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## **Social Entrepreneur – The New Kid ‘Off’ the Block**

*The global societies are deluge with economic imperfections, social inequities and gaps between the various classes. The world is in dire need of a Good Samaritan who volunteers to devote one's sincere efforts, intellect and other resources towards the overall social development on various fronts, thus bridging the gap between the haves and have-nots. The rise of social entrepreneurs is probably the indication of the arrival of such Good Samaritan. This chapter throws light on understanding a Social Entrepreneur.*

**I**nequity is an evil; all-pervasive. Inequity, in addition to the ubiquity, assumes various forms. Inequity prevails on the grounds of knowledge, racial status, health, technology, development, education, recognition, etc. Nonetheless, the principal inequality that results in the rest of disequilibria is the economic inequality. The unstoppable growing gap between the rich and the poor stands as the gruesome concern that fuels the other disparities.

Statistics suggest that a meager 0.13% of the world's population controlled 25% of the world's assets as in 2005. While 20% of the world's population consumes 86% of the world's goods, 80% of

populace gets just the remainder 14%. That certainly speaks volumes about the acute inequality existing on the earth.

My heartiest thanks to the web source *www.globalissues.com*, which shares an exhaustive list of startling statistics, that offered a convincing reason to attempt this research based book. The source says that half the world – nearly three billion people – lives on less than two dollars a day. It adds that the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of the poorest 48 nations, which amounts to a fourth of the world, is less than the wealth of the world's three richest individuals combined. To add a little more of agony to the heart wrenching numbers, nearly a billion people entered the 21st century who are unable to read a book or sign their names. To add to the saga of sufferings, the wealthiest nation on Earth has the widest gap between rich and poor of any industrialized nation.

The economic developments like globalization, liberalization, improved technology, etc., are supposed to be the comforting factors to a country and its people. But what is the reach of the comfort as a result of such developments in reality? How far have the governments been successful in alleviating the poverty? How significant has been the impact on the countryside people of the improving technologies and streamlining service standards? How far have the business entrepreneurs been successful in reducing the gap between the haves and have-nots? What has been the extent of application of the upgrading technologies and widening knowledge base on the neglected areas like agriculture and small industries? Has the pacing development got anything related to illiteracy, education on its agenda? If yes, why the statistics still show as dismal a picture as mentioned above?

Perhaps, the reason for the inequality could be the differences of interest. The corporates, though can contribute towards bridging the gap, it still is not among its prime priorities. The companies would

believe in the cliché ‘the business of business is business’. The priority would certainly be for annual gains, business expansions, market penetrations, overseas ventures etc. Social responsibility on the shoulders of the corporates is still in inchoate stages, and moreover is not mandatory for the corporates. However, hats off to a handful of companies like Infosys, Satyam, Tata etc., that have sincerely taken up the corporate social responsibility. Nevertheless, it is absolute discretion of the company whether or not to contribute towards the society. Due to such liberal and unorganized structure of CSR the gap between the classes of society is hardly reduced.

Government’s position is helpless too. For instance in India, while managing the largest democracy in the world, tenure of five years is certainly not sufficient to address the needs of all the classes. Even worse is the situation when the system is plagued by evils like red tapism, bureaucracy, corruption, nepotism, lethargy etc.

If that was the scenario on the corporate and the political fronts, is there a feasible solution for the poverty and the inequality? The obvious guess would be the Non-profit and Non-government organizations. Here is a brief evaluation of the status of the NPOs/NGOs. The statistics suggest that there are around 1.2 million Non-Profit Organizations in India, which employ nearly 20 million people. It further suggests that, by virtue of their small size, nearly three-fourths of all NPOs have only volunteers or at most one paid staff. It indicates that only 8.5 percent i.e., one in 12 NPOs, employs more than 10 paid staff. The most important element to ensure the sustainability of the organization and continuance of the service is funds. The main sources of funds for NPOs in general are mainly from, grants, charities and donations. When the funds are coming from various sources, it certainly lets the factor of uncertainty creep in. Every time the organization runs out of funds, they are compelled to raise the begging bowl in front of the donors. These concerning

facts question the very sustainability of the organization and replicability of ideas to serve the society.

From the above discussion, we can observe and infer that a few inalienable ingredients to reduce the inequality in the society are:

- Sincere and dedicated efforts towards the social development activities
- Independent sustainability of the organization
- Replicability and hence creativity in the ideas and approach towards serving the society.

