

Sign Language Interpreters in Kenya: A Brief Overview

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There is a growing number of sign language interpreters in Kenya working with the Deaf Community but none have received suitable training in the profession as there is no formal training for sign language interpreters available in Kenya. We will discuss the interpreter's status & role in Kenya's Deaf community from different perspectives, based on the model of interpreters i.e. helper, conduit, communication facilitator etc. We will address the needs that may arise for interpreters when receiving training, specially in the linguistic aspects.

We will have a look at the development of Kenyan Sign Language Interpreters Association and the history of sign language interpreting & training in Kenya. Our past experiences will be discussed, the obstacles we faced, the recognition we fought for etc. We will discuss the language issues the interpreter will face in Kenya: Swahili and English are used as national languages, with over 30 tribal languages thrown in.