Developing the Field of Social Entrepreneurship

A Report from the Center for Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE)

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Duke University
The Fuqua School of Business

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PREFACE

This report is intended to stimulate a discussion about the nature and future of the emerging field of "social entrepreneurship." The findings are based on extensive interviews and conversations, as well as our observations as active participants in this field for some time. However, we are well aware that it is not a complete or unbiased assessment. We want to acknowledge three limitations that we hope others will address as they take this conversation further.

Global perspectives. We all look at the world through the lens of our own perspectives and experiences. This report reflects our views from working on this topic based in the United States. While we did conduct numerous interviews with people working outside of the U.S., we do not pretend that this report does justice to the development and dynamics around social entrepreneurship in other parts of the globe. We hope that our work stimulates others to contribute their distinctive perspectives to this discussion, so that we may get a more well-rounded picture of the rise of this concept and the movement that currently surrounds it.

Historical context. When we speak of an "emerging field," we are talking about the emergence of a specific way of framing and talking about work that has a long history. The concept and language of "social entrepreneurship," as it is now understood, is relatively new, as is the deliberate movement to advance knowledge and practice associated with this concept. The increasing number of articles, books, university courses, centers, foundations, and other organizations explicitly dedicated to it since the 1990s supports this observation. To acknowledge this is not to deny important historical antecedents. These antecedents may have taken the form of individual practitioners or of other movements, such as "scientific charity" in the United Kingdom in the late 19th century, "professional philanthropy" in the United States in the early 20th century, and "social economy" in Europe throughout the 20th century. We welcome anyone who would enrich this conversation by placing social entrepreneurship into a deeper historical context.

Quantitative analysis. This report is completely qualitative. We have made no attempt to measure the activity in this field in order to identify growth rates or other patterns of interest. Rigorous quantitative analysis poses special problems for several reasons. As discussed in this report, we still have significant disagreement on definitions. It is hard to count unless you know what you are counting. Many of the contending definitions would make it very difficult to count because they do not rest on easily observable characteristics. Even if we had an agreed upon definition, gathering the data would be a major undertaking, especially considering that social entrepreneurship can take many different organizational forms (nonprofit, for-profit, cooperative, etc.). Rather than getting into debates about reliable measures, we decided to leave the quantitative analysis and associated claims out of this report. We welcome anyone who wishes to take on this effort. It would be a tremendous service to the field.

Acknowledging these and other limitations, we submit this report in order to stimulate and inform an on-going conversation about whether and how to move this field forward.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We are at a critical point in the lifecycle of "social entrepreneurship." The concept continues to gain recognition, even though it is neither widely nor well understood. If it is to have lasting, positive social impact, proponents will have to be strategic in building a strong community of practice and knowledge, and in strengthening the ecosystem that supports practitioners.

New concepts are introduced all the time. Some never catch on. Others experience great popularity for a period, but then decline and are viewed as passing fads. A few concepts have staying power and sustained impact. In rare cases, a new concept serves as a foundation for a whole new field of practice and knowledge. Social entrepreneurship has the potential to be one of those rare field-creating concepts.

Based on new courses and university programs being started around the world, references to social entrepreneurship in conferences and books, increased electronic and print media coverage, and endorsement by current and former public officials, we can safely say that the concept is gaining momentum, recognition, and respect. For those of us who believe that social entrepreneurship represents an important new lens through which to view social change, this is encouraging. However, many thoughtful observers, including advocates, are concerned that the momentum could fade or be undermined before a solid foundation is laid for the future of this emerging field.

In 2006, the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE) at Duke University–with support and funding from the Skoll Foundation–launched a two-year project to explore some of the key questions around building the field of social entrepreneurship, with particular attention to the areas in which we as an academic center could have the greatest impact, namely in research and education. This first phase of this project has been devoted to general research on the emerging field. The second phase will focus on developing a compelling strategy for CASE.

This report focuses on what we learned in the first phase about the overall state of the field, the specific challenges and opportunities for its development, and potential strategies for moving it forward. Our findings at this stage are grounded in observations and suggestions that emerged from interviews of 85 knowledgeable informants, supplemented by numerous conversations at related gatherings, feedback on the presentations of our early findings, and an extensive review of the literature about this field. Our main conclusions are as follows:

Now is a critical time for the field of social entrepreneurship. This exploration was indeed timely, as there was an overwhelming consensus from respondents that the concept is creating energy that could propel it forward, but that it is still fragile and not well understood. Many practicing social entrepreneurs do not identify themselves as such. Among those who embrace the term, there are significant differences regarding definitions, values, and visions of success. This could fragment the community of individuals and organizations that make up the "field" as it now exists. The enthusiasm with which some early proponents have promoted social entrepreneurship has begun to generate a mix of resistance, skepticism, and unrealistic expectations. In addition, the ecosystem that supports social entrepreneurs has major weaknesses that could undermine their effectiveness, and thus, weaken the case for the field.

The challenges present important opportunities to move the field forward. Though our respondents were quick to identify problems and challenges, most of them saw these as creating opportunities to clarify and deepen understanding of the concept, forge a vibrant community of practice and knowledge around shared interests, build a knowledge base in which to ground our claims, and improve many of the inefficiencies in the ecosystem, inefficiencies that have hampered performance in the social sector for decades.

The time is right to make a major leap forward. Societies around the world are looking for new solutions to pressing social problems. They are particularly interested in approaches that mobilize private initiative, ingenuity, and resources. New questions are being raised that challenge existing knowledge, solutions and old sector boundaries. The window of opportunity is open for proponents of social entrepreneurship to introduce new models, new ways of thinking, and new frameworks, provided a rigorous base can be established for this work.

Success will require building a strong community of practice and knowledge, as well as improving the ecosystem that supports social entrepreneurs. A healthy field depends on two things. One is a sufficient number of interested parties who engage with each other, identify as part of the field, and build a foundation of knowledge for the field. We refer to this as a "community of practice and knowledge." If this group is very small or highly fragmented, it cannot constitute a "field." The current loose community formed around social entrepreneurship faces significant challenges if it is to have strength and stability moving forward. In Section 1, we identify five challenges that reflect tensions in the community, as it now exists, and we offer potential responses to each. We make a plea for a community that combines rigor with openness and respect.

Success will also require a healthy institutional and social environment to support the practice. We refer to this as the "ecosystem of social entrepreneurship." It includes the resources (financial, human, social/political, and intellectual capital) essential for the success of social entrepreneurs, and the environmental conditions (such as public policy and politics, media, economic and social conditions, and related fields) that could support or undermine the practice of social entrepreneurship.

We already know many of the inefficiencies and challenges in this ecosystem. Unless these are addressed, social entrepreneurs will struggle and their potential will not be fully recognized. In Section 2, we identify challenges and opportunities for improving this ecosystem in order to strengthen the field. We identify five priorities for strengthening the ecosystem (related to financial markets, performance assessment, scale, talent, and business models) and note several other potentially valuable interventions. In the end, the ecosystem for social entrepreneurs should blend support with rigor and discipline.

Of course, the community and the ecosystem work together. A productive community of practice and knowledge will increase our chances of improving the ecosystem. Participants in this ecosystem are likely recruits for the community of practice and knowledge. Building the field of social entrepreneurship requires concerted efforts on both of these requirements.

INTRODUCTION: PROJECT GOALS, FRAMEWORK, AND METHODS

In the fall of 2006, the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE) at Duke University, with the support of the Skoll Foundation, launched a project to identify opportunities for building the field of social entrepreneurship, as a field of practice and as an academic field. This report is a product of that effort.

Project Goals

As its name states, CASE is dedicated to advancing social entrepreneurship, by which we mean improving understanding and strengthening practice. As a university-based center, the tools we use are research and education. We recognize that these are not the only tools that will be needed to advance the field, and that we need to work in conjunction with others to serve our mission. Thus, this project was designed with two goals in mind, one internal and one external. The internal goal is to develop an effective strategy for CASE. The external goal is to inform and stimulate a broader discussion about how to advance this emerging field. This report addresses the second goal. It shares the findings and conclusions about overall strategies and leverage points for advancing social entrepreneurship.

Framework and Definitions

What do we mean when we speak of "building the field of social entrepreneurship"? For purposes of this project, we define "social entrepreneurship" rather broadly as innovative and resourceful approaches to addressing social problems. These approaches could be pursued through for-profit, nonprofit, or hybrid organizations. However, we did not impose even this broad definition on our interviewees. Rather, we asked them what the concept means to them and openly discussed definitional differences.

When we speak about the "field," we are referring to both an arena of practice as well as an arena of inquiry, knowledge, and learning related to that practice. This is similar to the "fields" of law, medicine, or business entrepreneurship. "Building" this field refers to deepening our knowledge about it and improving the quality of practice in it.

In framing the project, we recognized that the practice of social entrepreneurship does not happen in a vacuum. It takes place within an ecosystem that can enhance or undermine the effectiveness of social entrepreneurs. Improvements in practice will likely require changes in that ecosystem. Efforts to "build the field" need to be designed with this ecosystem in mind. Thus, at the outset of this project, we developed a framework to describe the key elements of the social entrepreneurship ecosystem. We organized the elements into two broad categories. The first broad category consists of the *resources*, or types of "capital," that social entrepreneurs depend on to do their work, including financial capital, human capital, intellectual capital, and social/political capital. The second broad category includes the *external conditions* that can affect social entrepreneurs. Here we divided these conditions into four categories: policy and politics, media, economic and social conditions, and related fields.

Figure 1 presents the ecosystem, illustrating the richness and complexity of the environment in which social entrepreneurs operate and the various determinants of their effectiveness. It does not attempt to capture the complex interaction effects among the elements of the ecosystem. This framework has informed our research, our conversations, and our thinking about building the field of social entrepreneurship. We have used it specifically to structure Section 2 of this report.

Methods and Data Sources

The research phase of this project involved in-depth interviews with 85 knowledgeable participants in or observers of this field. Interviewees included:

- Academics
- Consultants
- Funders
- Practitioners
- Journalists and authors
- Others knowledgeable about the field

While the participant pool was heavily biased towards people located in the United States, we did speak with fourteen individuals currently working in the United Kingdom, Europe, and Latin America. A number of the other participants were able to draw on significant experience with social entre-preneurship in a global context. (See Appendix A for a list of interviewees.) Although we had an interview

guide (see Appendix B), the interviews were largely conversational, often going in directions not anticipated by the interview guide. Our main job was to initiate the conversation, listen respectfully, and probe for insights that might be useful to our work. This was not intended to be a systematic survey that would be subject to statistical analysis. The interviews should be thought of as candid, purposeful conversations with knowledgeable people. The goal was to learn what we could about the state of the field and opportunities to move it forward. The participants were generous with their time and thoughtful in their responses.[1]

In addition to conducting the interviews, we reviewed the history of and literature about the field, conducted a working session with the CASE advisory board, hosted a facilitated visioning session with a select group of knowledgeable informants, solicited feedback on early findings that were presented during the University Network for Social Entrepreneurship meeting at the 2007 Skoll World Forum on Social Entrepreneurship and again in a Skoll Colloquium for faculty in the field, and had numerous informal conversations.

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[1] Note that the interviews were conducted from October 2006 to March 2007. This means that the interviews did not capture the impact of any events after March, including, for instance, the

impact of Roger Martin and Sally Osberg's article "Social Entrepreneurship: The Case for Definition." However, some of the other conversations that have informed this work did occur between March and August 2007. We have tried to reflect the impact of recent developments in our conclusions.

Figure 1: Ecosystem of Social Entrepreneurship (Summary)
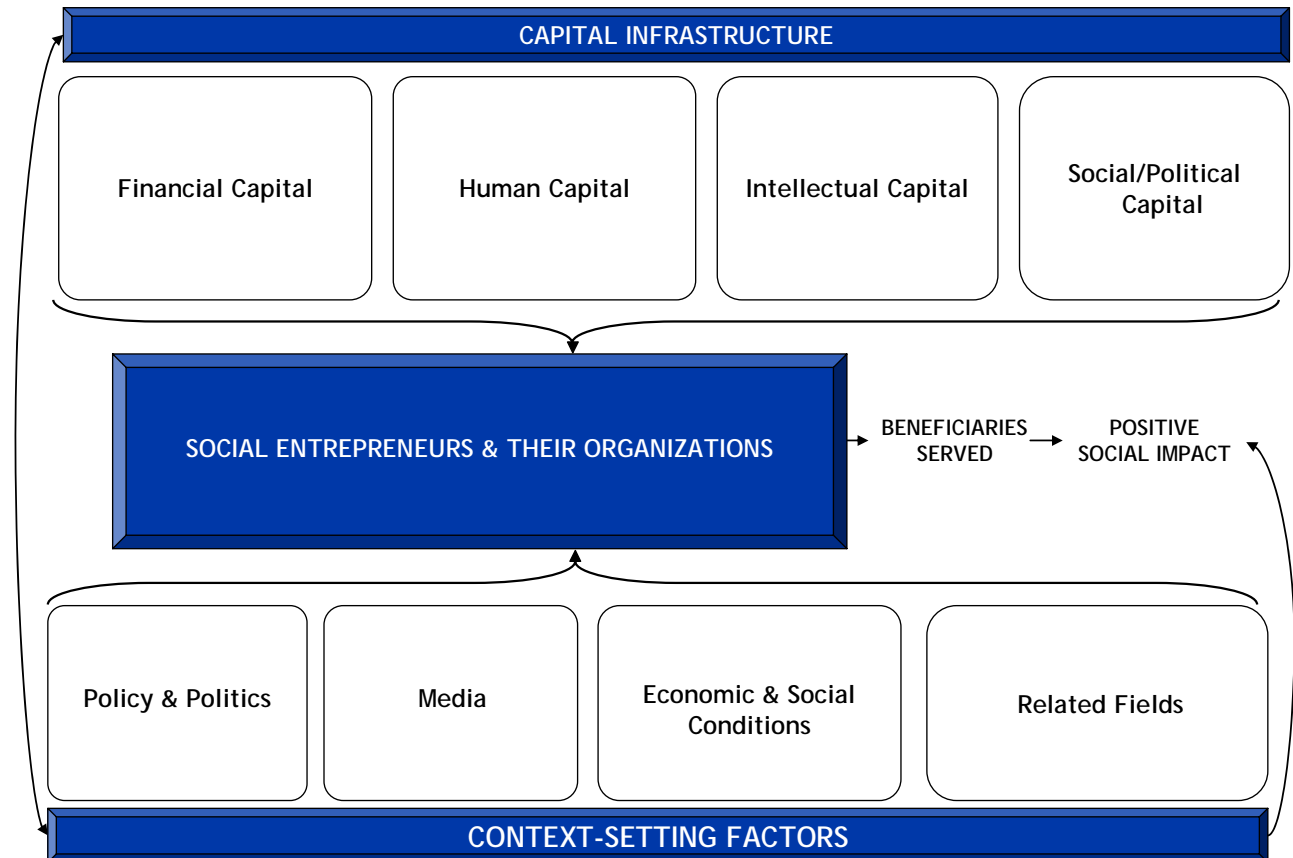
1.0 FORGING A COHESIVE, CREDIBLE, AND VIBRANT COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE AND KNOWLEDGE

