

Women Tech it Up

Final Report

Recipient	Women Leaders in Technology
Recipient address	Pulchowk, Lalitpur, Nepal
Project name	Women Tech it Up
Project Location	Lalitpur, Nepal
Reporting period	September 2023 - March 2023
Report compiled by	Lhakpa Dolma Sherpa, Sarila Ngakhusi
Date submitted	

Introduction

Women Tech it Up is an alliance of women and organizations working with women/girls to empower them in tech. Women are still facing a significant gender gap in science and technology, and there are programs to help empower them by providing them with the necessary tools and resources to succeed in the field. By creating opportunities for networking, skill-building, and mentorship, these programs support women in tech and help bridge the gender gap. Initiatives like Women Tech it Up help to build a more equitable and diverse society by promoting women's leadership, influencing women-friendly policies and investment environments, and creating a safe and inclusive technological space for all.

Hence, programs like Women Tech it Up are essential as they focus on addressing the under-representation of women and girls in STEM fields. Women Leaders in Technology (WLIT) brought together representatives from various women representing different organizations working on grassroots level for gender equality in STEM for a 2-day facilitated summit (from September 10 to September 11) to identify problems and challenges faced by girls and women in tech. In this summit, through critical thinking, and brainstorming, the group came up with a couple of solutions that could address the problem more effectively and help create a more significant impact. Over the next four months, each organization conducted individual projects aligned with the mission and vision established at the summit, which was funded and supported by WLIT. With this summit, we were able to fund 25 different communities (organizations, groups, and IT clubs all led by women) and reached 3000+ students in total.

The main goal of Women Tech it Up was to promote the concept of "women for women," which encourages women to support and mentor each other in their careers. The facilitation from Mrs. Summera Shretha helped us make actionable points as follows:

Vision: to create a fair, equitable, knowledge-based, and resilient society, ensure safe, inclusive, and accessible technological options for all, specifically to women and girls

Why: to strengthen women leadership and collective agenda, to combat issues faced by women in technology, to influence women-friendly policy and investment environment

What: Promote gender friendly digital entrepreneurship, policy research, and advocacy, Awareness raising and capacity building including role models, Networking and alliance building

Activities

Women Tech It Up announcement

In September 2023, we started the second Women Tech It Up application process, distributing the application forms through our social media channels via an open call. We received applications from 14 organizations across six districts. After careful evaluation based on geographical distribution, the composition of the organizing committee, and the target audience, we selected nine organizations to participate in the program.

Organizations that applied for Women Tech it Up subgranting:

S.N	Organization
1.	Brightland College
2.	Build and Train
3.	IOE Pulchowk Girls
4.	Katha.akar Nepal Team
5.	Kathmandu University Computer Club
6.	KBC-IT CLUB
7.	Learn N Share Organization
8.	Lumbini Elite
9.	Nutan Research and Innovation Centre
10.	Office of Safe and Respectable Learning
11.	Pulchowk Girls

12.	Robotics Club of LEC and BMC IT Club
13.	Safer I
14.	The Algorithm

Selected organizations and their projects:

S. N	Organization	Project	District where the project was implemented	Number of people reached
1.	Brightland College	Design Thinking Workshop	Nepalgunj	19
2.	Katha.akar Nepal Team	Katha.akar: Shaping Stories	Tanahu	16
3.	Kathmandu University Computer Club	EmpowerHER Event	Dhulikhel	70
4.	Learn N Share Organization	Git & GitHub Workshop	Butwal	18
5.	Lumbini Elite	Empowering Girls in Graphic Design	Butwal	27
6.	The Algorithm	“म भित्रको म”	Kathmandu	15
7.	IOE Pulchowk Girls	3 days React workshop	Kathmandu	65
8.	Safer I	Tech for Moms	Kirtipur	24
9.	Exploring Feminist Data and Design	OSRL	Kathmandu	7

1. Program Name: Women Tech it Up 2023/24

2. Date: 2nd Feb, 2024

3. Social Media Post(link):

a. Posted by Sarila Ngakhusi :

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/773273963957212/permalink/981617116456228/>

4. Description

Please describe the program in a short paragraph. Include the design, intention, and need of the program.

Women Tech it Up is an alliance of women and organizations working with women/girls to empower them in tech. Women are still facing a significant gender gap in science and technology, and there are programs to help empower them by providing them with the necessary tools and resources to succeed in the field. By creating opportunities for networking, skill-building, and mentorship, these programs support women in tech and help bridge the gender gap. Initiatives like Women Tech it Up help to build a more equitable and diverse society by promoting women's leadership, influencing women-friendly policies and investment environments, and creating a safe and inclusive technological space for all.

Last year's impact and the broad reach of various small organizations and clubs touched many lives, reinforcing our belief in the necessity of continuing this cause. Regrettably, this year we lacked dedicated funding for the Women Tech it Up program. As a result, we reallocated funds from the FREE STEM initiative, enabling us to support 10 clubs with 15,000 rupees each.

These clubs are expected to pursue the same thematic focus as last year: fostering a fair, equitable, and knowledge-driven society while ensuring safe, inclusive, and accessible technological opportunities, particularly for women and girls. Furthermore, we have decided to concentrate these programs outside the Kathmandu Valley, where such activities and opportunities are scarce.

