Where Stories Become Sanctuary

2025 ANNUAL REPORT
Bookwallah Organization



OUR VISION

A world where every child believes they are worthy of love, happiness, and a beautiful future.



OUR MISSION

Bookwallah brings the healing power of stories to children affected by trauma.





WHO WE SERVE

Childhood Cannot Wait

Bookwallah serves children living in orphanages and special schools. They may be recovering from abuse, exploitation, life on the streets, HIV, cancer, disability, severe economic instability, or the loss of a parent, including through farmer suicide.

Across the world, conflict, natural disasters, displacement, and economic hardship are disrupting childhoods.

These crises can feel impossibly large. **But, what a child experiences next is something we can change.**

Stories offer a seemingly simple but powerful response: solace, escape, and safe distance from difficult experiences. They remind children that what happened to them does not have to determine what comes next.

Perhaps the greatest gift of a story is the possibility of a different ending. As child begins to feel safer and calmer, they may then be better able to engage with education, care, and the relationships surrounding them. Leading to a better world generations to come.

Week after week, Bookwallah gives children a safe place and a reason to return.

BECAUSE OF YOU

Children have a place to return to.



In 2025, donors, volunteers, and partners kept Bookwallah present. Week after week, children returned to stories, caring adults, and spaces created for healing & imagination.

Thank you for staying with us.

A Note from Our Founder

When I started Bookwallah, I believed deeply that stories could help children through some of life's hardest circumstances. Years later, that belief has only deepened.

Think of the stories we have carried with us since childhood. So many follow a hero's journey: a character faces hardship, encounters allies, discovers strengths they did not know they possessed, and begins to see that another future is possible. For a child who has experienced adversity, a story can offer something profound—the chance to see themselves not only through what has happened to them, but through who they might become.

In 2025, sanctuary in practice meant children returning to storybooks they never would experience otherwise, caring adults who showed up week after week as trusted role models.

Our research shows that after 35 sessions, many children experienced joy and engagement, connected with the values within stories, and sustained or strengthened hope. For children affected by abuse, abandonment, and other adversities, these are meaningful signs of healing and resilience.

Thank you to every donor, volunteer, partner, and team member who makes this possible. Your support sustains these spaces and relationships, giving children too often overlooked by society a place to return to—and a future to imagine.

Seena Jacob
Founder



What You Made Possible in 2025

Your support kept libraries (“Imagination Havens™”) open and stories returning each week.

17

libraries sustained across four cities

578

story sessions delivered

531

children participating in recurring sessions *every week*

1,038

children with daily library access

185

volunteers who made the work possible

3

new libraries opened in 2025

What We Are Learning

EARLY EVIDENCE JULY 2025 TO FEBRUARY 2026

57%

of participating children maintained or increased their Hope scores

Average Hope score: 27.44 in July 2025 and 27.67 in February 2026. The highest possible score on the Children's Hope Scale is 36.

Hope is more than a feeling. It reflects a child's belief that they can move toward a goal and find another path when obstacles arise.

For children who have experienced complex trauma, maintaining hope and emotional stability can itself be meaningful progress. Research shows there is a strong correlation between Hope and success outcomes in life.

We measure each child against their own baseline, not against other children.

