

## OLINIA: MEXICO'S PUBLIC POLICY INNOVATION FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY

### OLINIA: LA APUESTA DE INNOVACIÓN EN POLÍTICA PÚBLICA Y MOVILIDAD URBANA SOSTENIBLE EN MÉXICO

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**Abstract** -- Urban mobility in Mexico faces challenges such as traffic congestion, air pollution, and a lack of affordable and safe transportation options. In 2023, the Mexican government launched the *Olinia* project, the first national company to assemble electric micro-vehicles, as a public policy strategy to promote sustainable and inclusive urban mobility. This article analyzes the *Olinia* project at the intersection of public policy and sustainable mobility, describing its objectives, development methodology, initial results, and challenges. Based exclusively on institutional speeches and media interviews with the project's coordinator, it examines the elements of strategic planning, inter-institutional collaboration, domestic technological development, affordability, and the expected impacts of the *Olinia* model. The results highlight planning focused on the first and last mile of urban transport, the creation of a multidisciplinary team composed of talent from national educational institutions (IPN, TecNM, UNAM, among others), the design of ultra-compact electric vehicles with low cost and low energy consumption, and the adoption of a decentralized production model unprecedented in Mexico's automotive industry. The discussion evaluates the project's strengths (government support, alignment with local needs, and national technological appropriation), its limitations (regulatory, technological, and market challenges), and areas for improvement. It concludes that *Olinia* represents a pioneering case of public policy innovation aimed at sustainable mobility, with the potential to transform urban mobility in Mexico and to inspire similar initiatives in emerging economies.

**Key words** – electric vehicle; inter-institutional collaboration; Mexico; public policy; strategic planning; sustainable urban mobility.

**Resumen** -- La movilidad urbana en México enfrenta desafíos de congestión vehicular, contaminación atmosférica y falta de opciones de transporte asequibles y seguras. En 2023, el gobierno mexicano lanzó el proyecto *Olinia*, la primera empresa armadora nacional de

minivehículos eléctricos, como estrategia de política pública para impulsar una movilidad urbana sostenible e incluyente. Este artículo analiza el proyecto *Olinia* desde la intersección entre política pública y movilidad sostenible, describiendo sus objetivos, metodología de desarrollo, resultados iniciales y desafíos. Basado exclusivamente en discursos institucionales y entrevistas en medios con el coordinador del proyecto, se examinan los elementos de planeación estratégica, colaboración interinstitucional, desarrollo tecnológico nacional, asequibilidad e impactos esperados del modelo *Olinia*. Los resultados destacan la planeación enfocada en la primera y última milla de transporte urbano, la creación de un equipo multidisciplinario con talento de instituciones educativas nacionales (IPN, TecNM, UNAM, entre otras), el diseño de vehículos eléctricos ultracompactos de bajo costo y bajo consumo energético, y la adopción de un modelo de producción descentralizado inédito en la industria automotriz mexicana. En la discusión se evalúan las fortalezas del proyecto (respaldo gubernamental, alineación con necesidades locales, apropiación tecnológica nacional), sus limitaciones (retos normativos, tecnológicos y de mercado) y áreas de mejora. Se concluye que *Olinia* representa un caso pionero de innovación en política pública orientada a la movilidad sustentable, con potencial de transformar la movilidad urbana en México e inspirar iniciativas similares en economías emergentes.

**Palabras Clave:** colaboración interinstitucional; México; movilidad urbana sostenible; planeación estratégica; política pública; vehículo eléctrico.

## INTRODUCTION

Mexico's major cities face a mobility crisis characterized by traffic congestion, high levels of air pollution, and a shortage of affordable and safe transportation options in peripheral areas [1]. Nearly 78% of the country's population lives in urban areas [2], and more than 80% of these residents travel less than 30 kilometers per day, according to various studies [3–5]. However, many of

their short-distance travel needs—such as trips within neighborhoods or connections to mass transit systems—are met through informal solutions like mototaxis which, while reflecting local ingenuity, lack safety and formal regulation [6]. At the same time, Mexico has largely functioned as an assembler of vehicles manufactured abroad, without producing models designed locally for its own context [7]. The transition to electric mobility presents an opportunity to innovate in clean and sustainable transport solutions; however, until recently, electric vehicles were imported, expensive, and intended for markets very different from the Mexican one [8].

