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# Characterization of Rural Women as a Protagonist in the Socioeconomic Development of Fusagasugá and Silvania, Colombia

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## ABSTRACT

The participation of rural women in Colombia has had a long and anonymous trajectory. Such participation has been limited to roles exclusive to the domestic environment: raising children, tidying up the house, preparing food and farming. Their responsibilities were carried out within a patriarchal society, without social or economic recognition, sacrificing their personal aspirations. Objective: to characterize socioeconomically the rural women in Fusagasugá and Silvania, agricultural food growing areas of the province of Sumapaz, Cundinamarca. A descriptive-analytical research with a qualitative-quantitative approach was conducted. A probabilistic sample was applied to 144 participants. The household of the rural woman of Fusagasugá is composed of her spouse and children 58%, the mainly engaged in unpaid household chores and agricultural and livestock activities. The Silvanenses of free union marital status and single mother head of households representing 52%, develop productive work standing out as entrepreneurs and businesswomen; 84% have businesses. The relevant role played by rural women in contributing to food security, growth and sustainable development is highlighted.

KEYWORDS: Agricultural economy, Community, Women and development, Colombia.

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# Caracterización de la mujer rural como protagonista en el desarrollo socioeconómico de Fusagasugá y Silvania, Colombia

## RESUMEN

La participación de la mujer rural en Colombia ha sido de larga y anónima trayectoria. Limitadas a roles exclusivos del entorno doméstico: crianza de hijos/hijas, organización de la casa, preparación de alimentos, labores agropecuarias, sus responsabilidades transcurrieron dentro de una sociedad patriarcal, sin reconocimiento social, ni económico, sacrificando sus aspiraciones personales. Objetivo, caracterizar socioeconómicamente la mujer rural de Fusagasugá y Silvania, despensas agrícolas de la región. Investigación descriptivo-analítico, enfoque cuali-cuantitativo. Muestra probabilística aplicada a 144 participantes. El hogar de la mujer fusagasugueña lo conforman cónyuge e hijos 58%, se dedican principalmente a labores domésticas, actividades agropecuarias de pancoger. Las silvanenses de estado civil unión libre y madres solteras jefes de familia 52%, desarrollan labores productivas destacándose como emprendedoras y empresarias, 84% cuentan con negocios. Se destaca el importante papel que desempeñan las mujeres rurales al contribuir con la seguridad alimentaria, crecimiento y desarrollo sostenible.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Economía agraria, Comunidad, Mujer y desarrollo, Colombia.

## Introducción

The gender gap, in particular, limits rural women's access to resources and financing, land tenure, academic training and holding public positions, reducing job opportunities, fair income and decision-making capacity with respect to patriarchy. The concept of patriarchy has been used over time to refer to "a type of social organization in which authority is exercised by the man as head of the family, owner of the patrimony" (Fontenla, 2008), or as "a historical sociocultural problem of colonized societies," which create ideological inferiority in women (Llanos, 2024).

The origin and acceptance of women's poverty is related to the planetary socio-spatial inequality that is more dramatic in Latin America and certainly, in Colombia. Aspects such as unpaid work, lack of financial and technological support (credit and land acquisition), minimal job opportunities, gender violence and economic dependence, limit their participation in

decision making (Medina & Restrepo, 2022).

It is important then to recognize women's leading role in today's world and the impact of their work on the nations' economies, one of which is the agricultural sector, where more than 37% of the workforce in the sector is female, a figure that rises to 48% in low-income countries. If there were equity between men and women in access to resources, agricultural production would increase and the number of undernourished people in the world would decrease (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, FAO, 2020). (Garcia *et al.* 2020) identify different activities of rural women that go beyond the traditional and inherited domestic and reproductive tasks, participating extensively in agricultural work, household financial decision-making and community affairs in rural areas.

