



ITALIAN AGENCY
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REPUBLIC OF LEBANON
MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY



جمعية الصناعيين اللبنانيين
ASSOCIATION OF LEBANESE INDUSTRIALISTS



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Innovation and Design, a tool to fight poverty

Beirut, July 12, 2016. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) organised the launching of the event "Creative Lebanon" together with the Ministry of Industry and with the participation of H.E Ambassador Christina Lassen, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon and H.E. Mr. Massimo Marotti, Italian Ambassador in Lebanon.

Challenging economic times in Lebanon have left the country's smaller manufacturers in a precarious situation, struggling to provide livelihood and employment opportunities for their communities. Seeing the extensive, yet undervalued, potential in the skills, artistry, creativity and cultural heritage of Lebanon, UNIDO, with the financial support of the European Union and Italy and in partnership with international designers devised two innovative projects which could leverage Lebanese specialties while simultaneously incorporating innovation and design: "Development of Clusters in Cultural and Creative Industries in the Southern Mediterranean", funded by the European Union and Italy, and "Supporting Host Communities in Lebanon Affected by the High Influx of Syrian Refugees (CELEPIII)", funded by Italy. The "Creative Lebanon" initiative is a joint venture between the two projects

"Creative Lebanon" is a pilot boutique/creative hub to help small Lebanese producers in showcasing their new innovative products and by doing so to create closer connections with the local markets.

"For UNIDO, launching "Creative Lebanon" is another important step in promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialisation in Lebanon. This initiative proves that Lebanon is a melting pot of creativity and industrial design, and an useful tool to economic opportunities and job creation", declared Mr. Cristiano Pasini, UNIDO Representative.

The Italian Ambassador H.E. Mr. Massimo Marotti stressed that "this initiative adds an Italian idea based on product designing, to better help Lebanese small and medium-sized companies to expand their activities and market their products."

For her part, Ambassador Christina Lassen, Head of the EU Delegation in Lebanon, said: "When it comes to creative industries, Lebanon has definitely a comparative advantage in the region and has demonstrated in many ways that it has a strong 'creative spirit'." "This is interesting for us because the creative sector creates job opportunities in particular for young people and for women, so we wanted to give it an extra push," she added.

The Minister of Industry Hussein El Hajj Hassan thanked the European Union and Italy for their contribution and expressed his support and encouragement to this event, adding that this initiative came at a time in which Lebanon was passing through critical circumstances on different levels, hoping that this place would really help small producers promoting their products.