

Guideline for Employers in the Private Sector

**(For Promoting a Safe Working Environment for Women's
Participation in the Labor Market)**

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Introduction:

Investing in human resources in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan must be prudent and efficient to achieve actual economic viability. When men and women participate equally in economic life, they can contribute their potential to building a more cohesive society and a more flexible economy. "The surest way to help enriching the lives of families, local communities, and economy is to allow everyone to unleash their full creative capabilities."¹ **Women represent tremendous opportunities rather than loss-causing heavy burdens**, as their participation in the workforce is the primary driver of labor market success. This is what the term "women's economy"² signifies, highlighting the power that women represent in growth and bridging the gap in male and female utilization rates in the global economy. It provides a strong impetus to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)³. **Equality before the law and economic equal opportunities are not just wise social policies; they are also smart economic policies**⁴.

Objective of the Guideline:

This guideline aims to encourage employers to increase women's participation in workplace institutions by highlighting the economic and social benefits of increasing women's involvement in the economy. It underscores their positive impact on economic growth and institutional performance, especially that the economic landscape in Jordan is automatically heading towards further marginalization of women's economic roles, contrary to the global and regional trends. As a consequence, this behavior incurs an economic and social cost in the "socioeconomic" sphere due to discrimination against women in the labor market. The reality, as indicated by numerous experiments and studies, is that pushing

¹ World Bank. (2013).

² Goldman Sachs, the Leading Investment Bank.

³ World Bank. (2013).

⁴ World Bank Group President: Kim Jong Kim.

women into the labor market achieves economic growth that takes Jordan to a high level of sustainable development.

Success Story of Nabil's Factory

(Four Women Supporting Their Father from Inception to Global Market)

Nabil's bakery started in 1945, gradually expanding into the production of frozen and, then chilled pastries. The "Nabil" project began as a family endeavor, consisting of a father and his four daughters. They supported and faced the challenges of economic, political and labor fluctuations together. Over time, they with their father attracted more experts and contributors to transition from a family business to an institutional one. In 2013, the four daughters officially became part of Nabil Factory's management council. Their participation in the World Economic Forum conference at the Dead Sea led to a five-year contract with a global company for institutional development. Nabil's Factory underwent administrative and digital transformation in 2019, and it later transitioned from a local to a global entity through a partnership with the Abu Dhabi Sovereign Fund. Mr. Nabil and his four daughters remained in the company's management, receiving annual profits. Today, Nabil's Factory is a primary supplier of frozen and chilled foods under leading global brands in Jordan and the region.

The establishment and development stages of Nabil's Factory were marked by a creative strategy that involved the maximum participation of women in the workplace and management. Women occupied 80% of the founding committee positions in the factory, 45% of supervisory and administrative roles, and the highest percentage of female workers in meat processing facilities. The factory currently aims to involve more women to promote equality and diversity in the workplace, enrich product quality, and increase production, which promises further prosperity and excellence.

The Impacts of Increased Women's Participation in the Labor Market:

Accelerating Economic Growth on Several Levels:

The relative lack of job opportunities for women in developing countries can hinder economic growth⁵. Reducing the gender gap in the labor force can accelerate economic growth⁶, benefiting not only women but also the entire economic system at various levels:

Level One: Institutional Performance, including:

- **Increased revenue and net profit:** Greater gender diversity in the workforce leads to improved institutional performance by providing effective work solutions, enhancing employee satisfaction, reducing turnover costs, and leveraging available talent. This results in higher company revenues and net profits⁷.
- **Increase in Workforce Skills and Diversity:** Increased female participation in the workforce contributes to a more skilled and diverse labor force, particularly as women's education levels rise compared to men's⁸, which, in turn, enhances institutional performance and gross profit ratio⁹.
- **Growing Talent Pool:** Equal employment opportunities for women allow companies to tap into a larger talent pool, which, in turn, reflects positively on potential growth. There is compelling evidence of positive changes in company performance due to women's presence on boards of directors and in senior management positions¹⁰. Therefore, talent has become one of the most sought-after commodities in the world. However, some talents pose serious problems because it is a rare resource that companies compete for

⁵ Stotsky, 2016.

⁶ UN Women, 2015.

⁷ International Finance Corporation, (2015).

⁸ Najjar, A. (2011).

⁹ ESCWA. (2015).

¹⁰ Waitzberg, et al, (2010).

more than anything else. Consequently, the value of women's contributions rises and increases as the scarcity of talented workforce grows¹¹.

- **Providing Broader Expertise and Competencies:** Greater gender diversity in corporate boards enhances corporate governance by providing a broader range of expertise and competencies (Lord Davies, 2013). The presence of women in corporate boards enables them to solve problems innovatively, with a strong sensitivity to issues have to do with competitiveness, making them more ideal, composed, balanced, and objective.
- **Increasing Institutional Innovation:** Estimates at the institutional level indicate that companies with three or more women in senior management positions exhibit a higher degree of organizational effectiveness and higher profits as well. This aligns with a study by McKinsey in 2008, which found that companies with three or more women in their senior management teams achieve better results across all organizational dimensions, including leadership, work values environment, coordination, and control, which are positively associated with higher operating margins. A study by Ezso & Ross in 2011, analyzing companies focusing on innovation, concluded that women's presence in senior management positions enhances the performance of the respective company.
- **Institutional Managerial Excellence:** An increase in the number of women in decision-making roles can potentially reduce the percentage of financial transactions involving high risks, typically carried out by male traders¹². Companies with the highest proportion of women in their senior management teams outperform those with the lowest proportion of women in terms of shareholder value, overall return on investment, and their loss in the labor market means a loss of returns¹³.

