Transformative Social Innovation in Latin America: Interdependence, Co-creation, and Democratization of the Change Agenda

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Abstract

This article seeks to analyze how social innovation in Latin America has evolved as our societal problems have changed in nature, depth, and scale. Today, social innovation in Latin America reflects the current social territorial transformation at the local level. As a response to the climate emergency and the political, economic, humanitarian, and health crisis, the region has made progress in articulating its innovation ecosystem and equipping actors with the essential knowledge to create a common understanding of our problems. Despite that, the challenge of making significant inroads in addressing the region's pressing socio-environmental problems is greater. In the coming years, the acceleration of our understanding of the processes and impact we generate will be more crucial than ever before.

On the one hand, this article offers a historical analysis of social innovation in the region and of its ecosystem of actors. On the other hand, it analyzes several recent experiences that illustrate three core principles that are emerging in response to the socio-environmental crisis. These core principles include interdependence, co-creation, and democratization of the change agenda. The analysis contributes to a theoretical-practical reflection in the current global context and points to a paradigm shift in social innovation. This, in turn, gives us a new perspective through which we can analyze future changes and proposals that are emerging from local innovation ecosystems towards creating a sustainable future for the region.

1. Introduction

Given the current inflection point and transformation in development models in Latin America, it seems relevant to reflect on the evolution and emerging changes in Social Innovation in the region. This analysis can help us learn from the journey and gather momentum to unlock its potential for creating profound change in the region, as we face multiple social, political, economic, and environmental challenges. In short, this article seeks to foster the emergence of a more transformative social innovation for Latin America. Additionally, it also makes a contribution to the general debate on social innovation where perspectives from the global North have prevailed (Solis, Bucio and Paneque, 2021).[i]

A first challenge is to locate the conceptual discussion of social innovation and to understand the currents that gave rise to the concept as well as the process by which Social Innovation in Latin America was developed with a greater sense of convergence, integration, and transforming capacity. A second challenge has to do with understanding the intersectoral nature of social innovation, how it has been built over time, not only adding actors to the ecosystem but also adding different competencies and skills such as the ability to engage in dialogue, empathy, and the capacity to influence the new economy. A third challenge is to generate a discussion about the urgency of our environmental crisis and about how social innovation has turned out to be a transformative option for integration, collaboration, and adaptation in the territories facing the global emergency. Ultimately, this article seeks to explore, understand, and analyze how new initiatives or manifestations of social innovation have been able to nurture the ecosystem and move towards transformative social innovation.

The Social Innovation Lab of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile has centered its efforts on promoting sustainable development by facilitating the co-production of knowledge, stimulating the participation of an increasing number of changemakers, and by collaborating with different actors of the ecosystem, across the public and private sectors, civil society, academia, and the social entrepreneurship ecosystem. This work has made it possible to identify three emerging central elements that characterize the recent wave of social innovation in the region and that differentiate it from its previous manifestation: interdependence, co-creation and democratization of the change agenda.

To illustrate the shift towards transformative social innovation, and thus account for the aforementioned elements, this article analyzes intersectoral initiatives that are emerging in the region in response to complex challenges in social, economic, political and environmental problems. First, initiatives such as Nuup and MapBiomas show us how by embracing interdependence and adopting a holistic approach that views society as part of nature, it is possible to contribute to sustainable and regenerative development. Second, Ayni and Comida para Todos point to co-creation, based on a common understanding of our challenges and a transformative engagement of actors, which enables the participation of multiple actors in the implementation of solution. Third and last, the experiences of REDIM, Alter Terra, and of ANIA and the Municipality of Lima contribute to understanding how the democratization of the change agenda creates spaces of greater participation of local actors in the transformation and development of their territories.

The analysis of these intersectoral initiatives presents the context and the problem that gave rise to the initiatives as well as the solution models and guiding principle to show how the three core elements of the new wave of social innovation can be applied in practice. Therefore, these initiatives are just some examples of how local ecosystems are re-organizing in different ways, reflecting the evolutionary potential of territories and people and recognizing that the traditional way of working is no longer an option.

Finally, the article ends by offering a reflection of the need for dialogue on how we can build more sustainable futures by transforming the ways in which we relate to one another and understanding the particularities of the region. In this context, thinking about the core elements of the new wave of social innovation from the Latin America perspective implies that, for regenerative practices to emerge, it is necessary to internalize the interconnections of the region with the world, as well as break away from the old colonial matrix. Finally, this work concludes

with a reflection on the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic, digitization, and new participation mechanisms for moving towards transformative social innovation.

