

RIPESS' work and resilience of local Social Solidarity Economy initiatives in the context of Covid-19



ripess

Intercontinental network for the
promotion of social solidarity economy
Réseau intercontinental de promotion
de l'économie sociale solidaire
Red intercontinental de promoción
de la economía social solidaria

Introduction

RIPESS wants to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals with all its members and in confluence with the institutions of the United Nations and other global networks and organisations through Social Solidarity Economy.

To this end, RIPESS Intercontinental has received, for the first time since its foundation 25 years ago, funding for a structured advocacy project from the Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation.

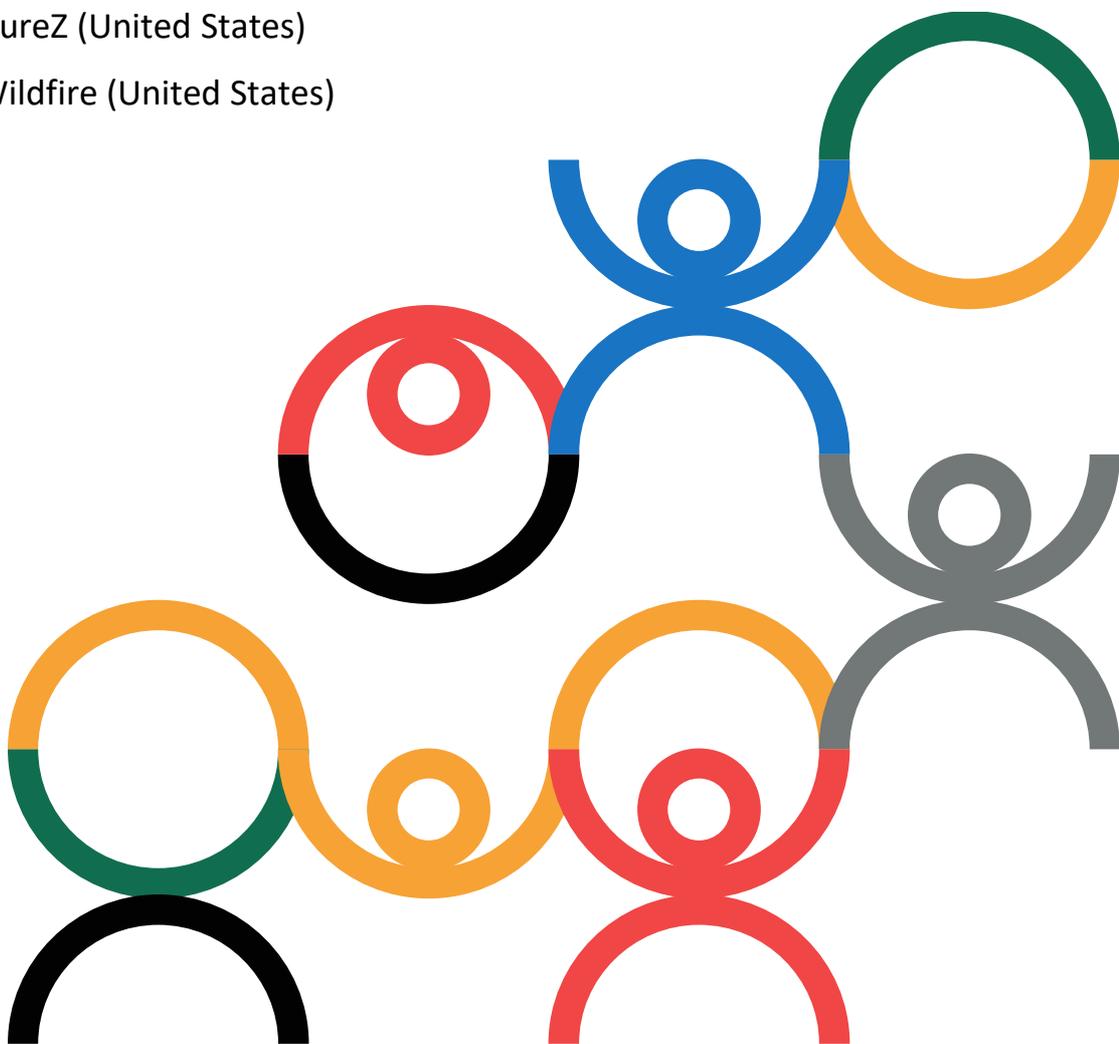
The project "**Advocacy for the promotion of Social Solidarity Economy as a strategy to achieve sustainable development (SDGs) in a post-Covid-19 context**" reinforces RIPESS' actions in promoting the Social Solidarity Economy, fostering cooperation between continents, and influencing public policies from local to global, especially women's and minorities' associations.

This guide shows a selection of regional and local actions implemented in the continents that have participated in the project, such as the systematisation of local experiences, mapping, training courses, etc.



