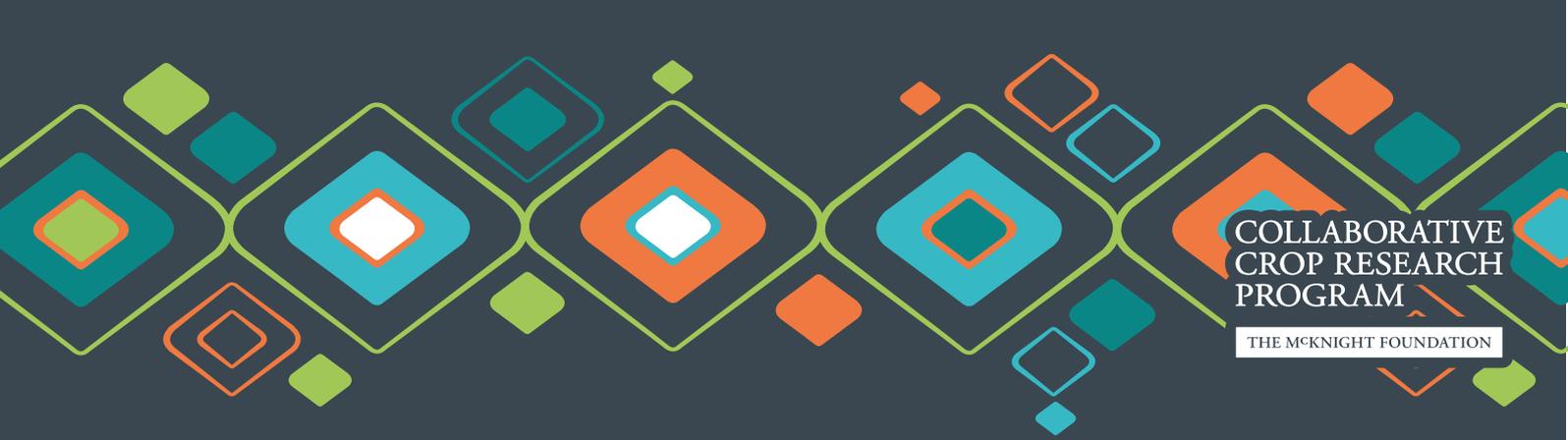




Advocacy in agroecology:

the case of the Andes
Community of Practice

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COLLABORATIVE
CROP RESEARCH
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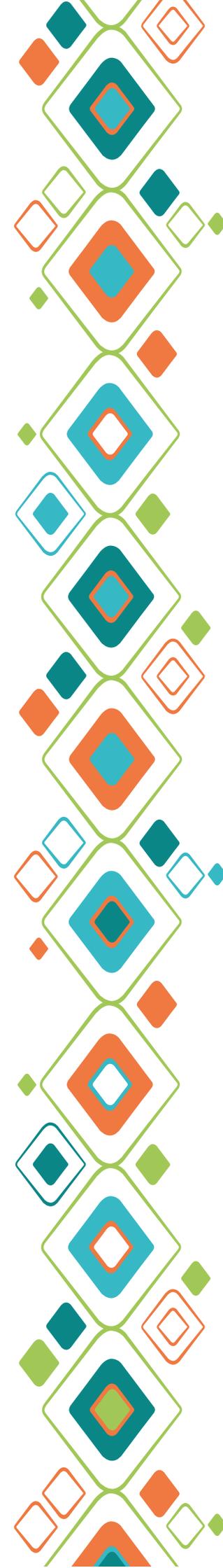
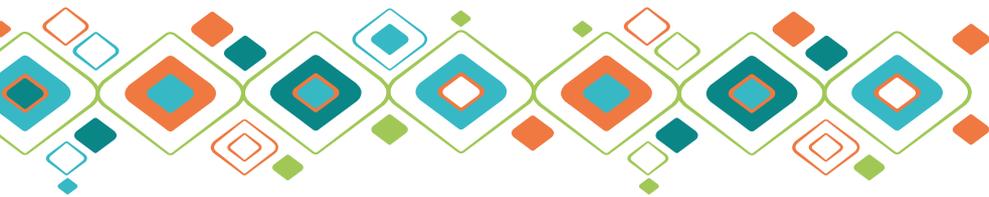


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Presentation

This report seeks to define as precisely as possible the meaning of the term “policy advocacy” through the lense of the practical work of some of the organizations that form part of the Andes Community of Practice of the McKnight Foundation’s Collaborative Crop Research Program.¹ Analysis is presented on how these organizations have carried out policy advocacy at different levels and with varied degrees of success, including lessons learned over time and the impacts and challenges they face in the future. This is not a conceptual report but rather an analytical paper based on these organizations’ real experiences with policy advocacy. The report looks at the foundations of their successes and identifies lessons learned from their activities and efforts, including their strengths and limitations. The role of the Andes Community of Practice, which supports research that is streamlined – with greater or lesser intensity – in decision-making processes mostly at different levels of government, is also addressed as are its strengths as a collective which can engage in policy advocacy.

¹ It is worth noting that McKnight Foundation has worked over the years with several other institutions and organizations that are not part of this partial 2021 “snapshot”.

Introduction

The Andes Community of Practice of the Collaborative Crop Research Program of the McKnight Foundation (Andes CoP)² has more than 15 years of experience in agricultural research work, mostly in applied research. A component is aimed at supporting policy advocacy as a mechanism which allows for broader recognition, scaling up, integration, and consolidation of solutions and responses generated by research.³ “Policy advocacy” has been, since the first annual meeting of the Andes CoP in 2004, a recurring theme and point of reflection for our joint work agenda. Although beneficiary organizations of the McKnight Foundation are mainly dedicated to research and rural development, there is an understanding and consensus on the need to support and engage in policy advocacy as an activity/process. This may be marginal in the context of overall activities, but has considerable importance with regards to its potential to trigger broader transformative change.

In this context, it is necessary to better identify the contours of policy advocacy and understand the nuances between a broad list of actions that can range from more or less direct intervention in the process of creating or modifying a legal norm or public policy (policy advocacy *per se*), undertaking scaling-up efforts (as a result or as a catalyst of policy advocacy), to what could be more discreet and less visible but equally important actions that focus on generating changes in institutional policies, in public school curricula and in spheres that do not necessarily pertain to the public/state arenas. The Andes CoP has a diverse set of advocacy experiences and scaling-up efforts across this varied spectrum.

This report synthesizes policy advocacy experiences of the Andes CoP based on a review of different interventions and actions undertaken over

² For more information and details on the Collaborative Program of the Foundation see: https://www.mcknight.org/es_mx/programs/international/collaborative-crop-research/our-approach/ For its work in the Andes specifically, see, <https://andescdp.org> Also, review the results of the Seventeenth Annual Meeting of the Andes CoP at <https://www.andescdp.org/cdp17>

³ The following organizations are members of the Andes CoP: in Bolivia, AGRECOL, EKORURAL, PROSUCO, PROINPA, UMSA; in Peru, Bartolomé de las Casas Center, CIZA, YANAPAI Institute, IM, ETC Andes; in Ecuador, CLACSO, ECLOSIO, FLACSO, ILRI, INIAP, AMIGO Project, PROSUCO, RICOLTO. International partners include CIP/WUR, CGIAR, IICA, IRD, SWISSAID.

the last 10 years by its organizations. These interventions and actions are placed under a conceptual framework describing “policy advocacy” and its variations and differences. The dream of taking agroecology,⁴ as a central activity, from “islands of success” to “oceans of change” through policy advocacy and scaling-up, demands attention to and reflection about different actions, interventions and practices of Andes CoP organizations.⁵ The notion of “convincing narratives” takes on special importance in this context based on, for example, the experiences highlighted during the last annual meeting of the Andes CoP.⁶

The report is divided into four sections. The first section provides a conceptual framework to clarify the concept of policy advocacy. It does not aim to offer an exhaustive academic analysis of the concept but rather a contribution that facilitates, especially for the organizations of the Andes CoP, an understanding of how much progress has been made on policy advocacy, even when they are not specifically performing policy advocacy. Section two offers a synthesis and preliminary analysis of the advances and challenges faced by a group of organizations of the Andes CoP in their policy advocacy actions, particularly in the government/public sphere. These organizations have been selected based on their efforts to develop policy advocacy agendas over time and takes into consideration the strengths they have shown in their successes and how they have overcome challenges as well. Section three highlights the lessons that can be drawn from the analysis of the different examples of policy advocacy from the Andes CoP and also the challenges that influence chances of success and real-life impact for small farmers and agroecology in general. Finally, section four identifies some lessons learned from organizations as an almost *sine qua non* condition to guarantee minimal levels of success in policy advocacy actions and interventions.

Through this brief conceptual analysis of what policy advocacy means, combined with reflections on the learnings from the Andes CoP in concrete practical cases, and the identification of challenges and lessons learned, this report offers a critical reflection of policy advocacy to the Andes CoP itself, as well as, to the McKnight Foundation.

