



**PRATHAM  
BOOKS**

# The power of technology

# to create a Reading India



Annual Report 2015 - 2016



*"We believe in the power of technology to continue bringing us closer to our mission. The effects of our new initiatives are inspiring, and humbling, in equal parts".*

## Note from the Chairperson

If we could have one wish, it would be this: joyful stories for each of the 300 million children of India. So they discover the satisfaction of reading, of chancing upon new ideas and thoughts, which, in turn, open doors to richer lives. 2015 brought us a little closer to realizing that wish – through the power of technology. Throughout the year, we used technology not just an enabler - but as a force multiplier.

We were early champions of openly licensing our content so that other people could use our stories in ways that they needed. We took that journey further by launching StoryWeaver, a digital repository of openly licensed multilingual content for children. StoryWeaver multiplied our storytellers, as stories and images from Pratham Books travelled the Internet to be reshaped, reimagined and reworked for a whole new audience. We also launched a crowd-funding platform, Donate-a-Book, which multiplied our donors, as people across the length and breadth of the country could choose to donate books to specific projects with a single click. 'Missed Call Do, Kahaani Suno' took audio stories to children, as a single missed call via a mobile phone could deliver stories to a child's home. We created an early reading package of 55 storybooks and story cards in Hindi that was developed in collaboration with our partner, Pratham, and used in 9 states in India. Through print, digital, and audio, technology enabled us to reach children in newer, more powerful ways than before.

We believe in the power of technology to continue bringing us closer to our mission. The effects of our new initiatives are inspiring, and humbling, in equal parts.

The StoryWeaver digital platform started with a repository of 800 stories in 24 languages, which mushroomed into over 2000 stories in over 45 languages in just a couple of months. Stories that – even as you read this – are being read, translated, and used in classrooms and libraries over the world, not just by downloading and printing, but also off mobile screens and computer displays.

The Donate-a-Book platform has raised funds to distribute 49,000 books to 139 schools and organisations. Over 300 libraries have been set up benefiting over 100,000 children.

The last 365 days have seen Pratham Books use technology more ambitiously, and more effectively than ever before, and thousands of children are reaping the benefits. It leads us with a unique set of questions to answer in the days ahead: Will children read stories on their mobile phones as easily as printed books, or listen to them narrated? Will the next set of translations come from readers, and not publishers? Will open source enable educators to adapt and create the content they need in their classrooms every day?

We are on the cusp of a new paradigm in children's publishing, one that is open, accessible, equitable, and serves the needs of all children. It is a path that leads to more children reading, more young minds discovering, and more joyful learning. These are truly interesting times, and we thank you for being a vital part of this journey. With your help, we look forward to an India where there is a book in every child's hand.

Suzanne Singh  
Chairperson

# Spinning a worldwide web of stories.

## StoryWeaver

September 8 is International Literacy Day, and Pratham Books celebrated it with the launch of StoryWeaver, an open source digital platform hosting hundreds of children's stories in a wide range of languages. But StoryWeaver was designed to do more than just serve up books – it opened up stories, their words, and images, and set them free to be reimagined and reinvented by creators and readers from across the world.

On the platform, multilingual stories can be read, or users can use the tools that allow downloads, translations, and versions of existing stories to be created. All content is made available under Creative Commons licenses to encourage collaboration and reuse – on media including desktops, laptops, tablets, and mobile phones.

At launch, StoryWeaver had 800 stories in 24 languages. But not for long! First came new languages, including the less mainstream Konkani and Santali; Mundari, Sadri, Kurukh and Kora from Indian tribes; the complex and the classical in the form of Khmer and Sanskrit; and a rich

selection of international tongues like Filipino, Farsi, and Kurdish.

Stories are projected in classrooms by literacy organisations, or shared on tablets and mobile phones. They are downloaded and printed locally for use in schools and libraries. From Teach For India Fellows, to education technology organisations like Zaya Learning Labs, StoryWeaver is finding its way into schools, reading programs and homes.

