

Jadara Electronics

Manufacturing (Engineering manufacturing)

High Retention Rate through Zero Tolerance on Harassment & Safe Commutes and Workspaces



Published by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and UN Women

GIZ Registered offices

Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

220 East 42nd St, New York, NY 10017, USA

GIZ Employment Cluster and UN Women joint project on Promoting Productive Employment and Decent Work for Women in Egypt, Jordan and Palestine

GIZ Office Jordan

Mohamed Bassem Al-Khammash St.13, Sweifieh

Amman 11190, Jordan

www.giz.de/jordan

UN Women Jordan Country Office:

6 Jeddah Street, Um-Uthaina

Amman 11183, Jordan

www.jordan.unwomen.org

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, the United Nations, including UN Women or UN Member States.

Published

June 2024

Amman

Design

Ahmad Diranieh

Amman

Photo credit

Rajif Raman © GIZ

Text

Prof. Dr. Lucia Lanfranconi, an international expert in diversity, equity & inclusion and the Development for the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, Alexander Monden, Commission Manager, Maram Abed AlNabi, Economic Cooperation and Private Sector Development Advisor and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), Layla Al Qasem, Women's Empowerment Principles and Private Sector Specialist with the generous support of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

Suggested Citation

Lanfranconi, L. & Moden, A. & Abed AlNabi, M. & Al Qasem, L. (2024). High Retention Rate through Zero Tolerance on Harassment, Safe Commutes and Workspaces. Amman, Jordan: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and UN Women.

Copyright © GIZ and UN Women, 2024

All rights reserved

Content

1) Company profile	05
2) The business context of investing in safe and inclusive workplaces	07
2a) Anti-sexual harassment policy and practices	08
2b) Safe commuting practices	09
2c) Further initiatives on a safe and healthy work environment	10
3) Vision and profit: return on investment	11
4) Yes – but: challenges and solutions	13
5) About the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs)	14



FOREWORD: TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY IN THE JORDANIAN LABOUR MARKET

The economic participation of women in the Jordanian labor market remains significantly low, with a decline observed in the post-COVID-19 era (Karbala & Kern, 2022). In order to motivate more women to enter the labour market and align with Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV), it is crucial for companies to take the first step towards creating women-friendly and gender-inclusive work environments. Such an inclusive environment not only attracts and motivates well-qualified women but can also lead to a diverse, engaged and motivated workforce.

Overall, many studies show that investing in more women-friendly and gender-inclusive workplaces leads to higher productivity, innovation, improved corporate reputation and sustainable growth for businesses. Back in 2015, McKinsey showed that gender diverse companies are 15% more likely to outperform their competitors. This likelihood has increased over the years to 21% in the 2018 report and 25% in the 2020 report (McKinsey 2015; 2018; 2020). The benefits to companies are particularly high in a context where many women are not integrated into the labour market, as is the case in Jordan (UN Women 2018; World Bank 2020a; b; c).

GIZ and UN Women have joined forces to drive meaningful change in the private sector and the wider economy by developing business cases focused on SMEs in Jordan. The business cases document and showcase companies that have taken key steps towards becoming women-friendly and gender-inclusive. These cases highlight how these steps have paved the way for positive returns for these companies and the tangible benefits they have experienced. The focus is on SMEs as they are the largest (SMEs constitute approximately 99.5% of the total economic establishments and occupy approximately 60% of the total workforce (JCI 2024)) and most important part of the Jordanian economy.

The main objective of these business cases is to raise awareness among companies of the value and benefits of gender diversity and gender-responsive policies and practices for businesses by demonstrating the benefits for all – companies, their employees and the community – of employing more women and creating inclusive working environments.

The business cases were developed using a comprehensive methodology, including collecting data from company representatives, reviewing relevant documents, conducting field visits, interviewing CEOs and holding focus group discussions with employees.

