GENDER, POWER, AND TRANSFORMATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

By

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ABSTRACT

Gender equality in low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs) has been a development goal since the 1990s. Although progress has been made in reducing gender gaps, gender inequalities, mostly against women, persist. In rural and agricultural settings in LMICs, women have less decision-making authority over arable land, less access to agricultural inputs, and more poverty time –deprivation of free time or leisure due to unpaid and paid labor activities-- compared to their male counterparts. Therefore, Sustainable Development Goal 5 on Gender Equality is far from being accomplished by 2030, as agreed in 2016 by the international community.

Therefore, scholars and practitioners in gender and development are calling for the urgency of transforming one of the primary roots of gender inequalities: the gender structures of constraint (gender norms and rules). However, little has been done to understand how that transformation happens. This dissertation includes one theoretical and two empirical research articles. It delivers insights into the gender and development literature on transformation and recommendations to development practitioners.

The first article proposes a theoretical framework for gender and development scholars and practitioners to examine gender structure transformations amid implementing development programs in LMICs. This framework integrates the literature on rural women's empowerment in the Gender and Development (GAD) school of thought and Feminist Political Ecology (FPE). In this article, I compare the concepts of gender, power, and transformation in both literatures and propose the *Women's Empowerment for Gender-Transformative Development Framework*.

The second article implements the theoretical framework proposed in the first article. The objectives of this article are a) to examine how women and men challenge gender norms when they receive resources from a development program; and b) to identify the potential negative consequences when women and men challenge norms due to their participation in the program. To do that, I implement a content analysis from 65 semi-structured interviews with rural women and men participating in *Empropaz*, a nationwide entrepreneurship program with a gender focus in Colombia. The results show that women and men challenged gender norms by enhancing their self-esteem, sense of agency, control over resources, and family cooperation. However, collective power was less prevalent. The resources provided by *Empropaz* enabled individuals to have new thoughts and perform new actions that defied traditional gender expectations. Despite these gains, a few

participants continued to experience verbal gender-based violence, heightened family conflict, and decreased life balance.

The third article is an in-depth intra-household analysis of gendered dynamics. It provides evidence of the role of power legitimacy for women having decision-making authority over agricultural land. Based on GAD literature, it identifies the association of power legitimacy and other social factors (e.g., access to land and education) in explaining spousal discord or accord on who within the household makes decisions over the land. The study's objectives are: a) to understand women's participation in decisions within the household, both domestic and agricultural, compared to their male counterparts; b) to identify the role of legitimacy factors in determining women's participation in agricultural decisions; c) to identify the role of other social factors in determining women's decision; and d) to identify the role of legitimacy factors in women's and men's discord in their survey's responses. I implemented a firth logit and a multinomial logistic regression based on an intra-household survey (responded by the woman and man head of the household separately) with 147 households producing cashews in Honduras. The results show that a legitimacy factor – the women feeling comfortable having different opinions with their male partner – positively and significantly affects women's decision-making authority. Similarly, land ownership, contribution to on-farm labor in cashew production, participation in other crops and animals, and having more education than their male counterparts positively and significantly affect women's decision-making authority over cashews plots. The legitimacy factor mentioned above is also positively associated with women and men having the same opinion that women participate in the decisions over the land.

The dissertation concludes that achieving SDG 5 in Latin America requires rural development to support women and men in challenging gender norms and couples to address conflicts and differing opinions. Research that merges GAD and FPE can greatly contribute to this endeavor.

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INTRODUCTION

Achieving gender equality in low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs) has been a development goal since the 1990s. The international community, national governments, and development scholars have oriented resources, research, policies, and programs to reduce disparities between women and men. The 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing was a milestone that marked an international commitment to reduce gender inequalities in critical areas of concern such as poverty, education, gender-based violence (GBV), and natural resources management (United Nations (UN) Women n.d.). This was the product of the vindications of feminist social movements, non-profit organizations, and gender and development scholars who advocated for development strategies that reduce gender inequalities, mostly against women, change the roots of those inequalities, and increase women's power over their lives, in their households, and communities (Bunch and Fried 1996).

This conference was followed by promulgating the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000, which set eight goals to be accomplished internationally by 2015. MDG 3 aimed to promote gender equality, empower women, and help reduce gender gaps in education and poverty (UN 2015). As a result, the enrolment rate of girls in primary school moved from 74 to 103 for every 100 boys from 1990 to 2015 (UN 2015). In 2016, gender equality continued to be a development goal with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that seek economic, social, and environmental transformation and accomplish the goals not met with the MDGs towards sustainable futures by 2030. SDG 5 on Gender Equality aims to empower women and girls. After almost a decade of its promulgation, progress has been made, but still, gender inequalities against women persist (Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) 2023; Organizations for Economic Co-operations and Development (OECD) 2023; UN n.d). This phenomenon is significant for rural and agricultural settings of LMICs (FAO 2023).

According to recent studies monitoring the progress of SDG 5, there has been improvement in multiple areas. Firstly, the availability of data on gender equality had advanced with the increased implementation of sex-disaggregated data, which was a concern in 2015 (FAO 2023). Moreover, women now have more access to resources such as digital technology (e.g., cell phones) and financial services (e.g., bank accounts and loans) (FAO 2023). For example, the gender gap between women in access to banking accounts dropped from 9 percent in 2011 to 6 percent in 2021 (FAO 2023). Harmful practices have also decreased, such as the rate of child marriage (OECD

2023). According to the Organizations for Economic Co-operations and Development (OECD) (2023), the mean rate passed from 2.5 girls married out of 10 in 2011 to 2 girls out of 10 in 2022. Progress has also been made in unpaid domestic work: in 2014, women worked 3.3. times more in these activities compared to men, while in 2023, it was 2.6 times (OECD 2023). Similarly, this has happened with GBV indicators. The rate of women experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV) in the last years changed from 19 percent in 2014 to 10 percent in 2023 (OECD 2023). Despite this progress in reducing gender gaps, gender inequalities persist. Inequalities persist in control over land and property, access to services and group membership, and technology dissemination (FAO 2023; Nyuki 2022; OECD 2023). For example, women continue to perform more unpaid domestic work than men, 4.7 hours and 1.8 hours, respectively (OECD 2023).

Gender inequalities in agricultural and rural settings in LMICs are critical, too. Women's contribution to agricultural and food systems is essential. Forty-nine percent of women in agriculture contribute as family workers (FAO 2023). Nonetheless, 49 percent of women who work in agriculture report being family helpers, compared to 17 percent of men (FAO 2023). Along these lines, their agricultural productivity is less than men, and they have less access to high-profit commodified chains (FAO 2023). When working as employees in the food system sector, women are paid 18.4 percent less than men and work mostly in informal and low-skill activities (FAO 2023). In addition, in these contexts, women work more in unpaid domestic activities partly because they allocate considerable time to collecting water –-in a year, women can spend a total of 200 million hours fetching water for themselves and their families (FAO 2023; OECD 2023). Although the gender gap in education has decreased, in some rural areas of LIMICs, only 1 percent of women finished secondary education (FAO 2023).

The consensus is that these inequalities persist because of gender-discriminatory institutions or gender structures of constraint[1] that limit people's lives due to their gender (Cerise and Francavilla 2012). In this dissertation, I use the concept of gender structure of constraint. These are rules and norms that delineate people's life choices based on their gender (Cerise and Francavilla 2012; Gammage et al. 2016; Kabeer 1999; Sen 1999). The former are formal regulations such as laws and written property rights; the latter are cultural expectations and prohibitions for people

[1] In this dissertation, discriminatory gender institutions and gender structures of constraints are synonyms. Scholars influenced more by the institutional framework in economics, especially by the work of Amartya Sen, use the term gender institutions (Cerise and Francavilla 2012; Sen 1999). Meanwhile, scholars who are mostly influenced by critical theories in sociology and feminist studies use gender structures.

according to gender (Kabeer 1999). These structures restrict people's "access to opportunities, resources, and power" (Cerise and Francavilla 2012, 2). Cerise and Francavilla (2012), based on Sen (1999), delineate a difference between structures (or institutions) that are discriminatory and structures that are not discriminatory:

> "While social institutions in themselves are not inherently good or bad, discriminatory social institutions are those that restrict or exclude women and girls and consequently limit their access to opportunities, resources and power which negatively impacts upon development outcomes [...] discriminatory social institutions constrain the opportunities of men and women and their capabilities to live the life they value" (3).

Although discriminatory gender structures are challenging to transform, they can be changed (Cerise and Francavilla 2012). The OECD measures the changes in gender norms and rules using the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) across 179 countries. This organization found recently that the number of countries with low and very low discriminatory gender structures increased from 75 countries to 85 countries. These advances have been primarily a result of the promulgation of laws that protect women's rights concerning GBV and child marriage, as well as advances in people perceiving that GBV and women not being political leaders are unacceptable (OECD 2023).

Nonetheless, gender norms and rules mostly against women and girls prevail. The last SIGI report with information for 2022 suggests that 40 percent of women and men live in countries where discriminatory gender structures are high or very high (OECD 2023). For instance, 30 percent of women between 15 and 49 years old around the world perceived that their partners could beat women under certain circumstances, like burning food or refusing sexual relations (OECD 2023). Along these lines, most people (56 percent) worldwide consider that when women work, the children will suffer, and thus, 45 percent of people think that men have more rights to be employed than men (OECD 2023). Gender structures of constraint can change for the worse over time. One example of gender structures changing for the worse is that in 2022, the proportion of people thinking that men should have more rights to have employment than women increased by 4 percent compared to 2014 (OECD 2023).

Due to the persistent gender inequalities and underlying gender structures of constraint, scholars and development practitioners predict that SGD 5 will not be met by 2030 (Cole et al. 2018; Kleibera et al. 2019; FAO 2023; McArthur et al. 2022). Therefore, they have recently called for gender-transformative approaches in the global development arena. Gender-transformative approaches are different from other gender approaches, such as gender-sensitive, gender-blinded,

or gender exploitative[2], and they aim to change the roots of gender inequalities, especially gender rules and norms (Cole et al. 2018; Kleibera et al. 2019). Development programs that embrace this approach work toward more equitable societies by supporting people in reducing the limitations constraining their life choices due to gender (Cole et al. 2018).

At the scholarly level, the literature on gender transformation in development has been increasing in the last few years. In this dissertation, transformation refers to the process through which individuals challenge conventional norms and rules of behavior and identity associated with their gender, thereby mitigating gender power imbalances (Butler 2006). It is a change in which inequalities are reduced compared to a previous state (Connell 1986). McArthur et al. (2022) conducted a literature review on gender-transformative approaches. They found four principles across the articles that define the development programs with this approach: a) there is a motivation to transform gender structures of constraint; b) the focus is to change the systems that are (re) producing the inequalities; c) the main goals are to achieve gender strategic interests such as reducing GBV; and d) there is a recognition of the diverse forms of identities (e.g., race, religion, economic status, age, among others) that intersect with gender to explain people experiences in gender power relations and their transformation (McArthur et al. 2022).

At the international development level, agencies working in rural and agricultural settings of LMICs are promoting this gender-transformative agenda, too. This is partly because most of the projects are not tackling gender rules and norms (FAO 2023; Njuki 2022), and some of them have had negative consequences, such as increasing women's and men's time burden (FAO 2023). Some organizations promoting a gender-transformative approach are the FAO, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation, the CARE Foundation, and the CGIAR. For example, FAO (2023) says one of the differences between its last report on women's status in agriculture in 2023 and 2011 is that they "evolved from focusing on gender gaps to promoting gender transformative change." FAO (2023) defines gender-transformative as:

> "Moving beyond stand-alone interventions targeting single areas of constraint – such as women's limited access to resources and services –towards designing and implementing solutions that could change the system in a lasting manner by removing the underlying structural constraints and building positive and equal non-discriminatory gender norms

[2] Gender-sensitive refers to programs that recognize and work towards reducing gender inequalities, without working in changing the roots of those inequalities, such as gender norms and rules (Kleibera et al. 2019).

and roles, with more equitable gender relations within households, communities and organizations" (10).

These recent calls for a gender transformation focusing on international development are not new (McArthur et al. 2022). The Women's Conference in Beijing in 1995 called for transforming the roots of gender inequalities (Moser 2020), including gender rules and norms. Moreover, since the 1980s, feminist scholars have called for a radical change in development initiatives to reduce gender gaps and increase women's rights (McArthur et al. 2022).

The body of literature on Gender and Development is leading the call for a gender-transformative approach in the realm of development. Gender and Development is a school of thought that started in the 1990s and understands gender (in)equality in rural and agricultural development in LMICs. The literature on women's empowerment and intra-household bargaining power has been the core corpus in Gender and Development for understating gender power relations and the process of changing those and providing programming recommendations.

I understand women's empowerment as the processes of change by which individuals or groups, independently or collectively, alter gender structures that limit their life choices (Batliwala 1997; Kabeer 1999; Leon 2001; Rowlands 1997; 2010). Empowerment is a very complex concept because of its core element: power. Power has a negative and positive connotation. The negative connotation implies the dominance of one individual or group over others, making others act against their will or in a way that restricts their life choices (Deere and Leon 2001; Rowlands 1997; VeneKlasen and Miller 2002). The positive connotation, also known as a generative form of power, encompasses when individuals or groups challenge or transform the negative form of power in a way that does not reduce the power of others (Butler 2006; Connell 1987; Deere and Leon 2001; Rowlands 1997; VeneKlasen and Miller 2002). Bargaining is "the ability of one person to exert influence over another during a negotiation process" (Acosta et al. 2020:1213).

Nonetheless, the Gender and Development literature on women's empowerment and intra-household bargaining power has gaps regarding a transformative agenda in gender and development.

Firstly, there is little understanding of the 'how' of gender structure transformation with the support of rural development programs. Specifically, the literature does not provide a theoretical framework and empirical examples of how the resources provided by a program translate into women gaining more power and/or gender structure transformation.

Secondly, little empirical research examines the negative consequences, including negative forms of power, arising from the empowerment process. Scholars have suggested that since empowerment processes put the predominant norms and rules at risk, people challenging those norms can receive negative consequences, such as GBV and loss of status (Horton 2018; McCarthy and Krause 2024; Rowlands 1997).

Thirdly, the literature on intra-household bargaining power in rural settings usually focuses on the material and human determinants (e.g., land ownership, on-farm labor, among other factors) of women's intra-household bargaining power over agricultural land and little on the legitimacy determinants. Legitimacy in this context is when someone recognizes their partner's authority or claims as valid (Agarwal 1997; Sen 1987).

Fourth, few studies have identified why, in surveys, women and men report differently who makes decisions over the land. The literature has shown partners discord in answers to surveys about bargaining power, with women reporting more joint decisions and men reporting more male sole decisions (Alwang et al. 2017; Ambler et al. 2017; Twyman et al. 2015).

This dissertation aims to contribute to the current scholarship on the gender-transformative approach in Gender and Development by closing the four gaps mentioned in the paragraphs above. I do that by focusing on Latin America. I focus on this region because of the importance of rurality and agriculture, the higher indicators of gender inequality in rural areas compared to urban areas, and my relationship with the region since I was born and raised in Colombia.

By 2019, 123 million people live in rural areas in Latin America, representing around 20 percent of the total population (International Labor Organization (ILO) n.d.). This percentage is higher in some countries, such as in Honduras, which is 40 percent. The rural population is critical for the region's economic development, especially for agricultural production. However, rural areas face a more significant burden than urban areas. By 2019, the poverty rate in rural areas was 2 to 3 times more than in urban areas; in rural areas, 45 percent of the people live in poverty (ILO n.d.).

Family farming and women's roles in this type of agriculture are critical in this region. Family farming represents more than 80 percent of farms (Graeub et al. 2016), and women and men contribute to the land by making decisions and performing on-farm labor (Farah-Quijano 2013; Hamilton 1998). According to the FAO (2023), women make up 36 percent of the laborers in the agricultural and food systems in the region. Latin American countries have advanced in reducing discriminatory rules and norms in the past years, positioning themselves better than other

LMIC regions, such as Asia and Africa (OECD 2023). This region has reduced the age of earlier marriages for women, made legal advances on GVB and land titling, and increased women's political participation. For example, countries such as Bolivia and Colombia have led agrarian land title reforms prioritizing joint decision ownership between women and men (FAO 2023; OECD 2023). Also, women's political participation increased from 12 percent in 1997 to 20 percent in 2011 (Cerise and Francavilla 2012).

These advancements reflect the work of the government, agencies, and social movements (Nobre et al. 2017). The countries in the region have committed to taking a step forward to reduce gender inequalities, including those in rural areas. One of the first international milestones was the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1979. This convention influenced countries in the region to adopt laws to protect women, including land ownership (Nobre et al. 2017). In addition, countries meet to evaluate, assess, and report their situation and progress in reducing gender inequalities with The Regional Conference on Latin American and Caribbean Women (La Conferencia Regional sobre la Mujer de América Latina y el Caribe, in Spanish). This conference is under the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and has been held every three years since 1977. The last conference was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 2022 and focused on promoting societies that value care work (e.g., education, health services, domestic labor, and environmental-related activities), and calling for a transformation of development approaches that align with the values of care work and gender equality (ECLAC 2022). Parallel to the conference in 2014, there was the first Conference on Rural Women in Latin America and the Caribbean in Brasilia, Brazil (Conferencia de Mujeres Rurales para América Latina y el Caribe, in Spanish), and then in 2017 was held the second conference in Paraguay.

Despite this progress and commitment, gender inequalities against women and the underlying structure of constraint still exist. According to Nobre et al. (2017), the leading gender inequalities against rural women in Latin America are the high labor burden they face compared to their male counterparts due to their income-earned and domestic activities; the no recognition of that work from their male counterparts and other community members; the informality in their income-earned activities; and the low access to resources (e.g., land, water, and agricultural inputs). These inequalities are related to gender structures of constraint. Thirty-two percent of women in the Americas (Latin America and North America) think that women can be beaten by their husbands

under certain circumstances (OECD 2023). This percentage is higher than Europe (17 percent) and less than Africa (38 percent) (OECD 2023).

Therefore, this dissertation encompasses three articles that contribute to closing the gaps mentioned above in Latin America, focusing on Colombia and Honduras. It contributes to a better understanding of women's empowerment and decision-making authority and to programs aiming to reduce gender inequalities. Table 1 summarizes each article's purpose, objectives, theoretical framework, methods, and location, as well as the gap in the literature that it aims to close.

Chapter 1: In the first chapter, *A Theory of Empowerment and Development for Gender Norms Transformation*, I propose a theoretical framework to contribute to the 'how' of gender norms transformation by reviving the concept of empowerment as a radical feminist concept and programming tool (see Table 1). I explain in Chapter 1 that empowerment has lost its radical proposal of changing norms and rules in the last few years. I propose a framework by merging two bodies of literature that are usually not in conversation. One is Gender and Development, specifically its empirical literature on women's empowerment in agriculture, and the two most popular frameworks on women's empowerment in the development arena: the three-dimensional (Kabeer 1995; 2018) and four-power (Rowlands 1997) empowerment frameworks. The second school of thought is Feminist Political Ecology, specifically its literature on women challenging gender norms.

As a researcher, one of the main challenges in writing this chapter was to write in a way that was understandable for a wide community interested in gender norms and rules transformation in rural development. In this chapter, I write for applied researchers and development practitioners from different disciplines and professional backgrounds about theories on power, gender, and transformation, which, at the same time, come from different epistemological perspectives, including post-positivism paradigms and critical theory perspectives.

Chapter 2: The second chapter, *Transforming Gender Norms in Rural Development. A Case Study in Colombia* is an empirical qualitative case study that uses the framework proposed in Chapter 1 to understand the 'how' of gender norms transformation (see Table 1). It examines how women and men challenge gender norms when participating in a development program and identifies potential negative consequences that arise (see Table 1).

Table 1. Summary of the Three Research Articles in the Dissertation.

Title	Purpose	Objectives	Theoretical framework	Methods	Location	The gap it aims to close
Chapter 1. A Theory of Empowerment and Development for Gender Norms Transformation	To revive women's empowerment as a radical transforming concept and programming tool for the current agenda on gender-transformative approaches.	It proposes a theoretical framework contributing to gender-transformative agendas in gender and development.	Gender and Development's Women Empowerment Theories and Feminist Political Ecology.	Review of seminal literature on women's empowerment in Gender and Development and Feminist Political Ecology.	Global South or LMICs.	It provides a theoretical framework for understanding the 'how' of gender norms transformation.
Chapter 2. Transforming Gender Norms in Rural Development. A Case Study in Colombia	To provide empirical evidence on the pathways for gender transformations in development.	It examines the processes by which women and men challenge gender norms when participating in a rural entrepreneurship development program in Colombia. It identifies potential negative consequences that arise when challenging gender norms.	The framework proposed in Chapter 1.	Qualitative: Content analysis from 65 semi-structured interviews with 44 women and 21 men participating in a development program.	Colombia (Cauca and Caquetá).	It examines the 'how' of gender norms transformation with the support of a rural development program.

Table 1 (cont'd)

Chapter 3. Women's decision-making authority over agriculture in Honduras	To provide empirical evidence on the role of legitimacy in women's bargaining power over the land.	It understands women's participation in decisions within the household, both domestic and agricultural, compared to their male counterparts. It identifies the role of legitimacy (e.g., women's recognition of their decision-making power by their male counterparts and themselves) and other factors in determining women's decision-making authority. It identifies the role of legitimacy factors in women's and men's discord in their responses to women's decision-making.	Gender and Development's intra-household collective bargaining theory.	Quantitative: Firth logit and multinomial logistic regression models with information from an intra-household survey of 147 households (147 women and men, respectively).	Honduras (Choluteca and Valle).	It explores the legitimacy factor's role in explaining women's decision-making authority over the land and couples' discord.

Source: Author's elaboration.

To do that, I implemented a case study with participants in a rural program with a gender focus in Colombia (see Table 1). The program is Productive Entrepreneurship for Peace (*Empropaz*) and is implemented by Corporación Mundial de la Mujer Colombia (CMMC). I conducted a qualitative study using 65 semi-structured interviews (see Table 1). Qualitative studies on women's empowerment are common. According to Chavarro (2020), in Latin America, 64 percent of the studies on women's empowerment are based on qualitative methods, especially document revision (50 percent), semi-structured interviews, and focus groups (Chavarro et al. 2020). Kabeer (2018) says that some inquiries on women's empowerment are better answered using qualitative methods. For instance, this author emphasizes that quantitative methods cannot explain 'how' resources provided by programs bring about agency (Kabeer 2018)[3].

This study was done with CMMC, a collaboration that started with a Strategic Partnership Grant funded by the Michigan State University Center of Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS), after my advisor, Dr. Maria Claudia Lopez, contacted them to learn about their projects and explore ways in which she could work with them. During the research process, my advisor and I discussed the research objectives and questions with them and their interests in this research. I regularly met with CMMC staff to discuss the methods, sampling, interviewee selection process, and fieldwork progress. During this collaborative process, CMMC provided information on *Empropaz (a development program on rural entrepreneurship).* They shared internal reports and a quantitative dataset with me, which included participants' information and answers to monitoring surveys. I also interviewed some of the CMMC staff. The local staff helped contact the interview participants and provided information about the local context. This was crucial since it allowed the interviewees to trust me and the research assistants who helped me during fieldwork. Before fieldwork, I participated in a week-long in-person nationwide event that CMMC and its national staff organized. This immersive experience granted me insights into *Empropaz*'s functioning. The results of this

[3] Scholars have used semi-structured interviews, life histories, and focus groups to examine women's empowerment. They use these methods to a) assess women's and men's perceptions of individual and collective empowerment (or to understand the perception of change by women and men) (Agarwal 2020; Akter et al. 2017; Meinzen-Dick et al. 2019; Pavanello and Pozarny 2015); b) understand women's perception and experience in agricultural projects aiming to empower women (Meinzen-Dick et al. 2019); identify what it means for women's and men's empowerment (Meinzen-Dick et al. 2019); and identify the characteristics of the farms, farmers, and development projects (Agarwal 2020; Pineda et al. 2019).

chapter have been shared in two opportunities with *Empropaz,* first in Fall 2023 with staff working in the main office in Bogotá and then with 50 staff around the country. The staff agreed the results resembled their experience and enthusiastically received the recommendations.

One of the main difficulties I encountered in this study was the security problems during fieldwork. I conducted fieldwork in towns highly impacted by the armed conflict in Colombia, during the national election for president and congress, and at a moment of the year when natural disasters due to heavy rain occurred. Therefore, I had to leave the fieldwork areas constantly and then return when it was safe for me and the research assistants. Also, for these reasons, I could not interview people living in high-risk areas and had to conduct two interviews via Zoom from Bogotá.

Chapter 3: The third and last chapter is W*omen's Decision-making Authority over Agriculture in Honduras* (see Table 1). It delves into gendered intra-household relationships and understands the role of legitimacy in women's decision-making authority on arable land (see Table 1). This chapter has three research objectives: Understand women's participation in decisions within the household, both domestic and agricultural, compared to that of their male counterparts; identify the role of legitimacy and other factors in determining women's decision-making authority over the land; identify the role of legitimacy factors in women's and men's discord in their responses about women's decision-making authority over the land (see Table 1).

I implemented a case study in Honduras among small-scale cashews producers in two departments in Honduras: Valle and Choluteca (see Table 1). This case is a quantitative study based on statistical regression models using an intra-household survey in which both the male/female household heads and their female/male spouses responded to the questionnaire. I used for the analysis 147 households (see Table 1). Regression analysis based on intra-household surveys on women's decision-making authority over agriculture is common (see some examples: Anderson et al. 2017; Twyman et al. 2015). Likewise, other scholars (Doss et al. 2014; Doss and Quisumbing 2018), the survey for this study identifies decision-making by asking 'who' questions oriented to identify who decides within the household, who gives input in the decision-making or who has the final say over on-farm activities (e.g., decisions over land, agricultural inputs, post-harvest activities, labor, income, and credits). The survey results bring to the forefront trends related to gendered decision-making, the determinants of women's participation

in decisions within the household, and the influence of women's participation in decision-making on agricultural outcomes (e.g., technology adoption).

I use a survey implemented by the Alliance of Bioversity and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) and Swisscontact, and funded by Global Affairs Canada, as a baseline for the development program *Rural Opportunities Project in the Gulf of Fonseca in the Dry Corridor of Honduras* (*Oportunidades Rurales para el Desarrollo Inclusivo para la Región del Golfo,* in Spanish*).* This survey was implemented within the first year the program was running; thus, it did not intend to show any impact. This program has already finished, and, to my knowledge, there is no plan to implement an end-line survey that measures changes in gender power dynamics. To access the dataset, I asked permission from the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT and the Swisscontact office in Honduras. As part of my early access to the dataset, I helped with its cleaning and publication.

I encountered a few challenges in the study for Chapter 3. I could not do fieldwork or collect the data by myself. My first plan was to design and conduct an intra-household survey. Nonetheless, it was costly, and the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and it wasn't easy to follow that first plan. Therefore, I sought intra-household surveys conducted by other organizations. Unlike Chapter 2, I encountered difficulties with data interpretation due to a lack of knowledge about the context. I also depended entirely on the data collection and questions asked by other organizations to accomplish their goals, in this case, to measure women's empowerment to provide inputs to implementing a development program, and not to serve my research questions. I would have liked to complement my research on the determinants of women's decision-making authority with research on the meaning of joint decision-making. Joint decision-making can entail women and men making decisions in a gender-equal fashion (both providing their opinions and participating in the final say) or men making the decision and women confirming what men say without providing their opinions (Acosta et al. 2020; García et al. 2021).

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CHAPTER 1: A THEORY TO EXAMINE GENDER NORMS TRANSFORMATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Introduction

The United Nations (UN) agreed in 2016 to achieve gender equality by 2030. However, this goal is far from being accomplished in rural and agricultural areas of low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs). In these settings, women, more than their male counterparts, have less access to resources such as land, suffer more from gender-based violence (GBV), experience higher unemployment rates, have more time poverty, and endure more poverty (Babugura 2017; FAO 2023; Hanmer and Klugman 2016; Team and Doss 2011). Over the last four decades, women's empowerment has been a popular concept and development programming tool to reduce these gender inequalities. Nevertheless, women's empowerment has multiple definitions in the development world (Ibrahim and Alkire 2007) and is used by multiple actors, including gender and feminist scholars from disciplines such as economics, sociology, community psychology, and education; feminist activists; and practitioners in corporate social responsibility and international development (Horton 2018; Leon 2001; McCarthy 2017).

Women's empowerment encompasses the processes of change by which individuals or groups, independently or collectively, change gender structures that limit their life choices (Batliwala 1997; Kabeer 1999; Leon 2001; Rowlands 1997). This definition encompasses three crucial concepts: power, gender structures of constraint, and transformation.

Power denotes the dominance of one individual or group over another individual or group, so the latter act against their will, and the imbalance of resources and opportunities for decision-making between individuals or groups (Deere and Leon 2001; Rowlands 1997; VeneKlasen and Miller 2002). It also entails generative actions of individuals or groups to challenge or transform this dominance or imbalance (Butler 2006; Connell 1987; Deere and Leon 2001; McCarthy 2017; Rowlands 1997; VeneKlasen and Miller 2002). Gender structures of constraint, also known as gender discriminatory institutions, comprise formal regulations, such as property laws and inheritance codes, and informal norms, such as cultural expectations and prohibitions, which limit individuals' life choices because of their gender (Kabeer 1999; Cerise et al. 2012; Gammage et al. 2016; Ibrahim and Alkire 2007). Transformation refers to the process through which individuals challenge conventional norms of behavior and identity associated with their gender, thereby mitigating gender power imbalances (Butler 2006). It is a

change in which inequalities are reduced compared to a previous state (Connell 1986).

As a concept, women's empowerment emerged from the efforts of South Asian and Latin American feminist activists and grassroots movements in the 1980s, engaging in dialogue with feminists in North America and Europe. They highlighted that development programs at the time failed to address women's interests and voices or to challenge the gender structures that marginalized them (Batliwala 1997; Cornwall 2016; Sharma 2000; Young 1997). Globally, the concept of women's empowerment was initially proposed by the Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) group. Formed in India in 1984, this group brought together feminists from the Global South advocating for empowerment as a perspective through which development could reshape gender norms and rules (Batliwala 1997; Cornwall 2016; Sharma 2000; Young 1997). In Latin America, women's empowerment was influenced by raising awareness projects in the 1970s, which utilized Freire's popular education perspective (Batliwala 1997). The raising awareness (*consientización* in Spanish) movement emphasized establishing grassroots participatory processes within marginalized communities to address social inequalities, including those rooted in class (Batliwala 1997). Therefore, at its core, women's empowerment serves as a radical feminist concept and tool aimed at understanding and reducing gender inequalities (Cornwall and Rivas 2015), particularly those affecting women living on the margins of LMICs.

Empowerment has become a key concept for scholars seeking to understand gender inequality and pathways to gender equality. Gender and Development (GAD) is the school of thought that has predominantly focused on women's empowerment in agriculture and rural settings in LMICs. This concept has also gained popularity within the international development community. It was crucial in the UN Millennium Development Goal 3 to Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women in 2000. It is one of the main pathways toward achieving Sustainable Development Goal 5 on Gender Equality by 2030. This popularity quickly brought criticism against women's empowerment at the etymological, scholarly, and programming levels.

Etymologically, for feminist scholars based on Foucault's idea of power, empowerment entails that power can be obtained, overlooking that it is always present in social relations[4]. This

[4] Regarding feminist perception of power understood from Foucault's perspective, Buisson et al. (2022) says: "Most feminists have, however, rejected the conceptualization of power as a good, distributed among individuals and

implies that development programs give power to rural women, overlooking rural women's own power.

Scholarly critiques have pointed out that GAD focuses primarily on women's individual economic and ideological dimensions of empowerment. Therefore, it pays less attention to women's collective empowerment, their control over sexuality – including sexual orientation, pleasure, and reproductive rights – men's responsibility, and the context in which people live to achieve gender equality (Cornwall and Anyidoho 2010; Riseger 1997; Sharma 2000; Young 1997). Another critique of GAD scholarship is that this literature has used mostly pre-conceived exogenous definitions, overlooking local women's meanings of being empowered (Tavenner and Crane 2022; Völker and Doneys 2022).

At the programming level, for some, empowerment has been co-opted by international development agencies and the private sector implementing corporate social responsibility. According to this critique, co-optation is primarily for accomplishing neoliberal market purposes (e.g., promoting that women should meet their needs without the support of the State and be economic agents in the market) rather than to transform gender structures of constraint (Batliwala 1997; Buisson et al. 2022; Cornwall 2016; Cornwall and Rivas 2015; Elmhirst 2011; Horton 2018; Khurshid 2016; Mollet and Faria 2013). Batliwala (2007), one of the first scholars to conceptualize women's empowerment in development, argues that its political roots are not there anymore due to the co-optation of this concept.

Since the mid-1990s, scholars have proposed avenues to approach these critiques. Regarding the etymological critique, scholars have pointed out that empowerment is not a process by which an external agent gives power to people in the margins, but a process by which people lead, and external organizations provide support (Cornwall and Rivas 2015; Stromquist 1997). Cornwall and Rivas (2015) say: "The work of external actors and interventions, then, may be conceived not as empowering women but as clearing some of the obstacles from the path and providing sustenance for women as they do empowerment for themselves" (406). On the scholarly side, studies have started to examine the rural women's meaning of being empowered amid the implementation of development programs (Meinzen-Dick et al. 2019; Völker and Doneys 2022). Finally, to re-politicize women's empowerment, feminist and development

groups. Following Foucault's post-structuralist perspectives on power (1975, 1978, 1980), they have conceptualized power as dynamic and exercised across relations, discourses, and everyday social practices" (129).

scholars have called for the revival of empowerment's original radical purpose of transforming gender structures of constraint and tackling issues such as masculinities, sexuality, and collective power (Buisson et al. 2022; Cornwall 2016; Weringa 1997). For Weringa (1997), retaining the concept of empowerment is a way for feminists to recover control of the concept from the co-opted version developed by international agencies and corporations.

The recent revival of empowerment's feminist radical roots has been embraced by feminist development scholars (Buisson et al. 2022; Tavenner and Crane 2022). McArthur et al. (2022) found in a literature review that scholars' calls for a gender-transformative approach (development programs that aim to transform gender structures as one of the primary roots of gender inequalities (Cole et al. 2018)) have increased in the last four years. They found in the literature that one hundred forty papers, out of 356 papers in English published since the 1990s, were published from 2020 to the first quarter of 2022 (McArthur et al. 2022).

This recent call also comes from international development agencies that allocate resources and implement major rural development programs in LMICs. Organizations such as the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation, and Care International actively advocate for women's empowerment as a means to change gender structures of constraint and achieve gender equality. This commitment stems from the persistence of gender inequalities and the low percentage of gender-transformative development programs (FAO 2023). In a 2023 report, the FAO revealed that while "75 percent of [their] agricultural policies recognized women's roles and/or challenges in agriculture, only 19 percent explicitly prioritized gender equality in agriculture or women's rights" (xxiii). Consequently, FAO (2023) advocates for a new programming agenda to transform gender structures of constraint[5].

1.1.The Importance of Transforming Gender Norms

However, this recent call lacks a theoretical framework to bring to the forefront women's empowerment in a transformative fashion in development. This lack of framework is related to

[5] The call for development programming that seeks to transform gender structures is not new. According to McArthur et al. (2022), since the 1995 Beijing Women's Conference, there has been a call in the international development field to transform the structures leading to gender inequality, and feminist scholars have also called for this perspective years ago (see an example: Cornwall and Rivas 2015).

three aspects little explored in GAD literature. The first aspect relates to the 'how' of the transformation. Few studies on women's empowerment in development examine the mechanisms or pathways toward gender structures of constraint transformation. Kabeer (2018), Flores-Novelo et al. (2017), and Nyuki et al. (2022) mentioned that few studies focus on the process by which the resources provided to women and men by development programs translate into increased power for them. Second, few studies address the potential forms of domination that may coexist within the empowerment process (e.g., women experiencing gender-based violence from their male counterparts due to their increased decision-making power) (Horton 2018; McCarthy and Krause 2024; Quisumbing et al. 2022). Much of the literature emphasizes the positive aspects of the empowerment process (e.g., women increasing their decision-making within their households). The third aspect is that most of the literature on women's empowerment does not address macroeconomic and macro-political structures that can be intertwined with gender structures of constraint in producing gender inequalities, such as a country's economic and political system (see an example of feminist proposals that address macroeconomic and macro-political structures: Ojeda et al. 2022).

This paper proposes a theoretical framework to close this literature gap: the *Women's Empowerment for Gender-Transformative Development Framework*. This framework intends to provide theoretical inputs to understand how resources provided by development programs might translate into more power, the potential negative consequences that might exist in an empowerment process, and the role of macro-political-economic dynamics in that process. To do that, I merge two schools of thought usually used separately: GAD's women's empowerment literature and Feminist Political Ecology (FPE). FPE, a subfield of Political Ecology (PE), concerns itself with political, gender, and environmental dynamics (Jarosz 2011; Bezner Kerr 2014; Nyantakyi-Frimpong 2017).

FPE and GAD have contributed to the understanding of women gaining power and gender norms transformation in rural and agricultural settings of LMICs. Still, each has different limitations in understanding how the resources provided by rural development programs translate into gender norm transformation. Merging the contributions of the two can fulfill the limitations that each one has independently and bring to the forefront a better framework to understand gender norms transformation in the rural development scenario.

GAD has been instrumental in understanding women's empowerment and development

over the last three decades, providing theoretical frameworks, measurement techniques for women's empowerment, assessments of the role of development programs in fostering women's empowerment, and the connection between women's empowerment and other development outcomes (e.g., poverty reduction) (Beuchelt 2016; Kabeer 1999; 2018; Kandpal 2019; Kandapal et al. 2013; Malapit et al. 2019; Mudege et al. 2018; Pineda et al. 2019; Rowlands 1997). However, very few studies within the GAD literature have identified the pathways by which resources from programs translate into women's power, the potential negative consequences of women's gaining power, the role of intersectionality in gender norms transformation, and the role that plays the context. Intersectionality involves the intersection of multiple identities (e.g., race, life cycle, religion, sexual orientation) to understand people's power experiences.

FPE has offered insights into the societal processes through which individuals perpetuate and challenge gender structures of constraint amidst environmental struggles (Mollett and Faria 2013; Sultana 2009). Nonetheless, FPE has little literature that understands the role of development programs in leveraging women's power and gendered-intrahousehold relationships.

