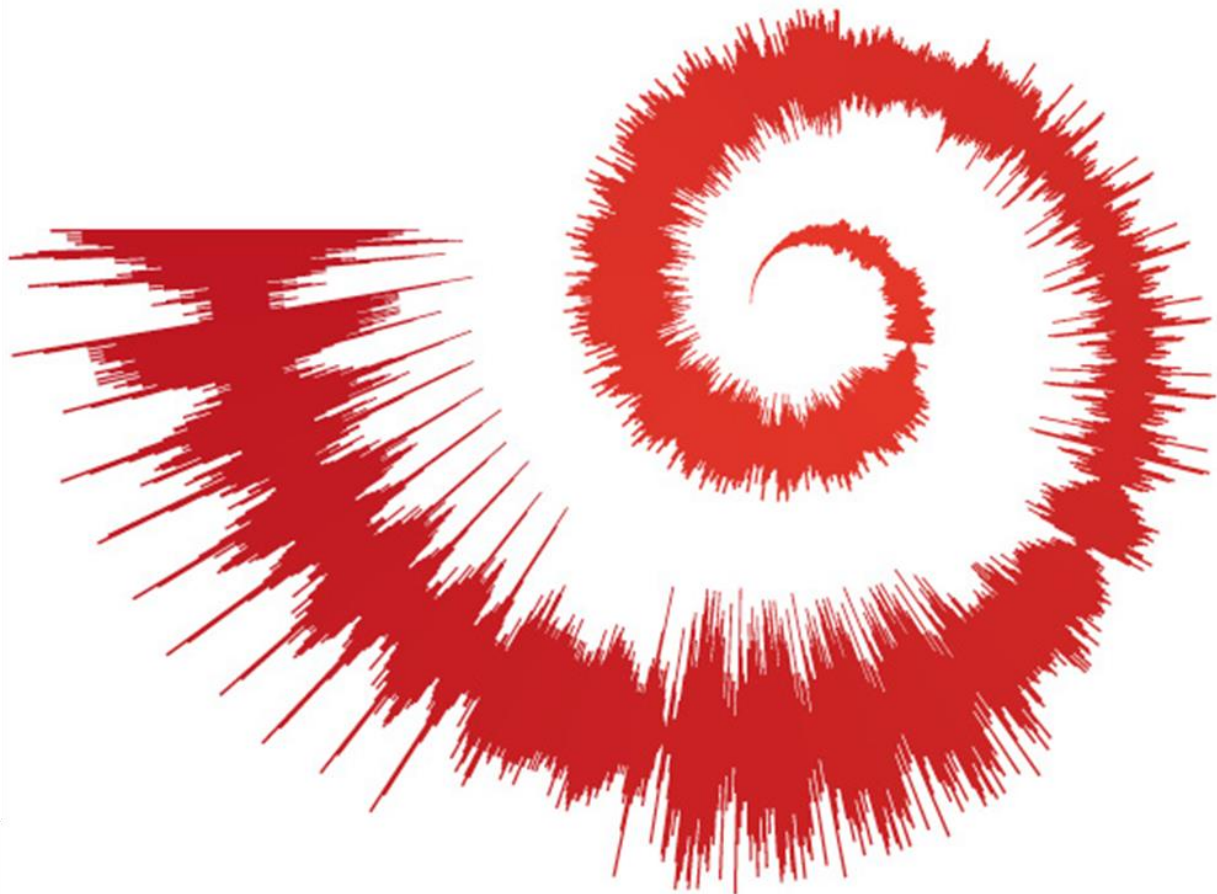


Frequently Asked Questions on the **World Report on Hearing**



Why a World Report on Hearing?

In recognition of the rising prevalence of hearing loss globally, the World Health Assembly unanimously passed a resolution in 2017 focused on the prevention of deafness and hearing loss (WHA70.13). The Resolution urges Member States to make hearing health care a public health priority by making ear and hearing care accessible and integrating ear and hearing care into national health plans. In support of Member States' efforts to implement this Resolution, the World Health Organization was called upon to prepare the first ever *World Report on Hearing*, as a means of defining the direction of global ear and hearing care and providing a strong basis for country action.

What is the World Report on Hearing?

The *World Report on Hearing* will deliver a cohesive narrative on hearing loss and ear and hearing care that is based on the best available evidence; outline the shift in the epidemiological distribution of hearing loss globally; highlight best practices for ear and hearing care; and provide guidance to Member States on recommended interventions and their cost-effectiveness.

The report will establish links between addressing hearing loss and achieving many of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, notably those relating to ending poverty (Goal 1), ensuring healthy lives (Goal 3), improving chances for education (Goal 4), and promoting employment opportunities (Goal 8).

When will the World Report on Hearing be released?

The *World Report on Hearing* will be launched 3 March 2021, which coincides with World Hearing Day. The report will be available for download on the [World Report on Hearing website](#). A QR code will be available for easy access to the website.

Who are the target audiences for the World Report on Hearing?

- The Report is aimed at policy-makers and representatives of government ministries and international agencies that have a direct influence on national health policies.
- The Report also targets civil society organizations, professional bodies, service providers, hearing-related foundations, NGOs, associations of the deaf and hard of hearing, parent groups, private sector entities and other key stakeholders in the field of ear and hearing care.
- Its evidence-based messages will assist their efforts to raise awareness on hearing loss and encourage policy action for provision of ear and hearing care in their countries and regions.

