

DON'T LET HEARING LOSS LIMIT YOU

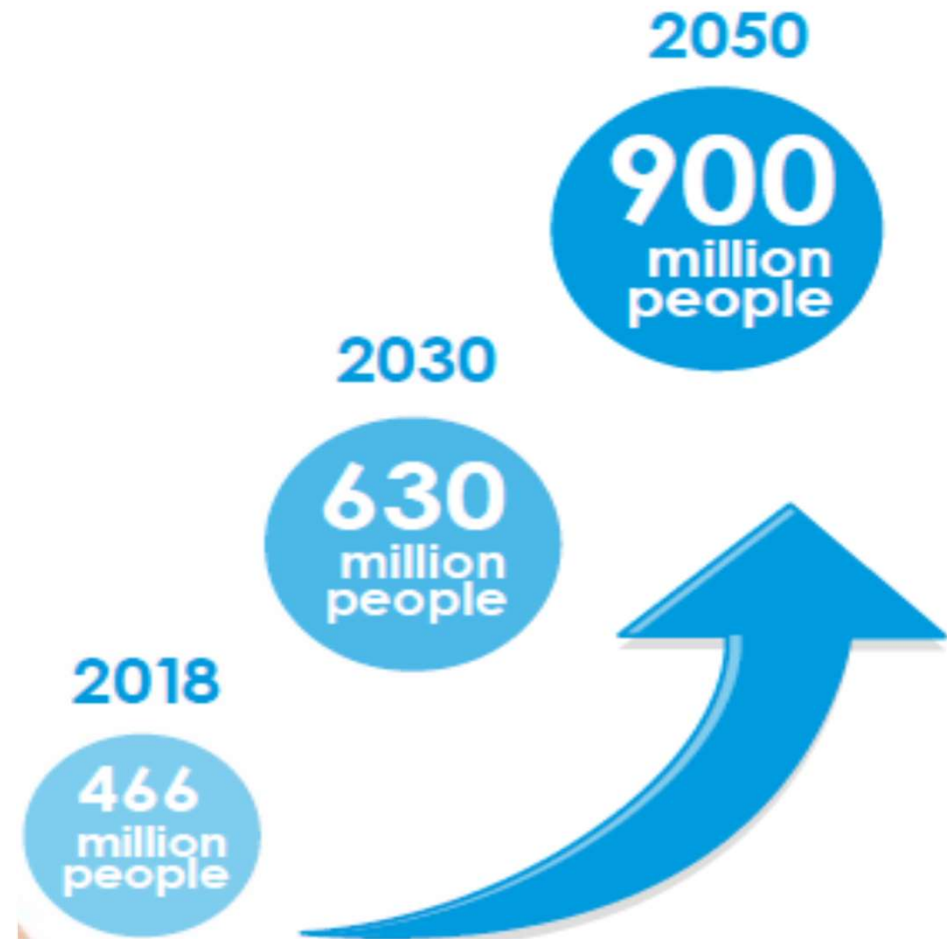


Hearing for life

World Hearing Day 2020

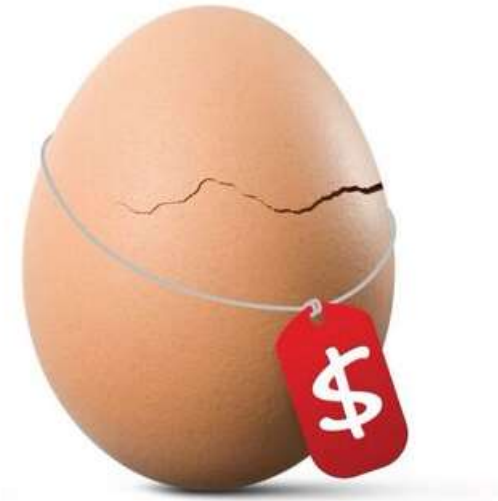
Hearing loss is on the rise

- Over 460 million people globally have disabling hearing loss.
- WHO estimates that unless action is taken to prevent and address hearing loss, the numbers could rise to over 900 million by 2050.



