



Φ ΚΑΤΗΛ

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S

REPORT

2018-20



Dear Friends,

A thirtieth anniversary can put you in any number of moods. Celebratory, of course. A little wistful, perhaps. Grateful, for sure. In an age where nothing seems to last and things change by the minute, three decades feels like a long time. We realize that we were able to deliver on our vision consistently because of the unstinted support we received from multiple quarters over the years. And, as we celebrate a great milestone in the Katha journey, I'd like to thank Ms Geeta Dharmarajan, our Founder-Director, for being the guiding light for all of us at Katha. From a personal standpoint, she has been my guru. Had it not been for her round-the-clock support, persistent encouragement and constructive criticism, I wouldn't have been able to execute my role efficiently and contribute to the growth of Katha. I owe a lot of gratitude to her for always being there and I feel privileged to be associated with a person like her. I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank all those magic-makers who came forward and helped us dedicate all our thoughts, ideas, innovations and actions in pursuit of excellence for children.

As we step into the thirty-first year of our existence, we take stock of progress until now and set in motion the further strengthening of our resolve in the changing global context. Over the course of the year 2018-19, we've looked at both the draft and the craft of our various initiatives and programmes to bring holistic development in the child's life; we have tried to fine-tune them for maximum impact. We will also be hosting a series of events through the year where we can collectively discuss the challenges and joys of building a nation where every child counts. There will be stimulating discussions and debates, and we hope to carry on the tradition of bringing together like-minded people who believe so strongly that reading provides joy. And we can all put our collective strength to spread this joy to every child.

*Parvinder*

Parvinder Kaur  
Executive Director's, Katha



# SOME WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

“I can simply say Katha is doing what one can dream best out of education. I hope we will learn from it to change the culture of education in Delhi.”

— **Shri Manish Sisodia**, Hon’ble Deputy Chief Minister & Education Minister of Delhi

“Katha has commendably applied the mountain will-come-to-Mohammed adage to bring the richness of India’s literature to English habitues, in a manner uniquely its own.”

— **Economic Times**

“... Katha is its multi-stake holder engagement with different partners which includes Delhi government and an innovative education model to mainstream education.”

— **Deccan Herald**

“In exceptionally difficult and harsh conditions, Katha is making a tremendous impact on ... children.”

— **Joint Evaluation Team**, MHRD, Government of India

“The motivation that Katha provides to out-of-school children is very unique. This, for us, is something very distinct and out-of-box outcome from the Katha intervention.”

— **Joint Evaluation Team**, MHRD, Government of India

“With all admiration and best wishes ...”

— **Prince Charles**

“An educational jewel in India’s crown.”

— **Mr Naoyuki Shinohara**, Deputy Managing Director, International Monetary Fund

“I continue to be impressed and inspired by Katha’s outstanding dedication to children and the importance of learning.”

— **Mr Gene R Carter**, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, USA

“It has been a pleasure to see your impressive work. Best of luck!”

— **The Jury of Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award**

“What a lovely bright colourful school. It is great to see the children being encouraged to be creative. And very motivated and energetic teachers. Well done!”

— **Mr Mark Westenra**, New Zealand

“What a delightful morning amidst such lovely, responsive

and attentive children. Kudos to Katha family and to Geeta for this amazing project and journey.”

— **Ms Shovana Narayan**, Padma Shri Kathak Guru

“An inspiring place with brilliant staff, and children with huge potential in life.”

— **Ms Judith McNeill**, Comic Relief, UK

“A nest, a lot of chirping birds, birds and young butterflies, life, energy and beauty. All carved out of a surrounding which speaks of a struggle for survival and going ahead. Thank you, Katha, for introducing us to the spirit of life in the community.”

— **Ms Anita Agnihotri**, Secretary, MoHUA

“The excellent lab of Katha is an eye-opener. I am amazed at the degree of creativity, efforts and the focus on creating higher standards of learning. Fantastic!”

— **Ms Chyaya Balaji**, Toolbox Foundation

“The School is such an inspiration. It always sparks my creativity when I visit. The team is really making a difference to the lives of so many!”

— **Ms Neha Singh**, John Lewis Foundation – India Liaison Office

“Katha’s work is driven by the idea that children can bring change to their communities that is sustainable and real, just as the children do in [their books].”

— **Papertigers**

“As with most Katha books, the new releases are elegantly produced, attractively illustrated, and shaped by concise commentaries.”

— **livemint.com**

“Books like these reinforce my belief in Katha publishers that they are doing a wonderful job in creating quality literature for young readers.”

— **Literary Sojourn** (The Bicycle)

“Katha lives and breathes within urban context, striving to empower, enlighten and educate through the power of story.”

— **Ms Amanda Leigh Lichtenstein**, USA

“Katha stands as an exemplar for all the creative projects around the world that grapple with ordinary and dramatic misery in cities.”

— **Mr Charles Landry**, The Art of City Making

“... inspirational work.”

— **Mr Leawik Blan**, Asian Education Foundation, University of Melbourne, Australia

“Incredible job to shape kids’ futures.”

— **Mr David Fruttura**, Boston University

“Katha has proved that the school curriculum can be made interesting and the modes of learning innovative.”

— **HT Live**

“Both public and government schools can learn from Katha how to anchor literacy in the indigenous tradition of storytelling.”

— **Prof. Krishna Kumar**, Former Director, NCERT

“Katha has done outstanding work to bring computer and internet access to marginalized communities in the slum areas ...”

— **Gates Foundation**

“Katha deserves a round of applause for ... unearthing a cache of talented translators and revealing the wealth and diversity of literature that lies hidden and unappreciated in this amazing land of ours.”

— **Indian Review of Books**

“Katha has a real soft corner for kids. Which is why it ... create[s] such gorgeous picture books for children.”

— **Time Out**

“A pioneering Indian translation house of quality ...”

— **The Hindu**

“An institution in the world of Indian literature.”

— **The Business Standard**

“Katha transports underprivileged children to mainstream education system successfully.”

— **Financial Times**

“Katha, the non-governmental organisation Geeta Dharmarajan began a quarter century ago, is a tale of thinking out-of-the-box...”

— **Time Out**

**1. A LION IN PARIS**

Beatrice Alemagna  
Recommended by CBSE and NCERT

**2. AAMU'S KAWANDI**

Shrujana Niranjani Shridhar  
Shortlisted for The Hindu-Young World Goodbooks Award 2017

**3. BIOSCOPE**

Mamta Nainy . Illustrated by Jayanto  
Included in the International Board on Books for Young People [IBBY] List in 2011

**4. DADDOO'S DAY OUT**

Prabhjot Kaur  
Recommended by CBSE and NCERT

**5. DAYS WITH THATHU**

Geeta Dharmarajan . Art by Nancy Raj  
Recommended by CBSE and NCERT

**6. DINOSAUR-LONG-AS-127-KIDS**

Geeta Dharmarajan . Art by Rajiv Eipe  
Katha Chitrakala Award 2010 First Prize Winner

**7. EARTHSONG**

Geeta Dharmarajan . Art by Enrique Lara and Luis Garcia  
Chosen in 101 Best Indian Children's Books by Young Zubaan

# AWARD-WINNING CHILDREN'S BOOKS

**8. FIRST SUN STORIES**

Multiple Authors and Illustrators  
Chosen in 101 Best Indian Children's Books by Young Zubaan

**9. GATILA**

Lisa and Anjora Noronha  
Katha Chitrakala Award 2011 Special Mention

**10. HAIKU**

Kala Ramesh . Art by Surbhi Singh  
Honourable Mention for Best Book for Children by the Haiku Society of America

**11. HOW TO WEIGH AN ELEPHANT**

Geeta Dharmarajan . Art by Wen Hsu  
Katha Chitrakala Award 2011 First Prize Winner

**12. I HAVE A HOME**

Claudia Legnazzi  
Recommended by CBSE and NCERT

**13. MAI AND HER FRIENDS**

Durga Bai  
Katha Chitrakala Award 2010 First Runner-up

**14. MIMI'S DREAM**

Kuie Ling Hsu  
Katha Chitrakala Award 2011 First Runner-up

**15. MOON, RAMU AND I**

Geeta Dharmarajan . Art by Harshvardhan Kadam  
Darsana National Award 2011 for the Best Children's Book

**16. MY HAIKU MOMENTS: AN ACTIVITY BOOK FOR YOUNG HAIKU LOVERS**

Honourable Mention for Best Book for Children by the Haiku Society of America.

