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Summary of Existing Information
on the
Roles and Status of Women in Nicaragua

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To begin to sketch the profile of the status and roles of women in Nicaragua, which is what this work attempts to do, it has been necessary for the most part to work from the general to the specific, that is, to extrapolate woman-specific data from larger, more broadly focused studies. The fact is that there are few woman-centered studies dealing with Nicaragua. Those which exist, however, have significance beyond their number (or their scope), because they show an embryonic and even growing interest in the subject.

Access to source materials, and even verification of their existence, is complicated by the lack of a central repository for government studies or data sets and the absence of coordination among the various private and public concerns doing research in Nicaragua. Moreover, the National Public Library was destroyed in the 1972 earthquake and is now in the process of being rebuilt. The libraries of the two universities, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua (UNAN) and Universidad Centroamericana (UCA), are small by today's academic standards and limited in scope. The Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas (INCAE) in Managua has a well-stocked general reference section, but the focus of most of its materials is understandably narrow. Access to the literature, therefore, depended for the most part on the good will and willingness of the various government ministries, banks, and private organizations active in the study and development of Nicaragua to loan publications and study results. The supportive assistance of individuals engaged in the development process, who suggested other sources of information, was invaluable. In a few instances, known publications were not obtainable¹ and for this the study lacks. Also

¹ de Sotomayor, Dra. Amelia Borge, La Condición Legal de la Mujer y su Situación de Hecho.

Porrás M., Salvador, untitled study on the status of women in Nicaragua, University of Central America.

there must exist studies or sources not made known to the research team, and these remain untapped.

In spite of these limitations, a profile of the status and roles of the Nicaraguan woman is discernible; to put it into full relief, however, real gaps in the literature must be filled and the need for future research into specific areas is evident.

Demographic Information

The population of Nicaragua² is a young one in that nearly 60 percent of the total is under the age of 20 years. The median age for women is 16.6; for men it is 15.2 years. The higher death rate of young Nicaraguan males cancels their higher birth rate and women outnumber men in the over 15 age brackets (Censos Nacionales 1971, Vol. I:VIII). The male/female index country wide is 96.35 men for each 100 women (DIPSA:7).

Rural/Urban Population Distribution

The literature reflects two different concepts for differentiating rural from urban environments. The Executive Office of Inquiry and Census categorizes populations of 1,000 or more as urban when they have "some urban characteristics such as: streets, electricity, business and/or industrial establishments, etc." (Censos Nacionales 1971:VI). Using these criteria the rural population is 52.3% of the total republic. However, Dirección de Planificación Sectorial Agrícola (DIPSA), the government agency charged with development planning for the rural area, disputes this classification, asserting that localities with 10,000 inhabitants or less, based on and engaging in agrarian economic activities with limited access to fundamental services and having a definite rural vision of the world are fundamentally rural. By DIPSA's estimate, therefore, the rural

² 1,877,952 (1971 Census).

sector comprises 65% of the total population (Informe de DIPSA:28-9).³ The conceptual difference (nearly a quarter million people) is of substantial significance to the development planner.

Fertility Rate

Crude fertility rate for Nicaragua is listed at 48.9 per 1000. Gross reproduction rate is 2.4% and total fertility rate is 6.9% or 68.6 births per 1000 women in the fertile age groups (15-49 years) per year. Using this fertility rate, the project population for 1985 is 3,003,200 and for the year 2000 it is 4,683,300 (Bove, Roger E., Projections for Nicaragua 1970-2000, Bureau of Census, Washington, D.C., 1975).

To humanize these statistics, we can refer to Humberto Belli's conclusions in his fertility study of urban women, "The women of our study are having considerably more children than they desire. The real birth rate is approximately double that desired," (Belli, H., 1975:227). Catherine Strachan, in a nutritional study of the rural village of Tonalá, writes, "In Tonalá, by the time a woman was 34 years old, she could expect to have been pregnant eight times. Of these eight pregnancies, probably only six (babies) would have been born alive, and two would have died before they were five years of age." (Strachan, 1971:28).

Life Expectancy

A basic source document, the UN Statistical Yearbook, in its latest edition (1975), cites 1969 data in listing life expectancy at birth for Nicaraguan males and females alike of 49.9 years. The Statistical Abstract of Latin America, 1971 edition, gives precisely the same figures. Sex differentiation appears in the Projections for Nicaragua 1970-2000 dated October 1975. This source

³ This very informative publication of 238 pages contains no publishing or printing date, no author and no title. It has been dubbed "Informe de DIPSA."

cites life expectancy at birth for males as 52.69 years and for females as 55.86 years for the year 1975.

