

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND A NEW MODEL FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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In the last decade or so, there has been a growing interest in an area researchers are calling social entrepreneurship, a movement spearheaded by individuals with a desire to make the world a better place. This paper describes the structure and process of international development in Africa from the perspective of a social entrepreneur. The authors address the opportunities and challenges faced by social entrepreneurs as they attempt to affect large-scale social change. The result of this study is a unique development model that provides tools for the social entrepreneur to address problems and build capacity and sustainability within the African context.

Keywords: Social entrepreneurship; Africa; international development; health care.

1. Introduction

In the last decade or so, there has been a growing interest in an area researchers are calling social entrepreneurship. This paper describes the structure and process of international development in Africa from the perspective of a social entrepreneur. It begins with a brief discussion of social entrepreneurship, a movement spearheaded by individuals with a desire to make the world a better place, and then compares how the bottom-up development model of social entrepreneurship differs from the top-down model used by large development agencies.

However, an entrepreneurial bottom-up structure is not sufficient in itself to address development issues. Any new approach to problem solution must consider how people in developing countries affect social change to allow the social entrepreneur to focus on achieving results in the most effective and cost-efficient manner possible. The environment shaping the way social entities get things done within a developing country is unique and different from the way things are done in a highly industrialized nation. Based on our work in the field of healthcare in Tanzania and Cameroon, we have identified several challenges

and opportunities that the social entrepreneur must address. These broad and overlapping categories include: (1) identifying the social issue of the intervention, (2) developing an organizational structure and aggregating the needed resources, (3) building the appropriate technology, and (4) learning how to navigate the cultural and political landscape.

The result of this study is a unique development model that provides tools for the social entrepreneur to address problems and build capacity and sustainability within the African context. The model has at its core an international group of equals, called the client consultant system infrastructure (CCSI). It provides the organizational hub for directing the energies of the group and for doing much of the innovative work of the project. The recurrent interaction among members of the CCSI leads to the emergence of a collective mindset among its members and between the CCSI and its environment, both African and Western, and becomes the key to bridging the barriers between the social entrepreneur and his/her African partners. The theoretical underpinning of the model is rooted in systems theory and participatory action research. The various processes at work within the model, such as structural coupling, and penetration and interpenetration, are illustrated with examples from our work in Africa.

2. Social Entrepreneurship

In the last decade or so, there has been a growing interest in an area researchers are calling social entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurship combines a social mission with business-like discipline. Entrepreneurship is generally characterized as the exploitation of an opportunity to create value. It also involves mobilizing resources to achieve entrepreneurial objectives (Timmons, 2009). Social entrepreneurship is a variation of entrepreneurship with the social mission explicit and central to its reason for being. The impact on society rather than wealth creation becomes the primary value created. The entrepreneur builds wealth and value within a market structure and the market discipline controls how the entrepreneur functions to build wealth and value. Social entrepreneurs operate in different environments, and, more importantly, under different rules than business entrepreneurs. When operating in developing countries, issues of government intervention, cultural biases, colonial traditions and processes used by the development community all impact the methods by which social entrepreneurs successfully function. Skills are not immediately transferable from business markets to social services. An entrepreneur identifies a need for vaccinations in developing countries and mobilizes resources to maximize the number of children being vaccinated. A social entrepreneur develops a one-to-one relationship with patients at the village level, integrating their concepts of health and wellness with the benefits of vaccinations. In this process, the worldviews of both the social entrepreneur and the patients in a remote village move toward each other so both can exploit the opportunity to improve children's health.

3. International Aid Agencies and Social Entrepreneurship: A Difference in Process and Viewpoint

The process by which international aid agencies and social entrepreneurs each pursue their goals and objectives is dramatically different. The large development agencies tend to

justify the expenditure of large amounts of money by focusing not on the validity of results, but rather on the process devised to achieve those results. Thus, indicators of a job well done are defined by bureaucratic or ceremonial factors like the number of conferences, and studies or meetings that take place to discuss subjects such as global poverty, and the number of keynote publications prepared. Recently, with the introduction of private donors to the mix, the total amount of money committed has become a measure of success. As Maurice Bertrand puts it: “the way in which the mill operates becomes more important than the quality of the flour it produces” (Hancock, 1989).

