

MISSION MILLION BOOKS

Impact Report: 2019



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LETTER FROM OUR TRUSTEE

My father founded Ratna Nidhi 25 years ago with the purpose of uplifting underserved children in the city of Mumbai. This dream to make sure that these children and communities have access to a better life, has helped us scale his dream through the years. From a small family trust working for children, we have grown into an organization that has branched out its work in the area of Healthcare and Education.

Our daily lives are filled with constant movement, noise and flashing lights that bombard our senses. Books are an oasis in times like these. When we read, we read in silence and the black print on white pages provide a much-needed break to our eyes and brain. Books are the windows to the world outside, and when we read a book, we engage in dialogues with some of the greatest minds that the world has seen. How else would we speak with Einstein, Mahatma Gandhi or Abraham Lincoln?

Schools these days have massive cupboards, but many are lying empty. Those same cupboards could be filled with educational books and resources to enrich the minds of the youth of our country. We are donating books to help these schools fill these cupboards with

the best of educational books and starting libraries. It is surely possible that these school libraries will one day ignite our children to be the next Elon Musk, Isaac Newton or Steve Jobs.

We are thankful to thousands of parents, children and companies who have donated their much-loved books to us and everyone that has helped us inch one step closer to our mission. When we hear from our intervention areas that numerous schools in India who now have a library for their children because of the books we have donated, we know we are changing lives and, in that process, becoming catalysts for change. By giving and sharing with others we are creating future resources. I hope that this program will ignite hope and aspiration for many to dream and look ahead in their lives. We look forward to your participation in our Mission Million Books program.

Rajiv Mehta

Trustee

Ratna Nidhi Charitable Trust

TEAM

Trustees

Rajiv Mahendra Mehta

Asha Mahendra Mehta

Advisory Board

Nitin Khanapurkar

Dr Ravi Bhallamudi

Ashok J. Kothari

Team

Priti Mehta

Ragini Parmar

Richika Padubidri

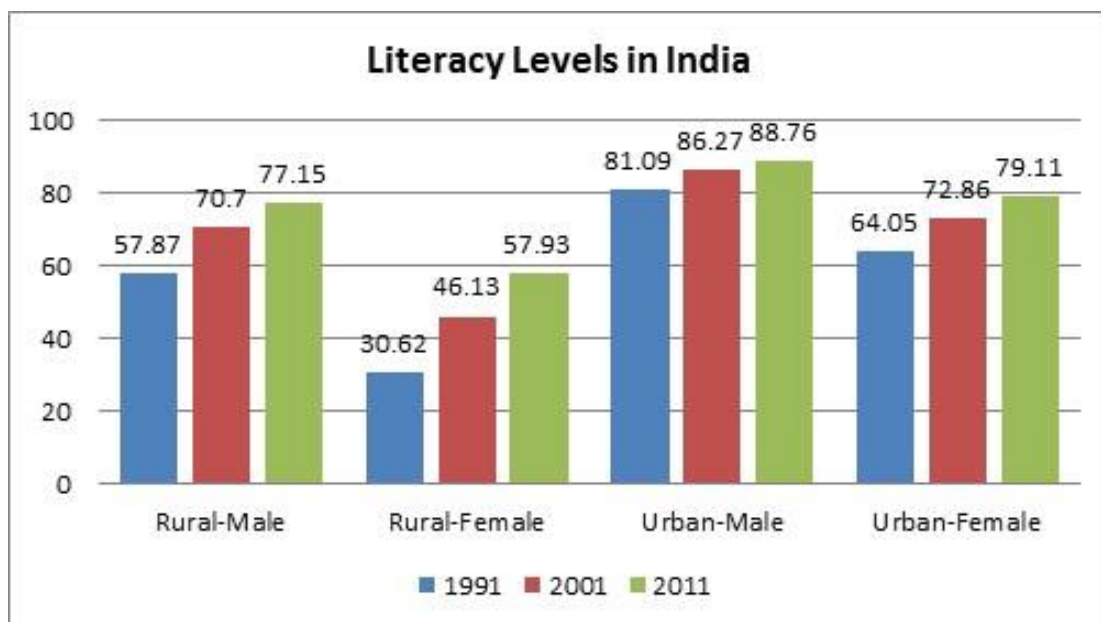
Anushka Desai

Meenakshi Mulge

THE NEED

Access to Quality Education is not Equal

India is stream rolling her way into development, but illiteracy continues to plague a large section of the society. The [7th All India Education Survey](#) shows that at least 35 million children aged 6 - 14 years do not attend school and a major reason for that is the high cost of private education and the need to work to support their families. Student dropout rates increase alarmingly in class III to V, its 50% for boys, 58% for girls.

