



क KATHA

2020-21

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Dear Friends,

It has been a turbulent year; a year, which threw the world into turmoil and misery but one which also celebrated the resilience of humanity.

The challenges – posed by the pandemic – were faced with grit, guts, valour and innovativeness. Individuals – rich and poor – and corporate and nonprofit organizations came together to help and assist the Government in its efforts to face and deal with the pandemic.

Our heart goes out to the medical fraternity, be it ward boys, nurses, doctors, the police, army, sanitation workers, other front-line workers, and government and semi-government agencies who provided relief and sustenance to the worst affected.

Over the last 30 years, Katha has not only been involved in educating children from underserved communities but has also focused on communities. Thus, we were able to ascertain and render timely help to our communities. Katha distributed ration and necessary supplies from our Govindpuri centre. Our teachers and mentors worked tirelessly to ensure that our communities could face the everyday challenges. Knowing our strong community roots, the Government of Delhi sought our help to reach slum communities – by way of provision of meals.

Amidst the pandemonium, we kept sight of our main goal, and ensured that our children continued with their learning. Our teachers implemented innovative methods – online and offline, virtual and real – to include children from KLS and the schools and communities we serve on behalf of our Donor Partners. One of our major tasks, this past year, was to educate community women in the use of technology. Our Founder-President, Ms. Geeta Dharmarajan, played a vital role, with her intuitive and innovative advice to help our efforts to alleviate the problems of the populace we serve.

Because of the lockdown, we revised or halted many of our on-field programs. Fortunately, our Donor Partners extended the program-period. However, this resulted in a substantial drop in funds with the resultant hardships to our employees. As I am penning this note, we are unsure about the continuity of certain projects and projected incomes. However, in view of the strong relationships we have with our Donor-Partners and their acceptance of Katha's strengths, I am optimistic. Katha will be back at full strength and vigour before too long.

I take this opportunity to express, on behalf of the Management of Katha, our deep appreciation of and our heartfelt gratitude to all our employees who continue to serve our communities.

We are immensely grateful to our Founder President, Ms. Geeta Dharmarajan who has been a constant source of encouragement, and her words of wisdom have helped boost our spirits as we continue to stand by our children and communities through these challenging times.

Parvinder

Warmest,

Parvinder Kaur



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AN EPITAPH

Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan 1928-2020

During the year, we lost one of our long standing and most revered Member of the Katha Governing Council and the Katha family – Smt. Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan. She departed for the heavenly abode on the 16th of September, 2020.

The late Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan was a leading scholar of Classical Indian Dance and Indian Art & Architecture. A Trustee of India International Centre and Founder Trustee of the IGNCA, she was also the author of many books on these subjects.

All of us at Katha, shared with Kapila ji not only our achievements but also turned to her for advice and guidance when we had difficulties and problems in the

implementation of our programs for children. We will miss Kapila ji's warmth and guidance. As a member of Parliament and given her involvement in the activities of diverse cultural and educational institutions, the country has lost a great person. No one can fill her shoes.

It is not just Katha but it is the world that has lost a scholar – a wonderful, vibrant person who loved dance, music and various forms of art. May she rest in peace.

We miss you Kapila ji

KATHA – AT A GLANCE



Over the years Katha has reached out to millions of Children, Youth and Women of underserved communities. Though our various programs, we have brought about positive & effective transformations of entire communities, including career prospects & livelihoods.

SINCE INCEPTION:

BENEFICIARIES	1988-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	TOTAL
CHILDREN	97,54,447	2,63,904	3,59,806	4,39,745	1,08,17,902
YOUTH	35,000	858	2,048	1,548	39,454
WOMEN	4,00,500	20,500	53,500	56,314	5,30,814
TEACHERS	18,456	1,570	3,350	5,706	29,082
SCHOOLS	1,132	94	300	499	2,025
COMMUNITIES	1,176	140	710	990	3,016

DURING 2020-21

PROGRAM	SCHOOLS	CHILDREN	TEACHERS	YOUTH	COMMUNITIES	WOMEN	TOTAL BENEFICIARIES
I LOVE READING	145	48,260	811	-	77	3,500	52,571
KLS	1	1,350	20	100	15	10,000	11,470
KSE	-	-	7	400	5	-	407
KITES	-	-	8	800	-	-	808
SQEP	3	860	21	-	15	500	1,381
READING APP	-	25,000	100	-	100	-	25,100
COOL/BOOKS*	-	1,67,480	-	198	198	-	25,100
PPS*	-	57,957	410	-	-	-	58,367
KATHA SRI	-	-	-	-	580	42,314	42,314
TEACHER TRAINING	350	1,38,038	4,229	-	-	-	1,42,267
KATHA UTSAV	-	800	100	50	-	-	950
TOTAL	499	4,39,745	5,706	1,548	990	56,314	5,03,313

2020 – 2021: A YEAR OF CHALLENGES



The Year 2020-21, threw open various challenges as the world struggled to come to terms with the COVID-19 pandemic. It presented a dual challenge before us:

Restoration of the regular long-term programs of Katha to ensure that the gains made so far are not lost and adverse impact on communities is minimised by re-engineering and re-calibrating the on-ground projects. Secondly, to engage in Relief, Response & Build-Back during the COVID-19 pandemic and by reaching out to geographies even outside the regular program intervention areas.

Education is one area that has been hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially

in the communities that Katha works with. While other critical needs are being responded to, educational needs cannot be forgotten – such an interruption can have long term and adverse implications, especially for the most vulnerable children.

I am proud to say that every single member of the Katha family took up this challenge, ensured continuity of on-ground programs, and worked to evolve strategies to further expand the reach, and strengthen the education ecosystem – and, in such a way that we would be better prepared for future disruptions and are able to adapt to the changing needs of the students and youth.

LOCKDOWN AND LIVELIHOOD – CHALLENGES





THE PANDEMIC AND CHALLENGES – A GLANCE

Education is usually a low priority in low-income families. With the closure of schools, children were left in a lurch and the educational gap between the ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’ widened further.

With all government benefits and vaccination drives being done digitally, the divide, between the ones with access to technology and the internet, and those who did not widened. Without access to a smartphone device and high-speed internet, it was impossible to avail basic government entitlements.

With the second wave and the initiation of the vaccination

drive, there were many myths and misinformation about the vaccines. Along with the relief work, Katha worked towards curbing misconceptions through our awareness and information campaigns. Widespread media circulation about incorrect information related to the vaccine has been discouraging many families to get the shot.

IMMEDIATE RELIEF WORK CARRIED OUT BY KATHA



Providing dry ration kit to the **1000** ‘most at risk families’ in Govindpuri and other slums of Delhi

Distributing cooked meal every day to more than 200 families



Supporting hundreds of community women to produce masks at their homes and distribute them in the Govindpuri slum communities.



Providing children and their families, accessibility to Katha's digitised content and to other important web-portals through our Reading App – KathaKhazana



THE COVID-19 CRISIS AND KATHA'S INTERVENTION

The pandemic substantially increased the hardships and the vulnerability of the people from underserved communities. Amidst these difficult times, people have been trying hard to survive the pandemic and 'infodemic'. Katha, with its real-time hands-on e-experience and on-ground support, has been involved with communities in Govindpuri (Delhi's largest slum cluster) and beyond.

With the onset of the

lockdown in India and the consequent shutting down of schools since early March 2020, Katha was quick to come out with innovative action for our children, youth and women. Through our experienced and well-trained team of mentors, women and youth volunteers we engaged in relief work, assistance, and online and offline awareness generation campaigns.

A multipronged strategy was adopted to help people – by way of providing cooked meals, dry ration kits, digitized reading & learning material, counselling the women and families to alleviate their fear and panic. We encouraged them to constructively engage with and access government services, information, education and training.



With a combination of online services and community classes, we have sought to mitigate the adverse effects on children. During the Pandemic, Katha has pursued its tech-enabled education platform for children from Katha Lab School, by adopting on-line mentoring, zoom meetings, WhatsApp groups, provision of free eBooks and teaching-learning material. The method poses challenges due to factors, such as, intermittent access to devices, periodic recharges etc., and cannot be solely relied upon. The ideal situation is to combine good teaching with technology – as in a ‘Flipped Classroom’ or ‘Hybrid Pedagogy’ wherein students learn the material on their own through e-books, digitized

worksheets, activity sheets, videos and other instructional material. Simultaneously, on-line interactions via Zoom and instructions on WhatsApp provided an opportunity of digital interaction amongst the trainers/educators and beneficiaries. Katha also distributed smart phones,

tablets, to children, to enable online education. Maintaining safety protocols, we also held face-to-face interactions, in small groups, by holding physical classes in a nearby community park. Katha teachers also visited households and arranged classes at their homes, in small groups of 5-10 children.

A special highlight during this year was the launch of India’s first interactive reading portal by Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Education Shri Manish Sisodia.

KEY OBSERVATIONS:

- The lack of information about the virus created a sense of fear amidst the masses. There was a feeling of distress that often discouraged neighbours to support one another. The stigmatisation that came with the virus was one behaviour pattern observed
- Daily wage labourers and informal workers comprised the majority of the population in Govindpuri. Loss of work resulted in highly depleted household income and without any savings, this hampered families to procure even the essential food for the household. Children and women were most affected as they did not get proper nutrition and medicines
- Young girls suffered due to a lack of access to menstrual sanitation products caused by shutting down of schools coupled with drop in income due to loss of employment
- Govindpuri communities have a continuous influx of a migratory population. With uncertainties facing them due to the lockdown, many of them went back to their native homes, resulting in higher probability of infection, and reduced connectivity of children to their schools





300 MILLION CITIZENS' CHALLENGE

Out of 300 million children in India of school-going age, 50% can read and 50% cannot. By bringing these 2 groups together, the programme aims to promote reading – for joy and meaning.

**SCHOOLS WERE CLOSED
BUT CHILDREN WERE
LEARNING!**



TADAA was very impactful and interesting to students as well as to teachers. They learned quickly and also memorized the stories very fastly in comparison to the traditional methods of teaching.

Ek Tara

When Early Learners start reading for joy and meaning, it not only reduces their chances of dropping out of school, but also helps them understand how to break out of the cycle of poverty. Children then leverage their potential to bring about positive changes – for their families, communities, different life-forms and the planet.

As a solution, Katha has developed India's first reading portal for children – TADAA! The portal is built on Geeta Dharmarajan's StoryPedagogy, a teaching-learning framework,

which Katha has successfully implemented, for over three decades at Katha Lab School at Govindpuri, and in government and low-cost schools across various Indian states.

The objective of the Portal is to create an inclusive, all-encompassing platform for children of India to access relevant reading material, ranging from quality content to improving reading skills through fun activities along with small courses where children learn the basics of entrepreneurship and other skills.



I like the idea of putting the importance of climate through activities to students. This is great !

Anshu Jha, SEWA Bharat

Conceptualized as a tool to improve reading levels and as a space for meaning and fruitful exchange, the portal will offer content, drawn from the length and breadth of our Country with divergent languages, cultures and heritage – introducing its user to folklore, art and experiences outside of their immediate surroundings. Simultaneously, the Portal would also be providing a space for our budding writers to practice their creative writing and pen down their vivid imaginations – adding another layer to the learning process.

The portal content is made accessible to the underserved communities through Katha's diverse programmes being implemented across the country.

