



Cooperatives and Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE): An ILO Perspective



International
Labour
Organization

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Outline

- ILO on coops and social and solidarity economy (SSE)
- COPAC and UNTFSSE
- Workshop questions
 - Boundaries, principles and values of coops and SSE
 - Europe on social coops and social enterprises
 - Cooperation with the ILO on coops and SSEs

International Labour Organization (ILO)



- Oldest **UN** specialized agency - responsible for world of work issues
- Only tripartite UN agency with government, employer & worker representatives from 187 member states (as of Aug 2017)
- Four strategic objectives which are also the pillars of the decent work agenda: **employment creation, social protection, rights at work and social dialogue**
- Recognized the importance of coops in implementing its mandate toward social justice and full employment
- Only specialized agency of the UN with an explicit mandate on coops with a Coop Unit since 1920 and a Recommendation (193) on promotion of coops
- The ILO Constitution gives cooperative organizations a consultative status
- ILO works closely with coop partners including the International Cooperative Alliance and its sectoral organizations and regional offices

ILO Recommendation 193 (2002)

Promotion of Cooperatives

- Adopted as guiding text, not binding in nature
- Notes that coops operate in all sectors and all countries
- Refers to & uses as ICA definition, principles & values on coops
- Recommends governments create an enabling environment and facilitate access to support services for coops
- Suggests employers' and workers' organizations can promote cooperatives in their supply chains, among their members & communities
- Underlines the importance of coop to coop cooperation across sectors



- COPAC is a multi-stakeholder partnership of global public and private institutions that promotes and advocates for people-centred, self-sustaining cooperative enterprises, guided by the principles of economic, social and environmental sustainable development.
- Members include the ILO, ICA, WFO, FAO and UN DESA
- ILO is the current chair where this responsibility rotates every 2 years
- Current areas of work include:
 - Activating coop engagement with the SDGs
 - Showing concrete proof of coop contributions to the SDGs
 - Advancing statistics on coops (e.g. employment, value added, etc.)



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Division for Social Policy and Development

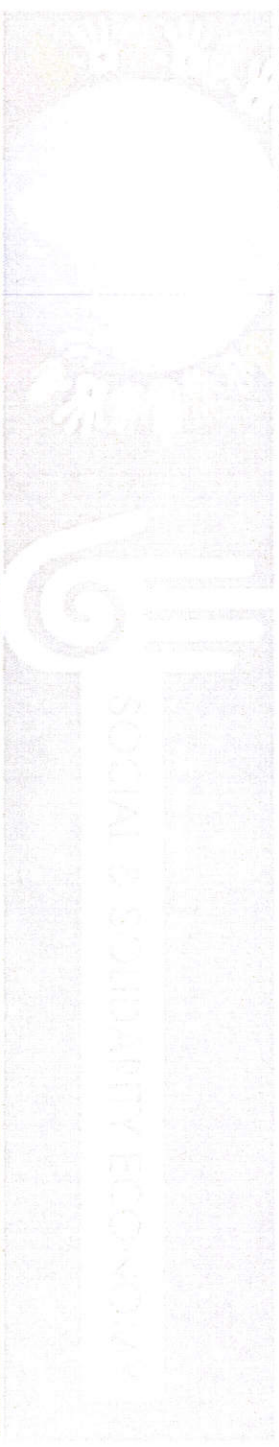


Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy

UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy (UN TFSSE) brings together UN agencies & inter-governmental organizations with a direct interest in SSE as well as umbrella associations of international SSE networks.

It aims to:

- Enhance the recognition of Social and Solidarity Economy Enterprises and Organizations (SSEOs) in sustainable development;
- Promote knowledge on SSE;
- Consolidate SSE networks;
- Support the establishment of an enabling environment within and outside the UN system;
- Ensure coordination of international efforts.
- ILO is currently chairing it in close coordination with FAO & UNRISD



Members	
UNRISD	UNESCO
ILO	UNEP
UNDP	UNIDO
UN-DESA	UN Women
FAO	WFP
WHO	OECD
UN-NGLS	TDR
UNAIDS	ECLAC
ESWCWA	UNECE
	UNCTAD



Some observers
EESC
GSEF
MedESS
EMES
SSE International Forum (formerly Mont Blanc meetings)
International Co-operative Alliance (ICA)
RIPESS
CSEND

Three Sets of Workshop Questions

- SSE boundaries and principles
- Europe on social cooperatives and social enterprises
- International collaboration

