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Adelante: New directions for women's empowerment in Colombian farmers associations

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Bachelor of Arts
University of Minnesota
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An abstract of
A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the
Rollins School of Public Health of Emory University
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Abstract

Adelante: New directions for women's empowerment in Colombian farmers associations

By Emily C. Myers

Global gender inequality remains a pervasive issue with a range of social, economic, and health implications. Research on interventions seeking to end gender disparities in health, economics, and politics have shown conflicting results. Research about community organizations' effects on women's empowerment, or women's ability to enhance their own wellbeing, in rural areas is no exception. This qualitative study examines how farmers associations empower and disempower women in Colombia. The results suggest that association membership empowers women through skill enhancement, decision-making, and leadership. This empowerment may be unintentional on the part of women and their communities, and it may stem from women's perceptions of traditional gender roles. Future group-based empowerment interventions should consider localized, contextual constraints women face and their traditional roles to empower women intentionally.

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Acknowledgements

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Chapter 1: Literature review

Introduction

The United Nation's fifth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) seeks to end discrimination against women and girls to encourage sustainable development and equitable societies (United Nations Development Programme, 2016). This goal articulates women's empowerment as a "multiplier effect" that drives economic growth and development (United Nations Development Programme, 2016). Although women do 40% of the world's paid work, they disproportionately represent the working poor living in extreme poverty[1] (Dutt, Grabe, & and Castro, 2015). In Nicaragua, agriculture accounts for 17% of the GDP, and 35.5% of agricultural laborers are women (Manchón & Macleod, 2010). Nicaraguan women in agriculture contribute 6% to Nicaragua's GDP, but only 35% of these women own the land they till (Manchón & Macleod, 2010). Women from households of low socioeconomic status often work as income generators and as caregivers, traditionally a woman's role (Overseas Development Institute, 2010). Women's dual responsibilities result in "time poverty" which prevents women from participating in their local economies as men do (Overseas Development Institute, 2010).

Studies consistently show that discrimination against women and girls remains one of the largest social, economic, and public health burdens across the globe (United Nations Development Programme, 2017). A decrease in gender inequality would mitigate related adverse outcomes, promoting economic and social progress worldwide (United Nations Development Programme, 2017). This literature review explores the history of empowerment research, consequences of women's disempowerment, economic factors related to women's

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[1] Extreme poverty is defined by earning $2 USD or less each day.

empowerment, and challenges women may continue to face as they empower themselves. The original research presented in Chapter 2 pertains to smallholder farmers associations participating in an economic intervention aimed at women's empowerment, as defined as women's ability to enhance their own wellbeing in this paper. As such, this review highlights women's income-generating activities, particularly in agricultural production.

History of women's empowerment research

Historically, development theory considered impoverished women in isolation, without contextualizing their advancement relative to their men peers (Hays-Mithchell, 1997). Women's interests were also equated to familial interests, which ultimately buried women within their families and failed to address women's individual needs (Hays-Mithchell, 1997). Researchers have also assumed that women-headed households are poorer than men-headed homes, which is not always true (Datta & McLlwaine, 2000). Scholars have also struggled to define 'gender equality' and 'women's empowerment', resulting in different approaches to empowerment and development among international organizations (Eyben & Napier-Moore, 2009). When working women are accepted, they may still be considered "helpers" to their working husbands, not producers in their own right (Manchón & Macleod, 2010). Despite policy advances promoting gender equality, cultural attitudes continue to challenge women's empowerment (Manchón & Macleod, 2010).

Consequences of women's disempowerment

There are a myriad of health and safety implications linked to women's empowerment. For example, women are often the primary food provider in their families, so crises, like a drought, disproportionately affect women (Manchón & Macleod, 2010). They must recover from such crises with limited access to financial or productive capital because they must compensate for

labor that was unpaid, exacerbating their dependence on family members that are men, who are more likely to be paid for their labor (Manchón & Macleod, 2010; Yilo & Straus, 1984). Such a dependence makes women more vulnerable to intimate partner violence (IPV) and related mental health issues because they are dependent on men to meet basic needs (Yilo & Straus, 1984).

Qualitative studies revealed that women link the IPV they experience to men's unemployment because men are unable to fulfill their traditional role as a provider (Hynes, et al., 2016). There is a statistically significant correlation between households of low socioeconomic status and increased physical violence, which aligns with the life experiences women describe (Friedemann-Sánchez & Lovatón, 2012; Vyas, Jansen, Heise, & Mbwambo, 2015). This link perpetuates a cycle of poverty and poor health equity among women victims of IPV (Vyas, Jansen, Heise, & Mbwambo, 2015). Generally, a husband's controlling behavior over his wife, like using violence to intimidate her into submission, is a significant barrier to catalyzing gender equality (Dutt, Grabe, & and Castro, 2015). Other consequences of disempowered women experiencing IPV include heightened risk of acquiring HIV, developing chronic diseases, and substance abuse problems (Hidrobo, Peterman, & Heise, 2013). Reducing women's dependence on their husbands or partners may make women less subject to masculine control.

Economic factors of women's empowerment

Studies examining factors influencing women's empowerment and agency have demonstrated mixed results. For example, a survey comparing land-owning to non-landowning women found that land owners participated in household decision-making more, had greater relationship power, and experienced less partner control than their non-owning counterparts

(Grabe, 2012). In a related qualitative study, women note that their land ownership heightens the respect their husbands have for them (Grabe, Dutt, & Dworkin, 2014). They did not, however, experience increased financial decision-making power (Grabe, 2012). Quantitative and qualitative investigations do not show consistent conclusions about land ownership, decision-making, and relationship power.

Various research has specifically tested the effect employment has on women's empowerment to determine if it has a negative or positive effect on empowerment. Some postulated that employment pushes women out of traditional household roles and exposes them to new skills, ways of communicating, and ideas (Desposato & Norrander, 2009). Others wondered if women's access to wage employment increases empowerment because women thereby have more income which is linked to increased decision-making power, increased participation in the public sphere, and increased ability to connect with other women (Korovkin, 2005; Barrientos, Bee, Matear, & Vogel, 1999).

On a macro level, holding a job outside one's home is linked to increased political participation among women (Desposato & Norrander, 2009). Women's interests are, theoretically, better represented in a government if women themselves participate politically, ultimately chipping away at institutionally entrenched gender inequality (Desposato & Norrander, 2009). On a micro level, women who are members of cooperative businesses reported less controlling partners and participated in financial decision-making more than women who are not members of such businesses (Dutt, Grabe, & and Castro, 2015). It is possible that the group dynamic of cooperative business models may mitigate threats to women's agency, and possibly enhance it (Dutt, Grabe, & and Castro, 2015).

Some credit economic necessity, and subsequent women's employment, as an inadvertent catalyst of gender norm change. Among the rural poor, women take on agricultural work traditionally completed by men (Radel, 2011). Rural communities are more isolated, which fosters an interdependence between men and women because the demands of farming are too great for men alone to bear (Carter, 2004). This economic interdependence inadvertently heightens women's agency within their households and communities, especially in comparison to their urban peers (Carter, 2004).

Women may also be empowered in ways additional to formal employment on an individual basis. In Latin America, women working in agriculture generate a significant cash flow through their family farms though they are not formally employed (Korovkin, 2005). Their economic influence grants these women the autonomy to participate in community organizations (Korovkin, 2005). In another study, women noted that their membership in community groups have long-term, positive effects on their intimate relationships (Grabe, Dutt, & Dworkin, 2014).

However, entering wage employment could constrict women's availability, and ultimately disempower them and force them to drop out of such organizations (Korovkin, 2005). Future research could consider examining the relationships between formal employment, cash flow, community participation, and women's empowerment.

A study conducted in Guatemala found that the higher the average household income in a community, the less likely a husband was to be the sole financial authority in money management (Carter, 2004). This correlation, however, may not be attributed exclusively to women's employment or income (Carter, 2004). Further, if a woman does not earn as much as other members of her household, her employment does not substantially increase her

empowerment (Carter, 2004; Hynes, et al., 2016; Grasmuck & Espinal, 2000). Researchers

theorize this phenomenon occurs because the more traditional gender norms are at macro

levels, like that of Guatemala, the less control women have at micro levels (Grasmuck & Espinal,

2000).

Different interventions aimed at women's economic empowerment protect women in

addition to empowerment more generally. Cash and in-kind transfers extended to Ecuadorian

women proved to reduce the prevalence of IPV in a randomized trial (Hidrobo, Peterman, &

Heise, 2013). Among rural Tanzanian women, paid work also protects against IPV (Vyas & Heise,

2014). A cluster-randomized trial found that South African women participating in micro-credit

programs experience less IPV than their non-participating peers (Pronyk, et al., 2006). Studies

like these demonstrate that women's economic empowerment has a multiplier effect.

Yet, there is evidence that apparent economic empowerment does not necessarily promote

women's empowerment overall. In a qualitative study from Colombia, women did not describe

that employment increased their household decision-making agency, likely because men

typically earn more than women and traditional gender norms promote men as the primary

economic provider for the household (Hynes, et al., 2016). On Brazilian grape farms, women are

typically put into detail-oriented positions, because of the assumption that women are better

suited for such work because they are inherently more 'delicate' than men (Selwyn, 2009).

Women are not compensated fairly for their labor because it is thought to be an innate talent,

not an acquired skill (Selwyn, 2009). These studies demonstrate that gendered stereotypes,

particularly about work, continue to challenge women's empowerment.