A Hindi story was shared on Whatsapp with teachers as part of a summer reading program, and 1500 public school teachers read it to 50,000 children. A Unicef-DIET outreach workshop in Chandrapur, Maharashtra, saw stories used in teacher training – leading to curated reading lists for a program called '15 minutes of joyful reading every day'!

Two stories have found their way into an English textbook being printed by Harper Collins India, while an organisation in Himachal Pradesh has

translated 22 stories into Tibetan, to print, and sell locally. Even further, the Association of Science Technology & Innovation, Malaysia, has printed 32,000 copies of 10 books on STEM topics for their children.

Content from StoryWeaver is being shared across platforms like International Children's Digital Library, WorldReader, African Storybook Project and FreeKidsBooks, creating a ripple effect and reaching more children.

A single English story, It's All the Cat's Fault, has been translated on StoryWeaver no less than 45 times – into 27 languages. Its illustrations have been reimagined and repurposed to create 12 new, and different, stories. This is the true possibility of StoryWeaver, and the opportunity of social publishing. When people key in [www.storyweaver.org.in](http://www.storyweaver.org.in), they become part of a larger culture of people who create, read, and use the stories. Together, we will create an ever growing world of joyful stories that bring us closer to our mission of 'a book in every child's hand'.

### **Missed Call Do, Kahaani Suno!**

While many of the stories have made their way onto mobile phones, it took a really special campaign to deliver the joy of listening to a Pratham Books story via a missed call. Children calling a number would receive a call back, and have the opportunity to listen to a free audio story in Hindi or English. This was followed by an automated text message with a link to the story on StoryWeaver, so that the child could take the step from listening to the story to reading it for herself. Once on StoryWeaver, she could discover more stories to draw her further in to the world of reading.

In just five days, 7000 children made 37,000 missed calls. That's 37,000 stories finding listeners and readers.





# Building libraries for the children who need them.

## Donate-a-Book

Technology opened up another brilliant bridge between children who wished to read, and the people who would help them. Donate-a-Book, [www.donateabook.org.in](http://www.donateabook.org.in), is a simple and powerful crowd-funding platform for organisations in need of children's books.

Its effectiveness lies in its utter simplicity of use. All an organisation – non-profit, school, or reading group – has to do is create an appeal for the reading resources they need. They pick the language, and the books they need. The platform harnesses the power of social media and crowd funding to showcase their work, and raise funds for the books.

The platform is designed so that 100% of the funds are used for the books. Not a single paisa goes towards administrative fees. In fact, even if

an organisation does not meet the target it desires, it still receives books for the amount it raises.

Donate-a-Book has helped organisations across India kick start their reading programs by building libraries in Indian languages that encourage children to read. In rural Tamil Nadu, Lakshmi Subramanian, a volunteer in a hostel, helped set up a library for the girls of the Irula tribe who studied there. In the tiny village of Kolwadi, in Maharashtra, St. Thomas English Medium School campaigned for books for a reading program, so that their children would read more than just textbooks. They reached their target in just three days, and even managed to set up a library for children from nearby communities. In Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu, Banu Priya Jagadeesan raised funds for books for a library she ran – while doing so, she saw a campaign from Satya Special School in Puducherry, and was so moved by their work that she now volunteers with them too.

This platform won us the Publishing Innovation of the Year Award 2015 at the Publishing Next conference, for – in their words – “its ability to successfully leverage crowdsourcing and social media towards achieving its goal, as well as for an innovative

initiative that demonstrates a commitment to children's books, both in Indian languages and English.” But what has made us just as proud are these responses:

*“We cannot thank you enough for creating this platform. We would not have been able to raise this amount for the specific goal of ordering these books without the platform. Built into the platform was a campaign that allowed us to efficiently communicate our work, goals and needs with people who prior to this had no way of knowing we existed. Acquaintances of acquaintances donated to us through the platform you created because it was an efficient way for them to donate. It's been a wonderful experience”.*

