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Towards a Reconciliation Between Performance, Innovation and Inclusiveness in Solidarity Economy Organizations

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Abstract: This theoretical and descriptive article explores the complex relationship between performance, innovation, and inclusivity within solidarity economy organizations, with the aim of identifying a coherent articulation between these three dimensions, often perceived as contradictory. By adopting an exploratory approach based on a literature and documentary review, the study offers an in-depth reflection on the tensions and possible synergies between these concepts, in a context marked by the contemporary challenges of Integrated Territorial Development and territorial resilience. The article introduces the concept of inclusive organizational innovation, conceived as an integrative response to the economic and social development requirements of solidarity economy organizations. This form of innovation aims not only to improve organizational performance, but also to strengthen local anchoring, community engagement, and the socio-economic integration of marginalized populations. By overcoming the dilemma of matching performance, innovation, and organizational inclusiveness, the study develops a conceptual framework for considering inclusive innovation as a strategic lever, capable of strengthening the sustainability of organizations and supporting the integrated development of rural territories.

Thus, the article contributes to enriching the reflection on alternative development models by promoting the transformative potential of solidarity economy organizations, while highlighting the need for a systemic and balanced approach between economic efficiency, social responsibility and inclusive governance.

Keywords: Integrated Territorial Development; Performance; Innovation; Inclusiveness; Inclusive organizational innovation; Solidarity economy organizations; Resilience.

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1 Introduction

In a global context marked by successive crises—the 2008 financial crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, and geopolitical instability due to the Russo-Ukrainian war—solidarity economy organizations (SEOs) are facing an imperative for structural and functional transformation. These entities, rooted in local dynamics, are distinguished by their vocation to respond to socioeconomic needs often neglected by the traditional market. To strengthen their resilience and their contribution to territorial development, it is becoming crucial to adopt new organizational tools that promote performance, innovation, and inclusivity.

Innovation, in this context, is no longer limited to its technological dimension; it is establishing itself as a cross-cutting lever for change, capable of generating institutional, economic and social transformations(Diercks et al.,

2019). It allows OES to increase their efficiency, adapt their economic models and strengthen their local competitiveness, while stimulating a dynamic of endogenous development complementary to public policies. At the same time, organizational inclusivity—understood as the set of mechanisms aimed at sustainably integrating individuals marginalized due to disabilities, precariousness, or social exclusion—is becoming a fundamental pillar of the sustainability of SEOs. By adopting an inclusive culture, these organizations strengthen their social anchoring and offer stable employment prospects to vulnerable populations, thus contributing to territorial cohesion and social justice(Yuhertiana et al., 2022). As "popular" actors, they also play a decisive role in maintaining food security and supporting local agricultural sectors, particularly in times of crisis(Birchall and Ketilson, 2009).

This context highlights a dilemma of adequacy between the search for performance, the imperative of innovation and the commitment to inclusivity. Therefore, a reflection is necessary on how OES can articulate these dimensions sometimes perceived as contradictory, in order to strengthen both their internal efficiency and their societal impact at the territorial level.

This review article, with a descriptive and theoretical purpose, aims to analyze the conditions for an optimal balance between performance, innovation, and inclusiveness within solidarity economy organizations. In this perspective, an exploratory approach was adopted to interpret and answer the following central question: how to reconcile performance, innovation, and inclusiveness within the framework of solidarity economy organizations? To address our problem, this article is structured in three parts. The first part of the article proposes the conceptual and theoretical framework of the performance of solidarity economy organizations. The second part addresses the issue of organizational innovation and especially social innovation brought by solidarity economy organizations. As for the third part, the author addresses the organizational balance between innovation, inclusiveness and performance by addressing the three successive relationships between these three variables. To arrive at inclusive innovation as a solution to achieving this famous optimal organizational balance. Finally, and in light of the results obtained, a discussion will be conducted.

2 Performance of solidarity economy organizations

In recent decades, significant changes have occurred in the national and international production environment, and more competitive markets have forced companies to adapt to more stringent standards of economic efficiency. Solidarity economy organizations have also adapted to this increasingly demanding economic scenario, both from consumers in the domestic market and from consumers and companies in the international market.

Therefore, maximizing financial and member service results has become imperative for the survival of solidarity economy organizations. The need to reduce costs and capitalize on falling costs has become a decisive factor, requiring significant effort from organizational leaders. This scenario has highlighted the importance for these entities to seek alternative and less costly ways to finance their activities and, consequently, the need to monitor and evaluate their performance, not only by the organization's members, but also by creditors and other interested parties.

It is important to emphasize that according to the agency for agricultural development (FAO, 2023), solidarity economy organizations are organizations of great importance for global agriculture, as they allow rural producers to store and market their production, promote their integration into value chains, and spread the democratization of access to technology and technical assistance.

