Social Enterprise as a Rights-Based Approach to Development:
A Comparative Study of Two Organizations

By

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B. Eng, Mechanical Engineering
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Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning and the
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ABSTRACT

Social enterprise has emerged as a potential new way to combat poverty and conduct development interventions. Social enterprise uses business methods to achieve financial sustainability for organizations seeking to create social impact. At the same time these organizations often operate in areas which are traditionally administered by governments. As such, there is potential to implement rights-based approaches which integrate human rights principles into organizational design, procedure and processes and put pressure on traditional responsibility bearers.

Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions are two social enterprises operating to ensure access to high-quality water in Northern Ghana that have not explicitly adopted rights-based approaches. This study explores key stakeholder conceptions about social enterprise and human rights through interviews with social entrepreneurs, government officials, and staff and customers of two social enterprises. In agreement with the literature on social entrepreneurs, the analysis reveals that social entrepreneurs attempting to achieve equal access to high quality water in Northern Ghana are resourceful individuals that pay close attention to context in designing their community engagement methods. In addition, in their thinking they appeal to human rights, recognizing the importance of the interconnectedness of rights and of the government as ultimate responsibility holder. However, there is a gap between thinking and action, as these organizations are disconnected from government involvement and focus on technical fixes in light of the social-structural issues that affect access to water in Northern Ghana.

However, human rights can provide the framework for action which social enterprise needs. Rights can serve as a benchmark; an agreed upon ethical framework that can help to overcome the ambiguity that many of the research participants expressed about the 'social' nature of social enterprise. In addition, given the resourcefulness, dedication and motivation of the research participants, social enterprises may be well-positioned to operationalize rights-based approaches and to establish a much-needed dialogue between marginalized communities and formal human rights regimes. At the same time, incorporating rights into social enterprise presents some sticky ethical problems to social entrepreneurs, including adopting an approach that may ultimately result in their own obsolescence.

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List of Acronyms, Tables and Figures

List of Acronyms

AIDS – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CEE – MIT Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
CPR – Civil and Political Rights
CWSA – Community Water and Sanitation Agency
E. coli – *Escherichia coli*
ESCR – Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
GC15 – General Comment 15 of the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights
GWC – Ghana Water Company
HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICCPR – International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR – International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights
IGO – Inter-Governmental Organization
IWASH – Integrated Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Program
M. Eng – Master of Engineering
MIT – Massachusetts Institute of Technology
NaDCC – sodium dichloroisocyanurate
NGO – Non-Governmental Organization
PSC – MIT Public Service Center
SELCO – Solar Electric Company of India
SME – Small and Medium Enterprises
TB – Tuberculosis
TNC – Trans-national Corporations
UDHR – Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN – United Nations
UNDP – United Nations Development Program
UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund
WAWI – West African Water Initiative

Figures and Tables

Chapter 1: Defining the Problem

This research stems from my interest in the intersection between international development intervention, technical solutions, entrepreneurship and human rights. The inequity between 'developing' and 'developed' areas is a product of centuries of exploitation, corruption, false promises and well-intentioned but misguided interventions that have dehumanized certain groups while privileging others. I seek to explore one way in which a promising new model for development might harness the language of human rights to effect social-structural change in an unequal world. Just as development intervention can exacerbate historical inequalities, there may be ways in which to engage in a development process that is not oppressive. Social enterprise seeks to tackle large and intractable social problems with business methods. However, they do not single-mindedly chase profit or power. Instead they use the market to simultaneously achieve social impact and financial sustainability.

Recently, the number of organizations calling themselves 'social enterprises' has risen dramatically. As an example the number of organizations calling themselves social enterprises in just the UK in 2009 was about 62,000. These organizations employ around 800,000 people and represent about $37 billion US (Social Enterprise Coalition, 2009). But is social enterprise still just the 'status quo'? Or is there a way in which to ground it in theory that can help to rigorously direct and inform it; a way to ensure it is held accountable for the actions taken in its name? Too often development interventions have failed to affect the socio-structural relationship between those orchestrating the intervention and those on the 'receiving' end. In order to do this one might be able to look to the language of human rights and rights-based approaches to development that are

grounded in social, economic and cultural rights outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). In fact, there are many development organizations that are now taking this approach, including the United Nations, ActionAid, CARE and Oxfam (Hoffmann, 2008; ActionAid, 2010; Rand & Watson, 2005). This thesis will explore how incorporating rights-based programming might make social enterprise morally grounded and theoretically harmonized, therefore strengthening its claim to be a just development intervention and its ability to create social impact.

Background

In order to fully understand the motivation and subsequent analysis of this thesis, this section describes the genesis of my research. It also expresses the spirit in which I undertake this research.

I first experienced a 'developing' area in 2006 when I spent the last semester of my undergraduate degree in East Africa as part of McGill University's Canadian Field Studies in Africa program. This program selects 40 students each year from across Canada to live and study on a traveling field semester in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Subsequent to the field semester I sought out ways to continue working in East Africa and was hired as the project manager for a small Canadian NGO. There I aided in the design and construction of an orphanage complex and the hiring of Kenyan consultants. I made strong friendships with those I worked and felt I was 'helping' to make a difference. The project was going very well. However, I started to think about how easy it was for me to distance myself from poverty while, for the people with whom I was working, it was a daily experience.

As I reflected on my experiences in East Africa I started to question what it was that made certain people privileged and others impoverished. It could not be explained by laziness or other character flaws associated with people living in poverty; the classic 'American' story of 'pulling yourself up by your bootstraps' was impinged upon by structural factors that give rise to insurmountable obstacles in developing areas. In fact, further reflection revealed to me that the story was in reality a myth. People can take advantage of opportunities, but cannot, without institutional support, safety nets and the help of others 'pull themselves up'. I took a great interest in reading about class and power and through this reading began to see international relations and international development in a new light. Rather than naturalized or explained away by 'cultural differences' the poverty in the world was a direct result of privilege elsewhere.

This led me to think about how to be an effective ally for people in developing areas. I started to believe that it is important to build local capacity and, at the same time, pay detailed attention to the means of development, not just the ends. Are there ways in which to do this and, if so, how could they work to not just satisfy needs, but also reaffirm basic human rights and transform the relations of power?

My understanding of these issues came from reading Paulo Freire's (2000 [1970]) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Freire defined the situation of oppression as:

> Any situation in which "A" objectively exploits "B" or hinders his and her pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression. Such a situation in itself constitutes violence even when sweetened by false generosity; because it interferes with the individual's ontological and historical vocation to be more fully human." (Freire, 2000 [1970], p. 55).

I recognized development as such a situation. When I read this it made me think of the aid and charity on which so much of development depends as 'false generosity' that

constituted a way in which to reproduce oppression. As a result, I recognized my own

complicity in this process and wished to change it. The following passage, which I quote

at length from Freire (2000 [1970]), describes how those in a position of power can truly

side with the oppressed in their struggle for social justice:

> Given the preceding context, another issue of indubitable importance arises: the fact that certain members of the oppressor class join the oppressed in their struggle for liberation, thus moving from one pole of the contradiction to the other. Theirs is a fundamental role, and has been so throughout the history of this struggle. It happens, however, that as they cease to be exploiters or indifferent spectators or simply the heirs of exploitation and move to the side of the exploited, they almost always bring with them the marks of their origin: their prejudices and their deformations, which include a lack of confidence in the people's ability to think, to want, and to know. Accordingly these adherents to the people's cause constantly run the risk of falling into a type of generosity as malefic as that of the oppressors. The generosity of the oppressors is nourished by an unjust order, which must be maintained in order to justify that generosity. Our converts, on the other hand, truly desire to transform the unjust order; but because of their background they believe that they must be the executors of the transformation. They talk about the people, but they do not trust them; and trusting the people is the indispensable precondition for revolutionary change. A real humanist can be identified more by his trust in the people, which engages him in their struggle, than by a thousand actions in their favor without that trust. (pp. 60-61)

I realized that it would take both struggle from people in developing areas and a constant

self-reflection on the part of people in the West to change the dynamics of development.

It is with this mindset that I engage in this research, which is an attempt to be reflective

upon the practice of development.

Purpose

In this study I examine the experiences of individuals working for two social

enterprises, Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions, who are attempting to

provide safe, equal access to water within the Northern Sector of Ghana. The purpose of

this study is twofold: 1) To explore the benefits and challenges of incorporating human

rights into the structure and processes of social enterprise, and; 2) To determine whether social enterprise can potentially help to fulfill economic and social rights through operationalizing a rights-based approach to development. Doing so may in fact lead to transformative social-structural change in which marginalized communities are able to influence and shape the political[1] debate on human rights while at the same time accessing basic services. The focus of the study will be on how individuals within social enterprises conceive of and act on their ideas about social enterprise and human rights. To do this, I will draw on existing literature about social enterprise and rights-based approaches to development. As such I will:

1. Analyze the meanings that social entrepreneurs attribute to their actions through a typology of social entrepreneurs.
2. Explore the ways in which social enterprises may implicitly use human rights in their work.
3. Demonstrate the potential for a rights-based approach to social enterprise in lieu of a needs-based approach.
4. Provide insight into how an explicit rights-based approach to development might strengthen social entrepreneurship both morally and functionally.
5. Flesh out the ethical and moral questions that a rights-based approach to social enterprise generates.

Rationale

Much of the research and writing on social enterprise comes from the perspective of traditional management studies and seeks to understand how social enterprise is different than traditional enterprise. Moreover, with the notable exception of Mohammed Yunus' work, much of this literature is focused on organizations that operate in the 'developed' world, especially the United Kingdom (Nicholls, 2006). Although this is informative for students of management, it is not as useful for those trying to uncover

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[11] By political I mean concerned with the analysis of the distribution of power rather than in the traditional party politics or partisan sense.

how this new form of intervention can lead to a transformation of the relationship between developed and developing nations and their people.

Importantly, the social enterprises studied in this thesis are breaking new ground when it comes to provision of basic services in Ghana. There is a gap in the literature regarding social entrepreneurship and social enterprise in the region. More often the literature refers to the outright privatization of water resources in the area (Yeboah, 2006). This study represents an attempt to fill this hole.

More generally, using business methods to provide basic services could easily revert to needs-based programming that focuses not on the root causes of denials, but rather on technical fixes. This can result in organizations that provide basic services but do not empower marginalized groups to mold and demand their rights. This thesis will help to explicitly explore how to avoid this pitfall while at the same time providing these essential services. This exploration of the intersection between social enterprise and human rights is a research first.

Outline

This thesis is organized into three sections. The first three chapters provide important contextual information about the motivation for this study, the people and organizations involved and the literature which situates it in the field. The next two chapters form the analysis section of the thesis. The first analysis chapter uses a typology of social entrepreneurs provided by Zahra et al (2009) to help understand the actions of individuals within social enterprises. It then explores how these individuals define both the term 'social enterprise' and themselves. The second chapter in this section explores the central question of how the social enterprises in the study currently conceive of and

act on human rights rhetoric. At the same, time it explores the extent to which there may be a need to address rights issues in the water sector in Northern Ghana through examining the political implications of water access in the region. The third section of this thesis is comprised of the conclusion, which poses some ethical questions about social enterprise and human rights, expounds upon the need for a rights-based approach to social enterprise, explores what that might look like and provides suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2: Methodology

This section tracks the research process; from finding a topic to searching the literature to conducting interviews and observation. It also deals with some of the issues encountered during the research process.

Finding a Research Topic

Upon entering MIT I knew my research would explore three important areas:

1. How organizations operating in the context of international development worked to transform or reinforce social power relations.
2. Social theory and its application to development.
3. Organizations implementing technology in the developing world, as engineering is my vocation.

I also knew that my prior experiences in Africa would shape my thinking and direction. Arriving at MIT, I was quickly swept up into an intense teaching assistantship with D–Lab, a series of courses at MIT in which students learn about technology and development and implement technical projects with community partners around the world. In the course of learning to be a TA, I was exposed to the entrepreneurial spirit of the students at MIT who often conceived of their D-Lab projects as ways to form businesses. This led me to think seriously about my own experience in Kenya managing operations for the NGO Mikinduri Children of Hope (MCOH).

Moreover, this was about the time that I had begun to engage with Paulo Freire's work. As a result, I found that financial sustainability was not quite what I was interested in researching as a thesis topic. I was more concerned with motivations for pursuing entrepreneurial activity and how entrepreneurship could elicit more widespread social change. I wanted to understand the fascination and obsession that abounds on the MIT

campus with innovation and entrepreneurship and whether this was truly a good thing, especially in the context of development intervention.

In the course of looking into these topics I came across the idea of social enterprise, which I interpreted as: business ventures in developing countries that take into account social relations and structure while creating jobs and returning all surplus to the community. Rather than just an earned income strategy for NGOs and non-profits, social enterprise seemed to be a restructuring of the way in which development practice could be conceived, in that they take into account the context-specific social and structural factors that affect business. Moreover, by creating organizations that were profitable, the surplus can be reinvested entirely, creating jobs and income for people in developing areas. In this way they might be able to give people the opportunity to take control of their destiny.

The literature on social entrepreneurship and social enterprise, however, is both large and disparate and, frustratingly, none of it converges around a single definition of the term. Most of this body of work consists of case studies of individual organizations operating within the field of development and the decisions they make in order to provide essential services to their constituents (Alvord, Brown, & Letts, 2004). With the notable exception of Muhammed Yunus' work, in which he notes that business and entrepreneurship fail to take into consideration fundamental human needs beyond personal gain, the literature seemed to lack a framework through which to analyze and advance social entrepreneurship (Yunus, 2007). Without a principled approach to the topic, it seemed as though anything might pass as social entrepreneurship. Is creating a new manufacturing plant in China social enterprise? It creates jobs, can aid in economic

growth and provides people with an economic good. Moreover, what makes a social enterprise 'social'? Social enterprise seemed to lack a theory to go along with it that helped to ground it and make it distinct from the traditional hypotheses about the multiplicative benefits of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). It was through this reading that I came to focus on contributing to a more structured way in which to talk and think about the field. In order to explore these ideas I looked for groups on the MIT campus that engaging in what they defined as social entrepreneurship, social enterprise or social business which I could then recruit into a study.

The Study

 This section describes the water problem in Northern Ghana, the two organizations which are the focus of this research and the research methods. This contextual information is provided in order to aid the reader in fully situating and understanding the data and analysis presented within this thesis.

Northern Ghana and the Water Problem

 Tamale, Northern Region Ghana is characteristic of the Northern Sector of the country. In Ghana over 30% of the population lives on less than $1.25 per day (The World Bank, 2006). This aggregate statistic however does not specifically capture the poverty in the Northern Region, which for environmental, social and cultural reasons does not enjoy the relative prosperity of the South.

 In terms of climate, Northern Ghana is hot and dry for nine months of the year with Harmattan[2] winds blowing sand and dust from the Sahara during the months of January to March. Monsoon rains then quench and possibly even flood the country between May and September.

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[2] Winds that carry sand and dust off the Sahara towards the Atlantic Ocean.

Demographically, Northern Ghana is characterized by large rural areas with few urban centers. For example, the Ghana Statistical Service estimated the total population of the Northern Region 1.8 million people, with Tamale (population ~ 300,000) being the largest urban center (VanCalcar, 2006). Within urban centers access to piped water is provided through a public-private partnership between the Ghana Water Company and Biwater, a private British water resources engineering company (Biwater, 2009). Although this water is safe for consumption and shows no presence of *E. coli*, the supply is intermittent, sometimes only flowing for one day per week or per month (Collin, 2009). Other typical sources of water in urban centers may be public boreholes and standpipes, water tankers, bottled or sachet water and artificial 'dams' or 'dugouts' which collect rainwater during the rainy season in May-September. In rural areas dugouts are a typical water source. Often each village will have a dam from which people will draw water for drinking and household use; however, they can be located as far as a one-hour walk from a village. This places enormous strain on women and girls who are often tasked with providing water for households, impacting their ability to go to school and sometimes their safety. Moreover, being surface water, these dams are the source of many diarrheal and other water-related diseases. In fact, the UNICEF (2010) reports that 25% of under 5 mortality in Ghana is caused by diarrheal disease. Moreover, Ghana is one of only four remaining endemic countries where guinea worm is still found; a painful and sometimes fatal flatworm infection transmitted by contaminated water (The Carter Center, 2009).

The Organizations

Integral to this research is an understanding of the participating organizations. Both Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions share a common goal: to

address the problems outlined above and bring clean water to the Northern Region of Ghana. However, they go about achieving this in different ways and each has a unique conception of their mission. Below is a brief organizational sketch of both social enterprises to provide a better sense of the formation and objectives of each organization.

Pure Home Water

Pure Home Water is a Ghanaian-registered non-profit organization co-founded in 2005 by one of the study participants and two local partners. Pure Home Water has two main goals: 1) to provide safe water to people in the Northern Sector of Ghana; and 2) to become financially self-sustaining as an organization. According to these goals, Pure Home Water initially started selling a wide variety of household drinking water technologies to people living in Northern Ghana. These included the safe storage products, candle filters and ceramic pot filters, among others. In 2006, however, Pure Home Water began to exclusively concentrate on the Potters-for-Peace style ceramic pot filter, which remains to this day its main product. Locally branded as the Kosim[3] filter, this device, pictured below, consists of a ceramic pot suspended above a plastic safe water storage container covered by a lid.

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[3] 'Kosim' means 'pure water' in the Northern Ghanaian language of Dagbani

Figure 1: Kosim Filter

Water can be accessed through a tap present at the base of the safe storage container.

Each filter comes with an instructional sticker, a scrub brush and one chlorine tablet for

initial cleaning.

For the first two years of existence, Pure Home Water sold filters by way of two

channels; rural outreach sales by salespeople and through retailers that sell Kosim filters

from shops primarily in Tamale, Northern Region. Rural outreach consists of identifying

potential villages in which to sell the filter and conducting coordinated demonstrations,

after which individuals are invited to purchase a filter. Sales through retailers make use of

shops to sell the filter on commission to anyone who might want one.

Though these rural outreach and retail sales continue, a large proportion of Pure

Home Water's business in years three and four has been comprised of institutional buyers

who purchase large volumes of filters and subsequently retain Pure Home Water to

conduct filter trainings, distributions and monitoring. The large volume of sales during

2008 and 2009 shown on the graph above came as an emergency response to flooding in the Upper East Region. Pure Home Water staff members conducted emergency distribution trips in service of large contracts from international NGOs like Oxfam or International Governmental Organization (IGOs) like UNICEF who were responding to this flood.

Much learning has taken place from the flood distribution. Though Pure Home Water still conducts the majority of its sales through institutional buyers, currently during these trips, each villager receives one free filter and a Pure Home Water employee accompanies them to their house where they assist in its proper installation. This practice is a recent development implemented after the emergency distribution of 2008. During that distribution, Pure Home Water staff realized that many filter recipients did not know how to properly use the filter even after attending group instruction sessions. Carefully showing each recipient how to install and use the filter in their own home has caused drastic increases in proper and sustained usage rates.

In each village they work, Pure Home Water has what they term a 'community liaison' that helps to coordinate interaction with the Pure Home Water office. These liaisons are generally well-respected individuals in the community identified by local chiefs. The liaison collects reports of broken filters, requests for new filters and also consults with the local chief to keep them updated on Pure Home Water's activities in the community. In addition they may also help with arranging distributions, with translation and with monitoring and evaluation.

Community Water Solutions
Begun by two former MIT students, Community Water Solutions is a United States-registered non-profit organization that works to address the water quality challenge

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in Northern Ghana by implementing community-scale village water treatment centers. One such treatment center is pictured below:

Figure 2: Community Water Solutions Treatment Center, Nyamaliga

These treatment centers are co-located with village dugouts and consist of a set of mixing tanks, a concrete pedestal and a disinfection/storage tank. Each morning the women who run the station fill the mixing tanks with water and treat it with alum (aluminum sulfate) to induce flocculation and leave it to settle for the remainder of the day. Meanwhile the water from the previous day is moved into the disinfection/storage tank where it is treated with Aquatabs, a proprietary sodium dichloroisocyanurate (NaDCC) tablet. This water, now safe to drink, is sold for a small fee (around $0.05/20 Liters) to villagers that would have otherwise gone straight to the dugout to collect their drinking and household water. The women running these stations collect this fee, use it to purchase materials to sustain the treatment station and keep the rest as a profit. At the time of writing, women operating these stations were making around $1/day as take-home pay.

In addition, wherever Community Water Solutions conducts an intervention, each villager is initially given a 20-liter safe storage container in which to collect and store their water. If used properly, this plastic container, with a lid and spigot, drastically reduces the chances of re-contamination. Moreover, in order to make water safety certain, the chlorine dosing used is enough to ensure an acceptable level of chlorine residual to prevent re-contamination.

Institutionally, Community Water Systems attempts to integrate their water treatment stations into the existing fabric of the community. They do this by consulting heavily with village elders as to all relevant details concerning the operation and maintenance of the treatment center. Moreover, they seek to hire local women to run each water treatment station. These women are generally selected by the village elders because they are seen as the most 'clean', 'responsible' and 'hard-working' women in the village.