In his historical analysis, (Cristiano, 2022), demonstrates the inefficiency of different legal instruments used in Colombia to reduce discrimination against rural women, which despite the theoretical argumentative objectivity, is rarely applied in practice (laws 51 of 1984, 731 of 2002, 1900 of 2018, etc.), "to date, there is no comprehensive policy that allows maximizing the effort of the different sectors of public administration linked to the global problem of overcoming all forms of discrimination against women". It defines three types of discrimination to which they are subjected: *-for living in the countryside*, limited access to basic services, difficult labor insertion and higher poverty than in urban areas; *-for being women*, patriarchal mentality with economic dependence, unpaid work, little participation in politics and *-for being victims of violence*, with more than five decades of armed conflict in Colombia. Likewise, physical, psychological and sexual domestic violence" (Cristiano, 2022). Similarly, (Leguizamón & Cruz, 2023), consider that: "it is essential that the National Government expedite the formulation and implementation of policies that place gender equity at the center of rural development".

According to the Rural Women's Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, about 22% of the total Colombian population are rural women, and only 41% of these participate in the labor market, which is a low percentage compared to men, 76% (Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística, DANE, 2020). (Riaño, 2019), states that rural women of Cundinamarca transmit values and social patterns to their children, promoting gender equality, recognition of their rights and rural empowerment.

The set of experiences arising from the proposal, analysis and execution of the project was methodologically based on descriptive-analytical research with a qualitative-quantitative approach, and the application of technical instruments, structured observation and interviews. "An adequate measuring instrument records observable data that represent concepts or variables that the researcher has in mind" (Escobar *et al.*, 2019). The sample was applied to 144 participants. The information gathered allowed to define profiles, showing that most of them assume household and childcare tasks, participate as social leaders and in family agricultural and livestock production. In Fusagasugá, only 20% have businesses, while in Silvania, 84% have businesses. The aim of this study was to characterize rural women in Fusagasugá and Silvania in social, economic and cultural aspects, the axis of their incorporation into community public functions, local leadership, and entrepreneurship.

## 1. Materials and methods

### 1.1. Study area

Fusagasugá and Silvania municipalities (Colombia). The work is part of the project: Analysis of family farming capacity in the context of food and health security (COVID-19), Sumapaz province, supported by the University of Cundinamarca. The following municipalities were selected: Fusagasugá, for being the capital of the province, and together with Silvania are agricultural food growing areas of the region (fig. 1).

Fusagasugá is the capital of the Sumapaz province, and known as the "Garden City of Colombia". It is located in the department of Cundinamarca, with a climate that varies between 13°C to 25°C. It has 204 km<sup>2</sup> of territorial extension, from which 93.51% corresponds to the rural area, which integrates the following townships: - Western, Bosachoque, El Resguardo, Cuchanal, Novillero and Viena villages; - North, Los Robles, San Rafael, La Aguadita, Bermejal, Tierra Negra, Piamonte and Usatama villages; - Eastern, El Jordan, La Palma, Pekin, Sauces villages; - South Eastern, El Placer, Espinalito, Sardinas, Bethel, Mosqueral, La Isla, Mesitas, Palacios, Bochica, Guayabal, Batan, Guavio, Santa Lucia and El Carmen villages; - South Western, San Antonio, Santa Maria, La Puerta and El Triunfo villages (Alcaldía de Fusagasugá, Secretaría de Planeación, 2021). According to DANE projections 2022, 51.97% of the total

population are women; 10,418 live in rural areas, while 75,516 live in the urban sector (Alcaldía de Fusagasugá, 2022), in contrast to the other municipalities in the province, where most of the inhabitants live in the countryside. Main economic activities: agriculture livestock and commerce.