When we refer to the "field" of social entrepreneurship, we are essentially speaking about two closely related things: the ecosystem in which the practice takes place (previously described), and the community of individuals and organizations that expressly share an interest in advancing this practice. According to Wenger and his colleagues:

> Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.[2]

We would explicitly include organizations, as well as people, when being part of this community furthers their mission. Without an active community of practice and knowledge, the "field" of social entrepreneurship does not exist. The success of the field depends on the health and effectiveness of this community. Consequently, we will devote this first section of our report to actions that will help develop and grow a cohesive, credible, and vibrant community of practice and knowledge around social entrepreneurship.

Now is an opportune time to take strategic steps toward strengthening this community. The concept of "social entrepreneurship" is clearly gaining momentum. This is apparent from increased the attention in mainstream media, growth of new academic programs around the world, and prominent awards (including the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize) for acknowledged social entrepreneurs. Our interviewees for this project recognized the momentum and saw it as presenting an excellent "window of opportunity" for building the field. Yet, most of them also identified tensions, frustrations, and challenges that could undermine efforts to move forward. If these are not handled correctly, the field could easily fragment, be marginalized, or simply become a passing fad. The excitement and energy that have been building around this concept could fade as quickly as they arose.

Participants in our study were concerned, but not pessimistic. They saw the challenges as providing stimulus to take actions that are necessary if this emerging field is to mature and the community is to gel. In this section, we will discuss key tensions, frustrations, and challenges, as well as actions that might be taken to address them. These tensions fall into the following five categories:

- Clarifying definitions without fragmenting the community
- Finding common ground amidst different visions
- Balancing active promotion with demonstrated success and realistic expectations
- Respecting the old while highlighting the new and exciting
- Meeting the needs of both practitioners and academics

We will discuss each in turn, and then close by emphasizing the importance of rigor, openness, and respect.

1.1 Clarifying Definitions without Fragmenting the Community

The Challenge: While intellectual disagreements are healthy and natural for any newly developing field, definitional disputes about social entrepreneurship have taken a toll, according to those we interviewed. Even our most knowledgeable informants did not agree on a definition of social entrepreneurship. Several suggested, *"Definition is one of the biggest problems in the field."*[3]

Some asserted that the term was so unclear that they no longer use it, even though they were widely perceived to be part of this field. Others were not sure the concept was well enough defined to allow them to answer some of our questions. *"Is social entrepreneurship even defined well enough at this stage to consider whether or not 'it' is gaining momentum?"* Several respondents suggested that unless the field could quickly develop a common vocabulary and find a way to deal with the familiar definitional disputes, its legitimacy would be open to serious question.

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[2] Etienne Wenger, Richard McDermott, and William M. Snyder, *Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Guide to Managing Knowledge*, Harvard Business School Press, 2002, p. 4.

[3] When text is italicized and in quotes or indented, it is taken verbatim or as a close paraphrase constructed from our notes on the interviews.

The reactions of practicing social entrepreneurs were particularly interesting. Because this is a new term, many said that they did not identify themselves as "social entrepreneurs" until they were officially recognized as such for some award or fellows program:

> First there is the identity challenge–what makes an individual or an organization a social entrepreneur? Then there is the self-identity challenge–do people really recognize themselves as social entrepreneurs? The question, of course, is what the identifiers are.

Probably many practicing social entrepreneurs do not identify with this term. It is conceivable that many who do now identify themselves this way are simply adopting the term to attract funding, as they see it as the "new thing." From the perspective of many social entrepreneurs, the seemingly endless definitional disputes are *"getting in the way"* of doing the work, advancing practice, and increasing their effectiveness. For them, too much time is spent arguing over definitions and little is resolved. As one asked plaintively, *"Why this obsession over definition?"*

Our interviewees were concerned about definitions being too broad and being too narrow. Some were concerned that if definitions are too loose, *"anyone creating some kind of social benefit can claim to be a social entrepreneur."* They worried about the concept being "watered down." Others were concerned about the concept being too exclusive:

> Social entrepreneurship, as it is being advanced, needs to have a more expansive and inclusive view of what it is and who are included as social entrepreneurs.

Some worried that a narrow definition reinforces elitism. *"Social entrepreneurship appears overly focused on an elite core of remarkable individuals that appeal well to the new emerging wealth, all too often leaving others that do not quite fit off or well behind the parade."* Several referred to an exclusive club of the *"usual suspects"*:

> For practitioners it has gotten really "clubby"– you are either in or out–which does a disservice to moving social change forward when other people feel "less than".

While specific definitions of social entrepreneurship were nearly as varied as each respondent, many of the differences can be organized around a few key themes:

Innovation versus Enterprise: Though the practices that constitute social entrepreneurship have a long (and, unfortunately, not well documented) history, the current popularity of the term "social entrepreneur" owes a great deal to two trends that accelerated in the 1980s, each with a different emphasis.[4] One trend involved social purpose organizations searching for new sources of revenue, particularly earned income, and using business methods to support their work. The other involved private citizens creating innovative solutions to social problems. Some of our participants emphasized innovation in their definitions; others emphasized the use of business methods. In reading the press or talking with students, it is apparent that each of these elements has played an important role in attracting attention to social entrepreneurship. Often the two are conflated in coverage of social entrepreneurship.

Individuals versus Organizations: Some people see social entrepreneurship as focused on the exceptional individuals who, acting alone or perhaps with a partner, create new ventures. These respondents tended to emphasize the personal characteristics and traits that they believed define these independent social entrepreneurs. Other respondents noted that current definitions risked the "over-glorification" of individuals. They emphasized the collective nature of entrepreneurial activity, including the team that is *"surrounding and supporting the entrepreneur and the organizations that were creating the change."* For some who adopted a more organizational or collective perspective, social entrepreneurship could happen from within existing organizations, including governmental organizations and large corporations.

Systems Change versus Incremental Social Impact: Many respondents focused on the scale and sustainability of the change created by social entrepreneurs. To them, social entrepreneurs want to change the world. They would talk about creating a widespread *"systemic change,"* a *"state change,"* or a *"paradigm shift."* (This emphasis is similar to achieving a "new equilibrium" that Martin and Osberg place at the center of their definition, even though their article was not published until after the

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[4] For a discussion of the history of social entrepreneurship, particularly in the U.S., see J. Gregory Dees and Beth Battle Anderson, "Framing a Theory of Social Entrepreneurship: Building on Two Schools of Practice and Thought," *Research on Social Entrepreneurship: Understanding and Contributing to an Emerging Field*, Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), 2006.

vast majority of our interviews were complete.[5]) Others were content to see incremental change or any net positive social impact, including community-based ventures that are not out to change the world, or innovations that make charitable relief more efficient or effective.

Steps Forward: It is easy to see how these three points of difference can lead to significant confusion over what counts as social entrepreneurship and what does not. The challenge is to find definitional solutions that increase precision and clarity while allowing healthy disagreements, respecting different perspectives, and still including enough supporters to propel this field forward. Too broad a definition will dilute the focus of the community, while too narrow a definition could exclude too many and result in a field that is *"too special"* for mainstream attention. A community of practice is starting to emerge, including those who embrace all the different definitions mentioned above. In order to maintain the interest, commitment, and participation of key players, we suggest a path forward that balances increased clarity with openness and respect for differences.

Of course, no one is in a position to dictate the definitions for the field. As one participant put it:

> No one is really charged with shaping or defining the field and the term. Everyone has their own take on definition. If someone did come up and say, "This is what it is…" – who would believe them? What buy-in?

Shared definitions will have to emerge from a give and take process among participants and the media outlets that popularize the term. However, since those of us who currently identify with this field have a vested interest in resolving the confusions about definitions, we would suggest adopting the following guidelines:

- Clearly distinguish "social entrepreneurship," focused on innovation, from "social enterprise," focused on the use of business methods to generate income
- For the foreseeable future, define the community of practice and knowledge to include both social entrepreneurship and social enterprise

- Find a vocabulary to distinguish the different forms of socially entrepreneurial behavior (i.e., to distinguish independent start-ups led by one or two people from organizations engaged in finding innovative solutions to social problems; and the revolutionaries, aiming for major systemic change, from the reformers, aiming for more incremental improvements)
- Recognize the importance and legitimacy of all these forms of entrepreneurial behavior, and acknowledge that they have enough problems, concerns, and passions in common to be part of a shared community of practice and knowledge
- Respect that it is healthy for key community participants to focus their work on forms of socially entrepreneurial behavior that they deem most important, interesting, and a good fit for them

These guidelines should allow for the development of a diverse and vibrant community with some critical mass but without all the confusion that currently exists in the field. Participants need to respect honest differences while working together to help find new and better solutions to social problems.

1.2 Finding Common Ground Amidst Different Visions

The Challenge: Participants are drawn to social entrepreneurship for a variety of reasons. This is reflected in part in the definitional disputes. It is also reflected in different values and visions of success. During our interviews, we explicitly asked what would count as success in building this field over the next decade and beyond. Once again, the answers were wide ranging. Respondents offered up visions that reflected varied backgrounds, perspectives, values, political ideologies, and theories of social change.

Social entrepreneurship is a global phenomenon and, to a certain extent, the differences in visions reflect regional, national, and cultural attitudes. We did not have enough interviews outside of the U.S. to map different perspectives geographically, but they were apparent from our interviews and other conversations. As one of our interviewees observed:

> In some countries, [social entrepreneurship] has grown out of the social economy; in others, there have always been very strong links with the public sector. In the States, there is more of a business orientation, and more hostility to links to government. And in

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[5] Roger Martin and Sally Osberg, "Social Entrepreneurship: The Case for Definition," *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Spring 2007.

the developing world, there is a long history of what essentially is social entrepreneurship – businesses of all sorts with social purposes.

We heard some people associate social entrepreneurship with the cooperative movement and others argue that it is an extension of government. We heard one representative from a developing country say that in his country, *"all entrepreneurship is social,"* since any productive activity creates social benefits; and we heard another from a country on the same continent say that in his country, "entrepreneurship" is a bad term, associated with exploitation and ruthless profit seeking. Some cultures, such as in the U.S., highlight individuals and their success. In other cultures, the collective is seen as the proper unit of analysis. These differences affect visions of success for the field.

Even within the U.S., we saw differences based on attitudes toward business, government, and the social sector. Some of our interviewees saw social entrepreneurship as the first step in reforming a flawed capitalist system. More than one person commented that the ideal long-term goal was for *"all entrepreneurship to become explicitly social."* Others saw social entrepreneurship as an effort to bring business-like discipline to solving social problems, a way of spreading the practices and spirit of capitalism. Some interviewees saw social entrepreneurship as a way to reform the nonprofit sector, while others felt that the attention on just the "nonprofit" social entrepreneurs by the mainstream press and many funders was too limiting. These respondents emphasized including for-profit social enterprises and the emerging group of hybrid for-profits with a social mission. A few respondents seemed to view government as the most legitimate creator of public good; they accepted social entrepreneurship as an extension of and testing ground for government, but worried about its legitimacy and about accountability to the public. Their ultimate goal was for government to take over successful programs and ultimately to become more entrepreneurial in its own right.

Not surprisingly, as with the definitions, visions of success for the field were nearly as varied as the number of participants. This was especially true of their longer-term visions. For many participants, social entrepreneurship was a bridge to a better society, reforming the social sector, government, and/or the business world. They were leery of maintaining social entrepreneurship as a distinct "discipline" or "profession." However, most agreed on the value of focusing attention on social

entrepreneurship for the near and medium term in order to create greater appreciation for the value of the practice and to deepen our understanding of it. The bridge requires a foundation that needs to be established now.

Even in the medium term, participants disagreed on how best to build the foundations. We could identify three different, but not mutually exclusive, visions of success, each with different implications for the best path forward. These map onto three current catch phrases in the field.

