Communication for Social Changemaking: A "New Spirit" in Media and Communication for Development and Social Change?

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In pockets of media and communication for development and social change (MCDSC) a distinct set of practices around a worldview emphasizing optimism, chic, creativity, boldness, and "changemaking" is emerging. This trend is in stark contrast with the momentum of our current academic debates exploring the role of communication in the decolonization of MCDSC. This article aims to bring greater critical attention to what I term *communication for social changemaking*. Through an analysis of selected cases from a sample of program texts spanning 10 years, communication for social changemaking is found to rest on an underlying "spirit" that justifies the employment of capitalist mechanisms for social purposes and a common good. This article argues that there is an urgent need to critically interrupt the assimilation of global capitalist values in MCDSC practice where they undermine social justice goals, and also calls for research to explore how practitioners are both adapting and resisting these discourses.

Keywords: communication for development, communication for social change, social entrepreneurship, social innovation, capitalism, changemaking

The field of media and communication for development and social change (MCDSC) is in a period of flux. Academia is engaging increasingly with postcolonial theory, with calls for a postcolonial and culture-centered paradigm (Dutta, 2011; Suzina, 2021; Tufte, 2017), in this way critiquing international development cooperation as neocolonialist, propelled by transnational capitalist interests (Dutta, 2011). However, a very different and under-discussed school of thought is growing in parallel, primarily within the domain of practice, accelerated by the growing presence of philanthropies in development and changes in the development funding landscape causing increased scarcity and competition for donor funding (Taggart & Power, 2022). While the former seeks to resist capitalist interests through communication, the latter embraces capitalist cultures and entrepreneurialism as a solution to social problems and the failings of development. This new wave of entrepreneurialism has connections with not only long-term processes of the globalization of capitalism but also some new trends, as explored in this article. Of particular importance

is the way that these entrepreneurial influences raise alternative conceptualizations of communication and their connection with development and social change.

This article contributes to a body of work that explores the increasing neoliberalization of MCDSC. Some important contributions have critiqued the growing neoliberalization and corporatization of MCDSC (Dutta, 2011; Enghel, 2015; Thomas, 2014, 2015; Wilkins & Enghel, 2013) and Information and Communication Technologies and Development (ICTD; Gurumurthy, 2010), links with microfinance (Wilkins, 2016), and the implications of changing aid flows and actors on both humanitarian journalism (Scott, Bunce, & Wright, 2017) and development more broadly (Richey & Ponte, 2014). Pertinently, there has been a call for greater political economy analysis of the development communication field (Enghel, 2015) as well as critical analysis of the "hype around social entrepreneurship as the panacea to inequality in the global age" (Chakravartty, 2009, p. 39), both of which are key aims of this article.

This article also builds on McAnany's (2012) discussion of a new "social entrepreneurship" paradigm. In brief, McAnany (2012) predicted that MCDSC should and would become influenced by social entrepreneurship, identifying areas of commonality and benefits for MCDSC practice. He argued that both MCDSC (especially participatory approaches) and social entrepreneurship were interested in facilitating local people and groups to achieve self-defined goals by drawing on their existing resources. He outlined at least four key benefits that social entrepreneurship approaches offer MCDSC. First, alternative funding models could enable MCDSC to break free from its dependency on large institutional donors. Second, social innovation approaches would be less technologically deterministic, instead emphasizing local appropriation of technologies. Third, the social entrepreneurship paradigm would solve MCDSC's problem with scale, given the emphasis on small start-ups and pathways to expansion. Finally, he predicted a productive shift in monitoring and evaluation practices away from accountability-driven approaches and toward more internal drivers for continuous improvement. It is fair to characterize McAnany's (2012) appraisal as buoyant and optimistic, especially compared with the critical stance of Chakravartty (2009) and Gurumurthy (2010). However, McAnany (2012) did also identify some tensions, including the risk that new buzzwords, polished success stories, and hero narratives may obscure and oversimplify complexities, and that the close association with business may trigger concerns among scholars. Unsettlingly, aside from a few individual case studies, such as Davis' (2016) framing of a nongovernmental organization (NGO) working in favelas in Rio de Janeiro as an example of the social entrepreneurship approach to MCDSC, McAnany's (2012) proposition has not been substantially or empirically investigated by scholars.

