

ENGENDERING TECHNOLOGY

FAT 

Feminist Approach to Technology

ANNUAL REPORT  
2011-2012

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Feminist Approach to Technology (FAT) is a not-for-profit organization based in New Delhi, India and founded on the belief that the space of technology, technological research and enquiry needs to be occupied by both men as well as women to allow for women's development in society. It offers a gendered critique of technology and technological design so as to ensure that women are not left behind in their choices of livelihood and empowerment.  
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# ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR

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This Annual Report reflects the activities and achievements of Feminist Approach to Technology in the year 2011-2012. With the experiences gained from the new activities started in 2010-2011, we felt much more confident in executing and expanding our projects as well as starting some new initiatives. Based on the program strategy developed in March 2011, our primary programs are:

- Research, Documentation and Communication
- School Intervention Program
- WeWIT (We Women In Technology) Initiative
- Advocacy Initiative
- Technical Center Project.
- Technical Assistance for Women's Groups

Depending on the funds we could raise for the year 2011-2012, we executed the following activities under these programs.

## RESEARCH, DOCUMENTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Women and girls' education and

training in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) has been a talked about issue in recent times. However, there seems to be a lack of research and studies that establish the gender gap in STEM education in India at all levels, primary, secondary or tertiary. Since we are planning to start a program to work particularly with schools to promote STEM education of girls, we were interested in finding any related studies/research that would help us form a baseline. Hence we did a literature review on STEM education and girls in India.

Though there are a variety of papers and articles written on women in science and technology, we found very few articles on the role of educational institutions in shaping and influencing the interest of girl students in STEM subjects. There are very few studies and surveys conducted on the issue of STEM education of girls and even those that we found are out of date as they are more than 2 decades old. A scan of articles

and presentations found reveal that most experts believe that schools, teachers and educators play a very vital role in moulding the interest of girls towards pursuing science and technology education in secondary as well in tertiary levels. However, no research was found that would establish the discrepancy in the number of girls vs. boys taking up STEM related streams for higher education, or explain the reasons behind difference in interest of boys and girls in STEM subjects. A total of 12 studies have been reviewed out of which 7 are from India.

## ADVOCACY INITIATIVE

Although it is quite a well-known fact that women are less represented in the fields of science and technology, and this low representation means women's voices are near absent in the creation of and decision-making around technology, India has still not recognized it as a major hindrance for women's rights. FAT has always believed that those who control technology control

certain kinds of power. Women's absence in the field of technology only means that while successes of the women's movements have ensured many rights for women, with technology advancement new challenges constantly bring new threats to realization of women's rights. Hence, one of our primary goals is to mainstream the issue of women and technology starting from collaborating with and gaining the solidarity of the women's movement.

## National Consultation on Women's Movement & Technology

As an effort towards starting the dialogue on intersections of women's rights with technology and how the women's movement is engaging with it, we organized a two-day consultative workshop in Delhi in October 2011. Participants from 27 women's groups and organisations listened to experienced activists with diverse perspectives, shared their own experiences, and discussed chal-



allenges and ideas that they could work towards collectively in order to change the current skewed picture of women and girls in Science & Technology in the country. After two-days of sharing and brainstorming, it was felt by the group that much capacity building of partners is needed to understand the minute details of the issues raised at the meeting. Across the table, partners felt that only after we understand the

issues well ourselves, can we take the necessary steps to collectively tackle them. Hence it was decided that FAT would coordinate different consultative workshops on various issues related to women and technology around the country. The report of the consultation is available in our website at the link: <http://fat-net.org/content/national-consultation-womens-movement-technology>.

## First Regional Consultation on Women and Technology, Mumbai

In December 2011, we organized a 2 day consultative workshop in Mumbai in partnership with Point of View, Mumbai. The regional consultation was a follow-up of the National Consultation on Women's Movement & Technology held in New Delhi. Around 50 participants from varied back-

grounds participated in this event. The talks and discussions covered a wide range of topics under the themes - Science & Tech for Empowerment; Reproductive Health and Technology; Disability and Technology; Women in Science and Tech; Women's Sexuality and Technology; and Internet, Activism and Rights. The report of the consultation is available at <http://advocacy.fat-net.org/>.



## Other advocacy efforts

Every year FAT participates in various meetings, conferences and other events to promote the cause of women and technology through talks and presentations, as well as to keep abreast of trends and events in the areas of our interest. This year we participated in the following events:



FAT was invited to the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) annual meeting in New York, USA where we presented our commitment towards increasing women and girl's participation in Science and Technology.