Greater Support and Empowerment for the "New Heroes": According to this vision, the most important thing for the field and society is to identify and support the social entrepreneurs who create widespread, systemic change. These social entrepreneurs may be called "New Heroes," to borrow the title of a PBS documentary series on social entrepreneurs produced with the support of the Skoll Foundation. These new heroes are defined by their "*pattern-changing*" innovations. These innovations and their relentless pursuit of results represent society's best hope for effecting enduring, breakthrough social change. Examples range from Florence Nightingale to Muhammad Yunus. Success for the field involves identifying more high potential social entrepreneurs and helping these "new heroes" achieve their intended impact.

> *We need social entrepreneurs at scale [commensurate with the problems they are addressing] because there is a risk that if they are all "mom and pop" operations, people will not believe that they are a viable part of society. I believe in having one or two "home runs" to change the system.*

Everyone Becoming a "Changemaker": According to this vision, the most important thing is to spread the practices of creating change as widely in society as possible. It draws on Bill Drayton's ideas in "Everyone a Changemaker," wherein citizens of the world "respond quickly and effectively to social challenges, and where each individual has the freedom, confidence and societal support to address any social problem and drive change."[6] The argument can be made that this is the best path to widespread social change. It positions corporate executives and government leaders to work with independent social entrepreneurs to accelerate change. Proponents of this view would plant the

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[6] Bill Drayton, "Everyone a Changemaker: Social Entrepreneurship's Ultimate Goal," *Innovations Magazine*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Winter 2006.

seeds of socially entrepreneurial behavior early and often. This vision has the potential to touch everyone's life. Success for the field involves the ideals of social entrepreneurship being mainstreamed as *"part of the national fabric of how social change is pursued."* Social entrepreneurship as something distinct from mainstream would be *"unnecessary in a future where the pursuit of social value was embedded in all organizations operating globally."*

Growth of "Enterprising Social Innovation": According to this vision, society would be better off if we could produce more innovative, market-based, "enterprising" approaches to social problems. "Enterprising social innovation" is a phrase used by Dees and Anderson in a recent article on the history and future of the field of social entrepreneurship.[7] It refers to creative uses of business tools and markets for social impact. It blends methods of business and philanthropy, seeking to correct market failures and harness market forces to create social good. Much of the excitement surrounding social entrepreneurship in recent years is driven by the idea that it involves the use of business methods. This is evident in much of the press devoted to the topic. This character is what is seen as novel (see the discussion of old and new below). These innovations may be conceived of and pursued by an independent social entrepreneur, or they may originate from within or across existing institutions, be they business or philanthropic, small or large, public or private. Success for the field, in this view, involves improved understanding and adoption of the best use of market forces and business methods to achieve social impact.

It is easy to see why it would be difficult to gain consensus on a vision of success for the field. Different players in this field will pursue different visions. Ideally, they will do this in ways that are complementary to one another and that do not create unhelpful divides.

Steps Forward: Different visions of success are compatible with forging a cohesive, vibrant, credible community of practice and knowledge, as long as there is enough of an "overlapping consensus" (to borrow a phrase from philosopher John Rawls) to hold the community together. Based on our field research, we believe that such an overlapping

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[7] J. Gregory Dees and Beth Battle Anderson, "Framing a Theory of Social Entrepreneurship: Building on Two Schools of Practice and Thought," *Research on Social Entrepreneurship: Understanding and Contributing to an Emerging Field*, Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), 2006.

consensus does exist. The current participants in the community that is forming around the notion of social entrepreneurship seem to have the following in common:

- Recognition that we need innovative approaches to social change and that the status quo is not sufficient

- Desire to harness private ingenuity, resources, and energy for the public good

- Appreciation for the value of socially entre-preneurial behavior

- Interest in drawing on business methods and markets, where possible, to craft sustainable solutions to social problems

- Need to learn more about what it takes for socially entrepreneurial efforts or endeavors to succeed

We believe these commonalities are sufficient to hold together a community of practice and knowledge. They should be emphasized. Different participants in the community should be free to pursue their different visions of success. They should be free to try to persuade other participants to embrace their particular vision for the field. This kind of give and take is healthy for an emerging field. It forces participants to articulate and support their views more rigorously. The important thing is that the mechanisms that bring participants in the community together, that allow them to develop and share knowledge, should be structured so as to emphasize the common concerns, problems, and passions that make this a community.

1.3 Balancing Enthusiastic Promotion with Demonstrated Success and Realistic Expectations

The Challenge: New concepts rarely catch on without active promotion. This is especially true of concepts that challenge the status quo, that require people to think and act differently, and that cross sector and disciplinary boundaries in the way that social entrepreneurship does. Early proponents often have to act as promoters. Promotion can lead to the selective use of dramatic success stories, while downplaying failures and disappointments. Promotion lends itself to rhetoric, perhaps bordering on hyperbole, that emphasizes the benefits of adopting the new concept while glossing over the downsides. It is hard to attract people to a new community of practice and knowledge unless they are sufficiently excited about the value to

themselves and society of participating. The problem is that reality is almost always more subtle and complex.

Several respondents expressed concerns that promotion of social entrepreneurship might have created *"unrealistic expectations of quick, dramatic successes."* Some thought all the attention the field was getting was slightly premature as demonstrated full success stories were still quite minimal. They saw a risk of backlash if proponents were to *"over-promise and under-deliver."* Some worried about the over-use of microfinance as the one recent example of a widespread success, suggesting the field might be perceived as a *"one hit wonder"* and that microfinance, now serving some 100 million people, may set the bar too high for others. There was an overwhelming consensus among our informants that the field needs more stories and case studies that clearly demonstrate the impact and success of social entrepreneurs, backed by rigorous analysis. Many felt that current success stories, while powerful and moving, lack hard data or proven measures of success, scalability, and sustainability. Otherwise, this could look like a field with lots of little ventures that are admirable but almost never come close to the espoused goal of widespread, lasting impact, and that never match up to the problems they are designed to solve.

Providing compelling cases is a serious challenge. The work of social entrepreneurship is difficult. It takes considerable time to achieve systemic change or a "new equilibrium." Many proponents argue that society does not provide adequate support for social entrepreneurs. Without a strong infrastructure, including better access to resources for scaling, it is not surprising that widespread impact is relatively rare. Pointing to select innovations of the past, such as the creation of the nursing profession by Florence Nightingale, can help, but is not usually compelling to skeptics. (It also raises the old versus new issue discussed below.) Ironically, the pressure to create more contemporary stories of successful social innovations that achieve significant scale might result in more failures due to premature efforts to scale. Several informants raised a caution about pressure to scale up quickly. As one put it:

> There needs to be a greater focus to have these innovators *"drill down"* to make their organizations and programs work well before moving to replication where breadth, branding, and *"touches"* risk dominating over depth, demonstrated results, and sustainability.

Even when promising cases are identified, documenting success in a rigorous way poses serious challenges. It is one thing to tell a compelling story with anecdotal evidence of impact, and another to back it up with hard analysis. Many informants spoke about the lack of robust data and rigorous research directly linking social entrepreneurship with significant social improvements. This kind of analysis is inhibited by the all-too-familiar problems of measuring social impact and attributing it to a particular innovation. Thoughtful researchers can and often do disagree on which data to collect, which analytic methods to use, and which conclusions are justified. Even with microfinance, widely recognized as a success of the magnitude to prompt a Nobel Peace Prize, various attempts to measure its social impact have resulted in mixed conclusions. It is often easy for critics to question the methodology or find some limitation of the analysis.

Impact assessment is still a crude and inexact science. Any rigorous effort to measure the impact of social entrepreneurship in general would be very complicated indeed. With business entrepreneurship, small and new businesses are often used as a surrogate for the level of entrepreneurial activity. In this way, David Birch was able to show that these entrepreneurial businesses were creating the bulk of the jobs in the U.S. economy. This captured the attention of policymakers and business school deans, helping to propel that field forward. Creating the database needed to do a similar groundbreaking study of the value of social entrepreneurship is complicated because of definitional differences and limited publicly available data. Some proponents cite the number of new nonprofits created around the world, but this is a very imperfect indicator of socially entrepreneurial activity and does not confirm that these new organizations are having great impact. This proliferation of new organizations may simply cause more fragmentation and inefficiency in an already highly fragmented sector.

In addition to documenting success, proponents need to accept failure as part of the landscape. Success sells, but entrepreneurship of any sort is fraught with failures. Social entrepreneurship is no exception, even if the social sector is more reluctant to acknowledge failures. In fact, if proponents are right in their claims that society does not provide enough support for social entrepreneurs, we should expect more failure or at least stagnation among social ventures than among business ventures. Again, respondents overwhelmingly noted the need for the field to look openly at failures and ask tough questions. In the words of one informant:

There is too much focus on success. I get nervous with how social entrepreneurs are being accelerated and celebrated… Are we giving the wrong message by only celebrating successes and not spotlighting the lessons learned from the failures that all entrepreneurs make?

How can this be done without prompting the response, "See? It doesn't work"? In the world of business entrepreneurship, the high failure rate of new businesses does not undermine appreciation for the value and importance of entrepreneurship in an economy. Proponents of social entrepreneurship need to create the same kind of excitement while fostering realistic expectations about inevitable failures and disappointments.

Steps Forward: This field and the community of practice and knowledge that supports it have to be grounded in a realistic assessment of what social entrepreneurship has to offer. Proponents have already gotten the attention of mainstream media and institutions. This has created curiosity and excitement. It is drawing new members into the community on a regular basis. Now is a good time to build a solid and realistic case for what social entrepreneurship could mean if it were adequately supported, in the way business entrepreneurship is supported. This case can be built with historical and recent examples, but they alone will not illustrate the full potential of this "field" if it is fully plowed, fertilized, and tended. The case also has to be grounded in theory that explains the role and importance of failures in this process. When empirical data are in contention, a strong theory can help us sort out the truth. The following steps would take us in this direction:

- Illustrate the potential value of social entre-preneurship by use of the best examples

- Document the challenges facing social entrepreneurs to explain why there are not more examples

- Build a rigorous and compelling theory of social entrepreneurship that
  - Is well grounded in relevant disciplines
  - Illustrates the role of social entre-preneurship in the larger scheme of social improvement
  - Provides a basis for estimating the value social entrepreneurship could have to society if it were better supported

  - Addresses potential costs of this kind of experimentation ("creative-destruction") in the social sector
  - Has testable implications

- Support the theory with illustrative examples of both successes and failures

- Use the theory to explain the role of failures and disappointments as part of a dynamic, uncertain, experimental learning process

- Continue to work on impact measurement methods and tools to allow more precise assessments to test and refine the theory going forward

This is a theory-based approach, grounded in the observation by social psychologist Kurt Lewin, "there is nothing more practical than a good theory." When empirical findings are open to contention and different interpretations, theory can provide clarity and credibility. Only with a good theory do we know how to interpret failures: Do they demonstrate flaws in the idea of social entrepreneurship, or do they merely illustrate a natural part of the process? Furthermore, a good theory can provide the basis for building an effective infrastructure to support social entrepreneurship in the future.

1.4 Respecting the Old while Highlighting the New

The Challenge: The social entrepreneurship movement embodies a fundamental tension between old and new. The concept has captured the imagination and hearts of many because it sounds like a new and different approach to social problems, at a time when many believe that a new approach is desperately needed. The notion that this is new was reinforced by some of the early proponents who were highly critical of the status quo in the social sector. They put forth "social entrepreneurship" and "venture philanthropy" as revolutionary, pattern-breaking innovations with the potential to transform the way we tackle social problems. This alleged newness is part of what made the concept "newsworthy" and, thus, is responsible for a significant part of the growing interest in the topic.

Yet, the practices associated with social entrepreneurship, however it is defined, can be found throughout history. This is widely acknowledged by many thought leaders in the field and reflected in some of the central literature. However, acknowledging the historic roots of social

entrepreneurship opens the door to the oft-repeated criticism that social entrepreneurship is not a new field but just a new *"label attached to something which we have already had. Innovative people have always existed–this is not necessarily new."* This observation suggests that social entrepreneurship is not worthy of all the attention it is getting, because it is simply a fancy label for what people have been doing all along and will continue to do, with or without some new name.

Our respondents reflected this tension in their comments. They recognized the appeal of being seen as the *"new, new thing"* and were happy to capitalize on the excitement of social entrepreneurship being viewed this way. But many of them raised questions about the emphasis on the "new"–new money, new players, new solutions, and new ventures. In advancing the image of social entrepreneurship as being an innovation, proponents might be viewed as ignoring or, worse, disrespecting similar activities and expertise with roots in the past. They worried that this emphasis was merely glorifying *"what is new and taking focus away from folks doing the work but needing assistance and resources."* In terms of overall social impact, several felt that if resources and attention are disproportionately focused on what is "new"–existing effective solutions could be lost:

> *There are existing organizations doing this work. We have many solutions to existing problems but we are missing the mechanisms to help organizations take these [pre-existing] solutions to scale.*

To use an example mentioned by one respondent, few in the world of social entrepreneurship would see the expansion of Boys & Girls Clubs to reach more children in their communities as part of the field of social entrepreneurship. If more contemporary innovations get resources over approaches that have long been effective, much of the new money and talent flowing into this work could be wasted.

