

World Congress on Rural Life, Rome, June 25-27, 2012

Working Group: Education, Culture, and Religion in the Rural World (Chair, Katherine Marshall)

1. History: transformations, agriculture, space. Why some programs have succeeded, others failed, some societies thrive while other languish
2. Education: special challenges for rural world, efforts to adapt to agricultural calendar, rural realities, skills, practical issues of distance. Roles of technology, cell phones, information.
3. Culture: immutable or dynamic? Tempo of life, tradition versus religion
4. Religion: What are and what can be roles of churches? In advocacy, advice, dispute and conflict resolution, search for new models. Interfaith relations in a rural setting
5. What provokes migration and is it inevitable it will continue? Can technology change the picture?
6. What are the major issues on peoples' minds? On the expert radar? Issues that come to mind include land tenure, including major land purchases by companies and governments, awareness of and changes in gender roles, and GMOs. Questions of authority and local government?