

Workshop 7: participation and territorial anchorage

Launch of a French platform designed to "Scaling up the local in Europe" - 8th November 2007 in Paris

22 people from Luxembourg, Belgium, Germany, Quebec and, of course, France, met to discuss a simple statement that stems directly from the Pactes Locaux (Local Pacts). This network has benefited from the exchange of experience and mutual collective development over a ten-year period. *"Without the participation of people, it is impossible to bring about profound change. We can no longer hope to resolve 'global' issues if we do not attempt to find ways of organising concrete and territorial responses, in dynamic human spaces, that are linked both to one another and to the outside world."* On the basis of these shared convictions that they also practice at local level, the group has jointly worked to build bridges and converge at other levels around this point of view. Without detracting from the autonomy and legitimacy of the individual, it is possible to become more influential and credible and even to reinforce these approaches aimed at serving the common good. The workshop began with a series of presentations aimed at stimulating debate amongst the group present.

The international dimension: making the picture a little clearer

Yvon Poirier, from Quebec, talked about how the dynamics of RIPESS¹ were established in the 1990s, thanks to the initiative of local actors, and with a view to addressing the global dimension. RIPESS has gone from strength to strength from the first international meeting in Lima in 1997, to the 4th international meeting in Dakar in 2005. It has extended its approach to include new environments and continents and now includes a Board of Administrators. Due to the somewhat limited resources, it does not meet very often, but it is an ongoing process that includes the sharing of knowledge between active members. The international functioning of the network is on the agenda of the Lux'09 meeting, and given the importance of developing a form of democratic governance that is appropriate to the internationalisation of the network, will be a

transversal theme in all of the topics of discussion. At the moment, each continent, country or region is organised according to its own context. Latin America is the most dynamic continent (17 national networks, the Brazilian Solidarity Economy Forum is present in all of the regions). Quebec represents a long-standing and solid basis of this dynamic in its own country and also in the financial and technical support that has been designed as part of a renewed approach to co-operation between countries of the North and the South. A network has just been established in the United States. Dakar inspired the creation of national networks in Morocco and West Africa: Mali, Niger, Burkina, Guinea and Senegal, where the RIPESS secretariat is currently located. A forum has just been held for the first time in Manila in the Philippines and this marks the launch of similar initiatives in Asia.

The slow and fragile construction of the European networks

Eric Lavillunière, from INEES, expressed the view that the notion of "social and solidarity economy" (SSE) encompasses widely differing realities. It is impossible to compare the economic importance of the social economy and that of the solidarity economy. The solidarity economy has given rise to the creation of new networks and is anchored in renewed values. Forty different languages are spoken in Europe and this is a real difficulty for the creation of networks. The networks only have limited resources and this leads to the proliferation of small-scale sectorial platforms. A European committee meets every two months to prepare for Lux'09. It is working very effectively and is based on the principle of "who agrees to do what?" All members remain independent within the framework of an international programme of work. The French Platform for "Scaling up the local in Europe" quite clearly has a role to play within this process, as long as it succeeds in achieving a real degree of internationalisation! The aim is to move beyond the testimonies, and convert them into theory. Not

a great deal of progress has been made over the last 10 years in terms of the recognition of the SSE. It is always very difficult to explain that the way of doing something is at least as important as the results one sets out to achieve. One of the aims of LUX'09 is to open up a space for contributions in order to consolidate the existence of a European platform for the solidarity economy and to establish the best possible forms of co-operation with the traditional platforms of the social economy (co-operatives, mutual societies and associations). He welcomed the IRIS initiative (the European inter-network of ethical and responsible initiatives), which has begun to bring networks that represent fair trade together with ethical financing, social insertion enterprises and responsible consumerism - cf. www.iris-network.eu (Fr + En).

The collective experimentation of local democracy in France

Gérard Logié from ADELS², which was set up over 40 years ago, raised a question that is asked everywhere: "what is the purpose of civil society?" He quoted the economist from the Philippines, Nicanor Perlas, who continues to argue in favour of a third sphere: the cultural sphere is responsible for ensuring that the two other spheres, namely the economic and political, accord due respect to the human and environmental values of life on earth. This reflection is also to be found in the challenges currently faced in France in the context of the municipal elections. There is a need to recognise the validity of territorial policies that are truly participative, as well as the dimension of the collective general interest, which is not compatible with the system that forces them compete with one another as part of a tendering process. To obtain the effective recognition of these two principles is a political objective on its own.

