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Social Citizenship in Rural Acapulco, Mexico: Resistance, Solidarity, and Social Cleavage in Times of Pandemic 2020-2021*

[English Version]

Ciudadanía social en Acapulco rural, México: resistencia, solidaridad y clivaje en tiempos de pandemia 2020-2021

Cidadania social na zona rural de Acapulco, México: resistência, solidariedade e clivagem em tempos de pandemia 2020-2021

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Abstract

Objective: this research aims to study the Papagayo River Basin (CRP for its acronym in Spanish) in relation to environmental sustainability, local economy, and social citizenship. **Methodology:** it starts with a participatory diagnosis through three integrating axes: 1. Systematic observation; 2. Stakeholder mapping; 3. Use of a variant of social mapping, which consists of holding meetings with members of all the actors participating in the research (communities, government, and academic institutions) where a process of exchanges of opinions called "egalitarian dialogues" prevails.

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Results: 1. Through the strategic alliance among the actors, the social appropriation of knowledge was strengthened; 2. The variant of social mapping, as a participatory methodology, enabled the exchange of knowledge between the communities and academia. **Conclusions:** 1. The communities that make up the PRC are committed to their territory to participate in integral development projects; 2. Promoting the social economy based on principles, values, and good practices is important; 3. Safeguarding the environmental conditions of the Papagayo River and all its tributaries is also a priority; 4. With the strengthening of conditions (2) and (3), access to rights is made possible and, with it, the construction of social citizenship.

Keywords: social economy; social citizenship; Papagayo river basin; community actors; common use resources.

Resumen

Objetivo: esta investigación tiene como objetivo el estudio de la Cuenca del río Papagayo (CRP) en relación con la sostenibilidad ambiental, economía local y ciudadanía social. **Metodología:** parte de la realización de un diagnóstico participativo a través de tres ejes integradores: 1. Observación sistemática; 2. Mapeo de actores; 3. Uso de una variante de cartografía social, que consiste en la realización de reuniones con integrantes de todos los actores participantes en la investigación (comunidades, gobierno e instituciones académicas) donde prevalezca un proceso de intercambios de opiniones denominados “diálogos igualitarios”. **Resultados:** 1. A través de la alianza estratégica entre actores se fortaleció la apropiación social del conocimiento; 2. La variante de cartografía social, como una metodología participativa, posibilitó el intercambio entre conocimiento de las comunidades y la academia. **Conclusiones:** 1. Las comunidades que integran la CRP están comprometidas con su territorio para participar en proyectos de desarrollo integral; 2. Es importante impulsar la economía social que se sustente en principios, valores y buenas prácticas; 3. También es prioridad salvaguardar las condiciones ambientales del río Papagayo y todos sus afluentes; 4. Con el fortalecimiento de las condiciones (2) y (3) se posibilita el acceso a los derechos y, con el ello, la construcción de la ciudadanía social.

Palabras-clave: economía social; ciudadanía social; cuenca del río Papagayo; actores comuneros; recursos de uso común.

Resumo

Objetivo: esta pesquisa visa estudar a bacia do rio Papagayo (CRP) em relação à sustentabilidade ambiental, economia local e cidadania social. **Metodologia:** baseia-se em um diagnóstico participativo através de três eixos integradores: 1. Observação sistemática; 2. Mapeamento dos atores; 3. Utilização de uma variante de mapeamento social, que consiste em realizar reuniões com membros de todos os atores participantes da pesquisa (comunidades, governo e instituições acadêmicas) onde prevalece um processo de troca de opiniões chamado «diálogos igualitários». **Resultados:** 1. Através da aliança estratégica entre os atores, a apropriação social do conhecimento foi reforçada; 2. A variante do mapeamento social, como metodologia participativa, tornou possível a troca de conhecimento entre as comunidades e a academia. **Conclusões:** 1. As comunidades que compõem o PRC estão comprometidas com seu território para participar de projetos de desenvolvimento integral; 2. É importante promover uma economia social baseada em princípios, valores e boas práticas; 3. Também é prioritário salvaguardar as condições ambientais do rio Papagayo e de todos os seus afluentes; 4. Com o fortalecimento das condições (2) e (3), é possível o acesso aos direitos e, com ele, a construção da cidadania social.

Palavras-chave: economia social; cidadania social; bacia do rio Papagayo; agentes comunitários; recursos de uso comum.

