

# Recipe Booklet for a Successful Business

“Women’s Access to Economic Justice through Legal Empowerment” Project

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# Preliminary Note

## Who We Are

Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD) is a civil society organization and a think tank that aspires to create all-inclusive intellectual and developmental change in the spirit of *Nahda*— The Arab Renaissance — through achieving social, economic, and political justice, and assisting vulnerable segments of society in acquiring their rights. ARDD's mission is to initiate a civilizational message of renewal and to revive an ethical and value-based society in Jordan and the Arab world.

## About the Project

This recipe book has been created as a part of the Ford Foundation project, “Women’s Access to Economic Justice through Legal Empowerment.” The project aims to ensure women’s equal and safe access to the labour market and to enable employers in the private market to provide a safe working environment conducive for women within the existing legal framework in Jordan.

Particularly, the project aims to (A) increase the number of companies that exhibit an understanding of labour law regulations, work permit processes, and women's rights in Jordan, as well as (B) expand participating companies’ capacity to promote gender inclusivity and implement gender-sensitive HR policies.

## Disclaimer:

This booklet provides information that reflects ARDD's views only and is based on the methodology developed for its preparation, official bodies were not consulted.

## Gratitude:

ARDD thanks all who supported the work on this report, mainly Ford Foundation the donor for the project.




# Introduction

## Why this Recipe Book?

Women's participation in the workforce not only empowers women, but also improves business profitability. A gender-diverse work environment offers many benefits, including:

- Greater productivity and innovation - having more women in the workplaces boosts innovation and performance
- Improved recruitment - companies will fill vacant roles with the most qualified candidates and can help place suitable candidates in sectors lacking manpower through gender inclusive recruitment systems
- From a Cost-Benefit Perspective – new hires tend to be more costly; businesses may find it a more efficient to reintegrate employees after leaves of absence
- Positive effects on current employees - you can strengthen your team's dynamics and enrich the workplace by broadening employee perspectives, skill-sets, and talent
- Enhancing your organization's reputation by empowering women and fostering a safe and inclusive work environment
- Increasing GDP growth:
  - Increasing the number of women in the labour force
  - Integrate refugees into the labour market to stimulate economic growth through diversity of ideas and knowledge



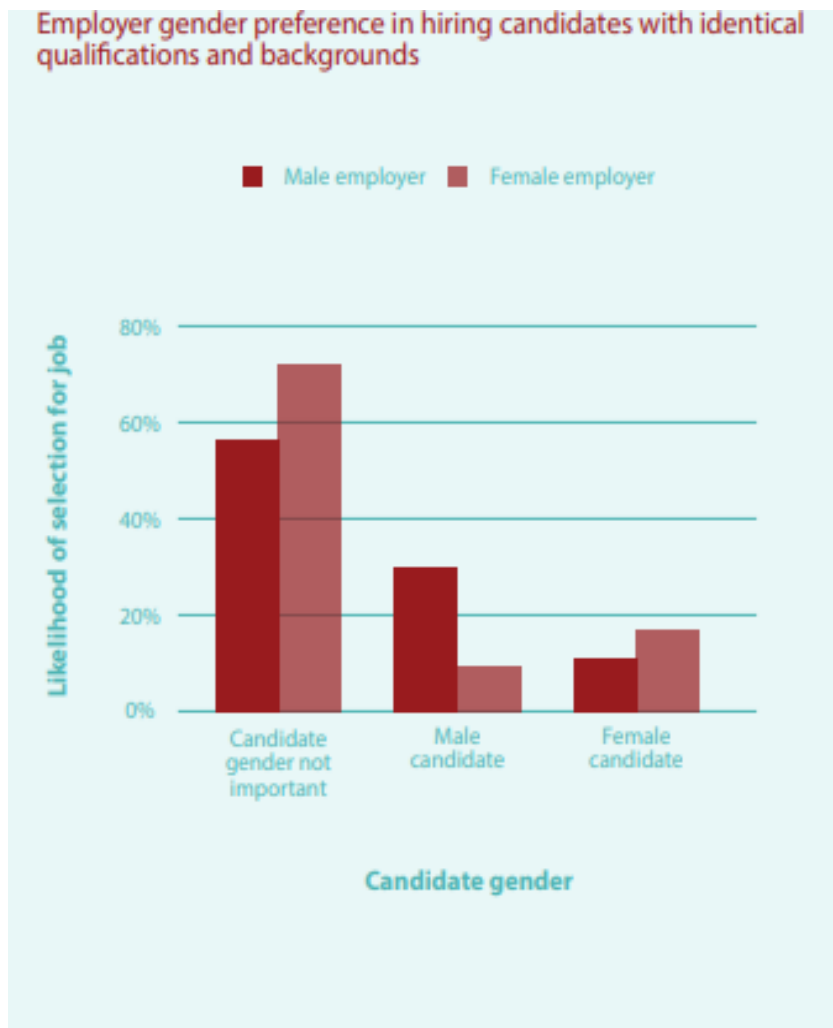
**Jordanian companies employing Syrian refugees can use employee ties to Syria to win business in Syria once the armed conflict subsides and reconstruction begins**

# How should the recipe book be used – Who are the targets?

This recipe book aims to serve as a guideline for both upper level and HR management and provides simple recipes (tools and resources) for management to rely on in creating a safe, open, and gender-neutral work environment. Upper level and HR management must recognise, however, that implementing a gender-inclusive workplace will require the involvement of all employees of their organisation. Therefore, not only must a company set gender-neutral internal policies, on a basic level, but it must also adequately implement its policies in practice, in addition to training both itself (the employer) and its employees, on gender sensitisation.