¹ International Network for the Promotion of the Social Solidarity Economy - cf. www.ripest.net (Fr + En + Es)

² Association for Democracy and Local Education in France

The French platform designed to "Scale up the Local in Europe" is:

- a **co-operation-based approach to work that has joint specifications and forms of organisation**. These are determined on an on-going basis by the people who join the platform on a voluntary basis. This takes the form of exchanges between peers. Neither evaluative nor judgemental, and not based on external postures, it is a process designed to encourage experience sharing that helps to establish context-related analogies and differences and to produce a joint approach;
- a **preparatory work schedule for LUX'09**, with 5 regional stages planned in 2007 up to the end of 2008. These events and possibilities for exchange between actors, local inhabitants and invited guests, will alternate with intermediary sessions designed to capitalise the work undertaken to date;
- an **approach that produces results and a variety of different tools**: to help make progress on issues or collective challenge specific to the host territory; to experiment, in situ, with a collective construction process that enables forms of horizontal co-operation between actors of different levels; to develop content on the theme of "Democratic participation and territorial anchoring ..."

Finally, it extends an invitation to become involved in:

- the **first regional stage that is due to take place on 13th and 14th December in Poitiers** and which aims to answer the following question: "what is the contribution of partnership-based initiatives in the creation of employment, of insertion by economic activities, the development and agglomeration councils, and territorial funds..., social territorial dialogue, the development of a more solidarity-based territorial economy, which is more co-operative and responds to everyone's aspirations to a job and to employment?" The event will be structured into the following three phases: illustration, discussion and proposals.
- the **general process with a first meeting scheduled to take place in Paris in January** (date to be agreed). Exchange between participants will lead to **deciding on how best to get things underway**.

For further information, please contact:

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Indicators of well-being for a solidarity based and responsible territory

At the moment there is an apparent lack of tools that can be used to evaluate the quality of life of our fellow citizens and the public policies that exist regarding territorial social cohesion. Paradoxically, as the economy becomes globalised, then we have a greater need for territorial approaches to organise service and redistribution policies that are adapted to meet with people's needs. The major, statistical macro-economic indicators that are traditionally used to indicate a country's economic and social performance provide precious little information that might be used to organise these public actions. There is also a lack of resources that may be used to evaluate the contribution made by the private and third sector to the improvement of the quality of life.

Brief description of the project - The European Institute for the Solidarity Economy intends to construct a dynamic methodological tool which it will then apply, on an experimental basis, at the local level. The aim is to be able to evaluate the quality of life and well-being of populations at a local level, using a relevant and appropriate tool. On the basis of 3 or 4 test territories in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, efforts will be made to identify the most appropriate indicators to measure them, as well as the factors that drive progress. Therefore, this project will take the form of a research action.

Objectives - To construct an appropriate methodological tool kit that will enable the territories that so desire, along with all of their stakeholders, to:

- Make use of quantitative and qualitative criteria for the evaluation of the well-being of their population
- Have access to statistical support for this approach
- Evaluate the efficiency of public policies in the areas of social and environmental cohesion, and therefore to supply tools that may assist the public authorities in their decision making process
- Define avenues for future progress that are endorsed by all parties
- Establish possibilities for the involvement of the production sector
- Establish a more accurate evaluation of the contribution made by the solidarity economy to the improvement of the quality of life of the populations

Expected impact - The expected impact is to promote a new culture for the definition of socio-economic policies in the Grand Duchy. The action will focus on the definition of an appropriate methodology, with the potential to become an approach that has a significant multiplier effect.

Partnership and financing - INEES will call on the support of the local associations that are members of the Réseau Objectif Plein Emploi and has already met with the Ministry for Internal Affairs in Luxembourg, SYVICOL (the Union of Towns and Municipalities), STATEC (Central Service for Statistics and Economic Studies) and various researchers ...

An application for European funding for this project will also be submitted to INTERREG (under trans-regional or transnational provisions).

We are currently looking for partners for the European aspects of this project.