Community Water solutions has few full-time staff. Their model is based on setting up new businesses rather than growing their own operation. However, as the demand for water treatment stations grows, so too will the parent organization. As such, Community Water Solutions employs local Ghanaians to monitor existing water treatment stations and aid villagers in any issues that they may have.

Research Method

The cases and experiences of those involved with Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions, will serve as sources of data. By exploring the work of these organizations I hope to investigate whether social enterprise is a potentially transformative intervention that can help to fulfill and influence economic, social and cultural rights through operationalizing a rights-based approach.

In conducting this research I made the conscious decision to pursue a deep, qualitative understanding of the thoughts and feelings and conceptions of my research participants. Qualitative research provides an insight into the thought process, decisions, emotions and sentiment of research participants and is better equipped to answer questions about the ways in which people make meaning (Warren & Karner, 2010). What I have sought in doing this type of research is to provide an honest, holistic presentation of the organizations and individuals involved and their relationships, motivations and actions. I have done this by, wherever possible, using several data sources through which to triangulate the information.

This research takes the form of an integrated narrative comprised of interviews and observations of members of both Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions and the local government institution for rural water supply in Northern Ghana. The observation and interviews were completed during the months of June to August 2008 and January 2009 on two separate trips to Tamale, Northern Region, Ghana. To the best of my ability I kept detailed notes of staff interactions and decisions as well as my own thoughts and reflections, all of which inform the analysis and conclusions of this paper. Below I outline the two main sources of data: participant observation and one-on-one interviews.

Participant Observation

During each trip to Ghana I conducted participant observation with both Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions management, staff and customers. At Pure Home Water I assumed the role of an associate for a period of three months in the summer of 2008. During this time I completed an MIT Public Service Center (PSC) Fellowship at Pure Home Water in which, in conjunction with a local graphic artist, I

developed training manuals and an educational sticker that graphically details how to use and care for their Kosim ceramic pot filter. This sticker and manual are, at the time of writing, still in use at Pure Home Water. At the same time I traveled and worked with Pure Home Water employees and management on several large monitoring and evaluation trips, each of which was in service of a major contract that Pure Home Water was in the process of fulfilling. During the course of these trips I was treated as staff myself, entering homes to give demonstrations, distributing filters, talking to customers and interacting with Pure Home Water employees.

Moreover, at that time, the management of Community Water Solutions was implementing their first community water treatment station in Kasaligu, Ghana, just outside Tamale. I had extensive discussions with the founders of Community Water Solutions about their philosophy and observed the manner in which they started to set up their organization. It was valuable to have the chance to observe the founding members of Community Water Solutions as they began their social enterprise and to discuss with them at length their motivation, model and future goals.

In January 2009 I returned to Tamale as part of a Master of Engineering student team. I had the opportunity to visit two dozen of Pure Home Water's customers in and around the Tamale area, as far as one hour away by motorbike, speaking with each in turn with the aid of a translator. These customers had had different experiences with Pure Home Water. Some had received their filter recently, while others bought their filter over two years previous from the date that we spoke. Moreover, some had received their filter for free while others had bought their filter from Pure Home Water. I also had the

opportunity to accompany both new and old staff on a filter distribution trip in which I helped to install filters in the homes of rural villagers.

By January 2009, Community Water Solutions had finished implementation of a second water treatment center at Nyamaliga, just outside Tamale. I had the chance to visit both of the community water treatment stations that Community Water Solutions had set up in the intervening time and to speak with and observe the women who were running the stations and those that were purchasing water. In addition, I spoke with some of the village elders who were involved in the process of selecting the women to run the treatment stations and other details in their setup.

The Interviews

Beyond participant observation, the main source of data for this study is a series of seven semi-structured interviews which I conducted in January 2009 with one local government official, four individuals associated with Pure Home Water, one individual associated with Community Water Solutions and one associated with both Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions. In selecting the participants for the interviews, I chose to not only include some of the founders of the social enterprises themselves, but also a sample of the employees and managers of those organizations.

Each of the participants was interviewed in one semi-structured interview session during which time they were asked questions about their experience, their organization and their views on the work they were doing. Each interview was about one hour long, although a few went as long as two hours, and was guided by a set of questions I developed beforehand. None of the participants had access to these before the time of their interview. Moreover, all but one interview was tape recorded and subsequently transcribed. In each case that was feasible, I performed participant checks of the

interview transcript, though in the end only two participants chose to review and edit their responses and neither made significant substantive changes. At the end of each session I made sure that the participant was given the chance to respond and ask questions about the research.

The Problem of Anonymity

As mentioned above, during the summer of 2008 while conducting part of the research for this thesis I was an MIT Public Service Center Fellow at Pure Home Water and developed educational product stickers to be affixed to the Kosim filter and product training materials for salespersons. While completing this work I became close with several of the Pure Home Water staff and management and have continued to stay in touch with them since completing my research. As a result many of the interviewees were drawn from a pool of people whom I consider to be my friends.

With this in mind, difficult decisions had to be made about how to best respect the integrity of the anonymity agreement I signed with each research participant. This was especially complex given that one research participant is also my thesis advisor and still involved in the operation of one of the two organizations. Moreover, both Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions are small organizations, making it easy for someone familiar with them to identify a particular research participant. That being said, at the time of writing, beside the founders of the organizations, only one research participant still works with either organization. Weighing my options in this situation I decided to provide as little background about each participant as possible, only providing context where it may enrich the analysis. Though I feel that there is nothing lost in omitting detailed descriptions of the research participants, others may disagree.

In addition, I have given my participants the opportunity to have their real names used in this thesis. Below is a legend of interview participants and their corresponding organizations. Some participants have chosen to retain a pseudonym, while some have chosen to have their real names used:

Pure Home Water	Community Water Solutions	Community Water and Sanitation Agency (National Government)
Ben	James	Ivan
Harriet	Rebecca	
Henry		
James		
Susan		

Table 1: Interview Participants and Their Respective Affiliations

Chapter 3: Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to situate my research in the context of the history of development, social enterprise and human rights-based approaches to development. The first section of the chapter explores the literature on social entrepreneurship and social enterprise after having located its genesis in the history of development, focusing on a key text used in subsequent analysis. The second section explores human rights-based approaches to development.

History of Development

Social enterprise is just one intervention in the long history of colonialism, imperialism, and development. As such, its genesis is inextricably bound to the history of development and development intervention. The following discussion is not, nor is it intended to be, a detailed chronicle of colonialism and what followed. It is merely intended to highlight the effects of this period and how this led to the birth of social enterprise.

History of the Term

The 'long 19th century' (1789-1914) was the century of imperialism. As the countries of Europe – and later their former colonies, the United States and Australia – scrambled to bring the largest portion of the world under their economic and cultural influence, the peoples of colonies were subjugated, intimidated, enslaved, harassed, hunted, displaced and abused in the name of economic gain (Hobsbawm, 1962). It was this situation that caused Frantz Fanon (2004 [1963]) to remark that:

> In concrete terms Europe has been bloated out of all proportions by the gold and raw materials from such colonial countries as Latin America, China and Africa. Today, Europe's tower of opulence faces these continents, for centuries the point of departure of their shipments of diamond, oil, silk and cotton, timber, and exotic produce to this very same Europe. Europe is literally the creation of the Third

World. The riches which are choking it are those plundered from the underdeveloped peoples. (p. 58)

Not only were the material resources of the colonies appropriated by the colonizers, so too was the land. By the time of the end of the First World War, for example, twenty percent of the surface of the Earth was controlled by one nation: Britain (Young, 2001). This had destructive effects on colonized peoples, as many were extirpated from "the land, which must provide bread and, naturally, dignity." (Fanon, 2004 [1963], p. 9). As a result the colonial subject was at once alienated from their land and abused, demoralized, starved and enslaved to devastating and enduring effect (Mutua, 2002). In doing so the colonial powers were forcibly seeking to order the world after their own social models and systems, rendering an exotic world intelligible while at the same time rending the cultural and social fabric of colonized peoples (Scott, 1998). They employed in their service a cadre of indigenous peoples educated in the West which then returned to their native countries and aided in administering colonial state policies (Fanon, 2004 [1963]). This 'colonial elite' assisted the colonizers in their effort to decipher local traditions and orient these societies toward Western liberal democracy and governmental administration

These administrative states were in fact some of the more mild forms of colonialism. Even more explicit and violent forms of intervention were the attempts to exterminate or subjugate in the name of religion, efficiency, modernization, civility or some combination of the four. Examples of this behavior abound; from King Leopold's Belgian Congo to the Portuguese genocide of the Putumayo in Brazil to the forced Diaspora of millions of African slaves to the Americas, Europe and Asia. Such wide economic and military dominance had far-reaching economic, social and cultural

implications, which the people of the colonies inevitably resisted. Against this domination a vibrant anti-colonialism developed that led to successful independence movements, first in Latin America in the 1800s and later in Asia and Africa. Even in the face of violent efforts to thwart independence movements the colonies had all but completed their goal of national sovereignty by the 1970s.

As these struggles raged, the colonial masters sought to retain influence in the colonies. After World War II, as Escobar (1995) noted:

> For the United States, the dominant concern was the reconstruction of Europe. This entailed the defense of the colonial systems, because continued access by European powers to the raw materials of their colonies was seen as crucial to their recovery…in other words the United States supported European efforts to maintain control of the colonies. (p. 31)

As such, a new concept began to gain popularity as a silent and powerful way for the West to remain engaged in the affairs of Latin America, Africa and Asia[4]. As each colonial power in turn lost their overseas possessions to independence, many offered a program of social and technological progress as a remedy to what was seen as the still 'backwards' state of these fledgling polities. At the forefront of this 'development agenda' were the concepts of 'modernization' and 'economic development', code words for the creation of a Western-style liberal democracy and market society (Escobar, 1995). Many theories about how this might be done were posited, but unsurprisingly none made space for historical difference or the above-mentioned cultural, social and military dominance. Given the nature of the language of 'development' – that some states are underdeveloped and need to imitate or transform to be like those that are 'developed' – each was necessarily teleological and held as their goal the modern Western 'developed'

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[4] Although most of Latin America gained independence in the 19th century, it is included here as it shares a colonial history with Africa and Asia.

state and market economy (Mutua, 2002). Much like in colonial days, those in the West

felt that the institutions of the colonies would have to be changed:

> There is a sense in which rapid economic progress is impossible without painful adjustments. Ancient philosophies have to be scrapped; old social institutions have to disintegrate; bond of caste, creed and race have to burst; and large numbers of persons who cannot keep up with progress have to have their expectations of a comfortable life frustrated. Very few communities are willing to pay the full price of economic progress. (United Nations, 1951, p. 15)

Even though the above quote comes from the United Nations, it is not a view with which

many in the new countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America agreed. For them there was

not a sense of 'underdevelopment' or what a 'developed state' might be. Escobar, for

example, (1995) claims that the birth of 'development' as we know it today came with

Harry Truman's inaugural address on January 20th, 1949 in which he stated:

> More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas. For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and the skill to relieve the suffering of these people…I believe that we should make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life...The old imperialism—exploitation for foreign profit—has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair-dealing…Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace. And the key to greater production is a wider and more vigorous application of modern scientific and technical knowledge. (Truman, 1949)

For Escobar, it was on that day the vast majority of humanity became 'underdeveloped'

in the discourse surrounding poverty and global representation. This moment in time was

critical as it defined the Western view of the former colonies going forward. The peoples

of Latin America, Africa and Asia did not see themselves as 'underdeveloped' but the

initiation of the language of development came to shape their impressions of themselves

and of former colonizers for years to come (Said, 1994 [1978]). Escobar also goes on to

trace how this new concept has created a powerful discourse about the 'Third World' that the West is able to control and which silently forms our societies' notions of themselves in relation to one another. Rather than a violent colonialism, this new phenomenon represents a way to manage the information produced about and control the representation of the peoples and cultures of the former colonies (Escobar, 2003 [1995]; Escobar, 1995; Said, 1994 [1978]).

But still others contend development is an even older idea. Tracing its history far before Escobar's proposal, Cowen and Shenton (2003 [1995]) propose that the concept of 'development', widely conceived, is historically and ideologically grounded in the European enlightenment even if the term was coined in the mid-twentieth century. They argue that 19th century positivists like Saint-Simon, Comte, List and Mill gave rise to theories of development that were informed by the social turmoil experienced in Europe during the creation of the nation-state. These theories and formulas were proposed in order to mitigate the "the social disorder of rapid urbanization, poverty and unemployment" caused by technological progress, industrialization and the division of labor (Cowen & Shenton, 2003 [1995], p. 29). For Saint-Simon the concept of trusteeship was central; that an enlightened group could help guide others in a process designed to elicit a "'progressive amelioration of the moral, physical and intellectual condition of the human race'" (Cowen & Shenton, 2003 [1995], p. 32)[5]. These trustees were to be none other than the banks and bankers; those who had the capacity "to utilize land, labor and capital in the interests of society as a whole" (Cowen & Shenton, 2003 [1995], p. 34). Flashing forward one hundred and twenty years, one can see how this idea manifests

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[5] As we will see later, this concept of progressive realization comes into play in the language and subordination of economic, social and cultural rights.

itself, for example, as a group of more 'developed' countries formed both the Bretton

Woods[6] institutions and the bilateral national development agencies like CIDA, DFID

and USAID. These organizations are responsible, *entrusted*, with informing and

instructing less developed countries how to modernize. It was this line of thinking that

initially led to the Mandate System established by the League of Nations after World War

I in which rather than being freed from colonial rule, legal and administrative control of

former German, Ottoman and Turkish territories was instead transferred to Allied powers

(Rajagopal, 2003). In fact the United Nations Charter has two entire chapters – Chapters

7 & 8 – devoted to trusteeship (United Nations, 2009). This is the modern form of what

Saint-Simon first proposed when he wrote that "the present epoch might be transformed

into another order through the actions of those who were entrusted with the future of

society" (Cowen & Shenton, 2003 [1995], p. 34).

Non-Governmental Organizations, Social Movements and More

Though tracing the history of the UN and the Bretton Woods Institutions is

beyond the scope of this discussion, during the latter part of the 20th century a growing

number of researchers, political leaders and members of social movements came to see

these institutions and their ideology as lacking and dogmatic (George, 2007). As a result,

a new movement grew; one that saw itself as independent from government and the

private sector. 'Civil Society' consists of social movements, non-governmental

organizations (NGOs) and non-profit organizations and citizen's coalitions that started to

influence the debate on development (The London School of Economics, 2004).

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[6] Though initially formed to reconstruct Europe after World War II the Bretton Woods Institutions
    eventually played a large part in directing development of countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

NGOs have had a particularly central role in civil society. NGOs come in many forms, however in the context of this research the term is used to signify legally constituted organizations that engage in work related to social, economic or environmental development in developing countries. In support of the NGO movement, Watts (2003 [1995]) argues that development and its alternatives have been reframed. While warning against this "trustee" conception, he shows that development is no longer conceived in the logic of an 18th and 19th century positivist project designed to produce liberal democracies and market societies the world over. Rather it is understood as a necessary response to the "growing sensitivity to the ecological consequences of unfettered growth coupled with unprecedented global inequalities" (Watts, 2003 [1995], p. 61). He feels that a coordinated effort is needed to combat these problems, one that involves both the countries from the West and those from Latin America, Africa and Asia. The question for Watts is how to do it in way that fundamentally challenges global power relations.

Just like large bilateral aid and intergovernmental organizations, NGOs have several limitations when it comes to creating transformative social structural change for marginalized communities. It seems that for one, they cannot provide the counterpoint to positivist development that Cowen and Shenton (2003 [1995]) desire. They note that even the new contemporary push within the NGO movement for some new form of 'development' that stresses "small-scale solutions, ecological concerns, popular participation, and the establishment of the community" still involves trusteeship (p. 42). Not discounting the few vibrant, Southern social movements and NGOs, the authors observe that the vast majority of organizations that today work towards 'development' is

from the Global North. Rather than national governments directly implementing the development project, Northern NGOs serve as the conduit for development. In essence, though the discourse has changed, both the goal and process are the same: achieve some form of development under the direction of actors from the Global North.

A Needs-Based Approach

To address this, Escobar (2003 [1995]) argues that social movements may be the locus of a new discourse on alternatives to development and an alternative to historical NGO intervention. He argues that oftentimes the 'basic needs' approach that many NGO's use to legitimate their interventions is:

> Lacking a significant link to people's everyday experience, 'basic human needs' discourse does not foster greater political participation. This is why the struggle over needs interpretation is a key political arena of struggle for new social actors involved in redirecting the apparatuses of development and the state. The challenge for social movements – and the 'experts' that work with them – is to come up with new ways of talking about needs and of demanding their satisfaction in ways that bypass the rationality of development with its 'basic needs' discourse.[7] (Escobar, 2003 [1995], p. 225, emphasis added)

The 'basic needs' or 'needs-based approach' was popularized in the 1970's and 1980's by a widely-read book entitled *First Things First* by Paul Streeten. In it he argued that the basic needs or 'needs-based' approach to development would incrementally focus on meeting the most pressing needs first, such as access to water, food, shelter etc. and later on meeting more complex needs (Streeten, 1981). In fact in the appendix to his book, Streeten (1981) outright rejects the notion of Social, Economic and Cultural Rights, based on limited resources to fully meet those rights.

However, the needs-based approach has been roundly critiqued and Streeten's focus on material resources misses the point. By focusing on fulfilling people's

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[7] Bypassing basic needs and re-politicizing development is at the core of rights-based approaches to development.

fundamental requirements one can easily ignore the root causes and power dynamics that

cause those denials (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004). This is problematic because

the basic needs approach tends "to devalue the objective of equality as compared to that

of meeting basic needs. The BNA [Basic Needs Approach] may not, then, be consistent

with the demands of social justice as articulated by many egalitarians." (Qizilbash, 1996,

p. 1213).

Participation

In critiquing the needs-based approach, many sought new ways to engage with

'stakeholders' to identify and address their own issues. One popularly proposed method

to do this is 'participation'. In some circles, 'participatory development' has gained a

kind of hegemonic control over the discourse on poverty reduction and development

practice. The premise of this approach is that unlike previous 'top-down' approaches to

development in which professionals from Northern development organizations, identify

'basic needs', design and then implement projects in Latin America, Asia and Africa,

participatory development involves the input of 'project beneficiaries' or 'project

partners' or 'stakeholders' from the start. The rationale is "that the articulation of

people's knowledge can transform top-down bureaucratic planning systems." (Mosse,

2001, p. 16).

Many NGOs started to seek legitimacy by partnering with social movements and

attempting to identify causes with, rather than for the communities that they wanted to

serve. These first attempts at participation have since been thoroughly critiqued as

instrumental and cursory, serving more often to legitimate an organization's intervention

than to empower (Mosse, 2001; Cooke & Kothari, 2001).

This discussion is not intended to be a thorough review of the subject, rather it is merely to say that many have noted the importance of popular participation in development strategies going forward, while at the same time trying to ensure that participation is not used instrumentally by development organizations. This idea has contributed to the development of local and social enterprise in development interventions.

'Social' Entrepreneurship and 'Social' Enterprise

Many NGOs have realized that their objectives and effectiveness are tied to their ability to raise funds and garner political support and legitimacy amongst governments and the people they seek to serve (Fowler, 2000). In order to sever their dependence on government and philanthropic sources for financial sustainability, many turned to profit-making ventures to support their missions. Oxfam, for instance, opened many Oxfam stores where people in the West could buy Oxfam brand clothing or merchandise, the profit of which went to supporting their programs. The same was true for many other small and large non-profit organizations. The ideological combination of participation, social mission, and market methods to achieve social transformation led to the idea of social entrepreneurship (Chell, 2007). Thus the history of development is instructive when looking for the genesis of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise: the social, economic and environmental imperatives created by colonialism combined with the spread of neoliberalism have contributed to a discourse about local participation and the ability of markets to remedy social and environmental problems.

These topics have recently become a topic of growing interest to intellectuals and practitioners. When Bill Drayton, founder of Ashoka, started his organization in 1981, it

was the only one of its kind that supported and encouraged so-called social entrepreneurs. Now 29 years later, there has been a proliferation of organizations, centers, papers and definitions dedicated to advancing or studying some form of social entrepreneurship. In addition, social enterprise has also received attention as being a game-changing way of approaching social problems. This has led to various definitional boundaries among people who are researching or studying the subject (Bielifeld, 2009). This section deals with this problem by offering an introduction to entrepreneurship and the definitions of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise. Lastly it defines a key piece of literature used in the analysis of data contained in this study.

