



## Wassim Nacef – Thermoplastics

Zaghouan

The industrial zone of Zaghouan is home to one of the main production sites of the global toy manufacturer, Playmobil. This is where the 32-year-old engineer Wassim is making the dreams of children around the world come to life. Day after day, hundreds of the iconic plastic figures are created in his factory and then shipped to Playmobil's headquarters in Germany, for distribution to toy stores around the world. But how did a young entrepreneur like Wissem end up leading the production unit of one of the world's best-known toy brands?

Wissem started his professional career as a quality manager in a car company, after graduating from the National School of Engineers of Sfax in 2012. Through his network he learned of a Maltese investor thinking to establish a production site in Tunisia.

"I contacted a Maltese plastic injection company that wanted to relocate part of their production abroad for their main client Playmobil. At the time, they were still hesitating between Romania and Tunisia. After several visits to Tunisia, I managed to convince them that settling here in Zaghouan was the most competitive choice," says Wassim.

In 2014, Thermoplastics become an offshore company specialized in plastic injection, moulding and pad printing. "We mainly work for Playmobil. Thermoplastics started small, with 6 employees and 3 machines. Today we have over 100 employees

and 30 machines," explains Wassim.

Wissem met a UNIDO expert on access to finance in 2017. Through the Mashrou3i project organized by UNIDO and funded by USAID, the Italian Cooperation and the HP Foundation, Wissem and 14 of his employees were provided with a tailored 4-day training in quality control.

"Playmobil have several subcontractors in the world but want to invest more in Tunisia and with Thermoplastics. We meticulously follow the multinational firm's processes to ensure we meet their requirements, especially in terms of production quality control," adds Wassim.

Currently in expansion, Thermoplastics is pursuing new markets, clients and business opportunities. Wissem has already started this growth with the construction of two new departments: one for maintenance and another for recycling. This expansion plan will involve the purchase of new machines and the employment of nearly 50 technicians. Assisted by the Mashrou3i Project, Wissem also would like to obtain the ISO certification and upgrade his stock management through the purchase of specific software.

"We believe that the more we assure the quality and standards of our products, the more we will get new market opportunities. This involves the addition of high-performance machines, qualified technicians and new professional training."