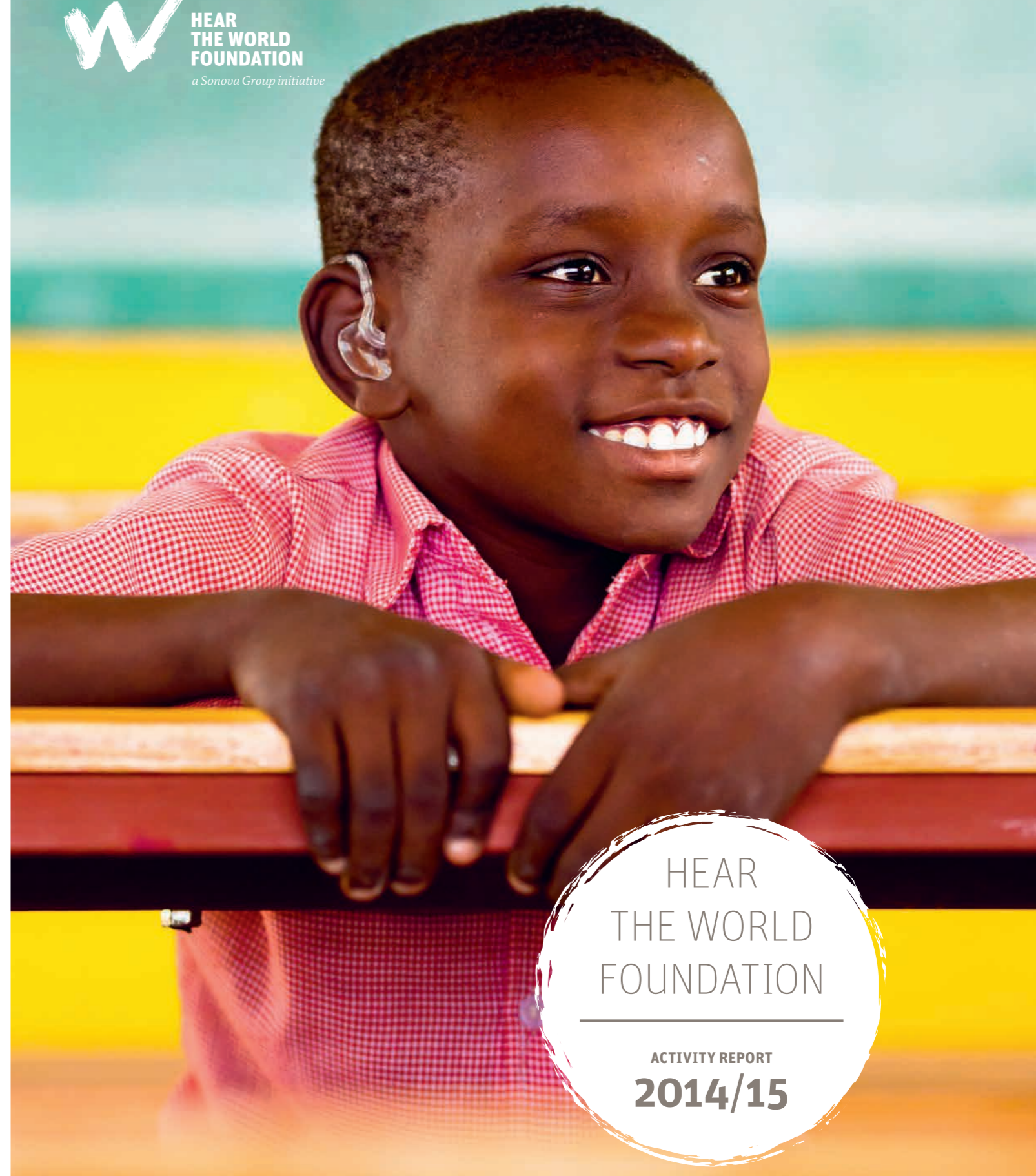


## ABOUT THE HEAR THE WORLD FOUNDATION

By supporting the charitable Hear the World Foundation, Sonova is campaigning for equal opportunities and a better quality of life for people with hearing loss. As a leading manufacturer of hearing care solutions, the company feels socially responsible for contributing towards a world where everyone has the chance to enjoy good hearing. For instance, the Hear the World Foundation supports disadvantaged people with hearing loss around the world and gets involved in prevention and providing information. It focuses particularly on projects for children with hearing loss, to enable them to develop at the appropriate rate for their age. More than 80 famous ambassadors, including celebrities such as Bryan Adams, Annie Lennox, Sting and Joss Stone, champion the Hear the World Foundation.

[www.hear-the-world.com](http://www.hear-the-world.com)  
f /CanYouHearTheWorld



HEAR  
THE WORLD  
FOUNDATION

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ACTIVITY REPORT  
**2014/15**

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# WORKING TOGETHER FOR BETTER HEARING



Listening to the nature, hearing music and voices, chatting and having a good laugh together – our sense of hearing is essential for communication and a vital part of our social life. That is why the Hear the World Foundation pursues a vision of creating a world in which every single individual has the chance to experience good hearing.

Did you know that around 50 percent of all cases of hearing loss could have been avoided? And that some 1.1 billion young people worldwide put their hearing at risk due to their listening habits? That is why the Hear the World Foundation is also actively involved in preventing hearing loss. In Canada, for instance, we support Sound Sense, a project designed to teach schoolchildren about the dangers of listening to music at excessively high volumes. Last year, the Hear the World Foundation presented Sound Sense with the John Bamford Award. To find out what this project has done to deserve such an honor, turn to page 18.

This is a very ambitious goal, and over the past year, as ever, we have been working very hard toward achieving it. The quality of the care provided is always a top priority. It is our claim to ensure that children in low-income countries receive the same standard of audiological care as those from higher-earning backgrounds, which is why we make sure our project partners have state-of-the-art hearing aids and the right equipment for fitting and validating them at their disposal. In all of our projects, we also make an effort to develop the necessary expertise on site. This ensures that audiological care can be provided on a long-term basis, as well as creating local jobs – a key element of the foundation's sustainable work. Expert knowledge is passed on primarily through voluntary engagements by Sonova employees. A prime example of this is our HEAR HAITI project (p. 14), in which 23 volunteers took part last year.

We were delighted that partner stores in seven countries carried out fundraising campaigns last year to help the Hear the World Foundation. The "4 Ears" campaign collected more than CHF 20,000, all of which will go toward funding the foundation's activities and enabling us to further expand our support.

We are proud of and pleased with what we have achieved so far, but we also know that there is still a long way to go to turn our vision into reality. We would be glad to count on you to help us do this.

