



# Doing Good That Is Good

The newsletter of FARMS International

Special Field Report: Chittagong Hills, Bangladesh • September 2012

Providing revolving entrepreneurial loans to poor Christian families - Galatians 6:10

Dear Friends,

**J**esus said, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24: 14.

The Chittagong Hills of Bangladesh has to be one of those places called the "uttermost!" FARMS has the privilege of ministering to the Christian community in many remote parts of this world and this hill tribe region of Bangladesh ranks right up near the top. God has orchestrated amazing opportunities for this ministry to reach out to Christians in challenging areas, such as Nagaland, Nepal, Cuba, Bangladesh, Cambodia, to name a few. This is only possible because of your love and support. As a result, your life is blessed by the prayers of those you help. Yes, they really do pray for us! Furthermore, as God uses FARMS to grow churches and spread the gospel of Jesus Christ in these difficult areas of the world, we are hastening the return of our Lord.

Traveling to most of these places is difficult at times, dangerous at times, but always awe-inspiring. The body of Christ is unspeakably diverse, yet uncommonly homogenous, in so many ways. I have always felt "at home" with believers, no matter how dissimilar our cultures are. This surely is a manifestation of God knitting his body together in seamless harmony.



Tripura tribal ladies in traditional dress. They are standing on gravel made from bricks. Gravel is a rare commodity in Bangladesh.

I had the privilege, last January, of once again visiting this beautiful hill region of the world. Travel permits are rare for foreigners, but God always makes a way. **The church is growing in these hills and that is nothing less than a miracle!** Missionaries, native evangelists, teachers and development workers have made great sacrifices to equip and encourage believers and God truly is adding to his church daily. We have been working in this hill tract region for over thirteen years now. The BTABC, Bangladesh Tribal Association of Baptist Churches, and FARMS have partnered together to run this development loan program. Because of its extreme remoteness the challenges taken on by the FARMS committee administering the program are unique. The committee has done a wonderful job overcoming each obstacle.

In this letter, I will be sharing some of the diverse projects your giving has made possible.

Love in Jesus,

Joseph Richter, Executive Director



Visits by foreigners are uncommon in the Chittagong Hills



Missionary liaison, Harold Ebersole, in discussion with FARMS loan committee.



**Honey Charan Tripura** started his fish farm and market seven years ago with a loan from FARMS. He is extremely grateful for the help. He is now able to pay for his children's education. He has four sons and three daughters. One son is attending a university and another is working in Dhaka teaching at a Christian training center. He prays for FARMS and thanks all who give to make this program possible. He says there are many in his village being helped by the program. He is faithful with his tithes from his project profit. Inset: photo of him and his wife by their home.



Ginger is a good cash crop. **Satirum Tripura** showed us how ginger roots are stored to preserve for planting.



**Sujon Tripura** has a cow project with FARMS. He took a loan in 2009 for a cow. The cow had two calves, pictured above. The mother died, but he still will make a profit from her offspring. Sujon is married and has two young children. He is a pastor of his village church and is a faithful tither.



**Jotirum Tripura** started his pineapple garden three years ago. Last year he harvested his first crop of 500 pineapples. The pineapples grown in the hills command a high price. He now has 2000 plants, but needs fencing to protect from animals. Pray for Jotirum!



**Mojerung Tripura** has a small pig project in her village of Katholi Para. Pigs provide much needed cash income for tribal families.



**Ujjal Barua** trained as a lab tech at Mulumghat Hospital. After his training he wanted to start a lab and dispensary in a small town in the Chittagong Hills. He used his loan from FARMS to buy a microscope and supplies. As his lab business grew, he used the profits to expand his pharmacy and now has a thriving business.



**Jonipur Tripura** and his wife used their FARMS loan to start a village store. Even though the store is small it has provided income sufficient for his family needs. He also has a banana plantation. His wife tends the store when he is at the plantation. They have two young children and are faithful tithers to their church.



**Purno Chandra Tripura** started a banana plantation with a FARMS loan seven years ago. He used his profit to start this mango orchard and then expanded it with a second loan three years ago. He made \$1000 from his first mango harvest and now has 10 acres of fruit trees! He has one son in college, a daughter finishing high school, and two children in elementary school, made possible by his project income. The project has gone so well that he has even started a small shop with the recent profits from his plantation.



**Jaganath Tripura's** project is growing turmeric. This orange spice is widely used in Asia to flavor curries. It is very profitable. The roots are boiled and then dried for about a week. The crop is sold locally.

**Emajon Tripura** used his loan to establish a mango plantation. Through lots of hard work, he now has 500 trees. Each tree is already producing 50 to 70 pounds of mangos. He explained that it is a lot of work to keep down the insect damage, but he is doing a good job. His future is much more secure.



**Guradhon Tripura** lost his rice fields due to loans with Bengali money lenders. This often happens in the Chittagong Hills. He was able with a loan from FARMS to pay off the money lender and redeem half of his land. Soon he may be able to redeem the rest with the profits from his farm. Please pray.



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This team from the Marma tribe has planted 18 new Marma churches in the Chittagong Hills since 2004! Marma are traditionally Buddhist. The man on the right has a cow project with FARMS and is also a school teacher.



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