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EXPLORING THE SOCIALITY OF (SOCIAL) ENTREPRENEURSHIP

A CASE STUDY FROM GHANA



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Preface

First of all I would like to thank my supervisor Paul Hebinck for his guidance and reflection during the writing of this thesis. I would furthermore like to thank Lianne van Rijssel from Ontmoet Afrika as she planted the seeds for my interest into the topic of social entrepreneurship. The introduction weekend in Schoorl that she organized provided some practical tips and know-how about Ghanaian society. Furthermore, she was the person that brought me in contact with Victoria. Victoria and her family have been a great support during my time in Ghana. For a period of five weeks in total they have taken care of me and made me feel at home in their house in Accra. Though I was not looking for it, they truly became my African family. Moreover I would like to thank everyone that has helped me during my field research in Ghana. I would like to express my gratitude to the entrepreneurs that were willing to share their ideas and visions and introduced me to their companies. At the same time I am very grateful for the encounters I had with the Ghanaian population who made the three month stay so special and who have made me feel welcome in their country right from the start. Furthermore I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Anouk Baake who has been the best coffee buddy in the world during the last months of writing this thesis in the university library of Delft (which scores high in the top ten of most depressing places in the world). Without the many laughs we shared and the support she gave me in all ways possible this thesis would probably not be here in front of you. As this thesis will be the closure of my educational career I would also like to take advantage of the opportunity to thank my parents from the bottom of my heart. Over the past seven years during my studies in Breda and Wageningen they have always supported me with regard to solving practical problems that students living by themselves encounter, moving houses several times, offering me a helping hand in times of financial scarcity and during my numerous stays abroad. I am very grateful that they have given me the opportunity to choose my own path, but above all, that they have always provided me with a warm place to come back home to.

Introducing the new Ghana

Imagine the following popular view of Africa: mud huts, dry landscape with red sand, people in traditional clothes, cows grazing in the fields, people playing drums.... It is almost a scene from "*Groetjes uit de rimboe*"¹. Now imagine the following: lines of cars stuck in traffic with people getting irritated on their way to work, streets crowded with people, markets overflowing with consumers, street vendors selling the newest versions of smart phones on the corners of the streets. Everybody seems to be busy, seems to be going somewhere, having something to do, and appointments to get to. The new key words of the cities of Ghana are related to dynamics, economic activity, consumers, sales, crowds, noise and traffic jams. This is the new Ghana; this is the future that Africa is taking.

"Afrika is booming business" (Van der Bijl, 2012)



¹ Dutch television programme in which Dutch families visit and stay with traditional African families. The focus is on the differences in lifestyle and the adjustment difficulties that the Dutch families are dealing with.

Abstract

Background and cause: The motivation for this thesis research was evoked during the preparation phase of the internship research that was conducted for the voluntary organization Ontmoet Afrika, as an initial literature study suggested that despite its growing popularity, the field of social entrepreneurship is characterized by fuzziness, conceptual ambiguity, and blurry boundaries which the ever growing number of conceptual papers aspire to resolve. A thorough analysis of the literature furthermore suggested that the interpretation of the inherent sociality of social entrepreneurship is regarded to be too superficial, which has resulted in an inability of using this characteristic as the distinguishing factor between the concepts of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship. This is implied as the operationalization of the sociality of social entrepreneurship is identified to be similar to the descriptions of the social element of entrepreneurship. Consequently, inspired by the theories about contextualization, it was realized that in order to discover a more profound interpretation of the social, the context-specific interpretations and expressions of the sociality of both entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship needed to be explored. The literature study additionally implied that the conceptualizations are potentially too one-sided and context-specific when applying them to analyse social entrepreneurship in a country like Ghana and that they should therefore rather be regarded as an external discourse. Moreover, it introduced a proposition for a reevaluation of the sociality of social entrepreneurship, which expressed the sociality in *finding and/or creating new connections as to form new social relations in society and thereby contributing to a different construction of society in order to solve social problems.*"

Research objective: This thesis aims to ultimately resolve the ambiguity between the concepts of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship by analyzing the possibilities of employing context-specific interpretations and expressions of the social element in order to attribute more value to the interpretation of the sociality of social entrepreneurship, with the intention that it is enabled to serve as the differentiating element between the two concepts. During the quest for answers it is not aspired to formulate a 'true' definition of social entrepreneurship, but rather an understanding of the interpretation of the social.

Research questions: The main research question that was formulated reads as following:
"How can the context-specific interpretations and local expressions of "the social" by Ghanaian entrepreneurs be employed to attribute more meaning to the sociality of social entrepreneurship?"
In order to answer the main research question and reach the overall goal of this thesis the following sub-research questions were formulated:

- 1) How do local entrepreneurs from Ghana understand the concepts of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship and the social elements that are inherent to them?
- 2) How is the Ghanaian perspective linked or similar to the conceptualizations that are presented in the theoretical framework?
- 3) Should the theoretical framework be regarded as an external discourse?
- 4) Can a case be made for new social connections in society as *the* differentiating element, in order to attribute more value to the interpretations of the social element?

Methodology: This thesis research applied a qualitative research strategy with a multiple-case study design. Through conducting an initial qualitative literature study, the problem statements were formulated. Subsequently, by conducting a three month field research in Ghana, a comprehensive insight into the local interpretations and expressions of the sociality of (social) entrepreneurship was gained. To acquire this data, qualitative semi-structured interviews as well as participant observation was utilized. A sample of nineteen entrepreneurs from Ghana, of which 7 positioned themselves as a social entrepreneur, was composed through using a variety of non-random samplings. The

entrepreneur profiles that resulted from a thematic content analysis approach serve as the basis of the comparison of the empirical material.

Conclusions: Three main conclusions were made regarding the main research question:

- 1) The local interpretations of the (social) entrepreneurs cannot be applied to attribute more meaning to the sociality of social entrepreneurship as the value that is attributed to the social element of social entrepreneurship by the social entrepreneurs is equal to the valuation of the social element of entrepreneurship. For the reason that the interpretations match the conceptualizations presented in the theoretical framework, they also present the similar interpretation of the social which was determined to be too superficial.
- 2) After obtaining their knowledge about social entrepreneurship through external information channels that they were able to access through their contacts with the West, the social entrepreneurs internalized the conceptualizations from the West by blind-copying them, which is seen as the justification for the previous conclusion. As a result of the fact that the social entrepreneurs thus conformed their context-specific interpretations of social entrepreneurship to the external formulations of the concept, these conceptualizations should be regarded as an external discourse.
- 3) The local expressions of the (social) entrepreneurs in Ghana can be applied to attribute more meaning to the sociality of social entrepreneurship by acknowledging that the new connections in society created by social entrepreneurs serve as the missing link in the operationalization of the social. By including the elements of the proposition in the interpretation of this sociality, a different valuation of this sociality is reached which results in the ability of differentiating social entrepreneurship from entrepreneurship on the characteristic of this sociality.

Limitations and recommendations: A number of limitations had to be dealt with during the course of this thesis research. The first limitation is related to the case-study design of this research, which is seen to complicate the generalizability of the results. Triangulation through using multiple cases, methods and sources was therefore utilized to enhance the external validity. However, as the objective of this research was not to find a “true” definition of social entrepreneurship which could be generalized, but rather to map the understanding of the interpretations of the social, this thesis research focused on investigating the context-specific interpretations of Ghanaian entrepreneurs in order to acquire a comprehensive insight into the contextualization of social entrepreneurship in Ghana. It is recommended that more research is conducted in order to investigate the context-specific interpretations in other places where social entrepreneurship is contextualized as the sum of these contextualizations together form the understanding of the concept.

The second limitation is related to the cases that support the proposition. Due to the continuous process of analysis that characterises qualitative research, the importance of exploring the expressions of the social by Ghanaian entrepreneurs in order to reach the goal of this research was only identified *after* the field research was conducted. As a consequence of the resulting scarcity of empirical material related to the local expressions, only three cases could be identified that support the proposition. Consequently, it is recommended that more research is conducted in order to expand this basis of support.

The third limitation is related to the role of the researcher. As a consequence of the fact that the researcher was seen as an external information source and was attributed a status of “expert”, the data collection process was hindered. Besides obstructing the access to their personal views and interpretations, it also hindered the abilities of the researcher to research their interpretations in an

unbiased manner. Future researchers in Ghana (or elsewhere) that focus on the topic could therefore work with a local interviewer, in order to reduce this influence.

It is furthermore recommended that additional research is conducted with regard to the role of the government and NGO's which might have been altered through the new connections in society that social entrepreneurship created. It would be interesting to investigate what these parties could do to facilitate and simplify the process of problem solving that social entrepreneurship has taken up, for example by providing tax reductions for social entrepreneurs.

Keywords: *social entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship, social value, problem-solving mechanisms, external discourse, contextualization, qualitative research, multiple-case study, Ghana*

Explanatory list of terms

Due to the fact that the key terms entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship, as well as entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs are so often used in order to make clear distinctions in the analyses and conclusions, it was decided to refer to the concepts as (social) entrepreneurship when this distinction was determined to be unimportant. (Social) entrepreneurship thus refers to both entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship.

For example: exploring the sociality of (social) entrepreneurship thus signifies an exploration of the sociality of entrepreneurship as well an exploration of the sociality of social entrepreneurship.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

For the MID master internship a research was conducted for the organization Ontmoet Afrika, which is situated in Alkmaar. Ontmoet Afrika is involved with sending volunteers and interns to a variety of partner organizations in Ghana, Malawi and Cameroon. These partner organizations are mostly NGO's and governmental institutions like schools and hospitals. Over the past years, Ontmoet Afrika has been dealing with numerous difficulties regarding the cooperation with these partner organizations. As a result, Ontmoet Afrika wanted to explore the possibilities of cooperating with social enterprises in Ghana as they believe that the cooperation with social enterprises is likely to involve less risk. Furthermore, Ontmoet Afrika believes that social entrepreneurship could be the answer to a sustainable and fair development of the entire world. In addition, Ontmoet Afrika wanted to acquire more knowledge about the concept of social entrepreneurship and the theory behind it. For a detailed explanation of the internship assignment that was conducted consequently see appendix 1. For more information about Ontmoet Afrika see appendix 1.

To create a theoretical foundation for the above-mentioned placement research, a variety of articles and books about or related to social entrepreneurship was examined. However, it became clear very soon that even though the topic is gaining much in popularity over the past few years, there is considerable variation in the interpretation of the concept. In other words, there is much uncleanness about what it actually means, and there is no universally accepted definition up until this point. According to Brigitte Hoogendoorn (2011, p.23) who wrote her PHD on social entrepreneurship, *"the study of social entrepreneurship is still a research field in its infancy, characterized by conceptual ambiguity, blurry boundaries with other fields, a limited number of empirical studies, and a modest base for theory building and testing purposes."* Currently, there is a huge pile of conceptual papers all trying to define the concept, which has only led to great confusion in the literature and practice (Zahra et al., 2008). It was furthermore identified that the majority of the literature about social entrepreneurship has its origin in Western Europe and the USA. Consequently, the following question raised: if there is already great confusion in the 'western world' (where the concept was invented) about the definition of social entrepreneurship, how is social entrepreneurship then interpreted on the ground, far away from the western world, in an African country like Ghana? This question would become the starting point for this thesis research.

To strive for more insight into this fuzzy concept, it was decided to try and dismantle the concept to its building blocks and examine these separately. Social entrepreneurship can be dissected into the two main elements "social" and "entrepreneurship". Questions that rose were: *Is social entrepreneurship related to or based on the concept of entrepreneurship or is it a distinct field of knowledge? In what way do the concepts differentiate from each other? Is social entrepreneurship differentiated from entrepreneurship by the social element that is part of it? How can the sociality of social entrepreneurship best be interpreted and operationalized?* A theoretical exploration which aims at answering these questions will follow in the subsequent chapter.

Report structure

As a consequence of the fact that the problem statement was developed on the basis of the theoretical framework, this thesis will have a less conventional outline. The structure of the thesis is as following:

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework which aspires to create structure in the jungle of contradicting conceptual papers about (social) entrepreneurship. The theoretical framework will serve as the generator for the problem statement and research questions which will be presented in **Chapter 3**.

Chapter 4 will describe the methodology that was used in this thesis research. A distinction will be made between data collection methods and data processing methods.

Chapter 5 will present and compare the empirical material that was gathered in Ghana. It aims at giving a comprehensive insight into the views and interpretations of local entrepreneurs from Ghana about the topic.

Chapter 6 will provide an analysis of the empirical material presented in chapter 5. This analysis will be based on the comparison of the empirical material and the conceptualizations from the theoretical framework (ch2 versus ch5).

Chapter 7 will make a case for investigating the local expressions of the social element in contrast to the local interpretations of the social element in order to investigate the possibility of new social connections as the missing link in the operationalization of the social. By using three business cases from Ghanaian entrepreneurs it will be aspired to provide support for the proposition that was given in the theoretical framework.

Chapter 8 will present the conclusions of this thesis. It will furthermore discuss the limitations of this thesis research and consequently give recommendations for further research.

This thesis research is essentially an interaction between the following elements:

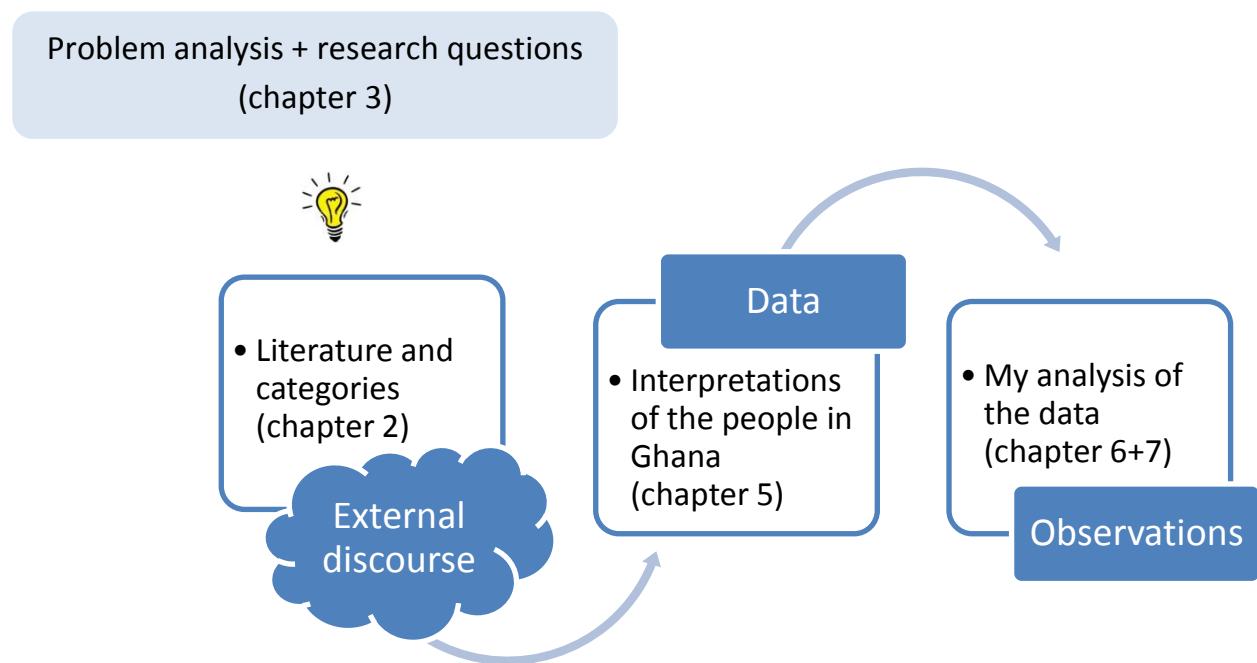


Figure 1.1: Interaction between the different elements of the research

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

This chapter will present a theoretical exploration of the sociality of social entrepreneurship. The building blocks “social” and “entrepreneurship” which together form social entrepreneurship will be examined. First of all an introduction to the concept of entrepreneurship will be given, including definitions by among others Joseph A. Schumpeter and Max Weber, after which the concept of social entrepreneurship will be analysed. Emphasis will be put on isolating elements which differentiate entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship from each other, which will also include an operationalization of the social element. Next, two new approaches from the literature regarding a new operationalization of the sociality of social entrepreneurship will be presented. The first approach is based on the views of Steyaert and Hjorth (2006) who argued that a phenomenon can only truly be understood if its contextualization’s at the grassroots are investigated. It furthermore suggests that the conceptualizations presented in the theoretical framework should be seen as an external discourse when analyzing social entrepreneurship in the context of Ghana. The second approach is inspired by a reconsideration of the literature concerning the problem solving mechanisms of society. Based on this reconsideration a proposition will be made with regard to more meaningful interpretation of the sociality of social entrepreneurship will furthermore be given, in order to ultimately resolve the ambiguity between the two concepts.

Defining entrepreneurship

According to Hoogendoorn (2011, p.7) entrepreneurship is in general portrayed as an “*ill-defined and inherently complex concept*”. Its interdisciplinary nature is involved with a selection of fields including management, finance, psychology, sociology, economics, political science, and geography (Audretsch *et al.*, 2007; Wennekers and Thurik, 1999). Up to this day, no universally accepted definition of entrepreneurship has been produced. However, Sternberg and Wennekers (2005) introduced a distinction in the definitions about entrepreneurship. On the one hand there are definitions of entrepreneurship which refer to a type of behaviour. This behaviour is associated with the development and formation of new economic opportunities. On the other hand there are definitions of entrepreneurship which refer to entrepreneurship as an occupation. This definition concerns persons who own and manage an enterprise at their own risk. These two different types of definitions are referred to as the *behavioural* and *occupational* notions of entrepreneurship. To get a better insight into the concept of entrepreneurship, it will be described with the help of the writings of several authors.

One of the first to give meaning to the term entrepreneurship was the French economist Jean Baptiste Say. Say (1803) stated that “*The entrepreneur shifts economic resources out of an area of lower and into an area of higher productivity and greater yield*”. Entrepreneurs thus create value. The writings of the economist Joseph A. Schumpeter, which are often referred to as the classic statement about entrepreneurship, acknowledge this statement of increased productivity. According to Schumpeter (1911) “*the function of entrepreneurs is to reform or revolutionize the pattern of production*”. Schumpeter believed that entrepreneurship is about making a ‘new combination’ of already existing materials and forces, and thereby producing something novel and innovative. It is about using the existing resources in a different and new way, irrespective of whether those resources increase or not. Schumpeter called this carrying out of new combinations “enterprise”; the individuals whose function it is to implement them he called “entrepreneurs”. Schumpeter’s entrepreneurs are the change agents in the economy as they move the economy forward by making these new combinations (Dees, 1998).

The social scientist Max Weber has written about entrepreneurship throughout his works. An early definition of entrepreneurship that Weber (1898) created is: *"Entrepreneurship means the taking over and organization of some part of an economy, in which people's needs are satisfied through exchange, for the sake of making a profit and at one's own economic risk"*. Weber distinguished himself from Schumpeter as he believed that entrepreneurship is more related to the economic actions of enterprises and organizations, than to the economic actions of a single person. According to Weber, a modern enterprise or organization that is capable of exploiting profit opportunities is necessary in order for entrepreneurship to exist (Schwedberg, 2000). This contrasts with Schumpeter's individualistic approach. Knight (1921) also highlighted the element of risk-taking which is integral to entrepreneurship. According to Knight entrepreneurship involves dealing with the risks that are related to doing something new, while spending time and capital on an uncertain venture.

The majority of contemporary writers about entrepreneurship stay true to the Say-Schumpeter tradition that identifies entrepreneurs as the catalysts and innovators behind economic progress, while adding their own nuances. Drucker (1985) for example added the element of opportunity to the definition of entrepreneurship. According to Drucker entrepreneurs do not necessarily need to elicit change, but they rather exploit the opportunities that are caused by change. Entrepreneurs typically see the possibilities rather than the problems created by change (Dees, 1998). Stevenson (1983, 1985, 1990) added the element of resourcefulness to the definition of entrepreneurship. He suggested that entrepreneurship is about *"the pursuit of opportunity without regard to resources currently controlled."* In other words, entrepreneurs do not let their own resources limit their options, but instead mobilize the resources of people in their network to achieve their objectives.

A popular view holds that everyone that starts his own business is an entrepreneur. This definition relates to Wennekers and Thurik's (1999) occupational notion of entrepreneurship. However, all of the above-mentioned academics argued that entrepreneurship is not simply involved with establishing and managing a company. Schumpeter (1911) argued that only those people that actually perform the entrepreneurial function can be referred to as entrepreneurs. In other words, someone is only seen as an entrepreneur at the moment when he is actually making these new combinations. This definition relates to Wennekers and Thurik's (1999) behavioural notion of entrepreneurship. When the business is built up, the entrepreneur loses this description and is rather referred to as manager or shareholder. Schumpeter (cited in Swedberg, 2000, p.60) explained that: *"(...) It is just as rare for anyone to always remain an entrepreneur throughout the decades of his active life as it is for a businessman never to have a moment in which he is an entrepreneur, to however modest a degree."* Also Drucker (cited in Dees, 1998, p.2) explicitly stated that *"not every new small business is entrepreneurial or represents entrepreneurship."* He illustrated this statement by arguing that there is nothing innovative or change-oriented in opening a new branch of a Mexican family restaurant.

In conclusion, entrepreneurship is thus about acting upon **opportunities** to improve the **productive capacity** of society by making **innovative combinations of resources**, whether these are currently at hand or not, while dealing with the **risks** that are involved with doing something **new**.

Defining social entrepreneurship

As mentioned, the concept of social entrepreneurship has been growing in popularity over the past years. It has become a global phenomenon and interest in social entrepreneurship still continues to grow (Zahra et al., 2008). However, despite the increase in academic attention, there is still no universally accepted definition of social entrepreneurship but rather a great offer of conceptual papers which vary tremendously. According to Zahra et al. (2008) social entrepreneurship means

different things to different people, creating great confusion in the literature and practice. Social entrepreneurship can therefore be seen as a multi-interpretable concept which is characterized by conceptual ambiguity and blurry boundaries with other fields (Hoogendoorn, 2011). The attempt to demarcate social entrepreneurship often starts with the discussion of whether social entrepreneurship can be seen as sub-phenomenon of entrepreneurship or as a distinct field of knowledge. Many academics view social entrepreneurship as a phenomenon on its own and not being directly related to entrepreneurship. According to Steyaert and Hjorth (2006) “*it is not an exaggeration to say that social entrepreneurship has been mostly neglected in the literature on entrepreneurship and has mainly been given the attention by scholars that typically do not belong to the core contributors of this field.*” However, it is argued that denying the historical anchorage of social entrepreneurship could carry the risk of seeing social entrepreneurship as a “*reified, immutable object instead of a socially constructed phenomenon*” (Dey and Steyaert, 2010).

Conversely, there are a number of authors that do not neglect the relation between the two phenomena. Swedberg (2006) has highlighted the importance of recognizing the historical connections of social entrepreneurship by linking it to the theories of the economist Joseph A. Schumpeter. According to Swedberg, it is important that the concept of social entrepreneurship can be translated to Schumpeter, as Schumpeter, in contrast to many of the authors who write about social entrepreneurship currently, had been working on creating a general theory of entrepreneurship before he approached the concept of social entrepreneurship. The advantage of this approach according to Swedberg is that it creates the possibility of isolating the factors that social entrepreneurship has in common with entrepreneurship in general, and ignoring the other factors involved. Swedberg (2006, p. 33) summarized that: “*In brief, it helps to have a general theory of some phenomenon before you begin to analyze a sub-phenomenon of that phenomenon*”. Also Abu-Saifan (2012) and Dees (1998) argued that our understanding of social entrepreneurship should be build upon the existing entrepreneurship theory and research. Dees (1998, p.3) illustrated that “*Social entrepreneurs are one species in the genus entrepreneur*”. These views imply that conceptualizations of social entrepreneurship should acknowledge this link with entrepreneurship, while at the same time present characteristics which differentiate the two concepts from each other.

The main element of differentiation between entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship is related to motivation and mission. The difference is expressed in the importance that is attributed to social wealth creation versus economic wealth creation. According to Mair and Marti (2006, p.36) “*social entrepreneurship is seen as differing from other forms of entrepreneurship in the relatively higher priority given to promoting social value and development versus capturing economic value.*” As Bornstein (2004) explained it: business entrepreneurs are “for” the economy, while social entrepreneurs are “for” social change. However, to be able to sustain business activities, it is necessary for social entrepreneurs to also earn an income. Social enterprises can therefore be seen as hybrid organizations which have a double business goal: (1) creating social value and making an impact, while at the same time (2) having income generating activities as to be financially sustainable. Abu-Saifan (2012) illustrated that: “*social entrepreneurs design their revenue-generating strategies to directly serve their mission to deliver social value.*” The goal of generating an income can thus be seen as an indispensable but secondary goal of social entrepreneurship.

In addition, solving problems in society is believed to be an essential element of social entrepreneurship according to the definitions on the following page. Through pursuing opportunities and developing strategies that maximize social impact, social entrepreneurs aim to solve social problems. These problems in society can be referred to as urgent needs that are being mishandled, overlooked, or ignored by other institutions (Bornstein and Davis, 2006). These needs arise as a result of market failure: the cost of providing a needed good or service is more than its beneficiaries are able or willing to pay (Wolk, 2008). The public sector and to a lesser extent the non-profit sector have traditionally been held responsible for solving these market failures which generate problems in

society. Wolk (2008) mentioned public schools and libraries as classic examples of public services that address market failures. However, both the public and non-profit sector have undergone dramatic changes in the past years. Governments have first of all decreased their funds in face of free market ideology, which has led to fewer and different interventions by the public sector to solve social problems (Hoogendoorn, 2012). Furthermore, there is a growing recognition that solving society's troubles requires more than government intervention alone (The Economist, 2010). Also the non-profit organizations have had more and more trouble with taking care of the growing amount of people in need, while dealing with increased competition and a decrease of available funds. Social entrepreneurs have taken up the challenge to address these social problems that are not taken care of, working at the angles of the public, private and social sectors. With innovative business approaches social entrepreneurs aim to tackle market failures, which can be considered as "*the sources of the opportunities that social entrepreneurs act on*" (Wolk, 2008). The nature of opportunities that are pursued can be seen as another element of differentiation between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship. While entrepreneurship identifies an opportunity as a gap in the market, social entrepreneurship recognizes an opportunity in market failures. As Austin (2006, p.3) explains it "*A problem for the commercial entrepreneur is an opportunity for the social entrepreneur*".

Definitions of social entrepreneurship

- "Social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector, by:
 - Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value),
 - Recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission,
 - Engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning,
 - Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand, and
 - Exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created" (Dees, 1998).
- "Social entrepreneurship encompasses the activities and processes undertaken to discover, define, and exploit opportunities in order to enhance social wealth by creating new ventures or managing existing organizations in an innovative manner" (Zahra et all, 2008).
- "The social entrepreneur is a mission-driven individual who uses a set of entrepreneurial behaviours to deliver a social value to the less privileged, all through an entrepreneurially oriented entity that is financially independent, self-sufficient, or sustainable" (Abu-Saifan, 2012).
- "Social entrepreneurship impacts the society by employing innovative approaches to solve social problems" (Robinson et al., 2009).
- "Social entrepreneurs are society's change agents, creators of innovations that disrupt the status quo and transform our world for the better" (The Skoll Foundation, 2014).

Social entrepreneurship can thus be seen as a great contribution to society as it involves identifying social problems and finding proper solutions for them. However, simply solving the problem is often not sufficient for social entrepreneurs. Instead, they want to tackle the problem by its roots and change the system. Ashoka (2005) argued that it is the responsibility of a social entrepreneur to recognize "*when a part of society is stuck and to provide new ways to get it unstuck. He or she finds what is not working and solves the problem by changing the system, spreading the solution and persuading entire societies to take new leaps. Social entrepreneurs are not content just to give a fish or teach how to fish. They will not rest until they have revolutionized the fishing industry*". Bornstein

and Davis (2010, p.94) confirmed that social entrepreneurship aspires to resolve social problems by redesigning the problems-solving mechanisms: *“Social entrepreneurship represents a fundamental reorganization of the problem-solving work of society: a shift from control-oriented, top-down policy implementation to responsive, decentralized institution building”*.