Best wishes,

**Lukas Braunschweiler**  
President of the Hear the World Foundation



Our activity report is also available online. Videos, image galleries and further information provide interesting insights into our projects:

[www.hear-the-world.com/report](http://www.hear-the-world.com/report)

# OUR GOALS, OUR COMMITMENT,

## ABOUT HEAR THE WORLD

The Hear the World Foundation was established in 2006 as an initiative of the Sonova Group, the leading manufacturer of hearing care solutions. The foundation advocates for equal opportunities and improved quality of life for people with hearing loss around the world.

The vision of the Hear the World Foundation is a world in which:

- EACH PERSON HAS THE **CHANCE TO EXPERIENCE GOOD HEARING,**
- WEARING A HEARING AID **IS NO LONGER A TABOO,**
- HEARING IS **CHERISHED AND PROTECTED,** AND
- PEOPLE WITH IMPAIRED HEARING ENJOY **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES.**

Since 2006, the foundation has been involved in over 60 projects on all five continents and has given thousands of people with hearing loss the chance to enjoy a better life.

## OUR SUPPORT IS BASED ON THREE PILLARS



### Technology

Provision of hearing aids, FM systems, cochlear implants



### Funding

Support through funds



### Professional support

Training of project partners

## HEARING LOSS – A NEGLECTED ISSUE

Hearing loss is still a neglected issue, even though the figures speak volumes: more than 15% of the adult population is affected by hearing loss<sup>1</sup>, and around half of these cases could have been avoided by taking preventive measures<sup>2</sup>. Some 665,000 children with significant hearing loss are born every year<sup>3</sup>. One of the biggest challenges is that 80% of people with hearing loss live in low- to middle-income countries and often do not have any access to audiological or medical care<sup>4</sup>. In low-income countries, for example, only one in 40 people with hearing loss wears a hearing aid<sup>5</sup>. This has serious consequences: children with untreated hearing loss, particularly those living in these regions, have hardly any future prospects. After all, children who cannot hear very well have difficulty learning to speak, which reduces their chances of receiving an education and developing at an appropriate rate for their age.

## FOUNDATION GOALS

Against this backdrop, the Hear the World Foundation's goal is to actively support and promote projects that provide help for people with hearing loss to enable them to enjoy a better quality of life. The foundation also aims to draw attention to and raise awareness of the issue of hearing loss by carrying out studies and campaigns. Support is provided via financial resources, the provision of hearing systems and the deployment of an own team. Sonova bears all of the foundation's administration costs to ensure that 100% of all donations go directly to the projects.

# OUR BASIC PRINCIPLES

## FOUNDATION GOVERNANCE

The Hear the World Foundation is an independent charitable foundation. Comprehensive foundation governance is essential for us. This involves ensuring transparency with regard to our strategy, goals and support activities as well as professionalism in terms of organization and management. To avoid conflicts of interest, an organized procedure for

applying for support and selection criteria for projects are clearly defined. As a member of Swiss Foundations, we operate in line with the basic principles of the Swiss Foundation Code. We see it as our duty to use the funds entrusted to us in accordance with the aims of the foundation and in the most effective way possible.



Pupils of our project partner Willie Ross School

## HELP US TO HELP!

You can help people to hear again! The Hear the World Foundation is a recognized Swiss foundation and, thanks to its precisely defined goal and transparent processes, it guarantees that 100 percent of your support goes directly to our projects. Sonova bears all of the administrative costs.

### Bank details for donations:

UBS AG, Zurich  
Account: Hear the World Foundation  
Account number: 230-477384.01U  
IBAN: CH12 0023 0230 4773 8401 U  
SWIFT: UBSWCHZH80A

<sup>1</sup>WHO, The global burden of disease: 2004 update (2008) / <sup>2</sup>WHO, Factfile Deafness (2006) / <sup>3</sup>Unicef (2004) / <sup>4/5</sup>WHO, Factsheet Number 300 (2012)

# SUSTAINABLE SUPPORT: A KEY PRIORITY

The aim of the Hear the World Foundation is to enable people all over the world to enjoy better hearing. Every year we receive a large number of applications for support. An essential criterion when it comes to selecting and implementing projects is sustainability, which is why the Hear the World Foundation primarily supports projects that can make a lasting positive impact. The quality of the audiological care provided is a crucial element, and with this in mind, particular attention is paid to the following four aspects:

## 1.) APPLYING THE AUDIOLOGY GOLD STANDARD FOR EVERYONE

Fitting children with amplification is a challenge and a big responsibility. Over the years a validated protocol for pediatric fittings has been developed and adopted. We strongly believe that children in low-income countries have the right to receive the same quality of audiological care as those in countries with higher incomes. We therefore make sure that our project partners have the right training and equipment to diagnose hearing loss, fit hearing aids and verify fitting in accordance with international standards. We always provide our project partners with the latest hearing aid technology, so they can offer their patients the best possible solution – no matter where they live or how much they earn.

## 2.) BUILDING UP LOCAL SKILLS AND EXPERTISE

In all the projects we support worldwide, we are committed to establishing and cultivating the expertise needed on site. This way we can guarantee the provision of long-term audiological care on site and create local jobs too – which is a key part of the sustainable work of any foundation. Expert knowledge is passed on from teams of volunteers of qualified Sonova employees and, wherever necessary, other specialists.

## 3.) ENSURING PROFESSIONAL FOLLOW-UP

To help guarantee a lasting positive impact, we only provide hearing aids if we can ensure that the recipients will also receive regular support from locally based specialists after their hearing aids have been fitted. Audiological care alone is often not enough, especially in the case of children with hearing loss. Supplementary measures such as speech therapy or parental training and involvement are required to help children realize their full potential and to support their language acquisition.



Using state-of-the-art devices for diagnosis

## 4.) LONG-TERM SUPPORT AND MONITORING SUCCESS

We work in long-term partnerships with our project partners across the globe. Our experts help them develop the next logical steps of their projects – such as training sessions or buying a new piece of equipment. In doing so, we lay an important foundation to further professionalize the

audiological care. Each of our project partners is obliged to provide a detailed report twice a year containing precise details about the progress of their project and their use of funds.



Professional follow-up – speech therapy as a key element

# OUR FOCUS



## FOCUS CHILDREN

Providing audiological care for children is a focal area of the Hear the World Foundation's activities.

