



UNIVERSIDAD  
DE CELAYA

The SDG Accord

*The University and College Sector's Collective Response to the Global Goals*

### **Integration of SDGs in**

- ☐ Institutional governance/strategic level
- ☐ SDGs in research
- ☐ SDGs in campus operations
- ☒ SDGs in curriculum development
- ☐ SDGs in student engagement activities
- ☐ SDGs into community activities
- ☐ SDGs at a whole-institution level

### **Focus on**

- ☒ Goal 1 - No poverty
- ☐ Goal 2 - Zero hunger
- ☐ Goal 3 - Good health and wellbeing
- ☒ Goal 4 - Quality education
- ☐ Goal 5 - Gender equality
- ☐ Goal 6 - Clean water and sanitation
- ☐ Goal 7 - Affordable and clean energy
- ☒ Goal 8 - Decent work and economic growth
- ☒ Goal 9 - Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- ☒ Goal 10 - Reduced inequalities
- ☐ Goal 11 - Sustainable cities and communities
- ☐ Goal 12 - Responsible consumption and production
- ☐ Goal 13 - Climate action
- ☐ Goal 14 - Life below water
- ☐ Goal 15 - Life on land
- ☐ Goal 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions
- ☐ Goal 17 - Partnerships for the goals

### **Digital Economy Program University of Celaya - from traditional to digital**

Currently, most SMEs in Mexico are governed by a traditional business model with limited sales channels, logistics, administration, marketing and production systems and average 18 months in their buying and selling cycles.

Based on this problem, the University of Celaya developed and implemented the digitalization program for Micro and SMEs called Digital Economy. This project promotes the digital maturity of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the region, with the objective of strengthening their competitiveness in the market, fostering the spirit of collaboration, joint learning and the necessary links to build a solid business and commercial future. This project has a direct impact on Sustainable Development Goal 8 (decent work and economic growth): digital economy and geographical indicator. And also contributes to the development of objectives 1) No poverty, 4) Quality Education, 9) Industry, innovation and infrastructure, 10) Reduced inequalities and 17) Partnerships for the goals.

The program began on a face-to-face basis, with teams of students each collaborating with a MSME to implement digital transformation actions. In the first stage of project implementation, 1040 students were trained in the period January-June 2020 in digital economy and its implementation and more than 500 MSMEs in the region and 16 social organizations were supported in their transition to the digital economy. In the August-December 2020 cycle, 200 students were trained, remotely due to the pandemic Covid-19, in digital economy and its implementation. A total of 61 companies were supported.

As a second stage of the project, the model was scaled to the state level through the State Commission for the Planning of Higher Education in Guanajuato (COEPES) and the Ministry of Sustainable Economic Development of the state of Guanajuato. Where the educational institutions that are part of this commission replicated the project to support MSMEs throughout the state of Guanajuato.

#### **BENEFITS**

1. In 2020 and 2021 alone, 2155 students were trained and certified in Digital Economy, 1519 MSMEs were involved and the programme scaled up to the whole state of Guanajuato.
2. Participating MSMEs during the pandemic reported benefits such as: increase in sales, development and implementation of a new business model and also reported an increase and/or diversification in the number of customers.
3. The Ministry of Sustainable Economic Development of the state of Guanajuato approved the creation of the labour competency standard of the Digital Economy Implementer, which will now boost the competitiveness and employability of people who manage to get certified.

#### **CHALLENGES**

1. Currently, most MSMEs in Mexico are governed by a traditional business model with limited sales channels, logistics, administration, marketing and production systems and average 18 months in their buying and selling cycles.
2. Most of the small and medium-sized enterprises that participated in this programme did not have a budget to purchase technological equipment, software, licenses for web design, etc., in their businesses.

## *SDG Accord Reporting 2022 Case Study*

3. Many of the owners and managers of these MSMEs did not have the knowledge of how to use digital tools in their daily business activities.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

In conclusion, this programme was created with the aim of boosting the regional economy by strengthening the competitiveness of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the region, increasing their digital maturity. The benefits obtained were very satisfactory and as a University we call on educational institutions around the world to implement supportive and developmental programs in their localities.

As a testimonial we quote verbatim the comments of a participating business owner:

Edith Cristina Tapia- Owner of “Mueblería San Juan” (Furniture shop). "It was very beneficial for the shop... During the pandemic it helped us, we increased our sales, they made us have inventory control that we didn't have. It was very beneficial, it was a very nice project... We have received customers even from other states, things we couldn't even imagine... We are very grateful to the group of students who helped us, they opened our eyes. We are grateful to the university for encouraging them..."



Image description: Photograph taken from a digital economy class given to one of the groups of students who participated in the Digital Economy Program.