



CIHEAM

International Center for Advanced
Mediterranean Agronomic Studies

**WOMEN EMPOWERMENT &
GENDER MAINSTREAMING
INACTIVITIES OF THE
CIHEAM**

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I. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

1. PERSISTENT CONSTRAINTS

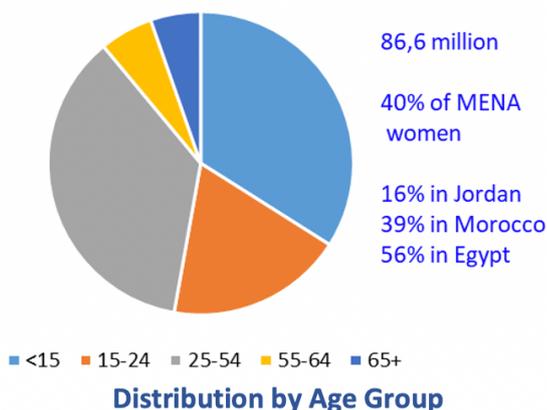
Women play an essential role in Mediterranean agro-food systems and in the development of rural and coastal areas, including in the related scientific and research fields.

Women are responsible for the majority of agricultural work, controlling most of the non-monetary economy (subsistence agriculture, childcare and child education, household responsibilities, water and energy supply...). They are major contributors to food and nutritional security. They generate incomes, improve livelihoods and general welfare of households, particularly those with low incomes. Despite normative reforms and societal changes in favour of women empowerment, they still face persistent constraints that limit their formal socio-economic participation and their involvement in decision-making processes. These situations of inequality or invisibility, especially in already fragile areas, make them more vulnerable to crises. Indeed, COVID19-related crises are currently affecting women and girls disproportionately due to their work in informal employment or vulnerable sectors such as family farming.

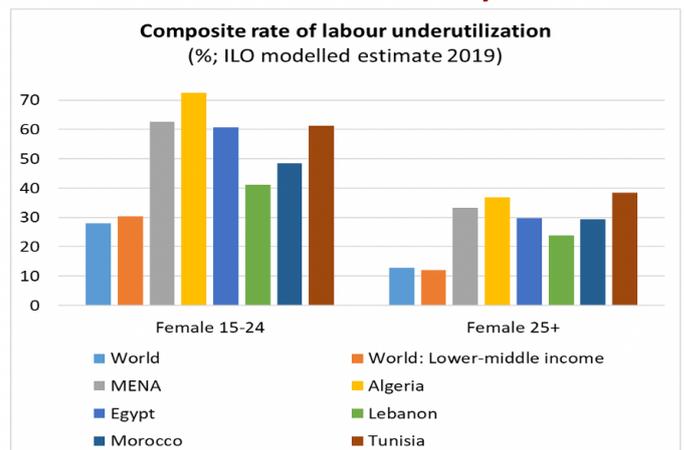
2. WOMEN IN RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL AREAS : INTERSECTIONALITY ISSUES

Many factors contribute to the vulnerability of women, including that of the urban-rural divide. Informal work, limited access to essential services, lack of infrastructures, digital and technological gaps, two-speed education systems, etc. These development **inequalities within countries** call for the adoption of an intersectionality approach when considering empowerment of women. Beyond being an issue in terms of equal opportunities, the socio-economic exclusion and the lack of participation of women in public/communities decision-making processes lead to a considerable **waste of potential and human capital**. They also lead to significant losses in terms of development and sustainable economic growth in areas faced by poverty, the negative impacts of climate change and the scarcity of natural resources and for which solutions exist in **the green economy, circular economy, agro-ecology, sustainable tourism, social business...**

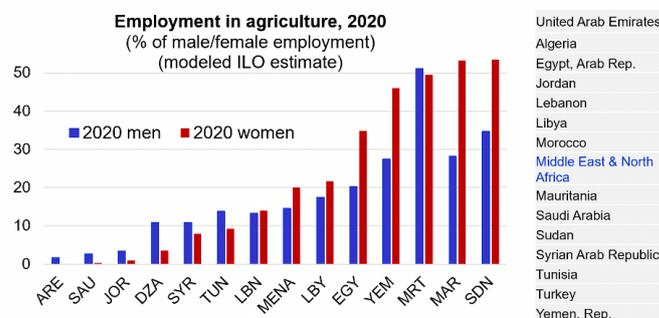
Rural women in MENA countries in 2015
(ILO - modelled estimates)



Gender Gap closing in education and health,
but not in the economy



High unemployment level of women:
32% in Palestine, 22% in Tunisia...



- Agriculture = 20 % of women employment > men (14,5%)
- Strong contrast: 35% in Egypt; ~50% in Yemen, Mauritania, Morocco, S
- Share of agriculture in women employment has decreased (32% in 2000; 20% in 2020) but important

Source : ILO (International Labor Organization)

II. CONNECTION WITH THE SDGS, CAPMED, THE EU AND AU STRATEGIES

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

Gender equality figures in SDG 5 and is linked to other SDGs such as SG 1 (No poverty), 2 (Zero hunger), 6 (Clean water & sanitation), 8 (Decent work & economic growth), 9 (Industry, innovation & infrastructure), 12 (Responsible consumption & production patterns), 13 (Climate action) ...

CIHEAM ACTION PLAN FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN (CAPMED)

In the CAPMED, gender equality is one of the specific priorities (10-Gender Equality/Vulnerable Group Inclusion) as well as a crosscutting issue in several key priorities (Knowledge & Know-How, Natural Resources & Energy, Food security, Youth, employability & employment, Rural & Coastal Development ...



GAP III (EU GENDER ACTION PLAN)

The EU's new Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Action 2021–2025 (GAP III) aims to accelerate progress on empowering women and girls. This plan makes the promotion of gender equality a priority of all external policies and actions. It provides a roadmap for working together with stakeholders at national, regional and multilateral levels.

AFRICA AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Africa has recognized the fact that enhanced agricultural performance is key to growth and poverty reduction through its direct impact on job creation and increasing opportunities, especially for women and youth, food security and improved nutrition, and strengthening resilience.



III. CIHEAM'S SOLUTIONS THROUGH EDUCATION, RESEARCH & COOPERATION

In line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, the CIHEAM Action Plan for the Mediterranean (CAPMED 2025) gives prominence to issues of capacity building and empowerment of women in agriculture, fisheries and more generally in rural and coastal Mediterranean areas. Identified as a priority, gender equality and women empowerment are crosscutting themes that invite us to reflect upon several components of Mediterranean agriculture and rural development.

Women empowerment projects developed by the CIHEAM consist in elaborating integrated '**multidimensional**' support packages and **gender-sensitive (and/or targeted) development interventions** to help increase the full participation of women and girls in local economies. In addition, the adoption of a systemic approach inherently connecting business-household-community, economic and social empowerment of women is used.

The CIHEAM supports women by contributing to :



WOMEN IN SCIENCE

- Support of female students and researchers
- Gender studies
- Collection of data on gender...

JOBS CREATION AND EMPLOYMENT

- Job creation /women entrepreneurship in creative, innovative and inclusive businesses
- Capacity building for future professions in the green economy and agriculture, blue economy and fishing, by mobilizing new technologies, technical and social innovations...



GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATION

- Decision-making at local/national/regional levels (local decision-making bodies, cooperatives...) / Leadership of women in the community
- Raising awareness and policy dialogue
- Gender mainstreaming in agricultural institutions, research, policies and programmes...





IV. SOME CIHEAM PROJECTS ON THE GROUND

1. CONTRIBUTING TO JOBS CREATION AND EMPLOYMENT
2. CONTRIBUTION TO EMPOWER WOMEN IN SCIENCES
3. CONTRIBUTING TO GOVERNANCE

1. CONTRIBUTING TO JOBS CREATION AND EMPLOYMENT

W.E.E : Developing the Handcrafts Skills and Enhancing the Economic Status of Women in Upper Egypt

WEE is aimed at improving the social and economic status of rural women of the poor communities in the Governorates of Fayoum, Sohag, Assiut and Aswan (Egypt), **by triggering and sustaining their capacity to produce and sell food and non-food items, while taking care of their children and families.**

Inclusive and Sustainable Value Chain Development in Oromia

The “Inclusive and Sustainable Value Chains Development in Oromia” programme, funded by Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has been launched in April 2017. The project benefits 42 cooperative associations, with some 16,000 members and value chain actors. It is implemented in 20 woredas of Oromia Regional State. The intervention approach of the CIHEAM is to strengthen a **specific value chain (e.g. horticultural products) reinforcing the role of women throughout** its stages in order to have an impact on increasing the availability of those products at household level and on local markets, thus leading to improved diets.

European Neighborhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD SOUTH)

ENPARD South is an initiative launched by the European Union in 2011 to strengthen the partnership between the EU and the Neighbourhood countries in terms of agricultural and rural policies. Managed by the CIHEAM Montpellier, its objective is to accompany partners in strengthening their agricultural and rural policy and answers to this question “What policies are needed to support farmers and rural population?” ENPARD deals with 6 main themes: production chains organisation, youth and women, extension and training, governance of rural territories, marketing of rural and agricultural products, good agricultural practices.

Creation of jobs in South Tunisia to support agriculture and handicraft: solidarity economy and professionalisation (Emploi-Sud)

Coordinated by the CIHEAM-IAMM, the “Emploi Sud Tunisie” Project is aimed at enhancing the creation of jobs in the fields of agriculture and handicraft in the Medenine Governorate. It fosters the integration of young people, either graduated or not, within the regional economy and responds to the needs of farmers and cooperatives in terms of skills and service gaps.

Social Innovation in Marginalised Rural Areas (SIMRA)

SIMRA is a project funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. It seeks to advance the understanding of social innovation and innovative governance in agriculture, forestry and rural development, and how to boost them, particularly in marginalised rural areas across Europe, with a focus on the Mediterranean region (including non-EU) where there is limited evidence of outcomes and supporting conditions.

FAO DONNE TUNISIA (Institutional partnership CIHEAM-FAO)

The main objective of the LoA CIHEAM-FAO is to improve the livelihoods of rural women and communities engaged in the artisanal fishery sector with clam gathering/production on the Tunisian coastline through training and the development of micro-projects for market access and income generation. In collaboration with FAO and its local partners in Medenine Governorate (South Tunisia), the CIHEAM Bari supports beneficiaries in setting up and carrying out their income-generating activities, in accessing information and vocational training, appropriate services and tools, including financing and marketing opportunities.

Cross-Border Rural Communities Development in Libya and Neighbouring Countries

The main goal of the project is to enhance cross-border socio economic development in the rural coastal communities in Libya and in Neighbouring Countries. This main objective includes several aspects like socio economic improvement and development in coastal-rural areas where fishery represents the only revenue for local livelihoods, fostering sustainable coastal resource management, considering climate changes in fishery activities.... A Gender oriented approach in order to rationalize and facilitate the role of women in the rural coastal community development toward its multifunctional role is also an objective.

Rural empowerment of Kurdistan region through sustainable development of the olive oil value chain

The objective of the project is to reinforce the institutional support and the capacities of producers within the Kurdish virgin olive oil value chain. The project covers the whole Kurdistan Region, with a particular focus on the olive oil developed area in the territories of Dohuk, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah and Garmanyar Governates.

OROMIA-ETHIOPA 2

The main objectives of this project are to improve and reinforce the horticulture value chain through capacity and institutional building and introduction of improved agricultural practices. The aim is to strengthen the role of women in agriculture value chains and finally to improve nutrition and dietary diversity of vulnerable target population, namely women and children.

Olio del Libano III

The project aims to promote new and better forms of organisation, to protect and inform consumers, to support producers, young people and women. The olive and olive oil chain is to be strengthened by farmers and cooperatives through the implementation of a virtuous quality-oriented olive oil strategy, by integrating the MoA laboratory with the necessary technologies, and creating opportunities to build support for the policies to add value and promote African oil, at national and international levels.



[Building Resilience in Syria - Early Recovery interventions in Agriculture](#)

Since 2015, in Syria, the CIHEAM Bari is implementing interventions aimed at increasing the resilience of rural communities through the strengthening of agricultural and livestock productions, thus increasing food security in the programme areas. Both the previous programme “Agriculture and Livestock Support for Syrian People” as well as the ongoing programme Ra.L.A “Strengthening Raqqa Local Administration to Support the Rural Communities”, strive to assist Syrian rural communities by supplying agricultural and livestock inputs, rehabilitating veterinary and crops services, strengthening the skills of local communities and creating income generating opportunities for women. The capacity of Syrian local administrations and local technicians are particularly strengthened to provide appropriate agriculture and veterinary services for their farmers and breeders. These efforts are done in collaboration with local administrations and associations and are encouraging the reconciliation between populations of different ethnic origins and religion, hereby increasing dialogue, agricultural and economic exchanges. Implemented actions supported rural women by prioritizing female-owned farms when distributing agriculture inputs as well as by helping set up women associations, supporting them in developing income generation activities in the field of dairy and food processing. So far, 5 women associations have been set up and assisted in implementing their business ideas thus creating stable livelihood opportunities. The associations are supported through the provision of inputs and equipment for the start-up of the activities and are accompanied through trainings and continuous technical assistance by the programme technicians.

Wes

Building on previous similar projects, 'Water and Environment Support (WES) in the ENI Neighbourhood South Region' project is a regional technical support project funded by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI South). WES aims to protect the natural resources in the Mediterranean context, improve the management of scarce water resources in the region and solve the problems linked to the pollution prevention and the rational use of water. The WES Project Countries are Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia. From its design phase WES has been committed to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and youth in its structure and management, as well as in its activities. Besides strong involvement in various capacity building activities, CIHEAM Bari is also contributing to the drafting of WES Gender and Youth Action Plan with the aim to contextualize 'gender and youth issues' within the framework of water and environment and elaborate on how WES can integrate gender and youth considerations effectively, in a practical and strategic manner and contribute to influence the regional and national gender and youth agendas.

Hilly Areas Sustainable Agricultural Development Project (HASAD)

The **HASAD project**, implemented in Lebanon, aimed at supporting rural women in the development of their agricultural products by setting up small processing units and facilitating access to markets and improving qualifications and skills.

Devlok

Devlok is a project dedicated to the development of a local governance process in the Kerkennah Islands (Tunisia) that ensures inclusive dialogue between the involved stakeholders and their participation in the definition, implementation and monitoring of a sustainable territorial development strategy. Its objectives consist in reinforcing the maritime, agricultural and rural economy by supporting economic and social initiatives that enhance the local and specific resources of the Kerkennah Islands for the benefits of the overall population, with a focus on women entrepreneurship.

2. CONTRIBUTION TO EMPOWER WOMEN IN SCIENCES

A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF STUDENTS ARE WOMEN

- **CIHEAM Montpellier:** 2/3 to 3/4 of CIHEAM Montpellier Masters students are women
- **CIHEAM Zaragoza:** During the past 5 academic years: 47.5% of participants to advanced courses are women; 57% of participants to MSc programmes are women
- **CIHEAM Bari:** 40 % (from 1998-2020) and growth rate of women students + 20% (from 1998 to 2020)
- **CIHEAM Chania :** 2/3 of CIHEAM CHANIA Masters students are women

GENDER-SMART PROJECT

Gender-SMART is a community of seven European Research Executing Organisations (RPOs) and Research Funding Organisations (RPOs), operating in the field of food science research, agriculture and life. This community has the operational objectives to develop Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) that contribute:

- To building a culture of gender equality;
- To developing measures to support equal careers;
- To reshaping decision making and governance;
- To mainstreaming gender in funding, research and teaching.

As a partner in this 4-year European programme, the CIHEAM Bari has designed and defined its GEP after nearly two years of audits and training. The Headquarters and the 3 others Institutes are following in the same line based on this first experience and lessons learned as well as the benchmarks and tools that have been mobilised.



CAPACITY BUILDING & TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Workshop on “Sharing Approaches, Tools and Good Practices on Rural Women Empowerment and Gender “ (July 2018, CIHEAM Bari)

The workshop was attended by the Ministries of Agriculture of Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Palestine, representatives of FAO, UN Women, UfM, the Italian Association of Women for Development (AIDOS), the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation and other partners. It provided an excellent opportunity for institutions and practitioners to share experiences and good practices on the empowerment rural women. It helped strengthen collaboration and networking among the different participants to synergize development cooperation interventions and foster exchanges on the development of innovative approaches and tools for women empowerment.

3. CONTRIBUTING TO GOVERNANCE

ENHANCING GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD SECURITY (GEMAISA)

[GEMAISA](#) project is implemented by the CIHEAM Bari and funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation. Currently in its second phase, the project aims to improve the livelihoods of rural women in five Mediterranean countries by increasing the participation of women within selected, local agro-food value chains and contributing to the strengthening the capacity of the Ministries of Agriculture’s capacity to mainstream gender issues and promote women empowerment within their policies, strategies and programmes.

The GEMAISA project has been included among the [36 promising practices in Mainstreaming Gender into European External Action \(2018 Annual Implementation Report of the European Commission GAP II\)](#).





V. Institutional dialogue and partnerships

Gender inclusion and the empowerment of women is a priority area of the MoUs that CIHEAM has signed with the UfM or the Mediterranean Integration Centre (CMI-World Bank). These areas have given rise to collaborations with FAO and the OECD Development Centre.

5th UfM Women's Empowerment High Level Conference: A focus on rural women and agro-food sectors in the context of COVID-19

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfMs) and the CIHEAM co-organised during the 5th Women4Mediterranean Conference a side-event on the Gender Impacts of COVID-19 and the Solutions in agro-food sectors, food security and Rural Areas of the Mediterranean Region (19 November 2020). High-level speakers from FAO and the European Commission took part to this side-event, and included the participation of H.E Ms Akissa Bahri Minister of Agriculture, Water Resources and Fisheries in Tunisia.

4th UfM Women’s Empowerment Conference reaffirms the key role of women in building inclusive societies and unlocking the potential of the Mediterranean (10-11 October 2019)

Organised in partnership with renowned international organisations such as UN Women, UNIDO, UNDP, the Parliamentary Assembly of the UfM (PA-UfM), Science Po Paris, Konrad Adenauer, the Euro-Mediterranean Women’s Foundation and the CIHEAM, this edition brought together some of the most active voices on gender equality in the region, involving 300 participants from over 30 countries. The participants discussed the role of men, the private sector and the media to shift stereotypes and social barriers. They explored ways to combat gender-based violence, means to empower women in rural and agricultural areas, the role of women in science, technology and innovation, and measures to invest in reproductive health.

CIHEAM-UfM Workshop **“Empowering women in rural and agricultural areas”**

During the Conference, the CIHEAM and the UfM co-organised the workshop “Empowering women in rural and agricultural areas”. The workshop invited the panellists and the participants to exchange, present their experiences and to provide recommendations for the conference.



European Development Days 2018 **(European Commission)**

Women, Food and Rural development: A Mediterranean Opportunity!

The CIHEAM promoted Mediterranean Women on its stand during [the European Development Days 2018](#) and contributed to raise awareness on the important role of women in strategic issues such as food security, climate change, local development, resilience of communities...

GLOBAL ONLINE COLLABORATIVE PLATFORM

In the context of growing recognition of the role of rural women to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Wikigender (OECD Dev), the CIHEAM and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) organised an online discussion on "Strengthening the role of women in rural and agricultural areas in the Mediterranean region". Over 50 insightful and expert comments were posted which identified the challenges facing rural women; Policy recommendations towards the achievement of the SDGs; and examples of good practices to unlock the empowerment of rural women.



About Wikigender

As a global online collaborative platform, Wikigender links policymakers and experts from both developed and developing countries to share knowledge and find solutions to advance gender equality. The platform focuses on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and in particular on SDG 5.

www.wikigender.org

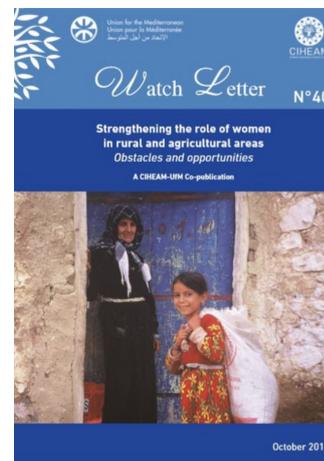
Strengthening the role of women in rural and agricultural areas in the Mediterranean region: transforming challenges into opportunities

SOME OF OUR PARTNERS



SOME OF OUR PUBLICATIONS

Strengthening the role of women in rural and agricultural areas - Obstacles and opportunities, “Women in Rural Development and Agriculture: Challenges and Opportunities” a joint publication CIHEAM-UfM, Watchletter n°40, October 2018



- Why are men and women affected in different ways by COVID-19? – The importance of gender equality for building resilience in the response to the pandemic in rural areas in the Mediterranean region, FAO, CIHEAM publication
- Gender and climate-induced migration in the Mediterranean: from resilience to peace and human security, *Mediterra Migration and Inclusive Rural Development in the Mediterranean*, CIHEAM, 2018
- Mediterranean Women in Rural and Agricultural Communities: Double Jeopardy, Multiple Opportunities, Seghirate, Y. (2017), *IEMed, Mediterranean Yearbook*, pp. 243-246.
- Building Resilience of Mediterranean Rural Communities Through the Empowerment of Women, Quagliariello, R. & Ciannamea, C. (2016), Watch Letter n°36
- Women Entrepreneurs in Rural Greece: Do They Come From the Same “Neck of the Woods”? Locals, Daughters-in-law and Urban-Newcomers, Iakovidou et al. (2012), New Medit, 11(2), pp. 58-64
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- Mainstreaming Gender Dimensions in Water Management for Food Security and Food Safety, Bari: CIHEAM, 2007, 238p. (Options Méditerranéennes: Série A. Séminaires Méditerranéens, n°77)

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- Women Academics in Science and Technology with Special Reference to Turkey. Saglamer G. in: Ambrosi L. (ed.), Trisorio-Liuzzi G. (ed.), Quagliariello R. (ed.), Santelli Beccegato L. (ed.), Di Benedetta C. (ed.), Losurdo F. (ed.). Women Status in the Mediterranean: their Rights and Sustainable Development. Bari: CIHEAM, 2009. p. 45-61. (Options Méditerranéennes : Série A. Séminaires Méditerranéens; n. 87)



Established in 1962, the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) is a Mediterranean intergovernmental organisation composed of 13 Member States (Albania, Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey). It operates through its 4 Institutes based in Bari (Italy), Chania (Greece), Montpellier (France) and Zaragoza (Spain) and the Headquarters based in Paris.

As a key player in multilateral cooperation in the fields of sustainable agriculture and fisheries, food systems, coastal and rural development, its missions revolve around four main objectives :



Protection of the planet by combating all forms of waste: waste of natural resources, food waste and waste of knowledge and know-how;



Food and nutrition security by boosting sustainable agriculture and food systems;



Inclusive development by investing in new generations and fragile territories;



Prevention of crises by managing tensions and working for the resilience of communities.

The CIHEAM strives to achieve these objectives through education and capacity building, networked research, cooperation and technical assistance and political dialogue. Cooperation is essential for CIHEAM, which collaborates with more than 50 countries, several regional and intergovernmental organisations, and more than 600 universities and research centres.

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