Unfortunately, it is inherently difficult to measure the social value or social impact that is created through social entrepreneurship (Dees, 1998), first and foremost due to a lack of clarity about the nature of social value itself. How could social change in terms of gender relations that are altered be measured? Or what would be the social value of providing drinking water to a community in Northern Ghana? Austin (2006, p.3) illustrated that *“The challenge of measuring social change is great due to nonquantifiability, multicausality, temporal dimensions, and perceptive differences of the social impact created”*. While survival and growth are good performance measurements of commercial entrepreneurship, it are weak indicators of the efficiency and effectiveness of social entrepreneurship. Instead of aiming for organizational growth, social entrepreneurship rather directs its available resources to reach the largest social impact as possible. In comparison, the performance indicators that are related to commercial entrepreneurship like profit, market share and customer satisfaction, are distinctly more tangible and quantifiable (Austin, 2006). The main goal of entrepreneurship is creating economic value, which can be measured by evaluating the profit that is made. Profit implies that the enterprise has been able to shift its resources to more economically productive uses and that value was added to the product or service. However, as social entrepreneurs identify opportunity in market failure, the system of market forces does not readily apply. In other words, social entrepreneurship is involved with dealing with problems that have not been solved because consumers were unable to pay the price for it, or because the profit margin was too low for entrepreneurs. The different type of mission and opportunity recognition that are related to social entrepreneurship thus influence the way in which performances are measured and resources are mobilized. Hence, resource mobilization and performance measurement can also be seen as elements of differentiation between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship.

In conclusion, social entrepreneurship is thus about using **innovative approaches** and making use of **opportunities** in the form of market failures in order to create **social value** which leads to **social change** and **solving social problems**. However, as it is seen as a **hybrid** concept, the second aim of creating **economic value** in order to finance business activities should not be ignored. The main elements of differentiation between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship are determined to be related to **motivation and mission, opportunity recognition and market failure, resource mobilization, and performance measurement**. The difference in mission is seen as the fundamental distinguishing feature.

Exploring the inherent sociality of (social) entrepreneurship

Operationalization of the ‘social’ in social entrepreneurship

The emphasis on creating social value and solving problems in society are thus seen as the main elements which differentiate social entrepreneurship from entrepreneurship in general. However, the meaning of this social value often remains undefined in the literature. What does the building block ‘social’ exactly represent? What does the term ‘social value’ indicate or ‘social problems’? To acquire a thorough understanding of the concept of social entrepreneurship it is important that “the social” is operationalized.

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2003) explained ‘social’ as (1) relating to society and its organization or the quality of people’s lives, (2) relating to your position in society in accordance to your job, family etc, or (3) relating to meeting people, forming relationships and spending time

with them. In short, the term 'social' often relates to human society, its members and their mutual relationships. It is also described as feeling responsible for the needs of the other members in society (Interglot, 2013). The creation of social value through social entrepreneurship is viewed as the opposite of the creation of personal and shareholder wealth (Austin, 2006). Creating social value is thus about producing results for the benefit of others, rather than for personal benefit alone. It is about a shift in thinking from 'me' and 'us' to 'all of us' (Bornstein and Davis, 2010). By creating this social value, social entrepreneurs aim to solve problems in society. Society is explained by Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2003) as a particular group of people who share laws, organizations and customs. Social or societal problems are thus always problems that affect a larger group of people, and directly or indirectly have an influence on everyone within that society.

Todres and Lewis (2012) defined the sociality of social entrepreneurship as following: "*By sociality we refer to the relationships, connections, communications, exchanges, and networks, as well as the social and cultural norms which facilitate commerce*". According to Todres and Lewis, short or long term relationships between stakeholders are integral to (social) entrepreneurship. The social element is thus articulated in the specific setting in which entrepreneurship operates that is defined by social relationships and networks.

In conclusion, the sociality that is inherent to social entrepreneurship can thus best be understood in terms of creating value for the **benefit of others** as opposed to oneself to solve problems in **society**, while operating in an environment that is determined by **social relations and networks**.

Exploring the sociality of entrepreneurship

Though social entrepreneurship distinguishes itself primarily from entrepreneurship by the higher priority that is given to reach social goals, literature suggests that entrepreneurship itself also contributes positively to society in many ways. Entrepreneurship brings about social results like: support to economic growth, wealth creation, employment possibilities, development and distribution of products and services, meeting consumers' needs, tax revenue, new innovations and more (Wolk, 2008). Especially for developing countries, the potential benefits and new innovations that flow from entrepreneurship are enormous (Robson, Haugh, Obeng, 2008). According to Chipika and Wilson (2006) most of the Sub-Saharan African countries use the development of small- and medium-sized enterprises as a means to alleviate poverty, generate employment and promote national economic development. According to Hoogendoorn (2011, p.5) it is very interesting to see that "*we are moving from an economy dominated by large firms with a marginalized role for small businesses to an economy where entrepreneurship and small firms are acknowledged for their role as agents of change, generators of new jobs, and engines of prosperity*". According to these authors, entrepreneurship is thus actively used in addressing problems in society.

Though the dominant stream of writing still only highlights the commercial aims of entrepreneurship, the inherent sociality of entrepreneurship is recognized by more and more authors. As Van de Ven (2007, p.353) argued "*entrepreneurs also pursue collective interests*" and in this way make a positive contribution to society. According to Austin (2006) the contrast between the opposing motivations of social and commercial aims between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship are overstated. Austin (2006, p.3) exemplified this by stating that "*Commercial entrepreneurship does benefit society in the form of new and valuable goods, services, and jobs, and can have transformative social impacts. Such transformations can even be a driving motivation for some commercial entrepreneurs*". Hjorth and Steyaert (2006) also aspire to defend the view that entrepreneurship is about more than economic action, by developing an understanding of entrepreneurship as a process of social change. They define entrepreneurship as "*a complex social-creative process that influences, multiplies, transforms, re-imagines and alters the outlook of the space in society in which it is at once grounded and contextualized*". Todres and Lewis (2012) also stated that entrepreneurship is inherently social.

They explained that the outcomes of entrepreneurial activity may be determined to be economic and/or social, but that “*the process of entrepreneurship is always social*”. Mair and Marti (2006) support the view that all entrepreneurial forms are social. This can be an intentional and direct effect of the pursuit of supporting social problems, or an indirect positive externality in the form of job creation, the introduction of new products and services, and the generation of tax revenue (Hoogendoorn, 2011). Santos (2009) strengthens this idea by stating that: “*all economic value creation is inherently social in the sense that actions that create economic value also improve society's welfare through a better allocation of resources*”. However, the opponents of this view argue that social wealth creation is only a by-product of the economic value that is created in commercial entrepreneurship (Venkataraman, 1997). Referring to social results as by-product is similar to referring to social results as a positive externality. Both refer to results that occur unintentionally or unplanned as a consequence of something that is done. However, the supporters use a positive connotation, while the opponents use a negative connotation.

In conclusion it could be stated that **all entrepreneurial forms are inherently social**. Both entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship contribute to society in a multitude of ways and help to address social problems. Though a **difference in motivation and mission** exists between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship, the former primarily aiming at creating social value and the latter primarily aiming at creating economic value, both eventually lead to the creation of social value and contribute to resolving social problems. When formulated like this, **the divergence between the two concepts seems minimal**.

Degree of sociality as a continuum rather than dichotomy

Summarizing the previous paragraphs it can be stated that neither entrepreneurship nor social entrepreneurship is about pursuing either purely commercial or purely social goals. Instead of a dichotomy between the two concepts and their associated degree of sociality, Austin et al. (2006) suggested that the relationship can rather more accurately be conceptualized as a continuum, which ranges from purely commercial to purely social entrepreneurship. Austin exemplified that even at the extremes of the continuum there are still elements of both. Williams and Nadin (2011, p.121) illustrated that “*social and commercial objectives are commonly combined and inter-twinned in entrepreneurs' logics, with different entrepreneurs giving varying weight to these logics*”.

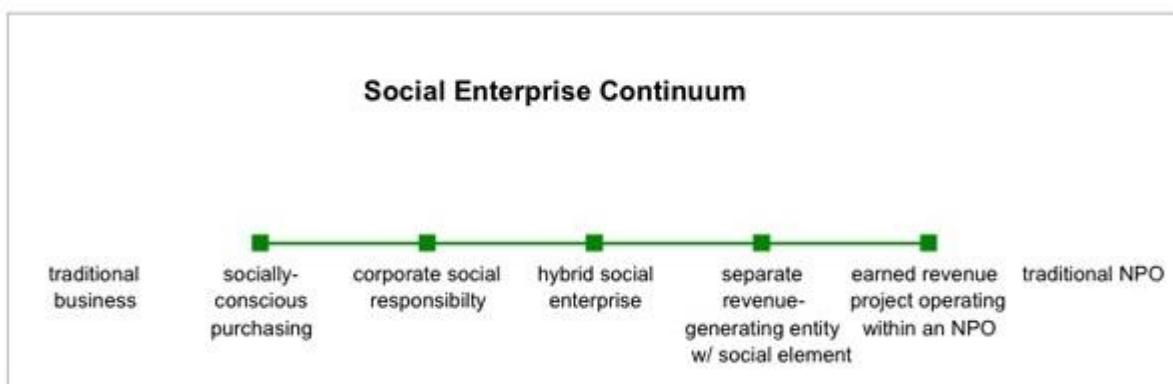


Figure 2.1: The Social Enterprise Continuum (BC Centre for Social Enterprise, 2010)

The BS Centre for Social Enterprise (2010) advocates this view and has developed a model which is called the Social Enterprise Continuum, see figure 2.1. The model depicts a number of organizational forms and how these relate to each in other in terms of social versus commercial goals. The main organizational forms that are presented are traditional businesses on the left, social enterprises in the middle, and traditional non-profit organizations (NPOs) on the right. Moving from left to right on the continuum, the social aspects of the organizations increasingly become the focus. Especially the

step from Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to social enterprise enjoys an important shift in focus as this is seen as the dividing line in mission statement between a focus on profit and wealth generation for shareholders compared to a focus on the social mission and profit generation in order to reach this social mission (Entrepreneur's Toolkit, 2011). The model furthermore suggests that there is movement possible on the continuum. In other words, the place on the continuum of an organization is not static but could potentially change over time. As Williams and Nadin (2011) illustrated: "*what begins as a commercial entrepreneurial venture may become more socially oriented over time or vice versa*". Also Steyaert and Hjorth (2006) acknowledged that many initiatives have recently been rephrased as forms of social entrepreneurship. For example, many NPOs have started their own income-generating activities recently to cope with the decreased amount of funding available and increased competition between NPOs. By searching (funding) solutions beyond their organization's boundaries, they change their organization's position along the continuum.

This model gives an interesting representation of the view that the relation between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship is not dichotomous, but rather based on a continuum. Instead of aiming at purely social or purely commercial goals, the model acknowledges that both goals are aspired in both social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship. The model represents the two concepts as two unique phenomena, but which can easily evolve in each other when business strategies are changed. Critique on this model could be formulated as the model is based on organizational form. The model differentiates between traditional enterprises, social enterprises and non-for profit organizations. However, many authors argue that social entrepreneurship is not defined by organizational form. While entrepreneurship is often believed to be expressed through private businesses and organizations, social entrepreneurship is suggested to be operating at the angles of all three fields. According to Nicholls (2006) social entrepreneurship "*is best understood as a multi-dimensional and dynamic construct moving across various intersection points between the public, private, and social sectors*". Wolk (2008, p.166) provided a clear explanation of the way in which social entrepreneurship operates at these intersects: "*Like business, social entrepreneurship utilizes markets to drive innovation and productivity. Like government, social entrepreneurship responds to market failures by providing public goods and services. Like nonprofits, social entrepreneurship engages individuals in action to achieve social goals*". Social entrepreneurship is thus operating in a playing field which links to all sectors, see figure 2.2. The motivation for this is clearly described by Austin (2006, p.2) "*The central driver for social entrepreneurship is the social problem being addressed, and the particular organizational form a social enterprise takes should be a decision based on which format would most effectively mobilize the resources needed to address that problem. Thus, social entrepreneurship is not defined by legal form, as it can be pursued through various vehicles*".

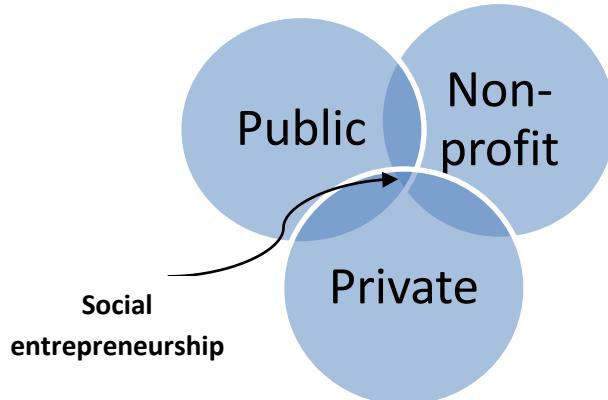


Figure 2.2: Social entrepreneurship at the intersection of the public, non-profit and private sector

In conclusion it could thus be stated that the relationship between entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship and their associated degree of sociality can be seen as based on a **continuum**, rather than a dichotomy. However, the **organizational form** should not be used when determining the degree of sociality of an entrepreneurial initiative, as social entrepreneurship operates in the private, public and non-profit sphere.

Concluding statements about the sociality of social entrepreneurship

From the previous paragraphs it can be concluded that the concepts of social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship are not so far apart as some authors would like us to believe. It was introduced that social entrepreneurship is based on the basic principles of conventional entrepreneurship, including acting upon opportunities, taking risks, making new combinations between resources and using innovative approaches. In addition, a number of elements of differentiation were isolated which distinguish the two concepts from each other, being motivation and mission, opportunity recognition and market failure, resource mobilization, and performance measurement. Social entrepreneurship fundamentally distinguishes itself through a different focus in its mission and motivation. While entrepreneurship is seen to have mainly economic goals, social entrepreneurship principally has a social mission, with a secondary economic goal as to be financially sustainable. The basic principles of entrepreneurship and the elements of differentiation are applied in such a way as to answer to this social mission. This inherent sociality of social entrepreneurship was operationalized as following:

"The sociality that is inherent to social entrepreneurship can best be understood in terms of creating value for the benefit of others as opposed to oneself to solve problems in society, while operating in an environment that is determined by social relations and networks."

Though social entrepreneurship thus distinguishes itself primarily from entrepreneurship by the higher priority that is given to create social value, literature suggested that entrepreneurship itself also contributes positively to society in many ways. Entrepreneurship in itself also creates social value like support to economic growth, wealth creation, employment possibilities, development and distribution of products and services, meeting consumers' needs, tax revenue, and new innovations. Furthermore, entrepreneurship also addresses problems in society, like unemployment. In an area with high unemployment rates it does not necessarily take an organization with a specific social mission to solve the problem. Moreover, both entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship operate in a specific setting that is determined by social relations and networks. Making use of the social network to access resources for example is done by both entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs, and thus cannot be seen as a distinguishing social feature. As a result it was concluded that all entrepreneurial forms are inherently social. The relationship between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship should not be seen as a dichotomy but rather as based on a continuum. Even though the numerous conceptual papers are so desperately trying to demarcate social entrepreneurship and its most distinguishing feature of having a social mission, it seems as if the two concepts eventually do not differ that much from each other. The main difference is seen to be situated in the different mission and motivation, which does influence the way in which the basic principles of entrepreneurship are applied, but the (social) results and impact on society seems to be similar. It could be argued that a difference does exist, but that the current interpretation of the social element does not allow for this conclusion. **The interpretation of the 'sociality' of social entrepreneurship is believed to be too superficial.** Hence, the understanding of the social element should be given more profundity in order to make a clear differentiation between the two concepts. However, the view that entrepreneurship has a social element integral to it should not be ignored. Entrepreneurship does create social value and does contribute to society. However, as Todres and

Lewis (2012) argued “*notions of the ‘social’ in entrepreneurship should not simply be ‘collapsed’ into the category of ‘social entrepreneur’*. Rather we would argue that *sociality has been present all along in the realms of entrepreneurship (...)*.” In other words, the social element of entrepreneurship can exist alongside the social element of social entrepreneurship, as long as the interpretations of this social element differ.

Finding a different approach in the literature towards the operationalization of the sociality of social entrepreneurship

It could be concluded that the existing operationalization of the sociality of social entrepreneurship in the theoretical framework has failed to serve as the basis element of differentiation between entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship, due to its shallow interpretation. New approaches in the literature should therefore be identified if more profundity to this operationalization of the sociality is to be given. When reconsidering the literature two new insights are gained in relation to encountering the understanding of social entrepreneurship. First of all, Steyaert and Hjorth (2006) argued that the multitude of different contexts in which social entrepreneurship is given form, together make up the meaning of the concept. Thus, in order to get a more thorough insight into the valuation of the social element, they suggested that the context-specific interpretations should be examined at the grassroots where the concepts are contextualized. Secondly, some sources in the literature indirectly imply that the missing link in the operationalization of the sociality of social entrepreneurship could be hidden in the creation of new connections in society. Both of these approaches will be investigated in more detail next.

Contextualizing the understanding of social entrepreneurship

In the previous paragraphs, a whole lot of information was presented that aimed at creating some sort of order in the chaos of existing conceptual papers about (social) entrepreneurship. However, as the conceptualizations that are presented in this theoretical framework are founded on the conceptual papers of academics from mainly the USA and Europe, a one-sided view which is potentially too context-specific (West) could have been produced. Consequently, it could therefore be argued that the theoretical framework does not give a comprehensive insight into the real meaning of the concepts and the operationalization of the social element. In addition, when exporting these conceptualizations to investigate the concept in a non-western country, this could cause problems related to representativeness. Steyaert and Hjorth (2006) argued that a comprehensive insight of a phenomenon cannot be acquired whatsoever when only the theories presented in a theoretical framework are adopted. They even suggested that there is not one specific context from which the concepts can be explained and that social entrepreneurship should be rescued from being incorporated in any such context-dominant determination. They believe that instead of depending on one dominant discourse, social entrepreneurship can only be explained by describing and narrating contextualized concepts of social entrepreneurship. In other words, the multitude of different contexts in which social entrepreneurship is given form, together make up the meaning of the concept. It is in these different contexts where social entrepreneurship is really given shape and where it is practiced. As Steyaert and Hjorth (2006) illustrated, by contextualizing social entrepreneurship they believe that: “*we are brought closer to life/ground, to relations, to the social of entrepreneurship and to the entrepreneurial of the social*”. Also, by looking at the different contexts where the concepts are truly shaped, new views could emerge, which could provide new lines of flight for entrepreneurship and new ways in which it could be brought beyond its present limits (Styaert and Hjorth, 2006). Social entrepreneurship could in this way be “*deterritorialized*” from its actual origins and boundaries. Consequently, it can be re-territorialized again in new languages, new cultures, new practices and new socialites. “*These re-territorializations of*

entrepreneurship produce novel ways of making sense of the entrepreneurial" (Steyaert and Hjorth, 2006).

Thus, the context is what ultimately determines how social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship are conceptualized and how they are understood locally. As Steyaert and Hjorth (2006) argued, these context-specific understandings together form the true meaning of the concepts. Consequently, an investigation of the context-specific interpretations is fundamental in order to gain a comprehensive insight into the concepts of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship and their elements of differentiation. This thesis therefore focuses on exploring the local interpretations of entrepreneurs from Ghana concerning the concepts of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship as well as the inherent sociality of the concepts. While the ambiguity between the two concepts could unfortunately not be resolved in the conceptualizations presented in this theoretical framework, these local interpretations might provide new insights regarding the valuation of the sociality of social entrepreneurship which could be utilized to differentiate the concepts from each other. However, to acquire a comprehensive understanding of these local views it is important to keep an open mind. In other words, the categorizations and conceptualizations that are presented in this theoretical framework should not influence the assembly and analysis of the data. In combination with the fact that the theoretical framework is largely based on the views of academics from the West, it was decided that the theoretical framework should therefore rather be considered as an external discourse.

In conclusion it could be stated that to attain a comprehensive understanding of social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship and the sociality that is inherent to the concepts, the **local context-specific interpretations** should be investigated. Subsequently, these local interpretations could potentially generate new views on the valuation of the sociality of social entrepreneurship. Even though the conceptualizations presented in this theoretical framework serve as the foundation for this local research, the **theoretical framework should be regarded as an external discourse** since it is largely based on the views of academics from the West, in order to minimize its influence on the assembly and analysis of the data.

Regarding new connections in society as the missing link

As was introduced already, common across all definitions about social entrepreneurship are the elements of social value creation, social impact and solving social problems. However, efforts to operationalize "the social" are scarce. After re-examining the literature about social entrepreneurship, words like 'transformative', 'change agents', and 'disrupt the status quo' stood out. Though it was introduced shortly in the paragraph *Defining social entrepreneurship* that social entrepreneurs aspire to not just solve a social problem but rather tackle the problem by its roots and change the system, the existing operationalization of the social element does not include these notions. While the objective of solving social problems was recognized, it was also acknowledged that entrepreneurship too contributes to solving problems in society. While this element of problem-solving itself could therefore not serve as *the* differentiating element, the way in which the problem-solving mechanisms are altered in order to reach social change perhaps could.

As mentioned, the social problems in society are often the result of market failure. Traditional market forces cannot solve the problem due to prices that are too high for clients or profit margins that are too low for entrepreneurs. In the past, public and non-profit institutions were appointed to deal with these market failures and the social problems that came into being as a result. However, due to several trends and developments, the problem-solving capacity of both public and non-profit institutions has dramatically decreased. In the current composition of society, a number of these social problems will thus not be resolved. Consequently, a reorganization of society and its problem-solving mechanisms is necessary in order to solve these social problems. Authors like Dees (1998)

and Bornstein & Davis (2010) proposed that by making new social connections and new combinations of people and resources, social entrepreneurship aspires to reorganize the problem-solving abilities of society. Dees (1998) for example mentioned that social entrepreneurship is about creating new combinations of people and resources that significantly improve society's capacity to address problems. Bornstein and Davis (2010, p.73) added that "*Social entrepreneurs are creative combiners, carving out spaces in society to foster whole solutions. If they 'specialize' in anything, it is bringing people together who wouldn't coalesce naturally*". These new connections can be seen as the building blocks for a new configuration of society. A proposition could be formulated based on the three elements which came forward in the reconsideration of the literature being: social problems, construction of society and its problem-solving mechanisms, and new connections in society. The proposition reads as following:

"The sociality of social entrepreneurship is expressed in finding and/or creating new connections as to form new social relations in society and thereby contributing to a different construction of society in order to solve social problems."

More value could thus be attributed to the sociality of social entrepreneurship through acknowledging that the creation of new connections in society plays an essential role. The sociality of social entrepreneurship is then expressed in the fact that new social relations are created which did not exist before, in order to reorganize the structure of society as to solve social problems. Still, Schumpeter (1911) already defined entrepreneurship as making a 'new combination' of already existing materials and forces, and thereby producing something novel and innovative. How are the connections and combinations that social entrepreneurship creates different from the combinations described by Schumpeter? Establishing and maintaining new relations with people from a social network as to get access to different resources is very common in entrepreneurship. The social network is in this view seen as a resource. In social entrepreneurship the focus is not solely on making this new combination of resources (like new relations between people in a social network) but primarily on the new structures and relations in society that are derived as a result. Social entrepreneurship makes these new combinations within the social spheres of society itself in order to change social structures in society and the existing problem-solving mechanisms. Bornstein and Davis (2010, p.24) give a clear summary of this process "*Social entrepreneurs initiate and lead change processes that are self-correcting, growth-oriented and impact-focused. They create new configurations of people and coordinate their efforts to attack problems in ways that are more successfully than before*".

However, a proposition cannot be supported by the work of only two social entrepreneurship specialists. Unfortunately, there has been limited attention to the role of new social connections and relationships in order to restructure society and its problem-solving mechanisms with regard to social entrepreneurship in the literature. So in short, the existing body of research introduces this new understanding of the sociality of social entrepreneurship, but does not thoroughly deal with it. Instead of continuing with speculating about the proposition, it was decided to seek for practical examples of social entrepreneurs that support the proposition. Box 1 on the following page introduces the business case of Zorgvoorelkaar.com which can be seen as a perfect example of how new connections in society could lead to a new composition of that society and its problem-solving mechanisms in order to solve social problems. In line with the views of Steyaert and Hjorth (2006) which were introduced previously, it will furthermore be aspired to find additional examples that support the proposition in the context-specific understandings of social entrepreneurship by social entrepreneurs in Ghana.

In conclusion it could be proposed that the sociality of social entrepreneurship is expressed in finding and/or creating **new connections** as to **form new social relations** in society and thereby contributing

to a **different construction of society** in order to solve **social problems**. In this way social entrepreneurship is about resolving social problems by **redesigning the problem-solving mechanisms** in society. By reevaluating the sociality that is inherent to social entrepreneurship by including this element of new social connections, the ambiguity in differentiation between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship could be resolved. Consequently, it could be determined whether or not social entrepreneurs are truly a different category of entrepreneurs.

**Box 1: A practical example of how new social connections can change the system:
Zorgvoorelkaar.com**

Social problem

The costs for health care and other types of support are ever increasing. In combination with the individualization of society, this has resulted in a decreased access to professional or voluntary care for people in need.

Responsibility and current problem-solving

The Dutch government is held responsible for taking care of its citizens. Through instruments like public hospitals, health insurance, home care and the so-called *persoonsgebonden budget* (a budget which is used to personally purchase and arrange health care), the government aims to organize all issues related to care. However, recent trends indicate that the Netherlands is in transition from a welfare state to a “participation society”. This participation society can best be described as a society in which citizens themselves take responsibility for their own lives and their environment to the extent of their capabilities.

Social connections

Due to decentralization, the share that local governments need to compensate for healthcare is getting bigger. As a result, these local governments are trying to find ways to change formal healthcare to informal health care. Zorgvoorelkaar.com is a perfect example of an informal healthcare initiative. Zorgvoorelkaar.com has created an online market place for voluntary and professional help. This platform matches people in need with volunteers or professionals that could support them (for example by doing groceries or giving support to their autistic children). This platform thus cuts out the government and its institutions as middle men and instead connects supply and demand directly.

Change in structure of society and its problem-solving mechanisms

By connecting people in need with potential care takers on their online platform, the initiative contributes to an increase of the informal care capacity in the Netherlands. By stimulating new social connections between people, new opportunities arise. In addition, when different parties use Zorgvoorelkaar.com as a central platform they are able to join forces. Through the initiative, supply and demand are brought together in a way which is completely new for this sector. Hence, it has influenced the problem-solving mechanisms in society: the sector is transforming from a top-down approach, to a bottom-up approach that has an informal, voluntary character.

Conclusion

In conclusion, through offering a platform where people in need and potential care takers can meet, Zorgvoorelkaar.com encourages a bottom-up approach to solving the problem of health care and support while decreasing the role of the government in this.

(Source: Patrick Anthonissen - in Volkskrant, 21-09-2013 - Free translation from Dutch).

Chapter 3: Problem analysis

Problem statement

The theoretical framework which was presented in the previous chapter brought about a number of problems relating to the understanding of the sociality of social entrepreneurship. This thesis will deal with two of these problems.

Problem #1: The interpretation of the sociality of social entrepreneurship is too shallow.

The theoretical framework first of all suggested that the interpretation of the social element with which social entrepreneurship differentiates itself from entrepreneurship is too shallow. In the current interpretations, the social element of social entrepreneurship seems similar to the social element of entrepreneurship as they both create social value, contribute to addressing social problems and operate in an environment that is defined by social relations and social networks. To deal with this problem, the operationalization of the sociality of social entrepreneurship should be given more profundity and meaning. In line with the views of Steyaert and Hjorth (2006) it is believed that the compilation of context-specific interpretations together form the meaning of the concepts. In order to attain a comprehensive understanding of the concepts, they should therefore be investigated at the grassroots. Accordingly, it is believed that the interpretations and expressions of the concepts at the grassroots in Ghana could provide a more comprehensive understanding of "the social". Consequently, an investigation of the operationalization of the social by local entrepreneurs in Ghana is necessary in order to determine whether or not these local views also present a shallow interpretation of the sociality of social entrepreneurship. By making a comparison between these local interpretations and the conceptualizations presented in the theoretical framework it will then be possible to identify similarities in interpretation, as well as isolate elements of differentiation which could potentially be employed to attribute more meaning to the current operationalization of the social element. The works of Dees (1998) and Bornstein&Davis (2010) on social entrepreneurship furthermore indirectly implied that the creation of new connections in society could serve as the missing link in the operationalization of the sociality of social entrepreneurship. It was implied that new connections in society could contribute to a different construction of that society and its problem-solving mechanisms in order to solve social problems. However, as there has been limited attention to the role of these new social connections in the literature that was investigated, explorative research needs to be conducted aiming at identifying the new social connections in Ghanaian society created by social entrepreneurship, in order to find support for the proposition presented in the theoretical framework.

