

RESEARCH ANALYSIS

ON PEOPLE WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS
IN NKHATA BAY AND ITS SURROUNDING VILLAGES



Chimwemwe Malawi Foundation

24-01-2016, Nkhata Bay, Malawi



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No names, pictures or contact details are shared in the analysis. All people included in the research will stay anonymous.

1. Introduction

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Chimwemwe Malawi Foundation focusses on helping people in need in Malawi. In order to do so several projects have been launched since 2010.

Jan Willem van Hasselt and Lonneke van Zutphen joined the Chimwemwe Malawi Foundation in 2012 and with their accession a new target audience was appended. Namely the Deaf and Hard of hearing people of Malawi. Jan Willem van Hasselt and Lonneke van Zutphen started a new project of Chimwemwe Malawi Foundation in Mzuzu called ; 'the Greenshop' which is a Vocational Training Centre for the Deaf.

After two years working in Mzuzu Jan Willem van Hasselt and Lonneke van Zutphen decided to shift their focus to the Deaf people of Nkhata Bay and surroundings. To substantiate their work for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Nkhata Bay and surrounding villages a research on the target group needs to be done.

*** Research Team:**

Alex Ndipo: He is temporarily working for Chimwemwe Malawi Foundation in order to help us lay out contacts with the (Group) Village Headmen. Being a Malawian he is of invaluable importance in creating good understanding between us and the Malawian people in the villages. His skills in English, Tonga and Sign Language make him to be an important interpreter.

Fanny Singini: Fanny is a deaf girl. She is a teacher at the Bandawe School for the Hearing Impaired. She is the one presenting our vision and plans at the meetings. She speeches in Signs and English. She helps to lay out contacts with Hearing Impaired people in the village and is functioning as a role model for Hearing Impaired people in the villages.

Levi Bingu: Levi is a deaf boy. He is a student at the Greenshop in Mzuzu. He helps to lay out contacts with Hearing Impaired people in the village and is functioning as a role model for Hearing Impaired people in the villages.

Nthandose Chadewa: Nthandose is a deaf girl. She is a student at the Greenshop in Mzuzu. She helps to lay out contacts with Hearing Impaired people in the village and is functioning as a role model for Hearing Impaired people in the villages.

Lonneke van Zutphen and Jan Willem van Hasselt:
Are the promoters of this research and the driving forces behind Chimwemwe Malawi Foundation.

2. Purpose of Research

The Operational Research on people with Hearing Impairments in Nkhata Bay and surrounding villages has been done in order to determine the target group as a whole and as individuals.

We wanted to research what the living conditions of the Hearing Impaired are, their level of education and their working experience. In addition we questioned them about their wishes for the future and we gave them the opportunity to share their thoughts and questions with us.

This information needed to be gathered for us to set out a strategy to offer help to the target group.

According to the group village headmen no research in this field has been done before and no data are available on this target group. We feel it was most important to meet face to face with the target group and give them the opportunity to share their questions, concerns and challenges with us.

3. Topographical coverage

The area we are focussing on is Nkhata Bay town and its direct surrounding villages. The boundaries of the area are:

- to the South: the Vizara Estate.
We cover the villages up to the river Maji ngatuwa
- to the West: the M5, although Singo village also continues on the West side of the M5. So we make an exception for the Hearing Impaired living on the West side of the M5 up to mkondezi. Mkondezi is also included.
- to the North: we go as far as Kamwadi
- to the East: Lake Malawi

We have decided to focus on this area because we live in Nkhata Bay, Lichizi and we care for the people around us. Given the fact that most of the people in our target group do not have large amounts of money to spend on transport, we feel the distance from their homes to a possibly future Community Centre for the Hearing Impaired should be able to cover on foot or by bike.

Appendix 1. *List of Senior Group Village Headmen, Group Village Headmen, Village Headmen and their villages.*

4. Methods to be used

The Operational Research on people with Hearing Impairments in Nkhata Bay and surrounding villages is done through a questionnaire which was administered by the research team. The whole process is being partitioned in 9 steps.

- Step 1:** Contacting the (Group) Village Headmen and informing them about our research. We asked their permission to visit their village and talk to their villagers and our target group. Together we set a date, time and place for the meeting.
- Step 2:** Asking the (Group) Village Headmen to find all the Hearing Impaired people in their village and urge them to come to the meeting. To assist the (Group) Village Headmen in their task we provide them with posters for them to spread in their village.
- Step 3:** Contacting the (Group) Village Headmen one more time if they have found people in our target group for us to meet and if they have found time to spread the posters in their villages.
- Step 4:** Is the actual Meeting where we presented ourselves and our ideas in a speech. After explaining our purpose of visit, we gave all attendants the opportunity to share their thoughts and questions about our work.
- Step 5:** Administering of the Questionnaire. We met the Hearing Impaired people face to face. We talked with them by using signs and an interpreter. We payed special attention on making them feel welcome and taken serious. We asked permission to take their picture to add to the research forms at a later stage.
- Step 6:** Processing the data obtained in the meetings with the Hearing Impaired people in the villages.
- Step 7:** Analysing the data
- Step 8:** Drawing conclusions from the analyses and form a strategy to assist in the needs concluded.
- Step 9:** Giving feedback about the analysis and the strategy concluded from the analysis to the (Group) Village Headmen and the people in the target group.

5. Analysis

5.1 Gender

We interviewed 137 persons.

75 are male, that is 55 %

62 are female, that is 45 %

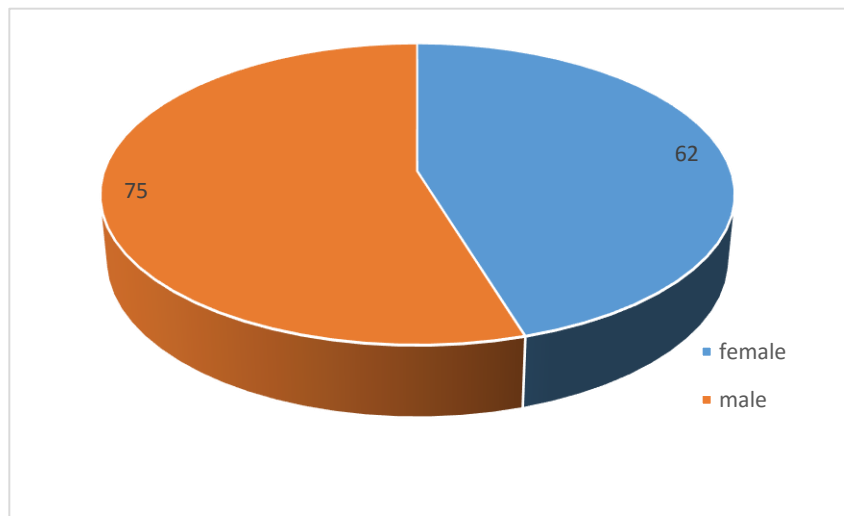


Table 5

5.2 Age groups

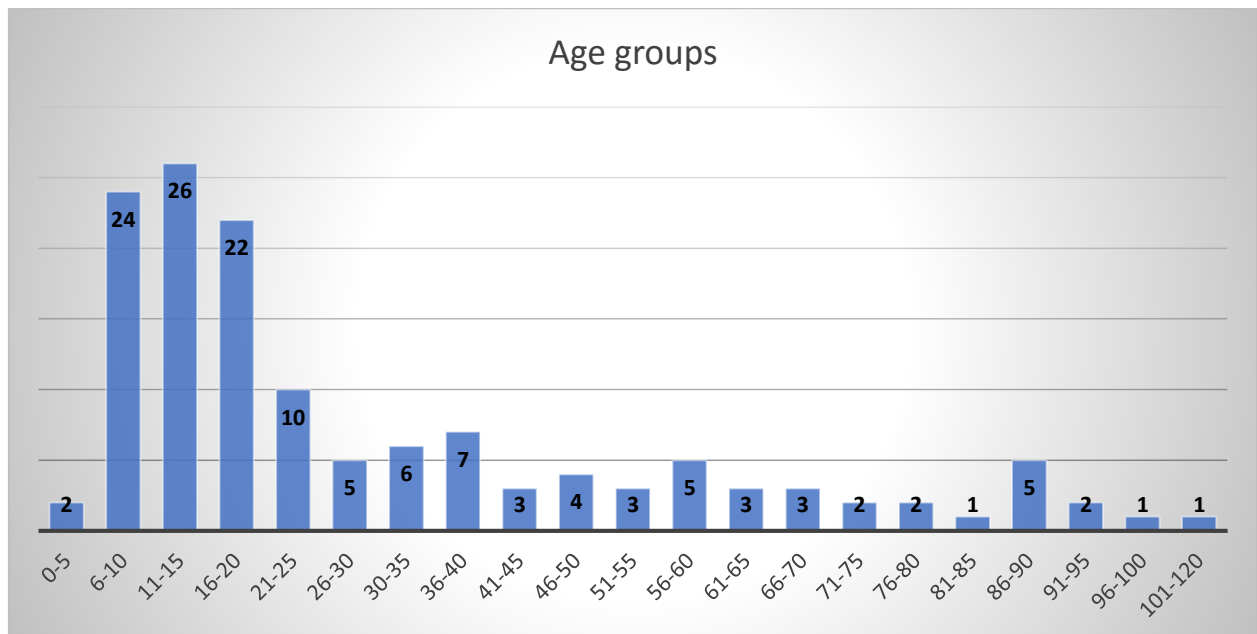
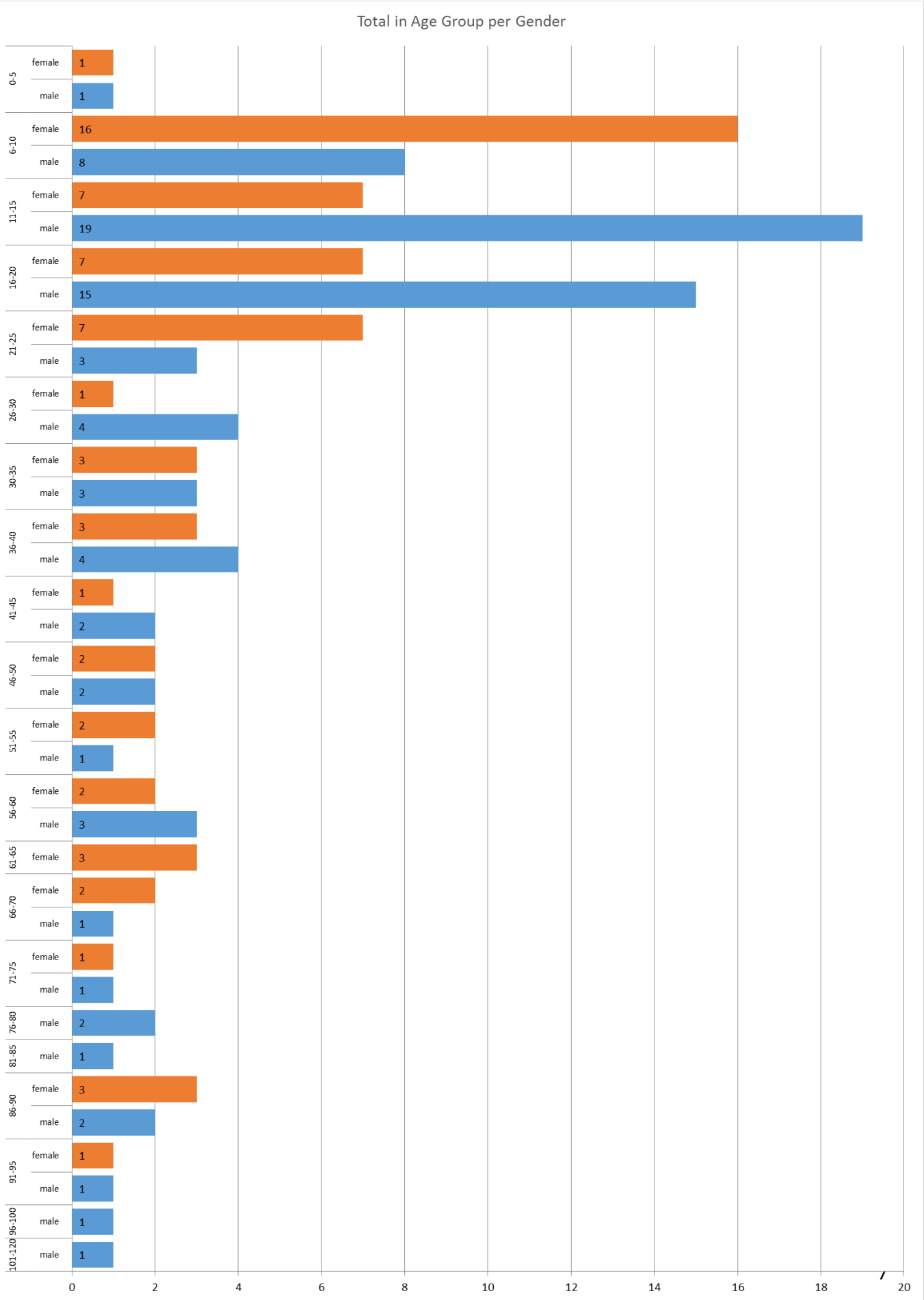


Table 5.2

5.2.1 Age groups and gender



5.3 Age groups and Hearing Impairment

of 137 people,

29 are probably Deaf, that is 21 %

102 are probably Hard of Hearing, that is 75 %

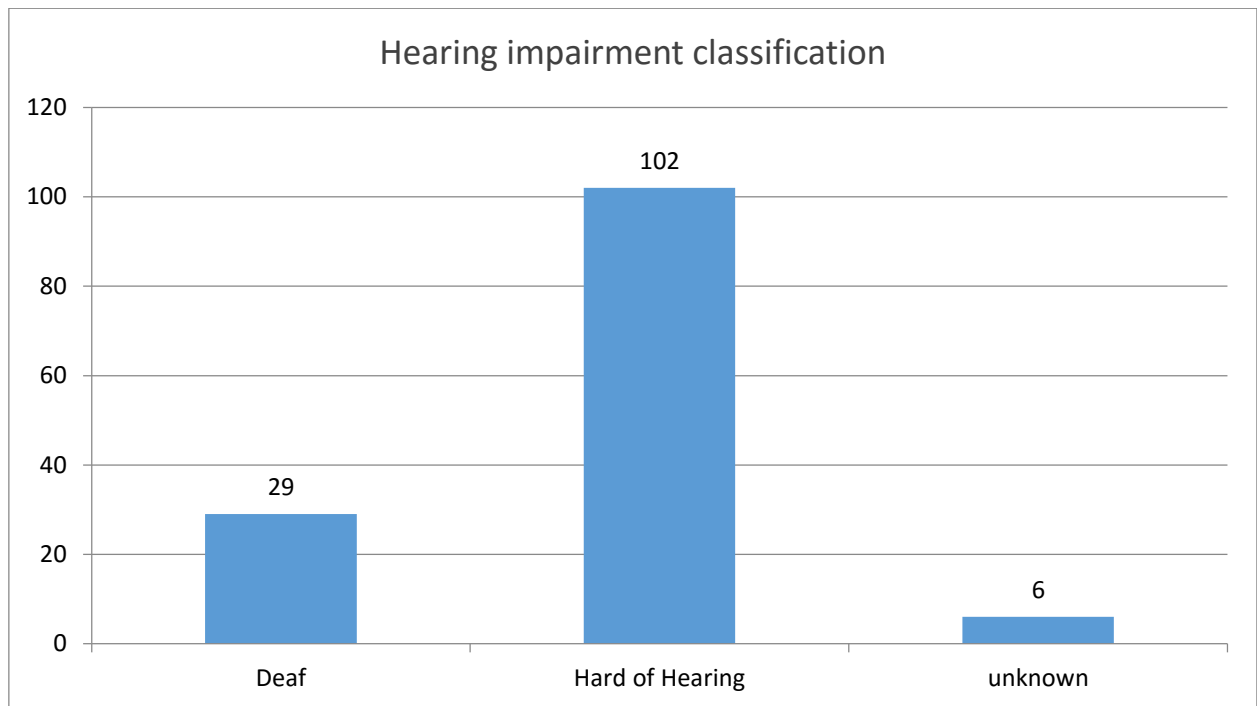
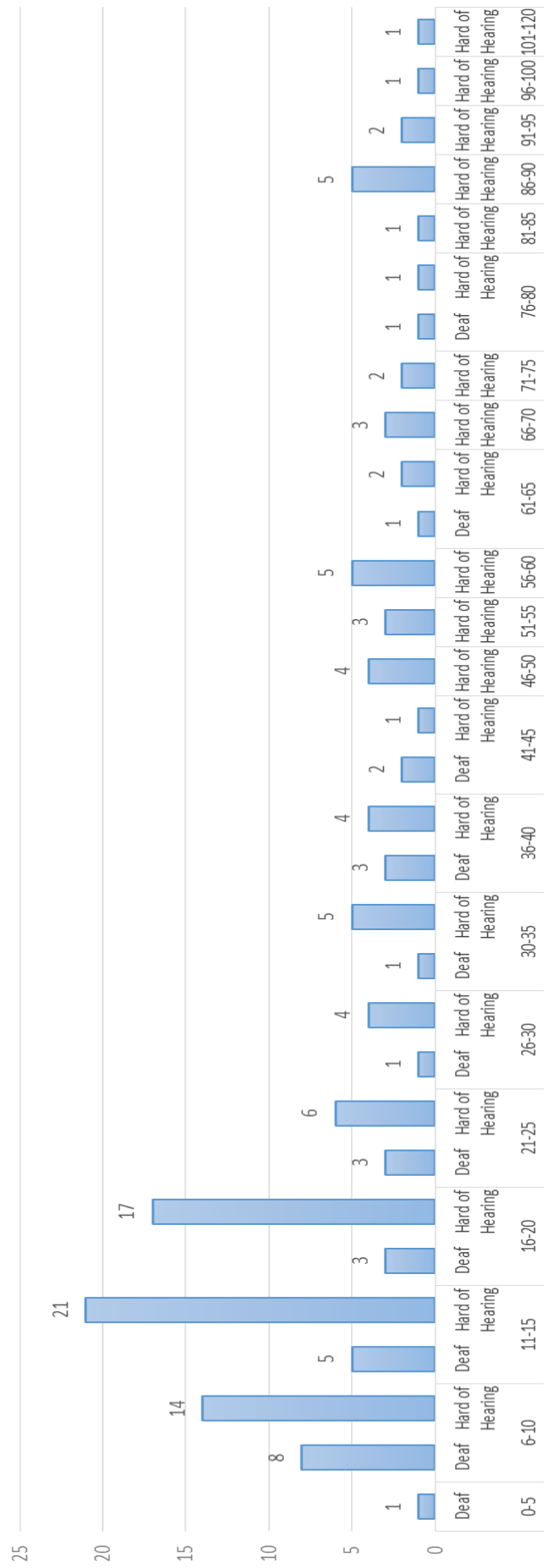


Table 5.3

Hearing problems per age group



5.3.1 Causes of Hearing Impairment

Cause	Number of cases
Deaf	14
Cerebral Malaria	4
loud machines	1
Malaria	5
Malaria yellow fever	1
Otitis Medea	3
Hard of Hearing	75
Cerebral Malaria	6
cockroaches	1
conceiving	1
crying at night	1
ear infection	2
itching	2
itching and pain	1
just happened	1
Knocking inside	1
long term illness	1
loud machines	1
Malaria	14
Meningitis	1
old age	3
Otitis Medea	23
pregnancy	1
Severe headache	2
Sicknes and pain	1
sickness	4
soil in ears	1
sound in ear	4
stomach pains	1
vessels	1
water in ears	1
Grand total	89

