



**HEAR
THE WORLD
FOUNDATION**

a Sonova Group initiative



HEAR
THE WORLD
FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT 2012/13

CAMPAIGNING AGAINST HEARING LOSS ON A GLOBAL SCALE



To create a world in which every person has the chance to enjoy better hearing and live life without restrictions – that is our vision. This vision guides us through our day-to-day work at Sonova and spurs us on to tackle every task. Every challenge we face and solve takes us one step further toward achieving this goal.

Our innovations make it possible for people with hearing loss to experience music, to converse effortlessly with friends and family – in short, to enjoy all aspects of life and savor sounds to the full, in all their huge variety.

Unfortunately however, there are also many people who are unable to benefit from our technology, either because they do not have the financial means or because they have limited access to the appropriate care in their home countries. This is where we do our best to fulfill our social responsibility and help out. With our Hear the World Foundation, a corporate social responsibility initiative of the Sonova Group, we can reach out to these people raise awareness and help prevent hearing loss in the wider community.

Children with hearing loss are at the very heart of our commitment. After all, it is these young people whose future prospects can be enhanced by the provision of hearing aids as well as audiological and medical care. We are very fortunate to have been able to help hundreds of people enjoy better hearing since the Hear the World Foundation was founded in 2006. Yet there is so much more we want and need to do! In 2013 for example, we are planning to extend our activities to include cochlear implantation (CI), with the help of the Sonova company Advanced Bionics. This is because a hearing aid alone is sometimes not enough, especially in severe cases of hearing loss. In particular,

children born profoundly deaf may benefit from cochlear implantation at an early stage to enable them to learn how to speak and hear.

Providing aid where it is needed – this is something that concerns us all. All Sonova employees are therefore invited to become ambassadors for good hearing and get involved in the work of the Hear the World Foundation. With their expert knowledge, they actively support the foundation's projects by doing voluntary work on location. Furthermore, following an application process, three seats on the Advisory Board of the Hear the World Foundation were awarded to employees at the start of the year.

The tremendous response from our staff has shown us how strongly the people working at Sonova identify with Hear the World and our vision to create a world in which every single person has the chance to experience good hearing.

You can find out exactly what we are doing to transform this vision into reality on the following pages. On that note, I hope that reading our Activity Report 2012/13 will offer you an interesting insight into the work of the Hear the World Foundation.

Sincerely,

Lukas Braunschweiler
President of the Hear the World Foundation

Hear the World is a corporate social responsibility initiative set up by Sonova Holding AG, the world's leading manufacturer of innovative hearing solutions.

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OUR GOALS, OUR BASIC PRINCIPLES, OUR SUPPORT

Since 2006, the Hear the World Foundation has been advocating equal opportunities and improved quality of life for people with hearing loss throughout the world. The Hear the World Foundation is a corporate social responsibility initiative of Sonova Holding, the leading manufacturer of innovative hearing solutions. The vision of the Hear the World Foundation is a world in which:

- each person has the chance of good hearing,
- wearing a hearing aid is no longer a taboo,
- hearing is cherished and protected, and
- people with reduced hearing experience equal opportunities.

The employees, ambassadors, and partners of the Hear the World Foundation advocate these objectives daily.

Since 2006, the Hear the World Foundation has been involved in over 45 projects on all five continents and has already given hundreds of people with hearing loss the chance of a better life.

Foundation goal

The Hear the World Foundation's goal is to be tangibly involved in projects, studies or campaigns aimed at improving the quality of life for people with hearing loss. Support is given via financial resources, the provision of hearing systems, or the dedication of an in-house team.

Sustainability principle

The underlying maxim in project selection and implementation is sustainability. The Hear the World Foundation thus predominantly supports projects with a long-term holistic approach. What exactly does that mean in practice? It means, for example, that care is always taken when providing hearing aids to ensure that the hearing aid recipients have access to a stable, regular supply of batteries and also receive regular care by hearing care professionals. As the required expertise is often absent in developing countries, the Hear the World Foundation enables corresponding training sessions to be conducted. Particularly in the case of children with hearing loss, accompanying measures, such as speech therapy, is often required as well. These are only a few examples of the follow-up measures that need to be considered in addition to the initial help.

HELP US TO HELP!

At the Hear the World Foundation, we notice on a daily basis that we can support only a fraction of the people who actually need help. You, dear reader, can also help people to hear again.

You can enable children with hearing loss to have an education, integrate into the community and realize their full potential in life.

Please help us to help! The Hear the World Foundation, a recognized Swiss foundation with stringent guidelines, ensures that all the donations received are passed on to our projects. Even the smallest donation is welcome and makes a difference.

The Hear the World Foundation warmly thanks all sponsors on behalf of those supported.

