

Enhancing Employability of Women in Information Technology (IT) Sector

**News Clipping of
Project Launching Ceremony**



**Project: “Enhancing Employability of Female Graduates in
Information Technology (IT) Sector in Lahore”**

Dated: 25th June, 2015

Venue: Best Western Hotel Lahore

**USAID Small Grants and Ambassador's Fund
Program**

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Media Coverage:

THE EXPRESS
TRIBUNE
WITH THE *International New York Times*

Pilot project

'Women underrepresented in the IT sector'

120 women will be placed across 10 universities under placement initiative

AMEL GHANI
LAHORE

The Information Technology (IT) sector plays a pivotal role in the global economy, Sanjh Preet (SP) CEO Abid Hussain Gill said on Thursday.

He was speaking at the launch of a pilot project aimed at making the environment in the sector women-friendly. "Some of the most affluent people across the world come from the sector," Gill said. He said despite its global pre-eminence, women were underrepresented in the sector in the nation. He said SP had discussed the issue with women, universities and

owners of IT companies before launching the project.

Gill said the pilot would place 120 women in 10 companies for three-month long internships. He said SP would also work closely with the companies to help devise policies that would enable a greater number of women to join them.

Programme director Pervaiz Akhtar shed light on some of the challenges that prevent women IT students from pursuing a career in the sector. He said the sector was perceived to be dominated by men where there was little space for women to

function. Akhtar said this compelled many women to become educators instead of professionals. He said marriage and motherhood also made women leave their jobs as relevant benefits were not provided in the sector.

Akhtar said those employed in the sector did not tend to have set working hours. He said this was the chief reason that prevented woman from working in the sector. Akhtar said of the few women who opted to study IT even fewer pursued it professionally. Stressing the salient features of the pilot project, he said the 120 women would be se-

lected through a competitive process. He said they would be provided Rs300 daily to cover their transportation costs. Akhtar said SP would also try to secure additional stipends for them from the companies they were placed at.

Reservations were raised on the occasion by representatives of several IT companies. Brainoids CEO Sohail Zafar Cheema said the sector did not invest in interns. Cheema, a former provincial minister, said software houses' resources like the provision of a computer and the guidance of a senior professional. He said the benefits

of such an initiative to the sector were unclear.

Hussain Ahmed of Net Revelation said he had observed that women were not capable of performing logical and technical work. He claimed women also focussed their energies on getting married. IT academic Sadia Shehzad challenged his assertion saying that most of the women in her classes outperformed men. She said the lack of a conducive environment was the chief hindrance for them. Shehzad said it was becoming increasingly common for IT profession to work from home instead of doing

late-night shifts at offices. She said initiatives should be taken to make the sector more women-friendly.

The Dream View CEO stressed the importance of encouraging women in the sector to branch out and establish their own businesses. He said most women tended to be indisposed towards this in contrast to men. The Dream View CEO said this enabled men to take advantage of the vast amounts of outsourced work made available by international companies.

The SP has collaborated with the USAID Ambassador's Fund over the initiative.

The Nation

Internship for IT graduates

LAHORE: A project has been launched in the city to enhance employability of females in Information Technology (IT) sector by facilitating creation of a gender-friendly environment in 10 IT companies.

The project has been designed to place 120 female IT graduates as internees in the same companies. The project is a joint venture of Sanjh Preet and USAID Ambassador Fund Program.—PR

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آئی ٹی میں گریجویٹ خواتین کیلئے انٹرن شپ پروگرام کا آغاز

پروگرام کا آغاز سائبر پریست اور یو ایس ایڈ کے اشتراک سے کیا گیا۔

لاہور (پ ر) آئی ٹی کے شعبے میں خواتین کی بڑھتی ہوئی تعداد کو مدنظر رکھتے ہوئے تیار کردہ اس پروگرام کے تحت ایک سو بیس خواتین کو انٹرن شپ کے مواقع فراہم کرنے کیلئے سائبر پریست اور یو ایس ایڈ کے اشتراک سے ایک سو بیس خواتین کیلئے انٹرن شپ پروگرام کا آغاز کیا گیا ہے۔ لاہور کے ایک ہائی ٹیک کمپنی میں انٹرن شپ کے مواقع فراہم کیے جائیں گے۔ یو ایس ایڈ کے اشتراک سے تیار کردہ اس پروگرام کی لاگت تقریباً دو لاکھ روپے ہے۔



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