

WFD – Human Rights Through Sign Languages

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Today I want to talk all about the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) and its mission and future plans from 2007 to 2011, this is focusing mainly on the Human Rights through Sign Languages.

1. WFD Mission

WFD has list of Mission and I am going to pick out some of them.

WFD works in partnership with the United Nations (UN) and WFD promotes the rights of Deaf people to participate in politics, society, government and other areas of life as equal citizens.

WFD involves Deaf leaders in the process of making decisions affecting the lives of Deaf people, on all levels from local to international.

Empowering Deaf people globally, including those in developing countries, Deafblind, Deaf with disabilities- in short all Deaf People- WFD builds a network and structure that allows for achievement of the goal of human rights for all people.

WFD must have achieved a strong foundation of political and economical strength.

2. Human Rights

WFD has a vision of the world as a more perfect and equal place, not only for Deaf people but also for all people globally.

Deaf People have full human rights through recognised Sign Languages, through quality of education and quality of life.

The UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities is implemented in all countries worldwide. By this the Governments will have to take account of the UN Convention into law.

3. Political Strength

Deaf people have human rights, self-determination and political strength

Deaf people are actively involved in all areas of society as equal citizens. There are many more Deaf people in Parliaments/Congresses, and in other high decision-making positions. All of the Deaf people have opportunity for a good social, cultural and family life.

4. Sign Language is respected

One of the WFD's aims is to get the respect, awareness and acceptance of Sign Language.

Sign languages have been researched and accepted in the great majority of countries worldwide. However there are some countries in the world that still do not accept nor respect Sign Languages.

Sign Language to be accepted in education and in order for equal access, Sign Languages must be included in services such as Sign Language Interpreters.

Countries where previously sign language was ignored are making rapid advancement in researching and documenting their sign languages, and in legislating the rights of Deaf people to use these sign languages as their native language worldwide.

5. Deaf education is of high quality

In those countries where Deaf education was once unavailable, schools have been established and education for Deaf people is quickly catching up to the rest of the world. All Deaf education is bi-lingual, the use of both written language and Sign Language; and education for Deaf children and for Deaf adults is equally important. Deaf people have full access to all higher education, including university and adult education.

6. Technological advances ensures access

Because of technological advances, ensuring full access to information, Deaf people can do and participate more. For example the access to information and ease of interaction is possible by visual communication, services supplied in sign language, relay services and other technology. The Internet and other information technology allow for communication in sign language. This means there are more employment equality and more opportunities for advancement. There are more Deaf people in professional jobs, i.e. teaching, medicine, psychology, etc.

7. Access and Interpreting

The interpreters are professionally trained and qualified. Governments take responsibility for financing training programmes and interpreters' costs and increase the number of interpreters for more availability of sign language interpreters. Full participation in employments and social is enabled because all Deaf people have full access to interpreting services.

8. Families

Programmes are provided for families of Deaf children to ensure the home environment fosters and protects the needs of the Deaf child as regards communication, personal development and family interaction. The UN Programs for the Eradication of Poverty have improved the situation and living conditions of Deaf people, especially Deaf women and girls' situations have improved and they have become more equal with Deaf men and boys.

9. Self-determination and empowerment are assumed

Partnerships with parents, teachers, doctors and other professionals to be strong. All of these groups work together to ensure Deaf people have a good education and that Deaf adults are involved in the education of Deaf children.

Deaf people and their concerns are no longer lumped in with 'generic' disability groups and issues. Deaf people belong in the ethnic group which is seen as Cultural group with difference in the culture.

Bio-ethicists have worked with Deaf people to ensure that they are accepted as they are, with no attempts to eradicate deafness or sign language anywhere in the world. Sign language belongs to Deaf people and the acceptance of the Deaf Culture.

10. Vision 2020

WFD has vision for year 2020, for the rise and development of the lives of Deaf people, the Deaf Culture, the Deaf Community. As I have said all of these points so far, is that all of them are involved in making the life of Deaf people equal. So therefore it is important the Human Rights through Sign Languages, bring equal access in educations/schools and services of interpreters, becoming equal in employments, social and many more. All of this leads down to the UN Convention.