

# WOMEN IN ENGINEERING CONGRESS PAKISTAN 2012

7 – 9 September 2012

*Report by*

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## **PAKISTAN STUDENT/GOLD/WIE CONGRESS 2012**

Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Science and Technology IEEE Student Chapter hosted the Pakistan Student Congress 2012. Scores of students from different universities and numerous other IEEE chapters from all over Pakistan came to GIKI to compete, discuss, share and enjoy the many activities and opportunities IEEE Pakistan had in store for them. It could be said that this event was definitely one of the major highlights of IEEE in Pakistan this year. The congress stretched on to three days. WIE congress was an essential part of the congress.

## **IEEE PAKISTAN WIE FORUM**

IEEE Pakistan Women In Engineering Forum had the privilege of organizing the WIE Congress 2012 there at GIKI. The IEEE Pakistan Women In Engineering Forum, established with the help of Ramalatha Marimuthu, WIE Chair 2010-12, back in May 2010, aims to integrate the Women In Engineering Affinity Groups of Pakistan and provide them a platform where they could get recognized for their contributions to IEEE and WIE. Members of the Pakistan WIE Forum are effectively playing their role in reducing the gap between the industry and students through innovative programs and projects and to strengthen the female engineers of Pakistan socially, ethically and technically. They serve to facilitate the development of such programs and activities that promote the entry into and retention of women in engineering programs.

IEEE Pakistan WIE Forum has an executive committee of 9 female members, and over 90 volunteers, located in different parts of the country. They are carrying out the projects of IEEE Pakistan WIE Forum in their respective IEEE Sections of Pakistan. This year, the entire team of the Pakistan WIE Forum joined hands to plan, organize and execute the WIE Congress 2012. Sitting at remote locations of Pakistan, we planned the congress with the IEEE GIKI Chapter, marketed the event all across Pakistan and executed it in the best possible manner there at GIKI. It would surely not have been possible without the assistance of the IEEE GIKI Student Branch members and their WIE members.

## **WIE CONGRESS**

### **OPENING CEREMONY**

A number of 120 WIE delegates from all over Pakistan attended the WIE Congress. On September 7, the event was opened by Maria Syed, with a very warm welcome to all the WIE delegates. Maria is volunteering for the Pakistan WIE Forum as a member of the STAR Project team. She gave a quick introduction to Women In Engineering Society, highlighted its objectives and gave an insight about the WIE activities across Pakistan.

## INTRODUCTION TO PAKISTAN WIE FORUM

After this, Mehak Akhlaq, Treasurer and Special Projects Head of Pakistan WIE Forum took over and enlightened the audience with a very informative and highly interactive session. Mehak is also leading the STAR Pakistan Project and is executing it with a team of 4 WIE members. She started off her presentation with introducing the team of Pakistan WIE Forum and explained the attendees about the vast network of the Pakistan WIE Forum and how it is spread all across the country. She highlighted that out of a total of 17 WIE Affinity Groups in Pakistan, PWF has activated more than five dormant Affinity Groups. She further added that through the tremendous efforts of our team, we have helped in the formation of three new Affinity Groups and two are still in the process of formation. Pakistan WIE Forum representatives have been conducting training sessions for the Executive Committee members of WIE Affinity Groups of Pakistan. We have trained the members of over more than ten Affinity Groups in Pakistan. Mehak also mentioned that at present we are carrying out more than six national level projects engaging more than 90 of WIE volunteers all across Pakistan. Interacting with the audience Mehak asked them how they volunteer for WIE in their respective domain and what they expect out of their WIE Society membership.

## PAKISTAN MISSION TO PROGRESS PROJECT

Ms. Sara Rehman Memon, Karachi Section Coordinator of the Pakistan Mission to Progress Project then came over and presented the research and analysis carried out under the banner of Pakistan Mission to Progress. She started off by introducing the Pakistan Mission to Progress Project. She told that this project was the first ever mega project launched by Pakistan WIE Forum. The purpose of the project was to analyze, quantify and strive to upgrade engineering trends among Pakistani females. It also included awareness programs to spread out wakefulness to the limited and conservative minds of Pakistani women belonging to the rural areas of Pakistan reviving their academic, medical, character-building aspects of life. She also said that the motivation behind this project was to provide awareness to people about science, engineering and technology (SET) and also to increase the networking in members by connecting all the WIE affinity groups. She explained the hierarchy of the project team and explained their working. Sara presented the results of the phase one of the project that was to conduct a survey of the current gender-equality status through questionnaire among the different engineering universities of Pakistan. She displayed the survey results through bar diagrams and pie-charts. A result showed that male to female ratio in engineering universities in Pakistan is 87% to 13%. She also showed the strength of females enrolled in different engineering disciplines and it was evident that in Pakistan, least females are enrolled in mechanical engineering, very little in civil engineering and close to none in mining. Results were also displayed and discussed for other questions like engineering being an inherited profession, progressing career in engineering, reasons behind their taking up engineering as a profession etc.