Steps Forward: Most proponents believe that there is something new about the current approach to social entrepreneurship and efforts to grow it as a field. It has historical precedents, and those of us in the field now should do what we can to learn from the past and to build on the expertise that has been developed and handed down. However, using the conceptual framework and language of social entrepreneurship to describe this activity is new. Grouping nonprofit, for-profit, and hybrid activities under one umbrella, and building a movement to support this sector-blurring activity in a more

deliberate way are new. Language makes a difference. It changes the way we see things, creating new possibilities, as well as potentially new blind spots. We suggest the following steps to address the tension between new and old:

- Acknowledge that social entrepreneurship has historical precedents from which we all can learn, but note that it has never been fully exploited, in part because it has been confused with charity and routine social service delivery

- Develop a story, grounded in history, that explains why this is a particularly ripe time for a radical advance in this practice and in society's attitude toward it

- Point out that what is new is the way of framing this activity in terms of "entrepreneurship," the deliberate crossing of sector boundaries in search of more sustainable solutions, and the level and breadth of interest in advancing the practice and knowledge about this kind of social problem solving in a systematic way

- Recognize that the process of entrepreneurial innovation is only part of a larger ecosystem for creating lasting solutions to social problems and that other players have important roles to play

With these steps, it should be possible to celebrate what is new and exciting about social entrepreneurship while still recognizing historical precedents, respecting prior work on social problems, and building on the lessons of the past. Proponents of social entrepreneurship are attempting to engage in their own Schumpeterian "revolution," fundamentally changing the patterns of social problem solving. While we can point to individual social entrepreneurs throughout history, this revolution at the societal level–this widespread change in how we frame and tackle problems–has not taken hold. What is new is this revolutionary effort to identify social entrepreneurship as a distinct practice, deepen our understanding of it, and change society to support it more effectively.

1.5 Meeting the Needs of Both Practitioners and Academics

The Challenge: As in many fields, we heard a tension between the needs of academics and practitioners. Practitioners want timely, actionable, accessible, relevant knowledge. Academics seek to develop theoretical frameworks grounded in and relevant to

existing literature from their disciplines, as well as rigorously conducted empirical studies, publishable in leading academic journals. In the long run, there may be "nothing more practical than a good theory," but in the early stages of development, theories can seem remote from practice, made more remote by the norms and standards of academic practice. Academic work often takes relatively long periods of time to be completed, vetted, and published. The end product is typically written for other academics, not practitioners. Academics are rarely rewarded for taking the time to translate their work for practitioners.

Not surprisingly, few practitioners cited academics or academic centers when asked about where they currently turn for knowledge to help them do their work. Amongst recognized social entrepreneurs, the most valuable knowledge sharing seems to come from their peer networks and select forums organized by their funders. Hardly anyone interviewed mentioned academic journals, periodicals, books, or professors as their main sources of knowledge. As one respondent framed it:

> How do we find a form of communication and organization that actually engages with practitioners on the ground, while not devaluing the academic roles? This is very challenging.

Academics need to establish their legitimacy among their academic peers, if this field is to have legitimacy, but they face barriers. Social entrepreneurship cuts across traditional academic disciplines into which faculty tend to fall, each with its own standards of rigor and its own orthodoxies. It cuts across the schools into which universities are organized. It is grounded in a practice that is still being defined and understood. And we have no large databases of reliable, quantifiable data on which to draw. It is extremely hard to do interdisciplinary research that is practice-oriented, largely qualitative, and still well respected by academic peers. As one interviewee suggested:

> Social entrepreneurship is an "applied discipline" rather than arcane theory. But, as scholars, we need to move beyond a consultancy approach for credibility and need to focus on drawing theory out of practice, developing some new theory, and then applying back to practice.

However, even this is a risky path for academics who want legitimacy at their institutions.

Academia should be an important part of this community. The presence of rigorous academic work at leading universities adds legitimacy to the claims made by proponents of social entrepreneurship for its importance. When Harvard Business School launched the Initiative on Social Enterprise in 1993, it sent a signal that caught the attention of other leading schools and the media. "Universities have to be involved–for their credibility, legitimacy, convening (power)." Academics have access to existing knowledge and are in a position to develop new knowledge that should be useful to practitioners. Academics also have the training to bring a critical perspective and rigor to knowledge development efforts. Practitioners can and do learn a great deal from their peers and mentors, but each practitioner has an experience base that is dependent on particular circumstances and that may not apply to peers asking for advice. Academics who interact with and study many practitioners in different circumstances are in a position to see patterns that an individual practitioner or small groups of practitioners are likely to miss.

Of course, most academic research methods were designed primarily to inform theory by generating descriptive knowledge of the phenomenon being studied, not prescriptive knowledge about how to engage in effective practice. Not surprisingly, as one practitioner put it, "Academics may be making problems more theoretical than necessary." The justification for the more theoretical work is that theoretical advances will ultimately inform practice in a deep and important way. Of course, some academic work is aimed at answering questions directly relevant to practitioners. The problem is that even this work is often presented in such an "academic" way that it does not connect with the practitioners who could use it. How do we use the skills of academics to advance practice and theory?

Steps Forward: If this field is to develop in a way that truly supports practice, we may need to embrace methods of knowledge development and sharing that break from traditional research and dissemination models. One academic interviewee, arguing "there must be collegial engagement with the practice community," suggested that we need a new kind of practitioner-oriented approach to developing and capturing knowledge in this field, one that does not fit standard discipline-based methodologies.

Perhaps the knowledge has to be co-developed by practitioners and academics. It can then be formalized and shared, rather than simply

"disseminated"—a term that did not feel right to a number of interviewees.

> *The field needs the ability for practitioners and academics to come together and create a nexus where they can talk about definitions, applications (how entrepreneurship is used), successes and failures, and how to apply lessons.*

This collaborative approach would allow us to harvest the knowledge embedded in practice, but with the aid of the expertise and critical thinking of academics. The challenge is doing this in a way that has legitimacy in the academy. As one interviewee put it, "*An intellectual 'shake out' is needed… It is time to unite powerful forces, funders, and ideological trends.*" In order to balance the needs of the academy with the needs of practice, we recommend the following:

- Create more venues and mechanisms for academics and practitioners to interact as colleagues around the knowledge agenda and research needs, not just venues where academics "teach" practitioners

- Explore methods of knowledge development or co-development and knowledge sharing that combine insights from practice with the rigor and critical expertise of academia

- Respect the fact that academics will also have to engage in work that is too theoretical to be of interest to practitioners and that serves to gain academic credibility for this emerging field

- Support efforts by academics to mine existing literature for knowledge that is helpful to social entrepreneurs

- Move toward an "evidence-based" approach to social entrepreneurship practice

"Evidence-based" approaches to practice are on the ascendancy in medicine and management. Social entrepreneurship will pose a challenge to this approach because innovation is inherently uncertain. However, many of the decisions social entrepreneurs must make on their way to creating widespread, lasting change are amenable to rigorous research and critical thinking. Creating effective bridges between academics and practitioners can help move us in this direction in a way that will improve practice and make academic work more valuable to practitioners.

1.6 Community Conclusion: Combining Rigor, Respect, and Openness

In order to maintain the momentum in this field and to forge a cohesive, credible, and vibrant community of practice and knowledge, we are recommending a combination of <u>rigor</u>, <u>openness</u>, *and* <u>respect</u>.

It might seem at first blush that the first two of these characteristics are at odds, that rigor and precision require narrow focus and exclusivity. They do not. We can move toward more precise definitions, as well as rigorous empirical and theoretical work, and still welcome all those who share an interest in innovative and enterprising private initiatives to improve social conditions. Focus is strategically important for each participant in the community. No one should try to do everything or focus on every aspect of this work. However, the community as a whole should be a *"big tent"* or, as one respondent called it, a *"broad church."* Respondents saw a significant opportunity lost if the field becomes too exclusive. As one respondent put it:

> *The ideas in social entrepreneurship can be used to revitalize social and public institutions. It has great potential to do this if it does not become too hermetic, too special.*

Another observed:

> *Social entrepreneurship is a "big tent" that includes social enterprise, social innovation, and entrepreneurship in the social sector… Any group [or person] that is innovative, introducing new solutions, acting entrepreneurially, and seeks large scale social change should qualify.*

This big tent is essential to create a critical mass of interest in this topic, to draw important participants into the community, and to maximize opportunities for learning from one another.

In particular, we believe the tent should include both social entrepreneurship (in the sense of pattern-breaking innovation) and social enterprise. Our respondents were split in terms of which camp they would most identify as their most natural home. Many seemed to embrace both camps and drew on both elements when talking about the field as a whole. Even those most closely tied to social innovation were intrigued by the use of business methods and market models where feasible. This is also what intrigues the media. Nearly every major article on social entrepreneurship in a leading publication (such as the *New York Times*, *Economist*,

and *The Atlantic Monthly*) alludes to the use of business methods, attitudes, or models. That is often the "hook" of the article, the unexpected combination of business methods and social objectives. The thoughtful participants in this community recognize that there are serious limits to what can be done through markets alone, but without the "enterprise" element as part of the field, it would lose much of its edge and appeal. Those focused on social entrepreneurship and those focused on social enterprise have much to learn from one another.

A big tent is not enough to make a community credible and productive. That is where increased rigor in definitions, theory, and research is extremely important. Participants cannot learn much from each other if they are talking at cross-purposes, defining terms in very different ways. Also, there are limits to the kind of knowledge that can be produced through studies of the most successful cases. The field will benefit by encouraging a transition to larger scale or more in-depth research that adopts high research standards and includes the whole range of performance from clear failure to outstanding success. It will also benefit from a good theory or some well-argued competing theories. Competing theories are common even in the hardest of the sciences, physics. The presence of well-argued theories allows for better hypothesis generation and testing. It also allows us to better understand the differences within our community.

Considering the different perspectives, visions, and values in this community, the other essential ingredient for it to thrive is respect. This includes respect for those who approach this topic from different ideological points of view and those who hold different visions of how this field can best contribute to society. It also includes respect for all the innovative work that has gone on in prior eras and the efforts of others who are approaching social change differently. Just as rigor does not preclude openness, respect does not preclude vigorous disagreements. Some of the most vibrant fields of knowledge and practice hold within them participants who strongly disagree on matters of the utmost importance in those fields. As long as the disagreements are voiced respectfully, they are a healthy part of any community of practice.

At this point in our work, we are encouraged by what we heard in our interviews and by what we witnessed as participants in this field during the time we have been engaged in this project. Despite the many challenges, tensions, and weaknesses identified by those with whom we spoke, the momentum in the field continues to grow. The community of practice and knowledge seems to be taking shape in a healthy way. And, within that community, we have seen movement toward more precise definitions and more rigorous research. If we adopt an approach of rigor, openness, and respect, the future for the field looks bright.
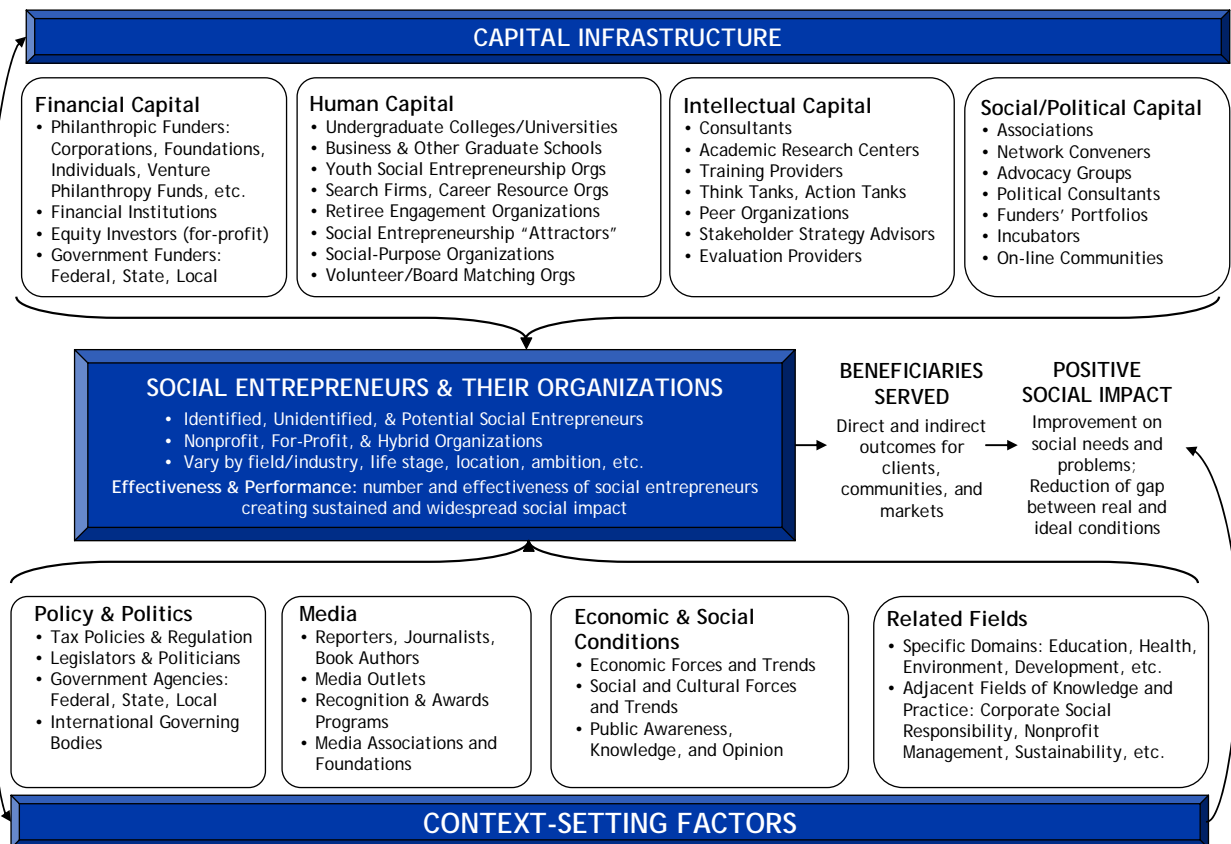
2.0 FINDING KEY LEVERAGE POINTS IN THE ECOSYSTEM

The second effort in the two-pronged strategy we recommend for building the field of social entrepreneurship involves strengthening the "ecosystem" in which the practice of social entrepreneurship takes place. A well-functioning community of practice and knowledge can serve as a platform for improving the ecosystem, making it more efficient and effective. The question is, "Which interventions are most likely to advance the field of social entrepreneurship?" In this section of the report, we identify potential leverage points in that ecosystem, based largely on suggestions made by participants in our field research.

