

Statutes





STATUTES



CONSTITUTION

BYLAWS

STATUTES

IMPORTANT PART OF THE ORGANISATION

WRITTEN RULES THAT THE ORGANISATION FOLLOWS

ESTABLISH PROCEDURES: HOW TO HOLD ELECTIONS, ORGANISE MEETINGS, QUORUM REQUIREMENTS, MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE

GUIDEBOOK FOR YOUR ORGANISATION

FORMAL AND LEGAL DOCUMENT

STATUTES



Approved by
members at the
General Assembly

Above
the board

Decides the activities
towards a goal

Explain roles and
responsibilities

STATUTES



HELPS THE ORGANISATION TO RUN

GIVE ANSWERS TO TOUGH QUESTIONS

SAVE TIME WHEN DISCUSSING AN ISSUE

HELP THE ORGANISATION TO FOCUS ON
PURPOSE AND CARRY ACTIVITIES

REQUIRED BY THE GOVERNMENT AGENCY WHEN
APPLYING FOR A CERTIFICATION OR OFFICIAL STATUS



Write

Approve

Uphold

PROCESS

STEP 1:
CREATE
THE TEAM

STEP 2:
INVOLVE MEMBERS
IN THE PROCESS

STEP 3:
GATHER
EXAMPLES

STEP 4:
MAKE A
FIRST DRAFT

STEP 5:
DISCUSS THE
QUESTIONS

STEP 6:
MAKE AGREED CHANGES
TO THE STATUTES

STEP 7:
PRESENT THE FINAL
DRAFT AGAIN

STEP 8:
VOTE TO APPROVE
THE STATUTES

STEP 9:
GIVE COPIES
OF STATUTES

STEP 10:
MAKE A VIDEO WHERE YOU
EXPLAIN THE STATUTES

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- PURPOSE OF YOUR ORGANISATION?
- HOW A LEGAL DOCUMENT HELPS YOUR ORGANISATION TO FOLLOW THE GOALS?
- GATHER EXAMPLES
- WHO WILL WRITE THE STATUTES?
- HOW MAKE YOUR STATUTUES FAIR AND DEMOCRATIC?
- DO THEY ALLOW MEMBERS A VOICE?
- HOW INCLUDE GENDER AND DIVERSITY?

1st Section: OBJECTIVES AND OPERATIONS AREA

- Name of the Association
- Address / Location of the Association
- Logo
- Mission
- Vision
- Objectives
- Activities
- Languages
- Relationships





MISSION



5. CHAVITA MISSION

To have a Deaf community with a better standard of life, that builds its capacity, is self – determining, has self – confidence, values and develops itself and participates fully, through Tanzanian Sign Language, in all development activities, economically and socially in co-operation with the Government and various institutions.

Article 5: AIMS

To have a Deaf community with a better standard of life, that builds its capacity, is self – determining, has self – confidence, values and develops itself and participates fully, through Tanzanian Sign Language, in all development activities, economically and socially in co-operation with the Government and various institutions.



LANGUAGES



9. OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

The day-to-day activities of the Association shall be carried out in three official languages as follows:

- a) The sign language,*
- b) Swahili (National Language), and*
- c) English.*

The sign language, including translation usage, shall be given priority for teaching the Deaf and sign language interpreters to enable delivery of service to the Deaf and the society in general.

Article 4: LANGUAGES

4.1 International Sign shall be used as a meeting language at all meetings of World Federation of the Deaf.

4.2 Information, including minutes, printed materials and correspondence shall be made available in English.

4.2.1 The registration language of the organisation is Finnish; and the language of the minutes is Finnish.

2nd Section: MEMBERS

- Membership Categories
- Membership Procedures
- Duties, Benefits and Rights of Members
- Duties, Benefits and Rights of Affiliated Members
- Duties, Benefits and Rights of Youth Members





ORGANS



1. MEMBERSHIP

The shall be three types of membership, namely:

- a) CHAVITA (regional) branch membership,*
- b) Co-opted membership, and*
- c) Honorary membership.*

Article 11: MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

World Federation of the Deaf's membership shall consist of the following categories:

- a) Ordinary Members (OM)*
- b) Associate Members (AM) and Interim Associate Members*
- c) International Members*
- d) Honorary Members (HM) and Honorary President*
- e) Individual Members (IM)*
- f) Individual Youth Member (IYM)*
- g) Youth Ordinary Members (YOM)*



RIGHTS & DUTIES



5. RIGHTS AND BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

A CHAVITA member shall have the following rights:

- a) To participate in all activities of the Association by observing established procedure.*
- b) To attend the meetings of the Association and give suggestions and make decisions (for those allowed by the constitution).*
- c) To be represented in the meetings of the Association that he/she is entitled to attend.*
- d) To elect leaders and national delegates as per this constitution.*
- e) To give his/her own defense at the relevant meeting of the Association on charges against him/her, and to appeal to higher levels if not satisfied with the decision given.*
- f) To present his/her opinions to any CHAVITA leader provided he/she does so according to the established procedure.*
- g) To be given, through the Association's General Meeting, CHAVITA's annual activities and financial reports.*

Article 13: DUTIES OF THE ORDINARY MEMBERS

The OMs are responsible for payment of membership fees as determined by the Board.

Article 14: BENEFITS AND RIGHTS OF THE ORDINARY MEMBERS

14.1 The OMs, upon payment of their annual membership fees, are entitled to full participatory and voting rights at meetings of World Federation of the Deaf.

14.2 World Federation of the Deaf will endeavour to give the ordinary members all possible support as each ordinary member is entitled to receive advice and documents when seeking rights, benefits and solutions.

3rd Section: DECISION MAKING

- Information about decision-making of your organisation
- Structure and system of the organisation
- Who reports for governance? Example: If you have a director, the statutes must explain that the director is hired and overseen by the board.



3rd Section: DECISION MAKING

- Organs/Structure of the Organisation
- The General Assembly
 - Delegates -Guidelines
 - Functions -Quorum
- Voting at the General Assembly
- Extraordinary Meetings
- Meetings
- Functions of Meeting





ORGANS



1. ORGANS WITH MORE EXECUTIVE POWERS

- a) *The organs vested with more executive powers in running the Association are the General Meeting and the Executive Board.*
- b) *The Executive Board is accountable to the General Meeting.*

Article 26: ORGANS OF THE ORGANISATION

26.1 The organs of the organisation are the GA and the Board of World Federation of the Deaf.

26.2 The decision-making power lies in the GA. The executive organ responsible to the GA is the executive Board elected by the GA.



MEETINGS



GENERAL MEETINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Association shall have three General Meetings: an Ordinary Annual General Meeting, an Electoral General Meeting that shall take place after every three (3) years, and an Extraordinary General Meeting that may be convened at any time. The Executive Board shall decide on the venue and date of a General Meeting.

Article 27: THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (GA)

The GA is a meeting of the World Federation of the Deaf, where delegates, selected by OMs, are entitled to vote. Each OM whose membership fees are fully paid and current is allowed up to two (2) Deaf delegates, preferably one male and one female, at meetings of the GA.

4th Section: ADMINISTRATION + BOARD

How the organisation is run by the Board.

Statutes should explain about the official offices of the group

- 1) Titles
- 2) Required duties
- 3) Length of terms
- 4) Voting procedure
- 5) Appointment procedure
- 6) How to remove someone from office



4th Section: ADMINISTRATION + BOARD

- The Board
- Meetings of Board
- Functions of Board Meeting
- Replacement of Board Members
- Finance Committee
- Other Committees
- Executive Team / Staff
- Minutes
- Regional Representatives/Delegates
- Youth Section





THE BOARD



1. THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board shall have the following members who shall be elected by the General Electoral Meeting:

- a) Chairperson.*
- b) Vice-Chairperson.*
- c) Six (6) delegates.*

The Executive Director and his/her assistants (as deemed necessary) shall represent the secretariat to the Executive Board meetings.

2. FUNCTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

- a) The Executive Board constitutes the meeting of the leaders and supervisors of all activities of the Association, under the jurisdiction of the General Meeting.*
- b) It shall make preparations for the Annual General Meeting and the General Electoral Meeting.*
- c) The Board may form small committees (e.g. for investigating a certain issue) and other committees as deemed necessary.*
- d) It may void or endorse a decision made by a lower sitting of the Association.*
- e) The Executive Board shall hold ordinary meetings twice per year. However, it may convene an extraordinary meeting at any time by the chairperson calling such a meeting in writing, stating the reasons and agenda for such meeting. Three-quarters (¾) of the members of the Executive Board may cause an extraordinary meeting to be convened by informing the Chairperson and the Executive Director and stating the aim and agenda for such meeting.*
- f) The Board shall employ and cease the employment of the Executive Director, and shall supervise the same, in its execution of the Association's duties/responsibilities in accordance with the laws of employment and regulations in the country.*
- g) It shall receive reports from the secretariat of the Association, and shall present reports to the General Meeting.*
- h) The Executive Board shall issue to the secretariat of the Association policy, guidelines, procedures and decisions.*
- i) It shall suspend any leader of the Association who has breached the code of ethics of leadership.*

Article 32: THE BOARD

32.1 Ordinary meeting of the GA shall, from different countries, elect a President, Vice President and a maximum of nine (9) and, if there are less than 9 nominations received for the office of the Board, a minimum of five (5) members. These Officers shall be Deaf. The recruitment and appointment of a person as the salaried Executive Director are described in Article 38.

