

**Réseau Intercontinental de Promotion de l'Économie Sociale et Solidaire**

**TOGETHER, LET'S PREPARE DAKAR 2005**

[www.uqo.ca/ries2001/RIPESS](http://www.uqo.ca/ries2001/RIPESS)

# RIPESS INFO

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**Address :** B.P. 611211524, Point E, Boulevard du Sud, Dakar Etoile, Sénégal  
**Telephone:** (221) 825.8590 **Fax:** (221) 825.3238 **Email:** [dk2005@sentoo.sn](mailto:dk2005@sentoo.sn)

**Newsletter for activists and friends of the network**

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## **1. RIPESS meeting at Mumbai (January 16 - 21, 2004)**

At the 2004 World Social Forum, RIPESS not only organized and engaged in debates on social and solidarity-based economy, but it also mobilized leaders of workers' movements in preparation for the 2005 Meeting at Dakar.

At Mumbai, RIPESS organized a seminar entitled: "Can Social Economy Change the World?" as well as two workshops, one focused on financial solidarity and the other on fair trade and local development.

RIPESS also participated in a seminar on public policy and the relations between nation states and society organized by GRESP (Peruvian Group for Economic Solidarity), one of the founding members of RIPESS.

With the goal of favoring diversity and sharing experiences, 12 members of RIPESS (six women and six men) contributed to these dialogues, representing Africa, Asia, and North and South America. RIPESS' speakers were the following: Abdou Salam Fall et Karine M'Bengue of RIPESS' Senegal technical team, Humberto Ortiz Roca (GRESP) and Nedda Angulo Villareal (GRESP) of Peru, Carine Guidicilli (GESQ) and Michel Chaurette (CECI) of Canada, Fatoumata Sy and Dame Sall (RADI) of Senegal, Gandhi Mathy, Arum Raste and Jai Sen of India, and Kaba Djakabe of Guinea.

Finally, RIPESS organized a meeting of leaders from Asian social movements, who displayed interest in joining the RIPESS dynamic and are undertaking case studies in Asia in preparation of Dakar 2005.

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## **2. International Seminar: Decentralization - Local Development - Economic Solidarity (Dakar, February 16 - 20, 2004)**

During five days of seminars organized by ENDA GRAF of Senegal, in partnership with the organizations *Mensenbroeders* of Belgium and *Fratelli dell'Uomo* of Italy, RIPESS offered perspectives on the stakes of social and solidarity-based economy at the international level. During the opening of the seminar, Abdou Salam Fall elaborated upon the context and challenges of the social economy as well as the role that should be played by NGO's in their quest for alternatives and understanding.

On Tuesday, February 19<sup>th</sup>, our communications advisor Karine M'Bengue presented *The Lima, Quebec and Dakar Dynamic*, and outlined the functions of RIPESS. At the end of her presentation, participants displayed interest in joining the membership of our network, thus strengthening our membership in Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Italy, and Belgium. One conclusion of this seminar was the highlighted need for the mobilization, in the North as well as the South, of participating organizations for the preparation and success of Dakar 2005.

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### **3. Networking in Mali (Bamako, February 24 - 28, 2004)**

Invited by Mrs. Aminata Traoré, the founder of the *Centre Ahmadou Hampathé Ba*, RIPESS participated in two activities in Bamako: a workshop on “The Tripartite Relation Between Civil Society, States, and the United Nations” given February 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>, and “African Cotton Production Benefiting Innovation in the Social Fabric” presented February 28<sup>th</sup> – March 4<sup>th</sup>. Here Abdou Salam Fall, gave the opening remarks for the first workshop with his presentation “Roles and Responsibilities of Civil Society”.

In conjunction with the *Groupe Malien de l'Économie Solidaire* (GMES), the participants defined their agenda in preparation for the RIPESS meeting in Bamako next February.

