The Landscape of Entrepreneurship Support in Mexico

2025

Executive Summary

Conecta
BridgeforBillions

ASPEN NETWORK OF DEVELOPMENT ENTREPRENEURS
aspen institute

About Bridge for Billions and ANDE

This report is a collaborative effort between **Bridge for Billions** and the **Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE)**, two organizations committed to strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem in emerging economies.

Bridge for Billions is a social enterprise founded in 2015 with the mission to democratize access to entrepreneurship. It provides entrepreneurs with the tools and guidance needed to transform their ideas into sustainable businesses, having supported thousands of founders in over 100 countries through one of the world's largest online entrepreneurship program networks. This report is part of a new strategic research initiative developed within its flagship program, Conecta, which supports both entrepreneurs and the support organizations that accompany them.

The Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE) is a global network of over 230 organizations that promotes entrepreneurship in emerging economies. As an initiative of the Aspen Institute, ANDE's mission is to strengthen organizations that support Small and Growing Businesses (SGBs) as a strategy to solve social and environmental problems and improve quality of life. With a proven track record in mapping and analyzing investment and entrepreneurship ecosystems in Latin America since 2013, ANDE is a leading voice in the sector, providing knowledge, training, and policy advocacy to support SGBs.

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Mexico's entrepreneurial ecosystem is a **paradox of growth and fragility**. On the surface, it is thriving: new ventures are being created, and an impressive 72% of them survive their first year after receiving support. But the organizations meant to nurture this growth, the Entrepreneurship Support Organizations (**ESOs**), are themselves struggling for survival. This report digs beneath the surface to uncover the story behind the numbers, revealing a resilient but fatigued entrepreneurship support ecosystem whose full potential is being throttled by a broken funding model and a fragmented structure.

"Funding cycles are too short. We end up dedicating more time to securing the next grant than to supporting entrepreneurs, which creates constant instability for our team and the entrepreneurs we serve."
– **ESO Leader**, Roundtable discussion

This report is a situational analysis with advocacy purposes, designed to give ESOs a collective voice and provide a roadmap for systemic change.

By reading this report, you will get:

- An evidence-based look at how 80 Mexican ESOs actually operate, their models, their results, and their struggles.
- Actionable insights on where funding and policy must shift to unlock national innovation and growth.
- A practical, four-point agenda that ESOs, funders, and policymakers can act on tomorrow.

A resilient but fatigued ecosystem

The Mexican ESO landscape is diverse and mature, anchored by a mission-driven, non-profit backbone (42% of the sector). These organizations are effective: they achieve high program completion (76%) and one-year business survival rates (72%), and they are fundamentally inclusive, with programs reaching a majority of women (53%) and a significant share of youth (50%).

72%	48	53%	ESOs are proven engines of impact
One-year survival rate for supported ventures	Median number of new jobs created per ESO in 2024 alone	Percentage of women entrepreneurs reached	

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Despite these successes, our data reveals four critical challenges that are holding the entire ecosystem back:

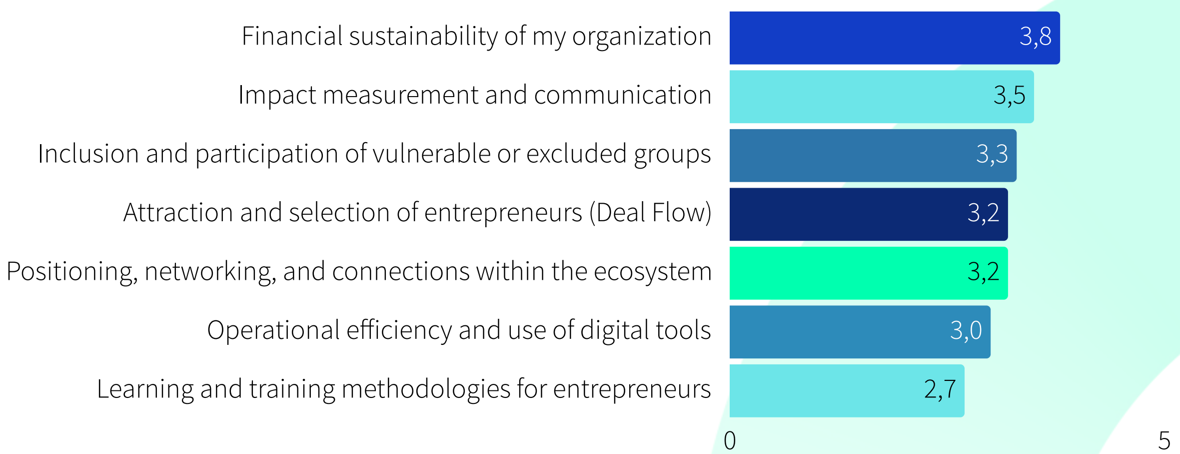
- **Structural financial instability**: The fight for their own financial survival is the top challenge for ESOs. A heavy reliance on short-term grants creates a cycle of precarity that drains resources from their core mission. **This matters because unstable ESOs mean unreliable outcomes for entrepreneurs and wasted public and private investment.**