¹¹ Waitzberg, et al, (2010).

¹² Herbert & Coates, 2008.

¹³ Waitzberg, et al, (2010).

Level Two: The Connection Between Increasing Women's Engagement to Economic Growth and Investment Development:

- **Untapped Potentials of Women Remains a Missed Opportunity for Economic Growth and Development Worldwide:** Women's economic participation contributes to project development, business management, increased return on investment, and enhanced productivity. Raising the female labor force rate to levels on par with males in each country has a positive impact on the overall economy. There is a causal relationship between women's participation and economic growth, resulting in an increase in the gross domestic product.
- **Increasing Women's Participation in the Workforce Will Increase Global GDP by 5-20%.**
- **Women's Integration into the Labor Market and their Earning Income Improve the Savings Rate at the Local Economy Level:** They are more capable of saving compared to men. A one-percentage-point increase in the share of income earned by households where women play a role leads to an approximately 15-fold increase in national savings¹⁴.
- **Investing in Women Has a Compounded Effect on Societal Well-being:** Women's participation in the labor force benefits family income, health, and children's education¹⁵.
- **Women's Wage Labor is one of the Most Important Factors in Reducing Poverty in Developing Economies:** Encouraging women's participation in the labor market is part of poverty reduction and raising living standards for the population, which is a key to sustainable development.
- **Improving Women's Income-generating Opportunities and Income-control Increase, for example, Girls' Enrollment Rates in Education:** Women invest a large portion of their family's income in their children's education. Women tend to allocate the larger share of their resources to their families, resulting in improved levels of

¹⁴ World Bank, 2013

education and health for individuals. They often reinvest a large portion of their income in their families and local communities, leading to an evident increase in the family's income share that directly benefits children¹⁶.

Discrimination against Women in the Labor Market Incurs Economic and Social Costs

Discrimination against women in the labor market results in losses as well as social and economic costs at individual, institutional, societal, and international levels, negatively impacting societal structures and domestic product:

First: the Economic Axis: The Economic Underrepresentation of Women Results in Economic Losses and Costs.

- **Losses in the Jordanian Local Market:** The cost of women's reduced economic participation in the Jordanian labor market was estimated about 11 billion Jordanian dinars in 2013, equivalent to 46% of the GDP at that time¹⁷.
- **Gender Gap Incurs Local and Global Losses:** The value of losses borne globally due to gender disparities is estimated about 28 trillion US dollars, especially in countries with high female unemployment rates and low employment rates. The gender gap represents a significant loss in income and economic development, with potential GDP losses of up to 26% in countries with substantial gender gaps¹⁸.
- **Women's Unemployment Impoverishes Families and Spreads Poverty and Illiteracy:** The percentage of women heading households in Jordan increased from 17.5% in 2020 to 18.4% in 2021¹⁹. This increase in female unemployment, both educated and uneducated, results in higher sustenance levels within families compared to global rates. It can lead to increased financial burdens and impoverishment among families

¹⁵ International Labor Organization, 2015.

¹⁶ World Bank, 2013

¹⁷ Jordanian Strategies Forum, 2015.

¹⁸ World Bank, 2015.

forced to support their uneducated daughters, which means a higher rate of poverty among women compared to men. Moreover, the limited presence of women in leadership positions within companies and institutions leads to decrease in their earned income compared to the average income earned by men. Consequently, poverty becomes more concentrated among women than among men, signifying the feminization of poverty compared to men. This type of poverty has become an inherent product of the capitalist system²⁰.

- **Exclusion of Women from Institutional Management Positions Negatively Affects Productivity:** Companies employing women in management positions can be better prepared to serve consumer markets dominated by women. Therefore, the gender gap in senior management positions within companies will lead to significant losses in terms of labor and production²¹, as the smart economy focuses on female employees and female customers.
- **Empowering Women Farmers with Economic Resources and Means of Production Increases Agricultural Output:** If women farmers were given the same opportunities as men to access productive resources such as land and fertilizers in developing countries, agricultural output would increase by approximately 2.5% to 4%²². Removing barriers that prevent women from working in specific sectors or roles would lead to increased economic output by raising the labor-force participation rate and the productivity of the workforce.

¹⁹ Tadamon: The percentage of women heading their households in Jordan increased from 17.5% in 2020 to 18.4% in 2021 (sigi-jordan.org).

²⁰ Najjar, 2011

²¹ Waitzberg, et al, 2010.

²² FAO, 2011.

