

ADVOCATING FOR SIGN LANGUAGE RIGHTS IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (RDC)

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<h2>Background</h2>	<h2>Encountered Difficulties</h2>	
<p>Democratic Republic of Congo is the largest country in sub-Saharan Africa, occupying 2,344,858 square Kilometers. This country has been plagued by conflict over the last two decades. Approximately 2 million of 95.89 million are Deaf and hard of hearing individuals. In addition, there are about 39 schools for the Deaf and hard-of-hearing people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abandoned by the Government and Congolese Sign Language (CSL) has not been officially recognized. • Facing barriers to communication with hearing citizens, and don't have quality education. • Experiencing oppression, negligence, and exclusion in society. • Lacking access to information and employment opportunities. 	
<h2>Lessons Learned</h2>		 <p>UNITED NATIONS</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Human rights are a set of rights inherent to every human being, regardless of their gender, religion, nationality, ethnicity, race, disability, or social status, from their birth to their death. 2. These rights are inalienable, indivisible, and interrelated, and cannot be removed from the individual (UN Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights). 		
 <p>CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES</p>	<h2>The Legal Recognition of National Sign Languages (World Federation of the Deaf 2022)</h2>	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div data-bbox="666 2087 1024 2200"> <p>Country with Sign Language recognition 74</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1120 2063 1402 2343">  </div> <div data-bbox="1473 2200 1831 2313"> <p>Country without Sign Language recognition 119</p> </div> </div>		
<h2>My Future Plans For Sign Language Rights Advocacy</h2>		 <p>WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF</p>
<p>Firstly, I will connect with Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals at their schools, churches, and homes. Then, I will organize a general assembly with the theme “Inclusive For All, Congolese Sign Language Is My Rights.” Secondly, we will elect the Executive Committees that will execute Sign Language Legislative activities. Finally, for the bills to be passed by the government, we will conceive and present our legislation on Congolese Sign language and Deaf rights.</p>		