

# ProGirls

## Professional Orientation of Girls



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ECONOWIN



The EconoWin programme of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) has entered into partnership with numerous companies and business associations in the MENA region, together with European/German companies as a means of professionalizing the management of Gender Diversity to promote employment opportunities for women. To enhance the female talent pipeline in companies, ProGirls project provides professional orientation for young female students and is implemented in cooperation with schools in Egypt, Tunisia and Jordan. EconoWin and its component ProGirls are commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) Germany.

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ProGirls – Professional Orientation of Girls

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## Foreword

The countries of North Africa and the Middle East have the world's lowest female participation rates within the workforce. Women make up only approximately one fifth of the employees. Less educated women are more likely to be working, although generally in poorly paid jobs offering no social security. Right across the social spectrum, traditional role models are an obstacle to equal opportunities in the labor market<sup>1</sup>.

Women are less likely to be recruited than men, despite possessing necessary skills. At the same time, numerous companies experience difficulties in filling vacancies. Women's potential consequently remains untapped. Moreover, it is clear, that huge economic potential lies in the full participation of women in the economy. The McKinsey Global Institute estimates that bridging the gender gap could add up to USD 2.7 trillion to the annual GDP of the MENA region in 2025<sup>2</sup>.

GIZ with its programme EconoWin cooperates with nearly 20 companies all over the MENA region to better attract, retain and promote women and men equally by the professional management of Gender Diversity. To enhance the female talent pipeline in companies and to motivate young female students towards unusual jobs, ProGirls/Professional Orientation of Girls project is implemented in Egypt, Tunisia and Jordan. Have a look how Egyptian companies engage in the project by opening their doors for young female talents.

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1 ILO, 2016: Women in Business and Management. Gaining Momentum in the Middle East and North Africa. International Labour Organization Regional Office for Arab States

2 McKinsey Global Institut, 2015: The Power of Parity: How advancing women's equality can add \$12 trillion to global growth. McKinsey&Company

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## ProGirls

In Egypt, female students are mostly outperforming boys in schools and universities<sup>3</sup>, but are underrepresented in the workforce, especially in technical- and management careers. 24.7 per cent of all Egyptian women are unemployed in comparison to 8.3 per cent of all men<sup>4</sup>; only 7.1 per cent of all managers are female<sup>5</sup>. Although the average percentage of Egyptian women enrolled in STEM- (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) university studies is 43 per cent<sup>6</sup>, only 9 per cent of the Egyptian engineering workforce is female<sup>7</sup>.

ProGirls therefore enhances the professional orientation of 16-year-old Egyptian female pupils in cooperation with private sector companies with a focus on STEM- (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) jobs and managerial positions. Girls gain first-hand experience of new fields of work and encounter female role models as a means of widening their career options through three different formats: Girls'Day, female mentoring and internships.

Throughout two-week internships girls are implementing small tasks and job-shadow to get to know the working environment and female role models in a company, supervised and guided by well-prepared female supervisors. During online-, telephone- or life mentoring sessions, girls (mentees) are coached by successful and trained women (mentors) occupying leading positions in technical- or managerial fields. On Girls'Day, a one-day professional orientation event, companies open their doors for female pupils, who discover their dream jobs and learn what it takes to work as a woman in the world of STEM and leadership.

Since 2017, ProGirls has been implemented jointly by GIZ and its EconoWin programme and by PASCH (Schools: Partners for the Future Initiative), coordinated by Goethe-Institut Kairo and Alexandria<sup>8</sup>. 200 female pupils from public and private schools in Cairo, Alexandria, Damanhur and Sohag as well as 50 Egyptian private sector companies have participated till now. This booklet provides some insights into the benefits ProGirls is having on selected companies, female mentors, girls, teachers and schools.

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3 UNESCO, 2018: [https://en.unesco.org/unesco\\_science\\_report/arab-states](https://en.unesco.org/unesco_science_report/arab-states)

4 ILO, 2018: [http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/ Page3.jspx;ILOSTATCOOKIE=5HoBWso7i9\\_XH916OpPGalg5jQ2iY3ukUNMdwsh\\_BJl2YSzhQos\\_11254440622?MBL\\_ID=2&.adf.ctrl-state=1oevl89ny\\_92&.afLoop=682008984104327&.afWindowMode=0&.afWindowId=null#%40%40%3F\\_.afWindowId%3Dnull%26\\_.afLoop%3D682008984104327%26MBL\\_ID%3D2%26\\_.afWindowMode%3D0%26\\_.adf.ctrl-state%3D70geb6s0z\\_4](http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/ Page3.jspx;ILOSTATCOOKIE=5HoBWso7i9_XH916OpPGalg5jQ2iY3ukUNMdwsh_BJl2YSzhQos_11254440622?MBL_ID=2&.adf.ctrl-state=1oevl89ny_92&.afLoop=682008984104327&.afWindowMode=0&.afWindowId=null#%40%40%3F_.afWindowId%3Dnull%26_.afLoop%3D682008984104327%26MBL_ID%3D2%26_.afWindowMode%3D0%26_.adf.ctrl-state%3D70geb6s0z_4)

5 ILO, 2016: Women in Business and Management. Gaining Momentum in the Middle East and North Africa, [http://ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms\\_446101.pdf](http://ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_446101.pdf)

6 World Journal of Education, 2017: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1162654.pdf>

7 HR Revolution Middle East Journal, 2017: <http://www.hrrevolution.me/is-there-any-place-for-women-engineers-in-egypt-and-greece/>

8 The Goethe-Institut is the Federal Republic of Germany's cultural institute, active worldwide. It promotes the study of German abroad and encourages international cultural exchange.



