

Theme 2: SSE initiatives in the territories - Summary of phase 1 of the web forum to prepare for the RIPESS meeting in Manila

Introduction: the first phase has finished

This phase centred on the organisation of ties of solidarity at the grassroots level and local pacts as applied to two questions: how do producers and ethical consumers link up? How do (ethical) production and solidarity-based/social finance link up? It also asked how progress can be made on the local, national and international levels.

Results: 23 contributions in total:

5 contributions in 3 languages

13 contributions in French only

5 contributions in French and English

5 contributions in English only

You can continue to share your experiences and analyses on these questions throughout the forum. It would be very useful if the panel of contributions included input in Spanish and English.

Phase 2 will run until 24 August, focusing on changing the scale of solutions

This phase applies to question 3: how is an alternative market for SSE products and services being organised on the ground? It also asked how progress can be made on the local, national and international levels.

This question and phase are key to the process of “building the solidarity economy as an alternative development model”, the theme of the 5th Manila meeting.

Making social and economic justice an everyday reality remains a priority, an on-going task, a question of the survival of projects and organizations.

“But the ability to understand the implications of interdependence has become a global concern. It is probably the key factor in whether the human race as a whole survives or not next century.” (ASSEFA).

What point have we reached in changing the scale of solutions? What lessons can be learned from the building cycles that are already underway with the aim of producing cooperative actions and institutional rules and mechanisms that are effective and equitable and can be adapted to multiple levels?

How to progress further and remove the obstacles to widespread application of available solutions?

It is important to remember that the forum’s purpose is to pave the way to formalizing proposals on the potential of the territorial approach, which will then be given concrete form in a 4-year programme based on cooperative actions between ourselves.

The organisation team is in place in Europe and North America. We would

like to **call on RIPESS organizations from other continents** to join us and **on everyone to give the forum a broader and more interactive scope.**

Organisation team, 16 August 2013

Yvon Poirier, Martine Theveniaut, Daniel Tygel, Françoise Wautiez

All the contributions can be found on the RIPESS international website

<http://www.ripest.org/forums/topic/theme-2-fr/>

<http://www.ripest.org/forums/topic/theme-2/?lang=en>

<http://www.ripest.org/forums/topic/tema-2/?lang=es>

A summary description of contributions is available (in French only)

http://www.pactes-locaux.org/bdf/docs/etape_n_1_contributions_anglais.pdf

A. Learning stories: an overview of forum contributions

Question 1: linking (ethical) producers and (ethical) consumers

- 23/06 Community-supported farming: a global practice - *Judith Hitchman, URGENCI*
- 27/07. Agence BEST, Graefewirtschaft, a social and multi-cultural company in the Kreuzberg district of Berlin - *Heike Birhkoelzer, directrice*
- 28/07 Cloughjordan ecovillage for building a sustainable community, Ireland: *Oliver Moore, Newsletter Voyage Apprenant P'actes Européens, janvier 2013*
- 31/07 Wulkow ecovillage: economic self-help in a serious crisis situation, Germany: an approach - *Technologie-Netzwerk Berlin*
- 01/08 The AltraEconomia (alternative economy) project and solidarity purchasing groups (GAS in Italian) in Venice: *Jackie Scutt, Rapport du Voyage Apprenant des P'actes Européens, avril 2013*
- 02/08. NEKASAREA: a network of producers and consumers in Biscay that creates short food chains: *Jocelyn Parot, URGENCI, in Bulletin International de développement local durable (BIDLD)*
- 09/08. Seikatsu Club Consumers' Co-Operative Union, Japan - *Yvon Poirier, BIDLD*

Question 2: linking (ethical) production and solidarity/social finance

- 25/07: concerted planning and local economic development, Kayès region (Mali) - *Idrissa Sanogo, GRDR-Kayès Atelier 3, 2^{ème} Congrès du RIPESS Europe, Lille, juillet 2013*

- 29/07: the *Fabrique Citoyenne* project, part of a cooperative framework (on the edge of the Aude and Ariège departments) - *Peter Wollny Atelier 3 au 2^{ème} Congrès du RIPESS Europe, Lille, juillet 2013*
- 02/08. Social and complementary currencies: an effective tool for linking producers and (ethical) consumers - *Miguel Yasuyuki Hirota*
- 04/08. Creating activities: the *Pôle d'économie solidaire* in the Dijon greater urban area (Burgundy) rebuilds local economic circuits *in Faire P'acte: Cahier de propositions des P'actes Européens, 2011*
- 04/08. Building cooperative actions between different scales, a movement driven by elected representatives (Brittany). *Alain Yvergniaux ; in Faire P'acte: 2011*
- 04/08. Territories that invent their currency: *Gazette des Communes, in socioeco.org*
- 08/08. Cooperatives and Inuit Communities in Canada: *Yvon Poirier, BIDLD*
- 08/08. ASSEFA: 40 years of local holistic development organised by and for villagers in different regions of India - *Yvon Poirier, BIDLD*