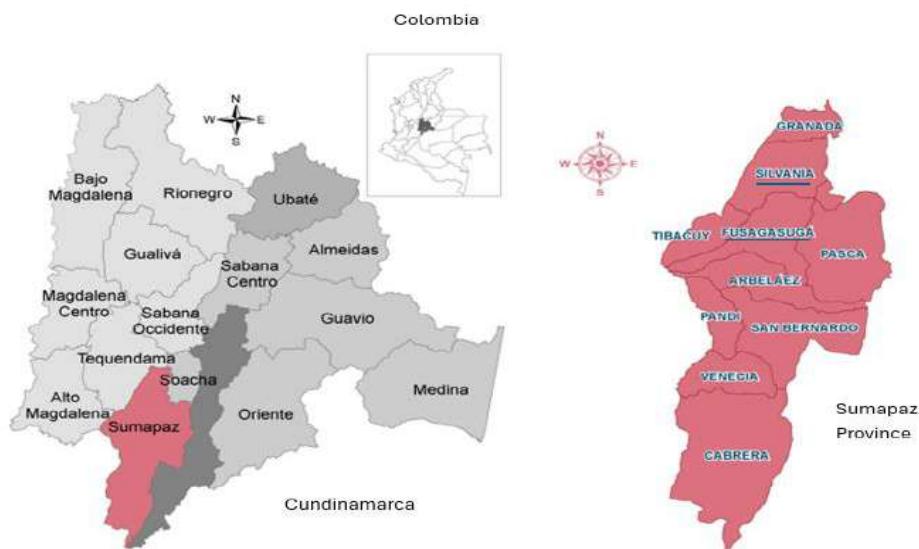


Figure 1. Map of Sumapaz province. Fusagasuga and Silvania underlined, 2021. Source: Adapted by Cámara de Comercio de Bogotá.

Silvania is located 44 km from Bogota (Capital of Colombia) on the Panamericana Highway, has an area of 162.91 km<sup>2</sup>, with a rural area covering 97.51% of its territory, and 59.54% (7,439 women) population. The municipality is made up of 13 villages: San Jose, Panama, Lomalta, Yayata, Quebrada Honda, Azafranal, Noruega, Jalisco, Santa Rita, La Victoria, San Luis, Subia and Aguabonita. Farming and livestock are the municipality's economic activity (Alcaldía Municipal de Silvania, 2020).

## 1.2. Delimitation of the study period

The study began in the year 2022 and was led by a team of 4 research professors with interdisciplinary backgrounds and 3 students who, based on their proposals, field work, analysis exercises and personal initiatives, guided the process general aspects.

### 1.3. Desing

The research approach was mixed qualitative-quantitative. Quantitative, using numerical variables related to economic and social conditions of the participants and in-depth exploration of focus groups. Qualitative, due to the nature of the topic and research method used mainly in the social sciences. Thus, the synergy of approaches allowed the realization of the socioeconomic characterization of rural women and their impact on the family and the community transformation. To this end, technical instruments for data collection were used (structured observation, field work, survey application, information processing and analysis). (Hernandez & Fernandez, 2014) point out that the factors for choosing the mixed approach depend on the researchers' capabilities and training, and the appropriate adaptation to the problem statement.

The descriptive-analytical research type was based on the theoretical foundation on socioeconomic aspects that characterized the rural women of the municipalities under study, complemented with a deductive exercise to infer conclusions determined by the analysis of the information gathered. "Descriptive research comprises the recording, analysis and interpretation of the actual nature and composition or processes of the phenomena. It works on factual realities and its fundamental characteristic is to present a correct interpretation" (Hazel & Sally, 2020).

### 1.4. Instruments

The design included the development of technical instruments validated by a statistical consultant and expert researchers in the field. The survey contains 62 questions, most of them Likert-type, and some open-ended, which made it possible to collect data on reality. They were organized by sections that included: basic data, marital status, schooling level, family records, affiliation to health systems, socioeconomic characterization questions, occupation, household activities, detailed information on entrepreneurship, and participation as leaders, among others.

### 1.5. Sample

For the sample calculation, the information from the National Population and Housing Census 2018 conducted by DANE and the 2022 estimates of women in populated centers and

dispersed rural areas was reviewed initially, selecting rural women, age range between 18-70 years old, with availability to answer the survey, which allowed forming a population of 713 women distributed as follows: 478 (50.74%) in Fusagasuga and 235 (24.95%) in Silvania, with 95% reliability and a 5% relative error margin, using the formula for finite populations; a sample of 144 women surveyed was obtained, 81 (29.78%) in Fusagasugá and 63 (23.16%) in Silvania. (Contzen & Forney, 2017) state that projects should start from planning and focus on fieldwork, using the techniques of structured and participant observation, and the design of technical instruments applied through surveys to obtain primary information. The study allowed an analysis to be carried out, determining results that will serve as a source of information and support for the formulation of public policies.