Problem #2: The conceptualizations that are presented are potentially too one-sided and context specific when applying them to analyse social entrepreneurship in a country like Ghana.

The theoretical framework furthermore suggested that the conceptualizations that are presented are potentially too one-sided and context specific when applying them to analyse social entrepreneurship in a country like Ghana. Due to the fact that the majority of conceptual papers originate from Western Europe and the USA, the theoretical framework could potentially have a focus which is too much based on the views from the West. In order to keep an open mind to the local interpretations it is therefore important to get away from the formulated categorizations and conceptualizations that were presented in the theoretical framework. Instead of letting the theoretical framework potentially influence the data assembly and analysis, an unbiased view is necessary in order to get a thorough insight into the interpretations and expressions of the sociality of social entrepreneurship by local entrepreneurs in Ghana. As a result, the theoretical framework

rather needs to be regarded as an external discourse. As it will be difficult to investigate a phenomenon when the conceptualizations of that phenomenon are made inaccessible, the phenomenon needs to be dissected to be able to investigate all its distinct elements. Consequently, the examination of the local interpretations of the concept of social entrepreneurship also needs to include an investigation of the local interpretations of the concept of entrepreneurship and the social elements that are part of the concepts. Only after a comprehensive understanding is obtained, it will be necessary to link the data to the theoretical framework. By comparing the local interpretations to the conceptualizations presented in the theoretical framework, it will be possible to determine if similar interpretations of the concept prevail at the grassroots. On the basis of this comparison it will furthermore be possible to determine the correctness of classifying the conceptualizations in the theoretical framework as an external discourse.

Description of the topic

The subject of this thesis can best be summarized as an exploration of the sociality of both social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship through conducting a case study in Ghana. This research includes an investigation of how the 'social aspect' of entrepreneurship in Ghana is interpreted by entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs, after which this insight is linked to the conceptualizations in the theoretical framework. In line with the views of Steyaert and Hjorth (2006) about contextualization, the concepts need to be investigated at the grassroots in order to attain a comprehensive understanding of the concepts. One of the places where social entrepreneurship is contextualized is Ghana. It was decided to conduct the field research in Ghana, as this is the country where the internship research for Ontmoet Afrika was planned. Furthermore, Ghana appeared a very suitable country for this research as it is a non-western country in Africa with a lot of potential (growth rate of ±7% a year²). Furthermore, it was presumed that entrepreneurship fulfils an important role in the Ghanaian economy with Accra and Kumasi as the main trading hubs. In addition, through contact with social entrepreneurs in Ghana for the internship research, confirmation of the existence of social entrepreneurship in Ghana was received.

Research objective and research questions

Research objective

This thesis aims to ultimately resolve the ambiguity between the concepts of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship by analyzing the possibilities of employing context-specific interpretations and expressions of the social element in order to attribute more value to the interpretation of the sociality of social entrepreneurship with the intention that it is enabled to serve as the differentiating element between the two concepts. During the quest for answers it is not aspired to formulate a 'true' definition of social entrepreneurship, but rather an understanding of the interpretation of the social.

Research questions

The main research question of this thesis research is formulated as following:

"How can the context-specific interpretations and local expressions of "the social" by Ghanaian entrepreneurs be employed to attribute more meaning to the sociality of social entrepreneurship?"

² Ghana Statistical Service, 2013

The following sub-research questions need to be answered in order to answer the main research question and reach the overall goal of this thesis.

- 5) How do local entrepreneurs from Ghana understand the concepts of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship and the social elements that are inherent to them?
 - a. How is entrepreneurship understood by local entrepreneurs from Ghana?
 - i. What does it mean for them to be an entrepreneur?
 - ii. How do the local entrepreneurs define and categorize themselves?
 - b. How is social entrepreneurship understood by local entrepreneurs from Ghana?
 - c. How are social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship related to each other according to these entrepreneurs? What elements of differentiation are given?
 - d. How are the social elements of both entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship perceived, valued and expressed by local entrepreneurs from Ghana? How is the social operationalized?
 - e. How do the interpretations of the entrepreneurs in comparison to the social entrepreneurs that have been interviewed differ?
- 6) How is the Ghanaian perspective linked to the conceptualizations that are presented in the theoretical framework? Are the interpretations similar?
 - a. Are similar elements of differentiations used?
 - b. Is the 'social' operationalized in the same way?
- 7) Should the theoretical framework be regarded as an external discourse?
 - a. Is there awareness in Ghana about the concept of social entrepreneurship?
 - b. How did the social entrepreneurs get acquainted with the concept of social entrepreneurship?
 - c. Do the local entrepreneurs in Ghana use the external discourse in their interpretations? If yes, how and why?
- 8) Can a case be made for new social connections in society as *the* differentiating element, in order to attribute more value to the interpretations of the social element?
 - a. What kind of new social connections are created in Ghanaian society through social entrepreneurship and in what way? What is new or especially 'social' about these connections?
 - b. Why did not these new connections in society exist before?
 - c. Have these new connections in Ghanaian society resulted in a change in structure of society and its problem solving mechanisms?
 - d. How did the problem solving mechanisms work before, and how did they change?
 - e. Which social problems are addressed?

Relevance

First of all, as the majority of articles that are published about (social) entrepreneurship are written by authors from Europe and the US, it would be interesting to gain an insight into the local interpretations in Ghana about the topic. Even though there is only a limited number of African writers on the subject, entrepreneurship is booming in Ghana and there is a rise in people practicing social entrepreneurship at the same time. In addition, this research will aim to provide more insight into the sociality of social entrepreneurship which is up until this point underexposed as well as unclearly defined in the existing literature. Therefore the outcomes of this research can be very interesting as they will present an African view on the understanding of the sociality of social entrepreneurship. The results of this thesis can be interesting for academics interested in social entrepreneurship, (potential) social entrepreneurs in Ghana, the government of Ghana, NGO's,

people from the West wanting to start up a (social) business in Africa or cooperating partners from the West.

Expectations

It is expected that this thesis research will present some interesting findings on the interpretations and operationalization of the sociality of social entrepreneurship. It is furthermore expected that this thesis research will provide a comprehensive insight into the local understanding of entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship and the inherent social element of the concepts, as well as an insight into the existing social problems in Ghana and the problem-solving mechanisms that operate in society. In addition, it is expected that this thesis research will create clarity about the possibility of the theoretical framework functioning as an external discourse.

Underlying assumptions

The assumptions that are underpinning this thesis could influence how questions are formulated and how the research will proceed. It is therefore important to acknowledge and analyze the assumptions that are underpinning this research. To list a few of these underlying assumptions:

- The original communitarian society in Ghana is more social than the individual society in the west. Support from family and social networks is essential in running a business.
- Entrepreneurship has a big social contribution to society in Ghana. In addition, the difference between entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship is small.
- Organizational form influences the expression and role of the social element of (social) entrepreneurship. It is assumed that one-man businesses and family businesses are more individual and associations and NGO's are more communal in their structures as well as in their formulation of business objectives.
- The existing problem-solving mechanisms in Ghana are underperforming. As a result, social problems have a more severe nature and affect a greater amount of people than in the West.
- Social entrepreneurship can be used as a strategic tool to get access to specific resources.
- The conceptualizations from the theoretical are not representative for non-western countries as they are founded on the work of academics from mainly Europe and the USA. Consequently, they should be regarded as an external discourse.

Chapter 4: Methodology

Research design

As outlined by Green and Thorogood (2010), the aims of a qualitative approach are usually around understanding and interpretation of a phenomenon (i.e. the 'how' and 'why'), rather than determining cause and effect relationships which is typical for a quantitative approach. As this research is concerned with exploring the understanding and valuation of the social element of entrepreneurship by Ghanaian entrepreneurs, a qualitative research strategy was chosen for this thesis. Furthermore, a comparative design using a multiple case study is applied in this thesis. A multiple-case study occurs whenever the number of cases examined exceeds one (Bryman, 2008). As different enterprises have been visited and multiple entrepreneurs have been interviewed, this thesis research is concerned with multiple cases. According to Bryman (2008) the findings that are common to the cases can be just as interesting and important as those that differentiate them.

Data collection methods

Different qualitative data collection methods have been used, among which a qualitative literature study, semi-structured interviews and participant observation. The data collection methods are divided under desk research and field research.

Desk research

Interest in the topic for social entrepreneurship was evoked through the internship research that was conducted for Ontmoet Afrika. To get acquainted with the most important concepts, a qualitative literature study was carried out. This literature study resulted in the problem statement presented in chapter 3 and as a consequence serves as the foundation of this thesis research. The literature study aimed at analysing the building blocks "social" and "entrepreneurship" which together form "social entrepreneurship". Through examining literature about classic economists like Schumpeter and Weber, entrepreneurship theory and social entrepreneurship theory, an insight was gained into the meaning of the concepts, the differentiating elements and the interpretation and role of the social element which is inherent to both social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship. However, the majority of research papers that were examined for this literature study originate from the US and Europe which could lead to the fact that the theoretical framework is potentially too one-sided or context-specific. When using this theoretical framework as a guideline, this could influence the way data in Ghana would be assembled and analysed. Therefore, the choice was made to regard the theoretical framework as an external discourse. During the research phase the theoretical framework was thus solely considered as the basis or inspiration of the thesis. However, during the analysis phase the local interpretations of the Ghanaian entrepreneurs have been compared to the theoretical framework to investigate whether or not theory matches practice and to explore the possibility of social connections being the solution.

Key search terms: *economics, entrepreneurship, Schumpeter, Weber, social entrepreneurship, social, commercial, social value, hybridity, social profit, civic engagement, social network*.

Field research

From February till May 2013 a three month field research was conducted in Ghana. During the field research, an insight was gained into the understanding of local entrepreneurs about the concepts of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship, and the social element which is integral to these concepts. Furthermore, information about the daily operation of the businesses of the interviewees was obtained, including information about their business activities, results and beneficiaries. Semi-structured interviews with entrepreneurs and employees of a number of enterprises in Ghana were used as a qualitative method to acquire the above-mentioned information. The choice for semi-structured interviews was made as this type of research method gives a guideline for the interviewer but also leaves some space for interpretation, follow-up questioning and improvisation. As a result, the interviews remained flexible, which was very useful when interviewing in a country like Ghana. Due to the semi-structured nature of the interviews that were conducted, they differ in length, formality and usability. Several meetings were arranged with the majority of entrepreneurs, while a few entrepreneurs were only met once. In general, the distinct meetings also had a (slightly) different focus: some were more focused on getting acquainted with the entrepreneurs and getting to know their businesses, some emphasized on an exploration of their interpretations about the concept of (social) entrepreneurship, while others primarily served to discuss practical arrangement for a potential cooperation with Ontmoet Afrika. However, these different topics generally came back during every single meeting. By having a number of contact occasions, the trust and open-heartedness between the researcher and interviewees was strengthened. The interview guide that was used for the interviews with the Ghanaian entrepreneurs can be found in appendix 2.

In addition to the semi-structured interviews, participant observation was conducted in order to gain a better understanding of the business activities, entrepreneurship strategies and (social) processes in general in Ghana. Participant observation was furthermore used to triangulate the information that was obtained through the semi-structured interviews. In addition to conducting participant observation during the enterprise visits to Ghanaian entrepreneurs, the observations were carried out continuously during the time of field research.

Sample group

This thesis research is based on the interpretations of 19 entrepreneurs from Ghana, of which 7 positioned themselves as a social entrepreneur and their company as a social enterprise. In order to acquire this sample of entrepreneurs a variety of non-random sampling methods was applied. First of all, purpose sampling was utilized to identify potential partners for Ontmoet Afrika. Initial contact through email was established with eight organizations after learning about them on the internet through their company websites and websites related to social entrepreneurship (for example from the SEEED awards). Together with Ontmoet Afrika and with the help of a guideline that was produced in order to make a distinction between the different social enterprises (see appendix 3) it was decided which organizations would be visited. The initial contact that was established with these entrepreneurs on behalf of the internship research lead to a basis of trust and recognition which supported the process of gathering local interpretations about (social) entrepreneurship in a later stage. Snowball sampling was also employed as some of the respondents or other people in the network recommended their contacts, for example Lovans and Bobobo. In addition, some of the entrepreneurs were found through convenience sampling as contact was made during visits to different towns after which it was decided that they were quite interesting case material, for example Obehi and Kwadwo. In addition, there were some entrepreneurs who found me, like Richard and Salome, and were very enthusiastic to talk to me and share their ideas on entrepreneurship, sometimes even without information about their views was requested.

The flexible nature of the sampling approach that was applied suits the Ghanaian context and eventually ended up favourably as an interesting and diverse sample of entrepreneurs was obtained.

The sample group includes entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs from both the urban and rural areas that operate through different organizational forms with varying sizes and diverse business activities. Subsequently, the entrepreneurs and their businesses were categorized in the following five organizational forms: one-man business, family business, large/hierarchical company, association, and NGO. It is believed that diversity in organizational forms provides a more honest representation of what is going on in Ghana on different levels. Even though the social entrepreneurs that were interviewed all referred to their business as a social enterprise, it was decided to classify them under the five organizational forms that were mentioned, rather than creating a distinct organizational form for them. This choice was made as the theoretical framework suggested that social entrepreneurship is not defined by organizational form, but is expressed in the public, non-profit and private sector. Figure 4.1 presents an overview of the entrepreneurs that are part of the sample.

One Man Business	Family Business	Large/hierarchical companies	Association	NGO
Iddi – Smock workshop Tamale	Bobobo – Fruit and vegetables processing factory Tamale	Amed – Délifrance Accra	Juliana – Akoma Puso-Namogo	Lovans - KITA Ghana Kumasi
Kwadwo – souvenir and clothing shop Kumasi	Michael – Man and Man Enterprises* Kumasi	Theodore – Busy Internet Accra	Konlan – Maata-N-Tudu Tamale	Bernice– BGCF/Bamboo Bikes* Kumasi
Obehi – Web development and design Coastal Region		Adjoa– MicroEnsure* Accra	Robert – SWOPA Sirigu	John – YHF Smoothie bar* Bolgatanga
Richard – Apartment rental Accra		Ken– Omega Schools* Kasoa		
Salome – Children's school book writer Kumasi		Margaret – MSA Ghana* Accra		
		Mary Kay – PHW* Tamale		* Positioned as social enterprise (7)

Figure 4.1: Sample group

Data processing methods

The necessary data to fulfil the purpose of this research was gathered by using the above-explained methods. However, the main and sub-research questions cannot be answered without analyzing the acquired data. In order to analyze the results from the semi-structured interviews a thematic content analysis approach was employed. The thematic content analysis involves an analysis of the content of the empirical data to categorize the recurrent or common 'themes'. This approach is also referred to as being a comparative process, as the various accounts are compared with each other to identify common themes. The model which is presented in figure 4.2 was used to structure the ideas, opinions and motivations from the interviewees about (social) entrepreneurship. This resulted in an

entrepreneur profile for every entrepreneur that was interviewed in Ghana (see appendix 4). The entrepreneur profiles present several key terms in bold which characterize the specific view of every interviewee. As the majority of entrepreneurs use key words that are similar and/or can be grouped together, it is possible to make a comparison between them. Consequently, the key terms that were deducted from the entrepreneur profiles have been categorized in a coding scheme (see appendix 5) under the five main themes: *opportunities, characteristics entrepreneurs, resources, sustainability and social results*. In line with the thematic content analysis approach, these key terms and main themes are regarded as a coding scheme which serves to categorize and process the data.



Figure 4.2: Model to create entrepreneur profiles

An additional data processing model was constructed in order to analyze the key elements of the proposition, see figure 4.3. These key elements came forward in the reconsideration of the literature which was conducted in order to find new approaches towards the operationalization of “the social”. By breaking down the proposition to its basics it became possible to use the key elements as a guideline for analysing the empirical material once again, in order to find support for the proposition. As this time the empirical material was analysed with regard to expressions of the social, the main focus was on information concerning the start-up and development of the company, main business activities, goals and desires, beneficiaries, business strategies and objectives, future plans, and more. By combining this information with the additional material from the interviews and analysing it with the help of the above-explained model, it was possible to construct the business cases that are presented in chapter 7. See appendix 5 for an overview of the completed models for all three business cases.

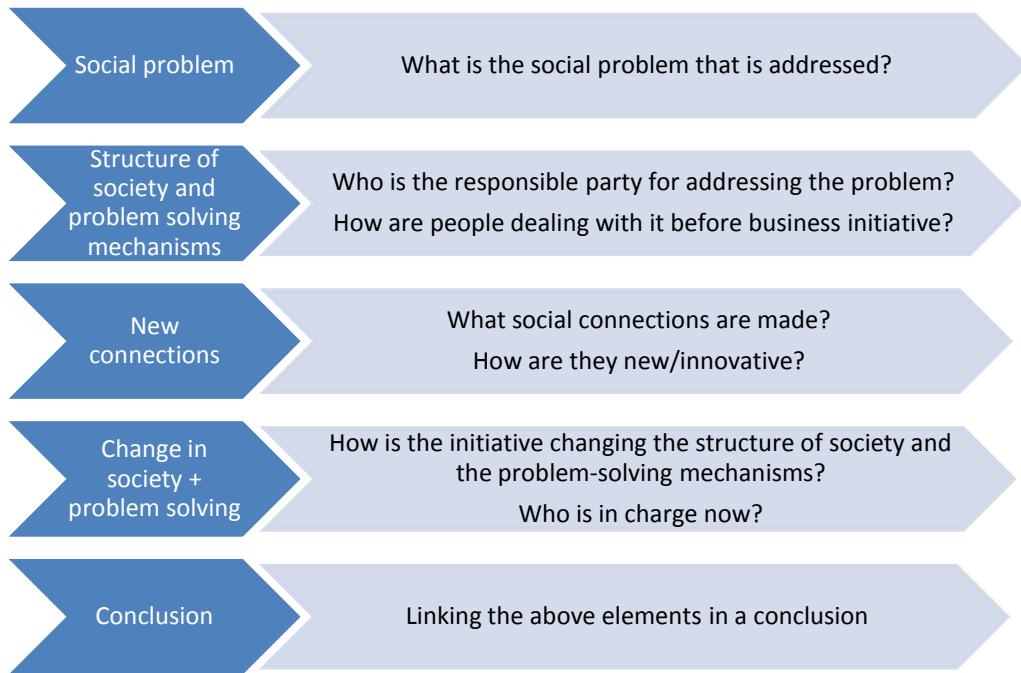


Figure 4.3: Data processing model for analyzing the key elements of the proposition

Chapter 5: Contextualizing (social) entrepreneurship

According to Steyaert and Hjorth (2006), the context-specific interpretations of a phenomenon together make up the meaning of that phenomenon. Thus, in order to get an insight into the concept of social entrepreneurship in order to attribute more value to its inherent sociality, it should be contextualized on the ground. This thesis research has chosen to investigate the contextualizations of (social) entrepreneurship in Ghana. The local interpretations that will be presented in this chapter are therefore based on the empirical material that was obtained through interviews with nineteen entrepreneurs from Ghana which were conducted during a field research from February till May 2013. The data that was obtained is summarized in the entrepreneur profiles (see appendix 4) which are used as the foundation of the local interpretations that are formulated in this chapter. The chapter will have the same structure as the theoretical framework as to be able to make comparisons between the two chapters in a later stage. The chapter will therefore start with an investigation of the local interpretations of the concept of entrepreneurship by Ghanaian entrepreneurs. Next, their understanding of social entrepreneurship will be explored. Finally, the chapter will present the local interpretations of the sociality of (social) entrepreneurship by the interviewees, in which “the social” will be operationalized according to these local views.

Local interpretations of entrepreneurship

When comparing the data from the interviews with Ghanaian entrepreneurs it appears that there is no consensus on the meaning of the concept. Entrepreneurship means different things to different people, also in Ghana. In this paragraph, no distinction is made between entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs in their understanding of entrepreneurship, as it is believed that they are in essence all entrepreneurs in the first place. To give a small introduction to how entrepreneurship is understood by the entrepreneurs that were interviewed, a few quotes will follow:

- Obehi: “*Entrepreneurship is about somebody with a business idea that follows through with it, he becomes self-employed. Entrepreneurship is about perseverance. The background does not matter; it is all about being motivated. Furthermore a need is necessary to start up a business.*”
- Richard: “*Entrepreneurship is about seeing a gap in the market of something that does not exist (or merely does not exist) and acting upon it. Entrepreneurship is furthermore all about combining the right resources.*”
- Michael: “*Entrepreneurship is about expanding and innovating your business and investing in the future. It is about choosing the right time and not waiting until the market is expanded by other businesses.*”
- Bernice: “*Entrepreneurship is about coming up with new businesses, projects or income-generating activities.*”
- John: “*Entrepreneurship is about coming up with new ideas, and then implementing them. Whether these new businesses initiatives are for profit or they are not profit, the initiators are entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs see an opportunity and immediately want to act upon it. They do not have the patience to wait.*”

As explained in the methodology, the entrepreneurs used several key terms during the interviews while illustrating their understanding of entrepreneurship. Consequently these key terms were categorized in a coding scheme (see appendix 5) under the five main themes: *opportunities, characteristics entrepreneurs, resources, sustainability* and *social results*. The first theme groups together the key terms that explain entrepreneurship as a way of creating opportunities. It explains entrepreneurship as dealing with a need, constructing something, providing employment, creating a form of freedom. The second theme groups together the key terms that explain entrepreneurship by the characteristics that the entrepreneur himself should possess. An entrepreneur should be creative, active, work hard, be motivated, willing to take a risk, and think outside of the box. The third theme groups together the key terms that explain entrepreneurship as a combination of certain resources. Entrepreneurship only consists when several resources are combined (depending on the business type) like capital, expansion possibilities, market, networking, customer service, research, local knowledge, innovation. The fourth theme groups together the key terms that explain entrepreneurship as something that first and foremost needs to be sustainable. In order to survive and be successful, entrepreneurial initiatives should make profit, be sustainable, work effective and efficient, and be independent. The fifth and last theme groups together key terms that explain entrepreneurship as a way of making an impact in society, sharing with and supporting others, creating employment, stimulating empowerment, and maintaining social relations. Basically, the understanding of entrepreneurship of every entrepreneur that was interviewed is formed on the basis of a combination of these key terms. With the help of the main themes, a more thorough understanding of entrepreneurship by Ghanaian entrepreneurs will be presented next.

Entrepreneurship as an opportunity

The key words that are categorized under the theme opportunity are often used by entrepreneurs when they start to explain their understanding of entrepreneurship. Many entrepreneurs see that entrepreneurship starts with taking advantage of an opportunity. According to Adjoa "*entrepreneurship is essentially about being able to recognize an opportunity, a demand, somewhere, be it services, be it products, and then going after it.*" Also Amed is full of business ideas and acknowledges that there are many opportunities in Ghana to start new initiatives. John emphasizes that especially acting upon the opportunities that you recognize is important by saying that "*Entrepreneurs see an opportunity and immediately want to act upon it. When it comes to new ideas, you can do all the thinking, and do all the planning, but implementation is always different.*" In many cases it is a need that lies at the basis of a new business opportunity. For example Lovans believes that entrepreneurship is about identifying a need and developing a new business idea to deal with this need. In 1984, the parents of Lovans identified the need for a school of farming to become a farm professional and as a result established KITA. Also Ken believes that some of the needs in the world (like education) need a businesslike approach in order to be dealt with. He identified the need for accessible quality education for the poor in Ghana and developed a new format for a private school.

Besides exploiting opportunities, entrepreneurship is also seen as a generator of opportunities itself, for the entrepreneurs but certainly also for others. The opportunities that are created by entrepreneurship are expressed in a variety of forms. Currently, there is a lot of unemployment in Ghana, even a lot of university graduates are at home as there is no work for them to do. As a result, entrepreneurship is seen as an opportunity to employment by many. Employment in itself leads to earning an income and consequently financial independence. For example Robert from SWOPA mentioned that entrepreneurship serves as a mean to create opportunities and income-generating activities for the women in Sirigu, which is an area known for poor employment possibilities. Also Theodore mentioned that creating employment for others and supporting people is an important element of entrepreneurship, as "*a society must be strong in order to succeed in it as an enterprise.*"

Entrepreneurship is furthermore seen as an opportunity to create a certain amount of freedom. Kwadwo explains this by stating that "*being an entrepreneur also means having a certain amount of freedom. I feel very responsible for my shop but I like to live the life I want. That is why I delegate this responsibility from time to time to my employees.*" Iddi shares this opinion and mentioned that "*Entrepreneurship is about having an enterprise where you have other people doing the work for you. As an entrepreneur you are able to manage your own time and take a day off when you feel like it. This is a sort of freedom that all people are looking for.*" Also Bobobo feels that entrepreneurship has made her so much more independent. She mentioned that "*I can do whatever I want. I am very proud at this. I can travel, and I can learn what I want at a time that I want. I am my own boss.*" Through setting up an entrepreneurial initiative, the women of Akoma have also been able to make a living and use the money that they earned "*to free ourselves and buy some clothing*".

Moreover, entrepreneurship is seen by many entrepreneurs as an opportunity to construct something. For example Bernice believes that entrepreneurship is not just about studying in school and reading books, but rather about setting up your own projects, about establishing something that can generate money. Bernice points out that unfortunately not every entrepreneur in Ghana shares this vision. "*In Ghana, successful entrepreneurs often spend their profits on big expensive products like houses and cars, instead of investing the money in income-generating activities or supporting other people.*" Also Amed sees that a lot of entrepreneurs in Ghana only use their success in business to show off. They do not do anything constructive with it. Yet, Amed himself believes that entrepreneurship is an opportunity to construct something, to build a life. However, you need to be willing to invest in it as an entrepreneur.

Entrepreneurship defined by the characteristics of the entrepreneur

Many entrepreneurs explained the concept of entrepreneurship with the help of characteristics that entrepreneurs typically possess. The concept is thus explained by the personality traits of the person practicing it. First of all, an entrepreneur is often seen as someone who works hard and is very active. According to Salome "*being active and busy will get you somewhere, not sleeping. There are always ways to make money in Ghana as long as you are not lazy.*" Also Bernice believes that first and foremost an entrepreneur should be active. To deal with the problem of youth unemployment, Bernice thinks that there should be more focus on entrepreneurship and that the youth should be more entrepreneurial and active with creating their own solutions. Bernice sees a lot of people that have studied entrepreneurship at school but at the end of the day they are at home doing nothing. Bernice believes that entrepreneurship is not just about reading books and going to school, but it is rather about how you position yourself in the system: by being active and enterprising. Besides working hard and being active, it is furthermore important to keep up with your activities. Obehi confirms this by stating that entrepreneurship is all about perseverance. "*The background does not matter; it is all about being motivated*".

The majority of entrepreneurs furthermore see an entrepreneur as a creative person who is able to think outside of the box. For example Richard believes that to be a good entrepreneur who can come up with good solutions you need to think outside of the box. However, according to Richard, many managers of big enterprises in Ghana are not innovative and cannot really perform anything. "*They only think in their own circle and cannot get out, there is no creativity. Instead they are just sitting at their desks pretending to be important.*" Also Kwadwo thinks that being innovative is key to being a successful entrepreneur. You need to be creative in your business strategies and for example have a competitive offer of products which none of the other sales men have. For Kwadwo this means travelling to the neighbouring countries to trade Ghanaian products for a more 'exotic' range of products from abroad. Being creative thus includes coming up with new ideas: for products, for markets, for promotion.