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## WE – WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS ACTIVITY

We conducted a one-hour activity in which the teams were to come up with an idea and a plan to implement it. The entire audience was divided in groups of four to five people and were given 20 minutes to brainstorm an idea that could bring a social benefit in whole society. After that one member of each team was invited to demonstrate his/her ideas in one minute. They were to come up with an idea, build a plan for its execution, develop a marketing strategy and incorporate methods of effective communication for it. The audience participated enthusiastically and came up with very exciting and brilliant ideas that could bring radical changes in our society. The feedback of this activity was highly encouraging and many girls showed interest in joining the network Pakistan WIE Forum. The judges evaluated the presentations on the basis of problem identified, proposal designed, implementation and impact on society.

## USING WIE DIRECTORY

The WIE Membership Directory provides complete listing of active WIE members, including: Women Engineer/Scientists. Unfortunately, many WIE members around us are not aware of this useful IEEE tool and do not know to access it and utilize it to its fullest.

Hafsa Muqaddas, Student Representative WIE Affinity Group Lahore Section, presented on how to use the IEEE Women In Engineering Directory. Most of the members present there had vague idea about its use and took keen interest in the presentation. Hafsa lead them through the steps you need to follow to access the WIE directory. She told them that access to the rosters is limited to active WIE members. To access the directory, members have to use their myIEEE account. She also explained how to find information in the directory and in what possible ways can you make the best use out of it. The session turned out to be highly informative and left a great impact. In the end hand-outs were also distributed in which steps were mentioned to access the IEEE Women In Engineering Directory.

## ENERGIZE THE SCIENTIST INSIDE YOU THROUGH WIE IEEE

Ms. Mehvish Zahoor, former Chairperson IEEE Pakistan WIE Forum, blessed us with her presence on the WIE Congress. She not only shared her valuable experience with all the delegates but also spoke to the audience on the topic Energize the Engineer inside you through WIE IEEE. She highlighted how IEEE sparks up the engineering germs inside you by providing you the necessary resources for your research work, technological experimentation, mentoring connections and helps you in executing your ideas.

**MAKE YOUR 27\$ WORTH**

People in the third world countries, especially the students, find the IEEE membership way too expensive and unaffordable. Rabia Khalid, Chairperson IEEE Pakistan WIE Forum, picked this very grave issue and talked about how to make the maximum out of your IEEE membership. Rabia has been volunteering for IEEE since 2010 and, all along her undergraduate degree, has had the experience of working in different domains for the IEEE. Currently she is leading the Students Committee for the South Asia GOLD and R10 SAC collaborative project, the “Student Professional Mentorship Program” (SPMP). By sharing her experiences with the attendees, she highlighted various opportunities offered to us by the IEEE and are never utilized by us to the fullest. She also talked about the recognition awards that the most active volunteers among us do not bother to send their nominations for. Rabia mentioned the various resources of IEEE, which if put to use, would make your membership totally worth. She effectively engaged the audience and had a very positive feedback by the end of the session. Students were highly impressed by the way they were made to realize that the 27\$ they pay off for their membership is nothing as compared to the benefits and resources it brings along

**WIE AFFINITY GROUP PRESENTATIONS**

The aim behind this WIE Congress was to bring together the WIE members from different universities all over Pakistan so that they get together and grab the networking opportunities provided to them. Affinity Group presentations were held where WIE representatives of different affinity groups highlighted the activities of their respective affinity groups. They talked about the different events they organized and told everyone about their achievements throughout the year.

