

Modern Missionaries

An Ethnography of Social Entrepreneurs and Entrepreneurial
Legitimation in the Humanitarian Field

Wenderson de Lima



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Abstract

In nearly six decades of international interventions, the question of how to promote societal progress in African societies is still the subject of lively debates. The persistence of wars, famine, political instability and economic underdevelopment on the continent continues to fuel spirited discussions about how to organize aid most efficiently and whether old forms of international assistance still work. In this scenario, modern missionaries appear bearing promises to solve poverty related problems. Some of these people call themselves: 'social entrepreneurs'. These entrepreneurs have during the last decade gained increased space in the humanitarian field.

Based on the premise that business and self-interest may in fact be the most effective way to assist the 'extreme poor' in the Global South, entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs have increasingly begun to gain recognition as innovative humanitarian players. By applying business principles and practices to the humanitarian field, social entrepreneurs are constructed as challengers of previously institutionalized forms of organizing aid, such as charities and NGOs. The aim of this dissertation is to create a greater understanding of how social entrepreneurs gain legitimacy in the humanitarian field. Drawing on ethnographic methods, I address this aim by exploring the realities of social entrepreneurs creating organizations in Kenya's largest urban slum Kibera, in Nairobi.

I argue that, to gain legitimacy in the humanitarian field, social entrepreneurs depend on the interplay between social, cultural, symbolic and economic capital. Furthermore, I emphasize the symbolic power of places in the processes by which entrepreneurs gain social acceptance and support for their interventions. While seemingly fostering social transformation and entrepreneurship in the Global South, social entrepreneurs may informally create and support an economy which justifies the existence of NGOs in Kibera. Within this economy local actors create several mechanisms for profiting from foreign led organizations. This phenomenon I call 'unexpected entrepreneurship': activities that emerge as reactions to processes of development and the delivery of humanitarian services and products as well as the implementation of policies. Although often commercial and informal in nature, this form of entrepreneurship influences how social entrepreneurs gain access to local settings. Unexpected entrepreneurship also changes how social entrepreneurs design and deliver their solutions.

Keywords: *Social Entrepreneurship, Modern Missionaries, Humanitarian Field, Legitimacy, Gift, Charity, Technical Assistance, Humanitarian Habitus, Unexpected Entrepreneurship, Third Sector, NGOs.*

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During the course of this research I discovered where my curiosity for compassion came from and how it influenced the way I behaved towards myself, my family and others. This research process compelled me to look at myself as a subject whose social positioning influenced the focus of my inquiry and access to information in Sweden and in Kenya. It helped me understanding that having experience as a slum dweller and writing an ethnography about social entrepreneurs was not a coincidence but a reflection of my upraising dealing with many of the problems that these actors are known for trying to address. After all the first 25 years of my life were heavily shaped by actors that delivered care beyond genetic ties and economic motivations. The current study is a manifestation of my, sometimes unconscious, amazement and appreciation for compassion.

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Chapter I: Introduction

1.1 Social Entrepreneurs Entering the Humanitarian Field

Social entrepreneurs have always existed. But in the past they were called visionaries, humanitarians, philanthropists, reformers, saints or simply great leaders. Attention was paid to their courage, compassion, and vision but rarely to the practical aspects of their accomplishments (Bornstein & Davis, 2010: 2).

In this dissertation, I investigate how social entrepreneurs gain social acceptance and support in Stockholm, Sweden and in the urban slum of Kibera in Nairobi, Kenya. I call this process ‘entrepreneurial legitimation’. In the literature, entrepreneurs appear as actors fulfilling functions that include: a) discovering (Kirzner, 1997), creating and acting upon opportunities; b) creating new organizations (Gartner, 1988); and c) innovating, which means changing the methods through which individuals access and combine resources and produce new organizations, goods and services (Schumpeter [1927] 1989). Schumpeter’s conception of the functions of entrepreneurs has laid the groundwork for how entrepreneurship is most frequently understood today, stressing that: entrepreneurs create new combinations of resources, sets of activities and processes by which markets are adjusted and economic growth is achieved. Entrepreneurs cannot set in motion these creative processes on their own and this is where entrepreneurial legitimation becomes critical.

Many scholars have contributed to our understanding of how entrepreneurs seek acceptance and support primarily in the pursuit of economic gains (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001; Bensemann et al., 2018). Thanks to scholars, such as Weber (1968), O’Connor (2004), Lounsbury and Glynn, (2001), we know a fair amount about how entrepreneurs gain and maintain legitimacy in the business field. These scholars help us understanding how such actors gain legitimacy by, for instance, telling and adapting compelling stories (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001; O’Connor, 2004), complying with religious ethics (Weber, 1968), contributing to and profiting from places (Bensemann et al., 2018).

This dissertation takes the discussion about entrepreneurial legitimation further into the sphere of social life where entrepreneurs claim to care less about their own individual economic gains and more about humanity, the environment and social improvements in the Global South. Such individuals have, since the 2000s, been increasingly perceived, referred to and self-identified as ‘social entrepreneurs’, that is, actors offering new forms of assistance to communities in economically poor countries (e.g. Easterly, 2006; Bornstein & Davis, 2010; Dempsey & Sanders 2010). It is the legitimation of social entrepreneurs that I am particularly concerned with in this study.

In theory, social entrepreneurs distinguish themselves from purely commercial entrepreneurs by posing their social missions as the overarching organizational goal (Dees & Anderson, 2006)

or aligning their social missions with economic goals (Austin et al., 2006). Put differently, unlike commercial entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs provide solution to target groups that are most often marginalized and economically deprived (Austin et al., 2006; Ruebottom, 2013). Social entrepreneurs are also known for applying “innovative business models to address social problems previously overlooked by business, governmental and non-governmental organizations” (Zahra et al., 2009: 520).

Social entrepreneurship, the set of activities and processes set in motion by social entrepreneurs, occurs in various types of organizations including charitable, for-profit and not-for-profit ventures (Austin et al., 2006). Perhaps because of its focus on mission statements, individual motivations and personality traits the social entrepreneurship literature tends to present social entrepreneurs as compassionate ‘heroes’ (e.g. Nga & Shamuganathan, 2010; Meyskens et al., 2010; Miller et al., 2012; Cohen et al., 2019; Austin et al., 2006; Bornstein & Davis, 2010). Accordingly, these persons are described as actors of change, playing pivotal roles in the processes of societal transformation which lead to improvements in different contexts across the globe (e.g. Europe, US and the Global South).

The idea of entrepreneurs being primarily driven by a ‘mission’- a word which etymologically means sending the Holy Spirit into the world- suggests that social entrepreneurship can be approached as a newer label for a much older social phenomenon. I propose social entrepreneurs are archetypes of modern missionaries: those who, against the odds, work to bring modernity and economic development to the Global South. They may either have been born in the country in which they work or, in some cases, come from outside it. In this context the term ‘modern’ carries a Eurocentric bias that may seem invisible at first sight. The missions of modern missionaries may be religious (e.g. Barton, 1915) or secular (Beckerman, 1956; Webster, 2009) but they often tend to imply modernization through westernization. Accordingly, for the Global South to become ‘modern’, this often implies being like the west.

Entrepreneurs also appear as missionary archetypes in the management literature. Drawing on evidence from firm founders, Fauchart and Gruber (2011) report how some entrepreneurs play the role of missionaries creating organizations out of their concern for others and viewing their ventures “...as political objects that can advance a particular cause for the benefit of society at large” (Fauchart & Gruber 2011: 936). In this sense, these ‘missionary entrepreneurs’ view their work and organizations as means to a social and/or environmental end. However, by focusing primarily on entrepreneurial traits, missions and narratives this literature tells us more about entrepreneurs plans and motivations than it informs us about their practices, i.e. the things they say and do while working with their solutions.

The current dissertation goes beyond the official world of social entrepreneurship in aid and development discussions. It brings clarity to what it means to become a recognized social entrepreneur as well as ‘doing’ social entrepreneurship in formal settings and in everyday life. As I show, what social entrepreneurs say in for instance public mission statements may differ from what they actually do. These actors may use the label ‘social entrepreneurship’ to gain support and acceptance for their ideas, ventures, products and services. Furthermore, they may use social missions as discursive devices to gain support from key audiences. These social missions may change over time and even become completely overshadowed by economic goals. As argued by Ester Barinaga (2012), research has been mostly focused on the entrepreneurial aspect of social entrepreneurship at the expense of the ‘social’ reality in which the phenomenon is embedded. This dissertation contributes to the social entrepreneurship literature by creating a better understanding of how social entrepreneurs gain legitimacy in the context I call the ‘humanitarian field’.

The humanitarian field, I hold, is a fluid discursive and institutional space constituted by and through the practices of actors such as scholars, aid workers, consultants, local leaders, journalists, celebrities, governments, social entrepreneurs, aid recipients, philanthropists and local leaders. This field is to a large extent composed by, dependent on, and subordinated to, actors from other fields like business, academia, the state and the media. Actors engaging with the humanitarian field often compete for legitimacy and control over universal conceptions of humanity, compassion and care for distant others. In this competition for legitimacy, they strive to determine what form of aid is most effective in the process of remedying the suffering of people in the Global South. As I show in this dissertation, social entrepreneurs and other actors of the humanitarian field in general are heavily influenced by neoliberalism: a set of economic-oriented assumptions which stipulates that businesses and commercial entrepreneurs are the most central drivers of human progress and social welfare.

To help us understand how neoliberal assumptions produce and guide our behaviour, Bröckling (2016) has elaborated on the concept of the ‘entrepreneurial self’. The entrepreneurial self is a set of schemes through which we are supposed to understand ourselves and our lives. In this set of market-oriented schemes, we find most of the contemporary role models, demands, social and individual technologies and institutional arrangements which determine how we behave towards each other, ourselves and our environments (Bröckling, 2016). The education system (Berglund 2013), the labour market (Costea et al., 2012), philanthropy (Vrasti, 2012) and social entrepreneurship (Dey & Steyaert, 2014) are some of the fields where this set of schemes is disseminated. I argue that it is in light of such a neoliberal regime of assumptions

and behavioural prescriptions that social entrepreneurs gain legitimacy among various supporters and audiences.

Legitimacy is perhaps most observable in the high levels of support and social acceptance which actors receive for acting in accordance with socially established norms and formal laws (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008). As Suchman famously puts it, legitimacy: "...is a generalised perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions" (Suchman, 1995:574). By building and maintaining legitimacy around their new ventures, products and services, entrepreneurs gain access to the resources that are crucial for the creation, growth and survival of their organizations (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001).

It is not only the entrepreneur who must acquire legitimacy. Organizations, the entities created by entrepreneurs (Gartner, 1988), must also gain social acceptance and support. Suchman (1995) has brought clarity to the concept of legitimacy by analysing how organization acquire and maintain social acceptance and support by creating a generalized perception that their actions are appropriate and worthy of support. He has found that the mechanisms by which organizational legitimacy is constructed tends to be dependent on what branches of society the organizational activities take place in and influence. If and to what extent organizational behaviour becomes legitimate depends largely on the institutions prevailing in different sectors and industries. Drawing on Powell and DiMaggio (1991), he has shown how, in their quest for legitimacy, organizations tend to become more like each other. To gain legitimacy (i.e. support, social acceptance and the generalized perception of appropriateness) organizations have to comply with (e.g. aesthetics and ethical) demands imposed by different actors.

Bourdieu (1984) has created a greater understanding of the interplay between different mechanisms of production and maintenance of legitimacy such as money, recognition, education and valuable social networks. He contends that not all subjects have equal access to mechanisms by which legitimacy is gained. Furthermore, Bourdieu argues that some subjects of legitimation do *not* only gain, maintain or lose legitimacy. They also compete for control over the mechanisms by which legitimacy and social superiority is produced. It is in the course of this competition that some subjects gain the power necessary to determine what is valuable, appropriate and acceptable within and across different industries (e.g. the artistic industry), social groups (e.g. family and church groups) and sectors (e.g. corporate and public). Industries, social groups and sectors, tend to change as a result of this competition for legitimacy and its' means of production.

Competition is one of the main tools by which neoliberal regimes (re)produces their ethos, fostering the entrepreneurial self (Bröckling, 2016). Competition does so mainly because of its ability to make individuals see each other in comparative terms, a habit which becomes a compulsion. We learn from, and are conditioned by, it. It's addictive appeal, springs mainly from the idea of competitiveness as a linear source of individual, social, political and economic progress. When we engage with ourselves and others, we are prone to see most of these relations in competitive terms. These terms, we tend to assume, increase our chances of success as individuals, organizations and society (Bröckling, 2016: 60). I argue that competition also influence how social entrepreneurs interact with each other and distant others. Social entrepreneurs have to comply with demands from the context where they operate and the humanitarian field, like any 'field' in Bourdieu's (1984) conception, is shaped by competition for legitimacy.

Like Nielsen et al. (2012:70), I view legitimacy as a perspective—an interpretative framework—from which one can derive greater insight into how ideas and opportunities are evaluated, accepted and supported. By this token, entrepreneurial success relies on the extent to which the entrepreneur can make others—including actors within the entrepreneur's own organization—perceive their ideas as “attractive”, “relevant”, “useful” and “valuable” (ibid). These scholars partly attribute such a form of success to the mobilization of resources that are available to entrepreneurs due to their social networks: personal contacts and acquaintances may play a significant role in the process by which entrepreneurs gain access to the resources. Nielsen et al. (2012) add that context plays a significant role in entrepreneurial legitimation, determining if and when (and to what extent) is the ‘right timing’ for a new organization to be founded. This temporal aspect of entrepreneurial legitimation is also related to the levels of innovativeness of the ideas that entrepreneurs try to materialize. The ‘newer’ an idea is the more difficult it is to get it explained, accepted and supported (ibid). De Clercq and Voronov (2009) argue that, to successfully deal with this ‘newness problem’, entrepreneurs have to manage the paradoxes of ‘fitting in’—complying with socially constructed norms—and ‘standing out’—creating new services and products. One of the strategies (i.e. sets of deliberate actions taken in the pursuit of well-defined goals) used by entrepreneurs to cope with this paradox is storytelling. O'Connor (2004), shows how entrepreneurs gain legitimacy by designing and adapting organizational storytelling and missions.

Bensemann et al. (2018:11) make an important contribution to this conversation by showing how place may hold physical resources for entrepreneurs and function as “...an informal institution where local culture, norms, expectations and values are all embedded.” Therefore,

they argue, place is crucial for entrepreneurial legitimacy building. Bensemann et al. (2018) suggest that entrepreneurial legitimacy is more easily ascribed when entrepreneurs become perceived as actors ‘being of’, and contributing to, the place where they create their ventures. This connection between entrepreneurship and place adds a collectivist twist to entrepreneurial processes. Excessive individual recognition by one legitimating actor (e.g. the media) may jeopardize entrepreneurial legitimacy among other actors living and operating in the same locations where ventures are created (Bensemann et al., 2018).

Like O’Connor (2004) and De Clercq and Voronov (2009), I believe that we need to increase our understanding of entrepreneurial legitimization processes. Such strand of research is important mainly because legitimacy is a key aspect of the entrepreneurial process having in mind how all entrepreneurs need to gain social acceptance and support in order to materialize their ideas (De Clercq & Voronov, 2009). Thus, we need to know more about how it happens: what are the main factors determining who gains public recognition and support as a social entrepreneur? The focus of this dissertation is on the legitimacy building process for social entrepreneurs in the humanitarian field

By assessing several mechanisms of entrepreneurial legitimization in the humanitarian field, this dissertation challenges several assumptions about social entrepreneurs and local actors in the Global South, such as aid recipients. I question the overall tendency in the social entrepreneurship literature to present social entrepreneurs as morally unquestionable individuals. I critically assess the practices of social entrepreneurs which are almost automatically deemed to be good such as: establishing the root cause of social problems; articulating social missions; and unselfishly assembling and surrendering resources to address global injustices such as the lack of sanitation in urban slums. I also question the often undisputed image of aid receiving actors as passive, harmonic, grateful and unenterprising. As I show, the processes of development and delivery of poverty alleviation solutions to places like Kibera are filled with tensions between what international humanitarian actors presume is the best way to help the Global South and the reality of people targeted by interventions. It is in light of these planned interventions and tensions that local actors discover and create new opportunities to profit from their interactions with actors such as social entrepreneurs, donors and organizations working with poverty alleviation. I see this as a manifestation of what I term ‘unexpected entrepreneurship’. In this dissertation, I show how this form of entrepreneurship emerges as a reaction to social entrepreneurship.

1.2 Between Heroes and Villains

Nicholls (2010) argues that social entrepreneurship is a field of action and research in a pre-paradigmatic state, due to its lack of epistemological and conceptual clarity. Dees and Anderson (2006) subdivide this field into two main schools of thought: the social enterprise school and the social innovation school. The *social enterprise school* conceives of social entrepreneurship mainly as innovative activities undertaken by nongovernmental non-profit organizations in order to generate income while pursuing their social missions (Dees & Anderson, 2006). In this sense, social entrepreneurship is viewed as a form of transference of business practices and norms to third sector organizations (e.g. charities, foundations and non-profit organizations) under the premise of creating new sources of income for non-profits, improving non-profits' organizational effectiveness and creating social value (Bacq & Janssen, 2011). The third sector comprises "non-governmental organisations which are value-driven and which principally reinvest their surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural objectives; it includes voluntary and community organizations, charities and social enterprises, cooperatives and mutual" (NAO quoted in Corry, 2010: 15).

The *social innovation school* conceptualizes social entrepreneurship as a process through which actors create new public goods and services and/or create new ways of delivering existing solutions. The focus of this school of thought, argue Dees and Anderson (2006), is on how actors create new and better ways to solve social problems and meet social needs. The goal of creating social value—often referred to as what defines social entrepreneurship and distinguishes it from commercial entrepreneurship—is pursued and achieved with innovations (ibid). Actors (e.g. social entrepreneurship fellowship organizations), involved in the propagation of this conception of social entrepreneurship tend to highlight the role of individual profiles most known as social entrepreneurship practitioners or "social entrepreneurs" (Nicholls, 2010: 626).

Social entrepreneurs are in this realm conceived as hero innovators, identifying underutilized resources and finding new ways to use these resources to address social needs, creating positive social change (Dees & Anderson, 2006). While the social enterprise school's approach to social entrepreneurship sees the use of innovative methods of income generation for third sector organizations, the social innovation school defends the idea that social entrepreneurship should instead be defined in terms of the social changes created by social entrepreneurs.

A closer look at what kind of social entrepreneurship tends to gain support and recognition from foundations, governments and fellowship organizations reveals how business oriented notions of social entrepreneurship are transforming the relations between the West and the Global South. Powerful actors (e.g. government agencies and philanthropists) in the social

entrepreneurship debate tend to support and celebrate the figure of the social entrepreneur who, instead of providing distant others with financial and/or material handouts, offer sales and/or lending solutions to the economically poor in the Global South. Bishop and Green (2008) report this trend in a fair amount of detail. To aid the poor most effectively, wealthy donors tend to argue, social entrepreneurs have to apply business models and, by committing to business models, their solutions will eventually become ‘financially sustainable’ (Bishop & Green, 2008).

From Bornstein and Davis (2010) we learn that social entrepreneurs face financial constraints that their commercial counterparts usually do not have, because of their short term and unstable sources of economic capital. The financial resources available for social entrepreneurs are usually quite limited and some financial support may place too many bureaucratic burdens on them (e.g. governments may impose reporting requirements which are too difficult to comply with). For social entrepreneurs, it is easier to get financial support during the initial phase (usually the first year) of their ventures but they have difficulties growing or maintaining steady flows of economic capital.

The idea of financially sustainable solutions for social problems has two mainly functions. It assures that social entrepreneurs are more independent from often unstable flows of financial support from donors. It also appears to ensure that social entrepreneurs promote, instead of damaging, local markets in the Global South. This explains why foundations and governments tend to favour social entrepreneurs who claim to sell or lend solutions to their target groups.

In the pursuit of legitimacy, social entrepreneurs tend to use language as rhetorical strategies by which they create and spread stories involving ‘heroes/protagonists’ and ‘villains/antagonists’ (Ruebottom, 2013). Through the use of these strategies, adds Ruebottom (2012), social entrepreneurs gain legitimacy by creating tensions between the status quo and the values of those actors from whom social entrepreneurs need support. In debates about how to aid the Global South most effectively, the ‘villain’ is not only poverty, injustice and marginalization. In these debates, the villain is also charity: the ‘old’ and ‘failed’ form of humanitarian care that humiliates the economically poor and constrains the growth of local businesses in the Global South (e.g. Easterly, 2006; Moyo, 2009; Muhammad Yunus in Dees, 2012).

Actors with the power to determine how social entrepreneurship is popularly conceived and promoted tend to claim that organizations that distribute free goods and services to economically poor individuals, are not financially sustainable. They further propose that this practice risks creating and/or enhancing further dependency on charity (e.g. Bishop & Green, 2008). Thus, the acquisition of financial sustainability through marketization solves three negative aspects of

charity at once: 1) it addresses the social entrepreneurs' dependence on short term handouts from donors; 2) it ensures that solutions to poverty do not harm the self-esteem of marginalized groups; 3) it avoids creating constraints to the growth of local businesses in the Global South.

Nicholls (2010) notices how actors create legitimacy for social entrepreneurship (e.g. the Scholl Foundation, which gives support to business oriented for-profit social entrepreneurship initiatives) by conceiving of it as a movement by which the third sector acquires greater financial sustainability and effectiveness with the application of market-oriented solutions. This discourse often involves hero entrepreneurs and business oriented models applied in the pursuit of social change. Nicholls then identifies and explains how these actors influence debates about social entrepreneurship. Among the main players are governments, foundations and fellowship organizations. These influence conceptions of social entrepreneurship due to their funding and professional support for social entrepreneurs. They also create social entrepreneurship research centres and provide social entrepreneurs with awards and consultancy services.

In a similar study, Hervieux et al, (2010) adds that market-oriented ideals of social entrepreneurship are also promoted by consultants and academics who view social entrepreneurship as a process by which third sector organizations become commercially viable. Based on this conception, we are witnessing the marketization of the third sector (e.g. Dempsey & Sanders, 2010). Accordingly, actors such as academics, governments and foundations construct and disseminate success stories about social entrepreneurs as if all of our contemporary socio-environmental problems are supposed to be solved with technical and business-oriented solutions (Edwards, 2008). This includes the creation of technological and organizational solutions for contemporary aid and humanitarian issues such as natural disasters, famine, growing population of refugees and lack of sanitation in urban slums.

1.3 You Can't Do It Alone

In this dissertation, I discuss how social entrepreneurs gain social acceptance and support from various actors such as donors, investors, government agencies and local actors operating where new solutions are delivered. I do this by looking at how these actors interact during the creation, management, support and acceptance of organizations with social missions. To do this, I focus on Peepoople, an organization founded by Swedish couple Anders Wilhelmson and Camilla Wirseen.

You can't do it alone! You need money! You need partners! When I came to Kibera [an informal settlement near the Centre of Nairobi, Kenya] and started talking with the elderly and understood that I should ask for permission to implement this project. Not to come and say: "we are going to do this!"

but instead to say “may we do this?” It has to be done this way. This is their area! They decide! So, I approached them with a different attitude. I can talk to people in all levels...I had these meetings with the elderly and they told me: “Camilla we will support you, we will ensure that you are secure... you are one of us!” (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 03 February 2015, my translation).



Courtesy of Peepoople, www.peepoople.com

Camilla Wirseen and Anders Wilhelmson founded Peepoople in 2006 as a for-profit social enterprise, delivering toilet bags to slum dwellers in Kenya. After use, the Peepoople toilet bags turn the human waste into fertilizer that are intended to be sold to farmers in Kenya. Public agencies (e.g. Sweden’s Innovation Agency), donors, social entrepreneurship fellowship organizations (e.g. Ashoka Fellowship) and the media (e.g. New York Times, Financial Times and The Economist) created massive hype around Peepoople. They represented it as a success story: a case illustrating how business models can help the economically poor to generate profits, protecting the environment, “saving lives” (Regeringskansliet, 2011:28) and, at the same time, promoting entrepreneurship and development in countries of the Global South like Kenya. Peepoople also attracted attention from scholars and students in several subject areas in Sweden and abroad (e.g. Heikinnen, 2012; Redfield, 2012; Lacharité, 2013; Molin & Goitom, 2013; Olivensjö & Ottosson, 2014; Bengtsson, 2015; Kokko & Lagerkvist, 2016; Kokko, 2019).

The fact that Peepoople gets so much support and recognition in the humanitarian field is not the only noteworthy aspect of this case. It also highlights the importance of place in the entrepreneurial legitimization process. Kibera—the Kenyan urban informal settlement where Camilla Wirseen and Anders Wilhelmson have implemented the so called ‘Peepoople business model for slums’—plays a strikingly important role in this process. This place is considered by many as a ‘famous slum’, attracting a large number of scholars¹, journalists², politicians (e.g. Barack Obama), celebrities (e.g. Madonna) and social entrepreneurs.

I started my research at the Stockholm Business School in 2014. At this point, I met Camilla Wirseen, co-founder of Peepoople, when she gave a talk about working as a social entrepreneur at the course ‘Entrepreneurship in Developing Countries’ (held at the Stockholm Business School, Stockholm University). She talked about how her organization (Peepoople) was improving the lives of economically poor people in Kenya. She also described how public agencies and donors perceived Peepoople during the process by which the organization gained attention, support and access to funds. She also talked about what took Peepoople’s founders and employees to convince local Kenyan actors (for instance chiefs, youth leaders, private school owners, product testers and consumers) to accept and support Peepoople in Kenya. In the same occasion, Camilla Wirseen also talked about her efforts in creating a new organization: an NGO called the CUP Kenya, offering free menstrual cups and mentorship programs to teenager girls in Kibera. Thus, these cases became a starting point in my quest for a better understanding of social entrepreneurship in Kibera.

These cases are not only interesting because of the attention and support social entrepreneurs got from powerful actors influencing the humanitarian field. One of the most remarkable features of these cases is how various people involved in daily work with Peepoople and the CUP Kenya tap into three predominant discourses in the humanitarian field: charity, technical assistance and entrepreneurship. In Kenya, Peepoople partly operates as a charity (providing free toilets to private schools in the settlement), as a provider of technical assistance (teaching slums dwellers about hygiene) and as an entrepreneurial venture (e.g. by selling toilets to households and fertilizers to Kenyan farmers). In the CUP Kenya case, actors shift their focus from entrepreneurship to charity and technical assistance, organizing the free provision of menstrual cups and a sexual education program for children and adults living in Kibera. These cases help us not only understanding how social entrepreneurs gain legitimacy in the

¹ Davis, (2007), De Feyter (2011), Reyna (2012), Swart (2012), Dixon & Tooley (2012), Gallaher et al, (2013) Bodewes (2013), Kiyu (2013) Ekdale (2014), Rigon (2014).

² Robbins, (2012), Higgins (2013), Jaffar (2014)

humanitarian field. These cases also help us understanding how different humanitarian discourses are put in practice and how these discourses affect social entrepreneurs' ability to gain support and acceptance for their solutions.

1.4 Research Problem and Aim

Social entrepreneurship scholars have explored separate single aspects of the legitimization process such as social entrepreneurs' education, social networks and economic assets. Much of their efforts have been based on explaining how social entrepreneurs gain and maintain access to financial support (e.g. Austin et al., 2006; Bornstein & Davis, 2010; Burns 2011). This leaves the interrelation between economic capital and other, sometimes equally important, aspects of legitimacy (e.g. individual charisma) largely underexplored.

Legitimation involves much more than the acquisition of financial support and, to date, only a few scholars have used the legitimacy perspective to study the social entrepreneurial reality (Nicholls; 2010; Hervieux et al., 2010; Ruebottom, 2013). These studies help us gain insight into how social entrepreneurship, as a scientific discipline and field of action, gains legitimacy among actors such as governments, academics and wealthy foundations (Nicholls; 2010; Hervieux et al., 2010). They leave, however, the legitimization of social entrepreneurs outside of their analysis. Consequently, most theories of entrepreneurial legitimization are based on studies of commercial ventures, neglecting how primarily morally driven entrepreneurs (i.e. social entrepreneurs) gain acceptance and support.

Furthermore, the social entrepreneurship literature faces empirical deficiencies as conceptual inquiries outnumber empirical ones (Hoogendoorn & Pennings 2010 in Barinaga, 2012). Social entrepreneurship studies tend to lack in depth evidence about the everyday life of social entrepreneurs seeking support for their ideas, products, services and organizations. Existing studies tend to be too focused on narratives provided by social entrepreneurs and managers in interviews, official texts, and homepages (e.g. Nicholls, 2010; Ruebottom, 2013).

This literature tells us little about how, for instance, ordinary organization members and local actors (e.g. individuals targeted as main beneficiaries of social entrepreneurs) participate in the process of entrepreneurial legitimacy building. Scholars' overreliance on heroic social entrepreneurship narratives poses a scientific problem in that this data tells us more about what managers, policy makers, donors and social entrepreneurs want to say in public than what they actually do in everyday life. Consequently, the voices of local actors in the Global South are

largely absent in the social entrepreneurship literature. As I will show throughout this dissertation, these voices are of great importance if one wants to fully understand social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial legitimization processes.

As indicated in the previous section, there is a need for studies that critically assess the everyday life of social entrepreneurs in their interactions with donors, ordinary organizational members and local actors who participate in entrepreneurial legitimization processes. Thus, the purpose of the current research is to understand social entrepreneurship in the context of the humanitarian field. As I argue, legitimization is a key aspect of the social entrepreneurial process. Therefore, this study explores the mechanisms by which individuals gain acceptance and support as “social entrepreneurs” while working for and creating organizations in this constantly changing context which I term the humanitarian field. With this in mind, I pose the following research question:

- *How do individuals gain legitimacy as social entrepreneurs in the humanitarian field?*

To answer the above question, I focus my analysis on empirical evidence (e.g. interviews and observations) from several actors involved in the creation, ordinary work, acceptance and support of Peepoople and the CUP Kenya. To a lesser extent, data from organizations created by other social entrepreneurs is also used. Social entrepreneurs are treated here as ‘subjects of legitimization’ (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008), meaning that they are both active and passive in the processes by which they convince actors to accept and support them. It is with this analysis that I aim to make a theoretical contribution to social entrepreneurship literature.

The current study also aims to address the empirical gap in social entrepreneurship literature by taking into account those actors who interact with social entrepreneurs as ‘sources of legitimacy’ (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008). This includes international actors (e.g. donors, NGOs, foundations, government aid agencies) and local actors (e.g. local leaders, Kenyan authorities, school principals, female micro entrepreneurs and employees in organizations created by social entrepreneurs).

1.5 Outline of the Dissertation

This dissertation is structured as follows. Chapter 2 is a literature review of trends and concepts that are paramount in the construction of the humanitarian field as a context which some social entrepreneurs engage with and, to some extent, try to transform. As argued earlier, actors in this field tend to compete with each other in order to determine what kind of aid is most effective in

poverty alleviation and humanitarian work. In this section, I discuss three discourses which are promoted, applied and criticized by actors shaping this field: charity, technical assistance and entrepreneurship. Each section is followed by a short presentation of organizations applying humanitarian discourses in Kenya. These organizations do not only serve here as illustrative examples of how social entrepreneurs operationalize various humanitarian discourses. They also show how other actors engage with debates in the humanitarian field (e.g. foundations, aid agencies, journalists and academics) by presenting social entrepreneurs and local problems in the Global South.

Chapter 3 outlines the language of legitimation that I apply in the dissertation. Accordingly, I explain how concepts inherent in this vocabulary may help us gain a better understanding of the legitimation of social entrepreneurs in the humanitarian field. A variety of scholars, with different backgrounds and research fields, are cited in this chapter. All these scholars contribute to offering insights into the main mechanisms by which individuals and organizations acquire legitimacy.

In Chapter 4, I discuss the ethnographic techniques used to gather the empirical information used in this study. Here I explain in greater detail what I mean by ‘ethnography’ and methods related to this research tradition such as participant observation, shadowing, interviews and text analysis. The ethnography conducted is mainly based on the empirical reality of social entrepreneurs in the process by which they became subjects of legitimation in the humanitarian field. My fieldwork (in Swedish and Kenyan contexts) involves over twenty social entrepreneurs and sixty informants from different organizations (foundations, non-profit and for-profit social enterprises, slum dwellers cooperatives, slum tourism agencies, women empowerment groups, public agencies and social entrepreneurship networks). Here I also discuss how my own experiences helped me to get access and support during fieldwork.

Chapter 5 gives a detailed empirical account of how social entrepreneurs gain the support necessary to implement their projects in Kibera in Nairobi, Kenya. This place is of particular interest in that it is viewed by social entrepreneurs and other informants as so-called ‘a hub of humanitarian innovations’. As I argue, operating in such a ‘hub’ does provide social entrepreneurs and other actors with greater legitimacy in the humanitarian field. Mostly for this reason, this urban slum has tended to attract several social entrepreneurs creating organizations which provide products and services to slum dwellers. The chapter’s main purpose is to show how entrepreneurial legitimation processes influence, and are influenced by, the place where solutions are delivered. Here, I also describe in detail some of the implications of the concentration of social entrepreneurs in Nairobi and in Kibera. I show how local actors perceive

and interact with individuals implementing poverty alleviation projects in this informal settlement and seek legitimacy in the humanitarian field.

Chapter 6 presents how Peepoople was created and gained international recognition and support. It contains, in greater detail, information about how the people creating, managing and working at Peepoople try to gain legitimacy for the Peepoople solution in Kibera. This chapter shows the formal and informal aspects of the entrepreneurial legitimacy building process. The events, practices and actors presented here help us understand what it takes for individuals to be labelled “social entrepreneurs” and how such entrepreneurs gain the support and acceptance necessary to create and sustain their organizations in the humanitarian field.

Chapter 7 offers a description of how one of the founders of Peepoople went on to create a new organization: the CUP Kenya. In contrast to Peepoople in Sweden, the CUP Kenya was created as an NGO, financed and influenced by private donors. This chapter can be viewed as a continuation of the ‘social entrepreneurial journey’ started with Peepoople. Accordingly, I show how a social entrepreneur transitions from a solution organized around a ‘business model for slums’ towards the creation of an NGO distributing free goods and services in Kibera. This case generates new knowledge about entrepreneurial legitimacy in relation to shifts in neoliberal humanitarian discourses.

In Chapter 8, the concepts presented in Chapter 3 are applied to offer greater insight into how social entrepreneurs gain legitimacy in the humanitarian field. The analysis begins by exploring the role played by subjects’ embodied skills, backgrounds and education in the legitimation process. Furthermore, a contribution to social entrepreneurship literature is made by showing how economic assets shape the reality of social entrepreneurs, their supporters and target groups. Moreover, I explore the importance of social networks in the legitimacy building processes of social entrepreneurs. This chapter concludes with an analysis of the role played by subjects’ statuses, honour, awards and recognition in the entrepreneurial legitimation process.

In Chapter 9, the main contributions of this research to social entrepreneurship practice, policy and theory are presented and discussed.

Chapter II: Humanitarian Field

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, trends and concepts of foreign aid that have guided the author's understanding of social entrepreneurs in the humanitarian field are discussed. The various schools of thought presented here show how assistance to the Global South is conceived of. The most popular justifications for the existence of international assistance are outlined below. The chapter begins with a theoretical outline of the concept of distance and otherness. After a background framing the current paradigm of neoliberal humanitarianism, three discourses are presented: charity and technical assistance and entrepreneurship. Each is described and critiqued in turn.

At several times in life, argues Jeffrey Sachs (2005), all of us need help through some form of handouts. In his proposal for increased aid for the Global South, Sachs (2005) shows how more acute is the need to help those who may die and/or be trapped into chronic poverty without international assistance. Sachs' interventionist reasoning seems to fit into what scholars (e.g. Young, 2006) define as cosmopolitan utilitarianism: a moral framework dictating that we should take action to minimize the suffering of our fellow humans, no matter where they are, no matter their citizenship. This, arguably, provides the philosophical basis by which we understand humanitarianism and humanitarian work today. As Sachs (2005) contends, it is our global duty to help the extremely poor and vulnerable when their governments are incapable and/or unwilling to do so on their own (*ibid*). African countries stand out as prime examples, where many governments lack the resources and/or political will to provide their citizens with the minimum means of survival (*ibid*).

Two figures are central in humanitarian debates: the West (often encompassing those actors where assistance is supposed to come from) and the Global South. The West often assumes a protagonist role, not only as a universal helper. It often appears as an object of imitation: developments in the West can, and shall, be emulated by distant others. As argued by Fassin, (2012) humanitarianism—the promotion of human welfare through the provision of assistance to others—produces victims. Victimhood plays a central role in the social construction of the other.

In his famous study of Orientalism, Edward Said (1977: 9) shows how the other appears as a counter image to the West (most specifically Europe). The other, in Said's (1977: 55-56) reading, is not only culturally deviant from the West, but also inferior: it is passive and lack the basic skills necessary for modern, rational, scientific reasoning. It is based on the idea of the other as economically and intellectually deficient, which ultimately legitimizes Western interventions in countries in the Global South such as Kenya (e.g. Amutabi, 2006). Furthermore, the other is not

only conceived in terms of its cultural and intellectual differences, it helps the West to define itself by showing what it is not (Said, 1977).

In humanitarian debates, the notion of ‘distance’ includes and transcends geographical boundaries (Kennedy, 2009). Distance may assume cultural, psychological and biological aspects. The distant other becomes the object of humanitarian care mainly because it is perceived as an incomplete human: an individual and/or set of individuals temporarily or permanently deprived of their humanity by problems such as catastrophes, famine, war, illness, poverty and disability. The official purpose of actors influencing humanitarian discourses and practices (e.g. journalists, foundations, government agencies and social entrepreneurs) is therefore not only to help but to ‘civilize’ and ‘develop’ the distant other through universal care and compassion (Amutabi, 2006).

Kennedy (2009) shows how geographical distance makes it more difficult for humanitarian actors to evoke sentiments of care and compassion towards distant others. People tend to take more care and responsibility for their close ‘neighbors’ (Kennedy, 2009), and fellow citizens in need, than they do for ‘distant strangers’. This symbiotic connection between responsibility, citizenship and territorial proximity is often strengthened and regulated by each country’s constitutions (Young, 2006). It is less clear, however, how and to what extent citizens of one country should take care of people who do not share national, cultural and territorial histories. It is in light of this lack of clarity about care and responsibility across national boundaries that cosmopolitan utilitarianism plays a significant role, offering reasons why the West should care for the other.

There are two ways to overcome the difficulties imposed by geographic distance worth discussing here. The first is to address this notion of distance by promoting and supporting actors close to distant others. Here is where the modern missionary metaphor is applicable to social entrepreneurs, NGOs and humanitarian workers. Like modern missionaries, these actors are deemed somewhat ‘closer’ to marginalized groups (e.g. Easterly, 2006; Edwards & Hulme, 2013). The second way to overcome such distance is by bringing the other ‘closer’ to the West using texts to describe suffering. Amongst these texts, images have become one of the most popular. Kennedy (2009) demonstrates how humanitarian actors frequently make use of images of suffering distant strangers to gain support for their causes. Such imagery gains our attention, evoking sentiments of universal compassion and care. The constant elicitation of these sentiments is necessary to convince donors the West to aid distant others.

Paradoxically, assumptions about ‘distance’ (Kennedy, 2009) and ‘the other’ (Said, 1977) may be also used to legitimize the West in its quest for control over non-Western societies (i.e.

colonialism and neocolonialism). It is nowadays almost common knowledge that aid has been and continues to be used by the West as an instrument of control of countries in the Global South (e.g. Duffield, 2010). Of all the politicians in the West, US presidents seem to be the most open about this non-symbiotic approach to overseas aid. Nixon's admission speech illustrates this quite eloquently: "Let us remember that the main purpose of aid is not to help other nations but to help ourselves (quoted in Hilary, 2010: 80)."

This approach, Amutabi (2006) argues, has shaped much of aid assistance to Africa, including Kenya, where NGOs exert overwhelming influence over domestic cultural, political and economic affairs. In theory, NGOs are "not-for-profit organizations concerned with addressing problems of global poverty and social justice and working primarily in the developing world (Lewis, 2015: 3)". They are organizations which constitute what we usually call "the third sector" (ibid.) and their official goal is to bring human and economic development to these others. In practice, however, NGOs may function as instruments of neocolonialism, they may operate as mechanisms by which the West maintains and expands its control over the Global South. NGOs are both created and critiqued social entrepreneurs and their growth is associated with the implementation of neoliberal reforms in aid receiving countries. So, in order to fully understand how social entrepreneurs gain legitimacy in the humanitarian field, we need to discuss how neoliberalism (re)shapes international assistance.

Neoliberal Humanitarianism

The dominant assumption about how countries gain and sustain wealth is based on liberal ideas as defended by, for instance, Adam Smith. Smith argues that groups of individuals, pursuing their self-interest in free markets, are key for creating and sustaining the wealth of entire societies (Smith, [1776] 2009). Markets operate as facilitators of exchange where supply and demand determine the value of products and services. In these relations of economic exchange, liberal thinkers place a central role on actors which, in the pure pursuit of profit maximization, also promote the creation and delivery of public goods and social wellbeing. As argued by Foucault (2008), liberals defend the idea that self-interested profit maximizing actors set in motion processes by which the end result is the construction of public goods and social wellbeing. Accordingly, traditional liberal thinking tends to pose all forms of legal business ventures as benefactors of society at large. These ventures fulfil this function mainly by creating jobs, paying taxes, supplying society with products and services and contributing to economic growth.

A remarkable new feature of contemporary liberalism—or more often called 'neoliberalism'—is how individuals and organizations are increasingly formed and constantly

encouraged to behave like businesses (Foucault, 2008). The market, according to this approach, is more concerned with the social (re)production of the ‘enterprising self’ or ‘entrepreneurial self’ (Bröckling, 2016) than it is with the production of services and goods. Modern government, Foucault (2008) adds, has become an extension of this neoliberal reasoning in that it forms individuals, institutions and social relations to become conducive to the market as the ultimate source of meaning and guidance of human behaviour. We are, in Foucault’s words, witnessing the expansion of the “enterprising self” to all realms of human life. I argue that the legitimization of commercial entrepreneurship discourses in the humanitarian field is a clear manifestation of this neoliberal expansion outlined by Foucault (2008).

African countries, argues Dambisa Moyo (2009), shall focus their efforts primarily on economic development, attracting and sustaining flows of private capital to the continent in order to break away from its long-standing dependency on aid from the West. Drawing on success stories of investors, companies and entrepreneurs in Africa, scholars contend that ‘homemade entrepreneurs’ and international business owners and investors are bringing more development to African countries than Western aid ever did (Easterly, 2006; Moyo, 2009). In this vein, Moyo (2009) contends that economic growth, driven by self-interested actors such as international investors and entrepreneurs, is a prerequisite to political stability and democratization in Africa. The following are some of the main implications of neoliberalism in the Global South.

Edwards and Hulme (2013) show how neoliberalism influences the role played by local governments in aid receiving countries. Local governments limit the scope of their interventions and act as ‘enablers’ of entrepreneurship and the market (Edwards & Hulme, 2013). Consequently, these governments are pressured by international donors to cut expenses and to diminish their roles as deliverers of services and goods to their citizens. Neoliberalism also transforms how donor states and aid receiving states relate to one another. Since the 80s, relations between wealthy governments and developing countries have been increasingly presented as a ‘win-win’ deal between donors and NGOs (De Feyter, 2011).

What is most remarkable in this neoliberal trend is not the legitimization of profits made through the delivery of help to distant others. The most noteworthy aspect of neoliberal influence on aid is that care for marginalized groups is becoming more openly associated with opportunities for private gains. McGoe (2012), for instance, helps us understand how this openness about self-interested forms of help is legitimized in the current debates about philanthropy and its effect on economically underprivileged groups.

It is not that self-interest no longer needs to be disguised behind tales of material and human sacrifices. Powerful actors in the humanitarian field even encourage actors such as social

entrepreneurs to show how profits can be made out of acts of care for distant others. This disseminates the idea that organizations and social entrepreneurs can, and should, profit from their interventions in economically poor communities. Accordingly, private and public donors are acting more and more like investors: expecting a ‘return for their investment’ (e.g. Bishop & Green, 2008; Edwards, 2008; De Feyter, 2011) and holding organizations accountable for alleviating poverty by delivering quantifiable results. In spite of dictating that acts of care for distant others should not create and/or enhance dependency in developing countries, donors increasingly favor solutions that are, or have the potential to become, completely financially sustainable.

Academics, most often economists, also play an important role in the process of legitimization of neoliberalism and the entrepreneurial self in the humanitarian field. Some scholars have become famous by proposing business and entrepreneurship to be a more effective means of helping the poor than aid through charity (e.g. Soto, 2000; Prahalad & Hammond, 2003; Prahalad, 2006; Easterly, 2006; Polak, 2008; Moyo, 2009). A large part of this literature bases its argument on an allegedly higher effectiveness of businesses when it comes to social change, emphasizing the ability of entrepreneurs to replace and/or address ‘failed traditional aid approaches’. This genre has gained an increased political influence and popularity since the 80s, so much so that Lewis (2014) calls some books of this ilk ‘development blockbusters’, demonstrating how scholars and aid practitioners use them to turn their own humanitarian work experiences into commodities.

Neoliberal humanitarian reasoning reconfigures the identities of the distant other. Once passive distant others are now being replaced by the images of resourceful entrepreneurs and consumers. This transformation is quite apparent in the works of scholars such as Soto, (2000) and Prahalad and Hammond, (2003). Management scholar CK Prahalad, popularizes the term ‘bottom of the pyramid’, defending the idea that a population of 2.7 billion people living on less than \$2.50 a day are supposed to be viewed as a profitable consumer base. This reasoning prescribes new roles for international actors who participate in poverty alleviation work in the Global South. Instead of relying primarily on local aid workers for the distribution of goods and services, international actors such as multinational companies should train and entitle locals to sell their services and products (Prahalad & Hammond, 2003; Prahalad, 2006).

Neoliberalism also sets norms for NGOs. In neoliberal terms, NGOs delivering solutions to distant others, are supposed to operate in contexts where markets and governments cannot reach (Edwards & Hulme, 2013). This reasoning also presupposes that markets are best suited to create

and deliver products, services and progress to societies. In this sense, these organizations are not only supposed to try to address social problems. They are also encouraged to pave the way for economically poor communities to become integrated into the market (ibid). In this vein, scholars such as Dahan et al. (2010) show how businesses and NGOs can collaborate: finding mutually beneficial methods of the development and delivery of products and services to the Global South. In the following sections, three discourses are reviewed that significantly influence how NGOs and social entrepreneurs gain legitimacy and operate in developing countries: charity, technical assistance and entrepreneurship.

2.2 Charity

To fully appreciate social entrepreneurship and the humanitarian field we first need to consider the concept of charity and its role in contemporary humanitarianism. Derived from the Latin '*caritas*', charity refers to selfless acts of care, love and compassion for others (Dees, 2012). Based on the Christian parable of the Good Samaritan, charity ideally implies caring for strangers from whom ties of reciprocity are not required and/or non-existent (ibid). Charity, argues Dees, "...makes no reference to consequence of the act, other than the act is performed out of love and compassion. In fact, personal gain from the act dilutes its moral values, and raises questions about the purity of the motives (Dees, 2012: 322)." Although often perceived as archaic (or even taboo in, for instance countries like Sweden (Gawell, 2015)), charity involves altruistic relations which still influence how contemporary societies form their moral responsibilities towards their own citizens and aid recipients abroad (Eyben, 2006; Kowalski, 2014). These moral assumptions underpin contemporary charitable institutions (Scherz, 2014), organizations and humanitarian practices (Fassin, 2012). Dees (2012) shows how virtues and practices of charity also influences how, for instance, social entrepreneurs gain financial support for their new solutions.

In his famous study of the birth of modern capitalism in Europe and the US, Max Weber (1958) showed how entrepreneurs complied with religious norms and ethics in order to motivate their work and accumulate capital. The entrepreneur, in Weber's analysis, was partly an administrator of God's gifts. Entrepreneurs also used religious ethics to ensure that their employees worked harder. According to Weber, protestant ethics contributed to modern capitalism by promoting an attitude constituted of rational work, capital accumulation and frugal consumption. By relating his or her work with religious virtues and callings, the entrepreneur gained acceptance and recognition from clients and religious authorities (Weber, 1968). This also involved compliance with Christian virtues such as charity. Weber helps us understanding how protestant ethics

influences how we view charitable practices. The 16th century European Protestant Reformation created an ‘attitude toward life’ by which gift giving, among several other practices, became less like an impulsive and instinctive act and more like a rational endeavour organized around long term goals, the systematic assessment of results and the calculation of suffering in target groups. This has not completely erased our impulses to give to suffering others at random. It has, nonetheless, made unsystematic giving the object of social regulation and condemnation (e.g. Borstein, 2009). It is from this social regulation and condemnation of impulsive random giving that philanthropy derives its modern meaning, differentiating itself from charity. Philanthropy is often conceptualized as rationalized and institutionalized form of charitable giving: a form of charity that is more focused on handouts to organizations and uses scientific reasoning to legitimize itself (ibid).

GiveDirectly in Kenya

A case that illustrates how contemporary charities may operate in the Global South is GiveDirectly, an organization founded by four Harvard and MIT graduate students: Paul Niehaus, Michael Faye, Rohit Wanchoo, and Jeremy Shapiro. Their method of assistance to the economically poor attracted the attention of journalists (Goldstein, 2012; CBC News, 2013; Sobecki, 2017) mainly because of its simplicity. It fits into what is known as aid through charity but in a quite different way. GiveDirectly does not provide aid to economically poor people in the Global South like most organizations do: through ‘in-kind contributions’ (e.g. text books, food, medicines, fertilizers) and/or services such as business training (OECD, 2016). Instead, they transfer \$1000 over 9 to 10 months to households in countries like Kenya. Furthermore, they do not impose demands on how targeted households should spend the cash transferred. This financial handout is largely unconditional, leaving the ultimate decision about spending the money with the aid recipients themselves. One journalist commented that:

Unconditional cash transfers to individuals do little to address the structural factors responsible for poverty, such as government corruption, gender discrimination, and the lack of quality jobs, schools, and health care. Those problems need not just philanthropic, but also political and macroeconomic solutions, pursued by governments, private industry, and the non-profit sector working in tandem. Yet if your concern as an individual donor is making life easier and more fulfilling for the poor, GiveDirectly's model warrants close consideration. I donated \$200, in part because, after seven years of reporting on American poverty, I'm familiar with the critique that many aid efforts impose needless bureaucratic burdens and constraints on poor people's lives, when what they really need is financial savings: the type of flexible spending power that allows a family to address a problem, like a leaky roof or broken-down car, in a timely and effective manner, before it spirals into a crisis with dire outcomes for health, education, and employment (Goldstein, 2012/12/21).

GiveDirectly was established three years after its founders started transferring sums from their own money to Kenyan rural households. The organization represented the expansion of something that started as a private effort to help people, without having to go through, and/or support, other organizations. By creating GiveDirectly, the instigators could accept donations from the public and expand the program to other countries. The idea was also inspired by their own scientific research which suggested that transferring money directly to economically poor households was a better way to help the poorest of the poor than, for instance, microfinance.

Microfinance, argued GiveDirectly's founders, was praised by celebrities, politicians and the media but there was little evidence that such a form of aid benefited the economically poorest populations in the Global South. In some cases, it even increased indebtedness among target groups. Even though GiveDirectly was considered “an outlier” among other organizations working with poverty alleviation, its initiators managed to get financial and professional support from well-known companies such as Google (\$2.4 million in grants) and Facebook (whose cofounder and media wunderkind Chris Hughes joined the group's board). The organization was also featured as a top-rated charity by GiveWell (a nonprofit organization which assesses and recommends aid programs to donors based on ‘rigorous evidence’ and cost-effectiveness). Since 2013, GiveDirectly has reached 125,000 households in rural Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda (Goldstein, 2012/12/21).

In the West, charity is one of the oldest forms of organizing assistance to the economically poor and the ill. In Africa, Western charities were organized in different ways since the intensification of European colonization during late 1800s (Amutabi, 2006). In his postcolonial reading, Amutabi (2006) shows how Western NGOs came to Africa bringing ‘free’ religious services (‘saving souls’), health care and education. Although often associated with Western Christian values, charity is a global institution. Scherz (2012) and Osella et al (2015) report the importance of local forms of (‘indigenous’) charity in the Global South. Scherz (2012) observes, for instance, that in Central Uganda charity principles may even be viewed as something individuals are born with, driving them to help others in need.

Critique of Charity

The question of whether charity is an effective method of aiding the economically poor in the Global South still divides scholars, aid practitioners, philanthropists and politicians. In Marcell Mauss’s ([1954] 2005) sense of the concept, charity is synonymous with gift giving and sacrifice: the public and seemingly unselfish surrender of free objects. Mary Douglas (1990) and Pierre Bourdieu (1977) argue that charity is not a selfless transfer of material and non-material ‘free gifts’. Drawing on Mauss, Douglas (1990) argues that there is no such a thing as ‘free gifts’.

Charity is meant to be a free gift, a voluntary, unrequited surrender of resources. Though we laud charity as Christian virtue we know that it wounds. I worked for some years in a charitable foundation that annually was required to give away large sums as the condition of tax exemption. Newcomers to the office quickly learnt that the recipient does not like the giver, however cheerful he be (Douglas, 1990: ix).

Mauss ([1954] 2005) and Bourdieu (1977) contend that gift giving is a practice marked by unclear expectations of reciprocity. Most importantly, these scholars disclose the symbolic value of gift giving in that it increases the status, honour and recognition of gift givers. Status, honour and recognition are central aspects of legitimacy (Weber, 1968; Bourdieu, 1990).

Based on an ethnographic analysis of ‘sacrifices’ (i.e. gift giving to communities, gods and religious authorities) performed worldwide, Hubbert and Mauss (1964) provide us with rich evidence supporting the above propositions. They show how gift givers gain superior social distinction by engaging in dramatic rituals of the surrender of human and non-human resources. At the same time, gift giving tends to function as a marker and mechanism of social subordination among gift receivers (Mauss, [1954] 2005; Bourdieu (1977). The public act of receiving charity, argues Dees (2012), may even be humiliating for some subjects. No matter how seemingly unselfish and unpretentious they may appear, gifts have political and economic consequences, often generating status and economic gains to givers and shame to recipients.

Gifts may be reciprocated with counter-gifts that assume several forms, sometimes invisible in economic terms (Mauss, [1954] 2005; Douglas, 1990; Bourdieu, 1977).

The way charities have functioned in European and American history seems to converge with some of the assumptions presented above. Cunningham (2015) shows how surrendering resources to the poor in Europe in the Middle Ages was a way for the wealthy to reduce and/or avoid their punishment in the after-life. In turn, the poor reciprocated these acts by praying for their wealthy benefactors (*ibid*). Since their beginning and later popularization in the continent, charities have been criticized for interfering with the mechanisms of the free market (Cunningham, 2015). For centuries, philanthropists and charities have been accused of creating incentives for the poor not to seek work and self-reliance (*ibid*).

Several scholars (e.g. Eyben, 2006; Scherz 2012; Kowalski, 2014) apply Mauss's (2006) and Bourdieu's (1977) gift concept in order to explain formal and informal practices adopted by aid givers and receivers in the Global South. Some have shown, for instance, how gift giving is a form of self-interested generosity that goes hand -in -hand with actors' attempts to establish, change, rank, and maintain social relations (Osella et al, 2015; 2014; McGoey, 2012). By providing aid receiving countries with various gifts, donors establish, maintain and profit from, asymmetric relations of power with individuals, communities and governments in the Global South. One of the most notorious examples of such relations is the so-called Trump-Ukraine 'quid pro quo' scandal in which the president of the United States used \$400 million in military aid to coerce the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelensky, into providing damaging information about Trump's political opponent (BBC News, 2019/12/19).

There are numerous (less controversial however) empirical pieces of evidence about other forms of quid pro quo involving aid, foreign policies and humanitarian interventions (e.g. Mann, 2005; Amutabi, 2006). In his critique of contemporary American foreign policies, Mann (2005) notices how actors in countries in the Global South are often required to purchase American commodities in order to keep receiving developmental assistance. It is argued that aid in the form of charity is detrimental to African economic, political and social prosperity. Such a form of aid is actually a major obstacle to African economic development, mainly because it tends to promote corruption (Moyo, 2009), perpetuate dependency among aid receivers and constrain the profitability and growth of local businesses (Easterly, 2006). For African countries, the continuous import of Western goods and services, destroys local businesses and constrains economic growth. African governments, adds Moyo (2008), are 'addicted to aid', concluding that financial and material hand-outs provided by the West, are actually the causes of persistent poverty in Africa.

According to Sachs (2005), however, critics of aid neglect our universal moral duties to help people facing emergencies. Even scholars in the rich West, adds Sachs (2005), need handouts such as scholarships and research grants. Gregory Dees (2012), known as the father of social entrepreneurship education, shows how social entrepreneurs and society at large benefit from charity. Drawing on the case of Muhammad Yunus (Nobel prize winner and famous social entrepreneur), he adds that even social entrepreneurs who criticize charity also rely on hand outs from actors such as foundations to finance their ventures and subsidize the delivery of solutions.

For extremely poor families and individuals in the Global South, becoming ‘dependent’ (on, for instance, charity and favors from local leaders) may be viewed as a strategy to increase resources, chances of survival and social mobility (Scherz, 2012). While assessing the role of religious charities and NGOs in Central Uganda, Scherz (2014) concludes that dependency on handouts and local patronage, may in practice be more liberating for the poorest of the poor than programs based on the idea of avoiding gift giving. One of the humanitarian discourses that is often positioned in contrast to charity is called ‘technical assistance’.

2.3 Technical Assistance

Most people believe in the maxim that if you give a person a fish, they can eat for a day, but if you teach a person to fish, they can eat for a lifetime. What this means for subsistence environments is that good mentorship, not provision or sales of technology and other products, is likely to make the most lasting contributions (Toyamma, 2014:443).

The above quote is well illustrative of the main assumption underpinning technical assistance. Technical assistance is mainly based on the idea that rich countries can, and should, help distant others by transferring and disseminating knowledge and skills presumed to be vital for the economic, political and social progress of aid receiving countries (Collier, 2007). This form of assistance differs from charity in that technical assistance tends to avoid providing material and financial handouts to aid recipients. With technical assistance, argues Collier, (2007:112) all these recipients get from donors is a supply of “skilled people”. This form of aid is most popular for what is supposed to be accomplished: to build the capacity of societies by, among other things, transferring knowledge to individuals, communities, local firms and government officials in the Global South (Kowalski, 2012). It often involves financing and organizing education programs, seminars, scholarships, study tours and workshops.

Proponents of this form of aid argue that capacity building is a crucial mechanism for giving local actors the skills needed to create and sustain long term improvements in their countries (e.g. Toyama, 2014). Not all scholars reviewed here use the term ‘technical assistance’ in their studies of knowledge transference as a form of aid (e.g. Scherz, 2012; Toyama, 2014; Radhakrishnan, 2015). Even so, all studies presented here are based on the empirical reality of actors delivering international assistance through some sort of training, workshops and/or education programs.

As ‘humanitarian discourse’ (i.e. a set of prescriptions about how to help distant others), technical assistance was promoted and disseminated by the US government under Harry Truman’s administration in the aftermath of World War II. Truman believed this would create new national wealth, increase domestic productivity, expand purchasing power and raised individuals’ standards of living (Macekura, 2013). Truman claimed that “greater production is the key to prosperity and peace. And the key to greater production is a wider and more vigorous application of modern scientific and technical knowledge” ([1949] 1964: 115). Based on this assumption, technical assistance became popularized in 1949 with particular support from the US government and the United Nations.

In the same year, president Truman also popularized the term ‘development,’ asserting that societal progress could be approached as a linear process and countries in the Global South could and should ‘catch up’ with the economically rich US by imitating its political, social and cultural processes (Kowalski, 2012). It was also under this administration that development programs were reshaped so as to include not just specific countries and continents but the entire “underdeveloped world” (Macekura, 2013: 129). This was intended to ensure the expansion of capitalism to all areas of the planet and, at the same time, restrain the influence of communism in economically poor countries.

Since then, powerful humanitarian actors have promoted technical assistance. The United Nations, for instance, has allocated part of its budget to technical assistance, supplying aid receiving countries with experts, professional personnel, and training. Technical assistance has been disseminated by other agents than governments, policy makers and scholars (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2019/12/31). Firms, philanthropists, foundations, corporations, international lending institutions, wealthy entrepreneurs, ‘NGOs’ and social entrepreneurs have played a significant role in the popularization of this form of aid.

