1. Introduction

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1.1 GETTING THINGS DONE SUSTAINABLY

A lake in Southern Sweden, the Darß Peninsula on the south shore of the Baltic Coast, the Island of Utila off the Honduran Coast, the Thames River in London, the River Spree in Berlin and the Ruhr River in Bochum – what do all of these places have in common? The descriptions evidently suggest some reference to water. These are the various places where the authors of this book spent ringing in the New Millennium. While few of us have memories of our specific New Year's resolutions for 2000, the majority remembers a general interest in sustainability issues and each of us can recall the specific body of water where we were.

At the turn of the millennium some people warned of radical change; social, environmental and religious groups anticipated major transformations (and also the Y2K bug). Some had high hopes; others had no specific outlook. Where were you at the turn of the millennium? Do you remember personal New Year's resolutions? What happened to them? And why should it take a new year or even a new millennium to make resolutions?

In 2000 governments worldwide agreed on Millennium Development Goals (MDG) to eradicate extreme poverty by 2015. In view of the deprivation experienced by billions of people, the goals appear to be a paradigmatic commitment to change. It is noteworthy that the MDG are based on a 25-year period with 1990 as their base year. The 1990s were years of substantive global summits, notably the Rio Earth Summit of 1992; there was also a systematic change that preceded these conferences, the end of the Cold War as symbolized by the fall of the Berlin Wall. From this base, the Millennium Declaration placed a commitment to change by 2015.

A 25-year period is roughly one generation; this particular one was the period during which we, the members of this research group, went through school and university and have become adult citizens in a world publicly committed to change. While there is a widely shared, vague

agreement that change is necessary, there is a wide space as to the precise goals of such change, as well as the possible means. Recall the MDG commitment to a world without poverty – without *extreme* poverty to be precise. What does this mean? The specification of the goal is to halve the proportion of people whose income is less than 1 US\$ a day by 2015. In short, the goal is a world with less relative poverty. Is this still a commitment to change? As far as means are concerned, who is responsible for such a commitment?

Change raises a question of responsibility. For personal resolutions the responsibility is at least obvious, it is yours. But who is responsible for holding government accountable to commit to international resolutions such as the MDG? Other governments? The rich and powerful? All the citizens of the world? Who takes the responsibility for societal change? *Changemaking* requires makers, or so it is often claimed. *Changemakers* may be governments, businesses or NGOs, but in everyday life they are most easily understood as persons. Biographies tell the stories of outstanding changemakers – motivated and creative, experimental and persistent, visionary and charismatic – and examples include civil society leaders such as Wangaari Mathai, who planted millions of trees, entrepreneurs like Steve Jobs, who changed information technology, and statesmen like Barack Obama, perhaps the major player today in the rhetoric of change.

Entrepreneurship receives double attention in capitalism. It is used to describe individual business entrepreneurs and increasingly as a way of talking about politicians and civil society leaders. Hence the spectre of an economic imperialism that phrases everything in economic terms, indicating entrepreneurship and innovation as somehow inevitable. On the one hand, entrepreneurs and their innovations are a driver of economic growth, and by implication also of the sustainability problems caused by economic growth. On the other hand, entrepreneurs may come up with social or ecological innovations that help overcome problems of unsustainability. One way this problem solving seems to happen is via a relatively recent type of changemaker: *social entrepreneurs* are now popular and self-identify as actors for societal change (rather than primarily for private profit). There is both attraction and doubt regarding social entrepreneurs and ‘the power of their ideas to change the world’ (Bornstein 2004).

It is easy to be attracted by the local, bottom-up nature of social entrepreneurs, by the many agile and non-Photoshopped faces from around the globe who stand for concrete ideas and actions for change. They express local origin yet are coupled with a larger outlook; there is a societal commitment rather than solitary project making. It is difficult not to be drawn in by the priority of the social, the relevant goal rather than the goal of

profit – not more of the same stuff, but different doings and beings. The possibility to work together with such changemakers is attractive, to help make brilliant ideas visible; the brilliant ideas of regular people rather than those of the usual suspects from business, politics or culture.

Thus in 2009 a journey started that would take us from the River Ryck in Greifswald to a football player in Hamburg (Germany) and a river jump inventor at the Loire in France, to quite a different river jump in Nairobi (Kenya), to the stakeholders upstream and downstream of a fund in Quito (Ecuador), to water catchments in Maharashtra (India) and a blue forest in the High Tatra in Slovakia, almost to ‘greening the desert’ in Saudi Arabia and back to Greifswald and into the Ryck (more about all this later).

From the start, however, there were second thoughts. What, if anything, can local actors achieve for societal change? Do such actors have significant access to resources and know-how of scale to make a difference or do they simply legitimize the status quo? In particular, what do tales of heroes tell us about change? ‘Caesar defeated the Gauls. Did he not even have a cook with him?’ asks Bertolt Brecht. Who is with these actors; who gives them authority to act on behalf of others? Where does social change originate? Is the framing of changemakers as ‘entrepreneurs’ and ‘innovators’ part of a neo-liberal agenda that makes the market and its terminology the imperial language for politics and civil society? What then about environmental sustainability and social goals? Finally, what about us? Would we be able to make a contribution to our partners or to the general public, not least given the large diversity of ideas and approaches seemingly held together by the new label of *social entrepreneurship*?

According to Joseph Schumpeter the maxim of the entrepreneur is *getting things done*. The term ‘social entrepreneur’ indicates there is a pressure in view of large societal and environmental problems to move beyond business pragmatism. Hence we see the rise of the adjective: not the entrepreneur, but the *social* entrepreneur (and not development, but *sustainable* development and so on). Accordingly we called our project GETting ThIngs DOne *Sustainably* (GETIDOS); pragmatism on the one hand, meeting social and environmental goals on the other. A paradox or the way forward?

Our research project set out to clarify the role and potential of social entrepreneurship for sustainable development with a specific focus on the water sector. Following a general mapping of social entrepreneurship in relation to major water challenges, we selected case studies for in-depth investigations and cooperations. The following sections provide the relevant background information, set out our approach and introduce the case studies that will be presented in depth in the following chapters.

1.2 GLOBAL CHANGE – SUSTAINABILITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Economic growth and its consequences have been at the centre of contestations over global change worldwide. On one hand it is argued that economic growth is required to promote development on a global level; on the other hand, there are large economic inequalities and, at least partly owing to economic growth, the world faces ecological challenges including climate change, biodiversity loss and freshwater shortage. Thus emerged *sustainable development*, which focuses not only on economic development but also on the non-economic dimensions, especially the environmental sustainability of the earth for present and future generations. As the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) put it in what is the most widely referred to political definition, ‘sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’ (WCED 1989).

The WCED puts particular emphasis on the concept of needs, ‘in particular the essential needs of the world’s poor, to which overriding priority should be given’ (WCED 1989). About a decade later this call for priority was taken up by 191 countries in the 2000 Millennium Declaration and the subsequent MDG with their primary focus on poverty eradication and its links to education, gender, health and environmental sustainability (see Box 1.1).