In addition, Mali's department of economic solidarity has initiated the planning of a meeting of departments of solidarity and entrepreneurship from Mali, Burkina Faso, and Senegal to create a panel of governments with departments dedicated to social and solidary-based economy, which will sit at Dakar in November 2005. The purpose of the panel will be to establish lines of communication between these ministries and departments to promote social economy. Nations sending delegates will include Canada, Brazil, Belgium, France, Quebec, Mali, and Burkina Faso.

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### **4.) Fair Trade lauded by FIARA, 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting (Dakar, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2004)**

During the 5<sup>th</sup> *Foire Internationale de l'Agriculture et des Ressources Animales* (International Fair of Agriculture and Livestock Resources), held in Dakar March 4 – 10, the forum on fair trade was one of the few instances of sharing and reflection.

Presided over by Karine M'Bengue of RIPESS and organized by Oxfam International and its partners, the forum allowed members of agricultural organizations from five African nations (Senegal, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, and Mali) to exchange their experiences, mainly concerning importation of the unhealthy remnants or byproducts of unconsumed Western food, (i.e. rice and poultry), organic products, agreements often not adhered to by countries, creation of food surpluses, and fair trade.

Before the opening of debate, Abdou Salam Fall described the link between fair trade and the international project of social and solidarity-based economy. He then invited the agriculturalists to mobilize for the fight against the political wrongs of neo-liberalism and the unfair treaties imposed on Southern countries. The leaders of the different agricultural organizations greatly appreciated RIPESS' approach and resolved to join us in our preparations for Dakar 2005.

Lastly Mr. Djarga Seidi, of NAFA-Gonal, has offered to be a contact for RIPESS in Guinea Bissau.

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## 5) News and Announcements

- Regarding international exchange, our administrative assistant Coumba Siby spent three months experimenting with the innovation of the “collective kitchen” in Victoriaville, Quebec. Eager to share her experience, she has been recording her findings and working to bring the successes evident in this project to Senegal.
- RIPESS’ technical staff in Dakar currently has four part-time interns. They include two Canadian students from Dalhousie University, Philip Duguay and Caroline Soucy, and two American students from Georgetown University, one working in collective kitchens, Laura Kogut, and the other, Charles Harris, on the topic of fair trade.
- The Canadian Center for Studies and International Cooperation (CECI) in its program of voluntary cooperation has hired a new communications advisor to develop RIPESS’ communications approach. Karine

M’Bengue (BA in Political Science and MA in Communication) joined our technical team in Dakar December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2003, for a period of two years. We welcome her aboard.

- Idiatou Bah, the contact liaison for the RIPESS team, has recently been blessed with a newborn boy. Currently in Montreal, she receives our warm congratulations.
- ACAPES, an NGO dedicated to assisting youth in finding work and education, has furnished the *Groupe Sénégalais d’Économie Solidaire* with two of its most promising assistants for part-time positions, as well as office space for the *Groupe’s* work in its grassroots mobilization for Dakar 2005.
- Announcing new publications from the *Conference Internationale de Gatinéau* (Quebec) September 24-25, 2003: *Le Sud ...et le Nord dans la mondialisation. Quelles alternatives ?*

Three documents by Louis Favreau, Abdou Salam Fall and Gérald Larose will be available at the end of 2004 under the following titles : (1) *Le*

*Sud... et le Nord dans la mondialisation : Quelles alternatives ?*

(2) *L'Afrique qui se refait : Initiatives économiques populaires et développement en Afrique Noire.*

(3) *Altermondialisation, économie sociale et coopération internationale : l'expérience québécoise.*

- Mrs. Georgine Kengne of the Center for the Promotion of Economic and Social Alternative from Cameroon, is currently building a

movement in Central Africa.

- **REMINDER:** Meeting of North American Network for Dakar 2005 is scheduled May 19<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2004 in Trois Rivières, Quebec.
- « THE ASIAN SME FORUM 2004 : Fair Trade and Solidarity Finance for Socially Responsible SMEs » is scheduled to be held at Kunming, China June 23 – 25, 2004.

Send your news and announcements to:  
[dk2005@sentoo.sn](mailto:dk2005@sentoo.sn)