



Exploring the Potential of Social and Solidarity Economy in Oaxaca, Mexico: Challenges and Opportunities

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Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analyzed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

The social and solidarity economy (SSE) is defined as a set of socioeconomic initiatives, formal or informal, individual or collective, that prioritize the satisfaction of people's needs over profit. It is also characterized by the fact that they are independent of public authorities, act based on values such as equity, solidarity, sustainability, participation, inclusion, commitment to the community, and are called promoters of social change [1-4]. The SSE takes up the associative enterprises of production, transformation, commercialization and services of groups of people who have come together to improve their quality of life and that of their community, generating territorial development and strengthening the fabric of social collectives [5-7]. The SSE incorporates the proposal of ecological economics, considering that economic

systems are not closed in monetary and real flows, but are open systems that are related to the biosphere, where the processes of production, distribution, consumption and post-consumption generate entropic energy flows and, therefore, alternative ways of producing, exchanging, and consuming that consider the energy waste produced by economic activity are promoted [8-11]. In Oaxaca, Mexico, according to the National Institute of Statistics, Geography, and Informatics and its National Survey of Occupation and Employment (2022), the unemployment rate was 1.28% and the poverty rate 41.9%. 43.1% (about 1,762,800 people) are in moderate poverty, while 23.3% are in extreme poverty. The percentage of poverty in the Oaxaca state is 24.4 percentage points higher than the national percentage, making it the fourth poorest state in the country. The SSE is an organizational model that, unlike the informal

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micro-enterprises that are developed in entities with high marginalization such as Oaxaca, seeks, with the associative strength of workers or producers, to have greater economic efficiency and greater life expectancy through long-term sustainable economic growth, with interest in social issues and care for the environment, as opposed to informal micro-enterprises, which only seek to solve their individual or family problem of economic subsistence in the short term. Oaxaca, Mexico, is an entity with many potential productive resources, which have not been well exploited or managed to trigger greater economic growth to benefit the standard of living of its population [12-16]. The high community participation of the population, taking into account the 417 municipalities (73.2%) with a *usos y costumbres* system of government out of a total of 570 municipalities in the state. However, we can say that this high level of community participation, which characterizes the Oaxacan people, has not yet been used to its full potential to generate employment and social welfare for its members, so many communities resort to the emigration strategy to find work and better salaries. One of the great opportunities for improvement in the coming years is the installation of the Interoceanic Corridor of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, which among its main objectives is to plan and coordinate actions that contribute to the development of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec region, with an integral, sustainable, and inclusive vision that promotes economic, productive and cultural growth, as well as the establishment of Development Poles for the Well-being of the region. In conclusion, we can say that local development initiatives can be considered as the responses of public and private actors to the problems and challenges posed by the integration of today's markets. The issue is not the productive system of a locality or a territory, whether or not it is made up of large or small companies, but the organization of the local productive system. It can be said that the family/community units and the economic enterprise between different organizations of the same territory or sector solve general conditions with producers that commercialize or supply together and are oriented to the development of the local community.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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