

Dealing with Numbers!!!

The India Story

Vahishtai J Daboo
Founder & Principal Consultant

CIICA Conference 2025

integrated  Services for Listening
& Spoken Language

In a country of 1.4 billion — how do we
deal with these numbers?

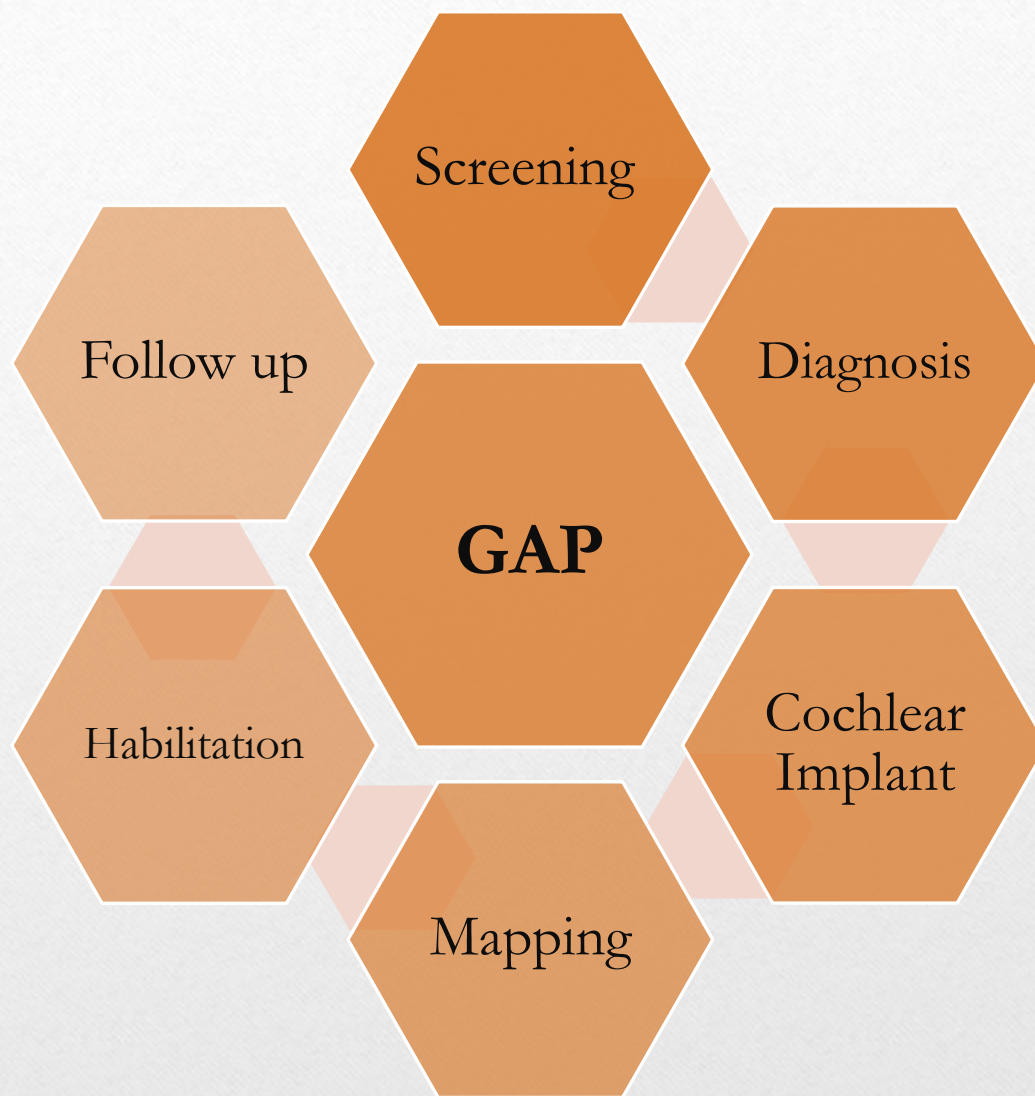
The Numbers...

