

MANAD

MALAWI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF

Published with support from Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and Finnish Association of the Deaf



**MID YEAR
ACTIVITY
REPORT**



FINNISH ASSOCIATION
OF THE DEAF



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Disability Partnership
Finland



MANAD NEWSLETTER

The MANAD Newsletter, published twice a year by the Malawi National Association of the Deaf, keeps the Deaf community informed about key events and updates.

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WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



I am deeply humbled and honored to present to you the first edition of our 2024 newsletter. This newsletter allows us to reflect on our work while offering you, our valued stakeholders, readers, and supporters, the opportunity to suggest ways we can better serve the Deaf community.

As highlighted in the articles, we approach our work like a race where winning is more important than simply finishing. Winning, to us, means anticipating challenges and driving change through the meaningful participation of our members in social activities while safeguarding their rights. I hope this inspires many to move from disbelief to action, and from action to even better action.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all MANAD project

staff and board members for their tireless efforts in helping us reach our goals. Special thanks also go to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) and the Finnish Association of the Deaf (FAD)/Disability Partnership Finland (DPF) for their generous funding, which made this newsletter possible. As well as most of the activities you can read about in this newsletter

I also wish to acknowledge Save the Children, the Government of Malawi, FEDOMA, MACOHA, World Vision Internation-

al, and the media for their unwavering support in making a positive impact on the lives of Deaf people across Malawi.

It is my sincere hope that this newsletter will enrich and strengthen our connections with you all.

— Byson Chimenya

OPDs empowered on girls and women rights

Blantyre:

MANAD participated in a Human Rights and Gender Disability meeting at Grace Bandawe Conference Center in Blantyre on March 11th and 12th, 2024, facilitated by FEDOMA. MANAD was represented by Women and Youth Coordinator, Ms. Margret David.

During the meeting, Ms. David shared an overview of Deafness, explaining that some individuals are born Deaf, while others become

Deaf later in life. She also highlighted key challenges Deaf people face, particularly in communication.

The discussions then shifted to gender and disability, focusing on the unequal participation and rights violations faced by women and girls with disabilities. The need to empower them to speak out against discrimination was emphasized.

Additionally, the meeting covered conventions on the rights of persons with disa-

bilities, with discussions centered on issues like attitudes, communication, accessibility, and policy.

MANAD participate in World Hearing Day

MANAD took part in the World Hearing Day 2024 event at Mulunguzi Secondary School in Zomba on 1st March 2024. World Hearing Day is observed every year on 3rd March which is a public holiday in



Malawi, the event had to take place on 1st March instead.

cased various activities. MANAD presented the Malawian Sign Language Dictionary and other digital books that are being developed.

This year, the theme was "Changing Mindsets: Let's Make Ear and Hearing Care a Reality for All!" At the event, both Deaf and hearing people show-

MANAD trains parents of deaf children and teachers in basic sign language in Mangochi



and, ultimately, independence in adulthood. This effort aligns with the overall objective of promoting inclusive education and supporting children with disabilities in their personal and academic growth.

This initiative by Save the Children demonstrates a strong commitment to fostering inclusivity and addressing the communication barriers faced by parents of deaf children. By equipping both parents and teachers with basic Malawian Sign Language skills, the program is creating a more supportive environment for deaf children, enhancing their ability to engage both at home and in educational settings.

Suzen Sululu's experience is a powerful testament to the immediate impact of this training. For the first time, she can communicate more effectively with her daughter, which not only strengthens

their bond but also helps the child share her school experiences and improve her development. Her request for hearing gadgets for her daughter also highlights an ongoing need for further resources to support deaf children beyond sign language training.

Zakeyu Mwase's remarks underscore the broader vision of the initiative. Through increased awareness and improved communication, the project aims to empower deaf children, helping them achieve academic success

MANAD and Save the Children partnership is growing stronger



ificant progress toward full national coverage, though, as Malonje Phiri, MANAD's Acting Programs Officer, pointed out, more work remains to be done.

