Preface

“One of the newest figures to emerge on the world stage in recent years is the social entrepreneur. This is usually someone who burns with the desire to make a positive social impact on the world, but believes that the best way of doing it is, as the saying goes, not by giving poor people a fish and feeding them for a day, but by teaching them to fish, in hopes of feeding them for a lifetime. I have come to know several social entrepreneurs in recent years, and most combine a business school brain with a social worker’s heart. The triple convergence and the flattening of the world have been a godsend for them. Those who get it and are adapting to it have begun launching some very innovative projects.” (Friedman, 2006)

Mahadea and Youngleson (2013, p. 533) explain that social entrepreneurship is “vital to the progress of societies” and leads to the creation of social ventures with a view to solve societal problems like poverty, health, pollution and unemployment. The social entrepreneurship process can be explained by focusing on six stages: (1) a pressing social problem is identified and examined; (2) the social entrepreneur responds to the unmet needs of society and sees it as an opportunity to bring about social change; (3) the primary purpose and mission of the social enterprise are identified; (4) programmes are put in place and the opportunity is translated into a social innovation; (5) the performance of the enterprise is evaluated and scaled; and finally (6) income is generated (Mahadea & Youngleson, 2013). The social entrepreneur is often someone that tackles major social problems and can be seen as a change agent of society.

Social entrepreneurs add great value in that they build social capital in the community, as in the case of the Grameer Bank credit delivery system (Yunus & Jolis, 2001); and foster a more equitable society in which the needs of disadvantaged people are addressed, as in the case of Ela Bhatt’s Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) of India (Branson, 2011). Yunus founder of Grameen Bank cited in Moses (2013) said that,

“When we want to help the poor, we usually offer them charity. Most often we use charity to avoid recognizing the problem and finding the solution for it. Charity becomes a way to shrug off our responsibility. But charity is no solution to poverty.”

Social entrepreneurs encounter a lot of challenges in their quest to bring about social change, because they are trying to persuade societies to move in different directions than charity, government grants and corporate social responsibility to address social problems. Traditional and contemporary methods are no longer enabling social entrepreneurs to deal with these challenges and post-contemporary approaches,
creativity and social innovation are needed to ensure a growing social sector. This text specifically explores business models and strategies that can be used to develop and enhance social enterprises.

The text highlights social entrepreneurial trends in the UK, Zimbabwe, Saudi Arabia and South Africa. South Africa is highlighted in various chapters due to the various social challenges the country is facing, which includes the wide income and social inequalities, the unemployment rate, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, lack of decent housing, inadequate access to health care facilities, electricity and water issues, inequalities in education and skills, corruption in the public sector, high income inequalities and high levels of crime (Du Toit & Van Tonder, 2009; Mbeki, 2011).

It is important to highlight that the text does not focus much on the explanation and the roles of cooperatives and non-profit organisations (NGOs) and their specific strategies, although these aspects cannot be left out when a topic like social entrepreneurship is explored. NGOs were basically established due to the perceptions that governments failed to solve societal problems and due to the failure of the public sector to redistribute resources from taxpayers, individuals and firms to improve the lives of people. NGOs and cooperatives therefore fill market gaps between the private enterprise and the public sector for the benefit of communities and are often referred to as the ‘independent sector’, ‘citizen sector’, and ‘third sector’ (Mahadea & Youngleson, 2013, p. 534). Cooperatives are owned by community members to service local human needs and use local resources, for example the labour of unemployed people in the community to alleviate poverty.

The concept of social entrepreneurship has been given considerable attention in recent years; however the social entrepreneurship concept has always existed but was not clearly defined as an entrepreneurial activity. Section 1 in the text focuses on the boundaries and challenges, social value creation and the distinct theoretical and conceptual foundations to explain the concept of social entrepreneurship.

Chapter 1, titled “Boundaries and Challenges for Social Entrepreneurship”, focuses on social entrepreneurship as a phenomenon, its differentiators and its boundaries along with the challenges faced by social entrepreneurs. The chapter proposes strategies which need to be adopted to overcome the challenges and provide global examples to serve as role models for future entrepreneurs.

Chapter 2, titled “Creating social value in societies”, reviews social value creation by focusing on the essential business/social inputs, social value forms, platforms, stakeholders’ involvement, locations, timing, outcomes and the social value appraisal systems. The United Kingdom is used as a case study.

To ensure that a social enterprise is successful, the social entrepreneur needs to understand that a business model is important. The business model canvas is a good tool to use, however, some of the focus areas will need to change to incorporate social value creation.

Section 2 in the text explores business models from a social enterprise perspective.

