



## ***Solidarity economy fairs as an alternative to local socioeconomic development in the municipality of Santa Maria, RS***

**Renata Gonçalves Rodrigues**

*Instituto Federal de Tecnologia Ciência e Educação do Rio Grande do Sul – Vacaria – RS – Brasil*

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4489-3141>

**Patrícia Dornelles de Aguiar**

*Universidade Regional de Blumenau – Blumenau – SC – Brasil*

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4310-7353>

### **Resumo**

Atualmente, as feiras de economia solidária surgem como uma alternativa das comunidades para o desenvolvimento socioeconômico local. Considera-se cada vez mais relevante a participação da sociedade em projetos empreendedores locais com intuito de valorizar a comunidade através do incentivo ao comércio, ao serviço, ao lazer e à cultura, estimulando assim, um ambiente favorável à solidariedade. A partir dessa perspectiva, percebe-se que é importante considerar os bairros periféricos que fazem parte do espaço urbano e as relações sociais e econômicas inseridas neste ambiente, a fim de articular uma dinâmica que promova o desenvolvimento local com a participação destas comunidades. A economia solidária, por meio das feiras, favorece a integração social, cultural e econômica sustentável no sentido de uma economia simples, em que a solidariedade e a comercialização de produtos artesanais caracterizam o projeto. O desenvolvimento desta pesquisa utilizou-se da metodologia qualitativa em que, partindo da análise de dados socioeconômicos e de fatos circunstanciais, buscou-se elaborar uma árvore de problemas que facilitasse a compreensão e a importância socioeconômica desta proposta. O resultado esperado parte do entendimento de que é possível a implementação de feiras de economia solidária nos bairros periféricos do município de Santa Maria, RS, se houver a colaboração ativa da Prefeitura Municipal, instituições e da comunidade local.

**Palavras-chave:** Desenvolvimento local. Espaço urbano. Espaço público. Espaços de negócios. Relações sociais.

## Solidarity economy fairs as an alternative to local socioeconomic development in the municipality of Santa Maria, RS

### Abstract

Currently, solidarity economy fairs emerge as an alternative for local socioeconomic development of the communities. Society's participation in local entrepreneurial projects is considered increasingly relevant to valorize the community by encouraging trade, service, leisure, and culture, thus stimulating a favorable environment to solidarity. From this perspective, it is important to consider the peripheral neighborhoods that are part of the urban space and social and economic relations inserted in this environment, to articulate a strategy that promotes local development with the participation of these communities. Solidarity economy favors sustainable social, cultural, and economic integration as a simple economy through the fairs, in which solidarity and the commercialization of handcrafted products characterize the project. This research was developed through the qualitative methodology to elaborate a problem tree from the analysis of socioeconomic data and circumstantial facts, to facilitate the understanding and the socioeconomic importance of this proposal. The expected outcome stems from the understanding that it is possible to implement solidarity economy fairs in the peripheral neighborhoods of the municipality of Santa Maria, RS, if there is an active collaboration of the City Hall, institutions, and the local community.

**Keywords:** Local development. Urban space. Public space. Business space. Social relationships.

## Ferías de economía solidaria como alternativa al desarrollo socioeconómico local en el municipio de Santa Maria, RS

### Resumen

En la actualidad, las ferias de economía solidaria surgen como una alternativa a las comunidades para el desarrollo socioeconómico local. La participación de la sociedad en los proyectos empresariales locales se considera cada vez más relevante para valorar a la comunidad en el fomento al comercio, servicio, el ocio y la cultura, estimulando así un entorno favorable a la solidaridad. Desde esta perspectiva, se da cuenta de que es importante considerar los barrios periféricos que forman parte del espacio urbano, las relaciones sociales y económicas insertadas en este entorno, para articular una dinámica que promueva el desarrollo local con la participación de estas comunidades. La economía solidaria, por medio de ferias, promueve una integración social, cultural y económica sostenible en el sentido de una economía simple, de manera que la solidaridad y la comercialización de productos artesanales caracterizan el proyecto. La metodología llevada a cabo en esta investigación es cualitativa, a partir del análisis de datos socioeconómicos y hechos circunstanciales, de manera que se intentó desarrollar un árbol de problemas que facilita la comprensión y la importancia socioeconómica de esta propuesta. El resultado esperado proviene del entendimiento de que es posible implementar ferias de economía solidaria en los barrios periféricos de la ciudad de Santa Maria, RS, si existe la colaboración activa del Ayuntamiento, las instituciones y la comunidad local.