Another key characteristic of entrepreneurs that is identified by the interviewees is that entrepreneurs often possess a certain amount of fearlessness and courage, they are not afraid to take a risk. Adjoa illustrates this by saying that: *“a good entrepreneur should have that gut feeling to do something, which cannot be learned in school. An entrepreneur should have that boldness to do something, he should not be afraid. It is just something that somebody else on a normal day would not do, to take that step. Entrepreneurship is about risk taking. Entrepreneurs are not the most careful, prudent people you can find. They have certain blind spots. They go to places and do things that other people would not even dare.”* Also John recognizes these blind spots in entrepreneurs. He mentioned that entrepreneurs get so enthusiastic over new ideas that they do not have the patience to analyze all the potential pitfalls but want to start immediately. Also Konlan identified that risk-taking is part of being an entrepreneur. However, to minimize the risk, he believes that entrepreneurs should use certain strategies. By making use of lending groups Maata-N-Tudu is able to reduce the risks and costs associated with providing small loans to low income women who lack traditional collateral, business plans, business records and credit history. Adjoa agrees that it is important to minimize the risk of failure, but at the same time she mentioned that as an entrepreneur you *“should not be afraid to make these mistakes as it will eventually lead to something better.”*

There is dualism in the opinions of the entrepreneurs about the necessity of high education. On the one hand there are the entrepreneurs that feel that education is very important for an entrepreneur. On the other hand there are entrepreneurs who are supporters of the contrary: too much education can limit your creativity and *“spoil your brain”*. Salome is a supporter of the first group. She mentioned that there are many entrepreneurial opportunities in Ghana, especially if you educate yourself. She believes that education is the most important and valuable aspect in life, and that you are never too old to learn. Also Obehi believes that education is key in starting-up a business and becoming a successful entrepreneur. He mentioned that a lack of business education currently leads to many potential entrepreneurs not being able to set up a business successfully. For example, to improve chances on getting finances, entrepreneurs need to write a business plan. Yet, the business plan culture is not present in Ghana. Instead, all these business ideas of future entrepreneurs are developed and safely stored inside their heads. The entrepreneurs do not have any theoretical framework to organize their thoughts. As a result, the entrepreneurs often do not consider important elements in running a business. For example, many of them do not have an exit strategy. Instead they think: *“By Gods grace we will succeed”*. A lot of these people have really good ideas and they know that they are going to succeed, but they just need guidance, mostly in the form of business education. Konlan feels that education is a key component to reach success for an entrepreneur as well. According to Konlan every entrepreneur is able to pay back his loan to Maata-N-Tudu when he invests in a viable economic activity. Problems only occur when an entrepreneur is not able to manage his resources over which they need to make a return. This is often related to a lack of literacy skills and the short term thinking of many Ghanaians. As a consequence of their illiteracy they are not able to make calculations concerning the expected profit and the like. When these people would be educated, these problems would be eradicated. Being a supporter of the second group, Richard has very opposing ideas about the importance of education. He mentioned that you do not have to follow good education to become a good businessman. He believes that too much education could even work against you as you might become less creative and innovative, since you will only study from your books. Though Bernice acknowledges the importance of getting some education, she agrees with the statement that entrepreneurs should not just be busy with reading books, but rather with what is going on around the globe. *“As an entrepreneur you always need to broaden your scope to different angles.”* Also Michael thinks that your background does not necessarily influence your entrepreneurial skills. Together with Amed, he believes that the key to success for entrepreneurs rather lies in hard work, motivation, and mistakes that are learned from.

Entrepreneurship as a combination of resources

The third theme groups together the key terms that explain entrepreneurship as a combination of certain resources. Entrepreneurship is about combining the right resources (depending on the business type) like capital, network, innovation, ideas, a market, research, local knowledge, and customer service, in order to develop and expand the enterprise. However, it is not always easy for an entrepreneur to get access to the resources that are required to make a business to a success.

The most important resource for entrepreneurs in Ghana (and everywhere else in the world) seems to be capital. Almost all the interviewees mentioned that access to capital was the main barrier for developing their business. The entrepreneurs face difficulties in accessing both start-up capital and capital that is needed to make investments in order to expand their company. Konlan recognized this problem already years ago and consequently established Maata-N-Tudu. The overall objective of Maata-N-Tudu is *“to economically empower women through the provision of micro-credit to support women’s income generating activities and thereby improving upon their standards of living and that of their families.”* Maata-N-Tudu thus improves the accessibility of business loans for underprivileged groups in society. An entrepreneur that has been dealing with many financial constraints over the past years is Obehi. As a small entrepreneur it is almost impossible to get an affordable loan. Obehi mentioned that there is still a lot of corruption regarding the allocation of loans. Furthermore, most loans in Ghana involve high interest rates (around 35%) and collateral of high value. Many people have difficulties with this collateral, because they for example do not own a house or car that can serve this purpose, or because the value of the collateral that is asked for is worth more than the investment they need. Lovans agrees that interest rates in Ghana are too high. He illustrates that when entrepreneurs are not able to pay back these loans, they can get into a lot of trouble. They will for example experience harassment when they need to barrow from family members in order to pay back the loan. To support the entrepreneurs, Lovans is planning to set up a microfinance project with KITA which will have ‘normal’ interest rates (between 10-20%). Entrepreneurs seem to have problems particularly with getting their hands on start-up capital. However, this capital is necessary in order to be taken serious by others. Obehi illustrates this by stating that when you have some capital, you can go to a bank which will assign a worker to you that will help you with your business plan and your subscription at the chamber of commerce. However, if you have less than 10,000 Cedi (around €3000)³ in Ghana, you are referred to as a small business, and not even as an entrepreneur. In Ghana they also call these people a ‘hustler’⁴. When you have no access to capital as an entrepreneur people will not take you seriously, they will tell you *“It is no time for playing games and having fun, just get a real job”*. Amed states that no matter how innovative your idea is, in Ghana you either need to have capital or you should be able to convince others to invest in your idea. Luckily, John found an investor in his social network that could help him with his start-up capital.

This brings us to the second resource which explains in part entrepreneurship: the social network. As mentioned entrepreneurship is all about combining the right resources. However getting access to the resources that are required is not always that easy. The following entrepreneurs thus use their social network as a resource in itself to get access to the resources they need. Richard believes that it is actually not too difficult to set up a company in Ghana, as long as you use your network. When you have a good idea but no money, go and find someone that is interested in it and will invest the money for your company. Also when you did not get certain education or you do not know how to repair certain things for example, hire someone to get advice or repair it. Michael adds that using

³ Based on the exchange rate in February 2014.

⁴ Meaning of Hustler from urbandictionary: A hustler is someone that tries to make money in any way he can or wants. A hustler is the way one lives in his life. Going out on the streets or wherever making money and working hard for it. A hustler is not lazy as he is consistently out earning money. He gets the money by using his smarts and out cunning everyone out there. A hustler has ambition and a more serious approach to life than a gangster or a pimp.

your network in this way can also create a lot of room to focus on other things. While your partners focus on things that you are not an expert in, you can focus all of your attention on your chore business, producing the cooking stoves in the case of Michael. Also Bernice believes that networking is the key component to success for entrepreneurship. As an entrepreneur you should not just rely on the resources you have yourself, but rather try to make use of resources from others. Bernice is always in contact with different people and institutions to see how they can exchange ideas or technologies to move the projects ahead. Bernice is not an engineer, yet the Bamboo Bikes Initiative is still moving ahead, because they are collaborating on those aspects. It is often a two-way street: Bernice needs the assistance of a certain person; this person also needs the assistance of Bernice. They collaborate, network, and share ideas in order to achieve their goals.

According to Adjoa, innovation is one of the key drivers of entrepreneurship. Innovation is often seen as coming up with new ideas and approaches for new markets, new products, new promotion means, new production methods and finding areas that are still untapped. An innovative business idea is necessary to start an enterprise. Innovation should furthermore also be integral in the day-to-day practices of a company in order to continuously improve, develop and grow as a company. Theodore explains that BusyInternet is based on a very innovative business idea, as it is currently the only centre in Ghana which provides this product. Since the start in 2001 BusyInternet has focused on developing new ideas and expanding their business. As a result they offer a wide range of unique services at the moment. Also John introduced the smoothie as a new product on the Ghanaian market and the Smoothie Centre can thus be seen as an innovative business initiative. Conversely Robert believes that you do not necessarily have to come up with a new idea to be innovative. He illustrates this by clarifying that Melanie, the founder of SWOPA, saw potential in reviving the traditional arts of Sirigu. So instead of coming up something new, they revived an art from the past that was almost forgotten. They simply gave a twist to it. By creating the visitor centre they innovated and transformed the traditional arts to a business initiative from the modern days. Innovation is also often seen in the use of new technology. Bobobo for example recently started using a new solar dryer to process the fruits and vegetables in her factory. She is now able to offer a more hygienic and more efficiently produced product, which gives her a step ahead of competition. Ken is also planning to use new technology at Omega Schools, in the form of video lessons which are currently being developed. When the prices go down every child will receive a tablet to follow and review these lessons in class or at home. Also Michael is developing a machine to mechanize the production process as to upscale production and improve product quality. Besides innovation in the form of new business ideas and new technology, innovation can also be seen in the business model that is used by the entrepreneur. For example Michael uses innovation in the sense that he includes poor along the whole value chain as suppliers, manufacturers, retailers and customers, which accounts for positive economic, social and environmental effects. Another form of innovation can be seen in several certifications that can be acquired for different products, like fair-trade and organic certifications. The actual product does not necessarily change when one of these certifications is received, but it serves as a proof of a certain production process. Juliana explains that by receiving the fair trade and organic certificates for their products, Akoma has been able to export their products to a new niche market. In the case of Akoma, innovation has thus lead to a new market that could be accessed.

Besides access to capital, an idea for an innovative product and a social network, entrepreneurs need to have a market to sell their products and services to. According to Bernice, being able to market your products is what counts at the end of the day. If you are producing but you are not marketing the products well, you cannot pay your human resources director, your engineer, and your suppliers. According to Michael, finding a good market is essential to entrepreneurship. Choosing the right time and not waiting until the market is expanded by other businesses should also not be underestimated. In this respect finding the right market is also linked to dealing with or avoiding competition. Michael explains that Man and Man tries to expand their market to Togo and Côte d'Ivoire, as there is less

competition in these markets. So entrepreneurship is also described in the way the entrepreneurs market their products and services.

Other resources that are named in the explanations of entrepreneurship by the interviewees are research and local knowledge. According to Mary Kay research is a very important aspect of entrepreneurship. Besides an innovative idea to start up your business, it is important to continue investigating, develop new ideas and improve the offer of products or services. Besides the production itself, research, testing and evaluation are therefore the building blocks of Pure Home Water according to Mary Kay. It is furthermore important according to different entrepreneurs that entrepreneurial initiatives are build on local knowledge. According to Ken entrepreneurship is about looking at the local conditions and creating a business plan based on this local knowledge. It is about looking at what is actually going on in practice, in the economy, and try to make a plan which is in line with these trends. Ghana's "sachet economy"⁵ required an innovative approach in order to reach new markets and clients. As a result Ken developed the daily-fee-model which is in accordance to the 'sachet economy' of Ghana. Also Margaret believes that it is of utmost importance that local knowledge and expertise is used. MSA Ghana initially only used experts from outside of Ghana, until they realized that there is certainly enough expertise in Africa. Now, Africans advice other Africans on best practices. The services can now be offered against lower prices, while having fewer problems related to cultural differences.

Customer service is also an element in the explanation of entrepreneurship that is highly valued. Theodore believes that entrepreneurship is not only about developing a product that is unique and finding a market for it, but also about retaining your clients and making sure they are satisfied. Busy Internet puts high value on delivering on their promise and giving their clients the best quality possible. As a result of good customer relations, clients are likely to come back and only buy from your company. As a consequence of her high-quality products and good customer relations, Bobobo does not recognize many enterprises that form serious competition. Also Kwadwo wants to satisfy his clients while at the same time sell them as much as possible. *"You need to try to convince the customers with your sales techniques without being pushy."* Kwadwo gives his clients the opportunity to look through the shop at their own pace and try on as many things as they like. He has to respect that they sometimes take some time to decide. As he put it: *"people in the bush do not catch bush meat everyday".*

Eventually, by combining these resources, all the entrepreneurs want to be able to expand their business, upscale production and increase their number of clients and beneficiaries. Ken for example believes that expansion is central to entrepreneurship and thus developed a business format that was easily replicable. In three years Ken has been able to establish a chain of twenty schools, with twenty more schools being built at the moment. By building a new and bigger kiln, Pure Home Water has been trying to expand their production as well. Expansion is essential for Pure Home Water as their company's mission is to provide clean drinking water to as many people in Ghana as possible. John agrees that expanding your business activities is one of the main goals of entrepreneurship. If the social entrepreneurship projects of the Youth Harvest Foundation appear to be working and are earning profit, John wants to come up with more ideas and for example set up smoothie centers in other parts of Ghana. Expansion is related to different elements of an enterprise. Besides up scaling production and increasing the number of clients, expansion can also be seen in the amount of employees that work for a company. Juliana believes that providing employment for as many people as possible in Puso-Namogo is one element of expansion. There are still women in the surrounding communities that could join Akoma and get the chance to improve their situation. The women of

⁵ Sachet economy refers to an economy in which "spend-as-you-earn" thinking is present. It is all about cheap, day-to-day use. As a result, in a sachet economy, many products are packaged for daily use (f.e. shampoo, telephone credit, alcohol etc).

Akoma are praying that there will be more work and clients to sell to: *"By his grace we will have more demand, more machines and we can extent the production"*.

Entrepreneurship as a sustainable business initiative

Sustainability is the fourth theme which is part of the explanation of entrepreneurship. First and foremost, an entrepreneurial initiative needs to be sustainable in order to survive and be successful. Thus entrepreneurship is also about making profit, being independent and working effective and efficient. According to Adjoa, entrepreneurship is about establishing a profit making business. As an enterprise *"we need to pay our bills. [...] We need profits in the sense that we can keep a business"*. John agrees with this, as he believes that only when your enterprise is financially viable you are able to continue to deliver results. In this sense it is important that your income is reliable. Mary Kay explains that Pure Home Water is currently trying to diversify its distribution channel, as they are depending on unreliable funding. At the moment, Pure Home Water mainly relies on big NGO's like UNICEF to cover their operations costs. However, Pure Home Water cannot rely on these organizations too much in the future as these organizations are very likely to get less funding or no funding at all in the next years. To deal with this potential problem, Pure Home Water wants to start up their individual sales network again. Also Juliana recognized that entrepreneurship is about being financially independent. Akoma has been set up as two different departments⁶ as this gave the women the opportunity to be independent and feel responsible for the business activities. Margaret strongly believes that in order for an enterprise to be sustainable, it needs to be managed in an effective and efficient manner. Margaret illustrates that this is often a problem for the NGO's that are operating in Ghana. *"For example, they do not have any documentation of the good work they have been doing. As a result they are not really able to control and monitor their activities. They cannot use this knowledge to learn from their mistakes."* Through the workshops and training that MSA provides, the business expertise of NGO's relating to effectiveness and efficiency is improved. Besides being financially sustainable, it is also important to be sustainable in the rest of your business approach. Michael has for example realized that the current business plan of Man and Man will probably not be sustainable on the long run. When the economy of Ghana grows and welfare in Ghana increases, people will start using LPG or electricity based stoves instead of the improved cooking stoves. Consequently, Man and Man should continuously diversify and develop itself.

Entrepreneurship as a way of creating social results and benefits.

The fifth and last theme groups together key terms that explain entrepreneurship as a way of creating social results and benefits. It explains entrepreneurship as a way of making an impact in society, sharing with and supporting others, creating employment, stimulating empowerment, and maintaining social relations. In contrast to the other four main themes, this theme will only present the interpretations of the twelve entrepreneurs that were interviewed. The views of the seven social entrepreneurs about the social element of entrepreneurship are left out on purpose, as the social entrepreneurs differentiate themselves on the basis of this element. Therefore, it is believed that their opinions about this sub-element of entrepreneurship could be biased, as they all believe that a social element *should* be part of the entrepreneurs' strategies, but that currently many entrepreneurs mainly focus on commercial value creation (see the following paragraph).

All of the interviewees acknowledged the importance of the social element in entrepreneurship. Making a contribution to society is seen as an indispensable part of entrepreneurship. Lovans believes that trying to make a change should be one of the main goals. The students of KITA are taught about this importance of this and most graduates have really developed into 'change agents' and have

⁶ (1) Akoma Trade (Ghana) Ltd – trading department and (2) Akoma Multipurpose Society – women's association in the community of Puso-Namogo.

started initiatives in their communities to deal with certain challenges. They are always busy with "how can I help?" Also Theodore is of the opinion that contributing to the well-being of society should be at the basis of entrepreneurship. He explains that "*this is the point where you can make profit, as people that are sick, poor or uneducated will not use your services. Instead, the people that you support today could be your customers of tomorrow.*" Furthermore he believes that a society must be strong in order for an organization to succeed in it.

Furthermore, the entrepreneurs also believe that supporting the people in your environment in an essential part of entrepreneurship. Bobobo believes that it is very important to share new knowledge with the rest of the employees. "*When there is a new thing, I get everybody on board*". Sharing and helping others might be seen as the key value of Bobobo. A lot of people come to Bobobo for help and she always tries to do something for them (small or big), even if it is difficult, so that these people at least know that she really wants to help them. This support can be seen in funding, knowledge and advice. Bobobo explains that "*when you help each other, you are able to grow. Because others have helped me, I have been able to grow. That is why I need to help others now. I need to bring in new technology and knowledge. Only if you share what you have with others you are able to reach development*". Also Kwadwo has realized that it is important to help the people in your direct environment. He believes that you should always try to help your relatives when you are able, for example by providing employment for them: the employees in his shop are all people from his social network.

Employment creation is probably the most visible social impact of entrepreneurship. All of the interviewees identified the merits for society of providing employment. In Ghana, especially among women and youth the need for income-generating activities is high. The need for business opportunities for women is recognized by Robert from SWOPA and Juliana from Akoma. In the villages of the Northern regions there are poor employment possibilities and especially women have a weak social and economic position. To solve this need, both SWOPA and Akoma started initiatives which provide good opportunities for the women to improve their situation and have possibilities to earn some income themselves. Through microfinance loans Konlan, and in the near future also Lovans, is trying to stimulate entrepreneurship and employment creation. Konlan states that the mission of Maata-N-Tudu is therefore "*to initiate and promote the socio-economic well being of women in the operational area through enterprise development. Its overall objective is to economically empower women through provision of micro-credit to support women's income generating activities and thereby improving upon their standards of living and that of their families.*" Some of the interviewees even saw benefits in providing children with employment opportunities. For example Iddi mentioned that: "*Providing employment for other people, among which children, is important, so that they can foresee in their own living and are able to go to school.*" However, not all interviewees were of the opinion that entrepreneurs are responsible for creating employment. Salome defended that the main responsibility for creating jobs still lies with the government of Ghana.

Through earning their own income people become more independent and get empowered, which is another social result of entrepreneurship. The women of Akoma in Puso-Namogo are a very good example of women empowerment through employment. Juliana explains that entrepreneurship to these women means that they are able to make a living and that they can "*use the money to free ourselves and buy some clothing*". In addition, social relations in Puso-Namogo have changed tremendously, as the women are now breadwinner of the family and the men take care of the children.

Furthermore, Akoma has also resulted in more unity in the community and between the people. With the establishment of SWOPA the women of Sirigu also got a chance to develop themselves explains Robert. "*SWOPA provides a unique opportunity for women to come together to share*

problems, strengthen social ties and solidarity, to modify power in family relations, to improve the marketing and produce pottery and art, to improve marketing and the income situation. Art and craft also present opportunities for women to develop and express their individual qualities and identity.”

Local interpretations of social entrepreneurship

In addition to discussing the concept of entrepreneurship with the interviewees, an effort was also made to discuss the concept of social entrepreneurship. A clear distinction can be made between the interpretations of social entrepreneurs and the interpretations of entrepreneurs about the concept of social entrepreneurship. The majority of the seven social entrepreneurs were able to give a concise definition of the concept. On the contrary, the majority of the entrepreneurs were not acquainted with the concept. An explanation of the understanding of social entrepreneurship according to both groups will be presented next.

Social entrepreneurship according to social entrepreneurs

The majority of social entrepreneurs that were interviewed were able to give a concise definition of social entrepreneurship. They were able to give an explanation of how they thought about social entrepreneurship and were able to point out the difference with entrepreneurship in general. Adjoa for example gives the following definition: *“Social entrepreneurship is about enterprises that make revenue to impact lives directly. Social entrepreneurship has a more community focus and is less about making money than commercial enterprises.”* Bernice describes social entrepreneurship as a sort of intervention. It is about something you are trying to do to get others in a better position. It is about changing lives. It is about helping others and others helping you to achieve your social goals. Ken explained social entrepreneurship as doing business, *“but with a big heart”*. The relationship with the clients can be seen as being partners rather than exploitation or the like. The vision of making an impact and doing good influences how social entrepreneurs do business along all lines of the enterprise. According to Ken, social entrepreneurship is about doing good by doing business. John believes that the definition of social entrepreneurship goes beyond the fact that you are earning an income. He illustrates that: *“when it is not for profit, social entrepreneurship applies already because then you are an entrepreneur, but not focusing on putting money in your pockets, but focusing on delivering a social value.”* According to John social entrepreneurship can be defined as doing an activity to achieve a clear-cut social value, while at the same time being financially sustainable. It is about an activity that has wider benefits, that is more of a public good. Because your enterprise is financially viable, you are able to continue to deliver that social value.

The majority of social entrepreneurs use the perceived distinction between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship as the basis for their definition of the concept of social entrepreneurship. Consequently, it could be suggested that they believe that the two concepts are linked to each other, while also differentiating on a number of elements at the same time. Looking at the definitions that are discussed so far, it can be concluded that the attitude towards the element of income-generation and profit making is seen as the main difference between entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship. Adjoa illustrates this by saying that *“It is important for the entrepreneur to make a conscious effort for this [social results]. If you are talking about the normal entrepreneur, who is more of a capitalist, so grab grab grab money. Make money, make profit, you can lose focus. And not so you touch lives.”* Also Bernice emphasized the difference in attitude towards earning and spending money. According to Bernice, successful entrepreneurs in Ghana often spend their profits on big expensive products like houses and cars, instead of investing the money in income-generating activities or supporting other people. She illustrates that these businessmen *“go and buy big shoes, big cars, rich things [...] Unnecessary, on unnecessary stuff! [...] People want to buy \$1.000 or \$1.000.000 dollar cars. But if you will go to the house, you will see about ten cars parked in the house.”*

They are rich. Today I will use this one, tomorrow I will use limousine, I am going to fashion. Meanwhile people are there suffering. I can tell the difference between the business men and those social entrepreneurs. If you do not have the passion you cannot work at those angles." Adjoa adds that to be able to work as a social entrepreneur you need to have that natural affinity with a social enterprise. You need to know what you want in life and what makes you more fulfilled: money or social results. The majority of social entrepreneurs thus see 'commercial' entrepreneurs as capitalists and in it for the financial gains, while social entrepreneurs are in it for the social value that is created with their activities. However, all social entrepreneurs do acknowledge the importance of earning an income as a social entrepreneur as well, in order to be sustainable and continue with the business activities. John explains that he used to spend a lot of time on getting funding for his projects. That is why he asked himself: "*Is it possible to integrate the business of chasing money into the projects that we are doing?*" With establishing the social enterprise, John is still doing what he was doing, but this time what he is doing also has the potential of generating income. With the social enterprise format you are able to keep doing what you want to do, and maintain focus on your main goals. It is extra important for social entrepreneurs to create a steady income as a lot of the social entrepreneurs mentioned that it is extra difficult to get investors and funding as a social enterprise, in comparison to a commercial enterprise. For example Michael states that it is not easy to get impact investors into your company. They recently realized that they cannot do everything themselves, but that they have to look for different people that can buy shares in their company so that they can grow. Unfortunately all of the banks that they contacted in Ghana were not interested in investing in the improved cooking stoves. According to Michael, they are only interested in the big industries; the profit margin of the cooking stoves is not big enough for them.

Besides basing their definitions on the perceived difference between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship, the social entrepreneurs also base their definitions on the perceived difference between social entrepreneurship and the work of NGO's. Mary Kay for example mentioned that Pure Home Water is seen as different from commercial enterprises as they have a non-profit aspect. At the same time, Pure Home Water is different from NGO's as these organizations really need to prove their benefit to society according to Mary Kay, probably as a result of accountability towards donor organizations. In his description of social entrepreneurship, Ken identifies a difference in effectiveness between the two. He mentioned that NGO's "*often do not meet the true needs of the local population. A lot of money is wasted in the progress of getting it to the beneficiaries. Only a small percentage of the money ends up where it was initially directed at. On the contrary, social enterprises work a lot more efficient and cost-effective.*" John sees the difference between NGO's and social entrepreneurs in the social relation with the beneficiaries. He exemplified that one of the advantages of social entrepreneurship over the work of NGO's is that the relation with the clients will be more equal in the sense that they do not get products and services for free. According to John, "*the NGO's stop the beneficiaries from thinking, because they give them free things. As long as the NGO's supply products and services for free the lives of the beneficiaries improve. However, the day they stop supplying, the lives of beneficiaries become worse than they were before the NGO's came in with their free things. So actually they continue to contribute to deepening poverty, and deepening all the problems they think they are going to solve. With social entrepreneurship, the beneficiaries now have to pay something, and they will be inclined to value whatever social value they have received. They will cherish it, and take better care of it then if they would have received it for free.*" Their mindset will change, and John believes this is a win-win situation.

However, not all of the social entrepreneurs were too confident about their own knowledge on the concept of social entrepreneurship. When Michael was asked about his understanding of the topic for example, he immediately asked for support and feedback, instead of giving an answer himself. "*Currently we are not purely a social enterprise. We were thinking that a social enterprise does not make a profit. Is that the meaning of social enterprise?*" Eventually he gives the following answer, still a bit insecure about his knowledge: "*I did not understand the meaning of social enterprise well,*

because it is not easy to get a grant. We are not thinking of social, social, social. Socially we are employing people, we are reducing the carbon emission, socially we are reducing the cost of fuel consumption, but still it is not easy to work without profit. Therefore now we want to move from a social, to a profitable business. Because if we think of social, social, social, the business might collapse." During the interviews, some of the other social entrepreneurs also tried to get approval about the descriptions they were giving about social entrepreneurship.

Social entrepreneurship according to entrepreneurs

Unfortunately, this will not be a very extensive paragraph, as none of the entrepreneurs were acquainted with the concept of social entrepreneurship. During the interviews, an effort was made to introduce the topic. However, the entrepreneurs did not generally take on the lead as they were not aware about the concept. As was introduced in the previous paragraph, the entrepreneurs did acknowledge that a social element is inherent to entrepreneurship. The following paragraph will therefore analyse their understanding of this social element in comparison to the social element of social entrepreneurship described by the social entrepreneurs.

Local interpretations of the sociality of (social) entrepreneurship

The social entrepreneurs that were interviewed expressed their understanding of the social element of social entrepreneurship through stating that the phenomenon:

- Is about changing and impacting lives
- Focuses on delivering a social value
- Is about doing good by doing business
- Has a more community focus than entrepreneurship
- Is less about making money than entrepreneurship
- Works more effective and efficient than NGO's
- Is involved with a more equal relationship with the clients than entrepreneurship and NGO's.

Surprisingly, the entrepreneurs made use of similar elements in their explanations of entrepreneurship in general. For example Theodore from BusyInternet explained that BusyInternet believes that it is very important to make a social contribution. As a consequence, they made it central to the enterprise's mission: "*BusyInternet aims to provide both commercial services as well as social and economic development*". Theodore uses the same objective of doing good while being sustainable as the social entrepreneurs do, in order to describe the practices of BusyInternet. Also the passion of Lovans is not related to making as much money as possible, but instead lies with the community development aspect of KITA. According to Lovans, community development involves working towards a change and can be seen as the eventual *chore* part of the programme of KITA.

As can be read in the paragraph: Entrepreneurship as a way of creating social results and benefits, the majority of interviewees acknowledged that social results and benefits are an important part of entrepreneurship. They furthermore suggested that multiple beneficiaries such as personnel of the enterprise, clients, specific target groups and/or communities profit from these social results like employment creation, economic growth, independence and empowerment, and a contribution to the community and environment. So besides the financial goals, most of the entrepreneurs also have some social goals they would like to reach with their enterprise. Moreover, even though the entrepreneurs are not aware about the concept of social entrepreneurship, it appeared from the interviews that most of them do make a distinction between more social and more commercial entrepreneurs. Yet, they do not define the entrepreneurs that are more social as social entrepreneurs. It is questionable whether they would if they would be acquainted with the concept. The statements of Bobobo give a positive suggestion in this direction. After explaining the concept of

social entrepreneurship according to the external discourse to Bobobo, she decided that her business could actually be categorized as a social enterprise as well. *"My business is the same. It is all about the social relation. The communities are always happy to see me. In Africa if you work with that relation you will get results. Social relations bring success. However, most entrepreneurs do not do like this".* She then mentioned to see a clear difference between herself and more commercial entrepreneurs who focus more on making money as well. So even though Bobobo was not acquainted with the concept of social entrepreneurship beforehand, her business strategies and activities seem to be in line with social entrepreneurship. While the social entrepreneurs thus make a clear difference between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship, the other entrepreneurs seem to wipe out this distinction as they use the same building blocks in their formulations as the social entrepreneurs do.