4 In several of the Andean countries, particularly in Ecuador and Bolivia for example, agroecology recreates a deeply political and ideological debate that confronts different ways of understanding progress and development of agriculture. It is beyond the scope of this report to document this debate, but suffice to say that it confronts traditional forms of production and agricultural practices, with - in general - intensive and industrial agriculture as promoted by free market and capitalist development models. For further reading see, Artacker T. and Daza, E. (2020). *Mapa de Actores y Estado de la Cuestión: La Dimensión Política de la Agroecología en Ecuador*. Instituto de Estudios Ecuatorianos. Auspiciado por Swissaid. See also. Paredes, M., Sherwood, S., y Arce, A. La Contingencia del Cambio Social en la Agricultura y la Alimentación en América Latina. *Revista de Ciencias Sociales*. Número 54, Quito, enero 2016, pp. 11-25

5 Anderson, C., Bruil, J., Chapell, M.J., Kiss, C., and Pimbert, M. Scaling Agroecology from the Bottom Up: Six Domains of Transformation. *Food First*, Issue Brief No. 1, Spring 2020. Available at, https://foodfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/FoodFirstBackgrounder-AgroecologyTransformations_Feb21.pdf

6 During the presentation of the regional team of McKnight Foundation at the Seventeenth Annual Meeting of the Andes CoP (July 6-16, 2021), it was widely agreed that generating robust narratives contribute to the advocacy process in the transition towards agroecology itself. See Annual Meeting Report available at, <https://www.andescdp.org/cdp17>

1 Preliminary considerations about policy advocacy: what are we talking about?

Literature, informational materials, guidelines, etc. on “policy advocacy” are abundant and diverse. A simple Google search for “policy advocacy” offers more than 5 million results. Although there is no universally accepted definition of this concept, policy advocacy can be defined as:

...the efforts of organized citizens [for example civil associations] to participate and influence the formulation and implementation of public policies [rules] and programs through persuasion and pressure before state authorities, international financial organizations and other powerful institutions. It consists of a cluster of activities aimed at gaining access, participating in an informed manner and influencing [with results] people who have decision-making power in matters of importance to a particular group or to society in general.”⁷

In this sense, it is usually a collective action preceded by more or less intense dialogue processes, to actively participate in the exercise and directing of power and the spaces where it is exercised. This happens especially in the state/public arena and at multiple levels, throughout different phases of decision-making processes which often results in the approval of a legal norm, a specific public policy or a specific official program. Policy advocacy can be a process that pursues a change and/or a result thereof expressed in instruments such as laws, regulations, policies, or others. In general, policy advocacy involves processes, diverse in terms of the actors and public entities involved and the incentives to which each actor responds.

Although the emphasis in this definition is focused on the state level (“public or state matters”), it is clear that advocacy or influence actions can occur in non-public or non-state arenas, for example, in the context of a group or federation of agroecological farmers, a political movement, or other non-governmental, private, communal or corporate spaces. It is important to keep this in mind. However, for the purposes of this report and to aid conceptual precision, policy advocacy in this context focuses on the state/public space, at the national, subnational or international level.

⁷ This definition is taken and modified from the document “Central American Advocacy Training Program. Basic Manual for Political Influence.” Washington Office for Latin American Affairs. June 2002. Available at, https://www.wola.org/sites/default/files/downloadable/Advocacy%20Training/past/atp_manualbasico.pdf

Far from being a linear and clearly defined process in terms of its phases, Figure 1 reflects incremental complexity and intensity of the actions that may or may not lead to successful advocacy processes and results.

Figure 1.



Starting with low-intensity actions (for example, a conversation, a preliminary contact, a presentation at an event, a formal request to an authority, discreet up-scaling activities or replication of a practical experience in a certain space or territory depending on its repercussions, etc.) through more inclusive and formalized efforts (for example, preparation of a draft legal proposal, technical support for legal initiatives and processes formal advocacy, etc.) a policy advocacy process can move gradually or center itself on achieving a result.

In the case of the Andes CoP and its organizations, policy advocacy is reflected, in general, in actions and activities targeted towards, for example:

- Participation in the drafting and promotion of laws or specific regulations pertaining to agroecology or related issues,
- Mobilization of resources from public budgets for agroecological activities of various types through active participation in relevant spaces where budgets are defined and which are formally created by law,
- Promotion of specific agroecology programs before national authorities,
- Recognition of agroecology as an activity of national interest or of special importance in the context of food security,
- Creation of agroecology commissions or working groups at the subnational and municipal level,
- Recognition of local technologies and innovations in the context of Andean

agriculture and small farmers in particular (through research results) and their integration into plans, programs, instruments,

- Development and inclusion of agroecology educational programs and related topics in rural schools.

The public/state arena, subject matter or the type of action, serve, in general terms, as a point of reference to categorize what could be defined as policy advocacy actions. The work and direct interaction with municipal officials, congressional representatives, representatives of regional governments and ministries to develop or change a law or regulation or program over time, is a good indication of policy advocacy.

Certainly, the examples of policy advocacy are diverse and depend on specific social, cultural, institutional, political and economic contexts. Section 2 offers examples of advocacy or what could fall under a more general concept of “influence” and policy advocacy *per se* from some of the organizations of the Andes CoP.

It is important to note that all policy advocacy interventions incorporate “degrees” or intensities of influence – as concrete actions – at different levels, moments and circumstances in the state/public space. To reiterate, in this report and to facilitate understanding, we distinguish, as far as possible, between policy advocacy associated with the public/state arena and “advocacy” or influence as it relates to non-state spaces. The latter implies a sum of actions/acts that “push” processes/results in different ways in non-state scenarios and do not qualify as policy advocacy *sensu strictu*. At the same time, the notion of “scaling-up”⁸ is integrated as an activity, product, process and/or catalyst for policy advocacy.⁹

Although this first approach to policy advocacy contributes – one would hope – to rationalize its process and result, it is insufficient to guarantee the transformative changes that, for example, agroecology demands on many fronts and levels. For this, clarity about the objective or goal that is pursued with the advocacy activity and effort is required.

Figure 2 (below) shows two models that allow us to visualize how and where policy advocacy takes place and its results, including through scaling up as a tool for change. On one hand, it covers the model of Kania *et al.* on “*system changes*”¹⁰ and on the other, it synthesizes and integrates the work of Moore *et al.* on scaling “out”, “up” and “deep” and how to enhance the impact of organizations.¹¹ This visualization helps set a proposed scope for advocacy efforts and identify where it usually takes place. On the other hand, it also shows

8 According to Valdivia-Díaz and Le Coq, “scaling up” means several simultaneous transitions, at different scales, levels social, economic, cultural, institutional and political dimensions, which lead growing numbers of families to optimize the agroecological practices and expand it through products in the market. Valdivia-Díaz M. y Le Coq, J.F. *Propuesta de Hoja de Ruta para el Escalamiento de la Agroecología en Ecuador*. Alianza CIAT-Bioversity. Abril de 2022. Available at, <https://www.researchgate.net/publications/359765744>

9 Scaling-up, according to Anderson *et al.*, faces challenges to achieve transformative change in six areas: access to resources, knowledge, exchange systems, networks, equity and narrative. This could also apply to the proposal by Moore *et al.* and its scaling dimensions oriented, ultimately, to deep scaling-up, changes in the paradigm and mental model and that, in some way, is also related to the conditions of “system change” or systemic changes proposed by Kania *et al.*