Further, women who work are still expected to fulfill all household and childrearing responsibilities because men remain the traditional household providers (Hynes, et al., 2016). Effectively, household duties are not redistributed equally among men and women when a woman enters the work force, highlighting continued gender inequalities (Hynes, et al., 2016). These findings, however, conflict with the aforementioned Maasi women, who linked their land ownership to heightened respect from their husbands (Grabe, Dutt, & Dworkin, 2014).

Backlash

In some contexts, a woman who enjoys higher economic empowerment relative to her partner may be at a higher risk for intimate partner violence (Vyas, Jansen, Heise, & Mbwambo, 2015). Examples of heightened IPV risk include: (1) an employed women with an unemployed partner; (2) a woman who earns more than her partner; and (3) a woman more educated relative to her partner (Vyas, Jansen, Heise, & Mbwambo, 2015). Only in *some* low- and middle-income settings may a woman's economic empowerment protect against IPV. For example, a husband may use a woman's wealth as a means to extort or abuse her, as documented in India (Bloch & Rao, 2002). Various studies examining micro-credit interventions among Bangladeshi women often conflict, showing that such programs both reduce or increase IPV (Koenig, Ahmed, Hossain, A., & Mozumder, 2003; Schuler, Hashemi, Riley, & Akhter, 1996; Goetz & Gupta, 1996).

When women transgress beyond their traditional household roles into the workforce, their example is often considered a "break-down" of family values that negatively impacts children (Datta & McLlwaine, 2000). Theoretically, higher risks of IPV may be attributed to men seeking to regain control over the stress of women breaking traditional gender roles (Beneria, 1992; Pitkin & Bedoya, 1997; Friedemann-Sánchez & Lovatón, 2012; Sengupta & Ganguly, 2014).

Women themselves acknowledge that their husbands may be threatened by the independence they gain through employment (Selwyn, 2009). In additional contexts, they say that their husbands do not like not knowing where they are, so women cannot participate in employment or community activities for more than a few hours at a time (Gotschi, Njuki, & Delve, 2008).

Further, women's multiple responsibilities, traditionally including household duties, caring for children, and completing farming tasks limit their ability to seize opportunities for economic empowerment (e.g., famers association membership) (Gotschi, Njuki, & Delve, 2008). Women have said that their gendered duties limit their abilities and interests, and may work twice as hard to ensure that employment or participation in community organizations do not interfere with their traditional feminine, household roles (Grabe, Dutt, & Dworkin, 2014; Grabe, 2012). These household dynamics may incite tension that increases IPV, though women may be perceived as economically empowered.

Various examples indicate that masculinity still prevails as a meaningful access point for increasing one's autonomy, particularly in the work force and community. In Mozambique, women members of farmers associations, a type of employment, describe feeling uncomfortable disagreeing with their men peers (Gotschi, Njuki, & Delve, 2008). They are also more likely to report encountering problems in comparison to men association members (Gotschi, Njuki, & Delve, 2008). Women in mixed-gender associations found it easier to make business contacts and access help when needed (Gotschi, Njuki, & Delve, 2008). Men association members are more likely to be credited with association growth, particularly while working under women's leadership (Gotschi, Njuki, & Delve, 2008). Among Nicaraguan farmers associations, women members who attempt to enter leadership positions described rejection

of women's leadership from members who are men (Manchón & Macleod, 2010). Women are not necessarily empowered in their workplaces simply because they are working.

Longstanding patriarchal attitudes are a barrier to interventions designed to address gender equity; overt attempts to encourage gender equality may be seen as too drastic. A study in Mexico found that when women take on traditionally masculine agricultural tasks in a community based farming organization, the community derided their efforts (Radel, 2011). Such an event suggests that attitudes about women's employment and empowerment are slow to change, regardless of economic need (Radel, 2011). In a qualitative study from Nicaragua, men leaders of the Federación Nacional de Cooperativas Agropecuarias y Agroindustriales[2] (FENACOOP) view federation projects that directly address gender inequality as extraneous and believe they hinder the federation's ability to promote its central, economic mission (Manchón & Macleod, 2010). Most of FENACOOP's men members believe that potential gender equity initiatives are too abrupt and attempt to spur cultural change too quickly (Manchón & Macleod, 2010). Overall, women's empowerment within an organization depends on the organization's leaders' upbringings, commitment to gender equality, and their leadership training (Datta & McLlwaine, 2000).

Conclusion

Researchers have experimented with different interventions aimed at empowering women and mitigating the consequences of gender inequality. A closer examination of income-generating organizations in which women participate may reveal new approaches to effectively empower women and encourage the "multiplier effect" associated with women's

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[2] English translation: National Federation of Agricultural, Livestock, and Agroindustry Cooperatives

empowerment (United Nations Development Programme, 2016). A decrease in gender

inequality would mitigate related adverse health outcomes to promote economic, social, and

political progress worldwide (United Nations Development Programme, 2017). Chapter 2

presents novel research investigating women's perceptions of decision-making, empowerment,

and gender norms in farmers associations. The discussion in Chapter 2 offers ideas about how

to use economically and/or farming oriented cooperatives to empower women.

Chapter 2: Manuscript

Abstract

Global gender inequality remains a pervasive issue with a range of social, economic, and health implications. Research on interventions seeking to end gender disparities in health, economics, and politics have shown conflicting results. Research about community organizations' effects on women's empowerment, or women's ability to enhance their own wellbeing, in rural areas is no exception. This qualitative study examines how farmers associations empower and disempower women in Colombia. The results suggest that association membership empowers women through skill enhancement, decision-making, and leadership. This empowerment may be unintentional on the part of women and their communities, and it may stem from women's perceptions of traditional gender roles. Future group-based empowerment interventions should consider localized, contextual constraints women face and their traditional roles to empower women intentionally.

Introduction

Research shows that intimate partner violence against women is higher in displaced settings (Hynes, et al., 2016). The relationship between such violence, economic inequality, and poor health outcomes is well-documented, demonstrating the importance of providing aid to a country's most vulnerable populations as a preventative public health measure (Yount, DiGirolamo, & Ramakrishnan, 2011; Ackerson & Subramanian, 2008; Ellsberg, Jansen, Heise, Watts, & Garcia-Moreno, 2008; Coker, et al., 2002; Jewkes, Dunkle, Nduna, & Shai, 2010). Colombia has one of the highest rates of internally displaced persons (IDPs) globally due to the 50-year conflict between the Government of Colombia and guerrilla groups (Human Rights Watch, 2012).

To address these urgent public health issues, the UN World Food Programme Colombia (WFP) implemented a marketing intervention in smallholder farmers associations to economically empower women, many of whom the conflict displaced or otherwise affected by the violence and related political instability. The intervention offered farmers associations a contract in which WFP purchased their products for eight months, and WFP linked the associations to potential buyers to enhance association capacity and access to markets. Ideally, these other buyers would replace WFP once the intervention terminated. WFP also implemented a marketing intervention coupled with gender rights training among smallholder farmer associations. Association members attended several trainings about marketing, nutrition, women's rights, and gender roles. A cluster randomized control trial, this project's parent study, will examine the effect of each intervention arm on the relationship between women's economic empowerment and intimate partner violence.

The empowerment literature examines women's empowerment through group-based programs designed to increase women's economic empowerment. Much of the published work examined the effects of membership on outcomes like IPV prevalence or women's decision-making power (Grabe, Dutt, & Dworkin, 2014; Grabe, 2012; Pronyk, et al., 2006). Qualitative publications have explored how women perceive their membership in various groups to affect their personal lives (Grabe, Dutt, & Dworkin, 2014; Gotschi, Njuki, & Delve, 2008). However, the literature lacks information about women's perspectives on how such organizations operate, and, further, how these operations relate to women's empowerment.

We selected a qualitative approach to address the following research questions: (1) How may farmers associations *empower* women?; and (2) How may farmers associations

disempower women? We collected data from women members of farmers associations in Caquetá and Cauca Colombia prior to intervention implementation. We explored women's emic[3] perspectives on their associations, their participation in their associations, and gender. We asked participants several open-ended questions about why women join their farmers association, how members (men and women) participate in the association, how the association makes decisions, how the members choose association leaders, and how the local community treats women. This information may inform future scale-up of the WFP interventions and other humanitarian development strategies.

Methods
Study design, study segmentation, and recruitment

Qualitative data provide detailed understandings of women's experiences within the associations. We selected focus groups (FGs) because, though a sub-set of the farmers associations, they offered a broad range of perspectives on the farmers associations at one time (Hennink, 2014). FGs allowed us to understand multiple emic perspectives on women's decision-making and leadership, within the associations' group dynamics, in a short amount of time. Further, WFP delivered the interventions at the association level, so FGs were best to understand women's empowerment at the association level. We used a semi-structured FG guide so women could spontaneously discuss the topics salient to their experiences. We included sections about association participation, decision-making, leadership, and community gender norms in our semi-structured guide.

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[3] Emic perspectives are the 'insider' perspectives of the group being studied.

We recruited associations for participation because of their intervention assignment and gender composition. Intervention assignments were to either the 'marketing only' or 'marketing and gender rights' treatments. Gender compositions were either 'mixed-gender' or 'women-only' associations. As such, there were four study segmentations: (1) Mixed-gender association; treatment A (marketing intervention only); (2) Mixed-gender association; treatment B (marketing intervention and gender training); (3) Women-only association; treatment A (marketing intervention only); and (4) Women-only association; treatment B (marketing intervention and gender training). *Table 1* summarizes the segmentation by gender composition and intervention group. The table only shows data analyzed in this paper (6 FGs total). By collecting data from at least three associations in each segment, the sample size is large enough to assess saturation in each subgroup (Guest, Namey, & McKenna, 2016). This segmentation also allows us to compare women's empowerment in mixed-gender and women-only associations. This segmentation would allow researchers to collect follow-up data later to generate longitudinal, qualitative data comparing 'marketing only' to 'marketing and gender rights' treatments as well.