Second: the Social Axis: The Economic Underrepresentation of Women Entails Additional Costs that Necessitate Restructuring:

- **Gender Discrimination in the Private Sector Weakens Educational Opportunities:** Female unemployment weakens incentives for women's education among poor and middle-class groups—the vast majority of society—since one of the most important incentives for women's education in these groups is preparing women for jobs commensurate with their education, which weakens their educational opportunities (Najjar, 2011).
- **Women's Unemployment Negatively Affects Social Structures and Diminishes the Culture of Security and Peace:** Female unemployment has significant psychological effects on women who feel marginalized and undervalued, potentially leading to depression, suicide, and criminal activities.
- **Pay Inequality Undermines Women's Productivity and Institutional Output:** The problem of wage discrimination in labor leads to the perpetuation of discrimination against women, weakening their work incentives. This is a key factor in women's withdrawal from the labor market, resulting in a decreased labor-force participation rate on their part. On average, women working in most countries earn 60 to 75% of men's wages, which, in turn, perpetuates discrimination against them and weakens their work incentives, making it a key factor in women's withdrawal from the labor market and consequently reducing their participation rate in the workforce.
- **Discrimination against Women Negatively Impacts Their Roles in the Family and Society:** Women working in environments permeated with workplace discrimination face physical and psychological effects due to the burden of pressures surrounding women in their performance, as a result, of their roles outside and inside home²³. In fact, training women in skills and crisis management in their homes and workplaces

²³ National Jordanian Committee for Wage Equity. (2014).

contributes to the sustainability of their economic independence, thus enhancing their family and societal roles²⁴.

- **Discrimination against Women in the Labor Market Threatens Sustainable**

Development: Discrimination in the labor market in all its forms imposes significant social and psychological costs. It contributes to women's withdrawal from the labor market and their reluctance to engage in productive work due to the psychological issues they face, which reduce their productivity and effectiveness in the workplace.

Additionally, family problems arise from the conflict of roles for women in the absence of a fair division of labor between both genders. This leads to women refraining from or even quitting the labor market at a time when efforts are being made to increase women's economic participation to drive sustainable development²⁵.

The Legislative Framework that Promotes a Safe Working Environment for Women in the Private Labor Market

Preface:

The right to work is a fundamental human right recognized by international legislation and local laws. Empowering women with economic opportunities expands their choices and prospects in all areas of life, including the economic, social, political, and cultural spheres.

The Jordanian Constitution explicitly guarantees women's right to work and deems it a fundamental and inherent right. It mandates taking necessary measures and actions to economically empower women, given the low economic participation of women in various countries. Statistics show a link between high levels of violence and increased poverty

²⁴ Majority of Jordanians: economically empowered women are less vulnerable to domestic violence - Al Ghad Newspaper (alghad.com).

²⁵ Al Awawdeh, 2009.

among women. Furthermore, gender gaps exist in various areas, including economic participation.

First Axis: Economic Empowerment of Women in National Legislation (The Jordanian Constitution and Local Laws):

Having industrial and commercial facilities provides services responsive to the needs of working women increases their inclination to work. Additionally, providing logistical support to women, such as transportation allowances at the beginning of their employment, significantly encourages them to enter the labor market. Having a trusted reference that provides specialized advice to women workers creates a safer working environment with significantly less violence²⁶.

First: Women's Right to Work in the Jordanian Constitution:

Article 23/1 of the Jordanian Constitution guaranteed the right to work for male and female citizens, along with the obligations it entails. It states, "Work is the right of every citizen, and the State shall provide opportunities for work to all citizens by directing the national economy and raising its standards."²⁷ Since 1952, the Jordanian Constitution has granted Jordanian women many rights. Over the years, Jordanian legislators have amended these rights to align with justice and gender equality, narrowing gaps to facilitate sustainable community development for the national interest.

Second: Women's Right to Economic Empowerment in the Constitution:

In 2022, new constitutional amendments were passed in favor of Jordanian women, particularly regarding their right to support and empowerment. Article 6/6 states the following: "The state shall guarantee the empowerment and support of women to play an

²⁶ Majority of Jordanians: economically empowered women are less vulnerable to domestic violence - Al Ghad Newspaper (alghad.com). (DAEM, 2022).

²⁷ The Jordanian Constitution of 1952 and its amendments until 2022.

active role in building society in a way that guarantees equal opportunities on the basis of justice and equity and protects them from all forms of violence and discrimination.”

This text serves as a binding rule for local laws and regulations, ensuring support and empowerment for women based on the principle of equal opportunities. This includes critical legislation related to women's work and economic rights, aiming to establish a system of social and economic protection for both male and female citizens. Training women in basic skills in the labor market increases their efficiency and productivity. Additionally, providing them with legal, psychological, and social counseling empowers women in the labor market, according to a study by DAEM for Women's Empowerment Association 2022²⁸.

- **Right of the Working Woman/Man to Childcare Facilities Provided by the Employer:**

Article 72/A of the Labor Law states: "An employer with a number of female employees, with no less than 15 children under the age of 5 should provide suitable childcare in the workplace, given the fact that multiple employers could collaborate to establish a shared daycare in their geographical area."²⁹ Moreover, the Nursery Regulations/System No. 77 of 2018 issued under Article 4 of the Ministry of Social Development and Labor Law No. 14 of 1956, Article 3/B/1 states: "The nursery provides care for children from one day to four years old."

²⁸ Majority of Jordanians: economically empowered women are less vulnerable to domestic violence - Al Ghad Newspaper (alghad.com). (DAEM for Women's Empowerment Association, 2022).

²⁹ Jordanian Labor Law (No. 8) of 1996 and its amendments. Article 72/A stipulates in paragraph B of the same article: "The Minister shall determine suitable alternatives if it becomes clear that the employer cannot provide the appropriate facilities within the establishment or its surroundings in accordance with instructions issued for this purpose."