At the outset, it certainly is next to impossible to expect the unique concoction of sincerity, dedication, financial independence, and creativity from any of the three groups discussed above (Corporates/ Government/NGOs). It needs a different breed of entrepreneur, who is kind enough to dedicate his self less efforts for social cause, smart enough to ensure financial independence and sustainability and intelligent enough to think creatively and innovatively, to ensure the replicability of the ideas. This is probably the definition that best suits Social Entrepreneurs – an emerging breed of entrepreneurs, whose principal interest is the social development, at the same time ensuring the sustainability of the organizations, and replicability of ideas.

### **Objective and Methodology**

These unsettling statistics formed a ground to think and prompted our team (at Icfai University) to interact with recognized Social Entrepreneurs and learn more about this emerging class of entrepreneurs who have been creating waves across the societies in the recent past. Thus the objective of this study was to observe the modus operandi of the Social Entrepreneurs, understand the mission and vision and learn their style of bringing about the desired change

in the society. Most of this research is based on the primary sources of information. We spoke to around 30 Ashoka recognized Social Entrepreneurs (whose profiles are shared in the annexure) and gathered adequate information to understand and conceptualize the practice of Social Entrepreneurship. However, some of the information has been derived from the secondary sources of information as well, like websites, magazines and the published books.

### **Criterion of the Sample**

To maintain the uniformity through the reading, the book comprises the conversations with and the experiences of only those Social Entrepreneurs who are recognized by the Ashoka Foundation (About Ashoka is discussed in the box).

### **Who is this?**

William Drayton is believed to have coined the term *Social Entrepreneur*; Ashoka – the apex body of Social Entrepreneurs describes the term, as “Social Entrepreneurs are individuals with innovative solutions to society’s most pressing social problems. They are ambitious and persistent, tackling major social issues and offering new ideas for wide-scale change. Rather than leaving societal needs to the government or business sectors, Social Entrepreneurs find what is not working and solve the problem by changing the system, spreading the solution, and persuading entire societies to take new leaps.”

Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship defines Social Entrepreneurs as those who identify and apply practical solutions to social problems by combining innovation, resourcefulness and opportunity. Schwab foundation says that Social Entrepreneurs innovate by finding a new product, a new service, or a new approach to a social problem.

### Inception of Ashoka

In 1980, Ashoka, one of the leading social enterprises in the world, was founded by Drayton. He named the enterprise after the Indian emperor Ashoka of 3rd century BC. Speaking in an interview, Drayton said the idea for establishing an organization for Social Entrepreneurs came to his mind when he was studying at Harvard in 1963. During those days, Drayton actively participated in the Civil Rights Movement in US, which was based on Mahatma Gandhi's ideas. He founded a number of organizations ranging from Harvard's Ashoka Table, a discussion group based on social sciences, to Yale Legislative Service. In 1963, he went to India to join Vinoba Bhave's (Bhave) Bhoodan (land gift) movement. This movement had a great influence on Drayton. Even Drayton admitted that it was Bhave from whom he learnt about changing the society and also understood the process of change. In the year 1980, Drayton established Ashoka in India, with a budget of \$50,000. Initially, Drayton faced financial problems to run the enterprise. He called on various corporations and foundations to support the enterprise, but his efforts failed.

His search ended in 1984 when John D and Catherine T MacArthur Foundation awarded him \$200,000. Since then he went on to successfully raise millions of dollars for the enterprise. The enterprise led by Drayton is responsible for bringing about major social reforms in various countries. According to some experts, the whole credit goes to Drayton for bringing reforms in the society. Drayton's work has not just confined only to the expansion of Ashoka but also contributed much to the development of the social sector. Speaking on this J Gregory Dees, Professor at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business said, "Bill was the pioneer; he really laid the foundation for the rest of us."

*Source: Icfai Case Study Development Cell.*

Wikipedia defines Social Entrepreneurs as "someone who recognizes a social problem and uses entrepreneurial principles to organize, create, and manage a venture to make social change." It says "Whereas business entrepreneurs typically measure performance in profit and return, Social Entrepreneurs assess their success in terms of the impact they have made on society".

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## Understanding Social Entrepreneurs

From the above definitions, we can infer that Social Entrepreneurs are the much awaited class of people who are resolute to devote their dedicated efforts towards the social upliftment, ensuring the financial independence with innovative ideas promising the sustainability of the ideas. Social Entrepreneurs are the people with a set of unique mix of characteristics. Social Entrepreneurs are in a restless and constant search for new and innovative ways to serve the society. For instance Tyrone Bledsoe is a US based, Ashoka Certified Social Entrepreneur, who organized the first ever Student African American Brotherhood on the campus of Georgia Southwestern State University. Tyrone is the Associate Dean in the University. His objective was to curb the college drop out rate because of the negative peer pressure. Today it is a widespread, nationwide organization of students dedicated and committed to the service to brotherhood under the motto, “I am my brother’s keeper, and together we shall rise.” This creative approach not only improved the peer to peer relationship but also registered a phenomenal 86% graduation rate, which is more than twice the national average for black males.