Introduction

The state of Guerrero, Mexico, is characterized as a federal entity with a high degree of marginalization in its communities. It shares this *status* with states such as Veracruz, Oaxaca, and Chiapas, in which 40% of communities with high and very high degrees of marginalization are concentrated (National Population Council [CONAPO], 2015). In rural areas, this situation increases and worsens with so-called vulnerable groups, such as women and indigenous people. According to the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI, 2020), nationally there are 185,243 rural and 4,189 urban localities. In Guerrero there are 6,627 rural and 142 urban localities; Guerrero is ranked 13th nationally for its number of inhabitants (3,540,685). Twelve out of every 100 persons aged 15 years and older cannot read or write, 51 have completed basic education, 22 have completed high school and 16 have completed higher education. Only slightly more than 45% of the inhabited private homes have a bedroom, 49.4% have internal plumbing, 98.0% have electricity, 53.2 % have sewerage connected to the public network. According to the Secretaría de Trabajo y Previsión Social de Guerrero (2021) the average income of the employed population presents up to two minimum wages.¹ The indigenous people represent an important group whose situation follows the pattern of the national trend, where they are historically excluded. The structural roots of their marginalization are determined by cultural, economic, social, and political factors. In Guerrero there are four indigenous groups: Mixtecos, Nahuas, Tlapanecos and Amuzgos; all of them share a low development of social citizenship and consequently high rates of social exclusion (Fleury, 2007).

Derived from the Covid-19 disease of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, many economic activities in Mexico were affected, among other reasons, due to limitations in social interactions. The first case was detected in the country on February 27, 2020 (BBC News World, 2020). From then on, the actions of the state, municipal and federal governments focused on social distancing, which resulted in an almost total stoppage of different economic activities. The rural sector in the municipality of Acapulco, mainly anchored to the dynamics of the city, suffered the effects of the stoppage of tourism and economic activities. On the one hand, because production destined for the domestic market did not find an outlet in local demand, and on the other hand, because a large part of the employed population was partially or totally employed in the tourism

1. Two minimum wages are equivalent to \$345.74 in Mexico and \$16.8752 U.S. dollars: 29/04/22)

sector. Consequently, the pandemic affected the right to work of an important sector of the rural population of this municipality. According to the Mexican Institute of Social Security (IMSS), during the month of June 2020, the State of Guerrero (of which the aforementioned municipality is part) suffered a 7.2% decrease in formal employment (Téllez, 2020).

The Municipality of Acapulco de Juárez is classified with a *low degree of marginalization*, as opposed to the classification attributed by the localities, which ranges from a *very high degree of marginalization* to *very low*. The municipality was also classified with a very low degree of social backwardness. However, each community (or locality) presents different ranges of *degree of social backwardness*, predominantly low social backwardness (Fierro-Leyva, 2021).

In this context, carrying out a community diagnosis of the new needs of the producers affected by the pandemic and the insecurity in the region was necessary. The proposal focused on understanding the territorial needs that could arise from the new normality, the potential for organization, production, and commercialization, as well as detecting the opportunities and strengths that could be used to provide solutions to the needs identified by the actors of the territory, from a social citizenship perspective.

In this vein of reflection, it can be said that social economies, represented by the Family Production Units (FPU) throughout rural Acapulco, constitute a transformative gamble (Foro Global de la Economía Social [GSEF], 2018) because it empowers people, while strengthening community ties. For some scholars such as Vuotto and Fardelli (2012) and Diez *et al.*, (2020) supporting the social economy is an exercise of governance and a cultivation of social citizenship, as they generate mechanisms of social inclusion, which is defined as: "the capacity of society to build an active citizenship, eliminate discriminatory barriers in the market, and disseminate a culture of solidarity" (Fleury, 2007, p. 99).

Alternatively, at the public policy level, it should be taken into account that the evaluation of the results of the social economy involves learning, the internalization of values, community priorities and consideration of human dignity (Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible [ODS], 2020). The satisfaction of these premises opens the way for the expansion of social citizenship in this rural area of Acapulco.

Theoretical Possibilities: Social Citizenship and a Solidarity Economy

The social and solidarity economy constitute the reference to strengthen the key category of this work: construction of social citizenship. In this sense, there is a theoretical debate about these possibilities where exclusion and discrimination, as undesirable situations, constitute the societal objectives to be challenged. Thomas Humphrey Marshall (2007), who revitalized the concept of social citizenship, argues that citizenship understood as a *status* integrates access to basic resources for the exercise of rights and duties. In this regard, Añón (2002) comments that "non-discrimination in access to these resources constitutes the necessary and sufficient condition of citizenship" (p.1) and emphasizes that "inequalities and situations of dissatisfaction of basic needs, clearly interfere with the capacity for deliberation or the affirmation of solidarity as a social bond of cohesion" (Añón, 2002, p. 1). Social rights for Añón are inextricably linked to those of social justice and the protection of the most vulnerable people; in the case of the study that concerns us, the community members of the rural area of Acapulco.