Mridula Koshy, Deepalaya Library

*“We are glad to partner with Pratham Books in helping our children to inculcate the reading habit. We hope that these books will be the key for them to open up new dimensions and explore the world. With this support, we can divert other funding that we get to meet other critical needs of our project”.*

Vinod Hari, Isha Vidhya

Donate-a-Book has raised funds for and distributed 49,000 books

Helped 139 schools and organisations

Helped set up 300+ libraries

Impacted 1,11,00 children

Across 71+ towns and cities

Enabled 1,042 unique donors to contribute

*“I donated using Donate-a-Book because many people I trust on Twitter trusted Pratham Books and the #donateabook initiative. I also noticed that the professionalism with which the donations are handled is better than most crowd funding projects. I could also relate to the real life problems that Donate-a-Book was trying to solve. After all, my first best friend was Sherlock Holmes”.*

Avinash Narayanan, a donor from Hyderabad

*“Donate-a-Book is a brilliant campaign, which will take Pratham Books a few steps closer to achieving their noble mission of putting a book in every child's hand. It is an innovative, inclusive campaign which also allows donors to select a campaign they most relate to and donate as little as Rs 100 to help a child. This diversity and flexibility makes it my campaign of choice. That this campaign is led by the incredible team at Pratham Books whose admirable work I have followed for years only made it even more compelling to support”.*

Surekha Pillai, a donor from New Delhi



## Creating hundreds of stories for thousands of readers.

While technology has carved a path for us to reach more readers in search of stories, our guiding light for content continues to be our mission statement itself of 'a book in every child's hand'. As a result, we published a very wide range of titles, several digital-first non-fiction books, and we also developed an Early Reading package of 55 books and story cards that children returning to school could enjoy. The set of books in Hindi was developed in close consultation with colleagues in Pratham and was readied in a span of two months in the summer so that children coming to school in July would come back to classrooms livened by colourful books and cards. The package made optimal use of material and resources at hand. There were wordless cards in various formats, books developed on existing illustrations and books that were re-purposed for this package. There was an enthusiastic response to the hard work as we received field reports on the usage of the material.

We published a total of 60 titles in different languages, which adds up to 480 books. Eight of

these titles were originally written in an Indian language. It gives us great pride to add that the entire subcontinent found representation on our book list – *Brahmaputra Diary*, a spectacular photographic book was written by a Bangladeshi activist on the river Brahmaputra. Urdu, the language with deep subcontinental affinities graced our list with many original titles. *Badshahi Park*, written by a well-known author is a mystery with a touch of the supernatural, very much in keeping with the tradition of Urdu *afsanas* and is a very special addition to our list. People's struggles to save their forests, such as Chipko in India, were introduced to children through the medium of a story in *Chipko Takes Root*. These tales are sure to find a resonance across the region.

One of the least-served sections in children's publishing is the need for simple, informative books introducing concepts of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). So, we released a set of 20 digital-first non-fiction titles that would not just inform, but also inspire curiosity in a child's mind. *How Far is Far* helped

We published a very wide range of titles, several digital-first non-fiction books, and we also developed an Early Reading package of 55 books and story cards that children returning to school could enjoy.

estimate distances, *Bonda and Devi* came from a future world inhabited by robots, *The Fascinating Fibonacci* explored the mysteries of the Fibonacci series, and *Dum Dum-a-Dum Biryani* delved into simple math calculations. Each of the books included activity ideas for classrooms. Equally fresh was a set of books on environmental subjects – *Jadav and the Tree-Place* transported readers into the life of Jadav 'Molai' Payeng, the Forest Man of India. *Up World, Down World* dived into the rich biodiversity of canopy forests. And *Dive* took its readers on an underwater adventure to a coral reef.

Finally, we added books that would develop emotional intelligence among children. *A Helping Hand* contained the idea of accepting differences, while *Reethi and Meethu* explored the notion

of freedom. Our favourite characters came back on our title list with new adventures in *Pehelwan ji Learns a Slippery Lesson*, *Sringeri Srinivas Learns to Laugh* and in the *Kallu's World* series.

