

Regional Policy Conference on Women Entrepreneurs in the Agri-food Sector

28-29 October 2026 Events — Tunis, Tunisia

Golden Tulip El Mechtel

DAY 1 — WEDNESDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2026

Capacity-Building Workshop

From Evidence to Action: Strengthening National Capacity for Gender-Transformative Agri-Food Innovation

Workshop Objectives

- Equip national officials from agriculture and women's affairs ministries with a shared evidence base on the state of women's participation in agri-food innovation ecosystems across the seven Masar Al'an countries (Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Algeria).
- Advance the objectives of the International Year of the Woman Farmer (IYWF) 2026 by strengthening the capacity of national officials to address barriers to women farmers' access, control, agency and leadership across agrifood systems.
- Provide practical tools for integrating gender-transformative approaches into national agricultural strategies, policy frameworks, and investment decisions.
- Build peer connections among national officials across the countries, fostering a south-south and north-south learning network that extends beyond the workshop.

Time	Format	Session / Activity
		08:30 – 09:00 — Registration *and welcome coffee*
		MORNING SEGMENT — EVIDENCE AND LANDSCAPE
09:00 – 09:30	*Opening Plenary*	**Welcome and Scene-Setting** • Consuelo Tome Virseda, General Coordinator, AECID • Anna Dorangricchia, Project Manager, Union for the Mediterranean • Sophia Ngugi, Gender Officer, FAO Regional Office for Near East and North Africa (RNE) • Yasmine Seghirate, Administrator, CIHEAM

09:30 - 10:00	*Keynote Presentation*	**Module A — The Regional Landscape: Where Are We?** *Presentation of key findings from the regional diagnostic mapping across the seven Masar Al'an countries* • Seham Ghalwash, UfM Technical Assistance Team
10:00 – 11:00	*Country Perspectives Panel*	**From the Landscape to the Ground: National Realities** *Short structured interventions from national officials representing each of the seven countries, sharing one specific challenge and one promising practice from their national context in relation to women in agri-food innovation.* *Facilitated by Seham Ghalwash, UfM Technical Assistance Team* • **Tunisia:** Cyrine Ben Khamlia, Ingénieur principal, APIA (Agence de Promotion des Investissements Agricoles) • **Egypt:** Hanan Makram, Professor of Rural Sociology, Agricultural Extension Research Institute • **Jordan:** Sereen Khair-edden Hakouz, Director of the Productivity Enhancement Directorate, Ministry of Social Development • **Lebanon:** Gloria Abouzeid, Director General of Cooperatives, Ministry of Agriculture • **Morocco:** Bouchra CHORFI, Director of Education and Research, Ministry of Agriculture • **Palestine:** Hanna Nakhleh, Gender Focal Point, Ministry of Women's Affairs (online) & Johnny Bassil, Program and Policy Manager- Private Sector Development, EU Delegation Jerusalem • **Algeria**: Mohamed Benidir, Researcher, Institute National de la Recherche Agronomique, Algeria (INRAA)
11:00 – 11:20 — Coffee *break and networking*		
11:20 – 12:00	*Interactive Presentation & Q&A*	**Module B — Gender-Responsive Policy Design: From Principles to Practice** *Practical Working Group session on the tools and approaches that make agricultural and innovation policies gender-responsive and capable of addressing unequal access, control and decision-making power. Output : a Gender Policy Checklist and a Policy Self-Assessment Tool for participating countries, to feed the Regional Agenda.* *Facilitated by Anna Dorangricchia, Project Manager, UfM*
12:00 – 13:30	*Expert Panel& Discussion*	**Module C — Financing Instruments for Women Agri-Food Entrepreneurs** *Panel discussion on the financing landscape, grants, blended finance, impact investment, agricultural credit, and the structural barriers that prevent women agri-food entrepreneurs from accessing capital at scale* *Moderator: Roula Jabbour, Manager, Al Majmoua Lebanon* • Inclusive Nissa: Simona Federico, Maghreb Regional Coordinator, COSPE ○ Randa Abed Rabbo, General Manager, UCASC Palestine ○ Houda Aloui, Executive Director, Syres, Tunisia ○ Ola Hariri, Program Manager, LMFA, Lebanon • Nabil Assaf, Subregional Coordinator for North Africa & FAO Representative in Tunisia • Ahlem Ghazouani, Program and fund manager, Impact partner • Ruba Ghassab, Portfolio Manager, Alfanar (Jordan) • Douja Gharbi, CEO RedStart Tunisia

13:30 – 14:30 — Lunch —		
AFTERNOON SEGMENT — PEER LEARNING AND PRACTICAL WORK		
14:30 – 16:00	*Breakout Groups (parallel sessions)*	**Module D — Country Action Planning: Translating Evidence into National Priority Actions** *Structured working groups of 8 to 10 participants each, organized by sub-regional cluster across three groups: North Africa (Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria); Egypt; and Eastern Mediterranean (Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine). Each group works on a facilitated exercise using the mapping evidence and the Regional Agenda priority areas to identify the top two national policy or investment actions your ministry could commit to in 2027.* *Facilitated by Mahdi Bouallegue, Capacity Building, Agricultural Development & Entrepreneurship Expert*

Group A North Africa Cluster	Group B Egypt & Nile Valley	Group C Eastern Mediterranean
Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria: policy alignment, cooperative financing, Maghreb coordination mechanisms *Facilitated by: CIHEAM & CAWTAR*	Egypt: Agritech startup ecosystem, women farmers value chain access, Egyptian Startup Charter linkages *Facilitated by: The Technical Assistance Team and FAO*	Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine: conflict-sensitive approaches, cooperative models, digital connectivity barriers *Facilitated by: ICARDA & Berytech*

16:00 – 16:15 — Short *break*		
16:15 – 16:45	*Plenary Reporting*	**Country Cluster Priority Actions: Reporting Back & Open-floor discussion** *Each cluster presents its two priority national actions* *Questions for the discussion: which of these priority actions could be coordinated regionally? Which requires bilateral or multilateral support? Which is ready to be included in the 2027 Action Plan?* *Facilitated by Seham Ghalwash, UfM Technical Assistance Team*
16:45 – 17:45	*Field Experience Sharing*	**Module E — Peer Learning: Women Leading Agri-Food Innovation Across the Region** *Women agri-food entrepreneurs experience of accessing innovation support and financing.* *Moderator: Giulia Maria Ferraresi, UfM* • Rouaa Isra Adel, Founder and CEO, Aquayate, Algeria • Radwa El Amir, Commercial Director, Sanabil R&D, Egypt • Boshra Al-Younis, Founder and Manager, Fresh Mushrooms, Jordan • Takoua Merhghi, President,GDA borj essougui Mornag,Tunisia
17:45 18:00	*Closing — Day 1*	**Summary of Key Takeaways and Preview of Day 2** *Brief synthesis of the day's outputs & Overview of the Regional Agenda to be officially presented on Day 2 and how participants' contributions feed into it.* *Facilitated by Seham Ghalwash, UfM Technical Assistance Team*
	20:00	**Networking Dinner at Hekaya La Goulette** (transfer from hotel provided)

DAY 2 — THURSDAY, 29 OCTOBER 2026

Regional Policy Dialogue Conference

Presenting the Regional Agenda 2026–2030: Innovation for Women Entrepreneurs in Agro-Food Systems

Conference Objectives

- Officially present the Regional Policy Agenda 2026 to 2030 on Innovation for Women Entrepreneurs in Agri-Food Systems. Present and discuss the 2027 Action Plan
- Position the initiative within the broader IYWF 2026 momentum and establish the UfM Task Force as the reference coordination mechanism for this agenda in the Mediterranean and MENA region.

Time	Format	Session / Activity
08:30 – 09:00 — Registration, *networking, and exhibition area open*		
MORNING SEGMENT — HIGH-LEVEL OPENING AND EVIDENCE		
09:00 – 09:45	*Opening Plenary*	**Institutional Opening** • Hela Hassine, Director of the Rural Women's Support Bureau, Ministry of Agriculture, Tunisia • Hanene Benzarti, Women's Director, Ministry of Women and Family Affairs, Tunisia • Isidro Antonio González Afonso, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Spain to the Republic of Tunisia • EUD • Petra Kezman, Deputy Secretary General, Human Development, UfM (video message) • Nabil Assaf, Subregional Coordinator for North Africa & FAO Representative in Tunisia • Sanaa Zebakh, Director, PRIMA • Yasmine Seghirate, Administrator, on behalf of Teodoro Miano, Secretary Geneal, CIHEAM
09:45 – 10:30	*Keynote & Panel*	**Session 1 — Policy Regional Agenda 2026–2030** *Presentation of the headline findings of the Regional Diagnostic Mapping across the seven Masar Al'an countries and of the draft Policy Agenda and its Action Plan.* *Moderator: Mahdi Bouallegue, Capacity Building, Agricultural Development & Entrepreneurship Expert* Keynote: Seham Ghalwash, UfM Technical Assistance Team • Dina Najjar, Senior Gender Scientist, ICARDA • Soukeina Bouraoui, Executive Director, CAWTAR • Rim Tannir, Head of Human Resources, Berytech • Ahlem Ghazouani, Program and fund manager, Impact Partner • Francesca Volpe, Project Manager, CIHEAM Bari • Clara Guelbenzu, Head of Communications, CIHEAM Zaragoza • Clara Casasnovas Florit, Project Coordinator, BETA Technological Centre

10:30 – 10:50 — Coffee *break*		
10:50 – 12:30	*Regional and national good practices & Working Groups*	**Session 2 —Policy Regional Agenda 2026–2030** *Good practices from the region to be scaled up* *Moderator*: *Clara Casasnovas Florit, Project Coordinator, BETA Technological Centre* Keynote Speech: Margerite Saroufim, Deputy Minister of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Social Solidarity, Egypt • Florence Basty, Country Representative, UN Women • Insaf Cherif, Chief Technical Advisor of UNDP Tunisia's project "Green Economy and Women's Economic Empowerment in Tunisia" (GEWEET) • Claudia Zaccari, Senior Project Analyst, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT • Noura Abdelwahab, Lead Gender Expert, WE4F 2.0 MENA • Asma Hamouda , Programme Manager, GIZ • Marco Velasco, Programme Manager, AECID
12:30-13:15	*Panel discussions*	**Session 3 —The 2027 Action Plan and Financing Landscape** *Presentation of the 2027 Action Plan and sustainability plan* *Moderator:* Yasmine Seghirate, Administrator, CIHEAM • Consuelo Tome Virseda, General Coordinator**,** AECID • Anna Dorangricchia, Project Manager, UfM • EBRD Tunisia Office • Malak Boukthir, Founder and CEO, EcoFeed, Tunisia
13-15-13-30	*Closing session*	**Wrap-up and next steps** UfMS
13:30 – 14:30 — Lunch		
Local visit 14.30 – 17.00 for sponsored participants only Women-led Cooperative Djnean (Sidi Thabet, Ariane Governorate)		