Table 5.3.1a

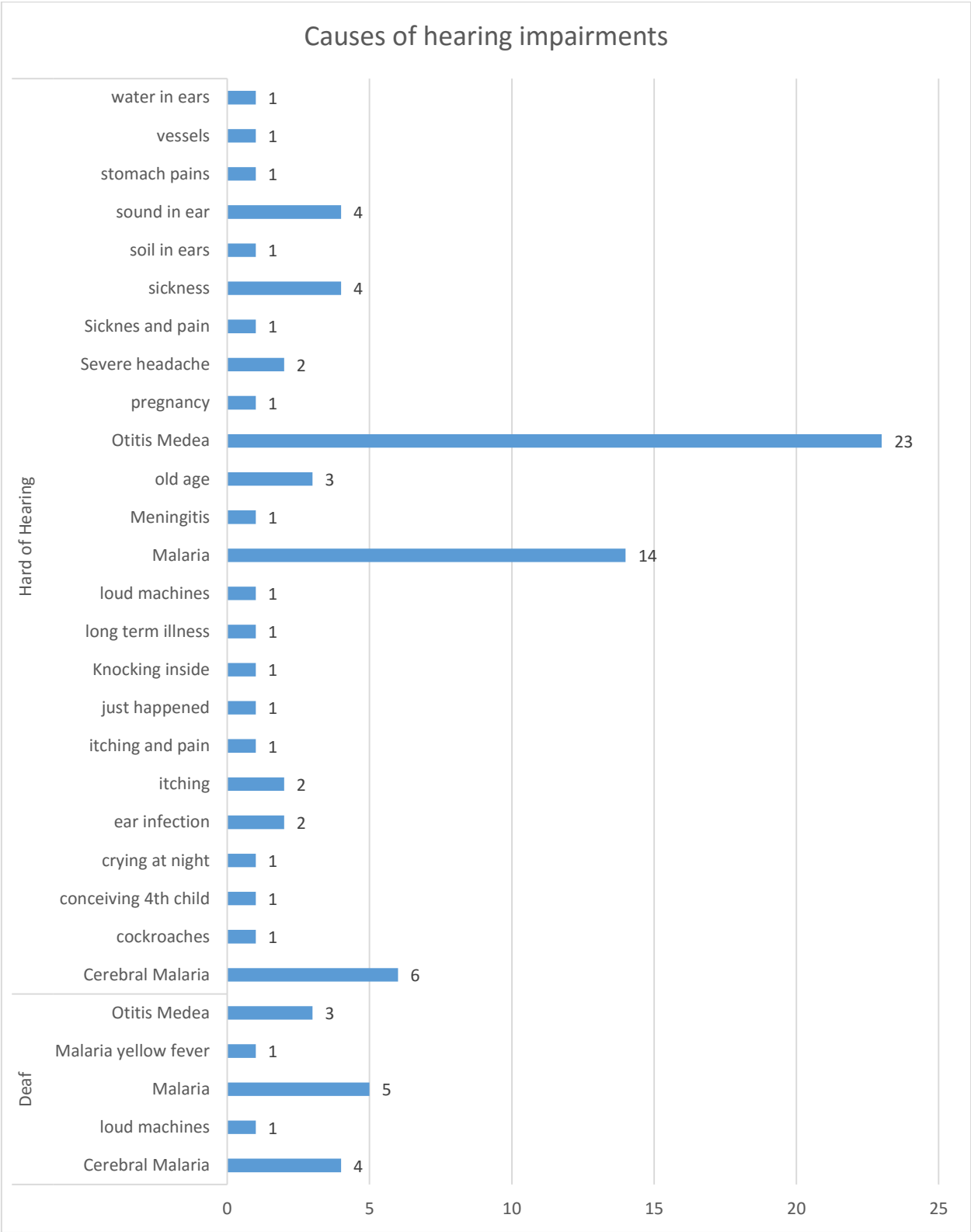


Table 5.3.1b

5.3.2 How many Hearing Impairments have been noticed in in the last 20 years?

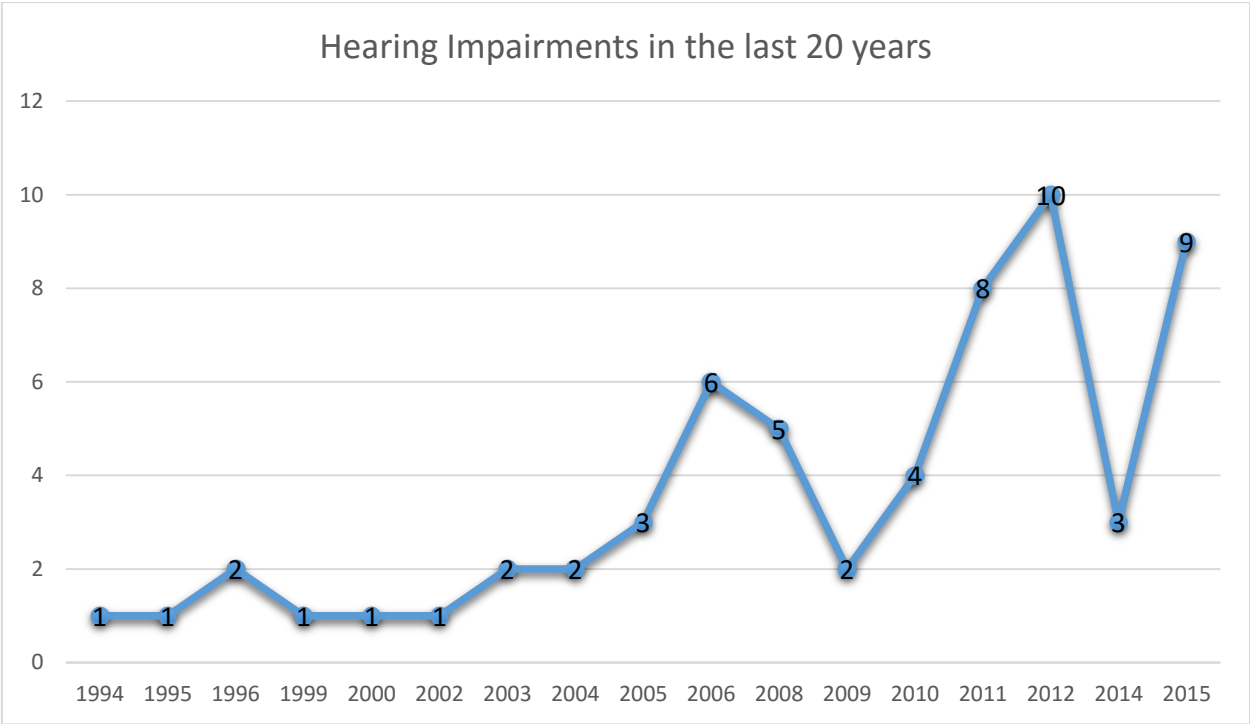
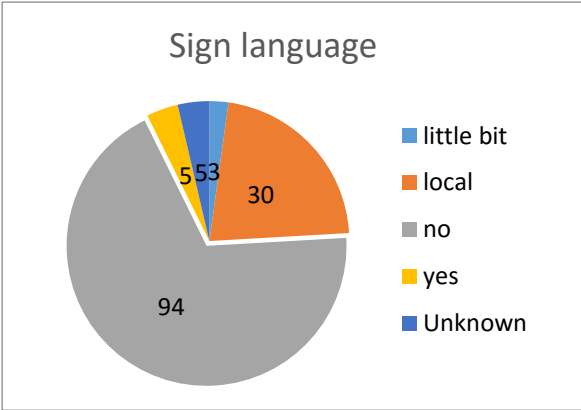


Table 5.3.2

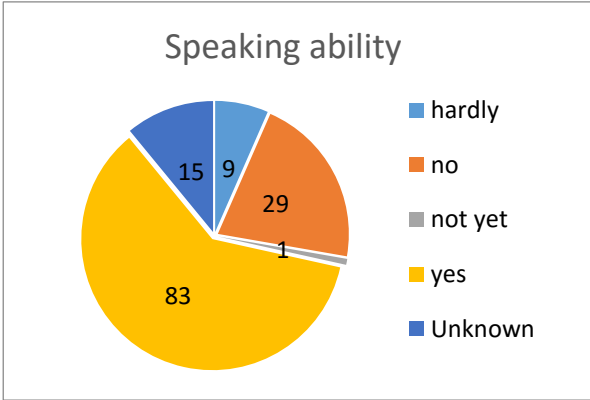
5.4 Communication

5.4.1 Use of Sign Language



