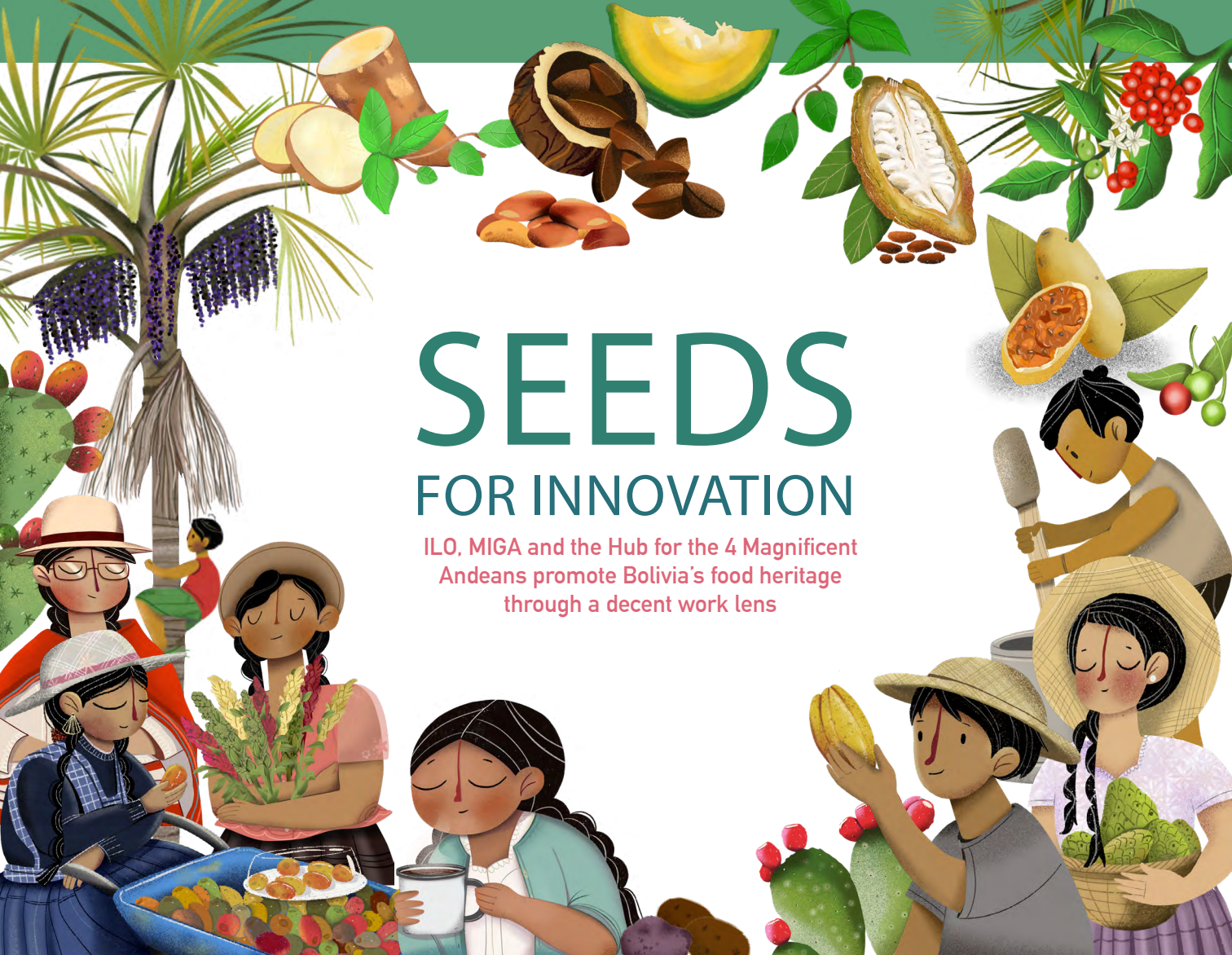




SEEDS FOR INNOVATION

ILO, MIGA and the Hub for the 4 Magnificent
Andeans promote Bolivia's food heritage
through a decent work lens





As of 2021, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Bolivian Food and Gastronomic Integration Movement (MIGA) and the Hub of the 4 Magnificent Andeans (HUB4MA), have joined forces through awareness-raising initiatives to promote the reactivation and sustainable development of strategic value chains in the country.

In this sense, actions in 2021 focused on revalorizing Bolivia's food heritage, by means of awareness-raising campaigns on the importance of sustainable food production, regional cuisines with identity and the life stories of producers involved in the transformation chains of Andean grains in the country. In addition, in the framework of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, multi-stakeholder dialogues were held to discuss the barriers that prevent micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) from improving their productivity, competitiveness and access to markets and global supply chains.

For 2022 and 2023, ILO, MIGA and HUB4MA are planning a series of advocacy initiatives to showcase the value of food production activities linked to the food heritage of Bolivia's territories. It is expected that these actions, which the ILO is promoting through the SCORE project, will strengthen Bolivia's position as a hub of excellence for Andean grains. This, in turn, can contribute to fostering better linkages among productive units with lead buyers, leading to the opening of new export markets.



