



BASELINE STUDY REPORT

On the situation of the Deaf in Malawi

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Foreword

On behalf of MANAD, I would like to thank all those who were involved in the baseline study. This is the first of its kind in the history of MANAD. The survey got views from the Deaf, Parents and special education teachers in many districts. The team also traveled to some district of all regions of Malawi to meet face to face and interview different Deaf people.

We are grateful to the Finnish Association of the Deaf (FAD) for their untiring financial support to MANAD, which started in 1997. The support from FAD initially started through their Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Sign language project (ESARSLAP) and Eastern and Southern Africa regional organization project (ESAROG) that MANAD participated with other 5 countries namely, Botswana, Ethiopia, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Lesotho. The final project evaluation had recommended that there was need to work with one country to provide thorough training, which would benefit more members. The cooperation helped to produce sign language Instructors and Interpreters. It also helped the leaders to be capacitated and be responsible for their organization. The setting up of the secretariat is one of the biggest achievements. People can now visit us and see what we are doing for the Deaf people in Malawi.

We had set out to get views from deaf people in all districts. However, we managed to collect data from 50% of the places. This in my view is a good achievement. There were 375 people that filled out the questionnaires. MANAD is grateful to the District Assembly of Mwanza, Ntcheu, Phalombe and Rumphi for their assistance in getting these questionnaires filled out: this shows they care for their Deaf citizens in their communities. We hope we shall work together with our government as we have always done before. MANAD appreciates its partnership with our government of Malawi.

For any association to work well, it needs information. This information should tell the leadership what members want the association to do for them. This report has provided us with valuable and educative information to work for the better and improve the lives of deaf people in Malawi. We have heard what you our member are saying. You said you want MANAD should help reduce poverty among its members, you want better education, you want Sign Language, you want interpreters on TV and also you want society to change its negative attitudes toward the deaf. MANAD will endeavor to find ways to meet your demands. Am sure as we continue sharing information and working together we can make the change.

Ms Juliana Mwase

MANAD Chairperson

Acknowledgement

The Malawi National Association of the Deaf MANAD would like to thank all those who made this baseline study a success. This is the first baseline study to go further in some corner of the country to meet the Deaf face to face in order to get proven information.

MANAD would like also to thank the 375 Deaf and hard of hearing people respondents, who managed to fill and return the questionnaires. We especially want to pay our gratitude to the District Assemblies of Mwanza, Ntcheu, Phalombe and Rhumpi who helped to reach as many Deaf people as possible.

We are grateful to Mrs. Euphrasia Mbewe for her untiring work to complete this report. We also want to thank the MANAD officials Mr. Byson Chimanya, Mr. Isaac Msuku, Ms Lucy Siwinda, Mr. Malonje Phiri, Mr. Charles Mtambo and some interpreters for cruising on long and tiring journeys to interview Deaf people in the Southern, Central and Northern Regions of Malawi. Special thanks go to Ms Katherine Breen, an Intern Student from Gallaudet University. She was persuading her MA on how development cooperation impact on person with disabilities globally. She was attached to MANAD and FAD. Ms Breen assisted in the survey during 2 field trips to the Central and North regions, and also assisted in the analysis of some of the data. We also extend our gratitude to Mr. Paul Mbewe for the graphs.

Lastly we are grateful to those, whose names are many to mention, who participated in one-way or the other to make this study report a success. We are really grateful to the Deaf people who provided the information. MANAD believes in the Deaf people themselves expressing their own problems so that we can work towards a common solution.

This report is also for us; MANAD wishes it to be accessible to every Deaf. For this report to be accessible to every Deaf, it should be transcribed into sign language on SVCD or DVD.

MANAD also hopes that this report will be useful not only to MANAD, but also to its partner organizations like the MANAD's prospective donors, the Federation of the Disability Organization in Malawi (FEDOMA) and its affiliates. It would also help the government of Malawi to plan for Deaf people in future.

INTRODUCTION

The Malawi National Association of the Deaf (MANAD) is an organization formed by the deaf people. Its aim is to advocate and lobby for the rights of the Deaf through the recognition of Sign language. MANAD has entered into development cooperation with the Finnish Association of the Deaf (FAD). It is in this cooperation where a baseline study was proposed and funds were sourced. The Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) funded this survey. Mrs. Euphrasia Mbewe who also did a survey on the situation of Deaf people in Africa in 2005 to 2006 compiled the survey. In addition the MANAD officials were involved during field trips to conduct face-to-face interviews in the selected districts of South, Central and North regions of Malawi.

In this baseline study report we have covered the objectives, methods and the analyzed results from the respondents. The information in the report has been laid out in the order of the questions that were asked on the questionnaire. A sample of the questionnaire is attached. The questionnaire had 26 questions. Some of the questions only required the respondent to tick in a box e.g. if only a Yes or No answer is solicited. Some spaces were given for a more elaborate response.

The topics covered on the questionnaire focused on these thematic issues: First it asked for personal details of the respondents such as names, age, address, marital status and also if they had any children. The questionnaire has sections on education, employment, social welfare, health, access to information and sign language. The respondents are also asked to state what in their opinion ought to be priority areas for MANAD's strategic focus. And lastly the questionnaire asked for comments.

The questionnaires were sent out in two languages, English and Chichewa. The responses in Chichewa have been translated. We have summarized some of the responses

The education system for the deaf in Malawi leaves much to be desired. As the survey will show, there are many deaf that go through primary school but only a small fraction of that number ever progresses to secondary schools. The few that make it learn in the mainstream schools without proper support. Sign language is not used or encouraged in schools. So the development of the language will now depend on the establishment of deaf clubs where deaf can regularly meet. As can also be seen from the survey results, very few Deaf have got marketable skills that the labor market wants. Very few have attained vocational or college training. In a bid to earn a living few have engaged in small businesses selling a handful of items by the roadside.

The respondents bemoaned the lack of sign language interpreters at the clinics/hospitals. They felt that this puts them at risk of getting wrong prescription that would not cure their ailments. While there are campaign drives by several organizations and the government intended to raise awareness on issues like HIV/AIDS, reduction of Mortality rates, anti-malaria, under 5 child vaccination, teen pregnancy, that information is not reaching many of the deaf people. The respondents have said as one of the priorities that MANAD should sensitize these organizations so that when they design their campaigns that information reaches the Deaf too.

Several priority areas were mentioned in the returned questionnaires. They included intensive sign language courses to be spreaded to all parts of Malawi, setting up of branches, raising awareness, poverty reduction strategies for MANAD members and improved education system for the deaf people.

Ideally, MANAD should be a place where every member uses sign language and share the sense of belonging: members feel as equals. Members should adhere to the constitution that defines who its members are: The Deaf or hard of hearing who have accepted sign language and agree with the objectives of MANAD. What should be the mode of communication at MANAD's office or meetings? This is the dilemma that needs to be resolved if all members are to feel they belong to MANAD and MANAD is not a preserve of the few. As we learned from the Deaf during face-to-face interview, some schools did not enroll children who could not speak. Should MANAD then also carry on with discrimination against them?

Some people wrongly claim they are Deaf but are hard of hearing. This group of people needs hearing aids. MANAD should be advancing the acceptance of sign language. In other countries, hard of hearing formed separate associations to champion their needs such as cheaper and affordable hearing aids and installation of loop system in public places. These associations are affiliated to the International Federation of the Hard of Hearing (IFHOH).

This report also contains recommendations that we hope would assist MANAD to find solutions and possibly devise strategies for implementing the solutions.

The Objectives of the baseline study were:

- To get information on the resources, capacity, needs and priorities at the MANAD headquarters, MANAD branches and the situation, needs and priorities of the Deaf in different parts of the country
- To seek information on various factors related to deafness, social status, education, employment, health, and information and Sign Language.
- To seek information on what Deaf want so that MANAD can raise awareness and deliver services of benefits to the Deaf community in Malawi.
- To study problems related to social exclusion of the Deaf in order to lay a foundation in the delivery of Sign language interpretations services for their full participation in society.