Operationalization of "the social" according to local views from Ghana

According to the interpretations presented in this chapter, the sociality that is inherent to both entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship can best be described in terms of **making an impact** on people's lives and society through creating **opportunities for others** in the form of employment and empowerment, and through making a **contribution to society** and the environment.

Chapter 6: Matching theory with practice: local interpretations versus theoretical framework

In this chapter, a comparison will be made between the conceptualizations that were formulated on the basis of (social) entrepreneurship literature presented in [chapter 2](#) and the local interpretations based on the interviews with entrepreneurs from Ghana presented in [chapter 5](#). This chapter will therefore be involved with contrasting the literature to the empirical material or matching theory with practice. This is seen to be highly important in order to examine whether or not the problems that were put forward in the theoretical framework exist in practice as well. This signifies investigating if the people in Ghana attribute the same shallow meaning to the sociality of social entrepreneurship by valuation the social element of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship equally. If it appears that they utilize another operationalization of “the social” in their descriptions, this could then be used to give more meaning to the operationalization that was presented in the theoretical framework. In addition, this chapter will also serve to investigate the correctness of classifying the conceptualizations in the theoretical framework as an external discourse. It will be explored what role the external discourse potentially plays in the interpretations of the local entrepreneurs by evaluating the possibilities that the conceptualizations are being imposed on the local entrepreneurs by parties in the West or being internalized by choice of the local entrepreneurs.

Comparing the context-specific interpretations with the conceptualizations from the theoretical framework

In accordance to the outline that was used in chapter 2 and 5, the comparison that is made in this paragraph will start with an evaluation of the views on entrepreneurship. Consequently, the views on social entrepreneurship will be compared after which the operationalizations of the social element will be assessed.

Local perspectives on entrepreneurship versus theoretical framework

Similar to the many different views on entrepreneurship from academics from the West that were presented in the theoretical framework, entrepreneurship is also interpreted in different way by the different entrepreneurs in Ghana. Also on the ground in Ghana no consensus about the meaning of the concept exists as the concept is explained and valued in different ways by the interviewees. Nevertheless, through re-using the main themes that were presented in chapter 5, it will be possible to make a comparison between the conceptualizations about entrepreneurship that are made in the theory and in the interpretations of Ghanaian entrepreneurs. The five main themes: *opportunities, characteristics entrepreneurs, resources, sustainability and social results* will thus serve as a guideline to compare the context-specific interpretations with the conceptualizations from the theoretical framework.

1) *Entrepreneurship as an opportunity*

The majority of entrepreneurs explained entrepreneurship by the fact that it exploits and/or creates opportunities. This element of opportunity was also highlighted in the theoretical framework for example by Drucker (1985) who stated that entrepreneurs do not necessarily need to elicit change, but they rather exploit the opportunities that are caused by change. Though the views on this theme are thus mainly in line with each other, the entrepreneurs from small businesses in Ghana also emphasized entrepreneurship as an opportunity to

create more freedom. Two of the one-man business entrepreneurs even saw it as the main goal of having an enterprise.

2) *Entrepreneurship as defined by the characteristics of the entrepreneur*

The majority of the Ghanaian entrepreneurs explained entrepreneurship by listing specific characteristics and personality traits that they attributed specifically to entrepreneurs. Unfortunately, this theme cannot be compared to the theoretical framework as the papers focusing on the characteristics of the entrepreneurs were left out of the theoretical framework on purpose. This choice was made as it was aspired to create more clarity about the phenomenon of entrepreneurship, rather than focusing on the people practicing it. However it seems plausible to believe that these papers would also highlight characteristics like an active attitude, hardworking, creative, able to think outside of the box and willing to take a risk. It would be interesting to investigate these papers in order to investigate for example the importance of education for an entrepreneur as there was a dualism in the opinions of the Ghanaian entrepreneurs about the necessity of education for an entrepreneur. While some of the entrepreneurs highly valued a good education and identified education as a precondition for success, other entrepreneurs believed that too much education could actually spoil your brain and creativity.

3) *Entrepreneurship as a combination of resources*

The entrepreneurs that were interviewed explained entrepreneurship as a combination of different resources. They all identified the importance of expanding and growing their enterprise through combining resources like capital, the social network, innovation, a market, customer service, research and local knowledge. These interpretations are in line with the Say-Schumpeter tradition which identifies entrepreneurship as a way of creating value and increasing productivity through making innovative combinations of resources. This element of innovation is also emphasized by the entrepreneurs that were interviewed. While the majority of entrepreneurs see innovation in terms of a new business idea, the use of new technology or integrated into the business model as a useful resource, the one-man business entrepreneurs only acknowledged the importance of starting with an innovative business idea. Although Stevenson (1983, 1985, 1991) argued that entrepreneurs generally do not let their own resources limit their options, but instead mobilize the resources of people in their network to achieve their objectives, the majority of interviewees mentioned that it is not always easy for an entrepreneur to get access to the resources that are required to make a business to a success. Especially the one-man business and family business entrepreneurs mentioned to have many difficulties with getting access to capital to start-up and/or expand their business. On the contrary, in line with the view of Stevenson, some of the entrepreneurs did mention to use their social network as a resource, for example as a way of getting access to capital. In addition, the entrepreneurs working in larger enterprises seem to have better access to the required resources.

4) *Entrepreneurship as a sustainable business initiative*

All of the entrepreneurs that were interviewed agreed that an enterprise needs to be financially sustainable in order to survive. The entrepreneurs explained the concept of entrepreneurship thus by the importance of generating an income and making a profit. The theoretical framework also acknowledged profit-making as a prerequisite for the existence of entrepreneurship.

5) *Entrepreneurship as a way of creating social results and benefits*

The local interpretations also included an explanation of entrepreneurship as a way of creating social results and benefits. The entrepreneurs identified that entrepreneurship is involved with the creation of social value and contributes to resolving social problems. This

social element of entrepreneurship was highly valued by all entrepreneurs that were interviewed. The theoretical framework also advocated for the inherent sociality of entrepreneurship. However, different opinions were presented in terms of the motivation behind the creation of these social results. Some researchers believed these results to be by-products of the creation of economic value (Venkataraman, 1997) while others argued that social results and societal transformations can even be the driving force for some commercial entrepreneurs (Austin, 2006). A difference in motivation can also be identified in the interpretations of the Ghanaian entrepreneurs. On the one hand the one-man business and association entrepreneurs seem to aim at social value creation in terms of mainly helping out themselves and improving their own situation. For them, entrepreneurship means an employment opportunity for themselves and a way of creating more freedom. The larger/hierarchical companies and NGO entrepreneurs on the other hand seem to aim at social value creation in terms of mainly helping out others and improving the situation of others. For them, the social element of entrepreneurship is linked to supporting as many people as possible, alleviating poverty and contributing to solve societal problems.

In conclusion, it could be stated that the local interpretations from the Ghanaian entrepreneurs that were interviewed match the conceptualizations that were presented in the theoretical framework, with some minor exceptions present. The basic principles of entrepreneurship that were introduced in the theoretical framework re-emerged in the explanations of the Ghanaian entrepreneurs. Both described the concept of entrepreneurship by using notions of opportunity, innovation, risk, and the combination of resources. Furthermore, the inherent sociality of entrepreneurship was identified by the Ghanaian entrepreneurs as well as in the theoretical framework.

Local perspectives on social entrepreneurship versus theoretical framework

When analyzing the local interpretations of Ghanaian entrepreneurs about social entrepreneurship, it appears that these are broadly in accordance with the literature and conceptualizations of the concept that are presented in the theoretical framework. However, while the numerous authors from the West all try to formulate their own views which are based on the same principles but with minor nuances, the views of the social entrepreneurs about social entrepreneurship seem to be more in line with each other. However, a sharp contrast can be made between the interpretations of social entrepreneurs and the interpretations of entrepreneurs about the concept of social entrepreneurship, since the majority of the seven social entrepreneurs were able to give a concise definition of the concept while none of the entrepreneurs were even acquainted with the concept.

The theoretical framework highlighted the importance of acknowledging the link between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship, while at the same time presenting characteristics which differentiate the two concepts from each other. The definitions that the Ghanaian social entrepreneurs provided were mostly based on (1) the perceived difference between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in general and (2) the perceived difference between social entrepreneurship and NGO's. As they use the principles of entrepreneurship to isolate elements of differentiation in social entrepreneurship it could be argued that the entrepreneurs also identify a link between these concepts. The main element of differentiation that is brought up in the interpretations of the social entrepreneurs is the difference in attitude towards the element of income-generation and profit making. Social entrepreneurship is described as focusing more on social goals rather than focusing on making money, which is viewed as the main goal of entrepreneurship in general. In both the theoretical framework and the local interpretations, this difference in mission and motivation is seen as the fundamental distinguishing feature between the two concepts. Yet, the theoretical framework also put emphasis on some additional elements of differentiation, which were not really discussed by the interviewees. The social entrepreneurs in Ghana recognized that similar to entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship is also concerned with

exploiting and creating opportunities. However, their interpretations do not endorse the belief that social entrepreneurs primarily recognize these opportunities in market failure which was argued in the theoretical framework. Furthermore, the differentiating elements of resource mobilization and performance measurement have also been neglected largely in the context-specific interpretations from Ghana.

The conclusion that social entrepreneurship is about creating social value which leads to social change and solving social problems that was presented in the theoretical framework is generally supported by the interpretations of the interviewees. They expressed the social goals of social entrepreneurship in terms of changing and impacting lives, delivering a social value, having an equal relationship with the clients, and having a community focus. However, while the theoretical framework included solving social problems as one of the main objectives of social entrepreneurship, this is not clearly formulated in the local interpretations. Even though their statements about making an impact and changing lives indirectly make positive suggestions in this direction, an emphasis on eradicating social problems, preferably at their roots, is lacking. However, when analyzing their business strategies and activities it appears that the social entrepreneurs from Ghana actually do aim on solving social problems. For example Omega Schools is involved with providing affordable quality education, Pure Home Water is involved with providing drinking water in the Northern regions of Ghana, and Man and Man enterprises aims to contribute to a better health of society by offering improved cooking stoves which produce less smoke. What the social entrepreneurs have asserted in their explanations of the concept of social entrepreneurship is thus not always fully in accordance to their business activities.

Local perspectives on the sociality of (social) entrepreneurship versus theoretical framework

While the social entrepreneurs from Ghana and the conceptualizations about social entrepreneurship from the theoretical framework both aimed at presenting a clear difference between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship, the other entrepreneurs in combination with the conceptualizations about entrepreneurship seemed to wipe out this distinction as they used the same building blocks for their definitions as the social entrepreneurs/social entrepreneurship conceptualizations used. The theoretical framework suggested that the relationship between entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship and their associated degree of sociality can be seen as based on a continuum rather than a dichotomy. The interviewees also acknowledged that there are more nuances possible between the extremes of either purely social or purely commercial. They erased this strict line through illustrating that there are entrepreneurs who are more social and entrepreneurs who are more commercial. Yet, they do not categorize the entrepreneurs that are more social as social entrepreneurs. The theoretical framework also suggested that the organizational form should not be used when determining the degree of sociality of an entrepreneurial initiative, as social entrepreneurship operates in the private, public and non-profit sphere. The social entrepreneurs that were interviewed indirectly support this view as they are operating in different organizational forms themselves, ranging from family businesses and large/hierarchical companies to NGO's.

The conclusion that all entrepreneurial forms are inherently social is thus present in both the theoretical framework and in the context-specific interpretations from Ghana. They simultaneously argue that both entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship create social value and contribute to a better society. Differences could potentially be identified when comparing the two operationalizations of "the social" which are presented in figure 6.1. Consequently, it could be concluded that a similar value is attributed to the sociality of social entrepreneurship. Both operationalizations highlight the element of the "other" and "society" as opposed to the "self".

Theoretical framework	Local interpretations
The sociality that is inherent to social entrepreneurship can best be understood in terms of creating value for the benefit of others as opposed to oneself to solve problems in society , while operating in an environment that is determined by social relations and networks .	The sociality that is inherent to social entrepreneurship can best be described in terms of making an impact on people's lives and society through creating opportunities for others in the form of employment and empowerment, and through making a contribution to society and the environment.

Figure 6.1: Operationalizations of "the social"

Yet, while the operationalization from the theoretical framework identified the element of solving problems in society, it was left out in the operationalization that was deducted from the local interpretations of Ghanaian entrepreneurs. Through the examples of Omega Schools, Pure Home Water and Man and Man enterprises the previous paragraph nonetheless implied that the social entrepreneurs that were interviewed actually do aim on solving social problems. So while the context-specific interpretations of the social entrepreneurs do not confirm this view, it could thus potentially be supported through exploring the local expressions of the social element in the business activities and results of social entrepreneurs.

In conclusion, it could be stated that the context-specific interpretations of the interviewees of both entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship are **broadly in line** with the conceptualizations that are presented in the theoretical framework. Furthermore, they mutually support the statement that all entrepreneurial forms are inherently social. The local interpretations from Ghanaian entrepreneurs thus enforce the problem statement which argues that the interpretation of the sociality of social entrepreneurship is too shallow, as the value that is attributed to the social element of entrepreneurship is equal to the valuation of the social element of social entrepreneurship. Consequently, **the local interpretations cannot be utilized to give more profundity to the interpretation of the sociality of social entrepreneurship**. In addition, they can neither provide new insights regarding the proposition that was introduced in the theoretical framework. However, it was implied that the local expressions of the social in terms of business activities and results could potentially serve to give more meaning to the sociality of social entrepreneurship.

Theoretical framework as external discourse: imposed or internalized?

The previous paragraphs concluded that the local interpretations of Ghanaian entrepreneurs are similar to the conceptualizations that are presented in the theoretical framework. Especially the definitions about social entrepreneurship that were provided by the social entrepreneurs from Ghana were very much in line with the theoretical framework. It would therefore be interesting to investigate where the interviewees obtained (or did not obtain) their knowledge about the concept of social entrepreneurship. The following paragraph will therefore investigate the awareness about social entrepreneurship in Ghana and the influence of the conceptualizations from the west on how the views in Ghana are developed. This involves evaluating the possibility that the conceptualizations are being imposed on the local entrepreneurs by parties in the West and the possibility that the conceptualizations are being internalized by choice by the local entrepreneurs. In the end it will then

be possible to investigate the correctness of classifying the conceptualizations in the theoretical framework as an external discourse.

Awareness about social entrepreneurship in Ghana

To investigate the information channels about social entrepreneurship that are accessible to the Ghanaian population, the general awareness about social entrepreneurship first needs to be analysed. During the three month field work in Ghana, social entrepreneurship was not something that was popular or alive in society in general. The interviewees also implied that awareness about the concept is not widespread in Ghana. Even though the government of Ghana has recently started to recognize that entrepreneurship is seen as indispensable when it comes to modernizing the socio-economic infrastructure of Ghana and consequently has put encouraging entrepreneurship high on the governmental agenda (Government of Ghana, 2013), the interviews with the entrepreneurs suggested that there is not much awareness about the concept of social entrepreneurship at governmental level. For example John stated that "*I am not sure, at the registration system in Ghana, people will know what a social enterprise is*". Currently, no legal framework for registering a social entrepreneurial venture is in existence either. Both John and Ken mentioned that they aspired to distinguish their social businesses in the future in terms of a new type of legal format. As the Ghanaian government is paying more and more attention to stimulating entrepreneurship in Ghana, a discussion about the possibilities for social entrepreneurs, for example in terms of tax reductions or the like, could potentially have a positive outcome.

In addition, the interviews suggest that even the actors that directly deal with social entrepreneurship through the products that they buy or because they work in a social enterprise are more or less uneducated about the concept. For example Adjoa mentioned that the clients of MicroEnsure are probably not aware of MicroEnsure being a social enterprise. For these final consumers, MicroEnsure is just providing a very good service. Their partners like the banks and Tigo are assumed to know about the social enterprise aspect of MicroEnsure. Moreover, Mary Kay exemplifies that though everybody at Pure Home Water uses the word, even the local Ghanaians, Mary Kay thinks that not a lot of them actually know what it exactly means. When discussing the topic with two employees of Pure Home Water, they excused themselves for not being able to tell much about the concept. They illustrated they were not clarified about certain things in the company. Bernice also believes that the youngsters who are in charge of producing the bamboo bikes are not acquainted with the social enterprise aspect of their work. Instead, for them, it just means a great opportunity of earning an income. Adjoa believes that her employees know that MicroEnsure is a social enterprise, but that they might not be fully up-to-date content wise about the meaning of the concept. However, MicroEnsure does make sure that they recruit people who fit within the (social) goals of a social enterprise. She believes that it is more important that her employees have a natural incline to help people and impact lives. She explains "*You need to have love helping people. Because you need to approach them, you need to relate to them. Because if there is a national disaster you need to talk to these people. [...] we make sure that we recruit people who have that natural ability.*" Nevertheless, while Adjoa admitted that education about social entrepreneurship is inadequate in Ghana, she was very positive about the future and explained that "*People are getting there. Is not as advanced as in the west, but people are becoming aware. Slowly but surely.*"

As was introduced in chapter 5 already, also the twelve entrepreneurs that belonged to the sample group appeared not to be acquainted with the concept of social entrepreneurs. As the government, the population, customers and even the employees from the social enterprises are not acquainted with the concept of social entrepreneurship, it is not expected that other entrepreneurs that are operating in Ghana are aware of the concept. So far, only the social entrepreneurs in Ghana themselves seem to have an idea about the meaning of social entrepreneurship. Consequently, the

following question rose: *Which information channels about social entrepreneurship did they use, which are apparently not accessible to the general population of Ghana?* During the interviews, the social entrepreneurs were therefore asked how they got acquainted with social entrepreneurship. Adjoa had her first encounter with the concept of social entrepreneurship while she was doing her internship at an investment bank in the UK, in the summer of 2004. During this three month internship she did community service for the bank so as this give something back to the community. John was first introduced to the concept while he was participating in a workshop in Amsterdam in 2009. He illustrates that “*it was the first time that they mentioned it, and I happened to be there*”. The workshop was organized by the Sexual and Reproductive Health Alliance of the Netherlands. As a result of the SEEED competition of 2011 that Michael competed in with his enterprise Man and Man, he came across the concept of social entrepreneurship. Man and Man won a SEEED award for their social and environmental impact. In this competition, Michael received support from an accountant and advisor that the SEEED award provided to write his business plan for his social enterprise. This advisor for example helped them with upgrading the business plan to meet international standards. Through reading the book “Wealth at the bottom of the pyramid” by C.K. Prahalad, Ken learned about social entrepreneurship for the first time. Prahalad is an American Management Guru which uses different case studies in his book. His book is all about doing good by doing business. Margaret received her knowledge about social entrepreneurship through MSA International, of which MSA Ghana is part. MSA is originally a UK-based initiative and the Ghana branch was established in 2005. Susan Murcott, the founder of Pure Home Water, as well as Mary Kay herself both originate from the USA, where they were educated about social entrepreneurship.

What can be concluded from the above is that **all the social entrepreneurs got acquainted with social entrepreneurship because of contacts from abroad**. Either through a book, the ‘mother’ organization, a workshop or competition that all had their origins in the West, the social entrepreneurs were introduced to the concept. Only those entrepreneurs with contacts abroad were able to accumulate knowledge on the topic and consequently position themselves as a social entrepreneur. Consequently, it is reasonable that the population of Ghana which did not come into contact with these “external information channels” is not aware about the concept. The only additional channels of information about social entrepreneurship that are accessible to them are in the form of social entrepreneurs in their social network or others people that learned about the topic. It could furthermore be asserted that it is not surprising that the definitions that the social entrepreneurs have given about social entrepreneurship are in line with the theoretical framework, as their knowledge is gathered in the West, where the conceptualizations in the theoretical framework originate from.

Exploring the influence of the conceptualizations from the west on the opinion formation about social entrepreneurship in Ghana

The theoretical framework suggested that the conceptualizations that it presented should be regarded as an external discourse. This implication was made on account of the realization that the majority of conceptual papers on which the theoretical framework is founded originate from Western Europe and the USA. As a result, it was suggested that the conceptualizations that were presented could potentially be too one-sided and context specific when applying them to analyse the contextualization of social entrepreneurship in a country like Ghana. In order to keep an open mind to the context-specific interpretations it was therefore decided to get away from the formulated categorizations and conceptualizations that were presented in the theoretical framework in order to minimize its influence on data assembly and analysis. During the data collection in Ghana, it was thus aspired not to impose the ideas presented in this external discourse on the population of Ghana, including the nineteen (social) entrepreneurs that were interviewed, but rather to obtain an unbiased local view. Nevertheless, the first part of this chapter concluded that the local interpretations that were investigated match with the conceptualizations that were presented in the

theoretical framework. So despite the efforts of not letting the categorizations from the external discourse influence these interpretations, they appeared to be similar in the end. As the previous paragraph asserted, it is nonetheless not surprising that the context-specific interpretations of social entrepreneurship by the social entrepreneurs are in line with the theoretical framework, as they used external information channels that originate from the West to accumulate their knowledge on the topic. Actually all the social entrepreneurs that were interviewed got acquainted with social entrepreneurship because of contacts from abroad. So while it was aspired to keep the theories produced in the West away from the interviewees, the interviewees had already ensured access to them.

Consequently, the social entrepreneurs thus actively chose to employ the conceptualizations that these external information channels provided in order to characterize and distinguish themselves. However, while the numerous authors from the West all try to create their own views based on the same principles but with minor nuances, the views of the social entrepreneurs about social entrepreneurship seem to be more identical to each other. This might be explained by the view that instead of internalizing the concepts by thoroughly analyzing and adapting them to a more personal fit, the social entrepreneurs rather internalized the conceptualizations by blind-copying them. This process could be illustrated through the example of Bobobo. Bobobo first got into contact with the concept of social entrepreneurship through the interview that she conducted for this thesis research. The researcher could in this case thus be seen as the external information channel. The conceptualizations from the theoretical framework were explained to her during the interview, after which she replied that her business could actually be categorized as a social entrepreneurial venture as well. She thus decided to take over the conceptualizations from this "external discourse" and use it characterize herself. It could therefore be suggested that the social entrepreneurs internalize the conceptualizations only to a certain extent as it is assumed that there would be more differences between the definitions that they provided if they would have taken the effort to personalize these views. The fact that not all of the social entrepreneurs were too confident about their knowledge and continuously asked for verification during the interviews strengthens the idea that they have not thoroughly investigated the conceptualizations either.

Even though support is found for the assumption that social entrepreneurs have internalized the conceptualizations from the West, it is not clarified yet with which objectives they have done this. First and foremost they used the designation of social entrepreneurship to distinguish themselves from the other entrepreneurs in Ghana. Subsequently they were able to use this distinction in their contact with external parties like investors, donors, clients, providers and other organizations from the West. They for example used the categorization of being a social enterprise as a means to get access to challenges and business plan competitions and the like. For example Man and Man Enterprise was able to participate in the SEEED award competition due to the fact that they positioned themselves as a social enterprise. Participating in this contest proved to be very beneficial for Man and Man Enterprise; besides receiving support from a consultant with writing their business plan, Man and Man also received a check of \$5.000. The social entrepreneurs thus basically used the conceptualizations as a way of marketing or promotion and of getting awareness for their projects. In this way, social entrepreneurship is actually employed as a resource in the contact with external parties in order to achieve certain goals. Emphasis is put on external parties, as it was identified that awareness about social entrepreneurship in Ghana is generally low, which makes using the concepts in contact with Ghanaian parties senseless. Consequently, the internalization of the concept of social entrepreneurship by the social entrepreneurs could therefore be seen as a strategic tool. By positioning themselves as social entrepreneurs, they gain access to doors which remain closed for other entrepreneurs. However, as the comparison in this chapter suggested that the difference between the two concepts seems to be minor, it could be argued that the social entrepreneurs thus play with reality as they make others believe that they are truly different.

When analyzing the local interpretations from the Ghanaian entrepreneurs, it seemed as if the conceptualization of the concept was imposed on the interviewees, as the conceptualizations about social entrepreneurship from both sides showed so much similarity. However, the above supported the idea that these theoretical underpinnings are rather internalized by the social entrepreneurs in Ghana, as opposed to being imposed on them. Through external information channels they got acquainted with the concept after which they actively chose to employ it to characterize themselves. However, as it was implied that they have blind-copied the conceptualizations from the West, it could be stated that the social entrepreneurs **conformed their context-specific interpretations of social entrepreneurship to the external formulations of the concept**. Consequently, instead of using an emic approach to categorize themselves, the social entrepreneurs in Ghana have adopted the etic approach which was brought to them through the external information channels. The social entrepreneurs thus employed a categorization from outside (etic perspective), rather than developing a characterization from the inside (emic perspective).

On the basis of this discussion, it is possible to determine the correctness of classifying the conceptualizations in the theoretical framework as an external discourse. Even though it was argued that the theoretical framework should be regarded as an external discourse as a consequence of the fact that the theories presented in it are based on the findings of academics from Europe and the USA and thus not represent the Ghanaian perspective, the social entrepreneurs employ these conceptualizations to characterize themselves, which advocates that they do represent the Ghanaian perspective. However, due to the fact that the social entrepreneurs internalized the conceptualizations from the West by blind-copying them, no context-specific nuances are provided in their interpretations. The social entrepreneurs thus employ the conceptualizations but they did not internalize them in the sense of personally adapting them to their specific views and business strategies. As a result of the fact that the social entrepreneurs thus conformed their context-specific interpretations of social entrepreneurship to the external formulations of the concept, **these conceptualizations should be regarded as an external discourse**. In addition, the local interpretations could therefore still give a one-sided view on the topic. This is reinforced by the fact that the local interpretations thus also confirm the shallow interpretation of the sociality of social entrepreneurship. It could therefore be argued that as a consequence of the fact that the social entrepreneurs that were interviewed have internalized the conceptualizations from the West by blind-copying them, no different valuation or understanding of the social element could be identified in their interpretations. However by using examples of Omega Schools, Pure Home Water and Man and Man enterprises the previous paragraph nonetheless implied that in addition to the context-specific interpretations of “the social” by the social entrepreneurs from Ghana, also the local expressions of the social in terms of business activities and results by these social entrepreneurs could potentially serve to give more meaning to the sociality of social entrepreneurship. As the conceptualizations that were presented in the theoretical framework (and blind-copied by the interviewees) are not embedded in the complex social economic reality, while these local expressions are, they could give a richer representation of the understanding of the sociality of social entrepreneurship. The following chapter will therefore explore the expressions of the social element in terms of new connections in society, in order to find support for the proposition.

Chapter 7: New social connections in society as the differentiating element

This chapter will present an analysis of the local expressions of the social element by (social) entrepreneurs in order to find support for the proposition that was given in the theoretical framework. First of all, an examination of the possibility of finding a different operationalization of the social through analyzing the local expressions of sociality in Ghana will be provided. In addition, the key elements of the proposition will be explored, which will be used to structure the analysis. This includes an introduction to the nature of social problems in Ghana, the existing problem-solving mechanisms in Ghanaian society, and the role of the government, NGO's and social networks. After this, three business cases from Ghana will be presented which were chosen in order to provide support for the proposition. These business cases will serve as examples of how new connections in society could lead to a new composition of that society and its problem-solving mechanisms in order to solve social problems. Finally, it will be determined whether or not the analysis of the local expressions was able to provide a different valuation of the social element of social entrepreneurship in order to solve the ambiguity between the concepts for once and for all.

Focusing on local expressions rather than local interpretations of the social

It was concluded in the previous chapter that the local interpretations of the interviewees match the conceptualizations that are presented in the theoretical framework and consequently express the same hollow valuation of the social element of (social) entrepreneurship. As a result, these context-specific interpretations cannot be utilized to attribute more meaning to the sociality of social entrepreneurship which is essential if a differentiation between the concepts of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship is to be made. Due to the fact that the social entrepreneurs that were interviewed have internalized the conceptualizations from the West about social entrepreneurship through blind-copying them, their interpretations do not reflect a different understanding of the sociality of social entrepreneurship. However this does not necessarily indicate that a different expression of the social element of social entrepreneurship does not exist in Ghana. What the entrepreneurs propagate about social entrepreneurship could be different from how they give form to the social element of social entrepreneurship through their business activities. What people say and do is does not always in line with each other.

