

# Voices and Flavours from the Earth

## Visualising Food Sovereignty in the Andes

Maruja Salas

Wise Andean People's Networks



Reclaiming  
**Diversity &  
Citizenship**

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The video clips are on Vimeo.

## Chronology of PASA activities (2007-2013)

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
November 2007	Global workshop convening all partners in Monsaraz, Portugal
January 2008	Visit to the Altiplano to visit Nacasur and Communities – Design workshop in Copacabana, Bolivia
June 2008	Workshop: Community Video in Chucuito Workshop: Participatory Action Research for Food Sovereignty in Chucuito
July 2008	Start of workshop in Chucuito, Puno
January 2009	Design of the Summit of Communities during the VIPP Training in Jarabacoa, Dominican Republic
May 2009	Watunakuy 2009 in Queramarca and Raqchi Monitoring of the Food Sovereignty activities in the PASA communities in Cuzco, Puno and Bolivia
June 2009	Summit of communities (“Summit on the Summit”) in Ayrumas Carumas PASA assembly in La Paz, Bolivia
December 2009	First Workshop about Wisdom Dialogues in Chucuito with wise farmers Coordination meeting of partners in Copacabana, Bolivia
May 2010	Second PASA assembly in Cuzco Watunakuy 2010 in Queramarca, Raqchi
July 2010	Four PASA elders join the dialogue of knowledge systems with the regional network on Agricultural Research of the McKnight Foundation in Lima
October 2010	Global encounter of partners and interregional exchange with farmers and activists of the Rice Campaign in Asia, in Penang, Malaysia
January 2011	Second Workshop about Wisdom Dialogues in Chucuito, Puno
May 2011	Third workshop about Wisdom Dialogues in Raqchi, Cuzco linked to the Watunakuy 2011
October to December 2011	Wisdom Dialogues about alpacas in Ayrumas Carumas, native fish species in Perka, potatoes in Yunguyo, and alpacas and bitter potatoes in Aymaña.
January 2012	Third PASA assembly in Chivay, Colca Valley, Arequipa
July 2012	Fourth Workshop about Wisdom Dialogues and Documentation in Chucuito, Puno
January 2013	Fifth Workshop of Wise People’s networks about Wisdom Dialogue in Chucuito, Puno

## Glossary

<i>achachila:</i>	ancestors	<i>firi:</i>	steamed quinoa
<i>aku:</i>	roasted and ground flour	<i>huaycha:</i>	a plant that indicates time for sowing in the lower zones
<i>akulle:</i>	an offering of coca leaves and wine	<i>ichu:</i>	highlands pasture lands
<i>alasitas:</i>	a post-harvest game with miniatures	<i>illa:</i>	a stone that attracts one
<i>apus:</i>	sacred mountains	<i>imilla:</i>	highland potato variety
<i>ara:</i>	wild quinoa	<i>isaño o mashua:</i>	Andean tuber
<i>Auqui Auqui:</i>	a dance with masks	<i>ispallas:</i>	origin, source of life
<i>ayllu:</i>	extended family	<i>ispi:</i>	endemic fish of Lake Titicaca
<i>ayni:</i>	mutual aid group	<i>jaiñachu:</i>	male alpaca or llama
<i>aynoqa:</i>	crop rotation and fallowing system	<i>jilaqata:</i>	communal organisation for fisheries
<i>cañihua:</i>	Andean grain	<i>jucha:</i>	quinoa porridge
<i>cañihuaco:</i>	roasted, ground cañihua	<i>kankacho:</i>	roasted alpaca
<i>cayuna:</i>	alpaca foetus	<i>kiwicha:</i>	Andean grain
<i>ccona:</i>	stone mill	<i>llampí:</i>	alpaca fat
<i>cecina:</i>	jerky	<i>llankallanka:</i>	wild fruit
<i>chachawarmi:</i>	sibling relationship	<i>llaullas:</i>	animal-shaped stones
<i>chacoñas vincoñas:</i>	woollen covers	<i>mamaqota:</i>	mother lake
<i>chacras:</i>	agrobiodiversity small plots	<i>mashua:</i>	Andean tuber
<i>chajo:</i>	edible white clay	<i>mauru:</i>	endemic fish of Lake Titicaca
<i>challar:</i>	a final ritual with wine	<i>mayu:</i>	Milky Way
<i>chalona:</i>	jerky	<i>moraya o tunta:</i>	dehydrated white potato
<i>charqui:</i>	jerky	<i>muchkhara:</i>	wild fruit
<i>chayro:</i>	thick spiced soup with meat and vegetables	<i>muju mama:</i>	mother seed
<i>chuño:</i>	dehydrated black potato	<i>muña:</i>	wild mint
<i>chuwa:</i>	ritual to ask permission to enter the lake celebrated in August	<i>mutu mutu:</i>	a plant that is observed in August

