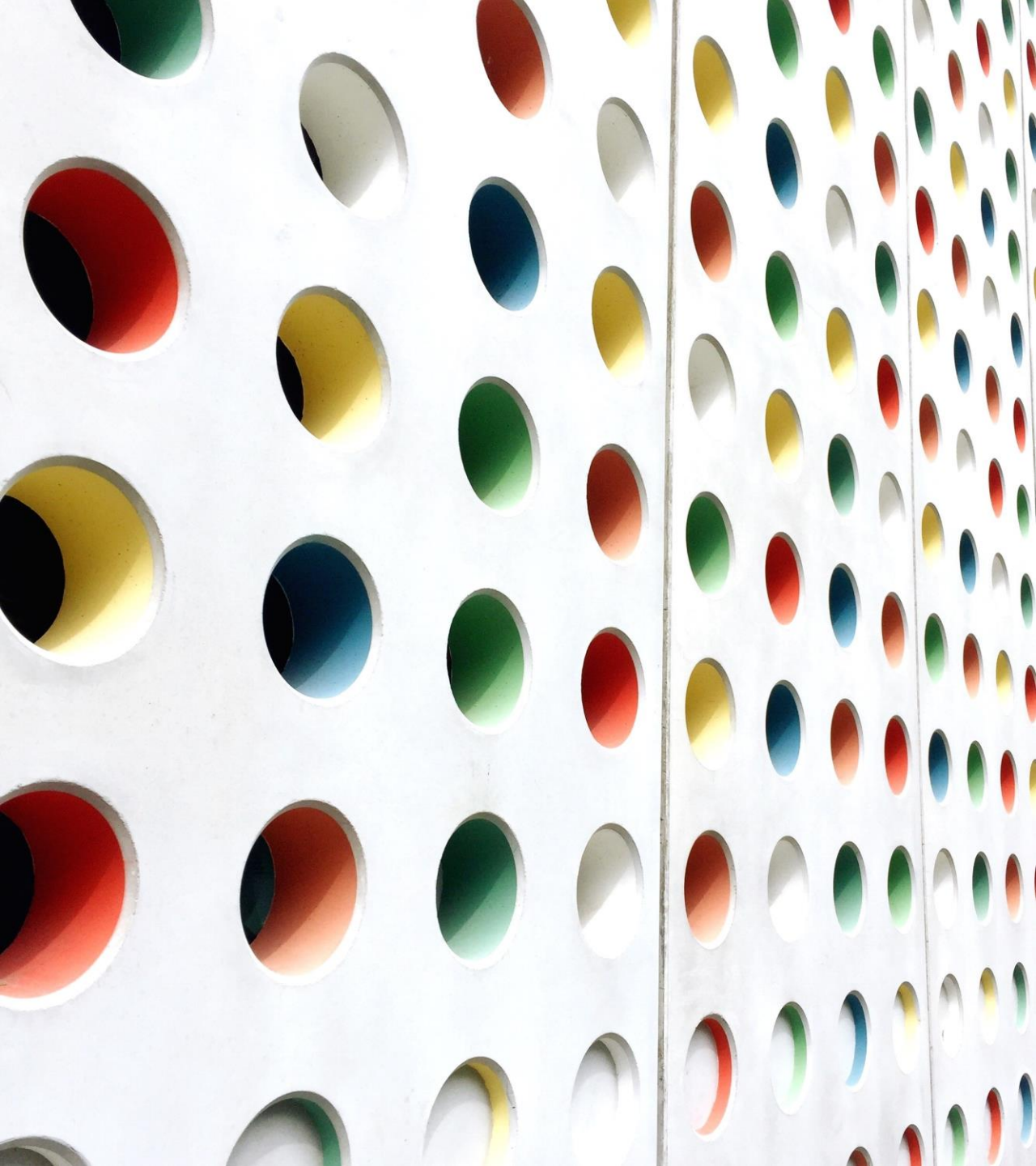




# Social and Solidarity Economy in the World and ILO's Efforts

---

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE ILO-JCA JOINT WEBINAR  
'TSUNAGARU'

16 DECEMBER 2021

JÜRGEN SCHWETTMANN, ILO CONSULTANT

# The SSE – an undefined creature

---

No universal expression  
(social economy,  
solidarity economy, SSE,  
popular economy, third  
sector, etc.)