**Palabras clave:** Desarrollo local. Espacio urbano. Espacios públicos. Espacios comerciales. Relaciones sociales.

## 1 Introduction

Urban markets and fairs attract consumers and entrepreneurs, generating a flow of people in the occupation of public spaces and encouraging local socioeconomic development. The construction of these scenarios in urban places favors

the creation of synergies between agents and the community, constituting unique shopping and socialization experiences (FERREIRA, MARQUES AND GUERRA, 2015). According to Sebrae (2019), the events encourage the creation of a favorable environment for generating business opportunities, in addition to spreading entrepreneurship as a lifestyle, stimulating the emergence, expansion and diversification of sustainable businesses.

It is in this universe that this discussion develops since the theme of the solidarity economy is a subject that is currently being treated and emerges as a possibility of income generation, social insertion and change (BARRETO, LOPES AND PAULA, 2011). The solidarity economy is present in many parts of the country through fairs, characterized by socioeconomic meetings outdoors, on streets, squares or vacant lots, with products displayed on tables, benches, or even on the floor (QUEIROZ AND AZEVEDO, 2012) and “have become important for the local socio-economic dynamics since they can offer simpler, essential or superfluous, creative or imitative products to a population that does not have access to the products of the upper economy” (SILVEIRA, 2009).

In this context, the geographical notion of the periphery, according to Soto (2008) “refers to the areas that surround the central areas of urban agglomerations”<sup>[1]</sup> and, where the territorial configuration, or geographical configuration, therefore has its material existence, but its social existence, that is, its real existence, is only given to it by the fact of social relations (CASTELLI, 2014) opening opportunities for the use of public spaces as the possibility of sharing the same territories with other people without the compulsion to know them in-depth (SOBARZO, 2006).

It should be noted that the holding of fairs and events generates opportunities for social interaction and new business spaces since local entrepreneurs can sell products directly to consumers. Given this reality, it is clear that peripheral regions of the municipalities can become a fertile space for these opportunities, as such experiences in public spaces lead to socio-political, economic, organizational, and environmental gains (DIAS AND SOUZA, 2014).

The Mapping of the Solidarity Economy in Brazil, made available by the Brazilian Forum of Solidarity Economy (FBE, 2006), considers the development of the solidarity economy in two dimensions: the dimension of solidarity production and the dimensions of solidarity commercialization and consumption. Thus, according to the FBE (2006), the dimension of production grows in a superior way to commercialization and consumption. It is in this context that fairs and events emerge as an alternative to expand spaces and possibilities for interaction, as well as a way to reverse this situation.

In addition to the economic character present in these experiences, there is also an appreciation of the social aspect (SAUSEN et al., 2014). Thus, such practices can be expanded as strategic projects for the development of local communities (COUTINHO et al., 2006). As far as the actors responsible for local development engage, which according to the actions taken in a given territory, can result in income generation and the quality of life of its residents (GRIMM, SAMPAIO, PROCOPICK, 2018). Also, Souza (2007) states that monetary profit is not the objective sought, but the maintenance of family consumption, or the achievement of a certain level of income.

In this context, there is the municipality of Santa Maria, located in the central region of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, which has a partnership between the Municipal Government and the Planning Institute of Santa Maria (IPLAN), where studies are developed from the Urban Development Policy and the Master Plan for Territorial Planning, to order the full development of the social functions of the urban and rural areas, thus guaranteeing the well-being of the inhabitants of the municipality. In Santa Maria, it is common to hold fairs of the most diverse types, which usually take place in the central region of the municipality, limiting access to the community that lives in distant neighborhoods. Considering the facts discussed above, the question is how to generate opportunities for the occupation of public spaces in peripheral neighborhoods and encourage socioeconomic development in these locations?

Based on this reflection, the objective of this article is defined, which consists of proposing the holding of solidarity economy fairs in peripheral neighborhoods of the municipality of Santa Maria, RS. The proposal seeks to present to the neighborhood community, that it is possible to use public spaces in these locations, to hold fairs and outdoor events. These events should encourage the display and commercialization of the most diverse products, to collaborate in the formation of a new way of local, sustainable economic development, and social inclusion. Thus, this study is justified by considering the neighborhoods on the outskirts of the municipality of Santa Maria, RS, as locations with potential for holding fairs and events, which usually occur in neighborhoods located in the central area. In this way, seeking to give opportunities to the communities in the periphery, the holding of solidarity economy fairs as a form of leisure and integration among the community, as well as providing the development and enhancement of the local economy, using their public spaces to exchange products and services of common interest.

## 2 Local Development

Development in the economic, regional, or local sense is more complex than meets the needs of the population and the market. Amid the search for economic progress and the development of a region, it must be understood that this process can be directly related to its social reality, as it comprises the “process of improving living conditions in general” (THEIS, 2008).