A particular emphasis is placed on low-income countries, where children with undiagnosed hearing loss have very limited future prospects. This is because children who cannot hear very well have difficulty learning to speak, which restricts their chances of receiving an education and developing at an appropriate rate for their age. Therefore, providing support in this area can change lives. Our focus:

- Projects designed to increase newborn hearing screenings
- Deployment of mobile teams of experts to diagnose hearing loss in children
- Professional training for local staff and provision of adequate tools to ensure children are diagnosed accurately
- Providing support for projects that supply children with appropriately fitted hearing aids, along with continuous care and additional speech therapy

# 95% / <10%

In high-income countries, **95% of all children** undergo routine hearing screenings after they are born. In low-income countries, however, this generally applies to **less than 10%**<sup>1</sup>



## FOCUS PROGRAMS FOR PARENTS & FAMILIES

The younger the children with hearing loss are, the more important the role played by their parents becomes.

Hearing aids need to be checked regularly, speech development exercises need to be practiced and parents must provide emotional support in everyday life. In the case of projects in low-income countries, it is also essential to provide parents with basic information about hearing loss. Hear the World supports projects that run various programs to help parents:

- Guides, newsletters and brochures
- Workshops, conferences and special consultation sessions for parents
- Opportunities to share experiences with other parents of children with hearing loss

# 90%

**OF ALL PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH HEARING LOSS** say that interaction with other parents is particularly helpful to them<sup>2</sup>



## FOCUS PREVENTION OF HEARING LOSS

It is essential to take any opportunity to prevent hearing loss from occurring.

The risks vary greatly between countries with high income levels and those with lower incomes, and the foundation's projects are therefore equally wide-ranging. In high-income countries, noise is the primary cause of hearing loss and cases of this are rising rapidly. The focus here is on projects designed to raise awareness of the risks of noise-induced hearing loss. In countries with low incomes, however, childhood diseases, chronic otitis media or incorrect dosages of medication are the main factors behind the development of hearing impairments. These two completely different challenges require specifically tailored approaches when it comes to finding solutions:

- Campaigns for schoolchildren and teenagers in high-income countries with the aim of raising awareness of the risks posed by listening to music at loud volumes
- Measures for improving the medical situation in low-income countries

# 50%

**OF ALL CASES OF HEARING LOSS ARE PREVENTABLE**<sup>3</sup>



## FOCUS PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Building a local audiological care network.

Medical aid and audiological care cannot be provided on a long-term basis if the local population is reliant on foreign specialists who are not on hand to help all the time. The only way to build up a stable network, so that knowledge can be passed on and put into practice and the local people can receive good, long-term audiological care, is to train local audiologists. This also has the beneficial side effect of creating skilled jobs with promising future prospects in the country concerned. The Hear the World Foundation supports projects in the following areas:

- Training local audiologists
- Providing further training for clinic staff and teachers who deal with children with hearing loss
- Providing support for research projects and awarding grants

# 87.5/5.2%

In 87.5% of high-income countries, more than one audiologist is available per million population **THESE FIGURES ARE ONLY MET IN 5.2% OF LOW-INCOME COUNTRIES**<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Judith Gravel Lecture – Prof. De Wet Swanepoel (2011)/<sup>2</sup>Zaidmann-Zait (2007)

<sup>3</sup>WHO, Factsheet Number 300 (2012) / <sup>4</sup>WHO, Multi-country assessment of national capacity to provide hearing care (2013)

# HIGHLIGHTS 2014/15



sponsored by FUJIFILM

## Hear Malawi PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT

What is your favorite sound? This is the question the Hear the World Foundation has been asking young people with hearing loss in Malawi who were recently fitted with new hearing aids donated by the foundation. Under the guidance of Philipp Rathmer, the teenagers captured sounds and scenes from their everyday lives that portray their newly discovered world of sound.



Participants of the photography project



[www.hear-the-world.com/hearmalawi](http://www.hear-the-world.com/hearmalawi)

## Special Olympics UNITED WE ARE STRONG

A special highlight during the National Summer Games 2014 in Germany was the participation of Hear the World ambassador Mimi Müller-Westernhagen. She supported the clinical staff during the hearing screenings and gave an unplugged-concert.



## Richard Seewald Award FUNPROI, PANAMA

With his prestigious award Prof. Dr. Richard Seewald honors the outstanding commitment of Funproi to bring state of the art hearing health care services to the Republic of Panama.



## Dance workshop WITH SERGEI POLUNIN

In his role as Hear the World ambassador, ballet dancer Sergei Polunin held a dance workshop for members of the Russian dance group "Angely Nadezhdy" in Moscow. Not only for the teenagers, who all have hearing loss, but also for Polunin a once-in-a-lifetime experience.



Sergei Polunin teaches the teenagers dancing steps

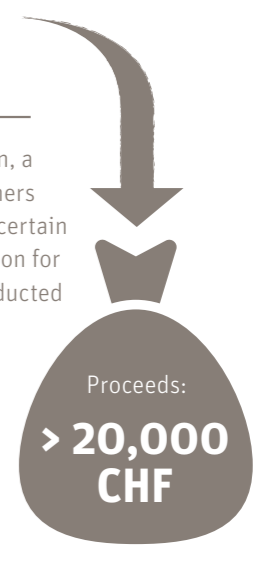


Maninee, daughter of a Sonova employee, poses for the campaign



COUNTRIES

As part of the campaign, a selected group of partners makes a donation of a certain amount to the foundation for every hearing test conducted in one of their stores.



Proceeds:

> 20,000 CHF

[www.hear-the-world.com/4ears](http://www.hear-the-world.com/4ears)



## 50 DONATED UNITRON HEARING AIDS

Hear the World has for the first time donated Unitron hearing aids – to the Centro Cristiano in the Dominican Republic



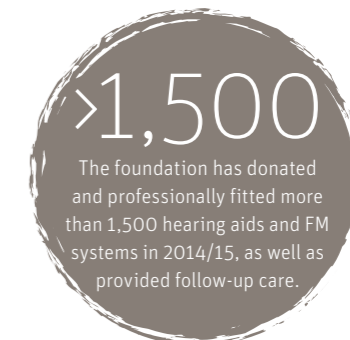
**EAR CARE DAY**  
Hear the World is active supporter of WHO's Ear Care Day 2015



## JUDITH GRAVEL FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT

The Judith Gravel Fellowship is awarded each year to an outstanding student of the Doctor of Audiology degree program at the UNC Chapel Hill. 2014–2015 Fellowship Recipient is Johnna Tanji.