2.1 The State of Social Innovation in Latin America

The desired impact of social innovation would greatly benefit from an understanding of its conceptual evolution, the different perspectives, and diverse context in which social innovation has taken place. In this context, it is key to analyze how the concept in Latin America evolved with a greater sense of convergence, integration, and transformative capacity.

The first references to Social Innovation date back to the 60s. They are associated with uses in experimental studies in the social sciences and humanities. However, the scale-up and spread of social innovation arguably emerged as a response to the obsolescence of the economic approach to innovation, which was focused on the development and growth of companies (Solis, Bucio and Paneque, 2021), as well as to a need to embed innovation in public policy. This evolution generated a shift in social innovation investments: from the production of knowledge to the application of the knowledge, rapidly and powerfully, to generate social benefits and development (European Commission, 2013).[ii]

Many definitions and currents of thought emerged worldwide, two of which stand out. According to one current, social innovation addresses existing social needs, centering on products, results, impact, and the generation of value for society (Mulgan, 2006[iii]; Phills, Deiglmeier, and Miller, 2008[iv]). The second current sees social innovation as a new way of doing things, where the focus is on structural changes, power relations, and new processes that promote the participation of the community in which they are embedded (Westley, 2008).[v]

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has studied social innovation since 2004. One of its objectives was to identify innovative experiences at the grassroots level with a particular focus on areas such as community health, basic education, income generation, rural and agricultural development, food security and nutrition, among others. This study as well as other research sought to systematize experiences that could inspire the development of social innovation in the region. The main discussions that arise in these documents highlight the development of social innovation as a mechanism to help reduce social inequality, particularly in regard to aspects in which the market has not adequately responded to the needs and demands of the population or the public sector – whether national or municipal (Rodríguez and Alvarado, 2007).[vi]

Among the different approaches proposed by the academia and multilateral institutions, those that became predominant were those that resonated with the needs and gaps in the prevailing development model in the region. In retrospect, and based on indicators produced by social innovation ecosystems (such as the Social Innovation Index, The Economist), the Cartesian approach to finding solutions to problems expanded effortlessly, particularly in countries with strongly rooted neo-liberal public policies, a strong and dynamic private sector, and still latent social needs and gaps. Among these countries are Chile and Colombia, both considered pioneers and leaders in social innovation in Latin America.

Meanwhile, 10 years later, Nicholls and Ziegler (2019)[vii] raised a global discussion around the need to integrate both currents of thought, as originally described by Mulgan, Phills et al., and

respectively, Westley. The authors suggest that the new ideas that were promoted by social innovation and that manifest as products, services, models, or processes should intervene at different socio-structural levels, moving towards a change in power relations. This implies an improvement in processes and capacities. The authors seek to get us out of the present paradox, reorienting academic and intersectoral work in the service of public policies and private initiatives to enable the changes that are needed to achieve greater well-being today and tomorrow.

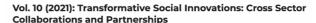## 2.2 The Region's Nascent Ecosystem and Its Stakeholders

The convergence of actors that gave rise to social innovation in Latin America can be seen as the first wave of Social Innovation. We use the waves metaphor to illustrate that it was an iterative process, where convergent forces strained the boundaries that traditionally defined social sectors—public, private, civil society, academia—and engendered pioneering hybrid sectors that, in many cases, triggered new processes of social innovation.

Since 2010, we can observe the advent of social innovation in the administrative systems in the region. This was influenced by the positioning of social innovation at the institutional level in the global North. For instance, in Colombia, the National Public Policy for Social Innovation launched in 2010. This policy paved the way for the foundation of the Center for Social Innovation in 2012, as part of the National Agency for Overcoming Extreme Poverty. Another example is the 2013 National Program for Technology and Social Innovation in Argentina. Meanwhile in Chile, various programs now provide financing for social innovation, and the concept has been integrated into the eligibility criteria for programs offered by the Ministry of Economy, Development, and Tourism.

In parallel to the process of integration of social innovation in government agencies, complementary processes that have strengthened the ecosystem were developed. An example of this is the growth of public innovation in the region (Alsina, Gomez and Noveck, 2020[viii]) and the consolidation of impact investment funds that have contributed substantially in introducing topics like social impact measurement to the agenda.