On behalf of FAT, Gayatri Burago-

hain (Executive Director of FAT) delivered a talk on 'Women's rights and Science & Technology' at the Global Fund for Women (GFW) headquarters in San Francisco for GFW's partners and other invited guests.

We also participated in a radio program organised by Vigyan Prasar (an autonomous body of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, that works to promote science among masses) on All India Radio.



Gayatri attended the final meeting of the Gender and Citizenship in the Information Society (CITIGEN) Research Programme orga-

nized by IT for Change in Bangalore where she delivered a talk on 'What matters in building feminist power through technologies'.

Gayatri was invited as a keynote speaker at the Motorola Global Engineering Marathon organised in Bangalore where she gave a talk on 'Innovations and Social Change'.

We made a presentation on the teaching methodology we use in our Tech Center at the American India Foundation office in New Delhi.



FAT also participated in the NGO India Exhibition 2012 in Gurgaon, Haryana. The exhibition was a

3-day event and had more than 150 organizations participating. It was a great opportunity to network with other organizations and share our work with them.

We also attended a 2-day national consultation on 'Gender and Media Literacy' organized by Nirantar in Lucknow. Gayatri presented on the topic 'Engendering Technology'.

## TECHNICAL CENTER PROJECT

After the launch of the Technical Center for Underprivileged Girls in Lajpat Nagar in July 2010, many adolescent girls from the hutment areas near the center joined the classes. However a number of challenges made it very difficult for the course to be conducted as planned. All of the students were part time domestic workers and semi-literate or completely illiterate. It was not possible for the students to attend classes regularly due to time constraints. Moreover, our purpose of starting the center was to promote technical education for girls from low-



er social economic background. With most of the girls being illiterate or semi-literate, it was challenging for us to train them any further than basic operations in the computer. We realized that with our present skill sets we were not well equipped to work with this group of girls. So we took the decision to conduct an internal evaluation and to take feedback from the participants of the Technical Center in order to revisit our experience and devise ways and means of getting better results for our efforts.

In April 2011, we started with the recruitment of a Tech Center Assistant and evaluations of the Tech Center. The process of evaluations included feedback from the previous group of students and a need assessment in the hutment areas near our center location. Post the evaluation we finalized our course structure for a six months' course. The course included basic computer education aimed at developing confidence and teaching basic technical skills needed in day-to-day life, and various workshops



aimed at raising awareness on women's rights and developing leadership. The course was then started with a group of 20 girls, most of whom had appeared for their 12th grade exam and were waiting for their results. All of the girls were from conservative families from lower socio-economic backgrounds. After the completion of course for this group, another group joined in January 2012. A total of 49 girls participated in our program this year.

During the year 2011-2012, many workshops and community events were organized besides the regular lessons on basic usage of computers and Internet. These were:

Community Media Practitioner and Filmmaker Kavita Dasgupta facilitated a workshop on basic skills in still photography and video making with the students. Following the workshop, the FAT Tech Center students made a short documentary film based on their own lives named "Zindagi Khatti-Meethi" (Life Sweet and Sour). The film is about interac-

tions and conversations with their family, especially their parents. It can be viewed in our website at the link <http://fat-net.org/category/resources/video-resources>.



2 team members from the French organization What Women Wish (WWW) volunteered for 1 week during which they trained the students in using Internet for emailing, social networking, blogging and looking for jobs.

A young engineer, Ayan Sasmal, volunteered at the tech center for 2 months during which he trained the students in Desktop Publishing software and some basic hardware skills.



A parents' meeting was held at the center to interact with the parents and discuss the education plans of the students.



The students were taken on an exposure visit to Khoj Foundation, an organization that works with street children.



A workshop on Gender and Sexuality was facilitated by feminist activist and trainer, Nandini Rao. The workshop was the first formal exposure for our students towards their notions on gender and sexuality.



A community event called the Red Door was organized in collaboration with Reshma, an artist and mental health activist. The event was a sit and draw competition encouraging people of different age groups express their

hooded imagination and creativity through the medium of art. This was followed by a discussion around notions about madness and mental health.



The Tech Center celebrated Women's Day on 29th March in Jalvihar locality, Lajpat Nagar. The event was organised by the Tech Center students themselves. The girls did everything themselves, from writing the slogans, preparing the posters, inviting people, to even speaking at the event.

We started an internship program in our center which provided the students of our center the opportunity to intern with us and teach other

students. 2 students interned with us to train new students while 2 students interned as full time office assistants.

