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**Carolina TRIVELLI**

no. **8** 2000

**P**obreza rural:  
¿problema de algunos  
o mal de todos?

**Rural Poverty: Problem of  
a Specific Group or General Condition?**

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# **Rural Poverty: Problem of a Specific Group or General Condition?**

**Carolina TRIVELLI**

## **Abstract**

Social Science research on poverty issues is relatively new in Peru. Thirty years ago no one will consider poverty as a topic, although the problem existed and it was recognized as one of the characteristics of specific groups of society: the un-integrated, the more traditional, the excluded ones. However, during the 90's we saw a rapid growth in the number of studies, and of specialists, researching on poverty as main topic. This research was mainly in how to measure, recognize and characterize poor people. This research "boom" brought a number of measures of poverty and of the characteristics of poor people, most of the studies were at the national level or centered in urban populations. Rural poverty was less studied, but the conclusions reached by most studies were terrifying. Around 60% of rural households are below poverty line; near 90% of households have at least one unsatisfied basic need; rural poverty is more severe and is far from being solve than urban poverty. But, worse than that, as it is shown in this paper, the non-poor households also face very limited developing options and are closer to become poor than to stay out of poverty. In this context, rural poverty cannot be considered a problem of a group or sector of rural households, it has to be faced as a generalized problem in the rural areas. In this sense, public policy should center its efforts in rural development in general instead of promoting a large number of independent programs with limited impact in the rural area as a whole.

**Key words:** rural poverty, standard of living, rural areas, social indicators, Peru