

WASLI Newsletter 2009-02



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THE SITUATION OF DEAF IN TOGO AND SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETING

Association des Sourds du Togo (AST)

Email: sourdstogo@gmail.com



Capital: Lome

Languages: French (official and the language of commerce), Ewe and Mina (the two major African languages in the south), Kabye (sometimes spelled Kabiye) and Dagomba (the two major African languages in the north)

Currency: Communauté Financière Africaine franc (XOF)

(Source: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/to.html>)

Togo is a coastal country of West Africa. It is stretched on a surface of 56.785 km² with a population of 6 million inhabitants. Togo belongs to the Least Advanced Countries of the world (rough national revenue per person of \$ 350).

Since the nineties, the country has undergone the consequences of a growing economic crisis. Politics have resulted in a drastic reduction of the assistance from the backers. However, following the signing of the total political agreement in August 2006, happy prospects have opened for the country.

Over this difficult time, little has been done for Disabled Persons who represent 10% of the population. Among the Disabled Persons, the Deaf are the subject of a strong marginalization in all the fields (decision making, development programs, educational policy, etc).

Deaf children are not registered in the ordinary schools. Although Togo subscribed to the International Convention of the Rights of the Child, the Conference of Jomtien (1990) and the action plan of Dakar EPT (2000) concerning the right of disabled children to education, there is no policy of inclusive education. The disabled child is invisible, and in particular the deaf child. There are specialized institutions that ensure the schooling of deaf children, but they have very limited resources and do not have bonds with ordinary schools. In Togo, there are only 6 specialized institutions for deaf children that approximately educate 400 deaf children.

Close to 95% of Deaf people in Togo are illiterate and live an extreme poverty. Although their official manpower is not yet defined on the national plan, it is an established fact that their school and social life is alarming under all aspects.

Everywhere, the Deaf undergo a strong discrimination: access to the structures of care and to education is difficult to them; their socio-economic integration is strongly blocked. Many of them unfortunately have turned to begging and juvenile delinquency and are very isolated because of the difficulties of communication which their deafness generates. Deaf girls and women often are the subjects of sexual abuse. They miss information about adopting responsible behavior in their choice of sexual partners. They do not know their body, its operation and its mechanism of defence, or about reproduction.

The feeling of unjustified guilt, feeling of sadness and of anger, insulation, revolt, etc, is what the Deaf in Togo live with. To help the Deaf and to hear their needs is a long term job but it's enthralling. It is true that the deafness is a sensory disability particularly difficult to deal with but we see significant progress if one correctly deals with them. It is absolutely necessary to obtain satisfaction for the Deaf who belong to a forgotten and scorned group. This will give to them easy access to basic education, to regular training and to better social integration.

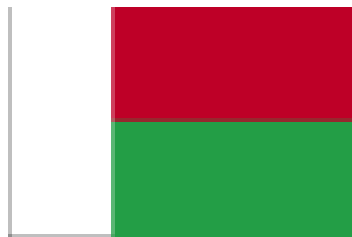
Today the success gained by the actions in favor of the Deaf is remarkable. These actions have made it possible to discover the talents and the potential of the Deaf. The television media often speaks about it and there are a small number of Deaf who have an easy life, thanks to the television and radiophone sensitizing on deafness and popularizing signs in some well populated areas.

But there still remain lots of challenges to take up so that the families, the communities and society in general are aware about deafness and accept completely that deafness is not easy for several people especially the families. The law of protection of the Disabled Persons has not been applied yet. The human rights for the Deaf are non-existent in Togo.

This is also the case for interpreters. When they need interpreters, the Deaf and the parents often call upon the direction of the school of Deaf which places at their disposal a specialized teacher in Deaf education. This teacher temporarily leaves his pupils in the classroom in order to render free service. But unfortunately those who make these decisions and the teachers of the school of Deaf do not know the ethical code of the interpreting profession. At the time of the seminars, meetings or conferences of long duration (five to seven days), the messages are not accurately transmitted. Being the only intermediary between Deaf persons and Hearing persons, the interpreter translates the messages into signs during many long hours, and he is tired and is thirsty. Thus he stops for about thirty minutes to rest. He sometimes is badly paid but he is thanked. It is thus necessary for us to think about creating an association of interpreters for the Deaf.

All that is the subject of our action plans for the years to come.