The system used by large-scale development agencies is a sub-optimized feedback loop. A thermostat is used to regulate the temperature of the room but if the thermostat is set at too low a temperature, everyone in the room is cold. Everyone in the room then puts on additional clothing to remain comfortable, while the thermostat cycles the air conditioning on and off, maintaining an uncomfortable temperature. The international aid agency vaccinates children and measures its success by how many children are vaccinated. This is the equivalent of putting on a coat in a cold room. The agency measures success by its activities (vaccinating children), not its results — the reduction of poverty and disease in the community. The entrepreneur, on the other hand, using creativity recognizes the system is operating sub-optimally and sets out to change the structure and process to obtain more optimal results.

Entrepreneurs are driven by results! To survive, entrepreneurs have to make the sale, the product and the profit, by any means, within acceptable legal and ethical parameters. It is the results that matter, rather than the process. The process becomes secondary in the sense that the quality of the process makes the system more or less efficient, but the goal of the system is still results. When combining entrepreneurship with social responsibility it is the results that are examined first. Social entrepreneurship is about the reduction of poverty, the increase in the level of education, or the quality and access to health care. The process is selected to maximize the efficiency of the system designed to deliver the result.

Micro-enterprise development, for example, has as its goal the alleviation of poverty at the local level. The individual is responsible for accomplishing the results using a process devised by him and for him with some help from outside. Aid agencies tout the process of micro-enterprise development as making small loans available for development. In fact, poverty is alleviated by making clothing that is then sold for profit.

The systems that comprise international aid at the local level can be conceived as a complex adaptive system that is balanced on a knife edge and, when perturbed, will move in nonlinear directions. Large-scale change can be introduced in these systems by introducing and leveraging small irritants. Separate systems interconnect with each other, providing a mutual environment, in what Luhmann (1995) called interpenetration. The authors have used both these concepts to develop a model for international development we believe will uniquely fit the needs of social entrepreneurs and their clients.

4. Affecting Change in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities

To bring change to complex organizational systems, the social entrepreneur must first address several broad challenges and opportunities. We have organized these challenges

and opportunities into four distinct but overlapping categories situated within the context of maternal and child health in Tanzania and Cameroon. They are: (1) the identification of unique healthcare problems from a local perspective in addition to an overall national perspective, (2) the development of operational systems and the aggregation of needed resources to address the unique local health issues, (3) the information, communication and healthcare related technology to facilitate the solution of the problem, and (4) the political and cultural issues that militate against the efforts of the social entrepreneur to address the first three challenges.

4.1. *The health issue*

The first challenge in any health care intervention is identifying the health issue to be addressed. Focusing attention on health issues ensures that the health needs of a target population are the central focus of the intervention rather than the needs of those driving the intervention. Health initiatives in developing countries are frequently about the needs of the donor organizations, technology manufacturers, or political entities. By focusing first on the health issue, the social mission becomes explicit and the goal of the intervention is framed to emphasize the positive impact on society.

The difficulty with respect to health care is that much of the data from developing countries is national, while the health issues addressed by the social entrepreneur tend to be local. In Cameroon, for example the national statistics reflect that the under-5 infant mortality rate is 147/1000 live births and has grown in the past 15 years. The goal for 2015 is 47/1000 live births WHO (2006). The infant mortality rate in Batchem Ville, a village in the north of the country where we are working may be significantly different from the national average. The same may be true for vaccinations, malaria prevention programs, HIV AIDS incidence, etc. Therefore, the social entrepreneur must be prepared to collect baseline data as a prequel to any further work. In this way the health needs of the local population can be narrowly targeted.

4.2. *Systems and organizational development*

The next major challenge is the development of operational systems and the aggregation of needed resources to address the unique local health issues. International aid agencies often attempt to deal with this problem by taking charge of the organizational process. They generally focus on the macro-strategic level of the organizational system, first defining the mission and vision of the project and then developing an organizational structure to assure results, perhaps with input from health professionals in the developing country. By controlling the organization, these agencies control the results. On the other hand, the social entrepreneur is responsible for helping create new patterns of relationships that will address the needs of the target population and have continued sustainability after the team's departure. The approach is to focus on change at the micro level because that is where relationships, interaction, small experiments and simple rules shape emerging patterns. According to this view, the only way real change is made is from the bottom up (Olson and Eoyang, 2001).

We have found that systems theory and some of the perspectives of complex adaptive systems (CAS) provide us with a good framework for understanding how patterns of relationship evolve and sustain themselves. Relationships, in a broad sense, are the glue that helps to form organizations systems. They develop among a set of mutually interdependent parts that function as a whole to achieve a common purpose and exist within a boundary that separates the system from its environment. Mutually interdependent parts form subsystems that depend on one another as parts of a larger system. In this sense, systems can be embedded within larger ones.