Unaddressed hearing loss has an impact

- Increased costs to health systems
- Failure to achieve the goal of education to all
- Lost productivity due to unemployment
- Increased need for ear and hearing care services and resources



Unaddressed hearing loss poses an annual global cost of \$750 billion

Unaddressed hearing loss impacts individuals and their families

Communication

- Deaf children (*who have no hearing*) would be unable to develop spoken language without interventions.
- Children with hearing loss (*who can hear, but not as well as others*) can have delayed language development.

Education

- Children with unaddressed hearing loss have increased rates of grade failure and greater need for education assistance.



Unaddressed hearing loss: the impact

Employment

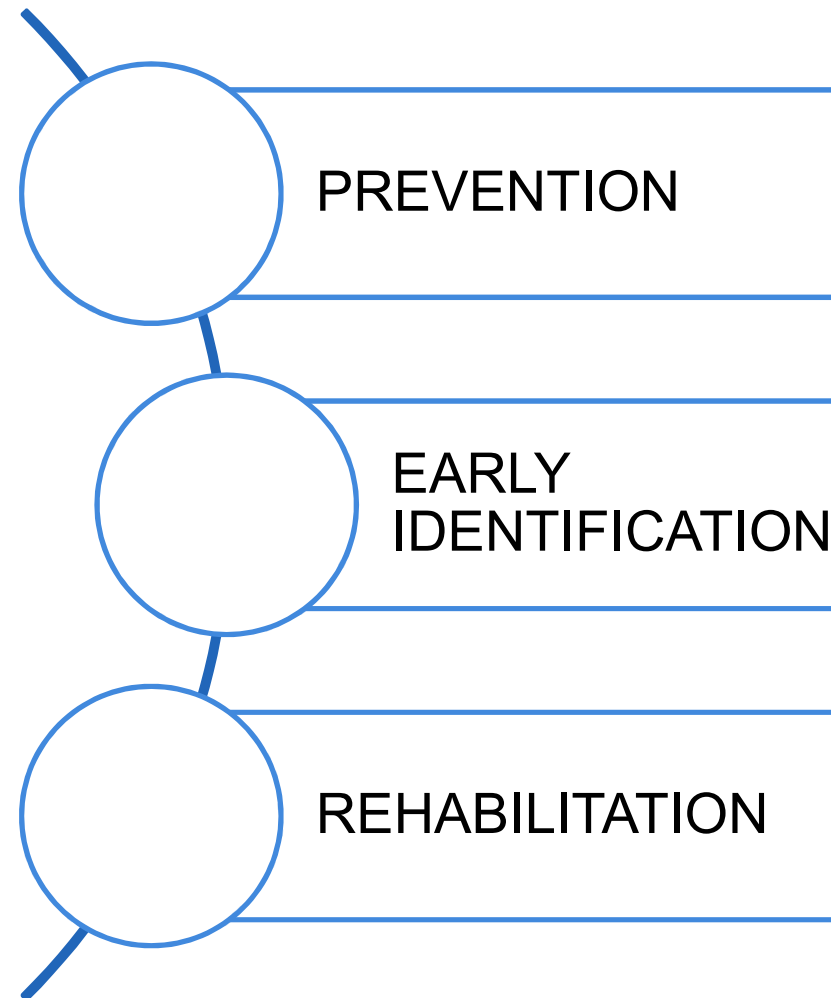
- Adults with unaddressed hearing loss also have a much higher unemployment rate.
- Among those who are employed, they often earn lower wages compared with the general workforce and retire early.



Social and emotional impact

- Exclusion from communication can have a significant impact on everyday life, causing feelings of loneliness, isolation, and frustration.
- It is associated with early cognitive decline in older persons with hearing loss.