Against this backdrop, the *Olinia* project emerges as a public policy initiative aimed at developing domestic automotive technology to address urban mobility needs in a sustainable and inclusive manner. Announced in 2023 by the federal administration, *Olinia* is conceived as the first Mexican manufacturer of electric micro-vehicles—ultracompact city-focused vehicles—designed and built entirely with local engineering. The project stands out for integrating sustainable mobility objectives, such as zero local emissions and low energy consumption, with goals related to social and economic equity, including offering affordable prices for low-income sectors and reducing operational costs. Likewise, *Olinia* incorporates an innovative model of industrial development based on collaboration among government, academia, and, in a later phase, private industry, combined with a decentralized production scheme.

This article examines *Olinia* as a case study, exploring how the initiative brings together strategic planning, science, and technology to translate public policy into sustainable mobility solutions. The Introduction outlines the challenges of urban mobility in Mexico and the general framework of the *Olinia* project. The Method section describes the analytical approach used. The Results section presents the main findings on *Olinia*'s development in terms of strategy, technology, institutional collaboration, and progress achieved. The Discussion assesses the project's strengths, limitations, and areas for improvement, situating it within the broader context of public policy and the automotive industry. Finally, the Conclusions discuss the potential implications of *Olinia* for sustainable urban mobility and public-sector innovation.

## METHOD

A qualitative case study of the *Olinia* project was carried out based on content analysis of official primary sources. Specifically, two YouTube videos of President Claudia Sheinbaum's morning press conferences were examined—one presenting the project [9] and another reporting its progress [10]—along with two media interviews featuring *Olinia*'s general coordinator, Roberto Capuano Tripp [11–12]. These sources, provided directly by the project's promoters, describe *Olinia*'s

objectives, development strategy, challenges, and future vision in the words of its leaders.

For the analysis, categories relevant to the intersection of public policy and sustainable mobility were identified in the sources: strategic planning, inter-institutional collaboration, national technological development, affordability, and expected impacts. Manual coding of textual fragments corresponding to these categories was performed, followed by a narrative synthesis of the information. Since the aim was not to evaluate quantitative data but to understand the initiative's orientation and scope, this qualitative method was appropriate.

This approach makes it possible to understand how *Olinia* operates as a public policy project, the strategies it uses to develop its own technology, and the obstacles and success factors identified by its managers. The results are presented below, organized according to the thematic axes mentioned above.

## RESULTS ANALYSIS

***Vision and objectives of the Olinia project.*** *Olinia* was conceived with the stated mission of providing zero-emission electric mobility within reach of millions of Mexicans. Unlike previous initiatives focused solely on producing a vehicle [13–14], this project carries a broader promise of social well-being: “using science and technology to improve people's lives” through the way they move [12]. Its main motivation is to address unmet mobility needs in first- and last-mile trips—short but essential journeys that millions of people make every day, such as taking children to school, going to the market, or connecting to mass transit systems. Currently, these needs are often met through informal solutions such as mototaxis, cargo tricycles, or adapted motorcycles, which, although inventive, lack safety, comfort, and regulation [6].

*Olinia* therefore seeks to design ultra-compact electric vehicles specifically targeted to this widely used urban segment, offering a safe, comfortable, and affordable alternative to mototaxis for passenger transport, as well as a small delivery vehicle for light urban cargo. The strategic objective is sustainable and inclusive mobility, combining zero local emissions with costs that remain accessible for low-income users and operators.

***Strategic and technological planning.*** From the outset, *Olinia* adopted a rigorous strategic planning approach to turn its vision into reality within a defined timeframe. The project was announced with a six-year goal to develop three micro-vehicle models and deploy them commercially. This schedule aligns with the duration of the current federal administration, reflecting a clear intention to achieve tangible results within the government term that promotes the initiative.

