



FIRST QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER 2023



The three-month edition of The Great Indian Treasure Hunt kicks off with a spectacular start!

We are thrilled to share some exciting news with you regarding the 4th Cohort of The Great Indian Treasure Hunt and its latest 3-month edition. We received a staggering 108 applications from 17 different states of India, showcasing the immense interest to be part of the program. After a rigorous selection process, we have selected 12 incredibly talented participants from 6 different states to take part in this thrilling 3 month edition.



About the Host Organizations

Our latest edition is all about celebrating the incredible work being done by young social change makers who are leading grassroots organizations. We have proudly partnered with these organizations to showcase their inspiring efforts and highlight the impact they are creating in their communities.

At the heart of our collaboration is the recognition of the power of youth-led initiatives in driving positive change. These young social change makers are not waiting for change to happen, but are actively taking charge of their communities and creating innovative solutions to address pressing social issues.

These grassroots organizations, led by young leaders, are making a real difference on the ground. From addressing environmental challenges, promoting gender equality, advocating for human rights, fighting poverty and inequality, to advancing education and health, these organizations are working tirelessly to create a more just and sustainable world.

One of our featured partners is AGRO RANGERS, a non-profit committed to regenerative organic farming in Pune, India, founded and led by young activist Siddesh Sakore who is passionate about addressing the urgent climate crisis. They focus on agroforestry to rejuvenate small farmer lands and mitigate climate change. Agro Rangers have introduced intercropping agroforestry models, trained farmers, and supported high-yielding fruit saplings, drip irrigation, and biofertilizers to build economic resilience and improve soil quality.



We are excited to highlight our collaboration with "Adi Johar", a youth-led organization that is making a meaningful impact in tribal villages through their work in eco-diversity conservation and promoting sustainable living. Led by a young changemaker, Adi Johar is committed to addressing critical issues such as environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity, and unsustainable practices in tribal communities. Through their innovative programs, Adi Johar is empowering tribal communities with knowledge and resources to conserve their unique ecological heritage while promoting sustainable livelihoods. They work closely with local communities to raise awareness about the importance of eco-diversity conservation and implement sustainable practices such as organic farming, agroforestry, and water conservation techniques.. Adi Johar's efforts not only contribute to the preservation of precious natural resources but also promote economic empowerment and self-sufficiency among tribal communities. They provide training, capacity building, and support to help tribal villagers develop sustainable livelihoods that are in harmony with their natural environment.



We are honored to partner with "Jeevanthirth," a non-profit organization that is dedicated to improving children's education and well-being. Jeevanthirth focuses on providing access to quality education for underprivileged children, with a particular emphasis on marginalized communities.

Through their innovative programs, Jeevanthirth works tirelessly to ensure that every child has the opportunity to receive an education that equips them with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to thrive. They provide educational resources, teacher training, and support to schools and communities in need, with a focus on holistic development that includes academic, social, and emotional aspects of a child's growth.

Jeevanthirth believes that education is a powerful tool for social change and works towards breaking the barriers of poverty, discrimination, and inequality through education. They also collaborate with local communities, parents, and other stakeholders to create a conducive environment that nurtures the overall well-being of children and fosters a love for learning.





The Journey of 12 Khojis across 6 States learning from 20 Social Organizations begins!

The 12 participants gathered at Jeevantirth, the starting point for their adventurous learning journey. They were filled with excitement and curiosity as they embarked on the sky phase, a 4-day preparatory phase to set the stage for their upcoming expedition.

During this phase, the participants spent time getting to know each other on a personal and professional level. They shared stories, experiences, and interests, building connections and forming bonds. Through team-building activities and group discussions, they learned about each other's strengths, weaknesses, and perspectives, laying the foundation for effective teamwork.

Setting clear objectives and goals was a crucial step for the participants. They engaged in reflective exercises, and brainstorming sessions, and facilitated discussions to identify what they wanted to achieve by the end of their learning journey. They crafted specific and measurable targets, such as developing leadership skills, enhancing communication abilities, or gaining insights into different cultures and communities.

The participants also recognized the importance of managing conflicts in a constructive manner. They engaged in discussions on conflict resolution strategies, communication styles, and active listening techniques. They established protocols for addressing conflicts, ensuring that differences would be addressed with respect and open-mindedness, and solutions would be sought collaboratively.

In addition to conflict management, the participants created a code of conduct that would guide their behavior throughout their journey. The code emphasized mutual respect, inclusivity, and ethical conduct. It served as a guiding framework for their interactions with each other and the communities they would be placed in during their expedition.

After the sky phase, the participants were organized into three teams of four members each with a mentor assigned to each group. They were excited to embark on their journey to the organizations where they would be placed. With clear objectives, established protocols, and a shared code of conduct, the teams set off with determination and enthusiasm to make the most of their adventurous learning journey.





