

STITCHING US TOGETHER

CHINA

Many cultures marginalize those with disabilities. In rural China, where special teachers are unavailable, the deaf are kept from local schools and forced to depend on others for survival. In impoverished villages, deaf children are commonly sold or abandoned, believed to be burdens. Out of desperation, these outcasts resort to begging and prostitution. When their futures appear threadbare, Stitching Us Together offers the deaf and disabled dignity and hope. This close-knit community thrives on sign language. Joyful hands move at top speed, sewing tablecloths, toys and pillows, crafting cards, and communicating messages across the colorful workroom. Visitors are greeted with silent, but uncontained excitement. The talented seamstresses jump from their seats to pass out hugs and proudly show off new creations. Their new found skills not only provide safety and independence, but a daily reminder of their value and purpose.



STORIES OF RESCUE & EMPOWERMENT

COUNTRY: CHINA • PROGRAM: MICRO-ENTERPRISE



Ah Lam

Ah Lam lived in a world of impenetrable silence. In rural China, no teacher was available for deaf children. So instead, Ah Lam stayed home while others went to school. She remained silent while others learned to read, write, and make friends.

When a group of deaf students came to her village, Ah Lam learned how different life could be. She begged for a chance to attend a deaf training center, but her family refused. Determined, Ah Lam slowly learned sign language on her own and began planning a life apart from her family. She eagerly looked for work, but no one would hire an uneducated and unhearing girl. Ah Lam's desperate search came to a joyful end at Stitching Us Together. There, she not only learned to sew and sell beautiful crafts, but she learned to see her own worth and value. Today, Ah Lam uses her hands to be a loud voice for girls who are still kept silent by deafness and disability.

*For more stories of rescue & empowerment, please visit our story gallery at www.warinternational.org/story-gallery
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