REPORT ON GATI TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Chandraprabha Saikiani Centre for Women Studies, Tezpur University organized the first GATI training programme on the 24 December 2021. A total of 30 participants were present in the training programme. The training programme was inaugurated by Professor Chandan Kumar Sharma, Dean HSS in-charge. Professor Sharma welcomed the dignitaries of the programme, the resource person, and the students at the university. Prof Sharma began by emphasising on the significance of the project and asserted that the institution needs to take the opportunity of the project to ensure the enhancement of gender equality in the STEM disciplines as well as the larger community. The programme commenced with a session by Professor Pratibha Jolly, the Principal Investigator, DST GATI, Delhi. Professor Jolly started her session by introducing the genesis of the GATI project. She gave an overview of the framework and methodology of the GATI Pilot. The GATI Pilot is a strategic and systematic attempt to encourage the higher educational institutions towards supporting inclusion and diversity. It is a labour of love and a mission to achieve a gender-inclusive institutional framework to achieve gender equity and promote women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) disciplines. Gender-equity framework have been exercising in the form of initiatives like ATHENA SWAN. However, GATI is an indigenous initiative. It is self-developed within India keeping in mind the Indian ethos and ecosystem. Importance on developing the quality of the institution based on capacity development and creation of opportunities for valuable experiences and growth for all was stressed upon. She explained the GSAT team about the GATI framework and methodology. The GATI framework enlists 7 criteria.

- Criteria 1- GATI Self- Assessment Team Processes
- Criteria – Gender Profile of the Institution.
- Criteria 3- Gender Advancement, Career Progression, Leadership.
- Criteria 4- Gender Policies, Processes, Procedures, Practices.
- Criteria 5- Gender Climate and Organizational Culture.
- Criteria 6- Institutional Values, Best Practices, Case Studies.

Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions (GATI) is important as it stands on the principles of bringing equity, celebrating diversity and honouring inclusivity for women in the field of STEM. It is a vision to enhance the participation of all underrepresented groups including women. Women enter into the education system by being awarded PhD degrees but by the time they progress through their academic journey and try to step up the ladder of occupational hierarchy, their numbers keep falling or they most likely relocate themselves in other work conducive to them. The major problems that come their way are lack of mentoring and support during the early years of their research. Women experience implicit and sometimes even explicit bias in appraisal and development. They suffer from lack of inclusion, recognition and opportunity and are constantly made to feel like an outsider which is detrimental for their growth at all levels. This Prof. Jolly calls the problem of the Leaky Pipeline in academia. As an example, amongst 629 Nobel Laureates in Science only 23 are women. At the national level, we have steps like reservation and affirmative action, but we

need to take up more gender-responsive efforts to bring equity, diversity and inclusion of women in STEM. Equity would help in providing a level playing field for work-force participation. Women on their own merit are looking for equal opportunity to showcase their talent and be rewarded for it. The GATI charter enlists the formation of GSAT (Gender Self-Assessment Team) who are given the responsibility to steer change, communicate and engage at the community level. They need to create engagement and awareness among the students, faculty, support staff, administration and stakeholders on issues of gender equity, diversity and inclusion. The GSAT is responsible for conducting awareness campaign on GATI Charter and GATI Pilot, conduct capacity building programmes through seminars, workshops and training programmes. To conclude, Prof. Pratibha Jolly requested the GSAT members and other participants of the programme to alter their prejudiced belief and value systems through thoughtfully designed sensitization programmes and achieve a gender-sensitive, gender-responsive and gender-inclusive environment for the promotion of women in STEM disciplines.

Followed by Professor Jolly's session was the presentation of the first resource person, Kamatchi Sankaranarayanan, Assistant Professor, IASST, Guwahati. Of the 7 criteria, Prof. Sankaranarayanan spoke on the 3rd Criteria of the GATI framework "Gender Advancement, Career Progression, Leadership". The Sustainable Development Goal 5 which deals with achieving gender equality was elaborately discussed. The various barriers that deter women in climbing the institutional and social ladder were focused upon. The gender-disparity in the leadership roles in the STEM fields were brought to light by Prof. Sankaranarayanan. There is clear gender gap being institutionalised in our everyday life, especially at the workplaces. These gender-based stereotypes hinder the way of career progression proves to be detrimental for a woman's growth and development in academia. Despite progress in the field of education and health, women continue to face economic challenges, denied political participation, equal pay and remain almost invisible in the decision-making process. She mentions about the reduced possibilities of career progression for women and the hindrances that come their way. About 43% of STEM graduates in India may be women-highest in the world but women's share in STEM jobs in India is a mere 14%. These statistics sourced from UNESCO Institute of Statistics show the discrepancy that exists in academia. The speaker also explained the implicit and sometimes, explicit biases that women face in their workplace. The Matilda Effect for example is a bias against acknowledging the achievements of those women scientists whose work is attributed to their male colleagues. It has happened to the work of some extraordinary female scientists as Lise Meitner, Rosalind Franklin and Marietta Blau. To make the session participative, Prof. Sankaranarayanan listed few questions for the participants to answer. Questions pertaining to impact of maternity leave on women's promotion after a long leave, recruitment policies etc. She summed up by suggesting that girls need to have the right role models and mentors so that they can be the ones leading the way because when girls see more women in positions of leadership either in the boardroom or senior management positions, it would be an aspiration for them all.

The 2nd resource person for the training programme was Professor Lipi Banerjee Mahanta, Associate Professor, IASST, Guwahati. Prof. Mahanta took up the Criteria 4 "Gender policies, Processes, Procedures, Practices". The Global Gender Gap Index with special reference to India was discussed. Additionally, the various policies developed by the Government of India for improving the Gender Gap were highlighted. Government schemes like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Mahila Shakti Kendra that aims to empower rural women with opportunities for skill development and employment, The National Creche Scheme ensures that women take up gainful employment through providing a safe, secure and stimulating environment to the children, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojna which aims to provide maternity benefit to pregnant and lactating mothers and the like. She further talked about the importance of building a gender-inclusive and gender-sensitive work culture that would facilitate favourable working conditions for all genders. She also spoke on formulation of gender policies. The basic elements of gender policy were highlighted. Gender Policies are necessary for promoting a just and gender equitable environment, it would act as a deterrent against gender discrimination and harassment both in workplace and in other areas. Moreover, it would facilitate a gender sensitive and conducive working environment. The programme ended with a vote of thanks to the participants, resource persons of the day.