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ABOUT **FAT**

Feminist Approach to Technology (FAT) was founded in 2008 in order to empower women to access, use and create technology. In the decade of its existence, it has established itself as a niche organisation working at the intersection of feminist values, women's rights and technology.



Organisational Transition & Rebuilding

Over the past decade, the organisation has expanded from a small three-person team to 28 people in total - 3 full time consultants, 16 staff and 9 interns, working in 4 states of India. In the last one year, FAT has revamped its organisational systems to ensure that governance and leadership aligns with the organisation's current goals and values.

In response to Board members stepping down after a period of struggle towards the end of 2018-19, this year began with the new management team. The team comprised of three staff members who were alumni of our programs, three consultants, and the Executive Director. Taking over at a time of flux, the new management team needed to understand the present challenges and needs of FAT. To address this need, we undertook an organisational evaluation just as the 2018-19 financial year was ending. The evaluation was conducted by the Chairperson of the Board, Pradeep Esteves, and an external evaluator.

Strengthened by the evaluation as well as our ongoing commitment to become a decentralised girl-led collective, we recognised the importance of organisational development. As the next step, we realised it was important to redesign the implementation process at FAT. We also learnt that senior, more experienced participants from Level 3 were ready to carry out on ground project implementation. This experience would build leadership and organisational skills while also enabling their participation in systems building and so on. In response to this, we began mini projects for these participants. The girls decided their independent projects which would be implemented in their community. FAT provided the support, both financial and otherwise, that they needed to make this happen. Through this process, our Level 3 participants came on board as interns with FAT and gained exposure to program management and organisational functioning. They learnt to design projects, identify community needs, create concept notes, draw up a budget, and so on. It was an important learning experience for everyone involved.

Following the organisational evaluation, this year was a period of reflection and conversation at FAT. We came together for the learning experience and to truly engage with FAT's evolution. Collectively and collaboratively, we identified the direction and structure we wanted for FAT. At the same time, our young leaders participated actively in several global conferences, helping them tell their story even while we wrote the next chapter in FAT's journey.

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The evaluation also helped us revisit our vision and mission for FAT. The vision and mission were collectively discussed and redefined in conversation with young leaders, participants and interns from the FAT team across different locations. Together, we worked to explore and discover FAT's identity. By January 2020, a draft document was outlined. In February 2020, we undertook a branding exercise with the help of three consultants from 3M Consultancy. In collaboration with them, we redesigned FAT's logo, identity colours and communication strategy. However, the outbreak of the pandemic in March 2020 brought this collaboration to an end and we had to halt the process midway.

This financial year was a year of evolution for FAT. We were sheltered in our chrysalis, working hard to transform from the caterpillar of the years past to the butterfly we wanted to be in the years to come. The year, however, ended with the onset of the pandemic, which affected even our best laid out plans. Despite this, it was a crucial year in redefining the direction we wanted FAT to take and laying the foundation for what was to come.

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Programs for 2019-2020

Activities under Young Women's Leadership Programme (YWLP):

■ **Workshops at Patna Tech Centre:** A week-long Exchange Learning workshop between girls from Level 1 and Level 2 was organised from April 21st to 25th 2019. While Level 1 girls attend the Patna Tech Centre regularly, Level 2 girls travel from across Bihar to participate in periodic workshops at the Patna Centre. The sessions were a combination of exchanging technical skills as well as discussing shared experiences of negotiating with family, overcoming daily hurdles and facing community perspectives on girls' rights. Representatives from The David and Lucille Packard Foundation also visited the Centre during the workshops to meet the girls.



■ **Activities at Giridih Tech Centre:**

- A. Between August 16th and September 20th, thirty-three girls participated in advanced internet and computer skills training at Giridih.
- B. We hosted photography training in three phases from September 6th to 20th 2019 for twenty girls. After each training, the girls completed assignments and at the end of the training, they had produced nine photo stories on diverse community issues impacting their lives. Some of these photo stories were titled 'Apna Shareer, Apna Adhikar' [My Body, My Rights] and Bhedbhaav [Discrimination] and Baal-Vivaah [child marriage].
- C. Besides the regular advanced computer classes and practice, girls were trained on the different uses of the internet. This spanned tasks like booking tickets and hotels, using online banking, checking different websites for government services, and so on. This training was undertaken between May and July of 2019 by the local Tech Centre staff.