5<sup>th</sup> Fellowship Recipient



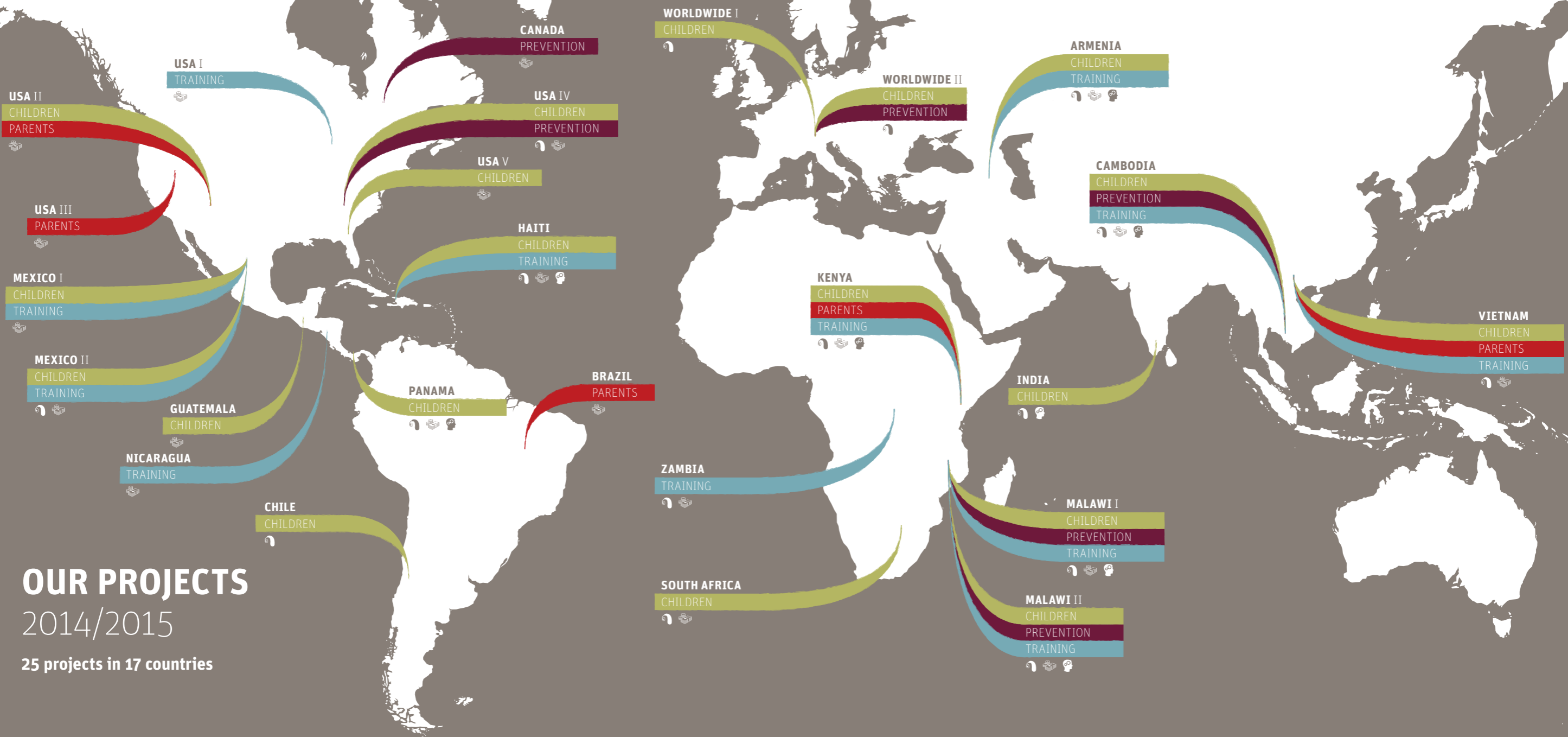
>1,500

The foundation has donated and professionally fitted more than 1,500 hearing aids and FM systems in 2014/15, as well as provided follow-up care.

# OUR PROJECTS

## 2014/2015

25 projects in 17 countries



Our support:



Technology



Funding



Professional support



[www.hear-the-world.com/projects](http://www.hear-the-world.com/projects)



FOCUS CHILDREN



FOCUS PROGRAMS FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES



FOCUS PREVENTION OF HEARING LOSS



FOCUS PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

# HEARING MEANS LIVING

**People with hearing loss have a tough time on the Caribbean island of Haiti, especially children. Since last year, the Haiti Deaf Academy has been working hard to change this – with great success.**

Let's take the example of Albert. When Cathy Jones first met him two years ago, she thought he was about eight or nine years old. "He couldn't hear anything and couldn't speak at all," she says. "He grew up cared for by various people in the mountains, where he was likely treated with crude voodoo practices. He was completely feral and felt so miserable that he indicated to us with his hands that he wanted to die." A former Phonak manager from California, Cathy Jones has been making regular trips to Haiti since 2008. "I loved my job," she says, "yet I told myself: 'You've got to do more.' So I joined a group of avid humanitarian enthusiasts, travelled to the poorest country in the western hemisphere and did the best I could wherever I could." She soon discovered where her efforts were most urgently needed – in helping children with hearing problems.



A need to improvise: hearing screenings being carried out in a church

## THE POOREST OF THE POOR

People with hearing loss have a particularly tough time on Haiti. People call them "bébés" and treat them as if they are mentally handicapped. Nobody knows how many of them there actually are in this poor Caribbean country, but one thing is clear: the proportion of people with untreated hearing loss here is significantly higher than in industrialized nations. "Many children here suffer from middle ear infections, which go untreated due to the lack of medical infrastructure," Cathy Jones explains. "Then on top of that there are people whose hearing has been damaged by lack of treatment for diseases and, of course, congenital hearing impairments." After the catastrophic earthquake that hit the island in 2010, the situation for people with hearing loss took another dramatic turn for the worse. "In many places they were thrown out of the lines of people waiting to get aid handouts," says Cathy. Ever since then, she and Kathryn

Montoya, a sign language teacher from Idaho, have been campaigning to improve the situation for these people, and especially for the children. Their efforts have proved successful: in Lévéque, around 40 kilometers away from the capital city of Port-au-Prince, they set up the Haiti Deaf Academy, where children with hearing loss and their families are offered prospects for the future.

## A SCHOOL FOR LIFE

"We teach sign language to 52 children and adults here," explains Kathryn Montoya. "By doing this, we give them a voice – a chance to simply communicate. That provides the basis for them to learn to read and write. When we first came here, the level of education was terrible. Many people didn't even know their own names." Not all the children who attend the academy live with their families in the nearby center for people with hearing impairments. "We regularly drive through the villages and ask around about 'deaf children.' Then they can come and live in a home that is connected to the school," says Kathryn. Since October 2014, the Haiti Deaf Academy has taken its aid to the next level thanks to help from the Hear the World Foundation: Over 50 people have been provided with hearing aids. Albert was one of the recipients. "As it turned out, he is actually around 18 years old. He is not mentally challenged; he just couldn't hear anything before. Now he can. He has already begun to imitate sounds and we will continue to offer auditory training so they can learn to speak and communicate verbally with practice."



