



# WIZEAR NEWSLETTER

## Special Edition : World Hearing Day

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3RD MARCH 2021

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- There are 466 million people with disabling hearing loss worldwide.
- It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that we flatten the hearing loss curve.
- Hearing is a gift and so we should place value upon it.

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## Background Information: WHD

WizEar joined the rest of the world on the 3rd of March in commemorating the World Hearing Day 2021. This year's theme is Hearing Care for All; Screen, Rehabilitate, Communicate. A lot of activities were lined up as part of the commemorations and this included live music show, speeches from various people and testimonials from clients who have been assisted by WizEar.

This year's commemoration was very different from the previous years in that it coincided with the launch of the first ever World Report on Hearing by Global Coalition For Hearing Health. This was done through a webinar and a lot of people joined in from various locations across the world. The World Report on Hearing focused

mainly on highlighting a call to various institutions to act with regards to ear and hearing health. Emphasis was placed on responsibility of individuals, family, community and government at large.



**University of Zimbabwe Audiology and Speech therapy students celebrating WHD2021**

Several International organizations like CBM, WHO, GCHH, LSHTM, AUDIOMAX also took part in the commemorations. This brought in some weight on issues

that were discussed. Even though most of the countries are under lockdown, the online platform enabled them to converge and discuss sobering issues regarding basic ear and hearing health care.

Good hearing and communication are important at all stages of life.

Hearing loss (and related ear diseases) can be avoided through preventative actions such as: protection against loud sounds; good ear care practices and immunization. Hearing loss (and related ear diseases) can be addressed when it is identified in a timely manner and appropriate care sought. People at risk of hearing loss should check their hearing regularly. People having hearing loss (or related ear diseases) should seek care from a health care provider.

## WHO Hearing Statistics On Hearing

World Health Organisation estimates that there are 466 million people with disabling hearing loss worldwide and 5% of these are children. In Zimbabwe it is estimated that over 900 000 people have some form of disability. The statistics by WHO are expected to double

by 2050 especially in the sub Saharan as well as low to middle income countries like Zimbabwe. This is a clarion call for us to take care of our hearing because once it is lost it will not be easy to restore. Early intervention screening and proper rehabilitation will help to flatten the curve.



World Hearing Day  
3 March 2021



**HEARING CARE FOR ALL**  
SCREEN • REHABILITATE • COMMUNICATE

# Do not ignore messages from your ear!



WizEar Founder Dr. Clemence Chidziva .

WizEar's Founder and board member Dr Clemence Chidziva gave his inaugural speech highlighting challenges and successes that have been faced by Zimbabwe in ear and hearing health. He also commented the work being done by both WizEar and AudioMax in a bid to ensure that quality and affordable ear and hearing health is accessed by all. Dr Chidziva also took a swipe at parents who are still very primitive and resort to hiding children with hearing disabilities. Given how much

technology has changed the playing field in medicine, he encouraged parents to come and discuss their concerns with a qualified ENT specialist so that together they can explore available opportunities for the child. It is paramount that all children are given equal access to education, child development, health facilities and child rights without flagging their disabilities.

This year's commemora-

tion not only highlights what needs to be done but who should do it and when. Dr. Chidziva also implored parastatals and cooperates to join in the bandwagon for ensuring that ears are given as much priority as other competing body parts or diseases.

*Most people do not listen with the intend to understand .They listen with the intend to reply.*

## CBM Country Director Speech

In her speech through a video recording Ms Deborah Tigere who is the CBM Zimbabwe Country Director highlighted the importance of rehabilitation through Community Disability Inclusive Development programs. She also highlighted the importance of early detection of hearing loss to enable early intervention so as to salvage hearing. As an organization CBM supports programs that are geared towards disability inclusion.

She also touched on the importance of the World Hearing Report and encouraged people to read it and share the facets of the report widely. Ms. Tigere also highlighted that in the near future, she hopes to see EHC systems being strengthened in terms of capacity building/ facilities/ equipment and increased community engagement in a bid to meet the expected outcome of having at least one in every 10 people with hearing loss by 2050.



## WizEar Board Chair's Speech



Dr Sharai Shamu an eye specialist as well as WizEar Board Chair, applauded the two teams WizEar and AudioMax for commemorating such an important day. In her speech she highlighted the need for proper ear care as well as having the

right messages being broadcasted. Information is power and without information people fail to make informed decision. She hoped that the ear and hearing health care service delivery will find its way to the most vulnerable people in the hard to reach areas of Zimbabwe. She also called to various partners to

join in the celebration and ensure that they support ear and hearing health care activities. More emphasis was placed on the need to screen, rehabilitate and therefore communicate with people who have hearing loss. She reiterated the need to come together and work as partners.

