

Efforts of some municipal administrations of Mexico for the regional development

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Resumen

Es necesario promover articulaciones productivas a nivel municipal que detonen oportunidades de progreso. Sin embargo, es sabido que las autoridades municipales sólo duran tres años en el cargo, por lo que no pueden dar continuidad a los programas. Esto propicia que los programas se pierdan y dejen de lado el desarrollo social y cualquier proyecto municipal que rebase el periodo de tres años. Muchos de estos ensayos en vez de quedar trunco deben fortalecerse a partir del éxito que logren. Siendo limitados los recursos de los municipios, además de la iniciativa local, se requiere del apoyo financiero y técnico de los gobiernos estatales y federales, así como de la decidida participación de la comunidad municipal y de los empresarios. Dentro de los resultados más significativos en la aplicación de los programas sobre desarrollo regional se encuentra “Puro Potosino”, que logró una continuidad de una administración a otra. Durante 2006, 602 empresas resultaron beneficiadas. Actualmente se encuentran favorecidas 720, de las cuales 50% de éstas venden su producto a grandes cadenas comerciales en México y 20% exportan su producto a diversas partes del mundo. Entre los logros más significativos del programa está la generación de 4,900 empleos directos y 2,000 indirectos (Carrera, 2008 y Lazos, 2008). Sin embargo este caso bien se pudiera catalogar de excepcional ya que no hay claridad de los resultados de otros programas similares. Igualmente, algunos alcaldes en diversos municipios de México, han implementado programas muy interesantes para el desarrollo de las comunidades. En esta ponencia se analizarán algunos de estos programas.

Palabras Clave: Municipio mexicano, desarrollo regional, proyectos productivos, continuidad de los programas, gestión de recursos

Abstract

It's necessary to promote economic activities at the municipality to detonate development opportunities. However, the municipal authorities only stay three years in their office, so they can't continue the programs. This situation favors that the programs lost and ignore the social development and any municipal project longer than three years. Many of these programs must be strengthened from the success. The resources of the municipality are limit, also initiative local requires financial and technical support from

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the state and federal governments and the participation of local community and employers. The most significant results in the implementation of programs on regional development is “Puro Potosino” that continuity from one administration to another. In 2006, 602 companies were benefited. Currently 720 companies are favored, 50% of them sell their product to TNCs in Mexico and 20% export their products to various parts of the world. The most significant achievements of the program is to generate 4,900 direct jobs and 2,000 indirect (Carrera, 2008 and Lazos, 2008). But this case could be cataloged exceptional because there is no clarity on the results of other similar programs. Some mayors in municipalities in Mexico, have implemented very interesting programs for the development of communities. In this paper some of these programs will be discussed.

Keywords: Mexican municipality, regional development, productive projects, continuity of programs, resource management.

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Introduction

The role of the municipality in different countries its not limit to the political representation and the provision of public services, but tends to expand into new social tasks and especially an active role in promoting economic development.

However in Mexico still dominates the traditional approach because the municipalities have limited financial resources and low preparation of the administrative staff, also local political groups, with exceptions, continue to see public places as the chance increase their personal wealth. At the same time considering that democracy in Mexico is an incipient practice, the political culture in general, and especially in small towns, is a culture with many problems. There is a certain indolence to demand accountability from the officers and a distrust of political institutions.

Despite these drawbacks with some frequency you can see successful experiences of municipal authorities. They innovate interesting projects that impact on regional development, especially if replicated in other municipalities as “Puro Potosino” project.

The Mexican Municipality

The aims and structure of municipal government were sealed in the article 115 in the Constituent Congress of

1917. Then, the municipalities are equipped whit “freedom” to choose their authorities, provide public services that are assigned in this article, establish their programs and the administrative structure.

Article 115 provides that “State shall take, for the internal regime, form of Republican, Representative, Democratic, Secular and Popular government the basis of its territorial division and its political and administrative organization the free municipality, in accordance with the following principles:

- 1) Each municipality will be governed by a council of direct popular election, composed of a mayor and the number of councillors and trustees determined by law.
- 2) The municipalities will have responsible function and utilities:
 - Water, drainage, sewerage, treatment and disposal of waste waters.
 - Public lighting.
 - Clean, collection, transportation, treatment, and disposal of waste.
 - Markets.
 - Cemeteries.
 - Trail.
 - Street and Parks.
 - Public Safety, municipal preventive police and transit.
- 3) The municipalities freely administered his income, which will come from yields of property belonging to them, as well as contributions and other income that legislatures established in his favor (Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos. Artículo 115, 2014).