- **Systemic fragmentation**: The sector lacks a unified voice to advocate for its needs. While a vast majority (83%) of ESOs desire a collective association, their current fragmentation weakens their influence. **This matters because it leads to duplicated efforts, wasted resources, and a critical missed opportunity to inform effective national innovation policy.**

- **The early-stage capital gap:** A structural misalignment plagues the financing pipeline. Investors identify the lack of early-stage capital as the top challenge (68%), yet remain risk-averse. **This matters because the capital gap is the single greatest brake on job creation and inclusive economic growth, throttling the potential of promising ventures before they can scale.**

- **Limited impact measurement:** The ecosystem's ability to prove its value is hampered by a focus on short-term outputs instead of long-term outcomes. **This matters because without credible, long-term impact data, Mexico will struggle to attract the international and private capital needed to fuel its innovation economy.**

The system is on the brink of financial collapse: Average ESO challenge ratings (1. Not a challenge - 5. Significant challenge)



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An agenda for collective action

Mexico cannot afford to let the backbone of its innovation economy crumble. The data points to systemic challenges, requiring a coordinated commitment to a new agenda for action, built on four pillars:

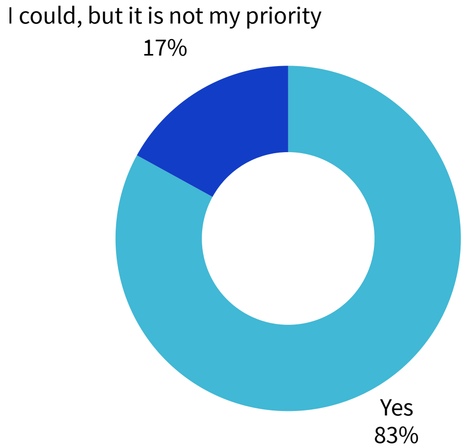
- **From fragmentation to a cohesive sector:** The immediate priority is for ESO leaders to act on their shared interest and **establish a national association** to serve as a unified partner for co-designing public policy.

- **Forging sustainable Public-Private financing:** Funders and policymakers must shift from restrictive grants to **flexible and multi-year core funding for ESOs** and deploy **blended finance models** to de-risk and unlock private investment for entrepreneurs.

- **From the aspiration of inclusivity to concrete action:** The ecosystem must move beyond good intentions to **co-design programs with marginalized communities** and create a policy framework that values all forms of entrepreneurship, not just high-growth tech.

- **Rethinking impact and scale**: ESOs, through a new association, must **collaboratively adopt shared and long-term outcome indicators,** and funders must align their reporting requirements to support a culture of genuine, collective learning.

A clear mandate for change: ESO’s interest in joining a sectoral association or guild



Agenda for collective action at a glance

For Entrepreneurship Support Organizations (ESOs)	For Funders, Investors, and Philanthropy	For Policymakers and Government Agencies
Organize and unite: Take the lead in establishing a national association to serve as a unified voice, set professional standards, and build collective power.	**Fix the funding model:** Shift from short-term, restrictive project grants to multi-year, flexible core funding that ensures the stability of the support infrastructure.	**Recognize the sector:** Formally engage with the new ESO association as a legitimate and strategic partner in co-designing national entrepreneurship policy.
Lead on impact metrics: Proactively collaborate to define and adopt a core set of shared, long-term outcome indicators to build a powerful, evidence-based narrative of the sector's value.	**Bridge the capital gap:** Develop and deploy blended finance models and co-investment vehicles that use public or philanthropic capital to de-risk and unlock private investment for entrepreneurs.	**Create an inclusive framework:** Enact regulatory reforms that simplify administrative processes and provide legal recognition for diverse business models, such as social enterprises.
Co-Design for inclusion: Move beyond passive outreach by partnering directly with marginalized communities to design and deliver culturally and logistically accessible support programs.	**Streamline reporting:** Align grant reporting requirements with the sector's shared outcome metrics to reduce the administrative burden on ESOs and support a culture of collective learning.	**Incentivize growth:** Implement stable, long-term policies that provide financial incentives for early-stage investment and support the blended finance models needed to unlock capital.