

Our Managing Partner Rossana Chu attended the 2019 Social Enterprise World Forum in Ethiopia

22 November 2019 | LC Lawyers LLP | Rossana Chu



Sustainable Economic Growth for Human Development via Social Enterprises

From 21 to 25 October 2019, I attended the Social Enterprise World Forum and the pre-forum study tours in Addis Ababa of Ethiopia. That gave me an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas on an international level in the promotion of **sustainable economic growth for human development via social enterprises**.

“ There is no definition on “social enterprise”, but it is commonly known as it is a form of enterprise that serves a social purpose or unleashes the potential of the underprivileged. ”

Its positive social impacts can be greater than charities as it empowers people rather than merely providing.

I am pleased to see social entrepreneurs in different countries (including those in Africa) doing so much for their societies. Some of them focus on fundamental elements such as nutrition for children and the poor, basic schooling, health and hygiene, shelter, and agricultural engineering. Some social enterprises empower women to break through gender inequality and seek jobs, climate refugees to adapt to new environments, and disadvantaged families to expand their opportunities. Yet, there are other social enterprises dealing with issues relevant to our next generations, such as IT literacy, youth support, vocational training as well as the use of technologies for the betterment of the societies.

“ One example that I remembered most was the use of drones to deliver donated blood to remote areas. ”

We often hear of insufficient blood donations, but in some areas of the world, even the transportation of donated blood is a problem and its delay can lead to loss of lives. The use of drones is a solution, but the kindhearted social entrepreneur had to go through long procedures to obtain governmental approvals to fly the drones in the relevant territories.

To achieve meeting of minds, the SEWF 2019 brought together not only social entrepreneurs, but also officials from governments or quasi-government bodies, investors and academics to establish new relationships and create synergies for working together to increase the visibility and efficiency of social enterprises.

“ I believe international exchange at occasions like the SEWF can help achieving certain of the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals which are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. ”

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About the Social Enterprise World Forum and the 2019 Forum

The Social Enterprise World Forum (SEWF) is the leading forum for international exchange and collaboration in social entrepreneurship and social investment held in the form of annual conferences. The annual event was first held in Edinburgh in 2008 and has since been held on six continents.

The British Council hosted the SEWF 2019 in Addis Ababa of Ethiopia at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) conference centre. The forum was complemented with youth week, policy forum, academic symposium, study tours, exhibitions as well as networking evening cultural receptions.

The SEWF 2019 was a historic occasion as it was the first time the SEWF was held in a developing economy. Hosting the forum in Ethiopia provided a unique opportunity to create a truly global social enterprise movement that shared experience, built networks and delivered solutions for a more inclusive and sustainable future for all.

The 2019 event attracted up to 1,200 social enterprise leaders, policy makers, development partners, private sector representatives, academics, practitioners and supporters from all around the globe.



Source: <https://www.sewf2019.org/about/>

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