These collective enterprises have a particular organizational architecture in which there are a high number of members, mostly represented by rural producers who, for the most part, have a low level of education, which poses problems of both information asymmetry and monitoring and control of management by members.

2.1 What is performance?

Performance is a complicated and subjective topic that scholars continue to debate, but it broadly relates to an organization's capacity to fulfill its goals (Elena-Iuliana and Maria, 2016; Popa et al., 2012). In general, corporate performance is measured using two dimensions: effectiveness and efficiency (OUAHRAOUI and ADRDOUR, 2024). Effectiveness is established by selecting the appropriate objectives, whereas efficiency is determined by the level of rational usage and dedication to available resources. It is possible to succeed in only

one dimension, but for optimal performance, both dimensions must be at their peak(BENHAMMOU et al., 2024). Although the two dimensions emphasize distinct features, they remain interconnected. For example, an organization must choose a goal that corresponds to its stated objective. It must fulfill its aim while minimizing waste, redundancy of effort, and needless expenses.

Thus, performance is recognized as the state of competitiveness of an organization, achieved through a certain level of effectiveness and efficiency that paves the way for a sustainable presence in the market. As for sustainability, it is an integral part of the concept of performance (Ishak et al., 2020).

2.2 The performance of solidarity economy organizations between effectiveness and efficiency

Organizations must maintain extreme efficiency in order to operate in a competitive marketplace (Hailu et al., 2005). Solidarity economy organizations possess distinct efficiency characteristics that set them apart from private or public enterprises. However, because the organizations serve both economic and societal interests, evaluating their performance necessitates a thorough review of cooperative theory.

According to Pinho (1986), the economic objective of solidarity economy organizations is cooperative efficiency, which includes the concepts of productivity, efficiency, and member well-being. Thus, the cooperative's economic performance is achieved through the cooperative's specific assets, which include freedom of membership, democratic management, distribution of net surpluses, a limited interest rate on capital, the creation of a fund for member training, and active inter-cooperation (Holgado-Silva and Binotto, 2022).

Furthermore, Santos (1986) argues that, in economic areas, certain characteristics only affect solidarity economy organizations and must be viewed from a different perspective than that generally applied to other organizations. Productivity is a key factor in solidarity economy organizations since leftovers are distributed according to volume. On the other hand, the same author argues that profitability in solidarity economy organizations is not considered from the owner's perspective because profit is not the cooperative's objective. Performance is implicit and must be considered and quantified from the perspective of productivity, which is defined as the articulation of variables, investment, material and labor (dos Santos et al., 2020).

According to Panzutti (1996), in solidarity economy organizations, people use the services of the cooperative rather than seeking a return on capital; in non-solidarity economy organizations, profit sharing is the main objective. According to the same author, despite the fact that the economic character of the cooperative enterprise differs from that of a capital company, the cooperative farmer seeks the value of his capital invested in the cooperative rather than its production, unlike any shareholder in a capital company, whose objective is to maximize the wealth of his partners through the invested capital (Panzutti, 1996).

2.3 Evaluation of the performance of solidarity economy organizations

Evaluating the success of businesses, particularly those in the solidarity economy, is a multifaceted process that incorporates both financial and non-financial factors. Economic performance is frequently used to evaluate financial performance, whereas non-financial performance is concerned with the information content of social indicators (Neto, 2006).

Some researchers argue that the performance of organizations should be evaluated based on social indicators, as their primary objective is not profit, but rather production and member services. Others argue that the social effectiveness of solidarity economy organizations is the result of their economic performance, which implies that economic and financial evaluation is more important (Neto, 2006).

Similarly, organizational performance must be assessed in light of its unique characteristics, such as capital structure and conflicts of interest among members. Some researchers argue that separating ownership and control can improve internal governance systems (Huse, 2007; Saïsset, 2021).

According to Hunt and Morgan (1996), organizations are encouraged to adopt broader effectiveness approaches that include their community and economic effects, rather than focusing exclusively on financial issues. These indicators may include member benefits, social contributions, and transparent and accountable governance practices (Hunt and Morgan, 1996).

Indeed, the performance analysis of organizations focuses on economic and social performance. First, economic performance can be measured by obtaining a positive gross profit, which represents the cooperative's surplus. In this way, surpluses are obtained after subtracting deductions and costs from net operating income (Surplus = NIO – Deductions – Costs), which indicates their efficiency (Hunt and Morgan, 1996). Generally, these analyses are

extracted from the organizations' accounting reports, such as the statement of surpluses or losses (Ferreira et al., 2018). As for social performance, it is necessary to take into account the nature of solidarity economy organizations and the fact that they are distinguished from other organizations by their social aspect, that is to say that this dimension is fundamental to evaluate performance as a whole. Table 1 below presents the indicators of the variables of the economic and social performance of organizations.

