



*Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture*

*International Forum*

## ***Women in agriculture***

***Women's contribution to agriculture and  
food security in the Americas***

*October 7, 2010 • IICA Headquarters*



## ***The panelists***

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### **NEMESIA ACHACOLLO TOLA MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LANDS OF BOLIVIA**

"All of us have within us the power to bring about change," says Nemesia Achacollo Tola, who decided to divide her time between her duties as a wife and mother and union activities. She is currently serving as the Minister of Rural Development and Lands of Bolivia, a position she hopes will enable her to contribute to the process of change championed by social organizations.

The current Minister of Rural Development and Lands was born in Yapacaní, Ichilo Province, in the Department of Santa Cruz, on July 18, 1967, the second daughter of four siblings. Her early life was no different from that of other children, spent in the local school and in the rice fields, where she learned about farming from her parents.

For many years, she worked in the fields alongside her husband, Adalberto Barboza Céspedes, and her four children (three daughters and one son). It was when she moved to Santa Rosa, in Choré, that she took on the role of union leader.

In 1996, as the Treasurer of the Comité Pro Pueblo, she promoted the installation of running water in houses in the community of San Luis.

She also served as the General Secretary of the Bartolina Sisa Departmental Federation of Rural Women of Santa Cruz, where she was responsible for public works such as the introduction of basic sanitation. The success of those efforts led to her being nominated and elected as the alternate to the first candidate for the office of Mayor of Santa Rosa.

As a departmental leader in Bartolinas in 2001, she and the unions she organized in different villages in Santa Cruz were involved in land disputes that pitted campesinos against forest concessionaries.

Her career as a leader gathered momentum between 2002 and 2009. She held a number of posts, including that of Executive Secretary of the National Federation of Rural Women of Bolivia, a position that allowed her to spearhead international campaigns such as the one to recover native seeds to ensure food security and sovereignty, and others aimed at securing parity in political representation.

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## **BEATRIZ PAREDES RANGEL FEDERAL DEPUTY AND CURRENT PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE INSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTIONARY PARTY**

Beatriz Paredes Rangel studied sociology at the National Autonomous University of Mexico.

She has served as Governor of her home state of Tlaxcala and as a member of the Federal Congress and Senator of the Republic in the 51<sup>st</sup>, 53<sup>rd</sup>, 57<sup>th</sup> and 58<sup>th</sup> Legislatures (in the last case, as President of the Congress of the Union).

In the Federal Executive Branch, she worked at the Department of the Interior as Under Secretary of Political Development and Under Secretary of the Interior; she also served as Under Secretary at the Secretariat of Agrarian Reform.

She has held various international posts, including that of Mexico's Ambassador to Cuba and President of the Latin American Parliament.

She has been a member of various party committees and served as the General Secretary of the NEC of the PRI and as President of the Colosio Foundation. She is currently President of the National Executive Committee of the Institutional Revolutionary Party.

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## **SENATOR JOANNE MASSIAH MINISTER OF STATE ATTACHED TO THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LANDS, ENVIRONMENT, MARINE RESOURCES AND AGRO INDUSTRY ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA**

Joanne Maureen Massiah was born in Antigua on May 15, 1968. She is the mother of two teenage sons, Kurt and Brian Williams. She attended the York College, The City University of New York, Queens, NY, where she obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science in June 1993. She then went on to the University of Oregon School of Law where she graduated with a doctorate in jurisprudence in May 1997. She was also a student of the Norman Manley School of Law in Jamaica. There she obtained a certificate in Law Education.

She is a lawyer by profession. She is a senator in the upper house of Parliament, a member and candidate of the United Progressive Party. She was a trustee of the party from 1999-2001; she is a member of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, a member of the New York State bar, and a founding member of the Performing Arts Society of Antigua and Barbuda. She is a member of the Collaborate committee for the promotion of emotional health in Children (CCOPE), and has been Director of the Big Brother, Big Sister Organization - Antigua/Barbuda chapter since 2002. She is presently a member of the Professional Organization of Women in Antigua and Barbuda (POWA).

Joanne is the current sponsor of the Yogi Warriors Basketball Team of the Parham Town Community. She has also established a "reading club" situated at the Branch Hall in Parham, for the entire constituency. The club is intended to serve both children and adults. She also assists various church groups in the constituency from time-to time with their various outreach community efforts.

As the first woman appointed to the Upper House of Parliament by the UPP, she continues to be a leading female personality in the party.

Senator Massiah is a well-known advocate of women's and children's issues. She regularly counsels young people. She is committed to the professional and educational development of young people and the empowerment of every citizen and resident in Antigua and Barbuda and the wider Caribbean. Her other interests include gourmet cuisine, golf, steelpan, jazz and blues.

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## **ANA MARÍA AROCHA QUIJANO** (Uruguay)

A union and political leader involved in many organizations dedicated to the development of rural women, an attorney and notary, and experienced in dairy production. She has held many important positions during her distinguished career, including those of:

- Member of the Commission for the Development of Rural Schools
- Founder and President of the National Association of Rural Women's Groups of Uruguay
- Counselor of the Rural Federation and regular delegate to the Honorary Commission of Rural Women
- President of the Federation of Rural Women of Uruguay
- Founder of the International Association of Rural Women
- Founder of the Ibero-American Network of Rural Women

Over the years, she has received many important accolades. The Equity and Gender Commission of the National Legislature recognized her as a "Pioneering Rural Woman of the 20th Century" and as the "First woman president of a rural women's organizations" in 2001. The 88th Congress of the Rural Federation paid tribute to her for her work in defense of the family and rural producers, in 2006. In 1997, she was nominated as a candidate for the Inter-American Award for the Participation of Women in Rural Development, conferred by IICA.

She has contributed to the organization of important events, such as the MERCOSUR Women's Forum in 2008, the Creation of the Ibero-American Network of Rural Women in 2009, and the Inauguration of El Nido Training and Social Integration Center, in 2010.

She has participated in many international events, including: the World Congress of Rural Women, in Spain (2002), the Tenth Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, in Quito, Ecuador in 2007, and the International Fair of Rural Women in Spain, in 2010.