- **Right of the Women Workers to Maternity Leave, and Men Workers to Paternity Leave:**

The Jordanian Labor Law grants pregnant working women the right to maternity leave of ten weeks, with full pay, as specified in Article 70: "Women workers shall be entitled to maternity leave with full pay for ten weeks before and after delivery. Leave after delivery shall be no less than six weeks long and employment before the expiry expiration of such a period shall be prohibited."

Additionally, in the context of maternity leave, the law supports it with paternity leave to manage family affairs for the benefit of the child. Article 66/J states that "an employee has the right to three days of paid paternity leave."

- **Right of Women Workers to One Hour of Paid Breastfeeding Leave for One Year:**

The Jordanian Labor Law includes many rights that ensure decent and safe working conditions for working women and girls, including the right of women workers to one hour of paid breastfeeding leave for one year from the date of delivery. Article 71 states: "After the expiry of the maternity leave stipulated in article (70) of this law, the working woman shall be entitled to take paid intermittent period(s) for nursing her newborn baby during a year since the delivery date, the total of this period shall not exceed an hour per day."

- **Prohibition of Dismissing a Pregnant Woman or Notifying Her:**

The Jordanian Labor Law prohibits the dismissal of a pregnant woman starting from the sixth month of pregnancy or during the maternity leave. Article 27 stipulates that the services of a pregnant woman cannot be terminated, nor can she be notified of the termination of her services by her employer during maternity leave, annual leave, or sick leave. If she is pregnant, it is prohibited to terminate her services or notify her of the

termination of her services for a period of six months, starting from the sixth month of pregnancy.

- **Right of Women Workers to Take a Full Year Off for Child Rearing:**

The law grants working women the right to take unpaid leave for child rearing for a period not exceeding one year in establishments employing ten or more workers without salary. It also allows her to return to her job after the expiration of this leave. Article 67 states: “Every woman worker in an establishment employing ten or more workers shall be entitled to a maximum of one year unpaid leave to bring up her children. She shall have the right to be reinstated at the end of her leave, but shall lose that right if she was engaged in gainful employment during that period.”

- **Right to Leave to Accompany Spouse for Work outside the Governorate or Country:**

Both spouses have the right to obtain leave for a maximum of two years, without pay, to accompany their spouse to work outside the governorate or country. Article 68 states: “Every worker, male or female, shall have the right to take unpaid leave once for a maximum period of two years to accompany his or her spouse if the latter is moved to a work place in a province other than the one in which he or she normally works or abroad.”

- **Right to Equal Pay Without Gender Discrimination:**

The Jordanian Labor Law prohibits wage discrimination based on gender for equal work. Employers who do not comply with the minimum wage requirements and break the law can face penalties and be required to pay wage differentials. Article 53 of the Labor Law states: "An employer, or person acting on his behalf, who has paid a worker less than the minimum rate of remuneration shall be punishable by a fine of no less than five hundred twenty dinars and no more than one thousand dinars in respect of each offense, and shall

also be ordered to pay the worker the difference. The penalty shall be doubled every time the offense is repeated."

- **Right to Annual Leave Not Counted from Official Holidays:**

The Jordanian Labor Law grants every worker paid annual leave of 14 days, which becomes 21 days after 5 years of service. Article 61/A of the Jordanian Labor Law states: "Every worker shall be entitled to annual leave with full pay for a period of fourteen days for every year of employment, unless a longer period is agreed. Annual leave shall be extended to twenty one days where the worker has been in the employment of the same employer for five consecutive years. Official and religious holidays and weekly rest days shall not be counted as part of a worker's annual leave unless they fall in its course."

- **Right to Sick Leave (14 Days Per Year) Based on Medical Certification:**

Every worker has the right to take paid sick leave when a health condition arises according to the Jordanian Labor Law. Article 65 states: "Every worker shall be entitled to fourteen days a year of sick leave with full pay on the basis of a report by the medical practitioner approved by the establishment. Sick leave may be extended to a further fourteen days with full pay if the worker is hospitalized and with half pay if the worker is not hospitalized but provides a report from a medical commission approved by the establishment."

- **Right of the Worker to Leave Work While Retaining Legal Rights When the Employer Violates the Agreement:**

According to Article 28 of the Labor Law, "The worker has the right to leave work without notice while retaining their legal rights regarding the termination of service and any resulting compensation for leave and damage in case the worker is employed in work that substantially differs from the type of work agreed upon in the employment contract, or the

employee is assigned work in a way that requires changing the employee's permanent residence, transferring them to another job of lower grade, reducing their wage, or subjecting them to assault by the employer or their representative. The employer shall be penalized for failure to implement any provisions of this law or any regulations issued under it, provided that they have received a notice from a competent authority in the Ministry requesting compliance with these provisions. "

It is proven by a medical report issued by a medical authority, that his continuation of work would threaten his health.

- **Right to Work in a Morally Safe Working Environment:**

Article 306 of the Jordanian Penal Code criminalizes any indecent acts or statements that are contrary to modesty. It states: "Any person who commits an indecent act or makes any unethical statement or gestures in an indecent manner by a word, act or gesture explicitly or implicitly shall be imprisoned for a period of not less than six months if the victim is above the age of eighteen years without consent." The law does not specify an upper limit for the penalty, allowing for the possibility of more severe penalties for more serious offenses.