Table 1. Indicators of the performance of organizations in the solidarity economy

Category	Variables	Indicators	References
	- Remains obtained	- Gross profit (accounting	(Ferreira et al., 2018);
Performance	-Remains distributed	report)	(Sun et al., 2019);
economic	among members	-Percentage distribution	(Hunt and Morgan,
		of leftovers over the last	1996).
		three years.	
	Participation of	- Income	
	organizations in social	generation/earnings for	
	actions	members	(Amonarriz et al., 2017);
		- Generation of	(Meyer et al., 2017);
Social performance		opportunities	(Mhembwe and Dube,
		(employment/work) for	2017)
		the community	
		- Monetary volume of the	
		tax contribution	
		- Actions to	
		integrate the social and	
		professional framework	
		-Work on social,	
		environmental,	
		educational and cultural	
		projects.	

Source: Made by the author

Finally, when solidarity economy organizations can operate effectively, they become economically stronger. As in this article, income generation and improved social and economic outcomes for members can be encouraged. In most developing countries, rural areas have few income-generating activities, which has a direct impact on the well-being of the population (Afolabi and Ganiyu, 2021). In this sense, economic disparities in rural areas would have a negative impact on rural production and livelihoods.

As a result, supporting institutional arrangements in the form of organizations has become one of the strategies to address these obstacles, as this organizational structure is considered a model adapted to the socioeconomic objectives of its members. Existing research on the subject highlights the role of solidarity economy organizations in reducing market failures and improving access to resources in the absence of strict interest rates or difficult conditions (Milovanovic and Smutka, 2018; Mojo et al., 2017).

3 Innovation in solidarity economy organizations

As an essential complement to national development policy, it is now more crucial to establish new territorial development instruments that support the use of endogenous local resources in order to drive new types of growth based on the potential of the social and solidarity economies. Organizational innovation is one of these instruments. Indeed, Varamini and al. (2020) show that organizations must innovate and advance technologically in order to remain competitive in the market. This necessitates acknowledging society's tastes and customs(Varamini et al., 2020). Ji and al. (2019) underline the need of innovation in companies in order to retain performance and acquire competitiveness(Ji et al., 2019).

Furthermore, innovations social has become increasingly important in solving societal problems at all levels. To be considered social, an innovation must provide a new solution, created or modified, to solve problems and meet social demands that have not yet been addressed using current tools and solutions, resulting in a social effect. Cooperative principles are linked to social, economic, and environmental developments. Organizations would be an important lever to overcome difficulties in the agricultural environment and stimulate the adoption of innovation, particularly for small-scale farmers (Cook and Plunkett, 2006).

3.1 Innovation

Innovation is critical for economic and company growth, which boosts market competition. The Oslo Manual defines innovation as the introduction of new goods, processes, marketing tactics, or organizational methods (Gault, 2013). New products and techniques can help organizations boost their profits and competitiveness. Changes in people's aspirations and ambitions drive innovation. Joseph Schumpeter defined innovation as the creation of economic value by introducing something new or significantly improved (Schumpeter, 2000). Innovation may also be defined as a multidimensional process that converts ideas into new products, services, and procedures. Social innovation seeks to solve social problems by involving the community. The goal, approach, and place of development separate social innovation from technological innovation. However, they are interconnected and can complement one another (Table 2).

As for the (to)	Technological	Social innovation
. ,	innovation	
Value	Value appropriation:	Value creation: interest
	interest of economic	social groups and the community
	actors	
Strategy	Look for the benefits	Solving social problems
	competitive	
Place of innovation	Business	Community actions
Innovation process	Sequential steps	Participation through the collaboration of
	defined and controlled	beneficiaries and stakeholders in the
		community
Dissemination of knowledge	Intellectual property	Diffusion mechanisms for replication and
generated by innovation	protection mechanisms	expansion
	for ideas/technology	

Table 2. Difference between technological innovation and social innovation

Source: Adapted by the author from the work of Bignetti (2011).

For the analysis of social actions of organizations, the concept of innovation of Baregheh et al. (2009) will be accepted and used, because it considers innovation as a process that can be broken down into stages, which is consistent with social innovation (Baregheh et al., 2009).

3.2 Social innovation

By bringing together universal concepts such as innovation and social issues, it is clear that definitions have taken on different nuances over the past ten years. Some of these concepts will be presented in this subsection.

3.3 Concept of social innovation

Social innovation involves the development of new ideas or actions to solve social problems, leading to more effective solutions that benefit society (Mulgan, 2006). It has the potential to stimulate local development, as well as social and solidarity economies. Social innovation generates income, variety and accessibility, while transforming communities (BENSAHRI, 2023). It is a collaborative process that goes beyond problem solutions to address systemic issues and global challenges (Anheier et al., 2019). Due to its adaptability, social innovation creates wealth, diversity and accessibility, which are considered essential points for the success of social innovation models themselves. Another point to highlight is related to the context of social innovation itself, that is, in addition

to the spatial context, there is a social context, insofar as there is a transformation of relationships in space that clearly values territorial development and community empowerment (BENSAHRI, 2023).