The SCORE Programme and its outreach in Bolivia

Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) is a global ILO programme that improves productivity and working conditions in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The objective of the Global Programme is to support the implementation of SCORE Training, which combines practical classroom training with technical assistance at enterprise level.

SCORE Training demonstrates international best practices in the manufacturing and service sectors, and supports SMEs to participate in global supply chains. Likewise, it focuses on developing cooperative working relationships that result in shared benefits. The Programme assists governments, employers' organizations and workers' organizations in Africa, Asia and Latin America to develop national industrial and export sectors. It also focuses on developing innovative partnerships among the ILO, multinational enterprises, lead buyers and brand consortia, to encourage the integration of SCORE Training into their supplier development strategies.





In the 2022-23 biennium SCORE will focus in Bolivia on supporting the Confederation of Private Entrepreneurs of Bolivia (CEPB), so that it can be autonomous in the delivery of SCORE Training as CEPB is the organization in charge of promoting the Programme in the country.

In this regard, the project's foreseen impacts are:

- Strengthening opportunities to achieve the sustainability of SCORE in Bolivia and its integration into the local economic development framework.
- Increasing SME links with international markets through integrated strategies that include gender and enterprise formalization approaches.



Why work with Andean grains?

"Quinoa, Tarwi, Cañahua and Amaranth, species that are the living representation of our Andean identity, have earned the title of the Magnificent Andeans (Magníficas Andinas- MA) for several of their characteristics that not only make them superfoods, but also species with the greatest capacity to adapt to extreme environmental conditions and resilience to climate change in the production systems of the Altiplano and Valleys of our country." (HUB4MA, 2021)





Quinoa - Bolivia's golden grain

At present, quinoa is grown in more than 100 countries, due to its great adaptability and hardiness. There are varieties such as: Quinoa from the Altiplano, Quinoa from the salt flats, Quinoa from the valleys, Quinoa from the tropics, Quinoa from the coast. Of these five types of quinoa in the world, Bolivia has the first four. However, the Quinoa of the Altiplano (sweet) and the Quinoa of the salt flats (bitter) are the most sought and consumed worldwide, and are the most produced ones in Bolivia (ILO, 2022).

Quinoa has enormous potential for use in processed form, an aspect that allows a better use of its nutritional qualities. For this reason, in the quinoa processing link, it is necessary to clearly differentiate between the grain's milling with processes of primary transformation and final products.



Tarwi

The plant is considered a semi-wild species in Bolivia. Its growth is not very homogenous: flowering, ripening of the grain and the height of the plant vary during the 6 to 8 months of the crop's cycle. However, it is recognised as a crop that provides a large amount of nitrogen to the soil (approximately 5 qq/ha of urea) and it is a very efficient pest controller. Tarwi production does not tend to incur into costs in terms of inputs, time or cultural activities, and is considered by producers as a cost-saving crop.

Tarwi has a more favourable effect on health than normal food could have. Nutritionally, tarwi grain has: protein that can exceed 50%, optimum amino acid content, significant contributions of phosphorus, potassium, iron, manganese, calcium and a higher fat content.



Amaranth

Amaranth is a native species native to the high Andean areas of Bolivia and is of historical and social importance, being a grain that has been cultivated since the Inca period. It has nutritional and dietary properties that currently capture the world's attention. In Bolivia, amaranth is cultivated mainly in the inter-Andean valleys, located in the Eastern Cordillera and characterized by being located between 1,800 and 2,800 m.a.s.l., with average temperatures between 15°C and 19°C.

Amaranth is one of the agricultural products with great versatility in its preparation and consumption. It is considered a grain with excellent nutritional value and great agricultural, food, industrial and export potential. Growing consumer demand and the widespread change in the population's dietary patterns place amaranth in a favourable ranking with regards to preferences of consumers, industries and traders, which in turn opens up promising prospects for this crop's development.



Cañahua

Cañahua is a crop native to the central Andes between Bolivia and Peru. The main production areas in Bolivia are in the departments of La Paz, in the area of the Pacajes and the highlands of Omasuyos; Oruro, in the Chipayas area; and Cochabamba, around Independencia and Tapacarí.

This crop is distributed in the highest semi-arid regions, from 3500 to 4500 m.a.s.l. Cañahua has exceptional nutritional properties, and when compared to other grains (quinoa, rice and wheat), it contains higher values of zinc, calcium, iron, proteins and fiber, and lower values for fat. These characteristics make cañahua a very healthy and nutritious food. There are also medicinal properties, which are used locally for treatments against typhoid fever, altitude sickness, cholesterol control and dysentery.

In addition, as it is a gluten-free grain, cañahua is an ideal food for coeliacs. It is also considered resilient to climate change due to its behaviour in the face of extreme droughts and frosts, as well as the absence of pests and diseases that make organic production possible under better conditions. These nutritional and productive characteristics offer a substantial potential to promote cañahua's production and consumption.





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