In addition to its publication program, Pratham Books held several workshops and events to bring greater focus on children's literature. In Pune, Bangalore, and Delhi sessions, we called upon translators in eight languages to share their concerns, difficulties, and perspectives on translating for children. In Delhi and Srinagar, we spoke to Urdu authors, while at an Urdu symposium in Mumbai, we engaged with writers, theatre people, and opinion makers about the importance of children's literature in preserving language.



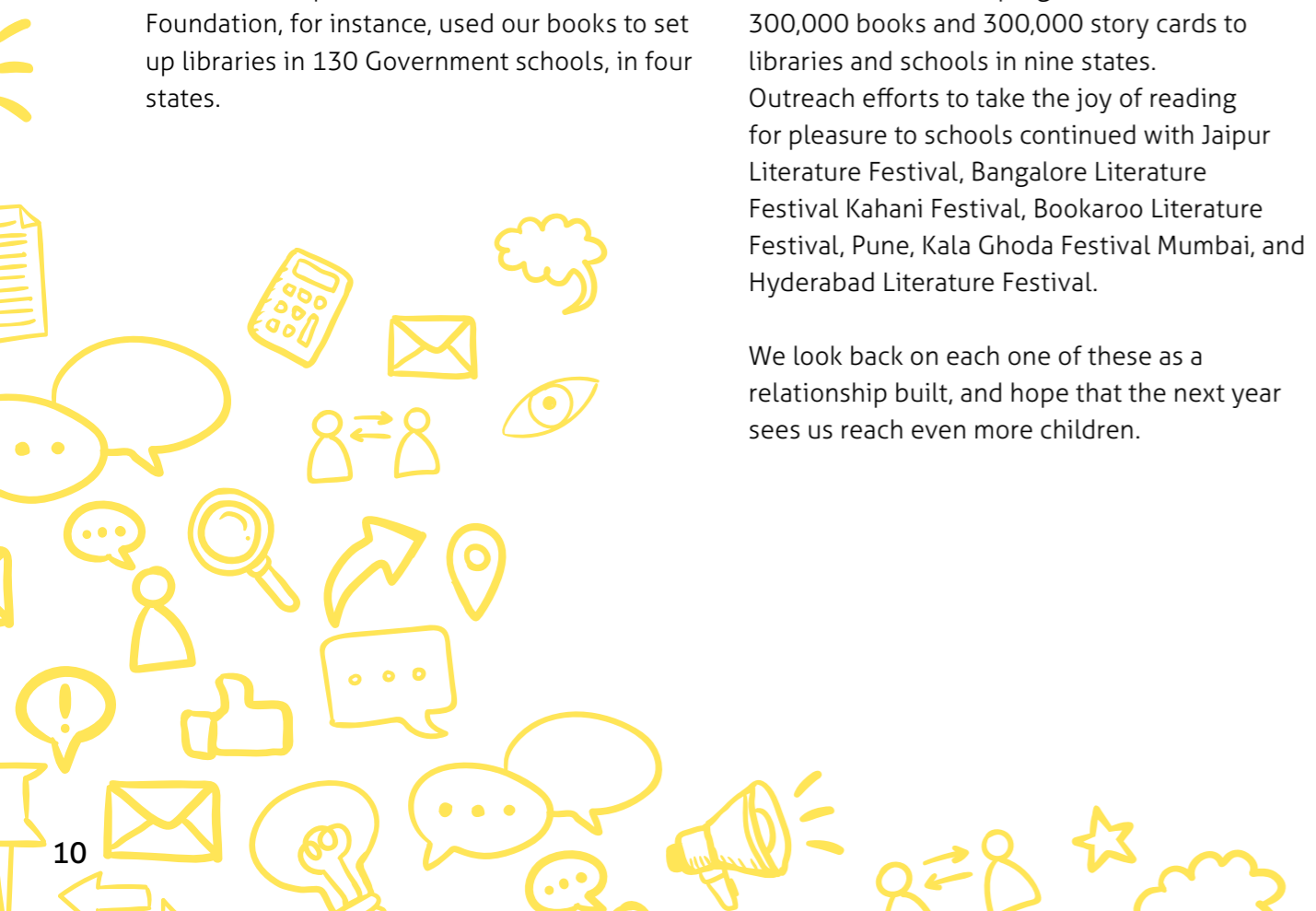
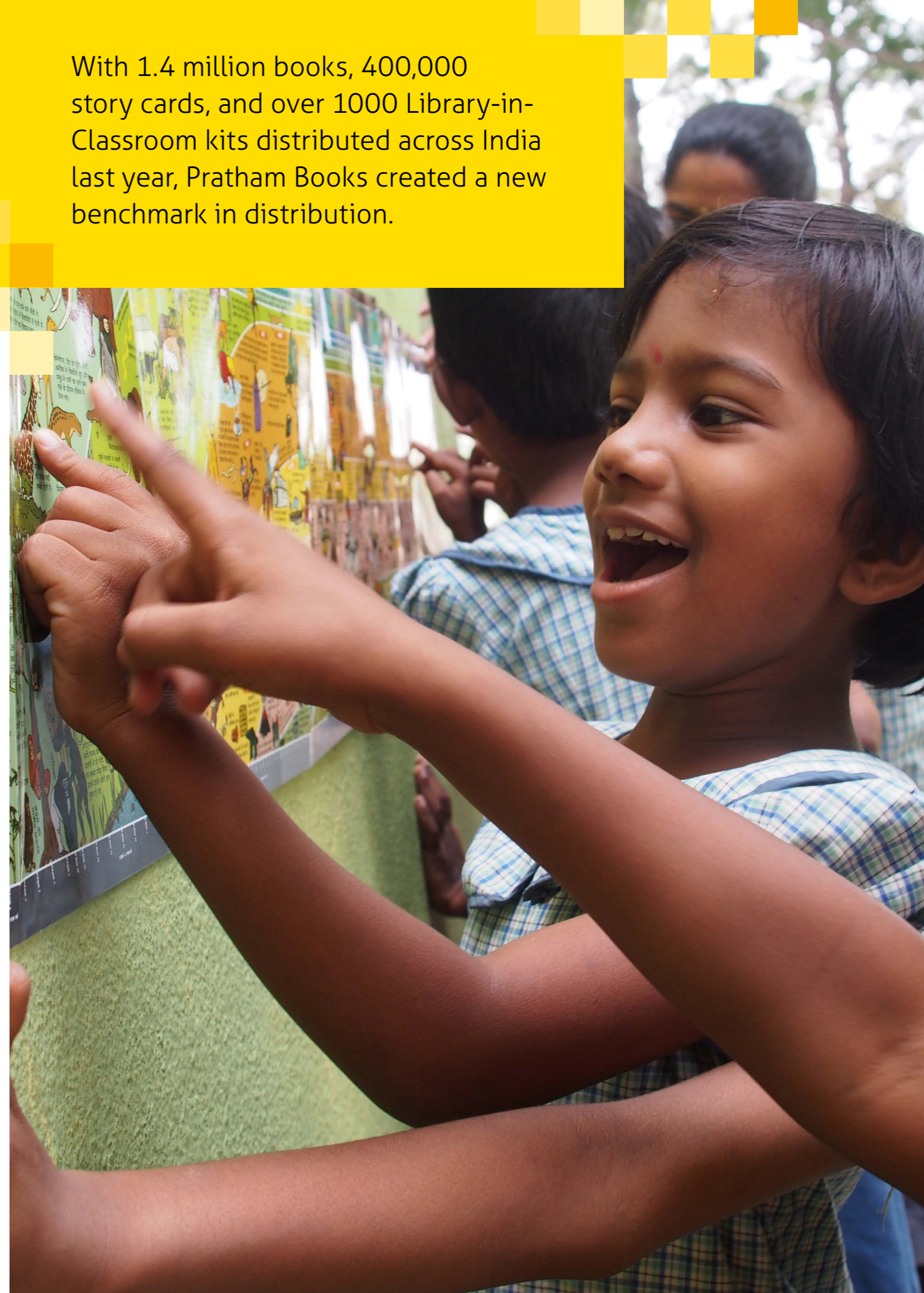
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## Building Relationships, One Story at a Time.