32.2 Only OMs may make nominations for office in the Board. OMs should be prepared to commit travel and maintenance support to enable such elected officers to participate in meetings of the Board and its standing committees. If funds are available, World Federation of the Deaf will provide such support to Board members, with priority given to those from developing countries.

32.3 In the election of Board members, the principles of gender equality and adequate regional presentation from across the world should be taken into consideration.

32.4 The President shall open the meetings of the GA and presides over the Board meetings.

32.5 The Vice President shall open meetings of the GA and the Board whenever the President is unable to attend.

32.6 Board members shall serve for the good of World Federation of the Deaf. Members of the Board are elected for a four-year term, and may be re-elected.

32.7 The Board shall appoint the Executive Director.

32.8 The Board Members shall perform various duties as assigned by the Board.

32.9 At all other international conferences, the President, Vice President and Board Members shall be official representatives of World Federation of the Deaf only, understanding that they are not also representing other organisations. The Board may also appoint another person to represent World Federation of the Deaf at international or national meetings.





COMMITTEES



Article 37 OTHER COMMITTEES

The Board may establish any other committees deemed necessary, and functioning under the Board's supervision, at any time and for any period of time. Each committee established shall have guidelines to guide their work.

5th Section: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Finances
- Financial Records and Auditing





FINANCE



3. ACCOUNTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

- a) *The accounts and other property of the Association must be maintained / stored in accordance with sound accounting procedures. There should be sound financial and property control procedures.*
- b) *An external auditor shall once per year audit the financial and property accounts of the Association. The audit report shall be presented in the Association's General Meeting for discussion.*
- c) *The Chairperson, the Executive Director and the Accountant shall be the signatories to the Association's bank account.*
- d) *The Association's Accountant is responsible to furnish the secretariat with income and expenditure reports, as shall be needed.*

Article 36 FINANCE COMMITTEE (FC)

Three Members elected from and by the Board to constitute a Finance Committee. The FC supports the Board in the implementation of the management of finances in the areas of administration, the administration of funds, bookkeeping, financial reporting and auditing.

6th Section: AMENDMENTS AND CHANGES

- Includes information about amendments and how changes to the statutes should be made.
- Usually, it requires previous notice and a two-thirds majority vote.
- It is recommended to tell your members at two consecutive meetings that a statutes amendment will be voted on at the third meeting or sending out a notice to all members telling them that a statutes amendment will be voted on and when.

AMENDMENTS AND CHANGES



Article 36 AMENDMENTS TO THE STATUTES

36.1 Amendments, if any, to the WFD Statutes shall be considered only at the WFD General Assembly or an extraordinary meeting and shall require two-thirds (2/3) approval by members entitled to vote.

36.2 Proposals for amendments to the WFD Statutes shall be submitted to the WFD Secretariat at least six (6) months prior to the incoming WFD General Assembly.

36.3 After careful review by the WFD Board, the WFD Secretariat shall send all proposed amendments along with the WFD Board recommendations to all Ordinary Members entitled to vote at least two (2) months before the WFD General Assembly.

YOUR ASSOCIATION'S STATUTES / BYLAWS / CONSTITUTION

- Mission
- Vision
- Membership
- Quorum for general assembly
- Frequency of general assembly
- Committees
- Financial monitoring
- Members' rights



USING YOUR STATUTES

1. When your statutes are approved, make sure that your organisation and your members use them
2. Have a consultant to advise the board on proper procedures
3. Your meetings should be running smoothly and follow your statutes
4. Remind people when someone is not following the statutes
5. Your staff should have the statutes in mind when doing work
6. Have a copy of statutes at meetings
7. If there is a question about how to do something, look in the statutes for the answer

REVIEWING YOUR STATUTES

- If you have a situation that you did not think of when writing it, you can add that information to the statutes
- You should go over your statutes and help your board, staff and members to remember what is in the statutes
- Maybe you notice that there are changes or clarifications that needs to be made

Statute amendments can be suggested at any time

INCLUSIVE STATUTES

Do diverse people take part in your activities and meetings?