For projects involving international development, understanding these relationships, as well as the boundaries that exist around subsystems within the larger system, can spell the difference between failure and success. For example, the development of a telemedicine system in Tanzania involves subsystems that cross cultural boundaries within the country as well as subsystems that cross international boundaries (Chrispin & Katzenstein, 2005). Thus we find that a mother in an African village generally relies on her relationship with the village healer and other people in the village to address her healthcare needs. If we wish to encourage the interaction between a nurse in a western-oriented hospital and a mother in the village, we must provide an opportunity for them to interact in a meaningful way across the boundaries of their respective cultural subsystems. Similarly, these boundaries can make it difficult for a western-oriented and educated consultant/entrepreneur to truly understand the differences between the way he accesses and processes information with those used by his counterparts in the developing world.

Complexity theory adds the perspective that organizations continuously evolve as they adapt to interactions with other systems and to the interaction of their subsystems. According to Dooley (1996), CAS behave/evolve according to three key principles: (1) order is emergent as opposed to hierarchical, (2) the system's history is irreversible, and (3) the system's future is often unpredictable. The basic building blocks of the CAS are agents. Agents are semi-autonomous units that seek to maximize some measure of goodness or fitness by evolving over time. From a complexity perspective, everyone can be an intentional change agent in an organization if they become more aware of options to help an organization adapt to its environment. Because everything in an organization is interconnected, organization change emerges from the evolution of individuals and small groups. The obvious implication for the social entrepreneur is to identify a team of people who will champion the project and whose organizational role will facilitate the relationship building necessary to sustain new patterns of interaction.

Another concept from systems theory that has relevance for our work is networking. Networks are often described as the basic units of organizational structure, wherein the total organization is viewed as a complex arrangement of interconnected networks of people carrying out their work both independently and interdependently. These networks use a small central coordinating group to link independent specialized organizations that are each very good at one thing. The idea behind networks is that an organization can concentrate on what it does best and rely on other organizations to provide assistance in areas where they have distinctive competences. For example, we are in the process of implementing a cooperative agreement between our University and a private university in

Tanzania. This agreement will allow both of these universities to share resources across international boundaries using technology as the enabling infrastructure. California State University Dominguez Hills (CSUDH), has developed a unique online nursing program that can be made available to nursing students at Hubert Kairuki Memorial University (HKMU) and HKMU can provide unique research opportunities in areas such as malaria, HIV-AIDS and maternal and child health for faculty at CSUDH. Thus, networking reduces unnecessary duplication of talent and resources and enables an organization to do more with less.

4.3. *The supporting technology*

Another challenge facing the social entrepreneur is the development of a technology infrastructure, i.e., the information, communication and healthcare related technology, to facilitate the solution of the design problem by supporting communication and relationship building across time and distance. Notably, the technical system is not the primary fix in this model. Although many developing African countries are understandably excited about the potential for using information and communication technology (ICT) to leapfrog them into the 21st century, in reality there are several obstacles in the way.

Working in Africa really is different from working in the United States, and each of these two different worlds provides unique perspectives about development, health and wellness, healthcare capacity and the role of technology. Systems that work in the Western world do not necessarily work equally well in Africa and are not necessarily accepted by the client users of the system. In healthcare as in other areas, there is considerable evidence to suggest that the introduction of new technologies invariably creates turbulence within an organization, primarily because the new organizational structures associated with the innovation are not assimilated within the existing status quo (Coombs, 1996).

Our work in India is a case in point. After significant conversations with health professionals, government officials, patients and experts worldwide, an integrated telemedicine program was suggested to government officials. These officials decided that, rather than proceed based on the recommendations presented, they would proceed with the construction of a telemedicine room and purchased telecommunications hardware and software. The equipment was installed in the telemedicine room and never used. Without integrating system design, discussed above, misunderstanding and mistrust among all the stakeholders conspires to defeat the project.

Although the ICT infrastructure in many developing countries is undergoing rapid modernization, and is no longer the major barrier, the spread of email and full Internet service, problems with band-width and the urban-rural divide reduce its effectiveness as “the solution.” In our view, the technical system should be optimal for the cultural environment in which it operates and compatible with the local health care system. Most importantly, designing an optimal system does not mean using the most advanced technology available, but rather using technology appropriate for the local environment. Generally, the key is that the technology should suit the level of development in the country, as well as the specific site at which it is installed. This approach assures the people

using the system will begin to learn the new skills and patterns of social organization necessary to support the project through its design evolution.