Although GAD and FPE have been used separately, they have commonalities, and merging them benefits the reviving of women's empowerment in a transformative fashion in the development field. Both schools of thought are part of the gender and environment intellectual landscape, which also encompasses ecofeminism, environmental feminism, and environmental justice (Ojeda 2011). Therefore, they share common inquiries, such as examining the gender power dynamics related to the impacts of climate change, as well as access to and control over natural resources such as water and land (Ojeda 2011). Moreover, FPE can help address the literature gaps in women's empowerment within GAD, particularly in understanding the process of gender norms transformation, its attendant positive and negative consequences, and the role of macroeconomic and political dynamics in structure transformation (Nightingale 2006; Sultana 2009; 2020; Truelove 2011). Similarly, GAD can contribute to FPE by focusing on the role of development in supporting the transformation of gender structures of constraint, as well as the gendered-power dynamics within the household.

The framework I propose follows Weringa's (1997) proposal of reviving empowerment as a radical feminist concept and a programming tool for transforming gender structures of constraint. Disregarding empowerment as one of the pathways to gender equality would not only dismiss the voices of feminist scholars, activists, and development practitioners from Latin

America and South Asia, who initially advocated for the term, but also overlook the positive impacts of empowerment programs on women's well-being in these regions of the world (for examples, see: FAO 2023; Horton 2018; Kabeer 2018; Pineda et al. 2019).

The article's order is as follows. First, I explain GAD and FPE and their respective contributions and limitations in examining gender structure transformation. Next, I reflect on how GAD and FPE address the concepts of gender, power, and transformation and to what extent they can contribute to transformative empowerment in development. Finally, I propose *the Women's Empowerment for Gender-Transformative Development Framework*. I conclude by highlighting promising areas of study based on this theoretical framework.

2. Gender and Development Scholarship on Women's Empowerment

GAD has proposed well-known theories in women's empowerment and development. The most widely used frameworks are the three-dimensional theory by Naila Kabeer (1999) and the fourth-power theory by Joe Rowlands (1997) (Priya et al. 2021). The former framework emphasizes empowerment as a process by which those lacking the ability to choose gain that ability (Kabeer 1999). The latter framework goes beyond the notion of choice and understands empowerment as a process of transforming gender structures of constraints and highly values empowerment through collective action (Agarwal 1994; Rowlands 1995;1997).

2.1. The Three-Dimensional Theory from Nalia Kabeer

Nalia Kabeer is a feminist economist inspired by the capability framework proposed by Amartya Sen (Maiorano et al., 2021). The three-dimensional theory of change understands empowerment as

> "the processes by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such an ability. In other words, empowerment entails a process of change. People who exercise a great deal of choice in their lives may be very powerful, but they are not empowered in the sense in which I am using the word, because they were never disempowered in the first place" (Kabeer 1999, 437).

The first dimension is access to and control over social, material, and human resources, which are necessary conditions for having the ability to choose. The second is agency, which refers to conscious actions that challenge structures constraining an individual's ability to choose. Agency is considered the core element of empowerment, typically observed through decision-making. It encompasses the cognitive capacity for critical analysis, reflection, and goal setting, and the practical capacity to act and achieve these goals. It also encompasses a subjective

capability reflecting how women view themselves and their place in society—their 'sense of agency,' self-worth, and personhood" (Kabeer 2018 2).

The third dimension is achievement, which refers to the goals pursued by an individual. Achievements are categorized into general outcomes desired for humanity and functioning outcomes desired by individuals who have been denied from having those choices. These achievements can also be divided, in terms of gender, into general or practical gender needs and strategic gender needs or life choices. Practical gender needs are necessary for subsistence and do not necessarily challenge the gender structures of constraint (rules and norms) (e.g., food security), while strategic gender needs explicitly challenge the structures oppressing women (e.g., deciding on income) (Argawal 1994; Molyneux; 1985; Moser 1989). Thus, empowerment refers to functioning achievements and strategic gender needs.

2.2. Four Power Theory from Joe Rowlands

The second GAD's women's empowerment framework focuses on empowerment as an individual and collective transformation of gender structures of constraints. Batliwala (2007) defines empowerment as a process of seeking structural transformation. Along these lines, Agarwal (1994) defines empowerment as an individual and collective process of challenging and eliminating gender inequality and the power relations that subordinate one gender over the other. In Latin America, Deere and Leon (2001) assert that empowerment is "the radical alteration of the processes and structures which reproduce women's subordinate position as a gender" (Young 1993, 158, cited by Deere and Leon 2001). For all these scholars, collective action, women's social mobilization, and access and control over resources (e.g., arable land) are critical not only for challenging gender structures of constraint but also for changing them.

The four-power theory by Joe Rowlands (1995;1997) offers a similar understanding of empowerment. This scholar proposes a framework that defines women's empowerment as dismantling gender norms that disadvantage women (Argawal 1994; Batliwala 2007; Deere and Leon 2001; Maiorano et al. 2021). To achieve this, Rowlands (1995;1997) suggests a comprehensive framework for women's empowerment through four domains: 'power over,' 'power from within,' 'power to,' and 'power with.' 'Power over' refers to control over others by diminishing their power and involves mechanisms of oppression (Deere and Leon 2001; Rowlands 1995;1997). The other three types of power represent the generative aspect of power and are related to women's empowerment as they do not limit others' power.

‘Power from within’ pertains to the personal dimension. Rowlands (1995) describes it as “developing a sense of self and individual confidence and capacity and undoing the effects of internal oppression” (15). This includes aspects such as self-esteem and a sense of agency. Self-esteem refers to “feeling that [one] can function as an autonomous, self-determining individual” or feeling empowered (Pollack 2000, 82). It is a critical condition for women’s empowerment since gender norms negatively impact women’s existence by undervaluing them through stigmatization (Lagarde y de los Rios 2020). According to Lagarde y de los Rios (2020), women are more likely to be insecure than men due to this stigmatization, and by gaining self-esteem, they confront the stigmatization against them. Sense of agency entails being aware of gender norms and rules and being able to set life goals (Batliwala 1997; Kabeer 2018; Rowlands 1997). Scholars emphasize the importance of this personal power as it represents the first step in becoming aware of gender norms, one’s own position regarding those norms, and gaining self-determination to transform them (Leon 1997). According to Stromquist (1997), gender norms lead to a sense of hopelessness among women regarding change or the belief that the suffering caused by gender inequalities is due to personal life decisions rather than gender structures of constraints.

‘Power to’ refers to the ability “to act and to realize one’s aspirations” (Rowlands 1995) and represents the relational dimension. According to this author, this type of power is associated with relationships with close individuals (Rowlands 1995;1997). It can be operationalized when a person improves their decision-making within the household and engages with their partner as an equal (Rowlands 1995;1997).

‘Power with’ refers to sharing power with others collectively, aiming for social and community transformation and representing the collective dimension (Deere and Leon 2001; Rowlands 1995). This occurs when “individuals work together to achieve a more extensive impact […] This includes involvement in political structures, as well as collective action based on cooperation rather than competition” (Rowlands 1995, 15).

2.3. Implementation of the Two Theories and Limitations

The two empowerment theories are not exclusive; they share similarities. Both conceptualize empowerment as a process rather than an outcome. Kabeer (1999;2005) defines women’s empowerment as the process of gaining the ability to make decisions they were previously denied, and similarly, proponents of the second framework assert that empowerment

is a process of social transformation (Agarwal 1994; Deere and Leon 2001). Additionally, from both theoretical perspectives, gender structures of constraint are considered critical, as they influence the empowerment process while also being its goal. Both frameworks affirm that gender structures, especially norms, can be internalized and naturalized by individuals. To explain this phenomenon, these scholars use false consciousness or Doxa (Connell 1987; Kabeer 1999). Doxa refers to "aspects of tradition and culture which are so taken-for-granted that they have become naturalized" (Kabeer 1999, 441). Another similarity between the two theories is the need for critical consciousness, which involves how people respond to Doxa or false consciousness. Critical consciousness occurs when individuals recognize their situations of oppression and domination, understand that these situations are not natural, and realize they can be transformed (Kabeer 1999). Feminist scholar Haraway (1991) states, "liberation rests on the construction of consciousness, the imaginative apprehension of oppression, and possibility" (149). Therefore, the importance of 'power from within.' In addition to their commonalities, these empowerment theories are also complementary. Malapit et al. (2019) propose identifying agency, based on Kabeer's definition, in the three domains: 'power from within,' 'power to,' and 'power with.'

Based on these two theories, GAD has developed indicators and methods to measure the empowerment and disempowerment that women face within the household, including the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) (Malapit et al. 2019; O'Hara and Clement 2018; Dietz et al. 2018; Larson et al. 2019; Maiorano et al. 2021). Additionally, this literature has highlighted the positive connection between women's empowerment and the SDGs related to No Poverty and Zero Hunger (Achandi et al. 2018; Barak et al. 2023; Diiro et al. 2018; Doss 2018; Fisher and Carr 2015; Mutenje et al. 2016; Quisumbing et al. 2023; Sraboni et al. 2014). Furthermore, GAD has identified both the positive impacts of development programs on women's empowerment and household well-being, including projects on entrepreneurship, micro-credit, and agricultural technologies (Daher et al. 2022; Kabeer 2018; McCarthy and Krause 2024; Ojediran and Anderson 2020; Pineda Duque and Castiblanco Moreno 2022; Quisumbing et al. 2022; 2023; Rezaei et al. 2021), and their negative impact on women's empowerment (Beuchelt and Badstue 2013). Beuchelt and Badstue (2013) find that agricultural development programs have also had negative consequences in terms of gender, such as introducing new agricultural technologies, such as machinery, in rice production that displaced

poor rural women who used to perform manual labor activities as income-earned activity. Besides, GAD scholars have extensively analize the power imbalances and empowerment at the intra-household level, through its literature on intra-household baraginig power (for example, see: Acosta et al. 2020; Agarwal 1997; Doss and Meinzen-Dick 2015; Katz 1991).

Nonetheless, GAD has at least four gaps in the empirical literature. First, little research has examined power's negative and positive aspects in empowerment processes. FAO (2023) recently acknowledged the importance of this consideration. Second, GAD scholars have largely overlooked an intersectionality perspective, although Clement (2019), Larson et al. (2019), Kabeer (2018), and Tavenner and Crane (2019; 2022) have lately emphasized its importance. Third, limited literature connects gender inequalities within the household with gender structures in the broader community, society, and the macroeconomic and macro-political dynamics. The fourth and final gap is that few studies identify the different processes by which women transform and challenge gender norms and rules, as well as how the resources provided by development programs translate into women's empowerment (Flores-Novelo et al. 2017; Kabeer 2018; Nyuki et al. 2022).

3. Feminist Political Ecology Scholarly on Gender Structures Transformation

FPE is concerned with human-environmental change and conflict—which can result from development models not addressing environmental or social justice issues, and directs attention to power dynamics associated with resource access and management, potentially challenging assumptions about rural households' homogeneity. This approach emerged in the mid-1990s in response to critiques of PE for lacking a feminist perspective (Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) 1994), ecofeminism having an essentialist view of gender[6], and GAD for overlooking the environment (but GAD does not overlook development) (Resurrección 2017; Robbins 2012).

FPE is part of the PE community of practice. FPE has revealed how uneven gender relations impact individual experiences differently by mediating resource access, governance, and control at multiple scales, including the household, community, and global dynamics. It focuses on the impacts of environmental challenges on gender identities and relationships, such

[6] The ecofeminism of the 1980s understands women have more connection with the environment than men because they are women. It comes more from the Humanities (Ojeda et al. 2022). Meanwhile, FPE understands that women are more prone to environmental concerns because of their position and role in society, not because of being women. FPE comes more from the social sciences, such as geography and sociology (Ojeda et al. 2022). Both ecofeminism and FPE are part of the gender and environment intellectual field (Ojeda 2011).

as the differentiated effects of natural disasters on the lives of women and men, and the connections between the (re)production of gendered identities and relationships with the environment, including issues like conservation, climate change, and water security (Ojeda 2011). Scholars employing this FPE perspective have also illuminated how gender intersects with other axes of difference, such as class, race, and caste, to shape access to and management of resources (Versillo 2022).

According to Elmhirst (2015), FPE originated with a structural and modern materialistic perspective, focusing on how culturally mediated gender roles structured access and control over resources. This includes examining those resources' socio-political processes and knowledge systems (Lyon et al. 2010; Nyantakyi-Frimpong 2017; Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) 1994; Veuthey and Gerber 2012). This perspective remains prevalent today. Vercillo (2022) employs structuralist FPE and analyzes women's and men's access and utilization of agricultural resources, along with the underlying gender norms. The author finds that these norms often imply women's inferiority to men, leading to women's dependency on men for access to land management and services, as observed in the implementation of an agricultural development project in Ghana (Vercillo 2022).

Over the last decade, FPE has expanded, with scholars charting different trajectories while emphasizing gender differences at its core from a more post-structuralist and post-modern perspective (Ge et al. 2011; Sultana 2009;2011;2020). These scholars are influenced by post-structural feminist theories such as 'gender performativity' (Butler 2006) or 'doing gender' (West and Zimmerman 1987). They understand gender as a routine accomplishment embedded in everyday interaction (West and Zimmerman 1987, 125). Thus, it is in daily experiences and in the body that people reproduce and challenge gender norms and rules (Butler 2006; Trauger 2017; West and Zimmerman 1987). Therefore, this FPE perspective interrogates the co-production of social difference by examining how the meanings and materiality of gender and the environment are mutually constructed or transformed in daily experiences and the body (Elmhirst 2011a; 2011b;2015; Mollett and Faria 2013; Nightingale 2006;2011;2020; Ojeda et al. 2022; Sultana 2009;2011;2020; Truelove 2011).

These two FPE traditions, structuralist and post-structuralist coexist and share at least four common characteristics or commitments for understanding the transformation of gender structures of constraint (Bridge et al. 2015 use the term 'commitments' to elucidate the commonalities among different PE traditions).

The first and most significant commitment is to elucidate how marginalized individuals with lower social status confront gender structures of constraint. Following this commitment, scholars emphasize that women challenge gender norms when they occupy spaces (e.g., participating in organizations, working in farming or community settings), engage in activities, and access resources that are culturally prohibited or not traditionally expected for women. For FPE, conflicts may arise when women find themselves in these new spaces or engage in these practices (Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) 1994). This resistance to norms can manifest both individually and collectively.

The second commitment involves exposing contradictions by understanding a process's positive and negative aspects (Robbins 2012, as noted in PE). Contradiction refers to the interrelation of two processes that may seem contradictory. For example, a well-intentioned policy aimed at achieving justice may inadvertently reproduce injustices, or an environmental struggle against negative impacts on people's livelihoods may yield both negative and positive consequences in their lives. FPE sheds light on how women organize, both formally and informally, and occupy new spaces in response to the adverse effects of environmental struggles on their livelihoods and families. In doing so, they challenge gender norms. However, their actions also expose them to consequences such as rape, intimate partner violence (IPV), loss of social status, and increased labor burdens (Ge et al. 2011; Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) 1994; Nightingale 2011; Nyantakyi-Frimpong 2017).

The third commitment involves understanding that gender relations and the process of transforming gender norms are embedded in individual (including the body, emotions, and knowledge), household, community, national, and global geographies, influenced by specific political and economic systems (e.g., capitalism and neoliberalism), and environmental struggles (e.g., water insecurity, climate change, and extractives economies) (Arriagada Orazún and Zambra Alvaréz 2019; Hawkins and Ojeda (eds.) 2011; Nightingale 2006; Ojeda et al. 2022; Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) 1994; Sultana 2011). The concept of geographies is critical in FPE (Hawkins and Ojeda (eds.) 2011; Resurrección 2017), as it denotes the spatial contexts where gender relations, environmental struggles, and political and economic macro-dynamics intersect. The body is also important as a scale of analysis, as environmental struggles can have different impacts on people's bodies depending on their gender performance (e.g., gendered differentiated impacts of toxins affecting the environment on people's bodies) (Hawkins and Ojeda (eds.)

2011; Ojeda et al. 2022).

The fourth commitment involves adopting an intersectionality perspective (Arriagada Orazún and Zambra Alvaréz 2019; Buechler et al. 2020; Ge et al. 2011; Nightingale 2010; 2011; Versillo 2022). Research in FPE provides insights into the intersections between gender and other social differentiations, such as race, caste, age, ethnicity, and religion, and how they jointly impact the experiences of women and men with implications for changing gender structures of constraint.

However, FPE has limitations related to the understanding of gender norms transformation. Likewise, in the case of GAD, one of the critiques in the literature against FPE is that, although more recently, there has been a focus on non-binary gendered identities(Shrestha et al. 2019) such as queer studies (Heynen 2017; Sandilands 2002), this is still an understudied area in FPE.

Moreover, few studies focus on how development programs can play a role in transforming gender structures of constraint (see as an example: Beucheler et al. 2020), something that GAD scholars focus more on. Most of the studies focus on how women challenge gender norms due to experiencing environmental or economic shocks, which trigger women to act contrary to the gender expectations in their communities to respond to that shock. For instance, women in Ecuador started to attend public meetings instead of being at home, as expected by their male counterparts when a shrimp extractive industry arrived in their community (Veuthey and Gerber 2012).

In addition, compared to GAD, FPE focuses less on understanding gendered intra-household power dynamics. Most FPE studies focus on how women challenge gender norms in their communities or societies, individually or in groups—with other women. Nonetheless, it's not common to find among FPE scholarship literature that focuses on the ways in which women challenge gender norms within their household and in relation to their male counterparts.

4. Gender, Power, and Transformation of Gender Structures in GAD and FPE

Gender, power, and transformation are critical concepts for women's empowerment. Before proposing a new framework, I compare the understandings of these three concepts in GAD empowerment literature and the two FPE traditions and analyze their implications for an empowerment framework with a transformative perspective.

4.1. Gender

In this subsection, I compare the 'gender' concept between GAD and the structuralist and post-structuralist FPE traditions. I compare four dimensions of 'gender,' including its definition, how it's constructed, and whether it is perceived as a binary category --including views on intersectionality.

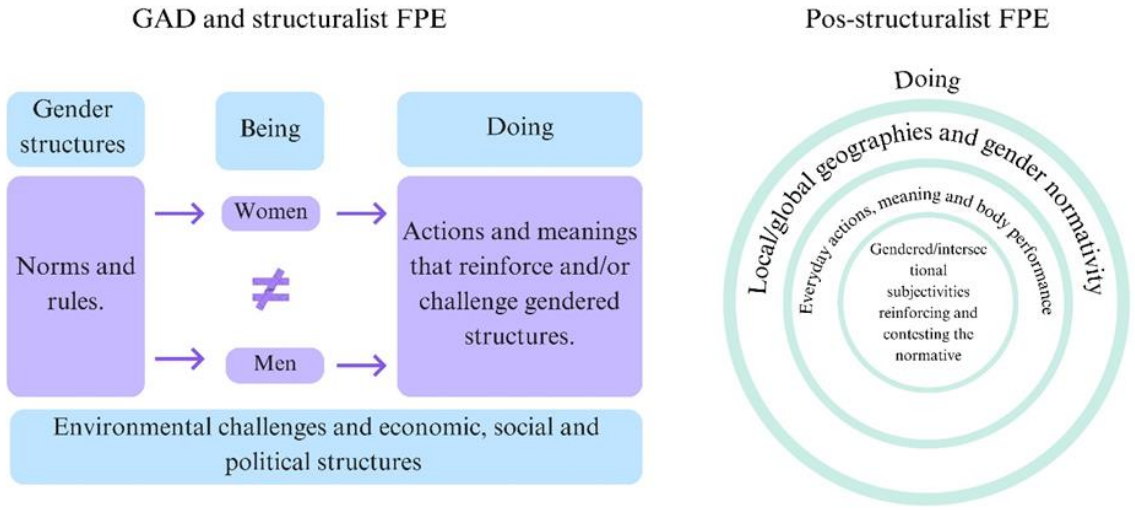
Scholars in the three traditions approach gender as a socially constructed category rather than a biological one (Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) 1995) (see Table 1). However, they envision how construction occurs differently (see Table 1). This is an ontological difference in the 'gender' concept. According to Elmhirst (2011;2015), Mollett and Faria (2013), and Nightingale (2011), structuralist FPE adheres to a fixed and modern idea of gender. Tavenner and Crane (2022) highlight the same for the GAD literature on women's empowerment. A fixed and modern idea of gender, in the words of Bulter (2006), distinguishes between *being* (people's personal identities, including their gender, race, etc.) and *doing* (people's actions and perceptions) and assumes the existence of pre-established gender structures before the *being* and *doing* (Bulter 2006).

Figure 1 illustrates the GAD and structuralist FPE fixed-modern idea of gender. This figure shows that the GAD and structural FPE traditions understand gender as an identity (the *being* in Figure 1) that precedes people's actions and meanings (the *doing* in Figure 1), which at the same time are shaped by gender structures of constraints, such as rules and norms (*Gender structures of constraint* in Figure 1), and embedded in a social context (the *environmental challenges and economic and political structures* in Figure 1). The actions and meanings of individuals, whether women or men, can also reinforce or change gender rules and norms. For structuralist FPE, the *being*, *doing*, and *structures* are also embedded in macroeconomic-political systems (e.g., neoliberalism and racism) (see Figure 1).

The three-dimensional (Kabeer 1994) and the four-power (1997) GAD empowerment theories have a fixed-modern idea of gender. The former theory assumes that gender structures create differences between women and men (*being*) and, thus, the importance of women (*being*) gaining agency (*doing*) for their strategic gender needs (challenging *gender structures of constraint*). The latter theory sees women (*being*) gaining power (*doing*) – 'power from within,' 'power to,' and 'power with' – so women can challenge the gender norms and rules (*gender structures of constraint*) that oppressed them. Empirical GAD studies examples with fixed-

modern gender ideas measure women's and men's (*being*) agency using indexes or indicators that cover actions such as (decision-making and group membership) (*doing*), and who recognize inequalities in agency between women and men are due to gender norms and rules (*gender structures of constraint*) (McCarthy and Krause 2024; Malapit et al. 2019; Quisumbing et al. 2023) (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Illustration Comparing the Concept of Gender Between GAD, Atructuralist FPE, and Post-structuralist FPE.



Source: The author's interpretation is based on the literature review.

Meanwhile, the post-structuralist FPE does not have a fixed-modern idea of gender. A non-fixed modern idea does not separate the *doing* and the *being*. The next paragraphs explain what it means to distinguish between *being* and *doing* (see Figure 1).

Post-structuralist FPE does not have a modern-fixed perspective since gender is seen as subjectivities constructed through actions and meanings performed in everyday life (*doing*) (Nightingale 2011; Sultana 2009; Truelove 2011) (see Figure 1). According to post-structuralist feminists, who inspired post-structuralist FPE, subjectivities are formed in daily practices, simultaneously reinforcing and contesting dominant gender subjectivities aligned with gender structures of constraint (Butler 2006; West and Zimmerman 1987). Therefore, the post-structuralist FPE tradition posits that gender solely exists in the *doing*; there is no separation between *being* and *doing* (Butler 2006; West and Zimmerman 1987) (see Figure 1). 'Doing gender' involves both reproducing normative expectations of gender roles and risking those norms, thereby confronting the consequences of challenging established norms (West and Zimmerman 1987) (see Figure 1). 'Doing gender' is embedded within specific geographies and

environmental struggles such as water insecurity and climate change (see Figure 1).

Therefore, studies inspired by the post-structuralist FPE tradition have research questions on comprehending the construction of gendered subjectivities (bodies, emotions, knowledge, and practices) within contexts of environmental struggles (Bezner Kerr 2014; Nightingale 2006; Sultana 2009; 2011; 2020; Truelove 2011). Recently, some GAD scholars have engaged with a non-modern-fixed gender perspective by suggesting the importance of how gender is constructed in daily practices (Tavenner et al. 2020; Tavenner and Crane 2022). Table 2 compares the 'gender' concept between the three traditions, GAD, structuralist FPE, and post-structuralist FPE, including whether they have a fixed-modern idea of gender.

Table 2. Comparison of 'Gender' Between GAD, Structuralist FPE, and Post-structuralist FPE.

Dimension	GAD	Structuralist FPE	Post-structuralist FPE
Definition of gender.	Gender is an identity or a social relationship product of the gender structures of constraints.	Gender is an identity or a social relationship product of gender structures and the macro-economic-political systems.	Gender is a subjectivity in everyday experiences and coproduced in geographies.
How gender is constructed. (Having a fixed-modern idea of gender vs. not having a fixed-modern idea of gender).	Most of the literature has a modern-fixed idea of gender as described by Agarwal (1994), Deere and Leon (2001), Deere and Twyman (2012), Diiro et al. (2018), Kabeer (2005), Malapit et al. (2019), Maiorano et al. (2021), McCarthy and Krause (2024), Quisumbing et al. (2023), Rowlands (1995;1997), and Sraboni et al. (2014). Few studies propose a non-modern-fixed idea of gender, for example, Tavenner and Crane 2022.	Most studies have a modern-fixed idea of gender, for example, Nyantakyi-Frimpong (2017), and Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) (1994).	Studies do not have a modern-fixed idea of gender. For instance, Asher (2004), Nightingale (2006; 2011), Mollet and Faria (2013), Sundberg (2004), Sultana (2009; 2011;2020), and Truelove (2011).

Table 2 (cont'd)

Gender is a binary concept	Most literature has a binary cis-gender view. For example, Barak et al. (2023), Buisson et al. (2022), Deere and Twyman (2012), Diiro et al. (2018), Kandpal et al. (2013;2019), Maiorano et al. (2021), McCarthy and Krause (2024), Quisumbing et al. (2022), Schuler et al. (2018) and Völker and Doneys (2021). Few propose a non-binary perspective. For example, Gibbons (2023), and Tavenner and Crane (2022).	Most literature has a binary cis-gender focus. For example, Bacon (2010), Hovorka (2006), Nyantakyi-Frimpong (2017), Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) (1994), and Veuthey and Gerber (2012).	Most studies recognize that gender is non-binary. For example, Asher (2004) and Sundberg (2004). This includes authors focusing on the intersection between PE and Queer studies, such as Heynen (2018) and Sandilands (2002).
Intersectionality perspective.	Most literature does not have an intersectionality perspective. For example, Barak et al. (2023), Buisson et al. (2022), Deere and Twyman (2012), Diiro et al. (2018), Kandpal et al. (2013;2019), Maiorano et al. (2021), McCarthy and Krause (2024), Quisumbing et al. (2022), Schuler et al. (2018), and Völker and Doneys (2021). Studies acknowledge an intersectionality perspective (Larson et al. 2019); however, few include it.	Theoretically, it acknowledges an intersectionality perspective (Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) 1994), and some have an intersectionality perspective, such as Buechler et al. (2020), Kansangaa et al. (2019), Nyantakyi-Frimpong (2017), and Vercillo (2022).	Most studies acknowledge and include intersectionality theoretically and empirically. For example, Asher (2004), Elmhirst (2011;2015), Ge et al. (2011), Mollet and Faria (2013), Nightingale (2011), Sundberg (2004), and Truelove (2011).

Table 2 (cont'd)

	For example, Addinsall et al. (2023), Clement et al. (2019), Mukhopadhyay (2023), and Tavenner and Craner (2019).		

Source: Author's elaboration.

Whether the tradition has a fixed-modern idea of gender is linked to whether they hold a binary or non-binary gender perspective (see Table 2). GAD and structuralist FPE mostly have a binary cis-gender perspective (Deere and Leon 2001; McCarthy and Krause 2024; Quisumbing et al. 2023; Sraboni et al. 2014), while pos-structuralist FPE does not (Asher 2004; Mollet and Faria 2013; Sultana 2009;2011;2020) (see Table 2).

GAD and structuralist FPE empirical studies predominantly focus on inequalities between cis-gender women and men, heterosexual couples, or female and male-headed households. McArthur et al. (2022) conducted a recent literature review on 356 studies related to gender, development, and transformation of gender structures of constraint. They found that most studies compare the disadvantages experienced by women compared to men in agricultural and rural settings. Studies assessing men's perspectives on women's empowerment are also examples of a gender binary perspective (Schuler et al. 2018). This binary perspective is reflected in most empirical GADs and structuralist FPEs studies (see Table 2). Recently, GAD literature suggests the importance of addressing a non-binary perspective (Gibbons 2023). Tavenner and Crane (2022) reflect on the implications of measuring women's empowerment from a binary gender perspective in GAD:

> "The reduction of women and men to dualistic 'sex' categories in sex-disaggregated empowerment metrics does not capture the full spectrum of biological sex, nor does it engage with how 'women' are not a homogenous group within agricultural systems. Using binary sex categories thus risks misrepresenting women (and men) as seemingly monolithic categories, rendering important diversity within and between these groups invisible, and excluding nonbinary, intersex, and gender nonconforming people from being measured at all" (852).

Although empirical studies with a non-binary perspective are still few among the post-structuralist FPE tradition literature, this FPE tradition acknowledges that gender is non-binary (Asher 2004; Sundberg 2004). Also, Heynen (2018) and Sandilands (2002) have merged FPE with queer studies (see Table 2).

Along these lines, GAD and structuralist FPE traditions recognize the importance of an intersectionality perspective (Larson et al. 2019; Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) 1994), but few empirical studies address it. Figure 1 illustrates how GAD and structuralist FPE typically refer to women and men, whereas post-structuralist FPE addresses 'gendered subjectivities,' implying an intersectional approach (Nightingale 2006;2011; Truelove 2011) or 'embodied intersectionalities of differences' (Sultana 2020).

The GAD tradition usually does not address an intersectionality perspective. For example, studies that measure women's empowerment with quantitative indicators compare to those of their male counterparts without considering other axes of difference (Malapit et al. 2019; Maiorano et al. 2021). However, a few recent GAD empirical studies address an intersectionality perspective; Mukhopadhyay (2023) explores the intersection of religion, caste, and class and how it is associated with women's empowerment in agriculture and body mass index. This author takes this intersectional perspective using statistical models based on survey information (Mukhopadhyay 2023).

Although structuralist FPE does not address intersectionality (see Table 2), it recognizes it as important (Larson et al. 2019; Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) 1994). According to Mollet (2017) and Mollet and Faria (2013), this tradition often perceives women and men as separate homogeneous groups, overlooking how power dynamics may differ based on intersecting factors such as race, ethnicity, class, socioeconomic status, age, marital status, and religion. However, recent structuralist FPE studies are starting to address this perspective. Using an intersectionality perspective from a structuralist FPE, Buechler et al. (2020) find that renewable energy projects in Arizona (USA) and Zacatecas (Mexico) leverage women's agency, especially among older women compared to younger women (an intersection between age and gender). Older women are the ones who lead actions to reduce energy consumption and implement sustainability activities compared to other community members (Buechler et al. 2020).

In contrast, post-structuralist FPE adopts an intersectionality perspective on gender (see Table 2). Post-structuralist FPE rejects the notion of homogenous genders, recognizing other social differences in power experiences (Mollett and Faria 2013; Nightingale 2011) (see Table 2). Sundberg (2004) examines how gender identities are constructed or negotiated during the implementation of a conservation project in Guatemala without assuming binary predefined roles. In embracing an intersectionality perspective, Nightingale (2011) demonstrates how caste

intersects with gender, as younger Hindu women challenge norms by remaining at home during menstruation, contrary to the tradition for their caste, which dictates being outside the house and on agricultural land.

The three traditions' commonalities and differences regarding gender can contribute to bridging literature gaps and developing a transformative framework for empowerment and development.

The fixed-modern concept of gender in GAD has provided a useful framework for scholars to comprehend the impacts of development programs on women's agency, and for practitioners to implement interventions effectively. On the other hand, the non-fixed-modern concept might help address gaps in GAD literature concerning the 'how' of transformation. The reason why a non-fixed modern idea can contribute to understanding the 'how' of transformation is because It elucidates how resources provided by development programs translate into agency. This perspective on gender has the potential to identify how individuals 'doing gender' in their daily lives either reinforce or challenge norms when they receive resources from development programs. Furthermore, it can elucidate how these daily experiences, or 'doing gender,' contribute to agency. This does not mean that research using a fixed-modern idea of gender could not contribute to explaining the 'how' of gender structure transformation. This means that a non-fixed idea of gender can be one of the avenues to understanding the 'how.'

Furthermore, combining the non-binary and intersectionality perspectives of post-structuralist FPE with recent GAD literature on this topic would facilitate an understanding of how empowerment is experienced by individuals of different genders and across various axes of difference, such as race, religion, and place of residence.

4.2. Power

This subsection compares the concept of power between GAD, structuralist FPE, and post-structuralist FPE. The three traditions share similarities in the definition of power, and differences in the empirical focus on power, and the sources of power. Table 3 illustrates the comparison between the three traditions with examples.

The three traditions share a common theoretical foundation regarding the definition of power. They all recognize that power involves both domination and the transformation of these patterns of domination, referred to as generative forms of power (Butler 2006; Kabeer 1995; Rowlands 1995;1997) (see Table 3).

Table 3. Comparison of 'Power' Between GAD, Structuralist FPE, and Post-structuralist FPE Traditions.

Dimension	GAD	Structuralist FPE	Post-structuralist FPE
Definition.	Theoretically, it defines power as domination and generation. For example, Agarwal (1994), Deere and Leon (2001), Kabeer (1995), McCarthy (2017), and Rowlands (1995;1997). Empirically, most studies focus on the expression of domination against women, especially when measuring levels of (dis)empowerment. For example, Maiorano et al. (2021), and Malapit et al. (2019). They also focus on the generative forms of power by measuring women's empowerment and its connection with other development outcomes. For instance, Achandi et al. (2018), Diiro et al. (2018), Doss (2018), Fisher and Carr (2015), Hanmer and Klugman (2016), Mutenje et al. (2016), Sraboni et al. (2014), Daher et al. (2022), Kabeer (2018), Ojediran and Anderson (2020), Pineda et al. (2019), and Rezaei et al. (2021).	Theoretically, it defines power as domination and generation. For instance, Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) (1994). Empirically, studies focus on the gendered negative impacts of projects, economic dynamics, and environmental struggles. For instance, Kansangaa et al. (2019), Nyantakyi-Frimpong (2017), Mehta (1994), Shields et al. (1994), Veuthey and Gerber (2012), and Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) (1994). At the same time, studies focus on generative power by analyzing women's collective power against development projects, and in response to environmental struggles. For example, Bacon (2010), Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) (1994), Hovorka (2006), Veuthey and Gerber (2012).	Theoretically, it defines power as domination and generation. For instance, Ge et al. (2011), and Butler (2006). Empirically, studies understand how people produce, reproduce, and challenge the normative in their everyday experiences. For example, Ge et al. (2011), Nightingale (2011), Ojeda (2011), Sultana (2009), and Truelove (2011).

Table 3 (cont'd)

Sources of power.	Gender inequalities are mostly due to gender structures of constraint. For example, Buisson et al. (2022), McCarthy and Krause (2024), and Quisumbing et al. (2022).	Gender inequalities are due to gender structures of constraint. These structures are linked to social, economic, and political macro-structures such as capitalism, neoliberalism, and colonialism. For example, Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) (1994), and Veuthey and Gerber (2012).	Gender inequalities are due to gender structures of constraint. These structures are linked to economic and political macrostructures such as capitalism, neoliberalism, and colonialism. See Arriagada Orazún and Zambra Alvaréz (2019), Buechler et al. (2020), Buechler and Hanson (2009), Hawkins and Ojeda (eds.) (2011), Ojeda (2011; 2021), Ojeda et al. (2022), and Truelove (2011).

Source: Author's elaboration.

Power as domination implies control over others, restricting their ability to choose (Rowlands 1995). Therefore, one person's power reduces another's (Rowlands 1995). Generative forms of power suggest that individuals can make choices, care for themselves, and alter the rules and norms that limit their autonomy (McCarthy 2017). This power means that one person having more power does not reduce another's power (Rowlands 1995). In essence, power also encompasses the ability to shape the rules of social conduct (McCarthy 2017).

GAD's theories on women's empowerment understand power in both ways. The three-dimensional theory (Kabeer 1995) emphasizes that women's empowerment is a process of generative power against domination. The four-power theory includes power as domination with the concept of 'power over,' and power as generative with 'power from within,' 'power to,' and 'power with' (Rowlands 1995).

Empirically, GAD focuses on domination, measuring levels of disempowerment. These include time poverty, lack of access to and control over resources, and IPV (Malapit et al. 2019; O'Hara and Clement 2018; Dietz et al. 2018; Maiorano et al. 2021) (see Table 3). Studies that focus on generative side power measure women's empowerment and its connection to other SDGs, such as those related to poverty and food insecurity reduction, as well as the positive impact of development programs in reducing disempowerment (Achandi et al. 2018; Diiro et al.

2018; Doss 2018; Fisher and Carr 2015; Mutenje et al. 2016; Sraboni et al. 2014; Daher et al. 2022; Kabeer 2018; Ojediran and Anderson 2020; Pineda et al. 2019; Rezaei et al. 2021) (see Table 3).

Theoretically, structuralist and post-structuralist FPE also sees power as domination and generative. As mentioned in Section 3, one of FPE's commitments is to reveal contradictions, which means focusing on both the negative (power as domination) and positive (power in its generative connotation) sides of a process.

A book edited by Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) (1994), *Feminist Political Ecology. Global Issues and Local Experience* is one of the first proposals of structuralist FPE, and it presents cases of dominative power, individuals unequal access, and control over resources based on gender, as well as the collective actions women lead to change those unequal dynamics. Therefore, structuralist FPE empirical studies delve into both powers. They identify the dominative power by understanding how processes, such as the introduction of new technologies, the implementation of a development project or policy (e.g., structural adjustment policies), or women engaging in collective action, can (re) produce gender inequalities including unequal gender division of labor and GBV (Kansangaa et al. 2019; Nyantakyi-Frimpong 2017; Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) (1994); Veuthey and Gerber 2012) (see Table 3). Regarding generative power, structuralist FPE focuses on women's collective action against environmental struggles or development projects that affect their lives and the lives of their families and community members, and the benefits for women in engaging in collective action (Bacon 2010; Hovorka 2006; Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) (1994)).

In the case of post-structuralist FPE, theoretically, studies also acknowledge dominative and generative power. Studies under these traditions use Butler's (2006) perspective, which suggests that power both prohibits and regulates but can also be generative. For this tradition, power as domination is constantly (re)produced through the naturalization and repetition (doing) of normative practices (Butler 2006), and the discipline of the normative (Ge et al. 2011). Power as generative expands the normative practices in everyday experiences (Butler 2006).

Therefore, empirically, post-structuralist FPE comprehends how the two forms of power, the dominative and generative, coexist in individuals' everyday gendered experiences (Ge et al. 2011; Nightingale 2011). Empirically, post-structuralist FPE proposes that power and gender manifest in the practices and meanings of everyday life and bodies, and they understand the ways

in which people expand the normative by occupying new spaces, conducting new practices, and accessing resources not allowed for them (Nightingale 2011; Ojeda 2011; Truelove 2011) (see Table 3). For instance, Sultana (2009) shows that arsenic water contamination in Bangladesh lead women to visit places to collect water in their everyday lives, places that are traditionally prohibited to them. Daily, they challenge gender norms (generative) while also experiencing power as domination, such as GVB, from men in the streets for doing that (Sultana 2009).

However, these three traditions differ in their conceptualization of power sources (see Table 3). I utilize Connell's (1986) distinction of power sources to elucidate these differences. Connell (1986) suggests that feminist literature can be categorized into sources of power that are either intrinsic or extrinsic to gender structures of constraints. Intrinsic theories attribute the causes of oppression to gender structures of constraint themselves (Connell 1986). Extrinsic theories consider that gender structures of constraint and macro-political-economic systems (feminists who acknowledge capitalism's role in shaping gender dynamics) are both the root causes of gender inequalities and gender power as domination (Connell 1986).

GAD has mostly an intrinsic perspective in its scholarship since it emphasizes gender structures of constraint as the main source of gender inequality (Buisson et al. 2022; Kabeer 1999; McCarthy and Krause 2024; Quisumbing et al. 2022; Rowlands 1995). This is visible in GAD women's empowerment theories, which emphasize women gaining agency for them to transform the gender norms and rules that constrain their lives (Rowlands 1995;1997). Another aspect that reflects this perspective in GAD tradition is the increasing call by GAD scholars for gender-transformative development programs (Cole et al. 2018; Cornwall et al. 2015; Kleibera et al. 2019; McArthur et al. 2022; Njuki et al. 2022). Empirically, there also has been an increase in studies on identifying gender structures of constraint, especially gender norms, and the roles of those in implementing development programs (Badstude et al. 2020; Timu and Kramer 2013).

Meanwhile, the two FPE traditions recognize that gendered power relations stem from intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Likewise mentioned in Section 3, connecting macro-political and economic systems (e.g., capitalism and neoliberalism) with local and individual struggles is one of the main FPE commitments. Therefore, for FPE, gender inequalities are shaped by norms and rules, further reinforced by macroeconomic and political systems (see Table 3). For post-structuralist FPE, both gender structures and macroeconomic and political systems are interconnected and coproduced gender inequalities. Therefore, from this perspective, one cannot

say that one (e.g., macroeconomic structures) causes the other (e.g., gender norms). Ojeda et al. (2022) highlight that FPE advocates for transforming gendered structures of constraints, asserting that such transformation is contingent upon changes in other structures, including neoliberalism, capitalism, and racism. This advocate assumes that both are the main root of gender inequalities.

Therefore, empirically, structuralist FPE tradition examines the relationship between large economic and political systems and localities, exploring how industrialization, new market-oriented economies, globalization, and other structural changes (e.g., structural adjustment policies) affect women's and men's lives (Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) 1994). FPE studies adopting a post-structuralist perspective focus on how social, economic, and environmental policies or systems (e.g., capitalism) are manifested in the everyday lives and bodies of women and men and their daily experiences in relation to the environment, such as water and agricultural land (Buechler et al. 2020; Buechler and Hanson 2009; Hawkins and Ojeda (eds.) 2011; Ojeda 2011; Ojeda et al. 2022; Truelove 2011). For example, a post-structuralist FPE scholarship focuses on gendered dynamics related to access, control, and extractivism[7] of natural resources and land in Latin America, rooted in the history of colonialism in the region and land grabbing from internal armed conflicts, such as in the case of Colombia (Arriagada Orazún and Zambra Alvaréz 2019; Ojeda 2021).

The commonalities and differences between GAD and the two FPE traditions regarding 'power' contribute to bridging gaps for a transformative empowerment framework. Both GAD and FPE conceptualize power as involving both domination and generation. Therefore, as recognized in the literature, an empowerment framework must acknowledge that empowerment entails generative power and the challenge of power forms as domination without necessarily reproducing domination.

However, these traditions emphasize different sources of power, which influence their perspectives on transformation. GAD and FPE recognize that gender structures of constraint are fundamental roots of domination and gender inequalities. Therefore, for a transformative empowerment framework, addressing the change in gender structures is crucial. Furthermore, this perspective should be complemented by the extrinsic FPE viewpoint, which signifies a

[7] Extractivism can be understood as "as a model of overexploitation of nature under which local communities and environments suffer the damage, but do not benefit from extractivist activities." (Ojeda et al. 2022, 151).

commitment to connecting individual and local issues with macro-political-economic dynamics. This extrinsic perspective can help bridge gaps in empowerment literature by addressing the often overlooked political and economic context. In other words, a transformative empowerment framework should acknowledge the intertwined nature of gender structures of constraint with macro-economic and political systems. Doing so would enhance our understanding of the extent to which an empowerment strategy focusing solely on gender structures can mitigate gender inequalities, which are also shaped by macro systems.

4.3. Transformation

This subsection compares the concept of 'transformation' towards reducing gender inequalities between GAD and the two FPE traditions. We assess 'transformation' through three dimensions: a) definition, b) the sources of that transformation, and c) its consequences. These forms of transformation are connected to the definitions of 'gender' and 'power.' Table 4 compares the three dimensions of the traditions.

Table 4. Comparison of 'Transformation' Between GAD, Structuralist FPE, and Post-structuralist FPE Traditions

Dimension	GAD	Structuralist FPE	Post-structuralist FPE
Definition.	Transformation is the process of reducing gender gaps related to unequal source rights, gender division of labor, and gendered ideologies. For example, Agarwal (1994), and Hillenbrand et al. (2015). Also, the changing of gender structures of constraint–- rules, and norms. For instance, Agarwal (1994), Rowlands (1995;1997), and Kabeer (1999).	Transformation reduces gender inequalities by changing the gender structures—rules and norms—that cause different source rights, gender division of labor, and gendered ideologies. It also changes the aspects of the economic and political systems and environmental struggles that cause gender inequalities. See Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) (1994).	Transformation is the challenge or disruption of the gender structures or the socially acceptable; or to expand the boundaries of the acceptable by 'doing gender.' For example, Butler (2006), Sundberg (2004), Trauger (2007) and West and Zimmerman (1987). Challenges to the economic and political systems can also accompany it.

Table 4 (cont'd)

			For example, Hawkins and Ojeda (2011), and Ojeda et al. (2022).
Source of transformation.	Development programs can produce, reproduce, and transform gender structures of constraint. Thus, development can enhance gender equality. For example, Daher et al. (2022), Kabeer (2018), McCarthy and Krause (2024), Ojediran and Anderson (2020), Pineda et al (2019), Quisumbing et al. (2022), and Rezaei et al. (2021).	Transformation can happen due to an environmental and poltical struggle affecting people's lives. For instance, Bacon, (2010), and (Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) (1994).	Transformation can happen due to an environmental struggle affecting people's lives. For example, Asher (2004), Nightingale (2006), Sultana (2009), and Truelove (2011).
Negative consequences of transformation.	It recognizes theoretically the potential negative consequences of transformation.	Studies focus on the coexistence of transformation with negative consequences.	Studies focus on the coexistence of transformation with negative consequences.
Negative consequences of transformation.	For example, Deere and Leon (2011), and Quisumbing et al. (2022). Some of them are starting to count the negative consequences in the empowerment process (Quisumbing et al. (2022); McCarthy and Krause (2024).	For example, Nyantakyi-Frimpong (2017), Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) (1994), and Veuthey and Gerber (2012).	For example, Nightingale (2011), Sultana (2009; 2020), and Truelove (2011).

Source: Author's elaboration.

GAD and structuralist FPE, from their intrinsic idea of power, define transformation as reducing, challenging, or eliminating gender structures of constraints, and thus, gender inequalities (Agarwal 1994). Likewise, Connell (1999) would say for feminist studies in general, scholars in both GAD and structuralist FPE perceive gender structure of constraint transformation as an improvement in inequality or a reduction in gender gaps to ensure that the future is better than the past and the present. Consequently, they propose addressing issues that indicate unequal power relations between women and men. These issues include access and

control over resources (e.g., land and household assets rights or economic resources) (Agarwal 1994; Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) 1994), decision-making within the household (Hillenbrand et al. 2015), time poverty (e.g., distribution of domestic chores and agricultural labor) (Kasangaa et al. 2019), and group membership (Bacon 2010; Rocheleau et al. (Eds.) 1994). For example, Hillenbrand et al. (2015) see joint decision-making between women and men as a way of transforming gender power relations from a less equal (a scenario where men make decisions solely) to a more equal fashion. Agarwal (1994), drawing on an example from Mies et al. (1986), suggests that land ownership can enable women to gain social status within their community and receive better treatment from community members.

These two traditions also view transformation as a process of empowerment – transforming gender norms and rules (Rowlands 1997) or the process by which people without the ability to choose to gain such an ability (Kabeer 1999). In both GAD's theories of women's empowerment, empowerment is a process of transformation at the individual and collective levels (Kabeer 1999; Rowlands 1995;1997). Similarly, Agarwal (1994) argues that individual empowerment challenges structures and inequalities while collective empowerment eliminates them. An empirical example of GAD literature using transformation as empowerment is found in Acosta et al. (2020). They analyze the meaning of joint agricultural decision-making among small-scale farmers in Tanzania to better understand women's decision-making authority, within the household and over the agricultural land, as an indicator of increased bargaining power and, thus, empowerment (Acosta et al. 2020).

Post-structuralist FPE envisions transformation more as expanding the normative or denaturalizing norms through new gender identities or social interactions (Connell 1986; Butler 2006). This idea stems from the understanding that gender is displayed in daily life, and thus, the way to transform the normative is to challenge norms in everyday experiences and interactions with others (West and Zimmerman 1987) or to cause gender trouble by making evident that the normative (based on prohibitions and regulations) is unnatural (Butler 2006). Trauger (2007) summarizes this latter perception of transformation:

> "Behavior that is seen as 'out of place' both violates and contests dominant social narratives. This violation and contestation can be seen as a transgression of expected behavior that provides an opportunity for the (re)writing of the social narratives (Cresswell, 1996). Killian (1998) argues that transgression can be seen as an assertion of identity and a claiming of public space for the purposes of increasing the publicity and in some cases, the power, of marginalized groups" (297).

Sundberg (2004) exemplifies how the gendered and racial identities of indigenous women in Guatemala changed in everyday life when they participated in women's groups to harvest and sell medicinal plants as part of a conservation program (Sundberg 2004). During their daily encounters with other women, group members discussed gender-based and community political issues, which made them feel more confident and set life goals beyond their family necessities (Sundberg 2004).

These post-structuralist FPE scholars, who have an extrinsic idea of power, believe that the transformation of gender structures needs to go hand-in-hand with the transformation of other local and global oppressive politics of difference, such as racism and neoliberalism (Hawkins and Ojeda 2011; Ojeda et al. 2022). For this tradition, gender norms and rules, and gender inequalities are embedded in these structures (Hawkins and Ojeda 2011; Ojeda et al. 2022).

Besides the definition of transformation, the three traditions differ in the sources of transformation (see Table 3). In GAD, transformation can be leveraged by resources (human, material, social), such as training, schooling, land, income-earned activities, and group membership, promoted by development programs or acquired by the individuals independently of these programs (Daher et al. 2022; Kabeer 2018; McCarthy and Krause 2024; Ojediran and Anderson 2020; Pineda et al. 2019; Quisumbing et al. 2022; Rezaei et al. 2021). For example, Pineda et al. (2019) suggest that policies can change gender norms after finding that a program that provided an agricultural identification number to women coffee producers in Colombia, increased their levels of empowerment in individual, economic, and social domains since they were able to access accredit and subsidies.

For both FPE traditions, transformation is more closely associated with people's individual and collective responses to challenges they face, especially environmental struggles (e.g., water insecurity, climate change, and negative effects on livelihoods and well-being) (Asher 2004; Bacon, 2010; Sultana, 2009; Truelove, 2011) (see Table 4). Therefore, for gender norms transformation, it is not necessarily a development program granting resources. For example from a post-structuralist tradition is Asher (2004), who shows how rural Afro-Colombian women collectively organized to reclaim their gender and ethnicity, assert control over their territory, and share their needs and experiences. By doing that, they challenged gender and race norms.

A third dimension of 'transformation' is the potential negative consequences of transformation (see Table 4). The three traditions theoretically recognize that when a transformation occurs, negative consequences, such as the manifestation of power as domination (e.g., GBV), can be faced by those transforming the normative (Deere and Leon 2001; Butler 2006). In a few words, transformation can lead to a backlash (McCarthy and Krause 2024). The three traditions acknowledge the negative consequences for people who challenge gender norms because they define power as domination and generative (see Table 3).

Nonetheless, few empirical GAD studies explore the forms of domination that might be generated due to empowerment processes (McCarthy and Krause 2024; Quisumbing et al. 2022) (see Table 3). For example, McCarthy and Krause (2024) find that a development program with pastoralists in Kenya increased women's empowerment, but in the end, men were more likely to consider IPV as justifiable. Therefore, the authors call attention to the fact that programs targeting women's empowerment can have consequences in them experiencing violence (McCarthy and Krause 2024), and thus, the importance of tackling those potential backlashes.

Empirically, both FPE traditions emphasize the coexistence of transformation with the presence of power as domination (see Table 4). This emphasis relates to FPE commitment, explained in Section 3, to bring contradictions to the forefront. Veuthey and Gerber (2012), from a structuralist FPE, provide an empirical example of women organizing against the shrimp industry in Ecuador due to its detrimental effects on the livelihoods of rural low-income families. As a result of their political mobilization, women gained a greater presence in the political sphere but experienced decreased involvement in household affairs since they did not have same available time, thereby challenging gender norms. However, this challenge to gender norms also led to increased household conflict (Veuthey and Gerber 2012). Along these lines, from a post-structuralist perspective, Nightingale (2011) finds that women in Nepal are expanding the normative by occupying spaces that are prohibited to them due to their gender (e.g., agricultural land), and by doing so, they expand the normative, while at the same time losing status in their communities (e.g., male did not want to married them because of challenging gender norms).

The three traditions share commonalities and differences that contribute to a transformative empowerment framework, which helps bridge literature gaps. Both GAD and structuralist and post-structuralist FPE assert that transformation involves challenging gender structures of constraint, as they are fundamental roots of gender inequalities. However, they

differ in their approaches to identifying these changes, influenced by their respective concepts of gender. These differing approaches represent various expressions of transformation within an empowerment process and contribute to the literature gap concerning identifying the pathways to transformation. Thus, an empowerment process can embody transformation when it results in a reduction of gender inequality (e.g., in resource rights) and an improvement in the current situation, as posited by GAD and structuralist FPE; challenging gender structures by expanding and denaturalizing norms, as advocated by post-structuralist FPE; or by eliminating these structures, as suggested by GAD and structuralist FPE.

Furthermore, a transformative empowerment framework can recognize, as addressed by post-structuralist FPE, that transformation can occur when women and men challenge economic and political systems producing gender inequalities. Although these systems are not inherently gender structures of constraint, they contribute to gender inequalities through their interaction with such structures.

The different sources of transformation highlighted by GAD and FPE are complementary to a transformative empowerment framework in development. Combining GAD and FPE perspectives can contribute to closing the gap in the literature on pathways of transformation in empowerment. GAD has demonstrated that development programs can facilitate individual empowerment by transforming gender norms and rules, thus reducing inequalities. Similarly, FPE traditions have shown that environmental struggles, economic challenges, and political dynamics can also serve as catalysts for organizing people to transform societal structures.

Incorporating both perspectives as potential sources of transformation enriches the empowerment framework. It would be beneficial to explore how the resources provided by development programs intersect with other resources held by individuals or groups, as well as other motivations for transforming the structures that perpetuate inequalities.

Finally, embracing the concept of contradiction proposed by FPE would contribute to understanding the negative consequences faced by individuals who challenge or transform power structures. Therefore, a transformative empowerment framework should also consider the consequences of empowerment.

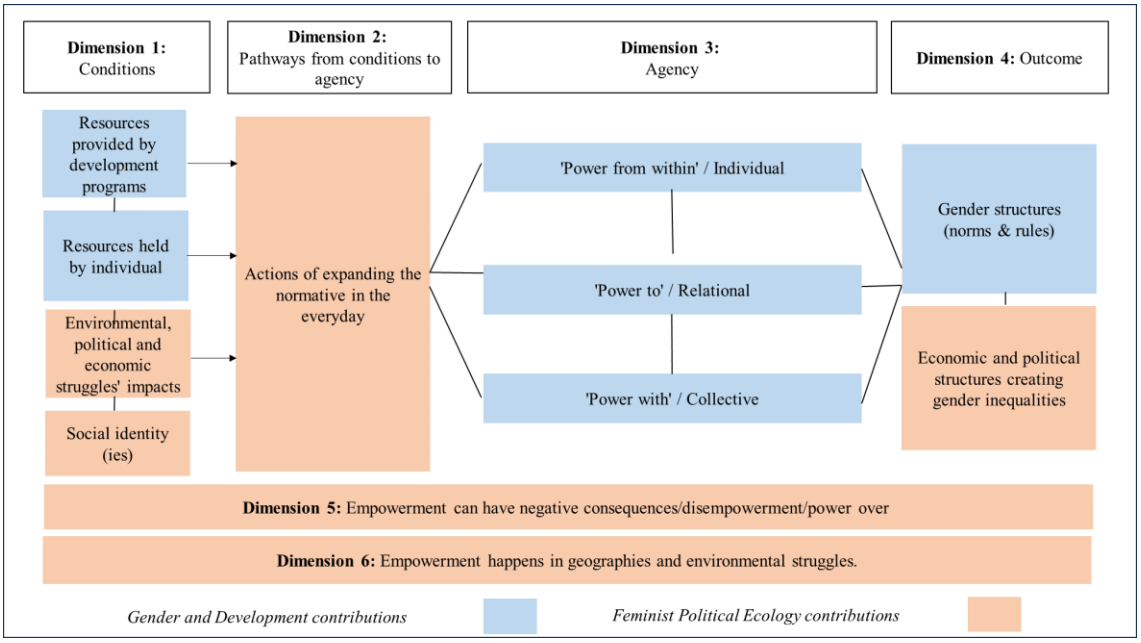
5. Towards a New Theoretical Framework

Merging GAD and FPE theoretical proposals, including their concepts of gender, power, and transformation, as well as their empirical analyses, provides an opportunity to develop a

theoretical framework that revitalizes the transformative nature of empowerment for rural development in LMICs. Therefore, I propose the theoretical framework: *Women's Empowerment for Gender-Transformative Rural Development*.

The theoretical framework aims to close the literature gaps for a transformative empowerment framework merging the contributions of GAD and the two FPE traditions. It is based on the definition that empowerment is the individual and collective process by which people challenge or eliminate gender structures of constraint (Kabeer 1999; Rowlands 1995;1997), and other political and economic structures that co-produce gender inequalities (Ojeda et al. 2022). Therefore, the framework delineates empowerment across six dimensions: conditions, pathways from conditions to agency, agency, outcomes, negative consequences, and geographies. Figure 2 illustrates this framework. The boxes in blue are the contributions from GAD, and the boxes in light orange are the contributions from FPE. The following subsection elucidates the framework's dimensions while also delineating the contributions of GAD and the two FPE traditions.

Figure 2. Women's Empowerment for Gender-Transformative Development Framework.



Source: Authors' elaboration based on Kabeer (1999;2018); Rowlands (1995); and FPE contributions.

5.1. Framework Dimensions

Dimension 1: Conditions to empowerment. People require certain conditions to change gender structures of constraint and political and economic structures that create gender inequalities. Drawing from GAD, I emphasize the necessity of access to and control over material (financial services, land, income, and assets), human (education, schooling, and health), and social resources (family support and social networks) as prerequisites for individuals to attain agency within their households and communities (Kabeer 2018). These resources may be independently possessed by individuals or provided through development programs (or state interventions) (see the first two blue boxes under the box 'Dimension 1' in Figure 2). As mentioned by FPE, the sources of transformation can also be people organizing to challenge structures as a response to the negative impacts in their lives of these structures through environmental, economic, and political struggles (see the second orange light box under the box 'Dimension 1' in Figure 2). People's forms of resistance, aside from the ones supported by development programs, can interact with the resources provided by development programs and other resources to gain agency (see Figure 2).

The access to and control over these resources and the process of attaining agency and transforming gender structures are influenced by individuals' social identities and positions within society. In essence, non-binary and intersectionality perspectives are critical since factors such as race, ethnicity, age, social class, socio-economic status, and place of living can impact individuals' access to and control over resources, particularly if these societal structures intersect with gender and impose constraints on their lives (see the third box in orange under the box 'Dimension 1: conditions' in Figure 2).

Dimension 2. Pathways from conditions to agency. The path from conditions to agency elucidates how access to resources from development programs can translate into agency. Drawing from post-structuralist FPE's contributions and a non-fixed modern idea of gender, the agency is attained through the enactment of actions in daily life that challenge the norms restricting individuals lives based on their gender (see the orange light box under 'Dimension 2,' in Figure 2). These actions may encompass previously nonexistent behaviors and contrary to prevailing norms and rules. For instance, in post-structuralist FPE's view, occupying spaces previously off-limits to women (e.g., streets at night) and assuming new roles in the community (e.g., serving as community leaders) are examples of such actions (Sultana 2020; Veuthey and

Gerber 2012). Post-structuralist FPE posits that it is through these daily actions that individuals achieve agency.

Dimension 3. Agency. I adopt the concept of agency from GAD's empowerment theories (Kabeer 1999; Rowlands 1995;1997). The framework I propose defines agency as the capacity to make choices and challenge gender norms and rules (Kabeer 1999). Therefore, I see agency when individuals become aware of gender norms and rules, make efforts to change them, and/or attain decision-making authority in their personal lives, households, communities, and societies. To operationalize agency, I adhere to Malapit et al.'s (2019) approach, which aligns with Rowlands' (1995;1997) empowerment framework: 'power from within,' 'power to,' and 'power with.' Each form of power signifies the acquisition of agency at the individual, relational, and social levels, respectively (see the three blue boxes under 'Dimension 3' in Figure 2).

Dimension 4. Outcomes. The primary outcome of this empowerment process is the transformation of gender norms and rules, as suggested by GAD and the two FPE traditions, and other political and economic structures that also cause gender inequalities, as suggested by FPE (see the blue and orange light boxes under 'Dimension 4,' in Figure 2). In this framework, transformation is challenging, expanding the normative or eliminating both outcomes. These notions of transformation are based on merging both GAD, structuralist FPE, and post-structuralist FPE. Regarding the normative, which is the vision of post-structural FPE, empowerment seeks to broaden the boundaries of what is considered acceptable for individuals, because of their gender, within their personal lives, households, and communities. In this way, the roots of gender inequalities can be reduced.

Dimension 5. Negative consequences. FPE's commitment to exposing contradictions can help bridge the gap in GAD literature, which often overlooks the negative forms of power that can arise during an empowerment process. By adopting this approach, the positive and negative aspects inherent in empowerment when women challenge gender norms can be explored (see 'Dimension 5' in Figure 2). Furthermore, it helps address the gap in GAD research, which has few studies examining the potential negative impacts of programs promoting empowerment. A more comprehensive understanding can be achieved by considering both the positive and negative aspects, especially in well-intentioned development programs in agriculture aimed at empowering women.

Dimension 6. Local and global geographies and environmental struggles. This FPE commitment can help analyze how community, macro-political, and economic dynamics influence the empowerment process (see 'Dimension 6" in Figure 2). Adopting this perspective from FPE as an empowerment framework can provide insights into how factors such as environmental struggles (such as water scarcity) and economic trends (such as unemployment) positively or negatively impact women's empowerment. By leveraging this FPE commitment, the role of community dynamics in program design and the influence of national and international policies to which the program must adhere (e.g., donor mandates) on the effectiveness of empowerment programs for women, can be better approached.

6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I propose a framework titled, *Women's Empowerment for Gender-Transformative Rural Development*, which draws upon contributions from both the structuralist and post-structuralist FPE traditions as well as GAD empowerment theories –the three-dimensional and the four-power theories. While GAD and FPE have traditionally been considered separately, I demonstrate that their integration offers a more comprehensive approach to empowerment for rural development in LMICs. Presently, there is a growing demand for the transformation of gender structures among development practitioners and scholars, particularly in regions such as Asia, Africa, and Latin America. However, these calls lack theoretical discussions. Therefore, there is a need for a framework that addresses how gender structures can be effectively transformed. This chapter contributes to this gap. To propose the new framework, I compared the 'gender,' 'power,' and 'transformation' concepts between GAD and FPE. This comparison enabled a discussion on how the concept's commonalities and differences between the traditions contribute to an empowerment framework that responds to the contemporary call for gender-transformative development programs.

This chapter offers a framework that examines the 'how' of transformation, specifically the pathways of transformation. The framework emphasizes dimensions less explored in GAD theories of empowerment: negative forms of power that coexist within an empowerment process, collective power, pathways from resources to agency, and the significance of space and socio-political-economic-environmental conditions in which gender structures are produced, reproduced, and transformed. Nonetheless, it does not include theoretical discussions on gender

in queer, masculinities, and feminist social movement literature. Future theoretical discussions using these types of literature can enhance the framework proposed in this chapter.

Therefore, this framework provides a theoretical foundation for future research avenues in the scholarship on women's empowerment and development in LMICs. Some of these research avenues could include: What role do development programs play in promoting collective forms of power ('power with')? What are the negative consequences or forms of domination inherent in an empowerment process, and how do they manifest? How can these negative consequences be prevented or addressed? How can development programs facilitate access to resources that pave the way to agency? What are the daily actions typically associated with agency and gender norms transformation? What are the key political, economic, and environmental conditions influencing the production, reproduction, and transformation of gender structures?

Contemporary international development scholars and practitioners acknowledge the critical importance of transforming gender norms and rules and other structures co-producing gender inequalities to mitigate persistent gender inequalities in LMICs. Merging GAD and FPE, along with their primary conceptions of 'gender,' 'power,' and 'transformation,' represents an initial stride toward a framework capable of identifying pathways for transformation towards the SGD 5 on Gender Equality. I present this framework as an initial endeavor to rekindle the radical feminist roots of women's empowerment.

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CHAPTER 2. TRANSFORMING GENDER NORMS IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT. A CASE STUDY IN COLOMBIA

1. Introduction

Over the past five decades, scholars, activists, and development practitioners have reported that rural women, specifically in low-middle-income countries (LMICs), encounter more limited access to resources and societal burdens than their male counterparts, significantly impacting their well-being. Extensive evidence demonstrates that women, in contrast to men, experience higher susceptibility to food insecurity, lower access to digital and agricultural technologies, fewer land rights, poorer conditions in agricultural employment, higher poverty rates, increased vulnerability to gender-based violence (GVB), less economic benefits from cash crops, and greater barriers to market access (Babugura 2017; Doss and Quisumbing 2020; FAO 2018; FAO 2023; Hanmer and Klugman 2016; Team and Doss 2011). These disparities detrimentally affect women's income, household food security, and well-being (Botreau and Cohen 2020; FAO 2023), making it evident that gender disparities persist.

Gender structures of constraint are one of the main roots of gender inequality. They encompass formal rules, such as inheritance laws, and informal norms, like cultural expectations and prohibitions, which limit individuals' life goals and actions based on gender (Kabeer 1999). Women's empowerment is one of the pivotal concepts and programming approaches in comprehending and changing gender structures in LMICs' rural settings (Batliwala 1997; Quisumbing et al. 2023). Women's empowerment is an individual or collective transformation wherein women without power gain agency and actively challenge gender structures of constraint (norms and rules) (Agarwal 1994; Deere and Leon 2001; Kabeer 1999;2005).

Empowerment is a complex process (Quisumbing et al. 2023), partly because one crucial element of empowerment, 'power,' encompasses positive and negative dimensions (Butler 2006; Connell 1987; Rowlands 1997). The positive dimension denotes generative power, which challenges such forms of domination and does not diminish others' power (Butler 2006; Rowlands 1997). Conversely, the negative dimension refers to forms of domination, defined as "the ability of one person or group to get another person or group to do something against their will" (Rowlands 1997, 9). In addition, empowerment can inadvertently trigger dominative power, such as instances of intimate partner violence (IPV) (Deere and Leon 2001; McCarthy and Krause 2024; Nyantakyi-Frimpong 2017; Rezaei et al. 2021; Veuthey and Gerber 2012).

Besides power, transformation is also a core part of the definition of empowerment. It is the process by which people, individually or collectively, diverge from expected gender structures of constraint limiting their lives (Butler 2006; Connell 1987).

Unfortunately, since the 1990s, the concept of empowerment has been co-opted by agencies merely as a buzzword – it has multiple definitions, or it does not have a definition that encompasses transforming gender norms or rules (Batliwala 2007; Cornwall 2016; Cornwall et al. 2007; Elmhirst 2011; Horton 2018; Khurshid 2016; Mollet and Faria 2013). This phenomenon has detached the concept from its definition: gender structure transformation. Therefore, empowerment has not been fully implemented as a concept and tool for changing norms and rules. Since the 1990s, feminist scholars have emphasized the critical need to reclaim empowerment from its buzz usage and use it to transform one of the main roots of gender inequality: gender structures of constraint (Cornwall 2016; Cornwall and Rivas 2015; Weringa 1997).

Currently, there is an increasing push from gender development scholars and development agencies (e.g., the United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)) to implement programs that indeed transform gender structures of constraint to achieve gender equality (Hillenbrand et al. 2015; FAO 2023; McArthur et al., 2022; Quisumbing et al. 2023). The current push for transforming gender structures arises partly due to development programs' insufficiently addressing structural changes, which have led to the persistence of gender inequalities. As a result, humanity is far from accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on Gender Equality by 2030 (FAO 2023).

Nonetheless, more literature is needed on the 'how' of that gender structure transformation. Likewise, in sustainability, there is an urge for transformation for more social, economic, and environmentally sustainable futures, but this urge has little attention to how that transformation would be (Bentz et al. 2022). Therefore, Bentz et al. (2022) bring to the forefront the importance of identifying the means and manner for the transformation needed for sustainability. A similar focus on the 'how' of transformation is needed in gender and development.

The Gender and Development (GAD) school of thought has significantly contributed to women's empowerment and development in LMICs and the recent call for gender

transformation. This school of thought has proposed the main empowerment theoretical frameworks in development (Kabeer 1999; Rowlands 1995), measurements (e.g., the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index), and gender structures of constraint identification, especially gender norms (Batliwala 1997; Badstude et al. 2020; Chavarro et al. 2020; Deere and Leon 2001; Malapit et al. 2019; Quisumbing et al. 2023; Sraboni et al. 2014; Timu and Kramer 2013).

Nonetheless, two critical areas require more attention in the GAD literature on women's empowerment to contribute to understanding the 'how' of gender structure transformation. Firstly, as suggested by Flores-Novelo et al. (2021), Kabeer (2018), and Nyuki et al. (2022), the literature lacks an understanding of the societal processes or pathways through which resources from development programs translate into individuals gaining power and transforming gender norms and rules. Likewise, in sustainability, there is a lack of literature on gender structure transformation. Most studies understand the effect of resources (e.g., land, income-earned activities, education) on people gaining generative power but not the processes or means by which those resources translate into generative power. Secondly, although suggested by the empowerment theory in GAD, few empirical studies have identified the potential coexistence of both negative and positive aspects of power within an empowerment process (see for some empirical examples: Horton 2018; McCarthy and Krause 2024).

The first chapter proposed a theoretical framework for women's empowerment and development, addressing the two areas above that are missing from the literature. The framework, *Women's Empowerment for Gender-Transformative Rural Development*, merges the contributions of GAD and Feminist Political Ecology (FPE). FPE concerns itself with political, gender, and environmental dynamics (Bezner Kerr 2014; Jarosz 2011; Nyantakyi-Frimpong 2017). It comprehends women's resistance to gender structures of constraint and exposes contradictions by highlighting such resistance's positive and negative aspects. However, FPE has not thoroughly analyzed the role of development in transforming gender structure as extensively as GAD has.

In this chapter, I empirically test the theoretical framework proposed in Chapter 1 by investigating the empowerment of rural women engaged in a development program across two distinct regions of rural Colombia, comparing their experiences to those of participating men. I explore how women and men challenge prevailing gender norms within the program and identify

potential negative consequences that may arise when these norms are contested. The research questions of this second chapter are: How do women and men challenge gender norms when participating in a development program? What negative consequences might arise because women and men challenge gender norms due to the development program?

I conducted a content analysis on 65 semi-structured interviews in the Spring and Summer of 2022, involving 44 women and 21 men enrolled in a gender-focused rural entrepreneurship program in Colombia. This country holds significant importance as a location. In 2019, the country's rural population constituted 24 percent of the total populace, half women (Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (DANE) 2020). The country has enacted laws aimed at safeguarding women's rights, encompassing regulations that penalize GBV (Laws 1258 of 2008, 1773 of 2016, and 2172 of 2021), feminicide (Law 1761 of 2015), sexual abuse during armed conflict (Law 1719 of 2014), and the absence of child support from male counterparts (Law 1542 of 2012). However, in rural areas, prevailing gender norms differ from urban settings, perpetuating expectations that women, rather than men, should primarily be responsible for domestic chores (DANE 2020). Consequently, gender inequalities persist against women. For example, 11.6 percent of rural women face unemployment compared to 4.2 percent of men (DANE 2020). Additionally, women in rural areas dedicate more hours per day to work than their male counterparts, with a significant portion of these hours devoted to unpaid household duties (DANE 2020).

2. Rural Women's Empowerment and Entrepreneurship in LMICs

GAD has uncovered key findings concerning women's empowerment and development in rural settings in LMICs. Below, I summarize five fundamental findings in the literature on rural women's empowerment. This literature has found that women are likelier to lack power than their male counterparts (Maiorano et al. 2021; Malapit et al. 2019). Besides, the operationalization and measurement of empowerment pose challenges because of its complexity (Quisumbing et al. 2023), due, among other things, to the fact that empowerment in one domain does not necessarily imply empowerment in another domain (Bishop and Bowman 2014; Hanmer and Klugman 2016; Malapit et al. 2019). For instance, women may have decision-making power over income in agricultural settings but not in the distribution of domestic chores. Regarding the measurement, some quantitative studies may indicate women's empowerment,

while qualitative assessments with the same group reveal that women do not perceive themselves as empowered (Clement 2019; Meinzen-Dick et al. 2019).

Another finding indicates that women's empowerment positively influences the SDGs of No Poverty and Zero Hunger. Studies suggest its capacity to enhance food security, nutrition, and agricultural productivity in rural areas (Clement 2019; Dietz et al. 2018; Diiro et al. 2018; Larson et al. 2019; Sraboni et al. 2014). In addition, the findings imply that individual women's empowerment relies on material, social, and human resources (Kabeer 2018). Material resources encompass land and asset ownership, and credit access (Agarwal 1994; Deere and Leon 2001; Kabeer 2018). Social resources refer to networks and connections with influential individuals (Kabeer 2018; Kandpal et al. 2013; Rowlands 1997). Finally, human resources include formal education, technical skills in agriculture, negotiation capabilities, exposure to media, and labor experience (Hanmer and Klugman 2016; Kabeer 2018; O'Hara and Clement 2018; Rowlands 1997).

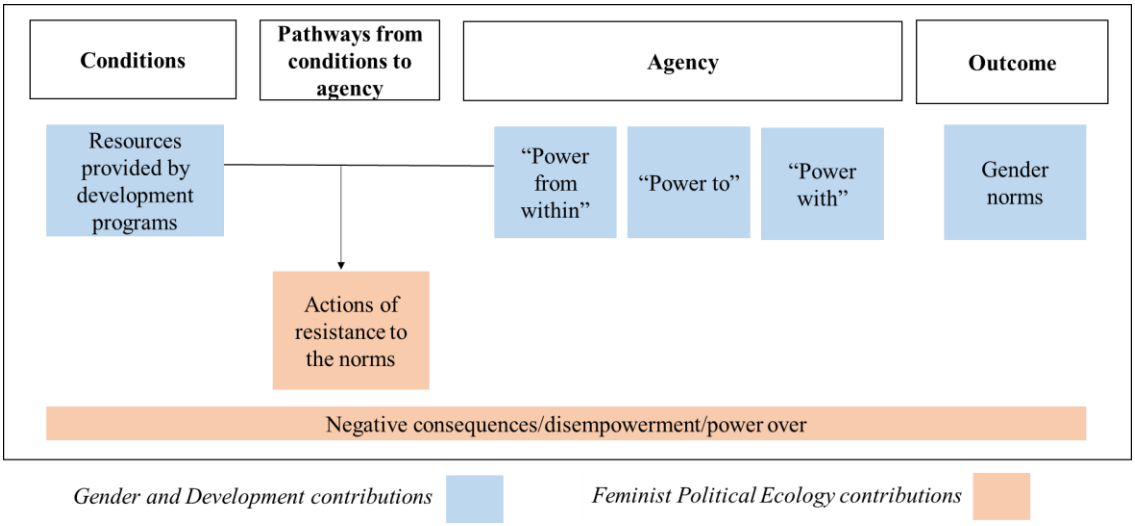
The last main finding indicates that the impact of development programs on women's empowerment is mixed (Horton 2018; Kabeer 2018). On the one hand, studies suggest that resources provided by programs can adversely affect women's empowerment (Beuchelt 2016; Mudege et al. 2018) because of the effect on women's power over decisions on the land. On the other hand, other studies propose that program resources can support women's empowerment (Kandpal et al. 2013; Kandpal and Baylis 2019; Pineda et al. 2019). Micro-finance programs can help women's freedom of mobility, decision-making power within households, investment in children's education, and awareness of intimate partner violence (IPV) (Daher et al. 2022; Kabeer 2018; Ojediran and Anderson 2020; Pineda et al. 2019; Rezaei et al. 2021). At the same time, the micro-credit and entrepreneurship programs may lead to disempowerment by increasing women's domestic responsibilities, causing anxiety and depression (Horton 2018; Pineda et al. 2019; Rezaei et al. 2021). This differs from a program improving in one empowerment domain, not another. In this case, the program is creating new negative consequences for women. In the example explained, it is creating more work, more anxiety, and depression.

3. Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I use part of the theoretical framework proposed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation: *Women's Empowerment for Gender- Transformative Rural Development*. From this

framework, I specifically use how the resources provided by development programs, as one of the conditions to empowerment, enable pathways to agency and how that agency, reflected on different types of powers, translates into challenging gender norms. In addition, I include the framework's dimension on how an empowerment process coexists with negative consequences. Figure 3 illustrates the framework dimensions that I considered for this analysis. The boxes in blue are the contributions of GAD's empowerment frameworks (Kabeer 1999; Rowlands 1997), and the boxes in orange are the contributions from FPE.

Figure 3. Theoretical Framework: Women's Empowerment for Gender-transformative Rural Development



Source: Adapted from the Framework in Chapter 1.

Drawing inspiration from Rowland's (1997) and Kabeer's (1999;2005;2018) work, I conceptualize empowerment as an individual or collective change in which individuals challenge or transform gender structures of constraint that limit their ability to make choices. I subscribe to the notion that transformation involves reducing inequalities from a previous state (Connell 1986) and challenging power dynamics—achieved when individuals resist normative expectations and behave differently from gender norms, and rules (Butler 2006). Additionally, I recognize that empowerment may coexist with or create disempowerment or negative forms of power (Horton 2018; Rowlands 1997).

This framework is rooted in the three dimensions proposed by Kabeer (1999;2005;2018): resources, agency, and outcomes (see Figure 1). Resources serve as the conditions for agency and can encompass material, social, or human resources, and can also manifest as outcomes of

agency (Kabeer 1999;2018; Horton 2018). Development programs (or state policies) may provide these resources, or these can be independently acquired by individuals (Kabeer, 1999;2018; Horton, 2018). Agency represents the central element of empowerment (Kabeer 1999; Horton 2018). It signifies purposeful action (Horton 2018), often observed through awareness of gender norms and rules, efforts to change these norms, and authority in decision-making. Lastly, the third dimension comprises achievements or outcomes, representing the individual's pursued goals (see Figure 3).

To operationalize the concept of agency, I adopt the approach outlined by Malapit et al. (2019), employing Rowland's (1997) categorization of three types of power: 'power from within,' 'power to,' and 'power with' (see Figure 1). 'Power from within' denotes the personal dimension encompassing self-esteem and a sense of agency and is seen by scholars as one of the first steps towards empowerment (Lagarde y de los Rios 2020; Rowlands 1997). Self-esteem is "feeling that [one] can function as an autonomous, self-determining individual" or feeling empowered (Pollack 2000, 82). Lagarde y de los Ríos (2020) notes that women are more likely to feel insecure due to prevailing gender structures; hence, building self-esteem becomes an act of challenging these structures. Sense of agency involves awareness of gender structures and the ability to set life goals (Kabeer 2018; Rowlands 1997). 'Power to' constitutes the relational dimension of empowerment. Rowlands (1997) states it pertains to improving decision-making within household relationships and striving for equality within couples. This can include women's increasing their decision-making over household resources, such as income, and a more equitable distribution of domestic chores in terms of gender. 'Power with' signifies the shared power within a collective, aiming for social transformation (Deere and Leon 2001; Horton 2018; Rowlands 1997).

To understand how resources translate into agency, the framework brings FPE contributions (see Figure 3). FPE suggests that the pathway for people gaining agency is in the daily actions of resistance to the normative, or women 'doing gender:' performing behaviors and forms of identity, which are 'out of place' or 'out of the expected/appropriated' for their gender (Trauger 2007; West and Zimmerman 1987; 2009) (see Figure 3). This framework also acknowledges that gaining agency can lead to negative consequences, disempowerment, or forms of domination against those challenging the norms, such as IPV (Deere and Leon 2001; Horton 2018; Rowlands 1997) (see Figure 3). To comprehensively understand this phenomenon,

the framework integrates the contributions of FPE. FPE empirically explores how challenging gender norms can simultaneously yield positive and negative consequences (Nightingale 2006; 2011; Sultana 2009;2020; Truelove 2011). For instance, a well-intentioned policy to achieve justice might inadvertently perpetuate injustices.

4. Method

4.1.Development Program

I conducted a case study involving rural women and men participating in the *Productive Entrepreneurship for Peace* (*Empropaz*) program in Colombia. This program, implemented by Corporación Mundial de la Mujer Colombia (CMMC) and funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), started in December 2019 and is set to last for five years.

Empropaz aims to bolster the economic standing of rural populations, budding entrepreneurs with unrealized business ideas, and small business owners aiming to enhance their ventures. Therefore, this development program provides training based on 60 modules designed, by them and one-to-one mentoring conducted by local staff, women and men. Participants typically use 10 of those modules, depending on their needs. Of the 60 available modules, participants use mostly three that are required and select seven that are optional. The required modules are 'Gender, Negotiation, and Gender Roles,' 'Life Plan and Personal Life Balance,' and 'Bussiness Plan.' According to *Empropaz* staff, family and personal life topics are critical because they affect the business's success. One of the staff in the headquarters in Bogotá, who participated in the program design and led its implementation, said in an interview: "*This type of business* [participant's business] *is family business because all the family participates, we had to promote that. We have always said in our methodology that people should have a life plan aligned with their business plans. But we have found that people did not have a life plan*."[8] Table A in the Appendix describes the 9 modules that participants use the most, and Table B in the Appendix illustrates the names of the 51 optional modules that participants use less. In addition, *Empropaz* offers financial services like credits, savings accounts, or initial capital in association

[8] During my fieldwork in Colombia for this study, I conducted 9 semi-structured interviews with *Empropaz*'s staff. I did not use the information from those interviews for this chapter, but I use it the methods section to explain *Empropaz*.

with the bank Bancamía[9]. A participant receives approximately two years of training, one-to-one mentoring, and access to financial services.

The training and the one-to-one mentorship were designed by a group at the CMMC headquarters in Bogotá and adapted with the input of staff members working in rural areas. According to internal documents and staff interviews, CMMC's vision of women's agency is mostly related to economic power, access and control over income, and the capacity to set economic and life goals and act towards those goals. A staff member at CMMC's headquarters in Bogotá said in an interview: "*We need to give more relevance to women entrepreneurs who are empowered to make economic decisions because those* [decisions] *will allow them to build their business. When women do not make economic decisions, it will be very difficult for them to succeed in their business.*" Another staff in the headquarters said: "*what is empowerment? The power to help their family get on in life, to accomplish their passions, desires, and power to negotiate and face confrontations with confidence.*"

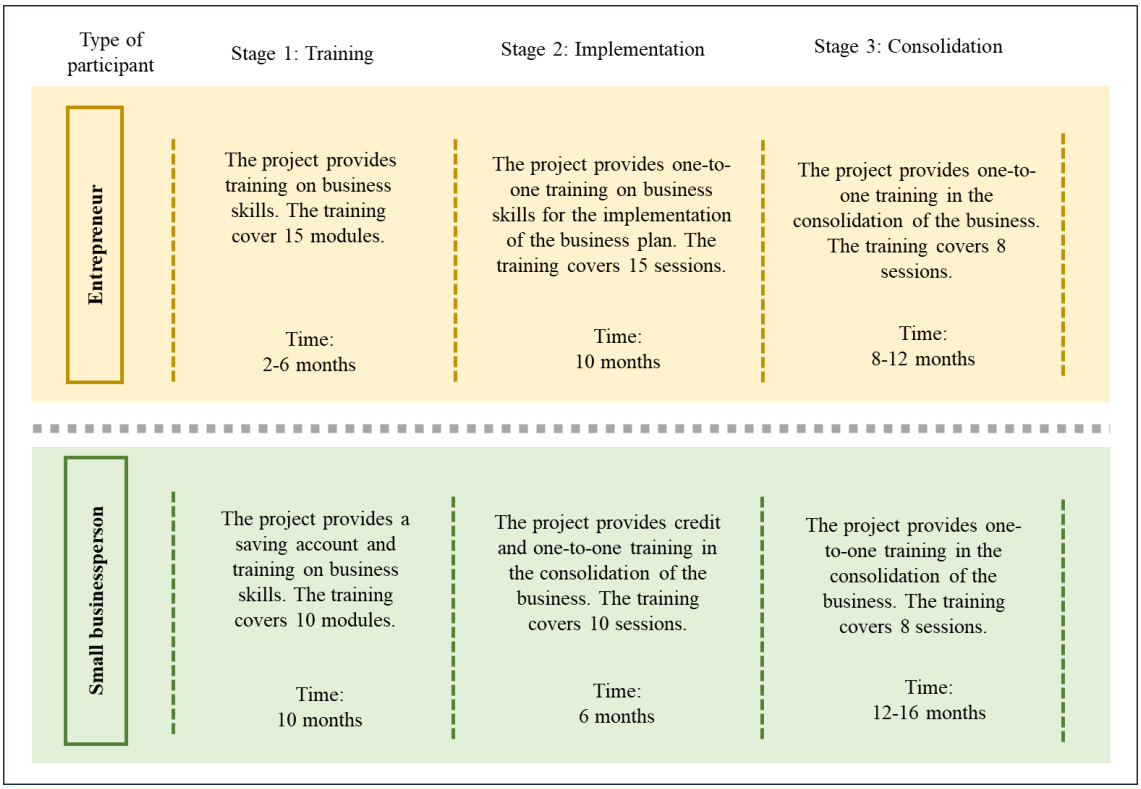
Empropaz explicitly targets individuals in 62 municipalities across 13 departments significantly affected by the internal armed conflict. Priority is given to women, individuals under 30 years of age, those with physical disabilities, and victims of armed conflict. Access to the program starts with initial contact by CMMC staff with interested individuals. During this initial interaction, potential participants undergo an interview with staff members to evaluate their suitability for acceptance.

Upon entry into *Empropaz*, participants progress through three stages, each corresponding to the resources they receive. Figure 4 explains the different stages of the program, considering the type of participant. According to *Empropaz* policies, there are two types of participants. One is the entrepreneur who, when starting *Empropaz*, had only a business idea, and the second is a small-business person who had been running their business before they joined the program with *Empropaz* (see Figure 4).

At the time of data collection, 2,936 individuals had enrolled in the program. Among the 2,322 active participants, 1,058 were in stage one, 950 in stage two, 175 in stage three, and 139 had completed all stages (see Figure 4).

[9] Bancamía is a micro-finance bank created in Colombia in 2008. For more information, see the following link: https://www.bancamia.com.co/somos_bancamia-nosotros/

Figure 4. Program *Empropaz* Description by the Stage and the Type of Participant.



Source: Adaptation from information and figures provided by CMMC in October 2021.

Also, 614 individuals had discontinued participation in the program[10]Table C in the Appendix portrays the number of participants by stage according to their status (active or inactive) and whether they started *Empropaz* as entrepreneurs or small businesspersons. Participants can be spouses of the same household. Nonetheless, *Empropaz* does not keep a register of participants from the same household.

4.2.Site

This case study focuses on active participants residing in two departments located in southeast and southwest Colombia: Cauca and Caquetá. I chose these departments because they have a high number of beneficiaries from the program, with a significant count of participants either initiating or completing stage three. Also, it was in these two departments that the program started, and conducting the research on those sites will allow us to interview people in different stages of *Empropaz*. *Empropaz* chose to work in Cauca and Caquetá because these are areas

[10] The study did not focus on people who discontinued the program. I included only active participants since the study aims to understand how participants receiving *Empropaz* resources challenge gender norms.

recognized by the Colombian government as highly impacted by the armed conflict, which was one of the donor's interests.

In Cauca, I selected, in consultation with CMMC, Santander de Quilichao, Caloto, Silvia, and Cajibío municipalities. In Caquetá, my focus extended to Florencia, San José de Fragua, Albania, and La Montañita. Besides, these two departments provide ethnic diversity in the context of analysis. Cauca is the most multicultural department in Colombia, where Indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and mestizo populations live. Meanwhile, Caquetá is predominantly inhabited by the mestizo population.

Cauca is located in the southwest of the country. According to the last National Census, this department was the third poorest in monetary poverty by 2018, after Choco and La Guajira (DANE 2020). In Cauca, by 2018, 87.6 percent of people had jobs in informal jobs, compared to 72.3 percent in the country (DANE 2020). In 2020, 63% of the population lived in rural areas (Gobernación del Cauca et al. 2020); and in 2019, a high proportion (43.8 percent) of the employed population was in the agricultural sector, a much higher proportion than the rest of the country (15.8 percent) (DANE 2020). As stated before, Cauca is one of the most diverse departments in Colombia. Twenty-five percent identified by 2018 as Indigenous, and 20 percent as Afro-Colombian.

Regarding rural women, Cauca is the second department with more rural women in Colombia, with approximately 8 percent of them (DANE 2022). In terms of indicators of gender equality against rural women, Cauca is in a better situation than the national average in issues such as adolescent pregnancy by 2021 (DANE 2022). Nonetheless, there are still some gender inequalities against rural women in Cauca. For instance, 42 percent of people who were beneficiaries of an agricultural credit provided by the national government (*Crédito de Fomento Agropecuario*) were women, and 58 were men (DANE 2022).

Caquetá is also located in the country's southwest, between Colombia's Andean and Amazon regions. By 2018, this department was the tenth in monetary poverty in the country, with 40.1 percent of the population in poverty (DANE 2020). In Caquetá, by 2019, a high proportion of people lived in rural areas (39.2 percent), but most lived in urban settings (60.7 percent) (UNDP n.d). Agriculture is critical for Caquetá since it represents 15.2 percent of the department's gross domestic product, especially livestock (Rodríguez et al. 2023). However, it has environmental challenges since it's the third department that emits more greenhouse gas

emissions due to agriculture-related deforestation (UNDP n.d). Caquetá also has challenges to gender inequalities against rural women. This department was the fifth department in Colombia with the highest rates of child marriage (13.9 percent) in 2021, and the third in adolescent pregnancy (DANE 2022).

4.3. Sampling

After choosing the sites, I formulated the criteria and a strategy for selecting the interviewees. I employed a five-step strategy to select research participants to ensure internal generalizability within the qualitative sample. According to Maxwell (2002), internal generalizability is crucial for the validity of qualitative studies. It exists when participants represent various individuals within the population whose perspectives are important in addressing the research question. After selecting the sites, I designed the criteria and the strategy to select the people interviewed[11].

Firstly, I estimated the total number of interviewees by referencing the typical participant count in similar qualitative studies, which commonly involves interviewing around 50-60 individuals. For this case study, I interviewed 65 participants across the two departments: 33 in Cauca and 31 in Caquetá. In addition, at the end of the study, conducting more interviews was unnecessary since I reached a saturation point. Study participants were providing similar information, and no new data resulted in interviewing more people.

Secondly, I established three criteria for participant selection: gender (women and men), participant type (entrepreneur or small businessperson), and program stage (training, implementation, or consolidation/program completion). In the sampling, I did not consider the proportion of mestizo, Indigenous, and Afro-colombian participants in each department. However, the people interviewed reflected the race and ethnic diversity in Cauca and Caquetá. Thirty interviewees in Caquetá were with mestizos and 1 Indigenous person. Of the 33 participants in Cauca, 18 were mestizos, 2 were Afro-colombians, and 13 were Indigenous.

Thirdly, based on the three criteria, I calculated the distribution of each department's total participants (the population) (considering only the four municipalities in each site). I used the *Empropaz* dataset provided by CMMC. This calculation resulted in 12 types of interviewees. Tables D and E in the Appendix show the distribution of the 12 type of interviewees.

[11] This concept is a critical component for assessing the validity of research based on a qualitative method or in other words, to assess if the conclusions that are drawn from that data are valid or invalid (Maxwell 2002).

Fourthly, I allocated 30 interviewees per department to mirror this population distribution. Overall, the interviews comprised 44 women and 21 men, consisting of 41 entrepreneurs and 35 small businesspeople, and involving 25, 33, and 10 participants in the training, implementation, and consolidation stages, respectively (see Table D and E in the Appendix).

In the Fifth step, I randomly selected potential interviewees who met the criteria using the *Empropaz* dataset. I chose two candidates (the primary interviewee and a replacement) for each of the 12 groups in both departments, as identified in the fourth step of the sampling process. Subsequently, I provided the selected candidates' names to the local *Empropaz* staff, who then extended invitations to participants. Occasionally, when the initially selected individual and their replacement were unavailable for the interview, I worked with the local staff to identify participants sharing similar characteristics.

The interviewed women and men were individuals with low incomes, either married or single (never married, widowed, or divorced), with a lower level of education, and an average age of 41. Particularly in Cauca, 15 participants belonged to indigenous or afro-colombian communities, which usually have lower well-being indicators than the mestizo population, such as in schooling, employment, and poverty (United Nations Population Fund n.d).

4.4.Data Collection and Analysis

I conducted semi-structured interviews (Rubin and Rubin 2012) from February to July 2022, after for more than two years the program started its implementation. Qualitative methods, such as semi-structured interviews, addressed the research questions as they are adept at capturing causal processes, institution-building, and broader, often unforeseen impacts (Kabeer 2003, 113). The in-person interviews lasted 1 to 2 hours, were audio-recorded, and transcribed when the person agreed. I conducted the interviews with the support of two research assistants who are locals in each department, have worked in rural areas, and were familiar with the topics of this study. In Cauca, the research assistant was a man doing a master's in sociology and had experience in fieldwork and topics related to rural studies and gender. In Caquetá, the assistant was a woman with experience working in rural areas with entrepreneurship projects. Before starting the interviews, I trained them on gender equality, empowerment, interview techniques, the questionnaire, and ethical research. The interviews were conducted in various settings—

businesses, homes, or other locations chosen by the interviewees (e.g., libraries or hotel conference rooms). Interviews were conducted in private, excluding the participant's partner.

The interviews delved into topics surrounding gender norms and the perceptions of women and men regarding how the resources provided by *Empropaz* positively impacted their personal lives ('power from within'), their household dynamics ('power to'), and their social networks and community affiliations outside the household ('power with'). Additionally, the interviews explored the potential negative impacts, including forms of 'power over,' resulting from gaining these forms of power with the support of *Empropaz'*s resources.

I piloted the interview questions with three Empropaz participants in Candelaria, Valle del Cauca. A municipality with characteristics similar to those I would work on afterward. I did the pilot to assess the questionnaire and the time of the interviews. All participants provided written informed consent before participating in the interview. In 2022, the Michigan State University Institutional Research Board (IRB) approved this research through the STUDY00007158 case.

For the analysis, I employed content analysis (Rubin and Rubin 2012) using the Nvivo software. Initially, I developed a codebook using deductive and inductive approaches, consisting of 18 codes categorized into 5 themes and 3 dimensions (gender norms, positive aspects of agency, and the negative facets of such empowerment). See Table F in the Appendix for a summary of the codebook and Table G for the complete codebook. These codes were created based on the framework (see Figure 3) and after an initial review of 10% of the interviews. To validate the codebook, I conducted an intercoder reliability assessment that tested the level of agreement in coding between a colleague and me (see Table G in the Appendix). This colleague is a woman with a PhD in Community Sustainability who also has done research in Latin America on topics related to gender equality and environmental justice. She is Colombian, and therefore, she was perfect for running the intercoder reliability assessment. For that analysis, I utilized the Kappa test. The mean Kappa score obtained was 0.65, indicating a fair to good level of agreement (Nvivo 2021). All codes demonstrated an agreement ranging from good to excellent.

After completing the coding process, I adopted Miles et al.'s (2014) approach, employing condensation and data display strategies. To condense the data, I initially crafted memos or conceptual statements that synthesized the findings associated with each code. These statements

served to discern the primary themes emerging to address the research questions. In identifying these themes, I remained aligned with the theoretical framework (see Figure 3. Subsequently, based on these themes, I devised a sequence of intermediate displays containing memos pertinent to each theme. According to Miles et al. (2014), displays are an organized, condensed collection of information facilitating conclusions and actions. In this stage of the analysis, to identify whether the increased 'power from within,' 'power to,' and 'power with" challenge gender norms, I identify, using the FPE idea on women challenging gender norms, if people's descriptions of gaining those types of powers were contrary to the gender norms identified in the sites.

To present the results, I implemented descriptive statistics to quantify the results, thereby identifying common responses from both women and men. Additionally, I employed cognitive mapping techniques to comprehend the process of challenging gender norms. Cognitive maps offer a visual representation of how social processes unfold within an individual's mind or life, as Miles et al. (2014) outlined.

Before the implementation of the interviews and analysis, I expected that *Empropaz* had improved 'power from within,' particularly the sense of agency (e.g., gender norms awareness and setting life goals) and life balance; as well as 'power to,' specifically, control over income. I expected this since because *Empropaz* had specific modules on these topics. I also did not expect *Empropaz* to have improved 'power with' since its methodology focuses more on the individual than on groups or communities. Additionally, I was not expecting any other changes in 'power to' or 'power from within' or differences between women and men. Before starting the study, I did not have information about the gender norms on the sites, *Empropaz* did not have the explicit objective to transfer norms, and I did not have information on the program's negative effects on people's lives.

5. Results

5.1. The Processes by which Women and Men Challenge Gender Norms

This section outlines the findings regarding the first research question, focusing on how women and men challenge prevailing gender norms. Initially, I present four prevalent gender norms observed by interviewees within their respective towns or cities. Subsequently, I delve into how interviewees challenged these norms based on the resources acquired through

Empropaz. Specifically, I explain how the resources provided by *Empropaz* translate into types of agencies and how that agency challenges norms.

After implementing the interviews, as shown in the following section, I found, as I expected, that *Empropaz* does improve participants' sense of agency and control over income and is less likely to improve 'power with.' However, I also found that it mostly improves 'power from within' and other features of 'power with' in a way that challenges some of the gender norms in the study sites. And that people experience negative consequences due to challenging those norms. In addition, I found that men improved some of these powers in a way that challenged gender norms and improved women's power. *Empropaz* did expect to improve women's and men's features of 'power from within' and 'power to,' but they did not intend to do it in a way that challenged the gender norms. Table H in the Appendix shows what the program aimed to achieve and what it did not aim to achieve.

5.1.1. Gender Norms

Interviewees identified four common gender norms prevalent in their surroundings. The gender norms they recognize do not necessarily imply that they believe, adhere or are against to those norms. Instead, it indicates that they acknowledge the existence of those norms in their communities.

The first norm entails the expectation that women should be the stay-at-home partners responsible for domestic chores, while men should be the heads of the household responsible for public-facing activities, such as earning an income. Sixty-six percent of both women and men acknowledged the existence of this norm, with no differences found between departments.

The second norm, I identified as the 'dutiful woman,'[12] was identified by 60 percent of the study participants. This norm expects women to be knowledgeable about household economics and domestic affairs, striving for the survival of their families. A 'dutiful woman' is perceived as someone clever at handling life's challenges, excelling in multitasking (income generation and domestic activities), self-motivated, patient, sociable, frugal, and thrifty. This expectation is not placed on men. On the contrary, according to the interviewees, men should not be 'dutiful,' which allows them to be irresponsible with household and family responsibilities—

[12] I was inspired by the feminist scholar Simone de Beauvoir, who, in her 1958 autobiographical book *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter*, describes a dutiful woman as someone who follows conventional rules and performs the activities that society expects from women daily.

for example, spending their income on friends and alcohol instead of household necessities or neglecting their responsibilities with children. According to the interviewees, men who behave in this manner are not socially judged as women. Consequently, according to the interviewees, women are considered more suitable for entrepreneurship than men. However, it is important to note that women are seen as more adept for certain entrepreneurship activities (e.g., handcrafting) than for others (e.g., livestock). The norm was said mostly by women (77 percent), rather than men (43 percent). This norm is more accentuated in Cauca than in Caquetá. Of the 49 interviewees who mentioned this norm existed, 24 were from Cauca and 15 from Caquetá.

The third gender norm, identified by 41 percent of the study participants, centers on the perception that women are physically weaker compared to men. As per this norm, women are deemed unfit for physically demanding tasks such as operating heavy machinery, woodworking, construction work, or engaging in agricultural activities involving heavy lifting or handling animals. Conversely, men are perceived as capable of performing these physically demanding tasks and those related to technology. Women are deemed better suited for delicate and creative tasks such as cooking or handicrafts. This norm was perceived by women (39 percent) and men (48 percent).

The fourth gender norm, recognized by 25 percent of the study participants, revolves around the belief that women are considered the property of men. Consequently, they are more susceptible to experiencing GBV, such as IPV and sexual harassment. This norm was reported by women (32 percent) rather than men (4 participants). Women say that usually, they are more often subject to physical, verbal, patrimonial (related to assets control), and psychological intimate partner violence. According to women, these cause them to feel low self-esteem and shame. In addition to intimate partner violence, women say that in their communities, women also suffer violence, especially verbal related to sexual topics, from their male clients. No difference between departments was found when reporting these last two norms.

5.1.2. Pathways from *Empropaz*'s resources to agency

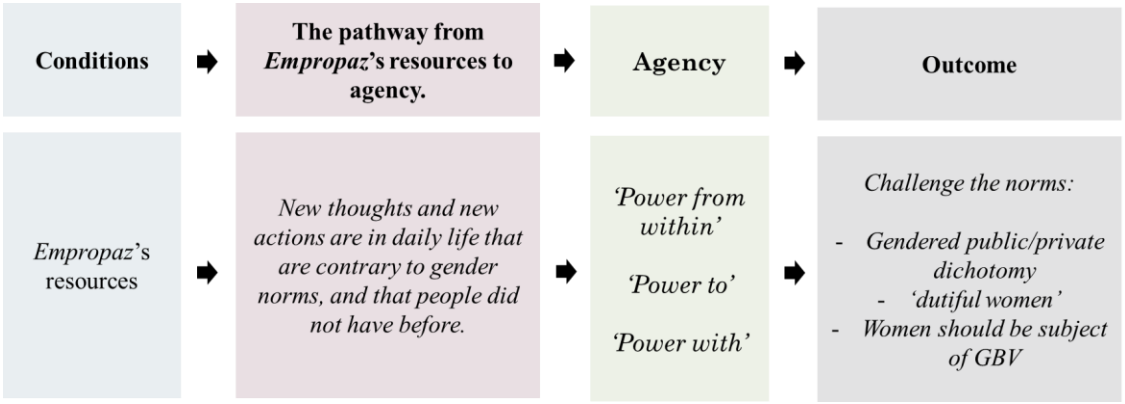
This section explains how *Empropaz*'s resources translate into women and men gaining agency in a way that challenges gender norms. According to interviewees, *Empropaz* provides human resources composed of training and mentorship about women's rights, gender equality, life goals, family cooperation, life balance, and better control over income that supports them in gaining agency. Due to these resources, out of the 44 women involved in this study, 95 percent

reported experiencing gaining at least one of the three powers, which reflects forms of agency: 'Power from within,' 'Power to,' or 'Power with.'

Two women reported not gaining any power. One participant is a small business person, married, and from Caquetá. She did not explain how the benefits from *Empropaz* translated into power. A second participant is also a small business person, married, and from Caquetá. This participant said that she benefited from the program with a micro-credit that allowed her to buy more products for her convenience store. However, she reported that she has always managed her income and that micro-credit did not bring her benefits in her power as a woman. Among men, 100 percent gained at least one of these forms of power. As I show in the following sub-sections, in some cases, men improving these powers challenge gender norms in a way that benefits women and gender equality, but in other cases, they do not.

Figure 5 explains how *Empropaz*'s resources supported women and men to challenge gender norms. According to interviewees, the training on the importance of setting life goals, women's rights, family cooperation, and financial and marketing skills provided by the program were crucial for them gaining power. *Empropaz*'s resources translated to agency by creating opportunities for people to have new thoughts and perform new actions in their daily lives, thoughts and actions contrary to gender norms that women and men did not have before the program (see the 'Pathways from resources to agency' column in Figure 5). Therefore, the act of people having and doing these new thoughts and actions in their daily lives using *Empropaz*'s resources was the pathway by which the resources were translated into 'power from within,' 'power to,' and 'power with' (see the 'Agency' column in Figure 5). These three types of powers are forms of agency. At the same time, women and men gaining these types of power challenged the norms that women should be dutiful and men should not, the gendered public/private dichotomy expectation, and that women are subject to GBV more than men (see the 'outcome column' in Figure 5). These norms were challenged because, thought gaining the aforementioned powers, women and men started to think and act contrary to the norms. However, the norm of women being physically weaker than participants did not, evidently, challenge men due to *Empropaz.* These norms were changing in the sense that the new thoughts and actions that women and men perform are 'out of place' or 'out of the expected.' As I mentioned in the framework section, Trauger (2007) and West and Zimmerman (1987;2009) state that people challenge structures by performing 'out of place' or against what is expected.

Figure 5. The Process by which *Empropaz* Resources Translated into the Agency, and Women and Men Challenge Gender Norms.



Source: Author's elaboration from content analysis from interviews and the Framework in Figure 3.

The next subsections explain the detailed processes by which *Empropaz'*s resources were translated into each type of power or form of agency: 'power from within,' 'power to,' and 'power with.' I use quotes to illustrate the results and percentages to indicate the proportion of women and men who gained power. See Table I in the Appendix for percentages by type of power and gender.

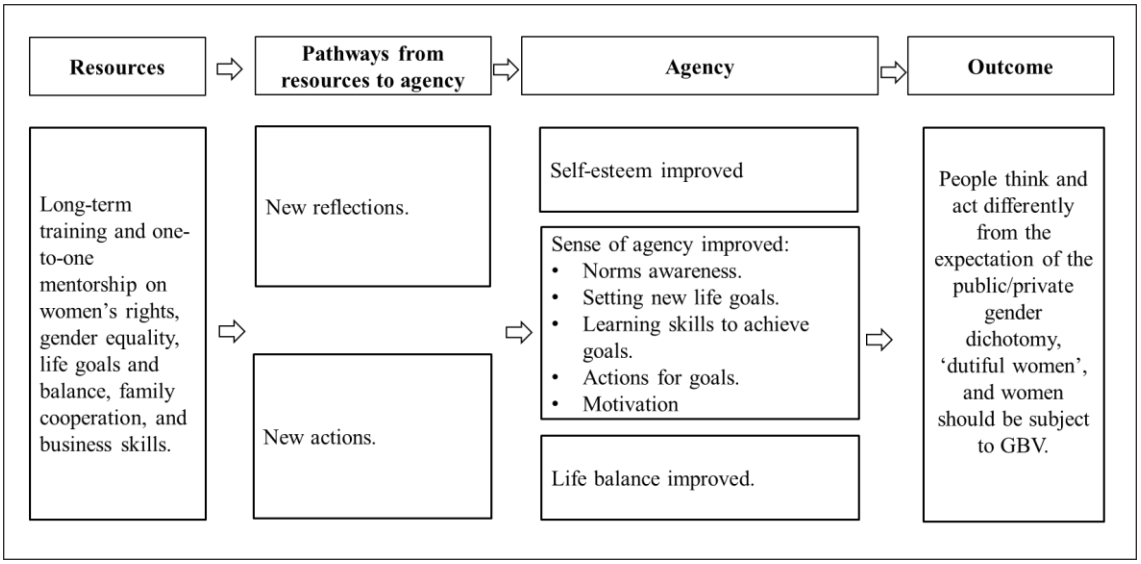
5.1.2.1.'Power from within'

Ninety percent of women and 100 percent of men improved their 'power from within' in a way that challenged the gender norms. They gained this type of power because they improved at least one of the following aspects: self-esteem, a sense of agency, or life balance. Life balance is the equilibrium between personal, social, and economic well-being or the awareness of its significance. The process by which participants gained these three power features and challenged gender norms against women with unexpected thoughts and actions due to *Empropaz* occurred through various societal processes. Figure 6 illustrates the most common processes regarding the 'power from within.'

Figure 6 initially outlines the resources provided by *Empropaz* that enabled women and men to acquire forms of 'power from within' that challenge gender norms. Subsequently, it demonstrates that the pathways of these resources into self-esteem, a sense of agency, and life balance happened through *Empropaz*'s resources, creating opportunities for individuals to reflect upon and act regarding their life goals and prevailing gender norms in ways against the norms (see Figure 6). The creation of these opportunities is what, in Figure 6, is called 'pathways from

resources to agency.' By attaining these three power features, women and men started to think and act differently from the expectations of gender norms; 'out of place.' They challenged the expectation that women should solely be stay-at-home partners and men be the breadwinners, that women should be dutiful while men should not, and that women should be subject to GBV (see Figure 6). The following paragraphs explain how *Empropaz* supported self-esteem, a sense of agency, and life balance and how that challenges gender norms.

Figure 6. Cognitive Map. The Process by Which Resources Translated into Women's and Men's 'Power from Within' and Challenge Gender Norms.



Source: Author's elaboration from content analysis. Total women interviewed 44 and reporting 'power from within' =40. Total men interviewed =21 and reporting 'power from within' =21.

Self-esteem: Fifty-two percent of women improved their self-esteem, and only 10 percent of the men (2 men) reported experiencing this. Therefore, I explain how women gain self-esteem. *Empropaz* helped improve women's self-esteem by supporting them in having new thoughts or actions for self-reflection, self-care, and valuing their intellectual capacity (see Figure 6).

The primary *Empropaz* resource facilitating women's self-esteem was the training sessions covering personal and business topics. The personal topics included discussions on gender equality, women's rights, and life goals, allowing women to reflect on their rights and conduct self-assessments. The business-oriented training equipped them with skills essential for better enterprise management, encompassing business planning, accounting, client management, and product design. The one-on-one mentoring provided by the staff was also instrumental for

reflecting since people had the opportunity to discuss their personal life situations with the staff. This one-to-one mentoring covered setting life goals, providing motivational support, imparting information on women's rights, and mentoring on the practical application of newly acquired business skills (see Figure 6). Through this training and one-to-one mentoring, women reported experiencing better self-esteem because they could set goals beyond their domestic and family responsibilities; in other words, goals for themselves as individuals. Also, women participants reported experiencing feelings of empowerment, value, capability, security, significance, and the recognition of their deserving a good life. For women, these feelings of valuing themselves are crucial for their well-being (see Figure 6). For example, a woman who is a stay-at-home mother said: "[**How was *Empropaz* useful for you at the personal level?]** *I did not believe in me. I was ashamed of everything, even of talking to another person. It helped me to value myself* **[Could you give an example?]**: *Being here talking with you without feeling ashamed*" (Interview 31).

Sense of agency: 100 percent of the men and 89 percent of the women acknowledged a sense of agency. For men, as explained in the following paragraphs, gaining a sense of agency was beneficial for challenging gender norms against women—for example, it increased their awareness of women's rights.

Women and men gained a sense of agency through the training provided on gender inequality, women's rights, personal life goals, and business skills, and also on women staff being role models for participants. Besides, the training includes the 'Life Plan' module (see Table A in Appendix), which encouraged individuals to reflect on their goals. The mentoring provided by the staff was also influential, as they mentored women and men on setting new long-term life goals for themselves (e.g., in the case of women who had life goals only related to their family and started to set goals for themselves) (see Figure 6). As I explain in detail below, women and men said that before, they did not have a long-term goal for their lives (e.g., buying a house) or for themselves (e.g., improving their schooling, and not only one of their children). These resources offered opportunities for new thoughts, such as self-reflection and goal setting. Furthermore, *Empropaz*'s resources provided participants with new opportunities to undertake actions they had not previously, fostering a belief in the attainability of their goals and, thus, motivating them to pursue their objectives.

This process facilitated the acquisition of a sense of agency indicators: a) awareness of gender norms, b) setting new goals and confidence in their achievability, c) acquiring knowledge

necessary to achieve these goals, d) taking actions toward achieving goals, and e) sustaining motivation to pursue these objectives (see Figure 6). Subsequent paragraphs elaborate on each indicator. It is important to note that gaining one indicator of sense of agency does not mean gaining another indicator of sense of agency. Therefore, an individual could gain awareness of gender norms, and another could set new goals.

The first indicator of a sense of agency is gender norm awareness. Twenty-three percent of the interviewees, predominantly women, gained awareness of gender norms. Twenty-four percent of the women recounted that through *Empropaz*, they learned and reflected upon issues like IPV, gender equality laws in Colombia, and women's rights—such as earning an income, having leisure time, and enjoying freedom. Importantly, two women mentioned discussing their rights with their husbands. One woman shared:

> "**[What do you learn about that topic of 'empowered women' in *Empropaz*?]** *It allowed me to reflect. Sometimes, as a woman, you think that everything is fine with your partner, and as* [staff name] *said: "violence is not always physical, is also psychological and emotional." Men have the power of money, and because of that, they think they can undervalue us. Men said:"I am the only one who contributes to the house." But they are not looking to all the domestic chores women do as mothers and spouses, which is the hardest work*" (Interview 46).

Regarding men, 14 percent mentioned that due to *Empropaz*, they started reflecting on their role within the family, particularly their low contribution to domestic chores compared to women, and the significance of gender equality for improving households, communities, and the next generation. One man elaborated:

> "*The* [*Empropaz*] *guidebook taught me many things. It taught me about women's rights and the rights they have.* […] *I was, like, rough. How can I tell you this? Sometimes, I take the time to see all the work they have. They are the first ones to wake up and the last ones to go to bed. Meanwhile, one, as she* [her wife says]: *"You don't value that." Yes. She used to tell me: "You never value." And there* [*Empropaz'*s guidebook] *I learned the value.*" (Interview 23b).

The second indicator of a sense of agency involves setting new life goals or gaining awareness that goals can be achieved (see Figure 6). Forty-nine percent of the interviewees, 45 percent of women and 57 percent of men, expressed setting life goals for the first time. These goals encompassed aspirations such as owning a house, seeking a better education for themselves and their children, establishing a retirement plan, and enhancing leisure activities. A woman said: "*Before* [*Empropaz*], *I thought that I was useful only for fixing clothes* [her previous business].

[Staff name] *made me think that I could achieve my goals and that it was not too late to say to myself what I wanted for my life. That it was not late for me to shine*" (Interview 31).

The third indicator, acquiring new knowledge to achieve life goals even if they have not started to do something towards the goal, was mentioned by 31 percent of the interviewees. Among them, 20 percent of women and 24 percent of men mentioned acquiring new knowledge that they had not yet applied by the time of the interview (see Figure 6). However, they acknowledged that these new skills could assist them in taking steps towards achieving their goals.

The fourth indicator indicates that 64 percent of women and 76 percent of men acted to achieve their goals by translating new knowledge into action (see Figure 6). Unlike the third indicator, this indicator captures when people set a goal, acquire information about potential actions, and act to accomplish it. This form of agency manifested through new actions, including a) better management of their income, savings, and purchases for themselves, their households, and children—in the case of women, this also meant the ability to carry out these actions independently from their male counterparts; b) making improvements to their businesses (e.g., changing or upgrading the location); and c) managing and seeking clients (e.g., searching for potential clients on social media). Through these new actions previously unexplored, women and men worked toward fulfilling their dreams, solidifying the notion that these aspirations were attainable. One woman mentioned:

> "*Empropaz helped with my finances. I did not know how to set a price for my products. I did not know if I was losing or earning money, and I found I was losing* […] *With Empropaz, I learned to put a value to my time, my work, and a price to value that* **[How did that help you in your personal life?**] *I have a poster with my dream; now, with Empropaz, I will change that poster with new dreams*" (Interview 18).

The Fifth indicator of a sense of agency was mentioned by 36 percent of women and 43 percent of men: acquiring motivation to achieve goals (see Figure 6). Interviewees expressed that after applying the new enterprise skills provided by *Empropaz* and witnessing positive results, they remained motivated to pursue their goals without giving up. They also highlighted the importance of staff regular visits. One woman mentioned how the visits and advice from the staff kept her going:

> *"*[name of *Empropaz* staff] *always tells us that we don't need much money to start a business. Unfortunately, I had to leave my town because of a personal situation. The* [name of staff] *told me, "Let's implement a new business. Let's do it. I will help you."*

And I said, "Let's do it." Those types of things are done by people who care about you" (Interview 72).

Life balance: The final aspect of 'power from within' covers 30 percent of women and 24 percent of men who said they attain a better life balance (see Figure 6). Through staff mentoring, women and men improved their businesses, resulting in increased income. Accordingly, they could hire someone or take a day off. The program also offered labor-saving techniques during training (e.g., automated Excel spreadsheets for accounting), leading individuals to express that they now have more time for other activities than before. By managing their time more efficiently, they felt an improvement in their life balance. As one woman said: "*Empropaz helped me to optimize my time by generating an Excel spreadsheet* […] *Now, I don't have to spend hours each month to know how much I earned, and I have time for other activities that I need to do*" (Interview 25). In the case of men, the training on the importance of life balance raised awareness about being financially responsible with their income. One man described:

*"***[In general, how *Empropaz* changed your life]** […] *before that* [coffee farm] *I was not producing because I drank it all in beer. So, when the bad times arrived, I did not have a penny in my pocket. So, I had to work in coca plantations. But now, I am always working on the farm.* **[Do you like that? Not to work in coca plantations?]** *Of course. It is a mental relief because I am not thinking: "What about if tomorrow is raining? And I must get there* [coca plantations]*." Now, I am at home. If it starts raining, I can stay in bed until the rain ends, and then I can go to the farm. Plus,* [*Empropaz*] *has also taught me to plan. For instance, all the work activities I must do in the week."* (Interview 47).

5.1.2.2. 'Power to:' Control over Resources and Cooperation within the Household

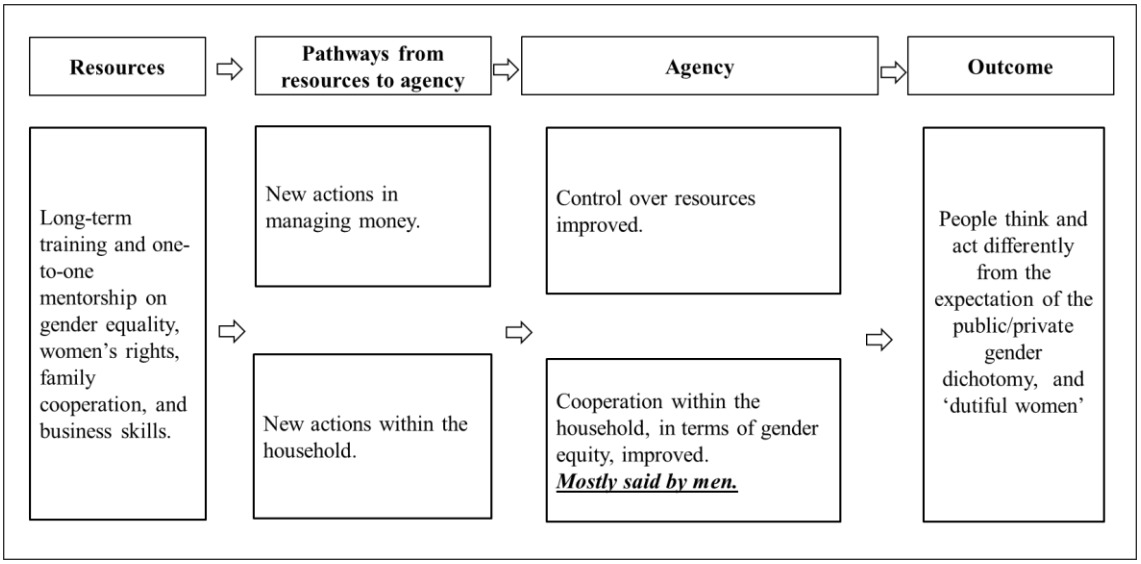
Interviewees gained 'power to' with better control over resources and improved family cooperation in a more gender-equal fashion. Family cooperation pertains to the "social arrangements regarding who does what, who gets to consume what, and who makes decisions" (Sen 1987, 3) among household members. Figure 7 delineates the pathways through which women and men attained this power, and, thus, acting contrary to the gender norms on 'dutiful women' and the expectation that women are solely responsible for domestic chores and should not work outside the home, and men are responsible for public space.

Sixty-five percent of the interviewees gained 'power to' by enhancing their household and business income control. In the accounts provided by women (58 percent) and men (76 percent), they mentioned income management improvements. According to the interviewees, the

accounting and saving training, along with staff mentorship on these topics and, in some cases, access to savings accounts or micro-credit, empowered them to exercise better control over their income (see Figure 7).

Empropaz instructed participants to calculate their business costs and earnings, determine product prices, adopt saving strategies, and differentiate business budgets from household budgets to fulfill their entrepreneurial and life aspirations. Interviewees mentioned that staff support was instrumental in applying this knowledge to their situations.

Figure 7. Cognitive Map. The Process by which Resources Translated into Women's and Men's 'Power to' and Challenge Gender Norms.



Source: Author's elaboration based on content analysis. Total women interviewed 44, and reporting 'power to' =28. Total men interviewed=21, and reporting 'power to' =18.

These resources enabled participants to undertake new actions they had not done before, such as improving money management, saving for business upgrades, and purchasing desired or necessary items (see Figure 7). Moreover, some women reported increased economic independence from their male counterparts, contributing to household expenses, and buying desired items that their partners did not purchase for them. Through these new actions, interviewees gained control over resources (see Figure 7). One woman reported: **"[How *Empropaz* saving program helped you?]** *Now, I don't have to ask for money from my husband. I don't have to ask him anymore to lend me money. If I need to buy things for my business, I can take from my savings*" (Interview 72).

Of the 76 percent of men who improved their income control, 19 percent suggested that the change in income control was associated with increased control by their female partners over income or them taking more household responsibility through better income management. The following verbatim excerpt illustrates this scenario.

> "**[How *Empropaz* changed your life?]** *My life has changed a lot* […] *I did not plan my money management*. **[Could you tell me more?]** *I was a person who used to go out. If I had had extra money, I would have spent it. Now, my way of thinking is different. I am not spending my money in those places. Instead, I supply my household. I do not spend my money with friends anymore.* […] *I am in business, and sometimes you have ups and downs. When I had a down, she* [wife] *took almost all the responsibility. It's very difficult for one, to be honest* […] *It's shameful, but it's like that* […]." (Interview 49).

However, 57 percent of the 76 percent of men's narrative of improving income management did not make evident whether men gaining control over income led to gender norm confrontation or favored women.

In addition to improving control over resources, *Empropaz* improved household cooperation in a more gender-equal fashion. Twelve percent of the respondents reported improvements in family cooperation. However, this change was more prevalent among men, occurring in 57 percent of cases, compared to women, at 25 percent. This means that due to *Empropaz*, men started to cooperate more in the household in a more gender-equal fashion.

According to the interviewees, this was made possible through training on women's rights and family dynamics. The program included a module emphasizing the significance of fostering a family dynamic rooted in respect, dialogue, mutual support, and shared contributions to domestic and business responsibilities. As a result of this training, 25 percent of women reported having more opportunities to spend time and share spaces with their family members. Some also noted a more balanced distribution of domestic chores, with their male counterparts now taking on more household responsibilities. One woman shared:

> *"My husband said*: [name of the interviewee] *should be all the time in the house, she is the one who does everything* […] *Now that he sees that I am working and I am helping economically, he says: "I feel bad for you so that I will help you, I will start helping you"* […] *So, he is doing it. Now, we divide the activities* […] *I like that"* (Interview 68).

Similarly, this was observed in 57 percent of the interviewed men. They are doing household chores in a manner where gender norms are challenged. The men mentioned that the staff mentoring and training prompted them to share decision-making authority regarding household and business activities with their wives, engage in respectful communication with

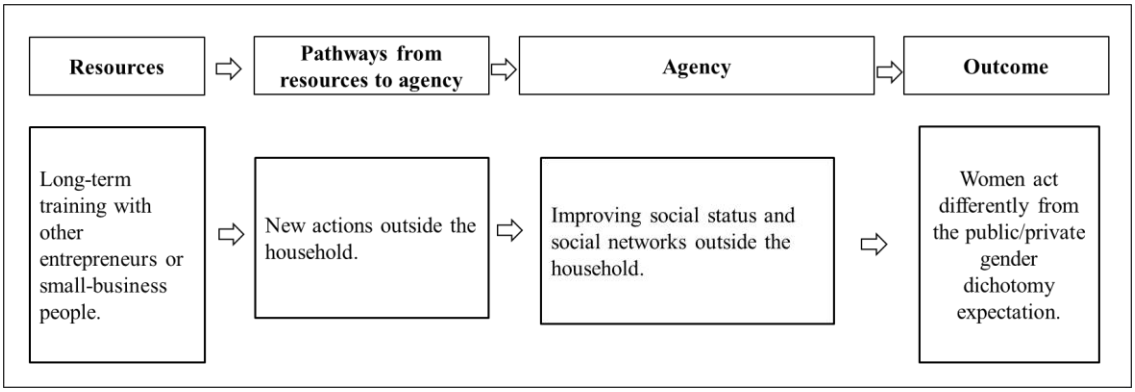
their female counterparts and other household members, contribute more to domestic chores, and establish shared life goals with their partners. One man mentioned:

> *"***[How the program helped you with that?]** […] *Also, look that* [staff name] *taught me to contribute to domestic chores. Before, I depended on the woman* […]. *Almost all that I have learned, I have taken it from there* [*Empropaz'*s guidebook] *because I never used to cook. Imagined that. I thought that women were the ones who must cook, and one should be there, sitting down.* **[How do you feel about that?]** *I feel good that I am not leaving all the responsibility to her. Before, she argued with me: "Look, all those clothes on the floor."* […] *I used to say: "Why are you arguing?" I did not understand why she was pissed, but now, I understand. Now that I do domestic chores, I realized why she was pissed."* (Interview 23b).

5.1.2.3.'Power with:' Participation in Groups and Public Spaces

Forty-one percent of women and 57 percent of men stated that due to *Empropaz*, they participate more in public spaces they had not previously engaged with. Participants started to participate more in their groups or associations by sharing what they learned in *Empropaz*, and, thus, enhancing their leadership roles. Figure 8 demonstrates that, according to the participants, the social resources provided by the program—such as entrepreneurial meetings and the general knowledge acquired—supported this form of empowerment.

Figure 8. Cognitive Map. The Process by which Resources Translatef into Women's and Men's 'Power with' and Challenge Gender Norms.



Source: Authors' elaboration based on the content analysis. Total women interviewed 44, and reporting 'power with' =18. Total men interviewed 21, and reporting 'power with' =11.

These resources prompted individuals to engage in new actions: establishing connections with new people and introducing money management and goal-setting techniques learned in *Empropaz* to their associations. Through these actions, women and men mentioned increased participation in groups and public spaces, gaining more visibility within the community. However, it was in the women that this led to initiating connections beyond their households and

challenging gender norms that restricted women from participating in public spaces (see Figure 8). One woman expressed: "*Before, I did not go outside my house* […] *I was all the time cleaning and cooking. Everyone says here that women are the ones who should be at home and that they cannot do other things. So, for me, this* [*Empropaz*] *has been different"* (Interview 50).

5.2. Negative Consequences of the Empowerment Process

I now address research question two concerning the potential negative consequences of an empowerment process. The various forms of generative power through which women challenged gender norms, alongside the resources provided by the development program, also led to negative consequences (e.g., increased time burden) and manifestations of 'power over' (e.g., GBV) for 29 percent of the women. In contrast, this negative consequence was less present among men, as two men from 21 reported increased family conflict, and two experienced a decreased life balance.

Some women (7 women out of 44) experienced a decrease in their life balance as their businesses started or expanded due to the implementation of new actions. Therefore, they dedicated more time to their businesses, resulting in less free time. Household conflict or verbal IPV was also reported, albeit less frequently (6 women). Women became more aware of their rights and gender norms and began to value themselves more, sharing these thoughts with their partners. In response, some men reacted with verbal violence by denigrating their partners or expressing disagreement with their ideas. Additionally, as women began participating in new spaces, such as entrepreneur meetings organized by the program or working outside their homes, some men demanded that their partners continue to perform all the domestic chores as usual. They expressed concerns that women might seek other relationships in these public spaces. For instance, a woman whose husband did not allow her to go outside her home mentioned:

> *"Before Empropaz, I did not participate in public meetings because my husband is a jealous person. But then, I started to say to him: no. He thought that I was going to meet a new person in those meetings. So, one day, I said to him:"You have to help me to be the star of my life, you have to help me meet my dreams." I also told him that he needed to accept that some things will change in the house, such me going out. Now, I said to him: I will go to a meeting. He gets furious at me, but still, I will go to my meeting"* (Interview 31).

Finally, 2 women experienced a loss of status in their communities. This occurred because starting a business held less status in the communities than being employed. Additionally, as their businesses improved, some community members questioned their

credibility. There was skepticism regarding their success, with suspicions that their achievements might have been due to engaging in an illegal or socially unacceptable activity.

Although few women reported these negative experiences during the process, those who had started their entrepreneurship before they joined *Empropaz* mentioned experiencing violence from their partners, household conflicts, and sexual harassment from clients. One woman recounted:

> *"When I started my entrepreneurship, my marriage ended. My husband at the time said to me: "you are only useful for the kitchen, you cannot do any entrepreneurship, you are not useful, for anything."* […] *My ex-husband thought that I was never being able to be outside the house. I remember that used to tell him: "I want to study." And he responded to me: "But, who will take care of the kids? Who will do the things of the household?"* (Interview 71).

5.3. Differences According to Geography and Stage in the Program

The results suggest differences based on the departments where the interviews were done regarding the acquired powers. In Cauca, 100 percent of the interviewees reported changes in their 'power from within,' while in Caquetá, 87 percent. This could be explained because, in Cauca, people reported gaining more of the three aspects of 'power from within:' a sense of agency, self-esteem, and life balance. All the interviewees in Cauca reported an improved sense of agency compared to people in Caquetá (84 percent of the 32 interviewees in this department). Forty-two percent of people in Cauca said they gained self-esteem; in Caquetá, this was 31 percent. Also, 36 percent of the interviewees in Cauca identified gaining life balance, but in Caquetá, this percentage was 18.

Regarding the 'power to,' more people in Cauca, 73 percent, reported gaining 'power to,' while in Caquetá, it was 69 percent. This result is driven by more interviewees saying that family cooperation improved in Cauca -- 42 percent in Cauca versus 28 percent in Caquetá 28. In both departments, better control over resources was important. Sixty-four percent of interviewees in Cauca reported gaining control over income, and 66 percent in Caquetá. 'Power with' was also reported more in Cauca (54 percent) than in Caquetá (37 percent). Finally, I found some disparities in terms of the location for the negative consequences experienced by women and men due to gaining 'power from within,' 'power to,' or 'power with.' In Cauca, 9 percent of the interviewees reported experiencing at least one negative consequence; in Caquetá, it was 22 percent.

In addition to the differences between departments, I find differences depending on the participant's stage in *Empropaz*. Participants who are in the last stages (implementation and consolidation of the entrepreneurship idea or improvement of the business), meaning that they have received all the training, are receiving mentoring, and were granted a credit, were more likely to report improvement in 'power to' (in both aspects, including control over income and family cooperation), and 'power with,' compared to participants in earlier stages (training). Of the 65 interviewees, 17 percent are in later stages (implementation or consolidation); however, they represent 22 percent of those who reported improvement in 'power to,' and 27 percent of those who reported 'power with.' Although there were no differences in people gaining 'power from within' according to the stage they are in the program, it is important to note that there were differences in self-esteem between women and men. Women were the ones who gained self-esteem rather than men. A greater proportion of people in the later stages (implementation or consolidation), who have received training, one-to-one mentoring, and credit (24 percent), said that their self-esteem improved, and the population in this stage represents 17 percent of the population.

6. Discussion

This study brings to the literature an empirical example of the 'how' or means of gender norms transformation due to a rural development program. It also identifies the contradictions empowerment processes entail for a development program by showing the positive and negative aspects. The framework proposed in Chapter 1 was useful for closing two empirical gaps in the literature on women's empowerment and development related to the 'how' of gender norms transformation, and this study is an empirical example of its implementation.

The first gap that this study addresses is the limited understanding of the societal process or pathways by which resources translate into agency indicators in a way that is contrary or 'out of place' according to gender norms (Kabeer 2018). As I explain in the following paragraphs, I found similarities with GAD studies on the types of power women and men gained when participating in rural or entrepreneurship programs. However, this study contributes to reducing the aforementioned gap in the literature by showing 'how' the new actions and thoughts gained by women and men, and associated with gaining more 'power from within,' were contrary to the expected norms based on gender. This was possible by implementing the framework, *Women's Empowerment for Gender-Transformative Rural Development*, that merges GAD and FPE.

I observed that women challenged norms with the support of *Empropaz* as they acquired features of 'power from within,' specifically self-esteem and a sense of agency that were contrary to the gender norms that existed at the study sites. Similar outcomes have been identified in other entrepreneurship programs in LMICs (Ciruela-Lorenzo et al. 2020; Daher et al. 2022; Hernández Medina et al. 2021; Flores-Novelo et al. 2021; Pineda Duque and Castiblanco Moreno 2022). Therefore, this study aligns with the GAD empowerment theory, which posits that enhancing self-esteem is the primary step toward women's agency as it enables them to confront stigmatization (Lagarde y de los Rios 2020; Rowlands 1997). Additionally, GAD theories suggest that a sense of agency is crucial for empowerment. It enables individuals to comprehend their cultural environment, societal constraints, and expectations, thus setting goals for themselves (Kabeer 1999). In this study, both women and men gained a sense of agency. I found that women become more aware of gender norms and their right to set goals for their lives, while men become aware of women's rights, their role in upholding these rights, and their surroundings.

GAD scholarship (Rowlands 1997; Kabeer 1999) suggests that empowerment involves enhancing women's power within their households. In this study, women primarily exhibited agency at a personal level. Still, some extended this personal power into more relational forms, such as controlling household resources and fostering more cooperative relations within their households. Increased family cooperation was frequently observed among men, resulting in 'power to' for their female partners. However, in most cases, men improving their control over income did not challenge gender norms.

GAD also emphasizes the significance of collective power as it enables not only the challenge but also the transformation of gender norms at the societal level (Rowland 1997). This form of power was less prevalent in this study, aligning with findings in entrepreneurship programs in LMICs (Daher et al. 2022; Pineda Duque and Castiblanco Moreno 2022). The low prevalence of this type of power can be potentially related to multiple factors. One is the fact that *Empropaz* does not prioritize 'power with, ' although CMMC is interested in working more in the future on power. The program usually works with people individually, rather than in groups, for example. Also, the program started in 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and most of the activities were implemented at the individual level and/or using online platforms. Another potential reason is the form in which collective power was identified in the research. In

this analysis, I defined ‘power with’ when people affirm that their social network increased. Nonetheless, this definition of ‘power with’ did not consider how the interaction with new staff and other *Empropaz* members plays a role in increasing forms of collective power. Instead, *Empropaz* focuses on individual empowerment. Horton (2018) suggests that ‘power with’ should be promoted since it fosters the establishment of groups and women’s solidarity.

This study contributes to the literature by showing ‘how’ *Empropaz*’s resources provided to women and men translated into people gaining the three forms of power. The results show that *Empropaz*, with the long-term (approximately 2 years) training and one-to-one mentorship, enables women and men to gain new thoughts and perform new actions that they did not think of or do before. These new thoughts and actions, applied in daily life, were contrary to gender norms or put at risk gender norms. In having those new thoughts and actions, people ‘do gender’ or perform daily actions and have thoughts against norms (Trauger 2007; West and Zimmerman 1987;2009). Women and men acted and thought ‘out of place’ of the norms constraining their lives and one of their partners. In a few words, *Empropaz* contributed to women’s empowerment by creating opportunities for both women and men to ‘do gender’ differently from societal expectations of their gender roles (Trauger 2007; West and Zimmerman 1987; 2009). Similar results have been found in FPE when understanding how people transform gender norms transformation in their daily lives, although not necessarily in the presence of a development program (Sultana 2009). Therefore, the societal process by which resources translate into agencies (or forms of power) is when resources provide possibilities for people to have new thoughts and perform new actions in their everyday lives that are contrary to norms.

It is important to note that neither *Empropaz* nor the participants initially had the goal of gender norm transformation. Participants did not necessarily join *Empropaz* to challenge these gender norms, nor is it *Empropaz*’s programmatic goal to challenge social norms, at least not directly. Instead, participants’ motivation was to access low-interest credit and training to improve their income-earning activities. However, both women and men,acquired forms of power that inadvertently challenged gender norms when receiving training and mentorship, mostly on women’s rights, gender equality, life goals, family cooperation, life balance, and better control over income. The literature has found similar results about women not necessarily joining entrepreneurship programs to transform gender norms (Heitner 2020; Hernández Medina et al. 2021; Ibáñez and Guerrero 2022; Flores-Novelo et al. 2021; Pineda Duque and Castiblanco

Moreno 2022; Rezaei and França Marques 2021). Also, FPE suggests that women can engage in activities that challenge gender norms without the initial intention of doing so (Rocheleau et al. 1994; Sultana 2009; Truelove 2011).

Besides, *Empropaz* did not envision some of the effects of their program on people agencies for transforming gender norms. *Empropaz* aimed to improve people's sense of agency (life goal setting and awareness of women's rights), family cooperation, and control over income so they could succeed in their businesses. This study reveals positive unintended consequences: participants challenge gender norms by gaining forms of agency, such as self-esteem.

Another gap in the literature on women's empowerment and development that this study contributes is to identify empirically the negative consequences of an empowerment process. Merging GAD and FPE contributes to closing that gap. Like FPE, the findings revealed contradictions within the empowerment process (Miller et al. 1994; Nightingale 2006; Nyantakyi-Frimpong 2017; Sultana 2020). Some women, and a few men, now have less free time, while others experienced GBV, family conflict, or a loss of status in their community. These negative aspects emerged as individuals gained power in a domain (e.g., gaining self-esteem) but simultaneously created negative consequences in other domains (e.g., time poverty).

Notably, the *Empropaz* program did not offer opportunities to confront the norm of women being perceived as physically weaker or more delicate than men. Although it allowed individuals to challenge the stereotype of the 'dutiful woman,' it did not address the broader societal notion that women are more inclined towards entrepreneurship. Research indicates that women enroll in small-scale entrepreneurship programs more frequently due to limited access to employment (Flores-Novelo et al. 2021; Pineda Duque and Castiblanco Moreno 2022). GAD scholarship on empowerment has found that gaining power in one domain (e.g., 'power from within') does not imply gaining power in another domain (e.g., 'power to' or 'power with') (Bishop and Bowman 2014; Hanmer and Klugman 2016; Malapit et al. 2019). Future studies in this social context should investigate whether entrepreneurship programs perpetuate the 'dutiful woman' norm. Therefore, the norm of a 'dutiful woman' seems to have a contradiction internally in terms of being challenged and reproducing simultaneously.

Nonetheless, GAD and FPE frameworks also aid in understanding cross-cutting themes related to the empowerment process towards gender equality. As GAD suggests, various forms of power are interconnected. I observed that 'power from within' can bolster 'power to.' For

instance, individuals, both men and women, who gained awareness of gender norms—such as recognizing that domestic chores are not solely women's responsibility—redistributed household tasks more equitably, fostering increased family cooperation. Similarly, aligned with FPE, the findings indicate that geographic contexts influence transformations in gender norms. The results show that people interviewed in Cauca were more likely, compared to participants in Caquetá, to report changes in the three forms of power, especially in self-esteem, family cooperation, and features of 'power with.'

7. Conclusion and Programming Recommendations

This study significantly contributes to the scholarship concerning rural women's empowerment and development within LMICs. The contribution addresses gaps in the existing literature related to the 'how' of gender norms transformation. I empirically examine the process through which resources provided by development programs translate into various forms of power, challenging gender norms. Moreover, it delves into negative forms of power within these processes. The study showcases that merging GAD scholarship with FPE, as proposed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation, is useful to understand the 'how' of empowerment when people receive the support of resources from a development program and identify the negative consequences embedded in an empowerment process.

This study holds implications for programs aimed at reducing gender inequality by transforming gender structures. Empowerment programs should offer opportunities that enable individuals to 'do gender' or initiate new actions or thoughts in their daily lives that enable them to gain powers that challenge gender norms. These opportunities encompass human resources—training covering personal development, gender equality, and practical skills (e.g., business skills). Material resources such as financial services and social resources like one-to-one mentoring should also be emphasized. Furthermore, programs need to be aware of the negative forms of power that may arise during the transformation of gender norms and implement mechanisms to address them. Additionally, more effort should be directed towards promoting forms of collective power that foster women's solidarity and encourage non-patriarchal masculinities among men so their empowerment contributes to gender norms transformation.

This study has limitations. It cannot be generalized to other contexts and does not tackle aspects that further studies can explore. Moreover, it did not examine how individuals' resources before participating in the program influenced the empowerment facilitated by such programs.

Moreover, it did not concentrate on the social conditions leading to negative consequences in the empowerment process and provided recommendations to address them. This study also did not delve into an intersectionality perspective in the analysis. At the methodological level, I interview people from different ethnicities since this is an important aspect of the study sites in which Mestizo, Indigenous, and Afro-Collombian populations are diverse. I also interview people of different ages. Further, studies should delve into the role of ethnicity and age, in intersection with gender, in women and men challenging gender norms. Finally, few people said experiencing violence has one of the negative consequences (e.g., IPV) for challenging gender norms due to participating in the program. Few people reporting experiencing violence could be because they did not face that situation or because the study, due to the methods, did not capture those types of negative consequences. The interviews were one-time for a maximum of two hours, which did not allow sufficient time to build trust with study participants.

I conclude that empowerment developmencan contribute to reducing gender inequality by supporting individuals in transforming gender norms that limit their lives. This transformation involves promoting daily thoughts and actions that challenge these norms by being contrary to the cultural expectations based on gender, fostering non-patriarchal masculinities, and establishing mechanisms to address the negative aspects that arise when contesting these normative beliefs.

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APPENDIX A: DATA SUPPLEMENTS FOR CHAPTER 2

Table A. *Empropaz* Guidebook Modules that Participants Use the Most.

#	Name in English	Name in Spanish	Required or optional	Description
1	Gender, Negotiation, and Gender Roles	Género, negociación y juego de roles	Required	It seeks to raise participant's awareness of gender quality and its importance for a more equal and just society. Also, it provides information about laws related to women's rights, such as those against GVB. In addition, it provides an opportunity for participants to reflect on the importance of people's (women and men) roles and contributions to the family, business, and society, as well as to implement negotiation tools.
2	Life Plan and Personal Life Balance	Plan de vida y equilibro personal	Required	It aims to raise participants' awareness of the importance of implementing personal life goals. It also seeks participants to reflect on the human dimensions that can improve the quality of life and the main changes needed to achieve personal goals.
3	Business Plan	Plan de negocios	Required	Participants learn how to make and implement a business plan.
4	Personal and Family Budget	Presupuesto personal y familiar	Optional	It aims to teach participants the importance of creating a budget and how to do so. It also provides participants with different skills for better income management, which can help them achieve their basic needs and personal goals.
5	The Basic Functions of a Business	Funciones básicas de la empresa	Optional	It seeks participants to create a structure for their business, in which they will allocate responsibilities to each person.

Table A (cont'd)

6	Strategies for Services and Fidelity of Clients	Estrategias de servicios y fidelización de clientes	Optional	It aims to help participants learn about targeting their clients, establishing a relationship with them, and federalization strategies.
7	Organization's Strategic Planning	Planeación estratégica de la organización	Optional	It seeks participants to learn about business planning in the short and long term.
8	Information Technology and Communications (ICT), and Commercial Development	Tecnologías de la Información y las Comunicaciones, y desarrollo comercial	Optional	It aims participants to learn about ITC and how to use them in their business. They will learn mostly how to use internet sources for their business.
9	Credit: An Alternative for Growth	Crédito: una alternativa de crecimiento	Optional	It creates awareness and knowledge about the role of credits in business.

Source: Adapted from *Empropaz's* database provided by CMMC.

Table B. *Empropaz* Guidebook Modules that Participants Use Less

#	Name in English	Name in Spanish
10	Compention and posicioning analysis	Análisis de la competencia y posicionamiento
11	The capacity to reinvent yourself	Capacidad de reinventarse
12	Consumption tendencies	Tendencias de consumo
13	Development of high-value-added ideas and prototypes	Desarrollo de ideas de alto valor agregado y prototipos
14	Marketing	Mercadeo a la carta
15	Business and value chains	Entorno empresarial y cadenas de valor
16	List of resources and providers	Lista de materiales y selección de proveedores
17	Production basic concepts	Conceptos básicos de la producción
18	Marketing research and knowledge about the client	Investigación de mercados y conocimiento del cliente
19	Business and family balance	Equilibrio empresa y familia
20	Seven steps	Siete pasos

Table B (cont'd)

21	Technology as a business tool	Tecnología como herramienta empresarial
22	Life plan and good habits	Plan de vida y buenos hábitos
23	Bussiness implementation	Puesta en marcha de la empresa
24	Personal strategie and bussiness perspective	Estrategia personal y visión empresarial
25	Creativity and innovation	Creatividad e innovación
26	Planning, programming and control over production	Planeación, programación y control de la producción
27	Corporate social responsibility	Responsabilidad social empresarial
28	A mix of marketing	Mezcla de mercadotecnia
29	Profitability and sustainability	Rentabilidad y sostenibilidad de la empresa
30	Selection and stablishment of working groups	Selección y conformación de equipos de trabajo
31	Products and packing	Presentación de productos y empaque
32	Product quotation and price-fixing	Cotización de productos y fijación de precios
33	Management and implementation of electronic sheets	Manejo y aplicación de hojas electrónicas
34	Quality control and planning	Planeación y control de la calidad
35	Cash flow and resources sources	Flujo de caja y fuentes de recursos
36	From a family business to a business	De negocio familiar a empresa
37	Clients and providers datasets	Base de clientes y proveedores
38	Marketing strategies	Estrategias de mercadeo en el punto de venta
39	Time hunters	Cazadores del tiempo
40	Introduction to accountability	Introducción a la contabilidad
41	Leadership	Liderazgo
42	Making decisions. What would you do?	Toma de decisiones ¿usted qué haría?
43	Building and managinig social networks	Manejo de relaciones y construcción de redes
44	Safety at work	Seguridad en el trabajo
45	Protect the environment in your business	Cuide el medio ambiente desde su empresa
46	Management of word processors	Manejo y aplicaciones de procesadores de palabras
47	Innovation processes and development of new markets	Procesos de innovación y desarrollo de nuevos mercados
48	Kit of an organized business person	Kit de empresario organizado
49	Strategic planning for the operation area	Planeación estratégica del área de operaciones
50	Strategic planning for the marketing area	Plan estratégico del área de mercadeo
51	Comunications	Comunicaciones

Table B (cont'd)

52	Values for peaceful coexistence are within me	Valores para la convivencia (ddhh) la paz esta dentro de mi
53	Business growth vs. loans	Crecimiento de la empresa vs endeudamiento
54	Optimization and innotation of products	Optimización e innovación de productos
55	Selling process	Procesos de venta y manejo de objeciones
56	Participate with success in commercial events	Participe con éxito en eventos comerciales
57	Growing as a family	Creciendo como familia y protocolo
58	Quality tools and improvement	Herramientas de control y mejoramiento continuo de calidad
59	Management indicators	Indicadores de gestión
60	Inventory management	Manejo de inventarios

Source: Adapted from *Empropaz's* database provided by CMMC.

Table C. Participants of the Project by the Steps, the Surveys, the Type of Participant, and Status in the Project.

Project steps	Survey	Entrepreneur		Small businessperson		Total Participants		Total
		Actives	Inactive	Actives	Inactive	Actives	Inactive	
Stage: Training	Baseline	506	228	552	241	1,058	469	1,527
Stage 2: Implementation	Monitoring: Survey starting step 2	431	103	519	34	950	137	1,087
Stage 3: Consolidation	Monitoring: Survey starting step 3	78	2	97	5	175	7	182
	Endline: Survey after step 3	109	0	30	1	139	1	140
Total		1,124	333	1,198	281	2,322	614	2,936

Source. Database of *Empropaz* provided by *CMMC*.

Table D. The Number of People Interviewed in Caquetá According to Sampling Characteristics.

Project steps	Entrepreneurs		Small businesspeople		Total
	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Stage: Training	3	0	4	1	8

Table D (cont'd)

Stage 2: Implementation	3	3	5	4	15
Stage 3: Consolidation	5	2	1	0	8
Total	11	5	10	5	31

Source. Auhtor's elaboration.

Table E. The Number of People Interviewed in Cauca According to Sampling Characteristics.

Stage in *Empropaz*	Entrepreneurs		Small businesspeople		Total
	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Stage 1: Training	5	4	4	4	17
Stage 2: Implementation	3	2	9	4	18
Stage 3: Consolidation	0	0	1	1	2
Total	8	7	11	9	35

Source. Auhtor's elaboration.

Table F. Themes and Codes for the Codebook.

Dimension	Theme	Concept/Code
Gender norms	Gender norms	1. Gender norms
Positive aspects of agency.	"Power from within"	2. Self-esteem improved. 3. Life balance improved. 4. Sense of agency improved (this is a sub-concept of agency).
		5. "Power from within" did not improve.
	"Power to"	6. Power authority within the HH improved. 7. Cooperation within the HH improved. 8. Gender-based violence within the HH decreased.
		9. "Power to" did not improve.
	"Power with"	10. Participation in social networks improved. 11. Family and friends' networks improved.
		12. "Power with" did not improve.
Negative aspects of agency.	"Power over"	13. Life balance decreased. 14. Personal well-being decreased. 15. Conflict within HH increased. 16. Gender-based violence increased. 17. Loss of status.
		18. No "power over."

Source. Auhtor's elaboration.

Table G. Codebook

Theme	TAG/code	Concept	Definition	Rule	Examples in Spanish
Gender norms	GenderNorm	Gender norms.	Cultural expectations or prohibitions that constrain individuals' expectations, rights, and actions because of their gender. "Unwritten rules of behavior regarding what is considered acceptable and appropriate in a given group or society." (McDougall et al. 2021).	Code for all the statements that entail what women or men should do (or not do), what women and men are better for or worse for, or what women and men usually do. It includes when people say that women or men are better or worse for entrepreneurship or business, such as taking risks, being organized, or having negotiation abilities. The interviewee can agree or disagree with the gender norm. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	Example 1: "Interviewer*:* Quisiera saber si usted desde su experiencia como mujer empresaria ve si hay alguna diferencia cuando los hombres y las mujeres llevan negocios o emprendimientos" Interviewee: Pues las mujeres somos más organizadas [...] pero el hombre siempre tiene como ese, como más credibilidad. Por lo mismo, porque pues este mundo como por el machismo [...] Por ejemplo, uno va a hacer un negocio con alguna persona importante, y yo voy y negocio, y pues yo soy importante, pero siempre el hombre tiene que, por su palabra de hombre más credibilidad" (Interviewee #56). Example 2:

Table G (cont'd)

					"Interviewer: ¿de pronto alguna vez ha sentido como alguna limitante o barrera durante su negocio que usted diga, "uy, esto puede que pase por el hecho de que sea mujer", o no necesariamente? Interviewee: De pronto hay veces que hay limitante, que uno va a los negocios en donde atienden los señores, y a ellos les gusta es que vaya un vendedor hombre, pero pues a mí eso me es indiferente. Hay veces uno va, más que todo sucede cuando en los negocios son gente creyente, evangélicos; cuando uno va yo no sé si es que las esposas son muy celosas o qué. Uno va y: "ay no, no me interesa anda de lo que usted lleva". (Interviewee #4).
Power from Within	SelfEsteemI	Self-esteem improved	Gained awareness of the importance of the importance of self-esteem.	Code when the interviewees say they changed their perception on the following aspects.	Example 1:

Table G (cont'd)

		.	This means "feeling that [one] can function as an autonomous, self-determining individual" (Pollack 2000, 82) or gained that feeling. Gained awareness of the importance of feeling empowered to make positive choices and direct the course of one's life; that is, a sense that one can be an agent (Pollack 2000) or gain that feeling.	The aspects are their self-perception (Daher et al. 2022), self-confidence (Flores-Novelo et al. 2021; Pineda Duque and Castiblanco Moreno 2022), sense of security (Ciruela-Lorenzo et al. 2020), physical appearance such as clothing (Daher et al. 2022), sense of importance, perception of feeling empowered, dignity (Rowlands 1995), or being aware of deserving a better life. Code only when people say they gained one or more of these features from participating in *Empropaz*, starting a business with *Empropaz*, or improving their small business due to *Empropaz*. Code when the interviewee says that they have started gaining awareness of self-esteem, have started to take action to improve their self-esteem, or have better self-esteem than before. Gaining agency is a process. Thus, interviewees can be in different stages of that process.	"Interviewer: ¿Cómo cambio su vida desde *Empropaz*? Interviewee: Claro, porque uno como mujer, uno poder manejar un proyecto, uno saber todo lo que yo sé con la experiencia que he tenido, uno como mujer se siente importante. Uno se siente" (Interviewee #56).

Table G (cont'd)

				Do not code statements when the interviewee refers to a statement by other family members or friends about their self-esteem. It only includes the interviewee's self-perception. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	
	LifeBalanceI	Life balance improved.	Gained awareness of the importance of balancing personal, social, and economic well-being or balancing personal, social, and economic well-being.	Code when the interviewee says they learned the importance of having time to share with their family, taking care of personal health, and generating income. It includes statements about the interviewee's feelings about being independent and not an employee and the consequences of that. Code only when people say they gained awareness of life balance from participating in *Empropaz*, starting a business due to *Empropaz*, or improving their small business because of *Empropaz*. Code when the interviewee says that they have started gaining awareness of the importance of life balance.	Example 1: "Interviewer: ya nos ha empezado a contar como *Empropaz* ha cambiado cosas en su vida. ¿*Empropaz* ha influenciado en su forma de pensar? […] Interviwee: Cuando iniciamos el programa uno llega con una mentalidad y muy encerrado. Porque a veces estos programas lo motivan a uno a hacer lo ordenado [...] le enseñanza usted a balancearse en lo personal, lo que gana e invierte, en eso. Sí he aprendido mucho pasando por el programa" (Interviewee #60).

Table G (cont'd)

				Also, code when they have started taking actions to improve their life balance, or have a better life balance than before. Gaining agency is a process. Thus, interviewees can be in different stages of that process. Do not code statements when the interviewee refers to a statement by other family members or friends about the interviewee's awareness of life balance. It only includes the interviewee's self-perception. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	
	SenseAgI	Sense of agency improved.	Gained awareness of the importance of knowing that one is "being an individual who can interact with her [his] surroundings and [or] cause things to happen" (Rowlands 1997, 111); or knowing that.	Code when the interviewees gained awareness of gender norms and whether they thought they could change them. Being aware of gender norms entails women or men being aware of their surroundings (See definition). Also, code when the interviewees report the following aspects.	Example 1: "Interviewer: "Y cuando dice que si le [*EMPROPAZ*] sirvió un poco ¿Cómo le ayudó? Interviewee: Sí, me ayudó mucho, porque el tema de género hay mucha tela que cortar.

Table G (cont'd)

			Gained awareness of the "subjective capability that reflects how women view […] their place in society" (Kabeer 2018, 2); or gained that subjective capability.	The aspects are people gaining awareness of the importance of planning for a better life and setting goals (Daher et al. 2022). This is part of the sense of agency of "causing things to happen." It also includes setting goals for the business's future, feeling that people can do everything- as a sign of people having the awareness that they can set goals for their life, and feeling of economic and decision-making independence in the labor market. This covers when people say that due to *Empropaz,* they are setting targets and goals in their business and that they are saving and implementing *Empropaz's* business management techniques. Do not code when people say they feel empowered; this will go in the self-esteem code. Code only when people say they gained a sense of agency from participating in *Empropaz* or starting or improving a business due to *Empropaz*.	Le ayuda a uno a mirar más allá de lo que puede mirar. Me ayudó [*EMPROPAZ*] a reflexionar, pues porque, porque uno de mujer a veces, eh... una cosa de... una mujer a veces piensa que todo está bien viviendo así en pareja, y resulta que, una cosa que decía [STAFF DE *EMPROPAZ*], que no solo de la parte física es la agresión, sino también la psicológica y emocional, porque ellos [HOMBRES] tienen el poder de tener el dinero piensan que lo pueden a uno ver menos, algo así" (Interviewee #46). Example 2: "Interviewer: Entonces es como para mirar y entender la parte de la vida, entonces usted terminó así"

Table G (cont'd)

				Code when the interviewee says they have started gaining a sense of agency or now have a better sense of agency than before. Gaining agency is a process. Thus, interviewees can be in different stages of that process. Do not code statements when the interviewee refers to a statement by other family members or friends about the interviewee's sense of agency. It only includes the interviewee's self-perception. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	"[…] pero me decía que estuvo también trabajando en casas de familia, hizo lo de los jugos, trabajó allá y ahorita acá. Listo. ¿Cómo ha sido su experiencia en *Empropaz*? Interviewee: Mi experiencia pues fue chévere, fue buena. La verdad sinceramente a mí el estudio no me gusta. Nunca me ha gustado, entonces yo lo miraba, ay, como un estudio. Ay, sí. Pero yo dije: "no, pues hagámosle". Yo dije: "hagámosle porque igual". Pero entonces cuando ya uno empieza a mirar de qué se trata, o sea, que uno va adquiriendo como conocimiento. Porque muy diferente cuando uno tiene esa guía de negocios que tiene como algún estudio, como saber cómo va a manejar el negocio, cómo va a manejar las finanzas.

Table G (cont'd)

					Pero yo me metí porque era algo que a mí me gustaba, no porque hubiera hecho un estudio. Entonces con *Empropaz* he empezado a tener más conocimiento de cómo organizar mejor la mercancía, cómo poner cosas que de pronto están como quedaditas que no tienen esa salida rápida" (Interviewee #30)
	NoPWithin	"Power from within" did not improve.	No gain in self-esteem, life balance, or sense of agency.	Code when the person says that neither *Empropaz*, having a business because of *Empropaz*, nor improving their small business due to *Empropaz* enhanced their awareness of life balance, self-esteem, or sense of agency. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	TBD
Power to	PowerHHI	Power authority within the HH improved.	Gained decision-making authority in household and business decisions and control over assets and income.	Code when the person reports positive changes in their participation in household or business decisions.	Example 1: "Interviewer:¿Cuál es esa diferencia" (Interviewee #56)

Table G (cont'd)

			"Decision-making authority is commonly used as an indicator of women's bargaining power […] Bargaining power is the ability of one person to exert influence over another during a negotiation process" (Acosta et al. 2020, 1213). Control over assets and income is understood as having rights of management (operation of the asset or income), exclusion (who can use and benefit from the asset or income), and/or alienation (renting or selling the asset) (Meinzen-Dick et al. 2019).	This code covers more participation or authority in negotiation or bargaining over leisure activities, children, domestic chores, and activities of the business (e.g., hired labor). Also, it includes positive changes in the control over assets and income such as means of transportation, housing, land, technology, machinery, and income earned from the business or from other sources of income. It also includes better management of the finances of the business and the household. This code does not care about the extent of participation in the decision-making. Participation can be sole decision-making or joint decisions with the partner or other family members. Code only when people say they gained power authority within the household or the business due to *Empropaz*, starting a business because of *Empropaz*, or improving their small business due to *Empropaz*.	"[…] [ENTRE TENER SU PROPIO NEGOCIO Y NO TENERLO] que a usted le llama más la atención? Interviewee: Y que estoy cogiendo mi propio dinero. Por ejemplo, lo que es mi esposo el día que cumple años o el día de las madres o el día del padre, pues yo tengo mi propio dinero entonces yo le doy a mi hijo: "mire papi, regálele esto a su papito del día del padre." Y pues no estoy pidiéndole a él mismo para darle a él mismo. Eso es lo que me gusta. Ser independiente. […) Hay veces él tiene, incluso yo le digo: "amor, présteme tanto". Y él me presta. Y yo cuando tengo, yo se los devuelvo. O el mismo, el a veces dice: "amor, présteme tanto." Y cuando él tiene, él me los regresa y así.

Table G (cont'd)

				Code when the interviewee says that they have started gaining participation in household and business decisions or/and control over assets and income; or/and if they reported that they have better participation in decisions and control over resources than before. Gaining agency is a process. Thus, interviewees can be in different stages of that process. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	Nos ayudamos entre los dos. Cuando él tiene pues, cuando él no tiene, pues yo compro lo que haga falta para la casa, y cuando yo no tengo, pues él, y así" (Interviewee #56). Example 2: "Interviewer: ¿Recuerda que vio ese [ROLES DE LA FAMILIA] tema en *Empropaz*? Interviewee: Sí, nosotros miramos ese tema y la verdad a [NOMBRE DE STAFF DE *EMPROPAZ*] yo le compartí y le dije: "que me voy con mi esposo a trabajar, y primero, él [ESPOSO] no lo hacía [LABORES DE LA CASA], yo me iba todo el día a trabajar y llegar a la casa que a hacer la comida, y él [ESPOSO] se acostaba a descansar" (Interviewee#62).

Table G (cont'd)

		.			"[…] Yo un día lo senté y le dije: "Si usted no me colabora yo no le colaboro, porque yo llego y tengo mucho trabajo, que la losa y la casa, la ropa." Si no me ayuda y ve que cuando yo voy [AYUDARLO A TRABAJAR] a él le rinde, él tiene que colaborarme, y aprendió. Ahora dice: "que va a hacer de comida?" Y yo le digo: "Que tal cosa". Y a veces él hace la cena, o si tengo ropa, él va y la lava. Nos apoyamos mutuamente". (Interviewee#62).
	CoopHHI	Cooperation within the HH improved.	Gained "social arrangements regarding who does what, who gets to consume what, and who takes what decisions" (13) within the household (Sen 1987).	Code when people say that the family members now have the same goals for the family. Also, code when interviewees say that there is more cooperation between the members of their household. It also includes spouse support and reporting a new positive family dynamic (Daher et al. 2022; Ciruela-Lorenzo et al. 2020).	Example 1: "Interviewer: Desde que inició en *Empropaz* usted me ha contado que han cambiado algunas cosas de su vida ¿Usted me puede explicar más cómo eso fortalece el hogar? Usted me dijo ahora que se sentía más unido el hogar."

Table G (cont'd)

				This code excludes reducing gender-based violence since this is the GBVD code. Code when people say the cooperation within the household improved because of *Empropaz*, starting a business because of *Empropaz*, or improving the small business due to *Empropaz*. Code when the interviewee says that cooperation and support in the household started to improve or improve. Gaining agency is a process. Thus, interviewees can be in different stages of that process. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	Interviewee: Sí, o sea, es que nosotros estuvimos un tiempo separados, se estaba acabando la relación entre nosotros, el hogar estaba desboronado. Estábamos así, y mire que este programa nos ha enseñado, nos ha hecho como esa armonía, como una unión, como paz, porque peleábamos mucho. Interviewer: ¿Qué es para usted armonía? Interviewee: Para mí es como, como esa paz, como esa comprensión. Ella me dice algo y yo le digo: "sí, o miremos por aquí". Comunicación también, porque no teníamos comunicación. Ella necesita algo y me dice, "ve, tal cosa, vení, ¿usted qué dice?" y yo le digo: Sí, está bien o está mal. [ANTES]. Ella me contaba.

Table G (cont'd)

					Y yo no le prestaba atención. Eso nos ha enseñado [*EMPROPAZ*], de tener ese respeto de ambos, de escucharnos, todo lo que ella me está comunicando y lo que yo le digo. Interviewer: ¿Qué pasaba cuando no había comprensión? Interviewee: Cada uno jalaba pa' su lado, y ni ella progresaba y yo tampoco. Interviewer: ¿Jalar cada uno pa' su lado es qué? Interviewee: Que yo quería hacer mis cosas por allá como yo quisiera, y ella también. Eso me enseñó también [*EMPROPAZ*], lo que ella quería, me ha enseñado a apoyarla. […] Digamos que mal, no. Porque como le digo.

Table G (cont'd)

					A veces cosas que no hay en la cocina, lo sacamos de ahí [DEL NEGOCIO] […] Ahora mire que está la comunicación, vivimos tranquilos. A veces alegábamos mucho. Ya no, normal. A veces yo salgo o ella sale y nos llamamos, nos hablamos" (Interviewee #23b).
	GBVD	Gender-based violence decreased.	Decreased in "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, […] occurring […] in private life" (World Health Organization n.d.).	Code when people report that verbal, physical, psychological (self-esteem is attacked, or being manipulated), sexual, or patrimonial (not being able to manage assets owned, including land for agricultural households) from their couple or another household member against them decreased (Brendel and Schwitalla 2011 cited by Avolio Alecchi 2020). Code when people say the violence within the household was reduced because of *Empropaz*, starting a business due to *Empropaz*, or improving the small business.	TBD

Table G (cont'd)

				Code when the interviewee says gender-based violence within the household started to decrease or decreases at all. Gaining agency is a process. Thus, interviewees can be in different stages of that process. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	
	NoPTo	"Power to" did not improve.	No gain in power authority, family cooperation, or less gender-based violence within the household.	Code when the person says that neither *Empropaz*, having a business due to *Empropaz*, nor improving their small business because of *Empropaz* enhanced their participation in decisions over the activities or assets related to the household or the business; improved cooperation within the household; or decreased gender-based violence within the household. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	TBD
Power with	SocialNI	Participation in networks improved.	Participation in formal associations, community groups, cooperatives, or public spaces improved.	Code when people say they participate or started to participate more in groups or public events due to *Empropaz*.	TBD

Table G (cont'd)

				Or starting a business because of *Empropaz*, or improving a small business due to *Empropaz*. This code also includes when interviewees say they have perceived "changes in contractual agreements and bargaining power in various types of relationships" (Daher et al. 2022) outside the household. The previous aspects includes, for example, when interviewees say that they have perceived changes in their bargaining in different types of relationships outside the household, such as decision-making in the community, the church, buyers, or contractors of the business. Also, code when people say they are less shy to interact with others outside the household. Also, code when people are now more visible in public spaces (Pineda Duque and Castiblanco Moreno 2022).	

Table G (cont'd)

				For example business festivals, and an agent of change in society (Ciruela-Lorenzo et al. 2020). It also includes when people perceived changes in interacting with other women with similar problems (Daher et al. 2022) and inspiring other women, or involving them (Ciruela-Lorenzo et al. 2020). It excludes women from family and friends. Code regardless of the extent of the participation. The person can be just a group member or hold a leadership position. Code: When the interviewee says they are seeking opportunities to start participating in groups or social networks, they now participate in groups or public events, or their participation in public events or groups is better. It is important to note that gaining agency is a process. Therefore, interviewees can be in different stages of that process of gaining agency.	

Table G (cont'd)

				Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	
	CloseNI	Family and friends' networks improved.	The relationship with family members outside the household and friends improved.	Code when people say they gained or improved their closed social networks because of *Empropaz* or started or improved a business due to *Empropaz*. Code when the interviewee says that their relationship with family members (outside the household) or friends is improving or is better than before. Gaining agency is a process. Thus, interviewees can be in different stages of that process. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	TBD
	NoPWith	"Power with" did not improve.	No gain in any type of social network.	Code when the person says that neither *Empropaz*, having a business, nor improving their small business enhanced their public and closed social network. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	Example 1: "Interviewer: ¿Usted ha puesto en práctica todo lo que ha aprendido de *Empropaz* en alguna asociación o cooperativa a la que pertenece?

Table G (cont'd)

					Interviwee: En este momento no he participado de nada, no porque invitaciones no haya tenido, soy más bien escaso en ese sentido, entonces no he hecho parte de eso" (Interviewee #60).
Power over	LifeBalanceD	Life balance decreased.	Increased in not being able to perform personal, family, and/or economic activities related to lack of time or labor burden.	Code when people say they don't have time or possibility to do certain activities due to the business or *Empropaz*. Also, code when people say they don't have leisure due to the business or *Empropaz*. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	Example 1: "Interviewer: nos gustaría conocer qué es lo duro de emprender, qué es lo duro de tener uno su propio negocio ¿Qué puede ser esa partecita que es más dura? Interviewee: Pues lo duro es porque genera mucha responsabilidad [EL NEGOCIO]. Mucha responsabilidad. Uno con un negocio propio es mucha responsabilidad. Por ejemplo, uno el hecho de que tengamos el propio negocio. Un ejemplo, nos vayamos para otra parte a un paseo diez ocho días y uno deja a un encargado.

Table G (cont'd)

					Pero, ese encargado no es lo mismo como uno. Ya uno va a venir, "no pues que este animalito tiene tal enfermedad" "o que esta vaca le pasó tal cosa". Yo siempre he dicho que nadie quiere y cuida las cosas como uno mismo" (Interviewee #56).
	PersonWelD	Personal well-being decreased.	Increased negative personal emotions.	Code when people report stress, frustration, anxiety, instability of emotions, depression, or feeling tired due to starting a business because of *Empropaz*, being part of *Empropaz*, or improving a small business because of *Empropaz*. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	TBD
	ConfHHI	Conflict within the HH increased.	Disagreement among the household members increased. There has been increased conflict within the household. .	Code when the spouse or other household member does not support the business of the women or men (Rezaei and França Marques 2021) Also, code when other forms of conflict emerge due to women or men's participation in *Empropaz*.	Example 1: "Interviewee: ¿Él [EXESPOSO] le decía cosas por usted estar trabajando acá? Interviewee:. O sea, cuando recién me metí [AL NEGOCIO], me dijo:

Table G (cont'd)

	ConfHHI	Conflict within the HH increased.	Disagreement among the household members increased. There has been increased conflict within the household. Conflict is the lack of consensus on decisions and activities (Coleman and Strauss 1989).	Code when the spouse or other household member does not support the business of the women or men (Rezaei and França Marques 2021) Also, code when other forms of conflict emerge due to women or men's participation in *Empropaz*. Or starting or improving a business due to *Empropaz*. This type of conflict does not include violence. Code when people say they have family conflict because of participating in *Empropaz*, starting a business, or improving their small business. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	Que ah, que pa qué me había metido, que esas deudas, que de a dónde iba a pagar, que cómo iba a pagar, que yo no sé qué". Entonces, obviamente, a mí me dió rabia. Yo le dije: "que no." O sea, que lo único que él quería era quizá verme metida en una casa de familia"Y le dije: "no, yo no quiero eso para mi vida". Le dije: "no, y es, lo que a mí me gusta hacer y lo voy a hacer" […] Ay, a veces empezaba que sí, que yo venía acá y que plata. Al principio no se va a ver la plata, ahorita no es que se mire mucho, pero bueno, tiene uno una estabilidad. Entonces toda s esas cosas. El negocio estuvo a punto de irse al piso […] Como él me decía: "que no. Que yo trabaje y trabaje, y sin plata. […] Que esto para qué, que estas deudas en el banco,. Que él si no tenía deudas. Yo le dije.

Table G (cont'd)

					"Usted no tiene deudas,pero no tiene nada; no tiene ni una casa, no tiene nada" […] sí o sí, yo tenía que meterme con el banco". Entonces todas esas cosas así. Hubo un tiempo en que sí le perdí [AL NEGOCIO] como interés porque yo dije "ag, pues no trabajo". Yo dije: "Pues entonces no trabajo y me quedo en la casa". Pero estar en la casa es estar sin dinero. Era no vestirme, porque yo siempre me vestí" (Interviewee #30).
	GBVI	Gender-based violence increased.	Increased "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life" (World Health Organization n.d.).	Code when the people describe forms of patrimonial (control or selling the assets), physical, verbal, sexual, and psychological (self-esteem is attacked or being manipulated) violence (Brendel and Schwitalla 2011, cited by Avolio Alecchi 2020). It includes violence within the household, family, community, organizations, and the activities related to the business.	TBD

Table G (cont'd)

				Code only when people say they have suffered violence as part of participating in *Empropaz*, starting a business, or improving their small business due to *Empropaz*. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	
	LossStatus	Loss of status.	Less respect from family members, friends, or community members.	Code when neighbors and other members of the community judge people negatively. Code when people say they have suffered a loss of status since participating in *Empropaz*, starting a business, or improving their small business due to *Empropaz*. Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	TBD
	NoPOver	No "power over."	No presence of gender-based violence, loss of status, decreased life balance, conflict within the family, or decreased personal well-being due to *Empropaz*.	Code when the person says that neither *Empropaz*, having a business, nor improving their small business due to *Empropaz*, caused gender-based violence, and conflict within the family. Also, loss of status, time poverty, or mental health issues.	TBD

Table G (cont'd)

				Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	
The process from resources to agency	ResoToAgen	From resources to agency.	The process by which access to resources leads to transforming or challenging gender norms.	Code is when people describe how resources provided by *Empropaz* allow them to challenge or transform gender norms within the household, community, or society. It includes resources such as training (e.g., the training of *Empropaz*), credit, saving accounts, the coaching of a business expert (e.g., the staff of *Empropaz*), income, having a new business, improving the business, social resources (networking), or mentorship. It also includes statements on how resources can help other women gain any of the dimensions of "power from within," "power to," and "power with." Code the question of the interviewer and the answer of the interviewee.	Example 1: "Interviewer: Cuando usted me decía que sufrió mucho con la infidelidad de su esposo y que usted la identificaba como violencia psicológica, ¿Usted en ese momento la identificaba como violencia psicológica? ¿O fue a través de estos talleres que usted lo supo Interviewee: Sí, a través de los talleres. Claro, porque uno empieza a permitir muchas cosas. Realmente ahí es donde uno entiende a muchas mujeres que aguantan infidelidades, abusos, maltratos, precisamente por la parte económica, por la dependencia económica. […] y la falta de oportunidades […].

Table G (cont'd)

				Code only statements about women's or men's perceptions of how those resources helped them. Do not code statements about how women or men think those resources can help them or help others in the future. This code might require to re-read the interview or to code multiple paragraphs.	Este señor [EX-ESPOSO] es el que respondía por el arriendo, y yo me embarazo, y es un embarazo de alto riesgo, donde no me puedo parar, no puedo hacer andar porque si lo hago empezaba a sangrar. En ese momento, él dizque andaba con otra persona, eso fue terrible. Imagínese la dependencia económica, porque yo ¿De dónde más? Y ahí fue cuando ya que se dio la oportunidad de poner mi negocio otra vez, y a pesar de eso fue difícil, yo deshacerme de esa relación. Fue muy duro porque en la parte de autoestima uno termina, y [ÉL] era una persona bastante manipuladora. Entonces es donde uno dice que sí necesita que se le hable de eso" (Interviewee #38).

Source: Author's elaboration.

Table H. What *Empropaz'* Aimed to Achieve and What They Achieved, According to the Questions of the Study.

Questions of the study	What *Empropaz*'s achieved or caused		Did *Empropaz* aim to achieve or cause it?
How do women and men challenge gender norms when participating in a development program?	'Power from within" improved.	Self-esteem.	No
		Sense of agency.	Yes
		Life balance.	Yes
	'Power to' improved.	Control over income.	Yes
		Family cooperation.	No
	'Power with' was not improved in most cases.	Social networks.	Yes
	The types of power were gained in a way that challenged gender norms, including when men gained power.		No
	There were differences between women and men in gaining types of power due to *Empropaz*.		No
What negative consequences might arise because women and men challenge gender norms due to the development program?	• Less life balance. • Household conflict. • Verbal violence from their male counterparts. • Loss of status in the community.		No

Source: Author's elaboration.

Table I. Percentage of Interviewees that Said Their Power Increased due to *Empropaz* According to Gender, for Each Power Indicator

Type of power	Power's indicators	Woman (n=44)	Man (n=21)	Total (n=65)
'Power from within'	Self-esteem improved	52%	10%	38%
	Sense of agency improved	89%	100%	92%
	Life balance improved	30%	24%	28%
'Power to'	Control over resources improved	59%	76%	65%
	Cooperation within the HH improved	25%	57%	35%
'Power with'	'Power with'	41%	57%	46%

Source: Author's elaboration.

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CHAPTER 3: WOMEN'S DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY OVER AGRICULTURE IN HONDURAS

1. Introduction

Since the 1990s, gender equality has been a development goal and a means to achieve other goals, such as reducing poverty and food insecurity. During this time, gender inequalities, typically affecting women, have decreased in the agricultural sector of low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs). Within this sector, the gaps between women and men in access to credit, education, and technology are now narrower than before (FAO 2023). Nevertheless, many gender inequalities in agriculture persist in these countries. More women than men experience poorer labor conditions (e.g., lower wages and formal employment), undertake unpaid care labor, have less access to land rights (e.g., decision-making over land), and are more vulnerable to gender-based violence (GBV) (FAO 2023).

Gender and Development (GAD) scholars have emphasized that to reduce gender inequalities in agricultural settings in LMICs, development programs, and public policies must address gender power imbalances and promote women's empowerment within the household (Agarwal 1994; Deere and Leon 2001). These scholars underscore the significance of studying social dynamics in the household domain to reduce inequalities between women and men. Within this domain, everyday power imbalances between genders are produced, reproduced, and changed.

From this perspective, a household is a unit of conflict (sometimes even violence) and cooperation in which the members may have similar or opposing interests and power dynamics (Argawal 1997; Bokemeier 1997; Coleman and Strauss 1986; Connell 1987; Roberts 1991; Sen 1987). Conflict involves disagreements between couples regarding decisions and activities (Coleman and Strauss 1986), which carry both positive and negative connotations. The positive connotation entails individuals expressing their perceptions and needs. Conversely, the negative connotation occurs when there is violent conflict, defined as an "act carried out with the intention of, or perceived intention of, physically [verbally and psychologically] hurting another person" (Gelles and Strauss 1979 as cited by Coleman and Strauss 1986, 144). Gender power imbalances within the household can be observed through disparities in individuals' bargaining power, defined as "the ability of one person to exert influence over another during a negotiation

process" (Acosta et al. 2020, 1213), and empirically operationalized as decision-making authority (Acosta et al. 2020).

Since the 1990s, this gender and household scholarly perspective has emerged as a response to gender-blinded programs that fail to acknowledge gender inequalities and roles in agriculture. Beuchelt and Bastude (2013) cite case studies of gender-blinded programs in which the introduction of machinery in rice production in Asia, such as seeders, resulted in women who previously seeded manually losing their jobs. The gender household approach responds to this gender-blind approach by recognizing the gender roles and power dynamics within the household associated with implementing development programs. For instance, the household approach examines who makes decisions—solely women, solely men, or both women and men—and how this relates to the adoption of agricultural technologies such as yield-enhancing practices, soil-restoring strategies, new crops, and agricultural inputs (Gerard et al. 2020; Gillian et al. 2020; Theriault et al. 2017).

To address gender inequalities in agriculture within development programming, adopting a household perspective is crucial. This perspective enables an understanding of women's decision-making authority within the household compared to their male counterparts. Previous literature has examined women's decision-making authority by assessing their involvement in decisions regarding agricultural land compared to men; as well as the determinants of their participation in decision-making (Bradshaw 2013; Farah-Quijano 2013; Hamilton 1998; Twyman, Useche, et al. 2015). Most studies have focused on decisions concerning land management (e.g., technology adoption and labor distribution) and resources derived from the land (such as income or food for own consumption) (Beaman et al. 2013; Gilligan et al. 2020; Shibata et al. 2020; Sumner et al. 2017; Theriault et al. 2017), revealing that women's participation in these decisions is largely influenced by their material, human, and social resources (e.g., land ownership, education level, and contribution to on-farm labor) (Bradshaw 2013; Deere and Leon 2001; Deere and Twyman 2012; Farah-Quijano 2013; Wiing 2013).

Scholars usually administer questionnaires to both the woman and man heads of the household to understand these decision-making authority dynamics. One popular example is intra-household surveys where both heads of households are interviewed separately about how decision-making works in their home (Alwang et al. 2017; Ambler et al. 2017; Jacobs and Kes 2015; Twyman, Useche, et al. 2015). Nonetheless, these surveys have shown that women and

men of the same household have different opinions in their responses on who makes the decision—also known as spousal or couple discord (Alwang et al. 2017; Ambler et al. 2017; Ambler et al. 2021; Van Campenhout et al. 2022). Studies have found that women tend to report more joint decisions (made jointly by women and men) and decisions solely by women, while men reported sole male decisions (Alwang et al. 2017; Ambler et al. 2017; Twyman, Useche, et al. 2015).

Despite the contributions to understanding women's decision-making authority within the household in agricultural domains, three aspects should be explored more in empirical and applied research for programming toward gender equality. First, more studies should describe women's and men's participation in household decision-making, including domestic and agricultural decisions. Second, empirically, the role of gender norms[13] and legitimacy factors in explaining women's participation in decisions should be examined more. Legitimacy in this context entails whether a person recognizes or perceives their partner's authority or claims as valid (Agarwal 1997; Sen 1987). It includes factors such as women's perceptions of their contribution to decisions, the partner's perceptions of their respective contributions as a couple (Agarwal 1997; Sen 1987), or women's perception of being comfortable having different opinions than their male counterparts. The literature primarily focuses on the material, human, and social determinants, such as land access, labor, technology, and income, and few on gender norms and legitimacy factors.

Nowadays, understanding the effects of gender norms and legitimacy factors is critical for programs working towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 of Gender Equality by 2030 in agriculture. As stated by the United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (2023), SDG 5 is far from being achieved by 2030, partly because of gender norms and the lack of inclusion of men in the development programs aiming to reduce gender inequalities (FAO 2023). Therefore, the FAO (2023) calls for implementing gender agendas that transform gender norms and include men.

In the past, promoting such agendas without correct guidance and information has led to a lack of implementation or unintended negative consequences. Bedford (2007) suggests that

[13] Gender norms are the cultural expectations and traditions that affect people's agency or life choices (Kabeer 2018).

projects promoted by the World Bank on conflict resolution policies and men's inclusion in Ecuador in the 1990s created undesirable effects by imposing their external vision that women and men need to complement each other, disregarding the possibility of conflict –in a positive connotation--, and portraying poor men as violent, lazy, and drunk (Bedford 2007). Similarly, Horton (2018) draws attention to the fact that programming staff have evaded addressing topics such as the possibility of conflict within households, fearing negative consequences for the members and under the gender norm that dictates the household should be a unit where genders complement each other.

Besides describing women's participation in both domestic and agricultural decisions and the role of gender norms and legitimacy factors explaining their participation, the third aspect that should be explored more in the literature is to explain spousal discord in reporting the dynamics of household gender power. One hypothesis[14] in the literature to explain this phenomenon is the lack of mutual recognition of each other's (women and men) legitimacy in decision-making (Coleman and Strauss 1986). Consensus or discord on who makes the decisions can reveal underlying gender power dynamics within the household (Annan et al. 2021; Coleman and Strauss 1986; Ghuman et al. 2006). Consensus can indicate an egalitarian relationship where both partners recognize each other's power, or it can indicate a normative consensus, which in male-dominant households implies the woman accepting power asymmetries against her (Coleman and Strauss 1986). Also, these authors suggest that consensus and discord can be related to more household conflict and conflict violence (Coleman and Strauss 1986). Understanding the consensus and discord in couples' decision-making reporting could support programming to achieve SDG 5.

This study contributes to the empirical literature in these three aspects. It provides evidence on women's participation in decisions within the household, both domestic and agricultural, compared to that of their male counterparts, and the role of legitimacy factors in determining women's decision-making authority, and discord in women and men's responses about women's decision-making authority. The research questions are the following:

1. What is women's participation in agricultural and domestic decisions within the household compared to men?

[14] All the hypotheses in the literature are explained in the framework section.

2. Do legitimacy factors determine women's participation in decisions over agricultural production? This study explores men's perceptions of women's involvement in decision-making and women's perception of comfort in having different opinions with their male partners.
3. Do other factors, including material, human, and social resources, determine women's participation in decisions over agricultural production?
4. Do underlining power dynamics –legitimacy-- correlate with couple discord or consensus in reporting women's participation decisions over agriculture?

To answer these questions, I follow GAD's collective bargaining model theory. This theory acknowledges the cooperation and conflict dynamics within the household. It suggests that material, social, and human resources, as well as legitimacy factors, are related to women's bargaining power or authority in decisions over agricultural land (Agarwal 1997; Hoddinott et al. 1997; Lundberg and Pollak 1994; McElroy 1990). Additionally, I incorporate the contributions of Coleman and Strauss (1986), feminist scholars who focus on gendered intra-household decision-making, albeit not necessarily within development studies.

This study is based on a case study among heterosexual dual-headed households dedicated to small-scale farming in Honduras. Honduras is particularly pertinent for this study because the country had the highest poverty rates in Latin America as of 2022 and the highest food insecurity rates as of 2021 (CEPAL 2023; FAO 2022). Additionally, family agriculture or small-scale agriculture is the livelihood of many households in Honduras, where women are less likely to have power over agricultural land than their male counterparts, including having less control over income and productive resources from the land (Dietz et al. 2018).

For the analysis, I report descriptive statistics and conduct probabilistic statistical models using information from an intra-household survey implemented in 2018. The survey includes 147 dual-headed households involved in cashew production across five municipalities located in two departments in the Gulf of Fonseca: Choluteca and Valle. Both the woman and the man head of the household were surveyed. These households were part of a development program on cashew production named the *Rural Opportunities Project in the Gulf of Fonseca in the Dry Corridor of Honduras* (*Oportunidades Rurales para el Desarrollo Inclusivo para la Región del Golfo*, in Spanish), implemented by Swisscontact from 2017 to 2022 (Twyman et al. 2022; Swisscontact n.d.).

The Choluteca and Valle departments have the country's most cashew producers (Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganadería 2020). There were 1,372 cashew producers in these two departments in 2018; however, production is low, and farmers need other economic activities to meet their needs (Muriel et al. 2020). By 2021, Honduras was the fourth producer of this agricultural product in Latin America, with 2,145.81 tonnes, following Brazil, Mexico, and Peru (Our World in Data n.d.).

The results of this case study advance the literature on intra-household bargaining power in GAD and contribute to Latin American programs that promote women's participation in agriculture decisions to reduce gender inequalities. It provides recommendations for addressing legitimacy factors and reducing gender inequalities at the household level in agricultural settings.

2. Theoretical Framework

The household encompasses emotional, social, cultural, economic, and power relations (Connell 1987). The definition of a household varies according to the context or culture and the researcher's theoretical perspective (Bokemeier 1997; Roberts 1991). One of the key definitions of GAD scholars and other gender social scientists is that a household is a social unit of cooperation and conflict of production and consumption, in which members have different perceptions, identities, and interests (Agarwal 1997; Sen 1987). Scholars in sociology and anthropology emphasize that the household is a space where violence may occur (Bokemeier 1997; Coleman and Straus 1986; Connell 1987; Roberts 1991). Thus, I understand the household as a unit:

> "Constituted of multiple actors, with varying (often conflicting) preferences and interests, and differential abilities to pursue and realize those interests. They are arenas of (albeit not the sole determinants) of consumption, production, and investment, within which both labor and resource allocation decisions are made" (Agarwal 1997, 3). Also, they are arenas of cooperative, conflicting, and violent social relations.

This study uses the principles of the household collective bargaining models proposed by feminist economists in GAD scholarship. Like Agarwal (1997), I refer to models primarily as theoretical frameworks or approaches rather than mathematical and statistical representations of a phenomenon. These models acknowledge the cooperation and conflict dynamics within the household and how they affect household well-being outcomes. GAD literature has two collective bargaining models: the cooperative and non-cooperative.

The cooperative model recognizes the household as a unit of cooperation and conflict, acknowledging that household members have different preferences and bargaining power that

affect well-being outcomes (Agarwal 1997; Doss and Meinzen-Dick 2015; Katz 1991). In this model, a person's bargaining power depends on their fallback position, which enables them to survive outside the household due to resources (e.g., income earned outside the household) or extra-household factors (e.g., marital laws, parental wealth) (Agarwal 1997). Thus, a person with a better fallback position has more bargaining power within the household, as they have more options to exit (e.g., divorce) if cooperation fails. Nonetheless, according to Horton (2018), programming strategies based on the cooperative-conflict model often prioritize cooperation as the ideal situation, promoting 'gender complementarity' as the ideal household dynamic, overlooking the importance of conflict in reducing power imbalances based on gender. Most policy recommendations around this model aim to increase the fallback position of women (e.g., rural) to enhance bargaining power, such as securing property rights over land.

The non-cooperative model assumes that "each individual makes separate but interrelated production and consumption decisions based on his or her own preferences" (Doss and Meinzen-Dick 2015). Unlike the cooperative model, the non-cooperative model assumes that individuals can have different preferences due to their identities (e.g., gender). Thus, cooperation can lead to unjust and inefficient outcomes (Agarwal 1997; Doss and Meinzen-Dick 2015; Katz 1991; 1997). Most policy recommendations around this model aim to increase an individual's fallback position and change dynamics within the household. However, this model does not fully capture why people do not cooperate since it treats household members as separate individuals with different consumption and production patterns (Doss and Meinzen-Dick 2015).

Despite their differences, these two collective bargaining models share two principles that I use for the analysis: the idea of the household and the determinants of one person's stronger bargaining position within the household. I complement these principles with Coleman and Straus (1986).

Based on the cooperative and bargaining models, the determinants of bargaining power are divided into four categories: fallback position, gender norms, legitimacy factors, and extra-household dynamics. These determinants are interrelated (Agarwal 1997).

A person with a better fallback position has more bargaining power within the household, as they have more exit options if cooperation fails. According to Agarwal (1997), the fallback position is related to the material, human, and social determinants of women's bargaining power within the household (e.g., labor, income, and land) (Agarwal 1997). Besides these determinants,

gender norms and legitimacy factors also explain women's bargaining power (Agarwal 1997; Coleman and Straus 1986; Sen 1987). Legitimacy factors cover women's and men's perceptions of their contribution to decisions and their partner's perception of their contribution (Agarwal 1997; Coleman and Strauss 1986; Sen 1987). According to Coleman and Strauss (1986, 151), these legitimacy factors reflect the "degree of consensus over how the power is distributed." From a sociological perspective, they suggest that greater legitimacy between the couple can decrease households' violent conflict (Coleman and Strauss 1986). This legitimacy can reflect egalitarian relationships between the woman and the man, in which both recognize their own power and each other's power in the household, as well as male-dominated relationships, in which the woman recognizes men's superior power (Coleman and Strauss 1986). They found in their study of couples in the United States in the 1970s that conflict and violent conflict are less present in egalitarian relationships and male-dominant normative relationships. As an underlying power dynamic, this concept of legitimacy is one of the hypotheses for explaining why couples respond differently to the same questions about decision-making in surveys.

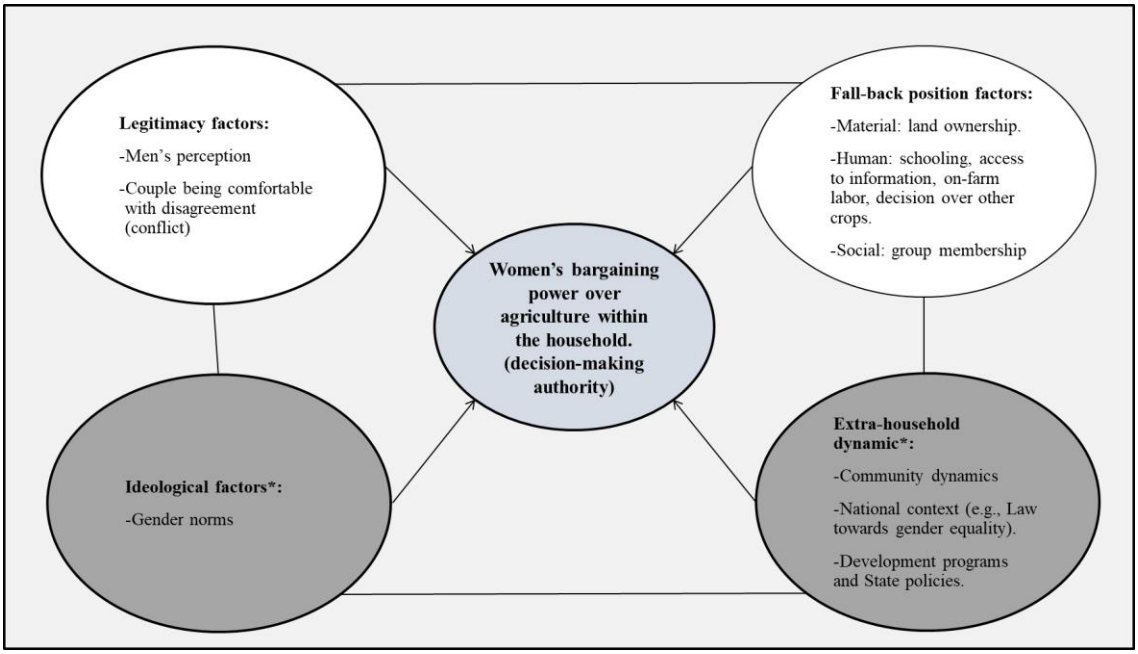
Finally, bargaining is also related to the extra-household dynamics, such as aspects in the market, state, and community (Agarwal 1997; Roberts 1991). According to Roberts (1991), the norms of the community, the roles of other family members (outside the household) in the decision-making, the influence of agencies (e.g., development programs and extension services), and state laws can influence the decision-making process by either favoring unequal gender relationships or promoting more gender equality.

In this study, I examine the material, human, and social determinants (fallback position) and the legitimacy factors associated with women's bargaining power position on agricultural decisions within the household. To operationalize bargaining, I utilize the concept of decision-making authority or women's participation in decisions (Acosta et al. 2020).

The legitimacy factors assessed in this study include men's perception of women's participation in agricultural decisions and the couple's comfort in having a different opinion from their male counterparts. Additionally, I consider material, human, and social factors (fallback position), including women's land ownership, contribution to on-farm labor, decision-making over other agricultural products, group membership, schooling, and access to information and services. Community-level and gender norms are not addressed in this study.

Figure 9 illustrates the main concepts from the bargaining models and other gender scholars, as well as the relationships between these concepts utilized in our study. I use the same legitimacy determinants to understand the disagreement between couples' responses on who makes the decisions, except for the men's perception of decisions. Men's perception is not included because I use that variable to measure spousal discord.

Figure 9. Theoretical Framework for the Study.



*These factors are not included in the analysis of this study.

Source: Author's elaboration based on the collective and bargaining models, Agarwal(1997), and Coleman and Strauss (1986).

2. Literature Review: Women's Participation in Intra-household Decisions in Agriculture in Latin America

Scholarship on household bargaining and agricultural decision-making authority has proliferated since the 1990s (Quisumbing 2003). This growth has been driven by the efforts of feminist scholars and development practitioners who emphasize the consequences of gender-blind approaches in development (Agarwal 1994; Beuchelt 2016; Deere and Leon 2001). The empirical contributions of studies aiming to understand decision-making patterns and its determinants are classified into three types, depending on their research topics.

The first type examines household decision patterns (Hamilton 1998; Weeratunge et al. 2016; Farah-Quijano 2013; Anderson et al. 2017; Bernard et al. 2020). These studies focus on

identifying who makes what decisions within the household and how those decisions are made. They concentrate mostly on identifying women's and men's participation in decisions related to land control – what crops and inputs to use and how to allocate the money earned from the economic and domestic activities (food purchases and childcare) (Carter 2004; de Brauw et al. 2014), and women's autonomy (birth control) (Ramirez et al. 2005; Speizer et al. 2005; de Brauw et al. 2014).

One main result of this first type of study for Latin American countries is that joint decisions are common – decisions made by the man and woman head of the household (Bradshaw 2013; Doss 2018; Doss and Quisumbing 2018; Farah-Quijano 2013; García et al. 2021; Hamilton 1998; Patel et al. 2007). However, García et al. (2021) show in Nicaragua and Colombia that women's decision-making authority in joint decisions varies on a spectrum from women affirming in silence what their husbands decide to men considering women's input (García et al. 2021).

Another main result is that women participate more in agricultural decisions related to the allocation of income earned from the land, and domestic decisions such as food purchases, and children's nutrition (Casique 2000; Patel et al. 2007; Twyman, Useche, et al. 2015), rather than in agricultural decisions related to inputs (e.g., fertilizer) or the management of the land (Twyman, Muriel, et al. 2015). However, few studies comprehensively analyze women's and men's participation in both, domestic and agricultural decisions (see some few examples: Maiorano et al. 2021; Malapit et al. 2019).

The second type uses the collective bargaining model theory to identify the social and economic determinants of women's participation in decisions (Agarwal 1997). These determinants can vary depending on the type of decision and the person's fallback position (Twyman, Useche, et al. 2015). The fallback position relates to resources such as land, income, or the share of economic wealth the person contributes to the household (Bradshaw 2013; Deere and Leon 2001; Deere and Twyman 2012; Farah-Quijano 2013; Wiing 2013). It comprises individual resources and extra-household environmental factors (e.g., community dynamics, agency support, and family and friend support) (Agarwal 1997; McElroy 1990). The fallback position enables an individual to survive outside the household in case the cooperation fails (e.g., divorce or widowhood) (Agarwal 1997).

The main result of the second type of study is that bargaining often favors men since they have more access to and control over resources (Quisumbing 2003). Moreover, for Latin American countries, the determinants or factors that increase women's fallback position include material resources (e.g., land, wage income, and transfers), family wealth, gender norms and rules (e.g., laws that guarantee women's rights), personal attitudes, and social (e.g., group membership) and human resources (e.g., contribution to on-farm labor) (Amarante et al. 2023; Doss et al. 2014; Hamilton,1998; Farah-Quijano 2013; Jha 2004; Frankenberg and Thomas 2003; Parada 2022). Farah-Quijano (2013) explains that joint decision-making increased across generations in Colombia. Farah-Quijano (2013) author suggests that these changes have occurred partly due to new laws mandating joint ownership (woman and man) of plots acquired in marriage. The author also suggests that this change is due to a transformation in gender norms, such as perceptions of household headship and local gender norms that favor women's control over land. The main gap in this type of literature is that there is little empirical research on gender norms and legitimacy factors compared to material (e.g., land), human (e.g., labor and education), and social (e.g., group membership) determinants. This study addressed the legitimacy factors, as well as material, human, and social determinants.

The third type of study compares the different perceptions of women and men regarding who decides over arable land (Alkire et al. 2012; Ambler et al. 2017). For the Latin American region, these studies suggest that women and men have different perceptions of how decisions are made (Alkire et al. 2012; Alwang et al. 2017; Covre-Sussai 2014; Bradshaw 2013; Speizer et al. 2005; Twyman, Useche, et al. 2015). Women tend to report more on surveys joint decisions than men, and men tend to report more sole male decisions (Bradshaw 2013; Patel et al. 2007; Twyman, Useche, et al. 2015).

The literature provides at least four hypotheses as reasons for that discord: a) lack of mutually recognized legitimacy between the couple on who makes the decisions, which is a sign of underlined power relations (Annan et al. 2021; Coleman and Straus 1986; Ghuman et al. 2006), b) desirability effect by gender that makes that one (or both) of the respondents answer according to what is culturally expected (Alwang et al. 2017; Jejeebhoy 2002; Van Campenhout et al. 2022), c) women and men have different meanings of decision-making (Ambler et al. 2017; Dekkers 2009), and d) measurement errors (Ambler et al. 2021).

In Latin America, Alwang et al. (2016) conducted an experiment in Ecuador to test differences in responses regarding agricultural decisions when either the woman or the man was interviewed alone or jointly. They found that interviewing the woman and man together led to a higher probability of joint decisions being reported. According to these authors, women and men have different perceptions of their responsibilities and actions (Alwang et al. 2016). Still, few studies have delved into why women and men report different decision-making patterns in surveys (or other studies) (Alwang et al. 2017; Ambler et al. 2021; Van Campenhout et al. 2022). This study addresses this gap by testing the hypothesis about legitimacy.

3. Background: Cashew and Gender Roles in Honduras

I implemented a case study of households dedicated to family farming in Honduras. Honduras is the second poorest country in Latin America, with high rates of poverty and food insecurity. Nearly 44 percent of the inhabitants living in rural areas are in poverty, including 20 percent in extreme poverty, and 11 percent of its inhabitants are malnourished (Derlagen et al. 2019). Agriculture is fundamental for people's livelihoods in rural areas. In 2017, agriculture represented 13 percent of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and 36 percent of total national exports (Derlagen et al. 2019). In the same year, agriculture employed 28 percent of the population in the labor market.

The case study is among small-scale cashew farmers in the Gulf of Fonseca. This region is located on the border between Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador (Twyman et al. 2022), and is characterized by its biodiversity. Nonetheless, the Gulf of Fonseca is part of the 'dry corridor.' The 'dry corridor' is a geographical area in Central America –including parts of Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, and El Salvador- that is highly affected by climate change. It faces severe droughts during the year with low water availability for consumption and agriculture production, and then, it suffers from intense rains (FAO 2021; Fraga 2020). Besides, according to FAO (2021), 86 percent of the rural population living in Honduras' dry corridor is impoverished, and 55 percent is food insecure.

Of the 9.5 million inhabitants in Honduras by 2022, two million were rural women. This country has laws and legal statements to guarantee rural women's rights. Rights protected by these laws are the elimination of GBV (e.g., the decree for the creation of the public research center for Feminicides in 2016 and the law against domestic violence in 1997 and 2014), and the promotion of access to resources such as credit, land, and housing such as the creation of the

national program of credit for rural women –CREDIMUJER-- in 2015, the law for equal opportunities for women in 2000, and the approve of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas in 2018 (Articulación de Mujeres de La Vía Campesina – CODIMCA and OXFAM 2021; CEPAL n.d.; La República de Honduras 2016).

Despite the laws and the advances in the situation of rural women in the country, gender inequalities persist against women. Only 12.5 percent of the employed people in rural areas are women, and 73 percent of rural women are considered economically inactive (Articulación de Mujeres de La Vía Campesina – CODIMCA and OXFAM 2021). Seventy percent of rural women in Honduras are in poverty, and 50 percent are in extreme poverty (Swisscontact 2022). Also, most of the land is owned by men, and women who are owners have smaller land than men (Articulación de Mujeres de La Vía Campesina – CODIMCA and OXFAM 2021); in fact, Swisscontact (2022) states that only 14 percent of rural women own land.

4. Methodology

4.1. Study Area

The study focuses on five municipalities in the two departments of Choluteca and Valle located in the Gulf of Fonseca: Concepción de María, El Corpus, El Triunfo, Namasigue, and Langue. These two departments, Choluteca and Valle, produce most of the cashews in the country, and cashews are one of the main sources of employment and economic subsistence for families in these geographical areas (Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganadería (SAG) 2014). Most cashews produced in Honduras are exported to El Salvador, Germany, and the United States (SAG 2014).

Around 1,371 small-scale holders produce cashews on their own land in the study area; most farmers are over 50 years old, and 24 percent are women (Muriel et al. 2020). The average size of landholding for cashew production is 1.5 to 2.1 hectares (ha), and the productivity is very low compared to other Central American countries (Muriel et al. 2020). In this region, the productivity is approximately 1276 kg/ha, while in other regions of Central America, it is 1563 kg/ha (Twyman et al. 2022). These farmers have low access to physical capital and low levels of formal education (CDH and VECO-MA 2008); only 2 percent have secondary education (Muriel 2020). Sixty percent of the farmers have other sources of income to complement the low income earned from cashew production (Muriel 2020; Twyman et al. 2022).

Most of the cashews produced by farmers are sold to local middlemen or to local semi-industrial or individual artisan processors, who sell the cashews mostly to export them or to local markets (Twyman et al., 2022). In the region, five semi-industrial companies process and sell cashews for exportation, and 27 individual artisanal processors sell to local markets (Swisscontact 2014, cited by Twyman et al. 2022). Processing is characterized by low technological inputs and economic investment (CDH and VECO-MA 2008). In processing, the shell is manually removed from the cashew (CDH and VECO-MA 2008). In this region, an important proportion of cashew processors are landless.

Women participate in on-farm family labor on their land in various agricultural activities in cashew production, such as seeding trees, transplanting and pruning them, controlling pests and weeds, and harvesting (Muriel et al. 2020). Men also participate in these agricultural activities and select the cashew fruit after harvesting, drying, storing, and transporting it for sale (Muriel et al. 2020). Women's participation in processing is high. Ninety-three percent of employees in artisanal processing are women (Muriel et al. 2020; Twyman et al. 2022).

According to Twyman et al. (2022), cashew production and processing are not the only main source of income for people, including women. In a qualitative study done in this area based on focus groups and semi-structured interviews, Twyman et al. (2022) found that women also work in other local agricultural (e.g., raising poultry) and non-agricultural activities (e.g., restaurants) and that cashew production is more of a complementary income source. Along these lines, cashews are not the main cash crop in the study area; livestock and grain play a more important economic role.

Twyman et al. (2022) find that despite women contributing to cashew production, specifically in dual-headed households, they considered themselves helpers or supporters. This may be associated with the gender norms of women being responsible for the private and home sphere while men are responsible for the public domain (Twyman et al. 2022). Twyman and co-authors (2022) also identify aspects that lead to women's disempowerment in cashew processing and production: low group membership, high workload (including unpaid domestic activities), and low perception of being landowners.

4.2. Data Collection and Sampling

The development program, *Rural Opportunities Project in the Gulf of Fonseca in the Dry Corridor of Honduras* (*Oportunidades Rurales para el Desarrollo Inclusivo para la Región del*

Golfo, in Spanish) (Twyman et al. 2022), was implemented from 2017 to 2019 by Swisscontact and funded by Global Affairs Canada (Swisscontact n.d.). It aimed to improve the economic well-being of -small-scale farmers and small-scale agricultural businesspeople in poverty, with a special focus on women and youth (Muriel et al. 2020; Swisscontact n.d.).

One of the program's goals was to increase women's economic well-being by promoting their participation in the cashews value chain (Muriel et al. 2020), particularly through training in business, financial, and group membership skills. These training courses focused on improving productivity and income earned from people's economic activities and leveraging the creation of small businesses -- in this case, cashew production (Swisscontact 2014 cited by Twyman et al. 2022). In the case of youth, they trained them with competencies and skills for the labor market (Swisscontact 2022). The program also supported people's entrepreneurship and employment. It delivered agricultural technologies (e.g., climate-smart practices for cashews farmers and labor-saving machinery) to women so they could start their businesses and diversify their income (Swisscontact 2022). In addition, the program offered training and practical strategies to practitioners and public policy stakeholders on gender equality and economic well-being (Swisscontact n.d.).

According to Swisscontact (n.d.), 52 percent of the program's participants were women. The Alliance of Bioversity and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), and Swisscontact implemented an intra-household survey to diagnose gender gaps and women's empowerment. This is the *Database for Women's Empowerment Indicators in Golfo de Fonseca, Honduras*, conducted in 2018 and published in Harvard Dataverse in 2021 (Moreno et al. 2021). I utilized this survey for this study and participated in the dataset's data cleaning and publication (I am also a co-author of the dataset published in Harvard Dataverse).

This survey was used to report on women's empowerment and disempowerment indicators and policy recommendations for reducing the gender gaps in the cashews value chain and provide recommendations to the program before its implementation (Muriel et al. 2020; Muriel et al. 2021; Twyman et al. 2022). Therefore, the survey does not intend to show the program's impacts, and these households produced cashews before the program.

The survey was conducted among cashew producers in the Valle and Choluteca departments. The original dataset covers dual-headed households, single female-headed households, and single male-headed households for cashews for two different groups of people:

producers and processors. The survey includes 204 households producing cashews, with 204 women as respondents and 195 men (Twyman et al. 2022). These households comprise 14 single female-headed households, 9 single male-headed households, and 181 cis-gender heterosexual dual-headed households. It also includes 98 households of cashew processors, with 98 women and men as respondents (Twyman et al. 2022).

In this study, I focus on dual-headed household cashew producers, where both the woman and the male heads of the households (the couple) answered the questionnaire regarding decisions over cashews. Additionally, I concentrate on households that reported cashew production in the last twelve months. If a household did not report cashew production in the last twelve months, the questionnaire did not inquire about decisions over cashews for that household. Therefore, out of the 181 dual-headed households producing cashews, I utilize information from 147 households, comprising 294 respondents (147 women and 147 men). Sixty percent of these households are in a free union (cohabitation between people without being legally married), while 40 percent are married, which is common in Honduras (INE n.d.).

From the initial 181 dual-headed households, I excluded 34. Of the 34 households I excluded, 12 households did not provide answers from both the woman and man. In the other 22 households excluded, neither the woman nor the man reported cashew production in the last 12 months.

This intra-household survey comprises twelve modules divided into two sections (Moreno et al. 2021). The first section has four modules about the demographic (e.g., age, gender, marital status, and number of children per household), economic (e.g., occupation and poverty index), and social (e.g., food insecurity index) characteristics of the household, and this section of the survey was answered by the woman and the man together (Moreno et al. 2021). The second section covers the other eight modules, in which the woman and the man responded separately. It covers the agricultural products on the land, land ownership, decision-making over agriculture, domestic decisions and income, gender norms, on-farm and off-farm labor, group membership, access to information, and access to credit (Moreno et al. 2021).

4.3. Data Analysis

I conducted a quantitative analysis in three steps. The first step addresses the research question: What is the level of women's participation in agricultural and domestic decisions within the household? I utilize descriptive statistics to discern the involvement of women and

men in agricultural and domestic purchasing decisions. The questionnaire comprises inquiries regarding decisions concerning both agricultural and domestic activities within the household. Agricultural decisions pertain to managing the farm's products, encompassing animals and crops, including cashews. Domestic decisions encompass everyday household purchases (groceries) and occasional acquisitions (such as land, bicycles, and other means of transportation). I illustrate both women's and men's perspectives, as well as whether the couple agrees with their responses.

The second step addresses research questions two and three: Do legitimacy factors determine women's participation in decisions over agricultural production and income earned from that production? Do other factors, including material, human, and social resources, determine women's participation in decisions over agricultural production? To do so, I conduct a regression model.

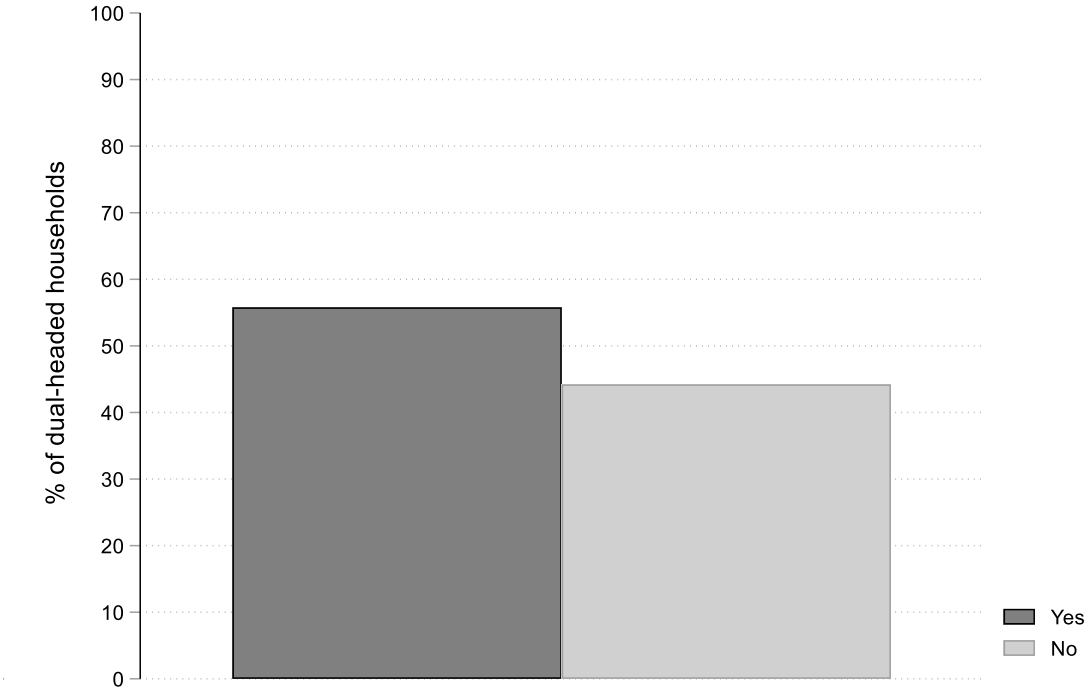
To model the role of legitimacy and other factors on women's participation in decisions over cashews, I run a Firth logit or Penalized Maximum Likelihood Estimation logistic regression (Firth logit). Firth logit is used when perfect prediction, "zero-cell," or 'separation or quasi-separation' problem exists in a Maximum Likelihood Estimation logistic regression – statistical models that aim to explain a dummy dependent variable (Williams 2019). The 'separation or quasi-separation' problem is when a combination between the dummy dependent and a categorical independent variable does not have observations (separation) or has few observations (quasi-separation). It can happen with small samples and affects the estimations. As a result, a correlation between an independent and dependent variable can be statistically significant due to this problem.

I use a Firth logit because the dependent variable for this model is a dummy (1=participates and 0=don't participate), the sample size is small, and I found a 'quasi-separation' problem with one of the independent variables: 'comfortable of having a different opinion with the couple.' I discovered that problem by producing a cross-tab between the dependent variable and each independent variable. The cross-tab between a woman's participation in cashews and being comfortable having a different opinion with the couple has a few observations for the following combinations: a) 12 observations for the households in which the woman does not feel comfortable having a different opinion with her couple and do not decide over cashews; and b) 4 observations in which the woman does not feel comfortable

having a different opinion with her partner and decide over cashews. Table J in the Appendix provides this cross-tab.

The dependent variable for measuring women's decision-making authority over cashews for research questions two and three is a dummy: 1 being if the woman head of the household participates in the decisions of cashews alone or with her male counterpart, and 0 being if the woman does not participate in those decisions. This variable is based on the following question that the woman responded alone: 'Who normally makes the decisions over cashews?' The answer to this question is the household member's identification number (ID). The enumeration assigned to each household member an ID number (e.g., HH member number 1, HH member number 2, HH member number 3, etc.) at the beginning of the survey. This ID number is linked to the socio-demographic characteristics of each household member (gender, age, schooling, civil status, and occupation). To create the dependent variable for the analysis, I identified the ID provided in the question, answered by the woman alone, about 'who' makes the decision, along with the gender of that ID. Figure 10 shows the descriptive statistics for this dependent variable.

Figure 10. Dependent Variable 1. Percentage of Dual-headed Households Reporting Women Participating in Decisions over Cashew Production. Women Responses. n=147.



Source: Author's elaboration.

For research question two, the independent variables are legitimacy determinants inspired by the intra-household bargaining model theory proposed by GAD and the contributions of Connell and Strauss (1986) on gendered intra-household dynamics (see Figure 1 in section 3). Therefore, the independent variables are the perception of the possibility of having different opinions and the male couple's perception of women participating in decisions over cashew production. The first variable comes from the survey question, which was answered by the woman and the man separately: 'When you disagree with your partner, do you feel comfortable telling them you disagreed?' The answer options are a) most of the time, b) sometimes, c) rarely, and d) never. I recategorized these options as yes, feeling comfortable (option a), and not feeling comfortable (option b, c, and d). I did this recategorization for the women's and men's responses separately. Then, I compared the woman and man responses of the same household and created a categorical variable at the household level with the following categories: 1) woman does not feel comfortable (man can feel or not comfortable), 2) woman feels comfortable, but man does not, and 3) both, woman and man feel comfortable. Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics for the independent variables. The descriptive statistics show that in 10.9 percent of the households, the woman head of the household does not feel comfortable with having a different opinion from their male couple, in 34.7 percent, the woman feels comfortable, but the man does not, and in 54.4 percent, the woman and man feels comfortable (see Table 5).

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of Independent and Control Variables. n=147.

Independent variables	Percentage/ mean	SD
Legitimacy factors		
Comfortable having a different opinion with the couple (*when you disagree with your partner, do you feel comfortable telling them you disagreed?*)*		
The woman does not feel comfortable	10.9	-
The woman feels comfortable, but the man does not	34.7	-
Both the woman, and man feel comfortable	54.4	-
Male couple recognizes that woman decides on cashew production (yes)	69.7	-
Material, human, and social factors		
The woman owns *de facto* cashew plots (yes) (*who are considered landowners?*)	36.7	-
The woman performs on-farm activities in cashew production (yes) (*Who has participated in cashews activities (production and post-production) in the last 12 months?)*	52.4	-

Table 2 (cont'd)

The woman makes decisions over other crops (yes) (*who normally makes the decisions for livestock/grain*?)	86.4	-
The woman's access to information and services (yes=1) (*have you received information or benefits from programs or services*?)	50.3	-
The woman's group membership (yes=1) (*are you an active member of groups?)*	74.2	-
Other independent variables		
Number of children in the HH	1.9	1.58
Civil status		
Free union	61.2	-
Married	39.8	
Schooling difference between the couple		
Man > woman	15.7	-
Same education	61.9	-
Woman > man	22.5	-
Department		
Choluteca	89.8	-
Valle	10.2	-

*In parenthesis is the survey question used to create the variable.

Source: Author's elaboration.

The second legitimacy variable comes from the male head of the household's responses to the following question: 'Who normally makes the decisions over cashews?' According to Table 1, in 69.7 percent of the households, the male partner recognizes that the woman head of the household decides over cashew production.

For the second and third research questions, I also consider material, social, and human resources as independent variables based on the determinants of women's decision-making authority portrait in the theoretical framework (see Figure 9). Table 1 illustrates these variables.

The independent variable for material resources is if the woman, head of the household, owns cashew plots. This variable is a dummy, and it comes from the question, 'Who are considered landowners?' This question was asked to the woman and the man together (this module was asked to the women and men together, not separately) for each plot identified on the farm. The survey also identified each plot's crop (s), so I could filter the ownership of cashews plots. Thirty-seven percent of households have the woman head of the household as owner of cashews plots (see Table 5).

The analysis also has four independent variables measuring human resources. One is a dummy: whether the woman head of the household contributes to on-farm labor activities in cashews, which is the case in 52.4 percent of the households (see Table 5). For this variable, I use women's responses to the question in the survey, 'Who participated in cashews activities (production and post-production) in the last 12 months?' This question was answered for each of the following activities: seeding the nursery garden, transplanting, seeding, manual soil preparation, mechanical preparation, stroke and staking, fertilization, pruning, weed and plague control, harvesting, re-collection, inspection, classification, and drying. For the model, I created a variable measuring whether the woman makes one or more of these labor activities for the analysis. Table K in the Appendix provides descriptive statistics on women's participation in on-farm cashew labor for each activity. Women work mostly to recollect (15.0 percent) and prune (10.2 percent) (see Table K in the Appendix).

I also include two other variables measuring human resources: whether the woman head of the household decides over other agricultural products on the farm, besides cashews. I used the question survey: 'Who normally makes the decisions for livestock, grain, poultry, and other crops.' I merged the answers provided by women for livestock and grain in one dummy variable as a proxy of crops and animals that provide more income to the households. In 86.4 percent of households, the woman head of the household makes decisions about those products (see Table 5). It is important to note that women's participation in decisions for these agricultural products can be solely or jointly with their male couple or other household/family members.

Women's access to information and extension services is the last dummy variable for human resources. This variable comes from the question women answered: 'Have you received information or benefit of programs or services?' This question was asked for programs and services around agricultural inputs (e.g., pesticides and seeds), training in agriculture, finances, business skills, gender, and programs offered by organizations in the area. In 50.3 percent of the 147 households, the female head of the household says that they have received at least one of those services (see Table 5). Table L in the Appendix presents descriptive statistics for the type of information and services. Women receive benefits, information, and services mostly from the UN World Food Programme (WFP) (26.5 percent), which concentrates on food security, Swisscontact (15 percent), and Asociación de Desarrollo Triunfeña (Adetriunf) (12.9 percent), that provided skills and financial services for employment and entrepreneurship (see Table L in

the Appendix). It is important to note that only two women said that they received information on gender (see Table L in the Appendix).

Moreover, I include a variable for group membership as a proxy for social resources. This variable comes from the question: 'Are you an active member of groups?' Women answered this question for the following groups: agriculture, water management, credit and micro-finances, religion, patronage, and others. I merged the answers for these groups, and in 74 percent of the households, the woman head of the household participated in one or more of those groups (see Table 5). Table M in the Appendix presents descriptive statistics of women's participation in each type of group. Women participate mostly in religious groups (66 percent), followed by groups related to water management (17.7 percent), credit (13.6 percent), and patronage (10.9 percent) (see Table M in the Appendix).

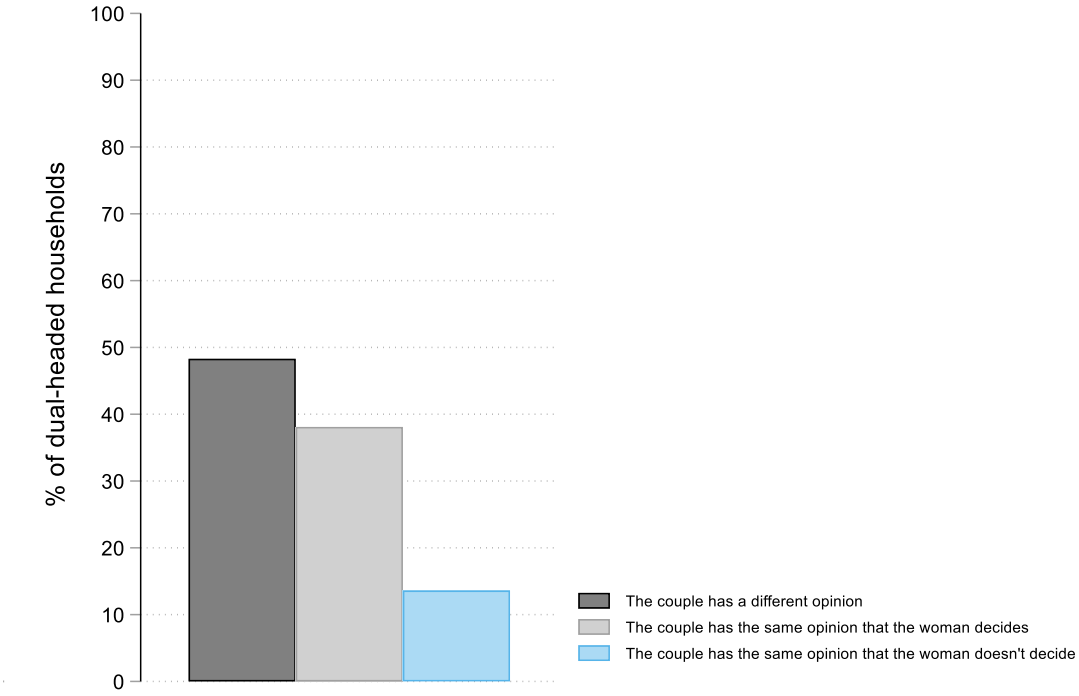
Finally, I also include in the model the socio-demographic characteristics of the couple, responded by the woman and the man together, as control variables: the number of children, civil status, the difference in schooling, and place of living (department). On average, the number of children is 1.9, and most couples are in free union, 61.2 percent, compared to being married, 39.8 percent (see Table 5). In most households, 61.9 percent of the couples have the same schooling, but in 22.5 percent of the households, the woman has more education, and in 15.7 percent, the man has more education (see Table 5). In addition, most households are in the department of Choluteca, 89.8 percent, and 10.2 percent in Valle.

In step three of the analysis, I answer research question four: Do underlying power dynamics –legitimacy- explain a couples' consensus when reporting women's participation decisions over agriculture? I use a multinomial logistic regression (Model 2). The dependent variable for this model is categorical: 1) the woman and man head of the household have different opinions on whether the woman participates in cashew production decisions, 2) both have the same opinion that the woman participates in the decisions and 3) both have the same opinion that the woman does not participate in the decision. I created this variable by comparing the responses of the male and female heads of the households to the question: 'Who normally makes the decisions over cashews?' Figure 11 shows the descriptive statistics of this dependent variable.

Figure 11 illustrates that 48 percent of households have spousal discord since they report different answers for women's participation in cashew production. Most of these households, 63

percent, present the phenomenon that the man says the woman decides, while the woman reports they do not decide. Figure 11 also shows that in 38 percent of the cases, the man and the woman have the same opinion that the woman decides over cashews, and in 14 percent of the cases, they have the same opinion that the woman does not decide (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. Dependent Variable 3. Percentage of Dual-headed Households Reporting that the Woman and Man have the Same or Different Opinions on Whether Women Participate in Decisions over Cashew Production. n=147.



Source: Author's elaboration.

I used post-estimation tests for logit and multinomial regressions to test the fit of the two models –which addresses research questions 2, 3, and 4. I checked all models for multicollinearity using variance inflation factors (VIFs), none of which had high multicollinearity.

Also, to have the final models, I compared them first with other models containing other control variables (e.g., household energy access, age difference of the couple, type of union –married or union-), to ensure I selected the best possible set of independent variables. To compare the models, I used the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) (Raftery 1995), and

Akaike Information Criterion (AIC), as well as LR[15] and Wald. Specifically, for the two multinomial logistic regressions, I tested whether the dependent variable categories were independent between them using the LR and Wald tests. The tests showed that the categories for each dependent variable are independent of the multinomial model, and merging categories was not unnecessary. I also tested the multinomial model for quasi-separation. I found the potential of this phenomenon due to the variable's woman owning de facto cashew plots and the woman making decisions over livestock and grains. However, none of these were the main independent variables.

None of the models seek to identify causality but focus on association since, theoretically, the information can be endogenous. For example, a woman making decisions over cashews can help her feel more comfortable disagreeing with the couple, and the other way around. A woman being comfortable disagreeing with her couple can cause them to have more decision-making authority over cashews. For all the statistical analyses, I utilized Stata16.1. Also, I display Average Marginal Effects (AMEs) as observed for a more intuitive interpretation of the models' results.

5. Results

5.1. Women's Participation in Agriculture and Household Decisions

This subsection presents the results for the first research question, examining women's participation in agricultural and domestic decisions. The results indicate that women participate more in decisions over certain agricultural products than over others, and they are more involved in household decisions necessitating significant purchases (e.g., means of transportation) than in routine domestic decisions (e.g., groceries). However, the pattern varies depending on whether the respondent is the woman or the man head of the household. The couples provide different answers about women's participation in agricultural and household decisions, suggesting that the woman and the man have different opinions in their responses.

Table 6 depicts the responses of women and men in dual-headed households regarding who makes the decisions about the production of agricultural products, including cashews, other crops, and animals, as well as household decisions. It also illustrates the level of the woman and the man having different opinions in those response

[15] The Walt and LR tests are for multinomial regression models to assess whether the categories are independent and need to be grouped. In other words, they are tests for combining dependent categories.

Table 6 shows that women heads of households predominantly make decisions about cashews and poultry compared to grains, other crops, and livestock. However, 44.2 percent of women state that only the man, head of the household, decides on cashews in their households. Regarding household decisions, women indicate greater involvement in significant household purchases (e.g., means of transportation) than in routine domestic decisions (e.g., groceries). For routine decisions, 17.7 percent of women report having no say, while this percentage is 8.8 for significant purchases.

In cases where women, head of the household, decide on agricultural products, they report that their participation mainly occurs in conjunction with their male counterparts rather than alone, except for poultry, where 45 percent of the women say they make decisions solely (see Table 6). Furthermore, according to women's responses, many households do not have other crops or livestock. In cases where the household has livestock, women report that these decisions are solely under the purview of men or are jointly made by the couple (see Table 6). For domestic decisions, women also report collaborating with their partners, as 91.8 percent indicate that they make decisions regarding significant purchases with their male counterparts, and 79.6 percent report the same decision-making pattern for routine domestic decisions (see Table 6).

Table 6 also presents men's responses regarding who decides on agricultural products and domestic activities. Likewise women, men report that women participate in cashews and poultry decisions. However, men in 23.1 percent of cases state that women do not participate in cashew decisions. Regarding household decisions, they also affirm that women participate more in major domestic purchases compared to routine household decisions (see Table 6).

Unlike women, men report more instances of women making decisions alone, followed by jointly making decisions with them. For instance, in the case of cashews, 34.0 percent of men mention that women make decisions alone, and 34.7 percent state making decisions with them. Similarly, this trend applies to other crops and animals (see Table 6). This was not the case for poultry since both women and men say they make the decisions together (see Table 6).

Table 6. Percentage (%) of Women and Men's Responses in Dual-headed Households on Who Makes the Decisions over Agriculture and Domestic Decisions and the Level of the Woman and the Man Having Different Opinions in their Responses. n=147.

Respondent	Responses	Decisions over agricultural production						Decisions over domestic activities	
		Cashews	Grains	Other crops	Large livestock	Small livestock	Poultry	Large domestic purchases	Routing shopping
Women	The HH does not have the product	0.0	15.0	44.9	59.2	78.9	5.4	N/A	N/A
	Only the man	44.2	46.9	32.0	19.7	9.5	12.2	4.1	17.7
	Only the woman	2.0	2.7	3.4	1.4	1.4	45.6	0.0	0.0
	Couple together	51.7	32.7	19.7	18.4	8.8	34.0	91.8	79.6
	Couple & others*	2.0	2.7	0.0	1.4	1.4	2.7	4.1	2.7
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Men	The HH does not have the product	1.4	20.4	52.4	57.8	82.3	14.3	N/A	N/A
	Only the man	23.1	35.4	0.7	24.5	1.4	3.4	0.0	0.0
	Only the woman	34.0	10.9	42.2	2.7	11.6	45.6	2.0	18.4
	Couple together	34.7	27.9	3.4	13.6	4.1	31.3	91.8	74.8
	Couple & others	6.8	5.4	1.4	1.4	0.7	5.4	6.1	6.8
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Agreement/disagreement in the couple's responses	The couple has a different opinion	59.9	47.5	80.8	44.8	88.5	47.2	5.5	26.0
	The couple has the same opinion that the woman decides	28.6	23.3	17.9	20.7	11.5	52.8	94.5	74.0

Table 6 (cont'd)

	The couple has the same opinion that the woman does not decide	11.6	29.2	1.3	34.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

*Others refer to family members within the household (e.g., sons, daughters) or outside the household (brothers, parents).

Source: Author's elaboration.

Moreover, like women, an important proportion of men affirm they do not have other crops or livestock in their household (see Table 6). However, it is important to note that in cases where they mentioned having those products, they indicated that decisions are either made alone by them or with their partner, except for small livestock, where 11.6 percent of men state that solely women make decisions on these animals (see Table 6). This pattern of men reporting that women make agricultural decisions solely more often than jointly (with men) applies to routine domestic decisions. For 18.4 percent of men, solely women make routine decisions. Meanwhile, 74.8 percent of men say they make routine household decisions jointly with their female counterparts.

Furthermore, the results show that women and men have different opinions on women's participation in agricultural and domestic activities. Table 6 indicates that couples that do no share the same opinion on women's participation in decisions range from 47 percent to 88 percent of households, depending on the activity. For cashews, in 59.9 percent of households, the couple does not share the same opinion about who makes the decisions. This result does not apply to domestic decisions since 94.5 percent of the couples share the same opinion that women participate in significant household purchases, and 74.0 percent have the same opinion that women participate in routine household decisions. Concerning women's participation in other agricultural products, the level of couple sharing the same opinion is the following: grain (52.5 percent), other crops (19.2 percent), poultry (52.8 percent), large livestock (55.5 percent), and small livestock (11.5 percent).

Considering the information provided by Table 6 on women's and men's responses, the main discrepancy between couples is that women report that when they make decisions, they make them in conjunction with their partners. In contrast, men perceive that when women make decisions, they do so solely or in conjunction with men. Moreover, in some cases, women report that they do not participate in the decisions, while their partners affirm that women do (see Table 6). I also found that there are slight differences between the study sites, Choluteca and Valle. According to Tables N and O in the Appendix, in the department of Valle, women tend to report more joint decisions on the different crops, animals, and domestic activities than women in the department of Choluteca. Responses of men did not differ between departments. Along these lines, more couples in Valle than in Choluteca tend to report differing opinions on who makes the decisions over agricultural products and domestic activities.

The following two subsections present the factors associated with women's participation in cashews, which is the focus of this analysis. One subsection focuses on legitimacy factors, and the other on material, human, and social factors.

5.2. Legitimacy Factors Associated with Women's Participation in Cashews Decisions

This subsection presents the results for research question two on legitimacy factors associated with women's participation in cashew decisions. Table 7 shows the odds ratios and standard errors for model 1, a Firth logit testing legitimacy, and the social, material, and human factors associated with women's participation in decisions over cashew production. Figure 12 shows the AMEs.

Table 7. Model 1. Firth Logit on Women Deciding over Cashews Production Among Dual-headed Households Producing Cashews in Honduras. n=147

Independent variables	Women deciding over cashew production
Comfortable having different opinions with the couple (ref=woman does not feel comfortable)	
The woman feels comfortable, but the man does not	7.94***
	(5.98)
Both the woman and man feel comfortable	9.72***
	(7.04)
The male partner says that his female partner decides on cashew production	0.63
	(0.29)
The woman owns de facto cashew plots	2.21*
	(0.98)
The woman performs on-farm activities in cashew production	2.05*
	(0.82)
The woman makes decisions over other crops and animals	12.16***
	(9.05)
The woman has group membership (yes=1)	1.54
	(0.71)
The woman has access to information and services (yes=1)	1.51
	(0.71)
Couple's schooling difference (ref = man > woman)	
Woman = man	1.37
	(0.76)
Woman > man	2.57
	(1.69)

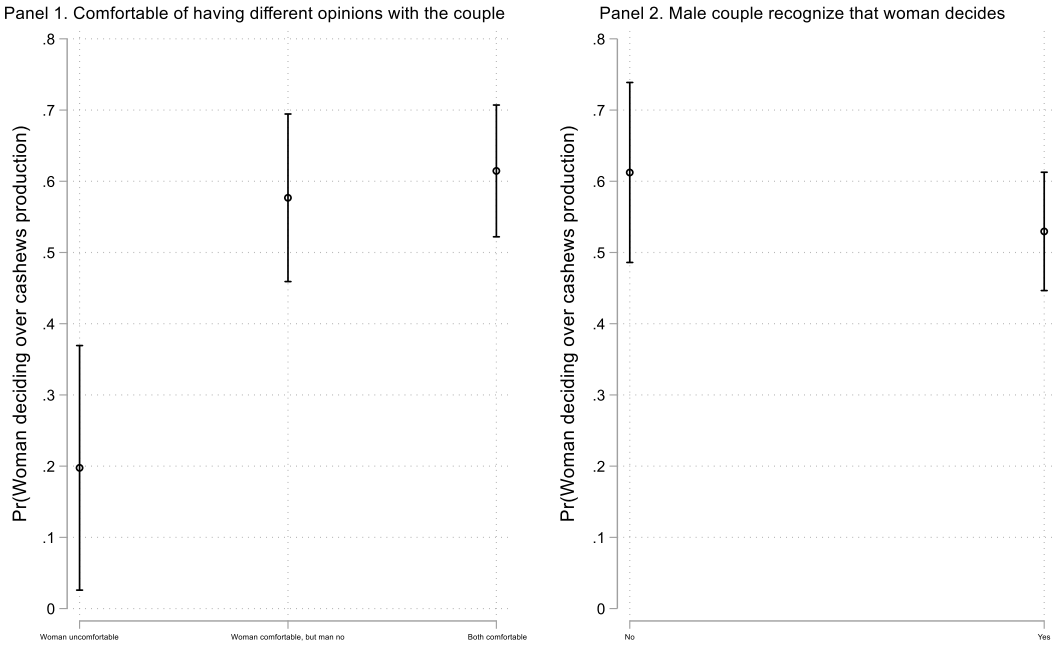
Table 7 (cont'd)

Civil status (Free union =1 & Married ==0)	1.27
	(0.55)
Number of children under 18 in the household	1.03
	(0.12)
Department (Choluteca = 1 & Valle ==0)	0.57
	(0.39)

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Source: Author's elaboration

Figure 12. AMEs for Women Head of the Household Who Report Participating in Cashew Production Decisions According to Legitimacy Factors. Results from Model 1.



Source: Author's elaboration.

Model 1, in Table 7, suggests that the legitimacy factor of women feeling comfortable disagreeing with their couple is positively associated with their participation in cashew production. Figure 12 shows the effect of the legitimacy factors on women deciding over cashew production from Model 1 (see Table 7). Panel 1 in Figure 12 portrays the variable of the partner being comfortable having a different opinion with their partner. It indicates that when women are uncomfortable having a different opinion with their male partner, the probability of them making decisions over cashews is 0.20. Meanwhile, when women feel comfortable, and men do not, or

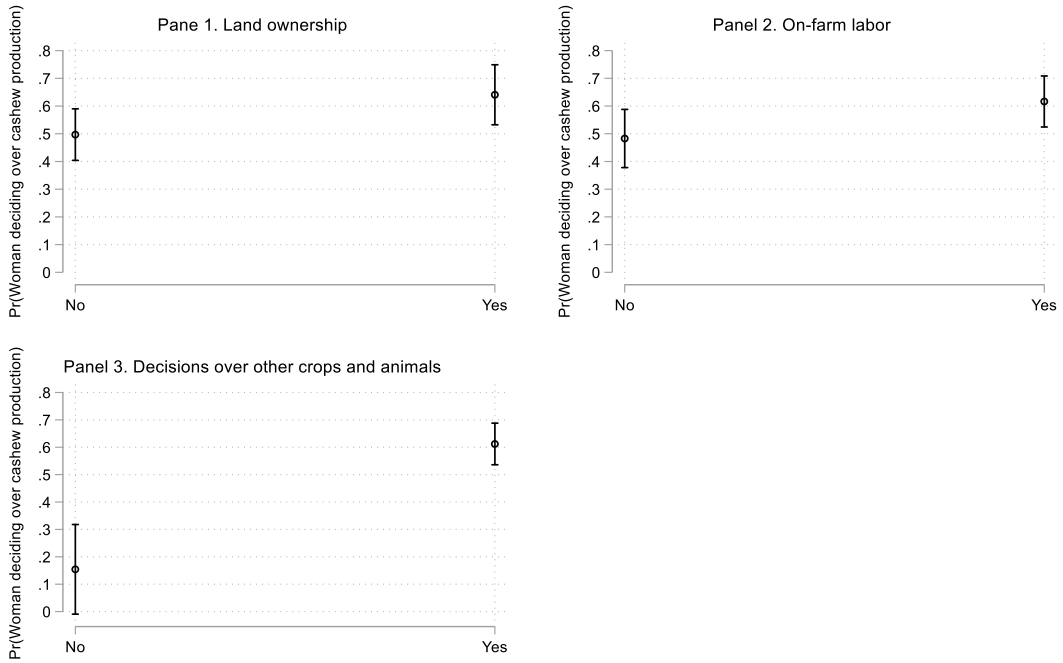
both the woman and the man feel comfortable, the probability of women deciding is higher, 0.58 and 0.61, respectively.

Meanwhile, males' perception of women's participation in decisions over cashews is not statistically associated with women saying they have decision-making authority over cashews (see Table 7). Panel 2 in Figure 12 shows no significant statistical difference in the probability of women deciding over cashews production between households in which the male partner recognizes their participation in decisions (0.53) and the male partner does not recognize such participation (0.61).

5.3. Material, Human, and Social Factors Associated with Women's Participation in Cashews Decisions

Model 1 (see Table 7) also suggests that women owing the cashew plots, contributing on-farm labor related to cashews, and participating in decisions over other agricultural products on the farm, such as livestock, poultry, grain, and other crops, have a positive and statistically significant effect on the probability of women deciding over cashews compared to women not deciding. Figure 13 shows the AMEs for these independent variables.

Figure 13. AMEs for Women Head of the Household Reporting Participating in Decisions on Cashew Production According to Material and Human Factors. Results from Model 1.



Source: Author's elaboration.

Panel 1 in Figure 13 illustrates that in households where the woman head of the household owns cashew plots, her probability of making decisions over cashew production is 0.64. Still, when the woman does not own the land, it is less, 0.50. Panel 2 (see Figure 13) shows that households in which the woman contributes on-farm labor in cashews have a higher probability (0.62) of making decisions over cashews compared to households in which the woman does not perform on-farm labor (0.48).

Along these lines, Panel 3 in Figure 13 describes that in households where the woman head decides over other agricultural products (crops and/or animals), the woman is more likely to decide on cashews. The odds that a woman who decides over other crops and animals also decides over cashews is 0.61, while the odds for a woman who does not decide over other crops and animals is 0.15 (see Panels 3 in Figure 13).

5.4. Legitimacy Factors Associated with the Couple's Agreement on Women's Decision over Cashews

This subsection presents the results for research question 4 on the factors associated with the couple's sharing opinion or lack thereof with their responses on women's decisions on cashews. Table 8 illustrates the odds ratios and standard errors for Model 2, a Multinomial Logistic Regression on the legitimacy and other factors explaining the couple agreeing that the woman decides over cashew production.

Table 8. Model 2. Multinomial logistic regression on couples agrees that the woman decides over cashew production among dual-headed households. (base=couple disagree). n=147.

Independent variables	The couple agrees on the woman's decision over cashew production.	
	Both agree women decide.	Both agree that a woman does not decide.
Comfortable having different opinions with the couple (ref=woman does not feel comfortable)		
The woman feels comfortable, but the man does not	3.78)	0.19*)
	(3.28)	(0.17)
Both the woman and man feel comfortable	4.53*	0.22*
	(3.75)	(0.19)
The woman owns de facto cashew plots	3.87***	0.09**
	(1.77)	(0.10)
The woman performs on-farm activities in cashew production	2.41**	1.07
	(1.05)	(0.67)

Table 8 (cont'd)

The woman makes decisions over other crops and animals	17.30**	0.45
	(19.88)	(0.33)
The woman has group membership (yes=1)	0.94	0.68
	(0.48)	(0.46)
The woman has access to information and services (yes=1)	1.28	0.49
	(0.53)	(0.30)
Couple's schooling difference (ref = man > woman)		
Woman = man	1.52	1.07
	(0.95)	(0.84)
Woman > man	3.40*	0.87
	(2.43)	(0.87)
Civil status (Free union =1 & Married ==0)	1.18	0.36
	(0.55)	(0.24)
Number of children under 18 in the household	0.86	0.39
	(0.12)	(0.48)
Department (Choluteca = 1 & Valle ==0)	1.54	0.39
	(1.22)	(0.48)

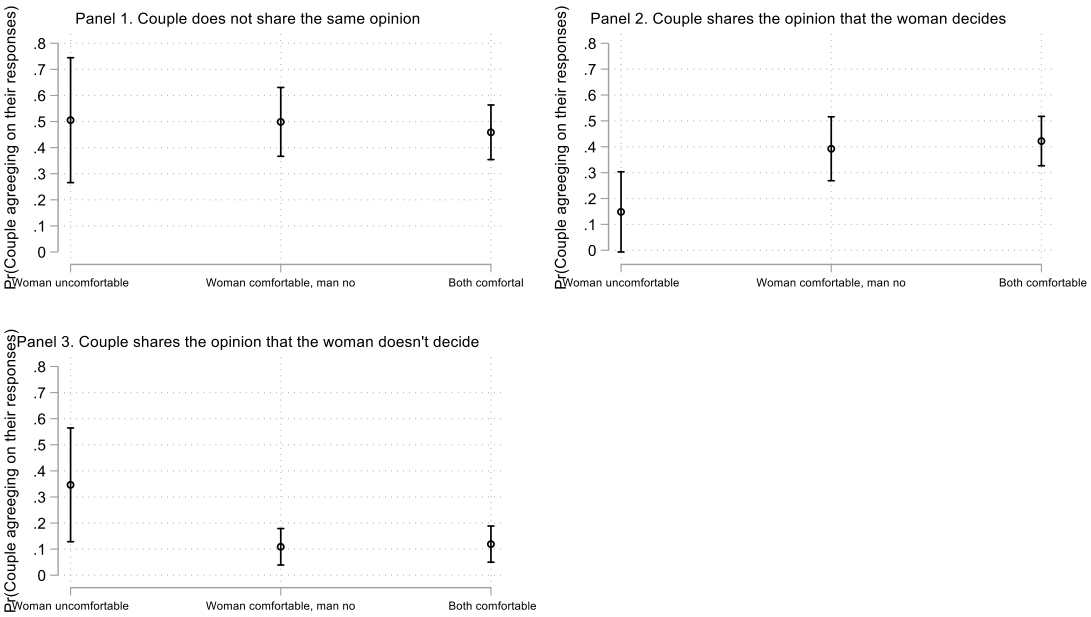
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Source: Author's elaboration.

Model 2 in Table 8 indicates a positive correlation between the legitimacy variable of women and men being comfortable having different opinions with their partner and the couple having the same opinion in their answers about women participating in cashews agricultural production. The model also indicates a negative relationship between the couple having the same opinion that women decide over cashew plots and women deciding over those plots. Figure 14 shows the AMEs for those associations.

Panel 2 in Figure 14 shows that when women feel comfortable having a different opinion with their partner, regardless of whether the man feels comfortable, there is a higher probability of the couple having the same opinion in their responses about women participating in the decisions over cashew. These probabilities are 0.40 and 0.42, respectively. Meanwhile, when the woman is uncomfortable, there is less probability that both the woman and the man report that the woman participates in the cropping of cashews, with 0.15 probability (see Panel 2 in Figure 14).

Figure 14. AMEs for the Couple Sharing the Same Opinion or Not Sharing the Same Opinion in their Responses on the Woman Head of the Household Participating in Cashews Production by the Ideological Factor of the Couple Being Comfortable Having Different Opinions with their Partner. Results from Model 2.



Source: Author's elaboration.

On the contrary, in households where women feel uncomfortable about having different opinions with their partner, the probability of the couple agreeing that the woman does not decide over cashew plots is higher (0.35 probability), compared to households in which the women feel comfortable and the man does not (0.11), and both feel comfortable (0.12) (see Panel 3 in Figure 14). However, the legitimacy factor of being comfortable having different opinion with the couple does not affect the cases in which the couple has different answers (see Panel 1 in Figure 14).

Interestingly, other factors are associated with the couple sharing the same opinion or not in their responses. Model 2 in Table 14 presents that when women own land, decide over other crops or animals, perform on-farm activities in cashews cropping, and have higher education than their male counterparts; there is a higher chance that the couple have the same opinion that the woman decides over the activities related to cashews, rather than not having the same opinion in their responses (see Table 8). In addition, the woman owning land is negatively related to the

couple sharing the same opinion that the woman does not participate in cashews, compared to the couple not sharing the same opinion (see Table 8).

6. Discussion

This study provides empirical evidence of women's decision-making authority over agriculture and the determinants of that authority. The result of this empirical study applies to a sample of heterosexual dual-headed households growing cashews on a small scale in the departments of Choluteca and Valle in Honduras. The results mirror the findings of other studies on Latin America's decision-making patterns and the significant role of material, human, and social determinants, as well as women's and men's reporting different answers in surveys on who makes the decision over the land. This study contributes to GAD literature by empirically showing that legitimacy, as the theory suggests, is significant in women's authority over agriculture and spousal discord in reporting decisions (Agarwal 1997). In addition, this study explores a new dimension of legitimacy: women feeling comfortable having different opinions with their couple.

Similarly to previous literature, I found that joint decision-making prevails in agricultural settings in Latin America (Bradshaw 2013; Doss 2018; Doss and Quisumbing 2018; Farah-Quijano 2013; García et al. 2021; Hamilton 1998; Patel et al. 2007). The results for the first research question show that women and men tend to report that decisions are made jointly. Moreover, I also found a gender division within the household regarding agricultural decisions. Women tend to decide more over cashew production and poultry, while men make decisions over livestock. In the study area, livestock is the most important asset households produce in terms of income. GAD has found similar results suggesting that women tend to participate in less profitable agricultural activities while men engage in more profitable agricultural activities (Fontana 2003). Also, women tend to participate less in routine decisions compared to large purchases.

As the theory suggests (Agarwal 1997), the results of this study emphasize that legitimacy factors are associated with women's decision authority. Though the results do not suggest an association between male perception of women's participation in the decisions over cashews, they suggest an association with another legitimacy factor. The results show that the legitimacy factor of women being comfortable having a different opinion from their partner is associated with women having decision-making authority over cashews. In households where

women feel comfortable having a different opinion from their partner, regardless of whether their male counterpart is comfortable, women participate more in cashew decisions than in households where women don't feel comfortable.

This result suggests that the possibility of positive household conflict is associated with women having bargaining power within the household over the arable land. According to the theory, the results of this study might reflect a scenario of positive conflict, in which women can express their own opinions without the threat of violent conflict, leading to more of them having decision-making authority and, thus, bargaining power over land. Further research should be done in the study area for empirical evidence to assess the dynamics of positive conflict within the household qualitatively, and how that relates to agricultural land management. The possibility of positive conflict can be related to legitimacy in the sense that women feel comfortable expressing their opinions because there is probably a recognition of their power from their male counterparts.

To complement the aforementioned finding, I found similar results previously suggested by GAD literature that women with better fallback positions, such as owning land, accessing information and services, contributing with labor on cashew production, deciding over other products, and having higher schooling than their partners, have more decision authority (Amarante et al. 2023; Doss et al. 2014; Hamilton,1998; Farah-Quijano 2013; Jha 2004; Frankenberg and Thomas 2003).

On the contrary, the results show that households where women were uncomfortable having different opinions from their male counterparts were less likely to make decisions over cashews. According to the theory, this result might suggest that women may not feel they can express different opinions from their partner, which could mean no legitimacy from their male counterpart. Thus, they are less likely to have decision-making authority.

Further in-depth research should be done on the meaning of this legitimacy factor, the social mechanisms by which positive conflict is related to women's bargaining power and its relationship with gender norms. Agarwal(1997) suggests that the determinants for women's bargaining power over arable land -- resources and legitimacy factors-- are associated with gender norms (see Figure 9). Another line of research is the associations between fallback and legitimacy factors.

As suggested by the previous literature, I also found in the case study in Honduras that the woman and man do not share the same opinion on who makes the decisions over different agricultural products in their farm (Alkire et al. 2012; Alwang et al. 2017; Covre-Sussai 2014; Bradshaw 2013; Speizer et al. 2005; Twyman, Useche, et al. 2015). I found different opinions in reporting on who makes decisions over cashews and other agricultural products. Studies in Latin America have suggested that the tendency is that women report more their participation and joint decisions, compared to men who report male sole decisions (Bradshaw 2013; Patel et al. 2007). Nonetheless, this study brings some nuances to that pattern. Women tend to report more joint decisions than men, but in many cases, men report women's participation in cases where women report they did not participate in decisions.

This phenomenon can entail that women do not recognize themselves as decision-makers, while men do recognize them. According to the theory, this is another legitimacy factor that affects women's bargaining power over land. A person's self-perception about his/her contribution to the household affects his/her bargaining power (Agarwal 1997). Twyman et al. (2022) conducted a qualitative analysis in this same study site in Honduras, finding that women do not recognize themselves as landowners and farmers. Instead, they view themselves as helpers. Therefore, women not recognizing thesemleves as farmers could explain why they do not realize they are making decisions with their partners. Further research should explore the reason for these results in the study area.

Studies have suggested multiple reasons for explaining a couple's discord in responses. I tested one of them: an underlying power dynamic (Coleman and Strauss 1986). The results in the case in Honduras suggest that when women feel comfortable not sharing the same opinion with their partner, independent of whether the men feel comfortable, there is a higher probability that the women and the men have a consensus in their responses that women participate. On the contrary, the results illustrate that when women do not feel comfortable not sharing the same opinions, there is no consensus on the answers provided by the woman and man head of the household on who makes decisions over cashews.

The phenomenon of households in which women feel comfortable not having the same opinion as their male counterparts, there is more spousal, according to surveys, who make decisions over cashews, can be related to underlying power relations. It seems that in households where women have a voice without fearing to think differently from their male counterparts,

there is more consensus about whether they participate in cashew production. In cases where there is a consensus that women are not participating in the production of this crop, that situation also applies. In this latter type of household, where the couple shares the same opinion that women do not participate in decisions over cashews, women also seem to participate in the decisions over other crops and animals on the farm. In addition, the results show that women must recognize their power to be a consensus. When these more equitable gender power relations are absent, there is a lack of consensus between women's and men's responses.

Other social factors explain couples' sharing the same opinion that women decide over cashews. These factors include women owning land, participating in the decisions over other crops or animals in the farm , having more education than their male counterparts, and contributing to on-farm labor. Meanwhile, a negative relationship exists between social factors, usually associated with women's bargaining power, and couples having the same opinion that women do not participate in decisions over cashews. These factors include women not owning land.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study brings empirical evidence to the GAD literature on the role of underlining power dynamics, in this case, legitimacy, in women's decision-making authority over arable land. It indicates that an environment where women feel comfortable having different opinions from their male counterparts increases their probability of having more decision-making authority over cashew production. Moreover, this study also found that the consensus/discord between couples in their answers on women's participation in decisions also entails underlying power dynamics: women feeling comfortable not having the same opinion as their couple, and recognizing their own power. The study suggests that legitimacy and fallback determinants are critical for enhancing women's bargaining power over agriculture.

Nonetheless, I recommend future research to address this study's limitations. First, the study did not cover the intersection between legitimacy and gender norms affecting women's bargaining power over agriculture. Second, it did not examine the mechanisms by which the possibility of positive conflict leads to women's decision-making authority and its nexus with gender norms. In other words, it does not explore why positive conflict in the household is correlated with women's decision-making authority. Third, this study did not delve into the role

of the social context in explaining women's decision-making authority, including the effect of development programs in the area.

In addition to the scholarly contributions, this study provides recommendations to development practitioners and policymakers who aim to implement a gender transformative agenda to achieve SDG 5 by 2030 in the agricultural settings of Latin America, especially Honduras. It is essential to address the topic of conflict resolution and the ability of women and men of not sharing the same opinion as their partners without violent consequences. For women to have more decision-making authority, having the opportunity to provide their opinions, whether their husbands agreed or not, is fundamental. In addition, improving women's recognition of their contribution to agricultural production is important. Women's recognition of their contribution to agriculture can be enhanced by development programs supporting women to gain more 'power from within' (Rowlands 1995;1997). This type of power entails having a sense of agency – recognizing one's own role in society. Finally, practitioners should continue increasing women's fallback position (land ownership) and access to human resources (education, contributing to on-farm labor, access to information), so they have more of a say in all the decisions associated with their households and the land they use.

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APPENDIX A: DATA SUPPLEMENTS FOR CHAPTER 3

Table J. Cross-table Between the Variables of the Woman Head of the Household Decides over Cashew Production and Comfortable Having a Different Opinion with the Couple. Values are Frequencies.

The woman decides	Comfortable having different opinions			Total
	Woman does not feel comfortable	Woman feels comfortable	Both feel comfortable	
No	12	23	30	65
Yes	4	28	50	82
Total	16	51	80	147

Source: Author's elaboration.

Table K. Women's On-farm Labor in Cashews in Dual-headed Households. n=147.

On-farm labor activity	F	%
Seeding the nursery garden	9	6.1%
Transplanting	4	2.7%
Seeding	10	6.8%
Manual soil preparation	4	2.7%
Stroke and staking	5	3.4%
Fertilization	7	4.8%
Pruning	15	10.2%
Weed and plague control	7	4.8%
Harvesting	14	9.5%
Re-collection	22	15.0%
Classification	2	1.4%

Source: Author's elaboration.

Table L. Women's Access to Services, Information, and Benefits on the Following Topics and Development Programs. Dual-headed Households Producing Cashews. n=147.

Service/information/benefits	F	%
Agricultural inputs	5	3.4%
Agriculture or livelihood	6	4.1%
Finance themes	3	2.0%
Market	2	1.4%
Gender-sensitive themes	2	1.4%
WFP	39	26.5%
Adetriunf	19	12.9%
Funder	10	6.8%

Table L (cont'd)

Swisscontact	22	15.0%
Other programs	11	7.5%

Source: Author's elaboration.

Table M. Women's Group Membership. Dual-headed Households Producing Cashews. n=147.

Group	F	%
Water management	26	17.7%
Credit and micro-finance	20	13.6%
Market	1	0.7%
Civic	3	2.0%
Religious	97	66.0%
Patronage	16	10.9%
Agriculture	1	0.7%
Other	5	3.4%

Source: Author's elaboration.

Table N. Percentage (%) of Women and Men's Responses in Dual-headed Households on Who Makes the Decisions Over Agriculture and Domestic Decisions and the Level of the Woman and the Man Having Different Opinions in their Responses in Choluteca. n=132.

Respondent	Responses	Decisions over agricultural production						Decisions over domestic activities	
		Cashews	Grains	Other crops	Large livestock	Small livestock	Poultry	Large domestic purchases	Routing shopping
Women	The HH does not have the product	0.0	15.1	46.2	60.6	81.8	6.1	N/A	N/A
	Only the man	46.2	50.0	34.1	20.4	9.8	13.6	1.5	14.4
	Only the woman	2.3	2.3	3.8	0.0	0.8	46.2	0.0	0.0
	Couple together	50.0	31.8	15.9	18.2	0.0	31.8	93.9	82.6
	Couple & others*	1.5	0.8	0.0	0.8	7.6	2.3	4.6	3.0
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Men	The HH does not have the product	1.5	18.9	52.3	58.3	82.6	15.9	N/A	N/A
	Only the man	23.5	34.1	0.8	25.0	0.8	3.8	0.0	0.0
	Only the woman	34.1	11.4	42.4	1.5	11.4	40.9	0.8	16.7
	Couple together	36.4	29.5	3.8	13.6	4.5	33.3	92.4	76.5
	Couple & others	4.5	6.1	0.7	1.5	0.7	6.1	6.8	6.8
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Agreement/disagreement in the couple's responses	The couple has a different opinion	57.6	46.4	82.3	45.1	90.9	47.8	2.3	22.9
	The couple has the same opinion that the woman decides.	29.5	22.7	16.2	17.6	9.1	52.2	97.7	77.1

Table N (cont'd)

	The couple has the same opinion that the woman does not decide	12.9	30.9	1.5	37.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Author's elaboration.

Table O. Percentage (%) of Women and Men's Responses in Dual-headed Households on Who Makes the Decisions Over Agriculture and Domestic Decisions and the Level of the Woman and the Man Having Different Opinions in their Responses in Valle. n=15.

Respondent	Responses	Decisions over agricultural production						Decisions over domestic activities	
		Cashews	Grains	Other crops	Large livestock	Small livestock	Poultry	Large domestic purchases	Routing shopping
Women	The HH does not have the product	0.0	13.3	33.3	46.7	53.3	0.0	N/A	N/A
	Only the man	26.7	20.0	13.3	13.3	6.7	0.0	26.7	46.7
	Only the woman	0.0	6.7	0.0	13.3	6.7	40.0	0.0	0.0
	Couple together	66.7	40.0	53.4	20.0	20.0	53.3	73.3	53.3
	Couple & others*	6.6	20.0	0.0	6.7	13.3	6.7	0.0	0.0
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Men	The HH does not have the product	0.0	33.3	53.3	53.4	80.0	0.0	N/A	N/A
	Only the man	20.0	46.7	0.0	20.0	6.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Only the woman	33.3	6.7	40.0	13.3	13.3	86.7	13.3	33.3
	Couple together	20.0	13.3	0.0	13.3	0.0	13.3	86.7	60.0
	Couple & others	26.7	0.0	6.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.7

Table O (cont'd)

	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Agreement/disagreement in the couple's responses	The couple has a different opinion	80.0	60.0	70.0	42.8	75.0	42.9	33.3	53.3
	The couple has the same opinion that the woman decides.	20.0	30.0	30.0	42.9	25.0	57.1	66.7	46.7
	The couple has the same opinion that the woman does not decide	0.0	10.0	0.0	14.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Authors' elaboration.

CONCLUSIONS

Gender and development scholars and practitioners advocate for transforming gender structures—rules and norms—to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on Gender Equality, which remains a distant goal unlikely to be accomplished by 2030 in low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs). Gender structures of constraint are among the primary roots of gender inequalities. However, this call for transformation has not been accompanied by literature on how such transformation occurs when development programs provide resources for women and men to have more power.

This dissertation contributes theoretically and empirically to examining pathways of gender norms transformation and the role of underlying power dynamics in women's decision-making power in rural and agricultural settings in Latin America. It proposes a theoretical framework, *Women's Empowerment for Gender-Transformative Rural Development*. It provides an example of implementing that framework to scholars and practitioners working towards SDG 5 in LMICs. Then, it delves into gender relations at the intra-household level to identify how underlying power dynamics, such as legitimacy, play a role in women's decision-making authority over land.

This dissertation introduces a theoretical framework for women's empowerment to elucidate the transformation of gender structures in LMICs when development programs provide resources. In doing so, I reinvigorate the concept of women's empowerment as both a radical feminist concept and a program to challenge norms and rules based on gender that constrain people's lives. Women's empowerment emerged as a central concept and a tool for gender structure transformation in the 1980s. However, in recent years, it has been co-opted as a buzzword for neoliberal market purposes, such as promoting the idea that women should fulfill their needs without state support.

Bringing together the literature on women's empowerment from Gender and Development (GAD) schools of thought and Feminist Political Ecology (FPE), which focuses on challenging gender norms, contributes to a theoretical discussion on 'how' the transformation of the roots of inequalities can occur. This framework aims to foster discussion among scholars and development practitioners to explore theoretical avenues that address the contemporary need to reduce the roots of gender inequalities in rural areas of LMICs.

The three chapters also emphasize five key elements for transforming gender norms and enhancing women's decision-making authority in rural households. In the following paragraphs, I provide a detailed discussion of these elements, along with recommendations.

The first crucial element for transforming gender norms involves understanding how resources provided by development programs translate into forms of agency that challenge gender constraints. According to the findings of this study, one pathway involves providing resources that enable both women and men to adopt new thoughts and behaviors contrary to prevailing gender norms in their communities. This process allows individuals to cultivate 'power from within,' 'power to,' and 'power with,' thereby confronting the constraints imposed by gender structures. In essence, resources that empower individuals to enact new, 'out-of-place' gendered actions and thoughts can lead to agency that undermines existing gender norms. I recommend that scholars conduct similar empirical studies across various contexts and development programs to gather more evidence on how resources translate into agency. For development practitioners seeking a gender-transformative approach, it is crucial to prioritize resources and programming techniques that encourage individuals to challenge normative gender roles. This prioritization should particularly benefit women who bear the consequences of gender inequalities.

The second crucial element is that development programsshould foster 'power from within,' 'power to,' and 'power with' in a manner that challenges gender norms. However, rural entrepreneurship programs tend to emphasize 'power from within' and 'power to' more than 'power with.' According to the literature, 'power with' not only has the potential to challenge norms but also to transform them at the community and societal levels. Therefore, greater effort should be directed towards implementing programs promoting 'power with' among women, thereby challenging the norms and rules that constrain their lives due to their gender. Additionally, researchers should investigate how programs can enhance and support collective forms of power.

Another important element is to focus on changing gender relations between women and men. This dissertation concludes that to reduce gender inequalities against women in rural areas by supporting them in gaining power, working with both women and men is crucial. As suggested in Chapter 2, development programs may promote men's awareness of gender norms and contribute to reducing women's labor burden within the household. However, Chapter 2

reveals that men can gain power through the resources of a development program in a manner that does not necessarily benefit women's empowerment, particularly when they exert more control over income and collective power. Furthermore, Chapter 3 highlights that legitimacy factors, such as women's recognition of power within the household, are critical for enhancing their bargaining power. When women feel more comfortable expressing disagreement with their partners, they are more likely to have decision-making power, which signifies increased bargaining power. Also, the results in Chapter 3 suggest that women might not recognize themselves as decision-makers, which is also a legitimacy factor.

Building on this third element, I recommend conducting further studies on the role of legitimacy and conflict in women's empowerment. In terms of development programs, I suggest promoting constructive forms of conflict related to power legitimacy among rural couples within the household and over land management. Additionally, there should be efforts to encourage men to attain power in a manner that fosters generative forms of power for women.

Fourthly, this dissertation underscored the importance of recognizing the negative repercussions individuals may encounter when challenging societal norms. Both women and men may experience adverse outcomes when empowered through resources provided by development programs. The negative consequences identified include heightened household conflict, verbal gender-based violence, and increased work hours. Researchers examining women's empowerment in rural LMICs should incorporate an understanding of how these processes can yield negative outcomes. Furthermore, greater efforts should be directed towards investigating the mechanisms underlying these negative consequences and developing strategies to prevent and mitigate them. Development programs should intentionally incorporate measures to prevent, reduce, and address these potential adverse outcomes.

The fifth element is the importance of both material and human resources, or women's fallback position. Development programs can provide these resources or support women's fallback position to enhance women's bargaining power, or individuals can acquire them through other means (e.g., inheritance, in the case of land). Human resources, such as education, training, or one-to-one mentoring on topics like women's rights, family cooperation, life goals, and economic and practical skills for income-generating activities, contribute to women having more decision-making authority over land in agricultural contexts, and enable both men and women to challenge gender norms. Material resources, such as land ownership and income-generating

activities (e.g., livestock and crop farming), can also empower women within the household. Scholarly research highlighting the significance of these resources has been substantial, and development programs should continue to support individuals in accessing such resources if the objective is to reduce gender inequalities in rural and agricultural settings.

This dissertation also provides reflections and concluding remarks about gender, power, and transformation research in Latin America.

Gender and development scholarship in LMICs needs collaborative research with local organizations that are implementing the programs. This is crucial for examining the 'how' of gender structure transformation and reducing gender inequality. Also, development programs aiming to implement gender-transformative approaches can benefit from research. In Chapter 2, I portray results from a collaborative case study with a nationwide organization in Colombia. This collaboration was significantly useful for the research and to understand the organization's actions. It allowed me to answer 'how' resources from development programs translated into agency, gain access and trust with rural women and men participating, and have access to information about the program's implementation. The organization also benefitted since they learned about women's and men's experiences in their program, gained information about the effects of their activities on participants' lives and gender equality goals, and assessed the possibility of implementing or strengthening strategies for women's empowerment, such as focusing more on collective power and non-patriarchal masculinities.

Research on gender, power, and transformation needs multiple methods. In Chapter 2, I conduct a content analysis using information from semi-structured interviews. This qualitative method elicits people's experiences in participating in a rural development program and the process by which the resources they received from that program supported them in gaining agency and challenging gender norms prevalent in their communities. In a few words, qualitative interviews are useful in examining the 'how' of the norm's transformation. On the contrary, in Chapter 3, I ran a statistical regression analysis using information from an intra-household survey. This quantitative method generated insights into the effect and role of legitimacy and other factors (e.g., land ownership) in women having more decision-making power. Therefore, this method is useful for identifying the relationship between an unexplored factor, in this case legitimacy, in explaining women's bargaining power over arable land. From this dissertation, I conclude that qualitative methods are useful for research focusing on the 'how' of gender

structure transformation and quantitative methods for assessing the role of resources and underlying power elements (legitimacy) in explaining women's power.

Another lesson learned from this dissertation about the research process is that underlying power relations can be related to women and men providing different answers about 'who' makes decisions over agricultural land. In Chapter 3, I found that in households in which women feel comfortable disagreeing with their male counterparts, women and men were more likely to agree with their answers. This result might entail that women's power legitimacy within the household is a factor that explains why women and men provide different answers. More discussion should then be conducted in the GAD scholarship on how underlying gender power relations affect interpreting information from intra-household surveys.

Finally, this research experience showed the critical role of the researcher's positionality in the studies on gender and development. My positionality is linked with my focus on power and transformation, my inquiries about the effects of development programs on women's empowerment, my passion for working in Latin America, and the results of my research.

I was born, raised, and educated in Cali, the third-largest city in Colombia. I was raised in the middle of two worlds—living in a middle-low-income neighborhood and studying in a high-income high school—which made me witness and experience the social inequalities in my city. Therefore, I studied sociology for my undergraduate and master's degrees. I wanted to understand and transform the social problems that surrounded me.

This value remains core to my research today and has influenced my epistemological stance. My main academic goal as a researcher is to contribute to more equitable gendered relations through applied research in one of the most marginalized Latin American realms: rural families engaged in small-scale farming. For me, social science research should benefit those facing the burdens of inequalities and injustices. Epistemologically, I envision that structures are the product of historical and social processes that can be challenged and changed. Thus, my passion for working with rural women in Latin American agricultural settings, power, gender, and transformation.

I also had the opportunity to work in the Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), which allowed me to be exposed to applied research, the GAD scholarship, and witness the work of development programs on issues around agricultural development (e.g., agriculture technology), and gender issues. Then, I enrolled in the

doctoral program in Community Sustainability at Michigan State University (MSU). At MSU, I was exposed to other scholarships such as FPE, ecofeminism, environmental justice, and institutions in natural resources management. The combination of my experience at CIAT and MSU allowed me to identify the value of merging GAD and FPE to understand gender structure transformation.

I also learned that my positionality also affected my fieldwork and results. As a Colombian woman doing research in my home country, I gained the trust of women and men so I could talk with them about their experiences in gaining power due to *Empropaz*'s resources. I am fluent in the local language and was raised in a city they could reference. In some of my interviews, I talked with the interviewees about what they know about my home city, for example. Nevertheless, I was also an outsider. I am a woman from a city with a higher income, and I am pursuing a doctorate at a university in the United States. Besides, the local staff introduced me to the rural women and men I interviewed as a woman from Bogotá, the country's capital. My perception is that this outsider part of my positionality influenced the study participants to not talk with me about more difficult topics that can bring about the process of people challenging gender norms, such as intimate partner violence (IPV). Most of the participants, especially women, talked about IPV that happened to them in the past, but not due to them gaining power due to *Empropaz*.

I conclude that to reduce gender inequalities in rural and agricultural settings in LMICs, including Latin America, it is critical to promote development projects that benefit the well-being of low-income rural women and men, and that facilitate opportunities for women and men to challenge gender norms, address disagreements between couples and conflicts in a constructive manner, and engage with both genders while recognizing the economic and social context as a co-producer of norms and their transformation. Achieving this requires collaborative, applied, and multi-method research that acknowledges the underlying power dynamics in the study process, as well as the significant contributions of various disciplines such as GAD and FPE.