With 1.4 million books, 400,000 story cards, and over a thousand Library-in-Classroom kits distributed across India last year, Pratham Books created a new benchmark in distribution. Our efforts were supported by our longtime large institutional buyers, like Pratham, Akshara, and Hippocampus, while others, including Room to Read, WNS Cares Foundation, and Swades Foundation scaled up their projects, and drew further upon our resources. WNS Cares Foundation, for instance, used our books to set up libraries in 130 Government schools, in four states.

In addition, Educate Girls provided Library-in-Classroom kits to over a hundred locations in Rajasthan, while books were distributed in Urdu and English in Ladakh with support from Team Everest. UNICEF in West Bengal chose 9 of our titles for a pilot distribution to anganwadi centers in Bishnupur district and we held successful community book fairs in Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi and Mumbai. Finally, the Pratham Early Childhood Education program distributed 300,000 books and 300,000 story cards to libraries and schools in nine states. Outreach efforts to take the joy of reading for pleasure to schools continued with Jaipur Literature Festival, Bangalore Literature Festival, Kahani Festival, Bookaroo Literature Festival, Pune, Kala Ghoda Festival Mumbai, and Hyderabad Literature Festival.

We look back on each one of these as a relationship built, and hope that the next year sees us reach even more children.





Varied themes and different days helped create a memorable year for young readers: Summer Reads, World Book Day, Biodiversity Reads, Environment Day, and World Wildlife Day Reads were just a few.



Pratham Books has long discovered that social media channels have greatly helped us to grow a community of influencers of reading – parents, teachers, writers, translators, and illustrators alike. This year, we plugged into Instagram too!

Our social media presence also helped spread the word about StoryWeaver, as well as acted as a guide to many first-time users of Donate-a-Book. Here are some of our favourite campaigns:

**What's today?**

Varied themes on different days helped create a memorable year for young readers: Summer Reads, World Book Day, Biodiversity Reads, Environment Day, and World Wildlife Day Reads were just a few.

**The creative crowd!**

Read to Play, a part of the Summer Reads campaign, invited readers to read free books, and create a menu of accompanying activities. Our efforts in crowdsourcing led to the creation of richly enjoyable resources for the books.



# Connecting a Community that Supports Reading.

**We are the Champions!**

One Day, One Story entered its fourth year on the back of over 2500 Pratham Books Champions. This year, they shared *The Boy and The Drum*, created by Umesh PN and Rajiv Eipe. Written by an experienced teacher of theatre, it is a folktale about kindness, and a whole new way of 'reading' a book. Champions sang, danced, acted and took the book to thousands of children through multiple storytelling sessions across India. On another note, the #PBChamps project was a finalist (Community Mobilization category) at the Social Media for Empowerment Awards.

**Twice the celebration**

The Pratham Books blog celebrated International Mother Language Day for two whole days, with blog posts sharing thoughts and ideas about language, memory, and more. From personal narratives, to closely held childhood stories, we heard a wealth of widely diverse viewpoints.

**Weave-a-Story**

StoryWeaver was launched with the Weave-a-Story campaign where 8 enchanting original stories written by some of India's best known children's authors were shared with the community to help create new versions and translations. The collaborative spirit of the community helped these 8 stories multiply to 113, of which 89 were in Indian languages.

**Wonder Why Week**

A week long celebration of curiosity was launched on National Science Day (February 28th, 2015) to spread awareness and share the new digital-first books based on STEM themes, and included interviews with authors and editors, and the sharing of resources and activities with educators and parents.

