Scaling Up Regional SSE Practice to the National Level?
Opportunities and Challenges from Izmir, Turkey

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25.06.2019
The aim of the study is to present a description and analysis of the rural agricultural development model based on SSE, from Izmir region in Turkey, with respect to its contributions to SDGs.

IZMIR AGRICULTURAL MODEL (IAM)

• Developed by Izmir Metropolitan Municipality
• Focus on rural development
• Supports agricultural cooperatives
• Based on contractual production model
• Contributes to multiple SDGs
Background

Izmir:

• population > 4.3 million
• 28.4% of the total population lives in rural area
• one of the most important agri-food centre

Agriculture in Izmir:

• small share in the gross domestic product (4.94%)
• employs 9.9% of the working population of the city
• domination of small sized family businesses
Initially, it started a relatively narrow-scoped project (School Milk Project).

In 2008, Izmir Metropolitan Municipality (IMM) started purchasing milk from Tire Dairy Cooperative.

The project attained incredible success.

The Government adopted it partially and prohibited IMM’s milk distribution at schools.

It has evolved and broadened over the years; its scope has expanded exponentially.
Agricultural Cooperatives

- Purchase Guarantee
  - milk
  - cheese
  - saplings
  - flowers
  - olive oil

- Technical Assistance
  - soil tests
  - fertilizing advices
  - education and training
  - distribution of quality seeds and saplings

Members

IMM

Infrastructure Improvement
Working together with people in the field for the sustainability of this work brought us to where we are today. As IMM, we did not develop and implement projects by ourselves. It is not our way. We have always listened and acted with the stakeholders at all stages.

Our main concern is to make rural life and rural production sustainable. We prefer to work with cooperatives in order to be efficient in resource use and also to reach more farmers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IAM Achievements</th>
<th>SDGs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• While the agriculture sector in Turkey grew by 3.1 percent between the years 2004 - 2017, it grew by 7.5 percent in Izmir.</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="SDG 1: No Poverty" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>• The cooperative membership rate in Izmir (28%) increased above the Turkey’s average rate (13%).</td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="SDG 2: Zero Hunger" /></td>
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<td>• The total turnovers of the contracted cooperatives increased by 658 percent in the 2007-2016 period.</td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="SDG 8: Decent Work" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Supported cooperatives have grown by 225 percent in terms of the total product range.</td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>• In the last 10 years, the number of employees in cooperatives has increased by 616 percent.</td>
<td><img src="image5" alt="SDG 16: Peace and Justice" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>• BAYCIKOOP one of the supported cooperatives has started to export flowers to the Netherlands.</td>
<td><img src="image5" alt="SDG 16: Peace and Justice" /></td>
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Table 2. Achievements of IAM (Spillover Effects to SDGs)

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<td>• Rural-urban migration has stopped.</td>
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<td>• New businesses other than cooperatives, have flourished.</td>
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<td>• Farmers have started to adopt sustainable practices.</td>
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<td>• 125,000 households and 131,000 children between 1-5 years have been distributed two liters of milk per week.</td>
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<td>• 6,500 refugee children have included to the distribution plan.</td>
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<td>• Women’s employment was supported by the cooperatives.</td>
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<td>• Women who are given oyster mushroom raising education started a women cooperative.</td>
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Small but efficient budget

- IMM has collaborated with 45 cooperatives in total and reached to 37.6% of the Izmirian farmers.
- IAM has attained to this impactful and positive results despite using only a negligible portion of IMM budget.
- This extensive effect could not be realized if IAM was built on collaboration with individual farmers only.
Success Factors

• Legal context
• Agricultural potential of the region
• Existence of agricultural cooperatives
• Building trust based relationships
• A holistic and integrative approach
• Education
• The continuity of local governments

Challenges

• The lack of a legal clarity
• The conflict between central government and opposition party municipality
• Urbanization
• The lack of systematic data
• The dominant cooperative culture
Regional Scale-up

• Creating a cooperative local and sustainable food system—flow of local food from producers to consumers

• Missing points:
  • A multi-level cooperative system
  • Cooperative alliances and networks
  • Connecting producer and consumer-owned ventures in agriculture and other fields
  • Collaboration with SSE organizations and networks
National Scale-up

Vertical Scale-up — institutionalization
- The state support and facilitating legislation
- Government intervention
  - foster dependency,
  - the distinction between SSE and public sector might become blurry.

Horizontal Scale-up
- Expansion
  - Moving beyond local borders – purchasing from other cities
- Replication
  - The necessary initial condition is the existence of agricultural activities and agricultural cooperatives.
Trade-offs of Scaling

• The contradictions of economic growth
  • The increase of the maize silage production of Tire Dairy Cooperative

• Concerns about the deviation from cooperative principles and values
  • Due to the rapid growth, some small producer members of cooperatives based on family labour have started to employ non-member workers.
Conclusion

IAM is the first example of its kind with its design and coverage.

In spite of negligible budget, it has produced strong results in terms of SDGs implementation.

The collaboration between the municipality and the cooperatives has made a meaningful progress in advocating cooperatives.

In spite of encouraging results, the model is still far from creating an ecosystem.
SSE in Turkey: A Future Still Uncertain

• Is it possible to harmonise national, regional and local priorities and actions?
• SSE gains strength in local level but it is definitely not a priority for the Government.
• Public demand for SSE emerges.
• Multiple crises in the country might force that SSE is considered as an alternative.