

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



FOREWARD



Dear Sathis,
Satrangi Salam! Zindabad!

Akam Foundation started from the journey of Project Kitape Katha Koi & Drishti: A Queer Collective as a registered body under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013, in the month of July 2022. The first year gave us more space to reflect and learn on our journey in the coming years. The year witnessed our reflection on the design of the program, and we came up with the inauguration of Chandraprabha Saikiani Feminist Library & Resource Centre at Dibrugarh as a feminist action hub for the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community. It was possible because of involvement of our community and support from allies. This resource centre will be a space for the LGBTQIA+ community in Assam. This inception year witnessed our continuous engagement with the local college and the university.

We kept on going more closer to our community this year too. Organising community meet up in small towns like Sibsagar, Jorhat, Golaghat, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and this helped us to build a community around us for more affirmative action on ground.

We are looking forward for coming years as we are articulating our work better and we are committed to continue our work on rural Assam and small towns of Assam.



Richapanna Neng



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ABOUT US

Akam Foundation - Towards Equality is a youth led queer feminist right based organization located in Assam. We are registered under Section 8 of the Company Act, 2013, registered in 2022. Akam means equality in the Mising language, spoken by the second largest tribal group in Assam. Equality & justice are the core values that drive Akam Foundation's activities, which are largely focussed in two areas of work i.e., gender justice & education.

Akam Foundation emerged from the journey of Project Kitape Katha Koi & Drishti: A Queer Collective. Project Kitape Katha Koi started in April 2020, which envisions the right to read for all by enabling free community library space. Project Kitape Katha Koi Community Library located in Ahatguri Village of Jorhat District started in August 2021. Drishti: A Queer Collective envisions bringing gender justice in Assam focusing LGBTQIA+ community, particularly from rural Assam, small towns with an intersectional feminist approach. Drishti A Queer Collective is governed by an executive council of 15 youth members as core group members from different parts of Assam.

OUR VISION

A just, inclusive, and equal society in India where every transgender and queer individual lives with dignity as equal citizens.

OUR MISSION

As a trans-led, feminist organization based in Northeast India, our mission is to:
-Build and co-create **free, community-run libraries** as inclusive feminist spaces.

-Nurture and support **LGBTQIA+ leaders** working toward gender justice.

-Center the voices and experiences of the **LGBTQIA+ community in northeast India** through education, economic opportunity and access to rights & entitlements.



OUR APPROACHES

COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION



Mobilising the community and bringing them together to understand their needs and necessities and making them identify their problem.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION



Formation of a collective within the community and organising them together and giving responsibilities to make them feel the sense of belongingness and accountability towards their work.

SOCIAL INSTITUTION BUILDING



With the help of advocacy and mobilising the community, building a strong social institution within the community will help in the sustainability of their solution which can further take forward the responsibility and the sense of belongingness to their generational leaders.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



Developing leaders within the community by building their capacity and strengthening the skill to make them independent to recognise their own problems and create solutions out of it.

RESEARCH & ADVOCACY



To work within the community it is good to understand their problems so as to deal with it. This includes the research of their needs and problems which help in depth realisation of the community. Therefore this can be used as a tool for advocacy in the larger context.

THEMATIC AREA

- GENDER JUSTICE
- RIGHT TO READ

2022-23 IN NUMBERS

- 2 library
- 2500+ books
- 200+ children Reached
- 6,000+ youth Reached
- 20+ college, university
- 10+ queer leaders



PROJECT KITAPE KOTHA KOI

Started in August, 2021 a Community Library in Ahatguri, Jorhat District that has initiated the Free Library concept during lockdown of Covid-19 pandemic in Jorhat. It serves around 100+ children from 5 villages in the Chenijan area. The Community library focuses on the access to the library for everyone, because in the rural areas of Assam, access to the library has been difficult for people. The library has a collection of 2000+ books and it runs regular library programs like book circulation, reading programs, story telling, book talk etc.