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RIPES network & their responses to Covid 19



See Socioeco's ESS mapping: http://www.socioeco.org/cartos_en.html

Initiative

ElHambreTienePrisa

Brazil



Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) entity description:

ElHambreTienePrisa (Movimento #AFomeTemPressa) is a social movement, although it is not a formal legal entity. It is structured as a dynamic of voluntary work, people and member organizations aimed at meeting the needs of people suffering from food insecurity, both in a situation of life on the streets and in the poorest communities on the outskirts of the city of Porto Alegre, capital of the province of Rio Grande do Sul, in the extreme south of Brazil.

In addition to the more than a thousand people who benefit weekly from food, the initiative provides collective actions in support of community structures that generate work and income through recycling, distribution of clothes, distribution of basic food baskets, collective work offices to solve community problems, etc.

ElHambreTienePrisa is a member of RIPESS LAC; the Latin American Confederation of Workers' Cooperatives and Mutuels (COLACOT) and the network of food producers' initiatives that produce food for the poorest populations in Porto Alegre which includes more than 15 movements and organisations.



Covid-19 Context:

- The issue of hunger and exclusion predates the pandemic but has become much more acute since the coup that interrupted the experience of popular government (Lula and Dilma) in 2016.
- The coup, in addition to the handing over of the country's strategic capital to transnational corporations, interrupted a wide range of social inclusion programmes, income distribution, correction of historical social asymmetries. This generated the return of hunger, extreme poverty, homelessness, etc.

Description of the SSE initiative:

The methodological proposal is based on 3 basic strategies:

1. Develop a concrete, regular action that benefits people and communities in situations of food and nutrition insecurity.
2. Link work teams with specific responsibilities for each organised group.
3. Promote the debate on the structural and circumstantial factors that lead parts of the population to live in a situation of food and nutrition insecurity, poverty, and social exclusion.

Key actions/activities:

The Movement currently has a central unit and 8 community kitchens that carry out weekly activities involving more than a thousand meals a week.

Key partners:

- A group of more than 60 volunteers who contribute according to their availability, either financially or by dedicating part of their time to the activities of making and distributing food, or by collaborating with their skills.
- The Solidarity Production Chain of Native Fruits, a network of more than 60 organisations and enterprises of social and solidarity economy and agroecology.
- The Latin American Confederation of Workers' Cooperatives and Mutuals - COLACOT.
- Some cooperatives and organisations that support with regular and/or occasional contributions of agricultural products.
- Central Workers' Union CUT.
- The Landless People's Movement – MST.



Main results and impact:

- From the movement's perspective there is clear awareness that the actions aim to fight the consequences of the current situation rather than solving the problem and the causes. This clearly points to the precarious nature of the actions. However, it is abundantly clear that what can be done is very significant for the beneficiaries and for the work teams, both in their pragmatic aspects and in methodological learning.
- There is still much to be done in terms of political debate, outreach, awareness raising and reflection on the issue.

Initiative

Latin American Savings and Loan Cooperative Ultrahuilca

Colombia



Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) entity description:

The Cooperative Ultrahuilca is a non-profit associative structure specialized in savings and credit, framed by the philosophy and doctrine of solidarity economy. It contributes to the sustainable human, social and economic development of its members and communities through cooperative education, business training and the generation of productive projects leveraged through savings and credit products. It is based in southern Colombia, specifically in the departments of Huila, Caquetá, Putumayo and Tolima.

The beneficiaries of this initiative are 61,986 members and the inhabitants of the departments of Huila, Caquetá, Putumayo and Huila.

The Cooperative Ultrahuilca is associated with the cooperative integration and training center CINCO, that is part of the National Bureau of Solidarity Economy of Colombia, partner organisation of RIPESS LAC.

Covid-19 context:

Utrahuilca has created the Utrahuilca Social Foundation - Fundautrahuilca to support the communities and territories where the widely accepted Utrahuilcan Farmers' Markets programme is implemented.

It has now been extended to various municipalities in Huila, such as Pitalito, San Agustín, Tesalia and even to departments such as Caquetá, where it is prospering and advancing with very successful results.

The farming families participating in this process have been trained through another of the organization's flagship projects: the diploma courses in Productive Gardens and courses in cooperativism. Their implementation has finally led them to become part of the large network of farmers' markets. This market allows them to sell their products to consumers without intermediaries, so the best products of the Colombian country can reach their tables.

This initiative has been maintained by generating a virtual logistics platform and strict biosecurity protocols during the pandemic, guaranteeing the continuity of sales and income for farming families affected by the closures and the compulsory isolation decreed by the State during the health emergency caused by Covid 19, as well as contributing to the processes of food sovereignty in the departments where it is present during the lockdown.