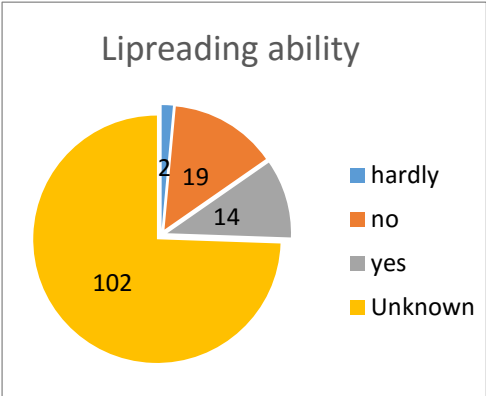
Sign language	Count of people	Percentage
little bit	3	2%
local	30	22%
no	94	69%
yes	5	4%
Unknown	5	4%
Grand Total	137	100%

5.4.2 Speaking Ability



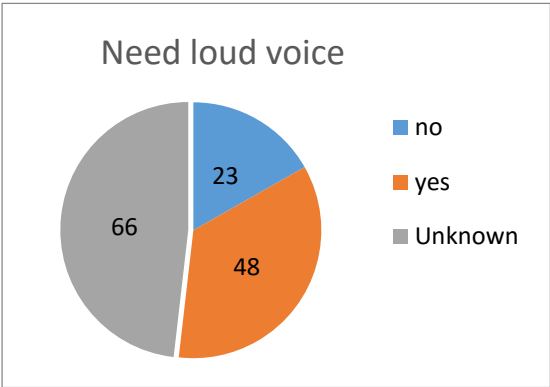
Speaking ability	Count of people	Percentage
hardly	9	7%
no	29	21%
not yet	1	1%
yes	83	61%
Unknown	15	11%
Grand Total	137	100%

