

## Vive la crise !

We say this without wishing to sound arrogant and disrespectful to those who are suffering the most at the hands of the crisis, instead we are expressing a hope that the crisis may initiate a change. Not in terms of the practices of the financial sector which, having stood at the very edge of the precipice (indeed there are those who have gone over the edge) and having been saved by public intervention (since it was considered to be too big to be allowed to die), has now resumed its activities on the basis of "business as usual," displaying the same excesses (financial speculation,...).

Rather we are expressing the hope opinion that public opinion will become aware of the iniquity of our socio-economic models. However, the alternatives would not yet appear to have gained a sufficient amount of credibility in order to initiate real change.

This situation creates at least two challenges for the solidarity economy (which, it has to be acknowledged, had done very little to benefit from the "opportunity" presented by the crisis to make its voice heard):

- To strengthen the academic arguments behind the heterodox theories that are currently too fragmented to influence the political decision-making process. It is for this very reason that, at the Xth RIUESS Meetings, we intend to launch a series of reflections in order to put together a theoretical body concerning the social and solidarity economy (cf. attached special supplement, which includes a call for communications);
- To give greater visibility to this other way of running the economy. We now need to bring together and to promote our activities. With this in mind, all of the efforts currently being made to map the initiatives taking place across the world help to improve these initiatives and to raise awareness about them and also serve to establish a network of the enterprises which, on a daily basis, show us that it is possible to do things in a different way and that nothing is inevitable as long as we unite our efforts in order to bring about change.

This is what we wish for ourselves at the beginning of a new year – 2010. A year in which we break away from the past and move towards a future full of promise.

Eric Lavillunière - Chargé de Direction INEES

**Interview with Romain Schneider,**  
the Luxembourg Minister of State for  
the solidarity economy  
08 September 2009 - by Abilio Machado



*"We are now conferring a new significance to the solidarity economy. By including it within the portfolio of the Minister for the Economy, we are granting the solidarity economy a level of recognition that it enjoys in very few countries*

*throughout the world. The very fact that a minister of state has been given full responsibility for the solidarity economy shows that this policy area is of essential importance to the government's actions."*  
(Statement issued by the government on 29 July 2009)

Cf. interview on  
<http://www.ecosol-online.lu>

### Publication

#### The new solidarity spirit

by Bruno Frère

(University of Liège – Belgium),

preface by Luc Boltanski, postscript by Jean-Louis Laville, Paris, Desclée de Brouwer.

In this new publication, the author shows how the community-based form of the economy that is today called the "solidarity" economy may trace its deep roots back to the libertarian and revolutionary movements and schools of thought that shook France in the mid-19th century. At the time, these movements appeared to represent a proposal for an alternative



social and political organisation to the market economy, without yielding to the siren calls of organised socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat. These movements also represented a real hope of counteracting what seemed, at the time, to be a first crisis of modernity. Today, this image would appear to be reborn through initiatives such as microcredit, alternative enterprises, community services, fair trade and non-monetary exchanges. Can this already be considered to be one way of emerging from the current crisis of modernity?

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Asian Forum for Solidarity Economy

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Asian Forum for Solidarity Economy cf. ([www.aa4se.com](http://www.aa4se.com)) took place on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> November 2009 in Tokyo, Japan. About 320 participants from 11 countries attended this international event, learning both the theoretical foundations as well as practices of solidarity economy both in Japan, Asia and other parts of the world. On top of that, more than 10 NGOs had their booths to show their products and activities, allowing visitors and bystanders to witness the diver-

liance 21 as key global networks which have driven this movement forward. Then followed a video conference by Mr. Pierre Calame, of FPH (Foundation for the Progress of Humankind), who told that the cliché "21<sup>st</sup> century is for Asia" is also true in terms of solidarity economy, arguing the need to transform our economy into the one in which "territories" (and/or "communities") can manage their own currencies and energy source, putting their workforce for social cohesion and

change, peak oil and food crisis (David Thompson – Australia).

In the Asian session, Benjamin Quiñones from the Philippines, main organiser of the 1<sup>st</sup> Asian Forum in October 2007 in Manila (network Corporate Social Responsibility SME) underlined the importance to have a plural economy approach based on the responsibility, solidarity and good governance. He suggests that to go forward with SE, we have to change our mindset and approach this in a more global manner, at the local and territorial level, in link with the global issues. One idea is to have case studies, included within the idea of learning journeys, in 20 or 30 territories, of different nature, to see how the communities work to build such a holistic approach, and taking into account the challenges they face since globalization affects them. In a preliminary manner, this is seen as a key track for work in Asia over the three year period 2010-2013. The idea is even to follow these «cases» over a 3 year period to see how they evolve. There probably will be an invitation for other continents to also share some «cases» to add to the ones in Asia for the 5<sup>th</sup> "Globalization of Solidarity" 2013 event.



sity of the realm of solidarity economy.

making themselves more self-sufficient.