Likewise, the concern for the welfare of its members and the community in general has led FUNDAUTRAHUILCA to move into the health sector, which is why REDSORSA has begun operations. REDSORSA has been underway since last year and it gained momentum this year. The main objective is to provide quality services and access to health care throughout the region where the Latin American Savings and Loan Cooperative UTRAHUILCA is present, guaranteeing its members access and availability of services at affordable prices in terms of laboratories, diagnostic tests, pharmacy, consultations, and treatment by medical specialists.

Description of the SSE initiative:

- Utrahuilcan Farmers' Markets: Creation of a virtual and logistical platform so that farmers in the region can sell their products without intermediaries, guaranteeing income to farming families that allows them a quality of life, while contributing to the food sovereignty of the participating departments. Flexible credit lines were also generated so that farmers could continue their production.
- REDSORSA: Creation of a specialized health center to provide quality health care to members and their families, as well as to the community in the departments where it is present.

Key actions/activities:

- Implementation of Farmers' Markets.
- Health care.
- Development of solidarity financial products.

Key partners:

Utrahuilca's partners are mainly farmers, small producers and traders living in the departments of Huila, Caquetá, Putumayo and Tolima.

Main results and impact:

- Contribution to food sovereignty.
- Income security for farming families.
- Healthcare.



Initiative

ORFED Association

Mali



Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) entity description:

The ORFED association works essentially on training and capacity building for women and girls in vulnerable situations in working-class urban/peri-urban and rural areas.

To accompany these women's groups, intervention logics based on SSE principles with an intersectional gender perspective have been put in place.

The organisation is based in the DIALAKORODJI / Commune I area of the Bamako district.

The ORFED Association is a member of RAESS.



Covid-19 context:

The COVID-19 pandemic has considerably affected the activities of the women's associations, as the various meetings within the association have been suspended to comply with the measures taken by the authorities. These associations therefore suffer from a lack of communication, which makes their work more difficult.

Description of the SSE initiative:

ORFED is mainly active in three areas:

1. The first axis is the establishment of an economic and social activity to promote the empowerment of these women. ORFED works in the processing of seasonal products and vegetables. Today, the two women's associations in Dialakorodji have been initiated into the processing of products such as tomatoes into sauces that can be packaged for a year.
2. The second axis is the management of a credit fund. To help the participants in the programme to sustain their economic activity, ORFED introduced them to credit management by a facilitator in the national language.
3. The third axis is literacy with a gender perspective. At this level, ORFED has undertaken the process of raising awareness of SSE with an intersectional gender perspective by focusing initially on literacy with a gender perspective, insofar as approximately 75% of women in these localities are illiterate. The training modules used are national language approaches to enable them to better master tools such as cash flow, association management, etc.

Key actions/activities:

The training of the Sutura and Kotogontola Associations in income-generating activities (IGA) and the social and solidarity economy. This technical training is complemented (thanks to the participation of the associations in the FDM network) by the integration of the gender perspective into the SSE tools so that the initiatives of the collectives' women can really be vectors of transformation for the improvement of their quality of life.

A group of 15 young men is also undergoing a series of training sessions on masculinities and women's empowerment.

Key partners:

The Association Quartiers du Monde (#QDM) through the women's network called "Femmes du Monde" and funding from the Luxembourg embassy to support women's empowerment.

Main results and impact:

The economic situation of the women has improved, as the income from tomatoes has allowed them to diversify their activities.

The women have also been taught how to process peanut paste and make liquid soap.

It is planned to train women in market gardening, focusing on tomato planting, harvesting and processing into finished products.



Initiative

Women's Social Solidarity Economy Action Circle

Mali



Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) entity description:

The Women's Social Solidarity Economy Action Circle (CAFESS) was created in 2013 within RENAPESS. It is a tool for women's economic empowerment and women's rights advocacy through gender equality instruments in the ECOWAS space in general, and in Mali in particular.

The women are supported in the practice of nine categories of activities which are: handicrafts, market gardening, food processing, catering, the manufacture of detergents and cosmetics, cattle fattening, poultry farming and pre-school education.

The organization is based in Commune V of the district of Bamako, Mali.

CAFESS is a member of RENAPESS and RAESS.

Covid-19 context:

Mali recorded the first two cases of Covid-19 on 25 March 2020.

Immediately, the Government of Mali undertook a series of measures from mid-March 2020. Although these measures are necessary to save lives, they have had and continue to have multiple negative effects on the functioning of social solidarity economy enterprises, on employment and on household livelihoods.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, food prices (corn, millet, rice, groundnuts, beans, sesame, oil, sugar, etc.) have soared.



Description of the SSE:

CAFESS groups have highlighted the activities of their agri-food processing and craft manufacturing companies of equipment and products for protection against Covid-19 contamination. The aim is to develop local responses that are easily accessible, in terms of availability, for both SSE actors and households whose mobility and activities have been strongly impacted by the pandemic.

Key actions/activities:

CAFESS includes 9 different revenue streams for women. Each provides employment for around 128 women. These employees are women who process cereals, groundnut and local agricultural products into produce that can be consumed by households.

