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The Mediterranean Dialogues

Rome Meeting

Rome, 27-28 Octobre 2016

The countries of the southern Mediterranean face great challenges.

Out-migration to cities and to Europe has become a major force, and the pressure is being felt primarily by women and young people from rural areas.

Weak growth is being exacerbated by inequality and unemployment. Rural areas, under-equipped, are no longer attractive to young people. The countryside, considered without a future, social prestige or prospect for profit-making, is spurring young people to migrate to cities that are better equipped and offer myriad opportunities.

2015 Congress

The theme of the South-North Mediterranean Dialogue, held in Milan in October 2015, gave the rallying call: 'Rural communities, No longer left behind: Rural and regional development in the South and North Mediterranean and the new Neighborhood Policy'

The Dialogues were the result of the **GCARD3 Regional consultation process for the MENA Region** which took place over the course of 2014 and 2015. To ensure that participation was equal and balanced, participants in these consultations represented rural development, youth, women, business and local governments.

The communities represented in the Dialogues expressed the challenges they faced and defined the measures that would need to be taken to create opportunities.

The meeting in Rome

- will build on the results of the Dialogue in 2014 and 2015, taking stock of the current situation
- share the initiatives of institutional actors focused on the challenges addressed
- designate priorities to make the rural areas more attractive to young people, women, etc.
- define the priorities for the 2018 Congress, and the process of South-North and South-South dialogue on an equal footing and oriented on the long term
- invite participants to implement a culture of understanding and lay the foundations for collective actions and synergies.
- is organized with the support of GFAR as a collective action delivering Outcomes 5.1 (advocating for gender equity); 5.2 (enabling the voice of youth); and 5.3 (fostering growth out of protracted crises) of the [GFAR Medium Term Plan 2014-2017](#)

Expected Outcomes

- strategies developed for improving the attractiveness of rural areas for young people, for women and for agripreneurs
- Encourage collective action at all levels, between partners across sectors and national borders, that will improve policies and encourage allocation of resources, to demonstrate solidarity and to encourage investment in rural areas
- Launch a consultation process at national and regional level, with a view to a Congress in 2018 highlighting the collective results that have changed attitudes, behaviors and institutions to the benefit of rural communities.

The concept note (in French) is attached below.

The preliminary program is available [here](#).

To learn about the YPARD Mediterranean group's work contributing to the outcomes of the Dialogues, read this [blog post](#).

For the original post on the website of the Fondation du Dialogue Sud-Nord Méditerranée click [here](#).