



## TECHNOLOGICAL INCUBATORS FOR POPULAR COOPERATIVES AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SOLIDARITY ECONOMY: THE CASE OF THE ELOS-UEMS INCUBATOR

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### Abstract

Technological Incubators for Popular Cooperatives (ITCPs) in Brazil emerged in response to the search for alternative ways of generating work and income aimed at promoting inclusion and citizenship. Since the mid-1990s, these initiatives have connected academic knowledge with the demands of popular sectors, contributing to the development of the solidarity economy. This study analyzes the contributions of ELOS - Social Technology Incubator for Popular Cooperatives to the solidarity economy through the incubated enterprises and extension activities of the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UEMS) between 2008 and 2023. The study adopts a descriptive and exploratory approach, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques. The data were obtained from the Information and Project Management System (SIGproj) and from the Extension Division (DEX) of UEMS. The findings indicate that ELOS made a significant contribution to solidarity economy initiatives. In addition to providing technical assistance, the incubator promotes citizenship education and strengthens the self-management of incubated enterprises, thereby contributing to work and income generation.

**Keywords:** Incubators; university extension programs; solidarity economy; enterprises.

### *Incubadoras Tecnológicas de Cooperativas Populares e suas Contribuições para a Economia Solidária: o caso da incubadora ELOS-UEMS*

### Resumo

As Incubadoras Tecnológicas de Cooperativas Populares (ITCPs) no Brasil emergiram no contexto da busca por alternativas de geração de trabalho e renda voltados à inclusão e à promoção da cidadania. Desde meados da década de 1990, essas iniciativas têm articulado saberes acadêmicos e demandas populares, contribuindo com a economia solidária. Assim, o objetivo deste trabalho foi analisar as contribuições da ELOS - Incubadora de Tecnologia Social para Cooperativas Populares para a economia solidária, por meio dos empreendimentos incubados e das ações de Extensão da Universidade Estadual de Mato Grosso do Sul (UEMS), no período de 2008 a 2023. A metodologia utilizada está fundamentada em uma abordagem descritiva e exploratória, com técnicas qualitativas e quantitativas, com base em dados extraídos do Sistema de Informação e Gestão de Projetos (SIGproj) e da Divisão de Extensão (DEX) da UEMS. Os resultados apontam que a ELOS contribuiu de forma efetiva com as ações voltadas à economia solidária. Além do assessoramento técnico, também promove a formação cidadã e o fortalecimento da autogestão dos empreendimentos incubados, fomentando a geração de emprego e renda.

**Palavras-chave:** Incubadoras; extensão universitária; economia solidária; empreendimentos.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

During the 1990s, the difficulties that had emerged in the 1980s intensified, further aggravated by the challenges associated with trade and financial liberalization in a context of economic recession. These developments forced the industrial sector to reorganize, affecting employment and labor relations and raising serious concerns about the growing unemployment rate.

Given this scenario, the solidarity economy emerges as a possible alternative to unemployment. It is a form of production, consumption, and income distribution centered on the primacy of people over capital and is based on associative and cooperative practices and oriented toward self-managed production, consumption, and marketing of goods and services (Singer, 2000).

According to Gaiger and Kuyven (2020), the term “solidarity economy” gained prominence and official recognition in Brazil during the 1990s, as economic initiatives based on the free association of individuals emerged and became recognized for their participatory nature and principles of cooperation and self-management. With its expansion, the field of practices identified with the solidarity economy came to encompass different social categories and diverse organizational modalities.

According to Singer (2000), the solidarity economy emerged as a response from different social groups to the contradictions of the capitalist system and the imperfections of market relations, in which a portion of the population, excluded from the formal labor market, seeks its livelihood through collective support. The author defines the solidarity economy as a mode of production whose central characteristic is equality of rights, coupled with self-management; i.e., the enterprises are managed collectively by the workers themselves, in a completely democratic way.