Planting Faith in Kenya

Planting Faith, located in Kenya, is illustrative of how social entrepreneurs apply the maxims of technical assistance to help economically poor people in the Global South. The goal of this project is to increase the standards of living of farming communities in Kenya by educating local farmers with farming and business skills (Martin & Novicevic, 2010). Implicit in this approach is the premise that knowledge transference is somewhat better than charity: it is a way to give people more control over their lives which goes beyond giving them money. The Planting Faith education program includes the transference of knowledge about how to install and use irrigation, determine what crops to grow, market crops and plant multiple crops. By targeting poor farmers, Planting Faith is supposed to tackle poverty related issues for Kenyans faced with the heaviest environmental and economic struggles: farmers (Martin & Novicevic, 2010). Planting Faith's originator is recognized by scholars at the University of Mississippi, Business School Martin and Novicevic (2010) as a "successful social entrepreneur":

This social entrepreneur, Horace Tipton, owed his success primarily to his commitment to cultural learning to gain a deep understanding of unique cultural norms of wealth creation and Kenyan institutional idiosyncrasies. His positive deviance from ineffective traditions of assistance to poverty-stricken Kenya provides some specific lessons that need to be learned when stimulating social entrepreneurship and planning management education initiatives in this country. His success in influencing local community to "give birth" of pockets to entrepreneurship among Kenyan farmers have left pioneering footprints for future social entrepreneurs to follow. Tipton has also shown that serving out of virtue is praiseworthy, and that positive deviance of pursuing social entrepreneurship in poverty-stricken areas does exist in the world. As shown by Bhawuk et al (2009) when you have a charismatic, dedicated social entrepreneur who lives with the people that entrepreneur will be more successful than people who come and go and do not live among the people. We need not only more people like Horace Tipton who work for the betterment of mankind but also more research of similar case studies (Martin & Novicevic, 2010: 490).

Before creating Planting Faith in Kenya, Horace Tipton acquired a B.A. in English from Hampton-Sydney College in Virginia. He grew up in a farming area and worked in farming for twelve years. He also worked in the Cotton Farming trading publication and created his own consultancy business. Tipton became engaged with agricultural missionary work in Kenya in 2004 at the Episcopal Diocese of Kenya. His efforts to improve the standards of living of Kenyan poor farmers were financed with money raised himself and through the support of a Christian NGO (Christian Community Services) which provided him with facilities and trained agronomists. Local religious leaders helped him reach the Kenyan farmers targeted by his intervention. Having his family also involved in the project helped Horace Tipton gain trust in the local community. Despite this, he struggled to prove to local farmers that his work was not driven by selfish ulterior motifs and his venture was not 'getting anything out of' Planting Faith. "I am a Christian and I aim to serve others" (Martin & Novicevic, 2010: 486) he would often state. Although critical of interventions based purely on financial handouts, this social entrepreneur has on several occasions lent money to local farmers (ibid).

Critique of Technical Assistance

Any critique of technical assistance must start with a deconstruction of its underlying colonial reasoning. Technical assistance is based on the assumption that distant others need to gain the knowledge and skills generated by, and in, the West. This knowledge is necessary if distant others want to acquire the kind of human and societal progress the West claims to have achieved. In line with Said (1977), this reasoning tends to position the West as intellectually superior. It wrongly approaches knowledge transferences between the West and the Other as a monolog: a performance in which only one voice is heard and from which the audience (i.e. the Other) is supposed to profit from by watching and learning. This is incorrect as history has demonstrated the West has gained knowledge and traces of its modernity from the other. For instance, Middle Eastern and Indian mathematicians played a critical role in the development of what we today

call ‘modern’ mathematics. This monologic performance of the West runs parallel to a point raised in Chapter 1: social entrepreneurship is troubled by its tendency to focus on one voice: donors, philanthropists and social entrepreneurs born, raised and/or educated in the West.

Technical assistance is flawed even if we assume that the West is intellectually superior and willing to transfer its knowledge to distant others as it ignores the most economically disadvantaged. In her study about aid in Uganda, Scherz (2012) shows how actors in the humanitarian field try to replace charity with interventions based on assumptions identical to those of technical assistance’s proponents. She reports these interventions tend to be most beneficial for the least economically poor local target groups. By avoiding financial and material handouts, humanitarian actors do not only steer away from charity. They end up bypassing the economically poorest of the poor. In an assessment of micro-finance workshops in India, Radhakrishnan (2015) concludes that the poorest local entrepreneurs are just ‘too low profile’ to be taken seriously by entrepreneurship teachers. Scherz (2014) adds that: aid programs that are not based on some sort of financial and material handouts may face difficulties attracting the poorest of the poor. This proposition converges with studies conducted in the urban slum where part of my fieldwork took place in Kibera, in Nairobi, Kenya (De Feyter, 2011; Bodewes, 2013).

Organizations that try to replace charity with programs purely based on training and workshops may trigger conflicts between NGO staff and target groups. They may even be accused of corruption for their refusal to provide locals with material and financial handouts (Scherz, 2014). NGO staff may be accused by locals of ‘eating the money’ that is used to finance assistance to the economically poor (ibid).

Interventions, based on technical assistance, may have other unexpected commercial consequences. Aiga (2012) shows that locals in several African countries may charge aid organizations in order to attend workshops, conferences and courses financed with funds from international donors. De Feyter (2011), Rigon (2014) and Bodewes (2013) report similar forms of local response to this form of assistance in Kibera. In the same vein, Rossi (2006) shows how target groups of these interventions manipulate the true nature of their needs in order to attract and maintain foreign led organizations in their areas. Local actors may believe that: “...there is always something to gain from project interventions (Rossi, 2006: 45)” even if they perceive little or no local demand/need for knowledge transference. These local responses to foreign interventions are manifestations of what I call unexpected entrepreneurship. Such a form of entrepreneurship is largely neglected in the neoliberal humanitarian discourse.

2.4 Entrepreneurship

As a practice, entrepreneurship has been part of our reality for millennia. As argued, by, for instance, Percy (2010: ix) “...humans have been—by necessity and by nature—entrepreneurial from the very beginning,” shaping the world around them with innovative ways to deal with each other, places and goods. As a field of scientific inquiry, entrepreneurship is relatively new. Schumpeter’s ([1927]1989) and Kirzner’s (1997) famous theoretical elaborations act as starting points from which we tend to understand the phenomenon today. This is mainly because the meaning of human and societal development is now, more than ever before, determined by economic premises (a trend predicted by Foucault in the 70s (Foucault, 2008)).

Both Schumpeter ([1927]1989) and Kirzner (1997) emphasize entrepreneurship as economic activities based on opportunity and competition. They differ, however, in their understanding of the nature of entrepreneurial opportunities. Whereas Schumpeter ([1927]1989) argues that opportunities may be created by entrepreneurs, Kirzner (1997) claims that opportunities are objectively ‘out there’ to be discovered. The idea of open trade is attached to entrepreneurship. In the process of discovering, creating and acting upon opportunities, the entrepreneur attracts competition and consequently, a balance is created in the prices of goods and services in the market.

A closer look at the ideas presented by Spinoza et al (1997), shows how the ‘successful entrepreneur’ has become legitimized as a critical source of political, social and economic progress in the West and, consequently, in the Global South. By creating and disseminating new products and services, these researchers argue, the entrepreneur engages in history making: processes by which this player improves standards of living in the West by changing the way people understand and deal with themselves and other things. Spinoza et al (1997), compare the actions of the entrepreneur with those of two other persona that have propelled societal progress in the West: the virtuous citizen and the cultural figure. Just like the virtuous citizen (who works to improve society by passing new laws) and the cultural figure (who articulates important practices that we tend to ignore), the entrepreneur creates social change by modifying the style of particular sectors or the style of society at large.

However, these propositions are not sufficiently critical about the West and entrepreneurship itself. Entrepreneurship as such is not always confined within “...the nexus of the law and the market...” (Rehn & Taalas, 2004: 145) as mainstream entrepreneurship studies tend to portray. As Rehn and Taalas (2004) argue, entrepreneurship may also assume informal and even criminal forms. Still, the perhaps overly optimistic reasoning of Spinoza et al (1997) helps us understand why the entrepreneurship discourse appeals so strongly to actors determining how people in the

Global South should be helped and the way these countries should evolve. This reasoning speaks volumes about the ability of entrepreneurs to shape society. Most importantly, it hints at why Western entrepreneurship has become normative in other contexts.

No matter where they come from or where their organizations are headquartered, entrepreneurs are making history in the West and across different countries and fields (e.g. Bishop & Green, 2008; McGoey, 2012; Morvaridi, 2015). This includes the humanitarian field where entrepreneurs are changing humanitarianism's conceptualization and how humanitarian actors are supported. McGoey (2012) and Morvaridi (2015) show that Bill Gates, for instance, is financing and, consequently gaining power over, an ever-larger portion of the UN's work.

International humanitarian agencies (such as the UN) which used to be financed by economically wealthy states are now increasingly underfunded, for a variety of reasons which can be summed up in one overarching point. Neoliberalism has made citizens in the West more suspicious of their own governments and delegitimized organizations like the UN which, are considered "...great big bureaucracies (Bishop & Green, 2008: 100)". Drawing on evidence from the US, Mann (2005) shows a tendency for suspicion and ignorance about aid from wealthy governments to the Global South. Thanks to scholars such as Mann (2005), De Feyter (2011) and Malkki (2015), the evidence has been developed showing "...people are now accustomed to suspect, sometimes rightly, that their money is not going to its intended recipients and that their compassion is being sought on partially false pretences" (Malkki, 2015: 23-24). Polls reveal that, for instance, US citizens believe that American international aid is larger than what is in fact delivered (Mann, 2005). In addition, people seem to be unaware of the fact that economically wealthy Western governments tend to delay and/or even completely default on contributions to humanitarian organizations such as the UN and aid to economically poor countries (e.g. Sachs, 2005). These studies suggest that the West is ignorant and inconsistent with its care and compassion for distant others, giving much less than it officially claims to give and taking exaggerated credit for aid that has never been delivered.

To finance their endeavours, actors such as the UN and NGOs are having to rely more and more on the humanitarian engagement of celebrities, private foundations and wealthy entrepreneurs such as Bill Gates and Warren Buffet (McGoey, 2012; Kapoor, 2013; Fridell & Koning, 2013). As shown by Bishop and Green, (2008), these entrepreneurs also claim to have 'the right' set of entrepreneurial skills to address private, public and humanitarian issues. This tends to render solutions more business-like, more technical and, consequently, less political (e.g. Morvaridi, 2015; Edwards, 2015). Mainly through companies, wealthy foundations, think tanks, social networks, NGOs and the media, these actors are changing how humanitarian care is thought of and delivered to people in the Global South. It is in light of this neoliberal tendency

that the figure of the social entrepreneur is constructed as an actor bringing more effectiveness to the third sector and more development opportunities through commercial entrepreneurship to the Global South (e.g. Dempsey & Sanders, 2010; Dees, 2012).

The ideal social entrepreneur, in this neoliberal humanitarian regime, is supposed to promote the wellbeing of the Global South by selling and/or lending, instead of giving free, solutions to their target groups. This actor also partly uses the maxims of technical assistance, teaching the Global South ‘how to fish’ by transferring entrepreneurship knowledge to the economically poor. Accordingly, aid programs that combine business models, microcredits and entrepreneurship education have grown dramatically in popularity (e.g. Edwards, 2008; Karim, 2009; Radhakrishnan, 2015). By this token, social entrepreneurship functions like a ‘marriage’ between development agendas, managerialism—the application of managerial business techniques to other organizations—and market opportunities (Burns, 2011). Some scholars (e.g. Elmes, et al, 2012; Kokko, 2019) have taken the issue of social entrepreneurship to the contexts of slums, showing how social innovations may help slums dwellers to improve their standards of living.

Sanergy in Kenya

Sanergy, a company—also viewed by some supporters as a ‘social enterprise’—operating in Kenya, illustrates well the use of business oriented social entrepreneurship to help the economically poor in the Global South. By providing low cost toilets for the urban poor, the company purports to combat infectious diseases and builds healthy communities in Kenya (www.gatesfoundation.org). It hires locals to build and manage the toilet facilities (named Fresh Life) as micro-entrepreneurs. Slum residents then pay to use the Fresh Life toilet facilities. Sanergy collects and processes the human waste from these facilities, turning the waste into fertilizer. On the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation homepage, Kenyan microentrepreneurs, managing with Fresh Life toilets, are presented as follows:

Leah Gachanja, who operates three Fresh Life toilets in one of Nairobi’s biggest slums, has earned enough money to supplement her husband’s income to cover food for the family and school fees for their children.

Josephine Kemunto, a Fresh Life operator who rents out eight plots in the slums, said replacing the open pit latrines with toilets has improved health issues, while reducing bad smells and maggot infestations. Since 2011, Sanergy has installed 772 Fresh Life toilets in Nairobi, safely removed 7,245 metric tons of waste from the environment, created 779 jobs, and grown to a team of 200 people—93 percent of whom are Kenyan. Every day, more than 30,000 people use the Fresh Life toilets (<https://www.gatesfoundation.org/Where-We-Work/Africa-Office/Sanergy>).

In 2011, Sanergy was founded by three graduate students from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology: David Auerbach, Lindsay Stradley, and Ani Vallabhaneni. Their solution was inspired by David Auerbach’s research into sanitation in Kibera (the informal settlement where the social entrepreneurs approached in my research place their organizations). It started operating in Kenya with a mission to tackle what founders viewed as an ongoing “sanitation crisis” (Auerbach, 2016: 212). In a chapter written by one of these founders, it is clear that Sanergy intervention is based on the idea that aid—in this case as sanitation provision—has to be profitable in order to be “sustainable” (ibid: 214). Sanergy won around 24 awards, including the MIT100K Business Plan (\$100,000) and Ashoka Fellowship (for David Auerbach). In cooperation with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) also granted \$100,000 to Sanergy. USAID stated they supported the work of entrepreneurs whose ideas had the potential to change the lives of millions of people around the globe (<https://www.usaid.gov/div/sanergy>).

Critique of Entrepreneurship in the Humanitarian Field

Michael Edwards (2008; 2010; 2015) is one of the most notorious critics of business- oriented social entrepreneurship. By giving priority to business and/technological oriented solutions for the economically poor, he argues, social entrepreneurs may be overshadowing the political and social nature of contemporary problems. Although business-oriented forms of aid are often glorified in the mainstream media, there is a lack of empirical evidence showing that business models can improve the social impact of organizations working with poverty alleviation in the Global South. Edwards (2010) contends that our knowledge about social entrepreneurship tends to be biased by managers' and entrepreneurs' success stories (see also Nichols, 2010). Studying the performances of relatively famous social entrepreneurs, Edwards (2010) concludes:

Few of these experiments are truly self-sustaining, mission drifts are common, and failure rates are high. There is often less room to manoeuvre between mission and market, and there are always trade-offs to be made- and they compromise the deeper impact of this work on social transformation (Edwards, 2010: 46).

Edwards (2010) adds that most of the social entrepreneurs who do perform well (both economically and socially) tend to turn their organizations into traditional for-profit businesses, giving up their social missions as soon as their solutions become financially self-sustainable and/or profitable. Yet, several billions of US dollars from Western private and public donors have been spent on these organizational 'experiments' (Edwards, 2010).

No matter how good the missions set up by social entrepreneurs really are, their models can backfire. In some cases, social entrepreneurs may offer a solution for one issue and, at the same time, create and/or enhance other problems. A clear example of this is the renowned microcredits provided by the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh (for which Mohammad Yunus became widely famous as a social entrepreneur, winning a Nobel Prize in 2006). With the purpose of empowering rural women by providing them with micro-loans, the bank replaced traditional and oppressively patriarchal institutions with an 'economy of shame' in which women (and their families), if incapable of repaying the loan, face the punishment of public humiliation and dishonor (Karim, 2008). Aid interventions based on microcredits are now well known for causing further impoverishment among local entrepreneurs and failing to reach the poorest of the poor in the Global South (e.g. Kowalski, 2012).

Social entrepreneurial work may not only result in negative consequences for those for whom solutions are delivered. In developing and implementing their social -business models, social entrepreneurs may themselves face several challenges. Combining commercial and social goals is more problematic than portrayed. Efforts to integrate such goals may prove they are often

incompatible in practice (Berglund & Schwartz, 2013). Although entrepreneurship's negative aspects have often been neglected in public debate, research shows how social entrepreneurs may struggle with issues such as the moral limits on their own profits/wages, opportunism among suppliers (Schwartz, 2012), unpaid labor, personal/financial/professional sacrifices, staffing problems, and burnout (Dempsey & Sanders, 2010).

Furthermore, social entrepreneurship may not only appear to solve some problems in urban slums. It is also embedded in the neoliberal assumptions that exacerbate the problems slum dwellers face. Neoliberalism informs the design of economic development models for the Global South. It also influences the formulation of aid and lending policies and informs social entrepreneurs' access to funds (Dey & Steyaert, 2016). Neoliberal assumptions have flagrantly failed to predict and explain the continuous growth of slums around the world (Davis, 2007). This is because, argues Davis (2007), these assumptions are based on economic models which do not capture the political and cultural contexts of the environments that they claim to be 'developing'.

Neoliberal institutions for international development such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have argued that slums would stop growing, once urban demand for labor decreased in the Global South. The basis of this argument was that fewer people from rural areas would move to urban centers looking for work. This would, in theory, help economically poor countries address problems related to the growing size and number of urban slums.

Quite the opposite has happened. Davis (2007) has shown populations in urban slums have grown even faster in the aftermath of neoliberal reforms put forward by indebted governments in the Global South. So did the number of NGOs (Amutabi, 2006; Edwards & Hulme, 2013). In their models, orthodox economists did not take into consideration how local conflicts and climate change were pushing more poor rural residents to urban centers. Most importantly, once faced with land concentration and land grabbing (often conducted by local governments, large corporations and local land owners), migration to big cities has become the only feasible alternative for the economically poor. In addition, the rampant growth in global real estate speculation is making decent housing in large cities unaffordable for more citizens (ibid). Thus, slums and squatter populations are likely to continue to grow in size, number and economic influence. It is in urban slums, concludes Davis (2007), where an ever-growing portion of the global workforce lives. He adds that NGOs do very little to address this development.

2.5 Summary

In this chapter, the main discourses that influence the humanitarian field have been discussed. Among these discourses, it is clear that charity, technical assistance and entrepreneurship play a central role in the way aid to distant others is articulated. The pros and cons of each discourse were presented.

Charity is, for instance, a form of aid with the most immediate effect on aid recipients but is often corrupted by self-interest, humiliation and increased dependency. Technical assistance avoids creating dependency and corruption by building the capacity of the Global South, transferring knowledge from the West to distant others. By doing so, however, it reproduces ideas of Western intellectual superiority comparable to those proposed by colonialism. It is a less immediate form of care and, as such, tends to be discriminated against by local aid receivers. Most importantly, it may not be so attractive or effective a means of helping the poorest of the poor: aid recipients who need immediate material and financial handouts and cannot afford to wait for improvements generated by long term approaches.

Entrepreneurship seems plausible because it acknowledges and promotes aid beneficiaries' ability to act as skilled commercial entrepreneurs and consumers. It also claims to solve the ancient problem of financial sustainability which social entrepreneurs and NGOs face. It may lead, however, to conflicts related to indebtedness among local aid receivers and conflicting organizational goals for social entrepreneurs. More empirical evidence is needed about its effects. Similarly, to technical assistance, it does not seem to benefit the poorest of the poor in the Global South.

In sum, this chapter showed how various discourses gain legitimacy, and shape the humanitarian field. In Chapter 3, this discussion is taken further with the presentation of concepts that help us understand how entrepreneurs engage in legitimacy building processes.

Chapter III: Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

Several of the concepts presented in this chapter are derived from a rich European tradition of religious sociology and appear in the works of Max Weber (1968), Pierre Bourdieu (1984) and Marcell Mauss (Hubert & Mauss, 1964). Max Weber argued that charisma and compliance to norms act as mechanisms by which individuals gain legitimacy. He showed people grant legitimacy to an individual on the basis of their collective perception of that individual's charisma, missions, callings and compliance with established norms. Furthermore, Pierre Bourdieu takes this further by adding some other mechanisms (e.g. financial assets), and dynamics (e.g. competition), of legitimization. The ideas of Marcell Mauss complement Weber's and Bourdieu's conceptions of legitimization. He shows the role played by gifts, sacrifices, places and objects in the processes by which persons gain status, recognition and honour. Following the presentation of these ideas, discussion turns to organizational and entrepreneurial realms. The chapter is then concluded with a short review of the strategic role that the practice of storytelling plays in entrepreneurial legitimation.

3.2 A Weberian Calling

Max Weber (1968) was the first scholar to systematically elaborate on the concept of legitimacy, addressing the question of what makes society accept the authority of certain individuals, professionals and social groups. Legitimacy for Weber appears as a mechanism for the justification of individuals' superior social positions. His position is that authorities legitimize their social superiority based on one or more of three grounds: legal, traditional and charismatic. On legal grounds, social superiority is justified as the result of appointments and elections: social events marked by general rules and legal procedures. On traditional grounds, a person gains social superiority because he or she has inherited legitimacy from others in similar social positions. This implies that people tend to legitimize and transfer their traditional power as a sort of 'inherited' social superiority. On charismatic grounds, Weber posits, individuals gain legitimacy as a result of their superhuman, extraordinary, and exceptional powers and qualities.

Of these three types of authorities, legitimacy based on charismatic grounds is of most relevance here as it relates to the entrepreneur. Just like the charismatic leader described by Weber (1968), the legitimacy of the entrepreneur springs from that person's heroism, creativity and action for societal change (Spinosa et al., 1997). But, unlike the charismatic leader depicted by Weber (1968), the entrepreneurs' 'heroic deeds' are often driven by personal pleasure and

economic gains (Schumpeter [1927]1989). Entrepreneurs acquire legitimacy by complying with moral demands proscribed by sources of legitimacy such as local communities and religious authorities (Weber, 1968). Thus, the entrepreneur not only has to gain social acceptance for his or her business. As shown in some of the social entrepreneurship and philanthropy literature (e.g. Edwards, 2008; Dees & Anderson, 2006; Bornstein & Davis, 2010), the entrepreneurs depicted by Weber attach ‘callings’ or ‘missions’ to their activities, expanding their motivations beyond the sphere of selfish and economic gains (Weber, 1968).

A central aspect of this calling is personal devotion to work which springs from ethics, despair, hope, and enthusiasm. Weber’s notion of a calling or a mission frames entrepreneurial work as the means to an ethical end in itself and therefore more acceptable for society and for entrepreneurs. Furthermore, the entrepreneur who works in the pursuit of a higher calling also boosts employees’ morale. Consequently, work becomes an ethical enterprise for the entrepreneur’s employees as well. Most importantly, entrepreneurs increase their chances of gaining acceptance and support by conceptually attaching their enterprise to higher callings. Authorities and communities, including nowadays customers and clients, will tend to negatively sanction and/or avoid any interactions with an entrepreneur who does not work in the pursuit of such a larger purpose (Weber, 1968). Personal devotion to a greater good is part of becoming recognized as an entrepreneur (*ibid*). Recognition—a central mechanism for legitimacy building in Weber’s analysis—is a result of this devotion. Recognition, argues Weber (1968), generates and maintains one’s high level of legitimacy.

What I term a ‘Weberian calling’ here is the urge which certain actors (e.g. social entrepreneurs, government agencies and donors) have to ‘rationalize’ (Weber, [1958] 2003)—to systematically attach a calculation of resources, measurement of results, quantifiable targets and scientific justifications—for their actions towards other actors and problems. This calling for rationalization may help us understand what sets social entrepreneurs apart from other types of humanitarian workers: the creation of organizations. Social entrepreneurs justify and legitimize their actions not only as forms of engagement in social and humanitarian work but also with the creation of organizations to address problems (e.g. Dees & Anderson, 2006). In the reality of social entrepreneurs, the Weberian calling is ‘a calling to organize’—to systematically arrange, order, coordinate and prepare— formal organizations to address issues that are often too complex to be solved with single organizational solutions (e.g. Austin et al., 2006).

3.3 Habitus

Habitus assumes a central role in Bourdieu's theoretical construction in that it helps us explaining how practices are generated. The concept of habitus helps us understanding how actions are constructed and performed in relation to our shared conceptions of being and doing things. In Bourdieu's own words, habitus is a system of:

“...mental dispositions, schemes of perception and thought, extremely general in their application such as those which divide up the world in accordance with the oppositions between the male and the female, east and west, future and past, top and bottom, right and left, etc., and also, at a deeper level, in the form of bodily postures and stances, ways of standing, sitting, looking, speaking, or walking (Bourdieu, 1977: 15).

Habitus is a way of being, knowing and doing things that is embodied by each one of us and mostly acquired through our upbringing. The concept is based on the idea that we internalize aspects of the social world through our experiences and these internalized experiences determine how we try to cope with unpredictable and ever changing situations. Our habitus tends to make us reproduce those aspects of the social world we have internalized throughout our lives. By doing so, habitus guides human conduct towards coherence and regularity.

We use habitus to make sense of and enact our positions in each specific ‘field’ that we interact with. Drawing on Bourdieu, De Clercq and Voronov (2009) argue that, in order to gain legitimacy, entrepreneurs have to enact ‘entrepreneurial habitus’. As newcomers in a specific field, entrepreneurs are faced with the paradox of ‘fitting in’ (complying with the principles, norms and practices within the field where they are operating) while, at same time, ‘standing out’ with new ideas, products and services (De Clercq & Voronov, 2009). It is one's ability to both fit in and stand out that constitutes the entrepreneurial habitus. Legitimacy is gained as a result of the enactment of this form of habitus. The concept of ‘field’ helps us further understand how legitimacy is generated to some actors and not to others.

3.4 Field

A field is a dynamic socially constructed arena within which actors navigate, interact with and struggle for legitimacy and power. Power assumes the form of resources (capital) that actors need in order to determine rules and sources of legitimacy within each field (Bourdieu, 1990). Capital determines how we are positioned in the various fields we interact with (see Section 3.5). Actors engaged in these fields have a shared understanding that the resources generated are worth fighting for. This understanding of what is valuable is embodied in the habitus of the actors. It is by means of their habitus (the embodiment of implicit, and sometimes unconscious, understandings of how to cope with contingencies and what is worth fighting for in each social arena) that actors (re)produce each field.

In other words, fields are constructed and preserved by the habitus of those participating in struggles for power (Bourdieu, 1984). To do so, subjects have to conform to requirements and rules that are elaborated and enforced by field participants. In each field, there tends to be interests and particular ways of reasoning competing for domination. Fields are occupied by dominated and dominant actors. Field domination is expressed in the dominant actors' ability to use and control resources (De Clercq & Voronov, 2009). Dominated actors are not passive, however; they constantly attempt to appropriate and establish monopolies over the mechanisms of power that (re)produce, maintain and set the boundaries of each field (Bourdieu, 1984).

Actors' habitus tends to preserve the social structures of the field, by embodying field specific efforts for the accumulation and maintenance of capital and goods produced in these social arenas (Bourdieu, 1984). However, fields are not static. Internally, the struggles produced by this constant competition over resources tend to create changes within each field. This is especially the case when there is an extensive mismatch between actors' expectations for capital and the reality. The more a field produces unmet expectations for resources, the more it is likely to face structural social change from within. Likewise, fields that produce a good match between internal and external actors' expectations and the reality tend to preserve their structures.

Fields may also emerge, change and, to some extent become autonomous from other fields due to external societal transformations. As suggested by Bourdieu's (1984: 1) study of the artistic field, these changes may occur as responses to new modes of production (i.e. transformations in the ways goods and services are produced and consumed). Moreover, fields may change as a consequence of the diversification and intensification in the number of actors legitimizing and consuming the goods produced by field participants. In the past, the Church

used to be most powerful source of legitimacy for any field. Today, states are viewed as the main sources of legitimacy from which other actors and fields gain social acceptance, access to resources and, consequently, the means for survival.

Some well known examples of fields are the business, religious, artistic, education fields. It is important to note, however, how these fields are positioned in hierarchical relationship with one another. Some fields may be completely dependent on resources from other fields, in order even to exist (Bourdieu, 1984: 1). For instance, the artistic field used to depend on religious and aristocratic fields as its primary source of resources and legitimacy. Once it had achieved increased economic independence from ecclesiasts and aristocrats, the artistic field became more autonomous. It did so by including other sources of economic resources (new consumers of cultural goods) and new sources of legitimacy (salons, publishers and theatre managers). The business field is usually more powerful (in terms of the amount and variety of resources at its disposal) than, for instance, the artistic field (Bourdieu, 1985). Like many other fields, the artistic field is therefore not completely independent from the business field.

In terms of entrepreneurship studies, one can argue that success (in the legitimization process) is not entirely up to entrepreneurs as persuaders and transformers. Entrepreneurs can assume practices in accordance with all socially accepted norms within a certain field and still not gain access to the resources needed for their new ventures. The outcomes of legitimacy building processes are also dependent on the capital which entrepreneurs possessed prior to their creating new ventures and where the entrepreneur is positioned in his or her field. Drawing on Bourdieu, De Clercq and Voronov (2009) argue that different types of ‘capital’ may influence an entrepreneur’s ability to gain legitimacy in her or his field.

3.5 Capital

Capital consists of all resources that can be exchanged and accumulated. We all have our “accumulated history” (Bourdieu, 1986: 15) when we engage with and strive for access to resources within different fields. In other words, we accumulate different forms of capital that help us navigate in various fields and gain access to resources and mechanisms for capital accumulation. According to Bourdieu (1986), there are three main forms of capital: economic, cultural and social.

Economic capital is characterized by its direct and immediate convertibility into money. Economists and entrepreneurship scholars have increased our understanding of how important

this sort of capital is for venture creation and growth (Schumpeter [1927] 1989) and how scarce and instable it tends to be for social entrepreneurs (Austin et al 2006; Bornstein & Davis, 2010; Burns, 2011). Examples of economic capital are property rights and savings (Bourdieu, 1986). Economic capital may be used to acquire cultural capital.

Cultural capital comprises the resources we acquire and accumulate through education and embodiment (for instance through heredity) of “long lasting dispositions of the mind and the body” (Bourdieu, 1986: 17) which can be converted into other forms of capital. The possession of economic capital tends to result in the acquisition of cultural capital and vice versa. Cultural capital becomes further convertible into other types of capital. With cultural capital it becomes, for instance, easier to get a highly paid job and, by so doing, ensure one’s access to economic capital. By acquiring cultural capital and a highly paid job, one is also more likely to create valuable social networks. These networks are also known as social capital.

Social capital is defined as resourceful social connections that are, under certain circumstances, convertible into other forms of capital. Social capital consists of both actual and potential forms of resources available via relations between actors and members of their networks. Family, ethnic, class and party memberships are some of Bourdieu’s (1986) examples of potential sources of social capital in that these connections provide actors with access to other types of resources.

Bourdieu’s conception of capital, habitus and field sheds light on how individuals gain entrepreneurial legitimacy in certain contexts. While capital determines our position in a field, habitus tells us what we should do in our interactions in these social arenas. Habitus and capital also can indicate in which field one is most likely to be viewed as a legitimate actor or as ‘an entrepreneur’, increasing actors’ access to social acceptance and resources for their new ventures.

These concepts also illustrate any mechanism of inequality which one may face during legitimization processes. Race, gender and ethnic discrimination tend to create difficulties for certain groups accessing the resources necessary to create, grow and employ people in certain organizations. It is well known, for instance, that organizations working with development aid and humanitarian interventions are usually established, financed and staffed with wealthy, white and upper middle-class individuals (Amutabi, 2006; Fridell & Konings, 2013). Amutabi (2006), for instance, argues that NGOs tend to reproduce different forms of colonial, racial and ethnic discrimination.

3.6 Gift and Consecrations

Sacrifices and/or gifts can give some insight into how social entrepreneurs gain legitimacy in the humanitarian field. Using the term “self-sacrifice”, Dempsey and Sanders (2010: 449) explain how social entrepreneurs jeopardize their health, economic welfare and personal relationships when trying to address “a larger social cause”. This work fills their lives with meaning: a sense of passion and solidarity that may be difficult to replicate in other fields (ibid).

In a functionalist anthropological study of sacrifices, Hubert and Mauss (1964) explain why and how actors engage in situations of (sometimes extreme) surrendering of human and material resources. A sacrifice, in its original terms, is “...a gift made by the primitive to the supernatural beings with whom he needed to ingratiate himself” (Hubert & Mauss, 1964: 2). In other words, sacrifices are a set of practices supposed to place subjects closer to god(s). In his later work, Mauss elaborates further on the idea of sacrifice as gift giving, as a tool to explain what happens when people ‘freely’ (and apparently disinterestedly) give away favours, objects and other forms of human and material resources. The main point here is that the act of surrendering resources is aimed at transforming the status of those involved in the sacrifice. Sacrifices are publicly displayed practices of gift giving that create legitimacy for givers, changing their social statuses.

Just as with ancient forms of sacrifice (e.g. Hubert & Mauss, 1964; Cunningham, 2015), social entrepreneurs are publicly rewarded with honour for their “extreme commitment” (Dempsey & Sanders, 2010: 450). However, the rewards for such sacrifices are less evident in economic terms and more significant in terms of other forms of capital. Creating and working for organizations that help distant others is rewarding and influences the way social entrepreneurs and social enterprise workers view themselves and are viewed by society. Sacrifices involve the practice of publicly giving away something of value and, in return, transforming the nature of the sacrificers and the objects sacrificed. Similarly, to the findings of Hubert and Mauss (1964), Dempsey and Sanders, (2010: 450) report that sacrifices performed by social entrepreneurs influence their reputations as identity markers. In line with Hubert and Mauss (1964), Mauss (2006) and Bourdieu (1977), I read these identity marking events (i.e. procedures by which individuals have their social differences and higher levels of legitimacy justified and naturalized) as ‘consecrations’.

Consecration means setting apart subjects, changing the way they are perceived and improving their status in relation to other subjects (Bourdieu, 1984). To be consecrated is to obtain a “sacred value” (Bourdieu, 1984: 13) even in the absence of sacrifices and/or any other gift giving

practice. To become consecrated is to become the subject of “recognition” and “legitimacy” (Bourdieu, 1984: 13). To do so, the subject has to be evaluated and approved by powerful ‘agents of consecration’, participants within the fields from where legitimacy is desired. What is the role of objects in this process? Here is where Mauss’s (1990) analytical tools become richer than those of Bourdieu.

While Bourdieu tends to disregard the role of objects in his theory of practice as a whole, Mauss (1990) acknowledges that objects may play a central role in the production of social relations, recognition, power, status, honour, and social differentiation. Just like individuals, objects may also be assigned greater legitimacy and social distinction through the consecration process. Objects may also become consecrated, that is they may be declared as sacred in their own right.

Once consecrated, objects also function as sources of legitimacy, status and power for those producing, owning and exchanging them. These objects tend to carry the honour and charisma of their creators and previous owners with them. Thus, the consecration of objects is highly relevant for entrepreneurship scholars because the figure of the heroic entrepreneur tends to go hand in hand with what they create, whether it be new organizations, new products or new services (Spinosa et al., 1997). Objects, developed and delivered by public and private partnerships, NGOs and ethically oriented ventures, may even serve the neoliberal ideology in the sense that they can “...reflect doubts about state capacity to safeguard populations” (Redfield, 2012: 158). In the realm of humanitarianism, social entrepreneurial legitimacy appears to be correlated with the privatization of ethical initiatives and the production of objects that meet the most urgent needs of people in the Global South.

Consecration provides subjects with legitimacy in the form of “symbolic capital” (Bourdieu, 1986: 17). Symbolic capital is an intangible source of power that “...helps field participants create symbolic meaning by defining and labelling phenomena and imposing definitions on other participants” (De Clercq & Voronov, 2009: 405). Symbolic capital gives field participants the power to influence the perception of what socially constructed categories are supposed to encompass and exclude. For instance, field participants with substantial symbolic capital have the power to judge and proclaim actors that are worthy of the label of ‘entrepreneur’ and to what extent certain new combinations of resources deserve the label of ‘innovation’. Symbolic capital is manifested as the actors’ reputation, prestige and status, all of which actors can use to convert into other forms of capital (Morvaridi, 2015). As Bourdieu argues, gift giving and generous deeds (including self-sacrifices) are a means of acquiring symbolic capital. Drawing on

Bourdieu, Morvaridi (2015) shows how contemporary gift givers (e.g. wealthy philanthropists) use their economic power to gain symbolic capital by receiving recognition and prestige for their heroic deeds. Thus, economic capital can be converted into symbolic capital and vice versa. Most importantly, certain individual gift givers (e.g. Bill Gates) are now endowed with sufficient symbolic capital to legitimize new practices and give new meanings to subjects and practices in the humanitarian field.

Conclusively, actors' high levels of symbolic capital enable them to introduce changes in the fields in which they operate, imposing new practices and perceptions on other field participants. Acknowledging the role of symbolic capital enables us to appreciate how actors can legitimize new practices and how subjects gain legitimacy in different contexts such as the humanitarian field. It highlights, for instance, that actors use their recognition and honour in order to influence and change our perceptions of social problems and innovative solutions. Most importantly, it equips us with the analytical tools to understand the role played by individuals' recognition, status and honour in the process by which they become consecrated as 'social entrepreneurs'. The next section presents a discussion of the legitimization of organizations.

3.7 Organizational Legitimacy

Deephouse and Suchman (2008) put the view that legitimacy is gained due to the interplay between "subjects of legitimation" and "sources of legitimacy". By the term "subject", they refer to actors who build legitimacy in dialectical relationships with different agents of legitimation. These agents act as "sources of legitimacy" (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008: 57) to the subjects that they interact with, evaluate and/or support. These sources of legitimacy can be religious authorities, customers, academia, aristocratic groups, the state, the media, foundations and social networks.

Subjects of legitimation engage both passively and actively with sources of legitimacy in the legitimation process (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008:54). I use the term "legitimation" to capture the fluid, processual and contextual aspects of legitimacy. This means legitimacy may, or may not, be attributed to subjects over time and contexts (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008:57). Once gained, legitimacy may be taken away from subjects. For instance, organizations that are highly socially accepted today may become (abruptly and/or gradually) illegitimate and even cease to exist later on. In sum, levels of legitimacy vary over time and context, depending on how, when, and where subjects of legitimation operate.

For entrepreneurs starting a new organization, legitimation involves multiple actors and audiences providing such subjects of legitimation acceptance and support. In line with Deephouse and Suchman (2008), I call these actors ‘sources of legitimacy’. Such sources of legitimacy may include prospective clients, investors, partners, donors, government agencies, the media, and suppliers, to name a few. In interactions with these audiences, entrepreneurs may, for instance, raise funds by convincing them that the organization is a suitable provider of societal solutions. These entrepreneurs, as subjects, gain this sort of legitimacy by securing audience’s confidence in order to attain, for instance, financial capital (Suchman, 1995). By registering their organizations, entrepreneurs formalize these organizations’ legal right to exist as they obtain approval from government agencies. Part of the explanation for why some entrepreneurs have managed to succeed in the legitimation process is because of their capacity for storytelling.

To acquire and maintain their legitimacy, as O’Connor (2004) and Lounsbury and Glynn (2001) argue, entrepreneurs have to develop and present believable accounts about themselves and their new venture to potential supporters, customers and wider audiences. This is called storytelling. It is an important mechanism of entrepreneurial legitimation mainly because new organizations tend to lack obvious asset value, track records and profitability (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001). Through storytelling, entrepreneurs are able to address these issues by making us perceive their new organizations, ideas, services and products as acceptable, useful and novel. In order to succeed in creating new organizations, entrepreneurs have to prove that their novel forms of organizing are actually the right one(s) in accordance to the values of the societies in which they aim to operate (O’Connor, 2004). Therefore, stories are “...legitimizing accounts of entrepreneurial action” (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001: 548). As such, they apply verbal expression and written language to convey important organizational practices and symbols.

In investigating the legitimacy building of a startup offering a platform for consumer activism, O’Connor (2004) argues that stories tend to be adapted and reconstructed so as to cope with contingencies (such as an economic crisis) and demands from organizational supporters (ibid). In other words, stories are adapted due to organizational supporters’ demands and changed circumstances in the sector where entrepreneurs seek support and acceptance. This process not, only changes the way the stories are designed and told. Stories may change how entrepreneurs view themselves, their organizations and others. They also influence critical aspects of a new venture, such as the organizations’ missions, staff, partners, investors and supporters. As O’Connor (2004) observes, the concern for legitimacy tends to be conservative even if entrepreneurial stories and missions are designed to overturn the status quo.

3.8 Summary

In this chapter, various concepts relevant to the investigation of legitimacy building processes have been reviewed in detail. Based on Weber's ideas, charisma was related to entrepreneurial action and organizations were revealed to have become institutionalized mechanisms of care for others. With concepts developed by Bourdieu, an actor's ability to gain legitimacy was shown to depend on how they enact their habitus and relate to their social positions in various fields. Borrowing from Mauss, objects, places and sacrifices were added as important aspects of the legitimacy building process. Finally, the role was outlined of storytelling in the legitimation process. In this chapter, the concepts have been presented which are used in this research read social entrepreneurship. The next chapter gives a detailed description of how this reading can be accomplished, based on an ethnographic research process. Chapter 4 describes the methodology of the research for this thesis.

Chapter IV: Methods

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology for this research. This dissertation is entirely influenced by the researchers' interactions with places, people, and texts. The research design comprised the inductive research process of ethnography, which has two main implications. The first is methodological and the second is both aesthetic and analytical.

The first implication has to do with the research questions explored in this study and its ethnographic approach, from which data is generated to address such questions. It is well known that ethnographies are pre-eminently suited for exploring "why", "who" and "how" questions (Foddy, 1994; Spradley, 1979). "Why", "who" and "how" questions are better explored when one applies methods that put the phenomena studied into their own context (Foddy, 1994). With the help of ethnographic techniques, one can bypass the many misconceptions about social entrepreneurs and the contexts in which they work. Most importantly, ethnographic techniques allow us to explore both formal and informal aspects of the legitimization process (e.g. practices and social events by which support, and social acceptance are granted to social entrepreneurs).

The second reason has less to do with fieldwork processes. An ethnography is approached as a style of writing employed by ethnographers. Drawing on Watson (2008), I see an ethnography as: "...the written account of the cultural life a social group, organization or community which may focus on a particular aspect of life in that setting" (Watson in Humphreys and Watson, 2009: 40). As well as influencing the way I have gathered data, the ethnographic tradition also informs how I write about the reality that I have evidenced during fieldwork. This style of writing is known for evoking among readers the feeling of "being there" with the writer and/or research subjects (e.g. social entrepreneurs), experiencing the field through the eyes of the ethnographer and the research subjects.

In other words, this ethnographic style influences how reality is represented in the ethnography. A 'good ethnographer' is less preoccupied with getting every single fact written in accordance with claims of objective or ultimate truth (e.g. facts about the gender and backgrounds of some informants in my ethnography have to be altered in order to protect research subjects). Instead, the good ethnographer produces a written account that prepares the reader to enter and cope with aspects of a particular field. This means that no ethnography can claim to offer ultimate objective truths but the "truer ones" (Humphreys & Watson, 2009: 42) provide the reader with the knowledge necessary to navigate and act in relation to a given field (in this case, the humanitarian field). Accordingly, the current ethnography retains the "key truths about processes" (Humphreys & Watson, 2009: 42): key facts about how entrepreneurial

legitimation happens and how things work in the humanitarian field.

Finally, writing an ethnography about legitimation processes for social entrepreneurs in the humanitarian field, gave me the opportunity to gain knowledge about myself. As a researcher, I have entered, captured and analyzed some legitimizing practices in the humanitarian field without detaching myself from my own accumulated history. This research is accompanied by a simultaneous labor of “self-analysis” (Bourdieu, 2003: 292). Through this reflexive process, one gains ‘self-knowledge’ (Czarniawska, 2007; Behar, 1996). Self-analysis and self-knowledge tell me that I am not a newcomer in the humanitarian field. Quite the contrary, I am significantly influenced by it. Somewhat similarly to social entrepreneurs whom I approached in this study (although in a very different way), I have also been a subject of legitimation in this field.

4.2 Situating the Self

During my research I discovered that the humanitarian field (in)formed me earlier than I had initially imagined. As a slum dwelling five year old child in Brazil, I interacted with and was influenced by this field in the 1980s. Then I was one of those, borrowing Scherz’s (2012) words, ‘poorest of the poor’ whose suffering mobilized social entrepreneurs to put into practice the humanitarian discourses of charity and technical assistance. This was my lived reality while I grew up. There are three lessons to take from my experience: 1) social entrepreneurs may change their missions and approaches to cope with contingencies unaccounted for in humanitarian debates; 2) the levels of legitimacy of certain humanitarian discourses and practices vary due to how donors and governments set their priorities. This has a direct, and often negative, effect on the economically poor due to their vulnerability to changes in methods of assistance; 3) the poorest of the poor are both subjects and sources of legitimization in the humanitarian field. The following sections show how.

The NGO: The Contrasting Discourses of Charity and Technical Assistance

In Brazil, I interacted with the humanitarian field almost simultaneously through two actors: the Catholic Church and a foreign led and financed NGO. While the former actor operationalized the discourses of charity, the latter tried to put technical assistance into practice.

A couple of days a week, my three brothers and I used to attend workshops organized by Casa da Criança (the House of the Children), an NGO headquartered in our slum (or favela as we call it) in Olinda, in the state of Pernambuco in the northeast Brazil. Founded in the early 1980s, Casa da Criança used to provide children with workshops and education programs about

regional art, music and Afro-Brazilian culture. We learned local forms of art such as Afro-Brazilian music and dances. However, more so than to try to preserve our ‘cultural heritage’, we were attending those courses mainly because of the free meals being served. Casa da Criança tended to avoid providing underprivileged families with material ‘hand outs’. It was based on the assumption that such handouts would not make the children and teenagers at Casa da Criança as independent and self-reliant as they should be. Workshops and meals were all we got from Casa da Criança.

Casa da Criança was created by a wealthy Italian art dealer, Giuseppe Baccaro³. He used to view the creation of the organization as a sign of his newly adopted anti-materialist life style. He associated Casa da Criança with his regret for what he had become in previous phases of his life: a rich and admired cultural entrepreneur buying and selling Brazilian art. He used to regret that he serviced wealthy individuals with the very art that was becoming increasingly absent in local public museums. By selling a part of his art collection (120 paintings) to finance the construction of Casa da Criança’s facility, Giuseppe Baccaro recreated his identity: from cultural entrepreneur, for the rich few, to ‘altruistic hero’ of the poor masses in our neighborhood. Once the facility was built, Casa da Criança was partly financed with funds raised in Europe.

The work creating and managing Casa da Criança influenced how Giuseppe Baccaro perceived himself. It also changed the way Baccaro was viewed by others in the local context. By, trying to remedy the suffering of ‘underprivileged children’, he became known for his sacrifices. He received more attention for his attempts to help suffering others than the poor whom he was trying to help ever did.

In 2000, Casa da Criança was discontinued for lack of funds. In a recent interview, a childhood friend of mine (who also attended courses held there) told me of rumors that the funds raised to finance Casa da Criança were embezzled by employees of the organization. The suspiciousness of locals towards the organization was also caused by the Casa da Criança’s refusal to help the poorest of poor with material and financial handouts. Almost simultaneously with this closure, Casa da Criança lost its legitimacy at an international and local level.

Baccaro, however, did not lose local legitimacy, because of how humble and compassionate he was towards those he helped. After the decline of his NGO, Baccaro continued to help the economically poor. Nevertheless, he changed his approach: instead of providing the poor with

³ More information (in Portuguese) about Baccaro and his projects can be found here: (<http://g1.globo.com/pernambuco/noticia/2016/08/morre-no-recife-o-colecionador-de-arte-italiano-giuseppe-baccaro.html>) (<http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/cotidiano/2016/08/1806628-mortes-cansou-de-ver-a-arte-se-distanciar-do-povo.shtml>) (<http://enciclopedia.itaucultural.org.br/pessoa17920/giuseppe-baccaro>) Accessed in 2017-12-19

workshops and education programs, he organized charities in the form of material handouts. On one of my trips to Brazil in 2010 (after I moved to Sweden), I passed by his neighborhood several times and noticed the large number of people (mostly women and children) lining up in front of Baccaro's house, waiting for their turn to get his help.

The Church: Charity, Dependence and Competition

I attribute a greater part of my family's survival, and economic improvement, to individuals who based their ways of caring for others on what we call charity. Among those individuals, the most important was Sister Joana Paula, who was often criticized (even by other nuns) for creating dependency among the poor with her handouts. The first and most important handout from the Church was a house in a slum called Alto do Monte. As single mother of five kids, my mother was often denied access to places to rent. Renting to a single mother with 'so many kids' was perceived as bad for business because of the mess, discomfort, and the faster depreciation children cause to properties.

Receiving that house from the Church had an unexpected negative consequence. That act of charity changed the way I experienced the well-studied (Amutabi, 2006; Davis, 2006) and often overly romanticized notion of community. Several members of our so-called 'community' never seemed to accept that 'the poorest of the poor' lived in a house that was so 'much better' than most facilities in the neighborhood. How could a family of beggars with a single mother live in a place which 'hardworking families' and community leaders could not afford? Most of our neighbors were living in housing that was poorly constructed on top of the unstable edges of our mountainous slum. Before we received our house from the Church, we were socially condemned just for being 'needy'. After receiving such a generous gift, we became the subjects of sabotage and boycotts by members of our community. This was seemingly caused by a confusing mix of collective envy and contempt. Such negative effects of her charitable efforts made Sister Joana Paula realize just how difficult it was to help the poorest of the poor without creating any conflicts within the so-called community.

To receive handouts from Sister Joana Paula, we were not required to attend Church ceremonies or courses. Our family was not particularly religious. One could ask for help (often in cash, food, and medicines) and just leave as soon as this was given. Still, to receive those handouts, we needed to build our legitimacy as the most deserving poor. This often meant that we had to supply Sister Joana Paula convincing stories about what we called our 'real needs' and our visions for the future.

This storytelling provided nuns with what they saw as the ‘hope’ that we would make the best out of their handouts and eventually become independent. Some nuns gradually became tired of supporting us without seeing any overall results. Apparently, this was taking too long. Here too, the local community played its role. In a sort of competition for help, local gift receivers and Church employees (who were qualified to receive gifts from the Church) accused each other of misusing the handouts provided by the nuns. I recall how some Church employees went as far as to make aid receivers (including myself) look as if they were buying drugs with charity. Helping my so-called community was hard and, by trying to do so, helpers were often faced with dilemmas.

The main dilemma was that of having to select the beneficiaries of charity. It was impossible to aid every household in the slum because we (the poorest of the poor) were too numerous. There were not enough resources to assist all of us equally and/or at once. To help, one had to choose and, by doing so, one inserted a sort of inequality into this community of the economically poor. Gossip and shame were exchanged among those who perceived themselves as the most suitable candidates of receiving help. Helping without engaging and/or producing such relations was perceived to be impossible. It also made some people involved in charity stop their interventions.

Only one of the nuns kept helping me until I finished high school (at the age of 24) and moved to Sweden in 2005. Sister Joana Paula raised part of the funds necessary to buy my tickets to Sweden. With her upper middle-class background, she mobilized her already established social network in order to assist individuals like me. I recall how Sister Joana Paula used to help several families and that she avoided letting aid receiving families know about each other. I assume it was her way of trying to help without creating and/or enhancing local conflicts.

It did not always work but she perceived that it made giving support easier. She also tended to keep her social enterprising in secret as a way of self-preservation. She was heavily criticized for giving charity to people like myself: people who, in the eyes of others, did not deserve help; people who did not do their best out of the help they received; ‘social parasites’ according to many. She told me several times how she, for instance, did not let her own relatives know about how much she helped me. “If they knew”, she told me once, “they would call me crazy”.

Both Casa da Criança and the Catholic nuns imposed certain moral demands on their beneficiaries. While the former rewarded the most authentic or exotic beneficiaries with aid, the latter tended to focus their help on those who were most open about their suffering and hopes. In both cases, one would not receive support without facing a certain dose of humiliation and

showing gratitude. In order to obtain some material benefit, one had to convincingly display and narrate about suffering. We had to show how well we deserved help, competing with dozens of other poor families who were looking for assistance from the same organizations. Most importantly, we were faced with charity workers' empathy fatigue, which is a result of the large number of stories of suffering they had to hear and evaluate.

By intervening for the benefit of suffering others, helpers at Casa da Criança and the Church created, enhanced, and maintained their status and power. Both organizations were entitled to gather and deliver resources for the poor as they saw fit. Although never demanding any material reciprocity, no form of help from the Church and Casa da Criança was ever entirely selfless. For each aid intervention ever performed, helpers became more respected members of society, while aid recipients (like myself) increasingly became targets of social condemnation. None ever took credit for being 'needy' and/or 'dependent' on the meals from Casa da Criança and the handouts from the Church. The more one needed help from others, the clearer one's own redundancy became in the eyes of the local community.

I never doubted about Baccaro's and Sister Joana Paula's good intentions towards those who they were aiding. How they attempted to do this was, however, another question. Casa da Criança's tendency to avoid giving charity was most helpful for the least poor in the neighborhood where I grew up. All my childhood friends who started making a living out of the skills taught at Casa da Criança grew up with what some of us saw as privileges, such as having working parents who constantly invested in their education. I was not raised in such a household.

When I am in Brazil, I often visit Sister Joana Paula. She reminds me of the numerous fairly useless courses organized by NGOs in Olinda that she made me go to during my teenage years. I have dozens of diplomas from such courses that were aimed at teaching me 'how to fish' but without providing me with the financial or material resources to become 'a fisherman'. Seven are diplomas from IT courses provided by an NGO (mainly financed with public funds from Germany) that never helped me acquire a computer. Soon after attending those IT courses, I forgot all the skills learned because I did not have a computer at home to practice on and use continually so as to develop further skills and knowledge. Some other people attending these courses were well off enough to have computers. For them, these courses were quite beneficial, improving their chances of employment and social mobility.

Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship discourse did not influence the way actors aided me during the 80s and 90s as much as it seems to influence the humanitarian field today. Back then, helpers focused their efforts mostly on in kind handouts and capacity building. Most capacity building efforts were based on the assumption the aid receivers would be integrated into the labor market. However, this reliance on the labor market as a way out of poverty and dependence on charity carried with it tensions between international donors and local actors delivering aid. Many local actors believed that the labor market would help children and poor families become self-reliant. At the same time, donors from the West condemned child labor, which made it impossible for actors such as Casa da Criança to employ children like myself.

Casa da Criança was a good example of how humanitarian discourses could contradict each other. This NGO trained us. It helped us acquire many work-oriented and artistic skills. But it could not employ us. It could not help us find employment either. This was not a problem for children with permanently employed parents. They were not as desperate to find new sources of income as those raised in poorer families. For the poorest of the poor children, myself included, this tension made it impossible to find sources of income in the humanitarian field. This pushed us into informal labor and business activities.

Under the physical pressure of empty stomachs and the psychological pressure of uncaring poor parents, we were trying to make a living out of tiny businesses that we created with the resources we had at hand. Combined with our physical necessities, there was a pressure towards enterprise, also fueled by popular stories of apparently ‘high profile’ entrepreneurs: wealthy individuals who had built their empires of economic wealth, from the starting point of an ability to sustain hope and act upon opportunities they seemed to see everywhere. These stories underpinned a local entrepreneurship discourse: a set of normative assumptions that made us believe that all the answers and solutions to poverty were in our minds. With ‘the right mentality’, success could be constructed from scratch.

With a hoe, a shovel, a rake and a handcar (often lent), we used to go around middle-class areas of Olinda, offering our services as grass cutters and unskilled gardeners. Quite often we would start the day as what other perceived as ‘child laborers’ and finish them as what others called ‘beggars’. The demand for our services was almost non-existent. When the demand seemed to exist, it seemed that some empathetic clients, created work that was not, in fact, needed. Thus, the demand for our services was sometimes based on this empathy and also on the ethical imperative to support what was deemed to be independence and self-reliance. Such an attitude was caused by the sight of children who, instead of ‘just begging’, were trying to make a living out of honest work.

It was striking how, based on this combination of empathy and the ethics of self-reliance, some of our clients used to pay us more than we had asked for our labor. By reading the work of Khan et al. (2008), one learns about just how unnatural and/or unsettling the existence of child labor appears in the West. Yet, where I grew up it was accepted that children would work to survive and support their families, and, perhaps, one day become one of those wealthy entrepreneurs depicted in the TV and in soap opera series.

Even if we perceived child labor as ‘normal’, it did not mean that we were fixed in those social constructions. From Monday to Friday, we walked from 05:00 until 12:00. If work was not found by then (not entirely coincidentally during lunchtime), it was time to navigate to the role of ‘beggars’ as we were hungry. We experimented with several forms of what can loosely be called businesses: selling popsicles at the beaches, selling beer during the annual carnival festival, selling orange juice in the traffic, selling candy from our house.

Microcredit is such a recurrent topic in aid and social entrepreneurship literature that I feel obliged to talk about how I have experienced it in the 80s and 90s. Like in most Brazilian slums, there were known ‘informal bankers’ or moneylenders (*agiotas*) who lent money to our neighbors. We were considered to be too low profile for such loans. Without permanent jobs, assets and/or sources of income, we were too poor for debt. Therefore, the money necessary to start our little businesses came sometimes from charity. Despite our efforts, we did not manage to generate any sort of sustainable income from all of the businesses we created. Each failed business was, in practice, a failure to sustain ‘hope’ among our aid givers. Several times, we could not convince them that we would make the best out of their help.

My experiences have three main consequences for how I view the world and how I have conducted the current research. These concern notions about poverty, community and the aid arena. First, poverty is a human condition which social entrepreneurs claim to be trying to alleviate in the Global South. My own experience keeps my eyes open for those who NGOs and aid programs often fail to reach: the poorest of the poor (e.g. Davis, 2006; Scherz, 2012). In the course of writing this ethnography, I have always asked myself and others: for what segment of the economically poor populations of the Global South are social entrepreneurs delivering solutions?

Second, the term ‘community’ is often used and romanticized by humanitarian actors. The community is the group of people placed in a certain area for whom social entrepreneurs are trying deliver solutions. My experience tells me to always ask the question of if and to what extent members of communities are as homogenous and harmonious as they tend to be depicted.

The last consequence of my upbringing has to do with my perception of the official world of aid and social entrepreneurship in which methods of poverty alleviation are formed, discussed and promoted. On the basis of my experience, I am curious about what actors do with these methods in both the official and informal realms of everyday life. Therefore, this research is based on practices adopted in the process of the creation of organizations in the humanitarian field. To gather information about these practices, I use ethnographic methods such as interviews, texts, field observations and shadowing.

4.3 Observations

Most of the social entrepreneurs approached during this research had one element in common. They travelled quite often in order to present their solutions both in their own countries and abroad. It was often during these travels that they interacted with, and attempted to gain legitimacy from, actors in the humanitarian field (e.g. donors and other social entrepreneurs). The work of such mobile subjects could be more efficiently captured by an observational technique called shadowing (Czarniawska, 2007). As a well-known technique used by organizational ethnographers (Ybema et al, 2009), shadowing helped me gain insight into the day-to-day practices and interactions of social entrepreneurs, social enterprise employees, donors, and local actors.

For this research, shadowing meant following informants in meetings, workshops, video production, dinners, and other events. This gave me the opportunity to observe how informants worked in various contexts. Instead of only capturing what entrepreneurs wanted to tell me (in interviews and texts presented in the next sections), shadowing allowed the chance to gather valuable empirical data about what informants actually did in the everyday life events. As Camilla Wirseen's shadow, for instance, in Sweden and in Kenya, I observed her day-to-day work and interactions with various contexts and actors: foundation managers, collaborators, sponsors, employees, Kibera residents, local leaders and even competitors.

I started shadowing Camilla Wirseen in October 2014 until June 2017, which gave me the opportunity to see how her practices and storytelling evolved over time across both countries. I was also able to shadow her as part of the audiences to whom she presented her projects in Sweden and Kenya. This offered the chance to notice: 1) how audiences responded to her project presentations; 2) what kind of questions they posed; 3) how she reacted to the questions posed

by different audiences. On some occasions, I could shadow her before and after presentations and meetings with various audiences such as donors, university students and collaborators.

