

# Loan Act for Rural Women

On 20th December, the Draft Loan Act for Rural Women was presented, which aims to ensure access to credit and other types of non-credit financial support for rural women.

The bill, based on the principles of financial inclusion and gender equality, facilitates the granting of microloans with preferential interest rates, supports development projects and boosts micro and medium enterprises.

The National Loan Program for Rural Women, financed through a trust\*, will include action to implement the National Loan Policy for Rural Women. The program will define the financial conditions of the microloans, the action plan to encourage the development of companies and productive activities, legal help for rural women to set up companies, financial literacy campaigns, as well as technical and financial training for the program's female beneficiaries, among other programs.

As well as regulating microloans channeled through microfinance institutions, the bill provides for non-credit support designed to improve rural women's entrepreneurial skills, to further professionalize loan-granting organizations and to improve and extend the supply of microfinance services they offer.

The sums involved in the loans being granted will be announced through public tenders that will specify the terms, conditions and necessary requirements to apply and, in any event, the programs funded must drive job creation and economic development.

Lastly, the bill provides for the creation of a Consultation Board for Lending to Rural Women. This Board will be entirely made up of women and will prepare public policy recommendations to promote the empowerment of women in the rural environment.

\* The equity for which will come from the State, national bodies, development banking, as well as other donations from natural or legal persons.