In turn, Freijeiro-Varela (2008) maintains that well-being translates into autonomy, dignity and integrity, and that social citizenship must go beyond the border of only the provision of material goods. Quoting Amartya Sen, the author argues that it is necessary to move from a "social citizenship focused on minimal material equalization in the face of inequalities generated by the market, to a social citizenship oriented toward the creation of social opportunities" (Freijeiro, 2008).

In the same sense, Cortina points out that civil and political rights must be recognized and protected, as well as "economic, social and cultural rights." Citizens require – in addition to free expression – association, awareness and participation, food security, clothing, housing, work, and healthcare. The author affirms that, without creative imagination, without initiative, collaboration, and cooperation, meeting the needs of the community, especially those who are most vulnerable is not possible (1998).

The idea of a transformative social economy still constitutes a category with few empirical references, but it is still a guiding base to improve an undesirable state of affairs. For example, the Global Forum of the Social Economy maintains that it:

[...] aspires to build a socioeconomic system that places people, their communities, and their environment at the center of all its processes. A system whose objective is to guarantee the sustainability of life in all its aspects and to promote equitable, inclusive, democratic, and sustainable well-being for all people

— women and men — and peoples anywhere in the world. (Foro Global de la Economía Social, 2018)

The main objective, according to Hernández (2020) is to bring together social movements and initiatives that share the desire to put people and the environment at the center of the economy and put an end to the economy based on extraction, growth, competitiveness, and the market, and that fight to advance toward resilient and collaborative societies (p.1).

Crespo-Arnold and Fernando Sabín-Galán (2014) place the social market as the main pivot of an economic proposal, when they state that:

... not only must it improve the procedures and tools with which it is equipped to become a viable and massive alternative, a way in which it would really acquire meaning, but it must continue to question and invent itself, in a continuous dialogue with the movements and the critical citizenship, to definitively and fundamentally break with capitalist economic logic in favor of another that put people and life at the center. (p.116)

Whereas, Coraggio proposes:

the creation of a space where the interests of the majority can be asserted, of a collective space. That it is not a space that begins already dominated and that those who are summoned to participate are to accept or legitimize a decision that has already been made; populist or not. Nor can it be a space where the voice of the majority is imposed by the weight of the numbers. (2002, pp. 8-9)

The reflection that Coraggio shares on this topic is essential to understanding the collective tasks (thought and action) that involve committing to the transformation of a state of affairs. It begins by establishing the conditions for the construction of spaces for change where there is dialogue and conflict and where the participants can learn and search together; because the exact path to follow is not yet known. It also suggested that the space should be one of convergence, which enables alliances and legitimacy; in such a way that the priority is to recover the strategic unity between economy, politics, and society (Coraggio, 2002).

Reality is the “synthesis of multiple determinations,” which does not mean the sum nor the coexistence, neither the juxtaposition; too much is known but not enough, one always has to learn and be open, not go to the “precise” nor look for replicable formulas. On the contrary, an exchange of knowledge and

overcoming of that knowledge that exists today must be strengthened to accept that there is hope. It is concluded:

It is still possible that we have to sacrifice more, but it makes no sense to accept greater sacrifices if it is not with the certainty that something else is going to come, and without seeing that everyone is sacrificing, that there are no elites that not only do not lose, but That win with impunity with the crisis. They cannot ask us for more sacrifices if there will be no possibility of overcoming this. (Coraggio, 2002, p.10)

Correspondingly, Razeto (2007, p.17) reflects on the mistaken idea of development. This is an idea that does not produce human happiness; it is not comprehensive; it is a concentration of wealth rather than the effective development of human and social potentialities. It is a development that is being questioned because to accumulate that wealth, natural resources that are not renewable are being irrationally exploited, ecological balances are being destroyed, and the environment is deteriorating. It is a development that has a poverty content, which is not favorable to human life. He adds that it is necessary to think about another development, in another type of economy, of solidarity and cooperation oriented toward sustainability for good living, and that strengthens a lasting peace between communities. Regarding the work of this author "Topics of Comprehensive Economy," Gómez-Núñez (2017) makes an excellent critical review on the subject, highlighting the complexity of the theoretical approach of alternative economies in Latin American countries — especially in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and Ecuador. This is how we talk about social economy, solidarity, popularism, and good living. All point to regional development and integration. The idea that Luis Rezeto offers (the previous quote) on development constitutes a good beginning for possible current debates.

