

## **Pratham Books StoryWeaver selected as a finalist for the Qatar Foundation's 2020 WISE Awards for innovation in bridging urgent global education challenges**

**Doha/Bengaluru/Delhi – May 5, 2020:** StoryWeaver, an initiative of Pratham Books, a not-for-profit children's book publisher, has been selected by the Qatar Foundation's flagship education initiative, WISE, as a finalist for the 2020 WISE Awards. Each year, the WISE Awards recognize and promote innovative and impactful projects from around the world that are addressing today's most pressing global educational challenges.

The 15 WISE Awards finalists come from 10 countries and were selected from a pool of 625 submissions evaluated according to strict criteria. Selected projects needed to be established, innovative educational projects that have already demonstrated a transformative impact on individuals, communities, and society in their context. They also needed to be financially stable, have a clear development plan, and be scalable and replicable.

StoryWeaver ([www.storyweaver.org.in](http://www.storyweaver.org.in)) is a digital platform that addresses the global book gap by providing open and free access to quality storybooks in multiple languages to promote reading acquisition among children. At the platform's core, is a repository of high-quality, openly licensed, multilingual storybooks from Pratham Books and other reputed publishers. While the platform is digital, the books are available in multiple formats to overcome the issue of digital access and can be read online, offline, or downloaded and printed. StoryWeaver has also embedded simple tools on the platform that allow users to further translate and version the books for localized requirements. This has led to a massive increase of over 2200% in the availability of local language books. StoryWeaver was launched in 2015 with 800 storybooks in 24 languages. Today it provides access to more than 20,000 books in 238 languages, to readers from all around the world.

Suzanne Singh, Chairperson of Pratham Books, says: "StoryWeaver's vision is to massively scale the creation and distribution of reading resources for children in mother tongue languages. Our endeavor is to address the global scarcity of books for children and arm every child with the power of knowledge and opportunity. By providing access to thousands of storybooks, the platform has enabled educators to make classrooms more engaging, libraries more diverse and most importantly, make learning fun for children. With StoryWeaver, we have opened up a new pathway to nurture a generation of readers."

StoryWeaver has seen a huge global uptick in usage as a result of children being at home due to forced school closures as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. As education systems are adapting to remote learning as a solution during this time, StoryWeaver is providing open access to a large repository of quality content that is being used widely.

Stavros N. Yiannouka, CEO of WISE, says: "Our world is experiencing a crisis that is affecting all facets of our lives. Education is no exception, and indeed the need for innovation is all the more urgent because of the systemic shortcomings that the crisis has exposed. In this context, the work celebrated by the WISE Awards is critically important. Each of the 2020 WISE Awards finalists has built an effective, tested solution to a global educational

challenge. Whether ensuring access to fundamental early childhood education or imparting valuable entrepreneurship and financial literacy skills, each project is already transforming lives, and provides an inspirational model for others to emulate. As we look forward to recognising this year's WISE Awards winners it is imperative that policymakers and civil society leaders around the world seriously address the need to bring some of these innovations to scale."

The WISE Awards winning projects will be announced in October 2020 and celebrated at a WISE event. In addition to publicity and networking opportunities, each project will receive \$20,000 (US).

---

### **About StoryWeaver**

StoryWeaver ([www.storyweaver.org.in](http://www.storyweaver.org.in)) is an open source digital platform of multilingual children's storybooks from Pratham Books. On StoryWeaver users can read, create, translate, download, print and share stories for free! By creating a collaborative framework where the creators and consumers of children's content can interact with one another, StoryWeaver attempts to address the scarcity of books for children. StoryWeaver was launched in 2015 with 800 books in 24 languages. Today, the platform offers over 20,000 books in 238 languages.

### **About Pratham Books**

Pratham Books ([www.prathambooks.org](http://www.prathambooks.org)) is a not-for-profit children's book publisher founded in 2004 with the mission to see 'a book in every child's hand'. Its key objective is to publish good quality, affordable storybooks in multiple languages to support reading acquisition among children.

### **About the WISE Awards**

Each year, the WISE Awards recognize and promote six successful innovative projects that are addressing global educational challenges. Since 2009, WISE has received more than 4,200 applications from over 150 countries. Up until now, 66 projects have won the WISE Awards, from a wide variety of sectors and locations for their innovative character, their positive contribution and their potential for scalability and adaptability. These projects represent a growing resource of expertise and sound educational practice. Year by year, WISE is building a community of educational innovators which offers a fertile environment for ground-breaking collaborations. Today the WISE Awards network comprises pioneering projects that are helping bring real change to societies and communities. For further information, visit: [www.wise-qatar.org/wise-works/wise-awards](http://www.wise-qatar.org/wise-works/wise-awards)

### **About WISE**

WISE was established by Qatar Foundation in 2009 under the leadership of its Chairperson, Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser. WISE is an international, multi-sectoral platform for creative, evidence-based thinking, debate, and purposeful action in education. Through the biennial summit, collaborative research and a range of on-going programs, WISE is a global reference in new approaches to education. For further information about WISE, visit [www.wise-qatar.org](http://www.wise-qatar.org)

---