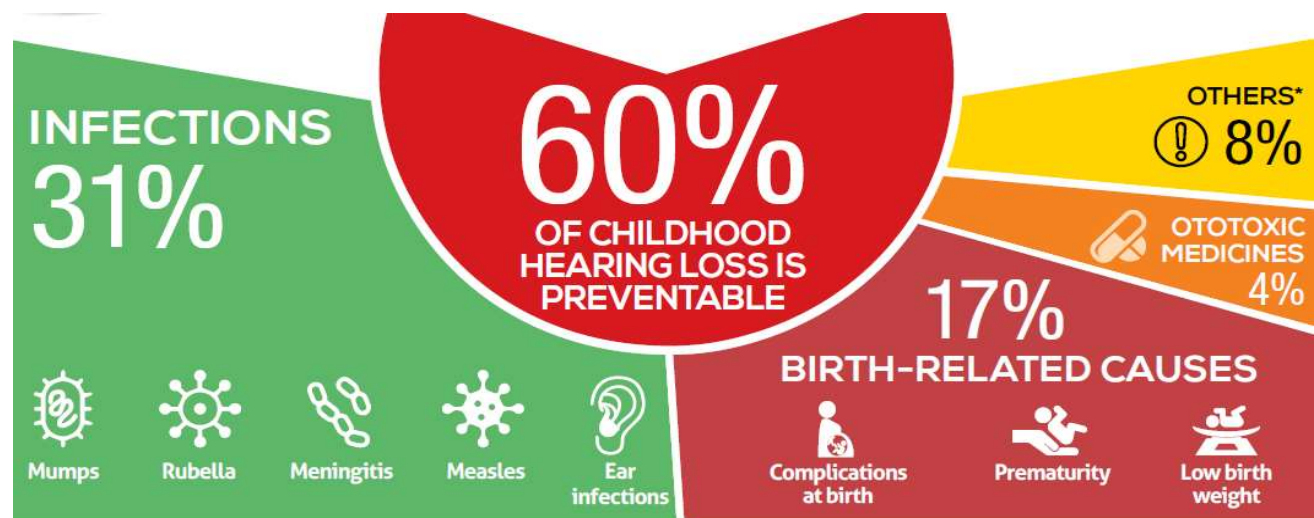
Hearing loss can be addressed



Hearing loss can be prevented

60% of childhood hearing loss can be prevented by:

- Immunization
- Good maternal and child care
- Treatment of ear infections (otitis media)
- Rational use of ototoxic medicines



Hearing loss can be prevented

- Limiting exposure to loud sounds at workplace
- Adopting safe listening practices

