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## International Conference “Unlocking the Potential of the Social Economy for EU Growth”

### WORKING GROUP REPORT

On the first day of the Conference, November 17th, 2014, a total of 10 working groups (WG) were held to discuss relevant topics that had been previously identified via a public consultation. Rapporteurs and moderators produced individual reports for each WG and they are published as they were received, without undergoing any editing process. The reports are divided into five sections (Main recommendations; Starting point; Main issues discussed; Recurrent issues; and Concrete proposals) although not all of them were completed in all WG.

In addition to individual WG reports, a document highlighting the main recommendations from all of the WG is available at [www.socialeconomyrome.it](http://www.socialeconomyrome.it).

*Please note that this is a working document, not edited for form or content.*

### WORKING GROUP 10: SOCIAL ECONOMY AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

**Moderator:** Roberto Di Meglio (ILO), Switzerland

**Rapporteur:** Danilo Salerno, (Coopermondo), Italy

**Speakers:**

1. Elena Casolari (Fondazione Opes), Italy
2. Fernando Martinho (Cooperativa de Estudos de Economia Social), Portugal
3. Guggi Laryea (World Bank) Belgium
4. Roderick Egal (MedESS), France
5. Samuel Barco Serrano, Spain

6. Maria Adelaïde Matheï, (UNRISD), UK
7. Stefania Marcone (Alleanza delle Cooperative Italiane), Italy
8. Marisa Parmigiani (Gruppo Unipol), Italy
9. Marco Santori (Etimos Foundation), Italy

Main recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social Economy should be included in the Post-2015 Agenda as a pathway to sustainable development and to a more inclusive society based on participation and the importance of real economy.</li> <li>- Public policies and legal frameworks should support international cooperation actions in order to create an enabling environment for Social Economy actors worldwide.</li> <li>- The EU should support investments in research, capacity building and training through international projects creating networking platforms involving all (Southern and Northern) Social Economy actors.</li> <li>- The EU should support the establishment of a European task force composed by Social Economy actors engaged in development cooperation.</li> </ul>
Starting point
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A report from the International Labour Organization<sup>1</sup> shows that the conventional approach to development is not able to create jobs in the quantity and quality required. When growth is driven only on capitals and good exchanges it cannot offer the appropriate solution for generating a sustainable economy.</li> <li>- A new paradigm for sustainable and inclusive development should consider and involve national and local stakeholders, in particular the Social Economy actors.</li> <li>- The process of crafting the Post-2015 Development Agenda offers an opportunity for Social Economy organizations to be considered a means of implementation to achieve 21st century challenges including the creation of decent jobs, food security, greening the economy, health for all, sustainable cities, local economic development, women's well-being and transformative finance, as illustrated in the position paper of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Social Economy<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>- Many organisations that make up the social economy are directly engaged in cooperation and development efforts in developing countries. This role is likely to gain even greater importance in the coming years, in light of the new approach to cooperation and development policy adopted by the European Union and the member states.</li> </ul>
Main issues discussed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A transformative paradigm of inclusive and sustainable development should integrate the economic, social and environmental dimensions. Local and national policies should be aligned with the Post-2015 Development Agenda and should include the role of Social Economy actors from every part of the world in order to promote new types of partnerships overcoming the traditional North/South approach to development cooperation.</li> <li>- Social Economy actors are leading international development projects worldwide in various economic sectors. There is a need to integrate them more within the European Development Policy and to scale them up in order to have an effective impact on sustainable development.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> "World of Work 2014: Developing with Jobs". ILO, Geneva, 2014: <[http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/world-of-work/2014/WCMS\\_243961/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/world-of-work/2014/WCMS_243961/lang-en/index.htm)

<sup>2</sup> [http://unsse.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Position-Paper\\_TFSSE\\_Eng1.pdf](http://unsse.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Position-Paper_TFSSE_Eng1.pdf)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complementarities between Social Economy actors and public and private institutions are required to develop an enabling environment for Social Economy.</li> <li>- SE actors can, to an extent, integrate similar services delivered by the public welfare State, but they are drivers of change and they should not be considered as alternative or residual providers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recurrent issues that came up during the discussion</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ownership should be the principle for a strategic partnership between Social Economy actors and organizations involved in international development. Financing should come from Official Development Aid (ODA) and other financial instruments which would contribute to build a new approach for international cooperation.</li> <li>- Facts and figures are crucial in order to demonstrate the impact of international development projects coordinated by Social Economy actors to policy makers.</li> <li>- An upscaling of the development projects is required to acquire visibility and voice within the decision making process with the policy makers consistently with values and principles of the SE.</li> <li>- A leverage effect for sustainable development should be created by using new financial instruments coming from national governments and EU funds dedicated to Social Economy organizations.</li> </ul>

Should you have any questions regarding this report, please contact [info@emes.net](mailto:info@emes.net) and [socialeconomyrome@lavoro.gov.it](mailto:socialeconomyrome@lavoro.gov.it)