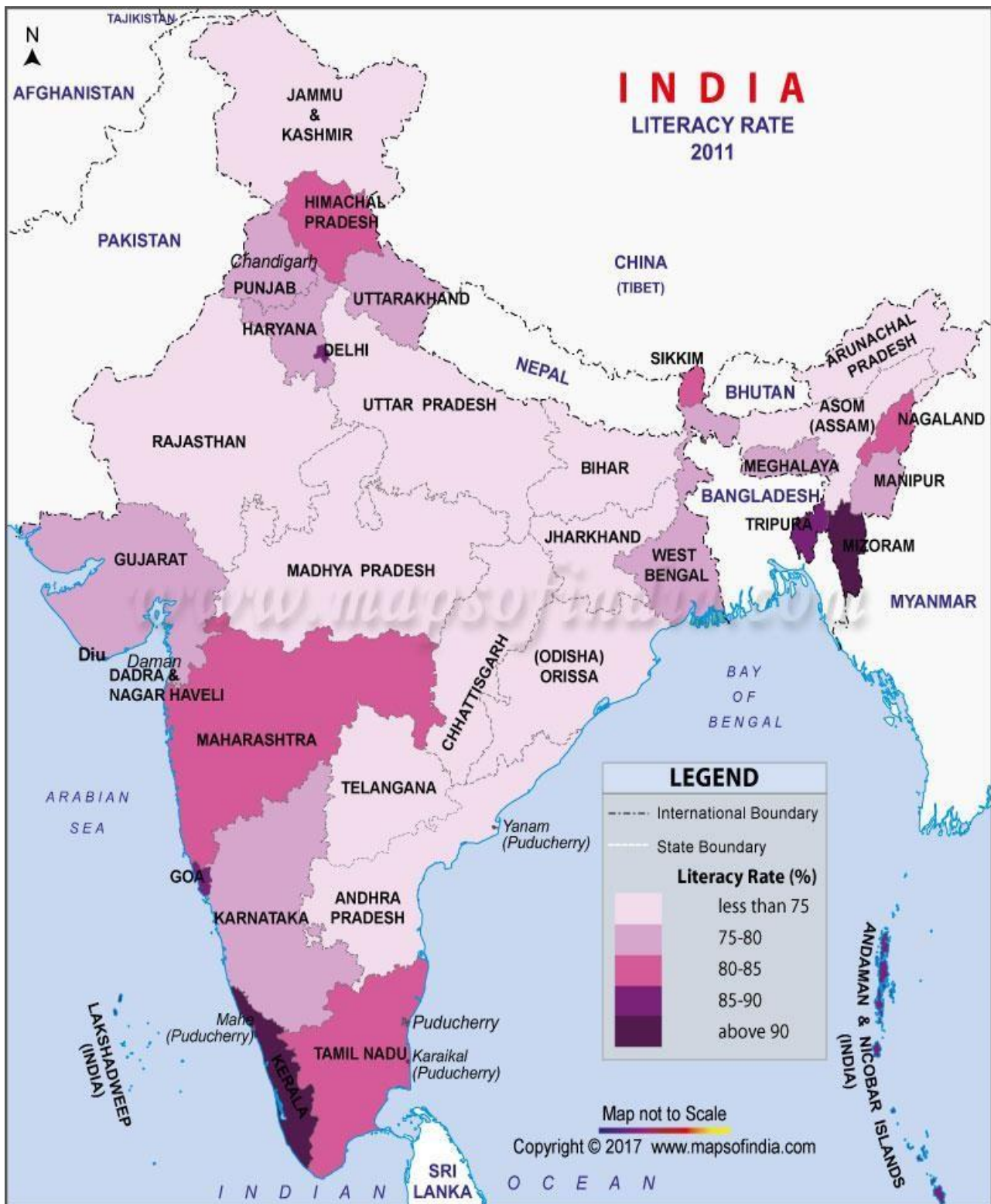


Graphical representation of literacy levels in India

A crucial factor in receiving a good education is access to books. Other than providing knowledge, books play a crucial role in developing better vocabulary, emotional intelligence, imagination, fostering natural curiosity, and improving attention span and focus.

Education is the most important component of various components of social infrastructure. Students that are well-educated and eventually receive proper training, can accelerate the pace of economic development.