**17. OH NO! NOT AGAIN!**

Geeta Dharmarajan . Art by Rajiv Eipe  
Chosen in 101 Best Indian Children's Books by Young Zubaan

**18. PALANQUIN BEARERS**

Sarojini Naidu . Art by Indu Harikumar  
Katha Chitrakala Award 2010 Special Mention

**19. RAZIA AND HER PINK ELEPHANT**

Mukul Dube . Art by Fahad Faizal  
Chosen in 101 Best Indian Children's Books by Young Zubaan

**20. RUN RANGA RUN**

Geeta Dharmarajan . Art by Srivi  
Nominated for the Jarul Book Award 2018

**21. THANGAM OF MEHRGARH**

Geeta Dharmarajan . Art by Mrinalini Sardar  
Katha Chitrakala Award 2011 Second Runner-up

**22. THE ELEPHANT IN THE TREE**

Mallika Nagarajan  
Recommended for the LRSIA Award Organised by Young India Books

**23. THE FAMOUS SMILE**

Geeta Dharmarajan . Art by Rashin Kheiriyeh  
Chosen in 101 Best Indian Children's Books by Young Zubaan

**24. THE GLASS TREE**

M Mukundan . Art by Poonam Athalye  
Recommended by The Robin Age as Best Read on Environment

**25. THE PRINCESS WITH THE LONGEST HAIR**

Komilla Raote . Art by Vandana Bist  
Chosen in 101 Best Indian Children's Books by Young Zubaan

**26. THE SONG OF THE SCARECROW**

Suddhasattwa Basu  
Chosen in 101 Best Indian Children's Books by Young Zubaan

**27. TO EACH HER OWN**

Vijaydan Detha . Art by Anita Hashemi Moghaddam  
Katha Chitrakala Award 2011 First Prize Winner

**28. U SIER LAPALANG**

Kynpham Sing Nongkynrih . Art by Maya Ramaswamy  
Recommended for the LRSIA Award Organised by Young India Books

**29. WALK THE GRASSLANDS WITH TAKURI**

Nima Manjrekar and Nandita Hazarika . Art by Maya Ramaswamy  
Recommended by Young India Books as the Best Read

**30. WALK THE RAINFOREST WITH NIWUPAH**

Aparajita Dutta and Nima Manjrekar . Art by Maya Ramaswamy  
Recommended by Young India Books as the Best Read





“Change can only happen if we come together, which would be the next step Katha needs to take. We need to look at child poverty as a crisis. I’m sure people will come out in the millions and say that they will not tolerate child poverty. Katha should be in that advocacy, partnership area to leverage people’s interest and bring them together.”

— Geeta Dharmarajan

## IT ALL BEGAN WITH A ‘STORY’!

When Katha’s founder—award-winning writer, editor, social entrepreneur and educationist—Geeta Dharmarajan returned from the US to India in the late 1980s, she came across an alarming UNICEF report which mentioned that every day 400 children in India die of diarrhoea. Around the same time, the results of the 42nd National Sample Survey (1986–87) revealed that one of the top reasons for children dropping out of school was not only to support their families, but also because they found school boring and the lessons taught irrelevant.

Geeta Dharmarajan was charged up about doing something in the education sector—for underprivileged children. She wanted to build an equitable India. She had a vision. She was faced with two questions: 1. How can we make education relevant and fun and thereby reduce non-literacy in children, in our many languages and bring the joy of reading to them? 2. How can we culturelink the wealth of India’s linguistic diversity to strengthen nation-building?

The answer was STORY! Stories that have the child at its centre, irrespective of the many divides of poverty, social invisibility and special needs she is on! And thus came into being KATHA, our story!



KATHA  
VILASAM

the story research and  
resource centre



# KATHAKAAR

## BOOKS FOR A BETTER WORLD!

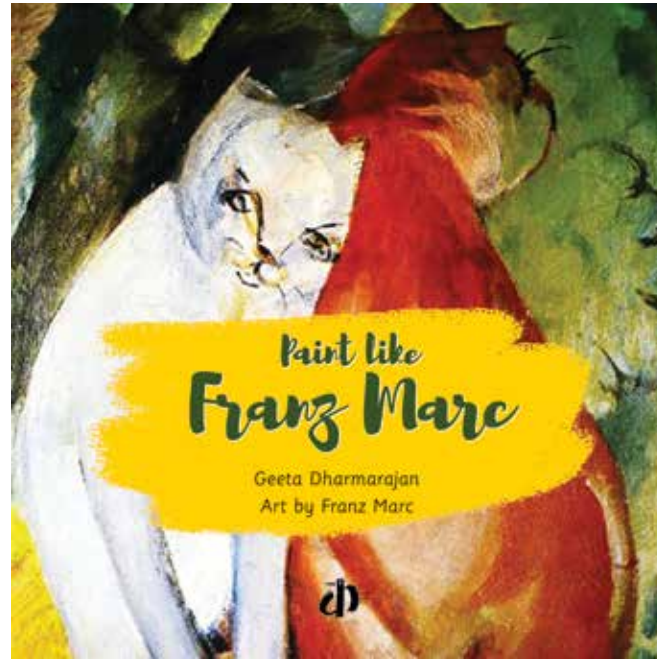
At the closing decades of the twentieth century, five children stood witness to the first spell cast by Katha — an idea to transform lives through words. Bit by bit, Katha grew, innovating new techniques and adapting itself to the ever-changing environment around it.

Katha, in order to democratize reading, has since then striven to inculcate the habit of reading in children, not just for productive and utilitarian purposes but also for them to find in words relevant to their lived experiences. As such the topics covered by Katha Books are wide-ranging from water and earth to gender sensitization, equity and kindness.

Reading as an inclusive practice can only be wholly accomplished through inclusive literature — be it poems, stories, and non-fictional narratives. Since ancient times, stories have been used to shape moral character and worldview. The content of Katha's books

is such that it makes children enthusiastic to learn whilst also sensitizing them, so that not only do they become productive members of the society but also leaders to lead us to a brighter future. The stepping stones of our unique enterprise are the books we publish — lucid narratives in an accessible language with a variety of hues and textures to keep children riveted, all for an affordable price. India's literary heritage is extraordinary with Katha contributing to continue it in small surefooted steps, one book, one child at a time.





## PAINT LIKE FRANZ MARC

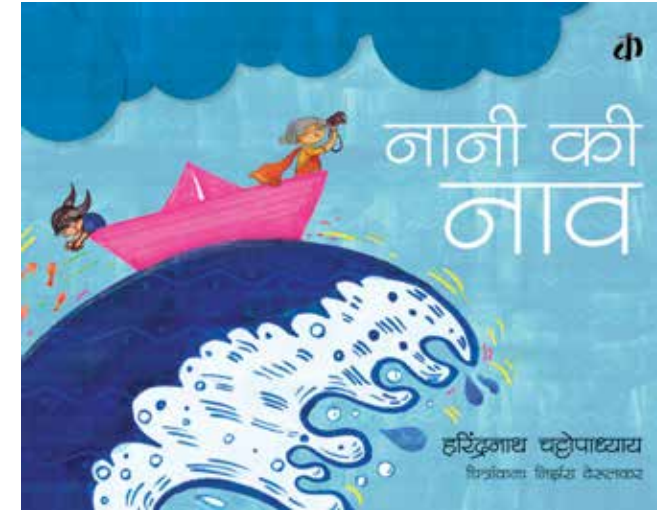
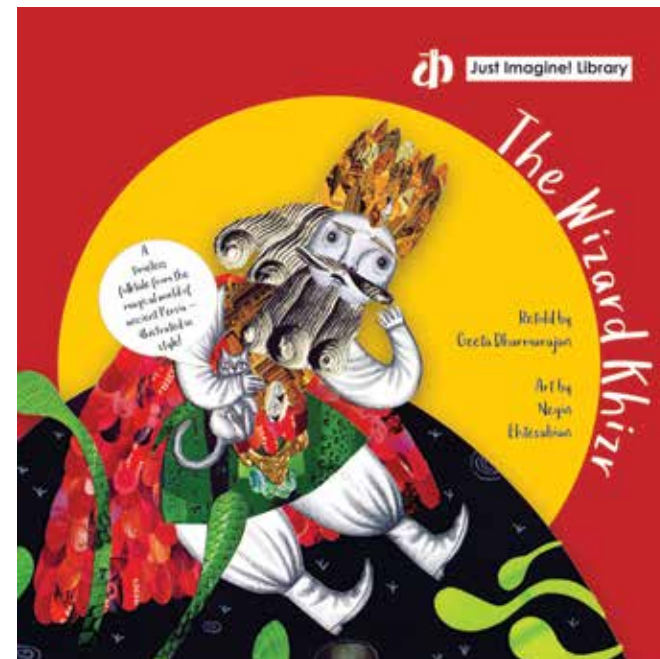
Geeta Dharmarajan  
Art by Franz Marc

A book meant for colourful hearts and creative minds! Gently guides children to engage with the German painter Franz Marc's works through simple but reflective questions. This book will encourage children and adults alike to don the artist's cap.