Contact: lavilluniere@inees.org

Job offer - INEES is in the process of recruiting a project manager (m/f)

Tasks: To head up the general organisation of the International Lux'09 Forum on Globalising Solidarity. The chosen candidate will be required to work essentially in three main areas:

- * logistics: organisation of preparatory meetings, planning of the various thematic sessions, organisation of the meeting rooms, accommodation, catering, transport and hosting of the participants, ...
- * editorial activities: reporting on the preparatory meetings, establishment of operational and planning documents, drafting of a range of letters to the participants, speakers, partners and official institutions, drafting of specific communications related to fundraising, ...
- * managing the website: placing articles on-line, moderating the forum, ...

Candidate profile: Interest in issues related to the Solidarity Economy and knowledge of the socio-economic and institutional contexts in Luxembourg and at a European level will be an advantage. The successful candidate will have a high level of operational skills that may have been acquired through professional experience in the areas of organisation, promotion and project management and/or events at an international level. Due consideration will also be given to the candidates' dynamism, sense of initiative, the degree to which he or she is multi-skilled, possesses organisational skills, the ability to lead a project, the capacity to work independently although also member of a team.

Other useful skills: The ability to get on well with other people, good communication skills, written and spoken English and French (knowledge of Spanish and/or German would be a real advantage) would make it easier to establish a good rapport and dialogue with our international and multicultural partners. Candidates should also have sound basic IT skills (word processing, Excel, Power Point, E-mail) and should also know how to edit web pages. The successful candidate will have to be prepared to travel a great deal (short stays abroad) and also to work flexible working hours.

Terms of the contract: The successful candidate will start work immediately or at a time to be agreed on the basis of an 18 month fixed term contract of 40 hours per week. The aim to make this a permanent nomination. Main place of work: Schifflange (Southern Luxembourg) and foreign travel.

Are you interested? If so, please send your application, before 29th December 2007 to:

INEES asbl - For the attention of Mr Eric Lavillunière - 1, rue du Moulin - L-3857 Schifflange - info@inees.org

Editorial The pre-programme special issue 10 of our newsletter has only just been published and here we are again with issue 11 because a great deal is happening as we move ever closer to the end of the year. Dynamic working processes have already been initiated for the workshops (see pages 3 + 4). Please do not hesitate to get in touch and to get involved. There are also lots of developments in Asia (see page 2) and there can be no doubt that the social and solidarity economy is constantly gaining ground around the world. In order to fully contribute to these positive developments, INEES has decided, in agreement with the European Steering Committee for Lux'09, which meets every two months, to recruit a new member of staff. While we are far from having raised the budget required to guarantee the success of this event, we still feel that it is necessary to invest in our human resources so as to increase our chances of raising funds and to move forward in the logistical organisation of the event. On a similar note, I would like to remind all readers that the success of this event is also dependent upon your involvement (participation in the workshops, the hosting of delegations in Europe and the funding of delegations from the South,...). In order to enhance the visibility of Lux'09, we intend to launch an interactive website in early 2008. If you have any ideas or proposals, please put them forward.

Eric Lavillunière - INEES

Asian Forum for Solidarity Economy

October 17-20 2007, Manila, Philippines

Close to 700 people attended the first Asian Forum for Solidarity Economy that was held in Manila. As well as many representatives from the Philippines, the Forum was attended by some 80 participants from 26 Asian countries and several participants from other continents (Europe and North America).

The Forum Programme focussed on four main areas:

- **Socially responsible investment**
- **Socially responsible enterprises**
- **Socially responsible consumerism**
- **Socially responsible governance**

All of the plenary sessions and workshops were organised around these four themes. There was a high degree of participation in the workshops and plenary sessions, and all of the participants seemed to find the contents interesting and relevant. It is possible to say that the notion of the solidarity economy has now begun to establish deeper roots in the Philippines and in the other countries represented at this Forum.

Particular emphasis should be placed on the presence of a high number of young representatives, as well as the fact that both genders were well represented, just as was the case in Dakar in 2005. There is no doubt that the Forum was a success.

The participation of RIPESS

As soon as the Forum was first announced in January 2007, discussions were held with David Thompson and Suman Khanal, the Board members for Asia (and Oceania), regarding RIPESS' participation in the event. They decided that it would be useful to have a North American presence at the Forum and that is why the Co-Chairs of NANSAN (North American Network for the Solidarity Economy), Dan Swinney and Michael Lewis, designated Yvon Poirier to attend.

