

Project for new employment of women in local tourism industry

The PRODES (Promotion et Development Social) association organised a national conference entitled "new local tourism initiatives to create employment opportunities for women" in order to introduce the project which entails support to local tourism, the hotel sector and small businesses. The Conference also addressed the importance of professionalism in the tourist industry and the central role that women can play in this sector.

The Conference which was funded by the European Union was attended by some 250 participants from civil society organisations, municipalities, tourism companies and universities. The event included an exhibition of tourism related products which involved 30 exhibitors. The President of the Tourist guide Syndicate, Haytham Fawaz, reiterated the importance of sustainable development as key to tourism and local industry and noted that openness to others provides opportunities for production. For his part, the head of private education for the ministry of education, Imad al-Ashkar emphasized the importance of preserving the local rural identity through the development of professionalism in managing small businesses particularly those run by women in rural areas.

By the end of the conference, participants outlined the key elements of the action plan which included, determining a stipend for tourist guides, defining standards for recruitment, regulating the work of guides and encouraging continuous communication amongst them.