

WOMEN GET THE LIGHT OF LITERACY: LITERACY GROUP EVALUATION.....

Last month we attended the much anticipated evaluation program of our nine month long Bangla literacy course called the Evaluation Test of Functional Literacy. We had the opportunity to evaluate groups at two Mahle villages in Rangpur and Dinajpur. There were 23 women altogether in the two groups. When we arrived we found that the women were a bit nervous to sit for the first ever test in their entire lives. On the other hand, we could see that they were quite excited too since they were well dressed and with makeup.



During the test all the members were evaluated separately for writing, reading numeracy skills. In the written test they were asked to write their personal details, question answers and make sentences also. In numeracy part there were addition, subtraction, multiplication, division sums, tables and word problems. After the writ-

ten tests all the participants were asked to read a paragraph from their book selected by us. All most 70% completed the course successfully. A few faced problems in writing and reading as it was late in the evening and they had vision difficulties such in young age 25-50.

After the group evaluation, we had a small gathering with the participants, the village headman, the group members' families, local government officials, a primary school headmaster and other villagers. All of them thanked SIL for this initiative and inspired the members to keep practicing what they have learned from this course. They reminded us that the Bangladesh government has ruled that everyone needs to be able to sign their name for any governmental work. The villagers congratulated the members with flowers and rounds of applause.

“Now, they are able to read and write. They are able to count and their confidence level has grown. This is all reflected in their smiles.”

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LANGUAGE, EDUCATION, AND DEVELOPMENT

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

Mar:5-9- GNG Ref. Training with Koch, Mahle, Kol and Koda community.

Mar: 12-16- MT AL Mat. Dev workshop with Usoi and Kol community.

Mar: 19-30: MLE Teacher's training with Hajong community.

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Group members who have completed the course also shared their feelings. Sumitra Hasda said, "Now we are very happy to be literate. We are not going to be cheated by shopkeepers. Now we can recognize money. We can count the change as well. Sometimes our husbands gave us an amount of money and used to say that there was more than there actually was. Now they won't be able to do that. My confidence level of talking in front of others has increased a lot. All of my transformation was made possible by getting this opportunity to learn to read."



Basonti Hasda, the volunteer of one group at Khalippur also shared her thoughts. "I am very happy today that all of them have completed the course. I want to thank them for making time to study. If they had given more time they could have done even better. They need to continue, I will always support them". When they asked for other ways to continue to grow in their skills, we provide them with a set of twenty books containing small and easy stories, information, and dramas for reading practice.

They will take the books rotationally from the volunteer.

It was a wonderful moment for me as well since I was a trainer for this course. I noticed the transformation of the women from the very first day. At the beginning of the course, they were not able to hold the pencil properly. Now they are able to read and write. They are able to count and their confidence level has grown. This is all reflected in their smiles. I feel proud by this change.

Written by: Shanta Maria D' Costa.

**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.**