[www.hear-the-world.com/children](http://www.hear-the-world.com/children)

**"When we first came here, many of the children didn't even know their names. Now they are able to communicate."**

**Kathryn Montoya, Founder of the Haiti Deaf Academy**



**Partner:** Haiti Deaf Academy

**Location, timeframe:** Lévéque, Haiti, since 2014

**Our support:**



>100

HEARING AIDS WERE DONATED  
AND FITTED



# LEARNING TO UNDERSTAND

**At the hearing center in São Paulo, parents learn how to handle the hearing aids their children have been given. Many of them are unaware that not wearing these aids can have an adverse effect on speech development.**

Ten years ago, it was decided that Brazilians who suffer from hearing impairments would no longer have to pay for their hearing aids. “That was a huge step forward, of course,” says Beatriz Novaes, an audiologist and Head of the Centro Audição na Criança (CeAC), a hearing center for children in São Paulo. Luisa Ficker, coordinator of CeAC, emphasizes that “before then, poor families couldn’t afford hearing aids. However, this doesn’t mean that the problems experienced by children with hearing loss have gone away.” The center was founded in 2004 to help tackle one of these problems – the fact that children from poorer social backgrounds often still seemed incapable of learning to speak despite being provided with new hearing aids, which meant that they were lagging behind. “Many parents simply didn’t know how important it is for their children to wear the hearing aids at all times, and not just for an hour a day. This is crucial for the children’s development and speech comprehension,

especially during the first two years of their lives,” says Beatriz. In addition to carrying out precise diagnostic evaluations using the CeAC’s high-tech equipment, she has been running a program for parents of children with hearing loss with the help of funding from the Hear the World Foundation.

## RIGHT FROM THE START

Since the program was launched, it has enabled mothers and fathers from São Paulo – a city of 12 million inhabitants – to learn how to handle hearing aids and what benefits the devices offer if their children wear them continuously, even when they are just babies. After all, even a mild hearing impairment can have a lasting impact on speech behavior later on. “There are always some parents who think it’s enough if their children can hear to some extent, but of course they’re mistaken,” says Beatriz. The children and their parents have to come to the center three times a year for hearing checks and an assessment of the child’s development. Later on these visits are reduced to twice a year. To impress on



Centro Audição na Criança – a meeting place for parents of children with hearing loss

“Parents play a very important role in treating a child with a hearing impairment. They tell us about the child’s behavior, progress and setbacks, which helps us a lot.”

**Luisa Ficker, coordinator of CeAC**

the parents how important these appointments are, Beatriz Novaes and her colleagues have produced a brochure. Using simple illustrations – since some of the parents can barely read – it explains how to use a hearing aid, when to take it out (for bathing or swimming) and why hearing is such an essential factor in learning to speak.

## A MEETING PLACE FOR PARENTS

The center also organizes group sessions for parents. “When one mother talks about how delighted she is that her little one is developing into a happy child and has learned to speak well, this leaves a strong impression on other parents. Much stronger than we do when we warn them about the need for discipline,” says Beatriz. During these sessions, the parents share their experiences. They talk about the difficulties they come up against in everyday life. Should the children keep their hearing aids in their ears even when they are on the bus, and what if someone there steals them? How can I explain to my daughter’s kindergarten teacher that she shouldn’t take her hearing aid out, even when she is romping around and playing? The CeAC’s programs provide answers to these and many other questions, emphasizing the fact that technological aids are only fully effective if people know how to use them properly.



**Partner:** Centro Audição na Criança (CeAC)

**Location, timeframe:**  
São Paulo, Brazil, since 2014

**Our support:**



# 5,000

CHILDREN HAVE BEEN EXAMINED AT THE CEAC SINCE IT WAS ESTABLISHED.

# ENJOY THE MUSIC WITHOUT HURTING YOUR EARS



Young people are interested in a lot of things, but awareness-raising campaigns warning against listening to loud music are probably not among them. That is why the Hearing Foundation of Canada appeals specifically to children – with great success.

Jamie Wood knows all too well how easy it is to damage your hearing: “When I was young, I used to go to really loud punk concerts every weekend. When my ears started to hurt too much, I stuffed them with toilet paper.” Now, 15 years later, Jamie is campaigning to stop the same thing from happening to young people in Canada. She is Manager of Programs for the Hearing Foundation of Canada, a non-profit organization that has been working to improve general hearing health since 1979. In 2005, it launched a program called Sound Sense, which aims to educate all Canadian schoolchildren about the risks of listening to excessively loud music.

## EPIDEMIC PROPORTIONS

Raising awareness of this issue is essential, since around three million Canadians – and roughly 20 percent of 12- to 19-year-olds – suffer from impaired hearing. The majority can be traced back to noise exposure, for example at concerts, when listening to music through headphones, or at sporting events. As Jamie Wood explains: “Obviously we are aware that young people in particular are at risk, but the problem is that they won’t heed our warnings about the damage caused by loud music. That would be uncool. So we target children before they reach puberty, when they are receptive and curious. And they take the knowledge they receive with them into young adulthood.”

In such a large country as Canada, programs like this will only work on a decentralized basis. The Hearing Foundation has 13 regional coordinators who are responsible for deploying training staff.

## FUN FOR SCHOOLCHILDREN

The presentation lasts for fifty minutes, but the one thing that matters above all else to the children is that they are great fun. Interactive videos are shown and the schoolchildren are also given the opportunity to use a sound meter to measure their listening decibel levels on an MP3 player. “We know how dangerous hearing impairments caused by loud noise can be,” says Susanne Martin, a local coordinator based in Edmonton. “This kind of damage can’t be repaired. But it’s wonderful to know that we’re helping children avoid making this mistake.” Another coordinator, Paul Harris, spoke about one child whose story still stirs his emotions today: “I met him twice, once when he was in third grade and once in fourth grade. Even on the first occasion he was very attentive. Then the next year he told us that his father was a carpenter and up to then had never worn ear protection while working, but that had all changed because he had warned his father about the risks. I’ve never been so proud.” Last year, the Hear the World



Making learning fun

Foundation presented Sound Sense with the John Bamford Award, which is named after a member of the Hear the World Advisory Board. In his laudatory speech, Professor John Bamford observed that “This program [Sound Sense] is exemplary in many respects: it is innovative, perfectly organized, and appeals to children on an emotional level.”