*nuño maya:* a plant whose grape-like fruit indicates a good potato harvest

*oca:* Andean tuber

*olluco:* Andean tuber

*Pachamama:* Mother Earth

*paco:* spiritual guide

*Paqalqu:* Family Groups (a local NGO)

*pasku chu'wa:* alpaca mating ritual

*pesque:* quinoa porridge, salty or sweet

*pinana:* a wild plant

*puka cachi:* red rock salt

*pukara:* a place where endemic fish species originate

*punko:* a fish species endemic to Lake Titicaca

*puquiales:* water sources

*q'oto:* the Pleiades

*qarachi:* a fish species endemic to Lake Titicaca

*qawra:* wild fruit

*qhesi:* a fish species endemic to Lake Titicaca

**Qolla Aymara:** Cure of the Aymara (a local NGO)

*quinua:* Andean grain

*quispiño:* quinoa steamed buns

*s'iki:* generic name of wild vegetables and fruits

*sankayu:* wild fruit

*sara mama:* mother maize

*sara tipiy:* husk the corn

*siwyrú:* a plant that grows between rocks

*suchi:* a fish species endemic to Lake Titicaca

*sumaq kausay:* human well-being in Quechua

*sumaq jakaña:* human well-being in Aymara

*t'impo:* a stew with meat, white dehydrated potatoes and vegetables

*taqui:* a huge basket to keep food in the storeroom

*tarwi:* an Andean legume

*toke:* a bird that indicates rain or drought

*trojes:* huge basket to keep food in the storeroom

*umunto:* a fish species endemic to Lake Titicaca

*vichuña:* a weaving tool made of alpaca bone

*wallaqui:* parboiled fish

*wamanripa:* medicinal herb

*watia:* post-harvest temporary earth kitchen, mutual family visits

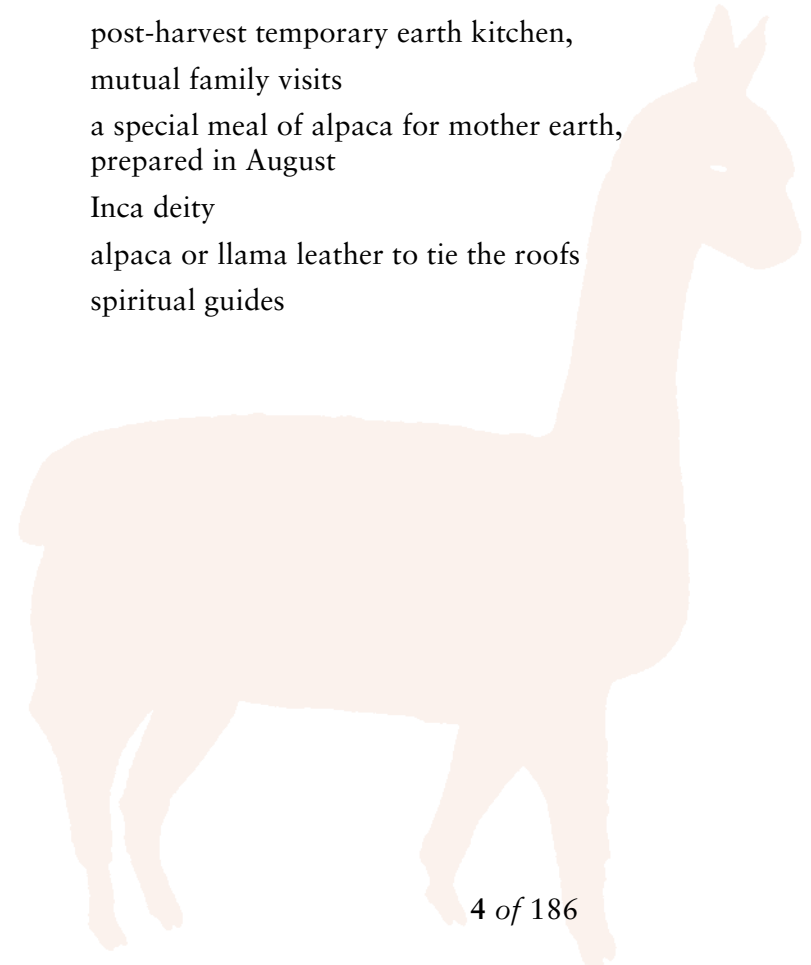
*watunakuy:* mutual family visits

*wilancho:* a special meal of alpaca for mother earth, prepared in August

**Wiracocha:** Inca deity

*yarink'a:* alpaca or llama leather to tie the roofs

*yatiris:* spiritual guides



# Preface

Michel Pimbert

*Visualising food sovereignty in the Andes: Voices and flavours of the earth* is a remarkable book that describes how indigenous communities are drawing on their knowledge and cosmovisions to rethink the priorities and governance of food and agricultural research in the Andean Altiplano of Bolivia and Peru. The work presented here is part of a larger international and multi-regional initiative known as *Democratising the Governance of Food Systems: Citizens Rethinking Food and Agricultural Research for the Public Good*.

