

A Hearing Aid for Mumtaaz

Shakti Colony, ward 67, Authorized slum, Hawa Mahal Zone

Jaipur: Shakti Colony is an authorized slum with 300 households in which 1,498 persons live. Most of the families have been here for around 38 years, and comprise communities including Muslims-Pathans, Lilgars, Kasai, Lohars from the neighbouring areas of Rajasthan.

One of them, Mumtaaz, is 16 years old. Her family includes her mother, father, three younger sisters, an older brother and grandparents. Her father



is a daily wage labourer, while her grandfather is a petty vendor. Mumtaaz studies in Surajpol Dabaw Khana School which is two kilometres away from her home.

On August 20, a meeting with 7 persons with disabilities was conducted in Shakti Colony, to understand the issues and challenges faced by persons with disabilities. Mumtaaz's problems were also raised by her grandmother, Jatun, in the meeting.

Jatun said, "My granddaughter cannot hear. When she was in class 5, she started facing the problem of hearing in both her ears, and now she has lost complete hearing in one ear and nearly completely in the other. So, she hears very little and only understands few words and actions. We tried out many solutions for her and took her to the hospital, but didn't get any help as our financial condition was not so good. We also took her for Jhaadh Phook (black magic), we made her wear a black thread, and took her to temples and *babas* (holy men), but nothing helped her."

When we asked Mumtaaz about her schooling through actions she replied, "I am in class 8 and want to study more but now I don't like going to school as school children make fun of me. I hope my problem gets resolved soon."

Sayeeda, a CMC member who was present in the meeting, said that even her family members and neighbours made fun of her and called her with names like *behri* (deaf), *pagal* (insane), a burden on the family, etc, and she even asked us if we could provide Mumtaaz some sort of help or aid.

Sayeeda also told her family that the CFAR team would help them. Sayeeda collected her documents and gave these to the CFAR team.

The Process

On August 31, with the support of CFAR team members and Nafeesa, Single Window Forum Member, Mumtaaz and her grandmother visited **Shri Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti** where they met Mr. Rajkumar, a senior official, who asked them to get a proper

check-up and bring the doctor's reports. If the doctor's report said that she was deaf and needed a hearing aid, the Samiti would definitely provide the ear machine, he said.



On September 2, with the support of Sayeeda and Nafeesa, Single Window Forum member Mumtaaz and her grandmother visited Sawai Man Singh Hospital. Sayeeda took the slip from the OPD and then went to room no. 50 where the audiologist prescribed further tests. The test was conducted in Charak Bhawan where as per the reports the doctor wrote that Mumtaaz should get a hearing aid soon.

The letter was shown in **Shri Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti**. Mr. Rajkumar gave the lanyard machine to Mumtaaz. But, said her grandmother, the machine was difficult to carry and not convenient and she expected her classmates would make fun of her.

Sayeeda insisted that if the Samiti could provide a machine that stuck to her ears, it would be really helpful, but Mr Rajkumar said it was “too expensive”.

Mumtaaz then said she wanted to continue her studies and become independent. “I had lost all the hopes but now finally I am seeing some light, so please provide me the best and sustainable hearing aid which will be easy to carry,” she told them.



The request worked, and finally she received a high-quality hearing machine worth ten thousand rupees.

When Mumtaaz wore the machine, she was able to hear. Her happiness knew no bounds.

Describing her experiences, Mumtaaz said, “Now I am able to hear everything. Words cannot express my joy. Now I can go to school and study. Now my cousins, schoolmates and neighbours will not make fun of me. Thanks to the Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti and CFAR team who found me and helped be selflessly.”

Jatun, her grandmother said, “Even if we had to pool in all our money, we would not be able to buy such an expensive machine I am very grateful to CFAR and Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti who supported us, and Sayeeda ji who linked us with them and helped us in getting the machine.”

Sayeeda responded, “I am very happy to see Mumtaaz so happy and will keep offering my support to more such people.”