NEWS FROM MADAGASCAR



Area: 587,040 sq km

Population: 20,042,552

Capital: Antananarivo

Language/s: English (official), French (official), Malagasy (official)

GDP: \$1,100

(Source: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ma.html>)

In Madagascar, there are 10 hearing people who are not qualified interpreters but who know Malagasy Sign Language. They are working in hospitals in Antananarivo, Mahajanga, and Fianarantsoa. 4 of these people are from Antananarivo, 2 are civil volunteers from the university, and 1 is a priest (Protestant). They have been studying for 1 year and if they continue studying they may be able to become qualified interpreters.



Antananarivo, 11 December 2008



President of FMM (Federation of the Deaf in Madagascar) conference presenting about: thanks to the Norwegian Deaf Federation, the Ministry of the Health, to Akama for teaching the 10 hearing interpreters, ESTIIM (school of the university) for teaching about communication, and to the deaf for teaching sign language. At this conference the Government was asked to give salaries for interpreters, land for the FMM office, a law to include Malagasy sign language in the constitution, and for education for deaf children.



Representatives from the region of Antananarivo, leader of the hospital in Antananarivo, and a representative of the Ministry of the Health

NEWS FROM NAOBI

Leandra Williams

National Alliance of Black Interpreters, Inc.

The Executive Board and Membership of the National Alliance of Black Interpreters, Inc. (NAOBI, Inc.) is pleased to announce that Antonio Goodwin will be serving as our next organizational president.

Antonio is originally from South Carolina but currently lives in Southern California. He is a graduate of Indiana University where he received an M. A. in Folklore, concentrating in Ethnomusicology; specifically, the African American aesthetic in Religion and Music. In December 2001, Antonio completed a joint degree program at Vanderbilt University's Law School and Divinity School with a J. D and M. Div. His concentration was in litigation, socio-political advocacy and ethics. While at Vanderbilt, his work in both Divinity and Law School focused on the elements of African American cultural and political ethos and thought. His company, the Renaissance One Group, LLC, is the parent company to several subsidiaries. One subsidiary provides American Sign Language consulting, interpreting and advocacy. Another company, AntonioGoodwin.com focuses on empowerment training and coaching. The non-profit arm of the company, the Empowerment Training Institute, promotes The Interpreted Life: Teen Curriculum to teenagers 13 to 19. Antonio is also a RID certified interpreter holding both the Certificate of Interpretation and the Certificate of Transliteration.

Antonio was sworn into office in December 2008 and started serving his two year term on January 1, 2009. Antonio is the second male to serve as NAOBI, Inc. President; the first President who is not an alumni of Gallaudet University; and the first President from the Western Region of the country. Thus, his Presidency brings much anticipation. This is an exciting time for the organization and

President Goodwin promises to initiate the changes needed to propel us forward. But, be assured that the spirit of cooperative partnerships developed during the past few years with other organizations in the field will continue. NAOBI, Inc.'s organizational goals and objectives have not changed.

Effective January 1, 2009 all emails intended for Antonio in his position as President, should be sent to: president@naobi.org. Please feel free to share this information with your members.

We look forward to your support of our NEW FACE OF NAOBI, Inc.

DEAF PEOPLE AND HUMAN RIGHTS: COMPREHENSIVE REPORT ON THE SITUATION OF DEAF PEOPLE RELEASED

Mr Colin Allen, Project Co-ordinator

Global Education Pre-Planning Project on the Human Rights of Deaf People

Swedish National Association of the Deaf and the World Federation of the Deaf

World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) and Swedish National Association of the Deaf (SDR) are proud to release the report "Deaf People and Human Rights", written by Ms Hilde Haualand, Researcher, and Mr Colin Allen, Project Co-ordinator of the Global Education Pre-Planning Project on the Human Rights of Deaf People.

The "Deaf People and Human Rights" report is based on a survey that is, up until now, the largest knowledge database on the situation of Deaf people. The lives of Deaf people in 93 countries, most of which are developing countries, is addressed. The Swedish National Association of the Deaf and the World Federation of the Deaf initiated the survey, with funding from the Swedish Agency for International Development Co-operation (Sida) and the Swedish Organisations of Disabled Persons International Aid Association (Shia).

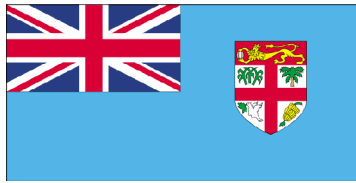
For anyone who would like to download the written English version of the report, it will be available shortly from WFD web site for free. The website is <http://wfdeaf.org/projects.html> . In the coming weeks, the report will also be presented in International Sign on DVD and on WFD website.

