



Extension, Education and Communication Service (SDRE)

Education for Rural People

A Call to Boost Education in Rural Areas

The flagship's key facts:

- 62 members among International Organizations, Governments, NGOs, Universities, Foundations and others
- Pilot Project: developing a Strategy for Education for rural people (ERP) in Kosovo
- International events:
 - Regional workshop on *Education for rural development* organized in partnership with FAO, UNESCO and UNESCO-IIEP, Bangkok, Thailand, November 2002,
 - Aid agencies workshop on *Education for rural people*, organized by FAO with the technical collaboration of UNESCO-IIEP, Rome, Italy, 12 - 13 December 2002.
 - International Symposium on Rural Education organized by UNESCO and the International Research and Training Centre for Rural Education (INRULED) in collaboration with FAO, Baoding, China, 20-23 January 2003
 - *Segundo encuentro regional sobre Educación Para Todos en América Latina*. Organized by UNESCO in collaboration with FAO. Santiago de Chile, Chile 23-24 September 2003.
- Publications :
 - "Education for rural development , towards new policy responses." A joint study conducted by FAO and UNESCO
 - Report on a Regional Workshop: "Education for rural development in Asia: Experiences and Policy Lessons" Bangkok, Thailand, 5-7 November 2002.
 - Report on the Aid Agencies Workshop "Education for rural people: Targeting the poor", Rome, Italy, 12-13 December

About 70 per cent of the poor live in rural areas. Despite the fact that education is a basic right in itself and an essential prerequisite for reducing poverty, improving the living conditions of rural people and building a food-secure world, children's access to education in rural areas is still much lower than in urban areas, adult illiteracy is much higher and the quality of education is poorer.

In this regard, the Sustainable Development Department of FAO and UNESCO have joined forces to establish a new flagship on Education for rural people (ERP) within the Education for All initiative. The flagship seeks to address rural-urban disparities, which are a serious concern to governments and the international community as a whole.

The flagship is a call for member countries, United Nations agencies and civil society for a collaborative action to increase the coordination of efforts targeting the educational needs of rural people. The partnership is open to members committed to working separately and together to promote and facilitate increased access to quality basic Education for rural people.

A people-centred approach to planning

The flagship supports the development of *education for rural people* through a participatory planning approach. It brings together all key actors at national and local levels to outline priorities for improving ERP including local communities, NGOs, local and national institutions and government ministries.

The Flagship's objectives

- Building awareness on the importance of *Education for rural people* as a crucial step to achieve the Millennium goals of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger and achieving universal primary education
- Overcoming the urban/rural education gap
- Increasing access to basic *Education for rural people*
- Improving the quality of basic education in rural areas
- Fostering the national capacity to plan and implement basic education plans to address the learning needs of rural people.

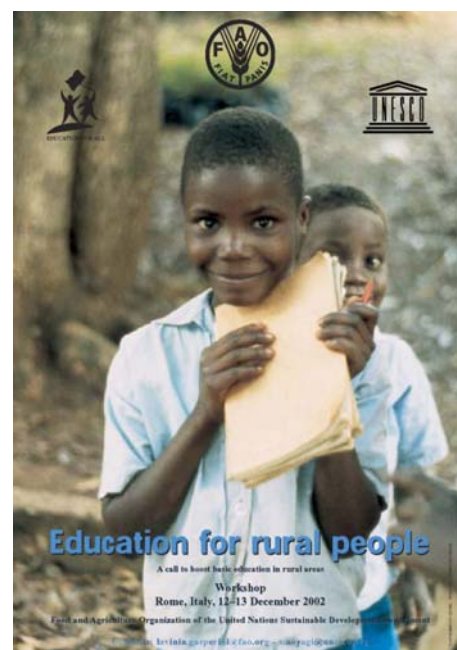
The Flagship's activities

At the national level

- Technical support to countries willing to address the basic educational needs of the rural people by formulating specific plans of action as part of the national plans on Education for all.

At the international level

- Advocate and mobilize partnerships for *Education for rural people* by concentrating on strategic global, regional and international events, and encouraging the same within countries.
- Support the exchange of good practices and knowledge on *Education for rural people*



Aid agencies workshop on Education for rural people, Rome, December 2002

The difficulties faced:

- The most serious problem faced by the project so far has been a lack of adequate funding and of staffing for the flagship

Developing a strategy for Education for Rural People (ERP) in Kosovo

More than 50% of the people of Kosovo live in the rural areas. Apart from helping to alleviate poverty and improve the livelihoods of rural people, rural development is seen as one of the few opportunities for income generation and economic growth. However, there is a lack of appropriate skills and education resources to support that development.

The *Education for rural people* project began in June 2003, and will run for a period of nine months.

Current project activities include:

- An in-depth study of rural people's education needs and the development of a strategy to address them
- Local Task Forces assisting in data collection and strategy development
- The training of key personnel, at local and national levels, in participatory planning and strategy development through a series of workshops

The solutions found:

Development of support by volunteers and *Education for rural people* members is the solution found to problems of staffing and funding shortages.

The Flagship's Next Steps

FAO accepted to be the *Education for Rural People* lead agency since we are convinced that education is a key to sustainable development, food security and poverty reduction.

Partnerships are crucial in the *Education for Rural People* initiative. The ERP flagship is a call for collaborative efforts to increase the coordination among partner organizations in targeting the educational needs of rural people.

For this reason, FAO and UNESCO are inviting Member States, UN entities and civil society to join us in the establishment of a new partnership in *Education for Rural People*.

If you are interested in participating in this initiative, please contact us.



Education for Rural people in Kosovo

Extension, Education and Communication Service (SDRE)

The Service is strengthening capacity through knowledge and information for sustainable rural development.

Our mission is to contribute – through support to agriculture and rural extension, education and communication- to efforts to resolve the pressing problems of Member Nations on food security and poverty alleviation.

Our focus is on strengthening the capacity of both government and development organizations, to help rural men, women and youth have the knowledge and skills they need to improve their productivity, incomes and quality of life, and manage in sustainable ways the natural resources on which they depend.

We seek partnerships as a vehicle for achieving development objectives, particularly where joint action will be more effective than individual initiatives. Our partnerships involve a wide range of actors including the public and private sector, NGOs and farmer organizations.

The lessons learned:

If you are planning for a year, sow rice; if you are planning for a decade, plant trees; if you are planning for a lifetime, educate people. (A Chinese proverb)

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