

## **Concept for mentors in the context of the Female Internship Program (FIP)**

### **Overall Objective**

The female internship initiative pursues three goals:

- Enhance gender equality within GIZ Pakistan by balancing the staff composition;
- Support Pakistani qualified women in finding entry points for employment;
- Increase GIZ's access to prospective employees.

In order to achieve these goals, female interns receive cross-cutting accompanying services and offers, including at least

- Overall induction/onboarding to GIZ
- Capacity building, e.g. application trainings
- Mentor
- Back-brief at the end of the internship.

### **Mentor's Role**

The objective of an individual mentorship in this context is to offer feedback, guidance and exchange on cross-cutting issues of developing a professional personality such as highlighting individual strengths and weaknesses, developing an individual professional long-term vision, professional code of conduct, work ethics, etc.

The mentor's role is to be distinguished from the project supervisor's role who is responsible for the job-related deployment, guidance and performance of the intern. Whereas the supervisor serves as a guide and point of contact for all subject-matter, project and job-related issues, the mentor takes a broader view regarding the prospects of the intern on the future labor market.

Mentor and supervisor might face overlap in their work with the interns and should consult each other closely.

## **Mentor's Tasks**

In detail, the mentor has the following tasks:

- Conduct an initial meeting with an intern, explain the overall purpose of the mentorship and elicit whether cooperation matches from both sides
- Agree on a rhythm of meetings with the intern and offer availability on demand
- Elicit topics of mutual interest to focus on during the mentorship
- Seek third party perspectives on performance/behavior of the intern regarding the selected topics
- Provide guidance, advice, feedback and support to the intern
- Provide final briefing together with the supervisor

## **Mentor's Approach**

The mentor acts similar to a coach and as such

- Observes and listens carefully
- Encourages self-help and self-reflection capacities
- Encourages reflection processes through questions rather than ready-made solutions
- Gives constructive feedback and does not shy back from mentioning topics beyond the comfort-zone, but always in a respectful manner

## Report on mentorship initiative for the Female Internship Program (FIP)

As part of the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the Female Internship Program (FIP), a pool of mentors was set-up to further support and steer the professional development of the interns. In this regard, the following mentors were assigned for each intern;

S. No.	Name	Project/programme	Duty Station	Mentor
1	Kainat Akhtar	Country Office	Islamabad	Rozina Riaz
2	Rabia Bukhari	RMSP	Islamabad	Qazi Farid Ahmed
3	Mariam Sardar	RMSP	Islamabad	Qazi Farid Ahmed
4	Zartasha Zahid	TVET-SSP	Islamabad	Constance Heinig
5	Muneeba Qureshi	FDP	Peshawar	Asim Shafi
6	Naima Sarfaraz	FDP	Islamabad	Sadia Abbasi
7	Maira Manzoor	LSP	Lahore	Hina Fouzia
8	Rabia Arshad	LSP	Lahore	Hina Fouzia
9	Naqsh Nasir	IWaSP	Lahore	Syeda Farheen Javaid
10	Hania Munir	RMO	Islamabad	Ambreen Siddique
11	Mahrukh Khan	Country Office	Islamabad	Martin Weiss

The mentors were tasked to contact the assigned intern to set-up the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting while copying the supervisor (for information purpose only). During the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting the mentor and intern then mutually agreed on the future course of action, i.e. frequency/mode of interaction, expectation management, role clarification, etc.

In order to support and follow-up on the mentorship initiative under FIP, meetings were organized with the mentors for individual feedback/experience sharing, bringing forward any questions with regards to their role as a mentor and sharing of best practices/lessons learnt.

The **approach** from all mentors in this context was aimed at the following;

- Professional development of the intern ranging from self-organization to report writing skills
- Self-analysis in terms of identifying weaknesses and strengths along with career goals and defining learning needs/requirements with regards to the internship opportunity, supervisor and mentor
- Understanding of basic topics such as work ethics, taking initiative/being proactive, preparation for any topic/task/meeting, follow-up skills, self-confidence, self-motivation, having a solution-oriented approach, cooperation, teamwork, being respectful towards others, etc.

Additionally, the most common **challenges/issues** faced by the mentors were;

- Setting-up meeting and communication with interns in some cases was not an easy task and required more follow-up from the mentors meaning scheduled meetings were

cancelled last minute or emails were not answered or timely answered by interns. This from mentors' point of view emphasized the need for support from respective supervisors to explain the relevance and importance of the mentorship initiative to the interns for their career and professional growth, in addition to their internship assignment.

- Establishing a sense of trust and open atmosphere took some time and effort initially. However, the mentors confirmed that with each meeting this changed as the interns realized and understood the intention of assigning a mentor was aimed at developing not only their professional capacity but also broadening their perspective with regards to being part of an organization and necessary skill sets required for better integration.

The mentors also shared some **recommendations** for the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the FIP to further fine-tune and possibly improve the mentorship initiative as well as the internship opportunity;

- Clarity of the role of intern is needed at the time of joining GIZ
- Learning aspects/perspectives need to be discussed/elaborated jointly with the supervisor
- Tasks should be assigned in view of the learning and development of the intern, and any additional task assigned should also be linked with the same
- Supervisors should steer the tasks and learning through the internship duration
- Opportunity to work with other colleagues, units, teams should also be provided for learning purpose
- Expectations and requirements of the intern from the mentor should be agreed at the very beginning
- Input should be given to the mentors by the supervisors ideally through a meeting before the mentors formally meet the interns
- Overwhelming the intern with too much technical information in short time must be avoided
- Supervisors should be responsible for the overall expectation management, i.e. needs of the intern and requirements of the project/programme
- Some performance feedback measure should be put in place. For instance, if a workplan is developed for the intern, a status review of tasks/objectives could be conducted on a fortnightly basis between the intern and supervisor.

In terms of the **way forward**, the mentorship initiative will be re-adjusted in the form of adapting the concept note for mentors for the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of FIP. Moreover, a separate session will be included in the induction event of interns that will focus on the topic of mentorship in order to provide orientation in advance.