5.4.3 Lip Reading Ability



Lip reading ability	Count of people	Percentage
hardly	2	1%
no	19	14%
yes	14	10%
Unknown	102	74%
Grand Total	137	100%

5.4.4 Can the subject hear better if a loud voice is being used?



Need loud voice	Count of people	Percentage
no	23	17%
yes	48	35%
Unknown	66	48%
Grand Total	137	100%

5.5 Hearing Impairments and Education

5.5.1 Level of Education

Level of Education	Number of school attendants	Percentage
Deaf	29	100%
No education	8	28%
not yet	2	7%
Nursery	1	3%
Standard 1	2	7%
Standard 2	3	10%
Standard 3	3	10%
Standard 4	2	7%
Standard 5	2	7%
Standard 6	1	3%
Standard 7	1	3%
Standard 8	1	3%
VTC	1	3%
Form 1	1	3%
Unknown	1	3%
Hard of Hearing	102	100%
No education	6	6%
no	1	1%
not yet	1	1%
Nursery	1	1%
Standard 1	12	12%
Standard 2	7	7%
Standard 3	10	10%
Standard 4	10	10%
Standard 5	5	5%
Standard 6	5	5%
Standard 7	5	5%
Standard 8	11	11%
Form 1	3	3%
Form 2	5	5%
Form 4	3	3%
Unknown	13	13%
yes, but unknown which	4	4%
Unknown Hearing Problem	6	100%
No education	2	33%
not yet	3	50%
Standard 2	1	17%
Total	137	100%

Table 5.5.1

5.5.2 Continuity of Education

School attendance	number of students
not yet	6
no	60
yes	47
finished	6
unknown	18
Grand total	137