As an intermediate milestone, the project established the goal of presenting its first functional prototype during high-profile events. It was announced, for instance, that in 2026, during the inauguration of the FIFA World Cup matches hosted in Mexico, the first operational *Olinia* units will be showcased to the public. Consequently, the development timeline is accelerated compared to typical automotive industry standards. A conventional vehicle usually requires more than five years from concept to production [15]; in contrast, *Olinia* aims to achieve a development cycle of approximately 2.5 years for its first model, made possible by the lower complexity of electric micro-vehicles.

The project's central technological strategy is the creation of a common modular vehicle platform on which different body variants—or “shells”—can be built for the various intended uses. Rather than designing each model from scratch, *Olinia* began by developing the foundational components—chassis, electric drivetrain, battery, and electronics—that will serve all micro-vehicles. Built on this shared platform are the personal-mobility version, the neighborhood-transport version (an improved mototaxi), and the last-mile cargo version. This unified architecture aims to shorten development time and reduce costs, making it easier to scale from one model to another. These variants can be seen in Figure 1, which illustrates the three preliminary models developed by the project.

To ensure that the vehicles respond to real user needs, the team adopted a user-centered design process. Engineers and designers immersed themselves in the context of popular transport by traveling in mototaxis in several cities and engaging extensively with drivers, passengers, and fleet owners. This fieldwork documented operators' long workdays (more than 10 hours), their frustrations with breakdowns and the safety issues of current vehicles, as well as their aspirations for improvement [11]. These findings shape the design of *Olinia*, which is approached “not from engineering but from empathy,” placing technology in alignment with the everyday needs of Mexican users [12].



**Figure 1.** Preliminary *Olinia* models for urban mobility, neighborhood transport, and delivery.

**Source.** Public dissemination material from the Government of Mexico (2025).

In terms of specifications, *Olinia*'s micro-cars are conceived for fully urban use, prioritizing efficiency and low cost rather than high performance. The maximum speed will be limited to approximately 50–60 km/h—

adequate for city streets but unsuitable for high-speed highways. This clearly defines the operational scope while reducing power requirements and overall costs. The lithium-ion battery will provide a minimum range of 100 km per charge, far exceeding the daily distance traveled by most urban users (typically less than 30 km) [3–5]. Because of the vehicle's small size and light weight ( $\approx 400$  kg), this range can be achieved with a relatively small battery.

A notable feature is that the micro-vehicle can be charged overnight using any standard household outlet, eliminating the need for specialized fast-charging infrastructure. Its electricity consumption is so low that it is comparable to that of a common household appliance: “the mini-car will consume roughly the same as a refrigerator or a microwave,” according to the developers [12]. This results in energy costs far lower than those of a gasoline vehicle—and even lower than those of many motorcycles—representing significant savings for users. *Olinia*'s technological strategy is thus oriented toward simple, efficient, and economical vehicles: powerful enough to fulfill urban tasks, including climbing steep slopes, yet optimized for cost and energy consumption to maximize affordability.

**Inter-institutional collaboration and national capacity building.** A fundamental pillar of *Olinia* is the way it brings together collaboration among government, academia, and local talent for the development of the project. Rather than outsourcing the design to foreign companies, the initiative chose to “turn to the best” talent in Mexico and assembled an unprecedented multidisciplinary team. This team includes specialists from the Tecnológico Nacional de México (TecNM), the Instituto Politécnico Nacional (IPN), the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), and various federal public research centers, all working together as a single group. This organizational approach has been described as an “exercise never before seen in Mexico” [12], since academic institutions traditionally work in isolation or only as advisors to industrial projects. In contrast, in *Olinia*, distinguished professors and researchers temporarily left their academic roles to join the project's engineering team full-time in a shared location. Their levels within the National System of Researchers (SNII) were maintained, but their full work dedication was focused entirely on *Olinia*, even relocating to the state of Puebla where the development center was established, according to the project coordinator [10].

