



Deaf People and Human Rights



Eastern Europe and Middle Asia Regional Secretariat of the WFD (EEMARS)

WFD Regional Secretariat for Asia and the Pacific (RSA/P)

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Hilde Haualand and Colin Allen
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Deaf People and Human Rights

Compiled by

Ms Hilde Hauland, Researcher

Mr Colin Allen, Assistant to the Researcher and Project Co-ordinator

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

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Front Page Cover Designer: Mr Dušan Nikolić

Photo of Researcher: Ms Siv-Elin Nærø

Photo of Project Co-ordinator: Mr Bojan Djukić

Please contact:

General Secretariat

World Federation of the Deaf

PO Box 65

FIN-00401

Helsinki, Finland

Email: info@wfdeaf.org

Website: www.wfdeaf.org

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1. Foreword

Dear Readers

The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) and the Swedish National Association of the Deaf (SDR) are very glad to have this unique document, containing the most recent information about the human rights situation of Deaf people. With global distribution, the “Deaf People and Human Rights” report will dramatically increase our knowledge about how to improve the status of Deaf people everywhere. Prior to this current report, the most recent research available was from as far back as 1992, when WFD published its “Survey of Deaf People in the Developing World”.

WFD is deeply thankful to the 93 countries that submitted their replies to the survey, addressing such varied areas as recognition of sign languages, accessibility, Deaf education and qualification of sign language interpreters. Sincere thanks go also to the Danish Deaf Association, Norwegian Association of the Deaf and Finnish Association of the Deaf for their support of this innovative project; and to the Swedish Agency for International Development Co-operation (Sida) and the Swedish Organisations of Disabled Persons International Aid Association (Shia) as the main funders. SDR has been honoured to co-operate closely with WFD as a partner in implementation of this important project.

The “Deaf People and Human Rights” report is very topical, as the ratification process of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is ongoing. It can provide the necessary information about what needs to be considered and done if the ratifying countries are going to commit to the spirit of the Convention and fulfil their responsibilities towards it. The Convention is the first international treaty that specifically mentions the rights of sign language users in many articles.

The Convention defines clearly that languages include both spoken and signed languages. It affirms that States must recognise and promote the cultural and linguistic identity of the Deaf community, as well as recognising and promoting the use of sign languages. The Convention further declares that States shall facilitate the learning of sign language and supports Deaf people’s right to receive education in their own language. It guarantees the right to access professional sign language interpreters. Indeed the Convention specifies that all persons with disabilities shall be entitled, on an equal basis with others, to recognition and support of their specific cultural and linguistic identities, and this includes sign languages and Deaf culture.

The “Deaf People and Human Rights” report supports WFD’s aim to promote equalisation of opportunities and full participation in society for Deaf people everywhere. The major results of the survey show clearly that the human rights of Deaf people are blatantly violated all around the world.

The analyses in this report will greatly help WFD and its member organisations orientate themselves to plan effective activities and strategies to improve human rights more systematically. WFD sincerely hopes that this report is also useful to the UN and its agencies, partner organisations and other allies working in the disability, and linguistic and cultural minority movements.

WFD would like to thank Mr Tomas Hedberg, Board Member of WFD, for his initiative in originating the project. Sincere thanks go also to the Steering Committee: Mr Tomas Hedberg, Mr Feliciano Sola Limia, Ms Meri Hysrke-Fischer and Ms Anneli Joneken; and to the WFD General Secretariat, for their strong commitment and willingness to work towards the best outcome possible.

Finally, WFD wishes to extend its deepest thanks to Mr Colin Allen, the Project Co-ordinator, for his outstanding and tireless input; to the seven regional co-ordinators; and to Ms Hilde Haualand for her fruitful analysis of all data, which led to the production of this thorough and impressive final report. Without these people and other volunteers, the entire project and the resulting reports could not have been successfully realised.



*Mr Markku Jokinen
President
World Federation
of the Deaf*



*Mr Lars-Åke Wikström
President
Swedish National Association
of the Deaf*

2. Executive Summary

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). The report can be viewed translated to International Sign on the WFD website (www.wfdeaf.org/projects.html).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities underlines that people with disabilities have the right to enjoy full human rights. The core factors for the human rights of Deaf people are access to and recognition of sign language including acceptance of and respect for Deaf people’s linguistic and cultural identity, bilingual education, sign language interpreting and accessibility. This report presents data and analyses about the respondents (most of which are associations of Deaf people), recognition of sign language in legislation, education, accessibility and interpreters and lifelong learning. The existence of various services or institutions is discussed in this report, not the qualities or quantities of such. One hundred and twenty-three (123) countries received the questionnaire, and 93 responded, giving a response rate of 76 percent.

The main findings are:

- Nineteen country respondents say their governments do not recognise Deaf people as equal citizens and only 44 countries have legal recognition of sign language, mostly within the fields of education and social services. Deaf people are not allowed to obtain a driver’s license in 31 countries. With very few exceptions, Deaf people are not formally denied the right to vote or to establish a family; but limited access to the media and other information, high illiteracy rates and heavy social prejudices cause violation of human rights for Deaf people and denigrate their status as equal citizens.
- It seems that no country totally denies Deaf people the right to an education, but the education system and/or literacy levels of Deaf children are not satisfactory in any respondent country. Only 23 countries provide bilingual education in sign language and the national language to Deaf children in some schools. In all other schools and countries, Deaf children’s access to education is limited. Most respondents say the quality of education for Deaf people is low and the illiteracy rate is high, which indicates that there is a massive ignorance in education systems about the importance of sign language in Deaf education.
- Eighty countries have sign language interpreters, but only 32 governments take some responsibility in paying for the sign language interpreters’ salaries. There is sign language interpreting training of varying quality in 43 countries, and only 30 countries have a Code of Ethics that secures the autonomy of Deaf people in situations where a sign language interpreter is involved. Only 18 countries have a sign language interpreting service, professional training and a Code of Ethics for sign language interpreting. Only 11 countries say Deaf people do not have access to government services, but the limited access to sign language interpreting indicates that there are almost no countries where Deaf people have real access to government services.
- Seventy-seven countries recognise that Deaf people have the right to work and earn a salary, but only 47 have anti-discrimination legislation in the field of employment that protects Deaf people against discrimination at work. Fifty countries say Deaf people can access university education, but only 18 countries provide sign language interpreting at universities. In all other countries, Deaf people’s access to higher education is very limited.

- Fifty-two country respondents are ignorant about whether the HIV/AIDS situation affects Deaf people in their country, or have no information about this issue. Country respondents in African regions seem to be the most aware about the HIV/AIDS situation, yet these are also regions with low access to public services. In most of the respondent countries there is a need for HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns and/or information about HIV/AIDS directed at associations of the Deaf and individual Deaf people, as the current situation is precarious.

Relatively few countries deny Deaf people access to education, government services or equal citizenship on the basis of deafness alone. But lack of recognition of sign language, lack of bilingual education, limited availability of sign language interpreting services and widespread lack of awareness and knowledge about the situation of Deaf people deprive most Deaf people of access to large sections of society. Thus they are not able to truly enjoy even basic human rights.

3. Deaf People and Human Rights

3.1 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Fundamental freedoms and human rights apply to everyone regardless of sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status such as disability or deafness. Still, Deaf people and people with disabilities all over the world recognised that their rights were not adequately protected by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child¹, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women² and other documents aimed at protecting the human rights of all people. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) does not grant people with disabilities any new human rights, but is a document to secure that people with disabilities shall enjoy the same human rights as everyone else. It is a document that aims to “promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity” (Article 1). The Convention recognises “that disability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others” (Preamble (e)). CRPD indicates a paradigm shift from a medical to a political and social focus in the work to secure the freedom and dignity of people with disabilities. Attitudinal and environmental barriers, not the physical impairment, prevent people with disabilities from enjoying full human rights; for Deaf people the major barrier is lack of recognition, acceptance and use of sign language in all areas of life, and lack of respect for Deaf people’s cultural and linguistic identity.

A set of principles for the whole Convention is laid out in Article 3, and all other articles are guided by these principles. Some of the principles are: “respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one’s own choices” (3 (a)); “full and effective participation in society” (3 (c)); “respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity” (3 (d)); and “respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities” (3 (g)). Respect for difference, the right to preserve identities, and acceptance of Deaf people and sign languages as part of human diversity and humanity imply that the recognition of sign language is inseparable from recognition and acceptance of Deaf people’s cultural and linguistic identity. The CRPD also recognises that *culture* (principle (d), Article 30), *identity* (principle (h), Articles 24 and 30) and *language* (Articles 2, 21 and 24) constitute an inseparable triangle.

CRPD mentions sign language in Article 2 - Definitions; Article 9 - Accessibility; Article 21 - Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information; Article 24 - Education; and Article 30 - Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport.³ The definition of communication in Article 2 “includes languages, display of text, Braille, tactile communication, large print, accessible multimedia as well as written, audio, plain-language, human-reader and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, including accessible information and communication technology”. The definition of language includes “spoken and signed languages and other forms of non spoken languages” (Article 2). Thus, sign languages are included in all articles that mention “communication” or “language”. CRPD provides a powerful tool to enhance the human rights of people with disabilities, and the above-mentioned articles highlight the basic factors for protecting the human rights of Deaf people.

¹ <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

² <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>

³ The full text of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities can be found at <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=259>

3.2 Basic Factors for Human Rights of Deaf People

The implementation of four basic factors is tantamount to the protection of the human rights of Deaf people:

- Recognition and use of sign language(s), including recognition of and respect for Deaf culture and identity
- Bilingual education in sign language(s) and the national language(s)
- Accessibility to all areas of society and life, including legislation to secure equal citizenship for all and prevent discrimination
- Sign language interpretation

As illustrated in Figure 3.1, without the implementation and existence of even one of these factors Deaf people will not be able to fully enjoy human rights.

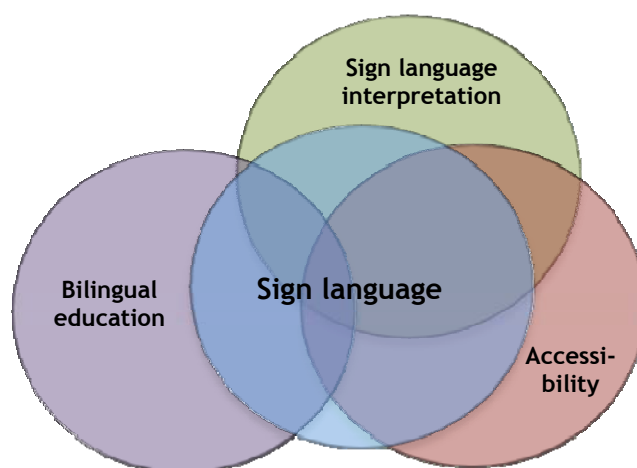


Figure 3.1

Full enjoyment of human rights for Deaf people can only be found in the core of this model, where sign language (including recognition of and respect for Deaf culture and identity) is the central factor. The sign language interpretation and accessibility circles share more space than the other circles, because accessibility often rests upon the availability of sign language interpreters. Sign language is the circle that overlaps the most with all other circles. Deaf people cannot be educated without sign language, it is not possible to use sign language interpreters without knowing sign language and access to various areas of life will be limited without access to efficient and natural communication. By the same token, the sign language circle in this model has the smallest part that has no shared space with other circles. Access to a language is a prerequisite for enjoyment of many human rights, but access to a specific spoken language or sign language is not (yet) perceived a human right. Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights⁴ reads “Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, such as race, colour, sex, *language*, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (Emphasis by researcher). Neither the Declaration of Human Rights nor the CRPD declare access to a specific or individual language or sign language as a human right; they state only that discrimination on the basis of language is not permitted. Herein lies a premise that all languages are equal, and all languages and their users should be respected and protected in their own right. When Deaf people, whose natural language(s) are sign language(s), are denied the use of sign language in interaction with other people or experience discrimination in various areas of life because they use sign language, the consequence is violation of their human rights.⁵ Sign language is at the core of Deaf people’s lives; sign language makes accessibility for Deaf people possible; without accessibility, Deaf people will be isolated.

⁴ The full text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be found at <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

⁵ As of this writing, WFD is trying to influence the view that the UN has towards the users of sign languages. For instance, during the first UN Forum on Minority Issues (December 2008) the president of WFD, Mr Jokinen, emphasised in his statement that users of sign languages should be recognised as linguistic minorities along with spoken language minorities.

3.3 “Deaf People and Human Rights”

3.3.1 Lack of data on the situation of Deaf people

The analysis in this report is based on the data collected through the Global Education Pre-Planning Project on the Human Rights of Deaf People. This constitutes the largest database about Deaf people in the world outside Europe, the USA and Canada. The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD), as well as other organisations that work with Deaf people in developing countries, recognises that a large majority - maybe as much as 90% - of the world's Deaf children and adults have never been to school and are thus more or less illiterate. It has frequently been observed that sign language is repressed in many countries and its use is not permitted in education. The consequence is that Deaf people are not aware of the rights they have, and live as a highly marginalised group especially in most developing countries. There is usually no or only very little access to information for Deaf people, which means that they do not even know what is happening in their immediate society and even less so in the world. Although these factors have been widely observed, little data or statistics on the situation of Deaf people in the different regions around the world have been collected in the past 20 years. The lack of data hinders efficient planning and targeting of development co-operation projects; as well, lack of knowledge about the situation of Deaf people in each country and region makes education and improved awareness more problematic.

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

The Swedish National Association of the Deaf (SDR) has been involved with development work for decades, and initiated the Global Education Pre-Planning Project on the Human Rights of the Deaf People with WFD and co-partners in the Nordic countries (Danish Deaf Association - DDL; Finnish Association of the Deaf - FAD; and Norwegian Association of the Deaf - NDF). The Swedish Organisations of Disabled Persons International Aid Association (Shia) granted funding to SDR, with WFD as a partner, to carry out a pre-planning survey project in WFD's seven regions. The members of the Project Steering Committee were Mr. Tomas Hedberg, SDR; Mr. Feliciano Sola Limia, WFD; Ms Nanny Nordström, WFD; Ms. Meri Hyske-Fischer, WFD; and Ms. Anneli Joneken, Shia. SDR and WFD approached FAD to appoint a project co-ordinator; subsequently Mr Colin Allen was hired to manage the project between July 2007 and December 2008 in the seven regions as follows:

- Eastern Europe and Middle Asia Regional Secretariat of the WFD (WFD EEMARS)
- WFD Regional Secretariat for Asia and the Pacific (WFD RSA/P)
- WFD Regional Secretariat for South America (WFD RSSA)
- WFD Regional Secretariat for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean (WFD MCAC)
- WFD Regional Secretariat for Eastern and Southern Africa (WFD RSESA)
- WFD Interim Regional Secretariat for Western and Central Africa Region (WFD WCAR)
- WFD Interim Regional Secretariat for the Arab Region (WFD RSAR)

The goals of the pre-planning survey were:

- Compilation of an analysis of the situation for Deaf people in each of the seven regions according to a common questionnaire
- Production of documentation of assessment of the capacity of the national organisations and the regional structure in each region
- Development of training materials and methodologies
- Production of an education plan for every region
- Compilation of a global training plan on human rights to be used as the basis for a new project application

The data presented and analysed in the “Deaf People and Human Rights” report is a product of the information collected through the common questionnaire⁶ and the reports that have been compiled for each of the seven regions. Western Europe and northern America are not formal regions within WFD, and are not included in this survey. The main target of the pre-planning

⁶ The full questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1

project was Deaf people in developing countries. This report highlights the situation in regions with a high number of developing countries.

In each of the seven regions, a Deaf regional co-ordinator was appointed and a regional working group was established. The regional co-ordinators were responsible to establish a communication network with the regional members as well as to co-ordinate the meeting for the regional working group. The Deaf members of the regional working groups were also responsible to acknowledge the survey results as they were received from the country respondents.

The questionnaire was prepared by the project co-ordinator, who also liaised with the President of the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI) for her guidance on relevant questions regarding the status of sign language interpreting services. The Project Steering Committee approved the survey questions. The questionnaire had 126 different questions, covering these topics: the respondent organisation's background, the national population of Deaf people, legislation and policies, access to government services, access to the media, status of the country's sign language(s), access to education, sign language interpreting services and employment. The questionnaire was available in English, Russian, Spanish, French, Arabic and International Sign.

The questionnaire was sent to the WFD Ordinary Members (OMs) in the seven regions, and to organisations that were assumed to represent Deaf people in countries that did not have any WFD OM. In some countries, lack of response from the main target organisation (WFD OM) led to contact with other associations in those countries that eventually responded. The questionnaire was sent to organisations and/or associations in 123 countries and 93 organisations/associations responded⁷. One report was compiled for each of the seven regions. All regional survey reports can be downloaded from the WFD website www.wfdeaf.org/projects.html

3.3.3 Evaluation of answers to the pre-planning survey

The vast geographical, cultural, social and linguistic variation of the countries participating in the survey has probably reduced both the validity and reliability of some of the questions and answers. However, the regional co-ordinators and working groups functioned as culture-sensitive resources and consultants for the respondents. One task of the regional co-ordinators was to encourage and remind the countries in the regions to complete the survey. Then the members of the regional working groups, who had wide networks in their regions as well as first-hand knowledge about the situation in many of the responding countries, were able to double check the incoming answers at their meeting after all completed questionnaires had been collected. The use of a common questionnaire for all countries and regions, as well as a system of regional co-ordinators and working groups has probably helped to keep the reliability at an acceptable level for most questions.

It is also likely that the activity level of the individual regional co-ordinators influenced response rates. In addition it must be noted that the people answering the questions and the members of the regional working groups belong to a small elite group of Deaf people who are literate, and have access to and knowledge of resources many Deaf people are not aware of. Even so, many of the answers only indicate the mere existence of a service or legislation, and give little or no information about the quality or delivery of this service or legislation. The respondents' perception of 'access', awareness about human rights for Deaf people and general resources also influence the answers. One example is the answers to the question on access to higher education: Australia, where most universities will provide sign language interpreters, said Deaf people do not have *full* access to sign language interpreters; other countries where resources are scarce and sign language interpreters are provided in only one university or only for a particular course, say Deaf people have full access. It is more likely that answers give a too-positive rather than a too-negative picture of the actual situation. Also, the regional working groups indicated that some countries may have given too-positive answers out of fear of reprisals from their government if they gave responses reflecting the real situation.

⁷ Appendix 2 provides a complete list of responding countries, and the name of the responding association or organisation in each country.

The answers to questions related to the existence of a particular service, institution or legislation show consistent patterns and do most likely reflect the actual situation in the responding countries. Answers to questions regarding quality of services, numbers or statistics show no or very little inherent consistency. They are not reliable, nor is it possible to analyse them without much more information, which probably is not at all available. Therefore, the numbers (for example number of schools, (un)employment rates and population) reported by each responding country and their qualitative evaluation of various services have not been included in this current report (with an exception regarding the level of literacy), although they can be found in the individual regional reports. Finally, the questionnaire had an emphasis on the role of services run by the government. Services and institutions run by private parties or NGOs may therefore be excluded from the answers, even if these services and institutions have considerable influence on the lives of Deaf people.

Partly due to the lack of reliable data about Deaf populations in both responding and non-responding countries, generalisations about specific areas or services for Deaf people in countries other than those who responded are advised against. Lack of information and lack of services might have caused some associations to refrain from responding, and it is likely that the situation is worse in many non-responding countries than in those who responded.

3.3.4 Methodology and analysis in 'Deaf People and Human Rights'

This report does not provide an exhaustive overview of the situation of Deaf people in the world, nor an exhaustive analysis of the data collected through the pre-planning project. To make a final analysis of the regional reports, an external researcher (Haualand) was hired and the project co-ordinator (Allen) for the Global Education Pre-Planning project functioned as assistant to the researcher. The external researcher did not take part in the pre-planning survey, and did not have input into the questions asked, the methods of data collection or the conclusions in the regional reports. The analyses are based on the seven regional reports, the raw data/answers from the survey, information provided by and discussions with the project co-ordinator and the WFD General Secretariat, as well as a few online resources. The format of this report is different than the format of the seven regional reports. The regional reports provide in-depth descriptions of the collected data, while the 'Deaf People and Human Rights' report provides an analysis guided by the principles of and selected articles in the CRPD. Answers to different topics in the questionnaire and the regional reports have been linked to show what factors influence the violation or support of human rights for Deaf people. The emphasis in analysis is on the existence of a legislation or service. Only occasionally is the quality of legislation or service discussed, partly because the respondents presented too varied cultural and resource-related views in their qualitative evaluations. The conclusions in this final report may not be the same as in the regional reports.

3.3.5 Appreciation

For support in the production of this report, the researcher and the assistant to the researcher wish to acknowledge the Norwegian Association of the Deaf and its General Secretary, Mr Paal Richard Peterson, for providing material resources and valuable advice on the statistical analyses; Ms Corrie Tijsseling, Dr Yerker Andersson and Mr Markku Jokinen for references and critical comments; the WFD General Secretariat, specifically Ms Meri Hyske-Fischer and Ms Laura Pajunen, for general comments and various documents; Ms Liz Scott Gibson for input into the chapter on access to services and sign language interpreting; and Ms Carol-lee Aquiline for editing the English in the report.

For the production of the DVD and web versions of the report, we wish to acknowledge the film production team Ms Vera Jovanović, Mr Slobodan-Boba Milošević and Ms Desanka Žižić for their excellent videography; Ms Vivien Batory for her co-operation with the project co-ordinator in translating and recording into International Sign (IS); and Schwung for sponsoring the space and bandwidth for the report in IS.

4. The Respondents

4.1 Self-Representation in Decision-Making

The CRPD states that “persons with disabilities should have the opportunity to be actively involved in decision-making processes about policies and programmes, including those directly concerning them” (Preamble (o)). To make the right decisions on behalf of all Deaf people, it is crucial that Deaf people themselves lead decision-making processes, including having the majority in bodies governing their own organisations. The national associations of Deaf people are the organisations that have the best knowledge about the challenges Deaf people face, and about the best ways to solve issues and improve the lives of Deaf people.

4.1.1 Respondents’ representation of Deaf people

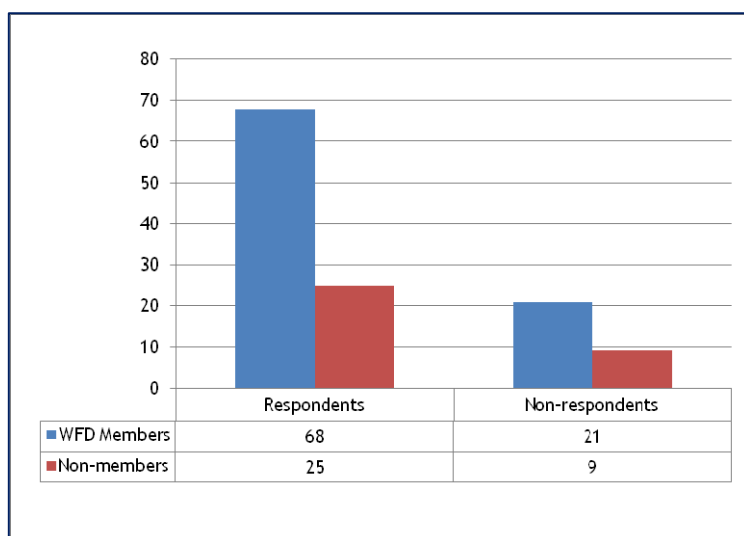


Diagram 4.1

As Deaf people are most likely to have the best overview of other Deaf people, it was crucial to the pre-planning survey to receive as many answers as possible from associations *of* Deaf people (Deaf-led), not associations *for* Deaf people (often led by hearing people with secondary interests in and knowledge about Deaf lives). WFD membership was used as an indicator of the nature of the respondents, because only national organisations of Deaf people with a clear majority of Deaf voting members, a governing board with a majority of Deaf persons and goals similar to WFD can become Ordinary Members (OMs) of WFD⁸.

Of the 123 questionnaires sent, WFD OMs received 89 while non-members received 34. Responses were received from 68 of the OMs, and 25 of the non-members. This gives a response rate of 76% from WFD members and 74% from non-members. This response rate is very high, considering the linguistic and cultural diversity, weak structure and limited capacity (both personal and economical) of many of the respondents.

4.1.2 Non-respondents

In six of the regions the non-response rate was between one to three organisations, while in the Asia/Pacific region only 14 of 28 questionnaires were returned. It is assumed that the main reasons for non-responses are dormant/dismantled organisations, political reasons (violence or major conflicts) and language barriers (especially in the Asia/Pacific region where the questionnaire was sent out in English and International Sign only). The regional working groups also indicated that some of the non-respondents might have felt they were unable to answer the questions, and therefore refrained from responding. The average situation for Deaf people and human rights is probably worse in the non-responding countries than in those who responded.

⁸ WFD Statutes

4.2 Economic Classification

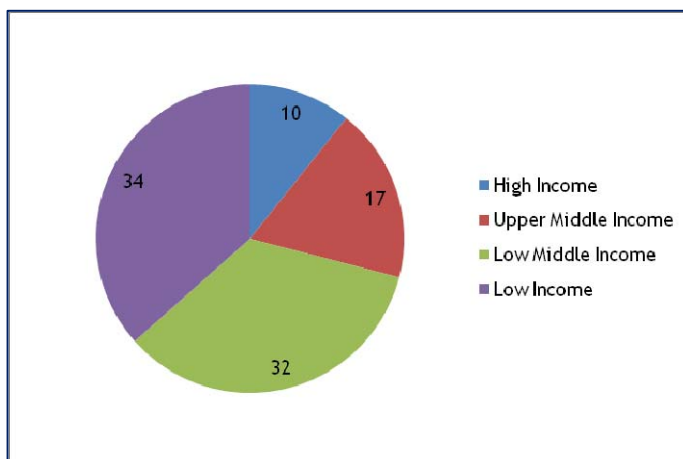


Diagram 4.2

Based on the World Bank's definitions, four classifications⁹ were used for this analysis: low income (L), low middle income (LM), upper middle income (UM) and high income (H). According to these definitions, more than two-thirds of the respondents are classified as low (34) or low middle (32) income countries, while 17 are upper middle and 10 are high-income countries.