Entrepreneurship

The French word "entrepreneur" literally means one who "undertakes" (Peredo & McLean, 2006). On a more basic level many people take the position about entrepreneurs that "you know one when you see one"; they associate these individuals with power, influence and starting and running commercial organizations (Chell, 2007, p. 5; Peredo & McLean, 2006). The scholar credited with first using this word in relation to the establishment and nurturing of firms was the French economist Jean Bapiste Say who said, "The entrepreneur shifts economic resources out of an area of lower and into an area of higher productivity and greater yield" (Say as quoted by Dees, 2001, p. 1).The focus here is on efficiency and the allocation of productive resources towards value creation. This can take many forms but not each is entrepreneurial. Dees goes on tease out a more nuanced view of entrepreneurs by using Drucker's concept of opportunity. He points out that in fact just starting a business does not imply that someone is an entrepreneur (Dees, 2001). In this way business is not the essence of entrepreneurship but rather seizing the opportunity to exploit change is key (Dees, 2007; Dees, 2008). Entrepreneurs may use

new technology to revolutionize an old business or combine existing service delivery

models to create wealth where previously there was none. Pierre Omidyar's invention of

eBay for instance, revolutionized the way in which business transactions could occur by

increasing the amount of information available and thus creating value for buyers and

sellers. In this tradition it is entrepreneurs that are the change-makers in society.

Dees also clarifies that entrepreneurs are not daunted by resource constraints; they

solve big problems, stimulate economic growth in the face of them. This transformation

is a process Joseph Schumpeter, called 'creative destruction', the replacement of older

inefficient organizations and technologies with new, more efficient ones (Schumpeter,

1962). Perhaps considered the father of modern research on entrepreneurship,

Schumpeter says that traditional entrepreneurs 'do more with less' than do existing

modes of production. Moreover they do this in the face of risk, financial or otherwise

(Tan, Williams, & Tan, 2005). Entrepreneurs often are faced not only with resource

constraints due to their promotion of untested ideas, but also receive pushback from

incumbent organizations attempting to use their power and influence to stand their

ground (Zarha, S. et al, 2009). Nevertheless, entrepreneurs continue to work towards their

goals; pursue their causes relentlessly, often at great personal sacrifice (Dees, 2001).

Spurred by competition, entrepreneurs strive to more efficiently use resources to create

economic value (Peredo & McLean, 2006). This drive to succeed is characteristic of

entrepreneurs.

But what motivates these individuals to invest their time and money in creating change?

In classical economic theory, all decisions are made by generalized rational individuals

motivated by self-interest. The sum of the decisions made by these actors will be

beneficial to society as a whole as it will result in the maximally efficient distribution of goods and services; those willing to pay more for certain goods and services will purchase them. This school of thought holds that economic interactions can be modeled in aggregate and that these models are predictive of future behavior. It is no surprise then, the social factors that create and influence entrepreneurs such as specific individual history, social status and relationships with other agents would for a long time be ignored within the field (Bianchi & Henrekson, 2005). These factors are considered irreducible to an aggregate characteristic, peripheral to an individual's motivation and not amenable to predictive modeling. In fact, when formal attempts have been made to model entrepreneurial activity in a neoclassical vein, for instance, abstraction from social context is cited as a key component of analysis. In a paper presented to the Allied Social Science Associations, Ying Lowrey (2003) of the U.S Small Business Association explained:

> It can be said that the key problem underlying the absence of economic theory of the entrepreneur is the absence of a method of abstraction of the entrepreneur in a form that permits the main economic role and behavior to be predicted and aggregated in a neoclassical framework…to achieve this goal, a neoclassical framework will be employed and the roles of the entrepreneur and the government will be greatly abstracted into the simplest forms. (p. 4)

Other theorists propose that there is an inherent drive to achieve their goals that motivates entrepreneurs (Chell, 2007). In either instance, the social context of entrepreneurship is ignored and there is a focus on the utilitarian individual as a change agent. It follows that these analyses of entrepreneurship cannot provide for a meaningful explanation of individuals and organizations whose explicit primary goal is not

accumulation and market efficiency, but is rather innovative social impact based on geographic and contextual specificity.

Social Entrepreneurship

It seems as though the language of entrepreneurship has been appropriated by economics and business. However, entrepreneurial activity can be found in many areas, including in the social sector (Thompson, 2008; Edwards, 2008). As Drucker (1985) noted:

> Hence entrepreneurship is by no means limited to the economic sphere although the term originated there. It pertains to all activities of human beings other than those one might term "existential" rather than "social." And we now know that there is little difference between entrepreneurship whatever the sphere. (p. 25)

Again the key to defining entrepreneurial behavior is the idea of seizing opportunities that increase efficiency or impact, relentless pursuit of a goal and steadfastness in the face of resource constraints. Clearly, these are not the exclusive domain of business. Many people who live in poverty exhibit this type of ingenuity, resourcefulness and alertness. Moreover, leaders of social movements and non-profits may exhibit exactly the same characteristics (Edwards, 2008). Moreover, since many traditional non-profits are now operating with earned income strategies, the boundary between the business and non-profit worlds has been blurred to an extent that it may be difficult to discern the particular sector in which an organization is operating (Peredo & McLean, 2006). The transformation and combination of these fields has resulted in a variety of mixed-method modes of operation, behind many of which are social entrepreneurs.

When non-profit and non-governmental organizations started to use commercial methods to support themselves, several simple questions began to be asked:

> Essentially, how could an organization with an overtly social and charitable mission pursue entrepreneurial goals or go about its business in an entrepreneurial

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fashion? How could the definition of entrepreneurialism also apply to the social enterprise? (Chell, 2007, p. 6)

Before these questions are answered, however, one must think about why entrepreneurial method might even be applied to social issues. The beginnings of this application can be traced to state failures to provide public goods. The shift away from social welfare state in North America and Europe during the 1980s meant less state funding for social programs (Johnson, 2000). At the same time, enterprise and entrepreneurship took on a central role in the policies of the Regan and Thatcher administrations, the logic being that individual entrepreneurs would be able to support and grow the economy (Chell, 2007). In response to this, some NGOs, influenced by the move towards privatization attempted to step in to fill the gap. In a piecemeal effort these organizations began to use business methods to support their goals (Bielifeld, 2009; Johnson, 2000). These earned income methods were a response to an increased need for social services combined with a decreasing budget for NGOs working in the social sector. In time organizations realized that perhaps providing their main services in a traditionally businesslike way may be a way to test their social value, instill creative drive, expand the ranges of their income sources, and liberate themselves from the restraints of funding dollars (Bielifeld, 2009).

It is precisely these varied motives that have created such a disparate, diffuse field. As a result, social entrepreneurship becomes a difficult term to define. In a recent article Zahra et al (2009, p. 521) surveyed the literature and compiled a list of definitions which various authors have used to describe the term, which is presented in Table 1, taken directly from their article.

Source	Definition
Leadbetter (1997)	The use of entrepreneurial behavior for social ends rather than for profit objectives, or alternatively, that the profits generated from market activities are used for the benefit of a specific disadvantaged group.
Thake and Zadek (1997)	Social entrepreneurs are driven by a desire for social justice. They seek a direct link between their actions and an improvement in the quality of life for the people with whom they work and those that they seek to serve. They aim to produce solutions which are sustainable financially, organizationally, socially and environmentally.
Dees (1998)	Play the role of change agents in the social sector, by: 1) Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value), 2) Recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission, 3) Engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning, 4) Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand, and 5) Exhibiting heightened accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created.
Reis (1999) (Kellogg Foundation)	Social entrepreneurs create social value through innovation and leveraging financial resources…for social, economic and community development.
Fowler (2000)	Social Entrepreneurship is the creation of viable socio-economic structures, relations, institutions, organizations and practices that yield and sustain social benefits.
Brinkerhoff (2001)	Individuals constantly looking for new ways to serve their constituencies and add value to existing services
Mort et al. (2002)	A multidimensional construct involving the expression of entrepreneurially virtuous behavior to achieve the social mission…the ability to recognize social value creating opportunities and key decision-making characteristics of innovation, proactiveness and risk-taking
Drayton (2002)	A major change agent, one whose core values center on identifying, addressing and solving societal problems.
Alford et al. (2004)	Creates innovative solutions to immediate social problems and mobilizes the ideas, capacities, resources and social arrangements required for social transformations
Harding (2004)	Entrepreneurs motivated by social objectives to instigate some form of new activity or venture.
Shaw (2004)	The work of community, voluntary and public organizations as well as private firms working for social rather than only profit objectives.
Said School (2005)	A professional, innovative and sustainable approach to systematic change that resolves social market failures and grasps opportunities
Fuqua School (2005)	The art of simultaneously pursuing both a financial and a social return on investment (the "double" bottom line)
Schwab Foundation (2005)	Applying practical, innovative and sustainable approaches to benefit society in general, with an emphasis on those who are marginalized and poor.
NYU Stern (2005)	The process of using entrepreneurial and business skills to create innovative approaches to social problems. "These non-profit and for profit ventures pursue the double bottom line of social impact and financial self-sustainability or profitability."
MacMillan (2005) (Wharton Center)	Process whereby the creation of new business enterprise leads to social wealth enhancement so that both society and the entrepreneur benefit.
Tan et al. (2005)	Making profits by innovation in the face of risk with the involvement of a segment of society and where all or part of the benefits accrue to that same segment of society.
Mair and Marti (2006a)	…a process of creating value by combining resources in new ways…intended primarily to explore and exploit opportunities to create social value by stimulating social change or meeting social needs.
Peredo and McLean (2006)	Social entrepreneurship is exercised where some person or group….aim(s) at creating social value…shows a capacity to recognize and take advantage of opportunities…employ innovation…accept an above average degree of risk…and are unusually resourceful … in pursuing their social venture.
Martin and Osberg (2007)	Social entrepreneurship is the: 1) identification a stable yet unjust equilibrium which the excludes, marginalizes or causes suffering to a group which lacks the means to transform the equilibrium; 2) identification of an opportunity and developing a new social value proposition to challenge the equilibrium, and 3) forging a new, stable equilibrium to alleviate the suffering of the targeted group through imitation and creation of a stable ecosystem around the new equilibrium to ensure a better future for the group and society.

Table 2: "Definitions and Descriptions of social entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurs." Zahra, 2009, p. 521

If social entrepreneurship is to be a useful conceptual tool and a discernable topical area,

then these definitions must be synthesized for several reasons. First, it would be difficult

to measure impact and understand the influence of social entrepreneurship without a clear

definition of the term. If one is to engage in social entrepreneurship, then clearly some

way to measure success would be key (Martin & Osberg, 2007). Second, this varied

understanding of the term makes it difficult to research and to adopt appropriate policy

and/or organizational measures that may encourage social entrepreneurship (Tan,

Williams, & Tan, 2005). This will become important in attempting to implement a rights-

based approach to social entrepreneurship and social enterprise.

        Within the data above there seem to be several pronounced themes. These

include:

1. Desire to create social impact/change or value

2. Seizing new opportunities for change

3. The definition of a mission, set of values or principles to guide behavior

4. Financial sustainability

With these in mind, for the remainder of this study I propose the following definition of

social entrepreneurship:

Social entrepreneurship is the responsible and principled practice of relentlessly taking innovative action in attempting to create positive social impact in the face of resource constraints.

Further;

Social entrepreneurs undertake social entrepreneurship or social enterprise (defined below) without the intent to enrich themselves. Rather their goal is to create social value while at the same time financially sustaining themselves.

        These definitions are still problematic. For instance there are questions as to what

'positive' means and which or whose principles are followed in the course of taking this

action. In addition there is not a conception of scale of impact in this definition. This will

become clear later when focusing on rights-based approaches to development and their

focus on process over impact; later these and other issues will be addressed. However as

a result of the language I have chosen the definition of social entrepreneurship I propose

has a political underpinning. The assumption being that social entrepreneurship can be

used to challenge existing power dynamics that create social problems in the first place

and work towards the assurance of human rights.

Social Enterprise

Contrary to social entrepreneurship, social enterprise has a much narrower

meaning and a generally agreed upon definition (Bielifeld, 2009). The term social

enterprise is defined by the Social Enterprise Alliance (SEA) as:

> [An] organization or venture that achieves its primary social or environmental
> mission using business methods. The social needs addressed by social enterprises
> and the business models they use are as diverse as human ingenuity. Social
> enterprises build a more just, sustainable world by applying market-based
> strategies to today's social problems. (Social Enterprise Alliance, 2005)

Social enterprises are different from social entrepreneurship in that they are organizations

that have an explicit focus on market and commercial activity to achieve social impact

(Thompson, 2008). One might say that social enterprise is one way of undertaking social

entrepreneurship. Another way might be leading a social movement or political lobbying

for social causes.

Thompson (2008), creates a more nuanced and detailed definition of social

enterprise, stressing several key factors that distinguish social enterprise from traditional,

commercial enterprise. He notes that an organization is a social enterprise if:

1. It has a social purpose.
2. Its assets and wealth are used to create community benefit.
3. It pursues this with (at least in part) trading activities. If it delivers services to clients which are paid for by a third party, as distinct from direct sales to a customer, this is still regarded as trading.
4. Its profits and surpluses are reinvested in the business and community rather than distributed to shareholders.
5. Employees (or members) have some role in decision making and governance.

6. The enterprise is held accountable to both its members and a wider community.
7. There is either a double or triple-bottom line paradigm with an acceptable balance of economic, social, and possibly environmental returns – which are audited. (Thompson, 2008, p. 153)

If one accepts these criteria, they can readily see that social enterprises also pay attention to process in their activities, meaning that there must be some underlying framework about how their founders see and make sense of the world. This understanding will be critical in examining social enterprise in a rights-based context.

Social Entrepreneur Typology

Zahra et al (2009) put forth a useful typology of social entrepreneurs, which will help in interpreting the data presented within this thesis. Moreover, this work deals specifically with the ethics of social entrepreneurship and relates directly to the human rights issues discussed in later chapters.

In their article, Zahra et al (2009) list three types of social entrepreneurs according to the methods by which they work, the scale they attempt to achieve and the ethical dilemmas they might face. These categories help to structure the motivations and goals of social entrepreneurs for analysis. Rather than attempting to classify the social entrepreneurs that have participated in this study, I will be drawing on characteristics from each category in order to better describe and make sense of their motivations and goals. Moreover this classification will help to show how the combination of social entrepreneurial traits or personalities within an organization can help that organization to be both self-reflective and effective.

Social Bricoleur

According to Zahra et al (2009), **Social Bricoleurs**[8] are derived from the theoretical tradition of Hayek who proposed "that entrepreneurial opportunities can only be discovered and acted upon at a very local level." They see markets as far from rational but rather as contextually specific and comprised by knowledge and relational webs inaccessible to outsiders. Therefore, information important to creating successful enterprises is hidden within the local social order and power structure. (p. 524). In this sense Social Bricoleurs are highly attuned to local social norms and conditions and can leverage locally available resources to address specific contextual problems. Social Bricoleurs help to address problems that might otherwise go unnoticed, especially to outsiders. Their drive and motivation is to keep the social fabric intact and often are not concerned about scale, being concerned instead with specificity and the fit of their solution. In fact, oftentimes they explicitly avoid the recognition of media and government officials and choose to blend into the social fabric.

Social Constructionist

Zahra et al's (2009) definition of the **Social Constructionist** entrepreneur is based on the theoretical legacy of Israel Kirzner who stressed not local specificity, but rather the keen ability of entrepreneurs to exploit opportunities as the driver of their success. Social Constructionists "build, launch and operate ventures which tackle those social needs that are inadequately addressed by existing institutions, businesses, NGOs and government agencies." (Zarha, S. et al, 2009, p. 525). They are bold in their actions and oftentimes may work in regions in which they themselves are not insiders. Moreover,

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[8] Bricoleur comes from the French verb *bricoleur*, which means "to tinker, fiddle or do it yourself".

the scope of the issues that they attempt to address may vary considerably, from local to regional to national to global, based on the opportunity presented.

As opposed to Social Bricoleurs, Social Constructionists seek to create scalable, systemic solutions that can be reproduced and can accommodate growing need. Accordingly their "advantages do not stem from local knowledge; they result from their unique capacity to spot and pursue those opportunities that generate social wealth by creating and reconfiguring the processes enacted to deliver goods and services." (Zarha, S. et al, 2009, p. 525).

Because of this, Social Constructionists face a number of dilemmas, however. Oftentimes their initiatives will be very resource intensive, requiring them to attract significant initial capital investment. Given the context of donor funding, this may be difficult to do without drastically altering their social goals. Moreover they need to manage a "web of complex and evolving relationships between their organizations, donors, professional employees, and volunteers" (Zarha, S. et al, 2009, p. 526). This means a detailed attention to process and potentially a diffusion of power within the organization.

Social Engineer

Social Engineers tackle problems that cannot be addressed by working within established norms and institutions which may be unable or unwilling to change. In this case revolutionary change is necessary in which new modes of interaction, exchange and making meaning are necessary. Social Engineers follow in the legacy of Schumpeter's 'creative destruction' and create new institutions which replace old ones. The most political type of social entrepreneur, Social Engineers "are usually a threat to the interests of established institutions, and are sometimes seen as subversive and illegitimate… As a

result, their capacity to act rests on their ability to amass sufficient political capital to assemble other necessary resources and achieve legitimacy" (Zarha, S. et al, 2009, p. 526).

This typology will serve as a framework within which to examine the interview and observation data collected for this thesis.

Human Rights and Rights-Based Approaches

> Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world… (United Nations, 1948)

Human rights provide an interesting framework through which to interpret social enterprise. By doing so one accomplishes two things. First, human rights imply the creation of *systems* by which rights are upheld, protected, respected and fulfilled and through which accountability can be traced. This is critical to ensuring that the rare, creative sparks which entrepreneurs generate are institutionalized. Second, human rights provide a structure for social enterprise that bestows rights universally to individuals based on the fact that they are human, rather than for any other factor. Though we may be able to debate what the content of rights are, once we agree everyone is entitled. This provides a base ethical framework that respects everyone, regardless of age, ability, sex, religion or any other social marker. These two qualities make human rights an appropriate framework for grounding social enterprise.

The most famous effort to create a universal standard to which to hold international actors was the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) by the United Nations in 1948. By international consensus the UDHR attempts

to provide an objective benchmark below which the actions of individuals and institutions are not acceptable. Moreover it articulates a fundamental respect for the dignity of each person regardless of any social, physical, political or other characteristic. This document has been instrumental in the practice of 'mainstream' or 'conventional' human rights – the type of human rights practice codified by international human rights law and characterized by careful attention to legal regimes and accountability of state actors (Rajagopal, 2007). Key to this conception of rights are the notions of 'equality and inalienability'; that each be given the same importance and that they are "inherent in each individual, not a gift or privilege given by authorities" (Twomey, 2007). In addition, UN's Vienna Conference on Human Rights in 1993 stressed the interdependence and indivisibility of rights granted under the UDHR (Munro, 2009). These concepts were included in the canon of human rights in order that the realization of one right did not impede on the realization of others and to give credence to their universality. By example, one cannot effectively access education if hungry and cannot be guaranteed access to water in the absence of an atmosphere free from discrimination of speech (Uvin, 2004).

But while the formal legal declaration of human rights – the UDHR – uses this type of language, it also provides the impetus to distinguish between civil and political rights (CPR), outlined by Articles 1-21, and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR), stemming from articles 22-27 (Baderin & McCorquodale, 2007). The former, often equated with democracy itself, involve those rights that ensure equality of participation in government, equality between individuals, rule of law and the protection of civil liberties (right to vote, right to a trial, right to free speech right to be innocent

until proven guilty, right to not be arrested without charge, etc.). Civil and political rights are most firmly rooted in the western liberal democratic tradition stemming from the articulation of the social contract by John Locke (Pogge, 2008). ESCR, on the other hand, involve those freedoms that are associated with living conditions, treatment, labor, access to natural resources, respect for cultural difference and other aspects of economic, social and cultural life (Beetham, 1995). Although it was the intention of the UDHR to assert that there could be no realization of one right without the realization of the others, it provided enough of a tension between CPRs and ESCRs that countries like the United States, which tend toward the primacy of the former over the latter, had reservations over the goals, justiciability and achievability of economic, social and cultural rights. At the same time the former Soviet Union had the opposite reservations which led it to insist on the primacy of economic, social and cultural rights over civil and political rights. (Beetham, 1995; Baderin & McCorquodale, 2007). Moreover, civil and political rights were seen to be immediately implementable whereas ESCR were seen to be goals toward which states should strive, a position which has since been thoroughly debunked[9] (Baderin & McCorquodale, 2007).

From this conception of ESCR came the idea of 'progressive realization'; that states should incrementally invest in achieving ESCR, a notion codified in the ICESCR. This notion has since underpinned and reinforced most of the pragmatic thinking of development professionals (Alston & Robinson, 2005). The debate over CPRs and ESCRs ultimately led to the drafting of two covenants derived from the UDHR: The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), both of which entered into

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[9] This conception, however, still holds sway in some powerful quarters

force decades ago. These two covenants, along with the UDHR form the 'International Bill of Rights' and the backbone of mainstream human rights practice.