By mid-2023, the project had more than 70 people from 17 states across the country forming this highly qualified technical team. The Technological Institute of Puebla (part of the TecNM) serves as the main headquarters: it houses *Olinia*'s design and engineering center, an innovation space already in operation, with a dedicated building under construction on campus. The

consolidation of this headquarters was made possible through the support of educational authorities and the backing of the state governments of Puebla and Sonora, demonstrating coordination among different governmental levels around the project.

Inter-institutional collaboration is also reflected in the creation of local knowledge and intellectual property. Historically, the Mexican automotive industry focused on manufacturing under foreign specifications, a process limited to “tropicalizing” imported technology [7]. *Olinia* reverses this logic: it starts with local needs and builds technology from scratch that can later be adapted or expanded, rather than adapting external technologies. The project has been enthusiastically received by Mexican automotive professionals, who claim that “Mexico was long overdue for launching a project like this,” given the expertise accumulated over decades of automotive operations in the country [7]. In meetings with industrial clusters and national companies, the team observed the impressive manufacturing and auto-parts design capabilities already present in Mexico—capabilities that are often underutilized. This reinforces the vision that *Olinia* will be a car proudly made in Mexico and opens the possibility that, once consolidated in the domestic market, the brand could expand internationally as a symbol of Mexican talent and culture.

**Business model, affordability, and technological inclusion.** Since the premise of *Olinia* is affordable mobility, both the business model and the production scheme were designed to minimize the cost to end users. The announced target price for the micro-vehicles ranges between 90,000 and 150,000 Mexican pesos (approximately 5,000–8,000 USD), depending on the version, which would position them as the cheapest ultracompact electric vehicles in the national market [16]. To contextualize, this price range fills the gap between motorcycles (20,000–100,000 pesos for common utility models) and entry-level subcompact cars (around 230,000 pesos for the cheapest gasoline models). This is a practically unattended market segment: motorized four-wheel vehicles at this price level do not exist because, with combustion engines, low-cost microcars would be too polluting to be permitted under Mexican regulations. *Olinia* takes advantage of this “window of opportunity”: being electric, its micro-vehicle can be offered in this middle-low price niche with zero emissions, filling the gap between motorcycles and traditional cars.

To achieve this cost objective, a key innovation is the decentralized production model. Unlike traditional automakers, which concentrate all production in large-scale plants like those of Nissan in Aguascalientes or Volkswagen in Puebla, *Olinia* proposes manufacturing the main components in a central site and then shipping disassembled kits to regional assembly centers throughout the country. This approach avoids transporting finished vehicles over long distances, which

significantly increases the final cost [17]. According to the coordinator, transporting a 90,000-peso microcar from a plant in northern Mexico to the southeast could greatly raise its price; instead, shipping 30 or 40 vehicles in parts inside a container and assembling them locally—for example, in the Yucatán Peninsula—reduces distribution costs. This “hybrid” model of production and distribution will allow *Olinia* to reach various regional markets while maintaining affordability and generating local employment in assembly centers. Although it requires complex logistics, the team considers it feasible given the smaller scale of the vehicles and essential to meeting the target price.

Regarding the business structure, *Olinia* is envisioned as a public-private company. Initially, it is a public project driven by the government, but with the explicit goal of attracting private investment to scale production and ensure long-term financial sustainability. The federal government would be the majority shareholder at the beginning, but private investors are expected to join, motivated—as in any company—by the pursuit of profit. This is considered important to instill market discipline in the project: “we want the company to generate money for its shareholders, among whom the main one will be the government” [12]. Success will therefore be measured not only in vehicles produced, but also in building a profitable business model capable of operating beyond public subsidies. With this aim, the team stated that the vehicle must not exceed 150,000 pesos; “if we produce an excellent vehicle but it costs 300,000, we will have failed,” said the coordinator Roberto Capuano Tripp in an interview [12], emphasizing the commitment to the cost target.

