1. Social entrepreneurship in the age of atrocities: Introduction

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INTRODUCTION

One of the tensions generated by globalization is that advanced technologies and our ever-shrinking world empower not only state actors but also individuals to act increasingly in either constructive or destructive ways. Although ‘social entrepreneurship’ is not a new type of human endeavor, its impact is greater than at any previous point in history. Contemporary ‘social entrepreneurs’ are, in fact, anti-terrorists.

This book focuses on social entrepreneurship concerning ‘atrocity’ issues. This introductory chapter provides an overview of social entrepreneurship itself. The chapter then considers potential perils and pitfalls of social entrepreneurship and, finally, presents an overview of the book, explaining its purposes and describing the profiled social enterprises.

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

This part first considers existing definitions of ‘social entrepreneurship’ before suggesting a refined, expanded version. Next, it explores the history of and institutions involved in social entrepreneurship and then moves on to a description of the various qualities social entrepreneurs themselves possess. The part ends by discussing social entrepreneurship as a particular type of venture.

Definition

What, exactly, is social entrepreneurship? Tony Sheldon, Executive Director of the Program on Social Enterprise at Yale University’s School of Management, has said, in echoing U.S. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart, that ‘[s]ocial entrepreneurship is a little like pornography. It’s hard to define, but you know it when you see it.’

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Bill Drayton, the author of this book’s Foreword, is often credited with coining the term ‘social entrepreneurship’ roughly 20 years ago. Drayton is a former management consultant at McKinsey & Company and Assistant Administrator at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In 1980, he founded Ashoka, an organization focused on identifying and supporting leading social entrepreneurs. Citing examples such as women’s rights leader Susan B. Anthony, environmentalist David Brower, education philosopher Mary Montessori, conservationist John Muir, nursing pioneer Florence Nightingale, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, sex educator and birth control activist Margaret Sanger, and Drayton himself, Ashoka provides the following description of social entrepreneurship:

[T]he most powerful force for change in the world is a new idea in the hands of a leading social entrepreneur. The job of a social entrepreneur is to recognize when a part of society is stuck and to provide new ways to get it unstuck. He or she finds what is not working and solves the problem by changing the system, spreading the solution and persuading entire societies to take new leaps. Social entrepreneurs are not content just to give a fish or teach how to fish. They will not rest until they have revolutionized the fishing industry.

J. Gregory Dees, Professor of the Practice of Social Entrepreneurship and Nonprofit Management at Duke University’s Fuqua School of Business, has provided a more specific description. Social entrepreneurship, Professor Dees says, combines the passion of a social mission with an image of business-like discipline, innovation, and determination commonly associated with, for instance, the high-tech pioneers of Silicon Valley. … Social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector, by:

- Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value),
- Recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission,
- Engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning,
- Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand, and
- Exhibiting heightened accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created.

Social entrepreneurship is usually viewed as innovation that uses business skills to pursue socially-beneficial goals instead of – or in addition to – the traditional entrepreneurial goal of financial profit. For example, Pamela Hartigan, Director of the University of Oxford’s Skoll Center for Social Entrepreneurship and former Founding Managing Director of the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, describes a social entrepreneur as ‘what you get when you combine Richard Branson and Mother Theresa – a hybrid between business and social value creation.’
But that definition is too narrow. As the field of social entrepreneurship has become more popular and widespread, its definition has similarly broadened. Based on developments in the theory and practice of social entrepreneurship, I define the term to mean an innovative venture – whether for-profit, not-for-profit, or some combination – which seeks to further a social goal. Such endeavors may or may not focus on using typical business skills – although all certainly do use at least some, such as accounting, networking, fundraising, public relations, asset acquisition and management, competition with other ventures for material and human resources, staff recruitment and supervision, effective use of technology, and organizational formation, incorporation, and administration. This expanded definition of social entrepreneurship overlaps with volunteerism, activism, philanthropy, and charity, but it is the entrepreneurial nature – that pioneering spirit – of this particular social work that sets it apart. As such, different kinds of entrepreneurs – like policy entrepreneurs, business entrepreneurs, or norm entrepreneurs – can be social entrepreneurs. Admittedly, those who embrace the more traditional, and limiting, definition may not consider some of the ventures profiled in this book to qualify as social entrepreneurship.

History and Institutions

Social entrepreneurship is in essence the privatization and secularization of activities that used to be considered the sole responsibility and province of government and religion. Social entrepreneurship often serves to ameliorate market failures. Not only do social entrepreneurs seek to fill gaps in existing political, social, economic, and legal systems, but these entrepreneurs also endeavor to rectify many of the very problems these systems often inadvertently create, such as inequality and, as Professor Chua observes in her Preface to this book, conflict.

The practice of social entrepreneurship has a rich history, even if the term itself is relatively new. When, exactly, social entrepreneurship became a distinct field in corporate and academic lexicons is difficult to determine because many who would qualify as social entrepreneurs do not refer to or even think of themselves as such, often out of lack of familiarity with the term. Not only is it a vague and only recently-popular concept, but ‘social entrepreneur’ as a label is also sometimes seen as self-congratulatory or self-promotional.