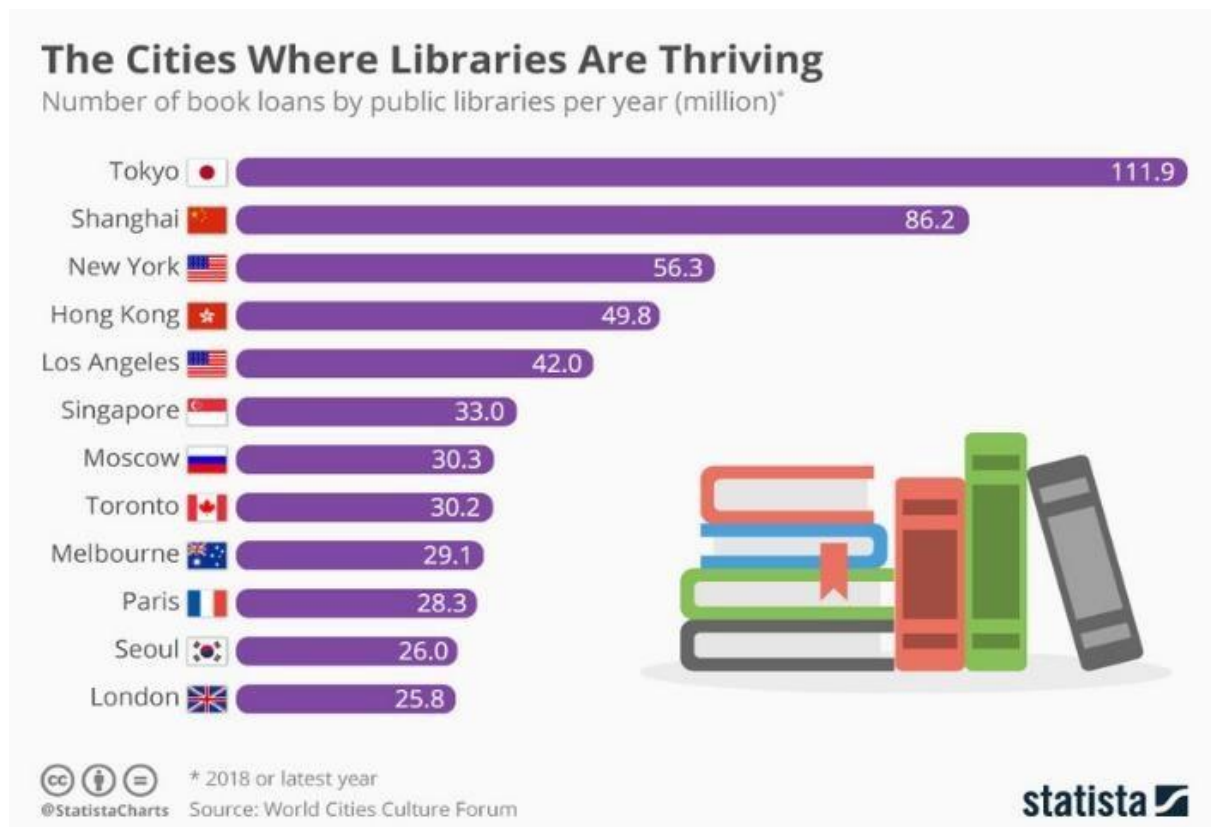
The stark socio-economic disparity in our country can be witnessed when we observe various children's access to quality education and educational supplies. Most children do not have access to good quality educational books. Noticing this gap, Ratna Nidhi Charitable Trust started the 'Mission Million Books' program, wherein we aim to donate 1 million books to low-income schools and colleges. Through this program, we are attempting to give multiple children access to good quality educational aids.



Literacy Rate in India, Census 2011

MISSION MILLION BOOKS

India is the land of the Vedas, Upanishads and the Puranas. Yet, a study by [The World Cities Culture Forum](#) shows that no Indian city is in the top 35 cities for the number of books loaned by public libraries. This brings forth the concern that readership statistics are deteriorating in India. In India, many students from disadvantaged sections are forced to go through their entire educational journey without having access to quality books due to the problem of accessibility.



Observing this gap, Ratna Nidhi started the 'Mission Million Books' program, a pan-India initiative aimed at providing the underserved with access to quality educational material for their growth and advancement. We are aiming to educate young India by cultivating reading habits among children and provides access to quality reading material. Our goal is to distribute 1 million books across Indian schools and colleges.



So far, we have donated over 8 lakh books to schools and colleges all over Maharashtra. Multiple renowned organisations such as The World Bank Family Network, Alibaba Group, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Rotary Literacy Mission, Gov. of Maharashtra and Crossword have partnered with us over the years to help make this program a success.

