

INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION
ON AGRICULTURE (IICA)



STRENGTHENING ACTIONS TO INCREASE
THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS IN THE SOUTHERN AREA

Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay and Paraguay

November, 1990

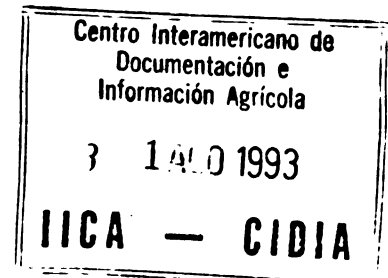
IICA
51
59a

PROGRAM III:
ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT



IICA-CIDIA

✓
INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION
ON AGRICULTURE (IICA)



**STRENGTHENING ACTIONS TO INCREASE
THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS IN THE SOUTHERN AREA**

Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay and Paraguay

November, 1990

**PROGRAM III:
ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

00005951

11CA
E51
I592

~~134 0000620~~

TITLE: STRENGTHENING ACTIONS AIMED AT INVOLVING WOMEN IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS IN THE SOUTHERN AREA (ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, CHILE, PARAGUAY AND URUGUAY)

1. Identification

1.1 Program III Area: Southern Office:

1.2 Scope: National Name of Country:

Multinational: yes Area: Southern Hemispheric

Headquarters: Argentina

1.3 Duration: Two years Beginning: 1991 Conclusion: 1992

1.4 Funding:

Regular Resources: Quota US\$120,000

Country Resources: US\$150,000

External Resources: US\$350,000

SOURCES	TOTAL US\$
External	350,000
National (countries)	150,000
IICA	120,000
TOTAL	620,000

2. ANTECEDENTS

2.1 Origin of the Proposal

Resolution No. 159 of the Fifth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), entitled "Importance of the Role of Women and Youth in Rural Development and the PLANLAC," states that "there is a need to strengthen efforts to increase the participation of rural women and youth in production and in improving the quality of life within the context of comprehensive development of rural families."



A framework for strengthening the participation of rural women in agricultural reactivation and development in Latin America and the Caribbean was prepared in 1989 under the technical direction of IICA's Organization and Management for Rural Development Program. This document was presented during an international seminar on women and rural development, held in May 1990 in San Jose and attended by representatives of multilateral and bilateral organizations and NGOs carrying out actions in support of rural women.

In 1987, the IICA Office in Argentina, together with the Secretariat of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (SAGyP) of that country and with funding from UNIFEM, became involved in the topic of women and rural development through a pilot project in Cachi. In 1989, these efforts were expanded to the northwest region of the country, and in 1990, to the northeast. In all three cases, the projects were built into programs to support small farmers, through specific actions aimed at rural women. The SAGyP entered into agreements with the provincial secretariats of agriculture, where the technical personnel who direct the project in each province are located. The key actions of the projects were aimed at:

- i) providing training to directors of rural development institutions for incorporating the issue of women into rural development policies;
- ii) providing training to technical personnel who direct the projects in each province, providing them with methods for working with rural women in carrying out participatory assessments, formulating projects, training rural women, executing projects (activities aimed at strengthening women's groups within farmer organizations) and increasing the capacity of women to generate family income.

In addition, throughout 1988 and 1989, the IICA Office in Paraguay worked with UNIFEM to draw up and negotiate a project in support of rural women which has since been approved and is about to get under way.

Likewise, the IICA Offices in Uruguay and Brazil have drawn up projects and, after discussing the matter with official institutions and NGOs in those countries, have established that there is considerable demand for such efforts in these countries; a message they have conveyed to IICA's Program III.



Throughout 1989, the IICA Office in Argentina received requests from the Offices in Uruguay, Paraguay and Brazil for horizontal cooperation to prepare projects in support of rural women. It has not been possible to answer such requests because of a lack of resources.