Women Head of Household

The rural/urban distinction (mentioned above) carries over into the head of household figures and is compounded by a lack of woman-specific data. The Cruz-Rappaccioli report lists five studies which detail head of household information by sex (Cruz-Rappaccioli, 1975:12, Table I.7), but of the five, four deal exclusively with urban or semi-urban marginal barrio areas and the fifth is too old (1950) to be statistically useful for purposes of this report. Generalizing from Table I.7, female heads of urban families range from 10% (Las Americas urban housing project) to 48% (marginal barrios surrounding the city of Managua). The DIPSA study (cited above), which was derived from responses to a questionnaire by heads of rural families, contains useful information about the respondents, but sadly fails to differentiate them by sex.

Legal Rights of Women

(The principal study made to date concerning the legal rights of Nicaraguan women was not made available by its author. We are awaiting a copy from the sponsoring institution, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University.)

Marriage Laws and Customs

The Nicaraguan civil code sets the minimum age for marriage without parental consent at 18 years for the female and 21 years for the male. Minimum age with parental consent is 14 years for women and 18 years for men. Legal marriage, whether civil or religious or a combination of both, more often occurs at the upper levels of Nicaraguan society. A 1968 study by the Instituto Nacional de Seguridad Social (INSS) as reported in Familia y Fecundiad, pp. 144, showed that 91.30% of the women of the "upper class" were married, while only 39.82% of the women of the "lower class" were legally married. (H. Belli, 1975:144).

It has been reported that in the rural areas, the age of first free union (common law relationship) is between 13 and 15 years for women. (Parroquia de Somoto:1).

Divorce Laws

Divorced women represent 2.6% of the total female population of the Republic (Censos Nacionales 1971:106 Vol. I). Nicaraguan law lists a series of causes for dissolution of a marriage which can be invoked by either party. In fact, however, the law appears to favor the male. For example, an adulterous act (acceptable grounds for divorce) is committed by a woman who has sexual relations with a man other than her husband. The same act by a man is called concubinage or cohabitation, not adultery, and is not cause for divorce. In order for his sexual relations with a woman other than his wife to be considered adulterous, they must take place within the conjugal domicile, or publically and with scandal (de Escorcia-Palacios 1975:234).

Extra-legal remedies are more easily available to men than to women. To wit: Article 130 of the Penal Code appears to mete out equal punishment to the male or female who kills a spouse discovered in flagrante delicto. "When either of the spouses surprises the other in the act of adultery and kills the spouse or the accomplice or both, the murderer will be condemned to a prison term of two to five years" (de Escorcia-Palacios 1975:233). On its face, impartial, Article 130 clearly discriminates on the basis of sex, because of the differing definition of adultery for men and women.

Remarriage for Divorced Women

Women may not marry their partners in adultery (Arto. 110, de Escorcia-Palacios, 1975:230). Men may. Women must wait 300 days after dissolution of a marriage to remarry. There are no time restrictions on remarriage of males (Arto. 112-20).

Literacy Rates

Slightly over half the population of Nicaragua (51%) can read and write. The literate population is almost equally divided between women and men at all age groups. There are, however, differences between urban and rural populations. Seventy-six percent of urban residents, as opposed to 32% of rural residents, are literate (Censos Nacionales 1971, Vol. II:2-4). As now administered, many rural schools offer only the first two or three grades.

Educational Levels by Age

Of the total population aged 30 years and under, slightly more women than men have finished three years of schooling. Of the population 19 years and under, slightly more women than men have finished up to 9 years of schooling. After ages 30 and 19 respectively the balance shifts to more male than female completion of educational levels. Men outnumber women in all age groups which have completed 10 years or more of formal schooling (Censos Nacionales, 1971, Vol II: 155).

Nationwide school enrollments for women slightly outnumber those of men until age 14, when the enrollment balance shifts by a few percentage points in favor of men. However, gross differences in school enrollment exist between urban and rural areas. School attendance for the rural sector between the ages of 6 and 29 years is only 17.31%, while that of the same urban group is 52.58% (Censos Nacionales 1971, Vol II:53-58).