Accomplishing the social mission is certainly the first objective for Social Entrepreneurs. However, they weigh the social and financial aspects equally. In an interview with Rajagopalan – a Social Entrepreneur, founder of TIDE (Technology Informatics Design Endeavour) he says that “the trend if I see in this country for the last 30 years, Social Entrepreneurship has moved away from philanthropy. Earlier this entrepreneurship, everything was structured around philanthropy. You try to get donation, then you try to fill your bowls with the donation and then you offer some services at no cost or subsidized cost to people.” He observes, “These things are now going away. What is happening instead is that the entrepreneurs who provide Social services at their cost, are also sensitized towards cost recovery.

The aspects of cost control and cost recovery are also becoming equally important in addition to the services. You might work on grants; still it is not 100% grant. People would want to recover cost, which is one trend. Financially social sector would like to be independent.”

### **Business Entrepreneurs – Social Entrepreneur-Philanthropist**

With the advent of the concept of corporate social responsibility, we can observe that the social front is being addressed to by all the three categories viz: business entrepreneurs, Social Entrepreneurs and the philanthropists (NPOs/NGOs) etc. However, there are thin margins that distinguish Social Entrepreneurs from the rest of the two.

While differentiating Social Entrepreneur from the two, Glory Alexander – an Ashoka recognized Social Entrepreneur feels “A Business entrepreneur is doing something mainly for commercial business to make money with exceptions like Narayan Murthy who is into business but also has created wealth around him wherever he has gone. In that sense it has been a little different. However, in general, people who are in business are out to make money from their venture. Philanthropist is a person who has already made money and giving a portion of it for a social cause or wherever he feels that there is a need. Whereas Social Entrepreneur is a person who does something for the social reason, which would benefit the community and which may not result in too much of production of money. It could, but need not always. But definitely would result in different forms of benefit for the community.”

Arvind Kejriwal – The Magsaysay recipient and a Social Entrepreneur, while defining a Social Entrepreneur says “NGO is one that doesn’t bother about profits but into social work whereas Business Entrepreneur is the one who doesn’t bother about



philanthropy and only about profits. Social Entrepreneur is primarily interested in social upliftment but at the same time doesn't deny the inflow of money so that it can be re-channelised into social development. So it's a blend of both."

### SROI – An Introduction

Social Return On Investment (SROI) is an emerging concept in economic development. The term SROI generally refers to a method of measuring social benefits. It is expressed as social performance as a ratio to an input, typically capital. SROI is likely to become increasingly relevant in micro finance as the industry transitions from donor capital to private investment. In this context, SROI is a tool by which MFIs can demonstrate their social value, which is presumed to be important to attract socially responsible investors to participate in micro finance as well as to allocate different levels of socially responsible investment to those MFIs offering varying risk and social/financial return. It is important to note up front that SROI is not impact assessment. Although SROI and impact assessment utilize similar information and similar methods, the two are distinct. SROI is a broader concept that includes impact assessment within its framework, but which also includes other concepts, such as monetized outcomes and cost benefit analysis.

Source: [www.seepnetwork.org](http://www.seepnetwork.org)

### Standard Guidelines for SROI

Guideline 1: Include both positive and negative impacts in the assessment.

Guideline 2: Consider impacts made by and on all stakeholders, including those inside the company itself, before deciding which are significant enough to be included in the assessment.

Guideline 3: Include only impacts that are clearly and directly attributable to the company's activities. Be conservative with leaps of faith, and don't take credit for more than your organization can realistically affect.

Guideline 4: Avoid double counting the value (financial and social) created by the company, and do not use market valuations of social impacts where they do not reflect full costs and benefits.

Guideline 5: In industries or geographic areas in which impacts would be created by the existence of any business, these impacts should not be counted

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in an SROI. The SROI should describe what makes the company different from a standard venture in the industry or region (i.e., from its competition).

Guideline 6: Only quantify or monetize impacts if it is logical given the context of the impact, business or industry.

Guideline 7: Put numeric metrics into context (e.g. this period versus last period, this company versus similar companies) to give the social return on investment meaning.

Guideline 8: Address risk factors affecting the SROI in the assumptions, and carefully consider and document the choice of discount rate for social cash flows.

Guideline 9: Carry out a sensitivity analysis to identify key factors influencing projected outcomes.

Guideline 10: Include ongoing tracking of social impact.