In July 1989, rural development specialists from the Southern Area, meeting in Montevideo, drew up a profile of the "Program to Strengthen Small Farmers in the Southern Area." One of the program's five components is entitled "Strengthening the Participation of Women in Rural Development Programs and Projects." This component recognizes that the limited participation of women in rural development policies and actions is common to all the countries of the area and is attributable to similar causes.

In this regard, a multinational project could offer advantages over the isolated actions of each country. The profile prepared by IICA's Rural Development Program suggested making the component on women a separate project.

After consultations at IICA Headquarters with the specialist in women's affairs and rural development, the IICA rural development specialists of the Southern Area, meeting in Asuncion from May 2-5, drew up this project profile proposal aimed at incorporating women into rural development.

2.2 Specific problem the project seeks to solve

Before stating the specific problem, it is necessary to make some brief comments on the general context of the project.

The small-farm sector plays a very important role in the Southern Area, in regard to both the number of farms and their contribution to the national economies.

It is estimated that small farmers own some 4,000,000 farms occupying approximately 25.4 million hectares, or 66% of all farms and 4.5% of the land occupied.

Their contribution to agricultural production is primarily in the area of food for domestic consumption. It is estimated that small farmers provide around 60% of the foodstuffs and other raw materials used for industry.



TABLE No. 1

IMPORTANCE OF SMALL FARMERS IN THE SOUTHERN CONE

COUNTRY	Farms in Prod.	Area Occupied	Agric. GDP	Exports	Food Production		
	N	%	hs.	%	%		
Argentina	187,046	37.1	1,297,527	0.64	n/d	3*	n/d
Brazil	3,383,851	67.1	19,894,841	6.00	20	(10)*	60
Chile	209,469	58.0	1,820,776	13.00	25	5	35
Paraguay	187,298	77.0	895,749	5.30	32	50	80
Uruguay	41,137	60.0	1,437,901	9.00	n/d	11	35
TOTAL	4,010,916	66.0	25,346,794	4.50	(29)*	(10)*	60

* Estimated

Despite its important contribution to the economies of these countries, this sector is characteristically poor, caused by a scarcity of production resources and the lack of institutional support in terms of such services as credit, technology or training.

The decade of the 1980s, with the onset of the foreign debt crisis, and the implementation of structural and sectoral adjustment programs in the countries as a response to same, only deepened the poverty of most small farmers, in effect, making them "net purchasers of foodstuffs." ¹ The rural poor were hurt by increased food prices and have seen their standard of living decline.

In this regard, the contribution of rural women to production has been underrated. As a result of the structural crisis that affected the region in the 1980s, levels of poverty have risen and rural women have become more involved in production, both on and off the farm. Another fact of life in rural areas is the increase in

¹ de Janvry, A. et al.. "Impacto de la crisis en la economía campesina de América Latina y el Caribe" in Fausto Jordán (compiler) La economía campesina: crisis, reactivación y desarrollo. San Jose, Costa Rica, 1989.



the number of households headed by women, created by the exodus of men to cities or other sectors in search of employment.

These facts, however, are not reflected in proposals and programs aiming to improve the lives of rural women or address their specific role as producers and reproducers within the small family farm.

This situation is aggravated by their lack of access to basic factors of production (land, capital, water) and to services provided by rural extension institutions (technical assistance, marketing, training).

The specific problem the project seeks to solve concerns the lack of mechanisms in the Southern Area which can be used to replicate and disseminate experiences gained in differentiated policies, programs and projects for rural women.

2.3 Justification

As democracy gains hold in the countries of the Southern Area, local governments are showing increased interest in finding solutions to the problems of rural women, because of a new perception of their potential contribution to agriculture.

In Argentina, the projects have called for joint production activities aimed at generating or improving resources. However, resources for carrying out such actions are extremely limited and will not be sufficient to produce an adequate solution to the problem or complete the training of the technical personnel who direct the projects. It is worth noting that the two regions in which the projects are being executed cover 1,000,000 km².

If this project is not executed, the women's projects currently being implemented in the region and the training would be cut short. Furthermore, it would be impossible to share with the other countries of the Southern Area the experience gained in northeast Argentina, by evaluating successes and difficulties.

Regarding NGOs, it should be pointed out that there are no NGOs specialized in working with rural women. The NGOs that work with small farmers address the issue of women in different ways and to differing degrees, but none of them assign high priority to the topic.



In Brazil, no programs for rural women exist yet at the federal level. A few months ago, an office was created within the Ministry of Agriculture to deal with this issue. In the states (or provinces), the technical assistance and extension teams and those that assist small family or associative enterprises are familiar with certain techniques aimed at supporting rural women.

Private institutions are numerous and varied in type:

- i) organizations to support women in defending their rights;
- ii) women's organizations (political). Federations of rural workers have secretariats serving rural women, and congresses are organized at the levels of the states and nation;
- iii) organizations that support the formulation and execution of production projects for women (rural and urban).

Work carried out in Brazil on behalf of women has been subject to certain limitations, which can be summarized as follows:

- a) lack of state-wide mechanisms to promote rural development, especially as pertains to guidance and coordination;
- b) empirical working methods that do not produce concrete, successful results (in other words, that never manage to get beyond the discussion stage, or that cause the projects of the women's associations to fail);
- c) lack of serious research on the role of women in agriculture, either as a member of the family unit or as a wage earner. No studies exist on how this role has changed in light of economic and political changes in the sector. This type of diagnosis should be the basis for the actions of NGOs working with women's issues.

In the public sector of Uruguay, no specific institutions work with rural women. Actions that do take place are generally carried out by NGOs: ISPRU, Manos del Uruguay and others, which focus on:

- i) organization of women's groups;
- ii) preparation and execution of specific production and artisanal projects.

As regards rural women, the limitations of these actions are:



- a) the topic has been given no political, economic or social importance within the sector because the institutions have done nothing to promote the importance of women's issues;
- b) lack of institutional presence: within the public agricultural sector, no institution has received a mandate to work with women; consequently, no specific actions are taken in this field;
- c) the work of the NGOs is limited in coverage, preventing them from having any impact on the problems of rural women in the countries; and
- d) lack of knowledge as to the circumstances faced by rural women, especially as concerns the types of work they perform and the conditions under which they perform it, on and off the farm.

In Paraguay, the Agricultural and Livestock Extension Service (SEAG) has an Education for the Home program, under which it initiated, in 1986, a project entitled "The role of women in rural development." The goal of this project, is to give greater importance to rural women in their triple role as mother-reproducer-citizen. The principal instrument used by the project is participatory assessment and planning.

The main limitations on the work being done with rural women in Paraguay can be summarized as follows:

- a) absence of specific policies which define the participation of rural women;
- b) low priority assigned to the issue within institutions (as a consequence of the above), which is expressed in a lack of qualified personnel and budgetary resources.

In Chile, the situation of rural women - the growing rate at which women are becoming involved in agriculture under difficult conditions (as squatters, earning low wages, etc.) as a result of the unique modernization process that has taken place in recent years, along with recent moves toward democracy - is such that specific actions need to be taken to promote greater cooperation between the State and the NGOs, in order to take advantage of the experience gained by the latter.

As can be seen in the preceding description of the problems in each country, certain problems exist in more than one country that would be best addressed through a multinational project. These are:

- a) A lack of information in the Southern Area on the working conditions of women and their role in society. In most of the countries, there is little or no understanding of the system that could be called "small farm-home," which is more than just the farm.

These small-farm homes use numerous strategies to ensure their subsistence. Such strategies are determined primarily by the availability of production resources, but also by the opportunities for employment in local and regional labor markets.

The size and make up of the family unit also influence the formulation of these strategies, as does the stage of development of the family. By understanding the strategies of the small farm-home system, it will be possible to identify and understand women's participation in work. This participation is clearly not the same in every case. While the responsibility of women in domestic chores and caring for the family seems to be common to all the countries, the same cannot be said in terms of their participation in production activities. This is why we find women who are in charge of an entire farm, female family members who help on the farm, women wage earners (full-time and temporary), women merchants, female artisans, etc. Ignorance of the degree to which they participate in community institutions makes it impossible to properly design policies and projects that envisage an improvement in their working conditions and a more active role in their communities.

While similarities have been found in the work performed by rural women in the different countries of the area, a great variety of situations also exist in each country. However, there is no common methodology available for making comparisons and drawing conclusions for action. At the request of the Directorate of Program III, case studies were conducted recently in six countries, only one of which, Brazil, is in the Southern Area.

- b) Lack or weakness of specific policies for rural women

Rural development policies and their instruments, the programs and projects, are designed and executed with men in mind, as the heads of the farms. However, available information reveals that women play an important role in the small farm-home. Training, technology generation and transfer and credit projects are traditionally aimed at the man in charge of the farm. Even when women are responsible for the farm, extension services do not view them as users.

- c) Shortcomings in the conceptual framework or ineffective methods for working with rural women

Some official documents in the countries affirm the need to promote the participation of women. There have even been some programs aimed at women, but their focus only tended to reinforce their traditional roles in nutrition, home economics, etc. If, as it has been demonstrated, rural women have an important role in agricultural production and great potential for contributing to reactivating the sector, focuses limiting them to being efficient "rural housewives" must be replaced.

In other cases, the conceptual framework is correct, but specific methods for working with rural women are lacking. In many cases, a frequent comment by extension agents is, "I do invite the women to the meetings. I don't know why they don't come."



3. Objectives

3.1 Specific objective

DESCRIPTION

To create mechanisms for joint action among the countries of the Southern Area, to be used in identifying and establishing priorities for differentiated policies and instruments which will facilitate the participation of rural women in development.

INDICATORS AND GOALS

Committee created within the Advisory Council for Agricultural Cooperation in the Countries of the Southern Area (CONASUR) to promote the participation of women, which will serve to identify and establish priorities for policies and instruments by providing access to trained personnel, updated information and appropriate approaches and methods.

3.2 Final results

DESCRIPTION

a. Updated information and basic studies available on the situation of rural women in the Southern Area.

b. Senior technical personnel trained in formulating policies and preparing programs promoting the participation of women in rural development.

c. Conceptual framework and operating methods available for work with rural women, based on the experience gained

INDICATORS AND GOALS

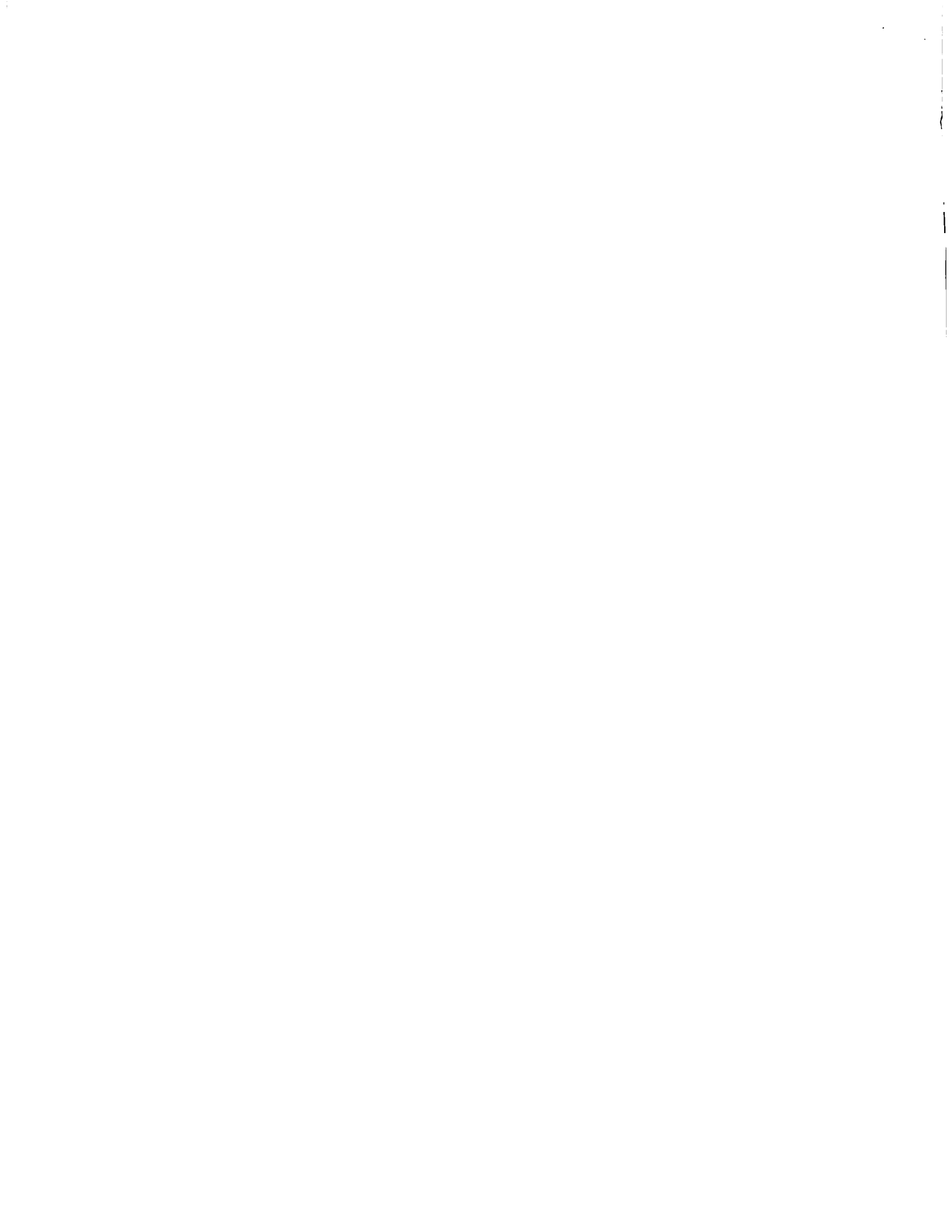
- 5 country-level studies and one area-level summary on the situation of women.

- A data bank in operation in each country.

- 20 senior technical personnel trained in the countries of the area.

- Production projects formulated and executed in Uruguay, Brazil and Argentina.

- 30 technical personnel trained in working with rural women, to serve as multiplier



from 18 production projects involving rural women in Uruguay and Brazil prepared and distributed. Technical personnel trained.

d. Permanent mechanism for horizontal cooperation in operation.

e. Policy and mechanism to ensure ongoing funding of projects for rural women established.

agents of these methods.

- A conceptual framework and three methodological documents prepared for working with rural women in the Southern Area.

- 25 technical personnel from the countries trained in using radio outreach techniques for working with rural women.

- 25 technical personnel from the countries trained in using audiovisual materials to work with rural women.

- 5 horizontal technical cooperation missions conducted in the countries.

- 3 meetings held of the committee to promote the participation of women in rural development.

- At least one rotating fund created in each country, with national counterpart funding, providing seed capital for necessary investments.

4. STRATEGY

Because of the particular nature of this project, every effort will be made to involve women managers, extensionists, outreach workers and technicians in project operations.

While funding is being sought for the project, rural development specialists in the countries will promote the topic at the senior levels of government and non-governmental organizations and discuss the project profile with them.

As part of the activities planned to promote the project, a workshop, will be held in Paraguay to launch the project. Participating in the workshop will be one of the leaders of the project being executed in Argentina to upgrade women's participation, who will discuss all phases of the implementation of that project. This will be the first horizontal cooperation action taken prior to formal execution of the project.