In this way, networks of solidarity enterprises are created based on collaboration between teams, cooperation, and solidarity, with the aim of social inclusion and income generation. The main purpose of solidarity enterprises is to provide opportunities for collective work and to identify alternatives for achieving common goals. Collective enterprises – also referred to as solidarity enterprises – may take different organizational forms, including cooperatives, associations, and formally or informally organized groups.

Solidarity economy enterprises are associated with the local production of goods and products made collectively – local development – and with environmentally sound forms of production and consumption, as principles of a more just and egalitarian society produced through cooperation, association and solidarity among workers in solidarity-based production, exchange,



and consumption enterprises and initiatives (Melo, 2017).

In this sense, incubators for popular cooperatives in Brazil emerge in the context of the search for alternatives for generating work and income aimed at promoting social inclusion and citizenship. Since the mid-1990s, these initiatives have contributed to the consolidation of the solidarity economy in the country. Created by civil society organizations in partnership with higher education institutions, these incubators have played a strategic role in providing technical assistance, training, and support for the management of solidarity economy enterprises.

Building on this initial experience, the university network of Technological Incubators for Popular Cooperatives (*Incubadoras Tecnológicas de Cooperativas Populares* - ITCPs) was established, expanding the reach of these structures throughout the country. Based on principles such as self-management, solidarity, and local development, social incubators have become spaces for articulation between universities, communities, and social movements. Their work involves promoting collaborative networks and strengthening collective enterprises, fostering a more just, participatory, and sustainable development model (Silva, 2017; Culti, 2007).

From this perspective, ELOS - Social Technology Incubator for Popular Cooperatives (ITCP) - emerged at State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (*Universidade Estadual de Mato Grosso do Sul* - UEMS)<sup>4</sup>, which initially operated as an extension project and was later institutionalized, linked to the Incubators and Junior Enterprises Sector within the Extension Division of the Pro-Rectorate of Extension, Culture and Community Affairs (*Pró-Reitoria de Extensão, Cultura e Assuntos Comunitários* - PROEC) at UEMS.

According to Lamberti and Vieira (2022), ELOS's activities ranged from seeking funding from institutions such as the Funding Authority for Studies and Projects (*Financiadora de Estudos e Projetos* - FINEP) and the Inter-university Network for Labor Studies and Research (*Rede Interuniversitária de Pesquisas e Estudos sobre o Trabalho* - Unitrabalho), to the mapping of 107 solidarity economy enterprises and groups in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul, which provided a solid basis for targeted incubation and technical support actions.

Therefore, considering the importance of the role of incubators, the following question arises: how has ELOS's work, through its actions, contributed to the consolidation of the solidarity economy? By examining ITCPs, particularly ELOS, this study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of their relevance in providing technical support and advisory services to groups and organizations, with the aim of developing more democratic and participatory management practices for work and income generation. Given this context, the objective of this work was to

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<sup>4</sup> The State University of Mato Grosso do Sul is composed of units distributed across 15 municipalities in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul, in addition to Distance Learning (*Educação a Distância* - EaD) centers, which expands its reach to 28 municipalities.



describe the contributions of ELOS to the solidarity economy, through the incubated enterprises and the Extension activities of UEMS, in the period from 2008 to 2023.

The methodology adopted for this study is based on a descriptive and exploratory approach, using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Data were collected from the Information and Project Management System (*Sistema de Informação e Gestão de Projetos - SIGproj*) and the Extension Division (*Divisão de Extensão - DEX*) of UEMS, focusing on ELOS's incubated enterprises and extension activities related to the solidarity economy. The study's time frame corresponds to the period from 2008 to 2023.

To meet the proposed objective, this work, in addition to the Introduction and the Final Considerations, is structured in three sections, namely: section 2: Technological Incubators for Popular Cooperatives (ITCPs): a discussion; section 3: A brief history of the creation of ELOS: in the context of university extension; and section 4: Results and Discussions.