*Source: [www.haas.berkeley.edu](http://www.haas.berkeley.edu)*

## Less Density of Social Entrepreneurs

All credits to William Drayton and Ashoka for offering a flurry of opportunities to the people with a social bent of mind. However, more than twenty years after the coining of the word and formation of organizations like Ashoka, Schwab foundation, the practice of Social Entrepreneurship is struggling to gain prominence as an entrepreneurial domain. And hence the gap between the haves and have-nots still remains to be filled. The reasons are manifold.

One of the major reasons affecting the Social Entrepreneurship is the revenue factor. Social enterprise doesn't concentrate on earning money. It will not grow as rapidly, unless there is self-sufficiency or income generation attached to social enterprise. Madhav Chavan of Pratham says, "When profit and thus income generation motive is combined with social change, that works much faster." One glaring evidence that substantiates the opinion is micro enterprises like Grameen bank of Mohammed Yunus, which grew rapidly over the years. Nevertheless, competition is ubiquitous, and it spares no one

as an exception. Not even Social Entrepreneurs. Today the government and the private sectors have – their presence in the areas where Social Entrepreneurs could have fared better viz; education, micro financing, etc.

One more limitation that challenges the Social Entrepreneurs is the people’s attitude towards Social Entrepreneurs. People will listen to them but may not be convinced. Unless they prove it. Hence the Social Entrepreneurs always carry a possibility of non-cooperation by the people. Another reason, according to the Social Entrepreneurs we spoke to, is the absence of a structured framework for the Social Entrepreneurship.

There are few spaces and little facilities for Social Entrepreneurs to work in. Social Entrepreneurs don’t have the institutional framework. For example, if you want to setup a private company, you just register the company; you go to bank you take a loan; you go to business school, you can learn all the tools and techniques and you are in business. However if you want to be Social Entrepreneur then there is no similarly supporting framework in which you work.

Ravi Agarwal of Toxics Link opines “I think society is not geared as yet to creating institutions that support Social Entrepreneurship”. While the concept of Business Entrepreneurship is hundreds of years old, and it started very early on in Europe and US when people had sought innovation in technology, Social Entrepreneurship is relatively new phenomenon.

Another reason of its slow pace of emergence is principle-based approach. Social Entrepreneurs are wedded with values, which are universal. A Social Entrepreneur will fight to the bottom dollar on some defined issues related to ethics, issue of democratic functioning etc. And these values and principles, which are grossly missing in the

### About Toxics Link

Toxics Link emerged from a need to establish a mechanism for disseminating credible information about toxics in India, and for raising the level of the debate on these issues. The goal was to develop an information exchange and support organization that would use research and advocacy in strengthening campaigns against toxic pollution, help push industries towards cleaner production, and link groups working on toxics and waste issues.

Over time, Toxics Link has developed capacities to interact with the grassroots through outreach amongst various civil society actors, as well as to play a role in influencing policy and have conversations with other stakeholders such as industry and technical experts. It is also central to networks connecting experts, civil society groups and individuals working nationally and internationally on issues related to toxics. Toxics Link has unique expertise in the areas of hazardous, medical and municipal wastes, as well as in specific issues such as the international waste trade, and the emerging issues of pesticides and POPs.

*Source: [www.toxicslink.org](http://www.toxicslink.org)*

corporate or government machinery, act as inhibitions on the way of Social Entrepreneurs instead of boosting and encouraging them.

## Measures to Nurture Social Entrepreneurs

One of the inevitable prerequisites for the Social Entrepreneurs to sustain is to think creatively and come up with innovative, and powerful ideas. They have to produce really good ideas that promise a significant, transformational social change. They should be capable of exploiting more resources to execute those ideas. Social Entrepreneurs are expected to be good not merely at technological innovations but also at leadership and managerial skills. They must bear in mind that the field of Social Entrepreneurship is in the beginning more challenging and daunting a task.

Social Entrepreneurs must possess the passion towards the social transformation, which can be the only driving factor for them to move ahead. The Social Entrepreneurs are self-motivated and

