

My Language, My Identity

SIL
Bangladesh
helps
communities
achieve
their
development
goals
while
retaining
their
Ethno
linguistic
identities.

There is no doubt that young people are the future of their nation. When launching something new, it is always easier once the youth are motivated. But it's important that the new initiative is positive for the whole community. SIL International Bangladesh recently arranged literacy training for young people who speak Usoi Tripura, a dialect of the Tripura language found mainly in Bandarban, in Southeastern Bangladesh. Most of the Usoi Tripura villages are in remote areas in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

The Usoi Tripura people have chosen to write their language using Roman script. It took a few years for community leaders to finalize the script and the spelling rules. People from different religious denominations and different areas took part in the process, with support from SIL. Community members and their partner organizations have produced a few materials using the script. SIL is also working to develop Usoi Literacy materials with the community.

Engaging young people is one of SIL Bangladesh's strategies to encourage the youth to take initiative in language development issues. Around 35 young people aged 18 to 35 from three sub districts were present at the event. They were proud to identify that Usoi is a living language and that in the villages people from all generations can speak their mother tongue. At the same time, they worry that those who migrate to the cities with their families are not passing the language on to the next generation. The young people identified some actions which they can take to preserve the Usoi language. These include encouraging parents to teach the mother tongue at home, talking about the importance of the mother tongue at different social gatherings and encouraging young people to wear traditional clothes and ornaments etc.



... .. SPECIAL COMMENTS

Learning to read and write can be challenging, but if the community start teaching mother tongue literacy to children, their learning will be life long. The young people believe that their language is a part of their identity, so it cannot be ignored.

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

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LANGUAGE, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

SIL

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My Language, My IdentityCont'd

It was fun and challenging for the Usoi Tripura youths to read and write in their mother tongue. Though the language and script are familiar, it was not that easy to read and write fluently at first. Facilitators arranged a large numbers of activities to provide reading and writing practice. Well respected people from the community with good language skills were present to correct the young people as they practiced. At first they were shy, they stumbled and laughed, they disagreed on particular sounds (since different areas have different pronunciation), but at the end of the day they praised the Lord for giving them such a beautiful language. They produced three different magazines with their own compositions, filled with traditional stories, jokes, riddles and accounts of funny or memorable experiences.



At the end of the event all the young people agreed that it is important to have a written form of the language. But the most important thing is to use it in everyday life. Learning to read and write can be challenging, but if the community start teaching mother tongue literacy to children, their learning will be lifelong. The young people believe that their language is a part of their identity, so it cannot be ignored.

Written by: Alpona Joyontee Kujur.

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

Sep 3, 2018: Active Citizen Facilitators gathering meeting.

Sep 5-9 2018: Active Citizen Leadership Training in Sylhet.

Sep 9-11, 2018: Learning Circle
Volunteer Training with partner organization.

Sep, 2018: Nutrition Program with lesson delivery and Learning Corner among 5 communities.

Sep 10, 2018: Seminar with the Government officials on youth development with Mahle Community.

Sep 11, 2018: Advocacy and Networking Seminar on rights and different services for Mahle.

Sep 17, 2018: An awareness raising seminar on Ensuring Local Government Health Services for Koch community.

Sep 17, 2018: Advocacy and Networking Seminar on 'Rights and Different services for Kol Community'.

Sep 18, 2018: An awareness raising seminar on 'Ensuring Local Government Health Services for Mahle community'.

Sep 25, 2018: An awareness raising seminars on 'Ensuring Local Government Health Services for Kol community'.