# Scaling New Heights-University of Zimbabwe



The world Hearing day commemorations organized by WizEar and AudioMax with funds from

CBM ,saw involvement of University of Zimbabwe Bsc Audiology students. Over 20 students ranging from freshmen to sophomores came to commemorate this day . In her interview, Tapiwa Mufutumari explained the three basic types of hearing loss and how these can be identified and of course prevented. In supporting her speech Samantha Malasha, who is a speech therapy student explained the relationship or link between hearing and speech. She also encouraged parents to ensure that they chil-

dren undergo early screening. Parents were advised to seek help and support should they find out that their child has a hearing or speech impairment. Her video can be accessed on this link for more information.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=501067787944184>

**Blindness cuts us from things and deafness cuts us from people-Hellen Keller.**

## A message from Mashambanzou

In order to effectively address issues of ear and hearing health, there is need for a collaborative effort. Last year’s commemoration saw organizations like Nzeve, Zimbabwe Deaf Trust, Legal Car rental, Impala Car Rental, University of Zimbabwe etc coming together to commemorate World Hearing Day. However this year due to Covid-19 restrictions most of these organisa-

tions joined virtually. However one organization that came to show its solidarity with Wizear was Mashambanzou Trust. Research has shown a link between PLWHIV and Hearing loss and to this end Mashambanzou felt the need to partner with Wizear in order to commemorate this important day. In her speech, Mashambanzou project officer Bessy Siyado highlighted the need to have periodical screening for people living with

HIV. Although the ART regiment does not cause hearing loss, it is believed that the virus itself can result in hearing loss.

## Highlights from AudioMax

AUDIOMAX remains the leading organization in the filed of ear and hearing health as they provide first class ear and hearing health care. Recently added to its list of services are the noise bans and the Cochlear implants. Noise bans are very popular with people who work in high noise level environments and these can be the difference between saving or loosing your hearing. Noise bans have

proven that correct and consistent use of noiseban will also protect one’s hearing. Audiomax also joined the rest of the world in commemorating the World Hearing Day. While they conducted the commemoration in conjunction with WizEar, the highlight of the day was the music show. The message across was “Hearing is a gift. How much value do you place on it? This message was



disseminated through music from well known Mbira gurus like Blessing Bled Chimanga, Adiona Maboreke, Zorro and Tariro Negitare. AudioMax business Manager Mrs. Melissa Kwenda also reminded parents not to hide children with a hearing impaired but to ensure that they also get a equal opportunity in life.

# Promoting Hearing Through Music



Design, Blessing and Lucia celebrating WHD.

This year's World Hearing Day was commemorated in style through virtual music show. The music show was conducted by Blessing Bled Chimanga. Well known artists like Tariro Negitare, Adion Maboreke and many others. Blessing was the main act of the day. All featured artists highlighted the WHD theme in their performance. Musical interlude were characterized by interviews by audiologist, audiotechs and ear technicians. During the live shows AudioMax audiologists, Ti-

nashe Nhokwara, Tsitsi Mandizha, Innocent Zhangaza, Edmore Shamu, Melissa Kwenda were interviewed by the artists. WizEar Program Manager Lucia Nkomo also came on the show. This spiced up the shows and based on the Facebook views, a lot of people watched these shows thereby increasing outreach and coverage.

*There are no deaf stores nor deaf companies but only deaf people. Companies should also consider us for employment" Lincoln Matongo*

## 2021 WHD Theme Unpacked

Every year the World Hearing Day is commemorated on the 3rd of March. On this day a theme is coined and this is in line with ear and hearing health. The 2021 theme is Hearing care For All. Screen, Rehabilitate. Communicate. This theme highlights the importance of early detection of hearing loss and early access to support. Everyone deserves an equal chance in

life and no form of disability should limit one's ambitions and future goals. Due to Covid-19, Wizear could not mobilise people to come for screening. Instead the messages was carried across three radio stations and one television station. This provided a wide coverage in terms of spreading the messages across the country.



