

Announcing A New Participatory Development Initiative In Zaouia-cheikh, Morocco

Founded in 2000 by former volunteers of the Peace Corps, the High Atlas Foundation (HAF) has implemented sustainable development projects in the Kingdom of Morocco's regions of Al Haouz, Essaouira, Mohammedia, Rhamna, Taroudant, and Tiznit.

The organization of the Moroccan Community in the United States (OCM-US), represented by Dr. Abdelkader Abbadi, after recognizing the quality of the participatory partnership that characterized the activities of the HAF, signed an agreement for cooperation with Dr. Yossef Ben-Meir, President of the Foundation.

Under the terms of the agreement, the Organization of the Moroccan Community in the United States decided to fund the activities of the High Atlas Foundation in Zaouia-Cheikh. The agreement is dedicated to implementing development projects to be identified following a series of meetings and participatory planning workshops with the population of the municipality of Zaouia-Cheikh and the rural municipality's Ait Oum El Beikht. Towards this end, the OMC-US remitted a check to HAF in the amount of \$50,000 to cover the expenses related to the project over a period of two years.

It is in this context that Mr Larbi Didouqen, vice president of the HAF and Dr. Abbadi held the morning of September 27, 2011 with the Wali of Tadla-Azilal and Governor of Beni-Mellal, a meeting which gave a summary of the two organizations and the subject of the agreement.

For its part, the Wali welcomed the two organizations, gave an overview of the region and in particular assured the two organizations to give moral and financial support needed to implement the Zaouia-Cheikh project in accordance with the National Human Development Initiative launched by his Majesty King Mohammed VI in 2005.

In the afternoon, the representatives of both organizations held a meeting in Zaouia-Cheikh with the Mayor and discussed the steps to be taken to carry out the project. Like the Wali, the Mayor gave his strong endorsement to the project and said that his Office will do everything possible to facilitate its implementation.

HAF's project team is beginning the process of organizing community meetings in Zaouia-Cheikh where local people will prioritize local projects and create and implement an action plan to implement them in partnership with public and private agencies.

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