**MEETINGS****1. STAR PROJECT PAKISTAN MEETING**

IEEE Pakistan Women In Engineering Forum initiated the STAR – Student Teacher And Research Engineer/Scientist Program. The project was approved by WIE Region 10 for the special funding. The team of Pakistan WIE Forum, working on the STAR Project, will not execute this project in any city of student branch. They are going to spread this project all over Pakistan. It was necessary for the entire team to meet up at one place and discuss their ideas and plans for the execution of the project. The STAR Pakistan Project team is:

Mehak Akhlaq, NUCES Islamabad - STAR Pakistan Lead

Maria Syed, NUCES Islamabad - Secretary STAR

Rehma Javed, PNEC NUST - Karachi Section Coordinator

Aymen Zehra, SEECS NUST - Islamabad Section Coordinator

Rabail Raza, NFC Faisalabad - Lahore Section Coordinator

Rabia Khalid, Chairperson IEEE Pakistan WIE Forum presided the meeting. Mehak Akhlaq discussed her plans for the project and how she wants to implement it. She shared her vision and targets with the team members. Two episodes have already been conducted of the STAR Project in Lahore Section and Islamabad Section. The reporting procedures were discussed and the deadlines were decided in the meeting.

## 2. ALL PAKISTAN WIE AFFINITY GROUP CHAIRS MEETING

The most important **part of the WIE Congress was All Pakistan WIE Affinity Group Chairs meeting. Not only the Branch chairs, but their executive committees were also invited, and also those who plan to take up positions in the executive committees next year were called upon.**

**The following agenda points were discussed in the meeting:**

1. Presence of Pakistan in global WIE.
  2. All WIE representatives to give a brief review of their last year's activities
  1. **Membership recruitment and retention - What do you do to recruit and retain members?**
  2. **Discussion regarding the committee structure of WIE Affinity Groups**
    - WIE affinity can be formed either at Section level or Student Branch Level
    - It is a good practice to have standard committee to run WIE effectively?
    - Increasing your executive committees, how good is it in the long run
    - Handing over the office new executive committee
  3. **Finances and fundraising - How to run the finances?**
    - Support from the IEEE Sections for affinity group events.
    - Impacts of imposing some registration fee for events organized
    - Getting sponsorships
    - Keeping a good record for budgeting and building contacts
  4. **Getting your affinity group activities reported**
  5. **Affiliation and Collaboration**
    - **Collaboration with industries**
    - **Collaboration with other WIE Affinity Groups**
    - **Collaboration with Pakistan WIE Forum**
  6. **Utilization of WIE resources (promotional material/funding support/publications)**
  7. All WIE representatives to discuss their next year's planned activities and events.
  8. **Annual Events**
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- **National WIE Summit 2012**
- **WIE Congress**

Ms. Mehvish Zahoor, former Chair Pakistan WIE Forum, who is also a member of the WIE Region 10 Committee presided the meeting and Rabia Khalid, current Chair Pakistan WIE Forum facilitated the meeting. The meeting was conducted in a very interactive way and the discussion mode was kept very light so as to encourage the WIE members to speak up for themselves and have an interactive discussion.

### 3. PAKISTAN WIE FORUM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

What better platform could've been for the executive committee of the Pakistan WIE Forum Executive Committee to meet each other than the WIE Congress. Pakistan WIE Forum members, situated in different sections of the country, availed the opportunity and gathered at the WIE Congress. They were quite delighted to finally meet each other after all online skype meetings have been the only mode of communication for the last year for them.

Formally a meeting was also conducted where the past achievements of the Pakistan WIE Forum were talked about. The past activities were discussed and the faults and lacking were thrown light upon. Solutions were thought of for the different problems they faced while attracting the females students towards WIE, conducting membership drives, executing their plans while collaborating with other Affinity Groups etc. Rabia Khalid, Chairperson Pakistan WIE Forum presided the meeting.

### GALA DINNER

On the second day of the congress, a Grand Dinner was arranged for the delegates of the congress. This was aimed be an opportunity for networking for all the participants. Representatives from different engineering universities of Pakistan interacted with each other, shared their respective affinity group activities and discussed the problems they come across.