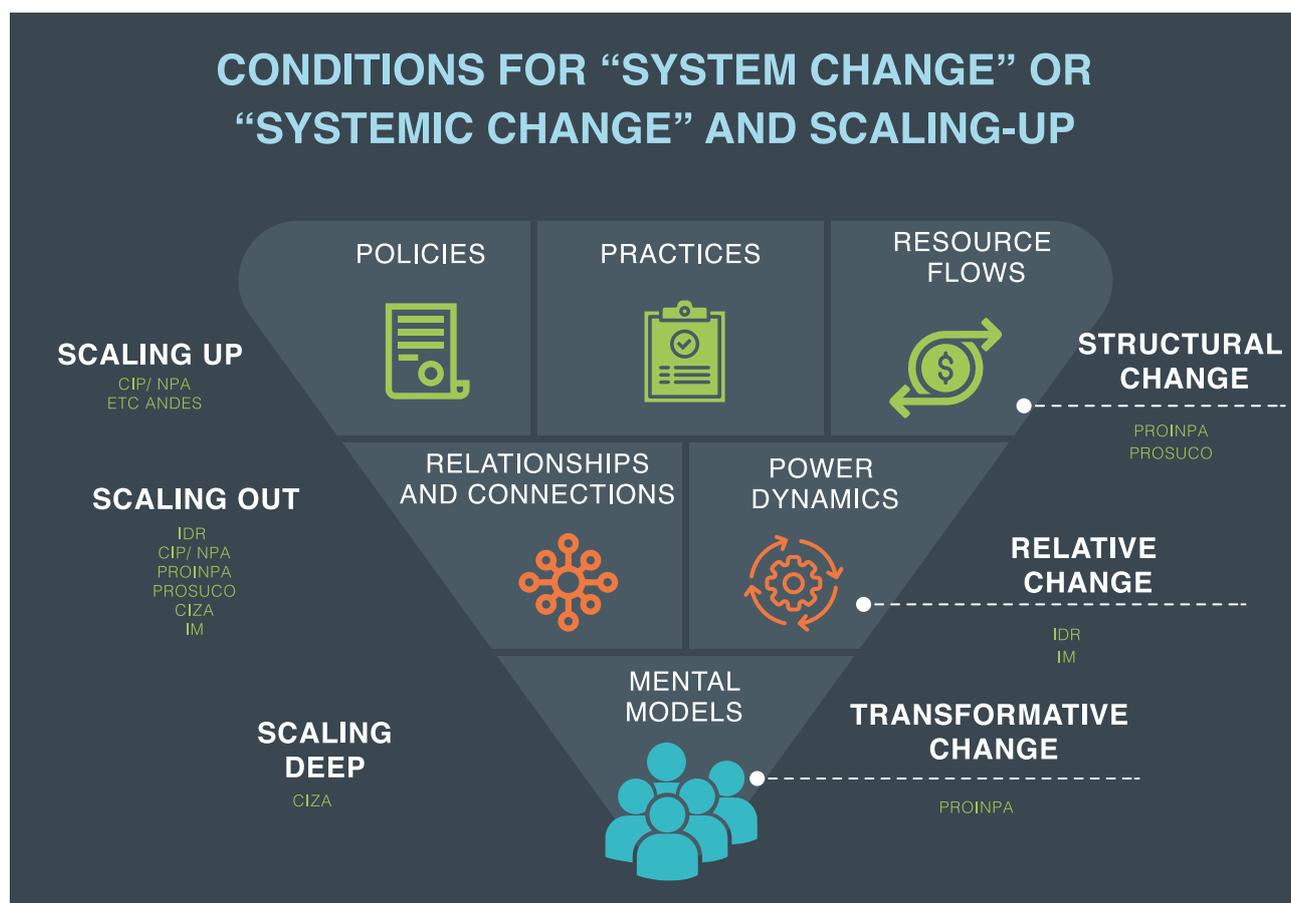
10 See, Kania, J., Kramer, M., and Senge, P. *The Water of Systems Change*. Reimagining social Change. June, 2018. Available at, <https://www.fsg.org/blog/new-article-water-systems-change#:~:text=The%20Water%20of%20Systems%20Change%2C%20a%20new%20article,model%20for%20those%20interested%20in%20creating%20systems%20change.>

11 Moore, M.L., Ridell, D., and Vocisano, D. Scaling Out, Scaling Up, Scaling Deep. Strategies for Non-Profits in Advancing Systemic Social Innovation. *The Journal of Corporate Citizenship Issue 58*, June 2015, 67-84

how this coincides with the scaling-up tool/process which often accompanies advocacy activities as demonstrative of the potential of solutions or sometimes as a concrete product of the implementation and effects of policy advocacy interventions.

This approach is applicable to agroecology as a dimension of agriculture and a specific interest of McKnight Foundation and the Andes CoP and to many other areas of human endeavors.

Figure 2.



While it may be relatively easy to generate impact through policy advocacy at the structural changes level (e.g. developing or changing a public policy itself, modifying a practice in an association or group, or influencing a decision on the flow of financial resources at the State or private level), it is often more difficult to make progress in achieving relational changes (e.g. in terms of relationships and connections and affecting multi-level power dynamics) and, especially, transformative changes (e.g. in mental models and the modification of people’s behavior) which have a positive and longer-lasting impact on reality and daily life – in this case, on the livelihoods of the small agroecological farmer or the peasant family and their communities. The latter requires additional efforts in terms of scaling-up, training, education, outreach, long-term interventions, etc. The difficulty of generating these changes is certainly variable depending on particular national and local contexts and circumstances.

Structural changes could be the result of “scaling up” actions that relate to advocacy at the institutional level, regarding public policies and regulatory changes, to affect larger

populations through actions at the national or subnational levels. In the case of relational changes, these largely correspond to the idea of “scaling out,” which goes beyond the continuous replication of experiences or their multiplication to promote networks, connections and relationships with “like-minded” actors or actors with common interests that expand the ideas horizontally and apply the proposals as principles to adapt them to different contexts. This coheres with the idea of “seeding” the proposals so that they are taken up in a particular but extended way. Finally, transformative changes are associated with “scaling deep” through efforts to change narratives and invest in education to generate different – and better – mental models and social paradigms for different settings and contexts. One can visualize policy advocacy accompanied by scaling efforts, among other tools that enhance its impacts.

2. Advances and impacts from the Andes Community of Practice regarding influence and policy advocacy in agroecology¹²

The organizations that form the Andes CoP offer several successful examples and cases of policy advocacy in the state/public and non-state spaces. They've managed to produce results even in the most complex dimension of transformative change at the level of mental models and changes in behavior in certain territories.¹³ A summary analysis of these cases is presented through the description of policy advocacy actions carried out by organizations of the Andes CoP and their effects and impacts. The summary is used to facilitate understanding and stimulate reflection.

Table 1.

BRIEF CONSIDERATIONS ON AGROECOLOGY AND ITS SCALING IN THE ANDES

In recent studies undertaken in Ecuador and Peru, some common general answers are found (certainly with nuances) to the question: why does agroecology not expand more intensively into larger territories or penetrates consumer markets? The reasons can be summarized as follows:

- Limitations *in situ* support and inadequate learning process stemming from extension programs,
- Limitations regarding access to seeds and different productive resources that enhance and trigger agroecology as a process,
- Limited product marketing channels which are mostly biased towards more “traditional” (modern) agriculture,
- Absence of consolidated alliances amongst producers and between producers and consumers, and,
- Absence of formal credit oriented towards agroecology.

Despite an apparent interest from the State for agroecology – which is reflected in public policies, strategies and multiple instruments – this reality and the acceptance by the producer largely contrasts what is written on paper.

Sources: Valdivia-Díaz M. y Le Coq, J.F. *Propuesta de Hoja de Ruta para el Escalamiento de la Agroecología en Ecuador*. Alianza CIAT-Bioversity. Abril de 2022. Disponible en, <https://www.researchgate.net/publications/359765744> and Valdivia-Díaz M. y Le Coq, J.F. *Propuesta de Hoja de Ruta para el Escalamiento de la Agroecología en el Perú*. Alianza CIAT-Bioversity. Abril de 2022. Disponible en, <https://www.researchgate.net/publications/359769113>

¹² This section has been prepared based on the review of relevant literature, a brief survey/form and conversations held with representatives of each organization.

¹³ “Success” refers to the achievement of a general goal or objective(s) as determined in the organizational strategy pertaining to an advocacy action. This covers from the very limited and focused action to the most ambitious, for instance at the national level. It also includes substantive and qualitative changes in livelihoods in as much these are defined as organizational goals/objectives.

PROINPA - Fundación para la Investigación y Promoción de Productos Andinos (Bolivia)

PROINPA has accumulated institutional experience focused on generating innovations and technologies that benefit small producers of Andean and agroecological crops. In the context of increasing soil erosion in southern Bolivia – explained by the intensification of quinoa cultivation – and in an effort to reverse this trend, PROINPA has generated and innovated alternatives that influenced the incorporation and recognition in official certification procedures (provided for in the legislation) of the verification of “multipurpose live barriers” and “improved rest periods” as a contribution to the sustainability of the agroecosystem. Policy advocacy has produced important changes in terms of structures, including public regulations and implementation processes. Scaling out with these innovations has had a virtuous effect on their policy and regulatory inclusion/recognition.

Additionally, in a mix of public/state and non-state spaces, through coordination and integration of efforts with entities such as McKnight Foundation, Wageningen University through Pherobank, and the National Agricultural Health and Safety Service (SENASAG), among others, PROINPA contributed to the production of pheromones against “*ticonas*” (alma kepis) and “moths” (pilipintos), authorized by the Bolivian government as an appropriate technology for pest control and currently being used extensively by more than 40% of organic quinoa farmers in Bolivia. They are also accepted for organic certification of quinoa production. This case poses a true transformative change that implies new ways of doing agroecological production of quinoa among a significant proportion of the Quechua and Aymara population of the altiplano, through simultaneous actions at the structural, relational and transformative levels. Here too, scaling out and up has allowed policy advocacy to achieve legal and regulatory change objectives.

In terms of influence at a non-state level, PROINPA has generated, through its research, an eco-insecticide derived from the *locoto* (*Capsicum pubescens*), called “Acaritop”. Its principle of action is recognized, produced and used by the members of the National Association of Quinoa Producers (ANAPQUI). ANAPQUI has contributed through investment in the manufacture of bio-inputs, while at the same time showing elements of transformative change considering the manner in which quinoa farmers respond with new and better tools and technology -generated by PROINPA- to persistent challenges of soil erosion, pests and diseases.

Finally, PROINPA has influenced a large number of small-scale quinoa producers, through the selection of quinoa varieties that are a fundamental part of producers’ family strategies for adaptation to climate change. This allows them to produce quinoa with seed from early-harvest varieties, with tolerance to biotic and abiotic factors and with better quality for agribusiness. In this case, elements of advocacy and influence converge at the relational level, as part of scaling out efforts.