As far as actors are concerned, the MDG focus first on governments and intergovernmental agencies. Within each state, governments are to set appropriate targets and take responsibility for their achievement based on implementation strategies developed in dialogue with partners at home and from abroad. The MDG specify ends; the necessary means or strategies are left in principle to the respective governments and their partners. In practice, however, in spite of the wide focus on human development

BOX 1.1 THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education
- Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
- Goal 4: Reduce child mortality rates
- Goal 5: Improve maternal health
- Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability
- Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development

in the MDG, economic growth has frequently re-emerged as *the* means for development (Vandemoortele 2009, p. 364) along with a donor-centric view on aid (ibid. 365) as *the* means of development cooperation when economic growth has not yet been achieved. In spite of committing to endogenous development in principle, one global way of pursuing these goals tends to dominate.

In this light it comes as no surprise that entrepreneurship is frequently invoked in the context of achieving global change goals (Easterly 2006). Entrepreneurship has long been considered the driver of economic development. Business innovation rejuvenates economies – the train replaces the post carriage, the mobile phone, the landline and so on – triggering ‘gales of creative destruction’ (Schumpeter 1942). With the rise of sustainable development, entrepreneurship has been specifically placed in a context of *green growth* and more recently for the goal of *green economies* (UNEP 2011).

There is a need to look more closely into the concepts of entrepreneurship and innovation and their possible contributions to global change goals. The WCED has highlighted ‘the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment’s ability to meet present and future needs’ (WCED 1989). Yet the state of technology and social organization co-depends on available ideas and the ability to carry out these ideas. In view of the priority given to needs, it is noteworthy that the discussion of limits is a challenge for ecological innovation in the sense of new technologies – for example, for water saving in personal consumption, agriculture and industry – and for social innovation owing to the fact that the main limitation may be just as much social rather than technological. Cultural or political contexts may prevent the use of available instruments – for example insufficient hand-washing and personal hygiene may cause disease even in the presence of technology, and unsustainable consumption continues in the presence of greener alternatives.

We can further spell out the attraction to social entrepreneurship within the context of global commitments to change, particularly sustainable development, in terms of the following *prima facie* reasons for relevance. First, social entrepreneurship proposes to address societal concerns, particularly of those least-advantaged and excluded; it thereby seems highly relevant for achieving the hoped-for change.

Second, closer examination of the MDG, in particular the environmental sustainability goal (MDG 7), reveals a surprisingly strong plea for the contextual, local and endogenous. As a 2006 UNDP progress report notes, not only is there no definition of ‘environmental sustainability’ associated with the Millennium Development Declaration (ibid. 13), there is also a task for countries to adopt global targets and adapt them to their context,

including the specification of new goals and targets where relevant (ibid. 54). In short, progress and especially realistic visions of progress are closely tied to endogenous processes. Social entrepreneurship is associated with such contextual, endogenous processes.

Third, the difficulties with donor-centric views of development suggest the need to study alternative ways of dealing with problems; ideas changing minds instead of money changing hands, as Jan Vandemoortele puts it. Social entrepreneurship is associated precisely with such a focus on ideas and their power to change the world. As social entrepreneur Roberto Eppe puts it, ‘Il faut changer les cerveaux’ (see Chapter 3). A move beyond traditional donor-centric approaches is called for to examine the role of social entrepreneurs as putative actors in sustainable development.

Fourth, sustainable development and the MDG stand for a global mega-programme. There does not seem to be any evident way in which the contribution of social entrepreneurship could be studied in the face of such global challenges, let alone counted with a focus on specific targets. Nonetheless, a closer look is warranted. As noted above, the MDG methodology itself does not include a definition of environmental sustainability; rather there is a call to adopt and adapt more general principles (UNDP 2006). By implication, more contextual approaches are fully legitimate as long as the link to environmental sustainability is made explicit. The focus on home-grown processes particularly in relation to ideas implies a focus on very different ideas – case studies below include river jumps, toilet monuments and cup throwing – that each respond directly to specific problems and challenges, yet at best only indirectly to global aggregate targets. The fact that each idea is different also implies that appropriate contributions may fall out of the global aggregate focus. Hence a focus on the ideas of social entrepreneurs helps to make issues that may have remained excluded or were at the fringe more visible. The focus is on ideas that emerge in response to specific contextual problems; while these ideas may be highly relevant for those local problems, it is an open question whether such ideas can travel or be replicated and imitated. We will pay special attention to this issue of *scaling*. In short, even if there is no self-evident way of summing up and counting different ideas, this does not imply their irrelevance. Now that this has been said, we will say more about social entrepreneurship and our understanding of the concept.

1.3 SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

‘Social entrepreneurship’ and ‘social entrepreneurs’ have only become more widely known expressions since the early 1980s. As we will see in the

next chapters, in practice these terms refer to a diversity of individuals, organizations and networks. To do justice to this diversity, we here use the term *social entrepreneurship initiatives* (SEI) to cover both the social entrepreneur and the organization or network.

The rise of SEI coincided with a more general rise in entrepreneurship in terms of a revival of small businesses (seen for more than a decade in Europe and the United States), a shift in the ideology of political economics from Keynesianism to the more individualist, market-first ideologies of the Thatcher and Reagan administrations, and a persistently high unemployment rate, which led to the hope that entrepreneurship would create new businesses and jobs (Swedberg 2000, p. 8). The rise of civil society post-World War II added to this constellation of factors in the 1980s and 1990s with an increasing number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and an increasing competition amongst them for funding.

Ashoka, founded in 1980 by William Drayton, is a US-based foundation for the support of social entrepreneurs worldwide and is probably the most important organization in making the term ‘social entrepreneur’ more widely known. Before we turn to Ashoka in more detail, a conceptual point is in order. We approach social entrepreneurship as a contested concept (Gallie 1956). Contested concepts serve as common currency for different actors from government, civil society, business and academia. The concept of sustainable development is a prominent example. On one level contested concepts have core ideas and expectations that need to be addressed; in the example of sustainable development there is a concern with (economic) development as well as with (environmental and social) sustainability. These expectations can seem paradoxical and controversial; that is one reason why they attract attention. For example, Wolfgang Sachs has called sustainable development a paradox. For him it means economic growth *and* nature conservation; yet an ever-increasing material standard for all is not compatible with the finite resources of planet Earth and even less so with nature conservation (Sachs 1999). Likewise, social entrepreneurship opens a space for concern with social goals *and* an entrepreneurial approach. Again the first impression seems paradoxical; social entrepreneurship as promoting societal goals *and* making profit?

On another level contested concepts attract specific conceptions. Actors from government, business, civil society and academia propose specific ways of using and refining the concept. What is the social or the social mission? Can entrepreneurship be equated with business and making a profit? What difference does the qualifier ‘social’ make to entrepreneurship? Accordingly it is important to clarify one’s conception of a contested concept and at the same time keep in mind that it is part of a larger contestation. Disagreements over the meaning of contested concepts reveal the

central arguments that the concept calls forth and unite people in discussion and contestation (Jacobs 1999).

