Teacher training for MLE in BRAC, Bangladesh

By Marufa Mazhar

“The limit of my language mean the limits of my world.” ~ Ludwig Wittgenstein

Multilingual Education in Bangladesh has increased enrollment in, as well as completion of, primary education for ethnic children. BRAC, founded as a relief organization in 1972 after the Bangladesh Liberation War, aimed at poverty alleviation and empowerment of the poor. Today, BRAC is promoting diversity in programs at home and abroad.

BRAC Education Program (BEP) launched the Education for Ethnic Children unit in order to cater to the educational needs of children of ethnic communities, running schools for ethnic children. On the basis of the research report “Feasibility study of Bilingual Education project for Chakma, Garo and Santal communities”, BEP launched Mother Tongue-based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) for children in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Advocacy with the Ministry of Primary Education for implementing MTB-MLE is a continuous process. The National Textbook Board has taken initiative on MLE.

Teachers are fluent in their own language but not able to read and write. Even though teachers are trained they are not competent to teach multigrade classes. This is due to limited efficiency and lack of experience, and because sufficient aid materials are not always provided to teachers.

There is an innovative pathway to develop MTB-MLE teachers in the BEP.

- Language Development Training – by a local expert
- Before training they have pre-test and at the end of the training, post-test
- Basic teacher training – focused on how to deliver lessons to students in a classroom
- Orientation
- Refresh training to brush up