Eligibility requirements for study participation included: (1) Membership in a smallholder farmers association participating in WFP's relevant intervention activities; (2) Aged 18 – 60 years old; and (3) Currently married to a man or living with a man as if married. All FGs occurred in July 2016 in the departments of Caquetá and Cauca, Colombia. The disparate racial composition of these departments made them attractive data collection sites, allowing us to diversify our sample to include multiple racial and ethnic groups. WFP's existing programming in these areas was another contributing factor to selecting field sites.

WFP sub-office staff recruited participants by contacting associations' legal representatives, a gate-keeper strategy. WFP staff explained the study purpose and coordinated data collection sessions with women members. The gate-keeper strategy maintained the relationship between WFP and the associations. It also bolstered recruitment because the study population is hard to reach. Colombia's mountainous terrain makes telephone lines sparse and cell phone connectivity challenging. Underdeveloped road infrastructure makes travel to and from participants' homes difficult if not previously familiar with the area.

Piloting of qualitative guides

We piloted the semi-structured FG guide in June 2016 in Nariño, Colombia. WFP proposed piloting in Nariño because it is like Caquetá and Cauca, where data collection was pre-selected to occur. These three departments are all located in southwestern Colombia and feature the Andes mountains; they are also removed from Colombia's largest cities (i.e., Bogotá, Medellín, Cali, and Barranquilla). The armed conflict was prominent in these departments, so they share turbulent political histories that may have indirectly influenced the data. Logistics also played a role in decisions about piloting. WFP sub-office staff and associations were both available in Nariño during the proposed piloting timeline. Lack of availability in other departments prevented piloting from occurring in other places. We did not pilot in the same departments where we planned to collect data to ensure the data analyzed did not overlap with pilot data in any way.

Piloting revealed which questions confused participants, required rewording, or needed examples to clarify. Piloting also helped the moderator, an American student, familiarize herself with the study context. Most significantly, one of the pilot FGs spontaneously mentioned

machismo, defined as strong sense of masculine pride. This inspired us to include a new question about community gender norms in the final FG guide. The final guide had questions about association participation, decision-making, leadership, and community gender norms. These final topics were finalized with WFP's guidance. Then we submitted the guide to Emory University's Institutional Review Board for ethical approval.

Data collection

We conducted 14 FGs in Spanish with a moderator trained in qualitative methods at Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health. Maintaining confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity were essential to meeting ethical research standards and protecting participants. Further, because the qualitative study links to a larger IPV study, confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity were particularly important. In the consent process, we explained the study purpose, potential benefits and risks, and privacy procedures. Such measures included using a secure device for recordings, explaining that only the research team may access data, and never publishing any identifying information about participants. Participants had the opportunity to ask any clarifying questions before beginning. We also provided participants with the research team's contact information at this time. After verbally consenting participants as a group, each woman signed twice to state her consent to participate and consent to an audio recording of the FGs.

We conducted all focus groups in private spaces in the community (e.g., community gathering place, a member's home, association shop location). We asked non-participants to clear the area before beginning the FG. If someone interrupted the FG, the moderator paused the discussion. If necessary, the moderator explained that a limited number of people could take part, that adding new participants once the FG began was not possible, or that the moderator only had

permission from the ethical review board to speak to other women. These answers satisfied any curious, interrupting non-participants. FGs resumed when non-participants left the area and privacy was restored.

Data analysis

We sought to understand emic perspectives on women's empowerment in farmers associations, thus a grounded theory approach was appropriate. In grounded theory, researchers use the data to discover a theory that may explain the data (Glaser & Strauss, 2009). Best practices in grounded theory endorse a systematic review of the data to ensure the results stem from the participants' own words (Glaser & Strauss, 2009). Therefore, the theory proposed in our discussion links directly to the emic perspective it seeks to explain because we used a grounded theory approach.

We translated and transcribed the data simultaneously to create transcripts. We only completed two transcriptions during data collection; we completed four more after data collection. Because of resource and time constraints, we could not use an iterative approach to data collection. While 84 women participated in the FGs during data collection, the completed and analyzed transcripts only represent 28 women. Hereafter, the only focus groups described are the six transcribed FGs. *Table 2* details the transcriptions included in analysis (i.e., number of participants, department, length, gender composition, intervention group). The FGs analyzed ranged in size from one woman to eight women. The FGs analyzed lasted an average of 56 minutes.

One person from Emory University selected two of the six transcripts for memoing, and they memoed the data by noting thoughts or questions as they read each transcript using MaxQDA12. From these memos, they developed 24 preliminary, inductive codes. Inductive

codes ensure subsequent analysis is driven by the data through a bottom-up approach,

emphasizing emic perspectives (Saldaña, 67-232). Next, they coded all six transcripts with the

preliminary codes and reviewed the coded segments. The reading and re-reading transcripts

familiarized them with the data, and this familiarity later helped us refine our research

question. With a refined research question and WFP's research interests in mind, the original

coder narrowed the list of codes to 13 total for analysis. Some of the preliminary codes were

redundant or too subjective to apply consistently, which warranted their exclusion. Two of

these codes are noteworthy: adelante/future and capacitar/fortalecer. These codes are in-vivo

codes taken from the Spanish-language audio recordings. "Adelante" means moving onward in

a progressive manner. "Capacitar" and "fortalecer" mean to "build capacity" and "to fortify." A

full list of these codes and their definitions appear in the appendix. The coder reviewed the

coded segments for consistent application of the codes across all six transcripts, and briefly re-

read the transcripts to code any segments they failed to correctly code in the first round. While

re-reading, they memoed a second time, paying particular attention to quotes from different

participants and FGs that echoed each other. These memos ensured they achieved code

saturation and worked as notes that guided the results write-up and discussion.

Results

Sample Characteristics

Participants in the FGs analyzed ranged in age from their mid-twenties to late-fifties. All

participants actively participated (e.g., attended meetings, conducted sales, cultivated product,

etc.) in their association. All women stated they were married or were living with a partner at

the time of data collection. Together, the six associations included in analysis produced eggs,

chickens, fish, coffee, guava, corn flour, and herbal teas. Most women lived on their family

farm, though farm production varied. Some women farmed only their family land. Some

associations collectively farmed members' family plots on rotation. Though many participants

in the FGs analyzed belonged to a mixed-gender association, the number of women members

exceeded the number of men members in these associations. This information is available in

Table 3.

The Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)

made significant strides to end the conflict in 2016, though peace remains a contentious issue

(Murphy & Symmes Cobb, 2016). The parent study's preliminary results show that the conflict

displaced 15% of respondents. The conflict likely displaced some participants in the qualitative

study, though we did not ask participants about displacement. During data collection, WFP sub-

office staff revealed that the FARC targeted at least one association's legal representative. One

FG stated there are "indigenous women. There are displaced women, [and] there are

vulnerable victims" among their association members.

Another participant stated "Here in…Colombia, we have a war not quite like the armed

conflict…One doesn't have just this problem…In the sense that here there's acknowledgment of

the Afro, of the Indigenous, but not of the campesino [farm worker]. Then, this is another

conflict". This participant did not link farmers' rights to the armed conflict, but her quote

illustrates competing domestic challenges the Government of Colombia continues to face. The

conflict continues to affect Colombians everywhere, which likely manifested in data in some

form.

Motivations to become a member

Women cited various reasons to join their farmers association. In the broadest sense,

improving "quality of life" is why women in the sample analyzed joined farmers associations. A

participant shared that her reasoning was "to improve the quality of life because among the members there is a lot...of help for everyone, and that is why the association formed". A more nuanced understanding of "quality of life" emerges with a closer review of the data.

Diffuse benefits (i.e. benefits other than those directly benefitting a woman individually) of membership for women's children and household were the most common reasons justifying association membership. For example, one woman explained that "now that we are associated, we have a lot of benefits to continue *adelante* as women, and to help our children, and to help our families too". Another woman in that same FG remarked "the objective for us in the cooperative is...like, we started it, but the idea is that our children continue on the path we started on". Most simply, women joined "[f]or our children. For the home".

In addition to women's individual families, the overall community-level benefit of a farmers association was another reason to join. One woman argued that "[w]e are going to have a better future in the community" for joining the association. In another FG, a woman described her desire to share the association resources with the community, by stating "we are able to get resources...for the association. Then, a...beautiful community that shares that with this association".

Collaboration within the association also justified association membership. One woman stated that "we are associates here because...we collaborate and obtain resources, but, we want... it is a benefit for all. For all twenty-three of us". Another woman from a different FG said that "[w]e depend on the association" for assistance with cultivation and sale of their crop. "[W]e want...to work in groups" is the simplest rendering of this concept in the available data.

Finally, women discussed women's empowerment as a reason to join the association, but only in a veiled way. Also, only three of the six FGs analyzed highlighted reasons to join specific to women. One participant said women join "to not always be in the house", though she did not explicitly state why always being in the house, as a woman, is undesirable. This participant went on to state that joining the association and contributing to the family is a reason to join "[s]o…it is not only what the husband does…what one [the woman member] also does well". One could construe her words to indicate that men are traditionally breadwinners in her community. Other FGs acknowledged struggles of women. A participant from a women-only association stated the association stems from "[t]he necessity of...us, the women...individually we do not achieve anything…There is...indigenous women. There are displaced women, there are...vulnerable victims…so to have an association to fight for ourselves". Another woman, also from a women's only association, addressed women's issues directly when explaining why women joined her association. She stated that "it's suffering the maltreatment…in many aspects. Physically, sexual, and patriarchal…We have united, and working in a team we can fortify ourselves". Women's empowerment was not a universal motivation to join a farmers association in the data analyzed.