PROSUCO - Promoción de la Sustentabilidad y Conocimientos Compartidos (Bolivia)

Since 2009, PROSUCO has promoted research and “social innovation” to generate positive changes in agricultural practices of Bolivian Andean communities, especially those of the Aymaras, in the northern highlands (around Lake Titicaca) and central and southern highlands. In addition to this, PROSUCO has several experiences in policy advocacy. Its model of social innovation “Yapuchiri” (farmer leaders and young innovators) has penetrated the public education agenda (policy advocacy at the structural and relational level) through the Alternative Education Sub-System of the Bolivian Ministry of Education.

Thanks to a persistent effort by PROSUCO and the recognition and formal certification of the “Yapuchiris” by the State, the “Yapuchiris” themselves (as well as the ideas incorporated in their training) are now better accepted, allowing them to join educational and decision-making processes at different levels. They are now recognized “as someone” not only from the social/communal perspective but from the point of view of the state and public agencies. This certification also allows them to apply for positions in municipalities which require certain academic degrees.¹⁴ We see here a process of policy advocacy at the State level, within the Bolivian public education system.

Likewise, and more as an example of an ongoing policy advocacy process, an attempt is being made to scale out this experience through a more effective intervention of the Bolivian State, as a result of the participatory development of methods and tools for agroclimatic information products for use in rural areas. These are processes where the presence of the “Yapuchiri”, with recognized observation and climate recording abilities, allows for the validation of climate information and its use to solve local problems.

Thus, the process is contributing to the provision of climate information services adjusted to the needs and understanding of local communities (scaling out) in numerous ways: the “Yapuchiris” are developing a network of “climate observers”, a “pachagrama” (map) of climate information, and indicators that allow predicting climate phenomena and their intensity in local areas. This initiative has proven the effectiveness of advocacy and influence with public actors (SAT AGRO of the MDRyT and SINB of VIDECI), and other development actors (Biocultura, ICCO, Helvetas, Swiss Contact, RIMISP), with a view of its adaptation in other contexts. Once there is preliminary support of communities where these products are operating, it is possible that other municipalities will join the effort.

Another process PROSUCO is promoting is its work with bio-inputs, based on the research work with “Yapuchiris” and communal RAI, to influence communities and families in the use of these validated products in their local contexts to improve their capacity to manage agroclimatic risks (frost, hailstorms). Progress has been made on joint management with the communities in the construction of centers for innovation and production of bio-inputs (with their regulations), and the communities themselves have initiated negotiations with their municipalities to complement these centers with more equipment to expand services

¹⁴ See document: *Redes de Agricultores e Investigadores: 2004-2017*, https://andescdp.org/sites/default/files/miscasos-estudio/Yapuchiris_español.pdf

beyond their communities. This type of effort coincides with an impact on the relational level, with scaling out that seeks to expand, in this case, the practical proposals from field work and the application of bio-inputs to networks and groups of communities.



Yapuchiris from FUNAPA and Jacha Suyu Pakajaqi receive their Basic Technician certificate from the Bolivian Ministry of Education. **Photo:** PROSUCO

UMSA - Universidad Mayor de San Andrés (Bolivia)

The Universidad Mayor de San Andrés has significant experience supporting processes on three main fronts: producer organizations, municipalities and public schools. This support is based primarily on what can be called “academic influence”, which includes streamlining ancestral and elders’ wisdom and traditional knowledge into the advocacy and influence processes as a means to promote improvement of the productive activity of small farmers of the altiplano.

The UMSA makes sure that strategic priorities are defined at the local level, by and for producers. Often these priorities are opposed to those of public institutions in charge of agricultural extension, promotion, etc. Although this cannot be described as policy advocacy *per se*, it does involve efforts to influence and inform with technical and scientific contributions and promote a conversation that eventually derives into policy advocacy processes that can also be supported by other organizations and social actors.

In the case of UMSA, its efforts to influence opinion occur primarily in the national and international publishing world, specifically trying to incorporate traditional wisdom or the knowl-

edge of indigenous peoples about biodiversity and crops as part of its scientific research process and objectives and peer-reviewed analysis.

This occurs – not without resistance from indexed journals – for example, through research about local/communal indicators on climate change and how local knowledge and wisdom have a central and guiding role in specific spaces and territories. It is, in this sense, an influence of an academic nature, but which can have indirect and future impact on the narratives and conversations on climate change in different contexts.¹⁵

Asociación YANAPAI - (Peru)

YANAPAI has almost a decade of work experience promoting the recognition, conservation and production of native potatoes by small farmers and generating mechanisms for their recognition and consumption by society, the state and the private/business sector through the Association of Guardians of the Potato of the Central Andes of Peru (AGUAPAN).¹⁶

Using very intensive scaling out and up strategies, YANAPAI has sought to generate visibility and widespread appreciation for small-scale agriculture (specifically “conservationist” agriculture) and for ways of life that are very distant from those of urban centers, but extremely important from the perspective of rescuing cultural heritage (farmers’ practices and knowledge are recognized as essential for the processes of adaptation to climate change), revaluation of agrobiodiversity (they are the main preservers of native potatoes of the central Andes) and support for the local livelihood of farming families called “conservationists” (alliances have been established with the private sector to market products derived from native potatoes and participate in the benefits generated by their commercialization).¹⁷

YANAPAI and AGUAPAN are not a pure case of policy advocacy, but rather, an example of a series of different scaling interventions in different spaces and at different levels that jointly enable a specific experience to show up on the social and policy radar screens.

For example, YANAPAI and SPDA have worked together with representatives of AGUAPAN to draw the attention of the Ministry of the Environment (MINAM) and INIA and their inclusion as part of the visibility of successful experiences of agrobiodiversity conservation through multisectoral meetings (MINAM/INIA Agrobiodiversity Technical Group), reporting, social

15 UMSA has numerous publications in prestigious indexed academic journals. It also works on different projects regarding agroecology and local knowledge and technologies, including, for example, the “Atmospheric Validation of Farmers’ Local Knowledge to Develop Regional Atmospheric Forecasts” project that has the support of Swiss Cooperation in Bolivia. See, for example, García, M., *et al.* Uso y Validez de Indicadores Climáticos Locales como Herramientas de Pronósticos Adaptados a la Realidad Andina. *Revista de Investigación e Innovación Agropecuaria y de Recursos Naturales*, ISSN 2409-1618, IARn vol.1 no.1 La Paz, 2014.

16 AGUAPAN is formally recognized as an association, with statutes, balance sheets, etc. It is formed by 40 peasant families from the Andean regions of Lima, Huánuco, Pasco, Junín and Huancavelica. AGUAPAN has a support group whose members are the National Institute of Agrarian Innovation (INIA), the International Potato Center and the Peruvian Society of Environmental Law, in addition to YANAPAI itself.

17 For the latter, there is a cooperation agreement with HZPC, a seed company that contributes through annual monetary allocations to each conservationist family so that these funds are invested in what the families deem convenient, specifically health, education and local agricultural supplies. The investment of this company is a contribution for the use of native seeds in the commercial production of “chips” and other products, mostly marketed in Europe and for which HZPC has committed to sharing benefits with each member of AGUAPAN.

media campaigns¹⁸, participation in events, etc. Likewise, at a more local level, AGUAPAN partners have participated in some of the most important seed and agrobiodiversity fairs, such as the Muru Raymi in Kichki, Huanuco; The experience of AGUAPAN and its guardians of the native potato has been used to contribute to the policy/regulatory process led by MINAM and INIA for the approval of the norm that recognizes “agrobiodiversity zones.”¹⁹ Although in this last case the farmers or conservationist families have not specifically participated in this process, SPDA and YANAPAI have, and as such have carried the families’ experience into the policy process with AGUAPAN, successfully, albeit indirectly aligning the interests of the Principals (the guardians of the potato) and the Agents (YANAPAI, SPDA and the State in general who is responsible for protecting the national cultural and natural patrimony).

CIZA / UNALM - Centro de Investigaciones de Zonas Áridas/Universidad Nacional Agraria la Molina (Peru)

Among its different activities, CIZA/ UNALM have been promoting the integration of issues concerning conservation of native crop seeds to address climate change challenges into rural schools in the Andes of northern, central and southern Peru since 2016. Through diverse and coordinated interventions with rural Andean schools’ parents’ associations (APAFAs) – many of whom are farmers – Regional Directorates of Education (DRE) and Local Educational Management Units (UGELES), CIZA/UNALM have begun a process of integrating efforts to teach about local knowledge concerning conservation of native plant agrobiodiversity, focusing mainly on children and young people in Andean rural schools, based on educational innovations that help contextualize the school curriculum, adapting methodologies and content to social/environmental contexts in which children live and develop.

These activities and interventions include, for example, presentations to authorities (e.g. Regional Directorates of Education and Local Educational Management Units), conversations with teachers and parents, and direct information meetings with the Ministry of Education to generate “up-take” at the higher national level.