The United Nation Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities 2000 article 31 (see box below)

United Nation Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities Article 31 Statistic and data collection

1. States parties shall under take to collect appropriate information, including statistical research data, to enable them to formulate and implement policies to give effect to the present convention. The process of collecting and maintaining it information shall:

(a) Comply with legally established safeguard, including legislation on data protection, to ensure confidentiality and respect for the privacy of person with Disabilities.

(b) Comply with internationally accepted norms to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and ethical principles in the collection and use of statistics.

2. The information collected in accordance with this article shall be disaggregated, as appropriate, used to help assess the implementation of the states parties' obligations under the present convention and to identify and address the barriers faced by persons with disabilities in exercising their rights.

3. States parties shall assume responsibility for the dissemination of these statistics and ensure their accessibility to person with Disabilities and others

Methodology

The data collection was done by sending e-mails, studying literatures, visiting schools for the Deaf and interviewing both the Deaf and their teachers, sending letters and questionnaires by post to all 28 Districts Assemblies. The District Commissioners in turn disseminated to their various departments, local chiefs and stakeholders who are closely in touch with deaf people. The survey team also traveled to some selected districts like Mulanje, Thyolo, Chitipa, Karonga, Mzuzu, Mzimba, and Kasungu to interview Deaf adults, youth and children. The questionnaire was translated into the Chichewa, the language that is widely spoken language in Malawi.

RETURNED QUESTIONNAIRES

MANAD received 375 filled questionnaires from the Deaf individuals that spared. Some questionnaires were received from District Assemblies and school managers. The responses and views outlined in this report are from the respondents. Thus the surveyors are not responsible for any information contained therein.

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO DISTRICTS

The table 1.0 below shows results of respondent from 17 districts.

Name of District.	Respondents	Name of District.	Respondents
Blantyre	27	Mzimba	64
Chitipa	30	Mzuzu	14
Dowa	2	Ntcheu	14
Dedza	5	Ntchisi	14
Karonga	15	Phalombe	73
Kasungu	19	Rumphi	9
Lilongwe	28	Thyolo	3
Mulanje	47	Zomba	1
Mwanza	11		
Total			376

Table 1.0. above shows that Phalombe, with 73, had returned the highest number of questionnaires, followed by Mzimba, Mulanje and Chitipa with 64, 47 and 30 respondents respectively. The high numbers are as a result of the method of transmission of information. The traditional authorities, chiefs and member of families of the Deaf were involved in getting this information out. In Mwanza, Ntcheu, Phalombe, Mzimba and Rumphi, the teachers, districts assemblies and government departments were very instrumental in getting the questionnaires filled out. In other places like Chitipa, Karonga, Mulanje and Thyolo the survey team had to fill out the questionnaires after getting responses during face-to-face interviews. The school manager also helped to collect data from school children. The process of identifying Deaf in rural Malawi involved traveling to far places using public buses, taxis and bicycle taxis.

RESOURCES, CAPACITY, NEEDS AND PRIORITIES AT THE MANAD HEADQUARTERS AND MANAD BRANCHES.

Headquarters.

The MANAD had acquired offices located at Chiwembe, Blantyre in 1996. MANAD shared these premises with the Union of the Blind. MANAD operated from these premises until 2007. They left the offices because they could not afford to pay rent any more. Since then MANAD had been operating from FEDOMA.

During the period 1996-2007, the Headquarter was fully functional; MANAD had employed 6 members of staff – the executive director, coordinator, accountant, and 2 guards. After 2006 financial crisis the staff were all laid off and offices relocated to FEDOMA.

Financial, equipment and facilities

The MANAD has not had a consistent source of financial support. The members had initiated some fundraising activities but these could only bring small amounts. There were donors who gave only one time financial support and no follow up afterwards. MANAD lacks equipment such as computer, Internet, photocopiers, cameras, and vehicles to enable it do its outreach work.

Capacity.

MANAD does not have the kind of personnel with skills to do many of activities that could lead to the realization of its objectives. In addition the lack of resource meant they could not hire consultants or qualified staff.

The ESARORG project (2001-2004) had run 2 training workshops for the board. Most of the current board members participated in those workshops. In this regard they have the basic understanding of what they are supposed to do. However, MANAD is still weak and needs more training. There have been some personnel changes due to deaths and resignations.

Branches

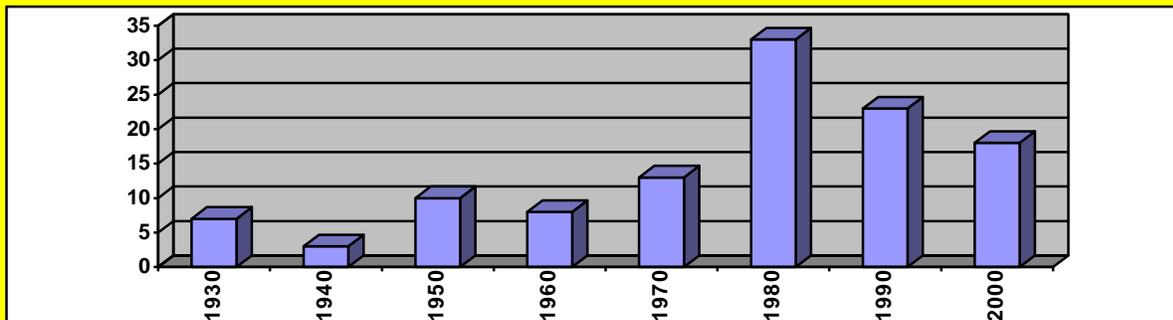
MANAD currently has 4 branches – Blantyre, Mzimba, Ntcheu and Lilongwe. The Blantyre and Lilongwe branches are most active while Mzimba has been dormant for sometime. The committees for these branches were constituted a long time ago. So there is need to revamp and provide capacity building. There are groups of deaf people that meet and these groups function as “branches”. There is a lot capacity building required at branch level.

Some of the areas that the Governing Council (Board) felt needed more attention were: constitutionalism, financial administration, Sign Language and SL Dictionary, advocacy and lobbying, Publicity and media, fundraising, HIV/AIDS, Branch development, membership recruitment. Deaf awareness, Leadership training, Outreach program,

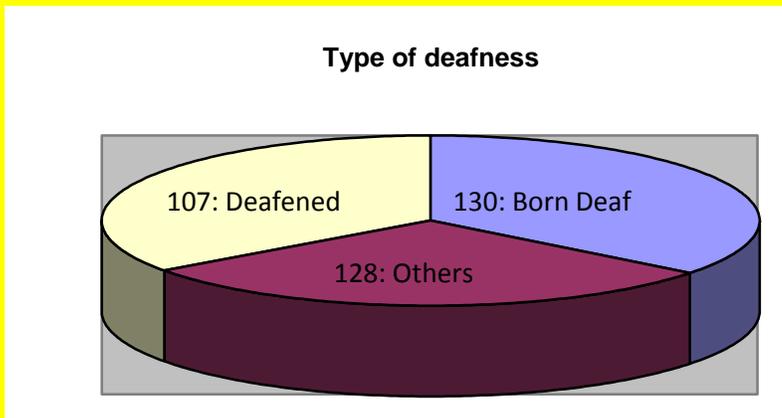
AGE VARIATION

This chart shows the respondents' birth years.

The age variation from respondents on the chart shows a few old Deaf. 6 respondents were born in the 1920s. 7 (1930s), 3 (1940s). 10 are from the 1950s. We had very few respondents that were born in 1960s (8). 13 respondents were born in 1970s. Many respondents (33) stated they were born in 1980s. Then followed by those who were born in 1990s (23) and 2000s (18). Some respondents refrained from answering this question on their date of birth.