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

HEAR THE WORLD CELEBRITY AMBASSADORS

Sting, Freida Pinto, John Legend, Julianne Moore, Peter Gabriel, Michael Bublé, Monica Bellucci, Take That, Diane Kruger are just some of the more than 60 celebrities who generously support Hear the World as ambassadors. Rock legend and photographer Bryan Adams took photos of each ambassador in the symbolic Hear The World pose: with one hand behind the ear symbolizing conscious hearing. They all contribute toward raising public awareness for the importance of good hearing and the consequences of hearing loss.

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



Copyright by Bryan Adams



The Hear the World Foundation is committed to improving the quality of life and promoting equal opportunities for people with hearing loss globally. The Foundation has a special focus on projects that support children in reaching their developmental milestones and realizing their full potential in life, regardless of their hearing loss.

OUR PROJECTS 2012/13

- 1 AFRICA**
Establishment of a telemedicine network for the African continent
- 2 ARMENIA**
Diagnosis and hearing health care for children with hearing loss – partnership with a Swiss clinic
- 3 AUSTRALIA**
Danger of noise-induced hearing loss – education for children
- 4 GERMANY**
Self-confidence and optimism – annual gathering of children with hearing loss
- 5 GUATEMALA**
Pioneering work in South America – hearing tests and hearing aids for children
- 6 GEORGIA**
Education and speech therapy for children in Tbilisi
- 7 GREAT BRITAIN**
A sensorially stimulating playground for children affected by hearing loss
Sports, games and fun – the Saturday Club for children with hearing loss
- 8 HAITI**
Communication in the dark – solar lights enable communication for people with hearing loss
- 9 CAMBODIA**
Education for the public and support for children in need
- 10 CANADA**
Medical and audiological support for Native Americans in Attawapiskat, Ontario
- 11 KENYA**
Audiological care and education for children with hearing loss
Noise is unhealthy – raising awareness of the danger of noise-induced hearing loss
- 12 MALAWI**
First audiological hearing clinic in the country
- 13 THAILAND**
Fifty hearing aids for children from the Klong Toey slum in Bangkok
- 14 USA**
Support for people with hearing loss living below the poverty line
Fellowships in pediatric audiology
- 15 INTERNATIONAL**
Special Olympics: Medical check-ups, hearing screenings, and hearing aids for athletes
52 Children Providing one child a week the gift of better hearing

HEARING HEALTH CARE FOR CHILDREN

Children with hearing loss are at the very heart of our commitment. After all, it is these young people whose future prospects can be enhanced by the provision of hearing health care for children. The foundation provides support for children with hearing loss whose families have no access to hearing health care due to geographical, social, or economic reasons. Within the scope of partner projects, the Hear the World Foundation particularly advocates the establishment of hearing screenings for newborn babies – after all, the earlier hearing loss is diagnosed, the better the outcome of treatment is likely to be and the better chance a child will have of experiencing good hearing.

Projects concerned with hearing health care for children are currently underway in Armenia, Georgia, Canada, Kenya, Malawi, Cambodia, Thailand, Guatemala, Nigeria, and the USA.



A young patient from the project Orejitas Felices in Guatemala

ARMENIA

SWISS PHYSICIANS LEND A HAND AT A CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL IN YEREVAN

The successful partnership between the University Children's Hospital Zurich in Switzerland and the Arabkir Hospital in the Armenian capital Yerevan has now been flourishing for 20 years. During this time, physicians from Switzerland have been on hand to provide their Armenian colleagues with helpful advice and assistance in various areas of pediatric care. The support provided is not limited to the two-week training courses run by the Swiss specialists in Yerevan – regular contact by e-mail ensures that staff in both hospitals can continuously share their experiences and contribute toward sustainable development. The Hear the World Foundation has been providing financial and technical support for this pediatric audiology partnership for three years now, and the progress has been tremendous: precise audiometric testing has now become standard practice at the Arabkir Hospital, as have professional fittings of high-quality hearing aids along with supplementary speech therapy provided by trained therapists. Babies can now be provided with their first hearing aids at the age of just six months thanks to the use of

new and sophisticated measuring techniques such as BERA (brainstem electrical response audiometry) testing and the now widely established newborn hearing screenings.



A boy receiving hearing health care at Arabkir children hospital

PROFILE OF A FORMER PATIENT

Irena, aged 25, has suffered from severe hearing loss in both ears since the age of one. She was one of the first children to be diagnosed and fit with a hearing aid when the project in Armenia was launched in 1998. Now a woman with a highly successful career, she looks back on her personal childhood experiences.