This process has achieved an initial recognition of the need to contextualize the educational curriculum and substantive matter as part of the local and regional territorial and institutional features in municipalities and the regional governments of Piura, Huánuco and Apurímac. Advocacy in this case occurs mainly in the public/state educational space with actions that also involve non-state social actors such as students, parents, educational, normal, regional universities and NGOs. These interventions are aimed at supporting changes in paradigms and trends towards adoption of culturally relevant curricula content in Andean rural primary schools. In the case of CIZA, advocacy can be verified at the level of relational change, with the expectation - due to the continued educational work- of trans-

¹⁸ See, for example, <https://www.actualidadambiental.pe/diez-iniciativas-sostenibles-de-pequenos-productores-que-necesitan-tu-apoyo/> y <https://www.actualidadambiental.pe/guardianes-de-la-papa-nativa-participan-en-congreso-mundial-sobre-este-alimento-ancestral/>

¹⁹ Through Supreme Decree 020-2016-MINAGRI of December 13, 2016, a Regulation on the Formalization of the Recognition of Agrobiodiversity Zones was approved.

formative changes. CIZA's actions coincide with the notion of scaling out, by expanding ideas and proposals towards the educational network of rural schools and scaling deep in terms of expected future impacts of changes in paradigms and perceptions, especially by new generations that have benefited from education aligned with regional and local realities and needs.



Don Agripino Gómez in the "Salón de las semillas" of the I.E. N° 15306 Pechuquiz, explaining to the children of the school about native potatoes. Pechuquiz, Altos de Frías, Piura, Peru. **Photo: Fiorella Manchego.**

ETC Andes - Asociación Ecología, Tecnología y Cultura en los Andes (Peru)

ETC Andes does not have policy advocacy as a specific mission. However, through different projects, especially within the framework of Ecocultura (a collaboration with ECOCIENCIA from Ecuador and AGRUCO from Bolivia), it has supported the participation of the population of 11 areas in the province of Pitumarca, Cusco, in the elaboration of communal agendas that have been the basis for their involvement and influence in participatory budgeting processes for the allocation of resources provided for in existing regional and municipal legislation in Peru. This is associated with the idea of scaling up and is a form of policy advocacy targeted towards relational changes in rural areas and territories. In other regions, such as Cajamarca, their experience— as in the case of other institutions – has been that changes and instability in municipal governments affect progress and the possibility of lasting impact. This has been a kind of advocacy effort through training community leaders to ensure local budgets are correctly allocated as a result of their direct intervention and participation. ETC Andes is still assessing whether this scaling out achieves permanent

structural changes in the way budgets are defined and assigned at the municipal and provincial levels, though a participatory, transparent and accessible process for communities supported by trained and informed people from within the communities themselves.

A second experience involving direct policy advocacy in a state context, has been the work and campaigns regarding an extension of the moratorium on bringing genetically modified crops into Peru. Under the leadership of the Centro Amazónica de Antropología y Aplicación Práctica (CAAP), working in partnership with the Ministry of the Environment (MINAM), activities were undertaken to extend the moratorium, in direct contrast to the position of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and the National Institute for Agrarian Innovation (INIA) which were in favor of lifting it. CAAP and MINAM and a series of organizations prevailed, and Congress extended the moratorium. In this case, there has been a clear technical intervention at the state/public level to influence policy decisions that are particularly relevant for agriculture and agroecology in general, as they relate to genetically modified crops. In this case, the actions of ETC Andes also fall within efforts to scale up with the specific goal of influencing the regulatory and institutional issues.

Finally, it is also important to refer to policy advocacy at the international level. ETC Andes has been part of the global agroecology movement through “Agroecology Now!” that, like many of the international networks, is defining the contents, the narratives and the way in which agroecology is perceived and can be promoted more effectively at the national and local levels. The relevance and weight of these spaces cannot be understated. International policy advocacy is also critical to define activities supportive of biodiversity conservation and climate action. Advocacy at this level is not negligible, since the results of these international processes often define the allocation of funds and resources of international cooperation and foundations that support the agroecological movement.

IM - Mountain Institute (Peru)

For several years, the Mountain Institute (IM) has concentrated its efforts on generating technologies and innovation adapted to local circumstances of the Peruvian Andes. An intense process of deglaciation in high Andean has produced so-called “acid rock drainage,” generated due to the exposure and erosion of the glaciers, which in turn produce acidic substances that contaminate springs, rivers, crop fields and livestock.

To counter this natural phenomenon, in turn caused by the rise in atmospheric temperatures due to human causes, in cooperation with the General Directorate of Environmental Health (DIGESA), local populations and the Santiago de Mayolo University have generated large-scale filtration and purification technologies that include the planting of reeds and the use of modified bacteria in bio-remediation processes. The levels of metals in the water have been substantially reduced to standards compatible with the Environmental Quality Standards (ECAS) established by the DIGESA.

These large pools are built with the support of the local municipality using part of the infrastructure with labor provided from the communities themselves. This technology has received widespread recognition from the Peruvian government with awards and special

mentions from MINAM, INAGIEN and local governments. In a way this is a first technical step aimed at influencing a research agenda and then escalating the innovation to other localities and regions and, finally, recognizing and promoting results, expressed in public policy that promotes its dissemination and adoption (scaling out).

As part of other parallel processes of policy advocacy at the state/public level, the IM is part of the Working Group on Mountain Ecosystems of the Ministry of the Environment (MINAM) that is developing a National Policy for the Management of Mountain Ecosystems, under the leadership of the National Institute for Research on Glaciers and Mountain Ecosystems (INAGIEN), which is accountable to MINAM. This technology, among many other aspects related to mountain ecosystems, is expected to be reflected in this strategy that defines the path of national policy on mountains and glaciers. Specifically, the IM participates in the discussion and drafting of this strategy, which, like others, will surely be approved by a legal norm to give it specific weight in the national development agenda. This is a typical process of policy advocacy in which the IM gets actively involved at the level of structural and relational change, not only at the national level but also at the international/regional level, through its participation, for example, in the Regional Initiative of Hydrological Monitoring of Andean Ecosystems or as part of the World Conservation Union and initiatives for the scaling-up of nature-based solutions for mountain ecosystems.

AGRECOL - Andes Foundation (Bolivia)

The AGRECOL Andes Foundation has significant experience in social advocacy and public policy work regarding the management and defense of water, agroecology, healthy food security and local economic development at the municipal level. Within its advocacy strategies, AGRECOL distinguishes social advocacy as processes of information, awareness and motivation for the action of grassroots organizations of civil society, from political advocacy, which refers to the accompaniment and promotion of grassroots organizations to influence their decision-making authorities so that they build, promulgate and implement public policies to ensure that these issues form a part of municipal territorial development models with a vision of sustainability.

Since September 2018, AGRECOL has been accompanying a process of social and policy advocacy in the Municipality of Pasorapa, department of Cochabamba, a critical municipality in terms of water availability.²⁰ This process aims to ensure that the Municipality has a public policy (municipal law) of comprehensive and sustainable management of its water resources, looking to ensure that in the medium and long term this municipality has better conditions of access and distribution to this key resource for agricultural activity, livestock and, of course, human consumption²¹.

²⁰ The scarcity of water, due to the depletion of sources due to continuous droughts, is the biggest problem that prevents the families of Pasorapa from having better living conditions.

²¹ AGRECOL (2021), *Procesos de Incidencia Política y Social. Guía para el Diseño e Implementación en la Construcción de las Políticas Públicas de Desarrollo Territorial Sostenible*. Bolivia. Disponible en <https://www.agrecolandes.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/IncidenciaPoliticaSocial.pdf>

In this context, AGRECOL has promoted a process, initially focused on social impact (workshops, meetings, talks) with civil society, headed by the Central de Trabajadores Agropecuarios (the farm workers' trade union), trade union leaders, and water users in general, which materialized in a participatory and detailed study of the current state of water resources in the different life systems of these municipalities, which was translated into a strategy or integral and sustainable management plan projected for the 2021-2030 decade²². This strategic plan was the central tool or evidence for these organizations to initiate a process of political influence (municipal summit, advocacy, lobbying) in their municipal government and for it to recognize the legitimate value of this proposal and grant it legal value through its elevation to the level of municipal law so that this plan becomes a fundamental component of the municipality's comprehensive territorial development plan, which occurred at the beginning of 2021. ²³

An important element of this process has been the consensus reached among all local social actors on the need for a comprehensive plan/strategy to have safer and more equitable access to this resource in order to guarantee local ways of life in the communities of Pasorapa, because water is synonymous with life. Likewise, it is worth pointing out how intensive the process of social and political advocacy has been over a little more than three years where the presence and drive of AGRECOL in different areas and with different local actors – civil society and the Municipality – has allowed it to generate harmony and alignment of interests among the actors (governance). As an example, we note the citizen of Pasorapa's demand improved systems for the conservation and management of water resources, with special emphasis on the recovery, protection and management of municipal water recharge areas and the rational and responsible use of water in their different uses, with the recognition and commitment of the Municipality with this requirement.