## THE WIZARD KHIZR

Retold by Geeta Dharmarajan  
Art by Negin Ehtesabian

A timeless folktale from the magical world of ancient Persia—illustrated in style!



## NANI KI NAAV

Harindranath Chattopadhyay  
Art by Nirzara Verulkar

A picture dictionary for early readers to build their vocabulary.

Hop on and row into Harindranath Chattopadhyay's treasure box of words. Accompanied by Nirzara Verulkar's nutty illustrations, this one will win all hearts.

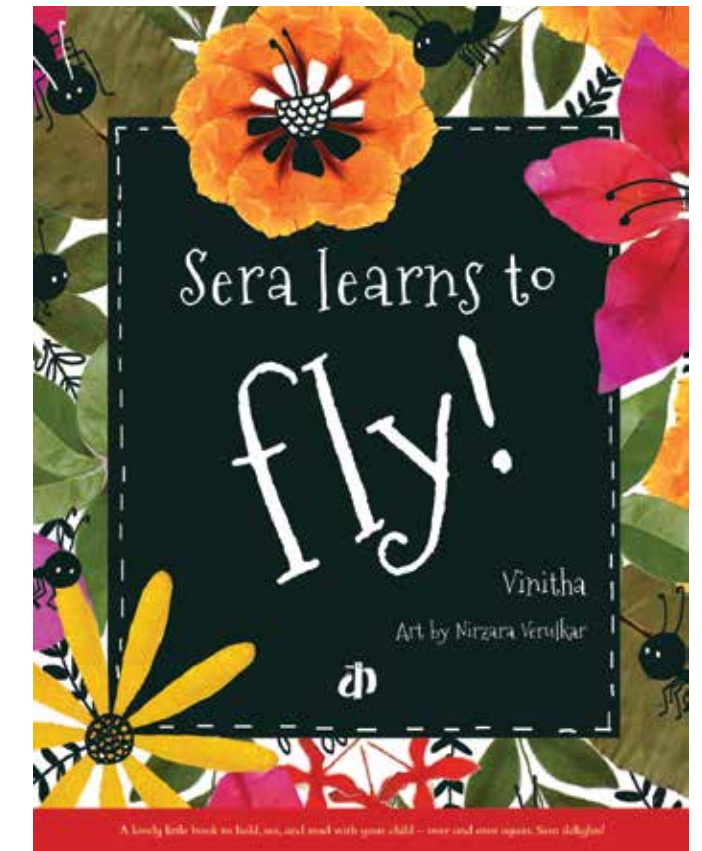


## SERA LEARNS TO FLY

Vinitha  
Art by Nirzara Verulkar

Could we ever imagine a tiny little ant, daring to dream? Sera, the ant does! But, will she actually fly?

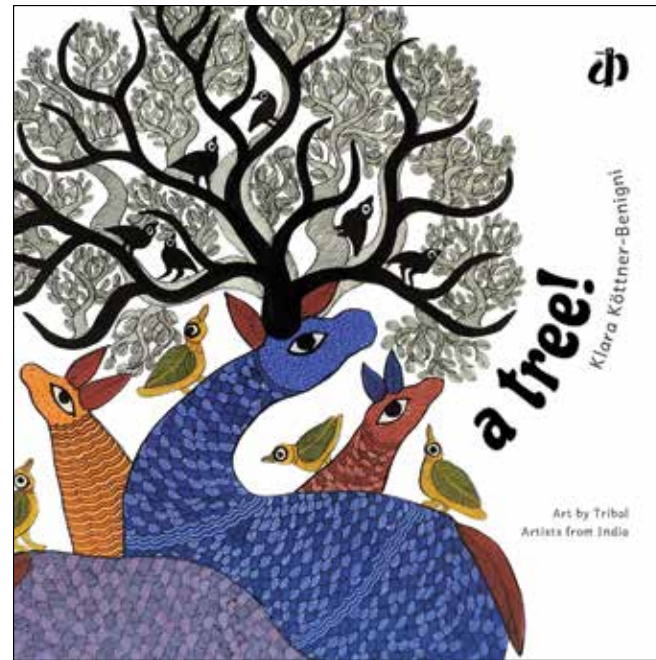
*Sera Learns to Fly* is about dreaming the impossible and making it happen. It is about curiosity and creativity. About knowing that with a little bit of help, anything is possible!





# EARTH CARER SERIES

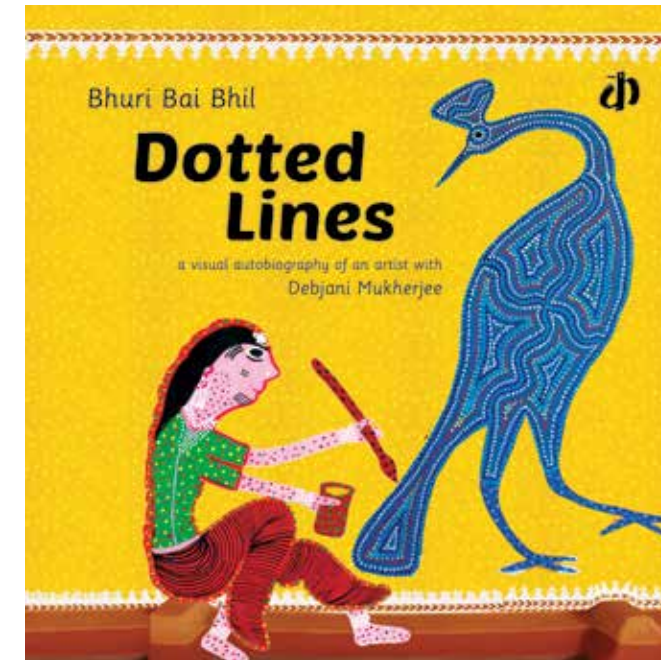
This unique set of three books from Katha's Earth-Carer's project provide young readers a comprehensive look at Global Warming and Climate Change and show them many easy ways to help make a difference. Engagingly designed with fabulous art and handpicked literature, the books in this set aim to educate and empower children while leaving them with the knowledge they need to understand environmental issues and a sense of hope to inspire them into action. The set also provides valuable classroom resource material for projects, essays, debates and discussions.



## A TREE

Klara Köttner-Benigni  
Art by Tribal Artists from India

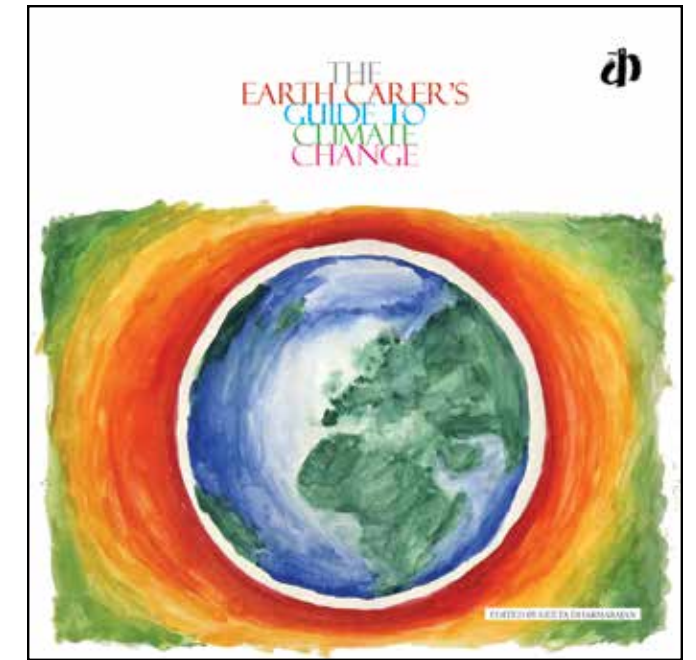
One poet and twelve tribal storytellers, some of India's most loved illustrators! They encourage you to – Think. Ask questions. Discuss and then swing into ACTION as an Earth-Carer! All books in this series carry a StoryPedagogy™ page for you to TA-DAA! away with your young readers!



## DOTTED LINES

Bhuri Bai Bhil  
Debjani Mukherjee

Learn all about the Bhil tribal people of Madhya Pradesh, earth-caring artists and storytellers. Awesome art brings to life a heartwarming story of a Bhil girl as she becomes an artist, seeing her own world with new creativity.



