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Co-creative characterisation of food systems for the generation of transition routes towards their sustainability in indigenous population

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Abstract

Highly vulnerable populations such as indigenous peoples are seriously affected in their food and nutrition. The National Survey of the Nutritional Situation Colombia shows that food insecurity in 2015 was at 54.2 %, and that eight out of ten indigenous households are in food insecurity. This situation has been aggravated by climate change, the pandemic generated by COVID 19, the armed conflict in their territories, and recently, by economic phenomena such as inflation, devaluation, unemployment, and increased food prices, as evidenced by various authors and studies. Given the lack of effective results of public policies, alternatives have emerged that are grouped under the generic denomination of “food autonomy” or “food sovereignty”. These alternatives constitute a wide universe of practices and proposals from the communities, which gradually intertwine, generating innovative, creative, and locally adapted responses, with interesting results in their contribution to guaranteeing the right to food. These initiatives are inspired by deeply rooted cultural principles and conceptions, many of them are related to territorial control and governance processes and can be understood as counter hegemonic. This set of food practices and social actors involved, are articulated with the dominant food system, but in permanent tension with it, and constitute what can be called “territorial food system”. The research project called “Territorio, Comida y Vida” studies food systems at the territorial level in two indigenous populations of Colombia, Misak and Los Pastos, to identify the mechanisms that manage to empower communities and interest groups in the search to reduce inequities and a good life for the most vulnerable. During the presentation, the results of the characterisation of the food systems of these peoples will be discussed, considering the functions, provision and services, collection and co-production, supply, trade and distribution, consumption, waste and unused management, emerging elements, evaluated at the household, farm, reservation, municipality, and other stakeholder levels. For the characterisation, instruments such as surveys, in-depth interviews, focus groups and secondary information are applied. The research methodology will be discussed, which follows a co-creative process and has a transdisciplinary work approach, where gender, inclusion and intersectionality are transversal.

Keywords: Food sovereignty, food autonomy