Currently, the process of implementing the regulations has initiated through the formation of a public-private Committee for the Management of the Pasorapa Water Plan, made up of the municipal government, farmworkers union, irrigation system users, etc. (currently in process). The next step was advocacy so that the Departmental Government of Cochabamba and the Ministry of Environment and Water formally and officially recognize the Pasorapa Water Plan as part of the State Planning System,. In parallel, negotiations have begun to obtain financial support from national and international entities for its execution (a project already executed).

22 Document: *Water and Life Systems in Pasorapa. State of Situation*. AGRECOL Andes Foundation. 2020.

23 The Municipal Government of Pasorapa promulgated the Municipal Autonomous Law No. 172/2021 (March 22, 2021) referring to the municipal and sustainable management of the municipality's water resources. The Regulation of this Law, also as an effect of the incidence of civil society, was approved by Municipal Decree No 33/2021 (19 November 2021).

CIP / WUR - Centro Internacional de la Papa/ Wageningen University & Research (Bolivia)

The CIP and the WUR have created a series of alliances to face a pressing technical problem: the degeneration of potato seeds resulting from, amongst other factors, a new disease that has appeared in Ecuador called *Punta Morada* (purple top disease) and potato “psyllids”. For this specific case, this alliance included the Technical University of Cotopaxi (contact with students and farmers), the National Institute of Agricultural Research (INIAP) (Context and contact with farmers), the Ministry of Agriculture (contact with farmers), Stats4SD (support in statistical analysis). In this case, through collaboration between the Ecuadorian Phytosanitary and Animal Health Regulation and Control Agency (AGROCALIDAD). AGROCALIDAD shared technical information about purple top disease and the “psyllids.”

Through a general influence and advocacy process – workshops and meetings with a broad spectrum of actors, together with research and practical results to face this problem – the organization has generated significant impact in terms of policy influence, including the fact that this problem is now on the agenda of the Ministry of Agriculture which has become aware of the limitations of the current seed law to address it. This, in addition to the catalytic effects of a regional conversation around Punta Morada and the potato “psyllid,” and its integration into the field of academic research and the participation of political actors, including MINAM (Peru), the Andean Community (CAN) and a private company (PEPSICO). This is part of the so-called scaling up and out efforts.



Farmers who identified the potato slipped in their plots after sharing purple advice on potatoes. Interinstitutional workshop between INIAP and CIP. **Photo: Israel Navarrete**

IRD – Instituto de Investigación para el Desarrollo (France-Ecuador)

IRD is a public institution whose objective is to undertake research and monitor its impacts with training, publications, technical advice, etc. Historically, in its collaboration with Ecuadorian institutions such as the Catholic University of Ecuador, it has done purely scientific work, basic research and academic training and minimal technological innovation per se.

Over time, through scaling out pest-management research results and promoting relational changes, including within the National Institute of Agricultural Research (INIAP) and the decentralized autonomous governments (GADS), IRD has also made attempts to influence the research agendas of the Catholic University, although with internal resistance from the organization itself and its conservative chair. Working through the Bio_Inca International Laboratory initiative (www.bioinca.org) within the university itself, IRD has sought to consolidate its actions and broaden the scope of research to the areas of “social innovation” which involves communities and farmers directly.

With gradual and progressive work –sometimes spontaneous and not clearly planned – in policy advocacy, IRD has been able to insert and achieve recognition of “iNaturalist!” – Ecuador by the Ministry of the Environment (<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/agri-andes-ecuador>). This has made it possible to drive visibility in the state/public sphere of research on wild biodiversity alongside research on domesticated and cultivated biodiversity which has not always had the recognition necessary for understanding its critical importance in any conservation and sustainable development strategy.

As part of this trajectory, IRD has also initiated a process of advocacy or influence in what we could call the “academic community”. In doing so it has disseminated the results of a project with important and potentially dramatic political and business-related impacts. IRD has demonstrated that less than 10% of all the recommendations provided by technicians in charge of assisting farmers in the use of pesticides are adequate and that basically they are agents that represent commercial interests that seek to promote the widespread and intensive use of pesticides. This “hard” science research combined with social participation (e.g. with 1,500 so-called “farmer-spies or informers”), with compelling documented evidence, finds barriers to entry in the academic circle (e.g. in journals such as Nature, Science and 7 other magazines). This also has profound effects on the possibilities of integrating these results into policy decisions at a higher level.

The reason offered for resistance to the publication in these and other journals and specialized academic spaces is that these issues move beyond hard science and factual data and into the political realm. IRD, in its regional capacity and thanks to its participation in the Global Landscapes Forum, also aims to influence or advocate for agroecology and these types of research issues in the international policy agenda.²⁴

²⁴ See <https://glfx.globallandscapesforum.org/topics/21467/page/TPP-home>

SUMMARY OF CASES

<p>PROINPA (Bolivia)</p>	<p>Its research on eco-insecticides has been integrated into the productive practices of quinoa farmers. Scaling out has occurred, with technological innovations adopted by farmers and recognized in official certification processes and regulations. Scaling up has also produced structural and relational changes in the interaction between the private sector and the State in pheromone production.</p>
<p>PROSUCO (Bolivia)</p>	<p>Their scaling-out work with the "Yapuchiris" and their state recognition as relevant actors in training and decision-making processes, as well as in their technical role as part of agroclimatic services provided to communities, reflects a successful policy advocacy process. This type of scaling and the interaction with local governments in the generation of bio-inputs with the participation of the "Yapuchiris" represents an ongoing advocacy process. Change is sought at the relational level and in power structures.</p>
<p>UMSA (Bolivia)</p>	<p>Its research work integrating local knowledge and "non-scientific" knowledge encounters resistance in the world of academic publication and, although it is not policy advocacy per se, it is a way of influencing and scaling out to strengthen knowledge to generate local impact.</p>
<p>CIZA/UNALM (Peru)</p>	<p>Their work with rural public schools and state entities to integrate new topics relevant to the Andean/rural reality (e.g. conservation of space and seeds) in the educational curriculum coincides with a scaling deep and out, with a positive and successful impact based on relational change, with the expectation of deepening the impact at a transformative level.</p>
<p>ETC Andes (Peru)</p>	<p>Its scaling up work, to integrate the local population in the processes of defining municipal budgets, taking advantage of the "participatory budget" process provided for in the law, aims at relational changes in these territories and jurisdictions. Likewise, it has implemented a scaling up strategy to seek –successfully – structural changes starting with the extension of the moratorium on the entry of transgenics into the country. Finally, its advocacy work at the international level through the "Agroecology Now!" campaign implies scaling and changes at all levels, with the expectation of long-term transformative change.</p>
<p>YANAPAI (Peru)</p>	<p>Its work with AGUAPAN involves scaling up and out, but not focused on advocacy processes per se, but rather on different actions/activities, on multiple fronts and levels that, when added together, generate a certain impact. In this case, the impact relates to a public good of critical cultural and environmental importance, native potato crops, that also have economic relevance for small farmers in the central Andes.</p>

SUMMARY OF CASES

Mountain Institute (Peru)

Its applied research in the field of glacier retreat prevention and its interaction with public entities and local populations implementing scaling up strategies has been successful for the “up-take” of relevant technologies by Andean farming populations. Similarly, in the area of scaling up and structural change, it has achieved the formal approval of a (current) national strategy/policy for mountain ecosystems.

CIP/WUR (Ecuador)

Its applied research work on potato crop pests and diseases, with multiple actors (e.g. national public universities, private entities and international research centers) has been successful in scaling out and up, with important changes in power relations, practices of farmers and authorities, etc. that is consistent with structural and relational changes.

AGRECOL (Ecuador)

In addition to its technical and scientific research, AGRECOL works on so-called social influence (communication, participation, training) and policy advocacy (direct interaction with state entities to generate changes). In a specific municipality, it has managed to generate widespread consensus among the actors to change the water resource management models to more sustainable models targeted to local populations and also lay the foundations for the recognition of these models through a strategy /plan approved by the municipality. In this case, scaling up and out and structural and relational changes are evident, but with the expectation of profound changes in the way populations and actors behave with regards to water management and conservation resulting from the implementation of this strategy.

IRD (France-Ecuador)

Its work has focused on generating alliances with research institutions and the academy, emphasizing scaling out and relational changes, with considerable resistance from the university environment itself, which views with some misgivings the idea of including “social innovation” as part of a process of pure and hard science. IRD has been especially successful in its policy advocacy as evidenced by the recognition of the “iNaturalist” initiative by the Ministry of the Environment, enabling the integration of wild and domesticated biodiversity variables in the state/public view at the national level. Finally, IRD continues in its efforts to demonstrate (with data and hard science) the private sector’s biases (in the case of certain pesticides) in its recommendations to state entities. It also continues to try to achieve the publication of this type of research in spite of significant barriers in academic circles. This research, and the influence that IRD is trying to exert in the academic world, shows the complex and often overlooked relationship amongst the public and private sectors and academia.