In parallel, financing and insurance schemes are being developed to facilitate the acquisition and use of the micro-vehicles among the target population. Since operating costs for electric vehicles are far lower than those of gasoline vehicles—even lower than those of many motorcycles—affordable credit options would allow users to experience daily economic savings from reduced fuel expenditure. Additionally, the *Olinia* company plans to provide royalties to the educational institutions that contributed to the technological development, ensuring that commercial success also benefits public universities and research centers. This innovative mechanism aims to share the benefits with the academic sector, encouraging future collaborations of this kind.

**Progress to date and next steps.** During its first year, *Olinia* has reported significant milestones. As mentioned earlier, the development center in Puebla was consolidated, with dozens of engineers working on vehicle design. In parallel, IPN and TecNM were involved in market studies to define key aspects such as seating capacity (2, 3, or 4 passengers) and the optimal launch sequence for the models [12]. This analysis will

help determine, for example, whether to begin with the personal-mobility vehicle, the neighborhood-transport version (community-taxi type), or the delivery version, depending on which presents greater demand and commercial feasibility.

On the technical front, the team plans to build a prototype fleet of at least five operational units for demonstration during the inauguration of the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Initial commercial production is projected for May 2027, when the first units should begin leaving the regional assembly centers for public sale. These goals imply an ambitious schedule, but the reported progress (developed conceptual platform, defined brand identity, operational facilities, etc.) suggests steady advancement.

A symbolic but important milestone was the official launch of *Olinia*'s brand identity [10]. The name derives from *olín*, a Náhuatl word meaning "movement," chosen to reflect the core purpose of moving people with locally developed technology while honoring the country's Indigenous cultural heritage. The logo was designed to balance engineering precision and human warmth, representing a promise of people-centered technology. Additionally, every major project needs an icon; in *Olinia*'s case, an alebrije-inspired emblem was created: a winged hare called "*Alma de Olinia*," shown in Figure 2. The hare was selected for symbolizing practical intelligence, adaptability, and efficient use of energy—qualities the project identifies with—while its unstoppable dynamism metaphorically reflects that of Mexico. The wings, meanwhile, evoke freedom of movement and "a new kind of flight, the flight of innovation," connecting with the imagery of the national eagle but in a unique manner. This alebrije hare symbol will be placed on all *Olinia* vehicles as a mark of authenticity, quality, and a reminder of the project's transformative spirit. While the branding aspect is secondary from a technical standpoint, it is important for building an appealing public narrative and fostering national pride around the initiative.



**Figure 2.** Graphic emblem used on *Olinia* project vehicles.  
**Source.** Public dissemination material from the Government of Mexico (2025).

Finally, *Olinia* has identified and begun addressing the regulatory challenges inherent to introducing a new type of vehicle. Currently, the legal category of electric micro-vehicles does not exist in Mexican regulations [18–19]. An imported microcar must be registered as a quadricycle or motor-cart, subject to limits on where it may circulate.

For this reason, the project is working together with government authorities to create an appropriate regulatory framework that allows these urban electric micro-vehicles to be licensed and operated as a distinct vehicle class. This includes defining safety standards—such as whether helmets will be required and specifying minimum equipment—and establishing circulation restrictions. It is expected that, similar to motorcycles, these vehicles will not be allowed on high-speed controlled-access roads. Regulatory acceptance will be a decisive factor for the successful rollout of *Olinia* and highlights the importance of aligning public-policy regulation with technological innovation.

## DISCUSSION

*Olinia* project exemplifies an innovative public policy intervention in the field of sustainable urban mobility. The following discussion examines its main strengths, as well as the limitations and challenges it must address, while also identifying opportunities to improve its implementation.

**Strengths.** *Olinia* benefits from several advantages that increase its likelihood of success. First, it enjoys high-level political and institutional support: the project is driven by the federal government, which gives it priority on the public agenda and access to initial resources. This backing has facilitated intergovernmental coordination (federal–state) and the rapid formation of the team and infrastructure. Second, its alignment with real population needs is a clear asset. The focus on first- and last-mile trips and on low-income urban sectors responds to a tangible social demand, increasing the probability of adoption once the product becomes available. Unlike many technological initiatives that search for a market for their product, in this case the target market was identified from the outset through field research, and the product is being designed based on that market. This increases the project's relevance and accountability.