93%

of emotional check-ins reported happy or very happy with the sessions

243
Children evaluated

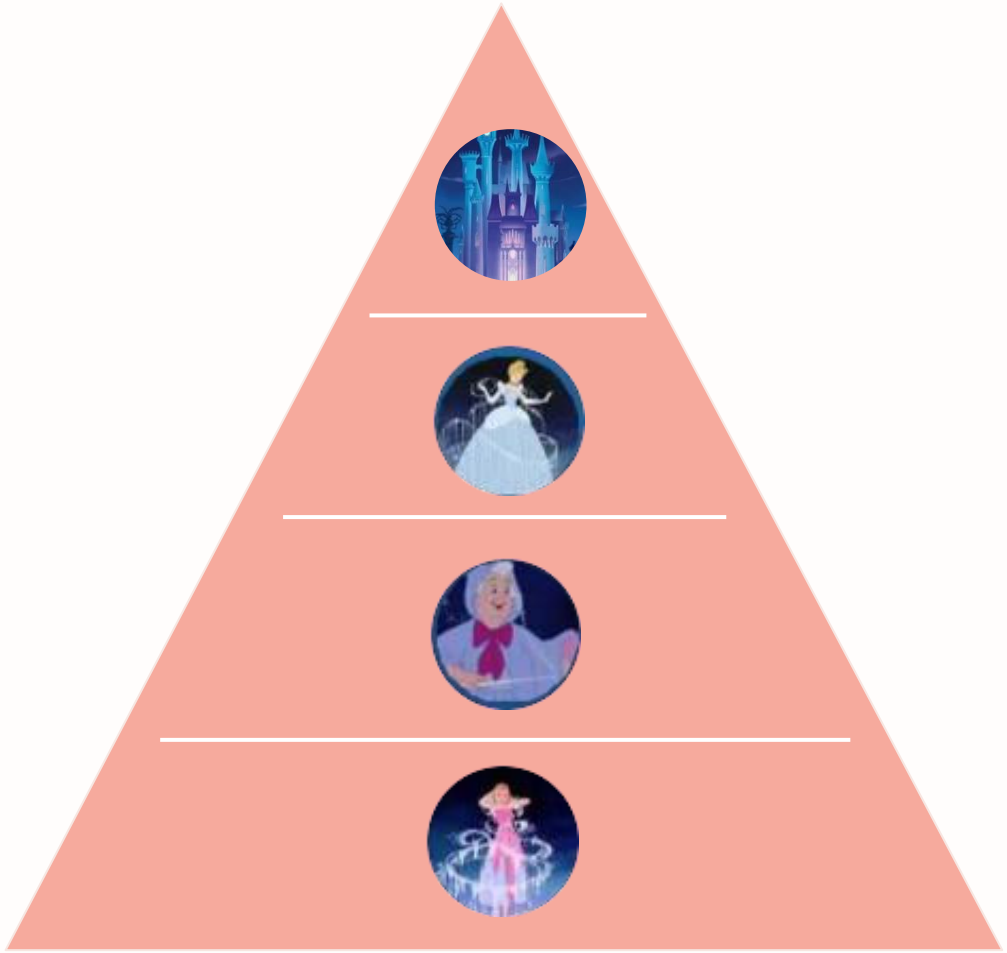
11
participating sites

2,607
emotional check-ins

These findings describe change within the participating group in our library locations. Not shown here are other surveys conducted to give a more complete picture on the child's recovery.

The Bookwallah Cinderella Methodology™

Bookwallah's five-year, story-led intervention



Cinderella imagery © Disney

FLOURISH (Castle)

Children are socially integrated and assimilated in society so they live a life they choose with pride and self-worth.

TRANSFORM (Ballgown)

Children demonstrate empathy and healthy coping mechanisms to navigate adversity, diversity. Children engage in abstract themes/values facilitating social integration.

EMPOWER (Fairy Godmother)

Children cultivate self-worth, connect with others, gain confidence. Children demonstrate pro-social conduct and behavior.

HEAL (Cinderella in Rags)

Children re-build trust, safety and stability as foundation for healing. Children develop self-awareness and explore "self".

Delivered through weekly stories, trusted adults, beautiful spaces, and local partnership.

HOW THE MODEL WORKS

The Program Pillars

The Bookwallah Cinderella Methodology ™ describes a child's five-year journey. These six pillars create the experiences that support it.

01 IMAGINATION HAVEN™ PROGRAM

Safe Spaces for Healing

Beautiful, story-filled libraries (Imagination Havens ™) offer children calm, color, and a safe sanctuary for healing.

02 STORY & STORY SPARKLER PROGRAMS

Stories That Spark Change

Interactive storytelling uses art, crafts, skits, and play to explore courage, self-acceptance, and love.

03 BOOKWALLAH ADVENTURES

Imagining Beyond Their Walls

Field trips turn stories into real-world experiences and expand what children imagine is possible.

04 THE GIVING TREE PROGRAM

A First Step Toward Hope

Mini Magic Crate Libraries and Happiness Parcels bring books and comfort to children in crisis settings.

