

Reaping the Harvest: Building on 50 Years of Endeavor

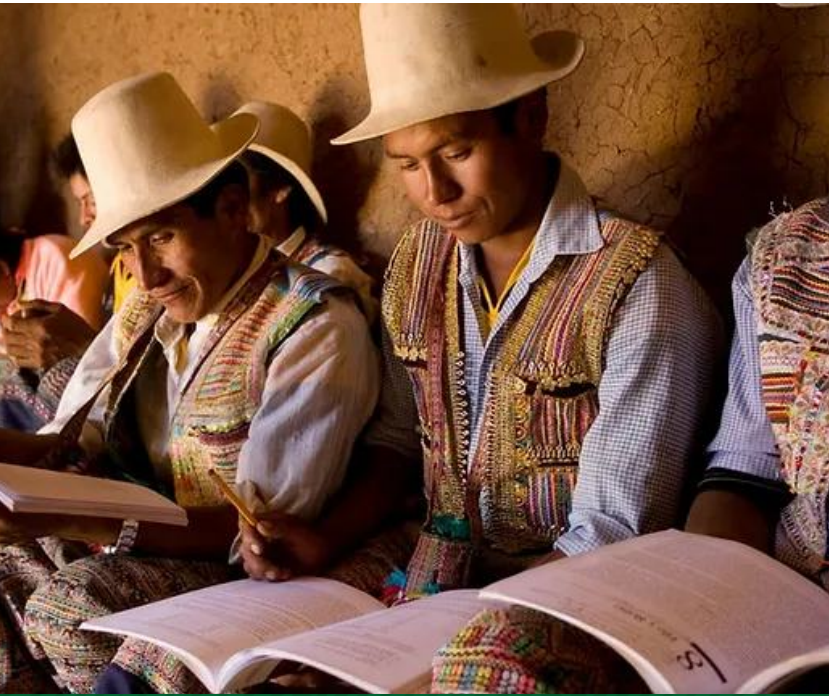




For 50 years, FUNDAEC has worked to bring about progress in communities across the globe based on a new vision of human nature.

Our work is driven by the conviction that people are irreplaceable resources in a self-sustaining process of development. And, that for any population truly to be in charge as protagonists of progress in their communities, they need to learn systematically from their own experiences, and participate in the generation, as well as the application, of knowledge accumulated at a global level, guided by the integration of both the spiritual and material development of humanity.

Our efforts have revolved around raising the capacity of local populations to replace existing social and environmental relationships characterized by domination, competition, force, and extraction with relationships defined by collaboration, solidarity, harmony, and mutual assistance.



Our Work

FUNDAEC's efforts over the last half-century—rooted in Colombia and gradually scaling across the globe—have unfolded through several distinct phases of evolution that together demonstrate how an educational process that centers the scientific and spiritual dimensions of human nature can accelerate the transformation of communities in both the material and moral realms.



1974-1980:

Establishment of the Rural University

Establishment of the Rural University



During its initial work in the Colombian region known as Norte del Cauca, FUNDAEC established the concept of the “rural university”. More than a place, the rural university was a social space in which the inhabitants of a region could learn systematically about their own development. Its goal was to set in motion and catalyze processes within the population that would lead to sustained development, where modern science and traditional knowledge could meet with dignity and interact harmoniously.

As the initial professors and students of the rural university worked in the region, an action-research approach—focused on the continuous study of the processes of community life—emerged. Among these processes, several areas of activity were prioritized:

1. enhancing individual and collective capacity through education,
2. the creation and adaptation of production models and technologies appropriate to the needs and conditions of the region, and
3. the creation of solid community structures and organizations that enable active decision making and autonomous implementation of development projects.



Establishment of the Rural University



Investigation into these processes of community life addressed the following areas: production in small farms; technological support to agricultural activity; marketing and the flow of money and goods; development of human resources; socialization and child education; decision-making; and the flow of information. For each one of these, a corresponding "learning process" was set in motion in an increasing number of villages to look for alternatives and to generate social forces within the rural population to influence the direction of development.

