

# PARTNERSHIPS FOR DECENT WORK



International  
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Organization

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# Newsletter

## South-South Exchanges on Social and Solidarity Economy

*“Productive, profitable and sustainable enterprises, together with a strong social economy and a viable public sector, are critical to sustainable economic development and employment opportunities”.*

– ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008)

Two major events in Agadir and Geneva reaffirm the effectiveness of South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) to develop new networks and partnerships in support of the Social and Solidarity Economy. The convergence between the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) as a thematic area and SSTC as a cooperation modality is a strategic opportunity for the ILO. The Organization has developed expertise on social and solidarity economy enterprises and organizations (SSEOs). It is also strongly committed to SSTC.

### 2013 Academy on Social and Solidarity Economy: An opportunity to enhance youth employment

The social and solidarity economy (SSE) is a reality in many people's lives. It promotes values and principles that focus on people's needs and on their communities. The concept of social economy-like SSTC cuts across all four dimensions of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda. In this regard, the third session of the ILO Academy on Social and Solidarity Economy held in Agadir, Morocco, 8–12 April 2013, brought out the complementarity between SSTC and SSE.

The **ILO Social and Solidarity Economy Academy (SSE Academy)** is an inter-regional training event bringing together more than 100 practitioners and policy-makers from around the world, to share their experiences and meet leading SSE specialists.

The Academy helps participants better understand areas in which the SSE can be applied and implemented successfully (e.g. job creation, social protection, social dialogue and green jobs). They also learn about social and solidarity experiences, strategies and tools from around the world, with a particular emphasis on South-South exchanges.

The two previous sessions of the Academy were organized by the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO) in Turin (Italy) in 2010 and in Montreal (Canada) in 2011.

The 2013 Academy focused on youth and job creation for young people. It was coordinated under the leadership of Mr Roberto Di Meglio. The ILO Partnerships and Field Support Department has granted eight scholarships to participants from the Global South.



South-South fellows at the 2013 Edition

The experts who received an ILO South-South fellowship demonstrated the links between the social and solidarity economy and South-South cooperation. Building on ILO expertise and experience, key messages were delivered by Ms Anita Amorim (ILO) and Mr Youssef Solaimani, co-facilitators of the session focusing on South-South Cooperation:

- South-South partnerships between social economy stakeholders are inclusive. They involve a multi-stakeholder approach central to the mainstreaming of the Decent Work Agenda.
- South-South and triangular arrangements can reinforce the impact of social economy in national contexts. They can sustain wider regional and inter-regional networks and platforms for knowledge and experience-sharing. In 2008 COOP Africa, the Cooperative Facility for Africa, sponsored a high-level visit for Tanzanian cooperative officials from the Government to Ethiopia to learn from the experience of its autonomous Federal Cooperative Agency. The ILO Regional Office for Africa supported this visit. This was consistent with the [Plan of Action for the Promotion of the Social Economy Enterprises and Organizations in Africa](#) adopted in Johannesburg (October 2009).
- Existing SSE networks between countries from the South are inspiring initiatives. For instance, the Espacio MERCOSUR Solidario serves as a knowledge-sharing platform for organizations of the Southern Cone working on the promotion and development of the SSE and fair trade.

Following the Academy, scholarship beneficiaries have created a knowledge sharing platform on SSE called the “Collective Brain”.

### Key Resources

#### SSTC and the ILO

South-South and Triangular Cooperation: The Way Forward  
South-South Cooperation and the ILO:  
Mainstreaming the Decent Work Agenda through the dissemination of good practices

#### Social and Solidarity Economy Academy

Academy Gateway  
Collective Brain (useful resources and knowledge sharing platform)

#### UNRISD Conference

Potential and Limits to the Social and Solidarity Economy  
Annual Review Meeting ILO-Brazil

## UN Research Institute on Social Development (UNRISD) – ILO Conference on Social and Solidarity Economy promotes participation by researchers from the Global South (Geneva, 6-8 May 2013)

The UNRISD-ILO conference is another milestone towards linking South-South cooperation and the social economy in the field of decent work, based on the principle of solidarity and incorporating economic, social, and environmental concerns into the international development agenda.