Partnerships are being forged across the country – via the 300M Citizen's Challenge – to make the content available to children from different regions and linguistic backgrounds. The Content (Books + Activities) will be translated, initially, into Hindi, Kannada, and Tamil in the coming year for wider reach and impact.

THE TADAA! READING PORTAL

The TADAA! – “Think, Ask, Discuss, Act, Achieve!” Reading Portal offers courses to enhance the joy of reading and life-long learning through an innovative and exciting excellence programme, designed and honed over 33 years specially for children living in entrenched poverty and who are first generation school-goers. The focus is on whole-language learning – including storytelling, which has been recognized as one of the pivotal 21st Century skills.



Kids just **LoooooVe** our reading mentors!



Shehazooli loves to hear stories and tell stories! She is our storytelling mentor.



Arjun loves to play with colours, music, and words! He is our Creativity Mentor.



Horini Akko loves to think and think AND think. Her question: What is your Think?



Kamala Ammaiji loves to read! She is a drama rani!

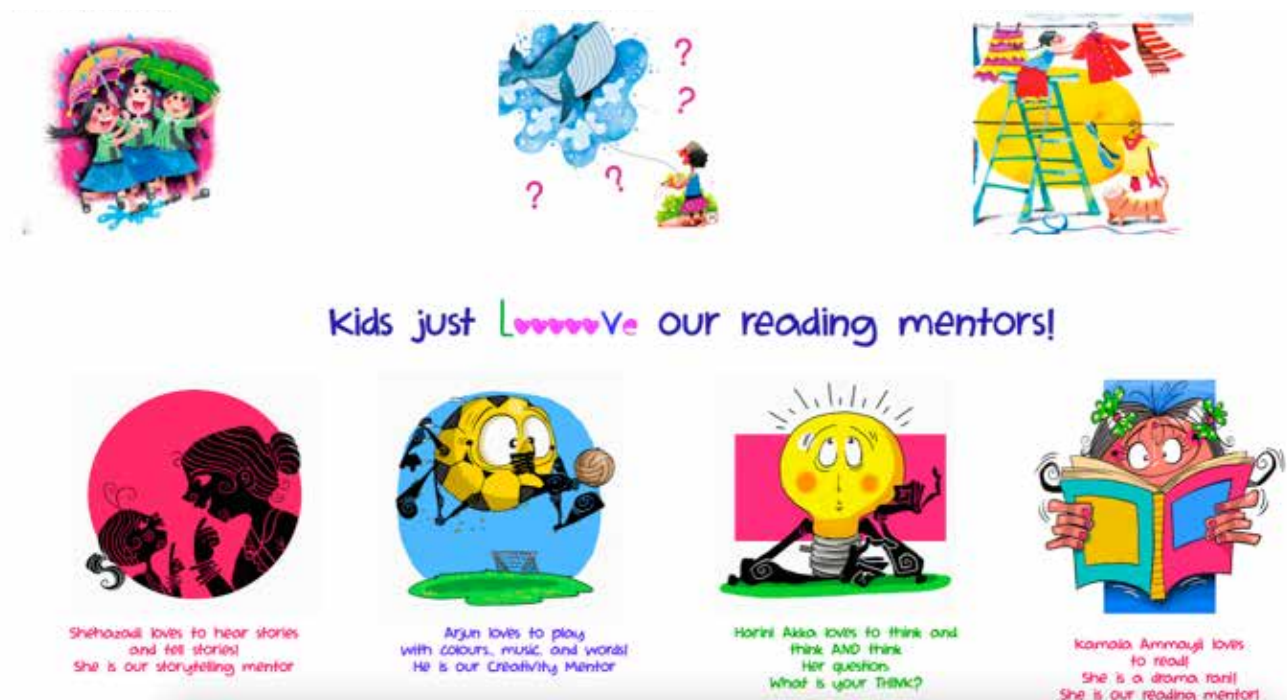
The TADAA! Reading Portal offers globally recognized children’s storybooks, engaging audio-visual content, and a host of contextual, relevant activities for children in the age group of 5 to 10 which would help them develop their SPICE (social, personal, imaginative, cultural and environmental) skills. It nurtures their curiosity, creativity and critical thinking. It helps them become Reader-Leaders who are GEEKS, understanding and working towards breaking

existing, detrimental stereotypes about GENDER, EARTH, EQUITY KINDNESS. Created using Moodle’s Learning Management System, the TADAA! Portal can be accessed using laptops, tablets and mobile phones. The same can be screened on a bigger screen using a projector to engage children. The portal provides a space for engaging students with interactive activities, games and expanding the scope of learning.



Beautiful Voice modulations and such interesting illustrations. You kept us gripped with your voice and activities. It made me curious and I like how you kept interacting, which made me look forward to more. Visuals kept us hooked to the screen!

**VERONICA,
CHILD RIGHTS AND YOU (CRY)**





LEAP WITH PARTNERS - THE SUSTAINABLE WAY FORWARD

With the main objective of ensuring a sustainability plan, the 300M Challenge is implemented through Katha's LeAP strategy – which involves diverse organizations, institutions and individuals coming together and Leveraging our combined strengths, our shared values, expertise and resources, and through Advocacy and Partnerships.

RESOURCES:

300M Partners would gain access to Storybooks, well-developed teaching-learning materials, activity sheets for children and instructions for teachers, volunteers and mentors – all these will be made accessible to our members, as online resources.

VISIBILITY:

Each partner's work will be acknowledged on the 300M website. Partners will also be provided mini-pages where they can showcase their work on the 300M and keep track of the total number of children they have helped and as also the number of children who win badges and certificates.

WORKSHOPS:

Katha will provide free-of-cost orientation sessions to our partners as part of the onboarding process. Katha can also provide, at a cost, specialized assistance to our partners, by way of in-depth teaching-learning sessions.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS:

Quality results for the 300 million, though individually achieved, will be collectively represented on the 300M website, to bring greater visibility to the challenge; and to the impact gained with the collaborative efforts.



I am delighted to see the way a learner is taken step by step through the reading, thinking and acting components just like in an interactive classroom, and actions beyond classroom! Amazing!

**ANISHA GUPTA,
BAREFOOT COLLEGE INTERNATIONAL**



PILOT TESTING RESULTS

The TADAA! Portal was pilot tested with selected 300M Challenge partners. The 10 selected partner organizations were given access to the portal.

- Login IDs were created for partner organization's teachers, mentors, and coaches.
- Three training sessions were conducted for each partner, namely:
 - Introduction to TADAA! Portal (Technical Orientation)
 - Power of Stories and Storytelling
 - Each Child Teach A Child (ECTC); Peer-to-peer learning
- 60 teachers/mentors/coaches were trained in the process.

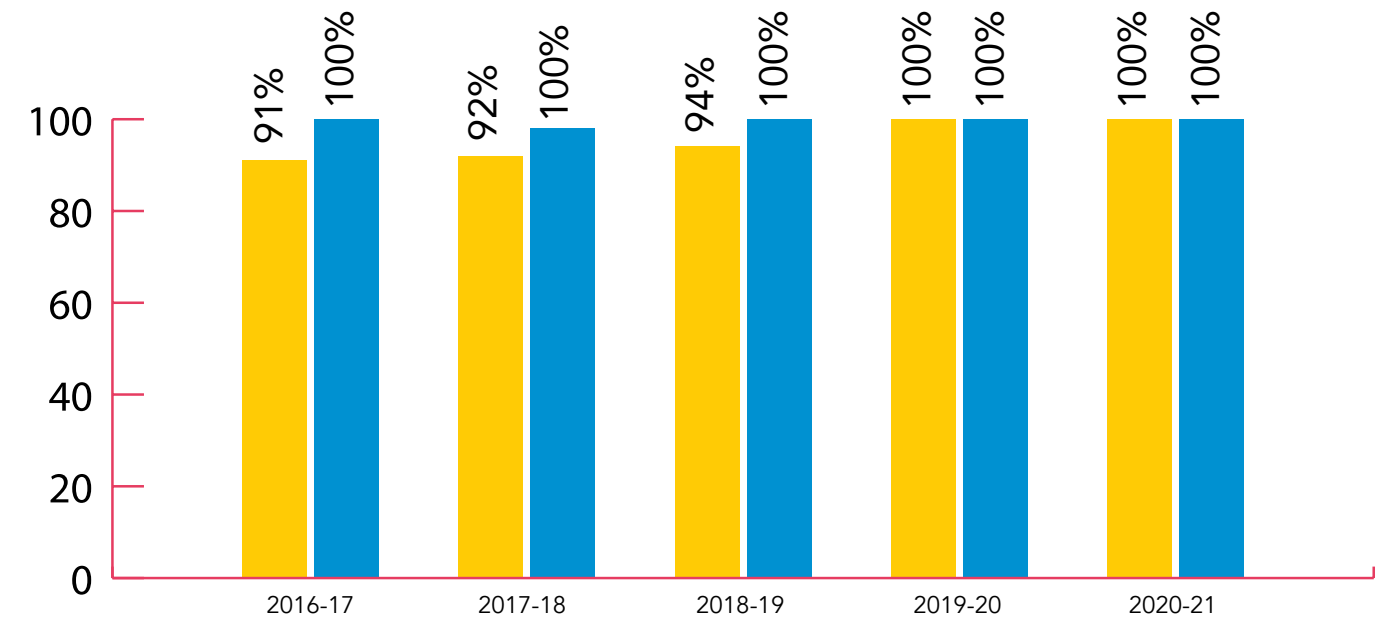


KATHA LAB SCHOOL

Katha Lab School, a community school established in 1990 in New Delhi, is Katha's center for innovations in education. It offers high-quality education to approximately 1,500 children starting from 3-month to 17-year-olds.



