



La graine d'eau

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Level 2



Il était une fois, il y a de cela bien longtemps, un village dans lequel il n'avait pas plu depuis trois longues années.

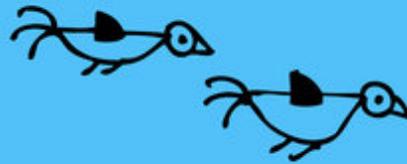


La terre était assoiffée et les plantes asséchées. La poussière se logeait jusque dans les yeux des villageois. Ceux-ci étaient très inquiets car ils savaient qu'ils ne pouvaient pas vivre sans eau.





Le chef du village organisa une réunion. Tous les villageois, jeunes et vieux, se présentèrent.



Le chef demanda à quatre jeunes hommes de s'approcher de lui.

« Je veux que vous alliez tous les quatre chercher de l'eau aux quatre coins du pays », leur dit-il.



Trois d'entre-eux revinrent au village au bout de quelques jours. Ils ne pouvaient plus avancer d'un pas. Le quatrième, qui était parti en direction du nord, atteignit une montagne blanche.

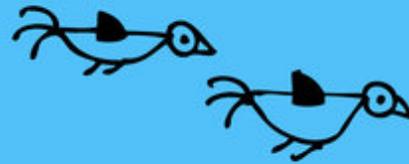


Tandis qu'il gravissait ses versants glissants, il aperçut une grotte dans laquelle se trouvait une vieille femme.

— Où puis-je trouver de l'eau ? lui demanda-t-il.



— Continue à escalader la montagne, lui répondit la vieille femme.



L'homme grimpa jusqu'au sommet de la montagne blanche et en arracha un morceau qu'il enveloppa et plaça délicatement dans un sac.

Puis, il retourna au village en courant aussi vite que possible.



Au village, tout le monde se précipita pour voir ce qu'il avait rapporté. Il était à la fois épuisé et heureux.

— J'ai rapporté la graine d'eau, indiqua-t-il.

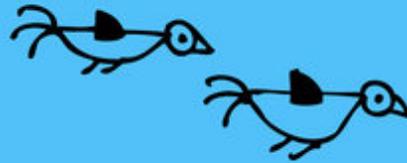


Lorsqu'il ouvrit son sac, la glace avait fondu et s'était transformée en eau. L'eau coula par terre et fut absorbée par le sol.



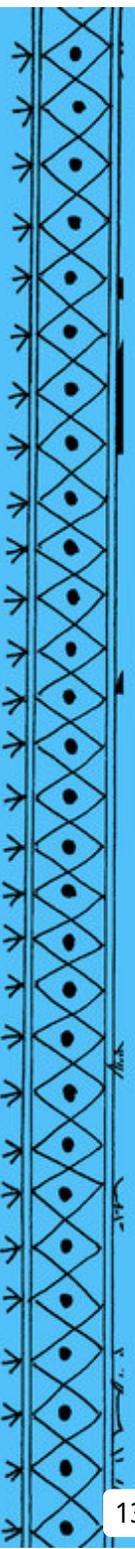


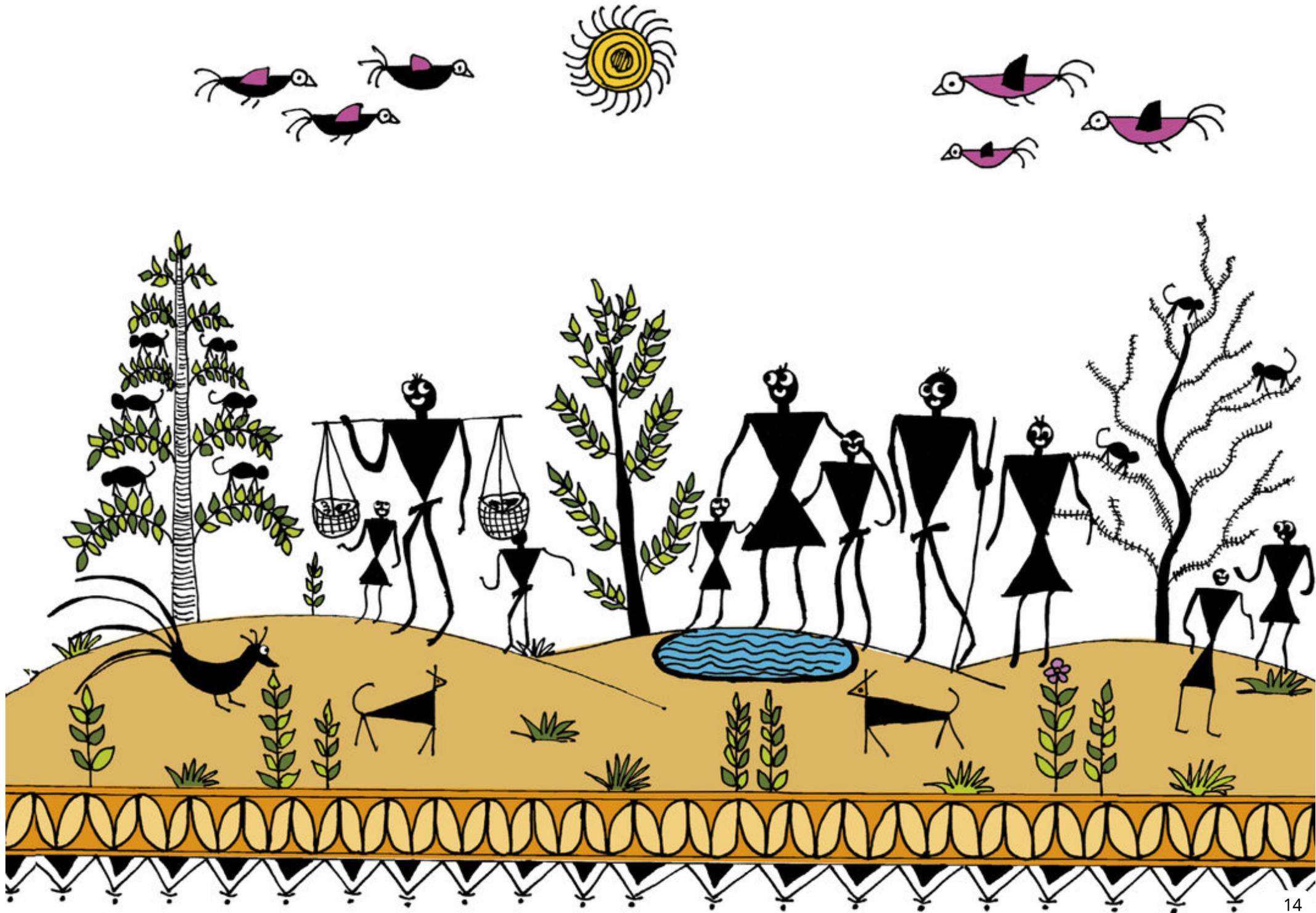
Les villageois poussèrent des cris et se mirent à creuser pour récupérer la graine d'eau. Ils creusèrent et creusèrent encore et parvinrent enfin à retrouver l'eau.