The rural (census definition) breakdown of school attendance by sex remains roughly equal from ages 6 through 29. In urban areas, school attendance is also roughly equal for male and female until the age grouping 20-24 years, when male school attendance becomes twice that of females and remains in that

position in the 25-29 cohort as well (9.9% male attendance to 4.5% female). (Censos Nacionales 1971, Vol. II:55-56). The percentage of students who continue through 10 years of schooling drops significantly for urban students to 6.4%, and nose dives to .66% for rural inhabitants (Informe de DIPSA:118). About 4% nationwide obtain a high school diploma (diploma de bachiller) and a scant 1% conclude university studies.

Nicaraguan public expenditures on education for 1974 represent 2.2% of the gross national product as compared to 5.3% for Panama, 1.7% for Guatemala, 3.6% for El Salvador and 6.7% for the United States (UN Statistical Yearbook 1975:870).

Government Employment

The Cruz-Rappaccioli report notes that women hold 12.9% of the elected offices of mayor, treasurer and boardmember (sindico) in the 134 municipal governments of Nicaragua. In the Federal Government, one of the 10 Ministers of State is a woman as are 2 of the 10 Vice Ministers. Of the 40 Senators, one is female and of the 60 Deputies of the Republic, 10 are women. Women are not represented on the Supreme Court nor do they serve as rectors or vice rectors of the two universities or on the faculty dean list. Nicaragua has no women ambassadors, but there are several female Consular officers. The National Advisor of Transportation is a woman, as is the Director of the National Theater (basic data from C. Belli report, 1975:12). History shows that since colonial times a small number of economically advantaged women have had the opportunity to become well-educated and integrated into political life.

Participation in Government Training Programs

Information on numbers of women in Government of Nicaragua training programs was not available, however, the United States Agency for International Development/Nicaragua (USAID/N) supplied its training figures for the years

between 1953 and 1976. Of a total of 1,619 participants in AID/N sponsored training programs, 341 or 19.84% have been female.

Child Care Facilities

The National Welfare Board (JNAPS) is charged with providing nursery schools for the children of working mothers. It operates a total of 6 nurseries: two in the city of León, and one each in Matagalpa, Jinotega, Granada, and the capital city of Managua. The Managua nursery has room for up to 75 children, but there are rarely more than 15 in attendance because of its inconvenient location. Mothers who would like to use these nurseries work as maids, factory workers or market women and must rely on inexpensive public transportation or limit their activities to those locations accessible by foot. Construction of new nurseries is planned for Las Americas (a low-cost public housing area) and Mercado Periférico (above data from Cruz-Rappaccioli, 1975:81-2). The nursery program is an ambitious one and modern in concept, but execution to date has not come close to meeting the ideal.

Article 128 of the Labor Code of Nicaragua requires establishments employing more than 30 women to provide a place for mothers to breast-feed their children (Cruz-Rappaccioli, 1975:15). It is not unheard of for employers to limit the number of female employees to avoid compliance with this legal requirement (Eadie, 1975:53).

Health Services

A complete listing of all available health services in Nicaragua is beyond the scope of this paper. However, it can be noted that perhaps the most complete coverage is that offered by El Servicio Médico de la Guardia Nacional which provides medical attention to military personnel and their families and maintains its own hospital in Managua. The National Social Security institute (INSS) has programs of medical attention for insured workers

and for their children until the ages of two years. Also, there are programs of medical assistance to the partner (conjuge) of the insured worker during gestation, child birth, and puerperium. In 1975, social security coverage extended to 17% of the economically active population (Informe Anual, 1975, Banco Central de Nicaragua:315).

The Nicaraguan Ministry of Public Health provides medical services in 108 municipalities operating 118 health centers and 126 health posts. Most of the centers are located in medium to large towns, leaving the majority of Nicaragua's 4,650 rural villages without any health services (Heiby-Monteith 1976:6). The Instituto Agrario Nicaraguense does operate dispensarios in its 54 colonias, which serve about 6000 rural families (personal communication, Dr. Oscar Montes, sub-director).

There exist various other medical services provided by private, foreign and other groups. The total national resources spent for health for 1975 represent 10.1% of the national budget or a per capita expenditure of 125 cordobas (\$17.80 U.S.) per person per year (Carrillo, 1975:4). This compares to 56 dollars (U.S.) per person per year spent in the United Kingdom for the year 1964 (Bryant, John, Health in the Developing World, Cornell University Press, 1969).