4.3 Population of Deaf People

The respondents were asked if there were any official records of the number of Deaf people in their country or if the associations had any official or approximate number of Deaf people in their country; the answers returned were not reliable. The numbers ranged from figures including all people with profound to mild hearing losses (including people with age-related hearing losses), to numbers equalling the membership of the association of the Deaf in that country. Almost no, if any, country respondent could provide a reliable figure of the population of deaf people in their country. However, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that there are about 59 million people (0.9 % of the total population) in the world with a hearing loss classified as severe or greater (hearing loss of 61dB or more) (WHO 2005¹⁰). Eighty percent, or 47 million, of these live in a developing country¹¹. The actual percentage of deaf people probably varies in different countries; external factors such as disease, accidents and environmental influences cause at least 50% of all hearing loss and are more likely to occur in developing countries.

The lack of reliability in the answers regarding population issues in the survey makes it difficult, if not impossible, to evaluate answers related to gender and age, whether the number of Deaf schools in a particular country reflect the population of Deaf students (there is no information on how many students are enrolled in these schools), what the rate of (un)employment is among Deaf people or if the number (supply) of sign language interpreters (qualified or not) is likely to meet the demand in each country. However, observations made by WFD, national associations of Deaf people and other organisations testifies to a huge lack of schools for Deaf children, very high illiteracy and unemployment rates, and great scarcity of sign language interpreters. The lack of statistics about Deaf people makes planning for and reasonable dimensioning of services targeted at Deaf people very difficult. Based on general observation, Deaf people are severely underserved in most countries.

4.4 Medical and Social Views

To many people, 'deaf' simply refers to a person who cannot hear. However, total or partial (in)ability to hear has fundamental social and linguistic implications, heavily influences relationships with other people, and is also not necessarily directly related to degree of hearing loss. The cultural and social aspects of being Deaf cannot be ignored when working to secure human rights for Deaf people. Deaf people continuously create regional and national communities based on communication in sign language, and have a heritage of transnational interaction that has evolved over centuries. This tradition is also recognised by CRPD Article 30 (4), which reads "Persons with disabilities shall be entitled, on an equal basis with others, to recognition and

⁹<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/DATASTATISTICS/0,,contentMDK:20420458-menuPK:64133156-pagePK:64133150-piPK:64133175-theSitePK:239419,00.html>

¹⁰ "Estimated global prevalence of hearing impairment by sex and severity level, 2005", table received in email to WFD from Dr Young-Ah Ku, Medical Officer, WHO, on 26 January 2009

¹¹ World Health Organization Fact Sheet no. 300, Deafness and hearing impairment, 2006

support of their specific cultural and linguistic identity, *including sign languages and deaf culture.*” (Emphasis by researcher) In the English language, the lowercase ‘deaf’ often refers to a property of the body (i.e. the physical inability to hear), while the uppercase ‘Deaf’ is often used to refer to the cultural and linguistic aspects of being deaf; however, the distinction between these two concepts is not always very clear.

There are no suggestions or reliable indications about the number of people who use or know one or more sign language(s) or would benefit from learning sign language. Sign languages are in general not widely acknowledged as a natural and self-evident language for all people with a moderate to profound hearing loss. They are not even mentioned as a possible tool for improving the lives of Deaf people in the WHO fact sheet about hearing loss, itself in conflict with the CRPD article 30 (4), mentioned above. As sign languages are natural languages it must be assumed that all people can benefit from knowing one or more sign languages. For people with a hearing loss (ranging from moderate to severe), knowing sign language and being able to communicate with it is not merely a question of benefit. It is a question about whether they have the possibility to enjoy human rights, and participate in and contribute to the communities and societies they live in, since spoken languages often or mostly will be inaccessible and insufficient for communication with other people. The lack of recognition, little knowledge about and limited access to education in sign language indicate that the present population of people knowing sign language is just a fraction of all those people whose quality of life would improve and whose opportunity to enjoy human rights would increase greatly if given access to sign language.

4.5 Respondent Organisations by Region

There are some regional differences regarding the degree of self-governance by Deaf people in their organisations. The tables below, by region, show the degree of autonomy in the organisations (defining autonomy through membership in WFD, a Deaf majority on the board and whether or not the person-in-charge is Deaf); whether they are recognised by the national government to represent Deaf people in their country; and if they have any contact with the current government in their country. Each ‘yes’ answer is given one point; non-responses or ‘no’ are given zero points. The maximum score possible is five points, which would indicate that the organisation is Deaf-led and has some contact with the government in their country. The nature or frequency of government contact does not appear in the diagrams. The numbers after country names show the year of establishment and the letters in parentheses indicate World Bank status (High - H, Upper Middle - UM, Lower Middle - LM or Low - L). The numbers in front of the questions on the right refer to the question number in the questionnaire. The non-members are placed at the right side in the diagrams for those regions that had non-members among the respondents, with a slight space between the members and non-members.

Eastern Europe and Middle Asia (EEMARS)

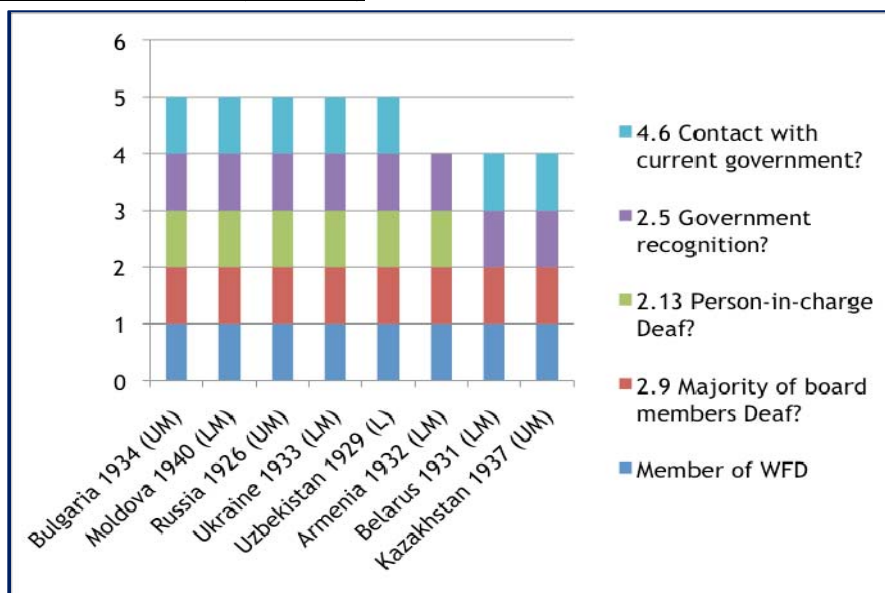


Diagram 4.3

All eight respondent organisations in the EEMARS region are Deaf-led, and all except Armenia have some contact with the current government. The organisations in these countries are also relatively old, with the youngest association having been established in 1940 (Moldova). The most common type of contact with the government in this region is membership in or representation on national disability councils.

Asia and the Pacific (RSA/P)

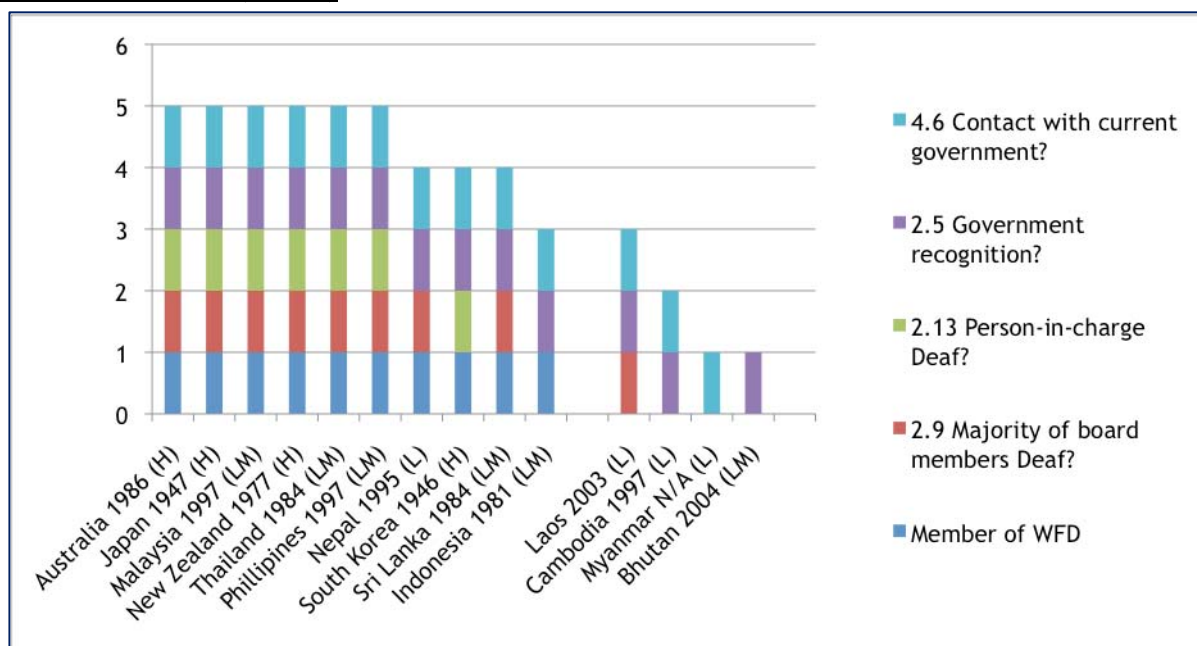


Diagram 4.4

Ten of the 14 RSA/P respondents are WFD members, while four are not. Only one of the non-member respondents scores three points, which is also the lowest score for a WFD member. Not all associations answered all questions, so it is not clear whether those with the lower scores are actually led by hearing people, or if there are other reasons for no score. South Korea and Japan have the oldest associations in the region. Some associations are represented on national disability councils; have advisory roles to governmental ministries, departments or disability-related projects; or are members of committees or involved in programmes or projects related to special education, interpreting and other services.

South America (RSSA)

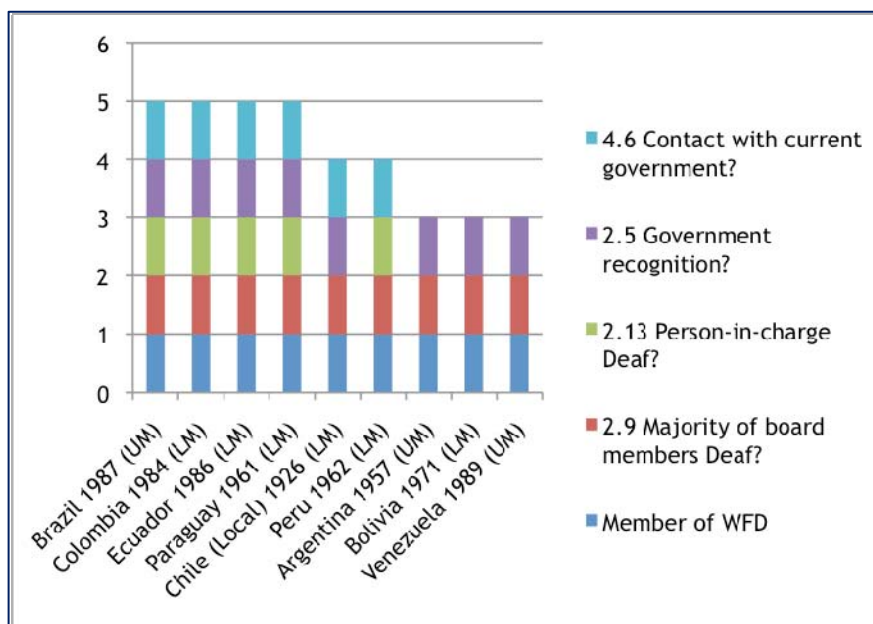


Diagram 4.5

In this region, all nine respondent organisations are members of WFD, and all boards have a Deaf majority. All but one (Peru) is recognised by the government as representing Deaf people, and six have contact with the current government. Three are represented on national disability committees; Colombia also has permanent participation in and input into all the democratic arenas where subjects related to the Deaf community are discussed. Even though all associations are Deaf-led, only five say their person-in-charge is Deaf. However, in this region, there seemed to be a tendency that only those with paid staff members answered this question, and voluntary (Deaf) in-charges have not been counted. Chile's answers are from a local branch (in the capital city of Santiago) of a national association of Deaf people that was disbanded in 2008. The ages of the associations range from the oldest in Chile (1926) to the youngest in Venezuela (1989).

Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean (MCAC)

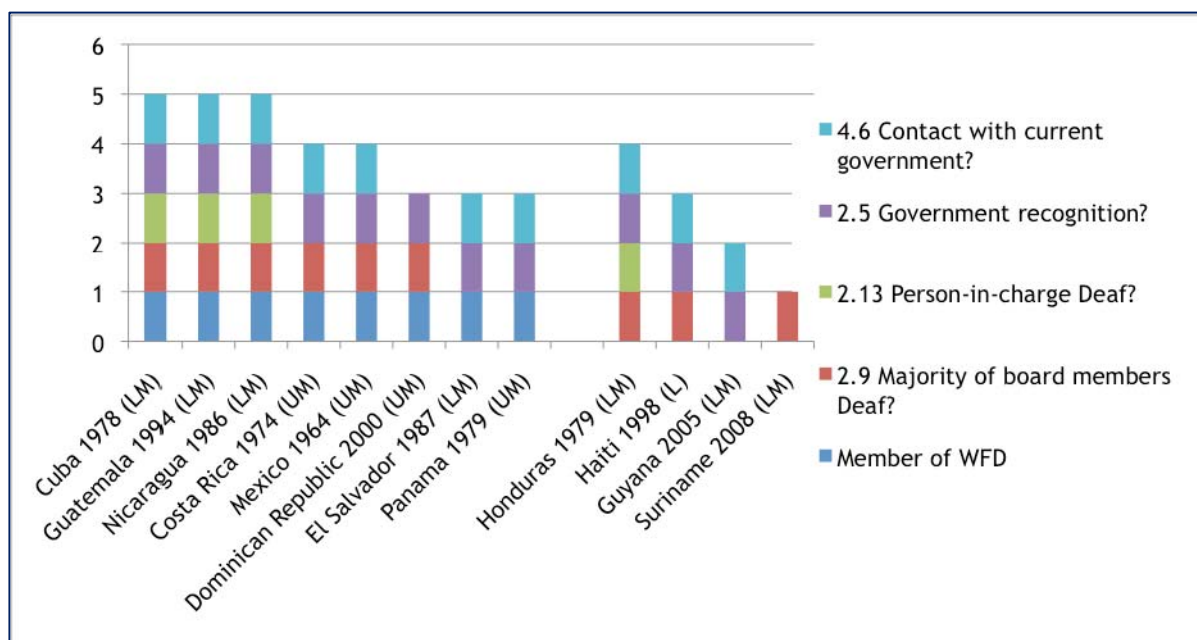


Diagram 4.6

Of the 12 respondent countries in the MCAC region, eight are WFD members and four are not. Only three countries score five points. All but two associations (Dominican Republic and Suriname) have some contact with the current government, and all but one (Suriname) are recognised by their government as representing Deaf people. Reported types of contact with the government are national disability councils, reports to and from different ministries, and project

management. Costa Rica has the oldest association, and the most recent organisation was established in Suriname in 2008.

Eastern and Southern Africa (RSESA)

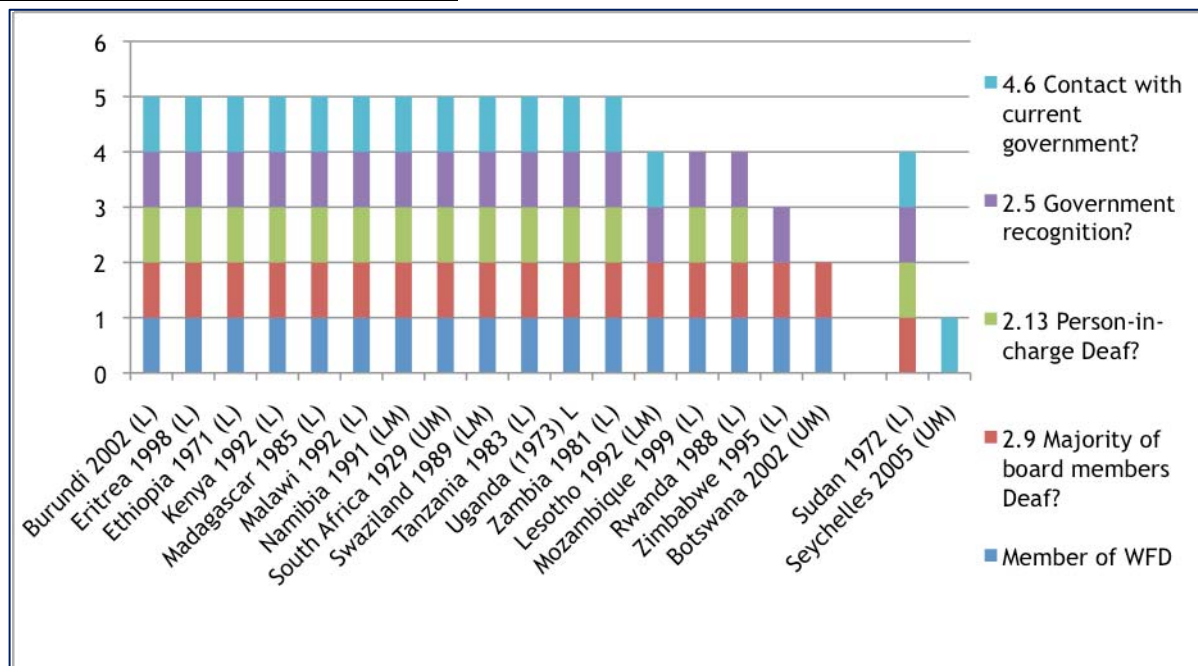


Diagram 4.7

The 19 respondents in the RSESA region have a high degree of self-determination and governmental recognition. Only the organisations in Botswana and Seychelles are not recognised by their governments. Four of the respondents have no contact with the current government. Of the 15 confirmed Deaf persons-in-charge, eight are in paid positions. Those who have contact with the government mention contact with various ministries, participation in national disability councils, and involvement in different projects on sign language, employment and social services. Uganda and South Africa each have one Deaf Member of Parliament. The oldest association in the region is in South Africa (1929); a few were established at the beginning of the 1970s, with the majority being established from 1989 onwards coinciding with the last few years of the UN Decade of Disabled Persons.

Western and Central Africa (WCAR)

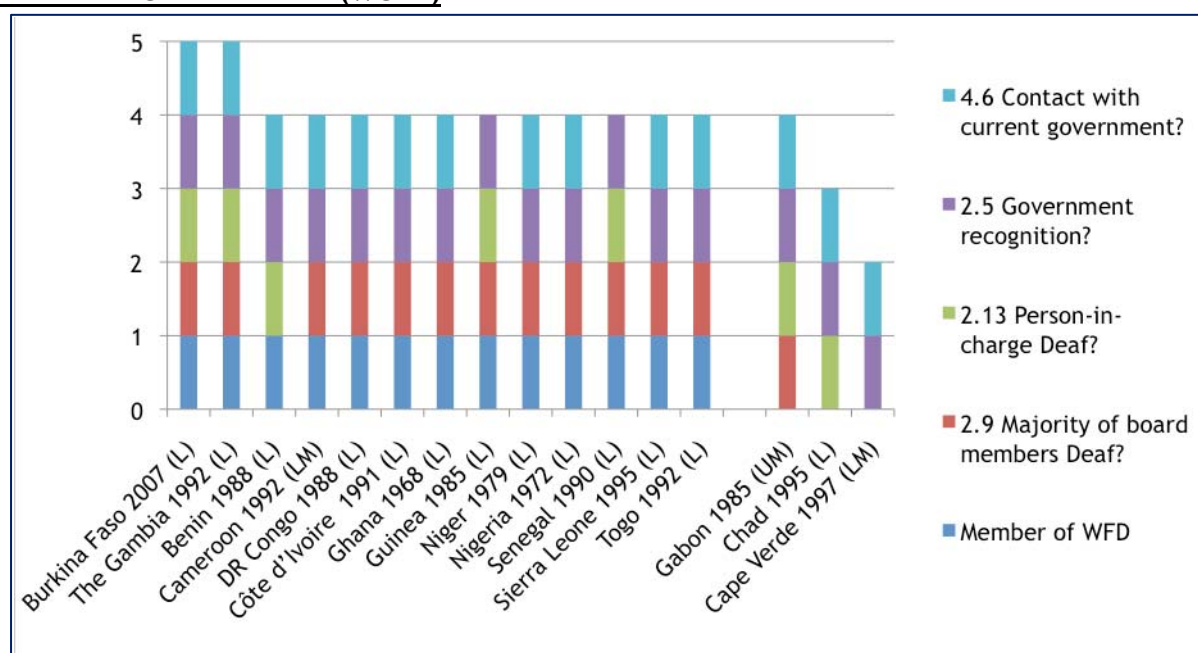


Diagram 4.8

Only two of the 16 respondents in this region get the highest score in self-determination, and contact with and recognition by the government. Both are WFD members. Three of the

respondents are not WFD members. Only Guinea and Senegal have no contact with the current government. The others mention contact with different ministries (often labour, social affairs and education) or through different disability initiatives. This is the region with the highest number of countries classified as Low Income by the World Bank; as will be seen in later chapters on education and accessibility/sign language interpreting, the associations in those countries work under severe challenges and lack of accessibility and services for Deaf people. The oldest organisation in the region is Nigeria, and the youngest is Burkina Faso, where an association was established in 2007.

Arab Region (RSAR)

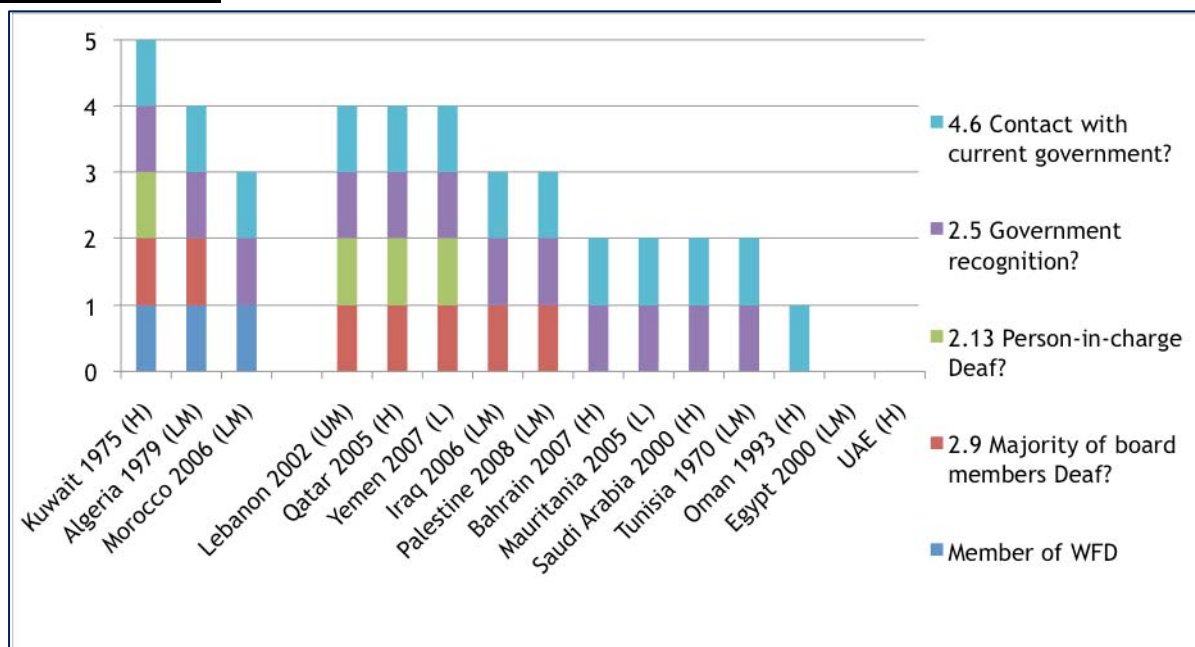


Diagram 4.9

This is the region with the fewest WFD members among the respondents. Only three of the 15 respondents are WFD members, and seven are led by Deaf people. Four have a Deaf person-in-charge. Five of the organisations that are recognised by the government as representing Deaf people and that have contact with the current government seem to have no Deaf majority or decision-making power by Deaf people. The contact with the government seems to be financial support for different activities and periodic meetings. Kuwait is the only association in this region that is both fully Deaf-led and that has contact with the current government. Kuwait is also the second oldest association in this region. The youngest association is in Palestine (2008). The respondent from United Arab Emirates was a government department for disability, thus the question about the year of establishment did not apply to this respondent.