“My hearing impairment was caused by an infection I had when I was a very young child. I was 20 months old when it was properly diagnosed, and I received my first hearing aid at the age of two. This was followed by years of speech therapy with daily exercises. Looking back on it, those years were tough and involved a lot of training, but I learned to speak by the age of about four. My mother was always there to support me and didn't let me become demoralized or give

up. Social contact was also really difficult for me to begin with. No one would play with me. “Who's that? What's that behind your ear?” – the same questions, time and again. I constantly felt offended by little things. Yet the situation was better at school – the teachers liked me because I was so hard-working. After finishing school, I started studying Japanese and English, and now I work as a consultant for a large company. I am also involved in the issue of hearing loss in children. I know from my own experience just how important this is: the public needs to realize that our handicap doesn't somehow make us special – we are completely normal, just like everybody else. These days I no longer have any difficulties with social interaction or communication in my environment – all that hard work has more than paid off!”

PROGRAMS FOR PARENTS

Parental involvement right from the start can have a positive influence on the age-appropriate development of children with hearing loss. If parents can provide effective support for their children when it comes to using hearing aids or undergoing speech therapy, this can lead to significant improvements in results. In many countries, however, parental involvement is not easy. This is because there is no information available to tell them how they can best support their children and in what way they can encourage their development – a situation that is also often aggravated by additional factors such as financial worries and a poor standard of education.

This is where the parent-focused projects run by the Hear the World Foundation come into play, whether they involve special training, specifically arranged consultations, or the provision of user-friendly guides. Parents not only benefit from advice on how to handle their children's hearing aids; they are also given the opportunity to learn methods and daily exercises that can help them enhance their child's speech development.

As part of its parent information program, the Hear the World Foundation is currently supporting projects in Cambodia, Armenia, and Kenya.

CAMBODIA

A TRAUMATIC PAST AND A HOPEFUL FUTURE

For three years now, the Hear the World Foundation has been lending its support to the organization All Ears Cambodia, which focuses on helping people on the fringe of Cambodian society. The work of the organization's director, British audiologist Glyn Vaughan, covers various areas relating to the theme of hearing loss. As well as raising awareness of medical issues, providing audiological care and training up its own audiologists, the All Ears Cambodia team also places great importance on working with parents. Together, a network of over 40 local and international aid organizations run campaigns in hospitals and on the radio to help make parents of children with hearing loss aware of the audiological clinic in Phnom Penh. This is the first and most important step in ensuring the children receive the support they need – many parents are neither informed about the medical services on offer nor aware of who they should

contact for help. When a child has been fitted with a hearing aid for the first time, All Ears Cambodia offers the child's parents regular consultations in which they have the opportunity to ask questions. The project in Cambodia was presented with the Prof. John Bamford Award in 2012.

Professor John Bamford is a member of the Hear the World Foundation Advisory Board and held the Ellis Llywd Jones Chair of Audiology and Deaf Education at the University of Manchester from 1989 to 2007. He recently chaired a review of audiology services for the Irish Health Service Executive, and is now advising on the implementation of the new Audiology Clinical Care Programme in Ireland. The annual John Bamford Award is presented to projects that stand out for their high sustainability and professionalism.



A hearing aid fitting at All Ears Cambodia

“Poverty in Cambodia is omnipresent and most people have practically no access to medical care. That’s where All Ears Cambodia offers a unique service and much needed help in all areas of hearing health care. This organization is highly professional and committed to providing sustainable local services. I was particularly impressed by the great personal dedication that the staff shows” (reports Foundation Board Member Ora Buerkli-Halevy after her project visit in March 2013.)

INTERVIEW:

Glyn Vaughan, founder and director of All Ears Cambodia, on the opportunities and difficulties involved in working with parents:

What are the major challenges in dealing with parents whose children are affected by hearing loss?

In actual fact, the most difficult part is telling parents for the first time that their child has a hearing impairment – especially if the damage is irreparable. For many of them, receiving this news is a catastrophic and traumatic blow. Their reactions vary widely, ranging from despair and anxiety to feelings of guilt. Many refuse to believe it at first. We therefore have to deal very sensitively with parents, which requires a great deal of patience and understanding.

How do you manage to convince parents that they need your help?

It certainly isn't easy sometimes, as providing audiological care is a long and drawn-out process. First of all we have to perform hearing tests, then fit a precisely adapted hearing aid, and even after that we still need to carry out regular check-ups. All this requires cooperation from the parents. Then there is also speech therapy and special requirements to help the child at school, which also depend on parental support. The most important thing is to offer parents good, detailed advice and emotional support. Contact with other

parents in similar situations can also be extremely helpful, which is why we are planning to set up our own “parent groups,” where they can share their experiences.

What are the most common questions parents ask?

When a child has been diagnosed with hearing loss, most of the questions asked relate to understanding the problem: “How can the hearing impairment be treated? Is it possible for my child's hearing to get better again? Or will it get worse and worse?” Most of the other questions focus on the child's future: “Will my child learn to speak? Will my child be able to talk to other people? Can my child lead a normal life?”

What inspires you the most about working with children and parents?

