Women in Technology

Cisco Networking Academy Scholarship Program

MOROCCO SUMMARY REPORT
March 2006

This report provides highlights of the Women in Technology Program (WIT) in Morocco. 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.

*Ambassador Riley with WIT students
ENSET Rabat*

ABOUT THE ACADEMIES

The WIT program in Morocco trained women from January 2005 through March 2006 at four Cisco Networking Academies hosted at the following institutions:

- Ecole Normale Supérieur de l'Enseignement Technique (ENSET Rabat)
- Ecole Normale Supérieur de l'Enseignement Technique (ENSET Mohammedia)
- Institut Supérieur de Technologie Appliquée (ISTA Mohammedia)
- Institut Supérieur de Technologie Appliquée (ISTA Errachidia)

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

The WIT program was publicized extensively through the Academies as well as through NGOs and government agencies in Morocco. A large number of applicants were recruited by Peace Corps Volunteers throughout the country. 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 Morocco: **448**
Scholarships awarded to Morocco: **100**

Demographics	
Average age:	29
Age Range:	19 to 49
Marital Status:	
Single:	83**%**
Married:	15**%**
Widowed:	2**%**

PARTICIPANT SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

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

How do you find the level of difficulty of the training?
93% responded "Challenging but right for my level"

Have you learned skills that will be valuable to you in your future career?
86% responded "Yes"

Would you recommend this course to other women?
92% 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?
88% responded "Yes"

We are far behind other countries in the field of technology - statistics show that Africa has only three servers per 10,000 inhabitants […] Furthermore, ITCs have a huge impact on cultural practices and it's for these reasons that this program could change this situation, one community at a time and that will start to influence the whole country.
— ISTA Mohammedia WIT student

WIT Orientation at ENSET Rabat

INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK

Instructors provided feedback on the WIT pilot program in Morocco, for which they stated their 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 instructors agreed that **internship/job placement assistance** is very important, as well as, additional computer and IT training programs, career skills training and attendance at conferences and meetings and membership in professional IT associations.

INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

WIT Morocco participants provided valuable feedback that will help to create an even stronger, more effective program in the future. Many participants affirmed the need to target more women who lack basic computer skills or who work outside of the technology field as well as **organize activities to bring awareness to women in remote parts of the country**. They also recommended frequent refresher courses and a basic computer skills orientation course for newcomers to the field of IT. Finally, instructors and students alike stressed the need for additional **training in English and French** to help students succeed in the IT field.

In order to continue and build upon the positive impact of the WIT program in Morocco, IIE looks to expand the WIT program in Morocco 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 language training components*
4. *Create an alumnae network and sustainable women's IT association*

CONCLUSION

The WIT pilot program in Morocco 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 Morocco.

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***.

This program is important as it opens doors, sometimes difficult to access, for women in our society. Furthermore, the program allows for advancement in technology in our society to come through women. A society where men and women posses the same level of skill is a society that will progress at the greatest speed.
-- WIT Instructor, ENSET Rabat