5. Equality and Sign Language

*"If I say yes to another person's language,
I have said yes to that person.
If I say no to a language, I have said no to the person,
because language is a part of one's self." (Terje Basilier, 1974)¹²*

5.1 Article 21 Freedom of Expression and Opinion; and Article 29 Participation in Political and Public Life

The statement above, by Dr Terje Basilier (1921-1974), sums up the key message in *Article 21 Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information* in the CRPD.

"States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can exercise the right to freedom of expression and opinion, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas on an equal basis with others and through all forms of communication of their choice", including among others "Accepting and facilitating the *use of sign languages, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication, and all other accessible means, modes and formats of communication of their choice by persons with disabilities in official interactions*" (Article 21 (b)) and "*Recognizing and promoting the use of sign languages.*" (Article 21 (e)) (Emphases by researcher) It is not incidental that recognition and promotion of the use of sign languages is placed under the Article on freedom of expression and opinion, since sign languages are the only languages that allow Deaf people to spontaneously and freely express their ideas; and that allows them to receive information that provides the basis for their own, independent opinions.

Freedom of expression and opinion is strongly connected to Article 29 on participation in political and public life; this reads "States Parties shall guarantee to persons with disabilities political rights and the opportunity to enjoy them on an equal basis with others". This includes among others the right to vote and to participate in the conduct of public affairs. Furthermore, the CRPD strongly emphasises that discrimination on the basis of disability shall not be accepted and that persons with disabilities are and shall be recognised as citizens with equal rights and dignity in all countries in the world.

5.2. Equal Citizenship

With this being the strongest and most basic message in the CRPD, the number of respondents that do not see that their countries recognise Deaf people as equal citizens is quite high. The 19 countries where the respondents say Deaf people are not recognised as equal citizens are Armenia, Bolivia, Cape Verde, Chile, Eritrea, Haiti, Laos, Madagascar, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Palestine, Qatar, Seychelles, South Korea, Suriname, Swaziland and United Arab Emirates.

However, many of the regional working groups believe that there are more countries than these where Deaf people are not recognised as citizens on equal basis, but where the country respondents have not quite understood the question and answered 'yes' rather than 'no'. A common concern is the lack of legislation that explicitly states that all people, including persons with disabilities and/or Deaf people, are citizens with equal rights. It is possible to argue that when legislation or statements on citizenship do not target any specific group, no groups are excluded. However, if other legislation directly or indirectly excludes or puts certain groups in a disadvantaged position, it affects these groups' status as equal citizens. Deaf people are not allowed to vote in Egypt and Deaf women are not allowed to vote in Saudi Arabia; it must be questioned if Deaf people in those countries really are recognised as equal citizens. When there is no general protection or declaration of everyone's status as equal citizens, minorities and other vulnerable groups will often be at a disadvantage. Not only will the right to participate in political life and public affairs be affected, other areas of life will also be influenced; for example freedom of movement (e.g. the right to obtain a driver's license) or permission to establish a

¹² Researcher's translation from Norwegian, quote from TV-programme on Sign Language

family. Diagram 5.1. shows that these rights are not evident in many of the countries that responded.

The information in diagram 5.1 is presented at the regional level, not at the country level. The numbers in parentheses after the region names are the number of country respondents in each region. All other numbers represent the number of positive answers within each category or question.

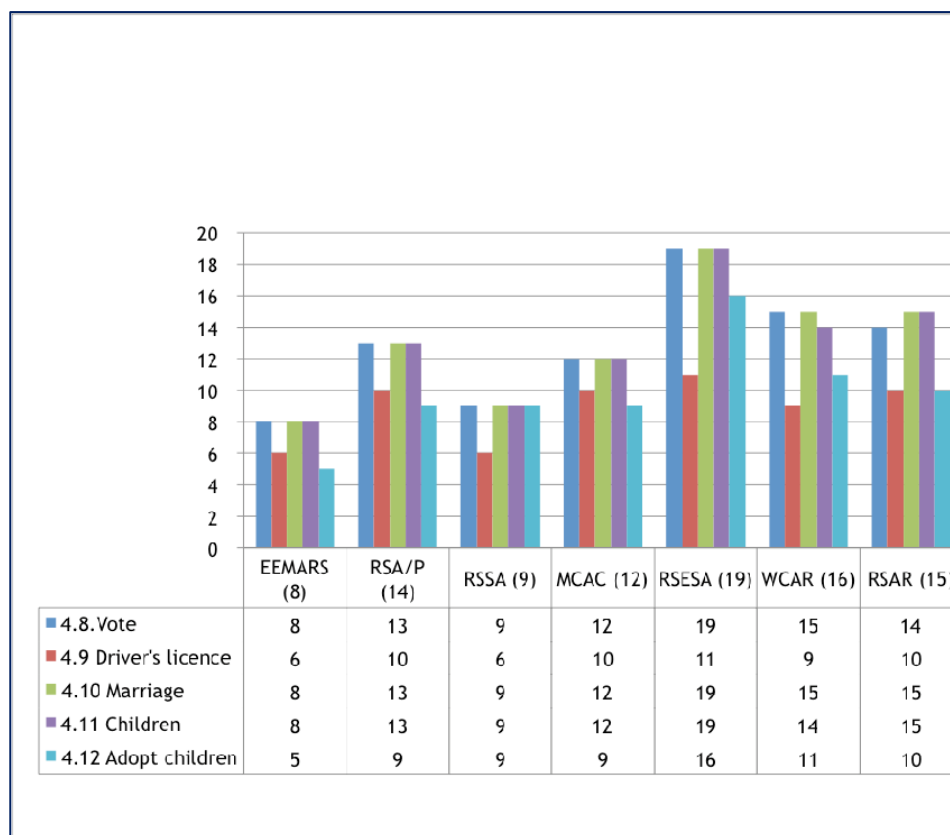


Diagram 5.1

5.2.1 The right to vote

Deaf people can vote in all but three of the respondent countries. Egypt is the only country that says Deaf people are not allowed to vote, while Cape Verde and Myanmar provided no answer to the question whether Deaf people have a right to vote in national, regional and local elections. In Saudi Arabia, only men are allowed to vote, while women are not; this applies to Deaf people also.

As will be shown in diagram 7.1, in chapter seven on Accessibility, very little information from the mass media and the government is accessible in sign language, and mass meetings/personal campaigns rarely have sign language interpreters available. Since it must be assumed that the majority of Deaf people are totally or functionally illiterate (see chapter 6, paragraph 6.3.3 on the low quality of education), written information in newspapers and/or flyers will be of limited benefit. Also, very few news programmes on TV are captioned. Even though Deaf people are rarely formally denied the right to vote, they are not provided the opportunity to make informed and independent decisions in political elections.

5.2.2 Obtaining a driver's license

In one-third of the countries responding, Deaf people are not allowed to obtain a driver's license. It seems, however, that not all these countries have legislation that explicitly states that Deaf people cannot obtain a driver's license. Prejudices and common practice by the traffic authorities or other institutions handling driver's licenses and driver training seem to be the major obstacles against Deaf people obtaining a driver's license. There are no known reports that Deaf drivers are a threat to other road users in the countries where Deaf people are allowed to obtain a driver's license, or that they are involved in more traffic accidents or injuries than the general

population. Denying Deaf people a driver's license is limiting their employment opportunities; as well it limits their freedom of movement and access to various social arenas and life in general.

5.2.3 Marriage, children and adoption

Article 23 Respect for home and the family in CRPD underlines the right of people with disabilities to marry and have children. Deaf people are allowed to marry Deaf or other partners in all responding countries but two. Only Cape Verde and Myanmar did not provide any information on this issue. In all countries except Benin and Cape Verde, respondents say Deaf people are allowed to have children. Benin and Cape Verde provided no information on this issue.

Seventy of the 93 country respondents said Deaf people are allowed to adopt children. Eight countries replied that said Deaf people were not allowed to adopt children, but did not provide information about legal bans. They mostly stated that 'it just did not happen' or that adoption in general was not common in their country. The remaining countries either did not provide any information about whether Deaf people could adopt in their country or did not know the answer.

If the information provided is correct, it seems that very few countries deny Deaf people the right to establish a family. It is still important to remember that many communities and families regard deafness a punishment or a shame, and might not encourage or allow their Deaf family members to marry or establish their own family unit. Furthermore, Deaf people have fewer chances to earn an income that will enable them to establish and sustain a family. When Deaf people are denied access to a language and education, they will be a burden to their family rather than being able to sustain their own family. Thus the lack of education and lack of access to a language affects not only Deaf individuals, but also whole families and communities.

5.3 Recognition of Sign Language

One question that arises is if the reported equality of citizenship is real, or if it is only formal. Equal citizenship seems to be a 'paper status', not a status Deaf people experience in practice. As outlined earlier in this chapter, the CRPD underlines that full citizenship includes "freedom of expression and opinion, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas on an equal basis with others and through all forms of communication of their choice". The measures to ensure this right for Deaf people are not only to accept and facilitate the use of sign languages, but also to recognise and promote the use of sign languages (Article 21(b and e)). Deaf people cannot access enough information to make informed choices, form independent opinions and express themselves adequately without sign language. Auditory and spoken messages are inaccessible to people with no or limited hearing; written information will only be accessible for people who are literate (which requires adequate education, which many Deaf people miss out on - cf. chapter six on education). It is not possible for people to express their opinions and thoughts without a language that they have the predisposition to learn and master effectively and naturally - and to Deaf people the only fully naturally accessible languages are sign languages. It is thus necessary to recognise and promote the use of sign languages to secure that the fundamental right to freedom of expression and opinion is granted to Deaf people. Saying 'yes' to sign language, is saying 'yes' to Deaf people, while saying 'no' is the same as say no to Deaf people and their opportunity to enjoy equal citizenship. Recognition of sign language also implies a 'yes' to the linguistic and cultural identity of Deaf communities, as culture and identity are part of language.

5.3.1 Sign language in legislation

Whereas 74 respondent countries say the government recognises Deaf people as citizens on an equal basis, only 44 countries have any kind of formal recognition of the country's sign language(s). The level of legislation varies from sign language being mentioned in an official guideline, to having constitutional status.

Region	Constitution	Legislation	Policy	Guideline	Other	Country Respondents
EEMARS		5				5
RSA/P	1	3	5			7
RSSA	3	2	1			4
MCAC		2	4			6
RSESA	3	3	9	2		10
WCAR		1				1
RSAR	3	3		5	1	11
Total	10	19	19	7	1	44

In 10 countries, sign language is mentioned in the constitution; 19 countries, it is mentioned in one or more laws. Nineteen countries mention sign language in a policy and seven countries mention sign language in a guideline. Among those who have given detailed information on where and how sign language is formally recognised, most refer to educational laws/policies or laws/policies regulating social and/or welfare services. It stands to reason that only in very few countries are sign languages formally recognised fully in a way so that users of that language have the right to use it for communication in all activities of society and in all areas of life. Although many countries have some kind of formal recognition, many organisations are not satisfied with the level or scope of this recognition, and continue to lobby their government to enhance and improve the status of their sign language(s).

5.3.2 Sign language dictionaries

Another indication of the status of sign language in a country is the existence of one or more sign language dictionaries. A dictionary is a fundamental tool to both promote the status of and enhance the use of sign language. Deaf people, teachers of the Deaf, sign language interpreters, hearing parents of Deaf children and other people with a need to communicate with Deaf people will benefit from a sign language dictionary. A dictionary will make many of the signs of a particular sign language accessible to more people than those who already know it; and also serve as documentation of the existence of a sign language. Legal recognition is not necessary for sign language dictionaries to be developed, but the dictionaries can then be used as a tool to show the existence of a (sign) language that needs legal recognition and protection.

5.4 Regional Overviews: Citizenship and Recognition of Sign Language

In the regional overviews below of the situation regarding equal citizenship and formal recognition of sign languages, the question of whether a country has one or more sign language dictionaries is included. Each 'yes' answer is given one point, while each 'no' is given zero points. Each country can earn a maximum of three points. Three points indicates that Deaf people in that country are recognised as citizens on an equal basis, that the status of the sign language(s) in that country is mentioned in a legal document of any kind and that sign language users in the country have a tool and document for its use (e.g. a dictionary). In only 30 of the 93 countries are Deaf people recognised as equal citizens, is sign language mentioned in any legislation *and* has a sign language dictionary been developed. In 15 countries Deaf people are recognised as equal citizens and have a dictionary, but sign language is not mentioned in legislation. In 10 countries (Benin, Bolivia, Cape Verde, Eritrea, Haiti, Laos, Myanmar, Seychelles, Suriname and Swaziland) Deaf people are not recognised as equal citizens, sign language is not mentioned in any legislation and they have no sign language dictionary; or they simply did not answer the questions.

Eastern Europe and Middle Asia (EEMARS)

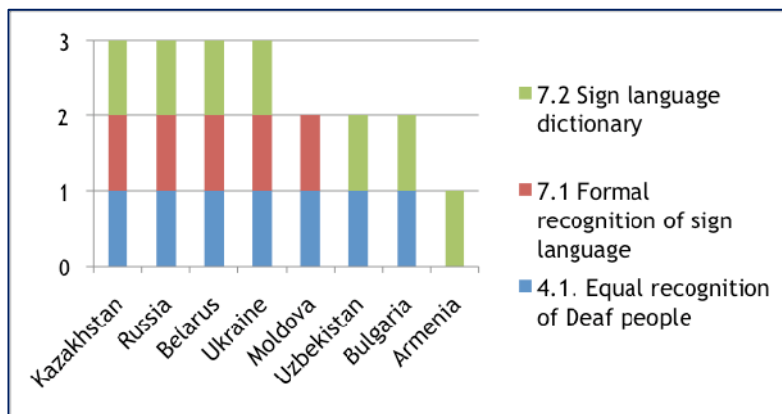


Diagram 5.2

In the EEMARS region, all countries except Moldova have a sign language dictionary. Although five out of eight countries have formally recognised sign language, most countries continue to actively lobby the government to recognise their sign language(s).

Asia and the Pacific (RSA/P)

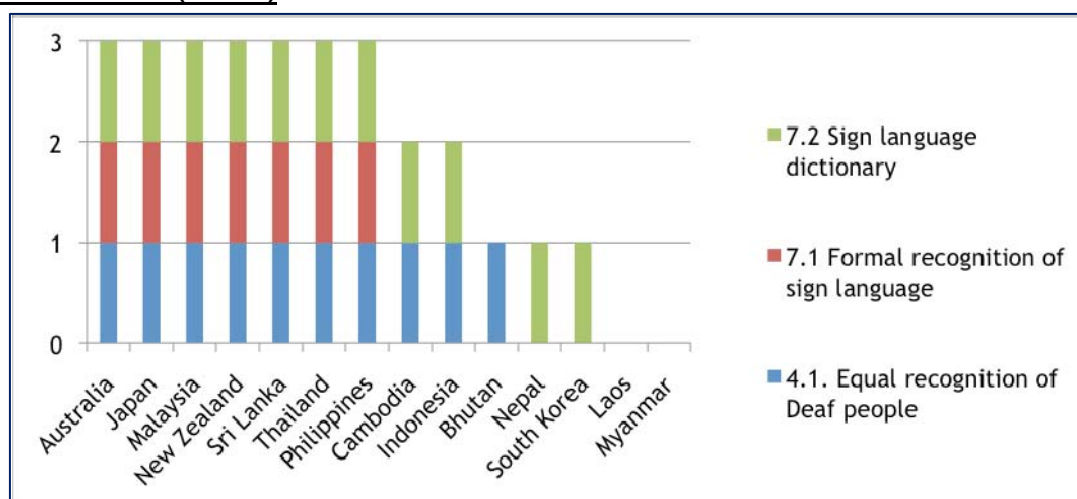


Diagram 5.3

In this region also, most countries continue to lobby their government to improve the status of their sign language(s). Notable also is that New Zealand is the only country to have a sign language-specific law (the New Zealand Sign Language Act, passed in 2006). Four countries in the RSA/P region do not recognise Deaf people as equal citizens.

South America (RSSA)

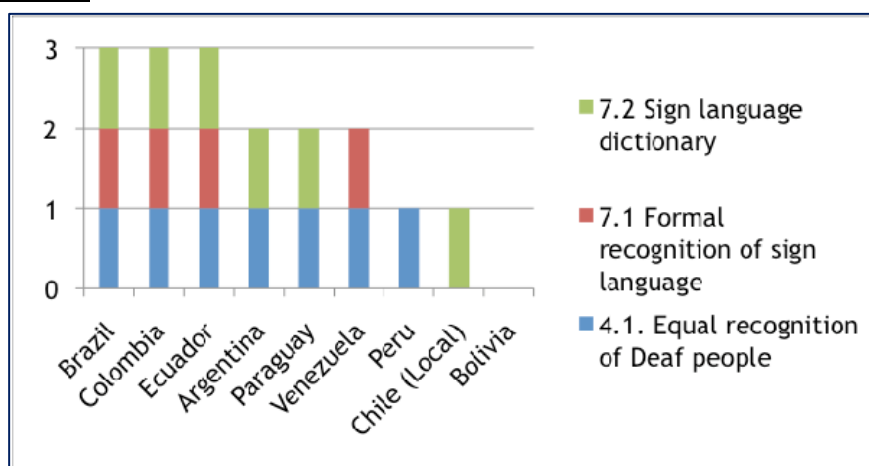


Diagram 5.4

Even though four countries have some kind of formal recognition of sign language, all respondent countries continue lobbying to improve the status of the sign languages in their countries. Six countries have a sign language dictionary. Two countries do not recognise Deaf people as equal citizens.

Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean (MCAC)

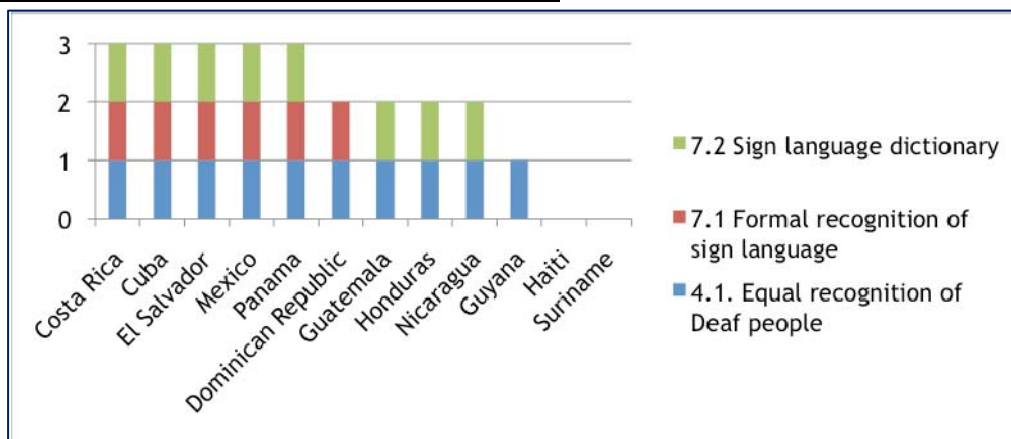


Diagram 5.5

In half of the 12 country respondents in the MCAC region, sign language is formally recognised by the government. Four of these country respondents (Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador and Mexico) continue to actively lobby their national government. Of those responding countries that have not formally recognised sign language, only three (Haiti, Honduras and Nicaragua) lobby for the recognition of their sign language.

Eastern and Southern Africa (RSESA)

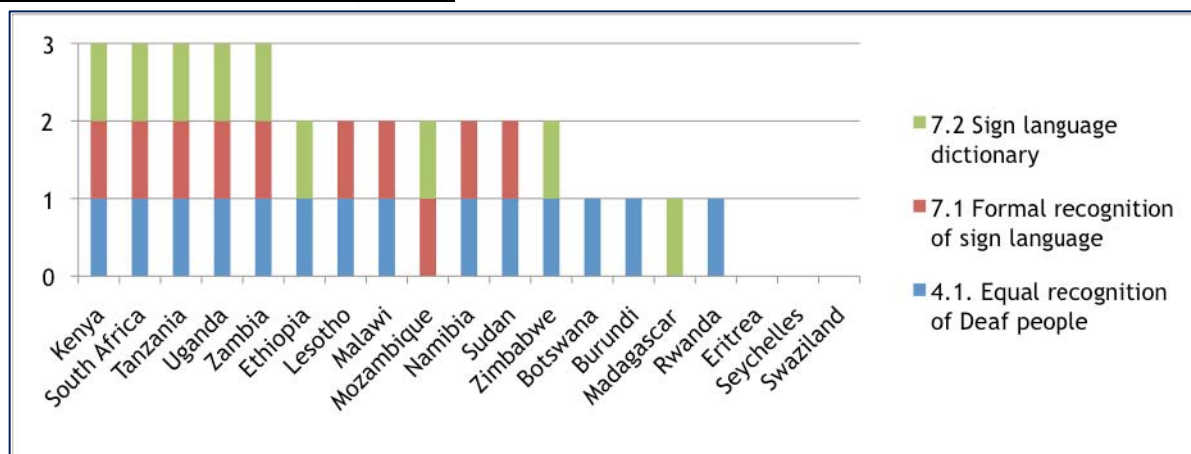


Diagram 5.6

Seventeen of these countries are lobbying their national government to recognise their sign languages. Botswana, one of the two countries in the region not lobbying their government, says lack of a sign language dictionary prevents them from advocating recognition of sign language. It should not be necessary to have a dictionary to lobby the status of sign language, but it shows that the existence of a dictionary is itself a tool not only for learning the language, but also to enhance its status.

Western and Central Africa (WCAR)

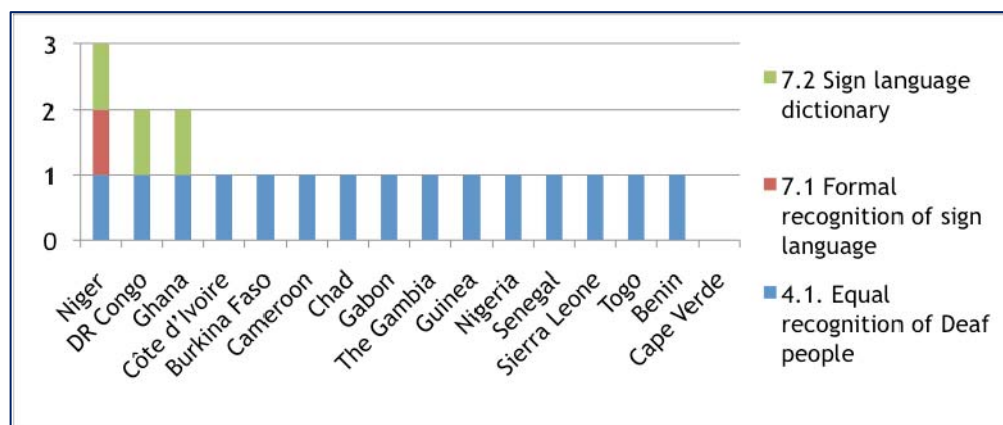


Diagram 5.7

Niger is the only country in this region that has formally recognised sign language, which recognition is limited to a guideline dated 1998. There are no other signs of formal recognition in the WCAR region, and sign language seems to be almost overlooked by the governments in this region. The three countries with a sign language dictionary and seven other country respondents lobby their governments for recognition of their sign language. Some of the country respondents that do not lobby their government argue that American Sign Language is used and has official status, at the cost of the national sign language. A similar challenge regarding lack of awareness and respect for the national sign languages can be found in the RSAR region.

Arab Region (RSAR)

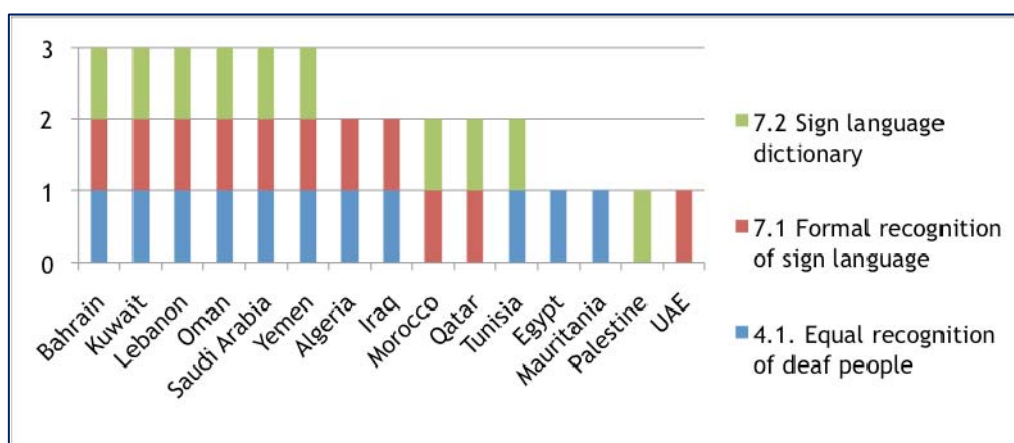


Diagram 5.8

Thirteen of the 15 RSAR respondents continue to actively lobby their national governments to recognise their sign languages. A major challenge in this area is a project initiated by sign language interpreters and hearing educators to unify the various sign languages in the region. The consequence of such a project is that sign language interpreters and teachers of the Deaf will learn and use signs that are not common vocabulary in each of the countries in the region, and will eventually hinder accessibility for Deaf people and reduce the respect for and status of the sign languages that have evolved naturally among Deaf people in the region.