- D. The girls from Level 3 of YWLP participated in an essay competition on water conservation organised by our local partner, Abhivyakti Foundation, for a wide network of youth in Giridih on July 28th 2019.
- E. On August 13th and 14th 2019, two Level 3 girls conducted a two-day workshop on life skills for school children in a village about 70 kilometres away from Giridih.
- F. We partnered with Inlingua, a language training institute in New Delhi, to launch online English classes from October 14th 2019. The classes were aimed at improving spoken, reading, listening and writing skills of the girls
- G. In Giridih, 21 girls have been trained in Level 3 to run their own interventions in their communities. The girls decided to form 3 groups for 3 different projects in the community and their training needs were identified accordingly. Of the 21 girls supported, 18 support the team in the overall activities of the Centre while planning their community interventions in parallel.

Trainings for participants of Level 3:

Multiple workshops were conducted and hosted for Level 3 group of YWLP.

- A. Thirteen girls went through an intensive six-month skill building course as part of Level 3 training. Further, nineteen girls worked as interns with FAT, contributing to our programs and implementation.
- B. The girls also participated in a full -day workshop that focused on building their professional and collective skills. With these new skills, girls could then work in their own communities to strengthen the rights of women and girls. The training covered a range of topics including:
 - Need of young women's leadership for community change
 - Collective leadership versus individual leadership
 - Principles of collective leadership
 - Defining professionalism and values that are necessary at work
- C. Between September 12th and 15th 2019, the girls participated in various exercises to help them understand project planning and development as well as define the guidelines for working in a collective. One of the days was dedicated to understanding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their application in the local context of the participants.
- D. The girls also participated in two sessions on what a feminist approach to technology was and how marginalised communities' rights were connected to technology. The sessions were conducted as a part of Workshops for Women by Women (WWW). These sessions were also attended by 25 others from organisations across Jharkhand.

■ **Participating in Learning Community:** From April till November 2019, 10 girls of Level 2 learnt photography and film making while also participating in the “Learning Community” run by Empower Foundation in New Delhi. The Learning Community brings together girls from different grantee organisations to design and implement a collective project in their own communities. As part of this community, the girls conducted a study in their own communities on safety and security of girls. They then used their video making skills to make a short film showcasing how fears and negative attitudes about boys have limited girls’ mobility.



■ **Self-care with South Asia Young Women’s Leadership and Mentoring (SAYWLM):** Self-care became an integral part of our organisation management strategies thanks to the project initiated by Deepika, one of our young women leaders who participated in SAYWLM. Our OD consultant also conducted sessions with our staff and interns on the importance of health care and steps towards positive health care. Through conversations, we promoted timely medical attention to health issues with access to peer support for doctors’ visits and/or a sick room at the office for anyone who needed it. We also began hosting yoga sessions at office, implemented office timings more strictly and made complementary days off mandatory for the entire team.

SUMMARISING YWLP

Level 1 & Level 2 girls came together in Patna to share experiences and learn technical skills. At Giridh, girls learnt basic and advanced computer skills and how to use the internet effectively. They also learnt photography, wrote essays, conducted workshops and learnt English! Apart from this, some joined us at FAT as interns while others led independent community interventions. The girls participated in workshops where they learnt project planning, development and execution in order to grow their leadership skills. Self-care grew to be an important component of our work in this program.

Activities under Young Girls in STEM

Jugaad Lab Program:

Jugaad Labs are community spaces for the Girls in STEM programs. These spaces were launched in order to enable interest in Science and Mathematics among the girls. This way, the girls have the choice to pursue a future in these subjects and use STEM to solve problems from their daily lives while simultaneously shifting systems and cultural norms in the society.

In 2019, we carried out some innovative changes in Jugaad Lab's work and strategy to increase effectiveness and accessibility. We restarted working with 12 girls from Level 2 of the GiSTEM program and enrolled 55 new girls in Level 1. The GiSTEM program then shifted its classes to different community locations in Delhi including Okhla, Nehru Nagar, Srinivasapuri and Jal Vihar. Based on previous feedback and to address issues of dropouts and increase our reach in the communities, we decided at the end of the pilot phase to start three Jugaad Labs within community spaces. These spaces were run by our Level 2 participants as part of their internship with FAT. Through this project and their internship, the girls mobilised the community, identified a space for the Jugaad Lab and ran the project. Through the community Jugaad Labs, we hosted many activities:

- A. **Life Skill Workshop on Group Bonding:** In June 2019, we conducted a Life Skill workshop on Group Bonding with girls from all three Level 1 locations. Given the varied background of participants, they often found it difficult to work together. Through this session, we worked with them to understand the importance of teamwork and group interaction.
- B. **Exposure visits:** At Jugaad Labs, we aim to facilitate exploration and curiosity. Exposure visits are an important part of this endeavour. The girls from Level 1 visited Nehru Planetarium to learn about the universe and solar system. They were able to connect their learning from the visit to their sessions at Jugaad Lab. At the end of the visit, they could better understand the rotation of the planets and had a clearer idea of STEM education in the outside world.

Level 2 participants visited a Mother Dairy plant to learn about milk production and the science behind it. The women scientists explained ways to check milk quality and participants understood the need for hygiene in this line of work.

In the first week of December, we took 39 Level 1 participants and 9 Level 2 participants to the STEAM Lab (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) to understand the concept of sensors and the working principles of Braitenberg vehicles. All participants learnt how to make a Light Following Robot as part of the workshop and were very excited by their achievement! The STEAM Lab visit helped participants explore the connection of art and STEM and realise the importance of group work as they worked collectively to build the robot.

- C. **Partnership with Girls Who Code:** In August 2019, we launched a partnership with Girls Who Code, an organisation which provides platforms to girls from different communities to learn and explore coding, thereby reducing the gender gap in technology. Participants from Level 2 began learning basic Scratch and Arduino programming, helping them increase their knowledge base and explore the application of STEM knowledge in real life scenarios. Aleyna, a Calibration Engineer with Ford Motor company (USA) and volunteer at Jugaad Lab, conducted a few sessions with Level 2 girls on Arduino programming, explaining the different components and their individual functions. The girls showed a lot of interest in the practical applications of coding.
- D. **Parents Meeting at Delhi Centre:** In October and November 2019, we organised a parent meeting for Jugaad Lab Level 1 participants to help parents understand what their daughters were learning. Parents were introduced to Jugaad Lab and the work we had undertaken in 2019. We also discussed the importance of Girls in STEM and some participants presented their projects to the parents, speaking about their learnings from Jugaad Lab. The girls also spoke to their parents about their experience of making projects in Jugaad Lab.



E. **Training of Interns:** Interns of Jugaad Lab were trained on the following:

- Working principles and functions of servo motors
 - Working with Switched-mode power supply (SMPS) and checking for power connectivity
 - Repairing laptop chargers
 - Working principles, usage and repair of UPS
 - Using power drills
 - Basic HTML programming
 - Working principles, material used and types of transformers
 - Usage of diodes
 - Understanding USB and 4 pin connections
 - Installation of printers and scanners to PCs
 - Ubuntu OS on PCs
 - Electrical and electronic circuits
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Two interns made an electric heater and a laser sensor project for Jugaad Lab's community exhibition!

■ **Academic support for Level 1 and Level 2:** In August and September 2019, we supported the girls with their exam preparations, noting that most girls needed assistance with Mathematics and English.

■ **Community STEM exhibition:** In December 2019, we organised a community exhibition for both Level 1 and Level 2 participants. This exhibition was intended for the community members to interact with the Jugaad Lab team and understand our work as well as the participants' learning. The exhibition was very well received, with community leaders in Okhla even bringing their children along!

■ **Lamp Making Workshop:** In December 2019, we conducted a workshop on Lamp Making for all Level 1 participants. All the girls made different lamps using waste materials with the help of Jugaad Lab interns and Level 1 facilitators. This workshop was conducted to foster creativity and teamwork skills among the participants. They also learnt the basics of electricity and electrical circuits through this workshop.

■ **Closing of Pilot Program:** This year was the final year of our pilot Jugaad Lab under the Girls in STEM program. We decided to increase the duration of each level in Jugaad Lab to provide full career support for girls interested. While we would continue to start with girls between the ages of 10 and 13 in Level 1, we decided to continue supporting interested girls till the age of 17 or older to take up a STEM career in Level 3. Each level of training would be designed to meet this goal, with Level 1 being for at least two years and Levels 2 and 3 lasting between two and four years each. The girls would have to clear an assessment to graduate from one level to another, helping us continue promoting STEM education for girls through Level 1, develop STEM acumen through Level 2 for those interested in a STEM career, and provide STEM-focused career building through Level 3.

