

EVALUATING CHANGE.....

“Oh! Is this our last meeting? Aren’t we going to see you anymore? Won’t you come back again?” Kurux community members had lots of questions when we met for a project evaluation event in Rangpur in July. It was a day-long event with 45 Kurux people.

I was a bit embarrassed, but also pleased to see the strength of our relationship with the community. We began our work with the Kurux in 2012, with a baseline survey. Then, after a long break we carried out a Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) Survey in 2015. We then started two programs with the community: learning circles and Bengali adult literacy. On the day of the evaluation, there were mixed feelings of joy and sadness amongst our team and the community. We were delighted to have completed the program successfully, but sorry that we don’t know yet when the next program will start.

The event started with an introduction and then the participants shared their positive experiences of being involved in the projects. Most of the volunteers from the learning circles and adult literacy groups shared about the ways in which they had developed personally through these projects; a few also shared about changes in the lives of other community members. Representatives from the villages thanked SIL for the projects running in their areas and talked about how their lives are changing as a result.



Members of the learning circles told us that although they were familiar with many of the topics beforehand, they didn’t have a detailed understanding about things like vegetable gardening, cleanliness, childcare, poultry and cattle

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

Oct 20-23: Active
Citizens Youth
Leadership Training with
Santal & Munda
communities.

SIL BANGLADESH
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EVALUATING CHANGE ..(CON'T)

rearing, women's rights or caring for pregnant women. Now they have greater awareness and more in-depth knowledge. They have made improvements in health, nutrition, education, family relationships and economics, among other areas. Participants in the adult literacy program told us that they had learnt both literacy and numeracy. As a result, they can now understand sign boards, banners and the destination written on public transport. They are proud to be able to write their own names, keep records and count the change when shopping.



It was encouraging to hear about the positive changes Kurux people have experienced. A few community leaders who were present said that they were aware of SIL's activities, but hadn't previously understood the impact. They said they were grateful for the projects and told us that although they sometimes expect financial aid to bring the greatest impact, they now realize that the learning circles and adult literacy programs will lead to sustainable development. They believe that these changes could last forever if people continue applying what they have learnt in their daily lives. They also recognize that they need to play an active role in the development of their community. We hope that we will all meet again soon and have the opportunity of starting a new project together.

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**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.**