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SYSTEMS AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT: ANALYSIS AND CASE
STUDIES

GOVERNANCE IN EMBEDDED FOOD MARKETS IN GOIÁS, BRAZIL

Agnes Aparecida Santos (agnes.mestradopgdr@gmail.com)

Lucas Figueiredo Machado (lucas.machado.socioambiental@gmail.com)

This paper examines the governance of local productive systems engaged in the commercialization of food produced by family farming in Goiás, Brazil, drawing on the analytical framework of embedded markets. These markets are understood as socially embedded economic arrangements governed by shared norms, collective action and close relationships between producers and consumers. The main objective is to assess how such arrangements contribute to territorial development, considering their organizational structures, coordination mechanisms and regulatory capacities, as well as their structural constraints. The study adopts a qualitative research design based on fieldwork and the application of a multidimensional analytical tool within four case studies, grounded in the literature on socially constructed markets, embeddedness and territorial development. The analysis mobilizes key

dimensions including connectivity, governance, socio-economic relevance, distinctiveness, socio-material infrastructure, multifunctionality, and food and nutrition sovereignty and security. This framework allows for the identification of both consolidated attributes and critical weaknesses within local productive systems. The findings indicate that these systems diverge significantly from conventional agri-food markets due to their high levels of connectivity, transparency and valuation of agroecological practices, fostering trust-based relationships and the reconnection of production and consumption. The results also point to positive contributions in terms of income generation, the strengthening of women's participation, and the promotion of more sustainable and territorially rooted food systems. However, the analysis reveals persistent governance challenges, particularly regarding limited market permeability, restricted capacity to incorporate new participants, and insufficient access to collective infrastructure and technical support. While embedded markets hold considerable potential for territorial development, their long-term consolidation depends on strengthening governance capacities and public policies capable of enhancing sustainability and scale without undermining their socially embedded character.

Palavras-chave: governance; social constructed markets; embeddedness; family farming; brazil.