Giovanni Acquati from INAISE (International Association of Investors in the Social Economy), who is also a member of the RIPESS Board, participated in the event.

During the Forum, Yvon Poirier was invited to address the plenary session to present RIPESS and NANSAN, as well as to inform the meeting about Lux'09. Many copies of the Lux'09 pre-programme (cf. Newsletter special issue 10) were distributed during the Forum.

The aim to raise RIPESS' public profile was certainly achieved and a large number of people expressed their interest in participating in Lux'09.

Networking activities

The Forum provided the opportunity to hold discussions with the Forum organisers.

It is important to mention that the meeting was organised by a small team of 4-5 people, chaired by Dr. Cielito Habito, an economist who had been the national director for planning during the Ramos presidency. Ben Quiñones of the Coalition of Socially Responsible SMEs (CSRSMEA) was the executive director of the Steering Committee. They believe that, for the time being, all of the necessary conditions are not quite in place to create an Asian network. A great deal of work still has to be done with the organisations in the various countries so as to encourage them to adhere to the ideas and national networks still need to be set up.

The aim is to organise an Asian Forum in two years time. Accordingly, the next Forum will be held in Japan in October 2009. The decision will be taken by the organisations in Japan.

The Forum Steering Committee is interested in developing relations with RIPESS. Over the next few months, the Committee will contemplate the possibility of submitting a formal application for membership.

Over the next two years, the aim is to establish a better understanding of the solidarity economy in Asia. In order to achieve this aim, efforts will be made to map all of the existing solidarity economy activities on a country by country and sector by sector basis. There is no doubt that the solidarity economy already exists and is already fairly well developed, even though many people still do not use this concept. These efforts will serve to make the solidarity economy more visible.

Other interesting information

The people in the Philippines have discovered that the word *banayihan* is the equivalent of the solidarity economy in their language. The *Banayihan Banking Window (BBW)*, which was made official during the Forum, has become the banking service of the solidarity economy. Working in partnership with a governmental department, the BBW acts as a link between the Socially Responsible Investors and the Socially

Responsible Enterprises in the Philippines.

Furthermore, Marcos Arruda announced the launch of the Alliance for an Oeconomy (ALOE), as a follow-up to the Solidarity and Socio-economic Pole (PSES) of the Alliance for a Responsible and Solidarity World supported by the Foundation for the Progress of Humankind (FPH) - c.f. www.socioeco.org (in FR + EN + ES). The aims are to collectively generate and to promote proposals and strategies that will lead to socio-economic change.

We should also point out that it was possible to hold this Forum thanks to the creation of a partnership between the CSRSME Asia and the FPH.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) also covered the travel and subsistence costs incurred by some delegations from certain Asian countries.

The UNITERRA Programme, which supports RIPESS, notably through national networks (for example in Western Africa), also contributed to the success of this event. It is active in several Asian countries and, thanks to a joint project with the GESQ (Group for the Solidarity Economy in Quebec), a delegation of 6 people from Nepal was able to attend the meeting in Manila.

Conclusion

As a result of the team work carried out over a period of several months, the objectives set for participation in the Forum were met. In particular, the dynamics of RIPESS are now known in Asia.

It is also possible to say that solidarity economy networking has now been born in Asia. However, just as is the case in other countries and continents, it will take some time for it to grow. Nevertheless, we can be confident in the future.

Yvon Poirier

Grande Région area around Luxembourg

47 organisations from the six regions of the Grande Région (Saarland (Germany), Lorraine (Fr), Rhineland Palatinate (Germany), Luxembourg (Lu), Wallonia (Be) and the German-speaking and French Community of Belgium) created a cross-border network at the Grande Région's 1st Forum for the Social and Solidarity Economy and in so doing have laid the foundations for future co-operation between the actors. Participation and across-the-board activity were the underpinning features of the Forum and the participants declared their intentions to become involved in future processes by signing a declaration of intent.

There is now a need to raise the necessary resources to allow this network, which has already identified the needs, to begin to work.

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The Days of International Solidarity Economy

held on 18th and 19th October 2007 in Lille were strongly influenced by Lux'09 (Workshop 1). One outcome was that the participants (including many elected representatives) adopted a declaration

Lille Declaration:

"Joining forces to promote policies on the social and solidarity economy within national, European and international decision-making bodies"

The event held in Lille took place in the context of the opportunities for debates and exchange that are organised on a regular basis by the International Network for the Promotion of the Social Solidarity Economy (RIPESS).