No universal definition  
– but many attempts to  
develop one

No universal agreement  
on the SSE components  
– except cooperatives  
and mutuals

No clear list of SSE  
principles – except the  
'primacy of people over  
capital' principle

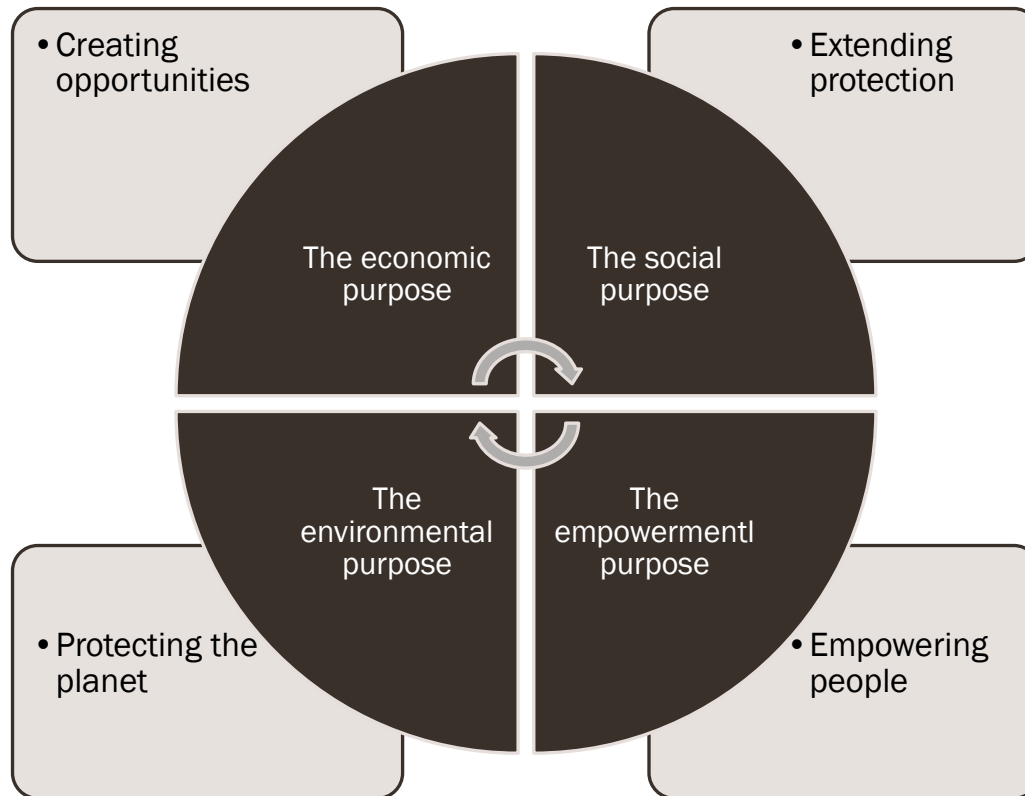
# Therefore: a pragmatic definition

---

The social and solidarity economy (SSE) is a concept designating enterprises and organizations, in particular cooperatives, mutual benefit societies, associations, foundations and social enterprises, which have the specific feature of producing goods, services and knowledge while pursuing both economic and social aims and **fostering solidarity**. (Johannesburg, 2009)

# The SSE's four purposes

---



The four-purpose architecture was recognized recently by the UN Secretary-General who, in a recent ECOSOC report affirmed: 'By empowering individuals through greater control over decision-making processes and resources, the social and solidarity economy fosters **economic dynamism, social and environmental protection and socio-political empowerment.**'

# A few figures

---

**Cooperatives:** 2,9 million entities with a total membership of 1,2 billion individuals, having created jobs or livelihoods for 280 million people world-wide.