On policy advocacy: some reflections on the cases

In the cases of policy advocacy reviewed above, emphasis is placed on structural changes and scaling out, as the first step for a profound transformation of the agroecological reality specific to each zone/territory/jurisdiction. All the organizations of the Andes City Council that promote and participate in policy advocacy actions – PROINPA, PROSUCO, AGRECOL, YANAPAI, CIZA, IM, ETC Andes, IRD and CIP/WUR, UMSA – through different strategies and tools (e.g. evidence from research, scaling up and successes in local practices) mainly point to institutional structural changes (mainly public/state) and regulations, as well as building relationships/connections and inserting themselves into the dynamics of power in different ways. The participation (direct or indirect) of several of these organizations in processes involving the creation or modification of laws, regulations, strategies, etc. and interaction with different instances of state power, are the most typical examples of policy advocacy in the case of the Andes CoP.

More specifically, ETC Andes' experience demonstrates that it has reached a phase of relational change, as it has sought to specifically influence the active participation of the population in the definition of public budgets at the local and regional levels. In other words, they have emphasized direct action in the budget definition process itself. Likewise, in the case of the IM and its work with water and of PROSUCO and the “Yapuchiris”, it could be argued that relational change has been affected by the substantive improvement of connections and communication with different actors, especially public authorities that have integrated their contributions to the agendas and talking points in different sectors. These efforts have been accompanied by scaling up and out.

It is harder to assess transformative changes over time, particularly in terms of their long-term sustainability. However, based on the analysis performed, it can be argued that the experiences of PROSUCO, AGRECOL, PROINPA and the IM, through policy advocacy actions and scaling in different forms, denote significant changes in the mentality and approach of the central actors – farmers – in their daily activities in the field. Positive changes can be verified in the field (at certain levels) after the policy advocacy actions have been undertaken.

3 Lessons learned from the Andes CoP and future challenges

- a) Research as a support and basis for advocacy.** Research undertaken by the organizations of the Andes CoP clearly supports improvements in the production and productivity of small agroecological producers over time. But, at the same time, it contributes positively to supporting policy advocacy processes aimed at improving institutional frameworks, public policies, regulations and different enabling conditions. These conditions facilitate the dissemination and eventual scaling of the results of research and resulting innovations, for example, through receptivity of public institutions to these results, understanding of these results, and their application. *It is also well known that evidence and science are not – today more than ever – sufficient to influence and even less to guarantee adequate decisions. Policy is often dictated by factors other than science, technology and proven efficient and effective practices at the local level.*
- b) Challenges of instability.** In their efforts to advocate, almost all organizations of the Andes CoP indicate that institutional instability of public entities, particularly at the subnational level (e.g. municipalities, regional governments), poses considerable challenges to support change at the structural, relational or transformative levels. The high personnel turnover, changes in investment plans and priorities, excessive politicization of officials, limited management and budget execution capacities, the limited tools to demand accountability from officials, corruption, and a scarce presence of control bodies constitute important barriers to the implementation of even moderately successful processes of influence and policy advocacy. These problems appear at the national and local scale – with different nuances and intensities – but they are recurrent. Patience, resilience, insistence and continuous presence in public spaces at these levels are the response required to overcome these real and concrete challenges.
- c) “Formal” relationships to create enabling conditions for advocacy.** In several cases, the organizations of the Andes CoP comment that, to start policy advocacy at any State level, there must be some kind of formal relationship, be it a cooperation agreement or some instrument that facilitates interaction between actors. This includes formal letter, communications, reports, meeting summaries, or other similar documentation. This is important because policy advocacy in these State/public spaces - at any level – becomes possible only once these “formal” requirements are met, due to legal principles under which public entities operate as well as how they further define – in their operating regulations

– the means and conditions with which institutions can interact with, for example, civil society entities, universities and other institutions, including state institutions and even individual citizens. This formalization is also important because public officials feel more “comfortable” in their actions and the processes can continue over time, beyond a specific government administration or changes in the composition of the public entities.

d) Different approaches to “doing” advocacy. The organizations of the Andes CoP have different ways and methods of pursuing policy advocacy. In some cases, institutional philosophy is clearly set to let social actors themselves intervene and define the path of advocacy, with organizations acting as accompaniment and providing technical information that supports these efforts at different levels. In other cases, there is a more direct and immediate intervention of organizations as agents that represent principals (a sector of the collectivity or community), sometimes without an express mandate *per se*, in intervention processes in the public/state arena, in these cases seeking legislative or regulatory changes.

e) Agroecology in a context of change and its challenges. In a specific case in Peru – but it is possible to assume that this also occurs in other contexts of the Andean region of Bolivia and Ecuador – some farmers show certain resistance to agroecology as an option for development and prosperity. In this sense, there is a certain preference by farmers for commercial or industrial crops that generate better and more immediate economic returns. This should not be surprising since the highly varied social, cultural, economic and even geographic situation of farmers determines their preference for certain crops over others. In this sense, a plausible explanation for this lies in the fact that for Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru it is not possible to speak of “agriculture” in the singular but rather of *agriculture(s)* so diverse and varied, sometimes in small geographical spaces, that it makes it impossible and almost absurd, from a practical point of view and from the perspective of policy advocacy itself, to pretend that all farmers and communities are going to respond in the same way to the stimuli that come from extension, cooperation projects, subsidies, market demand, etc. In this sense, the in-depth understanding of these environmental, social, cultural and economic contexts is a *sine qua non* condition to propose a goal or objective of policy advocacy or influence aimed at promoting agroecology in a broad sense. It is important, however, to also highlight that agroecological practices are not at odds with commercialization or even exports. On the contrary, agroecological products usually find local, regional, national and even international niches that generate virtuous circles in the chain of commerce. The challenge is to find the enabling conditions, technical assistance, market access options, and different types of aid that facilitate the transition towards agroecological practices that, suddenly, are oriented towards internal or external markets, as the case may be. Issues such as adequate routes for product transport, acceptable certification systems, incentives for local/associative/collective enterprises in any of their forms, and the creation of local business teams with management skills, are some factors that can contribute to

positioning and/or repositioning agroecology.

- f) The publication of “the non-scientific” and the challenges that are faced.** Agricultural research faces considerable challenges in some spaces when the incorporation of “the social”, or the active participation of the community in research, or even interdisciplinarity itself, is qualified as “non-scientific” and relegated to the margins of hard science by prestigious, indexed scientific journals that generate more or less obvious barriers to the publication of results. Among the organizations of the Andes CoP there is evidence of this resistance in academia and written media, such as renowned magazines or “journals”. Furthermore, the relationship between academia, the business sector and the State itself, and the way in which incentives and interests are aligned or not between Principals/Agents, continues to pose important challenges ranging from the barriers that are sometimes established when “proven” with data. and hard science to problems in the actions of agents, especially private ones at different levels (e.g. companies, renowned academic journals, etc.).
- g) The Andes CoP and its role as a “think-tank”.** Discreetly and perhaps almost imperceptibly, the Andes CoP itself can make an important contribution to the understanding of policy advocacy in conceptual and practical terms both as an “entity” and as a collective. The McKnight Foundation’s own institutional philosophy of supporting transformative research (research + advocacy) and the institutional thinking of each of the organizations of the Andes CoP Andes generate kind of “think tank”, without a formal or defined structure, but within which ideas, proposals and experiences that contribute to understanding policy advocacy as a phenomenon – part process, part result.
- h) The CoP Andes as an agent of change at the international level.** Likewise, Andes CoP as a collective, maintains a portfolio and institutional memory of actions and its own performance that could also act as leverage for advocacy, especially in regional and international spheres, where public policies, regulations and financing are also defined that have a direct and significant impact at the national level. In this sense, the Andes CoP has a still unfulfilled potential that can be exploited more actively in international processes, within the scope of the FAO, the different food summits, the Post-2020 Biodiversity Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals, etc. This new post-Covid 19 context and the idea of “building back better” that drive conservation and sustainable development agendas, offer an opportunity for the CoP Andes to influence these processes in a diverse way, including, for example: through written manifestos , direct interventions in the forums, organization of parallel events, etc. as part of a strategy to participate in these international agendas and scale the successes and lessons as evidence of the possible transition process towards agroecological practices. ²⁵

²⁵ Since its inception, the Andes CoP itself recognized that it is, among others, “... *an experience on how advocacy is done*,” based on maintaining a low profile, ensuring the intervention and participation of local actors (farmers) themselves, and promoting better information and research that contributes to changes in regulatory, institutional and political frameworks. Note: <https://andescdp.org/node/74>

- i) The concept of “success” in an advocacy context, with regards to the Andes CoP.** In the narrative of policy advocacy, the approval of a legal norm or a guideline or some form of state declaration (at some level) is usually identified as a milestone that marks success. However, in reality, it is the actual transformative change and scaling deep – on the ground – where the positive impacts of the advocacy effort can be perceived much better. This usually occurs in the long term.
- j) From successes ... to failures.** The organizations of the Andes CoP have also described situations where advocacy at the process or result level have been limited or failed in terms of the proposed final goal or objective(s), due to multiple factors, generally related to state institutional instability and the limited capacities of the Andes CoP organizations to invest and concentrate resources in activities that are not at the core of their specific functions – mainly research.