The events are linked to the "Globalisation of Solidarity" Meetings that have previously been organised by RIPESS in Lima (1997), Quebec (2001) and Dakar (2005). At the moment RIPESS and its members are preparing the Luxembourg Meetings, known as "LUX'09". This is a major European event that is due to be held in 2009. It is therefore quite clear that these events form an integral and on-going part of the international process designed to promote the construction of the social and solidarity economy.

Both the organisers and the participants at the Lille event felt that it was important to reiterate their support for the definition of the social and solidarity economy as formulated in Lima:

"an economy based on co-operation, sharing and collective action, placing people at the centre of economic and social development," as well as the definition of solidarity: *"in economic terms, solidarity is based on a project that is economic, political and social, and that results in a new way of approaching politics and of establishing human relations on the basis of consensus and citizens' actions."*

They went on to express their desire to jointly pursue and to consolidate the actions undertaken since 1997 with the networks of actors, particularly:

- The recognition of the social and solidarity economy as a mode of economic development that enables:
 - The creation of activities and jobs that are both of a high quality and socially useful
 - A fair and solidarity-based sharing of resources between the territories, populations and generations.
- Support for all local social and solidarity economy initiatives that are developed in a participative and democratic manner with citizens, project leaders, those involved in project support, institutions and elected representatives.
- Develop and reinforce the partnership dynamics between actors, networks and policy makers to enable the joint construction of public policies that support the social and solidarity economy.
- Implement actions in the areas of communication, training, research and lobbying of institutions.
- Build consensus and co-operation at international level.

Although there are an increasing number of local initiatives and progress in the field of institutional recognition, both the organisers and participants at the Lille event note that all the aims set in 1997 have not yet been achieved.

The weight of the dominant economic model within national, European and international institutions has led to an increase in inequalities and to the unfair distribution of wealth which the systems of redistribution are unable to redress. The disengagement of the State weighs increasingly heavily on the finances of the territorial authorities. These two dominant trends represent a threat to the long-term survival of the public policies implemented in recent years. In this political and economic context, the organisers and participants at the Lille event confirmed their desire to both co-ordinate and to multiply their efforts to influence political, economic and financial decisions at all levels.

They have a three-fold objective:

- To improve the structure, visibility and efficiency of the organisations involved on a daily basis in the discussions that take place at decision-making level, in order to promote the development of the social and solidarity economy.
- To safeguard and to reinforce public policies that support the social and solidarity economy that have been implemented at the various territorial levels.
- To ensure that recognition is given to the social and solidarity economy in all institutions (political, trade unions, associations, financial, educational, research,...) and to lobby these institutions on a regular and on-going basis.

The organisers and participants at the International Event on the Solidarity Economy in Lille, jointly commit themselves to:

- **Call upon their national governments to establish sustainable ministries dedicated to social and solidarity economy and to provide them with sufficient human and financial resources.**
- **Ensure that these ministries develop public policies to support the social and solidarity economy, and co-operate with the actors' networks, and that recognise them as fully-fledged partners.**
- **Lobby the European and international institutions (WTO, IMF...) so that they orient their economic and social policies in a coherent manner towards sustainable and solidarity-based development and reconsider their wealth indicators.**
- **Demand the establishment of fair and just international economic and financial relationships, particularly between the North and the South. This includes the cancellation of debts.**
- **Encourage the political, economic and social partners to take ownership for issues related to the social and solidarity economy and to support related actions within their organisations and in their relations with all of the decision-making bodies.**

For decades, the social and solidarity economy has clearly displayed its usefulness from a social and environmental point of view. It has also proved its economic efficiency by contributing to general interest.

The Lima declaration was signed 10 years ago. The declaration made in Quebec carried the title of "Resist and Build". The declaration made two years ago in Dakar was entitled "Empowering People."

The meeting to be held in Luxembourg in 2009 will enable us to gauge the progress made to date and to reiterate our intentions.

We call upon the whole of the social and solidarity economy to mobilise its energies and participate massively in this event, thereby affirming its role as a large international movement that is capable of helping to fulfil the hopes for peace and economic, social and democratic development that it promotes.