Third, the mobilization of national talent through inter-institutional collaboration represents a strategic strength. The integration of experts from IPN, TecNM, UNAM, and public research centers into a single team has enabled a unique transfer of knowledge and capabilities in Mexico. This highly qualified human capital increases the likelihood of achieving technical innovations in record time and sets a precedent for how public-interest technological projects can be managed. Fourth, the emphasis on affordability and low energy consumption gives the project a strong inclusive and sustainable character: if *Olinia* succeeds in commercializing an electric vehicle for around 100,000 pesos with operating costs lower than those of a motorcycle, it will democratize access to electric mobility in an unprecedented way. This affordability, combined with its cultural elements (a Náhuatl name, a Mexican symbol), may generate social acceptance and a sense of belonging among target communities—an important factor for

innovation diffusion. Finally, the decision to structure *Olinia* as a public-private company with a profitability mandate introduces market discipline and long-term viability, preventing it from becoming a fleeting government program. If it succeeds in attracting private investment, it will scale more rapidly, and financial risks will not fall exclusively on the public budget.

**Limitations.** Despite its strengths, *Olinia* also faces significant challenges and risks. One is the technological and timing challenge: although the relative simplicity of an electric micro-vehicle allows for shorter development cycles, the timeline remains tight (2–3 years for a prototype and around 4 years for mass production). The automotive industry is complex even at small scale, and there is a risk that delays or technical difficulties—such as developing safe, low-cost batteries or ensuring durability—could jeopardize established deadlines [12]. Any delay could undermine the public credibility the project has gained.

Another major challenge is the absence of a regulatory framework for this type of vehicle. Although the project is working on this, creating a new vehicle category and integrating it into traffic laws and homologation standards can be a slow process. If regulations are not ready in time, the first *Olinia* units could face difficulties circulating legally or ensuring occupant protection. Safety is also a concern: even if these micro-vehicles are safer than open mototaxis, they will still need to demonstrate basic safety standards (stability, braking performance, low-speed crash protection). Any negative incident could generate distrust among users.

In the market arena, a growing risk is competition from imported vehicles. Although there is currently no other electric product in Mexico that matches *Olinia*'s price and size niche, electric micro-vehicles do exist in Asia and Europe and could eventually enter the Mexican market. *Olinia* will need to compete in price and performance with potential imports, and while its advantage lies in knowing local conditions better, staying ahead in innovation remains a challenge. The arrival of imported models could create competitive pressures that hinder *Olinia*'s consolidation. This suggests that the government will need to develop policies that appropriately regulate this segment, protecting national development without undermining competition or principles of open trade.

Related to this, some private-sector actors have expressed skepticism regarding a government-led automotive project, arguing that it may fail due to lack of public-sector business expertise. This skepticism comes not only from objective analysis but also from vested interests—for example, gasoline motorcycle manufacturers who view *Olinia* as a potential disruption to their market. Criticisms have included predictions that “the company will collapse” or that “bureaucrats” are entering fields

they do not master [20]. Although project leadership has responded by emphasizing careful planning and a commitment to real profitability, these negative perceptions could translate into political or business resistance, complicating the acquisition of support, private investment, or supply contracts.

Finally, a structural limitation is the dependency on political-administration cycles: *Olinia* began under a specific administration, and although it has been institutionalized as a mixed enterprise, a shift in priorities in the next government could affect its momentum. Mexico's history of sexennial projects highlights how difficult it is to ensure continuity beyond the political cycle.

**Areas for Improvement.** Identifying areas where *Olinia* can strengthen itself is crucial to increase its chances of success. One such area is proactively managing regulatory adaptation: it is advisable for the technical team to work closely with standard-setting and transportation authorities from early stages to co-create the electric micro-vehicle category, ensuring that regulations are ready when the product is. This includes matters such as safety testing methods and clear guidelines on where these vehicles may circulate [12].

