Viewing Microcredit Lending through Participatory Mapping: A Case Study

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Abstract

Participatory mapping has been employed since the mid-1990s as a tool to seek greater social justice through spatial representations from the points of view of historically marginalized populations. While most participatory mapping projects have engaged indigenous issues, such as those involving territorial disputes and access to natural resources, few studies have attempted to apply participatory mapping to enhance adaptation micro-lending practices in the developing world. This study combines participatory mapping with interviews and geospatial technology to examine the limited participation of younger adults in a credit union in Tilaco, Mexico. We examine the process, utilities, and limitations of employing participatory mapping to help answer this question.

Keywords

gdx – international development – Latin America – microcredit – participatory mapping

Participatory mapping has been employed since the mid-1990s as a tool to seek greater social justice through spatial representations from the points of view of historically marginalized populations. While most participatory mapping projects concern indigenous rights to land and access to natural resources, few studies have attempted to apply participatory mapping to enhance micro-lending practices in the developing world. This study combines participatory mapping with interviews and geospatial technology to examine the limited participation of younger adults in a credit union in Tilaco, Mexico. We examine the process, utilities, and limitations of employing participatory mapping to help answer this question.