

# Special session



during the International Conference on “Potential and Limits of Social and Solidarity Economy” organized by UNRISD and ILO in partnership with



## Alternative Finance and Complementary Currencies

8 May 2013 p.m. Room II - ILO - Geneva

This special session will examine the potential and limits of a range of innovative financial and monetary tools (especially community banks and complementary currencies) to scale up social solidarity economy initiatives, build more resilient, socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable territorial development strategies. It will be an opportunity to better understand the diversity and complementarity of these emerging instruments, which are still little known and understood in mainstream academic and development policy circles.

**The objective is to present to a non-specialized audience (Member States, international organizations, civil society actors and academics) a range of issues and trends on alternative finance and complementary currencies, notably on the following questions:**

- An overview of the diversity of existing complementary currency approaches;
- What are the success stories, advantages and risks of these instruments? How to evaluate their operationalization along sustainable development criteria? What societal vision and value systems do they underpin?
- The legal framework within which they develop (grey zones, constraints, gaps, jurisprudence, fiscal implications...);
- Interactions with other social and solidarity economy actors, as well as more conventional economic and financial actors;
- How can they be successfully combined with other mechanisms and tools for financing local development?
- Governance frameworks within which they operate and that they promote (what changes do they induce in terms of exchange practices?)
- What types of development strategies (social, ecological, economic, and territorial or community-level) do they aim to support; and what results are there to show?
- What scaling-up is possible/desirable, including in terms of replication (needs, limits, potentials)?
- What research axes are already underway, and how to facilitate mutual learning and greater dialogue between these streams?

Organized by the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS), in cooperation with: UNRISD, ILO, Palmas Institute Europe, The Global Fund for Cities Development (FMDV), Institute for Leadership and Sustainability (IFLAS) of the University of Cumbria, Veblen Institute and the New Economics Foundation representing the European Union Interreg project: Community Currencies in Action (CCIA).

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# The session will be divided in two parts:

## 14:00-16:00: Plenary - Introduction and general discussion (Room II) (Interpretation French-English available)

- **Community and complementary currencies, practices & research: state of the art** – Jérôme Blanc, Laboratoire Triangle - Université Lumière Lyon 2
- **Territorial development dynamics and complementary currencies** – Marie Fare, Monnaies En Débat-Acteurs-chercheurs pour la pluralité monétaire et la transformation sociale
- **Scaling up complementary currencies: what role for governments?** – Bernard Lietaer, Berkley University
- **Solidarity, inclusive endogenous development and popular economy: the Brazilian experience of community development banks and complementary currencies** – Carlos de Freitas, Palmas Institute Europe and Global Fund for Cities Development (FMDV)
- **Unlocking local wealth** – Jem Bendell, Institute for Leadership and Sustainability (IFLAS), University of Cumbria

### Interactive discussion

**Moderator:** Hamish Jenkins, United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS)

## 16:15-18:15: Breakout sessions (English only)

The plenary will be followed by two parallel working sessions that will develop their discussion around the following papers prepared for the conference:

### Session I – Currencies and Communities: dynamics for a solidarity and popular economy? (Room II)

- **Social currency for common goods: the case of the Palmas currency** – Camille Meyer, Université libre de Bruxelles
- **Solidarity Finance and Public Policies: The Brazilian Experience on Community Development Banks** - Augusto Câmara Neiva, Juliana Braz and Diogo Jamra Tsukumo, Center for Solidarity Economy at University of São Paulo and Joaquim Melo, Coordinator of Instituto Banco Palmas
- **Complementary Currencies strengthening the Social and Solidarity Economy: case studies from Kenya** – Will Ruddick, Institute for Leadership and Sustainability (IFLAS), University of Cumbria and Lucero Mariani, Agglo Rouen en Transition
- **New approach for a social and solidarity currency: Towards a solution for humanitarian, economic and ecological crisis. The case of Androy in Southern Madagascar** – Jean-Luc Roux, Consultant

### Interactive discussion

**Moderator:** Carlos de Freitas, Palmas Institute Europe and Global Fund for Cities Development (FMDV)

## Session II – SSE, Time & mutual credit currencies: changing values, changing impacts ? (Room V)

- **Validating Complementary and Community Currencies as an efficient tool for Social and Solidarity Economy networking and development: the deployment of theory of change and evaluation standards for their impact assessment** – Leander Bindewald, New Economics Foundation, and Christophe Place, Geneva School of Business Administration
- **The New Frontier in Payment Systems: Virtual Currency Schemes, the C3 Uruguay case and the Potential Impact on SSE** – Marco Sachy, University of Leicester School of Management
- **Tumin, pesos, or wealth? Limits and possibilities of a local alternative to scarcity of money and abundance of richness [case study in Mexico]** - Marcela Orraca, Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana Xochimilco and María José Orraca, Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México
- **Local Exchange Trading Systems (LETS) as a response to economic crisis: The case of Greece** – Eleni Thanou, Technological Educational Institute of Athens and George Theodossiou, Technological Educational Institute of Larissa and Dimitris Kallivokas, Technological Institute of Athens

### Interactive discussion

**Moderator:** Jem Bendell, Institute for Leadership and Sustainability (IFLAS), University of Cumbria

Note: On the morning of 9 May (10:00-13:00), there will be an **expert meeting of researchers and practitioners specialized in complementary currencies** to discuss future research issues and longer term strategies to give more visibility to complementary currencies and related tools in mainstream development policy circles, as well to scale up and replicate successful initiatives.

If you wish to participate, please send a message to David Vergari ([david.vergari@unctad.org](mailto:david.vergari@unctad.org)) with a brief description of your activities or interest related to complementary currencies.



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### Practical information

#### How to get from the “BIT” bus (Nr 8) stop to the conference location:

When you arrive at the “BIT” bus stop, cross the road toward the blue sign that says ‘ILO/BIT’ (BIT is the French abbreviation for ILO). From there, walk to the white sign that says ‘Entree’. Turn right as you enter the building and walk along the side of the parking lot until you reach a glass door on your right that says ‘Nord’. It also has a sign next to it that says ‘Visitors’ Entrance’. Go through the door and up two escalators. You have now reached the Visitors’ Entrance. If you are arriving on Monday 6 May before 9.30am please do not enter here, but follow the signs from the Visitor’s Entrance up a flight of stairs and across the front of the building to ‘Porte 1’. If you are arriving at any other time, please enter using the Visitors’ Entrance. Please bring with you and Id document.