Overall, these business cases cover seven different sectors, in line with the priorities set out in the EMV: food industry, engineering, plastic and packaging, education, financial services, hospitality, and information and communication technology. Each case focuses on a specific thematic area, highlighting the apparent strengths and the clear business value. Collectively, these topics play a pivotal role in advancing gender equality: gender-responsive recruitment, supporting women in leadership positions, women on boards, family-friendly working conditions and equal pay, trust-based leadership, flexible working arrangements and tackling male teacher stereotypes, effective anti-sexual harassment policies and safe commuting practices, empowering women from disadvantaged backgrounds and with disabilities.

1. Company profile

Founded in 2006 by Maleeka Mohammad, Jadara Electronics was initially operated as a solo women-owned venture. After two years, Maleeka began recruiting. Today, Jadara Electronics has grown into a major player in the market, focusing on the production of vocational training equipment and renewable energy solutions, with a presence in both Jordan and the Gulf region. The mission of Jadara Electronics is to bridge the gap between education and industry needs, promote sustainability and empower the next generation of skilled professionals. Its diverse offerings include:

Cutting-edge Training Equipment

Provision of top-quality vocational training equipment to vocational centres and engineering universities.

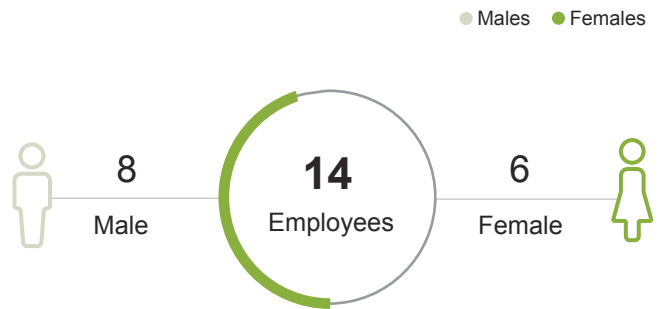
Sustainable Energy Solutions

As part of the commitment to a more sustainable and equitable future, renewable energy solutions are offered to meet the specific needs of both households and industry.

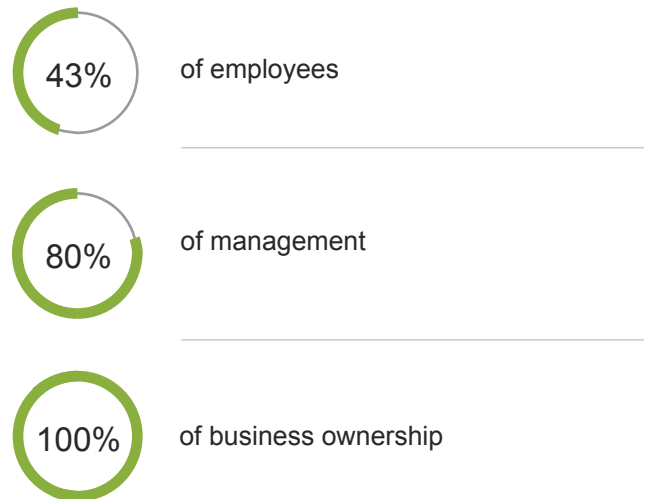
Specialised Vocational Training

Jadara Electronics Academy offers intensive vocational training programmes that empower motivated individuals, irrespective of their gender, to pursue rewarding careers as a technician.

Number of employees



Women comprise



Summary of key initiatives



Anti-sexual harassment policy



Safe commutes and workspaces

Summary of business benefits



Improved corporate performance



Strengthened loyalty and trust



Increased retention rate



Improved reputation and brand value



Jadara Electronics establishment

2006

Capacity development

2010

Signing of Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs)

2023

2. The business context of investing in safe and inclusive workplaces

Jadara Electronics' commitment to inclusivity and gender-responsive practices is exemplified by 100% female ownership and active involvement of women in senior management and technical positions. The company sets a high standard for gender equity in its workforce. Through policies promoting zero tolerance for harassment, fair recruitment practices, equitable pay for equal work and safe commuting measures, Jadara Electronics prioritises the well-being and safety of all employees, regardless of gender. These proactive measures not only address work-life balance but also contribute to fostering a supportive and inclusive workplace environment for both women and men.

“



Back when I was studying in 1995, I stood out as the only woman in my field. Even today, the majority of our clients are men. It's not about gender for me, but it's undeniable that clients often perceive me as a woman in a traditionally male-dominated role.