The second decade of the 2000's was marked by the dissemination of social innovation by the media. This was based on the convergence of diverse actors and the formation of communities of practice. In this process, organized civil society and the private sector led initiatives that promoted collaboration, such as festivals and meetings. In parallel to these events, initiatives for collaborative work emerged such as hubs and coworking spaces, albeit with different aims (see Akhavan, 2021[ix]). Additionally, during this period citizen innovation gained traction in several countries across the region (Chen, Han and Qu, 2020)[x]. Another trend was the connection of cities to innovation through the Smart Cities approach. This showed how innovation can contribute to enhancing resilience in urban systems (Rozario et al., 2021).[xi]

Universities positioned themselves as relevant actors in promoting social innovation. A range of literature analyzes the relationship between academia and social innovation (Gatica, 2011[xii]; Arocena and Sutz, 2021[xiii]). It is argued that universities have been understood as the natural space for the paradigm shifts required for the transformation that social innovation promotes (Mercado et al., 2017[xiv]). Faced with the challenges posed by social, economic, and political changes, universities have gradually begun to focus on their commitment to society, as a node

for the transfer of knowledge that directly impacts community development. Along these lines, and with the aim of transforming educational systems to prepare them for the challenges of the 21st century, the integration of social innovation into university syllabi has contributed to integrating an interdisciplinary perspective based on education.

It is interesting to analyze how the need to articulate new solutions and lead these often-disruptive processes, led to characterizing entrepreneurs or social innovators as key actors to spur this emerging ecosystem. In fact, recent academic approaches consider social entrepreneurs as catalytic actors in the ecosystem (Provenzano, Arnone and Seminara, 2016[xv]), integrating them into a five-pillar model of social innovation. The five articulated sectors—government, private, civil society, academia, and entrepreneurs—propose an approach to social innovation focused on socio-ecological transformation and economies for sustainable development (Solis, Bucio and Paneque, 2021). One of the organizations that has been critical in surfacing, supporting, and connecting social entrepreneurs is Ashoka. Its work has contributed to the emergence and establishment of the social innovation ecosystem in Latin America.

This is how entrepreneurs found support from public policy and many times also from philanthropy and impact investing in the region. Sistema B and other B-corp initiatives emerged as well, seeking to redefine the meaning of business success. Sistema B gained traction in the region and motivated a group mainly of young professionals to orient their business models towards a socio-environmental purpose. With this approach, companies can be a tool for innovation and socio-environmental transformation.

In brief, the development of social innovation has been driven by multiple actors, voices, and sectors. Although it is difficult to make a direct connection between initiatives focused on social innovation such as gray literature, academic production, and public policies, the overview outlined in this section illustrates the importance of continuing to contribute to the debate from a transdisciplinary perspective that integrates these different levels. This is in a regional context full of opportunities for innovation in which historically, and even before the concept of "social innovation" arose, a wide range of community and social-based initiatives have been developed (Unceta, Guerra and Barandiaran, 2021).[xvi]

2.3. Pending Issues in Social Innovation in light of the Region's Urgent Challenges

The breakthroughs that social innovation has generated in the region so far are undeniable; however, the magnitude of today's challenges requires that we urgently need to go beyond and catalyze transformative social innovation.

We find ourselves at a socio-environmental crossroads. The high level of inequality, generalized distrust, and the varied forms of social unrest that have erupted across the region reflect growing dissatisfaction with the current development model. Latin America's long-standing social crisis has been exacerbated by severe environmental damages that have accelerated the degradation of the region's diverse ecosystems. The COVID-19 outbreak in this context of widespread crisis has caused further upheaval, affected most sectors, and aggravated social ills by hindering access to food, health, a social safety net, and community organizing.

The complexity of the social issues we are facing need to be addressed from two key perspectives. First, we need to prioritize diversity to generate comprehensive solutions. As a social innovation ecosystem, multiple approaches coexist that arise from different disciplines and social sectors, and yet share a commitment to a sustainable future. Second, we need to promote cooperation as a fundamental principle to preserve life, recognizing that networks are the backbone of societies—understood as complex communication structures that ensure a shared purpose and flexibility (Castells, 2006[xvii]).

Faced with an impending environmental crisis, we propose strengthening the conditions for social innovation to flourish. This involves establishing new power relations that enable us to consciously, intentionally, and strategically address emerging challenges (Scharmer, 2007[xviii]).

