



World Health Organization

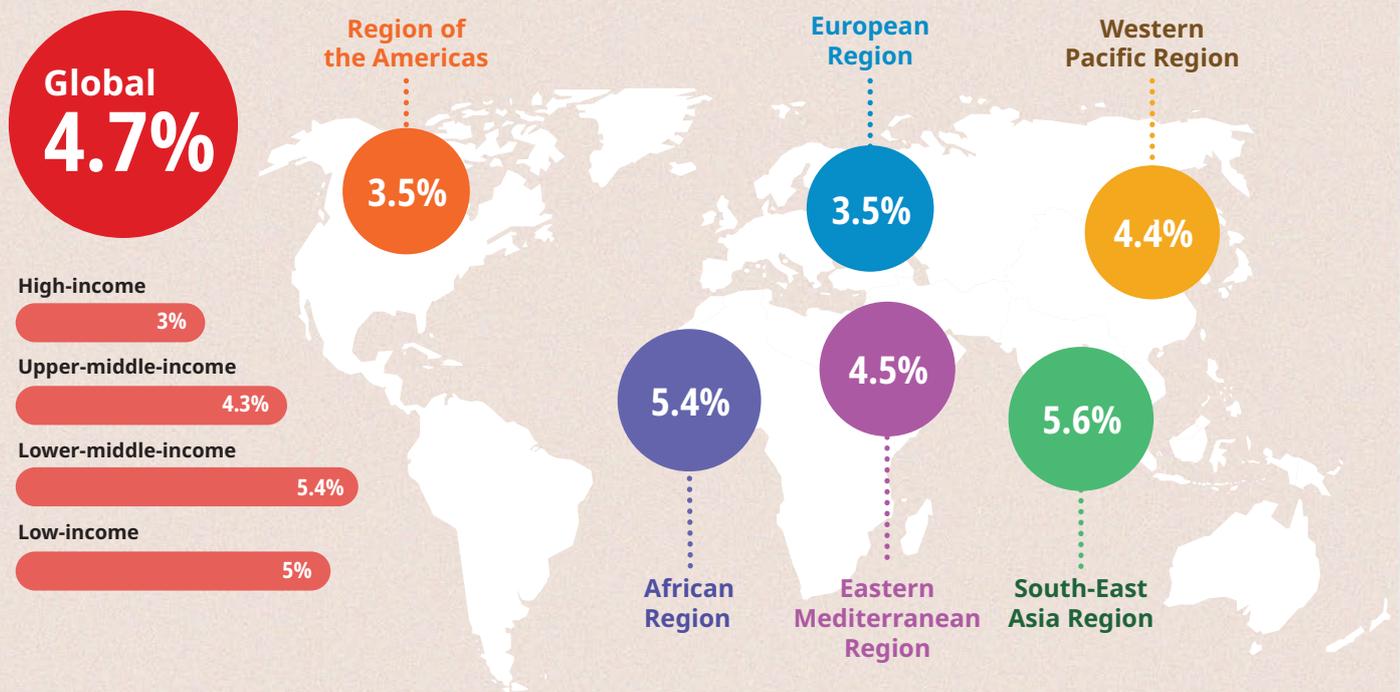
# Over 95 million children and adolescents (5-19 years old)

worldwide live with unaddressed hearing loss, highlighting

**an urgent global need for accessible hearing care and rehabilitation**



Unaddressed hearing loss in children is unevenly distributed across WHO regions and income groups



In 2023, the global number of years lived with disability (YLDs) attributable to childhood hearing loss was

**3.5 million,**

**2023**

with low- and lower-middle-income countries being the most affected

**Over 40%** of hearing loss among those aged 5–19 years is due to otitis media



Effective, affordable, and scalable solutions to address hearing loss and its causes already exist and are benefitting many



Medicines and surgery



Hearing aids and implants



Rehabilitative therapy



Sign language access



Hearing assistive technology



Captioning services



Diagnosis-otoscopy, audiometry

To make ear and hearing care accessible for all school-age children:

### Prevent hearing loss caused by preventable factors:

- Educate children, parents, and teachers about [good ear care practices](#).
- Promote [safe listening to avoid hearing loss due to loud sounds of music or video games](#).

### Identify ear and hearing problems at the earliest:

- Integrate [hearing screening](#) into school health programmes.
- [Train health care providers](#) working at primary level in ear and hearing care.

### Address ear diseases and hearing loss:

- Build capacity for specialized ear and hearing care services at secondary and tertiary levels of care.
- Ensure [access to affordable, high-quality hearing aids and implants, rehabilitation services](#), and family-centered support.

### Innovate to facilitate access to ear and hearing care:

- Use [WHO's hearing screening applications](#) for early identification of hearing loss at community level.
- Adopt validated technology enabled care models, including tele-audiology and AI supported tools for otitis media detection.



**Act now** to ensure that no child is left behind due to unaddressed hearing loss!