CAUSES OF DEAFNESS

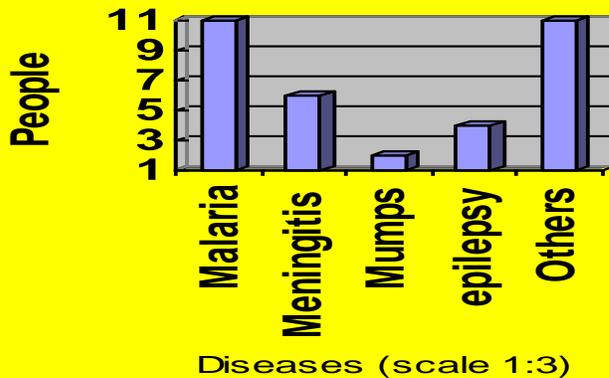


The Chart shows a comparison of the number of respondents that were born Deaf, acquired Deafness or are hard of hearing. The group, **others**, includes the hard of hearing and those with normal hearing.

130 out of 376 of the total respondents stated they were born Deaf

The chart shows the cause of Deafness from the respondents: -

Purported Causes of Deafness



217 respondents answered the question on what could have caused their Deafness. 130 of the respondents stated they were born Deaf while 107 acquired Deafness due to other illnesses. Malaria (23 people) accounted for the highest number of casualties followed by Cerebral Malaria (12), Meningitis claimed (16). Others stated that they had severe headaches (1), epilepsy (4). In Chitipa 20 respondents attributed

their deafness to unknown illnesses and one said it could be due to old age. One respondent from Blantyre had suffered from mumps. Otis's Media does not seem to be common among the respondents as only two from Mzuzu and Chitipa suffered from it. One respondent from Chitipa suffered from Anoxia. TB medication was also mentioned as a cause. Witchcraft was not to be missed: A respondent from Mzuzu said he became deaf due to witchcraft. However we do not know the truth and could not find any written documents on witchcraft incidents. Another respondent said he lost hearing due to loud noises while working with machines at the mines in Chitipa. Two respondents from Mulanje and Ntcheu said they had suffered from Ebola. One respondent stated that he fell critically ill and was presumed dead, was buried then on the 4th day was dug out only to find out later he was deaf. 13 respondents don't know why they are deaf.

The survey also heard from respondents who lost hearing because of other causes such as a flying insect entering the ears (flying termite are a common belief). Someone reported hearing strange sounds in the ear. A woman fell unconscious for one week and was discovered deaf after waking up. Still other said they gradually lost hearing without any illness. Someone in Thyolo said that a bird scratched him (Did not say the type of bird: bats and owls are a commonly believed to cause deafness, blindness or madness). A parent from Thyolo reported that his son became Deaf when the house caught fire while he was asleep.

RECOMMENDATION ON CAUSES OF DEAFNESS

Age category of occurrence of Deafness

- Born Deaf = 110 respondents**
- 0 to 7 years = 20 respondents**
- 8 to 14 years = 60 respondents**
- 15 to 21 years = 14 respondents**
- 21 to 29 years = 8 respondents**
- 40 to Old age = 5 respondents**

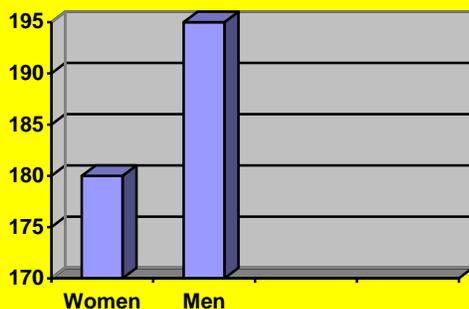
Deafness is an invisible disability and one of the disabilities that is most misunderstood. As the survey showed, 110 claimed that they were born Deaf while others gave various reason for their deafness some bordering on witchcraft. We recommend that: -

- MANAD, working together with other parents' organization e.g Parents of Disability Children Association of Malawi (PODCAM), should take measures to raise awareness to parents and guardian on causes of Deafness in order to lessen traditional myths and beliefs. Sign

language is an important tool that should be used in early intervention once Deafness has been recognized in children.

- MANAD should organize sign language classes for the general public, institutions both government and private institutions as the number of Deaf people is increasing every year.
- MANAD should advocate for every deaf child to be enrolled in school. Education is one of UN millennium Development Goal (MDG). MANAD should lobby against the practice of selecting only those who can lip read or are hard of hearing to enter schools.
- MANAD should work closely and advocate with Ministry of Health on the dangers of malaria and meningitis as the major cause of Deafness in Malawi.
- MANAD should work closely with Ministry of health to set up a registry system that should be developed to collect data on the number of children who a have been reported to hospital to determine the statistic figure of Deaf people make a visit.

GENDER EQUALITY



The chart shows number of questionnaire received from both gender

There were 180 women and 195 men that responded to the questionnaire.

RECOMMENDATION ON GENDER

The survey shows that the number of women respondents is lower than the men. In view of this we recommend that

1. MANAD constitution should enshrine a clause that addresses gender equity.

2. MANAD should advocate for inclusion of Deaf women in existing gender or women organization.
3. MANAD should advocate for the training and employment of Sign Language Interpreters in health care centers in order to afford women access to family planning and reproduction information.
4. MANAD should organize workshops where Deaf men and women are trained in gender mainstreaming strategies.

MARITAL STATUS

56 of the respondents said they were married while 44 said they were Deaf single parents. They did not say if they had been married before. 7 people were divorced and 5 respondents were widowed.

The respondents that were married did not provide information as to whether both spouses were deaf. Those who were divorced did not state if they divorced a deaf or hearing spouse. There have been cases where Deaf couples are not allowed to marry because their parents or guardians did not approve the marriage. A deaf woman said that some parents took away the child born in a certain deaf family on the pretext that it must learn to speak because the Deaf parents could not teach it to speak. The survey has found that the average number of children in a family is 4. The highest number of children was 10 and the least was 1 child. The United Nation Convention On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) says in Article 23:

Article 23 respect of home and family

1. State parties shall take effective and appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities in all matters relating to marriage, family, parenthood and relationships, on an equal basis with others, so as to ensure that:
 - a) The right of all persons with disabilities who are of marriageable age to marry and to found a family on the basis of free and full consent of the intending spouses to be recognized;
 - b) The rights of persons with disabilities to decide freely and responsibly on the number of children and spacing of their children and to have access to age appropriate information, reproductive and family planning education are recognized and the means necessary to enable hem to exercise these rights are provided;
 - c) Persons with disabilities, including children, retain their fertility on equal basis with others.
2. State parties shall ensure the rights and responsibilities of person with disabilities, with regard to guardianship, ward ship, trusteeship, adoption of children or similar institutions, where these concept exist in national legislation in all cases the best interest of the child shall be paramount. State parties shall render appropriate assistance to persons with disabilities in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities.
3. State parties shall ensure that children with disabilities have equal rights with respect to family life. With a view to realizing these rights, and to prevent concealment, abandonment, neglect and

segregation of children with disabilities, states parties shall undertake to provide early and comprehensive information, services and support to children with disabilities and their families.

4. State parties shall ensure that children shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when competent authorities subject to judicial review determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures, that such separation is necessary for the best interest of the child. In no case shall a child be separated from the parents on the basis of a disability of either the child or one or both of the parents.
5. State parties shall, where the immediate family is unable to care for a child with disability, undertake every effort to provide alternative care within the wider family, and failing that, within the community in a family setting.