## Origins of the initiative

Four major developments led to the birth of this global initiative. Between 2005 and 2007, the author of this preface facilitated a series of conversations in fields, villages, social gatherings, and in the heart of donor communities, in both the South and the North. These conversations involved pastoralists, indigenous people, fisher folk, progressive scientists and intellectuals, consumers and farmers (both urban and rural). The common view heard time and time again was “*we have no say in what the scientists are doing*”, along with concern over the mismatch between agricultural research and the reality of farming systems in the face of increasingly rapid social and environmental change. Small-scale producers and other people talked of a democratic deficit leading to a lack of food provider and consumer control over knowledge production, often with harmful consequences for people and the land. In both practice-oriented sustainable agriculture networks and advocacy oriented-peasant organisations people were asking: *What food and agricultural*

*research do we need? For whom? Why? How? Where? And with what impacts?*

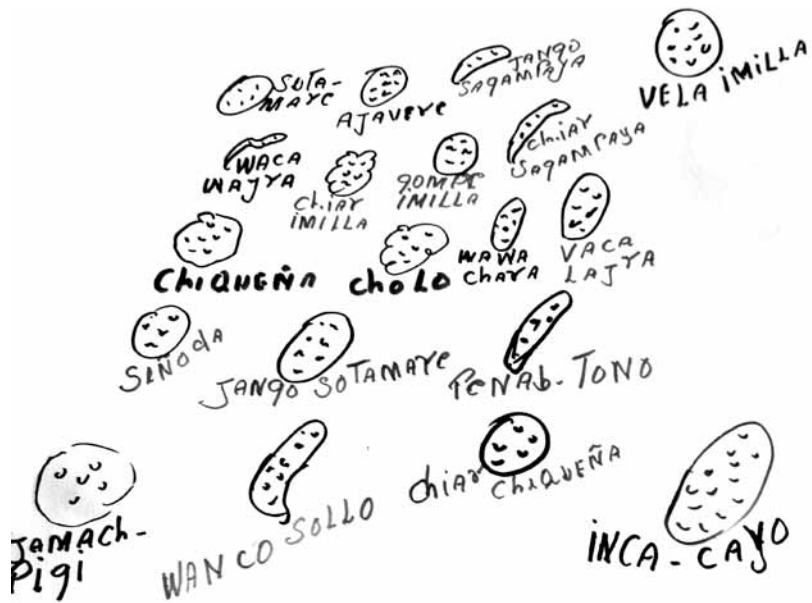
Second, at the same time these conversations were occurring, there were a number of very significant international and national developments. The concept of ‘food sovereignty’ was becoming a part of the international vocabulary and more centre stage than ever before. In Bolivia and Mali, ‘food sovereignty’ was enshrined in national agricultural policy. Other countries and coalitions were also pushing for an alternative paradigm for food and agriculture, discussions which later led to the adoption of national declarations or constitutional changes in favour of ‘food sovereignty’ in Ecuador, Venezuela and Nepal, for example. One of the clearest demands of the food sovereignty movement is for citizens to exercise their fundamental human right to decide their own food and agricultural policies. This implies that food providers and other citizens<sup>1</sup> can and should frame strategic priorities and policies for agricultural research.

