As of 1 June 2009 the Rural Territorial Dynamics Program is grounded in work done by a large number of partners in 16 territories in ten countries of Mexico, Central America and South America. In the coming weeks we expect to add three new territories and one additional country (El Salvador). The territories illustrate a diversity of development dynamics, illustrative of the rural mosaic of Latin America: from oil and gas extraction to subsistence agriculture, from capital-intensive aquaculture to cultural tourism, from dairy to cocoa, from illegal timber harvesting to liquors protected by sophisticated standards and certification schemes.

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Rural Territorial Dynamics Program
Network of Territories

As of June 1, 2009

www.rimisp.org/dtr
Campamento, Salamá and San Francisco de la Paz, Honduras

The contiguous municipalities of Campamento, San Francisco de la Paz y Salamá, in the Department of Olancho, make up one of the very few areas in Honduras that has increased per capita incomes, reduced poverty rates and improved the distribution of income.

The territory has a population of 36,594 in an area of 1,278 km². Agriculture is the main source of employment and income. The main activities are coffee, forestry, basic grains (maize and beans) and extensive livestock production. Commerce and other services are closely related to agriculture. Besides these activities, the territory has significant forest areas and its conservation and sustainable management has become a contentious issue. Hence, the focus of the work in this territory is the conflict between the positive economic and social dynamics and the degradation of natural resources.

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Cariri Paraibano, Brazil

The territory of Cariri is located in the state of Paraíba, in the vast semiarid region in Northeast Brazil. The economy of this territory is based on a mixture of traditional extensive cattle ranching in large landholdings, small scale family-based agriculture, wood and charcoal extraction, and a rapidly growing artisan manufacturing sector which employs one fourth of all local women.

Cariri is a large area of 7,000 km², 17 municipalities and 119 thousand inhabitants, of whom 9,000 are small-scale farmers. Poverty rates are among the highest in Brazil. In 200, 18 organizations (including federal, state and local government agencies, private sector associations, community-based groups and other civil society organizations) launched the Pacto Novo Cariri (Pact for a New Cariri). Under the Pact, seven development projects have been launched to support the local economy, develop the capacities of micro and small entrepreneurs, promote the development of social capital, and improve the management and conservation of natural resources.

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Central Chiloé, Chile

The territory is made up of the communes (municipalities) of Castro, Dalcahue, Chonchi, Curaco de Vélez, Quinchao and Puqueldón. They share the same economic base and livelihood strategies, culture, infrastructure and environment. Four economic activities predominate: tourism, small scale agriculture, artisan fisheries, and the salmon industry. The area of the territory is of 3,412 km² with a population of 89 thousand. According to official figures, 48% of the population is rural but this is almost certainly and underestimation. The area has seen a sharp increase in average per capita income and in the incidence of poverty, but also a worsening of income distribution.

The salmon industry has seen tremendous growth due to its international competitiveness; exports went from $ 160 million in 1991 to $ 1721 million in 2005. Thousands of jobs have been created in Chiloé and women have particularly benefited from them. Chiloé has been transformed economically and socially by the salmon industry. The salmon industry has also had a large and adverse impact on its surrounding environment. On the other hand, in the recent past there are numerous public, private and private-public initiatives to promote Chiloé’s distinctive identity based on its extraordinary natural and cultural assets; these include the declaration in 2000 by UNESCO of the churches of Chiloé as a World Heritage Center.

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1 Work in this territory is a joint venture between the Rural Territorial Dynamics Program and the Cultural identity and Rural Territorial Development project, both coordinated by Rimisp-Latin American Center for Rural Development.
Central-South Region of Yucatan, México

This territory is made up of four municipalities in the Yucatán peninsula in Southeast Mexico: Acanceh, Cuzamá, Huhi and Homun. The area of this territory is of approximately 700 km², and the population is of 30 thousand. About half of the population is ethnic Maya.

