

## **Khoj- Sheikhopura District, Punjab**

In the villages in which Khoj is supporting a non-formal education project for children, most of the population are either small landholders or landless labourers. The absence of healthcare and education facilities, improper sanitation and drainage, limited road access and a strong patriarchal system have all contributed to a lack of quality education and a depressed situation, in particular for girls and women. Khoj has responded to this situation with a project focussing on building the awareness and self-confidence among girls and their mothers. Initially, Khoj began by supporting a literacy programme for women which used phonetics as a teaching/learning methodology. In view of the rapid results, women asked that their children also be provided with these education classes which are now being undertaken in ten villages of Sheikhopura District in central Punjab Province.

### **Evaluation Objectives**

The purpose of evaluation was to assess the approaches and effectiveness of the project activities and suggest recommendations for future interventions.

Specific objectives of the evaluation were:

- To see how relevant are both the projects and activities in terms of addressing needs of target communities and achieving the projects' objectives;
- To measure efficiency and effectiveness of the approaches;
- To assess the projects' impact, with the utilisation of SCUK Global Impact Monitoring framework tool i.e. specific project and common monitoring
- To provide future direction (in the form of Recommendations) for phase II

### **Punjab Project**

The **communities needs** have clearly driven this project as the initial request for Khoj methodology to be used to address **gender disparity**, and to provide an educational opportunity for girls, came from the women in the communities who were attending Khoj literacy classes. This having been said, many of the men in the communities initially provided much resistance to project activities, fearing that the impact of their girls being educated would be immorality and loss of respect for their family. There has been a clear shift in the attitudes of many men from the start of the project, and currently in one village (BabuWala) a Khoj mens' literacy group has started in response to their request.

The **stakeholders** expressed a variety of **views on the quality of the education** provided in **Khoj schools** Quality was related to the following:

- access to education for girls who were previously not attending school
- access to a better education than that provided in the government schools for boys and some girls who were attending
- access to school within their own community versus challenges of traveling long distances to functioning government schools (many of the villages on paper have government schools, however the reality on the ground is that they are not functioning for a variety of reasons)
- access to computers and a computer teacher to support learning
- infrastructure that allowed for adequate classroom space and provision of resources such as blackboards, supplies and teaching aides
- teacher effectiveness not only related to the students' performance but also to teachers' level of professionalism (regular and on time, respectful, well organized, high moral standards)
- perceived changes in their childrens' behaviours and attitudes (less fighting, improved sense of hygiene, increased respect for others, enthusiasm for learning and working hard due to Khoj methods)

- success of Khoj methodology in building literacy as well as increased knowledge and practical understanding in many subjects
- relevancy of curriculum to students' immediate context, daily lives and needs including computer skills, agricultural skills, environmental and cultural heritage awareness through exposure visits to various locations.

In short **parents** viewed quality as the accessibility of the Khoj schools, the reliability of the teachers attendance and preparation, and the academic and social success they saw their children (especially their girls) gaining through the Khoj methodology. **Students** felt that the Khoj schools provided them with a good education. Those who had previously attended a government school related quality to interest level of teachers, attendance, curriculum content and their achievement levels. Students saw teachers in the Khoj schools as caring about what they were doing, what their interests were and the ways in which their lives could intersect with their learning in school. **Teachers** equated quality with the provision of a meaningful and relevant education that was based on the students' lives and context. They were also concerned about the quality of the infrastructure of the school facilities. **Community groups** seemed less aware of the specifics of the ways in which the Khoj methodology worked in the classroom, but were in general, supportive of the schools as they provided a local opportunity for girls to gain an education. Even some of those who had initially been very resistant to the idea of girls education had become strong advocates of Khoj schools within their community.

The **impact of training on teachers** was clearly reflected in both their classroom practices and in the comments of the focus group held with Khoj teachers. Training was viewed as an integral part of the project and a critical support to work in the field. Teachers felt they benefited from the experiential practice based approach of various trainings. They also felt the modeling that Khoj field staff provide on a regular basis in the field was invaluable. Learning by doing and professional growth through reflection on practice are central to the training model that Khoj uses.