Third, the consultations proposed by the bureau of the newly launched International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) also catalysed thoughts among advocacy-based peasant organisations and rights-based civil society groups on how to engage with this international

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<sup>1</sup> Today, the concept of citizen is at times understood to exclude indigenous peoples and minority ethnic groups who are not considered to be part of the nation-state. Yet, the word ‘citizen’ is originally derived from the Latin *civis* and was in use *before* the emergence of the nation-state. ‘Citizen’ referred to individuals active in a public body and involved in the management of community affairs. In this preface the word citizen is used in this broad sense to include all people living and working in a given country.





process.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of the IAASTD was “to assess agricultural knowledge, science and technology (AKST) in order to use AKST more effectively to reduce hunger and poverty, improve rural

2 IAASTD, ‘Agriculture at a Crossroads: Global Report’, <http://www.agassessment.org>. The IAASTD was launched as an intergovernmental process guided by a multi-stakeholder bureau, under the co-sponsorship of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Global Environment Facility (GEF), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), UNESCO, the World Bank and the World Health Organisation (WHO). The IAASTD has undoubtedly produced a landmark report that is both timely and remarkable in scope. This is the first independent global assessment which acknowledges that small-scale, low-impact farming sustains crucial ecological and social functions. Many of its more progressive recommendations, such as the need for much greater emphasis on agro-ecological approaches, are consistent with the food sovereignty paradigm and the quest for sustainable agriculture. However, the analysis and priorities of indigenous peoples, nomadic pastoralists, small farmers, food workers, forest dwellers, and food consumers are largely absent from the IAASTD report.

livelihoods, and facilitate equitable, environmentally, socially and economically sustainable development”.<sup>3</sup> After discussions with some members of the International NGO/CSO Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC),<sup>4</sup> selected individuals in La Via Campesina<sup>5</sup>, indigenous peoples’ organisations, pastoralist networks and others, it was decided not to enter this ‘invited policy space’ which was created from above – even though the IAASTD was seen to be timely and a potentially very useful process of collective reflection on AKST. Instead, there was a perceived need to create, from below, a series of independent and parallel ‘popular or citizen spaces’ where people can gain confidence, discover their voices, analyse, mobilise and act. It was thought that, at the very least, these ‘citizen spaces’ can complement the IAASTD because this intergovernmental process had not developed any comprehensive mechanism for local perspectives to be *directly* included in discussions on agricultural research.

Last but not least, a citizens’ jury held in 2005 on *GMOs and the future of farming in Mali* highlighted the importance of ‘agricultural research’ for farming communities. No fewer than five out of twenty-six recommendations from this intensive five days of citizen deliberations called for agricultural research to be re-organised to better serve the needs of small farmers.<sup>6</sup> Jurors asked for a fundamental reorientation of public research away from input-intensive farming and the development of new GM seeds to support low external-input agriculture, improve local seeds and landraces, and regenerate local food systems and markets. This unique event for West Africa demonstrated that citizens’ juries can provide a safe space for farmers to reach an informed, evidence-based view on complicated and often

3 IAASTD, ‘Agriculture at a Crossroads’.

4 See <http://www.foodsovereignty.org/Aboutus/Whoweare.aspx>.

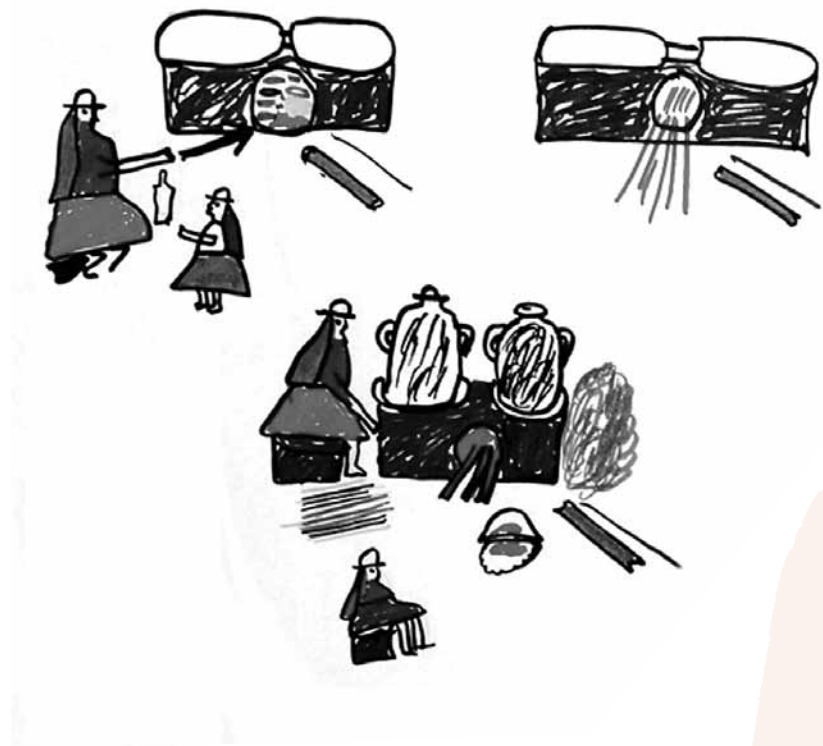
5 See <http://viacampesina.org/en/>.