Early missionaries might be considered among the first social entrepreneurs. The Manhattan Institute’s Social Entrepreneurship Initiative, which presents annual awards to outstanding social entrepreneurs in the United States, traces the roots of modern social entrepreneurship to the Gilded Age as well as the Victorian and Edwardian eras – all between 1850 and 1910 – in the United States and the United Kingdom. The Manhattan Institute sees
today’s resurgence in social entrepreneurship as a renewal of the spirit that flourished in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a spirit that saw the foundations of today’s independent, non-profit sector built by individuals who saw it as their responsibility to act to ameliorate society’s problems on their own without significant government oversight or involvement.16

The Manhattan Institute identifies 12 individuals as embodying this spirit: Robert Baden-Powell, founder of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides/Scouts; Thomas John Barnado, founder of Barnado’s homes for poor children; Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross; William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army; Peter Cooper, founder of the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art; William Wilson Corcoran, founder of the Corcoran Gallery of Art; Edward Flanagan, founder of Boys Town; Edgar J. Helms, founder of Goodwill Industries; Octavia Hill, founder of the National Trust; Enoch Pratt, founder of Enoch Pratt Free Library; Mary Harriman Rumsey, founder of the Junior League; and Henry Shaw, founder of the Missouri Botanical Garden.17 The breadth of social enterprises these individuals launched – from children’s leadership groups to artistic, educational, environmental, healthcare, and welfare organizations – provided early insight into the grand scope that contemporary social entrepreneurship would later embrace.

Modern social entrepreneurship could be considered to have started with Dr. Muhammad Yunus’s innovation of microfinance, which he developed in Bangladesh in the mid-1970s when he founded the Grameen Bank.18 Dr. Yunus’s and the Grameen Bank’s social entrepreneurship were celebrated by their joint award of the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize.19 This modern era of social enterprise also began with some high-profile initiatives. Musician and activist Bob Geldof helped raise – and popularize – support for famine relief in Ethiopia with his July 13, 1985 ‘Live Aid’ concert. Twenty years later, ‘Live Aid’ inspired the ‘Live 8’ concerts, similarly focused on political, social, and economic problems in Africa and in which Geldof was also involved.

Today, numerous organizations (including foundations, academic institutions, and networks), publications (including books, articles, journals, and blogs), fellowships, conferences, and competitions are dedicated to the field of social entrepreneurship.20 Wealthy and/or famous individuals (often political or entertainment celebrities), such as Michael Bloomberg,21 Sergey Brin and Larry Page,22 Warren Buffett,23 Jimmy Carter,24 Joey Cheek,25 Bill Clinton,26 Bill and Melinda Gates,27 Paul Hewson (a.k.a. Bono),28 Catherine Reynolds,29 George Soros,30 and Oprah Winfrey31 have established foundations that support, or have otherwise contributed significantly to, social entrepreneurship. Students, often through organizations they lead at professional schools,32 and other ordinary citizens have also increasingly engaged in and impacted social enterprise.33 The broadening composition of social entrepreneurs signi-
ties a democratization of the field. Not only have the participants in social entrepreneurship changed over time, but so has the practice itself. Instead of utilizing a hierarchical and centralized structure as in the past, today’s social entrepreneurship is more decentralized and collaborative.

Social entrepreneurship is in the public eye now more than ever before. Journalists – such as New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof, a part-time social entrepreneur himself – increasingly cover and even collaborate with social entrepreneurs. Websites and blogs – including one of each relating to this book – are also now dedicated to social entrepreneurship.

Qualities of Social Entrepreneurs

No particular background, experience, or education defines or ensures a successful social entrepreneur. However, certain personal qualities are essentially required if the venture is to be effective.

A social entrepreneur is a leader. Often because of her infectious enthusiasm and compelling vision, she possesses the ability to persuade others to adopt her approach to tackling a problem. She also is skilled at communicating with and managing the various staff members who flow into and out of the organization.

A social entrepreneur is a team player. She cooperates and collaborates with others within and outside her organization to achieve the results she seeks. Indeed, through such joint efforts, whole groups, beyond mere individuals, can be entrepreneurial.