Development studies reveal that it does not occur equally in all regions. Some develop more and others less for different reasons and involve processes of production, distribution, exchanges, consumption, habits, and cultural values, conditioned by the power relations matured in this process. Thus, it should be noted that the terms development and progress are confused in the economic scope. Historically, progress is seen as a temporal consequence of the evolution of society and the concept of development linked to the idea of economic growth (MATTEDI AND THEIS, 2002).

Currently, the development of a region evokes concerns not only of an economic nature but also of a social nature. New development strategies must be aimed at adjusting social imbalances by promoting local potential. After all,

“employing strategy means creating an exclusive and valuable position that involves a different set of activities” (DUARTE E SANTOS, 2011).

The municipalities are generally subdivided into the center and the periphery, that is, a central region where most of the trade and services are established and another called the periphery, where most of the workers reside and which has some small local commercial establishments aiming at meeting the needs of the community. Both regions are organized within an urban space. The urban space is formed by socio-spatial transformations resulting from the “distribution of productive activities and the population, materialized spatially as forms of urban development” (LIMONAD, 1999, p. 14).

The organization of local society is fundamental in generating opportunities for improving the quality of life and promoting development. For Oliveira and Lima (2003), thinking about development is, first, thinking about the participation of local society in the continuous planning of the occupation of space and the distribution of the fruits of the growth process (OLIVEIRA E LIMA, 2003).

### **2.1 Fairs as a space for social, cultural and economic integration**

The space is essentially linked to the reproduction of social relations of production (LEFEBVRE, 1976 apud SOBARZO, 2006). In this perspective, the public space is analyzed as a product and an enabler of social relations (SOBARZO, 2006). Space reproduces the social totality, insofar as these transformations (the house, the workplace, the meeting points, and the paths that unite these points) are determined by social, economic, and political needs (SANTOS, 1977). This economic, political, and social articulation makes organizations capable of balancing the different patterns of economic interaction, enhancing the reciprocal, commercial, and redistributive elements, together with an insertion in the public space with a view to local improvements (GAIGER AND CORRÊA, 2011).

Since antiquity, fairs have been considered “spaces for the sale of products and circulation of culture” (LEITE, 2015, p. 13). Currently, these spaces transcend the most important function of their origin that is supplying cities. Whether as a way of selling family farming products or as a possibility of employment and income or as a way of occupying public spaces, the fact is that fairs are present in large cities until today.

For Leite (2015), the fairs are characterized as a space of differentiated sociability, solidarity, without walls, with a relationship of neighborhood, contact, and coexistence. Differentiated for being in a public space where everyone who wishes can go to eat, buy, walk. Its main objective is social reorganization, to promote the human fulfillment of each person, emphasizing collective participation, cooperation, self-management, democracy, self-support, the promotion of human development, and social responsibility, in the form of solidarity collaboration (MANÇE, 2005).

### **2.2 The solidarity economy as an alternative to local development**

According to studies carried out by the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), throughout the 1990s, many popular groups, both urban and rural,

began to gain greater attention in the political, regional, and even a national scenario, due to their cooperative and associative organization. A significant group of intellectuals and representatives of social movements started to adopt the term “solidarity economy” as a concept that brings together a myriad of popular economic initiatives, whether in the countryside or the city, that had collective work and ‘self-management’ as common identity central elements (IPEA, 2016). In this way, there is a recognition of the diversity of popular strategies for generating work and income as an important step in valuing the local economic potential.

Given this, the distribution of these solidarity-based economic ventures in Brazil highlights the importance of solidarity-based economy fairs for the local community, since “[...] solidarity economy ventures are concentrated in two social categories: family farmers and artisans” (DIEESE, 2017, p. 29).

The solidarity economy initiatives, according to Leite<sup>[1]</sup>, have the following characteristics:

(...)combining dynamics of private initiatives with purposes focused not on profit, but collective interest. The economic reason is accompanied by a social purpose that consists of producing social and solidarity bonds, based on proximity solidarity; mutual assistance and reciprocity would thus be at the heart of economic action (LEITE, 2009, p. 34).

Historically, fairs have been described since the Middle Ages as a place for local commercialization that was initially based on exchanges and, over time, has evolved due to the commercial expansion for the commercialization of products in increasingly distant locations. According to Amorin (2011), “in modern times, fairs have diversified and constituted a meeting point between buyers and sellers to exchange products and/or services”. In this context, solidarity economy fairs emerge as a new model of development, with a focus on socialization, local market relations, and solidarity.