Graphs 2: Katha Lab School last 5 years' performance of 10th and 12th grades NIOS
Pass %age of 10th and 12th NIOS examination
 ■ X ■ XII

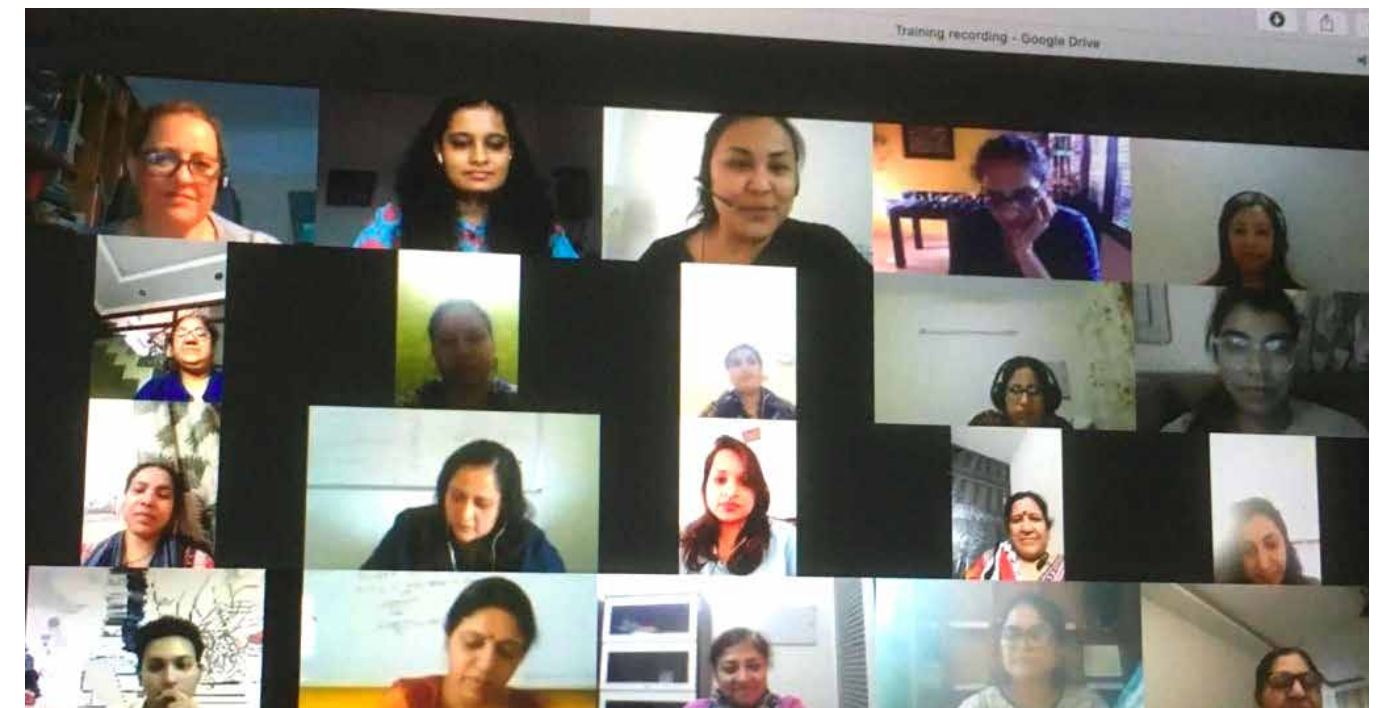


During COVID times, Katha Lab School became the hub of relief to the marginalized communities.

Katha Lab School provides crèche, pre-school, primary, secondary and special needs education. The school focuses on the holistic development of the children through Katha Relevant Education for All Round Development-KREAD

with an excellent integration of academic, vocational and life skills imparted to all children. In addition, Kala Nivas – our four arts centres for music, dance, theatre and fine arts, hone the creative skills of children.

This year, despite the pandemic, over 51% of the 616 enrolled children were girls. 100% of our students passed the NIOS Board exams both for Class X as well as Class XII, with 92% of the 12th passed children admitted to colleges.



KATHA & TONY BLAIR INSTITUTE OF GLOBAL CHANGE.

Tony Blair Institute for Global Change has been working in India since 2009 through their flagship education programme “Generation Global”, which equips students with global competences to become active global citizens and to prepare them for the 21st century workplace. They provide facilitated video conferences and online blogging opportunities for students from 30+ countries, to interact and learn from other students in a safe and inclusive space.

The objectives of Generation Global is to enhance qualities of critical thinking, active listening, leadership awareness through communication to make them global citizens and, at the same time, providing integrated dialogue-based learning in school systems. Generation global team connects the participating organizations with other educators who exchange their views and learn through their experiences.

Since Generation Global ideas and beliefs resonate with Katha’s philosophy, the students from our Govindpuri School took part in 4 such conferences organized between Katha and D.A.V. Public school-Dwarka, Bal Bharti Public school – Noida, Ismail School – Ukraine and Lead School Karmala – India.



Katha Lab School children participated in the General Global Conferences with an emphasis on “Essential of Dialogues”, in GSP’s audit @ home (Green School Program) conducted by Centre for Science and Environment (to get personalized guidance from CSE for adopting greener measures at home), and in the online COVID Awareness Quiz by TERI. Katha students also participated in the Workshops by Naaz Foundation and CHETNA NGO for adolescent girls, which focussed on their personal health, cyber bullying, personal safety and peer pressure.

Our children also participated in Chess Competitions, visited the Animal Shelter “Friendicoes” wherein our children initiated a community donation drive for street dogs. The children also undertook distribution of blankets and fruits to the elderly at Old Age Homes.



On the advice and guidance of our Founder President, Geeta Dharmarajan, Katha conducted a special session on immunity boosting home remedies to combat COVID using ingredients available at home. Children also made sanitizers and soap at home using everyday supplies.

Despite the pandemic, our staff and children celebrated Katha Foundation Day, Gandhi Jayanti, Diwali and participated in the Independence and Republic Day celebrations also via online platforms.



KATHA IT AND E-COMMERCE SCHOOL (KITES)

An initiative of Katha Lab School, KITES was founded in 2001 with the generous support of BT Global to offer quality IT education to underprivileged children and community youth to empower them with necessary knowledge and skills to enhance their future opportunities and livelihoods. Each year, KITES directly benefits over **1,000** children, community youth and women. The average salary of a KITES professional graduate triples after taking the Advanced Level

IT course.

This centre provides quality professional IT courses to the community youth, and helps them gain employment. KITES was accredited by National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT) in 2017 for IT 'A' course.

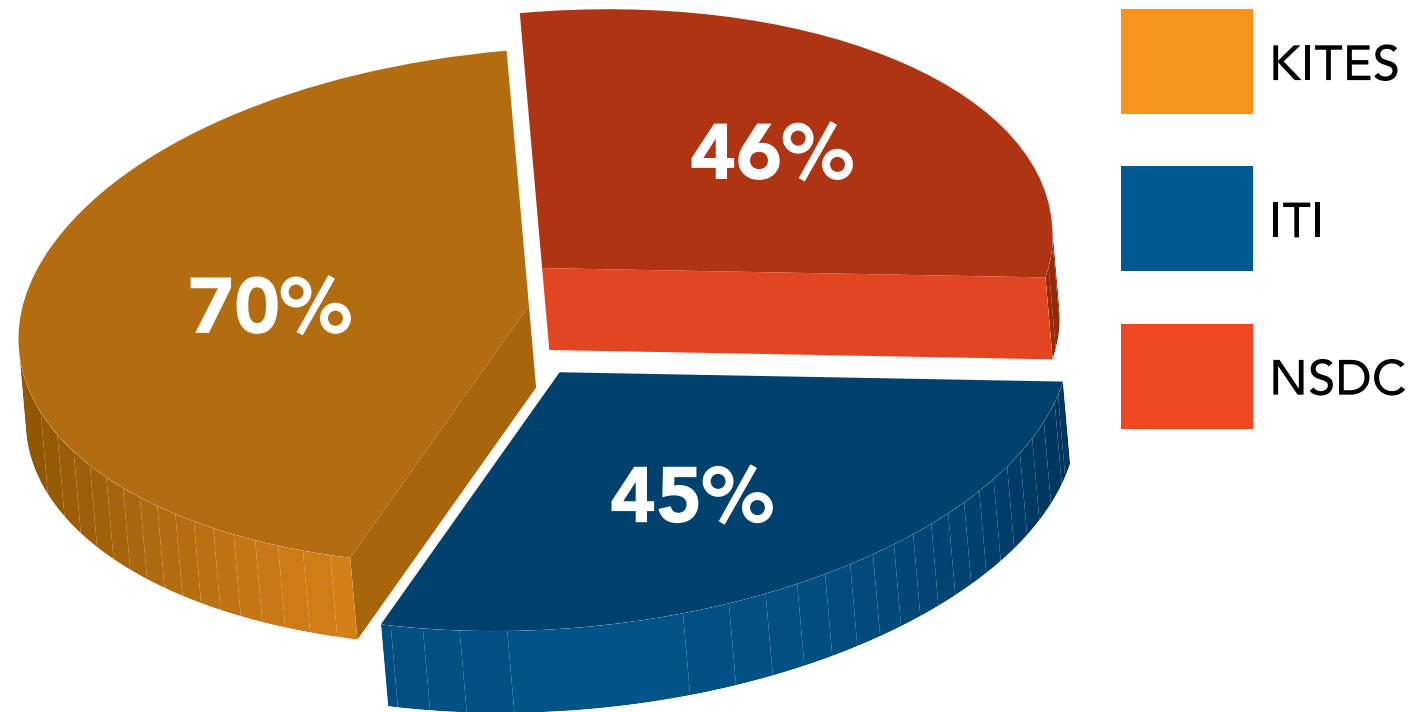
Currently KITES is Operational in Delhi as well as in Noida (U.P.) wherein **720** professionals are undergoing training with **85%** trainee placed in jobs till now, with an average salary of **Rs.18,000/per month**

after graduating from KITES. At KITES, along with the practical and theoretical training, students also participate in soft-skills classes and English conversation sessions to enhance their life-skills. Some of the organizations which inducted KITES graduates include Café Coffee Day, Aircon, Airtel, Amazon, Apollo Hospital, Asian Hospital, Bajaj Capital Finance Limited, Dish TV, Vishal Mega Mat, Max Hospital, PNB MetLife Insurance, Fashion Big Bazar, DLF, IGI Airport.

KITES children won the International Robotic Competition in Gurgaon. Many of our students developed e-commerce websites and are running them successfully; Students also developed a “Women Safety App” and “Drones”. Our IT trainees helped to reach out to more than **100,000** beneficiaries using the digitized content, developed by them, on an interactive website which proved to be of great benefit during these COVID times.



PLACEMENT RATE



Graph 1: placement of major skilling institutes of India. However, the sample size, rural-urban demography and geography are factors of variables.



KITES

Katha Information Technology and E-Commerce School

ITI

Industrial Training Institute
(data source: <https://dgt.gov.in>)

NSDC

National Skill Development Corporation
(data source: <https://skillsip.nsdcindia.org>)



KATHA SCHOOL OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP (KSE)

Vocational and entrepreneurship training is the need of the day, to make India more equitable. Knowledge and marketplace-focused skills are provided by the Katha School of Entrepreneurship [KSE]. The entrepreneurship and vocational training work together with the IT training at KITES and prepare students effectively, through training workshops and seminars, for the job market. The O and A level training in entrepreneurship starts with pre-entrepreneurial in primary

school and moves towards the O and A level training in a chosen craft — Bakery, Food Processing, Tailoring, Embroidery, Electricals and/ or Carpentry through middle and high school. The students in KSE also take courses in Business English and in IT and E-Commerce. All the courses at KSE have been certified by both the Ministry of Human Resource Development as well as the National Institute of Open Schooling.

At KSE, gender inclusive programs are conducted wherein more than 50% beneficiaries are women. The skill enhancement programs are taught by our successful Alumni groups and industry experts. Here again English conversation sessions are held to equip students with work-place communication skills.

Currently KSE is operational both in Delhi and Noida with about 350 professionals undergoing training. NIOS short term and long-term courses are offered in the areas of Bakery & Confectionary, Dress Designing & Cutting Tailoring, AC/Refrigerator Repair & Maintenance, and Early Childhood Care & Education. Katha has been successful in ensuring that 80% of the students, who pass, find jobs with reputed franchisees and eateries, such as, Café Coffee

Day, The Artisan Bake House, Anmol biscuits, Gayatri foods, Britannia, Kids Bakerym Kerala Bhavan, Radisson Blue, Shangri La, and Taj Man Singh.

The effectiveness and usefulness of Katha's initiative can be gauged by the fact that along with securing jobs with reputed organizations, quite a few of our students have started their own enterprises in India as well as abroad – such as in South Africa, Canada, Dubai etc.





