

The Deaf of Tanzania

The Tanzanian Sign Language Community



Hearing impairment and deafness are serious disabilities that can impose a heavy social and economic burden on individuals, families, communities and countries.

In Tanzania nearly 185,000 people are deaf. According to 2005 estimates by the World Health Organization, 278 million people worldwide have moderate to profound hearing loss in both ears. 80% of deaf and hearing-impaired people live in low- and middle-income countries.

In adults, hearing impairment and deafness often make it difficult to obtain, perform, and keep employment. Both children and adults may suffer from social stigmatization and isolation as a result of hearing impairment.

Many hearing people tend to think the deaf are not very intelligent because of the communication barriers, as well as the speech patterns deaf exhibit. Many deaf people feel hearing people oppress them and purposely withhold information from them.

Less than 1/2 of 1% are Christian. Hearing Sunday School teachers and pastors, like hearing parents, are not able to communicate truth or their beliefs to deaf children. Many deaf say they learn a lot of the "rules of life" by watching the action on TV or in movies.

The deaf value "information" above almost everything. Tanzanians are anxiously awaiting the publishing of a signed language Bible.

The first portions of Tanzania Sign Language Bible on DVD were dedicated on November 19, 2011. One story was chosen and shown on a projector screen. The deaf didn't want to take time to eat, but wanted to see story after story. TBC, the national television station, showed a clip of the dedication on TV for two days.

Primary Religion:

Non-religious

Disciples (Matt 28:19):

Less than 0.5%

Churches:

unknown

Scripture Status (Matt 28:20):

Translation started

Population (date):

185,000 potentially