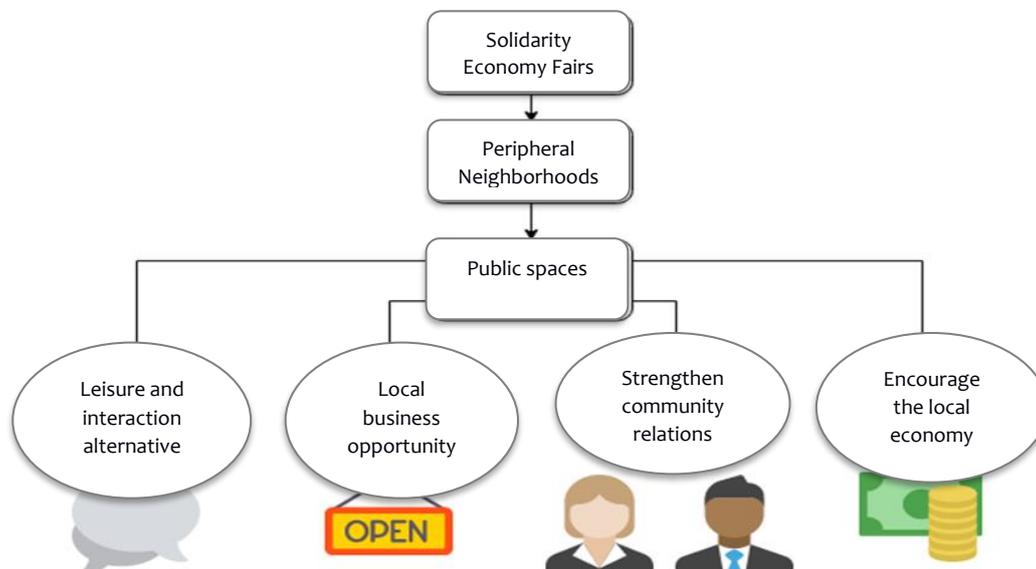
Solidarity economy fairs are important in terms of valuing the local economy and strengthening a new culture of consumption and marketing, based on solidarity. In addition to enabling the development of personalized relationships between producers and consumers, in humanized contact and valuing trust relationships (AMORIN, 2011). In this way, the novelty, strength, and differential of the solidarity economy revolves around the idea of “solidarity” (LISBOA, 2005), favoring an economic and social alternative in which, according to Lisbon (2011), it is reconfigured as a “way of life”, adjusting to a new perspective of social change in which the dimension of values plays a fundamental role.

### 3 Methodology

The development of this work, begins from the simple non-participant observation, to know the problem, mapping the fairs and events in the municipality of Santa Maria, RS, as well as the locations and neighborhoods for outlining the proposal. Being exploratory research, it was sought to observe the variables through the qualitative method, in which the aspects of reality cannot be quantified and use different approaches. For Deslauriers (1991), the researcher’s partial and limited knowledge means that the sample’s objective is to produce detailed and illustrative information. The basic procedure in reporting the results of a qualitative

study is to develop detailed descriptions of the place or individuals (CRESWELL, 2010). In this context, figure 1 presents the situation for the development of this proposal:

**Figure 1 – Contextualization of the proposal**



Source: Prepared by the authors (2019).

Seeking to achieve the proposed objective, information was collected on the neighborhoods of the municipality and its public places, as well as on the main events held. At this stage, information was also gathered through the elaboration of the theoretical framework, starting from exploratory bibliographic research, to support the argumentation around the central theme proposed in this discussion.

### 3.1 Characterization of the environment

The municipality of Santa Maria, founded on May 17, 1858, is located in the central region of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, 301 km from the capital Porto Alegre. It has a total area of 1,796.60 km<sup>2</sup> and approximately 261,031 inhabitants, according to the last Census conducted by IBGE in 2010. The population is distributed in urban and rural areas, where 95.14% of the inhabitants live in urban areas, and whose approximate demographic density is around 145.29 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup> (IPLAN, 2014). The urban environment is distributed in 10 (ten) Districts, the headquarters district being the city of Santa Maria, which is divided into 08 (eight) administrative regions and their respective neighborhoods.

The collection of this information was essential to precisely verify the distribution of the population in the neighborhoods, as well as the socioeconomic condition of this population. The analysis also took into account the authors' knowledge and observation about the reality of the municipality, as well as the research through social networks and local media sites (radio, TV, and newspaper) that events and fairs are usually held in neighborhoods in the central region of the

municipality of Santa Maria or in the Camobi neighborhood, where UFSM is located, as shown in table 1:

**Chart 1 – Fairs held in Santa Maria**

Event	Neighborhood	Place
Feira do Livro	Centro	Praça Saldanha Marinho
Feira da Gare / Brique da Vila Belga	Centro	Vila Belga
Feira de Múltiplas Artes	Nossa Sra. De Fátima	Museu de Arte de Santa Maria – MASM
Multifeira de Santa Maria - FEISMA	Nossa Sra. De Fátima	Ginásio Farrezão
Expofeira Agropecuária	Camobi	Centro de Eventos da UFSM
Feira do Cooperativismo - FEICOOP	Nossa Sra. De Fátima	Fundos da Basílica de Medianeira

Source: Adapted by the authors based on Santa Maria em Dados (2019).