4.4. Political and cultural issues

The fourth and possibly the most critical challenge confronting the social entrepreneur relates to the political and cultural issues that militate against the efforts of the social entrepreneur to address the first three challenges. For international aid agencies, this is less of a problem because they typically set up a closed system that supports a Western approach to problem solution. The social entrepreneur, on the other hand, believes the solution to the problem requires an in-depth understanding of the context or environment that sustains the current reality of the target population. To quote the title of a book by [Harrison and Huntington \(1991\)](#), culture matters. When interacting with people from different cultures, we need accurate perceptions, sound diagnosis and appropriate adaptation if we are to manage diversity effectively. In other words, the social entrepreneur must learn how to “learn culture.”

When the study of culture was first applied to organizational settings, it was considered predominantly to be a property of a nation. However, this view leads to the belief that the complexity experienced in “going international” is represented largely by the different passports carried by the team members ([Goodman et al., 1999](#)). The current focus is a heightened awareness of the multiple cultures carried both by individuals and by organizations and deepening understanding of the impact of these multiple cultures within work settings ([Sackman and Phillips, 2003](#)). Although this expanded view of the cultural context provides a better understanding of the complexity of working in different cultures, it does little to help understand how they work. The process of enactment, described by [Karl Weick \(1995\)](#), suggests that although we see ourselves as living in a reality with objective structural characteristics, we actually play an active role in bringing our reality into existence. Understanding culture as an ongoing, proactive process of reality constructions suggests we must root our understanding of organization in the processes that produce systems of shared meaning. Rather than focusing on what the system looks like, we must focus on how the system works.

In our work in Africa, we used storytelling and scenario-building to identify some of the shared frames of reference surrounding healthcare ([Katzenstein and Chrispin, 2005](#)). These scenarios provided a rich and dynamic picture of the patterns of social organization and shared behavior that are likely to occur among potential users of a healthcare delivery system. For example, the strong, positive forces embodied in the kinship system support reliance on the family, village elder and village healers as the first line of defense when making health decisions. In addition, people in the village observe the impact outside influences have on one of their members and collectively integrate this information into the collective wisdom of the village. These findings suggest the social entrepreneur must become aware of the collective mindset held by the potential end users of the system and work to transform this mindset into a new shared reality that can be lived on a daily basis.

At the other end of the social hierarchy is the seat of power — the government. African governments are frequently autocracies where power is held by a small group who control critical resources. In Cameroon, for example, these small groups are referred to as the “lions” and may engender real fear among those bureaucrats trying to make a living in the community at large. In projects of the type discussed here, the support and active participations of these bureaucrats and professionals is necessary to engender change and sustainability. There is an African proverb that states that “the hand that receives is always under the hand that gives.” Frequently, even though these bureaucrats really want to help, they can’t or won’t until the “lions” give permission. As a result, the social entrepreneur must spend significant amounts of time trying to win over the support of the lions to gain active cooperation from the bureaucrats. They also must develop strategies that will provide self-empowerment.

Within any culture or organization, there may be different and competing value systems that create a mosaic of organizational realities rather than a uniform culture. As noted above, besides familiarity with some of the cultural variable universal to most cultures, the social entrepreneur must be aware of how the mindsets of different parties associated with the project, particularly those of the end-users and those of the people in power, can impact the direction and the success of the project. Addressing this challenge entails creating a social context through which participants can enact a new organizational reality.

5. The Model

Conventional consulting models have not worked in Africa, primarily because they stress technical solutions to problems that have their roots in the cultural environment. The model we have forged provides an alternative paradigm in which an international consulting team of both Western and local partners can collaborate to design and develop an effective system to address a critical national need. It consists of structural components and process components that relate to each other to form a dynamic organization.

In this section we deconstruct the model to explain these structural and process components. However, it should be noted that the challenges described above, notably those pertaining to systems and organizational development and cultural and political issues, are critical to understanding how the model works.

5.1. *The client-consultant system infrastructure (CCSI)*

An important aspect of social entrepreneurship is creating mechanisms to make sure new ideas are carried forward, accepted and implemented. Whether or not innovation flourishes in the system depends on whether there is a structure that supports entrepreneurial activities, provides people with a degree of autonomy and rewards learning and risk-taking.