At the end of each training session, the children are given earplugs which reduce sound levels by around 30 decibels. Wearing these, they could spend more than eight hours listening to a rock concert without worrying about doing harm to their hearing. If Jamie Wood had had access to these devices in her wild youth, she would have saved her ears a lot of damage.



“It’s not a matter of frightening children, it’s about raising awareness – and about having fun in the process”

Andrea Swinton, Executive Director of the Hearing Foundation of Canada



Partner: The Hearing Foundation of Canada

Location, timeframe:  
Canada, 2009, 2011, 2014

Our support:



# 18 billion

CANADIAN DOLLARS PER YEAR:  
THIS IS HOW MUCH AVOIDABLE  
HEARING IMPAIRMENTS COST THE  
CANADIAN ECONOMY.

# CHANGING LIVES THROUGH AUDIOLOGY

**Infectious diseases can cause serious damage to hearing, and only well-trained professionals can help.**

**Unfortunately, these are few and far between in Malawi. An Australian couple are doing their best to change this.**

Our sense of hearing can easily become impaired. If too much earwax creates a blockage, for example, we can only perceive the world around us through muffled ears, and our sense of balance is affected too. An audiologist can easily resolve this problem by removing the wax. In a country like Malawi, however, even this simple treatment cannot be taken for granted. “When we first came here, there wasn’t a single audiologist anywhere in the country,” says Rebecca Bartlett, an Australian audiologist who has been living in the East African nation with her husband Peter – also an audiologist – and their three daughters since 2010. Their aims are to provide access for all Malawians to high quality audiology services through a sustainable clinic in Malawi’s capital city Lilongwe, to train up the next generation of local audiologists, and to extend services through an outreach network.

“When we go out to the villages and rural communities and explain to the people there how important their sense of hearing is, that has a great impact on Malawian society. I want to help with this, which is why I chose to study audiology.”

**Mwasoni Phiri, graduate from the ABC Hearing Clinic and Training Centre**



Practice makes perfect: Peter Bartlett and one of his audiology students

## GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS

They have achieved a great deal over the last five years. Since October 2013, Malawians have been able to have their ears examined at the country’s first specialist audiology clinic, which was set up thanks to the support from the Hear the World Foundation. “The patients have all kinds of problems,” says Rebecca Bartlett. “Of course, there are a lot of harmless cases of blocked ears, but many come to us with chronic middle ear infections that can lead to hearing loss. Infectious diseases that are common in Malawi or the medication used to treat them can also have a damaging effect on hearing.” At the ABC Hearing Clinic and Training Centre, the patients receive appropriate treatment for their complaints. If they are diagnosed with hearing loss, they can have hearing aids fitted there too.



## MOBILE CARE

An equally important part of the audiologists’ activities is their outreach work outside the clinic. Armed with equipment such as an audiometer to measure hearing ability, the Bartletts drive through local villages in a Jeep. “The roads here are poor and many people can’t afford to take the bus,” says Rebecca. “So it’s vital for us to go to them.”

The Bartletts’ students also accompany them on these trips. Six of them completed their training last year, including Mwasoni Phiri, a young man who has experienced hearing loss first hand. When he was a boy, he lost virtually all of his ability to hear for almost three weeks following an accident. “That incident motivated me to become an audiologist,” he says. “And when I discovered that people with hearing problems were being shunned by society, this made me want to pursue this career even more. Through audiology, I can change people’s lives and bring a smile to their faces again.” Thanks to Hear the World’s support, two of the audiology graduates will be going to the United Kingdom this year for further training. “We urgently need people here who have a wide-ranging education, to ensure that the clinic is in the best possible state when we hand it over to someone else to take charge,” says Rebecca Bartlett. She wants to stay in Malawi until 2016 before returning to Australia with her family. “But we’ll keep coming back to visit the clinic. You can never completely give up a project like this.”



[www.hear-the-world.com/training](http://www.hear-the-world.com/training)



**Partner:** EARS Inc

**Place, timeframe:** Lilongwe, Malawi, since 2011

**Our support:**



6

**AUDIOLOGICAL ASSISTANTS  
HAVE BEEN TRAINED SO FAR**

# SONOVA EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT

Alongside the financial and technological project support, employees of the Sonova Group form the important third pillar of the foundation's activities. From volunteering activities to fundraising programs – each and every contribution counts and is highly appreciated.

## ENTIRE COMMITMENT IN NUMBERS:



**VOLUNTEERING**



336 EMPLOYEES



527  
DAYS



11  
COUNTRIES

**May 2014, Malawi  
EARS INC.**

The volunteers have fitted hearing aids, helped with hearing aid repairs and trained the experts on spot.



**FUNDRAISING**

Sonova employees all over the world have raised **over 15,000** Swiss francs through fundraising campaigns.

**May 2014, Switzerland  
SPECIAL OLYMPICS BERN**

As members of the finish line and medal crew, the Sonova employees have supported the tournaments and could not fail to be moved by the athletes' emotions.



**May 2014, Germany  
SPECIAL OLYMPICS DÜSSELDORF**

With the help of Sonova employees, **520 hearing** screenings have been conducted in total.



**October 2014, January 2015**

**HEAR HAITI**

Sonova employees have supported this project during several missions each year.



>100

**CHILDREN & ADULTS**  
tested and fitted with hearing aids



**SYLVIA WRIGHT TRUST  
February 2015, India**

Sonova employees trained local experts on hearing aid fitting.



## A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE IN ONE WEEK

Jasmin Kaur reports on her experience.

I have been working for Sonova as an audiologist for four years, and before that I studied audiology at University College in London. My job is stimulating, but I missed having direct contact with patients. When I found out about the volunteer program that allows Sonova employees to work on projects supported by the Hear the World Foundation, I was immediately keen on the idea. I joined a delegation from University Hospital Zurich on a visit to Arabkir Hospital in Armenia, taking with me 80 hearing aids donated to the hospital by Hear the World. When the team and I arrived in Yerevan, we hit our first problem: the customs officials were highly suspicious of the hearing aids

I was carrying. It took all of our negotiating skills to convince them that everything was as it should be. The five days I spent working at the hospital were exhausting but exciting. My main task involved familiarizing the local audiologists with the software used for fitting hearing aids. I also helped out with around ten hearing aid fittings, making the optimum adjustments. It is always a pleasure to see the gleam of amazement in a patient's eyes when they find they can hear again. Another aspect I found fascinating was the enthusiasm of the medical staff. I have rarely seen medics working with such passion. It was a week I will always remember, probably for the rest of my life. I would like to thank the Hear the World Foundation for this experience, and my advice to all my colleagues at Sonova would be to go and do something like this too!