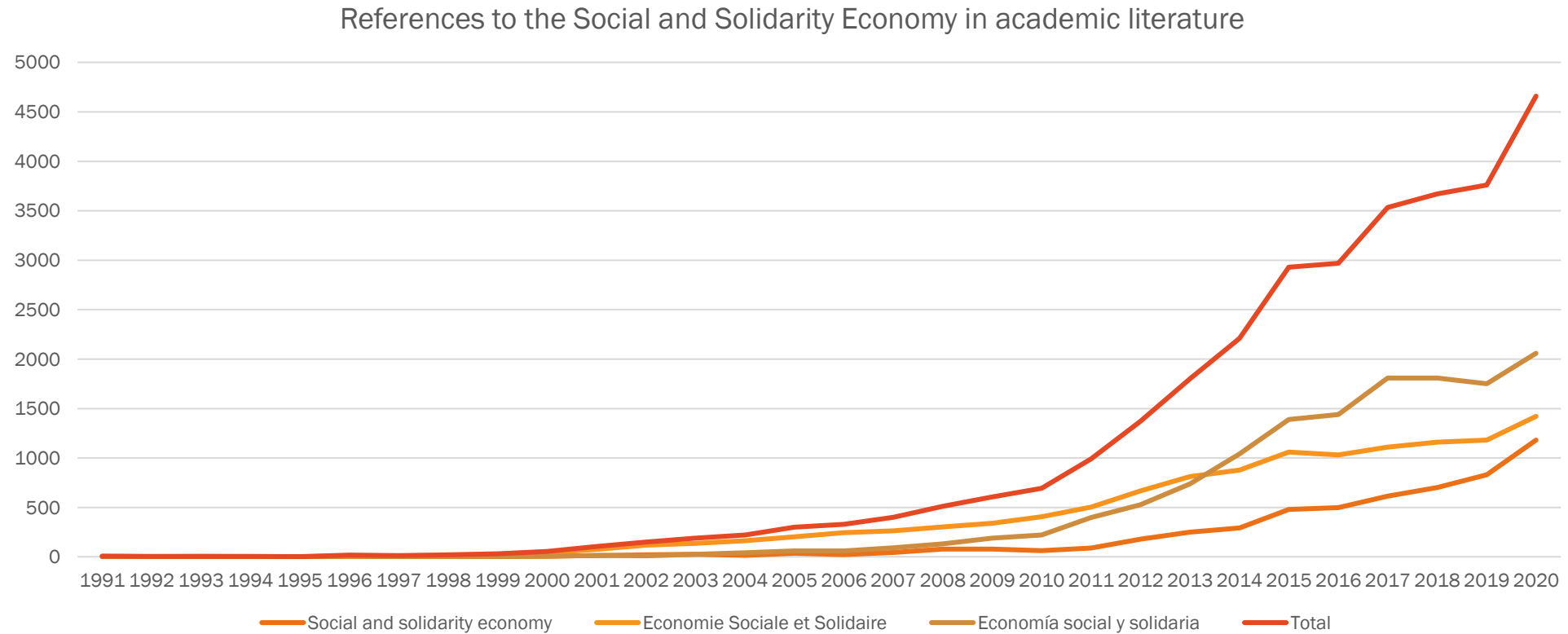
**Credit unions:** 86,000 entities with 291 million members, having accumulated 2.6 trillion US-\$ in assets.

**Mutuals:** 922 million individuals world-wide are being covered by mutual or cooperative insurers; they represent 26,7 per cent of the global insurance market.

**Foundations:** 260,000 entities with total assets of 1,5 trillion US-\$, and annual disbursements of 150 billion US-\$ (from just 39 countries).

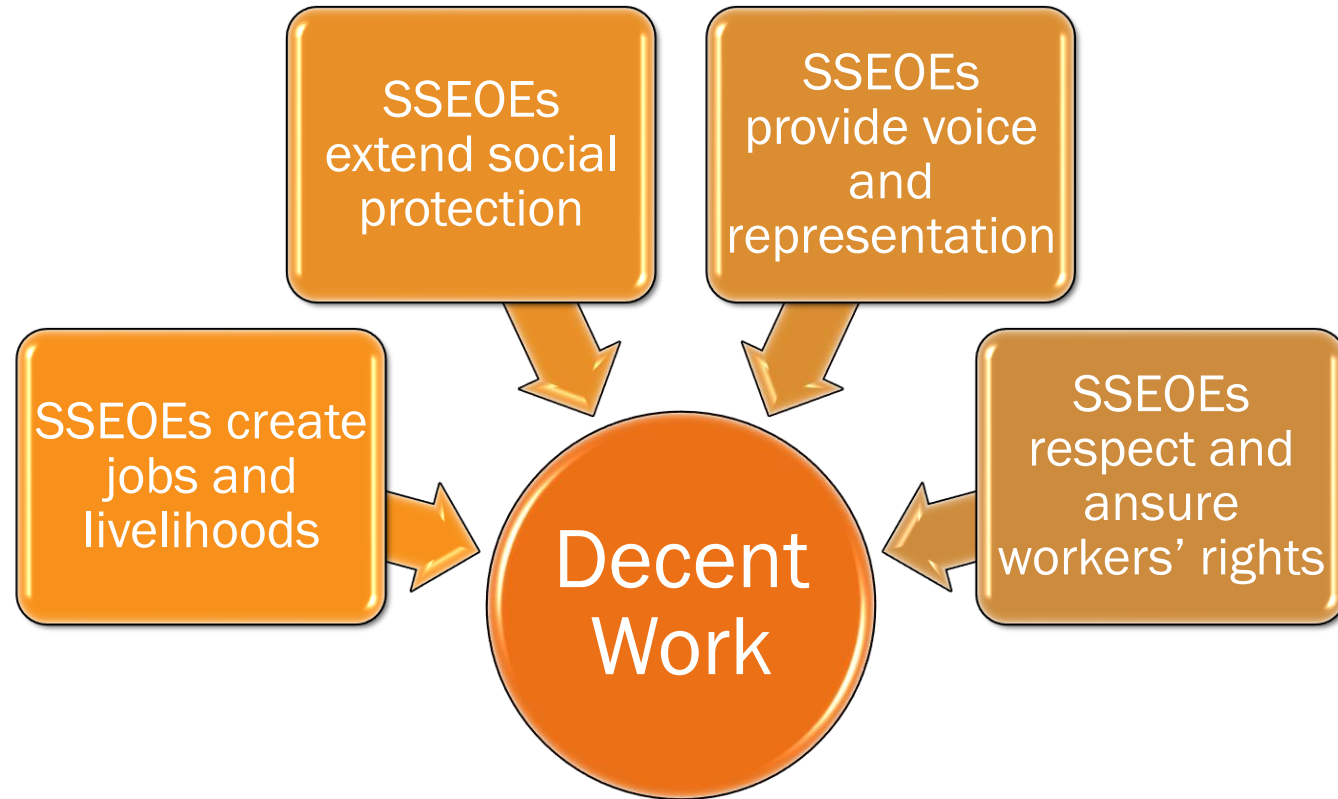
No global estimates on the number of **social enterprises** and **associations**,.