## Testimonial from Mr Lincoln Matongo



Mr Lincoln Matongo has post lingual hearing loss which he acquired as a result of prolonged ear infection. Having grown up in the rural areas of Rusape, it was not easy for him to access treatment as the only hospital

was very far and there was only one bus that ferried the route. To this end Lincoln faced problems with the ear infections getting worse. During his childhood he also faced a problem in lack of conducive learning environments. He was placed in a normal class and this affected his educational outcomes.

However as a child Lincoln refused to be let down by his hearing loss. He then studied hard on his own up to the point of acquiring a Diploma in ICT. He currently works at the Ministry of Transport as the ICT officer. Lincoln drives himself around and indication that hearing impairment should not limit ones' success.



## Against All Odds-Story of Design and Frank

The World Hearing Day commemoration would not have been complete if WizEar had not invited some members from the "Deaf community". This year was graced by Frank and Design Pamire (couple). Frank has Usher Syn-

drome while Design (wife) has no hearing impairment. Together Frank and Design use tactile sign language. Frank and Design have over the years graced a lot of platform in advocating for the rights of people with Hearing Disability. They also teach parents whose children have Sasha syndrome, on basic tactile sign language in order that they communicate with their parents. Frank and Design's story is that of a happy story which actually shows the benefits of early detection and screening. Through Frank most

people have come to realise that hearing loss or impairment should not limit one's social, economic and physical development. So far Frank and Design have also supported the development of sign language Bible translation as well as a number of translations to date. They will always remain great advocates for Screening, Rehabilitation and Communication.

**Do not let hearing loss limit you. There is more that you can do.**

## Supporting EHHC through Creating Opportunities-



Wonai Haruperi is an Audiologist

who works for both WizEar and AudioMax. Being the person who deals with clients on a daily person, her speech was so touching as she encouraged parents and employers to seek intervention earlier. Most children end up with profound hearing loss which could have been avoided if the parents had sought support earlier. Hearing aids only work when there is residual hearing. Wonayi empha-

sized on consistent and correct use of hearing aids for maximum benefits. She also highlighted easy ways of trouble shooting hearing aids like checking whether the batteries are not flat. People who use hearing aids should make sure that the hearing aids remain dry and far from any moisture. She discouraged parents from poking things into their children's ears.

## Effects of Covid-19 on EHHC in Zimbabwe

While Covid-19 has negatively affected the world at large, Zimbabwe has not been spared. Two waves with different strains has so far been experienced and this was the clarion call to stiffer lockdown measures. While the lockdown measures were necessary for survival, they negatively impacted members of the deaf community who relied on street vending for survival. Without much support

from government during the lockdown most of the hearing impaired families faced starvation. This forced them out of lockdown but with very little change as the streets were empty and they could not carry out their day to day businesses. Lack of household income or food also led to an increase in gender based violence. Hearing Impaired persons usually face challenges in trying to report

GBV cases due to limitations in communication. This barrier in communication has also led to misdiagnosing at the health facilities or even unreliable reports at the police stations.



Staying safe protects you, protects others

## Publications Of the Events-ZTV

**ISSUES PANE NYAYA**

**WORLD HEARING DAY 2021:  
HEARING FOR ALL:  
SCREEN, REHABILITATE & COMMUNICATE**

Guests:

Lucia Nkomo  
Program Manager  
WizEar

Barbra Nyangairi  
Executive Director  
Deaf Zimbabwe Trust

**LIVE ON  
CAPITALTALK 100.4FM  
& STAR FM**

**03|03|21  
2000hrs - 2100hrs**

Hosts  
*Leander Kandiero*  
*Rumbidzai Venge*

**im**

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Awareness | Empower | Influence | Change

Radio talk show with Rumbidzai Venge.

## Radio Commemorations

*The difference between hearing and listening is paying attention.*

Radio is one great way of reaching out to a lot of audience at the same time. Today's technology allows us to engage with people from different places on different platforms. WizEar took advantage of this in order to engage more listeners and audience regarding ear and hearing health care. To this end three radio programs were engaged through inter-

views in sharing information about proper and correct hearing health. Local radios such as CapitalTalk100, StarFM, Nyaminyami radio provided the platform for WizEar and AudioMax to talk about the world Hearing Day commemorations. This was also supported by ZTV which actually flighted two slots at 8pm prime time News and on GoodMorning Zimba-

bwe. Evidence of listenership was shown through followup questions and enquiries from audience. WizEar will make sure that they keep these engaged through more radio slots. Most people who called in wanted to know the services available and if there are schools available for children with Hearing Impairment. This was an indication of how important the program is.