1 Exhibitions

Ratna Nidhi has organised four book exhibitions accross Maharashtra.



2 Direct dispatches to institutions

Ratna Nidhi dispatches books to disadvantaged schools and colleges pan-India

3 Open Library in Mumbai

Ratna Nidhi's open library in Mumbai acts as a central library for various schools and colleges



4 Library on Wheels

Ratna Nidhi in association with ACC Trust has started a mobile library in Chandrapur, Maharashtra

5 Open Libraries across Maharashtra

Ratna Nidhi is starting open libraries in various districts



6 Readership development

Ratna Nidhi is starting book clubs to develop readership skills in students

Various verticals under the Mission Million Books program

EXHIBITIONS

Mission Million Books: Exhibition 1

The first book exhibition was organized on 29th & 30th September 2016. The event commenced with an inauguration ceremony, attended by Mr Guru Gowrappan, Global MD, Alibaba Group, Mr Rajiv Mehta, Chairman, Ratna Nidhi Charitable Trust, Mohan Shenoi, Chief Operating Officer (COO), Kotak Mahindra Bank, Sandee Barasia, Managing Director, Delivery, Ashok Kothari, Chairman - Trustee, Nava Samaj Mandal, Deepak Goyal, Chief Operating Officer (COO), Mgage, Kinjal Shah, CEO, Crossword and Vinay Bhartiya, Senior Vice President, Strategic Partnerships, Alibaha.com (India). The need for improving access to education through Mission Million Books was echoed by all the partners on the dais. The exhibition saw a rich repository of books in Science, Maths, History, Geography, Liberal Arts, Computers, Encyclopaedias, Dictionaries, Fiction and Non-fiction books. 1,05,000 books were **donated to 535 schools** and colleges from Mumbai, Purse, Thane, Raigad, Kolhapur and Aurangabad. We also donated 25,000 notebooks.



Mission Million Books: Exhibition 2

The Second Exhibition was organized at Baramati at the prestigious Vidya Pratishthan Institute on 26th and 27th March 2017. It was inaugurated by Shri Sharad Pawar, Honorable MP & President, Vidya Pratishthan. With a sprawling campus of 156 acres, the Pratishthan houses 25 Institutions, where more than 23,000 students are nurtured daily. A month-long campaign ensured over **52,000 books were displayed** at the exhibition. 51,000 books were donated to 1104 schools and colleges at Baramati over two days. The exhibition saw a rich repository of books in Science, Maths, History, Geography, Liberal Arts, Computers, Encyclopedias, Dictionaries, Marathi books, Fiction and Non-Fiction.



"Thank you, Shri Rajiv Mehta of Ratna Nidhi Trust, for distributing over 50000 books to over 850 schools, colleges in Baramati & Pune. Also, Thank you to Mr.Chris Wang, Country Head, Alibaba India, Kotak & Crosswords for the social initiative of Educating Young India"

- Shri Sharad Pawar

Hon'ble Member of Parliament & President, Vidya Pratishthan

Mission Million Books: Exhibition 3

The third exhibition was organized at the prestigious Rayat Shikshan Sanstha, Satara on 8th and 9th July 2017. Over 50,000 books were donated to 472 educational institutions at Satara. The exhibition saw a rich repository of books in Science, Maths, History, Geography, Liberal Arts, Computers, Encyclopaedias, Dictionaries, Marathi books, Fiction and Nonfiction books.



Mission Million Books: Exhibition 4

On 22nd April 2018, we had our 4th MMB Exhibition in Mumbai. Through the exhibition, we donated 3.6 lakh educational books to 1000 low-income schools and colleges in Maharashtra. The World Bank Family Network Book Project donated 40,000 educational books for this exhibition. The exhibition was inaugurated by Ms Swaroop Sampat (Chief Guest), Actor & Educationist; Mr. Vinay Bhartia, Senior, Vice President, Strategic Partnership, Alibaba Group; Mr. Rajiv Mehta, Trustee, Ratna Nidhi Charitable Trust; Mr. Ramnath Subramaniam, CEO, Maharashtra Village Social Transformation Foundation & Mr. Ashok Kothari, Trustee, Nava Samajh Mandal.