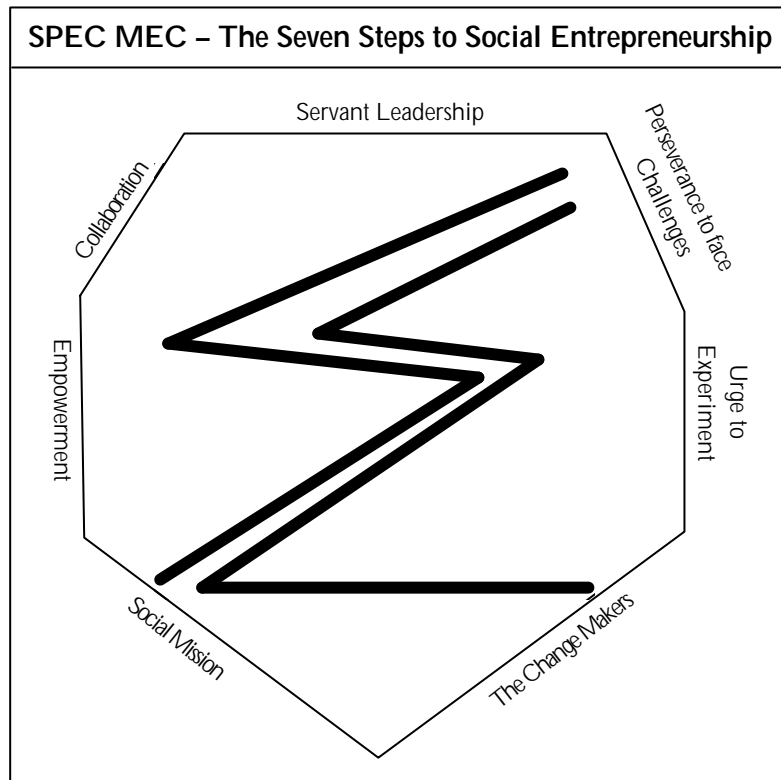
self-driven people. They have to stay focused. Madhav Chavan of Pratham says “Grow in one area and always believe in measurement of what you do. If you measure your work, then you know your strengths and weaknesses. So measurement is important, and the other thing is do not have closed door. Open-minded approach keeps one’s mind open to all kinds of available solutions. Then one can either borrow solutions or can judge among two or three solutions.”

Anshu Gupta – a recognized Social Entrepreneur of Goonj opines, “It is high time that we define who Social Entrepreneurs are. The way many are confused about the definition and traits of Social Entrepreneurs, I am also confused about it and most of them are confused about it.” There is no denying that there is still no clear *definition for Social Entrepreneurship*. Hence, it is essential to find out who is Social Entrepreneur in the entire model. One of the possible ways to make Social Entrepreneurship active could be to introduce the domain of Social Entrepreneurship at various levels of academics. This avoids a possible confusion with respect to the term as well as promotes the significance of the practice. Anshu Gupta of Goonj observes “Now I see so many mails where they write Social Entrepreneur in place of social worker. Because – this is not one thing where you need to pass an exam or get degree to become a Social Entrepreneur. This is really going to create a lot of confusion in the future.” Inclusion of Social Entrepreneurship into academics would definitely bring the discipline of the use and understanding of the term Social Entrepreneur in an appropriate manner. Ravi Agarwal of Toxics Link says, “Currently Social Entrepreneurs have to use existing systems. Suppose you want to learn skills of Social Entrepreneur, you can’t go to any school. There is no business school which teaches Social Entrepreneurship. You need this learning to come up. And Social Entrepreneurship ought to be recognized and I think that is slowly happening now. We need to just keep spreading; as it will happen more and more it will grow

further.” Thus Social Entrepreneurship as an academic program complemented with an appropriate assistance from the government and other funding bodies would certainly witness the triumph of Social Entrepreneurship and would draw a new and a better dawn, comprising a society of equals.

There must be a constant encouragement for the Social Entrepreneurs from various concerned entities. They should be thoroughly encouraged. They need not be successful all the time but definitely, there have been so many instances of Social Entrepreneurs who have done so well and made difference to the life of the people. People like Mohammed Yunus, Fabio Rosa, Jeroo Billimoria etc should be glorified as the change makers who have transformed the lives of thousands. The Social Entrepreneurs, government, corporates, and the academic institutions must on a war foot launch an awareness campaign about the role, significance and the contribution of the Social Entrepreneurs to the society. They must pass on effective and motivating advocacies to the next generation prospective Social Entrepreneurs, thus sensitizing them towards the social development.

This book is one of the humble attempts to spread awareness about Social Entrepreneurship as an emerging, distinguished discipline that promises a transformational change in the societies. The book is based on rich evidence supported with an exhaustive research based on both the primary and secondary sources of information. The subsequent chapters will identify the traits and characteristics of the Social Entrepreneurs, with adequate illustrations, experiences, and case studies about the certified Social Entrepreneurs, which promise to offer rich learning insights to the budding social as well as business entrepreneurs, the business leaders and the practising managers with a benevolent attitude and inclination towards the social development.



### **SPEC MEC: The Seven Principles towards Social Entrepreneurship**

Social Entrepreneurs bring in a few exceptional traits of leadership that help them in translating their dream of social development into reality. One of the driving forces that projects a Social Entrepreneur, as a benevolent human being is his '**Servant**' attitude while leading the target community. The style of Social Entrepreneurs is more like servant leader. *Social Entrepreneurs* illustrate that entrepreneurship and service orientation can go together. A large community of Social Entrepreneurs is embracing the servant leadership as their approach while leading the campaign for social development.