Defining SSE



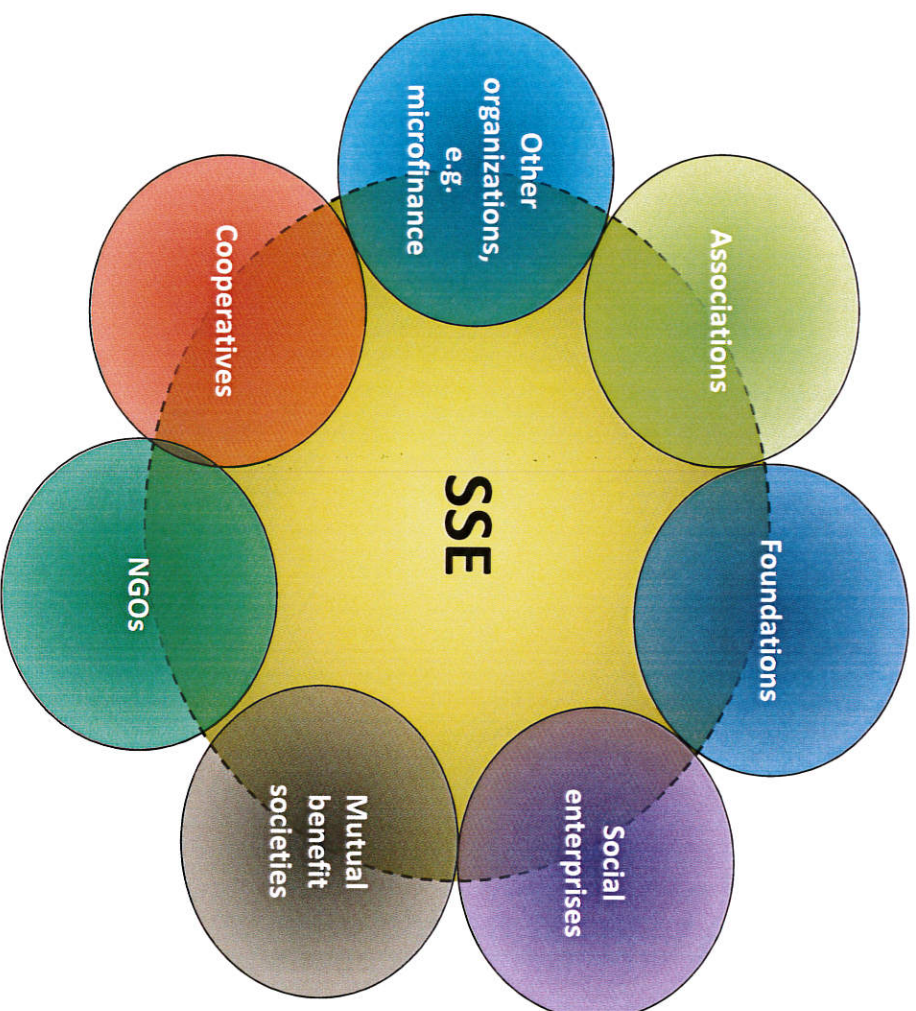
While there is no internationally agreed definition of SSE, the UNTFSSE considers it an **umbrella concept** and uses the following:

“Social and solidarity economy is defined as 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”

ILO Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193) calls for measures to be adopted for “establishment and expansion of a viable and dynamic distinctive sector of the economy, which includes cooperatives, that responds to the social and economic needs of the community”

UNTFSSE 2014: *Social and Solidarity Economy and the Challenge of Sustainable Development*. A Position paper.

SSE Actors



Common characteristics of SSE organizations

Common features	Comments
Economic and Social Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined social and economic objectives • Produce goods and services on a permanent basis • Do not seek profit maximisation but some SSEOs can be for-profit or generate surpluses (e.g. cooperatives) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Legally-binding, strict rules on use of surpluses/redistribution of surpluses
Collective Dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the will of people/groups to join forces in order to meet their own needs or those of others • Collective dimension depends on the definition and type of organisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Very strong in cooperatives (collective ownership); ◦ Less strong in some social enterprises • Collective dimension is not in contradiction with a strong leadership
Solidarity	<p>Operating methods based on solidarity (either altruism or reciprocity)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals not primarily oriented to accumulated capital or generating profits • Aims to include rather than to exclude
Autonomy	Autonomy of the organisation in management and in decision making processes
Voluntary involvement	No compulsory affiliation
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members/users/beneficiaries have the opportunity to be the owners of the organisation and/or to actively take part in the decision making process • Participation can take various forms (from one person/one vote to more flexible ways) but should be defined and done on a systematic and explicit basis (as being mentioned in formal documents and/or clearly known and understood by all involved stakeholders) • Participation should ideally give the possibility to control and/of imposing sanction

Adapted from ILO 2017: *The Role of SSE and Social Finance in Sustainable Development and the Future of Work. Inception report*