KATHA SCHOOL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (KSQEP)

KSQEP is a school adoption program implemented on Katha-Government Partnership School model, wherein we aim to transform and revitalize the quality of primary government schools with the objective of ensuring every child, especially the most disadvantaged, receives an excellent education comparable to the best of the private or public schools.

Through this initiative we bring primary school children in Delhi's municipal government

schools to grade-level reading using innovative, fun methods developed by Katha over the last 33 years. This is achieved by training the teachers, and giving them the much-needed support to creatively engage their students in learning for joy and meaning. This enables us to successfully transform the Municipal primary schools to be effective and enjoyable learning places for children, leading to high performance.

Through a multi-pronged

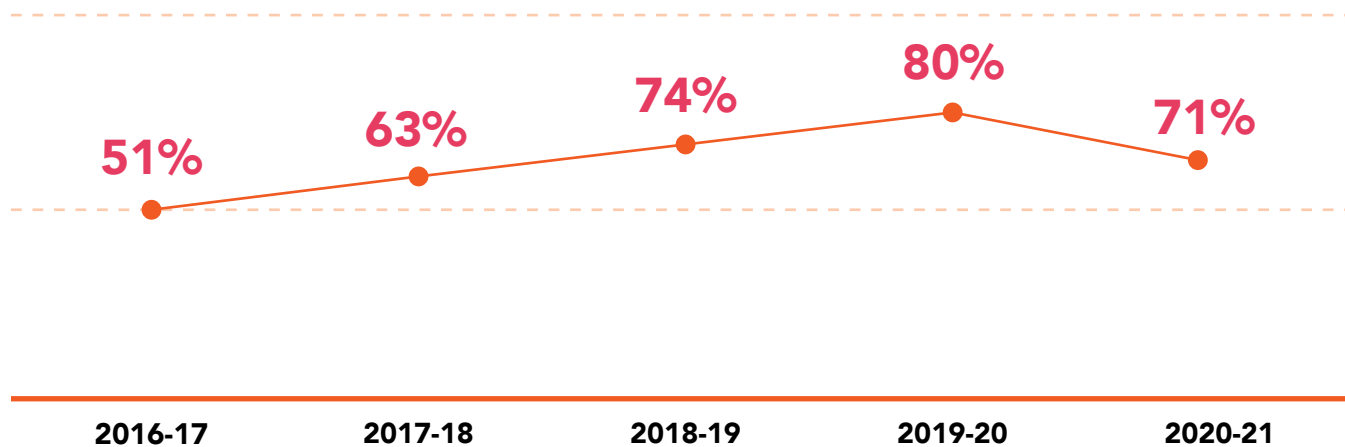
approach, which includes effective communication, empowering community women, and transmitting the importance of the Right to Education Act and the importance of education for overall development of children – Katha helps increase the enrolment of children, and in reducing dropouts by increasing the retention rate of students in all the schools where Katha

collaborates. We engage with all stakeholders – children, teachers, principals, community members and the government – to ensure effectiveness and sustainability of the SQEProgram.

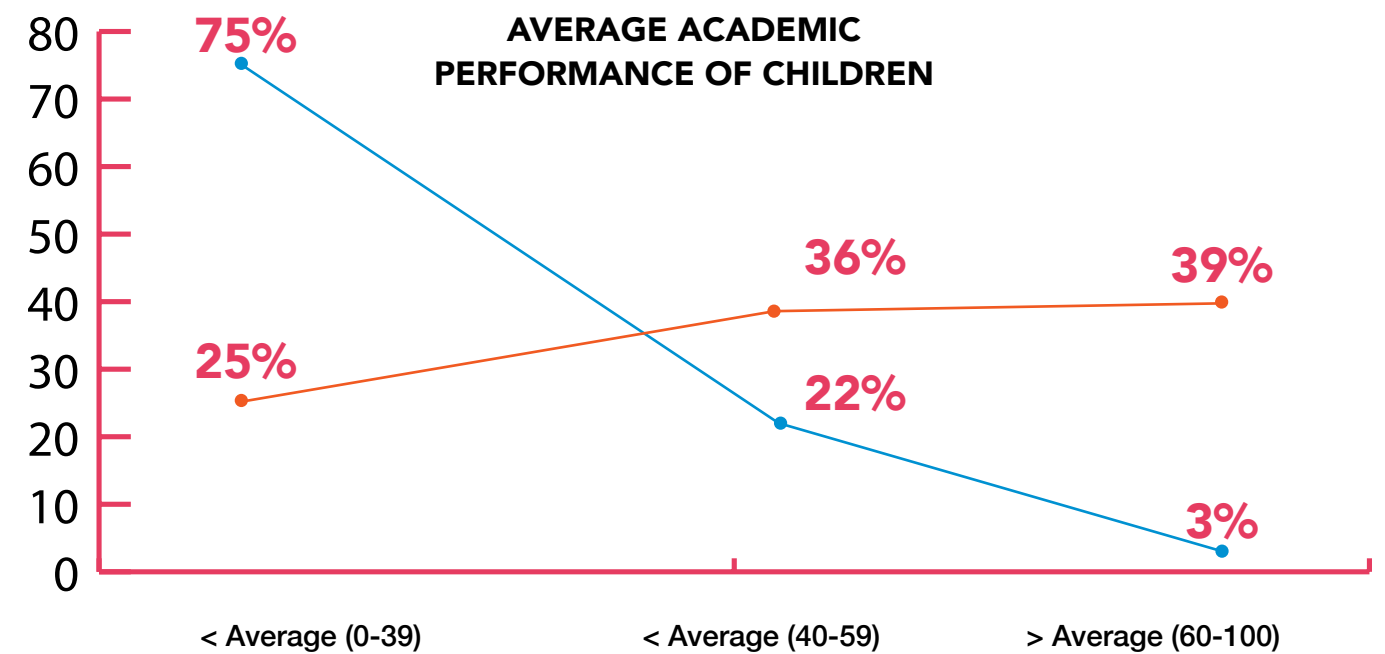
Currently this program is operational in the primary government schools of South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) wherein we completely transformed these schools, in

terms of infrastructure facilities and pedagogy, to be at par with private schools. Through our efforts there was a **109%** increase in enrolment and the average attendance increased from **51-80%**. **39%** children reached grade level learning at the end line studies compared to just **3%** in the baseline studies.

ANNUAL AVERAGE ATTENDANCE



Note: Low attendance in year 2020-21 is due to COVID where many children emigrated from Delhi



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During the year, 8 students from these schools were selected for Madhavi Pariksha at the Zonal sports meets; Students from our schools won 4 gold medals

Community support program was organized during COVID times. Ration kits, masks, soaps and sanitizers were distributed. Blankets were also distributed to the most-needy families with support from like-minded organizations. We also ensured that Physical reading kits were distributed to the children to enable home-based learning.

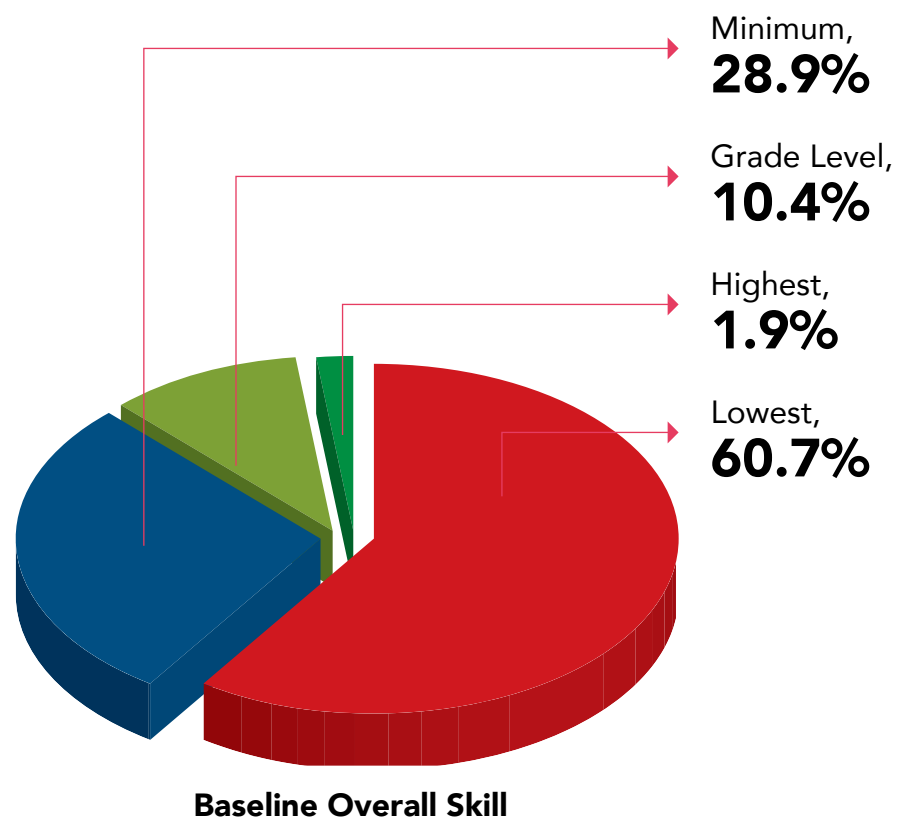


I LOVE READING

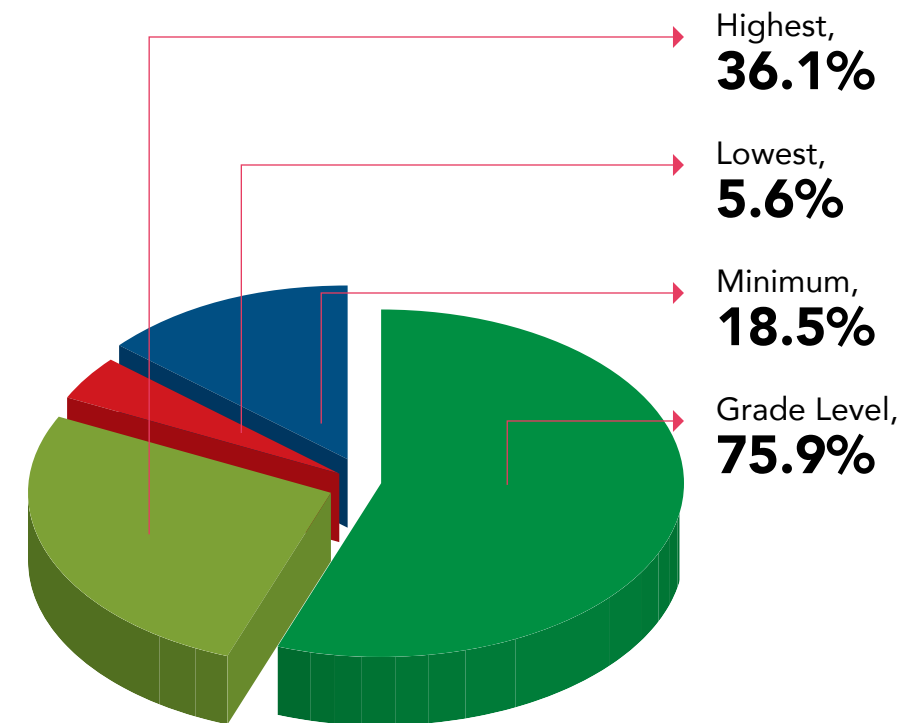
The ILR Program is a flagship initiative of Katha, started in 2008 to inculcate the joy of reading in children from underserved communities. Since a vast majority of the population in the slums are mostly illiterate, the children living there do not have any opportunity to learn to read. With colourful and attractively illustrated books, Katha ignited children's innate curiosity. Slowly but steadily through ILR, Katha got the children to start reading by nurturing their joy for reading. By 2017 Katha had covered 500 slum communities.



