



Manifesto of Youth with Deafblindness on International Youth Day 2025

By The World Federation of the Deafblind (WFDB) Youth Committee
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Preamble

On June 27, we now officially celebrate the International Day of Deafblindness, as proclaimed by the United Nations in 2025, recognizing deafblindness as a distinct disability with unique rights and needs. This date also honors the birth of Helen Keller—enduring symbol of empowerment and resilience.

On August 12, 2025, we join the global movement of International Youth Day, celebrated this year under the theme “Local Youth Actions for the SDGs and Beyond”. We, the WFDB Youth Committee, stand together with all young people with deafblindness worldwide, committed to shaping an inclusive, sustainable world through local action, global solidarity, and the full realization of our rights.

Our Principles

1. Visibility.

Youth with deafblindness must be actively and visibly included in all youth-led initiatives—in education, community development, culture, or public policy.

2. Accessibility

All environments—physical, digital, and institutional—must follow universal design principles, ensuring respectful communication that reflects the diversity of the Deafblind community. This includes diverse communication methods (sign language and its adaptations, written and spoken formats, support of Deafblind interpreters, etc.) and digital accessibility features such as closed captions, subtitles, audio descriptions, screen reader compatibility, and tactile or haptic feedback.

3. Equality, Inclusion, and Rights.

We have the right to participate fully in society, including access to quality education, healthcare, meaningful employment, and civic engagement—free from discrimination—under the protections of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).



4. Empowerment through Local Action.

Our creativity, innovation, and resilience at the community level are vital to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Empower us locally, and our impact will be felt globally.

5. Authentic Representation.

We must lead the discussions and decisions that affect our lives. The WFDB Youth Committee and other youth-led bodies ensure our voices are heard at the highest levels.

6. Solidarity and Partnerships.

We call for strong collaboration among disability organizations, youth networks, local authorities, and UN agencies to ensure coordinated action, resource sharing, and lasting change.

Our Demands

- **Implement the UN Recognition of June 27:** Governments must actively commemorate the International Day of Deafblindness with awareness campaigns, policy commitments, and concrete measures for accessibility and inclusion.
- **Youth Inclusion in SDG Strategies:** Youth with deafblindness must be fully integrated into local and national SDG planning and implementation, with our lived experience guiding change.
- **Youth-led Platforms:** Support and strengthen the WFDB Youth Committee as a global platform for leadership, advocacy, and peer connection.
- **Protect and Promote Our Rights:** Ensure the full application of the CRPD and national disability laws, explicitly addressing the rights and needs of young people with deafblindness.

Our Commitments

- **Lead local actions**—from awareness campaigns to community projects—that advance SDGs like quality education, decent work, and reduced inequalities.
- **Build peer networks**—mentoring and collaborating with other youth with disabilities to strengthen visibility, solidarity, and advocacy.
- **Educate and advocate**—sharing our stories with schools, governments, and the public to dismantle stigma, remove barriers, and promote a culture of accessibility.



Closing Call to Action

This is our moment.

On June 27, we stand in global recognition.

On August 12, we show how youth with deafblindness transform local action into global progress.

To every young person with deafblindness:

Your rights are protected.

Your voice is powerful.

Together, through the WFDB Youth Committee, we are the architects of accessibility, inclusion, and sustainable progress.

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