A social entrepreneur is driven by purpose. She embraces Mohandas ‘Mahatma’ Gandhi’s charge to ‘[b]e the change you wish to see.’ A social entrepreneur realizes that in an increasingly globalized world, positive and negative effects of worldwide interconnectedness impact us all – through politics, economics, culture, religion, health, technology, and in every other conceivable way. We are the generation of HIV/AIDS, the Rwandan genocide, Srebrenica, Darfur, 9/11, the ‘Global War on Terror,’ the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, raging conflict in the Middle East, Abu Ghraib, Guantánamo, the South Asia Tsunami, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, catastrophic earthquakes in Haiti and Japan, massive inequality, and global financial crises, pandemics, and climate change. Social entrepreneurs try to ameliorate or even prevent these and other tragic events from occurring in the first place and do not rely on governmental beneficence to do so. As then-United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Kofi Annan said about the 1994 Rwandan genocide and the atrocities perpetrated during the 1990s in the former Yugoslavia:

Why did not one intervene? The question should not be addressed only to the United Nations, or even to its Member States. Each of us as an individual has to
take his or her share of responsibility. No one can claim ignorance of what happened. All of us should recall how we responded, and ask: What did I do? Could I have done more? Did I let my prejudice, my indifference, or my fear overwhelm my reasoning? Above all, how would I react next time?40

Social entrepreneurs believe that their work not only can be done but that it must be done. Social entrepreneurs cannot help trying to help – they are inherently, or consciously choose to become, active change agents rather than passive observers. They see problems and respond. They are not bystanders, but ‘upstanders’ against significant social problems. Some view social entrepreneurs as naïve, idealistic, or fanciful, but in fact many social entrepreneurs are – and must be – realists and pragmatists.

A social entrepreneur is deeply committed to her particular cause. The passion she feels and conveys for her project will directly relate to her ability to recruit staff, fundraise, and raise public awareness. This passion often leads a social entrepreneur to be less concerned with personal income and more with the venture’s outcome.

A social entrepreneur is proactive. She is equal parts thinker and doer. More than someone who cares in the abstract, she actually works on critical issues in the flesh.

A social entrepreneur is creative. She possesses the ability to innovate, adapt, and implement new methods of addressing old or emerging problems. This creativity is a necessary correlate to the social entrepreneur’s commitment; without it, most ventures would founder.

A social entrepreneur is risk-accepting (or even risk-seeking). If an individual is averse to visiting foreign and potentially dangerous regions, spending time with strangers who may be involved in suspicious activities, or investing her own or others’ money in a project that may never become self-sustaining (let alone profitable), then that person is probably unsuited for the often thrilling and fruitful stakes and challenges of social entrepreneurship. While a social entrepreneur may be daring, she should also recognize and manage exposure to unnecessary risk-taking, such as illness, injury, or the violation of local laws.42

A social entrepreneur makes time to invest in her project. Since social entrepreneurs often have other responsibilities or jobs, good time-management skills and allocating sufficient time to expend on their project will ensure that the project is well run, especially when confronting devilish details that become more time-consuming than originally predicted.

A social entrepreneur is patient. Given the obstacles she will encounter – the difficulties associated with fundraising, raising public awareness, teaching, negotiating, and all other components of a social enterprise – she must be willing to endure challenges and setbacks over long periods of time. As
part of this process, a social entrepreneur must take note of lessons learned throughout her work and then analyze and apply them along the way.

All of these characteristics combine to produce a particular kind of person: a collaborative leader who is not discouraged by traditional obstacles, who possesses and can articulate a transformative vision of the world, and who passionately and proactively yet patiently address its problems (or, as social entrepreneurs often refer to them, ‘opportunities’). These traits have led some commentators to refer to social entrepreneurs as ‘unreasonable people,’ ‘radicals,’ or even ‘crazy.’ But such has been said of luminaries throughout history. As George Bernard Shaw reminds us, ‘All progress depends on the unreasonable man.’

**Social Entrepreneurship as a Particular Type of Venture**

Several factors make social entrepreneurship involving human atrocities, the focus of this book, a special and particularly difficult type of venture. These factors can be divided into two categories – resources and distance – which are further discussed throughout the case studies and in the concluding chapter.

Social entrepreneurs almost always face severe limitations on available resources with which to execute their ventures. Staff members, often volunteers, tend to be few in number and do not necessarily possess relevant experience. Usually the venture operates on a shoestring budget, with the likelihood or amount of additional funding unknown. Social entrepreneurs will often work in suboptimal spaces, perhaps part of another’s office or someone’s home. Communication and transportation – the latter a commonly expensive service in the contexts discussed – may also be extremely constrained by insufficient capital and unreliable due to underdeveloped technological access.

Distance among project sites, staffers, and supporters is a second category of factors that renders social entrepreneurship concerning atrocities an especially challenging endeavor. Staff and donors may work in different locations, possibly in different countries or continents, which makes interactions within and among staff and donors difficult. Furthermore, because at least some of an initiative’s staff may not work at the project site, there may be great distances between staff and the project base. These distances complicate communication and transportation, making it hard to ensure quality control or meaningful and productive relationships among all involved. Separation between a social enterprise’s project site and home base may also require staff to venture into regions that are dangerous, even deadly.
SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: POTENTIAL PERILS AND PITFALLS

The practice of social entrepreneurship is not free from controversy. Indeed, some have referred to social entrepreneurship as ‘a wolf in sheep’s clothing.’\(^45\) Two controversial aspects of social entrepreneurship are its potential unintended consequences and general criticisms of the endeavor and participants themselves.