In all out training and orientation we are expected to question and learn together. They (field staff) demonstrate for us and we follow their ideas. We train with the children in the classroom so it is a real situation. Initially they come every day and we work together. We learn how to discuss the Codes, how to teach through phonics, how to teach math in a way that is relevant to the childrens' lives. We have to reflect all the time on how and what we are teaching. – Kubra Ashiq, Khoj teacher –

Teachers trained in the Khoj methodology have to be actively involved in their own learning. **Teachers and students** are expected to think critically, problem solve, collaborate and create meaning together. This is a very challenging process and one that needs time and vast amounts of support and feedback for teachers to build the necessary skills for success (more detail in next section on Khoj methodology and in recommendations).

It is important to note that many Khoj teachers are from within the project communities and are graduates of Khoj women's literacy groups. By training and nurturing local women as teachers Khoj hopes to create a model whereby schools can have local teachers who are known and supported by the community. This is critical as 'outsider' teachers and often not trusted, and due to the challenging conditions there is a high turnover of teachers from Lahore.

The **impact of training on Khoj students'** is that they have teachers who have a deep level of commitment to their education, especially to the education of girls. They also have a depth of knowledge about the local context and relevant issues to integrate into the Khoj methodology as for many of them it is how they became literate themselves. Students are respected, expected to have high levels of attendance and are clearly becoming positive role models within their communities. In terms of training it should be noted that the **training of health workers** has not yet taken place due to difficulties in obtaining a trainer who is willing to work in the harsh

conditions for a low salary. This is a critical need and staff shared that every effort will continue to be made to provide the health training component.

**Field staff and teachers** work alongside each other to build skills in the Khoj methodology. This is a challenging task as the methods are based on a deep understanding of how to facilitate learning so that children think, learn and create their own meanings across the curriculum. Many of the teachers are themselves gaining confidence in taking risks, asking questions and implementing a curriculum that is not simply about following a lesson written in the Khoj planning book. The **relationships observed** were dynamic, supportive, humorous professional, honest, trusting, caring and challenging. Apart from the two core Khoj staff who have been with the project from the start, there has been a problem with high turnover of field staff due to the harsh conditions and low salary, which has made it challenging to give the teachers and community members a sense of continuity and trust. However, with local teachers being trained, many of whom the core Khoj staff have a long established relationship with from the womens' literacy groups; and with many of the communities growing support of the project, the relationships that do exist are extremely strong. This challenge of Khoj human capacity will be discussed more in the recommendations.

The **monitoring mechanisms in place to gauge the teachers training application in process** were not observed in use during school visits, however they were shared by the Khoj staff during the debriefing. There are two types of monitoring of teachers used by Khoj, structured and non-structured. Teachers are monitored three times a week by field staff in both clusters. This monitoring includes observing lessons, discussing problems that have arisen, sharing success stories and brainstorming ideas with the teacher. It also involves informal assessment of the students performance through the posing of questions, looking at work they have been doing, checking for understanding and having students share new knowledge gained in various topics. There is a more formalized daily reporting system by teachers who are expected to make daily entries in a reflective teaching journal. Initially this may only be a sentence or two. These entries are then read on a weekly / monthly basis by field staff and discussed. However, field staff shared that the drawback of this system is lack of time for the existing field staff to respond in a manner that they feel is suitable. Thus teachers may become frustrated when there is no immediate response or support for their current critical concerns, or when an issue is finally discussed with field staff weeks after it has been written about in their journal.

Before Khoj started their work in our village we did not know about the importance of education. Children had no awareness and they were illiterate, like many of us. The work they have done in a short time is like the prophet, they have done so much work. We are so impressed by the commitment of Khoj to meeting our needs. Even in the rains they come in though the muds. If they can support us like that, then we need to also support them in getting our children, especially our girls, into the Khoj schools.

- Male community leader, Babu Wala , Cluster 2-

The **relevancy of the project focus and activities** speaks for itself. Many children from the project villages are going to school for the first time. Girls have access to an education that encourages them to become confident, well informed, critical thinkers who are self assured, literate and enthusiastic about the possibilities for their future. There are 253 out of 412 previously illiterate children who now demonstrate reading and writing skills.