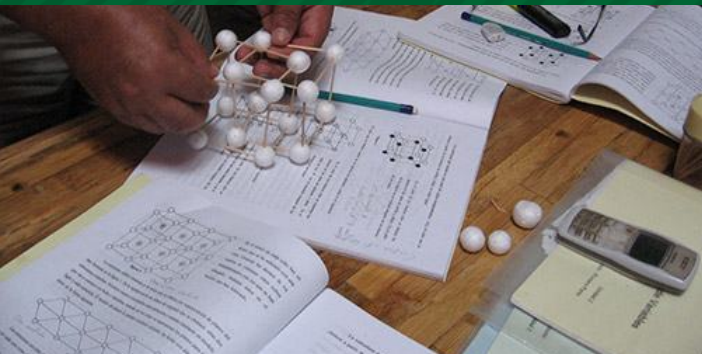
The knowledge generated in this period led to a methodology, pedagogical approach, and educational materials that became the foundation of FUNDAEC's future initiatives.



1980 - 2005

Expansion and Legal Recognition of Secondary and University Degree Programs

Expansion and Legal Recognition of Secondary and University Degree Programs



Based on the learning from its first years of work and in response to the need to raise capacity to promote community well-being, in the early 1980s FUNDAEC created the **Tutorial Learning System (SAT) program**. SAT's transformative approach to secondary education focused on: awakening in its students a strong interest in investigation, encouraging them to study their communities' problems in depth, and fostering their enthusiasm and commitment to use science in their search for solutions.

SAT's uniqueness is distinguished by an emphasis on integration: **of theory and practice, traditional wisdom and modern knowledge, the abstract and concrete, the spiritual and the material, the social and the technical, and service-oriented study, work, and community development.**

The pedagogical relationships are non-traditional, consisting instead of a group of people who work together towards a common goal. The students and the tutor, who is from the same town or region, tackle practical problems together and engage in a kind of encounter that opens the way for self-directed, self-paced learning. Over time, SAT received formal legal recognition and expanded its programs through other development organizations and public institutions in Colombia.



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FUNDAEC's SAT program is the most considerable revolution of education in the twentieth century.

The Club of Budapest

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SAT's success in catalyzing an education revolution is reflected in the improved well-being of rural communities throughout Latin America. As global problems continue to grow more complex and indiscriminate about geography, this kind of transformative learning model will be ever more relevant in mobilizing rural youth in the creation of more sustainable communities.

The Brookings Institute



Expansion and Legal Recognition of Secondary and University Degree Programs



By 2003 in Colombia, SAT had reached 50,000 students from 2,300 villages, 500 municipalities and 19 departments (approximately one third of Colombia's rural areas). At the international level, other institutions in Brazil, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Ecuador established the program in those countries with the respective approval of their governments.

During this stage, FUNDAEC also created the **University Center for Rural Well-being (CUBR) in 1988**, which trained and professionalized both the SAT tutors and a growing population of remote teachers eager for additional professional training. CUBR granted multiple university and postgraduate degrees in Education for Development to over 1,000 students at the undergraduate level and over 270 at the graduate level.



2006 - 2023

Global Reach

Global Reach



To respond to the interest shown by a growing number of countries around the world in adopting the SAT program, FUNDAEC began to offer a revised version of the first level of SAT called “Preparation for Social Action” (PSA), enabling the global widespread use of SAT’s proven content, system, and approach. **While the SAT program has now reached some 300,000 young people in Colombia and other Latin American countries, the PSA program, created in 2006, has been implemented in 17 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Pacific, and has thus far reached over 10,000 participants in those regions.**

Countries offering PSA include: Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Zambia, Uganda, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Central African Republic, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Phillipines, Cambodia, Malaysia, and India. In a further 15 countries, initial steps have been taken to build capacity for the introduction of the program, in response to local requests.

During this period, FUNDAEC also addressed the need for post secondary school pathways through the creation of its **Supporting Community Leaders** program. The program is designed to help young people who are pursuing a trade or profession to strengthen the well-being of their families and communities through environmental, youth development, and community organizing initiatives. It also seeks to strengthen their capacity to inspire and motivate others to serve, thus contributing to the creation of a culture of peace and a more tightly woven social fabric.



2024 -

Our Next Frontier

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The PSA program has been a life-changing experience for me. Through the program, I have gained a deeper understanding of the challenges facing my community and the importance of social action. I have worked with other young people to implement initiatives that have had a positive impact on our community. The program has given me a sense of hope for the future and has inspired me to continue working towards creating a better world.

Felix, a participant from Cameroon

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FUNDAEC has the capacities, the resources, the track record, the experience, the history, and they know where to go. That's 40 or 50 years of experience that we cannot buy.