Unintended Consequences

Social entrepreneurship includes the possibility of causing more harm than good, even if inadvertently. As the old proverb goes, ‘[t]he road to hell is paved with good intentions.’\(^46\) A social enterprise may generate unintended negative consequences, perhaps exacerbating a problem or, because of the delicate interconnectedness of needy situations, a related issue.

A social entrepreneur must anticipate as much as possible the likelihood of mistakes or other complications occurring and then decide whether to take the risk. Even if a negative consequence results, the project may be worthwhile. The good may outweigh the bad, or the bad may only be temporary and completely overshadowed by the good that is being – or will be – done.

Just as there may be unintended negative consequences, so too may there be unintended positive consequences, the flip side of interconnection and issue linkage.

Criticisms

Criticism of social entrepreneurship can be divided into charges aimed at social entrepreneurs themselves and charges aimed at their projects. Some suspect that, while altruism may compel many to become involved in social enterprises, at least a few individuals engage in this field out of mixed motives. Some social entrepreneurs may be driven by ego, including a desire to leave a self-promoting personal legacy or a competitive spirit to accomplish something no one else has.\(^47\) Social entrepreneurs may thus be criticized for being self-serving – individuals who seek to pad their résumés (to improve their public image or, as is popularly thought of Andrew Carnegie, to balance out their misdeeds\(^48\)); to achieve fame; or to make money. And it’s true: some may be motivated by these factors. As with many other human endeavors, sometimes it is the case that social entrepreneurs are driven by a combination of selfless and selfish interests. Social entrepreneurs might also be condemned for being naïve, unwelcome, unaccountable, inexperienced, unqualified, occasionally dishonest, officious intermeddlers, all of which may also be valid.\(^49\)
Social enterprises themselves are sometimes pilloried on several different grounds. They may focus too narrowly on the issues or facts that fit their agenda. For example, an organization that seeks to promote the UN could be criticized for ignoring problems within that institution. UN peacekeeping missions allegedly have fomented conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) because peacekeepers have committed horrible crimes, including rape, pedophilia, and prostitution, and similar charges have been leveled against many other UN peacekeeping missions (e.g., Burundi, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Kosovo, Liberia, Sierra Leone). By refusing to take a more critical view of UN activities, a particularly pro-UN organization could be accused of whitewashing the fact that one of the most significant and destructive forces the international institution has to battle against is itself.

Another criticism of social enterprises is that they may misrepresent their methodology, objectives, or activities. The self-characterization of social enterprises can be disingenuous and simply wrong, perhaps intentionally so. An extreme, albeit imperfect example (because not all of these organizations would qualify as social enterprises) is that, through executing the ‘Global War on Terror,’ we have learned that some seemingly innocent and helpful charities are, in fact, fronts for terrorist organizations. As a result of such misreporting, donors and staff may be completely unaware of the general purposes and specific projects they support and may not have contributed had they known the truth from the outset.

Others may criticize the methodology of a social enterprise, even if they agree with its goals. Paul Theroux, a writer and former Peace Corps volunteer in Malawi, decries the general ‘more money’ approach to Africa’s problems that he says celebrities, such as Bono, and others advocate. Theroux suggests instead that Africa needs better, less corrupt governance and leadership as well as more Africans staying in or returning to their home countries to help.

William Easterly, a professor of economics at New York University, argues that foreign aid can cause more harm than good. Even some aid proponents, such as Kristof, concede the point, acknowledging that foreign aid can promote dependency and yield similarly unwanted – and unintended – effects, such as when importing food promotes longer-term famine by discouraging locals from producing their own sustenance in the future.

What should we make of these criticisms of social entrepreneurship? As a first step, we must acknowledge their potential legitimacy. Therefore, as with any emerging field of work and scholarship, we should identify, study, and propose solutions to problems in the theory and practice of social entrepreneurship. Certainly, as with other public and private sector ventures, social enterprises would benefit from increased accountability and transparency. Social entrepreneurs should make more – and more accurate – information about their plans, work, and staff available to the public, particularly to
potential and existing donors, members of the communities in which they operate, and other stakeholders. Social enterprise managers should take more seriously their responsibility to thoroughly vet all staff (including volunteers) before hiring them. These same administrators must also be willing to fire staff when appropriate or necessary. A field that relies so significantly on volunteers must still demand accountability and professionalism of those volunteers, especially because the stakes involved in social entrepreneurship (i.e., the benefits and drawbacks to the problems and people targeted for assistance) are so great.

These and other critical challenges distinguish social entrepreneurship from other types of ventures. However, despite its potential perils, pitfalls, and obstacles, social entrepreneurship is still a promising endeavor. As anthropologist Margaret Mead once said, ‘[n]ever doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.’ Such ventures are most crucial where traditional aid (including for atrocity victims) – provided through governmental or religious institutions – is unavailable, insufficient, or ineffective.

