The Social Economy at Work:
Best practices in job creation through the Social & Solidarity Economy

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Social and Solidarity Economy

“A concept designating enterprises and organizations, in particular cooperatives, mutual benefit societies, associations, foundations, non-profit organizations and social enterprises, which have the specific feature of producing goods, services and knowledge while pursuing both economic and social aims and fostering solidarity.”

- ILO Regional Conference on Social Economy, Johannesburg, October 2009
Actors involved in the Social & Solidarity Economy (SSE)
Cooperatives

“Autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.” - ILO Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193)
ILO's commitment to the promotion of decent work

- ILO’s mission: Promote social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights for all.

- Mandate to promote decent work for women and men all over the world
  - Opportunities for work that is productive and delivers fair income, security in the workplace, social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives, and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.

- The Decent Work Agenda has four inseparable, interrelated and mutually supportive strategic objectives:
  1) Employment
  2) Social protection
  3) Social dialogue and tripartism
  4) Fundamental principles and rights at work
ILO’s commitment to cooperatives and other SSE enterprises

- Promote decent work, namely through the promotion of sustainable enterprises.
  - Mandate to work on cooperatives as stated in the ILO Constitution; Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193)
  - The 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization states: “Convinced that in a world of growing interdependence and complexity and the internationalization of production, [...] a strong social economy and a viable public sector, are critical to sustainable economic development and employment opportunities.”
ILO’s work on cooperatives and SSE

- Policy dialogue
- Legal and policy advice
- Research & knowledge generation
- Capacity building

Development cooperation
ILO’s projects on SSE in the Mediterranean region

Promotion of Organizations and Mechanisms of Social and Solidarity Economy (PROMESS)

- SSE policy formulation
- Support services to SSE organizations
- SSE support facility for youth employment programmes

Youth-Employment Support Programme (PAJE)

- Coordination mechanisms between institutional actors and civil society for youth employability
- Support to youth CSOs
Other ILO projects in SSE

Development of a Social Economy Policy in South Africa

- SSE policy formulation
- Support services to SSE organizations
- SSE support facility for youth employment programmes

Research Initiative on ‘The Role of SSE and Social Finance in sustainable development and the future of work’

- Role of SSE in a changing world of work, and the challenges posed by social finance
- Impact of SSE in the economic and social development and the contribution of social finance to employment and quality of work
Past ILO projects on SSE in the Mediterranean region

**Legal and policy advice**
- Agricultural cooperative law revision in Egypt
- Cooperative policy development in oPt

**Capacity building**
- Supporting women SSE organization and formalization in Egypt
- Supporting agricultural coop management in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon & oPt
- Supporting formalization of waste pickers through coops in Turkey
- 3rd ILO SSE Academy 2013 in Morocco

**Research & knowledge generation**
- Assessing agricultural coops in Jordan, Lebanon & oPt with focus on the role of women
- Exploring opportunities for response strategies through SSE in refugee situations in Turkey and Jordan
Challenges

- Often inadequate legal framework and regulatory environment for coops and SSE
- Unreliability of funding sources
- Limited infrastructure on coop/SSE training and business development services
- Lack of statistics on coops and SSE

Response Strategies

- Support the revision and development of regulatory frameworks for an enabling environment
- Demonstrate good practices at the country level and beyond to demonstrate the added value of SSE
- Promote cooperation as a viable business option with a focus on young people
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