## 2 TECHNOLOGICAL INCUBATORS FOR POPULAR COOPERATIVES (ITCPS): A DISCUSSION

Incubators emerged in Brazil in 1995, stemming from a demand by the Committee of Entities in the Fight Against Hunger and for Life (*Comitê de Entidades no Combate à Fome e pela Vida - COEP*) – a civil society group led by sociologist Herbert de Souza. In partnership with the Coordination of Postgraduate Programs in Engineering at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (*Coordenação dos Programas de Pós-graduação em Engenharia - COPPE/UFRJ*), this organization developed an incubation methodology focused on popular cooperativism, with the aim of disseminating it to other universities in the country (Rezende; Boeira, 2014). Also in 1995, according to Silva (2017), the University Network of ITCPs emerged to support the development of solidarity enterprises.

According to Culti (2007), ITCPs emerge from the growing demand from workers across the country who seek to establish solidarity economy enterprises. Incubators constitute spaces for exchanging experiences in self-management and self-determination in the consolidation of these enterprises and strategies for connecting solidarity enterprises involved in production, services, marketing, financing, consumption, and other forms of popular organization that enable joint self-sustainable growth.

According to Guimarães (2007), it is possible to identify in the process of forming a Social Incubator that many of them arise from initiatives in the public sector at the state level – as in the case of incubators created and maintained by public universities – whereas others are established



by private universities. According to Singer (2000), ITCPs are one of the components of the solidarity economy in Brazil, which operate through multidisciplinary teams affiliated with universities, which offer technical, legal, and training support to community groups interested in developing self-managed enterprises.

Thus, ITCPs play an important role in the context of the solidarity economy, especially in supporting solidarity economy enterprises in different sectors. Many of these incubators are linked to public universities, developing their activities mainly through extension and research projects.

### **3 A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CREATION OF ELOS: IN THE CONTEXT OF UNIVERSITY EXTENSION**

At UEMS, social technology initiatives are incorporated into the Institutional Development Plan (*Plano de Desenvolvimento Institucional - PDI/PPI*) through the PROEC, which coordinates and monitors activities across the 15 units.

ELOS began operating at UEMS in 2006 as an extension project entitled ELOS - Social Technology Incubator for Popular Cooperatives (ELOS<sup>5</sup>-ITCP). The incubator's work is geared towards strengthening popular groups, associations, and cooperatives, with a primary focus on communities in situations of socioeconomic vulnerability. Its functions include incubating and supporting collective enterprises that practice sustainability and solidarity economy, through training focused on self-management, workshops, and events. The incubation modalities<sup>6</sup> offered by ELOS-ITCP – Pre-Incubation, Virtual Pre-Incubation, and Resident Incubation – reflect different stages of enterprise development and have specific, complementary objectives.

Pre-Incubation focuses primarily on stimulating entrepreneurship and preparing embryonic projects with the potential to become sustainable enterprises, functioning as an initial phase for the maturation of ideas. Virtual Pre-Incubation has the same objective but is geared towards groups geographically distant from the incubator's institutional base, guaranteeing remote access to technical and training support through digital platforms. And the Resident Incubation modality is intended for already established enterprises with technological expertise, operational capacity, and a minimum amount of capital already secured. Each modality, therefore, plays a fundamental role in the process of forming and strengthening the incubated enterprises.

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<sup>5</sup> In 2021, the Incubators and Junior Enterprises Sector was established by PROEC-UEMS Ordinance No. 02, dated February 11, 2021. This body is responsible for coordinating and managing all actions related to this area. In 2022, ELOS - Social Technology Incubator for Popular Cooperatives was formally institutionalized as an incubator by CECAC/CEPE-UEMS Deliberation No. 22, dated October 5, 2022, and approved by CEPE-UEMS Resolution No. 2,558, dated December 16, 2022.

<sup>6</sup> CEPE-UEMS Resolution No. 2,558, dated December 16, 2022.



Taken together, these incubation models reinforce the university's commitment to promoting social inclusion through ELOS. By defining objectives that involve the incubation of popular collectives, training in self-management and sustainability practices, and fostering institutional partnerships, the resolution strengthens ELOS's role as a facilitator of collective enterprises, aligning itself with the principles of the solidarity economy committed to local realities.