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

Purposes

Despite the recent growth of and focus on corporate philanthropy, corporate social responsibility, private sector investment in developing countries, public-private partnerships for social causes, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and social entrepreneurship itself, comprehensive discussion on the topic of social entrepreneurship is still lacking. Many people are intrigued by social entrepreneurship: they are interested in who undertakes these activities as well as why, how, when, and where. Some also want to draw lessons from the experiences – successes and failures – of social entrepreneurs in order to pursue their own initiatives.

The authors of this book have thus identified a clear need for further examination of social entrepreneurship and have set out to fulfill five goals. First, we hope to contribute to the field of social entrepreneurship through our personal insight. Although it has been practiced in one form or another for centuries, social entrepreneurship is a relatively new, increasingly self-aware field. As a result, the existing literature on the topic is fairly modest. Because context is crucial – principles and practices of social entrepreneurship that work well in one place may not elsewhere – it is difficult to generalize from varied experiences, requiring additional case study analysis. Therefore, as Dr. Cheryl Dorsey emphasizes in her Afterword, this book, as one of the early
volumes addressing social entrepreneurship, contributes to the emerging field by helping to inform, instruct, and build the community of social entrepreneurs.

Second, we seek to help clarify the concept of social entrepreneurship. This chapter defined the concept and introduced its history and the theory behind it. The case studies that follow illustrate the concept of social entrepreneurship in practice. The concluding chapter, in which I offer detailed comparisons among the preceding case studies, then draws lessons to be learned from the profiled initiatives. The similarities among the case studies that I highlight and analyze in that chapter concern youth leadership, motivation, luck, failure, institution-building, management, friends and family, technology, intersections with academia, and potential personal risks, costs, and benefits. The differences I identify and consider concentrate on design and operations, scalability and obsolescence, staff, the role of local leadership, and social entrepreneur ‘multipliers.’ Reflecting on the unique initiative that is social entrepreneurship through the case studies elucidates the contours, aims, and functions of the field.

Third, we undertake to raise public awareness about social entrepreneurship. The book profiles several social enterprises in order to spread knowledge about the projects themselves and about the field of social entrepreneurship more generally. We hope not only that the profiles are inherently interesting and informative, but also that they provide insight and serve as models for budding social enterprises. That said, the views expressed by the contributors to this book are not necessarily shared by any of the other contributors, including myself.

Fourth, we explore leadership in innovative activist organizations. As such, the book directly and indirectly examines qualities of a social enterprise’s visionary and trailblazer. We also hope to give the reader practical advice on how to initiate and manage an international public service project and to draw from our experiences with our own endeavors to confront specific issues.

Fifth and finally, by focusing on initiatives in or relating to regions that have suffered atrocities, we endeavor to discuss the challenges, obstacles, and opportunities for social entrepreneurship in a particular – and particularly critical – context. These issues concern conflict prevention, ‘transitional justice,’ and post-conflict reconstruction, reconciliation, healing, and memorialization. Such matters may take generations to ameliorate and affect not only individuals in the immediate vicinity of atrocities but also those in neighboring regions and in a victimized community’s diaspora around the world.

In order to convey the specific subject-matter focus within social entrepreneurship and how pressing it is today, the title of this volume partially mimics the subtitle of Samantha Power’s Pulitzer Prize–winning book, ‘A Problem from Hell’: America and the Age of Genocide. As Bill Drayton notes in his
Foreword, social entrepreneurship has been crucial for inhibiting and repairing the devastation wrought by atrocities; for example, social entrepreneurs contributed to the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the world’s first permanent international war crimes tribunal.60 Individuals and organizations working on issues related to atrocities have increasingly gained recognition and praise as social entrepreneurs. For example, the Skoll Foundation presented its 2009 Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship to the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) to recognize and support ICTJ’s ‘pioneering integrated, comprehensive, and localized approaches to transitional justice with tools, expertise and comparative knowledge necessary to help countries heal.’61

While this book primarily focuses on social entrepreneurship in the context of atrocities, it necessarily also involves social entrepreneurship concerning other issue areas. The profiled case studies relate to, for example, education, literacy, economic and legal empowerment, and healthcare.

Profiles

This book profiles social enterprises led by young Westerners who focus on atrocity issues, whether ongoing or post-conflict.62 I have deliberately selected these criteria to provide coherence to the group of profiled enterprises and also to narrow an otherwise enormous number and type of social enterprises. This focus in no way suggests that other social ventures – whether led by older people or by individuals actually from the regions addressed, or initiatives focusing on other issues – are any less important. Rather, they simply fall outside the scope of this particular book.63 Indeed, much of the most creative and crucial social entrepreneurship originates from individuals in the developing world.64

As the editor of this book, I consciously chose the profiled organizations because their similarities and differences highlight various, and sometimes competing, approaches to social entrepreneurship.65 And like some other books that feature social entrepreneurs, I decided to limit the number of case studies to fewer than 10 in order to ensure sufficient space for detailing each initiative.66

I asked the founders and leaders of the profiled social enterprises themselves to discuss their projects,67 rather than to write about them myself.68 This format enables individuals who know most about a venture and the needs it addresses to discuss them, as well as organizational members’ motives, goals, challenges, successes, and failures. This book thus provides the opportunity for the contributors to report on their work and to reflect more deeply on and share lessons learned from their experiences. Such an approach necessarily entails certain drawbacks; for example, while the contributors are best
informed about their work, they may not be the most objective. By reflecting on the case studies as a whole, the concluding chapter aims to provide a more detached perspective.