It is always wonderful to watch how much progress children make, and how quickly, when we and the parents pull together. It is incredibly gratifying when I meet a child who was given hearing aids by us several years earlier and can now speak clearly and distinctly. Many of them attend school regularly and have a positive outlook on the future.

“Without this help, I would not have been able to cope with my two daughters. There is no other facility for children with congenital hearing loss anywhere in Cambodia.”

(Mother of two daughters with autosomal recessive inherited deafness)

PREVENTION OF HEARING LOSS

There are many effective ways to help children and adults with hearing loss. Yet it would be so much easier to take every available opportunity to prevent hearing loss from occurring in the first place! According to the WHO, around 50 percent of all cases of hearing loss in developing countries, for example, could have been prevented. In most cases, insufficient or incorrect medical treatment of infectious diseases such as otitis media (a middle ear infection) is to blame, and taking excessive doses of the antimalarial drug quinine is also still a common cause of hearing damage. But how do we go about educating people who cannot read newspapers or posters and have no access to media? This is no easy task, but the Hear the World Foundation is putting a great deal of effort into tackling it.

In contrast, dealing with the issue of prevention in more developed countries seems incredibly easy. However, here we are faced with an altogether different problem: noise-induced hearing loss is right at the top of the list of acquired hearing impairments. Electronic toys, video games and loud CD players are standard features of any child's room, while young people often put their hearing at risk when they use mobile MP3 players with earphones, frequently blasting their favorite music straight into their ears at much too loud a volume. Most school-based prevention schemes are therefore aimed at children in elementary school level and are designed to make them aware of these potential causes of hearing damage, encouraging them to protect their hearing in the long term.

The Hear the World Foundation is currently supporting prevention-based projects in Australia, Canada, and Kenya.

HOW LOUD IS TOO LOUD?

AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL CHILDREN PUT THEIR OWN HEARING TO THE TEST

Eight out of ten school children set the earphones on their mobile MP3 players to a volume that could potentially cause hearing damage – this is the conclusion reached by the Grow Smart Foundation, the Hear the World Foundation's project partner in Australia. As many as one in five Australian teenagers already suffer from hearing loss – an alarming statistic!

A lot of work is needed here to raise awareness of how to prevent hearing loss. With this in mind, volunteers from the organization are traveling all over Australia to warn elementary school pupils about the risk of noise-induced hearing loss.

In interactive workshops, individual classes are shown short, engaging movies geared specifically toward children, which explain how the human auditory system works. These videos demonstrate exactly what happens in the ear canal when the ear is exposed to loud noises. The children are then given the opportunity to test this out for themselves using their own electronic devices so that they can learn to tell when noise volumes reach a damaging level.

More information on the topic of noise volume and hearing protection can be found at www.hear-the-world.com.



Girls in Australia during an MP3 player test

INTERVIEW:

Four years ago, Australian Dr. Julia Norris set up the Grow Smart Foundation and developed the Hear2day program with the aim of raising awareness among elementary school pupils of noise-induced hearing loss. The audiologist was alarmed to see more and more children unconsciously inflicting damage on their hearing, for example by using MP3 players, so she decided to take matters into her own hands.

How are the school-based workshops run?

Even music is a form of noise – realizing this is the first step for the school children, and the biggest hurdle they have to overcome. We then talk about various sources of noise and their effects on our hearing. Our workshop program combines science with storytelling and having fun. We want to apply knowledge to daily life in a very tangible way. That is why we encourage the children to gauge volume for themselves using their own MP3 players. Our surveys show that the workshops prompt a lot of discussion among the children's families at home afterwards, so everyone becomes more aware of how to take greater care in dealing with all kinds of noise.

How do school children respond to the information provided?

Working with children is fantastic. They immediately join in with their own stories. Girls tell us about loud music in ballet classes, while boys talk about motorsport. They discuss the noise levels of lawnmowers and rock concerts. What alarms me the most is how many children carry on listening to music through earphones in bed in the evening, not realizing how dangerous this is.

What kind of feedback do you receive from the teachers at the schools involved?

The feedback we receive from them is very positive. They all fully support our program. They are pleasantly surprised by the teaching material we provide and find the workshops just as thought-provoking as the children do. Many of the teachers who listen to music themselves while they are out jogging were among the first to test the noise levels of their MP3 players. They also took away the free ear protectors we gave out to use when mowing the lawn at weekends.

What experiences have surprised you personally?

I am always amazed when children turn up their music to 100 to 105 decibels, believing this to be completely normal, and don't pay any thought to the risks they are exposing themselves to. However, finding out that, following our workshop, children limit the volume to 85 decibels and, put a lock on the volume control is the most rewarding thing about our work. This shows they have understood how important healthy hearing is and what they can do to protect it!