Interview with the CEO Maleeka Mohammad

”

Jadara Electronics has taken transformative steps to support and empower women in non-traditional professions and encourage more women to pursue careers in fields where they have traditionally been underrepresented. Their commitment extends to promoting gender equality, ensuring an inclusive environment and providing opportunities for all. Over the past five years, Jadara Electronics has made significant

strides in gender diversity by doubling the number of female employees, showcasing its commitment to creating equal opportunities for women in the workforce.

“



In previous companies where I worked as an electrical engineer, the schedule required me to work until 6 PM every day, even on Saturdays. But the approach here is entirely different: Saturdays are free and our work hours are from 9 AM to 4 PM. Once we have completed our tasks, we're free to leave.

Focus group interview with female employees

”

The organisation's leadership, marked by an open-minded and forward-thinking approach, sets a compelling example within the company. The CEO experienced first-hand how it is to advance and push a career in a “male-dominated environment”.

“

Viewing mistakes as learning opportunities is crucial. For me, honesty outweighs avoiding mistakes. This workplace feels like a second home. We spend quality time together, eat together, brainstorm and innovate together. I strive to create a healthy and relaxed atmosphere that fosters loyalty and trust among my team.

Interview with the CEO

”



2a | Anti-sexual harassment policy and practices

As a women-owned business operating in a traditionally male-dominated sector, Jadara Electronics has faced various challenges of discrimination from clients and suppliers. These challenges included some suppliers undermining the company's capabilities, refusing serious cooperation, and unprofessional remarks from certain clients.

The challenges also extended to instances of sexual harassment during interactions with clients and suppliers. "Sexual harassment" is defined by the ILO (w.J.) "as any behaviour of a sexual nature that affects the dignity of women and men, which is considered as unwanted, unacceptable, inappropriate and offensive to the recipient, and that creates an intimidating, hostile, unstable or offensive work environment". It can be physical, verbal or non-verbal.

The CEO has adopted a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment. In the event of a problem, she assumes responsibility for her female workers and personally approaches the client concerned to make it clear that such behaviour is unacceptable. If necessary, she is willing to terminate partnerships in order to maintain a safe and respectful working environment.

“



I've encountered instances of feeling uncomfortable due to unwanted attention and remarks from clients, which have made me feel harassed. There have been moments when people have stared at me in a way that made me feel exposed, or verbally harassed me by questioning my work choices with comments like 'Why are you working?'

”

Interview with the CEO

“



I prioritise the safety and well-being of my female colleagues. In the event of sexual harassment, I deal directly with the perpetrator and emphasise our firm's zero-tolerance policy against such behaviour. Open communication plays a pivotal role, and I insist on managing these sensitive matters myself to protect my employees.

”

Interview with the CEO

“



Trust issues surfaced during a university expedition, affecting my involvement as a female participant. Feeling uncomfortable, I left. However, upon returning with the CEO, the dynamics shifted significantly. She's a powerful advocate against harassment, understands our experiences and actively supports us.

”

Focus group interview with female employees



2b | Safe commuting practices

One of the biggest obstacles of female labour force participation in Jordan is not only an unsafe working environment but also the lack of safe and accessible (public) transportation (UN women 2022: 65). Jadara has successfully developed solutions to address and overcome this challenge.

“



The nature of our work extends beyond the office, and the office-provided transport ensures not only convenience but also safety for our team. Travelling together in company vehicles greatly enhances our collaborative experience and provides a safe and reassuring journey. The element of safety adds immense value to our overall working experience and long-term job security.

Focus group interview with female employees

”



A key measure implemented by Jadara is the provision of accessible transport, a service that is highly valued by employees. The provision of transport, along with the possibility of ride-sharing, plays a pivotal role in enhancing overall employee satisfaction and well-being.

“



Recognising that some female workers may face transportation challenges, I provide company cars to facilitate their commute. This ensures a safe and convenient transport option and promotes a supportive and inclusive working environment. In some cases, I personally pick them up to address any mobility restrictions they might encounter.