Adelante: Onward
The semi-structured guide did not ask about "empowerment" to reduce courtesy bias. As such, the participants analyzed seldom spoke of empowerment by name and women's perceptions of their empowerment are thin in the data included in analysis. However, the data analyzed emphasized "*adelante*". *Adelante* means onward or forward. As an adverb, it modifies both place and time.

Women articulated their dedication to *adelante* in a variety of ways. When asked to define *adelante* and what it means to them, a FG said "to continue fighting, to continue working", "to train [themselves]", and to not say "that [they] are only women of the house". Continuing to fight and work implies that participants believe change is possible through their actions. "Training themselves" exposes participant belief that expanding their technical abilities will move them forward. In the data analyzed, *adelante* signifies change driven through a woman's own action and skill.

A participant reflection on *adelante* demonstrates that determinism plays a role in *adelante*. One woman said that her fellow association members "organized ourselves and we accomplished it. And here we are, *adelante*". Another woman in a different FG projected that her association's egg project would do similarly. "[The project] allows us to continue *adelante* with one another, with all of the benefits for our families, also for our association members. All are going to improve". Our study participants believe collective association actions yield positive results.

One participant stated that "our objective is…in the cooperative…to continue *adelante*". Her fellow association member reiterated this concept, and said "We are…dedicated to be well and to continue *adelante*". A separate FG mirrored this sentiment, which defined women's association leadership as being "their endeavor to continue *adelante*". The purpose of an association is to continue moving itself and its members onward.

Eyes and Ears: Recognition

Participants indicated the importance of recognition both in the association and community in a variety of ways. When discussing decision-making, on participant stated that "[i]n the association, all as a group, they [everyone] listen more and all of that". During the

introduction to the FG, another participant said "I'm here to listen to you and to be heard by you [the moderator]". In another FG, a woman said "[w]e are in the process of capacity building. For our children, to have more of a voice". These comments show the participants value listening to others' perspectives and sharing their own.

In reference to the community, one participant mentioned that "[w]e are already recognized [as an association] and…they know that we are women and we are doing our part in the municipality". However, more participants shared their frustrations with lack of recognition. A woman in a different FG said that "[t]he [association] leadership is little recognized…It is little recognized, this work. And you can work in an association for five, ten years and be working the same…What do we need? By the first measure, it's acknowledgement". In another FG, a woman said that "in the town hall...there is very little help. They don't see women. I don't know how even a woman…is almost not considered". From the same FG, another woman joked that men do not see how much women contribute, and said "women don't help with anything! (laughter) But women help with a lot! With everything!".

Like *adelante*, that data analyzed does not link to explicit perceptions of women's empowerment. However, repeated mentions of "recognition" proves it plays an important role for women in some capacity. We cannot discern the extent of recognition's role in women's empowerment because we did not ask about recognition specifically, nor did we probe this concept during data collection. Nevertheless, feeling heard and feeling seen, by anyone (e.g., fellow association member, town hall, FG moderator), may inform how women feel empowered within their association.

Capacitar: Building a strong sense of collective efficacy

"Capacitar" means to "build capacity", which could mean for oneself or a group. In the FGs analyzed, women primarily discussed capacity building in a group. Women mentioned how belonging to the association preceded one's ability to build capacity in several ways. Individual motivations to increase one's capacity played a role in joining an association, but ultimately the association is the conduit in which women may build their capacity. A woman stated, "[w]e formed and founded the association. I have always searched for those processes...for the capacity building...to familiarize myself with the possibilities. To know ourselves as women. As an association". Women reiterated this idea, and stated "we organized ourselves to have the opportunity to build our capacity". Another focus group echoed this sentiment, saying "we have the capacity to...be professionals, to be a team, the experiences [for] managing projects". The emphasis on the association as a whole demonstrates the importance of group solidarity among the participants analyzed.

Some participants highlighted sharing, which is only possible through a group setting like that of an association. A women explained that "building our capacity...for example...we get some help, and...we can distribute the help that arrives". A different one in that same FG said that "[i]f she studies...[it's] because I also can". Achievement obtained through the group matters. Women also addressed this concept by highlighting the difficulty of working alone. "[E]ach one can't do it alone. But as an association...many good things". Similarly, another woman said "[t]o be alone...alone each one cannot...nothing. We say the same thing. So to have an association to fight for ourselves". Participants considered working alone too strenuous to accomplish one's individual goals.

Together, all of these comments suggest that our participants believe women's empowerment is possible through collective action. Women did not speak of building their individual capacity; participants analyzed prioritized "ourselves" over "myself". One woman succinctly articulated this result by saying "Adelante means to train ourselves [capacitarnos]". Many of her fellow FG participants verbalized agreement following this assertion. Another FG expressed a like sentiment, and stated "[a]ll [members] are going to improve. All united as women…we're improving and also for the benefit of each one". In other words, "we are going to…take up that idea to continue adelante for everyone".

Stronger Together: Leadership

Many women members had leadership positions in their associations. Participants emphasized the qualities of leaders, the expected roles of leaders, and the perceived positive effects of good leadership. Participants across all FGs stated that good leaders are honest, respectful, knowledgeable, motivated, and capable. Participants also highlighted the importance of being a leader for all members. One participant stated that good leaders are "not only thinking about one [person], because if you only think about one, you screw up". Another woman in a different FG said that leaders should have the "desire to work and to be a leader to everyone".

When electing a new leader, members considered a candidate's "knowledge". For example, a participant said "how do we choose leaders? Based on each one's knowledge". Another FG elaborated on this concept, and said leaders are chosen for "know[ing] to express [things] before the other people and all of that…it's knowledge".

However, participants emphasized a candidate's demonstrated capacity or ability as the most important factor in choosing a leader. "[T]hey elect them by ability of each person".

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Similarly, one participant in another FG stated that "to develop oneself for leadership in the association…is to have the ability". And finally, leaders are chosen because "they have…more abilities or if they have more capacities".

An association's gender composition does not have a perceived effect on whether or not women are considered viable leaders. Women's only associations only have women leaders, for obvious reasons, though mixed gender associations have had women leadership as well. One participant explained that women's roles in their households and on their farms were more flexible than their husbands/partners, which allowed women to play a more prominent role in their associations. When probed to elaborate on why women have the time to be an association member, she said "And with everything we have to do likewise for the house, time for us, like, is less rigid than for men. So men, they only get up, they get ready, they go out to one part, yeah, and only have to do that. We distribute the time best". It is possible that women took on more prominent roles in their associations because women are perceived to have the time to assume additional responsibilities. Overall, there are no apparent taboos about women serving as leaders within their associations, nor is a potential leader's gender explicitly considered when electing a new leader.

Leaders were responsible for helping all association members achieve the same goals. For example, a leader is a "woman of amplifying, pursuing" association goals, on behalf of all members. Another FG stated that, leaders were "with the desire to work and to be a leader for everyone". In short, "not only thinking about one[self]…Like, that is a good leader". Because members entrusted their leaders with running the association that yields '*adelante*', leaders are essential to empowerment.

Que Manda la Fuerza: Decision-making in association meetings

Decision making in the association, including electing leaders, was democratic according to the participants. Every association in the data analyzed held meetings or general assemblies during which members met to discuss changes to the association, changes in leadership, new directives, and other relevant topics. One participant stated that it is "*la asamblea que manda la fuerza*", or "the assembly orders the force" in English. Members make decisions that may influence an association's trajectory during these meetings, alluding to how empowering participation in assemblies may be because the assembly is the association's "force".

Dialogue characterized the decision-making process during assemblies or meetings. For example, one participant said "we come here, and…the women also talk. So then, here we are going to look at basing who has a bad reason…Then, the decisions that we make in the association, we are between [us] twenty-four…Likewise with the work. Likewise with the events that…the association does". Similarly, another woman in a different FG remarked that "[t]hey have meetings, and each woman shares her opinion. And between everyone, we decide what to do, what to choose". Another FG mentioned that "if someone does not agree, they speak, and we have a dialogue, and we arrive at an agreement", indicating that problem solving during association meetings required discussion. "[T]o make decisions…they listen".

Association leaders invited all members to attend assemblies or meetings. "They have to call everyone. For everyone to be there, to convene". One association in the data analyzed even stated "when they name a president…we all have to be together". However, most FGs stated that for decision-making, "[i]f we aren't all present...We make the decision among those who are there". Decision-making has the perception of empowering everyone, regardless of gender, to participate equally. One participant shared that "[e]veryone is free to talk. Everyone is heard.

Men and women are heard". Another said "we give our opinions and one of them…is good and is reasonable…we go according to that. There isn't a difference in this sense between men and women". More simply, another FG revealed that "the decisions that we make, we make among everyone". Further, another FG said "everyone votes in a normal way…no pressuring anyone to be all in agreement". There was one exception, when a participant stated that "[a]lways the men are dominant" in dialogue and decision-making. Since the mixed-gender associations analyzed had a larger proportion of women membership, it is possible that, generally, women played a lager role in decision-making than men simply because there were more women.