**Helping India's Children Read!**

The Donate-a-Book platform depends heavily on the power of 'social'. Campaigns like Donate-a-thon, Freedom to Read and International Book Giving Day helped add many books to libraries across India.







# Thank you

## to our Donors and Supporters

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Rameshwar Amruth  
Ramraj Ramesh  
Ramya Ravichandran  
Ranjan Varma  
Ranjeet Adkar  
Ranjith Nair  
Ranjith Raghavan  
Ranjith Thiru  
Rashmi Menon  
Rashmi Nair  
Ratnil Shrivastava  
Ravi Kumar  
Ravi Shah  
Ravi Ramadoss D  
Reema Chourey  
Rekha Mital  
Renjith GR  
Renuka And Abhinav  
Reuben Dsouza  
Revati Deshmukh  
Ria Banerji  
Rishabh Deora

Rishabh Kashyap  
Rishabh Malhotra  
Ritika Biswas  
Rohan Chawla  
Rohini Joseph  
Roopkamalkaur Sandhu  
Roshan Kambale  
Rubin Kumar  
Ruchi Kaushal  
Ruchir Mishra  
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Rumana Hussain  
Rupesh Vats  
Saadhika Syal  
Sabiha Taskin  
Sabyasachi Das  
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Safeena Husain  
Sai Harshad Y  
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Sakthi Raj  
Salil Bijur  
Salonee Pareek  
Sambit Dash  
Sameer Rastogi  
Samil Rajput  
Sandeep Goud  
Sandip Kotecha  
Sandip Mundhada  
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Sangeetha Kolasamy  
Sangeetha Ramaswamy  
Sangita Agarwal  
Sanjay Barapatre  
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Santosh Kanbargi  
Saptarni Chakraborty  
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Sarang Norway  
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Sathyanarayanan Srinivasan  
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Saurabh Sethi  
Save2 Help  
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Senthilmathi Mathi  
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Shivakumar Surendra  
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Shobana Shankar  
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Shreyasi Bose  
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Sahas Manjunath

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Sukanya Mukherjee  
Sukeerthi Varadarajan  
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Suman Bhattacharjea  
Sumit Yadav  
Sumita Kale  
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Sundaresan Varadarajan  
Sunil Goyal  
Supriya Srinivasan  
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Viveksagar Krishnamurthy Radhakrishna  
Vrinda Maheshwari  
Vysakh V K  
Yashwant Rathore  
Yashwant Vani  
Zamir Arif

## Balance sheet as at March 31, 2016

(Amount in Rupees)

Particulars	Sch No.	As at March 31, 2015 Amount	As at March 31, 2016 Amount
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Corpus Fund	1	208,11,533	212,08,711
Specified Fund	2	50,05,538	104,70,854
Current Liabilities	3	99,82,515	42,34,610
Provisions	4	61,105	13,278
Other advances	5	5,82,397	35,26,620
<b>Total</b>		<b>364,43,088</b>	<b>394,54,074</b>
<b>Assets</b>			
Fixed Assets	6	14,01,624	13,82,072
Deposits	7	77,20,202	236,00,109
Debtors	8	69,07,756	31,34,825
Loans and advances	9	5,42,270	3,44,220
Stock of Books		56,74,319	48,29,888
Cash in Hand		7,636	13,595
Cash at Bank	10	137,62,009	56,67,579
Deferred Development Expenses	11	2,26,971	3,29,376
Other Current Assets	12	2,00,300	1,52,410
<b>Total</b>		<b>364,43,088</b>	<b>394,54,074</b>
Significant Accounting Policies and notes to accounts	29		

## Income & Expenditure for the year ended March 31, 2016

(Amount in Rupees)