- **Right to Protection and Necessary Measures:**

Employers are required to provide precautions and necessary measures to protect workers from work hazards and occupational diseases, as well as to provide personal protective equipment without passing on any expenses to the workers. Article 78 of the Labor Law emphasizes occupational health and safety, stating: "Every employer shall take the necessary precautions and measures to protect workers against hazards and diseases, provide personal protective equipment, and ensure that workers are informed of personal protection and prevention methods. The employer shall post up the instructions and guidelines about occupational hazards and protection methods."

- **The right of the worker, whether male or female, to benefit from the provisions of flexible work for every pregnant individual, childcare provider, and elderly caregiver due to disability or illness:**

In accordance with Article 140 of the Jordanian Labor Law, which stipulates that: "The Ministers Board may, upon a recommendation of the Minister, issue the regulations necessary for enforcing the provisions of this Law." Flexible Work System No. 22 of 2017 was issued. Article 3/b of this system states: "The provisions of flexible work apply to workers who have family responsibilities, including pregnant women or workers who care for a child, a family member, or the elderly due to disability or illness."

Studies have confirmed that the implementation of the flexible work system reduces women's withdrawal from the labor market and enhances their economic participation. In a study issued by the Supreme Council for Population in 2015, it was found that 95% of large companies, institutions, and organizations with more than 50 employees that implement flexible work have experienced positive effects. These positive effects have reflected on the quality of their work and productivity due to the application of flexible work provisions. They have succeeded in attracting more pregnant women, homemakers, and caregivers. Furthermore, 60% of them reported that the application of flexible work contributed to increased female employment and their continued participation in the workforce. Companies and institutions unanimously agreed that beneficiaries of the system, both male and female, are satisfied with their jobs.

The right of the caregiver to receive financial support under the Maternity Insurance System for the year 2020, established by the Social Security Corporation:

The Maternity Insurance System for the year 2020 was established under Articles 42 and 106 of the Social Security Law for the year 2014. This system includes social protection programs for childcare in both nurseries and caregivers' homes. This system aims to support working women who meet the following conditions:

- The working woman must be a caregiver to a child under 60 months of age.
- The working woman must be insured according to the provisions of this system.
- The working woman must be employed when applying for support.
- The working woman must be eligible for maternity leave allowance.

The insured working woman is entitled to a childcare allowance on a monthly basis for a maximum of six months. The calculation of support starts from the first month after the end of maternity leave and continues until the child reaches 60 months of age. The support is provided in the form of a childcare allowance, and this allowance is discontinued once the child reaches 60 months of age. The amount of the childcare allowance is determined based on the insured worker's wage subject to deduction at the beginning of maternity leave.

Compliance with the rights of female workers means avoiding fines and penalties:

- a. An employer or the director of an institution shall be penalized with a fine of no less than 300 JD and no more than 500 JD for committing any violation.
- b. An employer shall be penalized for any violation committed by using any worker through coercion, threat, fraud, or compulsion, including the withholding of travel documents, with a fine of no less than 500 JD and no more than 1,000 JD.
- c. Penalties shall be doubled in case of repetition, in accordance with Article 77 of the Labor Law.

Fine for wage discrimination: An employer shall be penalized with a fine of no less than 500 JD and no more than 1,000 JD for each case in which they pay a worker less than the minimum wage or engage in gender-based wage discrimination. In addition to the fine, the worker is entitled to wage differentials, and the penalty is doubled for repeated violations, according to Article 53 of the Labor Law.

Ministerial closure of the employer's establishment: If an employer violates the provisions of this law, the Minister has the authority to close the workplace either partially or completely or suspend any machinery therein if such violation poses a risk to workers. Workers have the right to receive their full wages during the closure or suspension period. The Minister also has the authority to refer the violator to the relevant court. In such cases, the violator shall be penalized with a fine of no less than 100 JD and no more than JD, with the fine being doubled in case of repetition. The fine cannot be reduced below its minimum limit for any reason, as per Article 84 of the Labor Law.

Compliance with granting women their rights means avoiding jeopardy with the relevant authorities:

The Ministry of Labor receives complaints from workers, both male and female, through a hotline, the Wage Authority, and the "Hemayeh" platform on its website. Workers have the right to appeal to those entities. In the event that an employer commits any violation under the Labor Law and related legislation, the Inspection Department investigates the validity of the complaint and takes necessary actions. Hemayeh platform link: <https://complaint.hemayeh.jo/home/index>

Second Axis: Operational Support by Government Entities/Production Branch

Management Unit at the Ministry of Labor as an Example:

In accordance with the Royal Directives to develop necessary plans and projects for reducing poverty and unemployment, the Ministry of Labor has been implementing various projects and programs since 2008 to secure employment opportunities for Jordanians, both male and female, at different skill levels in remote areas with high poverty and unemployment rates. The ministry also implements training programs related to employment and sustainable development, promoting economic activity and changing the work culture to include women on an equal footing with men, aiming to achieve social security. One of the pioneering projects in this area is the establishment of Production

Units/Branches in remote areas with high poverty and unemployment rates across all governorates of Jordan. This project attracts investments to remote and impoverished areas to support them economically and socially, providing training and employment opportunities for unemployed individuals in these areas. Key aspects of this project include:

Establishment of Production Branches as subsidiaries of major factories in remote or high-poverty areas.

