



HOW DID WE UNVEIL OUR NEW WEBSITE (URL)

www.frontblog.dk

Without doubt, this is the digital age. Since almost everyone has access to the internet from snail-speed modem to godspeed cable, we decided that it would be a great idea to launch a website. So, people can browse and read what we have learned, discussed, and concluded. Just right after the launch, the reactions were overwhelming. The reactions are promising and positive. The blog site is definitely worth the investment! We believe that we should share to the general public what we have learnt here. Not only was it such an experience, but we are psyched to change the deaf world to the fullest after completing this program at the end of the year. There are still so much more information and blogging to come. Stay tuned!

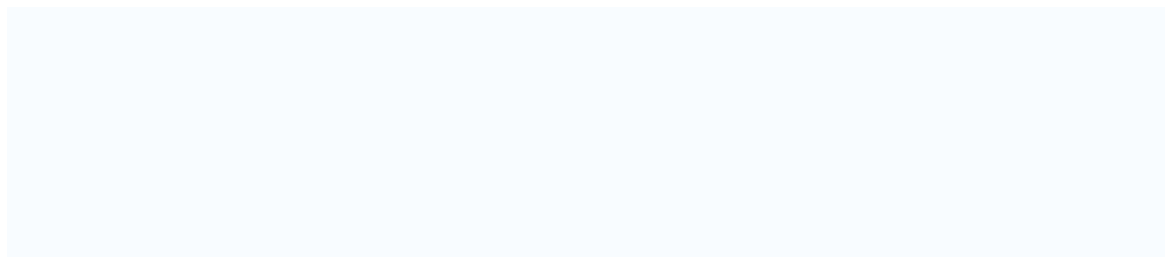
So, how did we produce the website? This is, unfortunately, top secret. Duh, this wouldn't be a secret at all because password isn't necessary in order to log in! The only possible password that we could think of right now is: TEAMWORK.

On the very front page of the website, you could see the line-up consisting of different participants along with different experiences. The experiences that we encounter, we share with everyone.

The project duties are evenly distributed to everyone. Complete communication is also an important tool for our progress – of course it does apply teamwork of any kinds. We debut with a full-agenda and we make weekly reports. It's wonderful to get to know each other much better as time passes by.

Each Frontrunner participant has a great talent of expertise. Therefore, we are grateful to rely on each other for certain favours, projects, and et cetera. This is definitely NOT a piece of cake. We make weekly updates on the website. How? We do weekly summaries of whatever we learnt during the prior week (text, PDF formats versions, and video clips are available for your convenience). Please check our blogs from time to time for weekly updates. The work isn't easy at all. We are however pleased to circulate all the information on the blogsite. Your comments, opinions, and feedback would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Enjoy the website.





World Federation of the Deaf (WFD)

WFD estimated that more than 80 percent of these 70 million live in developing countries. WFD works closely with the UN and its various agencies in promoting the human rights of Deaf people in accordance with the principles and objectives of the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other general acts and recommendations of the UN and its specialised agencies. When necessary, WFD uses special, legal or administrative measures to ensure that Deaf People in every country have the rights to preserve their own sign languages, organisations, and cultural and other activities.

Most important among WFD priorities are Deaf people in developing countries; the right to Sign Language; and equal opportunity in all spheres of life, including access to education and information.

WFD's philosophy

Equality, human rights and respect for all people, regardless of race, nationality, religion, gender, sexual preference, age and all other differences.

WFD supports and promotes in its work the many United Nations conventions on human rights, with a focus on Deaf people who use sign language, and their friends and family. WFD works with the aim of solidarity and unity to make to world a better place.

WFD's role

WFD is an international, non-governmental, central organisation comprising national associations of Deaf people.

At present, emphasis is placed on the following areas:

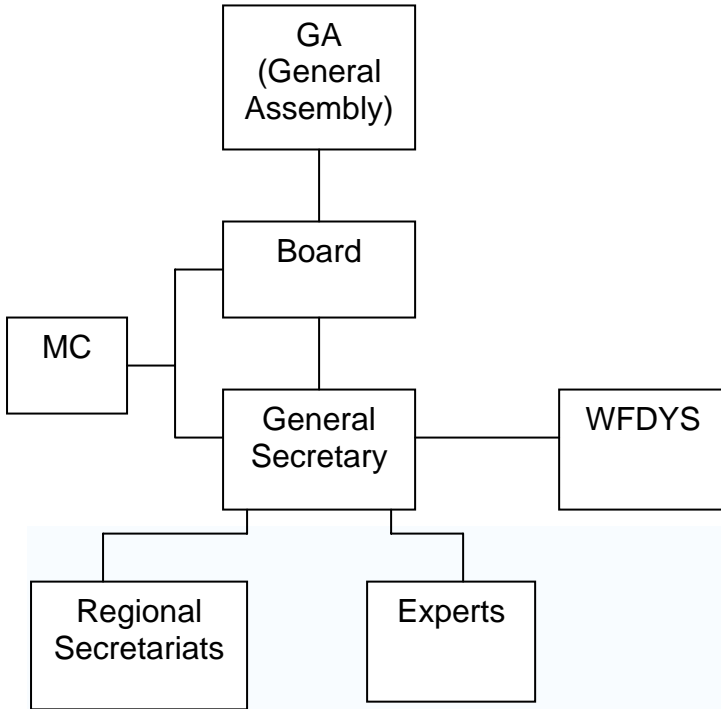
- Improve the status of national sign languages
- Better education for Deaf people
- Improve access to information and services
- Improve human rights for Deaf people in developing countries
- Promote the establishment of Deaf organisations where none currently exist