Afterwards, some questions asked by Marañón-Pimentel *et al.*, (2012) are shared: Is thinking of an alternative economy without a different policy and subjectivity possible? Is the solidarity economy part of a proposal for social transformation? What are the theoretical implications of thinking about these solitary economic experiences as part of this project of social transformation? (Marañón-Pimentel *et al.*, 2012, p. 14). The previous reflections remain as a permanent task for the search for community and societal transformation through strengthening the social economy to weave citizenship with social rights.

Participatory Methodology: Equal Dialogues and Social Cartography

The heuristic of this research is the result of the integration of three methodological axes: 1. Systematic observation; 2. Mapping of actors; and 3. Use of a variant of social cartography. During the recognition tours of the communities in the rural area of Acapulco, systematic observation was used² and interviews were conducted with key informants made up of authorities and community leaders. The first set of questions was about principles, values, and good practices implemented in their daily and productive activities. In the second component, reagents were integrated to carry out the mapping of actors, attending to the following axes: 1. Prosocial attitudes (cooperation, reciprocity, trust, and respect for rules and arrangements); 2. Levels of interest in the intervention (for, undecided, and against) and 3. Levels of power or influence over other actors.

In the second phase of the research, a variant of the participatory methodology, known as social cartography, was implemented. Social Mapping (SC) is a participatory methodology that generates local geographic information on the needs and interests of the population sectors. The SC for its exercise is divided into collaborative mapping and community mapping. These methodological alternatives "allow a community to recognize, rebuild and re-signify its territory in order to choose and decide on new ways of living and managing it. They imply processes of construction, validation, and recognition of local knowledge, in order to articulate a counter-narrative of external visions of the communities' territory" (Hernández *et al.*, 2020, p.11). For the implementation of this technique and the environmental conditions given (pandemic and insecurity), the action of direct communication was privileged through thematic meetings called "egalitarian dialogues (ED)." The assistants identified their activities through the elaboration of collaborative maps and located the different areas of opportunities in their environment; however, the use of the participants' voice was decisive for the proposals' systematization (Table 1).

2. Systematic observation consisted of recording facts that were previously categorized; for example, observe the significant elements of the social economy, ways to face the pandemic, values, and good practices, among others.

Table 1. Meetings "Egalitarian Dialogues (ED)"

	Name	Strategic axis
1	Digital maps and social cartography	Participatory diagnosis
2	Local development and social economy	Principles, values, and good practices
3	The Social Economy (SE) as an alternative for social change	
4	Food self-sufficiency	Food self-sufficiency
5	Production, marketing, and consumption circuit	
6	Decolonize the currency	Solidarity financial system
7	Social financial system	
8	Solidarity market	

Note. These dialogues were held on the two main routes of the Papagayo River (East and West). (Fierro-Leyva, 2021)

It should be mentioned that in rural communities there is a feeling of being used by researchers from different academic institutions, because the results are not disseminated and there is a lack of a commission (an alliance of actors made up of the government, academics, and communities) monitoring research activities. This situation was not easy to overcome, but it was achieved because well-known people in the communities had already joined the network and took the message to other places in the rural areas of Acapulco. Finally, they also had excellent allies from the same region.

The Papagayo River Basin: Resistance, Solidarity and Social Cleavage

The CRP constitutes a territory with sufficient potential in Common-pool Resources (CPRs), but until now the inexistence of policies to reverse the situation of poverty and marginalization of this territorial space has been the reality. The participatory diagnosis shows the territorial needs that arise from the new normality (pandemic context), the potentialities of organization, production, and marketing; as well as the opportunities and strengths that can be exploited to provide a solution to the needs already identified³. The challenge of this research was outlined with a long-term vision addressing the stated question: How to restore social rights in the CRP and, therefore, strengthen the construction of social citizenship in the territory? The theoretical assumption⁴ is the following: by strengthening environmental justice (care of ecosystems) and promoting the social economy in the region, is approaching social citizenship possible.

