

## KAJOLI CENTRES BUILDING THEIR OWN PREMISES

People with a sense of commitment to the advancement of education of children from disadvantaged families in Bangladesh are increasingly coming forward to provide financial and other support towards disseminating Kajoli Pre-School Model across the country, especially in poverty-prone areas in northern Bangladesh. It may be recalled that the Kajoli Pre-School Model was developed through research supported by RIB aimed at preparing children from disadvantaged families who are either unable to get entry into the mainstream primary education system of the country or are dropped out after admission due to lack of required preparation which the children from well-to-do-families receive before entry.

The major driving force for the dissemination of the Kajoli Model is community support (i.e. Centres are organised, financed, managed and owned by the local community). RIB's support is limited to providing learning materials and extending capacity building support to the teachers, who mostly have secondary level education background and are selected from the concerned villages. In most cases, Kajoli Centres are housed in rooms/verandas provided by the local people free of cost. The holding of classes in such places during monsoon rains and extreme cold weather become difficult. Local people who are willing to contribute their own labour, bamboos etc. to construct own premises for the Centers are often unable to provide cash-cost component for the construction (e.g. procuring tin-sheets for roof top, cemented pillars etc.). RIB on trial basis, has tested cost-sharing approach in constructing own premises for Kajoli Centres with support from some people at home and abroad. The trial yielded very encouraging results with the local community members volunteering their labour and other inputs such as local construction materials (bamboo) while support from outside the community was used to procure roof tins and cemented pillars.

Based on this success, RIB made a call for funding from people around the world through Kajoli Website ( [www.rib-kajolimodel.org](http://www.rib-kajolimodel.org) ) for construction of Centre premises, toilets, sinking of tube wells, capacity building of the teachers etc. The result has been quite inspiring so far. Funds received so far are being used for construction of 25 Centre premises in Nilphamari and Panchagar districts on cost-sharing basis. Construction of 10 such houses is already finished and remaining 15 are on way of completion. These premises are not only used for the children but also as meeting places for the mothers of children, training spaces for sewing and other income generating activities including capacity building activities of the village women. It is expected that the premises will increasingly be used as 'Development Centres' for local women. This will also lead to stability and sustainability of these Centres without external support as well as rejuvenate voluntarism among the rural people.