Based on this observation, all neighborhoods in the municipality were analyzed, to determine which of them would have the potential to hold these fairs. The number of inhabitants and the percentage of the income of the residents of these neighborhoods was taken into account, as shown in the table below:

**Table 1 - Administrative regions and neighborhoods of Santa Maria**

(Continuing)

Region	Neighborhoods	Inhabitants	People with income (%)	People without income (%)
URBAN CENTER	Bonfim	7.157	65.91	27.37
	Centro	17,847	69.88	24.23
	Nonoai	4,168	67.23	24.04
	Nsa Sra de Fátima	8,836	66.25	25.91
	Nsa Sra de Lourdes	5,993	65.73	26.03
	Nsa Sra Medianeira	9,030	63.16	28.25
	Nsa Sra do Rosário	6,769	61.78	28.57
NORTH	Carolina	3,356	56.38	28.61
	Caturrita	3,211	53.66	29.87
	Chácara das Flores	3,939	58.29	26.99
	Divina Providência	4,130	54.55	27.24
	Nsa Sra do Perpétuo S.	6,151	60.75	27.26
	Salgado Filho	7,018	53.62	31.19
NORTHEAST	Campestre do Menino D.	2.697	57.43	28.85
	Itararé	7,300	57.59	30.34
	Km 3	2,504	57.35	28.47
	Menino Jesus	5,410	63.81	27.04

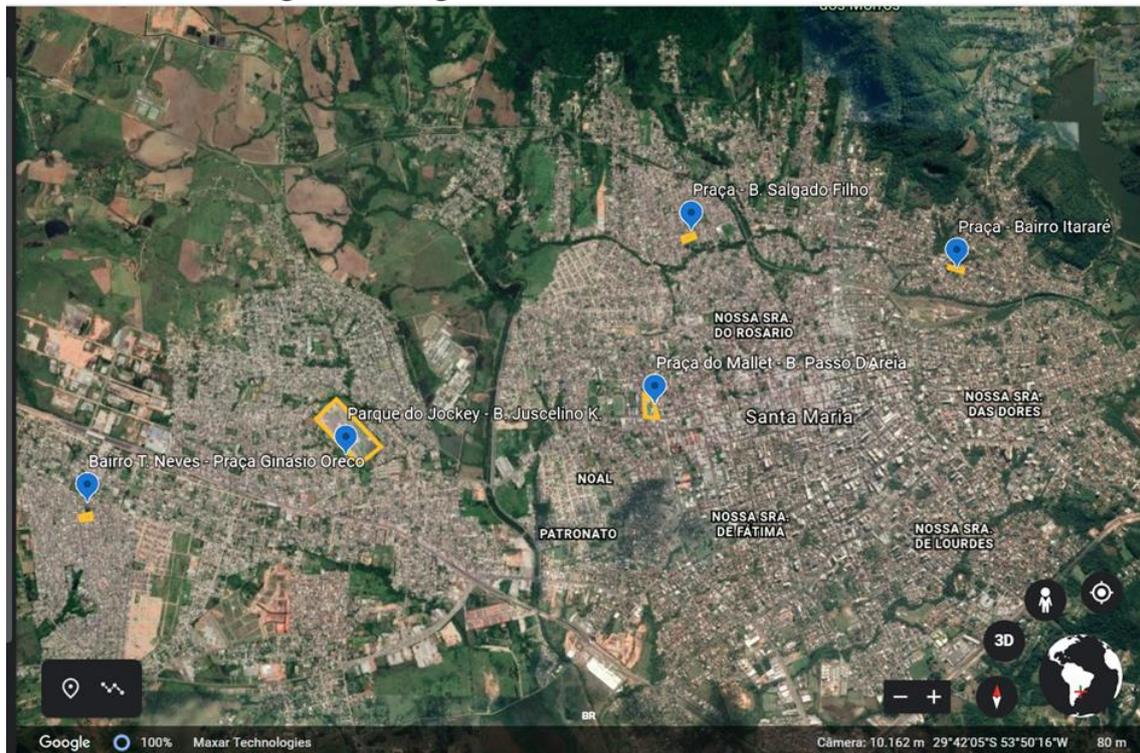
	Nsa Sra das Dores Pres. João Goulart	4,656 6,252	68.54 55.47	23.43 30.73
EAST	Camobi	21,822	61.78	27.05
CENTER-EAST	Cerrito Diácono João Luiz P. Pé-de-Plátano São José	1,127 3,152 2,200 5,697	52.17 50.92 56.68 60.70	34.16 28.87 28.77 27
SOUTH	Dom Antônio Reis Lorenzi Tomazetti Urlândia	1,984 5,621 2,039 8,967	59.07 55.22 56.79 56.84	28.48 28.73 28.15 28.62
CENTER-WEST	Duque de Caxias Noal Passo D'Areia Patronato Uglione	3,339 7,582 6,995 2,575 1,808	65.44 55.38 59 61.79 65.71	27.25 29.06 28.65 28.78 21.74
WEST	Agro-Industrial Boi Morto Juscelino Kubistchek Nova Santa Marta Pinheiro Machado Renascença São João Tancredo Neves	224 2,561 13,730 12,722 10,943 1,791 1,706 11,456	56.7 58.73 62.78 48.37 58.56 58.57 61.9 60.21	29.46 26.79 24.79 32.77 26.74 26.41 27.2 28.02