When we refer to the "ecosystem" of social entrepreneurship, we are talking about the environmental factors that affect the ability of social entrepreneurs to achieve their intended social impacts. For simplicity, we have organized this ecosystem as follows.

The ecosystem has two major divisions. Each division has four categories. The first division is the *Capital Infrastructure* that provides the resources that are essential to a social entrepreneur's success. Although management literature now refers to many kinds of "capital," for simplicity we have decided to focus attention on four major categories: Financial, Human, Intellectual, and Social/Political Capital. Though social entrepreneurs can, to some extent, develop these forms of capital through their operations, most social entrepreneurs rely on outside organizations to help them get or build the capital they need. Examples of the kinds of organizations that do this work are identified in Figure 2. It is important to note that these categories are broadly defined, including capital creators, providers, and related intermediaries. For some of these players, social entrepreneurs are an intended target market; for others, social entrepreneurs are incidental users of the resources they provide. These capital categories are not mutually exclusive in that organizations may fall into more than one category, providing access to more than one type of capital.

Figure 2: Ecosystem of Social Entrepreneurship (with Examples)

CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Financial Capital
- Philanthropic Funders: Corporations, Foundations, Individuals, Venture Philanthropy Funds, etc.
- Financial Institutions
- Equity Investors (for-profit)
- Government Funders: Federal, State, Local

Human Capital
- Undergraduate Colleges/Universities
- Business & Other Graduate Schools
- Youth Social Entrepreneurship Orgs
- Search Firms, Career Resource Orgs
- Retiree Engagement Organizations
- Social Entrepreneurship "Attractors"
- Social-Purpose Organizations
- Volunteer/Board Matching Orgs

Intellectual Capital
- Consultants
- Academic Research Centers
- Training Providers
- Think Tanks, Action Tanks
- Peer Organizations
- Stakeholder Strategy Advisors
- Evaluation Providers

Social/Political Capital
- Associations
- Network Conveners
- Advocacy Groups
- Political Consultants
- Funders' Portfolios
- Incubators
- On-line Communities

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS & THEIR ORGANIZATIONS
- Identified, Unidentified, & Potential Social Entrepreneurs
- Nonprofit, For-Profit, & Hybrid Organizations
- Vary by field/industry, life stage, location, ambition, etc.

Effectiveness & Performance: number and effectiveness of social entrepreneurs creating sustained and widespread social impact

BENEFICIARIES SERVED
Direct and indirect outcomes for clients, communities, and markets

POSITIVE SOCIAL IMPACT
Improvement on social needs and problems; Reduction of gap between real and ideal conditions

Policy & Politics
- Tax Policies & Regulation
- Legislators & Politicians
- Government Agencies: Federal, State, Local
- International Governing Bodies

Media
- Reporters, Journalists, Book Authors
- Media Outlets
- Recognition & Awards Programs
- Media Associations and Foundations

Economic & Social Conditions
- Economic Forces and Trends
- Social and Cultural Forces and Trends
- Public Awareness, Knowledge, and Opinion

Related Fields
- Specific Domains: Education, Health, Environment, Development, etc.
- Adjacent Fields of Knowledge and Practice: Corporate Social Responsibility, Nonprofit Management, Sustainability, etc.

CONTEXT-SETTING FACTORS

The second major division captures *Context-Setting Factors*. These create the conditions in which social entrepreneurs and their capital providers operate. The factors tend to have their influence indirectly, and they are highly diverse. We have grouped them into four broad categories that emerged as important in our background research for this project: Policy and Politics, Media, Economic and Social Conditions, and Related Fields. Examples of each of these are provided on Figure 2. Each of these factors has the potential to affect social entrepreneurs, various players in the capital infrastructure, and the other context-setting factors.

The ecosystem chart in Figure 2 does not do justice to the complex interactions among these factors. Any attempt to do so would result in so many arrows of possible connection as to be unreadable. At this point, we are not trying to create a precise causal model. We reserve that exercise for future work on the field. For now, we simply want to capture the most important elements of the ecosystem in which social entrepreneurs operate. It is the first step in identifying potential leverage points for moving the field forward.

All of our participants identified inefficiencies and obstacles in the ecosystem and discussed how these might be remedied. While all agreed that serious challenges exist for those who want to improve the ecosystem, most felt optimistic that these challenges could be met with creative solutions, dedicated attention, and increased collaboration.

Of course, not all opportunities for improvement are created equal. We have identified five inter-related issues as particularly crucial to address. These issues will not be a surprise to those closely involved in this field. They are:

- Making financial markets more efficient and responsive

- Refining and standardizing performance measurement tools

- Helping social entrepreneurs find effective pathways for scaling impact

- Building appropriate talent pipelines

- Providing better guidance on sustainable business models

Our participants suggested many other interventions to improve the ecosystem for social entrepreneurs, but these merit some special attention. Each of these could be the subject of a full-length report on

its own merits. In this report, we will briefly discuss each of the five related priority areas, offering suggestions for moving forward on each of them. We will follow this with a review of other important suggestions that emerged in our interviews and conversations, and some concluding observations.

2.1 Making Financial Markets More Efficient and Responsive

The Challenges: In almost every interview, participants identified the financial markets as a critical challenge for the field. Several issues were raised. While there were some disagreements about which problems were most pressing, we found widespread agreement that social sector capital markets are deficient in many ways. Some believe that not enough funding is available, especially to achieve scale. "*There is a huge gap between early stage, seed funder money and later stage, multi-million funding.*" Others said that the problem is not with the amount of capital in the market, but with the structure:

> *Capital markets [in this field] need to be better organized; there is plenty of capital available but the system is just not well organized.*

Others acknowledged both problems:

> *There is a problem of amount [but also a problem of] matching. Both supply and demand should figure out their underlying theories of change and try to align those.*

Under the current "system," the funding that is available often does not flow to its best uses (i.e., the highest social return relative to the risk). Providers of funds often do not know which use will produce the greatest benefits, and they seem to make their decisions based on factors that are not clearly related to performance. The financial markets for social ventures are full of inefficiencies. The search costs—the time and energy it takes to make the right match between social entrepreneurs and financiers—are high. The financial products, services, and terms of engagement often do not fit the needs of social entrepreneurs at different stages of development, or they impose burdensome conditions on the social entrepreneurs. Overall, social financial markets tend to be fragmented (often around different causes or interests), disjointed (different funders with different standards and requirements), and relatively small (compared to mainstream capital markets).

These financial market problems are made worse by the fact that social entrepreneurs can adopt a wide range of organizational forms that often defy old sector boundaries and call for different kinds of financial support. One respondent argued:

> The field needs capital markets and foundations that are open to funding social enterprises and it needs to offer the whole range of capital: grants, [program related investments], debt, equity-like, etc.

Social entrepreneurs who adopt a more traditional nonprofit structure face the problems inherent in a world that thinks in terms of "charity" and "gifts" rather than "investments" designed to create impact. Those that create hybrid forms that involve some philanthropically supported activities and some income generating activities can strike potential funders as "neither fish nor fowl." Though more foundations are doing mission-related investing in addition to grants, this is still a very immature and relatively small market with few standards. Some philanthropists simply do not want the complexity of assessing hybrid investments, of blending social and financial returns. It is simpler to make grants for social purposes and investments for financial purposes, keeping them separate. Finally, for-profit social ventures often have a hard time convincing mainstream investors that they can generate market-rate returns. They must then resort to the relatively new, small, and fragmented markets for direct social investments. "Socially responsible investing" in traded equities has been around a long time, but direct social investing is just beginning to develop and only some of those funds are directed to social entrepreneurs.[8]

Steps Forward: Some of the most important steps forward involve addressing other challenges. If we had commonly agreed upon social performance measures, these financial markets should work more efficiently. With a better understanding of alternative business models, social entrepreneurs might be able to reduce their reliance on problematic forms of outside capital. However, addressing these other challenges alone will not fix the all problems in the financial markets for social entrepreneurs. Fixing the financial markets will be a process of informed trial and error. It is an entrepreneurial process in its own right. We need to support financial service entrepreneurs, even though

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[8] Note that many organizations making direct investments for a social purpose are not investing in social ventures. They are investing in traditional business ventures that happen to fit social criteria, such as women or minority ownership or location in an economically distressed area.

their social impacts are indirect. We can be guided by what we know about the development of mainstream financial markets, but we will not know what works in this arena until someone tries it. The motivations and expectations of social funders are different from those of mainstream profit-seeking investors.

A number of suggestions emerged from our interviews, conversations, and brainstorming. Several of them are promising. Many are already being tried and tested in the field. They each pose serious challenges. As they are tried and tested, it is important to gather lessons learned from these experiments. Those who want to strengthen the ecosystem for social entrepreneurs should consider doing or supporting the following:

- Develop specialized financial intermediaries who have the expertise to make sound funding decisions and the marketing skill to attract funding

- Create new financial "instruments" or "deal structures" designed to address the different kinds of business models and different stages of development

- Support high-quality, independent "analysts" to assess social ventures and provide platforms to distribute their reports to funders who would find them useful

- Experiment with more collaborative funding models in which major funders invest in each other's "deals," sharing the risks and the lessons

- Work towards common grant applications, requests for proposals, and reporting requirements for foundation funding

- Establish standardized tools for social entrepreneurs to track the information that would be relevant to funders

- Organize online information marketplaces to make it easier for social entrepreneurs and suitable funders to find each other more easily

No silver bullet emerged from our interviews and conversations. Priorities varied depending on the position and perspective of the respondents. Partly because of biases in our sample, we heard a great deal about the lack of funding for scale, but it is not clear which of these interventions are more likely to remedy that problem. Respondents particularly interested in social enterprise focused on the need for new financial instruments and institutions to

support earned income social ventures for a mixed social and financial return. We simply urge those developing this part of the ecosystem to keep in mind that the issue is as much about quality as quantity of funding. It is not enough to increase funding without improving the allocation mechanisms that assure the funding is put to good use and creating better alignment between the expectations of the funders and the needs of the social entrepreneurs.

2.2 Refining and Standardizing Performance Measurement Tools

The Challenges: As one participant put it, *"We need to crack the code on social impact."* Reliable, timely, and cost-effective measures of social value are crucial for demonstrating success, providing better information to the financial markets, and informing the strategic decisions of social entrepreneurs. Yet, social value is notoriously difficult to measure and to attribute to a specific intervention.

Of course, measurement problems vary widely depending on a social entrepreneur's intended impact. Some impacts happen more immediately, are relatively easy to quantify, and can be traced with high reliability to a specific cause. However, many of the most important ways in which social entrepreneurs can make the world a better place are long-term, intangible, qualitative, not easily reduced to any single common metric (such as money), and hard to attribute to a single cause. Systemic impact can be particularly difficult to measure.

> *When you talk about social impact, most funders only want to talk about direct impact. You have to ask yourself, are you mobilizing resources to [serve] the right long term goal?*

To make the measurement task even more challenging, the value of specific outcomes is open to contention, reflecting differences in the values and assumptions of different observers. Anyone making an assessment will be doing so through the lens of specific values and assumptions.

This issue sits heavily at the center of the field. *"Overall, there is no sound measurement system that allows people to compare and contrast organizations."* Along with the inefficiencies of the financial markets, this is the most commonly mentioned problem, despite all the work that has been done to develop new and better approaches to performance measurement, including Social Return on Investment (SROI), the "triple bottom line," balanced scorecards, "blended value" propositions,

and even "randomized" trials of social innovations. Some saw this as an area for greater academic contributions. However, the social sector has long had evaluation consultants, usually academics or Ph.D.s in social sciences, but they do not seem to meet the expressed need for reliable, timely, cost-effective, comparable, and informative measures that social entrepreneurs and their funders are calling for. The past decade has seen the rise of less academic, more managerial, business-inspired approaches, along with a small industry of consultants willing to help implement these approaches. As of yet, no single approach has emerged as the standard, and most of the people we spoke with feel that no one has really "cracked the code." Different funders and intermediaries use different approaches, complicating life for social entrepreneurs who may have to answer to multiple funders with different requirements.

Steps Forward: Measurement is at the heart of a disciplined approach to creating social impact and demonstrating the value of the field.

> *If you add up all of the social entrepreneurs and have no idea of impact–what they have done–the field cannot advance. You really need numbers to support the idea of impact.*

However, the development of performance measurement systems should be approached with care. The wrong kinds of systems or requirements will be counterproductive. Too much emphasis on measurement for outside evaluation purposes may provide incentives for people to "game the system," resulting in unreliable data being reported. Social entrepreneurs whose cooperation is necessary to make it work may see it as an unhelpful, possibly punitive burden. It may drive attention to activities that yield short-term measurable results, rather than to more important activities with an impact visible only over a longer term. Outcome measures alone rarely serve learning purposes. One participant argued, *"Defining measures around the financial, organizational capacity, and programmatic pieces is [also] important."* For many entrepreneurs, measurement does not come naturally. They are often passionate about doing the work that achieves impact, rather than spending valuable resources measuring the impact.