The examples of Omega Schools, Pure Home Water and Man and Man Enterprises that were presented in the previous chapter implied that the explanations of the concept of social entrepreneurship by social entrepreneurs are not always fully in accordance to their business activities. While there was no emphasis in their explanations of social entrepreneurship on eradicating social problems, their businesses appeared to be motivated by solving problems in society. For example in the interview with Ken Donkoh he mentioned that it is the mission of Omega Schools to solve the world's biggest problem: Education. All of this implies that in addition to the context-specific interpretations of "the social" by the social entrepreneurs from Ghana, also the local expressions of the social in terms of business activities and results by these social entrepreneurs could potentially serve to give more meaning to the sociality of social entrepreneurship. Consequently, it has been decided to examine the results and changes that are evoked as a consequence of the entrepreneurial activities as well, which could be referred to as the local expressions of the social. Through analyzing the business activities, results and relationships with beneficiaries, support could potentially be found for the proposition that the creation of new social connections could lead to a new construction of society and its problem-solving mechanisms in order to solve social problems.

Exploring the key elements of the proposition from the theoretical framework

The proposition presented in the theoretical framework suggested that the sociality of social entrepreneurship is expressed in *“finding and/or creating new connections as to form new social relations in society and thereby contributing to a different construction of society in order to solve social problems. In this way social entrepreneurship is about resolving social problems by redesigning the problem-solving mechanisms in society.”* The following three key elements are at the basis of this proposition: (1) new connections in society, (2) new construction of society and its problem-solving mechanisms, and (3) tackling social problems. As explained in the methodology, the analysis of the local expressions of the social element in Ghana was conducted with the help of a model which is based on these key elements (see figure 4.4). However, before presenting the findings of this analysis, a short introduction to the three elements will be given, dealing with questions like: *What kind of social problems exist in Ghana and what is the nature of these problems? What are the existing problem-solving mechanisms in Ghanaian society? What is the role of the government, NGO's, and social network in dealing with social problems?*

In the operationalization of the social element in the theoretical framework, social or societal problems are referred to as problems that affect a large group of people and that directly or indirectly have an influence on everyone within a society. Examples of social problems that the population of Ghana is currently dealing with are: poor education, limited housing options, unemployment, limited access to improved water sources, and limited access to start-up capital and instruments for financial security. As was already introduced in the theoretical framework, social problems exist as a result of market failure. As the problem can therefore not be resolved through traditional market forces, a different approach is necessary. According to Wolk (2008) the public sector and to a lesser extent the non-profit sector have traditionally been held responsible for solving these market failures which generate problems in society. However, due to recent trends and changes the problem-solving capacity of these parties has decreased (Hoogendoorn, 2012), though it could be disputed whether or not the problem-solving capacity of the government of Ghana was superior in the past. According to Bernice, the government of Ghana is underperforming when it comes to eradicating problems in society. She illustrated that the Netherlands might be giving 80% of the support for solving social problems while Ghana might only be able to deliver 10% of the support, depending on the resources that are available. However, she did not doubt that the government was willing to give support as she mentioned that: *“(...) they are doing their best. Because I believe that there is no government that wants their citizens to be in a very difficult situation”*. Adjoa also acknowledged that the government is underperforming in dealing with social problems, but questions the willingness of the government: *“The government is not doing anything so we have to take up and do stuff”*. According to Bernice, the problem-solving capacity of NGO's has also decreased due to the unavailability of funds. However, the role of the NGO's will not be discussed in detail as this would touch upon a undecided field of discussion about the effectiveness and purpose of NGO's and development aid in general. In conclusion, the problem-solving mechanisms in Ghanaian society are thus underperforming or lacking, which leads to the continuance of the social problems.

Besides relating to the actor who is responsible for solving a social problem, problem-solving mechanisms of a society also relate to how people are currently dealing with this social problem. One way of dealing with a problem in Ghana is by not dealing with it. This can be illustrated by stating that if there is no access to start-up capital to set up an enterprise, farmers will continue with subsistence farming and just stay poor. Or by stating that if there is no access to affordable quality education, parents will settle with an inferior type of education for their children. Another common way of dealing with a problem is by asking family for support. To provide some context to the ambiguity related to the role of the social network as social safety net, the opposing views of Adjoa and Bernice will be discussed. According to Adjoa, people in Ghana solve many financial problems by borrowing money from their family and friends. Adjoa believes that this system has always worked

well in Ghana as the Ghanaian society is still very communal, which implies that everybody feels the responsibility to help each other. In contrast, though Bernice acknowledges that the extended family is seen to be performing the function of social safety net, she argued that this system actually is underperforming as well. She illustrates this by explaining that *“The issue is, if I have extended family and I want to support them, and I do not have it, how can I support?”* According to Bernice, in the end, solving social problems should not be about depending on parents, friends or the government, but about the strategies that you employ to reach your objectives.

Supporting the proposition: three business cases from Ghana

As was introduced in the theoretical framework, social entrepreneurs view market failures and social problems as sources of opportunity. The proposition suggested that social entrepreneurs solve these social problems by creating new connections in society which lead to a new composition of that society and its problem-solving mechanisms. After examining the empirical material through a different lens, it became apparent that some of the Ghanaian entrepreneurs that were interviewed support this proposition with their business cases. The “evidence” will be presented through displaying three business cases from entrepreneurs in Ghana. These business cases are structured by the key elements that form the proposition and include an analysis of the social problem that is being addressed, the new social connections that are made and their innovative nature, the actors responsible for solving the problem and the actors dealing with it now, and the change in society and its problem-solving mechanisms. For an overview of the completed models that were used per business case see appendix 5. For a general introduction to the businesses described below, including an overview of their business activities and the interpretations of (social) entrepreneurship by the corresponding entrepreneurs see appendix: 4.

Business case #1: MicroEnsure

Social problem

In Ghana, there is basically no awareness about the importance of having insurance. According to Adjoa only about 4% of the population is insured. As a result, the population of Ghana does **not have a safety net in times of financial set-back**. To illustrate the importance of having insurance and the role of MicroEnsure, the possible situation of a person passing away will be employed as an example.

Responsibility and current problem-solving

Especially during sickness and death of a person, expenditures can quickly add up. This can partially be explained by the fact that a funeral in Ghana traditionally consists of two ‘celebrations’: a burial during which the deceased is buried and a funeral during which the life of the deceased person is celebrated. While the burial is a sad goodbye, the funeral is a happy celebration in which the number of invites represents the success and happiness in the life of the deceased. The **direct family members** of the deceased are responsible for the expenses of this funeral. However, due to these cultural traditions, the costs are often very high. It is therefore not uncommon that the funeral is celebrated some time after the dying day, sometimes even up to a year or more, so that the family of the deceased has time to save money.

However, this does not eliminate the fact that the majority of people still need to borrow money from family and friends to pay for the bills of the disease and funeral. Often this is organized in the form of a collection or contribution that the whole family needs to make. According to Adjoa, this

system has been able to operate due to the feeling of responsibility to help each other as a result of the communal feeling in Ghanaian society. However, the pitfall of this approach is that the money that is borrowed is often not paid back at all or only after a long period of time. Consequently, this approach does not contribute to improving the financial security of the population of Ghana. The current problem-solving mechanism of this problem thus **depends on family relations in society**.

Social connections

The new connections in society that MicroEnsure has created in order to deal with the above explained problem are expressed in the formation of the **Tigo Family Care Insurance**. Tigo Family Care Insurance, designed by Tigo and MicroEnsure and underwritten by the insurance company Vanguard Life, provides life insurance coverage to the Tigo subscriber and one member of the subscriber's family, with the sum assured determined by the amount of airtime used on a monthly basis. By creating a new connection in society with **Tigo**, MicroEnsure has been able to set up an innovative distribution channel for their micro insurances. This distribution channel is even more attractive as customers subscribe for free because the product rewards customer loyalty at Tigo. As the majority of people in Ghana have a mobile phone, access to and awareness about these life insurances has been greatly improved. As the death of a relative is often sudden MicroEnsure furthermore ensures immediate payment to customers to help them meet funeral costs.

Change in structure of society and its problem-solving mechanisms

The responsibility of paying for the expenses of the funeral remains with the relatives of the deceased; however they will now be supported through a financial compensation from MicroEnsure in accordance with their monthly savings at Tigo. It could be stated that MicroEnsure thus partially takes over the responsibility from the relatives in addressing this problem. Hence it could be suggested that the insurance products that MicroEnsure provides serve as a **substitute safety net** for these people. Instead of depending on family relations for support in times of financial set-back, the customers now have more control and decisiveness. They do not have to please anybody because they owe that person, but are independent and can choose for themselves. Besides these improvements on the personal level, also family relations are therefore likely to be enhanced.

Thus, through linking the micro insurances to mobile phone payment plans the scope of insurance distribution and the awareness about the importance of having insurance is greatly improved. It could be suggested that MicroEnsure has been performing excellent as they increased the number of beneficiaries to 1,2 million local Ghanaians. In short, by creating a cooperation with Tigo, MicroEnsure has been able to offer clients a safety net when an unexpected hardship or disaster occurs. Consequently, MicroEnsure has changed the structure of society and its problem-solving mechanisms which depended on the extended family before.

Conclusion

In conclusion, through offering the Tigo Family Care Insurance in cooperation with the telecom provider Tigo, MicroEnsure has created an innovative connection in Ghanaian society, which has (partially) removed the burden for the family of paying the funeral expenses of the deceased. As a result, family relations have been improved and clients of Tigo have gained more independency and decisiveness. MicroEnsure thus serves as the safety net that the population of Ghana needs in times of economic set-back. Consequently the financial security of the population of Ghana is enhanced.

Business case #2: Omega Schools

Social problem

In Ghana, getting access to **affordable quality education** is a major problem in society, especially for the people at the bottom of the pyramid.

Responsibility and current problem-solving

The provision of education is seen as a **responsibility of the government**. However, the government of Ghana seems to be underperforming on this aspect. While private schools provide high quality education with corresponding expensive school fees, public schools do not have school fees but do not provide quality education either, according to many. In addition, public schools often employ extra hidden costs in the form of school materials and uniforms.

All parents in Ghana aspire to get the best education as possible for their children. However, as a result of the lack in affordable quality education, the majority **settles for less**. A great portion of society is nonetheless still having problems with coming up for the costs relating to this inferior type of education. As a result, parents sometimes keep their children at home, especially during harvest season. Besides saving money on school related issues, the children are then also in a position to bring in extra money. It is not uncommon for a **child to be earning an extra income** by for example selling water on the streets in order to pay for the uniforms, books or lunches. As it is often believed in Ghana that children owe their parents from the day that they are born, they share the responsibility with their parents to address the problem of education.

Social connections

Omega Schools identified the problem of accessible quality education in Ghana and decided to develop a businesslike approach to tackle the problem. Instead of offering education through public schools from the government, Omega Schools took over responsibility and created a connection with the parents at the bottom of the pyramid. As a result, the government was cut out of the equation and the **parents were appointed the position of direct clients**. Instead of developing an educational program from the top-down like the government does, Omega Schools decided to design their educational program on the basis of the capabilities of these parents.

This involved designing the educational program on the basis of the economic structure in Ghana: the **“sachet economy”**. A sachet economy refers to an economy in which a “spend-as-you-earn” thinking is present. As a result, many products are packaged for daily use at an affordable price (f.e. shampoo, telephone credit, alcohol, etc). Consequently, through developing the “daily fee model” Omega Schools has been able to offer education like a product that is packaged for daily use.

The daily-fee model can best be described as a pay-as-you-learn system. Every day, the students of Omega Schools pay a daily fee of 1,50 Ghanaian Cedi at the school gate which covers all costs, including teaching materials, assessments, two uniforms per year, lunch, national health insurance, use of the computer lab and extra after school training. As Omega Schools acknowledges that the income of parents is not always consistent, the students furthermore receive 15 one-day discount cards which allow them to go to school for free. These cards combined with a transparent picture of the costs have strengthened the trust in good intentions between parents and Omega Schools.

The direct connection that Omega Schools established with the parents can be seen as innovative as it is shaped by the sachet economy of Ghana and the capabilities of the parents themselves. In this way, Omega Schools has created a more equal relationship with their clients while at the same time creating a feeling of accountability towards them.

Change in structure of society and its problem-solving mechanisms

Omega Schools has taken over the responsibility of the government to provide education, by developing a businesslike approach to education based on the local economic situation. Instead of dealing with the problem of education top down, Omega Schools has been able to formulate a **bottom-up solution** inspired by the sachet economy and the difficulties that parents are dealing with. As a result, Omega Schools has improved the feasibility of parents to send their children to school. Moreover, this initiative has also **minimized the responsibility of children** to make a contribution.

The fact that Omega Schools has been able to establish a chain of twenty private schools since 2010, with twenty more being constructed at the moment, proves that Omega Schools has achieved their aim of improving the quality of and extend of access to education to low income families at the lowest cost on an unprecedented scale. The knowledge that every school was up to its capacity within one week after opening without using any other marketing tools than word of mouth, referred to as the “Omega Gospel”, strengthens this statement.

Conclusion

In conclusion, as a result of taking a businesslike approach to education by offering affordable quality education based on a daily-fee model, Omega Schools has replaced the responsibility of the government to deal with the social problem of education. By creating an innovative direct connection with parents from the lower classes of society and packaging the offer of education in accordance to the local situation and the difficulties that the parents are dealing with, Omega Schools has been able to change the problem-solving capacity of society.

Business case #3: Akoma

Social problem

The Upper Eastern Region is the second poorest region in Ghana among others due to **high unemployment rates**, especially among women. In this region, illiteracy rates are high, education services are poor, access to health services is very restricted and diseases have high incidence levels.

Responsibility and current problem-solving

Finding employment is viewed as an **individual responsibility**. However, in the case of high unemployment rates, it is the responsibility of the government according to many to provide sufficient employment opportunities that the population could apply to. In Ghana, men fulfil the position of breadwinner of the family, with the women supporting them in all ways possible.

Currently, the people in the Northern region mainly live from **agriculture**, though the income that is derived from this economic activity is low. Consequently, most families are involved with all sorts of **side-activities** in order to complement their income, like the small-scale production of shea butter.

Social connections

In 2008, the commercial Akoma Trade department wanted to set up a production site for the production of shea butter. They chose the community of Puso-Namogo as there were many opportunities in this village to improve employment rates and create a positive impact on daily life through community projects. Motivated by the trade department of Akoma, the women of Puso-Namogo formed an association. Hence, two new connections in society were made: (1) **connection between the women of Puso-Namogo** and surrounding communities in the form of the Akoma Multipurpose Society and (2) a connection between Akoma Trade Ghana and Akoma Multipurpose Society.

The women of Puso-Namogo formed an association as this would increase their independence from the trade department. Moreover, it represented the idea that together you stand strong and that together you could potentially solve the high unemployment rates among women.

Change in structure of society and its problem-solving mechanisms

It could be argued that the above-explained connections in society are not that innovative. However, the changes in society that were evoked by these new connections are.

The establishment of the women's association and the cooperation with Akoma Trade has resulted in three major changes in the society of Puso-Namogo and its surroundings.

- 1) The women in the community became more united and started working together.
- 2) The relationship between men and women changed as women are now earning their own income and are able to pay for school fees of their children. The women are now the breadwinner of the family and sometimes even support their husbands by buying for example kettle for them. Moreover, men have taken over some of the household tasks, which can be seen as a fundamental change as it is not common at all in Ghana.
- 3) Several projects were set up that were beneficial to the community as a whole. The fair-trade premium was used to finance these projects, including health insurance for the women, children's school uniforms and an ICT building (library is planned).

The new connections that Akoma has generated have thus ensured income generation and women empowerment. Instead of relying on their husbands, the women are now in control of solving problems in their society, which indicates that problem-solving mechanism of their society was altered. A number of 270 women so far have been able to change their income strategies and their social home situation.

Conclusion

By entering into a collaboration with a women's association in Puso-Namogo, the initiative of Akoma has resulted in solving unemployment among the women of that region as well as changing social relationships and structures in local society. Consequently, the women have been empowered to deal with problems by themselves and lead a more independent life of their husbands. Thus Akoma has also changed the problem-solving mechanisms of their society.

Attributing more meaning to the sociality of social entrepreneurship

When analyzing the three business cases of MicroEnsure, Omega Schools and Akoma, several observations can be made. First of all, they have all dealt with a pressing problem in society namely financial insecurity, education and unemployment. However, it should be acknowledged that the business cases that were presented only have the capacity to solve the social problem within certain limits, for example within the limits of a local society on a specific location or within the limits of a specific target group. Secondly, through making new connections in society, they have motivated a different construction of that society and its problem-solving mechanisms. While initially the government was held responsible for the operation and organization of these problem-solving mechanisms, all three business cases show a shift from this top-down approach to a bottom-up approach. The responsibility of solving the problem is in all cases assigned to the population itself that is affected by the social problem. However, through their initiatives, the social entrepreneurs provided them with support and tools so that they were able to deal with the problems by themselves.

Thirdly, the business cases all demonstrate the creation of new connections in society which did not exist previously. MicroEnsure created a new connection with Tigo, a telecommunication provider, with which they linked one of their insurance products. Omega Schools created a new direct connection with the parents of local income households and based the design of their educational program on this connection. Akoma created two new connections between the women of Puso-Namogo in the form of the association as well as a connection between this association and the Akoma Trade department. Yet, actually all the interviewees seemed to make a new connection in society through their businesses, both social entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs. MSA Ghana created a new connection between local knowledge and training by hiring local African's to give capacity development training to NGO's. Man and Man Enterprise recently made a connection with an investor from Côte d'Ivoire in order to upscale his production, export his products and thus reach a larger target market with his improved cooking stoves. Richard's business created a connection with professionals and expats by offering them short-term housing possibilities. BusyInternet created a connection with small Ghanaian entrepreneurs through the provision of web-services. Though the new connections that were described will definitely lead to new possibilities and approaches, not all of them change the system, industry or social hierarchy of Ghana. So the question should not be whether or not these connections are created, because entrepreneurs in general also create new connections (in line with the views of Schumpeter, 1911), but rather to what purpose these connections are used. Social entrepreneurs identify a social problem in the form of a market failure and actively search for a new approach to solving it. So the connections created by social entrepreneurs differ from the connections created by entrepreneurs in the sense that social entrepreneurs actively try to identify and establish these connections in order to try to solve a social problem by changing the construction of society and its problem-solving mechanisms, which is necessary at the traditional market forces seem to be failing to solve these problems.

However, as might have been noticed, one of the business cases does not concern an initiative that positions itself as a social enterprise. Instead, the Akoma Multipurpose Society is a women's association from Puso-Namogo. Nonetheless, the investigation of the local expressions of the social shows that through the connection that was made in society by establishing Akoma, the social structure of the society was altered including the problem-solving mechanisms resulting in the resolution of the social problem of unemployment. So even though Akoma is not positioned as a social enterprise and the women do not refer to themselves as social entrepreneurs or even have knowledge about this concept, the business activities and results indicate great similarities with the proposition concerning social entrepreneurship. Consequently, the business case of Akoma shows that a person does not necessarily have to position itself as a social entrepreneur to be one. The fact

that Akoma is not positioned as a social enterprise could be seen in a lack of education and awareness rather than a different business approach. The women of Akoma might chose to use this label when they would be acquainted with the concept. In addition the business case strengthens the statement that social entrepreneurship thus manifests itself in all organizational forms.

Thus, by analysing the three business cases that were presented evidence was found that supports the proposition. The missing link in the operationalization of the social element of social entrepreneurship was identified to be the new connections in society that social entrepreneurs create. Consequently, more value could be attributed to the operationalization of the social by recognizing these new connections in society which lead to new relations and a new construction of that society and its problem-solving mechanisms. A new operationalization of the social could be formulated as following:

"The sociality that is inherent to social entrepreneurship is expressed in finding and/or creating new connections as to form new social relations in society and thereby contributing to a different construction of society and its problem-solving mechanisms, in order to solve social problems and create social value and opportunities for others, while operating in an environment that is determined by social relations and networks."

By reevaluating the sociality of social entrepreneurship it can be distinguished from the inherent sociality of entrepreneurship. Consequently, the sociality of social entrepreneurship is able to serve as the element of differentiation by which social entrepreneurship clearly distinguishes itself from entrepreneurship.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

The theoretical framework suggested that the interpretation of the sociality of social entrepreneurship is too shallow as it matches the interpretation of the sociality of entrepreneurship, which results in an inability of using the social element of social entrepreneurship as the distinguishing factor between the concepts. In line with the ideas of Steyaert and Hjorth (2006) about contextualization, this thesis has therefore focused on investigating the local interpretations and expressions of the social element of social entrepreneurship by Ghanaian entrepreneurs in order to attribute more value to the operationalization of the social so that it can serve as *the* differentiating element between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship. Three main conclusions can be made based on this research.

1) The local interpretations of (social) entrepreneurs in Ghana cannot be employed to attribute more value to the operationalization of the sociality of social entrepreneurship

The research indicated that the local interpretations of (social) entrepreneurship from the Ghanaian (social) entrepreneurs that were interviewed are in accordance to the conceptualizations presented in the theoretical framework which is based on the work of academics from the West. It appeared that the basic principles of entrepreneurship that were introduced in the theoretical framework re-emerged in the explanations of the Ghanaian entrepreneurs. Both described the concept of entrepreneurship by using notions of opportunity, innovation, risk, and the combination of resources. In addition, the local interpretations of the Ghanaian entrepreneurs also acknowledged the inherent sociality of entrepreneurship, which they expressed through an identification of the creation of social value and the contribution to a better society. While the entrepreneurs that were interviewed were not acquainted with the concept of social entrepreneurship, the interpretations of the social entrepreneurs that were interviewed were almost identical to the conceptualizations from the theoretical framework. Their interpretations similarly distinguished social entrepreneurship from entrepreneurship by its primary social goal, which they expressed in terms of changing and impacting lives, delivering a social value, having an equal relationship with the clients, and having a community focus. The implication that all entrepreneurial forms are inherently social that was made in the theoretical framework is thus also recognized in the interpretations of both entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs. The local interpretations from the (social) entrepreneurs that were interviewed thus enforce the problem statement which argues that the interpretation of the sociality of social entrepreneurship is too shallow, as the value that is attributed to the social element of entrepreneurship is equal to the valuation of the social element of social entrepreneurship. Consequently, the local interpretations cannot be utilized to give more profundity to the interpretation of the sociality of social entrepreneurship

2) The social entrepreneurs conformed their context-specific interpretations of social entrepreneurship to the external formulations of the concept.

The research showed that the social entrepreneurs that were interviewed got acquainted with social entrepreneurship because of contacts from abroad. Either through a book, the 'mother' organization, a workshop or competition that all had their origins in the West, the social entrepreneurs were introduced to the concept. In addition, it appeared that after obtaining this knowledge through these external information channels the social entrepreneurs actively chose to employ these views to characterize themselves. Nevertheless, it was indicated that instead of thoroughly analyzing the conceptualizations and adapting them to a more personal fit, the social entrepreneurs seemed to have internalized the conceptualizations from the West by blind-copying them. Hence, it should not be a revelation that the local interpretations matched the

conceptualizations from the theoretical framework and for that reason did not present a different valuation or understanding of the social element. The social entrepreneurs thus employ the conceptualizations but they did not internalize them in the sense of personally adapting them to their specific views and business strategies. As a result of the fact that the social entrepreneurs thus conformed their context-specific interpretations of social entrepreneurship to the external formulations of the concept, these conceptualizations should be regarded as an external discourse. In addition, both the theoretical framework and the local interpretations potentially give a one-sided view on the topic.

3) The local expressions of (social) entrepreneurs in Ghana can be employed to attribute more value to the operationalization of the sociality of social entrepreneurship

The research indicated that a new approach to finding a different valuation of the sociality of social entrepreneurship could be found in a reconsideration of the empirical material with a focus on expressions of the social element by the entrepreneurs. This was based on the fact that some examples suggested that the way in which the social entrepreneurs explained social entrepreneurship was sometimes different from how they formed the social element of social entrepreneurship through their business activities. By providing three business cases from Ghanaian (social) entrepreneurs, the research was able to find support for the proposition that was introduced in the theoretical framework. Through the connections that the businesses made in society, the social structure of that society was altered including the problem-solving mechanisms resulting in the resolution of the social problems of financial insecurity, affordable quality education, and unemployment. The research furthermore showed that the connections created by social entrepreneurs differed from the connections created by entrepreneurs in the sense that the social entrepreneurs actively tried to identify and establish these connections in order to try to solve a social problem by changing the construction of society and its problem-solving mechanisms. Consequently, it was concluded that the missing link in the operationalization of the social element of social entrepreneurship was hidden in these new connections in society. Accordingly, the following new operationalization of the sociality of social entrepreneurship was formulated: *"The sociality that is inherent to social entrepreneurship is expressed in finding and/or creating new connections as to form new social relations in society and thereby contributing to a different construction of society and its problem-solving mechanisms, in order to solve social problems and create social value and opportunities for others, while operating in an environment that is determined by social relations and networks."* Finally, it was argued that the sociality of social entrepreneurship thus distinguishes itself from the inherent sociality of entrepreneurship through a different valuation of the social element which is expressed in the creation of new connections in society. The research consequently concluded that the sociality of social entrepreneurship can serve as the element of differentiation by which social entrepreneurship clearly distinguishes itself from entrepreneurship.

Chapter 9: Limitations and recommendations

This chapter will provide an overview of the limitations that had to be dealt with during the course of this thesis research. An explanation of these limitations as well as a justification of how they were handled will be provided. As some of the limitations could not be sorted within the course of this thesis research, recommendations for further research will be provided in addition.

Limitations with regard to external validity

Bryman (2008) suggested that the quality indicators which are utilized for the evaluation of social research are mainly geared towards quantitative rather than qualitative research. As this thesis research is concerned with qualitative research, the importance of these quality indicators could be played down. Nevertheless, the selection of a case study design for this research is considered to complicate the external validity of the findings. Bryman (2008) argued that a single case cannot be representative so that it might yield findings that can be applied more generally to other cases. However, as this thesis explored multiple cases in Ghana, the external validity of the findings is reinforced. In addition, triangulation of both methods and sources was applied in order to further enhance the external validity of the conclusions. Triangulation of methods was realized by conducting both qualitative semi-structured interviews and participant observation, while triangulation of sources was realized by interviewing not solely the entrepreneurs of the businesses that were visited, but also the employees, clients and other people within the community.

Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that the objective of this thesis was not related to finding a “true” definition of the concept of social entrepreneurship which could be generalized, but rather to mapping the understanding of the interpretations of the social. In line with the views of Steyaert and Hjorth (2006) about contextualization, this thesis research focused on presenting the context-specific interpretations of entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship and the sociality that is inherent to the concepts according to entrepreneurs from Ghana, in order to acquire a comprehensive insight into the contextualizations of the concepts in Ghana. Still, as Steyaert and Hjorth (2006) argued that the multitude of different contexts in which social entrepreneurship is given form, *together* make up the meaning of the concept, more research should be conducted in order to investigate the context-specific interpretations in other places where social entrepreneurship is contextualized.

Limitations with regard to the cases that support the proposition

Qualitative research is characterized by a continuous process of analysis and meaning-making of the empirical material. A continuous process of analysis was also integral to this thesis research. Consequently, only after having conducted the field research in Ghana where the empirical material was gathered, it was realized that in order to reach the objective of this thesis, its focus should shift towards the local expressions of the social element by the Ghanaian entrepreneurs. Due to the fact that the field research was initially designed to investigate the local interpretations of the entrepreneurs, the empirical material on the local expressions of the social resulted to be a bit scarce. Luckily, the data that was gathered for the thesis internship for Ontmoet Afrika did provide more insight into the expressions and business activities of the entrepreneurs and of the general social and economic processes in Ghana. Eventually, three business cases were selected and thoroughly investigated to make a case for the proposition. Yet, to carry the conclusions about these new connections in society only on three business cases is a bit hazardous. Subsequently, more research needs to be conducted in order to expand this basis of support. Additional research will also be required to determine why the other businesses that were interviewed did not touch upon all of the key elements of the proposition. Was the impact capacity of their business for example underdeveloped due to a limitation in resources, an event that occurred, or organizational

difficulties? In addition, further research is necessary into the existing problem-solving mechanisms and the role of the government and NGO's in order to demonstrate that the social entrepreneurs really have changed the relationships in society and consequently support the proposition. On the basis of this, it might also be able to get an insight into the new roles of the government and NGO's in the new composition of society that social entrepreneurship evoked.

Limitations with regard to the role of the researcher

Especially in conducting qualitative field research it is important to be reflexive about the role and influence of the researcher. It was concluded that the social entrepreneurs that were interviewed all obtained their knowledge through external information channels they accessed through their contacts with the West. As a consequence, the social entrepreneurs might have positioned me, being the researcher, as one of these information sources that they suddenly had access to. This expressed itself in the fact that during the interviews a lot of the entrepreneurs asked for feedback and affirmation of their stories as well as explanations of the concepts that were discussed. So, instead of introducing me to their views on the topic, they desired to obtain some of my 'academic' knowledge. Besides acknowledging the potential influence of this "expert" status, the potential influence of the fact that I am "obruni"⁷ should also not be ignored. Future researchers in Ghana (or elsewhere) that focus on the topic could therefore work with a local interviewer, in order to reduce this influence.