CHANDRAPRABHA SAIKIANI FEMINIST LIBRARY & RESOURCE CENTRE

A Feminist Library in Dibrugarh that was inaugurated in 19th March, 2023 that also caters as an anti-discriminatory safe space for all the readers. The library has a collection of 2000+ books and caters to the nearby local communities, alongside engaging with the LGBTQIA++ community and here in this Library we do various activities and workshops. We work with children, adolescents and adults as well, through various work and activities such as dance and drama, music and games, storytelling and read aloud, and weekly book reading sessions, etc.



The library also functions as a safe space for the LGBTQIA++ community and here within, we try to engage the community to be more aware of their own issues.

PROGRAMMES AT AKAM



COMMUNITY MEET UP

Community meet up is a tool for us to mobilise and organise the queer community in small towns of Assam and rural Assam.

We have organised meet up in towns like Golaghat, Sibsagar, Tinsukia, Jorhat etc to organise our community.



COLLEGE OUTREACH PROGRAMS

College outreach programs are one of the important ways to create awareness in the educational institutions so that the educational institution becomes a safe space for the community.

We and Drishti: A Queer Collective together mobilised more than 5,000+ youths within the colleges and Universities of Assam on Gender Sensitization. These outreach programs helped to build notions of gender beyond binary in the educational institutes from different parts of Assam.



WORKSHOP ON GENDER SENSITISATION

WORKSHOP ON RIGHTS & ENTITLEMENT FOR TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY IN DIBRUGARH

A workshop on rights and entitlements for the transgender community was organised in Dibrugarh district on 18 March 2023. The session focused on understanding transgender identity and the lived realities of transgender persons. We discussed key issues such as social exclusion, access to government schemes, healthcare, and legal rights. The workshop created a safe space for dialogue, learning, and sharing experiences. It helped participants become more aware of their rights and feel more confident to claim them.



WORKSHOP ON INCLUSION IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE AT THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK, TEZPUR UNIVERSITY

A workshop on inclusion in social work practice was conducted at the Department of Social Work, Tezpur University on 24 January 2023, with participation from 25+ students. The session introduced students to concepts of gender and sexuality within social work practice. Discussions were grounded in feminist perspectives and inclusive approaches to working with diverse communities. Students reflected on their roles as future social workers and the importance of practicing empathy, equity, and inclusion in the field.



SOLIDARITY WITH FREE LIBRARY MOVEMENT

Our Free Libraries are a part of the Free Libraries Network, India (FLN). As a member of FLN, we aim to reach out to remote Communities and to people who are enthusiastic about books and libraries, contributing to help build a free library movement in India demanding people's policy for free public libraries in India.

We have hosted a public discussion on discourse of free public library system in Assam Book Fair, 2023 bringing library worker, writer, publisher, reader together.



CAMPAIGN BY AKAM

#NOMOREHOLDINGMYPEE

A campaign demanding gender neutral washroom in higher educational institutes in Assam.

WASH is basic rights for everyone. Transgender, queer people are excluded in public toilet due to binary way of dividing public spaces.

Our campaign is demanding Higher Education Department Government of Assam to implement a policy by providing gender neutral washroom in colleges & universities in Assam. We launched the campaign in pride month of 2022.



CAMPAIGN AKAM PART OF

ONE BILLION RISING

Rise for freedom. Rise together for our rights.

On 14 February 2023, One Billion Rising was observed in Dibrugarh as a powerful act of collective expression, resistance, and reclaiming feminist space. The event was organised collaboratively by the UGC Centre for Women's Studies, Drishti: A Queer Collective, and Akam Foundation, and hosted at Dibrugarh University as part of the global movement One Billion Rising. Around 100 young people from different colleges and departments came together to dance, speak, and stand in solidarity. The gathering became a shared feminist space where young voices reclaimed visibility, dignity, and freedom—together, loudly, and joyfully.



OUR TEAM

- Rituparna Neog (she/they), Founder Director
- Nabajyoti Hazarika (they/he/she), Program Associate (part time)
- Kalpana Borah (she/her), Library in Charge (Jorhat)

PARTNER

- Free Libraries Network, The Community Library Project (Delhi)
- Dispur College
- UGC Centre for Women's Studies, Dibrugarh University

CONTACT US.

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