

From where I stand: “I have no regrets and I am very convinced with my career choice”

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Marwa Saber is a practical electricity teacher at Electro Misr Applied Technology School in Cairo, a wife, and a mother of two girls. Saber is one of the 40 staff who benefited from the Information Technology (IT) training that was delivered to the teachers and administrative staff of 3 Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) schools in Cairo and Alexandria over the period from 30 August until 30 September 2020 through the “TVET for Girls initiative”. This training focused on various digital literacy topics such as the use of Microsoft Office and internet browsing applications. It was developed in support of the Ministry of Education & Technical Education policy for the academic year 2020/2021 that promotes blended learning modalities (inclusion of distance learning/ online learning) to cope with COVID-19 preventative measures.

We spoke to Saber to learn about her reflections on her career and how the training contributed to enhancing her skills and her capacities.



Marwa Saber (right) attends the IT training at Electro Misr Applied Technology School. Photo: Courtesy of IECD.

“My father used to work in the electrical field. He was the only one who encouraged me to join the same field and he strongly believed in my capabilities, but my mother and my extended family were a bit skeptical. During my school time, whenever someone heard that I am a vocational high school student, they would immediately think that I am not smart enough, but this [misconception] never stopped me from doing what I want.

After I successfully finished my vocational high school degree, I enrolled in the Faculty of Industrial Education, department of Electrical Technology. During my undergraduate studies, I used to help my classmates who struggled with electricity classes and this made me feel a sense of accomplishment. At the beginning [of my studies], I wanted to be an engineer but after realizing that I was talented in teaching, I decided that this will be my goal in life.

We are now living in the digital era and everyone must know how to use computers and how to browse the internet. In that regard, the IT training that we received [through the “TVET for Girls Initiative”] was very beneficial and timely. Before I received the training, I already tried to learn how to use Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel applications, but after applying the lessons that I learned from the training, I am now able to finish in an hour what I used to finish in days. Moreover, the training helped me learn how to [effectively] use other essential Microsoft applications such as ‘Microsoft PowerPoint’, which allowed me to make my classes more interactive by adding pictures and animated illustrations.

My dream is to have a positive impact on [the life of] every student. For me, teaching is not just about transferring learning knowledge, but also about values and ethics. I try to be a role model through every word that I say and everything that I do. Finally, I have no regrets and I am very convinced with my career choice. My daughters see me as a role model, and I hope that they grow up and choose the fields that they want to pursue without ever thinking that they are not capable of achieving their goals.”



The “TVET for Girls initiative” is implemented through a collaboration between UN Women Egypt and the Institut Européen de Coopération et de Développement (IECD) within the framework of the joint UN Women-ILO regional programme “Promoting Productive Employment and Decent Work for Women in Egypt, Jordan and Palestine”. Through the “TVET for Girls initiative”, the programme aims to empower women in the TVET sector such as Saber who trains future women electricians. The programme’s efforts in addressing the gendered challenges in the TVET sector contributes to the achievement of [SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls](#) and [SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all](#). The joint UN Women-ILO regional programme is implemented in Egypt in partnership with the National Council for Women (NCW) and the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and is generously funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida).

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