



Adaptation for
Smallholder
Agriculture
Programme
ASAP



Investing in rural people

ASAP Innovations, Policy and Scaling

BOLIVIA

A community-centered approach, **bridging scientific and traditional knowledge through talking maps** to:

- raise awareness about climate change;
- find tailor-made solutions;
- promote women's inclusion, elevating the gross income of women-headed households;
- inspire to other municipalities and communities to embrace the talking maps innovation and adopt similar approaches.

The challenge:

Climate variability challenges crops, harvests and the resilience of smallholder farmers

Rural communities in Bolivia are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. From Pando, in the north, to Tarija, in the very south, smallholder farmers are exposed to a variety of extreme climatic events.

The Andean region is subject to frost and drought, while the valley region is affected by drought and flood events during the rainy season. Communities are worried about the impact of a changing climate on their lands. They have already witnessed an increase in persistent droughts, which according to predictions will affect up to a third of the country by 2030.

Protecting Bolivia's agricultural sector is vital as small-scale farmers provide 70 percent of the country's food needs and one-third of rural people live in extreme poverty.



The Economic Inclusion Programme for Families and Rural Communities in the Territory of Plurinational State of Bolivia (ACCESOS)

2011-2019

Project Financing

Total project cost: US\$ 58.98 million
IFAD financing: US\$ 28 million
ASAP grant: US\$ 10 million

Outreach

- 52 Municipalities in La Paz, Oruro, Potosí, Tarija, Chuquisaca, Santa Cruz, Trinidad y Pando, with ASAP activities in 16 municipalities that could be scaled-up to the other 36 municipalities
- 209,815 household members (187% of the initial target of 112,000)

Target group

Smallholder farmers with a special emphasis on women, young people and indigenous peoples

Programme Objective

Greater resilience of target communities, including greater protection of people and their productive activities from the impacts of climate change

“

We would like the times from before to come back. More rain, more harvests, more farms. Not like today. We would like to go back to those days, away from climate change.

”

- Lidia Mondaque,
ACCESOS/ASAP Project
Participant



[Bolivia: Climate Knowledge from the Ancestors](#)

The innovation: Talking maps are helping communities fight back against climate change

In Bolivia, the Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP) has piloted one of its key innovations – the **talking maps (*mapas parlantes*)**. This innovative tool brings together science and traditional community knowledge to identify key issues and adaptation priorities, giving Indigenous Peoples, women and youth a voice in decision-making, providing the opportunity to come up with their own solutions using IFAD’s financial support. Local traditional knowledge is a crucial resource of this approach, allowing communities to adapt to climate change based on their local needs.



Talking maps combine scientific data, satellite maps and traditional knowledge to identify key climate risks and adaptation priorities within their communities. This tool allows communities to reflect on the impacts of climate change on their lands, and identify and prioritize actions to counter climate threats.

This community-based approach also allows the participation and inclusion of illiterate people since maps and models can be made on different types of material, such as paper or the terrain itself, with very few limitations in interpretation.

Talking maps were proven to be a successful instrument to encourage communities to engage in natural resource management and ensure the equal participation of community members, who could then define short-, medium- and long-term adaptation priorities.

“

The communities have presented talking maps, our priorities, and our needs [...] I am a thousand times grateful for this way of working.

”

Martín Avila, ACCESOS/ASAP
Project Participant





Results and impacts

The programme achieved success through its community-centered approach, bridging scientific and traditional knowledge through the talking maps. This approach raised awareness about environmental degradation and climate change, and small-scale farmers started demanding tailor-made solutions and integrating them into municipal planning and budget. Another defining characteristic of ACCESOS was its direct allocation of financial resources to the communities, further bolstering and solidifying their stake in the process.

The impact of the programme reverberated across multiple dimensions. It strengthened the resilience of small-scale farmers to multiple shocks while simultaneously boosting and diversifying their income and providing improved access to markets. Moreover, the programme became a catalyst for women's inclusion, elevating the gross income of women-headed households.

Climate change adaptation risk management plans were integrated into the strategies of all 16 municipalities involved. By addressing water vulnerabilities, improving irrigation systems, reducing water losses, and supplementing water supplies during critical periods, the program aligned with the nation's commitment to climate solutions outlined in its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

Other municipalities and communities were inspired to embrace the talking maps innovation and adopt similar approaches. The ripple effect of the programme's achievements transcended boundaries, becoming a testament to its enduring relevance and potential for transformative change in the face of climate change.

ACCESOS Footprint



55 talking maps were produced



More than 9,000 families increased their natural and physical assets to manage climate risks



More than 13,000 hectares of land were restored or preserved



More than 56,000 small-scale farmers benefited from ACCESOS

Impact assessment



Positive impact on participants' gross income, increasing it by **13 per cent** per capita.



The ability to recover from climatic shocks was **4 per cent higher**, while for non-climatic shocks it was **5 per cent higher** for project participants than the comparison group



Increased women-headed households' gross income by **38 per cent** and the value of their crop production by **35 per cent** more than the comparison group.

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