Simultaneously, looking at the positive effects of the ILR program in the communities, we introduced the concept to the Delhi Government to improve the reading skills of the children, from Classes 1 to 5, in the Government Municipal schools. At every Municipal school we work in, a class room is dedicated for ILR; the room is painted, in attractive colours, with the pictures from the story books we use. A small library is also set up so that children can browse through the books. We train the teachers there on ways to engage the students into reading and learning. The objective is to get children reading at grade level standards.



Data source: 5 years Impact report of I Love Reading (2016-20)



Baseline Overall Skill
Data source: 5 years Impact report of I Love Reading (2016-20)



Katha won the 2013 Millennium Alliance Award from FICCI, USAID, India's Technology Development Board for the I Love Reading program. ILR is a 'Bricks & Clicks' Module-based intervention in primary schools. The broad objective is to enhance the reading capabilities of children and help them stay in schools. This program, from Delhi/NCR, has now spread to Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. During the current year, we covered **125** schools reaching out to over **44,000** children and **700** Government school teachers who were trained through online teaching-learning modules. We

have, through ILR modules, implemented English-Language intervention in **76** Government schools and have also set up **10 e-ILR Hubs** in place to enhance digital learning. During the year, our assessments indicate that **99%** of the children improved their reading abilities with over **32 percent** attaining grade level reading capability. In **25 schools**, we also included elements of WASH (Water, Sanitation & Hygiene), and educated children and the communities on the behavioural changes required to maintain high levels of sanitation and hygiene while conserving water.

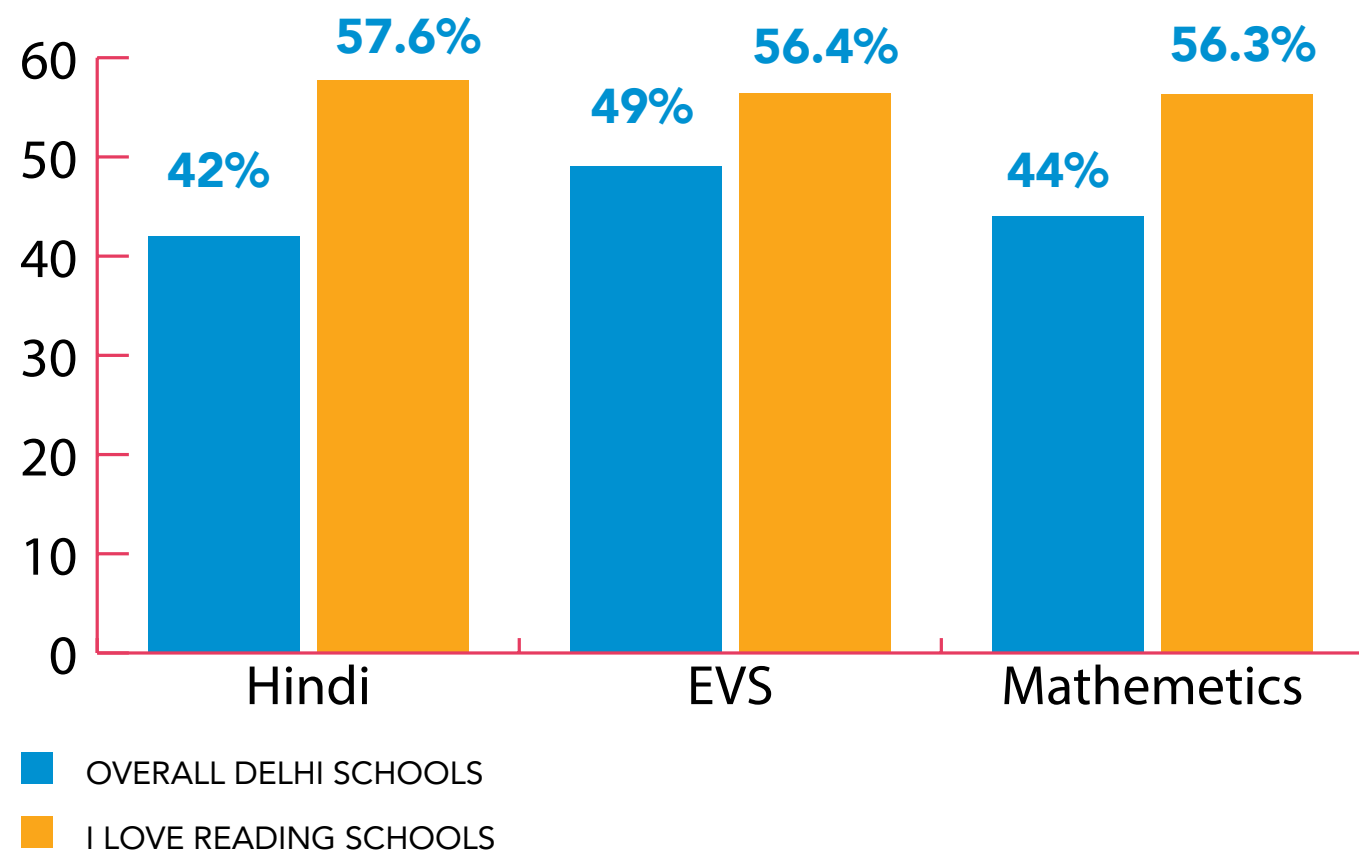


Data source: Field data and data retrieved from National Achievement Survey (NAS) for Impact report of I Love Reading (2016-20). The graph above clearly shows that there is a difference between the mean score of children from ILR schools as compared to the other Delhi schools. Highest performance – Hindi; Positive impact – EVS and Mathematics

An overwhelming majority of the teachers and principals found the ILR Program to be highly useful, and deemed it successful in achieving its objectives. Below is some of the feedback received from schools in Noida, U.P. where Katha implements the ILR Program.



Graph. Comparison of subject-wise achievement scores of students of grade 5



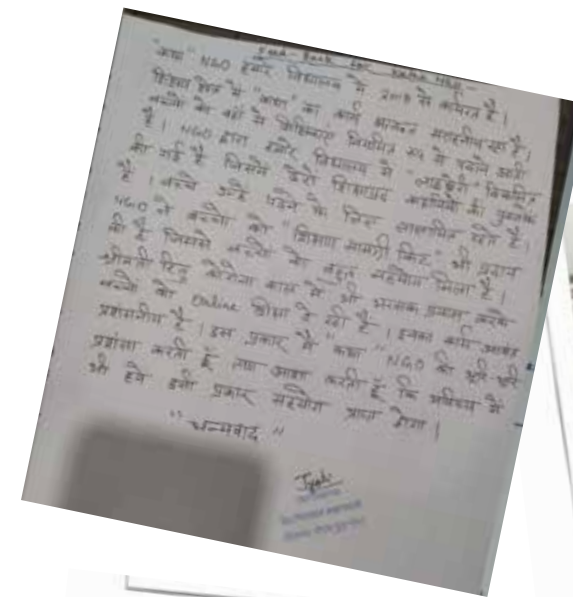
“

I got the opportunity to work with KATHA which is working in our school. I love the way they provide underserved children the joy of reading. The best part of KATHA in my opinion is choice and variety of books. Its supportive learning program is also beneficial for children. It supports not only Hindi literature/ Learning but also English language learning which is essential for growth.

Thanks to the mentor and ILR Program, Noida for support and fun loving activities.

ANURADHA TYAGI

(CLASS TEACHER OF CLASS III, PRIMARY SCHOOL KHODNA KHURD 1)

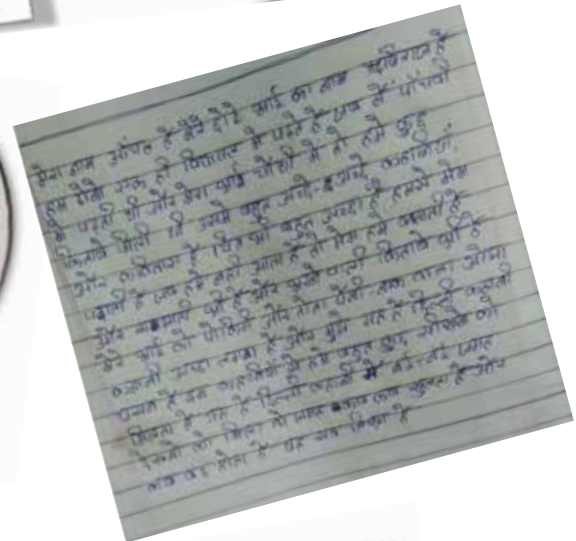


“कथा लाइब्रेरी में पढ़ना मुझे बहुत अच्छा लगता है। मुझे कहानियां बहुत अच्छी लगती हैं। मेरी पसंदीदा कहानी है माही और पेड़ का हाथी। मुझे स्कूल की याद आती है वहाँ पर सभी टीचर लोग मुझे बहुत पसंद हैं। मैं ऑनलाइन क्लास अटेंड करती हूँ।”

- Anvi
(Student of Class V, Primary School Khodna Khurd 1)

“मैं अपने बेटे को पढ़ता देख बहुत खुश हूँ। महेश हमेशा अपनी टीचर की बात करता है और जो भी सिखता है घर आ कर बताता है। बहुत अच्छा लगता है। धन्यवाद कथा!”