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# Girls'Day



SIEMENS

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# SIEMENS Encouraging Gender Diversity

With more than 1000 employees Siemens is focusing on fostering diversity of its workforce by including more women. ProGirls supports the company in achieving these goals.

During Girls'Day, female pupils learn what it takes to be an engineer, how electricity is being produced and distributed and turbines are working.

“ ProGirls gives girls a chance to experience jobs that are unusual for women. This really proves that girls can do the same thing as men.”

**Lujain Ahmed Rizk Ali,**  
Pupil at Knowledge Valley School



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“ It is very important for Siemens to integrate the new generation into the working world. For us, this is part of giving back to the community.”

**Gilane Elwi,**  
HR Business Partner

“ We encourage diversity and empower women through our company. ProGirls contributes to these goals.”

**Ahmed El-Saied,**  
HR Operation Consultant



# MARIB

## Enhancing Corporate Social Responsibility

Marib International Garments produces ready-made clothing for costumers in Europe and America. Including female workers in their production chain, Marib is a forerunner in closing the gender gap. During Girls'Day, Marib provides girls with insights into the clothing production.

“ The Girls'Day shows me that STEM is for everyone. On this day, I could experience work in a STEM related company.”

**Nour Allah Walid,**  
Pupil at Mostaqbal School



“ ProGirls enforces the CSR of Marib and demonstrates our communal responsibility. Also, it strengthens women's role in the society.”

**Doaa Hussein Elsayed,**  
Project Manager

The female students get to know how their beloved denim trousers are produced and find female role models in the world of work.

# ALEX PHARMACIES

## Boosting PR through Girls' Day

In its three branches, Alex Pharmacies is passing on its knowledge to younger generations. During Girls' Day, girls get insights into what it means to manage and build up a pharmacy chain as a woman. They also learn more about the compounding of liquids as well as the logistics behind a delivery system.

“ ProGirls is marketing for Alex Pharmacies. The company can present itself as a steady working organization investing in the future of girls.”

**Dr. Azza Mahfouz,**  
Founder/ Manager



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“ I learned skills that helped me to find my career. After participating at ProGirls, I want to become a pharmacist.”

**Mai Ashraf,**  
Pupil at Al-Quds School



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# Female Mentoring



# COCA-COLA Changing Perspective

The Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Egypt is the largest soft drink bottler and distributor in the Middle East. The company participates in ProGirls to promote women's role in its structure, enforce an exchange of perspectives and eventually enhance Coca-Cola's performance.

“ ProGirls helps me to decide which career I want to follow.”

**Hanan Hany,**  
Pupil at Futures School



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“ We believe that including women in the working process makes the company more innovative and successful.”

**Nourhan Nahel,**  
Senior Human Resource Specialist

To advance this change, Coca-Cola engages in the female mentoring sessions to discuss different career paths, discover their strengths and improve communication skills.



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# GERMAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO

## Overcoming Stereotypes

The German University in Cairo (GUC) is an Egyptian private university offering 71 undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes. Still more male than female students are enrolled at the Faculty of Engineering.

“ Through ProGirls, the girls get introduced to successful female engineers. This challenges the stereotype that engineering is mainly for men.”

**Dr.-Ing. Maggie Mashaly,**  
Assistant Professor



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“ After participating at ProGirls, I see a big chance for me to have a career in the field of robotics.”

**Habiba Ashraf,**  
Pupil at Mostaqbal School

To overcome the stereotype of engineering being only for men, the faculty participates in ProGirls. Female mentees are introduced to different disciplines such as Networks, Robotics and Computer Science along with what it takes to work as a female professor in ICT.



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# MICROSOFT Bridging the Gender Gap

The world leading IT multinational Microsoft works on empowering young girls to join STEM education and careers. To close the gender gap, young female talents are trained and mentored on digital skills and computer skills.



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“ At Microsoft, we are eager to bridge the gender gap in the STEM field and encourage the young generation of girls to join us.”

**Samar Halawa,**  
Philanthropies Leader

“ Through ProGirls I discovered my strengths and got ideas and opportunities about my future career.”

**Alaa Mohamed,**  
Pupil at Mostaqbal School



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They learn how to better use technology in their education and are introduced to different career paths in the field of ICT. Furthermore, through ProGirls mentees get insights into the work of their mentors.

