

DISSERTATION DEFENSE

April 8, 2026



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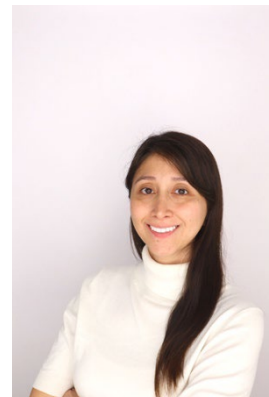
BRNG 2243

Water Governance in Latin America: The Dynamics of Community-based Water Management Institutions

This dissertation examines gendered participation in Community-Based Water Management (CBWM) across Latin America, focusing specifically on the climate-vulnerable Honduran Dry Corridor. While these local institutions are vital for resilience, women remain disproportionately excluded from leadership roles.

Using survey data from four Latin American countries, this study demonstrates that a 10% female representation on water boards significantly improves environmental conservation and management efficiency. To understand the persistent exclusion of women, this research operationalizes the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework and a participation typology in the Honduran Dry Corridor. The findings reveal that restrictive formal rules, such as land tenure, create a “proxy effect” where women act as passive participants rather than active decision-makers. Finally, a conjoint experiment proves there is no systemic community bias against female leadership; respondents prioritize institutional design over a president's gender or education.

Ultimately, this research concludes that women are key to advancing water governance in rural Latin America and that they can be effectively included through intentional changes in institutional design.



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