



Consolata Adhiambe with her teacher Joseph Guchuhi Korio in front of the blackboard at Kambui School for the Deaf in Kenya.

WWHearing will achieve its goals by:

1. Gathering information on the current and needed provision of hearing aids
2. Supporting the development of appropriate and affordable (low-cost) high quality hearing aids and audiological instruments
3. Supporting model programmes for the fitting of hearing aids and appropriate services on a significant scale and as relevant to the needs
4. Mobilizing public and private partnerships to meet the needs
5. Inviting financial, material, practical and organizational support.

PROJECTS

WWHearing sponsors pilot projects in various developing countries to demonstrate a variety of service delivery models which reflect its principles. The projects also measure outcomes and client satisfaction, the impact on the quality of life as well as cost effectiveness. Their outcomes will be used to set up full scale projects through local partnerships in developing countries.

The Future

WWHearing aims to coordinate and organize a coalition of partner organizations and others to develop and support programmes in aid of deserving communities. These programmes may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- WWHearing - Hearing aids (affordable, high quality hearing aids)
- WWHearing - Audiology (service delivery, affordable instruments & personnel)
- WWHearing - Health Care (including prevention of hearing impairment)
- WWHearing - Training (personnel, resources)
- WWHearing - Communication (speech & hearing, self support groups)



Luciano dos Santos, Brazil, 3 years old, wears hearing aids that improve the quality of his life.
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WWHearing for achieving prevention and better hearing



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WWHearing

World-Wide Hearing Care For Developing Countries



WWHearing – A new initiative to promote better hearing worldwide



Six year old Fatuma Mkilinda from Kenya was fitted with a behind-the-ear hearing aid.

The Need

Recent WHO (World Health Organization) estimates indicate that at least 255 million persons in the world (approx. 4.2% of the world population) are affected by moderate or worse disabling hearing loss. Globally, adult hearing loss ranks second after mental depression in the number of years lived with disability, while childhood hearing loss also has a profound impact on the expected quality of life. Two-thirds of all hearing impaired

persons live in developing countries and most would benefit from hearing aids if they were available. However, of the many millions of hearing aids needed worldwide, less than 6% are produced and fitted annually while only a fraction of these go to developing countries where they meet the need of just one in every forty persons with hearing loss.

The Initiative

WWHearing (**WorldWide Hearing Care for Developing Countries**) is a new initiative created in 2003 by a number of stakeholders that are in relations with WHO, including Christian Blind Mission and others.

WWHearing's mission is to promote better hearing by the provision of appropriate and affordable high quality hearing aids and services on a long term basis and on a significant scale.



WWHearing works within the WHO *Guidelines for Hearing Aids and Services for Developing Countries* (2nd ed. 2004), which advise that hearing aids must be part of a complete audiological service including diagnostics, fitting, rehabilitation and the training of personnel.

WWHearing is committed to develop and support such services for the optimum benefit of hearing impaired people worldwide but with a particular focus on the needs of children and adults in developing countries and underserved communities.

PARTNERS

Key stakeholders and partners include governmental departments, CBM and other INGDOs, professional associations, organisations of and for hearing aid users, donors and experts.

Among the current partners of **WWHearing** are:

- China Rehabilitation Research Center for Deaf Children (CRRCDC)
- Christian Blind Mission (CBM)
- Hearing International
- International Association of Logopaedics & Phoniatrics (IALP)
- International Association of Physicians in Audiology (IAPA)
- International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH)
- International Society of Audiology (ISA)
- Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF)
- Ministry of Health, Brazil
- Ministry of Health, India
- Ministry of Health, Philippines

and various participants from Australia, Botswana, Brazil, China, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Ireland, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Philippines, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand and the UK.

The World Health Organization (WHO) is an interested observer and provides technical and organizational support. Manufacturers (commercial and not-for-profit) will collaborate with the initiative through a special programme to be set up by WWHearing and jointly agreed with WHO.

WWHearing welcomes additional partners and stakeholders who share its goals to provide affordable quality hearing aids and appropriate services to needy communities. The partners elect an Executive Committee made up of qualified and experienced personnel.

Rukia Abdi has her hearing tested in a sound-proofed room. She is attending the Kambui School for the Deaf in Kenya.