Initially, I had planned to focus all my shadowing efforts on the day-to-day practices performed by Camilla Wirseen. Nevertheless, to my surprise, she was most often not available for that sort of observation when I was in Nairobi. Only during roughly two of my seven weeks' fieldwork in Nairobi (in 2015, in 2016 and again in 2018), I could follow her work with her organizations. I sometimes wondered how I could make the most out of my relatively short stays in Kenya. With that in mind, I used the time to shadow some other NGO leaders, managers and employees: foreigners and Kenyans who were working on the planning and implementation of their projects in Kibera. Eager to fill my days in Nairobi with "fulltime fieldwork," I started searching for alternative informants.

For this, I turned to social media such as blogs and Facebook. On Facebook there was a network of expats in Nairobi to whom I briefly presented my research and asked if anyone would be interested in participating. Three new social entrepreneurs agreed. Contacting staff from organizations that collaborated with Peepoople also proved to be a very fruitful research strategy to identify people I could interview or shadow. On several occasions, each new informant would lead me to more from other organizations because they all seemed to be constantly interacting with each other. In the beginning, my research was supposed to revolve mainly around how actors created and worked with Peepoople Kenya and the CUP Kenya. Caught by surprise with limited access to the daily work of these organizations, I became the shadow of several new informants.

For instance, for two days (in May 2016) I shadowed an American couple who created a for profit organization, offering health care education for children and local healthcare workers in Nairobi. At the end of January 2015, I followed a German (35 year old male) informant during his 5 days' of work, directing and editing a video documentary about human waste in Kibera. He was a friend of social entrepreneurs involved in Peepoople and the CUP Kenya and had previously made a video of the process of implementation of Peepoople in the settlement. Kenyan informants were also shadowed: in February 2015 I followed a female informant in her attempts to implement a for profit sanitation project in Kibera. Her work was based on a 'social business model' developed by German and Danish students at Copenhagen Business School. During the second week of May 2016, I also followed five other local project leaders living in Kibera, shadowing each of them for a day.

Although aware of the impossibility of following informants without, to some extent, influencing their acts (Czarniawska, 2007: 28), this approach involved trying not to disturb the flow of communication among the people observed. At various events, I was told how 'good' I

was as a shadow, because people perceived me as a very silent and discreet person. During meetings between social entrepreneurs and other actors in Nairobi and Stockholm (e.g. employees, NGOs, donors, local leaders, school personnel, potential supporters and target groups) I was often told: “many times we totally forget that you are here!” I was indeed following Czarniawska’s advice to: “...never behave like a fly on the wall (Czarniawska, 2007: 56)” but my role as an observer was influenced by my personal attitude and the fact that taking notes with rich descriptions of social events did not leave me with time for much else than just briefly introducing myself and saying goodbye before leaving.

All the foreign and Kenyan social entrepreneurs shadowed and interviewed seemed to have much of what anthropologists may call ‘social ownership’ (Gusterson, 1996), meaning that, to various extents, their privileged (upper middle-class) backgrounds seemed to give them a sort of confidence to speak or believe that they were entitled to be heard and taken into consideration by others. By this is meant that foreign informants often seemed to perceive themselves as individuals who could interact and discuss poverty related issues with several different types of audiences: wealthy and poor, Western and other, academics and practitioners, in business and government. To a great extent, the same could be said about upper middle-class Kenyans working as managers and accountants in what they often called ‘the NGO sector’.

It was mostly in these forms of expressing social ownership that foreign informants and upper middle-class Kenyans seemed to be different from myself and ‘other’ Kenyans living and working in Kibera. I often noticed how much easier it was to observe and extract information from upper middle-class informants than it was with informants with economically poor backgrounds. Upper middle-class Kenyan and foreign social entrepreneurs seemed willing and self-confident enough to talk about their social engagement and related ideas. In line with the arguments of Goffman (1989), the fieldwork was conducted in social spaces where (class, ethnic, racial and gender) hierarchies had to be constantly taken into consideration. Variation in class, ethnicity, race and gender seemed to give certain groups of informants (e.g. social entrepreneurs, NGO managers and office employees at foundations and public agencies) more social ownership (Gusterson, 1996) than others had.

In contrast to these foreign and Kenyan social entrepreneurs and NGO managers, Kibera residents (whom I was also trying to observe) were not always so comfortable with my presence. They had articulated certain difficulties expressing themselves verbally (Slutskaya & Simpson, 2012), which I realized actually meant that some groups in Kibera lacked the confidence to work in front of me as subjects of my shadowing efforts. Some Kibera business owners and residents expressed a certain ‘uneasiness’ in their attitude towards researchers and aid industry workers.

For example, one female worker at a HIV positive cooperative seemed to feel uncomfortable not only with my questions but also with my very own shadowing presence.

Such attitude reminded me of my own attitude when I was living in a favela in Brazil: the attitude of individuals who may feel questioned, judged and misunderstood by outsiders. Based on my own personal background, I experienced “...charged moment[s] of empathy...” (Behar, 1996: 21) for the people living in Kibera. As a researcher who embodied more than twenty years of experience with Brazilian slum dwelling, I assumed that the only way to make Kibera residents feel comfortable while working or ‘doing entrepreneurship’ in front of me was to tell them that I myself was raised in a slum.

From the perspective of an ethnographer, these moments of empathy were not always advantageous, bearing in mind the implicit tradeoffs attached to them. More often than I openly admitted, I did not feel as much empathy for social entrepreneurs as I did for their clients, employees and other slum dwellers. I was the other, observing social entrepreneurs (most from the West) interacting with others. It was difficult, and sometimes impossible, to observe these interactions without feeling like I was ‘choosing sides’: between otherness and the West, between working class Kenyan slum dwellers and middle-class local and foreign social entrepreneurs and NGO managers. This was so in spite of the fact that I was viewed, and treated by most Kibera residents, as an archetype of the middle-class West: the researcher employed in university from a wealthy country, another foreign white person curious about how people lived in Kenya.

Thus, every time I was engaged in observations, I presented my research and myself. To everybody I met during fieldwork in Nairobi and in Stockholm, I said that my research was about the entrepreneurial process which I perceived as the processes by which organizations were created. At this point, the focus was on the steps involved, such as coming up with ideas, discovering and creating opportunities, spotting trends, gaining access to Kibera and getting support from other actors. With this rather broad initial focus, I often presented my research by saying that:

“I want to understand, step by step, what it takes to create, manage and/or work for organizations in Kibera”.

I also made clear that I would leave if any of the people present felt a need for greater privacy. During the seven weeks of fieldwork in Nairobi, I visited Kibera almost every day. There I observed how informants, from organizations such as Peepoople, worked. I took notes of how these informants interacted with donors, aid agencies, NGOs, filmmakers, local authorities and social enterprises at meetings, dinners and collaborative work in -and -outside the settlement. Extensive notes were taken and later revised of the main topics approached. As a shadow of

foreigners and Kenyans, I was never engaged in “the actual practice” (Wacquant, 2004: 116) of creating and/or managing any poverty alleviation organization in slums. It seemed impossible to establish to what extent shadowing (as a less participative research technique) limited my level of bodily immersion in social entrepreneurship and the humanitarian field.

Similarly, I will never know exactly to what extent my current status (as a Ph.D. student at the Stockholm Business School) influenced my relationship with social entrepreneurs and other informants in Kibera. While inviting me to be ‘her shadow’ during a two-hour meeting with United Nations officials in Nairobi, a social entrepreneur once told me: “It is good to have you there with me! You boost me!” Thus, shadowing seemed to function as a source of entrepreneurial legitimacy (Schwartz, 2012) and confidence. The realization emerged that, by presenting myself as a social entrepreneurship researcher, I indirectly influenced some actors to recognize my informants as ‘social entrepreneurs’. Similarly, as a PhD student from Stockholm Business School, I was viewed as a sort of endorser of the project. By being a researcher from ‘a business school’, I often felt as if some informants were trying to adapt their narratives to what they thought I was expecting to hear. Some working in the humanitarian field seemed to think that I was expecting to hear accounts full of ‘strategic’ business practices and completely ‘rational decisions’.

To local informants (living in Kibera) my role as a researcher seemed to be of less interest. Perhaps this was because I was not viewed by locals as their ‘company doctor’ (Czarniawska, 2007) nor as a source of entrepreneurial legitimacy (Schwartz, 2012). Instead, Kibera informants were more curious about what life in Brazilian slums was like. Brazilian football was, otherwise, a topic that always helped me connect with Kenyan informants from within and outside Kibera. During my fieldwork in Kibera, I spent a considerable amount of time responding to questions and comments such as:

“Who is your chief?” “How do people build their houses in Brazilian favelas?” “What is your impression of Kibera in comparison to Brazilian slums?” “You look a little bit like fat Ronaldo [a Brazilian football player]!!”

Let me explain that, it was not only the fact that I verbally presented myself as post-slum dweller that helped me connect with the people living in Kibera. Several times I noticed how Kibera residents looked into how I behaved during my visits to the settlement; how I reacted to the smells of Kibera’s open sewage; how I reacted to the sight of dumps being used as playgrounds; how my body moved while walking in the muddiest and most unstable areas of Kibera.

As a researcher of flesh, blood and memories, I embodied poverty and slum dwelling in ways that went beyond verbal forms of communication. Several times I showed the roughness of my hands to informants. I was trying to illustrate my working class background through this enduring trace of the heavy unprotected work done since I was six years old. My body not only

served as a collector of memories and practices, as argued by Behar (1996: 23). It also contained visual signs of my slum dwelling memories.

Even so, for most people living in Kibera I was still just another '*mzungu*': a 'white' person wandering around and asking questions about local ways of living. My slum dwelling past was being tested in ways that I had never before experienced. Once locals even wondered if I would eat French fries sold in one of the settlement's many kiosks, just meters from the open sewage system. These events were reminders of the impossibility to acquire the social invisibility I had when I was, for instance, 'just a beggar'. No matter how passive and discrete I was while observing my informants, shadowing always involved 'mutual observation' (Czarniawska, 2007). Even my choice of clothing and accommodation in Nairobi were constantly noticed by these informant residents.

Another form of connection with the people of Kibera was completely unexpected: the anti-consumerist and sustainability morals imposed by foreign social entrepreneurs upon their Kenyan employees were in many ways very similar to the morals which social entrepreneurs posed to me. On several occasions, I was the subject of moral judgment for living in Nairobi with the same lifestyle of the foreign social entrepreneurs I was shadowing. Commenting on the hotel where I was staying, a foreign social entrepreneur told me more than once:

So.... You are rich huh??! (field notes, 2016-04-22)

You are the richest student ever! (field notes, 2016-04-23)

These words do not capture the ironic moralizing tone of such comments. It is well known in the literature that foreigners who fund and work in NGOs tend to impose anti-modernity and anti-consumerism agendas on local aid workers and aid recipients (Bartholdsson, 2006; Duffield, 2010). In Nairobi, I was facing criticisms based on these agendas as a researcher.

However, foreign social entrepreneurs were partly right about my social position in Nairobi. Compared to most Kenyan informants, I could be perceived as 'a rich student'. As argued by, for instance, Goffman (1989), ethnographers should be aware of where they are positioned in the social hierarchies of their fields of inquiry. Comments such as the ones quoted above, were good reminders of my lifestyle in Nairobi. Indeed, I was researching the lived reality and practices of several informants who lived in an informal settlement. I was also claiming to be a Brazilian who used to live in a slum. However, I was not actually living in Kibera. Instead, I was living the same life style as my foreign informants. During my Nairobi fieldwork, I was living in an upper middle-class area called Hurlingham in the neighborhood of Kilimani:



View of Hurlingham, Nairobi from hotel

Comments such as the ones quoted above were often made during events I was attending as a researcher. Most awkwardly, I was subjected to such comments in front of local co-workers, Kenyan employers and other Kibera informants. This however was not unusual. Kenyan employees (who also became my informants) were often the butt of similar forms of anti-consumerist criticism: for their purchase of ‘fancy’ clothing, smartphones and jewellery. It was striking how often foreign social entrepreneurs remarked about what Kenyan employees wore and consumed.

Kenyan NGO employees seemed to be well aware of what I was being criticized for: living in Nairobi with a lifestyle similar to that of their employers. Some told me how ironic it sounded. One Kibera informant even related how he was criticized for buying and wearing ‘fancy’ suits at work.

She is giving you a hard time huh? What is she talking about? Did you see where they [foreign NGO staff and social entrepreneurs] are living?! Take a look at those areas! You never see a poor person in those areas (Cab driver for NGO employees and managers, fieldnotes, 2015-02-01)

They don't understand us! Ahahah! She got very angry once when she saw me wearing nice suits and shoes. I like wearing suits! It makes me feel more self-confident specially if I am going to present myself somewhere. As soon as I got employed in the project, I bought nine suits. I looked like Obama! Ahaha! (NGO manager, fieldnotes, 2016-04-29)

Shadowing was not the only form of observation employed during fieldwork. To address the research questions, I also made use of information generated through participant observations. In Stockholm, I participated in events, courses and projects organized by an international social entrepreneurship network headquartered in New York. Most of their activities took place in a facility administered by the Impact Hub Stockholm as part of “... a global community, consultancy and a creative space” and a “...catalyst to foster social innovation” (<https://stockholm.impacthub.net/about-us/>). By participating in these activities, I met and participated in seminars with social entrepreneurs from countries like Italy, Sweden, Norway and Finland. In one of their brochures, I read a statement that reminded me of a central aspect of gift giving namely ‘reciprocity’ (Mauss’s ([1954] 2005; Douglas, 1990; Bourdieu, 1977):

“69% of our members believe that the time they invest in others comes back to them”. This statement illustrated widespread patterns of behavior observed in the humanitarian field. Most importantly, these patterns of behavior informed my choices of research question and analytical concepts (see Sections 1.4 and 2.2 for more details).

During a total of seven weeks of fieldwork in Nairobi, I visited Kibera several times *both* before and after shadowing social entrepreneurs and local informants working and living in Kibera. Those days, during which I was given only few hours to work as a shadow, I would use my ‘free time’ to visit Kibera. During every visit to Kibera, I tried to capture how aid was organized in the settlement. While walking in Kibera, I also visited various local and foreign organizations. During those visits I took notes and pictures about what seemed to best illustrate the role played by (local and international) organizations in Kibera.

It is important to note that these observations only happened in broad daylight. Social entrepreneurs and local informants advised that it was not safe to visit Kibera when it was dark. Almost every evening, I took cab tours around Nairobi asking taxi drivers to describe the different areas of the city. The three cab drivers who helped me with my fieldwork in Nairobi were also interviewed. All of them worked for social entrepreneurs and foreign led NGOs in Kibera.

Field notes played a crucial role. Many relevant points were brought up before and after I had recorded interviews. Thus, it seemed important to take notes of informal conversations in Kibera and elsewhere in Nairobi. For safety reasons, I could not always take recording equipment to Kibera: a constraint that increased the reliance on field notes. Although always accompanied by people well known in the community, feeling totally safe to do research in Kibera, and in Nairobi in general, was not possible.

Besides fearing for my own safety, during much of the fieldwork I was worried about creating problems for informants residing in the settlement. One of the men who provided safety to outsiders visiting Kibera once said that it became, to some extent, easier to protect us in that particular period because ‘the bad boys were busy’. He was referring to the large number of young men who were employed by the program for the infrastructural upgrading of Kibera and so were no longer committing crimes in the area. Furthermore, he expressed a deep concern about what would happen after the upgrading projects were concluded and these young men were all out of jobs once again. I, on the other hand, wondered what would happen to the local informants, once the upgrading of Kibera was concluded. Some of them feared that criminality and violence would increase as soon as ‘the bad boys’ lost their jobs.

With exposure to that environment, I embraced the attitude that ‘everything became data’ (Dunn, 2010) in my field notes. Traditional ethnographers would probably claim that spending just seven weeks visiting a field like Kibera was not long enough to witness how various everyday life events unfold. Some scholars argue that without at least one year of fieldwork:

...you don’t get the random sample, you don’t get the range of unanticipated events, you don’t get deep familiarity (Goffman, 1989: 130).

To my knowledge, Goffman has never done fieldwork in economically deprived places in the Global South. If he did, he would probably find out about the countless ‘random’ ‘unanticipated events’ which may unfold within one day in places like urban slums. It is one of the most remarkable features of urban slums: every day is marked by various unpredictable events that unfold when a significant number of people are constantly (re)inventing their own means of survival (Davis, 2006).

Without neglecting the importance of ‘getting deep familiarity’ (Goffman, 1989) by spending long periods in the field, one could argue that, in our increasingly globalized world, the temporal act of being there can assume a variety of forms and places (Hannerz, 2003; Czarniawska, 2007). One aspect of my fieldwork that was unheard of by ethnographers like Goffman was my use of the internet and social media to study social interactions between people and objects in several places at any time. Even when far away from Nairobi (I have been living in Stockholm since 2005), I remained up-to-date about events unfolding in Nairobi and in Kibera. Most importantly, the method of inquiry applied in this dissertation is multi-sited fieldwork (Hannerz, 2010). As such, this involved the study of social relationships between social entrepreneurs, donors, government agencies and local actors in both Nairobi and Stockholm. In the next section, the research technique of interviewing, very important for ethnography and particularly in multi-sited fieldwork, is described in detail.

4.4 Interviewing

As previously discussed, this ethnography is based on fieldwork in two sites: Nairobi and Stockholm. In this type of fieldwork, interviews are very important mainly because the ethnographers’ stay in local settings is usually short lived (Hannerz, 2010). In other words, by conducting fieldwork in more than one place I was almost always ‘in a hurry’. Interviews are well suited for these circumstances (ibid). With this in mind, I conducted 99 semi-structured interviews. These have become one the main sources of empirical evidence for this research.

With the semi-structured type of interview, I tried to establish an open-ended flow of communication between informants and myself. Such a flow was based mainly on a few general questions, avoiding suggestive inquiries and taking into consideration the context in which each interview occurred (Foddy, 1993). During most of these, questions raised included examples such as:

How was your organization created? Why did you choose to organize your project in this specific form? Why did you choose to operate in Kibera? Could you describe how it is to implement a project, work, live in and move out of this area? Can you describe, from start to the end, a day of work in the organization?

Employing an interview method with open-ended questions involved an attempt to capture the practical and cultural reality of entrepreneurship. Questions were intended to encourage informants to freely provide their own interpretations of practices and events (Foddy, 1993). For instance, they included asking about the main steps taken for the creation and management of Peepoople in Kibera, challenging occasions, achievements and (personal and organizational) prospects. With this form of interview, both formal and informal patterns of communication with informants were established. Even during formal (semi-structured taped) interviews, I encouraged interviewees to see our interactions as casual conversations rather than a strictly structured extraction of information. Such a form of interview often proves very useful, if one aims to gain an understanding of the cultural meanings attached to human action (Spradley, 1979). These are meanings that can be very difficult to capture in places like urban slums: contexts where (ethnic, racial, gender and class) conflicts are great, creating difficulties for researchers to obtain local actors' narratives of various events.

Interviews	Quantity
Camilla Wirseen	7
Peepoople shareholder	1
Other social entrepreneurs	35
Peepoople Kenya employees	11
The CUP Kenya employees	7
Other social entrepreneur employees	9
Kibera local business owners	8
NGO managers	6

Documentary producer	1
Chief	1
Village elder	1
Kibera school managers/teachers	4
Slum tourism Guide/manager	2
Taxi drivers	4
Foreign NGO volunteer	1
Aid agency manager	1
Total	99

As shown above, Camilla Wirseen was interviewed seven times in the course of my fieldwork in Stockholm and Nairobi. Other social entrepreneurs were also interviewed, both in Stockholm and in Nairobi, and asked to describe events related to their work. From 2014 to 2018, I interviewed a total of twenty social entrepreneurs, some more than once, comprising 35 interviews altogether. During these interviews, they were requested to provide their impressions of events such as meetings with donors, government agencies, NGOs, volunteers, local leaders and employees. These interviews occurred mainly in coffee houses, their homes, inside taxis and, to a lesser extent, via Skype and email. On each occasion, they were asked to tell me about older and the latest events in their lives and work. After each description, they were also encouraged to provide their impressions, points of view and feelings about other actors influencing their organizations. Interviews were recorded and extensive notes were also taken. For each interview, social entrepreneurs were informed that their statements were recorded. In some cases, interviews were quite retrospective as some organizations (e.g. Peepoople) were created several years before this research began. Other interviews had more to do with recent events as these social entrepreneurs were still formalizing the existence of their organizations. In the CUP Kenya's case, for instance, I interviewed the founders five months before the organization was created.

Apart from data gathered through interviews with social entrepreneurs, this dissertation relies heavily on accounts of Kenyans (living in and outside Kibera) who were somewhat involved in the legitimization of social entrepreneurs. This included social entrepreneurs' employees living in

Kibera and office staff living in other parts of Nairobi. These people also comprised cab drivers, employees in various Kibera based NGOs, members of film teams shooting advocacy videos and project suppliers. I also interviewed a local chief, landlords, primary school teachers, an NGO manager and small business owners. Not all of these interviewees knew of or were related to each other's organizations but they all had stakes in Kibera.

In Stockholm, I also interviewed seven social entrepreneurs and NGO employees (Swedes, Brits, Italians, Finns and Americans) who had visited and/or worked in Kibera. The information extracted through these interviews helped in understanding why people come to, visit, live, work and create organizations in that specific settlement. Interviews were conducted not only based on what people were saying but also on how informants were embodying and managing their expressions. I was trying to interpret their words not only for what they literally meant but also take into account the ways they expressed themselves with words, pauses, silence and body language.

During many attempts to book interviews with foreign social entrepreneurs in Kibera, a certain aura of prestige emerged around the notion of 'being the first interviewed'. One informant told me to avoid mentioning who I was interviewing to other interviewees. She stated that even if interviewing social entrepreneurs working within the same organization, I should try to pretend that each interviewee (social entrepreneurs or managers) was the first I had ever talked to.

People like knowing that they were "the first" you know? If you are going to interview [the co-founder of an organization] make sure that he does not know that you've interviewed me already. There is a lot of prestige involved in this business (social entrepreneur, fieldnotes, 2015-01-28).

To not risk having to lie about who I interviewed first, I decided not to interview the organization co-founder mentioned in the quote. Yet, this quote serves to illustrate the rivalry in this field. Competition for attention and apparent prestige were common, even among members of the same organizations.

As a researcher, I felt that I was joining a competitive system of status and hierarchies which I did not know how to handle. In this, social entrepreneurs seemed to view my research as an opportunity to gain recognition for their solutions and, indeed, for themselves as do-gooders. Having presented myself as a researcher from Stockholm Business School investigating social entrepreneurship processes, this made various informants more interested in talking to me. Many seemed to believe that, by being interviewed, they would be given the opportunity to present their organizations at the Stockholm Business School. On some occasions, informants explicitly told me that they would be happy to do so.

During the course of my interviews, some difficulties were faced in maintaining relations with informants, especially some Kibera residents. Some seemed unwilling to talk, answer phone

calls or reply to emails. Many of the locals I had already interviewed did not seem to want to meet again. This also included many local informants employed by, and recommended by social entrepreneurs. Some seemed tired of being approached by outsiders gathering accounts on the settlement's 'authentic' poverty.

In some twisted sense, the poverty faced by Kibera residents has become a well-known attraction for tourists and even celebrities (Reyna, 2012) from which many could profit. One Kibera resident explicitly claimed that 'we' (researchers, NGO workers, journalists and celebrities) were using them. This was a small business owner, living and selling clothes in Kibera. She told me that and walked away, so I never had the chance to discover exactly what she meant. These observations were confirmed by other foreigners conducting research in Kibera and other Nairobi slums.

I think one thing in Kibera that I think is kind of cool is that they are more sceptic towards NGOs and even hostile towards people who come there. I mean foreign people coming. There is slum tourism there for instance. Whereas in Mukuru [Mukuru Kwa Njenga is a slum in the East of Nairobi] I did not encounter this at all (Finnish master student and intern at an NGO located in Kibera, interview, 2018-05-23).

The above comment seems to be in line with reactions from residents who were not directly 'benefiting' from the NGOs in Kibera. For many local residents, a 'benefit' from an NGO seemed not to be conceptualized as the services and products these organizations claimed to be providing to 'the community'. Instead it was often perceived as something given to those who were directly paid by NGOs. One of my main challenges as a researcher during my fieldwork in Kibera was to make residents understand that I was not employed and/or serving the interests of foreign NGOs and social entrepreneurs.

The way I was presented to, and viewed by, informants also played a role in the quality, depth and amount of information provided during interviews. For some interviewees, academic researchers were all about theories and did not know anything about the reality of poverty and entrepreneurship in the Global South. In some interviews, this turned out to work in favour of more detailed answers, as informants assumed that I was completely ignorant of the subject and therefore needed to receive proper explanations on issues related to aid for the economically poor.

Some informants were quite open about their prejudices against academics, sometimes referring to scholars as those who tend to develop failed aid programs, because they never leave the comfort of the university campus to look into the 'reality outside'. Seeing this as an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding on the issues approached here, I left such assumptions unquestioned. The decision not to question such prejudices was mainly based on the idea that, if one aims to capture and understand the informants' cultural knowledge, the interviewees should be encouraged to assume the role of teachers (Spradley, 1979: 59). For fear

of negatively interfering in my informants' 'teaching mode', I let myself be criticized for being academic: 'too bookish to understand the world outside'.

For locals living in Kibera, assuming this role of instructors was not an easy task. Minority groups in all societies tend to internalize a strong sense of inferiority (Taylor, 1994) which, in turn, may unite their members in a perception of a closed community. In the specific case of Kibera, this meant that outsiders (like me), perceived as superior in economic terms but inferior in knowledge about poverty, tended to have major difficulties assessing the local reality. In the course of the fieldwork, I came to realize that most informants from Kibera assumed that somebody coming from Sweden would never truly understand their reality.

Due to Kibera's long history (and large proportions of) failed aid projects there was an atmosphere of disillusionment and mistrust towards outsiders (see, for instance, Higgins, 2013) which, in many cases, made approaching and interviewing people more difficult than expected. This could represent a danger for the study's validity because some interviewees simply thought that it was not worth giving a full description of their true situation in the settlement. To address this, I constantly encouraged informants to combine their line thinking with some practical examples of how they worked. Most important of all, such local attitudes tended to change after I described my life growing up in a Brazilian slum. During my initial two weeks in Nairobi, I gradually realized that my background as a former child beggar/laborer and slum dweller influenced these encounters with Kibera locals. In some encounters this was more important than my role as a researcher and these interviews would then assume the format of a simple exchange of lived experiences.

After sharing my experiences on discrimination, criminality and poverty in Brazil, the tone of interviews with some Kibera residents became more open and friendly. To a large extent, this sharing represented a request (Goffman, 1959: 24) upon which local interviewees were expected to respond by treating me as an equal. Some informants explicitly changed their ways of answering questions and others even told me that they felt like they could open up to me because we shared similar backgrounds.

This is not to say, however, that my background facilitated receiving information from all local informants. Even after knowing about my upbringing in a Brazilian slum, many seemed unwilling to participate in the research. It was unclear why, but six local informants (all working for foreign led organizations) seemed disappointed after being interviewed. During my second fieldwork visit in Nairobi, I tried to contact those interviewed previously in order to try interviewing them a second time. However, they never replied. At this point, I had emailed and called several other locals who never replied and/or showed any interest in my research. Quite frustrated, I shared my concerns with a local informant in Kibera who then told me that:

Everything has a price here! Do you know what I mean? A lot of people living in Kibera think that you *mzungus* go to Kibera and get rich by doing research on them, creating NGOs or taking pictures of them. So sometimes you see a lady selling vegetables in Kibera and you take a picture of her and after that she will say: come on! I know you are getting a lot of money and prestige for these pictures so give me some money! (Kibera resident, interview, 2016-05-03)

It is understandable that informants may perceive the act of sharing information as an opportunity for income generation, especially in cases where they believe that the researcher is the only true beneficiary of the knowledge they want to 'extract' (Spradley, 1979). In Kibera, most local informants did not seem to view me as their 'company doctor' (Czarniawska, 2007). In contrast with what my research represented for social entrepreneurial ventures, I was not adding any sort of 'entrepreneurial legitimacy' (Schwartz, 2012) to local informants' ventures. So, why would or should locals interrupt their activities to give me information for research that had no clear value for them?

No money had been offered to the Kibera residents interviewed on the first visit. This was mainly because I had thought that I was not interrupting their work in any way. As a matter of fact, this was erroneous. Several of the informants living Kibera were interviewed while they were at work. Some were interviewed while performing tasks for the Peepoople and the CUP. Others were interviewed shortly before and/or after their (paid) participation in the documentaries produced by my foreign informants. Due to the perceived lack of safety in Kibera, some interviews could not be recorded since I was repeatedly advised to not bring any item of value on visits to the settlement. On these occasions, field notes were the only empirical data produced.

To some locals who I interviewed at the hotel where I was staying, I paid a compensation of around 8 US dollars for their transport and time. It was the safest and fairest way I had found to conduct formal (recorded interviews). Some local leaders seemed to believe that I was doing research in order to create *my own* aid organization in Kibera. At all times during my fieldwork, I was clear about being a 'independent' researcher (meaning that I was not employed by any of the organizations that I was approaching) but, even so, some people insisted that I intended to create an aid organization in Kibera.

Informants who then insisted on viewing me that way were willing to give me information, at least in some occasions, 'for free' because they apparently thought I was going to generate other forms of resources for them such as employment (for them and their relatives) and access to international projects and funds. The three local leaders I interviewed called this a 'reward' which I was expected to provide them upon the launching and implementation of 'my future project'. Most of my local informants (for instance the chief and local business owners) confirmed it was impossible to operate any kind of organization in Kibera without paying some sort of (formal and informal) 'reward' to local governmental and traditional authorities.

No matter how useful the narratives captured on interviews were for this case study, they would not be sufficient to gain an in-depth understanding of why and how foreign organizations were created in Kibera. This is mainly because one can only guess if and how the information generated during interviews was influenced by the ways in which interviewees perceived the interviewer (Goffman, 1959: 24; Yin, 2014). I could never know how and to what extent my interviews were biased by the language used in my communication with informants and the contexts in which interviews were conducted (Foddy, 1993: 9). On some occasions, my interviews seemed to suffer due to interviewees' bias towards well-tailored advocacy and/or heroic abstract statements such as:

"I don't care about money nor status! I am in the business making a difference!" (one foreign social entrepreneur told me).

Also, among those local leaders and NGO managers living in Kibera, I heard similar comments such as:

"I started this organization to give back to the community". "I am a role model because I am successful! My dream is that women will no longer suffer!"

Such statements seemed to be adapted to what interviewees thought I (perceived as a foreign humanitarian) wanted to hear. Several times after being interviewed, informants (mostly social entrepreneurs, the NGO manager and office employees) advised me that they had rephrased their comments. Later on, I would find that most of these rephrased statements seemed to fit quite well with organization missions and campaigns published on the internet. During the fieldwork, I often wondered if the narratives gathered through interviews were any different from the stories being told on social media and organizations' homepages.

Conducting interviews was quite demanding in terms of the resources and efforts this research technique required. Several steps were involved: contacting possible informants, booking interviews and preparing overall questions, all of which needed to happen before the actual event of interviewing informants. With this in mind, it was frustrating to find out that a large number of statements provided during interviews were 'exactly' the same as those already in the public domain.

Sometimes even the pauses, the expressions of anger, the disgust with the injustices suffered by 'the poor' that were uploaded on the internet (often through social media such as Facebook) were 'the exact same' as the narratives gathered through interviews. At other times, people claiming to be social entrepreneurs answered my interview questions using statements read directly from their Power Point files. The constant bias towards success narratives that one faces while doing interviews with managers and entrepreneurs is well known in the literature (Edwards, 2008; Noordegraaf, 2014; Goffman, 1989). Nietzsche ([1878]1984) contends that all

stories creators tell about their creative processes tend to be biased by the creators' need to feel unique.

However, the reader should bear in mind that these interviews were attempts to understand practices and events. Even when informants insisted on only giving abstract sentences such as "I am here to save the world" or "I am so good at treating all kinds of people well that locals perceive me as one of them," interviews were steered towards them talking about what they did and what happened when they were trying to create and implement their projects. This is not to say that it was easy. Informants in higher positions (such as foreign social entrepreneurs, donors and managers) were often very good at diverting the flow of communication towards subjective and vague story telling. During some interviews, informants seemed to have developed a sort of 'selective memory', ignoring the challenging moments of their entrepreneurial processes and keen to talk about what they perceived as 'successful steps' in their journeys.

Such narratives came most often from informants whom Kibera residents called 'the office people'; the permanently employed aid bureaucrats, managers, the chief and self-styled 'social entrepreneurs'. The office people were often contrasted with 'the people on the ground'; Kibera aid workers receiving the lowest salaries or no permanent salary at all from foreign organizations: local aid workers who did not speak English, people who worked for the NGO sector on daily 'rewards' or 'coffees' (i.e. working on a commission), the least educated aid workers,; aid workers who did not 'look good' or 'speak well' enough to take leading roles on advocacy videos and/or serve as entertaining hosts (or dates) for foreign humanitarians.

It was thanks to my unexpectedly low access to the daily life of people at 'the office' (e.g. at Peepoople Kenya) that my research grew outside the advocacy bias of social entrepreneurship and humanitarianism in Kibera. This limited access to 'the office people' led me closer to 'the people on the ground'. The people on the ground did not articulate their narratives as the office people did. They proved to be valuable informants because they were closer to the reality of social entrepreneurship in the 'practices' by which they were organized, and which they actively organized themselves, as NGO workers, local leaders and aid receivers. Most could not and did not speak the language of advocacy and development aid buzzwords, a language fluently and frequently spoken by the office people. Instead, the people on the ground were more likely to tell me about several commercial, negative and paradoxical aspects of social entrepreneurship in Kibera. Thanks to my informants on the ground, I could bypass the myth of heroic deeds such as: selfless 'change making', 'giving back to the community', 'making a difference', 'taboo breaking', 'giving wings', 'empowering women'.

This ethnography also relies on information generated through text analysis, which is discussed in the next section.

4.5 Text Analysis

Linguistically, ‘texts’ are meaningful interactions because they manifest themselves as observable units demanding interpretation and, when structured consistently, conveying discourses (Phillips & Malhotra, 2008). Actors form and disseminate discourses by producing and grouping texts that make consistent claims about the nature of the social world (ibid). Accordingly, texts are used in this ethnography to unravel how actors produce meaning and legitimacy to social entrepreneurship. In the literature, entrepreneurs are known for their ability to create, adapt and change stories, organizations (O’Connor, 2004; Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001) and even institutions (e.g. Khan et al, 2008; Czarniawska, 2009; Borstein & Davis, 2010). One of the ways that actors can do this (especially in organizational realms where actions are most often not easily observable and, therefore, not easily emulated) is through the representation and dissemination of actions and discourses through texts (Phillips & Malhotra 2008).

In order to be accepted and eventually supported, entrepreneurs have to give meaning to their ideas, actions and work. An analysis of discourses inherent in texts helps us understand where meaning comes from and how subjects use meaning to become accepted to the point of even having their actions institutionalized (ibid). Like Phillips and Malhotra, (2008), I see texts as material manifestations of discourses which function as a source of both social stability (e.g. explaining why and how existing practices should be promoted and/or preserved) and social change (e.g. explaining why and how the status quo should be changed). Texts assume various forms including pictures, videos, written text and artefacts (ibid). In the following sections, a discussion is presented on these texts were gathered and used in this analysis of entrepreneurial legitimation.

Still and Moving Photography

Since 2014, various primary and secondary sources of texts were collected. Primary sources of texts are viewed as all texts produced through my own investigative efforts and contextualized experiences. During seven weeks of fieldwork in Nairobi and Stockholm, 300 photos and seventeen videos were taken or collected, capturing the work of social entrepreneurs, documentary directors, NGO employees, donors and local leaders. Most of this visual material was produced during my three visits to Nairobi (two weeks in January 2015, three weeks in May 2016 and two weeks in June 2018). These also included videos and pictures published by, for instance, the CUP Kenya and Peepoople. During this period, I was not at all aware that my dissertation would be more specifically focused on entrepreneurial legitimation. The initial

research focus was on the steps in the process of establishing social enterprises as entrepreneurial activities.

These actors spent a significant part of their stay in Kibera producing these forms of documentation, capturing their encounters with locals. I spent some of the time in Kibera observing and visually recording these encounters. The frontispiece is a good illustration of exactly how my camera and I were positioned towards research subjects, capturing their encounters ‘front stage’—in the socially constructed areas where actors were delivering their performances to a specific audience—and ‘backstage’—the area of social life where actors can relax and step out of character without fear of disrupting their performance towards the targeted audiences (Goffman, 1959). In this formal and informal practices enacted during social events were witnessed. This documented how social entrepreneurs, donors, NGO employees and aid beneficiaries acted in front and behind their own cameras.

With some organizations and social entrepreneurs, text was gathered that was richer in daily life details involving their work, meetings, workshops, launching events and leisure. Many times, I produced photos and videos about how others were working in the production of images in Kibera. In two cases, I had access to the entire process of production of still and moving photography, from the very first shooting to the ‘final published product’. This was through shadowing informants while they were producing texts such as documentaries, photo sessions and advocacy and campaign videos in the settlement.

I shadowed a German documentary director for a week while he was shooting an episode of his newest documentary in Kibera. Then I used my camera to film and take pictures of his work with social entrepreneurs, chiefs, NGO employees and Kibera residents. I recall, for instance, filming his instructions to the local NGO workers who appeared in his documentary. “Make the girls sing!!” he told them, referring to how he wanted a choir of school girls to produce the background soundtrack for the scenes he was producing; scenes about the role of one social innovation in Kibera schools. The soundtrack not only conveyed local music but, inherent in that music, there was also a before and after story: “in the past, before a specific foreign intervention, we were suffering and now, after receiving foreign help, we are finally able to study and evolve undisturbed”. After this, I interviewed the director while he was editing the material gathered during a week of work in Nairobi. The next day he went back to Germany.

Six months later, I watched the video that was uploaded on Facebook by some of my social entrepreneurs’ informants. The video was about the lack of affordable menstrual management products in the Global South and presented menstrual cups as one of the solutions. I watched and took notes of the transformations that occurred from ‘rough’ to the published versions of that visual material: what was the main message the documentary conveyed? Which actors were

present in the backstage of the shootings but were not visible in the final version of the video? How come some local NGO employees were filmed working in Kibera but did not appear in the final version of the documentary? How were donors, social entrepreneurs, public aid agencies, NGO workers and Kibera residents presented in the documentary? How come the poorest kids living in Kibera were not captured by the cameras? What role do places and objects play in the stories? How did internet viewers react to this episode of the documentary? How come Kenyans played all the protagonist roles but they were not presented by their names in the video?

Watching such ‘final product’ enabled me to contrast discourses inherent in the video’s storytelling with all the field notes, pictures and videos that I had myself produced as an ethnographer. Much of the information I needed to answer the above questions was readily available in my fieldnotes and interview transcriptions. I had recurrent conversations with some of the people participating in the production of photo sessions, videos and the above-mentioned documentary.

Whatever questions not answered by the field notes and interview transcriptions formed part of further conversations with these informants. For instance, I asked a Kenyan NGO worker why she appeared as a protagonist in the final version of the documentary while local employees from other NGOs were filmed but did not appear at all. She replied with a lengthy description of what it took for locals to meet the requirements of foreign photography producers. Looks, speech and body movements had to be ‘catchy’ and ‘camera friendly’, she said. Levels of camera friendliness were often established by how calm and yet passionate one appeared when speaking in front of the cameras. She also talked about what kind of NGOs and social entrepreneurs could afford to employ camera friendly staff. By doing so, she revealed her background (upper middle class, although she was usually presented by her employers as a poor slum dweller taking responsibility for her community in Kibera) and revealed some information about the social hierarchies among social entrepreneurs and NGOs.

Thus, the analysis of photos and videos also functioned as the last step of an ‘ethnographic loop’, raising new, and certainly better informed, research questions about social entrepreneurs, NGOs and the humanitarian field. This loop led me back to a reapplication of other ethnographic techniques presented in previous sections, such as shadowing and interviewing. Photos and videos complement, endorse and, ultimately, illustrate the information presented in this dissertation. All these texts were gathered with the consent of the research subject organization. Some of these even let me use photographs and images that they had produced and uploaded onto their homepages. One such organization was Peepoople.



How to use Peepoo.

Source: <http://www.peepoople.com>

Photos and videos of events in Stockholm were also produced and collected. For instance, on the 19th of May 2016 I went to a philanthropy event in Stockholm sponsored by Microsoft, KPMG and Nordea. It was attended by social entrepreneurs, academics, journalists, university directors and representatives from private foundations, the Swedish Royal Family, NGOs, government agencies and social entrepreneurship fellowship organizations. Some of these actors presented projects in the Global South in which they were involved. One such organization was the Skoll Foundation which is known in the literature for promoting business oriented social entrepreneurship and supporting social entrepreneurs who create for profit organizations (e.g. Bishop & Green, 2008; Nicholls, 2010). It was striking how the foundation used pictures from Kibera to showcase some of the projects and social innovations it sponsored.

Another presenting foundation was a direct financial supporter of the CUP Kenya: the object of my second case study in this dissertation. During the event, the head of this foundation gave advice to the audience about how to fund documentaries with great prospects for 'social impact'. It was not difficult to spot the underlying discourse promoted during such events, because private initiatives were presented as protagonists in all the successful stories about human progress in the West and in the Global South. Texts gathered during such events helped me grasp the discourses inherent in entrepreneurial and humanitarian storytelling. They also gave insight into the importance of still and moving images for the legitimization of social entrepreneurship and new forms of humanitarianism.

Written Texts

To answer questions related to the legitimization of social entrepreneurs in the humanitarian field, written texts were collected which were published by other researchers, journalists, consultants, aid agencies, social entrepreneurs and foundations. This was done by, for instance, reading a total of 100 organizations' websites. On these platforms I looked into presentations of organizations, solutions, social entrepreneurs and donors, local leaders, collaborators, clients and suppliers, staff, owners and aid receivers. These sites also contained other texts such as press releases and reports produced by academics, government agencies, consultants and donors.

For Peepoople, for instance, I used the Swedish principle of openness and the Data Protection Act to gain access to written texts about the organization's grants applications. Peepoople was supported with grants from Vinnova (Sweden's Innovation Agency). By analyzing the official communication between Peepoople and Vinnova, insight was gained into processes by which social entrepreneurs sought and gained legitimacy from this state agency. These particular official texts (three documents comprising 33 pages in total), offered a better understanding of how social entrepreneurs presented themselves, social problems, solutions and distant others. These texts also showed on what grounds government agencies based their formal decisions to support specific groups of social entrepreneurs.

Texts also added new dimensions and nuances to the legitimization processes in Sweden and in Kenya. For example, Peepoople's annual reports (eight documents with a total of 85 pages), contained information about the organization's finances, staff, owners, partners, investors, donors, sales, properties and clients. Furthermore, these contained an overall description of the organization's present situation, past achievements and prospects. These annual reports covered the trajectory of Peepoople from 2006 to 2015.

I also looked into how social entrepreneurs worked and were presented in social media. Social media contained valuable information about interactions between social entrepreneurs, organizations, informants. It also showed comments made by other people about organizational solutions developed by social entrepreneurs. This assessment revealed if and to what extent these platform users accepted, criticized and supported social entrepreneurs.

An investigation of the numerous texts about Kibera written by academics was also conducted (Davis, 2007; De Feyter, 2011; Reyna, 2012; Swart, 2012; Dixon & Tooley, 2012; Gallaher et al, 2013; Bodewes, 2013; Kiyu, 2013; Ekdale, 2014; Rigon, 2014) and Peepoople (e.g. Heikinnen, 2012; Redfield, 2012; Kokko & Lagerkvist, 2016; Kokko, 2019). The literature review also included articles and reports published by governments, NGOs and newspapers. Although these sources of information tend to be somewhat biased by political interests, individual world views, advocacy efforts and entertaining cultural essentialisms, they offered

various, sometimes conflicting, descriptions of Kibera and the legitimization of organizations such as Peepoople in the settlement. These descriptions served as complements for information gathered through interviews and field notes.

Artefacts

During the fieldwork I also gathered and analyzed photographs of artefacts: objects made by humans which, as consequence of human interaction with them, acquire meaning. Accordingly, I took note of the role played by gifts, ornaments in places and on people and material manifestations of social innovations. The analysis of these objects was intended to provide further insights into the actions and ways of life of research subjects, including social entrepreneurs, micro-entrepreneurs, donors and local leaders. This offered a deeper understanding of how social entrepreneurship and humanitarian discourses and practices became embodied in artefacts such as toilet bags, menstrual cups, items in NGO offices, machines, tools, toilet facilities, dolls, toilet seats and even human waste. Some of these artefacts were products of the projects, some were used in project processes and some were evidence of gift giving or levels of prestige, convenience or comfort.

To support the evidence presented in the Peepoople case, for instance, artefacts included the toilet bags, the toilet seat, the facilities through which the solution was administrated and delivered, the machine that manufactured the toilet bags, the storage facilities for the toilet bags and the containers in which they were shipped. In the CUP Kenya case, the artefact focus was obviously the menstrual cup and any information available about its associated production, storage and distribution. It is noteworthy that menstrual cups came in different brands, colours and, according to Kibera users, quality and comfort levels. Other artefacts studied in this case were the bags in which the cups were stored and sold and the uniforms the CUP Kenya employees wore at work. Once more, this analysis of artefacts led back to the 'ethnographic loop' mentioned before. In order to fully understand the meanings attached to these objects, I (re)turned to observations and interviews of people using, producing and delivering them.



An NGO branded water tank

As mentioned previously, it was only after collecting and analysing data that I became aware of what research questions I wanted to address here. This process was filled with confusion, physical risks and, most importantly, surprises. Many of these surprises had to do exactly with the meaning which research subjects attached to the artefacts they produced and/or dealt with. Human waste, for instance, had itself become an artefact in the eyes of humanitarian actors such as social entrepreneurs, donors and foundations.

Much of their efforts revolved around attaching new meanings to something most people, especially in Kenya, thought was repulsive and did not even want to talk about. Thus, it became clear that many social entrepreneurs were faced with the legitimization challenges of consecrating something that most people deemed utterly profane: human waste. Their legitimacy partly depended on their ability to, against all odds, make other actors see human waste as a resource or, at the very least, as something worth discussing in public. The next chapter shows how Kibera has become a critical part of, in the words of a United States social entrepreneur, the ‘Silicon Valley of shit’ in Nairobi.

4.6 Summary

In this chapter, the process of gathered the data presented in this dissertation has been described which involved fieldwork over four years in two sites: Stockholm, Sweden and in Nairobi, Kenya. Furthermore, I explained how my early experiences as a slum dweller in Brazil influenced my approach to social entrepreneurship in the humanitarian field. The important role of interviews in the two fieldwork contexts was highlighted. I also described how using texts (i.e. pictures, videos, written text and artefacts) offered insight into the practices and everyday life experiences of informants such as social entrepreneurs and aid receivers in Nairobi. The application of all these ethnographic techniques helped shaping my research questions and theoretical framework. From an initial interest in the processes of social entrepreneurship, the focus strengthened to the legitimization of these ventures. One discovery made while gathering data was the importance of place in the social entrepreneurship process. In Chapter 5 a fuller description of Kibera is given, from the many points of view of the various actors in social entrepreneurship located there.

Chapter V: Kibera

5.1 Introduction

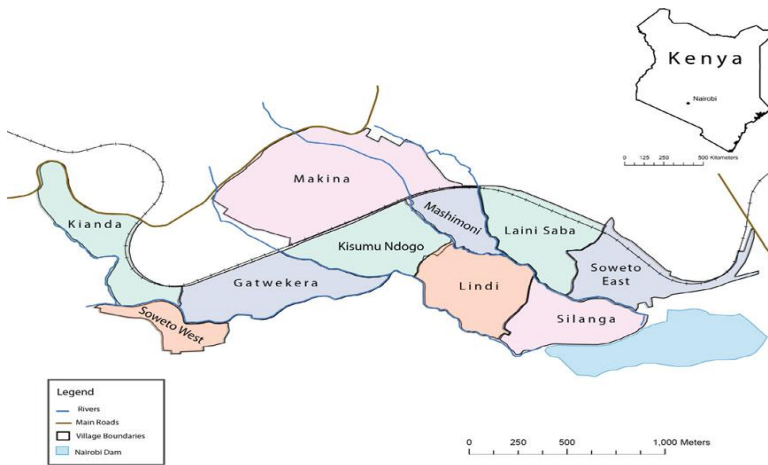
Kibera is the Kenyan urban slum where most of the informants for this study have been working, living and visiting. In the first section of this chapter, the reasons for local and foreign actors coming to Kibera are elaborated. The second section comprises a discussion of how local leaders position themselves in relation to other actors in the settlement. The third gives an outline of the humanitarian field's role as a source of employment for people living and/or working in Kibera. In the fourth section I show how local residents not directly employed by humanitarian agencies perceive, interact with, and profit from, the humanitarian field. The last section of this chapter provides a description of the process whereby foreigners come to Kibera to produce images and stories about the settlement. But before presenting Kibera, a discussion is necessary of the influence of neoliberalism in Kenya as a whole: a country some of my informants viewed as a 'hub' and 'showroom' of humanitarian innovations. How did this country gain such a status?

The history of the humanitarian field in Kenya goes hand in hand with its colonization by the British (Arasa & Kioko, 2012). From that time, the area, which gained independence in 1963, became attractive for international NGOs, foundations and Christian missionaries (Amutabi, 2006). Under the influence of neoliberalism, the country has become more dependent on and open to humanitarian actors such as NGOs (*ibid*). Like several other African states, Kenya faced economic instability mainly caused by reduced prices for its commodities and increasing oil prices during the 1980s (Amutabi, 2006). In order to renegotiate its debts with international lending agencies, it was forced to reduce expenses on social services and staff. Kenyan 'structural adjustments', opened the field of social services (such as education and healthcare) to humanitarian actors such as bilateral humanitarian organizations, aid agencies, foundations and NGOs.

During the 1980s, the country witnessed a steady growth of local and foreign NGOs operationalizing universal ideas of development, compassion and care (Amutabi, 2006). In 1995 there were an estimated 878 NGOs in Kenya. By 2005, that number had grown to 4099. By 2013, 8500 NGOs operated in the country, formally employing 240,000 Kenyans and an estimated 12,000 (NGO Coordination Board, in Kuo, 2016). By 2019 this number had reached 11,262 NGOs, of which 88% were funded with resources from outside Kenya (NGO Coordination Board, 2019). The NGO Coordination Board (2019) added that most of these organizations "...implemented projects in areas with good infrastructure, such as Nairobi, Kiambu, Kisumu, Nakuru and other urban centers" (NGO Coordination Board, 2019: 15). These organizations draw the attention of scholars and Kenyan politicians not only because of

their number. NGOs have proven to have significant political, social and economic influence on Kenya's domestic and international affairs (Amutabi, 2006; Kuo, 2016). One place in which foreign led NGOs are concentrated is the urban settlement of Kibera, located close to the center of Nairobi.

5.2 Entering Kibera



Map of Kibera and its ten villages, (Gallagher et al, 2013)

Kibera belongs to the Nubians. The whole of Kibera belongs to the Nubians. It was like when Kenya got independence, they were the only people around Kibera. Some say that they fought for Kibera, the Nubians. So, the largest majority of landlords in Kibera they are Nubians. Then Luos came into Kibera in large quantity, they rented the houses, paying the Nubians the rents. ...people say that they came from South-Sudan in large quantities, speaking Nubian then they parked at Kibera. So, 96 percent of the landlords in Kibera, they are Nubians. They speak Nubian. Right now, we've had houses like for 500 Shillings per month (Private chauffeur for social entrepreneurs and NGO staff, interview, 2016-05-03).

Kibera has appeared in numerous movies⁴, documentaries and international news. In such illustrative narrations of human reality, the settlement was often portrayed as a place where life was tough and hopes were absent. Kibera displayed a sort of 'human misery' that seemed to challenge the senses of foreign audiences and visitors. Most importantly, Kibera seemed to concentrate international aid financiers and humanitarians, producing images about the problems that they were claiming to have a 'new' solution to. In that sense, I noticed that Kibera

⁴Such as the 2005 thriller *The Constant Gardner* (<http://www.theconstantgardener.com>)



Some studies (Jaffar, 2014) have concluded that there are 200 NGOs registered in Kibera. To this figure, one can add the large number of short term projects being implemented almost on a daily basis in the settlement. Foreigners work temporarily in Kibera on, for instance, photo sessions, workshops, documentaries and news reports. By walking through the settlement every day, I gradually came to understand how and why Kibera is so attractive for some informants. Kibera looks like the perfect scene for a tale of ‘the poor’ in the Global South. It has acquired the fame of being one of the largest slums in the world. The size of the settlement is contested by those who claim that NGOs and international news networks repeatedly produce exaggerated figures about the number of families living there. Reliable data on this matter does not exist; NGOs, governments and scholars have produced diverging figures (e.g. Marras, 2009; Ekdale, 2014). These figures vary from 200,000 to 1.5 million inhabitants. Kibera residents talk openly about why they think so many actors (e.g. NGOs, activists, journalists and local authorities) tend to inflate the number of residents in the settlement. One of the main motifs is related to the legitimacy of those actors producing knowledge about the settlement. Working with poverty alleviation in a place where ‘1.5 million poor people live’ sounds like an enterprise worth admiration, recognition, visibility and, indeed, support from donors.

My first visit to Kibera



View of Kibera from one of the private schools visited in January 2015

I arrived at Kibera for the first time in January 2015. At first sight, the settlement looked like a conglomerate of houses and small business built of wood, iron sheets and mud. Household facilities share space with the offices of NGOs, private foundations and international organizations. Economic poverty seems visual, tangible and straightforward. Goats, ducks and chickens compete for space in the various dumps spread around the settlement while open sewage serves as playgrounds for some of the residents' children. Sometimes, the smell of garbage blends with that of dust raised every time vehicles pass over the unpaved roads. Some of that dust became stuck in my throat, leaving a bitter aftertaste lasting three days.

I cannot resist comparing Kibera with the favela where I grew up in Olinda, in the Northeast of Brazil. Just like Brazilian favelas, this place accommodates economically disadvantaged people offering cheap labor and products to the city's population. On one hand, their labor is sold to companies and upper middle-class households in Nairobi. On the other hand, goods produced in Kibera are sold to tourists, local residents, and middle-class and working class Kenyans expecting to find 'good deals'. Some outsiders visit Kibera just to eat lunch and then return to their jobs in the center of Nairobi.

Some people say that we [foreigners] should not be here, that our presence brings more problems than solutions. But I believe that if we work together with the local community then we can accomplish a lot (documentary director, interview, 2015-02-01).

There are extensive infrastructural, cultural and ethnic differences between Kibera and Brazilian favelas. In Brazilian favelas, one seldom hears anything about ethnic or tribal conflicts. Unlike Kibera, Brazilian favelas are usually not as populated by livestock. Kibera, however, accommodates all 40 tribes which constitute the Kenyan nation. The signs of economic poverty and discrimination are quite similar. The economic inequality among different groups living in Kibera is also very similar to that of Brazilian favelas. Despite this, like the other foreigners working here, I felt like a stranger trying to figure out to what extent my presence would affect local actors.

Foreign Presence in Kibera

Some young foreigners come to Kibera on trips organized by high schools in their homelands. During the first fieldwork period in Nairobi, I met a group of teenagers from a Christian high school in Michigan, in the U.S., at the same hotel where I was staying. They were supervised by their teachers, combining safari trips with humanitarian work in Kibera. Some other foreigners visit Kibera as ‘slum tourists’. A manager of a local slum tourism agency stated that foreigners tend to bring their children and family members to “see how people live in Kibera”.

Some of them want to teach their kids a lesson. Show how spoiled they are. Teach them that they should not complain. So, they want to go to Kibera and show how people live here. And then they go to safaris and other stuff that tourists do in Kenya (youth leader and manager of a slum tourism agency in Kibera, interview, 2016-04-22).

After visiting Kibera, several foreigners create various ties with the local community. Kibera triggers a continuous altruistic relationship with most of the foreigners who visit the settlement. Some became attached to Kibera residents as direct financers of local organizations and households.



Three foreigners visiting Kibera in January 2015

School fees, for instance, are a major concern among Kibera residents. Therefore, parents and teachers often ask foreigners to help them pay these fees. During the first fieldwork period, I met five foreign informants who, after visiting the settlement, agreed to pay local children's monthly school fees directly to the informal private schools in Kibera instead of giving the money to the children's parents. This was to ensure that the money would be spent on the children's education. Such a transaction is convenient for these local schools' managers. School teachers and principals confirmed that several parents were in debt to their schools. They also admitted that they used several mechanisms of shame to try to obtain the delayed school fees, including approaching parents about the debt in public. By getting foreigners to pay these children's school fees, the private schools ensure a higher predictability of revenues and save on the time and resources for their informal debt recovery work.

Attracting Helpers

The reasons why foreigners were attracted to working in Kibera were often not particularly altruistic. An Italian 33 year old woman explained how she came here as a result of her higher education in architecture in Kentucky in the U.S. Prior to her first visit in Kibera, her university teacher advised her to gain some sort of experience in the humanitarian field. She stated her motivation was that "my teacher said that it would be good for my CV if I did that". One should also pay close attention to the practice of becoming socially engaged internationally. Some foreign informants contended that doing 'international' humanitarian work was perceived as more prestigious than helping 'the poor' and/or minorities in their homelands. By helping distant people in need, foreigners could improve their CVs with 'international work experience' and, at

the same time, avoid becoming subjects of criticism in their own countries.

It is easier to help the poor abroad because the people in my own country [Sweden] do not have so many bad opinions about them. You see what is going on with the Roma people begging on the streets [of Stockholm] now? People here [in Sweden] have a lot of different opinions about them and about those who help them (sustainability manager in a Swedish company, interview, 2014-11-14).

The various “bad opinions” mentioned above epitomize a vivid debate about the role of charity, especially for the less distant others living on the streets of Sweden. By assisting Roma migrants, some helpers were accused of attracting even greater flows of beggars to urban Sweden. Individuals delivering charity in the form of direct financial handouts to these beggars, were sometimes accused of indirectly supporting criminal actors exploiting Roma migrants by bringing them to that country (Thurfjell, 2014-05-08). Some beggars were also criticized for declining in kind handouts, reminding us of the special moral nature of gift giving people in need should avoid trying to decide how they receive help from givers. In the most literal sense, the proverb ‘beggars can’t be choosers’ was applicable in this context.

In spite of illustrating how much more ‘difficult’ it may be to help ‘*not so distant* others’, the above quote helps us understanding how fluid public debates are when it comes to determining what kind of groups deserve most, or all, of our compassion. I met and interview the above quoted informant during events organized by an international social entrepreneurship network operating in Stockholm. In 2015, just a few months after our first encounter, her focus (in line with that of the Swedish media, politicians and society in general) shifted from one type of marginalized group to another. 2015 was the year of the so-called ‘refugee crisis’ during which 1,32 million people become asylum seekers in Europe and, of which, 162 000 moved to Sweden (Wiman, 02-10-2019). At that point, all social entrepreneurs involved in the social entrepreneurship network that I was participating were refocusing their efforts on new and/or better ways to help refugees in Sweden and in Europe at large. The network was composed of social entrepreneurs from countries such as Norway, Italy, Romania, Finland and Sweden. The large majority of them had some sort of volunteer/work experience in NGOs in Kibera.

Some other informants come to Kibera specifically to create new organizations involved in poverty alleviation activities, for both strategic and personal reasons. I was often told that choosing to create organizations in Kibera had to do with the international attention the settlement receives. Foreign individuals find it easier to raise funds from international donors if their organizations are working in the settlement. By operating in this urban slum, some foreign informants reported, they believe they can quickly gain access to resources from donors. They also described the location as a ‘hot spot’ for celebrities, foundations and wealthy business entrepreneurs seeking to show their social engagement. Therefore, they contended that there is a higher likelihood to persuade famous and wealthy individuals to endorse their new

organizations and solutions. In other words, there is a high probability of getting famous ‘ambassadors’ to raise awareness about social problems and organizations placed in Kibera.

Another strategic reason to create organizations in Kibera has to do with security. Compared to other places in Africa, Kibera is perceived as one of the safest informal settlements. Kenya has, in comparison to other African states, a fairly stable political system which makes foreigners feel safer than in some other countries. Kibera is also close to the center of Nairobi and the settlement hosts United Nations agencies. It has a large English-speaking population which allows foreigners to more easily communicate with employees and target groups, without having to learn the local languages. For most of the foreign informants in this research, Nairobi was viewed as a UN city and Kibera (with its’ size, level of poverty and proximity to Nairobi’s center) was a place which facilitates the development and dissemination of humanitarian solutions.