Interview with the CEO

”

2c | Further initiatives for a safe and healthy work environment

Jadara has introduced other significant inclusive initiatives designed to create a safe and secure working environment for female employees. These include the creation of dedicated rest areas, which further enhances the overall sense of safety and well-being in the workplace.

“



I've created a dedicated area for staff to relax with separate restrooms for both women and men and a quiet room. This space is designed to provide a peaceful environment for prayer or simply to take a moment for relaxation.

Interview with the CEO

”

“



Working at Jadara is extremely fulfilling due to the nurturing and health-conscious work environment.

Focus group interview with female employees

”



“



As this is a non-traditional sector, fathers or husbands may have reservations about female family members working due to social norms. I then invite them to experience our work environment first-hand. This initiative aims to challenge social perceptions and dispel any concerns about the role of women in non-traditional fields.

Interview with the CEO

”

3. Vision and profit: return on investment

Jadara Electronics' efforts have yielded remarkable results. With a **retention rate of 100%**, the company has **doubled its female workforce** from 3 to 6 over the past 5 years. The **number of women in sensitive managerial roles has increased** from 1 to 3, underscoring Jadara's commitment to gender diversity in leadership. Simultaneously, sales have surged by about 15%, reflecting its **market growth** and **customer satisfaction**. This growth reflects the company's effective strategies in product development, **market expansion** and **customer satisfaction**, contributing to its overall success and profitability.

I am committed to prioritising a conducive working environment, and the loyalty and trust of my team demonstrates the return on investment in our collective endeavours.

Interview with the CEO

Since the establishment of the company in 2006, our high retention rate speaks volumes: only three employees have chosen to pursue opportunities outside of Jordan.

Interview with the CEO

Past business cases in Jordan have shown that creating safe and respectful workplaces, free from sexual harassment, bullying and other inappropriate behaviour, is crucial to **increasing women's economic participation** in the country. Umniah took pioneering steps to create a safe working environment for all its employees by implementing measures to combat sexual harassment. This included the early introduction of a clear and comprehensive policy, coupled with mandatory training for all staff (World Bank 2020c).



The results at Jadara are evident, with outstanding levels of **employee satisfaction, loyalty and trust**. Moreover, Jadara's employees feel empowered.

“



We have an inclusive workplace where the unique perspectives and talents of both women and men are celebrated.

We receive training and support to enhance our skills and boost self-confidence, fostering collective growth.

This is a place where you can grow and innovate.

My confidence level has improved significantly since joining Jadara, a testament to the supportive environment here.

Focus group interview with female employees

”



All of this has clear economic consequences. One is that Jadara can draw on a **much larger talent pool than its competitors**.

“



Despite living far from my work, I find it worthwhile to commute here because I really appreciate the working environment and the guidance provided by our CEO.

Even though women often stand out as top graduates, we are offered limited opportunities. At Jadara, we are hired based on our merit and skills”.

Focus group interview with female employees

”

4. Yes – but: challenges and solutions

The diverse initiatives, aimed at creating safe and inclusive workplaces, have resulted in tangible returns on investment, such as increased employee retention, loyalty and performance.

While low turnover is a strength, retaining and attracting top talent is an ongoing challenge that Jadara seeks to address in the following ways:

- > Offering competitive compensation packages and implementing mentorship programmes.
- > Promoting a diverse and inclusive workplace culture.
- > Creating clear pathways for career growth and professional development and providing training and development programmes.

Women in non-traditional sectors may encounter gender bias and stereotypes that can hinder their career progression and limit opportunities, which Jadara seeks to address in the following ways:

- > Implementing gender bias training and awareness policies and programmes to employees as well as vendors, suppliers and clients.
- > Creating mentorship and sponsorship opportunities for women within the organisation.

- > Providing transportation arrangements for female employees, implementing a zero tolerance policy against sexual harassment and providing a safe and inclusive workspace with flexible working hours.

In the non-traditional sector of industrial engineering, family members may have reservations about the employment of female family members, influenced by social norms, which Jadara seeks to address in the following ways:

- > Taking a proactive approach and inviting family members to participate in a company visit to give them a first-hand view of the workplace environment, promoting transparency, addressing any concerns and fostering an open and inclusive dialogue to effectively address concerns.

