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: 2016-7-22

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Associated Change request number : 2016-034 (completed by Registration Authority)
Tentative assignment of new identifier : shf (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:
   Sheng

b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:
   Sheng

c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:
   Shang; Sheng'

d) Reason for preferred name:
   Today the S-H-E-N-G is the universally accepted and common spelling.

e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language (complete individual language currently in use):
   Sheng is spoken by multiple ethnic groups who live in the informal settlements of Nairobi. It is estimated that 2/3s of the city (i.e., two million speakers) use this language as first and/or vernacular lanaguage.

f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: SNG

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)
(Select one. See explanations of these types at \url{http://www.sil.org/iso639-3/types.asp})

For individual languages, also complete:

b) Countries where used:
   Kenya

c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used. Include GPS coordinates of the approximate center of the language, if possible:
   Nairobi but every major metropolitan city in Kenya.

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
   N/A

3. MODALITY AND LINGUISTIC AFFILIATION

   a) This language is: [ ] Signed [X] Spoken [ ] Attested only in writings

   b) Language family, if classified; origin, if artificially constructed:
      It is not classified but it should be considered a Bantu 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:
      Kenyan Swahili

4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

   a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:
      Go Sheng is the official curator of the Sheng language and culture <http://www.gosheng.org/>; Kwani? book published by Kwani Trust; Specific TV programs use it in series like Machachari (Citizen TV), Vioja mahakamani (Citizen TV), or Inspekta Mwala (Citizen TV); in comic shows like Churchill show (NTV), Hapa kule news (KTN); and in music or dance programs suchas Sakata (Citizen TV), or Orange beat ya street (NTV).   Ghetto Radio (89.5FM or www.ghettoradio.co.ke) advertises itself as the official Sheng station and broadcasts programs in Sheng only.
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?:
No but sauvy politicians use it to speak to voters.

c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:
Sheng is considered to be part of linguistic national identity and to neutralize ethnicity. Sheng is expanding its range of domains of use with pervasive influence in and outside classrooms of Kenyan schools, and its use in social media (texting). Mutonya (2008) and Kariuki, Kanana, and Kebeya (2015) document its use in advertising. Sheng is now heard in formal, adult speech registers, in homesteads, university campuses, at political rallies, in banking halls and police stations. Githiora (2016) argues that there is an ongoing, progressing change of character of Sheng from a restricted, in-group and covert youth language, to an urban vernacular of wider communication in Kenya.
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):


http://ifra-nairobi.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Mambo-6-Ferrari.pdf Aurélia Ferrari
CV 2014.


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
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: