

Rural development in Brazil: Are we practising feminism or gender?

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In the past two decades, the concept of gender has become central to feminist scholarship and activism. It is a powerful instrument towards the empowerment of women, but with the mass use of the term, its political meaning is being lost, which may lead to women becoming invisible once more.

At least in theory, gender awareness means greater visibility for the way in which development planning is shaped by patriarchal social relations. Planners are obliged to consider the social, political, economic, and cultural forces that determine women's and men's control of resources and products and therefore the degree to which they can participate in — and benefit from — development efforts. However, feminists working in development are currently concerned that the widespread use of the term 'gender' by mainstream development planners is 'contributing to its vulgarisation and simplification' (Celiberti 1997, 69), and the effacement of its political meaning (Costa and Sardenberg 1994).

In this article, we consider these issues, while sharing our experience as gender consultants on a state-sponsored rural development project in an arid area of Bahia, Brazil, where agriculture is one activity in the complex livelihood strategies of poor women and men. We shall refer to the project as the Eagle River project, and to the target area as the Eagle River region. The project is a major development effort in one

of the most deprived and poorest regions in north-eastern Brazil, and is the first one there which incorporates a gender analysis.

Implementation of the project began in December 1997, but only six months later the implementing agency, the Regional Agricultural Development Company (CAR), an agency linked to the planning bureau of Bahia, contacted us to devise a gender programme.¹ We work as external consultants through REDOR, a regional network of women's studies centres which includes our own institution, Núcleo de Estudos Interdisciplinares sobre a Mulher (NEIM), the Centre for Interdisciplinary Women's Studies of the Federal University of Bahia. NEIM was founded in 1983, as the second women's studies centre in Brazil. We should state at the outset that we are self-proclaimed feminists, active in women's movements in Brazil.

The Eagle River project

The Eagle River project is an ambitious undertaking, covering a large area of one of the least hospitable regions of Bahia. Its implementation was planned to take five

years, with the aim of developing an area encompassing 13 counties covering about 4,580 square miles, in the centre-south region of the state. This area consists almost entirely of *caatinga* vegetation,² with several distinct ecological sub-regions, some of which are considerably more humid and more fertile than others. However, agricultural production is limited due to lack of water: the area frequently suffers from long seasonal droughts. A drought can last as long as seven years, since the rain is never adequate to replenish water holes or rivers. Part of the project area is located in an area called the 'drought polygon', and one county has the lowest annual rainfall in the whole of Bahia. Although there are waterways throughout the area (including the Eagle River itself, which flows through all the 13 counties), most rivers are seasonal and almost completely dry up during the drought periods. Other water resources such as dams and waterholes are scarce and unevenly distributed, and access to them is difficult for many local producers.

As a result, the region has not attracted major agricultural and industrial enterprises. In contrast to most other regions in Bahia where large estates predominate, the Eagle River region is characterised by small land-holdings (*minifundia*). Close to two-thirds of the population live off the land, staying close to their relatives in small communities. Most *minifundia* are less than 100 hectares, and many are under 10 hectares. Nearly 85 per cent of the properties are worked by the owners themselves with the help of family members; the other 15 per cent regularly hire outside hands, or work as hired hands on other people's properties. The larger properties are usually owned by people who live in the city and who employ hired hands to run their farm. Those who run these places usually do not own land, or own such small areas that it is not worth the trouble to farm them.

Due to the adverse ecological conditions, the small size of the properties, and the lack

of available credit to small farmers and peasants in the region, production returns tend to be low, barely covering family needs. The vast majority of the properties are geared primarily to subsistence production and the sale of surplus products. Families in the region plant corn, beans, manioc, and sugarcane, and also raise cattle and small farm animals. Almost 65 per cent of rural families in Bahia live in poverty (averaging an annual income of less than US\$2,500 per household (internal surveys from Secretaria de Planejamento e Tecnologia (Seplanteq)/CAR, undated). Less than 35 per cent of the rural communities in the project area have electricity, and only a few have a local health facility with an attending nurse. A family has between five and six children, and child mortality rates are high: 88.20 per 1,000 (*ibid.*). Rural elementary schools (taking children up to the fifth grade³) have only been set up in recent years, together with transport to enable older children to attend high schools in the main county-towns. At 49 per cent of the population⁴, the area's illiteracy rate is one of the highest in Bahia.

The county towns are the only urban areas; for the most part, they are small in size and unimpressive in terms of services and commercial activities. One of the few major events in these towns are the *feiras* (weekly markets or fairs), where local farmers — including women — bring garden produce and small animals for sale.

Women's lives in the project area

In the Eagle River region, as in other rural areas across Brazil, traditional values regarding the division of labour, women's domestic roles, and gender hierarchies still predominate. Women marry young and are entrusted primarily with the care of children and other domestic activities. However, they are also expected to 'help' their husbands in the field, care for small animals raised on the farm, and prepare manioc flour and cheese

for home consumption and for sale in the fairs; some also raise produce for sale. Since much of women's agricultural work is performed as part of their duties as wives and mothers, their productive roles and crucial contribution to household survival are largely 'invisible' and unvalued. Even the women themselves tend to undervalue their participation in production: only 25 per cent of the female workforce are officially recognised as rural workers (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística/ Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios 1996) and covered by social security benefits.

In comparison to women in urban areas, rural women not only have less access to education, health-care, and employment opportunities, but are also much more dependent upon the men in their families and caught in a structure of more unequal gender relations. Indeed, in line with other poverty-stricken rural areas throughout the world, patriarchal family and social structures deny women real rights to land, limit women's access to and control over the proceeds of their own labour, and constrain their decision-making.

Agriculture is not the only source of income: migration to the south, especially to São Paulo, is a major strategy for most local families to supplement their incomes. Although recent statistics on migration rates in the region are not available, the fact that nearly every family contacted thus far by the project's field staff has one or more members working in São Paulo or elsewhere in the south shows the scale of the livelihoods problem in the area. Young women may go alone, or young couples migrate together; some married women with children also head south to work as domestic servants, leaving the care of the home and children to their husbands and fathers. However, this is more likely to happen if the men are unable to find jobs, or are either too old or too sick to migrate, and if there are no young men in the family to take their place as providers. Usually, husbands and

adult children migrate, while women and youngsters stay behind caring for the farm. In April, around the start of the dry season, busloads of migrant men leave the area to find jobs as construction workers in São Paulo. Many return in November, when the rainy season is supposed to start, to clear and till the land for planting.

Depending on precipitation rates and yearly harvests, men's migration between São Paulo and their homes in the Eagle River region may last for many years, giving rise to the phenomenon of 'drought widows', and a large percentage of female-headed households. For some, migration is permanent: the small size of the landed properties and large family sizes means there are too many people who inherit too little land. This, added to the adverse ecological conditions, pushes young men and women to go south permanently.

During our work, we found that the loss of labour through migration can effectively double women's workload. Women from one of the communities told us:

'When the man of the house is away, the woman of the house becomes man and woman of the house. That is why I pray for rain. It is too much work on the woman when we are alone. What happens when my husband is away? Well, let me tell you, it is work, work, work. I much rather go to São Paulo myself to clean other people's latrines than stay behind here. I can work all day as a maid in São Paulo and still not work as much as I work here. Besides, there I get paid, here I don't.'

In certain communities, women hold responsibility for nearly 80 per cent of the households and the care of the land for most of the year (internal project document, 1998).

Aims of the project

The main objective of the Eagle River project is to enable the rural population to stay in the area, through raising production

levels and improving the overall social and economic conditions in the region. The project aims to achieve this through the following activities.

- Promoting and strengthening local producers' associations. Some communities already had associations; in others, they are being created with the help of the project. Project plans call for work with 'interest-groups of producers', rather than individual families. All activities are to be carried out with groups, in line with principles of community development.
- Developing and implementing services to improve the productive capacity of small properties, including constructing dams and waterholes.
- Offering technical assistance to producers appropriate to local climatic and agricultural conditions, and providing credit to stimulate productivity.
- Improving social conditions through road-construction and maintenance programmes.
- Devising means of water storage for the use of local families.
- Supporting alternative rural education programmes.
- Offering technical and financial support for the implementation of small-scale irrigation systems running to small properties.
- Promoting the development and marketing of products which can take advantage of existing markets, to bring higher returns to local farmers.

To achieve these aims, the project has three main areas of work: community development (based on a commitment to community participation); production development; and provision of rural credit.

The project's structure and decision-making powers

The project area has been divided into four sub-regions, each with a local office staffed by a male agronomist/ co-ordinator, a female social worker, and between three and six agricultural technicians, all but one of whom are men. All the technicians have responsibility for a particular county in the sub-region, and over the past year, each has worked with eight to ten communities there. The number of communities involved in the project should double within the next year, and there are plans to hire more technicians to share the work. Most of the technicians are natives of the Eagle River region, who trained in Agricultural Family Schools⁵, which offer the equivalent of a high-school education. Overseeing the work of the local offices is a regional office, with a male regional co-ordinator and three monitors (two agronomists, who are male, and one social worker, who is female). The monitors are currently expected to visit the different sub-units throughout the week, although a decision has just been taken to halt this activity. The regional social worker is primarily responsible for communicating the work of the project's local social workers.

The balance of women and men in the organisation changes at the senior level. The Eagle River project's head office is in Salvador, Bahia's capital city. Its head co-ordinator is a woman, as are two of its four area co-ordinators — a woman sociologist (responsible for community development), a male agronomist (in charge of production development), another male agronomist who oversees the building of dams and waterholes, and a woman economist in charge of evaluations. The staff also include a male accountant and a female secretary.

At first sight, the presence of three women in top positions may suggest that women have considerable power in high-level decision-making in the Eagle River project. In fact, this is far from true: the

project is administrated by CAR, which is headed by a man, and he has the final word. The balance of power is even more skewed at lower levels of the project: in particular, the regional social worker is often excluded from decision-making, and even from basic activities. On occasion, meetings have been held without her, and she has been told that 'technical matters', which she would not understand, were discussed. She, and the other social workers in the project, are the only field staff who do not have direct access to transport. Women are thus dependent on the male staff to carry out their work.

The project's first 18 months

During the past 18 months, much of the work has been to identify and survey rural communities in each of the counties, mobilising the producers and working with them to draw up a 'community operative plan'. Perhaps the greatest effort has been concentrated on the construction of 95 water holes throughout the Eagle River area, and the development of field centres (named CATS) which offer communities the chance to participate in the development of alternative technologies, and see them in action. Several 'field days' have been held, in the field centres or at producers' homes, to train them in the use of new methods of appropriate technology, and disseminate information about alternative crops. For example, a type of watermelon is being promoted which can be used as food and water for animals, and is drought-resistant for up to two years. Other crops for cattle-fodder are promoted, which are more appropriate for the ecological conditions of the area, and which could serve as 'strategic reserves' for the drought season.

Some of the CATS have been very successful in terms of agricultural output. In one of the sub-units, enough watermelons were produced to distribute to all producers in the community. They kept

some of the seeds for their own use, but there was enough to distribute them in other communities as well. However, there has been much less success in terms of women's participation. In the beginning, very few women participated in the field-days, and most of those who did attend were there to cook for participants.

Challenges of incorporating gender into the project

We were asked to respond to the need to involve women in the project, by devising and implementing a gender programme. There are few people in Bahia trained to do the kind of work we do, and we had many misgivings about taking on this responsibility. As members of NEIM, we had often worked as gender consultants for government agencies and in development projects, and a major drawback was the fact that government-sponsored projects are often used for political ends. The present government of Bahia is conservative, whereas our work focuses on raising consciousness of gender in the context of wider social rights. We made it clear from our first contacts with the Eagle River project that our main goal in developing a gender programme for it was to contribute to women's empowerment.

Our knowledge of rural life was mostly academic: we had been involved with a range of extension programmes over many years, working with women's groups, but these were concentrated in urban areas, primarily in the poor neighbourhoods of Salvador. What did we have to offer a rural development project? We were also told by the head co-ordinator for community development, who guided our work, that much of our work was likely to be gender-awareness training for the project staff, mostly male agricultural engineers and technicians, many of whom were natives of the project region. We had no experience in training men in gender-related matters outside an academic setting, and no idea of

how we would go about this with men from rural areas. We were afraid that they would be very conservative: Brazilian men are known for their *machismo*. How would we go about sensitising them to gender issues?

Developing the gender programme

We were first contacted by the community development co-ordinator on the project, to whom we report. She asked us to write a proposal for 'doing gender', but what she had in mind at first was a programme for 'women only'. We insisted from the outset that it is necessary to mainstream a full analysis of gendered power relations in all the planned activities of the project. Thus the first document we submitted as gender consultants was geared towards providing a critical gender analysis of the project. This analysis included a point-by-point discussion of the project's components, and how one should proceed in order to guarantee a gender perspective (internal document, 1998). Underlying this analysis was the notion that guaranteeing gender equity implies pursuing two lines of action simultaneously: one that tends to the practical needs of women (Moser 1989), and one which is geared to their strategic needs (*ibid.*) — that is to say, women's need to challenge the unequal balance of power between women and men.

The programme we have devised aims to meet both sets of needs, so that women can participate on more equal terms with men, and draw greater development benefits than they would otherwise. In particular, the programme focuses on the following:

1. widening and increasing women's participation in activities related to technical assistance and training in agricultural and husbandry technologies, as well as to the appropriate use of soils and water resources;

2. guaranteeing women's access to productive resources such as credit systems, water holes and irrigation systems, and legal ownership of land;

3. guaranteeing greater gender equity in community associations and local decision-making structures.

One key activity is to form 'production groups' geared to income-generation, in which women receive technical training, parallel to participating in monthly held gender awareness workshops. In order to create the necessary conditions for achieving the proposed goals, the gender programme also includes specific activities such as providing gender-awareness training for the project staff and those of the partner institutions and agencies involved, as well as a programme of gender-sensitising workshops for local women in leadership positions, and one for school teachers.

The original plans envisaged one production group per county, in rural communities where the field staff were already involved. Staff were asked to identify first any pre-existing women's groups, independent of their nature (women's associations, income-generating groups, and religious groups), and, second, communities where such groups were either just starting, or where the community showed an interest in and potential for starting one. We visited all communities thus identified and selected 15 associations which there was a goat-keeping women's collective; two where women had well-developed income-generating activities, but pursued them individually, with no history of formal association; two where there were long-established women's groups, but none geared to income-generating activities; and ten where there were strong women's networks, either kin-related or associated with local Catholic pastoral activities, which showed significant production and organisational potential. In total, these

groups include about 450 women; the number of participants varies from 15 to 60. Their age, marital status, and level of formal education also vary widely.

Learning from our experience

What does a 'gender programme' involve?

The greatest difficulty we have encountered has been arriving at a common understanding with the senior management of the Eagle River project of what a gender programme should involve, and whether 'doing gender' was the same as 'doing feminism'. Senior staff in the project initially saw a gender programme as merely creating income-generating opportunities for women, primarily by forming women's production groups. The head co-ordinator in particular saw women's economic participation as the only gender issue to be addressed. She insisted on the creation of these groups when we presented our first proposal, although she later agreed with us that there was a need to involve women in the other project-related production activities planned.

An opposing view was — and still is — held by the agronomist responsible for the production-development work. He attended a gender-training workshop held by the international co-operation organisation that co-sponsors the project, before we became involved with the project. At the workshop it was (correctly, albeit simplistically) stressed that 'sex is not equal to gender' and that 'gender is not equal to women'. He holds the view that no special programme should be carried out for women, and that 'gender' is concerned with men and women. However, he has not taken on the idea that a gender analysis is founded on acknowledging the unequal power relations between women and men, and is therefore oblivious to the need for 'empowering' women. He proposed that women be 'incorporated' in all the existing planned

activities and programmes; yet, given the asymmetrical character of the pattern of gender relations in the region, women cannot participate on equal terms.

We have been adamant that gender cannot be a mere 'sub-component' in the project, to be contained in women's production groups; nor can it be assumed that 'including' women in all activities will suffice, unless unequal power relations are challenged. For example, most of the workshops with producer groups have involved games and dramatisations and have had a playful, relaxed tone. Our initial focus was to assist the groups in defining their specific production interest, and what was necessary to develop it. At the same time, we used techniques to promote group solidarity and organisational skills. We began a series of monthly gender-sensitising workshops on specific topics. Topics already covered include gender roles, women's organisations and struggles, women's rights, and women's health; the last two will focus on education and women's work. Based on 'gender pedagogy' methodologies (Büttner et al. 1997) which are themselves adaptations of techniques devised in feminist consciousness-raising groups, these workshops build upon women's individual experiences and practical knowledge, to achieve a collective reflection on gender relations and women's condition, and ways of improving the situation.

Although the community workshops have been an enriching experience for all involved, including ourselves, there have been some emotional moments, in particular when the issue of domestic violence is raised. This topic has also been the focus of considerable disagreements between us and some of the local co-ordinators, who insist that the issue of domestic violence falls outside of project goals, and that discussing it with the women may result in the loss of support to the project on the part of the men in the communities. They have taken the matter to the head co-ordinator, who

appears to agree with them. We do not consider it to be adequate to raise women's self-esteem and promote their participation in production activities, without 'tampering' with the existing pattern of gender relations in the region, especially as far as domestic violence is concerned. Staff say that when we address this issue, we are 'doing feminism', rather than gender, which should be avoided, even when the women themselves have identified violence as one of the main problems they face.

Support and resistance from men

As stated above, we were pessimistic about men's reaction to our activities. However, we were surprised by the genuine openness and interest shown by the male agricultural extension workers who attended the first staff gender-training workshop in October 1998. Contrary to our initial fears and expectations, they showed a high level of perception of and sensitivity towards the unequal relations between women and men in the areas covered by the project, and made a significant contribution to formulating a concrete action for the gender programme. As natives of the area, they were particularly helpful during our first field trip, which followed the first workshop, pointing out nuances in gender relations in the communities visited which we might have missed otherwise. In a subsequent workshop, they not only took an active part in all the discussions, but also added a special touch to the success of the event. For the 'finale' of this workshop, they presented us with a play in which, dressed as women, they showed in a funny yet poignant matter the economic and social problems faced by women in the region, and how they hoped the gender programme could effect changes in the existing situation.

However, none of the men in the upper echelons of the organisation, or of the partner institutions involved in the technical aspects of production develop-

ment, participated in the second workshop. Instead, they attended a training workshop on the construction of dams, which, against our efforts, was scheduled on the same date. This reflects the tendency to separate the 'social' from the 'technical' activities of the project. With a few exceptions, these men have shown the greatest resistance to the gender programme, even if at times in a veiled manner.

To assist them to change, we have held monthly workshops in each of the project's local units, when we not only discuss some of the more theoretical and methodological aspects of the gender programme, but also evaluate all the activities underway from a gender perspective, regardless of what component they belong to. This has opened the way for a rich exchange, in terms of looking more closely at the difficulties encountered, as well as at the different forms (and degrees) of resistance. These workshops have given us an opportunity to monitor, month by month, the growth of gender awareness among the staff. We have found that the higher the men's status in the project, the greater their tendency to resist our efforts. Most of the problems we have faced have been related to sexism on the part of the local co-ordinators.

Women's participation in decision-making: How far does this help?

From the above, it can be seen that the fact that a senior manager of a development project is a woman does not guarantee that it will be informed by a feminist commitment to equality between women and men. While it is important in itself to have equal numbers of women and men staff at all levels, and particularly in senior management, only the individual commitment of staff to feminist ideals will actually ensure that the project benefits women through challenging oppressive gender relations.

For many women, 'making it to the top' is accompanied by adopting values and attitudes associated with male managers. In

one meeting, the head co-ordinator told us that all that is necessary to improve women's condition is to give them better economic opportunities. This position is at odds with feminist views that women's experience of poverty has social and political dimensions as well as economic ones. She also espouses the idea that 'doing gender' should not be the same as 'doing feminism'. She told us that the project should not 'start a feminist revolution in the area', and that domestic violence is a private issue, which the project should not meddle with.

In contrast, the other women senior managers at head office have made it clear that they sympathise with feminist ideals, agreeing that we must work towards raising women's consciousness of their oppressed situation. They also agree that gender must be mainstreamed in all project activities, but they are responsible for components which are regarded as 'less important' than those co-ordinated by their male counterparts, and are often excluded from the overall decision-making process.

Timing of staff training

As Robert Chambers asserts in a consideration of the importance of staff training: '... in trying to understand projects and to derive practical lessons from them, the staff and their organisation are, if anything, more important than the people they affect. It is the staff who decide policy and execute it' (1969, 8). It is now beyond contention that providing gender awareness training for staff is a fundamental step in any attempt at mainstreaming gender in a given project. Ideally, this kind of staff training should be accomplished long before the staff actually set foot in the field. In the case of the Eagle River project, however, we have not only been forced to deal with a numerically male-dominated staff and the project's patriarchal structure of power relations, but have also faced the added disadvantage of more than nine months' delay before training got underway.