The eight social enterprises profiled differ with respect to their history, purpose, design, size, and status. The two organizations that no longer operate open and close this anthology. The first case study, in Chapter 2, examines the National Vision for Sierra Leone (NVSL), an outgrowth of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission (SL TRC), which used dialogue and artistic expression to help promote reconciliation, healing, and remembrance following atrocities committed in West Africa. The case studies start with this chapter for two reasons. First, this chapter contains a helpful rubric for approaching social entrepreneurship, particularly concerning the use of limited resources, which the reader should keep in mind when learning about the other profiled ventures. Second, echoing this introductory chapter, the NVSL case study also considers the definition of social entrepreneurship itself, similarly offering a broad meaning of the term.

Whereas the NVSL helped alleviate problems that refugees, among others, have faced by providing them with an outlet for expressing their emotions and aspirations, in Chapter 3, Asylum Access (AA) and related organizations showcase a different approach to refugee assistance. AA and its sister groups provide on-the-ground legal counsel and representation for refugees in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and they advocate for refugee rights worldwide.

Chapters 4 through 6 concern social enterprises that focus on Rwanda, the population and infrastructure of which was decimated by genocide in 1994. Chapter 4 highlights the Kigali Public Library (KPL), which is the first national public library in Rwanda. This chapter begins the trio of Rwanda-related case studies because it includes background on events surrounding the genocide that the other cases then reference. Indego Africa (IA), profiled in Chapter 5, partners with cooperatives of women artisans in Rwanda on a fair trade basis to sell their hand-made accessories and home décor products and invests profits from sales and fundraising into skills training programs for cooperative members. In some of these cooperatives, women work alongside the wives of imprisoned génocidaires who had killed their families during the genocide. Chapter 6 focuses on Generation Rwanda (GR), which contributes financial and other support to help orphans and other vulnerable children in Rwanda earn university degrees and hopefully become community leaders. Not only are IA and GR grouped together because they operate in Rwanda, but also because of their organizational partnership.

Orphans Against AIDS (OAA), the subject of Chapter 7, immediately follows the case study on GR for comparative purposes, because both social enterprises concern the same type of beneficiaries: disadvantaged children who are particularly susceptible to certain physical, psychological, and
economic harms. OAA provides academic scholarships, basic supplies, and healthcare to African and Asian children orphaned and otherwise made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS, in some cases exposed intentionally during atrocities.

The final two cases studies, in Chapters 8 and 9, concern social enterprises that have fostered dialogue toward achieving greater understanding of certain communities and current events. Americans for Informed Democracy (AID) uses various forums (e.g., seminars, summits, meetings, media, and videoconferences) to inform and engage Americans on U.S. foreign policy and international relations issues. Children of Abraham (CoA) sought to promote positive relations between Muslim and Jewish youth through online and in-person activities. This final case study is intentionally included in the anthology as an example of an ultimately unsuccessful social enterprise. Just as valuable lessons for social entrepreneurship can be gleaned from the more effective ventures, CoA’s missteps provide equally helpful guidance to nascent social entrepreneurs.

Social Entrepreneurship in the Age of Atrocities: Changing Our World is aimed at illustrating crucial conflict-related problems and crafting effective solutions. The contributors and I hope that the pages ahead inspire and inform you in your own study or practice of social entrepreneurship.

NOTES

1. ‘Social entrepreneurship’ is also sometimes referred to as ‘social enterprise,’ ‘social innovation,’ or ‘social venture.’ Kristof has termed one type of such entrepreneurship ‘Do-It-Yourself Foreign Aid.’ Nicholas D. Kristof, The D.I.Y. Foreign-Aid Revolution, N.Y. TIMES MAG., Oct. 24, 2010, at 48 [hereinafter Kristof, The D.I.Y. Foreign-Aid Revolution]. Kristof says that this concept ‘starts with the proposition that it’s not only presidents and United Nations officials who chip away at global challenges. Passionate individuals with great ideas can do the same, especially in the age of the Internet and social media.’ Id.


3. Of course, who qualifies as a terrorist – or social entrepreneur – may be a matter of perspective. As the old adage goes, ‘One man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter.’ Gerald Seymour, Harry’s Game: A Thriller 62 (Overlook Press 2007) (1975). Similarly, one man’s social entrepreneur may be another man’s mischief-maker.