B. How can we make further advances? Pooling lessons

a. Local pacts: a diversity of forms and shared characteristics

- **A bottom-up view: spaces for organisation where actual individuals can rebuild themselves with other people** - *in: « Faire Pacte », 2011*
- **The essential importance of spaces that are open** for the purposes of creating collective actions, mutual help, bold thinking and being firmly in a position to make dramatic change. *Atelier 3 Congrès du RIPESS Europe, Lille juillet 2013*
- **New alliances between communities, solidarity economy networks and local authorities.** Participation in the creation of the common good goes beyond the abstract notion of democracy. In territories, it takes the form of concrete actions that involve all stakeholders equally in a cooperative process. *Atelier au Forum Social Européen de Florence (novembre 2012)*
- **An innovative way of creating jobs and promoting the social and solidarity economy** in Germany *Technologie-Netzwerk Berlin*
- **A tool for territorial development:** Local Development Centres in Quebec have been in place for 15 years - *Yvon Poirier, in ouvrage LDNET sur le développement local, et témoignage de Jacques Fiset, directeur d'un CLD*

b. A bottom-up view: three relevant spaces for interaction

- **A local level for improvements** provided by stakeholders that organise solutions generated by close collaboration.
- **An embedded level that favours the territoriality of social life** in spaces for consultation that are big enough to act as cohesive spaces for public services and economic development based on endogenous resources, something the very small level does not allow.
- **An all-encompassing territorial level that maintains a relationship with the outside world** via interrelations that can take different forms: multi-level networks addressing similar problems; convergence on outcome targets committed to by contracting parties in a same region; partnerships between administrations, authorities and not-for-profit organisations for inter-cultural or inter-tactical action outcomes; the local application of European programmes or general measures, etc.

c. Territories and Solidarity

- **The holistic approach to the challenge of understanding global interdependencies: opening up prospects for 2050** (ASSEFA)
- **The learning process concerning territories' social responsibility: a European challenge** - *CIDES, centre de ressources et d'action de la mutuelle CHORUM et Think Thank Pour la Solidarité* (sur *Socioeco.org*)
- **Governance of common goods:** a new look at the conditional commitments in uncertain and complex environments to improve collective action *Elinor Ostrom*

d. Conditions for a local economic development rooted in solidarity

- **Redefining activities in territories outside the obligatory reference to a commercial exchange**
 - An activity is based on mobilising personal and professional values.
 - Rooting in a place as a component in a choice of lifestyle within a pre-existing social background.
 - The activities created imprint the effects of new social demands, defining profiles of activities in specific spaces capable of hosting them.
 - They express the values intrinsic to endogenous development (food, meeting essential needs) and external attributive values (leisure, environmental value, tourism) within various human-oriented systems.
- **In order to build the new glocal public sphere, the time has come for cooperatives to play an important role** in their own communities and as the most important not-for-profit organisation in the world (*Seikatsu Club*).

- **Once the social economy sector is a participant in developing strategies** with the entire range of stakeholders in a community, municipality, town or district of a city, it is guaranteed to serve all members of community.

C. How can we make further advances? Proposals

a. Giving the territorial pact a more widespread basis is about learning to cooperate.

For the exercise of real local democracy

- **The terms of democratic debate** need to be reconstructed to succeed in building far more cooperative partnerships that take into account all parties' territorial and social commitments.
- **Cooperation is the expression of shared responsibility:** it works to ensure that a diverse range of stakeholders, public and private, individuals and organisations, act within an overall and coherent process with the aim of achieving a shared goal in the interest of the greatest number.
- **Democratic participation for inhabitants-citizens is based on acting together and/or independently:** by contributing to public action initiated by other people, by taking the initiative to launch actions that help to achieve these shared goals; at times, by resisting when sites are chosen for economic reasons and those choices are imposed, with the backing of the authorities, even though they go against local residents' right to lead a healthy, safe and peaceful life, or when they destroy common goods. Because this is about protecting fundamental rights: a question that is part of the overall democratic debate on the global society approach.
- **There is an urgent need to unite the forces of society within our communities and between our communities to create the critical mass needed** to build an alternative model rooted in the real economy.

b. Learning the lessons of citizen action in the life of territorial society is essential

- **The local pacts approach is rooted in daily realities, but this type of local approach is not only geographic. It is interlinked and systemic.** It leads to the management of antagonistic practices, within and without institutions: the global with the local, the long term with the short term, collective interests with individual interests, the single-purpose approach (sector-based, cultural) with the multi-purpose and cross-cutting approach, the simplicity of actions with the complexity of situations.

- **The search for a better understanding and definition of local economic solidarity ties is an educational strategy** aimed at obtaining political recognition of the SSE as an economic sector in its own right. These approaches provide the foundation for all levels of a complex democracy: the management of everyday problems as well as the conditions for finding a dynamic and differentiated way to link to the globalised economy.