The common wisdom associated with this field is that human rights were necessitated by the atrocities of the Second World War, that they can help to transition 'traditional' societies to 'modern' ones, that international law is the only real arena in which they can be exercised and that to be accepted as dealing with 'rights' the state must be implicated (Rajagopal, 2007). This discourse, however, deserves careful consideration and analysis. Rather than being associated with any critical change substantiated by the Second World War, these premises are, in fact, intimately linked with the history of development and the power to make meaning (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004). By framing human rights as a 'gift' to developing nations generated through the experience of World War II, developed nations were able to both define the international legal system as the space of appropriate struggle over rights and to marginalize other forms of resistance like direct action, public protest and social organization. Ultimately this results in developed nations being able to attach 'objective legitimacy' to action taken through the legal arena and to sanction behavior by 'internationally agreed upon standards' (Uvin, 2004; Nyamu-Musembi, 2002). By doing so former, colonial powers were able to ignore the daily struggle of people on the ground: the 'non-elite and subaltern' (Rajagopal, 2007). The process by which this occurs directly relates to the concept of the 'Other' and the power of discursive control defined by Edward Said (Said, 1994 [1978]). Thus although mainstream human rights defines the mid-twentieth century as its genesis, with confidence one can trace the language and development of human rights back much

further. They are deeply rooted in the struggle against colonialism and have been colonized themselves by conventional human rights. As Rajagopal (2007) states:

> While it is true that modern human rights institutions such as the United Nations are post-World War II creations, human rights *ideas* and *practices* predate World War II. A major element of this prehistory is the struggle against colonialism and racism…The anticolonial revolt against Empires led to the recognition of the core human rights principles of our time including that of right to equality and right to self determination. (p. 275, italics in original)

Further:

> The struggle for independence in Africa was thus informed, at the base, by the experience of struggles against oppression and brutal exploitation experienced in everyday life. These struggles constituted the emergence of a tradition of struggles for rights which was organic to and informed by the specific histories and experiences of those involved.… The concept of rights was… forged in the fires of anti-imperialist struggles. It was informed by the need to overthrow all forms (not just colonial) of oppression and exploitation, not by constructs which had either been embodied in the UDHR or imported into Africa by those nationalist leaders who had spent periods in exile or study in the imperial homeland. (Manji as quoted by Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004, p. 1421)

Importantly, the concepts behind human rights have a dual history. One that comes from the formal interpretation and codification of rights into legal precedent, and one that comes from an alternative tradition rooted in understandings of human and group dignity located in many cultures around the world (Shivi, 1989). Some of these have come to be codified themselves such as the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. In addition, these conceptions of human dignity and cultural and social rights were used as justification in resisting the violent oppression of imperialism (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004). It is because human rights were born from the struggle against colonialism that they cannot possibly be uniquely a European creation. Quite to the contrary they remain pertinent and applicable to contemporary development interventions.

Moreover, given the history of development discussed earlier, one may also assert that the concepts of human rights and development are intimately entwined in that they both spring forth from the struggle against colonialism. Whereas one was meant to address the moral and ethical harm done to colonized people, one was meant to pragmatically address the basic needs and 'advancement' that those people were denied during colonial rule (Slim, 2000).

Rights-Based Approaches

> *Maslow is dead. There are no basic needs.*
>
> *– Peter Uvin*

Given this shared legacy one would expect to find that human rights and development would share a rich intellectual and practical tradition. In fact, the Right to Development itself was articulated in 1986:

> The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized. (United Nations, 1986)

However when one studies the histories of development and human rights discourse, one finds the opposite trend: these disciplines are cleaved from one another and pursued as though they were completely different projects (Robinson, 2005; Uvin, 2004; Slim, 2000)[10]. It is only recently that actors in the world of 'development' and actors in the world of 'human rights' have begun to engage based on a growing, if not delayed, realization by development practitioners that their actions are underpinned by the language and implications of human rights (Slim, 2000; Robinson, 2005; Alston &

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[10] As we will see later, some actors in the field of development have been wary of the political nature of human rights.

Robinson, 2005; Archer, 2009; Uvin, 2004). Rather than advance 'right to development'

this collaboration has given birth to the concept of human rights-based approaches to

development, which, for the purposes of this thesis, can be defined as:

> RBAs can be distinguished from economic and social rights on the one hand and
> the Right to Development on the other because they suggest both a deeper level of
> mutually transforming integration between human rights and development, and a
> translation of law into principles that are more readily applicable to programming
> and strategising for development. In sum, rights become less declaratory and
> more operational. (Gready, 2008, p. 736)

This is partially because:

> From a political, real-world, perspective, the track record of the right to
> development is catastrophic. According to most legal scholars, the declaration
> was bad law: vague, internally contradictory, duplicating other already codified
> rights, and devoid of identifiable parties bearing clear obligations (Slinn 1999;
> Rosas 1995; Obiora 1996). Affirming that all people have the right to
> development, and that such development consists of, and is realized through, the
> realisation of every existing category of human rights is surely a beautifully
> worded statement, but it is also operationally meaningless. (Uvin, 2007, pp. 598-
> 599)

A rights-based-approach does several things. First, it incorporates the language

and philosophy of human rights into the policies, programs and procedures of

development while at the same time incorporating the pragmatic, on-the-ground

experience of development (Uvin, 2007). By doing this, a rights-based approach

delineates 'rights-holders' from 'duty-bearers[11]' and allows marginalized groups to make

claims against the state and other actors based on internationally agreed upon standards

(Kapur & Duvvury, 2006). This process is sometimes also referred to as human rights

'mainstreaming'. For example, in 1997, then UN secretary general Kofi Annan instructed

all UN agencies to integrate human rights into their programs and policies at the most

basic levels (Hoffmann, 2008). This led to the landmark publication in 2000 of the

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[11] In human rights legal terms the state is the sole 'duty-bearer'.

UNDP's Human Development Report on Human Rights and Human Development,

which explicitly tied the idea of rights and freedoms to the fulfillment of the development

project.

> The strength in grounding development in human rights is that:

> Law is translated into political and social processes, into the everyday work of NGOs and IGOs, and, it is hoped, the everyday lives of the people with whom they work. This is a 'legal boomerang', in which principles based on international law are used at a local level in ways that may reinforce or question the parameters of international law. (Gready, 2008, p. 738)

This contrasts the earlier described needs-based approach in that as:

> a needs-based approach focuses on securing additional resources for delivery of services to particular groups, a rights-based approach calls for existing resources to be shared more equally and for assisting the marginalised people to assert their rights to those resources. It thus makes the process of development explicitly political. (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004)

> Second, a rights-based approach actively analyzes how and why certain groups

are denied certain fundamental rights. Thus the political nature of human rights becomes

clear. Human rights are concerned with the empowerment and dignity of marginalized

groups, which necessitates an involvement in political debate and analysis of the channels

of power (Archer, 2009; Munro, 2009; Chapman, J. et al, 2009). As a result,

organizations that choose to adopt a rights-based approach necessarily choose to become

involved in politics and value judgments. As Uvin (2007) stated:

> At the end of the day, although they seem to rest on a clear and fixed legal basis, the nature of the claims and the duties created by human-rights claims is a deeply political and constantly shifting matter; for what is socially and legally feasible today is never fixed, but a matter of political struggle…If a rights-based approach to development means empowering marginalised groups, challenging oppression and exclusion, and changing power relations, much of this task lies outside the legal arena, falling squarely in the political realm. (pp. 603-604)

This stance disintegrates the conception that development is an apolitical process (Hickey & Mitlin, 2009; Gready, 2008; Uvin, 2004; Archer, 2009). Under this new frame, people are not left out of development by accident, rather they are excluded by "direct acts of omission or commission that in turn impose obligations on certain actors and institutions to respond" (Hickey & Mitlin, 2009, p. 210). In this sense "poverty is neither natural nor inevitable but becomes something done to people, for whom certain actors bear responsibility: poor 'is not what they are, but what they have been made' (Gready, 2008, p. 742). This imposes the question, 'By whom have they been made poor?' and subsequent action to address the power imbalances that have made that situation possible. In this way, rights-based approaches to development are a way to shift the debate from needs and towards dignity, accountability, justice and the roots of poverty rather than the symptoms. In effect rights-based approaches matter in that they bring about:

> Discourse changes [that] have real-world impacts: they slowly redefine the margins of acceptable action; create opportunities for redefining reputations and shaming; change incentive structures and the way in which interests and preferences are defined; influence expectations, etc. (Uvin, 2007, p. 599)

Third, not only do rights-based approaches focus on re-politicizing development, they focus on process as much, if not more than product (Uvin, 2004). The responsibility for those employing a rights-based approach in these circumstances is to form ways for marginalized groups not just to satisfy their needs but also to make claims against those who are in some way obstructing their rights. This may come through careful power analysis, forming coalitions, formal political advocacy which focus on and attempt to change the root causes of rights denials (Hickey & Mitlin, 2009; Uvin, 2007). In practice this means that:

A rights-based approach emphasizes access for rights-holders to development processes, institutions, information and mechanisms for redress and complaints. In the context of development work, this means that the partners in and beneficiaries of development have access to a development project's mechanisms. Rather than development agendas that pursue externally conceived "quick fixes" and imported technical models, the norm would be to adopt process based development methodologies and techniques. (Kapur & Duvvury, 2006, p. 8)

Through these processes marginalized groups gain agency and self-determination. Rights-based approaches "ought to create opportunities for their participation – opportunities that are not dependant on the whim of a benevolent outsider, but rooted in institutions and procedures." (Uvin, 2004, p. 138). This means that rights-based approaches build the capacity and confidence of people to assert right-claims and challenge power structures, rather than attempting to find remedies to the circumstances those power imbalances imply.

Fourth, rights-based approaches focus on accountability and methods for redress (Robinson, 2005; Chapman, J. et al, 2009; Hickey & Mitlin, 2009). Without clear accountability, human rights claims become meaningless (Uvin, 2004). This may entail formal legal methods for ensuring accountability or other methods such as social pressure or 'naming and shaming'. Typically, however, those employing a rights-based approach are more and more working with duty-bearers to help them think through and implement ways to achieve full realization of rights, based on a growing realization that putative measures for rights denials might not make sense in the face of limited state resources and capacity (Uvin, 2004; Archer, 2009; Chapman, J. et al, 2009).

In summary, the key components to a rights-based approach to development are a focus on process along with "inclusion and non-discrimination, national and local ownership, accountability and transparency, and participation and empowerment"

(Robinson, 2005, p. 37). These characteristics of rights-based approaches are often

repeated in the literature and in the end "...add value in calling the state and others to

account; building capacities of rights holders and duty bearers; and encouraging a new

kind of human-rights ownership among NGOs. (Gready, 2008, p. 742; Cornwall &

Nyamu-Musembi, 2004; Nyamu-Musembi, 2002; Hickey & Mitlin, 2009).

Negotiating a Transition to Rights-Based Approaches

But the shift to a rights-based approach is not an easy or a complete one. Many

development practitioners have complained that rights-based approaches are just a

repackaging of old development ideas (Gready, 2008). Others have been passively

resistant to rights-based approaches to development. Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi

(2004) use the example of the World Bank to point out how some institutions resist

proactive incorporation of rights into their frameworks:

> [The] World Bank would like to be seen as promoting a rights-based approach to
> development through its current programming, and that there is no need for it to
> take any further specific steps to implement a rights-based approach. This
> position, and the bank's refusal to acknowledge the need for human rights
> accountability for any negative impact of its work, has earned it criticism from
> civil society as well as from the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural
> Rights (pp. 1426-1427)

Robinson (2005) notes that development actors may be uncomfortable about adopting

rights-based approaches into their practice because they view them as inherently political,

unrealistic and abstract. In the case of the World Bank for instance, taking a rights-based

approach would involve violating the Articles of Agreement which stress economic

factors over human rights factors in awarding loans (International Bank for

Reconstruction and Development, 1989).

In the specific case of NGOs, one of the traditional 'selling points' of their work

has been their 'objectivity' and non-partisan nature. This is a result of the needs-based

focus of their work and might be tarnished by taking up the mantle of human rights. In fact, many donors to international organizations give money under the condition that it not be used for political purposes or political activism in the traditional political party sense (Uvin, 2004). Rights-based approaches, however, are not political in the sense of political parties. Rather they are political in the sense that they deal with analyzing power which creates rights-denials. This can lead to claims that a rights-based approach breaches national sovereignty or interferes with national politics, the type of claims that many international NGOs wish to avoid. At the same time, however, this claim has been leveled large NGOs themselves, not because they adopt rights-based approaches, but because their large budgets allow them a degree of autonomy within less developed countries that can be interpreted as a breach of sovereignty (Archer, 2009; Mutua, 2002).

Non-State Actors and Human Rights-Based Approaches to Development

In the traditional human rights regime, individuals are the 'holders of rights' and states the 'bearers of duties' or the 'holders of responsibility'. Clearly there are challenges in implementing a rights-based approach, especially for those who are not clear 'duty bearers' in the conventional human rights sense. Until recently the roles and responsibilities of non-state actors in upholding and protecting human rights (especially economic social and cultural rights) had not been explored (Twomey, 2007; Baderin & McCorquodale, 2007; Ssenyonjo, 2007; Jochnick, 1999). Here the term, non-state actor is used to define any organization operating in the development or rights practice that is not the representative of a sovereign government. Like it or not, these non-state actors are now big players in the world of development practice and hold great sway over rights of all kinds. Jochnick (1999) notes, "Half a century ago, governments had far more control over the political, social, and economic conditions within their countries. States had the

responsibility of guaranteeing human rights on the presumption that they and they alone, were capable of doing so." (p. 59). This is no longer the case as large multinational companies and rapid privatization of natural resources overwhelm state ability to regulate and enforce, especially in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Jochnick (1999) goes on to trace a history that is replete with examples of human rights violations by private actors and subsequent attempts to hold those actors responsible, convincingly arguing there is an international consensus that demands private actors are held accountable for their impact on human rights.

However there is debate as to how this should be gone about. Currently both the ICCPR and the ICESCR only apply to state parties. Non-state actors such as multinational companies and NGOs are "only bound to the extent that obligations accepted by states can be applied to them by states" (Ssenyonjo, 2007, p. 110). This poses an interesting situation whereby states are accountable for human rights violations by non-state actors occurring within their borders. Thus states have an interest in creating the political and regulatory atmosphere that encourages non-state actors to respect, protect and even fulfill human rights. At the same time there is need for expanding the category of duty holders to include large multinational corporations, international NGOs, and citizen's groups, etc (Jochnick, 1999). Rather than being forced to respect protect and fulfill human rights by fear of legal censure, through taking a rights-based approach to development, these organizations would incorporate respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights into the core of their work. However, it remains to be seen if private actors, who are not democratically controlled, can uphold human rights in practice.

The Relationship to Social Enterprise

Clearly most social enterprises would fall under the banner of non-state actors. In many cases they are intervening in areas in which states are the legally recognized responsibility bearer. In some instances this may even function to encourage the state to neglect its responsibility to respect, protect and fulfill human rights (Munro, 2009). Even now, 95% of water and sanitation budget in Ghana is sourced from organizations outside the country, demonstrating the limited power of the state when compared with other development actors (Rodgers, 2008). As such, the field of actors that impact human rights is undoubtedly expanding and traditional schemes that cling to the notion of the state as the sole bearer of human rights responsibility are becoming outmoded (Jochnick, 1999). Rights-based approaches in fact expand the domain of rights beyond the language and sphere of the law (Gready, 2008). It is true now more than ever that "monitoring and accountability procedures must not only extend to States, but also to global actors—such as the donor community, intergovernmental organizations, international NGOs and [Trans-national Corporations] TNCs—whose actions bear upon the enjoyment of human rights in any country" (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004, p. 1418). Given this context, new interventions such as social enterprise must be critically evaluated. Many questions need be asked: is there a way to structure social enterprise under the framework of rights-based approaches to development? Do social enterprises have the capacity to do this? Do social entrepreneurs even think in terms of rights or are they pragmatic in the tradition of classical development and business? As Gready (2008) notes "A particular strength of the RBA [rights-based approach] contribution is in making human rights more operational in the terrain of development and the economy. That said it remains to be seen what human rights or RBAs can really deliver in practice." (p. 745).

Social enterprise represents an opportunity for human rights to "be re-imagined from below" and used as a "rallying point for struggle" (Gready 2008 p. 739). More than that, organizing social enterprise around rights might be able to:

> Go beyond the usual dichotomy between ideologies that glorify either the state or the markets…It argues that the functioning of any system including a market-based one, is subject to the judgment and limitations that come from the fact that all human beings have inalienable rights. It argues that processes of accountability, participation, inclusion, justice, and social guarantees have to underlie both the market and the state, and that under all conditions these matters are deeply political. (Uvin, 2004, p. 139)

But what does it mean to put these principles into practice? Key to this is the idea of operationalzing a human rights-based approach to development. A recent study has outlined how this might happen. Kapur & Duvvury (2006) outline a basic structure for operationalizing human rights-based approaches and strategies for organizations working to realize rights. They suggest that to do so one must take certain steps including:

1. Defining rights
2. Identifying a focus
3. Acknowledging that rights are context-specific
4. Creating transparency
5. Improving understanding of rights among duty-bearers and strengthening their capacities
6. Holding stakeholders accountable for their responsibilities vis-à-vis the realization of rights
7. Maintaining multiple strategies and levels of action
8. Creating an enabling process and context

With this framework in mind, it is instructive to explore to what extent non-state actors like social enterprises have sought to use, appropriate or incorporate the language of human rights in order to legitimate their actions. It is with this in mind that the remainder of this study attempts to tease out the thought process, actions and transformative power

of social enterprises that simultaneously bolster and undermine operationalizing a rights-

based approach to social enterprise.

Chapter 4: Applying the Typology of Social Entrepreneurs

This section uses the typology proposed by Zahra et al (2009) to explore the research data. Afterwards, I take a closer look at how my research participants characterize social enterprise in order to understand how these individuals define themselves.

Breaking through the Categories

According to Zahra et al (2009) there are three classes of social entrepreneurs: Social Bricoleurs, Social Constructionists and Social Engineers. Each of these types of social entrepreneurs faces different challenges and attempts to undertake social enterprise in a different way. However, the study participants seemed to defy this categorization. Instead they exhibited, in different proportions, the traits that Zahra et al identified. Many participants also seemed to actively value characteristics from other social entrepreneurship categories that they themselves did not possess. This made for organizations that were composed varyingly of different types of people exhibiting characteristics found across all three categories.

The Social Bricoleur

According to Zahra et al (2009) the Social Bricoleur is an insider; the local social entrepreneur who attempts to address problems that are not easily understood by outsiders. At the time of the study both Community Water Solutions and Pure Home Water each had at least one individual that exhibited some of the traits of the Social Bricoleur. Because of their "localized and oftentimes tacit knowledge, Social Bricoleurs are uniquely positioned to discover local social needs where they can leverage their

motivation, expertise and personal resources to create and enhance social wealth."

(Zahra, S. et al, 2009, p. 524).

The Local Interpreter
        In terms of adding value, the main function of the Social Bricoleur is to make sense of the social context of the region in which an organization is trying to work. In Pure Home Water's case two of its most important workers, James and Ben, might be characterized as Social Bricoleurs. These individuals help Pure Home Water to interpret and negotiate local protocol, ultimately integrating that protocol with Pure Home Water's business model. James explained this in a general sense, highlighting the importance of respecting Northern Ghanaian custom in pursuing development interventions:

> … In the Western world you really need to ask the consent of individuals; in most cases only individuals. You don't have a traditional setup like a chief or something. So that's a whole lot of protocol that in the Western world you don't have. You can just meet someone and say "Please I am doing this can you read this and help me if you can?" The person reads and says "No I cannot do that" or "yes I can do that." Here you would even need to get an interpreter who would interpret it to the chief and so the procedure is so long. And so before you even finish you are fed up…And so people from the West need to just take time to understand that things would have to catch up over time and you can't get the immediate response as you want. (James, 2009, p. 11)

Without Social Bricoleurs to direct the way in which to interact with target communities, both Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions would have to learn through trial and error, potentially damaging their reputation and slowing the implementation of their plans. Ben explained more directly an example of how local protocol has been integrated into Pure home Water's community engagement plan:

> Ben: OK. Yeah when I go to a community the first thing I do is I make sure I find the chief and the community leader which we call a liaison. In the community – you know the guinea worm[12] people started before Pure Home Water, so they

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[12] The Carter Center's guinea worm Eradication Program has a long history of engaging with communities in rural Ghana and has community liaisons with which they work.

normally just select someone as their liaison so when we go we just continue with their fellow [the guinea worm liaison] as our liaison as well because the fellow is experienced and knows the chief.

Derek: OK so you make sure that you have those contacts…

Ben: Yeah so when you go you then take the education a little bit to inform the chief and then the chief is the chief of the community and everyone respects the chief so when they all gather the chief then tells them "this is what they brought forward to me so I also want you to do this, do this, do this, to help the community out from disgrace."

Derek: From disgrace?

