



# Education for Rural People

A call to boost education in rural areas

Extension, Education and Communication Service  
Sustainable Development Department  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation

## Some of the flagship's key facts

- Hundred and fifty members among international organizations, governments, NGOs, universities, foundations and others.
- Pilot project *Developing a Strategy for Education for Rural People in Kosovo*.
- Project on **ERP** and Food Security in partnership with a network of European NGOs co-funded by the European Commission
- Regional capacity building workshops for policy-makers of Ministries of Agriculture and Education on **ERP** in Asia and South America:  
(FAO, UNESCO/IIEP, DGCS/Italy).  
-Bangkok Thailand (November 2002-May 2004).  
-Santiago de Chile, September 2003-August 2004.
- Aid agencies workshop on **ERP** Rome, Italy, December 2002 (FAO, UNESCO-IIEP, DGCS/Italy).
- *International Symposium on Rural Education*, Baodin, China January 2003 (INRULED, UNESCO, FAO).
- **ERP** Web site : <http://www.fao.org/sd/erp>
- Main publications:

*Education for rural development, towards new policy responses.*

*Educación para la población rural en Brasil, Chile, Colombia, Honduras, México, Paraguay y Perú.*

*Revisiting garden-based learning in basic education.*

*Education for rural development in Asia.*

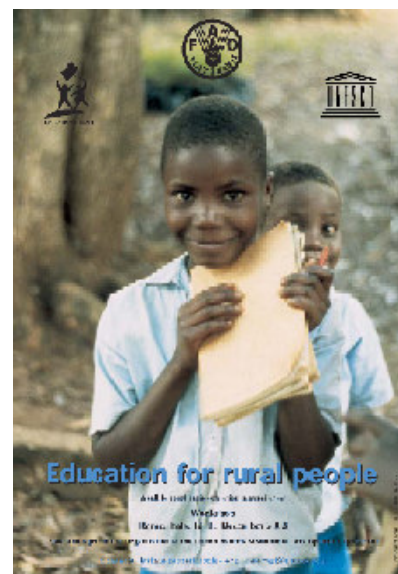
*Education for rural people: targeting the poor.*

About 70 percent of the poor live in rural areas. Education is a basic right in itself and an essential prerequisite for achieving all the **Millennium Development Goals** including reducing poverty, improving the living conditions of rural people and building a food-secure world. Even so, 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. This is the reason why, in 2002, during the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), the FAO Sustainable Development Department - Extension, Education and Communication Service (SDRE) - and UNESCO established a partnership on **Education for Rural People (ERP)** within International Alliance Against Hunger (IAAH) and Education for All (EFA) initiatives. The partnership seeks to address rural-urban disparities, which are a serious concern to governments and the international community as a whole. The partnership, led by FAO, is a call for member countries, United Nations agencies, Civil Society, academic institutions and private sector for coordinated, increased efforts in targeting rural people's needs by promoting increased access to quality basic education.

***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. (Chinese proverb)***

## The flagship's objectives

- Building awareness on the importance of **ERP** as a crucial step to achieve all the **Millennium Development Goals**, and particularly, eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education and promoting gender equity.
- Overcoming the urban/rural gap in education.
- 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 **ERP** as part of national Education for All and Rural Development plans.



## 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 strategies as part of national Education for All and Rural Development plans.

At the international level:

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



## Education for Rural People and Food Security. A Participatory Approach in the Fight Against Poverty

The project, launched by a network of European NGOs in partnership with FAO and in collaboration with UNESCO, is co-funded by the European Commission. The aim of the project is to strengthen the network of international key-actors, institutional or non-governmental, involved in the support of education for rural people, as part of the global strategy on food security, poverty alleviation and education for all. The program is based on the guidelines established by the FAO/UNESCO joint program on **ERP**.



### Developing an ERP strategy in Kosovo

More than 50 percent of the people in 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 **ERP** project June 2003-June 2004 has produced:

- An in-depth study of rural people's education needs.
- A national strategy of the Ministries of Education and Agriculture to address rural people's education needs in collaboration with Civil Society.
- The training of key personnel, at local and national levels, in ERP participatory planning and strategy development through a series of workshops.

***“Don't give fish,  
teach them to fish”***  
**(Proverb)**

### Next steps from 2004 to 2006

- Regional workshops on **ERP**:
  - Africa, 2005
  - Balkans, 2006
- A workshop on Statistics and **ERP** in Rome in 2005.
- A workshop on Basic Skills Training and **ERP** in Rome in 2005.
- Several new publications.

### Funding provided by

- Italian Development Cooperation (DGCS) Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Government of the Republic of San Marino
- World Bank
- Inter-American Institute for Co-operation on Agriculture (IICA)
- European Commission



### Extension, Education and Communication Service (SDRE)

The service is strengthening capacity through knowledge and information on sustainable rural development.

Our mission is to contribute, through 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 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.

**If you are interested in joining our partnership initiative in ERP please contact**

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