Maternal Mortality

Available health statistics indicate a maternal mortality rate of 280 per 100,000 live births. Abortion appears to be responsible for about 10% of reported maternal deaths or 26 per 100,000 births (Center for Disease Control 1975:22). Total maternal mortality (all causes) in the U.S. is 19 per 100,000 live births. Only 20% of all pregnant women in Nicaragua receive a y type of medical attention. Midwives, with little or no formal training, or family

members attend approximately 75% of births (Heiby-Monteith 1975:6). It has been estimated that the primary cause of death of women in urban areas is malnutrition, followed by abortion, and that malnutrition is the primary cause of death of rural Nicaraguan women (personal communication, Dra. Aura Carrillo). This could not be verified from available data.

Infant Mortality

The infant mortality rate is approximately 123 per 1,000 live births. Primary causes of infant mortality are gastroenteritis, malnutrition, and parasites. The Ministry of Public Health estimates it supplies medical services to no more than 20% of children under 5 years of age (Heiby-Monteith, 1976:6).

In her nutritional assessment of pre-school children in the rural village of Tonalá, Catherine Strachan found that 52% of the children suffered from mild-moderate malnutrition and 3% severe malnutrition (Strachan, 1971:93). The DIPSA study revealed that 60% of the rural population has an insufficient diet (Informe de DIPSA: 74).

Economic Information

Women's participation in the economy of Nicaragua ranges from subsistence-level food production to management of large business enterprises. Statistical information is available only on those women considered economically active, i.e., those 10 years and older who work for remuneration; these constitute 17.22% of all women. This second criterion of remuneration effectively eliminates from statistical consideration the rural woman who may, nevertheless, be the primary support for herself and some number of children. In no study reviewed was there an estimate of the economic value placed on labor of this type. The Nietschmann book did show that the swidden plots, tended primarily by the Miskito women, produced approximately the number of calories necessary

to feed the average family for a year. Produce from the swidden is augmented by calories obtained from hunting and fishing (Nietschmann, 1973:146).

Wage Earners

A revealing study of the extent of women's participation as wage earners in the three economic studies of Nicaragua was done by Lic. Claudia Belli. The primary sector, which is of major importance for the country, includes farming, forestry, hunting and fishing. This sector absorbs the labor of 46.95% of the economically active population and 8.03% of economically active women. The secondary sector consists of industrial, manufacturing, construction and mining enterprises and employs 16.96% of the economically active population and 16.34% of wage-earning women. The tertiary sector encompasses service industries as well as business and financial establishments and is the one where most women are employed (73.21%). The total work force involved in this economic division is 36.09% of the economically active population. The number of women engaged in small businesses, such as vendors of fruits, plants, and used clothing, as well as services, such as domestics, waitresses and beauticians, has grown as farming and manufacturing have become mechanized. The DIPSA report, in referring to this phenomenon, notes that the rural to urban migration should not be viewed as a process of industrialization but rather a process of favelizacion, or perhaps the ruralization of the urban sector (C. Belli, 1975:49).

Of economically active women 9.0% are professionals (primarily teachers and nurses), 3.8% are office workers and .2% are managers or directors (all data based on Censos Nacionales 1971 as reported by C. Belli, 1975).

Subsistence Farming

At least half and perhaps three-quarters of the nation's farmers do not control sufficient land resources to exceed subsistence level (Warnkin-Swenson

1974:107). According to the DIPSA study of heads of rural families, 77% earn 5,000 cordobas or less annually. Using average rural family size of 7 persons, this yields 1.95 cordobas (less than 28 cents U.S.) per person per day for food, clothing and medical supplies, leaving nothing for seed, fertilizers or farm equipment.

To augment this inadequate income, some 40% of the rural work force or 200,000 persons (Velazquez, 1975:1) hire out their labor and work the cotton, coffee and sugar cane harvests of the large fincas. A significant number leave homes and families to obtain this work. Women and some children uproot themselves to join the migrant workforce. It is estimated that one worker can earn up to 8 cordobas daily for four months. A mother and child together might earn 10 cordobas daily. It was impossible to obtain information as to percentages of women and children so engaged from either public or private sources. According to an informal questionnaire given to home extension teachers of the Ministry of Agriculture⁴, other activities engaged in by rural women to supplement their family income included the keeping of pigs, chickens and occasionally cows; fabrication in the home of a milk cheese (cuajada) and tortillas for sale; the laundering of clothing for remuneration (Jones, C., 1975).

