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## PRESS RELEASE

### Successful funding of a capacity building project for Deaf Communities in Francophone Africa

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*This information is available in International Sign via <https://vimeo.com/154318686>*

The Danish Deaf Association (DDL) has successfully received the funding from the Disabled People's Organisation Denmark (DPOD) to carry out a phase 1 project, which is commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016 for a period of one year.

This project aims to strengthen the organisational capacity of the World Federation of the Deaf's (WFD) Ordinary Members in Mali (AMASOURDS), Niger (ASN), Togo (AST), Cote d'Ivoire (ANASOCI), and the WFD Regional Secretariat for Western and Central Africa (WCARS).

As a continuation from the previous human rights project funded by SHIA, the project managed by the Swedish Deaf Association (SDR) and implemented by WFD in Western and Central African Region, carried out from 2009 to 2012, which culminated with the establishment of the WFD WCARS at the XVI World Congress of the WFD in Durban, South Africa. This new project is also building on the experiences and results from the development cooperation between Ghana National Association of the Deaf (GNAD) and the DDL in the last seven years.

*'I am excited on this opportunity to develop a long lasting partnership between DDL and some of the deaf associations in the Francophone Africa and the WFD WCARS. This region has been overlooked by international donors for many years, and I am pleased that this is the first project of such scope,'* says the WFD WCARS Regional Director Mr Lamin Ceesay.

The long term development goal of this project is that deaf people in the four countries are fully involved in the society, and are visible in the disability movements advocating for their human rights as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Activities of the project includes building the foundation for a transnational cooperation between the project partners and testing of the Training of Trainers (ToT) model in Togo with AST. Upon completion and if funding granted, the next three-year phase is expected to see the ToT applied to all four countries.

The WFD WCARS is expected to play a pivotal role in facilitating the regional knowledge and experience sharing both between the project partners and between all its member associations in Western and Central African Region. The WFD is expected to contribute with knowledge and advices on human rights issues and cooperation with the WFD WCARS.

The WFD President Colin Allen added, *'I hope this project will expand the partnership to more associations in the region strengthening their capacities to advocate for the human rights of deaf people impacting an even wider Deaf Community. More importantly, this project would be impossible without the financial support of the WFD Ordinary Members in the Nordic region particularly Norway (NDF), Finland (FAD), Sweden (SDR), Denmark (DDL), and Iceland (FH).'*

The DDL President Janne Boye Niemelä continues, *'The deaf associations under the Deaf Nordic Council have many years of experience with development projects for deaf associations in Africa. We have seen it work in practice. That is why DDL wanted to raise funds for this new project. We firmly believe that we have an obligation to assist developing the opportunities for deaf people all over the world, and we are so excited that this project is now to be realized.'*

GNAD will host the project office, where the project coordinator will be based during the implementation, which will be in close cooperation with DDL.

**About the World Federation of the Deaf**

*The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) is an international non-governmental organisation representing and promoting approximately 70 million deaf people's human rights worldwide. The WFD is a federation of deaf organisations from 132 nations; its mission is to promote the human rights of deaf people and full, quality and equal access to all spheres of life, including self-determination, sign language, education, employment and community life. WFD has a consultative status in the United Nations and is a member of International Disability Alliance (IDA). ([www.wfdeaf.org](http://www.wfdeaf.org)) Email: [info@wfdeaf.org](mailto:info@wfdeaf.org)*

**About the Danish Deaf Association**

*The Danish Deaf Association (DDL) is a national non-governmental organisation working for improving the living conditions for 4.000 deaf people in Denmark using Danish Sign Language. DDL's mission is to promote deaf people's full participation in all aspects of the Danish society as equal citizens. DDL is a member of World Federation of the Deaf (WFD), European Union of the Deaf (EUD), and Disabled Peoples Organisations Denmark (DPOD). ([www.deaf.dk](http://www.deaf.dk)) Email: [ddl@deaf.dk](mailto:ddl@deaf.dk)*