Depending on the context of a specific decision, leaders, whether women or men, played larger roles in decision-making in comparison to ordinary members. A FG said of decision-making: "to make the decision they [leaders] talk among all members, and that's equal". In other words, leaders' opinions are not more influential than anyone else's in a general assembly or regular meeting.

"Rush" decisions are too difficult to make as an entire group. In one association, community networking is the leader's responsibility. "[A]ll of the board would travel to…other places…making decisions, or…a formal invitation…[to] other entities. It is very difficult that we all come to make the decisions…We trust each other and that [the leader]…could make a practical decision quickly". Similarly, another FG shared that leaders make the "quick [decisions]" without association-wide discussion. Sometimes associations needed a decision made before it had the opportunity to call a meeting; in these circumstances, leaders decided independently, rather than sharing decision-making power with all members.

Not Here, Not Now?: Community gender norms and sexism

Participants briefly discussed leaders in the broader community. One participant explained that "the [association] leadership is little recognized [in the community]" and that they "think that it's the same [problem]" among men and women leaders.

Most participants explicitly stated that there is no gender discrimination in their community, contrary to the academic literature and even comments from the participants themselves. Of her community, one woman said "[h]ere we don't see if it's a man or a woman...We are all integrated". When describing their associations, participants said things like "we don't associate badly. Everything is the same...there isn't...there isn't [gender] discrimination". Generally, participants emphasized how sexism was something from the past; "[n]ow, we aren't discriminated against anymore". When asked if they believe there is gender discrimination in their community, a FG from a women-only association multiple participants said "No! Not now", and another added that "I think that before there was a lot of...machismo". This FG later gave the most comprehensive description of their perceived end of sexism. "What we want to do...if you want to study or if you want to do something else. The men no longer put that down. More freedoms for women to make decisions and...They can freely express without a man saying 'No, you can't do that. No.' I don't think that there is much of that now...[T]here...already are old men that have changed. And they always put down their rules and although it was very difficult to change their thoughts, the men have already changed their thoughts".

There are a few examples of contradictory statements in the data analyzed that suggested there may be more gender discrimination in the community than the participants openly acknowledged. One participant, from a mixed-gender association, explained that sexism

no longer occurs in her community. She said "[w]e are all united…men and women, we are equal [in the community]". Immediately following her remarks, another participant added that "[h]ere in the association, we don't feel bad. We don't feel bad as women". The second woman's comments insinuated that perhaps women may feel bad, as women, in the community; she implicitly compared the lack of sexism in their association to the assumed, possible sexism in their community. This same contradiction happened a second time. The same participant who gave the last comment trailed off, saying "in the community we [men and women] are very integrated…but…at the association level…" and another participant chimed in to say "We're more united". These set of comments seem to contradict each other. Further along in this FG, a participant explained that "the [local government] resources…never arrive to the women...there is very little help. They don't see women. I don't know how even a woman…is almost not considered", contrasting the association with the community and insinuating that sexism is present in their community.

In another FG, one participant questioned her own view. She said "it doesn't look like there is a difference [between men and women] or…no…It's equal. I don't know. Or if, like, in a meeting a male member or a female member attends…there is almost no difference". This participant did not boldly acknowledge sexism, *almost* no difference between how people receive men and women means there is *some* difference, which we may attribute to sexism in her community.

Though veiled, participants' comments about gender roles may speak to subtle gender discrimination in their communities. The data analyzed had numerous references to women

working in the home as their primary responsibility. For example, one woman explained that a woman's role is "[t]o be more of the house…and cooking…to have the house role".

Participants' comments also indicated that some believed women are inherently better at some tasks than men. For example, one woman said "the role of women in the community is that they organize everything…They are the best at managing the things". Regarding sales, another participant shared that saleswomen are treated better in the community because "they are women...easier right now to sell because as a woman, [they are better] than as a man". These 'positive' stereotypes undermine the skills women developed through experience and hard work, which devalued their roles as women in their communities. Their devaluation of their learned skills undermines their empowerment.

The data revealed one exception to women's perceived lack of sexism in their communities. One FG, from a women-only association shared "[t]hat's how we formed ourselves as an association about the gender violence that they suffer…Like, it's suffering the maltreatment in many aspects. Physically, sexual, and patriarchal…Then, we have united, and working in a team we can fortify ourselves". In other words, this participant not only acknowledged her perception of the mistreatment of women, but also stated that it was a principal reason to create her association. This participant also said that "we talk a lot about machismo. But machismo also exists in our [the women's] selves". Her comment may illustrate how women in other FGs do not acknowledge sexism in their communities because it is the norm in their communities and ingrained in women's senses of selves.

The same participant later described community gender norms and said "when one has to make important decisions, the woman many times does not enter in these...important

decisions". This quote is similar to a comment from another FG, where the participant said "the [local government] resources…never arrive to the women...there is very little help. They don't see women". Together, these comments show that women can identify gender inequality in their communities, though they may not identify it in explicit terms. This gender inequality may disempower women in ways they do not realize.

Discussion
Summary

Associations empower women, or progress them *adelante*, in a variety of ways. Women's perceived benefits of membership empower them. Members charge association leaders with ensuring all members have access to collective capacity building activities. The structure of the associations—necessary dialogue, decision-making, and voting—also facilitate women's empowerment. However, logistics may exclude some women from partaking in empowering activities as much as their peers. Further, veiled gender discrimination—like perceptions of women's traditional roles or innate qualities—in the community may disempower women. This information leads us to conclude that association membership empowers women in several ways and limits some of them in others. However, this empowerment, and related disempowerment, may be unintentional because of traditional gender norms.

Limitations

This study is not without its limitations. Guerilla warfare and economic inequality presented participants with unique life circumstances (World Bank, 2016; Symmes, 2017). The semi-structured guide did not ask women how historic or current events affected their associations. We designed the FG to last only one hour, and we prioritized questions about their associations and communities. External factors may have shaped participants' responses,

but the data lacks information about women's perceptions of those potential factors. Information about the armed conflict and income inequality could have illuminated challenges association members faced in association operation or running their farms over the past few decades. Future research could consider examining the role the armed conflict and growing inequality play in Colombian farmers' lives and association operations.

Data collection occurred in July 2016, wintertime in Colombia. The Andes mountains produce a range of microclimates in Colombia, so Colombia does not have predictable annual winter weather across Colombia (Sarmiento, 1986; Poveda, Álvarez, & Rueda, 2011; Etter & W., 2000). Farmers cultivate their products in a variety of ecosystems, which differently affect the quantity and quality of their products. While our participants produced in similar microclimates, unobservable characteristics may have influenced their data. For instance, a poor crop yield may have incited tension among association members. Such unknown circumstances may have contributed to the data's diversity.

A national transportation strike began in June 2016 (Murphy, Acosta, Bocanegra, & Garcia, 2016). It lasted 45 days and ended during data collection on July 22nd, 2016 (Murphy, Acosta, Bocanegra, & Garcia, 2016). The strike blocked major highways, disrupted food supply chains, and increased inflation (Murphy, Acosta, Bocanegra, & Garcia, 2016). Associations in our sample lost money because the strike prevented transporting their goods to market. The strike likely affected the data because it strained associations in our sample, though we did not directly ask or probe about how the strike affected the associations.

In the field we learned that 'gender composition' is not a usefully strict criterion. Of the original 14 FGs, including the six analyzed in this paper, 'women-only' and 'mixed-gender' meant different things to different associations.

'Mixed-gender' associations included associations: (1) With a sizable number of women and men members; (2) With one or two men members—the associations were 99% women overall; (3) That counted men as members because they farmed the products sold, but the men did not take part in association administration or decision-making; (4) Where membership hinged on 'household' because the association distributed payments per household, not per member; a woman/wife or a man/husband could alternate attending meetings; membership was not on an individual basis.

'Women-only' associations included associations: (1) With only women; (2) That considered itself women-only, but had two men members; men could not hold leadership positions, but could vote, discuss decisions, etc.

We did not expect gender composition to be a fluid concept. Even if we had a balance of 'women-only' and 'mixed-gender' associations and an adequate sample size to assess saturation segmented by gender composition, we would question the validity of a comparison. The FG guide did not include questions about what criteria an association used to classify itself as 'women-only' or 'mixed-gender'. There may be unobserved differences that would influence our ability to compare associations by gender composition because data collection was not systematic. Field definitions of gender composition are too nuanced to compare without more data. Further, there may be unobserved differences that influenced the results and conclusions.

A non-native Spanish speaker completed the focus groups. Though fluent and competent, non-native Spanish may have limited the moderator's ability to probe carefully. Also, the moderator completed two FGs each day (except for the seventh and fourteenth FG). Fatigue may have limited the quality of the day's second FG.

The data revealed women's perceptions in rural Colombia, a setting with many people displaced by the conflict (Human Rights Watch, 2012). We aim to use these results to examine how farmers associations empower and disempower women. This research contributes emic perspectives on participating in community organizations. We offer emic perspectives into how women develop and use their agency. We also examine what limits their agency in a group setting among rural Colombian women. This information may inform future development or scale-up of humanitarian development strategies.

