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***M'inka, ayni* and *apachikuy*: Social practices for food systems in crisis**

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Abstract

Andean social practices in Peru, such as the *mink'a*, *ayni* and *apachikuy* are based on solidarity, which seeks to guarantee the production and consumption of food for people in the countryside and also for their kin in the cities. The interweaving of traditional knowledge and social practices, as well as innovations can be effective in promoting the resilience of food systems. The aim of our work is to shed light on the social practices of cooperation for production (*mink'a* and *ayni*) and distribution of products (*apachikuy*) as examples of practices that are relevant in Peru, and to discuss their current potential to address food crises.

To achieve this, semi-structured interviews to different key actors were carried out in four Andean provinces in Peru to incorporate insight information about the use of these social practices pre-pandemic and during the lockdown and post-lockdown. An extensive literature review was also carried out. Based on this information, a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) was conducted. The analysis highlights the strengths and opportunities in terms of contributing to social tissues and providing support to vulnerable groups in times of crisis, while it reveals weaknesses and threats concerning the neglect and devaluation of these social practices by younger generations. Our conclusion is that these social practices contribute to sustaining food systems in critical situations, but require governmental programmes and academic research to ensure their continuity and promote their recovery and re-activation.

Given the limited research on the importance of these social practices, beyond their general description and ancestral uses, we recommend further research on the application of these practices and the measurement of their impact on food security and food sovereignty. A sound evidence base for the development of policies in Peru that promote resilient food systems is essential, as the country ranks first in food insecurity in Latin America.

Keywords: Community practices, COVID-19, food crisis, food security, solidarity practices