

# **Market access and gender roles in the Jatun Mayu watershed communities (Tiraque, Bolivia)**

**Women in Development Discussion Series at Virginia Tech**

**Thursday, November 20, 2008**

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# Introduction

- Project framework: Watershed Based Natural Resources Management in Small Scale Agriculture, Sloped Areas of Andean Region: Sub-watershed “Jatun Mayu” river. Tiraque – Bolivia
- Cross-cutting gender research: Analysis of gender roles within farmer’s economy

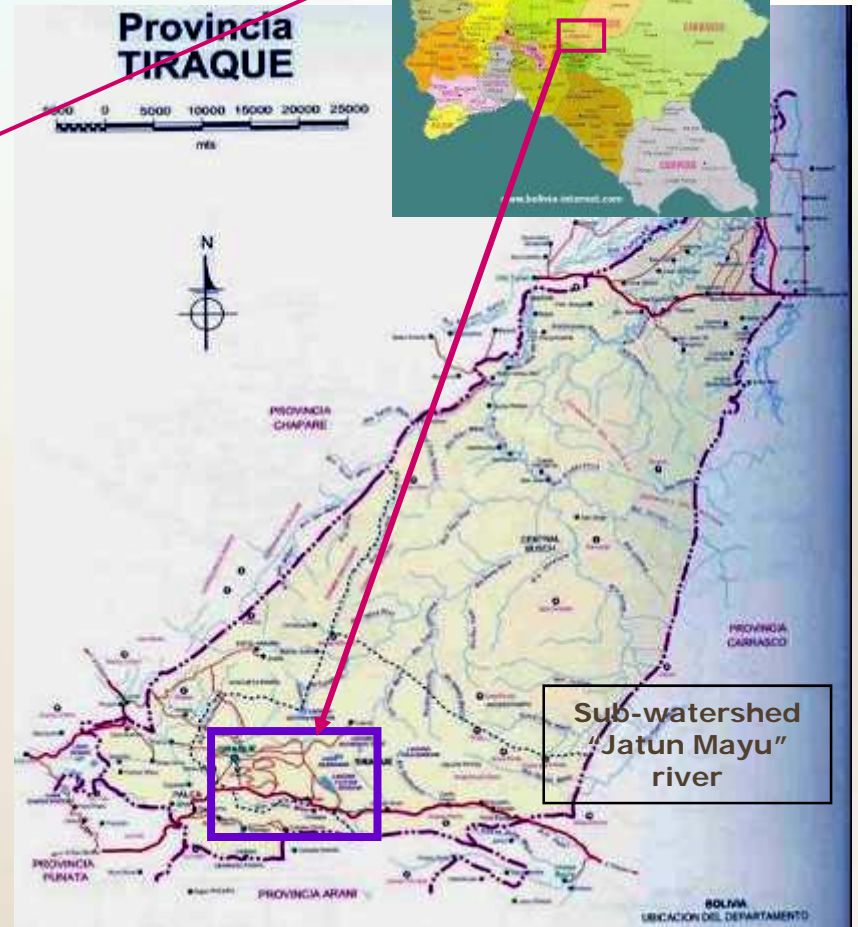


# Study area: Subwatershed Jatun Mayu, Tiraque - Bolivia

## Sub-watershed location



Cochabamba City



## **Study area: Subwatershed Jatun Mayu, Tiraque - Bolivia**

- Located on the southern side of Tiraque Province, 70 Km away from the City of Cochabamba; and covers an area of 117 km<sup>2</sup>
- It is comprised of 14 communities, with a population of approximately 3000 inhabitants.



# Study area: Subwatershed Jatun Mayu, Tiraque - Bolivia

- Primary economic activities:
  - Small-scale agricultural production
  - Livestock
- Low level of education and high illiteracy (33% - more than 60% are female)
- Primary social problems: low levels of income and lack of income-earning alternatives
- Principal environmental problems: soil erosion, deforestation and low levels of soil fertility



# Market access and gender roles

## Background

- Widely-held assumptions:
  - Andean societies to be strongly male-dominated
  - Role of women is relegated to reproductive responsibilities only.



# Market access and gender roles

## Objectives

- Describe the roles, responsibilities, actions and decision-making of small farmers and merchants in rural Bolivia
- Describe household dynamics and gendered social networks that facilitate or impede access to local and regional markets.



# Market access and gender roles

## Methodology

- Rapid Market Appraisal (RMA)
- Case Studies (CS)
  - Baseline data analysis (SANREM Project),
  - Secondary data
  - Semi-structured interviews
  - Direct observation and also an analysis of the social networks.
  - Participatory tools (regenerative cycles, crop budgets)
- Market analysis will be conducted around potato production (most important crop)



*"The wholesaler never loses". This sentence used by farmers sums up the transaction relationship*



# Market access and gender roles

- Methodology



*Case Studies (CS): Participatory tools - regenerative cycles*



*Rapid Market Appraisal (RMA): Semi-structured interviews*

# PRELIMINARY OUTCOMES

## 1. REPRODUCTIVE ROLE:

- An average household has 8 members.
- 12% of households are headed by women (access to resources is limited).
- 46% of women are literate, but 76% of the illiterate are women
- Women undertake mainly the household work, animal care and agricultural production support.



*Average family of 8 members: Father (right), Mother (middle) and six children (2 boys and 4 girls).*



# PRELIMINARY OUTCOMES

## 1. REPRODUCTIVE ROLE:

- The decisions about the income management and household are taken by men and women together (60%)
- Regarding the administration per se, women bear most of the responsibilities (43%).
- Mainly women are responsible for children's education, feeding and health care.



*Women are responsible for household management, child care, food security, health and education.*

# PRELIMINARY OUTCOMES

## 2. PRODUCTIVE ROLE

### Agricultural Production:

- Families own from 0.5 to 20 ha;
- Households led by women own between 0.25 to 1.2 ha.
- Women only manage 5% of the cultivated lands.
- Men take most of the decisions in productive activities
- They always count on the support and opinion of women.



*5 y.o. boy working in agriculture side by side with his father. "Everybody works in the family" say farmers.*

# PRELIMINARY OUTCOMES

## 2. PRODUCTIVE ROLE

### Agricultural Production:

- Actually, as an effect of migration, women are engaged in production activities that were exclusive to men.
- Implementation of IPM (Integrated Pest Management) workshops for women



*Due to migration, often women assume male's activities, like plot preparation and irrigation.*

# PRELIMINARY OUTCOMES

## 2. PRODUCTIVE ROLE

### Marketing:

- Sales decisions are made by men and women together
- Women are mostly responsible for marketing:
  - Negotiation skills
  - Bargaining power (higher prices)
- Wholesalers are mostly women
- In the markets men play the role of transportation, support and security of their wives.



*Both go to the market, women are in charge, but men support them*



# PRELIMINARY OUTCOMES

## 2. PRODUCTIVE ROLE

### Marketing:

- The high participation of women in markets is striking.
- Access to Information, mostly about prices, volumes and possible markets
  - Radio programmes,
  - Social networks
  - Cell phones (use has grown strongly in the last years).



*In market there is a high female attendance and predominance (View of Tiraque market )*

# Market interviews

Summary: interviews of four markets (potato commercialization)  
 Farmers, Wholesalers, Retailers, Key actors (Municipality, truck drivers)

Characteristics	Fours markets
Distribution of market actors	More than 60% are women (i.e. more than 80% of wholesalers)
Gender roles in the market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•In the last 20 years women's market participation has increased</li> <li>•Women are in charge of the business (potato sales)</li> <li>•Men support their wives with transportation and security</li> </ul>
Decision making	Women are in charge. It is their business
Money management	Women are in charge. <i>"women are the safe boxes of our families"</i>
Bargaining power and negotiation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Women-wholesalers "Between women there is more understanding".</li> <li>•"Men do not argue with women" "men do not know how to bargain". Wholesalers take advantage of men</li> </ul>
Factors that affect the negotiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Gender</li> <li>•Age</li> <li>•Origin (production)</li> </ul>
Social networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Important for negotiation</li> <li>•Use of cellphones plays an important role</li> <li>•Based on trust</li> </ul>
Farmers – wholesalers relation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•"the wholesaler never loses"</li> <li>•Based on trust (oral contracts)</li> </ul>
Importance of potato production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Local markets: In Tiraque once a week major wholesalers can spend more than \$63.000 (only potato purchases).</li> <li>•Approximately there are 10 major wholesalers in this market, only 2 of them are men</li> </ul>





## PRELIMINARY OUTCOMES

### 3. COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT ROLES:

- The Union (Syndicate): It's the main social and political institution in the community, but it's led only by men.
- In most communities women have no right to vote, but always have the last word at home
- Women's organization: Are sponsored and promoted by institutions that work in the area.

*View of a "Union" meeting with some female attendants but only as viewers.*



# **Preeliminary Conclusions**

## **Describe the roles, responsibilities, actions and decision-making of small farmers and merchants in rural Bolivia**

- Women's participation is a determinant factor:
  - Agricultural markets dynamic
  - Organizational structure
- Men are responsible for production activities and women for the marketing ones.
- Decision making: Women in the end have the last word (household, production and marketing)

## **Describe household dynamics and gendered social networks that facilitate or impede access to local and regional markets.**

- Gender is an important factor to access to markets
- Social networks important source of information, but it is important to identify its gaps
- Analyze marketing system to identify obstacles to participation in higher-valued markets



**Questions**