Attendance in Khoj schools is extremely high with students being enthusiastic to get to school on time. Many community members have changed their attitudes towards the relevancy of being literate, they have maintained their dignity and pride as they learn (women, children and now men) due to the fact that the Khoj methodology builds on what is relevant to their lives, what they bring to the learning process, what knowledge they already possess. The Khoj methodology looks

at assets versus deficits. **Activities** encourage adults and children to be problem solvers. Not only in the sense of academic problem solving, but for example in figuring out why certain vegetables are not thriving in their organic agricultural plot, or in engaging in role plays and debates around topics such as gender inequity and healthy nutrition.

Before the Khoj school started in our village we never saw children with school bags on their shoulders. Now we see children with bags rushing to school in the morning. Education is good and the children want to be in school. This is what we need for our community and our girls.

– Mens Group, Thathi Bhangan, Cluster 1 -

### **Khoj Methodology of Teaching**

In **critically assessing the Khoj methodology of teaching** it is vital to stress that it is not simply an innovative approach to teaching Urdu phonetically. It is a holistic approach to teaching and learning. Students engage in a wide range of diverse curriculum strands that are meaningful, relevant to their context and daily lives, and that are built on the assumption that children's potential to question, inquire, problem solve, collaborate and challenge are essential components of a good education. Teachers are viewed as learners who co-construct meaning alongside students in classrooms and in the world beyond.

The Khoj methodology uses innovative and empowering methodologies to give children quality and effective elementary education that is problem oriented and needs based. The Khoj methods are in direct contrast to those in government schools where conformist attitudes are bred. We want children to think critically, to think out of the box. It is a true challenge to make the educational vision a reality. I would say that in about 30 % of the classrooms real active learning is happening and in the other 70% they are at differing levels. – Nasira – Director of 'Khoj' Society for Peoples Education.

The **Khoj methodology** holds much potential for application in other educational settings as it is a clear reflection of curriculum that is based on locally relevant content that enables learners to find meaning in every aspect of their lives. As stated above it is not simply a phonetic approach to teaching Urdu (Codes / Advanced level will be discussed more in impact of phonetic approach), it is a way of thinking about teaching and learning. Curriculum is seen as an integrated whole, learning in Urdu relates to learning about science, relates to practical activities in the agricultural plot. The Khoj methodology reflects the connectedness between subjects, the ways in which children truly learn about their world and it uses quality active learning as a critical tool inside and outside the classroom.

In thinking about **replication in other settings** there are clear advantages and also clear challenges. The Khoj curriculum has not been developed in a vacuum, it has taken the **government** elementary curriculum requirements into account and integrated all skills and topics needed to pass government tests and to gain a certificate. The project has also seen the adoption of two non-functioning government girls primary schools. This has involved working through the government system to get permission, which has proved frustrating for Khoj staff. However, this is seen as a very real reflection of the respect the government holds for the Khoj methodology and the potential of linkages with government in the future.

Critical aspects of the Khoj methodology such as relevancy of curriculum, active based learning and reflective practice by teachers could greatly enhance the elementary government school settings if adopted. It must be remembered that the Khoj methodology and curriculum has been specifically designed for the villages in which Khoj schools exist. Thus, it would not simply be a

question of the government adopting the “Khoj curriculum package”, rather it would engage all parties in discussion, design and support in how to create curriculum that encourages children to think critically, problem solve and explore topics that are relevant to their lives.

The same would be true of adoption of Khoj methodology by other **community non-formal schools** It is not simply about the adoption of a set of lessons, a pack of literacy resources or ideas for exposure visits. This is where the biggest challenge in adoption of Khoj methodology lies as it is about adopting new ways of thinking about how children learn and how teachers teach. As is reflected by the ongoing professional growth of Khoj school teachers, this is a process that demands a great depth of understanding to truly implement the methodology in the way it is envisioned. This process takes much time and close support from field staff who hold the essence of the Khoj educational vision. This is not to say that adoption should not be considered, or that it is not possible. Adoption of the Khoj methodology in government and other community non-formal settings in the future should be encouraged, for with this will come a dynamic and much needed dialogue about constructivist approaches to education, about how to prepare children for their future and how teaching and learning can be relevant and meaningful.

