

## GROWING CONFIDENCE

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

Babudaing village is located in Rajshahi district, in Northwestern Bangladesh. According to a survey carried out by SIL in 2004-2005 there have been people from the Kol community living in the area for as long as anyone can remember. There are now around 88 families in Babudaing and two neighboring villages. For many years, there was no school in this isolated area, connected only by a muddy road to the outside world. Consequently, many Kol people missed out on education. In rainy season it was very difficult to reach parts of Babudaing village. I have heard that elderly people would sometimes die on their way to getting medical treatment. Government officials and police officers rarely visited.

In 2010 SIL Bangladesh started carrying out awareness raising programs in the area. We also began working with the Kol community to establish a multilingual education (MLE) preschool, a youth programme called 'Generation Next Group', and encouraged the participation of local representatives and senior government officials. More Kol children are now attending school. As a result of a visit from government officials, Rajshahi district announced that there would be a 5 kilometre road built, to connect Babudaing with another village. This news was overwhelming for the people of Babudaing. A new road would end many of the challenges they face, and enable them to travel easily whenever they are in need.



### ... SPECIAL COMMENTS

Babudaing village is no longer cut off during rainy season and the community has grown in confidence.

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

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LANGUAGE, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

SIL

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December, 2018 : Nutrition Program  
with lesson delivery and Learning Corner  
with Koda community.

December 6, 2018 : Yearly evaluation  
and staff meeting.

December 16, 2018 : MLE graduation  
Ceremony with Kol community.

December 16, 2018 : MLE graduation  
Ceremony with Koch community.

## GROWING CONFIDENCE . . . . . CONT'D

The construction of the road started in October 2017. The contractor began digging up the soil and delivering sand and other materials. However, due to a sudden change of plan, the road was not completed. The Kol community was very disappointed that their dreams were not going to be realized. They learnt from the contractor that an influential person had arranged to have the road diverted towards his own school.

Young people from Babudaing and village leaders met with the villagers and they decided that they would oppose this change of plan. The following day at 10 am they went to visit their local government representative and objected. They were told that the plans had changed because of the intervention of influential people. The representative said there was nothing he could do about this decision, but he assured the villagers that he would bring bricks from other areas to finish the road, so that they could travel during monsoon season. Within a few weeks the bricks were delivered and the villagers worked to lay them with spades and rollers. As a result, Babudaing village is no longer cut off during rainy season and the community has grown in confidence. They are increasingly aware of their rights as citizens to enjoy all of Bangladesh's facilities. They are now raising their voice together in order to access these rights.

Written by: Israel Hasda