For us, the biggest reward was to see how the program transformed every participant's life. Increase in confidence and awareness about equality and rights is seen in every girl. Almost every girl has taken a step of courage in her individual life, big and small. Many girls have enrolled in college or school for further education which, they say, would have not been possible without the support from the tech center. Some of the girls were refused financial support from their family to pursue their education, so they found themselves part-time employment to raise the money needed for their education. For a few girls, it was a big challenge to step out of their homes and walk into a workplace as well as a college after huge resistance, sometimes violent, from their family. The tech center has shown us that awareness and skills is the recipe to empower young women.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR WOMEN'S GROUPS

Being a women's rights organization working on technology, many women's groups and organizations regularly approach us for help and advice about technology usage within their office or in their programs. We realize that many women's groups/organizations are not able to afford state-of-the-art technology solutions and training or hire an in-house technologist due to lack of funding. To fill this gap, right from the formation of FAT, we have always offered our team's technical skills to provide technical advice, training, as well as hands-on support to other women's groups and organizations.

### **Mera Swasthya Meri Awaaz Abhiyan**

This year we collaborated with Sahayog, an organization based in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, that works on maternal health rights, to implement the technical framework of a project called Mera Swasthaya Meri Awaaz.

This project promotes a toll-free helpline that rural women in UP can use to register complaints of corruption in government health centers in their village using Interactive Voice Response (IVR) in their local dialect. These calls are then mapped in a website based on the open source platform, Ushahidi. Sahayog and its project partners further use this data to lobby with state health officials for more transparent and efficient health services. This project won the Vodafone Mobiles for Good award for 2012 under the health category.

### **Workshop on managing websites built on Wordpress**

Upon requests from some organizations, we conducted a 2 day workshop on website making and designing in Wordpress in Delhi. 8 team members from different organizations participated in the workshop.

The year 2011-2012 has been eventful as well as highly rewarding. For the next year, we plan to expand our tech center project to reach out to more girls from other communities in South Delhi. We would be recording the case studies of each of our students to track how this course has influenced them, what direction their life has taken and how it is different or similar to what they had planned for themselves.

The process of consultation with women's groups has helped us to some extent build much-needed solidarity with the women's movement. We would be working more with women's groups and organizations around the country to make the process stronger.

Working with schools to promote girls' education in STEM has always been our priority. However, we are dependent on the funds raised to be able to work with schools. Our efforts to raise these funds will continue. With renewed hope we look forward to all that is to be done in 2012-2013.

# THE TEAM IT WAS

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## Board of Directors

Monisha Behal (Chairperson)  
Rambishnu Sasmal (Treasurer)  
Gayatri Buragohain (Secretary)  
Aleyamma Vijayan  
Gurinder Kaur  
K Lalita  
Rita Banerji  
Simrita Gopal Singh

## Staff

Gayatri Buragohain (Executive Director)  
Srirupa Bhowmik (Program Associate)  
Asha Tiwari (Tech Center Associate)

## Consultants

Hassath  
Mibi Ete  
Nandini Rao  
Rambishnu Sasmal  
Savita Sharma

## Interns and Volunteers

Ayan Sasmal  
Jyoti Tiwari  
Raveena Gurung  
Sonia  
Kaye Lushington

## NON FOREIGN CONTRIBUTION (REGULATION) ACCOUNT FEMINIST APPROACH TO TECHNOLOGY, NEW DELHI BALANCE SHEET 2011-2012

LIABILITIES		AMOUNT	ASSETS		AMOUNT
<b>CAPITAL FUND</b>			<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
Opening Balance	63,444.00		Computer & Acce. Op. Bal.	60,238.00	
Addition - Net	98,797.00		Addition	28,750.00	
Less : Depreciation	53,807.00	108,434.00	Less: Depreciation	44,768.00	44,220.00
<b>GENERAL FUND</b>			Furniture & Fix. - Op. Bal.	3,206.00	
Opening Balance as on 01.04.2011	92,523.65		Addition	6,200.00	
Add: Access of Income over Expenditure	26,043.35	118,567.00	Less: Depreciation	670.00	8,736.00
			Office equipment - Purchased	63,847.00	
			Less: Depreciation	8,359.00	55,478.00
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES &amp; PROV.</b>			<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Sundry Creditors		47,602.00	Programme Advance	133,066.00	
			Cash-in-Hand	3,511.88	
			With ICICI Bank A/C	27,843.00	
			With Standard Chartered Bank	1,748.12	166,169.00
<b>Total (Rs)</b>		<b>274,603.00</b>	<b>Total (Rs)</b>		<b>274,603.00</b>