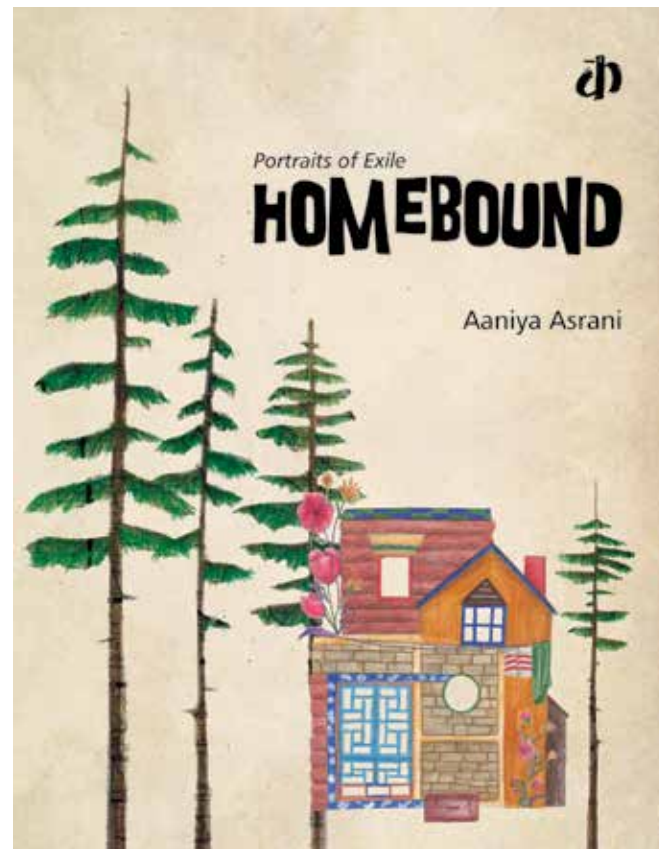
## THE EARTH CARER'S GUIDE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Edited by Geeta Dharmarajan  
Art by Various Artists

Let's love our Earth again! Here's a book that will encourage you to show compassion and care towards the only home you have. Read on to explore the magnanimous beauty that this world is!

# PORTRAITS OF EXILE SERIES

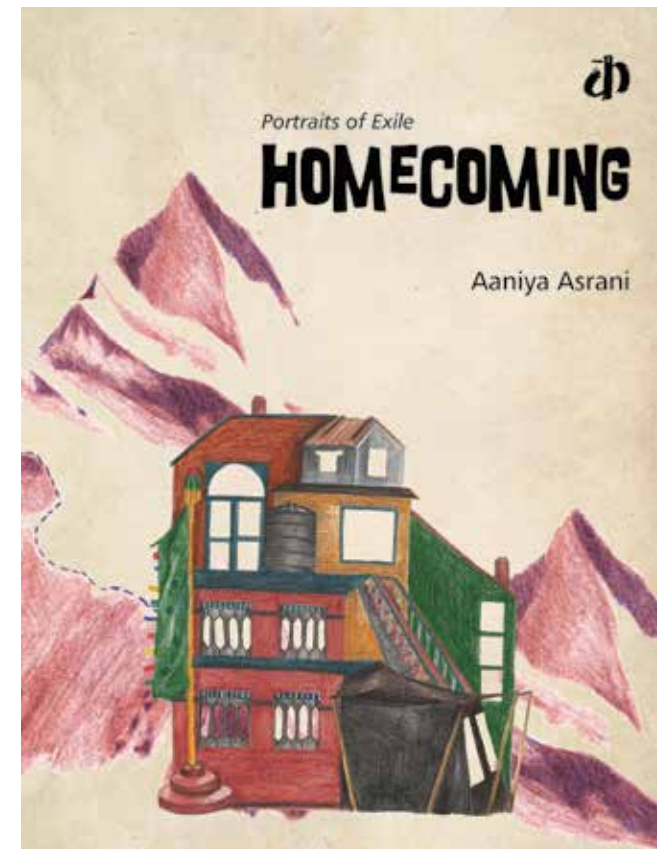
This creative non-fiction series is based on the lives of Tibetan refugees living in Bylakuppe, Karnataka, India. The stories are of loss but also of discovery. Living far from their homeland, the refugees forge new hopes and relationships. They carve out new stories in the places they now call their home.



## PORTRAITS OF EXILE HOMEBOUND

Aaniya Asrani

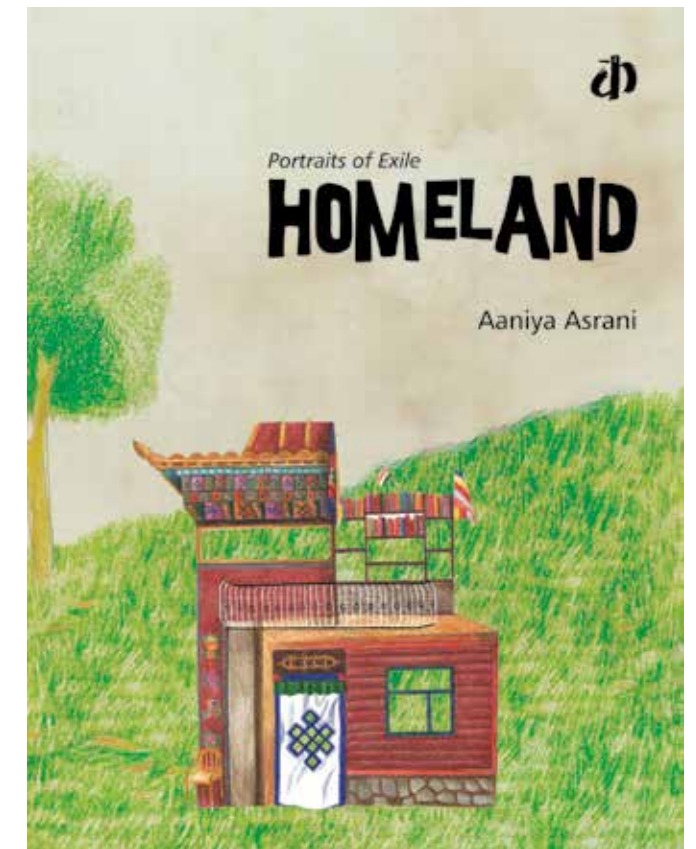
Explore the idea of home and what it means to live a life in exile through the eyes of a young girl named Jampa. Join her in her journey as she shares her story of a home that was, a home that is, and a home that will be.



## PORTRAITS OF EXILE HOMECOMING

Aaniya Asrani

Explore the idea of home and what it means to live a life in exile through the eyes of 76-year-old Kizom, as she shares her story of finding a home away from home.



## PORTRAITS OF EXILE HOMELAND

Aaniya Asrani

Explore the idea of home and what it means to live a life in exile through the eyes of a monk named Lobdorjee, as he shares his story of a home that he carries in his heart wherever he goes.



# katha utsav

## THE SEVENTH EDITION OF KATHA UTSAV A CELEBRATION OF CHILDREN'S CREATIVITY

Storytelling, creativity and imagination are the most wanted skill-sets for the twenty-first century. It is incumbent upon us to create a new breed of storytellers and writers. This is an urgent and essential responsibility of all educational institutions and educators.

Launched in partnership with CBSE in 2013, Katha's Search for Excellence in Creative Writing helps students use their creativity and imagination to create some great stories, poems and translations. Designed to promote creative writing, illustration and translation

skills in children from the ages eight to seventeen, the programme has been designed to nurture the creative instincts in India's children and to give them a platform to share their writing and celebrate their work, thereby inspiring generation of future writers. In its fifth edition too, this unique forum gave exposure to children to have a wide range of global perspectives through the Katha Writers' Workshops with reputed national and international mentors and inspired the participating children to achieve greater creativity.



the centre for  
sustainable learning





# EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOL

In 1990, Katha's first school, the Khazana Experiment, started as a learning centre in one of the largest slum clusters in New Delhi, Govindpuri, with five precious children and five 10x10 foot rooms given by the Delhi Government's Slum Wing. Geeta wanted to build a school that was fun for little children who seemed more at ease handling a hammer than a pencil. The children came—with their baby sisters and brothers. Within a month, a crèche was started. Soon the school had 25 babies in it, and as many children in the classrooms.

Using storytelling as a pedagogy was the idea behind starting the Katha Lab School in 1990. The goal was not just to make children literate but to truly

educate them, inculcating in them a moral and social worldview. Stories have the power to cover distances, to transcend time. The best stories however, are the ones that give perspective of the marginalized. Stories don't lead to results. They lead to questions. They make children curious and critical thinkers. And this thinking leads to the changes we see on ground. The Katha Khazana experiment tried to leverage the power of story and defined what was possible for children from low-income communities. It provided an inclusive learning environment where children could grow into individuals who are sensitive, empathetic, and accepting of differences—be it language, culture or ability.



