



Carolin Grieshop

## **FAO WORKSHOP ON "FOOD CRISIS: EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF RURAL PEOPLE AT STAKE"**

The Education for Rural People (ERP) initiative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) organised a workshop which was held at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, from 4 to 5 June 2009. The workshop aimed at fostering the partnership between and within countries and agencies that are necessary to strengthen education and training of rural people, sharing successful policies and practices as well as challenges and coming to a joint understanding of key actions to which the diverse stakeholders could contribute.

The workshop gathered national and international policy-makers, managers and experts responsible for education and training for rural people as well as civil society organizations. Among the invitees was Carolin Grieshop for MIJARC. Other invitees were from the main strategic partners operating in Africa.

### **One out of six people is suffering from hunger and illiteracy**

The situation of education and training in many African countries is characterized by low school access and achievement among rural people. Moreover rural people's access to secondary technical and vocational education (TVET) and training is particularly limited, especially in rural areas. Approximately one out of six people of the world's current population is suffering from hunger and illiteracy and the majority of them live in Africa.

### **75 million children of primary school age are out of school**

Within the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) framework, education and training policies play a crucial role in reducing the number of the 963 million food insecure people. The UNESCO Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2009 indicates that worldwide some 75 million children of primary school age are still out of school. Africa accounts for about half of the number of out-of-school children and over four out of five of them live in rural areas. As a result professional and social participation is hindered, as well as productivity and production. Getting all children into school and completing a full cycle of primary education, as well as skill training are a necessary condition for economic development, employment and competitiveness. Developing rural people's capacities is key to addressing development and crisis and especially food and environmental challenges. It is also important to ensure rural children and youth transition from primary to secondary education but this is not sufficient. After primary school, secondary education and TVET need to be granted to all rural children and

youth as well as literacy, skill training and life-long learning to farmers and in general to all rural people. Efficient education systems are characterized by relevance to local conditions, cost-effectiveness and sustainability and complementarities between primary, secondary, higher education and life-long learning.

This implies fostering the national capacities and institutions, organizations and individuals in charge of national and decentralized policies and programmes by addressing governmental and non-governmental stakeholders.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO, Sustainable Development Department) and the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) are inviting member countries, international agencies and civil society to join the partnership on **Education for Rural People (ERP)** initiative which is part of the International Alliance Against Hunger and of the Education for All (EFA) initiative.

#### **OBJECTIVES of ERP**

- Overcoming the urban/rural gap in education.
- Increasing access to basic Education for Rural People
- Improving the quality of basic Education for Rural People
- Fostering the national capacity to plan and implement ERP as part of National Education for All and Rural Development Plans.
- 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.

The report and conclusion of the workshop will be available soon on the following webpage:

[http://www.fao.org/sd/erp/erpeventsworkshopjune2009\\_en.htm](http://www.fao.org/sd/erp/erpeventsworkshopjune2009_en.htm)