



## Final declaration of the 8<sup>th</sup> Mont-Blanc Meetings

### “SSE: the new efficiency”

We, the participants of the 8<sup>th</sup> Mont-Blanc Meetings, leaders, entrepreneurs, actors and supporters of the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE), as well as citizens and representatives of institutions from all over the world, gathered in Archamps, next to Geneva, from 6 to 8 December 2017, to observe the contributions of the SSE to the society and to create, together, better ways of accompanying its change of scale and increasing its impact.

The SSE is efficient because it meets needs of populations and brings solutions to main social, climatic and civic challenges we are facing with.

The SSE has a heritage of values shared by actors all over the world. These values are not only those of democracy, equity and solidarity but also those of compassion, responsibility, creativity and ingenuity for the fulfillment of all and human dignity.

As a key global player, more than one billion people in the world are already involved in the SSE.

We are firmly determined to continue to build together and strengthen the SSE which is a mechanism of the civil society to open new ways of development. Having achieved greater recognition by the international community, we are working to promote its expertise to facilitate its change of scale, and thus to develop as well as to spread its model.

The commitment made by nations on September 25, 2017 at the United Nations headquarters in New York to reach by 2030 the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) and the other transformative action plans adopted by the international community such as the **Paris Agreement** on climate change, the **New Urban Agenda** which marked the conclusion of the 2016 Habitat III Conference of Quito, Ecuador and the Decade of Family Farming project (2018-2028) will be even better achieved if they rely on SSE, which has always acted this way.

The SSE gathers many diverse structures (cooperatives, mutual funds, foundations, etc.) involved in multiple fields of activities and attracts more and more actors who incorporate its principles. All of them share common efficient practices that give **priority to human being** over capital, to serve their members and the community as a whole, to invest back their profits into the social object of the company, and to adopt a democratic and participative governance. Thus they help building a sustainable social and economic system able to answer the needs and the fulfilment of present generations, all the while taking into account the needs and aspirations of future generations. It is through those values anchored in its DNA that SSE demonstrates its resilience when facing the financial crisis of 2007-2008, as well as its ability to respond to natural disasters that struck over the past few years.

Therefore, we invite the political and economic decision makers as well as the citizens to closely examine the plural efficiency of SSE and to make collective and creative energy. That is why participants of the 8<sup>th</sup> Mont-Blanc Meetings invite to:

- 1) strengthen entrepreneurship and innovation from SSE to serve sustainable development;
- 2) deepen democratic governance and partnerships to serve plural performance;
- 3) develop new solutions meeting needs of populations;
- 4) use digital innovations as development levers.

#### 1- **SSE: entrepreneurship and innovation for sustainable development**

The SSE represents a high-profile asset in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda and reach its 17 goals, as well as the 5 Ps described in its preamble (people, planet, peace, partnerships, prosperity).

In order to fully exploit that source of efficiency and make it grow, we invite the political decisions makers, the SSE organizations and citizen associations to:

- **in terms of innovation:**
  - put SSE innovation skills to profit in order to conceive creative solutions at national and international levels;
  - recognize the efficiency of the SSE and make the model known to the largest number of people possible, as well as its success and innovation potential;
- **in terms of support:**
  - support the exchange platforms and public-SSE partnerships in order to favor the emergence of new entrepreneurship modes and make young people acknowledge the great variety of models of entrepreneurs and organizations representing another way of generating and distributing wealth, and contribute to the emergence of a plural economy;
  - create a network of SSE companies contributing to specific sustainable development goals, such as the reduction of climate change effects (cooperatives focused on renewable energies, carpool, etc.) and form specific alliances between regional governments and SSE organizations around essential issues such as housing, health, social inclusion, etc.;
  - create SSE business incubators providing financial and technical support to strategic branches, and give them access to public markets;
- **in terms of financing:**
  - guide investment and savings towards sustainable projects anchored in territories;
  - reinforce efficient SSE financing ecosystems (cooperative and ethical banks, community savings mechanisms, solidarity micro-credit, etc.) which allow to reinvest profits to the benefit of territory development;
  - explore innovative financing modes in order to amplify SSE and allow it to fully participate to the achievement of the SDGs;
  - work on a cross-border funding network of SSE and national investment funds with the involvement of public and private sectors.

## 2- SSE: democratic governance and partnerships for performance

SSE implements not only a collaborative governance but also a civic and democratic one, allowing employees and consumers to be part of the decision-making process, which explains its adaptability and, therefore, a great part of its efficiency. Moreover, its will is to serve the Society and to add value to common and public goods.