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

How can sustainable audiological aid be guaranteed in developing countries? The long-term effectiveness of many aid campaigns is open to question if patient care is only provided on a selective basis by specialists brought in from abroad. Even if these physicians and audiologists manage to examine as many children as possible, diagnose cases of hearing loss, and fit hearing aids, the support often grinds to a halt as soon as they leave again. However, each individual patient with hearing loss needs continuous, professional care.

One genuinely sustainable approach is to provide professional training for audiologists specifically in the local area. This not only guarantees the provision of long-term care but also helps build country-specific networks and creates career opportunities for a young and talented workforce. The Hear the World Foundation sees unique potential in this, for both patients and audiologists. This is what stimulates us to

support projects that involve establishing training institutions for audiologists and develop appropriate training courses. Other schemes include offering advanced training opportunities for teachers who teach children with hearing loss at their schools, or for hospital staff who need to be trained to deal with people affected by this issue. However, it is equally important to continue to promote research in the field of audiology in more developed countries, too, and to provide support for researchers – in the form of grants, for instance – to help spread the latest knowledge all over the world.

The Hear the World Foundation is currently involved in training and educational projects in Malawi, Guatemala, and the USA.



Photographer Nino Ellison

Employee training

MALAWI

AUSTRALIAN SPECIALISTS SET UP AN AUDIOLOGICAL CLINIC

Husband and wife Peter and Rebecca Bartlett are the kind of people who transform their words into action. The Hear the World Foundation has been supporting their outstanding commitment since 2011. Within a short period of time, they established the first audiological clinic ever to be set up in Malawi, one of the poorest countries in Africa. At the clinic, which is based in the country's capital Lilongwe, the Bartletts take part in numerous activities. They examine patients of all ages on a daily basis, make a continuous effort to procure better technical equipment, offer advanced training for teachers who teach children with hearing loss and, at the same time, train local audiologists up to a high standard to

help them pass their final examinations. This training not only involves teaching theoretical knowledge relating to anatomy, physiology, audiometry and various other fields; the trainees are also encouraged to gain practical experience right from the start. Every Thursday, the six students currently taking part in the training scheme accompany their tutor, Peter Bartlett, as he goes out to examine children and adults in the nearby villages. As the Australian audiologist is keen to stress: "We urgently need audiologists who have local roots in terms of culture and language, and who can pass on their knowledge and skills with plenty of enthusiasm."

INTERVIEW:

39-year-old Mwasoni Phiri and 35-year-old Alinane Mtonya are studying audiology at the ABC Clinic run by Peter Bartlett in the Malawian capital Lilongwe. Read on to find out why they both decided to pursue this profession and what experiences they have gained so far.

What made you decide to study audiology?

Mwasoni: I have always wanted to work with children who either come from difficult family circumstances or are disadvantaged in some other way. Also, I was once affected by temporary hearing loss myself as a result of a head injury in a basketball game, so I know what it's like.

Alinane: I talked to friends who work in various hospitals. They all said that audiology is an interesting field of medicine, but it had not yet been established anywhere in Malawi.

What interests you the most about this profession?

Mwasoni: I really like explaining hearing problems to people. This enables me to advocate what I believe in and disseminate knowledge in a very practical way.

Alinane: The first time we went out to examine people in the villages – that's when I truly realized that our help can change these people's lives. For me it's more than just a job; it's a mission!



Peter Bartlett with a young patient

Are there any experiences that have made an impression on you personally?

Mwasoni: The joy and excitement on the children's faces when their quality of life improves so much thanks to a hearing aid – that is always great to see. When we examine children and I see what a poor condition their ears are in, this always gives me the impetus to keep persevering so I can help as many people as possible.

Alinane: An incredible number of experiences have made an impression on me. I recently watched how a girl's face changed when her hearing aid was switched on and she could hear her mother's voice for the first time – it was wonderful!

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Snowboarding, figure skating, biathlon – and 100-meter snowshoe races, too. These were some of the disciplines showcased at the 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Pyeongchang, South Korea. In early February, more than 2,000 athletes from 107 countries gathered here to test their skills in competitive events across seven disciplines. They all had one thing in common: mental or multiple disabilities. Yet they had no intention of missing out on the fun of sport!

The Special Olympics is the world's largest sporting movement for people with mental or multiple disabilities to be recognized by the International Olympic Committee. People with such disabilities run an approximately 40 percent higher risk of experiencing additional health-related constraints, such as hearing loss. In poorer countries in particular, those affected have hardly any access to adequate medical care.