This initiative really took shape following five training sessions, information and awareness-raising workshops for 650 women engaged with RENAPESS to address the impacts of Covid-19. At the same time, the initiative contributes to local development, covering the basic needs of citizens through access to basic social facilities and services, and advocating for more equitable economic relations.



Key partners:

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs
 Mali Chamber of Trade
 Solidarity finance cooperative DANISANDJI
 Commune V Municipality

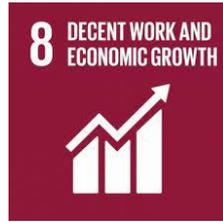
Main results and impact:

- SSE actors had access to raw materials, small-scale food production equipment and hand-made Covid-19 protection equipment.
- Actors stored, marketed and distributed their production throughout the country to low-income populations, especially in the most affected areas.
- Establishment of accompanying measures such as free food for low-income families, creation of funding lines for businesses, assessment of food needs and stocks, free water distribution and electricity subsidies for low-income families.

Initiative

HomeNet Thailand Brand

Thailand



Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) entity description:

HomeNet Thailand Brand strengthens informal business in the amid of global trade and covid pandemic. The organization is based in Bangkok, Thailand.

The beneficiaries of the initiative are informal workers and members of HomeNetPeople (all women).

HomeNet Thailand is a member of the Asian Solidarity Economy Council (ASEC).

Covid-19 context:

Informal workers in Thailand have no social welfare and supporting from the state agencies, as well as being invisible in the society. Their working conditions rely solely on daily basis which make them more vulnerable because income and quality of life in the workplace depend on the time of the day.

Global trading threatens Thai's business especially because Chinese products are sold at extremely low prices. As a result, Thai's products can't compete.

Description of the SSE initiative:

Homenet Thailand Association, which is composed of its own accounts and homeworkers, collaborated to establish **HomeNet Thailand Brand** as an informal social enterprise.

Investment funds are raised among members for product development, create marketing channels and increase their competitiveness. Most of the products are handicrafts.

In addition to helping with product development, HomeNet Thailand Brand raises awareness of women's rights and intersectionality. Home-based workers, who in many cases support their families financially, are often paid less and have to bear invisible costs such as shipping costs. This is linked to the fact that in the common imagination, working at home does not generate any additional costs for women workers.

Key actions/activities:

We trained and developed our members' skills on digital technology, matching and connecting provincial producers with processors groups and retailers in Bangkok.

Key partners:

Members of HomeNet

Main results and impact:

- Increase members literacy on digital market.
- Continuous communication platform from members to members, and from members to customers.
- Maintain members business.

Initiative

Sonjo Jimpitan

Indonesia



Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) entity description:

The initiative aims to extend vaccination coverage to support 75% coverage as government expected. The organization is based in Jogja, Indonesia.

The main beneficiaries are people living in remote rural areas especially seniors and people with disabilities.

Sonjo is a member of Sambatan Jogja and the Asian Solidarity Economy Council (ASEC).

Covid-19 context:

Vaccination needs to be done quickly in the community. However, the vaccination challenges faced by the Indonesian people are not easy.

While at least 75% of Indonesia's 270 million population must be vaccinated, Indonesia's population is spread across thousands of islands. Even within one island, it is still divided into urban and rural areas, each of which has its own complexity in implementing the vaccination.

Mass vaccinations were initially carried out in urban areas, using conference halls or hotels, with online registration.

However, the disparity in digital literacy in society causes this pattern to be less able to reach people in rural areas.

Description of the SSE initiative:

Sonjo is a community who voluntarily provides support to people in need during the pandemic. Bounded with solidarity, they encourage people to express their needs and their willingness to support others. **Sonjo Jimpitan** is an initiative to extend the government vaccination program as many people, mostly in rural areas, are still unvaccinated due to accessibility constraints.

Key actions /activities:

- Communicate the program through village chief's network.
- Assess and follow up incoming proposals from village government.
- Invite sponsors/ donors.
- Carry out vaccination of 1000 people per event.

Key partners:

Health workers from university, local volunteers, philanthropies.

Main results and impact:

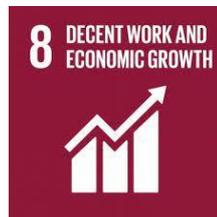
The initiative has administered more than 40.000 doses of vaccines in the first 30 days of Sonjo Jimpitan.



Initiative

The Network of Networks of Alternative and Solidarity Economy (REAS)

Spain



GUÍA de INICIATIVAS de Economía Solidaria frente al COVID-19

Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) entity description:

The Network of Networks of Alternative and Solidarity Economy (REAS) was born in 1995 to develop the Solidarity Economy in the Spanish State. Our activity is based on the principles and the values of the SSE Charter of Solidarity Economy and we aim to promote an inclusive, sustainable and collaborative model of economy that places people and their needs at the core of economic activity. REAS includes 944 entities that participate in 15 territorial networks and 4 sectorial networks.

