

IRSA - CONGRESSO MUNDIAL DE SOCIOLOGIA RURAL (01/10/2025 A 20/01/2026) - IRSA 23 - RURAL YOUTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE: IDENTITIES, TERRITORIAL RESISTANCE, AND THE DILEMMA OF WORK OR MIGRATION

INDIGENOUS YOUTH FACING CLIMATE CHANGE: COOPERATIVE ORGANIZATION AND DEFENSE OF TERRITORY IN THE SIERRA NORTE OF PUEBLA

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Climate change intensifies historical and territorial inequalities that disproportionately impact Indigenous youth. These individuals encounter multiple structural challenges, including environmental degradation of their territories, restricted access to dignified employment, and persistent pressure to migrate as a primary means of survival. This study examines how the Kin Tikat' Kan Xanata cooperative, composed of young Totonac Indigenous members, has emerged as a significant actor in the defense, stewardship, and resistance of the Ocomantla territory in the Sierra Norte of Puebla, Mexico. The cooperative aims to strengthen the endogenous economy and safeguard traditional knowledge through the sustainable use of natural resources and the production and commercialization of biocultural goods and services. Social organization, particularly through collective structures such as cooperatives, is identified as a

viable alternative to the dilemma of migration versus remaining in the territory. Drawing on individual interviews, participant observation, document analysis, and a focus group, this research analyzes the processes by which youth organize collectively to address environmental, economic, and social challenges. The findings demonstrate that Indigenous youth play a central role in confronting climate change by generating employment opportunities that are intrinsically linked to environmental stewardship and cultural preservation within their own territories.

Palavras-chave: indigenous youth; social organization; cooperative; biocultural goods and services; endogenous economy.