# 2018-19 HIGHLIGHTS



Beneficiaries reached:  
2,87,698

Children impacted:  
2,63,904

Teachers trained:  
1570

Women brought into our various programmes:  
20,500

Youth volunteers:  
858

Communities impacted:  
866

Number of children who completed entrepreneurship courses & training:  
1775

New books published:  
45

Total number of books published by Katha till date:  
469

Katha books recommended by CBSE and NCERT:  
124

Katha's titles procured by Directorate of Education:  
13

# 2019-20 HIGHLIGHTS

Beneficiaries reached:  
4,19,414

Children impacted:  
3,59,806

Teachers trained:  
3,350

Women brought into our various programmes:  
53,500

Youth volunteers:  
2,048

Communities impacted:  
710

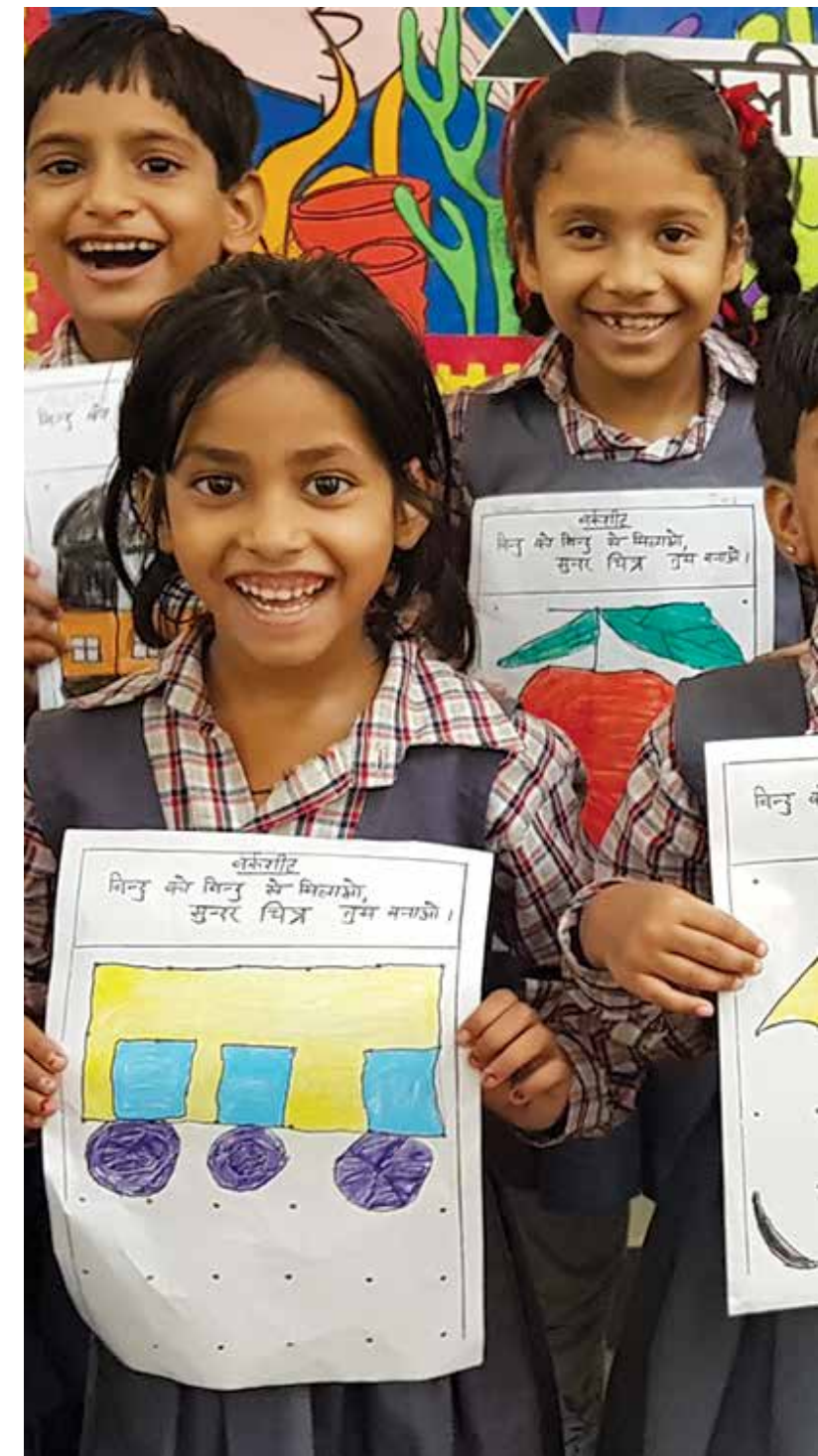
Number of children who completed entrepreneurship courses & training:  
1,620

New books published:  
~~45~~

Total number of books published by Katha till date:  
~~469~~

Katha books recommended by CBSE and NCERT:  
~~124~~

Katha's titles procured by Directorate of Education:  
~~13~~





## IT AND E-COMMERCE SCHOOL **(KITES)**

The centre offers quality IT education to children as well as the men and women from the communities to enhance opportunities for them. This innovative centre has proven to be one of the most successful and unique projects in Delhi's slums. KITES is accredited by National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT) for IT 'A' course.





# I LOVE READING CAMPAIGN

In the communities that Katha worked with, it was found out that a large proportion of school children, especially first-generation readers, who were enrolled in government schools struggled to recognise letters and decode word. In a foresighted move to address this challenge, Katha initiated the I Love Reading programme in 2004 with Delhi's 10 municipal government schools and the surrounding slum communities.

Aiming to improve the effectiveness of elementary education in the government school system, especially reading skills in children, the programme was designed using Katha's proven education and teacher training methods. Over the years, the ILR programme took epic proportions and is being practised in over 80 government schools across Delhi NCR.

Making use of Katha's beautifully illustrated books, the programme stimulates students' imagination, expands their minds and evokes enough interest to keep them reading. Under the ILR programme, Katha works with all the stakeholders – students, teachers, principals, communities/parents, and the government—to ensure a robust, sustainable intervention. With direct intervention through trained Reading Mentors, ILR facilitates whole school transformation. One of the most important features of ILR is the integrated approach of teaching based on NCERT syllabus. In addition to this, the programme also focuses on supporting the most reading challenged children in MCD schools and tracks their progress and results.

## HIGHLIGHTS 2018-2020

Operational in Delhi, Noida and Haryana	Covered <b>95 primary schools</b> and set up <b>95 reading libraries</b>	Benefits <b>26,519 children</b>
Has trained <b>570 Government School teachers</b> in the last two years	<b>70% children</b> are at grade level reading proficiency	Introduction of English language learning in 6 identified schools
All the schools have access to Katha's digitised material either through <b>10 e-ILR hubs or through pre-loaded pen drives. Teachers</b> are using digital learning technology for children to encourage the use of self-learning and web based resources		A pool of <b>950 Master Students Librarians (MSLs)</b> doing ECTC



# MAINSTREAMING KATHA'S MODEL

In 2016, Katha's success with its reading programmes brought in the partnership with the Government of Delhi to replicate our model in government schools. Our externally evaluated work was so good that the government gave Katha five schools to run. So, under School Quality Enhancement Programme, Katha partnered with the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) and The Education Alliance (TEA) and adopted five of the South Delhi Municipal Corporation schools to mainstream its Story Pedagogy and improve the effectiveness of elementary education.

Many of our efforts are to engage more widely with systematic changes in the quality of 'mainstream'

curriculum and pedagogy. In these schools, we introduced and implemented unique integrated module based curriculum which is aligned with National Curriculum Framework based on NCERT syllabus. The Four C's — Curriculum Development, Classroom Design, Continuous Assessment and Community School Linkages are the four pillars of Katha's innovative education.

Through these, efforts are made to make teaching child-centric, creative, engaging and fun in the partner schools. Starting with just a single classroom to becoming a model school, we have definitely come a long way!



## HIGHLIGHTS 2018-20

Operational in <b>3 schools</b>	Enrollment increased by <b>103%</b>	Attendance improved by <b>25%</b>
Teachers <b>trained</b> to use variety of materials keyed to individual student needs	<b>Teachers are flexible</b> in modifying and adapting the lesson plans	High level of <b>parent teacher</b> contact has been established School
	leaderships have adopted Katha's way of imparting education and they have embraced Katha in <b>various high-level meetings</b> . Recently,	Director SDMC has praised Katha for its work in transforming schools and suggested to take up more schools Children are learning with
multiple methods to <b>develop a scientific temperament</b> , critical thinking and abilities to ask question.		



# KATHA SRI

Under Deloitte's WorldClass programme that endeavours to make a long-term meaningful impact on the lives of girls and women, and the communities they live in, through strategic partnerships with organizations that share their vision, Katha will work towards the economic empowerment of women from the communities through education, skill-building and mentoring.

Katha will train teachers from 500 government schools across the areas of North, South and East Delhi and will hold workshops for and with the young and older women living in the communities surrounding these low-cost government schools. We have evidence that the integrated approach of training teachers and community women works toward bringing about a meaningful socio-economic change in communities which is sustainable and long-lasting. Training the teachers enables them to become motivated, resourceful, inspired and inspiring as they are systematically acquainted to the methodology and framework of Katha's StoryPedagogy™. Teachers are equipped to teach the NCERT syllabus while following and applying the Katha framework to transform reading into a fun, engaging, enjoyable and enriching experience for the students and the teachers.