- Establishment of a new factory/production unit for interested investors in the targeted remote areas with high poverty and unemployment rates.
- Targeting the textile sector in most of the branches established during the years 2008-2017 and attracting investors in other industrial sectors (such as paper and cardboard manufacturing, medical supplies, food industries, etc.) since 2018.
- The current number of operational Production Branches across the governorates is 29 with a capacity of accommodating 10,740 workers. Currently, 8,432 workers are employed in these branches, and an additional 2,308 new workers will be employed in 2023, bringing the total number of workers to approximately 10,740, distributed across all regions.
- The number of Production Branches under construction and operation in 2023 is 3, with the aim of employing 550 workers per Production Branch. An example is the Production Branch in Mafraq, which aims to employ 250 Jordanian workers.
- The number of Production Branches under consideration for 2023 is 6, with the aim of employing 930 workers as part of the Royal Initiatives to expand Production Branches in targeted governorates and regions. Additionally, 7 new Production Branches are planned in various governorates of Jordan with the aim of employing 2,050 male and female workers. Negotiations are underway with some investors in this regard. New investors are also being sought in areas like Al-Balqa, Central Badia, Wadi Araba, Al-Azraq, Irbid, Bani Kinana, and Tafilah. Financing Sources for Production Branch Projects:

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- Capital funding (Royal Hashemite Court, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, and the Professional and Technical Skills Development Fund).

Incentives and Benefits Offered to Investors by the Ministry of Labor:

First:

Capital support provided to investors when establishing Production Branches:

Contribution towards the cost of constructing each square meter with an amount ranging from 225 to 250 JD.

Payment of the cost of providing infrastructure services (water, electricity, road connections, if available).

Free provision of the building by the investor for three years from the date of operation of the Production Branch.

Second:

Operational support for workers at Production Branches, provided to investors as follows:

A 50% contribution to the salaries of workers for 12 months, based on the minimum wage.

A contribution of 25 JD towards transportation for workers for 12 months.

A payment of 25 JD for social security contributions for 12 months, along with the incentives provided by the Ministry of Investment, as well as the tax and custom exemptions. Article 2 of the Jordanian Income Tax Law for the year 2014 states: "**Taxable income is what remains of the net income, or the total net income after deducting carried-forward losses from previous tax periods, personal exemptions, and donations.**" Furthermore, Article 10 of the same law states: "**Any person is allowed to deduct contributions and donations made in the Kingdom without personal benefit for religious, charitable, humanitarian, scientific, environmental, or professional**

purposes—provided that the nature of the donation is accurate—up to a maximum of 25% of the taxable income."

Third Axis: Safeguards for Women's Rights in International Law:

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has been actively seeking to join the international humanitarian community since its establishment by ratifying international laws, conventions, covenants, and treaties, given its pivotal role in achieving sustainable development. It has ratified the majority of international conventions, covenants, and treaties that focus on human and women's rights in particular. This has led to creating international commitments on Jordan's part, aligning national laws and legislation with these internationally ratified agreements. Among the prominent international covenants ratified and emphasized by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the economic empowerment of women are:

First: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Its articles include the protection and preservation of human rights, emphasizing equality among all people regardless of their differences. Article 1 states, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." It also reaffirms in Article 2 that every person has the right to enjoy all rights without discrimination based on sex³⁰. Article 22 emphasizes the right of every individual to social security, essential for their dignity and personal growth. Article 23 asserts the right to work under fair conditions, in a

³⁰ Every person has the right to enjoy all the rights and freedoms mentioned in this declaration without any discrimination of any kind, especially discrimination based on race, color, sex, language, religion, political or non-political opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or any other status. Furthermore, discrimination on the basis of the political, legal, or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, under trusteeship, or subject to any other limitation of sovereignty, is not permissible.

decent environment, with equal pay and the ability to receive bonuses, while Article 24 specifies working hours and periodic leaves³¹.

Second: The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights:

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights on December 16, 1966, and it entered into force on January 3, 1976. Jordan ratified this Covenant, making it legally binding since its publication in the official gazette.

This Covenant affirms that all individuals are equal in economic, social, political, and cultural rights. States parties are obligated to harmonize their domestic legislation to fulfill their international commitments. The rights enumerated in the Covenant fall under economic, social, and cultural rights, addressing fundamental social and economic conditions necessary for a life of dignity and freedom, including labor, social security, health, education, food, water, housing, a healthy environment, and culture³².

³¹ **Article 22:** Every person, as a member of society, has the right to social security, and it is their right to have economic, social and cultural rights provided to them through national effort and international cooperation, in accordance with the structure of each state and its resources, and in a manner that is consistent with their dignity and the growth of their personality, in freedom.

Article 23: (1) Every person has the right to work, to choose their employment freely, and to enjoy just and favorable working conditions, as well as protection against unemployment.

(2) All individuals, without discrimination, have the right to equal pay for equal work.

(3) Every individual who works has the right to a fair and satisfactory remuneration that guarantees for them and their family a decent standard of living with human dignity, and it shall be supplemented, when necessary, by other means of social protection.

(4) Every person has the right to establish trade unions with others and to join them for the protection of their interests.

Article 24: Every person has the right to rest and leisure, particularly with reasonable working hours and paid periodic vacations

³² Introduction to Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights: <https://www.escr-net.org/ar/resources/368498>.