6 M.P. Pimbert and B. Boukary, ‘Democratising research for food sovereignty in West Africa’, *Journal of Peasant Studies* 37, 1 (2010): 220–26.

controversial issues, which can then be amplified to policy-makers. It was also clear that farmers had much to say about what kind of food and agricultural research they want, the topic was not too complex for them to understand.

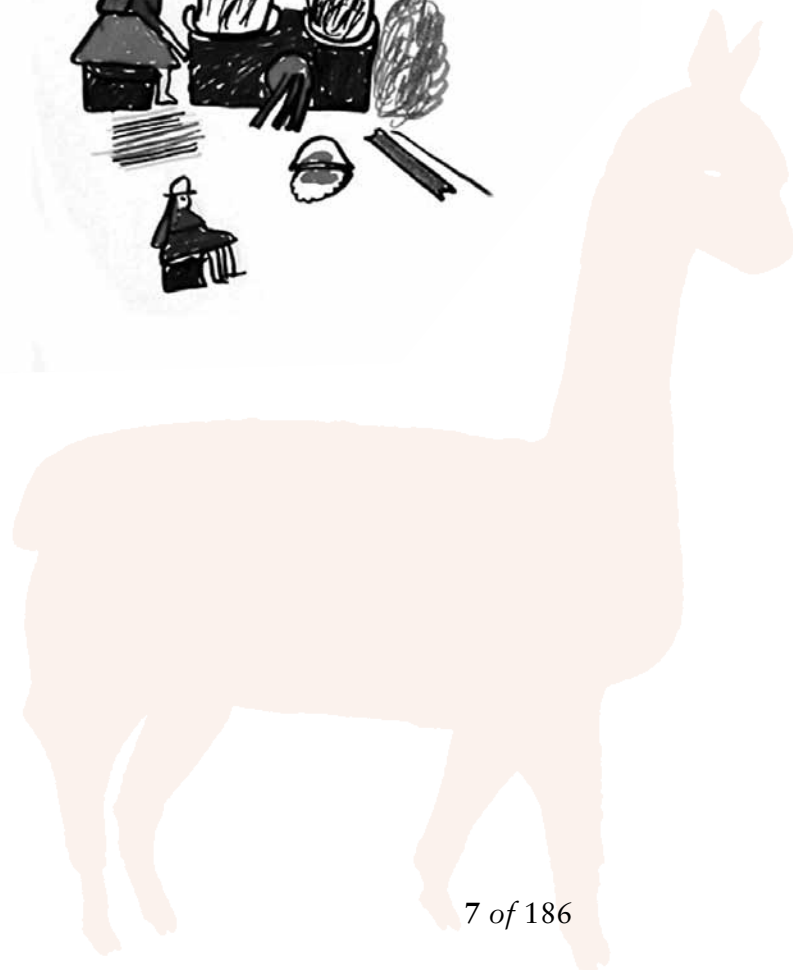
The global initiative *Democratising the Governance of Food Systems: Citizens Rethinking Food and Agricultural Research for the Public Good* was set up in response to these four developments.<sup>7</sup> Firmly based in the tradition of participatory action research (PAR), the overall objective of this initiative is to create safe spaces in which citizens (food providers and consumers) can engage in inclusive deliberations on how to build an agri-food research system that is democratic and accountable to wider society. More specifically, the methodological approach seeks to facilitate the participatory design of alternative, farmer and citizen-led agricultural research.