PROBLEMS IN FAMILY

We have noted that only 40 respondents out of 376 respondents said that they faced communication problems within the family. The communication problems hinder them from consulting family members, getting information and participating fully in the family. The respondents cited the lack of awareness on Deaf issues and sign language within the families. There was a lady in Chitipa who expressed happiness with her family's willingness to use home signs. Negative attitudes and stigmatization have been mentioned (**Chitipa, Phalombe, Mulanje, Mzimba**) as some of the reasons the Deaf are left alone, they do not get much cooperation and get mocked for being deaf. While other respondents did not feel that their deafness was causing problems in their families; This group of people stated that poverty i.e lack of food, clothes, proper shelter, and unemployment is a big problem. Another group (seems to be hard of hearing) said they need speakers to raise their voices when talking to them. 3 respondents from **Chitipa** and one from **Lilongwe** wrote that they face no problems, although they did not mention why they don't face problems. Other respondents did not fill out this part.

"We use home signs .In the beginning I used to be left alone now things have changed to better. Other relatives can chat with me"

RECOMMENDATION ON FAMILIES WHO HAVE DEAF CHILD

We recommend that

1. MANAD should vigorously raise awareness to its Deaf members, parents of the Deaf, teachers of the Deaf and the general public. The Deaf also need to become aware about themselves and become champions in the advocacy of Malawi Sign Language (MSL) and Deaf Human Rights.
2. The government, through the social welfare and health institution, should include Deaf people and their families in social welfare and other sectors.
3. The government should work with MANAD to raise awareness about Deafness and the importance of using sign language in homes where deaf persons live in order to break the communication barriers and eliminate the negative attitudes and stigma that Deaf people face in their families and the society.

A PRIMARY EDUCATION

The diagram 1.5 A below shows respondents who did primary school.

	Mua	Embangweni	Mary View	Mount View	Mainstream	No school	Total who attended primary school
Blantyre			2	15	7	2	24
Chitipa		4			6	2	10
Dowa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dedza	5					1	5
Karonga					39 Deaf Sch		39
Kasungu	1				11	1	12
Lilongwe*	6	3	10		3	4	22
Mulanje *	5		5	1	20	11	31
Mwanza					7	1	7
Mzimba						-	
Mzuzu	5	4	2		2	3	13
Ntcheu					2	-	2
Ntchisi *	5	1		-	5	2	9
Phalombe			7		50	1	57
Rumphi	5	1				1	6
Thyolo			1	1	1	2	3
Zomba	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	32	13	27	17	153	30	240

The diagram above shows that 240 respondents reached primary school. When the survey team visited some the schools, officials gave us the numbers of pupils in schools in 2009. For example in Chitipa, we got a list of 312 deaf students in the whole districts. The District education manager in Thyolo gave us a list of 372 pupils. Mount View School has indicated that there are 180 pupils (83

boys and 97 girls). Those enrolled only come from south Region of Malawi. Because these children were underage, they did not fill out the questionnaires.

153 respondents say they attended mainstream schools. 20 said they never went to school. Others people left the blank space unfilled. Our guess is that they did not read/understand the questionnaire. The mainstream schools do not have specialist teachers. We wonder how they learn if special teachers are not available in inclusive schools or units. Some of the children are hard of hearing and might benefit from using hearing aids, but they complained of lack of batteries, a situation that hinders them being active in class. There seems to be no consistent supplies of hearing aid batteries in schools.

Secondary, Vocational, College, University education

“Teachers don’t consider us even when teaching. They forget us in class”

As the survey showed in the subject on primary education, there are many deaf students leaving primary schools and fewer progressing to secondary schools. Only 90 respondents have been to secondary school. There are even fewer Deaf doing vocational training. 10 respondents report to have been to college while 15 did vocational training. The one person who reported to have been to university was from Lilongwe.

PROBLEMS IN SCHOOL

Respondents mentioned one sort of problem or another. The major being not able to follow what the teacher is saying. 2 respondents were of the view that their teachers had negative attitudes towards them. The respondents also mentioned that even their peer would sometime mock them. As one respondent from Mulanje put it

“I did only form 1 to 2 and left school because of problem of the teachers not signing”

“Other students were making fun of me”. As has already been mentioned, there are no special secondary schools for deaf. The deaf learn in the mainstream secondary schools. As can be seen from one respondent who said the teachers in his class did not pay attention to him or take his needs into consideration. Some respondent affirmed that they managed to get through lessons by sitting in the front row of the class where they could hear the teachers better. Other said they relied on their classmates’ notes to study. Two respondents from Blantyre and Ntchisi said that since teachers were using oral methods they could not take some subjects such as dictation. In Blantyre, Lilongwe and Chitipa, three respondents interviewed face-to-face indicated that even though they reached form 4, their command of written English was still low and unsatisfactory.

“The lack of money or support made me not to go further with education”,

“The death of my parents resulted in me failing to pay school fees”

SIGN LANGUAGE USAGE IN SCHOOLS

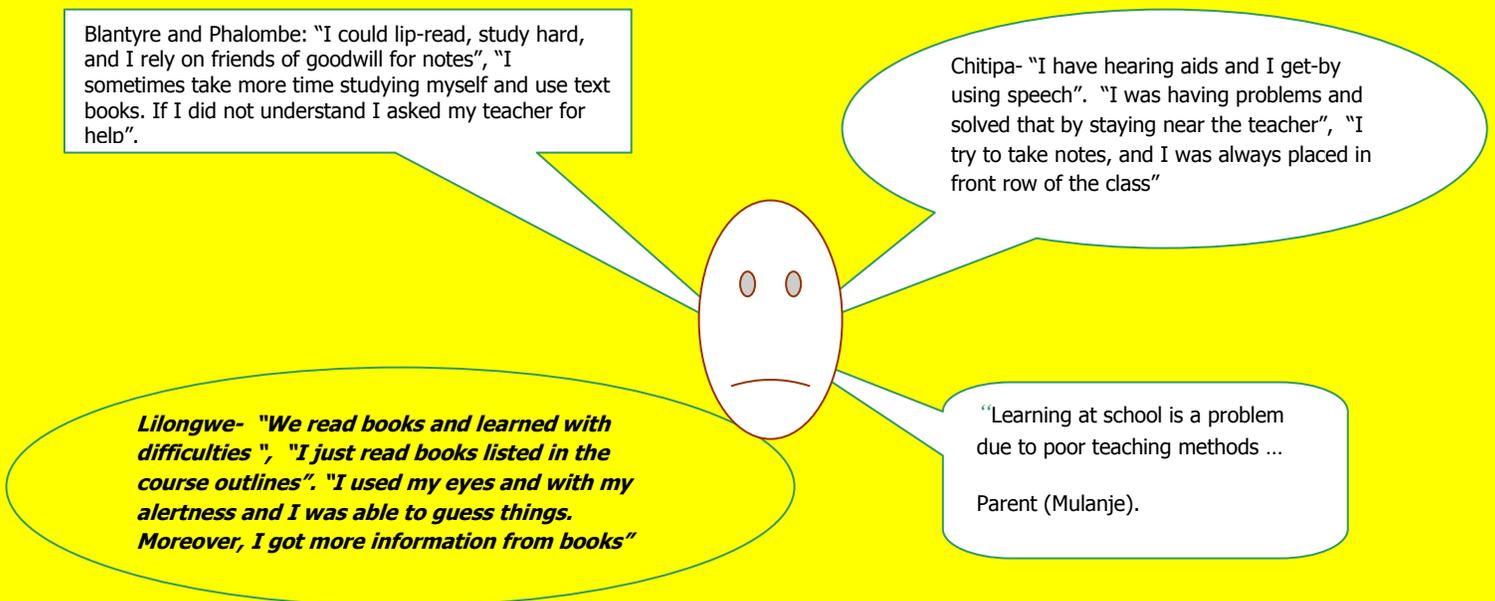
208 people filled out the question on the use of Sign Language in schools. The survey found 85 respondents who said sign language was used. 149 respondents said sign language is not used while others did not fill this part. This part is not very conclusive because teachers filled out some of the

questionnaires and gave similar answers to many students. On the observations of the deaf in community, it is evident that the majority learnt to sign through interaction at the Malawi National Association the Deaf (MANAD) since 1996. Oralism that hit the world after the Milan, Italy Education congress in 1880 spread around the world where sign language was banned (Brill Richard 1984). This affected Malawi too. The early missionaries who built school for the Deaf in Malawi brought oralism. Deaf people have few options of schools. It is only recently that some schools are using signs in combination with speech. Oralism is still prevalent in the deaf community. Only a few Deaf in the community are fluent user of Malawi sign language notably those who were born Deaf and whose mother tongue is sign language.