5.5 Sign Languages - Part of the Human Heritage

The situation in the WCAR and RSAR regions where national sign languages are contested by other sign systems (unification project) or foreign sign languages (American Sign Language) is a sign of the low status of sign languages. As long as it is not clearly and formally stated that sign languages as Deaf people in each country use them are natural languages in and of themselves, attempts to change or mould them into artificial and less effective variants will continue. Each natural sign language that is being used by Deaf people of a region or in a country represents the cultural, social, historical and religious ideas of that region or country. Sign languages are, just like spoken languages, carriers of regional and national cultures and heritages; they carry, as well, the culture and heritage of Deaf people. In order to preserve and respect the full heritage of each

country, it is necessary to include sign languages. It is not only Deaf people who will benefit from formal recognition of sign language(s). Recognition of sign language(s) is also a way to enhance and give respect to the overall linguistic and cultural heritage of each country and of humankind.¹³

¹³ See also the WFD Policy "WFD Statement on the Unification of Sign Languages"
http://www.wfdeaf.org/pdf/policy_statement_signlanguages.pdf

6. Education

6.1 Article 24 Education

Being able to communicate effectively in sign language and being able to read and write the language(s) of the country they live in is crucial for Deaf people's ability to participate effectively in a free society; this is a declared goal of Article 24 on Education in the CRPD. Article 24 reads that States Parties shall ensure that "persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education". Article 24 further emphasises that appropriate measures must be taken to facilitate "... *the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community*" and to ensure that "... the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deafblind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in *environments which maximize academic and social development*. (...) In order to help ensure the realization of this right, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are *qualified in sign language...*" (Article 24 (4), emphases by researcher). The CRPD is not only saying that Deaf children should be taught in and with sign language, but also that this education shall take place in environments that maximise academic and social development. It is necessary also to be able to communicate with peers and other people as well as the classroom teacher. In a school for the Deaf, the children can communicate with each other in a natural language. Therefore the best environment for academic and social development for a Deaf child is a school where both students and teachers use sign language for all communication.

6.2 The History of Deaf Education

6.2.1 The manual method vs the oral method

Deaf children's access to and ability to receive education and enlightenment is one of the oldest and most contested discussions in the history of Deaf people; it continues to be a controversy in many parts of the world. Throughout the past millennium the discussion on whether Deaf people should be taught using signs (also known as the manual method) or using speech (also known as the oral method) has been continuously debated - mostly by hearing people and other people with secondary knowledge about Deaf people. The discussion regarding education of Deaf people culminated temporarily in Milan, Italy in 1880 at the second International Congress on the Education of the Deaf-Mutes, where the participants passed a declaration stating that the oral method should be preferred to that of signs in the education and instruction of Deaf people (Brill 1984). Sequentially, the natural sign languages used by Deaf people themselves were banned from most schools for the Deaf. As globalisation already had its firm grip of the world by the end of the 19th century (mainly through the colonies that were still widespread at that time, and Christian missionaries), the idea of the superiority of speech over signs was quickly spread all over the world despite continued reports that the oral approach in Deaf education failed Deaf children over and over again. Deaf people's literacy level remained low, and limited their access to and participation in civil life.

6.2.2 An emerging bilingual education

At the end of the 20th century, linguists started to document that the sign languages used by Deaf people all over the world were languages just as natural and rich as spoken languages, and that spoken (audible) languages did not have any inherent superior qualities that made them more human or more "natural" than the visual sign languages. This discovery, along with the continued poor results from the oral method, eventually led to a change in the way of thinking regarding Deaf education. A bilingual approach - using sign language as the language of instruction in all subjects for Deaf children (since this is the most effective language for learning and communication for Deaf people), with a parallel strong emphasis on teaching reading and writing of the language used in the country or society they live in - will give Deaf children a good basis for

direct and independent communication in all surroundings¹⁴. At this turn of the century, the bilingual approach is becoming more and more widespread in schools for Deaf children, especially in North Europe and in North America, with promising results¹⁵. Deaf children's literacy level is increasing, and efficient learning is facilitated so the children can focus on studying and learning the contents of the various subjects rather than using their effort to merely try to understand what the teachers say and what the books state. The replies recorded, however, show that the belief in the oral method is still strong, which means a good basic education continues to be out of reach for most Deaf children in the world. One example is the overwhelming majority of country respondents that report that the Total Communication (TC) approach (which promotes the use of speech and signs at the same time) is being used as the only or one of several, educational approaches in their country. TC might be better than the pure oral approach, since it permits visual signals in communication, but it does not respect the nature of either of the two languages involved. Research (among others Johnson, Liddell and Erting 1989) has shown that it is virtually impossible to adequately convey a message in either of the two languages involved through this method, and one or both parts of the communication will deteriorate. Using this method requires that both parties are fluent in both languages prior to communication; it is especially neither possible nor advisable to use it in situations where a person is in the process of learning one or more languages.

6.3 Recognising the Right to Education

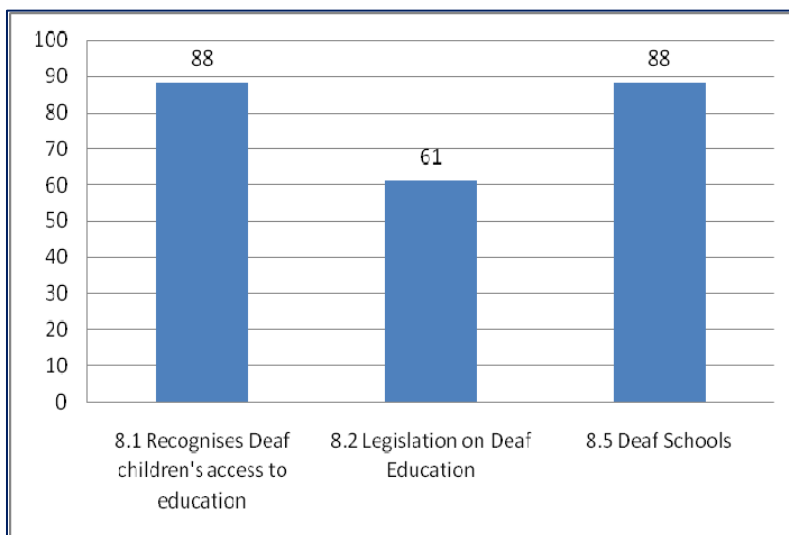


Diagram 6.1

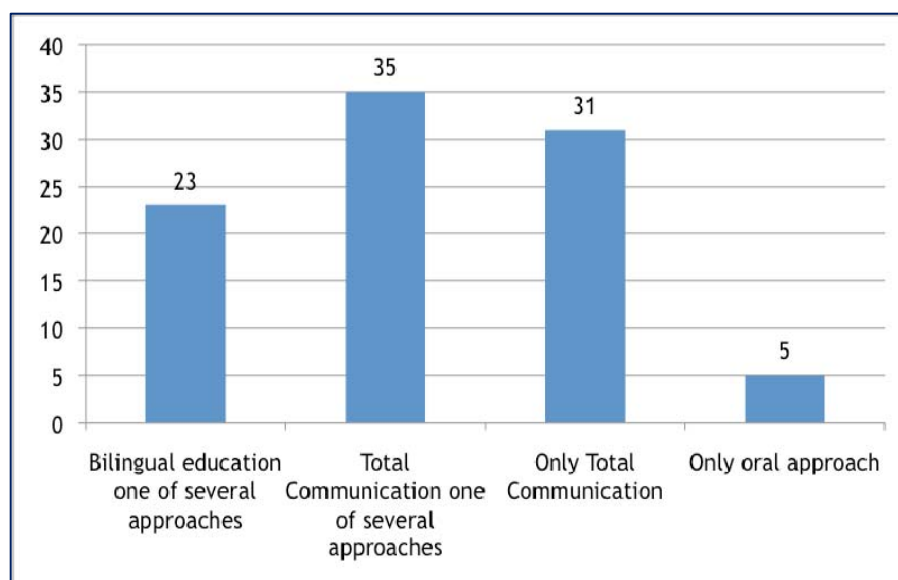
It seems that none of the 93 countries totally deny Deaf children the right to education. The five countries that say they do not recognise Deaf children's right to an education have one or more schools for the Deaf (Bolivia, Eritrea, Guinea, Seychelles and South Korea), and five countries that do formally recognise Deaf children's right to an education have no school for the Deaf (Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Kuwait, Seychelles and Yemen).

¹⁴ See also the WFD Policy on "Education Rights for Deaf Children" at http://www.wfdeaf.org/pdf/policy_child_ed.pdf and Grosjean, François (2001) "The Right of the Deaf Child to Grow up Bilingual" in *Sign Language Studies* (2001, 1(2), 110-114)

¹⁵ Since each country has a different educational system, different methods, different materials and so forth, there are no studies on the effects of bilingualism on the education of Deaf children that are possible to generalise on an international level.

6.3.1 Educational approaches¹⁶

Most country respondents say that more than one approach is used in the country's schools for the Deaf. Total Communication is the dominant approach, and is used in 66 of the responding countries. In 35 of these countries, Total communication is one of several educational approaches. In 31 countries, Total Communication is the only educational approach. Only 23 country respondents say the bilingual approach is



one of the approaches in their country, but only one country (Venezuela) says this is the only educational approach for Deaf children. Only five countries (Algeria, Argentina, Iraq, Malawi and Senegal) said only oral approaches (oral method or Auditory Verbal) were used in the schools.

6.3.2 Low awareness about bilingual education

The written replies from many respondents indicate that while the bilingual approach is becoming more and more known compared to the replies to the WFD Survey on the Status of Sign Language (Supalla et al, WFD 1993), there is much work left before it is possible to say that all Deaf children receive a true bilingual education. Teachers are not fluent in sign language and persisting low expectations about Deaf children's ability to learn (probably a consequence of the failures of oral education and Total Communication) continue to keep the education level low. Many teachers, Deaf people and politicians are uncertain what a bilingual education for Deaf pupils essentially means. It is not clear whether all respondents had an accurate definition or comprehension of bilingual education for Deaf children. Some of the respondents have probably confused bilingual education with education in two spoken/written languages (for example Spanish and English). Also, some respondents seem to confuse bilingual education with Total Communication. When asked if their government provides bilingual education using the country's sign language (question 8.4), 31 responses are positive. But when asked about educational approaches for communicating with Deaf children in the schools, only 23 respondents confirm a bilingual approach is used. The latter question (8.5.2) was a multiple-choice question with the bilingual approach and Total Communication explicitly separated. Respondents had to make a distinction between bilingual education and Total Communication, which they did not have to do when answering the first question (8.4). The numbers provided regarding access to education must be read carefully, as this is an area where many associations of Deaf people are not really aware nor do they have good knowledge¹⁷.

¹⁶ A brief definition of the approaches discussed in this report:

Bilingual Education: Sign language is considered to be the natural language ('mother tongue') that will be acquired as a first language. Spoken language, which is not acquired naturally by Deaf children, will be learned as a second language as the child becomes cognitively/developmentally ready. Both languages are used throughout the child's entire education.

Total Communication: All forms and modes of communications are used. This includes natural gestures, sign language, manually-coded spoken languages, sign systems, mime, audition and speech.

Oral Education: Spoken language is assumed to be the basis for standard social and academic communication, and the human system is assumed to be designed (pre-wired) to learn language expressed in speech. Children learn about and from spoken language. Also known as auditory-oral, aural/oral education. Emphasis on speech.

Auditory Verbal Education: Supposes that even minimal amounts of residual hearing can lead to the development of spontaneous speech and language, if that residual hearing is stimulated. Children learn to process language through amplified hearing. A method of oral education with an emphasis on listening.

¹⁷ The definition of the different educational approaches (see footnote 16) was distributed to the regional working groups only after responses to the questionnaire had been collected. Individual countries never received these definitions.

6.3.3 Low quality of education

A considerable majority of the responses state that the level of education is poor, low and not acceptable, even in countries where there is a reported bilingual approach. There is a danger that the diagrams regarding education of Deaf children show a more positive picture than the reality, since they only provide information about whether there is legislation on education for Deaf children, if there are any Deaf schools and if bilingual education is offered. They do not provide any qualitative information about the situation as it exists in the schools. The regional survey reports provide the numbers of schools in many of the countries, but there are no numbers about the percentage of Deaf children that are enrolled in schools or how large the schools are, so it is not possible to determine how many Deaf children actually receive any kind of education in any of the regions. If a country has a high score in the regional diagrams below, it is a sign that there are some domestic resources or knowledge about Deaf children's right to receive an education, and that bilingual education is one of the approaches used. Low scores mean that not even the formal rights are there, and/or that there is a massive ignorance in the education system about the importance of sign language in Deaf education.

6.4 Regional Overviews

In the regional overviews below, questions included regard governments' recognition of Deaf children's right to receive an education, the existence of legislation or policies on Deaf education, the presence of any school(s) for the Deaf¹⁸ and whether bilingual education is one of the educational approaches used in schools. Each 'yes' answer to each of these questions is given one point. Also, the country respondents' qualitative responses regarding the quality of the education is given points. If the level is reported satisfactory, two points are given; if it is reported below average or as having some positive aspects, one point is given. When the country respondents use descriptions such as low, poor, deficient, pathetic and so forth to describe the general opinion of the current literacy level, the answers are given zero points¹⁹. Also, some countries did not respond to this question, and their answers will also appear as zero points. The percentage after each country name is the level of literacy in the general population.

Eastern Europe and Middle Asia (EEMARS)

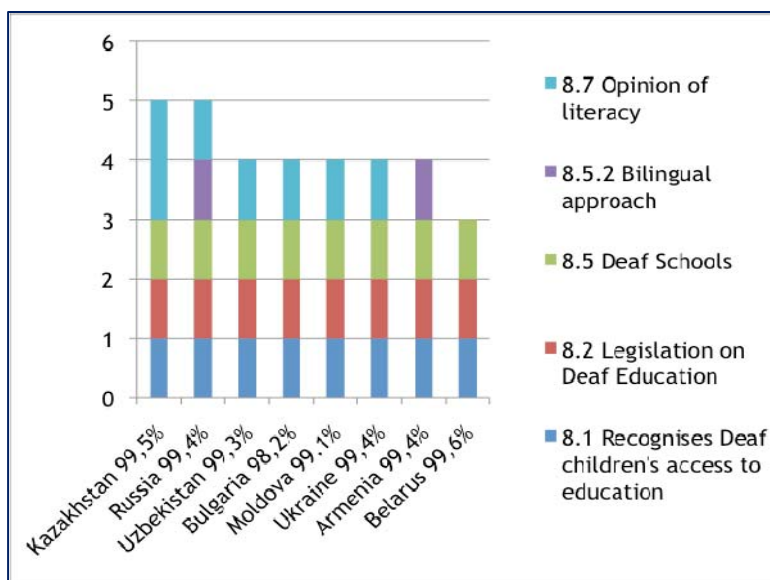


Diagram 6.3

¹⁸ The researcher has chosen to include the answers to question 8.5 "Does your country have any school specifically for Deaf children and Deaf students?" rather than question 8.3 "Does your country's government provide any of the following educational settings for Deaf children and Deaf students?", since the education systems are very diverse with regards to private/public schools. For example, in the RSA/P region there are many schools controlled by private organisations or Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). The researcher has chosen to put the emphasis on whether there *are* schools for the Deaf, not whether they are run by the government or by a private party or an NGO. Detailed information is available in each of the regional reports.

¹⁹ The given points are the result of the researchers' evaluation of the written answers. Full answers to question 8.7 "What is the general opinion of the current literacy level of Deaf children and Deaf students in your country?" are available in the regional reports.

In the EEMARS region all governments in all countries recognise Deaf children’s right to receive an education, there is legislation on Deaf education in each country and there are schools for the Deaf in all countries. Two countries reported bilingual education as one of the educational approaches, but it is not known in how many schools or classrooms a bilingual approach is used in those two countries. Only Kazakhstan expressed an opinion that the literacy level of Deaf children and Deaf students is satisfactory.

Asia and the Pacific (RSA/P)

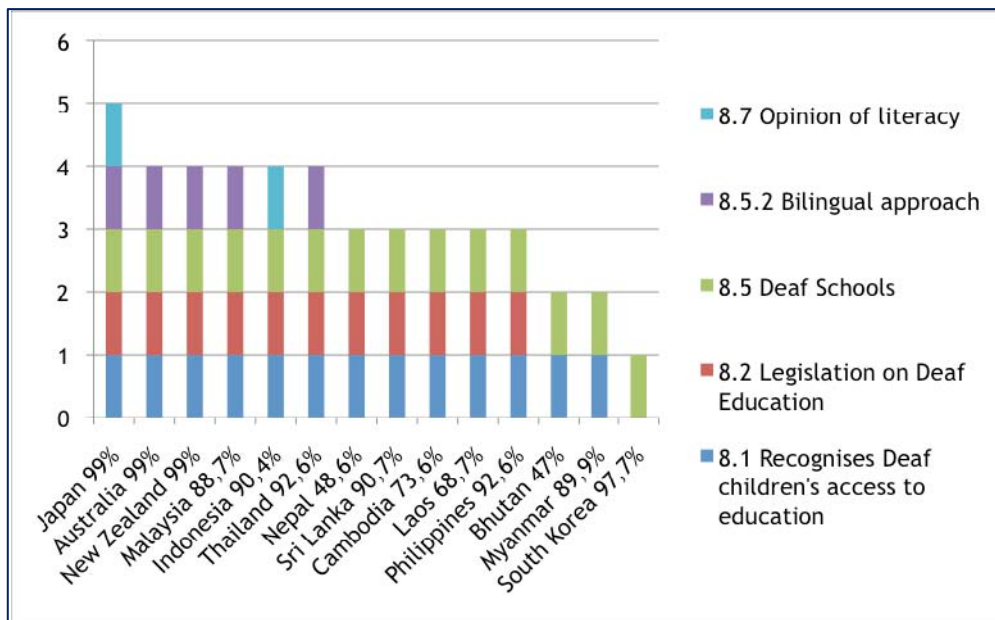


Diagram 6.4

There are schools for the Deaf in all countries in this region; all but one (South Korea) recognise Deaf children have the right to receive an education; and all countries except Bhutan, Myanmar and South Korea have a legislation or policy on Deaf education. Five countries offer some kind of bilingual education setting. Only two countries (Japan and Indonesia) reported some satisfaction with the current literacy level of Deaf children, but none were entirely satisfied. The current educational level is reported insufficient because of lack of availability of sign language settings; because teachers of Deaf students are not skilled in sign language; or because educational settings for Deaf children or Deaf students have just been established.

South America (RSSA)

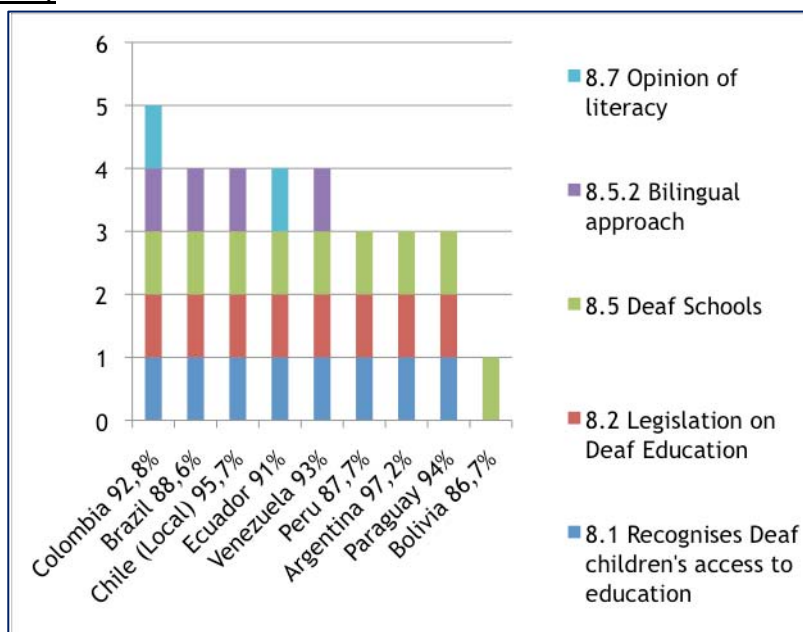


Diagram 6.5

Even though there are schools for the Deaf in all countries in this region, the general opinion of the literacy level is very low. Only two countries (Colombia and Ecuador) say the level is at an average level, and none are entirely satisfied. The regional working group said there are a relatively large number of bilingual education programmes in South America; however the quality of many of these programmes is low. Also, the regional working group is uncertain if the country respondents have the right definition of bilingual education, as they may have interpreted it as bilingualism in two spoken and written languages (i.e. Spanish and English) rather than in sign language and the written language.

Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean (MCAC)

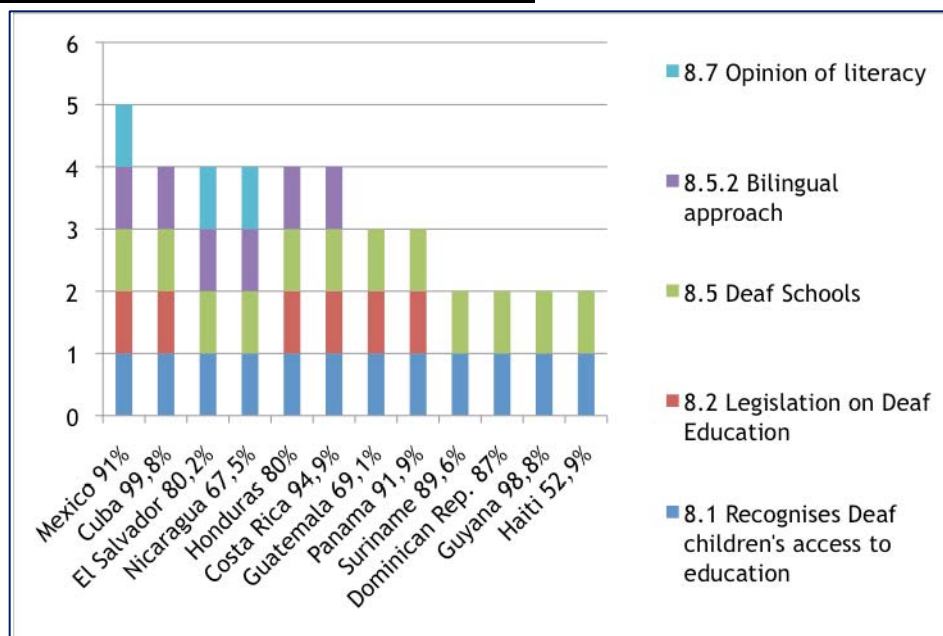


Diagram 6.6

All countries in the MCAC region recognise Deaf children’s right to receive an education, but only six have specific legislation or policies regarding Deaf education. Six countries have bilingual education as one of their educational approaches. Several comments stated that the current educational level is of a very low standard, and that the level of literacy is poor. From Haiti, where the government has recognised Deaf children’s right to education, there came a statement saying that the general community believes that Deaf people should not be taught reading and writing. This highlights the fact that prejudices against Deaf people in the general population could also become a hindrance to improving Deaf children’s access to education.

Eastern and Southern Africa (RSESA)

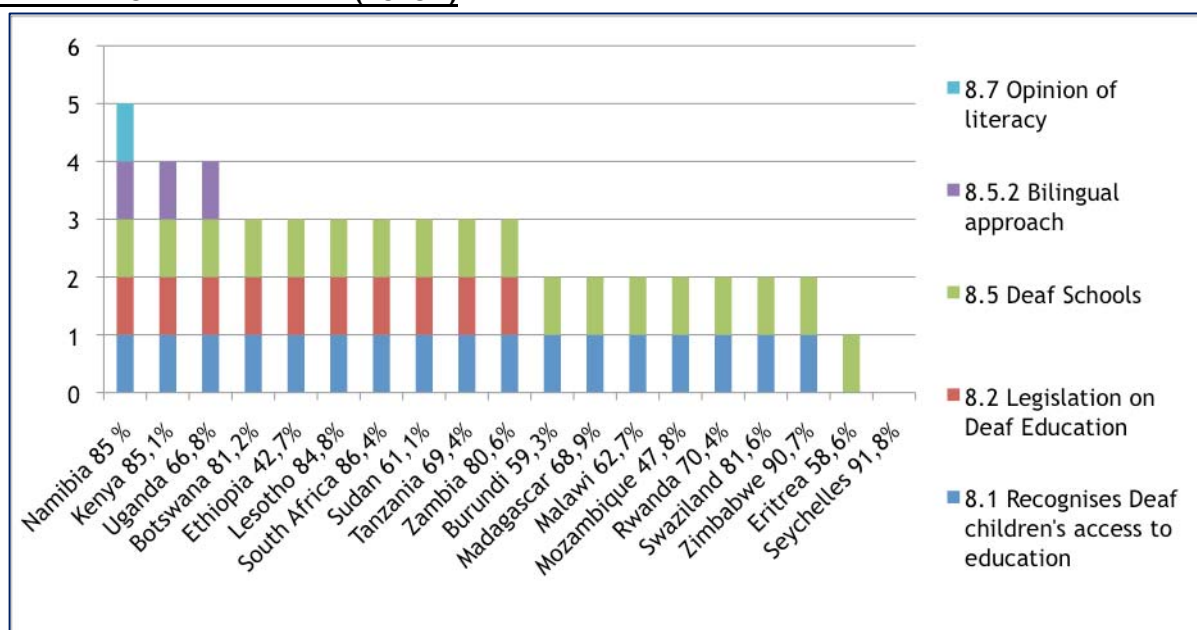


Diagram 6.7

All countries except Eritrea and Seychelles said the government recognises Deaf children’s right to receive an education, and all countries except Seychelles had one or more schools for the Deaf. Seychelles said Deaf children attended a school for the handicapped. As for the answers regarding bilingual education, there is a conflict in the collected data material. Three countries reported bilingual education as one of the educational approaches, but the regional working group emphasised that they believed only Kenya and Uganda really had bilingual education programmes. All countries had a very low opinion about the current level of literacy; the common opinion is that most Deaf children and Deaf students are illiterate when they have completed their education. Some country respondents (Lesotho, Malawi, Sudan and Seychelles) were more specific and said that most, possibly over 90 percent, of Deaf people in their countries are illiterate.