In Acapulco, there are two large hydrological basins: the Sabana River Basin (CLS) and the Papagayo River Basin (CRP). This work considers the analysis of this last subregion (CRP), due to the following specific considerations: 1. It is one of the basins of Mexico that is in good environmental and ecological condition in a territory where the land is communal property⁵; 2. The component communities of the CRP do not dump industrial waste (there are no industries in this zone); 3. There is a high potential for fishing because it is very close to the sea; 4. It is a navigable river and can connect with the sea and a lagoon called "Tres Palos"; 5. It is the main source of water for Acapulco; and 6. The topography of the river, consumption and flow allow sufficient generation of electricity to supply other territories, according to studies by the Federal Electricity Commission-Mexico (Sabás-Vargas, 2012).⁶ This potential of the CRP has not translated into the well-being for the riverside population; on the contrary, the communities present high rates of poverty, marginalization, and social backwardness (Table 2).

3. A general diagnosis of the rural area of Acapulco was carried out in the aforementioned investigation (Project 314483).

4. Instead of hypothesis, the theoretical assumption concept is used.

5. In Mexico there are three types of land tenure: private property, ejidal, and communal property. A definition of Communal property, in the context of Mexican law, is as follows: set of lands, forests, and waters, patrimony of the population centers, which in fact or by right keep the communal state, be they the resources of common use (RCU).

6. Misael Sabás Vargas describes the conflict of international scope that aroused the construction project of a hydroelectric dam in the CRP called "La parota" in the rural area of Acapulco.

Table 2. Degree of Marginalization of the Localities of the Papagayo River Basin (CRP)

Route/Location	Degree of Marginalization CONAPO 2016	Social backwardness
Route 1 Río Papagayo-WEST		
El Salto	High	Low
San Isidro Gallinero	High	Medium
La Concepción	Very high	High
Parotillas	High	Medium
Los Ilamos	High	Medium
Las Parotas	Very high	High
San José de Cacahuatepec	High	Medium
Route 1 Río Papagayo-EAST		
Apalani	Very high	High
El Rincón	High	Medium
EL Carrizo	High	Medium
Cacahuatepec	High	Medium
El Cantón	High	High
Huamuchitos	Very high	High
Barrio Nuevo de los Muertos	Very high	High

Note. Prepared by (Fierro-Leyva, 2021)

The CRP with the rural area of Acapulco constitute the opposite extreme from the prodigious international port, because in poverty and marginalization they are not different from other regions of Guerrero; therefore, it could be said that there are two Acapulcos: the rural – the excluded, poor, and marginalized; and the urban – where public policies take hold and private initiative has taken its place in its diverse investments. The economy of the territory is mainly family-based, the producers have rustic production systems with a low level of production performance (Fierro-Leyva, 2021).

The limited access to capital, the scarce technology used, restricted marketing channels, scarce training, and technical assistance do not make having higher control of its production possible. The presence of intermediaries that

monopolize agricultural and handicraft production is encouraged. Agriculture oriented toward corn, pumpkin, rosehips, lemon, chili, bean crops, and other vegetables is scarcely technical. Most of the cultural and harvesting work is done manually. There is little fertilization and the productive system is completely temporary. The costs to produce corn, as well as other crops, are higher than the income they obtain from sale. They are not ready to reach the profitable economic scale necessary; nor is there enough to devote to the products' commercialization.

The problem of the territory was aggravated by the economic cessation generated by social distancing, decreed by the Federal Government. In this context, carrying out a community diagnosis of new needs of producers affected by the pandemic was necessary. They have seen their economic activity and quality of life reduced. The challenge was (and still is) to strengthen the social sector of the economy of rural communities of Acapulco, for the improvement of living conditions, with gender equity and respect for human rights in the framework of peace processes and care for the environment. The commitment (although it sounds repetitive) is to build a lasting strategic alliance, to establish the conditions for the design and strengthening of a transformative social economy proposal for social welfare (Fierro-Leyva, 2021).

For the construction of a prosperous territory, with better quality of life indices, a strategic alliance between the inhabitants, governments, and academic institutions is inescapably required, so that together they design a route for progress based on decent work and cooperative effort with social commitment. It is a huge task to conceive and design an orderly and sustainable model for a rural territory, where prospective planning constitutes the guiding compass based on principles, values and good practices and, the essence of action, whatever these may be.

Any social economy project must consider the integration of marginalized communities if its goal is a society in which social welfare prevails. In this sense, the social economy goes beyond the mere consideration of producer-consumer economic cycle, and also contemplates aspects involved in citizenship, human rights, gender equality, the environment, resilience, democracy, and an essential vision of human dignity.