— La graine d'eau nous a donné de l'eau ! s'écrièrent-ils tous, pleins de joie. La graine d'eau nous a donné de l'eau !

Le village avait désormais de l'eau.



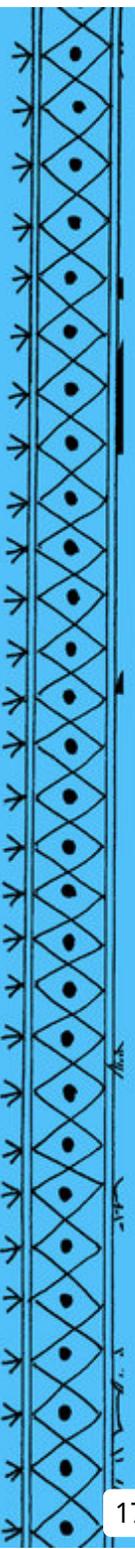
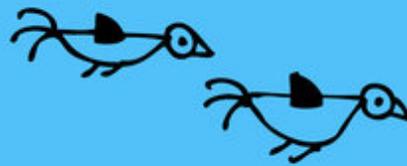


Ils en prirent grand soin.

Désormais, le village a de l'eau même s'il ne pleut pas.









The Concept

India's diverse linguistic landscape has a rich seam of stories for children. Unfortunately, many tribal languages do not have literature for children in book form or books for reading pleasure. As increasing numbers of tribal children go to school, it is now more necessary than ever to create a body of children's literature in their languages.

Literature that reflects their own world and opens up the world beyond because books are magical, powerful things that inform, amuse, educate and entertain in the most interactive way. Books make every child an independent and life-long seeker of knowledge in her own unique way. For education to be truly meaningful to every child, she must get good books to read in her own language.

The Project

Pratham Books and IgnusERG, with the support of Bernard van Leer Foundation have created the first ten books for children's reading pleasure in Munda, Kui, Saura and Juanga languages from Odisha. The stories were written and illustrated by authors and illustrators belonging to these tribes in a series of workshops. This series of books is called **Adikahani**. It is a significant first step towards giving a voice to cultures that do not find adequate representation in mainstream discourses.

The Partners

IgnusERG is a guild of resource persons working to support teachers and enhancing the quality of education, particularly in government schools. They focus their efforts on bringing equity in education and addressing the needs of marginalized children.

Bernard van Leer Foundation is an international grant-making foundation based in The Hague. Its mission is to improve opportunities for young children growing up in socially and economically difficult circumstances. It has a particular interest in supporting mother-tongue based education.

This story was written by the Munda Writers' Group consisting of Budhanatha Munda, Prafull Surin, Prafulla Tapno, Rabindra Kumar Singh and Santosh Kumar Singh. With a background in ECCE, they all interact with children regularly. It has been illustrated by Ramani Ranjan Sarangi using the Saura wall mural style as a base. The Munda language has more than 5 lakh speakers and is spoken in Sundargarh, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts of Odisha. It is a group of languages spread over a geographical area beyond state boundaries and has been a repository of fascinating myths that have attracted linguists and litterateurs. The spellings of the language in Odia script are not definitive as many new sounds are being rendered in print for the first time.



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La graine d'eau

(French)

Comme la pluie ne venait pas, les jeunes hommes du village furent envoyés chercher de l'eau. L'un d'entre-eux rapporta une graine d'eau !

This is a Level 2 book for children who recognize familiar words and can read new words with help.



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