



This International Literacy Day, StoryWeaver launches ‘Freedom to Read’ - a campaign to create more joyful stories in more languages for children.

Across the world, September 8th is celebrated as International Literacy Day. This day, a year ago, [Pratham Books](#) launched [StoryWeaver](#) - India's first open source, digital repository of multilingual children's stories and opened up a gateway to a never ending stream of stories. To mark this occasion, StoryWeaver is launching its 'Freedom to Read' campaign.

At StoryWeaver we believe that every child should have access to joyful stories in her mother tongue. With the ‘Freedom to Read’ campaign, we will add stories in 15 new languages to StoryWeaver. The campaign will culminate on International Mother Language Day (February 21st, 2017), with the stories having reached children through on-ground collaborations.

When StoryWeaver was launched a year ago, our goal was to create a participatory framework where content creators and users could collaborate with each other to create content in multiple languages. This would have a multiplier effect to address the scarcity of multilingual reading resources that exists in India. StoryWeaver launched with 800 stories in 26 languages (Indian and International). Today, there are over 2000 stories in 49 languages. Almost all the new languages have been added to the platform at the request of our community.

The languages on the platform truly reflect the linguistic diversity of India: minority languages ([Konkani](#) and [Tibetan](#)), classical languages ([Sanskrit](#)) and tribal languages ([Kora](#), [Santali](#)) are active on StoryWeaver. Additionally, so are international languages like [Russian](#), [Italian](#), [Spanish](#), [Farsi](#) and [Kurdish \(Arabic and Latin Script\)](#) - to name a few.

Translations in these languages are being done by passionate language enthusiasts and teachers who believe in our mission of ‘a book in every child’s hands’. Tenzin Dhargyal, a teacher at the TCV School, Suja, Himachal Pradesh and his colleagues have translated 30 stories to Tibetan on StoryWeaver. *“I am translating these books so that I can inspire other Tibetan teachers to translate children’s stories to the language. There is a real dearth of good quality stories for kids in Tibetan”*, says Tenzin. Tenzin has already shared stories with students online and has plans to download, print and share copies of the stories with students and teachers for classroom use.

Ms. Suzanne Singh, Chairperson, Pratham Books said “Stories form an important part of a child’s growth and development. They introduce new words and ideas into a child’s world and expand the boundaries of their minds. With the ‘Freedom to Read’ campaign, we hope to make many more stories available in languages that are underserved and underrepresented in the mainstream”.

StoryWeaver is also playing a small but vital role in preserving tribal languages. Kora

(sometimes Konra) is spoken in pockets across West Bengal and North Odisha. Organisations like Suchana in Birbhum, West Bengal are using StoryWeaver in their work with Adivasi children from the Santal and Kora communities. In the 6 Kora villages where Suchana is working, the language had never been written before they started translating stories on StoryWeaver using the Bengali script. Without active intervention, it is very possible that the next generation will not use it as a first language. So as a living language, it might not last beyond the next couple of decades. StoryWeaver has helped Suchana by dramatically improving their ability to create learning materials in Santali and Kora. Their educator-translators have translated 27 stories to Kora (Bengali script) and 19 stories to Santali (Bengali Script) so far. They plan to print 500 copies of these stories and share them via a mobile library, and will also load free e-books from StoryWeaver onto SD cards for viewing on low cost smartphones.

Our Supporters

Tanvi Bambolkar, Konkani translator "I think the main reason why our collaboration with StoryWeaver is so infused with energy and passion is that we (at the Konkani Bhasha Mandal) feel that there is a lot to be done for Konkani and we cannot waste time. So we try to give as much as possible in whatever ways we can."

Shravan Kumar Jha, Chief Knowledge Officer, i-Saksham, Bihar

"StoryWeaver serves an important purpose in facilitating students to be the weaver of their own world.. It reinforces the belief that books are our best friends, and more so for these children who live in hard-to-reach areas wherein i-Saksham works. These children lack not in imagination, but in the availability of such critical resources such as books which can lend them a shoulder to sit on and view and understand the world around them."

StoryWeaver

StoryWeaver was launched a year ago with a vision to weave a new chapter in children's publishing. A creative space where authors, translators, illustrators and educators could come together and catalyse the creation of more joyful reading material for children.

By placing all the content on StoryWeaver under CC-BY 4.0 - one of Creative Commons most liberal licenses - we wanted to foster collaboration between content creators and users of children's content. On StoryWeaver stories can be read, created, downloaded, translated, versioned or printed using the tools embedded on the platform.

Pratham Books was set up as a not-for-profit children's book publisher in 2004 with the mission to see 'a book in every child's hand'. The key objective was to publish good quality, affordable storybooks in multiple Indian languages to support reading acquisition among children.

In the last decade, Pratham Books has published over 300 original titles in 18 Indian languages, which total up to about 2000 books. The books cover a range of genres including early readers, fiction, non-fiction, and storybooks on science, history, mathematics and nature. They have had the distinction of working with many of the country's renowned

authors and illustrators and their books have won several awards as well.

www.prathambooks.org