

The Outreach Program

After trials of non-success, we finally succeeded to have an effective step in our trial to reach out to the deaf children of the rural areas. While some of these children are lucky to have families who are capable and willing to find proper schools for their child far from their homes, many are undiagnosed, neglected and isolated.

Our aim from the Outreach Program is to reach out, mainly, to this category of children. We may not succeed from the first step, but eventually we will reach them. To apply the Outreach Program properly, we will need much more finances than what is available presently. Therefore, we decided to make small steps according to our capacities in order to diminish the amount of neglect present in those remote areas. Luckily last Spring 2009, we had very good partners who contributed to the success of these first steps.



The Screening Phase: The first phase of the project was the screening phase. Announcements for the screening day were made by the School of Children with Special Needs in Aita Chaab, South of Lebanon, in a big number of both Christian and Muslim villages around them, at the Southern border of Lebanon.

On the day assigned for the screening, together with our partners, we took the bus to Aita Chaab and the trip lasted for three hours. At arrival, the men helped carry the equipment, and then everyone joined in the preparation of the rooms for the tests. Teams were divided to perform the different tests, and everyone was ready to welcome the people.

We first started by collecting information about the children and the families. Followed, the medical check, which was performed by a pediatrician, who was experienced doctor with hearing loss.

The team of the American Hospital of Beirut performed both the Oto-Acoustic Emission (OAE) and audiograms. Our partner from the school for the Deaf, IRAP, also made audiograms in a different room. Luckily we had the needed equipment. Meanwhile, the leader of the team, who is the Head of the Audiology department at the American Hospital of Beirut, was doing the coordination, assisted by the team of the LCD and the staff of the school of Children with Special Needs.



When the day was over, everyone gathered for a meal, and on the way back in the bus, we studied the 55 cases that we saw during that day.

The Diagnostic Phase: In the second phase, families of all children gradually went to the American Hospital of Beirut for comprehensive and accurate tests.



Awareness and Distribution of Hearing Aids: It was very necessary to provide awareness to the families, before handing the 30 hearing aids, which were offered by the Liliane Fonds. The awareness presentation was about the care of the hearing aid and more important, is the family's role in assisting their child. Participated in this meeting, a hearing aid professional, the Parent's Association for the Deaf on behalf of whom a mother gave a word, as well as young deaf people who gave words of encouragement. Finally, some of the children received their hearing aids during this meeting, and others later in Beirut.

Future Steps: The fact that there were free tests performed and free hearing aids distributed, was a great contribution for the success of the campaign. This success also encouraged us to start planning for the second campaign, which we hope should be even more fruitful as a result of the good echo we had due to our good dealing with the families. Our partners and among them the Liliane Fonds, agreed for a second go; which we hope will take place this coming spring of 2010, in a Christian village this time.

Presently, a staff member of the LCD has started monthly visits to Aita Chaab, in the South, in order to support the children diagnosed with hearing loss and their families, within the capacities we have. We also hope that one of our EIP mother, would join in some of these visits in order to encourage the families to support their children.

We pray to have more funding for this project in order to have more access to the homes of the deaf children whose families may not make an effort to participate in such campaigns. We need to do home searching to find these children, who are usually the most neglected.

But we also learned to be very grateful for the things we are able to do in a country where the government is almost absent for the people with disability.