Therefore, the states commit to taking the necessary steps to enforce these rights gradually, in particular those areas:

- Respecting economic, social, and cultural rights (refraining from any violation of these rights).
- Protecting economic, social, and cultural rights (preventing third parties from violating these rights).
- Protecting economic, social, and cultural rights (preventing third parties from violating these rights).
- Fulfilling economic, social, and cultural rights (taking necessary measures to enforce these rights through legislative and administrative procedures, budget allocation, and other means).
- Seeking and providing international assistance to enforce those rights.

Third: The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights:

Jordan ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1975, which, in its preamble, affirms that all individuals are born free and equal in dignity and rights, entitled to various rights, and that it is the duty of the state to protect and ensure these rights. Article 8 explicitly prohibits slavery, forced labor, and servitude³³.

Fourth: The Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women:

The Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, includes provisions that uphold women's rights and prohibit discrimination against them. Article 10 highlights the importance of gender equality

³³ Article 8: 1. No one shall be subjected to slavery or servitude in any form; slavery and the slave trade are prohibited in all their forms.

2. No one shall be subjected to forced labor.

3. (a) No one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labor.

in employment, emphasizing that women are entitled to equal rights as men in the economic and social fields³⁴.

Fifth: The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women:

Jordan ratified this convention in 1992. It acknowledges that discrimination against women hinders their participation in political, social, economic, and cultural life, and it obstructs the full development of society and the family. The convention defines discrimination against women as any distinction, exclusion, or restriction based on sex that impairs the recognition of women's human rights and fundamental freedoms in political, economic, social, cultural, or any other field.

Sixth: International Labor Organization (ILO) Conventions:

34 Article 10: 1. All appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure that women, whether married or unmarried, enjoy equal rights with men in the economic and social fields, in particular: (a) The right, without discrimination of any kind, to receive vocational training, to work, and to choose their profession and type of work, and to be promoted in their employment or profession.

(b) The right to receive equal remuneration as men for work of equal value, and to be treated equally in work of equal value.

(c) The right to enjoy paid leave, retirement benefits, and social security guarantees against unemployment, illness, old age, or other incapacity to work.

(d) The right to family benefits on an equal basis with men.

2. In order to prevent discrimination against women on the grounds of marriage or pregnancy and to ensure their effective right to work, necessary measures shall be taken to prohibit their dismissal due to marriage or pregnancy. Maternity leave with pay shall be provided, with the guarantee of returning to their previous employment, and necessary social services, including childcare services, shall be provided to them.

3. The measures taken to protect women, in certain types of work, for reasons related to their physical constitution, shall not be considered discriminatory measures.

Jordan has ratified 26 ILO conventions, all of which promote the elimination of gender-based discrimination. Some of the most important of these conventions include:

1. Convention No. 29 of 1930 concerning Forced Labor.
2. Convention No. 81 of 1947 concerning Labor Inspection in Industry and Commerce.
3. Convention No. 100 of 1951 concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value.
4. Convention No. 105 of 1957 concerning the Abolition of Forced Labor.

The Fourth Axis: The Current Situation of Working Women in the Labor Market:

There are still demands and gaps that require significant efforts, and these efforts should be a collaborative endeavor between the public and private sectors, as well as civil society organizations advocating for various rights.

1. **Gender Pay Gap:** Despite Jordanian labor laws and legislative frameworks highlighting the illegality of wage gaps for work of equal value and Jordan's ratification of International Labor Organization Convention No. 100 on equal remuneration for equal work, as well as Convention No. 111 on non-discrimination in employment and occupation in 1963, reports from the General Social Security Corporation and the General Statistics Department indicate the presence of wage gaps between males and females. This requires continuous oversight by the government to ensure the implementation of labor laws regarding wages and support from the private sector in various areas, such as promoting corporate social responsibility, establishing a legal framework supporting "corporate social responsibility," and providing tax incentives for employers who commit to fair wages and female employment.
2. **Low Economic Participation of Women and Lack of Social Protection:**

The economic participation rates of Jordanian women in the labor market remain at 14%, and there has been no change in these rates for years. When compared to the

participation rates of men, a significant gender gap becomes evident. This hinders the achievement of gender equality in work and economic participation. Despite legislative texts and protective systems emphasizing fairness and non-discrimination between genders in employment, as reflected in international agreements ratified by Jordan and incorporated into local laws to ensure effective implementation, there are many challenges facing women in the labor market. These challenges lead many women to withdraw from the workforce prematurely, such as inadequate transportation, complex roles, unsafe working environments, low levels of women's registration in social security and health insurance, and issues related to social protection, despite the existence of national strategies for social protection and decent work.

3. **Challenges of the Balancing Complex Roles for Working Women:**

Traditional and caregiving roles are still primarily the responsibility of women, even in cases where they have a job outside the home. Working women often bear additional burdens, including economic burdens, work outside the home, and caregiving responsibilities inside the home. There are also financial burdens associated with providing care for children under the age of five. The law mandates the provision of childcare facilities for female employees if the workplace meets specific criteria, but the guarantees for the implementation of this provision are insufficient, and, as a result, working women often shoulder a significant portion of these responsibilities.

