

Pratham Books' StoryWeaver celebrates International Mother Language Day by launching open digital libraries for children in 100 languages
(For release on or after 21st February 2019)

February 21, 2019, Bengaluru: Pratham Books' StoryWeaver marks International Mother Language Day by opening a gateway to digital libraries in 100 languages for children across the world and thereby addressing the scarcity of books for children in their own languages.

To achieve this milestone, StoryWeaver has collaborated with a global network of organisations and individuals who are helping create this vast resource of children's storybooks, as part of its 'Freedom to Read' campaign.

By leveraging technology, in the form of its free-to-use digital platform, and open licensing, which allows for the sharing of original content, StoryWeaver has accelerated the creation of quality content and launched children's libraries in a wide range of languages: tribal Indian languages like Korku, and Pawari; relatively rare languages like Bundelkhandi, and Surjapuri; and underserved international languages like Chinyanja, and Basa Jawa.

The UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report reveals that 40% of the global population does not have access to education in a language they speak or understand. This translates to over 2 billion people who would benefit from having books in their mother tongues.

StoryWeaver collaborators like African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AfLIA), describe these libraries as building literacy, as well as strengthening Africa's cultural identity. Dr. Nkem Osuigwe, Director, Human Capacity Development & Training, AfLIA, says, "The books have knowledge that African children need – building relationships, honesty, forgiveness, respect and love for other human beings, storybooks about nature as well as storybooks that promote arts and craft. The storybooks on the (StoryWeaver) platform that amaze me most are those that have the capacity to build the curiosity of children about science, inventions, calculations and naturally occurring phenomena."

StoryWeaver partners like Azad India Foundation (AIF) describe the frustration of not having reading resources in Surjapuri, despite it being spoken by 1.2 million people in Bihar, West Bengal, Assam and Bangladesh. Yuman Hussain, Executive Director, AIF says, "The children that we engage with at the learning centres have never seen a storybook in their mother tongue. Even my teachers haven't read books in Surjapuri."

Suzanne Singh, Chairperson, Pratham Books, says, "With 40% of the global population not having access to education in their first language, the issue of lack of linguistic diversity in children's books is a serious concern. StoryWeaver was conceived to address the inequity in reading resources for children, by making quality storybooks available digitally, for free." Adds Purvi Shah, Head - Digital Initiatives, Pratham Books, "The Freedom to Read campaign has enabled us to collaborate with organisations and individuals who share our commitment to creating high quality reading resources in children's mother tongues."

Partner Organisations

[Azad India Foundation](#): Surjapuri

[SNS Foundation](#): Marwari

[African Library and Information Associations and Institutions \(AfLIA\)](#): Igbo, Hausa, Fante, Ewe, Yoruba, Kikuyu, Luganda and Swahili

[Suchana Uttar Chandipur Community Society](#): Santali, Kora, Bilinguals

[Little Readers' Nook](#): Kutchi Bilinguals

[Unnati Institute for Social and Educational Change](#): Korku

[North East Educational Trust](#): Assamese and Bodo

[Darakht-e Danesh Library](#): Pashto, Farsi

[Right to Play](#): Urdu, Kinyarwanda, Asante Twi

[REHMA](#): Urdu and Urdu bilinguals

Language Champions

[Agnes N.S. Nyendwa](#): Chinyanja

[Amit Dudave](#): Pawari

[Ana Jovic](#): Serbian

[Ankit Dwivedi](#): Bundelkhandi

[Kaye Suscang](#): Filipino

[Maharani Aulia](#), [BE Priyanti](#): Basa Jawa (Javanese)

[Melchiade Ntibazonkiza](#): Kirundi

[Nguyen Dac Thai Hang](#): Vietnamese

[Priya Bhakthan](#): Sanskrit

About StoryWeaver

StoryWeaver (www.storyweaver.org.in) is an open source, digital platform of multilingual children's stories from Pratham Books. On StoryWeaver users can read, create, translate, download and share stories for free! By creating a collaborative framework where the creators and consumers of children's content could interact with one another, StoryWeaver attempted to address the scarcity of books for children. StoryWeaver was launched in 2015 with 800 stories in 24 languages. Today, the platform offers over 11,500+ stories in 146 languages.

About Pratham Books

Pratham Books (www.prathambooks.org) is a not-for-profit children's book publisher founded in 2004 with the mission to see 'a book in every child's hand'. Its key objective is to publish good quality, affordable storybooks in multiple languages to support reading acquisition among children. Since inception, Pratham Books has published over 3,000 books in 21 Indian languages.