The fact that the interviewees actively inquired about my knowledge of the topic, which was based on the conceptualizations of the theoretical framework, furthermore hindered my ability to research their interpretations in an unbiased manner. It has been somewhat of a struggle to restrain myself from referring to the theoretical framework and really regard these conceptualizations as something from the external, hence external discourse. This struggle is represented in figure 1.1 which depicts these conceptualizations as an external discourse in a cloud. The picture of the external discourse as a cloud which is high up in the sky, intangible and not embedded in the complex social economic reality, supported me in keeping an open mind during the research.

Recommendations

On the basis of the above discussion together with the findings of this research, the following recommendations were formulated:

- 1) It is recommended that more research on the context-specific interpretations in other places where social entrepreneurship is contextualized will be conducted, as the sum of these contextualizations together forms the real understanding of the concept (Steyaert and Hjorth, 2006).
- 2) It is furthermore recommended that more field research will be conducted which focuses on investigating the local expressions of the social element by entrepreneurs in order to expand the basis of support for the proposition. This would include researching why other business cases were not able to touch upon all of the key elements of the proposition.
- 3) Building on the previous recommendation, it is also recommended that additional research is conducted with regard to the role of the government and NGO's which might have been altered through the new connections in society that social entrepreneurship created. It would be interesting to investigate what these parties could do to facilitate and simplify the process of problem solving that social entrepreneurship has taken up, for example providing by tax reductions for social entrepreneurs.

⁷ Obruni is a term used in Ghana to refer to a white person.

- 4) Based on personal interest, it is also recommended that the implications of this research for organizations in the West that are cooperating with the social entrepreneurs in Ghana are investigated. Does it for example matter for the cooperating parties that the Ghanaian social entrepreneurs employ the label of social entrepreneurship as a strategic tool to get access to certain resources?

Chapter 10: References

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Appendix 1: Ontmoet Afrika

Internship assignment: Opportunities for Ontmoet Afrika for cooperating with social enterprises in Ghana

The organization Ontmoet Afrika which is situated in Alkmaar is involved with sending volunteers and interns to different projects in Africa. The partner organizations of Ontmoet Afrika are situated in Ghana, Cameroon and Malawi and are mostly NGO's and governmental institutions (schools, hospitals etc). These organizations earn some money with the arrival of the volunteers but are nonetheless mostly dependent on donations and subsidies. Ontmoet Afrika believes that things should change in the world of development aid and sees potential in cooperating with social enterprises who earn (most of) their own income to pay for their activities. Social enterprises can be seen as hybrid organizations which have both a commercial and a social goal. The placement assignment is therefore concerned with finding social enterprises (SE's) in Ghana which have a potential for cooperating with Ontmoet Afrika. What will be done during the placement can therefore be summarized as following:

- 1 Make a workable definition of Social Entrepreneurship and social enterprises.
- 2 Find a number of social enterprises in Ghana according to a made categorization.
- 3 Get into contact with them and ask if I can come to their organization, around a week per SE.
- 4 On location: try to talk with as many people as possible.
- 5 Determine what volunteers/interns could do there.
- 6 Brainstorm with the manager and employees about "what would you like here?"
- 7 Inform both the SE's and the host-families about the vision of Ontmoet Afrika.
- 8 If the organization is enthusiastic, arrange practicalities (like housing, travelling etc).
- 9 Make an evaluation document as described below.

Document with:

- A description of the company
 - What is their business?
 - How are they a SE?
 - Who initiated it, who works there and what is the level of education (for supervising students)
- List of possible tasks to be done
 - Categorized under different types of education
 - Long term assignment vs. short-term or one-off assignments
 - Ideally it should be created in such a way so that the SE is not dependent on the volunteers
 - Also think about tasks they do not think about (website work, promotion, writing pieces on the origin of fair-trade products for the consumers, research etc). Possible tasks besides their core business.
 - When are these tasks to be done? How long should the student stay?
- Practical arrangements:
 - Students should preferably be staying with a host-family. Preferably with a family from a poorer part of the population (because more financial support and traditional family life). The host family should not necessarily be linked to the company. Though the company is in charge of arranging the host-family. Possibility for more luxury option. The students should get their own room and some people in the family should be able to speak English.
 - Travelling (taxi, bicycle)
- Add films and photos of the company and possible host-family for potential volunteers, to make them enthusiastic. → write a story for the website



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I am Lianne van Rijssel, the founder of the volunteer organization Ontmoet Afrika, Dutch for Meet



Africa, in the Netherlands. Our website address is: www.meetafrica.org. Ontmoet Afrika was founded on the first of January 2004, so next year in 2014 we will celebrate our 10th birthday. We have a board with 4 board members, but the daily work of recruiting and preparing volunteers and students is done by myself. At the moment we have between 70 to 90 volunteers and students a year who go to Africa through our organization. A part of them do an internship as part of their studies in the Netherlands, and a part of them want to work as a volunteer.

Throughout the years the number of partners I work with in the African countries Ghana, Malawi and Cameroon has grown from 1 in 2004 till 9 nowadays.

We tell potential volunteers: "Meet the other, develop yourself and inspire one another". Our vision is that people who visit Africa with an open view really get in contact with the local people. That gives them knowledge, inspiration and involvement. We are more attracted to this idea, than to the idea of westerners going to Africa with the idea to have to help the people there or to show them how things should be done. Our slogan is: Change the world, start with contact!

We believe it is important that initiatives from people and the government from a country itself get acknowledgement and endorsement. They can develop their country in a way that fits them the best, to keep their identity and to gain independency. It fits our goal that western volunteers and student's work within the African system with African colleagues. So they can learn about the African way of working, thinking and acting. And they can be in the middle of the African society. Until today we work mostly with NGO's and governmental institutions like schools and hospitals.

We now really like to start partnerships with social enterprises in Africa because I believe they are the strength of a country and also the answer for a sustainable and fair development of the entire world. I think that development aid has a lot of risks (like inequality, dependency, passivity, corruption, inefficient use of money and manpower) that social enterprises will most likely not have. We would be happy to contribute in the exchange of inspiration, ideas and knowledge by selecting and preparing Dutch students who like to do an internship at a social enterprise in Africa. To intensify the experience for Dutch students I would like them to live with a local host family.

Some more personal information about myself. I am 38 years old, married with Richard, and we have two children: Yander (7 years) and Yousse (5 years). We live in Alkmaar, which is a town 40 km north of the capital Amsterdam in the Netherlands. Just behind our house is the Ontmoet Afrika office, where I work on a daily basis and where I receive potential volunteers during our first meeting.

I am looking forward to a fruitful cooperation with the people of some inspiring social enterprises in Ghana and Malawi in the near future!

Appendix 2: Interview guide entrepreneurs

General enterprise information

- Name of owner/manager and background
- Year of start-up
- Legal status of company
- Location and work field
- Number of employees
- Finances (profit, shareholders, funding, reinvestment)
- Cooperating parties

Enterprise activities

- Main activities
- Additional or supporting activities and services
- (Social) results
- Target market and beneficiaries (bottom-of-the-pyramid?)

Start-up and development of the business

- Path of development
- Barriers to overcome
- Access to resources (capital)
- Sustainability

Entrepreneurship

- Description entrepreneurship/entrepreneur
- Description social entrepreneurship/social entrepreneur
- Difference between the two
- Social element (results)
- Role of social network and social relations
- Motivation
- Information channel and awareness in Ghana
- Existing views on (social) entrepreneurship in Ghana
- Development and existence of social enterprises in Ghana
- Social safety net
- Role of the government
- Role of the non-profit/NGO sector
- Innovation
- Benefits of label “social enterprise”
- Future visions

Appendix 3: List with elements to distinguish social enterprises

Potential social enterprises in Ghana can be distinguished by:

- Location:
 - Are the SE's in Ghana *or*
 - Are the SE's Working in Ghana (f.e. Netherlands based)
- Initiative taker:
 - Is the initiative taken by a Ghanaian person
 - Is the initiative taken by a foreigner
- Legal form:
 - NGO
 - SE
 - Etc.
- Starting position:
 - Commercial company transformed in SE
 - NGO (Social company) transformed in SE
 - SE right from the start
 - See continuum of social enterprises
- Year of start-up:
 - The company should be past start-up phase → 5 years?
- Employees:
 - The company should not be too small. F.e. minimal 10 employees working.
 - Intern supervisor should have a degree (education related to assignment)
- Finances
 - Do they earn money themselves Yes/No
 - Percentage of money earned (f.e. at least 80%) and donated (subsidy)
 - Profit sharing or not → with share/stake holders and within the company (manager)
- Money generating activities:
 - Related to chore business
 - Not related to chore business
- Type of SE
 - Micro finance
 - Fair trade
 - CBT / eco-tourism
 - Advice/education
 - Health care

Appendix 4: Entrepreneur profiles

In this appendix the entrepreneur profiles that have been constructed to serve as a thematic content analysis tool will be presented. A total of 19 entrepreneur profiles have been created, divided into five company type categories being: one man business, family business, large/hierarchical company, association, NGO.

One Man Businesses

Iddi



Iddi is originally from Ghana and is in his twenties. Iddi is involved with the production of Smock (the traditional Ghanaian dress from people in the North). He operates two workshops in Tamale and sells the dresses via a number of distribution points (among which in Tamale and Accra). His clients are both people from the North of Ghana and tourists visiting the cultural centre of Tamale. The business of Iddi is registered as an enterprise and was established a few years ago. Through his business, Iddi employs around five adults and about ten children that work part-time.

Delegating work, managing time, freedom, employment.

According to Iddi entrepreneurship is about having an enterprise where you have **other people doing the work for you**. As an entrepreneur you are able to **manage your own time** and take a day off when you feel like it. This is a sort of **freedom** that all people are looking for. Providing **employment** for other people (among which children) is important, so that they can foresee in their own living and are able to go to school.

Kwadwo



Kwadwo is originally from Ghana, Eastern region and is in his thirties. His enterprise Black Mighty Venture is a souvenir and clothing shop involved with the trade and sales of products from Ghana and abroad. His enterprise is situated in Kumasi but he sometimes also distributes his products to Accra. His clients are mostly tourists (both domestic and foreign). The business of Kwadwo is registered as an enterprise and was established a few years ago. Through his business, Kwadwo employs two people that work in the shop, and five people that work in the sewing workshop

Trading resources, innovation, customer service, freedom, employment to social network

According to Kwadwo **entrepreneurship is important** and brings with it many opportunities. Kwadwo believes that a university education will not necessarily get you where you want to be. There is a high level of unemployment in Ghana and therefore it is good if you can start your own business. To be successful as an entrepreneur it is important to be **innovative** and have a

competitive offer of products. That is why Kwadwo sells high quality and low availability products from different countries in his shop. Kwadwo believes that it is important for an entrepreneur to **use the resources you have**. For example when he travels abroad to buy new products, Kwadwo takes with him many Ghanaian products (mainly clothes) so that he can trade these for the products he wants to buy. Another aspect that is highly valued by Kwadwo is **customer service**. Kwadwo wants to satisfy his customers while at the same time sell them as much as possible. You need to try to convince the customers with your sales techniques without being pushy. To Kwadwo being an entrepreneur also means having a certain amount of **freedom**. He feels very responsible for his shop but he also likes to live the life he wants, delegating the responsibility from time to time to his employees. Furthermore, Kwadwo believes it is important that through his shop he is able to provide **employment** to people from his social network. When he hired the assistant for his shop, he mentioned that it is important to help people in your **social network** when you are able.

Obehi



Obehi is originally from Nigeria and in his thirties. Obehi is involved in web-development and design. He founded his company in 2006 when he was still living in Sweden. He now operates his online-business from flexible working places throughout Ghana (mostly coastal area). His clients are companies throughout the world that find his services through the internet. The business of Obehi is registered as an enterprise. Obehi employs freelancers from all over the world that offer their services through online platforms. Obehi for example currently cooperates with three programmers from India and two advertising managers from Bangladesh.

Access to capital, perseverance and motivation, creativity, hustler, expansion

Obehi thinks that entrepreneurship is about "*somebody with a **business idea** that follows through with it, he becomes **self-employed***". Entrepreneurship is about **perseverance**. "*The background does not matter; it is all about being **motivated***". Furthermore a **need** is necessary to start up a business. Luckily there is a lot of need in Ghana. Entrepreneurship is also about being **creative**. Entrepreneurs always try to keep **expanding their business**. Entrepreneurs want to go from sole proprietorship to expanding the business where you will get other people to do your job. Also Obehi would like to expand and change his company to an LTD, because this would mean more **freedom** (financially). In Ghana there is no shortage of business ideas at all. Every day he talks to people about entrepreneurship and business ideas for the future. However it is not always possible to act on them, for example as a result of **financial constraints**. Obehi sees this as the main problem that is involved with entrepreneurship: **access to capital**. For example to get a loan you often pay high interest rates or they ask for collateral of high value. To improve chances on getting finance, entrepreneurs need a **business plan** (whether or not they write this out fully or not) so that they can expand their business. Yet, the business plan culture is not present in Ghana. Instead, all these business ideas of future entrepreneurs are developed and safely stored inside their heads. This does lead to certain aspects that they do not think of. For example, many of them do not have an **exit strategy**. "*By Gods grace we will succeed*". They do not make any kind of SWOT analysis or the like. As a result, the investor does not have any elements on which he can base whether or not it will be wise to invest. The entrepreneurs have ideas but they do not have any theoretical framework to

organize their thoughts. A lot of these people have really **good ideas** and they know that they are going to succeed, but they just need guidance. They need to be able to make a cost-cost-benefit analysis a needs analysis. Obehi says that *“up until the point you have started up a real business, you will remain a fucking dreamer”*. He believes that in Nigeria/Ghana there are so many **potential entrepreneurs** that have everything in their head, but no development and capital to work it out. Obehi believes that entrepreneurship can be seen in small initiatives as well. However, in Ghana if you have a really small business, you are referred to as a **‘hustler’**¹ instead of entrepreneur. As long as you are still in start-up phase/have not really made it, the [innovative] ideas are often seen as stupid. People will tell the entrepreneurs *“It is no time for playing games and having fun, just get a real job”*. Until you present results (CASH!) you are a ‘joker’.

¹ Meaning of Hustler from urbandictionary: A hustler is someone that tries to make money in any way he can or wants. A hustler is the way one lives in his life. Going out on the streets or wherever making money and working hard for it. A hustler is not lazy as he is consistently out earning money. He gets the money by using his smarts and out cunning everyone out there. A hustler has ambition and a more serious approach to life than a gangster or a pimp.

Richard



Richard is originally from Ghana, Volta region and is in his twenties. Richard is involved in the rental of fully-furnished up-market apartments. He currently manages the rental of eight apartments which are located in the posher areas of the capital city Accra. His clients are mainly expats that come to Ghana for work, and to a lesser extent students from abroad. The business of Richard is registered as an enterprise. Richard works together with a number of electricians, plumbers and cleaners on a contract basis.

Innovation, creativity, thinking out-of-the-box, networking, combining resources

According to Richard entrepreneurship is about seeing a **gap in the market** of something that does not exist (or merely does not exist) and acting upon it. Richard furthermore thinks that it is all about **combining the right resources**. Someone has to add something to the company. If you do not add something, why would you be hired? He is of the opinion that it is not too difficult to set up a company, you just need to use your **network** sometimes. So when you have a good idea but no money, go and find someone that is interested in it and will invest the money for your company. Also when you did not get certain education or you do not know how to repair certain things for example, hire someone to get advice or repair it. Use the resources that you have in short. Richard believes that many managers of different enterprises are not innovative and cannot really perform anything. They are just sitting there pretending to be important. Furthermore they cannot think out of the box for creating solutions to certain problems. They only think in their own circle and cannot get out. There is no **creativity**. You do not have to follow good **education** to become a good businessman. Look at Bill Gates that started Microsoft. Richard himself also did not enjoy much education. He believes that people that get too much education will be less creative and innovative, as they only study from their books. Rather he believes that to be a good business man you need to **think out of the box** to come up with good solutions.

Salome



Salome is originally from Ghana, Eastern region and is 72 years old. Salome is involved in the writing and publication of books. She has worked as a teacher her whole life and decided that she wanted to use her experience in order to improve the quality of education by producing educational materials and books. Her business is situated in Kumasi. Her clients are schools in Ghana that could use her educational material and books. She aims to expand her range of clients to the whole of Ghana. The business of Salome is registered as an enterprise. Salome is literally a one-man business as she has no employees.

Entrepreneurial opportunities and potential, education, active

Salome believes that there are many **entrepreneurial opportunities** in Ghana, especially if you educate yourself and if you are an active person. **Education** is the most important and valuable aspect in life, you are never too old to learn and you should never stop learning. Unfortunately according to Salome a lot of people in Africa are lazy. She thinks this is no good, as **being active and busy** will get you somewhere, not sleeping. Salome says that there are always ways to make money in Ghana. However, due to the prevailing **mindset** of wanting lots of money right now, the people do not look at the opportunities, learn more and develop themselves. The people in Ghana should **develop their potentials**. She mentioned that "You put a seed in the ground and it will grow. God has created the ground to let things grow. Just like Africa". As a small entrepreneur Salome has problems entrepreneur to find funding for printing her books, as this is very expensive (limited **access to capital**). Being an entrepreneur Salome stills thinks that the responsibility for creating employment lies with the government (probably a legacy of being a teacher throughout her life). Salome is optimistic about the future and the potential of Ghana. Currently especially Kumasi is a vibrant city with lots of entrepreneurship and trading (in contrast to Accra). She believes that people in Ghana will be very happy in the future.

Family Businesses

Bobobo



Bobobo is originally from Ghana, Bolgatanga and is in her fifties. Her enterprise Bobobo Farmers Trade Processors and Marketing is involved with the processing of fruit and vegetables. In addition, Bobobo also manages a herbal garden. The processing factory and the garden are both situated in Tamale. The company of Bobobo was founded in 2007 and can be categorized as a family business, though registered as an enterprise, which falls under the umbrella of Temaiko Enterprise. Her target market is the Ghanaian market though Bobobo is planning to export her products abroad. In addition, the NGO World Vision is one of her bigger clients. Bobobo employs 42 people with her business, though this number can increase to 200 people in busy times (harvesting time).

Social relations, sharing, support, freedom, access to capital

Bobobo sees herself as an entrepreneur. According to Bobobo entrepreneurship is about "**being self-employed**. *I can do whatever I want. I am very proud at this. I can travel, and I can learn what I want at a time that I want. I am my own boss. Furthermore I relate to all workers as my family. When it is time for work, I do not play. But when there is time, I relate to everyone and play*

*around so that everyone is happy. It is very important that the workers are happy because they will work hard and will deliver neat work. The work will go well. Also when the business is doing well, I give some extra to the people besides their salary. I tell them, here is some gift/extra for soap or the like. When you eat, you need to eat with them. We need to **share the wealth**.”* Thus according to Bobobo, relating to your employees is essential for an entrepreneur. People love their relations more than money, so you should treat them as your family. Bobobo sees **innovation** as another important element for an entrepreneur. She always tries to use new approaches, new products and new production methods. With the help of a university in Germany she was for example able to acquire a **solar dryer** to process the fruits and vegetables in her factory. Bobobo had also just returned from a trip to Burkina Faso to learn about the extraction of oil from the Baobab tree from other female entrepreneurs. Bobobo believes that as a result of her high-quality products and good **customer relations**, there are not many enterprises that form serious competition. Furthermore, Bobobo believes it is important to also **share new knowledge** with the rest of the employees. “*When there is a new thing, I get everybody on board*”. Sharing and helping others might be seen as the key value of Bobobo. A lot of people come to Bobobo for help and she always tries to do something for them (small or big), even if it is difficult, so that these people at least know that she really wants to help them. This **support** can be seen in funding, knowledge and advice. Bobobo explains that “*when you help each other, you are able to grow. Because others have helped me, I have been able to grow. That is why I need to help others now. I need to bring in new technology and knowledge. Only if you share what you have with others you are able to reach development*”. Bobobo feels that her enterprise could also be categorized as a **social enterprise**. “*My business is the same. It is all about the social relation. The communities are always happy to see me. In Africa if you work with that relation you will get results. Social relations bring success. However, most entrepreneurs do not do like this*”. She mentioned to see a clear difference with more commercial entrepreneurship where the main focus lies more with making money. Bobobo thinks that entrepreneurs in Ghana still need to deal with many factors that hinder their growth. One of these barriers is a **limited access to capital**. Bobobo has experienced many problems with receiving funding in order to request the certifications needed to export abroad. She believes that the **government of Ghana is responsible** for assisting beginning entrepreneurs with these issues.



Michael is originally from Ghana, Kumasi and is in his thirties. His enterprise Man and Man Enterprise which is positioned as a social enterprise is involved with the production of biomass-fuelled cooking stoves made from scrap metals. The improved cooking stoves are 40% more efficient than conventional charcoal-fuelled stoves. Man and Man was founded in 2007 and is located in Kumasi. The target market of Man and Man are small households in Ghana and neighbouring countries. Man and Man is registered as a Limited Liability Company and could be categorized as a family business as it is built on his father's business in kitchen utensils. Michael employs 13 people plus some extra people on contract basis. From 2007 till today Man and Man has been able to produce 108.000 stoves for the households in Ashanti region.

Expansion, innovation, profit, cooperating, social results, access to capital

According to Michael entrepreneurship is about **expanding** and **innovating** your business and investing in the future. It is about choosing the right time and not waiting until the market is

expanded by other businesses. In this way entrepreneurship is also linked to **dealing with (or avoiding) competition**. If you cannot compete on resources and price, you should try to hit another market or region. Michael explains that Man and Man tries to expand their market throughout Ghana and also in Togo and Côte d'Ivoire, as there is less competition in these markets. According to Michael innovation is crucial for an entrepreneur. Man and Man is for example involved in developing a machine to mechanize the production process, so that production is expanded and quality is improved. Michael realizes that he continuously needs to be innovative as the business is not going to be **sustainable** forever. When the economy of Ghana grows and welfare in Ghana increases, people will start using LPG or electricity based stoves. As a result Man and Man should diversify itself and develop the business continuously. Michael therefore believes that new **ideas** are essential in growing your business. Innovation can also be seen in their business model that includes the poor along the whole value chain as suppliers, manufacturers, retailers and customers and accounts for positive economic, social and environmental effects. Man and Man is positioned as a **social enterprise** as "*Socially we are employing people, we are reducing the carbon emission, and socially we are reducing the cost of fuel consumption*". However, as an entrepreneur it is also important to earn an income and make **profit**. According to Michael it is not easy to get funding or find investors if you are a social enterprise. It is in general difficult in Ghana to get **access to capital**. That is why recently they decided to put more focus on being a profitable business and less focus on being social. However, the main motivation of Michael will always be 'the good cause of the work' and the **social results**. He feels really happy when he sees his personnel working for him and when he sees people using his stove. These are in principle his main priorities. If he would want to earn real money, he should move this whole thing aside and go for the quick money. Michael believes that entrepreneurship is also about using your network and **cooperating with other organizations**. While your partners focus on things that you are not an expert in, you can focus all of your attention on your core business, producing the cooking stoves in the case of Michael. As he explains: "*Last year, we were doing everything by ourselves but I realized that we have to look for different people that can buy shares in our company so that we can grow.*" Since the company is growing and more and more people got involved, also the responsibilities and challenges increased. **Communication** now starts to get more and more important. Michael sometimes thinks this is difficult but in the future he also sees that this will lead to growth. Michael believes that your **background** does not necessarily have to influence your entrepreneurial skills. Even though Michael has a background in Physics, he really feels like a business man.

Large/hierarchical companies



Amed

Amed is originally from Sierra Leone, Freetown and is in his twenties. Amed is the Manager of Délfrance which is a lunch café and coffee corner located in Osu, Accra. The company is registered as a Limited Liability Company and is part of the Délfrance branche. The clients of Délfrance are mainly expats, tourists and residents of Accra. Délfrance currently employs 10 people.

Ideas, hard work and motivation, market, construct something

According to Amed entrepreneurship is about coming up with new **ideas**, finding **resources** and establishing a new business initiative. Amed himself has many different business ideas and he sees a lot of **opportunities** in Ghana. The one major constraint to entrepreneurship is access to capital. Even though you have a very innovative idea entrepreneurs still need to have capital or be able to convince others to invest in their idea. First and foremost an idea for a new enterprise should be financial viable and **profitable**. Entrepreneurship is also about finding a **market** to sell your products/services to. A new market could be developed, but it is also possible to find unusual and **innovative** markets to sell your products to. His business idea for a paintball centre is for example interesting for students and families, but could also be a useful place for the military to train in. So instead of only focusing on the entertaining use of the product, Amed also acknowledges the educative aspect of it. Amed believes that the key to success for entrepreneurs cannot necessarily be found in education, but rather in a lot of **hard work, motivation and mistakes** that are learned from. According to Amed, especially people that you do not have a family relation with can be great motivators as you will have more pressure to perform well and responsibility towards them, then you would have towards family. Amed sees that a lot of entrepreneurs in Ghana only use their success in business to show off. They do not do anything constructive with it. In Ghana, when you are rich, you are rich, when you are poor, you are poor. But you will always want to show other people that you have money. When they have the money, people will spend it. On the contrary, Amed believes that entrepreneurship is an opportunity to **construct something**, to build a life. But you need to be willing to **invest** in it as an entrepreneur.

Theodore



Theodore is originally from Ghana and is in his twenties. Theodore is the Marketing Manager at BusyInternet which provides web-services and data hosting services. It furthermore includes an internet café which is located in Accra. BusyInternet was founded in 2001 and is registered as a Limited Liability Company. The target market of BusyInternet are professionals, entrepreneurs and other residents of Accra for their internet café, in addition to businesses and organizations for their web-services. BusyInternet is focused on transforming the local economy to meet the opportunities of the digital age. The Busy team is made up of about 100 young and motivated people from across West Africa.

Innovation, customer service, social results, creating opportunities for others

According to Theodore entrepreneurship is about offering something different from what is already there. **Innovation** is therefore central to entrepreneurship. BusyInternet is the only centre in Ghana which provides this product and can therefore be seen as an innovative enterprise. From the start in 2001 they have focused on developing new **ideas** and **expanding** their business. As a result they offer a wide range of services at the moment. Theodore believes that **customer service** is key to entrepreneurship. It is not only about developing a product that is unique and finding a market for it, but also about retaining your clients and making sure they are satisfied. Busy Internet puts high value on delivering on their promise and giving their clients the best quality possible. Besides financial results, entrepreneurship is also about **social results**. BusyInternet believes that it is very important to make a social contribution, so they made it central to the enterprises mission: *"BusyInternet aims to provide both commercial services as*

well as social and economic development". Theodore states that it is important to be concerned with the **well-being of society**. This is the point where you can make profit, as people that are sick, poor or uneducated will not use your services. Instead, the people that you support today could be your customers of tomorrow. Furthermore he believes that a society must be strong in order for an organization to succeed in it. Therefore **creating opportunities for others** and supporting people is also seen as an important element of entrepreneurship. BusyInternet tries to transform the local economy to meet the opportunities of the digital age.