Particulars	Sch No.	Year ended March 31, 2016 Amount	Year ended March 31, 2016 Amount
<b>Income</b>			
Sale of Books	13	370,00,991	364,12,923
Donations received	14	53,68,381	108,21,710
Other Income	15	35,75,751	34,65,380
Income from Funds	16	79,89,349	28,27,659
<b>Total (A)</b>		<b>539,34,472</b>	<b>535,27,672</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Book Development Expenses	17	246,31,278	218,02,971
Selling & Administrative Expenses	18	99,88,838	93,72,847
Staff Expenses	19	103,24,013	105,80,995
Promotional Expenses	20	8,84,019	3,66,851
Depreciation	6	5,14,153	4,24,044
Fund Expenditure	21	134,54,666	115,83,967
<b>Total (B)</b>		<b>597,96,967</b>	<b>541,31,675</b>
<b>Excess of Income over expenditure (A-B)</b>		(58,62,495)	(6,04,003)
<b>Add:</b>			
<b>Opening Balance in Funds</b>			
Opening Balance in Corpus Fund		212,08,711	130,56,406
Opening Balance in Specified Fund		104,70,855	192,27,163
<b>Balance of Funds after appropriations</b>			
Corpus Fund		208,11,533	212,08,711
Specified Fund		50,05,538	104,70,855
<b>Total balance in Funds</b>		<b>258,17,071</b>	<b>316,79,566</b>
Significant Accounting Policies and notes to accounts	29		

for Pratham Books



Sriram R  
Trustee

Bengaluru  
August 29, 2016



Ashok R Kamath  
Trustee

As per our report of even date  
for Singhvi, Dev & Unni  
Chartered Accountants  
Firm Reg No 003867S



S Ranganath  
Partner  
Membership No. 201191

Bengaluru  
August 29, 2016

for Pratham Books



Sriram R  
Trustee

Bengaluru  
August 29, 2016



Ashok R Kamath  
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Chartered Accountants  
Firm Reg No 003867S



S Ranganath  
Partner  
Membership No. 201191

Bengaluru  
August 29, 2016

Receipts and Payments account for the year ended March 31, 2016

(Amount in Rupees)

Particulars	Sch no.	Year ended March 31, 2015 Amount	Year ended March 31, 2015 Amount
<b>Receipts</b>			
Balance brought forward			
- Cash on hand		13,595	42,304
- Cash at bank		56,67,579	53,29,564
Sale of books	22	318,55,198	405,98,293
Donations	23	53,68,381	108,21,710
Other Income	24	18,12,513	21,46,367
Sale of Fixed Assets		21,050	50,282
Specified Funds	25	79,89,349	28,27,659
Fixed Deposits - Withdrawn		193,18,972	43,83,374
Professional Fees-Recovered		2,50,000	-
Income Tax Refund - Received (TDS)		-	1,16,130
<b>Total</b>		<b>722,96,637</b>	<b>663,15,683</b>
<b>Payments</b>			
Book Development Expenses	26	199,96,067	215,50,552
Selling, Administrative and Promotional Expenses	27	104,84,663	99,53,900
Staff Expenses		103,24,013	105,80,995
Fund Expenditure	28	136,74,100	114,75,197
Fixed Assets Purchased		5,54,754	6,28,226
Fixed Deposits		34,39,065	64,45,639
Advance Tax Paid- AY 2012-13		54,329	-
Balance carried forward			
- Cash on hand		7,636	13,595
- Cash at bank		137,62,009	56,67,579
<b>Total</b>		<b>722,96,637</b>	<b>663,15,683</b>
Significant Accounting Policies and notes to accounts	29		



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 Mr. Ashok Kamath Trustee  
 Ms. Rekha M Menon Trustee  
 Ms. Kanchan Bannerjee Trustee  
 Prof. M.S. Sriram Trustee  
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 Mr. Srikanth Nadhamuni Trustee

**Advisory Board**  
 Ms. Rukmini Banerji  
 Ms. K.R. Usha  
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 Ms. Vinita Bali  
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for Pratham Books



Sriram R  
Trustee

Bengaluru  
August 29, 2016



Ashok R Kamath  
Trustee

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Membership No. 201191

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