Source: Prepared by the authors based on IPLAN Santa Maria (2019) and Census IBGE 2010.

Observations focus on some circumscribed aspects from which specific issues are learned and the totality where the observed analysis takes place. Given this analysis, it was found that the choice of neighborhoods to hold these solidarity economy fairs, should be concentrated in places with the highest number of inhabitants and with the lowest percentage of income, as they understand that they are communities that are less favored socioeconomically.

From the socioeconomic analysis shown in table 1, the following neighborhoods were determined for the intervention project: Salgado Filho, Itararé, Passo D'Areia, Juscelino Kubistchek and Tancredo Neves, as illustrated in the following figure:

**Figure 2 - Neighborhoods selected for the Fairs**



Source: Adapted by the authors based on IPLAN Santa Maria (2019) and Census IBGE 2020.

Thus, once the neighborhoods were chosen, the public places where the event could take place were identified. At first, it was found in these neighborhoods, squares that would be the most appropriate place to hold the fairs, not only for space but also for the infrastructure they offer, making them more suitable for this project. The choice of squares as a public space for the fairs is intended to facilitate the access by the local community, as well as to guarantee an infrastructure that includes the proposed socio-economic integration. Chart 2 shows the location of the squares in their respective neighborhoods:

**Chart 2 - Location of public squares in Santa Maria neighborhoods**

Neighborhood	Square
Salgado Filho	Av. Oliveira Mesquita (sem nome)
Itararé	Av. Assis Brasil (sem nome)
Passo D'areia	Rua Mal. Hermes – Praça do Mallet
Juscelino Kubistchek	Rua das Laranjeiras – Parque do Jockey
Tancredo Neves	Av. Paulo Lauda – Ginásio Oresco

Source: Prepared by the authors based on Google Maps (2019).

Community involvement is of fundamental importance since the proposal aims to promote an alternative of leisure and interaction between people, uniting the dissemination and commercialization of the most diverse products produced, or

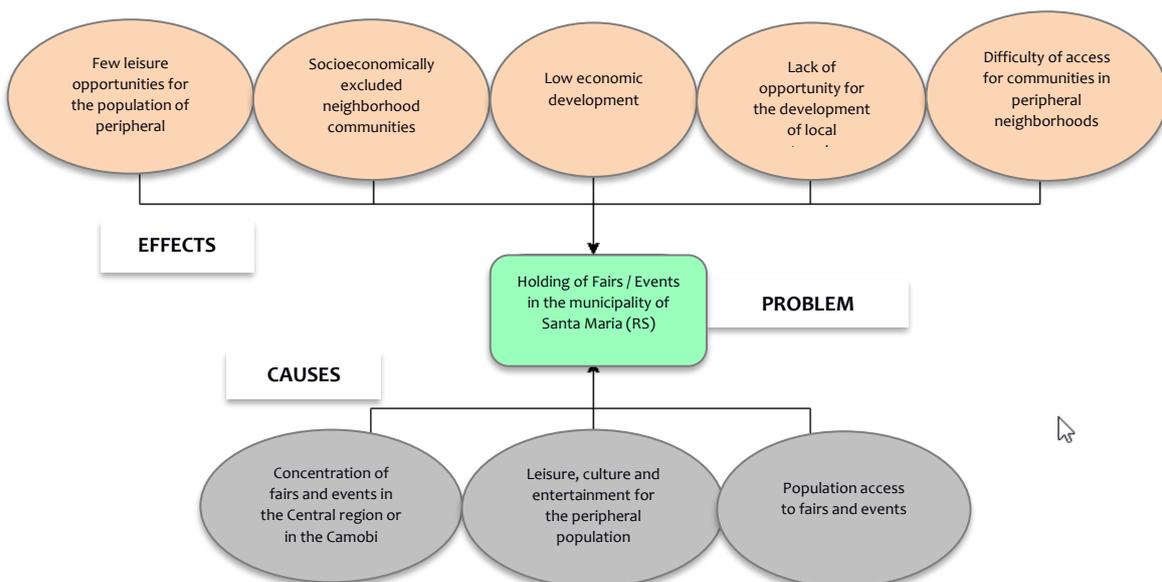
not, by the community itself, so that they have greater visibility among the residents of these neighborhoods, strengthening the local economy through solidarity and sustainable event.