### HIKING TRIP

After two days of regular competitions, seminars, meetings and presentations, finally the delegates were given a break and were taken for a hiking trip on the beautiful mountains of Sawabi. Climbing the mountains at 6 in the morning, alongside the breathtaking views of Tarbela, the congress attendees witnessed the best ever views of Pakistan. It was only made possible due to the efforts and support of IEEE GIKI Student Branch. Hiking trip was the best idea for a social networking activity

## **COMPETITIONS**

### **1. SKY HAWK ROCKET DESIGNING COMPETITION**

To give a break to the delegates from the hard and hectic routine of the congress, we organized a Sky Hawk Rocket Designing Competition. It was a very exciting and fun-filled activity where the participants were to brainstorm, plan, and build a balloon rocket with their team. They were to design a rocket that could be propelled from one point to another on its own accord. They were given nothing more than a couple of balloons, chart papers, straws, tape, a reel of thread and cloth clips. Their goal was to figure out how to deliver a rocket from one side of the room and back. The teams were not to drag the rocket with their hands- they had to remain on one side of the room when launching their rocket.

Thirty minutes later, participants were competing against one another to see whose rocket would travel the furthest distance along a thread that was held up straight by the participants themselves. A six-judge panel rated the participants on the design, neatness, ingenuity and range of their rockets. More than 20 teams participated and worked in groups of three or four. Team from IEEE PNEC Student Branch was runner-ups where IEEE UET Peshawar Student Branch was the winner.

### **2. BEST WIE AFFINITY GROUP VIDEO COMPETITION**

Pakistan WIE Forum organized the Outstanding WIE Affinity Group Video Competition. The WIE delegates coming from each Affinity Group had to display a short video containing glimpse of the activities of their affinity group and how has it progressed over these years. The video had to contain an overview of the events held in the last year and also a history of the affinity group so far. The videos were judged on the basis of how effectively and creatively the task was carried out.

WIE PNEC video was awarded the first prize and WIE GCUF stood the runner up.

### **WIE PAKISTAN AWARDS**

Pakistan WIE Forum has always been blessed with outstanding volunteers who have worked tremendously with keen devotion and allegiance. In order to recognize their efforts, Pakistan

WIE Forum took the initiative of recognizing their hard work and commitment.

IEEE Pakistan WIE Forum gave out special awards and certificates of recognition to the WIE volunteers across Pakistan. These awards were announced at the closing ceremony of the WIE Congress '12. Awards were announced for the categories of:

- Outstanding WIE Affinity Group Pakistan
- Outstanding WIE Affinity Group Chairperson Pakistan
- Outstanding WIE Volunteer Pakistan

The nominations for these awards were collected in August 2012 and with the judges panel of following 5 members:

- Amir Zahoor - Chair IEEE GOLD Committee IEEE Sweden Section
- Om Parkash - Student Activities Coordinator IEEE Region 10
- Rayees Nishad - South Asia GOLD Coordinator IEEE Region 10
- Durdana Habib - Mentor IEEE Pakistan WIE Forum
- Hassaan Idrees - GINI Lead Pakistan, Volunteer R10 WIE Committee

A total of ten nominations for Outstanding WIE Volunteer Pakistan, four nominations for Outstanding WIE Affinity Group Pakistan and four nominations for Outstanding WIE Affinity Group Chairperson Pakistan were received.

Awards selection was based on:

- Quality of activities conducted/organized
- Presence in R10 and WIE Newsletters
- Events volunteered in.
- Collaborative events.
- Innovation and ideas.
- Leadership qualities.
- AG membership growth in tenure.
- Intra and inter-university events attended

And after evaluation of them, the following results were compiled:

- WIE Affinity Group **UET Lahore** as Outstanding WIE Affinity Group
- **Wahaba Hussain**, WIE NEDUET Karachi as Outstanding WIE Affinity Group Chair
- **Rehma Javed**, member WIE PNEC Karachi as Outstanding WIE Volunteer Pakistan.

A special recognition award was presented to Mehvish Zahoor, Chairperson Pakistan WIE Forum (2011-12) for her valuable contributions and services to Pakistan WIE Forum.

The aim behind the awards was to promote women in engineering and to recognize those who are putting up a valiant effort to do so. By introducing these annual awards, we believe to have provided a platform to WIE members of Pakistan to spur their activities even more.

After the announcement and giving away of the awards, mementos were distributed among the speakers and guests. To continue the feel of the congress, the winning videos of the video competition were also displayed in auditorium. In the end Sadaf Shakor, WIE member IEEE GIKI gave a closing speech and thanked all the delegates for joining us for this auspicious event. After this the delegates gathered for a group photo.

WIE Congress all in all was a wonderful event, thoroughly planned and very well organized by Pakistan WIE Forum with the support of IEEE GIKI Student Branch.

*Report by*

**Rabia Khalid**  
Chairperson Pakistan WIE Forum

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