Social innovation was first discussed, according to Cloutier (2003), in 1970, in the studies of James B. Taylor and Dennis Gabor. In this multidisciplinary scenario, social innovation does not yet have a widely accepted concept, with a wide range of definitions in the literature. Table 3 presents some of these concepts.

Table 3. Concept of social innovation according	ng to different authors
Definition of the concept of social innovation	Reference
Seeking to address social needs by introducing a social invention,	(Taylor, 1970)
such as a "new way of doing things" or a new social organization.	
A fresh solution to an unsatisfactory social condition that is defined	(Cloutier, 2003)
by action and has a long-term impact on the well-being of	
individuals and/or communities.	
Social innovation is largely driven by the satisfaction of	(Novy and Leubolt, 2005)
fundamental human needs, improved political engagement of	
disadvantaged groups, enhanced socio-political ability, and access	
to resources required to strengthen rights that lead to the	
satisfaction of human needs and participation.	
A tool for an alternative vision of urban development that	(Galego et al., 2022)
prioritizes addressing human needs (and empowering people) via	
innovation in neighborhood ties and community governance.	
New ideas (products, services, and models) that meet social	(Murray et al., 2010)
demands while also fostering new social interactions or	
partnerships. These are developments that benefit society while	
also increasing its ability to act.	
A process of collective creativity in which individuals of a	(Domanski et al., 2020)
particular collective unit learn, invent, and develop new rules for	
the social game of collaboration and conflict. Simply put, they	
believe that this would be "a new social practice, and in this process	
they acquire the necessary cognitive, rational, and organizational	
skills."	
Social innovation is the process of applying knowledge to social	(Bignetti, 2011)
needs with the participation and cooperation of all stakeholders,	
resulting in new and sustainable solutions for social groups,	
communities, and society as a whole.	
Social innovations are defined as planned, organized, goal-oriented	(Cajaiba-Santana, 2014)
intentions and legitimized acts conducted by social agents with the	
objective of bringing about social change through the formation of	
new social practices.	
Social innovation is an important process for society's progress and	(Agostini et al., 2020)
the quest for sustainable alternatives for collective well-being.	

Source: Made by the author

As these concepts emphasize, the central goal of social innovation is to satisfy human needs that have not been met by the state, nor by commercial entities or responsible individuals.

3.4 Characteristics of social innovation

Fairbairn (2017) describes social innovation as having the following characteristics:

- 1. Deviant Action: Start with behaviors that violate established institutional rules.
- 2. Beyond Capitalism Initiative: Focusing on the social aspects of the capitalist market.
- 3. New Discovery: Innovative Solutions to Global Societal Challenges.

- 4. Collaborative action is essential for creating a new paradigm of social innovation.
- 5. Novelty and intentionality: Social innovation is defined as a creative solution to a social problem with the objective of altering society.
- 6. Social action should have a major impact by encouraging new social contacts and empowering individuals.
- 7. Nonconformist Perception: Institutional innovation might be perceived as unusual, troublesome, or deviant behavior.
- 8. Organizational Use Action: Organizations can test and develop small-scale social innovations.
- 9. Social innovation can create new organizational forms by adapting or hybridizing current ones.
- 10. A logistical model arises when social innovation spreads across networks to attract additional backers(Fairbairn, 2017).

These qualities underscore the complexity of social innovation, which goes beyond solving fundamental problems to changing existing social structures and organizations.

3.5 Actors of social innovation

Social problems vary in context, severity, and scope, and they involve a variety of actors. The social innovation process takes place through ongoing interaction between developers and beneficiaries in the public, private, and social and solidarity economy (3rd sector) sectors. Individuals, social movements, and organizations drive change, while governments use social innovation to create laws and public policies(Mulgan, 2006). Collaboration between multiple actors, partnerships that are formed between the State, the business sector, the third sector, individuals and communities, are essential and reflect the entire process of social innovation, from creation to dissemination (Prim, 2017; Vercher, 2022). Partnerships are necessary and coincide with government policies that address concerns such as youth, women, marginalized individuals and the environment.

Responses require active collaboration, allowing market principles to coexist with government and charitable processes. Partnerships, such as those seen in organizations, contribute to social innovation by utilizing a range of resources. Individuals then form social movements to meet shared societal demands, leading to innovations. Universities play an important role as collaborative platforms for generating and implementing social innovations that meet societal demands (Mulgan, 2006; Murray et al., 2010; Prim, 2017).