The line along which the social economy develops confronts the capitalist economy, which in turn reduces the economy to merely an exchange of commodities in a market. This premise is based on the assumption of rational humankind and free markets; that there is a free exchange of commodities by individuals, based on a geometry of profit and loss, generating strategies for a better position of profits is assumed. Capitalist dynamics, which are based on these assumptions, tend to be exclusionary because the economic expression of

its processes is only possible if there are social relations of inequality of power, and if it creates and maintains a political system that reinforces this unequal relationship. This is exacerbated in societies with pre-modern characteristics; they have failed to separate the economic and political element from the public, which also contains persistent acts of corruption and impunity; the law does not necessarily reflect a rule of law (Fierro-Leyva, 2021).

In this part of reflection, the social economy is a transformative gamble, because it empowers people and strengthens community ties. For some governments to support the social economy is an exercise in governance and a fostering of citizenship; however, to promote an institutional initiative for territorial development (incorporating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development) implies the construction of a strategic alliance of the different sectors involved, and mainly of the community actors of this region.

The relevance of promoting the environmental conservation and economic reactivation of the CRP lies in the imminent danger of not investing (neither via government nor private initiatives) in this region, even though it is the main supplier of water and other natural resources in the municipality of Acapulco and surrounding territories. This situation has signaled an alert in this region of Guerrero and generated proposals for imminent social cleavages⁷, namely: 1. The Centro Turístico Acapulco Sur is being built with large State and business investments (Hernández, 2021)⁸; 2. The Private Initiative (PI) is proposing to form the "New Acapulco" to address insecurity in the municipality (Tejado-Dondé, 2021)⁹ and 3. Another very tense situation that may arise in CRP is the idea of re-municipalization by the community actors

7. The idea of social cleavage implies a fragmentation or division of a social group for ethnic, religious, economic, political, cultural, and agrarian reasons, among others.

8. *Forbes Mexico* published that the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) foresees that the new tourist development Acapulco Sur, in Guerrero municipality of San Marcos, as well as the construction of a highway from Acapulco International Airport, will curb migration and displacement of the population from Costa Chica to Guerrero. The Acapulco Sur Tourist Center is considered one of the priority projects of the Integrated Development Plan for El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and the south-southeast of Mexico, with the purpose of making migration safe, organized, and regulated; it also aims at attacking its causes and makes human mobility a chosen option, according to the body headed by Alicia Bárcena.

9. The decomposition of Acapulco (violence, messages to pressure authorities and protection racketeering) began in this century. Such is the decomposition that, because the port seems impossible to recover, the Private Initiative (PI) has formally proposed to divide the coastal region into two parts: 1. The traditional coastal zone called "Miguel Alemán"; and 2. The "open sea" beach area called Punta Diamante (to the west). Many investors are trying to save their properties, developments, and sources of employment, as they see the port collapsed by insecurity, and with an unusable potable water and sewage network. It is important to highlight that national and foreign businessmen consider Acapulco to be the only coastal area and completely have forgotten about the rural zone that corresponds to two thirds of the municipal territory. (Correction accepted).

of this region, to separate from Acapulco and to form a new municipality because they are not being attended to by the different levels of government (Gómez, 2020).¹⁰

Identification of Opportunity Areas in the CRP–Acapulco Rural Area

Through a social cartography approach (participatory methodology variant), areas of opportunities (AOP) were identified in the rural region of Acapulco. The proposals emerged from meetings called "egalitarian dialogues" on the East and West routes of the Papagayo River, as they are considered the micro-regions with the greatest number of communities that share common problems. However each of these two main routes has specific interests and needs. The problems are arranged according to the following categories: 1. Citizen participation and infrastructure; 2. Keys to the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE); 3. Food self-sufficiency and production circuits; and 4. Solidarity financial systems (Table 3).

Table 3. *Parameterization of Categories, Strategic Axes, and Proposals*

CATEGORY	STRATEGIC AXES	PROPOSALS
I. Citizen Participation and Infrastructure	Participatory diagnosis	Building a specialty health care system in the CRP
		Strengthening security mechanisms
		The construction of a communication bridge between the eastern and western part of the Papagayo River basin is required.
		Ecological rescue of the Tres Palos lagoon through the strategic alliance of the actors that make up the Horizontal Knowledge Network.