These conditions enable the municipality to ensure the political representation of the citizen of the town and defend their interests. The municipal authorities have the necessary powers for the provision of public services. In this way aren't expected to other “roles” of the municipalities, namely, that its authorities maintain the public pace and do what they can to keep functioning public services. We understand perfectly that in 1917 has deprived this vision of the municipality who the only concerned the constituent social justice, the freedom of individuals and service that were then elementary.

As already seen, the institutional design of the Mexican municipality remained enshrined in constitutional article 115 since 1917. Only stayed in its political role of public service, which invested it with the municipal freedom and wanted to provide it with financial autonomy without achieving it at all. Municipality in Mexico, as in many countries has played an important role in ordering the local life.

Currently municipal authorities in various countries have assumed responsibilities through new utilities that give to this instance of government a large presence in local life. However, it's not common that in Mexico the municipalities have expanded responsibilities in a similar way. Then a repeated claim is the various scholars of the municipality who demand a certain update of municipalities to carry out new public roles in terms of locals and regional economic development.

However, the Mexican municipality is not designed and not equipped with real instruments to promote economic development or improvement of the level of care of its citizen. Efforts that can make the municipal administration in this regard are limited and at the expense of the government of the state and the federation. In effect in the municipal administration manages resources for all types of works and services, to this must be added that the welfare programmes inspired by capturing the sympathy for the vote. Although these observations are known by those who studied municipal life, we must not ignore some efforts of the municipalities to make sporadic projects that promote the local development with modest financial resources. The backlog of Mexican municipalities is in almost every aspect: starting by levels of government revenue that sometimes is not enough to cover the cost of bureaucracy and much less for public service. The deficit faced by the participation of federal tax revenues. This situation of dependence, the municipal authorities usually comply in fulfilling the functions which the law designates them. At the same, more than a half of the municipalities, being of rural type do not have properly trained administrative personnel, among the personal have low salaries and uncertainty because their job is thanks to the "system of spoils" that characterizes at the municipal administration.

Not having incentives to encourage the municipality to better levels of performance, the efforts of some mayors to go beyond the fulfillment of its obligations outlined by the law, are rare and fleeting. This situation occurs in a small percentage of municipalities and rarely has a longer duration than three years, because it is the period when a mayor is in an office¹.

In Mexico, the CIDE reported successful cases of innovation of municipal governments in the country. In some cases when there is leadership from a mayor and the determination to undertake innovative projects,

despite the drawbacks mentioned, successful projects are achieved. However, it is customary to end the government, the incoming president precedes their own projects.

Despite the usual lack of continuity of projects, giving evidence that municipal continuity can be achieved the collaboration of local groups, entrepreneurs and citizens respond positively to the call proper of the mayor.

"The lack of continuity plans and management programs is present all the time. Officials with little or not experience are found in local public affairs. (...) Low levels of professionalization and rooting cause that the municipal administration make space of continuous experimentation and improvisation (Arellano, 2011; Cabrero, 2011; Montiel, 2011; Aguilar, 2011: 30).

It is evident that there is awareness of the shortcomings of the locality, not only in terms of public services but also in terms of economic and social development among the residents of the municipality. It seems that they expect only to someone who convinces them to do something to confront together such conditions of backwardness and lack.

Indeed, the social capital has been accumulating in communities with an advancement of availability of resources (communications, automobiles, farming, industrial supplies, urban-rural infrastructure) but above all awareness of the shortcomings and desire to overcome them. In addition, successful cases reported by CIDE show that when the municipal presidents achieve successful innovations no objections from anyone to support these innovations (including State and federal authorities) while some of those occasions overflowed the established legal and administrative order. Not to say fall in illegal actions to implement bold projects that break with traditional bureaucratic inertia but carried out projects for which there is no clear legal basis.

These innovations must also be its success in Mexico, because there is a "network" of federal public administration and public agencies consisting of programs and governmental institutions that have programmes and funds can be exploited by the municipalities. The economic participation of local businesses and neighbours willing to risk some financial resources, when they are convinced of the feasibility of the project can be achieved.