# THYSSENKRUPP

## Increasing Team Spirit

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The international engineering company ThyssenKrupp distributes elevator technology in Egypt. Through engaging in female mentoring, the company does not only aim to develop the society. Mentoring also increases the team spirit within ThyssenKrupp.

“Through ProGirls, I experienced working in a company and this will help me a lot to choose my career plan.”

**Nour Allah Walid,**  
Pupil at Mostaqbal School



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“Mentoring is joyable because of passing on experience to others. Being a mentor makes you proud of your work and your company.”

**Nihad Fahim,**  
Country HR Director

Joining the ProGirls workshops for female mentors enforces the communality and hosting the mentoring sessions at the company deepens the corporate feeling. During the sessions, girls learn calculation techniques, experience tasks in HR and tendering, and learn about different career paths in the field of engineering.







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# Internships



# GAS, MERCEDES-BENZ

## Growing Acceptance Towards Female Workers

GAS – Mercedes-Benz Service Center, PC. Egypt, provides after sales services and spare parts to Mercedes-Benz passenger car customers. During their internship at the company, girls experience what it means to be an engineer and a business developer.

“ ProGirls raises the awareness as to discrimination and spreads positive communal ideas that will render the company attractive.”  
**Maha Mowafy,**  
 Business Developer



“ ProGirls made me feel I can do something new, different and usually performed by men. ProGirls really promotes equality.”  
**Omneya Kamel,**  
 Pupil at Egyptian Language School



They are assisting in repairing cars, exchanging tires in the workshop, managing customer relations and touch upon quality management. Through the presence of the girls at Mercedes GAS car workshop, the blue-collar workers get used to the idea that women can work on the same tasks just like men.

# VODAFONE

## Inspired by Female Role Models

Vodafone Egypt has a strong focus on gender equality. Through participating in ProGirls, girls are offered two-week summer internships which also supports Vodafone to spot future female employees.



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“It is important to see women as role-models who can have a work-life balance and who are achieving big things in their career.”

**Farah Aboeela,**  
HR Senior Specialist

“I have experienced being a real employee for two weeks. The words “HR” and telecommunication are no more mystery for me, they have become a real career path.”

**Rola Attia,**  
Pupil at Knowledge Valley School



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The girls get to know Vodafone’s concept of employer branding, they engage practically in global conference calls and are inspired by interviewing female employees as role models. These women give advice on what it means to work in managerial positions.

# LIFE CARE TECHNOLOGY

## Thinking Beyond Biases

Life Care Technology equips hospitals all over Egypt with life-supporting machines. The company installs engines to support breathing, surgical tables and emergency equipment. Professions in medical engineering are very important but mostly occupied by males.

“ I want to prove that girls can work just like boys. There aren't any jobs that are made for only one gender.”

**Farah Sherif,**  
Pupil at Futures School



“ Seeing the girls getting familiar with the medical engineering field, shows me that our company is doing the right thing in introducing them to this male-dominated area.”

**Elena Jasinska,**  
Order Processing

Therefore, Life Care engages in ProGirls. During an internship girls learn how a respiration apparatus is working, and visit hospitals to see how medical engines are installed and run by doctors and nurses.

# PROMETEON-PIRELLI

## Investing in the Talents of Tomorrow

Prometeon-Pirelli produces and supplies tires for busses, trucks and agricultural vehicles in Alexandria. As part of investing in the talents of tomorrow, Prometeon-Pirelli provides internships for female pupils at their site. The girls learn about finance, inspect the workshop and get insights into industrial engineering.



We help girls today and maybe in the future they work with us. There is nothing more powerful than supporting future female talents."

**Saeed A. Gawad,**  
HSE & Sustainability Consultant



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I am into engineering and this internship made me sure about it."

**Rokaya Yasser,**  
Pupil at STEM School



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# ProGirls in Schools





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Not only female pupils and companies benefit from participating in ProGirls. The involved schools experience innovation, promotion and recognition through the project as well. The Egyptian teachers play a key role in introducing professional orientation and gender sensitive learning to their pupils. These topics add an extra value to the curriculum. Teachers are having a major influence on the professional and personal future of their pupils: They guide the girls through the project and see them becoming more secure about their study-, work-, and personal life aspirations.

“ ProGirls is a bridge to the real life and thus contributes to our school's mission: We teach for life.”  
**Fatma Ismael,**  
 Teacher at Egyptian Language School

“ Our school benefits a lot from ProGirls as we now include topics of professional orientation and gender sensitive learning in our lessons.”  
**Mona El Aguz,**  
 Teacher at Mostaqbal School



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“ ProGirls has shaped the girls' character, they have become much more self confident and independent.”  
**Nadia Kholef,**  
 Teacher at Knowledge Valley School



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“ Before their participation in ProGirls, the girls wanted to become fashion designers or study art. Now they want to become engineers.”  
**Marina Hossam,**  
 Teacher at Nefeteri School

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