To understand how ELOS contributes to the solidarity economy through its Extension activities, it is necessary to make some considerations about university extension, in order to clarify the different types of extension, the thematic areas, and how university extension is implemented within UEMS.

University extension is characterized as a process that articulates teaching, research, and extension in an integrated way, promoting a transformative relationship between the university and society through interdisciplinary, educational, cultural, scientific, and political actions (FORPROEX, 2012). Thus, through extension activities, it is possible to enable interaction between the university and society, promoting exchanges between academic and community-based knowledge, which occurs with the Incubators that are coordinated by Universities and are embedded in the community to carry out the exchange of knowledge.

In 2018, MEC/CNE/CES Resolution No. 7, dated December 18, 2018 (Brasil, 2018), was published, establishing that at least 10% of the total curricular workload of undergraduate programs must be allocated to extension activities. In this way, university extension has come to be seen as a fundamental activity in the context of higher education, organically integrating it into the curriculum and the organization of research. It is a process that transcends disciplinary boundaries and takes on a political, educational, cultural, scientific, and technological character. Its main contribution lies in promoting a transformative interaction between higher education institutions and various sectors of society, allowing the knowledge produced by academia to be applied in a practical and socially relevant way.

University extension activities are classified into six types: program, project, course, event, service provision, and publications and other academic products (FORPROEX, 2007).



**Table 1 – Definitions of Extension Activity Types and Modalities**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Program:</b> An articulated set of projects and other extension activities, preferably integrating extension, research, and teaching activities. It has an organizational and institutional character, clear guidelines, and a shared objective, and is carried out over the medium and long term.                                                            |
| <b>Project:</b> A continuous and structured activity of an educational, social, cultural, scientific, or technological nature, with a specific objective and a defined timeframe. It may be linked to a program – the preferred format – or carried out independently as a standalone project.                                                                   |
| <b>Extension course:</b> A pedagogical activity, theoretical and/or practical in nature, offered either in person or remotely, planned and organized systematically, with a minimum workload of 8 hours and defined assessment criteria.                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Event:</b> An activity involving the public presentation and/or exhibition – either open to the public or intended for a specific audience – of knowledge or cultural, artistic, sporting, scientific, or technological products developed, preserved, or recognized by the University.                                                                       |
| <b>Service provision:</b> The performance of work offered by the Higher Education Institution or contracted by third parties, such as the community, enterprises, or public agencies. Service provision is characterized by intangibility and the inseparability of the process from the product, and it does not result in the transfer of ownership of a good. |
| <b>Publications and other Academic Products:</b> These consist of publications and academic products resulting from extension activities, intended for the dissemination and promotion of cultural, scientific, or technological knowledge.                                                                                                                      |

**Source:** Prepared by the authors based on FORPROEX (2007).

In this sense, all extension activities should be classified according to the following thematic areas: 1) Communication; 2) Culture; 3) Human Rights; 4) Education; 5) Environment; 6) Health; 7) Technology and Production; and 8) Labor. The classification by thematic area aims to organize the activities based on thematic groupings, facilitating the articulation between individuals or groups working in the same thematic area or in similar fields (FORPROEX, 2007).

The organization and operation of university extension at UEMS, the University Extension Policy, and the standardization of Extension activities follow the deliberations established by FORPROEX, according to Souza (2021). Within UEMS, the documents that guide Extension activities are the University Extension Policy and the standardization of Extension activities, which are contained in CEPE-UEMS Resolution No. 2,555, dated December 16, 2022.

## 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At UEMS, ELOS-ITCP, according to Lamberti and Vieira (2022), from its early stages, when it operated as an extension project, developed alternative initiatives aimed at generating work and income, brought together researchers and sought financial support from institutions such as FINEP and Unitrabalho, which enabled training actions, participation in events, granting of



scholarships to students and the mapping of 107 (one hundred and seven) economic groups in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul.