The key component of the model’s structure is a mini organization we call the client-consultant system infrastructure (CCSI). Comprised of agents from several of the constituencies involved in the development effort, the CCSI provides the organizational hub

for directing the energies of the group and for doing much of the innovative work of the project. These individuals may be perceived of as “idea champions,” that is, people who see the need for and champion productive change within the proposed organizational system. They believe in the project idea and are able to visualize the system opportunities and benefits, confront obstacles and gain the support needed to bring it to reality.

The concept behind the CCSI emerged from the Action Research process developed by Lewin in the 1940s. Action Research has as its core the democratic work group that Susman and Evered called the client system infrastructure (Susman and Evered, 1978). The researcher works closely with practitioners located within the client system, who provide the subject system knowledge and insight necessary to understand the anomalies being studied. Participatory action research encourages the researcher to observe and draw conclusions from the democratic interaction of the agents within the client system infrastructure. In his research in Tanzania, Katzenstein looked at this process from a consulting perspective and realized the traditional consultant, in the role of researcher and facilitator, was by definition outside the democratic system. Because the outside consultant often is viewed as the expert, inequities develop in the status between the client infrastructure and the consultant. Inequities in status are magnified by cultural differences in worldviews and erect barriers to communication and understanding between the consultant and his client system. Katzenstein (2000) suggested the consultant should become part of the client system to form a structure he refers to as the CCSI. Rather than the consultant having a privileged outside position, the CCSI is an organizational structure of equals. It is a learning organization with a flat horizontal structure, empowered roles, shared information, collaborative strategy making and perhaps most important, an adaptive culture.

It is through this ad hoc organization that innovative work is done. Its defining characteristics, what Maturana and Varela (1992) calls criteria of distinction, are as follows:

- An ad hoc, multinational, multicultural, social entity of equal partners
- Oriented toward the solution of practical problems
- Individual agents come and go as needed, not all agents work together all the time
- Individual agents are structurally coupled to multiple environments with different cultures.

In essence, the CCSI is a small central coordinating group with links to several independent, specialized organizations that are goal directed (see Fig. 1).

As these various people from diverse backgrounds and organizations begin to interact, they draw on each other’s excitement and expertise, and become aware of more options to help the organization develop a better fit with its environment. Alan Fowler (2006) states “partnership is about gaining a deep organizational relationship, which is not a project. Look at a project as a vehicle to explore relationships, not as the basis of them. In doing this a longer-term perspective is to help both parties develop capability to analyze effectively and address unforeseen problems that will arise in the future, not just in the immediate context of a project—in other words, a case where partnership makes each organization, more agile and adaptive.”

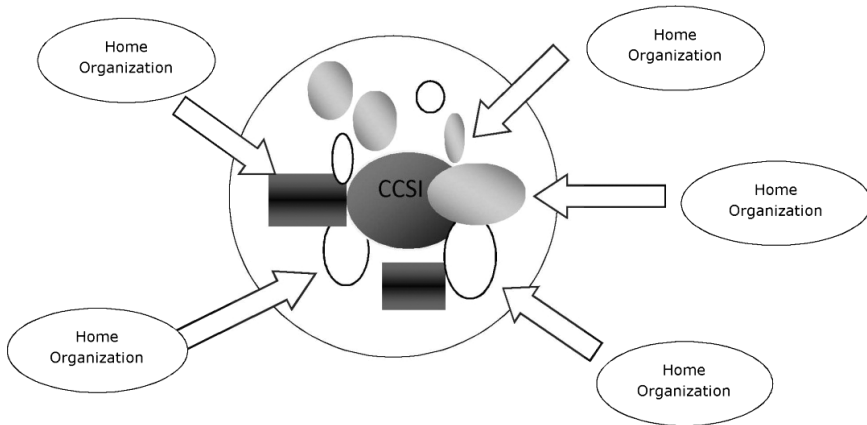


Fig. 1. The client consultant system infrastructure (CCSI).

However, establishing a democratic group of equal participants within the CCSI is easier said than done. As discussed in the culture challenge earlier, each member of the CCSI is a carrier of multiple cultures reflecting the individual's background and organizational affiliations. As such, they are likely to have competing views of how the project should proceed unless there is some intervention that helps them transform their individual mindsets into a new shared reality. Thus, development of the CCSI requires that a social entrepreneur possess certain qualities of leadership, what [Bennis \(2009\)](#) calls leadership competencies, among which is the ability to engage others in shared meaning, and to facilitate communications effectively and empathetically across cultures. This occurs through the process of structural coupling and reality enactment.