## 2. Results and discussion

### 2.1. Profile of rural women in Fusagasugá and Silvania

To define the profile of rural women in Fusagasugá and Silvania, a comparative analysis was made by selecting the most representative variables that provided the required information: age range, schooling, marital status, number of children, composition of the family nucleus, occupation, quality of mother head of household.

Figures reported by DANE show that the farmer population represents 43.6% of the national population. They are fundamental to maintain the country's food security (DANE, 2020). The eastern region of Colombia, which includes the departments of "Boyaca, Cundinamarca, Meta, Norte de Santander and Santander, has the highest percentage of farmers of whom 44.3% are of legal age". The range of 41 to 64 years old is the most representative of this population with 6.1 million., while young people register lower proportions with 1.8 million people.

In Cundinamarca, the 2018 Census with projections 2023 presents data on rural women with a population of 400,062, which represents 47.89% (DANE, 2020). In Fusagasugá, most of them are in the 50-59 age range, 36% (29 respondents); in Silvania, young women between 30 and 39 years old predominate, 33% (21 respondents).

Table 1. Profile of rural women Fusagasuga / Silvania

	Fusagasugá	Silvania
Age	50 to 59 years old: 36 % (29)	30 to 39 years old: 33 % (21)
Marital Status	Free union: 42% (34) Primary school: 58 %	Free union: 33% (21)
Schooling	(47)	Secondary school: 31 % (26)
No. children	3 to 4: 52% (42) Spouse and children : 58	1 to 2: 52 % (33) Spouse and children : 33 %
Immediate family	% (47)	(21)
Head of household	No: 64 % (52)	Yes: 52 %(33) Independent, business
Occupation	Household chores: 70% (57)	woman and / or entrepreneur: 84% (53)

Source: Own elaboration

### -Civil State

Free union is the marital status with the highest percentage in the two municipalities; it is a legitimate way of forming a family, socially accepted and with legal protection from the state. In Fusagasuga, 42% (34 women) are in this condition, and 31% (25 women) are married. These couples form different family nuclei: some are made up of the spouse and children, 58% (47); others only mother-children, 15% (12), most of them with 3 or 4 children, 52% (42).

In Silvania, free union is 33% (21 respondents), followed by single marital status, 22% (14 respondents). The family nucleus composed of spouse and children represents 33% (21); and 29% (18) of households are mother and children, with 1 to 2 descendants, 52% (33). This means that in Silvania, there are more mothers who are heads of household, 52 % (33); while in Fusagasuga 64 % (52) are not.

### -Education

Regarding the level of education, sources consulted on national information served as references for comparison with those of the study. "The level of schooling is 39.4% of the 14.8 million peasants in Colombia who finished primary school; 24.2% high school, and only 10.9%

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are technicians or professionals; 9.3% do not have any level of education, but 91.6% know how to read and write" (Escobar *et al.* 2019).

The related data show a significant decrease in illiteracy rates, reducing gender gaps with respect to men, with a higher participation of rural women in higher and post-graduate education levels of 7.9% and 21.4%, with sustained trends, for example, in secondary education. Rural men registered 5.6% and 18.3% respectively. However, among the rural population aged 6 to 21 who were studying in 2020 (pandemic), 76.5 % corresponded to men, with a decrease of 74.2 % in women; this difference is explained, among other reasons, by poverty and androgenic cultural persistence that determined an interruption of social achievements. "Taking care of household chores (23.7 %), lack of resources or high educational costs (19.8 %), pregnancy (9.6 %) or not interested in studying (9.6 %)" (DANE, 2020). The schooling level of the population under study in Fusagasugá is 58% (47 women) in primary school, 31% (25) in secondary school, 5% (4) professional, 4% (3) technical or technologist, and 1% (1) postgraduate education.