The beneficiaries are members of the Network of networks of the Alternative and Solidarity Economy and the public (local communities and economies, citizens, SSE practitioners, policy makers, researchers, etc).

The Network of Networks of Alternative and Solidarity Economy (REAS) is a member of RIPESS Europe.

Covid-19 context:

The “**Social Solidarity Toolkit to confront COVID19**” was developed by REAS RED during its 25th anniversary that coincided with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The main purpose of this toolkit is to demonstrate that SSE can respond better to the COVID19 crisis because it emanates from the territories and is based on the solidarity of its networks that comes to the fore in difficult times.

This collaborative toolkit is the fruit of these special economic, social and personal relationships that showcase a variety of different Spanish sectorial, territorial initiatives such as the environment, consumption, the care sector, culture, education, ethical finance, legal support, the work environment or production.

The aim of the SSE Toolkit is to demonstrate that SSE has proven to be more resilient during the COVID19 pandemic and can be the best protection against the pandemic of the capitalist system because it promotes equity, decent work, cooperation, and sustainable development models.

Description of the SSE initiative:

The SSE Toolkit includes SSE campaigns and initiatives that have been developed in Spain and in other European countries to combat some of the challenges created by the COVID 19 pandemic and that have changed our daily life.



Key actions/activities:

- The Internal Wholesale Market for organic farmers, a virtual space that aims to be a meeting point for organic producers and traders to sell organic food that is not being sold due to the closure of restaurants, hotels and canteens. For example, the Baserriko Plaza; the Citizen Laboratory for the construction of local consumption circuits in the Social Market of Madrid and the 8 ideas developed by Carro de Combate to rethink our consumption during #YoMeQuedoEnCasa.
- Mutual support networks such as the "Cotidianas" project, care networks such as in the Basque Country or Andalusia, or the creation of a form to request masks for health centres, residences and in general for workers in essential services in Murcia.
- The audiovisual meetings at La Casa Encendida or the talks organised by ERESS.
- The financial initiatives: Goteo's #CoronaZero channel and the Cooperative Fund for Social and Health Emergencies in Catalonia.
- A set of resources for the management of Arç Cooperativa's insurance.
- AKAB (Askatasun Kolektiboetarako Abokatuak) has opened a legal clinic for those who have suffered police abuse.

Key partners:

Members of the Network of Networks of Social Solidarity Economy.

Main results and impact:

Mapping of 121 initiatives led by the Social Solidarity Economy to share the COVID-19 response in a more just and social way that can inspire other actors and improve people's quality of life.

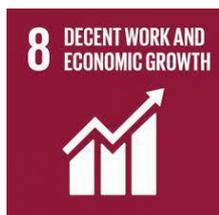


Initiative

TechNet Berlin



Germany

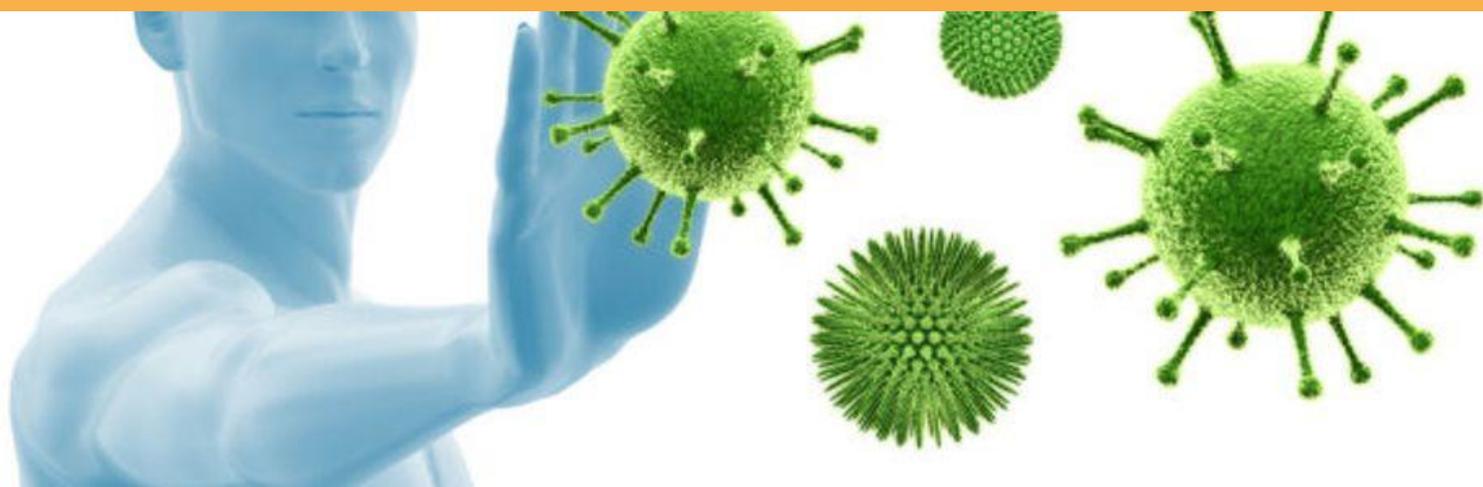


Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) entity description:

TechNet Berlin supports a community enterprise in the town of Brandenburg in Germany, of the socially disadvantaged neighbourhood Hohenstücken. It employs 8 people in 5 businesses: neighbourhood café, proximity services, community gardening, repair café, and cultural services.