Another area for improvement is deepening user involvement during development. Although ethnographic research has already been conducted, it would be valuable to carry out participatory concept-testing activities (e.g., focus groups with mototaxi drivers testing simulators or early prototypes) to refine design details that improve adoption. In the financial sphere, it will be important to design smart subsidy or incentive mechanisms—for example, government-backed soft loans for early adopters, or cross-subsidies through programs replacing polluting vehicles—to accelerate initial market penetration. These policies would complement the technical project with public-policy adoption measures.

Collaboration with local governments (municipalities, boroughs) could also be explored to pilot shared-use schemes for the micro-vehicles (such as car-sharing or community fleets), maximizing their social impact in marginalized areas. Regarding industrial development, although the decentralized model is innovative, it will require establishing a solid domestic supply chain for components; one improvement could be to sign early agreements with national suppliers of batteries, motors, and parts to ensure quality and cost control.

Finally, in terms of public communication, maintaining the focus on transparency and periodic dissemination of progress—what the team calls a “open kimono” philosophy [21]—will help sustain public support and manage expectations. Continually presenting achievements (design milestones, prototypes, tests) not

only provides accountability but also builds confidence and enthusiasm among potential users and investors.

## CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the *Olinia* project shows how the integration of public policy and technological development can be articulated to address urban mobility challenges in an emerging country. *Olinia* is conceived simultaneously as a government program to promote sustainable mobility and as an innovative automotive company guided by principles of social inclusion and commercial viability. Through its objectives and strategy, the project seeks to solve a concrete problem—the lack of safe, clean, and affordable short-distance transportation—through a solution tailored to the Mexican context: electric micro-vehicles designed and manufactured locally, affordable for low-income sectors, and operable using the existing infrastructure (household outlets).

The experience of *Olinia* offers several valuable insights. First, it demonstrates the importance of strategic planning with a long-term, state-level vision to drive innovations that the market alone does not provide. Political support made it possible to bring together human and financial resources that would have been difficult to align otherwise. Second, it highlights the potential of inter-institutional collaboration: the strategic partnership among universities, research centers, and the government within a single work team has enabled the development of a complex technology in a reduced timeframe, setting a precedent for future science-based projects in Mexico. Third, *Olinia* indicates a path toward building national technological capabilities; rather than relying on foreign technology transfer, it is generating Mexican knowledge, design, and engineering, which could have long-term spillover effects in the local automotive industry. Fourth, the emphasis on affordability and cultural adaptation (a Náhuatl name, an alebrije symbol) underscores that technological solutions must be socially adoptable. This commitment to technological inclusion—turning an electric vehicle from a luxury good into an accessible work tool—is especially relevant for developing countries. Finally, *Olinia* shows that environmental and economic sustainability can be mutually reinforcing: delivering zero emissions and low energy consumption is not incompatible with profitable business models when there is innovation in design and production.

It is still too early to assess *Olinia*'s final impact; at the time of writing, the project is in the prototype development stage and in the process of establishing its first assembly lines. However, its progress suggests that, if implemented as envisioned, it could transform the landscape of urban mobility in Mexico. A successful outcome for *Olinia* would imply the creation of a new vehicle category in the country, the widespread adoption of electric transport among low-income segments, and the demonstration that a technology-driven company with

public participation can innovate with agility. This last point would have significant implications for innovation policy, offering a replicable model of how the state can catalyze emerging technological sectors by joining forces with academia and industry.

*Olinia* is an ambitious project in public policy innovation and sustainable mobility. Its strengths in strategy and collaboration point to a promising future, although it will need to navigate its technical, regulatory, and market challenges carefully. If it achieves its goals, it will not only improve the quality of life for millions by providing clean and safe transportation, but it will also position Mexico as a pioneer in a unique technological niche—turning a vision of “moving Mexico with Mexican talent” into a tangible reality. The development of *Olinia* warrants close monitoring, as its insights may inspire similar initiatives in other countries seeking local solutions to global challenges of urban sustainability.

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