ISO 639-3 Registration Authority
Request for New Language Code Element in ISO 639-3

This form is to be used in conjunction with a "Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code" form

Date: 2015-9-1

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Names, affiliations and email addresses of additional supporters of this request:
We are submitting this on behalf of the Deaf Community of Papua New Guinea, after going through this with them through several workshops and meetings with them at several locations in PNG.

Associated Change request number : 2015-066   (completed by Registration Authority)
Tentative assignment of new identifier : pgz   (completed by Registration Authority)

PLEASE NOTE: This completed form will become part of the public record of this change request and the history of the ISO 639-3 code set. Use Shift-Enter to insert a new line in a form field (where allowed).

1. NAMES and IDENTIFICATION

a) Preferred name of language for code element denotation:
Papua New Guinean Sign Language

b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:
Papua New Guinean Sign Language / PNGSL

c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:
Abbreviation: PNGSL
(Additional information: also known in a book as "Melanesian Sign Language", but it was a name coined by hearing people when making that book, not consulting Deaf people, and the sign language is not used in all Melanesia, only in Papua New Guinea. There are other separate sign languages in Melanesia. So it is a misleading name, and the proper name is Papua New Guinean Sign Language.)

d) Reason for preferred name:
That is the name used by deaf people in PNG.

e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language (complete individual language currently in use):
Deaf people of Papua New Guinea, estimated population of 30,000 individuals.

f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: PGL

Your suggestion will be taken into account, but the Registration Authority will determine the identifier to be proposed. The identifiers is not intended to be an abbreviation for a name of the language, but to serve as a device to identify a given language uniquely. With thousands of languages, many sets of which have similar names, it is not possible to provide identifiers that resemble a language name in every case.

2. TEMPORAL DESCRIPTION and LOCATION

a) Is this a   ☒   Living language
☐   Nearly extinct/secondary use only (includes languages in revival)
☐   Recently extinct language
☐   Historical language
☐   Ancient language
☐   Artificially constructed language
☐   Macrolanguage

(Select one. See explanations of these types at http://www.sil.org/iso639%2D3/types.asp)

For individual languages, also complete:

b) Countries where used:
Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville

c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used. Include GPS coordinates of the approximate center of the language, if possible:
Equivalent to Papua New Guinea's boundary.

d) For an ancient or historical language, give approximate time frame; for a recently extinct language, give the approximate date of the last known user's death

3. MODALITY AND LINGUISTIC AFFILIATION

a) This language is: ☒ Signed   ☐ Spoken   ☐ Attested only in writings

b) Language family, if classified; origin, if artificially constructed:
Deaf Sign Language

c) Closest language linguistically. For a Macrolanguage, list the individual languages (adopted and/or proposed) to be included in its group. For signed language, note influence from other signed or spoken languages:
Influenced by Australian Sign Language and spoken Tok Pisin.

4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:
There are two books which claim to be Papua New Guinean Sign Language, but they were copied from Australian Sign Language.

The first book to be authentically Papua New Guinean Sign Language is expected to be printed in 2016. This project was mentioned in both newspapers and on broadcast news in 2014.

b) Is this language officially recognized by any level of government? Is it used in any levels of formal education as a language of instruction (for other subjects)? Is it taught in schools?:
It was officially endorsed by the Papua New Guinean government in May 2015 as an official language of Papua New Guinea, which now has four official languages. It is taught in deaf units within hearing schools and in deaf schools.

c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:
There is a great regional variation of this language, but still they are mutually intelligible. This is due to many deaf parents of deaf children who never learned the PNG sign language, so the deaf children grow up using "home signs". This later influences the various deaf communities throughout PNG where those deaf gather. But still deaf people understand each other's signing within the country.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

You do not need to repeat sources previously identified in the form, "Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code"

a) First-hand knowledge. Describe:

b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:

c) Knowledge from published sources. Include known dictionaries, grammars, etc. (please give complete bibliographical references):

Please return this form to:

ISO 639-3 Registrar
SIL International, Office of Language Information Systems
7500 West Camp Wisdom Road
Dallas, Texas 75236 USA
ISO 639-3/RA web site: http://www.sil.org/iso639-3/default.asp
Email: iso639-3@sil.org
An email attachment of this completed form is preferred.

Further information:

If your request for a new language code element is supported by the Registration Authority as a formal proposal, you may be contacted separately by researchers working with the Ethnologue or with LinguistList asking you to provide additional information.

Sources of documentation for ISO 639-3 identifiers:

Gordon, Raymond G., Jr. (ed.), 2005. Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Fifteenth edition. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International. Online version: http://www.ethnologue.com/ .

LinguistList. Ancient and Extinct Languages. http://linguistlist.org/forms/langs/GetListOfAncientLgs.html

LinguistList. Constructed Languages. http://linguistlist.org/forms/langs/GetListOfConstructedLgs.html