5.2. Structural coupling and reality enactment

The success of the CCSI is enhanced by a process of structural coupling. [Maturana and Varela \(1992\)](#) define structural coupling as the recurrent interaction between two or more entities that produces structural changes in the interacting entities and leads to the structural congruence. This process is the means by which members of the CCSI achieve a common worldview. The key activity in this concept is the mutual recurrent interaction that results in the structural linking of the parties. Practically, it means sleeping in your host's house, eating what he eats and developing empathy for the life he leads and the difficulties he faces. It means listening to his stories and telling him yours until you both create a common world. This recurrent interaction changes all participants, and links them to each other and to the CCSI.

Thus, through the process of structural coupling, the CCSI provides the social context through which participants can begin to enact a new organizational reality. As the various members of the CCSI interact with each other, the multiple cultures each person brings to the CCSI evolve into a shared culture that is neither Western nor non-Western. The recurrent interaction among the members of this groups leads to the emergence of a

collective mindset from which an appropriate organization system can be developed and implemented.

Therefore, a critical issue the social entrepreneur must consider is whether the group of agents has the requisite variety and diversity needed to co-evolve with the environment. Importantly, the major stakeholders in the project, such as healthcare professionals, ICT professionals, consultants and villagers, must be included in the CCSI so their voice contributes to the emergence of a new and shared mindset (see Fig. 2).

5.3. Networking and penetration — Interpenetration

The CCSI is not only the organizational hub for directing the energies of the agents involved in the project, but is also the hub connecting members of the CCSI with their home organizations. The organization structure now involves a complex arrangement of interconnected networks of people carrying out their work both independently and inter-dependently. As such, the CCSI becomes the hub of a complex network of interdependent parts that can be made available to assist in the solution of the problem. In essence, this network links independent specialized organizations that are each very good at what they do through a central coordinating group, i.e., the CCSI. The benefit of such a networked system is that it allows each organization to concentrate on what it does best and to rely on other organizations in the network to handle the areas in which they have distinctive competences. Thus, networking reduces unnecessary duplication of talent and resources and enables an organization to do more with less.

When individual agents now return to their home environment, they infect the environment with new thoughts. The answer is in the return. They change their environment because they have changed; their perceptions have been altered. For the social entrepreneur, this

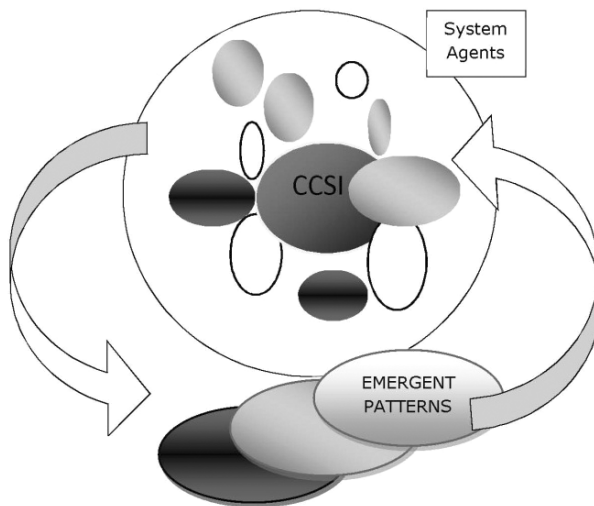


Fig. 2. Structural coupling and reality enactment.

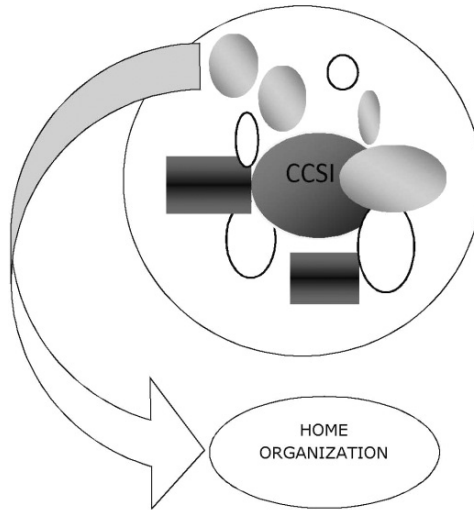


Fig. 3. Penetration.

means identifying an agent whose organizational role will facilitate the relationship building necessary to sustain new patterns of interaction.