The conference began with an introductory speech by Ms. Yoko Kitazawa, one of the founders of the PARC (Pacific Asia Resource Centre), admitting the seldom use of the term "solidarity economy" in Asia, explaining its historical development in Europe and mentioning RIPESS and AI-

During the international session speakers from RIPESS shared their vision of the importance of SSE in different key issues: social inclusion (Vincent Dagenais - Québec, Canada), territorial anchorage (Martine Theveniaut - France and Mr. Yvon Poirier – Canada) and common goods, climate

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Asian Forum for Solidarity Economy will be held in 2011 in Malaysia. Asia has more than 50% of the planet's population; this is even of more strategic importance.

Minutes compiled from

Miguel Yasuyuki Hirota (Japan) and Yvon Poirier (Canada) notes.

## US Social Forum



The next US Social Forum will be held in **Detroit - 22 - 26 June 2010.**

You can find more information on the website <http://www.ussf2010.org/> The solidarity economy network is involved in the workshop on "building economic alternatives".

RIPESS contact: Emily Kawano  
[emilykawano@gmail.com](mailto:emilykawano@gmail.com)

### Call for contributions

**Solecopedia, the shared international encyclopaedia for a social and solidarity economy**

We are contacting you because you are committed actor in the efforts undertaken to support a responsible, social and solidarity economy and in the hope that you will contribute to the launch of this innovative and exciting initiative that is based on an open and collective intelligence!

It has been designed in order to jointly develop a tool to enable us to improve our mutual understanding of the work carried out by many people in this area.

During this period of multiple global crises, there is no doubt that the social and solidarity economy is part of the response and the improvement of our joint knowledge and know-how is an important means to help us to communicate. It is with this aim in mind that we have created this new site.

[www.soleclopedia.org](http://www.soleclopedia.org)

The Soleclopedia facilitation team

# Participation in the ILO conference on the social economy "Africa's response to the world crisis"

**Held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 19 to 21 October 2009**

At this conference a range of topics were addressed during sessions led by speakers from Africa and the rest of the world. The discussions covered issues such as the definition of the Social Economy, the typology and the characteristics of the actors, various experiences that have been successfully promoted in different sectors by a variety of public and private actors and the new developments within the cooperative movement and social enterprises.

During the session on the Contours of the social economy in Africa, the participants were informed about the way in which RIPESS has developed over the course of the years, the dynamics of the SSE in Africa and the experiences accumulated in this area. These explanations, which were given both in the plenary and workshop sessions, served to raise the interest of the participants from Africa on the one hand and, on the other, to emphasise the added value that RIPESS-Africa is able to contribute to the ILO agenda in Africa.

However, the most important aspect of this conference was that it provided the African participants with detailed information about the current situation (development of the RIPESS, existence of an African vision of the SSE, existing networks, emerging initiatives...) and future perspectives. They were also given the opportunity to sign up to the network possibilities that exist within RIPESS and this led to the establishment

of a list of 73 people from almost all of the African countries.

The representatives from the networks in Morocco (REMESS), Guinea (REGESS), Senegal (GSESS) and, of course, from Mali (RENAPESS) began to draw up a road map that will lead to the creation of an African network. An African meeting is due to take place in Morocco in June 2010.

Furthermore, Nancy Neamtan from the Chantier de L'ES in Quebec presented the Quebec experience and all of the added value that had been accumulated within the network.

A consensus of opinion was reached around the promotion of the SSE as a response to the crisis in Africa. However, there is a need to develop a multi-actor partnership in order to make this viable. It is the task of the African networks, which have now been granted recognition in terms of their mission, to organise themselves so that they are able to play their role and take their place in the efforts required to implement the action plan.

The national networks have already begun to hold exchanges on the road map in the lead-up to the African meeting in June 2010, including the next steps to be taken as part of this new work plan.

**Madani KOUMARE** - Président du RENAPESS Mali  
Coadministrateur au RIPESS pour l'Afrique

## The 1<sup>st</sup> Solidarity Economy Social Forum and the 1<sup>st</sup> World Solidarity Economy Market

are due to begin in Santa Maria – RS, from 22 to 24 January 2010 and will continue in the Metropolitan Region of Porto Alegre with the activities of the Social Forum 10 Years in Porto Alegre and neighbouring cities, from 25 to 29 January 2010.

The methodologies will be the same as those used at the WSF and will be participative, interactive and self-managed, with a view to the construction of "ANOTHER POSSIBLE WORLD" through "ANOTHER ECONOMY THAT ALREADY EXISTS." The aim of this mobilisation is to give greater visibility to the developments that have taken place within the solidarity economy over the course of the 10 years of the WSF.



A workshop will be held on 23 January at the initiative of the Brazilian Forum for the Solidarity Economy, on the subject of international solidarity integration.

Information and registration:

E-mail:  
[ecosol@fsmecosol.org.br](mailto:ecosol@fsmecosol.org.br)

Website:  
[www.fsmecosol.org.br](http://www.fsmecosol.org.br)

## RIPESS Europe

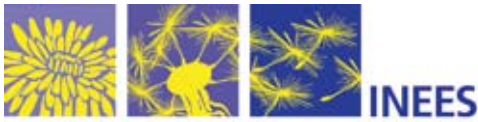
Over the course of the 18 months that preceded the 4th International Forum on Globalising Solidarity, which was held in April 2009 in Schifflange, Luxembourg, the European networks invested a lot of time and effort in collectively establishing links with the networks from the other continents. Encouraged and strengthened by this experience, the challenge for them today is to extend this dynamic process in order to move towards the construction of a RIPESS network for Europe.