The beneficiaries are at first employees and volunteers of AuWiHo but also the inhabitants of the local community who in the long run will benefit from healthy food, courses, and exercises.

TechNet is a member of RIPESS Europe.



Covid-19 context:

The initiative is focused in containing the spreading of the Covid-19. The Land of Brandenburg has been (and is still being) very affected, being a top 3 of 16 German Landers with the highest rate of COVID 19 infection.

Description of the SSE initiative:

The aim of the new project is to design specific proposals to prepare disadvantaged people for the changes caused by the pandemic. The project was developed to make specific plans for participants confined to the district during the Covid-19.

Key actions/activities:

TechNet started with the rigorous monitoring of people and employees meeting in-house. The project evolved into supporting the vulnerable local population in strengthening their health through mobility and healthy eating courses.

The initiative actively improves health status through health promotion. In addition, it strengthens health; individual skills and abilities through individual coaching and increases employability.

Social innovation lies in taking up the obstacles that participants must overcome and balancing them with an accompanying support structure in the company or working on them continuously.

Key partners:

Social enterprises in the region, the JobCenter, and a department of the local authority.

Main results and impact:

- Reduction of the infection rate in a hot spot of COVID 19.
- Further impact on the community will be seen after more time of implementation.

Initiative

Canadian Community Economic Development Network

Canada



Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) entity description:

The Canadian Community Economic Development Network is a national partnership of organisations and individuals across Canada committed to strengthening communities by creating economic opportunities that improve social and environmental conditions.

The Canadian population is the main beneficiary.

CCEDNet is a member of RIPESS North America.

Covid-19 context:

Long before the global pandemic reached Canada, the care of our most vulnerable citizens had challenged many governments, communities, and families. “Care work” was “women’s work,” and therefore underpaid and undervalued. That often meant difficulty retaining staff and inadequate quality of care, particularly in for-profit settings.

When COVID-19 struck, no one suffered more than residents in long-term care. According to the Canadian Institute for Health Information, 80 per cent of COVID deaths in Canada have been in retirement homes and homes with 24-hour nursing care.

Description of the SSE initiative:

The goal is to request the Canadian Federal Government to deliver on its promise to remove for-profit businesses in the sector of care for the elderly and increase support to community-controlled businesses such as cooperatives and non-profits.

To this end, CCEDNet and its members ask the government to include the accelerating the Social Finance Fund program in the post-COVID economic recovery.

Key actions activities:

A public campaign towards the federal government, letters and messages to Members of Parliament.

Key partners:

Co-operatives and Mutuels Canada (CMC)
Ontario Non-Profit Network

Main results and impact:

In December 2021 the federal government agreed to deploy more intensively the program.



Initiative

G15+

Quebec, Canada



Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) entity description:

The G15+ is a group of 15 economic, labour, social and environmental leaders who are mobilising in an unprecedented effort to support Quebec's economic recovery efforts. The group has developed a series of proposals to support businesses and workers and their communities, based on the broad social, economic and environmental objectives on which there is broad consensus in Quebec.

The Canadian population is the main beneficiary.

G15+ is a member of Chantier de l'économie sociale.

Covid-19 context:

At the beginning of the pandemic, the Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called for a more inclusive post-Covid recovery. As a result, a group of 15 organizations, calling themselves the G15+, prepared a series of proposals for government and society at large. The proposals relate to agriculture, housing, the economy, financing and First Nations and Inuit.

Description of the SSE initiative:

This is not an SSE initiative, but rather an initiative in which SSE is an integral part.

Key actions/activities:

Publication of proposals and advocacy with government and the media. In addition, regional committees have been set up to develop concrete initiatives. For example, in Quebec City, a circular economy center project is being developed.

