
On 29 January 2004 at **FAO Headquarters (Rome, Italy)** the **Education Group of the Extension, Education and Communication Service (SDRE), Sustainable Development Department**, organized a seminar on "**Education for Rural People (ERP)**" with the participation of fourteen Italian NGOs.

The purpose of the seminar was to update the Italian NGOs on the FAO/UNESCO flagship initiative on Education for rural people (ERP). The Seminar started with a presentation of the ERP flagship recent achievements and of the project on Education for rural people, approved by the European Commission and prepared by the Italian NGO ACRA (Associazione di Cooperazione Rurale in Africa e America Latina) in collaboration with the Education Group of SDRE, FAO. The project that has a global ERP advocacy component and a field component will be implemented in Africa and Latin America, in countries where ACRA is already active.

The book "Education for Rural Development, towards new policy responses" - recently published by FAO and the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) - and the ERP website were presented. ERP on line is an important achievement of the SDRE department. The site is a useful and easy tool to spread news on activities related to ERP and to mobilize the civil society, International Organizations and NGO's as well as the flagship members that now are more than 80. They can directly interact and share information and experiences among themselves in order to enhance the quality of their work in favour of education of the rural poor. Discussion on possible collaboration between members regarding the above issues followed.

The seminar was a step further in strengthening the collaboration among Italian NGOs and the Flagship Members. NGOs represent, over all, almost 70% of the flagship members. The complementarity among their grass root work and the policy and research work of FAO, UNESCO and other International Organizations in addressing basic learning needs of rural people was stressed by seminar participants.