

WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION

Hearing Loss and Impairment Statistics (March 2006)

- According to 2005 estimates, 278 million people worldwide have moderate to profound hearing loss in both ears.
- 80% of deaf and hearing impaired people live in low and middle income countries.
- The number of people worldwide with all levels of hearing impairment is rising, mainly due to a growing global population and longer life expectancies.
- Chronic middle ear infection is the main cause of mild to moderate hearing impairment in children.
- The impact of hearing impairment on a child's speech, language, education and social integration depends on the level and type of hearing impairment, and the age of onset, especially if it begins before the age when speech normally develops.
- In developing countries, fewer than 1 in 40 people who would benefit from a hearing aid have one.
- Current annual production of hearing aids is estimated to meet less than 10% of global need.
- 50% of deafness and hearing impairment is avoidable through prevention, early diagnosis and management.