Testing New Ideas in Kibera

Choosing Kibera as an urban slum context in which to create an organization was not only because actors attempted to ‘make a difference’ in a ‘strategic setting’. Some social entrepreneurs chose to create organizations in Kenya, in Kibera, also because they have partners working in other international organizations in Nairobi. Some social entrepreneurs are married to expats placed in Nairobi, working for public and private international organizations. For example, I met the manager of a newly established German for profit ‘social enterprise’ married to an employee at Nairobi’s American Embassy. Some Kibera residents explained that extramarital affairs are also a reason s for starting and sustaining organizations in Kibera and in Kenya. By having a project in Kibera, one can combine poverty alleviation work with tourism and adventure.

Most foreign social entrepreneurs used the term ‘pilot project’ for activities they were organizing in the settlement. Some of these were testing and/or offering solutions mainly based on technological innovations. Others claimed to be bringing new ways of organizing and distributing aid assistance to Kibera residents. An illustrative example of this is an American couple implementing a one -year ‘pilot project’. By teaching NGO workers and schoolteachers how to combine scenic arts with healthcare education, they claimed to be offering a solution for children’s lack of attention in classrooms. Teaching about, for instance, AIDS prevention would be easier with their solution, they suggested, because children would be entertained while learning. Their one year pilot project was entirely financed by a wealthy international organization well known for combining business leadership with humanitarian services and networks, namely the Rotary Club in the U.S. and Kenya.

We are almost entirely out of funds now. Things here in Nairobi cost a lot more than we had predicted when we had applied for our first grant. It costs a fortune to do stuff like for instance repairing your car and your MacBook here. And when they are done, your stuff is in worse condition now than when you left them. We are testing this project here and we are collecting all kinds of results and pictures. We are also filming the entire process. When we go back to the US in July [2016] then we will have the material we need to do more fundraising. The idea is that if we can prove that this project works then we can do fundraising with the big foundations like the Gates Foundation. They are all about scalable models and big results so we have to make sure that we can show that this can work everywhere (American social entrepreneur, interview, 2016-05-08).

This social entrepreneur first came to Kibera as a volunteer in one of the several American NGOs operating in the settlement. ‘Helping the poor in Kibera’ has since then become not only a ‘meaningful experience’ for her. It also helped her escape the ‘life of stress and depression’ that she used to have in Texas. She recalled she started volunteering for charitable initiatives at ten, as part of school projects. At the time, she told her mother how good she felt when she was helping her school raising funds for “the poor abroad”.

Years later, when she was studying to become a civil engineer, she was diagnosed with clinical depression and dropped out of university. After intensive psychiatric treatment for around a year, she decided to volunteer in Africa, beginning with an American Christian missionary organization “helping the poor” with education programs in Kibera. Since she started working in Kenya, she has no longer needed help with her previous stress and depression related issues. One and a half year after our first interview, this informant stated she had moved back to the U.S., deciding to manage her organization in Kenya from a distance because it was cheaper for her. She seemed glad to tell me she had resumed her higher education; only this time, she chose to study biology, as her organization is focused on health issues.

Local informants contended that for social entrepreneurs like, the one quoted above, to create organizations in Kibera it is not enough to have good intentions, goods or services. To be allowed in this settlement, social entrepreneurs have to comply with the local hierarchies. Accordingly, they need to negotiate their access to Kibera with local leaders.

5.3 Gatekeepers

The Kenyan custom duties authority kept most of our video recording equipment when we arrived at the [Jomo Kenyatta] Airport yesterday. I should have told my partner to not tell the officers the real value of the equipment but they cornered us in separate places where we could not communicate with each other. Our mistake was that we were the last ones left at the airport so they could do whatever they wanted with us with no witnesses. It was late so all the other passengers were already gone. Don’t they see that we are actually trying to help them? Don’t they understand that we are trying to help Africa?! (Canadian filmmaker, field notes, 2016-04-22)

To legally enter Kenya, foreigners have to pay a 50 US dollar fee for a Kenyan visa. However, foreigners reported many other ways by which their entry and stay in Kenya is

profitable for official Kenyan authorities. They often labelled Kenyan officials ‘corrupt’ for their attempts to formally and informally charge foreigners visiting the country. However, the most striking aspect of the above quote is not how foreign informants perceive Kenyan authorities. It is remarkable how these foreign informants perceive their good intentions as something that should help them gain acceptance among Kenyans state authorities. Thus, the informants think that Kenyan authorities should disregard Kenyan laws in order to facilitate the work of foreigners in the country.

A group of Dutch university students (working as volunteers for a foreign led social enterprise in Kibera) similarly broke the local law, by being overcrowded in a car with six passengers. On some occasions, they were caught by the Kenyan traffic police and paid bribes to skip paying a high fine. In their attempts to bypass some of the Kenyan regulations, foreign informants were themselves participating in what they called ‘corruption’. For them, however, ‘corruption’ always seemed to be something associated with Kenyan authorities. With their good intentions in mind, these informants believed that ‘the ends justify the means’ which rendered their corrupt practices invisible to themselves. Their rationale was that they were going to ‘help Africa’ and Kenyan authorities should facilitate that by not imposing local formal and informal rules on them. One type of Kenyan state actor plays an important role in the process of legitimation of social entrepreneurs in Kibera, namely the chiefs.

If you want to implement you project here, I can help you! We usually evaluate your project and tell you if it works here. I cannot be in the pay check of any NGO but if you want to have your project here, I want a reward! (Chief in Kibera, interview, 2016-04-29).

Informants made it clear that ‘the chiefs’ are important local actors. Chiefs are those actors from whom one has to seek approval in order to have organizations up and running within the settlement. This is true for both foreigners and Kenyans, all of whom needed to pay the chiefs (formally and/or informally). The necessity to pay rewards for access to, and information about, Kibera was seldom mentioned by foreign informants. Instead, foreign informants ascribed their access to the settlement to a sort of humility and innovativeness: individual competencies which opened the socially constructed gates of the community to foreign organizations. Foreign informants tended to claim that they had become ‘one of them’, thereby gaining acceptance for their organizations in the settlement. But, beyond determining which organizations are allowed to operate in Kibera, what role do chiefs play for social entrepreneurs??

The Chiefs usually know where to go, where not to go, and advice to the organization where to put the office. The Chiefs have the village elders. ...when someone like you [a foreigner] come and take 2 hours of their time then you need to check in some [money]. That is the thing around there. But the truth is that [the Chiefs] know that they have the information you need; they know the truth you need. You see? They will tell what is bad and what is good. They will tell you where to put your office or not to put your office. (NGO cab driver and Kibera resident, interview, 2016-05-03)

Chiefs also have a certain level of influence on how social entrepreneurs recruit local employees. As state officers, the chiefs are in charge of formally registering all organizations operating in the settlement. They often present themselves as being in charge of maintaining law and order there. This includes, for instance, resolving disputes between landlords and tenants. Appointed by the Kenyan government, chiefs cannot be formally “rewarded” for their information and advices. They are not allowed to appear on the official payroll of the organizations operating in the settlement. The chiefs can, however, profit from the creation of organizations in the settlement by having their relatives employed in these organizations.



The Chiefs Office in Kibera

One informant was a Kibera chief's relative, employed by a foreign social entrepreneur. When I met him, he was running his own food store business in Kibera. Formally, he was employed as a manager at a foreign led social enterprise. Informally he was a business owner. It became clear that some local actors have the ‘leverage’ (a term used by some locals to denote the level of authority enjoyed by certain individuals) to become fully employed in certain foreign organizations, enjoying employment benefits which are not completely associated with their labor. Foreign led organizations help these local actors concentrate their wealth, providing them with salaries and benefits which do not demand fulltime work or, in some cases, no work at all.

Some foreign informants stated that paying to operate in Kibera has to do with their race and nationality. They tend to view their need to pay bribes and rewards for access in Kibera as a matter of cultural and racial differences, which was incorrect because such bribes were extracted from Kenyans as well. As local business owners living in the settlement also mentioned, even Kenyans have to pay local leaders in order to operate in Kibera. What differentiates Kenyan small business owners from founders of foreign organizations is the price they have to pay for the approval of local leaders. Foreigners have to pay higher “rewards”, as they are perceived to be the ones “getting famous” and “making millions out of their NGOs in Kibera” (Kibera resident, interview, 2016-05-03).

Approval from Village Elders

Chiefs are not the only local authorities from whom social entrepreneurs need to seek approval. To operate in Kibera one has to seek approval from *informal* and/or traditional community leaders elected by the slum residents. These leaders are called “village elders”:

A village elder in Kibera is someone who was born there... [but] not only someone who was born there. Maybe he was raised [in Kibera] from the age of ten until now. He knows the roads. He knows the maps. So, what I want to say is the elders play a major role in putting an organization in Kibera. In Kibera, in the ghetto, the village elders are.... A village elder is someone you cannot fuck with. Even... no matter how bad you are. You touch a village elder and you are gone! You don't live in Kibera anymore. So, all organizations in Kibera, they have village elders... (Cab driver, interview, 2016-05-03)

The practice of “having village elders” (as mentioned by the informant above) assumes various meanings. Village elders operate as endorseees of foreign organizations in Kibera. The role of endorsee often involves attending events organized by foreign projects. To attend these events, these elders charge their inviters. The price of their attendances in such events varies depending on the profile of the organization and the duration of the event. These elders also influence the recruitment of personnel in Kibera, appointing and recommending individuals of their preference to positions in local and foreign organizations. Some are also owners of businesses, private schools and even managers of foreign aid projects. I met a village elder who works as a manager of an international ‘rights-based agency’ which provides Kibera residents with sanitation facilities. Like Peepoople, his agency claims to be charging Kibera residents for toilets and turning human waste into a valuable resource: biogas. His organization receives support from the Gates Foundation and Danish and Dutch researchers. Once a social entrepreneur gains the approval from village elders and chiefs, they need support and protection from specific ‘youth leaders’ and/or ‘bad boys’.

Support from Youth Leaders

Youth leaders usually interact with social entrepreneurs as paid guides and English/Swahili

translators. They also offer their services as volunteers for foreign led organizations. In the settlement exist other actors called ‘bad boys’—thieves, robbers and ex-convicts—who are feared and respected in the area. Some work for social entrepreneurs as providers of security (from themselves and other bad boys) in settlement.

NGOs are good! They create jobs here. You see all these projects around? They are all employing people from here. These *mzungus* usually come here to see how the people of Kibera live. Every time, there is someone trying to make a video here, it means that I will have work. Last time they made a documentary here, I was employed for three whole months. When the documentary was done, I was jobless again. I don’t know how long I’ll stay without work now. I will probably start committing crimes again if I don’t get a steady job soon. Can you help me? Do you have work for me? (former ‘bad boy’, currently a youth leader, interview, 2016-04-26)

To me, the boundaries between youth leaders and bad boys seem quite unclear; some bad boys and youth leaders are relatives and close friends. In some cases, individuals play both roles depending on how they perceive their opportunities. Describing oneself as ‘a youth leader’ is more accepted outside of Kibera than claiming to be ‘a bad boy’. Being a youth leader does not mean that one is at a young age. The ‘youth leaders’ I met were around 30 to 40. One 40 year old youth leader who used to be a bad boy is the founder of a community-based youth organization, hoping to get funds from foreign donors. The organization is registered in Kibera but not operative yet. At the time of writing he was making a living as security guard for foreigners visiting the settlement.

I also met an ex-convict working as a part-time security guard for foreigners visiting Kibera who was also a fulltime employee of Peepoople Kenya, drawing a salary and benefits from the project while providing his security services to other projects and clients. The first time I met him, he was working as a guard for a German documentary and wearing a uniform from a Danish social enterprise. He was one of five local informants who use their local recognition to appear on the payroll of foreign led organizations as formally employed without actually having to work fulltime. They are employed not entirely for the labor they provide to their employers. They work for and receive payments from several foreign led organizations because they are feared and recognized within the settlement. This man was described by a Kenyan NGO employee in Kibera:

[He] has been in Kibera for many years. He is born there. He grew up there and he does business there. If [he] says “you don’t deal with that person” I don’t think you can get anywhere. Because people trust him, because there are so many [NGOs] who are bad that they need somebody to endorse them (NGO office employee, interview, 2015-02-05).

The price for access in Kibera depends also on the nature and timeline for visiting the settlement. To visit Kibera for a couple of hours could cost 8 U.S. dollars; to stay overnight cost 30 U.S. dollars; to make your one week documentary may cost you 800 U.S. dollars; to start and operate your own organization in Kibera one is required to pay more permanent costs.

5.4 The Best Employers

Local actors call NGOs all organizations working with poverty alleviation in the settlement. This includes even those organizations that social entrepreneurs label as social enterprises. These organizations, according to most of the (foreign and local) informants contributing to this research, provide slum dwellers with the best chances to earn a ‘reasonable salary’ and social mobility. The people living Kibera are otherwise systematically discriminated against by other sectors of the Kenyan economy when they provide their labor. Employers in other industries tend to pay less for the settlement’s labor force mainly because they assume that, as a resident in Kibera, your costs of living are lower than the average Kenyan and so should be the price of your work. In line with that, NGOs are the main source of ‘fair and steady wages’, ‘empowerment’, benefits (such as health insurance for workers and family members), well-paid freelancing activities and social mobility in the context of Kibera.

Kibera residents often compare the salaries paid by organizations in what Kenyans usually call ‘the NGO sector’ with activities undertaken in other sectors. For instance, the ladies selling vegetables in Kibera stated that they earn on average 5000 Kenyan shillings monthly. Waiters working in Nairobi pubs, hotels and restaurants mentioned they earn an average of 10,000 shillings to work from 17:00 to 05:00 in the morning every day, six days a week.

Finding permanent employment and earning better wages is deemed difficult even for those residents who have higher education. One of the reasons for this is the Kenyan labor market is perceived as far from meritocratic. This often implies that foreign led organizations are locals’ best hope for an improved education, a well- paid job and ‘having a good life’. A local informant recalled how he used to get paid 16,000 Kenyan shillings every month to transport the human waste collected from one of the several foreign led sanitation projects in Kibera. The same employer provided health insurance for him and his family. He worked two days per week, even though he was formally employed fulltime.

In contrast to the wages paid and opportunities provided by other sectors, the humanitarian sector is a source of higher wages, well-paid freelancing activities and ultimately ‘a way out’ of Kibera. Even for those well-educated workers employed in jobs related to their professions, foreign led NGOs (especially those well connected to embassies and subsidized by state agencies) are perceived as much better employers. In some cases, higher educated schoolteachers, working in Kibera, earn less than poorly qualified NGO employees providing services to the schools.

That woman, we’ve employed to clean the toilets in our school project, is making more money than the schoolteachers (foreign NGO manager, field notes, 2015-02-01).

This comment was made during one of my visits to a private school located in Kibera.

Competition to Help

Because Kibera is a very huge slum and I think it is the second biggest slum in the world, after Soweto in South Africa. So most of these NGOs target Kibera, because it is popularly known all over the world. So, if someone wants to help in a slum, they think of Kibera. You definitely, in your mindset, I will help people in Kibera. So, you find this many, many and many NGOs... (Kibera resident and NGO manager, interview, 2015-02-07)



An abandoned toilet in one of Kibera's private schools

Managers of foreign led organizations tend to perceive that there are ‘too many NGOs’ claiming to be helping people in the settlement. The toilet facility pictured above is not abandoned because there is a lack of potential users for it. Right next to this particular toilet, are toilets from another foreign NGO which are up and running. The toilet in the picture is ‘abandoned’ because another foreign NGO started paying a monthly fee to the owner of that private school to have its own toilet concept running there. The above abandoned facility is then a product of a fierce overlapping and competition to help among organizations and individuals from countries like Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, Britain and the U.S. Foreign led organizations often create this competition by establishing themselves in areas which are already assisted by other organizations.

Many actors here agree that something seems to be ‘trendy’ about for profit sanitation solutions in Kibera. Like Camilla Wirseen with Peepoople, several other social entrepreneurs are in the area implementing their solutions for the settlement’s perceived lack of sanitation. Perhaps this trendiness has something to do with the importance foreign social entrepreneurs

and donors give to sanitation. Many foreign social entrepreneurs involved in the research for this dissertation tend to see sanitation as something which will drastically improve the lives of slum dwellers. One is Auerbach, an Ashoka Fellow who claimed that sanitation "... can have a transformative effect as residents enjoy the benefits of a higher quality of life. They begin to expect an improved community, a cleaner surrounding environment, better health services, and find the means to send their kids to school" (quoted in Perepu & Singh, 2016:11). Together with two other MIT students, Auerbach has created Sanergy (presented in Chapter 2): a for profit organization delivering sanitation solutions to two urban slums in Nairobi, including Kibera.

"Nairobi's become the Silicon Valley of shit," says Ani Vallabhaneni, co-founder of Sanergy, a company recently launched by young graduates from MIT's Sloan School of Business that is one of several trying to revolutionize, and profit from, the flailing Kenyan sanitation industry. Sanergy ("sanitation" plus "energy") began in a Massachusetts classroom as an idea to decentralize waste collection and processing, then blossomed into a practical way of bringing toilets to Kenya's slums while improving sanitation, energy, and even the agriculture industry across Kenya. The company recently won \$100,000 in a business plan competition at MIT, and is now piloting their model of pay-per-use toilets, branded "Fresh Life," around the slums of Nairobi. The founders' goal is to create a network of franchised low-cost toilets in slums, owned and operated by local entrepreneurs, while also providing an affordable option for residential toilets (Kalan, 2011-11-19).

The above quoted social entrepreneur described the whole of Nairobi as a "Silicon Valley of shit". Yet, it was in Kibera that he started implementing his project. I visited several facilities of for-profit sanitation, social enterprises created by foreigners. Some of these solutions were competing for space and clients in schools and households in Kibera. They are also competing for brand visibility in the settlement. It is important to "show your presence" (NGO office employee, interview, 2015-02-05) in the settlement by, for instance, having your project logo on items and facilities aimed to help the local community. As shown in the image above, toilet facilities display the name of the donors. Most organizations providing these facilities claimed to be selling toilets or charging residents for toilet visits.

The organization facilities I visited were constantly conflating social enterprises with social innovations. They all claimed to be turning the human waste of Kenyans into some sort of resource: fertilizers, energy, biogas. It is also noteworthy that these organizations avoid being labelled NGOs. Instead, they describe themselves as a social enterprise, rights-based agency, 'social company', 'design initiative' or 'social business'. In the public domain, there is no mention of competition among altruistic projects in Kibera. In interviews and public documents, managers of these organizations emphasize they are trying to 'coordinate' their efforts with other organizations operating in the settlement. In daily practice, however, coordination is not particularly desirable or evident.

Competitive Collaboration

Collaboration and competition seem to go hand in hand among foreign and local organizations in Kibera. Although usually friendly in their interactions, social entrepreneurs and NGO employees were often heard to gossip and criticize each other's organizations, questioning their motivations and effectiveness and undermining each other's initiatives. One topic often brought up in such gossip is the intimate private affairs of foreigners and locals working for NGOs in Kibera.

Foreign and local employees also tend to view their methods of intervention as superior in comparison to those of their competitors/partners in Kibera. This, some of these informants argue, is one of the main reasons why so many projects fail to coordinate their efforts and thrive in Kibera.

Coordination has a downside that managers usually avoid talking publicly about: it means becoming almost invisible in the large crowd of organizations already operating in Kibera. Organizations are, in practice, trying to stick out from the crowd, gaining global visibility for what is called their scalable social impact in Kibera. The term scalable was frequently deployed to describe the solutions developed and tested in Kibera. Implementing and showing the level of scalability of interventions are important activities for managers in the settlement. This shows how programs, products and services brought to Kibera can be translated to other contexts. For this reason, scalability is important for presentation to donors as what is portrayed as a scalable solution is more likely to gain support and attention than one which is only applicable to Kibera.

The overlapping of assistance provided by foreign led organizations is quite visible in certain areas of Kibera. Such overlapping is also caused by local authorities which allow such competition when they do not inform such organizations about the programs already existent in places where social entrepreneurs and managers of foreign led organizations want to help. There is an incentive for bringing more organizations into the area. Chiefs, for instance, increase their 'rewards', and employment for their relatives, based on the number of foreign led organizations placed in their areas of responsibility in Kibera. In a study about public and private partnerships in Kibera, Katui-Katua and McGranahan (2002:18) notices that "for community leaders, being able to help people get jobs is an important source of legitimization". Thus, there is no disincentive for such overlapping.

In a quite unexpected way, this competition brings about infrastructural and economic development to certain areas within the settlement. Some Kibera residents labelled as ‘rich’ those areas of the settlement with the highest concentration of NGOs. As youth leader advised: “there are some areas here in Kibera that we don’t even call ghettos anymore. They are rich compared to the other areas where NGOs don’t want to work; where there are not so many NGOs” (youth leader, fieldnotes, 2016-04-28).

While foreign organizations aimed at implementing their projects and gaining global visibility, local leaders emphasized their ability to profit from allowing projects to operate in Kibera. It was ‘a win-win deal’ that had little and/or nothing to do with the mission of solving the problems faced by slum residents. A remarkable feature of such deals for space in the settlement was that foreigners were not made aware of how competitive the areas were when they initially tried to operate there. Many would find out that their projects were overlapping with others only months after launching their organizations.

Doing Good Makes Me Feel Good

NGOs also compete in Kibera because most poverty alleviation actors attempt to take the credit and attention for ‘doing good for the poor’. This can be the case even for social entrepreneurs, managers and donors working together in the same organizations. Each of these actors seemed to aspire to appear publicly helping the poor in Africa. To appear to assist the poor, in the media, is not only good for one’s organization. It is personally and professionally rewarding to gain such individual recognition.

Internal conflicts tended to unfold when it was time to decide which social entrepreneur or donor would appear in documentaries, media interviews, videos, NGO homepages and TED talks. Gossip abounded which was often related to organizations leaders’ personal affairs, lack of skills and selfish motives for joining the NGO sector. Quite ironically, the same people, complaining about the vanity and selfishness of others, tended to exhibit similar behavior. While telling me about their good deeds, some informants described the benefits of improving their CVs and the feelings they have while helping ‘the poor’ in Kibera. Informants feel good about ‘doing good for the poor’. Some were also eager to gain widespread international and local recognition for this, even if it meant sabotaging colleagues, partners and other organizations. Some Kenyan social entrepreneurs and NGO managers also expected to profit politically from this recognition in the NGO sector in Kibera, hoping that such recognition would help them build a career in Kenyan politics.

Quid Pro Quo

We are going to smash them! There will be nothing left of them when we are done! If she feels better about herself claiming to be helping the poor, it is her problem (foreign social entrepreneur, fieldnotes, 2015-02-01).

A social entrepreneur made these remarks just a few minutes after she had had a meeting with representatives from a British NGO, strongly banging the palm of her hands together. She stated this while talking to her employees, partners and donors at a dinner table in one of Nairobi's fanciest hotels. These comments (and the context in which they were made) seem to epitomize the aura of fierce competition among foreign organizations in Kibera.

The meeting had been arranged by three representatives of a British NGO trying to implement a child charity and education project in Kibera. The main purpose of that meeting was to find forms of collaboration between organizations. The foreign social entrepreneur invited to the meeting had had seven years of experience creating and managing organizations in Kibera. Employees from the British NGO wanted her to support them while they were trying to implement their programs in Kibera. It was clear during the meeting that having a project in Kibera is important for the British NGO. The NGO staff talked to this social entrepreneur with a certain tone of admiration because of her experience creating organizations in Kibera. "You know how things work there" was stated a few times.

In exchange for the social entrepreneur's collaboration, the British NGO offered some support so that her organization could expand to other African countries (Congo and Nigeria were mentioned) and India. On top of that, she was hoping to get this British NGO to provide her employees with free health care education. After receiving this education, her employees would become certified health care workers, increasing the legitimacy of her organization. The British NGO even later financed the education of some of her employees abroad. One went to health care courses in South Sudan and India as a result of this collaboration.

The above social entrepreneur was faced with the paradox of having to collaborate with a competitor in exchange for support in two other African countries and in India. She needed to help the NGO staff to implement their programs and, at the same time, she wanted to "smash" them in Kibera. The British led program and the above social entrepreneur targeted the same groups in the settlement. On one hand, she helped this NGO gaining access to Kibera. On the other hand, she gradually outcompeted her collaborator/competitor by blending social events

and activities organized by her organization with those of the British NGO. Her organization was already present in all the spaces where the NGO chose to implement its program and thus she acted as a sort of middleman between the NGO and actors in Kibera. Those Kibera residents whom the NGO recruited to work in the settlement were recommended by her and were already employed by her own organization, thus drawing two salaries. On several occasions, she even took credit for the solutions the British NGO brought to Kibera. One year after setting up their program, the British NGO left Kibera.

A Play of Desperate Needs

In their public statements, advocacy videos and homepages, social entrepreneurs and organizations are portrayed as offering solutions to slum dwellers in seemingly desperate need. These people in need are frequently conveyed in images of children and women whose basic needs are not being met. It must look as if, without the intervention of each foreign led organization, these basic needs would remain unmet. In their various advocacy and journalistic videos, these organizations are plotted as if they were the only actors offering new solutions to the poor in Kibera. However, during the first ten minutes of one visit to Kibera, I found five projects offering very similar sorts of ‘sustainable’ toilet solutions for the same local residents. This is one of the most striking findings of my research: the storytelling of local slum dwellers in so-called desperate need for foreign assistance is, in many cases, exaggerated and/or anecdotal. This is often used by project leaders in order to impress international audiences and donors.

...most of these NGOs are doing almost the same thing. They are competing against each other and I think that is why most NGOs do not last in Kibera. In other areas, especially the rural areas, the NGOs can take a while. They are there for quite a while but in Kibera most of them don't last for a long time because when they come in then these people in Kibera grab as much as they can.... So Kibera is very different from other slums where it is very difficult to find NGOs working there (NGO manager and Kibera resident, interview, 2015-01-07).

NGOs not only compete for the deserving poor but also for skilled personnel: locals well known in the community, good presenters and ‘camera friendly’. Some social entrepreneurs often mentioned how difficult it was to find people from Kibera who could establish and maintain relations with donors by, for instance, writing reports, funding applications and impact evaluations in English. Complying with demands from these donors was deemed very complicated, even for experienced organization leaders. Kibera residents who can do this type of work are rare and very attractive for NGOs. This lack of staff qualified for bureaucratic work in the NGO sector opens the space for the recruitment of Kenyans from other classes and areas of Nairobi.

For locals, the most attractive employers are those foreign led organizations well connected to their homeland's embassies, large corporations, and state agencies. The least attractive employers are those organizations primarily financed by individual support and donations. They pay lower salaries and offer less opportunity for professional development for their workers in Kibera. The least attractive organizations were often mentioned by Kenyan informants as way to start gaining experience in the NGO sector. It is understood that one should not 'stay too long' in such organizations. When captured in videos (for documentaries, TV, campaigns, etc.), those locals working for the top NGOs were usually the ones performing better. They looked 'natural', while producing and presenting 'catchy' advocacy phrases in front of the cameras. They looked authentically poor and yet determined to do something about their situations. Their lower paid colleagues, employed in less subsidized NGOs, tended to be cut out of videos for not being 'catchy enough' in the way they look, act and speak.

5.5 Sitting Allowances

The forms of employment offered by foreign led organizations to local employees in Kibera were often criticized by other residents with an overall tone of resentment. Some even accused local NGO office staff of being the main and/or only beneficiaries of what they call the NGO sector. For example, as one explained:

They are many. You see many NGOs they just come that way and afterwards you find that only three or two people are benefiting from those NGOs. That is what is going on in Kibera. They really love to enter there but after entering you find that only three to two people are enjoying the NGO.

Researcher: Who are the people benefiting from the presence of NGOs in Kibera?

The chiefs, the people like managers, secretaries, and the people in the office, only the people in the office. But in the ground, in the field, there is nothing. People are getting nothing (NGO employee and Kibera resident, interview, 2015-02-09).

Among residents, there is a widely spread perception that NGO staff and local leaders are the main (or the only) groups in Kibera benefiting from the concentration of foreign led organizations there. Because aid organizations in Kibera are perceived as a booming industry, any form of interaction with aid projects is viewed as an opportunity to earn some money. Accordingly, slum dwellers charge for their attendance at meetings organized by such organizations. In Kibera, the exchange of cash for attendance in humanitarian events is called a 'sitting allowance'. Sitting allowances seemed to represent the price foreign organizations had to pay for Kibera residents to show up at workshops and meetings. It was also a price that organizations paid so that Kibera residents 'appeared' as supportive receivers of aid when interventions were filmed and photographed.

The people of Kibera, because of that loneliness and the way they live, if [NGO] people come they know when you [as a slum dweller] are called, and then you know that you shall be told this, you shall be taught this, and you shall be telling this and then you are getting sitting allowance. Only that! If we are given sitting allowance then it is just okay. So they [Kibera residents] don't want to know who are really benefiting. They know that you've started it [a project] but it is not there again but still [formally and officially] it goes on but the people are thinking that you have stopped it (NGO employee and Kibera resident, interview, 2015-02-09).

In such a context, the act of purportedly receiving aid is turned into an opportunity to generate some casual income. There are even people who make some sort of living out of attending events organized by foreign led organizations in Kibera. Some Kibera residents call such individuals 'professional attendees'.

It is remarkable how little academic literature discusses the phenomenon of sitting allowances. Discussions about the incidence of payments for attendance in social events organized by foreign led organizations are more open in internet forums and on social media. In the public domain of the internet, actors confirm what I frequently heard from Kenyan informants. Usually these discussions are led by Western and African individuals who work, or used to work, in foreign led organizations in Africa. In a blog⁵ an American aid project leader described what happened when her colleague (an NGO worker living in Kibera) organized workshops in Kibera.

Eventually, there emerged an expectation of a "sitting fee" to attend someone's meeting – yes, organizations paying people just to fill the seats in their events. This complicated our initial attempts to hold community meetings around the issue-based maps. The first one was organized by Regynnah, a mapper, on the topic of health. It was held in Raila, her own village. There were a good 30 people and it was a great success. However, we only gave out sodas to participants, no money or phone airtime. Regynnah came to us afterward and said now her contacts were mad at her because they expected to be paid for this 1-2 hour discussion of health – even though most of them were health practitioners and ostensibly interested in the topic. We hoped instead they'd be able to make use of the information – not demand a sitting fee. We tackled this by making sure people knew in advance that no one would be paid for such discussions – meaning they might attract fewer people, but ones who are more intrinsically motivated to participate – and in fact, sometimes only 4 or 5 people showed up (Map Kibera, Blogging the first open map of Kibera, 2011-01-29, accessed in 2017-01-04).

Like the above quoted blogger, I also observed the demand for sitting allowances and/or any form of monetary compensation for interacting with foreigners, even from locals who were already employed by foreign led organizations. Some locals in charge of organizing such social events criticized this as a 'twisted' result of the concentration of NGOs in the settlement. They knew that they had to pay to gather people around their events, but they did not acknowledge how their own employment conditions influenced and encouraged local demand for sitting allowances. These employees did not openly reflect upon the widespread local perception that the NGO sector was much more beneficial for the locals and foreigners employed in it than for ordinary slum dwellers. Most importantly, they criticized locals for doing things that NGO employees also did including making money out of attendance in social events, interviews and physical access to Kibera.

⁵<http://www.mapkibera.org/blog/tag/kibera/page/2/>

I think that they are using us! What do they have for us? Nothing! They come and go and I've never seen how this benefit us (Female business owner, selling clothes in Kibera, interview, 2016-05-02).

I helped this Dutch guy writing a book about Kibera and he never even put my name on the book (Youth leader, fieldnotes, 2016-05-03).

For some Kibera residents, the concentration of foreign led organizations, together with the privileges enjoyed by aid workers in the settlement, make the practice of attending events and showing gratitude into a profitable service in its own right. The high discrepancy between the living standards of aid workers and ordinary Kibera residents creates a sort of inequality that justifies demanding sitting allowances. Sitting allowances have become part of the price social entrepreneurs and NGOs have to pay for helping the poor while living like the rich in Nairobi do. Even for those aid workers who live in Kibera, the so-called NGO sector created income inequalities that promote a feeling of injustice during and after their interventions.

I've never worked for an NGO but I've seen people in NGOs. I've seen more than one hundred NGOs in [Kibera]. If [the NGO worker] is a driver, if he is a consultant, an accountant, he works on the field, all of them have good money!! You see??!

Like me, I am a driver. I drive a taxi. I have not been blessed to have my own car but I have something small. I can't complain. I have two kids who are eating and I have a wife even though I am 26. Then you have Jack [another Kibera resident employed by a Western NGO], Peter who is like 28 or 29, three years more, if I compare myself with him, he is like so far away! He is earning more. His life is good than mine. Already just working for 3 years [for an NGO], he already has two cars. I've been to his place he is a friend of mine; we drink sometimes together. I can't compare to myself! You work for an NGO. You move from a house of five thousand and you go to a house of fifteen thousand. You are not supposed to live in a four thousand house. Money comes in faster and easily! That is the thing around here! (Cab driver and Kibera resident, interview, 2016-05-03)

A higher income is far from the only privilege offered by the NGO sector in Kibera. Attached to such employment there are many opportunities: the status and safety of living on steady salaries and benefits; the prestige of being associated with a field where one is 'paid to do good'; the constant accumulation of experiences through which one can reach even higher positions within and outside the sector; educational trips combining professional development with tourism; the accumulation of valuable contacts with actors operating in several fields; the interracial and extramarital relations through which one can gain higher positions and status for dating foreigners.

Most of them are... if she is a woman, she has a black boyfriend, if he is a man, he has a black girlfriend. Me, myself... my dream is to date a white woman. I was never lucky like some of those guys I told you. I see them walk around with white women, *mzungus* working for NGOs (local business owner, interview, 2016-05-03).

To fully understand how locals perceive their encounters with foreigners, one has to understand the socio-economic pressures faced by Kenyans aspiring to improve their economic wealth and move out of urban slums such as Kibera. Some Kibera residents accused NGOs and foreigners of overly romanticizing life in ghettos. With a certain tone of irony, a local resident once told me that foreigners tend to forget that most people living in Kibera are not really looking forward to staying there.

You see? Don't get me wrong! I have no intentions of staying here! As soon as I start making enough money I am moving out of here (manager at a Kibera recycling center, interview, 2016-04-28).

The above quoted informant has created a business out of recycling bones found in the garbage of Nairobi. He manages a team of 15 local workers who turn the bones into Massai souvenirs, which are then sold mainly to foreign slum tourists. Some of these tourists even help him selling his products on international internet platforms. He related that for many years he lived as a homeless child coming from the countryside to the streets of Nairobi. He recalled how, after many years, his recycling work has finally enabled him to move to Kibera, renting a place for the first time in his life and affording to build a family. Like all the Kibera residents I talked to, he aims to have 'the good life'. This, as some locals explained, is not only related to satisfying basic needs, as many NGOs and social entrepreneurs operating in the area tend to claim. I was told several times that having a good life means being able to buy a nice suit, go to a nice hairdresser, go to nice clubs on the weekends and buy your girlfriend a new dress. Many of my Kenyan informants mentioned that robberies committed by the bad boys (mainly male teenagers Kibera residents) were to finance such a life.

So that is the problem. The problem is crime is like an infection around here, no-one wants to live a bad life. No-one wants to survive on 100 [Kenyan shillings]. The girls want to dress better in these primary schools. She sees other girls on TV and when he goes to school, she sees other girls being dropped off with very fancy clothes. So what is the next step she takes? Prostitution! Or sugar daddies! The boys want to dress good. No-one wants to walk in ragged jeans. What is the next step? Influences! Another guy tells him: "Come on! You are a grown-up man! You need to live a good life! You have family, you have more brothers! Look at us! We drink red label in the clubs, we have good girlfriends." And then he will ask: "How do you do these things?" He will tell you as long as you don't talk... then you join the group. It depends on your mentality to resist (Cab driver, interview, 2016-04-28).

The above informant spoke about yet another aspect of the socio-economic pressure faced by Kibera residents: the demands they face from relatives living in the poorer rural areas of Kenya. To illustrate such a demand, he mentioned that every time he visits his relatives in the northern countryside of Kenya he has to split a 1000 Kenyan bill into 20 bills of 50 Kenyan shillings, so he can give one of these smaller notes to each relative. His reasoning was, as a Kenyan living in Nairobi, he cannot visit his relatives in the countryside "empty handed".

5.6 Imaging Authentic Poverty

Social entrepreneurs creating organizations in Kibera often stress the importance of producing pictures and videos of their activities in the settlement. These artefacts are supposed to be used in campaigns, fundraising events, project homepages, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and individual blogs. With these artefacts, they intend to attract international attention to their causes and solutions.



A social enterprise worker enters a private school in Kibera

In Kibera, I met in total of eight (five males and three females) foreigners from Sweden, Canada, France, the U.S. and Germany who came to ‘capture the reality’ of Kibera and use images of that reality in their poverty related documentaries, aid and advocacy homepages. I got to know two of them through Camilla who, on some occasions, convinced informants to let me shadow them. They were journalists, TV producers, advertisement producers, professional photographers, health care workers and film students. All were higher educated in their respective fields. Most were not making a living from their work in Kibera but had their own jobs in their home countries. They were making videos there mostly as a part-time activity; as a way of participating in the humanitarian field; as a way of helping their friends (for instance Camilla) who have organizations in Kibera. Celebrities from the music and video industry also visit the area to promote projects. Kibera functions as a sort of attraction not only for tourists but also for news networks, NGOs and advocacy groups seeking to make videos about poverty related issues.

Some of these informants finance their video productions with their own capital while others receive grants from wealthy foundations such as the Gates Foundation. Only one had previous experience filming in what was described as ‘challenging environments’. For all the others, it was their first time to ‘capture the reality’ of places such as Kibera. For those first-timers in Kibera, making videos and photos in the settlement was a chance to test their skills in a new environment. By testing their imagery production skills in such a context, they also hoped to use such experience to improve their CVs while ‘doing good for the poor’.



The social enterprise worker walks in Kibera talking to locals about sanitation issues

The West behind the Cameras

Social entrepreneurs and imagery producers were quite concerned about how locals appearing in their videos looked and sounded. At least in front of the cameras, the West did not appear as the main protagonist in these productions: most of the individuals filmed were black Kenyans. There was not to be anyone of another skin colour on camera. While taking images of Kibera, foreigners feared that anyone would ruin the authenticity of the videos. Therefore, lighter skinned people were constantly avoided by the cameras. While following filmmakers, social entrepreneurs were told several times that no whites should be captured in the videos. I was also told to get out of the way when the cameras were turned on.

The Ideal Deserving Poor

Imagery producers wanted to show locals as protagonists, as ‘homemade’ change makers. The ideal change maker should, however, be able to persuade Western audiences to identify themselves with economically poor communities. They wanted blacks to participate in the videos but the protagonists should not look too different from the audiences that the videos aimed to reach. It was important to look ‘authentically African’ but, at the same time, protagonists (mostly women and children) needed to seem somewhat similar to white foreigners, specifically in their facial features.

While explaining the above to me, a foreign informant used the example of the little Syrian boy who drowned in 2015 while trying to get in Europe. The boy’s dead body, carried by a Turkish police officer in the resort town of Bodrum, was captured in pictures shown across the globe. In this sense, the Syrian boy became a sort of symbol of the human

tragedy faced by refugees. 24 hours after his pictures went viral, one agency organizing the rescuing of refugees in boats reported a 15-fold increase in private donations. It became clear that the foreigners producing videos and photos in Kibera, wanted their visual artefacts to have a similar effect on global audiences: going viral, creating awareness about the issues they were working with and attracting international support to their causes. These informants contended that, in order for certain issues to be spread quickly, subjects of suffering (at least the ones captured by the cameras) should appeal to humanitarian audiences not only with their problems but also through their appearance and narrative.

One foreign social entrepreneur also contended that the images of the little boy's dead body shocked audiences in rich countries not just because it displayed that the refugee crisis was also a tragedy for the children. Those images triggered a global humanitarian empathy as well because the dead child was white. Therefore, it was important for my informants to select protagonists for the videos who had the 'potential to move' global rich white audiences. Accordingly, a 9-year-old girl residing in Kibera was selected to participate in fundraising videos and photo sessions organized by a social entrepreneur and her friends.

You know that little Syrian boy who made everybody pay attention to the refugee crisis just because he was white!?? I think she [a Kibera resident 9-year girl] has the same potential. She is black but she looks a lot like white people in Europe and the US. Her face, her smile, is like a European! I used her so many times in my projects so I feel also responsible to take care of her. A good-looking girl like that living in Kibera... She can be raped any time!! So, I have adopted her so she is living with me now. I am trying to teach her how to behave outside of Kibera. I put her in a boarding school here in Nairobi but the world outside of Kibera seems to be quite different for her so she is struggling to adapt (foreign social entrepreneur, fieldnotes, 2016-04-29).

In her seven years of work in Kibera, the above informant has created three organizations. Her latest is delivering sexual and human rights education to schoolgirls in the settlement. The above mentioned 9-year-old girl appears in all photographic material created to promote the three organizations. The girl is not an orphan and her family is far from being the poorest in Kibera. Still, this particular social entrepreneur views the act of adopting the girl as a sort of retribution for the girl's services posing with different social innovations over the past seven years.

Hiding the Poorest of the Poor

It was striking how the children, whose lives and suffering are captured by the cameras, were not the poorest kids living in Kibera. The children participating in these four video productions all have working parents and attend Kibera's private schools. While observing video and photo productions in Kibera, I was frequently approached by children showing signs of extreme poverty: they were not enrolled in any school; their clothes were worn and ripped; they had marks all over their bodies; they were so filthy with mud, slime and dust that it was difficult to distinguish between their sores and the dirt stains on their bodies.

Although my informants were looking for some expressions of suffering that had the potential to be widely and instantly distributed on the internet, all these children who constantly approached the film staff and me were never captured by the cameras. Imagery producers did not show any interest in these kids as subjects of their videos and photo sessions. They were, in some cases outspokenly, avoiding the clichés of fundraising events that used images of starving children with flies around their faces. They wanted to replace such images of extremely poor kids with happier and more proactive children: children just in need of ‘a little push’ to become successful in school and as adults.



This girl does not appear in the documentary

Most importantly (and heartbreakingly), the poorest kids I met in Kibera often tended to be left out of the interventions designed and implemented by social entrepreneurs. I was told by one Kenyan informant that this was for “purely logistic reasons”. As these children were “moving around” and “so hard to contact,” it made it almost impossible for organizations to reach them (NGO employee, interview, 2016-04-28). However, this was not the only reason for excluding these kids.

Other informants related that helping these homeless children required a lot more resources than helping the ones who have parents and are in school. To help the poorest children in Kibera, actors in the NGO sector have to build orphanages and employ staff permanently. Even more problematic is the fact that these children need help for several years ahead. None of the trendy solutions proposed by social entrepreneurs could solve such structural and long-term problems. These kids do not just need a toilet that recycles human waste. They do not only need help with school fees. They are deprived of almost all their basic needs. They do not even have shelter or parents.

Helping these orphans is of little interest for those seeking fast international recognition in the humanitarian field. Their needs for holistic long-term solutions do not match the fluid goals of donors and the technical for profit solutions designed by social entrepreneurs. These children do not fit into current ideals of the deserving poor due to the large scope of

interventions necessary to solve their problems. In contrast to these orphans, the schoolchildren are easily reached and helped, which explains why they have become the main targets of social entrepreneurs and video productions. These schoolchildren are important players in contemporary humanitarian storytelling.

Plotting Moral Epiphanies

The following is one of the stories presented in a video produced by a foreign informant.

In one of the muddy roads of Kibera, three vehicles pass carrying foreigners, local guides and local leaders. Together with the local leaders (chiefs, village elders and youth leaders), foreigners walk through some areas of Kibera discussing the different issues faced by residents. The foreigners are very keen to hear all locals speak. Expressions of humility, empathy and respect are clearly setting the terms of the conversation. Local leaders and foreigners walk and talk together until they reach a school where several residents are waiting. The female residents and male local leaders are the only ones talking. Foreigners sit closely to locals, listening attentively to what everybody has to say. In their body language, foreigners show how close they are to the locals. Hugs and handholding are subtly captured by the cameras. Even when in complete silence, foreigners have to show, with their facial expressions, how they agree with what is being said by their hosts. Once arriving at a conclusion about ‘the real problems of the poor’, foreigners get to work on new solutions. The cameramen make it clear that the work processes of foreigners are filled with meetings and open dialogues with the poor. A sense of consensus and participation is constructed in front of the cameras.

The visual storytelling gains momentum when foreigners return to the poor areas of Kibera bringing new solutions to the residents. It is also important that the solutions are not ordinary: the objects and services brought to the poor have to express a new way of thinking, a different approach or thinking outside the box. Upon their arrival at the previously visited schools, the foreigners are warmly received by school principals, parents, local leaders and, this time, the children. The children literally set the tone of the event. They sing songs about how their lives have improved since solutions were provided and/or financed by certain foreign projects (behind one of the cameras, a documentary director asks the school principal to make the children sing. School principals and teachers often help the children with the lyrics).

These cameras captured stories of the local demand for help from the West. If solutions are ‘homemade’, these imaged stories have given the message that all locals need is some

financial support from the West in order to continue and/or scale up their activities. If solutions are solely designed in the West, storytelling is then focused on the active participation of locals in foreign led organizations.

In all these stories there is a clear match between the needs of the poor and the professional competencies of the foreigners. If the poor need healthcare, the foreigners are doctors and nurses. If the poor need education, the foreigners are teachers and pedagogues. If the poor need better housing, communication technologies, sanitation, infrastructure and running water, the foreigners are engineers, architects and designers.

In some other videos and photos, foreigners are completely absent (except for those behind the cameras). Three out of five video productions I shadowed had no filming of foreigners. Instead, these videos emphasized the role played by the solutions designed and delivered by foreigners: menstrual cups, toilets and stoves. These were portrayed as objects of discussion and gratitude among Kibera residents. This imagery was supposed to express how foreign aid and products are completely ‘owned’ by the locals. It is not enough that locals participate in the design of their own solutions. There should be no doubt that the solutions, once delivered to the settlement, belong to and are fully used by the residents.

In spite of delivering technical and/or professional solutions to the poor, foreign project managers would question some ‘bad habits’ of slum dwellers. Words such as gender equality, empowerment and sanitation are mentioned, even becoming titles for different parts of the story. Several times during the video sessions, the cameramen made close ups of these words, zooming on whiteboards with ‘awareness’ and ‘women’s empowerment’. (This is done close to where foreigners were standing and talking to the poor). For organizations focused on gender equality education, it was also important to show how male slum dwellers were involved and eager to learn. A male slum dweller was shown in the audience of a workshop holding a notebook with ‘he for she’ and ‘fighting sexual abuse’. But behind the scenes of these video and photo sessions other transactions were being made between foreigners and locals.

This is Big Business!

Backstage of these imagery productions, I was able to observe informal commercial transactions between foreigners and local actors. Locals were unanimous about the commercial nature of their interactions with foreign led NGOs and any agent related to such organizations in Kibera. This also included video and photo productions aimed at raising awareness about issues addressed by foreign led organizations in the settlement.

A Kibera resident recalled how social entrepreneurs have to pay to get their solutions implemented in certain schools. He was in charge of driving advocacy film teams around Kibera and mentioned that another informant (a documentary producer) had to pay 6000 Kenyan shillings per day to shoot videos in Kibera schools owned by some of the village elders. But the school facilities (i.e. couple of classrooms and corridors) were rented by the school principals without the permission of school owners. This specific documentary producer did not know that. He was caught by surprise when he arrived at one of the schools where its owners were waiting for him.

I remember the case when you [the researcher] were here the first time [in January 2015]. When you were with [the documentary producer] there was this headmaster but the school belongs to the church [elders]. So, the headmaster would ask [the documentary producer] to pay him like 6000 shillings to record a film. It was filming.

Then the next day when we went there because I was driving. The church elders were there and the headmaster was [telling the documentary producer] like: "you can't do it right now! The elders are here! Just go and I will give you a call!" And like before [the documentary producer] could leave, one of the elders consulted him: "Hey mzungu! You've come, it is good. You wanted to record?" and [the documentary producer] would say: "I think it is not a good time!"

Then the church elders would tell him: "No! It is the best time! The elders are here. They want to see what you are doing" and they asked [the documentary producer]: "and we hope you are not paying anything!"

So that would blow up the whole case but it did not blow the whole case because [the documentary producer] did not tell [the elders]. He did not tell the elders that he was paying the headmaster 6000 shillings each day (NGO employee and Kibera resident, interview, 2016-05-03).

The local police, youth leaders and bad boys also turn imagery productions into a source of income. They provide foreigners with safety and access to Kibera in exchange for money. As soon as the demand for security increases, these local actors take the opportunity to raise the price of their services. When finding out that the price for security had more than doubled in just one year, the documentary director mentioned in the quote above stated:

...this is a famous slum so security here is big business! These are the people making real money in this area (documentary director, fieldnotes, 2015-02-01).

He added that, in such visits, payments to the police were made in cash without a receipt, which made formal reporting on expenditures more difficult. The director was in Kibera to produce a documentary about innovative ways through which poverty related issues were being locally addressed. He had produced imagery for Peepoople in the past but the documentary he was making at the time focused on other sanitation solutions. It was financed with grants from the Gates Foundation.

5.7 Summary

In this chapter, I have described how people came to Kibera to help local actors, creating organizations and working for social entrepreneurs. A sophisticated pattern was shown of the exchange of resources among foreigners, social entrepreneurs and local actors. In order to gain legitimacy in the settlement, social entrepreneurs became sources of income and social capital for local actors such as chiefs, informal leaders and Kibera residents. Cash, employment and access to international social networks were currencies used by social entrepreneurs to gain social acceptance and support in the settlement. Local actors constantly emphasized the need for solutions that brought employment and other sources of income for the people living in Kibera. In the next chapter, I present a solution by which social entrepreneurs claimed to meet several of these local needs, combining the provision of sanitation with the generation of new sources of income in Kibera.

Chapter VI: Peepoople

6.1 Introduction

Peepoople is an interesting case for social entrepreneurship scholars and legitimacy theorists because of its massive international recognition and support from actors such as government agencies, foundations, and the media. Thus, the aim of this chapter is to create a greater understanding of how, and what kind of, resources actors involved in Peepoople mobilized in order to gain such legitimacy.

The chapter begins with a presentation of the process by which founders of Peepoople started perceiving the lack of sanitation as a ‘global crisis’ often involving economically poor people in the Global South. A description of how actors developed the Peepoople solution is also given. This is followed by an inquiry into one of the founders of Peepoople, Camilla Wirseen, showing some aspects of her everyday work in public presentations and interactions with donors, public agencies, investors and NGOs. This section addresses the question of how such sources of legitimacy are motivated to support Peepoople. The chapter continues the Peepoople narrative with an outline of how some individuals in Sweden perceive Peepoople as a solution and an employer. This leads into a description of the testing process for the toilet bags developed by Peepoople in two urban slums in Kenya and Bangladesh. The public face of Peepoople’s legitimization is then detailed with examples of the role journalists and prize committees play. This segues into a presentation of how Peepoople’s founders created an NGO to deliver their solutions in Kenya, complemented by an account of how some Kenyan employees perceive their work for Peepoople. The chapter concludes by showing how actors involved in Peepoople influence the implementation of a so-called business model for slums.

6.2 The Idea

In May 2005, while visiting a slum in Mumbai in India, Anders Wilhelmson, a professor at Sweden’s KTH (the Royal Institute of Technology), encountered a female pavement dweller who told him that slum dwellers need access to toilets. It speaks of the quality of this professor, who teaches architecture for urban areas in developing countries, that this encounter that inspired him to work on poverty related issues. This meeting made him realize that slum dwellers all over the world are in urgent need of decent toilets.

Anders Wilhelmson decided to put aside some work hours to try to solve this global sanitation problem. While doing this, he started developing a solution applicable everywhere sanitation is needed. This decision placed the lack of sanitation into an international perspective. During this period, he started perceiving the problem of lack of toilets as shared by 2.5 billion people

globally. Already by the summer of 2005, he came up with some initial ideas about the Peepoople toilet bags. This story was consequently presented in channels such as YouTube, TED talks and academic studies (e.g. Heikinnen, 2012; Redfield, 2012; Lacharité, 2013; Olivensjö & Ottosson, 2014).

However, Anders Wilhelmson did not develop the product alone. In collaboration with other academics from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (University in Uppsala) and KTH, he started researching the technology behind these toilet bags. In 2007, Annika Nordin published her licentiate thesis (Nordin, 2007) in which she presented the technology that turns human waste into fertilizer.

Sanibag [later labelled Peepoos], is under development (www.peepoople.com). As its appearance resembles a plastic bag, it takes advantage of the widespread habit, in the absence of sanitation systems, to defecate in plastic bags [most known in slums as flying toilets]. Important though, it adds the property of sanitising the material by use of urea integrated in the bag. Urea will degrade to ammonia upon contact with faeces and after sanitation also the bag will be degraded. The investment cost in the Sanibag system is low and an ordered collection and treatment of the used bags might be economically self-sustaining. Such system will both remove and inactivate the faecal pathogens and produce a safe fertiliser for increased crop production and food security. Thus, the Sanibag [later called the Peepoo bag] has the potential to be instrumental in accomplishing Target 10 under the Millennium Development goals: to halve by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, and Target 2: to halve by 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger (Nordin, 2007: 35).

The inner part of the Peepoople toilet bag was based on the above technology. It is highly significant that this technology was related to targets set by the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in 2000, which were supposed to be met by 2015. In 2007, Anders registered Peepoople AB as a for profit company in Sweden. In 2008, the company had the patents for the toilet bag concept granted. In 2009, Anders Wilhelmson published an article in collaboration with three other scholars, Björn Vinnerås and Annika Nordin (both from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences) and Mikael Hedenkvist (from KTH) which appeared in the academic journal *Water Science & Technology* with the title “Peepoo bag: self-sanitizing single use biodegradable toilet” (Vinnerås et al, 2009). After introducing the reader to a contemporary reality in which two and half a billion people lack access to adequate sanitation, the scholars presented the Peepoople toilet, which contains a sanitizing agent called:

.... urea ($\text{CO}(\text{NH}_2)_2$), which degrades upon contact with bacterial enzymes in the faeces to form ammonia (NH_3) and carbonates, both of which contribute to pathogen inactivation. Since urea is stable and harmless in its undegraded state, it is the most user-friendly option for applying ammonia in a single toilet system where the user can come into contact with the disinfectant. After degradation of the bag, the contents can be used as a fertiliser since the material is enriched by the addition of urea (Vinnerås et al, 2009: 1744).



Niklas Palmklint/ Courtesy of Peepoople

The article concluded that Peepoople technology takes up to four weeks to sanitize the faecal matter inside the bag: a timeline during which the bag stores the faecal matter without the risk of leaking its contents into the environment. From the initial idea to the implementation of the Peepoople in Kibera, it took Anders Wilhelmson five years of work, for which he received help from several people, including his wife Camilla Wirseen.

In 2005, the same year of that visit to the slums of Mumbai, Anders Wilhelmson developed the main features of Peepoople business model: a bag that safely stores human faeces and turns it into fertilizer. The fertilizer is supposed to be sold as a commodity more valuable than the toilet bags themselves. He emphasized that the Peepoople toilet bags are one of the few products in the planet that can be produced and consumed without creating a negative environmental footprint. On the contrary, the more Peepoople toilets are consumed, he claimed, the more value it creates for the environment. “Not a lot of products sold in market can do that”, he stressed. On several public platforms, Anders Wilhelmson commented that the main driving force behind his work is not money. Instead, he wanted to do something meaningful (e.g. Anders Wilhelmson, YouTube interview, 2012-10-30). This was also a theme for Camilla Wirseen, who repeatedly emphasized her disinterest for money and her focus on meaningful work which gave an energy gained working with poverty alleviation in Kenya. In the next section, the main features of Camilla Wirseen’s work with Peepoople are presented.

6.3 The Social Entrepreneur

In spite of claiming to be seeking meaningful, in contrast to financially profitable work, the founders of Peepoople seemed to attach sacrifices to the process of creation of the organization. While Anders Wilhelmson referred to the hours involved daily which he has set aside to try to solve the problem of sanitation, Camilla Wirseen stressed how the work with Peepoople required her full time dedication. It demanded that she leave her job in a leading photography agency to work for Peepoople and staying in Kenya between 35 to 40% of her time.

Camilla Wirseen is one of the founders of the Peepoo project. She has been responsible for the day-to-day activities since its inception in 2005. In 2008, she left her position as Head of Photography at Scandinavia's leading stock photography agency Johnér to dedicate all her time to Peepoople. Today Camilla is Peepoople's Project Director. Since fall 2010, she has worked as Director and Manager of the initial launch project in Kenya (Digital Development Debates, www.digital-development-debates.org, accessed in 2020-04-09).

In the course of creating Peepoople, Anders Wilhelmson invited Camilla Wirseen to manage the organization's communication, fundraising, testing and implementation in Kenya. In an interview with Wilhelmson he opened up about her capacity for the roles. He perceives her as good at "getting things done". Furthermore, he views her as a "natural communicator": a person who knows "the importance of diplomacy" (Anders Wilhelmson, YouTube interview, 2012-10-30). He attributes such 'natural' communicative skills to her upbringing. With experience as a curator at one of Sweden's most renowned art museums, she was brought up in an ambassador's family. According to Anders Wilhelmson, she is more of a social entrepreneur than he is. In the same vein, he argued that, without her "talent", Peepoople would probably never have been put in practice. Wirseen described her own professional background in these terms:

I am actually an architect. I studied architecture in Canada. So, how things look is very important to me. I am Swedish actually born in Stockholm. I have been living eight years abroad but the last couple of years I have been traveling a lot. So, my background was in architecture but I never became an architect really, I became a photographer, working as a curator at Kulturhuset (Fieldnotes from Camilla Wirseen's lecture in Entrepreneurship in Developing Countries, Stockholm University, 2014-11-04)

Much of the project's initial success in raising funds to test and develop the product is attributed by both Wilhelmson and Wirseen to Wirseen's ability to convince private and public actors to support Peepoople. During our interviews and her presentations in Stockholm, she frequently stressed the importance of being a "good communicator" and the importance of "looking serious". She gave the example that Peepoople's homepage was designed to make the organization "look like a big company". She also told me about the importance of doing good presentations. She reflected on her special "touch", a set of "social skills" that enables her to talk to people "in all levels" (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-02-03, my translation).

How you present yourself is also who you are as a person. The first time I walked into the World Water Week I got my whole advisory board. I got a person from the World Bank, a sanitation expert who gives

advices on water and sanitation and does economics, I got another one from Ashoka.... I got the top of top just on that first day. And I think again it is how you present yourself. And what he [the World Bank expert] said to me this: "if that was not for you, that I trusted you...." I mean a good idea yeah but. If you are going to invest a lot of money you have to have trust (Fieldnotes from Camilla Wirseen's lecture in Entrepreneurship in Developing Countries, Stockholm University, 2014-11-04).

She described her social skills as also helping her to read impressions correctly from people around her. By reading the audiences while presenting Peepoople at various forums, she assessed the most suitable candidates to become supporters of the project. For her, "connecting to people at all levels" (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-02-03, my translation), means being able to engage in meaningful conversations with people from different classes, ethnicities, nationalities and ages. As an example of her social "touch" (ibid), she mentioned her ability to speak to the children who she usually meets in Kibera. She related that people were impressed by her ability to have rich dialogues with the settlement's children. Kenyan informants also described how her communicative skills helped Peepoople to raise funds. This is a typical example:

I think that most of the fundraising is done in Sweden and maybe they come up with an idea. Like "buy or let's say give like 50 Euros for one child in school". And some ideas come from someone like Camilla who is very brilliant when it comes to fundraising and she says: "I think this idea might work!" That is what they do; they make the creation like "let's try this idea if we can fundraise like during Christmas time". Or other form of fundraising is that directly connected to the schools. If people want to get attached to school project like "give a child toilet for one year." And say maybe 30 Euros, 50 Euros (Peepoople Kenya office employee, interview, 2015-02-01).

She also attributed part of her social skills to her experiences abroad, first in Canada and then Italy where she lived for ten years. These social skills were further enhanced when she started working for Peepoople. She gradually learned how to stand up and talk in front of "big audiences" (which, in her words, means audiences of over a thousand), by presenting the Peepoople concept in social events. She recalls the first time she presented Peepoople at a United Nations event in Nairobi in 2008. She admitted that she had been very nervous then but, after that experience, she began to lose her fear of talking in front of such large audiences. She mentioned that she learned from paying close attention to how the "bigshots" in the field of sanitation made their presentations in these events. Then, she started learning the language and the visual aids necessary to perform "good presentations" (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-02-03, my translation), to be taken seriously, to be viewed as 'a big company'.