Funders have a crucial role in developing suitable systems and standards. Funders (and others) wishing to drive the progress in this area might consider the following suggestions:

- Make social entrepreneurs aware of the different tools currently available, as well as the pros and cons of each

- Encourage use of and continued experimentation with impact-oriented performance measures by social entrepreneurs, making sure to include qualitative elements as well as signs, symptoms, and indicators of intangible and long-term impact

- Favor measurement systems that produce information that is valued by and useful to social entrepreneurs (usually including process measures as well as outcome measures for learning purposes)

- Distinguish what is publicly reported from what is available for internal, managerial use

- Reward candor, learning, and informed strategic adjustments, not just raw outcome performance

- Avoid the situation in which different funders impose significantly different and demanding measurement methodologies on a single organization

- Use intermediaries to design and implement external reporting standards in a way that provides the information that capital providers want in forms that are meaningful and engaging

- Make the values and assumptions behind any measurement scheme transparent and open to challenge

- Recognize that judgment is required and make sure performance data are accompanied by information that helps users make sensible judgments and comparisons

One interesting suggestion is to conduct a thought experiment before requiring any social entrepreneur to adopt a particular measurement system. Ask whether it would have helped or hurt the chances of success in cases that were highly successful. One could ask:

> If Yunus, for instance, had used this SROI system, would it have helped or hurt his chances of success? When would it have shown results? How would funders have reacted? Would it have provided useful information to him?

The same exercise could be done using the example of Florence Nightingale or other highly successful social entrepreneurs.

2.3 Helping Social Entrepreneurs Find Effective Pathways to Scale

The Challenges: It may have been a bias in our sample, but many of those with whom we spoke were focused on scale. Regardless of how they defined social entrepreneurship and whatever their visions for the future of the field, they all seemed to agree that success for the field of social entrepreneurship requires that social entrepreneurs ultimately achieve significant "scale" relative to the magnitude of the problems they tackling. Without large-scale successes, in addition to microfinance, the field is likely to be marginalized. There were a few dissenting voices, but the dissent was largely about timing and effectiveness. As we discussed earlier, it is important not to press organizations to scale prematurely.

Most of our respondents were concerned about scale of impact, which could be achieved in many ways, including independent replication. Many also focused on scaling the organizations, arguing that this often is an important step on the way to scaling impact. Microfinance is a case in point with lots of replication, but also with each of the major, catalytic players (Grameen, Accion, FINCA, etc.) achieving significant scale in their own right. This is not always true. Hospice care, for instance, spread largely through independent replication with no large dominant players, at least in the U.S. But both organizational scale and scale of impact were pressing issues for our respondents. The ecosystem is apparently not doing enough to support appropriate and effective scaling efforts.

The explanation for this involves all the major ecosystem issues identified in this report. Many pointed a finger at the financial markets, blaming funders for not sufficiently backing the scale-up of successful social ventures. Exceptions were noted, but foundations by-and-large bore the brunt of the criticism for their short time horizons (usually no longer than three years) and their desire to fund the next new thing instead of scaling what works. A second finger of blame was frequently pointed to the lack of clear performance measures by which funders could identify with some confidence what works and see the impact they could achieve by supporting expansion efforts. A third culprit was the lack of suitable managerial talent in the human capital pipeline. Often the social entrepreneur who founds an organization does not have all the skills required to take it to scale and may not enjoy that process as well as the start-up and initial success. There are, again, notable exceptions, but building a team with the right mix of skills on an acceptable

budget is no easy task. Fourth, especially in light of the state of financial markets in this sector, some raised concerns about the lack of scalable business models that also align with the mission of the social venture. With four fingers of blame extended, this leaves only the thumb, which points to the social entrepreneurs in the middle of the ecosystem who often lack a clear understanding the optional paths for scaling impact and a clear logic for selecting a path suitable to their purpose.

Steps Forward: Progress on any of the other four major issues could certainly help more social entrepreneurs achieve greater scale. However, it is not clear that addressing these elements is either necessary or sufficient. The successful spread of innovations and the growth of social ventures in the past, including the recent past, indicates that it is possible to achieve considerable impact even in this flawed ecosystem. Proponents of social entrepreneurship cannot afford to wait for all these major issues to be addressed. They need to help social entrepreneurs find viable paths to scale and widespread impact (new equilibria) now. It is also not clear that fixing these other elements alone will open a floodgate of successful scaling efforts by social entrepreneurs. Achieving widespread impact and growing a social purpose venture is no easy task. More can and should be done to facilitate scale in both senses of the term. In addition to working on financial markets, performance measures, talent, and business models, those who wish to improve the ability of social entrepreneurs to scale might want to:

- Identify and document successful paths to achieving scale in an imperfect world, analyzing success stories and drawing on the best strategic thinking

- Encourage innovation in the scaling process and capture the lessons from the experiments

- Recognize that no one path fits all social ventures–each strategy needs to be designed for the circumstances at hand

- Provide social entrepreneurs and their teams with knowledge about different scaling strategies, frameworks for designing their own, and opportunities for learning with and from others struggling with the same issues

- Capture and share lessons learned along the way

- Do not overemphasize the need to scale quickly, which may result in premature efforts to scale

- Acknowledge that not every "successful" local innovation or venture is scalable or worthy of scaling

- Acknowledge that the role of the founding social entrepreneur may change through the scaling process and that other talented individuals may be needed to play a leading role

Some people argue that we have enough innovation in the social sector, and that we should simply focus our efforts on scaling what we already know works. This logic has some appeal, but it misses an important point. The fact that well-recognized, "successful" social innovations and ventures do not scale is a sign that much more innovation is needed. Maybe it is innovation in policy or in marketing, or in program design, but some more innovation is needed.

If Edison had designed an electric light bulb that worked well in his own house, but despite its known success, was not purchased and adopted by others, we would have to ask why not. Maybe this innovation fails to scale because the bulb costs too much for others, is too bright for those who are used to candles, requires wiring that is rare, does not suit the room size in other houses, has no economically viable distribution channel, cannot be shipped without damage, or any number of other potential explanations. Whatever the reason, the innovation process is not over when the light bulb is demonstrated in Edison's house. That is just the beginning. Innovation is needed all along the way to tackle the challenges and barriers to widespread adoption of any innovation, even those with clear local success.

2.4 Building New Talent Pipelines

The Challenges: Many of our participants identified human capital as a significant barrier to success. They talked about the tremendous challenges of recruiting, retaining, and developing human capital in the field. As one put it, "*We need an exponential increase in human talent. Even if we solve some of the systemic problems, new ones will come up.*" Some suggested that talent was as serious of a problem as financial markets. "*We tend to think of sustainability only in terms of finances, but it is critical in terms of people [too].*" Most saw the two as linked, since philanthropic funders are often reluctant to support significant staff development or educational expenditures, seeing them as "overhead," and some react badly when an organization breaks with the norms in the sector to

pay higher salaries to attract the talent they need. This is partly a remnant of the culture of "charity" that still has a grip on the social sector and that demands sacrifice—a vow of poverty. The effect is to limit the pool of talent to those willing to make the sacrifice. This means that the field attracts a disproportionate share of those who can afford to make the "sacrifice" because of other forms of financial security (such as the salary of a spouse, earnings from prior employment, inheritance, etc.). Fortunately, this culture is starting to weaken as new funders increasingly appreciate the talent needs of building an effective organization. In any case, funding and the culture of charity are not the only barriers to addressing talent needs in this sector.

As with the financial markets, there are some search and matching problems. It can be hard for people with suitable talents to connect with the social entrepreneurs who could put those talents to good use. Reducing these search costs would help. However, it is not clear that we have enough people with the right talents. Several respondents pointed to the increasing need for "hybrid" management and leadership skills, the challenge of finding talented people who are "*bi-lingual, speaking the language of business as well as the [social] sector.*" Effective social entrepreneurship in this age requires both subject matter expertise and business thinking. Because of the trend toward greater specialization in higher education, few programs prepare people to work across sector boundaries. Finding people with the right mix of skills is extremely difficult. Those who come with business skills often underestimate the difficulty of adapting those skills to the challenges of social entrepreneurship.

Developing the right mix of skills is also no easy task. Few social entrepreneurship organizations are large enough to have internal development programs. Suitable outside educational opportunities, for those making the transition from business and for those with social sector backgrounds who want to develop business skills, are in limited supply. The ecosystem needs new talent pipelines and development programs to prepare social entrepreneurs and their teams for the challenges of sustainability, scale, and the creation of new equilibriums. "*Mature entrepreneurs could benefit the most from building the skills of their teams.*"

Steps Forward: In the business world, it is widely recognized that talent is the key to success. The team is one of the key factors when venture capitalists make their investment decisions. Businesses see themselves in a "battle for talent."

Human capital is no less important for the success of social entrepreneurs. It is important to improve the flow of talent into the field and develop the skills of those already in it. In particular, it is crucial to develop "hybrid" management and leadership skills. Not everyone has to have the same skill set, but the team has to possess all the critical skills and the team members need to be able to speak each other's language. Those who want to strengthen this part of the ecosystem should consider the following:

- Invest in programs that increase "hybrid" management and leadership skills, particularly those that address the needs of social entrepreneurs to scale their impact and sustain their ventures

- Support team-building efforts and educational programs that work with teams, rather than just individuals

- Facilitate peer learning, not only among social entrepreneurs, but also among members of the senior teams working with the social entrepreneurs

- Explore emerging talent pools such as those embarking on second careers

- Experiment with new approaches to draw on motivated talent from the business sector, adapt it to the needs of social entrepreneurs, and use it to develop internal capabilities

- Find ways to reward talented people who work in this field, through reasonable compensation and attractive (but rarely offered) benefits, such as pensions, health care, insurance, training, and paid sabbaticals

- Encourage suitable undergraduate and graduate programs (in business, public policy, education, social work, public health, environment, and engineering schools, etc.) to offer tracks that make it possible for students to develop hybrid skills

Proponents of social entrepreneurship need to be as deliberate in their efforts to improve the talent pipelines as they are in their efforts to improve the financial markets. Both are necessary ingredients for the success of the field and the health of the ecosystem.

2.5 Providing Better Guidance on Effective Business Models

The Challenges: Though a smaller number of respondents raised this issue, we decided it was

worth including among the top five because of its relationship with the others. Business model design and innovation is often underestimated. We define the term "business model" to include two key elements:

1) an operating strategy that includes internal organizational structure and external partnerships that are crucial for creating the organization's intended impact; and,

2) a resource strategy that defines where and on what terms the organization will acquire the resources (financial and human) it needs to do its work.

The business model, in this sense, is essentially the conduit through which a social entrepreneur converts inputs into outcomes. It determines the organization's financial and talent needs, the extent and nature of dependence on different resource providers, and the efficiency with which resources are converted into impact, which factors into the social return on investment. If the business model is not "sustainable" over the period of time required to achieve widespread, lasting impact, it hardly matters how effective an innovation is at achieving impact. The business model will have to change. If the business model is not capable of being scaled or replicated, widespread impact will be a pipe dream. If the business model is not aligned with the mission and intended impact of an organization, the organization may be sustained and it may scale, but its ultimate impact will be undermined. This can even be a problem for for-profit social ventures that discover their mission impact would be better served through activities and costs that cannot be adequately covered by their revenues.

Our respondents typically raised the issue of business models in the discussion of financial markets and their deficiencies (which are worse in much of the developing world where much social entrepreneurship is taking place). Some worried about too much dependence on foundation funding and about the difficulties of getting and managing government funding. Earned income is popular as an alternative, but many social entrepreneurs have not been able to find an earned income stream that is sufficient for their needs and well aligned with their social objectives. Some suggested that it is important to understand the business models social entrepreneurs currently use:

It would be tremendously powerful if we could identify the twenty or so business models [in this field]. For example, in the VC [venture capitalist] world, they know within two minutes what is the business model being pursued.

This knowledge could serve as a foundation for creative business model design that could help address financial needs. Greater attention to business model design could also force social entrepreneurs to think about how to mobilize the talent and knowledge they need on favorable and sustainable terms, perhaps through partnerships. Yet, too often social entrepreneurs do not have access to the knowledge they need to engage in creative business model design or re-design.

Steps Forward: Social entrepreneurs will be successful only if their innovations are supported by sufficiently sustainable, scalable, and aligned business models. Proponents of social entrepreneurship who want to strengthen the field should consider taking the following steps to strengthen social entrepreneurs' ability to develop robust and effective business models:

- Recognize that no single business model will work for all social entrepreneurs and that models drawn from the world of business may not be appropriate

- Support research efforts to develop better knowledge of alternative business models for social entrepreneurs and to frame some design principles

- Encourage experimentation with different business models, capturing the lessons from the experiments

- Provide strategic assistance to social entrepreneurs who have attractive innovations but business models that limit their potential in serious ways

- Develop funding schemes for foundations and social investors that encourage resource-smart business model redesign and help recipients make the transition to the new business models

These five issues (financial markets, performance measurement, scaling strategies, talent development, and business models) emerged as priorities as we analyzed the data from our interviews and conversations. Addressing them could go a long way toward strengthening the ecosystem, assuring greater success of social entrepreneurs, and building the field.

