Abstract
This study analyzed the institutional structure and the participation of actors in the strategy of rural territorial development (edtr) in two territories: one in Mexico and another in Brazil. It is a qualitative research with review of documents, 46 interviews and participant observation during 2010 and 2011. The results show that the two edtr have similar characteristics like: a) the federal government design the edtr with sponsorship of international institutions; b) both edtr have colleges where citizens participate to plan the rural development, but this participation is constrained by government actors. One of the most important conclusions is that although both edtr have a legal framework that provides for an institutional structure to citizen participation for decisionmaking, in fact this participation is emerging and there are no signals in the short term that the government wants to change this situation.

Keywords
Rural territorial development, Brazil, Mexico.