Ben: You see. Because when someone comes all the way somewhere to come and educate you about something and then find out later that you are not serious about it, it wouldn't give a good name to the community. Then when this information from the chief goes to the people they all know that "so, so and so is coming to educate us on this specific thing about the water system" so when you come you are not a new person anymore, they know of you before you arrive through the community liaison and the chief, who make sure they give the community the information on why you are coming there...Yeah by the time you get there you see they have gathered waiting for you to hear the education you have for them. (Ben, 2009, p. 6)

Clearly the subtleties of this kind of interaction would be lost on someone without

intimate local knowledge. I observed this firsthand during monitoring and evaluation trips

when Ben acted as a guide for other non-Ghanaian members of the team, pointing out

how to interact with chiefs, approach and show respect for households and avoid

potential problems that we, as outsiders, might not be able to predict. Moreover, being

knowledgeable about local resources and how to work in the context of Northern Ghana,

the Social Bricoleurs on Pure Home Water's staff were adept at marshalling resources at

a moment's notice, whether it be something as simple as a knife to repair a broken filter

to something as complicated as hiring a reliable translator for the day. This echoes Zahra

et al's (2009) point that "In organizing their ventures, Social Bricoleurs typically require

neither external nor specialized resources. They often rely on whatever resources that are readily harnessed." (p. 525).

The 'Quintessential Experience'

Given that these individuals are extremely important to interpreting and negotiating local social structures, it is important to understand what made them interested in pursuing work with Pure Home Water. Both James and Ben grew up in the villages of Northern Ghana and are well acquainted with not only the culture and societal norms of the region but also with the water contamination problems that their organization attempt to address. Each cited their own lived experience as a main driver towards working with Pure Home Water. Ben described his interest in the Kosim filter:

> *Derek: So what is it about you that made you think 'I want to do this?' Why was it important to you to do?*
>
> Ben: Because I saw them pouring in dirty water and then it came out clean…So I just reflected in my mind to the rural area I knew, because I have stayed in the village for a long time so I know how their water system is… and how their water really affects them by giving them so many diseases like guinea worm, diarrhea and etcetera. I said "Oh, the people drinking the dam water really deserves this". And when I went too deep into details I knew [Pure Home Water] was tackling so many communities in the Northern Sector. (Ben, 2009, p. 4)

James also mentioned that he remembered members of his family becoming sick from drinking contaminated water. As a result the problem of water contamination had become personal and his drive to improve his own community's health and sanitation became the ultimate motivator for social change. In fact, previous to working with Pure Home Water, Ben had worked with the Carter Center's guinea worm Eradication campaign and at the time of this interview, James was in the process of writing a thesis on women and water in Northern Ghana. To add to Zahra et al's (2009) concept of the Social Bricoleur, I propose that potential Social Bricoleurs' identification with a

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particular problem comes from a 'quintessential experience'; a lived experience that intimately ties them to a social problem and which contributes to the conditions under which a Social Bricoleur might evolve. Since Social Bricoleurs are often locals, their motivation for social change is derived from emotionally impactful experiences. At the same time, however, Zahra et al (2009) stressed the fact that Social Bricoleurs are often motivated to take steps toward social change on their own, absent of external resources and external motivation. They are individuals who can stitch together local, readily available resources in order to tackle the problems they identify. This is not true of either James or Ben who did not start organizations of their own accord, but rather added their entrepreneurial skills to an existing organization. During my residence at Pure Home Water these individuals showed the initiative, drive and determination characteristic of traditional entrepreneurs even though they may not have chosen to take action until engaged with an existing organization. It seems that some successful Social Bricoleurs may, in fact, need to interact with other social entrepreneurs in order leverage their skills to realize opportunities for social change. As Zahra et al (2009) noted "Thus, just as the uniqueness of their own local knowledge and capacity to improvise provide the fuel for their discoveries, the ability of Social Bricoleurs to expand is often limited by their own ignorance of social needs and opportunities outside the realm of their knowledge." (p. 525). This too may apply to the actual formation of social enterprises or ventures by Social Bricoleurs.

The Non-Local Bricoleur
        Interestingly, I also found that several non-local social entrepreneurs exhibit some of the characteristics of the Social Bricoleur. This suggests that the local, tacit knowledge that Social Bricoleurs possess is not as inaccessible to outsiders as Zahra et al (2009)

proposed, but rather can be incrementally uncovered and assimilated by persistent and detailed investigation. In fact, outsiders can manage to gain a startlingly deep, albeit incomplete, profile of local knowledge and systems. For instance, though the principals of Community Water Solutions are not local actors, they have been able to build their knowledge of local decision making systems in order to make sense of how social structure determines action in the contexts in which they operate. They accomplished this through careful observation and dedication during their time immersed in Northern Ghana while conducting their Master's theses with Pure Home Water. Rebecca, for instance, surveyed several hundred homes in Northern Ghana as part of her Master's thesis work. During this time she came to understand that local women may in fact value community water treatment and that it may fit more cleanly into their daily routine than household water treatment. Moreover, she started to see the importance of engaging the community by following a set of social 'rules of engagement' that includes first proposing their idea to the chief and then vetting it with the community council, much like Pure Home Water. This procedure has strong implications within the community and not following it, she realized, can lead to the demise of a project. Thus she recognized the importance of engaging the elders in a community to make their own decisions in adopting water treatment technology. In doing so, Rebecca noted that Community Water Solutions often enters into lengthy negotiations with the village council to determine the best place to set up their water treatment station. Even if that place may not be the optimal location, they will only suggest other places for the treatment station, and/or build the station and let the community decide for itself that in fact it need be moved; recognizing that autonomy of process is paramount.

Moreover, she mentioned that Community Water Solutions involves the village council in selecting the women that will run the station, noting:

> We found out that, because of the way the villages are, the men do make the decisions and a woman couldn't work at the center unless her husband said it was OK that it was just easier for everyone to let the elders make that decision and they would nominate the two women that they want to work at the center. Though we're not entirely comfortable with that process we realize that we have to kind of pick our battles and if that's the way the village wants to do it then that's, you know, how they've been selected. And so far it's worked, the women have been happy to work there and have enjoyed it. But we realize that it might not always be the fair way; there might be someone who doesn't have any children and has no income who would be a better candidate to work at a center then someone who maybe has three kids and her husband has a farm but the elders like her so they decided that she'd be the one to work there. But we don't want to have to start causing any sort of uproars in the village hierarchy. (Rebecca, 2009, p. 7)

This process shows both attention to local social structure and a careful and prudent trade-off is what contributes to creating an improved "'social equilibrium' where social peace and order exists" and, as Zahra et al noted, the Social Bricoleur has both maintained and strengthened the social fabric (Zahra, S. et al, 2009, p. 524). Even though she was not from the area in which she worked, she managed to develop a deep understanding of the process through which to engage with communities in Northern Ghana.

Social Bricolage serves a necessary function. Those who practice it provide a pathway into understanding and working with the communities that social enterprises attempt to serve. Oftentimes they are locals who have a detailed and intimate knowledge of the community in which an organization seeks to work. These individuals are motivated by a quintessential experience that ties them to a specific social problem which they want to solve, but which may not, in and of itself provide the drive which is needed to form their own organizations.

However, as opposed to the typology presented by Zahra et al (2009), Social Bricoleurs need not be locals. In fact outsiders can build a detailed and accurate picture of foreign social contexts. Through interviews, observation and a careful attention to detail, it is possible that outsiders can develop a keen sense of what may be locally appropriate and at the same time provide for social impact.

The Social Constructionist

Social Constructionist entrepreneurs follow in Israel Kirzner's tradition and "build, launch and operate ventures which tackle those social needs that are inadequately addressed by existing institutions, businesses, NGOs and government agencies" (Zarha, S. et al, 2009, p. 525). Oftentimes they are outsiders that do not have the advantage of local knowledge, but are adept at seizing opportunities to implement scalable solutions to deliver goods and services that impact social goals. This is certainly true of the founders and managers of both Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions, who are not from Northern Ghana, but who seek to address the region's water access and quality issues.

The 'Quintessential Moment'

One important factor, however, that is not touched upon in the article by Zahra et al (2009) is this type of entrepreneur's motivation to create social change. In investigating this question I asked each interviewee to reflect upon what it was that made them interested in doing the work that they do. In the responses there seemed to be one common theme that sensitized these individuals to social enterprise. Many of these social entrepreneurs spoke about a way in which they came to empathize with the populations that they attempt to serve. I have chosen to call the experience or event to which they attribute their empathy with a certain group or their desire to affect social change a social

entrepreneur's 'quintessential moment'. This quintessential moment plays a large part in forming or altering their worldview and in their choice to form social enterprises. For Susan, this moment came in the form of an International Women and Water Conference organized by women from Berkely, California; India; and Nepal to which she was invited in 1998:

> [The organizers] raised money to bring me [to the 2nd International Women and Water Conference]. And when they did that I didn't think anything of it. I'd been paid previously to go to a conference. Sometimes you pay yourself, often you pay yourself, but sometimes I'd been invited and my expenses were paid so I just thought, "well, here's a conference" you know? And when I got there I realized that the Nepali peasant women had no money and [the organizers] were raising money to bring me. And they were bringing me because they wanted solutions. And then on top of that there were Nepali women who had walked…two and three days [to get there], because, though illiterate they knew that they had water problems and they looked to me for the answers. And it's like "Whoa! I have been trained for all these years as if I know something but the solutions that I have been trained in are centralized solutions, but the solutions that they need?"… I went through this sort of mental shift…So that's when it was like "there have to be solutions that will empower these women", alright? And that's been the driving force in my career from then till now. It's like, "Well if not me, who?" So that was sort of like this light bulb going off moment because my whole life up to that point had been a journey to that meaning of putting together all the diverse skills that I have – diverse and disparate – into an integrated whole. (Susan, 2009, pp. 5-6)

This quintessential moment represented a powerful turning point in Susan's career and life; one in which she realized that she had skills and drive to address a major problem faced by people the world over. Although it is unclear what sensitized her to be open to the realization that came with her quintessential moment, but that an instance like this one occurred was another key theme found in the interviews.

Rebecca, for example, also felt that a quintessential moment had changed her path and set her on the course towards social entrepreneurship. For her this moment came on her first trip outside the United States:

I had never even been to Europe or other developed countries and so going to [Latin America] I was just shocked about the way people were living. All of these children, children who were mostly economic orphans, so their parents had given them up because they couldn't afford to take care of them anymore. I had heard about poverty and read books about all these different countries but just being in that experience opened my eyes about the problems of the world. And so, I just wanted to become involved in helping the people I met in [Latin America] and people like the people I met in [Latin America]. I just felt like I, as an engineer, had all these skills that could be used to actually make a really big impact besides just working in the States. I could be doing something that could be great [in the United States], but it wouldn't really be helping people for whom just the smallest thing could make such a huge change. (Rebecca, 2009, pp. 1-2)

Notice that like Susan, Rebecca also emphasized the fact that she felt she had 'the skills' to help. Thus, not only is the quintessential moment important, so too is the feeling that the future entrepreneur has a strength or skill to offer in solving the problem presented by their quintessential moment. This is not unlike how Drucker (1985) characterized the entrepreneurial spirit, noting that "To succeed innovators must build on their strengths. Successful innovators look at opportunities over a wide range. But then they ask, 'which of these opportunities fits me, fits this company, puts to work what we (or I) are good at and have shown capacity for in performance?' (Drucker, 1985, pp. 126, Italics in original). Both Susan and Rebecca have backgrounds in engineering, science and water treatment and technology and, upon recognizing the difference that their skills could make in the lives of people with whom they had come to identify, they made a decision to act.

Achieving Scale

Zahra et al (2009) noted that Social Constructionists attempt to create solutions that are scalable and transferrable and that may be "regional, national, or even global in scope" (p. 525). Both Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions partly define their success in terms of number of persons served. In describing the progress of the

organization, Susan noted the rapid yearly growth of Pure Home Water's filter

distribution and sales. In addition, Susan has global ambition, participating in and

advocating for a global network on household water treatment and safe storage.

Moreover, Henry noted that Pure Home Water was proud to have taken on new contracts

and to have extended its reach to new areas just west of Tamale during 2009.

During this time the way in which Rebecca spoke about Community Water

Solutions' first two project villages as pilots reveals a desire to scale their model

regionally. At the same time, however, Rebecca expressed her desire to stay grounded

within the community, evidencing her previously identified Social Bricoleur traits:

> …these two villages we essentially consider our pilots and what we're trying to learn from them is if people would pay for water, pretty much. And if we could get ...a center open running consistently once we left.
>
> There had to be a way to scale up and not just scale out and reach people...So I was thinking about doing things on a bigger level without getting too detached from the communities…
>
> … [it's] an intermediate step. It's basically like a private water municipality model just at a smaller scale and so you could scale it up to provide water for a whole region if you did it the right way. It's essentially a for profit model for bringing clean water to people. (Rebecca, 2009, pp. 9,4,11)

These ambitions seem to match with the typology offered by Zahra et al (2009).

Using and Identifying New Resources

Zahra et al (2009) stressed the resource-intensity of the work that Social

Constructionists undertake. They must be resolute in the pursuit of their goals as

oftentimes they face strict resource constraints due to the type of scalability they seek.

Both Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions have the ultimate goal of

becoming financially independent from the donor support upon which they currently rely.

In Pure Home Water's case that support has taken the form of grants from large

foundations and personal investment from its founders. Community Water Solutions has

benefitted from fellowships and grants won by its principals and by fundraising. Since

both organizations are relatively young, they still require this 'venture' funding, much

like a traditional enterprise might. In the same vein, and contrary to traditional non-profit

organizations, all founders expressed that they regard it as a temporary rather than a

permanent and deliberate source of operating income. This initial funding has been both

difficult to muster and inconsistent over time. Pure Home Water, being older than

Community Water Solutions has seen more fluctuations in its start-up funding and has

had to deal with more difficulty in ensuring funds. As Henry noted:

> We have tried [finding sustainable grant income] in the past and we were
> successful in the first and the second fiscal year. Unfortunately in the third and the
> fourth fiscal year, we were not so lucky to receive funds from external
> organizations, which puts us in the position that we need to focus on the sales of
> our filters in such a way that we have enough margin on each filter sold out that
> we can take that margin and use it to compensate our expenses. (Henry, 2009, p.
> 4)

Zahra et al (2009) also noted that this situation can put pressure on Social

Constructionists to compromise social goals for financial sustainability. However, the

reaction to this financial difficulty, is typically entrepreneurial; it is perceived as a

challenge to be overcome:

> Two years ago and when we finished our Hilton money it was like "OK. Close up
> shop. On to the next place." And then I thought, partly it's sort of like "Be
> damned! You know we've worked hard, we've made a start here and I don't care if
> [others don't] care about the organization, I care about the organization and I
> don't want to see it die and I am willing to step up to the plate to help make it
> happen." (Susan, 2009, p. 28)

In the Community Water Solutions case, there is a realization that running a social

enterprise takes not only monetary resources, but also a long timescale. This investment

of time is similarly resource intensive:

> So our end goal is for Community Water Solutions to still be a non-profit but not have to rely on grants and donations. But I think that we will probably [need to keep supporting CWS] for the next five years while we're working that out. Then we think we'd be a really truly social enterprise and not just setting up social enterprises and ourselves having to rely on foundations and grants to support our operating costs. (Rebecca, 2009, p. 10)

Further, Rebecca chose to relocate to Northern Ghana to pursue Community Water Solution's goals upon graduation from university. A persistent attitude characterizes many of the individuals interviewed in this study and affirms the characteristics of Zahra et al's (2009) Social Constructionist. Moreover it is in line with a multitude of other researchers who have studied entrepreneurship and social enterprise (Drucker, 1985; Peredo & McLean, 2006; Dees, 2001; Chell, 2007).

It is this mindset that makes for actors that systematically and carefully use resources; another trait often expressed by traditional entrepreneurs used to ensure efficient use of scarce monetary and other resources (Drucker, 1985). For example, one major expense for Pure Home Water is transportation. Pure Home Water's new service contracts make it necessary to visit each household individually when installing filters in a village. Moreover, this rural population is scattered over an area roughly the size of the state of Maine, making transportation time consuming and costly. As a result their staff has had to become resourceful in designing their distribution trips. Ben and Harriet noted that in the beginning Pure Home Water salespeople might take up to four trips to a village: one to organize a demonstration with the local chief, one to perform the demonstration, another to collect names and service filters, and a fourth to distribute new filters, each time using a salesperson's time and a large quantity of petrol. This was at first thought to be the only way to respect local protocol and the time constraints of the hard-working villagers who attended the presentations. However, as funds became

restricted, it was an untenable system. Now staff often bundle visits to villages making sure to do demonstration presentations and to stay in the village for several hours afterward in order to collect names of individuals that would like to purchase or receive a filter. This gives villagers the time to complete other work if needed and to return later to put their names down for a filter while the staff makes rounds with the community liaison to service existing filters. They also might travel to a new adjacent village to make contact with the chief, especially when conducting large contracts. Moreover, they typically do all this using one of the motorcycles purchased by Pure Home Water in order to conserve on gas. As both Ben and Henry noted, this results in long, hard days for staff that might sometimes drive for hours to reach small villages, but at the same time a reduced number of initial trips to a region or area. However, this procedure has helped Pure Home Water save money and increase the reach of their programs even as financial resources become scarce.

Zahra et al (2009) noted that not only do social constructionists adapt to limited resources, they also seize opportunities to integrate new resources into their work when they present themselves. A typical example of this behavior comes from Susan, who cleverly integrated her university teaching and research into the work she does with her social enterprise:

> So from [the Women and Water Conference] forward it was like "OK, the solutions must be small scale; either community-based or household-based. And then the next challenge was: that's what I want to do for the rest of my life, so how am I going to do that? In what context? Am I going to set up my own NGO? Am I going to be a consulting engineer to developing countries? Am I going to work within MIT? And I had no idea at that time. I knew that that was my direction unstoppable, I was just going to go forward, but I did not know means… [Then] in September 1998 I said [to the MIT Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering administration] I would like to offer a small-scale

> drinking water project in rural Nepal…and the answer was "we don't think anyone in our program would be interested…No, you can't do it". So my best trait is that I am persevering and so I waited a year and I came back and in 1999 in September I said the exact same thing, "I want to do drinking water treatment in rural areas, low-tech, a developing country; in Nepal." And they said "Well, offer it and see if anyone's interested". And that year there were 20 or 21 environmental water track engineering students and 16 signed up [for Nepal] as their first choice. It's like "Oh whoa!" (*Laughing*). So it was not embraced initially by the administration but it became embraced because it was embraced by students. (Susan, 2009, pp. 6-7)

> I was able to find [to realize that work] a path through the MIT Master of Engineering program....household water treatment and associated projects make very bite-sized thesis projects. You know it lends itself beautifully to multiple studies. (Susan, 2009, p. 14)

Not only do we see evidence of the determination with which the individual pursues their goal, but we also see creative thinking about the way in which to best pursue it. The implication here is that resources can be marshaled through Susan's teaching and research. She has recognized and taken advantage of an opportunity to both recruit talent (in the form of Master's level students at MIT) to support her organization and to provide funding for that talent. This has resulted in a wide variety of work being done at almost no cost to Pure Home Water itself over a period of approximately five years. From technical and business analysis of water treatment technologies, to monitoring and evaluation of their product, to initial research into a filter construction facility, these students have ended up giving invaluable support to the organization. Building this type of collaborative relationship helps Social Constructionists to "build, maintain, and grow their organization." (Zahra, S. et al, 2009, p. 526).

Social Constructionists attempt to build larger scale organizations that address social needs and that can be scaled up to reach regional, national or global audiences. Oftentimes they are motivated by a 'quintessential moment', similar to the Social

Bricoleur's 'quintessential experience', in which they came to empathize with the community which they want to serve and in which they realize they have a skill that can effectively address it. As they put their plans into motion they are faced with resource constraints that can be quite daunting and, like traditional entrepreneurs, use their resolve and ingenuity to overcome them.

The Social Engineer

Zahra et al (2009) presented the Social Engineer as the social entrepreneur that would follow in Schumpeter's tradition of creative destruction: "they identify systemic problems within the social systems and structures and address them by bringing about revolutionary change." (p. 526). Social Engineers are concerned with creating path-breaking new ways to address social problems.

The best example of Social Engineer traits comes from Community Water Solutions, which has learned quite a bit from Pure Home Water in terms of using a different business model to reduce costs and increase service. Community Water Solutions sought a way to reduce the resources that need be invested in the initial setup and subsequent monitoring and evaluation of its end product. Rebecca noted that this resource constraint, combined with knowledge of the community social structure and a holistic view of water provision that includes local financial viability, helped them to decide upon a community water treatment as the final business model:

> Rebecca: OK, so I worked with [Pure Home Water] for two years helping them with their monitoring and evaluation. So I would go visit people who bought the filter and see if they were using it or if they weren't using it why they stopped and then test the water to make sure [the filter was] working. And the main thing I learned from that was that basically any type of program where you are working on the household level requires a lot of monitoring and evaluation effort if you really want to know the impact you are having. It was really hard. I visited over 200 households… So I imagine for a really small organization with limited

funding you can see why…the monitoring gets dropped because it just takes so much time, you're not really moving forward with sales and you don't really get to see the benefits of the monitoring and evaluation when you look at your financial statements and talk about your impact. Even though I think it's important…I was always thinking, "If I ever started my own non-profit there's got to be an easier way to go at this problem without having to do all this monitoring", which is what led up to thinking about treating water on the community level.