Women and young women will be given workshops which will equip them with financial skills, advocacy skills, leadership skills, community-engagement skills, sanitation, health and financial literacy. The women from the communities will also be reading leaders who will take forward the reading programmes in their respective communities.





# KATHA PARTNERS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA TO EXECUTE ITS FLAGSHIP PROJECT **SWACHH MAHARASHTRA** GRAND CHALLENGE

The Swachh Maharashtra Grand Challenge is first-of-its kind open innovation platform in collaboration with the private sector, development sector and government to pilot innovative and effective sanitation solutions in Maharashtra. Set up by Collective Good Foundation (CGF) and India Sanitation Coalition (ISC), in partnership with CEPT University, and with support from BMGF and Government of Maharashtra, the Swachh Maharashtra Grand Challenge identifies, pilots and scales WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) programmes across Maharashtra.

CGF has chosen Katha as one of the implementation partners for this project based on it being adjudged as the winner of the Swachh Maharashtra Grand Challenge. The project strengthens the drive to achieve the national and state (Maharashtra) goals of safe and sustainable sanitation and an open-defecation free society. The project also aims to equip schools with improved access to safe and sustainable sanitation infrastructure by upgrading toilets, handwashing stations and providing comprehensive behaviour change training to key stakeholders to create long term change.

As the winner of Swachh Maharashtra Grand Challenge, Katha is getting an opportunity to implement the project in Chandrapur in Maharashtra where the programme will be tested and, if proven successful, will be scaled to other geographies.





## KATHA POISED TO **SCALE UP** ITS MODEL IN UP, HARYANA, MAHARASHTRA AND ROHTAK

Katha's integrated models of reading, women-training and community engagement-programs have been successful across Delhi and NCR. At present, Katha is perfectly poised to scale and replicate its work in other states. Katha. Following this, Katha will implement its LeAP strategy (Leverage, Advocate and Partner) with local organizations, NGOs and state governments to scale and replicate the model across India. The methodology, philosophy and its plan of implementation are clear and precise, and this is the strength of Katha's model for replication and scaling across India. Also, Katha creates, provides

and disseminates contextualized content (for teachers and communities), conducts thorough background (ethnographic and quantitative) research of specific states and districts while taking into consideration their needs and specific challenges to understand what kind of content and media of implementation will be the most effective. Thus while paying attention to quality and the context of project implementation – Katha ensures that while scaling - the project is socially desirable, politically and administratively viable, financially feasible and technologically do-able.





the centre for  
sustainable learning





# KATHA HOLISTIC EARLY LEARNING (KHEL!)

Katha has always believed in fostering a culture of transforming a teacher into a ‘reflective practitioner’ who is herself a thinker, learner and above all a knowledge originator. In a conscious and notable move to train Katha teachers in out-of-the-box thinking in education and shift away from traditional teaching styles for reading and comprehension that typically focused on teachers strictly correcting mistakes, Katha started Kalpana Vilasam (Centre for Research and Teacher Education) and KHEL! (Katha Holistic Early Learning) in 2007.

Over the years, Katha’s teacher training imparted through Kalpana Vilasam KHEL! has helped teachers bring sustainable enjoyment to all children. The programme trains teachers to creatively engage children into learning and bring the classrooms to

life. Katha teachers possess sound knowledge of the developmental stages of a child and have an in-depth understanding of the sociocultural values, strengths, and challenges of their students. They realize the importance of engaging with young people—being with them, living their lives, understanding them, before making them understand the lessons of life. And our innovatively designed teaching strategy introduces the standardized curriculum to children in fun ways, without using the textbooks, make learning an organic process.

Specially designed teacher development programmes that include quality- and assessment-based workshops ensure that Katha teachers are always in touch with the most recent pedagogical practices from across the world, and are well aware of innovative teaching-learning ideas that are implementable in their own classrooms.

The project covers 200 primary schools of South DMC and North DMC with 1200 teachers + principals trained in Katha’s Story Pedagogy.

- About 50,000 children benefitted through the programme in the last two years and enhanced their reading abilities.
- The project empowers 40,000 women through functional literacy skills, financial literacy skills, WASH and leadership and vocational training.
- Through immersive and interactive workshops, Katha provides opportunity to participate in social, economic, and political decision-making and raise their standard of living.
- Literate and empowered women take care of their children better. Women with better decision making and control over financial resources ensure better opportunities and future to the children.



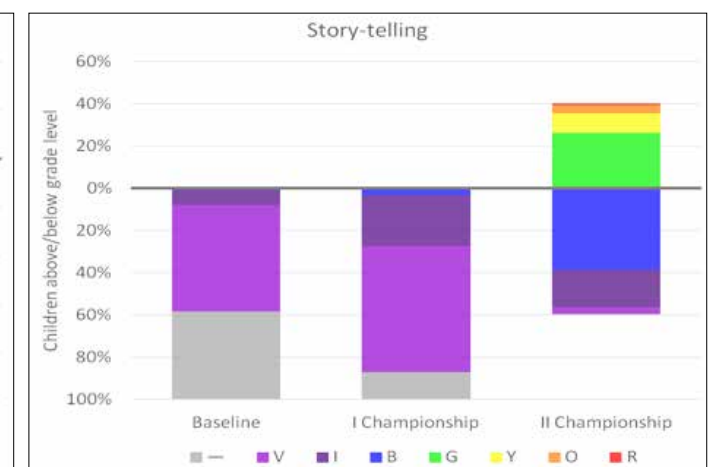
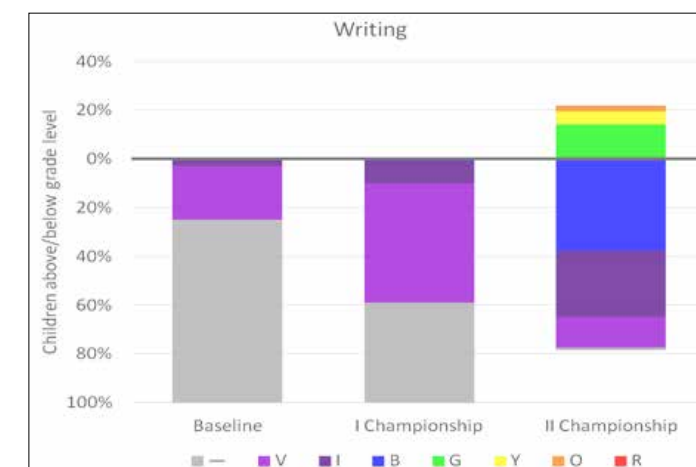
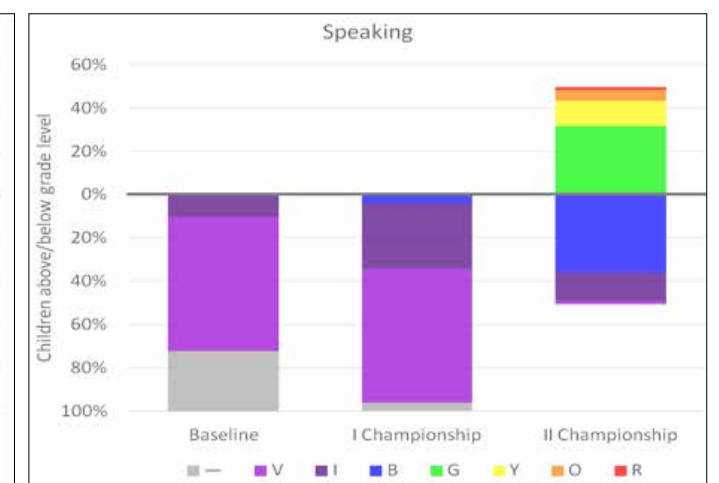
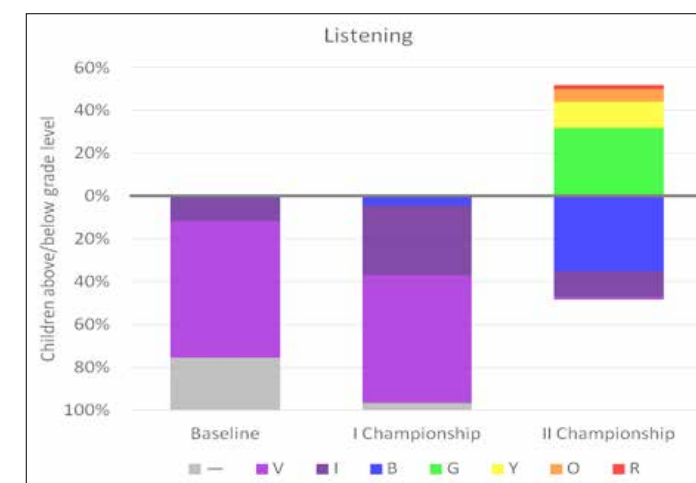
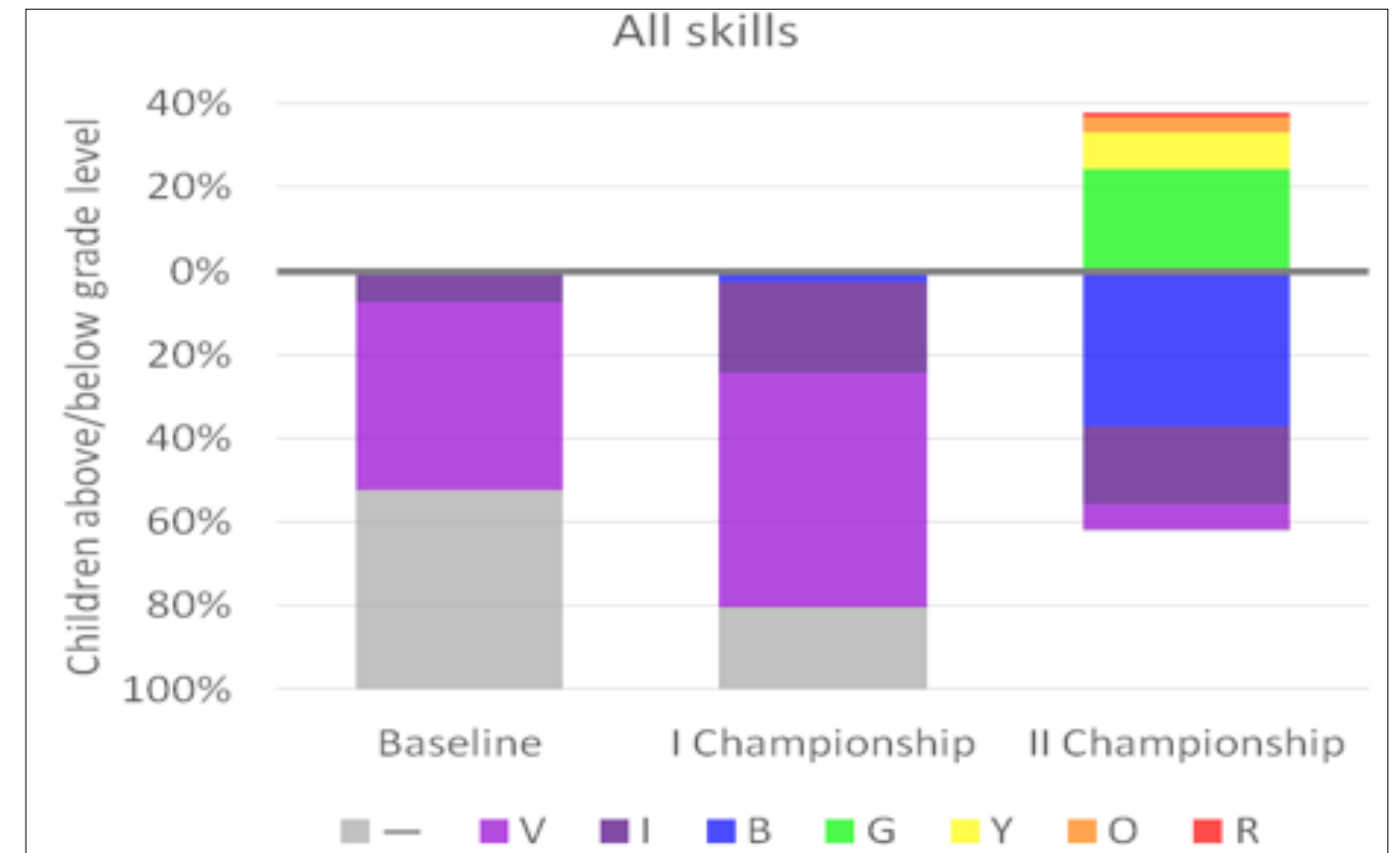


