

# Rural Poverty in Peru

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The rural area is the most vulnerable area in the country. It concentrates the population that has the most precarious life levels. This document analyzes the main poverty and hunger indicators which characterizes this region. The main tool used to carry out the estimates has been the National Survey of Households, which interviews 20,000 homes, of those approximately 40% corresponds to rural homes.

Between the main results obtained for this area, we found a reduction in the poverty incidence, gap and severity. Reduced from 78.4, 35.6 and 20.0 for the year 2001, to 73.6, 29.7 and 15.2 for the year 2003, respectively. A similar decline is appreciated for the case of extreme poverty. Another indicator that reflects the situation of the rural area, is the hunger, measured through the Household caloric deficit. In this case, we found a reduction of 6.9 percentage points between 2001 and 2003, reaching a value of 39.2% for the last year.

When analyzing the poverty through the indicators of levels of life, although a light improvement is observed, with an recover from 69.8% in total poverty and 26.1% in extreme poverty for the year 2001, to 68.5% and 25.6% for the year 2003 respectively, important deficiencies that should be assisted persist: 28.3% of the rural housings lives in an overcrowded situation, while 49.2% of the houses live with out drainage.

Another indicator that allows the analysis of the economic situation of the rural homes, is the evolution of the expenditure, measured by the monthly average per capita expense. This indicator had showed an increment form S/142.7 in 2001 to S /.151.4 in 2003. Although this increment, the rural revenues still only represent 40% of the average expenses in the urban areas.

These and other indicators showed us the precarious situation that suffers the rural area. The quality of life of this region measured through indicators of poverty as it had been presented previously, is corroborated with other complementary indicators as malnutrition, illiteracy, mortality, among others. For example, we find that for the year 2000, 11.7% of the children below 5 years old in the rural area presented inadequate weight, for the year 2002 it existed approximately 9% of illiterate, and a rate of infantile mortality was 60 for 1000 children born alive. In this sense, in spite of the advances observed in the rural development, these are still insufficient: the gap between the urban and the rural area stays, and in some cases it is even increased.