Adjoa



Adjoa is originally from Ghana and is in her twenties. Adjoa is the general manager of MicroEnsure which is a for profit social enterprise that is involved with selling micro insurances to local Ghanaians (mostly entrepreneurs). MicroEnsure works with local insurance company partners and other stakeholders to develop an expanding range of products to meet the specific needs of people living in poverty. Innovative products cover policyholders with crop, loan, health, life and property insurance – offering clients a safety net when an unexpected hardship or disaster occurs. By cooperating with Tigo, MicroEnsure has been able to link life insurance to mobile phone payment plans: the more airtime is used, the more life insurance one gets for oneself or for family members. MicroEnsure is registered as a Limited Liability Company. Since the start of MicroEnsure in 2002, they now have 1,2 million insurances for local Ghanaians. MicroEnsure operates throughout the whole of Ghana but the main office with a team of 16 employees is situated in Osu, Accra

Opportunity, risk-taking, innovation, impacting lives, sustainability

According to Adjoa entrepreneurship is the ability to see an **opportunity** and go after it. It is about establishing a business venture, creating a profit making business, or starting a social enterprise. Essentially it is being able to recognize an opportunity, a demand, somewhere, be it services, be it products, and then **going after it**. Adjoa furthermore believes that a good entrepreneur should have that gut feeling to do something, which cannot be learned in school. An entrepreneur should have that boldness to do something, he should not be afraid. It is just something that somebody else on a normal day would not do, to take that step. Entrepreneurship is about **risk taking**. Entrepreneurs are not the most careful, prudent people you can find. They have certain blind spots. They go to places and do things that other people would not even dare. It is furthermore important as an entrepreneur that you are able to analyze a situation, so that you are able to **learn from your mistakes**. You should not be afraid to make these mistakes as it will eventually lead to something better. **Innovation** is one of the key drivers of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship is largely about coming up with a new idea or product and finding areas that are still untapped. One conversation can spark an **idea** that will be the next big thing. Adjoa thinks it is very important in this day and age of living, to make sure that whatever you do as an entrepreneur makes an **impact on people's lives**. There is a crucial **social aspect** inherent to entrepreneurship. It is important for the entrepreneur to make a conscious effort for this, even if it is just in their own little way in their own firm, for example in the form of **mentorship** and coaching. According to Adjoa, **social entrepreneurship** is about enterprises that make revenue to impact lives directly. Social entrepreneurship has a more community focus, and is less about making money than commercial enterprises. However, as a social enterprise it still remains essential to make a profit, so as to be **sustainable**. You **need profits** in the sense that you are able to pay your bills, keep a business and so that you can touch more lives. It is key to keep the essence of your business alive in what you are doing as an entrepreneur. Adjoa believes there is great **potential** for entrepreneurship in Ghana.

Ken



Ken is originally from Ghana and is in his thirties. Omega Schools was founded by Ken and Lisa Donkoh and James Tooley in 2009 as a social enterprise to improve the quality of and to extend access to education to low income families at the lowest cost on an unprecedented scale. Omega Schools uses the innovative daily-fee-model (1,50 cedi a day) which includes classes, books and other school materials, lunch, two uniforms a year, tutoring, national health insurance and more to the children. The chain of twenty schools (soon 40) located in Greater Accra and Central Region districts in Ghana were filled to their capacity on the week of opening. Over the past three years, Omega Schools was able to offer their services to over 11,000 students. Currently, Omega Schools employs over 500 people of which 48 work at the head office. Omega Schools is registered as a Limited Liability Company.

Need, innovation, expansion, sustainability, local knowledge, social impact

According to Ken entrepreneurship is about identifying an existing **need** and **acting upon it**. Ken believes that some of the needs in the world (like education) need a businesslike approach in order to be dealt with. He identified the need for accessible quality education for the poor in Ghana and developed a new format for a private school. Ken furthermore believes that entrepreneurship is also about **expanding** and growing your business. With a business format that was easily replicable, Ken has been able to open up twenty schools, with twenty new ones being built at the moment. **Innovation** is seen as key to entrepreneurship by Ken. As a result of the innovative approach of Ken the schools have become an immediate success, using an all-inclusive daily fee model, own curriculum and assessment system, and even new technology (Omega Schools is developing video lessons with the help of tablets). Entrepreneurship is about looking at the local conditions and creating a business plan based on this **local knowledge**. It is about looking at what is actually going on in practice, in the economy, and try to make a plan which is in line with these **trends**. Ghana's "sachet economy¹" required an innovative approach in order to reach new markets and clients. Transparency of the financial costs is very important for the low-income families as well as building **trust** by for example providing the students with 15 discount cards.

Margaret



Margaret is originally from Ghana and is in her forties. Margaret is the Country Team Leader of MSA which is a not for profit organization established in 2005 with their headoffice in Accra. MSA Ghana delivers capacity development and other technical services to health and development organizations, with emphasis on sexual and reproductive health and HIV&AIDS organizations, to improve their program effectiveness and institutional impact. They carry out operations in Ghana and its neighbouring countries, and they work for organisations such as bilateral and multilateral donors and foundations, UN agencies, government ministries, departments, and international and local NGOs. MSA Ghana is registered as a Limited Liability Company, positioned as a social enterprise, and is a branch of Management Strategies for Africa International (MSA International). MSA Ghana employs 5 people plus technical associates that work on contract basis.

Potential, combining resources, local knowledge, effectiveness and efficiency

Margaret believes that entrepreneurship is about **combining the right resources and expertise**. She believes that entrepreneurship and expertise is abundant in Ghana. Before MSA Ghana was

of MSA believed in the **potential** of Africa and recognized that there certainly is expertise in Africa itself. He decided to combine this expertise in the network of MSA Ghana, so that Africans themselves could advise other Africans on best practices, and even offer these services against lower prices. Entrepreneurship is thus about making use of **local knowledge**. The main barrier to entrepreneurship is believed to be finding **funding** for your activities. Also MSA is dealing with some problems relating to this field. However, MSA does not want to be dependent on donors but be independent and **sustainable** in itself. Entrepreneurship is also about leading your business in an **effective and efficient** manner. Through the workshops and training that MSA provides, the “business expertise” of NGO’s relating to effectiveness and efficiency is improved. Entrepreneurship is also about **contributing to a better world**, which MSA does indirectly by giving support to and improving the management of NGO’s.

Mary Kay



Mary Kay is originally from the UK and is in her forties. Mary Kay is the Managing Director of Pure Home Water which was established in 2005 by Susan Murcott from the USA. The enterprise was established as a social enterprise as they identified a need to bring improved water to the rural areas of northern Ghana. The core business of PHW is related to the sale and distribution of ceramic filters, locally branded as the “Kosim filter”, especially to low-income households. Their clients are NGO’s that buy the filters to support these households in the North. Additional activities that PHW is involved in are providing training, service, distribution, monitoring and evaluation, and emergency relief services in cooperation with other parties. Since the establishment PHW has been able to employ over 20 people and to reach over 100,000 people. Pure Home Water which is registered a company limited by guarantee is located in Tamale and currently employs 20 people.

Research, innovation, sustainability, creating awareness, making an impact

According to Mary Kay entrepreneurship is about recognizing a **need**, creating a **sustainable** enterprise and making an **impact** in the world. The main goal of Pure Home Water is not to sell as much as possible, but is related to creating access to improved water for the people in the rural areas of Ghana. **Access to capital** and generating more income are seen as the biggest challenges to entrepreneurship. Currently Pure Home Water tries to diversify its distribution channel as they are momentarily depending on unreliable funding: namely NGO’s. Entrepreneurship is also about **expanding** your business. Though Pure Home Water has been dealing with some problems relating to expansion they have been able to build a new factory and are currently building a new kiln to be able to **upscale production**. **Innovation** is strongly linked to this and is seen as the key element of entrepreneurship and integral to the enterprise. Through **research**, Pure Home Water has been able to develop an innovative water filter and several machines. Research is therefore also seen as a very important aspect in entrepreneurship. It is about investigating what has already been done and **developing new ideas**. Furthermore it is about trying to improve the company and the offer of products or services continuously. Besides the production itself, research, testing and evaluation are therefore the building blocks of the company. Entrepreneurship can also be used as a tool for **creating awareness** and paying attention to matters that require attention, safe drinking water in this case. Pure Home Water is positioned as a **social enterprise** in which social entrepreneurship is seen as making an **impact** and reaching as many people as possible at an affordable price. Pure Home Water is seen as different from commercial enterprises as they have a **non-profit** aspect.

Associations

Juliana



Juliana is originally from Ghana, Northern Region and is in her fifties. Juliana was chosen as the president of Akoma Cooperative Multipurpose Society which is a non-governmental organization established to help members of the village of Pusu-Namogo in the Northern Region, particularly the more vulnerable women, children and elderly, to rise out of poverty. Akoma was founded in 2006 and registered as an NGO. Akoma cooperates with the trading department Akoma-skin, a subsidiary business venture of Akoma International (UK) Limited. Akoma is mainly concerned with the production and sales of two particular products: Shea Butter and Black Soap on the foreign market (UK). Both of these products have received Fair-trade certification and organic status. With the fair trade premium Akoma finances a number of community projects. Akoma currently employs 270 women.

Creating employment opportunities, independence, expansion, contribute to society

According to Juliana entrepreneurship is about **creating employment opportunities**. For the women in Puso-Namogo and their husbands, there is not much work to be found. Some of them were already involved in the shea butter industry, but since the establishment of Akoma, real employment opportunities were created. Entrepreneurship to these women means that they are able to make a living and that they can "*use the money to free ourselves and buy some clothing*". According to Juliana, entrepreneurship and starting a new initiative is also linked to **innovation**. Since the start of Akoma, the women were able to build a factory, upscale production, improve quality, and even get fair trade and organic certificates for their products. With the fair trade premium that is received, the women are furthermore able to finance projects that are beneficial for the whole community (school uniforms, national health care insurance, ICT building). Entrepreneurship can thus also **contribute to society**. Central to entrepreneurship is the ability to grow your business, make it to a success and **expand**. There are still women in the surrounding communities that could join Akoma and get the chance to improve their situation. Currently Akoma is exporting its products to the UK, but they would like to produce for the Ghanaian market as well as other foreign countries. The women of Akoma are praying that there will be more work and clients to sell to: "*By his grace we will have more demand, more machines and we can extent the production*". Entrepreneurship is also about coming up with new **ideas**, for products, for markets, for promotion. According to Juliana, together you can come up with the best ideas and decisions: "*we use our heads together*". The principle of Akoma is that all members have a say. This also leads to women empowerment, as not one person is in charge, but everyone is responsible. Entrepreneurship is thus also about being **independent** and having a feeling of **responsibility** over your activities. As a result, family relations in Puso-Namogo have changed, as the women are now breadwinner of the family and the men take care of the family.

Konlan



Konlan is originally from Ghana and is in his fifties. Konlan is the Head of Direction of Maata-N-Tudu Association which is a non-political, non-religious, non-ethnic, non-governmental women's membership organization operating in northern Ghana that was established in 1993. The English translation of "Maata-N-Tudu" is "Women of the North". The goal of MTA is to initiate and promote the socio-economic well being of women in the operational area through enterprise development. The activities of Maata-N-Tudu are categorized under their two main departments (1) micro finance loans department and the (2) development department. Currently the organization has grown to employ over 40 workers in all three offices combined (Tamale, Bolgatanga and Wa) and is giving out loans to 8932 women in the North.

Creating opportunities, access to capital, risk, expansion, improve situation

According to Konlan entrepreneurship is an opportunity to **improve your situation**. The Northern region is the poorest in Ghana and especially the women do not have many opportunities. Entrepreneurship can be seen as **creating opportunities for yourself and for others**. Konlan identifies **access to capital** as the main challenge of entrepreneurship. Maata-N-Tudu was established to deal with this challenge by providing micro finance loans to the women of the north. Their mission is: "*to initiate and promote the socio-economic well being of women in the operational area through enterprise development. Its overall objective is to economically empower women through provision of micro-credit to support women's income generating activities and thereby improving upon their standards of living and that of their families.*" The women use the loan as an **investment** to buy for example seeds. According to Konlan every entrepreneur is able to pay back his loan when he invests in a **viable economic activity**. Problems could occur when an entrepreneur is not able to manage its resources over which they need to make a return. This is often related to lack of literacy skills and the short term thinking of many Ghanaians, they are simply not able to forecast. As a consequence of their illiteracy they are not able to make calculations concerning the expected profit and the like. Konlan has realized that entrepreneurship involves **risk-taking** and that strategies are needed to minimize this risk. By making use of lending groups Maata-N-Tudu is able to reduce the risk and cost associated with providing small loans to low income women who lack traditional collateral, business plans, business records and credit history. According to Konlan entrepreneurship is also about **expanding** your activities, growing your business, and reaching more people. Maata-N-Tudu has been growing tremendously since it foundation in 1993. Maata-N-Tudu currently has 8932 participating women in 21 districts in the three northern regions and employs 40 people. However, to be able to expand in the future, they need more **financial resources**.

Robert



Robert is originally from Ghana and is in his thirties. Robert works as a guide at the SWOPA Tourist Visitor Centre which is the location where the products of SWOPA Women's Association for Pottery and Art are sold. SWOPA is located in sirigu, Northern Region and was founded in 1997 in order to provide a unique opportunity for women to improve skills in the production of quality canvass painting, basketware, pottery, and art, and in so doing improve the incomes of its members. SWOPA is registered as an NGO and referred to as a nonprofit community-based women's empowerment organization. The target market for selling the products to are tourists (domestic and foreign) visiting Sirigu. SWOPA has 360 active women as members and employs 13 people at the visitor centre.

Creating opportunities for others, need, innovation, create awareness

According to Robert entrepreneurship is a possibility for **creating opportunities** and income-generating activities for others. There are poor employment possibilities for the people in Sirigu and especially women have a weak social and economic position. The founder of SWOPA, Melanie, identified the **need** for these women to improve their situation and have possibilities to earn some income themselves. She saw potential in **reviving** the traditional arts of Sirigu to serve as an income-generating activity. According to Robert, entrepreneurship is often linked to coming up with **something new**. However, Melanie believed that it did not necessarily need to be new, but that a revival of traditional arts that were almost forgotten could also be a form of **innovation**. Innovation in the way that they gave a twist to it. SWOPA decided to not only start producing, but also listen to the demand of clients, and create a visitor centre where this all comes together and where both parties can meet and learn from each other. Entrepreneurship can also serve as a way to **create awareness** about a certain product or issue. Through SWOPA, Melanie has been able to create awareness about the importance of preserving the arts of making traditional pottery, baskets and paintings.

NGO's

Lovans



Lovans is originally from Ghana and is in his thirties. Lovans is the Programme Coordinator of KITA which is a non-profit premier tropical agricultural college in Kumasi, Ghana that was established in 1984. Besides training the students, KITA is also involved with consultancy, research and development. The areas of specialty of KITA are agriculture and food security, education, youth empowerment, and business development, entrepreneurship and financial services. KITA aims for environmentally sustainable development, which enhances the local economy, the nation and the quality of life in Africa. At the moment KITA has about 100 students of which about 60 are in boarding school (the other 40 are doing distance studying or short courses). Since 1984 KITA has hosted over 20.000 students. KITA is registered as an NGO and employs around 40 teachers.

Need, idea, creating opportunities, access to capital, making an impact

According to Lovans entrepreneurship is about identifying a **need** and developing a new business **idea** to deal with this need. In 1984, the parents of Lovans identified the need for a school of farming to become a farm professional. The Kumasi Institute of Tropical Agriculture (KITA) was a very innovative initiative and one of the first in its kind. As a result KITA had to issue its own certificates and develop a standardized programme and examinations. Currently, KITA is still the key player and busy with **expanding** by attracting more students and setting up new projects. Lovans believes that entrepreneurship is for a great deal about **creating opportunities** for others. KITA is therefore involved in business development and entrepreneurship training as they have identified the need for this. Currently, there are many young unemployed people in Ghana. When these people are taught how to conduct business (to start up, grow, relate to a bank), they will have a future. Lovans believes that it is difficult to gain **access to capital** for many entrepreneurs. At regular financial institutions they often ask very high interest rates (40%) for a loan. If the entrepreneur is not able to pay back the loan, they will experience a whole lot of harassment as they need to borrow from family which causes a whole lot of problems. To try and solve this main barrier for entrepreneurship, KITA is planning on setting

up a **microfinance** project. The aim of this project would not be to make profit, but rather to support entrepreneurs (farmers in this case) with providing loans with an interest rate of about 10-20%. Furthermore, they could help the entrepreneurs with writing their **business plan**, so that they know how to pay back if they just follow the plan. Lovan's passion is actually with the **community development** aspect of KITA. He believes that trying to **make a change** should be one of the main goals of entrepreneurship. The students of KITA are also taught about this importance and most graduates have really developed into 'change agents' and have started initiatives in their communities to deal with certain challenges. They are always busy with "how can I help?"

Bernice



Bernice is originally from Ghana and is in her thirties. Bernice is the founder of both the NGO Bright Generation Community Foundation (2006) and the social enterprise Bamboo Bikes Initiative (2008). The aim of the BGCF is to empower women and youth economically and socially. The projects that they have can therefore be divided into projects related to economic empowerment and projects related to educational support. The economic empowerment programs they have are related to bamboo bike production, recycling and organic farming for commercial markets. In short, these are all environmentally friendly projects. The educational support programs are involved with activities which improves the educational situation of deprived children (donating shoes and sanitary pads, providing books and the like, deworming projects, teaching projects, sports activities, education to promote capacity building). The office is located in Kumasi and employs 5 people. The bamboo bikes are mainly sold on the foreign market.

Setting up projects, networking, sharing of resources, innovation, contribute to society, active

According to Bernice entrepreneurship is about coming up with **new businesses, projects or income-generating activities**. Bernice sees it as something that is a bit broader and that is really helping out people and youth. In Ghana, as a result of a high degree of school dropout it is difficult for youth to get a job to do. Even a lot of university graduates are at home as there is no work for them to do. Bernice believes that there should be more focus on entrepreneurship and that the youth should be more entrepreneurial and **active** with creating their own **solutions**. Bernice sees a lot of people that have studied entrepreneurship in their school but at the end of the day they are at home doing nothing. Bernice believes that entrepreneurship is not just about reading books and going to school, but it is rather about how you position yourself in the system: by being active and enterprising. Bright Generation Community Foundation (BGCF) was established as Bernice identified this **need** for income-generating activities, especially among women and youth. BGCF tries to come up with entrepreneurship projects that can earn them a living. Furthermore, the goal is to also turn the other projects (education/sports) into entrepreneurship projects. **Innovation** and renewal is integral to entrepreneurship according to Bernice. Especially the Bamboo Bikes Initiative is very innovative: contributing to a better environment, motivating people to ride a bike, and giving training and employment to youth in Ghana. According to Bernice **marketing** is also important in entrepreneurship. At the end of the day as an entrepreneur you need to be able to sell your products. If you are producing but you are not marketing it well, you cannot pay your human resources director, you cannot pay your engineer, you cannot pay your employees. **Networking** is the key component to success for entrepreneurship according to Bernice. As an entrepreneur you should not just rely on the **resources** you have yourself, but rather try to make use of resources from others. Bernice is always in contact with different people and institutions to

see how they can exchange ideas or technologies to move the projects ahead. Bernice is not an engineer, yet the Bamboo Bikes Initiative is still moving ahead, because they are collaborating on those aspects. It is more of social network: Bernice needs the assistance of this person; he also needs the assistance of Bernice. They **collaborate**, network, share ideas in order to achieve their goals. Even though Bernice feels like a true entrepreneur, she still wants to dedicate her time to her NGO instead of establishing a commercial business venture. Bernice states that *"Yes I have the drive, if I am there and I am not doing something, I am not comfortable, it has become part of me. I am happy when I see that BGCF has been able to donate about 100,000 shoes to school children, not about the millions that I am having."* However, in Ghana, successful entrepreneurs often spend their profits on big expensive products like houses and cars, instead of **investing** the money in income-generating activities or supporting other people. After two or three years you can see these same people going for a loan or begging people for money as they have spent everything. Bernice thinks that entrepreneurs have a responsibility towards **contributing to a better society**: commercial business people have forgotten that these people will hold guns to your head, and come and rob all your properties. When these people get out of prison, they still have no job, the issue is still there. Entrepreneurs have a responsibility to help others and change the system. Bernice sees **social entrepreneurship** as the answer. It is about helping others and others helping you to achieve your **social goals**. Social entrepreneurship is more like an **intervention**. It is about something you are trying to do to get others in a better position. It is about changing lives. As an entrepreneur you should not sit down, but look at what the world is learning, what is going on around the globe? What are some of the major challenges, what could be the solutions? As an entrepreneur you always need to **broaden your scope** to different angles. Bernice thinks it is all about your **strategies**. You need to think about what you want to reach and how. Bernice believes that social entrepreneurship is gaining in popularity in Ghana. Also most NGO started to change their focus to more social entrepreneurship projects. This is also related to the credit crunch. As there are little funds only, they need to utilize them well and they have to start earning their own money to be **sustainable**.

John



John is originally from Ghana and is in his forties. John is the founder of the Youth Harvest Foundation Smoothie Bar. The smoothie bar which was founded in 2013 is located in Bolgatanga. The smoothie bar is positioned as a social enterprise and was established as a way of income-generation to finance the projects of the NGO Youth Harvest Foundation which operates in Northern Ghana. The target market for the smoothies are mainly foreign tourists and volunteers, though John identifies a market for the middle-class Ghanaians as well, when they are aware of the place. Currently it employs two people.

Sustainability, acting upon ideas, social value, networking

According to John entrepreneurship is about coming up with **new ideas**, and then implementing them. Whether these new businesses initiatives are for profit or they are not profit, the initiators are entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs see an **opportunity** and **immediately want to act** upon it. They do not have the patience to wait. When it comes to new ideas, you can do all the thinking, and do all the planning, but implementation is always different. John positioned himself as an entrepreneur, and even a social entrepreneur, years ago (2007). John believes that the

definition of **social entrepreneurship** goes beyond the fact that you are earning income. When it is not for profit, social entrepreneurship applies already because then you are an entrepreneur who is not focusing on putting money in your pockets, but who is focusing on delivering a **social value**. According to John social entrepreneurship can be defined as doing an activity to achieve a social value, while at the same time being **financially sustainable**. It is about an activity that has wider benefits, that is more of a public good. Because your enterprise is financially viable, you are able to **continue** to deliver that social value. Being sustainable is becoming more and more important as over the past years development aid and available funds have been decreasing. Instead of thinking about how you solve STD's, HIV and unemployment, John started to ask himself: how do we continue to exist in order to be able to continue to raise these issues? John wondered whether it would be possible to integrate the business of chasing funds into the projects that YHF is doing. The solution would be a social enterprise: you are still doing what you are doing, but this time what you are doing also has the potential of **generating income**. The choice for a smoothie centre was motivated by the **need** from the volunteers and people at YHF to get a quick and healthy bite and continue with their activities. In Ghana it can be seen as an **innovative** initiative as many people are not acquainted with smoothies and toasty's. Making good use of **resources** is important in entrepreneurship, and therefore the centre will make use of the seasons of the fruits. According to John, entrepreneurship is also about **expanding** your business activities. If the social entrepreneurship projects of YHF appear to be working and are earning profit, John wants to come up with more ideas and for example set up smoothie centres in other parts of Ghana. Social entrepreneurship is now a **strategic goal** within the YHF. Setting up an enterprise always involves having **start-up capital**. According to John one of the main barriers to entrepreneurial initiatives is finding this start-up capital. John used his **network** to find an investor who could help him with this capital. The income that is generated by the smoothie centre is used to finance the projects of the YHF. John believes it is important that entrepreneurial initiatives will make this **contribution to society**. John believes that the future is for social entrepreneurs, instead of NGO's. One of the advantages of (social) entrepreneurship over the work of NGO's is that the relation with the clients will be more equal in the sense that they do not get the products and services for free. The beneficiaries now have to pay something, and they will be inclined to value whatever social value they have received. They will cherish it, and take better care of it then if they would have received it for free. Their **mindset** will change, and John believes this is a win-win situation.

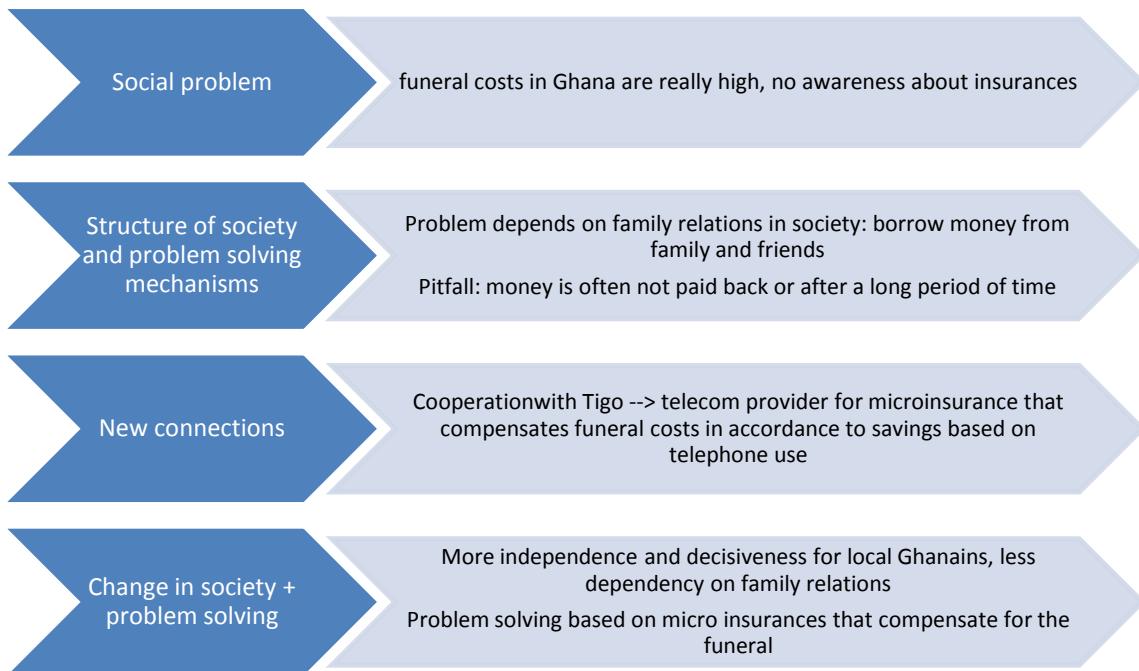
Appendix 5: Data processing models

Coding scheme

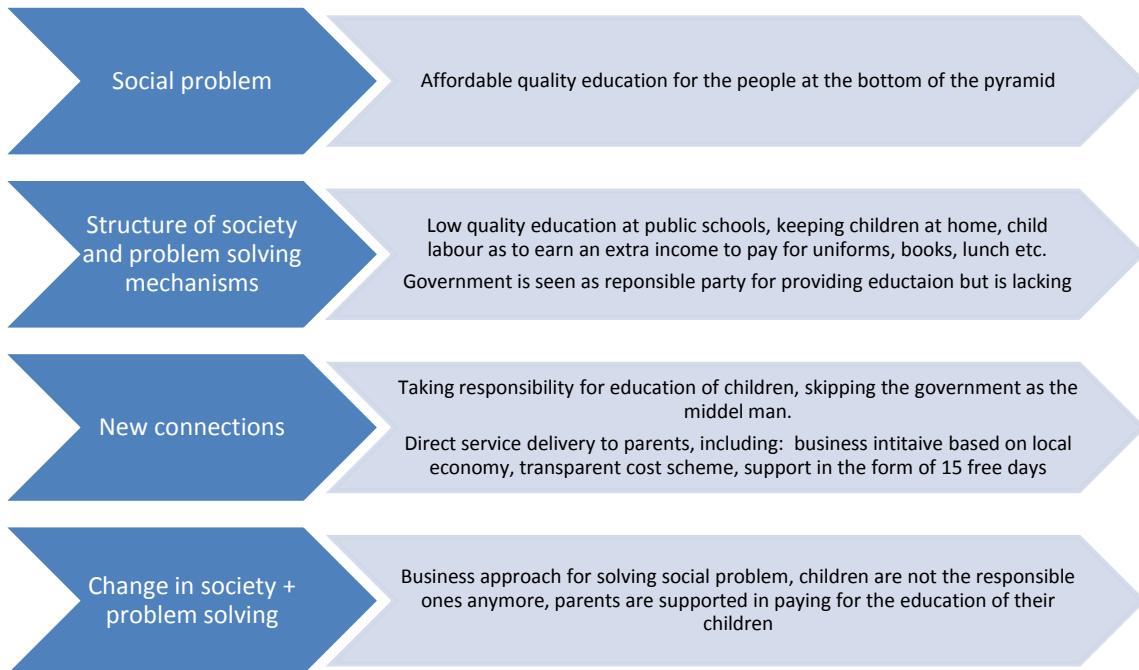
Opportunities	Characteristics entrepreneur	Resources	Sustainability	Social results
Opportunities	Perseverance	Resources	Sustainability	Contribute to society
Delegating work	Active	Access to capital	Profit	Social results /impact on lives
Managing time	Hard work and motivation	Social network	Effectiveness and efficiency	Support
Freedom	Creativity	Combining/trading resources	Independence	Sharing (of resources)
Employment	Thinking out-of-the-box	Innovation		Social relations
Opportunity creation for others	Risk-taking	Ideas		Employment creation
Need	Education	Market		Improve situation
Potential		Research		Empowerment
Construct something		Local knowledge		Creating awareness
Setting up projects		Customer service		Education
Acting upon ideas		Expansion		Social value

Completed data processing models for analyzing the key elements of the proposition

Business case #1: MicroEnsure



Business case #2: Omega Schools



Business case #3: Akoma

