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Intra-household decision-making processes: What the qualitative and quantitative data tell us

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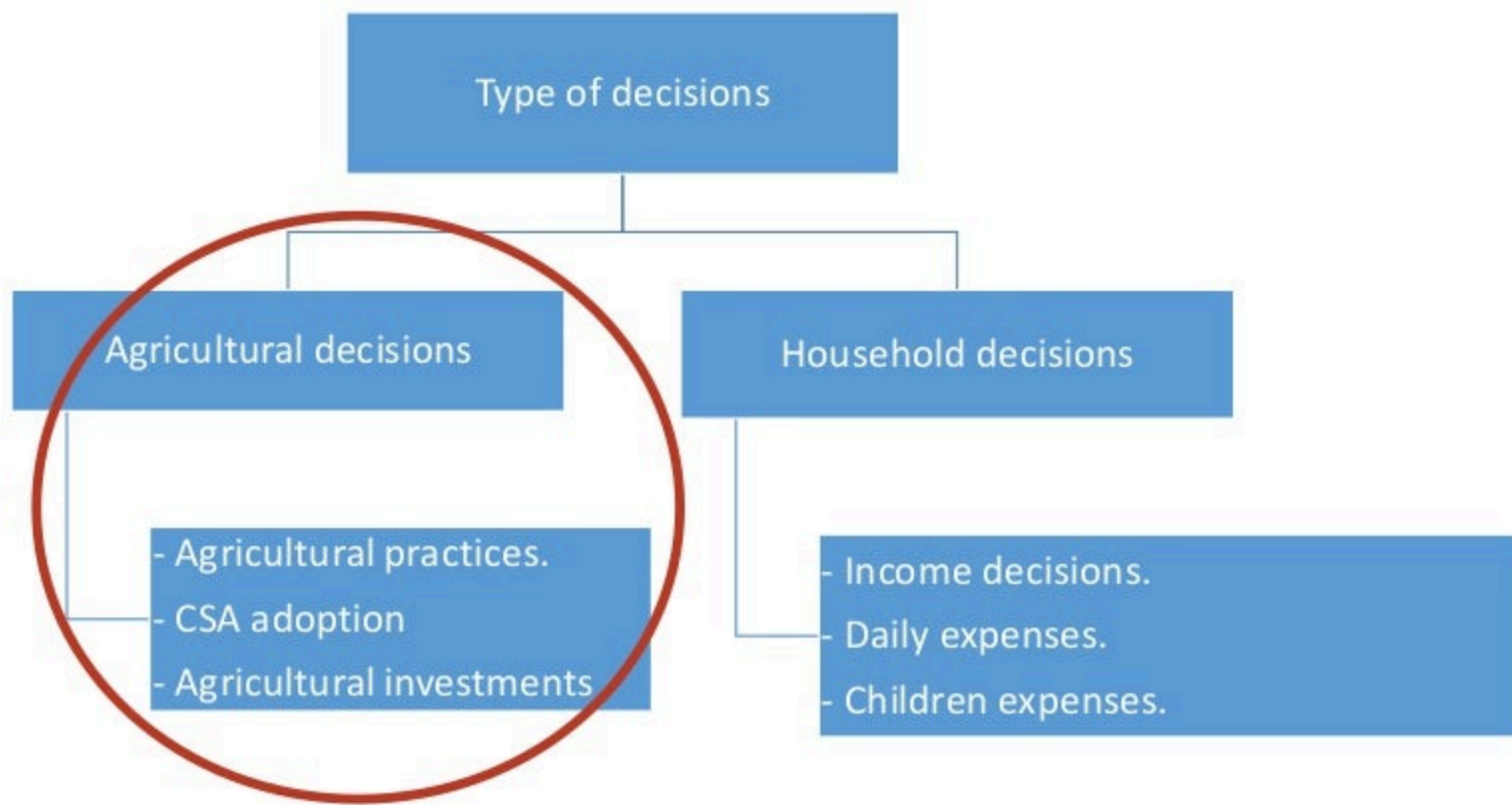
Why are we interested in intra-household decision-making?

- To understand household gender relations and how these shape agricultural decisions.
- To better target development projects and interventions to achieve a variety of agricultural development outcomes.
 - Women's empowerment → women's participation in decision-making.
 - Productivity and sustainability → technology adoption and farm management practices.
- Decisions can be made by an individual male, individual female or jointly by couples or different members of the family.