Tardif and Harrisson (2005) highlight five dimensions to take into account when analyzing and defining a social innovation. These are:

- 1. The transformation (development) proposed or carried out,
- 2. The innovative nature of the proposal,
- 3. Innovation itself,
- 4. The actors involved,
- 5. The processes adopted (Tardif and Harrison, 2005).

According to these authors, analyzing these dimensions allows us to understand the novelty, innovative characteristics of the action/proposal, the goal of the innovation, the innovation process, the relationship between the actors of innovation and the social structure, as well as the potential or existing barriers to innovation. In any event, to conduct this study, social innovation must be implemented. In parallel with the development debate, social innovation is not the preservation or privilege of an organizational form or legal structure; in other words, social innovation can emerge from social actors and organizations (formal and informal) as well as institutions (laws, public policies) (Bensahri and Sossi Alaoui, 2023).

3.6 Approaches to social innovation

According to Richez-Battesti (2008), the approaches to social innovation can be summarized as follows (Bensahri and Sossi Alaoui, 2023):

3.6.1 The institutional approach

This is a definition of social innovation as a tool for modernizing public policies; it is defined as the ability of private actors and civil society to correct the flaws of traditional public action, or even replace it with something consistent with the work on "New Public Management" (Besançon, 2013).

3.6.2 The Anglo-Saxon entrepreneurial approach

The emphasis is on the individual and the societal benefit of their entrepreneurial action, considered as a lucrative business. There are two distinct schools of social entrepreneurship, both American: market recipes and social innovation (Richez-Battesti et al., 2012). The first social school places a strong emphasis on the characteristics of innovation and on the entrepreneur who brings it to life. The second school, on the other hand, is more interested in the financial means necessary to create a social innovation, perceived as a response to a social need (Besançon, 2013).

3.6.3 The Latin entrepreneurial approach

It highlights the democratic, community, and non-profit aspects of social organizations. Since the activity is carried out in a bottom-up manner, based on democratic principles, and serving a social purpose, the social component focuses on how this action is carried out(Besançon, 2013). A key component of the concept remains non-profit, which is described as a restricted redistribution that avoids profit-maximizing behaviors(Defourny, 2004). The Anglo-Saxon approach, more individualistic and altruistic, lacks a double collective and democratic trait which distinguishes this entrepreneurial logic(Besançon, 2013).

3.6.4 The institutionalist approach

It is inclusive of other approaches while going beyond them by considering social innovation as a territorialized system and a tool for social transformation(Besançon, 2013). The latter is considered as a "discontinuity with respect to the practices usually implemented in a given environment" (Cloutier, 2003). In reality, the creative aspect of social innovation stems from the break with current practices in a specific context.

4 Between performance, innovation and inclusivity: a quest for organizational balance

4.1 Trade-off between inclusiveness and performance of solidarity economy organizations

The conflict between inclusion and performance frequently pervades solidarity economy groups, bringing into doubt their role in decreasing poverty among the most vulnerable producers. These groups mostly function in rural communities, where they are supposed to preserve social inclusion and solidarity (Wassie et al., 2019). This pressure may erode the competitive structures that let solidarity economy organizations succeed in bigger value chains. Solidarity economy groups frequently struggle to eliminate members who do not match organizational standards, which causes high-performing members to support low-performing ones, reducing the motivation to engage(Wassie et al., 2019).

Berdegué (2001) shows that the most effective Chilean producer associations follow tight regulations that allocate advantages depending on performance and market circumstances. The urge for inclusion frequently results in a variety of membership in solidarity economy groups, which poses management issues. According to Bachke (2019), the underperformance of solidarity economy organizations in Mozambique is most likely due to a high proportion of illiterate members and low membership fees(Bachke, 2019).

Furthermore, the most disadvantaged members of solidarity economy organizations are frequently underrepresented, exacerbating institutional imbalances. Solidarity economy groups' leaders are often older, richer farmers from the rural elite (Wassie et al., 2019). This is demonstrated in the case of Ethiopian solidarity economy organizations, where Bernard and Spielman (2009) discover that decision-making within these organizations is frequently concentrated in management committees that do not include the cooperative's poorest members (Bernard and Spielman, 2009). Similarly, Gelo et al. (2020) demonstrate that the benefits of a large-scale intervention aimed at improving the performance of solidarity economy organizations were largely absorbed by members of the elite (Gelo et al., 2020).

Overall, social inclusion frequently seeks to guarantee that the poorest smallholders have access to economic possibilities. However, these techniques have the potential to raise transaction costs and make it more difficult for organizational administrators. Bernard and Spielman (2009) argue that organizations can only fulfill two of the following three conditions:

The organization prioritizes inclusive membership, participatory decision-making, and market performance.

