Jordan's First-Ever Diversity Trailblazers Awards Launched by IFC and the Amman Stock Exchange

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- **Jordan’s pioneering awards recognize private sector employers leading the way in increasing opportunities for women in the workplace**.
- **Just 14 percent of women worked in Jordan in 2023, one of the lowest female labor force participation rates globally.**
- **PwC wins the inaugural Jordan’s Diversity Trailblazers Award while second and third place are awarded to Bank al Etihad and Estarta Solutions.**

Private sector employers who lead the way in advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment in the workplace were recognized today at Jordan’s first-ever *Diversity Trailblazers Awards* ceremony in Amman.

These awards were established by IFC in collaboration with the Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) and in partnership with the Kingdom of the Netherlands. They aim to increase women’s participation in

the workforce and improve their growth opportunities by identifying private sector champions who are diversifying their workforce, supporting women throughout various life stages, and advancing them into leadership positions.

PwC was announced as the winner of Jordan's inaugural *Diversity Trailblazers Award* for supporting its women employees and setting an example for others to follow.

More than 60 companies submitted applications for the awards, which were evaluated by representatives from IFC, ASE, and UN Women. Second and third place were awarded to Bank al Etihad and Estarta Solutions, respectively. In addition, [Atlas Furniture Manufacturing LTD. Richmond Sleep Products, Eversheds Sutherland International LLP (Amman Branch), Hikma Pharmaceuticals, INGOT Brokers, Jordan Kuwait Bank, Jordan Phosphates Mining, Jordan Telecommunications Company (Orange), Nafith Logistics, and Najeeb Thawabi & Partners Co. (Anabtawi Sweets) were recognized as diversity champions in their respective sectors, namely manufacturing, telecommunications, financial services, healthcare and pharmaceuticals, transportation and logistics, consumer goods and services, and energy.

"The Netherlands is committed to supporting Jordan in enhancing a resilient economy, with a particular focus on women's inclusion and empowerment. Our financial support for this IFC initiative reflects our dedication to recognize Jordanian companies that place female empowerment at the heart of their strategies and success," said Harry Verweij, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Jordan.

"Employers in Jordan can play a pivotal role in attracting, supporting, retaining, and promoting women in the workforce," said Khawaja Aftab Ahmed, Regional Director for the Middle East, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. "With these pioneering awards, we aim not only to recognize and reward employers who champion gender equality but also encourage others to adopt similar practices."

The awards come at a crucial moment in Jordan, where, despite high levels of education, just 14 percent of women worked in 2023, according to the World Bank, compared to 63 percent of men—one of the lowest rates in the world. Socio-cultural norms, a lack of supportive policies, workplace discrimination, and inadequate childcare facilities were among the main barriers cited.

"Our congratulations to all the winners of these seminal awards," said Mazen Wathaifi, CEO of the Amman Stock Exchange. "Harnessing Jordan's underutilized female economic talent is not just beneficial but essential for the country's economic growth. By shining a spotlight on companies that are leading the way, we aim to inspire and drive meaningful change for working women across the nation."

The awards ceremony included a discussion on women's impact in the workplace with television presenter Rahaf Sawalha and Engicon's Business Development Director Hazem Zureiqat.

Globally, removing barriers to women's employment and leadership is at the heart of IFC's roadmap for advancing gender and economic inclusion and the World Bank Group Gender Strategy for 2030.

In Jordan, IFC has been a steadfast partner of the country for half a century, supporting the private sector with investments and advice that help increase competitiveness, create jobs, build sustainable infrastructure, and improve financial inclusion. IFC has invested more than $2 billion across sectors and has helped create and maintain an average of 18,000+ jobs per year, with more than 3,300 held by women.

About IFC

IFC — a member of the World Bank Group — is the largest global development institution focused on the private sector in emerging markets. We work in more than 100 countries, using our capital, expertise, and influence to create markets and opportunities in developing countries. In fiscal year 2024, IFC committed a record $56 billion to private companies and financial institutions in developing countries, leveraging private sector solutions and mobilizing private capital to create a world free of poverty on a livable planet. For more information, visit www.ifc.org.