Social Entrepreneurs while assuming the servant leadership are constantly reminded of several things that result in a successful practice of servant leadership. The very focus of the servant leader is on the followers. The servant leader would be more interested in the interest of the people first than the organization.

Agapao Love has been defined as moral and respectful consideration and treatment of others (Patterson) and hence forms an inevitable component of the Servant Leadership Model. A Social Entrepreneur as a servant leader is characterized by the traits like Humility or the teachableness of the leader, Genuine Concern for others, Controlled Discipline, Seeking what is right and good for the organization (society), Showing mercy in beliefs and actions of all people, Focusing on the purpose of the organization, Creating and sustaining peace among the target communities. Altruism is another desirable feature of the Social Entrepreneurs as servant leaders. Altruism basically means the set of moral acts intended to promote the happiness of others, which in the due course establishes the trust factor in each other.

Definition of Entrepreneurship is incomplete without **'Perseverance'** to face challenges. The hurdles multiply when it is Social Entrepreneur. There are several factors that contribute to the uncertainty and challenges against the Social Entrepreneurs. The few factors that contribute to the challenges to the Social Entrepreneurs are the Newness Syndrome, Lack of Resources, Public Perception, Gender Specific Problems, Lack of Regulated Environment and Lack of a Structured Framework.

Social Entrepreneur being a new kid on the block is passing through a phase characterized by Lack of Clarity and Awareness, Misunderstanding the benchmarks. Social Entrepreneurs are generally not supported by the authorities or the sponsors. And they



do not rely on charities as a principal source of income. Hence, lack of resources is a common issue faced almost by all the Social Entrepreneurs in the beginning phase for the want of funds.

The lack of clarity in the definition of Social Entrepreneurs adds to the complication resulting in a variety of public perceptions. The people may not show their readiness to accept the agenda and the services of Social Entrepreneurs. Many even mistake it to be another political stunt or a gimmick with ulterior intentions. Hence, the passionate Social Entrepreneurs should also be ready to face a crisis of trust in the beginning. However, they must learn the knack of convincing the public and getting the public into their stride. Managing Women entrepreneurship is another challenge for the Social Entrepreneurs. Nevertheless the women have come-off with flying colors as the Social Entrepreneurs in the projects like Grameen Bank. However, the incidence of rigor varies from one activity to another. For instance, the activity that involves physical rigor as is with most of the activities in the Social Entrepreneurs, women may be considered a challenge.

Social Entrepreneurship, despite having more than 25 years of practice, is still in an unorganized pattern and remains an unattended and unnoticed domain by the authorities concerned. Still the aspiring entrepreneurs have to struggle to obtain recognition in the society. The Social Entrepreneurs are not yet provided with the safety cloak, or security that guarantees them of their sustenance in the sector. The absence of a regulatory body stands as one of the biggest challenges faced by the Social Entrepreneurs and compelling the aspirants to think twice before choosing Social Entrepreneurship as a career.

A structured framework is a building block for any enterprise to withstand. Social Entrepreneurs don't have a structured institutional framework. However, the Social Entrepreneurs can be given a bigger

arena with the required resources, security, policies, guidelines etc. And more importantly the authorities concerned can play a crucial role in bringing about more awareness about the Social Entrepreneurs by breaking down the preset notions and mindsets. One of the groundbreaking developments could be introducing Social Entrepreneurship into academic curricula.

**‘Empowerment’** has a different connotation to the Social Entrepreneurs than it is to business entrepreneurs. Social Entrepreneurship can thrive only in an empowered environment. Empowerment is the very mantra behind the success of a Social Entrepreneur. Empowerment can be exercised successfully in the presence of several other factors, among which Vision is the foremost propellant for the Social Entrepreneurs to drive their missions and to empower the citizen communities and the voluntary organizations. The Social Entrepreneurs bring their vision in alignment with the people’s interest and motivation and thus making the vision a collective, and a collaborative vision. Social Entrepreneurs have the capacity to inject the vision into the target communities and motivate and empower them with the vision. Social Entrepreneurs are driven by a genuine concern to develop and improve the society which adds further effect to the empowerment of the people improving their personal lives and hence resulting in social development.

Self-sustenance is the ultimate motive of Social Entrepreneurship. And hence self-sustenance acts as one of the strong promoting factors for Social Entrepreneurs while empowering the citizen community. The thought process and hence the prospective ideas of the Social Entrepreneurs should be oriented towards the self-sustenance of the target communities, resulting in a sustainable and relatively permanent social development.