Due to events of this nature, already being part of the municipality’s cultural agenda, the collaboration, and support of the City Hall, as well as private institutions regarding the organization and publicity of these events, is assumed, bringing the community together to participate in both the organization, as well as publicizing fairs within their neighborhoods. The idea of solidarity economy fairs comes as a proposal to strengthen the social, cultural, and economic integration of these neighborhoods, in a sustainable and supportive manner, since they involve community participation for the development of the local economy.

#### 4 Results and discussion

Based on observation, data collection, and analysis of circumstantial facts, we sought to determine the cause and effect relationship of the research problem in question starting from a reductionist approach to reality, through a causality analysis demonstrated by the problem tree below:

**Figure 3 – Problem tree**



Source: Prepared by the authors (2019).

Given the analysis of this problem with the cause and effect relationship, as well as in the data and information collected, the so-called logical frame for this proposal was elaborated, as shown in Table 3. The construction of the logical model is a proposal to organize the actions that compose a program in an articulated way with the expected results, also presenting the hypotheses and ideas that give meaning to the proposal (CASSIOLATO AND GUERESI, 2010).

**Chart 3 - Logical model**

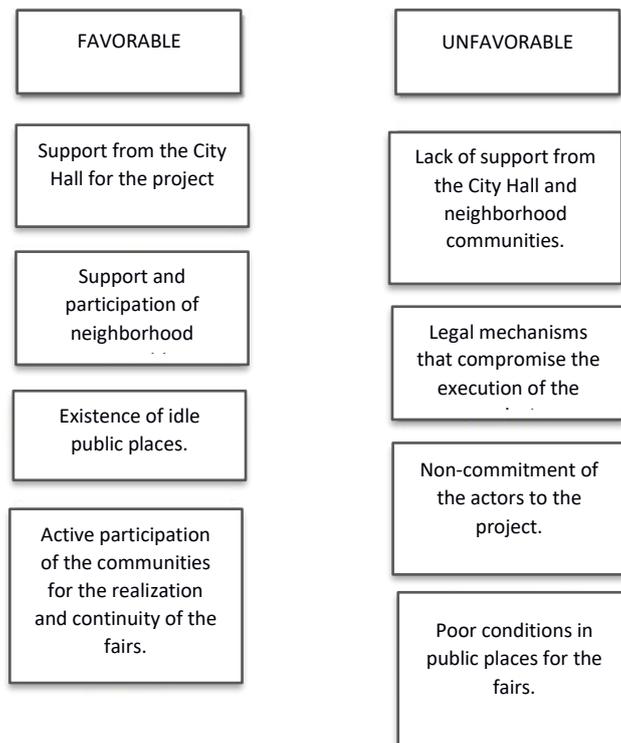
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	<b>Logic of the Proposal</b>	<b>Objectively verifiable indicators</b>	<b>Sources of evidence</b>	<b>Important assumptions or premises</b>
<b>Superior or general objective</b>	Solidarity economy fairs held in public spaces in the peripheral neighborhoods of Santa Maria, RS.	Check with the City Hall for the feasibility of including the project in the municipality's events agenda.	Inclusion of solidarity economy fairs in the neighborhoods in the municipality's events agenda.	Permanence of the neighborhood solidarity economy fair on the municipality's events agenda.
<b>Project or specific objective</b>	Enable the community of the peripheral neighborhoods an alternative of leisure and interaction, strengthening relationships, providing opportunities for local businesses and encouraging the local economy.	Propose and highlight with the City Hall the relevance of the project for the community of peripheral neighborhoods and for the municipality.	Active participation of the community in the neighborhoods where the fairs will be organized.	Non-participation of the community in the peripheral neighborhoods for the fairs.
<b>Results</b>	Periodic and/or itinerant solidarity economy fairs in the peripheral neighborhoods.	After being approved by the City Hall, encourage community support in participating in the project.	Solidarity economy fairs in peripheral neighborhoods with the active participation and collaboration of the local community.	Non-continuity of the project due to the lack of participation by the local community.
<b>Activities</b>	To unite the local community of peripheral neighborhoods in the participation and organization of fairs, seeking to diversify and value sustainable business among local artisanal traders.	Ensure that the events agenda is fulfilled so that the community can collaborate in organizing the fairs.	Regular fairs are held in public squares with leisure, culture and local business activities among the local community in the neighborhoods.	Failure to hold fairs due to poor weather conditions or the public space for holding them.