OPEN LIBRARY

With receiving a steady influx of book donations, in 2018, the Ratna Nidhi team came up with the concept of starting an open library in their premises. Since then, schools and colleges come to the open library every day and take back anything between 5 to 150 books for their own libraries. Our open Library at Mumbai houses more than **50,000 educational books** and is open yearlong to low-income schools/institutes, providing them with the freedom to select and avail their choice of books, free of cost. The library has a plethora of books of various genres. You can find anything from fictional romances to mechanical engineering textbooks. Seeing the merit of this concept, the Govt. of Kolhapur (Maharashtra, India) is collaborating with Ratna Nidhi to start an Open Library in Kolhapur. This library will house more than 50,000 books and will be a central point for schools and colleges in all nearby districts and villages to issue books.



Ratna Nidhi's Open Library in Grant Road, Mumbai

LIBRARY ON WHEELS

Education is not a problem; Education is an opportunity.

– Lyndon B. Johnson



3067
books
read

1500
kms
travelled



2500
children
reached

2300
library
cards
made



Some Indian villages, districts and pockets of rural areas are extremely inaccessible. The students in these areas face problems like food and water shortage, and lack of access to healthcare and sanitation. Access to world-class educational books is not one of their primary concerns.

Far from urbanisation, children living in these remote areas do not have access to basic education and the ones who have the slightest exposure to any sort of education, its standard does not match the required

But we, at Ratna Nidhi believe that educating our future generation is what paves way for development. To bridge this gap, Ratna Nidhi, in association with ACC Ltd. set up a 'Library on Wheels' in Maharashtra.

This **mobile library** travels around rural Maharashtra, making books accessible to children from low-income backgrounds. Library on Wheels on the move in the rural most villages in India, providing free access to books, conducting reading programs, thereby influencing young minds and enable them to explore a world beyond their academics.



M.O.U. WITH GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA

In the first quarter of 2019, Ratna Nidhi signed an MOU with the Government of Maharashtra. 'Mahaparivartan', is a Government of Maharashtra initiative, that is focused on using the Public-Private partnerships for social development of Maharashtra. Ratna Nidhi Charitable Trust is the **official NGO Partner** for various programs under the Healthcare & Education sector. As a part of the signed MOU, Ratna Nidhi aims to provide free mobility and prosthetics aids to physically disabled people and set up libraries in rural Maharashtra.



VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Readership Development: Book Clubs

India's literacy rate is 74.04%, yet, studies show that Indians are poor readers. If we compare the East to the West, Europeans spend more time reading than their Asian counterparts do. One reason for that is that the print machine was a European invention and pre-independence a substantial chunk of the Indian population was illiterate. Indians are used to 'Intensive Reading', which is a repetitive reading of texts because traditionally we have associated reading with either religious texts or textbooks.

The other form, 'Extensive Reading', which is reading for leisure or to gain knowledge of varied topics is considerably lacking in Indian society. Another reason for lower readership is the problem of privilege and accessibility to good quality reading material.

Noticing this gap, under the 'Mission Million Books' program, Ratna Nidhi Charitable Trust has embarked on a journey to inculcate better readership habits in students.

Thus, we present to you Ratna Nidhi Book Clubs.