Western and Central Africa (WCAR)

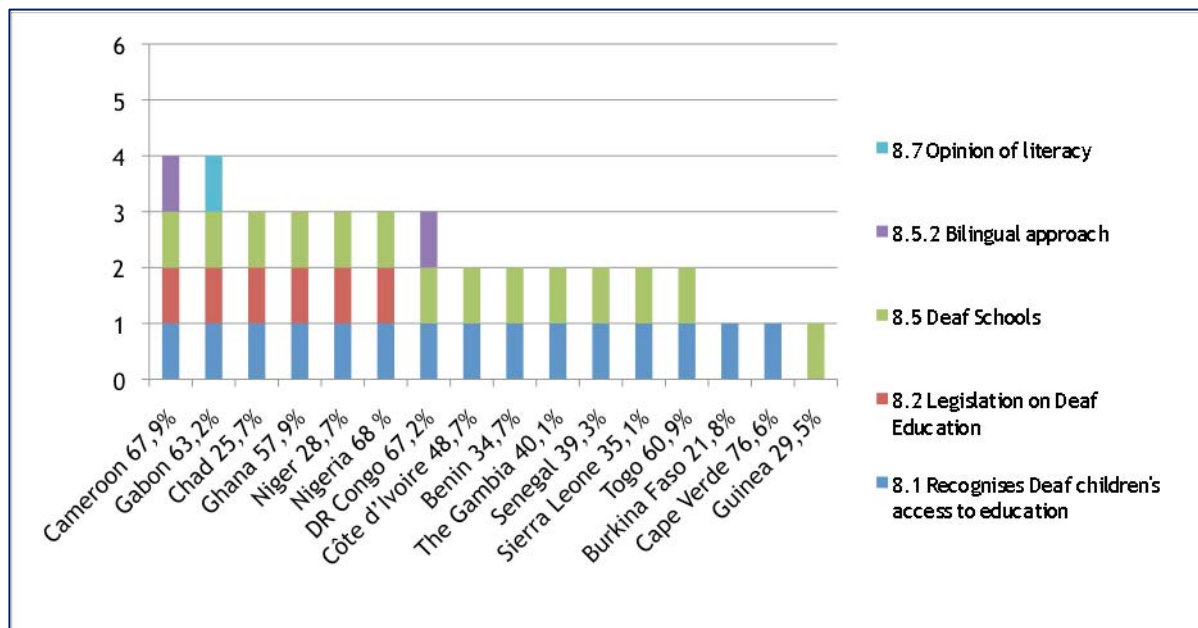


Diagram 6.8

Only Guinea said their government did not recognise Deaf children’s right to receive an education. Cape Verde did not provide any information on whether they had any schools for the Deaf, and Burkina Faso said there is no school for the Deaf in the country. Only Gabon gave some positive remarks about the current level of literacy, explaining that sign language was used in one private school and that the literacy level of the children that attended this school is acceptable. Cameroon and DR Congo say the bilingual approach is used in their country. Otherwise, the common opinion is that the level of literacy is very low or unsatisfactory, and that there is a serious trend of Deaf children and students being illiterate at the conclusion of their education.

Arab Region (RSAR)

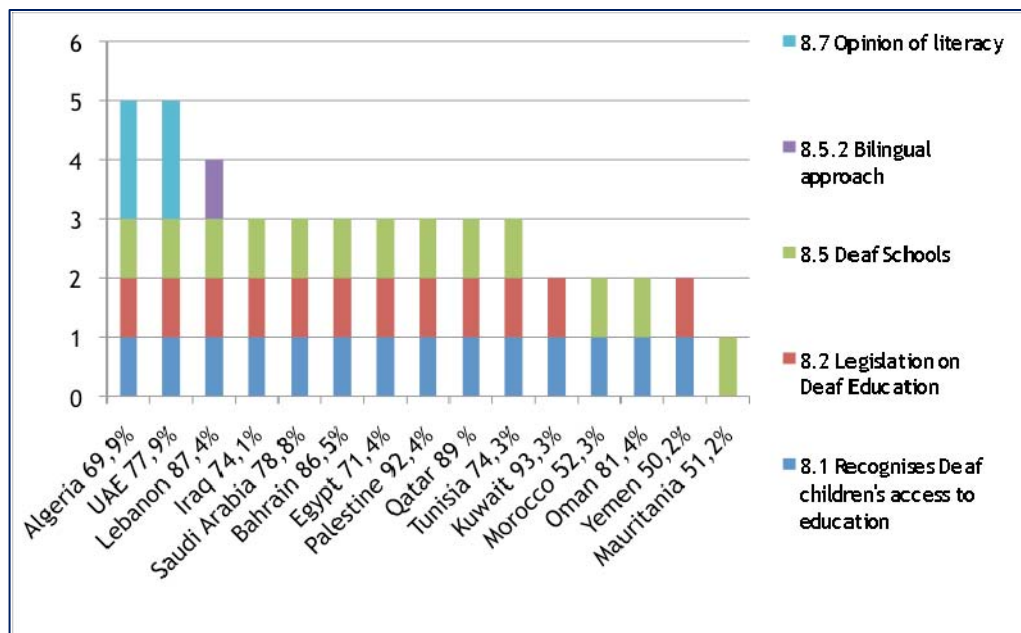


Diagram 6.9

All countries except Mauritania recognise Deaf children's right to receive an education. Three countries (Mauritania, Morocco and Oman) did not have any legislation or policy on Deaf education. Only Lebanon had bilingual education as one of the approaches.

6.5 Growing Acceptance of Sign Language in Deaf Education

These diagrams only show the existence of some formal settings in the respondent countries. It is not yet possible to detect how widespread the bilingual approach really is, or indeed how many Deaf children receive any kind of education at all. Due to different research approaches and different questions, it is not possible to make any direct comparisons between the results in the report "Deaf People in the Developing World" (Joutsalainen 1992) and the "Deaf People and Human Rights" report. However, it is worthwhile to note that in 1992 thirteen countries (Argentina, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritania, Nicaragua, Panama, Swaziland, Tanzania, the Gambia and Zimbabwe) reported the oral method as the only approach. Of those 13 countries, in 2008 Cuba, Kenya and Nicaragua say a bilingual approach is used in their countries. Only Argentina and Zimbabwe still report the oral method as the only approach used in their countries. In Dominican Republic, Gambia, Haiti, Lesotho, Mauritania, Panama, Swaziland and Tanzania, oral methods and sign language are used simultaneously. Looking at the development in those 13 countries could be an indication that the pure oral method is gradually giving way to educational approaches that include the use of signs or sign language.

Almost all countries acknowledge that Deaf people have a formal right to enter a school, but almost none of the respondent countries have an education system whereby education is delivered in the most appropriate language for Deaf students (the bilingual approach); and very few Deaf people receive an education in an environment which maximises academic and social development. A vast majority of the respondents say the literacy level among Deaf people in their country is low. The education systems in most countries continue to fail Deaf people; and Deaf people are denied access and deprived of opportunities to seek secondary, vocational and higher education. As well, opportunities to obtain and hold a job to earn a living to support oneself and a family are severely limited.

7. Access to Services and Sign Language Interpreting

7.1 The Meaning of Accessibility for Deaf People

A key factor for accessibility to government services (and any other service run by institutions where the personnel do not use sign language) for Deaf people is provision of and access to sign language interpreters, as is highlighted in the CRPD. Article 9 on Accessibility states that in order to “enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas.” The article further pronounces that States Parties among others shall take appropriate measures to: “Provide forms of live assistance and intermediaries, including guides, readers and *professional sign language interpreters*, to facilitate accessibility to buildings and other facilities open to the public.” (9.2 (e) CRPD) (Emphasis by researcher)

For Deaf people, barriers to access are rarely about physical obstacles. More often the barriers will be found in lack of accessible information, whether this information comes through direct interaction with other people who do not know or use sign language, or from sources that are intended to reach many people at once, e.g. the mass media. Article 21 on Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information in the CRPD says State Parties shall take appropriate measures to provide “... information intended for the general public to persons with disabilities in accessible formats and technologies appropriate to different kinds of disabilities in a timely manner and without additional cost”(21 a); accept and facilitate the “... *use of sign languages, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication, and all other accessible means, modes and formats of communication of their choice by persons with disabilities in official interactions*”(21 b) (Emphasis by researcher); and to encourage “... the mass media, including providers of information through the Internet, to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities”(21 d). Since radio is per definition inaccessible to Deaf people, and most Deaf people are illiterate, sign language on public television is the most effective way to provide information and news to Deaf people.

This chapter provides a short overview on access to mass media in the responding countries, before discussing access to sign language interpreting services.

7.2 Access to Mass Media and Information

Diagram 7.1 shows the number of countries in each region providing TV programmes with sign language (via a sign language interpreter and/or information provided directly in sign language); captioning of news and current affairs programmes; and provision of governmental documents in sign language.

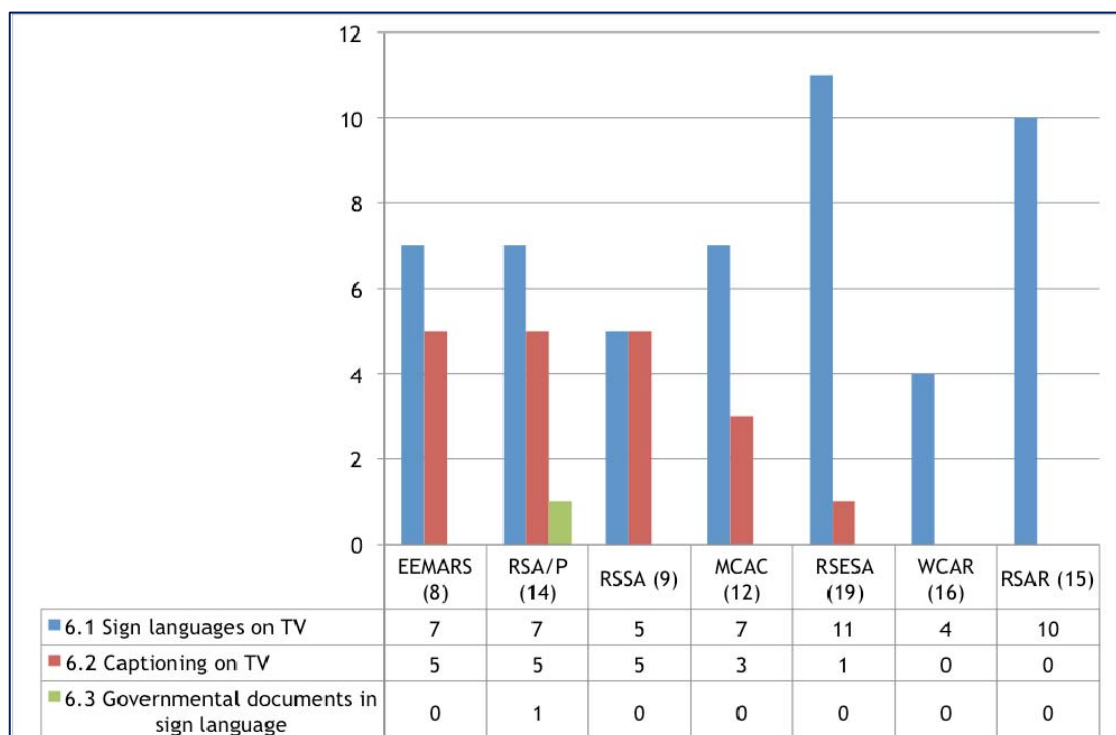


Diagram 7.1

7.2.1 Sign language(s) on TV

Fifty-one of the country respondents say that sign language services for news and/or current affairs programmes are provided on public television. This is an improvement since 1992, when only six countries (Belize, Brazil, Cuba, Ghana, India and Pakistan) said they had programmes produced in sign language and 12 countries (among others China, Colombia, El Salvador, India, Peru and Thailand) had programmes with sign language interpreting. Some of the countries responding to the 1992 survey did not respond to the global pre-planning survey, but the reported number of countries with sign language on television is remarkably higher in 2008; therefore it is likely that there has been an overall improvement, even if there is no data on the situation in those specific countries in 2008. There are, however, large regional differences in the length and frequency of the programmes that are either conveyed directly in sign language or presented with a sign language interpreter. All EEMARS country respondents have daily broadcasts in sign language (many for about 10 minutes every day). In the RSA/P region, weekly broadcasts are more common. In the RSAR and MCAC regions, the norm is sign language interpreting of one or more news programmes every day or a programme once a week. In the RSESA region, most of the sign language provided on television is interpreting of news programmes, either every day or once a week. In the WCAR region, some countries provide sign language interpreting, as is also the situation in the RSAR region. In the RSAR region, Iraq and Qatar provide sign language programmes only in the 'Unified Arabic Sign Language', an artificial mode of signing that is not widely understood or used by Deaf people (see also the chapter on Sign Language Recognition and the RSAR regional report for details). Compared to the total broadcast hours in all countries, the portion of programmes with sign language is very low, and will not give Deaf people equal access to the mass media or the information intended for the general public sent via television.

7.2.2 Captioning

Only 21 countries provide captioning of news or current affairs programmes, which excludes literate Deaf people from accessing even those programmes. In 72 countries, Deaf people do not have any access to news and current affairs programmes at all, except in those cases where some of these programmes are broadcast with a sign language interpreter.

7.2.3 Governmental documents

Only Thailand says that their government offers governmental documents in the country's sign language. With the exception of Thailand, Deaf people cannot yet communicate with their government in the language of their choice.

7.3 A Consequence of Limited Access to Information: the HIV/AIDS Situation

Lack of information affects Deaf people's opportunities to make free and informed decisions, as shown in the discussion on Deaf people's right to vote in 5.2.1 and diagram 5.1. Diagram 7.2, about the awareness of the HIV/AIDS situation of Deaf people in respondent countries, shows that lack of information also leads to situations that can cost or shorten the lives of Deaf people. The diagram below outlines responses to the question as to whether the HIV/AIDS situation affects deaf people in the countries surveyed.

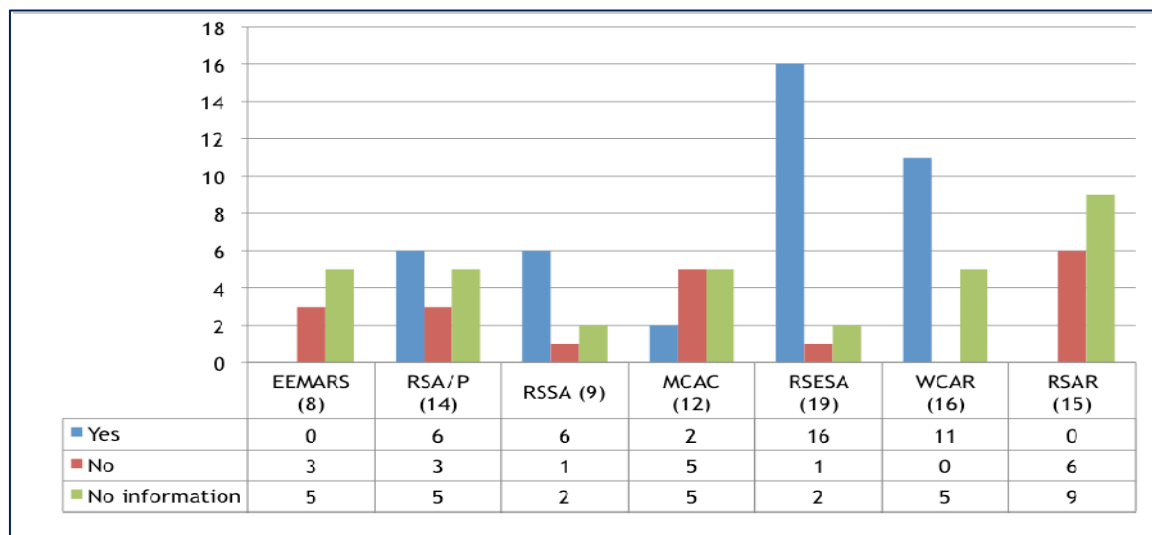


Diagram 7.2

This diagram reveals that awareness about the impact of the HIV/AIDS situation varies greatly among the regions, and that more than half of the country respondents seem partially or totally ignorant about this issue. Fifty-two country respondents say HIV/AIDS does not affect Deaf people, or they have no information on this issue. Only 41 countries confirm that HIV/AIDS affects Deaf people in their country. Only in the two African regions and in South America do a majority of the respondents confirm that the HIV/AIDS situation in their country affects Deaf women, men and children. In the MCAC and RSA/P regions, less than half of the respondents say the HIV/AIDS situation affects Deaf people. In EEMARS and RSAR none of the country respondents say the HIV/AIDS situation affects Deaf people. All regions have respondents that do not know about the HIV/AIDS situation in their country or that did not give any response to the question. Country respondents in the two African regions seem to be the most aware about the HIV/AIDS situation, but these are also regions with low access to various public services. In countries where access to public services is slightly better, such as the EEMARS and RSAR regions, none of the country respondents will confirm that the HIV/AIDS situation affects Deaf people in their country. The "Deaf People and Human Rights" report reveals that the need for HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns and information about HIV/AIDS directed at both associations of the Deaf and Deaf people as individuals is vital in most of the respondent countries.

A global survey on HIV/AIDS and disability (Groce, World Bank/Yale University 2004) reveals that people with disabilities are at a higher risk of infection by HIV. Among the risk factors are low education/high illiteracy, inaccessible information campaigns, lack of access to health services and erroneous beliefs that people with disabilities are not sexually active and therefore excluded from HIV/AIDS services and programmes. Deaf people are subject to all these risk factors, especially inaccessible information, and the HIV/AIDS situation is likely to affect Deaf people in all countries. Lack of access to information about HIV/AIDS is likely to make Deaf people less aware about how HIV/AIDS spreads and how to prevent infection.

7.4 Access to Government Services

Eleven countries said Deaf people did not have access to government services, such as education, health care, employment, social welfare or any other government service²⁰. When the countries that responded that Deaf people did have access to such services were asked how these services were accessed, about half of the respondents say that Deaf people use services in the same way as hearing people do. The regional overviews show, however, that there are severe limits on Deaf people's chances to benefit or use government services in all countries that responded.

7.4.1 Formal access vs real access

Although few countries deny Deaf people formal rights to government services and the number of countries who have sign language interpreters has grown since 1992, the responses in 2008 show that few, if any, Deaf people have equal and *de facto* access to government services. The reported existence of one or more sign language interpreters in a particular country cannot be taken as a sign that Deaf people have equal access to various services, for several reasons.

Firstly, there must be a system for provision of and equal access to sign language interpreters for all situations where they are requested; and the Deaf person or associations of Deaf people should not be solely responsible for paying the interpreters' salaries. Sixty-one country respondents say their government takes no responsibility for paying for sign language interpreters' salaries. Secondly, sign language interpreting is a profession that serves both Deaf and hearing people, and the profession requires training. A professional sign language interpreter is fluent in both the signed and spoken languages of the country and has specialised knowledge in interpreting between two (or more) languages. Knowing some sign language, and a commitment to 'help' Deaf and hearing people to communicate, is not a qualification to become or serve as a sign language interpreter. As shown in the regional overviews, the length and quality of training varies greatly among the country respondents. Thirdly, proper ethical behaviour at work is crucial for the quality of the service sign language interpreters provide. Professional confidentiality and awareness of the duties and roles of a sign language interpreter are fundamental to ensure equal status between the parties in a communication situation that involves interpreting, and to safeguard a Deaf person's right to independence and autonomy. Sign language interpreters must be trained in the languages they are to translate between (most often one or more of the spoken languages in the country where s/he is working and one or more of the signed languages that are used by Deaf people in the same country); and learn about, understand and follow the Code of Ethics for sign language interpreters in that country. A Code of Ethics (or an Ethical Code or Code of Professional Conduct) for sign language interpreters gives direction on how sign language interpreters shall conduct themselves during the course of their work²¹.

7.4.2 Increase in availability of sign language interpreters

Since 1992 and the "WFD Survey of Deaf People in the Developing World" there has been a considerable growth in the number of countries that say they have sign language interpreters available. In 1992, 29 of the 65 respondents to the WFD survey said they had sign language interpreters in their country. Of the 93 respondents to the current survey, 80 countries report that they have one or more sign language interpreters; however the qualifications and the quality

²⁰ There is no information about why these countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, DR Congo, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Nepal, Mauritania, Palestine and Suriname) reported that Deaf people do not have access to government services. It is thus not clear if legislation excludes Deaf people from services, or if the respondents feel that the obstacles Deaf people face are so massive that they have answered 'No'.

²¹ The World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI) has an overview about the Code of Ethics at <http://wasli.org/CodeofEthics.htm>

of sign language interpreting services varies greatly. The 13 countries that do not have any sign language interpreters at all are Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mauritania, Myanmar, Seychelles and Togo. In all other countries, the quality and the scope of the sign language interpreting varies greatly, and the variation is related to the availability of training, professional conduct and how sign language interpreters are accessed by those who request their services.

7.5 Sign Language Interpreting Services, Training and Codes of Ethics

In the questionnaire, respondents were asked if their country has a sign language interpreting service, if there is any training for sign language interpreters, if there is a national Code of Ethics for sign language interpreters, how many sign language interpreters they have and the general opinion of the sign language interpreting service.

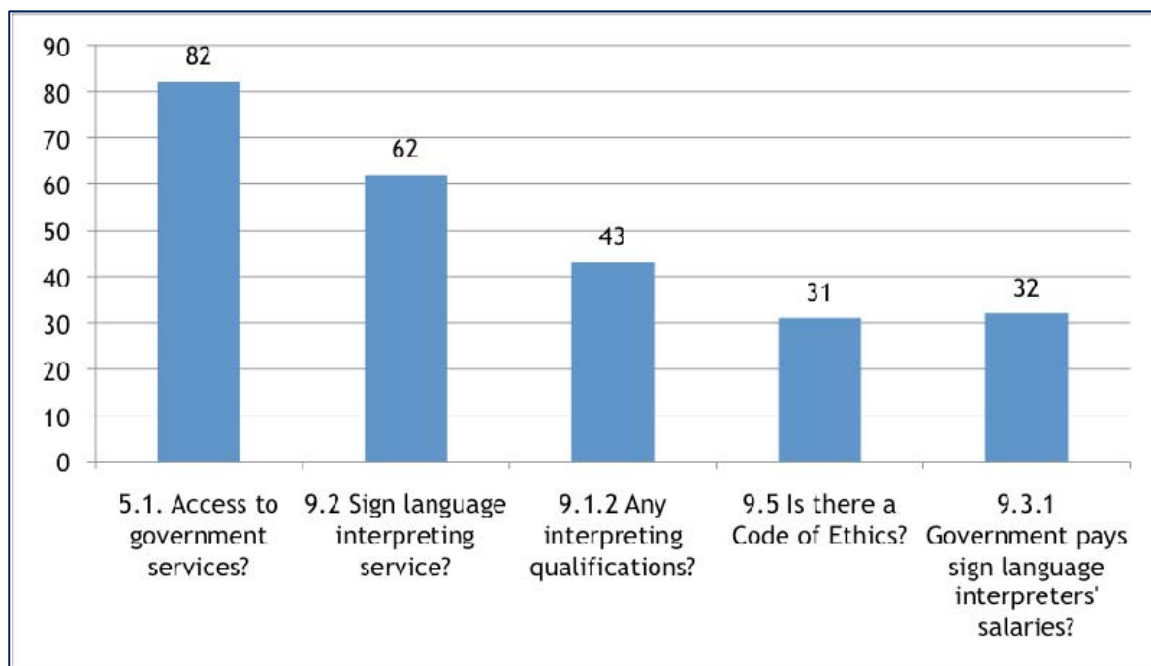


Diagram 7.3

Of the 93 country respondents, 62 reported that there is a sign language interpreting service in their country. Forty-three said there was some kind of training²² for people who want to become qualified sign language interpreters; and 31 countries said there was some kind of national Code of Ethics for sign language interpreters. Thirty-two countries say their government takes some responsibility in paying for the sign language interpreters' salaries. Only 18 reported that they had a sign language interpreter service, provision of training for sign language interpreters, a Code of Ethics *and* a government that is prepared to pay for the interpreters' salaries. These countries are Australia, Belarus, Brazil, Bulgaria, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Namibia, Nicaragua, Qatar, Russia, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda. In all other countries, one or more of these factors were missing. Of those respondents that reported that they have a sign language interpreting service, training and Code of Ethics, only three (Australia, Bulgaria and Japan) reported that the government paid for all sign language interpreter services. In all other countries, the government paid salaries to sign language interpreters in some or in no cases, and/or the Deaf people themselves, an organisation or association of or for Deaf people, or other parties paid for interpreters' salaries - if the interpreters received any salary at all.

²² This question may have been interpreted differently by different countries, as some may include general sign language classes or courses, while others may have understood it as training in interpreting skills required after gaining fluency in sign language.

