

**GSEF Global Virtual Forum**  
***Great Challenges, Greater Solidarity***  
***Power of Community and SSE as a Path for Transformation***

**19 October 2020**  
**Opening Plenary Session**  
**SSE in Times of Great Challenges: A Strategy for Inclusion and Well-Being**

**Moderator:** Mr. Jason Nardi, General Delegate, Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of Social Solidarity Economy (RIPESS) Europe

**Speakers**

- Mrs. Soham El Wardini, Mayor of Dakar, Senegal
- Ms. Yoo Yuwon, Salim health-cooperative
- Mr. Jorge Bragulat, Universidad 3 de febrero
- Mr. Gianluca Salvatori, Director, European Research Institute on Cooperative and Social Enterprises (EURICSE)
- Prof. Marguerite Mendell, University of Concordia
- Mr. Juan Manuel Louvier Martinez, Director General, National Institute of Social Economy of Mexico (INAES), Mexico

**Summary**

The inaugural session provides an approach from different regions of the world of how the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) allows to reflect and reconfigure societies, to make them more just and inclusive; this in a context of evident deterioration of the conventional economies that has exacerbated its economic and social consequences in the face of the health emergency.

In the SSE, a sustainable path is visualized which makes possible the integral development of the human being in an atmosphere of harmony and respect for the environment. The principles, values and practices of the SSE are outlined as indispensable elements of a strategy for the inclusion and well-being of all people, which is even more urgent today and perhaps even possible.

**Concept Note**

The already vertiginous world, today, lives complex times because of the COVID-19 context. Although the digitalization of a great number of school, work, political

and family activities has brought great transformations, there are pending issues in the social field. In the face of the global crisis, inequalities are consolidating.

During the pandemic, a limited number of businesses grew economically, while the International Labor Organization estimates that, in the first quarter of the year, the equivalent of 155 million full-time jobs were lost in working hours. Many of the jobs will never be recovered.

Promoting well-being and inclusion calls for the debate to think about development not only in economic parameters, but also in considering the environment, the social climate, the quality of life, the good life.

The 2008 crisis showed the deficiencies of having the capital as a paradigm by widening the gaps within societies. A decade later, the Covid-19, once again questions the permanence - and relevance - of the capitalist economic model. The reflections and debates on this subject must be deepened, in order to implement the great and profound required changes and achieve fairer societies in which *no one is left behind*.

The SSE constitutes a viable and ideal path for achieving well-being and social inclusion. It places people, their values, their dynamics in community and the integral development of the human being at the center through education, social security, dignified work and a more equitable distribution of the wealth generated from it; in an atmosphere of harmony and respect for the environment, invoking the value of solidarity and reciprocity over competition and accumulation: the community over the individual.

Building the roads to move from a system with negative effects such as social and economic exclusion, to one that allows us to meet -and re-meet- in collectivity, from *horizontality*, from a "we" that recognizes each person *as an end in themselves* and not as a *mere instrument*; that preserves and respects nature instead of using it and destroying it; **another economy is required**.

The SSE is an effective strategy for all people, regardless of their origin or condition, to fully exercise their rights, develop their potential, and have equal opportunities. It allows us to see social inclusion and well-being not as objectives and future ideas, but as present realities and daily experiences.

In the world, there are lessons learned from the past and the present, from rural and urban areas, from countries with different levels of development, from different latitudes, in order to face complex times with the SSE and to enhance territories, well-being and inclusion. The exercise of the principles, values and practices of the Social and Solidarity Economy makes it possible to rethink and reconfigure a better present and future in everything and for everyone.

**Objectives:**

- To share, from different regions, the experiences, practices and initiatives of the SSE that promote development from the local level and the ways of articulating them in order to integrate a model of regional and global scope based on principles and values that seek the well-being of people and their communities.
- To reflect on and redefine the principles and important roles of the SSE for a better world where *no one is left behind*. To propose answers from the perspective of solidarity and collectivity to the challenges implied by the depletion of the predominant capitalist economic model, facing the future and in the context of the crisis by COVID-19, through processes of innovation, cohesion and social integration.

**Questions that will be addressed during the session***Round 1*

- How does the SSE contribute or has contributed to the well-being and inclusion from the perspective of the territories? What are some experiences?
- Which actors have been key in the implementation and which aspects of the economic model had to be overcome in order to promote the SSE?

*Round 2*

- How do we do it from the SSE perspective so that no one is left behind?
- The context of the pandemic represents greater challenges and, in turn, opportunities. How does the SSE contribute to a better world? How do we make it extend to all sectors and all areas?