



Partnering for Innovation

Meet Ashraful

By purchasing a small-scale reaper to provide reaping services to farmers in his community, Ashraful is changing agriculture for smallholder farmers in Bangladesh.



Ashrafal Islam is 29 years old and lives in the village of Bhupatipur in Bangladesh. His father cultivates rice, wheat, vegetables, and other crops. But Ashrafal was not interested in helping with the farm, because he saw the inefficiency of the hard labor, long hours, and low profit involved in the traditional methods that his father and his father's peers used. Instead, he opened a small shop in his village, where he sold electronics and recharged mobile talk time.

One day Ashrafal saw a wall painting advertising The Metal's small-scale reaper, which is being commercialized in Bangladesh with support from Feed the Future Partnering for Innovation. He called the help line at The Metal's nearest farm machinery hub to learn more. After applying, he was selected to be a local service provider for The Metal. The Metal trains these entrepreneurs on how to use the reaper and market their services, and the entrepreneurs buy a reaper and provide reaping services in their community. This model provides The Metal with a way to reach farmers in remote areas without investing in additional storefronts. Through the training, Ashrafal learned about the many benefits of the reaper, which can reap one acre of grain in an hour, work that would take eight hours to do manually. Ashrafal also developed a vision for wider-spread reaper use. Because he believes that involving young people in agriculture is essential to the future of Bangladesh's agricultural cultivation and food production, he hoped to involve young people in using the reaper.

Seeing how the Metal reaper could be a key tool in helping Bangladeshis make significant changes in the agriculture sector, Ashrafal purchased a Metal reaper. It was almost the middle of the rice harvesting season, so he immediately began providing machine services to the farmers in his community. Some of the established farmers were skeptical of using a machine over traditional, manual methods, and were reluctant to allow the machine in their fields. But through education and field demonstrations, Ashrafal convinced them of the benefits they would see as a result of using the reaper. In the partial season that he owned the machine, he reaped nearly 20 acres of rice and earned \$250. He expects to earn even more next season. As a result of this success, he is enthusiastically promoting the benefits of The Metal's reaper services.

Ashrafal is helping improve the Bangladeshi agriculture system by encouraging widespread use of the reaper and inspiring farmers and local entrepreneurs to become local service providers for The Metal. By developing a small-scale reaper and distribution model that reaches rural farmers, The Metal is making agriculture in Bangladesh more efficient and raising incomes for farmers and entrepreneurs.

-- This story was originally posted on the AgTechXChange by The Metal.