

Libraries as safe, welcoming places



Free Libraries Network

- Collective of 200+ community libraries, activists and researchers across the country
- Right to read, Reading is for all
- Free membership – zero deposits, no lost/damaged book fee, no identity proof
- Inclusive – free from discrimination



- Share resources and best practices, peer support
- Different models – community spaces, mobile libraries
- Books closer to readers
- Curated collection



- First generation learners – historically excluded communities
- Relationship with books begin at physical libraries
- Regular read alouds – thinking and sharing with friends



- Other reading programs – reading fluency, adult literacy
- Books for readers with print disabilities
- Other programs – art, theatre, constitutional rights, academic writing; author meet, college admission support





Professors speaking about the college admission process, it's complications and all the information that is not easily accessible to all



A Member of Parliament visiting a library in Assam.

Discussed about various issues & concerns of queer community.



Digital divide

- Access to digital devices
- Online programs – challenging
- Digital literacy

FLN Programs

- **Books for all** – provide excellent books free of cost to all member-libraries, curation support
- **Librarian capacity building/workshops**
- sharing best library practices
- **Research and advocacy** – public library legislation, national library policy – publicly funded and locally governed



FLN workshops

- Meet other library practitioners, share practices, challenges



FLN so far...

2018-19

Started as a private Facebook group with ~30 member-libraries

Shared challenges and learnings

Started the books dissemination program 'Books For All'

2020- 22

Collective grew to over 150 Free Libraries.

Peer-based resource sharing and capacity building against the backdrop of Covid19 lockdown & school closures.

Consultations with policymakers, publishers & govts.

Registered as Society with 80G and 12A certifications

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Over 200 FLN members - orgs & individuals

Capacity building workshops (physical and online) to over 70 libraries

Over 17,000 books distributed across FLN Member-Libraries all over India

Consultations with Local & State Govts - Karnataka, Delhi, Rajasthan, Jharkand,



Thank You!



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