- Mahesh Kumar
(Father of Kartik Class V, Primary School Khodna Khurd 1)



“दादी माँ मुझे कहानी सुनाती थी जैसी मेरी कथा की टीचर मुझे कहानी सुनाती है। मेरी पसंदीदा कहानी 'मिस्ट्री ऑफ द मिसिंग सोप' है। ये बहुत अच्छी है। मैं इसे कोरोनावायरस के बारे में जानी। मैं अपने हाथ भी धोती हूँ। मुझे अपनी जूम क्लासेस पसंद हैं।”

- Ishita
(Student of Class III, Primary School, Khodna Khurd 1)



KATHA HOLISTIC EARLY LEARNING (KHEL): KATHA TEACHERS' TRAINING

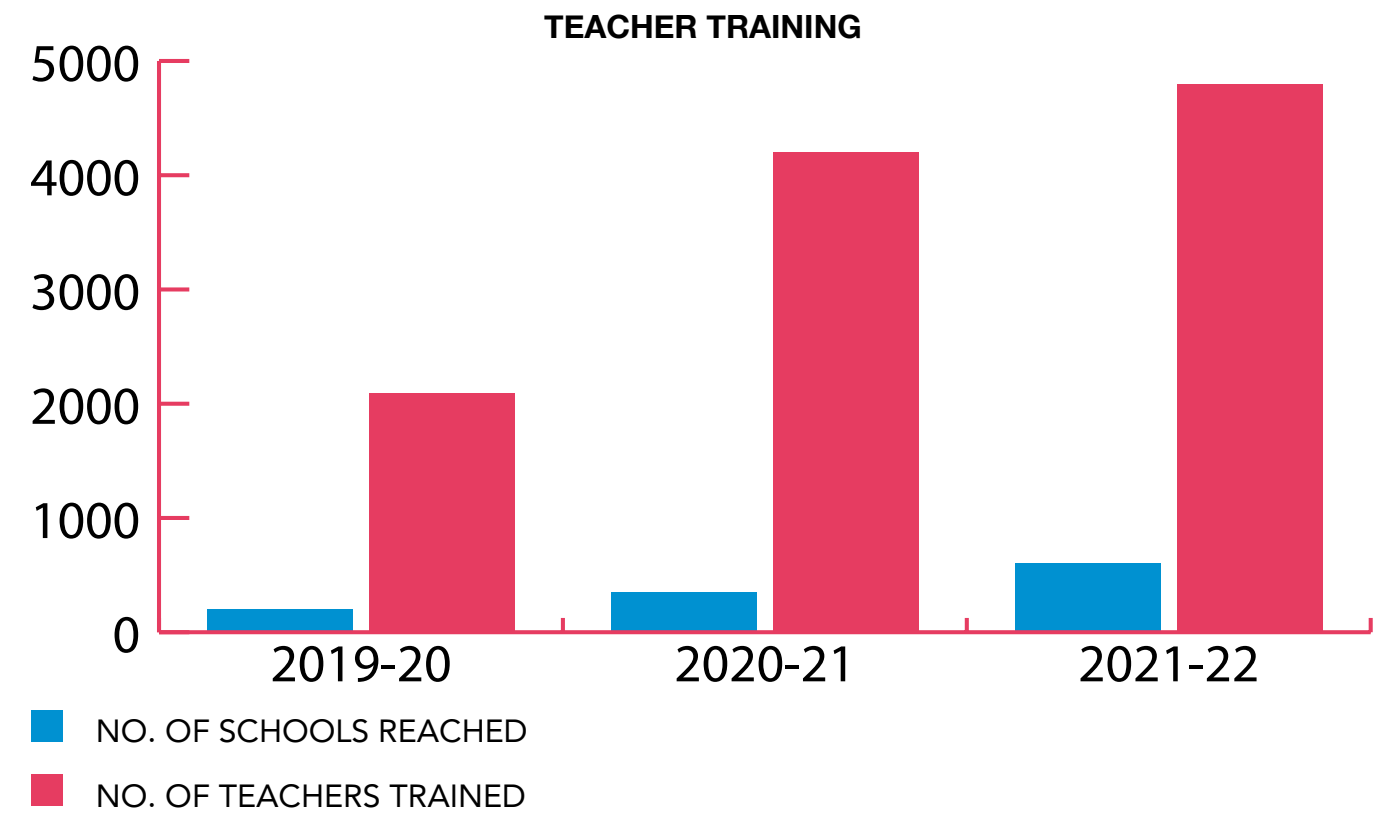
Under this initiative, teachers in primary schools, study and understand children's needs, and the drawbacks in the existing education practices, so as to address the same, and support the Right to Education Act and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, and work towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals of quality education. This immensely helps in fostering

the lifelong learning skills of children, thereby, enabling them to be responsive, responsible adults in the future. The training helps teachers to creatively engage students in learning, making it a fun experience with the ultimate aim of bringing children to not only grade level reading but to instil in them a lifelong joy of learning.

Through KHEL, Katha works with school teachers and principals, for creative teaching and to work on solutions collectively to overcome the challenges faced within the institution of education. Teachers of the government schools are trained in Katha's StoryPedagogy to enhance classroom teaching.



Currently, we are training teachers from 350 government schools in Delhi and Haryana. The focus is to bring a systematic change in primary school education as emphasised in the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Through Offline and Online channels, we trained 4229 teachers and principals impacting over 1,30,000 children.





KATHA SLUM RESURGENCE INITIATIVE – KATHA (SRI)

Katha runs various community programmes and workshops, involving life-skills, financial, literacy and livelihood skills, and (SHE) 2 (Safe water, Sanitation, Health & Hygiene, Education & Empowerment) Workshops for women, youth and young girls.

Katha also organizes the Mothers' Associations (Maa Mandals), wherein women are trained and empowered to take on advocacy roles for their respective communities. This program is operational in 580 slum communities of Delhi and Haryana with over **42,000 women**, and impacting almost **2 lakh women**. Along with the Maa Mandals being trained on community issues, with a focus on educating children, Katha has set up 9 Community Owned and Operated Learning spaces – called COOLs – which

are digitally powered and run by community women. These COOLs help women earn livelihoods, and serve as nodal points for training and empowerment of community women. Under this program we undertook distribution of COVID Relief Kits, and Reading Kits in digital and physical form, provided assistance on government schemes and relief support. We continued with workshops on health, hygiene and sanitation to keep communities safe and protected amidst the pandemic.





SWACHH MAHARASHTRA INITIATIVE

Under the Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan of Government of Maharashtra, Katha had collaborated with Collective Good Foundation & Samhita in building knowledge, attitude and practices towards WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) among children of 20 schools of Zila Parishad of Chandrapur district in Maharashtra. We trained 55 of the teachers in WASH behavioural change, and benefitted 1459 children.

Katha created a more conducive and child-centric environment for fun-filled learning through the use of student-created posters and banners. Katha's Supergirls series' stories and characters were used for behavioural change communication and for imparting Social, Personal, Imaginative/Intellectual, Cultural, and Environmental (SPICE) skills as part of the Katha pedagogy (StoryPedagogy). Students created awareness material around the various WASH themes which was put up across the school, especially at crucial locations, such as, toilets, hand wash stations, water tanks etc.

The biggest challenge to the

implementation of the project was the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing lockdown. The isolation and social distancing protocols prevented the in-person baseline assessment and delayed the process of distribution of books, worksheets and activity sheets among children. Since many of the parents did not have smartphones, we provided content and the worksheets in schools once a week. Non-availability of children via virtual/ ICT means was the biggest challenge – including the lack of smartphones. However, the children responded and were able to participate once they had access to smartphones.





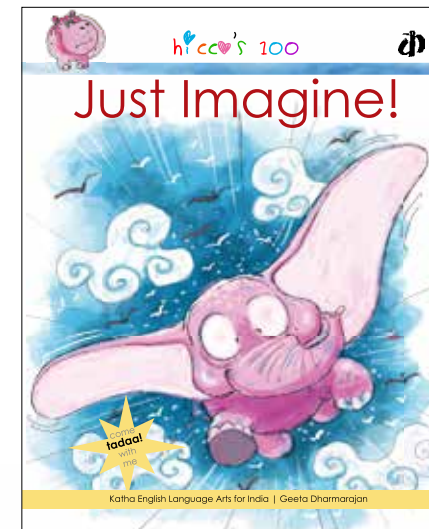
KATHA PUBLICATIONS

Keeping in mind the prevailing pandemic environment and the need to get as many children to read and read at grade level under our ambitious – “300M Citizens’ Challenge” – Katha brought out chosen creatives to address the constraints and introduced an “Untextbook package” to enable children to become familiar with the English language.

JUST IMAGINE! –

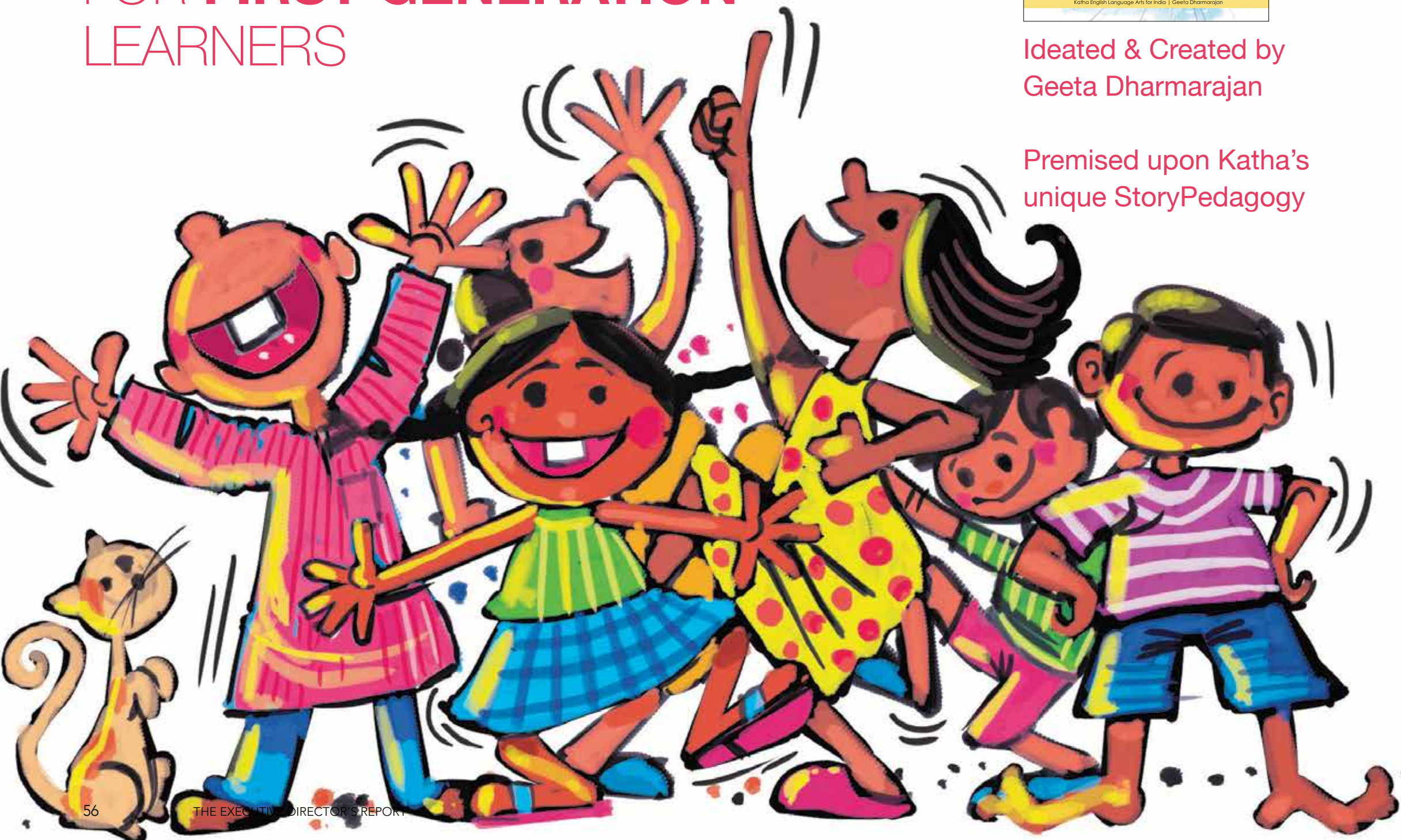
A UNIQUE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE LEARNING KIT

ESPECIALLY DESIGNED
FOR **FIRST GENERATION**
LEARNERS



Ideated & Created by
Geeta Dharmarajan

Premised upon Katha's
unique StoryPedagogy



THE VISION AND OBJECTIVE

The Just Imagine! kit has an expansive vision and has been created systematically to achieve the same. The kit has been specially designed to increase the ability of first-generation learners to read for joy and meaning in the English language.