This recipe book shares simple recipes (techniques) for companies to utilize in implementing a gender-inclusive workplace for improving business performance and increasing revenue. It has specifically been created to ease a business organization’s transition into a gender-inclusive work environment. Current challenges to women’s economic participation include:

- Harassment – some women prefer to opt out of employment due to fear of harassment
- Freedom of movement - Public transportation continues to confine women because of its poor and unreliable infrastructure, coupled with its unsafe and frequently violent spaces where women often face sexual harassment
- Gender roles and social pressures - Jordan’s socio-cultural norms dictate that women should serve as the primary caretakers at home. Mothers tend to find either no time to commit to employment after maternity leave due culturally expected childrearing responsibilities or are unable reconcile private sector employment with family responsibilities
- Discrimination – studies have shown that employers usually prefer recruiting, training, and promoting males, rather than taking internal measures to remedy the challenges women face in participating in the workforce
- Gender pay gap - While Jordanian laws do not directly demand equal pay, bridging the wage gap and ensuring fair compensation is an important measure in women’s workplace rights



- *Wasta*– While facilitating the entry of some into the labour market it excludes others who lack such social connections, and is often described as a form of nepotism or favouritism
- Mismatched Skill-set - The disparity between a woman’s skill-set, competence, or education and the available opportunities deter many vulnerable women from working
- Refugee Status - female refugees face exceptional entry barriers to the labour market

# Healthy Cooking: How to Prepare for Successful Gender Inclusion

**Before one cooks, one must prepare.** Ideally, all employees at the company should be aware and in support of gender inclusiveness at the workplace. While a company’s formal commitment to gender equality is essential, a variety of other steps must be undertaken in parallel to help instil healthier and sustainable results. A company must be consistent in the application of its policies and exhaustive in the inclusion of employees, i.e., entry-level through upper management.



From the outset, employer perceptions must be addressed. Otherwise, employer bias will continue to challenge women’s participation in the workplace. Training and educating male employees to support their female colleagues as equal members of their team, in addition to supporting female employees’ career progression, are equally as important to encouraging women to join the workforce from the outset. Cultural expectations halt many women from participating in the labour force. Child and elder care are important aspects of Jordanian traditions, but such responsibilities fall entirely on women’s shoulders. Therefore, companies must account for this issue and better facilitate women's access to work. The below recipe lists strategies companies can use to support gender inclusivity.

## Preparation Recipe:



- Demonstrate your commitment to gender equality
- Remove all indications of gender from applications and recruitment materials to reduce, bias towards candidates.
  - Offer benefits that are essential to women, like: Access to suitable and affordable transportation
  - Flexible working hours
  - Work from home arrangements
  - Nurseries or care facilities for children and elders
- If a certain measure is found to be expensive, cooperation with other companies could be an effective way to reduce the cost per company
- Engage male employees in the equality dialogue and support their contributions to an inclusive and safe work environment. Campaigns, such as HeForShe, can encourage men's participation
- Establish a culture of trust, inclusion, and diversity to complement gender inclusivity

# Got the Right Kitchenware?



The key to organizational change is a well-adapted human resources policy implemented across all departments of a company. Comprehensive tools include familiarizing each employee with women's workplace rights and creating internal systems that ensure effective implementation. Change should be implemented both formally and informally. The following recipe suggests some mechanisms a company can employ for ensuring its workplace successfully embraces gender-neutrality.