The trade-off between inclusiveness and performance in organizations is a complex and diverse issue that requires careful consideration. On the one hand, inclusiveness is essential to achieving the social objective of solidarity economy organizations—helping farmers in need, encouraging rural development, and developing a sense of community. However, inclusiveness can negatively impact performance, such as increasing internal coordination costs, decreasing market competitiveness, and diluting the market orientation and resources of solidarity economy organizations.

Indeed, the social activities of organizations are often implemented to the detriment of economic performance (Bizikova et al., 2020). Larger and more diverse memberships, as well as the multi-purpose nature of organizations, increase internal coordination costs (e.g., through influence costs (Gyulgyulyan and Bobojonov, 2019)) and pose significant managerial challenges, without resulting in additional cost savings for solidarity economy organizations' businesses. Thus, carrying out social activities can improve the social capital of the organization, but at the expense of performance. In some research, the level of participation of organizations in social actions has been evaluated, taking into account the association with their economic performance. Researchers have found that participation in social actions is related to the distribution of surpluses of solidarity economy organizations (Liebrand, 2007).

Furthermore, a literature review on the relationship between organizational formation and poverty discovered that market-oriented solidarity economy organizations (known as performance groups by researchers) are more likely to exclude poor farmers (Jerumeh et al., 2019).

The primary cause of exclusion for these small farmers is typically a lack of agricultural land. Furthermore, open or restricted membership is sometimes framed as a trade-off between performance and inclusion (German et al., 2020). Indeed, performance necessitates that the agricultural cooperative chooses farmers who can positively contribute to its operations and marketing plans. This suggests that development initiatives aimed at connecting farmers to markets may make agricultural cooperatives less inclusive (Bijman and Wijers, 2019a).

Previous studies argue that solidarity economy organizations with performance-oriented membership rules are better able to reduce transaction costs and achieve higher levels of market performance (Fuentes-Solís et al., 2019). This selection process is essential for the cooperative to serve its members well and compete in the marketplace. However, development strategies aimed at connecting farmers to markets can inadvertently make organizations less inclusive by prioritizing farmers who are best positioned to improve the cooperative's performance. This conflict between performance and inclusivity underscores the need for organizations to strike a balance between these two opposing approaches.

According to Sebhatu et al. (2021), the performance of organizations can be significantly positively influenced by their size and geographical location (Sebhatu et al., 2021). Larger organizations sometimes have greater economies of scale and bargaining power, which can boost their competitiveness. Similarly, organizations located in territories with favorable market conditions or infrastructure tend to outperform those located in less favorable territories. However, social efforts by organizations to promote inclusiveness and community development can have a negative impact on economic performance since they increase internal coordination costs and create managerial problems (transaction cost theory and agency theory). Indeed, according to a recent study by Miller and Mullally (2022) on the relationship between performance and inclusiveness of organizations, the inclusion of a diverse set of farmers (small and large) among the members of a cooperative can decrease the performance of these organizations by increasing transaction costs, but the inclusion of a large number of existing members of the same type (e.g., only medium or large farmers) in a given activity can improve performance by pooling a greater amount of inputs(Miller and Mullally, 2022).

As a result, organizations must find a balance between the benefits of inclusivity and the need to remain competitive in the market. Indeed, the inclusivity of organizations positively influences the performance of these organizations in the solidarity economy because according to Amadieu & Viviani (2011) and Saïsset (2014), it seems that an increase in intangible assets leads to a significant improvement in the performance of organizations (Amadieu and Viviani, 2011; Saïsset, 2014).

To address this tradeoff, organizations could use techniques that encourage inclusivity while improving their performance. Organizations, for example, can use targeted recruitment techniques to attract members who will benefit the agricultural cooperative's operations and market strategy (Franken and Grashuis, 2023). They can also

invest in training and capacity building initiatives to empower their members and enhance their skills and productivity (Wassie et al., 2019). In addition, organizations could explore new approaches to reduce internal coordination costs (agency costs), such as using technology or collaborating with other organizations.

In conclusion, the trade-off between inclusivity and performance is a complex and ongoing challenge for organizations. By carefully balancing these competing priorities and adopting strategic approaches, organizations can maximize their impact on poverty reduction, rural development, and community empowerment while maintaining their market competitiveness (Bijman and Wijers, 2019b).

4.2 Relationship between innovation and inclusiveness of solidarity economy organizations

As the author observed in the second section of this article, innovation encompasses a variety of elements, including technological advances, new products, processes, materials, market diversification, differentiation, and structural changes that introduce uncertainty. An initiative must be new or significantly improved by the organization to be considered innovative.

Innovation makes a contribution by providing answers to societal challenges including income inequality and food insecurity (Baud, 2016; Rip, 2018). Indeed, innovation is a transformational process that employs technologies, social arrangements, and new knowledge to address social challenges. Projects like the African Union's Agenda 2063 acknowledge the value of innovation in critical areas like agriculture, health, and energy.