7.6 Regional Overviews

The following diagrams show the overall access to government and interpreting services in the respondent countries, sorted by region. Each “yes” to the relevant questions has been given one point. All other answers (“no” and information that Deaf people themselves and/or associations have to pay salaries, or no information provided at all) have been given zero points. The higher the score the better one can assume access to sign language interpreters, and thus access to government services, is. The countries receiving only one point only offer formal access to government services, but have none of the basic requirements for a sign language interpreting service; in these countries Deaf people will therefore only have partial, if any, access to services. The maximum score for any country is five. However, receiving a maximum score does **not** mean that one can conclude that Deaf people have full access to various services and a well-functioning sign language interpreting service. The highest score indicates only that a sign language interpreting system exists with minimum basic elements (organised service, some training, Code of Ethics and that the government recognises that sign language interpreters are entitled to a salary for the service they provide). Also, the number of available sign language interpreters in each country is a critical factor but not included in the diagrams. Those countries receiving less than five points cannot be said to have even a basic, functional sign language interpreting system. The regional survey reports provide detailed information about the situation in each country.

Eastern Europe and Middle Asia (EEMARS)

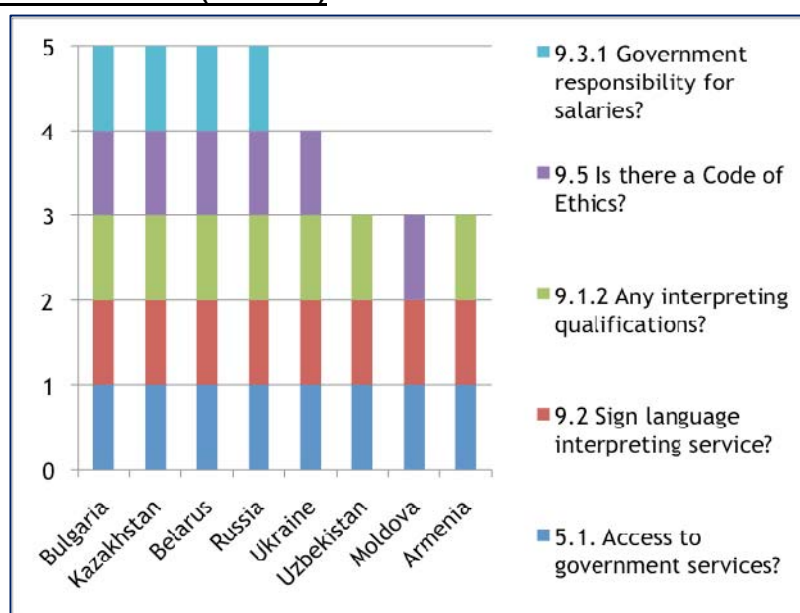


Diagram 7.4

Moldova has no training for sign language interpreters, and Uzbekistan and Armenia lack a Code of Ethics for sign language interpreters. The Bulgarian government pays only up to 10 hours of interpreting service a year for each Deaf person, so access to services is severely limited in this country too. In four countries, the government does not pay or contribute to the payment of interpreters’ salaries at all. The message from the other EEMARS countries is that there are few sign language interpreters available. The numbers ranged from five sign language interpreters in Armenia to 800 interpreters in Russia.

Asia and the Pacific (RSA/P)

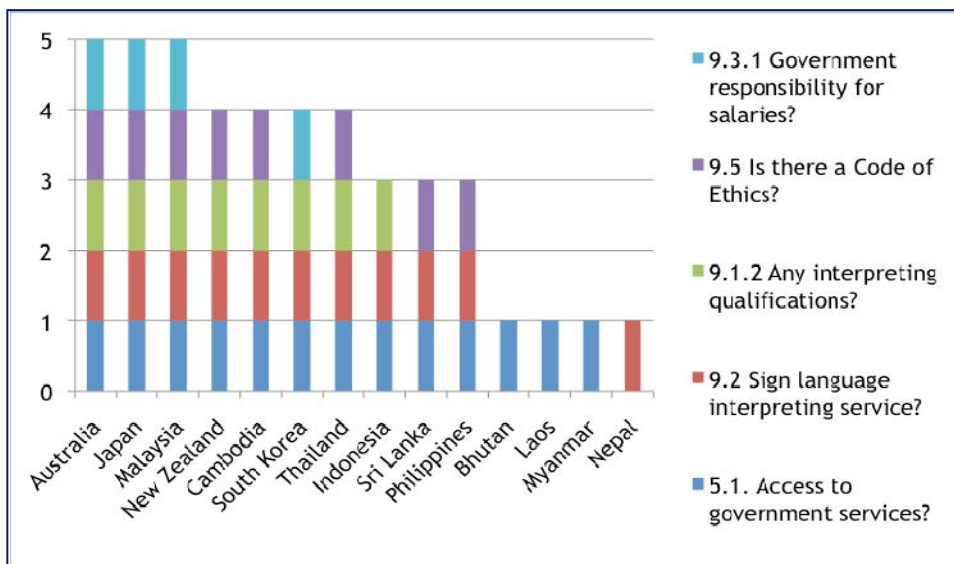


Diagram 7.5

Only Nepal says Deaf people do not have access to government services, but they do have a sign language interpreting service. Bhutan, Laos and Myanmar offer formal access, but have no sign language interpreting service, training or Code of Ethics for sign language interpreters. In only four countries does the government pay for some of the interpreting costs. Australia, Japan and Malaysia receive the maximum score in the RSA/P region. Those countries, however, report that there are large differences in the qualifications of sign language interpreters, and that the services are still inconsistent. The broad opinion regarding sign language interpreting services in the RSA/P region is that there is a lack of quality in formal training or qualifications; interpreting services themselves are weak; the number of sign language interpreters is not enough, and supply cannot meet demand; and the general community has limited awareness about available services. The number of sign language interpreters ranges from three in Laos and Sri Lanka to 20,000 in Japan. However, less than 1,800 of the interpreters in Japan are qualified, and their status and salaries are low.

South America (RSSA)

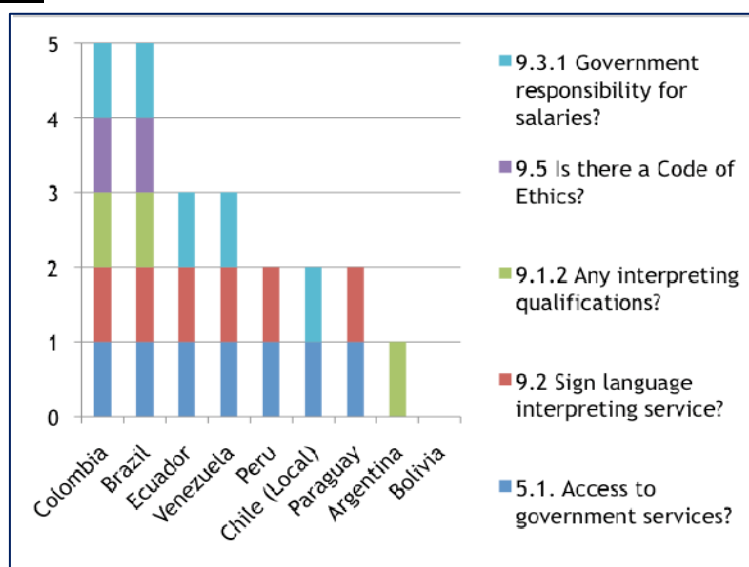


Diagram 7.6

Argentina and Bolivia say Deaf people do not have access to government services. Only three countries have any training for sign language interpreters and only two have a national Code of Ethics. Most respondents in the RSSA region state that sign language interpreting services are accessed through a national or local Deaf Association, religious groups or through hearing family or acquaintances. The regional working group in RSSA also expressed the concern that Deaf people had to register as members of particular groups (for example religious organisations) in order to

receive sign language interpreting services at no charge. The number of sign language interpreters ranges from approximately 10 in Bolivia to 1,500 in Brazil. Peru and Argentina did not provide the number of interpreters in their countries.

Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean (MCAC)

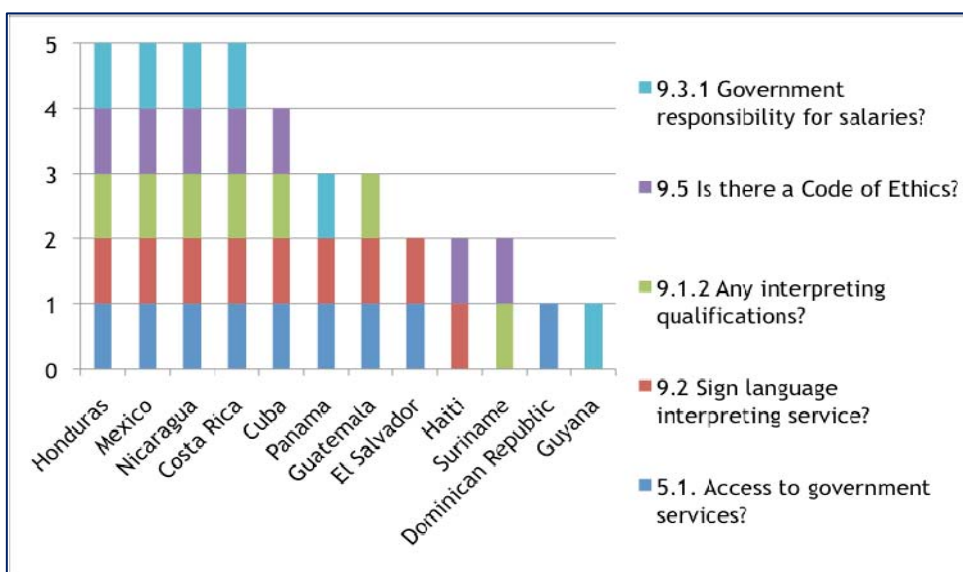


Diagram 7.7

Three countries say Deaf people do not have formal access to government services; however one of these (Guyana) says the government sometimes pays for sign language interpreters. Three countries lack a sign language interpreting service, there is training for sign language interpreters in seven countries and seven countries have a national Code of Ethics. The major complaint in the MCAC region is the lack of and the low quality of training for sign language interpreters. Also, the low number of sign language interpreters is a constant concern. Suriname reports they have two sign language interpreters, while there are 434 in Cuba.

Eastern and Southern Africa (RSESA)

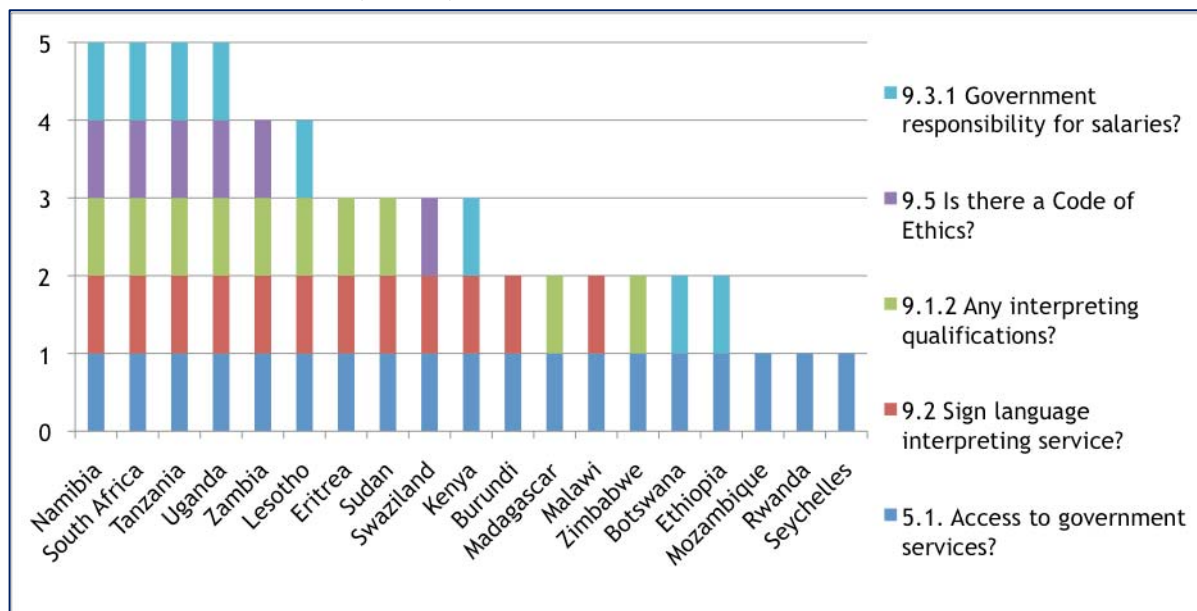


Diagram 7.8

In 12 of the 19 respondents in the RSESA region, national or local Deaf associations provide sign language interpreters. Eight of the governments in this region pay for some sign language interpreting. There is a Code of Ethics in six of the countries. Seven countries have no sign language interpreting service. The broad opinion is that there is a lack of quality in formal training and qualifications; sign language interpreting services are not available all the time; there are not enough sign language interpreters so supply cannot meet demand; and there is a lack of funding for these services. In RSESA, the number of sign language interpreters ranged from

three in Rwanda and Swaziland to 102 in Uganda. Seychelles did not provide any information about sign language interpreting services, but said they use hearing people who have signing skills to act as interpreters for Deaf people.

Western and Central Africa (WCAR)

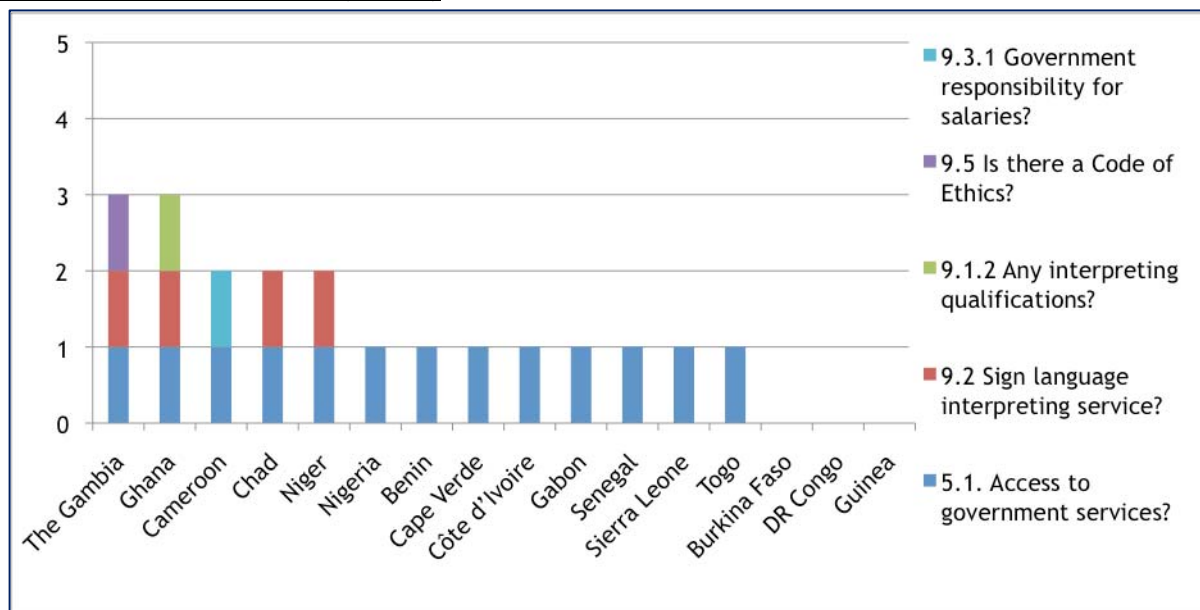


Diagram 7.9

Only in Cameroon does the government pay for sign language interpreters. Four countries have a sign language interpreting service, but governments run none. Only Ghana has recently started a sign language interpreter training program at the University level, and the Gambia is the only country with a Code of Ethics for sign language interpreters. The demand is far greater than the supply in most countries, so people who know sign language (often teachers and people with Deaf parents) will be asked to interpret without qualifications or payment. In Benin and Togo, staff members at the Deaf schools function as interpreters. The number of sign language interpreters ranges from two in Cameroon and Senegal to 150 in DR Congo.

Arab Region (RSAR)

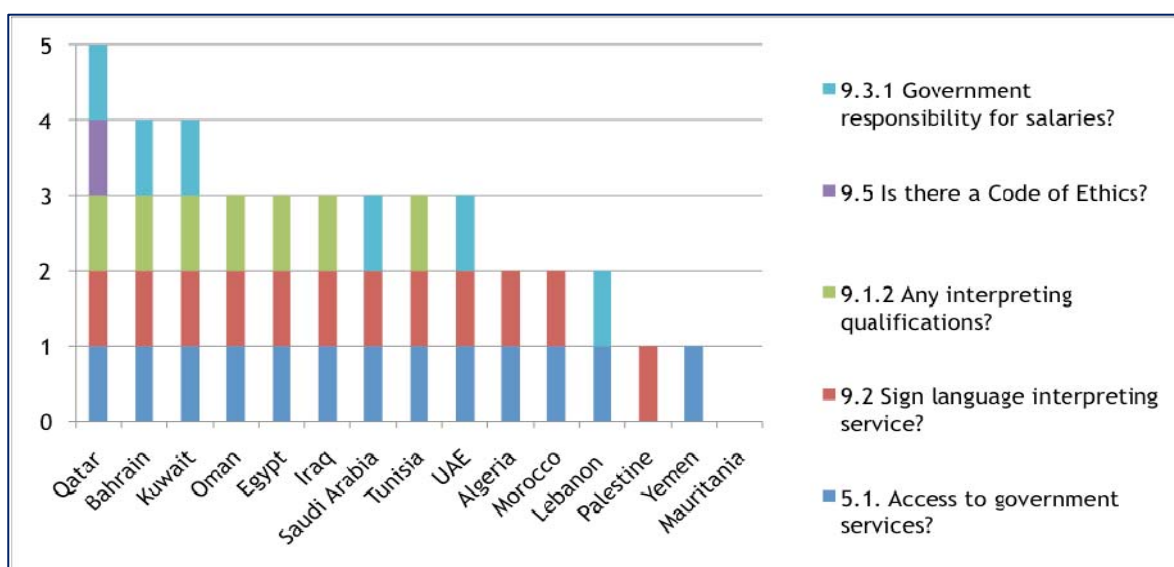


Diagram 7.10

Mauritania and Palestine report Deaf people do not have access to government services, but Palestine still has a sign language interpreting service. Lebanon and Yemen offer formal access, but have no service, training or Code of Ethics for sign language interpreters. Qatar is the only country in the region that has a Code of Ethics. The regional working group for the RSAR region commented that, in spite of some of the responses, there are no people who have received full training to become professional or qualified sign language interpreters. There is a training programme on the Unification of Arabic Sign Languages (see paragraph 5.4. in the Equality and

Sign Language chapter) that both Deaf and hearing people can attend for five or 10 days. Hearing people who complete this training receive a certificate as a 'sign language interpreter'. It is said that Deaf people generally do not understand or use the signs of the 'Unified Arabic Sign Language', and since the course gives no instruction on the process of interpreting, it must be questioned if the sign language interpreting qualifications provided are of much worth. The number of interpreters ranges from five in Bahrain, Morocco and Palestine to 300 in Algeria.

7.7 Low Quality of Training and Low Number of Sign Language Interpreters

The situation regarding training of sign language interpreters in the RSAR region is also illustrative of the situation as a whole. While 40 of the respondent countries have some kind of interpreter training, the length, scope and quality of this training varies greatly; from a 5-10 day course in learning some signs to a University diploma with courses running over several years. It is thus not possible to assume that the mere existence of training guarantees that the people who work as sign language interpreters have the necessary qualifications. Only 34 countries have both training for sign language interpreters *and* a Code of Ethics. If there exists no formal guidelines or Code of Ethics for sign language interpreters, the goal of a training or qualification programme is bound to be imprecise; hence it will be difficult to evaluate the qualifications the training gives.

Of those countries answering the question about how many sign language interpreters in the country are qualified, 30 countries said they had 20 or fewer qualified sign language interpreters; seven countries had 21-100 qualified interpreters, while 12 had more than 100 qualified interpreters. Some of the countries that reported that they had 20 or fewer qualified/trained interpreters are populous states like Mexico (20 trained interpreters/approximately 108,000,000 inhabitants), Thailand (20/65,000,000), Madagascar (4/20,000,000), Sudan (5/40,000,000), Tanzania (6/40,000,000) and Iraq (1/28,000,000). It is not clear whether these numbers are from official registries of sign language interpreters or if they are based on assumptions and/or personal knowledge by the person or group responsible for giving the answer. The low number of qualified sign language interpreters in most countries is alone a strong indicator that Deaf people do not have de facto access to government services. There are no recommended ratios on the number of sign language interpreters required in a given population, as the demands/demographics of a local/national community are what drive need.²³

²³ Information in an email dated 24 December 2008 from Ms Liz Scott Gibson, President, World Association of Sign Language Interpreters

8. Lifelong Learning

8.1. Article 27 Work and Employment

Article 24 on Education in the CRPD emphasises that States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels, and lifelong learning (Article 24 (1.5)). Article 27 on Work and employment says that persons with disabilities shall “have effective access to general technical and vocational guidance programmes, placement services and vocational and continuing training” (Article 27 (1.d)). In addition to primary education, Deaf people shall also have access to secondary and higher education as well as vocational training; and the education and/or training must be provided in a mode that is accessible to Deaf people. Access to further education and vocational training is important to being able to find and hold a job to earn a salary that allows independent living. The right to work is also stated in Article 27: “States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible ...” (Article 27(1)). Discrimination on the basis of disability is prohibited (Article 27(1.a)); people with disabilities should have effective access to placement services; and assistance in finding, obtaining, maintaining and returning to employment shall be promoted. (Article 27 (1.e)).

8.2 Vocational Training and Access to Higher Education

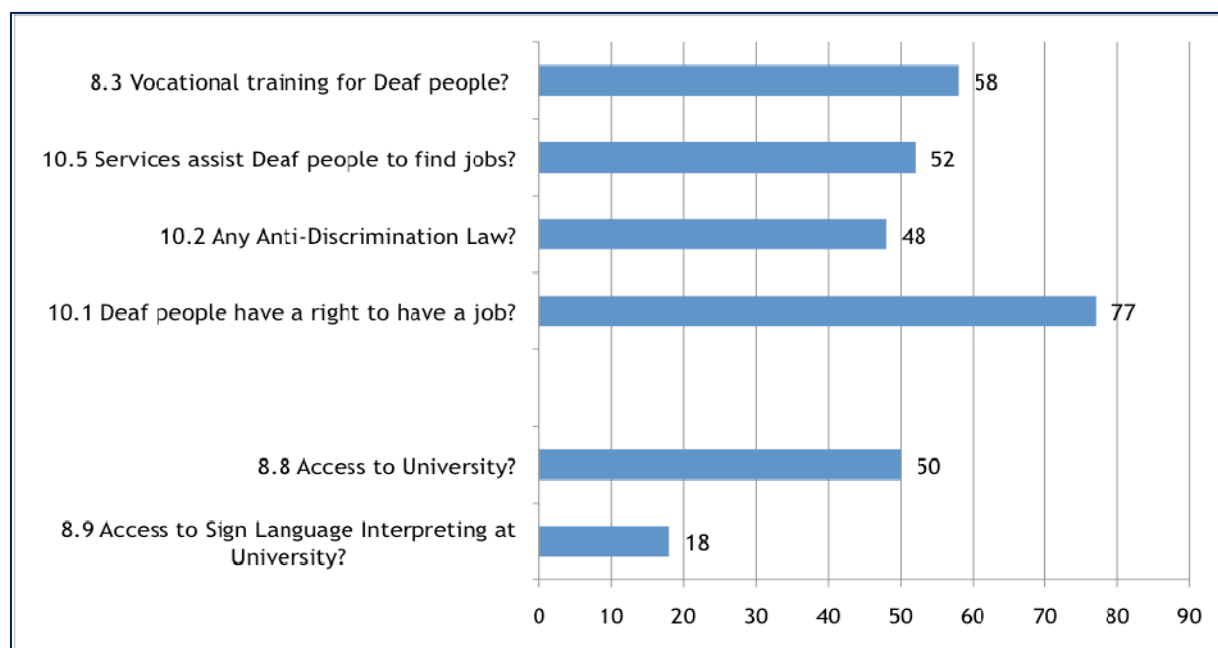


Diagram 8.1

Sixteen country respondents say their country does not recognise Deaf people’s right to work and to earn a salary, yet approximately half of the respondent countries have no laws that declare labour market discrimination on the basis of disability or Deafness illegal. Fifty-two countries provide some assistance to Deaf people to find a job, and 58 provide vocational training for Deaf people. The questionnaire asked if the associations had any approximate or official figures on the number of Deaf people who are in paid employment in the country, or if they had any figures on the unemployment percentage among Deaf people. The answers were, however, too diverse and random to form any reliable conclusions or statistics. The only conclusion it is possible to draw is that figures on (un)employment of Deaf people are rare, if they exist at all, and also quite incomplete. The regional reports provide information on the (un)employment numbers given by the country respondents.

There are no formal obstacles against Deaf people entering University in 50 countries, but only 18 countries actually provide interpreting services at the University level. Several country respondents that report Deaf people do not have access to University say the reason is no or little access to interpreting services. The number of countries where Deaf people are not formally

denied access to University might thus be higher than in the diagram above, but the number of countries where Deaf people experience real access is much lower.

8.3 Regional Overviews

The respondents were asked if Deaf people have the right to gain employment and earn a salary, if there are any anti-discrimination laws in the area of employment, if there are any services to assist Deaf people to find a job, if there are any vocational training programmes for Deaf people, if Deaf people have access to University education and if Deaf people have full access to sign language interpreting services at University. Each positive answer to these questions is given one point, while negative or missing answers are given zero points.