Luhmann (1995) refers to this process as penetration. Penetration occurs when the system makes its own complexity available for constructing another system (Luhmann, 1995). It occurs when individual agents of the CCSI go back to their home organizations and infuse the culture there with new thinking that has emerged from the CCSI. In effect, the CCSI as a system penetrates the African environment, and the Western environment of the social entrepreneur, forming a new system and context. The interaction of the CCSI as a system, within the context as a system, results in changes to both (see Fig. 3).

Interpenetration, on the other hand, exists when penetration occurs reciprocally, that is when both systems enable each other by introducing their own complexity into each other. Interpenetration is a mutual change, which sets up recurrent interaction and results in structural drift (Maturana, 1992; Luhmann, 1995). It refers to the mutual interaction between the system and its environment where both system and the environment change (see Fig. 4). Through penetration and interpenetration, the various subsystems involved in the project continue to infect and re-infect each other such that there is an evolving change occurring throughout the entire system.

5.4. Participatory action research

The work of the CCSI and others is based on participatory action research (AR), with several important additions. Put simply, action research is “learning by doing” — a group of people identify a problem, do something to resolve it, see how successful their efforts were, and if not satisfied, try again (Susman, 1983). Although this is the essence of the

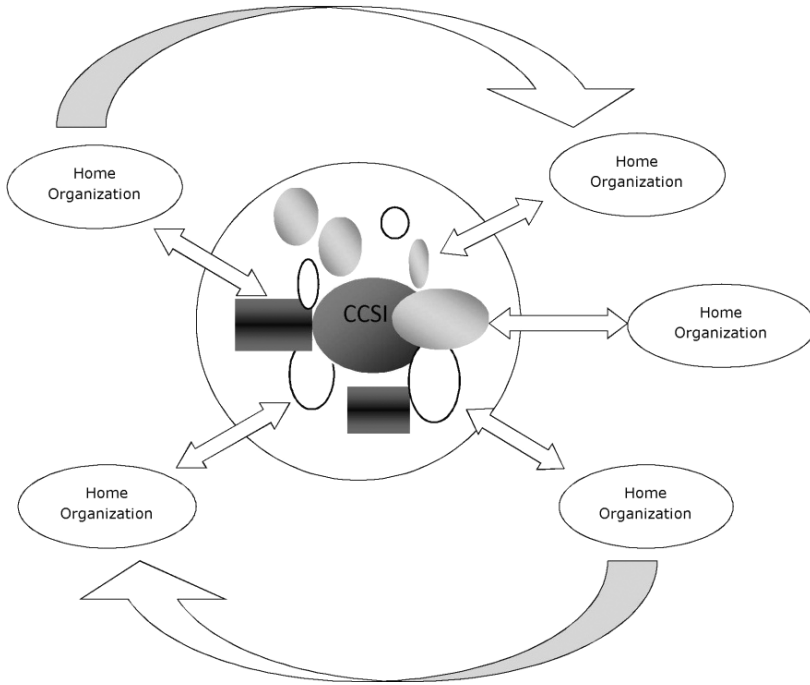


Fig. 4. Interpenetration.

approach, there are other key attributes of AR that differentiate it from common problem-solving activities we all engage in every day. A more succinct definition is,

Action research... aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to further the goals of social science simultaneously. Thus, there is a dual commitment in action research to study a system and concurrently to collaborate with members of the system in changing it in what is together regarded as a desirable direction. Accomplishing this twin goal requires the active collaboration of researcher and client, and thus it stresses the importance of co-learning as a primary aspect of the research process. (Gilmore, 1986)

The process of AR is cyclical and consists of five elements. Initially, a problem is identified and data is collected for a more detailed diagnosis. This is followed by a collective postulation of several possible solutions, from which a single plan of action emerges and is implemented. Data on the results of the intervention are collected and analyzed, and the findings are interpreted in light of how successful the action has been. At this point, the problem is reassessed and the process begins another cycle. This process continues until the problem is resolved (Susman, 1983).

- Diagnosing — Identifying or defining a problem
- Action planning — Considering alternative courses of action

- Action taking — Selecting a course of action
- Evaluating — Studying the consequences of an action
- Learning — Identifying general findings.

The members of the CCSI move back and forth through the elements in a somewhat messy process from which answers become apparent. In more complex social change processes, as described here, the learning that emerges from one solution often opens up new issues to explore. Thus, our model adds a linear component, as well as a cyclical one, to the AR process.