It is important to note that the unique character of the innovation process might marginalize farmers with minimal resources. As a result, inclusive innovation approaches have been fostered to better accommodate the demands of underrepresented players, such as small farmers, Moroccan groups, and rural or poor locations. These initiatives include ideas such as social innovation, frugal innovation, and (Pedroso et al., 2023); a type of innovation that benefits the poor; territorial innovation (Bensahri and Sossi Alaoui, 2023) and inclusive innovation (Klingler-Vidra et al., 2022).

4.3 Innovation VS Inclusivity

4.3.1 Implementing an innovative culture encourages exclusive membership in organizations

After analyzing the literature review, it is possible to formulate a transitive relationship between the culture of technological innovation, the strategic orientation of solidarity economy organizations (SEOs) and their membership policy. Indeed, the adoption of a culture of technological innovation tends to favor a more market-oriented orientation. However, when this orientation favors the market to the detriment of local communities, it can lead to more selective, even closed, membership practices. Thus, the culture of technological innovation, by encouraging the search for new skills and specific talents among candidate farmers, could indirectly favor a restricted membership policy within cooperatives.

According to Batalini et al. (2014), for solidarity economy organizations to survive in the market, diversification and differentiation are required, along with technological innovation, management and performance aspects, qualification, and implementation of new processes(Batalini et al., 2014). These economists believe that product diversification serves a wide range of markets and consumers. Furthermore, differentiation necessitates organizational actions such as developing a trusted brand, providing agile consumer service, and periodically transforming and renewing product offerings. These viewpoints may be viewed as both collaborative entrepreneurship(Cook and Plunkett, 2006) and social and sustainability goals (Kormelinck et al., 2019).

In conclusion, agricultural solidarity economy organizations, like any other business, require innovation for survival, and this culture of innovation within these organizations will encourage them to move towards the market because it meets these quality and performance requirements (Neto, 2006).

Bijman and Wijers (2019) argue that when organizations shift from a community orientation to a market orientation, their social, political, and economic goals must be reoriented toward predominantly economic activity. With this shift, performance and commercial factors take precedence over social and solidarity principles (Bijman and Wijers, 2019). According to these authors, agricultural producer solidarity economies are likely to exclude certain farmers, particularly those who are unable to meet the quality standards that markets are increasingly demanding. Given that market orientation necessitates a strategic mindset and a greater focus on performance. As a result, these groups become more selective in accepting new members (Bijman and Wijers, 2019a).

In conclusion, the implementation of an innovative culture within organizations could lead them to adopt a closed membership policy, selective towards farmers by excluding small producers among them.

4.3.2 Social innovation, a lever for organizational inclusivity

Social innovation is defined by the European Union as "a new solution to a social problem that is more effective, sustainable and equitable than existing solutions and for which the value created is primarily for society as a whole rather than for private interests." This concept contributes to understanding the influence of social innovation on territorial development (BENSAHRI, 2023; Oeij et al., 2019; Phills et al., 2008). Accordingly, "empowering people and driving change" might relate to the prospect that social innovation would bring about societal transformation, which will lead to long-term social inclusion (Oeij et al., 2019).

Indeed, social entrepreneurship promotes social innovation in areas where the public and private sectors do not appear to be able to appropriately respond. (Defourny and Nyssens, 2017): the creation of completely new or enhanced products and services, new organizations and/or modes of production, new factors of production, new business alliances, and new forms of company. Farmers typically employ organizations to spur social innovation (Futemma et al., 2020).

Furthermore, social innovation is best understood as an endogenous process of social change that can foster a sense of solidarity and territorial inclusion for those living in precarious situations, as well as permanently and inclusively improve the well-being of all inhabitants of a given territory (BENSAHRI, 2023).

Innovation and social inclusion have attracted the attention of researchers and policymakers worldwide over the past decade. Rural communities, in particular, are at the center of this national and international concern.

Certainly, innovation, science and technology can help solve environmental and social problems, stimulate economic development and reduce poverty.

Promoting best practices in social innovation in developing countries is another goal of inclusive organizations. In fact, the inclusive nature of these agricultural producer organizations will result in alternative development methods that rely heavily on social and technological innovation to help rural areas marginalized to become more socially inclusive and reduce poverty.

Following the recent reforms undertaken in Morocco as part of the establishment of a social state and the implementation of a general Moroccan social protection system, this approach of social innovation via organizations could catalyze this social policy and address territorial disparities at the socioeconomic level of the most deprived.

5 Towards inclusive innovation of solidarity economy organizations

5.1 Definition of the concept of inclusive innovation

According to Heeks et al. (2013), inclusive innovation is defined by its fundamental view of development, which thus refers to marginalized groups' inclusion in certain aspects of innovation, as opposed to conventional views of innovation, which (often implicitly) understand development as broad-based economic growth. According to the same researchers, inclusive innovation expressly defines development as the active inclusion of individuals who are excluded from the mainstream of development (Heeks et al., 2013).