“I have rarely seen medics working with such passion.”

Jasmin Kaur, audiologist at Sonova

**In the  
LUGGAGE:**



Training for audiology employees  
**HOSPITAL ARABKIR  
October 2014,  
Armenia**

80  
HEARING  
AIDS



[www.hear-the-world.com/volunteering](http://www.hear-the-world.com/volunteering)

# OUR AMBASSADORS

Hear the World is now supported by more than eighty celebrity ambassadors. They all contribute towards raising public awareness for the importance of good hearing as well as the consequences of hearing loss.

Photographer and musician Bryan Adams captured them all in the Hear the World pose for conscious hearing, with their hands cupped behind their ears. Sting, Annie Lennox, Julianne Moore, Ben Kingsley and Joss Stone are just some of the many celebrities featured in these impressive photos. They all support the mission of the Hear the World Foundation and contribute toward raising public awareness of the importance of good hearing and the consequences of hearing loss.

Thanks to this unparalleled commitment, the Hear the World Foundation has been awarded the Guinness World Record for the world's largest photographic awareness campaign.



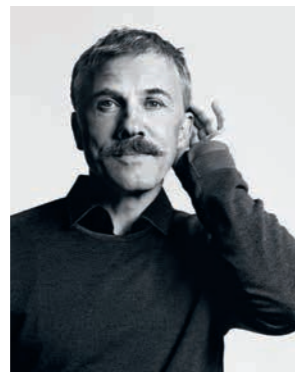
Diana Krall



Status Quo



Vanessa Paradis



Christoph Waltz



[www.hear-the-world.com/ambassadors](http://www.hear-the-world.com/ambassadors)

“The gift of hearing is something unique, and supporting those who struggle with hearing loss is invaluable. I can’t imagine having to live without my hearing, let’s put a stop to people having to.”

**John Newman, musician**



John Newman

# OUR PARTNERS

The Hear the World Foundation has strong partners that we can rely on to help us offer people more professional and sustainable care.

## ACCURATE DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT – EVEN IN REMOTE AREAS

Reliable equipment is absolutely essential for providing accurate diagnosis of hearing loss and professional hearing aid fitting services. Thanks to the partnership with GN Otometrics, one of the world's leading manufacturers of instruments for hearing and balance assessment, the Hear the World Foundation is able to supply its partner projects with the equipment they need on preferential terms. “We are proud to support the Hear the World Foundation,” says Søren Holst, President of Otometrics. “We believe that the instruments and training we provide can help ensure children are diagnosed accurately and receive the treatment they need.” Annerina Grobbelaar, who heads up the Hear the World partner project in South Africa, adds. “The equipment we get from Hear the World gives me the assurance that our care meets international standards – despite the fact that we are working in an emerging nation.”



## CONTINUOUS PROVISION OF BATTERIES

VARTA Microbattery, one of the world's leading battery manufacturers, has been supporting Hear the World since back in 2010 by supplying its power one hearing aid batteries. Thanks to this partnership, the Hear the World Foundation can provide hearing aid batteries free of charge for every hearing aid it donates. “Our goal is to fill every hearing aid with energy and life, giving people the gift of hearing day after day,” says Torsten Schmerer from VARTA Microbattery. “Families in India cannot afford expensive batteries, so the donated ones have given our project a huge boost,” explains Tony Allison, who is in charge of the Hear the World partner project in India.



# ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS OF MARCH 31, 2015

## 1 GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

The objective of the Foundation is to provide global education on hearing, with the aim of helping to prevent hearing loss. The Foundation also provides technological, financial and professional support to groups, public facilities and private individuals to prevent hearing loss or to improve the lives of those with hearing loss.

According to the Foundation charter, the initial paid-up capital of CHF 500,000 does not have to be maintained. All capital is available to the Foundation Board for grants.

The Foundation Board consists of the following persons:

- LUKAS BRAUNSCHWEILER
- SARAH KREIENBÜHL
- ORA BÜRKLI-HALEVY
- MAARTEN BARMENTLO
- TRACEY KRUGER

The business operations of the Foundation comply with the statutes dated December 4, 2006, and the Foundation's rules of procedure dated December 4, 2006. PricewaterhouseCoopers served as auditors for the fiscal year. Their selection for the following year has been confirmed. Their mandate is based on legal regulations and generally accepted accounting principles.

## 2 ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING PRINCIPLES

The annual financial statements are prepared in accordance with the accounting principles under FER 21 so to provide as reliable an assessment as possible of the Foundation's financial position, results of operations and cash flows. The financial statements also contain the previous year's figures. The regulations on commercial accounting also apply.

## 3 VALUATION PRINCIPLES GOVERNING INDIVIDUAL ITEMS IN THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in an account held with UBS in Zurich. Other receivables relate to withholding tax that has not yet been reimbursed. Prepaid income relates to the auditing costs.

## 4 FINANCIAL ASSETS AND EXPLANATIONS REGARDING ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

The Foundation does not have any fixed assets. Its assets comprise the Foundation's capital, which is deposited in a current account. The capital was invested with UBS AG at an average interest rate of 0.010% and is available on a daily basis.

## 5 GRATUITOUS (FREE) SERVICES

All resources required for the governance, management and administration of the Foundation and all of the Foundation's communication activities were provided by Sonova and its group companies free of charge and funded by them where necessary. This included, for example, accounting, communications and logistics services.

## 6 TRANSACTIONS WITH RELATED PARTIES

Non-cash benefits were provided in full by Phonak AG and Unitron Hearing GmbH. Devices are charged to the Foundation at production cost but are reported in the income statement at the list price for Swiss audiologists. The difference between production cost and list price is reported as a donation. In total, Phonak AG provided non-cash benefits worth CHF 1,535,450 and Unitron Hearing GmbH CHF 66,252.

## 7 EVENTS AFTER THE BALANCE SHEET DATE

No material events occurred after the balance sheet date.

## 8 ACTIVITIES OF THE FOUNDATION DURING THE FISCAL YEAR

The Foundation Board determines the resources to be awarded and their allocation during budgeting. These resources were distributed as follows during the fiscal year:

	2014/2015 (in Swiss francs)	
Technological support for projects abroad	1,614,977	75 %
Financial support for projects abroad	397,402	18 %
Technological support for projects in Switzerland	101,872	5 %
Financial support for projects in Switzerland	29,932	1 %
Administrative expenditures	10,859	1 %
Other operating expenditures	585	0 %
	<b>2,155,627</b>	<b>100%</b>

As of the balance sheet date, technological support of CHF 5,400.00 for projects (Redbird and Arsobo) was outstanding.

