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Strengthening Deaf Education, Empowerment, & Employment (Deaf-E³)

Project Implementation Dates: May 7, 2021 - May 6, 2024

Project Summary

Deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind (D/HH/DB) people excel in higher education and employment when they have full access to language acquisition and development, primary and secondary education that supports their language and learning needs, and a barrier free society. Accomplishing this requires both skills-based training and changing societal perceptions of D/HH/DB and their capabilities.

Deaf-E³ is a United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-sponsored activity with the implementation led by Gallaudet University. The Deaf-E³ activity will build the capacity of four groups integral to advancing equitable basic education for D/HH/DB children and youth in Nigeria:

1. Educational professionals;
2. D/HH/DB Nigerians themselves;
3. Nigerian Sign Language interpreters; and,
4. USAID and other development actors.

Project Stakeholders

- Deaf Worlds (DDW): facilitating community capacity building with:
 - Nigerian National Association of the Deaf (NNAD)
 - Deaf Teachers Association of Nigeria (DTAN)
 - Deaf Women Association of Nigeria (DWAN)
- Wesley University, Ondo: Employer of Record

Project Activities and Outcomes

1. Work with educational professionals on implementing multilingual-multimodal (bilingual) deaf education pedagogies and create two manuals shared nationwide. Educators will gain classroom and strategic resources to meet language, communication, and learning needs of D/HH/DB students.

2. Build organizational, leadership, and advocacy capacity of organizations serving D/HH/DB Nigerians as well as the communities they serve to increase self-advocacy and affect systemic change, build partnerships, and effect equitable societal inclusion.

The Challenges

- Deaf education professionals and families rarely have access to pedagogies, curricula, and resources that enable them to offer fully inclusive education to D/HH/DB students.
- Due to misunderstanding of “inclusive,” systems do not meet D/HH/DB people’s language development, cultural, and communication needs.
(<https://tinyurl.com/593y4nsr>)
- The World Federation of the Deaf shows D/HH/DB students are rarely provided inclusive and accessible education that enables them to become self-actualized individuals. As a result, 90% of 72 million D/HH/DB people worldwide have never been to school, and are thus more or less illiterate.
- Limited training for Sign Language interpreters perpetuates inequitable outcomes, negatively impacting D/HH/DB people in all areas of their life.
- Development Stakeholders rarely offer D/HH/DB-led organizations and individuals meaningful and inclusive engagement in programming, decision-making processes, and activities that affect them.

Key Message

- Inclusion and Equity through Sign Language.

3. Establish a consortium of Nigerian Sign Language interpreters and deaf community members to analyze current and best practices related to interpreting to assess interpreting processes and practices and empower interpreters and D/HH/DB individuals to advance professionalization and access for all.

4. Increase the capacity of USAID and its partners to engage D/HH/DB Nigerians organizations and leaders to understand the issues they face for more equitable and inclusive outcomes.