Beyond sign lan-

The collaborative efforts between Save the Children and the Malawi National Association of the Deaf (MANAD) in Dedza reflect a strong commitment to improving the lives of deaf children and their families through sign language education. The distribution of 45 sign language dictionaries, as part of a larger effort to provide 400 dictionaries, is a crucial step in enabling parents and teachers

to effectively communicate with deaf children, thus fostering their inclusion in family life and the education system.

This initiative, which follows similar activities in other districts, highlights the widespread impact of projects funded by the Finnish Association of the Deaf (FAD) and Save the Children. The dedication to covering multiple districts in Malawi shows signif-

guage training, Save the Children is also supporting deaf leadership capacity training in the same districts, reinforcing the empowerment of the deaf community. The partnership between Save the Children and MANAD has proven successful in expanding MANAD's work, enhancing support for the deaf community in Malawi, and setting a precedent for future collaborations.

This ongoing initiative underscores the importance of sign language as a tool for education and personal empowerment, while also highlighting the critical role of partnerships in expanding the reach and effectiveness of programs for deaf individuals.

MANAD review internal assessment project



MANAD review facilitated internal assessment of the MANAD-Finnish Association of the Deaf (FAD) project “Supporting Malawi National Association of the Deaf (MANAD) Organizational, Advocacy and Sign Language Work Capacities Phase II” was held in Salima from 28th-30th June 2024.

MANAD trained on fraud and corruption safeguarding



MANAD participated in a training on fraud and corruption safeguarding. This was organized by Save the Children for all its partners. The training focused on how organization can safeguard resources against misuse and how to report fraudulent

activities that leads to abuse of organization resources that may lead to loss of trust from donors amongst others.

There were 9 partner organizations that work with Save the Children International and MANAD is one of them.

MANAD was represented by the board chair, Robert Mbendera, deputy youth chair, Kettie Mwamvani and Thyolo district branch chair Martin Jeremiah.

The training took place at old Annie’s Lodge in

BT police trains Deaf members in GBV

The Gender-Based Violence (GBV) training session organized by Blantyre Police Station for MANAD members is a significant step towards empowering the Deaf community in Blantyre to address and report cases of abuse.

Held at HHI Primary School on April 13, 2024, and facilitated by Sergeants Ziona Lapani and Chifundo Namanja, the training focused on educating MANAD members about the importance of reporting GBV incidents promptly to the police.

The facilitators em-



phasized that timely reporting of any form of violence—whether in the workplace, family, or psychological context—is crucial for safeguarding human rights and ensuring that victims receive appropriate support. Sergeant Lapani's encouragement for Deaf members to seek police assistance and report any violent incidents reinforces the police's role in protecting vulnerable groups, including the Deaf community.

Rodrick Kapatuka, a MANAD member who attended the training, expressed his gratitude through a sign language interpreter. He highlighted how the session helped him and others understand the importance of reporting GBV without delay. This training not only raised awareness about GBV but also built confidence within the Deaf community to take action against violence.

FAD and MANAD held 2024 annual negotiation meeting

Malawi National Association of the Deaf (MANAD) held their Annual Negotiation Meeting with the Finnish Association of the Deaf (FAD) representative Ossi Oinonen, who is FAD project manager. The meeting took place from 4 to 8 March 2024 in Blantyre at the MANAD Secretariat Office. During the meeting, previous year activities were discussed, challenges and achievements were shared. 2024 activity plan and budget were presented.



