



## CIHEAM attends the 4<sup>th</sup> UfM Ministerial conference on strengthening the role of women in society

Press Release

Cairo, Egypt, 27 November 2017



*The CIHEAM attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Union For Mediterranean (UfM) Ministerial conference on strengthening the role of women in society in Cairo (Egypt). Given the pressing challenges faced by the Mediterranean region, this high-level meeting invited parties to give a new impetus to gender equality and to the respect of the rights of women and girls. Gender equality is mainstreamed through all the activities of the CIHEAM. Social and economic empowerment, education and capacity building, enhancement of women's role in the field of poverty reduction and in crises prevention are key items of the CIHEAM Action Plan for the Mediterranean ([CAPMED 2025](#)) adopted in 2016.*

The UfM Ministerial Conference was built on an intensive preparatory work carried out by Officials and the four working groups of the Regional Dialogue on Women Empowerment launched in 2015. The Conference represented a good opportunity to take stock of the commitments undertaken since the [Paris Ministerial Meeting in 2013](#) regarding gender equality and women's empowerment and to agree on the best way to operationalize them in the years to come. The Ministerial Declaration providing concrete recommendations and guidance has been adopted and a working plan is currently in preparation to implement the ministerial recommendations related to the regional dimension in this specific priority. During the meeting, a focus has been placed on the establishment of the regional follow-up mechanism to assess the impact of countries and stakeholders policies and interventions, evaluate the gaps and propose concrete and corrective measures and recommendations to improve the implementation and the impact on the ground.

The CIHEAM took part in the expert working group meetings on "Women's Economic Participation & Leadership" and "women's economic participation and leadership" and presented the [GEMAISA](#) programme to the audience. Financed by the Italian Cooperation and conducted by the CIHEAM-Institute of Bari (Italy), GEMAISA's objectives are aimed at enhancing gender mainstreaming for sustainable rural development and food security in southern Mediterranean countries. These goals are achieved through an interinstitutional public/private platform to protect and increase the role of women in the Mediterranean and in the Near East mostly in natural resources management and food security through institutional building. Moreover, a specific component is developed through the assessment of strategic potential partnerships for women empowerment with consequent capacity building,



dissemination both in national and international scenarios of positive women entrepreneurship experiences in target areas.

Women are at the heart of environmental and socio-economic challenges in rural territories but their role as solution-makers and key actors of development remain under-estimated. Despite their crucial role in food security and safety, small-scale agriculture and fisheries, sustainable water and land management, climate change mitigation or social business and entrepreneurship, women often have limited access to ownership, education, credit, governance and decision-making. This marginalization of women in rural areas prevents sustainable development and somehow hinders opportunities of economic growth and social stability.

The CIHEAM promotes the implementation of capacity building programmes for women in the Mediterranean countries closely related to local policies, training tailored to their needs, supports the creation of enterprises, associations or cooperatives and national or regional networks. These strategies for the inclusion of the youth and women in the rural areas shall be completed by awareness-raising campaigns of decision-makers and investors involved in the human, rural and agricultural development of the Mediterranean area.

*More about the [4th UfM Ministerial Conference on “Strengthening the Role of Women in Society”](#)*

*More about [GEMAISA](#)*

*More about the CIHEAM [www.ciheam.org](http://www.ciheam.org)*

## CIHEAM

Created in 1962, the CIHEAM is a Mediterranean Organisation that works for improving sustainable agriculture and fisheries, for ensuring food and nutrition security and for developing rural and coastal territories. The CIHEAM gathers 13 Member States from both shores of the Mediterranean (Albania, Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey) and works with several international and regional institutions. CIHEAM's actions rely on a bottom-up collaboration and are problem-solving oriented, connected to the peculiar needs of the countries. With its Member States, public and private partners and academics the CIHEAM strive to meet the 4 following challenges:



Struggling against “triple waste” (Knowledge-Natural Resources-Food)



Boosting Sustainable Agriculture and Food



Investing in new generations and fragile territories



Preventing risks and managing tensions