

## YOUTH LEADERSHIP : A FLOURISHING DREAM.....

“Our community, our dream” is an inspiring theme for a youth group. Young people can be the pillar of their community. They have a strong, energetic voice and a keen interest in new ideas. They are the future leaders of their community and have the capacity to change their society. Young people can find innovative ways to face challenges and realize their dreams. Generation Next Group (GNG) is a project which encourages young leaders.



We started the GNG under HELP project in November 2016 with groups of young people from four different ethnic communities in Bangladesh. On March 22nd 2017 we organized a GNG refresher training in the Rajshahi region with 35 young leaders from different communities. The main objective was to review the vision of the groups, their experiences, successes, problems and solutions.

Building on what they learnt in the first training, the groups have been getting an overview of the situation in their villages, and considering how to overcome problems. They have taken on the responsibility of bringing about change in their villages. During the day-long refreshers program they got a chance to share their dreams of future leadership in their communities. They discussed the initiatives they have taken for community development, with the aim of building good relations with government officials, encouraging children to attend multilingual education (MLE) schools, raising awareness among parents about sending their children to school, encouraging cleanliness, reducing alcoholism and internal conflict in the community, developing the use of the mother tongue and cultural events in daily life.



“The GNG program helps community members to build up youth leadership and encourage to take responsibility of their own society.

For more information on topics mentioned in this newsletter, please go to .  
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... SNAPSHOTS ...  
WHAT'S PLANNED FOR  
THIS MONTH

May: MLE School  
Monitoring visit.

May: MLE School  
Teachers Ref. Training  
with Kol, Koda, Koch  
community.

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SIL Bangladesh  
Avenue 2, Road 15, House 974, Mirpur  
DOHS, Dhaka 1216.

To subscribe to this publication ...  
E-mail: SILBD\_monthly@sil.org  
Phone: +880 58950923

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#### YOUTH LEADERSHIP: A FLOURISHING DREAM...(CON'T)

Generation Next Group leaders also shared their successes. They have already seen some small steps towards reduced alcoholism, greater use of the mother tongue and awareness of cultural heritage, increasing unity among the community, reduced gender discrimination and better school attendance. In one village they worked hard to level a playing field and to create a slope on one side so that water would drain away without flooding local houses. So far the successes are small, but they will grow as the program develops. These young people are stepping up into second line leadership, always ready to take on new challenges for the betterment of their communities.

**Sonia Kol** a young leader from Noongola, said "I am very excited and have learned many things from this training which I will try to implement in our village". **Rony Koch** a young leader from the Koch community said, 'I learned many things from the training and am now implementing all these in our groups and among community people. I feel that I will be a resource for our community.'



SIL Bangladesh works with ethnolinguistic communities to promote and protect their rights, recognizing that they are some of the most vulnerable groups in Bangladesh. The GNG program helps community members to build up youth leadership and encourage to take responsibilities of their society. It is exciting to see how the Generation Next Groups are contributing their strength to development projects. They are now advocating and networking for themselves, starting in their own villages. We can see that the dream of youth leadership is flourishing.

Written by : Jewel Rozario.

**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.**