4 Distinctive elements of policy advocacy from the experiences of the Andes CoP

From the cases selected in section 2, certain distinctive elements and lessons learned can also be identified that are common and shared between the advocacy stories of the different organizations of the Andes CoP. These are actions/activities/ways of doing things that make it possible to detect some general principles that could contribute positively and as a guide/orientation to advocacy efforts even beyond the Andes CoP.

Flexibility and “freedom”. The Andes CoP as a collective maintains a highly healthy practice based on the flexibility and freedom that its members have to pursue their institutional objectives. Unlike much of the technical cooperation whose presence tends to stand out and whose influence is quite noticeable in the course of projects, initiatives and programs, in this case, McKnight Foundation plays a more discreet role: it facilitates and enables processes and provides conversation spaces where it makes suggestions and proposals along with the other member institutions of the Andes CoP.

There are no hierarchies and there is a great deal of dialogue and openness. This has made it possible to consolidate and improve the interventions of the collective and its individual members, generating a degree of horizontality that allows open and transparent discrepancy together with coherence and multiple consensuses and enthusiasm to advance in the process of consolidation and transition towards sustainable and agroecological practices.

Willingness. Carrying out policy advocacy out of simple obligation is different from doing it out of conviction of its virtues and benefits. Although many of the Andes CoP organizations selected for this analysis focus their expertise on the natural sciences and concentrate their interventions on research and direct field work with small farmers dedicated to agroecology, there is also continued work in rural economy, food security (nutrition), and rural sociology among other less “hard” disciplines.

These organizations also show a degree of genuine interest in not only carrying out the research that corresponds to them as part of the mandate they have as members of this group and their own specific field projects supported by the McKnight Foundation, but also because there is a conviction about the importance of advocacy based on good research and the connection between these variables: research plus advocacy plus the progress and development of the agroecological agenda in broad terms.

Although it has not been evaluated as a specific part of this report, it is evident that advocacy actions undertaken by the organizations of the Andes CoP respond to the need to promote

research and, through that, respond to the needs/interests of small farming communities.

Clearly, a positive attitude – including resilience to adverse institutional and political contexts – facilitates the possibilities of desired and planned results in the actions and interventions of general and policy advocacy, beyond the fact that each organization has its own unique style and institutional approach to advocacy and that none is specifically dedicated to advocacy as part of its institutional objectives.

Consensus. All the organizations of the Andes CoP agree that policy advocacy only makes sense as long as it is carried out in a coordinated and concerted manner with a diversity of actors and, sometimes, partners, from all sectors and branches and at all levels (community, municipal, regional/subnational, national). The preference for a scaling out approach is evident and allows expanding messages and results.

Whether done in a more direct and proactive way or in a more indirect way that leaves the social actors, especially the organized farmers, to intervene and direct the advocacy process as Principals and Agents²⁶ simultaneously, it is evident that consensus-building and coordination with multiple actors and organizations is an essential condition for successful advocacy. Without minimal alliances it is impossible to undertake the policy advocacy process. The CoP Andes organizations have alliances at different levels, including as the Andes CoP itself.

Long-term. A very healthy and absolutely critical practice from the point of view of the possibility of doing policy advocacy is the support and long-term commitment offered by the McKnight Foundation within its support for agroecology. Policy advocacy – like agriculture – is generally a long-term process that requires persistence and, in both cases, resilience on the part of social actors.

The possibility of having this support over time contributes decisively to the positive results and impacts of policy advocacy actions in particular and of scaling as an important step to disseminate innovation and change ways of thinking. The long term also allows evaluation of the sustainability and resilience of the changes generated, offering a critical tool for self-assessment and confirmation or correction of directions and strategies.

Clear objectives. The different organizations of the Andes CoP are clear about the objectives to be pursued with advocacy and advocacy actions and, especially, they have defined their roles in these processes, in some cases very directly and in others indirectly through representative social actors. On the other hand, they also understand that their central role in many cases is not activism, lobbying or direct policy advocacy, but rather, applied research and scaling strategies as inputs to contribute to advocacy processes/results.

26 In the 1970s, economists such as Harold Demsetz, Kevin Mitnick, Stephen Ross and Joseph Stiglitz developed the Agent-Principal or “agency” theory and the dilemmas that arise when the former do not adequately represent the interests of the latter and have incentives of action different from each other. In the context of agroecology, the Principals could be considered the farmers, peasants and producers themselves, organized or not, while the Agents are those who represent them or carry their voices in the advocacy processes – sometimes they are the farmers themselves (case in which the problems of incentives can be diluted) or different actors such as organizations and groups, NGOs, others. See, for example, the work of Jane, J.E. *The Principal Agent-Theory to Policy: Policy Implementation and Public Policy-Making*. *Open Journal of Political Science* 2013. Vol.3, No.2, 85-89 Published Online April 2013 in SciRes (<http://www.scirp.org/journal/ojps>)

Closing remarks

Although it is beyond the scope of this report, it is worthwhile to openly raise some of the challenges that the movement towards agroecological transition faces. Regardless of ideologies or political orientation, widespread corruption in most countries and at all levels poses a challenge that is sometimes uncomfortable to talk about but should be discussed.

This structural and underlying problem has enormous implications for the possibilities and efforts, for example, of healthy policy advocacy, which finds barriers that are difficult to overcome, since political decisions end up having little to do with substantive matters, sustainability and scientific evidence.

Beyond the successes and impacts that the Andes CoP has had, several of its organizations have mentioned this problem as a barrier that also affects the possibilities of greater scaling-up in its different forms. On the other hand, the science/evidence/political decision relationship is much more complex than it appears and the motivations for the decisions, especially, but not only in Latin America, often have very little to do with solid evidence and even with logic. This phenomenon occurs at all institutional levels and deserves attention in order to improve the advocacy process itself.²⁷

The circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic and its impacts, the environmental crisis and an increasingly unstable world that is questioning the established order, offer, paradoxically, an opportunity to reassess the role and function of agroecology as an alternative to contribute to local and national food security, and to the millennium development goals and the Post 2021 Biodiversity Agenda itself.

A positioning of this form of agriculture (for example, from the Andes CoP) and its incorporation into national and international agendas requires intensifying advocacy efforts at different levels and applying various strategies for scaling up and transformative changes. The next annual meeting of the Andes CoP offers an interesting opportunity to shape its contents around these new circumstances and a “new” and changing world.

²⁷ Paul Krugman, winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics, highlights a psychological and social phenomenon by which politicians/decision makers always find the reason not to do what is right, no matter how much economic evidence is presented to them, for example. Krugman, P. *Why Economics Failed*. NYT, May 1, 2014 Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/02/opinion/krugman-why-economics-failed.html>

Abbreviations

ANAPQUI	Asociación Nacional de Productores de Quinoa (National Association of Quinoa Producers)
APAFA	Asociación de Padres de Familia (Parents association)
CAAAP	Centro Amazónico de Antropología y Aplicación Práctica (Amazon Center for Anthropology and Practical Application)
CAN	Comunidad Andina (Andean Community)
CdP	Comunidad de Práctica Programa Colaborativo de Investigación de Cultivos (Community of Practice –Collaborative Crop Research Program)
CIP	Centro Internacional de la Papa (International Potato Center)
CIZA	Centro de Investigación de Zonas Áridas (Arid Zone Research Center)
DIGESA	Dirección General de Salud Ambiental (General Directorate of Environmental Health)
DRE	Direcciones Regionales de Educación (Regional Directorates of Education)
ETC	Asociación Ecología, Tecnología y Cultura en los Andes (Association of Ecology, Technology and Culture in the Andes)
FONAG	Fondo Nacional para la Agricultura (National Fund for Agriculture)
GADS	Gobiernos Autónomos Descentralizados (Decentralized Autonomous Governments)
ICCO	Interchurch Coordination Committee Development Aid
INAIGEM	Instituto Nacional de Investigación en Glaciares y Ecosistemas de Montaña (National Institute for Research on Glaciers and Mountain Ecosystems)
INIA	Instituto Nacional de Innovación Agraria (National Institute of Agrarian Innovation)
INIAP	Instituto Nacional de Investigaciones Agropecuarias (National Institute of Agricultural Research)
IRD	Instituto de Investigación para el Desarrollo (Research Institute for Development)
MINAGRI	Ministerio de Agricultura y Riego (Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation)
MINAM	Ministerio del Ambiente (Ministry of the Environment)

ONG	Organismo no gubernamental (Non-governmental organization)
PEPSICO	Empresa PEPSICO (PEPSICO Company)
PROINPA	Fundación para la Investigación y Promoción de Productos Andinos (Foundation for the Research and Promotion of Andean Products)
PROSUCO	Promoción de la Sustentabilidad y Conocimientos Compartidos (Promotion of Sustainability and Shared Knowledge)
RIMISP	Centro Latinoamericano para el Desarrollo Rural (Latin American Center for Rural Development)
SENASAG	Servicio Nacional de Sanidad Agropecuaria e Inocuidad Alimentaria (National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Service)
UGELES	Unidad de Gestión Educativa Local (Local Educational Management Unit)
UMSA	Universidad Mayor de San Andrés (San Andres University)
UNALM	Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina (La Molina National Agrarian University)
WUR	Universidad de Wageningen (Wageningen University & Research)

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