

**CERAI (International Center of Rural and Agriculture Studies**, by its Spanish initials) is a secular, progressive and independent non-government development organization specialized in rural development and sustainable agriculture with a focus on Food Sovereignty. In CERAI we want to contribute to the development of rural communities improving the well-being of families and environment, defending farmers' interests to have equal access to means of productions, improving decision-making participation, raising awareness and respect values to the peasant culture and contributing to the women empowerment in the rural society. International cooperation, rural development, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), political advocacy and training are our main working tools. All of them are aimed at defending and promoting the right to Food Sovereignty and Agricultural Reform with a focus on agroecology.

CERAI has extended and improved its activities in a large part of the Spanish territory, and has consolidated its cooperation work in the Eastern Mediterranean and especially in the Maghreb countries, in South and central America, and to a lesser extent in Sub-Saharan Africa. This allowed us to work both on a local and global level, influencing on specified problems in rural community. As a result, our mission is to encourage development models based on the capacities of rural communities to achieve its self-sufficiency material y spiritual and obtain food, energy, water etc. by themselves as well as ideas, inspirations, dreams and life projects.

#### Some projects related to participatory action research

CERAI is nowadays or has recently been involved in these experimental projects (mainly financed by UE) that improve families' conditions by the setting up of rural strategies of sustainable development:

- Introducing a model for rural development within LEADER approach in the Daira El Hachem ( Mascara , Algeria) (AECID).
- The Valorisation of an Ethno-Gastronomic Heritage Route of Shkodra Lake, Albany (EU).
- Supporting small producers of Credit and Services Cooperatives (CCS ) and Agricultural Production Cooperatives (CPA ) to improve food security in the coastal municipalities of Manzanillo and Amancio, Cuba. ( EU )
- Strengthen economic , social and environmental development with the participation of small farmers with agro-ecological approach in the municipalities of Suchitoto, Tenancingo , Cinquera Tejutepeque and Jutiapa, El Salvador (EU).
- Strengthening local comprehensive development by supporting local social structures , the development of activities that generate economic resources and environmental protection in the valley of Imlil, High Atlas Phase II, Morocco.