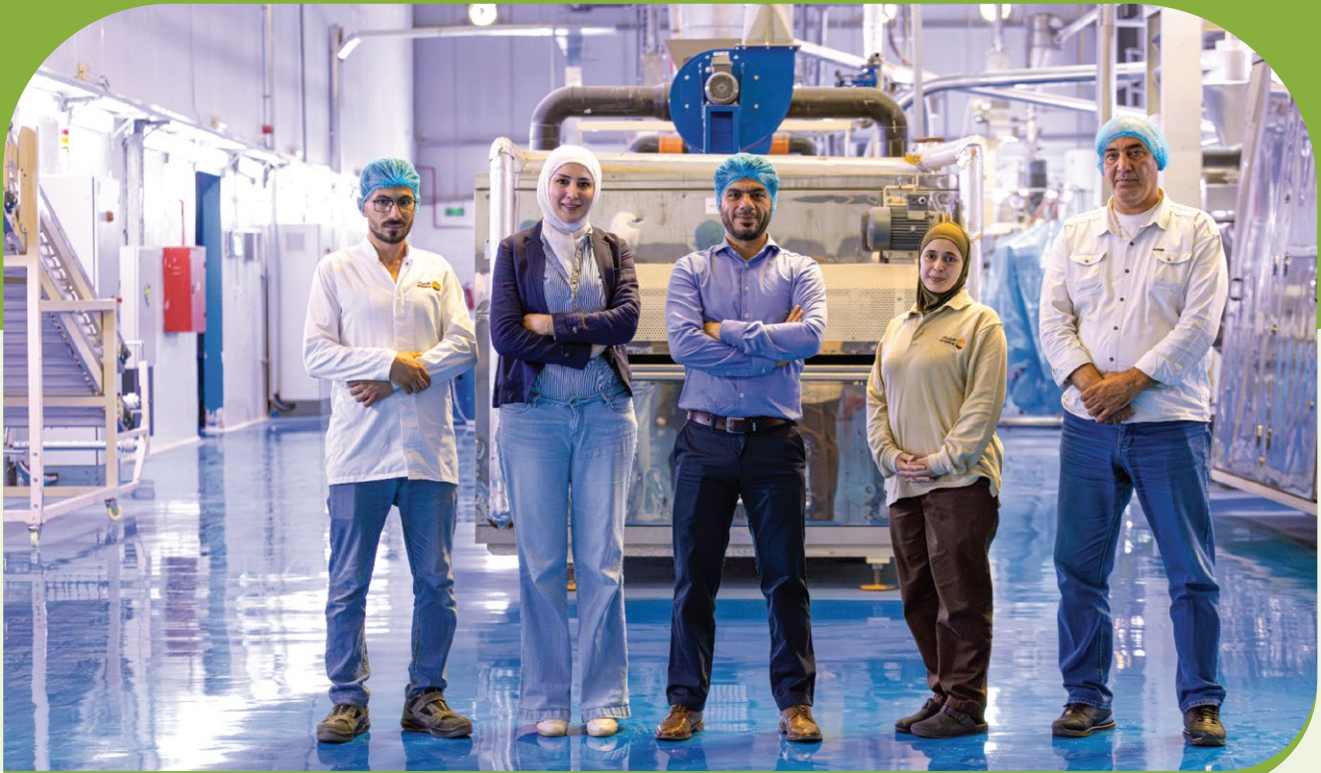


Attayebat Company

Manufacturing (Food manufacturing)

Attracting the Best Talents through Blind and Skill-focused Recruitment



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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

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Ahmad Diranieh

Amman

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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).

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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

Since its establishment in 2011, Attayebat Company for Food Industries has produced an extensive range of snack pellets. Their product line encompasses a wide variety of potato, corn, legumes and natural ingredients.

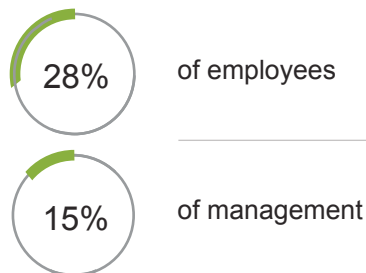
The company operates on a continuous basis, with the factory running around the clock in two shifts to ensure a seamless production flow and fulfil the requirements of customers inside and outside Jordan.

The quality of Attayebat's products is guaranteed and evidenced by its gluten-free facility as well as high-standard certifications such as FSSC 22000, ISO 22000, HACCP, ISO 14001, ISO 9001, HALAL and Kosher. Although its products are rooted in the MENA region, the company also exports to other parts of the world.

Number of employees



Women comprise



Summary of key initiatives



Gender-blind recruitment



Women-led shift



Leadership commitment



Empowerment of women in leadership positions

Summary of business benefits



Better business performance



Increased Innovation



Higher retention rate



Employee satisfaction



Factory
establishment

2011

Increased female
representation

2020

Signed the WEPs
leadership commitment on
gender-neutral policies

2022

Training and development
on gender-responsive
procurement

2023

2. The business context of inclusive and skill-focused recruitment processes

Attayebat Company for Food Industries demonstrates a strong leadership commitment to gender equality and the integration of women in the workplace as a top strategic priority.

The company invests in women-friendly business policies and practices by providing equal opportunities and unbiased hiring practices. Initiatives such as launching the Leadership Development Programme, introducing flexible work policies, conducting gender awareness trainings and establishing a Gender Equity Committee contribute all to the promotion of gender

equality and inclusion within the organisation, benefiting both women and the overall success of the company.

“



I observe that diversity increases internal competition and improves the quality of work.