2.6 Addressing Other Attractive Leverage Points in the Ecosystem

While we believe that the five issues noted above should be treated as priorities, there are many other valuable ways to strengthen the ecosystem. In the remainder of Section 2, we highlight a few of the promising suggestions that emerged in our conversations. We can use Figure 2 to guide us through this process. Since we have already covered financial capital and human capital, we will look at suggestions about strengthening the other parts of the ecosystem. These include:

- *Intellectual Capital* – Supporting new forms of creation, capture, and sharing

- *Social/Political Capital* – Enriching, expanding, and deepening networks

- *Policy and Politics* – Advancing new legal forms and political linkage

- *Media* – Educating the journalists to educate the public

- *Economic and Social Conditions* – Capitalizing on new money and new ideas

- *Related Fields* – Exploring collaborative research and education

Intellectual Capital – Supporting new forms of creation, capture, and sharing: Knowledge, particularly in the form of "know-how," is crucial to the development of any field and to the success of practitioners. Some know-how is generated internally as organizational skills and "process" capital are developed and applied in new arenas. Some crucial knowledge is acquired from outside providers. Knowledge development is particularly crucial in a newly emerging field such as social entrepreneurship. As one participant said:

> *The field is "ripe" for knowledge development; it is at a critical point of needing to "know what it know," and spread that knowledge quickly and broadly.*

The topics on which social entrepreneurs and other participants in the ecosystem most need greater knowledge are reflected in the five priorities for building the ecosystem discussed above. Each of those priority areas raises serious research questions and educational challenges. However, beyond these major content areas, we also heard interviewees' views on the optimal process for developing and sharing useful knowledge. Many of our respondents challenged the old model of experts (academic and otherwise) developing knowledge

and then disseminating it to the practitioners who will put it to use. They called for more innovative approaches to knowledge creation, capture, and sharing. Interestingly, some of these suggestions came from academics who questioned the value of traditional research methods in this kind of applied field. These new approaches could help close the gap between academics and practitioners discussed in Section 1. As one participant commented:

> *If organizations focused on knowledge understood what the clients needed rather than just pursuing what they wanted to get their heads around, that would be helpful... They could partner with practitioners. Given that academic centers have the ability to do that, it would be a "breath of fresh air" in the knowledge space.*

<u>*Promising Suggestions:*</u> Experiment with new methods of knowledge development and learning that engage practitioners and experts in a "co-creation" process that blends rigor and analytical thinking with a deep appreciation for the realities of practice. Build active learning networks to surface and share the intellectual and process capital that are embedded within organizations. Foster reflective, critical peer learning. Explore apprenticeship, fellowship, and other experiential learning models. Test the value and limits of new information and communications technologies to make knowledge and learning more accessible and timely.

Social/Political Capital – Enriching, expanding, and deepening networks: The field of social entrepreneurship already includes several important networks for selected social entrepreneurs, leading funders, academics, and consultants. These networks already deliver considerable value to those participating in them. One participant noted the value of these networks in which *"people don't see each other as competitors, and they are willing to share information much more readily."* According to another, *"the biggest source of energy for social entrepreneurs is other entrepreneurs."*

Many of the social entrepreneurs we interviewed commented that they learned the most from peers they met through these formal networks, and often at events convened by these networks. However, it is clear that those developing these networks have an opportunity to get even more value out of them for the field.

> *More development of networks is needed. Social entrepreneurs are hungry for social*

and professional interactions with peer groups but are often isolated.

These networks should be enriched, expanded, and deepened. It may sound like a contradiction to say they could be both expanded and deepened, but both dimensions are necessary for optimal value creation. Most people appreciate the value of strong ties among a small group of people facing similar challenges, but underestimate the value of more extensive networks. Stanford sociologist Mark Granovetter made his name on research that demonstrated the "strength of weak ties" for practical purposes, such as finding a job.[9] It is also important for influencing public policy and the media, two important elements of the environment in which social entrepreneurs operate. Though interaction with policymakers is more frequent in other parts of the world, it is only recently in the U.S. that social entrepreneurs have been working together to share and build political capital. Social entrepreneurs and their allies benefit from being part of larger networks, as well as being together with smaller, more homogeneous groups. Networks can foster more extensive and important "weak" ties.

Promising Suggestions: Be more deliberate about ways to use existing networks as platforms for knowledge creation, learning, and shaping the external environment in favorable ways. Design gatherings to better serve practitioner learning needs (depth) and to offer more opportunities for building extended networks beyond the network's core members to include other key ecosystem players (breadth). Help social entrepreneurs develop their skills for *"leveraging their Rolodex"* (their contacts, including weak ties). Improve communications mechanisms and learning opportunities across global networks, perhaps organizing sub-groups around specific fields or topics of interest. Consider developing common learning programs and curricula across different formal networks in which the members have similar needs.

Public Policy and Politics – Advancing new legal forms and political linkage: Context-setting factors tend to be harder to influence than sources of capital for the field. Nonetheless, there are things that can be done to affect or capitalize on context-setting factors to strengthen the ecosystem for social entrepreneurs.

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[9] Mark Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 78, Issue 6, May 1973.

With regard to public policy and politics, our respondents focused on two main items. One involves the legal forms of organization available to social entrepreneurs, particularly those engaged in social enterprise. *"Social enterprises are in the middle of for-profit and not-for-profit, and we need different legal structures to support them."* Participants mentioned the "community interest company" designation in the United Kingdom as an example of a policy innovation that might facilitate social entrepreneurship, allowing for more appropriate business model options. The other issue involved getting politicians, policy thinkers, and heads of major government agencies to see social entrepreneurship as a potentially viable tool for achieving their public policy objectives while capitalizing on private ingenuity, initiative, and resources. One participant noted, *"Social entrepreneurs can and should act as true laboratories of innovation and solutions [of public problems]."* Another commented,

> There is a great opportunity to expand social impact through both new public policies [favorable to social entrepreneurs] and by directing the major funding of government [toward innovations demonstrated by social entrepreneurs].

Just as the current U.S. President campaigned on a platform of "compassionate conservatism" that included a focus on faith-based and community-based organizations, future candidates in the U.S. and elsewhere could include social entrepreneurship in their platforms. Of course this poses some risk that social entrepreneurship will be seen as a partisan issue, and it will put the field under scrutiny, but getting the topic on policy agendas could strengthen the field by adding a sense of legitimacy.

Promising Suggestions: Support exploration of and experimentation with new legal forms of organization that might help social entrepreneurs create more sustainable and scalable business models. Help leading politicians see how social entrepreneurship might be a valuable part of their platforms, perhaps capitalizing on the current U.S. presidential election to gain visibility.

Media – Educating the journalists to educate the public: Several of our participants noted that the term "social entrepreneurship" is still largely unknown to the public and is poorly understood. One argued, *"There is a level of mass consciousness that needs to be raised."* This mass consciousness could help change the culture to be more supportive of

social entrepreneurship. Increased awareness of the concept and practice could attract additional resources, talents, and attention to the field.

Though the topic is getting media coverage, journalists using the term may not have (or convey) a clear understanding of it. Proponents of social entrepreneurship want to get the positive stories out, but journalists are rarely encouraged to write positive stories. They may appear as occasional human-interest pieces, but this will not have the intended effect of getting the reading public to take social entrepreneurship seriously. *"Journalists are not encouraged to write 'good' stories, and it is a challenge to write them well."* The bias toward negative stories may even lead to some journalists attempting to debunk the idea of social entrepreneurship or to find the weaknesses or flaws of specific socially entrepreneurial ventures.

Consequently, journalists could use help in crafting interesting and informative stories about social entrepreneurship. Proponents need to show them how to create a "hook" for the stories that will interest the reading public and their editors by emphasizing what is new or unexpected, or by placing the stories in a larger context of social change that is breaking down sector boundaries. The kinds of narratives that work can be illustrated with examples from those few leading journalists who do "get it." Only with a knowledgeable group of journalists who know how to cover social entrepreneurship will the field get the media coverage needed to generate more widespread awareness.

Promising Suggestions: Find opportunities to educate journalists on what is new and exciting about social entrepreneurship. Help them see the narratives that will make their stories on this appealing to readers and editors. Take advantage of venues that bring journalists together for educational purposes. Help social entrepreneurs and those supporting them get better at telling their stories in ways that make them media worthy. Encourage prominent players in the field to be available to speak with journalists and help educate them on this topic. Identify one or more potential "key influencers" who could command media attention and advocate for social entrepreneurship, the way Al Gore did for global warming.

Economic and Social Conditions – Capitalizing on new money and new ideas: The concept of social entrepreneurship did not arise in a vacuum. It reflects broader and deeper social trends that are driving change in how we approach social problems.

Our participants commented on many of these trends, including a new emphasis on private solutions to social problems, an increasing appreciation for the value of innovation and entrepreneurship in generating economic prosperity, growing levels of new wealth created through entrepreneurial ventures, and a willingness to challenge and break down old sector boundaries in search of new solutions to social problems, among others. People and organizations are increasingly willing to blend the social and the economic.

> *There is a convergence in these two fields [with] for-profit companies trying to create social impact through business models and nonprofits trying to become more efficient, sustainable, etc., which is creating a new environment for change.*

The popularity of social entrepreneurship can be seen, in part, as one response to these trends. Whether it will grow into a significant expression of a new mindset--a mindset that could energize the whole ecosystem should it take hold in a serious and lasting way--remains to be seen. It depends, in part, on the ability of proponents of social entrepreneurship to capitalize on these propitious circumstances.

Promising Suggestions: Make the case for social entrepreneurship to those with significant resources (new wealth) and an inclination to approach problems entrepreneurially. Appeal to them to help strengthen the ecosystem in which social entrepreneurs operate. Work with those who are articulating a new role for government and for cross-sector approaches to social problems to articulate the role of social entrepreneurs in the new schemes of governance.

Related Fields – Exploring collaborative research and education: The same trends that have supported the rise of social entrepreneurship have also supported new activity in related fields, including corporate social responsibility, nonprofit management, philanthropy, social investing, and environmental impact. We are seeing more attention to corporate social impact measurement, (environmentally) sustainable business enterprise, business opportunities that benefit the base of the economic pyramid, mission-related investing by philanthropies, business development by nonprofit organizations, and cross-sector partnerships and "hybrid value chains." Some of these developments directly involve social entrepreneurs, but all of them could have significant implications for the field of social entrepreneurship. The knowledge needs and

research agendas of these related fields are increasingly overlapping with those of social entrepreneurship. One respondent pointed out:

> There needs to be more research on how the social and economic blend together, the synergies and interactions. We don't have the bridges between those two topics.

This is an issue shared by the related fields. This point was made effectively by Jed Emerson's work on the "blended value proposition."[10] The ecosystem for social entrepreneurs can be strengthened if knowledge is shared across these different fields.

Promising Suggestions: Draw together select practitioners and researchers around common topics, such as social impact measurement lessons or market-based solutions to social problems, to engage in collaborative knowledge development. Experiment with educational programs that bring together social entrepreneurs (and their teams) with corporate counterparts, and business entrepreneurs working on related issues or problems.

2.7 Ecosystem Conclusion: Providing Support with Discipline

In order to strengthen the social entrepreneurship ecosystem in a way that truly benefits the field as a whole, proponents need to take steps to make it more supportive, but not too supportive. It has to have in it the functional equivalent of market discipline, so that the support goes to its most promising uses.

In this section, we have described a number of ways to strengthen the ecosystem in which social entrepreneurs operate, including building the capability of social entrepreneurs and their organizations to operate in an imperfect ecosystem. We have singled out five topics as high priorities for the field, based on our judgment and feedback from our fieldwork. We also identified additional

[10] Jed Emerson, "The Blended Value Proposition: Integrating Social and Financial Returns," _California Management Review_, Summer 2003.

promising opportunities that did not make the cut with the top five priorities, but that all have significant potential to strengthen the social entrepreneurship ecosystem. Fortunately, a number of innovative and exciting efforts are underway to address these issues.

We believe it is essential to create a supportive ecosystem for social entrepreneurs, if the field is to thrive. Business entrepreneurs benefit from a very supportive ecosystem, particularly in the U.S. Yet, there is an important difference between business entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship that should not be neglected. Business entrepreneurs face significant market discipline from both customer markets and financial markets. Customers determine whether the good or service provided creates more value for them than it costs to produce. Investors determine if the venture is likely to provide sufficient returns to justify their investments. For social entrepreneurs, the ultimate test is social impact, and that value is not guaranteed by market discipline. We need other mechanisms.

Thus, it should not be surprising that one of our participants raised the question of how much support is "_too much support_," suggesting that entrepreneurs need hurdles to test not only the validity of their ideas but their own skills to execute on the idea. Without some devices to filter out the under-performers, scarce forms of capital and other support will be spread among those who put it to good use and those who do not. When good people are tackling important social problems and often making sacrifices to do it, it is hard to deny them support. We think that they "deserve" it. We see a high failure rates among new businesses. This should not be lamented because it largely reflects a healthy process of markets working to assure capital is directed to its best uses. If the ecosystem is to do its job of enhancing chances of success for the field as a whole, we must mimic this kind of discipline, using the best measures and judgments available at the time. We need to create a healthy, vibrant ecosystem that supports innovative social entrepreneurs, but with appropriate discipline.

3.0 CLOSING COMMENTS: BUILDING A FIELD, A COMMUNITY, AND AN ECOSYSTEM

In order to advance the field of social entrepreneurship and assure that the concept has lasting impact, we have argued that it is necessary to build a vibrant community of practice and knowledge, and to strengthen the ecosystem in which social entrepreneurs do their work. While it would be a mistake to minimize the challenges facing those determined to build the field, we should be encouraged by the progress made to date and by the continued momentum. Fortunately, a number of resourceful individuals and organizations (in addition to the two involved with this report, Skoll Foundation and CASE) are dedicated to moving this field forward, and new players are embracing the concept every year, all around the world. Already, many of the suggestions and recommendations in this report are being implemented or tested by someone in the field.