NON FOREIGN CONTRIBUTION (REGULATION) ACCOUNT  
FEMINIST APPROACH TO TECHNOLOGY, NEW DELHI  
INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR 2011-2012

EXPENDITURE		AMOUNT	INCOME		AMOUNT
<b>1. Global Fund For Women - Cost</b>			<b>Grant-In-Aid</b>		
Personnel	21,480.00		Received during the year from :-		
Programme Cost	3,229.00		1. Mama Cash		1,439,570.00
Admin Overheads	93,589.655	118,298.65			
			Donation & Contribution		95,000.00
<b>2. Mama Cash</b>					
Honorarium - Project Coord.	453,000.00		Misc. Receipts		73.00
Teaching Centre	30,680.00				
Meeting & Consultation	77,554.00		Bank Interest		1,800.00
Travel - Programme	65,047.00				
Documentation	36,774.00		Training & Tech Support		220,000.00
Equipment Cost	70,047.00				
Salary - Admin.	542,744.00				
Admin Overhead	109,249.00	1,385,095.00			
<b>3. Society Account</b>					
Salary	121,107.00				
Documentation & Stationery	5,697.00				
Office Rent	26,400.00				
Travel & Conveyance	1,328.00				
Honorarium/Stipend	30,000.00				
Computer & Access. Purch	28,750.00				
Admin. Overheads	13,724.00	227,006.00			
Excess of Income over Expenditure		26,043.35			
<b>TOTAL.....(RS.)</b>		<b>665,541.35</b>	<b>TOTAL.....(RS.)</b>		<b>665,541.35</b>

FOREIGN CONTRIBUTION (REGULATION) ACCOUNT  
FEMINIST APPROACH TO TECHNOLOGY, NEW DELHI  
BALANCE SHEET 2011-2012

LIABILITIES			AMOUNT	ASSETS			AMOUNT
<b>CAPITAL FUND</b>				<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>			
Opening Balance	38,976.00			Computer & Acce. - Op. Bal.	35,770.00		
Addition -	70,047.00			Less : Depreciation	21,462.00	14,308.00	
Less : Depreciation	30,501.00	78,522.00					
				Furniture & Fix. - Op. Bal	2,206.00		
				Addition	6,200.00		
				Less : Depreciation	670.00	8,736.00	
<b>GENERAL FUND</b>							
Op. Bal. As On 01.04.2011	63,823.65			Office Equip. - Purchased	63,847.00		
Add : Excess of Income Over Expenditure	63,750.65	73.00		Less: Depreciation	8,369.00	55,478.00	
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES &amp; PROV.</b>				<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Sundry Crediors		3,076.00		Cash - in - hand	745.88		
				With Standard Chartered Bank	1,748.12		
				S. Debtors	655.00	3,149.00	
<b>TOTAL.....(RS.)</b>		<b>81,671.00</b>		<b>TOTAL.....(RS.)</b>		<b>81,671.00</b>	

FOREIGN CONTRIBUTION (REGULATION) ACCOUNT  
FEMINIST APPROACH TO TECHNOLOGY, NEW DELHI  
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS FOR 2011-2012

RECEIPTS		AMOUNT	PAYMENTS		AMOUNT
Op. Balance - As on 01.04.2011		97,498.65	1. Global Fund For Women		
Grant-In-Aid			Personnel	21,480.00	
Received during the year from :-			Programme Cost	3,229.00	
1. Mama Cash		1,439,570.00	Admin Overheads	93,589.65	118,298.65
Misc. Income		73.00	2. Mama Cash		
Sundry Creditors		3,076.00	Honorarium - Project Coord.	453,000.00	
			Teaching Centre	30,680.00	
			Meeting & Consultation	77,554.00	
			Travel Programme	65,047.00	
			Documentation	36,774.00	
			Equipment Cost	70,047.00	
			Salary - Admin.	542,744.00	
			Admin Overhead	109,249.00	1,385,095.00
			Liabilities Paid		33,675.00
			CLOSING BALANCE		
			With Standard Chartered Bank-Fc	1,748.12	
			Cash-in-hand	745.88	
			S. Debtors	655.00	3,149.00
TOTAL.....(RS.)		1,540,217.65	TOTAL.....(RS.)		1,540,217.65



**Feminist Approach to Technology**

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