What will the World Report on Hearing say?

The *World Report on Hearing* features four main sections with chapters detailing the following themes:

1. *Hearing across the life-course*: explains why hearing matters, the importance of communication in everyday life, and the impact of hearing loss on individuals, families and society. This section provides a life-course

perspective to hearing and outline how causative and preventative factors faced across the lifespan influence one's hearing trajectory and determine an individual's hearing capacity at any point.

2. *Actions for ear and hearing care*: demonstrate that hearing loss can be prevented and its impact mitigated. It will showcase the vast array of preventative interventions currently available and outlines opportunities for early identification of hearing loss at all ages and in different settings, including community-based settings. The section reflects on various effective clinical and technological advances make it possible for everyone to benefit from hearing care, irrespective of their age, nature of hearing loss or communication preference. It focuses on public health approach as a means for delivering person-centered hearing care.
3. *Facing the challenges*: this section outlines the various barriers and challenges faced in the field of hearing care, focusing on epidemiology of hearing loss and its rising number in the context of ongoing demographic shifts; gaps in human resources available to provide ear and hearing care services in countries where they are most needed; and issues around access to hearing devices. It looks at challenges related to the often-complex requirements for addressing hearing loss; barriers of knowledge and awareness; and health system limitations. It will frame the issues that the ear and hearing field faces from the perspective of how those issues can be addressed, sharing examples from various countries.
4. *Designing the way forward*: this section proposes a set of H.E.A.R.I.N.G. interventions for implementation by countries to promote access to ear and hearing care. It includes health system enablers that are necessary for the full implementation of the set of interventions.

What new information will the Report provide?

The report provides new information on:

- Latest data on hearing loss estimates including current status and projections
- Future projections till 2050
- Cost of unaddressed hearing loss
- Human resources availability for ear and hearing care (EHC)
- Data on current access and use of hearing aids
- Cost of scaling up ear and hearing care interventions in next 10 years
- Return on investment made in scaling up EHC and related financial gains

The Report will further elaborate on:

- Opportunities to prevent and address hearing loss across the life course
- Cost effective solutions available
- Challenges faced including
 - human resources for EHC,
 - poor knowledge and awareness,
 - stigma
- Concepts such as:
 - Task sharing across cadres
 - Telehealth for EHC
 - Primary level EHC
 - Health system interventions

What are the key messages and recommendations of the Report?

1. The number of people living with unaddressed hearing loss and ear diseases is unacceptable.
2. Timely action is needed to prevent and address hearing loss across the life course.
3. Investing in cost effective interventions will benefit people with hearing loss and bring financial gains to the society.
4. Countries must integrate people-centered ear and hearing care within national health plans for universal health coverage.

The Report calls for integration of the H.E.A.R.I.N.G. set of interventions into national health care plans

Hearing screening and early intervention programmes targeting:

- Newborn and infant screening
- preschool- and school- ear and hearing checks
- Hearing screening for older adults
- People exposed to noise or ototoxic chemicals/medicines

Ear disease prevention and management through:

- Good ear and hearing care practices
- Identification at community level through trained workforce
- Medical treatment
- Ear surgery

Access to affordable, high-quality technologies and related services such as

- Hearing aids
- Cochlear implants
- Assistive technologies e.g. loop systems

Rehabilitation services that are:

- Age-appropriate
- Multi-disciplinary
- Family-centered

Improved communication through:

- Sign language learning
- Sign language interpretation
- Captioning services

Noise reduction through regulations for:

- Occupational hearing conservation
- Safe listening entertainment venues
- Safe listening smartphones and audio players

Greater community engagement through:

- Communication campaigns
- Strengthening associations of hard of hearing and Deaf
- Multi-sectoral collaboration to address stigma

How can the World Report on Hearing be used?

The World Report on Hearing is an evidence-based resource that will serve as:

- A policy document for guiding Member States in incorporating key ear and hearing care interventions into national health plans.
- An advocacy tool, to mobilize political action for furthering EHC.
- An educational resource on EHC.

What package of advocacy materials will be available?

In November 2020, the following advocacy materials will be available on the [World Report on Hearing website](#):

- Dissemination guide
- Infographics with key communication messages
- Posters
- Flyers
- Social media assets: data cards, GIFs, and tiles
- Branding and promotional materials such as T-shirt and bags

In early 2021, the following materials will be available on the [World Report on Hearing website](#) :

- Executive (?) Summary including selected infographics
- Summary report for policy makers
- H.E.A.R.I.N.G. interventions policy brief
- World Report on Hearing
- Press release/note for media

What policy events can you implement to promote the World Report on Hearing?

The World Report on Hearing calls for action to governments to Integrate people-centered ear and hearing care within national health plans for universal health coverage. For this to happen, all the stakeholders in the field of ear and hearing care must act as local champions in planning events, engaging with policymakers for World Hearing Day 2021, which will mark the launch day of the WRH.

Please refer to the Dissemination guide for details on how to prepare events such as:

- National launches
- Policy dialogues
- Panel sessions
- Site visits
- Personal meetings
- Press briefings
- Webinars with government participation