Before we turn to our working conception, we offer a few comments on the general and vague level of the contested concept. The social of social entrepreneurship requires at minimum a focus on societal issues. Paradigmatic is a focus on needs in relation to poverty reduction. The world's most famous social entrepreneur, Muhamad Yunus, illustrates the goal of his microcredit approach with the image of *museums of poverty*; poverty, not just a proportion of the poor, is to be made a matter of the past. Entrepreneurship seems to require at minimum the production of some good or service, such as the microcredits offered by Yunus's Grameen bank. These considerations show that already at the vague level a few differentiations are possible to help shape the contours of the contested concept. The production of goods and services suggests a difference to social activism, which may advocate for or against a cause but need not produce a good or service. The explicit social mission suggests a difference to primarily profit-oriented or self-interested business; a pioneer of social entrepreneurship research, Gregory W. Dees argues that this is the core that distinguishes social entrepreneurs from business entrepreneurs (Dees 2001). Finally, the production of goods and services suggests a difference to government, which sometimes provides (public) goods, yet is ultimately responsible for the *regulation* of goods (the production being a secondary question of appropriate means). These are only initial differentiations with blurry borders. We hence turn to the level of conception and more specific approaches. Actors from government, business, civil society and academia have approached social entrepreneurship from their specific yet frequently overlapping contexts. In his first speech as UK Prime Minister in 1997, Tony Blair referred to social entrepreneurs as 'those people who bring to social problems the same enterprise and imagination that business entrepreneurs bring to wealth creation' (quoted in Grenier 2009, p. 175). Business entrepreneurs have also responded to the theme of social entrepreneurship; for example, Jeffrey Skoll of eBay founded the Skoll Foundation in 1999. The foundation speaks of social entrepreneurs as 'extraordinary leaders . . . ; their organizations are creating the innovative models that can spark large-scale change for seemingly intractable social problems'.¹ Furthermore, civil society organizations have been selecting, supporting and celebrating social entrepreneurship for some time now. Ashoka speaks of social entrepreneurs as 'individuals with innovative solutions to society's most pressing social problems'.² While there is widespread interest in social entrepreneurship, properly speaking it is only academia that has a constitutive interest in formulating conceptions of social entrepreneurship.

Specifically, Jacques Defourny and Marthe Nyssens have identified the emergence of two schools within social entrepreneurship research – the *earned income school* and the *social innovation school* (Defourny and Nyssens 2010). The earned income school defines social enterprise as ‘any earned-income business or strategy undertaken by a non-profit to generate revenue in support of its charitable mission’ (Defourny and Nyssens 2010, p.41). In terms of defining elements, the focus is on the earned income of organizations while the social tends to be associated with the production of goods and services for a market. Innovation is not central for this approach. According to Defourny and Nyssens, the earned income view strongly dominates outside academia, and it usually requires a social enterprise to have at least 50 per cent market-based income. Within academia, the social enterprise incubator at Harvard Business School has been associated with this view as well as the work of Jed Emerson and Jerr Boschee.

In contrast, the social innovation school analyses social entrepreneurship centrally in terms of innovation. Unlike an invention, an innovation has to be put into practice; it has to be carried out. Like an invention, an innovation has to be novel at least relative to its place and time. For example, the microcredits of Grameen are relatively novel in the context of post-independent Bangladesh even if historians can point to earlier instances of microcredit use in the Middle Ages and in early industrialization. For the social innovation school there is a primary focus on outcomes and impact rather than on incomes. Frequently there is a focus on individuals presumably owing to the strong linkage between new ideas and persons. In terms of defining elements, we find a focus on innovation, frequently (though not necessarily) a focus on individuals and finally a focus on the social in a wide sense that is not tied to market production as an outcome or a necessary prerequisite. Earned income in this view is a question of means and not central to the phenomenon. If the earned income view has been popular outside academia, then almost the opposite seems to hold inside academia with many scholars focusing on social innovation (Nicholls 2010).

The language of schools no doubt calls for some caution so as not to downplay the diversity of positions and perspectives. More general juxtapositions have a helpful role as a heuristic for mapping and hence for situating more fine-grained positions. In particular, the above distinction is resonant with the language of practice. Consider as an example two prominent civil society organizations, Ashoka and the Social Enterprise Alliance.

According to Ashoka:

Social entrepreneurs are individuals with innovative solutions to society’s most pressing social problems. They are ambitious and persistent, tackling major social issues and offering new ideas for wide-scale change. Rather than leaving

societal needs to the government or business sectors, social entrepreneurs find what is not working and solve the problem by changing the system, spreading the solution, and persuading entire societies to take new leaps.³

Here the focus is on innovation; innovations that can change systems. Ashoka selects and supports fellows according to a selection procedure that focuses on ‘the new idea, creativity, entrepreneurial quality, social impact of the idea and ethical fiber’.⁴ Ashoka has selected more than 3000 fellows from 80 countries and typically supports these fellows with a three-year stipend as well as network support.

According to the Social Enterprise Alliance:

A social enterprise is an organization or venture that achieves its primary social or environmental mission using business methods. The social needs addressed by social enterprises and the business models they use are as diverse as human ingenuity. Social enterprises build a more just, sustainable world by applying market-based strategies to today’s social problems.⁵

Here the focus is on the use of business approaches for social or environmental missions.

The respective approaches of these two organizations fit well with the distinction between the two schools. Moreover they suggest a rough terminological clarification: social entrepreneurship as a reference to social innovation and social enterprise as a reference to earned income. The distinction need not be viewed as a dichotomous either/or debate.⁶ There is room for both earned income and social innovation approaches. In fact, both co-exist in practice. In the following chapters the focus will be on social entrepreneurship broadly within the school of innovation; we will, however, keep earned income in perspective and will return to it in our synthesis chapter (8).

Innovation is the carrying out of new ideas relative to their temporal and/or spatial context. The main focus is not the invention but the putting into practice of the invention. As is well known, not least from political visionary programmes, it is one thing to have an idea, quite something else to carry it out. We limit this practical focus to a modest requirement of novelty relative to temporal and spatial context. What is proposed as novel by an entrepreneur may be nothing new from the perspective of the historian – a point that has even been made in regards to the concept of social entrepreneurship!

A focus on the practical implications of ideas that target social problems leads to the concern of whether the product or service is available to all who need it or who could benefit from it. In social entrepreneurship research the term ‘scaling’ has come to be associated with this issue. In the

following chapters we address this concern via an investigation of the goals of the respective SEI and their ability to achieve these goals. More specifically, we ask whether they aim at the national level and to what extent they have been able to achieve impact on the national level; this is a central reference point as the nation-state remains a central locus of the democratic discussion and implementation of the public good.

Scaling is possible through many different means – organizational growth, collaboration with others, imitation by others, and so on. In view of this diversity it is helpful to first draw a basic distinction. In the following chapters, *scaling out* refers to the growth and replication of a product and service by the SEI itself, as a franchise or by imitation. *Conditions of scaling out* refer to the use and creation of cultural, economic, political, scientific and environmental spaces that co-shape the journey of an innovation. For example, legal advocacy work may remove a barrier in regulation that the innovation faced in political space. We will first analyse ways of scaling for different SEI. In the synthesis chapter (8) we will review the results obtained via the case studies.