Eastern Europe and Middle Asia (EEMARS)

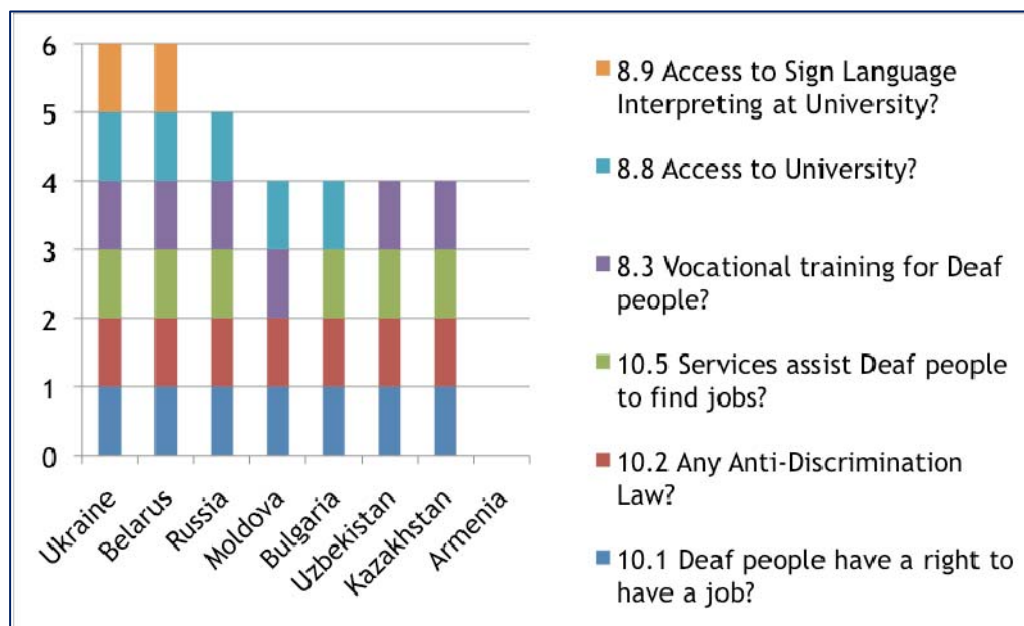


Diagram 8.2

Armenia is the only country that does not recognise Deaf people’s right to have a job and earn a salary. All countries but Armenia have anti-discrimination laws in the field of employment. Armenia and Moldova have no service to assist Deaf people to find a job. Some of the problems related to employment mentioned by country respondents were: low level of education and lack of higher education; communication barriers; and low salaries in jobs available to Deaf people (reduces incentive for Deaf people to work).

In only two of the countries (Belarus and Ukraine) do Deaf students have full access to sign language interpreters in universities. Three countries (Bulgaria, Moldova and Russia) say Deaf people can access universities, but interpreters are not provided. In the three countries where Deaf people do not have access to University education, these reasons were provided: unavailability of sign language interpreting services for Deaf students; refusal of permission for the sign language interpreters to interpret during exams; low level of University entry exam results of Deaf students; and lack of interest on the part of Deaf students to enter University.

Asia and the Pacific (RSA/P)

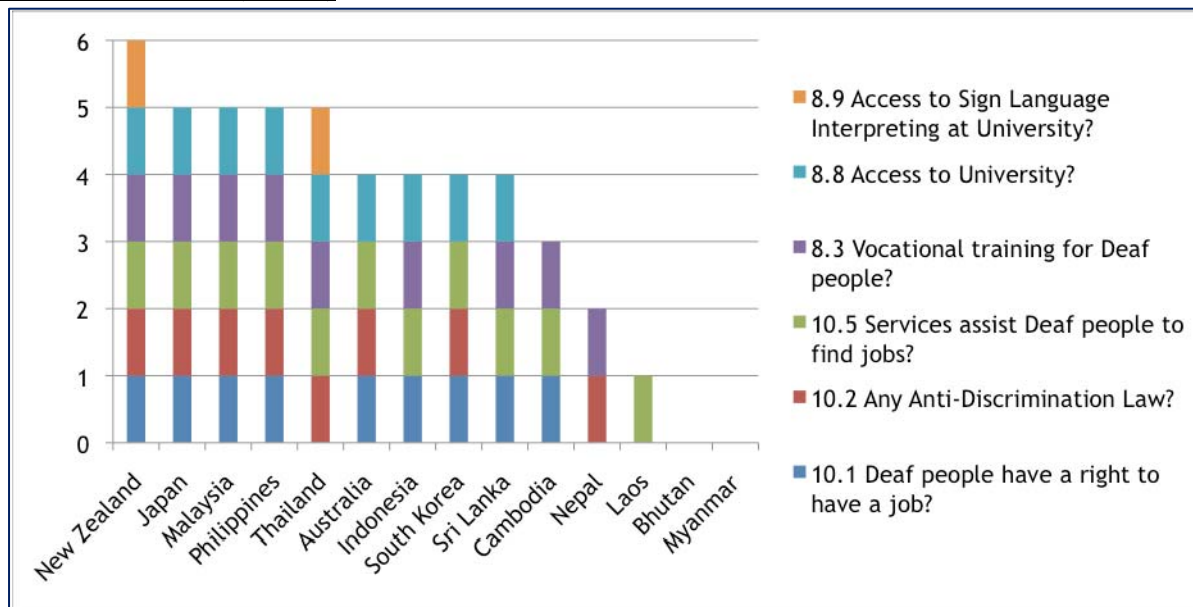


Diagram 8.3

Respondents from Bhutan, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal and Thailand state their governments do not consider that Deaf people have a right to be employed and earn a standard salary. However, Nepal and Thailand have anti-discrimination legislation in the area of employment, so there is a conflict in their answers. All countries except Bhutan and Myanmar have services to assist Deaf people to find work. Some of the reasons provided for unemployment are: most job training is not accessible to Deaf people; education and job training are not available or only available in few parts of the country; barriers in communication; discrimination by hearing people; and lack of Deaf awareness and sign language interpreters in the workplace. Nine of the countries offer Deaf people access to University, but only New Zealand and Thailand offer full interpreting services in universities. In Australia, some universities will provide accommodation, including sign language interpreters. Reasons provided by the country respondents where Deaf people do not have access to universities are that Deaf students are not yet able to reach this level, no Deaf students have completed secondary education, that sign language interpreting is not available or there is no funding available for these services.

South America (RSSA)

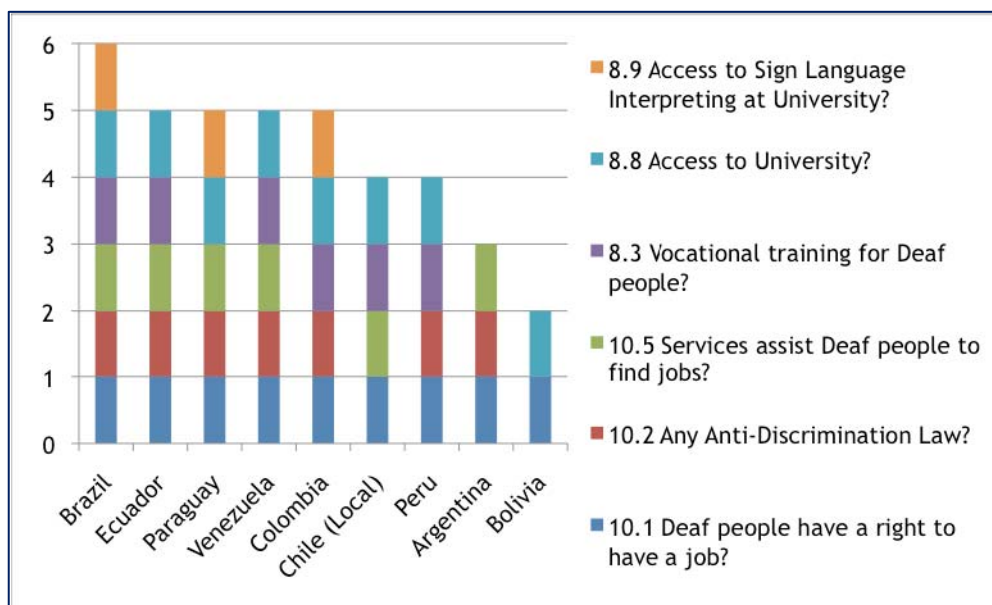


Diagram 8.4

In all countries, Deaf people have the right to have a job and earn a salary; and only Chile and Bolivia lack anti-discrimination legislation in the field of employment.

The one country saying Deaf people do not have access to University (Argentina) says the reason is unavailability of sign language interpreters. The situation seems to be the same in Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela. Only Brazil, Colombia and Paraguay provide sign language interpreters at University.

Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean (MCAC)

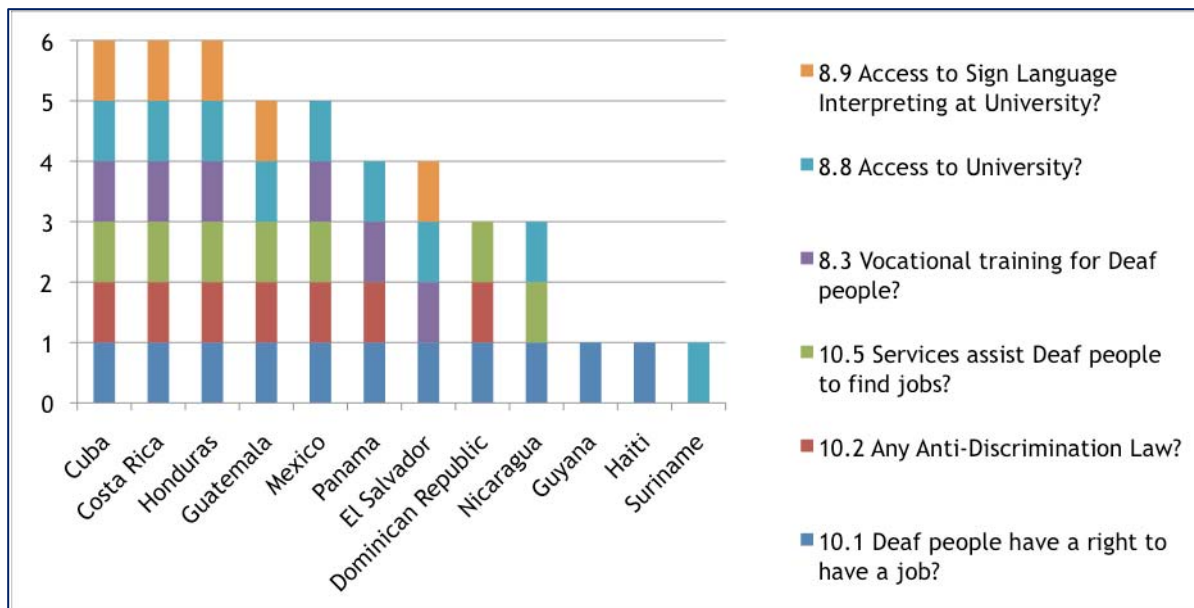


Diagram 8.5

In all countries except Suriname, Deaf people have the right to get a job and earn a salary, but only seven countries have anti-discrimination legislation in the area of employment. Reasons provided for unemployment among Deaf people in the region are: lack of employment opportunity laws; the low level of education; and communication difficulties.

In the countries where Deaf people do not have access to University education, reasons provided are that no Deaf students have received a secondary education and that there is an unavailability of sign language interpreting services for Deaf students.

Eastern and Southern Africa (RSESA)

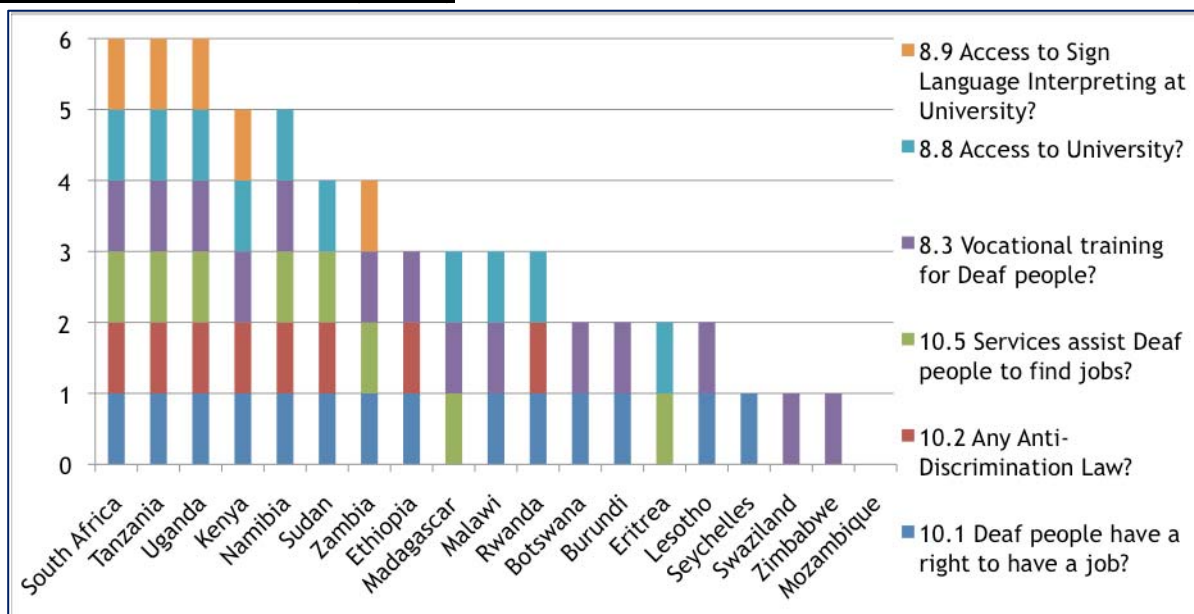


Diagram 8.6

In five of the countries (Eritrea, Madagascar, Mozambique, Swaziland and Zimbabwe), Deaf people's right to employment and to earn a salary is not recognised. Eight countries have anti-discrimination legislation in the area of employment. The main reasons for unemployment of Deaf people in this region are barriers in communication; low literacy skills; lack of education and job

training for Deaf people; and discrimination by hearing people. A bad national economy is also provided as a reason for high unemployment.

Deaf people have access to higher education in 10 of the 19 countries. Four of these country's universities provide sign language interpreters. Zambia says Deaf people do not have access to universities because of lack of sign language interpreters and high qualification requirements, but interpreters will be paid for if a Deaf person qualifies for university education.

Western and Central Africa (WCAR)

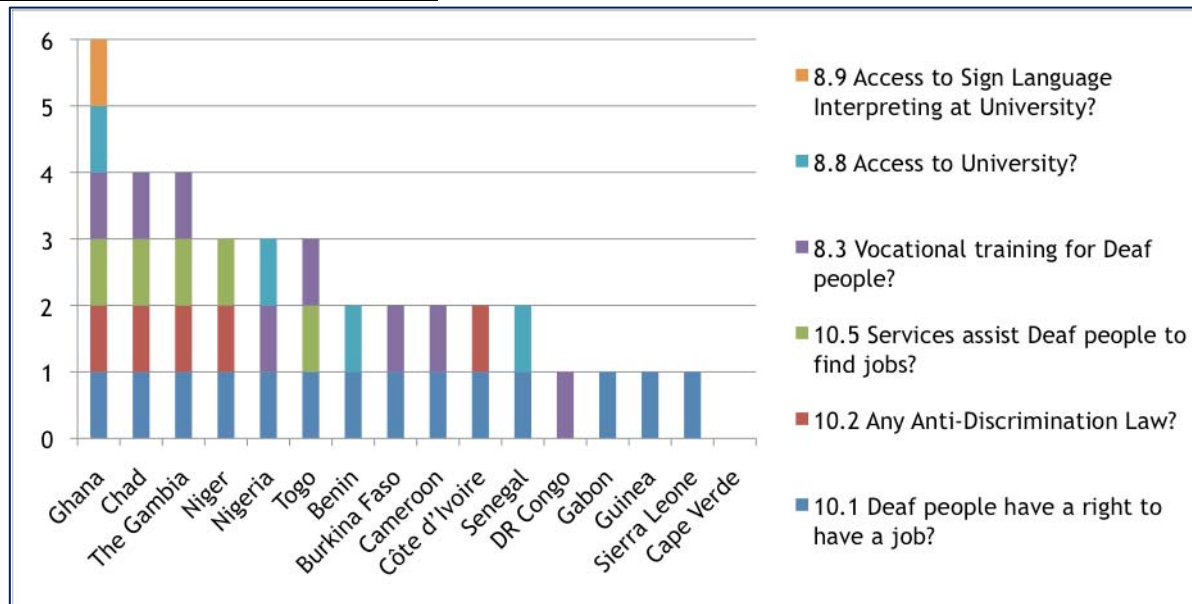


Diagram 8.7

DR Congo is the only country that reported that Deaf people do not have the right to a job, although the situation is unknown in Cape Verde. Only five countries (Chad, Ghana, Gambia, Niger and Senegal) have anti-discrimination legislation in the field of employment. Reasons for unemployment are discrimination against Deaf people in the workforce and low education or lack of vocational training.

Deaf people can access universities in four countries (Benin, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal), but only Ghana provides sign language interpreters in universities. Reasons for inaccessibility to universities are: no formal structure is available for Deaf students to obtain a higher level of education; unavailability of sign language interpreting services for Deaf students; Deaf students currently in school are not able to reach this level; and no formal support service for Deaf students at the universities.

Arab Region (RSAR)

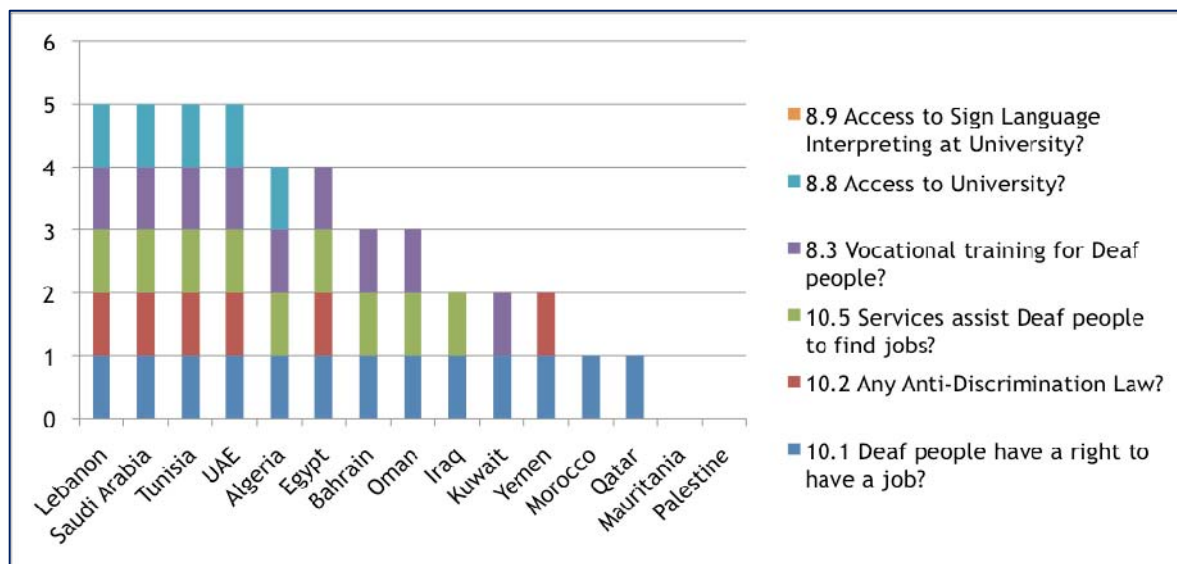


Diagram 8.8

Two countries, Mauritania and Palestine, do not recognise that Deaf people have the right to employment and to earn a salary. Six countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen) have legislation that prohibits discrimination in the area of employment. Frequent comments regarding unemployment are that Deaf people are out of work due to poor literacy or because they do not have access to sign language interpreting services for job interviews or on-the-job training.

Only five countries (Algeria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and United Arab Emirates) provide access to universities for Deaf people, but none of the countries in the region provide interpreting services for University education.

9. Final Comments from Researcher

The CRPD emphasises the role and responsibility governments have to fulfil and ensure that people with disabilities shall enjoy human rights. The role of governments was also emphasised in the questionnaire of the Global Education Pre-Planning Survey, and has consequently guided the research done in compiling this final report based on the seven regional surveys. In many of the respondent countries, there is a long tradition of co-operation and exchange of ideas with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in high income countries (according to the World Bank classification). Both services and schools for Deaf people have been established as a consequence of foreign donation/development projects, NGO-based co-operation and other private initiatives (including missionary work). Since the questionnaire often explicitly asked if the *government* in the responding countries provided various services, there is a great chance that many services and institutions serving Deaf people that are run by NGOs and/or other private parties, rather than governments, have not been included in responses. In many countries, these non-governmental services might have a more wide-reaching and substantial role in the lives of Deaf people than governmental services and legislation.

Unfortunately, there is very little data or information about the quality and quantity of the various services and institutions serving Deaf people, and much more research in various fields (for example demography, linguistics, sociology/anthropology and education) is needed. The analyses in this report are only based on the reported existence of different services, institutions and legislations in the responding countries; the quality and outreach of these are not discussed or analysed. Also, it has not been possible to analyse the answers in light of gender and age, to see how different services or different discrimination affects men and women, or how different age groups are served. However, lack of research and knowledge about the Deaf population is not an excuse for continued ignorance of the needs and rights of Deaf people.

Even though the CRPD emphasises the role of the governments, it is not only legislation in the countries that have ratified the CRPD that needs to be changed and improved to follow the spirit and the content of the CRPD. Policies, programmes, services, awareness-raising, all the work done by NGOs and others also need to be modified according to the CRPD. These institutions will in many cases also provide important resources and knowledge that can support the enjoyment of human rights by Deaf people. Often, they will also be able to assist governments in their work to improve the rights, services and quality of lives of people with disabilities. It is crucial to listen to and respect the opinions and knowledge of Deaf people in each country in the planning, implementation and/or provision of all programmes, services or legislation that will affect their lives, whether run by an NGO or a governmental or private party. Otherwise, the risk is high that the quality of life for Deaf people will not improve, and Deaf people will remain disempowered and deprived of access and full enjoyment of human rights.

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Regional Survey of WFD Regional Secretariat for Asia and the Pacific (WFD RSA/P)

Regional Survey of WFD Regional Secretariat for South America (WFD RSSA)

Regional Survey of WFD Regional Secretariat for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean (WFD MCAC)

Regional Survey of WFD Regional Secretariat for Eastern and Southern Africa (WFD RSESA)

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The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights

<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

US Census Bureau

<http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/worldpopinfo.html>

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World Federation of the Deaf

www.wfdeaf.org

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http://www.wfdeaf.org/pdf/policy_statement_signlanguages.pdf

WFD Policy on Education Rights for Deaf Children:

http://www.wfdeaf.org/pdf/policy_child_ed.pdf

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11. Background of Research Team

Ms Hilde Hauland, Researcher



Hilde Hauland (born and raised in Trondheim, Norway) is a social anthropologist (Cand.polit., University of Oslo 2001); a researcher at the Fafo Institute of Labour and Social Research in Oslo; and a PhD candidate at the University of Oslo. She has been involved in non-governmental organisation activities since 1988, including the Norwegian Deaf Youth Association, the Norwegian Association of the Deaf, the Norwegian Student Union, the Norwegian National Disability Council, the Nordic Council of the Deaf, European Union of the Deaf, World Federation of the Deaf and WFD Regional Secretariat in Eastern and Southern Africa. She held the Powrie V. Doctor Chair in Deaf Studies at Gallaudet University 2005-06, and has also produced TV programmes in sign language for the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation. Growing up as one of two Deaf siblings in a hearing family who all learned to sign, she has been moving in and out of

both the Deaf and hearing worlds all her life; comparing cultures and social lives continues to motivate her endeavours.

Mr Colin Allen, Assistant to Researcher/Project Co-ordinator

Colin Allen was raised in a Deaf family in Sydney, Australia and graduated with a Diploma in Community Organisations from the University of Technology, Sydney. In his varied professional career, he has worked as a professional actor with the Australian Theatre of the Deaf, the Fairmount Theatre of the Deaf (Ohio, USA) and the Sunshine Too Company (National Technical Institute for the Deaf, Rochester, New York, USA); and was an AIDS Educator for the Deaf Community in Sydney.



Colin was heavily involved with the Deaf community in his home city of Sydney and later was intensively involved with the Australian Association of the Deaf (now known as Deaf Australia), serving as President for nine years. In July 2003 he was elected a board member of the World Federation of the Deaf.

Between September 2000 and May 2007, Colin was employed by the Finnish Association of the Deaf (FAD); he began his duties for FAD as an organisational training advisor with the Albanian National Association of the Deaf. He then moved to Cambodia to work with the Deaf Development Programme as Programme Advisor for three years, and was then Organisational Advisor for the Organisational Training Project with the Kosovar Association of the Deaf for three years. He conducted a Balkan survey project in four countries (Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Turkey) in collaboration with their national Deaf Associations.