The relevance of the municipalities involved significantly in local development is seen very necessary, because the federal and states governments are unable to get to all the municipalities, not only by insufficient public funds, but the social leadership occurs mainly in the municipal

1 From 2018 local governments will have the possibility of re-election for an additional period of 3 years. Municipal Presidents, trustees and members may only be nominated for re-election by the political party that ran them originally

presidents (Mayors) and councils. The intervention of the state and federal Governments in localities, involves projects that social participation is not required, these Governments are capable of performing them by private companies or with its own staff, it is therefore take advantage of the strategic location of the municipalities that would be the ideal to trigger that social potential as it is the case in several countries. Under the circumstances, the public must assume the role that corresponds to and in conjunction with the municipal government, should undertake programs and projects to the solution of the problems.

“The local government continue to be space from the problems more senses. Citizens are appropriated of sense of collective identity. They want to be part of the solutions, must be recognize its capacity for organization and management to assist in the development of their community” (Morales, 2004; Nájera, 2004: 12).

Two Successful Projects “Puro Potosino” and “Red de Centros de Desarrollo Hábitat”

As a successful experience is the project called “Puro Potosino”, created in the city of San Luis Potosí which attained a continuity of administration to another. The capital of San Luis Potosí located immediately to the north of the geographical center of the country, comprising a population of large middle classes.

A sign of the program’s success is that during 2006, the number of beneficiary companies was 602. Currently favoured 720, of which 50% of these sold its product to TNCs in Mexico and 20% exported its product to various parts of the world. Among the most significant achievements of the program is the generation of 4,900 direct and 2,000 indirect jobs (Carrera, 2008 and Lazos, 2008).

The “Puro Potosino” program is aimed at micro, small and medium enterprises in order to help them in the search for better business opportunities and contribute to the generation of major sources of employment for the town.

According to the analysis of Ady Carrera and Flavio Lazos, the permanence of this program has much to do with its low cost and optimal results: “in 2007, Puro Potosino budget was \$550,000.00, excluding wages and salaries of the staff, from the own resources of the municipality. These resources achieved benefit 682 enterprises, i.e., an investment by company around \$ 806.00 “(Carrera, 2008 and Lazos, 2008: 176). The doubling of the percentage of Puro Potosino also is a very good indicator, the number of participating companies that in February 2004 were 35, increased to 720 in 2008 (career, 2008 and Lazos 2008).

The program Puro Potosino is very complete and adequate for the creation, promotion and development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. The institutes that offered the business incubator were the Instituto de Estudios Superiores Monterrey and the Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí, this can be designated the first phase of training. In a next phase is providing services of training and advice for the marketing of their products. Also the program has agreements with dependencies and State and federal agencies to facilitate procedures of companies and take advantage of these support programs. The third stage of assistance to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises included the marketing support that has allowed them to sell the production to five TNCs like Wal-Mart and the OXXO stores, as well as the export of some products.

It should be noted that Puro Potosino is a program that meets the needs of the companies participating in an efficient and visionary. Thanks to the success achieved has remained over the years, and although it started as a purely municipal program, already has endorsement and participation of the Government of the State of San Luis Potosi. It also must stress according to Ady Carrera and Flavio Lazos that changes in government have not affected the team work of the program, unusual thing in the mexican public administration, which allowed to preserve the institutional memory and innovate based on the experience of the years. Like other successful municipal cases studied by CIDE, this programme achieved the trust of the local community and thereby the individual competition, both entrepreneurs who participate in the program as the consuming public who gives preference to companies integrated program products.

Another successful project of regional development is the Red de Desarrollo Hábitat in Hermosillo, Sonora. Hermosillo, capital of this state has a population of which have high rates of human development in comparison with the rest of the country; also suffers from irregular human settlements, composed of migrants who live a precarious life, devoid of basic public services.

To address this important social problem, the municipality of Hermosillo created its own programme “Hábitat”, surely inspired by “Secretaría de Desarrollo Social” at the federal level, where obtained financial resources. The “Centro de Desarrollo Hábitat” of Hermosillo has among its objectives: “improve the environment of the areas of priority attention to make them places ordered, safe and livable, attending its problems, seeking to reduce poverty, including public works and actions articulated, fully planned and executed in coordination by different municipal unit with the participation of citizens with a

focus on groups vulnerable and preferential attention, improve the quality of life and human dignity, promoting social development, improving the urban environment and public space” (Carrera, 2008: 215).