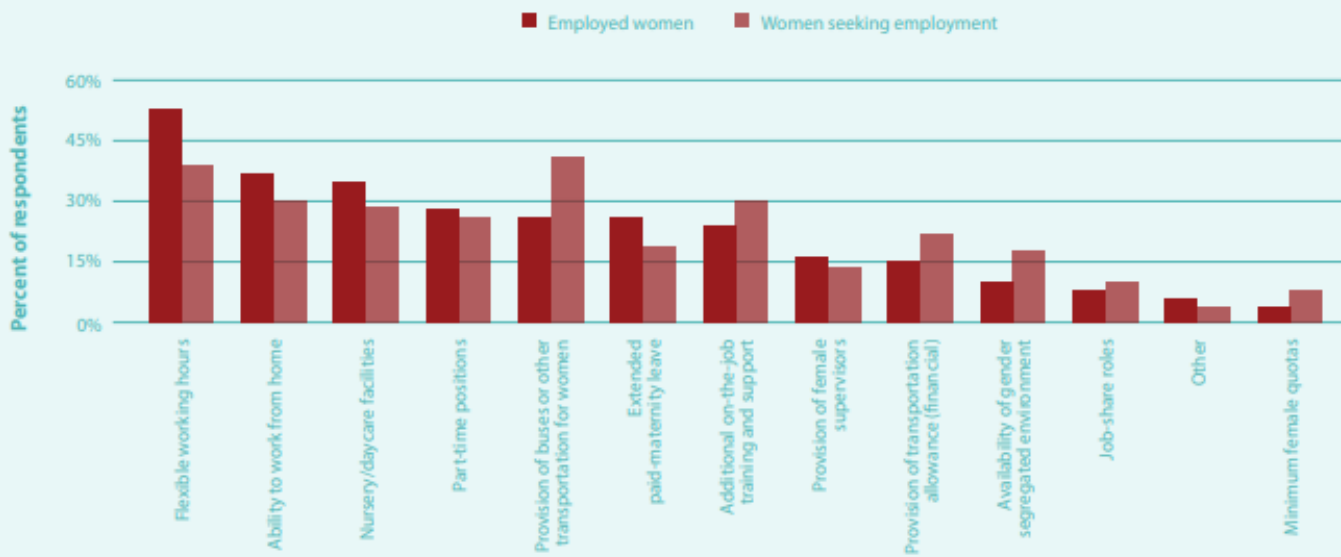
## Tools Recipe (Best Cooked Periodically and Systematically):



- Assess your company's internal policies and practices to identify gaps in gender equality, including equal pay
- Formally change your written internal policies to reflect your commitment to a gender neutral and inclusive workplace. Internal policies must explicitly commit the company to gender neutrality and workplace inclusiveness, and must include action plans for implementation. Changes should include:
  - Equal pay through systems that (A) objectively classify jobs and pay structures based exclusively on the requirements of the job to be performed, irrespective of the status or gender of the person performing it, (B) consist of periodical gender-neutral job evaluations, and (C) provide corrective measures should a situation of unequal remuneration emerge
  - Fair and gender-neutral recruitment and retention practices
  - Effective anti-sexual harassment policies. A company should couple its strong worded policy statement with a complaint procedure system for which consequences to harassment are defined. The anti-sexual harassment policies must also set-up remediation, implementation, training, awareness, monitoring, evaluation, as well as support systems
- Open communication within a company to encourage women in vulnerable situations to voice challenges and bring prevalent obstacles to the discussion table. For example, through the creation of an anonymous feedback system



Policies young women believe will most encourage women to enter the workforce



Policies and benefits most encouraging to young women

# Perfecting the Recipe: Training



To create the best dishes, one must practice. Raising awareness amongst all staff members is essential to changing existing habits.

**Training Recipe:**

- Designate responsibilities to an “Equality Committee”
- Encourage vulnerable employees to create support groups amongst themselves
- Support new parents and mitigate women’s career interruptions
- Train staff, supervisors, and managers on gender equality



## Having a Great Sous Chef: Building Partnerships

A sous chef offers support and keeps things running smoothly. Similarly, external organisations and human rights groups can serve as great sous chefs to your business to help you tackle gender sensitivity systematically and succeed in achieving a gender neutral workplace.

### Cooperation Recipe:



- Build partnerships with aid and human rights organisations, such as ARDD, to ensure your internal procedures and guidelines comply with Jordanian labour law and legislation
- Partner with other companies seeking to implement change; this can create a helpful platform to exchange experiences and best practices
- Build partnerships with recruiting agencies that are also committed to gender equality
- Participate in, or get featured on, national, regional, and international platforms
- Inform suppliers and customers about your gender equality policies to enhance your external reputation
- Consider obtaining official accreditation or certification to signal your success in implementing a gender inclusive workplace



# Checklist for Good Health

**You are what you eat.** What we choose to eat has a direct implication on our health. This section presents a set of criteria for a company to use in assessing its gender-inclusive diet initiative. Successful health measures include:

- ✓ Internal systems that explicitly and formally embrace gender neutral job descriptions, performance criteria, and employee evaluations
- ✓ Pay equity (paying employees equal remuneration for the same job regardless of gender)
- ✓ Males and females are employed and retained at equal rates
- ✓ Proportional rates of women are retained in managerial positions (because employees are unlikely to change often, this sign may take time to appear)
- ✓ Continued employment of women who have given birth
- ✓ Activities and campaigns are continuously being arranged by employees for gender inclusiveness and women's empowerment
- ✓ Male employees are actively involved in gender inclusive workplace efforts
- ✓ Enforce policies like a Zero Tolerance Policy towards Sexual Harassment, a Code of Conduct that addresses harassment in the workplace, and a policy for whistle-blowers
- ✓ A Confidentiality Agreement must be signed by all members of the organization to ensure there are safe reporting mechanisms
- ✓ Provide support or work in coordination with organizations providing social protection services that have a direct impact on women's lives such as 'Back to School' campaigns, legal assistance, childcare services, psychosocial support, etc.

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