

Building up Regional Innovation Systems (RIS) for Development: The Case Study of the State of Mexico, México

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Abstract : The State of Mexico is an administrative entity of Mexico, and it is one of the most important territories due to its great economic and social impact for the whole country, especially since it contributes with more than eight of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The State of Mexico has a population of over seventeen million people and host very important business and productive industries such as Automotive, Chemicals, Pharmaceutical, and Agri-food. In 2017, the State Development Plan (Plan Estatal de Desarrollo in Spanish) which is a policy document that rules State's economic actions and integrates the bases for sectoral and regional programs to achieve regional development), raised innovation as a key aspect to boost competitiveness and productivity of the State of Mexico. Therefore, in line with this proposal, in 2018 the Mexican Council for Science and Technology (COMECYT for its acronym in Spanish), an institution in charge of promoting public science and technology policies in the State of Mexico, took actions towards building up the State's Innovation System. Hence, the main objective of this paper is to review and analyze the process to create RIS in the State of Mexico. We focus on the key elements of the process, the diverse actors that were involved in it, the activities that were carried out and the identification of the challenges, findings, successes, and failures of the intended exercise. The methodology used to analyze the structure of the Innovation System of the State of Mexico is based on two elements: the case study and the research-action approach. The main objective of the paper, the case study was based on semi-structured interviews with key actors who have participated in the process of launching the RIS of the State of Mexico. Additionally, we analyzed the information reports and other documents that were elaborated during the process of shaping the State's innovation system. Finally, the results obtained in the process were also examined. The relevance of this investigation fundamentally rests in two elements: 1) keeping documental record of the process of building a RIS in Mexico; and 2) carrying out the analysis of this case study recognizing the importance of knowledge extraction and dissemination, so that lessons on this matter may be useful for similar experiences in the future. We conclude that in Mexico, documentation and analysis efforts related to the formation of RIS and interaction processes between innovation ecosystem actors are scarce, so documents like are of great importance, especially since it generates a series of findings and recommendations for the building of RIS.

Keywords : regional innovation systems, innovation, development, competitiveness

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