



RIPESS EUROPE – Solidarity Economy Europe
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Workshop 3

SOCIAL INDICATORS AND IMPACT *Human and democratic dimension of SSE*

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I. WHAT WE SHARED

- **Objectives**

How to point out and express - with the help of indicators controlled by the solidarity initiatives - the specificity of solidarity economy projects through the different processes, organisation, governance, means of cooperation, etc. That are used to be developed in a truly human and democratic progress perspective as well as social justice, with and for the people involved, locally dedicated and still taking into consideration global issues?

The means and tools

We need to share and cross at a grass-root level, and through the hub and networks, our good practices, innovation and means of cooperation in order to capture and enhance the main common features that can be used to influence public policies in favor of solidarity economy, to promote and foster solidarity economy through Europe.

This sharing process should feed on the numerous analysis from researchers who are as much part of SE, and who've been actively helping out SE initiatives by enhancing their decisive political and economical specificity.

Testimonies : either because the auditing is not satisfying, under the influence of social business or fully administrative process in countries where SSE is well implemented and recognized as such, or because it doesn't really exist as such in countries where SSE is getting acknowledged, participants have identified the need for the grassroots level and also for the public policy sake to help identify the nature of solidarity activities. Something dealing with quality mapping could be used for a "mirror effect", to identify steps of progress in projects and in public policies.

→ **To link our tools to our strategy.** To protect and help develop genuine solidarity economy experiences, the indicators must be referring to a movement that is trans-sectoral – it should enable people active in solidarity economy to share and promote more easily, and not allow social washing.

- Thus, indicators should bring input on
 - democratic organization
 - equity in labor, measurement of how fundamental and social rights are respected
 - the nature and quality of cooperation
 - measure of ownership and control.
 - ...

This could take the form of **a crossed production and financial reporting, social reporting and environmental reporting**. There should be options to **be linked to legal frames** – from national to international convention (Human rights, labor laws, etc.)– giving opportunity to refer to more general convention in matters such as social and democratic rights for instance.

The human and democratic dimension

This is a central dimension of solidarity economy that must be kept as the core energy of any project.

→ **To express the fundamental human and democratic dimension**. Well-being, emancipation, dignity : there is a major human factor and thus emotional and psychological sides to solidarity economy that must be dealt with through a quality expression and inquiry (without reducing it to a matter of efficiency, and in order to express phenomenons that can't be translated into number). It would be important **to define different dimension of human dignity and needs, in that sens the concept of well being is very useful (economic needs, political needs, cultural needs, etc)**. It would be necessary to address those different issues and see how the experiences operate on them regarding their field of action.

Institutional dimensions, environmental context, social and human progress should be taken into account in the “measurement” of solidarity economy development at a given local level. The indicators should be designed in a way that could be adjusted to different countries, regions, and local environment.

This work would help changing the way we see measurement and contribute to build tools to be help converging quality initiatives, accepting that there are parts of our activities that we can't measured through % and statistics.

The geographic and scale dimension

Be it trans-border or at a very local level, solidarity economy is built through cooperation, not competition. The notion of “scaling up” experiences, or spreading them, must be considered regarding the communities involved, their mutual willingness to develop any given activity, and their democratic involvement in it. Notion such as reciprocity, measurement of common good and expression of social needs/willingness and fulfillment should be taken into consideration. A marketing reproduction of solidarity economy models would make no sens, thus the indicators of “territorial expansion” should be dealt with an accurate sense of cooperation and co-decision between different communities and people involved.

→ **There are specific rural dimensions that must be taken into account** : in the means of development, in the capacity to share and improve well-being at a local level.

- **A few things that we know by “intuition” and basic observation - Main specificities pointed out**

→ we need to measure social dimension by using accurate social and democratic indicators, giving a clear perspective and statement claiming that those experiences make a fundamental difference for the people touched by it.

→ **The delicate question of the “wording”** : we could work on a common vocabulary, common notions and concepts that would enable us to rightfully express what those experiences achieve, if not fully, at least truly. Terms such as measuring the “social balance” have been suggested, as well as “social capital”. A proper

debate and work about those notions seems to be needed.

II. THE NEXT STEPS

- **Open an exchange forum in Ripess Europe to share resources and experiences, aside from Panorama, specifically on the topic of indicators**

- share tools and experiences / contents and resources/ value metrics about

1) the development of local initiatives

2) how it works when it comes down to negotiate with public authorities

- to create some space to have discussion **to create a common ground & language** on core notions and well being indicators, linked with researchers. This work could involve researchers.

- Express a common sense of human progress through social and political perspectives, “capacitation” (Amartya Sen) and solidarity perspective for our societies.

This would mean a permanent group in the Ripess Europe to share and build a common vision for cooperation.

This work should be crossed with the Panorama and the many experiences identified through it. At some point, a larger inquiry could be organised through a large number of experience and mapped as such in the Panorama.

- **Build a collective voice for advocacy and public statements**

- bring in work from universities and researchers

- organise collective work among Ripess members

- make an articulate link to human right, UN Millennium dev, Philadelphia convention, ILO

- promote and communicate through our networks and beyond, towards public policy makers.

- **Turn it into common project**

- find resources: look at it in terms of cooperation, even if there is no European projects – looking at this as an investment – shared pool of resources. You can choose to give time, resource or money.

- organize a European meeting

- build a MOOC that could help easily share the common notions and indicators