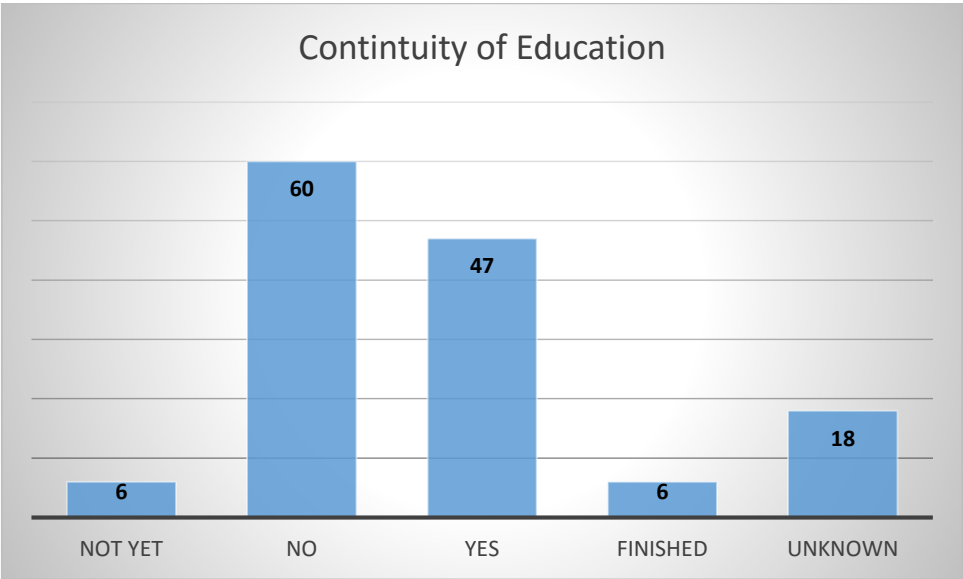


Table 5.5.2

5.6 Work and Work experience

Having a job	
no	96
retired	5
yes	15
Total	116

5.7 Wishes for the future in terms of work

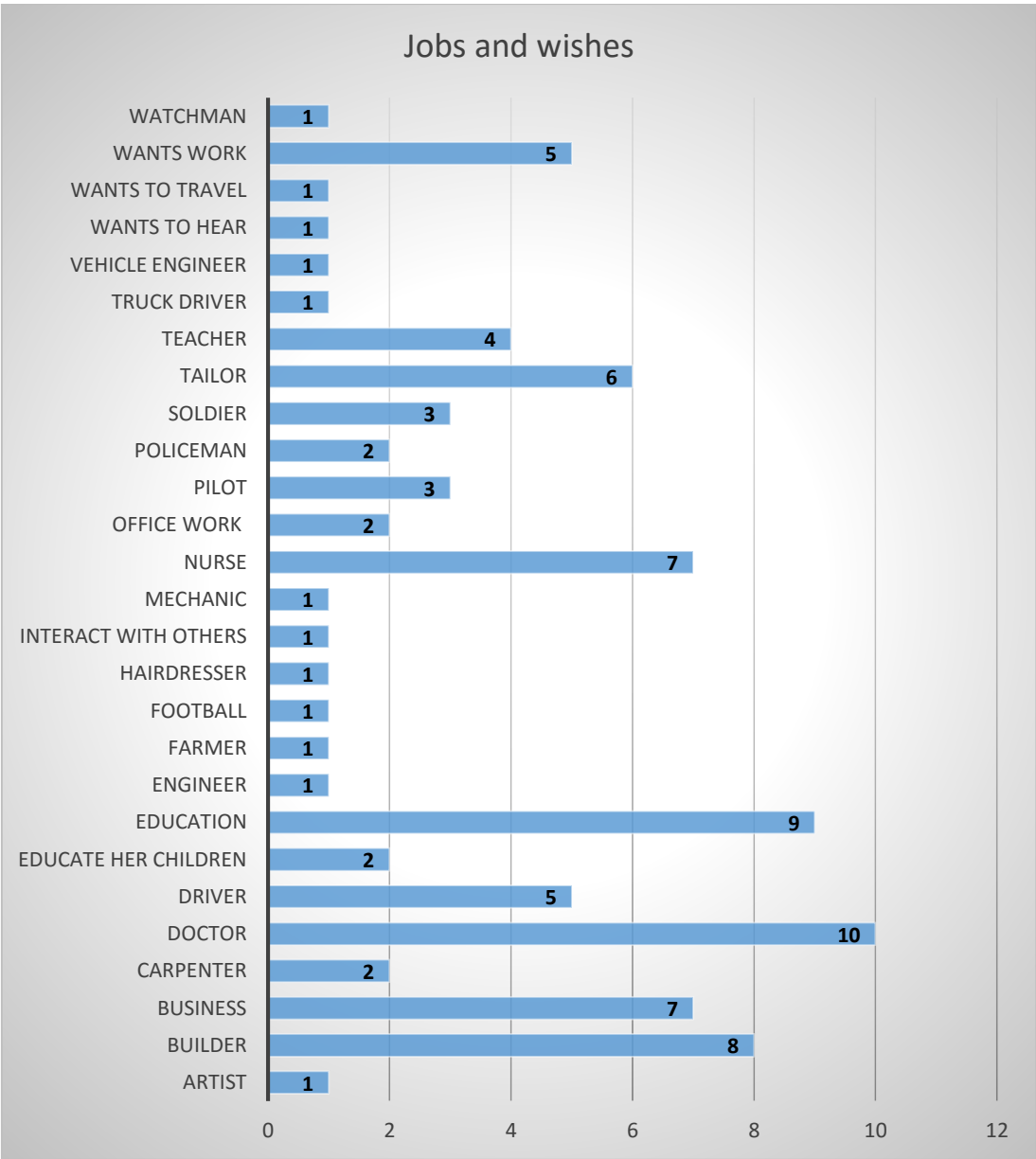


Table 5.7

6. Conclusion

In general we can say we met a lot of people with all sorts of Hearing Impairments. It was not hard to find them and if we would have searched longer we certainly would have met more people with Hearing Impairments.

Of these people not many knew how their Hearing Impairment could be classified. Only the students at Schools for the Deaf have had a hearing test. Almost all people attended the Nkhata Bay Hospital, but few were informed thoroughly about their condition and what that means for their future health.

Most of the people we interviewed, had normal relationships and if old enough, were married with children. Some of the young children have been bullied at school because of their Hearing Impairment but most of them told us they liked going to school and had friends at school.

Age groups and gender

In order to draw conclusions from the numbers of males, females, children and adults, we first need more information on demographics of the population of Malawi.

Causes of Hearing Impairment

According to table 5.3.1 we conclude the following numbers

33 are Hearing Impaired since birth, that is 24 %

19 are Hearing Impairment caused by Malaria, that is 14 %

10 are Hearing Impairment caused by Cerebral Malaria, that is 8 %

26 are Hearing Impairment caused by Otitis Medea Infection, that is 19 %

It seems in the years 2011, 2012 and 2015 more Hearing Impairments have started or were discovered. Unfortunately the line in table 5.3.2. is not going down, but up.

Sign Language