From 2009 to 2015, according to Lamberti and Vieira (2022), the ELOS project aimed to provide advisory and technical support to solidarity economy initiatives, focusing on the self-organization of workers in the planning and implementation of solidarity economy enterprises, based on self-management methodology. ELOS-ITCP's actions were directed towards unemployed workers and workers engaged in the informal economy. The demands addressed originated from neighborhood associations, unions, workers' cooperatives, and other forms of social organizations representing civil society.

In this sense, the incubator advised incubated enterprises, such as COOPORÃ, a clothing cooperative formed and managed by women in Ponta Porã, Mato Grosso do Sul, in the segment of clothing, accessories, and uniform manufacturing. The advice occurred through the elaboration of a business plan, the search for partnerships with other entities, self-management courses and training and skills development in cutting and sewing (Lamberti; Vieira, 2022).

Another incubated enterprise was the Solidarity Economy Store, located next to Avenida Center Shopping Mall in Dourados - MS, in partnership with the Municipal Forum for Solidarity Economy in Dourados (*Fórum Municipal de Economia Solidária de Dourados*). The products included handicrafts, clothing, accessories, and ethnic items produced by members of the Jaguapiru Indigenous community. The Solidarity Economy Store has been operating in the central square of the city. The store exclusively sells handicrafts produced and marketed by 17 artisans.

In 2011, the ELOS project established a partnership with the Network of Incubators for Sustainable and Solidarity Economy Enterprises in the Central-West Region (*Rede de Incubadoras de Empreendimentos Econômicos Solidários e Sustentáveis do Centro-Oeste* - REINESCO) and with other Higher Education Institutions, especially the State University of Mato Grosso (*Universidade Estadual do Mato Grosso* - UNEMAT). The overall objective of the proposal was to establish a network of incubators for sustainable and solidarity economy enterprises in the Central-West region, expanding the exchange of knowledge, methodologies and other scientific productions and establishing a connection between researchers and their incubation methodologies and appropriate tools for the self-management of different production chains and collaboration networks (Lamberti; Vieira, 2022).

In addition to these incubated enterprises, projects, programs, and extension events related to the Incubator are also noteworthy. These were registered with the DEX and are compiled in chronological order in Table 2:



**Table 2** - Extension Projects, Programs, and Events Related to ELOS Registered with DEX (2008–2023)

| Year of registration | Modality | Title                                                                                                                               | Objective                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2008                 | Program  | ELOS - Social Technology Incubator for Popular Cooperatives – Solidarity Economy                                                    | To support the creation and development of popular cooperatives, promoting their inclusion into the labor market and generating income for their members.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 2008                 | Event    | Launch of the Manual for Mapping Solidarity Economy Enterprises in Mato Grosso do Sul, 2007                                         | To disseminate the document entitled <i>Mapping Solidarity Economy Enterprises in Mato Grosso do Sul</i> (Mapeamento de Empreendimento Econômico Solidário em MS).                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 2009                 | Project  | ELOS - Social Technology Incubator for Popular Cooperatives – Dourados Unit, MS                                                     | To incubate popular cooperatives aimed at serving groups experiencing socioeconomic vulnerability.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 2009                 | Event    | 1st Microregional Solidarity Economy Fair                                                                                           | To establish an integrated relationship between the university and society, as well as between education and work.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 2010                 | Project  | FORPESC Leiteira: Training for the Identification and Incubation of Solidarity Enterprises for Technology Transfer in Dairy Farming | To generate work and income through the incubation of solidarity economy enterprises.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 2011                 | Program  | ELOS Program - Social Technology Incubator for Popular Cooperatives – Solidarity Economy                                            | To support the creation and development of popular cooperatives, promoting their inclusion into the labor market and generating income for their members.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 2011                 | Project  | Network of Incubators of Sustainable and Solidarity Economy Enterprises in the Central-West Region (REINESCO)                       | To establish a network of incubators for sustainable and solidarity economy enterprises in the Central-West region, expanding the exchange of knowledge, methodologies, and other scientific outputs, while establishing a network of researchers focused on incubation methodologies and tools suitable for the self-management of different production chains. |
| 2011                 | Project  | Awareness-Raising and Training Activities in the Solidarity Economy Applied to Horticulture                                         | To identify and develop appropriate social technology methodologies focused on family farming that may contribute to the social development of the state of Mato Grosso do Sul, as well as increase the economic viability of the participating groups.                                                                                                          |
| 2011                 | Event    | 1st Seminar of Incubators of the Central-West Region/UEMS                                                                           | To develop actions to strengthen solidarity economy enterprises, with a focus on the commercialization of products from various production chains through the incubator network.                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2011                 | Project  | Incubation of Enterprises in the Solidarity Economy Network of Jardim and Bonito, MS                                                | To strengthen solidarity economy enterprises in tourism regions by identifying and creating business and innovation opportunities from the perspectives of local development, public policies, solidarity economy, and technological innovation.                                                                                                                 |