On this basis we will discuss the *new paradigm of scaling* that is proclaimed to have emerged from social entrepreneurship practice (McPhedran Waitzer and Paul 2011). The *old paradigm* in this debate draws on an idea of scaling from the business sector: grow your organization and with it you will grow your impact. It is said to draw on ‘conventional wisdom of the business sector, where efforts at scaling-up typically focus on increasing the size of organizations’ (McPhedran Waitzer and Paul 2011, p. 143). Additionally there is the idea of global reach: ‘Great business ideas go global to serve customers; at their full potential they become ubiquitous. For example, people everywhere happily use soft contact lenses without having any idea where they first came from’ (ibid.). In contrast, the new paradigm – pioneered in social entrepreneurship research by Jeffrey Bradach (2003) – holds a different view on organizational size and scaling. Societal impact is the goal, whereas organizational growth and size is deemphasized; ‘finding ways to scale impact without scaling the size of an organization’ is for Bradach the ‘new frontier for our work in the field’ (Bradach 2003, p. 143). ‘How can we get 100x the impact with only a 2x change in the size of the organization?’ (Bradach 2010). According to McPhedran Waitzer and Paul, this emerging paradigm is better adapted to the social sector: ‘This emerging paradigm holds the promise of shaping strategies that succeed, thanks to the defining characteristics of the *social* sector, leveraging the collaborative potential of mission-driven innovators while keeping organizational footprints – and attendant resource needs – to a minimum’.

We will return to this paradigm debate in the final part of this book

BOX 1.2 THESES ON INNOVATION AND SCALING

Innovation: Social entrepreneurship initiatives carry out new ideas relative to their temporal and/or spatial contexts of action.

Scaling: Social entrepreneurship initiatives a) aim at the broad societal level and b) are able to implement their ideas at the broad societal level.

Further theses in relation to the two schools:

School of innovation: The social entrepreneur as individual is central as a driver for innovation; they are the founders and top-down leaders of their organizations.

Earned income: Earned income is central for social entrepreneurship initiatives.

(Chapter 8). For now we can note that the focus on innovation suggests the following *theses* to be examined in the following case studies (see Box 1.2).

So far our approach fails to specify the social in social entrepreneurship. Both in the earned income and the social innovation schools, the social is frequently taken for granted as a matter of obviously good goals.⁷ Yet upon consideration, little is self-evident or obvious. Albert Cho points out two key problems (Cho 2006). First, if the social is taken for granted, then the social of social entrepreneurship is effectively deferred to social mission, social innovation, and so on. For example, while innovation may help clarify entrepreneurship, it is much less clear how social innovation helps clarify what is social about social entrepreneurship. The question has simply been deferred and we now need to ask what is social about social innovation? Goals and procedures are frequently controversial and thus more needs to be said about goals and procedures. Second, the problem re-emerges as one of monological definition: social is what the social entrepreneur or social enterprise claims to be social. This move seems tied to the assumption that the actor is good. Yet consider the controversies over the pros and cons of abortion, the right or not to privately own weapons, the right way of living with animals, and so on. This list could easily be extended. Real-world controversies involve a diversity of interests, value pluralism and non-inclusive public spheres. A monological definition is therefore not likely to sufficiently illuminate the social of any specific case of social entrepreneurship, let alone all of them.

It is a matter of theoretical adequacy to increase the clarity of terms

used. And it is a matter of academic honesty (Max Weber) to clarify one's positions and their implicit or explicit normative stakes. This last point is especially important for social entrepreneurship research to the extent that it exhibits a strong tendency not just to study social entrepreneurship but also to promote it. Here we approach this normative explication in two steps. We first examine the place of social entrepreneurship with respect to socially recognized goals in the water sector. In a second step we refine the analysis of goals in the water sector with a specific ethical conception based on the capabilities approach and the theory of strong sustainability.

1.4 SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND WATER CHALLENGES

We have come to refer to the Earth as the blue planet. Water is fundamental to the life process. It is therefore of little surprise that water is a central target within MDG 7; in fact, access to water is the most widely reported target of MDG 7 (UNDP 2006, p.26) and a 2003 Ashoka survey among its fellows ranked water as the top priority (Ashoka Concept Note Water Farming, 1).

One way to study water challenges is to look at freshwater availability, distribution and use. Only some 2.5 per cent of the blue planet's water is freshwater; of that, three-quarters is stored as ice and glaciers and about one-quarter as ground water. Only 1 per cent of freshwater is stored in lakes, rivers and soils. Freshwater is a 'blue gold' (Barlow and Clarke 2002), a precious resource not only for corporations but for all of life.

About 10 per cent of freshwater use is for private consumption including drinking water and hygiene; that is the drinking water and sanitation targets of the MDG 7 really only focus on a relatively small yet unevenly distributed quantity as far as the overall use of freshwater is concerned. Agriculture and industry are by far the largest users of freshwater, with agriculture accounting for about 70 per cent of global freshwater use and industry about 20 per cent (Mauser 2007). We thus draw a subcategory in relation to agriculture and industry as an important domain in freshwater usage. Issues here concern both the quantity of water used as well as the quality of its use, such as the pollution that may result from agricultural or industrial water use.

Finally and most fundamentally we focus on water in relation to ecosystems and its role for human beings and life as an interrelated whole. The politics and management of water within a watershed is a first category to delineate human activities as far as the role and use of freshwater on the land is concerned; this includes water for private

consumption, industry and agriculture as well as water for animals and species within ecosystems that support all of life. River basin management and watershed development are well-known forms of engagement in this more general sense; these activities seek to bring together the diverse uses and functions of freshwater. Thus we can draw the following picture: a concern with watersheds and river basins as an overall, integrative concern that includes the spheres of agriculture, industry and private water use for drinking and sanitation.⁸ We can then ask where SEI are active in relation to freshwater use and more specifically, watershed protection and its subcategories?

Maps 1.1 to 1.3 seek to visualize where SEI in the water sector have been accredited or promoted by recognized social entrepreneurship support organizations. The maps, which are located on pages 24–6, render visible SEI that are supported by one or more of the following organizations: Acumen, Ashoka, Echoing Green, Schwab and the Skoll Foundation, that is the leading global social entrepreneurship support organizations.⁹ As these organizations tend to support a social innovation approach to social entrepreneurship, the fellow/support choices they make are of particular interest for our purposes. There is no way, especially for a single research group, to identify all SEI globally, not least because there are no established inventories from which one could draw. The support organizations effectively play the role of a discovery mechanism. Thus the maps below visualize SEI so discovered and promoted, but not all SEI. The maps are a conservative estimate that under- rather than overestimate the activity in relation to water challenges. The maps locate the SEI in terms of their respective headquarters.

By the end of October 2011 the search led to 13 SEI with a primary focus on drinking water and water consumption, and 28 SEI with a focus on drinking water and sanitation, that is, a total of 41 initiatives. Map 1.1 shows the state of MDG improvement with respect to the drinking water goal and positions SEI with respect to this issue of MDG 7. The estimate is that in 2011, 768 million people remained without access to an improved source of drinking water; 40 per cent of those people are in Sub-Saharan Africa. The map offers a first perspective on the claim that social entrepreneurs tackle ‘society’s most pressing social problems’ (see the Ashoka approach introduced above), that is, where such SEI are promoted. It shows a relatively high number of social entrepreneurs on the Indian sub-continent; however, not so for India’s neighbouring country China or for Sub-Saharan Africa, the area with the most pressing issues (according to the MDG).