In terms of **fast track** learning and the **phonetic teaching methodology** there has been a high level of success in helping students gain competence in the Core year (twenty five codes with the same number of key words/phrases /sentences form the basis for the Core year program). Even from the early stages of phonetic awareness children feel a sense of accomplishment that motivates them to engage with the various Codes activities. This is apparent when observing children in classes reading and writing. The use of relevant Codes means that children are keen to find meaning and feel a sense of ownership over the content. Children learn quickly, with interest and with supports for sequential development of their literacy skills. Opportunities are provided for practice, group work, problem solving, creativity and self expression. The phonetic teaching methodology sees language as part of an integrated whole, it is used to express ideas, to reflect thinking, to discuss and debate, to record, to build understandings and to solve problems.

Children learn through games, exercises, questioning and using spoken and written language as part of their daily routine. Children see much potential in being able to read and write.

Children in all the Khoj schools shared stories of how important it was to them to be literate. They not only saw it as an investment for their future “You will not get work outside the village if you cannot read and write and use the computer” (Class 5 girl), as a powerful personal tool for expression and as a practical tool to support their families.

Before I could not read or write. Now I help at home by keeping the accounts, I can check that they are right and make sure we are not cheated. I can read about religion and poetry and write stories of my own. I could not do that before the Khoj school was in our village.  
– Boy Class 5 – Pir Kot, Cluster 2

**Students** are not only gaining academic skills they are also developing a high level of social awareness, **self confidence** and an ability to think creatively and critically about a wide range of issues. In classrooms students were observed:

- working together in small groups to create words
- sharing ideas on what good nutrition means
- performing various role plays
- reading and writing stories
- solving mathematical problems that involved mental math
- engaging in open discussions with teachers
- listening to each others opinions.

All of the interactions observed and experienced with Khoj students were respectful and reflected a strong sense of self esteem, confidence and awareness. Students were able to be honest, to feel comfortable with adults, to value peers as individuals, to think for themselves and to make thoughtful decisions. **Extra curricular activities and exposure visits** are not only very popular with the students but provide them with a range of learning opportunities. Regular sports events are held between the Lahore and Sheikhopura District project, celebrations are held with the community for Pakistan Day, exposure visits are made to various places including visits to cultural / historic sites in Lahore and visits that encourage activism and participation in environmental issues, for example a visit to the Changa Manga forest where students planted trees.

The following comments reflect the impact and importance of the co-curricular activities and exposure visits.

Children, especially the girls, are not usually very confident when they join the school. Once they go out and see something they come back with confidence. For example the Lahore visit helps them get a sense of historical places and it develops their interests and enhances their curiosity to know more about their region and about the history of Pakistan. In other schools students do not have an opportunity to do such things. - Teacher from Thathi Banguan –

Before we did not know that Pakistan was made on August 14<sup>th</sup>. Our children and the Khoj school have made us aware of Independence Day. They had a celebration and a guest came and we all were invited. Now the community organizes and has a big celebration, we are informed now.

- Mother from Thathi Banguan

One of our favorite things in school is that we get to go on visits and that we have sports events with the students from Lahore. These things help us learn so much about ourselves and about the region and country we belong to.

- Khoj Student -

I was very strongly against my daughter going out of the village for the Khoj exposure visits. Then when she did go I listened to her and she had discovered so many important things from her trip to Lahore. Now I am very supportive of the school taking her anywhere they want to as I know she will learn so much, and I will learn too.

- Father from Thathi Banguan-

**Agricultural activities** are an integral part of the Khoj curriculum and are immediately relevant to the students' lives as most of their families are farmers. As one boy stated: "Agriculture is our life." Parents and students talked about the various applications of knowledge that have been gained on agriculture, and especially on organic agriculture. Students gain direct hands on experience through the agricultural plots where they engage in many farming activities from preparation of the soil, to irrigation to purchasing and planting of seeds to cultivation and harvesting.