The Search for Bigshots

It was the year 2008, it was the World Sanitation Year, there was a focus on sanitation in World Water Week, a four day conference. And there I came with brochures, business cards and Peepoople toilet bags. And nobody knew about this. I was distributing the brochures as well and the brochures stated: "We have the solution to a problem that 2.5 billion people suffer from". It is like you are trying to sell them something, you have a few minutes to get their interest, communicate clearly about your project. And because Peepoople was so new I knew the time would be tight! So, but when I got their attention, I managed to communicate clearly what Peepoople was about (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-02-03, my translation).

Camilla Wirseen stressed the importance of attending and making good impressions in social events such as these event spaces where one can convince “the bigshots” (e.g. heads of aid agencies and foundations, and sanitation experts) in the humanitarian field to support Peepoople. While interacting with some of these important people, she employed some of their language and gained their trust and access to resources provided by public and private agencies. During (often only five minute long) “pitching presentations”, she also learned about what makes a good presentation to attract important supporters attending development aid and humanitarian events (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-02-03, my translation). She clearly used a business model to attract attention.

A student in the audience: how were you able to attract so much investment?

I think the market is so huge, 2.5 billion... I mean if we make it, we are going to be one of the biggest companies. It is so huge! It is also about how you present yourself.

How you present yourself is also who you are as a person. The first time I walked into the World Water Week I got my whole advisory board. I got a person from the World Bank, a sanitation expert who gives advices on water and sanitation and does economics, I got another one from Ashoka.... I got the top of top just on that first day. And I think again it is how you present yourself. And what he [the World Bank sanitation expert] said to me this: “if that was not for you... that I trusted you.... I mean a good idea yeah but...” If you are going to invest a lot of money you have to have trust (Fieldnotes from Camilla Wirseen’s lecture in Entrepreneurship in Developing Countries, Stockholm University, 2014-11-04).

She noted the importance of making herself visible during such events, recalling how, during World Water Week 2008, the size of her solution was quantified and showed to other event participants on her brochure: ‘we have a solution for 2.5 billion people’s problems’. The business cards and brochures were designed by an advertising agency, which according to her, was one of the largest in Sweden at the time. In other words, she saw these events as social spaces where she could establish contacts and gain support and endorsers for the Peepoople product. Where she met representatives of government agencies, some told her about available grants and apparently informed her about the likelihood of her organization receiving financial support, before any formal process of evaluation had been undertaken. It was during this single event that she managed to procure some of the “big shots” in the sanitation and development world to become members of Peepoople’s advisory board, including from the United Nations and the World Bank (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-02-03, my translation). It is noteworthy how she constantly compared these encounters with donors and supporters to job interviews in which one’s professional credentials may be important but what determines who gets the job is one’s charisma and trustworthiness. Therefore, gaining legitimacy from “the top of the top” was not only a matter of presenting a good solution. The primary reason why she obtained these actors’ support of Peepoople, she argued, was the aura of trustworthiness she embodies, as shown in her quote above concerning the World Bank representative’s perception of her capacities.

Defining Social Entrepreneurship

For Camilla Wirseen, the work with Peepoople was the first time she ever became involved with any project for the people who, financially, are considered to be at ‘the bottom of the pyramid’ (often referred to as the BoP market). Having no previous experience with social enterprises, charity events and/or NGOs, the work around Peepoople influenced how she viewed herself professionally. The longer she worked in this field, the more she started seeing herself as a social entrepreneur and sanitation expert.

I thought that entrepreneurship had to do with money but then I decided that money is not my interest. But then I looked into Wikipedia before this lecture and I took some things from it. “Entrepreneurship can be defined as the ability to identify opportunities and create resources and take advantages of these opportunities.” When I read this, I thought; “this is actually not what I want to do.” I mean identify opportunities is one thing but I think it is rather identifying the problem and see a solution and then you can find opportunities (Fieldnotes from Camilla Wirseen’s lecture in the course Entrepreneurship in Developing Countries, Stockholm University, 2014-11-04).

Thus, Wirseen did not initially see herself as an entrepreneur as she considered entrepreneurship limited to those whose primary goal was to make money for themselves through their innovations. However, in the course of developing and delivering presentations of her work with the Peepoople concept, she learned about alternative forms of entrepreneurship and incorporated that into her storytelling. In this process, she also began to see herself as “an expert in sanitation” (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-02-03, my translation).

While I was shadowing Camilla Wirseen in Nairobi in 2015, she mentioned she had been invited to participate in an international conference: a conference about sanitation taking place in India. She seemed to be partly surprised and quite content to be invited to that conference as a world sanitation expert. In the process of co-creating and managing Peepoople, she had gained some practical experience: a familiarity with the exercise of organizing and delivering solutions to the economically poor in the Global South.

Social entrepreneurship is about pursuing innovative solutions to social problems. So, Anders identified the problem... Of course, he didn’t identify the problem it has been already talked about as one of the biggest problems in the world. But it’s been a problem that has not been up on the agenda (Fieldnotes from Camilla Wirseen’s lecture in the course Entrepreneurship in Developing Countries, Stockholm University, 2014-11-04).

Her presentations (of herself, her organization and its products and services) became partly informed by notions of social entrepreneurship, constructed by channels of knowledge such as Wikipedia. By not only pursuing individual economic gains, but also organizing solutions for ‘social problems’, Camilla Wirseen and Anders Wilhelmson often came to be labelled ‘social entrepreneurs’ by public agencies, entrepreneurship networks and the media.

The fact that she became known a social entrepreneur operating across Sweden, Europe and the Global South had implications for how she began to feel about her work. Since she started

with the Peepoople project in Kenya, she has had experiences that triggered her will to be continuously engaged in ‘making a difference’. In Kenya, she discovered what she referred to as “an energy” (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-02-03, my translation) that gives more meaning to her life and work. This apparent energy also seemed to fuel her continued attempts to implement projects in Kenya. It drove her attempts to change what she perceived as ‘dehumanizing’ features of Kenyan society.



Used toilet bags collected in a Kibera private school

I do not get so much energy when I am here in Sweden but when I am in Kenya... [emphasis in the original] when in you are in Africa, you do not think so much about yourself. If you have the opportunity to make a difference, if you know that you can help someone, then it will be almost as if you cannot refuse to help, do you understand? (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2014-12-18, my translation).

On several occasions, while presenting the Peepoople project in Stockholm, Wirseen spoke about how she organized other (mostly sport and art) events to raise funds to help the poor in Kenya. While shadowing her in Nairobi, she told me she had organized an art exhibition with photos she had taken in Kibera, mentioning that she had sold most of them to fund the project in the settlement.

6.4 Main Supporters

In 2009, the Swedish national government became a financial supporter of Peepoople. Through grants administrated by Vinnova (Sweden’s innovation agency), it financed a large scale test of the Peepoople business model and user acceptance of toilet bags in Kibera (this testing is described in Section 6.6). The tests took place in two slums: Kibera, in Nairobi, Kenya and Mymensingh, a city in Bangladesh. Social entrepreneurs involved in the grant application saw success in convincing grant evaluators as partly a consequence of personal relationships.

Those state funds we’ve got were from Vinnova and there we had to send a grant application like all the other projects. However, one of the jury members was chairman of the board of Peepoople. He did not get to vote in our project but he talked very well about it so I do not think that we would have got the

grant without his support. So, there's always been some kind of personal contact involved (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-10-14, my translation).

From Vinnova, Peepoople received 7.5 million Swedish crowns, which Vinnova announced in 2009 as part of a grant process called 'environmental innovations' (Miljöinnovationer). Only 30 of nearly 200 applicants received funding, totalling 150 million Swedish crowns, on average 5 million each. With a 7.5 million Swedish crowns grant, Peepoople was supposed to finance its one year (from 2010 to 2011) large scale pilot project in Kenya and Bangladesh. According to the grant announcement, this pilot project encompassed twenty thousand individuals across the two countries.

In the grant application, sent to Vinnova on the 22th of October 2009, social entrepreneurs stated that "Peepoople has the potential to become a new Swedish success story", "... new approaches to providing sanitation are desperately needed" and the goal of Peepoople is to "... reach out to 1 million people in urban slums by 2012" (Peepoople ansökan till Vinnova, Miljöinnovationer, 2009-10-22, diarienummer 2009-04400).

It is noticeable how this grant application not only related the scalability of the solution and the "desperate" necessities of the economically poor in the Global South. It also seemed to appeal to the sense of national identity and national interest. After all, those in charge of evaluating if, and to what extent, this solution is worth a grant were from Sweden. As well as they were, for the most part, employed by Swedish companies, government agencies and universities. Accordingly, Peepoople was not only likely to become a success story. It was likely to become a "new Swedish success story". The adjective "new" is of obvious interest here as it conveys that it was not the first time that Sweden has produced successful innovations and entrepreneurs.

Your project addresses a relevant field with great importance for future sustainable growth. The expected results of this project are well in line with Miljöinnovationer's goals. (Vinnova, beslut-ansökan, beredningsunderlag, 2009, diarienummer: 2009:04400, my translation).

There were some strings attached to these grants, including Peepoople's biannual reporting of its progress. The first toilet bags were produced semi-manually in Kenya, employing 20 people. Moving the production of Peepoople toilet bags to Sweden also converged with demands coming from public agencies which supported the organization. At the same time, it made the solution far more expensive in Kenya due to the difference in production costs due to differences in labour, rent and utilities in the two countries, the necessary transportation costs and Kenyan custom duties. One of the conditions for Vinnova to support what it considered to be social innovations such as Peepoople, was that the knowhow stayed in Sweden. The technologies that were developed with support from Vinnova are supposed to "... contribute to economic value creation and know how in Sweden". Vinnova's support is also purported to lead to "... the

creation of new business opportunities as well as the strengthening and updating of already established industries and technologies in Sweden” (Vinnova, beslut-ansökan, beredningsunderlag, 2009, diarienummer: 2009:04400, my translation).

As noted in Wirseen’s quote at the beginning of Section 6.4, competition for grants may not be as fair and assessments may not be as objective as they formally seem. Grant evaluators may be friends and colleagues with social entrepreneurs. Three of the Miljöinnovationer 2009 evaluators were from universities where some of the founders, shareholders and inventors of Peepoople worked.

Furthermore, there were also some formal rules ensuring the socioeconomic inequality of access to government recognition and financial support. In order to become suitable as a grant applicant, leaders of Peepoople had to show that they own, and/or have invested, a certain amount of economic capital in the organization. Tillväxtverket (The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth), for instance, granted 300,000 Swedish crowns to Peepoople on the condition that the applicant themselves funded an additional amount equivalent to 80% of funding they were applying for (in Vinnova’s case there was a similar policy involving 50% of the amount granted). As such, these types of conditions teach us that social entrepreneurs who already have a significant amount of economic capital may be given more support than their less financially equipped competitors.

Governmental Endorsements

Grants were and still are not the only form of support that Peepoople receives from governmental agencies. On several occasions, Swedish government agencies acted as Peepoople’s endorsers. In 2011, the Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications and Ministry for Foreign Affairs⁶ present Peepoople as a *“lifesaving toilet”*:

Forty per cent of the world’s population live without toilets. Faeces spreads disease and pollutes water. A green and white bag from Sweden solves the problem. The company behind the invention that can improve lives for billions of poor people is called Peepoople AB (Regeringskansliet, 2011:28).

In Nairobi, the Swedish embassy also endorsed Peepoople. On 27th of September 2013, the Swedish ambassador in Kenya, Johan Borgstam, visited a school in Kibera (Anwar Academy) which was delivering Peepoople toilet bags to the school children. The ambassador was accompanied by Camilla Wirseen (CEO of Peepoople Kenya at the time), Nancy Karanja (professor at the University of Nairobi), True Schedvin (deputy head of Kenya Development

⁶ <http://www.regeringen.se/contentassets/724f78d9290f4ea7974341bbac04a1f8/environmental-technology---13-swedish-solutions> accessed in 2017-01-03

Cooperation at the Swedish embassy), Kenneth Okoth (member of the parliament in Kenya for the Kibra constituency). Next to Camilla Wirseen, in a video (published by Peepoople AB on YouTube), the Swedish ambassador⁷ stated that:

...on behalf of the team of the embassy of Sweden, I know that I speak for all of us when I say that this has been an eye-opening visit to us. It's also been a very inspiring visit and I am one hundred percent sure and confident that, because of the commitment that you show in your work in the school, in the Peepoople team, we are going to see great improvements. And I must say that also by Swedish standards, these were very clean toilets (Johan Borgstam, 2013-10-27).

In some cases, it was difficult to establish the exact extent to which various governments supported Peepoople. During phases of the creation and development of the solution, state agencies played a less clear (although not informal) role in the organization. For instance, Sida (the Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency) supported Peepoople financially through a Kenyan organization called ACT. Peepoople also received funds from the European Union in 2010: 340,000 Swedish crowns. It is also worth remembering that Peepoople's first organizational investor was led by private companies and Swedish state agencies.

Government agencies and foundations supported Peepoople by endorsing its toilet bag solution in public texts. For instance, Peepoople was assessed in a sanitation report⁸ financed by private foundations, public aid agencies and large corporations. Published in 2014, the report focused on new generation sanitation businesses, stating that Peepoople sold an average of 2000 to 3000 toilet bags per day (80,000 units per month) and distributed a monthly average of between 60,000 to 80,000 toilet bags to schools within Kibera. The report used figures provided by Peepoople employees in Kenya to claim that the Peepoople toilet has "an estimated penetration" of 37 to 55 percent of all households in Kenyan slums. The plural term 'slums' was used even though Peepoople was only operating in one, Kibera. According to the report, the Peepoople so-called penetration was possible after just seven months of "stable operations" of the organization in Kenya. The exaggerated tone of market optimism posed in the report is clear, not only in the figures used to present Peepoople as a success story. All for profit private initiatives presented in this report were celebrated as "new successful players" of the humanitarian field, and presented in reductionist economically oriented terms. There was an apparent sanitation crisis going on in the Global South and organizations operating with "market-based models" were going to address it.

Fortunately, a number of market-based models have emerged in both rural and urban areas to address the sanitation crisis. Although they differ in terms of approach and reach, they all serve the BoP in a financially sustainable manner, by offering improved sanitation solutions *at a price that the poor are*

⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FirdEM6hu7M>, accessed in 2017-01-02

⁸ <http://www.toiletboard.org/media/10-27-Designing.pdf>, accessed in 2017-01-08

willing and able to pay (author's emphasis) (Hystra for the Toilet Board Coalition September-2014, accessed in 2017-01-08).

The report from which this excerpt was taken was sponsored by the French bilateral agency (Agence Francaise de Developpement, AFD) and the corresponding British one (UK's Department for International Development, DFID) in their 'coalition' with Unilever and the private London based Stone Family Foundation. As in several other public texts about Peepoople, demand for such products is self-evident: the poor are presented as subjects 'willing and able to pay' for sanitation solutions like toilet bags. By acting upon this readiness and capacity to pay, organizations like Peepoople were supposed to help the poor in the Global South in a financially sustainable way.

The Dutch Family

Peepoo's strength is that it focuses on the local population's habits and traditions and makes them sustainable, rather than forcing people to adjust their behaviour. For people without other options, such as the residents of Kibera, it is an appreciated and good solution. We are very pleased to be able to help introducing this new promising sanitation solution in urban slums where the majority of the inhabitants lacks access to toilets, says Rolien Sasse, Director of Simavi (Peepoople, press release, 2011-02-11).

Peepoople also received support from some international NGOs. For instance, a Dutch one called Simavi has been, since 2011, one of the main financers of Peepoople's operations in Kenya. This organization is responsible for administering 1.6 million euros which it has received from the privately-owned Dutch Postcode Lottery. It acts like a sort of middleman between this donor and Peepoople. These resources are aimed at financing Peepoople's operations specifically in Kibera. Founded in 1989 by a private organization called Novamedia, the Dutch Postcode Lottery is recognized as distributing part of its turnover among well known organizations such as UNICEF, Greenpeace and Amnesty International.

The United Postcode Lotteries consists of the Nationale Postcode Loterij, the BankGiro Loterij and the Vrienden Loterij in Holland, the People's Postcode Lottery in the UK and the Swedish Postcode Lottery in Sweden. The lotteries share the same vision: to contribute to a better world for people and the planet, and they fulfil this vision by donating all profits to charitable causes. Novamedia/the United Postcode Lotteries are the world's 2nd largest private donor to charitable causes. Since the start of the Dutch Postcode Lottery in 1989, the lotteries have donated 6.1 billion euro to charities (Peepoople, press release, 2014-06-04).

Simavi describes itself as a 'development organization' which "...strives for a world that offers social and economic opportunities to all women and girls. In the communities where we work, the opportunities for women to live a healthy life are often limited by social and cultural views, discrimination, coercion, and violence. Empowering women, both socially and economically, puts them in a better position to pursue their right to a healthy life" (<https://simavi.org/long-read/our-ambition-vision-and-mission/>, accessed in 2020-05-03). The organization channels its resources into what it calls investment' in promoting WASH: water, sanitation and hygiene in areas such as Kibera. With 40 employees in the Netherlands, the organization presents itself as

an agency promoting sexual and reproductive health and female rights in countries such as Kenya. My informants at Peepoople frequently referred to Simavi funding coming from ‘the Dutch family’. These are the crucial judges of how Peepoople Kenya gets funds and if funding will be sustained. “You have no idea how rich this family is!” I was told several times during my fieldwork. Together with the Swedish innovation agency (Vinnova), this family became one of the two main financers of Peepoople in Kenya.

Return to Investors

When Peepoople was created in 2006, Anders Wilhelmson became the major owner of the company. Through his consultancy firm (Anders Wilhelmson Arkitektkontor AB), he registered Peepoople AB, owning 94% of the organization. Peepoople was expected to grow fast, producing 500,000 toilet bags per day. For that, it needed to acquire machinery to automate production, which required external investments. Based on their visions of growth and increased outreach for the product, he and his partner Camilla Wirseen gradually started seeking investors and selling company shares.

In 2009, the first external shareholder entered, STING Capital which was itself owned by Swedish state agencies and private corporations such as Ericsson. When announcing its investment in Peepoople AB, the STING investment manager, Martin Gemvik claimed:

This is a very exciting investment in a company that addresses a billion-worth-market, while representing a much sought-after solution and a bit more tolerable existence for a significant part of the world's population. In this way can we help to build another successful Swedish export company, while helping to solve a problem that the UN has as a prioritized topic on its agenda... (STING Capital, press release, 2009-10-05).

Peepoople's product and strategy appeared a clear win-win story when told by social entrepreneurs and sources of legitimacy like STING: by helping the poor to have “a more tolerable existence” Peepoople would also support the Swedish economy through increased exports. Based on this narrative, other private investors gradually bought shares in Peepoople AB, gradually increasing shareholder control over the company. In 2009, the company recruited a new CEO, Karin Ruiz, who had “long international experience” in business, working with marketing, business development and sales. Leaders of Peepoople claimed that they had been seeking a “business oriented” CEO with international experience and Karin Ruiz had “the right background”. Karin had a bachelor in civil engineering oriented in industrial economics from Chalmers University of Technology in Sweden (Peepoople, press release, 2009-11-05).

Until 2013, the production of Peepoople toilet bags had been semi-manual in Kenya. Once the process of design and construction of a high speed machine was concluded in Germany 2013,

the production of Peepoople toilet bags moved from Kibera in Kenya (the site of its initial inspiration and use) to Sweden. This machine cost 3.5 million euros. Producing 500,000 toilet bags per day, it used biodegradable supplies imported from BASF, Germany. In raw material alone, each toilet bag cost the equivalent of 5.1 Kenyan shillings in 2013. However, Peepoople leaders and donors expected that the cost to produce the toilet bags would eventually go down to a level at which each Peepoople would become cheaper than the polythene bags used for ‘flying toilets’ in Kibera.

In 2013, the Swedish media announced that “famous high profile people within the Swedish private sector” were investing in Peepoople (Dagens Industri, 2013-02-23, my translation). Among these famous investors were individuals belonging to well known Swedish family companies such as Stefan Bengtsson (presented by the media as an heir to the large clothing company H&M), the Nordgren and Pihl families (founders of Nefab, a global industrial packaging manufacturer), the Lindgren and Löfgren families (founders of companies such as Altitun, which provides laser products to telecoms) and the founder of business software company Intentia, Björn Algvist. By 2012, private investors had more shares in Peepoople AB than its founders. Anders Wilhelmson became the third largest shareholder with 17% of its shares. This was the financial reality from the gaze of the Swedish investors, which was quite separate from how the organization was viewed from within, in Kibera.

6.5 Compassionate Employees

An interesting aspect of Peepoople’s legitimation process is how the organization was perceived by its employees and those aspiring to work for it. A look into how social entrepreneurs have present the organization to its potential employees reveals this. Peepoople is described in terms of its awards (e.g. ‘an Ashoka Fellowship awarded company’), successful pilot projects abroad (e.g. in Pakistan, Kenya, the Philippines, Haiti and Bangladesh), social missions (e.g. that all people who so desire shall have access to dignified and hygienic sanitation), the scale of production (half a million toilet bags per day) and clients (e.g. thousands of people in Kibera and elsewhere through other organizations such as Oxfam, UN-HABITAT, Red Cross). All these factors become part of the storytelling used to recruit new employees. The ideal Peepoople employee—in spite of having to meet specific qualifications such as work experience from international businesses and organizations, the BoP market and in handling relations with international donors—has to be “passionate” about helping people out of poverty and solving social problems (Job description: Accountant and Administrator Peepoople Kenya, 24 March 2014). As an employer, Peepoople also produced endorsers of its solutions.

Through my internship, and by having already read published works by Peepoople AB and its implementing partners in that capacity, I am privy to knowing that the adoption rate for Peepoo has been very high in all cases where it has been introduced, often higher than other sanitation alternatives (Lacharité, 2013: 7).

Among the many academic texts produced about Peepoople, the undergraduate honours thesis written by Rachelle Lacharité (2013)—“How to Enhance Systems of Sanitation Based on the Peepoo Experience: The Role of Space and Human Capabilities in Outlining Key Obstacles and Possible Solutions”—is striking not only because of the terms which the student used to endorse of the Peepoople product, but also because her internship was based in the organization’s headquarters in Stockholm, without any field experience.

...it is important to know that I believe that Peepoo is a good solution, based on my experience as an intern due to the jobs I was tasked with. It is also important to consider that I have never experienced at first hand a lack of sanitation, or poverty in general. I have not been to any of the countries that I will be focusing on. I come from a privileged background, am Caucasian and use a porcelain bowl as a toilet. It may be hard to relate to, or identify some themes based on my upbringing and experiences (Lacharité, 2013: 9).

I would like to thank Peepoople AB and Clara Lidström for having me as an intern so I could learn about and contribute to the work that they’re doing to help provide dignity and safety to the 2.5 billion people worldwide without adequate sanitation (Lacharité, 2013).

The above quotes suggest that social entrepreneurship does not only give meaning to the work of social entrepreneurs. It may also become a source of meaningful work for those working for such social entrepreneurs. This work gains meaning in light of the social problems it is supposed to address: for instance, a “global sanitation crisis” which “... is killing millions of people each year, creating disastrous impacts on environments, fuelling conflict, spreading disease (Lacharité, 2013: 1). In light of this causal association between the lack of sanitation and a large array of problems in the Global South, Lacharité (2013) quoted Jan Eliasson (United Nations Deputy Secretary-General) in his call for “inclusive capitalism” to help solve the sanitation crisis. This sort of capitalism apparently becomes more inclusive by producing businesses, services and products for the people at the bottom of the global socioeconomic pyramid. Most importantly, the statements above illustrate an underlying trend in the way we may think of meaningful work and care for distant others. They intrinsically suggest that meaningful work is no longer restricted to third sector non-profit organizations, as it used to be (e.g. Dempsey & Sanders, 2010). For profit companies too are now seen to provide people with opportunities to work while engaging in humanitarian missions.

In Sweden, I have met people who perceive Peepoople as an attractive employer, not just because of the organization’s humanitarian mission. They also want to work there because of its financial sustainability: an organizational advantage by which Peepoople is viewed as a social space where meaningful work can be performed without jeopardizing the employer’s ability to pay salaries and offer long term or permanent work contracts. For these people, Peepoople AB seems to be more attractive than ordinary third sector organizations, mainly because it is a for -

profit company and, therefore, less likely to suffer from economic instability and the vulnerability of dependency on donors. The following is an illustrative example of my encounters with such persons.

In January 2015, I interviewed a female informant in Stockholm who is a member of an international social entrepreneurship network headquartered in New York. During this interview, she noticed the Peepoople toilet bags placed in the small library next to my office at the Stockholm Business School. She knew about Peepoople and told me that she was unemployed and that it would be great if she could work for them. She then explained how she was tired of the economic instability and work insecurity related to her work with NGOs. She herself had had experience as a social entrepreneur, creating a Fair Trade business that went bankrupt one year after it was started. In one of her several temporary jobs for NGOs, she had visited Kibera. Peepoople, she explained to me, was a good prospective employer because it was for -profit and, as such, it would give the opportunity to work with social issues without the economic and professional insecurity that she had been facing as a Fair Trade social entrepreneur and NGO worker. As a for profit company, Peepoople had an obligation to follow through with business oriented processes in its operations and account for its expenditure, just as donor dependent organizations do for their contributors. One of these was trialling the product before moving to mass production, which was done in two locations.

6.6 Testing Peepoople in Urban Slums

In 2008, two slums were chosen for tests with Peepoople toilet bags: Kibera in Kenya and Mymensingh in Bangladesh. By testing Peepoople in these different contexts, Peepoople's leaders attempted to gain better knowledge about how their products were perceived in different settings. The field tests in Bangladesh were financed, carried out and evaluated by GTZ (The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit), an international development organization controlled and funded by the German government.

“...our very first grant application, I think that I got help from Annika Nordin [developer of the Sanibag] when I wrote the grant application. It was not so hard because I had written a lot of texts for our [Peepoople] homepage. The first grant application was sent to Elisabeth von Muench from GTZ so that we could do the field tests [of the Peepoople toilets in Bangladesh]. I was lucky to meet her [during a conference called World Water Week 2008 in Stockholm]. I was quite nervous about how I wrote in English, if I was writing correctly. And now, when you look back, now I have learned how the language should be but then I was really nervous. But it went well! (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-10-14, my translation)

In this 2014 interview, Wirseen further explained the importance of meeting Elisabeth von Muench in 2008, during the World Water Week in Stockholm. The importance of building personal relations and ‘selling the product’ to the people attending such events was highlighted.

During conferences, Camilla made a practice of standing outside lecture halls and approaching individuals who seemed to be the most suitable future supporters of Peepoople. Then, as she recounted, she had around five minutes to ‘sell the project’ to them. Elisabeth von Muench stated that GTZ supported Peepoople because it “... seemed like an interesting innovative option for people living in urban slums, particularly when it’s dark and they don’t want to go to a public toilet” (interview, 2017-03-30).

In 2009, GTZ evaluated how the toilet bags were perceived in the economically poor urban settlement of Mymensingh, in Bangladesh, based on how settlement residents describe and use the product. According to GTZ, Peepoople toilets would not fully address the need for sanitation facilities but it would help users by increasing their ‘privacy’ and ‘freedom of choice’. With Peepoople toilet bags, individuals stated they could more easily choose when and where to go to the toilet. The GTZ reports identified the main sanitation problem in Bangladesh was caused by land ownership disputes which hindered the construction of and access to traditional toilet facilities (GTZ, 2009). GTZ also evaluated the local so-called willingness to pay for Peepoople toilet bags in the settlement. In Mymensingh, only one third of the hundred individuals who had used the toilets bags claimed to be willing to pay for the Peepoople sanitary solution. There were toilet facilities already available for free in the settlement (GTZ, 2009). In Kibera, however, field tests were mainly conducted by Camilla Wirseen and results seemed to be more in favor of Peepoople.

Tests in Kibera

In Kibera, Peepoople field tests were financed with public and private funds from Sweden and the Netherlands. Camilla Wirseen had come to Nairobi for the first time in November 2007 to show the Peepoople prototype to representatives of UN-HABITAT. UN-HABITAT representatives then introduced her to people they referred to as ‘civic leaders’ in Kibera. Among these was one of the Kibera chiefs who took her to show the sanitation problem faced by people living in the informal settlement. In light of her aim to test the Peepoople bags in Kibera, the chief also pointed out some Kibera residents as suitable candidates for this. Accordingly, the Peepoople field tests which started in April 2008 were conducted with the individuals selected by the local chief.

And so, I said “I want young individuals who did not have families, and I want children, and then I also wanted to test it with some older people” and so I got a little difference [in the local respondents for the Peepoople tests]. Then he [the chief] helped me and it was no problem at all. All the individuals we invited were willing to participate. Then it was very simple questions like what they thought about [the Peepoople toilets], what they did not like. I had not done [field test surveys] before and I did not ask anyone about how to do it either but still I got the facts. When we did tests again, it was a larger field

test with 300 people, and it was not so difficult to do that either. To identify people when they get things for free in Kibera, they are quite happy. Free is okay! (Camilla, interview, 2015-10-14, my translation).

According to local Kenyan informants and Peepoople employees, participants in the Peepoople field tests did not only receive free toilets. They all received some “small money” to participate in the tests as well (manager at Peepoople Kenya, interview, 2015-02-07). Some other Kibera residents were employed to help Wirseen doing the field tests of Peepoople in the settlement. During this period, the Peepoople field testing was faced with bias from local respondents, field test workers and translators. This was because, hoping to get a job at the organization and/or a “casual reward” from Peepoople, local actors gave high rates of approval and reportedly showed a ‘willingness to buy’ the toilet bags (Kibera resident, interview, 2016-05-02). Already at that time, sanitation was presented to Camilla Wirseen as “a very big problem” (ibid). Her local informants portrayed sanitation as a problem which created a high demand for solutions like Peepoople. Accordingly, Kibera residents were apparently willing to buy Peepoople toilets in large quantities. Selling Peepoople toilets then, was going to be “easy business” (ibid).

When Camilla landed here it was like... [s]he thought how [s]he could help... I think someone told her [that the main problem] was hygiene. Here in Kibera people have flying toilets it is like you relieve yourself on a paper and then when it is dark you wrap it well on like 2 bags and then you let it swinging wherever it lands it is not your problem. You will find someone saying: “Oh Camilla we would like to have the project Peepoople here!” That is bullshit! That woman is just making those things up (Kibera resident, interview, 2016-05-02).

The ‘lying woman’ referred to was not Camilla Wirseen. The lying woman was a character rhetorically created by this informant to illustrate how actors living and operating in Kibera interact with foreign social entrepreneurs. The lying woman was used by the above informant as a character illustrative of, for instance, some of the “office people” who got their jobs in foreign led organizations in Kibera due to their ability to convince foreigners, like founders of Peepoople, that access to sanitation was a high priority among slum dwellers. “Making those things up” means that the demand for, and approval of, Peepoople toilet bags in the Kibera was exaggerated so as to ensure that Peepoople’s leaders would deliver the solutions to the settlement.

Mostly it is about how you communicate with these guys. And I want to remind you that this is Kenya. Kenya... money! Money talks! And even if Camilla don’t want to say it and I don’t want to say it directly. It is like: “you scratch my back and I scratch your back!” if you get the point... “you scratch my back and I scratch your back!” We have similar projects like Camilla’s in Kibera you see?? That deal with hygiene and toilets. Now, for your project to penetrate and make a niche—let me say it that way to be understood well—and come out of the global platform like she did it. It is not just a matter of trust or doing a good job! (Peepoople Kenya employee, interview, 2016-05-02).

The number of foreign actors coming to Kibera to provide residents with what are called ‘innovative solutions’ is so high that an informal economy of field tests had already been established in the settlement before Peepoople’s founders arrived. Part of what has been keeping this economy vibrant is the practice of exaggerating the suffering of residents and the need for foreign aid. Some social entrepreneurs realize this earlier than others.

An American social entrepreneur with nine years of experience added that any ‘quirky ideas’ that foreigners come up with are likely to be widely approved of in the settlement, keeping in mind that locals are rewarded by foreign led organizations. By telling overly dramatized stories about the demand for foreign assistance, one increases his or her chances of getting full employment, sitting allowances, ‘small money’ and/or casual ‘rewards’. But, what does such a local storyteller sound like? The above informant often made direct references to the person quoted below.

When you are working in slum areas, they need you like so much but basically in sanitation I can tell that the need is very big, because a lot of the houses are very small and together and there is no space for building toilets. So, I think a major need is the sanitation part. And also, the other need is water. Getting water is very difficult, getting safe water is very difficult. And then everything is about getting income like stable income among the people they earn income very casually. They work for someone else.... And the other thing is the girls. They have the biggest challenges. Many girls end meeting people to get some money. Some of them even able to do prostitution for them to get something like sanitary pads (manager at Peepoople Kenya, interview, 2015-02-01).

Local informants stressed how it pays off to make claims such as the ones quoted above. The informant quoted above seems to prove this proposition. She obtained a management position at Peepoople Kenya. No matter how biased the statements are, foreigners are supposed to pay for the stories they collect from local actors. By doing field tests in the settlement, individuals such as Peepoople’s founders become gradually acquainted with the local rules of interaction with humanitarian actors. One Kibera resident used the term ‘bargaining’ to denote what goes on when foreigners (creating organizations in Kibera) and local leaders meet.

Local leaders, chiefs, NGO workers and translators start “bargaining” as soon as foreigners show any interest in getting to know the lived realities of Kibera residents (Peepoople employee, interview, 2016-05-02). Information about the settlement also becomes a commodity traded by local leaders with international organizations. However, the forms of exchange, the price and the quality of this information may not be clear to foreigners. During the phase of field tests in 2008 to 2010, Wirseen learned some of the unspoken codes of conduct within the settlement. She gradually became aware, for instance, that information from certain local actors had a monetary price.

How can I put this? ... Sometimes they [local leaders and NGO workers] tell you, sometimes they don’t. Sometimes they tell you “ok you want to have a meeting with me at eleven, I am very busy.” That “being busy” you know, you have to make time for him with something. You see? Others don’t [pay any cash for meetings] and when you’ve had a meeting with them and you just tell them thank you without giving them something, the next time you want them, they will not be available. So, it is very hard and tricky dealing with the guys around... even for Camilla’s case. She told me that there was a time she would talk to people and tell them thank you and the people would tell her “no! Here you don’t say thank you! I have been with you for two hours. I’ve told you this and I’ve told you that. My family needs to eat” if you get the point I am making (Peepoople employee, interview, 2016-05-02).

Some local informants explained that while the problem of sanitation existed, it was exaggerated to ensure that Peepoople would be created in the area. As quoted above, neither the problem of sanitation nor the solution (Peepoople toilet bags) were what local actors had mainly in mind

when they welcomed Peepoople into the area. By conducting field tests, Peepoople leaders were bringing immediate resources and future job opportunities. For those whose jobs depended on Peepoople's continued operations in the settlement, it was necessary to portray sanitation as a crucial priority among Kibera residents. Thus, by addressing the urgent demand for sanitation, leaders of Peepoople were informed, their product would save lives and even help prevent rapes in the settlement. The following was extracted from a grant application in which Peepoople leaders presented Kibera, distant others and the results from the above mentioned field tests.

Bearing in mind that a previous study took place in the autumn of 2008, we have already established good contacts with local actors in Kibera, which is Africa's largest slum area with 1-1.5 million people. The first study, funded by Wilhelmson Arkitekter and GTZ, focused on the users of Peepoo. Then, ergonomic features and user benefits were examined. The results of the market research showed that the need for sanitation is great and that the interest and willingness to use Peepoo exists. It is mainly women and children who are positive about the Peepoople toilet bags (Tillväxtverket, ansökan DemoMiljö-förstudie, 2009, Diarienummer: 625-2009-01780, my translation).

Scholars have also participated in this conversation about the need for sanitation solutions like Peepoople in Kibera. Drawing on fieldwork conducted in 2012, Suvi Kokko and Johan Lagerkvist assessed the user acceptance of Peepoople toilets among Kibera schoolchildren. Based on this empirical data, two articles were published in 2014 and 2016. The researchers were scholars from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. In the later article, the researchers made reference to:

...feelings of stress, comfort, freedom, belonging to society, and, most importantly, happiness, which can be placed either as consequences of specific actions or outcomes or as an end state that can be obtained through access to sanitation (Kokko & Lagerkvist, 2016: 14).

According to some local and foreign informants, even instances of rape cases may have been exaggerated and wrongly related to the lack of sanitation. To some extent, Peepoople's leaders were informed about the risks of bias and the local tendencies towards exaggerating suffering. For instance, individuals from GTZ (which also financed and organized Peepoople's field tests in Bangladesh in 2008) raised concerns about the rates and dimensions of certain problems in the settlement. They warned Peepoople leaders that information about the consequences of the lack of sanitation in the settlement may have been exaggerated. Social entrepreneurs working at Peepoople responded to these warnings by stating that they were visiting Kibera every day when they were in Kenya, adding that they could witness the sanitation problem was 'silent' and 'invisible' but real. Accordingly, they perceived this problem as a fact even if there were no official statistics about its dimensions and its relationship to rape rates in the settlement.

According to some local residents, Peepoople leaders base critical organizational decisions on information provided by local co-workers who were not 'transparent'. There was a lack of transparency with, for instance, the problem of sanitation in Kibera. There was also a lack of transparency with information about the demand for Peepoople toilet bags.

The *mzungu* shows up and then, all of a sudden, things have a different meaning (manager at Peepoople Kenya, interview, 2015-02-05).

...that is the main thing that is needed if someone wants to start something like an NGO...the people which you first meet with matter a lot to the project. If they are transparent, you are going to have a very smooth riding organization. If they are not, then you are going to have problems. The mentality in Kibera is like: “*mzungus* come here, get themselves a lot of money, money in their bank accounts, to acquire more money, more money from us. They are not here to help us” (Kibera resident, interview, 2016-05-07).

According to some Peepoople employees, the success of Peepoople in Kibera depended on what ‘kind of people’ the managers and founders of Peepoople met when they first arrived in Kenya. These informants also claimed that Peepoople leaders have not met “the right people to work with” but none would dare to warn Wirseen about it (manager at Peepoople Kenya, interview, 2015-02-05). In Kibera, social entrepreneurs become surrounded by people whose jobs and ‘rewards’ depend on continued and growing intervention of organizations like Peepoople. This creates a relationship of mutual dependency within which local employees and social entrepreneurs confirm each other’s expectations.

Locals (most of them employed by Peepoople) provided Camilla with narratives, which confirmed that the sanitation problem was so huge and Peepoople was urgently needed. They understood that their employability was based on their abilities to make foreign do gooders believe on the urgency and depth of their apparent social problems. Some of these local informants have compared Camilla Wirseen as similar to other foreigners creating organizations in Kibera. They perceive foreigners as people benefiting far more from their own interventions than Kibera residents do. The general local perception is that ‘people like Camilla’ (often referred to as *mzungu*) are ‘getting rich’ by creating organizations in the settlement. Thus, most locals, especially those already working for NGOs of some sort, charge foreigners for any information and participation in field tests such as Peepoople’s. Despite this reality, or perhaps partly because of it, the process of legitimation continued to expand in Peepoople’s case through public recognition in Europe.

6.7 Prizes & Media

In 2012, Anders Wilhelmson was awarded the so-called ‘Änglamarkspriset’ a Swedish prize⁹ that aims to “give recognition to the people who, through their ideas and projects, take responsibility for the environment and also show great social commitment” (konsumentforeningestockholm.se, accessed in 2017-01-07, my translation). The prize

⁹http://www.konsumentforeningestockholm.se/Pressrum/Senaste_nytt/Anglamarkspriset-gick-till-Peepoople-/, accessed in 2017-01-07

includes 100,000 Swedish crowns, granted to Anders Wilhelmson in person, during a ceremony at Fotografiska Museet in Stockholm. According to the jury, Anders Wilhelmson received this award because:

The invention of the self-sanitizing Peepoo toilet has given an increased security to already vulnerable people and also has a significantly positive impact on the environment. The fact that Peepoo becomes fertilizer after use, which is a valuable resource in agriculture and on a household level, as well as a business opportunity, is also one of the contributing factors to why its founder Anders Wilhelmson is this year's Anglamarks prize laureate and scholar. To be able to go to the toilet in a safe and secure manner is perhaps natural for many of us, however in many parts of the world this is not the case. More than 2.6 billion people lack access to basic sanitation today. This problem leads to unsafe living conditions, especially for women and children who often fall victim to violence and sexual abuse when they lack access to privacy and have to respond to their needs in public. It also creates enormous problems for the environment (COOP, press release, 2012-06-14, my translation).

It is noteworthy how the prize jury put emphasis on women, children and the environment as more specific beneficiaries of Peepoople. It also seems important to emphasize how many urban slum dwellers had apparently already become consumers and receivers of Peepoople toilet bags. By this token, the committee presented the prize to Peepoople as an organization selling an average of 3000 toilet bags per day in Kibera. The organization was also distributing approximately 60,000 to 80,000 free toilet bags a month to Kibera schools. According to information received by the committee, between 1100 and 1500 households used Peepoo toilet bags once or twice a week (during emergencies, at night and/or during weekends when slum dwellers could not use toilet facilities at work). Between 300 and 500 households used the Peepoople toilet regularly.

Considered the main inventor of Peepoople, in 2009 Anders Wilhelmson became an Ashoka Fellow. Ashoka was at the time perceived as a renowned international social entrepreneurship network. The fellowship was presented as an award for his work and he was praised for:

"...changing the way in which people in poor and crowded urban communities with inadequate sanitation facilities deal with human waste and offering a more dignified daily life [mainly because] Ander's innovation creates portable alternatives to infrastructure based facilities. He is building a for-profit company that also creates incentives for waste collection—a lucrative job option for micro-entrepreneurs to collect the bags and sell them as fertilizer (Ashoka.org, accessed in 2015-06-22).

For Peepoople, this award had an important consequence for how the company presented its goals. Being a for profit organization, argued Anders Wilhelmson, was necessary for Peepoople in order for the company to expand and fulfil its social mission. When he became an Ashoka Fellow, a different financial direction emerged, as reflected in the website. Peepoople AB "commits to reinvest future profits to support its endeavor and social mission" (Peepoople homepage, accessed in 2015-06-20). However, other Peepoople leaders considered that this social commitment to reinvest the company's profits was not supposed to be viewed as a permanent pledge. According to most of my informants, Peepoople in Sweden was viewed as a traditional for profit company. The practice of reinvesting profits was written into Peepoople's Statute from 2009 but, they argued, it could be changed any time. One added that, as soon as

Peepoople started making ‘real profits,’ this social commitment would change. The rationale was that, after all, private investors as shareholders had already invested their capital in Peepoople with the intention to gain financial returns on it.

According to Anders Wilhelmson, the Ashoka Fellowship award meant an increase in the company’s legitimacy, mainly in terms of formal recognition and access to important networks. The fellowship also served as “a door opening for making contacts” in Germany and Kenya (Anders Wilhelmson, YouTube interview, 2012-10-30). The fellowship functioned also as a sort of certification of Peepoople’s social commitment even though the organization was legally defined as ‘a limited [for profit] company’. There was reciprocity involved in this fellowship, he argued, keeping in mind how relatively unknown Ashoka still was in Sweden. By supporting organizations such as Peepoople, this social entrepreneurship network gained some fame in Sweden while helping Swedish social entrepreneurs gain international recognition.

The Media

Most of the Swedish and international media also endorses Peepoople, highlighting how it is going to seemingly ‘save lives’ by doing business with the poor. Especially in the Swedish media, the Peepoople product is often associated with the controversial personality of Anders Wilhelmson. Under the headline “Swedish bag saves lives in slums” it was reported that Peepoople: “...bag can make life in slums better” (Bojs, Dagens Nyheter Vetenskap, 2010-03-14, my translation). Anders Wilhelmson by 2014 and even earlier was already known in the media for his work as a “progressive architect” and, somewhat paradoxically, an “established outsider” (Andersson & Hansson, SvD, 2008-05-11). In the Swedish Daily News, Anders Wilhelmson was presented as a ‘established outsider’ mainly for being “brave”, a bit “quirky” and for daring to do “the unexpected” (Mark Isitt in Andersson & Hansson, SvD, 2008-05-11). He was also described as an “incredibly talented architect” who “goes his own way” with a perseverant attitude in regard to how others, including his clients, perceive his ideas (Ulf Nordström in Andersson & Hansson, SvD, 2008-05-11). Because of Peepoople, Anders Wilhelmson also became recognized as a “Swedish entrepreneur” and social entrepreneur (e.g. Bhanoo, India Times, 2010-03-17).

With Peepoople’s toilet bags and its business model for slums, Anders Wilhelmson also attracted attention from the international media. After pointing out that: “Over 1.2 billion people have to defecate in the open.” “The biggest single cause of child deaths is diarrhoea or diseases related to it.” “Nearly 1 billion people have no access to piped drinking water or safe taps or

wells”, the weekly news magazine, the Economist, contextualised Peepoople’s approach, using some information similar to that on Peepoople’s own website.

Once people have invested some of their own money in a loo, they will use it. The World Bank confirms that the most successful sanitation projects involve only a small subsidy. Where building a fixed latrine is not possible—slum dwellers seldom own the land they live on, or have much incentive to improve a site to which they have no legal rights—entrepreneurs may help out. The Peepoo is a personal, single use bag that the Swedish founder of the company, Anders Wilhelmson, describes as the hygienic version of Nairobi’s flying toilet, intended, to begin with, for the same Kenyan users. Each [roll of Peepoople toilets containing 25 bags] will sell for 5-7 cents, about the same as a conventional plastic bag, and though a subsidy will be needed at first, the operation is meant to become self-sustaining, and indeed profitable (The Economist, 2010-05-20:3).

Journalists have described Peepoople toilet bags as a solution that can: “... end cholera” (The independent, 2012-04-10) “save lives” (Östlund, E24, 2009-11-30) and “help grow crops” (Bhanoo, India Times, 2010-03-07). Consequently, it may become a “... revolution in toilet technology” (Raval, Financial Times India, 2010-10-20) and a “... scalable, low cost solution for people without access to a toilet” (Flock, Forbes India, 2010-02-19). The storytelling put forward by the media evolved over time. Three years after the organization was launched in Kenya, Peepoople was already portrayed as a success story. Journalists described Peepoople no longer only in terms of its potential but as an already “... successful solution” (Waikla, Dagens Industri, 2013-03-08), “empowering slumdwellers economically” and making “... diarrheal diseases drop significantly” (Delvaux, The Standard, 2013, 09-21).

These actors also give meaning to entrepreneurship in the humanitarian field, relating the concept to stories about success, responsibility and faster improvements in the conditions of the poor in the Global South. The word success, for instance, is seldom explained by journalists. This word appears as an implicit feature of the solutions entrepreneurs develop. In contrast to the media in Sweden, international journalists tend to present Peepoople as part of general trend by which new profitable and innovative sanitation solutions are emerging. In the same vein, Peepoople is often presented as yet another entrepreneurial solution for ‘the bottom billion’, for the ‘bottom of the pyramid’, for ‘the urban poor’, for ‘poor farmers’, for refugee camps and those communities suffering with natural disasters.

According to this media report, Peepoople offers a product which is sustainable not only because it turns a problem (human waste of people living in places lacking sanitation facilities) into a solution (fertilizers). Peepoople is also a sustainable solution in organizational terms. Because it is for profit, it does not have to rely on donors like ordinary NGOs do. The Economist, for instance, urged its readers to perceive the phenomenon of

“successful sanitation projects” as the result of private initiatives that only receive “a small subsidy” (The Economist, 2010-05-20:3). However, the Peepoople toilet bags distributed in urban slums were almost completely dependent on subsidies granted by donors. Still, the media seldom mentioned how public and private donations were supporting the organization in Sweden and subsidizing the distribution of Peepoople toilet bags in places like the Kenyan urban slum of Kibera, in Nairobi.

The media also related stories about the need for sanitation and the entrepreneurial attitude of slum dwellers assisted and employed by Peepoople. In these stories, distant others were also entrepreneurial: local actors helping the organization selling and delivering toilet bags. Collectors of Peepoople toilet bags were, for instance, depicted as local entrepreneurs who, in the pursuit of their self-interest, were bringing development and sanitation to their communities.

The story of the reportedly ‘entrepreneurial poor’ bringing development to Kibera has been continuously disseminated in well-established magazines like the Economist. These stories are filled with ‘before and after’ narratives: accounts illustrating how female Kibera residents used to be faced with difficulties making ends meet before Peepoople was implemented. After working with Peepoople, the collectors of used Peepoople toilet bags were portrayed as finally able to provide for their kids. Note how the British-Somali journalist, Laila Ali, presented one of Kibera’s Peepoople collectors as an entrepreneur:

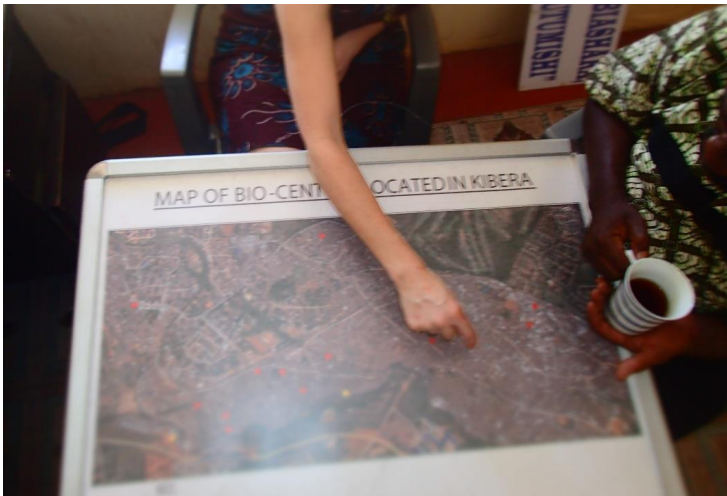
Mama Lucy, a young mother of three, makes her living by collecting the used Peepoo bags from her network of neighbors and friends. She then pockets the reimbursement fees. "I didn't have a regular job before the Peepoos were introduced, but I saw an opportunity when people did not want to drop off the bags themselves," she said, handing in a bucket of bags at the drop-off point. "Now, I do two rounds a day to pick Peepoos from people's houses. On a good week I earn about a thousand shillings (\$11)" - Mama Lucy, entrepreneur (Aljazeera, 2013-03-22)

Publicity such as the above has added to the legitimacy of the organization. By claiming to be meeting the sanitation needs of Kibera households with ‘a business approach’, Peepoople attracted attention from the media and supporters. Among news networks, international aid organizations and private foundations, Peepoople has often been described as having a novel approach to humanitarian issues. The ascribed novelty of the Peepoople approach is also based on how the organization constantly constructs the economically poor slum dwellers as entrepreneurs (especially women) and consumers. What follows is an account of the beginnings of Peepoople Kenya and its business model and operations, as they evolved.

6.8 Peepoople Kenya

After the 2008 and 2009 field tests, Anders Wilhelmson and Camilla Wirseen decided to create Peepoople Kenya. They perceived Kenya as a strategic country for testing, implementing and developing the Peepoople business model. The country was in their view “politically stable” when compared to other African countries (Anders Wilhelmson, YouTube interview, 2012-10-30). Furthermore, the English-speaking population of Kenya made this context more attractive to foreigners managing and working for Peepoople. This official language differentiates Kenya from West African countries where the official language is French. For those foreigners who speak English (as do Camilla Wirseen and other Peepoople employees), it was certainly easier to communicate with Kenyans.

Kenya is also strategic in a geographical sense. Bordering countries like Sudan and Somalia, Kenya has “enormous refugee camps” where other humanitarian actors operate, becoming potential buyers of Peepoople toilet bags. Furthermore, Kenya has only a one hour time difference from Sweden, which facilitates communications between co-workers in both countries. This also makes trips to Kenya free from jetlag. Most importantly, the Kenyan capital Nairobi has been described as a “United Nations city” (Anders Wilhelmson, YouTube interview, 2012-10-30). As such, Nairobi concentrates “big humanitarian programs” (ibid) from the United Nations (such as the United Nations Human Settlements Program, most known as UN-HABITAT) and Western humanitarian and development aid agencies.



Camilla Wirseen meets a local leader to discuss areas for distribution of toilet bags

In the same vein, Kibera is perceived by founders of Peepoople as a “well known” (ibid) settlement cited in famous books¹⁰ and shown in movies. Kibera not only constitutes a relevant so-called ‘cultural setting’ for testing the Peepoople toilet bags and business model. It is also a place where Peepoople can easily gain access to financial resources among international actors. A manager at Peepoople AB in Sweden, when interviewed, referred to Kibera (and also Kenya as a whole) a “showroom of humanitarian innovations”. He highlighted how “logistically easier” it is also for foreign donors to visit the projects they support in Kenya. In the humanitarian field, Kenya was contrasted with “tough countries” such as South Sudan where only few employees dare to go (Peepoople manager, interview, 2017-07-07). Hanging on the wall of this manager’s office, there were pictures of representatives of Peepoople sponsors hugging locals in the Kenyan localities of Kisumu and Kibera. By supporting projects, such as Peepoople Kenya, donors can acquire visual artefacts through which they can show their apparent social commitment. By operating in Kibera, Peepoople has been recognized by important humanitarian international audiences as a ‘serious social enterprise’ mainly because:

...the whole world is paying attention to what happens there! So, having a project up and running in Kibera is very important for Peepoople (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-03-05, my translation).

According to Peepoople’s leaders, the official aim of Peepoople Kenya is to create a sustainable sanitation model that also contributes to food security. With the experiences gathered throughout the implementation of the Peepoople business model, the organization would develop a scalable sustainable sanitation model that could be applied in slums all around the world. With this goal in mind, the focus of this discussion now turns to the observations of people on the ground at Peepoople Kenya and in Kibera.

6.9 Office Work

In June of 2010, social entrepreneurs launched Peepoople Kenya as an NGO with an office in Kibera. The organization was controlled by Peepoople AB and financed primarily with funds from Vinnova, Sida, and the Dutch Postcode Lotteries. Peepoople Kenya office workers claimed to establish “a very close relationship” (Peepoople manager, interview, 2017-07-07) with elders and chiefs: powerful local actors who judge, endorse and allow foreign organizations in Kibera. Some of these local actors even advised Peepoople leaders concerning the process by which they recruited local staff. For instance, two relatives of one of the chiefs in charge of Kibera

¹⁰ Like ‘Planet of Slums’, a book written by Mike Davis (2006) and mentioned by Anders Wilhelmson when talking about how they chose to implement Peepoople in Kibera.

became employed there. Local residents frequently stressed a desire to become office workers for organizations such as Peepoople. The remark was made more than once that this form of employment offered so many privileges that local NGO office workers should be the ones called “beneficiaries of NGO sector” (NGO employee and Kibera resident, interview, 2015-02-09).



Kale grown using Peepoople fertilizer

Having an NGO in Kenya provided Peepoople AB (in Sweden) with the organizational legitimacy necessary to raise funds from aid agencies, other NGOs and foundations. Such a form of fundraising is deemed impossible if the organization is registered as a purely for profit business in Kenya. The people working at the Peepoople office in Kenya often described their work as subdivided into two sets of activities: 1) creating and maintaining good relations with donors and, 2) supervising Peepoople employees working “out in the field” (Peepoople manager, interview, 2017-07-07). Among the Kibera residents especially, the comparatively immense financial resources of a foreign NGO greatly affected their views of how NGOs work and what they actually do. In contrast, the image Peepoople presented at home was far from the reality on the ground.

Social Entrepreneurs against the “NGO Mentality”

To help implement the business model for slums, leaders of Peepoople AB decided to recruit a general manager for Peepoople in Kenya. The ideal candidate for this job was described as a “social entrepreneur” and “... a dynamic business leader with good people skills, strong driving force, passion for solving social problems and a proven ability to creatively develop and build new businesses”. He or she was supposed to combine a “strong ethical fiber” with a “proven track record of successfully building new businesses and managing complex projects in different

cultural contexts, meeting set goals, budgets and time-lines”. The ideal social entrepreneur for Peepoople also had “work experience from international business environments, as well as from BoP markets.” However, work experience with innovations was not enough. The ideal candidate also had to be higher educated with a “university degree in business administration and/or management, MBA or similar (Peepoople, Job description: General Manager Peepoople Kenya, 2013-04-01).

Apart from suggesting where ideal social entrepreneurs are supposed to be socialized (in businesses and in business schools), this text depicted the social entrepreneur as a subject able to balance business skills with a strong sense of compassion and care for people in the Global South. This job description also tells us something important about social entrepreneurship: it may be conceived as the result of a merging between humanitarian and business attitudes. This ideal social entrepreneur was ascribed the power to become, and teach others to become, a “change maker”. The text also put the social entrepreneur in a position of social distinction. To be recognized, by organizations such as Peepoople, the ideal social entrepreneur here was a highly educated cosmopolitan—i.e. a person with experience from various parts of the world—who was already legitimized as a leader in the business field.

Peepoople AB recruited a Kenyan social entrepreneur to manage its organization in Kenya. This recruitment was the result of an encounter between one of the founders of Peepoople and a Kenyan social entrepreneur during meetings of the Community Impact Development Group: a set of social networking events organized in Frankfurt by the Siemens Foundation together with the Ashoka Fellowship. One of the founders of Peepoople claimed that this Kenyan social entrepreneur has made Peepoople a success in Kenya. This claim is well in line with the goal of the Community Impact Development Group, in that it confirms the idea that this network “...brings together social entrepreneurs from around the world who improve living conditions in Africa and Latin America with the help of innovative products and services” (Siemens Stiftung Annual Report 2012/2013: 11).

In an interview in Nairobi, this social entrepreneur tried to explain to me how business principles can help organizations such as Peepoople achieving financial sustainability and, at the same time, assist the economically poor in Kibera. The poor, at what he called the “bottom of the pyramid”, he argued, are faced with huge inefficiencies as consumers and as entrepreneurs. Because of their low income they cannot buy, create businesses and make investments as efficiently as their economically wealthier counterparts. To help the poor effectively, he added, Peepoople had to cope with this income level by selling toilet bags at affordable prices and volumes. Intriguingly, he went on to say that it also had to make its Kenyan employees more accountable for results based on, for instance, the number of toilet bags sold.

He pointed out two challenges organizations such as Peepoople faced. The first has to do with the instability and unreliability of the support from donors. The second challenge is:

...finding people who will come and do that without an NGO mentality, it is a very big problem. It is actually easier to give somebody something than try to create a business out of something that is so small [referring to the incomes of the poor]. So, members of the staff have to understand. ...in India that they wanted me to do something for them but the way they run their business is totally different in the social sector than the way they run their corporate business. But I think business is business!! You cannot afford to be nice because you are dealing with the poor. You have to follow a business process. In dealing with the poor, the outcome of the business may be nice. You sell Peepoople toilet bags to somebody then somebody does not get beaten at night, a girl does not have to be raped. That is the outcome of committing to a business. So, the business is designed to help somebody but you cannot be nice by giving things that you do not have to be paid for and that sort of things. Those are business principles (social entrepreneur and manager at Peepoople Kenya interview, 2015-02-05).

This manager at Peepoople Kenya makes a living out of developing and implementing business models for organizations in Kenya and abroad. As a former PwC consultant and with a background in engineering, he told me he tends to see efficiency problems in organizations as something related to human flaws. He proudly showed his notebook where he made sense of various organizational problems and designed solutions for the organizations that hired him. The solutions drafted in his notebook look like equations within which human, natural and financial resources were subdivided into variables and later on produced predictable results. He has been recognized for his abilities in developing business models for startups operating in poor communities and his capacity to increase the efficiency of already existing organizations.

Some other informants working at the office of Peepoople Kenya stated, in conversations and informal interviews that they subscribed to the above assumptions. To aid the economically poor most effectively, some Peepoople Kenya office workers argued, organizations have to commit to a business process and, by doing so, the organization would become financially sustainable: in other words, completely independent from donations provided by unreliable and unpredictable supporters. Some proposed that financial sustainability can only be achieved once NGOs operate as for profit organizations. By the same token, they positioned for profit organizations in direct contrast to the 'NGO mentality', to which several referred as operating with codependent altruistic relationships. Based on these relationships, charity (organized and financed by international actors) turns the poor in the Global South into dependent aid recipients and, at the same time, NGOs into financially unsustainable organizations, they contended. Organizations that distribute free goods and services to the poor were creating and/or enhancing further dependency on charity, was the view. This attitude formed the operational approach taken in Kibera and also influenced its adjustments over time.