Findings during the base line study field trip to Karonga and Kasungu.

School children in class are taught through Oral or lip reading. The surveyors have noted that when the children interact among themselves during free time, they use Sign Language, but in class the teacher does not use it.

The respondents were asked to explain how they learned since sign language was not used in their schools. We got 59 responses on this question. The Deaf students are left to learn on their own without proper teacher guidance. This is like taking distance studies (self-study course). As a result, they got frustrated; many of the deaf students failed their exams or simply lost interest and gave up on education. The following quotes summarizes the similar copying techniques used - as told by 59 respondents:



Milestone for equal educational opportunities for deaf students: Flemish government sentenced for discrimination.

The court in Ghent has sentenced the Flemish government for their refusal of reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities – a legal form of discrimination. With this sentence, the

demands of three deaf students and their parents are granted. The Flemish Deaf Association is very pleased with this outcome.

In March 2009, four parents submitted a formal complaint against the Flemish minister of Education and several Flemish schools to claim the right to accessible inclusive education for their deaf children. The parents were witnessing how their children, due to a huge shortage of interpreting service hours in the classroom, are denied communication and access to education during more than half of their teaching time. The children concerned can only use the service of a Flemish Sign Language Interpreter for an average of 7 out of 30 teaching hours. Also, the procedure for applying for these interpreting services was not meeting the minimal demands of transparency and objectivity.

The court of Ghent has indeed found the Flemish government guilty of discrimination, because the current amount of interpreting service hours of the deaf students is a refusal of reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities.

Fevlado is very pleased with this fundamental sentence of the Ghent court and calls this an important milestone for equal educational opportunities for deaf students. After more than 10 years (when for the first time, a Flemish deaf student could use an interpreter in education) the right of all deaf children and young people for equal educational opportunities is now finally recognized. This is all the more important since Flemish deaf schools can't grant diplomas. So if deaf students want to have access to higher education and to the labour market, they have no other choice than to go to mainstream hearing schools.. This is only possible for them if these hearing schools are fully accessible by means of Flemish Sign Language interpreters.

Fevlado hopes that the new Flemish minister of Education and Equal Opportunities will provide the necessary reasonable accommodations –not only for the three students concerned, but for all deaf children, young people and adults in secondary, higher en adult education now and in the future.

Press release : www.wfdeaf.org

RECOMMENDATION ON EDUCATION FOR THE DEAF

1. The Catholic Churches and the Central African Presbyterian Church (CCAP) missionaries built schools for the Deaf in the Malawi. The government supports these schools by employing teachers to teach there. The deaf population has grown. **Some schools need to be expanded as the existing infrastructure can only cater for a limited number of students.** This is evident in Mount View School for the Deaf in Bvubwe, which can only cater for 187 pupils while Karonga School for the Deaf has 39 children and is still growig. Most schools only provide primary education. Secondary level education is not accessible to the Deaf. Deaf are often put in inclusive settings¹ where the method of teaching is designed for hearing children. Deaf students usually don't learn much and are left to study on their own

¹ Learning together with hearing students

without teachers' guide and explanation. As the data shows, on the level of employment, that this is detrimental to their development if the Deaf students are not taught in Sign Language.

2. School units² must be established in all school to facilitate the inclusion of Deaf children. These units must be provided with specialized teachers proficient in sign language, the necessary teaching materials and facilities. Poverty stricken parents are unable to send their children to distant boarding school, as they can't provide their child with transport money. School closer to home will also help the Deaf to integrate in community.
3. Malawi sign language Dictionary must be published. MANAD as the key player should take leading role in its production.
4. MANAD should organize Sign language courses for teachers of the Deaf, parents, families, and education authorities and planners
5. Sign Language Curriculum should be developed so that it can become a subject in schools.

The United Nation Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities is very clear on the education of the Deaf. See quote in the box below: -

*The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. **Article 24***

3 (b) Facilitating the learning of sign language and the promotion of linguistic identity of the deaf community

(c) Ensure that the education of the persons, in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deaf blind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environment which maximize academic and social development.

4. In order to help ensure the realization of this right, state parties shall take appropriate measure to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in Sign Language and/ or Braille, to train professionals and staff at all levels of education. Such training shall incorporate disability awareness and the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.

² A class in a mainstream school set aside for the Deaf.

DEAF PEOPLE IN EMPLOYMENT

Unemployment is a major concern for many people in Malawi. For the Deaf, unemployment has a major impact on their lives as joblessness invites negative attitudes from society. The level of unemployed among the deaf in the survey is as high as 60 % or 225. Those running small businesses accounted for 15%. Even the choice of vocation is limited to artisan works (carpentry, tailoring, shoe mending, bricklaying) or selling sweets, cigarettes usually by the roadside. The survey found few deaf in formal employment, working as graphic artist or administrative assistant. A respondent told us that though he is doing business he does not have a license. He felt this was an obstacle to the growth of his business. As many deaf people said, they don't have capital to buy tools and start a business let alone pay for business licenses. We have observed that some respondents might have indicated as being unemployed when in fact they are peasant farmers. Farming is never considered as a profession/employment in this part of the world.

PROBLEMS FACED IN EMPLOYMENT

From Blantyre, Mulanje, Ntchisi, Thyolo to Phalombe districts the cry was the same. Many Deaf people face communication barrier when looking for jobs at the labor market. They also felt that many employers still see deafness as meaning inability to work. The other problem cited was that most Deaf do not have the qualifications needed to find good employment. As quoted from a respondent in Lilongwe "I am not working because I don't have any qualifications". For

No qualifications

Limited choices of employment

Discriminations

Unequal job opportunities

Deafness viewed as inability

those that have any kind of certificates, these were mostly in vocational training. As a result of the bad economic situation prevailing in the country, there are few job opportunities. The few jobs available are lowly paid part time work. The Deaf have to compete for these few jobs. As a respondent from Mulanje said, "because of negative attitude by employers, Deaf people are discriminated against".

The government of Malawi is trying to help some Deaf through Job placement. One respondent from Blantyre stated "I received support after my education assessment of the Deaf in Blantyre urban. The Malawi Council for the Handicapped found employment for me".

RECOMMENDATION ON EMPLOYMENT

We recommend that due to lack of vocational and professional skills characterized by inadequate education:

- MANAD should liaise with vocational learning institutions to enroll the Deaf. MANAD should encourage its members to undergo training.

- MANAD should work with the employers' organizations, e.g. Malawi Congress of Trade Union (MCTU) to sensitize them.
- MANAD should do a vigorous advocacy and awareness campaign on the abilities of the Deaf to different companies, NGOs and government in particular.
- MANAD should lobby micro credit lending institutions to review their lending policies so that Deaf people could also have access to loans.

GOVERNMENT AND NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION ASSISTANCE

One would think that with all these problems the Deaf are going through, the government would come in to help. Only 10 respondents got assistance from government. Among those that got assistance, (eg **Blantyre**), state that Social Welfare paid their school fees. Others they did not elaborate the kind of government's assistance.