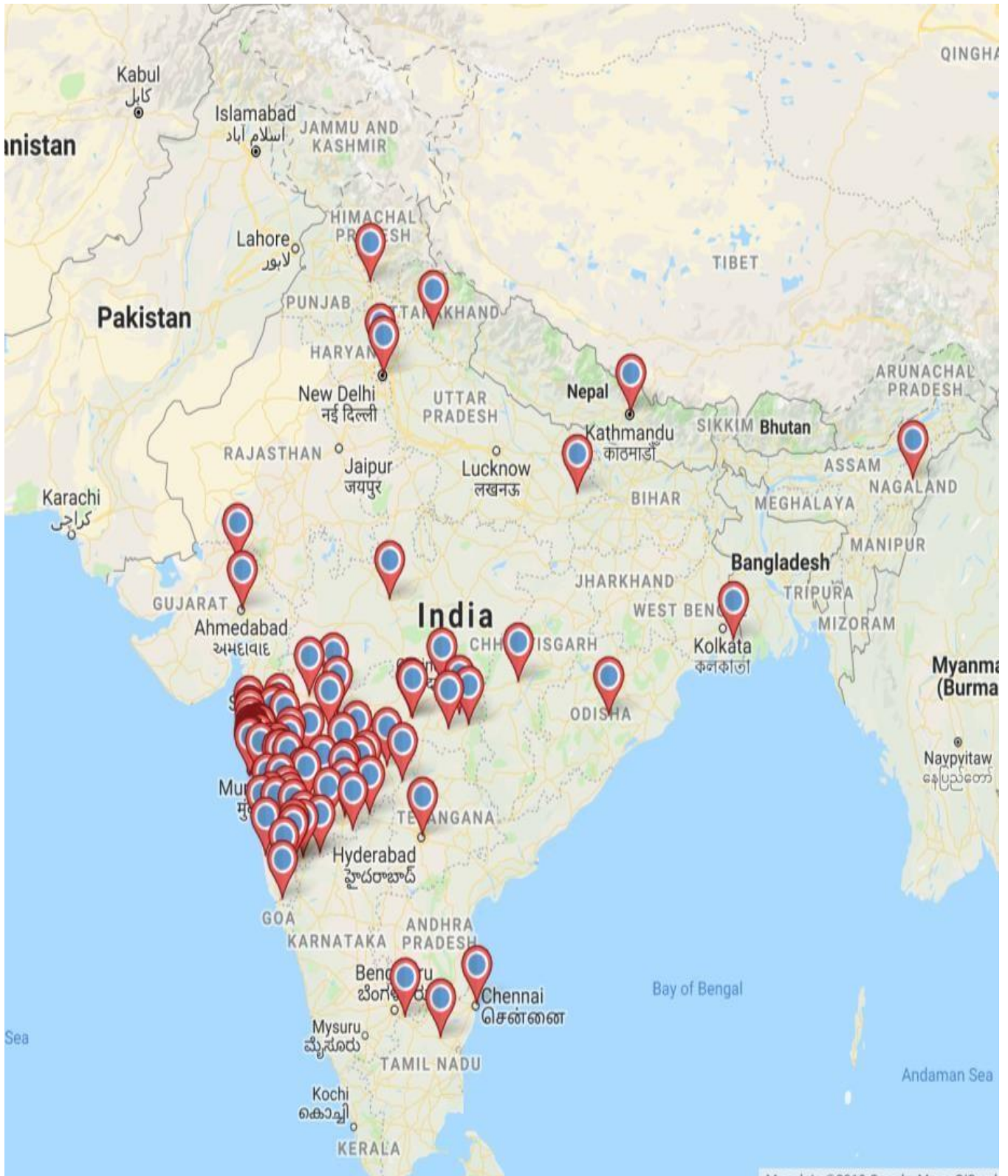
Setting up Libraries

The project will see a number of libraries being set up across Maharashtra, under the 'Mahaparivartan' program. Through these libraries, we aim to reach out to schools and colleges in rural India and provide them with access to good quality books. The Kolhapur Open Library project is the first project that is currently underway.