# CPAR: A DYNAMIC RESEARCH LAB

In February 2018, Katha added a research wing – the Child Poverty Action Research Laboratory (C-PAR Lab), made up of a small but dynamic and committed team of researchers. The Katha C-PAR Lab has been created with the express intention of producing robust, high quality action research that allows Katha to reach further heights in empowering India’s disadvantaged children.

The main objectives of the C-PAR Lab is to- I) study, analyze and present Katha’s work – now spanning three decades – in vision, theory and practice – through the lenses of jargon-free but

rigorous and systematic research, II) engage in action research that feeds into Katha’s mission and vision of promoting reading for fun and meaning among India’s disadvantaged children, III) provide meaningful and timely assistance to the various departments in Katha via research findings, knowledge, information, and other integrated skills, IV) conduct training sessions and workshops with teachers, students and Katha Fellows, V) add to the corpus of research on education at a national level by producing interesting and relevant studies on the links between children, poverty and education.





THE  
300M!  
CHALLENGE

creating a nation where  
every child reads!







# THE 300M! CHALLENGE

According to a UNESCO report of September 2016, “India will be half a century late in achieving its universal education goals.” Hence, we will achieve universal primary education only by 2050, universal lower secondary education only by 2060, and universal upper secondary education only by 2085. Without a reading population, India will be unable to sustain a strong rate of growth. In a country like India, it is a monumental task to ensure that every child is reading for fun and meaning ... a task that the government cannot accomplish alone.

In 2018, Katha decided to make an intervention. Along with like-minded organizations and people, Katha launched a pan-India campaign called the 300M! Challenge to create a nation where every child counts. The campaign strives to improve reading levels in hundreds of thousands of children with the help of volunteers. Through a multi-pronged strategy that looks at the problem from every angle and at every level, the 300M! Challenge helps bring India's 300 million first-generation readers into the ambit of reading.

- We define the problem.
- We are disruptive.
- We LEAP – Leverage. Engage. Advocate. Partner, with like-minded organizations and people.
- We bring in grassroots and civil society volunteers.
- We strengthen the government systems.
- We use technology as lever.
- We work on scale.
- We examine and evaluate.



# COMMUNITY OWNED AND OPERATED LIBRARIES (COOL!)

With a clear vision to make Delhi the reading capital of India, Katha, in 2018, started Community Owned and Operated Libraries (COOL!). These libraries seek to promote the joy of reading among young children by encouraging community youth, women, teachers, volunteers and caregivers to own and operate libraries and help children read for fun and for meaning.

As part of our initiative, our team of young, dynamic leaders have joined us to voluntarily run the libraries in their respective communities. We call them the Katha Junior Fellows or KJFs. Most of them have been associated with Katha over the past 4-5 years while

some of them have joined us newly. We currently have 50 Katha Junior Fellows with us in Team KHEL, and we hope to grow in size and spirit over the course of the next five years! Our fellows are also registered trainees with Katha under a specialised 30-30 module training programme that will take place in three phases in the course of this year. The Katha Fellows are passionate, dedicated, and committed to the cause of reading for meaning and joy. They are the backbone of Project COOL!. They believe in the potential of every child, and in the vision of Katha's 300 Million Challenge.