NGOs also play an important role in helping the vulnerable in society. 20 deaf affirmed getting assistance from NGOs. This survey found that there are such organizations that assist the deaf. The kind of assistance ranges from donation of blankets, textbooks, and shoes to foodstuff (this information came from Mulanje). A school official said the Catholic Missionary Brothers donated cloth and sewing machines. The NGO named Adventist Development and Relief agency (ADRA) (**Phalombe**), working for orphans, has assisted and provided food items like maize and pigeon peas. The Twane (Community Based Organization (CBO) helped with blankets and clothes In **Ntcheu**. Another respondent reported that NGO provided them with Blankets, sibusiso, soya, pairs of shoes, pails, exercise books, and pencils. However it was not clear whether these donations were for the individuals or for the schools.

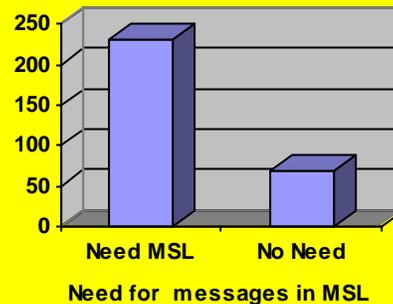
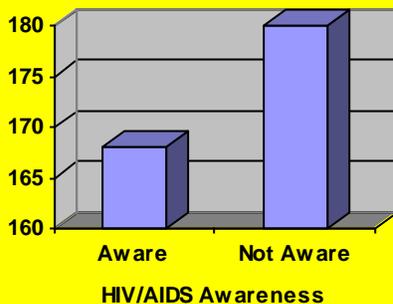
RECOMMENDATION ON GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCES

1. We recommend that the Governments' assistance to the Deaf should be extended to those who are more vulnerable, particularly those living in rural areas.
2. MANAD should advocate for the inclusion of deaf people in both governmental and non-governmental welfare and other programs that are set to alleviate poverty or improve education.

ACCESS TO HEALTH INFORMATION

Malawi finished the year 2008 with historic record as the only country in the world with the fastest growing HIV/AIDS national response programme, courtesy of effective systems put in place to fight the pandemic. In an interview, Principal Secretary for Nutrition and HIV/AIDS Dr Mary Shawa attributed the standing to numerous strides made in different areas relating to Voluntary counseling and testing (VCT), administration of antiretroviral (ARV) drugs and reduction of HIV infection rates in various age groups. "The HIV/AIDS national response programme in Malawi is the fastest growing in the world. This is the reason why the Global Health Council decided to hold the silver Jubilee and international Candle light memorial in Malawi on May 18 2008," she said. Provisional of HIV/AIDS information as an integral component in the fight against the pandemic is another area in which shawa said Malawi has recorded progress with over seven million people reached with HIV/ADS message as of 2008 compared to only about 660,000 in 2006. She said over 700 channels including newspaper, television and radio programmes were used to transmit the message. " We have also had an increase in provision of prevention of mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) services, with more than 500

Question no.19 on the questionnaire asked the respondents if they knew about HIV/AIDS, TB and whether they wanted this information in sign language. 375 people were sampled. 16 did not fill out this part. 47% said they were not aware of HIV/AIDS while 49% said they were aware of the diseases. The highest number of people that were not aware of the disease came from Phalombe. This is probably because most of them were still in school. 64% said they would understand better if the information were conveyed in sign language. 23 respondents said they don't understand sign language either. 4 people wanted the information written in other vernacular languages e.g Tumbuka. Some of the respondents said even though they were aware of the HIV/AIDS their knowledge was limited and would need more information. 44 people wrote that they understand the messages and don't need it conveyed in Sign Language. The lack of accessible information for Deaf in Malawi makes them vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. There is rarely any MSL interpretation available on televised HIV/AIDS programs. Programs on radio leave out the deaf people since they cannot hear. Newspapers are inaccessible to the Deaf who are uneducated. Moreover, newspapers cost money. VCT services are not accessible because many counselors do not know sign language.



One respondent (a guardian) stated, "He (his nephew) is very young to use any sign language". We have noted that this view is expressed due to lack of awareness. The younger the Deaf in the family where sign language is used the better he is in communication through sign language. Young Deaf people are the most important group to be informed about HIV/AIDS and other health matters. One respondent said, "I learned from Mary view school about health issues". From Mwanza, 2 youths said it would be helpful if the information were conveyed in sign language. Myths associated with traditions and culture, Stigma and other attitude towards Deaf people still exist. There are people who think Deaf are HIV/AIDS free, so they approached them for sex. Some people assume that since deaf don't hear or speak nobody proposes to them and therefore are not sexually active.

PROBLEMS VISITING HOSPITALS AND OTHER HEALTH CENTER

The respondents explained problems they faced when visiting a clinic/hospital. They said deafness not only hinders communication but also causes other problems. Here are some sentiments from selected respondents.

Blantyre: When communication breaks down, doctors might give wrong prescription, even before I finish explaining my ailments.

Chitipa "No problems, "Father signs and escort me to hospital".

Kasungu: Doctors don't understand our problem, and the doctor talk directly to parents instead of the Deaf patient.

Lilongwe and Thyolo: "We sometimes receive wrong medication. I find it difficult to express myself to the doctor if s/he doesn't understand sign language." "I can only use sign language. The problem is, I can't go on my own since for me to explain to them is a problem".

Mulanje: "It's difficult to communicate with the doctors as they are always busy hence we are sometimes prescribed wrong medicine. Sometime we are attended to very late as we are being told to wait on the queue. Sometimes doctors are reluctant to attend to us at all for fear of misdiagnosis." Somebody said "I use notes when talking to doctor or nurse".

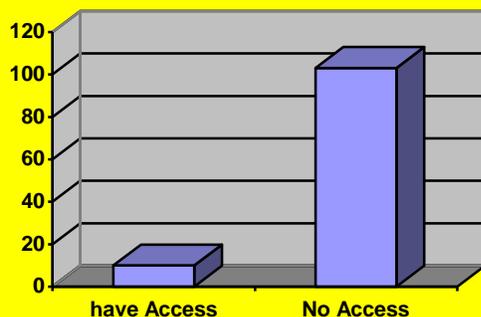
Ntchisi "Doctors find it difficult to understand what the deaf person is saying".

RECOMMENDATION ON HEALTH

Perhaps the most disturbing sentiment we have heard is that the doctors/nurses sometimes do not attend to the deaf on time or not attend to them at all. It is imperative that deaf awareness and Sign Language classes should be initiated not only at the health centers but also most importantly at the training institutions, so that when these doctors/nurses graduate they have basic skills of dealing with the Deaf.

INFORMATION IN SIGN LANGUAGE ON TELEVISION MALAWI (TVM)

The diagram shows the responses we received on the question, "Do you have access to information on Television Malawi?"



There is limited access to television in Malawi. According to what the respondents say, there is no TV signal in many rural areas and small towns further away from the Capital. MANAD has also explained that it has not had funds to pay for sign language programs on TV as demanded by TVM. MANAD has approached TVM on this issue of sign language interpreters but the TVM always said they would look into it when funds are available. As the diagram shows 103 responded don't get adequate information from TV while only 10 they

said they do. We just wonder how they get that information: Are they hard of hearing? Some respondents said they have never seen Sign Language before.

“TVM needs K1.9 billion, State controlled Television Malawi (TVM) wants K1.9 billion to roll out a nationwide signal, Minister of information and Civic Education, Hon Leckford Thotho told parliament on Tuesday 28th July 2009. TVM currently cover 35 percent of the country and needed big financial boost to reach everyone, according to government. The minister claimed the station has big plans to ensure everyone in the country watched its programs. It intends to increase its coverage from 35 % to 45% in the short term, 65 % in the medium term and 100% in the long term depending on the availability of funds. The minister however said poor funding suffocate the station’s plans to repair its machinery and purchase transmitters across the country Mzimba, Mchinji, Rumphu and Kasungu and surrounding areas are not upgraded with TVM services.” QUOTE FROM, THE DAILY TIMES NEWSPAPER THURSDAY 30TH JULY 2009.