Map 1.2 shows improvements with respect to the MDG 7 sanitation goal. In 2011 the UN estimated that over 2.5 billion people worldwide still

lack access to improved sanitation facilities, with over 70 per cent living in rural areas and access problems on the rise in poor urban areas with rapid population growth. We found 12 SEI with a primary focus on sanitation and as noted above, 28 SEI with a focus on both drinking water and sanitation, making a total of 40 initiatives. Again there is a relatively high level of SEI activity in India, which responds to an urgent need; however, other urgent areas are not covered such as Mongolia and many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Map 1.3 shows biodiversity threats to watersheds worldwide, thus highlighting the ecological dimension of watershed development (Vörösmarty et al. 2010). The problem areas here change somewhat to river basins that have a high population and are industrialized, such as many regions of Europe, the United States, India and China. With respect to different aspects of the management and politics of watersheds, we found 54 SEI. Again, India – here together with Indonesia – is a hotspot of SEI promotion, whereas there is less activity in Europe, the United States and in particular China.

Last but not least, in terms of our freshwater categories outlined above, we found 17 SEI in the category of water and industry and 36 SEI in the category of water and agriculture.¹⁰

Do SEI contribute solutions to the most urgent problems in the water sector? In conclusion, our mapping exercise revealed an initial broad-brush answer regarding the promotion of SEI in various water-related fields. The contrast with global water-problem maps reveals that while SEI are frequently active in some areas with high urgency (in particular India), there is a lack of SEI promotion in many areas with very high urgency, in particular many countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, China and as far as river basin management is concerned, Europe and the United States.

1.5 GETTING THINGS DONE SUSTAINABLY – THE GETIDOS APPROACH

The goal of our approach is oriented towards sustainability – *getting things done sustainably*. As sustainable development is a contested concept, we need to specify our conception of sustainable development and its link to SEI as actors in socio-ecological environments. This involves evaluating both the internal organization and external impacts of SEI in their respective environments and includes other actors from government, business and civil society acting according to formal or informal norms within diverse physical environments.

Ethics

On the ethical level our approach draws on the capabilities approach. This approach emerged from a philosophical debate of justice. It highlights problematic aspects of traditional liberal and utilitarian perspectives while at the same time seeking to retain their insights. According to the capabilities approach, basic questions of equality, justice and development ought to be evaluated according to their impact on human capabilities. These are doings and beings – such as participating politically or being in good health – and the focus is on the effective opportunity to do and to be (as opposed to a merely formal opportunity). For example, not just the formal right to vote but also the cultural, economic and environmental preconditions that make it possible to exercise that right.

Our approach to the social is accordingly one that puts primary emphasis on human development as a matter of heterogeneous doings and beings such as education, health and participation. If there is no single, overarching good or single index of development, then which capabilities should be focused on? Philosopher Martha Nussbaum has worked out a list of central human capabilities (Nussbaum 2000 and 2006) that are meant to spell out what is required for leading a human life in dignity. While this does not offer a comprehensive account of the social, it does offer orientation regarding a key set of issues that are likely important no matter what else will be important in specific contexts.

Moreover, her account helps to formulate a threshold of basic justice not just worldwide but also across generations, that is, an absolute standard of basic justice between generations (Ott and Döring 2004, 2.3.4. ff.). According to this view, the responsibility we have towards future generations requires as a demand of basic justice that we do not compromise the equal opportunity of future generations to lead a life in dignity as spelled out by the list of central human capabilities.

With a view on the Brundtland definition of the WCED introduced above, the list provides us with a conception and specification of the needs that are of basic importance as a matter of dignity whatever other problems there may be. The focus on central capabilities in relation to dignity is one way to focus on needs rather than wants. The focus on central capabilities also adds a choice qualification: what is important is not so much that the capability is exercised by person X, but that X has an effective opportunity to do so. An example is the difference between fasting and starving.¹¹ Just as importantly, there is a space for the cultural variation of capabilities, or different realizations, as Nussbaum says, of capabilities. What it means to have adequate shelter varies culturally and geographically depending on climate, tradition, and so on. In short, the abstract list has to be specified for specific contexts.

BOX 1.3 THE CENTRAL HUMAN CAPABILITIES

1. Life
2. Bodily health
3. Bodily integrity
4. Sense, imagination and thought
5. Emotion
6. Practical reason
7. Affiliation
8. Other species
9. Play
10. Control over one's environment (political and material)

Source: Nussbaum (2006).

For the specification of sustainable development, we focus on basic or central capabilities. It follows that development here is primarily a question of individual development (whereas technical, industrial or economic developments are a means to be evaluated in relation to their contribution to basic capabilities). Because central capabilities are frequently not met and as there is a constant task of development in the unfolding of generations, development is an always-present and enduring challenge.

Meeting the threshold of central capabilities depends on adequate institutions – in particular, Nussbaum argues, an adequate constitution. Adopting a term used by Maude Barlow, beyond the constitution the issue is one of a larger *covenant* (Barlow 2008). For the very possibility of ensuring basic capabilities co-depends on the natural environment. For example, the human rights to water for which Barlow and others have advocated, and which was declared a human right in 2010 by the UN General Assembly, not only depends on legal frameworks, but also on the availability of sufficient and clean freshwater for drinking and sanitation. If we pollute freshwater or over-deplete it for irrigation in agriculture, if we destroy forests and wetlands that purify water, then the implementation of the right will be very costly and in some regions impossible.

To generalize this point, basic capabilities co-depend on the natural environment.¹² Consequently, sustainability calls for a concern with the natural environment, its ecosystems and their relations to human capabilities. As the focus on the natural environment here is one in terms of its relation to us, specifically the benefits for needs and capabilities, sustainability research frequently frames this discussion in terms of natural

capital. Generically, a capital is an X that yields a flow of benefits X. The benefits that we are primarily interested in are benefits for central human capabilities; however, what else can be said about natural capital and, more specifically, water as a natural capital?¹³

Natural capital comprises stocks and funds as seen from a human time perspective. A stock is depleted when used and in principle can be used up immediately. A fund yields a flow of benefits and is able to regenerate or reproduce itself. For example, oil is a stock that humans can use but that stock is likely to be used up at some point, and forests are a fund that inter alia offers timber for humans over time. Accordingly, the famous origin of sustainability in forestry science is associated with the maxim to only cut as much timber as can be re-grown. Not only can animals and plants reproduce as living funds, likewise water and soil can regenerate as non-living funds. Water flows in water cycles that have the capacity to regenerate; to the extent that this capacity is respected, there is the possibility of using water sustainably.

Water is a fundamental element of life and a medium of complex, interactive ecosystem-services that functions as an irreplaceable natural capital. It is the 'bloodstream of the earth' (Ripl 2003) with a finely tuned system of arteries and veins. In relation to the criterion of strong sustainability, freshwater as a regenerating fund must be sustained for present and future generations. Environmentally sustainable behaviour does not negatively affect the capacity of freshwater to regenerate itself nor does it negatively affect its multifunctional role in ecosystem services (Lodemann et al. 2010, p. 431; see also Box 1.4 for a list of the role of water in ecosystem services).

Central capabilities and environmental sustainability are the main ethical focus of our evaluation of getting things done sustainably; they provide a space of orientation to specify the ethical aspect of the social. In regards to SEI, this perspective implies a design challenge: is the product or service designed in a capabilities-sensitive way? Is it designed in a sustainability-sensitive way? For example, the inclusion of toilets for the disabled in the Ikotoilets (discussed below) is from our evaluative perspective a difference that makes a difference. It is an instance of capabilities-sensitive design; on the level of environmental sustainability, so is the installation of water-saving taps. Such design features help the target group (which, as the example shows, ought not to be considered as a homogeneous mass) to convert the resource into a capability. In the language of the capabilities approach, these are *conversion factors*.

