

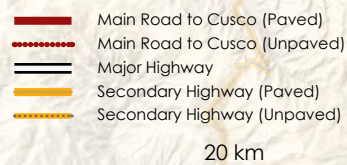
# Communities in the Clouds

## Landscape, Agriculture, and Access in the Peruvian Andes



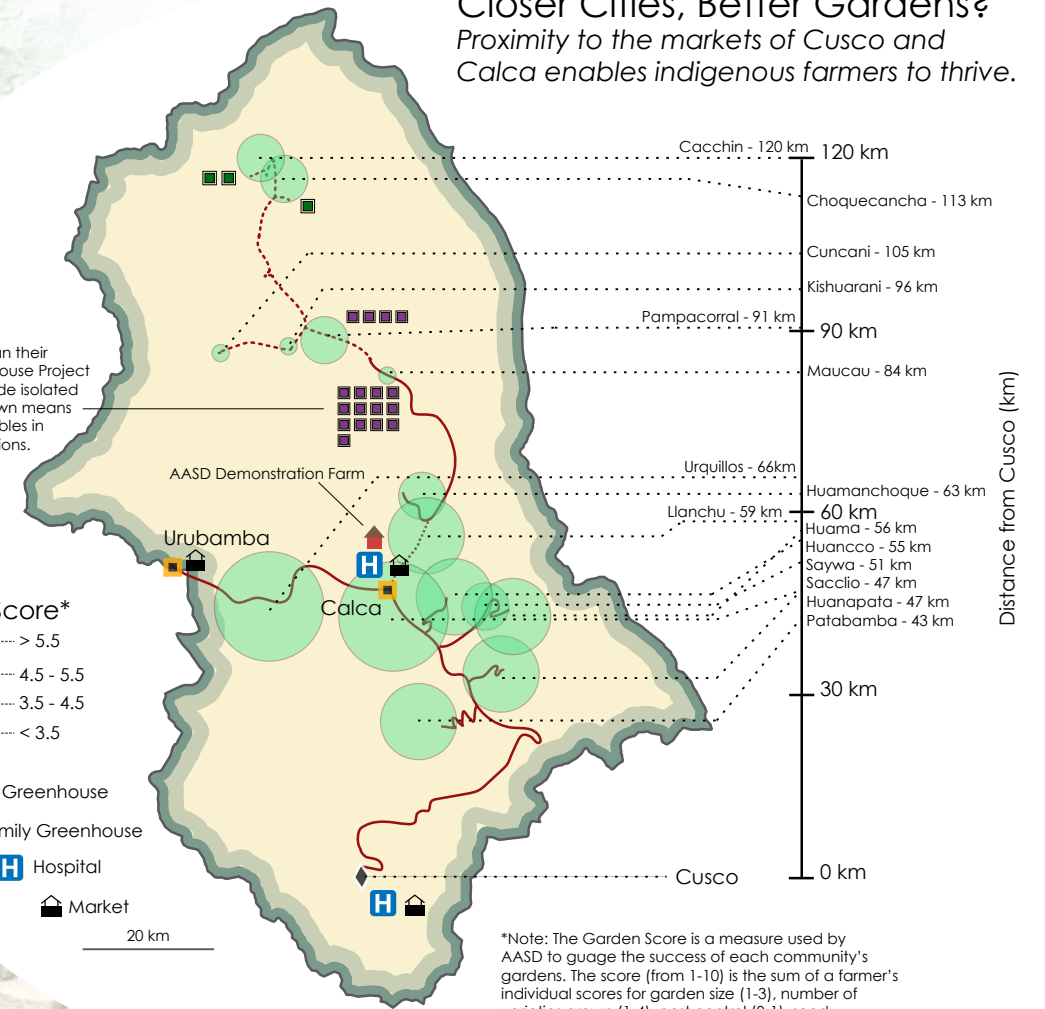
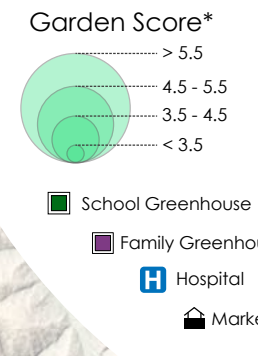
In the highest peaks of the Peruvian Andes, indigenous people face extreme conditions that prevent stable agriculture. High elevations, rocky soils, and blasting winds make it challenging to cultivate more than basic staples. The region's rugged terrain prevents easy travel to and from larger cities, where crops can be sold and medical care sought. To complicate matters, climate change is beginning to alter the region's landscape in new and unpredictable ways.

The Andean Alliance for Sustainable Development (AASD), based in the city of Calca, works to assist indigenous communities in developing sustainable, community-led agricultural solutions. Through their flagship Greenhouse Project, they seek to empower local farmers with the equipment and knowledge to grow a wider range of crops, feed themselves and their communities, and improve food security across the region. They strive, ultimately, to ensure that all members of Peru's high-altitude communities are able to live lives of good health and economic prosperity.

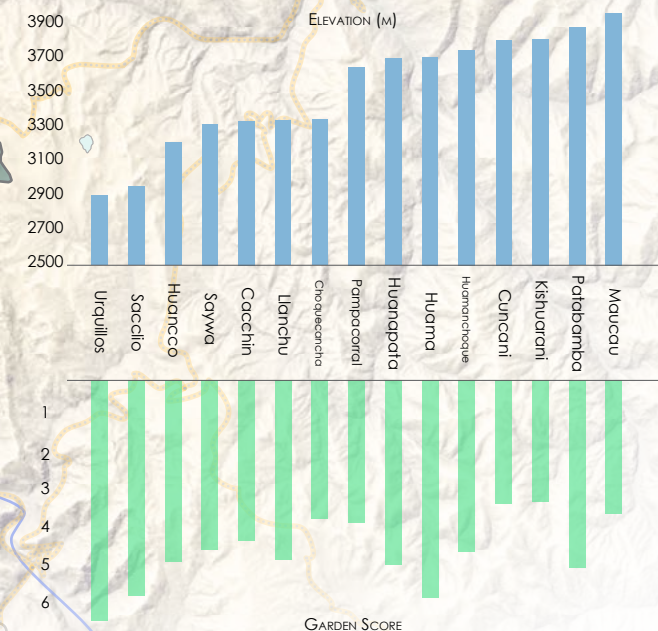


**Closer Cities, Better Gardens?**  
Proximity to the markets of Cusco and Calca enables indigenous farmers to thrive.

In 2012, AASD began their pilot Family Greenhouse Project in Maucou to provide isolated families with their own means for growing vegetables in harsh alpine conditions.



\*Note: The Garden Score is a measure used by AASD to gauge the success of each community's gardens. The score (from 1-10) is the sum of a farmer's individual scores for garden size (1-3), number of varieties grown (1-4), pest control (0-1), seed saving (0-1), and market engagement (0-1). The data here reflect each community's average score.



**Access** - AASD works with 15 communities around Calca to understand the unique agricultural challenges that each one faces. Their research has shown that closer proximity to Calca and Cusco provide more regular access to critical support, materials, and markets that make developing a successful garden easier for families. As a result, the gardens of families in isolated regions suffer more than those close to cities.

**Elevation** - Their research also indicates that gardens at higher elevations often suffer from colder temperatures and greater exposure, resulting in less productive community agriculture. For this reason, AASD has devoted specific attention to these communities through their Family Greenhouse Project.