



Global Forum
for Social and Solidarity
Economy

THE GSEF CHARTER



Global organization of local governments and civil society networks committed to the
development of the Social and Solidarity Economy

THE GSEF CHARTER

Adopted by the GSEF Extraordinary General Assembly on October 30, 2025

The GSEF Charter complements the GSEF Bylaws, available at gsef-net.org

0. Preamble

0.1. The Seoul Declaration, published on November 5, 2013, marked a key step in the creation of an international network bringing together local governments and Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) organizations. Entitled "New discovery of collaboration ", it calls for the emergence of a plural economy to counter the inequalities and ecological threats generated by neoliberal capitalism. Founded on global citizenship and cooperation between public and private players, it legitimizes a multilateral network promoting global socio-economic solidarity.

0.2. This declaration highlights SSE as a vehicle for resolving economic polarization, social inequality, exclusion and environmental challenges, promoting a model focused on communities, human beings and sustainability. Fundamental principles include public-private-civil society partnership, citizen empowerment, cooperation, and consideration of cultural and territorial diversities.

0.3. The development of the SSE relies on everyone, especially on young people and women, who play an essential role as catalysts for change, in their ability to build a sustainable future for all. The GSEF recognizes the importance of their active inclusion, both in decision-making and in access to economic and socio-professional opportunities.

0.4. Since its creation, the GSEF has established itself as a genuine forum - a space for exchange and dialogue where local governments and Social and Solidarity Economy organizations meet to share experiences and co-construct solutions adapted to local challenges. Convinced of the relevance of the local scale, the GSEF promotes the co-construction of SSE development, bringing together a diversity of stakeholders sharing common values and objectives. This constant dialogue between public authorities and SSE players has enabled the GSEF to become a place of strategic convergence, fostering cooperation at different scales.

0.5. The GSEF works to support the development of the Social and Solidarity Economy throughout the world, by supporting dialogue between public authorities and SSE players, in order to co-construct local and national public policies that contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and developing ecosystems favorable to the SSE.

0.6. Thanks to its active participation, in partnership with the international SSE ecosystem, the GSEF has contributed to the international recognition of the SSE, notably by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the United Nations General Assembly, which include it in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These advances have developed alongside local, regional and national public policies supporting the SSE.

0.7. GSEF members demand equality for all and trust in new generations. Drawing on the diversity and expertise of its members, the GSEF supports the development of a SSE that brings hope, by strengthening local capacities, supporting cooperation between players, promoting knowledge and sharing experience to reinforce the transition to a solidarity-based, sustainable economy on every continent.

0.8. The Dakar Declaration of May 6, 2023 reaffirms the urgency of the SSE to counter territorial, social and gender inequalities, while highlighting the vulnerability of young people, women and precarious workers in informal economies to the dominant economic model. It advocates a paradigm shift towards an economy based on cooperation, the primacy of the human being and the preservation of the living.

Article 1. Our identity and our commitment

1.1. For the global solidarity of the Social and Solidarity Economy, we establish the Global Forum for Social and Solidarity Economy (hereafter referred to as “GSEF”), as a non-profit international organization.

1.2. The GSEF strictly defends the four key principles that define Social and Solidarity Economy organizations: democratic governance and collective ownership, value sharing (non-profit or regulated profit-making), the pursuit of social utility, and local anchoring.

The GSEF subscribes to the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE), as defined by the International Labour Organization, and the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution “Promoting the Social Solidarity Economy for Sustainable Development” (A/RES/77/281) of April 18, 2023:

“The SSE encompasses enterprises, organizations and other entities that are engaged in economic, social, and environmental activities to serve the collective and/or general interest, which are based on the principles of voluntary cooperation and mutual aid, democratic and/or participatory governance, autonomy and independence, and the primacy of people and social purpose over capital in the distribution and use of surpluses and/or profits as well as assets. SSE entities aspire to long-term viability and sustainability, and to the transition from the informal to the formal economy and operate in all sectors of the economy. They put into practice a set of values which are intrinsic to their functioning and consistent with care for people and planet, equality and fairness, interdependence, self-governance, transparency and accountability, and the attainment of decent work and livelihoods. According to national circumstances, the SSE includes cooperatives, associations, mutual societies, foundations, social enterprises, self-help groups and other entities operating in accordance with the values and principles of the SSE”

1.3. The GSEF is defined by the central place it gives to dialogue between local governments and civil society actors and networks, fostering inclusive governance and shared decision-making.