Internal Organizational Responsibility

This space of ethical orientation is not only a matter of the impact of an organization on its target group – for example, whether social entrepreneur

BOX 1.4 EXAMPLES OF THE ROLE OF WATER IN HUMAN ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

<i>Ecosystem services</i>	<i>Examples of the role of water</i>
Supporting	
Soil formation	transport of nutrient matter
Primary production	photosynthesis
Regulating	
Climate	local cooling by evaporative processes
Disease control	hygiene and waste treatment
Provisioning	
Nutrition	drinking water, farming, industrial processes
Biochemicals	growth of medicinal plants
Cultural	
Heritage	settlement by lakes and rivers, sense of place
Education	understanding of complexity
Aesthetics	beauty and integrity of water bodies
Spirituality	wild rivers and groves

X in country Y helps improve access to drinking water and sanitation, and so on – it is also an issue for the internal management and external partnerships of an organization in the process of producing a product or service. On the one hand, this question concerns social standards within the organization and the way it engages with those affected by it (stakeholder participation). As is well known, organizations that do good things for others may put pressure on their employees to work harder and for less compensation precisely because it is for a larger good. On the other hand, there is a question of environmental standards in production: is the good or service produced in a way that does not negatively affect environmental sustainability?

These questions, often associated with the international dimension of corporate social responsibility (CSR) of companies, are also relevant for SEI (Gebauer and Ziegler 2013). They are of intrinsic importance because an organization that seeks to promote social dignity for a target group but violates requirements of social dignity in its own production process runs into problems of consistency and integrity. These questions are also of strategic importance. For a start-up in its early stage, the question of environmental sustainability may not seem relevant simply because the

BOX 1.5 A SPECIFICATION OF THE SOCIAL

Environmental sustainability: Social entrepreneurship initiatives contribute to environmental sustainability in the water sector.

Human capabilities: Social entrepreneurship initiatives contribute to human capabilities of their target group.

Internal organizational responsibility: Social entrepreneurship initiatives respect human capabilities of their staff and respect environmentally sustainable standards of production.

production may be very small or non-existent; however, for SEI who want to scale and achieve large-scale impact, these management questions are likely to be raised as questions concerning the responsibility and legitimacy of the organization in light of its increasing impact. CSR research even speaks of the iron law of responsibility. While SEI tend to be endowed with a start-up capital of trust owing to their focus on direct needs rather than profit-making opportunities, this capital may run out or become insufficient with the increasing visibility of the SEI. Based on our ethical conception we can state further theses for the study of social entrepreneurship (Box 1.5).

Politics

The discussion of the MDG highlights the political nature of the water issues discussed here. While governments agree on these goals, they may fail to deliver on these goals, let alone more demanding ones such as the human right to water for all and not just for a proportion. Likewise markets may fail to provide the goods and services required to meet such goals. Consequently there is ample space for SEI and others to work on goals and means, thereby exercising various forms of power.

The classic locus for power turned into legitimate authority is democratic government. Like other actors from civil society and business, even with a social mission SEI are not elected (input legitimacy) and their goals (output legitimacy) and processes (throughput legitimacy) require further scrutiny, as we noted above when we discussed the social side of SEI. If actors delegate power to agents, then we need to investigate the legitimizing reasons that turn the exercise of power into authority, that is, legitimate power.

We posit that the main source of legitimacy is the innovation of the SEI.

Their innovations can give them *output-oriented legitimacy* (Partzsch and Ziegler 2011, p. 68 ff.). This output must be a social one. Unlike business products, there is no established measure of success for the product or service such as profit or revenue, nor is there an established accountability mechanism. In the theory and practice of social entrepreneurship there has accordingly been much discussion of the social impact of social entrepreneurs and reporting practices, standards, and so on. From the point of view of a sustainability-oriented evaluation, we posit that the ethical clarification of this social impact is particularly important and the discussion of capabilities and environmental sustainability helps specify the output legitimacy.

Second, to the extent that SEI are locally embedded at least in the beginning of their initiatives, they have a good grasp of their respective local context. Close ties with affected communities introduce an informal accountability. The accountability of a person for a product that is used where she lives is different from that of a person or organization that produces a product for somewhere else or only comes to install the product and then leaves it to the community. This challenge of international development cooperation and the hand-out mentality it has been criticized of fostering is closely linked to expert power. Outside experts design and control what is right and good; by contrast, there is a civic quality to persons and organizations who work within a community to do what is urgent and important. This direct democratic aspect no doubt reduces the pressure on legitimacy to the extent that it can be seen as simply a form of direct democratic empowerment. Consider the difference between local entrepreneur X offering a solution to his community and multinational Y extending a product developed elsewhere with the aim of making profit in that same community. We thus propose to speak of *social accountability* as a second potential source of authority.

Third, SEI seem to indicate a distinct form of changemaking. Precisely because the goal is to solve a social problem, we find the phenomenon of SEI speaking of themselves as catalysts or of them being called transformation agents by others. They seek societal change and may no longer be needed when this change is achieved. In such cases, there is no power for power's sake and no growth for growth's sake. To the contrary, SEI frequently aim for more transparency and the empowerment of affected people (vis-à-vis state administration in particular). The SEI only have a *mediating role* by advocating for the affected communities and fostering participation. This participatory goal offers a third potential source of legitimacy.

Fourth, in practice 'social entrepreneur' is an outside distinction. It indicates that outsiders take an interest and recognize the idea as valuable.

BOX 1.6 THESES ON LEGITIMACY

Social entrepreneurship initiatives are legitimate agents. This legitimacy depends on their:

- a) output
- b) social accountability
- c) intermediate authority and respective success at empowerment
- d) outside recognition.

Consider by analogy the Amnesty International strategy of asking people from country X to write letters on behalf of people in country Y, referring to international norms. The authority of this outside recognition is partly owing to the fact that those outsiders will usually not be in any evident way related to conflicts of interest within the respective context. Their perspective as outsiders can endow the work with additional ethical objectivity (Sen 2009). Likewise, recognition as a SEI from organizations outside the specific sector and linked to international NGOs – such as Ashoka, Schwab or Skoll, which all take a global outlook – can serve as a distinction. This increases the local and regional recognition of the agent vis-à-vis other agents, makes it harder to ridicule new ideas and protects and promotes ideas changing minds. In short, we posit that *outside recognition* and the distinction as SEI may itself be a further source of authority.

These sources of legitimacy are possibilities. How these sources are played out, and to what extent, is a question to be studied in detail below. Hence we can again formulate theses for our investigation (Box 1.6).