Fostering Local Managers

Founders of Peepoople not only recruited Kenyan social entrepreneurs. They also tried to form managers and role models within the organization. As an NGO owned by a for-profit enterprise and supported by business minded donors, Peepoople Kenya has been subjected to various attempts to increase its productivity. These attempts revolved around applying business methods to combine organizational performance with the social mission of delivering toilet bags to the slum dwellers. One effort was that, for its office employees in Kenya, social entrepreneurs tried to form local leaders for Peepoople by creating role models within the organization. To set an example of success among the staff in Peepoople Kenya, a manager (raised in Kibera) was given the position of the head of the organization in Kenya and received a sizable salary raise. Social entrepreneurs were advised to:

...find somebody in your team [in Kenya] and raise his salary by several thousands and, as a consequence of that, he is going to take more responsibility and become a driving force for the development of the organization (Camilla Wirseen, 2015-03-03, interview, my translation).

Having office employees who were raised in Kibera was key to the organization's legitimacy. Their participation gave the impression that Peepoople was well in touch with the reality of economically poor communities. However, the end result of the above business oriented experiment was not in line with the aim of increasing organizational productivity and forming local leadership. It created, instead, an atmosphere in which well-paid managers expressed their financial success by trying to distance themselves from the economically poor and from their own backgrounds.

It was as if he lost track of reality. It was too much money for him. It was as if he had forgotten the type of service he was supposed to provide [to the community] (Camilla Wirseen, 2015-03-03, my translation).

... people started telling me "that guy is a jackass! That guy he is doing nothing and he is getting the most salary! He is faking the reports! He is getting so much money for nothing" and I was like "why don't you tell the boss?" and they were like "No!" None would step up and say [he] is cheating because [he] was the... By then [he] was the Peepoople... He was calling the shots (Kibera resident and Peepoople employee, interview, 2016-05-02).

Here there seems to be a gap between the idea of fostering local leaders within Peepoople Kenya and the reality of the class struggle within economically poor communities. This organizational experiment was based on the idea of increased financial rewards being linked to the fostering of better leaders for NGOs. This idea is underpinned by three main assumptions: 1) raising the compensation of managers will increase the efficiency of NGOs; 2) once economically rewarded, minority members will become more proactive helpers of the community 3) individuals living in economically poor communities are equally poor and united around social goals. Once put into practice, these assumptions diverged with Peepoople's social mission. It

created distance between a well-paid office employee and other employees and the community they aimed to assist.

It was a complete failure! You cannot do that, not if you are working in a slum, because they compete with each other all the time (Camilla Wirseen, 2015-03-03, interview, my translation).

Through these business oriented assumptions, the organization did not become more efficient. Instead, the inequality in salaries created conflicts among members of Peepoople Kenya's staff. Some even started sabotaging each other's work. Furthermore, paying a high salary to local managers reinforced the locally institutionalised stereotype of 'the rich Western NGO' making employees 'rich' in Kenya.

They start eating one another: "this one works but is not helping. The other one works but is not helping! He is like unfit for this job! People are eating a lot of the money then and I am doing a lot of... I am doing the most job in this organization and getting the least amount". That is the problem: communication and the right people! (Kibera resident and Peepoople employee, interview, 2016-05-02)

By paying high salaries to its managers, founders of Peepoople became subject to pressures from other employees get salary raises. One of the founders told me how an employee made 300,000 Kenyan shillings per month to work two days per week, handling the organization's homepage and reports to donors. This is thirty times what a waitress makes every month to work a 12 hour shift six days per week in a club in the centre of Nairobi. 300,000 Kenyan shilling is sixty times what a female slum dweller makes selling vegetables in Kibera.

For some Peepoople employees, high financial rewards may also create a loss of motivation among staff who view their work as more ideologically and/or passion driven. But even those staff who claim to be more driven by compassion earn fifteen times what Kibera residents earn to perform jobs such as waitressing, cleaning hotel rooms and selling vegetables. Within Kibera, this economic discrepancy is even more intense because people working within the slum tend to earn 50% less than those working in the affluent areas of Nairobi. Still, the compassion driven members of Peepoople's staff interpreted that other office workers were too focused on financial rewards and were neglecting the organization's social mission.

I want to work with people who really care for helping other people and I don't feel that way right now. I was telling Camilla that, I don't know, I might go back to work because in Peepoople there is not much... much growth for me especially because I need more challenge, maybe something more eye opening for me like doing a lot of research. Something for me to grow up more and get experience in challenging areas. But with time! (Peepoople Kenya office employee, interview, 2015-02-01).

For some other office workers, a sign of leadership and apparent 'success' also means changes in their dress code. Some of these informants saw the use of clothes such as formal and business

wear as a sign of ‘the good life’: a marker of their professional achievements and social mobility. Some of these informants also aspired to moving out from Kibera into those affluent neighbourhoods where their foreign bosses lived. There were large discrepancies, however, between the way local office employees behaved with their salaries and what foreign leaders of Peepoople perceived as appropriate. Dress code changes, for instance, were perceived as something negative by a Peepoople leader in Sweden who seemed to fear that the organization would lose its legitimacy as an NGO.

In one of our meetings they showed up wearing fancy suits and shoes. And then I told them that “we work in slums and we work with human waste!” It was as if they were trying to distance themselves from their friends in the slum and show “we have jobs! We are successful!” It was a show off to the community like saying “we have made it! We work for an NGO!” (Camilla Wirseen, 2015-03-03, interview, my translation).

The above quote is important here not only because it illustrates conflicting interpretations of successfulness. It also captures the moralist and anti-consumerist sensitivity which is a feature of Western social entrepreneurs’ encounters with local actors in Kenya. This poses a dilemma for social entrepreneurs. On one hand, telling local employees how they should dress or how they should spend their salaries is too authoritarian a move. This would make some local employees believe that they were forced to ‘look poorer’ even after they got a better paid job.

On the other hand, letting local employees freely display their increased economic wealth tended to reinforce something that was detrimental for organizations such as Peepoople: the local perception that those delivering solutions to Kibera are the real beneficiaries of humanitarianism. The relatively high salaries Peepoople pays to local managers and office workers does indeed create an economic and, in some cases geographical, distance between the staff and other slum dwellers. Kibera residents who do not work for what they call the NGO sector perceive these high salaries as markers of the unequal wealth and privileges generated by the humanitarian field. Although this still jeopardizes the organization’s legitimacy in Kibera, staff not wearing ‘fancy’ clothes and shoes at work will not change these economic discrepancies and local negative perceptions of NGOs.

For some of these office employees, social entrepreneurship was and remains a way out of Kibera. They seemed to be tired of Kenyan and foreign actors who overly romanticized poverty and slum dwelling in Kibera. They have a goal to move out from Kibera as soon as they are able to sustain higher incomes. Moving out is, among other things, a mechanism to address the discrimination and infrastructural problems they face daily in living in Kibera. It is also a marker of upwards social mobility which foreign social entrepreneurs do not seem to fully understand.

The NGO sector gives these employees relatively high salaries but their employment is often short termed. Based on this observation, I asked some Peepoople Kenya staff how they moved out of Kibera. This was one response:

I can't say that there are many institutions through which you can move out. Like for me, from my experience, the problem is primarily social because it was difficult for me to get to high school and I got an individual who have sponsored me, that person was from Kibera but he had a good job so with that sponsorship I finished my school, and he managed to mentor me, like saying "No! No! No! You have the ability! You can make it!" so there was a lot of pressure and a lot of mentorship. So when I finished school, I used to go to the American organization Carolina for Kibera. I used to go there and I used to have mentorship classes, there you have girls coming together talking about their problems. So that was the institution which did a lot of mentorship in Kibera. So, you have institutions for that but not very many... very few that will guide you in the right career, in the right skills. But sometimes you can really work hard; you can really have a lot of ambitions, but you don't make it because sometimes you find that people are getting jobs because they know people in good positions and others who just had luck when they got their jobs (Sales manager at Peepoople Kenya, interview, 2015-02-01).

The above informant had been working for Peepoople for the past four years. She viewed her work as driven by compassion and her interest for waste management and recycling issues. As mentioned above, her journey into the 'NGO sector' started during her teenage as a slum dweller receiving aid from an American NGO and a local business owner. Her statements about guidance into the "right career" suggest that, by receiving help from an American NGO, she has learned that working for the NGO sector is the most prospective pathway for professional and economic development. Accordingly, she started working for the NGOs from which she used to receive help. Based on this work experience, she then started her own NGO: a local recycling organization. This experience increased her interest in waste management issues. It is difficult, she stated, to make a good living on the money her organization generates. Based on her interest for waste management and need for increased income, she became a manager at Peepoople Kenya earning 120,000 Kenyan shillings monthly. The next section describes how business operations unfolded as the Peepoople program developed over time.

Creating Value but not Business

Founders of Peepoople and their office employees in Kenya seemed to be well aware of how the idea of helping the poor in the Global South through the application of business models appeals to sources of legitimacy such as donors, government agencies and the media. Even so, although managers at Peepoople Kenya tended to put the emphasis on their idea of social

entrepreneurship as a commercial approach to sanitation issues, some people working for the organization in Kenya did not view the business model for slums as ‘real business’.

What we are doing is just creating value on sanitation but it is not business! Because if you are able to sell one Peepoople bag set at 30 shillings, then at the community level the women are selling them for 50 shillings. So then the women make 20 shillings but Peepoople Kenya is not making any money. So, I don't think it is business. I usually look at it as a creation of value for sanitation, by not just giving the Peepoople toilet bags out for free for the community (Sales manager at Peepoople Kenya, interview, 2015-02-01).

Here the idea of organizational financial sustainability gains further meaning. Peepoople actually was not generating any profits from its enterprise in Kibera. Still, the organization would not give toilet bags for free. Giving things for free does not say anything about a product's worth and the local appreciation for it. The idea of avoiding charity by “creating value for sanitation” is also anchored in problems faced by all NGOs helping the economically poor in Kibera. Like several other such organizations, Peepoople encountered two problems: the local perceptions of the NGO sector and the fierce competition among organizations, offering similar products and services in the settlement. In this vein, Peepoople Kenya confronted the issue of trying to sell sanitation products in a place where residents are used to receiving things for free. As shown in the following sections, this put enormous challenges on those Peepoople employees in charge of selling the toilet bags.

6.10 Selling Peepoople

Peepoople Kenya provided women micro-entrepreneurs (or salesladies as the local women call themselves) with entrepreneurship training in Kibera. During these trainings, women aspiring to this role, received a three to four day session of entrepreneurship education. Through this, they were trained to combine business skills with ideals of purportedly doing good for the community.’

The training was good! It took about 3 to 4 days. It was about business and the other one was about hand washing. They were teaching us how we can be given loans, some money. How we can return the money. How we can sell the bags and then return the money to the management (Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-09).

All female micro-entrepreneurs I meet seemed to appreciate the entrepreneurship training organized by Peepoople. They also received cash payments to attend each session. Some of them already knew leaders of Peepoople because of their previous participation in the toilet bags field tests in 2008. They recalled how, during this testing process, the bags were distributed for free. According to some of the local female entrepreneurs, the previous experiences with the Peepoople field tests in Kibera created an expectation among many

slum residents that the toilet bags would continue to be given for free. This was a typical response encapsulating this perspective:

In 2008, when Camilla came to introduce the project, I was one of the people who were involved. So, you were called and then you were grouped with 3 to 4 groups in 2008. That's when she came the first time and then in 2009, she came back again and then she came a visited me in my house and we talked. She told me that she wanted to employ some people to work to sell the [Peepoople toilets]. So, I told her maybe people in Kibera they cannot buy the Peepoople toilets because in 2008 when she came, we were given free and it was just for testing to see that if it can work but we were given it for free. So, when she came, I told her "I don't know but we shall try!" (Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-09).

The free trial products and testing phase, combined with the potential customers' low and unstable incomes, created an initial obstacle for those attempting to sell the Peepoople toilet bags. At this point, the organization was paying monthly salaries to the salesladies who viewed the Peepoople enterprise as a much-appreciated opportunity to gain a stable income and plan their household economies. In practice, however, the Peepoople toilet bags could not be sold in Kibera in the sales volume initially set by the leaders of the organization and its donors. For Peepoople's founders, it became gradually clear that the high user acceptance from previous field tests did not really imply that Kibera residents were actually willing and/or economically able to pay for toilet bags.

We started by selling one bag, only one bag and then Camilla saw that it is very little for the people in the families. So, she told us to try to see if somebody can take three bags or even the band roll [a set with 25 Peepoople toilet bags] itself (Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-09).

Low demand

Some of Peepoople's major donors evaluated organizational performance by looking into how many daily users Peepoople Kenya reached in relation to the figures stated in the grant application. Actually, grant applications were formulated as if Kibera residents would rush into buying Peepoople toilet bags. Applications were based on figures generated during the field tests that had taken place in 2007 and 2008. Such tests, according to Kibera residents, had produced highly exaggerated results.

... the donors come with a lot of evaluations and then we also try to make it sell, to sell it to the people in the community. This creates a pressure for the Peepoople Kenya to constantly increase sales volume. So, we look every week how many Peepoople toilets have been sold in the community according to our target that we have in the work plan with the donors. They usually ask: "why are you doing this?" Why are you not achieving this target?" Whatever you have written in the proposal, saying that maybe: "I want to reach four thousand daily users of Peepoople toilets", that means sales will have to go high for people to use Peepoople toilets. So, when they come to the community, they look at the records you have. If you stated that you would reach four thousand but you were only able to reach two thousand users, they ask "why are you not reaching four thousand?" (Peepoople Kenyan Office Worker, interview, 2015-02-01).

To try to address what seemed to be the surprisingly low demand for the product, the Kibera salesladies were advised to create a debt system for their customers: a debt system through which the toilets were expected to be sold faster and more easily. Peepoople founders believed that this

would create an incentive for the increased use and purchase of toilet bags. Based on this assumption, Kibera residents received two rolls of toilet bags (each with 25 bags), as explained by one of the vendors.

Because the people were telling, the people in the crowd were telling us “this thing is so expensive”. So [leaders of Peepoople] told us “you can give for the credit, just give and then they pay back.” So, we started to give them and so they would pay back (Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-09).

This also meant that debt management became part of the Peepoople business model. This new feature of the business model completely changed how the local female entrepreneurs established and maintained relations with Kibera residents as customers.

I was trained by a girl called Sandra. She trained me on how to do the sales. By then we had a system whereby we used to sell by credit. We used to walk from house to house. You leave the Peepoople toilets. You... first of all you teach them what the Peepoople is. Teach them a bit about hygiene and then you leave the Peepoople toilets and then you come and collect money (Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-07).

With the credit system in place, the Peepoople increased its sales volume and gradually started meeting the targets set by Peepoople’s leaders and donors. Nonetheless, solving one problem created two other issues: a) the fast increasing indebtedness of households towards the salesladies; b) the amount of money the salesladies owed to Peepoople Kenya. Consequently, the organization faced internal conflicts based on debt and a situation of mutual blaming between the salesladies and Peepoople Kenya office staff.

“... people were using the bags and not paying; the money was very tough on them. So the credit was so big, became so large, so large for each and every one. Me, myself, my credit, I was the one who had least credit but some women had even more than 100,000 bags. People had a lot! Me, I had 38,000 in credit, at the outside. So it was very hard! You are teaching, you are mobilizing, you are selling, you are doing everything but, all the same; the toilets which were going out were many and the money coming back was very little (Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-09).

Sales managers at Peepoople Kenya started blaming the micro-entrepreneurs for causing failures in the business model. There developed a growing suspicion that the salesladies were not reporting their sales of Peepoople toilet bags correctly. These women were also accused of creating fake customers in order to keep receiving the commission paid by Peepoople Kenya.

They [the Peepoople Kenya management] were saying that there were some people [salesladies] who were given the money [debt payments for the toilets] and they were just using the money. They did not bring the money to the office. That is why the debt became very large. We were burdened, the salesladies were burdened, really burdened. In Peepoople Kenya, those who were near Camilla, they were just sitting free. They were just enjoying the money. Doing nothing! And when Camilla comes, they just tell her “the salesladies are not working!” They used to tell her that way “the salesladies are not working!” They were calling us. Sometimes I was in bed and they would call and say “where are you? Have you got up?” And when Camilla would come, she was told “oh! The salesladies are not working!” (Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-09).

The female sales staff received the blame for failures in the implementation of Peepoople’s business model. This model was essentially translated into slums and based on inappropriate market driven economic principles by a foreign organization that had located its automated manufacturing operation, based on a cost benefit analysis of production efficiencies, in Europe. More bags were being made than slum residents could afford to buy.

This blaming was also reflected in how they were presented in the public sphere internationally. In an article written for the digital platform Digital Development Debates, Camilla Wirseen stated that "... in order to receive more commission, some saleswomen have invented fake customers or have not reported actual payments to Peepoople Kenya." She referred to this practice as "corruption": dishonest conduct which challenged the success of Peepoople in Kenya. She added that "... corruption is a huge problem in Kenyan society" (Camilla Wirseen in Digital Development Debates, accessed in 2020-04-01). Yet there were some very practical reasons why these salesladies were unable to recoup the finances incurred through attempting to place the poor in debt.

Customers Move

By distributing the toilet bags through the debt system, the micro-entrepreneurs faced yet another challenge, namely the fact that some customers moved out of their houses before they paid for the product. The fact that many Kibera residents are constantly moving in and out of the settlement was not taken into account in Peepoople's business model for slums.

Sometimes you could sell to somebody here and then the next, or the next week you find out that she is not there again... They move! So if somebody moves, you can't get her in Kibera. That was the problem. Sometimes you sell for the wife and the husband comes another month and he says "you have to go up country!" Now the husband cannot pay the money. That is the problem! (Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-09).

The above mentioned challenges which the local micro-entrepreneurs faced were related to the widespread idea in Kibera that NGOs are wealthy organizations, already profiting from Kibera's residents. The main idea behind the business model for slums has always been that Peepoople would make profits from the fertilizers derived from slum dwellers' human waste. This reinforced the local perception that social entrepreneurs and social enterprise staff are the main beneficiaries of the NGO sector. Slum dwellers believe that, instead of paying for toilets bags, they should get paid to provide Peepoople with their human waste.

They expected the bags to be for free because they think: once you start making the fertilizer we [Peepoople] will earn a lot of money from the fertilizer. So, they don't see why... they feel like they are helping [Peepoople] with their poo... That aspect of us getting their poo, they think we make money from it so they don't expect to pay for the bag. You have to make someone understand that it is actually helping them, not us. Yeah! So I think that was where the challenge was, us making someone understand that the bag is helping them (Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-07).

Peepoople's for profit approach itself reinforced the idea for slum dwellers that they should get paid to provide Peepoople with their human waste. On the other hand, salesladies blamed Peepoople's founders and project managers for assuming that the number of daily users of the toilet bags would grow more quickly than was actually realistic. According to them, the targets put forward by Peepoople AB did not take into consideration the local perceptions about NGOs

and the slum dwellers' low and unpredictable incomes. This moved the emphasis on income generation back to more of a focus on donors and external fundraising.

Donors when Products don't Sell

When you are working with the bottom of the pyramid you need time to wait and most people cannot afford to do that... When you create a system [the Peepoople business] you need time for that system to take roots... People will not believe in it, users will not believe in it... (Manager at Peepoople Kenya, interview, 2015-02-05).

According to the informant quoted above, it took at least 5 years for the Peepoople business model to become established. In contrast to that, he lamented that the project's most important donors had tended to pressure the organization in Kenya for results measured on a yearly, monthly and, sometimes even, weekly basis. Good relations with donors were also important because Peepoople Kenya kept growing in its number of employees and the toilet bags distributed. This put pressure on its founders and managers to constantly search for new sources of funds. Employees at Peepoople Kenya perceived fundraising as quite intense and complex, in particular the application processes. Fundraising continued to demand more time also from those employees who also worked in 'the field' with the implementation of Peepoople business model in Kibera.

Applying, receiving and reporting results is complicated. It takes substantial lead time to apply for funds and then get applications approved. It also requires continuous work with sources of support which are constantly changing their policies for development aid and so-called "social impact assessment" (Peepoople Kenyan Office Worker, interview, 2015-02-01). While applying for grants from Vinnova in 2009, Peepoople's leaders set the goal of "reaching 1 million people in urban slums by 2012". Such a goal was based on the "high user acceptance" shown during "the successful field tests" carried out in 2008 and 2009 in Kibera and Bangladesh (Peepoople ansökan till Vinnova, Miljöinnovationer, 2009-10-22, diarienummer 2009-04400). According to foreign and Kenyan informants, donors from public agencies are the most demanding ones.

You cannot rely on them! For instance, Peepoople is a well-established project and Sida and the Swedish Embassy in Nairobi appreciate it but still it is not given that they will continue to support us. Applying for funds takes time. It takes between six months and up to one year to do that. Once you have applied, receiving the funds also takes time. The money does not come straight away... (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-10-14, my translation).

Once funds were granted, Peepoople Kenya purchased toilet bags from the organization's headquarters in Sweden. This meant, among other things, that in order to deliver the products in Kibera the organization had to pay import taxes to Kenyan authorities, which made the product more expensive. Promoting a Swedish export while 'saving lives' had a price also when managers of Peepoople Kenya tried to convince other donors to keep supporting the

organization. Being a product made in Sweden made fundraising more complicated. Some donors criticized the idea of promoting Swedish exports through their funds. This was raised by a sales manager in Kibera who said that some donors:

... want to see the impact of the project. But fundraising in general is not easy. Even the fact that the [Peepoople toilet bags] are produced in Sweden and imported to Kenya may lead some donors to ask: “aren’t we in fact promoting Swedish exports? We [foundations, NGOs and international aid organizations] may be criticized for doing that.” So, some donors may question that [form of export subsidy] or deny funds for us based on that (Sales manager, Peepoople Kenya, interview, 2015-02-01).

The dependency on what has been described as complex, unreliable and unstable donor arrangements was aggravated by the decreasing amount of capital per applicant provided by many of Peepoople’s most important financial supporters. Even governmental donors are more frequently inclined to act as private investors, ‘spreading the risk’ by involvement in a larger number of projects but granting smaller amounts of capital for each. Thus, more of Peepoople’s resources were directed towards bureaucratic work such as grant applications, impact assessment and regular results reporting. It is understood that donors focus their funds on projects with easily quantifiable and scalable ‘social impact’, which put a pressure on Peepoople Kenya to measure its organizational performance by assessing the numbers of daily users of Peepoople bags in Kibera. This effectively meant donors were imposing demands for fast results for problems that some Peepoople managers perceived as quite difficult to address with short term approaches.

So also, now that we are raising funds for our projects it becomes more hectic because you have to do the normal work and also you have to write proposals. So, it becomes a bit tricky for you to balance everything together (Peepoople Kenya manager, interview, 2015-02-01).

To cope with the increasing complexity of this fundraising work, Peepoople employees had to balance their role of assisting local communities with its products together with activities related to applying for grants. They were pressured to operate and “be innovative” (Peepoople Kenya manager, interview, 2015-02-01) in fields such as advocacy, grants management, charitable fundraising and impact assessment so as to manage conformity with the norms set by foundations, private donors and international and governmental development aid agencies. This entailed the handling multiple (sometimes diverging) demands set by various actors supporting Peepoople. This created a demand for office staff with the skills to establish and maintain good relationships with both donors and slum dwellers. These relationships were based on the idea, often presented by the organization’s founders, that local demand for Peepoople toilet bags was very high.

When the Peepoo project was first tested in Kibera, user acceptance was very high. Planning for the project was supported by Simavi and Aqua for All, two Dutch NGOs. The Swedish Government fund Vinnova granted Peepoople 750,000 euros for a large-scale launch project in Kenya and one in Bangladesh. In 2011 Simavi received 1.6 million Euro from the Dutch Post Code Lottery to support the launch project in Kibera (Camilla Wirseen, Digital Development Debates, www.digital-development-debates.org, accessed in 2020-04-09)

According to some micro-entrepreneurs and office employees, the stories which Peepoople leaders tell when they present the organization and apply for funds were based on exaggerated information about the demand for toilet bags in Kibera and unrealistic targets. While implementing the business model for slums in Kibera, Peepoople founders and managers realized they could not reach the target of daily users they had stated in such presentations and funding applications. With that in mind, the pressure on Peepoople Kenya for faster growth (measured mainly in the reported number of daily users) was increased. Consequently, the so-called ‘Dutch family’, one of Peepoople Kenya’s main donors, cut its funding.

Every single person who is working in the social sector that I have met, they are coming from the US, or Sweden, or somewhere, with a lot of money. They spend a lot of money. When they are in trouble with their donors, now they need to be able to say something... Something we have experienced with Peepoople when they were threatened. The donation was being taken away. I had to go all the way to Holland and plead to those guys to give me... and can you believe that they gave me a month? In a short term “let’s see what you can do in a month and let’s review it”. This was a very difficult time (manager at Peepoople Kenya worker, interview, 2015-02-05).

Charity in a Business Model

When Peepoople Kenya was launched in Kibera in 2010, its leaders were trying to sell the toilet bags to slum residents and the Peepoople fertilizers to Kenyan farmers. After several failed attempts to sell the bags to Kibera residents, the local salesladies started approaching private schools in the settlement, initially on credit. As had happened with the Kibera residents, the schools’ owners claimed to be unable to afford to pay for the toilet bags. On the other hand, Peepoople leaders realized that it was easier to get the schoolchildren to use the Peepoople bags than to sell to households. Charity gradually started influencing Peepoople’s business model for slums.

So, then we made an experiment with schools first, in which we built this kind of soak pits where you can pee in, for the boys and for the girls. There we had a girl who worked for Oxfam who was very knowledgeable about it and she taught us about how to build those toilets. And then we tried this and it worked so good and then we started well... Because we had a hard time selling Peepoople toilets out there in the community we realized that it was very easy getting children to use it. So we thought "ok, then maybe we will start this as a charity instead, starting with children, the children might pressure their parents to buy the toilets so that it can be a way to create awareness" (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-10-14, my translation).

By creating a school program, Camilla Wirseen and Peepoople Kenya managers inserted the discourse of charity into Peepoople’s business model in Kibera. The organization provided free toilet facilities and bags for around twenty thousand school children. This change demanded that Peepoople in Kenya and Sweden (Peepoople AB) operated partly as a charitable fundraising organization. It was, however, much more difficult to find financial supporters for the school program than it was for the earlier Peepoople business model. Charity was not apparently trendy

enough among donors. Still, Peepoople's leaders used the higher acceptance in the school program to meet the target by which donors evaluated their results: the number of daily users.



Peepoople toilet facilities built in one of Kibera's private schools

Numbers are important in Peepoople's daily work determining to what extent the organization can maintain good relations with supporters and gain support from prospective partners. Numbers are often conflated with social impact and many of those employed at Peepoople Kenya have their work performance evaluated on the basis of impact in numerical terms. Local office workers often mention how they work with daily assessments and reporting of the number toilet bags sold, the number of used toilets returned to Peepoople Kenya and the number of people attending social events organized by Peepoople. This, some of these workers argue, help the organization gaining good reputation, especially among donors. However, some of these workers respond to external and internal pressure for social impact in numerical terms by manipulating and exaggerating the numbers presented in reports.

So, I've been [working for founders of Peepoople] for like 5 years. It has not been bad but, on my side, there are things that I could not tell [them]. Maybe people would come to me and tell me "you are always with [founders of Peepoople] some people are fixing the numbers in the project." They would tell you... you go to schools and they will tell you that they have collected this amount of Peepoos but it is not this amount, just to impress the record or even to hike some money. People were used to being given money for different types of activities. So, I would tell them "ok! For me, I can't tell! It is for them [founders of Peepoople] to find out what is going on."

Researcher: What was the reason for them to fix the numbers of Peepoople?

Money! The only thing that can make someone cheat on that organization is money! Even like... if they wanted to go for a training somewhere in a school and the school has 20 children. They would be given lunch for those kids, just to motivate them, not like paying them, but buying bread and sodas for the 20 kids. Now if the people involved, if they would say 50 children, the school has 50 kids. They would be given money for how many kids?! 50 kids!! And then they would buy the stuff for 20 kids. The money for the other 30 would go in the pocket (Peepoople employee, interview, 2015-02-05).

Under increasing pressure to increase the reported number of daily users in Kibera, employees at Peepoople Kenya tried to increase the use of toilet bags in schools. Accordingly, they told schoolchildren to take the toilet bags to their homes if the children did not have to use the toilet

at school. This way, some schools kept the number of daily users up. This created a conflict between the charity model (fully implemented in the schools) and the Peepoople business model for slums.

There was a time when they came and they were to give Peepoople toilets for free to the schools. It was a time when the use of toilets decreased because let's say that I have three children, and I used to buy bags for them. But now in schools they are given the toilets for free. How can I buy [from the salesladies] Peepoople bags for them again? You see? (Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-09).

Researcher: But I thought that the children were given the [Peepoople] toilet bags only while they were in school.

Yeah... but in the evenings, some teachers give it to the children. "Go home with them!" And after you see the children are carrying the used Peepoople bags back to the schools: because they wanted the register to be full, because they have to count the toilets. They give it to the children "go home use this one and come with it back to school" (Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-09).

Salesladies Leave

The fact that Peepoople Kenya was formally registered (and known by Kibera dwellers) as an NGO made it more difficult for the local saleswomen to explain to other Kibera residents why the product should not be given for free. In this sense, the female local entrepreneurs faced difficulties not only selling the toilets but also due to negative reactions from slum dwellers.

You see it is not realistic. So, they were just taking, taking, taking... So, when you go to collect the debt they say like "no! This is a NGO! You are supposed to give these things for free. You are not supposed to ask for money from us" so it created a lot of problems at that time (Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-07).

As result of the organization's decreasing legitimacy as perceived by important donors and due to the blame ascribed to those in charge of implementing the business model, leaders of Peepoople changed the payment method for the local salesladies. In an attempt to foster a more proactive target-oriented attitude among the ladies, the organization implemented a payment system based solely on commission. This was mainly based on the assumption that the initial system (with a steady monthly salary plus a commission based on the number of toilet bags sold) did not create a constant push towards increased sales. Once in place, the new payment system created further tension between salesladies and Peepoople Kenya's office employees.

The salesladies interpreted the new payment system as unfair, unstable and discriminatory towards them, as they were the only employees of Peepoople Kenya paid by commissions based on their capacity to sell higher volumes of Peepoople toilet bags. This new sales system only rewarded the salesladies based on the number of toilet bags sold, leaving the work related to community hygiene promotion unpaid. This was also perceived as unfair by the salesladies, bearing in mind that the time and energy spent on community work was not insignificant.

We worked so hard and we, the salesladies, were paid just little money. And we were working a lot and these people who were not working were being paid 16,000, 17,000 and 18,000 [Kenyan shillings]. And sometimes you looked at them and say "hey! Why am I working this way?" You know, the women had

a basic salary at first so when that salary was completely removed, they were very angry about it. Because you know selling Peepoople toilets is not an easy task. So [the salesladies] became very hostile (Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-09).

When I met the saleslady quoted above (by the end of January 2015) she was no longer working for Peepoople Kenya. She was sitting on a small bench, selling vegetables in Kibera. She told me that, after facing problems selling and being paid for Peepoople toilet bags, she had decided to drop out of the project. A striking aspect of my conversation with this lady was her level of disappointment, bitterness and suspicion towards 'NGOs' (as Kibera residents tend to call all aid organizations operating in Kibera). Peepoople Kenya was the first and only NGO that she had ever worked for. After one and a half year trying to sell the toilet bags, she had left the organization. Her experiences with the project seemed to have strengthened her prejudices against the NGO sector as a whole. After 26 years living in Kibera, she told me that she was looking forward to creating a new business selling shoes. With the shoe business, she would finally be able to afford to move back to the place that she so nostalgically called home, Kisumu, the third largest city in Kenya.

Social Mobility in Peepoople

Local Kibera residents who worked for Peepoople seemed to share positive views of foreign led organizations in the settlement. I often heard personal 'success' stories being related to the employment opportunities created by Peepoople. Like other local NGO workers, Peepoople local employees often associated the act of getting 'an NGO job' with notions of 'successfulness', 'empowerment' and the 'good life'. It is noteworthy, nonetheless, how these informants seldom talked about the benefits of the solutions they were delivering to their neighbour's. Instead, they seem more inclined to stress the benefits of having a job at organizations like Peepoople.

The NGOs are helping. Most of the NGOs employ people from Kibera so they are helping us so much. Let me include myself. It is not like I don't come from there. They help us so much.

Researcher: How do NGOs help people in Kibera?

Most of them work for NGOs. That is the truth. Because they are so many NGOs in Kibera and they employ people from there. They don't get people from outside. That is good. They are helping people... they employ people from Kibera. They empower people with this (Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-08).

While leaders and supporters of Peepoople constantly stressed the 'life saving' importance of having a toilet, Kibera residents were quite united in the view of gaining empowerment by becoming employed by foreign social entrepreneurs. Based on these accounts, I started looking into social markers of what they called 'empowerment' and the employment track record of informants prior to and after their work at Peepoople. I began to check into their 'social mobility' i.e., their movement through social hierarchies derived by changes in occupations, status and economic situation (Goffman, [1959] 1969). What is presented in this section is some evidence

of the changes encountered by some of the individuals who worked for Peepoople. Firstly, is some evidence of social change in the people whose lives and mind sets Peepoople was supposed to 'change' and 'improve', namely, the salesladies.

Although some salesladies seemed to be discontented with their salaries and occupations, there was one who proves that there was room for upward social mobility through Peepoople. This informant told me how, after three months working for Peepoople as a 'micro- entrepreneur', she had become employed as one of 'the office people'. Her role as administrative assistant was not entirely based on her efforts as a micro-entrepreneur, according to other informants. It was mainly due to her ability to align her narratives to what she believed leaders of the organization want to hear. Her looks also mattered. She was perceived as 'attractive' and 'camera friendly' and often came across as a strong woman. She spoke English well and the fact she had started dating one of Peepoople's managers was critical to her professional development. After three years working for Peepoople she also became a manager, in another foreign led NGO delivering sanitation solutions for people in Kibera.

There were other Kibera residents facing downwards social mobility through the organization. One used to be the manager at Peepoople Kenya. This person had previous work experience in the humanitarian field volunteering for local aid organizations, including youth projects in Kibera. In Peepoople, he had quickly become "the one who called the shots when the [Swedish] boss was not around" (Peepoople employee and Kibera resident, interview, 2016-05-02). For this person, becoming one of the 'office people' and/or 'a manager' also had to do with 'personal relationships'.

This particular person was noticed by several other local informants as becoming a manager of Peepoople based on his love affair with a Peepoople leader. This personal relationship also influenced how he interacted with other Kibera residents and Peepoople employees. An informant explained to me how this manager exploited the relationship in order to earn money as a sort of 'secret middleman' between Peepoople Swedish staff and Kenyan service providers.

He was exploiting [the cab driver]! That I heard from [the cab driver] himself. [Founders of Peepoople] could not know the prices because it was like [their] first time here. Like he would take 9,000 shillings from [them] and it happens to a lot of white people here, if you get the wrong company or the wrong people. They might charge you something like 400 shillings, but if you are white in Kibera they will tell you that it is 800 shillings. If it is 300, they will tell you that it is 900. So like when [a Swedish manager of Peepoople] was dating [him], he used to take all the cash, [he] was the one calling all the shots, like he would tell [the Swedish Peepoople manager] "your ride for today, was 9,000 shillings", and then he would give the driver 3,000 and keep the rest of the cash for himself (Peepoople Kenya employee, interview, 2016-05-02).

He was able to manage and informally profit from Peepoople for three years before his corrupt schemes were discovered by the organization's founders. His personal relationships with a Swedish manager of Peepoople was not the only reason why his schemes remain unnoticed and

unpunished. The fact that Peepoople founders do not live in Kenya, argued one of my informants, enabled this manager to fake several reports (e.g. hours worked by the local staff, budgets, number of people attending workshops and sales reports) and act as an informal middleman, over-invoicing other leaders of Peepoople and, sometimes, getting a 200% cut of all products and services provided by locals.

In his own words the informant stated “things get tricky when the bosses are not around” (Peepoople employee and Kibera resident, interview, 2016-05-02). Other Peepoople employees were willing to tell on him but too afraid of the consequences. The continuation of their relatively well paid employment would likely be jeopardized if they reported what this manager was doing wrong. It was only after village elders decided to tell on him and, his love affair with the Swedish manager ended, that he faced downward social mobility. This downward movement was gradual: he first was reassigned to a lower status job with lower pay and, after the manager he used to date also lost her job, he was fired.

He was reduced. Well... [the Swedish manager] thought that this thing was not good for the project, the relationship with [him]. So, she stopped dating [him]. After some time [he] and [she] were off. And he was like reduced to ... ‘something manager’. After that the project went on and it gets to the point, I have told you, [the Swedish manager] being fired by the board. Problems at Peepoople, something like this. Peepoople thought that they would reduce the budget, people who were not doing much at the organization should be reduced so [he] was one of them so he faced the axe (Peepoople Kenya employee, interview, 2016-05-02).

I met the above mentioned manager the first time in January 2015. He was then transitioning from a “something manager” to being unemployed. The term “something manager” seemed somewhat comic but not entirely inappropriate here. This was mainly because he turned out to be one of those managers at Peepoople Kenya who ‘does something’ that not even he could explain. When I asked him what he did I often got answers such as “I empower people”. Asking for examples of how one goes about ‘empowering people’ led to similarly obscure answers: “I meet people and empower them”. Sometimes such answers were provided after up to 40 seconds of thoughtful silence. The best information I could get from him was about his journey as a Kibera resident, youth leader and through different foreign led organizations. He was also more prone to talk about what other people did at Peepoople. He also mentioned that he had never really been interested in sanitation issues. While recalling his professional experience at Peepoople Kenya, he spoke about how embarrassing it was for ‘a man like him’ (whatever that means) to be seen by others as working with human waste.

The last time I met him, in May 2016, he had been unemployed for almost a year. He showed signs of physical and psychological deterioration. These signs seemed to be associated with a combination of financial issues and heavy daily drinking. He told me how he was unsuccessfully trying to get a job in other foreign led NGOs in Nairobi. He attributed his lack of success to his

lack of ‘friends’ in the field but some of the informants who knew him told me that he had earned a bad reputation in the field.

In similar vein, some local employees argued that employment and professional opportunities in organizations like Peepoople often has little to do with honest hard work, education and professional expertise. Like in many other organizations in Kibera, looks and personal relationships were likely to determine if and how fast locals could get employed or become a manager or one of ‘the office people’ in organizations. It also seemed to determine what positions within the organization certain individuals acquired. This is one aspect of the everyday life in foreign led organizations which Kibera residents openly talk about but it is often absent in the social entrepreneurship stories presented in the public sphere. A further silence is around the inevitable rivalry among such organizations when they operate in the same area.

Competition for Sanitation



A Peepoople Toilet facility in Kibera

It is clear that Peepoople was and is operating in a slum which is internationally recognized and has gained some fame. As such, Kibera not only offers ‘strategic advantages’ (as often pointed out by the organization’s founders) to social entrepreneurs. It is also quite competitive. There is a concentration of organizations offering products and services similar to what Peepoople delivers.

...in Kibera that are times where you can find NGOs distributing food stuff, one NGO is paying for kids’ fees, one NGO is delivering sanitation so [Kibera residents] all want these things for free because, if you look at the sanitation aspect, Peepoople we are delivering sanitation then there is another NGO that builds latrines in the community as well as in the schools and it is for free. They just build, they construct and they leave for the people in the community own it and take care of it. So that is what they expect from NGOs (saleslady, interview, 2015-02-07).

Around one hundred meters from the Peepoople toilets shown in the picture above, there were facilities from yet another organization: Kounkuey Design Initiative (which locals call by its

acronym, KDI). This organization offered ‘pay as you go’ toilets for people living in Kibera. It also turned human waste into fertilizer. The waste was stored and transported in big detachable boxes placed under the toilet facilities.



KDI toilet facilities in Kibera

The boxes were easily removed, functioning as drawers through which the human waste was transported. Like Peepoople, KDI was also attempting to offer toilets to Kibera residents with a business model. Both Peepoople and KDI toilets captured in the pictures above were placed around the same school. The overlapping of sanitation solutions like these Peepoople and KDI was and remains quite visible in Kibera and involves organizations from several countries such as Norway, France, United States, Holland and Denmark.

Social entrepreneurs studied here make little or no reference to the fact that sanitation solutions compete with each other in Kibera. Instead, they present Kibera residents as poor people who, due to the lack of sanitation in the settlement, will miss school, get sick and even get raped. It is difficult, if not impossible, to convince audiences of the high demand for a certain solution if everyone knows that there are several similar solutions already in place. On a few occasions, actors working with Peepoople tried to present toilet bags as a serious competitor to traditional toilets. Unlike pit latrines, for instance, Peepoople toilet bags are odourless and don't attract insects. However, the responses to these propositions were generally negative. Actors such as government agencies and sanitation experts endorsed toilet bags, not as a replacement for traditional toilets, but as a solution for those who lacked access to traditional forms of sanitation.

An exaggerated construction of the high demand for sanitation in Kibera was needed. Thus, Peepoople was presented to one of its financial supporters as "... very important as there is a large shortage of latrines and toilets in Kenya" and even higher need for sanitation in Kibera where "...1-1.5 million people live" and "the lack of sanitation is a big health and environmental hazard" (Peepoople ansökan till Tillväxtverket, DemoMiljö, 2009-03-18, diarienummer 652-

2009-00913). In a similar vein (although with diverging information about the number of residents), KDI presented Kibera as follows:

Home to around 250,000 residents, Kibera is characterized by crowded conditions, a lack of waste disposal and sanitation services, high unemployment and crime rates and severe flooding. Yet despite these economic, social and environmental challenges, Kibera also has many assets: entrepreneurship, a strong social fabric, and extensive community activism (www.kounkuey.org, accessed in 2020-04-09).

Sitting Allowances

The concentration of organizations such as Peepoople and KDI in Kibera created a market for workshop attendance. The salesladies attending Peepoople entrepreneurship training sessions received money to do so. These were referred to as ‘sitting allowances’ which were calculated on the number of hours they spent on each Peepoople session and/or workshop. Even the residents who participated in the hygiene workshops received such sitting allowances. The price of sitting allowances is based on the status of each individual attending the events organized by Peepoople. The higher up in the local social hierarchy, the higher the sitting allowance. In practice, this means that local leaders, such as chiefs and elders, are supposed to receive more in sitting allowances than ordinary attendees. For Peepoople and all NGOs, it is important to respect the local social hierarchy by keeping payments to local leaders higher than for any other individuals. It is an acknowledgement of their position within the settlement.

Sitting allowances are not only a payment for attendance at events. They can also be given to locals who tell foreigners what they want to hear. Locals expect them if imagery of organizational activities are produced during such events. In some cases, receiving sitting allowances implies telling stories that are ‘catchy’ to audiences abroad. Receiving sitting allowances implies telling how life has changed since solutions, such as Peepoople, have been delivered in the settlement. Sitting allowances were not created by Peepoople. This was a well-established practice in Kibera before Peepoople leaders decided to deliver their product to the settlement. Attendees of Peepoople events were used to getting money for going to events organized by other organizations. With Peepoople, it would not be any different.

Some of those receiving sitting allowances to attend Peepoople events did implicitly agree to endorse the organization and acted as grateful as possible. One’s level of expressed gratitude was more important when filming and photo sessions were taking place. It was also important to give good impressions in front of the cameras because, by doing so, the attendees would increase chances of getting apparently hired at future events. There was even a chance of become hired as one of the privileged and well paid so-called ‘office people’. In fact, most of Peepoople’s office employees were perceived as having a ‘strong character’ and ‘presence in front of the

cameras'. The ones in the highest positions within the Peepoople Kenya office were often perceived 'good speakers' and 'camera friendly'.

In an internet newspaper, I read about the practice of paying for attendance in workshops in Kibera. This was right after my second fieldwork experience in Kibera in September 2016. The American journalist, Dan Bobkoff, illustrated the practice of sitting allowances, using Peepoople hygiene workshops as the main example, which was unsurprising in itself. What was rather astonishing was who the journalist interviewed: the Kenyan Member of Parliament Ken Okoth and an employee from KDI, Ibrahim Maina. Okoth:

The majority of NGOs came to Kibera in the last decade, following post-election violence and the AIDS epidemic. But as Okoth tells it, many of these groups don't have much to offer. "There's only 50 times you can teach somebody how to wash their hands. So we have NGOs calling people saying, 'Come, we'll teach you the importance of hand-washing.' So if I'm broke and bored I'll come to listen to you," Okoth said (Bobkoff, 2016-08-25, accessed in 2016-09-22).

I would like to remind the reader that Ken Okoth is the same Kenyan politician who publicly endorsed Peepoople three years earlier. In 2013, Ken Okoth was filmed walking side by side with one of the founders of Peepoople and the Swedish ambassador in Kenya during a visit to one of Peepoople's school projects in Kibera. In Bobkoff's report, however, Ken Okoth openly criticized NGOs for paying sitting allowances and for providing Kibera residents with services he deemed unnecessary. He seemed to have become a fierce critic of what NGOs (like Peepoople Kenya) were doing in Kibera, explaining that locals were "taking advantage of people who came to take advantage of them..." (Okoth cited in Bobkoff, 2016-08-25). Some Kenyan informants tell me in tones seemingly intended to justify the existence of sitting allowances by making statements such as "everybody is doing that" (Peepoople Kenya employee, interview, 2016-05-02). Ironically, most of the informants who spoke about this claimed this practice was most common among politicians such as Ken Okoth himself.

By stating that "there's only 50 times you can teach somebody how to wash their hands", Ken Okoth wrongly attributed the demand for sitting allowances to a notion of obsolescence in the kind of training people receive from organizations such as Peepoople. This comment is misleading mainly because sitting allowances are required from local actors no matter what kind of knowledge is being transferred during courses and workshops. By stating that "...if I am broke and bored, I'll come and listen to you", he also wrongly associated sitting allowances with a lack of income or not having anything to do.

In doing so, he neglected the fact that sitting allowances are also very common among attendees with well paid jobs and professional interests invested in participation in education programs (in the previous chapter, local healthcare professionals were stated to require sitting allowances from actors organizing healthcare education programs). This applies to all kinds of educational opportunity. For example, a Kenyan IT engineer and founder of an organization

funded by foreign donors to provide Kenyan civil servants and politicians with IT training confirmed sitting allowances were common. Even though IT is regarded by the attendees as involving valuable skills, he still had to pay for these workers to attend his courses, adding that attendees in higher positions tended to demand greater sitting allowances.

In the same article quoted above, a local KDI employee reportedly brought Bobkoff to one of the workshops where NGOs pay sitting allowances. The article includes pictures of the Peepoople logo painted at the facility where the workshop was taking place in Kibera.

And eventually, we arrive at a two story building. The sign outside reads: PeePoople. It's an NGO. "We advocate strongly on handwashing," says Medina Abakar, the manager of the Peepoo Community Programme in Kibera. The group offers biodegradable toilets in addition to its hygiene lessons. Yes, she says, they pay the locals to come (Bobkoff, 2016-08-25, accessed in 2016-09-22).

I will never know how, and to what extent, the journalist quoted above was related to KDI. His news report seemed to suffer from a certain bias towards KDI. Bobkoff showed how KDI had improved the life of 'a professional attendee' by providing him with 'a real job'. Bobkoff portrayed the life of a Kibera resident who used to be 'one of them' (a professional attendee), living on attendance in NGO events. But with the creation of KDI in Kibera:

Maina has a real job now. He works for Kounkuey Design Initiative, one of the few groups that does not pay the sitting fees (Bobkoff, 2016-08-25, accessed in 2016-09-22).

It is noticeable how the journalist constantly contrasted KDI with Peepoople by showing how purportedly corrupting Peepoople was in relation to organizations such as Red Cross and KDI. Some local informants told me that organizations such as Peepoople and KDI both have to pay local school principals to have their toilets around the school facilities. During my fieldwork in Kibera, I was reminded several times that having a project in schools was not simply a matter of 'trust' nor of offering 'a good product'. One had to pay in order to gain access to facilities in Kibera. None of my local informants seemed to believe that any organization could operate in Kibera without paying for access and endorsements from residents, chiefs and local leaders.

Financial Viability

Due to a lack of financial viability, Peepoople AB will close its operations in Sweden. Peepoople Kenya will however continue its operations and the possibility of re-establishing local production in Nairobi is currently being explored. The decision to close down Peepoople AB comes as a result of a dramatically changed situation in the distribution of aid funds, which has affected Peepoople's customers and projects. For further information, please contact: Anders Pihl, CEO, Björn Algvist, Chairman (Peepoople, press release, 2015-11-20).

It was through the above press release that I came to know that Peepoople AB was going to be discontinued in Sweden. Its leaders decided to again set up the local manufacture of Peepoople toilet bags in Kibera. By the beginning of 2017, this was supposed to be in place, producing five thousand toilets per day. The local production was aimed at supplying the Peepoople School Program with toilet bags. The Peepoople business model for slums—an organizational feature

which, according to many informants, as shown in Sections 6.7 and 6.9, had attracted attention and support from powerful actors in this field—was no longer used to distribute toilet bags in Kibera. Leaders of Peepoople gave up on the idea of implementing a ‘business model for slums’ and selling such toilet replacements altogether. The Peepoople patent and brand was handed over to International Aid Services (IAS): a non-profit organization founded by a Swedish missionary. IAS has programs in ten countries including Sudan, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania and Kenya.

Leif Zetterlund and his family had worked for several years in a government-controlled Juba and had seen the plight of the people. There was Sudan’s Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) who fought for independence, while the LRA (Lord Resistance Army) was active further south towards the Ugandan border, whose troops kidnapped children and forced them to become soldiers. The desperation was great and the people lacked basic necessities like water, food and clothes. At the same time, many aid agencies left Juba. “Something must be done” said Leif and IAS was launched on New Years Eve 1989, whose acronym originally was short for International Aid Sweden. IAS started to send relief items via Uganda to Yei and Kajo Keji and even back then the organization was driven by the words: Need, Injustice, and that no one is responding to the calls of the population (International Aid Services America, <http://www.ias-america.org/>, accessed in 2020-04-22).

Although Peepoople did not reach the much celebrated ‘commercial sustainability’ once proposed by Anders Wilhelmson, the organization had some funds left to finance a few of its charitable operations in Kibera schools. It was unclear to me what happened with the high speed Peepoople machine located in Stockholm. For one of Peepoople’s previous shareholders, the purchase of this machine marked the beginning of the end for the organization in its business form. This was because of the large amount of economic capital used in its purchase and the speculated high demand that never actually materialized. By having a machine producing toilet bags in Sweden, she added, Peepoople disregarded a critical feature of its social mission: creating work opportunities in the countries where the solution was supposed to be delivered.

For some employees, Peepoople’s decline was caused by a lack of funds and turnover of the products. After failing to develop a business model for slums in Kibera, Peepoople’s leaders seemed to be shifting the focus of the organization. The staff at Peepoople AB increased their efforts in trying to sell Peepoople toilet bags to humanitarian organizations addressing emergency and catastrophe situations. However, these organizations were not ordering the number of toilet bags expected by Peepoople shareholders. Some of these organizations purchased toilet bags only once. Camilla Wirseen told me how the staff of Peepoople AB should have approached such organizations that never placed orders again. She thought it was a mistake not to ask why organizations such as Oxfam in Great Britain did not continue to buy Peepoople toilet bags.

It hurts me a lot to see the current situation of Peepoople. I think we all should meet and discuss what we did wrong. Where we could have worked more. But I think that the CEO was not prepared to work in such a type of organization. None of the people working in the office in Sweden has any experience with socio-humanitarian work. Even when it was time to call possible buyers and try to sell the products, it was a big problem. The CEO used to start crying every time he got a no from somebody. You can’t

do that! You have to keep calling! You cannot give up! If clients stop buying our products, we should be calling them all the time to ask why they are not buying more.

I feel really sad. Still I did not put so much money into that project but I think that those like Anders who did put their own money must be really pissed off now. If it were me, I know that I would feel that way now (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2016-03-07, my translation).

Due to its lack of financial viability, the main owners of Peepoople decided to shut down toilet bag production in Sweden. However, the organization remained operative as an NGO in Kibera. Half of the staff in Peepoople Kenya was fired in 2015, including those local actors who were deemed important for the allegedly high levels of local acceptance the solution.

6.11 Summary

In this chapter, I have explored how social entrepreneurs gained the legitimacy necessary to create and sustain Peepoople in Sweden and in Kenya. Much of Peepoople's initial support and acclaim was based on the idea that it was possible to work for poverty alleviation by assisting the economically poor with toilet bags, entrepreneurship education and business models. The social entrepreneurs working with Peepoople had backgrounds and professional experiences which facilitated their access to support in the humanitarian field. These individuals, and their business oriented conceptions of social entrepreneurship, were supported by a variety of sources of legitimacy in this field, including government agencies in the West, foundations, the media, prize committees, NGOs and social networks. Some actors in Kibera played a crucial role in this process by confirming that there was a high demand for sanitation solutions and toilet bags. Some even exaggerated the role of sanitation in the settlement so as to ensure the creation of Peepoople in Kenya. In this storyline, sanitation was not only highly prioritized by slum dwellers. It was also going to solve wider socio-environmental problems by decreasing rape rates, increasing local health, decreasing pollution in rivers, fostering local entrepreneurship, making slum residents happier and contributing to food security.

While implementing Peepoople in Kenya, social entrepreneurs faced several challenges which undermined their much acclaimed business model for slums. The community lacked the income necessary to buy toilet bags. Although the lack of sanitation is perceived as problem in households, it is not a high priority keeping in mind other local problems such as the lack of affordable education, security and housing. In this context, the Peepoople toilet bags did not become a priority in these families' tight budgets.

The general lack of legitimacy faced by the 'NGO sector' also influenced perceptions of Peepoople negatively. Actors in the humanitarian field do improve the standards of living of Kibera residents. But they do it much more for those locals whom they employ than for the rest of the community. In Kibera, the widespread so-called 'NGO mentality' leads to a local unwillingness to pay for products and services delivered by humanitarian related organizations.

Not only were the social entrepreneurs involved in Peepoople unable to sell toilet bags in the settlement. On many occasions, they had to pay settlement residents to attend events. In this chapter, I have shown how actors involved in the creation of Peepoople gradually turned the organization into a charity until they completely abandoned the idea of a business model for slums in 2015. In the next chapter, I show in detail the implications this transition has had on the work of the co-founder of Peepoople, Camilla Wirseen, while creating another organization, the CUP Kenya.

Chapter VII: The CUP Kenya

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter I follow how Camilla Wirseen transitioned from the business models used in Peepoople to a traditional charity model in her new project, the CUP Kenya. Of particular interest are the implications of this transition on entrepreneurial legitimacy. Unlike the Peepoople case, the CUP Kenya project is based on a product that the organization has not developed. The CUP Kenya was created around the same period as I started my research at the Stockholm Business School in 2014. Therefore, it has been possible to follow this project from its inception and gain richer insights into the early stages of social entrepreneurial processes than for the Peepoople case.

The case study begins with Camilla Wirseen conceiving the problem she wants to address with the creation of the CUP Kenya. This is complemented with a history of menstrual cups and the role this plays in the work with the CUP Kenya product and a description of how funders of the CUP Kenya designed and negotiated organizational missions. Questions explored are: how do social entrepreneurs establish what aspects of social problems they will or will not focus on? How do they expand or limit the scope of their intervention? Following this are the details of Camilla Wirseen acquired the economic capital to create the CUP Kenya. This chapter also includes her process for the selection, training and management of her local staff and the process maintaining flows of support from donors. The chapter by showing how she created alternative sources of funds for her organization.

7.2 The Problem

About 2 years ago when I was visiting a slum in Nairobi, a journalist interviewed me and told me about the story¹¹ of teenage girls in Kibera who sell themselves in order to buy sanitary napkins. I was shocked and asked my team at Peepoople Kenya, who are all from Kibera, if it was true. “Yeah!” they answered, “that’s life!” Again, in shock... it is life that I am white and many of my friends are black, that I am born in Sweden and others are poor etc. But girls selling themselves for sanitary pads, aged 12-14!? No! It can’t be life! (Camilla Wirseen, 2014-12-18, interview, my translation).

The lack of menstrual management solutions in Kibera is similar to the issues Camilla Wirseen has tried to address with Peepoople. Furthermore, this previous experience enabled her to discuss taboos such as menstruation more easily. She stated that, after years talking about human waste (at Peepoople giving presentations) she could easily talk about menstrual problems and solutions. As quoted above, her awareness about the specific menstrual management problem in Kenya was raised through direct contacts with people working, visiting and living in Kibera.

¹¹News article: <http://www.voanews.com/content/in-nairobi-slums-sex-for-sanitation-139382973/159607.html>, accessed in 2016-05-03

Through these contacts, she started relating this menstrual management problem to other problems such as economic deprivation, untrustworthy teachers (see Section 7.6) and absent parenting.

They don't only avoid talking about topics that girls need to know but they are not there for them from early age. Love can sometimes translate into care; making sure someone is feeling good, is happy, in school, dressed properly and is warm enough (in Sweden this is what I constantly heard growing up, put on your hat and gloves). I am not saying that people living in poor environments are more evil in any way, it is just so challenging at times that parents don't have the energy to be there for their children the way we who live in this other rich world have. My estimate after having spoken to many is that about 50% of children are neglected while they grow up in these areas leaving especially girls during their teens desperately alone with problems that can affect their health, well being and future (Camilla Wirseen, LinkedIn, 2019-10-10).

In Kibera Wirseen not only gained knowledge about these problems. She also interacted with other actors trying to address these issues, learning more. For instance, she became acquainted with a foreign led organization attempting to introduce menstrual cups as a solution to what were described as the menstrual problems faced by teenage girls in Kibera. The organization was a self-styled 'social business' called Ruby Cup and, like Peepoople, it also tried to deliver its solution with a business model.

The Ruby project aims at facilitating empowerment and local growth for women in developing countries through providing an affordable and re-usable solution to the current challenges related to menstrual hygiene. The product we introduce is the Ruby Cup, which is made of medical grade silicone and can be re-used up to 5 years. It will be sold through local women vendors through a Micro Consignment Model. The business model for selling the Ruby Cup is based on low cost production and a distribution channel of local women entrepreneurs focusing on direct sales, women to women. Affordability is crucial when it comes to the base of the pyramid (BOP) sector and we have negotiated prices that will allow us to sell the product at 1/6 of the price of existing menstrual cup brands. The Ruby project will be launched in Kenya with a target market of 5-11 million girls and women from the BOP sector. Our global market counts all menstruating girls and women in developing countries living below \$8.22/day i.e. approximately 858 million (Ruby Cup's request for financial assistance from the Innovations Against Poverty (IAP) programme in support of an inclusive business project, Sida, 2012-11-05, diarienummer: 12015287).

Ruby Cup was founded in 2011 by Maxie Matthiessen (from Germany) and Veronica D'Souza and Julie Weigaard Kjær (from Denmark). The three founders met and started working together as students at the Copenhagen Business School. They were also users of the menstrual cup. On several occasions and various public platforms, Ruby Cup's founders were presented (and presented themselves) as social entrepreneurs. They were awarded several prizes for doing social business with passion and drive for creating social change. From Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency), Ruby Cup received US 160,000 dollars in 2012 which was granted as part of the so-called Innovation Against Poverty evaluated by business consultants from PricewaterhouseCoopers. According to Ruby Cup's founders, their organization met key Sida criteria including that it: 1) was commercially viable, and should grow and expand without the need for on-going subsidy (2) would deliver strong development benefits in a developing country (3) would leverage additional resources from the private sector through cash or in-kind investments alongside the IAP grant (4) was innovative in the local

context (Ruby Cup's request for financial assistance from the Innovations Against Poverty (IAP) programme in support of an inclusive business project, Sida, 2012-11-05, diarienummer: 12015287).

We first tried selling the cup at its original price which is 1800 Kenyan shillings but then no... very few people... many people were interested in having it but did not have the power of purchasing it. Then we lowered the price in some high-end areas we lowered it to 1500 Kenyan Shillings for the women so we could see it moving and then in low end areas we lowered it to 1000 Kenyan Shillings. But then also... the purchase power was also not good. And then we thought the product is not going around. The product was not marketed at that point. So, we decided to go to school girls. Talk to the girls about our product and give them at a lower price of 1000 shillings but few girls could afford. Some could not. So, I went back to the director and told her "there is a high demand for product. The purchasing power is low among the school girls. Most parents can afford 100 shillings, which is the equivalent of one sanitary pad, per month. So why don't we have a donation and put a social mission in the organization?" (Sales Manager at Ruby Cup Kenya, interview, 2015-01-29).