Derek: So in your time there in Northern Ghana you recognized the challenges of this model. Can you tell me a little bit about the formulation in your head and in..your partner's head as well, of Community Water Solutions? What is Community Water Solutions?

Rebecca: …We are officially a non-profit and what we do is essentially set up social enterprises. So we go in to a village and we'll train people. We've typically been working with women, so we'll train two women how to clean enough water for their entire village and then they sell that for a small fee. And all the revenues go toward that specific water treatment business and they save the right amount to buy their future treatment materials that they'll need and the rest is the profit for the women who work there. And we came about the idea in two ways: I was coming from this experience with the monitoring and I had had a lot of experience with household water treatment and I really believed in the technologies…But I still didn't think you could reach the scale that you need to reach to bring everyone on the household level…because of the monitoring and because you have to sell to individual homes… (Rebecca, 2009, pp. 16-17)

Aggregating water treatment on the community level has allowed Community Water Solutions to reduce the number of users with which it must directly interface. Instead of needing to physically reach every house, it only needs to reach each community water source. This is a great example of what Drucker (1985) called "systematic innovation [which] consists in the purposeful and organized search for changes, and in the systematic analysis of opportunities such changes might offer for economic or social innovation" (p. 31). Moreover it characterizes how learning from and adapting older interventions can potentially lead to more cost efficient and socially embedded interventions typified by Social Engineers. At the same time it harkens back to the importance of local knowledge and the Social Bricoleur.

Still, within the context of communities in Northern Ghana, for-profit community water treatment, that at the same time reinvests capital in the community and empowers women, is a "dramatic change in the social sphere" and, if successful, may eventually be rolled out as a potential solution to a "national, transnational or global social [issue]" (Zahra, S. et al, 2009, p. 526). By collectivizing treatment and promoting water treatment self-sufficiency and independence, Community Water Solutions has introduced a locally revolutionary idea, initially targeting a smaller scale but typical of a Social Engineer.

Integrated Social Enterprise

It seems that organizations are made stronger and more effective when social entrepreneurs of different stripes combine forces to tackle a problem. Both Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions have on their staff entrepreneurs of different types. This combination of skills makes them more adaptable to new situations they might face. Moreover it seems that social enterprises that are comprised of entrepreneurs with complementary skill sets are well equipped to tackle new and evolving problems. The Social Constructionist and Social Engineer need the Social Bricoleur in order to efficiently and effectively leverage resources. At the same time the Social Bricoleur may need the Social Engineer or Social Constructionist to find the passion or resources needed to pursue problems that may seem daunting to tackle on their own. Moreover, one may possess characteristics of each of the categories simultaneously. This may reflect what Zahra et al (2009) noted as "the growing maturity of social entrepreneurs in learning how to assemble resources and pursue different opportunities" or may reflect the fact that social entrepreneurs defy simple categorization and use a combination of the skills in pursuit of social change (Zarha, S. et al, 2009, p. 530).

Precursors to Social Enterprise

Zahra et al (2009) proposed that researchers begin "studying the contextual variables that influence different social entrepreneurial types." (p. 530). However, due to the overlap and interplay between the typologies he and his colleagues presented, it may be more important to understand the common motivations of social entrepreneurs. Moreover, when looking into the research on social entrepreneurship, a detailed analysis of individual's motivations has yet to be fully developed. The discussion that follows adds to this dialogue.

Across all categories, there seem to be two important factors that sensitize individuals to pursue development with a socially entrepreneurial mindset. The first is evidenced in the discussion above, what I have termed either the 'quintessential experience' or the 'quintessential moment'. This may help to explain the motivation to address social problems but it alone cannot explain why these individuals choose business as a way to address those social problems.

However this phenomenon can be at least partially explained. As it turns out, many of the entrepreneurs in the study had been exposed to traditional entrepreneurialism or business practice through family, friends, or life in general. As Susan explained:

> Susan: And what's prepared me to run a business, a social business? I would say what's prepared me to run a business is that I have grown up in a business family. My dad was a businessman. My dad was a mechanical engineer; slash self-made, successful businessman. And it was a family company. My dad's company made medical supplies and my dad started it as one person and built it to a thousand people over the course of his career.
>
> *Derek: Wow, impressive.*
>
> Susan: Yeah. And moreover I come from multiple generations of small business people who either succeeded or failed…These multiple generations back to the late 1800s are people who ran – you name it: one made filing cabinets, one had a milk truck, one did grocery store displays. Some succeeded, some failed but they

were all family-based businesses that were entrepreneurial. So I have a kind of lineage of entrepreneurialism and I often jokingly said that I didn't get the business gene because I never cared about personally making money; it's just never held any appeal to me. But I got the idealistic gene, alright? (*Laughing*). I do appreciate what the business people in my family line have done. In other words I don't disrespect business people; I see those as very important skills. It's just that somehow making a profit has just...you know I do come from an upper middle class family, so it's not that I've been hungry. (Susan, 2009, p. 3)

This introduction to enterprise and business seems to be a defining characteristic of the individuals in the study as most had been exposed to or involved with business in some way. Ben reflected on their father's contracting company:

Derek : What other jobs have you held before Pure Home Water? What other things did you do for work?

Ben: … I was doing contracts with my dad. You know, my dad is a contractor so that was what I was focused on after my school, before I had the guinea worm Campaign job and then Pure Home Water.

Derek: And so you were constructing houses?

Ben: Yeah housing...or road…they can give any contract it's a lot, it means a lot. They can tell you to build gutters or tar road or build a building…Yeah so I [helped] motivate staff for him and [made sure] everything was done correct. That has helped me to succeed later and be motivated. (Ben, 2009, p. 12)

Henry came from a high-pressure background in sales and management. Rebecca was a former student at MIT, which, as noted in the introduction, has a strong tradition of entrepreneurialism. Moreover, several of her partners at Community Water Solutions are former business consultants. Past exposure to business seemed to be something to which the participants attribute their mindset when working in the development field.

Being exposed to entrepreneurialism does two important things. First is gives potential social entrepreneurs a concrete framework of action to follow. This is very important given the nebulous nature of the problems they seek to address. Second it imbues confidence. Attempting to tackle water access issues in Northern Ghana given the

environmental conditions, resource constraints and, in some cases, foreign social structure is a difficult task to say the least. Experiences such as these help the participants to understand what is possible and to overcome the fear of failure. Since they have seen people close to them attempt and succeed or fail at business, it becomes an option that is within the realm of possibilities for themselves.

The quintessential moment/experience combined with exposure to business methods creates the conditions under which a person could choose to pursue social entrepreneurship or join a social enterprise. The quintessential moment/experience seems to jolt the social entrepreneur into leveraging their skills towards solving a social problem. Moreover, when using the principles of business which they learned from friends, family and experience this quintessential moment/experience ensures that social impact becomes the driver of success.

Reflections on Profit

The emphasis on social impact becomes even more evident when one examines social entrepreneurs own personal motives. Consistent with Zahra et al's (2009) characterization, that "social entrepreneurship relates to exploiting opportunities for social change and improvement, rather than traditional profit maximization", though all the entrepreneurs in the study stressed the importance of basic profitability, each noted the primacy of social impact (p. 521). In fact, many participants seemed genuinely taken aback at the thought that they might personally gain from the activities that they were undertaking. Like Zahra et al (2009), I found that the personal profit aspect of social enterprise seemed to be detached from the theory of individualism used to explain motivation in classical and neoclassical economics:

Derek: So you don't see yourself or Community Water Solutions as "I could get rich doing this" or that type of thing? So how do you see the social mission tying in with your own personal goals?

Rebecca: I definitely want to be able to make my living with Community Water Solutions. I would love to work for it for my whole life. It's something I've founded from the beginning and right now I definitely will spend the next year making no money off of it. So I realize that if we want this organization to exist and keep doing the good work that we're doing we need to be able to pay our employees and they need to be able to make a salary that they can live off of. But, if I don't make a million dollars off of giving people clean water, I'm perfectly happy with that. But I've never really been a business person. And I do understand [why some say that]… the best business minds out there will only be motivated to pursue social good, social work and doing either international development or helping people, if they could make money. But for me personally in this organization that's not why we started in and I'm perfectly fine with never making profit off of it. (Rebecca, 2009, pp. 10-11)

This confirms that profit is, for Rebecca, a means to an end rather than a goal in and of itself. The idea of profit is situated by her previous quintessential moment/experience as a way to achieve the social impact she desires. It becomes used in the context of reinvestment into the activities with which they are engaged, rather than in an extractive sense. The idea that profit should be used to reinvest was a common theme found throughout the interviews. This will become apparent in the next section.

In sum, the conditions under which individuals may chose to pursue social entrepreneurship vary; however there do seem to be at least two factors that social entrepreneurs in this study have in common: the quintessential moment/experience and a previous exposure to business methods or traditional entrepreneurship.

Understanding Social Enterprise

As previously seen in the literature review, within the literature on social entrepreneurship/social enterprise there exists huge definitional variety (Chell, 2007; Dees, 2001; Zahra, S. et al, 2009). How, then, do the individuals in this study define the

actions that they are taking? Each of the individuals interviewed were asked for their definition or understanding of social enterprise. Their answers reveal certain conceptions of what social enterprises do and the values they promote. In some cases these ideas about social enterprise were normative, stating what social entrepreneurs should be doing and revealing a potential linkage with activism.

To begin, I asked each participant about their definition of social enterprise. Susan spoke about her interpretation:

> *Derek: When you say Pure Home Water is a social enterprise, what exactly do you mean?*
>
> Susan: …they are neither businesses nor NGOs, but there's not a legal entity for that anywhere in the world. And they would have the so-called double, or more, bottom line. They would not have only the profit bottom line nor would they have only the social or charitable or ethical or common good bottom line, but a marriage of the two and then some. You know because I think when you marry the two the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. So that's my concept of a social enterprise. (Susan, 2009, p. 23)

The belief that there is more to social enterprise than making profit is a very clear theme in the both the literature on social enterprise and in the interviews I conducted. Several other research participants echoed Susan's conception:

> *Derek: But do you think that Pure Home Water, the goal...is it run as a business? Do you think or is it...?*
>
> Ben: …yeah I think I would put it as a social business…by social I mean, you know, I knew how much money we used to buy the products and how much we use to disseminate them in the rural areas so this should just tell me it's not the focus of making profit, it's just the focus of creating or providing potable water for the households in the rural areas and the urban. (Ben, 2009, p. 5)

This concept of being out for more than just private gain is the primary theme woven through almost every participant's interview and agrees with established literature on social enterprise (Chell, 2007; Nicholls, 2006; Peredo & McLean, 2006; Tan, Williams,

& Tan, 2005; Zahra, S. et al, 2009). It seems then that social entrepreneurs and those

working in social enterprises identify and corroborate this most basic point: that social

enterprise is about social impact more than just business methods. Rebecca and James

responded as such:

> I think [a social enterprise] could still have all the same values as a non-profit
> where [workers] get paid their salary and the business as a whole doesn't make a
> profit, but it does still not have to rely on grants and foundations and donations to
> operate. It's completely self-sustaining on its own, but…at the end of the fiscal
> year the shareholders aren't walking away with a million dollar profit. They're
> just getting their salary. (Rebecca, 2009, p. 10)

> That every organization should have some level of social responsibility, okay?
> Some organizations …get profits and then they try to take part of the profits to
> help the people in the communities that they work in. But my understanding or
> what I try to get from Pure Home Water is that…they would want the people to
> pay some little amount of money so they could sustain the Pure Home Water
> organization. So it is a way of combining their social responsibility and trying to
> break even… That is taking it as a social responsibility to provide for people that
> we have worked with. But then, in turn, the people would have to pay some token
> to keep the organization running…to keep the organization on its feet because it is
> people that work for the organization that means that these staff will have to also,
> in the long run, be sustained…Yes so I think basically that is what I have been
> trying to see, or that is what I understand by being a social enterprise by Pure
> Home Water. It is a non-profit making organization that tries to meet, or tries to
> work closer to its social responsibilities and that would have to raise money
> though to still support the organization, so I think basically that is what I see and
> that is what I understand by when they say social enterprise. (James, 2009, p. 4)

Two interesting points can be made about the above conceptions of social enterprise.

First, many conceive of social enterprise as a way to use business to create financial

sustainability for causes that are otherwise advanced by charity. Beyond that, however,

these quotes suggest that it is important that a social enterprise's main activity has large

social significance, such as water, health, environment or conflict resolution, etc.

Following on James' comments above, he went on to clarify and confirm this last point:

> Yes because when you say you are an enterprise, certainly your main
> objective...you don't care about the people. All you need to do is just to try to

convince the people to get your product and you make your profit…You don't really care about your social responsibility or what you need to do for society and the community. All your concern is with just your profit. But Pure Home Water is so concerned with the social aspect, the benefits people are going to derive from using the filter, rather than the profit. So I think that they have to sit down to re-brand the name… as maybe some sort of social organization rather than social enterprise. But I can understand why they are using the enterprise because it involves the exchange with money. (James, 2009, pp. 10-11)

In addition, for James it seems that the 'enterprise' part of social enterprise is misleading; causing confusion about the primacy of social impact and the derived benefit of the main activity or product that is being offered.

This previous analysis highlights and reifies Zahra et al's (2009) comments on the domain of social enterprise:

> … organizations pursuing profits as their sole objective often fall outside the domain of social entrepreneurship. Similarly, for-profit firms engaged in philanthropic endeavors or socially responsible activities would generally lie outside the boundaries of social entrepreneurship. Likewise, not-for-profit organizations, social service organizations or NGOs ignoring the economic implications of their operations would generally also lie outside the boundaries of social entrepreneurship. (p. 521)

For the participants in the study, then, social enterprise is about employing the concept of profit to create financial sustainability for goods and services that address a social goal.

This discussion of social entrepreneurial types, precursors and conceptions helps to highlight and deconstruct the reasons why individuals become involved in social enterprise and what they think social enterprises do. Later, these revelations will be helpful in discussing the most appropriate ways in which a rights-based approach may be employed. Moreover, the discussion of precursors and conceptions can help to explain why there may be no explicit rights-based approach to social enterprise that has thus far emerged. The next chapter will help to situate the need for a rights-based approach.

Chapter 5: Human Rights Discourse

This chapter aims to accomplish two objectives. The first is to explore how water access in Northern Ghana is heavily influenced by political/social factors. The second is to examine how the research participants and their customers conceive of human rights. Ultimately this will help elucidate the potential for a human rights-based approach to social entrepreneurship. This is critical because, though they often take action in areas governed by human rights; many social enterprises do not expressly adopt a rights-based approach to development.

The Politics of Water Access in Northern Ghana

In exploring a rights-based approach to social enterprise as it relates to water it is essential to understand how water access is affected by social power structures. Along the lines of Gready (2008) and Uvin (2004) one can uncover the ways in which power structures affect distribution of public goods in areas where this distribution may be fully, and perhaps incorrectly, attributed solely to technical issues.

Created in 1998 from the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing, the Ghana Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) is the government bureau in charge of water supply for rural communities in Ghana. It is organized by region, each region having a CWSA office in its capital city. The CWSA charter states that it is responsible for providing local governmental authorities, called District Assemblies, with support in promoting "the sustainability of safe water and related sanitation services in rural communities and small towns [and enabling] the Assembles encourage (sic) the active development of communities, especially women, in the design, planning, construction and management of water and sanitation" (Community Water and Sanitation Agency, 2008, p. 2). In addition, the charter calls for the agency to "assist and coordinate

with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) engaged in the development of water and sanitation and hygiene education in the rural communities and small towns" and to ensure "the sustainability of facilities through community ownership" (Community Water and Sanitation Agency, 2008, pp. 2, 3). In general it purports to do this through timely service provision. The Charter notes specific timeframes for service delivery in the table below:

SERVICE	TIME FRAME
Borehole fitted with hand Pumps	18 months
Hand dug wells fitted with hand Pumps	18 months
Spring development	24 months
Piped systems	36 months
Household latrines	6 months
Institutional latrines with hand washing facilities	10 months

Table 3: Service Provision Standards. Community water and sanitation agency, 2007, p. 3

Though the CWSA does not have its own technical staff, it uses government funds to hire contractors, such as World Vision and other borehole drillers, to provide the above services (Ivan, 2008). In the rural areas in which Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions work, the CWSA is the government agency with jurisdiction and responsibility to provide access to clean water for Ghanaian citizens. As such, in the traditional human rights regime, it may be considered the bearer of responsibility.

In the summer of 2008, I had the opportunity to meet with and interview a government official (Ivan) at the Community Water and Sanitation Agency in Tamale. This interview is very telling of the government's position on water access in rural communities. The individual interviewed had worked with the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing long before the CWSA was created. As a result he was party to the process that led to the birth of the CWSA and the debates about its necessity and ultimate role. As such they gave a detailed historical account of its development,

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describing the process whereby in order to "increase efficiency" a number of small

agencies were created that maintain a narrow portfolio (Ivan, 2008). The Ministry created

the Ghana Water Company to look after urban water supply and the CWSA to look after

rural water access[13] (Ivan, 2008, p. 1).

Moreover, there existed two factions within The Ministry that influenced the

formulation of the CWSA. That the charter does not reflect a focus on human rights

mirrors both this initial debate and the fact that the Right to Water had, as yet, not been

codified in General Comment 15 of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural

Rights. As Ivan notes:

> We had this debate often from 1991-1996 at the Ghana Community Water and
> Sanitation Agency but we adopted a needs-based approach. We try to target areas
> with most need. This brings up the debate of water as an economic or social good
> and there are proponents on either side. (Ivan, 2008, p. 1)

Ivan noted that one group desired to treat water as a social good and to address problems

of access by paying close attention to political, cultural and ethnic bias that prioritized

access for certain groups and not for others. They noted that the Ministry has the ability

to provide access to all at a certain standard but, instead, invests in areas that are

politically favorable. The interviewee noted that many of the people on this side of the

debate were from the North of Ghana, which is typically an area 'ignored' by powerful

Southern politicians.

Another group saw water access as primarily a technical problem that needed to

be dealt with through expanding service provision and by treating water as an economic

good. They advocated charging for water and a hierarchical responsibility: "First if you

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[13] Though Pure Home Water works in both rural and urban areas, this study is focused on rural areas as the
majority of information I was able to collect comes from rural areas. However, the responsible
governmental agency in urban areas is the Ghana Water Company.

can afford you should pay, second the community should supply to its members, third the state, fourth NGOs. But we are trying to partner with them to implement in hard to reach areas." (Ivan, 2008, p. 1). This view is corroborated in the CWSA Charter, which states that "the CWSA expects communities to manage and pay for the operation and maintenance of the water supply and sanitation facilities." (Community Water and Sanitation Agency, 2008, p. 5). In addition the CWSA has adopted a demand-driven model in which communities manage and pay for 5% of any installed water treatment, access or storage technology. In this case, demand-driven means that in order to be serviced by the CWSA, a district assembly must actively approach the agency to request services; in contrast to a model in which the CWSA must recruit and subsequently provide for all district assemblies (Ivan, 2008). This can lead to large gaps in access to water, given the technical difficulty of interfacing with dispersed rural communities whose members are not often used to making demands of the state (United Nations, 2004). In fact many of the community members with whom I had the opportunity to speak during my subsequent monitoring and evaluation trips had never heard of the CWSA and did not know what types of resources were available from the CWSA to the district assemblies; even in light of the statement in the CWSA charter that "The Agency will provide stakeholders with all the information they need to access our services." (Community Water and Sanitation Agency, 2008, p. 4). This process underscores how oftentimes rights are not fulfilled and that a rights-based approach may be able to shed light on the processes that produce these denials of rights by naming them as opposed to covering them up with technical fixes (Uvin, 2004; Kapur & Duvvury, 2006).

A demand-driven model also seems to be in conflict with the responsibilities placed on states to provide access to potable water as outlined by General Comment 15 of the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural rights, which codified the human right to water and to which Ghana is a party. General Comment 15 states that the right of access to water emanates from "the right to an adequate standard of living" and that "States parties have to adopt effective measures to realize, without discrimination, the right to water, as set out in this General Comment." (Comittee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2002, p. 150). Specifically, states parties have the obligation to respect, protect and fulfill the human right to water. Respecting means that states must "refrain from interfering directly or indirectly with the enjoyment of the right to water" (Comittee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2002, p. 155). This means that states must not take any action that denies individuals or groups access to water. Protecting refers to the fact that states have the obligation to prevent third parties from interfering with the right to water. Specifically this means that states must adopt legal measures to restrict third parties from impeding affordable access to safe water and that adequate penalty is placed on groups that do not comply. Fulfilling means that states have the ultimate responsibility to "facilitate, promote and provide" access to a sufficient amount of safe water for personal and household use and that states must do so proactively by according the right sufficient status within the national policy agenda. (Comittee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2002, p. 159). Ultimately it is the obligation to fulfill that is not upheld by a demand-driven model in which communities must request state aid.

