

2010 National Summit on a People-Centred Economy

DECLARATION

We, the participants at the National Summit on a People-Centred Economy, coming from the co-operative, credit union, community economic development, social and solidarity economy, social enterprise and social finance movements, and in collaboration with labour, environmental and food security representatives and international guests from 11 countries on five continents, strongly affirm our commitment to collaborate and innovate to build a People-Centred Economy.

The roots of our movements are marked by struggles for economic, social and environmental justice. The values that sustain our historic innovation and creativity – social equity, solidarity, economic fairness, gender equality, environmental sustainability, inclusion and democracy – inspire the solutions we bring to our communities and our planet.

Our combined efforts have enabled us to improve the lives of countless people, contributing to the support and creation of thousands of quality jobs and services, the revitalization of neighbourhoods and communities, and the improvement or formation of new spaces of social inclusion, mobilization and governance. In doing so we reweave the essence of citizenship and contribution.

The People-Centred Economy is plural and firmly established in multiple sectors, including working Canadians living in urban and rural parts of the country, Aboriginal peoples, immigrants, youth, persons with disabilities, racialized groups, women fighting for gender equality and other community members experiencing inequity and injustice.

Today, we invite all people in Canada to join this movement to establish a People-Centred Economy that seeks a more just response to social, economic and environmental imperatives. We invite all people in Canada to recognize the common challenges we must face together in the decades ahead.

The participants at the Summit commit to co-operation among our organizations, institutions and networks in the task of scaling up the positive results we are producing and continuing to innovate with new solutions to the challenges we face. We commit to ongoing gender and diversity analysis to strengthen equity and equality within our work, and to pursue critical analysis and collaborative research aimed at improving our understanding and our practice. We commit to extending our collaboration to all those movements and sectors that are prepared to work for a sustainable and equitable future.

Together, at the 2010 Summit, we have forged an agenda for our collective project. To strengthen the People-Centred Economy we want:

TO INCREASE PEOPLE-CENTRED FINANCE AND INVESTMENT by pressing for legislative, regulatory and flexible tax measures to help mobilize capital and enlarge the collective capacity within communities, sectors and enterprises to effectively invest their resources in building sustainable local economies.

TO ENLARGE OUR CAPACITY TO EXPAND PEOPLE-CENTRED ENTERPRISES by proactively building partnerships within the sector, with governments and with business to increase public understanding and support and increase investment in leadership development, education and training.

TO EXPAND PEOPLE-CENTRED PURCHASING DECISIONS by public, private and civil society organizations from triple bottom line and blended value enterprises; by strengthening and multiplying the relationships among actors committed to building people-centred value chains; and by investing in intermediaries that facilitate market access and expansion, cooperation among suppliers, and branding of ‘social economy’ products.

TO PROMOTE PEOPLE-CENTRED POLICIES THAT EMPOWER COMMUNITIES by providing long-term supports to multi-stakeholder organizations that link community-based economic development and sustainability; by structuring incentives to help mobilize people’s investment of their time, talent and resources to transitioning their communities towards a people-centred and ecologically sustainable economy.

TO BUILD A STRONGER MOVEMENT FOR A PEOPLE-CENTRED ECONOMY by organizing a national roundtable to help facilitate the movement’s evolution, including grassroots participation; by mobilizing pressure and opportunities for the co-construction of public policy; and by organizing means to systematically scale up innovations and models that are successfully advancing a people-centred economy.

TO FOSTER PEOPLE-CENTRED INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY by working with global networks that promote the importance of people taking charge of their own development; and by mobilizing support for the Millennium Development Goals.

The people-centred economy has progressed considerably in Canada in recent years, but the gains are still fragile and the challenges substantial. The continued development of a people-centred economy demands an overall perspective that draws a link between the local and the global, between why something is produced and how it is consumed, between the worker and the socially aware investor, between our decisions – personal, household, organizational, private and public – and the health of the planet. We will continue to connect the dots across and within our societies to realize the potential we know from our own experience is possible.

In concluding this Summit, we commit to continue mobilizing for a model of development that leaves nobody aside, so that, more than ever before, solidarity will be at the heart of economic activity throughout Canada and around the world.

Ottawa, June 2010