10. The president of Bienes Comunes de Cacahuatpec, municipality of Acapulco, asserts that this sub-region should become a municipality because it meets the requirements; moreover, the assembly of 46 communities agrees to separate from Acapulco. This is because their demands are not being met, such as the construction of a hospital, the improvement of roads, and support for projects to promote the region.

CATEGORY	STRATEGIC AXES	PROPOSALS
2. Keys to the Social and Solidarity Economy	Principles, values, and best practices	Promote ecotourism by developing identified potential visitor sites (hot springs, Papagayo River tours, among other attractions).
		Training in service sector activities should be integrated into the SE laboratory proposal.
3. Food Self-sufficiency and Production Circuits	Food self-sufficiency	Establish a social economy laboratory for training and specialized technical assistance.
		Initially, two agro-industrial cooperatives need to be promoted: one for processing lemons and the other for rosehips.
4. Solidarity Financial System	Solidarity financial system	Design and propose a solidarity-based financial system for the rural area
		Promotion of solidarity bazaar and use of social currency

Note. Prepared by (Fierro-Leyva, 2021)

Deactivating Conflicts and Tensions in the CRP

A conflict of international scope in the rural area of Acapulco, in the Papagayo river basin, was the announcement of a hydroelectric project called "La Parota." This project over the river was announced by the director of the Federal Electricity Commission (CFE), Alfredo Elías Ayub, in 2000. At the beginning of 2003, CFE personnel arrived at the site to carry out the corresponding technical studies. Faced with this situation, a group of community members prevented this governmental body from continuing its activities in the CRP, giving rise to the formation of the Council of Ejidos and Communities Opposed to La Parota (Sabás-Vargas, 2012). For Rodolfo Chávez (2009), this is the first conflict in the state of Guerrero.

Due to an investment megaproject, a business of transnational capital that intends to impose itself onto the indigenous people and peasants, ejidatarios, and communal farmers. The Federal Electricity Commission (CFE), which operates the project, is a promoter of large, mainly foreign capital. The CFE seeks to put the project out to bid, obtain resources from international banks, hire large construction companies, insert it in its program of financed public works and sell the profit to the investors. (Chávez, 2009, p.1).

Chávez Galindo argues that this conflict begins when the CFE tries to impose the project without prior, free, and informed consultation with the communities of the CRP. The voice of the community members was a resounding no to the construction of the hydroelectric dam, initiating a repertoire of protests throughout downtown Acapulco and other parts of Mexico and the world (Chávez, 2009).

There are institutions and companies that, before implementing regional works, aim at involving local stakeholders to avoid conflicts, respecting local customs and norms, as well as supporting the development of these communities; however, not all megaproject initiatives follow this path of supporting local people and their environment. In that sense, Watkins indicates that "this view, however, is not shared by all companies, as evidenced by the wide range of social and environmental conflicts still in progress" (2017).

Another situation of tension and very strong conflict, which can be generated in the rural zone of Acapulco and in the same route of the Papagayo River, is the idea of re-municipalization of Bienes Comunes de Cacahuatpec expressed in the media by Mr. Isaac Valeriano García, communal president of that territorial demarcation. He maintains that Bienes Comunes should become a municipality because it fulfills the requirements; moreover, the assembly of 46 communities agrees with separating from Acapulco. This is because their demands, such as the construction of a hospital, road construction and improvement, are not being met, as well as support for productive projects to promote the region (Gómez, 2020). The communities that make up the CRP provide agricultural products to the port's urban area, and actively participate with good practices to prevent contamination of the Papagayo River and its growing area of influence. However, this generous community action to date has not been considered, by governments, as a retribution in the form of policies for the sustainable development of the basin. Consequently, Adriana López Camacho (2022) points out that "academic institutions must reflect on their role in making these initiatives visible," understanding the worldview as another way of interaction with nature and as an inextricably entwined construction "with social, cultural, and spiritual phenomena" for "the reconstruction of the territory, the consolidation of an

economy based on solidarity, the balance of life. and the strengthening of the education system, among others. (López-Camacho, 2021, p. 110)”.

Results

1. Social appropriation of knowledge was strengthened through the strategic alliance among actors. The main achievement has been the creation of a network with municipal authorities, community actors and the Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero. This first stage of territorial recognition and diagnosis aided in the establishment of conditions for the next stage on the creation of a comprehensive program (specific projects resulting from the DIs) and the search for funding.