The authorities of development centers that focused to contribute to the welfare and quality of life of the beneficiaries, included workshops and training, including workshops for welding, hairdressing, mechanics, carpentry, plumbing, computer, gardening, dance, guitar, theater, family violence and crime prevention, but among the most requested was child care service.

The benefits of the network of “Centros Hábitat” until 2006 included 15,109 homes (Carrera, 2008) representing a high achievement for a program, more significant when one considers that such benefits women were housewives, workers, children, older adults and families with problems of violence.

Another aspect of the program “Centros Hábitat” are public works including road access, street paving, provision of drinking water and sewer systems construction. This urban infrastructure improved health, the mobility of the population through better transportation and public safety, while police patrols could do more patrols in each working day.

Fortunately, this program continues to operate today, and apparently with greater financial resources, while the municipal government changed political party. The successful municipal practices do not always have continuity at the end of the Administration, sometimes these practices have only a brief heyday, but set out some important ideas about regional development.

We selected some successful municipal practices on regional development (See table 1)

These municipalities programmes seem to be focused directly to economic development and even if one of them has an impact on the safety of workers, it also benefits to productivity and therefore to the development. The focus of all of them is job creation and/or improvement of their conditions. At this point, there is no greater success since the creation of jobs is the key to economic development and social welfare. This objective would be the solution to many and very important economic problems. Some programs seem to be linked to the economic activities of each locality and the exploitation of its potentialities which shows a good effort to provide real opportunities for employment to the population of the town.

However programs do not show great dedication to the training both for the management of the companies and for

the preparation of the products, except for one of them. The training of managers and staff of organizations can make the difference between success and failure of a project.

This programmes set out in this paper, only two have continuity “Puro Potosino” and “Centros Habitat”. There may be others in the country, but did not find information on the subject. These exceptions would confirm the rule according to which the municipal presidents to take possession of the office forgetting programmes to replace them with his own. The same is true of non-unionized municipal staff.

In this very small sample of successful cases of the municipalities, is that good initiatives there are. What deprives is improvisation, the shortage of financial resources and insufficient training and formation of political and administrative staff.

The Re-election, Opportunity for the Continuity of Projects

In times subsequent to the Mexican Revolution, expanded the reelection municipal authorities already that the mandate issued anti-reelection of the only armed movement referred to the Presidency of the Republic. However the reelecting enabling a strong movement of political leaders and a large force of political parties who calm the protests of those who were not selected as candidates in the hope of becoming it three years later.

The reelecting was a dogma that it was difficult to remove but the legislative authorities eventually withdrew in 2014, leaving the corresponding portion of the article 115:

“The constitutions of the States must set consecutive election for the same office of mayors, aldermen, and Trustees, for an additional period, if the mandate of Councils is not more than three years” (political Constitution of the Mexican United States. Article 115, 2014: 106).

Arellano and Cabrero had raised that consecutive re-election, the extension of the period of municipal government and the professionalization of the public service in the municipalities (Arellano, 2011 and Cabrero, 2011) are changes needed to ensure the continuity of programmes.

Opponents to the re-election of authorities argued that the chiefdoms and power groups grew stronger with the establishment of this modality causing an estrangement between them and municipal citizenship, which can be avoided with a mature democratic system that allows citizens to have information and means to reward or

Table 1 Selection of successful municipal practices

MUNICIPALITY	PROGRAM	OBJECTIVES AND CHARACTERISTICS
Aguascalientes, Ags.	Self-management (Autogestión)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish social security and health in the workplace, in order to achieve safe and hygienic places. • Achieve the reduction of accidents and diseases work, and recognition of the labour authorities. • Reduction of risks of work. • Accreditation of management system of safety and health at work.
Aguascalientes, Ags.	Municipal Production Fund (Fondo Productivo Municipal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and promote micro and small businesses. • Creation of new businesses and strengthen that are already made, creating jobs and maintaining existing ones. • Create business formal and therefore, broaden the taxpayer base. • Assess if the project qualify for being subject to credit. • Once collected the information, have to make a field visit to verify the location of the place, check equipment and machinery. If credit is approved, the companies staff must attend training to establish administrative databases.
MUNICIPALITY	PROGRAM	OBJECTIVES AND CHARACTERISTICS
Ensenada, B.C.	Municipal Regionalization (Regionalización Municipal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was created four additional regions to the municipal seat, which concentrated, coordinated and supported the administrative duties of the municipal delegations. • Intends to establish a rural regional policy which carry the regional order. • Decentralize municipal public services.
Torreón, Coah.	(The Family Orchards) Los Huertos Familiares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation and development of the orchards. • The program is focused to poor families. • Establish, develop and support all those strategies that strengthen and promote the participation and development together with authorities and bodies that affect the growth and culture of peoples. • Search improve diet by eating fresh foods.
Torreón Coah.	Hands to the "Chamba" (Manos a la Chamba)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborates with important enterprises of the region in search of staff so that they occupy their vacancies. • City Hall has a software that supports the administration and control of vacancies and records of applicants. • 145 companies are registered in the program.

