

BANGLADESH HEAR SCHOOL PROJECT PROFILE



More than two million people in Bangladesh suffer from hearing impairment. It is often caused by malnutrition, untreated ear infections, high fever from diseases such as typhoid, or marriage between close relatives. In a densely populated country where half the population lives in poverty and 60% of people are illiterate, hearing impaired children have few resources. In a country of 162 million people, only 2,500 spots are available in specialized schools, leaving most deaf children little chance to learn to communicate. They become isolated from their families and ostracized from their community.



Teacher Tuli Das teaches students how to pronounce the alphabet in her first grade class.

WHERE WE WORK

World Concern's programs are located in urban and rural areas. Hear Schools operate throughout Bangladesh in Mymensingh, Barisal, Savar (Dhaka) and Bhairab.

HOW WE HELP

World Concern provides education for hearing impaired children through Hear Schools. With the help of hearing aids and specially trained teachers, children develop speech and learn to communicate. The goal is that many will eventually be integrated into general schools. With a maximum of eight students in each class, the children are taught to hear their own voices and learn to speak, read and write.

World Concern also operates audiology centers, which provide hearing assessments and consultation to more than 2,000 hearing impaired people each year.

WHO WE HELP

Currently, World Concern teaches hearing impaired children between the ages of 2 and 15 years old. Children are referred through audiology clinics, or by attending one of the Hear Schools' annual camps, which serve 150 children each year.



Hearing aids help children listen to their own voices and learn to communicate with others.



A world of hearing opens up for Hear School students.

MIRAJ'S STORY

Opening Up a World of Sound

Miraj has been hearing impaired since he contracted pneumonia as an infant. His parents noticed that he didn't cry like most babies and only responded to very loud clapping. They took him to a monk in hopes of healing him, but he did not improve.

At age three, Miraj was unable to speak and was diagnosed by a doctor with profound hearing loss. His parents were devastated. Relatives tried to console them, but they felt there was little hope Miraj would have a normal life in Bangladesh. At 10 years old, Miraj communicated only through gestures and showed little evidence of understanding the world around him.

The family heard about World Concern's Hear School in Barisal and went to visit. Astounded at the learning environment and the caring, attentive teachers, Miraj's parents were thrilled when he was admitted to the school.

With the help of hearing aids and the specially-trained teachers at the Hear School, he was beginning to pronounce words within a short time. Friends and neighbors were amazed at his progress.

Today, Miraj speaks clearly, can read English, and enjoys doing math. On a typical day, he uses his speech to communicate with rickshaw pullers to get him where he needs to go, and bargains with merchants to purchase goods. His gentle personality and constant smile enable him to make friends easily. He's the captain of his cricket team, and is working with a tutor in hopes of being admitted to a general school soon.

Miraj's parents now see a bright future for him, and credit World Concern and God for helping their son.

ABOUT WORLD CONCERN

World Concern is a Christian global relief and development organization. With our supporters, our faith compels us to extend life-saving help and opportunity to people facing the most profound human challenges of extreme poverty. At World Concern, the solutions we offer, the work we do—with your help—creates lasting, sustainable change. Lasting change that provides lasting hope.

Our areas of expertise include disaster response, clean water, education, food security, child protection, microfinance and health. For more information about our work, please visit worldconcern.org.