The highest decision making body of WFD is the General Assembly (GA). Every Ordinary Member has the right to send up to two Deaf delegates to attend the GA, held every four years.

The GA is held in conjunction with the quadrennial World Congress of the WFD.



Structure of the WFD





1) Summary of Frontrunners discussion;

ARE WE DEAF OR DISABLED?

ITS OK TO BE CALLED 'DISABLED'

- If we accept being called Disabled, we may be “Selling our Soul.” But this can be seen as a positive thing. How?
- We have fought for years under the Sign Language category, wanting the Government to recognise us as a minority group and a culture. Perhaps if we accept being called ‘disabled,’ we can get better benefits and access. For example, it would be stupid to refuse getting a government benefit because we think we are ‘normal’ and should not get any help from the Government. Not getting any assistance means we would be ‘more disabled.’
- We can still feel Culturally Deaf, and educate Governments of the cultural view.
- If we are at a Deaf school, and we look in the Mirror, we see ourselves as Deaf. But if we look in a Mirror in a shop full of hearing people, we feel more Disabled. We feel Deaf in some situations and Disabled in other surroundings.
- The five senses are: Smell, Hearing, Touch, Sight and Taste. We have to accept that we have one of the five senses missing, Hearing.
- The disability sector has more resources, why not join them in our fight?

NO! WE ARE DEAF!

- A negative implication of “Selling our Soul” is that the Government will automatically link us up with the pathological view. This ideology will spread, and future generations of Deaf Youth will be taught that they really are disabled.
- We just have a communication disability, but this is not a real disability in a physical sense. It is just how the majority see us.
- It is what we feel, deep down. We cannot ignore this feeling! We have to back up our identity somehow, rather than accepting the ‘disabled’ label.
- The Government needs to recognise us as a unique cultural group. Sign Language Recognition with \$\$\$ backup is the only way.
- We are within hearing culture, but not OF it. (Fjord)
- Other disability groups do not have a substantive language, historical traditions, ideals, values and norms. We have many things in common with other minority groups, and fewer with the disability sector.
- What is “normal” ?

It is up to you which argument you want to accept... think about it!



2) Summary of Frontrunners discussion;

WHAT IS A DEAF SCHOOL?

Hearing view: deaf school means any school, programme, oral or not, call it 'school for the deaf', Deaf/Hard of Hearing, hard impaired', same for teacher for the deaf.

Deaf view: it must include signing environment.

3) Summary of Frontrunners discussion;

GENOCIDE WITHIN THE DEAF COMMUNITY

Sign Language in 3rd World: BSL in Australia and New Zealand due to colonisation, ASL in Africa and India due to missionaries, and Spanish Sign Language in Latin America.

Oral schools influence oral/sim-communicate, to be 'better' than full Sign Language.

Oral School (England for example) has better education – limited choice – Deaf must send children there because schools with signing environment in the U.K. use ineffective methods to teach deaf children. Proper bilingual methods will be likely to succeed at signing schools.

Certain religious groups and missionaries tend to use their own languages and coerce religion especially in the 3rd world countries.



4) Summary of Frontrunners discussion;

HOW TO DEVELOP DEAF IDENTITY? SENSE OR BELONGING?

There are several important factors:

- Important to know what your rights are
- Important to know what your limits are and completely accept oneself
- Growing up at Deaf School and Sign Language environment
- Link to Deaf Community, Deaf Club and Deaf friends
- It depends on circumstances (when you feel more Deaf?)

5) Summary of Frontrunners discussion;

WHY IS SIGN LANGUAGE BEST/IMPORTANT FOR DEAF PEOPLE?

- 100 % comprehension/expression through Sign Language. Is CI 100 % effective?
- Sign language – complete efficiency (yes!)
- Oral Deaf person are rarely seen content or satisfied
- Deaf feel normal in absolute deaf environment.
- Oral/CI constantly reminded of their deafness or even worse, handicap.
- Tove Skutnabb-Kangas mentions bilingual minds possess double capacity of creativity.
- Sign Language – identity – likely full identity -> Oral/CI always borderline identity.