This participatory process was initiated in 2007 to create safe spaces for small-scale farmers, indigenous peoples, nomadic pastoralists, food workers and other citizens in four regions, with one country acting as host for each region: West Africa (Mali), South Asia (India), West Asia (Iran) and the Andean region in Latin America (Peru). Rather than offer ready-made solutions, this global initiative supports a decentralised and bottom-up process whereby farmers and other citizens can decide what type of agricultural research is needed for food sovereignty, and also organise to collectively push for change in policies and practice.



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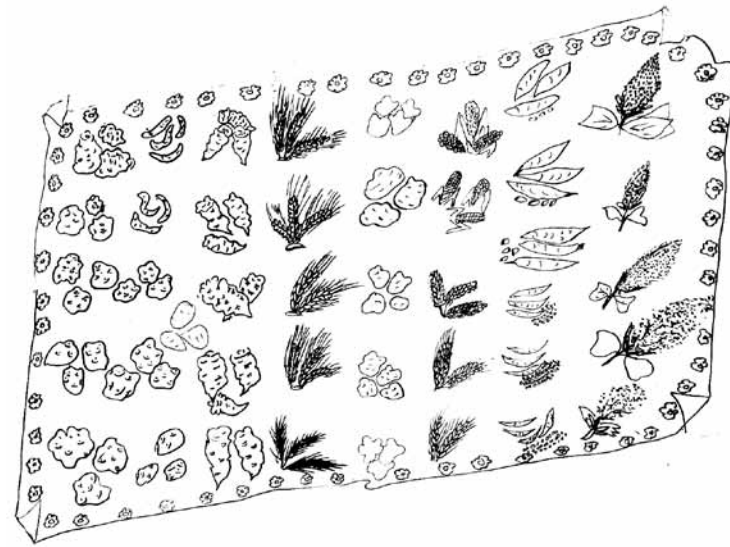
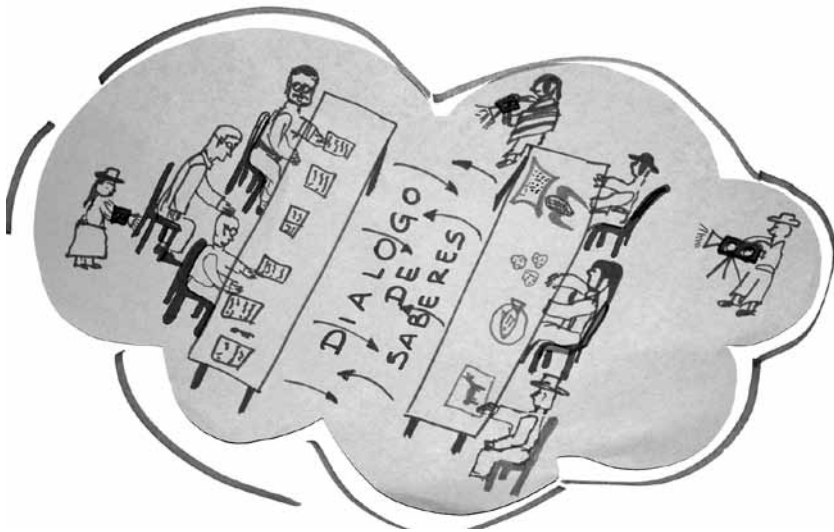
<sup>7</sup> This proposal for this global initiative was prepared by the Sustainable Agriculture, Biodiversity and Livelihoods Programme of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). The following donors have funded this action research: The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGIS), the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), Oxfam Novib, the New Field Foundation, and The Christensen Fund.



## PASA: The Andean Program for Food Sovereignty

Guided by a common vision and a commitment respectful to participatory processes, the global initiative unfolded in different ways in each of the four regions. Local partners were able to decide on the processes, methods, and time-frames which they felt were most appropriate for their own unique situation. Even the name of the initiative was reworked in different regions. For example in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, it became known as the Alliance for the Democratisation of Agricultural Research in South Asia. In Bolivia and Peru local partners preferred to call it the PASA – the Andean Program for Food Sovereignty.

To date the outcomes of the PASA have been remarkable in their depth, diversity and relevance for the Aymara and Quechua indigenous communities involved. *Visualising food sovereignty in the Andes: Voices and flavours of the earth* beautifully captures this wealth of experience and insights in the form of text, photos and videos in this multimedia book.