Beyond this demand-driven focus at a governmental level, many of the interviewees pointed to examples of how the right to water may not be respected. For

example, Henry recounted the influence of politics and cultural bias on water provision in

his home area:

> *Derek: Do you think that there are any ways in which water is influenced....access to water is influenced by say politics or some other social factors here in Northern Ghana?*
>
> Henry: Very recent experience. Myself, I myself am living actually in the rural area. I'm just on the border…outside of Tamale. Ah, when I saw my pipe open one day, I was shocked.
>
> *Derek: You don't normally get running water?*
>
> Henry: I don't have running water at all…So everything is installed. The house looks like just any modern house even in Europe or U.S. But there's no running water. Well a few weeks before the elections the pipe goes open and my pipe starts streaming and I was very happy with that. But immediately after the elections the pipe went closed again. That's a good example of how politics influences the water availability. It is strongly influenced by politics. I have no idea of what the mechanisms are about how decisions are made about that and how they are infiltrated in the Ghana Water Company or CWSA. But it is clear that they have a very strong influence...Elections were coming. Politicians want the votes of the people so what's the best thing they could do?…[open the taps and] stick their names on it. (Henry, 2009, pp. 7-8)

Likewise, Ben noted that government tends to ignore the needs of areas that have not

traditionally given them support:

> Yeah in some communities when the government sees that they have few, few votes you see [the government] doesn't normally care much about [that area]. [The government] focuses on areas where they have votes, leaving the others who [did not vote for them] without water, which I don't see as being reasonable, because there are people in that community who like [the ruling party] as well but it is just that [the ruling party] didn't win. (Ben, 2009, p. 17)

This experience agrees with another account by James who noted that during local

elections, the ruling party will often install new boreholes in rural areas or turn on the

piped supply to outlying urban areas in order to influence the results or in return for a

promise of votes (James, 2009).

Moreover Susan noted that there are multiple sociocultural and political dimensions that influence access to water in Northern Ghana:

> So water has a political aspect…A political aspect is that more people in the South [of Ghana] have access to water than in the North. Obviously there are political divisions that aren't North-South only but have played themselves out. There is a sort of intra-country discrimination and so there's something of that playing out politically… So I think that in terms of water quality, well, globally water safety is not so much on people's view screens as water access for reasons that are politically expedient and that are agency decisions. (Susan, 2009, p. 32)

These are several examples of how water access is determined by political influence, rather than by technological, financial or capacity based constraints.

In sum, it seems that the government agency in charge of water provision in Northern Ghana has adopted a strategy that may not be consistent with its responsibilities under General Comment 15 of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Several factors have contributed to this including an initial ideological debate during the agency's establishment and the fact that the agency was established before the formal adoption of the legal right to water. However, it seems that access to water in Northern Ghana may be used as a political football. This is corroborated by the stories of the interviewees, which suggest that the government may, at times, manipulate access to water resources in order to gain political support, an action which is contrary to its duty to respect the right to water. That being said there does seem to be space within the charter for groups concerned with realizing human rights to apply pressure. The mission of the CWSA, for instance, calls for "active participation of stakeholders" (Community Water and Sanitation Agency, 2008, p. 1). As a result there exist opportunities for external organizations adopting rights-based approaches to apply pressure to state parties to respect, protect and fulfill the right to water.

Conceptions of Water as a Human Right

All interviewees appealed to many ideas that are found in the literature and legal precedent of human rights. Most consistently they spoke about access to water as fundamental to life itself, that all are entitled to a sufficient quantity of clean water for consumption and household use. Although this is a concept codified by General Comment 15, no participant independently volunteered the language of rights to describe their goals or processes (Comittee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2002). Even when prompted, rights seemed to be only cursorily understood and auxiliary to the process of achieving full access. When asked about the advantage of a human right to water, for example, Susan answered simply, "And so the strength of a human right to water is that it will hopefully contribute to the goal of everyone having safe water and water access. So that's the human right." (Susan, 2009, p. 32). Similarly, none of the other participants interviewed expressed an actual methodology as to how a human right might actually translate into action. It seemed that even though the discourse of human rights has infiltrated the thinking of those working in the social enterprises studied in this thesis, none of the participants explicitly used the language of rights in crafting the mission and action of the organizations in which they worked.

In further accordance with the literature on human rights, each participant identified the government as the primary responsibility holder in terms of respecting, protecting and fulfilling the right to water in Northern Ghana. Below are some examples of the way in which the participants spoke about who should be responsible for providing water in Northern Ghana:

> You know it is the responsibility of government to provide these facilities, especially water, to make it accessible to every citizen of this nation. Government had the support of so many organizations that have come to also provide water.

And then this is from donor support from the United States from European Union and other organizations. Unfortunately access to clean water is still low in Northern Ghana. Access to clean water is still low. Even where there is water which is not clean, from dugouts and dams, some of these dry out in the dry season. (James, 2009, p. 8)

Rebecca echoed this sentiment:

In a perfect world I think it would be the government's responsibility, kind of the way it is [in the United States] and they have public municipalities, but we have private companies too. But at the end of the day it should be the government's responsibility. I just don't think that that's the best way to do it right now. But I think that any long term solution to this right to water is going to have to come through infrastructure and people really believing it is something that people have a right to and that it needs to be provided but I think it's going to be a long way till we get there. (Rebecca, 2009, p. 11)

These quotes reflect an implicit knowledge that water management is inherently a government responsibility, which is a critical component of the right to water. At the same time, there is an inclination towards need-based programming rather than rights-based programming and an underlying conception that the government will never be able to provide full access. For these participants, this begs the question, "Why even try to influence government?" In fact, both Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions have not had much interaction with the CWSA, the GWC or the Ghanaian government, despite the open invitation of the CWSA to coordinate with and assist NGOs and the private sector in securing access to water and the realization by social entrepreneurs that access to water is a political subject which requires democratic input. The quotes below by Susan and Rebecca serve as evidence of the lack of interaction with government, an understanding of government structures and a willingness to bypass them in favor of working locally:

Derek: …let me continue on here I wanted to ask you a few things about your interaction with government…

Susan: You asked me that last night and I've had almost none. Yeah so let me just clarify that. June 04 I was here at a [West Africa Water Initiative] partnership meeting and WAWI has tried to collaborate at every step with government with water...there's Natural Resources there's Ministry of Health, there's also the Ghana Water Company and the Community Water and Sanitation Agency. Those are at the federal level. And at the district level there's the district governments. (Susan, 2009, p. 28)

People have asked us before if we've talked to the Ghanaian government and gotten approval for the work were doing which we haven't and maybe we will someday if we get to be big enough. But we do say that we talk to the village chiefs and they approve everything that we're doing beforehand. (Rebecca, 2009, p. 12)

These quotes cannot alone explain why these individuals have not taken a primarily activist role in aiding rural populations to make rights claims. However, they beg the question: if social entrepreneurs realize that the government is responsible for water provision, then why not form an organization solely to put pressure on the government through awareness campaigns, naming and shaming, and lobbying? As noted previously, one answer is that there may not be enough knowledge of rights to take such action. However, many participants cited other reasons why pure activism might not accomplish the goals they are after. Susan mentioned competing priorities:

I also understand some of the reasons why governments are unable to safely and regularly and continuously provide safe water in developing countries. I understand some of the obstacles to that. That they have so many other priorities number one. Number two, there is corruption. Number three, they lack capacity. So in those instances I think that is where the fourth category, let's call it social enterprises and the nonprofit category need to play a larger role and the non-profit category does play a larger role. (Susan, 2009, pp. 27-28)

Even though there is an acknowledgement and identification of the responsibility bearer in the regime of human rights and these social enterprises are stepping in to fill the void, there seems to be a hesitation to call the government to account for respecting, protecting and fulfilling the right to water. In some cases this frustration with government

inefficiency results in a direct effort to bypass government/policy level thinking and stick

to the micro-scale:

> Why are some countries in poverty and some countries not? And if we could figure out that then we could solve the problem. Or if we could stop the government corruption and get more money into the villages then we could stop the problem. I understand those things are important but, I've never wanted to be involved in the high level things. I've just been like, "well that could eventually happen and could eventually help ten years down the road and probably will be the more sustainable way to look at the problem. But I know people that need clean water or orphans that need help right now. I want to go in and work with them right now." (Rebecca, 2009, p. 2)

Further;

> And so as I learned more about that problem and the technologies that existed out there I started realizing that it was really...basically a really simple problem that could be solved with very simple technologies that exist. And what seemed to me the main problem was getting those technologies to the people that needed them and making sure they were sustainable. So I started getting really interested in the implementation part of the water problem and kind of just started getting involved in project. (Rebecca, 2009, p. 1)

This reveals a technical, needs-based focus in spite of the realization that there are socio-

structural problems that need to be fixed in order to ensure the right to water. Even social

entrepreneurs realize that social enterprise may not be the ultimate answer to providing

water access for all given these conditions. This exposes an interesting situation whereby

those attempting to fulfill the access to water through social enterprise may be neglecting

a critical part of the equation –applying pressure to the legal duty-bearer: the government.

In sum, there is an interesting mix of concepts that contribute to social

entrepreneur's conceptions of human rights and the action they take. The human rights

discourse motivates the rhetoric around social enterprise, however when put into action,

many social entrepreneurs still rely on technical fixes and quantitative indicators (such as

number of filters sold, number of villages reached or amount of money earned) to

measure success. It seems that there is a human rights conception, but a needs-based focus that fails to place responsibility to uphold human rights clearly at the feet of the duty-bearer.

Customer's Conceptions of the Right to Water

In contrast, the customers of Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions have not been influenced by human rights discourse. Rather, many hold traditionalist beliefs about access to water. When asked about human rights, many rural villagers inquired as to the definition of a human right. Even when given the definition, oftentimes they rejected the notion. Although they hold the same conception that water is essential for life, those without access to clean water are sometimes considered to have done something to deserve that fate. Thus, villages whose water supplies had dried up or had been otherwise compromised were thought of as being punished for some kind of wrongdoing. In this way, there was no 'right' to water; it is conceived of as a gift that can be supernaturally taken away; compromised by actions of groups of individuals within a community. As a result, the people in villages are reluctant to speak of water as a fundamental entitlement and may, therefore, be reluctant to make claims against the government.

This conception is explained by James who noted the level of education for people in the villages as a main contributor to this line of thought:

> It is a human rights issue. That people do not know that access to clean water is a human rights issue is because of their level of education…The majority of the people in these rural settings are not educated. They have not been to school at all. For instance like my [thesis] study area, I have close to eighty five percent being illiterate, totally. They have never been to school so there is no way they would understand that there is even something they call human right…So even if you went to explain to them that water is a fundamental human rights issue it would take you a very long time... See I think policies are being designed by the UN and

World Bank and other institutions that want to bring about equal access, respect of society and so many other things. Unfortunately we still have people that do not even understand these things. The people do not see the right to water as something they need. They have pressing needs. When pressing needs are not considered they [don't] see what the United Nations and then the World Bank are saying are human rights issues. [They also don't see that these] policies are made to help them. They don't see that. They don't see that as a human rights issue at all. (James, 2009, pp. 5-7)

Harriet, another former employee of Pure Home Water confirmed this view:

People in rural villages don't realize that access to water is a right. It is more like they think the government or whoever is doing them a favor. It is up to organizations to educate people about rights and help them fight for them to just provide water. (Harriet, 2009, p. 1)

Another interesting example that corroborates the above conceptions was relayed to me while on a Pure Home Water emergency distribution trip in January of 2009 to a town in which there had recently been an outbreak of guinea worm. While setting up a filter in one of the houses, I noticed that my partner and translator was sitting with a woman who was being treated for guinea worm on her foot. When I approached and asked what was wrong with her leg, the translator told me that the woman had refused to marry. Confused, I asked for clarification and the translator and woman conferred. After talking, the translator turned to me and said that the woman had refused to marry a man from another village and that as a result she had contracted guinea worm. He then proceeded to tell me that oftentimes this conception of wrongdoing and karmic punishment is used as an explanation for life situations that are unfavorable. The question "Why?" can often be answered with "because you deserve it". This line of thinking extends to whole communities' access water resources. If communities do not have access to water, they do not feel it is because the government has failed them in providing access, rather, that they have done something to deserve it. This type of traditional belief

shows the difference between the liberal, Eurocentric view of human rights and the reality of how people on the ground view the same issues (Rajagopal, 2007).

This makes a strong argument for social enterprises to address education about rights and social power imbalances in order to improve the effectiveness of their model. A rights-based approach to social enterprise would necessarily enshrine and promote client education about rights holders and duty bearers. This is not unlike Paulo Freire's popular education movement in Brazil in which he used adult literacy programs to educate people in the *favelas* about the social-structural relations that aided in their oppression[14]. By not only providing an affordable, reliable service, but by also informing clients about their rights, social enterprises and entrepreneurs will be able to aid rights-holders in staking claims and fighting for their rights.

Thus we see just how important education about rights is in terms of the understanding between a social enterprise and the customers that it is trying to serve. In the end, there is much potential for a rights-based approach to address this gap in understanding. Because rights-based approaches focus on power imbalances that create rights denials, they can be instructive to social entrepreneurs wishing to direct pressure towards duty-bearers both through rights-holder education and exemplary technical service.

Water: An Intersection of Human Rights

> Water is required for a range of different purposes, besides personal and domestic uses, to realize many of the Covenant rights. For instance, water is necessary to produce food (right to adequate food) and ensure environmental hygiene (right to health). Water is essential for securing livelihoods (right to gain a living by work) and enjoying certain cultural practices (right to take part in cultural life). Nevertheless, priority in the allocation of water must be given to the right to water for personal and domestic uses. Priority should also be given to the water

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[14] See Gadotti, M. (1994). *Reading Paulo Freire*. Albany: State University of New York.

resources required to prevent starvation and disease, as well as water required to meet the core obligations of each of the Covenant rights. (Comittee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2002)

One of the tenets of rights based approaches is a holistic view of rights as inalienable and indivisible (Twomey, 2007; Uvin, 2004). The organizations studied in this thesis implicitly recognize that the right to water is tied to other rights, but use this to different extents in their organizational design. This is one of the reasons why social enterprise is so appealing to the participants in this study. It not only gives them the opportunity to secure access to water, but also several other areas can be addressed simultaneously. For example, Community Water Solutions expressly lists their goals on their website:

> To implement community-level water treatment businesses in communities of the developing world that:
> 1. Are run by members of the community
> 2. Provide clean water for residents of that community
> 3. Generate economic growth and
> 4. Empower women in the community. (Community Water Solutions, 2010)

Notice that rather than a singular focus on access to water, there are several human rights outcomes implicated in achieving Community Water Solutions' goals. These include, right to self-determination, right to water, right to livelihood and women's rights. Thus on the part of Community Water Solutions, there seems to be an inherent understanding built into its mission that access to water cannot be guaranteed without simultaneously addressing other human rights that affect access to water. As Rebecca noted:

> I think the most important thing is the fact that the women working at the center are earning an income while providing something that is beneficial for their community. So everyone in their community is getting clean water and they're very proud to be doing this service. And then they are also earning money from their hard work…the women in the villages are always working to provide for their families and to provide for their husbands and their children and it's been nice for us to help people realize that you can also set up a way to help people but you can get paid for the work that you are doing. In Kasaligu the first village we're in the woman [who runs the center] is now sending two of her children to

school with the money she's earning from the water treatment center. She wasn't able to do that before. So that was really exciting for us to see. (Rebecca, 2009, p. 7)

We can see here that the water treatment station can be more than just providing access to water but can also help to work towards and to secure other rights, like the right to education and the right to livelihood. Thus the Community Water Solutions model reflects the indivisibility of human rights expounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Participants from Pure Home Water also recognized that women's rights were essential to implementing the right to water starting with Susan's 'quintessential moment' at the 1998 Women and Water Conference. Beyond that experience there was a realization by many of the associates of Pure Home Water that ensuring and fulfilling physical, and economic access to high-quality water would drastically improve the position of women in rural areas, a sentiment corroborated by General Comment 15[15]. When I spoke with women in the rural villages where Pure Home Water works, many noted that they and their children spend up to four hours per day fetching water. This time commitment limits their opportunities to work in other household areas, secure a livelihood and attain an education. As Susan notes:

> [There are] some big justice issues around women and children's role in water provision. I almost see it as slave labor. In the United States child labor was outlawed. I understand child labor in agricultural societies has an essential role to play in the well-being of the whole family unit. But I also find it very distressing and a human rights issue when girls don't go to school because they are carrying water. That's a dominant thing that they do and it precludes them from going to school. I think that there is a definite use for that [but] it does relegate them for life to a lowly position, to lack of opportunity and lack of education. (Susan, 2009, p. 30)

James added to this by noting:

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[15] See *Comittee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, 2002, II.12 (a) (b) and (c), pp. 155-156

And so we would still have a situation where people walk long distances in search of water… especially women because the culture makes women fetch water for households. It is only in extreme case that you'll find men carrying…water for household use. And so in this direction women are always discriminated against because it is they who fetch water for household use. It is they who fetch water to do the cooking. It is they who fetch water to wash. And so it is the women who are discriminated against. (James, 2009, p. 8)

Women are often the main stewards of water in households in rural areas, and though Pure Home Water does not provide water, it does help to ensure that families have their own water that is clean and safe to drink. This helps promote the right to self-determination on a household level. As Susan noted:

Susan:… I visited three households yesterday. They spoke two or three different languages so they were representing different tribal cultures. I asked, "What do you think about this [filtered] water?" How does it compare to [piped] water? And they said, "We think its cleaner." And I said, "Well how does it compare to sachet water?" And they said, "Well, it's better than sachet water." And I said, "In what way do you mean it's better than sachet water?" And they said, "Because we're doing it ourselves. We can trust it. We know what's happening with this water; we can do it ourselves." So, self-reliance is not just a concept from Emerson or from our New England tradition. Self-reliance is something that people take pride in worldwide…

Derek: What you are saying is that there is something about being able to do it yourself?

Susan: Be self reliant. Yeah to be self reliant; that is a notion that people worldwide can subscribe to.

Derek: So you think that's one of the strengths of social enterprise?

Susan: ...is that it helps to build self reliance. And it helps to potentially build local self-reliance…and local sustainability. But that has to be proven and that's where I think of Pure Home Water as an experiment that is very much in process and it could fail… things live or die (*Laughing*) things fail or succeed and Pure Home Water has that potential at any point in time. (Susan, 2009, pp. 27-28)

This idea that customers value the ability to ensure their own water quality was something I found both with the customers of Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions. In January of 2009 when I traveled to the homes of Pure Home Water

customers in and around Tamale, regardless of the manner in which they received the filter, the majority of the people I spoke with noted that they liked the filter because they could ensure their water was safe without having to depend on others. In the case of Community Water Solutions, the women running the treatment center noted that they were also able to earn a living and provide a needed service to the community, both of which they took great pride in. It seems that ultimately water can be located at the intersection of several different but interdependent human rights.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the ideas of human rights have infiltrated the thinking of the participants in this research. From the idea that water is essential to life, to the recognition of the government as responsibility bearer, to the inherent realization that multiple areas of rights need be addressed to effectively achieve access to safe water in Northern Ghana. It has also shown that there are gaps that must be addressed in enacting a rights-based approach to social enterprise in the water sector, specifically:

1. A lack of engagement with political issues that affect access to water
2. A lack of engagement with government
3. Varying conceptions of human rights between social enterprises and their customers

Although there is an underlying human-rights sensibility to the way in which the research participants think about water access, there is a strong needs-based focus in practical implementation that diminishes the potential for social enterprise to truly transform power relations.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The previous chapters have aided in understanding the research participants'
conceptions of social enterprise and human rights and their various strengths, motivations
and weaknesses with an eye to understanding how these influence the actions that they
take. This chapter makes an argument for a human rights-based approach to social
enterprise as the logical integration of business methods and development practice to
achieve social change. In essence, a human rights-based approach to social enterprise can
integrate "the political side of development and change efforts with the organizing,
capacity building, and creative dimensions." (Munro, 2009, p. 165). From the exploration
of the people behind two specific social enterprises, it has been demonstrated that these
social entrepreneurs are innovative, multi-disciplinary thinkers who have been influenced
by both the 'quintessential moment/experience' and by previous exposure to business
methods. While they have an implicit conception of human rights in relation to water,
they and their customers may not apply it in practice. When justifying their work, the
social entrepreneurs tended to mix an unspoken knowledge of human rights into their
arguments; however few were well acquainted with the formal legal framework of human
rights. Overall, the research and analysis point to the fact that the unsaid 'social' of social
enterprise may, in fact, be an implicit knowledge of and desire to apply human rights.
The human rights thinking behind these social enterprises reflects an attempt to resolve
the ambiguity of the 'social' in social enterprise, an attempt to appeal to some agreed
upon ethical framework by which to justify their actions.