4. According to the first U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues and now international law scholar David J. Scheffer, there are five criteria that define an ‘atrocity.’ They are:

[i] high impact crimes
[ii] that are of an orchestrated character,
[iii] that shock the conscience of humankind,
[iv] that result in a significant number of victims, and
[v] that one would expect the international media and the international community to focus on as meriting an international response holding the lead perpetrators accountable before a competent court of law.


Along with the crime of aggression, these offenses are within the subject-matter jurisdiction of the ICC. Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court art. 5, July 17, 1998, 2187 U.N.T.S. 90.


11. For other similarly broad definitions of social entrepreneurship, see, e.g., JANET A. SILLIERN, JAMES E. AUSTIN, HERMAN LEONARD & HOWARD STEVENSON, ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE SOCIAL SECTOR 4 (2007) (‘Social entrepreneurship is ‘an innovative, social value-creating activity that can occur within or across the nonprofit, business, or government sector.’); RYSZARD PRASZKIER & ANDRZEJ NOWAK, SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THEORY AND PRACTICE 13 (2011) (‘The definition of social entrepreneurship implies that its practitioners come up with new ideas for solving pressing social problems and replacing old, ineffectual ones; they are creative and purposeful, determined to spread their ideas beyond their immediate circle; moreover, they are highly ethical.’); William Drayton, Foreword (Social entrepreneurs are
‘individuals with innovative, system-changing solutions to society’s most pressing social problems.’; Nicholas D. Kristof, Op-Ed., The Age of Ambition, N.Y. TIMES, Jan. 27, 2008, § WK, at 18 [hereinafter Kristof, The Age of Ambition] (Social entrepreneurs are ‘those who see a problem in society and roll up their sleeves to address it in new ways.’).


17. See generally Wooster, supra note 16.


20. For a selection of institutions and resources focusing on social entrepreneurship, see the Appendix.

21. In July 2006, Bloomberg took initial steps to establish a self-financed foundation he will manage after finishing his term as mayor of New York City. See, e.g., Diane Cardwell, Bloomberg to Put His Charity in Building on Upper East Side, N.Y. TIMES, July 2, 2006, at A25.

22. Brin and Page are the founders and leaders of the Google Foundation (http://www.google.org/).


24. Carter founded and leads the Carter Center (http://www.cartercenter.org/).

25. Cheek donated the US$40,000 from his 2006 Winter Olympic medal bonuses to Right to Play and has campaigned to raise awareness about the atrocities in Darfur. See Lynn Zinser, Another Chapter for Cheek’s Notebook, N.Y. TIMES, May 18, 2006, at D6.


27. The Gateses founded and lead the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (http://www.gatesfoundation.org/).

29. Reynolds founded and leads the Catherine B. Reynolds Foundation (http://www.cbrf.org/).
30. Soros founded and leads the Open Society Institute and the Soros Foundations network (http://www.soros.org/).
31. Winfrey is a self-described television pioneer, producer, magazine founder, educator, and philanthropist. For Oprah’s official website, see http://www.oprah.com/.
32. For example, the author and Scott Grinsell co-founded Yale Law Social Entrepreneurs, a student organization at Yale Law School.
34. For a survey of social entrepreneurs of various backgrounds, see CLINTON, supra note 26.
36. See NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF & SHERYL WUDUNN, HALF THE SKY: TURNING OPPRESSION INTO OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN WORLDWIDE xxii (2009) (stating the objective of recruiting readers ‘to join an incipient movement to emancipate women and fight global poverty by unlocking women’s power as economic catalysts’).
37. Kristof has profiled the work of at least one of the social entrepreneurs who contributed to this book, Andrew Klaber. See Kristof, The Age of Ambition, supra note 11. Kristof has also provided space on his New York Times blog to at least one other social entrepreneur whose work contributed to this book, Michael Brotchner (GR’s former Executive Director). See Posting of Michael Brotchner & Josh Ruxin to On the Ground by Nicholas D. Kristof, http://krystofblogs.nytimes.com/2009/04/11/rwanda-15-years-on/ (Apr. 11, 2009, 22:18 EST). In addition, Kristof has written about other social entrepreneurs, such as John Wood, the founder and chair of the Board of Directors of Room to Read, which focuses on literacy and gender equality in education. See, e.g., Nicholas D. Kristof, Op-Ed., His Libraries, 12,000 So Far, Change Lives, N.Y. TIMES, Nov. 6, 2011, § SR, at 11 [hereinafter Kristof, His Libraries, 12,000 So Far, Change Lives]. For the official website of Room to Read, see http://www.roomtoread.org/.
38. For the official website of this book, Social Entrepreneurship in the Age of Atrocities: Changing Our World, see http://www.socialentrepreneurship-book.com/. This website includes book reviews, a list of social entrepreneurship resources and institutions that is updated periodically, relevant news, and information about associated events (such as lecture series, conferences). This book’s companion blog is available at the same url and includes entries by contributors to the book about profiled social enterprises.
39. Carmella B’Hahn, Be the Change You Wish to See: An Interview with Arun Gandhi, RECLAIMING CHILDREN & YOUTH, Spring 2011, at 6, 7.
41. In various works, Samantha Power has popularized the term and concept of ‘upstanders.’ See, e.g., Samantha Power, Why Can’t We?, NATION, May 23, 2006, available at http://www.thenation.com/article/why-can-t-we [hereinafter Power, Why Can’t We?].
42. For a guide to legal issues social entrepreneurs confront, see Bruce Hopkins, Appendix A: Social Entrepreneurs’ Brief Guide to the Law, in ENTERPRISING NONPROFITS: A TOOLKIT FOR SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS 299 (J. Gregory Dees, Peter Economy & Jed Emerson eds., 2001); Bruce Hopkins, STARTING AND MANAGING A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION: A LEGAL GUIDE (2001).
44. The Unreasonable Institute, an incubator and network for social entrepreneurs, derives its name from George Bernard Shaw’s epigram. See Hannah Seligson, Unreasonable, Maybe, but it’s on a Social Mission, N.Y. TIMES, Oct. 23, 2011, § BU at 1.
45. Alex Nicholls & Rowena Young, Preface to SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: NEW MODELS OF SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL CHANGE vii, vii (Alex Nicholls ed., 2006).
47. See, e.g., Brooks, supra note 12, at 104–08 (2008).
57. For some existing literature in the emerging field of social entrepreneurship, see the Appendix.
60. For the official website of the ICC, see http://www.icc-cpi.int/.