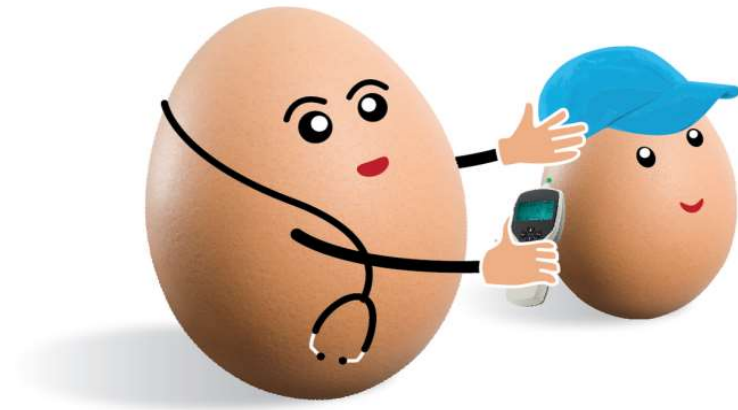


1.1 billion

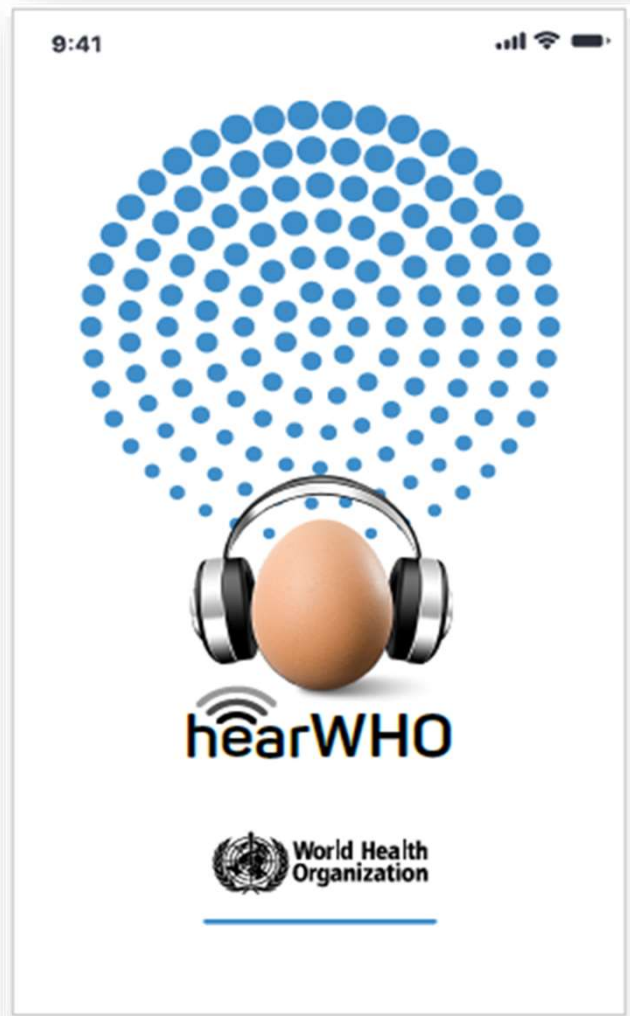
young people globally are at risk of hearing loss due to unsafe listening practices.

Early identification is possible at all ages and in all settings

- Technology and tools enable us to check hearing as early as the first day of life
- Innovations make it possible to test hearing in community settings e.g.
 - mobile-based software applications
 - automated hearing testing
 - noise-cancellation headphones
 - tele-health options



hearWHO



- In order to facilitate hearing screening, WHO has developed a software application.
- This is available for free download and use through android and iOS based devices.
- It is a simple test based on validated digits-in-noise technology.



All can benefit from hearing care solutions

Use of hearing technology and services

- Hearing aids
- Cochlear implants
- Implantable hearing aids

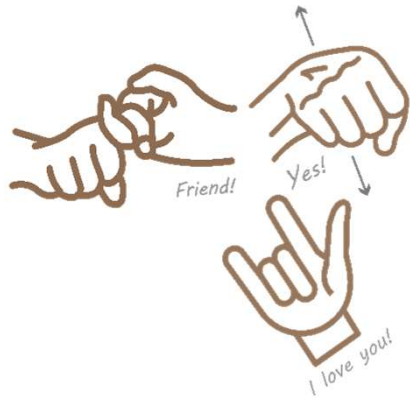


Rehabilitative therapy e.g. auditory verbal therapy



All can benefit from hearing care solutions

Sign language



Speech or lip reading



Assistive technology and services

Hearing assistive technology

- FM systems -
- Loop systems -
- Alerting devices -
- Captioning



Despite this.....

Majority of those with hearing loss do not have access to the required services



GAP IN HEARING AIDS NEED AND USE, 2020

Closing this gap could reduce the associated disability* by **59%**.

**estimated as Years lived with disability (YLDs)*

Causes for the gap



High cost of hearing aids
and cochlear implants,
batteries and care



Low awareness on the
benefits of hearing
rehabilitation



Lack of human
resources and services



Stigma of hearing loss and
hearing devices

How can we act?