Ruby Cup conducted its pilot project during what they conceived of as "feasibility tests" in Kibera. They argued that the tests showed "great positive results" (Ruby Cup's request for financial assistance from the Innovations Against Poverty (IAP) programme in support of an inclusive business project, Sida, 2012-11-05, diarienummer: 12015287). As a purported social enterprise, Ruby Cup was trying to sell the menstrual cups in Kenya through what they said was "a direct sales model" (ibid): teaching local women to use and sell the menstrual cups in their own villages. Rates of user acceptance and willingness to buy were considered high during the feasibility tests. But, once launching the organization in Kenya, the leaders of Ruby Cup discovered that willingness and the ability to pay for the product was low among women in Kibera and in Kenya as a whole.

In several private schools in Kibera, representatives of Ruby Cup were actually required to pay to hold their informative sessions. Similarly, in the Kenyan countryside, local leaders demanded payments in order to accept the project in their villages. After facing difficulties making Kibera residents pay for the menstrual cups in Kibera, Ruby Cup's leaders decided to leave Kenya.

Instead of trying to sell their own products in the Kenyan market, Ruby Cup started focusing its efforts on selling the menstrual cups to NGOs which were already operating in the country. These NGOs became 'donation partners' of Ruby Cup, raising money to buy menstrual cups (from Ruby Cup) and distributing them for free in Kenya and several other African countries. Ruby Cup also developed a program through which customers could buy one menstrual cup and donate another one to poor women (the Buy One Give One program). NGOs already established in some countries like Kenya would be in charge of distributing the menstrual cups financed by Ruby Cups' clients.

Disappointment

Camilla Wirseen was disappointed with the methods used by other foreign led organizations to help the economically poor in Kenya. She considers most offer solutions which are “too complicated to be effective” in Kenya. Another dismaying feature of these organizations is the lack of “passion for helping the poor” (Camilla Wirseen, 2014-12-18, interview, my translation) she noticed during her meetings with leaders and workers from some of these foreign led organizations. During these meetings and presentations, she would read impressions from all participants in order to identify prospective supporters for her organization. She was of the view that several actors did not seem to care about the issues raised during these events and reflected that it was hard to understand how people could make a living out of helping the poor without actually caring for them.

Based on a sense of shock about the “terrible and unbelievable situation” of teenage girls in Kibera, she started investigating to what extent teenage girls lacked access to menstrual sanitation and what they do when they cannot afford sanitary pads. Similarly, to the use of so-called ‘flying toilets’ in settlement (see Chapter 6), she perceived the lack of sanitary pads as a “silent problem”: a situation several slum dwellers faced but none wanted to admit and/or talk about (Camilla Wirseen, 2014-12-18, interview, my translation).

The starting point of her inquiry was the estimates and facts, as provided by the people she knew who were working and/or living in Kibera. This information confirmed her suspicions that girls sell themselves to buy sanitary pads and, by doing so, they also contract HIV. Another fact is that some girls do not even have panties. Yet another is that girls who cannot afford to buy new sanitary pads tend to use old ones for so long that they get infections.

We don't know if it is as many as 30 - 50 % of the girls who sell themselves. Girls at this young age are the most vulnerable in the society, they hardly have a voice (Camilla Wirseen, 2014-12-18, interview, my translation).

During her work with the CUP Kenya, Wirseen's convictions that men were exploiting teenage girls grew stronger and she repeatedly expressed her intention to make these men feel guilty for their “terrible” practices. Like many other foreign informants working with these issues, she tended to conflate rape with other sorts of relations of sexual exploitation between local teenagers and older men. Teenage prostitution and rape tend to be classified and judged in the same way. Leaders and supporters of the CUP Kenya also viewed the practice of dating “sugar daddies”—having intimate relationships with older and economically wealthier men—as yet another form of sexual exploitation comparable to that of rape (Camilla Wirseen, 2014-12-18, interview, my translation).

7.3 Menstrual Cups

The first menstrual cups (made of rubber) were patented in the US by the actress and inventor Leona Chalmers in 1937. With its flexible material, the cup was designed to be easily folded (with the fingertips) and inserted into the vagina. Once inserted, the menstrual cup unfolded itself, creating a seal to the vaginal walls. By doing so, the menstrual cups functioned as a recipient, catching menstrual fluid for around 4 to 12 hours (depending on the menstrual flow). Once used, the menstrual cups could be washed with running water and safely reused until the end of the monthly period, at which time they would be sterilized in boiling water for a few minutes.

This invention was deemed commercially unviable until it was later redesigned (with new materials and different shapes, colours and sizes) and reintroduced to the US market in 1987. By then, the technology behind the cup had evolved and menstrual cups became available in silicone, thermoplastic elastomer and rubber. Wirseen viewed the menstrual cups as a very sustainable solution, both economically and environmentally. If properly used, washed and stored, menstrual cups last up to ten years, making menstrual management both cheaper and eco-friendly.



Menstrual cups delivered by the CUP Kenya to a private school in Kibera, 2015-02-05

Even though menstrual cups had existed since the 1930s, the product remained largely unknown in the West and in the Global South. One reason, according to one of Wirseen's supporters, is that the menstrual cups last too long to be profitable for big companies such as Procter & Gamble. As transnational corporations aim at making and sustaining profits, traditional menstrual pads have always been considered more commercially viable, generating turnovers monthly. In other words, menstrual cups are sustainable for users and the environment but they are not considered to be sustainable for big businesses. In the Global South, however, NGOs

promoted menstrual cups as solutions for women who could not afford traditional menstrual pads.

7.4 The Mission

To be able to solve problems it is important to find the core problems. Having worked with underprivileged, first with Peepoople, a Swedish revolutionary sanitation solution of which I am the co-founder and since four years with my own project The Cup, I have found some key ones that I regard as general when it comes to adolescent girls living in poverty (Camilla Wirseen, LinkedIn, 2019-10-10).

Camilla Wirseen talked about the various projects she had created while she was working for Peepoople AB in Kenya. Art and photography workshops, fundraising music and sports events in Nairobi are among the initiatives she mentioned. She also stressed the intention to create an organization focused on menstrual issues. She explained that the topic of menstruation is perceived by most people as taboo, which she wanted it to change. To some extent, directly and/or indirectly, people were influenced by menstruation related issues but no-one wanted to talk openly about them. She repeatedly explained how she wanted ‘to break this taboo’, starting in Kenya. Thus, she created the CUP Kenya as an NGO in 2015 with the aim of offering free menstrual solutions for girls between 12 and 14 who could not afford to buy sanitary pads.

This project aims to empower girls and change lives with simple life skills trainings by the CUP in Kibera and provision of a sanitary solution... [the CUP Kenya] in Kibera distributes menstrual cups to girls aged 12-14 years in schools along with teaching them life skills aiming to strengthen the girls' self-confidence (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2014-12-18, my translation).

For Wirseen, it took some time to decide to create the CUP Kenya as organization. Initially (in 2014), she wanted to operate it while working (at least part-time) for Peepoople, thinking that the CUP had the potential to become part of Peepoople. Later on (in 2015), she discovered that Peepoople AB leaders were opposing her work with the CUP Kenya. Her opinion was that they feared resources intended to support Peepoople Kenya would be diverted to the CUP Kenya, which she stated was ill conceived as, according to her, the likely funding sources for both were quite distinct with the CUP Kenya not representing any competition or restriction to Peepoople's future access to funds.

It took from 2013 to 2015 to fully design the CUP Kenya, a process demanding resources and time which she had almost entirely devoted to her family life and working with Peepoople. Her research on menstrual management revealed that the average woman uses twelve thousand pads or tampons in their lifetime, made of materials taking “hundreds of years to break down in landfills” (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2014-12-18, my translation). Her research also included comparing homepages from other organizations working on menstrual management and women's empowerment. She concluded that menstrual cups can become ‘a win-win’ between each individual cup user and the environment.

I want to create my own NGO in Kenya which will receive the menstrual cups and then distribute them my own way. Because I have this program which I have designed based on my knowledge, keeping in mind that I have been in slums and I know how it works and how these girls must be taken care of (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2014-12-18, my translation).

With the CUP Kenya, Wirseen started operating in Kibera, engaging in a ‘donation partnership’ with Ruby Cup. Even now, most of the menstrual cups distributed in Kibera by the CUP Kenya are bought (for an average of 12 to 15 euros per unit) with private funds raised in Sweden and the US. Since creation of the CUP Kenya, she increased the number of menstrual cup suppliers, negotiating discounts to lower the prices paid. Ruby Cup cut its supplier/partnership relationship with the CUP Kenya around a year after the CUP Kenya started. Wirseen assumed this was because of her attempts to lower the prices for menstrual cups produced by Ruby Cup. At that time, all menstrual cups purchased by, or donated to, the CUP Kenya were produced in the West including the UK, Finland, the US and Germany.

Changing Missions

During the process of creation of the CUP Kenya, Wirseen changed the organization’s missions and work methods several times. When Richard Ulfvengren, a former high school classmate and advertising producer living in Los Angeles, became one of her project partners, he suggested a worldwide campaign. Since 1998, Ulfvengren had been living in the US where he established his own business, Traktor whose clients include Volvo, Visa, H&M and Fox Sports.

For Wirseen, a partnership with Ulfvengren represented increased opportunities to know how on video production and running a successful business. In her view, he is “great with numbers” and has “great contacts” with wealthy companies, families and individuals in Sweden, the US and the UK. Mainly due to this, the CUP Kenya signed a “buy one give one” partnership agreement with H&M, which Wirseen saw as “a huge step” for the organization (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2018-05-18, my translation). Through Ulfvengren, Wirseen hoped that it could easily gain and maintain good relations with supporters.

Richard grew up in Sweden and has had a very successful career as a Partner and Producer at Traktor. For the last 25 years, they’ve been making award winning TV commercials for major brands around the world. Prior to producing, Richard spent 5 years as a young man in Sri Lanka, India, and Zambia where he worked as an engineer on various foreign aid projects. Since his kids Emma (19) and Sebastian (22) are out of the nest and he does not play golf, he thought it was time to do some good, thus he set out to find the most unfair situation he could imagine, which to him was being a young girl living in poverty, and without any means to manage her periods. Richard wants to make menstrual cups a mainstream product known to all women around the world, as it is great for the environment and will make it easier to help the millions of young girls who can’t afford one of their own (The Cup Foundation homepage, 2017, accessed in 2020-04-26).

Over the years Traktor have twice been officially the most award-winning directors in the world. The haul includes three Grand Prix at Cannes, the Titanium Lion and additional twenty Lions, a D&AD

Black Pencil and additional pencils, several Clios, an Emmy win and five nominations and a Grammy nomination (Traktor homepage, accessed in 2020-04-26)

As part of a worldwide campaign, the CUP Kenya was intended to become a project under the umbrella of a foundation, the Cup Foundation, which was also created by Camilla Wirseen and registered by Richard Ulfvengren in the US. Once launched around the end of May 2015, the Cup Foundation targeted and raised funds from mainly private donors in Sweden, UK and the US. It was also intended to develop ‘a buy one give one’ relationship with buyers of menstrual cups internationally. By purchasing the menstrual cup, individual consumers could automatically donate another cup to the girls in the slums.



Two supporters of the CUP Kenya in a school in Kibera

The target groups of the CUP Kenya program changed when it started including older women and running seminars with parents of teenage girls. Wirseen and her employees in Kibera reported that older sisters and mothers of the teenage girls assisted, also wanted to receive menstrual cups. Wirseen also extended the CUP Kenya training to schoolboys (the teenage girls’ classmates) so they would also learn about sexual education, bullying and health care.

Camilla Wirseen even considered employing what she referred to as “a strong man” in Kibera to capture rapists and bring them to the local authorities (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2014-12-18, my translation). However, she gave this idea up when one of the CUP Kenya’s financial supporters stated it was too risky and went beyond the organization’s local role. According to this supporter, such a program also suffered the disadvantage of being unable to become ‘scalable’, reducing the likelihood of the CUP Kenya approach being reapplied elsewhere.

7.5 First Supporters

In January 2015, Wirseen formally received the funds necessary (38,000 USD) for a two-year CUP Kenya field test in Kibera. Shortly after, she created a community-based organization in Kibera, formally registered by the local Kenyan government authority. Before full scale implementation, a pilot program was executed with school girls in Kibera with the following objectives:

Objectives: Menstrual Cup Empowerment in Kibera 2015

- Demonstrate the CUP programs scalability
- Verify the user acceptance of menstrual cups among Kibera schoolgirls
- Evaluate the Menstrual Empowerment-Mentorship Program
- Refine the Menstrual Cup Empowerment-Educational Program
- Develop a training manual for Menstrual Cup Empowerment -trainers
- Develop a manual for the Empowerment Program
- Research how many adolescent girls sell themselves for sanitary pads

The first and main financial supporter of the CUP Kenya was Giving Wings Foundation, located in Stockholm. Giving Wings has as an official mission to “support women and girls in gaining independence and self-sufficiency through education and healthcare initiatives primarily focusing on menstrual health. In addition, the foundation will promote awareness on global women”s issues (<http://www.givingwings.org/>, accessed in 2016-05-25)”. It was founded and headed by Cristina Ljungberg, an American married to Johan Tage Ljungberg (chairman of Tagehus, a family holding company headquartered in Sweden mainly operating in real estate, hotel, construction and conference facilities).

Ljungberg also managed the provision of grants to advocacy documentary makers. She had visited Kibera and knew about the issues faced by women in the Global South. Both Wirseen and Ljungberg viewed themselves as well engaged with women’s issues, working to “empower” and “humanize” women and girls facing oppression from patriarchal societies. They seemed to share the view that women are “oppressed all over the world” but in the Global South they are faced with more “acute” and “terrible” problems caused by economic, political and social inequalities, which justify assistance coming from “more empowered women” in the West (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2014-12-18, my translation).

Menstrual hygiene or reproductive health education is an opportunity to identify and support youths who are in need of counseling or health care. Being a teenager is for many to feel or be completely

alone. You can almost be sure that in every training event there are some girls (boys too) that have been raped, are or have been under going incest, are having infections due to overuse of pads for too many hours or have been using of unhygienic solutions. Not to talk about HIV/ STI's and teenage pregnancy that is rampant among girls in Sub-Saharan Africa. Pregnancies that too many times lead to super unsafe abortions resulting in death. Challenges they many times have never mentioned to anyone (Camilla Wirseen, LinkedIn, 2019-09-25).

On 18th of December 2014, Camilla Wirseen met Cristina Ljungberg in order to apply for 30,000 USD from the Giving Wings Foundation to finance a CUP Kenya pilot project which was supposed to take place in Kibera for one year. By reminding donors, collaborators and workers of their 'empowering impact' in the lives of the girls in Kibera, she has managed to create a sense of closer links around supporters of the organization and its target groups. Such links have been constantly constructed in everyday interactions with actors within and outside of the humanitarian field. For instance, when interacting with her landlord in Nairobi (from whom she used to receive a sizable discount) she would say this rent reduction actively supported the groups targeted by the CUP Kenya: teenage girls living in Kibera.

7.6 The CUP Role Models

For the distribution of menstrual cups and the empowerment of local teenage girls, Wirseen employed so-called 'CUP role models', women who live and/or have had long experience living in Kibera. Their upbringing as economically poor local girls was important for the CUP's legitimacy in the area. A problem usually faced by organizations dealing with issues such as sexual education and menstrual management is that the people receiving help do not dare to openly talk about their problems. The CUP Kenya founders assumed that these role models were more likely to create trust for the organization among teenage girls and more easily 'connect' with them and, later, their female relatives, the target group of beneficiaries.

Wirseen contended that the CUP role models should start their interactions with the young girls by sharing their own experiences and challenges growing up in Kibera. She focused them on preparing the stories that they would tell the girls during the empowerment sessions, telling them to write them down. Some wrote that they were abused by their parents and employers during teenage years, some even getting pregnant, then being punished by their parents for this. Based on these accounts, Camilla Wirseen provided the CUP role models with advice about what kind of stories they should tell Kibera's teenage girls:

Don't go in so much on your son. Focus on how you grew up with loneliness and family problems. State your age. Make it more clear that you have a job. Tackle the issue of feeling alone when you face a problem. Remind them that we are not teachers. We are their sisters. They will not open up if they think that we are their teachers (Camilla Wirseen, fieldnotes, 2015-02-03).

One of the main issues the CUP Kenya faced was who was best suited to teach teenage school girls about reproductive health and menstrual hygiene. Some actors argued it was teachers' role,

which was rejected by the organization on the basis that teachers and students were in asymmetric power relations, while the CUP Kenya role models, argued Wirseen, have something among teenage girls that ordinary teachers don't have: trust.

Teachers don't only judge, give grades and homework but in many challenging environments are using corporal punishment. We often get anonymous written questions in our trainings where girls are asking if the menstrual cup they have been given can fall out when their teachers are beating them. This leads to another question we receive anonymously which is why teachers like beating girls on their butts. Unfortunately, sexual abuse by male teachers is common in schools. We have encountered a few female teachers too but not many. I think all of the above reasons make teachers far from the best to educate girls and boys about sex and related subjects. They lack one of the most important ingredients: trust (Camilla Wirseen, LinkedIn, 2019-09-25).

Trust is central here, argued Wirseen, because teaching is not only about giving information. It is about ensuring that the groups targeted by the CUP Kenya understand and digest the information they receive. She labelled this sort of teaching 'clear communication': a set of social interactions that can help actors identifying those who are in most need of help. Accordingly telling aspects of the role models' personal histories would enable them to gain the level of trust to talk about subjects considered taboo in Kenyan society. But before the role models could empower teenage girls: they needed, argued Wirseen, also to become empowered by workshops organized by the CUP Kenya.

All of the role models told Wirseen that, when they were teenagers, they started dating 'sugar daddies': having longer and/or short term sexual, emotional and economic relationships with older men. These men take the financial responsibility for their younger female partners. The relationship is based on an ambiguous mix of economic desperation and sexual adventure. In other words, sugar daddies are perceived as much needed longer-term sources of income and also as more experienced sexual partners. One of the CUP role models recalled how she started having sex with multiple and, in some cases, older partners when she discovered that her boyfriend was cheating on her. During her acts of revenge, she also discovered ways to profit economically from these sexual partners. She stated she felt relatively 'lucky' for her sexually promiscuous teenage years in Kibera without getting infected with HIV. Having unprotected sex is not only a matter of a lack of money to buy condoms, as argued by the CUPs founders and Western supporters, but also a matter of sexual pleasure having in mind how locals, especially teenagers, complain about how 'bad' sex with condoms is.

The Ideal Role Model

She is a born counsellor. People just come to her and start talking. She is a listener. She does not take any space (Camilla Wirseen describing to a donor how she sees a suitable candidate for manager of the CUP Kenya, field notes, 2015-05-04).

One of the CUP role models was employed while still officially working at the office in Peepoople Kenya. She did not want to formalize her resignation from Peepoople Kenya before being sure that Camilla Wirseen would acquire enough funds to permanently employ her. Her

first work in the NGO sector was as a saleslady at Peepoople Kenya, and only a few months later, she obtained an administrative assistant position there. Her boyfriend was one of the Peepoople managers and she was perceived by many, including Peepoople leaders, as good looking and camera friendly (see Section 6.10 Social Mobility in Peepoople). She has a natural attitude in front of the cameras, which Wirseen and Ulfvengren considered a sign of female empowerment. This apparently empowered attitude was important for the type of message the CUP founders wanted to convey to donors: there are strong local women capable of addressing issues such as sexual exploitation and the lack of education.

I met Camilla in 2010 in Kibera. I knew her through a friend. She was doing I think research at a household level so she needed someone to do the translations because she was going from house to house asking women about the Peepoople bags. How do they fit? Was it comfortable? Do they have privacy? Such things...

And now she wanted a woman to do the translations so a friend of mine called me and I met Camilla and we walked from house to house doing the translations. After that she went back to Sweden and came back during the launch, she called me again and offered me a job as a salesperson (the CUP Kenya manager, interview, 2015-02-07).

This CUP Kenya manager and role model knew quite a lot about the geography and local norms of Kibera. Most importantly, she knew where the various private schools were located and how to mobilize support from teachers and students. She knew how also how to organize social events involving children in Kibera. She has appeared in documentaries about menstrual cups walking together and singing with teenage girls. For these reasons, Wirseen employed her not only as the CUP Kenya role model, but also as the manager of the other role models.

Launching the CUP Kenya



Launching the CUP Kenya in a private school in Kibera, 2015-02-05

In February 2015, Wirseen formally launched the CUP Kenya. To help spread publicity, Wirseen and Ulfvengren decided to organize photo sessions of the event, supposedly to mark the starting point for the organization. For this specific occasion, Ulfvengren had invited Martin Löff (a renowned professional photographer) to produce images of the organization's activities. Löff captured encounters between the CUP Kenya's local employees (the designated role models) and children living and studying Kibera. Central to the imagery is the role models explaining the benefits of using the menstrual cups. These photos and videos were used by Wirseen in all her presentations of the CUP Kenya to prospective supporters, such as individual donors and foundations.

Do you know what? ... When I was standing there [in the main classroom of the private school where photo sessions took place] with Richard and I looked around and I saw them filming then I thought: "now we got started!" Then I started crying. It felt so overwhelming. It was a really strong feeling. "now we got started!" And then I looked at those small girls. Half of them... they confirmed that at already eleven years old they were having sex. Eleven!! [Camilla pauses and cries]. This is insane! (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-02-05, my translation)

These overwhelming feelings experienced with the launch of the CUP project influenced Camilla Wirseen in various ways. It was almost a decade since she had quit smoking but she started smoking again as a way to deal with her emotions on the day of that launch.

Empowerment Theatre

Camilla Wirseen and Richard Ulfvengren could not be present during the everyday work delivering of menstrual cups and empowerment sessions. Ulfvengren came only sporadically to

Kenya. This geographical distance between social entrepreneurs and ordinary staff made it difficult for Wirseen and Ulfvengren to ensure the functioning of their organization. They needed somebody be their “eyes and mouths” when it came to the CUP employees’ supervision, often mentioning about how they needed to make sure that employees were actually working (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-02-05, my translation).

This was not easy even when Wirseen was in Nairobi. She complained that employees “take her for granted” (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-02-05, my translation). Sometimes when she calls them during work hours, they were not at work. In some cases, they did not even disguise and/or justify their absence: “I’m helping my mom moving some furniture”, an employee once replied to her call. In other cases, employees found different ways to disguise their absence from work. Two even had their own NGO where they worked fulltime while earning a salary from the CUP Kenya. A European supporter of the CUP described one of these employees:

I think he wants to run in politics. I am sure he wants to help but he is also very strategic (laughs). You know what I mean... Because there is not a lot of employment. The aid sector is huge! So that is why probably everyone wants to have their own NGO because then they can get funding and a nice job. I realized that when I was there the first time. Of course! This is where all the money is! (supporter of the CUP Kenya, interview, 2018-05-23).

Wirseen acknowledged that many of her local employees thought once they had a job at an NGO they did not need to work anymore. But these problems were more rooted in the management of the CUP Kenya as well. One person who used to work for Peepoople and was later employed as a manager at the CUP Kenya was not ‘transparent’. Wirseen was warned about this person by other CUP Kenya employees, even firing one of those who had alerted her. Actually, Wirseen stated that she had perceived such advice as manifestations of envy (due to the manager’s higher salary) and attempts to sabotage that manager. One year later, Wirseen was warned again, this time, from a European supporter of the CUP Kenya, working with menstrual management issues in another urban settlement in Nairobi.

Camilla asked me to help with some reports and then I went to this first meeting [with the CUP role models] and it was like a theatre show. And then I realized no... This is not working. Everyone [of the CUP role models] told, like orally, what they had been doing, like, for the last week and what they were going to do in the upcoming week and it took forever! Everyone saying how many kids they trained and how many cups they distributed. For them... I mean it is a different culture. So, I ended up not going very often because [the manager of CUP Kenya] was very hard to reach. She was not so nice to me. She was hard to reach because she did not want to get caught. Of course! She did not want to be transparent because she was doing something that she did not want me to know (supporter of the CUP Kenya, interview, 2018-05-23).

Following the advice from one of Kibera’s elders, Wirseen hired a local auditor to go through the reports created by the CUP role models and supervised by the manager. She discovered that they have all been embezzling money from the organization by reporting fake schools, fake deliveries of menstrual cups and fake empowerment sessions. Camilla Wirseen even discovered

that the staff manipulated their own personal stories in order to increase their chances of employment at the CUP Kenya.

Furthermore, she found out that even the organization's recruitment processes had been biased by this 'theatre show'. The CUP Kenya manager had told job applicants to lie about their backgrounds. Wirseen recalled how she used to conduct those job interviews together with the CUP manager. She remembered that the CUP manager used to pretend not to know her acquaintances during the interviews. In fact, the manager had been interviewing friends whom she had advised to apply for those positions, grooming them with the kinds of stories they should relate to Wirseen in order to get a job. All the local employees had actually known about this but did not inform Wirseen. 'It is for her to find out' one of them claimed. Some were afraid of being dismissed as Wirseen was quite close to the CUP manager and had already fired other people for accusing the manager of wrongdoing. Consequently, Wirseen fired all of the role models, including the corrupt manager. Incidents like these also influenced her decision to move to Kenya where she has been living since 2016.

I think they see people like Camilla and they think "they are naïve and they have money so I can just tell them, yeah I am doing this!" I just felt like they were in two different worlds. In a way I see that Camilla is really, really naïve. And then [one of the CUP supporters] comes taking everybody to eat dinner in fancy restaurants. Why would they care about stealing your money if you are constantly showing off, showing that you have a shit ton??! (supporter of the CUP Kenya, interview, 2018-05-23).

The problem of taking Camilla Wirseen for granted and stealing money from her organization does not only have to do with how social entrepreneurs and donors show off. This sort of ruthless opportunism is also caused by a negative local perception of organizations from the humanitarian field. Kibera residents employed at the CUP Kenya perceive these organizations as short-lived. This has to do with how many of these organizations they have seen coming to and leaving Kibera after facing competition and lack of funds. Some of these do not last more than a few months in the settlement. With this in mind, the CUP employees acted as if their employer would disappear at any moment. Therefore, taking as much as you can from these organizations becomes almost self-evidently justifiable.

... most NGOs do not last in Kibera. In other areas, especially the rural areas, the NGOs can take a while. They are there for quite a while but in Kibera most of them don't last for a long time because when they come in, then these people in Kibera grab as much as they can. [Kibera residents] they just take, take and take! You know, I think now a days with the NGOs, they don't want us to work with something that is sustainable. They just want to pump money into something that is not sustainable so after a while they lack funds and then they go out... (the CUP Kenya manager, 2015-02-07).

7.7 Maintaining Support

Donors influenced the CUP Kenya by providing the organization with financial support. As well, they also enforced the organizational goals on Camilla Wirseen and her employees. These goals were either numerical: “ten thousand teenage girls have to be reached by the CUP Kenya in one year”. Or they were qualitative: “the CUP Kenya has six months to build a board of directors that can support the CUP in matters such as organizational development, fundraising and networking” (Camilla Wirseen, interview, my translation, 2018-04-20). Donors influenced the everyday organizational life of the CUP Kenya.

During one of her follow up meetings with a donor foundation, Wirseen was told to pressure menstrual cup producers to decrease their prices. “These cups are made of plastic! So why are they so expensive?” the representative asked. This donor also seemed to believe that a cartel of menstrual cup factories existed, given that different producers offered similar prices. The use of menstrual cup was also questioned “are you sure these girls will not turn these cups the other way around and use them as a condom? It is worth asking! Crazier things have been tried!” another representative from the same foundation stated (fieldnotes, 2015-08-01).

Donors also help with access and benefits from linking with valuable networks. This may have a price though. Some of these supporters threatened Wirseen’s sense of ownership of the CUP Kenya. One even claimed to have created the CUP singlehandedly, all of which led to Wirseen feeling her efforts were not properly acknowledged. Even so, Wirseen struggled sometimes to make managerial decisions without donors’ explicit approval. For instance, when she wanted to let go the CUP Kenya’s manager, one of her main supporters was opposed. This specific supporter was actually dating that manager. By firing this employee, Camilla Wirseen ended up confronting one of the CUP Kenya’s most important supporters.

Some donors want to have their foundation publicly associated with other well-known foundations and/or private donors, including the CUP Kenya. Therefore, Wirseen was frequently pressured to gain support from various other donors, some donors even recommending ideal sources of such humanitarian funding from those with the highest status in the field. Under pressure to increase the number of financial supporters, Wirseen once mentioned to a donor that she intended to seek support from SIMAVI (the Dutch NGO which supported Peepoople). “SIMAVI? Who knows about SIMAVI?” the donor replied with an ironic tone, while recommending other actors whom Wirseen should “get on board” (fieldnotes, 2015-08-01). One foundation even reduced its promised funding from 30,000 USD dollars to 10,000, in an attempt to force Wirseen to obtain a larger donor base.

I had planned all year as if we would get that money. Instead, they said “if you find someone to donate twenty thousand US dollars” that is, two hundred thousand Swedish crowns “then we will match this

money with another twenty thousand US dollars”. It was a big blow to the CUP Kenya! I was about to start crying in the meeting. When they told me that then they knew I had had no salary since May [2017]. They knew it! And ten thousand is nothing! The entire organization has been without money since May. Already one year ago, I had no wages. Then we had reduced on all costs but we had all our employees and everything (Camilla Wirseen, interview, my translation, 2018-04-20).

7.8 Back to Business

Camilla Wirseen struggled to maintain a steady flow of financial support to the CUP Kenya. Most of her supporters were organizations and individuals who donated menstrual cups. This type of support did not cover, for instance, rent, office costs or salaries for Wirseen and her employees. For months, Wirseen used her own money to finance the distribution of menstrual cups and empowerment sessions. One of the CUP Kenya supporters even lent her money to keep the organization running. Wirseen was not the only one negatively affected by this lack of funds. Some of her Kenyan employees spent months without a salary, while others did receive one, which created significant conflicts within the organization.

Wirseen tries to address these funding problems in several ways. She mobilized her contacts at the Swedish Embassy in Kenya to try to arrange a meeting with the United Nations officers in Nairobi to get financial support. One of these officers was Swedish. During the meeting, she aimed to seek support for the CUP Kenya and convinced officers to employ her at the UN in Nairobi as a consultant.

In cooperation with an NGO led by one of Kibera’s elders, Camilla Wirseen applied for funds from wealthy international foundations. This sort of joint grant application is critical for small organizations like the CUP Kenya because of the heavy bureaucratic work it involves. In this way, Wirseen hoped to access funding without hiring people with expertise in these application processes who are scarce and therefore expensive in Kenya. The organization headed by the elder (whom Wirseen also calls a ‘personal mentor’) was larger and had a staff with experience in grant applications.

Without a doubt, Camilla Wirseen consistently used business approaches to try to create other sources of funds for the CUP Kenya. She leveraged off the empowerment training developed at the CUP Kenya to sell an empowerment course to other organizations such as FIDA (Finnish Missions and Development Organization). Wirseen also started a business in Kibera called Ghetto Gifts, a gift shop, the profits from which would help Wirseen finance the CUP Kenya.

Since the beginning of 2016, Wirseen has lived in Nairobi, Kenya, contending that it is easier to manage her organization while based in Kenya. She continues her work with the CUP Kenya. With the knowledge and visual materials acquired during two years of implementation the organization in Kibera, she has been engaged in 'scaling up' the CUP distribution program to other areas of Kenya. With the valuable network provided by Richard Ulfvengren (her partner in the CUP Kenya), the CUP is, at the moment of writing, supported by H&M and other wealthy private foundations.

7.9 Summary

In this chapter, I have described how a social entrepreneur gained social acceptance and support to create a new organization, the CUP Kenya which was formed to address the lack of menstrual sanitation solutions in Kibera, identified while Wirseen was implementing the Peepoople business model in the settlement.

A highlight of this chapter was the role played by social capital (i.e. the resources made available to individuals due to the size and value of their networks of relationships) in the entrepreneurial legitimation process. A significant part of this capital was accumulated before this entrepreneurial process was set in motion: an old high school friend became an important source of organizational legitimacy for the CUP Kenya. Some of this social capital had also been acquired during previous entrepreneurial processes (i.e. the creation of Peepoople Kenya).

Another highlight of this case is how local employees created informal mechanisms in order to profit from the CUP Kenya in Kibera. Some used it as a source of income while creating their own NGOs and building their political influence. Other employees used their positions in Kibera and in the CUP Kenya to develop their economic advantage.

Chapter VIII: Analysis

8.1 Entrepreneurial Habitus

In this chapter, I apply the concepts of habitus, capital, storytelling, gift and legitimacy to analyse the cases presented in previous chapters. With these concepts, this chapter addresses the key question of the thesis: *how do social entrepreneurs gain legitimacy in the humanitarian field?*

Once determined to create Peepoople and the CUP Kenya, the main social entrepreneur, Camilla Wirseen whom I have followed closely over several years, used different strategies to gain social acceptance and support for her projects. Legitimacy is especially important for social entrepreneurs (Schwartz, 2012) and the organizations (Suchman, 1995) they create and work with. The phases through which these social entrepreneurs convince actors to support their solutions converge with what is known as the entrepreneurial ‘legitimation process’ (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008). In the case of Camilla Wirseen, part of this process involves presenting Peepoople and the CUP Kenya to ‘sources of legitimacy’ (ibid) such as the UN, private foundations, the media, and European governmental aid agencies such as Sida and GTZ.

She uses storytelling to present herself and her organizations (e.g. O’Connor, 2004; Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001) in public and private appearances. Through storytelling, the identities of her organizations are developed and displayed. Narrations about these organizations are also adapted, taking into account how actual and prospective sources of legitimacy react. Accordingly, to gain legitimacy the social entrepreneurs studied here have to convince public and private actors that their organizations are worth recognition and support. Part of this process involves presenting themselves as ‘protagonists’ (Ruebottom, 2013) participating in positive processes of social change: improvements brought to the humanitarian field and the local settings where solutions are delivered.

These stories also involve presenting charity, ‘the NGO sector’, uncaring self-interested NGO workers, unreliable donors, local institutions and corrupt local authorities as ‘antagonists’ (Ruebottom, 2013) to social entrepreneurship. As such, these institutions, sectors and actors represent obstacles to the work of compassionate social entrepreneurs. Together with the problems social entrepreneurs claim to be already solving (e.g. lack of sanitation, lack of menstrual solutions, flying toilets, sugar daddies, teenage sex and prostitution), they use these antagonists to give meaning to their work and tell stories about what they do in the Global South. As shown in earlier chapters, Camilla Wirseen has been remarkably successful in convincing several sources of legitimacy that the solutions she works with provide improvements and create opportunities for poor people.

This is not to say that storytelling alone is sufficient to understand how entrepreneurial legitimation occurs in the humanitarian field. It does not show us, for instance, how

entrepreneurs' embodied resources and social networks influence their ability to gain legitimacy. To truly comprehend legitimization processes in this field, it is important to look into where subjects of legitimization are socially situated prior and during the creation of organizations. This is where concepts like "habitus", "field" and "capital" (Bourdieu, 1986: 17) offer tools to understand entrepreneurial legitimization.

Social entrepreneurs' practices are primarily formed by conscious and unconscious embodied dispositions which enable them to cope with various often unpredictable situations (Bourdieu, 1986). These dispositions are also known as *habitus*. As subjects of legitimization, social entrepreneurs engage with the humanitarian field by enacting their 'entrepreneurial habitus' (De Clerq & Voronov, 2009). This form of habitus enables Camilla Wirseen, for instance, to deal with situations and contingencies faced during the legitimization of Peepoople and the CUP Kenya. In this process, she is faced with the paradoxical nature of the entrepreneurial habitus. She complies with discourses and institutions of the humanitarian field while, at the same time, she brings something new to this field: new toilets, new menstrual solutions, new ways to look at human waste, new business models for the economically poor, and new organizations.

The evidence presented in this study suggests that habitus may be strategically enacted by social entrepreneurs in several ways. Habitus manifests itself as (unconscious and conscious) dispositions of the mind and body: dispositions which are observable, for instance, in Camilla Wirseen's upper middle class upbringing within an ambassador's family; dispositions which are partly formed by the place where one of the social entrepreneurs creating Peepoople and the CUP Kenya grow up: Djursholm, in Stockholm, Sweden, is known for forming Sweden's elites (Holmqvist, 2018). There are several powerful sources of legitimacy (e.g. foundations, NGOs, government aid agencies, embassies) in the humanitarian field which are created, financed, managed and staffed by individuals (Amutabi, 2006; Scherz, 2012; Fridell & Konings, 2013; Malkki, 2015) with backgrounds and goals similar to that of the social entrepreneurs approached in this dissertation. Sharing similar ethnic backgrounds, ethical attitudes and opinions increases one's likelihood of gaining social acceptance, prestigious jobs and access to resources from powerful sources of legitimacy such as government agencies (Weber 2011; Eyben, 2006) and foundations. By acknowledging these aspects of social entrepreneurs "accumulated histor[ies]" (Bourdieu, 1986: 17), I take this conversation about social entrepreneurship legitimacy beyond the predetermined ethical premises of social missions and heroic entrepreneurs. I start to make this contribution to the social entrepreneurship literature by discussing one important feature of the accumulated histories of social entrepreneurs studied here: cultural capital.

Cultural Capital

The social entrepreneurs researched here exhibit features of habitus that are convertible into resources and advantages in the humanitarian field. One of these resources is ‘cultural capital’ (Bourdieu, 1986). In the embodied state, cultural capital appears in social entrepreneurs’ application of what Wirseen, for instance, calls “social skills”: the ability to “talk to people at all levels” (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-02-03, my translation). This facilitates her work, gaining access to other forms of capital in different fields. Furthermore, the social entrepreneurs studied here dispose of institutional forms of cultural capital. Before creating organizations like Peepoople and the CUP Kenya, Camilla Wirseen and Anders Wilhelmson had acquired educational qualifications improving their access to resources and support for their ideas, products and services. In these two cases, social entrepreneurs have diplomas and professional experience which they used to present themselves in social events such as the application for grants. Thus, cultural capital, acquired prior to their first interactions with the humanitarian field, helps them to gain and maintain legitimacy.

Another way to understand the role of cultural capital in social entrepreneurs’ legitimization processes is by analysing the events by which this resource is converted into other resources such as ‘economic capital’ (Bourdieu, 1986). A conversion of cultural capital into economic capital is observable when, for instance, the founders of Peepoople applied for grants from private agencies and public ones such as Vinnova (Sweden’s Innovation Agency). In Vinnova’s grant application documents, it is clear how these social entrepreneurs not only present Peepoople but also, use their educational qualifications and professional experience to gain support from agents of legitimacy who evaluate their solutions. It is also worthwhile recalling how some social entrepreneurs studied here engage with the humanitarian field from the perspective of somebody who is already established in other fields such as academia and the design industry. The technology behind Peepoople, for instance, is itself the result of a combination of academic efforts. This seems to confirm the argument that: no process of competition over resources and legitimacy is ever “perfect” (i.e. based on equal grounds and completely neutral towards subjects) bearing in mind how subjects are socially positioned prior and during social events (Bourdieu, 1986: 15).

It is not, however, only the social entrepreneurs studied here who acquire and convert cultural capital into other forms of capital. As shown in the previous chapters, the work of these social entrepreneurs also involves transferring cultural capital to their employees and target groups. In Peepoople’s case, it was observed that social entrepreneurs tried to foster local leaders and entrepreneurs through training in entrepreneurship and by creating role models within the

organization. To set an example of success among the staff in Kenya, a Peepoople manager (raised in the urban slum of Kibera) was given the position of the head of the organization in Kenya and received a sizable salary raise. This is illustrative of how social entrepreneurs, business consultants and donors may use economic capital in attempts to foster in the figure of the worker with “a social conscience” (Vrasti, 2012: 9). This case also shows, nonetheless, how detrimental it can be for the social enterprise because this ‘organizational experiment’ (Edwards, 2008) was conducted with, according to many locals, the most corrupt of Peepoople’s local employees, resulting in internal competition, fake results, envy and sabotage.

In the CUP Kenya case, this ‘bottom down’ transference of cultural capital was attached mainly to so-called ‘empowerment’ programs targeting school children and local employees. It is noteworthy here how employees close to the organization’s founders learned which stories were most likely to increase their chances of employment and success within the organization. In encounters with foreigners and local employees, they learned what donors and social entrepreneurs wanted to hear. They learned how to exaggerate, manipulate and profit from their personal stories accordingly.

In regard to the children—the allegedly main beneficiaries of the organization—this bottom down transference of cultural capital not only involved menstrual cup instructions and sexual health education. Employees were taught how to use their own social mobility to teach Kibera teenagers about what it means to be successful and how to achieve that. By doing so, the social entrepreneurs studied here were indirectly telling teenagers that the road out of economic poverty and exploitation involves employment in the humanitarian field. This produced and confirmed local perceptions of the humanitarian field as a context offering opportunities for ‘meaningful work’ (Dempsey & Sanders, 2010) without ‘sacrifices’ (Hubert & Mauss, 1964): a field constituted of ‘win-win’ stories where ‘the entrepreneurial self’ (Bröckling, 2016) and the worker with “a social conscience” (Vrasti, 2012:9) can coexist and fully prosper without conflict with each other. Furthermore, this shows how differently social entrepreneurs and NGOs may be perceived depending on where they operate: in the West, they may be historically marked by the exchange of financial rewards for meaningful work while in Kenya they tend to be perceived as part of the economic and political elite. This brings us to another concept which I contribute to the social entrepreneurship literature: place.

Placing Cultural Capital

In previous chapters, I showed how social entrepreneurs acquired cultural capital by traveling to and working in places like Kibera. For instance, the social entrepreneurs studied here frequently used their experiences in Kibera to support their claims about humanitarian problems

and solutions for the economically poor. This knowledge, gained by ‘being there’, was used to support claims about the local demand for the solutions provided by Peepoople and the CUP Kenya. For the social entrepreneurs approached in this study, these experiences in Kibera seem to legitimize their skills and knowledge. Knowing by ‘being there’ (in places like urban slums and refugee camps, where suffering and the demand for help is concentrated) is ranked higher than knowing by just reading about a place. As shown in previous chapters, the knowledge which the social entrepreneurs gained during their visits to Kibera was heavily biased by local actors trying to profit from their interactions with organizations such as Peepoople and the CUP Kenya.

Cultural capital helped Camilla Wirseen to attain the title of sanitation expert. This knowledge, significantly based on experiences in Kibera, gave her “legitimate competence” (Bourdieu, 1986: 18): a certain level of authority to speak on behalf of the economically poor in social events where the poor are often absent and unable to speak for themselves. It was in Kibera that social entrepreneurs gained knowledge about, for instance, the lack of menstrual pads for women in the settlement and a social enterprise (Ruby Cup) struggling to sell menstrual cups. Based on this knowledge learned in Kibera, the CUP Kenya was created, giving free menstrual cups instead of trying to sell them. Yet, this relationship between place and social entrepreneurial legitimation is largely neglected in social entrepreneurship literature (e.g. Nicholls, 2010; Ruebottom, 2012). Like missionaries (Barton, 1915; Webster, 2009), humanitarian workers (Malkki, 2012) and ethnographers, the work of the social entrepreneurs studied here involved mobility, movement and experience in, and through, culturally and geographically distant places. All social entrepreneurship cases presented in this dissertation were inspired and driven by constant trips to and learning experiences in various places where sources of legitimacy and distant others were concentrated.

Ethnographers (e.g. Goffman, 1989) tend to support this idea of ‘being there’ as a higher instance of knowing: a form of knowledge that cannot be fully acquired from a distance; a set of experiences that grants ethnographers greater authority to better analyse and (re)produce knowledge. In other words, ‘being there’ functions as a source of legitimacy to both ethnographers and, as I argue here, social entrepreneurs. This form of knowing by being there, or knowing by being where the economically poor are, is frequently highlighted by social entrepreneurs when they tell stories about their solutions. The Peepoople idea was inspired by an experience ‘there’, in an urban slum in India, when Anders Wilhelmson found out about the local need for toilets and started thinking about the lack of sanitation as a global crisis. Camilla Wirseen was ‘there’, in Kibera, where she discovered how some teenagers lacked—and some even prostituted themselves to buy—sanitary pads and where other social entrepreneurs were

unsuccessfully trying to use a business model to sell menstrual cups to slum dwellers. Thus, information acquired in place is central to the innovation—i.e. the new combination of resources (Schumpeter's [1927]1989)—developed by the social entrepreneurs studied here.

All social entrepreneurs approached in this study argued that their experiences with urban slums (more specifically Kibera) gave them insights and moral epiphanies about the situation of the economically poor. Some of these individuals were also visiting and working in informal settlements as part of their high school or university education. Thus, this knowledge acquired through experiences in places can be viewed partly as an extension of institutional forms of cultural capital.

My main point here is that social entrepreneurs do not acquire social acceptance and support only because of their solutions to social problems. Social entrepreneurs gain legitimacy also because of the knowledge they claim to gain through their experiences (visiting and/or working) in places where their solutions are allegedly needed. 'Being there' (in Kibera) and 'becoming one of them' (slum dwellers) give social entrepreneurs the authority to produce and disseminate descriptions about suffering faced by 'the distant other' (Kennedy, 2009) in their own terms: their own writings in the organizations' homepages, their own visual and verbal presentations in sanitation conferences, and in their conversations with sources of legitimacy such as journalists, donors, NGOs, prize committees and aid agencies. In the next section, I discuss how some of these sources of legitimacy are also sources of cultural capital.

International Sources of Cultural Capital

The 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1986) which the social entrepreneurs studied here used to create, manage and support their organizations was not only generated in interactions with distant others. International sources of recognition and financial support played a crucial role in informing these social entrepreneurs about the economically poor, their priorities and feasible solutions to social problems. To establish sanitation as the main social problem of the poor and to position toilet bags as a sustainable solution, these social entrepreneurs frequently made reference to sources of evidence such as the UN, academia, public aid agencies, consultancy firms and NGOs. For the social entrepreneurs approached in this research, these sources of legitimacy were also sources of information, describing a world where there is "a global sanitation crisis" (Lacharité, 2013: 1) going on—a reality where 2.5 billion people lack access to toilets. In some of the events organized by these actors, social entrepreneurs constantly encountered 'agents of consecrations' (Bourdieu, 1984), in other words, actors with the power to evaluate, endorse and support social entrepreneurs. These included sanitation engineers, sanitation researchers, the UN, NGOs and social entrepreneurship networks. Many of these

actors presented sanitation as a high priority in the global humanitarian agenda. Some of them even quoted Gandhi, stating that “sanitation is more important than political independence”.

It is also in this field where the economically poor are portrayed as a latent and yet untapped market (delineated as the BoP market) filled with resilient entrepreneurs and resourceful consumers. To gain legitimacy in this field, the social entrepreneurs had to ‘fit in’ (De Clercq & Voronov, 2009) and act in accordance with demands put by sources of legitimacy in the humanitarian field. Accordingly, they learned the language most commonly used in the field; they learned how to present Peepoople and the CUP Kenya; they learned that charity is not as ‘trendy’ among donors as ‘business models for the poor’. This process of ‘fitting in’ had consequences for their organizations, products and services.

The legitimization process through ‘fitting in’ determines how social entrepreneurs adopt certain practices, social missions and discourses. Some supporters of social entrepreneurs directly influenced how solutions were envisaged and organized. For instance, when Peepoople gained support from the Ashoka Fellowship, a leader of the organization officially committed to reinvesting his profits in Peepoople (at least while it was not making any profits): a move necessary to fit into the category of social enterprise posed by the Ashoka social entrepreneurship network. To convince international supporters that the bags designed by Peepoople “are actual toilets” (Anders Wilhelmson, YouTube interview, 2012-10-30), Wilhelmson and Wirseen designed and produced yet another good: the Peepoople toilet seat. In order to get economic capital from Vinnova, they made a commitment to keep the technical knowhow and work within Sweden. These individuals had to prove they were worthy of support and recognition as social entrepreneurs by meeting the demands of high status field participants such as international NGOs and government agencies. These field participants imposed their organizational prescriptions on these social entrepreneurs who were trying to gain individual recognition and organizational legitimacy in the humanitarian field.

To gain legitimacy in the humanitarian field, social entrepreneurs have to ‘fit in’ by complying with already established institutions and practices. Peepoople’s case provides clear examples of how legitimacy building processes shape organizational practices. To become eligible for funds (from non-profit non-governmental organizations, private foundations and aid agencies) Wirseen and Wilhelmson decided to (re)create Peepoople as an NGO in Kenya. Such funds were needed to subsidize the production and delivery of Peepoople toilet bags in Kibera. This move was critical for Peepoople in three ways. Firstly, Peepoople Kenya had to create a bureaucracy to deal with fundraising. Secondly, Peepoople donors got the power to define and measure ‘social impact’ as they see fit. The Dutch NGO Simavi, for instance, even suspended funds for

Peepoople Kenya when the latter did not achieve the numerical results expected and stated during early stages of legitimacy building.

Thirdly, becoming an NGO in Kenya influences how the organization was perceived by Kibera residents: the customers in the Peepoople business model for slums. NGOs, in the words of slum dwellers and Peepoople salesladies, “are supposed to give things for free” (Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-07). These three events illustrate how, by fitting into a certain field, entrepreneurs are likely to change their organizations and even reproduce organizational forms accepted at the time. Legitimacy, in Peepoople and the CUP Kenya cases, seems to be the enactment of entrepreneurial habitus in that founders of these organizations constantly dealt with the paradox of fitting in (by complying with humanitarian institutions and discourses) and standing out (bringing new organizations, products and services to the field). For the social entrepreneurs here, legitimation in the humanitarian field required more than an entrepreneurial habitus. It demanded a humanitarian habitus which, I argue, contributes to our increased understanding of social entrepreneurship across national boundaries.

Humanitarian Habitus

The habitus required by the humanitarian field, and enacted by social entrepreneurs studied here, is not only entrepreneurial. In order to create organizations in this field, these social entrepreneurs have to enact what I term ‘humanitarian habitus’: a set of conscious and unconscious dispositions that enables these individuals to deal with discourses, institutions and contingencies faced in the humanitarian field. Though such habitus they can make sense of moral sentiments (e.g. compassion) towards distant others and act in accordance with what they and others perceive is appropriate. For these actors, these moral dispositions parallel ‘entrepreneurial habitus’ in that one must articulate moral sentiments *while* navigating and creating organizations in the humanitarian field. Humanitarian habitus of social entrepreneurs studied here involves not only positioning one’s perceptions and actions towards, and experimenting with, different forms of aid. The Peepoople case shows how this process can start with new product - standing out in the field - and, at the same time, apply discourses and organizational models which are well in line with trends with already great momentum – ‘fitting in’- in the field.

The enactment of this humanitarian habitus is evident in, for instance, Wirseen’s ability to judge social problems in Kibera and evoke sentiments of care and compassion among supporters of her organizations in Sweden and internationally. In a similar vein, she discovered “an energy” (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2014-12-18, my translation) while implementing Peepoople and the CUP in Kenya. This energy is similar to the ‘energy’ Malkki (2015) felt in people conducting humanitarian work to alleviate suffering during catastrophes. Humanitarian workers and social

entrepreneurs seem to answer a 'higher call' (Dempsey & Sanders, 2010). In both cases, subjects give meaning to their practices by associating work with something bigger than themselves. It is noticeable how this 'energy' is manifested in social entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial process, attaching to their work (and the way they articulate themselves in verbal and embodied expressions) an aura of moral superiority. Here too place matters. Camilla Wirseen, for instance, contended that she did not feel such energy when in Sweden.

Although the social entrepreneurs studied here often spoke of this context-bound experience in positive terms, their stay and work in Kenya was not unproblematic as it involved mixes of self-interest, 'meaningful work' (Dempsey & Sanders, 2010) and 'sacrifices' (Hubert & Mauss, 1964). Attached to their everyday actions in Nairobi, there were often tears, laughter, excitement, pleasure, disappointment, rip-offs, entertainment, insecurity and competitiveness. I also observed that other foreign informants in coping with their work were filled with similar emotions. This mix of positive and negative experiences seems to converge with what we know as 'meaningful work' (Dempsey & Sanders, 2010) in that it brings about self-improvements to social entrepreneurs but at sometimes quite high personal and economic costs.

My research shows how social entrepreneurs—no matter how much they claim to disregard selfish motifs—are far from immune to the addictive game of constant competition. Like any subject of the dominant neoliberal regime (Vrasti, 2012), social entrepreneurs derive part of their ethos of being 'compassionate entrepreneurs' by depending partly on the frugal and socially responsible consumption and support of the West to finance their social enterprises in postcolonial contexts. This neoliberal ethos not only makes these subjects more compassionate but also more competitive (Bröckling, 2016). Unlike the purely heroic and compassionate subjects portrayed in the social entrepreneurship literature (e.g. Nga & Shamuganathan, 2010; Meyskens et al, 2010; Miller et al, 2012; Cohen et al, 2019; Austin et al, 2006; Bornstein & Davis, 2010), the social entrepreneurs studied here compete with each other's organizations to do good.

As shown in previous chapters, compassion may help social entrepreneurs articulate meaningful work, neoliberal humanitarian discourses and social missions. However, the competition among the subjects studied here reveals the self-interest embedded in actions seemingly driven only by compassion: this includes both the social entrepreneurs and the local employees approached in my study. Therefore, compassion is one aspect of humanitarian conduct that seems to be colonized by the neoliberal ethos (Vrasti, 2012; Bröckling, 2016). This happens through this ethos that social entrepreneurs articulate and put into practice humanitarian discourses and institutions. I showed in previous chapters that competition not only improves organizational and entrepreneurial performance but may also be actually detrimental to them.

For this reason, competition, although celebrated in commercial entrepreneurship discourse (e.g. Spinosa et al 1997), tends to remain ‘backstage’ (Goffman, 1959) in humanitarian performances. After all, who would support a social entrepreneur delivering solutions to people who are already assisted by other humanitarian actors? The next section is a description of the role of economic capital in the legitimization process of social entrepreneurs in the humanitarian field.

8.2 Economic Capital and Legitimation

Social entrepreneurs approached in this study do not enter the humanitarian field with only ideas and new organizations. They bring economic resources accumulated prior to their experiences in the field. The importance of this ‘economic capital’ (Bourdieu, 1984) is evident in, for instance, social entrepreneurs’ ability to invest their own assets in Peepoople and the CUP Kenya—economic capital accumulated before these organizations were created. Unlike what is often defended in some entrepreneurship literature (e.g. Spinosa et al 1997; De Clercq & Voronov, 2009), this study suggests that entrepreneurship is not merely a matter of spotting societal trends and mobilizing cultural and symbolic capital. The economic capital possessed by social entrepreneurs studied here played a great role prior and during the entrepreneurial process. As shown in Chapter 5, social entrepreneurs may patent solutions and create organizations with their own economic capital. During the first five years of its existence, Peepoople was developed and maintained primarily with the economic capital of its founders.

Economic capital is also part of the humanitarian discourse which social entrepreneurs try to put into practice. Most of the subjects of legitimization approached in this study based their organizations on the idea that the economic poor have the willingness and the economic capital to pay for solutions. Economic capital is in part what makes social entrepreneurs, for example, ‘fit in’ and ‘stand out’ in the humanitarian field. As discussed in previous chapters, individuals gain recognition as social entrepreneurs by creating and disseminating the impression that the economically poor—the distant others—have enough money to pay for solutions. By doing so, these actors align their stories with assumptions defended by proponents of neoliberal entrepreneurship discourses. By this token, distant others are not as passive and financially poor as they tend to be portrayed (e.g. Kennedy, 2009). Instead, the distant other is both entrepreneurial and economically powerful.

Like the archetype of a ‘modern missionary’, the social entrepreneurs depicted in the Peepoople case integrated economic development into their interventions and storytelling. Accordingly, local female salesladies became an archetype of the entrepreneurial distant other:

the micro entrepreneur who actively made money for herself, helping organizations such as Peepoople to deliver their solutions and bring development to Kibera. In this scenario, the other (Said, 1977) becomes less helpless and, consequently, less 'distant' (Kennedy, 2009), due to the allegedly entrepreneurial attitude towards solutions provided by these salesladies as social entrepreneurs. These women gained legitimacy in the humanitarian field with storytelling about solutions that create changes in the conditions of the distant other. In this storytelling, entrepreneurial education programs and economic capital appear as the main mechanisms of transforming the other. The storytelling was aligned with what was idealized by powerful actors in the humanitarian field: it made the economic poor appear as more complete humans and alleviated human suffering by enabling (Edwards & Hulme, 2013) the distant other to participate in the free market.

There is, however, a contradiction here which may shed light on why some foreign social entrepreneurs have difficulties gaining legitimacy in a local setting such as Kibera. At the same time as some social entrepreneurs claim to be enabling poor people to become economically better off, they moralize and even punish local actors for displaying any sign of economic progress. The irony here is that these foreigners were all upper middle class individuals living the same lifestyle they criticize locals for aspiring to. This created conflicts and tensions between on one hand, locals who strived to achieve social mobility (or 'the good life' as many of them called it) and foreigners who imposed their anti-modernity and anti-consumerism views on them (Bartholdsson, 2006; Duffield, 2010). It seemed to many Kibera residents that these foreign actors did not want to see local economic development going anywhere beyond what was required to meet basic needs. Unlike the modern missionaries conceptualized by Barton, (1915), Beckerman, (1956) and Webster (2009), these actors apparently do not work to modernize and raise the standards of living of Kibera residents to the same levels as their own. In the next section, I contribute to social entrepreneurship theory by showing how symbolic value may be attached to economic capital.

The Symbolic Value of Economic Capital

The economic capital acquired by the social entrepreneurs studied here plays a role that goes beyond that of financing organizations (e.g. Austin et al., 2006; Bornstein & Davies, 2010). Depending on where economic capital comes from, it may also carry symbolic value. By receiving economic capital from powerful sources of legitimacy, the social entrepreneurs studied here created the impression that they were worthy of greater recognition, acceptance and support from other field participants. When Peepoople, for instance, received over six million Swedish

crowns from Vinnova, its founders were also ‘consecrated’ (i.e. an aura of social superiority) by one of the most powerful sources of legitimacy across all fields, namely the state (Bourdieu, 1984). Simultaneously, the state became both a financial supporter and, intrinsically, an endorser of these social entrepreneurs. Accordingly, social entrepreneurs studied here publicly presented the financial support gained from the state and private foundations as markers of their prospects, recognition and trustworthiness.

These markers were then used to gain legitimacy from other actors operating in the humanitarian field and the business field. Receiving economic capital from state agencies gives legitimacy to organizations and their founders. This is so mainly because grants (be they governmental or private), just like any ‘gift’ (Mauss [1954] 2005), carries with them the honour and prestige of the granters. It was therefore quite usual that the social entrepreneurs studied in this dissertation strived to get grants from actors who Camilla Wirseen viewed as high profiles and big shots.

By supporting seemingly successful social entrepreneurs the granter also gains legitimacy. Social entrepreneurs act as sources of legitimacy for granters in three main ways: by displaying the granter’s brand wherever solutions are delivered; by becoming perceived in the humanitarian field as successful as change makers; and by connecting granters with other high profile supporters. It is therefore not unusual that granters encourage social entrepreneurs to seek support from other high profile actors. For instance, a grant from actors such as Gates Foundation and Rotary Club is ranked higher than financial support from a Dutch NGO that only a few actors know about. As shown in previous chapters, gaining economic support from these actors was not enough for social entrepreneurs seeking international recognition. In the next section, I make a further contribution to the social entrepreneurship literature by showing how social entrepreneurs spend economic capital where they are supposed to sell solutions.

Economic Capital for Legitimacy

As shown in previous chapters, the economic capital acquired from sources of legitimacy (e.g. the state) can be also converted into cultural capital, financing the acquisition of knowledge about social problems, distant others and solutions. For social entrepreneurs, Kibera residents act as critical sources of legitimacy in the humanitarian field. Yet, gaining legitimacy in the humanitarian field is not only a matter of acquiring ‘entrepreneurial habitus’ or ‘cultural capital’ (De Clercq & Voronov, 2009). Access to the settlement and interactions with these sources of legitimacy require the constant mobilization of economic capital. For instance, a ‘sitting allowance’ is a type of relationship by which locals are paid (in cash) to attend courses, workshops and marketing events organized by actors in the humanitarian field such as social

entrepreneurs and NGOs. As shown in Chapter 6, Kibera residents are also paid to test solutions and give public feedback on products provided by other organizations. By receiving a sitting allowance, one also seems to commit to making positive and grateful public reviews of the products offered by foreign actors.