StoryPedagogy opens up engaging ways for children to understand Katha's "MeWe" philosophy – so that children can achieve individual, collective, creative goals, practice the big ideas of kindness and equity, create a more nurturing and participative world, and evolve into becoming Earth-Carers.



BACKGROUND

Reading is a basic keystone skill for children in the 21st century. When children can read and comprehend, the chances are that they will be able to acquire the associated skills – academic, vocational and professional. Key 21st century skills are linked to reading, comprehension and higher-order skills – including storytelling.

THE POWER OF STORIES

Katha uses the power of stories to engage children. The Just Imagine kit has been developed keeping in mind children’s innate curiosity and interest in stories, illustrations, vibrant examples, descriptors, questions, games, puzzles, movement, song and dance. The stories revolve around the big ideas of GEEK (Gender, Earth, Equity and Kindness).



Hicco's 100

Hulgul's Pitara, Vol.1

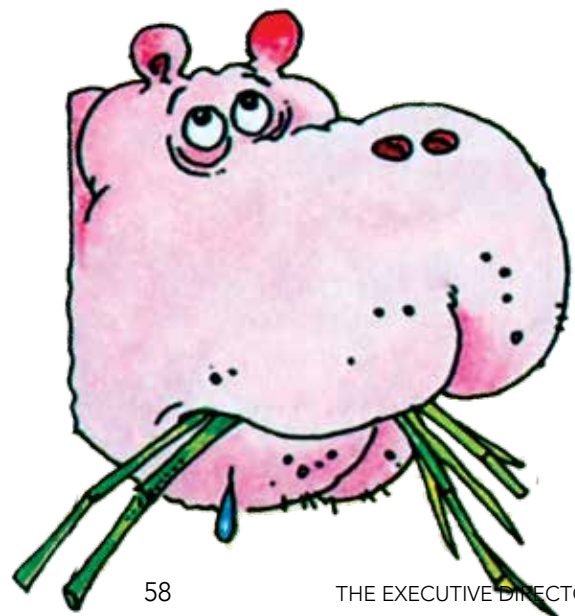
Hulgul's Pitara, Vol.2

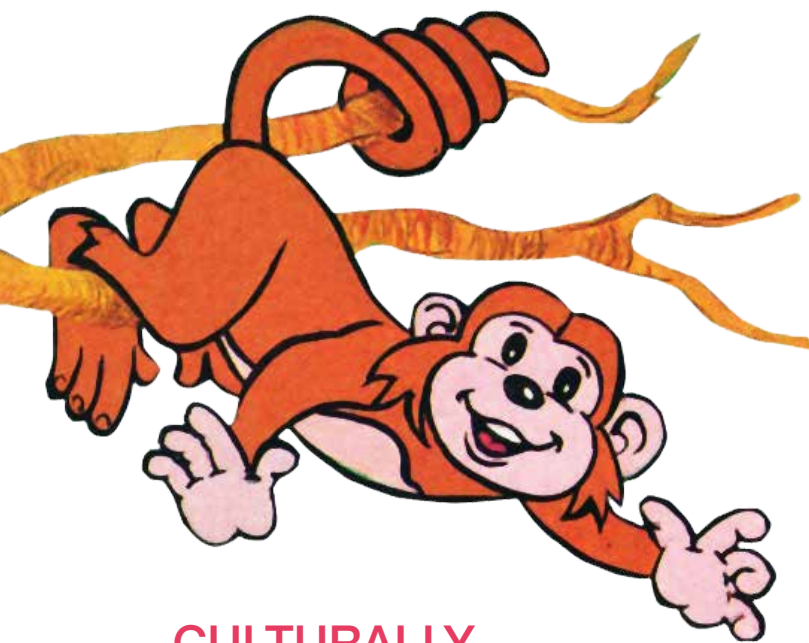
Tamasha's Reader, Vol.1

Tamasha's Reader, Vol.2

THE CHILD AT THE CENTRE

To build on what children know (such as, simple English words, fan, table, chair...) –Geeta Dharmarajan identified, created and curated relevant content, which takes children through a simple yet systematic process of creatively engaging with illustrations, simple questions, games and puzzles to build on their vocabulary while simultaneously learning new ideas and the English language. Thereby, children learn the English language through play, and without the pressure and stress of traditional methods.





CULTURALLY RELEVANT STORIES

from the Indian context were brought together. Illustrations for the kit



ENJOYABLE EXERCISES, built on Katha's innovative and unique TADAA! which encourages children to Think, Ask, Discuss, Act and Achieve were tied in with every unit so that children could engage with the Big Idea of every story while creatively building on what they know while learning new elements and while learning the English language.



INTEGRATIVE LEARNING

while creating the content was emphasized. Thus through learning English, children are encouraged to see the connections amongst the environment, animals, practicing kindness, friendship, and learning more about the natural flora and fauna of their surroundings, and also outer space!



ILLUSTRATIONS

envisioned by Geeta Dharmarajan and the Katha illustrator – which the children could relate to and connect with were chosen and developed to pair with the chosen stories.

FOR ENGAGED LEARNING,

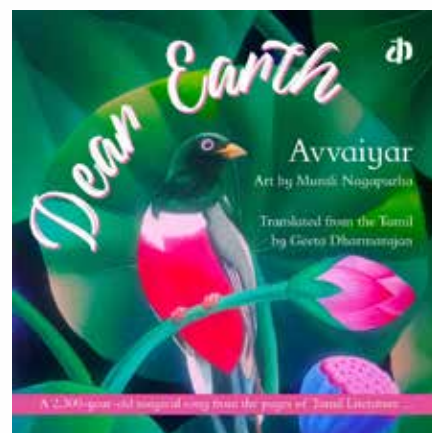
which can be fun and interesting for the child, varied modes of learning – such as flashcards, painting exercises, storytelling exercises, puzzles, games, audio and visual games, songs and dance have been integrated into the kit. A detailed Teachers' guide as a resource has also been put together for an understanding of the broader and deeper vision, and also as a guideline to the implementation plan.



UNIQUE ELEMENTS

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Some of the other books brought out during the year include The Mystery Of The Missing Soap, The Tale Of Makkhilal, Dear Earth, GEEK Library, Millions of Cats, Yuvakatha Series, COVID-19 Series, The Earth Carer Series.



Dear Earth

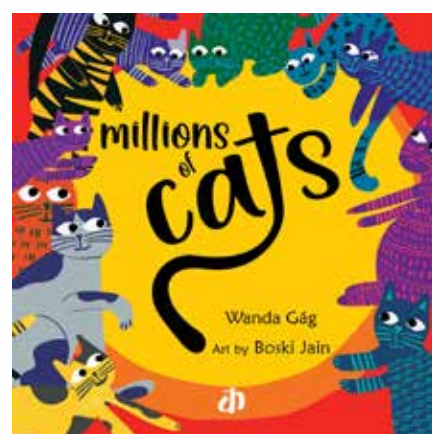
Avvaiyar | Art by Murali Nagapuzha

Translated from the Tamil by Geeta Dharmarajan

We call our planet Mother Earth because she gives life to all living things, including you and me.

Katha sends you with love, a delightful song from the Tamil Literature of 2,300 years ago, by the wise poet, Avvaiyar in a child-friendly translation.

We hope that this sumptuously illustrated Big Earthcarer book will help the Little Changemaker in your family to learn the art of kindness with our only home – Earth!



Millions of Cats

Wanda Gág | Art by Boski Jain

Once there was an old woman and an old man who wanted to adopt a cat. But when the old man steps out to find the perfect cat, he stumbles upon a sweet surprise that could change their lives forever.

Katha brings you Millions of Cats, a 90 year-old, award-winning story from American literature. Wrapped in the Indian flavours of delightful illustrations, this little bundle of magic will take you for a ride to places far and wide.



The Tale of Makkhilal

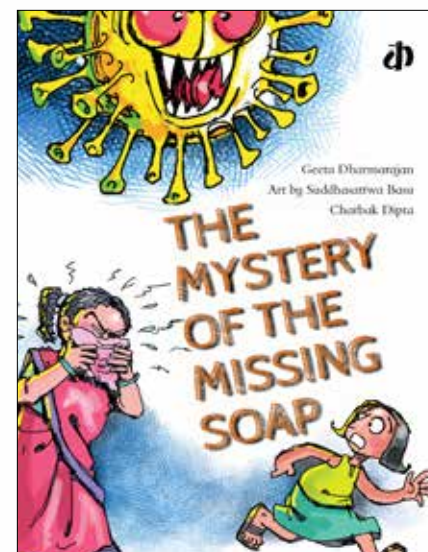
Geeta Dharmarajan

Art by Charbak Dipta

In the land of Makkhipuri,
The fly was god for all.
They prayed to it for good health,
They called it Makkhilal.

What happens when a fly becomes the god of a village? Terrible things, you'd imagine. But one person in the village sees through the fly's wicked ploy. Would she be able to save the village?

Find out in this romp of a poem that will encourage young readers to think about hygiene, role models, the power of one and a lot more.



The Mystery of the Missing Soap

Geeta Dharmarajan

Art by Siddhosattwa Basu and Charbak Dipta



A new title centred on a fly teaches kids about diarrhoea and to choose right from wrong in the form of a poem.

MID-DAY

katha utsav

WENT DIGITAL!