The social innovation ecosystem's central mission is to foster regeneration to sustain life on Earth. To that effect, transformations need to be systemic and focused on generating a paradigm shift. It is essential for the ecosystem to get aligned and reach a shared vision of the way ahead, understanding that circular economies with zero emissions and waste are a first step that will allow us to transition towards a deeper, more inclusive paradigm like regeneration.

2.4 What is Transformative Social innovation? How does it emerge in Latin America?

The vision for a second wave of social innovation responds to the urgent need for new strategies that can address the social and environmental crisis. It shows that innovations are defying their limits to meet the needs of a complex and increasingly digitized society, facing unprecedented social, economic, health, and environmental struggles. Although the problems that have surfaced in recent years are not without historical parallels, the scale and interconnections enabled by technology have taken them to a global scope. Therefore, social innovation needs to continuously adapt to a fast-changing context.

This second wave is premised on the interdependence of people and nature. Environmental problems are not only something for social innovation to address; the principles of ecosystem resilience are also a source of inspiration and foundation for the new relations that innovations propose. Indeed, diversity as an essential factor for the sustainment of life in natural ecosystems should be a guiding principle for doing social innovation. At the same time, the stakeholders involved in social innovation are shifting amid greater uncertainty and political polarization. In this context, the focus on the grassroots, community, and local action has become an unexpected force, especially in the face of changes in mobility brought by the pandemic and other social and political crises.

Another principle that transformative social innovation draws from nature is the capacity for regeneration. To apply and sustain this principle in the service of implementing new initiatives, we can identify three essential pillars: interdependence, co-creation, and the democratization of the change agenda.

Interdependence

Systems thinking and the regenerative paradigm

The crisis of the Anthropocene (Rockström, 2020[xix]) has been a catalyst to question the primacy of rationality over nature, as expressed in the organization of modern society and bolstered by the extractivist production model. Ecology as a critical discipline has studied the inextricable connection between the development of societies and the environment. In recent years, the idea that humans *are* nature has gained traction and found a practical grounding in regenerative economy, reinforcing the need for a systemic approach to our problems.

The impact of human activity on the planet has had systemic consequences—the interconnected nature of ecosystems has been evidenced by the devastation wrought on living systems, even at a distance. As such, and considering the critical state of the planet, adopting a holistic vision and changing our practices to restore ecological equilibrium are vital.

In the context of transformative social innovation, then, applying the principle of interdependence means recognizing that every action has an effect on the ecosystem as a whole. As such, preserving life on Earth depends on the transformation—and, in many cases, regeneration—of personal, interpersonal, family, social and collective bonds. In turn, these new ways of relating to one another enable a change in behaviors that protect the Earth and ecological equilibrium.

A relevant example of what interdependence looks like in practice is MapBiomas, an initiative co-led by the Climate Observatory in Brazil. Leveraging the experience and infrastructure of a network of organizations, MapBiomas generates high-quality data to monitor country-level patterns in land use change over time. Its pioneering methodology has enabled for example the collection of detailed data on deforestation in Brazil, which has been harnessed to mobilize key stakeholders to tackle the problem. The aim is to prevent desertification in the Amazon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. By convening and linking tech providers, universities, civil society organizations, and research institutions, Mapbiomas has facilitated a continuous exchange of ideas and knowledge. The result is a database of unprecedented quality to promote better decision-making by all actors involved in the fight against climate change.

Nuup, a Mexico-based organization, is enabling the shift for smallholder farmers to regenerative production by balancing seemingly opposing economic, economic, and social goals. To achieve that, Nuup designs flexible and emergent solution blueprints that can solve several problems at once and evolve as things change. Central to its work is its systemic approach, in other words, its 'system of systems views' - the ability to see how different parts interconnect at a system level and how different systems relate to one another. This in turn has been possible thanks to its human-centered focus on the experience of the farmer as a whole. Nuup's systemic approach guides its engagement and collaborations with diverse coalitions of actors spanning the private sector, civil society, and the public sector, and the academia.

Both MapBiomas and Nuup have embraced interdependence as a core principle. Their comprehensive and regenerative approach, which sees society as part of nature, contributes to sustainable and equitable development that fosters the restoration of degraded ecosystems. Both initiatives provide key stakeholders with information, access to technology, and a collaborative network that help them make more effective decisions in a context of crisis.

Co-creation

Creating a shared understanding of the challenge to generate new innovations

The growing recognition of interdependence is giving rise to radical collaboration. This perspective has allowed different stakeholders to align around common goals to effectively solve a problem. Unprecedented cross-sector coalitions that support the continuity of initiatives have been considered as social innovations in their own right. Co-creation has facilitated permeability of institutional limits.