According to the tables 5.4.1 - 5.4.4 we conclude that just over a quarter of all people we interviewed know some sign language. The majority of this group uses local signs, who people make up as they go along and when they need them. Only 5 persons know sign language that has been thought at school.

Speech

The majority (61%) of all people interviewed can speak without any problems. 28 % could not speak. It is uncertain if all persons with speech problems are also Hearing Impaired. It could be other problems are causing their speech difficulties.

Education

School attendance is not very good for people with Hearing Impairments .

Of 137 people interviewed, 53 are in school or have finished their education, this is 39%

60 are not in school while they should be, this is 44%.

28% of the Deaf and 7% of the Hearing Impaired are not in school.

It is difficult to say why these people are not in school. Some tell us they couldn't understand the teacher. Their classes are too noisy and they are easily distracted. Some tell us the teacher did not know what to do with them. To find out more about the reasons why pupils and students drop out of school further research needs to be done.

7. Sources of Information and References

Information about the people with Hearing Impairments in this Analysis is obtained through interviews with these people and their close relatives. Teachers and (group) Village Headmen provided information only with the subject present and aware of sharing this information.

Interpreting was done by Alex Ndipo and Teachers and (Group) Village Headmen. We are aware that small discrepancies might have occurred during these translations. By asking the same question again in different phrasing we hope to have reduced the discrepancies in translations.

No names, pictures or contact details are shared in the final analysis. All people included in the research will stay anonymous.