4. **Segregation in the Workplace:** Despite legislative texts and international agreements ratified by Jordan, which mandate the elimination of segregation within the workplace, some practices regarding the delayed access of women to leadership positions and decision-making roles persist. Some may believe that women, due to their traditional roles, may not succeed in these positions, and that competition among men is higher than among women.

The Fifth Axis: Guiding Principles for Employers to Promote a Safe Work Environment for Women in the Private Sector

1. Gender Equality and Inclusion:

A- Application of laws and regulations governing social protection and career development:

- Equal pay for equal work.
- Inclusion of female employees in social security.
- Provision of healthcare insurance for female employees.
- Application of incentives, bonuses, and overtime pay.
- Granting of annual and sick leave.
- Adherence to specified work hours and flexibility in work schedules.
- Maternity leave and breastfeeding hours for working mothers.

B- Providing training and career development opportunities for women to access managerial and leadership positions.

C- Enhancing the professional competence of working women, with incentives and promotions.

D- Ensuring gender balance in the workplace without favoring males over females.

2. Gender-Sensitive Work Environment:

A gender-sensitive work environment requires providing incentives for women to engage in the labor market and secure continuity, including:

- Establishing childcare facilities for female employees.
- Securing safe transportation for working women.
- Establishing an ethical code of conduct free from discrimination.
- Implementing necessary procedures to combat violence against women in the workplace.

- Guaranteeing women's right to complain about any wrongful actions taken against them while maintaining privacy.
- Raising awareness and fostering a culture of protection to empower women.
- Treating women fairly and justly without discrimination and adhering to the principle of equality in all matters related to career advancement based on merit and entitlement.
- Creating a supportive environment for enhancing women's skills through training in work-related skills and productivity.
- Providing a participatory work environment that promotes mutual respect.
- Ensuring the foundations of safety and health for women in the workplace.

The Sixth Axis: Employers' Responsibility to the National Economy and Gross Domestic Product (GDP):

Employers bear a national responsibility to increase women's economic participation opportunities. Each new woman in the labor market adds 12,668 Jordanian Dinars to the annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP), according to a study conducted by the Jordanian Strategic Forum in 2015. Additionally, a study conducted by the "DAEM for Women Empowerment Association" in 2022 revealed that Jordanian society is leaning toward empowering women in both the environment and the workforce. This contributes to increasing women's participation in the labor market and enhances their ability to confront domestic and societal violence. Moreover, the presence of individuals supporting women's economic independence increases their participation in the labor market.³⁵

The Role of Employers in Increasing Gross Domestic Product (GDP):

Employers play a significant role in increasing employment opportunities for women and bridging the gender gap in the workforce. Jordanian women can contribute to the economic growth side by side with men, accounting for approximately 60.4% of the

³⁵ Majority of Jordanians: economically empowered women are less vulnerable to domestic violence - Al Ghad Newspaper (alghad.com).

workforce. Gender equality in the labor market enables the Jordanian economy to raise its GDP by about 46.14%, according to the Jordanian Strategies Forum. This, in turn, increases the GDP per capita.

The Role of Institutional Collaboration in Enhancing Women's Economic Participation Globally:

Increasing women's participation in the workforce to 50% of the global average requires adding 678,974 women to the Jordanian labor market, an increase of approximate 278.8%. This would raise Jordan's GDP to 32.512 billion JD, up from 23.911 billion dinars, an increase of around 36%. The GDP per capita would rise by approximate 75% to reach 6,476 JD, as per the Jordanian Strategies Forum.

Employers' Role in Enhancing Job Opportunities for Women Contributes to Increasing Women's Economic Participation to the Regional Average in the Middle East and North Africa:

Raising the economic participation of Jordanian women to the regional average of 23% would mean adding 180,814 women to the workforce, an increase of 74.42%. This increase would positively impact Jordan's GDP, raising it from 23.911 billion JD in 2013 to 26.2 billion dinars, an increase of 9.58%. The GDP per capita would rise to 4,441 JD, an increase of approximate 20%, according to the Jordanian Strategies Forum.

Increasing employers' efforts to provide economic opportunities for women helps protect the Jordanian economy from potential losses and reinforces their responsibility in combating gender-based discrimination in the labor market.

Success Story of Rania Abu Zeitoun

A success story (a decent work environment produces creative workers and vice versa)

Rania received her training at the Vocational Training Center in 1999, where she initially started working as a seamstress in one of the factories in the Al Hassan Industrial City. Within six months, she became a supervisor and trainer, holding this position for a year. She later became a production line supervisor and then a production manager. She was selected as the first Jordanian capable of operating all stages of production machinery and was named a "technician manager." Rania received awards from the Investors Association for being the best seamstress and supervisor.

She continued to advance, becoming a technical manager and a trainer for female workers. She also became a designer for fashion models. When the factory's management changed, Rania was selected from among 250 Jordanians to become a branch manager and HR manager. She was further trained to become a liaison officer between the factory and the Social Security Corporation, where she received three awards for her development initiatives at Classic Sewing Company and its branches. Rania initiated efforts to attract Jordanian labor and encourage girls to join factory work by sharing her personal experience and showcasing the safe and encouraging work environment provided by factories for young women.

Rania currently holds the title of "Structure Manager," serving as the executive manager for all branches of Classic Sewing. She has created a safe and motivating work environment for female workers inside the factory and inspired other factories to follow the same approach to reduce employee turnover.

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