The Conference will contribute to the production and exchange of knowledge. This helps develop international policies and raise the visibility within the UN system of a broad range of topics related to Social and Solidarity Economy. Highlights will include fair trade networks, alternative finance and complementary currency systems, cooperatives, participation of women, informal workers, the link between SSE and social protection, as well as the recent trends in and implications of SSE.

As financial markets are accelerating and consumption is growing, the potential of South-South exchange in the social and solidarity economy is significant. Building partnerships between social economy stakeholders in the South, as well as North-South partnerships, is also essential. It necessarily involves a multi-stakeholder approach that is central to the mainstreaming of the Decent Work Agenda (DWA).

In this regard, South-South and Triangular Cooperation has been recognized at the UN level as a powerful mechanism for knowledge exchange which has as a main purpose the achievement of national goal, with special emphasis on the internationally agreed development goals.

Opening remarks will be given by Mr Paul Singer, Secretary for Social and Solidarity Economy of Brazil, Ms Sarah Cook, UNRISD Director, and Mr Guy Ryder, ILO Director-General.

The latter is one of the founding fathers of the notion of Social and Solidarity Economy. For him, the search for social justice is a common denominator between South-South Cooperation and Social and Solidarity Economy.

Some of the most remarkable examples of cooperatives and social and solidarity economy are coming from the South. Mr. Jürgen Schwettmann, Director of the Partnerships and Field Support Department, will chair a session on “SSE, Public Policy and Law”.

Supporting cooperatives and social economy contributes to reducing poverty, promoting the Decent Work Agenda, ensuring job creation, while enhancing horizontal exchanges between countries of the South

During the conference participants will explore the impact of the SSE on food security, rural development, gender equality and decent work; other dimensions such as the role of governments, civil society and the private sector will also be addressed. They will meet on 6-8 May at ILO headquarters in Geneva, under the auspices of the UNRISD, the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS) and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

The conference will bring together scholars and practitioners from different countries and academic institutions who are experts in the field of SSE. The Partnerships and Field Support Department of the ILO covered the costs of 13 participants through a South-South fellowship. This grant was made possible thanks to funds of the South-South and Triangular Cooperation Unit.

### South-South Cooperation and the ILO: Mainstreaming the Decent Work Agenda through the dissemination of good practices

The Good Practices Guide on South-South and Triangular Cooperation is part of the ILO's commitment to the promotion of South-South and triangular cooperation, and is targeted at governments, workers, employers, and civil society to help them learn from initiatives based on southern solutions that have proven effective in promoting decent work. SSTC provides an important mechanism to leverage resources and expertise – in particular by facilitating the transfer of knowledge and experience of the world of work in the Global South. It is necessary to systematize the collection and dissemination of such projects. Knowledge sharing is central to South-South and triangular cooperation, and greater visibility needs to be given to scalable and replicable initiatives through a good practices guide accessible on the web.

Available at [http://www.ilo.org/pardev/partnerships-and-relations/south-south/WCMS\\_211770/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/pardev/partnerships-and-relations/south-south/WCMS_211770/lang--en/index.htm)

## 9<sup>th</sup> European Regional Meeting (ERM), Oslo, Norway, 8-11 April 2013

Governments, workers' and employers' representatives from 51 European and Central Asian ILO member States met in Oslo to discuss concrete solutions to the employment crisis with a particular emphasis on youth. Following the ILO Director-General report on *Jobs, Growth and Social Justice*, the 9<sup>th</sup> ERM provided a platform to help countries affected by the crisis to overcome its negative economic, social and political consequences and restore trust. Recalling the 2009 Global Jobs Pact, representatives have adopted the *Oslo Declaration* that calls upon the ILO to assist its European and Central Asian members to design sound and equitable reform policies. The Declaration lists 10 policy expectations to address social and economic crises. It also requires the ILO to provide an exceptional response to the job crisis and enhance its abilities to take action. This position is consistent with the current ILO reform process. During the ERM, the Government of Norway announced the intention to double its voluntary contribution to the ILO for 2013. A new agreement, signed in Oslo by the Norwegian Minister for International Development, Mr Heikki Eidsvoll Holmås, and the Director-General of the ILO, Mr Guy Ryder, will provide additional funding of US\$ 8.7 million in support of the Regular Budget Supplementary Account, as well as ILO's work on social dialogue, labour administration and gender equality.

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