Source: Prepared by the authors based on the Center for International Studies on Government (CEGOV) at UFRGS (2019).

To complement and finalize the construction of the logical model, it is necessary to reflect on the possible influences that may interfere and even affect the implementation of the proposal. In this way, an analysis was made of the relevant factors of the context that may be favorable or unfavorable for the development of this proposal, as shown in figure 4:

**Figure 4 – Relevant factors related to the proposal**



Source: Prepared by the authors based on CASSIOLATO E GUERESI (2010).

The logical frame aims at understanding the strategy to be used for the implementation of these fairs. The relevant factors of the context collaborate to determine possible obstacles to development and expected results. For Santos et al. (2008), its main objective is to offer a common logical structure and enable the synthesis of information about the projects. According to Baldissera (2001), the way of researching reality implies the participation of the population as an active agent in the knowledge of their reality and allows them to acquire the knowledge necessary to solve problems and satisfy needs.

To facilitate the planning of fairs in the municipality, joint action is proposed with the City Hall, as well as a partnership with banks and private initiative companies, to win the engagement and the financial resources necessary to hold the fairs. The second step is to establish partnerships with schools, universities, and with the neighborhood community benefited by the action, encouraging their participation and collaboration in the execution of the proposal.

Given this, the Santa Maria Development Agency (Agência de Desenvolvimento de Santa Maria - ADESM), a non-profit and economic organization, has an important role in this stage, as its objective is to promote the

sustainable development of Santa Maria and the region through integrated action between the Public Power, Educational Institutions, Business Sector, Related Associations and Society Volunteers (ADESM, 2020). Despite the complexity involved in planning and executing projects of this magnitude, the establishment of partnerships and the active participation of the community is a fundamental part of local development to be achieved.

## 5 Final Considerations

The present article sought to present an alternative of leisure and interaction to the communities of the peripheral neighborhoods of the municipality of Santa Maria, RS, through the Solidarity Economy Fairs in selected neighborhoods through the analysis of socioeconomic indicators and observation, concerning events offered by the City Hall in general.

The use of public spaces by the community, especially the squares, favors social interaction and conservation of the place. By enjoying the public space, the community starts to have another view of this space, demanding better conservation of it. The holding of periodic events in these places also helps the City Hall to redefine spaces and provide a new model of economic and social development for less favored communities. In this context, the solidarity economy fairs, which are appearing in a notorious way across the country, bring a new form of economic and social development to the communities, an alternative, collaborative, and solidarity way, of free association and self-management.

Therefore, we sought to show that it is possible to hold these fairs in the peripheral neighborhoods of the less economically favored population of the municipality, based on research and observation of the variables discussed in that work. Solidarity economy fairs in these locations should emerge as an alternative for leisure and interaction, providing sustainable social and economic integration and enabling these communities to participate and collaborate in holding fairs on an itinerant and/or periodic basis in the public spaces of their neighborhoods.

It is expected to provide opportunities to residents of these communities of a new form of social integration, solidarity, and sustainability, combining well-being, culture, and local development through commercial interaction between the most diverse local artisanal producers, providing the dissemination of their products and strengthening relations between the residents of these neighborhoods, thus diversifying the local economy and improving the income of participating small entrepreneurs.

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**Renata Gonçalves Rodrigues**. PhD in Agribusiness from UFRGS (2016). Professor at the Federal Institute of Technology, Science and Education of Rio Grande do Sul – Campus Vacaria. Av. Venâncio Aires, 449/1102 – Porto Alegre/RS.  
[renata.grodrigues@outlook.com](mailto:renata.grodrigues@outlook.com)

**Patrícia Dornelles de Aguiar**. Economist. Master's student in Regional Development (PPGDR) at the Regional University of Blumenau - FURB. R. Tobias Barreto, 47/201 - Vila Nova, Blumenau / SC - Brazil - CEP: 89035-070.  
[patidornelles.aguiar@gmail.com](mailto:patidornelles.aguiar@gmail.com)

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#### CONTRIBUTION OF EACH AUTHOR

- a. Theoretical-conceptual foundation and problematization: Renata Gonçalves Rodrigues e Patrícia Dornelles de Aguiar
- b. Data research and statistical analysis: Patrícia Dornelles de Aguiar
- c. Elaboration of figures and tables: Patrícia Dornelles de Aguiar
- d. Photos: Patrícia Dornelles de Aguiar
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