In Silvania, 41% (26) completed secondary education; 58% (19) primary education; 5% (3) professional education; 4% (11) technical or technological education; and 1% (2) postgraduate education. Valuing educational training, the study emphasizes the importance of continuing to strengthen rural women's schooling, a vital factor in reducing inequality, violence, poverty, lack of job opportunities and entrepreneurship, weak participation in associations and in public and political positions; and, in contrast, to be able to increase their income, improve their living conditions and those of their families. "An additional year of primary education increases girls' potential wages by 10 to 20 percent, facilitates later marriage and fewer children, and makes them less likely to suffer violence" (DANE, 2020).

## -Health

In terms of health, 100 % of the participants are linked to the health system. In Fusagasugá 91 % (74 women), in Silvania 76 % (48 women) with subsidized regime based on the Identification System of Potential Beneficiaries of Social Programs (SISBEN); the remaining percentage has a contributory regime. These data are encouraging in terms of coverage, but the distance between the villages and high complexity health centers, the condition of the roads, and

the lack of regular transportation services make it difficult to access the necessary and timely care.

(Montaño, 2025) indicates that the absence of high complexity or level three hospitals; the insufficient infrastructure, equipment and human talent in low and medium complexity services, are determining factors of the deficiencies and structural inequalities in health. These difficulties increase in rural areas due to long distances and poor road conditions to access health services.

The state's budgetary investment in the maintenance and upkeep of roads would optimize travel time from the countryside to the city, facilitating food supply processes and promoting productive and entrepreneurial activities and better job, education and health opportunities.

## 2.2. Participation in the labor market

On the other hand, the COVID-19 pandemic increased gender inequalities implying a decrease in socioeconomic indicators for women, since their participation in the labor market was lower than that of men. Their reinsertion has been slow, especially due to the increase in unpaid work (domestic) and informality.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), in Colombia, reported that the women's participation rate in 2019 was 52.5%, and for 2020 it was 47.3%, evidencing a reduction of five points. Likewise, the International Labor Organization – ILO (2019), indicated that of the 23.6 million occupied female jobs lost in Latin America and the Caribbean in the second half of 2020, approximately 19.3 million were recovered in 2021, indicating that four million jobs remain to be recovered (DANE; the Presidential Counselor's Office for Women's Equity *et al.* 2022, p. 24-25). Thus, in Fusagasugá the most representative occupation of rural women is in domestic work, 70% (57) in unpaid jobs. Compared to national figures between January and April 2021, "92.9% performed unpaid work activities, being 35 points higher than men in the same period"; (DANE, 2020) and in Silvania only 8%.

On the other hand, in Silvania, 84% (53 participants) are independent, businesswomen and/or entrepreneurs, engaged in the production and marketing of agricultural inputs, such as avocado, coffee, banana, plantain, vegetables, fruits, aromatic herbs, ornamental plants;

breeding, raising and sale of cattle, pigs; poultry, fish (trout) and their derivatives handicrafts and food processing. In contrast, in Fusagasugá only 21% (17 participants) are engaged in food processing, poultry farming, fish farming (trout), cultivation of vegetables, fruits, coffee, ornamental plants and handicrafts.

It can be inferred that rural women in Fusagasugá are mostly engaged in unpaid domestic work, especially childcare (between 3 and 4 children), which absorbs most of their time, and in agricultural activities almost always destined for household consumption, a situation which, with respect to family income, is compensated by having the economic support of their spouses. (Rodríguez & Colón, 2022) point out that currently, due to the complexity of family units, the household economy demands greater knowledge and efficient techniques from all members for household management.

The families' birth rate in rural areas is higher, increasing the care workload for women, a fact that is also reinforced by the children's longer stay at home, which limits women's access to formal employment (Gómez, 2020). As mentioned before, women in Silvania were perceived to be more enterprising, possibly because of the fact that most of them are young mothers who are obliged to support their children, as (Arthur-Holmes & Abrefa, 2020) mentioned, young mother in rural areas have more education and work limitations affecting their personal growth.