Unlike gift giving events (Mauss ([1954] 2005), the payment of sitting allowances tends to have a secret aura; no one is supposed to openly talk about it and yet cash givers and receivers are well of aware of it. Those receiving such payments are also aware of what is required in return for economic capital: a dramatic performance of gratitude and a vow of silence about those who, to Kibera's residents, appear to be the real beneficiaries of the NGO sector. Making sitting allowances public threatens not only the legitimacy of social entrepreneurs but also undermines various humanitarian discourses. If technical assistance is the best solution for poverty (Coulier, 2006; Toyama, 2014), why would target groups demand material and economic handouts to receive it? If entrepreneurship and business education programs are so desperately needed in the Global South (e.g. Prahalad & Hammond, 2003; Prahalad, 2006), why do the economically poor require cash to attend such events?

Sitting allowances complement public rituals of gift giving (Mauss [1954] 2005) in that they are attached to acts of delivering, teaching how to use and endorsing solutions. Instead of NGOs acting as enablers of the market' (Hulme & Edwards, 2013), the payment of sitting allowances to Kibera residents suggests quite the opposite. It suggests that another market is created in the settlement, enabling NGOs and social entrepreneurs to deliver contemporary forms of assistance. This market has a direct consequence for the legitimation of social entrepreneurs and NGOs. Cash was exchanged for attendance. High rates of attendance determined levels of the success of interventions. Success measured in this form increased the likelihood of social entrepreneurs getting more support from the humanitarian field. Organizations and social entrepreneurs who did not dispose of enough economic capital were faced with low rates of attendance, which was then perceived as a failure in the humanitarian field. Rates of attendance were frequently used to measure the results of solutions based on any form of knowledge transference from gift givers to aid receivers.

This is not to say that the market of attendance in humanitarian events only exists in Kibera. The payment of sitting allowances occurs in aid receiving countries such as Ghana, Mozambique, Togo, Nigeria and Tanzania (Aiga, 2011). While it may have the positive effect of raising the income of those attending the events (ibid), it also brings with it the negative outcome of attendance at training sessions becoming only a matter of receiving cash and not purportedly learning to become the change maker, as idealized by social entrepreneurs, NGOs and donors. Most importantly, sitting allowances tend to maintain an aura of secrecy because

the practice is frowned upon among some actors of the humanitarian field. Therefore, disclosing this market in public may threaten the legitimacy of those subjects engaging with it. Once made public, the payment of sitting allowances in events organized by Peepoople, for instance, worked against the organization's legitimacy. Local leaders, the media and other foreign led organizations criticized the organization for paying for attendance in events.

Those who show how widespread sitting allowances are in Africa (e.g. Aiga, 2011) have not explored why locals require cash in order to attend events such as workshops and training sessions. Yet the use of sitting allowances in Kibera shows the reality of individuals who assume a certain form of entrepreneurial agency: they take the opportunity to make money out of actors delivering solutions to them. Slum residents are well aware of how important it is for social entrepreneurs to have their so-called solutions tested and accepted in the settlement and, consequently, recognized internationally. In this context, social entrepreneurs become 'subjects of legitimation' (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008) who are evaluated by local sources of legitimacy such as school principals, Kibera residents and local leaders. By gaining legitimacy in Kibera, social entrepreneurs increase their chances of getting support from wealthy actors in the humanitarian field. Social acceptance, endorsements and attendance at social events become acts of symbolic value; they consecrate social entrepreneurs and their solutions. Therefore, these acts can be performed in Kibera and exchanged for economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986) from social entrepreneurs. As showed in Chapter 6, social entrepreneurs are not exempt from this exchange, even if local leaders tell them that "you are one of us" (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-02-03, my translation).

Actors within the humanitarian field (e.g. social entrepreneurs, NGOs, the media, academics, and foundations) tend to portray locals as grateful, passive and victims. By studying the mechanisms of legitimation of social entrepreneurs, I acknowledge the entrepreneurial skills and practices of postcolonial subjects in Nairobi. The way through which locals in Nairobi interact with social entrepreneurs, is quite entrepreneurial. It is an entrepreneurial sensitivity inherent in the act of spotting, creating and acting upon opportunities (Schumpeter ([1927]1989; Kirzner, 1997). This is constantly performed by actors such as those slum dwellers who get paid to act as grateful aid receivers; by those Kibera residents who make an economically better living out of social entrepreneurs employing them; by government authorities, running the enterprises of patronage and bribes so as to maintain their power and increase their profits; and by the local chiefs and leaders offering access to Kibera in exchange for money, jobs and increased political influence in 'their' areas.

The practice of sitting allowances suggests that aid receivers may also perceive the act of being paid to attend events as a form of balancing against what they perceive as an unfair exchange of

benefits. There is no such a thing as a ‘free gift’ meaning that all gifts shall be somewhat unclearly reciprocated by the gift receivers (Mauss ([1954] 2005). Local residents tend to see their attendance in humanitarian events and the public use of solutions as something more valuable for social entrepreneurs than for themselves. With that in mind, the act of demanding cash payments for attendance in events organized by social entrepreneurs is well in line with Mauss’s notion of reciprocity in the exchange of gifts. This is because the attendees of humanitarian events perceive themselves as ‘the real gift givers’ in their relations with organizations such as Peepoople.

Some of these attendees even stated that they were “used” (female business owner and Kibera resident, interview, 2016-05-02) by social entrepreneurs and foreign led organizations conducting pilot projects and product and ‘organizational experiments’ (Edwards, 2008). Therefore, they see the need to have that exchange complemented by sitting allowances. Consequently, those social entrepreneurs who, as shown in previous chapters, try to sell products are challenged by local perceptions about do gooders who are supposed to give solutions for free or even pay for help in delivery. Kibera residents seemed to want goods (produced by actors in the humanitarian field) to be delivered ‘for free’ (at least in a monetary sense) because they viewed local chiefs, social entrepreneurs, and employees as the actual beneficiaries of the humanitarian field.

Economic Capital and Meaningful Work

Dempsey and Sanders (2010) have shown how social entrepreneurs narrate their work as meaningful in relation to the third sector in the US. In the eyes of helpers, the hands of the economically poor in the Global South may function as modern ‘sacrificial altars’ (Scherz, 2012). However, the poor themselves may see the work of helpers quite differently. Unlike in the US depicted by Dempsey and Sanders (2010), the local actors studied here do not view the Kenyan third sector as “... a sacred space existing apart from the influences of capitalism” (Dempsey & Sanders, 2010: 440). Quite the contrary, workers in the Kenyan non-profit sector are viewed as economic and political elites. This partly explains why some local actors perceive themselves as being entitled to profit from their interactions with the social entrepreneurs and NGOs studied here.

My study shows how locals request economic capital in order to provide social entrepreneurs with cultural capital and legitimacy in Kibera. Local actors attach high (and sometimes exaggerated) value to pictures, information and access to the reality of people living in Kibera. Most of my local informants claimed that foreign social entrepreneurs would become famous and even “make millions” out of local knowledge acquired in Kibera (Kibera resident, interview,

2016-05-02). Thus, they exchanged information about the needs and priorities of the poor in the settlement for what Bourdieu has conceptualized as “economic and social capital” (Bourdieu, 1986). Valuable contacts with foreigners were established. Jobs in social enterprises were secured. Households in Kibera tested and reviewed products such as the Peepoople toilet bags in exchange for “some small money” (manager at Peepoople Kenya, interview, 2015-02-07).

But what happens when information about distant others is incomplete, imperfect or even manipulated? Mistakes are commonly made mainly because entrepreneurs base their decisions on scarce and imperfect knowledge (Kirzner, 1997). The entrepreneurial legitimization processes assessed here were heavily dependent on the ‘feedback’ (Nielsen et al, 2012) entrepreneurs received when they presented their ideas. As shown in previous chapters, the process of presenting ideas and receiving feedback may be distorted by two actors in the humanitarian field: firstly, by dominant agents of consecration disseminating the paradoxical idea that the bottom of the pyramid is both economically poor and, at the same, time capable of buying products from the West and secondly, by local actors using and endorsing solutions they do not really believe in, nor intend to purchase.

The social entrepreneurs studied here acquired imperfect knowledge when they relied on information provided by local actors who exaggerated the need and priority given for sanitation in Kibera. Expecting to get employed by NGOs, local actors distorted the evidence about slum dwellers’ ability and apparent willingness to pay for solutions. Local actors tended to ‘manipulate the truth’ (Rossi, 2006) about local needs in order to attract and retain foreign led organizations. Even if the founders and managers of these organizations did acquire complete knowledge about the priorities and tastes of the economically poor, the demand for solutions such as Peepoople toilet bags was still uncertain. It was impossible for these entrepreneurs to know exactly if and to what extent clients would purchase their products and services.

8.3 Social Capital for Legitimation

The evidence analysed in this dissertation suggests that entrepreneurial legitimization is also influenced by individuals “network of connections” (Bourdieu, 1986: 22), also known as social capital: a resource well studied in the entrepreneurship literature (Nielsen et al, 2012). Social entrepreneurs approached in this dissertation made use of such connections as resources available to them before and during the creation of organizations. While mobilizing these connections they got in touch with, for example, old friends, some of whom invested their own economic and social capital in the organizations, helping these social entrepreneurs to gain

legitimacy in the humanitarian field. One can assess the volume of social capital that certain actors have by looking into the size of their networks and the different forms of capital that each member of these networks possesses (Bourdieu, 1986). As shown in Chapter 7, it seems that social entrepreneurs have to mobilize a considerable volume of the social capital which is available before they create new organizations. Their upbringing and backgrounds play a significant role here.

With their network of connections, the social entrepreneurs studied here gained the necessary support to attract funds, attention and partners for organizations. Social capital also helped them acquire valuable information about how such support can be obtained (Nielsen et al, 2012). Businesses, clients, partners and individuals with whom social entrepreneurs have been working offered different forms of support and prestige to the organizations. In the case of Camilla Wirseen, it is observable how a social entrepreneur may mobilize social capital that was acquired long before the entrepreneurship process was set in motion. She grew up in Djursholm, a place known for concentrating and forming members of Sweden's socio-economic elite (Holmqvist, 2015). This insight reminds us that social capital is inherently unequal as it is attached to one's social positioning. Socioeconomic inequalities restrict one's access to this resource (Bourdieu, 1986). This includes my research subjects. Not all the twenty social entrepreneurs approached in my study were raised in Djursholm but most of them belong to what is known as the middle and upper middle class. This also includes Kenyan social entrepreneurs.

The availability of social capital may be partly determined by a social entrepreneur's nationality. It is clear that actors in the humanitarian field associate the establishment and use of a "network of connections" (Bourdieu, 1986: 22) with, for instance, the countries where the social entrepreneurs come from. For instance, being a social entrepreneur from Sweden provides social entrepreneurs with resourceful connections (e.g. the Swedish ambassador in Kenya, embassy staff, Swedish employees at the UN in Kenya and Swedish business owners in Kenya).

The social entrepreneurs studied here contribute to and utilize places (Bensemann et al, 2018) and Kibera is well illustrative of this proposition. Having an organization up and running in Kibera is something sought after, even by well-established humanitarian actors. For those social entrepreneurs with experience and organizations in this informal urban settlement, the place gives increased chances to establish a new and valuable network of connections. Actors seeking to implement projects in Kibera may provide social entrepreneurs with different opportunities: economic capital, collaboration, international recognition, access to other places targeted by the humanitarian field and contact with powerful humanitarian actors. In this sense, place 'pays off' when it comes to gaining legitimacy in a specific field. It pays off especially when entrepreneurs

are dealing with places which, borrowing one social entrepreneur's terms, "the whole world is looking" at (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2015-03-05, my translation).

At the same time as they attract and provide networks of connections to entrepreneurs, places may threaten entrepreneurial legitimacy. In the specific case of Kibera, social entrepreneurs do not only cooperate but, sometimes informally and simultaneously, they compete for physical spaces and so-called 'professional attendees'. In this sense, social capital social plays a paradoxical role in entrepreneurial legitimacy: a partner who supports your organization may also be the owner of an organization competing for recognition and support in the humanitarian field; a social entrepreneur who helps your organization in accessing Kibera may soon copy your ideas; today's endorser of a project may become tomorrow's fierce critic. Legitimacy and its mechanisms of production are, after all, objects of competition (Bourdieu, 1984) among actors in the humanitarian field.

Subjects who act as sources of capital and legitimacy also impose demands on social entrepreneurs. In Chapter 7, for instance, I have shown how social entrepreneurs seemed to reciprocate the critical support they receive from friends by letting them act, in several public occasions, as the owner of the organization. Different forms of capital are not granted to social entrepreneurs without underlying ties of control and reciprocity. There are morals and demands attached to what is 'freely given' (Mauss, 2006), for instance the social capital granted to social entrepreneurs studied in this dissertation. Therefore, the relationships between subjects of legitimation and sources of legitimacy cannot be viewed as completely disinterested, keeping in mind that supporters gain some power over social entrepreneurs.

The cases presented here suggest that field specific demands tend to make organizations become more like each other (Powell & DiMaggio, 1991) and, while navigating different fields, entrepreneurs deal with the paradoxical demands of both "fitting in" and "standing out". In Peepoople's case, it is clear that some of these demands may conflict with local and international institutions and humanitarian discourses (e.g. technical assistance). As constituents of the humanitarian field, social entrepreneurship fellowship organizations disseminate conceptions of social entrepreneurs as actors who commit to reinvest profits (Nicholls, 2010). Consequently, social entrepreneurs at Peepoople aligned their organization to these conceptions even though commitments to reinvest profits conflicted with the interests of shareholders. This case illustrates how social missions can be changed and even completely abandoned over time (Edwards, 2010). Peepoople's shareholders demanded, as they phrased it, a return on their investment and it was the founders' intention is to meet these demands as soon as the organization started generating profits. Therefore, social missions can be used as fluid rhetorical devices in the entrepreneurial quest for capital (e.g. social and economic) and legitimacy.

Conclusively, social entrepreneurs act as sources of legitimacy in the humanitarian field. As such, social entrepreneurs may make (cultural, economic and social) capital available to employees, supporters and target groups trying to profit from and gain legitimacy in this field. Donors, for example, used information and success stories provided by social entrepreneurs to support their discourses. Kenyan actors, for instance, used their experiences and interactions with social entrepreneurs to access and establish networks of connections with other actors in the humanitarian field. The humanitarian field is perceived by these actors as prestigious and filled with opportunities for highly paid employment in Nairobi. At the same time as these actors are sources of entrepreneurial legitimacy, they gain cultural capital from social entrepreneurs: they learn skills necessary to navigate and thrive in the field.

8.4 Legitimacy and Symbolic Capital

The cases presented here suggest that individuals' accumulated honour and prestige also influence how they gain legitimacy as social entrepreneurs. In other words, the legitimacy gained by social entrepreneurs is a consequence of their accumulation of what Bourdieu refers to as 'symbolic capital' (Bourdieu, 1993). Symbolic capital is also available to social entrepreneurs because of their accumulated reputation and recognition. The recognition acquired by the social entrepreneurs studied here plays a dual role (Weber, (1968): it is a consequence of increased social support and, at the same time, it becomes the basis for maintaining entrepreneurial legitimacy. This is because individuals' levels of recognition play a significant role in their legitimacy building process (O'Connor, 2004) even before they become labelled as social entrepreneurs founding and working with organizations such as Peepoople.

Chapters 6 and 7 have shown how, prior to engaging in a social enterprise, individuals may be already internationally recognized in fields to which the humanitarian field is subordinated, such as business and academia. Anders Wilhelmson, for instance, is a professor and renowned architect. Richard Ulfvengren, the co-founder of the CUP Kenya, is well established in advertising and business. Thus, symbolic capital manifests itself as part of these social entrepreneurs' 'accumulated history' (Bourdieu, 1984): a set of past events which provides them

with honour, prestige and recognition even before they become ‘subjects of legitimation’ (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008) in the humanitarian field.

Furthermore, the evidence presented in previous chapters suggests that individuals’ symbolic capital follows the ideas and objects that they create. A toilet bag was not just a new product allegedly “saving lives” (Regeringskansliet, 2011:28) in urban slums in the Global South. It was also an artefact designed by a person whose apparently good reputation was already built before he began to engage with the humanitarian field.

As such, this object carried with it not only the charisma of its creators and previous owners (Mauss, 2006). It also inherited a national reputation: leaders and supporters of this solution presented it as yet another successful story of Swedish design; ‘the IKEA of the poor’; Swedish exports. This is an aspect of symbolic capital that tends to be neglected in the analysis of organizational legitimacy (Suchman, 1995; Deephouse & Suchman, 2008) and entrepreneurial legitimacy building (O’Connor, 2004; Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001; De Clercq & Voronov, 2009; Bensemann et al, 2018). Entrepreneurs not only present their ideas through storytelling. They also present themselves, often emphasizing honourable achievements, national identities and public recognition accrued over time.

Consecratory Events and Stories

The social entrepreneurs approached in this study gained recognition from sources of legitimacy such as European states, the media, foundations and social entrepreneurship networks. Some of these actors were powerful enough to act as ‘agents of consecration’, (e.g. Vinnova, the Economist and Tekniska Museet– the Swedish National Museum of Science and Technology,) making explicit evaluations of solutions. Furthermore, these agents of consecration may use social events such as award presentations and conferences to produce symbolic capital for these solutions and for the social entrepreneurs who promote them. The androcentric, individualistic nature of these mechanisms of legitimation is visible in their incapacity to acknowledge and praise other individuals (men and women) involved in the creation of such organizations. As shown in Chapter 6, these events create and spread public evaluations, generating recognition and prestige solely to one social entrepreneur, even though three other individuals (two women and one man) have helped develop and design the solution awarded.

The evidence from Chapter 6 also suggests that agents of consecration can use social events to grant different types of capital simultaneously. Some of the prizes won by social entrepreneurs assume the form of symbolic as well as economic capital attached (Bourdieu, 1993), due to the recognition and prestige that such events generate. Most importantly, this form of capital influences how social entrepreneurs and their solutions are presented to wider audiences and prospective supporters. Social entrepreneurs and their employees often use the recognition

gained in such events to present to and convince other actors to support these organizations. This recognition also becomes part of entrepreneurial legitimacy building through storytelling (O'Connor, 2004).

Social entrepreneurs' prizes themselves also become part of the storytelling which is so important for entrepreneurial legitimacy building (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001; O'Connor, 2004). This is an important mechanism by which these actors gain recognition in the humanitarian field. Powerful sources of legitimacy in this field (e.g. prize committees, foundations, government agencies and social entrepreneurship fellowship organizations) use the stories told by social entrepreneurs to support neoliberal discourses. Entrepreneurial storytelling becomes a source of symbolic capital for social entrepreneurs and their sources of legitimacy by: a) providing evidence and support to the neoliberal entrepreneurship discourses promoted by actors such as aid agencies, foundations and social entrepreneurship networks; and b) determining what social entrepreneurship means and who is worth recognition and prizes as an apparent 'social entrepreneur'. In cases studied here, storytelling discloses practices and events such as moral epiphanies, encounters with distant others, the surrender of worktime and economic resources and spotting business opportunities in the Global South. Social entrepreneurs' storytelling encompasses goals such as improving the standards of living of distant others through entrepreneurship and technical assistance.

Gift giving (Mauss, [1954] 1990; Bourdieu, 1977) is a practice with higher prospects for the accumulation of symbolic capital. It is remarkable, however, as shown in Chapter 6, that the social entrepreneurs studied here acquired symbolic capital in the humanitarian field for the creation of a solution which was not supposed to be given for free as charity. Instead, these subjects of legitimation received most of their social entrepreneurial honour and recognition for attaching a business model to the delivery of solutions to the Global South.

This epitomizes a neoliberal shift in humanitarian debates where relationships of charity between the West and distant others are, at least in theory, replaced by market relationships. The 'gift' (Mauss, [1954] 1990) of aid, generating symbolic capital to those creating, financing and delivering it (Eyben, 2006), must no longer disguise the self-interested motives of gift givers. On the contrary, sources of legitimacy in the humanitarian field actively encourage social entrepreneurs and other field participants to emphasize self-interest in their relationships with distant others. It is, in one social entrepreneur's own words, 'trendy' to help the poor with a business model. This idea has grown in a context where powerful humanitarian actors use neoliberal entrepreneurship discourses to criticize and offer an alternative to so-called 'free aid' in the Global South.

Social events in Kibera are also an important part of the entrepreneurial legitimization process in the humanitarian field. For social entrepreneurs to gain much sought after international attention, a story contrasting before and after the entrepreneur's intervention has to be conveyed, captured, edited and spread. Therefore, it is important to organize social events which convey such a message. Just like gift giving rituals (Mauss, [1954] 1990; Bourdieu, 1977), acts of the surrender of objects and services involve public drama. Such public acts are supposed to change the social character of social entrepreneurs. As well, in such events, donors, philanthropists, celebrities and corporate social responsibility initiatives are also given an aura of moral superiority. If not present, these actors must at least be taken into account.

Therefore, statements of gratefulness are publicly made by social entrepreneurs, NGO workers and aid receivers. In most cases, this also implies having to acknowledge financial supporters by putting their names and logos in the social entrepreneurs' homepages. This may seem trivial but tells us something important about social entrepreneurship's relationship to gift giving and reciprocity: in the role of a gift receiver, the social entrepreneur reciprocates gifts by showing how much donors mean to them in the pursuit of their social mission. Furthermore, the social entrepreneurs studied here frequently engaged in the task of ensuring that their employees and target groups publicly displayed their gratitude towards donors. This aspect is key when the imagery of encounters between donors, social entrepreneurs and aid receivers is produced.

Also, in line with gift giving procedures (ibid), the social events performed in Kibera also changed the status of the givers and the gifts. In several cases, it even changed the character of the objects and settings where the gift giving took place. The names and brands of donors were neatly painted on the toilet facilities, NGO offices, service centres, training facilities, lampposts and water tanks. The placement of these neatly painted physical spaces and objects near the surrounding makeshift houses in Kibera created a contrasting visual effect: they marked the geographic and social positions of the social entrepreneurs, donors and local employees in relation to the slum dwellers. The places within the settlement where social enterprise workers lived also fulfilled such a function: the closer one was to the 'NGO sector' the better the infrastructure of one's house. Places where sacrifices are performed also become consecrated, assuming social superiority as a by-product of these sacrificial rituals (Hubert & Mauss, 1964).

The evidence presented in this dissertation suggests that the ideal social entrepreneur is supposed to sell or lend their products and services to economically poor individuals. This is based on the assumption that distant others are entrepreneurial and economically powerful actors. Yet, to do that, the organizations studied here were heavily supported by gifts from other sources of legitimacy in the humanitarian field. In this context, social entrepreneurs gained national and international recognition for producing new goods, services, artefacts and stories

which confirmed neoliberal humanitarian trends. This is illustrative of how entrepreneurs can gain legitimacy by dealing with the paradox of 'fitting in' and 'standing out' (De Clerq & Voronov, 2009).

Other Sources of Symbolic Capital

The social entrepreneurs approached here not only gained legitimacy through the direct acquisition of symbolic capital. To gain legitimacy in the humanitarian field, they also negotiated and used the symbolic capital of other field participants. It is clear that chiefs, youth leaders and the elderly played a significant role in the legitimacy building of these social entrepreneurs. From Bourdieu (1977) and Mauss ([1954] 1990) we know that individuals may accrue symbolic capital through gift giving and the conspicuous use of economic resources. The way local leaders and authorities interacted with foreign social entrepreneurs is highly illustrative of how local sources of legitimacy converted their symbolic capital into economic capital. By charging social entrepreneurs for safe access to the settlement, public endorsements and attendance at events, these actors converted their local recognition into economic capital. The amount of economic capital spent on these critical sources of local legitimacy matched their different levels of accrued symbolic capital.

A public endorsement made by a chief was more expensive than that of a youth leader. Sitting allowances paid to the elderly had to be higher than the ones paid to ordinary Kibera residents. Often in exchange for cash, employment and social capital, these local actors became judges and endorsers of products, services, organizations and social entrepreneurs. In public appearances, they attached their reputation and honour to subjects of legitimation. To gain legitimacy among such symbolically powerful actors, social entrepreneurs had to 'fit in' to local norms. Social entrepreneurs had to pay to and/or create jobs for these sources of legitimacy or their relatives.

It is important, however, to explain how the symbolic capital of local actors operating in Kibera tends to be circumscribed by place: chiefs, youth leaders or village elders did not seem to be as powerful in other wealthier areas of Nairobi as they were in Kibera. This is quite noticeable when one meets these actors in places outside of the settlement such as the mall and the so-called 'fancy areas' where most foreign social entrepreneurs and NGO workers live. It is not only that these actors are not so powerful outside of Kibera. In some affluent parts of Nairobi, they may even be discriminated against by other Kenyans.

Entrepreneurial legitimacy seems to depend also on how social entrepreneurs manage to get other honourable and widely recognized actors to support their organizations. As a large slum close a 'UN city', Nairobi, Kibera is a strategic place for those individuals seeking the support from actors with high levels of symbolic capital, as the place attracts celebrities, politicians and

internationally renowned foundations and NGOs. Operating in such place increases one's chances to interact with and become endorsed by such actors.

The solutions developed by Peepoople, for instance, appealed, at least in the beginning, to these proponents of entrepreneurship discourse (e.g. Easterly, 2006; Bishop & Green, 2009) in the humanitarian field. The Peepoople business model for slums did not set a trend in this field. Instead, it converged with what was already trendy in the humanitarian field: serving the poor profitably. Like many other social entrepreneurs in this field, Peepoople's founders gained legitimacy for claiming to be able to replace flying toilets with biodegradable toilet bags and replace charity with business models for the economically poor. In practice, however, my research reveals how these individuals end up reproducing the practices they criticize: creating new NGOs and providing locals with free products, services and cash.

Chapter IX: Conclusions

Epilogue

Lately, I have been thinking about Peepoople.... Perhaps, as a product it was too soon out in the market. I mean that we should have waited more to do the investment we made on the high-speed machine, marketing and gaining the approval from different actors. The project also should have had more research results to back it up, I mean independent research. And the scaling up process should be more dynamic, maybe testing different models in perhaps different countries. It is important that such project creates jobs. It is a great project if you can then have local production in different places where Peepoo is used. And since Peepoople was created in 2006 a lot has happened in terms of biodegradable plastic and the price has also gone down. Because these plastics were great costs for Peepoople and it also influenced the design to keep down plastic consumption. So, it's a lot of lessons for us (Peepoople previous shareholder, interview, 2020-04-02, my translation).

The above quote illustrates a critical aspect of entrepreneurial legitimation: establishing the 'right timing' to bring new organizations, products and services into existence and into the market (Nielsen et al, 2012). In a similar vein, my study is influenced by this notion of temporality, keeping in mind how it is based on the reality of social entrepreneurs mainly from 2006 to 2016. As mentioned previously, the humanitarian field is fluid, changing its features over time. This is so mainly because actors forming, and being influenced by, this field tend to compete, experiment with, and change their practices and discourses over time. For instance, donors tend to change their forms of intervention and the kind of marginalized groups they target. The media constantly change their focus on different humanitarian issues, shaping our understanding of what kind of distant others deserve the most attention and help. Scholars constantly generate new theoretical and empirical knowledge that supports or challenges current forms of aid. Government agencies tend to modify their aid policies in line with domestic and international political shifts and changes in public opinion.

Therefore, the humanitarian field is likely to differ quite considerably from how it was when the journey of the social entrepreneurs studied here started in 2006. Based on these changes, I think the above quoted informant is right to think of the legitimation of Peepoople solutions in temporal terms. The CUP Kenya case is good example of this relationship between legitimation and time. This case tells us a story about how it took menstrual cups four decades before the product was gradually introduced into the US market and later into the humanitarian field. This happened mainly as a consequence of changes in technologies of production and in consumer behaviour. The same might well happen to the toilet bags developed by founders of Peepoople. Time will tell.

However, the most remarkable findings made during this research were not so much related to the acceptance of products and services as they were to the legitimation of social entrepreneurs and their organizations. It was fascinating to observe how individuals—creating and working for organizations like Peepoople—managed to gain legitimacy as social entrepreneurs in spite of the inadequacy of their business models for slums and the rejection

faced by their products and services. The aim of this dissertation was to contribute to the social entrepreneurship literature by explaining how this happened.

With this purpose in mind, I looked into practices adopted by social entrepreneurs, their employees, local actors, donors and other actors while interacting with each other. This analysis was primarily focused on practices adopted during three main types of social events: 1) occasions during which social entrepreneurs mobilized resources in order to gain and maintain legitimacy; 2) events by which actors interacted with, and evaluated, products and services designed by social entrepreneurs; 3) events during which actors granted their support to social entrepreneurs and organizations. In the following sections, the main contributions are presented of this study to social entrepreneurship's theory, methodology, practice and policy.

9.1 Storytellers

Great advances have been made in the quest for understanding entrepreneurial legitimacy. We know, for instance, how the entrepreneur's ability to design, tell and adapt stories plays a significant role in the process of gaining social acceptance and support for their ideas and organizations (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001; O'Connor, 2004). The analysis carried out in this dissertation converges with this proposition.

The stories told by social entrepreneurs studied here were critical to the acceptance and support of the organizations created. These stories involved two central protagonists: 1) the social entrepreneurs—raised in or supported by the West—who developed solutions for communities in the Global South; 2) the poor local entrepreneurs who, with the help brought from the West, were enabled to make a better living. As such, these stories fitted into trendy neoliberal entrepreneurship discourses which were promoted by, for instance, foundations, state agencies and the media.

I argue, however, that storytelling alone does not explain how entrepreneurs gain acceptance and support for their organizations. To fully understand the role of storytelling in entrepreneurial legitimacy building, we also must scrutinize how storytellers are socially positioned before, during and after the entrepreneurial processes. How do their professional backgrounds influence the design and presentation of stories? How does entrepreneurs' upbringing influence their ability to tell believable stories? How do individuals use different kinds of capital to gain legitimacy as an entrepreneur?

Elaborating on the concept of habitus (Bourdieu, 1986), the current study suggests that the legitimacy of social entrepreneurs depends on their ability to identify trends, operationalize humanitarian discourses, and evoke universal sentiments of compassion. Individuals not only become legitimized as social entrepreneurs for creating novel solutions and organizations in accordance to certain socially established norms. They also gain legitimacy because of who they were before and during the entrepreneurial process. Most social entrepreneurs approached in this study were raised in middle class families and this influenced their chances of gaining legitimacy in the humanitarian field. Therefore, I argue that entrepreneurial storytelling is also a matter of who is telling the stories. I propose a greater focus on the role played by individuals' social position before they become entrepreneurs, and before they engage in entrepreneurial storytelling. Entrepreneurial storytellers' backgrounds and accumulated capital are as important for entrepreneurial legitimation as their storytelling while creating their new organizations.

9.2 Humanitarian Cluster

Scholars have shown how place plays a critical role in entrepreneurial processes (Bensemann et al, 2018). They mean that in order to gain legitimacy in a certain place, entrepreneurs must show not only that they can profit there. They must show how they contribute to place by relating their ventures to the local history, institutions and actors. My analysis of evidence from Kibera supports, and adds a few new aspects to, this proposition. The entrepreneurs approached in this study gained legitimacy for being acknowledged as actors addressing problems attached to places. To accomplish that, they formally and informally aligned their individual and organizational activities to local institutions and demands from local sources of legitimacy such as slum dwellers, chiefs and employees. The local setting influenced how social entrepreneurs dealt with, and changed, what they referred to as their business models and their organizations.

In international humanitarian debates, social entrepreneurs gained legitimacy for claiming to be able to replace organizations classified as NGOs with new for-profit ventures and charities with business models for the poor. In local practice, however, my research revealed that these individuals ended up reproducing the practices they used to criticize: creating new NGOs and providing locals with cash, free products and services. These social entrepreneurs gained support from powerful actors from the West by creating for-profit organizations in the humanitarian field. At same time, they faced difficulties in operating with business models in the local setting where they delivered their solutions. Although they initially criticized charity, charity gradually became part of their *modus operandi* and it was also imposed by local actors.

I have shown in Chapter 6 how social entrepreneurs may have individual missions which are not as fluid as the ones they attribute to their organizations and not as ‘social’ as they claim. Not all recognition social entrepreneurs gained was strategically used for organizational purposes. Recognition was also part of the ‘feel good’ work of helping others. Accordingly, social entrepreneurs changed organizational practices and social missions and kept working to ‘make a difference’. The individual higher callings explored in this dissertation reminded me of the entrepreneurs explored by Weber (1968) in that their work—creating and managing organizations—gave them a sort of adrenaline “kick” or “an energy” (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2014-12-18, my translation). In other words, this calling manifested itself as a justification to view humanitarian work as an end in itself. As shown in Chapter 4, some social entrepreneurs even viewed this meaningful work as a self-healing process. This energy was both entrepreneurial and humanitarian.

This energy was also connected to place: working and living in the capital of Kenya was motivated by a mix of entrepreneurial strategies, personal convenience and humanitarian thrill. My research contributes to social entrepreneurship theory by revealing some consequences of this connection between social entrepreneurs and place. The main contribution here is my argument that, in Kibera, the place intensifies the gathering of social entrepreneurs. This urban slum was critical to Nairobi’s concentration of humanitarian agencies.

While commenting on the concentration of actors developing new toilet solutions in Nairobi, a social entrepreneur once called Nairobi a “Silicon Valley of shit” (Kalan, 2011-11-19). Although overly pejorative, this statement had something in common with my observations. I too thought of Nairobi as a place somewhat comparable with Silicon Valley. In contrast to what was said by this specific social entrepreneur, Nairobi not only gathered actors working with sanitation issues. This city functioned as a ‘humanitarian cluster’ where actors (including social entrepreneurs) concentrated their efforts, created organizations and developed solutions for the economically poor. Nairobi was indeed perceived as a “UN city” (Anders Wilhelmson, YouTube interview, 2012-10-30). In this city, Kibera accommodated those for whom solutions were developed. Therefore, it functioned as a place where humanitarian actors interacted with each other and the economically poor, under the premise of working for poverty alleviation.

Thus Kibera attracted social entrepreneurs, NGOs, donors, celebrities and the economically poor. It also offered social relationships by which subjects became socialized into new roles as, for instance, change makers, humanitarian/NGO workers, social entrepreneurs, humanitarian givers, teachers, exotic lovers and female micro entrepreneurs. With its fame, easy access, levels of poverty, social networks and local actors, Kibera helped social entrepreneurs to gain legitimacy. Social entrepreneurs acquired cultural capital and artefacts there: pictures of the poor

were taken; videos of the local situation were produced; networks with local and international actors were established. Local imagery, reports and narratives gave the impression that solutions developed by social entrepreneurs were heavily needed, welcomed and actually purchased. 'Being there' and having an organization in Kibera was a marker of legitimacy in the humanitarian field. Thus, I argue that place is critical to the legitimization process of entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs and other actors. Therefore, more studies of social entrepreneurship should focus on the role place plays in the process by which new organizations, services and artefacts are created.

9.3 Unexpected Entrepreneurship

In line with De Clerq and Voronov, (2009), this study showed how social entrepreneurs used their symbolic and cultural capital to gain legitimacy in the humanitarian field. Honour, prestige, upbringing and qualifications helped entrepreneurs achieve legitimacy in this field. For the cases investigated in this dissertation, however, having cultural and symbolic capital (De Clerq & Voronov, 2009) and/or a 'believable story' (O'Connor, 2004) was not enough to become supported and accepted as a social entrepreneur (see section 5 in Chapter 5, and section 6.10 in Chapter 6).

For the social entrepreneurs approached in this dissertation, gaining legitimacy in the humanitarian field was not merely a matter of enacting entrepreneurial/humanitarian habitus and/or investing on their cultural capital. The evidence in this study suggests that economic capital played a critical role in the legitimization process by: 1) helping entrepreneurs materialize their ideas before they gained support from other sources of legitimacy; 2) once granted by official sources of legitimacy, helping social entrepreneurs prove that their solutions were worth further support from other actors; 3) helping social entrepreneurs finance the acquisition of cultural capital; 4) paying for local artefacts, endorsers, users and positive reviews about their products. Thus, this dissertation adds knowledge to this literature by revealing how important economic capital may be for social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial legitimacy. The social entrepreneurs depicted in this study were not only judged for creating social value. They needed to create economic value too.

Local actors perceived that having an organization up and running in Kibera was of more value for social entrepreneurs than it was for slum dwellers. In the eyes of locals, experience in and information about the settlement were great sources of prestige, cultural and economic capital for social entrepreneurs, donors and NGO employees. Therefore, they created several ways to,

borrowing some local expressions, get their “cut of the action” (Kibera resident, interview, 2016-05-02), to get paid “sitting allowances” (Peepoople Saleslady, interview, 2015-02-09) to attend events organized by social entrepreneurs, and, in the words of a local chief, receive a “reward” (Chief in Kibera, interview, 2016-04-29) to allow social entrepreneurs to create their organizations in the settlement.

The use of economic capital by social entrepreneurs in Kibera fostered a sort of unexpected entrepreneurship. By unexpected I do not mean that this form of entrepreneurship is at all surprising for the local actors performing it. By ‘unexpected’ it is meant that locals create mechanisms of profit from the humanitarian field which have little or nothing to do with these social entrepreneurs’ business models and social missions. From the standpoint of local actors, this form of entrepreneurship converges quite a lot with entrepreneurial activities depicted in the commercial entrepreneurship discourse (Schumpeter [1927]1989; Kirzner, 1997). Discovering, creating and profiting from previously unnoticed business opportunities was what locals did while interacting with actors from the humanitarian field. For those external actors promoting and putting into practice humanitarian discourses, this form of entrepreneurship was quite unexpected. The irony here was that social entrepreneurs and donors were ‘successful’ in the process of fostering local bottom up entrepreneurship. However, the kind of local entrepreneurship they ended up fostering had little or nothing to do with the sort of entrepreneurship they had idealized in their policies and business models.

9.4 Theoretical Implications

To gain a better understanding of the legitimization of social entrepreneurs, I consulted with a literature that has not yet been fully utilized by social entrepreneurship scholars. This includes Max Weber, Marcel Mauss, and Pierre Bourdieu whose ideas are well known in the aid and NGO literature. Although the creation of NGOs is one of the functions of social entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurship scholars are yet to include this literature in their inquiries. It is hoped that, with the findings presented in this dissertation, more social entrepreneurship researchers will take these thinkers into consideration. Based on their ideas, this study added new features to the existing theories of social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial legitimization: capital, place, artefacts and competition.

Drawing on Bourdieu, I assessed the mobilization and interplay of several forms of capital in the process of legitimization of social entrepreneurs. In this research, it was shown how social entrepreneurs needed economic capital not simply to create, sustain and grow their organizations. They also needed economic capital to ensure social acceptance in the settings

where their solutions were delivered. Social entrepreneurs converted such acceptance into symbolic capital (e.g. international recognition) and symbolic capital rendered other forms of capital more accessible.

It is by mobilizing and converting various forms of capital that social entrepreneurs gained legitimacy. Some social entrepreneurs had more capital than others and, as a consequence, gained easier access to support in the humanitarian field. In spite of suggesting that not everybody can afford to become internationally recognized as a social entrepreneur, this insight sheds light on mechanisms and dynamics of legitimation yet unexplored by social entrepreneurship scholars.

Drawing on Marcel Mauss, the roles which places and artefacts played in the social entrepreneurship processes have been discussed in detail in. In Section 8.1 it was explained that places were not only where social entrepreneurs produced and delivered solutions. They also functioned as sources of legitimacy. Delivering solutions to people in a 'famous slum' was more valuable for social entrepreneurs than trying to help people in less notorious places. I have shown the symbolic capital attached to an urban slum which became famous for concentrating do-gooders and economically poor people. Drawing also on Mauss, I have shown in Section 8.4 how artefacts carried with them the charisma of social entrepreneurs, of the countries where they were produced and of the actors supporting their delivery to Global South. As such, artefacts are used to help slum dwellers embody the spirit of their producers, supporters and givers. They were not only evaluated and legitimized in light of the problems they aimed to address. They were evaluated and legitimized also based on who and where they were produced and which actors supported them. The roles of capital, place, and artefacts have already been discussed in previous sections. Attention is now turned to what competition has done to the entrepreneurial legitimation of the social entrepreneurs studied here.

Social entrepreneurship literature has advanced our knowledge about how social entrepreneurs and NGOs compete for grants and contracts (e.g. Dempsey & Sanders, 2010). In this research, it has been illustrated, however, that social entrepreneurs and NGOs may compete for more than that. They may compete for personnel, spaces for brand logos, space in private schools and attendees in social events. Recognition was also an object of competition among social entrepreneurs and NGO employees. This included even social entrepreneurs working together with other social entrepreneurs as partners, collaborators and cofounders within organizations. As showed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, this form of competition manifested itself even in the process by which I contacted and interviewed social entrepreneurs.

Although competition is often acclaimed as an essential and positive feature of entrepreneurship (Schumpeter, [1927]1989; Kirzner, 1997; Spinoza et al, 1997), it has some

negative impacts on the social entrepreneurial and legitimacy building processes studied here. In some of the circumstances explored in this dissertation, competition destroyed already established social bonds between social entrepreneurs, NGO employees and distant others. Competition for skilled and ‘camera friendly’ NGO staff, for instance, reinforced the locally institutionalized stereotype of ‘the rich foreign led NGO’ making employees ‘rich’ in the Global South while aid beneficiaries remained economically poor. In the same vein, it worked often in favour of local actors who were not the poorest of the poor. As such, it revealed the ambiguities and tensions between the humanitarian nature of social missions and the entrepreneurial means of achieving them.

9.5 Methodological Implications

For social entrepreneurship to become fully established as a legitimate field of scientific inquiry, it needs to base its knowledge on more than the often-heroic accounts of the social entrepreneurs themselves (Nicholls, 2010). Yet, it is mostly based on the accounts of policy makers, donors and fellowship organizations, and the conceptual studies conducted by scholars. In this dissertation, I have contributed to the social entrepreneurship literature by showing various ways through which social entrepreneurial knowledge can be produced without subscribing to the hero social entrepreneur discourse.

To help create such a knowledge, several ethnographic techniques were applied. I shadowed social entrepreneurs and their employees several times in Stockholm and in Nairobi. I worked with social entrepreneurship networks observing how they tried to influence entrepreneurial processes. I conducted repeated interviews with social entrepreneurs, donors, NGO managers, local leaders, and aid receivers over a period of six years. Finally, I analysed texts – i.e. pictures, videos, written texts and artefacts—which gave meaning to social entrepreneurship. Based on this experience, the following recommendations have been made.

Focus your inquiry on what social entrepreneurs do. Based on the current ethnography, social entrepreneurship researchers are advised not to take the ‘social’ for granted; to avoid looking at social entrepreneurs as actors who, on the basis of their ethically charged labels, always do good things. Instead of approaching social entrepreneurs as ‘by default’ more ethical and virtuous than ordinary people, studies should be focused on what these actors actually do to become recognized as ‘taboo breakers’, ‘change makers’, ‘life saviours’ and contemporary heroes. By this token, I join other entrepreneurship researchers in approaching entrepreneurs not only for

what they say and think but, primarily, for what they do (Gartner, 1988; Spinosa et al, 1997; Dey & Steyaert, 2014). There is a need for more studies about how these actors put their ideas, sayings and missions in practice.

Locate social entrepreneurship in its place. Take your inquiry to at least one of the places where social entrepreneurs claim to be delivering solutions. Look into how social entrepreneurs and their solutions influence, and are influenced by, these places: how do they move and how are they positioned there? In the course of this ethnographic research, I realized that, if I had not conducted fieldwork in Kibera, Nairobi, I would not have fully understood how social entrepreneurs and their artefacts influence the places they aimed to assist. I would not have found out that some social entrepreneurs were not only competing for funds but also for local facilities and beneficiaries. Fieldwork centered in one place intensively receiving aid allowed me to observe some features of social entrepreneurship which social entrepreneurs, donors and aid agencies in the West were not disclosing. Some solutions, for instance, were not lacking in this place, as was usually claimed by actors such as social entrepreneurs and donors. Quite the contrary, solutions were competing with each other to the extent that they even became devalued by some local actors. Thanks to my direct interactions with place, I realized that there was such a thing as rejected and abandoned solutions.

Include distant others in the data gathering process. Entrepreneurship researchers should interact with and gather data from all actors operating where social entrepreneurs are delivering solutions. By primarily approaching social entrepreneurs, social enterprise managers and donors, students are less likely to gain a deep understanding of the informal and critical nuances of social entrepreneurship. My study reveals that very often these actors tend to reproduce the information provided by homepages, PowerPoint presentations, the media and public texts. In other words, they tend to say and show things as we already know them from the public sphere. This may be the main reason why the image of social entrepreneurs as heroes prevails in the literature. In contrast, one is more likely to capture the mundane and informal nuances of social entrepreneurship by observing how social entrepreneurs interact with donors, distant others and other actors involved in social entrepreneurial activities. Instead of relying solely on the narratives of social entrepreneurs, researchers should also interview ordinary employees and members of the marginalized groups which social entrepreneurs are trying to help.

Take various voices, observations and events into your analysis. Scholars tend to not incorporate more than official texts and narratives from social entrepreneurs into their analysis. They base their results primarily on the analysis of quotes from interviews with social entrepreneurs and volunteers. Therefore, I argue that the social entrepreneurship literature is not

merely deficient in data about the everyday life of social entrepreneurs. It is also faced with an even more acute inadequacy in the analysis of how social entrepreneurship shapes, and is shaped by, several actors participating in social entrepreneurs' everyday life. We also need to know more about how other actors get involved in social entrepreneurship processes, including those marginalized groups which this form of entrepreneurship claims to be benefiting.

9.6 Implications for Entrepreneurial Practice

The social entrepreneurship literature has produced a fair amount of knowledge about social entrepreneurs working and creating organizations within their own countries (e.g. Austin et al. 2006; Ruebottom, 2012). This literature has not, however, fully explored the practical implications of social entrepreneurial work performed across national borders. To capture such implications, I have elaborated on the concept of the 'humanitarian field', arguing that—when social entrepreneurs create organizations that help distant others, raise funds in different countries, and employ people across national territories—they are dealing with more than the 'social' aspect of entrepreneurship. Most importantly, they are dealing with the humanitarian aspects of social entrepreneurship in terms of how their practices are motivated and legitimized as work for the promotion of human welfare, no matter where it is needed.

In the humanitarian field, social entrepreneurs have to deal with distance and otherness to an extent that actors working for social change solely in the third sector of their own countries do not. Social entrepreneurship in this field needs more than an entrepreneurial habitus; it requires the enactment of a humanitarian habitus: a set of dispositions by which individuals cope with organizational and cosmopolitan utilitarian contingencies. As such, the humanitarian field is a context that transcends national, racial and ethnic boundaries. This work with distance and otherness makes this form of entrepreneurship more 'humanitarian' than 'social'. Accordingly, the social entrepreneurs approached in this study have gained legitimacy in this field by mobilizing (their own and others') resources and appealing to our compassion toward individuals in the Global South. Such social entrepreneurship in this context has had positive and negative implications in these social entrepreneurs' everyday lives, organizations and solutions.

As shown in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 entrepreneurial work in the humanitarian field was rewarding in many ways. It involved exciting trips to exotic places and, sometimes festive, interactions with donors, audiences and target groups from various ethnic, racial and economic backgrounds. The work alleviating economic poverty in the Global South was filled with meaning, prestige

and opportunities for self-development. Social entrepreneurs were also helping themselves by: mixing humanitarian work with tourism, learning about local institutions, learning how other humanitarian actors worked in the West and in the Global South, creating and enhancing networks, addressing mental health issues, gaining recognition as experts in specific poverty related issues, and gaining symbolic capital as humanitarian good doers. Humanitarian work even increased some social entrepreneurs' self-esteem. Distant others often considered foreign social entrepreneurs attractive, good looking and more intelligent. All of these aspects made social entrepreneurship—the process of creating entrepreneurial organizations with social missions—more than work. It became part of social entrepreneurs' lifestyles.

Based on the research in this dissertation, it is reasonable to see social entrepreneurs as modern missionaries: living and working in culturally distant places, trying to change local institutions in these places, teaching the gospels of care for the self, others and the environment to people in the Global South, using their organizations as “political objects” (Fauchart & Gruber 2011: 936) to draw attention and support to problems in the Global South they deem important, getting the “energy” (Camilla Wirseen, interview, 2014-12-18, my translation) to, against the odds, work in the pursuit of a social mission, and placing economic growth as a central goal for their interventions.

The humanitarian field has also complicated social entrepreneurial work in ways that may be less apparent for social entrepreneurs working solely in their own countries. Being, and/or working for, foreigners had negative implications for how such social entrepreneurs interacted with and gained knowledge from distant others. In this context, the concept of opportunity—central to the theory and practice of entrepreneurship (Schumpeter ([1927]1989; Kirzner, 1997)—assumed meanings that often defied the social mission of social entrepreneurs and the policies of donors. I have shown in Chapter 5 and 6 how opportunities were created and acted upon when actors, for instance, displayed, exaggerated and manipulated problems in their areas, making some social problems look like business opportunities for social entrepreneurs, donors and government agencies.

I argue that social entrepreneurs working in the humanitarian field are faced with complexities that social entrepreneurs working in their own countries are less likely to face. The first complexity is related to geographical and cultural distance. By creating and working for organizations in the Global South, the social entrepreneurs studied had to either: 1) stay close to their organizations, distancing themselves from their societies; or 2) stay close to their societies, donors, families and relatives, distancing themselves from their organizations. Both options had their pros and cons. By being related to local perceptions of foreignness (e.g. being a citizen in

another country and/or getting funds from foreign donors), the social entrepreneurs studied here were expected, for instance, to employ local leaders and their relatives, pay higher salaries to local staff, and pay sitting allowances to workshop attendants.

Social entrepreneurship scholars and practitioners are also advised to reconsider their often uniform view of the non-profit sector, where social entrepreneurs operate. This sector is frequently depicted as a 'sacred' and, yet, economically marginalized space where social entrepreneurs and workers trade financial rewards (e.g. well-paid jobs in the corporate sector) for the opportunity and satisfaction to work helping others (Dempsey & Sanders, 2010). Unlike what is defended in this literature, the research in this thesis has shown how economically and politically privileged the third sector is in a place where many social entrepreneurs come to develop and deliver their solutions. In Sweden, for instance, such organizations tend to be situated at the periphery of the so-called 'strong' Swedish public sector (Gawell, 2015). In the Global South, however, these organizations are powerful enough to challenge and, in some areas even replace, local states in the provision of public services such as health care and education (e.g. Amutabi, 2006; Karim, 2009). As demonstrated in this dissertation, this level of economic and political power exercised by the third sector has daring consequences for the legitimization of social entrepreneurship in Kenya because local actors view NGO employees and social entrepreneurs as the main beneficiaries of such solutions.

I treat the humanitarian field as part of the third sector. It is the portion of this sector which is preoccupied with what are known as humanitarian problems: the gap between the current state of affairs in the Global South and the future situation as it is desired by international humanitarian actors. For distant others in the Global South, this field produces several forms and artefacts of care (as discussed at length in Chapter 2, it also provides these individuals with several business opportunities). For the West, the humanitarian field produces opportunities for business, export promotion, meaningful work, influence on other countries' domestic affairs and the acquisition of symbolic capital. Actors producing, financing, supporting and delivering solutions to people in this context, acquire this form of capital as a marker of social superiority and higher ethical standards. Such capital grants these actors the power to speak and act on behalf of those for whom solutions are delivered. In this dissertation, I have shown (e.g. Sections 5.5, 6.3 and 6.10) that entrepreneurial legitimacy is not only a matter of having good ideas and intentions: it is also a matter of the formal and informal mobilization of resources.

9.7 Implications for Policy

By assessing the process of social entrepreneurs' legitimation in the humanitarian field, the current research reveals a feature of international aid which is well known by ethnographers (e.g. Scherz, 2012) but quite neglected by social entrepreneurship scholars and policy makers: solutions developed, supported and delivered by the West tend to face difficulties attracting and reaching the poorest of the poor in the Global South.

Social entrepreneurship's main sources of legitimacy are policy makers, donors, fellowship organizations and foundations which give recognition and support for social entrepreneurs solving social problems with financially sustainable solutions (Bishop & Green, 2008; Nicholls, 2010; Hervieux et al, 2010). I have argued that this quest for financial sustainability is at odds not only with charity. It is at odds with the neediest actors where solutions are delivered: the poorest of the poor. By 'the poorest of the poor' is meant those people who, within economically poor places, such as urban slums, suffer more from economic deprivation than others: old and disabled people with few or no relatives, orphaned children who are not enrolled in school, and unemployed HIV positive single mothers. Although these groups were considered the poorest of the poor in the settings in which this study was conducted, they were often overlooked by foreign social entrepreneurs, donors and policy makers. These individuals are simply too poor to purchase the solutions delivered by social entrepreneurs.

This study reveals another well known and long held challenge facing policy makers, donors and social entrepreneurs in the Global South: convincing aid recipients that in-kind handouts and technical assistance are effective solutions for local problems. This is an old challenge because scholars have, for a very long time, demonstrated that in-kind handouts are used, for instance, to promote exports from the West to the Global South. By doing so, these artefacts are used to reproduce the economic inequalities that they claim to alleviate. Yet, most social entrepreneurs approached in my study attached artefacts produced in the West (e.g. Sweden, Norway, and Germany) to their solutions. These were popular among sources of legitimacy such as government agencies, donors and investors in the countries where these social entrepreneurs came from. In the settings where these solutions were delivered, however, local actors would not accept technical assistance and certain artefacts without some form of financial reward. Considering the costs of development, production, logistics and custom duties, I join those scholars (e.g. Scherz, 2014; Malkki, 2015) who have pointed out that cash handouts may be a cheaper and more effective way to help the economically poor than knowledge transfer and in-

kind handouts. This discussion is absent in social entrepreneurship policy making and thus deserves further attention.

9.8 Modern Missionaries

As indicated in Sections 9.6 and this analysis of the legitimization process of social entrepreneurs has led me to liken social entrepreneurship to a movement of modern missionaries. In this movement, social entrepreneurship has appeared as a new name for an ancient practice: the creation and management of organizations that were supposed to improve the standards of living of people in the Global South. In the same vein, I have conceived of the figure of the social entrepreneur as a new label for an old actor: the missionary, traveling and trying to bring about changes in other regions with education and/or support acquired in the West.

Change, distance and otherness have been central features of social entrepreneurs' work and their solutions have often revolved around addressing issues related to the lack of economic development among distant others. This form of development was no longer approached as a by-product of the social entrepreneurs' organization, as it used to be in the past Christian missions. It became instead the official flagship of the organization, generating benefits for both social entrepreneurs, the West and distant others.

As such, it provided these actors with the most tangible signs of the successfulness of their interventions. They have always related the success of their organizational efforts to such change. Like the missionaries of the past and today, the social entrepreneurs studied here were all working to bring new ways of life to their target groups. It was fascinating, however, to notice that some of these individuals changed their own ways of life as a consequence of this work of trying to change the lives of others. What differentiated these actors from other missionaries was the central role which entrepreneurship played as a means and end in the construction of successful and apparently 'developed' human beings in the Global South.

In this thesis, the stories have been presented of people who became recognized social entrepreneurs as a consequence of their new solutions. It has been shown how these solutions also involved trying to turn distant others into entrepreneurs. Social entrepreneurs appealed to their audiences by showing how proactive, enterprising and self-reliant people in the Global South were. Their organizations promoted the narrative that being economically poor did not mean being completely deprived of agency. Accordingly, they focused their efforts on

addressing problems in the Global South by approaching distant others as resourceful consumers and skilful entrepreneurs. Their plan was to replace the derogatory image of distant others (e.g. corrupt local authorities and passive aid receivers) with stories about positive change driven by actors in the West (e.g. social entrepreneurs, NGOs, aid agencies) and actors in the Global South (e.g. the entrepreneurial single mothers who were making ends meet by selling Western made goods to their neighbours in the slums). They also intended to replace the image of poor children with flies over their faces with stories about kids who were doing better in school thanks to solutions produced and supported by the West. They even offered highly paid jobs for their local employees.

This form of entrepreneurship, as such, has posed a challenge to scholars, practitioners and policy makers studied here. On one hand, this discourse rightfully acknowledged the entrepreneurial skills of distant others in the Global South. On the other hand, it made policy makers, scholars and social entrepreneurs wrongfully assume that they could plan for entrepreneurship among aid receivers. It also made actors presume the existence of a local demand—which in economic terms means willingness and ability to pay—for artefacts and technical assistance produced and/or supported by the West. As shown in this dissertation, actors promoting the entrepreneurship discourse in the humanitarian field neglected several critical aspects of the legitimacy of foreign interventions in the Global South. These aspects included local institutions determining of how local actors viewed foreigners also as ‘needy’ and how aid interventions were viewed by many as a social relationship from which the West could not make more economic profit than it already did. Another aspect was the often complete lack of purchasing power faced by distant others.

Here I have demonstrated how economically deprived people could not buy their way out of poverty, as was paradoxically assumed by some social entrepreneurs, donors and policy makers. Still, substantial evidence (see Sections 5.3, 5.5, 6.10 and 7.6) has been given that local forms of entrepreneurship emerged as a by-product of these interventions. However, such by-products had little or nothing to do with the forms of entrepreneurship planned by social entrepreneurs, government agencies and donors. Instead, I have described how these unexpected forms of local entrepreneurship were designed to create economic and political profits from the foreign organizations and social entrepreneurs. This included the creation of a market of tests for new goods, information about slum dwellers, endorsements from local leaders and payment for attendances in social events such as workshops.

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Sammanfattning

I nästan sex decennier av internationellt bistånd är frågan om hur man ska främja samhälleliga framsteg i afrikanska samhällen fortfarande föremål för livliga debatter. Ihållandet av krig, hungersnöd, politisk instabilitet och ekonomisk underutveckling på kontinenten fortsätter att driva livliga diskussioner om hur man organiserar bistånd mest effektivt och om gamla former av internationellt bistånd fortfarande fungerar. I detta scenario verkar moderna missionärer ha löften om att lösa fattigdomsrelaterade problem. Några av dessa människor kallar sig själva: sociala entreprenörer. Dessa entreprenörer har under det senaste decenniet fått ökat inflytande på biståndsdebatten.

Baserat på förutsättningen att affärsverksamhet och egenintresse i själva verket kan vara det mest effektiva sättet att hjälpa de extremt fattiga i det globala södern, har entreprenörer och sociala företagare alltmer börjat få erkännande som innovativa humanitära aktörer. Genom att tillämpa affärsprinciper och praxis på det humanitära fältet, konstrueras sociala entreprenörer som utmanare av tidigare institutionaliserade former av bistånd, såsom välgörenhet. Syftet med denna avhandling är att skapa en större förståelse för hur sociala entreprenörer får legitimitet på det humanitära fältet. Utifrån etnografiska metoder tar jag upp detta mål genom att undersöka hur sociala entreprenörer skapar organisationer i Kenyas största slum Kibera, i Nairobi.

Jag hävdar att sociala entreprenörer för att få legitimitet på det humanitära fältet beror på samspelet mellan socialt, kulturellt, symboliskt och ekonomiskt kapital. Dessutom betonar jag den symboliska kraften hos platser i de processer som entreprenörer får social acceptans och stöd för sina insatser. Samtidigt som de till synes främjar social omvandling och entreprenörskap i det globala södern kan sociala entreprenörer informellt skapa och stödja en ekonomi som motiverar välgörenhetsorganisationer i Kibera. Inom denna ekonomi skapar lokala aktörer flera mekanismer för att dra nytta av utländskt ledda organisationer. Detta fenomen kallar jag 'oväntat entreprenörskap': aktiviteter som uppstår som reaktioner på utvecklingsprocesser och leverans av tjänster och produkter. Även om det ofta är kommersiellt och informellt till sin natur påverkar denna form av entreprenörskap hur sociala entreprenörer får tillgång till lokala miljöer och resurser. Öväntat entreprenörskap förändrar också hur sociala entreprenörer utformar och levererar sina lösningar.

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How do social entrepreneurs gain social acceptance and funding for their ideas? What resources do these actors have to mobilize in order to gain international recognition and support? How do places influence social entrepreneurs' ability to create new solutions and organizations?

This thesis analyses the processes by which social entrepreneurs mobilize several forms of resources in order to create, manage and grow organizations in Sweden and in Kenya. The thesis applies the lens of legitimacy to create a greater understanding of what makes social entrepreneurs gain social acceptance and support from international and local actors.



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