05 RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Measuring What Matters

Quantitative and qualitative research tracks change and helps us continually strengthen the approach.

06 STORY AMBASSADOR-BUDDY PROGRAM

Mentors Who Show They Care

Trained volunteers become consistent mentors who reinforce belonging and care.

A STORY OF IMPACT

Growing Up with Bookwallah

Your support stayed with Supriya long after her library opened.

Four years ago, Supriya joined Bookwallah with her older sister. Quiet and reserved, she often cried in her new surrounding. Week after week, the library and its volunteers remained part of her life. Stories became a source of comfort, and the library became a second home.

Today, Supriya is vibrant, playful, affectionate, and imaginative. Your support sustained the sessions, relationships, and safe space that allowed her to grow up with Bookwallah beside her. In her own words-

“Nothing should stop you. You should try again and again.”



SUPRIYA, FOUR YEARS AGO



SUPRIYA TODAY

Supriya’s Hope score increased from 29 in July 2025 to 32 in February 2026.



17 LIBRARIES ACROSS FOUR CITIES

BOOKWALLAH ACROSS INDIA in 2025

Where Your Support Reached

MUMBAI · 8 LIBRARIES

East Meets West Library
Library of Hope
Sea of Stories Library
The Peacock Library
Library of Flowers
Library of Wishes
Kings of the Castle Library
The Secret Garden Library

PUNE · 5 LIBRARIES

Library of Journey
Jungle Book Library
Phoenix Rising Library
Lotus Library
Library of Dreams

BENGALURU · 2 LIBRARIES

Hungry Caterpillar Library
Noah's Ark Library

AHMEDABAD · 2 LIBRARIES

The Sunflower Library
Enchanted Forest Library



Before Photo of Library in Ahmedabad



After Photo of Library in Ahmedabad- “Enchanted Forest Library”

A DISTINCTIVE APPROACH

Why Bookwallah

Bookwallah combines the emotional power of stories with long-term presence, trusted relationships and disciplined learning.

For 16 years, Bookwallah has created and implemented a highly specialized, structured approach that uses stories to support healing and recovery for children who have experienced adversity.

01 **Long-term presence**

A five-year intervention, with many partnerships continuing longer. Our oldest location has remained active since 2011, allowing Bookwallah to stay beside children as they grow while welcoming new children into the program each year.

02 **An integrated experience**

Stories, caring adults and beautiful spaces work together through consistent weekly sessions.

03 **Community infrastructure based on trust**

Feet on the street -trained & passionate Bookwallah volunteers and staff create the relationships that keep the program returning.

04 **A learning discipline**

Hope measures, strengths and difficulties, interviews and caretaker surveys help refine the approach.













A Year in Motion

Celebrations, creative activities, annual field trips, and shared experiences brought children and communities together.

THE COMMUNITY BEHIND THE WORK

Powered by People

Volunteers do more than arrive with enthusiasm. They learn to listen, facilitate with care, and keep each child's dignity at the center.

Corporate partnerships follow the same principle: focused participation that strengthens the quality and continuity of the program.

185

BOOKWALLAH VOLUNTEERS

+250

CORPORATE VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION

1,120

HOURS OF CORPORATE ENGAGEMENT

450

BOOKS DONATED BY CORPORATIONS

Special thanks to First Source, Marsh, Tata Trust- Parag Foundation, Pratham Books, Kahani Tree, Fortune 500 Financial Institution







96% OF BOOKWALLAH'S TEAM ARE VOLUNTEERS

The Heart of Bookwallah

Our volunteers keep stories returning, week after week.

EVOCH reflects our values: Empowerment, Value Creation, Optimism, Creativity and Happiness.