## Virtual Music Performance By Bled

Blessing Bled Chimanga



Blessing Bled Chimanga is a musician from Zimbabwe. He is well-known for playing the drum, marimba and percussion. He is a music teacher and music creator. He is also the founder of Let the Drums Speak

Concert, an annual concert that he hosted every year with new acts of Blessing Performing with his drums. He has played with many artists such as Hope Masike, Josh Meck, Dudu Manhenga, the late Chiwoneso Maraire, Taririo Negitare, Chikwata263, the late Sam Mtukudzi

and Andy Brown. Eric Wainaina from Kenya, Amanda Tosoni from Italy, Ary Morais from Norway, Umoja Zimbabwe, Mother Africa and many others in Zimbabwe and across the world. He has toured countries such as South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, Mozambique, Norway, Sweden, Italy and the U.K.



The country's main newspaper publication carried a story in the Sunday Mail edition on ear and hearing health. The story was done by Mr Simbarashe Takawira who is a freelance journalist. Mr Takawira has a passion for ear and hearing health and has been part of WizEar's publications both in print and media platforms. In his article Mr Takawira highlighted the

# Print Media Publications-Sunday Mail

three main types of hearing loss and how these can be avoided. 60% of the hearing loss in children can be avoided and this publication highlighted ways in which parents can use in order to make sure that their children have hearing.

He also emphasized on how loud noise can damage one's ears. To this end his call was focused mainly on youths who listen to loud music and to some of the workforce who spent long hours working in very noisy environment. Part

of the publication also spoke on ototoxicity and how some known drugs damage hearing. This publication also played a great role in information sharing as well as in preparing people for the World Hearing Day which came in three days later after the publication.

## Screen, Rehabilitate, Communicate

**Usher Syndrome is a common genetic disorder involving hearing and vision abnormalities.**

## Good Morning Zimbabwe edition-

As part of the commemoration and call to action, Zimbabwe Television broadcast ZTV featured WizEar Program Manager Mrs Lucia Nkomo on Good Morning Zimbabwe show. This morning show targets audience before they go into their daily chores. In this production Lucia Nkomo explained why the WHD was important. There was a call to parents to support children with

hearing impairment through early screening and possible rehabilitation. Emphasis was also placed on proper care of ears and hearing by individuals, families, communities and even at government levels. Mrs Lucia Nkomo took this opportunity to call to action everyone, when it comes to hearing health. The responsibility for a health hearing nation lies squarely on all of us. Every one has a role

to play in order to ensure that people get access to screening, rehabilitation and are able to communicate.

During the Good Morning Zimbabwe slot Lucia Nkomo was joined in by Design and Frank Pamire. Design and Frank Pamire have become advocates for tactile sign language in Zimbabwe. Frank has Usher syndrome which makes it impossible to use normal sign language.

## Live Streaming of WHD 2021

Listeners and watchers were treated to a great virtual musical gala as part of the World Hearing Day celebration. Four well known artists belted their lungs out and provided sweet and beautiful music. Before each performance a mini interview by the artist was done. During the interview emphasis was placed on the WHD 2021 theme Screen, Rehabilitate, Communicate. The virtual musical

show was led by popular Mbira artist Blessing Bled Chimanga. The act was supported by Tariro Negitare, Zorro and Adiona Maboreke. The artists also managed to bring out the link between music and hearing. The show was streamed live on all AudioMax and WizEar social network online platforms. Without hearing there will not be any audience so said the musicians.



# Celebrating WHD through Pictures



Design Pamire signing to Hearing Impaired Audience



content to your newsletter is newsletter to a yes publica

*I did not choose  
Audiology but  
audiology chose  
me*

## Audiology Services on Offer

While WizEar and AudioMax are sister companies they compliment each other in service provision. WizEar is a not for profit and targets those from vulnerable low to medium income families while AudioMax gives EHC services to those who can afford to pay for the service. While statistics have shown that there is an increase in the number of people who need

ENT services, WizEar is also trying to ensure that everyone gets the service without burning a hole in their pockets. So far WizEar offers the following services:

1. Diagnostic screening of ears
2. Capacity building of health personnel in EHC.
3. Infrastructure and equipping hospitals.
4. Provision of hearing aids and batteries
5. Provision of earmoulds
6. School screenings
7. Conducting earcamps
8. Sign language
9. Case management of ear pathologies.
10. Reverse fellowship for ENT registrars.