Cash Crops

The same informal questionnaire indicated that the role of women in the growing of cash crops is primarily that of sowing and weeding; husking, processing, and preparation of the product, both for the home and for the market; and its sale in the market or to middlemen. The degree to which women participate is in need of study.

⁴ Total sample size 21. This, however, is the only evidence to be found of any attempt to assess the role of women in agriculture.

Land Owners

The Instituto Agrario Nicaraguense (IAN), charged by the Government with instituting reforms and innovations in the rural sector, states that 44.97% of land grantees in their colonization programs are women who work directly in farming. IAN affects about 6000 campesino families.

A study which looked at 952 lots of land (parcelas) in a rural area in the department of Managua, conducted by the Instituto Geográfico, found that women owned 456 lots or 47%. In the Tipitapa, Malacatoya areas women owned 12.77% according to the Cruz-Rappaccioli report (Cruz-Rappaccioli, 1975:54). No other rural area studies cover this kind of information.

Also lacking in the literature are any data on women's role in decision-making (e.g., what, when, how to plant), preservation and storage of crops, transportation of products from farm to market, or numbers of women traders and distributors of commodities. The Cruz-Rappaccioli report notes contradictory statements regarding the aforementioned roles of women as derived from personal interviews (Cruz-Rappaccioli, 1975:53).

Entrepreneurs

The literature on women in business for themselves covers only two areas of activity -- handicrafts and market sales. Individual women who merit the designation "entrepreneur" exist in Nicaragua, but their activities have not been the object of study and analysis.

For the most part, artisans in Nicaragua own and operate their own businesses, often aided by members of the family. A recent study by Banco Central of the situation of the Nicaraguan artisan notes that there are more women artisans than men (837 women, 638 men), and that they are most involved in working in ceramics, vegetable fibers, textiles and "otros" (which includes doll and toy making, working with seeds, shells and feathers, etc.) Male

artisans predominate in working leather, wood, metal and stone. The report concludes that women opt for lighter work which permits them to care for their children and manage all the housekeeping and food preparation chores. (Banco Central, 1976).

Most of the talleres (80%) function year round, but some limit activities to part of the year because of a lack of market, problems of raw material acquisition, or to permit agricultural activities. Coincidentally, the majority of those which cease production for some period are the talleres of ceramics, vegetable fibers and "otros". Their owners (and workers) also display the highest illiteracy rate, have the lowest level of technology and training, lack adequate work space, and are dependent primarily on family help for production.

The artisans which possess the most advanced technology, education and training, and who earn the most money are those who work in leather, wood and metal (Banco Central, 1976:25). The report suggests this imbalance is because ceramics and vegetable fiber talleres have located primarily in rural areas while talleres working leather, wood, metal, etc. have developed in urban communities (Banco Central, 1976:18). The report fails to note that those working with the lowest levels of training, technology and work space are also women.

Another group which might be included in the entrepreneur category encompasses the market women who daily manage small to medium-sized businesses. The only study of the markets available was centered in Managua and was completed on June, 1972, before the earthquake. The former six Managua markets have been reduced to one and subsequent severe inflation has rendered the accounting

figures out of date, but the portrait of the market women as early rising, hard working and industrious remains clear (Hager. 1972:39-49).

Self-Help Participants

A complete listing of all the agencies (private, foreign, international, or Government of Nicaragua) with local self-help projects is not publically available. A knowledgeable person in USAID/N compiled a list of existing or projected women's groups or groups with at least equal participation by women and men:

Ministry of Agriculture -- Housewife clubs, 4-S Clubs, some cooperatives.

JNAPS (Hospital and Welfare Council) -- Day Care Center groups.

INVIERNO (Instituto de Bienestar Campesino) -- Housewife groups in a total of 159 communities.

Ministry of Health -- Mother's Clubs, Nutrition Center Groups (SERNS), 14 community health committees.

FUNDE -- 34 credit unions among market vendors and rural town small businesses. (Jones, Charlotte, 1976 USAID/N).

In the Cruz-Rappaccioli report it was suggested that a complete survey of existing programs for women and their measurable benefits would provide valuable data in planning future programs for women (Cruz-Rappaccioli 1975:83).