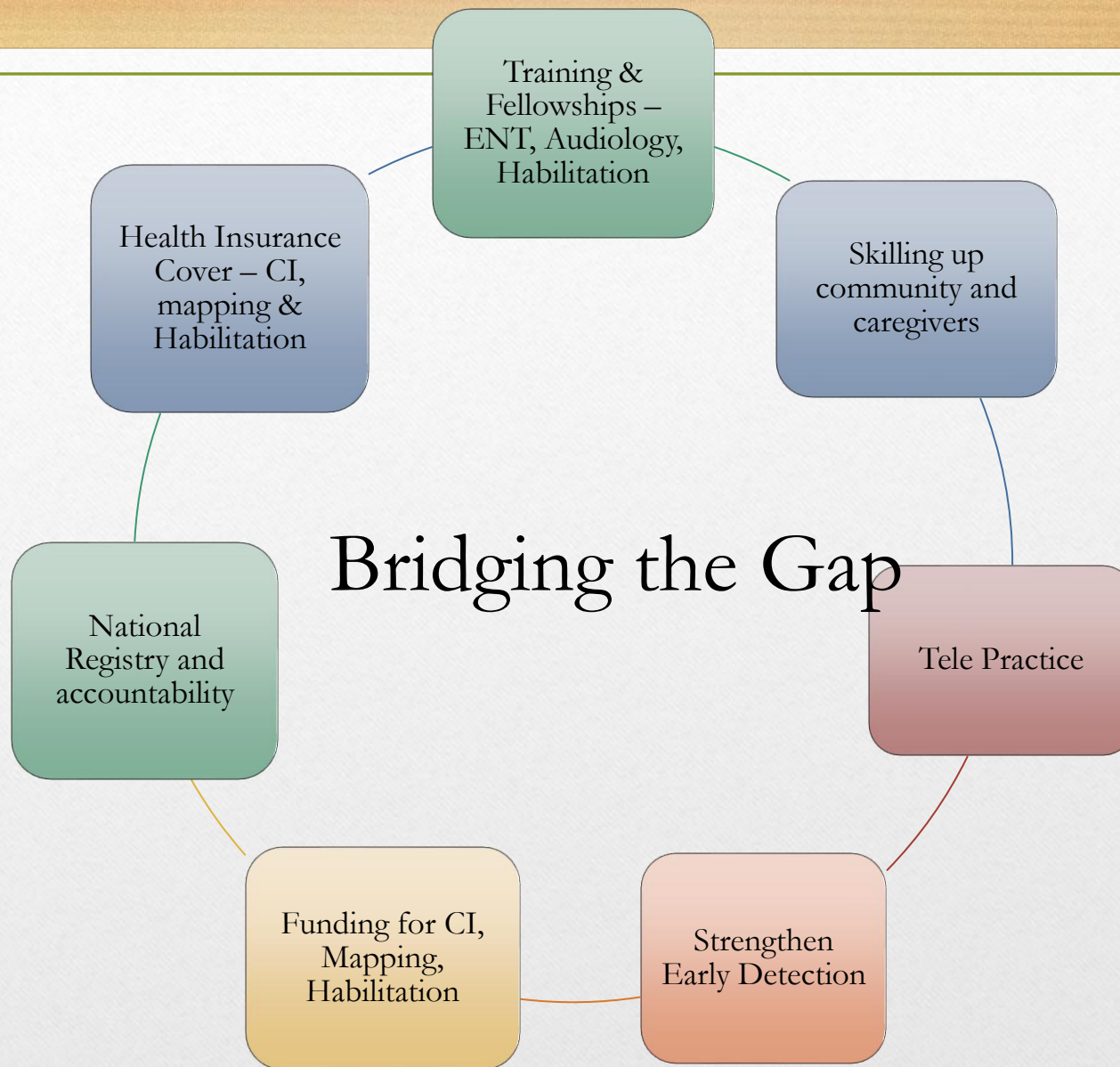
- Total population with HL: 63 million (*Garg et al., 2009, National Medical Journal of India*)
- Prevalence: 6.3% of population has disabling hearing loss (*WHO, 2018*)
- 25 million babies are born in India annually
- 100,000 babies are born with profound hearing loss annually
- Congenital deafness: 4-6 per 1,000 live births (*National Sample Survey, 2001*)

Workforce Gap

Profession	Estimated Available	Ideal Need (WHO Benchmark)	Gap
ENT Surgeons	~8,000 (AOI)	– (CI specialists fewer)	Limited CI-specialized surgeons
Audiologists / SLPs	2,500–6,000	~56,000	>50,000 shortfall
AVT / Re/hab Specialists	<1,000 trained	~10,000+	Severe shortage

(Refs: AOI; IHS; WHO Workforce Benchmarks; National Disability Report 2023)





Bridging the Gap

Impact Outcomes

- Critical Period Loss:
- 70% identified after age 2: Missing optimal language development window
- Implantation delays: Average 12-24 months from identification to surgery

The Re/hab Challenge...

- Therapy Infrastructure
- Service Delivery
- Patients requiring therapy: 30,000-40,000
- Available therapy centers: <300 nationwide
- Dropout rates: 40-50% within first year

Challenges in Scaling Up

- Inequity in access (urban vs rural)
- Shortage of trained audiologists & therapists
- Post-implant therapy is the weakest link
- Families often travel long distances or drop out early

From Numbers to Impact

- Universal newborn hearing screening
- Affordable CI access for all ages
- Invest in human capacity (AVT, mapping, re/hab)
- Develop data systems for follow-up & outcomes
- Strengthen public-private partnerships

“

Beyond the Numbers...

Let every voice be heard!

*Let's move from counting numbers to creating
impact together!!!*

”

Thank you!

Vahishtai J Daboo

Founder & Principal Consultant