Kenyan athletes in Hear the World pose for conscious hearing



Korean athletes at the games in Pyeongchang

The Special Olympics Healthy Hearing Program tackles this problem by providing comprehensive hearing screenings for the athletes at the Games. This forms part of the wide-ranging Healthy Athletes Program, which offers all participants the opportunity to undergo thorough medical examinations. The Special Olympics is therefore more than just a sporting event – it is also the world's foremost health program for people with mental disabilities. In Pyeongchang, for example, the Hear the World Foundation offered audiological services provided by its own highly trained staff on site, donated high-quality Phonak hearing aids to 55 athletes from 35 countries, and arranged free follow-up care in the athletes'

home countries. A total of 1,183 athletes aged between 8 and 64 underwent hearing screenings in Pyeongchang, and 218 of these were diagnosed with hearing loss. The aim of the cooperation between the Special Olympics and the Hear the World Foundation is to ensure that audiological care is provided at as many national and local Special Olympics sporting events as possible in the future.

The partnership is based on a vision to create a network intended to help more and more athletes experience better hearing in the future. The program is being extended to additional countries as part of a scheme running until 2014.

AWARD-WINNING TELEMEDICINE PROJECT IN AFRICA



Every year, a project in the Hear the World Foundation's portfolio is presented with the Prof. Richard Seewald Award, which is named in honor of a member of the foundation's Advisory Board who has demonstrated tireless commitment in his work on pediatric audiology over the decades. Hear the World Foundation Advisory Board member Professor Richard Seewald is a Distinguished University Professor Emeritus at the National Centre for Audiology and in the School of Communication Sciences and Disorders, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Western Ontario. The annual Richard Seewald Award is presented to an institution dedicated to the detection and treatment of hearing impairment in children and babies. The award aims to promote measures for improvement, for example in the areas of diagnosis and the fitting of hearing aids. In 2012, it was awarded to the Hearing Health Care consortium for its work on telemedicine in Africa.



Dr. Adebolajo Adeymo in the Institute of Child Health in Nigeria

In developing countries, people with hearing loss need professional yet affordable treatment that covers as wide an area as possible. This calls for innovative solutions, which is why three scientists from Australia, Nigeria, and South Africa – with the help of the Hear the World Foundation – are currently developing a telemedicine system for the African continent. With KUDUwave, a mobile device for taking audiometric measurements, voluntary helpers will be able to perform accurate hearing tests in remote regions in the future. This method represents a scientific milestone. Experienced experts will monitor and check the test results over the Internet, guaranteeing that patients receive professional care without the need for an expert directly on site.

The equipment is currently being tested at a school in Nigeria, with the trials set to be extended to Malawi and South Africa at a later stage. The aim of the research project is to develop sustainable methods for use across the entire African continent. Another member of the Hear the World Foundation's Advisory Board, Professor John Bamford, recently visited the project and described it enthusiastically as "a really exciting project with enormous potential – both for developing countries and for countries in the first world!"

52 CHILDREN

In addition to the projects we support with the help of partners in various countries, we launched our own program – "52 children" – in 2010. As part of this initiative, every week of the year the Hear the World Foundation gives a child in need the gift of better hearing, thus significantly boosting the child's quality of life. These children are not only

supplied with high-quality devices and batteries; they also receive ongoing professional care, provided by a local representative or partner of Phonak.

The Hear the World Foundation accepts applications for the "52 children" project all year round.

ROMANIA GABRIELA, 8 YEARS OLD

Gabriela, a cheerful girl from a poor Roma family, has severe congenital hearing loss. Because of her attentive nature, her loss of hearing remained undetected for a long time. The problem was not diagnosed until she was four years old, after which she started attending a kindergarten for children with hearing loss. Gabriela had to manage with a second-hand hearing aid until well into her school days, as the Romanian state only contributes a small proportion of the costs of such treatment and her family could not afford a better device. In spite of all these difficulties, the lively little girl developed so well that she was able to go to a regular school. Gabriela's family found out about the "52 children" project through friends, and thanks to this scheme she was provided with a high-quality hearing aid and FM system. This opened up a new world for her, as she could suddenly perceive noises she had never heard before. Gabriela's teacher is also delighted with the progress made by her pupil, who is now in the second grade. Her language skills are getting better every day and, thanks to her positive attitude, this bright eight-year-old has a very promising future ahead of her.



MOLDOVA MIHAELA, 11 YEARS OLD

Mihaela's profound hearing loss was caused by a meningitis infection she contracted as a young child. Mihaela lives with 72 other children in a home for children with hearing loss in Cahul. Her parents both work in Spain to earn a living, and her grandmother looks after her during the holidays. In 2012, at a summer camp in Switzerland run by the aid organization swisscor, Mihaela was given a hearing aid by the Hear the World Foundation. When she perceived sounds for the very first time, her whole face lit up and she started dancing on the spot. Her joy was indescribable! Three months after she returned from the camp we spoke with Mihaela's teacher. He was thrilled and says that her entire personality has been transformed, that she is much happier and is making great progress at school. He believes that Mihaela's delight at regaining her hearing has also helped give her a sense of optimism and a thirst for knowledge.



