

WARRIOR AGAINST POVERTY.....

The Mahle are a small ethnolinguistic community living in northern Bangladesh. Although there are thousands of Mahle speakers, they are not widely recognized as a distinct group. Many community members struggle economically and their educational opportunities are limited. Mahle people often live on small patches of uncultivated land belonging to the Government.

Traditionally, Mahle people have made a living by crafting household objects from bamboo. However, it has become increasingly difficult to market the products as they cannot compete with the cheaper prices of plastic goods.

SIL Bangladesh is taking the initiative with the community to try and achieve the UN's 'zero hunger' Sustainable Development Goal. One way in which the community is working towards this is by forming two 'learning circles' for women, who meet regularly to read about and discuss topics such as health, nutrition and gardening. They are also involved in activities to raise awareness about income generation.

Jotsna Murmu is a member of a learning circle. She told us that although she knew about vegetable gardening in the past, she had not tried it. Now, however, she is growing string beans, bottle gourds and cucumbers. "When they are mature I will eat some, give some to my neighbors and sell them in the market".



Another learning circle member, Shymoly Murmu, has started using

"SIL Bangladesh believes that raising awareness about how to generate income is essential for families to develop. As they build up their economic resources, their language and culture will also be more widely recognized."

For more information on topics mentioned in this newsletter, please go to .

[http: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Mahle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahle)

<https://www.ethnologue.com/language/Mahle>

... SNAPSHOTS ...
WHAT'S PLANNED FOR
THIS MONTH

Dec 05-08 Active Citizens Youth Leadership Training-6.

Dec 12-13: Adult Literacy Orientation with TRDP

Dec 18: Sports Day and MLE Graduation Ceremony with Kol and Koda community.

Dec 19: Sports Day and MLE Graduation Ceremony with Koch community.

SIL BANGLADESH
LANGUAGE, EDUCATION, AND DEVELOPMENT

SIL

SIL Bangladesh
House 11, Road 19/A
Uttara, Sector 4, Dhaka 1230

To subscribe to this publication ...

E-mail: SILBD_monthly@sil.org

Phone: +880 58950923

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open spaces for kitchen gardening. She told us “I used not to grow anything here. Since joining the learning circle and getting to know about gardening I have cultivated amaranth, leafy vegetables and tomatoes”. Like Jotsna, she plans to enjoy her harvest and sell some of it in the market.



Rita is a volunteer who facilitates the discussions of the learning circle. She said, “We were inspired by the chapter on savings. We have formed a co-operative society where we collect nearly 25 grams of rice every day”. When they have saved enough rice they plan to sell it and buy domestic animals. They also hope to be able to lease land, plant rice and increase their savings. “If we attack disaster, we can overcome it”, Rita told us.

SIL Bangladesh believes that raising awareness about how to generate income is essential for families to develop. As they build up their economic resources, their language and culture will also be more widely recognized.

Written by: Prodip Kisku

**SIL Bangladesh helps communities achieve their development goals while retaining their ethnolinguistic identities.
SIL Bangladesh is an organization in SIL International's LEAD Asia network – Language, Education, and Development.**