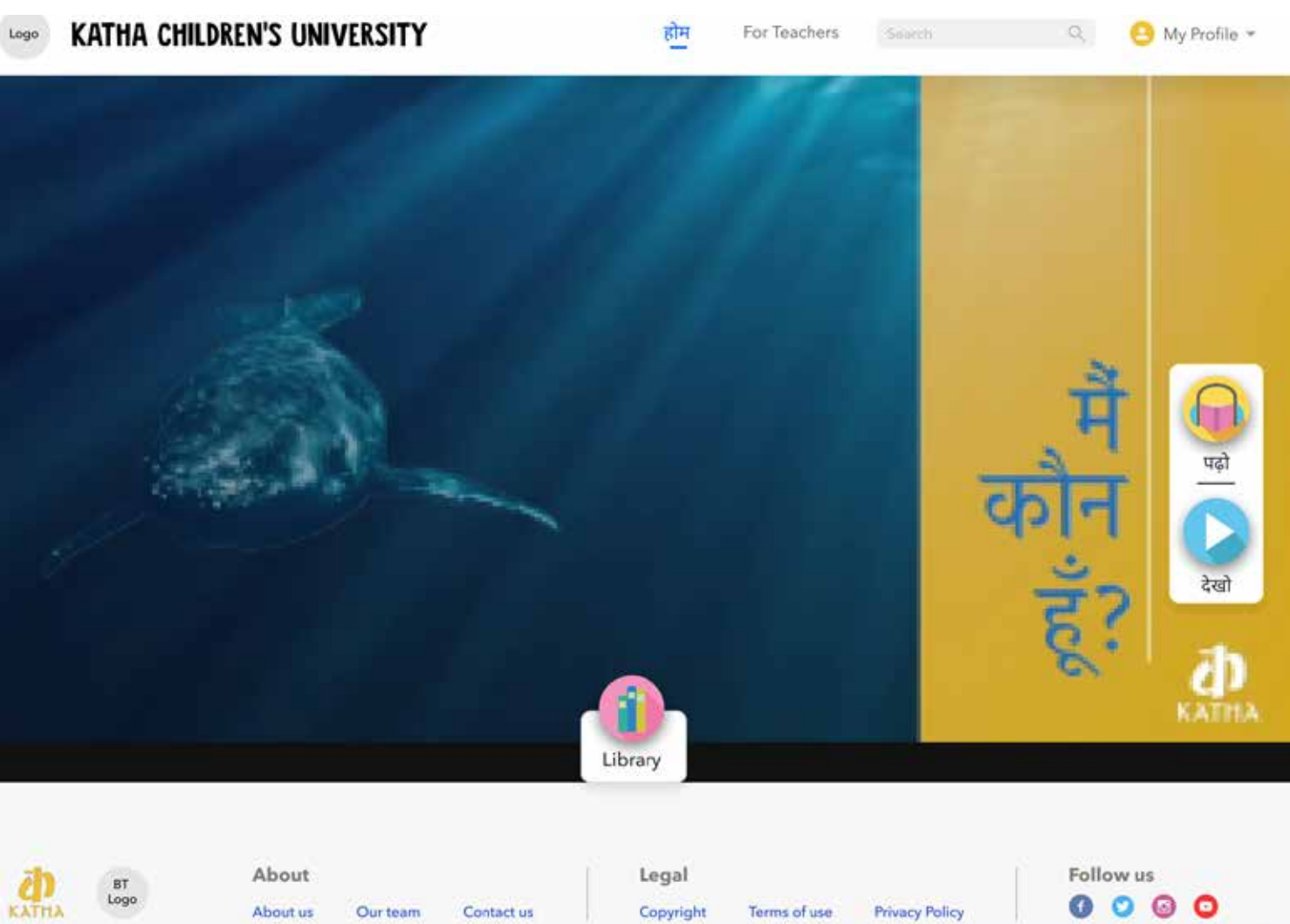
# INDIA'S FIRST MOBILE READING APPLICATION TO ENCOURAGE READING AND LITERACY

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**KathaKhazana - Stories & Games for Kids**  
Katha Education Education  
★★★★★ 968  
3+  
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# KaDL (KATHA DIGITAL LAB) AND KCU (KATHA CHILDREN'S UNIVERSITY)

The Katha Digital Lab (KaDL) aims at leveraging Katha's three decades rich experience in using its recognised Story Pedagogy onto today's digital tools to help children grow up to be reader-leaders. Over the years, through cooperative action and activism, Katha has brought together parents, teachers, government, donors and volunteers to work on projects impacting more than 1 million children. Therefore, through KaDL, Katha hopes to broaden its horizons and create a national and international impact on how we look at education- in quicker, frugal and efficient ways. KaDL, (which incidentally also means ocean in Tamil) helps key stakeholders bring together new digital

edu-programs, experiment with digital tools, explore digital media's potential and discover new pedagogical techniques to improve a child's experience inside and outside the classroom.

Under KaDL, students of the Katha Schools also register in the Robotics Lab that helps them build and design robots and programmes, analyse and interpret community challenges and use robotics as a way to solve them and do live demos to the people in the communities to show them the future that robotics as a field of science holds. The Robotics Lab works in tandem with KITES and the MACH! HUBS, to make the learning of maths, science and technology, fun.



# 31 ACCOLADES WE'VE EARNED IN THE LAST 31 YEARS



Katha's Founder & President Geeta Dharmarajan was awarded the civilian honour of the Padma Shri by the Government of India in 2012, for her extensive and inspiring work in the area of children's publishing and pedagogy.



North India Winner of the India NGO Awards for Quality Work, Accountability and Transparency 2009 by the Rockefeller Foundation and Resource Alliance, UK.



Winner of the Business Standard Award Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2018!

- Business Standard Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2018 presented to Geeta Dharmarajan Business Standard Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2018 presented to Founder President Geeta Dharmarajan
- *Sera Wants to Fly* was shortlisted for the Neev Books Awards 2019
- *Aamu's Kawandi* was shortlisted for the prestigious The Hindu Young World Good Books Award 2017 in the illustrations category.
- 12 of Katha's books were chosen in 101 Indian Children's Books We Love by Young Zubaan.
- *Moon, Ramu and I* won The Darsana National Award 2011 for the Best Children's Book.
- Bioscope included in the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) list in 2011.
- *My Haiku Moments: An Activity Book for Young Haiku Lovers* received Honourable Mention for Best Book for Children by the Haiku Society of America.
- *The Princess with the Longest Hair* received the Encouragement Prize Noma Concours 1989.
- *The Song of a Scarecrow* received an honourable mention at the Biennial of Illustrations 2003, Bratislava.
- *One Lonely Unicorn* received the Runner-up Award Noma Concours 2000, and the Biennial of Asian Illustrators Japan 2002.
- *Daddoo's Day Out* received the Runner-up Award at the 10th Noma Concours.
- *Chouboli and Other Stories, Volume II* won the A K Ramanujan Book Prize for Translation 2012 and the Asian Publishing Award 2011 in the Best Book Category.
- *Not Flowers of Henna*, translated by Jai Ratan from Hindi, received the Jury's Commendation at the Muse India National Award 2011.
- *The Man from Chinnamasta* by Indira Goswami was shortlisted for the Hutch Crossword Award 2006 in the category of Indian translations.
- *The Survivors* by Gurdial Singh was shortlisted for the Hutch Crossword Award 2006 in the category of Indian translations.
- *The Heart Has Its Reasons* by Krishna Sobti received the Crossword Book Award 2005
- Katha was awarded the Kidsstoppres Award 2017 (Runner Up) in the Best Indian Book Publisher category by Kidsstoppres.

## OTHER AWARDS INCLUDE, INTER ALIA

- Katha won the Promising Practices Award 2015 for its innovative StoryPedagogy™ for all grade levels.
- Winner of the NGO Transparency Award 2016 by GuideStar India.
- Winner of the Tech Museum Laureate award at the Stockholm Challenge in 2001.
- Finalist of the Stockholm Challenge Award 2002, an innovative award programme for innovative use of IT.
- Awarded the Millennium Alliance Award 2013 for our innovative I Love Reading programme by USAID and the Government of India.
- Awarded the ICICI India Inclusive Award 2012 by the ICICI Foundation for Inclusive Growth.
- Winner of the NASDAQ Stock Market Education Award 2002.
- Winner of the Social Enterprise Laboratory Award in 2002, by Digital Partners. Digital Partner's Social Enterprise Laboratory Selection Committee chose Katha as "one of only 10 winners of Digital Partners' Most Promising Social Enterprise for 2002 Award. This award is given in collaboration with the Indo-US Knowledge Trade Initiative to the most promising projects that are utilising the digital economy to empower the poor."
- Katha was awarded the mBillionth Award in the year 2018 in the Early Stage category by DEF India for "leveraging innovation in storytelling and creating India's first mobile reading application".
- Katha emerged as the only winner for Excellence in Social Impact in the Education category at the 20th Polestar Awards 2018.
- Our story "Thayyaal" written in Tamil by Rupavati and translated in the English from our book "Seperate Journeys" by Katha's founder and President Geeta Dharmarajan has been carried by Frontline, a fortnightly English language magazine published by The Hindu Group of publications from Chennai, India.
- Katha wins the FICCI Children's Book of the Year Special Jury Award for 2019!



# those who make it happen...

As we continue to find even more wonderful ways to spark a lifelong love of reading among children, we would like to thank all those who make this happen for our children – our committed community of donors and partners who make a huge impact on thousands of children by ardently supporting our various programmes, our enthusiastic tribe of authors, illustrators, storytellers, who weave magic and take it to children, our strong army of volunteers without whose support and hard-work our vision had remained a far-fetched dream. Here's a huge shout-out to all you wonderful people!

thank  
you  
all!



# कथा KATHA

Katha is a non-profit organization that has seamlessly connected grassroots work in education, teacher-training and publishing for nearly 31 years.

We believe that by providing children with holistic, relevant books and education, and fostering in them a love of learning, they can become agents of change who can lift their families and communities out of poverty. Our innovative education model, integrally supported by our award-winning book publishing programme, benefits over 160,000 underserved children and 1,100 teachers annually.

Our mission is to help every child realize his/her full potential through community-based quality learning; to spread the joys of reading; to reduce injustice and poverty through education; to enhance linguistic diversity and to help break down gender, social and other stereotypes through story and translation.

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