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: 2021-2-25

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Names, affiliations and email addresses of additional supporters of this request:
National Union of Disability Organizations in Rwanda (NUDOR), Email: nudor2010 at gmail dot com

Umbrella of organizations of Persons with Disabilities in the fight against HIV/AIDS and for Health promotion (UPHLS) Email: karangwa.francois at uphls dot org

World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) Email: info at wfdeaf dot org

Associated Change request number : 2021-016 (completed by Registration Authority)

Tentative assignment of new identifier : rsn (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:
   Rwandan Sign Language

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

c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:
   RSL, Rwandan Sign Language

d) Reason for preferred name:
   Names commonly used in RNUD published and non published documents and materials

e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language (complete individual language currently in use):
   Rwandan Deaf Community, 33,471 use Rwadnan Sign Language and about 200 hearing persons use RSL.

f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: RSL

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:
   Rwanda

c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used. Include GPS coordinates of the approximate center of the language, if possible:
   1. Umutara School for the Deaf, Nyagatare District, Eastern Province, Email: komar14@yahoo.com, P.O. Box 89, NYAGATARE. https://umutaradeafschool.weebly.com/

d) 2. Huye School for the Deaf, Huye District, Southern Province,

e) Ubumwe Community Center,Rubavu District, Western Province, https://ubumwecommunitycenter.org/

f) Nyabihu Demonstration School for the Deaf https://nyabihucenterforthedef.deaf.weebly.com/

g) Insititute Smaldone Nyamirambo, Nyarugenge District, City of Kigali.

h) 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:
   Sign Language, Deaf Community

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:
Ugandan Sign Language, USL, Kenyan Sign Language, KSL,

4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:
   - Position paper on Deaf Education in Rwanda
   https://www.slideshare.net/charlottesphillips/rnud-deaf-education-position-paper-2013
   - https://www.newtimes.co.rw/opinions/understanding-nature-sign-language

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?:
RSL is not officially recognized by the Government of Rwanda, it is used as a language of instruction only in specialized schools for the Deaf and taught only in such schools and centers for the Deaf. However, during the recent amendment of the National Disability Law of 2007, Rwandan Sign Language is legally mentioned in different articles such as access to information, Health, Education, Employment and social welfare. The draft amended Law is not yet approved by cabinet.

c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:
RSL is not an official language in Rwanda as yet; RSL was used since 1967 after the establishment of the Center des Jeunnes Sourds et Muets du Rwanda/ Butare School for the Deaf in Huye District by brothers of Charity. During that time, Deaf who completed primary six, were not able to continue to secondary education and University level due to communication barriers and sorted to vocationar activities mainly establishing cooperatives where they can engage in tailoring, welding, etc. The language further developed from there and in 1989, Rwanda national Union of the Deaf was established.
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:
I am a Native Signer of Rwandan Sign Language, I am the Executive Director of Rwanda National Union of the Deaf. I have studied in Ugandan schools and University, I travelled East Africa, I am familiar with the Signs in these countries are different from Rwandan Sign Language (RSL)

b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:
Rwandan Sign Language is the mode of communication among Deaf persons in Rwanda, I grew up using it until this right moment.

c) Knowledge from published sources. Include known dictionaries, grammars, etc. (please give complete bibliographical references):
- Position paper on Deaf Education in Rwanda
https://www.slideshare.net/charlottesphillips/rnud-deaf-education-position-paper-2013

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: