

ENHANCING GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD SECURITY ACTIONS

CLOSING SEMINAR | 6 December 2016 | ROMA

BACKGROUND OF THE PROGRAMME

The programme “Enhancing Gender mainstreaming for Sustainable Rural Development and Food Security Actions - GEMAIISA” was funded by the Italian Development Cooperation and implemented by the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies - CIHEAM Bari (www.iamb.it).

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME

In line with the Sustainable Development Goals adopted in September 2015 in the broader context of Agenda 2030, GEMAIISA aimed at improving the gender mainstreaming capacity of the national partner institutions in Egypt, Lebanon and Tunisia through pilot projects for the promotion of women's multidimensional empowerment in rural areas.

A transboundary approach to the programme implementation was chosen to encourage both south-south exchange of good practices, and north-south cooperation to improve the technical skills of the partner countries. A regional and multi stakeholder approach in addressing the challenges of sustainable development it was deemed necessary to encourage cohesion in the Mediterranean area and reduce resistance to changes.

Under the guidance of an International Technical and Scientific Committee that oriented and followed up the implementation of the activities, the programme boosted an innovative approach to women's empowerment and developed rigorous methodological tools in order to:

- support positive, sustainable changes in gender relations rural contexts, and monitor and measure their impact;
- give voice to rural women and their aspirations, recognizing their knowledge, skills and experiences and increasing their awareness so that they can fully participate to and influence decision-making processes within the household and at social and political level.

SCOPE OF THE SEMINAR

The seminar aims at discussing the lessons learnt from the programme, that experimented an innovative regional dimension. The dialogue among different actors from four countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia and Italy), not only highlighted the peculiarities and dynamics of the different contexts, but paved the way for the development of a common language on gender equality and rural women's empowerment. This dialogue – that has been established or strengthened also at country level involving key Ministries, local relevant authorities and institutions and the civil society - resulted in the implementation of three pilot initiatives in the target areas (El Fayoum in Egypt, Chouf in Lebanon, Medenine in Tunisia). GEMAIISA programme has involved several stakeholders in the three countries broadening its scope through the synergies created during the implementation and on-line networking activities. Indeed, the original programme has been adapted according to the countries' specificities and to the increasing capacity and vision of the involved stakeholders.

These processes have been analysed through a participatory evaluation activity aimed at identifying what has changed in the actors involved at different levels in their relationships, in their knowledge and practices. The participatory evaluation was carried out testing qualitative and quantitative participatory tools that were adapted to the different contexts. The results will be presented and discussed at the seminar, to discuss further support actions in the three target countries and exploring the possibilities for scaling-up in other Mediterranean countries.

Keeping in mind the Agenda 2030 recommendation to develop gender-disaggregated data collection systems and to identify more effective multidimensional indicators to measure women's empowerment and gender equality, the seminar aims at presenting the lessons learnt from GEMAIISA in this domain and discuss practices and tools developed, in order to draw recommendations for future development initiatives in rural contexts of South Mediterranean countries.