Interview with the CEO Eng. Dawoud Al-Qasrawi

”



2a | Gender-responsive procurement and recruitment

As a key initiative, Attayebat has integrated gender-responsive procurement practices (cf. WEPs 2023) that ensure fairness and equity in supplier selection and procurement. This includes an innovative and inclusive procurement process that promotes gender equality by encouraging the participation of women-owned businesses in procurement opportunities.

“



We do blind recruiting. This ensures that our decisions are really based on skills and not on gender or family status.

Focus group interview with female and male employees

”

Gender-responsive recruitment is another key practice that Attayebat undertakes to ensure fair and unbiased recruitment processes that provide equal opportunities.

The company uses measures such as gender-neutral language in job descriptions, blind resume reviews to minimise bias and diverse candidate pools.

Attayebat's gender-responsive recruitment process is designed to ensure that talent is hired solely on the basis of qualifications and not on the basis of “unconscious biases” related to gender or family status.

Both female and male employees are very supportive and positive about this process.

“



The recruitment process was good and fair. I was able to talk about what I wanted to do and what I didn't want to do. I am very happy.

Focus group interview with female and male employees

”



2b | Women-led shift

Attayebat Company is in the process of developing an innovative solution for gender-inclusive work practices. The company aims at setting up an all-female shift in its factory. This means that an entire shift team, consisting of supervisors and three to five workers, will be women. This will help the company to promote a more diverse and inclusive management structure, making it a more attractive employer for women. A safe working environment is essential for women to consider employment opportunities, and this initiative further reinforces the company's commitment to providing such an environment.

“



My goal is to run the entire shift A as an all-female shift. To achieve this, I have to invest in training these female employees. But I'm sure it will pay off, because in my experience women are extremely determined and hard workers. Women show a high level of commitment and are willing to take on more responsibility for their work.

Interview with the CEO

”



3. Vision and profit: return of investment

Attayebat Company aims to set a benchmark in promoting gender equality in the food industry and strives for a workplace that creates an environment where each individual, regardless of gender, can thrive, innovate and contribute fully. Attayebat sees women as a valuable but often underutilised resource with great **potential for growth in the industry**.

As described above, one of Attayebat's strategies used is therefore to conceal the gender and family status of applicants. In 2000, a famous study showed that symphony orchestras began hiring more women by having applicants audition from behind a screen that hid their gender (Goldin & Rouse 2000).

This famous study suggests that blind hiring allows more applicants from disadvantaged groups to reach the interview stage, allowing organisations to select from a larger pool of talent. Moreover, research suggests that blind hiring particularly increases hiring rates for members of traditionally disadvantaged groups when used by organisations that typically under-select candidates from these groups for interviews (Fath 2023). In the Jordanian context, where strong gender stereotypes still prevail (UN Women 2022), the blind recruitment strategy is therefore an effective tool for attracting the best talent.

It is not just blind recruitment that can pay dividends for companies. Language also plays a role. One study showed that job adverts with gender-neutral language in predominantly male roles received 145% more applications per job at a 16% lower Cost Per Application (CPA) than job adverts with female or male coded words (Appcast w.Y.).

In the interview, the CEO explained that his remarkable commitment to increasing the number of women in his workforce is rooted in his desire to make it easier for women to enter non-traditional areas of work.

“

When I once saw a female security guard outside the Swedish Embassy, I found it very inspiring and I would like to contribute to having more women in my workforce – even in non-traditional roles. One day I would also like to have a female security guard in my company.

Interview with the CEO



”

On the other hand, hiring more women has **many economic benefits for the company**. One of them is that, according to CEO Eng. Dawoud Al-Qasrawi, diversity leads to **internal competition and therefore better quality**.

The CEO also explained that the company's commitment to gender equality is linked to its signing of the WEPs, which is important to Attayebat, **the network, the international community and the founders**.

Attayebat's commitment strengthens the **company's brand image, promotes customer loyalty and attracts a wide range of suppliers and partners**.

Continued investment in women and gender equality appears to be paying off, resulting in a highly **motivated, satisfied and loyal workforce**, which has a direct impact on the **retention rate of 83%, with an impressive 95% retention rate for women specifically**.

“



I love working here, it is one of the best companies in the field.

I love working here because we are very innovative when it comes to dealing with new challenges. I am proud to be part of a company that really values its female employees.

Focus group interview with female and male employees

”



4. Yes – but: challenges and solutions

The biggest challenge for Attayebat in realising gender equality is to bring about a cultural change within the company and in the industry as a whole. Some examples of cultural barriers in the industrial sector include, but are not limited to, the social stigma associated with it being perceived as a traditionally male-dominated field, the lack of female role models, and cultural concerns about women's safety during commutes, particularly to remote or industrial areas, which are often seen as unsafe for women.

- > To address this issue, Attayebat is actively pursuing a strategy to provide comprehensive gender awareness training and is forming a dedicated Gender Equality Committee to lead this cultural change.

Another challenge is to increase the participation of women in leadership roles.

- > Attayebat has introduced leadership development programmes and mentoring initiatives.

Finally, measuring progress and assessing impact remains of paramount importance.

Finally, measuring progress and assessing impact remains of paramount importance.

- > Attayebat has developed a tracking system and regular reporting mechanisms to ensure transparency, accountability and continuous improvement.

Attayebat aims to become a role model for gender equality and inclusion in the food industry and an inspiration to other companies. The company's vision is to be an employer of choice for women in the region, fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce that drives innovation and success. Ultimately, Attayebat aims to contribute to the economic empowerment of women in Jordan and the MENA region and recognises their significant growth potential for the industry.

“



We hope that other companies will recognise the value of employing more women.

Focus group interview with female and male employees

”



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

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