic training in all the major centres and a state level network of interpreters to work with. This is a mammoth task and will likely take a lifetime. We plan to target 3 states for the first phase of the work.

I want to thank the organisers for sponsoring my conference registration and stay there. The facilities and the conference were simply wonderful.

Individuals or organisations from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States sponsored the following interpreters:

Rivo Andriamampianina	Madagascar	Catherine Molepo	Botswana
Samuel Begumisa	Uganda	Charles Phoofolo	Lesotho
Igor Bondarenko	Ukraine	Victor Shipahu	Namibia
Selamu Eyob	Ethiopia	Prisca Sinyoro	Zimbabwe
Octavian Malaba	Tanzania	Betty Wisiki	Malawi
Obed Mambwe	Zambia	Nehemia Zandamela	Mozambique
Nomvula Maseko	Swaziland		