## 9 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The performance report, containing information on the purpose, governing bodies and work of the Foundation, forms part of the Foundation's annual Activity Report. The most recent Activity Report was published in May 2014.

**BALANCE SHEET AS OF MARCH 31** (in Swiss francs)

	2014 / 2015	2013 / 2014
<b>Assets</b>		
Current assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	201,675	236,923
Other receivables – from third parties	14	65
	201,689	236,988
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>201,689</b>	<b>236,988</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Current liabilities:		
Accrued liabilities	7,000	7,000
	7,000	7,000
<b>Capital of the organization:</b>		
Paid-in capital	500,000	500,000
Acquired capital	(305,311)	(270,012)
	194,689	229,988
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>201,689</b>	<b>236,988</b>

**OPERATION STATEMENT FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 1 TO MARCH 31** (in Swiss francs)

	2014 / 2015	2013 / 2014
<b>Income</b>		
Income from donations	2,120,306	1,444,195
<b>Total income</b>	<b>2,120,306</b>	<b>1,444,195</b>
<b>Expense</b>		
Technological support for projects abroad	(1,614,977)	(797,978)
Financial support for projects abroad	(397,402)	(356,899)
Technological support for projects in Switzerland	(101,872)	(248,363)
Financial support for projects in Switzerland	(29,932)	(80,191)
Administrative expenditures	(10,859)	(19,820)
Other operating expenditures	(585)	(1,009)
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>(2,155,627)</b>	<b>(1,504,260)</b>
<b>Interim result 1</b>	<b>(35,321)</b>	<b>(60,065)</b>
Financial income	22	52
Realized gain/(loss) on exchange rate differences	(0)	(131)
<b>Profit/(loss) for the year before allocation to the capital of the organization</b>	<b>(35,299)</b>	<b>(60,144)</b>

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN CAPITAL** (in Swiss francs)

	As of 04/01/2014	Allocation	Change	As of 03/31/2015
<b>Capital of the organization</b>				
Paid-in capital	500,000			500,000
Acquired capital	(270,012)		(35,299)	(305,311)
<b>Total capital of the organization</b>	<b>229,988</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(35,299)</b>	<b>194,689</b>



Report of the statutory auditors  
on the limited statutory examination  
to the Board of  
Hear the World Foundation  
Zug

As statutory auditors, we have examined the financial statements of Hear the World Foundation, which comprise the balance sheet, operating statement, statement of changes in equity and notes, for the year ended 31 March 2015. As permitted by Swiss GAAP FER 21 the information in the performance report is not required to be subject to the statutory auditors' examination.

These financial statements in accordance with Swiss GAAP FER 21 are the responsibility of the Board. Our responsibility is to perform a limited statutory examination on these financial statements. We confirm that we meet the licensing and independence requirements as stipulated by Swiss law.

We conducted our examination in accordance with the Swiss Standard on Limited Statutory Examination. This standard requires that we plan and perform a limited statutory examination to identify material misstatements in the financial statements. A limited statutory examination consists primarily of inquiries of foundation personnel and analytical procedures as well as detailed tests of foundation documents as considered appropriate in the circumstances. However, the testing of the operational processes and the internal control system, as well as inquiries and further testing procedures to detect fraud or other legal violations, are not within the scope of this examination.

Based on our limited statutory examination, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements do not give a true and fair view of the financial position, the results of operations and the cash flows in accordance with Swiss GAAP FER 21. Furthermore, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements do not comply with Swiss law and the foundation's deed.

PricewaterhouseCoopers AG

Sandra Böhm  
Audit expert  
Auditor in charge

Gian Franco Bieler  
Audit expert

Zurich, 23 April 2015

Enclosure:

- Financial statements (balance sheet, operating statement, statement of changes in equity and notes)

PricewaterhouseCoopers AG, Birchstrasse 160, Postfach, CH-8050 Zurich, Switzerland  
Telefon: +41 58 792 44 00, Telefax: +41 58 792 44 10, www.pwc.ch

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# OUR ORGANIZATION

The Foundation Board comprises those personalities in the Sonova Group who are associated with the foundation's purpose, due to their commitment to date. The foundation's independence is assured by the external Advisory Board, made up of experts in audiology, which is responsible for evaluating suitable projects proposed to the Foundation

## FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS

**LUKAS BRAUNSCHWEILER (PRESIDENT)**  
CEO Sonova Holding AG

**SARAH KREIENBÜHL**  
Group Vice President Corporate HRM and Communications Sonova Holding AG

**MAARTEN BARMENTLO**  
Group Vice President Marketing Sonova Holding AG

**ORA BÜRKLI-HALEVY**  
Vice President Product Marketing Phonak AG

**TRACEY KRUGER**  
Vice President Global Marketing Advanced Bionics

## OFFICE

**ELENA TORRESANI**  
Head of Hear the World Initiative

**MICHELE MEIER**  
Communication and Corporate Social Responsibility Manager

**DARIA TAMAGNI**  
Corporate Communications and Corporate Social Responsibility Professional

Board for the allocation of foundation funds. The Advisory Board members are all employed in an honorary capacity. Incidental expenses are reimbursed as and when they occur. In addition, three Sonova employees are given the opportunity to liaise with the Advisory Board and serve as employee representatives for a two-year term.

## ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

**PROF. DR. RICHARD SEEWALD**  
Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the National Centre for Audiology, The University of Western Ontario (CAN)

**PROF. DR. JOHN BAMFORD**  
Honorary Professor of Audiology, University of Manchester (GBR)

**PROF. DR. OROZIMBO A. COSTA**  
Senior Professor in ENT medicine at the Audiological Research Center HRAC at the University of São Paulo (BRA)

**PROF. DR. BEATRIZ NOVAES**  
Professor of the Department of Human and Health Science at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (BRA)

**ANDREA BOHNERT**  
Senior Medical Technician at the Department of Otolaryngology, Head & Neck Surgery and Communication Disorders at Mainz University Medical Center (GER)

## EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVES IN THE ADVISORY BOARD:

**JANE BEVAN**  
Manager of Education and Training for the international division of Advanced Bionics

**JEAN ANNE JORDAN**  
Audiologist in the Research and Development department of Phonak AG

**MARTIN KIRCHBERGER**  
Research engineer in the Research and Development department of Phonak AG



## IMPRINT

MAY 2015

**CONCEPT AND TEXT**  
Hear the World Foundation

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