“



Join us at Jadara Electronics on the path to knowledge, empowerment and sustainability. We are here to drive the present and pave the way for a more inclusive future.

Interview with the CEO

”



5. About the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs)

The Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs) are a set of 7 Principles offering guidance to business on how to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment in the workplace, marketplace and community. Established by UN Women and UN Global Compact, the WEPs are informed by international labour and human rights standards and grounded in the recognition that businesses have a stake in, and a responsibility for, gender equality and women’s empowerment.



Resources and support

EMV, Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision. Downloaded at:

<https://www.jordanvision.jo/en>

JCI, Jordan Chamber of Industrie (2024). Small and Medium Enterprises Services. Downloaded at:

<https://jci.org.jo/Chamber/Services/Sectors/80095?l=en>

Karbala, G., Kern, J. Eds. (2022) COVID-19 and Women's Labour Force Participation: A Look into Women's Labour Force Participation Through the Lens of the Pandemic. Amman, Jordan: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and UN Women.

McKinsey (2015). Why diversity matters. Downloaded at:

<https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/mckinsey/business%20functions/people%20and%20organizational%20performance/our%20insights/why%20diversity%20matters/why%20diversity%20matters.pdf>

McKinsey (2018). Delivering through diversity. Downloaded at:

<https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/delivering-through-diversity>

McKinsey (2020). Diversity wins. How inclusion matters. Downloaded at:

<https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/mckinsey/featured%20insights/diversity%20and%20inclusion/diversity%20wins%20how%20inclusion%20matters/diversity-wins-how-inclusion-matters-vf.pdf>

Mc Kinsey & WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM (2023). Global Parity Alliance: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Lighthouses 2023.

Downloaded at: https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Parity_Alliance_2023.pdf

ILO (w.J.). Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. Downloaded at:

https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-hanoi/documents/publication/wcms_371182.pdf

UN women: Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs, w.J.): <https://www.weps.org/about>

UN women: GAP analysis tool un women (w.J.). Downloaded at: <https://weps-gapanalysis.org/>

UN Women (2018). UNDERSTANDING THE BUSINESS CASE FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE. A Policy and Guidance Brief Building on Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) – Middle East and North Africa. Downloaded at:

<https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20Arab%20States/Attachments/Publications/2018/Business%20Case/Understanding%20the%20Business%20Case%20for%20Gender%20Equality%20in%20the%20Workplace.pdf>

UN Women (2022). CASE STUDY: Trip.com Group. BUILDING A FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE. Downloaded at:

<https://www.weps.org/resource/building-family-friendly-workplace>

UN Women (2022b). General Framework for Gender Equality in Jordan. Economic & Social Council of Jordan and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). Downloaded at:

https://jordan.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/WC_General%20Framework%20for%20Gender%20Equality%20in%20Jordan_EN_f.pdf

Weber, Michael Weber; Heidi Stutz; Dragan Ilić; Ursina Jud & Martina Schläp. (2016). KMU-Handbuch "Beruf und Familie".

Downloaded at:

https://www.seco.admin.ch/seco/de/home/Publikationen_Dienstleistungen/Publikationen_und_Formulare/Arbeit/Arbeitsmarkt/Frauen_Arbeitsmarkt/kmu-handbuch--beruf-und-familie-.html

World bank (2020a). Amin Kawar and Sons (AKS): Reaping the benefits of family-friendly policies:

<https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/648951629872045304/the-business-case-for-investing-in-women-s-employment-in-jordan-amin-kawar-and-sons-aks-reaping-the-benefits-of-family-friendly-policies-case-study>

World bank (2020b). Estarta Solutions: Supporting women in non-traditional roles. Downloaded at:

<https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/625671621402102045/the-business-case-for-investing-in-women-s-employment-in-jordan-case-study-estarta-solutions-supporting-women-in-non-traditional-roles>

World bank (2020c). Umniah: Safe and respectful workplaces. Downloaded at:

<https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/345681623916069293/the-business-case-for-investing-in-women-s-employment-in-jordan-case-study-umniah-safe-and-respectful-workplaces>