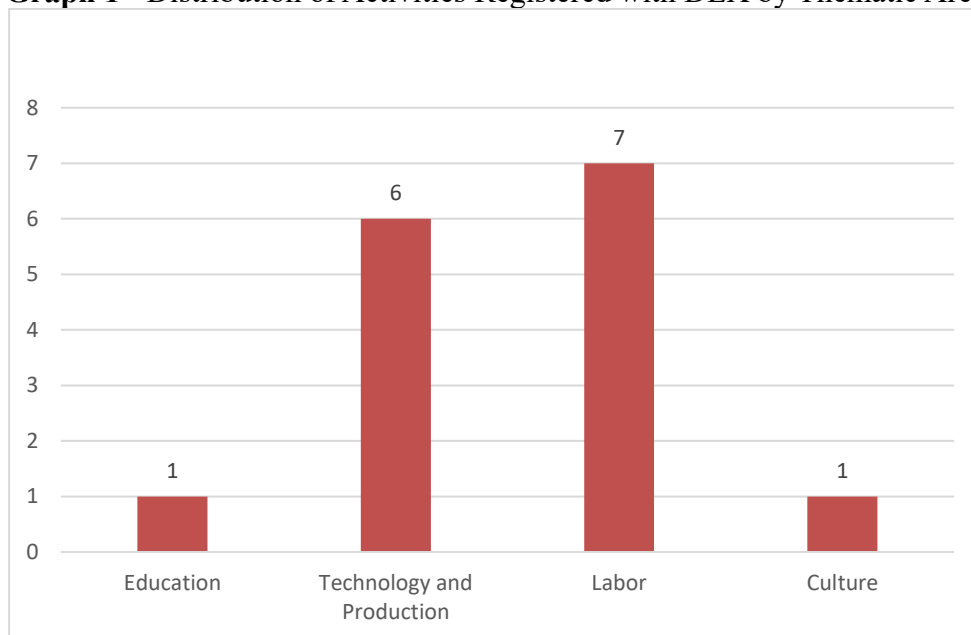
|      |         |                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2012 | Event   | Workshop on Solidarity Economy Enterprises with a Focus on Tourism in Mato Grosso do Sul                             | To share incubation experiences involving handicraft and family-farming groups and enterprises, with a focus on solidarity economy within the tourism production chain.                                           |
| 2015 | Project | Analysis of the Profile of Solidarity Economy Enterprises in the Municipalities of Dourados and Ponta Porã, MS       | To analyze the profile of solidarity enterprises in the municipalities of Dourados and Ponta Porã, MS. Specifically, to identify their organizational characteristics and the economic activities they carry out. |
| 2018 | Project | Interdisciplinary Extension Practices: Challenges and Possibilities for Supporting an External Community Association | To diagnose and provide advisory support on issues related to the commercialization of the Mini Dairy Plant in Ponta Porã, MS.                                                                                    |
| 2023 | Project | Brazil/Haiti/Venezuela Fashion Workshop: The Work and Social Inclusion of Women Entrepreneurs                        | To offer an intensive professional training course in industrial sewing to a group of migrant women residing in the municipality of Nova Andradina, MS, who are experiencing vulnerability.                       |