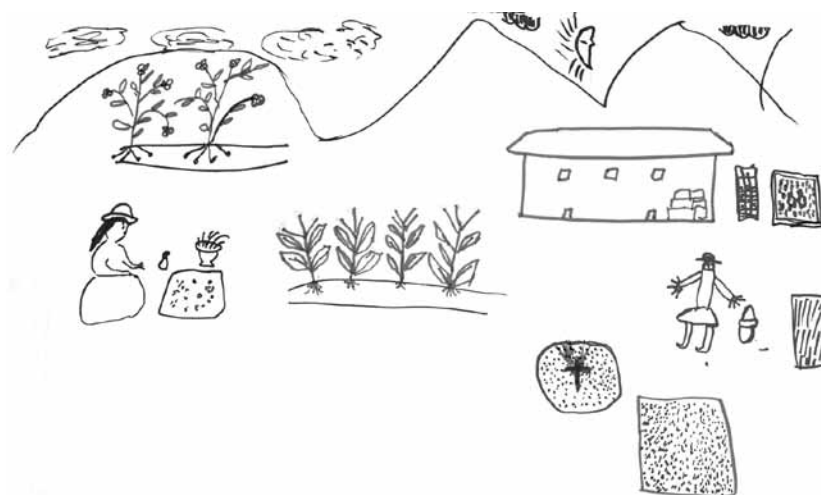
This book also presents in great detail the process of Participatory Action Research (PAR) that is at the heart of the PASA. It provides a particularly evocative example of how research is done ‘with’ people and not ‘on’ or ‘for’ people. This type of power-equalising research involves both researchers and non-researchers in close cooperative engagement, jointly producing new knowledge, with mutual learning from the process. Actors involved make sense of the world through efforts to transform it, instead of simply observing and studying peoples’ actions and views about reality – in the hope that meaningful change will happen somewhere further down the road. As such, this form of PAR is a significant reversal from dominant roles, locations and ways of knowing.

Chapter after chapter, the reader is introduced to the specific visualisation methods and group dynamics used to construct and validate knowledge meaningful to indigenous communities in the Peruvian Altiplano. Along with well-established participatory visualisation methods (drawings, mind maps) the PASA partners also relied extensively on community video film-making. Indigenous community members were trained

to make their own films using some of the latest digital video and editing technology. The new community film-makers have produced a wealth of evocative and moving films on their food, agriculture and culture which offer new insights into their life world. In so doing they have constructed new knowledge as well as articulated knowledge held by indigenous women, men, the old and the youth. The many video film clips included in this book offer profound insights into the diverse perspectives and views that coexist within and between indigenous communities involved in this PAR process. These multiple voices from the fields, lakes, mountain pastures, and households constitute a plurality of wisdom(s) on food, agriculture and human well-being. However, the diversity of authentic voices that come forward through these community video films are usually unheard, unseen, and/or actively marginalised by agricultural scientists, policy-researchers and economic planners.

In this context of marginalisation and exclusion of indigenous peoples, community video film-making has been an important means of cultural affirmation and self-expression of indigenous cosmologies in the PASA. Video film-making has allowed indigenous communities to engage with much more confidence with scientists and outside professionals by using their own films to show and explain ‘why’ and ‘how’ they live in Andean mountain environments, practice biodiversity-rich farming, care for the land and the lakes, travel the mountain ranges from pasture to pasture with their alpacas and llamas, eat such a diversity of foods including wild foods, and value indigenous customary institutions with their capacity to respond to shocks, uncertainty and change, including climate change.

This book not only tells the story of the journey travelled by the PASA partners over the last five years. The detailed information, real-life case studies, tools and reflections on theory and practice also make this a valuable handbook on how to organise intercultural dialogues. It offers many methodological



insights and lessons for practitioners who work within the PAR tradition. In addition, the participatory methodologies and processes described here also have a broader relevance and significance for natural and social scientists engaged in food and agriculture research.