Karonga DEM receives MSL dictionary

Since the publication of the Malawian Sign Language dictionary in 2022, numerous institutions and individuals have benefited from receiving copies, marking an important step toward promoting sign language as a means of communication between the Deaf and hearing communities. In a significant gesture, a member of the MANAD secretariat, along with the board chairperson, presented a copy of the dictionary to the Karonga District Education Manager's (DEM)



MANAD train district leaders on PSEAH

MANAD, with the financial and technical support from Finnish Association of the Deaf (FAD) is conducting Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harassment (PSEAH) training to 23 members of MANAD. Members come from 12 districts, mostly southern region. Most of them are youths and women. The training started on Saturday, 22nd



and will conclude on Monday, 24th June. Facilitators are from various professional backgrounds. An officer from Machinga District Hospital covered youth behav-

ior, teen pregnancy and reproductive health; another officer from Community Development within the District Council office taught members small business skill and village banking. Third facilitator was the police officer from Victim Support Unit. He taught members about gender based violence that is prevalent in communities and families. The Persons with Disabilities Act was unpacked and explained by the MANAD Programmes Officer. The final facilitator unpacked MANADs newly developed PSEAH Policy. This enabled members understand its contents ready to teach others members in their respective branches.



MANAD visits Karonga School for the Deaf

The secretariat and the board chairperson visited Karonga School for the Deaf where they interacted with the deaf students and disseminated two copies of the Malawian Sign Language Dictionary to the school. The team also motivated the students to pursue their studies regardless to have a better future.



Rumphi MANAD elects new office bearers



The MANAD Secretariat and board chairperson with the financial support from Finnish Association of the Deaf (FAD), had a meeting with the Rumphi branch members where they disseminated the information of the Sign Language Dictionary to the deaf community of Rumphi. During the meeting the members were trained on leadership skills at the end of the meeting the members casted their vote and elected the new branch and youth committees

Community intervention in sign language is bearing fruits

Following numerous sign language trainings that were offered to parents of deaf children and teachers, MANAD, and program funder, Save the Children conducted monitoring exercises. A monitoring exercise was performed in the Ntcheu and Zomba districts. This was done to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the training previously provided by MANAD to parents, caregivers, and teachers of Deaf children, to find out whether deaf children can articulate in their language in class and to find out whether members of the community were able to include deaf child in community activities like playing with peers.



The results were encouraging. Many parents were able to accommodate and interact with their Deaf children. However, the challenge was that the four-day training that they received

to find out whether deaf children can articulate in their language in class and to find out whether members of the community were able to include deaf child in community activities like playing with peers.

The results were encouraging.

Project coordinator Zakeyu Mwase has said that Save the Children is committed to working closely with MANAD to ensure that children grow up to become responsible citizens in the community and the nation.

MANAD Advocacy committee in 2024 IDSL preps



In preparation of the 2024 advocacy work, the MANAD advocacy committee held their meeting today at Salima where the discussion of 2024 International week of Deaf people and International Day for Sign Languages was raised as a major topic.

During the meeting, the com-

mittee focused on the challenges and successes of the previous IDW and ISLD commemoration and the way forward, efforts will be made to ensure the 2024 commemoration is a success.

The meeting was held on 18 May 2024 with

the funding from Finnish Association of the Deaf (FAD)

MANAD conduct ICT literacy training

The two-day ICT literacy training organized by MANAD in Liwonde from May 24-25, 2024, provided Deaf participants with valuable skills in internet and technology use for communication. Facilitated by Lloyd Chilongo, an ICT specialist and deaf graduate from the Malawi University of Business and Applied Sciences (MUBAS), the training empowered participants from 13 districts to better engage with technology.

Kettie Mwamvani, one of the beneficiaries, highlighted how learning IT has shaped them, enabling them to contribute effectively to human development within the Deaf society. She emphasized the transformative potential of these skills for improving the wellbeing of Deaf people.

Despite the short duration of the training, essential topics were covered, laying the groundwork for more advanced ICT knowledge. The program's success with the first cohort paves the way for further training, as more Deaf individuals are expected to participate in the program next year.



A company recruited Deaf youths

For many years MANAD has been conducting deaf awareness meetings in various forums including public and private companies. One of the issues raised is the prohibition of discrimination against people based on hearing status. The Malawi constitution and Persons with Disabilities Act, 2024, guarantee equal and effective protection against discrimination on grounds of disability. However, discrimination against deaf people still prevails.