The data analyzed does not explicitly determine what women believe women's empowerment is. Yet, the repeated use of *adelante* leads us to conclude that *adelante* is empowerment, though not restricted to women. In Spanish, *adelante* is an adverb (Word Reference: Online Language Dictionaries , 2017). In colloquial usage, it means to prosper or to progress (Word Reference: Online Language Dictionaries , 2017). A desire to continue *adelante* is a desire to progress from where one is now to where they want to go. This contrasts other empowerment literature, which found that marginalized groups appeal to the 'duty' of more powerful groups, imploring them to be more inclusive (Grabe & Dutt, 2015). Another definition declares that material resources, environmental inequality, individual sense of personal control, and enhanced well-being is empowerment (Grabe, 2012). But, this definition does not emphasize *who* empowers *who*. One participant in our sample stated that "[the association

project] allows us to continue *adelante* with one another…All are going to improve", which shows a focus on working with one's peer group, not other—including more dominant—groups to create change. What is empowerment if not women themselves creating positive change in their own lives?

Association membership generally empowers women. The participants talk a lot about building capacity together[4]. Once a member, a woman has the opportunity to develop skills she would otherwise not be able to. Existing empowerment literature affirms this idea. Resources and agency are essential to empowerment, where are materials and skills through which agency happens (Grabe, 2012; Hidrobo, Peterman, & Heise, 2013). Building capacity, as described in our data, increases women's skills and empowers them to do and access more with these additional skills.

Women leaders appear to better represent women's interests (Duflo, 2012). Participants in our data discussed the importance of having leaders that work for everyone, regardless of gender[5]. Leaders' roles are to ensure every member, including women, have capacity building opportunities. If a leader fails to fulfill this obligation, a member can replace them in a future vote. The promise of skill building among all members and the feedback loop of a leader's failure to fulfill that promise appears to empower women.

However, all mixed-gender associations in our sample had more women than men. The gender compositions of the associations sampled empowered women to elect women leaders to represent their—women's—interests. Though unstated in our data, purposeful solidarity

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[4] e.g., "we organized ourselves to have the opportunity to build our capacity"

[5] e.g., "[good leaders are] not only thinking about one [person], because if you only think about one, you screw up"

among women members could advance their collective empowerment, economically or otherwise, in the association and the community. Further, one could consider such farmers associations to be like any other community group. A previously published qualitative study shows that women perceive community group membership to have have long-term, positive effects on their intimate relationships, empowering women individually as well (Grabe, Dutt, & Dworkin, 2014).

The perceived benefits motivating women to join associations also empower women. The overarching reason women joined associations was "to improve the quality of life". Women explained they joined to help their families[6], their communities[7], and each other[8]. Women did not join strictly out of self-interest, but they did join to help other groups of which they are part. Women likely assessed opportunity cost, and they deemed membership worthwhile in pursuit of *adelante*. They may already be empowered by freely choosing whether to join a farmers association. Yet, their choice to join could be to further empower themselves through seeking the perceived benefits of membership, if indirectly. The participants' emphasis that women are "to have the house role" contextualizes an indirect acknowledgement of their empowerment by going outside the home to join an association. Society expected women to serve the household (a group), and women's discussion of group benefits over individual ones fits this societal narrative. However, some women may have joined against their will, despite benefits other women perceive. If true, membership may disempower a woman if she only participates to serve whomever forced her to join.

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[6] e.g., "to help our children, and to help our families too"
[7] e.g., "We are going to have a better future in the community"
[8] e.g., "we want…to work in groups"

Only one association in the data analyzed mentioned women-specific issues, like physical, sexual, and patriarchal violence, as motivation to join. This association then said they could strengthen themselves, as a team[9]. If a woman joins an association to end gender inequality, it is still because of women as a group, not a woman as an individual. Colombian culture is known for its collectivist values (Di Giunta, Uribe-Tirado, & Araque-Márquez, 2011). National collectivist values may explain why women discuss the groups (i.e. family, community, women overall) that benefit from membership rather than discussing why they personally benefit.

The structure of a farmers association may also empower women. Associations need leaders, dialogue, and voting for the association to work. Everyone, regardless of gender, may access these tools as a member. Associations facilitate empowerment by offering women a platform for decision-making, voting, or becoming a leader. The data repeated the importance of recognition, whether feeling heard in one's association[10] or frustrated with the community[11]. Associations offer women a platform to voice their opinions and to lead. An association empowers women through functioning because it must recognize its members.

"Quick" decisions are an exception. Sometimes leaders were unable to consult the entire association before making a decision[12]. If a woman is one of those leaders, her additional leadership responsibilities empower her to have more decision-making power. These "quick"

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[9] e.g., "maltreatment in many aspects, physically, sexually, and patriarchal...Then, we have united, and working in a team we can fortify ourselves"

[10] e.g., "We are in the process of capacity building. For our children, to have more of a voice"

[11] e.g., "What do we need [from the community]? By the first measure, it's acknowledgment"

[12] e.g., "It is very difficult that we all come to make the decisions...We trust each other and that [the leader]...could make a practical decision quickly"

decisions exclude ordinary women members from the privilege of enhanced decision-making. Ordinary members, however, do have the power to vote out leaders they do not believe represent their interests. Women's interests are better represented in a government if women themselves participate politically, ultimately chipping away at institutionally entrenched gender inequality (Desposato & Norrander, 2009). Association membership is no different. Democratic institutions, regardless of scale, facilitate women's empowerment as long as they include women.

Not all women had equal access to the empowerment opportunities offered through associations because of logistical reasons. For example, not everyone can make every meeting[13]. Though the data lacks specific examples, there are many possible reasons a woman may be absent from a meeting from our field observations. Poor road infrastructure and bad weather may prevent a member from attending a meeting. A particular member may live far away, discouraging her from attending meetings regularly. A woman may have scheduling conflicts. Missing meetings reduces women's access to empowerment via decision-making, leadership positions, and/or capacity building activities. Association membership may empower a woman, but if she does not participate often, she may not be as empowered as other members.

Participants stressed that gender inequality is no longer present in their communities[14], except one FG[15]. As shown through contradictions in the data, women do not consciously

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[13] e.g., "It is very difficult that we all come to make the decisions"; "If we aren't all present…we make the decisions among those who are there"

[14] e.g., "Now, we aren't discriminated against anymore"

[15] e.g., "When one has to make important decisions [in the community], the woman many times does not enter in these…important decisions"

acknowledge gender discrimination, but it is there nonetheless. There are several interpretations about women's empowerment to present. Courtesy bias is most obvious. Courtesy bias is when participants give responses they believe the researcher desires (Food and Agriculture Organization , 2017). The moderator was an American graduate student who traveled far to discuss their associations. It is possible participants wanted to present their associations and communities to someone from outside their community in the best light.

It is also possible that sexism is present, but only the women who were most empowered outright were able to join a farmers association. Alternatively, it is possible that gender discrimination is present, but some women (and men) become members for reasons other than their gender or perceived potential for empowerment. Most likely, however, is that the diversity of the data likely reflects the diversity of participants' communities. Sexism is possibly more prominent in some communities than others, and different women perceive sexism differently. Since most women in our sample did not openly acknowledge sexism as a contemporary challenge, they did not consciously join the associations for empowerment potential. Regardless of intent, associations did facilitate women's empowerment. Though effective models for promoting women's empowerment, associations' empowerment of women was likely inadvertent. There are several examples alluding to this conclusion.

Mixed-gender associations had a larger proportion of women members. A larger proportion of women means women dominated the associations by sheer quantity. Other scholars have identified cultivating a "critical mass" of women to ensure they have access to resources and adequate representation for empowerment (Manchón & Macleod, 2010). Though we recognize increasing women's presence in various institution as a critical step

toward empowerment, we question the long-term empowerment consequences of "critical mass". Are women empowered if their empowerment only stems from collective empowerment? Society and institutions ought to respect and represent women with dignity, regardless of whether women's presence is conspicuous or dominant.

The perceived flexibility of women means women are more likely to join association than men, and enjoy subsequent empowerment in an association. But, this perceived flexibility does not mean women do less work than men. It means they believe they may better rearrange their schedule to accommodate membership. Women from households of low socioeconomic status often work as income generators (e.g., association members) and as caregivers (Overseas Development Institute, 2010). Women's doubled responsibilities cause "time poverty", which is disempowering by itself (Overseas Development Institute, 2010). Women may still benefit from membership, but they may benefit only because of traditional perceptions about women's time facilitate their entry into the association. There may also be a trade-off between increasing empowerment in some ways but facing time poverty in others.

Women's beliefs about women's innate qualities may also inadvertently disempower women. Women in the data analyzed believe women are more organized and better salespersons than men[16]. Being organized and an industrious salesperson are laudable qualities; women should pride themselves and feel empowered for possessing these qualities. However, considering organization and sales as innate skills, rather than learned, gives women points of pride but devalues their mastery of such technical skills.

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[16] e.g., "the role of women in the community is that they organize everything…They are the best at managing the things"

Recommendations for future interventions

Associations empower women, and other community organizations may empower women if they consider particular constraints. If an organization's function relies on participation, the organization may empower women. Requiring members to make decisions, elect leaders, and collaborate empowers women through direct engagement.

Women in our study prioritize the benefits of membership for their families and communities over personal, individual benefits. Women also emphasized collaboration within the association to benefit all members. An organizational intervention to empower women should consider the groups of which women are already part. Centering the organization's objectives around serving those groups will appeal to women. Disempowered women stand to gain the most from an environment encouraging their participation, collaboration, and opinions. Traditional gender roles, like household roles, however, constrain these women the most. An organization that appears to align with traditional gender roles may enable disempowered women to become members safely and access opportunities to increase their empowerment alongside other women.

Interventions that promote recognition of organizations in which women are members, women's contributions, and women's leadership are advisable. The data suggests that women feel empowered if someone recognizes their efforts. Awards, public showcase events, or collaborations with other community organizations are methods by which non-members may recognize women and their accomplishments. If initiatives like these present the community with opportunities to observe women's accomplishments, one cannot deny women are meaningful contributors. This acknowledgement will enable women to feel, and be, empowered.

