

## BOOK REVIEW

# Social Entrepreneurship in the Water Sector: Getting Things Done Sustainably

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*Social Entrepreneurship in the Water Sector: Getting Things Done Sustainably*  
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Rafael Ziegler and his co-authors observed that “only some 2.5 percent of the blue planet’s water is freshwater; of that, three-quarters is stored as ice and glaciers and about one-quarter as ground water. Only 1 percent of freshwater is stored in lakes, rivers and soils. Freshwater is a ‘blue gold’ (Barlow and Clarke, 2002), a precious resource not only for corporations but for all of life” (p. 13).

By bridging the gap between social and environmental outcomes via instilling social entrepreneurship into research on water policy, this volume provides an intellectual and physical journey for readers into social entrepreneurship initiatives dealing with water challenges in drinking water and sanitation supply, in agriculture and industry, as well as for entire ecosystems.

From drinking water and sanitation to water use in agriculture, industry, and ecosystems, Rafael Ziegler and his co-authors investigate the contribution of social entrepreneurship to the sustainable use of water. The authors introduce the issues and their approach in Chapter 1. Case studies span from Chapters 2 through 6. Chapter 7 provides the conclusions on these case studies. Finally, Chapter 9 presents authors’ experiment in collaborative campaigning.

In Chapter 2, Mohaupt and Ziegler meet the challenge of access to sanitation, both a private and a public issue, by demonstrating the work of David Kuria and Ecotact. Ecotact has

accomplished in turning a basic human need into the talk of the town. Ikotoilets open the door for socially dignified, hygienic and safe access to public sanitation in urban centers. The authors' survey showed that both approval rates and user rates are very high. Ecotact acts as a catalyst attracting other business actors and municipalities to cooperate nationwide on high-quality public toilets. However, the potential customers need to be convinced to buy and use both urine-based fertilizer and composted fecal matter.

Chapter 3 focuses on the Big Jump. With his networking capacities, Roberto Epple inspired and initiated this symbolic and monumental innovation, where people all over Europe jump in their rivers at exactly the same moment. The event made Epple famous in the European environmentalist arena. Actually, Epple's innovation is system-changing in terms of changing people's mindset. Jumpers are or tend to be environmentalists. The authors noticed that although campaigns were triumphant and people began to reevaluate their living rivers, there are still many conflicts of interest regarding waterway projects and specifically on the European level, due to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAS).

Lodemann and Ziegler introduce the mission and work of Michal Kravčik and People and Water (PW) in its socio-ecological context in Chapter 4. In the fight against the old paradigm of large dam construction for flood prevention and energy supply, Kravčik emphasized the water cycle and renewed a cultural heritage. In the contemporary Slovakian context, the idea of creating small water catchments and thereby strengthening the small water cycle is unique. The innovation targets ecological sustainability with local empowerment. Fortunately, the programme of landscape revitalization and integrated river basin management in the Slovak (PLRIRB) strongly supported Kravčik's new idea and brought it to the national level via a governmental programme.

According to Ziegler and Henkel, the concept of "social contract" in developed countries is usually associated with philosophical treatises that investigate the conditions and principles of an impartial way of living together in a state. Chapter 5 shows the work of WOTR (Watershed Organization Trust), including the history, mission and approach of WOTR. The WOTR approach contributes to the improvement and maintenance of water as a regenerating fund. Through training, organizational arrangements, and the economic benefits obtained from improved freshwater availability and use, WOTR improves capabilities of political and economic participation. Also, WOTR has developed a Climate Change Adaption Project that is currently in its pilot phase in selected villages. Following Gandhi's ideas of village democracy and steps, social innovators seem determined to accomplish the incredible in the practical. A real social contract is emerging.

Chapter 6 outlines the genesis of EcoDecision and the concept of PES (Payments for Ecosystem Services). The authors trace the development of FONAG (*Fondo para la Protección del Agua*) against the backdrop of ineffective conservation efforts and a fierce water privatization debate. Echavarría's approach to water funds and her achievements in terms of output and impact are discussed. In principle PES are based on voluntary agreements, which require that all stakeholders participate because they see a real value in the ecosystem services at stake. However, the authors observed that a voluntary option to a collective action problem may result in unavoidable free-riding by some private sector stakeholders, as in the case of FONAG.

Chapter 7 describes what VcA itself calls the *VcA cosmos*. The authors furnish a short profile of VcA and VcA's general approach to change. VcA international water projects in collaboration with Welthungerhilfe have been overviewed. Furthermore, the authors illustrate the different approaches VcA is developing to raise fund for water projects and to activate and trigger its target group in Germany. VcA's strong commitment to collaboration and networking bears its actual scaling potential. The all-profit approach is so successful that could provide the basis for an integrated strategy of organizational responsibility. The VcA style of approaching people with low-threshold fun activities and the right multipliers is remarkably transmissible.

Chapter 8 is a synthesis one on social entrepreneurship and water. The authors understand that SEI develop and aim to spread novel ideas in collaboration with others for the public good as pioneers. They make available an original proof of functionality as well as making efforts to create or change political, economic and cultural conditions with a view to the respective social mission. The authors present their findings from the case studies for the theses proposed in the introduction and state their own conception of social entrepreneurship.

Chapter 9 discusses collaboration and cooperation, including an in-depth discussion of the *Big Jump Challenge*, a collaborative project that the authors co-initiated. In order to improve results and outputs both within and between civil society, as well as business and government for the benefit of society collectively, collaboration and cooperation are recurrently required. The Ashoka Changemaker Initiative (ACI), a pioneer creating the idea of an online collaborative competition, is introduced. The authors present their analysis of a collaborative competition held by the ACI in the domain of drinking water and sanitation. However, they found limited evidence for collaboration. Inspired by the idea of collaborative competition while seeking to improve on its collaborative aspect, the authors conducted the Big Jump Challenge as *collaborative campaign* in 2012. Their report on this experiment set an excellent example.

Goonetilleke (2014) et al. expose the current challenges, and explore potential solutions. From a multi-disciplinary perspective, they stipulate many thoughtful points of view for safeguarding the sustainability of the urban water environment. Some key issues impacting sustainability of urban water environment are the extent, quality and continuity of drinking water services; the extent and quality of wastewater collection and treatment; the control of urban stormwater; charging, tariffs and cost recovery; and the freedom of urban dwellers to use urban water services.

The authors bring a case study approach to the theme of social entrepreneurship and water challenges. Using detailed case studies from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America plus vivid stories, the authors assess the role and potential of social entrepreneurship for the sustainable use of water. Also, the ethics and politics of new ideas for sustainability in the water sector have been examined. The authors emphasize on ideas changing heads rather than money changing hands.

This book makes a breakthrough. Yes, there are almost no other sectors where ‘getting things done sustainably’ is as important as it is for the water sector. Let us work together to sustain blue gold and blue Earth.

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