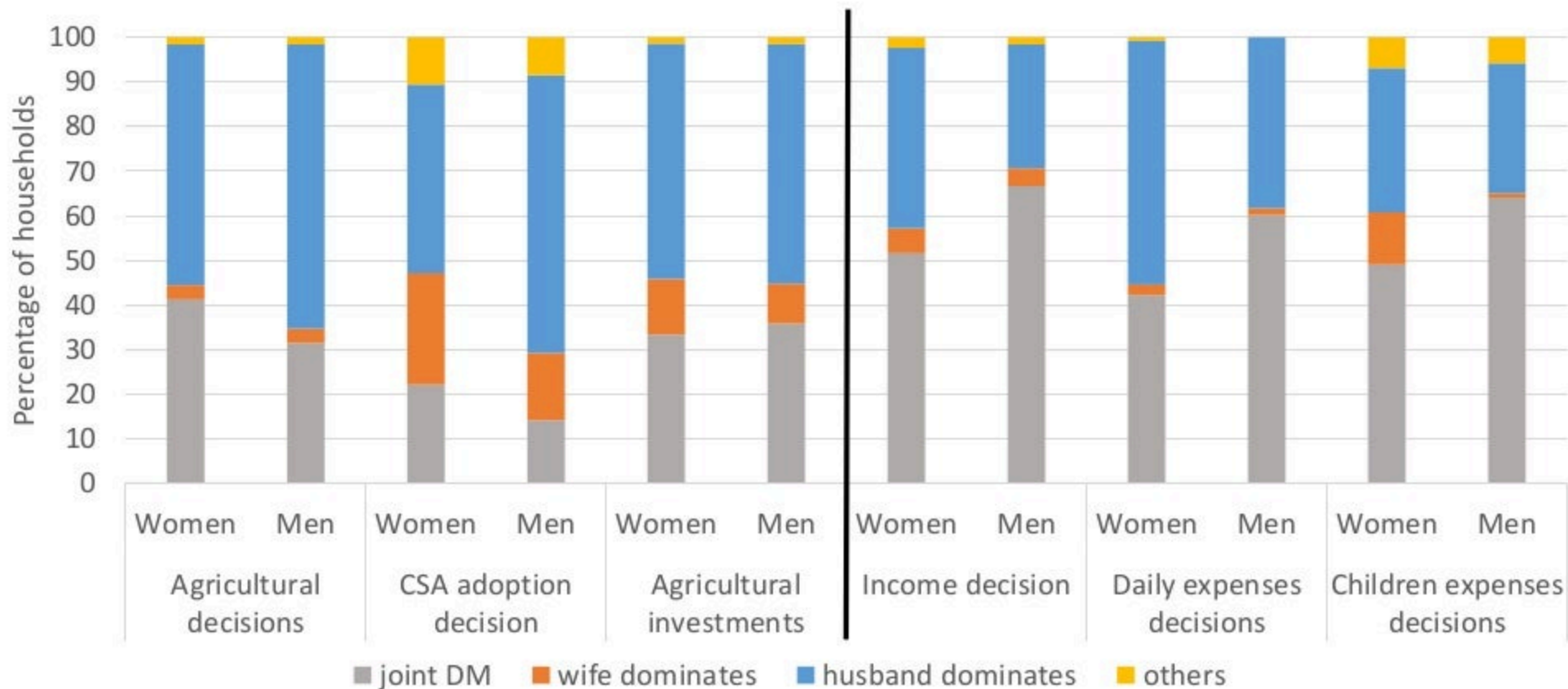
Study objective and methods

- Objective:
 - Understand intra-household decision-making patterns on family farms.
- Data:
 - Qualitative and quantitative data to classify household decision-making processes.
 - Focus on households with couples in two sites of Latin America: Cauca, Colombia and Tuma La Dalia, Nicaragua
 - Intra-household gender survey.
 - Colombia (2014): 198 households (125 partnered)
 - Nicaragua (2015): 270 households (206 partnered)
 - Semi-structured interviews with female-male couples.
 - Colombia (2017): 18 couples
 - Nicaragua (2017): 10 couples

Which type of decisions did we consider?



Quantitative findings: Type of decisions, Colombia



Qualitative findings: Joint decision-making typologies

Typology	Colombia	Nicaragua
The man makes the decision (no discussion)		X
The man informs the woman before making the decision, and the woman conforms to what he says		X
The man informs the woman before the fact, but he does not consider the woman's opinion	X	
The man considers the woman's opinion, but makes the final decision	X	X
The woman considers the man's opinion, but makes the decision herself		X
The man and woman exchange opinions and make a decision together	X	X
The man and woman exchange their opinions with other family members and make the decision as a family	X	X

Qualitative findings: Perceptions of joint and individual decisions

Colombia

- Joint decisions are characterized as a **conversation**, an **agreement**, and a way to **support** each other.
- Individual decision is a conversation with no agreement or when one spouse acts **without informing** the other spouse.
- Men and women tended to view individual decisions negatively (create conflict) and joint decisions positively (more equitable).

Nicaragua

- Joint decision-making implies reaching an **agreement**, typically through **dialogue**.
- Individual decisions is one made **without consulting** one's spouse.
- Men and women had slightly different views of individual and joint decisions. The differences were mainly predicated on men's concern with conflict generated by not making decisions together.

Quantitative findings: Decision-making typologies in Colombia

Agricultural decisions

Typology	Households (n=123)
Asymmetric in agricultural activities and CSA adoption and did not make agriculture investments.	46%
Husband dominates in all the three decisions (agriculture, CSA adoption and agriculture investments.)	31%
Joint decisions in agricultural activities and CSA adoption and asymmetric in agriculture investments.	22%
Wife dominates in agricultural activities and agriculture investments.	0.2%

Household decisions

Typology	Households (n=123)
Asymmetric in child and daily expenditures and use of income.	52%
Joint decisions in child expenditures, daily expenditures and use of income decisions.	32%
Husband dominates in child and daily expenditures decisions.	16%

Qualitative findings

- **Conventional gender norms**

- Men's and women's role in decision-making highly correspond to conventional gender norms.
 - Men as head of households and making decisions about agriculture and the farm.
 - Women were responsible for domestic and care work, generally making decisions about food.

- Spousal **discord** regarding farm and non-farm related activities.

- Women reported that men made most agricultural decisions.
- On the contrary, men reported agricultural decisions as being made jointly, thus perceiving that his spouse had a greater role in the process than she herself perceived.

Conclusion / Next Steps

Quantitative and qualitative results suggest

- Men and women have different perceptions of how decisions are made.
- In some households decision-making roles seem to follow traditional gender norms; in others there is more disagreement about how decisions are made, and others are more egalitarian, making many decisions jointly.

Next steps: Explore relationships between these typologies, other household characteristics, and ag development outcomes (technology adoption, productivity, nutrition, etc).

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