To include more women, organizational interventions should be inventive with logistics. For example, have rotating meeting locations so no single woman is consistently discouraged from traveling long distances to attend a meeting. Periodically checking in with members to determine the best time to hold meetings will allow associations to accommodate women's changing schedules.

Changing women's attitudes about gender roles also needs consideration. Women must hold men to the same standards which they hold themselves; women do not have to assume they are the only ones capable of a learned behavior. Beyond our data, the literature has found that effective programs engage multiple stakeholders in critical discussion about gender (Ellsberg, et al., 2015). Hosting group discussions about how everyone is capable of marketing, organizing, and leadership will encourage an equitable distribution of labor within an organization. Giving women an opportunity to hold men to the same standards they hold themselves may empower women.

Conclusion

Associations empower women in various ways, which advance women *adelante.* Women join associations to improve the quality of life of their families and communities, which empowers groups of which they are part; they do not explicitly join associations to empower themselves as women. Associations facilitate women's ability to participate in dialogue, decision-making, capacity building activities, and leadership. This access results in increased empowerment among women, whether women sought this empowerment intentionally or not. Gender discrimination is not universally acknowledged, as shown by some women's outright denial that sexism was present in their communities. Nevertheless, it remains a challenge

women may face in empowering their organizations and selves, per women's contradictions about gender dynamics in their communities.

The novel research presents women's emic perspectives on topics integral to empowerment within an organization: participation, decision-making, leadership, and community gender norms. These perspectives may inform future programs aimed at eliminating gender disparities in health, economics, and politics. Understanding how organizations that empower women operate illuminates structural tools to use in future programming to empower women.

Appendix

Figures

Table 1: Summary of Segmentation Analyzed

	Intervention A	Intervention B
Mixed-gender	1	3
Women-only	1	1

Table 2: Description of Transcripts Analyzed

Focus Group	No. participants	Department	Length	Assoc. Gender Composition	Intervention[17]
1	3	Caquetá	65 minutes	Mixed-gender	A
2	5	Caquetá	54 minutes	Mixed-gender	B
3	1	Caquetá	31 minutes	Mixed-gender	B
7	8	Caquetá	55 minutes	Women-only	A
12	6	Cauca	62 minutes	Mixed-gender	B
13	5	Cauca	68 minutes	Women-only	B

Table 3: Gender composition per association

Focus Group	Percent Women	Total No. Members	Total No. Women	Total No. Men
1	42%	26	11	15
2	57%	23	13	10
3	36%	14	5	9
7	100%	36	36	0
12	36%	28	10	18
13	64%	12	8	4

[17] **Intervention A:** Marketing only; **Intervention B:** Marketing and gender training

Codebook

Code	Definition
Adelante/future	Apply the "adelante/future" code when participants mention "adelante" or describe their future. The code should be applied whether or not they are describing how the association affects their future. The code only applies with an explicit mention of time. * Adelante is an in-vivo code from the audio-recording; "Adelante" is an adverb meaning "onward" or "forward".
Communication	Apply the "communication" code when participants mention talking, discussing, dialogue, etc. with other association members. This includes discussions that guide decision-making/choosing a leader, sharing knowledge among association members, airing concerns to the association, etc.
Capacitar/fortalecer	Apply the "capacitor/fortalecer" code when participants mention capacity building or strengthening/fortifying themselves. This may refer to women individually, the association as a group, another person, or a group other than the association. Capacity building may include topics such as undertaking new projects, learning from other association members, or working together but must include an explicit reference to improving someone's abilities, capacities, or strength. * Capacitar/fortalecer is an in-vivo code from the audio-recording; "Capacitar" is a verb meaning to train/build capacity. "Fortalecer" is a verb meaning to fortify/strengthen.
Decision-making	Apply the "decision-making" code when participants describe their decision-making process, rules, and norms. "Process" means the structure of decision-making (e.g., 1. call an assembly, 2. discuss options, 3. hold vote). "Rules" means protocols they follow during decision-making (e.g., everyone has one vote; majority wins). "Norms" means what typically happens in different types of decision-making situations (e.g., for time-sensitive decisions, leaders may make the decision exclusively). Participant talk of how association members participate in the dialogue proceeding a decision should be coded as "Communication".
Empowerment – association	Apply the "Empowerment – association" code when participants describe the positive or negative results for the association that stem from being an association member.
Empowerment – external/others	Apply the "Empowerment – external/others" code when participants describe the positive or negative results for anyone (other than the participant herself) or any organization (other than the association itself) that stem from being an association member.

Empowerment – family	Apply the "Empowerment – family" code when participants describe the positive or negative results for her family that stem from being an association member. This does not include participants speaking only about themselves.
Empowerment – identity/visibility	Apply the "Empowerment – identity/visibility" code when participants describe "being heard" (or not) or "being recognized" (or not) as members of the association. This code applies to being heard in the association, in the community, in a participant's household, or any other context relevant to the participant.
Empowerment – internal/individual	Apply the "Empowerment – internal/individual" code when participants describe the positive or negative results for herself that stem from being an association member.
Gender bias	Apply the "gender bias" code when participants explicitly mention gender bias, whether present or past (e.g., "machismo used to be a part of our community"), in any relevant context. However, participants may also imply there is gender bias in some relevant context relative to another (e.g., "There is no gender bias in the community" and later say "The genders are better integrated in the association). Implied "gender bias" should also be coded.
No gender bias	Apply the "no gender bias" code when participants explicitly say there is no gender bias present. This code may be used in reference to the association, the community, or any other context participants mention. However, participants may also imply there is no gender bias (e.g., "There's no gender bias in the community" and later say "The gender dynamic in the association is the same as in the community."). Implied "no gender bias" should also be coded.
Gender roles	Apply the "gender roles" code when participants describe roles typically divided by gender (or sex). For example, a participant may say "men may typically complete farm work and women typically conduct sales", which should be coded as "gender roles". This code should also be used when a typical role of one gender is described; direct comparisons between men and women are not necessary. For example, "women generally maintain their homes" should also be coded "gender roles" though it does not mention men at all.
Leadership	Apply the leadership code when participants mention leaders or leadership in any capacity. This includes how they elect leaders, descriptions of their association leaders, and leadership qualities ANY association member can have.

Focus Group Discussions: Community Perceptions of decision making and women's leadership

READ ALOUD TO PARTICIPANTS*:*

Hello, my name is _____. I am doing research for the World Food Programmed. We have come to your farmer's association to invite you to be in a new study. In this study, we would like to learn about your experience taking part in the association, such as the roles of women in your association and changes in the association you have seen, as a member. We would like to talk with each of you and six to eight other women from your association for about 1 or 2 hours in a group discussion. We may come back another time to ask you to talk with us again. About 70 women from different farmer associations will be asked to take part in about twelve group discussions.

Please know that your participation is completely voluntary, and you may skip any questions you do not want to answer. You are also free to leave the discussion at any time for any reason. With everyone's permission, I would like to tape the discussion because I cannot write fast enough to capture all of your comments, and I do not want to miss anything important you say. I have a plan to keep all of your responses anonymous and confidential. I will not share any information that could identify you with anyone outside of the research team, so it is safe for you to share your true feelings and opinions. Although I have a plan to keep your answers secret, there is a minimal risk that confidentiality and anonymity will not be maintained.

All participants must agree not to discuss comments shared during this discussion with anyone outside of this group. This is for everyone's privacy, and to help ensure everyone feels comfortable sharing their honest opinions. It is also important that everyone respects all of the opinions and ideas shared today, so please do not interrupt one another. For me, the most important thing is that we listen to each other and that you feel comfortable participating.

Also, please know that you are the experts! Your opinions and ideas are the most important things you can share today…

Does anyone have any questions or need me to repeat anything?

Are you willing to participate in this discussion?

Does everyone agree not to discuss this focus group with anyone?

Does everyone agree to respect each others' opinions?

Do I have permission to record the discussion?

BEGIN RECORDING

Introductions

Thank you for agreeing to participate. I appreciate your help. Is everyone ready to begin?

1. Can everyone please share their <u>first name</u>?

2. Why do <u>women decide to become a member</u> of the farmer's association?
    a. New friendships
    b. New business connections
    c. Growing crops
    d. Raising livestock
    e. Selling agriculture products
    f. Financial help

Goal 4: Decision making

Now, I would like to talk about participating in your farmer's association and decision making.

3. How do <u>women participate</u> in the farmer's association?
    a. Women's role
    b. Growing crops
    c. Selling crops
    d. Raising livestock
    e. Selling livestock
    f. Leadership

4. [IF APPLICABLE] How do <u>men participate</u> in the farmer's association?
    a. Men's role
    b. Growing crops
    c. Selling crops
    d. Raising livestock
    e. Selling livestock
    f. Leadership
    g. Differences between men and women

5. How are <u>decisions </u>made at the farmer's association?
    a. Factors considered: season, what was sold last year, amount of product available for sale
    b. Discussion among all members
    c. Discussion among newer vs. older members
    d. Discussion among women
    e. [IF APPLICABLE] Discussion among men
    f. Leaders make decisions
    g. Describe the process of making a decision/how the last decision was made
    h. Describe what happens when there is a big disagreement between members

Goal 4: Leadership

Thank you for your responses so far. Now, I have some questions about leadership in your association.