Anyone who wishes to receive the Report in International Sign on DVD, please send the attached Order Form appropriately filled in to WFD General Secretariat ([orders\[at\]wfdeaf.org](mailto:orders[at]wfdeaf.org)).

Please distribute this report - "Deaf People and Human Rights" and Order Form to your networks.

Email Address: DeafHumanRights@yahoo.com.au

FIJI ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF: INTERNATIONAL DEAF WEEK AWARENESS PROGRAMME



Area: 18,270 sq km
Population: 931,741
Capital: Suva
Language/s: English (official), Fijian (official), Hindustani
GDP: \$3,700
Currency: Fijian dollars (FJD)

(Source: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/fj.html>)

The Fiji Association of the Deaf (first established in 2002) has been organising a series of activities designed to assist the Deaf people.

Mission Statement

To provide the deaf with equal opportunities so that the deaf can live as equal members in society to help deaf people get the independence needed to advocate for their own needs.

Vision Statement

We want to have a strong, properly organised and well equipped Association that advocates for Deaf people to be EQUAL citizens of this country.

International Deaf Week Awareness programme was achieved following from last year we went to



Interpreters



Tents had charts and posters displayed

Prison to make a presentation about international deaf week. We provided the interpreter service for our deaf awareness. We had a whole lot of activities during the week that saw us make presentations to a Catholic Teachers College; this included staff and students of the college. We had all our affiliates and other Special Schools join us in the march through; these also included students in the mainstream classes. This was a positive sign as it showed the tremendous support given by the public and our peers.

Research Articles: Evidence-based research related to interpreter education representing a variety of disciplines (e.g., linguistics, education, anthropology) and methodologies (qualitative, quantitative, action, and observational).

Commentary: Educators' reflections on classroom teaching activities that provide meaningful advancements in the processes of preparing future interpreters; maintaining the skills of current interpreters, or promoting the professional development of practicing interpreter educators. In this section we also welcome original reviews of books, curriculae or resources that may be of interest to interpreter researchers, educators and trainers.

Open Forum: Publishable interviews with leading scholars, transcripts of debates or presentations of case studies that extend our understanding and analyses of trends in interpreter education and training.

Dissertation Abstracts: Abstracts of Master's theses and doctoral dissertations on interpreter education and related topics.

The journal will be published every two years in an online format, which will be available in a printed version as well. The inaugural issue will be available in November 2009 as a benefit to members of the Conference of Interpreter Trainers.

The Editorial Board is composed of prominent Deaf and hearing interpreter educators and researchers that represent a variety of international perspectives and languages, both spoken and signed.

For more information the *International Journal of Interpreter Education*, visit <http://www.cit-asl.org/journal.html>

IJIE CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS (Due March 30, 2009)

The editors of the new *International Journal of Interpreter Education* are currently seeking submissions for the inaugural issue, due to be published in November 2009. Please see the Conference of Interpreter Trainers website for more information: www.cit-asl.org/journal.html



Deaf Awareness Week in Fiji

1st SYMPOSIUM IN APPLIED SIGN LINGUISTICS: “SIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING”



26th September 2009

24 – 25 September 2009 - Pre-Conference Seminars

Call for Papers and Pre-Conference Seminars

We are pleased to announce the **1st Applied Sign Linguistics Symposium**, organised by the Centre for Deaf Studies, University of Bristol, Bristol – U.K. The aim of the symposium is to generate, for the first time, academic discussion over the emerging field of Applied Sign Linguistics. The question that will lead our discussion is the following:

- How can applied linguistic theory inform research and practice in the teaching and learning of sign languages?

Keynote Presenters

- I. Professor Vivian Cook, Department of Education, Communication and Language Sciences, University of Newcastle – U.K.
- II. Dr Richard Kiely, Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol –U.K.

Abstracts are welcome **for oral, poster presentations and pre-conference seminars** on the following areas:

1. Sign Language Teaching and Learning
2. Sign Language Acquisition as L1/L2
3. IT and sign language learning
4. Sign Language Testing and Evaluation
5. Sign Linguistics [Applied]

6. Discourse analysis

We will consider papers of any related field in Applied Linguistics.

- Deadline for submission of abstracts: **31st March 2009**
- Notification of acceptance: **May 2009**

Abstracts should be sent to Maria Mertzani: M.Mertzani@bristol.ac.uk

British Sign Language (BSL) and English are the official languages of the symposium.

For any further enquiries, please contact Maria Mertzani: M.Mertzani@bristol.ac.uk

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