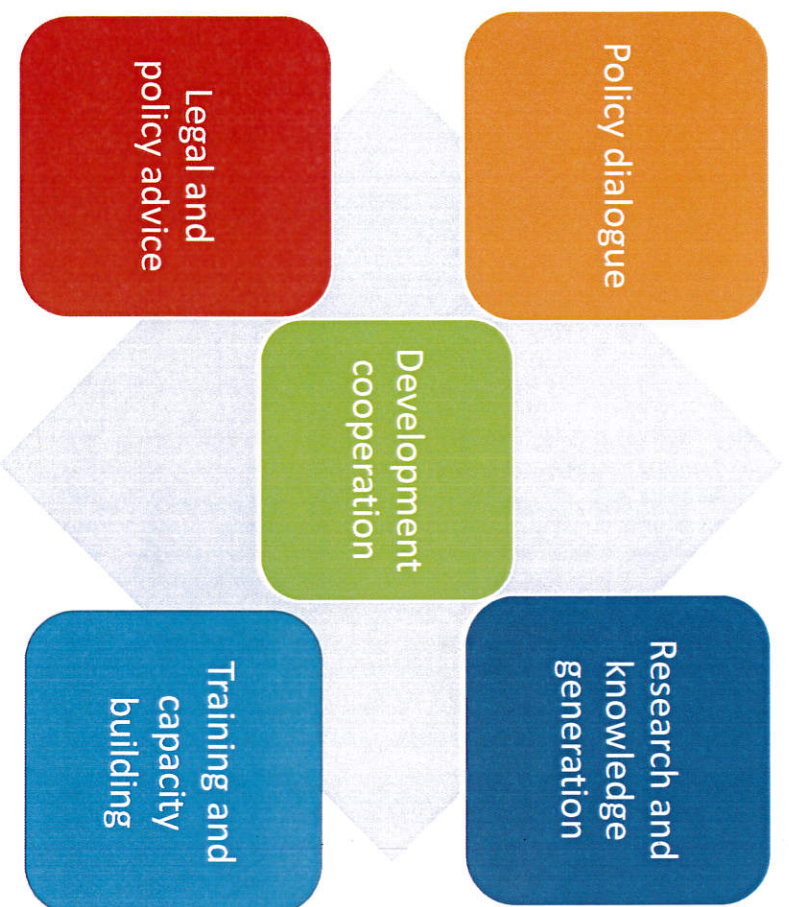
Social cooperatives

- Mainly coops are in the service of immediate members. That has changed over the last 20+ years or so, particularly in social care
- Social coops emerged as a socially innovative response to a market failure in provision of public services in countries like Italy in the 1970s
- Users of social services, like those within a community of people with disabilities, organized into coops for better services for themselves
- There is a growth in these type of coops around the world in home care, child care, health care
- They are legal entities that enter into contract and negotiate legal agreements with the state for the provision of public services
- In some countries, the legislation is still catching up with them after the fact.

Social enterprises

- A social enterprise is any private organisation which undertakes, either exclusively or at least for the most part, activities that are of a social utility and whose purpose is the general interest.
- For social enterprises the ownership system, the decision making process and legal status can be at individual level
- For coops the method of organisation and ownership system reflect the mission, using democratic or participatory principles or focusing on social justice

International cooperation



- Collaboration on the legal and policy advisory front is one entry point
- As important if not more so is to ensure the effective implementation of the adopted legislation and policy via:
 - Policy dialogue
 - Training and capacity building
 - Research and knowledge generation
- Development cooperation is the path used in delivering on these services

ILO's Legal and policy advice

ILO provides technical assistance to its constituents to:

1. **Revise and develop national cooperative policies and laws (in line with Recommendation 193)**
(e.g. Sri Lanka, Trinidad & Tobago, Peru, Sierra Leone)
2. **Develop social and solidarity economy legislation and policies through technical cooperation projects**
(e.g. in Tunisia and South Africa)



Training and capacity building

My.COOP

- Training package on the management of agricultural cooperatives
- Translated into more than ten languages (including English, Spanish, French, Arabic, Swahili, Bahasa Indonesia, Sinhala, Tamil, Nepali and Chinese) and adapted to over dozen country contexts



MyFinCOOP

- Training package for financial cooperative apex organizations and other support institutions to advance the effectiveness of financial cooperatives
- To be tested in Zambia or Malawi

Think.COOP

- Training module to support aspiring co-operators develop cooperatives using peer-to-peer approach
- Tested in Cambodia

SSE Academy

- Interregional training opportunity for practitioners and policymakers around the world to share experiences, best practices and challenges from their work in the SSE
- Seven academies have organized in Italy, Canada, Morocco, Brazil, South Africa, Mexico, Costa Rica, and South Korea



Capacity building for specific groups

- E.g. domestic workers in Trinidad and Tobago



Research and knowledge generation

- All the publications available at ilo.org/coop

ILO/WIEGO joint research on cooperatives in the informal economy

COOPERATION AMONG WORKERS IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY:
A focus on home-based workers and waste pickers
A joint ILO and WIEGO initiative

ILO/COPAC joint research on Statistics on Cooperatives

STATISTICS ON COOPERATIVES COUNTRY IN FOCUS: CANADA

Cooperatives in Canada
The structure of business cooperatives, between the producer and their services with the financial and technical support of the state, has been studied in Canada. The study is based on the results of a survey of 1000 cooperatives in 2008. The study is based on the results of a survey of 1000 cooperatives in 2008. The study is based on the results of a survey of 1000 cooperatives in 2008.