This in turn leads to the notion of two forms of inclusion: passive and active. Indeed, Johnson and Andersen (2012) define passive inclusion as lowering income disparity and pulling the poor out of poverty through increased income. However, active inclusion entails providing the excluded with rights, voice, capacities, and incentives to participate actively in development and innovation processes. These writers also underline the significance of inclusive innovation systems (Johnson and Andersen, 2012).

As for George et al (2012), they conceive inclusive innovation from the concept of inclusive growth: "Inclusive growth can be seen as a desired outcome of innovative initiatives (inclusive innovations) that target individuals from disadvantaged sectors of society as well as, at the same time, a characteristic of the process by which such innovative initiatives occur." (George et al., 2012).

5.2 Three theoretical approaches to inclusive innovation

Over the past two decades, the notion of inclusive innovation has gained ground in the innovation literature, although it remains vague and has multiple meanings. Three different approaches have emerged to explain this concept (Opola et al., 2021):

5.2.1 Approaching the bottom of the pyramid

The private sector often ignores stakeholders at the bottom of the economic pyramid due to low returns. This approach sees inclusive innovation as a way to overcome resource constraints at the base of the pyramid by connecting actors to established markets. Frugal innovation and social entrepreneurship are two concepts that emphasize the involvement of solidarity economy businesses and organizations in providing solutions.

5.2.2 The popular approach to innovation

This approach prioritizes formal knowledge and practices over local or informal knowledge. Grassroots innovation techniques emphasize knowledge, practices, and technologies developed and maintained by local communities or groups.

5.2.3 The political economy approach

This approach suggests that societal laws and practices align with the interests of key stakeholders. Exclusion in the innovation process occurs because the process aims to meet the demands of key stakeholders. Systemic reform and large-scale social change are recommended as responses, with the state and public organizations playing an increasingly important role.

6 Discussion: Role of solidarity economy organizations in promoting inclusive innovation

Our study revealed that in a context where socioeconomic inequalities persist, particularly between urban and rural areas, solidarity economy organizations (SEOs) find themselves at the heart of dynamics of social and territorial transformation. Faced with the need to improve their performance while consolidating their social mission, these organizations must overcome a structural dilemma: how to combine economic efficiency with the inclusion of marginalized populations in environments often marked by precariousness and lack of resources?

Inclusive organizational innovation emerges, in this context, as a holistic and tailored solution. By integrating the principles of participation, social justice, and territorial adaptability, it allows for the rethinking of organizational models, taking into account both performance imperatives and inclusivity requirements. This form of innovation is not limited to technological improvements, but encompasses institutional, relational, and social transformations. It is based on four essential pillars: strengthened institutional support, access to tangible and intangible resources, compatibility with the needs of local communities, and the rebalancing of power relations.

The Moroccan experience, supported by the guidelines of the New Development Model and the National Sustainable Development Strategy 2030, shows that strengthening inclusive innovation capacities within agricultural cooperatives can increase their resilience and territorial anchoring (Opola et al., 2021). Furthermore, international successes, such as the Chinese model (Habiyaremye et al., 2023), confirm that organizations capable of promoting locally anchored innovation play a decisive role in poverty reduction and the inclusive modernization of rural structures.

Inclusive organizational innovation is thus positioned as a strategic path for SEOs: it promotes sustainable performance while ensuring the effective inclusion of the most vulnerable groups. It therefore constitutes a coherent and operational response to the contemporary challenges of equitable and territorial development.

7 Conclusion

This article has highlighted the strategic role that solidarity economy organizations (SEOs) can play in promoting inclusive rural territorial development through the mobilization of inclusive organizational innovation. In emerging economies such as Morocco, the ability of organizations to articulate innovation, performance, and inclusiveness constitutes a decisive lever for strengthening the resilience of territories and combating structural

inequalities. The literature review has shown that inclusive innovation cannot be reduced to a simple technological improvement; it is part of a social and territorial dynamic, requiring resources, strong local roots, and appropriate institutional support.

The study also highlighted that Moroccan SEOs are adopting a hybrid approach, combining the different forms of innovation identified in the literature, to address the challenges of marginalization and precariousness of small producers. In this sense, inclusive organizational innovation appears to be an integrated and promising response, capable of strengthening social cohesion, economic performance, and environmental sustainability.

To ensure these dynamics are sustainable, the State and public and private partners have a responsibility to support these organizations by facilitating their access to resources, training, and cooperation networks. Thus equipped, the SEOs will be able to fully play their role as catalysts for more equitable, participatory, and sustainable rural development.

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