

RIMISP – Latin American Center for Rural Development

Corporate Presentation

August 2010

Rimisp is a regional non-profit organization that, for the last 25 years, has been supporting processes of institutional change, productive transformation, and capacity building for social actors and groups in Latin American rural societies, with offices located in Quito, Santiago (Head Office), Managua and La Paz.

Our goal is to achieve socially-inclusive and environmentally-sustainable economic growth in Latin American rural societies. **Rimisp** is committed and hopes to **influence dynamics of social change**, directly or indirectly, through the strategies and policies of national and sub-national governments, international agencies, private enterprises, civil society organizations and social movements.

The institutional goals that Rimisp proposes to achieve in collaboration with its partners are as follows:

1. Gain a better understanding of the changes affecting Latin American rural societies and their response strategies.
2. Improve the quality and effectiveness of the methods and tools used for the design, implementation and evaluation of rural development strategies, policies, programs and projects.
3. Promote and manage regional multi-stakeholder platforms that enable dialogue, cooperation, and synthesis of visions and strategic and programmatic agendas for the development of Latin American rural societies.
4. Facilitate learning processes that strengthen capacities of actors and innovative social coalitions, especially at the territorial level.
5. Provide information to assist the decision-making of policy makers, social actors, and rural development agents.

A key feature of the work of Rimisp is **networking**. We place extreme importance on the work undertaken with different partners, based on standards of trust, reciprocity and respect. Thus, research is carried out by partner organizations located in each country, whether governmental, NGOs, universities or others.

Rimisp generates five types of **products** that can be best described as public goods: (a) knowledge, (b) social learning, (c) capacity building, (d) regional networks, and (e) advocacy for social change.

Knowledge based on serious and rigorous socio-economic research, in order to understand the dynamics of change in rural Latin American societies, the determinants and impacts of change, and the response strategies of different social actors.

Social learning through the synthesis of processes, systematization and evaluation. In this way, we search for the means so that social actors acquire a better understanding of their realities and contexts, their opportunities and alternatives for the transformation of their societies, by developing learning cycles and the systematization of experiences.

Capacity building, especially at the territorial level, in order to strengthen and empower public and private stakeholders who can revitalize and transform Latin American rural societies, making them fairer and more equitable.

Building or strengthening of regional networks, linking different actors in processes of dialogue, cooperation and jointly undertaken work. Regional networks facilitated by Rimisp are always oriented to the achievement of specific goals within a defined timeframe.

Advocacy for social change, which is established through consultancy and collaboration with governments, international agencies, donor agencies, universities, NGOs and social organizations and through the contribution of knowledge to support processes of institutional change, productive transformation, and territorial development.

Rimisp's institutional activities are **financed** by international cooperation agencies, including IDRC (Canada), ICCO (Netherlands), IFAD (United Nations), Ford Foundation (USA) and NZAID (New Zealand). In the last three years, Rimisp has undertaken active projects through its partners in: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Spain, Uruguay and Venezuela. Additionally, in the last three years, Rimisp has conducted collaborative projects with organizations in Canada, China, Ethiopia, France, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, New Zealand, Philippines, United Kingdom, United States, South Africa, Turkey and Vietnam.

Institutional challenges for the 2010–2013 period, aim to optimize the organization's contribution towards the five objectives outlined above, through networking with our partners and collaborators.

We are also focused on improving our capacity to influence public policies and strategies in national and sub-national governments, international agencies, the private sector, and social organizations and movements.

We have established a thematic agenda that, on the one hand, will provide continuity to projects focused on understanding the transformation of rural societies and the effects of these changes, in terms of economic growth, social inclusion and environmental sustainability. We will also incorporate new issues into the work agenda: climate change, governance for development, and the private sector's role in opportunities for inclusive territorial development. At the same time, we will stress the critical and constructive review of our concepts, paradigms and interpretive framework in order to stay up-to-date regarding key aspects used to interpret a changing reality.

A selection of projects that illustrate the work of Rimisp

The Rural Territorial Dynamics Program aims to generate knowledge about the strategic factors that explain successful processes of territorial development. The Program conducts research on rural economic growth, social inclusion and responsible environmental governance. It also implements actions for capacity building and policy influence for decision-making. (www.rimisp.org/dtr).

The Territories with Cultural Identity project proposes to understand the institutional processes that enable the access of goods and services with cultural identity into dynamic markets, in order to have broader effects on the economic and social development of poor rural areas, thus strengthening their cultural identity. (www.rimisp.org/territorioeidentidad2).

The Chorlaví Group aims to stimulate and facilitate decentralized social learning processes oriented at improving the quality and effectiveness of transformative initiatives in rural societies in Latin America and the Caribbean. These annual learning cycles are directed at organizations and social actors. (www.grupochorlavi.org).

The Learning Network of Indigenous Rural Municipalities project seeks to strengthen the capacity of local actors in rural indigenous municipalities in Central America and the Andean Region, in order to improve their systems of governance and livelihood strategies. (www.rimisp.org/ramri)

The Knowledge for Change project aims to help improve the quality of strategies, policies and investments directed towards rural poverty reduction in four Latin American countries. Useful information and knowledge will be provided to Rural Poverty Working Groups established in each country, in order to organize and conduct political dialogue processes, policy analysis and technical assistance to decision makers.