One girl shares: "School has helped us understand how to select seeds and we help our parents learn too. Now when we go to the bazaar we have them show us all the seeds and we know how to check that they are healthy and clean. Often they mix the good and bad quality seeds. Now we know how to check and we feel good about that."

During a visit to an agricultural plot in Thathi Bhanguan the student's depth of knowledge was apparent. Students share their knowledge with their families and reflect on the fact that in the future when they farm their family land (or the land of other families) they will try and use organic methods despite the challenges. One student shared how she had secretly taken off the dry dung her father had used on a lemon plant in their home and replaced it with leaf fertilizer. The results have been so good that she now looks after all the plants in the family compound.

In Thathi Bhanguan there is a **computer training** center that is being used to train the Khoj teachers and teach students a range of computer skills. All stakeholders felt that computers were a critical component of the program as they can provide students with skills that will lead to wider opportunities for work outside the villages. Currently they are being used to teach Microsoft Word, Excel and In Page (Urdu software) as well as being utilized to show documentaries and educational videos. Khoj staff also see the computers as a powerful learning tool (especially once internet access is established) that will enhance curriculum.

The students take such an interest in everything we learn on the computers. When they print something out they are so happy and they share it with their family and friends. People are amazed to see what they can do on the computer. This experience has helped me, I really feel I have done some good. These children really need the support and access to information that computers can provide. If we get internet they can use it even more to enhance the Khoj curriculum, to find information, to research, to explore ideas., to feel part of a wider global community. The environment is so different to Lahore, no AC, power is erratic, no proper seats – but I have the best job satisfaction ever and it is because of the students and teachers enthusiasm and desire to learn.

- Khoj Computer Teacher -

When we discussed future plans children in the Khoj **Advanced level** were enthusiastic about the possibilities of **higher education**. This is more challenging for girls as they are usually unable to leave the villages. One boy says “ Boys can go out, girls have to stay and study here in the village” a girl then shares “Yes if the Khoj school was not here we would have no option after Grade 8, our education would be finished, but now we have choices, even for higher education.” Khoj has provided supports and information for distance learning courses that are proving very successful alternatives for girls and Khoj teachers wanting to pursue higher education.

### **Communities' Role in School Affairs**

Prior to Khoj's intervention in the project area the community did not have an understanding of participatory community based action. The slow process of gaining trust and building relationships with all community members was started with the literacy program for women, and has been greatly enhanced since October 2001 with the establishment of the Khoj schools. The request for girls education came from the women of the community and thus has always had their support. The men in the communities have provided much of the resistance to the idea of educating the girls, many fear they may become immoral and thus bring shame to their families and villages.

Community members do compare and complain about a variety of issues, however Khoj field staff adopt a problem solving approach. They listen to concerns, share their opinions and provide forums for open discussions to facilitate community problem solving. For example at the men community group meeting in Babu Wala men asked “Why don't we have a nice building for our school like in Thathi Bhanguan? How come they have computers and we don't?” Khoj staff reminded them that they had made a communal decision to contribute 1,000Rps per household but that they had never followed through. However, villagers of Thathi Bhanguan had contributed money, land and labor to enable the process.

There are clear signs that the established trust with community and respect of community for what they see Khoj schools providing for their children has created a **positive climate for**

**community participation and action.** Community members have participated in various aspects of project implementation including:

- provision of labor during construction of computer / literacy center
- space for classes in homes
- land for agricultural plots
- bulbs, fans and power supply
- stationary for their children
- mats and seats for in the classroom
- ¼ acre of land for school and computer center

Each village does have a **mothers group** that meets regularly to discuss school related issues. There is also one **men group** that has been established. Men do participate occasionally to discuss community related issues and concerns about the schools. Through these groups, and other activities, the Khoj project has facilitated the community in establishing a sense of organization around project implementation. Community voices are listened to and considered carefully by Khoj field staff when making decisions. It is hoped that the groups may become more formalized as a Citizen Community Board in the next phase of the project. This would create a link to the existing **government** structures and could support future **community mobilization** efforts.