We invite to:

- mobilize SSE values, its democratic governance and participative practices in order to realize the bold transformative vision of the 2030 Agenda which aims at bringing the world to a viable and resilient trajectory;
- bet on SSE to have synergies emerge and be reinforced, as well as local, territorial and international partnerships between players dedicated to reaching the SDGs, the Paris Agreement on climate and the New Urban Agenda;
- mobilize all players by an action from SSE in alliance with other organizations (syndical, ecological, rural, common movements...) and institutions by installing a permanent debate around a common proposition platform (social, economic, and ecologic);
- accompany the SSE scale change via better information, legal framework and financing (notably, incentive tax system and innovating financing modes), etc.;
- allow communities to take or take back the control over common goods (water, soil, natural resources...) by developing cooperatives, mutual funds and associations.

### 3- SSE: efficient and sustainable solutions to the needs and aspirations of the populations

To increase social, ecological and civic transitions in a human way, we invite:

- **governments and international institutions** to:
  - promote laws and legal framework in favor of the development and rise in power of the SSE;
  - facilitate the conversion of companies to the SSE models, and especially to conceive incentives to the passing of a company to its employees to make it operate according to collective ownership modalities and SSE functioning;
  - adhere to the International Leading Group on SSE and contribute to promoting the SSE on a global level;
  - integrate the SSE in the priorities of their public support to development (countries of the development support committee and OECD);
  - integrate the SSE in school programs and develop academic research;
- **territorial communities** to:
  - recognize and actively promote SSE contribution to proximity services such as transport, social services, housing, culture, health, etc., and to put in place public-SSE partnerships to that end;
  - favor public market attribution to SSE companies;
  - take all possible measures to make SSE more known to the population;
- **entrepreneurs** to:
  - take into account the SSE and put in place forms of collaborative, functionality or circular economy initiatives based on SSE models and principles, while offering decent and equitable working conditions;
  - reinvest profit in the company and finance initiatives in favor of public goods;
  - seize the opportunities of technological change to accelerate economic and societal progress (digital levers and its democratization to access knowledge) and to take into account threats (automation to the detriment of human adaptive faculties, "all digital", increase technological dependence etc.)
- **civil society, associations and institutions** to:
  - gather information on SSE and contribute to founding a new culture by opting for products and services it offers;
  - contribute to SSE financing (crowdfunding...);
  - express what matters the most to them, and participate in the creation of new evaluation criteria for public policies and decisions made by public authorities.
  - encourage within SSE and in the society a willingness to openness, change and collaborative work;
  - stimulate audacity of citizens and adaptation of behaviors for change;
  - put people and communities at the heart of the economy and mobilize them politically and in large numbers;
  - give more space to women and young people and make a commitment to a good "leadership" - leaders involvement in everyday actions.

### 4. Indicators to affirm Social and Solidarity Economy identity and effectiveness

The need to conceive new measure instruments to evaluate the impact of public policies, economic activity and investments is growing.

We invite:

- to conceive measurement innovations based on present communities' needs;
- to develop indicators which highlight not only successes but also negative externalities on the social, environmental and societal aspects of economic activities, whether by SSE actors or the dominant economy;



- to develop relevant social and ecological indicators in order to represent SSE identity, to establish societal impacts of solidarity actions and to promote interaction between SSE actors and the academic world;
- to take into account the SSE complexity and transversality in its design and understanding;
- to the setting up of participative processes aiming at elaborating new indicators, which would measure not only economic performance, but also social and environmental impacts, thus providing a more inclusive understanding of the development.

We encourage:

- **SSE players** on all continents to create and propose non-monetary evaluation criteria of all activities, services and projects; to collaborate on the basis of their respective experiences in order to list all evaluation criteria to take into account the multiple assets of the SSE, and elaborate together indicators easy to manipulate so as to favor their use by small and medium-sized SSE companies.
- **national statistics organisms and research** to equally take up the challenge of conceiving new criteria and measure tools which take into account the great economic and societal transformations currently happening (SDGs, climate change, inclusion).
- **public authorities and academic institutions** to start a series of participative processes aiming at elaborating indicators and piloting tools for public policies which would bring out SSE assets and its plural contributions to development, and which would allow to compare them to other players' inputs, even from a macro-economic point of view.

We, SSE actors, gathered at « SSE International Forum », emphasize at the end of the 8th Mont-Blanc Meetings the efficiency of the SSE to reach social as well as economic, environmental and civic objectives. Our forum, listening to participants of these meetings, will develop by itself its practices to expand, strengthen its ability to influence, and ease the creation of new unifying projects.

Archamps, on December 8, 2017