Integrate Hearing Care into National Health Systems



Provide hearing aids and cochlear implants as part of government-led health services. Include these in the list of assistive products made available within the country.

Develop and implement policies that ensure easy access to high-quality, affordable and safe technologies and services.



Adopt affordable, high-quality products which comply with WHO's recommendations.

*Refer to the WHO preferred profile for hearing-aid technology suitable for low- and middle-income countries for hearing aids.
<https://bit.ly/2tlQIHx>*



How can we act?

Integrate Hearing Care into National Health Systems

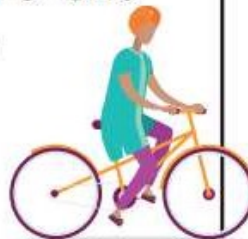


Reduce costs by measures like waving import duties or taxes, pooled procurement, use of solar-powered batteries and locally-sourced materials.

Encourage research and innovation in design and delivery of hearing aids and cochlear implants within the country.



Test and implement effective service delivery models that do not rely exclusively on highly trained professionals e.g. tele-audiology; use of trainable hearing aids; direct-to-customer services; use of e- and m-health platforms; training of locally available manpower. Such service delivery models should be adapted to the needs and health system of the country.



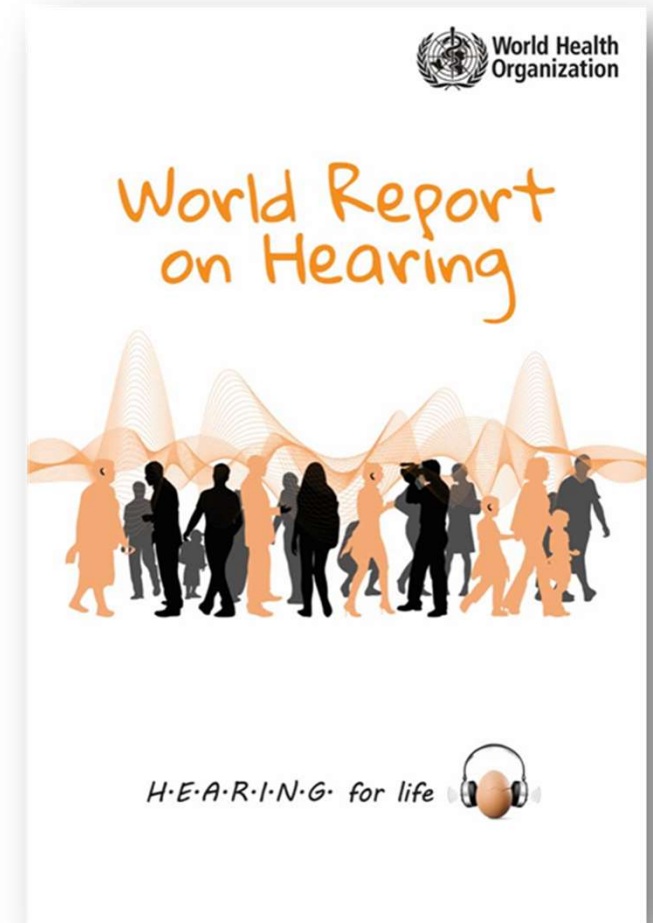
Launch a communication campaign to de-stigmatize hearing loss through accurate and accessible information.

Empower persons with hearing loss and strengthen their associations and activities.



Provides comprehensive action points of how the challenges for hearing care can be met.

To be launched in **May 2020**



Watch this space for more.....

Conclusion

On **World Hearing Day 2020**, WHO highlights that:



- Unaddressed hearing loss poses a serious concern for governments, for individuals and families.
- Hearing loss can be prevented and addressed.
- There is a huge gap in the need for and access to hearing care globally.
- To address the gap, hearing care should be integrated into national health systems
- Concrete steps should be taken to improve access to high-quality, affordable hearing aids and implants, along with the required services.