5. Activities

Please list/describe activities carried out as a part of the program, if any.

As part of this year's Women Tech it Up subgrant, We started accepting concept notes from September 2nd, 2023. We've received applications from 14 different IT clubs and small groups with the community among whom we have chosen 9 projects aligning with our mission to receive subgrant.

Fixed Activities for WTIU:

1. Application open
2. Social media sharing and networking (inform alumni and encourage them to apply)

3. Review application and select the one within our team with sustainable and impactful projects
4. Inform selected applicants and reach agreement - about financial support, or any other resources (trainers, venue, partners) if needed, discuss bills, reimbursement model, our role as WLIT, etc.
5. Make and sign MOU
6. Attend event, and followup for bills and report after project is completed
7. Reimburse them and collect physical bills - involve finance officer

6. Highlights

What happened that was remarkable about the program? This can be an interesting instance or something to be proud of.

Among the nine organizations that participated in the Women Tech It Up project, two were led by female student clubs: Learn n Share and Lumbini Elite Club, both based in Butwal. Additionally, a project was led by a female student from Nepalgunj, affiliated with Brightland College. These initiatives organized workshops such as "Empowering Girls in Graphic Design," "Git and GitHub," and "Design Thinking Workshop." All the projects were led and managed by undergraduate students for their peers.

Firstly, a highlight of the program was the EmpowerHer post-event in Dhulikhel, which was attended by 70 individuals. Key features included a reflection session where six participants shared their #imremarkable stories, a "Wall of Hope" activity for participants to express their aspirations, and panel discussions on "Empowering Women: Challenges and Opportunities," featuring speeches by female professionals in government on the topic of "Women in Tech for and Within the Government."

Secondly, Katha.akar is a women-led project dedicated to amplifying women's voices in the media and preserving their cultures through storytelling, primarily featuring participant stories.

Furthermore, "म भित्रको म" (Me Within Me) by The Algorithm celebrates the inspiring journeys of five professional women and eleven female students from Padma Kanya College. These two projects focus on sharing the stories of

successful women and creating role models, particularly in the field of IT careers. They not only showcase women's achievements but also offer networking and mentorship opportunities, thereby enriching the program's impact.

Additionally, Tech for Moms taught adult women in Kirtipur about internet safety, including social media features like Facebook's safety tools and the social marketplace. These concepts, which are simple for young people, posed challenges for the older participants.

7. Impact

What changes because of the program and why is it important? Does it cover a planned impact and outcome from the proposal?

The program has facilitated several significant changes, including the enhancement of leadership and teamwork skills among students, the amplification of women's voices, the establishment of networks connecting successful and aspiring women, and the support provided to grow small clubs led by females to practice their leadership skills.

These changes are crucial as they have the potential to empower individuals and communities alike. By nurturing leadership and teamwork abilities in students, the program equips them with essential skills necessary for personal and professional growth. Furthermore, by amplifying the voices of women, the program contributes to gender equality and diversity, fostering a more inclusive society where all perspectives are valued. Additionally, by creating networks that bring together accomplished and aspiring women, the program facilitates mentorship, knowledge exchange, and support, thereby assisting women in reaching their aspirations and goals.

These outcomes are in line with the planned impact and objectives detailed in the program proposal. Through the development of leadership and teamwork skills, the promotion of women's voices, and the establishment of networks, the program effectively addresses its goals of empowering individuals, fostering gender

equality, and building supportive communities. The program's influence extends beyond its immediate participants, positively impacting society as a whole by promoting empowerment, inclusivity, and collaboration.

8. Quantifiable results/indicators achieved

Please include results that are quantifiable. E.g.: Number of people reached, number of participants, and things achieved by participants of the program. Also, include if any quantifiable indicators from the proposal MEL was achieved.

This project directly engaged over 260 participants from six districts: Butwal, Dhulikhel, Kathmandu, Kirtipur, Morang, and Nepalgunj. Specifically, there were 19 participants from Nepalgunj, 45 from Butwal, and 16 from Morang. All projects were led by females, including three initiatives led by female clubs or groups outside the Kathmandu Valley.

The project successfully engaged a diverse range of participants, from adult and professional women to school children, demonstrating inclusion across various educational levels. This diversity highlights the project's broad reach and inclusive nature, encompassing students at different educational stages, undergraduates, and accomplished professionals.

9. Challenges and lessons

Please include what challenges(limitations/obstacles) you faced and how the program could have handled it better. You can include a recommendation answer to how the challenges could be overcome next time. what the program will do better, does it happen again?

- Ensuring that selected organizations were genuinely led by women or had significant female involvement was challenging. Some organizations did not meet the criteria fully, which impacted the program's goals of empowering women.
- Timely collection of reports from the organizations that received support was problematic. Delays in reporting hindered the assessment of project

impacts and the overall evaluation process.

- Some organizations failed to apply on time, leading to delays in project implementation and reduced participation.

10. Good Practices

What are good practices that the program followed that should be continued next time as well?

- Regularly sharing updates and highlights of the projects on the Women Tech It Up social media page.
- Having Women Tech It Up (WLIT) representatives attend project events to observe their impact

11. [Applications form](#)

12. [Reports submitted by organizations](#)