PROJECT REVIEW: BASKETBALL – A YOUNG ATHLETE AT THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS

In each Activity Report, the Hear the World Foundation reports on its ongoing project activities around the world. The ultimate aim of our work is for all our projects to make a sustainable impact. That is why we are keen to present people who have benefited from the audiological care provided as part of a Hear the World project in the past. How are they doing today? To what extent have their lives and everyday routines changed?

23-year-old Manuel Hofmann took part in the Special Olympics German National Summer Games in Munich last May. As already mentioned on page 16, the Hear the World Foundation offers free hearing screenings for all athletes participating in the Special Olympics in its capacity as sponsor of the Special Olympics Healthy Hearing Program. Manuel, a basketball player, was one of the athletes to benefit from this. He was diagnosed with hearing loss and subsequently given free Phonak hearing aids and follow-up care provided by a local Phonak partner.

“Manuel now wears his hearing aids all the time, just like a pair of glasses,” says his mother. “I keep noticing that they are really doing him good and improving his quality of life.”

Her son never used to like answering the telephone and preferred to avoid contact with other people as he only felt

secure and comfortable among his family, yet now he takes part in conversations much more frequently. He is also more communicative at his sports club – and the 23-year-old certainly does a lot of sport: in addition to basketball, which he has played at the Special Olympics and several other tournaments over the year, Manuel is a big soccer fan and also participates in skittles and bowling competitions. “Sometimes I feel guilty that it took us so long to notice that Manuel had a hearing impairment,” says his mother, “but he is also great at adapting and for a long time we thought that he was simply slow to grasp some things because of his mental disability, or that he just wasn’t very good at expressing himself.” Nobody considered the notion that Manuel might often be struggling to understand his parents purely on an acoustic level. His abstracted and dreamy behavior at times made it difficult to draw any conclusions in this regard. Occasionally he would give odd answers to his mother’s questions, or quickly take offence if he was corrected and become withdrawn. This rarely happens nowadays, and even unforeseen events no longer throw Manuel off balance. “I never realized that hearing and speaking have such a significant influence on social contact,” says Manuel’s mother, with a hint of relief.

In Manuel’s own words, “Now things are much better than before. Now I finally understand!”



Manuel Hofmann and his mother Silke

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Employees of Sonova, together with our celebrity ambassadors, actively support the Hear the World Foundation. They show their commitment through fundraising activities in aid of the Foundation or voluntary work as part of a Hear the World project, creating equal opportunities and a better quality of life for people with hearing loss.

WE RUN FOR HEAR THE WORLD

On the initiative of two Sonova employees, six teams of four runners and four lone runners participated in the Zurich Marathon on April 7, 2013, to raise money for the Hear the World Foundation. Thanks to their athletic efforts, they raised a total of around 10,000 Swiss francs for the Hear the World Foundation. Irma Tambini, initiator of the employee project, is happy with the result: “The aim of our campaign was to raise people’s awareness of the importance of good hearing. At the same time, our fundraising supports children with hearing loss who don’t have access to audiological care.”



Sonova employees at the Zurich Marathon

VOLUNTEERING IN KENYA

Douglas Baldwin, Audiology and Training Manager at Unitron, a member of the Sonova Group, travelled to Nairobi in Kenya on a volunteer mission trip. During his stay, he assisted the local audiologist with his knowledge in pediatric fitting. The Hear the World Foundation has been supporting the “Regain Hearing – Join Life” project for several years, enabling hearing health care for disadvantaged children in Nairobi. “To ensure the sustainability of the supported projects, it is important not only to provide children with the required hearing aids but also to educate the local audiologists on appropriate pediatric fitting, verification, and follow-up procedures,” says Doug Baldwin.



Douglas Baldwin with a young patient

WHO WE ARE

FOUNDATION BODIES

The Foundation Board comprises those personalities at Sonova who are associated with the Foundation's purpose due to their attitude and commitment to date.

The Foundation's independence is assured by the Advisory Board, which is responsible for the evaluation of suitable projects proposed to the Foundation Board for the allocation of Foundation funds. It also advises the Foundation Board regarding decisions on the amount of the payments to be allocated. The Advisory Council members are all employed in an honorary capacity. Incidental expenses are reimbursed as and when they occur.

FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS

- **Lukas Braunschweiler** (president), CEO Sonova Holding AG
- **Sarah Kreienbuehl**, Group Vice-President Corporate HRM and Communications Sonova Holding AG
- **Maarten Barmantlo**, Group Vice-President Marketing Sonova Holding AG
- **Ora Buerkli-Halevy**, Vice-President Product Marketing Phonak AG
- **Tracey Kruger**, Vice President of Global Marketing Advanced Bionics

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

- **Prof. Dr. Richard Seewald**, Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the National Centre for Audiology, The University of Western Ontario
- **Prof. Dr. John Bamford**, Honorary Professor of Audiology, University of Manchester

Since January 2013, three employees have been members of the Advisory Board:

- **Jane Bevan**: Manager of education and training for the international division of Advanced Bionics
- **Martin Kirchberger**: Research engineer in the research and development department of Phonak AG
- **Jean Anne Jordan**: Audiologist in the research and development department of Phonak AG

powerone)))

VARTA Microbattery, the manufacturer of the premium brand power one, is delighted to support the Hear the World Foundation by providing hearing aid batteries for various projects.

power one hearing aid batteries are known for their exceptional stability, reliability, safety, and performance. For many companies, VARTA Microbattery is also the partner of choice for customized product solutions.

Further information is available at www.powerone-batteries.com.



ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT

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 and financial 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.

In the fiscal year 2012/13, the Foundation Board consisted of the following persons:

- Lukas Braunschweiler
- Sarah Kreienbuehl
- Maarten Barmentlo
- Ora Buerkli-Halevy
- Tracey Kruger

The business operations of the Foundation comply with the statutes dated December 4, 2006, and the Foundation 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 statement is prepared in accordance with the accounting principles under ARR 21 so that as reliable an assessment as possible can be made of the Foundation's net assets and earnings situation. It also contains the previous year's figures. The regulations on commercial accounting also apply.

3 VALUATION PRINCIPLES GOVERNING INDIVIDUAL ITEMS IN THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Liquid funds include cash in an account held with UBS AG in Zurich. Other receivables relate to withholding tax that has not yet been reimbursed. Prepaid income relates to the auditing costs and individual outstanding invoices.

4 FINANCIAL ASSETS AND EXPLANATIONS REGARDING ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

The Foundation does not have any fixed assets. Its assets are comprised of the Foundation capital, which is deposited in a short-notice account. The capital was invested with UBS AG with an average interest rate of 0.25 % and is available on a daily basis.

5 GRATUITOUS (FREE) SERVICES

All resources required for the management and governance of the Foundation were provided free of charge by Phonak AG.

6 TRANSACTIONS WITH RELATED PARTIES

Non-cash benefits were provided in full by Phonak AG. Instruments 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 362,510.

7 EVENTS AFTER THE BALANCE SHEET DATE

No events occurred.

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:

	2012 / 2013 (in Swiss francs)	
Technological support for projects abroad	327,916	41 %
Financial support for projects abroad	255,558	32 %
Technological support for projects in Switzerland	72,916	9 %
Financial support for projects in Switzerland	56,603	7 %
Administrative expenditures	72,641	9 %
Expenses for fundraising and marketing	17,349	2 %
Other operating expenditures	1,521	0 %
	804,504	100 %

As of the balance sheet date, CHF 23,387 in support contributions from projects 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 December 2012.

BALANCE SHEET AS OF MARCH 31 (in Swiss francs)

	2012 / 2013	2011 / 2012
Assets		
Current assets:		
Liquid funds	297,798	387,487
Other receivables – from third parties	(666)	170
	297,132	387,657
Total assets	297,132	387,657
Liabilities		
Outside capital:		
Prepaid income	7,000	31,139
	7,000	31,139
Organization capital:		
Paid-up capital	500,000	500,000
Acquired capital	(209,868)	(143,482)
	290,132	356,518
Total liabilities	297,132	387,657

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

	2012 / 2013	2011 / 2012
Income		
Proceeds from donations	738,476	571,442
Revenues from fundraising	0	
Other income	21	1,228
Total income	738,497	572,670
Expenses		
Technological support for projects abroad	(327,916)	41 % (302,785)
Financial support for projects abroad	(255,558)	32 % (242,959)
Technological support for projects in Switzerland	(72,916)	9 % (37,407)
Financial support for projects in Switzerland	(56,603)	7 % (78,757)
Administrative expenditures	(72,641)	9 % (97,202)
Expenses for fundraising and marketing	(17,349)	2 % (80,444)
Other operating expenditures	(1,521)	0 % (1,864)
Total expenses	(804,504)	100 % (841,418)
Interim result 1	(66,007)	(268,748)
Financial income	131	486
Profit/loss for the year before	(510)	0
allocation to organization capital	(66,386)	(268,262)

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN CAPITAL (in Swiss francs)

	As of 04/01/2012	Allocation	Change	As of 03/31/2013
Organization capital				
Paid-up capital	500,000			500,000
Acquired capital	(143,482)		(66,386)	(209,868)
Total organization capital	356,518	0	(66,386)	290,132

IMPRINT

May 2013

CONCEPT

Hear the World Foundation

TEXT

Daniela Tewes
Christine Ringhoff

DESIGN

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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 systems, 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 60 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

www.facebook.com/CanYouHearTheWorld