What the respondents want:

TVM must include sign language and closed caption in its local programs. It would benefit Deaf viewers to know what is happening in Malawi because Deaf don’t listen to the radio. The TVM must always have a sign language interpreter because deaf people also want to know developments taking place in Malawi. The religious leaders should introduce sign language inserts in their televised church services. TVM must purchase modern technology equipment to support the Deaf. The staff at the Ministry of Information and TVM needs to be trained and sensitized on the importance of sign language.

RECOMMENDATION ON TVM

The right to information is a birth right for every person; the deaf person is often denied this right because they are left behind in the information age. There is no information in Sign language for the Deaf or closed captioning on Television Malawi. Radio is not accessible since they cannot hear the message, Newspaper is also not accessible since most cannot read and write. As information is power and ignorance is dangerous, we therefore recommend that: -

1. Television should be made accessible by introducing Sign Language. The government should pay the Sign Language Interpretation services.
2. Sign language should be legally recognized in the Republican constitution in Malawi as one of the languages.
3. The National Policy on Equalization of opportunities for persons with Disabilities June 2006 should be reviewed as there is no provision on sign language interpreters services stipulated in this document. Malawi Sign language is not clearly defined as a natural language like other local languages.
4. The media in Malawi should be sensitized to become aware about Deafness, deaf culture and the need to cover Deaf issues in the in positive light.
5. Since TVM TV signals only cover 35% of the country, MANAD should work with other organizations, authorities to devise ways of passing information.

RESPONDENTS’ SUGGESTED PRIORITY AREAS

Areas to Prioritize	NO.	Areas to prioritize	NO.
Sign Language	91	Advocacy	8
Education	60	Sign Language dictionary	6
Poverty reduction	35	Setup and strengthen Branches	5
Public awareness	20	Human rights	5
Health	12	Equal education syllabus	1
Leadership training	8	Modern technology	-

The Respondents were asked to indicate the areas that they felt should command priority in MANAD activities. 251 respondents responded to the question. The responses are summarized below

Sign Language:

The 91 respondents from Mwanza, Ntcheu, Phalombe Blantyre and Lilongwe saw Sign Language instructors and interpreter training as very important. They said this should be coupled with the spreading of the knowledge to the teachers, general public, doctors, justice system and other profession so that they can use sign language when communicating with Deaf in places such as hospitals, schools, etc.

Poverty reduction

35 respondents, from Karonga, Chitipa, Mulanje, Phalombe, picked poverty reduction as another important activity. They felt Deaf peoples’ living standard could be improved by running business. They also suggested that the government should provide handouts like food, clothing, financial assistance to the Deaf who are unemployed, assist Deaf to find employment or help deaf to be self employed by providing them with tools for carpentry, sewing machines and brick making. They see the need to improve living conditions of Deaf in Malawi by providing them with the necessary equipment, facilities, loans, fertilizer subsidy coupons³, capital for small business.

5 respondents from **Lilongwe, Blantyre, Mulanje, Mzuzu and Karonga** stated that the deaf association must have job placement program to help those who have academic papers in various fields (e.g. by convincing the company managers to employ deaf persons). One respondent asked MANAD to visit everywhere and meet in person and see how the deaf people survive without education. The respondents urged all Deaf people to co-operate as one in the north or south.

“Meet us in person in order to find out the problems we are facing since not all of us have access to education learning”.

Deaf awareness

Deaf awareness seemed to be high in the minds of the 20 respondents from Mulanje, Blantyre and Phalombe. They stated that Deaf awareness campaigns should be spread around the country.

³ A government’s fertilizer support program for peasant farmers.

Sign Language Dictionary

6 respondents from **Blantyre, Lilongwe, Phalombe, Chitipa and Karonga** cited Sign Language Dictionary as an important tool for use in teaching sign language and doing advocacy work.

Setting up and strengthening existing branches

MULANJE PARENTS RESPONSE ON PRIORITIES

" Our Deaf sons should be sent to school and in future they can be provided with the state assistance such as employment or vocational training.

"There is a need to sensitize parents with deaf children to send their children to school at an early age" and

"Teachers that are teaching the Deaf pupil should be taught to teach them in sign language". Three other parents echoed this statement.

Some respondents encouraged the MANAD to set up new and strengthen existing branches.

Equal education syllabus

One respondent from **Kasungu** wished for an equal education system where Deaf in special schools learn using the same syllabus or curriculum, as do the hearing children. However, Deaf could be taught in a language they understand better. Deaf leaders must stand and support us so that we find a way to help ourselves.

Human Rights and access to information

5 respondents from **Mulanje, Lilongwe, Blantyre, Ntcheu and Thyolo** stated that the deaf should be treated as equal citizens of Malawi. Schools, hospitals, and any other public spaces should be deaf friendly. Signs should be put in open places in hospitals showing where the deaf should seek assistance. Information needs to reach the deaf, as this is very important. Workplaces should be friendly to the deaf. Management of these places needs to know the rights of the deaf to access information about health, working conditions, etc.

Health

12 respondents from **Mulanje, Phalombe, Kasungu, Rumphi, Blantyre and Lilongwe** wanted information on issues such as family planning, HIV/AIDS etc to be made available in sign language. They also felt HIV/AIDS peer educators should learn sign language.

“We deaf people lack secondary schools, we only have primary schools some of them built by religious missionaries”

Education

60 respondents from Phalombe, **Mulanje, Chitipa, Karonga Mwanza Ntcheu, Mzuzu, Phalombe, Ntchisi and Thyolo** urged MANAD to lobby the government to develop and implement the Special Needs Education (SNE) policy and sign language at all levels (schools where Deaf children receive education). They suggested as a first priority to target the government. The Government should open and build many schools, including technical and vocational skills centers where Deaf can be trained in different skills such bricklaying, carpentry so that we can learn and get better jobs and improve our condition of living. “The government should pay our tuition fees through bursaries” one person said. There are few schools for the Deaf therefore, there is need to increase the intake of deaf pupils in those schools. The distances to learning institutions should be minimized: the government should build special schools closer to the communities.

COMMENTS

The following comments from respondents are reproduced as written on questionnaires. **Not all the respondents gave their comments but here are some views.**

Karonga "We need loan to start business or any help".

Chitipa

"We with hearing problems should be so pleased if the government can consider to improve our welfare"

" I just wish well wishers to the government and NGO to surrender full to the deaf in order to improve the stand of living both in families and schools"

"I would be the greatest person if any help can be considered"

"Need business to sell doughnuts (vitumbua) to sell to support the child's education"

"I asked help from you as I am deaf and by providing me some resources which may help in my life"

"Mother want son to be educated well so that he can look after himself. He is first born to two young brothers"

"The family would like to improve the living standard probably by running at least a small scale business"

Mwanza Comments

"Try to visit us and see how we are suffering in terms of daily needs of a person".

"Parents should be encouraged to send their deaf children to school. The government should take serious interest in Deaf people."