MANAD youths approached K-2 Transformers Compa-

ny, based in Lilongwe. This is a manufacturing company K-2 Transformers Company is expert in making transformers, repairing transformers, beer, and food. Is based in Lilongwe District. Lilongwe branch's chairperson Blessings Kaimilira, who also happens to be MANAD national youth chair had an

interactive session with K-2 company, where he asked the company to consider employing energetic and effective deaf people. The company was satisfied with the presentation made by the MANAD youth chair and managed to recruit five deaf youths.

Upon hearing the news that five deaf youths were recruited, Kaimilira was in a jovial mood. "I wish to commend the company for the steps it is taking towards correcting these gaps. We need to closely work together to address challenges are facing in the country," Kaimilira said.



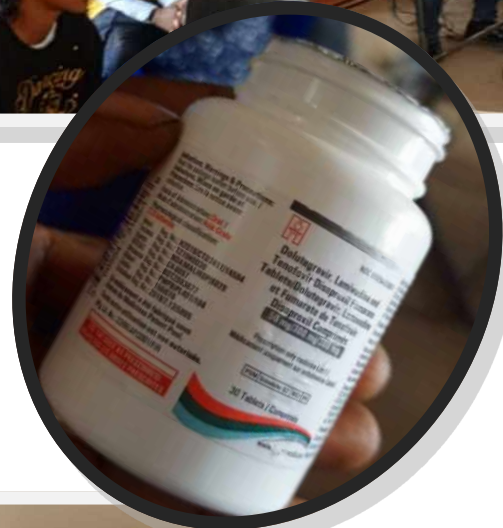
Bwaila hospital health workers trains deaf members on preventive health

Lilongwe Branch deaf members together with the hearing sign language students received training on preventive health. The training was facilitated by Bwaila Hospital health workers. Members were trained in cancer treatment, HIV/ AIDS prevention and care.

On HIV infections members learned about transmission, prevention, and management, emphasizing the importance of regular testing, adherence to medication regimens, and safe practices.

On cancer, Deaf members learned about the risk of cancer, early detection methods, and the importance of regular screening and healthy lifestyle choices to reduce risk.

The overall goal is to empower deaf people with the knowledge to better manage any health condition they may have.



GOVTs commitment to inclusive education

Secretary for Education, Associate Prof. Mangani Katundu has opened the Education Technology for Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) workshop on 19th March, 2024, at the Sigelege Hotel, in Lilongwe, facilitated by the Edtech Hub.

He highlighted Government's commitment to inclusive development (Malawi 2063), encapsulated in the goal of equitable access to quality educa-

tion and improved governance in the NESIP (2020-2030). Dr. Mangani also sampled key initiatives that are revolutionizing inclusive education, such as the sign language Dictionary by MANAD, the lip-synced digital teacher in One-Tab under the BEFIT national scale, Ekitab's SEND digital content, and technologies under development by innovators and academia in collaboration with DSTI and Inclusive Education.

He called upon Notting-

ham University, UK, and local ones, Montfort College, USAID, FCDO, Save the Children, Imagine Worldwide, JBJ foundation, OneBillion, Fount for Nations and parents to innovate more and for all.

Ministry of Gender, Association for People with Albinism in Malawi and Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC) are also in participation.

“Education Is Key”

MANAD leaders equipped in leadership skills

The MANAD Secretariat and board chairperson visited 6 districts meeting its MANAD members and leaders. The districts that were visited were Dowa, Kasungu, Mzimba, Rumphi, Karonga, and Chitipa. The purpose of the visits was to train members in human rights and organiza-

tional management and leadership. In Dowa, Mzimba, Rumphi, Karonga,

and Chitipa, they also held district branch committee elections where

new officebearers were elected. Apart from leadership training, they also disseminated and distributed MSL dictionaries.



MANAD opens new sign language training centres



Due to high demand for sign language training among hearing people, MANAD decided to open additional sign language training centres.