To solve the pressing challenges we face, all sectors need to be on board. This not only involves being part of creating projects or initiatives, but also actively contributing to shared decision-making that unites diverse stakeholders that complement each other around a common vision. One challenge for co-creating transformative social innovations is sustaining the connections between all stakeholders. To do this, it is important to implement strategies for power sharing that enable reciprocal relationships where all stakeholders are valued for their differences.

Ayni, a community of practice for transformative social innovation, proposes a new co-creation model with regional and local impact. The initiative is led by Ashoka, Co-Lab de Innovación Social of the Catholic University of Chile, Red de Innovación Local (RIL), and Vía Educación. It aims to go beyond the outdated paradigms of unilateral or consultative collaboration common in Latin America to enable genuine co-creation. Its flagship program is a 5-month program through which social entrepreneurs and local government leaders work together in teams to address a pressing need in their city. Teams apply systems thinking and engage a broader group of actors in a co-creation process to design collective actions with a systemic impact.

Another example is Comida para Todos (Food for Everyone), an initiative by the NGO Cultiva, Social Gastronomy Foundation and Co-Lab de Innovación Social. It convenes more than 34 organizations in the food space in Chile and Spain, including stakeholders from different sectors, NGOs, local governments, and businesses. This initiative is an example of articulation between private enterprise, civil society, and the government to enable an exchange of resources and capacity. Created in Chile as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it seeks to prevent food insecurity in vulnerable communities as well as reactivate the gastronomic industry, stimulate employment, create education spaces in soup kitchens, and support communities as resilient urban spaces. To do this, partnering restaurants use donations to distribute healthy meals in at risk communities, delivered by people who have lost their jobs with the crisis. The restaurants also provide capacity building to food establishments close to the communities to replicate the project.

Both cases propose innovative co-creation models and transformative connections between stakeholders. These models enable the development of cross-sector, inclusive solutions to pressing social problems. In the process, they generate a reciprocal exchange that allows each stakeholder to identify with the cause and engage from their unique position, bringing diverse perspectives and roles together to solve a common challenge.

Democratizing the change agenda

Local actors as change agents of community transformation and development

The territory as a socio-spatial phenomenon emerges from the relationship between stakeholders, culture, social and institutional norms, and subjective experience. A territorial perspective has fostered the inclusion and participation of communities in social innovation. The importance of participation for social innovation stems from the fact that the sustainability of new ideas depends on their ability to respond to stakeholders' needs. At the same time, the involvement of diverse actors in social innovation makes possible the emergence of new ideas. As such, it is necessary to question current models of democracy to elevate the role of citizens as change agents. This shift gives new meaning to emerging technology-based mechanisms for democratic dialogue and participation.

Community leadership and movement building in different territories across the region show that a process of social and political transformation is underway. Changes in participation mechanisms give rise to new debates, as evidenced by issues of gender and the value of interculturality. Transformative social innovation requires engaging citizens as change agents; therefore, mechanisms to enable effective participation must be incorporated into governance models from a "glocal" perspective.

For instance, the Network for Children's Rights in Mexico (REDIM) works with over 17 public institutions and 77 social organizations. This network created a methodology for children and youth to participate in civic and political processes, based on the principles of dismantling cultural frameworks, promoting authentic inclusion, translating across perspectives, and involving diverse voices over the long term. They aim to tackle adult-centrism to change not only how adults perceive and value children, but also how children perceive themselves and their capabilities. To achieve this, REDIM creates autonomous spaces led by young people to engage them in issues that affect their communities. This approach led to the approval in March 2021 of a new search protocol for forced disappearances of children and youth, which actively involves young citizens in the process.

Alter Terra, an organization based in Mexico builds capacity for community organizing to address social and environmental problems through shared and well-coordinated leadership. In Los Laureles, a town on the border with the US, Alter Terra designed a program to foster community-led, innovative solutions to tackle pollution in the river basin and improve waste management. They trained local leaders to effectively design, plan, and implement the river conservation project, involving the wider community and the government at each step. Based on its success, the program has been replicated in multiple communities. It has helped community leaders to strengthen their skills and capacity to influence change, empowered communities, and improved public officials' understanding of their needs. The result has been new laws, policies, and community projects that have generated long-term changes in highly precarious contexts.