## Taking EHC to Print Media.

Simbarashe Takawira



WizEar always laments on how less prioritized issues of hearing health care are by individuals, families and communities. To this end very little has been written in print media about ear and hearing health .One

journalist realized this gap and took to himself to write articles about ear and hearing care. Simbarashe Takawira is a freelance journalists who has now taken a keen interest in making sure that information regarding ear and hearing health is shared through print media. While his first love is photography,

his articles on EHC have won him a slot in the weekly publication where he writes about ear and hearing health care. 2021 saw an increase in written articles as well as radio interviews on good ear toilet. Feedback from readers has also supported the notion of feasibility of such information channels.

# World report On Hearing



Production describing picture or graphic.

double in 2050. These facts along with supporting data and evidence have been presented in the World Report on Hearing, which was requested by the World Health As-

sembly in 2017.

### KEY MESSAGES

The number of people living with unaddressed hearing loss and ear diseases is unacceptable.

Timely action is needed to prevent and address hearing loss across the life course.

Investing in cost effective interventions will benefit people with hearing loss and bring financial gains to the society.

Governments must act to integrate person-centred ear and hearing care within national health plans for universal health coverage.

This is a call for you to act and play your part. Together we can reduce the number of people with disabling hearing loss.

On the 3rd of March the World report on Hearing was launched by the World Health Organisation. According to WHO 466 million people have disabling hearing loss and this number is set to

*Every picture tells a story of a thousand words depending on the listener.*

## Unique Pictures

Unique Pictures is a company that provides photography and video editing services. Currently they have done a number of photoshoots for families, lovers or individuals. They are also the leading picture company when it comes to events. WizEar started their partnership with Unique pictures in 2016 and ever since all WizEar events have been covered by Unique Pictures. Their picture



quality is very high and they also do great video editing. Their good pictures is a result of both quali-

## Productions

fied personnel and up to standard equipment. Their services come reasonably priced too. Another service they offer is translations of documents as well as setting up table microphone for conferences.

This year 2021 Unique Pictures joined WizEar and AudioMax in commemorating the World Hearing day. This added value and color to the celebration. Contact Simba on +263773070006

# Bsc Audiology and Speech Therapy

One major hurdle for ear and hearing health care in Zimbabwe is lack of qualified personnel. Currently there are less than 20 ENT specialists in Zimbabwe. There are also less than 12 qualified audiologists in Zimbabwe and this makes ear and hearing service delivery inaccessible and very expensive. WizEar partnered with CBM in initiating a Bsc in Audiology and Speech Therapy program at

the country's main University i.e University of Zimbabwe. So far the first batch of students who enrolled in 2019 will graduate in 2022. This will boost the number of service providers and thereby spreading their span of influence in most areas around Zimbabwe. Having more audiologists will also reduce the cost of audiology services around the country. This year 20 students from the univer-

sity of Zimbabwe joined WizEar and AudioMax in commemorating the World Hearing Day. Their videos can be accessed on Wizear YouTube channel.





**World Health  
Organization**



**Alliance | Advocacy | Action**



**Check your hearing!**



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*“Till The World Hears”*



## From The Editors Desk

I do hope you have really enjoyed reading through this newsletter. The whole idea of this edition was to share with you activities that were conducted as part of the 2021 World Hearing Day Commemoration. Now that you have come to the end of the Newsletter, you may probably wonder if you too can help and be part of the team. For WizEar to do all this, there is need for strong partnership. This year's commemoration was made possible through funds from CBM. Technical support was also given by Global Coalition for Hearing Health, WHO as well as World Hearing Forum.

As WizEar there are so many activities that we would like financial support on and you too can assist. These are:

1. To conduct school screenings for learners.

2. To initiate DRR messages suitable for HI people.

3. To provide HI families support during Covid-19 lockdown.

4. To construct a one-stop hearing centre.

5. To procure more hearing aids and batteries.

6. To train more people in Primary



**Chief editor and WizEar Program Manager Lucia Nkomo**

- Ear and Hearing Health Care (PEHHC).

7. To equip our ear champions with simple audiometers for testing.

8. To train families and communities in sign language.

9. To construct another school for HI students.

10. To train teachers to identify hearing impairment cues amongst students.

11. To conduct more earcamps in remote areas.

12. To provide ear and hearing services in all Provincial hospitals.