**Women** have played and continue to play a central role in the success of the project. They generated the idea of Khoj schools to provide girls with an education, they have worked hard to convince their husbands, fathers, brothers, uncles and cousins of the importance of education, they have become the leaders who sustain the project with the support of Khoj field staff in the classrooms and in their own communities. Some of the women have become Khoj teachers, bringing a deep understanding of all stakeholders to their work.

Most of us are illiterate so we cannot facilitate in helping with school work. But we can give time, provide materials, even if we have no money we must try. We can help make our children regular and punctual and show interest in all that they learn and do at school. We can talk to our husbands about the importance of education. It is very hard but we can take on the work they would do at home, washing, cleaning, cooking ... it is a lot, a burden, but we owe it to our daughters, they can go to school, we never could.

– Mother, Thathi Bhanguan -

**Men** are less involved in school affairs than women, however they have the power to give permission for their girls to attend Khoj schools. Men view their role as appreciating the existence of the schools, sending their children to the school, providing space if needed for school, asking their children about school, checking the children's books (if they themselves are literate), giving their children time to do school work at home, talking to teachers if they visit homes, and offering labor if needed. One man states " We're ready to extend our full cooperation. Whatever we can do we trust you will not leave us in the middle." This is a very strong comment given the prevalence of a skeptical and highly critical view of anyone from the 'outside' wanting to start projects in their villages. The creation of the first Khoj men literacy group in Babu Wala (June 2004) is another sign of the men level of respect for the work Khoj does in the community.

**Children** have not only been the **beneficiaries** of the project. They have also been given roles in which they can take action and make decisions. This way of viewing children is woven into the Khoj methodology, children are doers, thinkers, **decision makers and action takers**. Students are engaged in cultivating their own agricultural plots, they are challenged to discuss and debate hard social issues such as gender inequity, they are expected to act on their new knowledge in practical ways, for example changing their hygiene and nutritional habits; which in turn changes the habits of their families. Viewing children in this way can lead to long term sustainable changes in attitudes and behaviours.

### **Khoj: Constraints and Enabling Factors**

The following **constraints** were identified:

- hard working conditions due to remote location and issues of access
- low salaries which makes it hard to retain field staff
- no vehicle for travel from Lahore to field sites, transport that is taken is not comfortable and has caused medical issues for staff (eg: back pain)
- absence of about 50% of children during sowing and harvest season
- family feuds in villages and sudden disruption of project work
- near absence of local teachers with matriculation certificate
- village politics
- absence of documentation person
- over extension of Khoj staff leading to frustration and inability to achieve all required project activities in a timely manner

The following **enabling** factors were identified:

- well established respectful and trusting relationship with community due to previous women's literacy work and ongoing project work despite harsh conditions
- willingness of community members to provide space in their homes /land for schools to function
- willingness of local women to engage in teacher training
- relevancy of curriculum to local context and issues
- support of dynamic individuals who have worked hard to create change (eg: teacher who built school room with help from her family and students despite lack of support from rest from community)
- strength of Khoj methodology in terms of rapid and measurable results, especially in literacy.

### **4. Conclusion and Recommendations**

Both projects have great strengths that are reflected in the report. They are clearly having a dramatic impact on the lives of girls and the communities in which they live. IRC and Khoj have different approaches to their work, yet are both working towards the project goal of addressing gender gaps in education and to indirectly address poverty issues by facilitating access to quality education through provision of community driven Non-Formal Education (NFE). The following recommendations are separated into two sections for IRC and Khoj, and will be followed by a joint recommendation for future directions and strengthening of the overall project implementation.

#### **Khoj: Recommendations**

Continue to build **Khoj teachers capacity** to implement the Khoj methodology in a way that supports existing teaching and also challenges teachers to build new levels of confidence in their classroom practice. This takes much time but needs support and attention in the next project phase if the teachers are to develop skills in taking initiative with the curriculum and responding to the students needs and interests. This will in turn further enhance the **quality of education** in the Khoj schools.