Cooperatives and the future of work

The Future of Work Centenary Initiative Issue No. 6

COOPERATION IN A CHANGING WORLD OF WORK: Towards a cooperative future*

1. Strong, fair, secure, and equitable

Cooperatives and the world of work series

COOPERATIVES AND THE WORLD OF WORK No.1

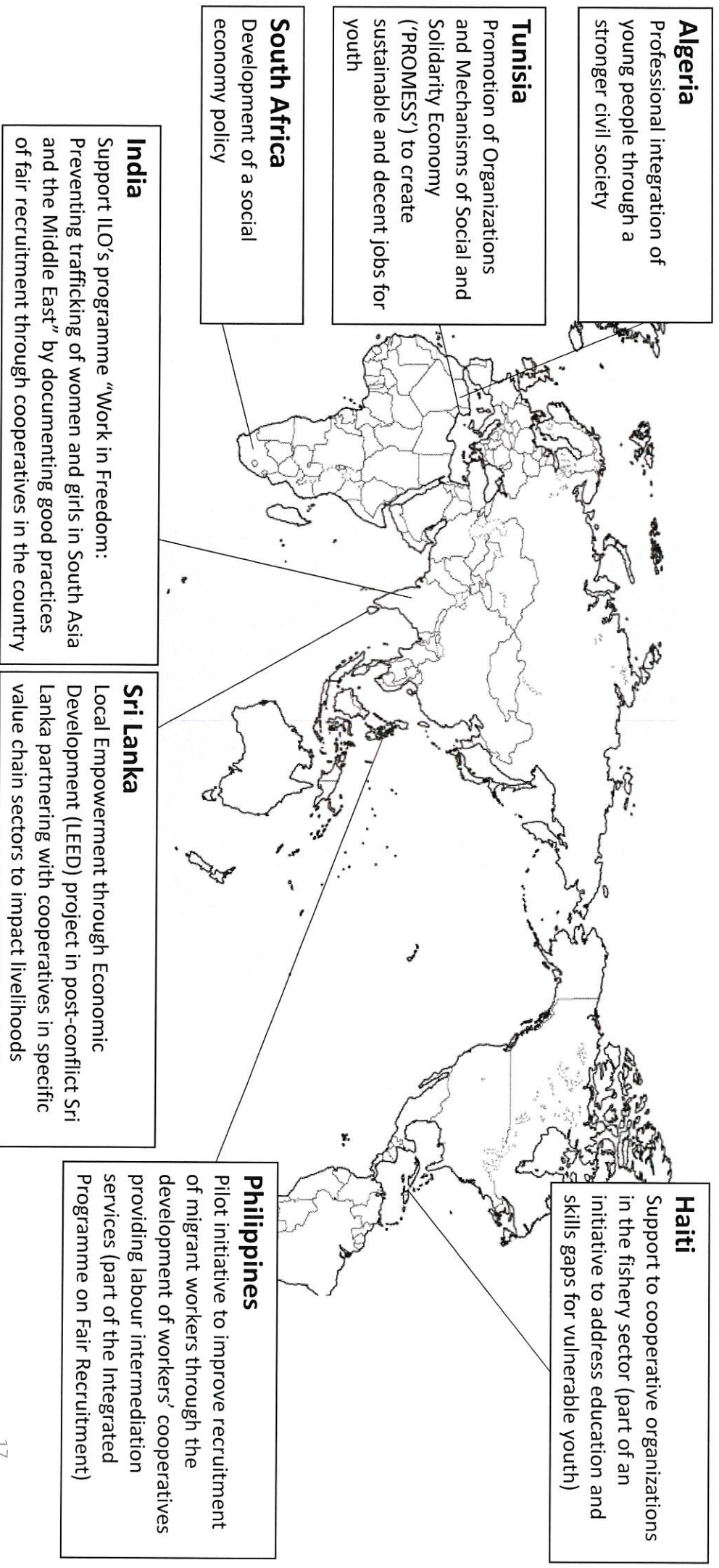
Leveraging the cooperative advantage for women's empowerment and gender equality

INTRODUCTION

Public policies for SSE case studies

Public policies for the social and solidarity economy: Towards a favourable environment
The case of the Republic of Korea

Examples of ongoing development cooperation



Thank you
Ευχαριστώ