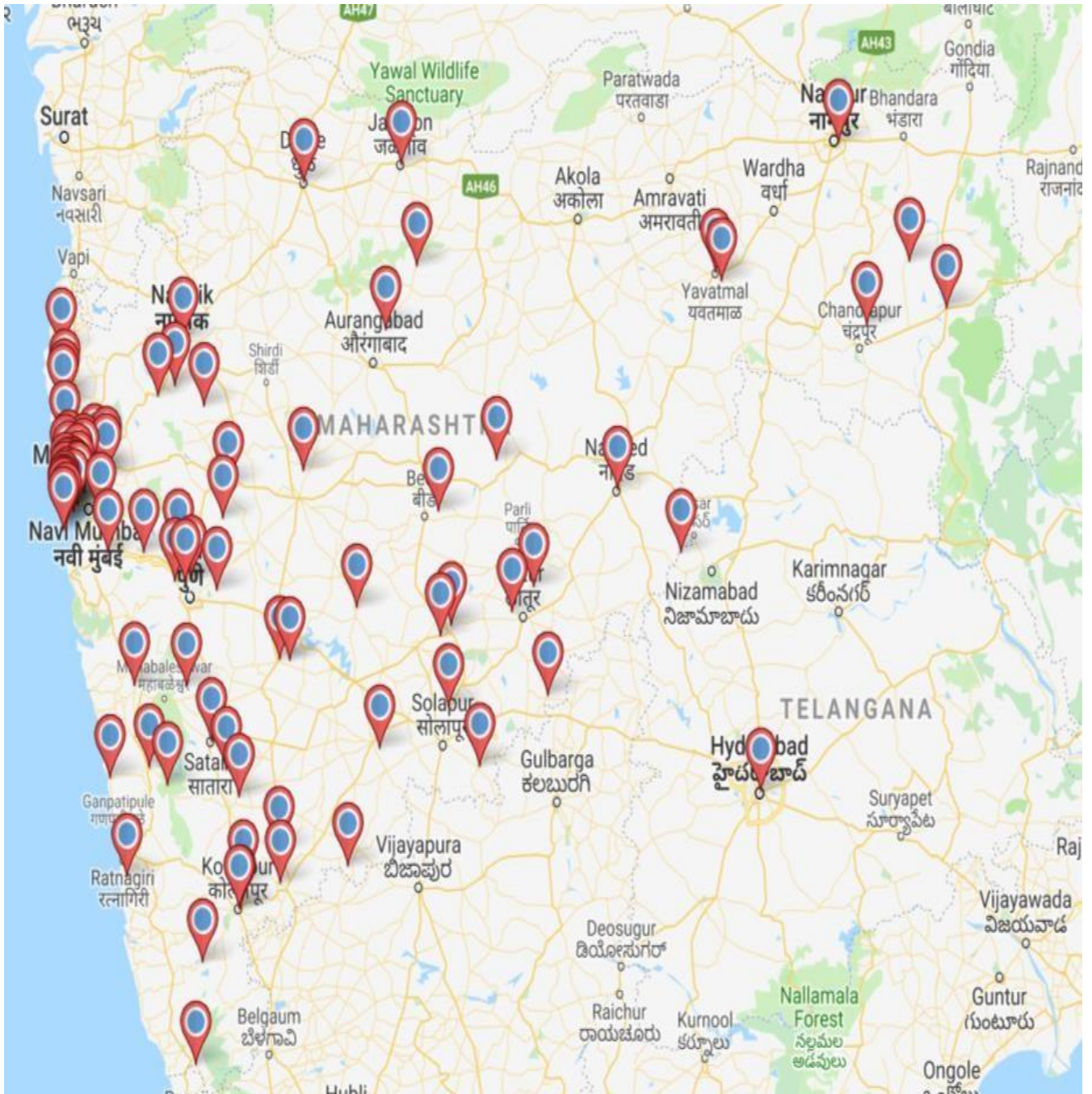
Library on Wheels

Ratna Nidhi intends to start multiple Library on Wheels projects across Maharashtra like the existing project in Chandrapur. With this, we hope to reach the innermost, inaccessible pockets of rural India.

IMPACT



Geocoded map of Ratna Nidhi MMB Program's reach in India



Geocoded map of MMB's reach in Maharashtra (India)

TESTIMONIALS

“Mission Million Books is one step towards helping improve the accessibility of quality reading material to Indian students. This is a great initiative and helps us in reaching rural India with books that will empower thousands of children. ”- **Chris Wang, Alibaba.com, India**

“The books collected from here will give students an opportunity to gain more knowledge and value education. Here the books are free of cost whereas in the market the same books are heavily priced. We are thankful to Alibaba Group and RNCT.”- **Zilla Parishad Primary School**

"The exhibition displays a large variety of books ranging from the primary section to senior classes, covering several subjects - Mathematics, Science, English, Computer Science etc. These books will not only benefit the students but will also teach me many things. I am thankful to Mission Million books for this great initiative." – **Katewadi High School, Baramati**

“Thank you very much for 977 books worth lakhs of rupees. It will definitely help our students to enrich their reading skills and knowledge forever. I hope you will help us to do our best in the field of education. Thanking you for all our staff and institution.”- **Principal, Maharshi Walmiki Vidyalaya, Walhe, Pune**

“It was a wonderful project. We got medical books which would be very useful to our students as well as our faculty. Thank you for inviting us and making us a part of this huge initiative. ”- **Sant Ghadge Maharaj Ashram School**

“It’s been a very overwhelming experience. Loads of access to rich resources! Thank you. We look forward to many more.”- **Satara High School**