Fernand Schaber, President, Unity Foundation



2024 -

Our Next Frontier

Our Next Frontier



FUNDAEC's successful collaboration with dozens of organizations—both to establish the SAT program across Colombia and to spread its curriculum across continents—testifies to its capacity to rally people around the global cause of education for development. **Motivated by the urgent need to hasten the transition to a society grounded in economic, environmental, and social approaches that are governed by cooperation, reciprocity, and solidarity**, FUNDAEC is poised to advance its impact on three interrelated fronts through the following multi-year initiatives:



1. Contributing to Global Discourse and Practice

As we engage in the national and global discourse on food access, the environment, and the shift from the existing production and economic models to regenerative approaches, **we will share our methodology, experience, research, publications, courses, curriculum development services, best practices and lessons learned in integrating the spiritual, material, and social aspects of development with practitioners across disciplines.**

Our Next Frontier



2. Expanding our Grassroots Collaborators

We will intensify and expand our collaboration with grassroots organizations led by youth, women, and/or farmers who are developing innovative approaches to food security and environmental sustainability, with the goal of multiplying the reach and impact of solutions that put the participation of people at the center of development.

3. Developing Regenerative Agricultural Practices

Furthering our long-standing involvement in regenerative agriculture, we are establishing a participatory and demonstrative agricultural learning site in the north del Cauca region that will engage the area's inhabitants and a large network of local partner organizations in developing and testing innovations that contribute to healthy food production.

We will also build upon the native forests that we have begun to establish near the learning site and the strong partnerships we have forged with a botanical garden, a reforestation project, and a network of tree nurseries that are located in the vicinity. The learning from this initiative will enhance our efforts mentioned above regarding participating in global discourse and strengthening strategic partnerships.

Collaborating Institutions

Over five decades of work, FUNDAEC has been honored to collaborate with a host of local, national, and international educational, governmental, and non-governmental institutions in widening its impact and reach. Some of these esteemed collaborators include:

- Colombian Ministry of Education
- Bayan Foundation (Honduras)
- Fabretto Foundation (Nicaragua)
- University of Chicago Development Innovations Lab (USA)
- Nur University (Bolivia)
- Escuela Nueva Foundation (Colombia)
- Association for Cohesive Development of the Amazon - ADCAM (Brazil)
- Inshindo Foundation (Zambia)
- Center for Resilient Communities at West Virginia University (USA)
- LazosLearning Association (Canada)
- Wong Foundation (Ecuador)
- The Ruhi Institute (Colombia)
- Kymanya-Ngeyo Foundation for Science and Education (Uganda)
- University of Michigan, School of Business (USA)
- The Dioceses of the Department of Santander (Colombia)
- Bachillerato en Bienestar Rural Educational Center - CEBBR (Colombia)
- Corporation for Regional Research and Ecodevelopment - CIER (Colombia)
- Corporation for Integral Education and Environmental Wellbeing - LA CEIBA (Colombia)
- Jayuir Foundation (Colombia)
- Foundation for the Education and Social Development of Sucre and Córdoba - FEDESSCO (Colombia)
- Acerías Paz del Río Foundation (Colombia)
- Educational Corporation for Integral Development - COREDI (Colombia)

Partner With Us

To celebrate and continue to build on 50 years of progress, FUNDAEC is launching an ambitious fundraising campaign over the next three years to help us advance our next decade of work. **Join us and the community of investors below to accelerate the societal transition towards economic, environmental, and social systems rooted in oneness, cooperation, and solidarity.**

Ford Foundation, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, Inter-American Development Bank, International Development Research Centre, The Resource Foundation, Canadian International Development Agency, Wayfarer Foundation, Mona Foundation, Meridian Health Foundation, Unity Foundation, KFW, Two Wings Foundation, Inter-American Foundation, GTZ, and Fundación para la Educación Superior.



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The most important lesson I have learned through my involvement in FUNDAEC is that everything I know-what I learn, what I have, I am going to put at the service of my community. Because if my community is well, I am well. If we work in unity for the well-being of all, we will all thrive.

Clariza Caicedo, teacher and CUBR graduate

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In the relationship with FUNDAEC it was always a relationship of giving, of serving and helping. FUNDAEC leads by giving all its knowledge without expecting anything in return, only that this knowledge can be useful to others.

Maria Teresa Repestro,
Fundacion La Ceiba