If not, why not? Maybe they can't join because of the time of day of your meetings or the venue?

Can you change how you allocate tasks or roles, so people get their voices heard?

Can you encourage more women to take roles, such as chairing meetings?

Can you make it easier for parents to come to meeting by changing the time or having a play corner?



INCLUSIVE STATUTES

Do you treat people differently?

Do you not include people because of their gender or race?

If someone feels harassed, what should they do about it? Who should they tell?

How can you ensure safety? Will people feel safe to be on the board? What steps can you take to ensure the safety of women?

What your organisation will do if someone is harassed? How can you support and protect the person?



GENDERISED STATUTES

IN MANY CULTURES, BOARD
ARE MALE DOMINATED: FEW
WOMEN HAVE FREEDOM
AND COURAGE TO RUN FOR
ELECTION

PROMOTES GENDER
EQUALITY IN YOUR
ORGANISATION

IMPROVES WOMEN'S
PARTICIPATION IF YOUR
STATUTES REQUIRE BOTH
GENDERS BEING
REPRESENTED



1. MISSION OF THE ORGANISATION

WHY IMPORTANT?

THE ORGANISATION CAN REALISE ITS FULL POTENTIAL ONLY BY PURSUING THE INTERESTS AND AGENDAS OF BOTH GENDERS

EXAMPLE

“The national association of xxx promotes awareness and realisation of the full potential for equality, self-support, participation and influence of deaf men, women, boys, and girls.”

2. MEMBERSHIP

WHY IMPORTANT?

HOW DO YOU ENCOURAGE THE PARTICIPATION OF BOTH GENDERS?

- Does it need to take special steps to ensure the inclusion of different categories of members in terms of age, social position, geographical location?
- Should special bodies be established, such as youth or women's wings? How will this affect, for instance, women's opportunities for policy influence and agenda setting within the organisation?

EXAMPLE

"The organisation shall encourage the participation of both genders. The organisation shall ensure that members feel safe to participate the activities organised by the organisation"

3. POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

WHY IMPORTANT?

ELECTION RULES MAY INFLUENCE THE CHANCES
OF WOMEN BEING ELECTED

- Should the gender of the chairperson differ from that of the vice-chair?
- Should a quota system to be used to ensure an equal number of men and women on the board or the executive committee?
- Does the disadvantaged gender need any special training or education to be able to participate equally in the decision-making?

EXAMPLE

“The general meeting shall elect one man and one female member from each of the country’s four main regions.”

4. RULES OF PROCEDURE

WHY IMPORTANT?

SUPPORT EQUAL PARTICIPATION OF MEN AND WOMEN

- What is the best timing of meetings for male and female members?
- Who will prepare the agenda? What are possibilities of men and women for suggesting items for the agenda?
- Is there a need for training women or men in relation to the board's work? For example raising awareness of gender issues?
- Are men and women equally represented in the organisation's structures and governing bodies, and what is done to ensure this?
- Is the organisation open to both male and female members?

EXAMPLE

"Both genders shall be represented in the organisation's structure and governing bodies."

USING YOUR STATUTES

It is important to use your organisation and its members are using the statutes. It is recommended that:

1. Your leaders make an effort to keep the statutes in mind when doing organisation work.
2. There is a copy of the statutes at meetings.
3. If there are any questions about how to do something, look in the statutes for the answer



Activity 1



1. Review your organisation's statutes / constitution / bylaws to make sure that all sections have the necessary information
2. Discuss: Are the expectations and guidelines clear enough for people to follow?
3. Discuss in a group of individuals with various background, experience and skills for fresh ideas and perspectives to strengthen your statutes.
4. Use the discussion questions below to examine closely and analyse your statutes.

Activity 2



1. Choose several organisations in your community that have a similar structure and goals (e.g. an association of the blind)
2. Review their statutes.
3. Take note of anything you feel that your organisation's statutes should include or are missing compared to other statutes.
4. Make sure the additions or changes you made are appropriate for the goals of your organisation.

Discussion



1. Does your organisation have strong statutes / constitution / bylaws that is guiding your organisation in the right direction?
2. What is the purpose of your organisation, its mission and vision?
3. Is each section in the statutes / constitution / bylaws complete? Are there any missing information?
4. Has something happened that there was no answer in the statutes / constitution / bylaws and should be added?
5. Are your statutes / constitution / bylaws easy to follow? Do your members understand them and have access to them either by paper, on the website or through video?