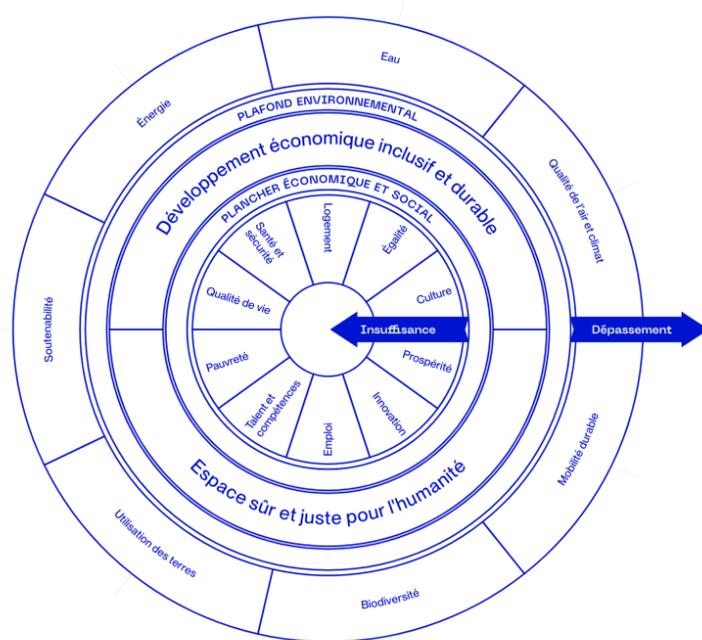
On 18 January 2022, the D15+ group unveiled "Well-being Indicators in Quebec". This project aims to provide Quebec society with 51 indicators to measure well-being, but also to measure the progress in well-being such as poverty reduction, the gender wage gap, climate change and homelessness.

Key partners:

Trade unions, environmental, social and economic organizations.

Main results and impact:

This is a recognized initiative, even by the media. For example, the announcement about the indicators was featured on Radio-Canada, Canada's leading French-language radio and television station.



Initiative

Island CultureZ

United states



Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) entity description:

Island CultureZ is a neighbourhood-level solidarity economy initiative. It is working in a predominantly Black neighbourhood to protect it from gentrification, build community wealth and political influence, produce its own food, and institute cooperative economics for a more resilient future. This neighbourhood has faced negative political and economic pressures for decades and covid-19 has helped expose those realities.

The beneficiaries are the residents of “Island” communities in and around Winston-Salem, NC. “Island” metaphorically represents a socioeconomic reality where residents have been historically economically, politically, and culturally marginalized, under-resourced, and underrepresented resulting in generations of low wealth and poor cardiometabolic health (amongst other cascading correlates). There are many “island” communities globally as a result of the persistent neoliberal economics that promote scarcity and wealth concentration. This work seeks to implement alternatives on a small-but-replicable scale that promote health, access, equity, dignity, accountability, sustainability, democratic participation, and resilience.

Island CultureZ is a member of USSEN.

Covid-19 context:

Island CultureZ (ICZ) is an equitable community wealth-building initiative in East Winston (a mostly Black and Brown low-income/-access neighborhood in Winston-Salem, NC) working to create local food system jobs by increasing food production opportunities, land ownership, and market access.

Through each avenue (food production, land ownership, political activism, and market access), we have crafted a robust, collaborative, multi-phase effort to create (1) opportunities in this community toward a healthier and more resilient future and a (2) replicable model for community wealth-building in traditionally politically and economically marginalized communities (“islands”) with partners at state, national, and international levels.

At its core, this is an attempt to recreate our village -- simply a self-sufficient reality where residents can walk from their houses to pick up the foods and conveniences they want while experiencing a healthy and active day progress all around them -- kids riding their bikes, groups of friends socializing, reconnecting with neighbors, and so on. Improving food access (not charity) necessitates improving our communities as a whole.

Description of the Social Solidarity Economy initiative:

This is not a new effort as much as it is an attempt to rekindle and build back better the vibrant community infrastructure that was lost with Winston-Salem’s construction of Highway 52 and eroded by redlining and other inequitable and systemically racist housing practices that continue to perpetuate intergenerational poverty in what’s known as one of the most difficult regions for socioeconomic mobility. We acknowledge that there was once a thriving local and cooperative food economy here and we are employing solutions to reverse engineer the damage.



Key actions/activities:

- Island CultureZ: the central organizing and development hub.
- Equitable community land ownership (working with community partners to determine plans for a community ownership strategy -- either a community land trust (CLT), a resident-owned community (ROC) configuration, limited-equity cooperative (LEC), community benefits agreements (CBAs), or a land bank).
- Food production cooperative (The Grassroots Agriculturalist Cooperative).
- Cooperative Financing Community Fund (via [Open Collective](#)) so we can transparently fund our own initiatives in the near future.
- Organic neighborhood parkland maintenance: as a public health measure reducing pesticide and other harmful exposures.
- Farmers Market(s) with SNAP/EBT access and a matching-dollars program (as a purchasing incentive).
- Local Food Procurement agreements with local institutions (partner with the [Center for Good Food Purchasing](#) for implementation).
- Youth empowerment & leadership programs within the ICZ board and each initiative.
- “Mobile food hub” transportation program to transport local product and urban farmers with limited mobility.
- Urban & rural farm network (as part of the Grassroots Agriculturalist Coop and mobile food hub).
- Anchor Institution Collaborative: The creation of a supportive ecosystem of aligned regional institutions to help minimize barriers and carry this work forward.

