

Off farm work in the Peruvian Altiplano: Seasonal and geographic considerations for agricultural and development policies

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SANREM Project “Adaptation to Climate change and Market of Vulnerable Agro ecosystems of the Altiplano”

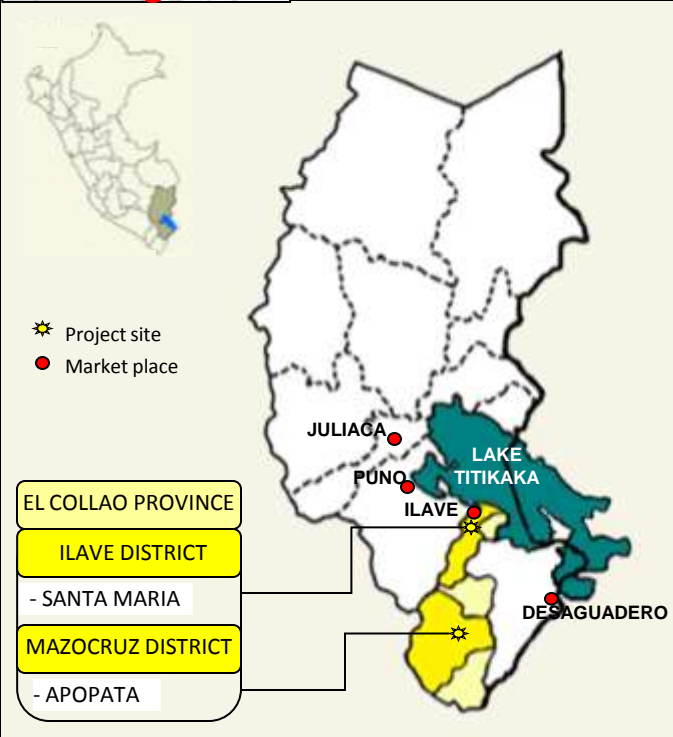
Objective

- Identify and analyse seasonal patterns of off farm work comparing two Aymara communities from different agro-ecological zones in the Peruvian Altiplano.
- Research questions:
 - What are the characteristics of households that use off farm work as a livelihood strategy?
 - What are the characteristics of household members that work off farm?
 - When do household members go for off farm work, where do they work off farm, and in which activities they work?

Different geographic conditions in the Altiplano



Lakeside zone, Community of Santa Maria



Dry puna zone, Community of Apopata

Who are they and when do they go for off farm work?

Off-farm work	Santa Maria (lakeside) n=48	Apopata (dry puna) n=67
% HH with off farm work	41.7%	34.3%
By gender		
Female	20%	13%
Male	80%	87%
	100%	100%

Livelihood strategies	Santa Maria (lakeside) n=20	Apopata (dry puna) n=23
Cropping	10.0%	-
Livestock	5.0%	91.4%
Mixed-farm (crop.-livest.)	50.0%	-
Commerce	25.0%	4.3%
Self-employment	10.0%	4.3%
	100%	100%

Lakeside Agricultural calendar	Santa Maria (n=20)	Season of the year	Apopata (n=23)	Dry puna Livestock calendar
weeding & pest control	5.0%	Jan, Feb, Mar	--	Alpaca birth & mating
harvest	--	Apr, May, Jun	26.1%	cull
fallow	30.0%	Jul, Aug, Sep	--	alpaca pregnancy detection
land prep & plating	30.0%	Oct, Nov, Dec	8.7%	Sheering
	25.0%	Anytime of the year	52.2%	
	5.0%	Whole year	13.0%	
	5.0%	Every Friday	--	
	100.0	Total	100.0	

Where they go and what they do



Santa Maria (lakeside)	Distance (time)	Main destination	Distance (time)	Apopata (drypuna)
25%	1 day	Tacna*	½ day	47.9%
--	½ day	Mazocruz	½ hr	17.4%
20%	½ hr	Ilave	½ day	13.0%
20%	3 hr	Puno	½ day	8.7%
10%	½ day	Arequipa*		--
5%	1 day	Moquegua*	½ day	13.0%
5%	2 day	Lima*		--
5%	1 ½ day	Cusco*		--
5%	½ hr	Nearby community		--
5%	4 hr	Desaguadero		--
100%				100%

* Out of the Altiplano region

Activities they work	Santa Maria (lakeside) n=20	Apopata (dry puna) n=23
Agriculture	50.0%	30.4%
Commerce	15.0%	26.1%
Construction	20.0%	17.4%
Transport	10.0%	4.3%
Services	5.0%	13.0%
Education	--	4.3%
Mining	--	4.3%
	100%	100%

Conclusions

- In both agro-ecological zones, those who work off farm are mostly male members of the wealthy households who have access to education and a better command of the Spanish language, land and animal holdings, forage, improved animals and hired labour. The poorest remain in the community to work on their own or other farms of the community. This is especially the case of the pastoralist households of the dry puna zone located in remote areas.
- General patterns of off farm work can be different or similar across both agro-ecological zones. Households from lakeside and dry puna agro-ecological zones go to the same places and get involved in almost the same activities. However when looking at the details they do so at different times of the year, according to their agricultural calendars.
- Seasonality and spatial location condition their on-farm labour demands and in turn their off-farm labour availability.
- There is a season when households neither from the lakeside nor the dry puna work off farm: the harvest season for agricultural households of the lakeside zone (May and June) and the alpaca birthing season for pastoralist households of the dry puna zone (January to March), indicating that Altiplano households define their availability of off farm labour according agricultural and cultural activities.
- Current agricultural development policy increases job opportunities in the coastal region acting as pull factor for the wealthier. Policy should increase job opportunities in the local area to provide equal opportunities across households and agro-ecological zones, including seasonal availability of labour according agricultural and livestock calendars to avoid interfering their cultural practices.