Mulanje Comments

"I wish the government and deaf people ourselves could do more enough to sensitize the public about deaf issues as deafness seems to be a hidden disability. Unless we do something the public will continue have negative attitudes towards the deaf"

"Thanks to MANAD and what we are complaining about should be solved"

"Thanking the MANAD for this workshop in the past there was nothing now we are blessed for this. If it started in the past there could be no any problems. Problems are solved through education & listening sometimes we fail to find peace because we are not educated. You all find a disabled but can work to help him/herself"

"Very thank to MANAD for coming to our rescue to solve our problems many thanks and regards"

"Needs more support for our daily needs and shelter"

"Government assist us as well as NGOs to give good amount of money and materials such as fertilizer and let the village headmen give their families coupon for buying fertilizer and leave other"

"I am an orphan I have a single parent, my father died years ago so my mother can't help me financially"

"The government sectors and NGOs must do something possible to make sure, this program must benefit deafness people"

"I need training in order to communicate with others and also for my own knowledge for my future. I need financial help to keep myself going"

"Some companies/bosses if they can allow us to be employed because other companies doesn't permit to be employ us, due to our problem (deaf)"

"Would be happy if any help concerning training, logistics"

"This needs the community to work hands in hands with the Deaf and there are well wishers who we as to help the Deaf"

"Need training in sign language and assistance in finance"

"Things that I want is to give me loan and in hospital they told me to stop giving birth and I want you to assist me with anything that you can help me because I'm not employed and I'm not educated anymore"

"Educate people with sign speaking and by using ear-phone"

"There are many people here in Malawi. Who have the problem of hearing properly? I think it's good for the government and the NGOs to find the ways of helping these people in different areas or over the country"

"My comments are: I would like people with disabled to be assisted accordingly when visiting the hospital in the case of communication as well as teachers to take care of these people"

"Increase schools and learning materials and even colleges so that we are not mixed up with normal/hearing students"

"We happy with this MANAD. We know that this organization is going to help us so continue to help us because helping does make a difference"

"Need of transport support from government for Deaf to attend school, government to support unemployed by social welfare,

Ntcheu COMMENTS

"the government should approve policies on special needs education".

"the deaf should be involved in HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns".

Thyolo Comments

"Those well wishers to assist me with my problems"

"I need to all deaf people become good live with children wife. I need to group of deaf play drama I need to Malawi government must know about development or support to MANAD."

"I need to group of deaf people in Malawi for soccer sports "football" to avoid indulging in immoral behavior e.g. drinking beer"

Lilongwe comments

"why not MANAD must help the Deaf to get funds in order for us to start small scale business."

"Deaf people are part of the Malawi society as such the central authority, need to consider the plight of the deaf people are facing in their daily lives"

"Government should introduce books of sign language so that others should learn".

"I wished government should improve our sign language so that others should learn like schools and hospitals to improve the living of the deaf person in Malawi"

"I will live to see the era when the deaf will have their own secondary school even a college in order for the deaf to get higher academic levels. That will be the era when more deaf persons will have a financial muscle to survive economically".

"To reduce the number of unemployment especially (Deaf people) the government should help us have access to education especially in vocational training centers so that we will be self-employed"

Ntchisi comments

"Due to lack of Sign language dictionary (Malawi) Deaf Sign Language instructors are finding it difficult to teach because many foreign signs inflow are disturbing local sign language. Hence the need to have the sign language dictionary urgently"

"Deaf have rights to participate in all activities involving the communities, clubs, assemblies, religions, schools, politics and any other relevant"

"We need sign language dictionary"

"Government should recognize us"

Mzuzu comments Four respondents stated the need for MANAD to reopen office in Mzuzu

"Not all of us can afford to be educated but if we can have an experience of doing something we can manage to live a better life".

"We need full government recognition and support".

Phalombe comments " government must support special Needs Education"

REFERENCE

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities 2000



MALAWI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF (MANAD)

Private Bag 14, Maselema, Blantyre 8. Phones: 08 569123/ 09 348389

- THE BIG ISSUE, MALAWI EDITION JANUARY 2009
- Brill Richal 1984, International Congress on Education of the Deaf: An analytic History. 1878-1980. Washington DC: Gallaudet College press.
- Press lease Ferlado :www.wfdeaf.org July 2009
- The Daily Times Newspaper, Thursday 20 July 2009
- The National Disability Policy on Equalization of Opportunities for Person with Disabilities June 2006

To whom it may concern

13 November 2008

Dear colleagues

MALAWI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF (MANAD) BASELINE STUDY ON THE SITUATION OF THE DEAF IN MALAWI.

The Malawi National Association of the Deaf (MANAD) is an organization of the Deaf. It was formed and run by the Deaf people. It advocates for the Deaf people's rights through the recognition of Malawi Sign Language. MANAD believes that in order to fight and reduce poverty, as one of United Nation Millennium Development Goal, there is need to empower the Deaf community first through Sign Language. Sign Language is the center of their daily living by which they participate in society. There is need to include sign language in education, health (TB, malaria, HIV/AIDS maternal mortality, reproduction poverty) and in all other social, economic and political e.g. voter education activities.

MANAD has begun a project in co-operation with the Finnish Association of the Deaf (FAD). The co-operation will among other things consist of organizational training activities targeting MANAD staff, Executive committee members and branch leaders. It will also train Deaf trainers (TDT/TOT) who will work in the districts to capacitate other Deaf people in Sign language, Deaf awareness, and leadership.

MANAD wish to solicit for your input and contribution by way of your views, ideas and what you feel are the priority areas that should be highlighted to uplift and change the living standards of Deaf people in Malawi. MANAD will also carryout a baseline study tour to some selected districts in southern, central and northern regions. We plan to meet Deaf in person and interview them. The selected districts are Mulanje, Thyolo in South and Salima and Dowa in Central, in the north Karonga and Mzuzu. We selected only a few districts due to limited funds. MANAD already toured Mulanje and Thyolo.

MANAD will be working with the Project advisor from Zambia, Mrs. Euphrasia Mbewe who is Deaf and employee of the FAD: as part of the emerging development co-operation, MANAD will work together with FAD to collect data and analyze it and compile the results into a report.

MANAD is appealing to the offices of the Districts Assembly, Social welfare and the Districts Planning and Development and the Districts Education Managers **to assist to locate the Deaf adults or children** where their parents can fill and complete the questionnaire. Please kindly make some copies for other members of Deaf community in the district for them to contribute ideas as well.

After filling the questionnaire, please kindly send to MANAD on the above address not later than 30th January 2009.

Yours sincerely

Juliana Mwase

MANAD CHAIRPERSON

c.c Third file

c.c Board members

MALAWI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF (MANAD)

Base line study/situation analysis questionnaire

Personal details

1. Name:.....

2. Date of birth:.....Place of birth:.....

3. Were you born Deaf or became Deaf later in life?.....

4. How old did you become Deaf? What was the cause of your Deafness?

.....
.....

5. Contact address:.....

Tel:.....Cell.....Fax.....

6. Sex: female male

7. Marital status: Married divorced Single widow (er)

8. Number of children

9. What problems do you face in family/society?

10. Education:

primary: Mua Embangweni Mount view Mary view

Chirimba resources Other name the school.....

Secondary:.....

College/University:.....

11. What problems did you face in schools?.....

.....
.....

12. Was sign language used? Yes No

13. If no how did/do you learn?.....

.....
.....

13. Employed Unemployed self-employed profession.....

14. If employed or unemployed state any problem faced.....

.....
15. Does the government assist you with finance or in any form? Yes No

16. State which assistance rendered

.....
17. Does any NGO help you with finance or materials Yes No

18. Name the NGO and state kind of support rendered

.....
19. Health: Do you know or have any information on HIV/AIDS, Cancer, and TB

Yes No Other

20. Do you understand the information or they need to be in Sign Language

.....
.....
21. What problem do you face when visiting any hospital?

.....
.....
22. Information: Do you have sign language/subtitle/caption on Television Malawi?

Yes No

23. If not why?

.....
.....
24. What do you suggest?

.....
.....
25. Priorities: What priorities do you need to improve living condition of Deaf in Malawi?

.....
.....
.....

26. Any other comments

.....
.....
.....

Thank you in advance

Send to the following address

The Executive Director

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