

PRESS RELEASE

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Breaking Barriers: Egypt's First Wave of Graduates from Game-Changing Youth Employability Programme.



Graduates of the Employability Programme celebrate at the graduation ceremony.

Cairo, 29th February 2024 - A significant milestone in Egypt's hospitality sector was celebrated this week with the graduation of the first cohort from an innovative employability programme. This initiative, aimed at bolstering youth employment and promoting inclusivity, is set to transform the landscape of the industry.

The project with the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance (the Alliance) in Egypt is supported by the Special Initiative "Decent Work for a Just Transition" of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. The Special Initiative, which also operates under the brand Invest for Jobs, aims to team up with companies to create good jobs in the eight African partner countries, and to improve local working conditions and social protection.

The Alliance's pioneering project is making waves in Egypt's hospitality sector. The programme's success lies in its collaborative approach – working closely with hotels, Food and Beverage businesses, local training partners, and non-profit organisations to address needs and remove barriers to employment for young people, particularly women.

The programme operates in Cairo and Hurgghada, with plans to expand nationwide. Its first graduation ceremony, hosted by Le Méridien Hotel Airport, Cairo, saw the jubilation of 50 graduates and attendees from Marriott, IHG Hotels & Resorts, Four Seasons, Kerten

Hospitality, Radisson Hotel Group, Jaz Hotels, and TICO (Touristic Investment Company). Etijah, a non-profit organisation providing programme training, also attended, proving the broad-based support for this essential endeavour.

The training included three weeks of 'soft skill' work in a classroom environment and then two months of practical training within a hotel. Students worked across the bar, restaurants, reception and housekeeping.

Glenn Mandziuk, CEO of the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, was on hand at the graduation ceremony and commented on the program's impact, "This initiative has had a tangible positive effect on local communities. I'm thrilled to congratulate the graduates, who've shown exceptional drive and leadership. This programme will undoubtedly serve as a model for future employment initiatives in Egypt and globally."



(L-R Felix Fach, Consultant GIZ, Glenn Mandziuk, CEO Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, a graduate, Karim Shawar, Head of Programmes at Etijah)

Felix Fach, Consultant GIZ, says, "we congratulate the students on their graduation and are delighted the programme has had such a positive impact on the local communities. We look forward to following the graduates progress as they embark on their careers and hope to welcome more prospective students."

Magdy Anis, the General Manager of St. Regis Cairo and Chairman of the Marriott Egypt Business Council says, "congratulations to all graduates and partners for a great achievement. We are honoured to be part of this project as it represents Marriott International's commitment to promote social justice, empower women, support their growth, and open up major opportunities for underrepresented populations in our country. By making investments in its growth, we hope to make Egypt's hospitality sector more prosperous and inclusive in the future."

Karim Shawar, Head of Programmes at Etijah, said: "We are very grateful to everyone who contributed and cooperated in creating these opportunities, and we aspire to create more opportunities for the participating youth through our collaboration".

He added, addressing the graduates, "today is the beginning of an important stage in your life after completing the practical training. This is a moment of victory, perseverance, and achievement. Always remember the dedication, hard work, determination, flexibility, and passion that helped you reach this important event, and we will continue to support you through the programme to obtain training opportunities and keep pursuing the dream of working in the field in a group of the best hotels in Egypt."

Eman Yousry, a 22-year-old programme graduate, shared, "I discovered the programme when Etijah's team visited my college. I was thrilled about the opportunity as it matched my interests, yet I didn't know how to get in. After completing soft skills and practical training, I secured a position at the hotel where I received my practical training. I'm proud to handle significant responsibilities despite being on the job for less than 3 months."

Mohamed Assad, also 22 and a programme graduate, said, "I completed the practical training and received a job offer from the hotel where I trained. I was very excited about learning new things about the industry and how hospitality works. The trainers were great and supportive. This helped me adjust quickly to my new work environment. I'm hopeful for the future and dream of becoming a professional chef one day."



(L-R Nada Ibrahim, Learning and Development Manager, at The St. Regis Cairo, Mohamed Mahmoud, Le Meridien Cairo Airport, Amr Awwad, HR Generalist at The St. Regis Almasa, Cairo, Glenn Mandziuk, CEO, Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, Amira El Hattab, Director of Training at Le Meridien Cairo Airport, Abier Mostafa, Learning & Development Manager at JW Marriott Cairo, Nada Rashwan, The St. Regis Almasa)

This project is part of the Alliance's 'Net Positive Accelerators' which aim to inspire the Alliance's members and leverage their footprints and operations to launch collaborative pilot initiatives targeting systemic issues in specific destinations. The aim is to capture critical learnings and potential for scaling and replication, which will be disseminated to the broader industry.

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2 Notes for editors

For more information please contact:

Becca Smith, Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, press@sustainablehospitalityalliance.org

About the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance

The Sustainable Hospitality Alliance brings together engaged hospitality companies and the wider hospitality value chain, along with strategic partners, to address key challenges affecting the planet, people and places around the world.

Through their strategic initiatives and global networks, they develop practical programmes and resources to create a prosperous and responsible hospitality sector that gives back to the destination more than it takes.

Their members represent over 50,000 hotels spanning 270 brands – totalling over 7 million rooms – and include world-leading companies including Accor, Choice Hotels International, Hilton Hotels & Resorts, IHG Hotels & Resorts, Four Seasons, Marriott International, and Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, as well as regional brands. Their network also includes other parts of the hospitality value chain, including owners, investors, suppliers, and other partners to further drive joined up action on sustainability, and accelerate the industry on the path to Net Positive Hospitality.

About the Special Initiative "Decent Work for a Just Transition":

Under the Invest for Jobs brand, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has put together a package of measures to support German, European and African companies in investment activities that have a high impact on employment in Africa. The Special Initiative "Decent Work for a Just Transition" – the official title – offers comprehensive advice, contacts and financial support to overcome investment barriers. The development objective is to team up with companies to create good jobs, improve working conditions and social protection in the eight African partner countries. The Special Initiative is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH among others. Further information is available at www.invest-for-jobs.com.

About Etijah

Youth and Development Consultancy Institute – Etijah is a non-profit organisation specializing in developing, improving, and disseminating development methodologies in the field of youth and community development.

Based in Cairo, Etijah primary concern is to create and tailor up-to-date and high-quality development methodologies, research tools, applicable practices of youth development and training delivery models, to be able to qualify youth by providing them with the skills, know-how, and aptitudes, as well as contribute in building the capacity of governmental and non-



governmental youth-serving organisations. Our role is to provide youth with direct access to unconditional participation by providing them with practical tools and models for developing community-wide initiatives.