Reasons for a Rights-Based Approach to Social Enterprise

Several important reasons exist that suggest a rights-based approach to social
enterprise is needed. First, many social enterprises inherently operate within the context

of human rights. By this I mean their actions directly affect human rights outcomes in terms of economic, social or cultural rights like water, natural resources, food, livelihoods etc. This is certainly the case with Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions, whose interventions can help to secure the human right to water, the right to self-determination and the right to livelihood. Other social enterprises work in other areas governed by rights. Click Diagnostics and Aravind Eye Hospitals attempt to achieve affordable and accessible healthcare for those in developing areas and SELCO attempts to assure an adequate standard of living through renewable energy[16]. Both of these areas are outlined in article 25 of the UDHR.

Because many social enterprises already work in areas in which the language or discourse of rights has infiltrated, formalizing this regime of knowledge may, in fact, be a most welcome development. For example, even though many of the participants have a distinct idea of what social enterprise is, they also had trouble describing how or why it might be the best method to go forward with development intervention. This theme developed in an exchange with Susan:

> *Derek: A couple minutes ago you said if we were to operate completely with a social mission we would just raise money send it over here and just give it away. So, why not?*
>
> Susan: [Why] not just a charity? It's a good question. Maybe we should be. Maybe we should be. I don't know the answers. I'm operating in the dark. I'm asking the questions, you're asking the questions, we're all asking the questions. I don't know the answers. Safe water for a billion people…When I first had that insight that that was going to be the rest of my life's work I put a question mark after it and someone suggested I should put an exclamation mark or I should just leave [the punctuation] off. But in my mind it was a question when I first conceptualized it. Can we deliver safe water to a billion people? You know. And so I don't know the answer, that's the bottom line and I am asking the question and everything that I do is geared toward asking that question. (Susan, 2009, p. 25)

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[16] Please see http://clickdiagnostics.com/ http://www.aravind.org/ and http://www.selco-india.com/ respectively for details.

Having a firm theoretical grounding in rights can help to provide direction and clarity in

areas where few, but governments, have treaded before.

Moreover, rights-based approaches can help to address some ethical concerns,

many of which are touched on by Zahra et al (2009):

> Our article encourages social entrepreneurs to keep the goal of maximizing social
> wealth in mind and urges them not to get caught up in the elegance or novelty of
> their own creation. Further, even though the pursuit of opportunities to increase
> income might be alluring, these activities should not be undertaken if they
> diminish the social venture's ability to serve its constituency. Such an inversion of
> means and ends raises serious ethical concerns, particularly for those volunteers
> and financial donors who wish to support an organization's social mission, rather
> than the technical operations.
> The lack of oversight and the potential for unethical actions should also
> encourage social entrepreneurs to adopt effective mechanisms that help to monitor
> their ventures. Social entrepreneurs share many of the same characteristics as their
> for-profit cohorts — risk-taking, proactiveness and independence. As such, some
> social entrepreneurs might be susceptible to taking unnecessary risks. Or, they
> may pursue innovation merely to create change, as opposed to enhancing social
> wealth. Social entrepreneurs should consider creating external advisory boards
> and implement effective governance mechanisms to make sure their ventures do
> not fall victim to… ethical abuses… (p. 529)

As Uvin (2004) points out, human rights-based approaches pay as much, if not more

attention to means than ends. They provide a benchmark and an internationally

recognized framework through which social entrepreneurs can compare their innovations,

creations and ideas. Essentially, as human rights are secured, so too is the social impact

social entrepreneurs wish to create.

However, social enterprises which operate in human rights sectors must have a

goal beyond the technical elimination of needs and a focus on the day-to-day operation of

their firms. There must be a vision of social justice which social entrepreneurs seek to

bring to fruition. If this is not the case, when their companies cease to exist there will be

no structural guarantee in place that ensures people's access to human rights. Even

though the people behind Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions are genuine, have character and integrity and truly care about the people of Northern Ghana, they are still private actors upon whom individuals and communities must rely. Individuals and communities have no direct control over Pure Home Water or Community Water Solutions' decisions or actions. Should they choose to cease their operations, the people of Northern Ghana would be left without a way to access filters, in the case of Pure Home Water, or to effectively and efficiently expand community water treatment to other sites, in the case of Community Water Solutions. Moreover, these organizations would not have created a way for the people of Northern Ghana to ensure *their own* access to clean water by right, without having to depend on a private organization. What is needed is more democratic control of resources through a human rights argument.

Thus, if, as the interviews have shown, safe, secure access to water, rather than profit, is the ultimate goal of these social enterprises then Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions must be willing to work towards the human right to water. They must push toward establishing democratic control over water, which, within the current legal regime of rights-holders and duty bearers, is the only way to truly ensure the right to water. Otherwise they may run the risk of absolving the government of its democratic responsibility while simultaneously divorcing the people from control of their own resources.

A human rights-based approach to social enterprise would also, as Gready (2008) suggests, replace apolitical, needs-based development programming and address the underlying power structures that prevent certain groups from claiming their rights.

Human rights-based approaches could help Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions think through the political aspects of their actions. As shown in the analysis, access to water in Northern Ghana is affected by social and political factors as much as by technical factors. Just recognizing and engaging with the political aspects of their work will allow Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions to both improve their ability to provide safe water and to push for democratic control. Moreover, basing their operations in the language of rights grants international legal and moral legitimacy to a social enterprise's efforts. By not taking a rights-based approach, these social enterprises will find themselves continuously addressing the symptoms rather than the root causes of poor water access.

At the same time, human rights can take from social enterprise the pragmatism, on the ground experience and responsiveness that social entrepreneurs embody and use it as a way to refine and redefine rights. Rights-based approaches are often criticized for being idealistic and unimplementable (Robinson, 2005). Given the characteristics of the social entrepreneurs that were explored in this thesis, they have the drive and innovative spirit to find ways to effectively operationalize human rights. Their passion for social change, could mean that many would be amenable to the activist approach to social enterprise that rights-based approaches entail. In fact, Susan noted how important activism can be in attaining goals:

> What I am doing is what every entrepreneur or pioneering person does, and I'm not saying I'm special or unique. I have a lot of colleagues who are pushing the envelope too. But I, among others, am new in a new field; new in a new awakening, or awareness…diarrheal disease kills more people than TB, malaria and HIV and it's been an invisible problem relative to others because it hasn't had the same level of advocacy that others have had and therefore it hasn't been able to get the same big bucks. You know the gay community has done a lot to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and to get money for that cause. They've been very

activist about it and that's one element that's sort of brought funding in. And there hasn't been a constituency to the same degree, anywhere to the same degree [for diarrheal diseases]. That's why I go around the world publicly talking about it. I do probably more public speaking in universities than I do in professional conferences now. It used to be the other way around…now I'm more interested in advocacy (Susan, 2009, p. 22)

This quote demonstrates how social entrepreneurs may look favorably upon pursuing activist roles in international development. Because their objectives rest squarely on the fate of human rights outcomes, social enterprises have a vested interest in achieving human rights goals. As such, their innovative, persistent and resourceful personalities make for the perfect agents to operationalize human rights.

By being effective, intimate advocates for marginalized communities, social entrepreneurs have much to teach the practice of human rights, the formal conception of which may be a Eurocentric idea devoid of input from the 'subaltern' (Rajagopal, 2007). A new, fruitful dialectic can be established between social entrepreneurs, who use pragmatic, locally specific knowledge and human rights, which may provide "a clear ethical and legal basis for the work of the development community." (Uvin, 2004, p. 49). The definition and discourse of human rights is always a moving target that is reshaped by political debate (Uvin, 2004). Due to their intimate connection with their customers, social enterprises seem to be aptly poised to influence this debate on the part of the marginalized and overcome the Eurocentric notions of the classical human rights regime.

A Rights-Based Approach to Social Enterprise in Northern Ghana

What might a rights-based approach to social enterprise in the water sector look like? To answer this question I use the framework proposed by Kapur and Duvvury (2006) for developing rights-based approaches. This discussion is not intended to be exhaustive. Rather I use the basic framework to attempt to understand what developing a

rights-based approach in the water sector in Northern Ghana might mean for social enterprises.

Taking a rights-based approach to realizing universal water access in Northern Ghana would start with the identification of water as a central focus and the supporting rights and parties that affect its implementation. Given the characteristics of Northern Ghana described in the previous chapter, the right to self-determination for communities and the right to livelihood for women seem most intimately connected to securing access to water for all. The next task would be to incorporate these as guiding principles for the design and processes of the social enterprise. This means paying attention to context. Because water is traditionally a community-managed resource in Northern Ghana and that women are particularly important stewards of water for families, a social enterprise employing a rights-based approach would find ways to create affordable access to water that reflects these facts. This means creating jobs within communities and reducing disease and work burden on women. Community Water Solutions has found a way to do this through its water treatment stations. It could be argued that Pure Home Water's model may not achieve these goals given that community-based jobs for women are not created and that each woman bears the individual burden of an extra filtration step and care for the filter that she would otherwise not be responsible for doing. At the same time, Pure Home Water has increased family self-sufficiency whereas with the Community Water Solution model, community members must rely on the water treatment station. This step is clearly a fine balancing act, but realizing human rights starts at the organizational level through attempting to anchor everyday practice in human rights language and precedent.

Next, Kapur and Duvuury (2006) argue that "A rights-based approach requires a shift from providing services to providing information." (p. 11). In doing so, the aim is to promote transparency in one's organization and in the government policy affecting the rights issues identified. Formally recognizing the water interruptions during elections, the way in which the Community Water and Sanitation Agency was born and numerous other issues that remain hidden within the agencies responsible for provision of water in Northern Ghana would be a first step. Actively engaging the government as the legal, elected responsibility bearer in developing new, innovative ways to scale up a social enterprise's model is a crucial second step. For Pure Home Water this might mean actively seeking the support of the government in implementing filter campaigns and promoting the filter as a way that government can fulfill its human rights obligations. In the short-term, Pure Home Water might become a supplier to the government; working contracts much like the ones it works for large institutional buyers. In the long-term, Pure Home Water could advocate for government adoption of the filter as policy for rural areas and for government capacity to build, service and maintain a network of filters across Northern Ghana. Community Water Solutions could initially invite government officials to see their water stations and offer their services in a consultative and planning role. Eventually they could instruct the CWSA on how to properly set up a network of community water treatment stations.

In addition, setting up innovative reporting structures within the social enterprise that allow information about its activities to be accessed by customers, government and other stakeholders will help to increase its legitimacy. For Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions, this currently includes sharing with communities the results

of the many water quality tests they perform in an effort to educate community members about water quality. In the future it would mean educating community members on any processes that exist for interacting with government officials to attempt to claim their right to water or working with government to create such structures.

Next and perhaps most critically, is the promotion of education about rights. Social enterprises can engage with both the CWSA and clients in this capacity. As shown in this research, oftentimes governments have an understanding of what rights are, but lack the knowledge or capacity to implement them in practice and so revert solely to needs-based programming. For instance, governments party to General Comment 15 are responsible for fulfilling the right to water but can do so through partnership with private entities (Comittee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2002). Working with the CWSA and Ghana Water Company to show them how social enterprise can fit into their goal of fulfilling rights may help to create a supportive legal and operational environment for social entrepreneurs. By using the language of rights and promoting affordable, effective new methods to provide service, social enterprises like Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions can enlist the aid and support of the government to form a mutually beneficial relationship.

At the same time, educating rights-bearers about their rights and the accountability mechanisms in place will help to put pressure on duty-bearers to realize rights. As we have seen, sometimes those whose rights are left unfulfilled may not in fact understand that violation in terms of rights, which would provide them with a legal mechanism for redress. Social enterprises, with their extended reach and network on the ground, are well positioned for this type of education. Staff of Pure Home Water and

Community Water Solutions should be trained in how to educate customers about the integrated rights they are attempting to address so that customers know what should be reasonably expected from responsibility bearers. Education of rights-holders combined with a higher level of service that takes into account local variation may combine to produce powerful, practical ways to hold duty-holders responsible by example (Kapur & Duvvury, 2006). At the same time, social enterprises incorporating rights as a benchmark within their own organization can turn to the government's own standards – read rights – when seeking to hold duty bearers to account for failure to respect, protect or fulfill.

Social enterprises also need to educate themselves about the daily, cultural practices of the people of Northern Ghana, while at the same time implicating those people in informing the delineation of, and staking claims to, their rights (Kapur & Duvvury, 2006). This requires that Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions learn about and inform rights-holders about current methods through which they can seek redress for rights denials and that they become effective voices form marginalized communities within the circles where rights are defined.

What is most important in this methodology is not the specific business model that a social enterprise adopts, but rather the impact on rights that the social enterprise will have. For example, by engaging the local governance structure in setting up water treatment stations, Community Water Solutions is ensuring local control over water resources. This is the happy medium in a country where the national government may be constrained by corruption, resources and infrastructure. However, to scale on a larger level and secure universal access to water in Northern Ghana and beyond, tapping into the network and resources of the state will be critical. Taking a rights-based approach to

social enterprise ultimately means serving as a bridge between the current situation and a future in which democratic governments are able to provide effective and reliable service to their constituents. This creates several interesting questions about the fate of social enterprises. However, only by paying close attention to context can social enterprises effectively incorporate rights into their own organizations, improve customer knowledge of rights and ultimately serve as a model for responsibility bearers to support, follow and adopt.

An Ethical Conundrum

While a rights-based approach to social enterprise can help to address some of the functional ethical concerns, like lack of oversight and cutting moral corners, proposed by Zahra et al (2009), it does create a critical ethical conundrum of its own. Private actors can respect, protect and *provide for* human rights, meaning they can help provide those services that, if supplied by a democratic government, would fulfill human rights. However, because they lack a legal and moral obligation imparted by a democratic process they cannot fulfill human rights. The research participants in this thesis have expressed the desire to make social change a central theme of the work that they do. But however benevolent a private organization may be, 'the people', rather than private actors, must be in charge of their own resources when it comes to securing human rights. This necessitates bringing the government back into the picture through a rights-based approach as "an empowered but responsible and responsive actor" with the ultimate goal of a democratically representative government fulfilling human rights (Hickey & Mitlin, 2009, p. 212). Though necessary to realize the type of social change that social enterprises seek to achieve, laying a human rights-based approach on top of social

enterprise necessitates that independent social enterprises work towards their own obsolescence or towards becoming effective government contractors. Given the passion, drive and dedication that the research participants have shown in creating and sustaining their organizations, this may be a difficult goal to work towards. As *business* entities, social enterprises have a vested interest in becoming a fixture in the contexts in which they work. Entrepreneurs themselves may not be willing to let go of that which they have created if government does become effective in addressing the social needs of its constituents.

In his interview, James brought this point to the forefront in an eloquent if understated manner. After noting the critical importance of educating rights-holders about their rights, he stated that if rural villagers did not understand the subtle difference that *access* to clean water rather than *free provision* of clean water is a fundamental human right, then social enterprise as currently conceived could not work:

> But then they would have to let the rural people also understand that once it's a human rights issue and they have to get it, there should be a way or a mechanism of sustaining the system even if it is provided for them for free….Yes I think that people, when they get to know that is it a human rights issue and they know that it is their right to have access to clean water, would not be willing to pay…*They would not be willing to pay because they have been made aware that it is a human rights issue, and then for that matter it is a government responsibility to provide for them.* (James, 2009, pp. 6-7, emphasis added)

The critical point is this: if social enterprises take up the mantle of rights education, sooner or later rights-holders will realize that the government has a responsibility to provide them with universal access to the safe water they require at an affordable price. At the same time, by working with government and showing them new and affordable models that can provide access to safe water, Pure Home Water and Community Water

Solutions can work toward the ultimate goal of a fair, democratically elected government that is willing and able to fulfill the human right to water. This begs the question: are social enterprises that purport to be working towards sustainable social change willing to work towards *this* moment, which might simultaneously lead to the realization of their goal and potentially to their own organizational demise?

If they are, then social enterprises cannot hide behind the guise of 'doing good.' Rather, they must have a long-term vision for what that means, and if securing human rights is the endgame, then a democratically elected government providing access to safe water is the ultimate goal. In fact, this is precisely what Rebecca expressed earlier:

> In a perfect world I think it would be the government's responsibility, kind of the way it is [in the United States] and they have public municipalities, but we have private companies too. But at the end of the day it should be the government's responsibility. I just don't think that that's the best way to do it right now. But I think that any long term solution to this right to water is going to have to come through infrastructure and people really believing it is something that people have a right to and that it needs to be provided but I think it's going to be a long way till we get there. (Rebecca, 2009, p. 11)

If, in the long run, it is the government's responsibility to provide safe water for its people, this vision must be included in Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions' planning from the outset.

In sum, any social enterprise wishing not only to respect and protect, but also to ultimately *fulfill* human rights must constructively bring rights-holders and duty bearers together through education, activism and innovation and serve either as an intermediate step or a partner in securing government's ability to provide access to safe water. Again, this was echoed by Rebecca who stated:

> … [it's] an intermediate step. It's basically like a private water municipality model just at a smaller scale and so you could scale it up to provide water for a whole

region if you did it the right way. It's essentially a for profit model for bringing clean water to people. (Rebecca, 2009, p. 11)

However, both Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions are currently missing the opportunity to secure social-structural change by not educating their customers about rights or working with the national government, which has a vast network and a mandate to provide for the human right to water. Even though the government may not be initially able or willing to do this, Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions can and should actively engage with the state in the name of securing human rights.

Again, this represents a long-term goal, realized under a fair and democratic system. Currently, the government may not be willing or able to provide these services, however, educating customers on their rights and actively inviting the participation of government, brings the system closer to democratic control of resources. To gauge their progress towards this goal, social enterprises might consider rethinking the ways in which they measure success. Rather than by number of filters sold, stations implemented or people they have reached, they might think of their success in terms of how constructively involved and invested the government is in aiding them to provide water to those who need it. Performing a thought experiment every so often in which they ask themselves whether or not their customers would be able to access safe water if they were to close up shop might give them a good sense as to whether they have succeeded in assuring the right to water. Do duty bearers take seriously their responsibility to provide and have they understood the ways in which to do it? Do they monitor water quality and access issues proactively? Do rights-holders understand their rights and the ways in which to claim them? Future research should identify social enterprises that purport to

have taken a rights-based approach to development and investigate these issues. It should also consider how such organizations have affected government policy and democratic control. Doing so will also help to uncover some of the hidden barriers to this type of activist social enterprise.

Current Challenges to Integrating Human Rights and Social Enterprise

Challenges exist in developing rights-based approaches no matter what the context. These include national sovereignty, the debate over universality of human rights and cultural relativism[17]. However, beyond the ethical concerns outlined above, there seem to be two unique challenges to implementation of a rights-based approach to social enterprise that may need to be overcome.

The strong needs-based tradition of development intervention is something of a juggernaut. The individuals in this study have questioned the utility of examining and implementing rights when there is immediate suffering and need. In this case, it falls to social enterprises to build coalitions with other actors that can help them to address immediate, pressing needs while they serve the more long-term function of realizing rights and addressing power imbalances.

As discussed in the literature review, addressing rights is inherently a political subject. By explicitly dealing with rights, social enterprises leave themselves open to attack by vested government stakeholders that may not want to address rights violations or rights that have been left unfulfilled. Social enterprises may not currently have the skills or resources in order to deal with these added pressures. Building up community organizing, educational and political corps in addition to the management and technical core of social enterprises is critical to adopting a rights-based approach.

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[17] See (Uvin, 2004; Gready, 2008; Nyamu-Musembi, 2002)

Conclusion

Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions are comprised of multi-faceted individuals with diverse motivation and tremendous drive. These individuals have risen to a noble and enormous challenge. They have done this at a time when many people with the type of technical knowledge, tenacity and determination that the study participants possess do not focus on the pressing social issues of our time. Thus, the results which Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions have garnered to date, which include serving many thousands of individuals with access to clean water in Northern Ghana, cannot be overlooked. They have had tremendous impact on the individuals they serve, who, when interviewed expressed great pride in their ability to provide safe water for their families. That Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions have been able to evoke this sort of pride from within their customers is no small feat. It is a direct result of the countless hours each individual has spent carefully thinking about the best possible way to serve their customers' needs.

Thus, the argument to incorporate human rights into social enterprise is made in the spirit of aiding social enterprises in their long-term vision of social justice. In no way is it meant to diminish the great work that Pure Home Water and Community Water Solutions do. Rather, what I propose is meant to help these organizations gain more clarity about their long-term goal and develop a more in-depth and all-encompassing organizational plan to guarantee long-term access to safe water in Northern Ghana and beyond. To do this, organizations must not only focus on *providing* clean water, but also on engaging the state, educating the people they work for about the right to water and incorporating the discourse of human rights in the daily undertaking of the work they do. Strengthening their mission by providing a long-term democratic goal will greatly

enhance their ability to bring rights holders and responsibility bearers together to realize

social change through new, innovative models of delivery.

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