At the most recent meeting of the European Steering Committee, we decided to concentrate our means and resources upon two main objectives:

- To increase our visibility and to focus our efforts on communication regarding our specific experiences of the social and solidarity economy;
- To work towards the structuring of the network, by extending it (notably towards the East and the North of Europe) and by promoting the creation of national and/or regional platforms. Our aim is to be able to hold a founding congress in 2011, with a preparatory meeting to be attended by delegates from the various networks at the end of 2010.

The next meeting of the European Steering Committee will be held in Paris on 23 March 2010 and the day before this meeting the "Communication" Committee will meet to take stock of the progress made to date by the various mapping projects and to discuss the creation of a website for the network.

Contact: Eric Lavilluniere – [lavilluniere@inees.org](mailto:lavilluniere@inees.org)  
Or Christine Gent - [ext.affairs@wfto.com](mailto:ext.affairs@wfto.com)



## Youth for a sustainable future

In line with global principles of sustainable development and environmental consciousness 18 young people from 4 different countries gathered in Luxembourg this autumn to learn more about social solidarity based economy (SSE) and raise awareness among locals.

Global environmental issues are challenges that affect our everyday life both on global and local levels. Environmental protection and sustainable development are deep-seated values of the European Union as well.

In March 2000, the European Council in Lisbon set out a ten-year strategy to make the EU the world's most dynamic and competitive economy while it was also a commitment about economic, social and environmental renewal in the Community. The following year, the Council adopted the EU Sustainable Development Strategy, which provides a long-term vision that involves combining a dynamic economy with social cohesion and high environmental standards.

On the global stage, ratified in Kyoto by 175 countries (with the notable exception of the United States), the first international treaty to fight against climate change came into force in 2005. It provides lower quantities of greenhouse gases emitted by industrialized countries of at least 5.2% by 2012 compared to 1990 levels. The Kyoto treaty expires at the end of 2012.

In December 2009, Denmark hosted the international summit on UN climate. The results were disappointing but we can underline that during the event a particular emphasis was put on the contributions of the new generations: more than a thousand of them analysed events using a particularly innovative online approach. The Global Youth Panel was a team of more than 1,000 young people from 140 countries (between 15 to 25 year olds) who are using a much-hyped communication tool Wave to virtually collaborate on a climate change debate in the spirit of: "Future is up to You(th)".

### Project "Future is up to You(th)" – Wiltz (Luxembourg) - 29th September to 5th October 2009

In the follow up of the workshops "Youth and Social Solidarity Economy (SSE)" and "SSE and Environment" held during the IVth International Forum "Globalisation of Solidarity" (April 2009 in Luxembourg), INEES organised this project with 18 young participants coming from France, Hungary, Turkey and Luxembourg. After several years of formal education regarding environmental issues they wished to try another way to discuss, to share thought with other young people and to experience different cultural attitudes to sustainability. The project was supported by the Service National de la Jeunesse (SNJ) in the framework of the Youth in Action Programme of the DG Culture and Education of the European Commission.

This action of the Programme offers a stimulating way for youth to become involved in debating and promoting active citizenship and democracy. The aim of Youth Exchanges is to get groups of young people from different countries together so they can explore their social and cultural differences and similarities. Youth Exchanges are targeted at young people between the age of 13 and 25. They receive the unique opportunity to experience significant mutual learning situations and to strengthen their feeling of being Europeans through discovering a theme that is relevant to their daily experiences but also has a clear European dimension. By participating in a youth exchange, young people go through a non-formal learning experience, which is recognised through a specific certificate called Youthpass.

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc78\\_fr.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc78_fr.htm)

The main objective of the project was to develop solutions and strategies to address environmental challenges in order to empower the participants to take action in the future and last but not least to provide them with an introduction to the concept of Social Solidarity-base Economy and to show them examples of SSE initiatives in Luxembourg. From the outset, the project was designed to incorporate the local community of Wiltz as much as possible. By the occasion of different activities youngsters were making interviews with local inhabitants or were trying to raise local awareness towards the themes of the exchange. Several SSE initiatives were introduced to the young participants, and they had the possibility to have a first-hand experience by visiting SSE practical examples and activities. They made different ludic activities and closed the youth exchange by an exhibition of artworks.

The organisations involved are already looking at potential opportunities for another youth project: YINISSIATE - Youth Network-ing In Social Solidarity Innovative And Territorial Economy. The project "YINISSIATE" is a feasibility visit where the 11 partners from different European programme countries (Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Portugal, Romania, Turkey) will discuss about the possibilities of setting up a common youth network in the field of SSE (social solidarity based economy) and also to consider other opportunities for future cooperations in the Youth in Action Programme.