62. By ‘young’ I mean that these individuals were current or recent students when they launched their social enterprises. By ‘Westerners’ I mean individuals from developed countries, also known as the ‘Global North.’ For a discussion of the ‘Global South,’ see Chapter 3.

63. Other volumes on social entrepreneurship have been similarly focused. For an example of a book that also concentrates on young people, see Sheila Kinkade & Christina Macy, Our Time is Now: Young People Change the World (2005). For an example of a book that highlights individuals living in the U.K. or the U.S. between 1850 and 1910, see Wooster, supra note 16.

64. See, e.g., ASHOKA, LEADING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS 2006–07, supra note 7.

65. Some other books have focused on a single social entrepreneur or venture. See, e.g., BORNSTEIN, THE PRICE OF A DREAM, supra note 18; ALEX COUNTS, SMALL LOANS, BIG DREAMS: HOW NOBEL PRIZE WINNER MUHAMMAD YUNUS AND MICROFINANCE ARE CHANGING THE WORLD (2008); TRACY KIDDER, MOUNTAINS BEYOND MOUNTAINS: THE QUEST OF DR. PAUL FARMER, A MAN WHO WOULD CURE THE WORLD (2004); SAM ROBERTS, A KIND OF GENIUS: HERB STURZ AND SOCIETY’S TOUGHEST PROBLEMS (2009); PAUL TOUGH, WHATEVER IT TAKES: GEOFFREY CANADA’S QUEST TO CHANGE HARLEM AND AMERICA (2008).

66. See, e.g., BORNSTEIN, HOW TO CHANGE THE WORLD, supra note 7, at x.

67. For other books that also feature social entrepreneurs writing about their own work, see DARRELL HASSMOND, KABOOM!: HOW ONE MAN BUILT A MOVEMENT TO SAVE PLAY (2011); WENDY KOPP, ONE DAY ALL CHILDREN . . . THE UNLIKELY TRiumPH OF TEACH FOR AMERICA AND WHAT I LEARNED ALONG THE WAY (2003); GREG MORTENSON, STONES INTO SCHOOLS: PROMOTING PEACE WITH BOOKS, NOT BOMBS, IN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN (2009); GREG MORTENSON & DAVID OLIVER RELIN, THREE CUPS OF TEA: ONE MAN’S MISSION TO FIGHT TERRORISM AND BUILD NATIONS—ONE SCHOOL AT A TIME (2006); JACQUELINE NOVOGRATZ, THE BLUE SWEATER: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN RICH AND POOR IN AN INTERCONNECTED WORLD (2009); JOHN WOOD, LEAVING MICROSOFT TO CHANGE THE WORLD: AN ENTREPRENEUR’S ODYSSEY TO EDUCATE THE WORLD’S CHILDREN (2006); YUNUS, supra note 18.

68. For two of the most prominent examples of books that provide in-depth profiles of a limited number of social entrepreneurs, see BORNSTEIN, HOW TO CHANGE THE WORLD, supra note 7; LESLIE R. CRUTCHFIELD & HEATHER MCLEOD GRANT, FORCES FOR GOOD: THE SIX PRACTICES OF HIGH-ImpACT NONPROFITS (2008). For examples of another type of edited, multi-contributor volume on social entrepreneurship, see ENTERPRISING NONPROFITS, supra note 42; STRATEGIC TOOLS FOR SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS: ENHANCING THE PERFORMANCE OF YOUR ENTERPRISING NONPROFIT (J. Gregory Dees, Peter Economy & Jed Emerson eds., 2002); SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: NEW MODELS OF SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL CHANGE, supra note 45.