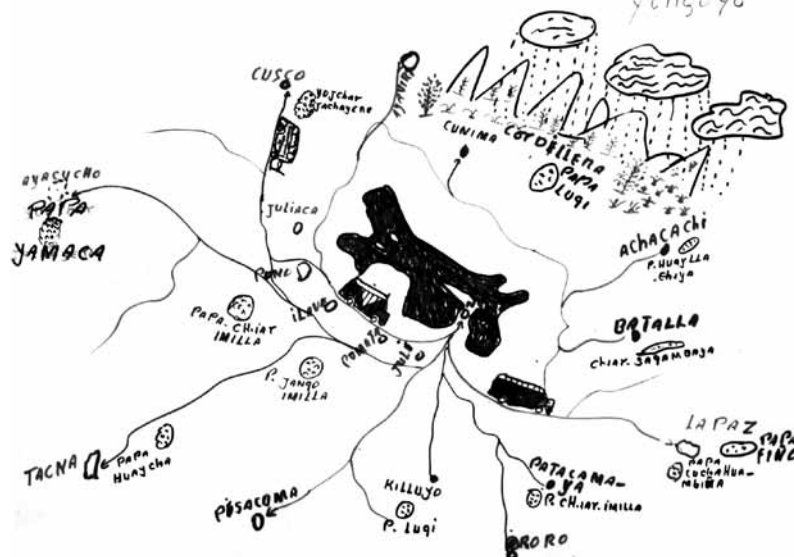
Indeed, the PASA experience offers some lessons and pointers for the transformation of agricultural research and development (AR4D) at a time when there is growing recognition that ‘business as usual’ is no longer an option.<sup>8</sup> For example, more open and respectful intercultural dialogues are needed to transform the dominant paradigm of food and agricultural research for development. Individuals and groups belonging to different cultures can be brought together to generate a deeper understanding of each others’ world views and this can lead to transformative action. But genuine and effective intercultural dialogue must be based on processes that give the least powerful actors more significant roles than before in the production and validation of knowledge. The following enabling factors are important in this regard:<sup>9</sup>

*Free prior informed consent* – jointly developed rules of engagement and a mutually agreed code of ethics

*Formation of safe spaces for intercultural dialogue* – non-threatening spaces in which actors involved can gain confidence, discuss, analyse, mobilise and act on the basis of a shared vision

*Reversals from normal professional roles, behaviours and attitudes* – change must begin with the self, from within.

## Camino de las semillas de papa nativa en Yunguyo



*Cognitive justice* – acknowledging the right for different knowledge systems to exist. The idea of cognitive justice emphasises the right for different forms of knowledge – and their associated practices, livelihoods, ways of being, and ecologies – to coexist.

*Extended peer review and different gatekeepers of knowledge.* Both powerful and less powerful actors must be involved in the co-validation of the knowledge and outcomes of intercultural dialogues. We need to recognise here that there is a plurality of legitimate perspectives on every issue. Each actor has partial and incomplete knowledge. This ‘extended’ peer review is a formidable asset at a time when everyone everywhere is faced with the open-ended uncertainties of a fast-changing world (environmental and climate change, spread of new diseases, unstable markets, political change).

<sup>8</sup> IAASTD, ‘Agriculture at a Crossroads’.

<sup>9</sup> M. P. Pimbert, ‘FPIC and beyond: Safeguards for power equalising research that protects biodiversity, rights and culture’, *Participatory Learning and Action* 65 (2012): 43–54.

*Communicating for change* should not be seen as the sole prerogative of communication professionals working in public and private scientific and policy research institutes as well as in agricultural extension departments. There is a need for a new communication praxis and allocation of resources that emphasises the devolution and dispersal of power. Advances in new communication technologies (digital video camera, radio, the Internet) as well as popular theatre, mapping and visualisation techniques offer new opportunities to decentralise and democratise the production of knowledge and communication messages – allowing even remote village communities to share stories and messages that can influence policy and practice at local, national and international levels.

To conclude, the author and contributors to this book are to be congratulated for doing such a thorough and wonderful job in synthesising and critically reflecting on the past five years' achievements of PASA. They provide us with a good reality check

and a solid basis to move forward for the next phase of PASA's journey and the larger international initiative it is part of – the Excluded Voices project ([www.excludedvoices.org](http://www.excludedvoices.org)). Work on *Democratising Food and Agricultural Research* will continue in the Andean Altiplano region. It will now focus on facilitating more intercultural dialogues between indigenous communities and scientists. Indigenous local organisations and their networks will also be strengthened to encourage farmer-led innovations and their horizontal spread to more people and places. Last, but not least, engagement with policy-makers will be enhanced through the organisation of citizens' juries on the priorities and governance of research for food, agriculture and human well-being ('buen vivir' or Sumaq Kausay in Quechua).

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