ANIA (Association for Children and their Environment) is a Peru-based organization that has created methodologies for recognizing and fostering children's contribution to sustainable development. They challenge the common view that children are the 'leaders of tomorrow'. ANIA partners with local governments to implement structural reforms that ensure that children are able to share their needs and ideas with decision-makers, and that these can be

translated into policies. ANIA is currently collaborating with the Municipality of Lima to enact an ordinance that recognizes the right of children and adolescents as changemakers for the sustainable development of their city. To design the implementation plan, the team co-developed a survey with children and youth to obtain a better understanding of how the municipality and other stakeholders can support Lima's youngest citizens as changemakers. For example, one of their objectives is for to create an indicator to quantify the contributions of children and adolescents to the development of their community, thus positioning children and adolescents as the present, not the future.

The cases above illustrate how social innovation initiatives in Latin America have responded in a comprehensive way, with a focus on communities, to the great challenges of the region, showcasing the radical transformation of traditional models.

3. Final Reflections

This document is an open invitation to continue the dialogue on transformative social innovation rooted in pathway towards regeneration. This concept, born out of the specific context of the region, seeks to respond to multiple demands for new perspectives and innovation. The reflection proposed recognizes that the social innovation ecosystem in the region has made valuable contributions towards sustainable futures; however, it also understands that the scale of change that our current social problems demand creates an obstacle to quickly integrate the knowledge we have gained along the way. Now more than ever we must take strides to meet the need for regenerating Earth. The article proposes transformation as a pathway to accelerate the scope of social innovation by placing the focus on shifting power relations. The transformation of relationships, routines, and ways of connecting with each other requires a paradigm shift, an objective that is at the core of social innovation and that is now more than ever necessary to revitalize.

Thinking from the Latin America perspective is an opportunity to consider challenges in their historical, social, and cultural context. In the current regional context of social crisis and increasing political polarization, it is important to incorporate the principle of interdependence by reconnecting with indigenous knowledge and traditions such as the relationship with nature. This principle is therefore an invitation to think systemically, recognizing that these social and economic dynamics exist on a global scale. The idea of a systemic outlook consists of recognizing interconnections at the regional level, without forgetting how the region interacts with the world. Within this mindset, regenerative practices organically emerge when we internalize our own interconnectivity and transform our own practices and relationships based on individualism.

Facilitating knowledge transfer in social innovation processes is particularly relevant when confronting shared challenges. The ecosystem's collective experience provides a wealth of knowledge that must be made available and shared between the Global North and South, undoing ancient colonial structures. Reflections from recent experiences in Latin America inform the second principle developed in this article, which underscores the importance of co-creation.

The article highlights the democratization of the agenda for change as the central axis of social innovation, in light of the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. Changes related to the

pandemic had specific effects at the grassroots level, as restrictions on movement transformed social and economic relations and elevated the importance of integrating multiple stakeholders and leaders in design processes and decision-making in the region. Additionally, digitization and the new forms of participation enabled by technological platforms create unprecedented opportunities to connect stakeholders and push their work towards transformative social innovation that makes regenerating the planet possible.

The article seeks to emphasize the value in reflecting on experiences from the region. The cases illustrated in the piece seek to provide evidence for the value of relevance, where we have the challenge of not only identifying solutions to existing challenges in communities, but also of ensuring their authenticity and effectiveness in terms of the wellbeing of people and ecosystems. We hope to stimulate reflection about new ways of connecting stakeholders in places that have been historically harmed and degraded as is the case in Latin America. Through this reflection, our aim is to spur new ways of co-creating and implementing solutions that benefit both communities and the planet.

To summarize, moving towards transformative social innovation in Latin America requires the appreciation and recognition of the natural processes of the land. It also involves integrating the knowledge and lessons developed by the social innovation ecosystem, reformulating them, and transforming and adapting them to the current challenging context. Additionally, this shift creates the possibility to generate a common, long-term vision for the region for how to face the challenges ahead, how to promote regenerative processes, and ensure a sustainable future for communities. It opens a multidimensional, cross-disciplinary reflection that can have impacts at the administrative, political, economic, and grassroots levels in Latin America.

In conclusion, we propose a reframing of the current crisis as an opportunity to transform practices, relationships, and indicators that have exposed the degradation of our planet. The article reflects on the transformations that are already underway in Latin America and are the key to advancing the transition towards a more prosperous, inclusive, conscious, sustainable, and engaged region.

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