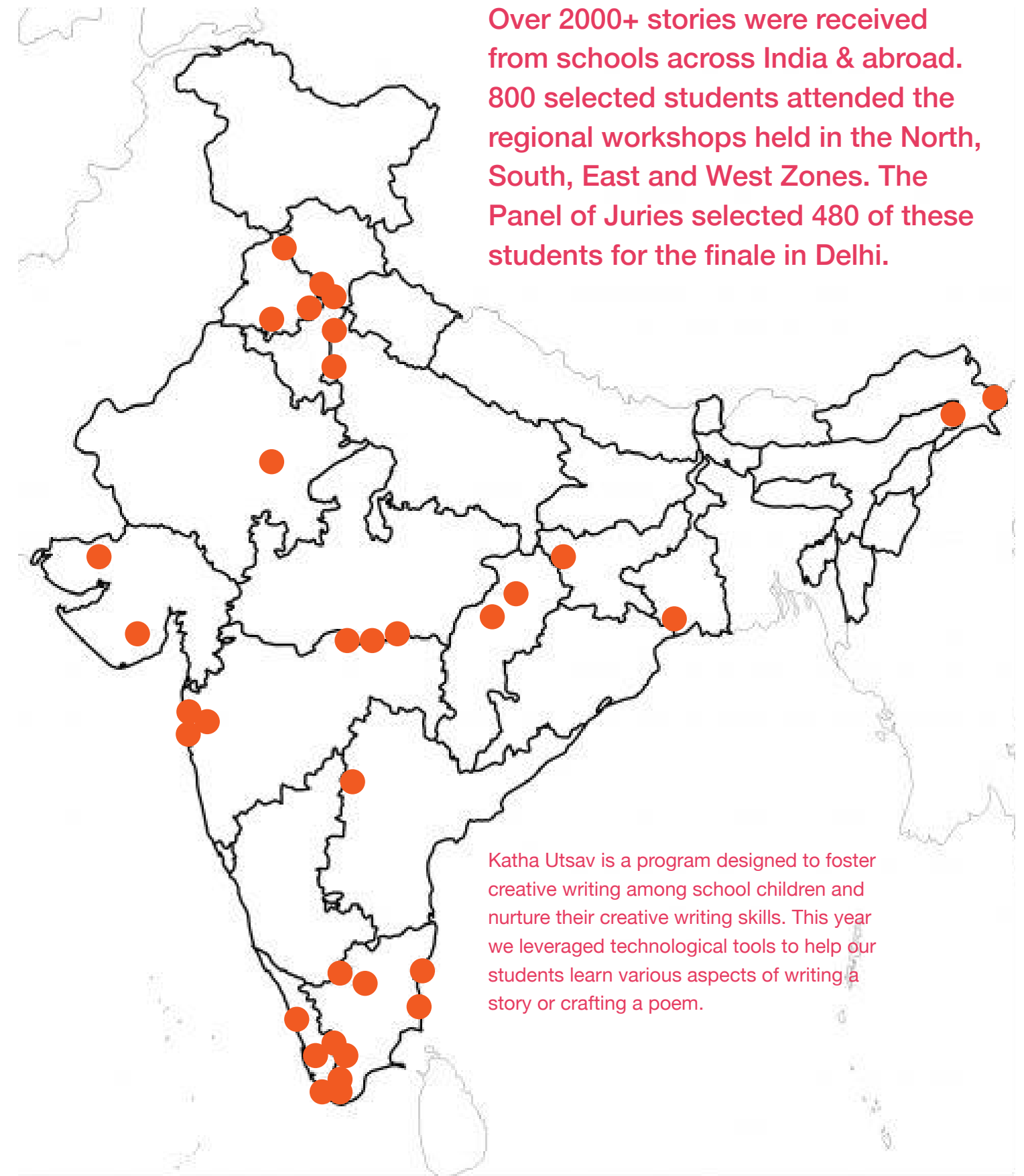


Katha is a narrative; it is imaginative, colourful, diverse and essentially Indian. Above all, it is a story!

Stories are at the heart of our work at Katha. We live and breathe our world through these stories. From the classics to the contemporary, our literary heritage – both oral and written – comes alive through these stories and legends. These stories transcend the barriers of geography, language and age. They educate, entertain and enrich and, in a divided world, they bring people together! Such is the power of story – it creates a kinder, compassionate world not for one, but for all!

KATHA UTSAV PARTICIPATION

Because of the Pandemic and lockdown, and the norms of Social Distancing, Katha Utsav went digital this past year.



CASE STUDIES: stories of hope and joy



CHHAVI

Chhavi, a student of Class 4 has overcome challenges to continue her good performance. Against all odds, she has been very active in

everyday engagement with the teachers.

The lockdown brought financial crisis to the home as her father lost his job. Even during tough times, her father helped her in online education.

He bought a second hand smartphone so that Chhavi could continue with her studies. She sends voice notes if she is unable to understand some concept. Her parents collect worksheets from the Katha mobiliser for Chhavi to practice.

Chhavi is a hardworking girl and aspires to become a teacher.

Her teacher Deepa says, “Chhavi is very active in asking and responding. Her responses may be delayed on the availability of the phone, but she keeps her assignment ready and shares with the groups as soon as she can access the phone.”



PARI

Pari is an eleven year-old whose father worked as a daily hawker. Pari’s mother also contributes to family income by working as maid servant in a kothi in C.R Park.

Pari was enrolled in Katha Lab School as a toddler of 2 and a ½ years. Since then she has been cared for and nurtured by dedicated teachers of Katha. Pari, once a shy and hesitant girl is a shining star with a bright future.

During the COVID situation when regular classes came to a halt – Katha Lab School rose to the challenge to ensure that children like Pari were able to continue with their education.

With a combination of remote online services, digitized learning material and community classes, Katha teachers kept students like Pari engaged in reading and learning via on-line mentoring, zoom meetings, WhatsApp groups, free ebooks and physical teaching-learning content.

Pari also rose to the occasion as an active participant in the Katha online classes, events, celebrations, discussion and projects.



DOLLY A STUDENT AT KSE, NOIDA

19-Year-old, Dolly Kumari, lives in Noida, with her parents and four siblings (three sisters and a brother). Her father was a street Litti Choka seller. However, After the lockdown, he began to work as a roadside vegetable vendor.

During the community survey, Dolly was informed about Katha School of Entrepreneurship (KSE) and was encouraged to visit the Centre.

Dolly visited the Centre, with her friend to acquire further information. During the counselling

session at KSE, she was briefed about the advantages and learning outcomes. Dolly was fascinated after taking a look at the classrooms, labs and other facilities at the Centre. She decided to get enrolled.

During her initial days, Dolly's delayed arrivals and frequent absenteeism were recorded. Her performance was not satisfactory. The teachers at KSE spoke with her, to check if everything was going well for her.

Dolly revealed that before coming for the classes, she completed all the household chores. She also took care of her younger siblings as her mother assisted her father. This explained her irregular attendance, her late arrival and low exam scores.

During the Parents-Teachers Meeting (PTM), the staff at KSE, discussed the issue with Dolly's parents and explained the importance of education and how they could prioritize it for their daughter. Dolly's parents were supported and advised, on ways to encourage Dolly to pursue her education. The teachers assured her parents of her capabilities.

Her parents understood and started supporting Dolly to pursue her education. Dolly started attending classes regularly and on time. Dolly exhibited diligence and dedication. She attended various workshops, completed different activities, and was eager to learn more. Dolly showed an improvement in her work and grades. Consequently, her confidence levels rose, and so did her overall communication skills and performance.

Later, KSE provided Dolly with an opportunity to intern at Independent Thoughts in January 2020. She accepted

it and completed it with good results. All through her internship, she was guided and counselled by the teachers at KSE.

At KSE, she also received special training on essential soft skills, such as interview preparation. Dolly was selected for a job on the very first interview that was scheduled for her!

OUTCOME: Dolly started working in July 2020, at Maxtech Data House P Ltd., Noida, as



RUBY

"I am very thankful to all the teachers of KITES. I got free training and certification here.

By the end of the course, my personality

a Collective Executive. Her monthly income is Rs 15000 + (OT, Incentive and other benefits).

Dolly is thankful to KSE for supporting her when she was going through difficult times. Dolly said that she can now help her family and can also support her siblings' education. She is a self-dependent girl and can live a more stable life.

changed in positive ways, in terms of attitude, soft skills and course-related skills.

I belong to an orthodox Muslim family. I am the first girl in my family who has been allowed to work. This is thanks to the teachers at KITES, who counselled my parents, and my parents then agreed to let me work.

I am now the role model among my siblings and cousins. Along with supporting my family financially, my training created a positive environment in my family, where girls can work and become independent.

My dream has come true. I am now working as Collective Executive at PC Financial Service (P) Ltd. My monthly CTC is Rs.15,205."



KANCHAN KUMARI CLASS 4TH

Kanchan Kumari, is one of the thousand children who was trained by Katha's reading mentor to excel in her ability to read for fun, meaning and comprehension through the ILR program.

Kanchan struggled with, pronunciation, fluency and retention of the words learnt. Poor reading skills discouraged her to learn further.

This also brought in hesitation and a lack of confidence. The situation further deteriorated when schools were closed because of the lockdown.

Kanchan had nothing to read or learn. Her father was unable to recharge his phone Internet connection due to low income during the COVID lockdown.

Kanchan's dreams were re-ignited when Katha's reading mentors started online classes and community classes simultaneously. After basic assessment, the Reading Mentor knew that Kanchan could not read her grade level text or solve simple maths. The Reading Mentor counselled Kanchan's parents to support her during online education and community classes.

At the beginning, Kanchan was unable to understand.

She was confused and rarely responded. The Reading mentor made several rounds of voice calls to Kanchan and built her confidence. Kanchan then joined in zoom classes as well as the WhatsApp group. Slowly and steadily, her interest in studies grew and she started responding.

She was provided with digitised storybooks to read at home, which increased her motivation and improved her overall performance.

"We are poor and we could not believe that

once schools were closed, our children would still be taught through online education. I make sure that my child is there when online classes are scheduled. Katha teachers even came to my place to teach my child and provided study material."

Poorn Chand Mandal, Kanchan's father Relentless efforts by Katha's reading mentor brought excellent results. Kanchan improved in her reading and numeracy skills. Kanchan was able to read simple words and sentences by the second quarter; she could read and write all matras. As a result her fluency in reading greatly increased.

Based on the observation made by the teacher she has attained 90% of the grade level reading proficiency. Kanchan and her parents are also thrilled that she is also learning English. They Have hopes that Kanchan will be able to speak read and write in English.

Kanchan is a little star, who has demonstrated that, well-channelised determination, a good support system, a congenial academic environment, story-telling and a customised teaching style can make a significant difference in learning, comprehension and retention levels of children and help them complete their schooling.

TESTIMONIALS FROM TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

"This year I got an opportunity to learn how to teach children through smart class in e-ILR hub. I have never been exposed to any such training which uses stories so beautifully. After learning smart class teaching, now I am independently teaching children through smart class which is helping children to be more regular for classes. Thanks to Katha for the efforts to make learning easier and joyful".

Madvi

Teacher, Class II, Satywati Nagar School.

"Katha NGO is working in our school to create Joy of reading among the children. The Reading mentor from Katha is working with the most reading-challenged children using various activities and worksheets, which are really creating an interest among children towards reading. Through Master Student Librarian (MSL) training, children are helping in peer learning and issuing storybooks to children in the school which is developing a leadership and caring quality among the children. I appreciate the effort of Katha and the reading mentor where the children are getting an opportunity for joyful learning in the school."

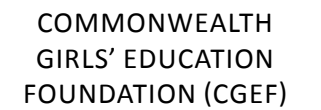
Mukesh Rana

Principal, Utkrist Vidyalaya Nimri Colony



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!





THOSE WHO MAKE IT HAPPEN...

Abhishek Das
 Abilash Balan
 Aggarwal Sunita
 Akhil Ghai
 Alin Aksiyote
 Amala Vaidya
 Anurag Ghosh

Atul Goel
 Ayush Joshi
 Chaitanya Kumar
 Deepak Sharma
 Dhruv Sarda & Varun Sarda
 Gaurav Kumar
 Gulshan

Indranil Dutta
 Ishwinder Walia
 Jawaid Iqbal
 Kalash Patel
 Kamlesh
 Karan Nayak
 Karan Nayyar
 Karan Sirisha
 Karan Sudhir Nayak
 kartik Singhal
 Khalid Iqbal
 Larry Stone
 Laurence Williams
 Laxmi Bhattacharya
 Mamatha Anand
 Megha Sharma
 Nanki Dandona
 Niyati Khetarpal
 Parul Vashist
 Patil Kamu

Poornima Mahesh
 Poornima Mani
 Prabhat Kumar
 Prasanna Walimbe
 Priyanka Jhunjhunwala
 Purnima Satish
 Ramesh Luckky
 Rupesh Kumar
 Samit Ghodke
 Sanaya Rohinton
 Satish Padmanabhan
 Shaik Ibrahim
 Shiv Kumari Sharma
 Sonal Dsouza
 Sumiti Arora
 Susan Ponter
 Tushar Pratap Chand
 Vikas Tharyani
 Vipu More
 Vishal Bansal



THANK YOU ALL



Φ KATHA

Katha is a non-profit organization that has seamlessly connected grassroots work in education, teacher-training and publishing for nearly 33 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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our Facebook page!