2025 EVOCH HONOREES

Unnati Singh
Nirja Shah
Eeshita Saxena
Gayatri Chhatwani
Incia Barretto
Shivani Bhatnagar
Srushti Lakhotia
Aditi Mitra
Malvika Lal
Nagarjun V.
Mayuri Shelar
Aarushi Jain
Palak Shah
Yashaswini Sriram
Diksha Khade
Amruta R.
Suzanne Dsouza
Amruta Sawant
Achint Kaur
Raunak Thakur
Aakanksha Jogdekar
Sarbjit Kaur Colonne
Shrestha Goutam
Harshita Bhosale
Pragya Tripathi
Dhara Karamchandani
Rahini Kalita
Ashley Paulson
Kiran Kanwar

Thank you for carrying the work, the values and the promise of Bookwallah.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our invaluable collaborators—JBCN School, Ivy Aspire, Dhirubhai Ambani School, St. Xavier's College, Sophia College, NMIMS, SIES, Jai Hind, FLAME University, Modern College, DES University, Jain University, Christ University, and Mount Carmel College, & Connectfor.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Small Moments, Meaningful Connections

"Whether it's spending time with the children, sharing stories, or simply asking about their day, these moments create meaningful connections."

DOLLY DARBAR
BOOKWALLAH VOLUNTEER

A CORPORATE PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

Stories Create Genuine Connection

“Each story becomes a starting point for interaction, reflection and creative activities. Over time, these sessions have created a genuine connection between our volunteers and the children.”

MOHAMMED DADAJI
ASSISTANT MANAGER, HUMAN RESOURCES, CSR & VOLUNTEERING
FIRSTSOURCE



THE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WORK

Leadership & Governance

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ranjeet Nambiar
Deep Patel
Sandya Dandamudi
Preethi Maroli
Seena Jacob

BOARD OF ADVISORS

Amy Christenson
Brandi Bernoski
Virginia Doty
Kunal Mehta
Olivia Moraes
Lopa Mohanty
Dr. James Garbarino
Jorie Jelinek
Muneet Kakani
Kalyan Dubal
Deepak Raman

INDIA STAFF

Priyanka Roy
Vaishali Ravaria
Omkar Sawant
Deena Shibu
Aarati Mahamuni
Smitri Menon
Sharen Achangaden
Rashmi Parab
Saish Shetty

+185 dedicated volunteers

2025 FINANCIALS

Where Your Support Went

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2025

TOTAL REVENUE

$364,720

$157,584 Cash donations
$207,136 In-kind donations

TOTAL EXPENSES

$391,938



● 93%
PROGRAM SERVICES
$363,270

● 4%
FUNDRAISING AND MARKETING
$15,080

● 3%
MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE
$13,588

These resources supported 17 locations and gave more than 1,000 children access to Bookwallah spaces and programs.
U.S. personnel is covered by Board member and private donors ("Bookwallah Lotus Club").
Excluding U.S. personnel, cash and donated resources averaged $18,350 per location.



LOOKING FORWARD

The Work Ahead

Your investment can deepen the quality of every Bookwallah library and help bring this specialized approach to more children.

01 **Protect consistency**

Children should be able to rely on the spaces and relationships already in place.

02 **Strengthen facilitation**

Training, observation, and feedback will help facilitators respond with greater care and precision.

03 **Build longer-term evidence**

We will extend our research, refine the program, and communicate its limits honestly.

04 **Prepare for responsible expansion**

With stronger quality and evidence, this specialized approach can reach more children in India and, over time, other parts of the world.

Quality and evidence will guide growth in India and beyond.

INVEST IN CONTINUITY

$1 Million to Deepen Quality and Extend Reach

In 2025, excluding U.S. personnel, each location required $18,350 in cash and contributed resources. A $25,000 investment can create a new library (“Imagination Haven ™”) designed to serve children *for years* and one year of strong story programming.

$25,000

one library
for one year
60+ children with access

$50,000

two libraries
for one year
120+ children with access

$100,000

four libraries
for one year
240+ children with access

Every gift counts. Collectively, with $1 million, Bookwallah can deepen the quality of existing locations and responsibly build the foundation for responsible expansion toward new locations reaching many more children affected by trauma across India and beyond.

THE NEXT CHAPTER

The Story Continues With You

Your support keeps Bookwallah present, week after week, so children can return to stories, caring adults, and a place created especially for them.

$300	helps give one child a year of access & guided story sessions
$25,000	can help create and sustain one library
MONTHLY GIFTS	keep story sessions consistent





THANK YOU

Stay with the story

Seena Jacob
Founder & CEO

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BOOK WALLAH
BECAUSE EVERY CHILD DESERVES A CHANCE IN LIFE