Khojis at Agro Rangers

The khojis, who were placed at Agro Rangers as part of their adventurous learning journey, delved deep into the world of agroforestry. They eagerly engaged in hands-on learning, immersing themselves in the practices and principles of sustainable agriculture and forestry.

The khojis embarked on field visits to various farmers in the region, keen to learn from their experiences and expertise. They observed different agroforestry techniques, ranging from alley cropping to contour planting, and learned about the benefits of integrating trees and crops in a holistic manner. They engaged in discussions with the farmers, exchanging knowledge, and gaining insights into local farming practices and challenges.



Motivated to make a positive impact, the khojis took action. They rolled up their sleeves and got their hands dirty, planting more than 200 saplings in one acre of land at Agro Rangers. They carefully selected a diverse range of tree species that were suitable for the local climate and soil conditions, including nitrogen-fixing legumes, fruit-bearing trees, and timber species. They employed sustainable planting techniques, ensuring proper spacing and nurturing the saplings with care.

The impact of their efforts was tangible. The khojis witnessed firsthand how agroforestry could contribute to mitigating climate change and rejuvenating the soil. The trees acted as carbon sinks, sequestering carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The roots of the trees improved soil structure, preventing erosion and enhancing water infiltration. The diverse tree species provided habitat for beneficial insects and birds, promoting biodiversity in the agricultural landscape.

The khojis were proud of their accomplishments and the positive changes they were able to bring about during their time at Agro Rangers. They gained a deep appreciation for the importance of sustainable agriculture and forestry in addressing environmental challenges and promoting resilient farming systems. They also developed practical skills in agroforestry techniques, which they could apply in their future endeavors.

As they moved forward on their learning journey, the khojis carried with them a newfound passion for agroforestry and a commitment to continue making a positive impact in their communities and beyond. They were grateful for the opportunity to learn, grow, and contribute to sustainable agriculture practices, leaving a lasting legacy of rejuvenated soil and a greener future.





Khojis at Adi Johar

The khojis, during their adventurous learning journey, had the opportunity to be placed with Adi Johar, an organization based in Madhya Pradesh that focuses on sustainable living and conservation of ecological diversity. They were eager to learn from the organization's expertise in sustainable practices and immerse themselves in the local culture and environment. One of the key lessons the khojis learned from Adi Johar was how to live in limited resources. They were introduced to sustainable living practices, including efficient use of water, energy, and other natural resources. They learned about the importance of minimizing waste and reducing their ecological footprint to protect the environment and promote sustainable living.



In addition, the khojis were taught traditional techniques for building mud houses and machans, which are elevated structures used for various purposes, such as living, storage, or observation. They learned about the locally available materials and how to use them to construct durable and eco-friendly structures. They got hands-on experience in mud construction techniques, including mixing mud, building walls, and applying natural finishes.

The khojis were amazed by the practicality and sustainability of these traditional building techniques. They realized the importance of preserving and promoting such indigenous knowledge for sustainable living, as it not only reduces the environmental impact but also promotes local culture and heritage. Through their interactions with Adi Johar, the khojis gained a deep appreciation for the value of living in harmony with nature and utilizing limited resources wisely. They learned how sustainable living practices can contribute to the conservation of ecological diversity and promote resilient communities.



The experience of building mud houses and machans not only provided them with valuable skills but also instilled in them a sense of connection with the environment and a commitment to promoting sustainable living in their future endeavors.

The khojis were grateful for the opportunity to learn from Adi Johar and integrate sustainable living practices into their journey. They left with a renewed understanding of the importance of conservation and sustainable living, and a determination to promote these practices in their communities and beyond, inspired by Adi Johar's commitment to ecological diversity and sustainable living.



Khojis at Learning Societies unConference

All the Khojis who were at different projects across India had a special gathering in Mumbai before embarking on their journey to The Learning Societies UnConference (LSUC) together. It was a joyous reunion as the Khojis were excited to reconnect with their fellow teammates and learn from each other's diverse experiences. They exchanged ideas, insights, and stories of their work in different parts of the country, which enriched their understanding of social change, sustainability, and adventures from their respective projects. LSUC was initiated by Shikshantar Andolan and other radical friends all around India in 2002, with the goal of bringing together individuals who are resisting the monoculture of the mind and co-creating diverse learning communities, sustainable learning spaces, and creative un/learning processes.



What excited the Khojis the most about this event was the unique format of an "unconference" where there was no predetermined agenda, and the participants co-created the learning experience. The emphasis was on collaboration, creativity, and dialogue, which aligned perfectly with the Khojis' values and approach to learning.

At Khoj, the team believed that exposure to diverse experiences was essential for young people to grow and shift their perspectives. Participating in The Learning Societies UnConference was seen as a valuable opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals who shared their passion for alternative forms of education and learn from their experiences. The khojis were eager to contribute their knowledge and expertise to the discussions, workshops, and other activities at the event. They were confident that this experience would broaden their horizons and inspire them to continue their learning journey with Khoj with renewed energy and enthusiasm. They were also looking forward to sharing their learnings with their community and applying them in their future endeavors.