Chapter 3, titled “Designing Business Models for creating and capturing shared value: An activity-system perspective” identifies a framework for designing business models that enable the creation and capturing of shared value. Using the shared value framework proposed by Porter and Kramer (2011) the authors proposes three design themes, namely the Product-Market Design (PMD), the Value Chain Design (VCD) and the Social Cluster Design (SCD).

Chapter 4, titled “Business models for social entrepreneurs” proposes business models by identifying models that are used by Zimbabwean women.

A business strategy is as important for social enterprises as it is for profit-driven companies.

Chapter 5, titled “Business strategies, creating value for social entrepreneurs” explores the various strategies available to social entrepreneurs. The chapter presents a broad spectrum of different competitive strategies, as well as resource strategies that social entrepreneurs can adopt.
Chapter 6, titled “Using Creativity and Social Innovation to create Social Value and Change”, highlights the need for social innovation. The author explains what social creativity and innovation are, the creative and innovative processes, and the barriers and support for social innovation.

Chapter 7, titled “Marketing in social ventures” highlights the unique marketing challenges that social enterprises face, including the various criticisms of marketing in the social venture context. The authors provide suggestions as to how these challenges could be dealt with, the importance of Strategic Marketing Planning, marketing audits, the mapping out of the strategic direction and collaborative or competitive strategies for social ventures. Attention is also given to the development and implementation of segmentation, positioning, communications and fundraising strategies that will promote efficiency and innovation, which will enable social ventures to leverage scarce public and philanthropic resources.

Chapter 8, titled “Social Entrepreneurship Marketing” focuses on how to market social ventures to satisfy consumer needs using an in depth understanding of where marketing and social entrepreneurship interact, indicating what is driving social entrepreneurship and developing marketing strategies for social entrepreneurship.

Chapter 9, titled “The Youth and Social Entrepreneurship: Youth Social Entrepreneurship” highlights that the youth is tasked with Entrepreneurism due to a lack of employment opportunities. Social entrepreneurship specifically offers very viable opportunities in a volatile economy.

Chapter 10, titled “Nurturing Social Entrepreneurship and Building Social Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy: Focusing on Primary and Secondary Schooling to Develop Future Social Entrepreneurs” focuses on introducing social entrepreneurship education at primary and secondary levels of education to build children’s entrepreneurial self-efficacy at a young age. Several benefits, of increasing self-efficacy at a young age, are outlined. The authors explain that a new curriculum needs to be devised and highlights barriers to an entrepreneurship program.

Global trends and social entrepreneurial lessons can be valuable for the social entrepreneur to explore and to enable creative thinking about social issues.

Chapter 11, titled “The Role of Social Entrepreneurship in the Global Business Environments” explains the practical and theoretical concepts of social entrepreneurship, the antecedents of social entrepreneurship in terms of cognitive desirability and feasibility, human capital, social capital and the significance of social entrepreneurship in global business environments.

Chapter 12, titled “The Advent of Social Entrepreneurship in Saudi Arabia: Empirical Evidence from Selected Social Initiatives” introduces the emerging field of social entrepreneurship from the Saudi context and highlights selected social initiatives undertaken by several actors.

Chapter 13, titled “The social economy and the role of government in South Africa”, examines how the social economy has fed into the South African national development plan and the impact of government policy implementation and regulatory framework to ensure achievement of various national and Millennium Development Goals.

Chapter 14, titled “Sustainable Livelihood Framework”, presents an overview of social entrepreneurial development in SA, the legal framework in SA, business models, and a model for developing social entrepreneurship in SA.

Chapter 15, titled “Legal Empowerment as Social Entrepreneurship: The KwaZulu-Natal Cases of Bulwer and New Hanover”, explores the distinct theoretical and conceptual foundations of social entrepreneurship and legal empowerment focusing on two cases to identify a link to African indigenous justice principles and remedies.
Chapter 16, titled “Social entrepreneurship – a new way for civil society in South Africa?” Gives a broad overview of current debates around the value of social entrepreneurship in South Africa. The author explains how the socioeconomic context in South Africa suits the acceleration of social entrepreneurship and suggests how the eco-system for social entrepreneurship can be strengthened.

The text aims to be an essential reference source, building on the available literature and expertise in the field of social entrepreneurship in developing and developed countries, while providing for further research opportunities in this dynamic field. It is hoped that this text will provide the resources necessary for governments, nonprofit and for-profit organisations, students, researchers, entrepreneurs and managers to address social needs in countries around the world.

The overall aim of social entrepreneurship, according to Bill Drayton cited in Moses (2013) is that “Social entrepreneurs are not content just to give a fish or teach how to fish. They will not rest until they have revolutionized the fishing industry.” So the question is “What is your role in revolutionizing the social sector?”

Ziska Fields
University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

REFERENCES