In the past two decades these municipalities have experienced increments in average per capita income, reduction in poverty rates and in three of the four municipalities, improvements in income distribution. The main economic activities are manufacturing (maquilas) and tourism, which take place in a definitively rural context. The state’s capital Merida and the tourism center of Cancún are relatively close by, linking this region with the country and with the world. It is a region extremely rich in cultural assets as it contains some of the most important Maya archeological sites. The region is severely exposed to climate change through the increased frequency and intensity of hurricanes. Climate change, coupled with the strong negative impact of local activities on natural resources (particularly fresh water, a very scarce resource to start with), are major threats to the future development of these territories.

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www.rimisp.org/dtr
Chaco Tarijeño, Bolivia

The dynamics of this territory are linked to gas and oil mining. The territory includes parts of the provinces of O’Connor, Aniceto Arce and Cercado, with an area of 13,072 km² and 225 thousand inhabitants (including the intermediate city of Tarija). Our studies show a significant increase in per capita income and a reduction in poverty in this area, with no changes in income distribution.

The all-important oil and gas industry (crucial not only at a local or regional level, but for the whole of Bolivia’s economy) coexists with frontier agriculture (encroaching on the Chaco forests), large landholdings and a significant indigenous community (belonging to three ethnic groups, Guaranies, Tapietes and Guenayek). Conflicts are frequent over land and other natural resources and around the distribution of the rent of the hydrocarbon industry, as well as between indigenous and non-indigenous communities.

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Coast of Santa Catarina, Brazil

This dynamics of interest in this territory are those that seek to take advantage and add value to its significant cultural and ecological assets. The coastal region of the state of Santa Catarina, in Southern Brazil, is 531 km long and has an area of 15 000 km². It is made up of 32 municipalities with approximately 1.5 million inhabitants. Florianópolis, Joinville, Itajaí and Criciúma are the four main urban centers in the territory, each with population of more than 100 thousand.

The coast of Santa Catarina is characterized by a rich mosaic of artisan fisheries, small-scale agriculture, artisan manufacturing, and tourism. The traditional açoriana culture is deeply rooted and the local population is very keen on experimenting with new livelihoods based on ecological and cultural community-based tourism.

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Cuatro Lagunas, Peru

This territory is located in the Department of Cusco, high in the Andes of Peru (3,500 to 4,000 meters above sea level). The name of the territory is derived from the lakes Pomacanchi, Acopia, Asnachoqa and Pampamarca. The territory includes four districts (municipalities) in the province of Acomayo, two districts in Canas, and three districts in Canchis province. The population is of about 100 thousand.

The fresh water resources in the lakes’ watershed are a key driver of the dynamics of this territory and the issues concerning access, distribution, use and conservation are central to the work being done here by the program.

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Dairy Region, Nicaragua

This territory is located in the Eastern shore of Nicaragua Lake in Nicaragua. It is formed by seven municipalities in the departments of Boaco, Chontales and Río San Juan and in the Autonomous Region of the South Atlantic.

After the war in the 1980s this area has seen the recovery of livestock production and, in particular, of dairy. In 1998 the Italian multinational Parmalat opened a dairy processing plant in the region and this consolidated the recovery trend. The territory has received significant public, private (domestic and international) and development cooperation investments. As a result, infrastructure (particularly roads), milk processing capacity and social capital (cooperatives) has improved.

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Jutiapa y Jalapa, Guatemala

This territory is part of a larger region in the Southeastern corner of Guatemala, and is made up of four municipalities in the Departments of Jutiapa and Jalapa. The area of the territory is of 579 km² and the population is of 70 thousand, of which 60% are rural.

The economy of this territory is based on agriculture and on remittances from migrants to the USA. Horticulture (melon) is an important, labor intensive and export-oriented activity, but the region also produces rice, beans and cattle for the domestic and Central American regional markets.

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Loja, Ecuador

Since the 1960’s, the province of Loja in the South of Ecuador (10,700 km²) has seen the migration of around 350 thousand of its inhabitants, roughly equivalent to the total present population. As a result, the province benefits from a large flow of remittances; a recent survey estimated that on average each migrant send to Loja $ 228 per month.

The project will explore the relationship between migration, remittances and the important growth experienced by the economy of Loja, which is reflected in the improvement in a number of social indicators.

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Mezcal region of Oaxaca, Mexico¹

Mezcal is an alcoholic beverage obtained from the distillation of maguey, a plant of the genus Agave. Mexico produces mezcal from over 50 different species of agave and thus there is a large variety of mezcal.