The final component of the model is the “interlude.” The interlude is an outgrowth of the consultant being inside the CCSI as a participant instead of outside as an observer. While an insider, the consultant can interact with other insiders, e.g., the client system, and facilitate the change within the AR model. However, in the process the consultant gives up the privileged position as a researcher that allows them to understand the relationships between the client system and its environment. The interlude, a time between periods of

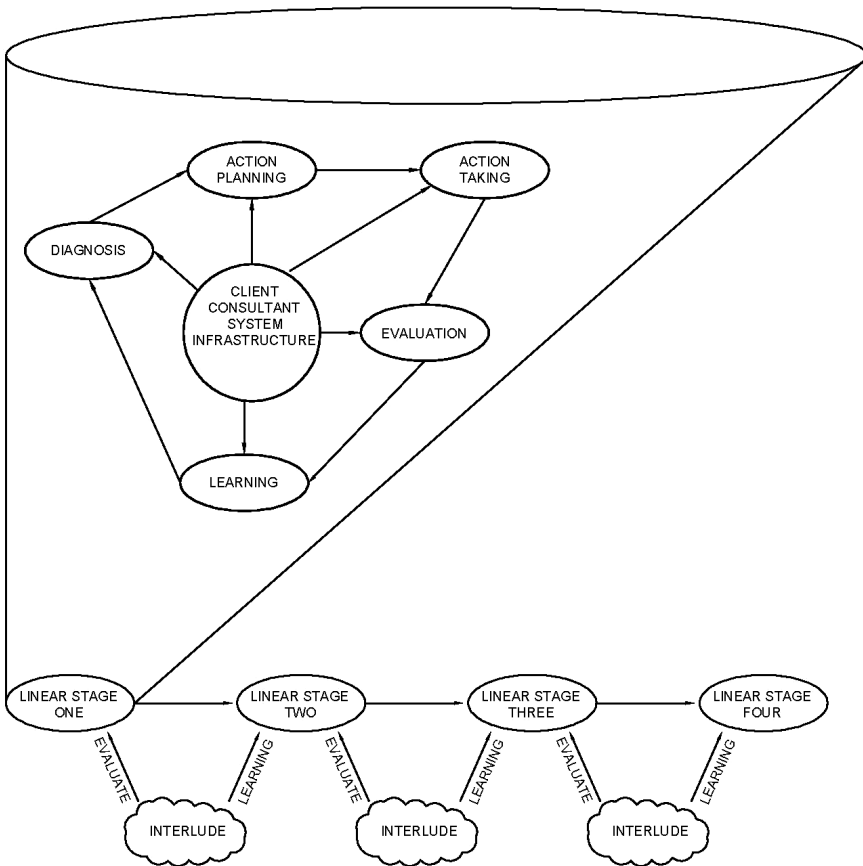


Fig. 5. Modified action research model.

activity when members of the CCSI are not working as a unit, is a period of reflection in which the participant/consultant withdraws from the system and examines what has been accomplished in the role of researcher/observer (Katzenstein, 2000) (see Fig. 5).

6. Conclusion

Someone said the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. Pouring large sums of money into African countries, with the hope that somehow the money will translate into development, has proven to be a failed strategy. If the Africans are ever to build an enlightened and prosperous continent, they must develop processes that will allow development to occur.

Social entrepreneurship may be such a process. Entrepreneurship that develops economic and social benefits within the grassroots of African society may allow Africans to rebuild their society in bite-size pieces and avoid the problems that a sea of money dumped into a society frequently causes. Social entrepreneurship also may allow African societies to focus on their social issues in addition to their economic ones using techniques and systems that have long since demonstrated their efficacy in the economic arena. Entrepreneurship is, after all, the engine of economic growth in developed countries, and the concepts of entrepreneurship have proven effective in many developing countries. Social entrepreneurship may also be the means by which African countries can, in a non-colonial way, harness the power of large numbers of young, dedicated professionals in the developed world with interest in giving back to the greater world in which they live.

The authors of this paper have provided a model to guide the social entrepreneur through the complexities of cultural and social differences that exist between individuals and nations. The model also bridges the power differential that naturally exists between Western experts and funders who have money and expertise and Africans who must live with the results.

The theories we have used in this paper provide the foundation on which the model and the process are based. The model has been tried in a limited number of countries and communities; however, it needs to be tested in different environments, cultures and areas other than healthcare to determine its generalizability.

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