Attracting more resources to field building: Of course, field building will not happen without resources to support it. It was a big conceptual leap for some philanthropists to realize that it was important to support capacity building in their grantee organizations. Simply providing money for programs was not the most effective strategy for achieving impact. Field building takes this logic a step further. It is not enough to build the individual capacity of grantees if the environment in which they operate is not supportive. The health of the field, especially the ecosystem, makes a significant difference to the effectiveness of social entrepreneurs and their organizations. The impact of field building may be less direct than capacity building or programmatic support, but it should not be underestimated.

Our respondents raised serious concerns about finding the funders to support community building and ecosystem improvement efforts. Beyond the Skoll Foundation, there are few funders dedicated to building this field, as a field. It would serve us all well to find a strategy for bringing other funders into this field-building effort in a serious and systematic way. It is possible for one foundation to make a major difference in a specific field. The Kauffman Foundation has played a major role in building the field of entrepreneurship, but it was dealing with a familiar concept that was reasonably well understood and with a field that was further along when Kauffman entered. Proponents of social entrepreneurship should look for ways to leverage the resources and strategic interventions of the Skoll Foundation to accelerate the development of this field.

Being strategic, catalytic, and collaborative: Of course, no single player can do all that it will take to develop this field. It takes a community to build a community and an ecosystem to strengthen an ecosystem. Progress will emerge out of the actions of many players--some will be deliberate in their efforts to build the field; others will simply see opportunities for themselves in addressing a need in this emerging field. Each organization that is deliberately trying to build the field has to choose a strategy that fits with its capabilities and circumstances. Ideally, these field builders will look for opportunities to be catalytic and to be collaborative. A catalytic opportunity is one that will trigger helpful independent responses by others. For instance, convening leading researchers on the topic of performance assessment could stimulate many of them to embark on new work. A collaborative opportunity involves a deliberate partnership of different organizations to pursue a goal of mutual interest drawing on the strengths of each partner. For instance, foundations could form a funding collaborative to support the scaling activities of social entrepreneurs operating in a particular arena.

Many players in the field now engage in strategic, catalytic, and collaborative activities. However, our respondents saw potential for much more of this sort of activity, particularly much more collaboration. If each field-building player would ask two questions about their activities, it might accelerate the development of this field:

- How can our actions be structured to stimulate (catalyze) others to act?

- With whom could we collaborate to increase the impact of our actions on the field?

Together we have the potential to build a field that can change the way societies tackle social problems, if we provide the resources to support field-building and work together to achieve the greatest impact from those resources.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – List of Interviewees

Interviewee	Organization[11]
Kim Alter	Virtue Ventures / Skoll Fellow (UK)
Jim Austin	Social Enterprise Knowledge Network (SEKN)
Jill Bamburg	Bainbridge Graduate Institute
Doug Borchard	New Profit, Inc.
David Bornstein	Author / Journalist
Jerr Boschee	Institute for Social Entrepreneurs
Maggie Brenneke	SustainAbility (UK)
Debbi Brock	Berea College
Eric Carlson	Global Social Benefit Incubator - Santa Clara Univ.
David Carrington	Independent Consultant (UK)
Gerald Chertavian	Year Up
Sara Chiles	New York University - Stern School of Business
Susan Cippoletti	Girls Scouts of the USA - Challenge & Change
Cathy Clark	Columbia Business School
Emma Coles	New Philanthropy Capital (UK)
Cheryl Dahle	Author / Journalist
Victor D'Allant	Social Edge
Ami Dar	Action Without Borders / Idealist.org
Kriss Deiglmeier	Stanford Center for Social Innovation
Cheryl Dorsey	Echoing Green
John Elkington	SustainAbility (UK)
Howard Feldman	University of Portland
Jim Fruchterman	Benetech
Kirsten Gagnaire	Sustayne
Cynthia Gair	Roberts Enterprise Development Fund (REDF)
Nick Gleason	CitySoft
Stephen Goldsmith	Harvard - Kennedy School of Government
Heather McLeod Grant	Author / Nonprofit Consultant
Roberto Gutierrez	Social Enterprise Knowledge Network (SEKN)
Pamela Hartigan	Schwab Foundation
Helen Haugh	Cambridge University (UK)
Paul Hudnut	Colorado State University
Howard Hussock	Manhattan Institute
Rob John	Independent Consultant / Skoll Fellow (UK)
Rosabeth Moss Kanter	Harvard Business School
Eamonn Kelly	Global Business Network
Barbara Kibbe	Monitor Institute
Vanessa Kirsch	New Profit, Inc.

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[11] The organizations listed above reflect interviewees' affiliations at the time of the interviews. In several cases, interviewees are no longer with these organizations.

Interviewee	Organization[11]
Art Kleiner	Author / Journalist / Editor
James Koch	Global Social Benefit Incubator - Santa Clara Univ.
Mark Kramer	FSG Social Impact Advisors
Rolfe Larson	Social Enterprise Alliance / Rolfe Larson Associates
Chris Letts	Harvard - Kennedy School of Government
Steven Levy	Connect 1-2-3 (South Africa)
Paul Light	New York University - Wagner
Johanna Mair	IESE (Spain)
Jim McClurg	Social Enterprise Alliance
Jordan Meranus	NewSchools Venture Fund
Clara Miller	Nonprofit Finance Fund
Dale Miller	Stanford Center for Social Innovation
Mark Moore	Harvard - Kennedy School of Government
Harriet Motache	Girls Scouts of the USA - Challenge & Change
Geoff Mulgan	Young Foundation (UK)
Alex Nicholls	Oxford University - Saïd Business School (UK)
Sally Osberg	Skoll Foundation
George Overholser	Nonprofit Finance Fund - NFF Capital
Iqbal Paroo	Omidyar Network
Amy Pearl	The Learning Initiative
Jim Phills	Stanford Center for Social Innovation
Tom Reis	Kellogg Foundation
Munro Richardson	Kauffman Foundation
Jeffrey Robinson	New York University - Stern School of Business
Mara Rose	New York University - Stern School of Business
Will Rosenzweig	Great Spirit Ventures / Haas School of Business
John Schnur	New Leaders for New Schools
J.B. Schramm	College Summit
Eric Schwartz	Citizen Schools
Jason Scott	Generation Investment Management (UK)
Paul Shoemaker	Social Venture Partners
Les Silverman	McKinsey Consulting Nonprofit Practice
David Simms	The Bridgespan Group - Bridgestar
Ed Skloot	Surdna Foundation
Kim Smith	NewSchools Venture Fund
Alibeth Somers	London South Bank University (UK)
Dane Stangler	Kauffman Foundation
Jenny Shilling Stein	Draper Richards Foundation
Nan Stone	The Bridgespan Group
Brian Trelstad	Acumen Fund
Simon Tucker	Young Foundation - Launchpad (UK)
Victoria Vrana	Venture Philanthropy Partners
Jennifer Wade	Denver University
Tom White	Social Enterprise Reporter
Alfred Wise	Community Wealth Ventures
Andrew Wolk	Root Cause Institute / MIT Sloan
Yasmina Zaidman	Acumen Fund

Appendix B – Sample Interview Guide

<u>BASIC INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR "THOUGHTFUL OBSERVERS"</u>[12]

Trends in the Field:

1. Do you consider yourself part of the "field of social entrepreneurship"?

    a. If so, how do you define the field of social entrepreneurship?

    b. If not, why not? What has been your experience with the term "social entrepreneurship"?

2. Does social entrepreneurship seem to be gaining momentum?

    a. If so, why now? What is driving this trend?

    b. If not, why not?

3. What would you consider success for the field of social entrepreneurship in the next 5 to 10 years?

4. As proponents of social entrepreneurship, what barriers or risks might we face as we try to achieve this success? What could go wrong going forward that might derail the social entrepreneurship movement?

Knowledge Development and Education for Social Entrepreneurship:

We are looking broadly at the field of social entrepreneurship, but we are most interested in the development and sharing of knowledge that will strengthen the field.

5. What new knowledge or research would increase the legitimacy, credibility, and effectiveness of the field of social entrepreneurship?

    a. In practice?

    b. In academia?

6. What are your clients' greatest needs for knowledge and learning? Do you consider these needs related to social entrepreneurship? How can these needs be met most effectively?

7. *(Consider how new knowledge is developed)*

    Given your experience, what are the greatest needs for new or expanded knowledge in this field? (Do you have any thoughts on who/what resources might best develop this new knowledge?)

8. *(Consider how your and your clients' learning occurs)*

    In what way(s) do you and your clients learn most effectively? Where do you think there are the greatest opportunities for improvement in informal and formal learning and education within the field social entrepreneurship? (Do you have any thoughts on who/what resources might best advance learning in this field?)

9. Do you feel there is a need for more consultants, trainers, coaches, or other professional advisors in the field to more effectively develop and disseminate knowledge?

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[12] As illustrated on the following pages, certain questions in this basic interview guide were revised, reframed, or replaced for various categories of interviewees. We should also note that these interviews often took the form of conversations with the interviewer following up on suggestive comments with questions not always on the original interview guide.

10. What role can and should universities and academic centers play in strengthening the field of social entrepreneurship? What do you think CASE should focus on in terms of its own knowledge creation, education and field building activities?

11. Do you have any final thoughts on how to improve the overall effectiveness, efficiency, and accessibility of knowledge development and learning opportunities?

Other Thoughts & Suggestions:

12. Do you have other ideas to share on either the substance or approach of our project? Are there any other key questions that you think may be important to include?

13. Can you suggest others to interview?

QUESTIONS FOR ACADEMICS AND OTHER RESEARCHERS

Knowledge Development and Education for Social Entrepreneurship:

5. What is your research agenda?

    a. What topics/subjects are most central to your work?

    b. Where do you publish your research? Are other outlets for publication needed?

    c. Are you more focused on building theoretical knowledge or translating knowledge for practice or both?

6. What is your educational/curricular agenda?

    a. Is social entrepreneurship content incorporated into your curriculum? If so, how?

    b. Are you developing materials for classroom use?

    c. Are you currently serving, or do you have plans to serve, students other than those that are full-time? Do you have any plans for developing "executive education" or other programs for practicing social entrepreneurs or those supporting/working with them?

7. Given your experience and thoughts above, what are the greatest needs for new or expanded research and knowledge in this field?

8. Where do you think there are the greatest opportunities for improvement and innovation in social entrepreneurship education?

Academic Credibility for Social Entrepreneurship

9. Should social entrepreneurship develop as a distinct academic field, such as strategy, entrepreneurship, or organizational behavior? Why or why not?

10. How is social entrepreneurship perceived within your institution? How many faculty are engaged in social entrepreneurship research or teaching? Are they tenured/tenure-track faculty?

11. What are the greatest barriers to achieving academic credibility for social entrepreneurship? How can these barriers be overcome? Where do the greatest opportunities lie?

12. Going forward, what are your priorities to ensure success at your university/host institution?

QUESTIONS FOR SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS AND OTHER "CONSUMERS" OF KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge Development and Education for Social Entrepreneurship:

5. What knowledge (subject matter/content) is the most helpful to you in your work? Why?

6. What are the 3 to 5 <u>sources</u> of knowledge that are most helpful to you? Where do you turn when you are seeking new ideas, assistance with a problem or strategic issue, or general guidance? What resources, activities, or educational programs, if any, do you regularly utilize or recommend to others?

7. *(Consider how new knowledge is developed)*

    a. Given your experience and thoughts above, what are the greatest needs for new or expanded knowledge in this field? (Do you have any thoughts on who/what resources might best develop this new knowledge?)

8. *(Consider how your learning occurs)*

    a. In what way(s) do you learn most effectively? Where do you think there are the greatest opportunities for improvement in informal and formal learning and education within the field social entrepreneurship? (Do you have any thoughts on who/what resources might best advance learning in this field?)

9. Do you have any final thoughts on how to improve the overall effectiveness, efficiency, and accessibility of knowledge development and learning opportunities?

QUESTIONS FOR CONSULTANTS AND OTHER KNOWLEDGE PROVIDERS

Knowledge Development and Education for Social Entrepreneurship:

5. Describe your knowledge development and dissemination strategy.

    a. What topics/subjects are most central to your work?

    b. In your work with clients, do you capture knowledge and share it more broadly? If so, how?

    c. Who are your target audiences?

6. What knowledge (subject matter/content) is the most helpful to you in your work? Why?

7. What are the 3 to 5 <u>sources</u> of knowledge that are most helpful to you? Why?

8. What are your clients' greatest needs for knowledge and learning? How can these needs be met most effectively?

9. *(Consider how new knowledge is developed)*

    a. Given your experience and thoughts above, what are the greatest needs for new or expanded knowledge in this field? (Do you have any thoughts on who/what resources might best develop this new knowledge?)

10. *(Consider how your and your clients' learning occurs)*

    a. In what way(s) do you and your clients learn most effectively? Where do you think there are the greatest opportunities for improvement in informal and formal learning and education within the field social entrepreneurship? (Do you have any thoughts on who/what resources might best advance learning in this field?)

11. Do you feel there is a need for more consultants, trainers, coaches or other professional advisors in the field to more effectively develop and disseminate knowledge?

12. Do you have any final thoughts on how to improve the overall effectiveness, efficiency, and accessibility of knowledge development and learning opportunities?