

## **Gujarat CSR Authority**

### **GUJARATI TRANSLATIONS OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS**

#### **The Scenario**

The quantum and diversity of children's books available in Gujarati is very limited. Globally too, there exists a great imbalance between books published in English and books written in other languages. Beloved children's tales from around the world such as Asterix, Tintin, Winnie the Pooh, The Little Prince, tales by Grimm Brothers and Roald Dahl are available in English. A child, when he or she reads these books, hardly even realises whether these books are in their original language, or translations, so compellingly are they written. For generations, such books have made children laugh and the illustrations have delighted them.

Reading is instrumental in stretching one's horizons. With every story that a child loves, he/she discovers a new way in which a tale can be funny or exciting, or the way it can bring wonder. Moreover, since children are newer to the world as adults, the books they have access to and read are potentially unique. Well-told stories help children make sense of the world. It helps them to stretch their minds and sympathies. Diversity in their reading helps them think in new ways. Good books have the potential to build a child's curiosity and understanding. It does not matter if books go beyond the world the children are accustomed to and they cannot relate to the material from their own experiences. It has been found that children also read and enjoy literature that is foreign to them as it introduces new thoughts and ideas in them.

A whole world of literature exists for children. But when one enters a bookstore anywhere in India, most of the books are in English. Mainstream publishing is primarily in English. However, there are countries such as France, Germany, Italy and the Scandinavian countries that have a robust and encouraging space for children's books.

Given the importance books hold for shaping children's lives, diversity in children's literature in Gujarati language is needed. One way to ensure this diversity is to look outwards towards other great writing and stories that are already available.

#### **Opportunity for CSR: Translating Popular Children's Literature into Gujarati**

Writing for children is often more difficult, and this is no different even for translations. Good translations that can hold their own against the originals demand discipline, freshness, inventiveness and skill. When one reads comics such as Asterix or German and Swiss fairy tales in English, these are so masterfully done that they continue to be beloved of children even in the English speaking world in their own right. Publishers such as Scholastic India are also involved in publishing and distributing quality children's books in India and have a wide

variety of books that engage children. Translation of popular children's stories and books into Gujarati involves the following aspects:

- **Publishing rights:** The first step is to contact the original publisher of the book or series and obtain the publishing rights to Gujarati language. The Company may contact a local publisher who would like to be interested in publishing the Gujarati translations. Rights would need to be obtained for translating and replicating the entire book, including text, illustrations and layouts.
- **Engaging professional translators:** The Company could either directly engage translators or use the network of translators available to publishers. Experience, credentials and approval of sample translation of the original text into Gujarati is a must before engaging the translator.
- **Distribution:** Gujarat has a network of about 40,000 schools in rural areas including primary and secondary schools. The translated texts can be distributed free or at subsidised rates to encourage a wider market for the books. Translations of the texts can also be made available to bookstores with the help of publishers. The name of the sponsoring Company would appear on every publication they have supported.

### **Estimated Project Cost**

Each Company can undertake to translate at least five titles over the project period of five years. A total corpus of 200 titles may be translated with the help of several companies.

The cost components of the translation of each book would include:

- Purchasing of publishing and copyrights from original publisher
- Translation and design costs
- Printing of 30,000 copies per title

It is estimated that translation of one book along with printing would cost about Rs. 1.20 crore, but the actual cost would vary depending on the specifications of the book.

### **Developing the CSR Project**

The Gujarat CSR Authority (GCSRA) can be approached for further details and assistance for developing the translation project. GCSRA can also provide support, on charge basis, for development of a project report, execution level support and monitoring.