Key partners:

Toxic Free North Carolina, Community Food Strategies, Urgenci, Piedmont Environmental Alliance, Land Loss Prevention Project, Other Suns, Forsyth Foodworks.

Main results and impact:

- Galvanizing new partnerships via a progressive shared vision.
- Purchased 2 buses for its transportation program.

Initiative

Creative Wildfire

United States



Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) entity description:

Creative Wildfire is a collaborative call to collective action from frontline communities, represented by Climate Justice Alliance, Movement Generation, and New Economy Coalition, and endorsed by the US Solidarity Economy Network, to resist a post-covid return to normal and build a just transition now.

The beneficiaries consist primarily of the members of the aforementioned networks and organizations.

Creative Wildfire is a member of USSEN.

Covid-19 context:

The Global Pandemic and the continued injustice toward people and the planet are changing life as we know it. So much is being lost, taken away, or destroyed. We say: enough is enough. As parts of our world re-open, we're told it's safe to return to "normal." But what is normal, really? Normal is careless. Normal is ableist. Normal is profit over life. Normal is having a boss. Normal is not getting paid what you deserve. Normal is the theft of land and life, and the myth of white supremacy. Normal is what got us into this mess in the first place.

We have histories of advancing bold, visionary solutions that nourish regenerative solidarity economies. We carefully and lovingly hold the threads of these histories in our present work as we repair relations and remember our way forward. It is time to assert OUR solutions. Creative solutions that ensure ecological, economic, and racial justice.

As we resist going back to "normal", we have the power to move money to real community solutions. Defunding, dismantling, and abolishing the systems that cause us harm — police and prisons, corporate healthcare, Wall Street profiteering, fossil fuel extraction — is critical but only half of the bridge toward justice. The second half is reinvesting the resources that exist in our communities to build cooperative, caring, connected, community-controlled institutions that provide for our needs.

Description of the SSE initiative:

It calls on groups to study, fund, & act and is a network of networks of grassroots actors.

Key actions/activities:

The network is working on moving the "Creative Wildfire" manifesto into popular culture by working with artists and cultural workers to amplify the strategic frameworks and grassroots solutions of frontline organizations towards a larger transformative cultural shift of restoring governance to the people and re-rooting economic decisions locally. A call for artists has already been issued.

Key partners:

Climate Justice Alliance, Movement Generation, and New Economy Coalition, and endorsed by Los Higueros Cooperativa, PUEBLO, Colaborativa La Milpa, Charleston Climate Coalition, Cooperation SLC, Post Growth Institute, Georgia Cooperative Development Center, Art.coop, Liberty Tree Foundation for the Democratic Revolution, The Center for Sustainable and Just Communities, Ujima Company, AK Healing Arts, Renewable Energy Worcester, UHAB, Queer Ecojustice Project, CoFED, Partners for Dignity & Rights, PISO, Cooperation Humbolt, Sustainable Economies Law Center, Intelligent Mischief, Power Shift Network, Spin It Forward, Black Folks Don't Swim?, Got Green, Upstream, Womxnist Liberation Coop, Micronesia Climate Change Alliance, Beneficial State Foundation, Organization Boricua de Agricultura Ecologica, Uprose, Cooperation Jackson, Philadelphia Area Cooperative Alliance, NC Climate Justice Collective, Decolonize Our Museums, Delicious Democracy, Food for the Spirit, We Rise, Little Village Environmental Justice Organization, Minnow, Understory, A Bookkeeping Cooperative, Understory, Oregon New Economy Project, RoundSky Solutions, CEANYC, Resource Generation, The Cranky Queer, Co+here Design Lab, Justive Funders, Florida Rising, Santa Cruz Community Ventures, GNN, Real Food Real Stories, Groundwork Northeast Revitalization Group, Nuns & Nones, Center for Economy Democracy, Lift Economy, OneLife Institute, CERO, {R}evolution, Sol Root Farmers Collective, Heart-Head-Hands: Everyday Living for Justice, Parable of the Sower Intentional, Community Cooperative, Floodgate Farm, Sunrise Worcester, Coliberate, Fort Collins Community Action Network, BoomShake Music, SongHomes for the Orisha, Rooms for Peace, Broome Tioga Green Party, Yolo Climate, Emergency Coalition, The Village in Oakland, Aurora Commons, Neighborhood Grow Plan, Tasting Awareness, Climate Refugee Stories, Collective Determination, Share Circles – Maui, and Peoples Hub.



Main results and impact:

Ultimate impact is yet to be seen, but an artist showcase was held in November 2021 featuring the selected artists and cultural workers:

<https://creativewildfire.org/showcase/>

Contributions

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