Many have wondered where they can acquire basic Malawi sign language in Malawi. The early training centres were Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mzuzu, Zomba, Phalombe and Salima. The

following have been opened in January, 2024. these are; Thyolo, Mangochi, Mchinji, Nkhotakota, Dedza and Rumphu.

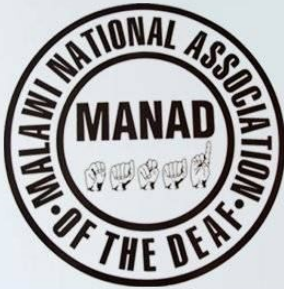
However Blantyre and Lilongwe have two centres each. This is due to the size and population of these cities.

MANAD is only an organization in Malawi with qualified sign language teachers trained by the Finnish Association of the Deaf (FAD) and

Deaf Action of Scotland.

According to Andrew Chinthunzi a sign language teacher based in Lilongwe, the also offer sign language classes to parents of the Deaf and hard of hearing children. This initiative increases family and social bonding between deaf child and members of the family.

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We offer Sign Language Lessons in Classes across the mentioned districts
We do Online Classes

We also do a special tailor made sign language training Programs for and suit Organisations interested to get their staff trained.

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BLANTYRE MZUZU LILONGWE	LEE	+265 996 38 18 02	HHI & LIMBE CDSS
	EFFIE MKINGA	+265 994 85 46 67	ST ANDREWS CCAP PRIMARY SCHOOL
	SEKA	+265 999 42 48 14	LILONGWE TECHNICAL COLLEGE & LILONGWE LEA PRIMARY SCHOOL
SALIMA	MICHAEL	+265 887 19 11 28	FAVOURED KIDS FOUNDATION. OPPOSITE SALIMA COMMUNITY HALL
ZOMBA PHALOMBE THYOLO MANGOCHI	STANFORD	+265 999 83 83 74	MPONDA PRIMARY SCHOOL
	MANEYA	+265 991 11 12 64	MIGOWI PRIMARY SCHOOL
	JEREMIA	+265 884 40 15 10	MPINJI CDSS
	M. CHRISTOPHER	+265 882 55 04 40	ST LOUIS PRIMARY SCHOOL ST AUGUSTINE 3 PRIMARY SCHOOL.
MCHINJI NKHOTAKOTA DEDZA RUMPHI	R. MBENDERA	+265 999 20 99 05	KAMUZU PRIMARY SCHOOL
	BERTHA HARA	+265 884 92 24 22	NKHOTAKOTA CCAP PRIMARY SCHOOL
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- Ability to know MSL as additional language apart from other language.
- Ability to talk and interact with Deaf communities and individuals directly without using sign language interpreters.
- To perform duties with ease having an additional knowledge, able to deal and communicate with Deaf clients e.g Deaf teachers. Social worker, Police and researchers.
- Those with MANAD sign language certificate will have an added advantage to enroll for the professional sign language interpreter training course.

Further inquiries and special SL trainings:Contact at info@manadmw.org

MANAD youth engage in farming

During the 2024 planning meeting conducted by the youths. The resolutions made were shared among youths in all districts through WhatsApp platforms. One of the ideas at the planning meeting was farming activity.

Agriculture is one of the main sources of income for the majority of households and agricultural

companies. This practice reduces poverty and enhances food security. But according to recent statistics, youth unemployment stands at 27.5% for those aged 15-24 years.

Nkhatabay youths started sweet potato farming. This is not only Nkhata Bay doing farming. Ntchisi and Chiradzulu branches do the

same. The Ntchisi branch harvested Irish potatoes while



Ntchisi Deaf Women in village bank and savings drive

Following the formation of the women's group in Ntchisi district, women's village bank. In Malawi, a village bank is a (sometimes informal) self-help support group of 20-30 members, predominantly female heads-of-household or as a joint account per household. The main purpose of setting up these banks is to develop the habit of saving among the Deaf women members and to give loans to themselves to boost their personal business and production in one or the other way.



However, sometimes, they meet and discuss issues about their sexual reproductive health, and gender-based violence among