For Social Entrepreneurs innovation drives empowerment. The Social Entrepreneurs not only create innovative ways generating income but also replicate their innovative ideas among the communities and thus empowering them.

Social Entrepreneurs observe that lack of information has been found to be a big constraint among the rural and the lower class women who are involved in the income generation process. Lack of information may be in turn attributed to the abysmal communication among the women. Adequate exposure to information and communication empowers the target communities thus making it a successful Social Entrepreneurship.

Considering the rural and backward background of the target communities with low levels of literacy, education, learning, knowledge, one of the most important concerns for Social Entrepreneurs is that the learning curve of the target population. The Social Entrepreneurs play a very crucial role to keep the target audience abreast of the emerging competencies. The above-mentioned techniques of empowering the voluntary communities can translate into reality when the Social Entrepreneurs can identify the untapped potential and channelise it appropriately.

Our research spanning for more than one year has been able to gather the information from various primary and secondary sources to understand the emerging breed of entrepreneurs called Social Entrepreneurs. From the information we could gather directly from the Social Entrepreneurs and from various indirect sources, it reflects seven main characteristics of the Social Entrepreneurs, which have been discussed in depth in the subsequent chapters. Social Entrepreneurs are the ardent believers in proactive change. As discussed in the following chapters, the word ‘**Change**’ has a different connotation for the Social Entrepreneurs as compared to its understanding by the business entrepreneurs. Social Entrepreneurs

create social change. They are tuned to uncover the social issues, bring the problems into light, bring about awareness among the affected, and initiate change proactively for the social cause. While business entrepreneurs create businesses, Social Entrepreneurs create change for the social cause. As Bill Drayton of Ashoka Foundation puts it “Social Entrepreneurs don’t wait for surroundings to decide the time for change; instead they proactively wake up the society and make them realize the need for change and thus facilitate the change”. The process of change is driven by several driving forces like a deep and a retrospective observation and a farsighted vision. Most of the issues raised by the Social Entrepreneurs are based on the fundamental observation, which are supported by the deep retrospective analysis coupled with an indomitable vision. The ambitious attitude of the Social Entrepreneurs is also worth mentioning while celebrating their success in bringing about change. On the face of it, the ambition may sound or appear unachievable however, they are also equipped with a hell-bent will to translate the ambition into reality. They are sensitized, and hence moved by the societal grievances. And hence as a result of their exposure to the deprived society, their irresistible will to improve the society drives the change they aspire for.

Social Entrepreneurs are addicted to change. Their constant exposure to the deprived society and their will to improve them makes them imbibe the ‘never-say-die’ attitude. They are not bogged down by the momentary impediments because they are self-motivated towards the ultimate goal. A Social Entrepreneur is not only sensitized and moved by the social problems but also eager to sensitize the society towards the apparently trivial issues that educate how they may bring about a sea change in the society. Another force that thrusts the social change is Empowerment. Empowerment acts as one of the chief tenets of a Social Entrepreneur that facilitates a democratic style of leading the social change. The twin factors – transparency and accountability – are the august assets of the Social Entrepreneurs.

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Democratic style of leadership is well complemented by their standards of transparency and levels of accountability towards the target communities.

Social Entrepreneurs possess the passion to serve the society and are equipped with a concrete **‘Mission’** to serve the double bottom line. They think with intelligent business acumen like a business entrepreneur. Social Entrepreneurs are driven by the obsession to serve the society and they possess the knack of applying the sustainable principles in the social development. He is a smart decision maker in terms of feasibility, sustainability, financial viability, creativity, and replicability of the ideas towards social development, societal upliftment, social awareness, and philanthropy. In other words, Social Entrepreneur is a person with a passion to serve the society and with an acumen to apply sustainable models for social development. They are driven not by how much profit they make but by how well they serve the social mission. They know the art of spreading the awareness and enthusiasm for enterprise among the target communities.

While service to the society and improvement of the deprived communities being one bottomline of the Social Entrepreneurs, they are equally attentive about another bottomline, i.e., sustainability. Social Entrepreneurs, like the business counterparts believe in a firm business model. Hence the Social Entrepreneurs lead the society by a *double bottom line principle*.

While defining their bottomlines, the Social Entrepreneurs seek clarity of the objectives, strengths, present scenario, threats and the capabilities required for the development. They begin with conceptualizing the idea and the desired results, thereby defining the capabilities required and an appropriate model promising the translation of idea into reality.