Continue **developing and implementing curriculum** (e.g: Civics and English) that will enhance students learning and teachers understanding of the impact of an integrated and holistic approach to education. Reflect on ways in which existing and newly developed curriculum can be directly related to government texts and topics and can be disseminated to other NGOs working in education.

Need for **documentation and reporting of project** activities. Currently Key staff are multi-tasking and therefore are unable to fulfill this role. In the next project phase human capacity needs to be examined and decisions made to ensure this aspect of the project is not neglected.

Building on **community mobilization** to increase community role in schools. Community members/groups have shown a great interest in project activities and could be asked to assume more specific roles in school management activities. This would also have the potential to encourage greater involvement of more resistant members through a formalized organizational structure. It could also enhance longer term goals of self sustaining schools.

**Advocacy and links to government structures** are natural aspects of this project. There is much the government and other organizations could build on from the Khoj methodology. Despite a challenging working relationship it is critical to look at all possibilities for sharing and collaborating with the government structure. Adoption of the two government girls schools is a very positive step in this direction.

**Strategize** on ways in which Khoj can share ideas, encourage replication of Khoj methodology and increase awareness of the educational impact of relevant and holistic curriculum design.

Follow leads on how to use existing proposal to get a **vehicle** as this would dramatically improve the working conditions for Khoj field staff.

### **Conclusion**

This evaluation has revealed the strengths and possible future directions for both projects. IRC and Khoj are working as partners in providing alternative systems of education that respond to the needs, issues and interests of children, especially from low income households and in particular, girls who are marginalized.

**Stakeholders** from both projects envision the work of IRC and Khoj continuing to strengthen and support education in their communities. They encouraged extension of the project and felt that in the next phase they could benefit from reflecting on challenges and successes to this point. **Women and girls** were especially vocal in their support of continued work with IRC and Khoj support and see it as invaluable in establishing new social norms that enable them to be educated within their communities. **Men** were also positive about the impact of the projects work and hoped that it would be sustained. Both IRC and Khoj have worked extremely hard in the projects first phase to mobilize community and encourage participation in decision making related to the project goals.

**Sustainability** of all project activities is an ongoing focus in terms of developing local capacity for action around educational issues. For example the establishment of strong supports for SMCs has dramatically impacted community awareness of the issues facing girls (IRC) and curriculum that is relevant, effective and built on an understanding of local needs and issues (Khoj) has proved a powerful way to generate community support alongside providing high standards of education. In the next phase it is suggested that both IRC and Khoj examine the structures they are establishing for less dependency, and the ways in which they can further mobilize community around self support for certain project initiatives in the future.

To this point the **partnership** between **IRC and Khoj** has been within the limited scope of exposure visits. IRC staff visited Khoj Project (Lahore) 23-27<sup>th</sup> February, 2004. From this visit the decision was taken by IRC to try out the Khoj methodology in adult education. It is recommended that the partnership possibilities are expanded, especially in terms of **dialogue around 'Quality Education' and 'Active Teaching Learning'** Both IRC and Khoj have much to offer and it would be good to provide a forum for discussion and joint design of tools related to monitoring and evaluation of their ongoing work in primary classrooms. It has been recommended in this evaluation that both partners work on issues of delivery of quality, both in terms of developing teachers deeper understandings of active teaching: learning (Khoj / IRC) and in terms of

developing curriculum that is interactive and holistic (IRC). Both partners have also been encouraged to continue to build and strengthen relationships with government and educational advocacy work.

Both partners shared their vision for the next phase and were clear that in order to reach project goals and outcomes a second phase of 3 to 4 years would be needed to build on the work of the first phase. Possible next phase activities are in line with recommendations made in this evaluation apart from IRCs proposed expansion and replication in 15 schools in Sehwan. It is apparent that the kind of change and impacts related to the project goals take substantial time to implement effectively. Careful planning of next phase activities and focus will ensure ongoing positive change in classrooms and increased community involvement in quality educational provision for their children, and especially for their girls.