6. How are <u>leaders</u> for the farmer's association <u>selected</u>?
    a. Requirements
    b. Is the process informal, formal, or a combination? Why or why not?
    c. Is the process different for different roles (president, treasurer, secretary)?
    d. [IF APPLICABLE] Is the process different for men and women? Why or why not?
    e. Is the process different for people of different ages? Why or why not?
    f. Describe how the newest leader was selected

7. What are <u>women leaders</u> in your farmer's association like?
    a. Age
    b. Farming experience
    c. Experience other than farming
    d. Personal qualities
    e. Influences on their leadership

8. How can <u>women develop leadership qualities</u>?
    a. Attending meetings
    b. Learning from current leaders or other members
    c. Decision making
    d. Other farmer's association activities
    e. Relationships with other members

Goal 4: Farmer's association vs. community

Next, I would like to know about your community participation in comparison to your association.

9. What are <u>women's roles in the community</u> like?
    a. Women's responsibilities
    b. "Vender" roles (if this is not clear, compare how women sell products through the association with women who have stores in the community)
    c. Leadership roles
    d. Neighbor relationships
    e. Participation in other groups/meetings outside the farmer's association
    f. Decision making

10. How is the <u>integration of the genders</u> in the community in <u>comparison</u> to integration in the association?
    a. Women selling agriculture products
    b. Women making decisions

     c.   Women leaders

11. How are <u>women's roles as members of the farmer's association different</u> from their roles in the community, if at all?
    a.   Women's responsibilities
    b.   "Vender" roles (if this is not clear, compare how women sell products through the association with women who have stores in the community)
    c.   Leadership roles
    d.   Member relationships/neighbor relationships
    e.   Making decisions for the association vs. as a community member

Closing

Thank you all for your contributions so far. I have a few more questions I would like to ask you.

12. <u>Overall, how would you describe women's role in decision making</u> within the association [IF APPLICABLE] compared to men?

13. <u>Overall, how would you describe women as leaders</u> within the association [IF APPLICABLE] compared to men?

14. Is there a topic about women in your farmer's association we have not yet discussed that you all would like to tell me about today?

That was my last question. I will be available for individual questions or other comments if you wish. Thanks again for participating in the discussion today! We appreciate you sharing your experience in the farmer's association.

END RECORDING

Discusiones de grupos focales: Percepciones de tomar decisiones y liderazgo de mujeres

LEA EN VOZ ALTA A LAS PARTICIPANTES:

Hola, mi nombre es _____. Hago una investigación para el Programa Mundial de Alimentos. Hemos venido a su asociación para invitarles para unirse un estudio nuevo. En este estudio, queremos aprender sobre su experiencia en la asociación, como los papeles de mujeres en su asociación y los cambios a la asociación han visto ustedes como miembros. Queremos hablar con cada una de ustedes y seis a ocho otras mujeres de su asociación por 1 o 2 horas en una discusión de grupo. Regresaremos, posiblemente, para hablar con ustedes otra vez. Preguntaremos a 70 mujeres de asociaciones diferentes para participar en 12 discusiones de grupo.

Por favor, sepan que su participación es completamente voluntaria, y pueden omitir cualquiera pregunta no quieren contestar. Están libres para dejar la discusión en cualquier momento por cualquiera razón. Con la permisión de todas, quiero grabar la discusión porque no puedo escribir suficientemente rápido para capturar todos sus comentarios, y no quiero perder nada importante que dicen ustedes. Tengo un plan para mantener todas sus respuestas anónimas y confidenciales. No voy a compartir cualquier información que pueda identificarles con nadie fuera del equipo de investigación, así está seguro para compartir sus sentimientos y opiniones verdaderos. Aunque tengo un plan para mantener sus respuestas en secreto, hay un riesgo mínimo de que la confidencialidad y el anonimato no se mantendrán.

También nos gustaría invitarlas para que las ideas de las personas que hacemos parte de esta actividad no sean compartidas con otras personas. Esto es importante para que nos sintamos en confianza y podamos compartir nuestras pensamientos. Es importante que todas respetan las opiniones e ideas compartidos hoy y que no interrumpamos cuando una de nuestras compañeras está hablando. Para mí lo más importante es escucharlas y que ustedes se sientan cómodas participando.

¡También, por favor, sepa que ustedes son las expertas! Sus opiniones e ideas son las cosas más importantes que pueden compartir hoy.

¿Alguien tiene alguna pregunta o necesita que yo repito algo?

¿Quieren participar en esta discusión?

¿Todas están de acuerdo de no hablar sobre este grupo focal con alguien fuera del grupo?

¿Todas están de acuerdo con respetar las opiniones de las demás?

¿Tengo permiso para grabar la discusión?

Introducciones

Gracias por aceptar de participar. Aprecio la ayuda. ¿Todas están listas para comenzar?

1. Antes de empezar, me gustaría que cada una de ustedes <u>se presente.</u>

2. ¿Por qué <u>mujeres deciden hacer parte</u> de la asociación de agricultores?

    a. Amistades nuevas
    b. Conexiones de negocio nuevas
    c. Crecimiento de cultivos
    d. Cría de pecuario
    e. Vender productos agrícolas
    f. Ayuda financiera

Objetivo 4: Tomar decisiones

Ahora, me gustaría hablar sobre participando en la asociación y tomando decisiones.

3. ¿Cómo <u>participan las mujeres</u> en la asociación?
    a. Papel de mujeres
    b. Producción de cultivos
    c. Venta de cultivos
    d. Cría de pecuario
    e. Venta de pecuario
    f. Liderazgo

4. [SI APLICA] ¿Cómo <u>participan los hombres</u> en la asociación?
    a. Papel de hombres
    b. Producción de cultivos
    c. Venta de cultivos
    d. Cría de pecuario
    e. Venta de pecuario
    f. Liderazgo

5. ¿Al interior de la asociación cómo se <u>toman las decisiones</u>?
    a. Elementos considerados: la estación, productos que vendieron el año pasado, la cantidad de productos disponibles por la venta
    b. Discusión entre todos los miembros
    c. Discusión entre miembros recientemente vs. miembros mayores
    d. Discusión entre las mujeres
    e. [SI APLICA] Discusión entre los hombres
    f. Lideres toman decisiones

g. Describe el proceso de tomar una decisión/la ultima vez que la asociación tomó una decisión sobre que productos para vender

h. Describe que pasa cuando hay un gran desacuerdo entre miembros

Objetivo 4: Liderazgo

Gracias por sus respuestas. Ahora, tengo algunas preguntas sobre el liderazgo al interior de su asociación.

6. ¿Cómo <u>eligen los líderes</u> de la asociación?
   a. Requisitos
   b. ¿El proceso es informal, formal, o una combinación? ¿Por qué o por qué no?
   c. ¿El proceso es diferente por diferentes papeles (presidente, tesorero, contador)?
   d. [SI APLICA] ¿El proceso es diferente para hombres y mujeres? ¿Por qué o por qué no?
   e. ¿El proceso es diferente para personas de diferentes edades? ¿Por qué o por qué no?
   f. Describe como el líder lo mas reciente fue elegido

7. ¿Cómo son los <u>lideres que son mujeres</u> al interior de la asociación?
   a. Edad
   b. Experiencia dentro el sector agrícola
   c. Experiencia fuera del sector agrícola
   d. Cualidades personales
   e. Influencias en su liderazgo

8. ¿Las <u>mujeres cómo pueden desarrollar los habilidades de liderazgo</u>?
   a. Asistencia a reuniones
   b. Aprender de líderes actuales o otros miembros
   c. Tomar decisiones
   d. Otras actividades al interior de la asociación

Objetivo 4: La asociación vs. la comunidad
Próximo, me gustaría conocer sobre su participación a nivel comunitario en comparación a su asociación.

9. ¿Cuáles son los <u>papeles de mujeres en la comunidad</u>?
   a. Responsabilidades de mujeres
   b. Papeles de vendedora (si no es clara, compare como las mujeres venden productos a través de la asociación y como las mujeres mantienen tiendas comunitarias)
   c. Papeles de liderazgo
   d. Relaciones entre vecinos
   e. Participación en asambleas fuera de la asociación
   f. Tomar decisiones

10. ¿Cómo es la integración de los géneros en la comunidad en comparación a la integración al interior de la asociación?
    a. Mujeres que venden productos agrícolas
    b. Mujeres que toman decisiones
    c. Lideres que son mujeres

11. ¿Cómo son los papeles suyos de la asociación diferente que los papeles suyos de la comunidad, si hay?
    a. Papeles de mujeres
    b. Papeles de vendedoras (si no es clara, compare como las mujeres venden productos a través de la asociación y las mujeres mantienen tiendas comunitarias)
    c. Papeles de liderazgo
    d. Relaciones entre vecinos y miembros
    e. Tomar decisiones como miembro comunitario vs. miembro de asociación

Clausura

Gracias a todos por sus contribuciones hasta el momento. Ya casi hemos terminado.

12. ¿En resumen, cómo describieran el papel de mujeres en tomar decisiones al interior de la asociación [SI APLICA] en comparación a los hombres?

13. ¿En resumen, cómo describieran las mujeres como lideres al interior de la asociación [SI APLICA] en comparación a los hombres?

14. ¿ Sobre la situación de las mujeres en la asociación, creen que hay algún tema del cuál quieran hablar?

Esa fue mi última pregunta. Estaré disponible para preguntas individuas u otros comentarios si desean. ¡Gracias de nuevo por participar en la discusión de hoy! Apreciamos que compartieron sus experiencias de la asociación hoy.

FIN DE LA GRABACIÓN

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