



# UGANDA NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF

## DEAFNESS.

### CAUSES OF DEAFNESS

- 5% of deafness is due to genetic reasons.
- 30% results from damages and diseases during pregnancy and birth.
- 40% of deafness result from infections and diseases e.g. meningitis, malaria etc.
- 10% of deafness is a result of accident and physical mistreatment.
- 15% of deafness has no known cause.

To date there exist no successful medical or technological treatment for profound deafness. A few people with partially impaired hearing can gain some degree of hearing with the help of hearing aids or rely on Sign Language or lip reading techniques.

### HEARING IMPAIREMENT

The term hearing impairment is a general term that refers to people who have problems with hearing. They can be divided into two different groups i.e hard of hearing and deaf. Deaf people can be divided into sub groups according to the time of hearing loss. There are groups which solely rely on Sign Language.

### CLASSIFICATION OF DEAF PEOPLE

#### a. (i) Congenitally deaf

Refers to a person who was born deaf and never heard of any spoken Language. This group of Deaf people is fully dependant on sign language and cannot learn the spoken language of the surrounding.

#### (ii) Prelingually deaf

Refers to a person who was born hearing but lost it before mastering the language of the family at approximately the age of 4 and below. This group of people cannot ably speak the spoken language of the hearing community.

#### (iii) Post linguually deaf

A person who was born hearing and lost it only after learning the spoken language of the environment at approximately 10 years onwards. If given proper support can be able to speak the language of the hearing community.

It is important to make a distinction between these three groups in order to understand why some deaf people can speak while some find it difficult to learn how to speak as he/she has never heard any spoken language and has no idea of how speech sounds.



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This is more or less true for prelingually Deaf child without any vague memories of sound. A postlingually deaf child or adult may be able to speak although the voice of a deaf person may sound different. But it is important to understand that even if it is difficult for a deaf child to learn how to speak, it is not at all impossible to teach the child how to read and write through sign language.

## b. Hard of Hearing

Refers to people who can hear the spoken language to some extent but it may take some time to receive the message such people can benefit from use of hearing aids.

## **HISTORY OF DEAF EDUCATION IN UGANDA**

The idea of education for the Deaf in Uganda was conceived in 1959 by Uganda Society for the Deaf with efforts of Mrs. Julian Lule with the blessing of administrators from Namirembe Diocese. Mrs. Julian was a teacher at Mengo Primary School but her two children were deaf hence they could not attend the normal schools.

Uganda Society for the Deaf decided to establish Uganda School for the Deaf in 1959 as the first school for the Deaf in Uganda. It went on to establish other schools as the number of deaf children increased. The establishment of more schools and units was as a result of UNAD's advocacy and awareness work which emphasized the realization of potentials of Deaf people through education.