The status of the gender programme and female staff in the project

As can be seen from the discussion of the staffing structure above, women staff (including ourselves) are included in the community-development component, while men control all the technical activities, classified as 'production development'. The simple fact that men outnumber the women lends a greater emphasis to production-related project activities: they are much more highly valued than those within the community development component. Of course one could argue that simply because production-development posts outnumber community-development posts, the former would be more highly valued regardless of sex. However, the fact that most agronomists are men, and most social workers are women, means the two sets of issues are intrinsically linked.

Women staff at field level have expressed their dissatisfaction with the existing gender divisions between the 'technological' and 'social' components of the project, demanding that they too be included in all the more 'technological' training courses offered to staff. One told us: 'we had to force our way in a training course on goat tending, but we work in communities that raise goats' (personal conversation, 1999). Women staff have also questioned the unequal balance of power between the agronomists and social workers, demanding greater participation in the decision-making process as social advisers.

Promoting linking between urban and rural women leaders

In addition to workshops with community members and project staff, we have also run a third series for women community leaders. These aim to sensitise community leaders to the gender programme and grant it greater visibility, while offering leadership training. We have run 13 one-day workshops, some in county towns. Although most participants are rural

community leaders, a significant number of urban women were also present. They included women in local government and union leaders. It is important for them to listen to what rural women have to say.

We began these sessions by showing a videotape depicting a 'normal' family day, but one in which gender roles are reversed: while the 'man of the house' cooks, cleans, sews, cares for the children, and realises he is pregnant, the wife goes to work, drinks in a bar with her girlfriends, comes home late, complains about everything, and beats up the husband. Besides being funny and creating a relaxed atmosphere, this tape stimulates discussions on gender relations and women's roles, in which participants can share their experience. The rural women complained of the 'invisibility' of women's work, even when working side by side with their male counterparts in productive activities, caring for the land, planting, or tending to the animals, let alone when, as 'drought widows', they must manage the property on their own.

Conclusion

When we came to the final workshop with women community leaders, we were filled with mixed emotions. It had been a marathon, in which we covered 13 hinterland towns in three months, and many dirt roads in between, reaching 687 women who had responded very warmly to our workshops, and asked us to return. We felt exhilarated with our accomplishment, but we were also afraid that this had been our last trip to the area. Despite the success of our work among the women, there were mounting complaints on the part of local project co-ordinators, who were still accusing us of doing 'feminism' instead of 'gender'. This complaint might cut short the entire gender programme.

Since then, the local co-ordinators have been forced to reconsider our work. Whereas before, workshops with leaders

were held in the country towns, the Eagle River project now enjoys increasing support from the local population, including many individuals in local government positions. The field staff report that local residents' visits to the project offices — women in particular — have increased. In the rural areas, there is increased participation of women in project activities geared to production development. In a recent field day for training in the use of alternative animal fodder, for example, 80 of the 200 participants were women. There are reports that in some communities, women are demanding equal participation in decision-making; for instance, when a community has to choose a number of residents to participate in project activities, they insist that at least half of them must be women.

Gender equity cannot be achieved without women's empowerment. This means women's role in rural production cannot be seen as separate from actions which seek to change their status, including within the project's internal structure. We shall not be surprised if colleagues continue to characterise our actions as 'doing feminism' in order to discredit them. It is much more comfortable and safer for them to restrict the aim to 'integrating gender', ignoring its more political objectives. We are busy preparing a new series of gender awareness workshops, this time for public school teachers in the project area, and especially in rural schools. Future plans also include preparing a series of taped programmes to be aired by local radio stations, focusing on health and sanitation, water resources management, education, and sustainable development, all looking at the issue from a gender perspective.

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Notes

- 1 This request came as a response to the demands of the International Agricultural Development Fund (FIDA), the international co-operation organisation co-sponsoring the project.
- 2 Caatinga is common in north-eastern Brazil; it is characterised by small shrubs and trees, including some cactus.
- 3 The usual age for fifth grade is 10-11, but in rural areas children tend to start school later.
- 4 Aged five years and older.
- 5 Agricultural family schools (*Escola Família Agrícola*) were set up by a Catholic priest 20 years ago; these schools offer elementary and high school education for the children of farming families. There are two such schools in the project area.
- 6 The groups that have been formed have defined the following production interests: two focus on embroidering, two on raising chickens, two on goats,

two on pigs, three on garden produce, two on the cultivation of fruits for canning, and two are still undecided.

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