Summing Up

Figure 1.1 visualizes our approach in terms of a capability conversion function (drawing on Robeyns 2005, modified). The capability set and environmental sustainability are the primary goals in this approach to sustainable development. Achieving these goals depends on access to the respective resources and goods, as well as the ability to convert these into capabilities. The classic role of the entrepreneur is the provision of new goods and services (circled in the graph). Owing to the social mission claimed by the SEI, we ask if and how they contribute to basic capabilities and environmental sustainability. This is a question concerning both the effect of the good or service and the process of production. Specifically with a view on capabili-

Figure 1.1 GETIDOS approach in terms of capability conversion function

Map 1.1 MDG drinking water goal and accredited social entrepreneurs

Map 1.2 MDG sanitation goal and accredited social entrepreneurs

Map 1.3 Biodiversity threats to watersheds and accredited social entrepreneurs

ties, we can ask whether the design of the good and service is such that it is sensitive to the difference between individuals and groups so that they not only have a good or service but also are enabled to use it (for example not only a toilet for ‘normal’ people but also one that is accessible to people with physical handicaps). In parallel, we ask whether the process is such that it not only makes a product available but also does so in a way that takes environmental sustainability into account (for example not only a tap but one that saves water and energy). The graph of capability conversions also indicates the important role of social and environmental contexts for the production and reproduction of goods and services, of power relations and the indirect conversion factors that are important to stably produce a good or service. Where such a production has become possible, we can investigate the legitimacy of this production – for a pilot project or for a project in the process of being scaled or even institutionalized. We look at its innovation as output, the process aspects of its accountability and the nature of the power sought (intermediary and empowering others), as well as the outside recognition of this approach.

1.6 GETTING THINGS DONE SUSTAINABLY – AS A TASK OF RESEARCH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This work is part of a larger research programme of science for sustainable development, now often called *sustainability science*. This research programme has emerged in the last two decades and remains internally heterogeneous.¹⁴ The key terms of sustainability and sustainable development indicate a general concern (to sustain something). In this section we seek to briefly delineate central demands regarding the quality of such research and how we have attempted to deal with it.

Sustainability science typically involves: 1) cooperation with non-academic partners, 2) interdisciplinary approaches, 3) acceptance of the urgency of issues, which leads to the requirement of new ways of thinking where stakes are high but facts disputed, and 4) concerns with a normative challenge regarding our responsibility for the future and future generations, as well as the legitimate development expectations of people worldwide, especially of those whose basic needs still have not been met (Ziegler and Ott 2011).

In what sense then is the approach outlined above an attempt to do sustainability science? We can sketch an answer in relation to the four categories just mentioned.

Urgency

The MDG set targets for 2015; framing our questions against the background of these goals thus introduces an explicit temporal framework. The challenges are undoubtedly urgent, yet there is reason to worry that the MDG (minimal as they are) will not be fully reached. Accordingly there are questions not only of how established actors in development cooperation should work towards these goals (and of what they have achieved so far) but also whether alternative or complementary actors may have something to contribute to the MDG and to the post-2015 MDG discussions (which have already begun). It is with this broad framing here that we study the role of social entrepreneurs via selected case studies.

In the European context, MDG 7 with respect to water points to the European Union's Water Framework Directive (WFD), which also specifies goals for 2015. One of our case studies seeks to strengthen the participatory dimension of the WFD and we have chosen here to directly participate, not just studying an idea but also replicating it and performing it ourselves (Chapter 9). As is indirectly so in the other case studies, here there is a constant renegotiation of observing and participating. Such a renegotiation is just what we have to accept and live with in sustainable development research. The task is to make the presuppositions and consequences of such research explicit and transparent.

Normativity

As we have already seen, research for sustainable development involves normative questions and contestations. While normative questioning can initially draw on a vague concept, it then requires a more specific conception of sustainable development. Here we draw on the capabilities approach and strong sustainability to spell out our conception and to orient the subsequent case studies as far as ethical concerns. The verb 'to orient' is important. Normative analysis in the first place has the task to illuminate the normative dimension and the values and obligations at issue, to bring them into the discussion. This work is prior to specific judgments and prescriptions of what to do in a specific situation and the numerous contextual considerations such judgments depend on. The primary goal here is illumination in this first sense.

Sustainable development and sustainability are not exclusively normative concepts. To the contrary, they involve numerous descriptive, empirical aspects. Sustainable development is not only a contested concept, but also a thick concept in the sense that doing work on sustainability involves evaluative and descriptive tasks concerning societies and their

natural environment (a point that we will return to below when addressing interdisciplinarity).

Justified Inclusion of Non-academics

Our non-academic partners in this project were SEI. Their ideas were explored via detailed change studies based on the approach outlined above. From this perspective we thought through the missions and approaches of our partners. This led to change reports, which we presented back to our partners in 2012 as critical feedback for them and for us. Three goals were associated with these reports and the subsequent discussion meetings: to offer helpful feedback to our partners from a perspective of sustainability, to hear their view of our work and finally, to discuss together the potential of social entrepreneurship for sustainable development. These discussions have co-shaped the final versions of the following chapters.

The epistemic and normative role of our partners for our research project is very important. Their inclusion was based on the following ideas. 1) *Local and tacit knowledge*: the SEI help us in the analysis of their respective cases, they help us understand in what sense they view themselves as entrepreneurs or innovators, and they especially help us see how their work is embedded in a historical context. Such qualitative understanding emerges from interviews and participant observation. 2) *Bias*: feedback from the SEI on our work provides criticism and questions beyond the lenses of academic work and its disciplinary biases. 3) *Care*: discussions with those who will be directly affected by practical implications of these conclusions, hence caring about them in a way academics might not, is incredibly valuable. 4) *Normativity*: because there are no experts in ethics with final authority, it is important to discuss ethical conceptions, disagreements and the reasons for them with the people involved. 5) *New conjectures*: including a selection of SEI introduces a variety of proposals for new ideas about doing things and ways of being, from the level of goal conception to the specifics of how to achieve those goals.

Interdisciplinarity

The team working on this project is interdisciplinary with backgrounds in environmental engineering and environmental science, management, philosophy and political science. Accordingly, we started with work on disciplinary interfaces that helped build the approach outlined above. We also engaged in a joint-work process on case studies. In 2009 we made a comprehensive overview of SEI in relation to major water challenges. In a

second step, we selected change studies again for a joint-work process. To do justice to social entrepreneurship as a putatively global phenomenon, we wanted to include case studies from Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe. This resulted in the following in-depth change studies:

Africa: Ecotact (Kenya)

Asia: WOTR (India)

Europe: People and Water (Slovakia), ERN (France/Europe), Viva con Agua (Germany)

Americas: Ecodecision (Ecuador)

This selection is based on actors selected as SEI by support organizations or otherwise externally recognized as innovators. There are many more individuals, organizations and networks who see themselves as SEI. The discovery and selection of SEI worldwide is real work in itself. Several large foundations have put their resources into this; they served for us the role of a discovery mechanism. More subtly, we thereby included initiatives that accepted the accreditation *as* SEI.

This selection created the space for further research. As anyone familiar with social entrepreneurship knows, there is a huge difference between the online profile of a given SEI, typically made available by the support organizations, and an in-depth case study of this SEI. Moreover, there is still a relative absence of in-depth, theme-specific approaches to social entrepreneurship research; in fact, we do not know of any in-depth, long-term sustainability-oriented research study in general, let alone specifically with a focus on water. There are learning possibilities here in regards to the idea and image of social entrepreneurship promoted via the support organizations and to the diversity of innovations SEI implement on the ground.