■ **The Internship Program:** The 11 interns of Jugaad Lab worked on some real time problem-solving challenges, both individually and as a group, including creating a water pump motor with a double switch. In January and February 2020, the interns were trained and undertook the Monitoring and Evaluation process for the Girls in STEM program. Further, they shortlisted and finalised locations to open new Community Jugaad Labs. They were trained on the following as well:

- Monitoring and Evaluation of projects including designing and creating assessment tools like questionnaires for both quantitative and qualitative analysis
- Training in using the 3D printer and its slicing software
- Making water level control circuit and understanding its working and metrics
- Fixing whiteboard and pinboard in Jugaad Lab as part of creating learning spaces

JUGAAD LAB AT THE OUTBREAK OF COVID-19

We started 2020 with great enthusiasm as our three community Jugaad Labs started becoming operational. We were also in the process of starting our operations in the new makerspace situated in one of the communities we work in. A makerspace is a place where people with shared interests, particularly in computing or technology, come together to work on projects. Our space was open to girls across all levels. After February 2020, as it happened across the globe, it became very challenging for us due to the COVID-19 pandemic affecting our participants, staff and the communities we engage with. After seeing the pandemic's effect on the lives of our participants', we had to stop our normal operations which included running Level 1, 2 and 3 from the Makerspace and the three community Jugaad Labs.



OUR JUGAAD LABS KEPT US BUSY THIS YEAR!

We encouraged teamwork through workshops and hands-on activities like lamp maming. Our participants strengthened their interest in STEM and learnt about real-life applications of these fields through exciting exposure visits! Our girls learnt Scratch and Arduino programming thanks to our volunteers and partnership with Girls Who Code! Our interns got trained in technical fields as well as organisational tasks such as monitoring and evaluation and creating learning spaces. We were able to provide academic support to the girls preparing for exams. We invited parents and the larger community to witness what we do at Jugaad Labs through a parents meeting and STEM exhibition. As an organisation, we decided to extend support to girls interested in pursuing STEM careers till they were 17 years old and beyond. Unfortunately, towards the end of the year, the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to close out Jugaad Labs but we look forward to coming back once it is safer to do so.

■ **Women in STEM Talks:** In April 2019, we hosted social entrepreneur Ms. Shomita and design engineer Ms. Sri Lakshmi as they shared their journey in STEM. The speakers spoke about the challenges they faced, the importance of women in STEM and the process of choosing a STEM career. They conducted teamwork activities with participants to help them learn to work in a group as well as a session on problem-solving and design thinking.

■ **STEM classes during COVID-19:** In March 2020, due to the pandemic we had to move to the online mode of working. We started engaging with the participants through online discussions on COVID-19 and later moved to conducting the STEM sessions and educational support online as well. Despite the COVID-19 crisis, we were able to retain 34% participants from STEM classes.

Organisational Highlights

Girls Advisory Council (GAC), was an initiative by Empower Foundation, launched in 2018 as a council of adolescent girl leaders who advised the Foundation on their grant making strategy. The goal of the initiative was to help the organisations best meet the needs of adolescent girls. The second Girls Advisory Council Meeting convened in April 2019.

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, we quickly adapted our programs and moved online. We provided as many phones as we could, recharged as many numbers as we could and capitalised on our network of trained young women between 17 and 25 years of age in our communities. By March 2020, 61 students were actively participating in our online space. Our 'Corona Nahi Karuna' campaign (Not Corona, But Compassion) was launched to create awareness about COVID-19 and fight misinformation. We began inviting all our participants as well as team members to our morning check-in calls. We used these calls to discuss the effect of the pandemic on our own lives and how we could all help each other through it. In March 2020, our check-in calls had 61 girls and 20 staff. Of this community, 50 girls came forward to mobilise community support for those in need.



Where do we go from here?

The year ended with us renewing our commitment to transform into a girl-led organisation. We participated in a full-day workshops for a week, discussing and debating our organisational vision, mission and structure. We were ably supported by the team from Phicus. As the year drew to a close, we look forward to incorporating these commitments and strategies in our interventions. However, just as the year was coming to an end, we began hearing about the COVID-19 outbreak. We needed to prepare for the possibility of working from home as well as cater to the needs of our communities. Over the course of the next year, we hope to contribute to COVID-19 relief while also furthering our commitment to our communities at large and girls in STEM in specific.