The GSEF brings together a diversity of players around a common vision, based on shared values. The diversity of its membership is reflected in the composition of its governance, where each member can play a role in the decisions and direction of the association's actions.

The GSEF is a convergence space, and organizes cooperation based on sustainable, multilateral partnerships that enable a variety of players to join forces and voices to lead coalitions on common causes.

1.4. The GSEF is committed to inclusion and promotes diversity, rejecting all forms of discrimination, whether based on social origin, nationality, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation. It fights against discrimination and the discriminatory ideologies that fuel it, adopting an intersectional approach to better grasp and combat inequality in all its forms.

Article 2. Our vision and objectives

2.1. The Social and Solidarity Economy plays a fundamental role in building a desirable economic model. The SSE stands out for its ability to act through values of solidarity, social justice and democracy, in a world where profits and interests can no longer be the sole drivers of decision-making. It places people at the heart of development, strengthening their emancipation, social ties and cooperation, and contributing to a fairer economic system. The SSE plays an active role in building an economy of peace, by acting to prevent conflict and supporting the resilience of communities in the face of social, economic and environmental crises.

This model is that of an economy for biodiversity, striving to preserve the living, while integrating the principles of sustainability and respect for natural resources and common goods. The SSE works for an economy of the commons, where goods and services are managed collectively with the aim of shared well-being, while meeting the challenges of social justice, decent work and worker protection. It tackles inequalities between people and countries, by proposing alternative solutions to traditional capitalism, which generates growing inequalities. By putting people before profits, the SSE aspires to an economy that takes into account the finiteness of natural resources, respect for ecosystems and the need for a transition to a fairer, more sustainable society.

Through its transformative power, the SSE is becoming a driving force behind just transitions, providing solutions to today's global challenges. It offers alternatives in the face of climatic, environmental, economic and social crises, while contributing to greater community resilience. SSE is at the heart of the response to global emergencies, be they environmental disasters, political crises or conflicts. By strengthening local capacities, it supports post-crisis reconstruction and long-term resilience, creating sustainable mechanisms for solidarity and cooperation. In this way, the SSE becomes an essential pillar of sustainable development, capable of responding to emergencies while working towards a systemic transformation of societies.

2.2. Objective: The GSEF supports the development of the SSE throughout the world, and the implementation of the frameworks needed to scale it up, in order to make it the standard for the economy and achieve a sustainable and inclusive mode of development.

2.3. The GSEF commits to dialogue between public authorities and SSE players for the co-construction of local, regional, national and supranational public policies that strengthen SSE ecosystems in conjunction with local organizations sharing the GSEF's values where they exist.

The local level is at the heart of this dynamic, while articulating with the regional, national and international levels, in line with the United Nations' recognition of the key role of local governments in localizing the SDGs.

To accelerate this transformation, the GSEF facilitates the diffusion and transfer of initiatives and successful projects, by encouraging the sharing of experience and expertise between territories. It gives a central role to young people and women in the SSE and is committed to their full participation in decision-making processes and to building their capacities, both within the GSEF and in SSE ecosystems.

2.4. The GSEF's action is fully consistent with the international compass of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, defined by the United Nations in 2015. The Social and Solidarity Economy responds to the SDGs in a cross-cutting way, and has been recognized as one of the most strategic and coherent levers for ensuring their localization, by facilitating their adaptation and implementation at the level of each territory.

Article 3. Our strategy and means of action

3.1. The GSEF relies on the diversity and expertise of its members, and acts in complementarity with them to carry out its missions.

It acts as an advocate to ensure that the SSE is recognized, deployed and supported at international, continental, national and local levels.

The GSEF strengthens the capacities of territories and players by supporting the structuring of networks, forging connections and developing public policies.

It promotes initiatives and encourages the sharing of experience.

It also supports the dissemination of SSE innovations and best practices, leveraging the knowledge developed by SSE practitioners and academics to build new perspectives and new narratives.

3.2. Every two years, the GSEF entrusts one of its member cities with the organization of its flagship event, the Global Social and Solidarity Economy Forum. This key event punctuates the life of the organization, and provides essential leverage for the fulfillment of its missions. A unique space for convergence, it brings together public and private players in the SSE sector from all over the world to share experiences, strengthen cooperation and stimulate new dynamics. It is also a major moment of political interpellation, where local governments and networks of civil society players engage in dialogue to advance the recognition and development of the SSE at every level.

Pierre Hurmic

Mayor of Bordeaux, France

GSEF Co-Chair

Stéphane Montuzet

President of CRESS Nouvelle-Aquitaine, France

GSEF Co-Chair