

Child Rights and Awareness

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

Today's children are tomorrow's future, and a future can only be fruitful if we care about today's children. A child's brain develops throughout their childhood and it is an important time for them to gather valuable knowledge from the world around them. This is only possible if the society or nation gives them priority, and allows them the freedom to share their opinions and dreams.

SIL International Bangladesh works with ethno-linguistic communities and is also concerned about the development and protection of children. As part of the CREM project (Child Rights of Ethnic Minorities), SIL Bangladesh has started a program called 'Bolte Chai' (I want to speak). The aim is to help children ethno-linguistic communities to express their feelings, needs and dreams to their parents and other members of society, so that they can grow in confidence. Children from these communities can help to develop their society. The CREM project plays a vital role in expanding their knowledge and skills. At present there are six child parliament groups running in the Rangpur area of Northern Bangladesh. In August, 2019, the 'Bolte Chai' program took place in four villages in Rangpur.

The children from these villages expressed their opinions and feelings about child rights and awareness in front of the Associate Education Officer from Rangpur. Prokoben Toppo, a boy from Paccha Para village said that he had learnt about children's six essential needs through the program. A girl called Mishti Kerketa from the same village said that she now understands that she has her own personal space which she does not allow anyone to enter. She said that she will inform her parents and brothers and sisters about her personal space. Sebastian Minji from Molong Para village said that he had learnt about many government services and can now inform others in the village about how to access these services. Sohag Toppo from Chanpur village said that SIL Bangladesh's program had helped him to understand about the importance of proper sanitation. He now tells others, including his family members about using toilets and proper sanitation. This has led to significant changes in the village. For example, fewer people are affected by disease.



...SPECIAL COMMENTS

A girl called Mishti Kerketa from Pacchapara village said, she now understands that she has her own personal space which she does not allow anyone to enter. She also said that she will inform her parents and brothers and sisters about her personal space.

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LANGUAGE, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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Child Rights and Awareness.. . . . Cont'd

A boy called Nipu Kujur from Bala Para village said that he used to live in unclean conditions. But after joining the nutrition program, he now prefers to live in a clean environment. He also tries to inspire others to practice good hygiene. Sumona Kujur, a girl from Durgapur village said that she gathered useful knowledge about ethics, norms and other values from child parliament program. As a result, she says she does not behave roughly with others. Shudha Kha Kha, a mother of one of the children, said that significant changes have taken among the children in their village because of the nutrition program. Her son now openly shares his personal feelings with her like a friend. Shudha Kha Kha also said that her son used not to listen to her. However, now he listens to his mother's guidance and takes her advice. Her son has taught her about the importance of washing vegetables before chopping them.

At the end of the 'Bolte Chai' program, the Govt. Associate Education Officer shared his feelings. He was very impressed because in his experience he had not come across villages like these, where children from ethno-linguistic communities have the confidence to discuss their rights and awareness-raising activities in front of a large group of people. He also thanked SIL Bangladesh for their involvement and expressed his hopes for the welfare of the children and the project.

Written by: **Ranjit Kerketa**

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

Sep 10-12, 2019: Child Rights Awareness, Family Awarded and Cultural Program with Kol-Koda Community.

Sep 10-11, 2019: Awareness raising event on community ownership, importance of Language & culture with Koch-Hajong Community.

Sep 18-19, 2019: Awareness raising event on community ownership, importance of Language & culture with Kol-Koda Community

Sep 21-22, 2019: Awareness raising event on community ownership, importance of Language & culture with Oraon (Kurux) Community.

Sep 22-24, 2019: Awareness raising event on community ownership, importance of Language & culture with Mahle Community.

Sep 22-24, 2019: Program Evaluation and Cultural Gathering (KEP).



SIL Bangladesh is an organization in SIL International's LEAD Asia