# The SSE – a concept growing in popularity



# The SSE and Decent Work

---



# The SSE and Sustainable Development

---

Two concepts are central to the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development: access and inclusion. The term ‘access’ appears 56 times in the Agenda, the term ‘inclusion’ (or inclusive) appears 45 times.

‘Access’ means access to land, to markets, to finance, to rights, to opportunities, etc. Creating access through collective action is precisely the role and raison d’être of many SSE organizations, in particular in situations where individuals are powerless, and excluded from services rendered by the state and the private sector.

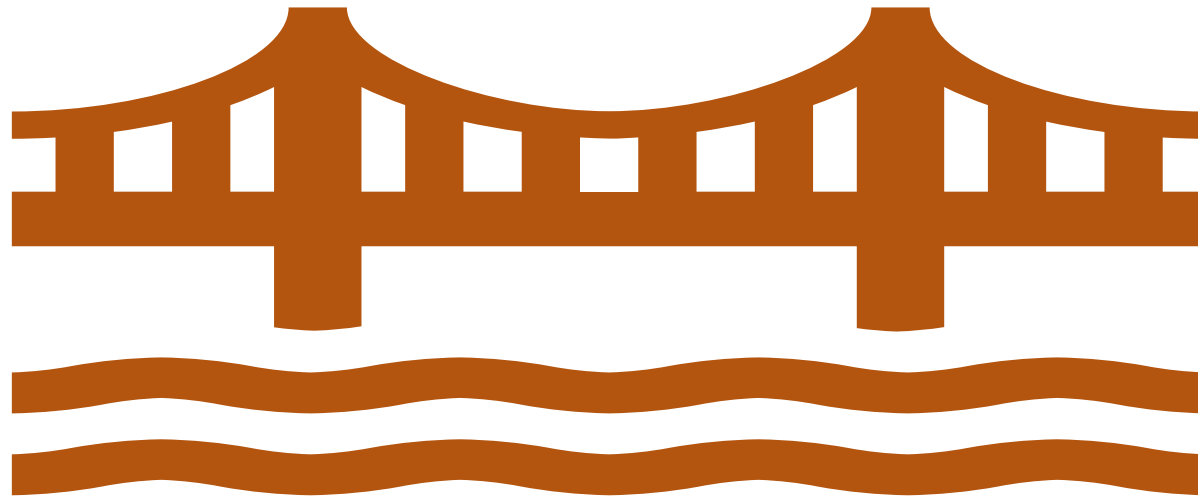
‘Inclusion’ means the social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status”. The SSE is, by nature and conviction, best suited to foster inclusivity.

Taken together, the two elements (access and inclusion) will enhance equality, which is the subject of SDG 10.

# The SSE: a bridge between informal and formal

---

The informal economy operators join an SSE organization, but remain as individuals in the informal economy



The SSE organization (if officially registered) becomes part of the formal economy, and can thus provide an entry point into formality for its members.

# ILO's efforts

---

Recognition of the SSE in recent instruments (R.204 on the informal economy, R.205 on decent work for peace, 2008 Declaration, 2019 Declaration).

Co-founder of the United Nations Task Force on the Social and Solidarity Economy (UNTFSE).

Since 2010, organization of an annual Social and Solidarity Economy Academy (ITC Turin)

Various research, policy-making and development cooperation projects.

SSE components in other types of projects.

Focus on SSE in South-South cooperation

2022 General Discussion on Decent Work and the Social and Solidarity Economy

# The ILC General Discussion

---

The General Discussion will take place at the 110<sup>th</sup> International Labour Conference, June 2022.

The ILO (as ‘office’) is preparing a report that provides an overview of the SSE, and proposes questions for discussion. The report will become available in February next year.

During the ILC, a conference committee will discuss the proposed questions, and draft conclusions.

The conclusions are expected to provide (i) a universal definition of the term “social and solidarity economy”; (ii) policy guidelines on the establishment of a conducive environment for the SSE; (iii) guidance on how the ILO should engage in the promotion of the SSE and (iv) encouragement on the establishment and maintenance of SSE partnerships.