

# Women in Technology

## *Cisco Networking Academy Scholarship Program*

### ALGERIA SUMMARY REPORT March 2006

This report provides highlights from the Women in Technology Program (WIT) in Algeria. The WIT program is a pilot project sponsored by the **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)**, and administered by the **Institute of International Education (IIE)**, through a grant from the **dot-GOV Program of Internews Network**. The program provided scholarship awards to women to attend the **Cisco Networking Academy Program (CNAP)**, a comprehensive global training program that teaches students to design, build, and maintain computer networks, preparing them for industry-standard certification as networking professionals.



*Algeria WIT students attend Cisco Academy conference in Algiers*

### ABOUT THE ACADEMIES

The WIT program in Algeria trained women from October 2004 through March 2006 at two Cisco Networking Academies hosted at the following institutions:

- Ecole Nationale des Postes et Télécommunications (ENPT) - Algiers
- Université des Sciences et des Technologies d'Oran (USTO) - Oran

### ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

The WIT program was publicized extensively through the Academies as well as through NGOs and government agencies in Algeria. IIE convened selection committee panels comprised of specialists and nationals with expertise in women's empowerment and the IT field to review applications and select award recipients.

Applications received from Algeria: **163**  
Scholarships awarded to Algeria: **40**

Demographics	
<b>Average age:</b>	32
<b>Age Range:</b>	24 to 51
<b>Marital Status:</b>	
Single:	80%
Married:	20%

## PARTICIPANT SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

Participant survey responses confirm that the WIT program in Algeria succeeded in preparing women for a future career in IT. The following responses provide a highlight of the survey results from WIT Algeria.

### **How do you find the level of difficulty of the training?**

90% responded “Challenging but right for my level”

### **Have you learned skills that will be valuable to you in your future career?**

95% responded “Yes”

### **Are you willing to serve as a mentor or role model to girls and women interested in pursuing a career in Information Technology?**

85% responded “Yes”

### **Would you recommend this course to other women?**

100% responded “Yes”

*I encountered every possible obstacle to participate in this training. The head of my department did not understand why I would benefit from this training and he did not want to give me the time to go to classes at ENPT. It was only with the intervention of his supervisor that I was allowed to go. It has been a difficult year for me, but I do not regret my decision to attend this training at all. Thank you so much!*

*--ENPT Algiers WIT student*

## INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK

Instructor feedback on the WIT pilot program in Algeria shows interest in participating in the program again and confirmed that there is **high demand** among women for this type of training.

When asked which additional training or enrichment activities would best support the career development of the WIT students, the instructor feedback mirrors participant feedback stating that in addition to the IT training, career and soft skills training as well as IT policy training would be helpful. The importance of internship/job placement assistance as well as additional computer and IT training programs was also stressed.

## INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

Participant survey results show that the WIT Algeria pilot program was very beneficial for the students and well-received by instructors. In order to continue and build upon the positive impact of the WIT program in Algeria, IIE looks to expand the WIT program in Algeria in the following ways:

1. ***Expand the program to reach more women and more academies across the country***
2. ***Include additional computer/IT training options***
3. ***Incorporate professional development and IT policy training components***
4. ***Create an alumnae network and sustainable women's IT association***

## CONCLUSION

The WIT pilot program in Algeria has been successful in providing its participants the skills and information necessary to pursue a career in the IT field. Participants attest to the value of the training and its role in increasing their opportunities in the IT industry and **raising their economic status and independence**. They strongly agree that the program should continue and expand to serve more women in Algeria.

By providing women with access to cutting-edge IT skills and practical training as well as professional development activities and the ability to organize a sustainable professional association, the WIT program is ideally positioned to empower women with the skills they need to become **pioneers for change** in their society.

IIE welcomes all inquiries and invites additional sponsors and partners for the expansion of the program.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information on the WIT program, please contact the Institute of International Education at [wit@iie.org](mailto:wit@iie.org).

*"Women in my country have so little opportunities to benefit from trainings like this one.  
At the university training is only available for men. Who knows why!"*

*--ENPT Algiers WIT student*