**Source:** Prepared by the authors based on data from SIGPROJ (2025) and DEX/PROEC/UEMS.

Table 2 shows the actions in chronological order, the modality to which they belong, their respective titles, and the proposed objectives. These actions demonstrate UEMS's continuous effort to promote the solidarity economy, which contributes to social inclusion and the generation of work and income. In this sense, the initiatives and actions of ELOS, specifically with the FORPESC Leiteira project, demonstrate a concern for strengthening collective enterprises, especially in regions marked by socioeconomic vulnerability. These actions seek to combine technical knowledge, research, and university extension with the reality of local communities, contributing effectively to the development of the municipality where the enterprise is located.

There has also been a broadening of the scope of these activities, including new themes such as tourism, family farming and, more recently, the empowerment of vulnerable migrant women. The programs, projects and events mentioned above reflect a collective effort that integrates educational actions, mapping, incubation and networking. This trajectory demonstrates the commitment of the institutions involved to interdisciplinary practices and to the promotion of a more just, democratic and inclusive economy.

**Graph 1 - Distribution of Activities Registered with DEX by Thematic Area (2008-2023)**



**Source:** Prepared by the authors based on data from SIGPROJ 2025 and DEX/PROEC/UEMS.

Graph 1 shows the number of extension activities registered with DEX between 2008 and 2023. It can be observed that the thematic area with the highest number of registered extension activities is Labor, encompassing topics such as agrarian reform and rural labor; labor and social inclusion; the training and qualification of human resources and managers of public labor policies; vocational education; popular organizations for work; popular cooperatives; the agrarian question; occupational health and safety; child labor; tourism and employment opportunities; and interinstitutional cooperation in the area.

In this sense, considering the solidarity-based enterprises incubated, as well as the projects registered and supported by ELOS since its creation, the relevance of its work in the development and strengthening of the solidarity economy becomes evident. In this context, ELOS makes an effective contribution to these initiatives, going beyond technical and administrative support by also promoting civic education, autonomy, and the strengthening of self-management among the incubated enterprises.

## 5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The objective of this work was to describe the contributions of ELOS - Social Technology Incubator for Popular Cooperatives to the solidarity economy, through the incubated enterprises and the Extension activities of the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UEMS), in the period from 2008 to 2023.

The results showed that among the supported incubated enterprises, COOPORÃ, a women-



led clothing cooperative in Ponta Porã, and the Solidarity Economy Store in Dourados stood out, representing important experiences in strengthening productive capacity and promoting social inclusion. Participation in regional networks, such as the partnership with the Network of Incubators for Sustainable and Solidarity Economy Enterprises in the Central-West Region (REINESCO), broadened the incubator's reach, strengthening inter-institutional partnerships and promoting the exchange of knowledge and experiences among different universities.

In addition to its direct work with enterprises, ELOS has consolidated its actions through various extension projects, programs, and events. Throughout the analyzed period, the scope of these actions has expanded to include themes such as tourism, family farming, and, more recently, the professional training and social inclusion of vulnerable migrant women. This trajectory demonstrates the institution's commitment to interdisciplinary practices and the promotion of a more just and inclusive economy.

Thus, based on the solidarity enterprises that have been incubated, as well as the projects registered with and supported by ELOS since its creation, it is clear that ELOS plays an essential role and effectively collaborates with actions aimed at the solidarity economy, going beyond technical and administrative support, also promoting citizenship education and strengthening the self-management of the incubated enterprises.

This study contributed to reflecting on the importance of Technological Incubators for Popular Cooperatives (ITCPs), especially ELOS, highlighting their contributions to the solidarity economy through Extension activities, as well as other forms of action.

Finally, further studies are suggested, as there is a field of research to be explored regarding ITCPs, which offer technical support and assist in the implementation of self-management practices, thus promoting social and economic inclusion.

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