The state of Oaxaca is located in the Southwest of Mexico. It is a region with an amazing diversity of ethnic cultures. The Mezcal Region was defined as part of the process to obtain and register a Geographic Indicator for the drink. It includes 131 municipalities and half a million inhabitants, of which about one fourth is directly linked to agave/mezcal production, processing and distribution.

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Interior Valley of O’Higgins, Chile

This territory is located in the Region of the Liberator Bernardo O’Higgins in Central Chile. It is composed by four municipalities, with a total area of 2,153 km² (30% of The Netherlands) but a population of only 20 thousand. According to official figures, 67% of the population is rural.

The territory has experienced a process of economic growth and very significant reduction in poverty rates, but with a growing inequality in the distribution of income. The economy of the territory continues to be based in agriculture, but the sector is experiencing a very rapid and widespread transformation. The driver has been the investment in top-quality irrigation systems and in capital and labor intensive systems like vineyards, olives, and pigs, which are displacing the old wheat and sheep systems. In some sectors of the territory, forest plantations are also rapidly growing.

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Southern Cusco Valley, Peru

This territory is composed of nine districts (municipalities) on two provinces in the Department of Cusco, in the Southern Andes of Peru. It is a territory that in the recent past has experienced significant economic growth that has not been translated into poverty reduction, due to a worsening distribution of income.

This is a territory whose dynamics are strongly dependent of its relations with the city of Cusco, to which it has been intimately linked since pre-colonial times. Cusco is a major tourist destination (700 thousand visitors per year) and the territory contains important Inca ruins as well as colonial monuments. A primary development strategy of the territory in recent years has aimed at capturing a significant share of the tourists that visit Cusco, trying to compete with a better known and much visited valley North of Cusco: the Sacred Valley of the Incas.

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www.rimisp.org/dtr
Tungurahua, Ecuador

The province of Tungurahua in the Central Andes of Ecuador has a population of half a million people, of which about 150 thousand are in Ambato, the capital city. With an area of 3,369 km² is the smallest and most densely populated province in the Andes of Ecuador.

Tungurahua has played an important role in inter-regional commerce since the early XIX century. This tradition led to the development of a dense network of local markets with regional functions. Capital accumulation by small and medium traders/farmers fueled economic diversification towards more intensive farming systems (fruits, flowers, and vegetables), textiles and small and medium metal works.

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Vale de Jiquirica, Brazil

Vale de Jiquirica is located in the state of Bahia in Northeast Brazil. It is a cocoa producing region that has been capable of adapting to the new conditions and demands of the global markets. The cocoa economy has been the source of the stability and sustainability of Jiquirica’s productive and livelihood systems.

The territory occupies an area of 12,414 km² and in the year 2000 had a population of 317,145, of which 46.06% lived outside its towns and cities. From 1991 - 2000 the population grew by 14.07% (compared to the 11% for the state of Bahia as a whole) and the rural population declined by 8.5%, although agricultural production has continued to increase. The service sector makes the greatest contribution to the economy and to formal employment. Approximately 100,000 people, two thirds of the rural population, depend directly on family farming. The selection of the Vale de Jiquirica as focus territory for the study was also encouraged by the presence of an inter-municipal consortium, and a history of rural union mobilization, which appears to have paved the way for the widespread implementation of social income transfers, rapid expansion of rural credit, growth of rural infrastructure and a continuing program of land reform.

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Watershed of the High Suárez River and the Fúquene Lake, Colombia

This territory a located in the central part of Colombia, and is made up of three municipalities in two different Departments: Santander and Cundinamarca. The three municipalities have a total population of 36 thousand people in 483 km². They share important characteristics: the local governments are among the oldest in Colombia having been founded in the 16th Century; the basis of the economy is small scale agriculture with a large presence of subsistence farmers, and; until recently, this was an area isolated from any important urban center, a condition that has just recently and abruptly with the opening up of a major highway linking to Colombia’s capital and other major cities. One of the three municipalities, Puente Nacional, has been hit severely by the violence surrounding the Colombian armed conflict.

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