Participation in Formal and Informal Money Markets

Private banks make personal loans without distinction as to sex providing the established requirements are met, i.e., a written letter of loan request, a personal financial statement, signature of responsible guarantor, and a letter of proof of employment. The Banco de Credito Popular which is an institution of the state gives loans to workers and small business men when they are guaranteed by the business or employing institution. The Banco Nacional has offices in the principal towns of each department. Small farmers may obtain

loans using the title to their land as guarantee. Figures from Banco Nicaraguense indicate that 24.35% of their loans are made to women. Banco de Credito Popular figures show an increase of 64% in loans made to women from 1973-75.

CARITAS, a private Catholic relief organization, made 421 small business loans in 1973, 88% of which were to women (Cruz-Rappaccioli, 1975:70). FUNDE, a private business organization, has established credit cooperatives in the municipal markets in urban and semi-rural areas. Loans are made at 2% interest per month and estimates of female membership varies between 80% and 95%. However, the agricultural cooperatives are composed solely of men (private conversation Ruth K. de Celedón, FUNDE). It should be noted that of the 19 semi-rural FUNDE Cooperatives, 11% of the managers are women and of the 17 urban cooperatives managers, 10 are women (Celedón).

Another source of credit for women is the individual money lender or prestamista who is in the market daily to make quick cash loans to market women, small grocery store (stall) owners or other small entrepreneurs. According to the market study by Hagen, loan repayment can fall as soon as close of business the same day or, more usually 30 to 60 days later. The cost is usually 10% monthly on the entire amount and may reach 240% annually. Women in the study realized the rates they were paying were high, but felt they would be unable to get a bank loan: familiarity with the prestamista and readily available cash influenced their decisions (Hagen, 1972:23).

The FUNDE market cooperatives were formed after the earthquake and after the study noted above took place. It would be useful to know percentages of cooperative versus prestamista versus bank loans to determine where women really are borrowing the most money and at what cost, under what terms.

Economic Responsibilities of Women

The exclusion of over 82% of Nicaraguan women from the lists of the economically active merits special emphasis; on the surface, at least, there appear to be good grounds for advancing inquiries into this crucial aspect of the female role. The Cruz-Rappaccioli report, as has already been noted (see Farming), highlights contradictory views of the rural women as decision-maker and participant in economic decisions related to agriculture.

The existence of contradictory views is not limited to woman's economic role alone. Two recent monographs, one of which has already had impact to some extent on development planning efforts, state contradictory views of woman's social/emotional/value-setting role. Both papers may be subjective to some degree, as neither sets forth the systematic base for its conclusion. An essentially positive view is reported in an untitled paper written by a sociologist from INVIERNO who sees the campesina as fulfilling responsibilities for the mental and physical health of the family and the intellectual and social development of her children. A more negative view emerges from a paper from the Parroquia de Somoto, which depicts the campesina in childhood as virtually abandoned by her parents who must work in the fields and whose weariness impedes dialogue or affectionate relationship. Thus, the rural female child grows up in the company of siblings and passes directly from childhood to motherhood at early teenage, shifting her economic dependency, such as it is, from parents to compañero. The INVIERNO paper suggests a man-woman relationship marked by masculine fulfillment of economic and social obligations to the family. The Somoto monograph portrays an abundance of women in the campo abandoned by men who assume no responsibility for the children they have fathered. In the absence of access to data undergirding these profiles, one is at a loss to determine which, if either, view better portrays reality.

Networks of Communication Among Women

There is virtually no information concerning networks of communication among Nicaraguan women as they may differ from men.

Conclusions

This study has begun to show that there do exist misconceptions of the rural woman's role in Nicaragua and that there is lacking a substantial amount of information about her. The urban woman has been included in some recent investigations, but the contribution and activities of the campesina remain virtually invisible, in spite of a fair amount of conjecture and hypothesizing. The lack of a coherent, methodical approach to defining the role of the rural woman is evident; the need for a standard methodology is clear. Data acquisition efforts cannot continue to exclude female respondents on the one hand, or have as their basis assumptions drawn from stylized, idealized, and subjectively drawn conclusions on the other. The work of development planners should proceed from a base of fact and reality. Whether and to what extent that reality includes women as economic participator, decision-maker, and essential resource in the development process is what we are about to investigate.

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