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Shreya & Samah

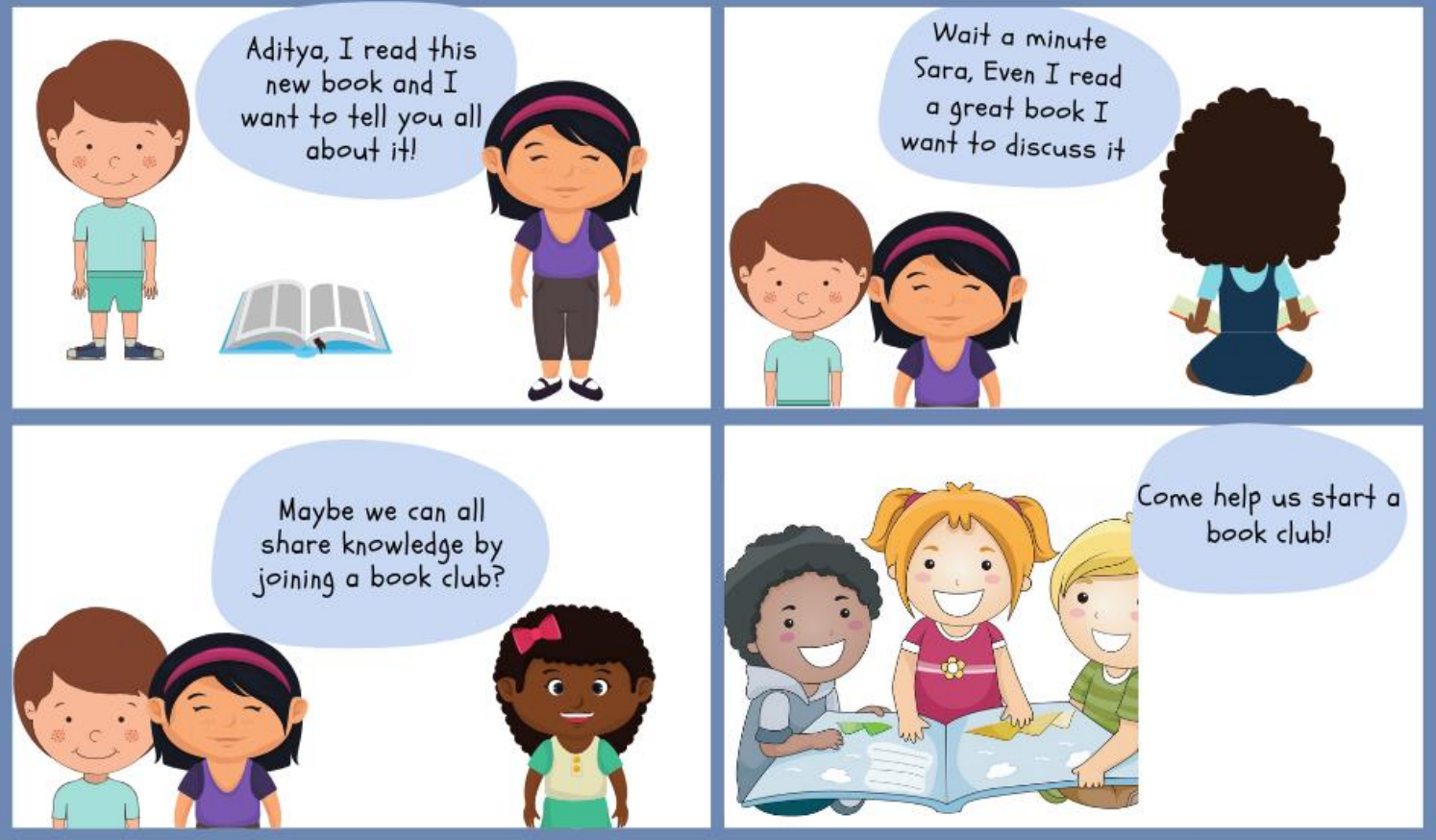
Find A Treasure



We are collecting and distributing books to children pan-India and book donations from YOU will help us to continue doing the same. If you are an author or publisher, please get in touch with us if you'd like to donate books to us. We would love to provide children access to the quality content that you have created.

The Bookworms

Ratna Nidhi Book Clubs



Knowledge is shared best when information flows freely. We want to provide children across Maharashtra with a platform where they can share, read, discuss and dream. You can support these children by connecting with us and sponsoring a book club.

Great Beginnings



We all love books. I wish our library had more books

Now their library has so many new books that these children can read.....



Don't worry children, we'll have more books soon!



Contact Ratna Nidhi if your school or college needs books

If you know a school, college or institution that needs books, refer them to us. This connection could give hundreds of children access to quality educational books.

Yash *and* the Library

Ratna Nidhi's Library on Wheels



Ratna Nidhi's Library on Wheels goes from village to village to give children access to books.....



Access to quality education and educational supplies is unequal. We are bridging that gap and trying to reach rural pockets of Maharashtra. Your old car can be converted into a mobile library and will be a new home for our books. This Library on Wheels will travel to small villages in some district of Maharashtra and give many children an opportunity to read, which they won't have access to otherwise.

Give your old car a new purpose!

OUR PARTNERS



BOOK PROJECT

THE WORLD BANK FAMILY NETWORK



Govt of Maharashtra



Rotary
India Literacy Mission

**ACC
TRUST**

**Ecom
Express**

CONTACT US



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