### 2.3. Socioeconomic characterization of rural women Fusagasugá / Silvania

On the other hand, socioeconomic information was collected from the participating population, taking the most representative percentages: home ownership, type of construction: floor material, size in square meters, utilities, household appliances, income and monthly expenses (Table 2).

The Departamento Administrativo de Planeación - Subdirección de Información y Evaluación Estratégica de la Alcaldía de Medellín (2019), cites by Zolnikov (2020), who define characterization as an essentially descriptive type of study, which resorts to obtaining "quantitative and qualitative data in order to approach the knowledge and understanding of the structures, characteristics, dynamics, events and experiences associated with an object of interest".

Population characterizations make it possible to obtain information on the structure and identity attributes of various groups of people with continuity over time, who, according to their differences, configure particular ways of being in a territory. They focus attention on guaranteeing or reestablishing the enjoyment of rights. They underpin the design, adjustment and implementation of public policies with a view to transforming problematic situations and offering goods and services that respond to their needs and interests (Departamento Administrativo de Planeación, 2019).

Table 2. Socioeconomic characterization of rural women Fusagasuga/Silvania

	Fusagasugá	Silvania
Housing	Own: 53 % (43)	Familiar: 56% (35) Power, water, TV: 37%
Public Utilities	Power, water, TV: 30% (24)	(23)
Housing Floor	Cement: 60% (49)	Cement: 65% (41)
M2. Housing	51 to 100 M2: 52% (42)	51 to 100 M2: 51% (32) Fridge, stove, TV, washing machine: 30%
Electrical Appliances	Fridge and TV: 43% (35)	(19)
Incomes	Less than COP 500.000: 65% (53)	COP 500.000 to COP 1.000.000: 40% (25)
Expenses	COP 500.000 to COP 1.000.000: 85% (69)	COP 500.000 to COP 1.000.000: 79% (50)

Source: Own elaboration

This concept supports the whole study, allowing to typify the group of interest, rural women; identifying profiles, socioeconomic aspects, family conditions, work activities, participation in organizations as leaders, information that will serve as input for the design of public policies.

## 2.4. Housing/Income

In Fusagasuga, most rural women have their own homes, 53% (43), or are in the process of making final payments, and 25 of these homes are fully paid for. The houses are between 51 to 100 m<sup>2</sup> 52 % (42 respondents), they house 3 to 4 people, 78 % (63 participants); they have cement

floors, 60 % (49 respondents), they are equipped with electricity, water supply and television signal, 30 % (24); 43 % (35) with refrigerator and television.

This result coincides to a high degree with national statistics presented by DANE, which show that 89.1% of rural women own their land, 5.3% lease it, 2.0% usufruct it, and 3.6% mentioned other forms of property (Becerra, 2021).

Their income ranges from less than COP 500,000, since a high percentage of their domestic occupations prevent them from accessing paid jobs; only a small group markets their agricultural and livestock products and entrepreneurship. These resources are insufficient to meet basic needs that exceed COP 500,000 to COP 1,000,000, with 85% (69 women) in this range. However, it is interesting to note that 73% (59) of these women, living with a partner, share the household economy.

Unpaid care work, an invisible labor, is the basis for the prosperity of families, health and welfare of the labor force performed by women over the age of 15 around the world. Because of its importance, according to the Oxford Committee for Relief Against Hunger (OXFAM) its economic value is estimated to be at least \$10.8 trillion annually, a figure three times the size of the global technology industry (Gómez, 2020).

Negative aspects and definition of unpaid care work or provision of direct care services are described and explained by ILO (2019) and Laine (2023). In Silvania, 56% (35 women) live in family homes, and 27% (17) in rented housing, showing that a high percentage do not own property. The size of the houses is 51 to 100 m<sup>2</sup>, 51 % (32); housing between 4 and 5 people, 65 % (41), and 65 % (41 respondents) with cement floors. They have electricity, water and television services, 37 % (23); household appliances: refrigerator, stove, washing machine and television, 30 % (19).

