## What is Kajoli?

**“Kajoli Model”** is an early childhood learning (ECL) model developed by Research Initiatives, Bangladesh (RIB)in 2002 following the successful completion of a unique action research.The research was specifically aimed at developing a model that would attract children from the most disadvantaged communities in Bangladesh to learning and schooling.

As an action research, the development of the model which emerged in the initial years of research in Kajoli, Magura, continued over the years in some 150 “Kajoli model centers” all over Bangladesh. In the process adjustments were progressively made to the model. While some of these centers have subsequently closed down, over 120 of them are still in existence in some 10 districts of Bangladesh. Over 5200 children are graduating every year from these centers and moving on to the Government primary school system. More centers are coming up regularly.

## How did Kajoli begin its journey?

Kajoli began in January 2003 in Kajoli (hence the name of the model), a village in Sreepur Upazila of Magura District in southwest Bangladesh. The research was actively supported by members of the staff and the Board of Directors of RIB. It could thus be considered as an in-house research program of RIB itself.

**What are the aims and objectives of Kajoli Model?**

The Model emphasizes upon education in the broader sense of the term and not simply upon the ability to read and write. It aims to help lay the foundations for children from disadvantaged families to develop into fully-fledged individuals, ready to face the multifarious challenges of life with courage, confidence and social consciousness.

The specific objectives of the Model include:

- To develop a one year program for an early childhood learning model aimed at attracting children (pre-school age, four to five year old) from the most disadvantaged communities in Bangladesh to learning and schooling. An underlying purpose was to dispel

the notion among parents of such children that education is a difficult and costly process, meant only for the rich and the well to do.

- To make pre-school learning a “fun and game” affair, so that after spending a year at a Kajoli model center, the children would be eager to continue studies at the local free government primary school. In other words, the Kajoli centers would serve as a bridge for the children to enter into the world of schooling and education.
- To ensure that the model would be so easy and inexpensive to implement that local communities throughout Bangladesh would be encouraged to open Kajoli centers in their own localities, on their own initiatives and without outside support. In other words, Kajoli centers would be community-owned and community-supported, ensuring their independence and sustainability.
- An underlying objective of the research was to help revive the age-old tradition of community-service and volunteerism which had characterized Bangladesh society before the emergence of the more recent externally-funded NGO-culture in the country.

**What are the salient features of Kajoli?**

The most outstanding features of Kajoli that helped it to emerge through trial and error over the years include:

1. The learning component
2. The community participation component