MUNICIPALITY	PROGRAM	OBJECTIVES AND CHARACTERISTICS
Durango, Dgo.	Micro-watersheds (Microcuencas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes into account the rehabilitation and conservation of natural resources, economic development and social and human development, fostering competitive, equitable and sustainable rural development. • The program includes reforestation, conservation of soil and water, renewable energy and environmental services systems. In terms of economic development, are promoted projects, irrigation systems, greenhouses, savings and handicrafts. • In the field of social and human development, is working on improvement of housing, paving, roads, classrooms.
León, Gto.	Productive Projects (Proyectos Productivos)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It seeks to promote the participation of women in the development of crafts and food products from the region with which to obtain an economic incentive. • The program provides inputs and material necessary for the manufacture of the products. • The Integral Family Development (DIF) sets dates for the preparation of the product and collected completed, paying a price for the ladies.
MUNICIPALITY	PROGRAM	OBJECTIVES AND CHARACTERISTICS
Guadalajara, Jal.	Undertakes Guadalajara (Emprende Guadalajara)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It seeks to encourage and finance businesses that promote employment and foster economic development in their locality or neighborhood. • Fosters the culture of entrepreneurship and self-employment. • Support those who by their socio-economic status have no access to some kind of financing that allowed the purchase of raw material. • There are several types of financing: <p>Financing with municipal funds, of 15,000 to 30,000 pesos with 24 month term.</p> <p>"Gemicro" is funded the project with funding from the Government of the State of 15,000 to 100,000, with a term of 24 months if it is to acquire raw materials and 48 months if it is for machinery. Options productive of the Ministry of Social Development (SEDESOL), is aimed at people who want to partner to set up a business, with a term of 18 to 60 months, depending on the assigned amount.</p>
MUNICIPALITY	PROGRAM	OBJECTIVES AND CHARACTERISTICS
Guadalupe, NL.	Business Development Center (Centro de Desarrollo Empresarial)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training program so that the businessman and the entrepreneur, to develop skills, knowledge and attitudes for the operation of the company. • Administrative for the modernisation of businesses, are given technical advice mainly the less size.
Ixtlán, Oax.	Promotion of Self-employment (Fomento al Autoempleo)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of breeding and fattening of trout, once accomplished this, began to market the trout. • Implemented the recreational fishing in lagoons, this being a tourist attraction. • Profits from the restaurant that promotes fishing for trout, was invested in the construction of rustic ponds for breeding trout.

Compilation the information of the prize and local management (CIDE) 2005, successful municipal practices.

punish candidates based on their previous performance. I.e., re-election bets for the maturity of political culture.

In any case we must remember that not consecutive re-election only remained in the world in two countries, Costa Rica and Mexico. The main argument in favour of consecutive re-election was giving good results in the majority of countries.

Without denying the merits of reform, since it was unable to overcome an atavistic precept; It seems that restrict the re-election to a single additional period is insufficient.

There will be programs that even after 6 years require continuity to consolidate and above all, there will be municipal presidents who, even after 2 periods, continue keeping the appreciation for their work as such according to their constituents, who reeleccionista it should not be limited the freedom of their vote as in other countries.

Perhaps, the legislators established this re-election limited for fear of the perpetuation of some municipal President by cacicales methods, but the electorate hardly achieved the maturity of political culture if they don't have the freedom to exercise it.

Final Comments

The changes that Mexico is experiencing in terms of municipal development and regional development, cannot be denied. Especially at the level of the market. In the case of the cities this growth is pathetically messy. It is evident that the corrections to the free market should boost them Government policies that have been absent from the country for more than 20 years.

The federal and state Governments could locate the potential of regional development based on the

experiences of the municipalities and natural and strategic resources of the regions, based on diagnoses and valuable information that would encourage investments of Mexican and foreign companies.

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