Case studies, in the original sense of learning and thinking about a complex reality, are practised for example in law, medicine and management (Krohn 2009). Here we bring a case study approach to the theme of social entrepreneurship and water challenges. We aim to learn about each case specifically and based on our conception draw conclusions from the cases to orient the role of SEI for sustainable development.

Outlook

The following chapters will accordingly present our change studies (Chapters 2 to 7). The final part of the book will draw conclusions from these change studies; this part is divided into two chapters. In our synthesis (Chapter 8) we will present the conclusions from our case studies with

respect to the theses and will analyse the implication of these results for our conception of social entrepreneurship as well as for the role of SEI in sustainable development. In Chapter 9 we will discuss collaboration and cooperation, including an in-depth discussion of a collaborative project that we co-initiated during the project, the *Big Jump Challenge*.

NOTES

1. <http://www.skollfoundation.org/about/> (accessed 20 July 2011).
2. <http://www.ashoka.org/support/criteria> (accessed 20 July 2011).
3. http://www.ashoka.org/social_entrepreneur (accessed 20 July 2011).
4. <http://www.ashoka.org/support/criteria> (accessed 20 July 2011).
5. <https://www.se-alliance.org/what-is-social-enterprise> (accessed 20 July 2011).
6. An overview of arguments advanced for the schools helps to better see this point (see Gebauer and Ziegler 2013). In support of the earned income school it has been argued that: 1) an earned income strategy promotes financial viability in the long term; 2) earned income creates independence and increases the space in which resources can be invested; 3) earned income encourages discipline via market activity and a business plan; 4) earned income helps the SEI to grow; 5) a focus on earned income resonates well with linguistic conventions, at least in capitalist societies, which tend to identify enterprise with market-based activity; 6) earned income also seems to have a close fit with market-liberal ideologies that tend to view social problems as market externalities; social enterprise is a way of internalizing problems and thus extending and perfecting markets. There are also a number of objections to the earned income school: 1) market income does not necessarily promote or even introduce financial viability and independence; what increases financial viability and financial sustainability is a contextual issue that depends on the problem (Dees and Anderson 2006); 2) the focus on earned income and business methods tends to require a focus on management and administration. Thereby the classic distinction between entrepreneurship and management/administration is blurred, and 'crazy' ideas may be at a disadvantage; 3) Making earned income an essential aspect of social entrepreneurship is to promote (knowingly or not) a selection bias in favour of dealing with problems that are marketable (Defourny and Nyseens 2010, p. 49), while many social issues cannot be dealt with by markets and there is hence a danger of confusing means and ends; 4) on the level of the theory of society and our conceptualization of it, there has been the worry that this approach is yet another form of market imperialism extending market questions to all domains of life. For example, policy questions tend to become a question of how to improve conditions for SEI and not of how to change policy for a specific social problem. The presence of an arguably radical edge – thinking outside the market or transforming capitalism – tends to disappear.

There are also arguments in favour and ones against the social innovation school. In favour: 1) the focus on innovation resonates well with key practice players such as Ashoka and their popularisers (Bornstein 2004) – a view towards the power of ideas to change the world is very much in the centre of this community of practice; 2) the focus on innovation preserves the distinction between entrepreneurship and management/administration, which may be fruitful for theoretical purposes (such as the explanation of change) and also for practice (as in the well-known view that the skills of the entrepreneur are not those of the manager maintaining and sustaining an already established organization); 3) the focus on innovation and the carrying out of ideas leaves it open whether the carrying out is best a matter for market production, policy, civil society or some mixture. Therefore, here means and ends are kept distinct; 4) just as there are

market-liberal theories and ideologies, there are also theories that emphasize the need to transform markets and to introduce disruptive change, and social innovation is in principle open to such views. In objection: 1) the advantage of analysing entrepreneurship in terms of innovation (in contrast to management) turns out to be a weakness to the extent that the concept of innovation remains elusive and vague; 2) the focus on ideas changing the world tends to focus on an ideal outcome and not on what those entrepreneurs have already achieved and as a result practitioners may be discouraged and research focuses on questions with only limited links to practice; 3) with a view on the frequent emphasis on individuals in this model, it has been objected that this approach misunderstands the nature of societal change as a complex process involving structures and organizations in a dynamic, and therefore cannot *explain* change.

7. What about the social as a question of actor type? In particular, can we not co-define SEI as actors from the third sector (Nicholls 2010, p. 16)? From a perspective of social enterprise (as defined above), this move is problematic as this view includes for-profit business actors. Thus, the question of actors is non-trivial too. From a perspective of social innovation, the type of organization is secondary as far as the categories of civil society, business or governmental actors are concerned. As Nicholls also notes, this view is 'agnostic about the role of business' (Nicholls 2010, p. 17). Thus a further argument would be required that third-sector actors are particularly innovative, perhaps because they are not so strongly influenced by the inertia of large public or business organizations. However, this move inherits the problem already present in the account of innovation (Schumpeter 1942) – why should large organizations not innovate (for example via research and development)? In fact, there is much evidence that they do. Finally, the clarification of actor types will hardly solve the kind of normative expectations that are part of the use of 'social' and 'social entrepreneurs' in the typical language games that suggests improving, tackling problems, and so on.
8. No doubt, this categorization of freshwater use is only one way of categorizing the complexity of water challenges. In addition, there is the water in the sea and the hydrological cycle as a whole. In particular, fisheries and their impact on marine ecosystems are an important global concern.
9. Further to the already reported Ashoka numbers, as of 2013 Acumens supports 63 fellows, Echoing Green supports 500 social entrepreneurs, the Schwab Foundation supports over 260 social entrepreneurs, and the Skoll Foundation 97 social entrepreneurs.
10. And for completion: we found 19 SEI beyond freshwater working on issues related to marine protection and coastal management.
11. Having an effective opportunity in many cases depends on participation and an effective say in decision-making (Henkel and Ziegler 2010). Participation is a matter of degrees: from a) nominal and passive forms of participation; via b) consultations and petitions; to c) participatory decision-making including bargaining or deliberation. Drawing on the discussion from deliberative democracy theory, we can examine the following indicators of the participatory quality of the process: 1) inclusiveness and political equality – who is included in agenda-setting, goal formulation and implementation? Are those directly affected by the initiative included in a way that gives them equal opportunity? 2) Publicity – is the initiative proposed and discussed in a public and transparent manner so that information is made available to all? 3) Reasoned debate – is there space for the exchange of arguments (that is a way to bring them forward and listen to them)?
12. According to the MEA, ecosystem services are the benefits that people obtain from ecosystems (MEA 2005). The MEA working-groups list ecosystem services directly linked to people's needs and wants as provisioning, regulating and cultural. In addition, it names supporting services that frame and maintain the former processes.
13. We here adopt a perspective of strong sustainability, a view that sees sustaining natural capital – in a wide sense – as a constitutive and distinct task of sustainable development (Ott and Döring 2004). Put differently, investments in overall capital – that is, sustaining the total of financial, technical, human, natural capital – is not sufficient; there is a need

to pay specific attention to natural capital and the specific, non-substitutable services it provides.

14. Important and frequently overlapping research communities contributing to sustainability science include resilience research, common-pool research, socio-ecological research, transitions research and vulnerability research. For a list of publications and journals as well as further resources, see <http://sustainabilityscience.org/document.html?type=journal>. The categories discussed in this section are introduced in more detail in Ziegler and Ott 2011.