The project will begin with the formation of the committee to promote the participation of women, which will draw up the annual plan of operation. The next step would be to carry out the assessments of each country and the comparative summary.

Based on these comparisons, it will be possible to determine the training needs for management personnel and the technical personnel who will serve as multiplier agents. Management personnel will receive training prior to the technical personnel. Once the first training workshop has concluded, the multiplier agents will begin to work in the field with the grassroots technical personnel and outreach workers to assess the situation of rural women. Once the grassroots technical personnel and women's groups have completed these assessments, a second training workshop will be held on the formulation of projects with rural women's groups. This training will equip the multiplier agents to undertake, in situ, training of grassroots technical personnel who, in turn, will begin to design projects with women's groups. A third workshop will train the multiplier agents in managing and administering projects with rural women. At the conclusion of this workshop, the multiplier agents will be equipped to assist the grassroots technical personnel and outreach workers in managing projects in the field. After the third workshop, the selected projects can be launched, to serve to demonstrate ways to work with rural women in the Southern Area.

After the first training workshop for technical personnel, the committee to promote the participation of women will hold a second meeting in order to disseminate the findings of the studies on the situation of women in the Southern Area and to begin to design mechanisms for setting up the rotating funds



in each country. Because it will take several months to set up this mechanism, it must be done as far in advance as possible. In this way, when the women's groups have completed their training and are ready to initiate execution of the project, the necessary funding will be available.

Following each of the three training events, a document will be prepared which will serve as the methodological framework for the work of the multiplier agents. It will contain the proceedings and an evaluation of the event.

After the second training event, the horizontal cooperation missions among the countries will begin. Such missions will be conducted throughout the two years of the project, depending on the needs and possibilities of the working teams.

Training in the use of the communications media will take place after the second training event, in other words, once the technical personnel have a conceptual and methodological framework for training, diagnosis and project formulation incorporating the gender viewpoint.

During the third meeting of the committee to promote the participation of women, which will serve as a conclusion to the project, the final document "Conceptual framework for promoting the participation of women in rural development" will be presented..

5. Basic activities

- . Three base studies on the situation of rural women in Uruguay, Chile and Paraguay. For Argentina and Brazil, it will be necessary to complete and harmonize certain information. A comparative summary will be drawn up of the situation of the five countries.
- . Three training meetings for senior technical personnel involved in women's issues and rural development.
- . One training workshop for senior technical personnel involved in women's issues and rural development.
- . Three training workshops for the technical personnel who will serve as multiplier agents.
- . Two training workshops for the technical personnel who will specialize in the use of the communications media in working with rural women.
- . A conceptual framework concerning the participation of



rural women in the Southern Area, and three methodological documents.

- . Five horizontal cooperation missions carried out among the Southern Area countries.
- . Implementation of 18 production projects in Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil.
- . Establishment of a rotating fund in each country to finance production projects with rural women.

6. Direct beneficiaries

The direct beneficiaries of the project will be official institutions of the sector (ministries of agriculture) or planning institutions both at the national and state levels, and selected NGOs involved in women's issues and rural development.

7. Costs

Source and major object of expenditure	Years					Total
	1	2	-	-	- n	
IICA SOURCE:						
1	60,000	60,000				120,000
EXTERNAL SOURCE						
2						
3-9	175,000	175,000				350,000
TOTAL						
NATIONAL SOURCE:						
2	60,000					
3-9	75,000	75,000				150,000
TOTAL						
GRAND TOTAL	310,000	310,000				620,000





INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE
P.O.Box 55-2200 Coronado, Costa Rica/Tel.: 29-02-22/Cable: IICASANJOSE/Telex: 2144 IICA CR
Electronic Mail EIES: 1332 IICA SC / FAX (506) 29-47-41, 29-26-59 IICA COSTA RICA