The fittest survives. But what qualifies one to be the fittest may be a difficult question to answer. However, one can say that innovation

is undeniably a part of a winning organization. May it be a business enterprise or it be a social enterprise, organization surviving in today's world has to be supported by regular innovation and the urge and passion to '**Experiment**'. According to Bill Drayton (Founder – Ashoka Foundation) there is no entrepreneur without a powerful, new, system change idea. This emphasizes the fact that the Social Entrepreneurs are motivated by the very intrinsic factors like newness in idea, innovation in the implementation and the passion to serve. It is interesting to observe that the Social Entrepreneurs have the knack of uncovering the uncommon observations from the common happenings resulting in unconventional solution to the pressing social issues. They possess the drive to break the convention and experiment with the available resources. Hence, to make an innovation successful, Social Entrepreneurs adopt a culture that is active and responsive to change. They ensure that it is going to benefit the society out of such innovation. The entrepreneur must ensure its success on commercial front too. Creative thinking is the spirit behind the innovative ideas. A radical innovation demands a continuous application of creativity. Hence innovative ideas demand a creative orientation of the entrepreneur. Creative orientation comprises:

- Originality component
- Orientation component
- Flexibility component
- Fluency component

The Social Entrepreneurs must be thoroughly and constantly oriented towards the aforesaid four components in order to avoid redundancy in ideas and in order to provide an effective solution to the society. Social Entrepreneurs are required to practise those inevitable tenets of an entrepreneur that pave the way for successful innovations.

Listening is one of those tenets, which plays a pivotal role among Social Entrepreneurs. And hence the propensity to listen in a Social Entrepreneur should be high in order to empathize with understand the needs, necessities, grievances, aspirations, and expectations of the people. Social Entrepreneurship, driven by their urge to experiment develop the tendency to Negate the Obvious; and prove to be exceptional.

Social Entrepreneurs' urge to experiment keeps them inclined towards thinking 'out of the box'. Social Entrepreneurs' creative thinking is oriented around realistic and replicable solutions for the target communities.

The creative ideas are in conformance with the plausibility, positive appeal, replicability, revenue earning capacity, newness, innovativeness, user friendliness etc.

Social Entrepreneurs' passion for innovative ideas is driven by intrinsic motivational factors. The momentary extrinsic motivational factors do not entice the Social Entrepreneurs and hence keep them strong in the relentless struggle to change the society through innovation. They are the souls with a different make of attitude and different bent of mind when compared with other entrepreneurs.

The Social Entrepreneurs are the experts of networking and '**Collaborating**' with the like-minded people. Research says, an ideal entrepreneur should spend around 60-70% of time in his routine in listening to the people around him. The leader is there to listen to the ideas, grievances, suggestions, explanations etc. The Social Entrepreneur is connected to the outside entities also and the scope of collaborative partners can be broadly categorized into government, corporates, and communities.

If one takes a look at the corporate scenario 10-20 years back, the corporates were also working in a very protective environment. And their sole interest was maximizing profits. But now corporates are

also becoming more global. CSR is the buzzword among the corporate parliaments. Many corporates today are keen on expanding their scope of interest towards social development as well, not limiting their role to commercial interests. This extended role of corporates certainly offers an opportunity for the Social Entrepreneurs to draw a win-win with the corporates. Government is another major prospective source to collaborate with the Social Entrepreneurs. Government, in fact, has a better reason to collaborate with the Social Entrepreneurs, as one of their prime interests is the social development and mitigating the gap between the haves and have-nots. The tie up with the community can be more effective and fruitful if the Social Entrepreneurs establish partnership with the corporates and the government, as the communities will have the tendency to go with someone/something established. Such a proactive strategic alliance may facilitate the Social Entrepreneurs in forming an integrated collaborative mechanism contributing more emphatically towards the social development.



***At a glance...***

- Social Entrepreneurs' principal interest is social development, at the same time ensuring the sustainability of the organizations, and replicability of ideas.
- Ashoka Foundation defines Social Entrepreneurs as the ambitious and persistent, individuals with innovative solutions to society's most pressing social problems by tackling major social issues and offering new ideas for wide-scale change.
- A few measures to encourage social entrepreneurship could be like introducing Social Entrepreneurship as an academic program at various levels of education, encouraging the aspirants with seed capital etc.
- One of the driving forces that projects a Social Entrepreneur, as a benevolent human being is his Servant attitude while leading the target community.
- Social Entrepreneurs are driven by the hell-bent determination and perseverance to face challenges and drive the vision home.
- Empowerment is the very mantra behind the success of a Social Entrepreneur.
- Social Entrepreneurs are ardent believers in proactive change.
- Social Entrepreneurs are the people with a mission to serve the society and with a acumen to apply sustainable models for social development.
- Social Entrepreneurs are characterized by the urge and passion to experiment.
- The Social Entrepreneurs are experts of networking and collaborating with the like-minded people.