The khojis were excited about the opportunity to participate in The Learning Societies UnConference as it aligned perfectly with their mission to promote diverse and sustainable learning experiences. They were eager to learn from other participants, share their own insights, and continue their journey of personal and collective growth as changemakers in their communities.



The Great Indian Treasure Hunt enters into the Metal Phase

The Great Indian Treasure Hunt has now entered the Metal Phase, which was held at Manthan Sanstha in Rajasthan. This phase marks a significant shift in the participants' journey as they enter a reflective and introspective period after five weeks of intensive action. During this phase, participants will have the opportunity to mould their individual personalities through self-reflection and learning from their experiences and challenges. The Metal Phase is designed to be a week-long celebration where all the participants come together to share their insights, lessons, and strategies for the remainder of the journey. It is a crucial period for reflection, learning, and personal growth as the participants take stock of their progress and plan their next steps.



Manthan Sanstha, situated in Rajasthan, provides a serene and conducive environment for this reflective phase. Surrounded by the beauty of nature, participants will have the opportunity to engage in introspective activities, group discussions, and reflection exercises to deepen their self-awareness and enhance their personal development.

Mentors had an one-on-one conversations with participants to understand them better and guide them for the rest of the journey. These conversations helped the mentors identify the participants' strengths and weaknesses, and offer them personalized guidance.





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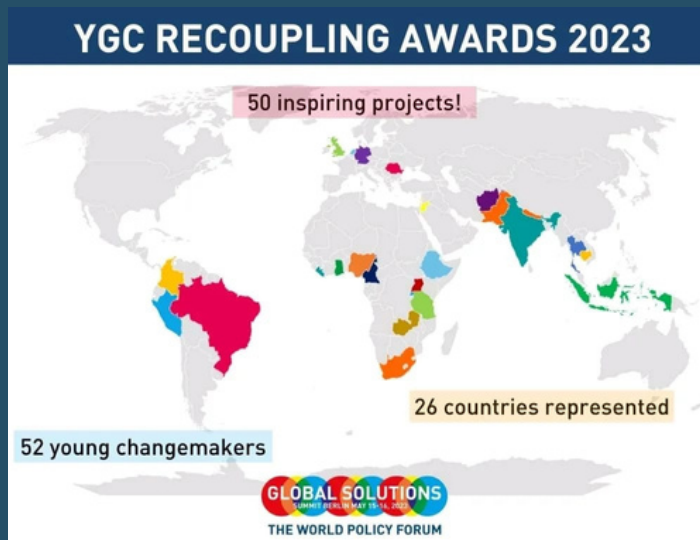




"Khoj and the Great Indian Treasure Hunt: A Global Solution Recognized by Young Recoupling Award"

We are thrilled to announce that Khoj, an innovative treasure hunt initiative, has been selected as one of the 15 global solutions by the prestigious Young Recoupling Award. This recognition is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our team, as well as the immense potential of Khoj to make a positive impact on communities and the environment.

The Young Recoupling Award, which is held annually in Berlin, Germany, honors initiatives from around the world that contribute to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Khoj has been recognized for its unique approach to solving social and environmental challenges through a treasure hunt format that engages and educates participants while promoting sustainable practices.



Our founder, Mr. Abhilash John, has been invited to Berlin to represent Khoj and share our vision and success story at the Young Recoupling Award ceremony. This recognition is a significant milestone for Khoj and a testament to the impact we have made in the field of sustainability and conservation.





Enlightening Meeting with Rimpochi: Exploring New Horizons for Holistic Education



We are honored to have the opportunity to meet Rimpochi at Nivedhya Nilayam in Wardha to discuss building a new and holistic education system. Rimpochi's wisdom and insights on spirituality and mindfulness are invaluable. The meeting was attended by passionate individuals who are working towards alternative approaches to education. Rimpochi shared invaluable insights and guidance on creating a more holistic and inclusive education system that nurtures the minds, hearts, and souls of learners. It was an enlightening gathering that inspired new ideas and perspectives for shaping the future of education.

NOTE TO THE WELL-WISHERS AND SUPPORTERS

We would like to express our sincere gratitude for any support that helps us to continue our work. We need your help so that we could create meaningful learning journeys for our youngsters so they to come out of their comfort zone, as well as to support the organizations that are working at the grassroots. If you enjoyed reading this newsletter, please forward it to others who may be interested.

To know more about Khoj and the work we do or to support us you can write at info.khojindia@gmail.com or call us at +91 7698443039.

With very best regards from the entire Khoj family, stay safe, stay healthy!



By supporting our work you can make a difference in the life youngsters and in the marginalized communities across India.

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