12. Appendices

12.1 Appendix No 1 - Questionnaire



World Federation of the Deaf

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

Email: DeafHumanRights@yahoo.com.au

A GLOBAL SURVEY

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

1.0 Contact Details

- 1.1 Country: _____
- 1.2 Name of the National Association of the Deaf: _____
- 1.3 Street Address:
Street Address: _____
Street Address: _____
City: _____
Post code / Zip Code: _____
Country: _____
- 1.4 Postal Address:
Postal Number: _____
City: _____
Post code / Zip Code: _____
Country: _____
Website Address: _____
Email Address: _____
- 1.5 Telephone Numbers:
Landline Number: _____
Mobile Number: _____
Facsimile Number: _____

Project Data Use Only

Country Reference No:

Received Date:

Data Entered:

Country Classification:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low Income | <input type="checkbox"/> Lower Middle Income |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Upper Middle Income | <input type="checkbox"/> High Income |

2.0 National Association of the Deaf

2.1 Please provide the official name of your National Association of the Deaf in both English and in your language:

2.1.1 English: _____

2.1.2 In your national language: _____

2.2 Please provide the number of members your National Association of the Deaf has in your country?

2.2.1 Deaf Members: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

2.2.1.1 Deaf Women: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

2.2.1.2 Deaf Men: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

2.2.2 Hard of Hearing Members: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

2.2.2.1 Hard of Hearing Women: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

2.2.2.2 Hard of Hearing Men: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

2.2.3 Hearing Members: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

2.3 In what year was your National Association established?

2.4 Does your Deaf Association have Statutes/a Constitution?

Yes, please go to Question No 2.5

No, please go to Question No 2.5

2.5 Does your government recognise your national organisation to represent Deaf people in your country?

Yes, please go to Question No 2.6

No, please go to Question No 2.6

2.6 Please list some the areas in which your association has adopted a policy statement?

2.7 Please list the six highest priority issues/actions in your strategic action plan

2.8 Please describe structure of your National Association of the Deaf (e.g. congress/annual meeting/ board/ executive/districts/local associations etc)?

2.8.1 How many affiliated regional and/or local Deaf Associations is part of your National Association of the Deaf?

2.8.1.1 Number of Regional associations: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

2.8.1.2 Number of Local associations: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

2.9 How many members of your members are Deaf?

[_____] of [_____]
(Deaf Board Members) (Total of Board Members)

2.10 How many members of the board are Deaf women and how many are Deaf men?

2.10.1 Deaf women: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

2.10.2 Deaf men: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

2.11 Does your National Association of the Deaf have committees for specific area of interest or affiliation with any other relevant independent groups in your country?

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sign Language Interpreters | <input type="checkbox"/> Sign Language Researchers | <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents of Deaf Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf Seniors | <input type="checkbox"/> Deafblind |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf Youth | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural groups of Deaf people | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf people with other disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Lesbian, Gay, Transgender and Bisexual | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf Women's Groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Children of Deaf Adults | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, <i>please write down:</i> | | |

2.12 Does your National Association of the Deaf have any paid staff members?

- Yes, please go to Question No 2.12.1
- No, please go to Question No 2.13

2.12.1 How many of the paid staff members are women and who many are men?

2.12.1.1 Women: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

2.12.1.2 Men: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

2.12.2 How many of the paid staff members are Deaf?

2.12.2.1 Deaf Women: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

2.12.2.2 Deaf Men: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

2.13 Is your Chief Executive Officer / Executive Director / Person-in-charge Deaf?

- Yes, please go to Question No 3.1
- No, please go to Question No 3.1

3.0 Population of Deaf people

3.1 Does your country's government have any official records on the number of Deaf people in your country?

- Yes, please go to Question No 3.1.1
- No, please go to Question No 3.2

3.1.1 If yes, please provide the official number of Deaf people in your country?

3.1.1.1 Total: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

3.1.1.2 Deaf Women: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

3.1.1.3 Deaf Men: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

3.2 Does your Association have any official or approximate figures on the number of Deaf people living in your country?

Yes, please go to Question No 3.2.1

No, please go to Question No 3.3

3.2.1 If yes, please provide the number of Deaf people in your country

3.2.1.1 Total: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

3.2.1.2 Deaf Women: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

3.2.1.3 Deaf Men: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

3.3 Does your Association have any official or approximate figures on the Deaf people who use sign language as their primary language?

Yes, please go to Question No 3.3.1

No, please go to Question No 3.4

3.3.1 If yes, please provide the number of Deaf people who use sign language in your country

3.3.1.1 Total: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

3.3.1.2 Deaf Women: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

3.3.1.3 Deaf Men: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

3.4. Does the situation of HIV/AIDS in your country affect Deaf women, men and children?

Yes, please go to Question No 3.4.1

No, please go to Question No 4.1

No information available, please go to Question 4.1

3.4.1 If yes, please describe the situation with HIV/AIDS in the Deaf community in your country including any official statistics on the number of Deaf people living with HIV/AIDS.

4.0 Legislations and Policies

4.1 Does your country's government recognise Deaf people as citizens on an equal basis as other citizens in your country?

Yes, please go to Question No 4.2

No, please go to Question No 4.2

4.2 Does your country's government have an office responsible for services for People with Disabilities?

Yes, please go to Question No 4.2.1

No, please go to Question No 4.3

4.2.1 If yes, what is the name, address, and website address of the government office that is responsible for services for People with Disabilities in your country?

- 4.3 Does your country's Government have any legislation or policies for Deaf people *(or People with Disabilities in general)*?
- Yes, please go to Question No 4.3.1
- No, please go to Question No 4.4
- 4.3.1 If yes, please list some of the policies or legislation that relates to Deaf people *(or People with Disabilities)*, *(please write the name of the legislations or policies in full detail)*:
- 4.4 Does your country's Government have any anti-discrimination laws for Deaf people *(or People with Disabilities)*?
- Yes, please go to Question No 4.5
- No, please go to Question No 4.5
- 4.5 Does your country's government provide any services specifically for the Deaf Community through its government departments?
- Yes, please go to Question No 4.5.1
- No, please go to Question No 4.5.3
- 4.5.1 If yes, what types of service are provided specifically for the Deaf Community by your country's government?
- 4.5.2 What is the general opinion of the current service(s) specifically provided for the Deaf Community by your country's government?
Please go to Question No 4.6
- 4.5.3 If no, why does your country's government not provide any service specifically for the Deaf Community?
- 4.6 Does your Association have any contacts with your current country's government?
- Yes, please go to Question No 4.6.1
- No, please go to Question No 4.7
- 4.6.1 What type of contact does your Association have with your country's current government?
- 4.7 Does your Association receive any financial support from your country's current government?
- Yes, please go to Question No 4.7.1
- No, please go to Question No 4.8
- 4.7.1 What is the amount of annual financial support from your country's government?
- 4.7.2 What is the purpose of the financial support from your country's government to the Deaf Community?
- 4.8 Do Deaf people have a right to vote in national, regional and local elections?
- Yes, please go to Question No 4.9
- No, please go to Question No 4.8.1
- 4.8.1 If Deaf people do not have the right to vote, please list the government legislation or policies that specifically exclude Deaf people from having the right to vote:

4.9 Are Deaf people allowed to obtain a driver's licence?

Yes, please go to Question No 4.10

No, please go to Question No 4.9.1

4.9.1 If Deaf people are not allowed to drive, please list the Government legislation or policies that stop them from being allowed to drive:

4.10 Are Deaf people allowed to marry Deaf or other partners?

Yes, please go to Question No 4.11

No, please go to Question No 4.10.1

4.10.1 If Deaf people are not allowed to get married, please list any specific Government legislation or policy that specifically stops Deaf people from being allowed to marry (or to be allowed to marry another deaf person):

4.11 Are Deaf people allowed to have children?

Yes, please go to Question No 4.12

No, please go to Question No 4.11.1

4.11.1 If Deaf people are not allowed to have children, please list any specific Government legislation or policy that stops Deaf people from being allowed to have children.

4.12 Are Deaf people allowed to adopt children?

Yes, please go to Question No 5.1

No, please go to Question No 4.12.1

4.12.1 If Deaf people are not allowed to adopt children, please list any specific Government legislation or policy that stops Deaf people from being allowed to adopt children.

5.0 Access to Government Services

5.1 Do Deaf people have access to government services such as education, health care, employment, social welfare and any general government services?

Yes, please go to Question No 5.1.1

No, please go to Question No 5.2

5.1.1 If yes, how do Deaf people access these government services?

5.1.2 Are Deaf people satisfied with the level of access they have to the government services?

5.2 Are Deaf people entitled to any financial assistance from your country's government?

Yes, please go to Question No 5.2.1

No, please go to Question No 6.1

5.2.1 What type of financial assistance are Deaf people entitled to receive from your country's government?

Disability allowance General Pension Disability-specific Pension

Other, *please write down:*

6.0 Access to the Media

6.1 Does your country's government provide sign language services for news and/or current affairs programmes on public television?

Yes, please go to Question No 6.1.1

No, please go to Question No 6.2

6.1.1 Please provide detailed information on how many hours or days per week Deaf people receive sign language services for news and/or current affairs programmes on public television.

6.2 Does your country's government provide subtitles / captions for news and/or current affairs programmes?

Yes, please go to Question No 6.2.1

No, please go to Question No 6.3

6.2.1 Please provide detailed information on how many hours / days per week are news / current affairs programmes (subtitled / captioned) offered for Deaf people?

6.3 Does your country's government offer governmental documents in your country's sign language?

Yes, please go to Question No 7.1

No, please go to Question No 7.1

7.0 Status of the Country Sign Language

7.1 Does your country's government formally recognise your country's sign language(s)?

Yes, please go to Question No 7.1.1

No, please go to Question No 7.1.3

7.1.1 What legislation/regulation formally recognises your country's sign language?

Constitution Legislation Policy Guideline

Other, *please write down:*

7.1.2 When did your country's government formally recognise your country's sign language?
Please go to Question No 7.2

7.1.3 Does your Deaf Association lobby your government for the recognition of your country's sign language(s)?

Yes, please go to Question No 7.2

No, please go to Question No 7.1.4

7.1.4 If no, please explain the reason your Association does not lobby your current government for the recognition of your country's Sign Language.

7.2 Does your country have a sign language dictionary?

Yes, please go to Question No 8.1

No, please go to Question No 8.1

8.0 Access to Education

8.1 Does your country's government recognise that Deaf children and Deaf students have the right to receive an education?

Yes, please go to Question No 8.2

No, please go to Question No 8.2

8.2 Does your country's government have any legislation or policies on Deaf Education?

Yes, please go to Question No 8.2.1

No, please go to Question No 8.2.2

**8.2.1 If yes, please list the specific name of the legislation or policies relating to Deaf Education:
Please go to Question No 8.3**

8.2.2 If no, are all Deaf children and Deaf students entitled to receive any education in your country?

Yes, please go to Question No 8.3

No, please go to Question No 8.3

8.3 Does your country's government provide any of the following educational settings for Deaf children and Deaf students?

Early intervention (Up to 5 years old) Yes No

Kindergarten (Between 3/4 years old to 5/6 years old) Yes No

Primary (From 5/6 years to 12/13 years old) Yes No

Secondary (From 12/13 years to 17/18 years old) Yes No

University (After 18 years old) Yes No

Vocational Education / Training Yes No

8.4 Does your country's government provide bilingual education using your country's sign language for Deaf children and Deaf students in your country?

Yes, please go to Question No 8.4.1

No, please go to Question No 8.5

8.4.1 If yes, in which educational setting is bilingual education offered in your country using your sign language?

Early intervention (Up to 5 years old) Yes No

Kindergarten (Between 3/4 years old to 5/6 years old) Yes No

Primary (From 5/6 years to 12/13 years old) Yes No

Secondary (From 12/13 years to 17/18 years old) Yes No

University (After 18 years old) Yes No

Vocational Education / Training Yes No

8.5 Does your country have any schools specifically for Deaf children and Deaf students?

Yes, please go to Question No 8.5.1

No, please go to Question No 8.5.3

8.5.1 If yes, how many Deaf schools does your country have?

8.5.2 What is the educational approach for communicating with Deaf children and students at the Deaf School in your country?

Bilingual Education Oral Method Cued Speech

Oral and Sign Language (Total Communication) Auditory Verbal

Other, *please write down:*

Please go to Question No 8.6

8.5.3 If no, where do Deaf children and students receive an education in your country?

8.6 What is the general opinion of the level of education received by Deaf children and Deaf students in your country?

8.7 What is the general opinion of the current literacy level of Deaf children and Deaf students in your country?

8.8 Do Deaf people have access to a University education in your country?

Yes, please go to Question No 8.8.1

No, please go to Question No 8.8.2

8.8.1 If yes, how many Universities provide access to studies for Deaf people in your country?
Please go to Question No 8.9

8.8.2 If no, why do Deaf people not have access to a university education in your country?
Please go to Question No 9.1

8.9 Do Deaf people have full access to sign language interpreting services at University?

Yes, please go to Question No 9.1

No, please go to Question No 9.1

9.0 Status of the Sign Language Interpreting Service

9.1 Does your country have any sign language interpreters?

Yes, please go to Question No 9.1.1

No, please go to Question No 9.1.6

9.1.1 How many sign language interpreters does your country have?

9.1.2 Are there any sign language interpreting qualifications available in your country?

Yes, please go to Question No 9.1.3

No, please go to Question No 9.2

9.1.3 Who provides the training for people who want to become qualified sign language interpreters?

- University Community College National Association of the Deaf
 Other, *please write down:*

9.1.4 How many years of training are available to someone who wants to become a sign language interpreter?

- Four Years Three Years Two Years Less than One Year
 Other, *please write down:*

9.1.5 How many sign language interpreters in your country have formal interpreting qualifications?

9.1.6 How do Deaf people access sign language interpreters?

9.2 Does your country have sign language interpreting services?

- Yes, please go to Question No 9.2.1
 No, please go to Question No 9.3

9.2.1 If yes, who provides these sign language interpreting services?

- Government National Association of the Deaf Private Sector
 Other, *please write down:*

9.2.2 What areas of life are sign language interpreting services available in your country?

- Social Services Health/Medical Services Employment Services
 Court Services Educational Services Counselling Services
 Financial Institutions Funerals / Weddings Entertainments
 Other, *please write down:*

9.2.3 What is the general opinion of these sign language interpreting services?

9.3 Do sign language interpreters receive payment for interpreting services in your country?

- Yes, please go to Question No 9.3.1
 No, please go to Question No 9.3.3

9.3.1 Who is responsible for paying for a sign language interpreter?

- Government National Association of the Deaf Deaf people
 Other, *please write down:*

**9.3.2 What the average hourly rate of payment for Sign Language Interpreters in your country?
Please go to Question No 9.4**

9.3.3 Do your sign language interpreters provide voluntary service for all sign language interpreting assignments?

- Yes, please go to Question No 9.4
 No, please go to Question No 9.4
 Sometimes, please go to Question No 9.4

9.4 Does your country have a National Association of Sign Language Interpreters?

Yes, please go to Question No 9.4.1

No, please go to Question No 9.5

9.4.1 Is your National Association of the Sign Language Interpreters independent from your National Association of the Deaf?

Yes, please go to Question No 9.5

No, please go to Question No 9.5

9.5 Is there a national Code of Ethics for sign language interpreters in your country?

Yes, please go to Question No 9.6

No, please go to Question No 9.6

9.6 Is there any legislation or policy in your country which states that the government has a responsibility for the provision of sign language interpreting services?

Yes, please go to Question No 9.6.1

No, please go to Question No 10.1

9.6.1 If yes, please list the legislation or policies that specifically state the Government has a responsibility for the provision of sign language interpreting services.

10.0 Employment

10.1 Does your country government consider Deaf people to have a right to be employed and earn a standard salary?

Yes, please go to Question No 10.2

No, please go to Question No 10.2

10.2 Does your country's government have any anti-discrimination laws in the area of employment, especially for Deaf people or People with Disabilities?

Yes, please go to Question No 10.2.1

No, please go to Question No 10.3

10.2.1 If yes, please write clearly the name of any legislation or policies that relate to anti-discrimination in employment:

10.3 Does your Association have any official or approximate figures on the number of Deaf people who are in paid employment in your country?

Yes, please go to Question No 10.3.1

No, please go to Question No 10.4

10.3.1 If yes, how many Deaf people are in employment?

10.3.1.1 Total: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

10.3.1.2 Deaf Women: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

10.3.1.3 Deaf Men: - [_____] *please write the number in this box*

10.3.2 What are the most common areas of work for Deaf people in your country?

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Office Administration | <input type="checkbox"/> Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Theatre /Arts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Research Projects | <input type="checkbox"/> Sign Language | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Farm work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Welding | <input type="checkbox"/> Carpentry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jeweller | <input type="checkbox"/> Tailoring | <input type="checkbox"/> Building | <input type="checkbox"/> Painter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning | <input type="checkbox"/> Car Mechanic | <input type="checkbox"/> Panel Beater | <input type="checkbox"/> Shoe Repairing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bakery | <input type="checkbox"/> Hairdresser | <input type="checkbox"/> Printer | <input type="checkbox"/> Catering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, <i>please write down:</i> | | | |

10.4 Does your country any figures on the percentage of Deaf people who are unemployed?

- Yes, please go to Question No 10.4.1
- No, please go to Question No 10.5

10.4.1 If yes, what percentage of Deaf people are unemployed in your country? If possible, give percentage of unemployed Deaf women and Deaf men.

10.4.1.1 Total: - [_____] *please write the percentage in this box*

10.4.1.2 Deaf Women: - [_____] *please write the percentage in this box*

10.4.1.3 Deaf Men: - [_____] *please write the percentage in this box*

10.4.2 Why are Deaf people unemployed in your country?

10.5 Does your country provide employment service to assist unemployed Deaf people to look for employment?

- Yes, please go to Question No 10.5.1
- No, please go to Question No 11.1

10.5.1 Who is responsible for providing employment service for unemployed Deaf people in your country?

- Government Employment Service National Association of the Deaf
- Other, *please write down:*

11.0 General

11.1 Which of the following does your National Association of the Deaf consider to be the highest priority for your Deaf Community?

- Better quality of Deaf Education
- Equal Opportunity in Employment
- Better Sign Language Interpreting quality and services
- Recognition of your country's Sign Language by your country's Government
- Improved quality and access to Government and Community Services
- Other, *please write down:*

11.2 Does your Association have any other concerns about the standard of living of Deaf people in your country? Please list those:

**Thank you for taking the time
to complete this Survey**

12.2 Appendix No 2 - List of Country Respondents by Region

1 Eastern Europe and Middle Asia Regional Secretariat of the WFD (WFD EEMARS)

<u>WFD OMs</u>	<u>World Bank Classification</u>	<u>Name of Association</u>
1. Republic of Armenia	L	Armenian Deaf Society
2. Republic of Belarus	L	Byelorussian Society of the Deaf
3. Bulgaria	UM	Union of the Deaf in Bulgaria
4. Republic of Kazakhstan	UM	Kazakh Society of the Deaf
5. Republic of Moldova	LM	Society of the Deaf of Republic of Moldova
6. Russian Federation	UM	All-Russian Society of the Deaf
7. Ukraine	LM	Ukrainian Society of the Deaf
8. Republic of Uzbekistan	L	Uzbek Society of the Deaf

2 WFD Regional Secretariat for Asia and the Pacific (WFD RSA/P)

<u>WFD OMs</u>	<u>World Bank Classification</u>	<u>Name of Association</u>
1. Australia	H	Deaf Australia
2. Indonesia	LM	Indonesian Association for the Welfare of the Deaf
3. Japan	H	Japanese Federation of the Deaf
4. Malaysia	LM	Malaysian Federation of the Deaf
5. Nepal	L	Nepal National Federation of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
6. New Zealand	H	Deaf Association of New Zealand
7. Philippines	LM	Philippine Federation of the Deaf
8. Republic of Korea	H	Korean Association of the Deaf
9. Sri Lanka	LM	Sri Lanka Federation of the Deaf
10. Thailand	LM	National Association of the Deaf in Thailand

Non-Members:

11. Bhutan	LM	Deaf Education Unit
12. Cambodia	L	Maryknoll Deaf Development Programme ²⁴
13. Laos	L	Deaf-Mute Unit of The Lao Disabled People's Association
14. Myanmar	L	Yangon Deaf Association and Mandalay Deaf Association

3 WFD Regional Secretariat for South America (WFD RSSA)

<u>WFD OMs</u>	<u>World Bank Classification</u>	<u>Name of Association</u>
1. Argentina	UM	Argentina Confederation of the Deaf
2. Bolivia	LM	Bolivian Federation of the Deaf
3. Brazil	UM	National Federation of Education & Integration of the Deaf
4. Chile	LM	Association of Deaf of Chile
5. Colombia	LM	National Deaf Federation of Colombia
6. Ecuador	LM	National Federation of Deaf People of Ecuador
7. Paraguay	LM	Deaf Centre of Paraguay
8. Peru	LM	Association of the Deaf of Peru
9. Venezuela	LM	Venezuelan Federation of the Deaf

4 WFD Regional Secretariat for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean (WFD MCAC)

<u>WFD OMs</u>	<u>World Bank Classification</u>	<u>Name of Association</u>
1. Costa Rica	UM	Costa Rican National Association of the Deaf
2. Cuba	LM	Cuban National Association of the Deaf
3. Dominican Republic	UM	National Association of the Deaf of the Dominican Republic
4. El Salvador	LM	Salvadorian Association of the Deaf
5. Guatemala	LM	Guatemala Deaf Association
6. Mexico	UM	Mexican Deaf Federation
7. Nicaragua	LM	Nicaraguan National Association of the Deaf
8. Panama	UM	National Deaf Association of Panama

²⁴ Associate Member of WFD

Non-Members:

9. Guyana	LM	Support Group for Deaf Persons in Guyana
10. Haiti	L	Centre of Assistance for People with Hearing Problems in Haiti
11. Honduras	LM	Honduras Deaf Association ²⁵
12. Suriname	L	Suriname Deaf Association

5 WFD Regional Secretariat for Eastern and Southern Africa (WFD RSESA)

<u>WFD OMs</u>	<u>World Bank Classification</u>	<u>Name of Association</u>
1. Botswana	UM	Botswana Association of the Deaf
2. Burundi	L	Burundi National Association of the Deaf
3. Eritrea	L	Eritrean National Association of the Deaf
4. Ethiopia	L	Ethiopian National Association of the Deaf
5. Kenya	L	Kenya National Association of the Deaf
6. Lesotho	LM	National Association of the Deaf - Lesotho
7. Madagascar	L	Federation of the Deaf in Madagascar
8. Malawi	L	Malawi National Association of the Deaf
9. Mozambique	L	Association of the Deaf in Mozambique
10. Namibia	LM	Namibian National Association of the Deaf
11. Rwanda	L	Rwanda National Association of the Deaf
12. South Africa	UM	Deaf Federation of South Africa
13. Swaziland	LM	Swaziland National Association of the Deaf
14. Tanzania	L	Tanzania Association of the Deaf
15. Uganda	L	Uganda National Association of the Deaf
16. Zambia	L	Zambia National Association of the Deaf
17. Zimbabwe	L	Zimbabwe National Association of the Deaf

Non-Members:

18. Seychelles	UM	Association of People with Hearing Impairment ²⁶
19. Sudan	L	Sudanese National Union of the Deaf

6 WFD Interim Regional Secretariat for Western and Central Africa Region (WFD WCAR)

<u>WFD OMs</u>	<u>World Bank Classification</u>	<u>Name of Association</u>
1. Benin	L	National Association of the Deaf of Benin
2. Burkina Faso	L	National Union of Associations of Hearing Impaired of Burkina
3. Cameroon	LM	National Association of the Deaf of Cameroon
4. Democratic Republic of the Congo	L	National Association of the Deaf of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
5. Côte d'Ivoire	L	National Association of the Deaf of Côte d'Ivoire
6. The Gambia	L	Gambia Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
7. Ghana	L	Ghana National Association of the Deaf
8. Guinea	L	Guinea Association of the Deaf
9. Niger	L	Association of the Deaf of Niger
10. Nigeria	L	Nigerian National Association of the Deaf
11. Senegal	L	National Association of the Deaf of Senegal
12. Sierra Leone	L	Sierra Leone Association of the Deaf
13. Togo	L	Association of the Deaf of Togo

Non-Members:

14. Cape Verde	LM	Association of Support for the Development and Integration of Handicapped Children
15. Chad	L	Church and Christian Mission for Deaf Persons in Chad
16. Gabon	UM	National Deaf Groups in Gabon

²⁵ During the survey this Association was not an OM; subsequently it became an OM

²⁶ Associate Member of WFD

7 WFD Interim Regional Secretariat for the Arab Region (WFD RSAR)

<u>WFD OMs</u>	<u>World Bank Classification</u>	<u>Name of Association</u>
1. Algeria	LM	National Federation of the Deaf in Algeria
2. Kuwait	H	Kuwait Sports Club for the Deaf
3. Morocco	LM	Moroccan Forum of the Deaf

Non-Members:

4. Bahrain	H	Bahrain Deaf Society
5. Egypt	LM	Association for Service to the Hearing Impaired
6. Iraq	LM	Charitable Organisation for the Deaf
7. Lebanon	UM	The Learning Centre for the Deaf
8. Mauritania	L	Association of Parents of Deaf Children
9. Oman	H	Al-Wafa Volunteer Social Centre in Abry
10. Palestine	LM	Palestine Union of Deaf
11. Qatar	H	Qatari Social and Cultural Centre for the Deaf ²⁷
12. Saudi Arabia	H	Saudi Association for Hearing Impaired
13. Tunisia	LM	Tunisian Association for Assistance to the Deaf
14. United Arab Emirates	H	Humanitarian Services of Sharja City
15. Yemen	L	Yemeni Society for Rehabilitation of the Deaf

²⁷ Associate Member of WFD