The following institutional sectors comprised the working group: The master of Social Economy from Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero (UAGro), the Secretaría de Planeación y Desarrollo Económico del municipio of Acapulco, Gro (SEPLADE-Acapulco), and the members of social groups and cooperative members. This team's collaboration, coordination and cooperation was a difficult and demanding task because of the Covid 19 pandemic conditions (COVITEL Guerrero, 2020) with a high rate of transmission (COVID-19 protection framework), as well as a rapid growth of insecurity perpetrated by organized crime that has been established in this municipality for more than fifteen years (Peña, 2017). This first stage aided at the establishment of conditions for the next stage, on the creation of a comprehensive program (specific projects resulting from the DIs) and the search for funding.

2. Social mapping, as a participatory methodology, enabled the exchange of knowledge between the communities and the academic institutions. During the reconnaissance tours, open interviews were conducted with authorities and community leaders to explore the knowledge and degree of implementation of principles, values, and good practices in their daily and productive activities. Results show that: a) The principles established in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are disregarded and b) There are valuable identity anchors such as: cleaning of roads, care of aquifers, care of biodiversity, bartering, shared workdays, and community festivals; and there are also non-valuable or undesirable identity anchors, namely: distrust in forming solidarity savings banks, distrust in establishing marketing cooperatives to deliver their products, incorporation of women into the labor market with no voice in their organization,

and incorporation of children into farming activities to the detriment of their educational training.

3. The results of the first stage have to do with awareness strategies and programs that the different levels of government have not become involved in yet. However, the Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero, through the Master of Social Economics, has taken up this course of action. To this end, the law on social and solidarity economy, in its second and third articles, provides the legal framework to foster sustainable programs in different regions of Mexico and, specifically, for the making of policies based on these participatory diagnoses (Ley de la economía social y solidaria [LESS], 2017).

4. As previously indicated, the following thematic areas were addressed during the egalitarian dialogues (ED): 1. Citizenship participation and infrastructure; 2. Key issues on Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE); 3. Food self-sufficiency and circuits of production; and 4. Solidarity financial systems. These categories were interpreted in specific proposals depicted in Table 3 (Parameterization of categories, strategic axes, and proposals). The claims arising from these meetings have not been addressed nor incorporated into government planning. The urgent point for the promotion of public policies is the territorial and environmental reordering of the Papagayo River Basin with a focus on a solidarity economy of local transformation instead of transnational capitalist class.

Discussion

The Pandemic in Acapulco's rural communities caused little damage to the economy because the economy is based 80% on small-scale agricultural and livestock production. Nearly 20% is supplemented to a lesser extent by jobs provided by the port's dynamics. The education sector was most affected by the pandemic due to the lack of connectivity or electronic media (cell phones, tablets, computers, and television) to be able to conduct its activities remotely. The Egalitarian Dialogues strengthened the process of raising awareness among community participants about this serious problem, since the effect on health was not very credible and they were initially disturbed by the measures taken by the health authorities such as the closure of beaches and different businesses in the port which greatly affected employment in the tertiary sector. As a result of the meetings held with the purpose of discussing the pandemic, the conclusion was focused on the need to have health services in the rural areas of Acapulco.

Conclusions

The communities that make up the CRP are committed to their territory and to participating in integrated developmental projects. Federal government institutions, in coordination with the other government branches, take up these proposals from the communities through participatory methodologies. In this regard, Milana and Villagra (2022) argue that "for these projects to become a reality, it is imperative that the State, and especially the country's science and technology agencies, design encouraging alternatives (p.175)" to strengthen field work conditions and prioritize areas of opportunity. This will turn them into regional projects to be managed by the communities themselves through the principles, values, and good practices of transforming social economy into a good living.

Access to human rights is possible with the promotion of a social economy and an environmental strengthening of the territory and thus, the construction of social citizenship in the Papagayo River Basin. The community actors in the rural area of Acapulco remain in a state of struggle, weaving social citizenship with resistance, solidarity, and social cleavage in the context of the pandemic. The conquest of social rights undoubtedly involves the achievement of social welfare factors for a good living. This process has to do with driving a transforming economy and a strengthening of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. The possibility could be found in the construction of a social and solidarity economy and the continuous study of the Papagayo River Basin (CRP) where two major concepts affect and overlap as a sine qua non condition for regional development: social economy and citizenship.

A participatory diagnosis that does not foster the creation of a strategic alliance among social, governmental, and academic institutions is destined for failure. The wish is to build a better society considering the universal agendas of good living as the 2030 agenda and to establish that "for global problems, local solutions," as stated by Ostrom (2000), the political scientist and economics Nobel Prize winner.

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