

## Case study — Publications

The large stall at the book fair in Bhopal is bustling with people, some picking up paperbacks, and many merely browsing. In a corner, an eight-year-old girl thumbs through a pictorial book on Origami titled 'Ek Aadhar Anek Aakar', her wide eyes reflecting her wonder. "Ma, what beautiful flowers in this book", she calls out to her mother who replies, "Yes my child...this world is very beautiful too". The child then continues to look at her book, while the mother keeps herself busy.

It may seem inconsequential to mention that the mother is sight-impaired, but the conversation brings to light the potential that **Eklavya's** publications have on a growing child. 'Ek Aadhar Anek Aakar' is among the many new books that Bhopal-based **Eklavya** publishes every year. Currently, the organisation is focusing on catering to the needs of early readers, and concentrating on the lack of good material to fulfil this need.



With Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the Government of India's programme for universal elementary education gaining momentum, the number of children entering primary schools is increasing. Consequently, the need for age appropriate, graded educational material for instructional and recreational purposes is being widely acknowledged and sorely felt by educationists.

There is a paucity of appropriate children's literature in various regional languages, and for neo-literate readers. Further, professional development of teachers and educational practitioners also depends on the availability of suitable material that builds understanding and perspective on critical issues in education. Hence, development and dissemination material for children, youth and practitioners is necessary, in order to make elementary education accessible and meaningful for every child.

Recognising this, the Trust launched its **Publication Initiative**, later branded **Parag**, during 2005-06, which promotes innovative publishing in educational material to improve the quality of India's elementary education.



It encompasses:

- The publication of books in various Indian languages
- Professional development among illustrators, writers, and publishers
- Dissemination of professional writing
- Networking among publishers and educationalists

The Trust's support to **Eklavya** enables the organisation to enrich its publication programme through 75 new titles, enhance its marketing set-up, and strengthen its Children's Literature Resource Centre. Besides **Eklavya**, the other organisations collaborating with the Trust within **Parag** include:

- **Anveshi**, Hyderabad, which is developing ten books each in Malayalam, Telugu and English, depicting the lives and experiences of children from marginalised communities
- **Nirantar**, Delhi, which develops educational material for neo-literates in the form of a bimonthly magazine, besides producing a variety of teaching learning materials and offering short courses on participatory material development
- **Pragat Shikshan Sanstha**, Phaltan, towards the publication of a supplementary reader, 'Everyday English' and a teacher's handbook, for teaching of English as a second language in select government middle schools in Phaltan, Maharashtra
- **Centre for Learning Resources (CLR)**, Pune which is developing bilingual reading material for school children, in Marathi / Hindi – English format, consisting of instructional material, recreational and reference material