In contrast to the data from Fusagasuga, rural women in Silvania have higher incomes of between COP 500,000 and COP 1,000,000 for their entrepreneurial activities, which cover primary needs and are proportional to their incomes, 79% (50). Their status as heads of household makes them responsible for family expenses. The proportion of women without their own income has decreased in the last decade.

The increase in their labor participation, female entrepreneurship and productive processes has contributed to the generation of their own income promoting their autonomy and key role in the economy (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, UN Women, 2018).

Microeconomics, as mentioned by (Parkin, 2020; Freire & Blanco, 2021), studies the integration of each economic unit and its relationships. Through economic activities, it identifies undertakings with the expansion or creation of products, processes and markets.

## 2.5. Accses to public services

Access to public services is vital for the progress and socioeconomic development of countries. When these services are lacking, communities not only generate a gap of inequality and inequity, but also affect the population's, the environment, and increase poverty.

According to the National Association of Public Utilities and Communications Companies (ANDESCO), there are still 3.2 million people in Colombia without access to drinking water. Of these, 2.3 million are in rural areas. As for natural gas service, according to Vanti figures, almost 40 million Colombians have access to this service (Escobar *et al.* 2019).

These data agree with the results obtained. In Fusagasuga, 22% (18 participants) have no water supply; 84% (68) no sewerage; 85% (69) no natural gas; 74% (60) no internet; 31% (25) no television signal. Similarly, in Silvania, 11% (7) have no water supply; 98% (62) sewerage; 100% (63) natural gas; 70% (44) internet, and 17% (11) no television signal.

In the case of a neighboring municipality, Arbelaez presents a harder situation where 91% of rural women's homes only have electricity service, lacking water, sewerage, natural gas, internet and cable television, demonstrating the negative impact of poverty. The lack of coverage of public services increases the time dedicated to domestic activities, affecting the workload, which minimizes their participation in community functions and political spaces (Escobar & Velásquez, 2022).

The United Nations (UN) reported "in 2020 that, on average, rural women spend three times as much time as men each day on unpaid care and domestic work" (Gómez, 2020). This fact is aggravated by the lack of utilities (especially piped water supply), household appliances, transportation, and low levels of education (Gómez, 2020).

Since agricultural production (primary sector) is the most important sector of the economy of Fusagasugá (one of the largest food growing areas in the region) and Silvania, the important role played by rural women in contributing to food security, growth and sustainable development in the region is highlighted. Promoting and strengthening the empowerment of rural women will contribute to improving their health and well-being and their families', to reducing poverty and hunger, to greater equity, and to inclusive economic growth, also mentioned by (Danielsen & Hinton, 2020; López-García & Carrascosa-García, 2024; Escobar *et al.*, 2024).

## Conclusions

In defining the profile of rural women from Fusagasugá, adults between 50 and 59 years old, it was established that the majority live in free union, the most common marital status. Their household consists of their spouse and children (3 or 4); they have primary schooling and are mainly engaged in unpaid household chores and agricultural and livestock activities. The women of Silvania are young, between 30 and 39 years old, single mothers, heads of household, with a maximum of 2 children, with high school education; they are more active in productive work and stand out as entrepreneurs and businesswomen.

As a whole, the article describes the potential and capabilities of rural women, advocating the institutionalization and sensitization of the gender perspective through the generation and transfer of knowledge, in order to overcome the persistent cultural discrimination problem that makes them vulnerable. The State and Colombian society continue to be indebted to women, which is why structural changes must continue to be encouraged through civic ethics based on equity and respect between men and women. Their example is the basic input to mobilize institutional decisions that must be applied with greater speed.

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## Conflicto de interés

Los autores de este manuscrito declaran no tener ningún conflicto de interés.

## Declaración ética

Los autores declaran que el proceso de investigación que dio lugar al presente manuscrito se desarrolló siguiendo criterios éticos, por lo que fueron empleadas en forma racional y profesional las herramientas tecnológicas asociadas a la generación del conocimiento.

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