The term "entrepreneurial" in this article is used to refer to a certain capitalist "spirit" that positions entrepreneurial people as ideal "agents of change" (Irani, 2019, p. 1). In using such a reference, I draw substantially on Boltanski and Chiapello's (2018) outline of contemporary capitalist cultures and values. They argue that a new capitalist "spirit" emerged in the 1990s, absorbing aspects of anti-capitalist critiques from the 1960s to justify capitalism as a common good and celebrating charismatic, creative, flexible, and socially engaged leaders. Chakravartty and Sarkar (2013) built on Boltanski and Chiapello's (2018) work in their analysis of "entrepreneurial justice" in India, in which entrepreneurial celebrities position themselves as ideal agents of social and economic justice. Relatedly, the term "innovation" in this article is not restricted to technology but rather to a general valorization of novelty and creativity (Scott-Smith, 2016). Finally, "changemaking," a term popularized by the nonprofit foundation, Ashoka, similarly reflects this spirit and is

used to refer to practices of social change leaders with entrepreneurial mindsets (Teasdale et al., 2020). This article proposes *communication for social changemaking* as a term that captures the emergence of a "new spirit" in MCDSC, whereby popularized discourses such as "creative capitalism" and "enlightened capitalism" are absorbed and proposed as an ideal mechanism for social change within this field.

I approach this study as a scholar of communication for social change, which is a field interested in how communication processes can contribute to social justice through engagement with critical theories of feminism, Marxism, adult education, social movements, and postcolonialism. In undertaking this study, I am also informed by previous fieldwork (see e.g., Elliott, Samati, Noske-Turner, & Rogers, 2020; Noske-Turner & Tacchi, 2016) and conversations with MCDSC practitioners located across both the Global North and Global South as part of ongoing collaborations and at summits and conferences. These encounters drew my attention to the growing adaptations of social entrepreneurship ideas in MCDSC practice by both local NGOs and larger agencies. I have also been struck that several practitioners in the Global South indicate a sense that their MCDSC work can benefit from entrepreneurial approaches, enabling them to be more bottom-up, operate in less precarious and dependent ways, be more adaptive to local needs, and determine their own priority actions and approaches. The aim of this article is therefore three-fold: to empirically examine the discourses underpinning this entrepreneurial MCDSC as it exists in program documents; to advance a critical theorization of this discourse and its implications; and outline questions for future research that would include engagement with the experiences of MCDSC practitioners in the Global South. The empirical analysis draws on a series of cases from mainly international organizations practicing across a wide spectrum of MCDSC. With these cases as the bedrock of this article, I then analyze how the new spirit influences the reconceptualization of communication and development and social change, its operationalization, and its consequences. This article begins by examining the discourses around social entrepreneurship and social innovation in the broader landscape of international development.

"Social Entrepreneurialism" in Development: Theoretical and Contextual Explorations

There is a growing critical literature within international development studies charting changing influences and political and economic structures. Specifically, the current era naturalizes configurations of global capital as a response to poverty, with concepts of "creative capitalism," microfinance, and "bottom of the pyramid" at its heart (Roy, 2010 pp. 25–27). Threaded throughout contemporary international development discourse is a celebration of "entrepreneurial celebrities" (Chakravartty & Sarkar, 2013) and "entrepreneurial citizens" (Irani, 2019), who are not just economic agents but crucially framed as ideal agents of social change contributing to nation building and social justice through their creativity and value generation. The term "changemakers," similarly invites everybody to become entrepreneurially minded social innovators, meaning, highly adapted to the cultures and contexts of late capitalism (Teasdale et al., 2020). These logics and discourses mirror core features of Boltanski and Chiapello's (2018) thorough characterization of the contemporary capitalist culture, which reinvents itself as a response to anti-capitalist critiques while also remaking precarity as desirable (temporally bound projects as offering flexibility, openness, risk, and experimentation), promoting charismatic leadership, and valorizing creativity, personal capital, mobility, and networks, wherein ultimately this spirit works to justify capitalism as a common good. The drivers and influences outlined in the literature are unpacked in the following sections, first exploring the funding landscape and changing development actors, followed by a review of literature critically

examining the rise of notions of entrepreneurship and innovation in development, and concluding by connecting these shifts as constituting a new spirit of development. This broader context provides the backdrop for analyzing the manifestations of the new spirit in MCDSC specifically.

Changing Funding Landscape and Organizational Structures

One key driver of these shifts is the expansion of private foundations into international development. Over recent decades there has been a significant growth in the number of foundations, the degree of their involvement in aid and development, their political influence, and the terms of funding (McGoey, 2015; Moran, 2014; Taggart & Power, 2022). Philanthropic foundations promulgate the idea that corporate actors and philanthropies are uniquely positioned to draw on their private sector experience and bring business efficiencies to development projects (Chakravartty & Sarkar, 2013; McGoey, 2015). In short, this is a direct suggestion that international development needs a capitalist spirit to enhance effectiveness and get results. This is particularly strong in "second-generation foundations" (Moran, 2014, p. 27), which include the likes of the Skoll Foundation and Omidyar Network (eBay), Internet.org (Facebook), Google.org (Google), and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Microsoft). Foundations of this ilk have gravitated around a "Californian consensus," which "holds an abiding faith in the capacity of innovation, technology and modern management methods to solve problems of extreme poverty" (Desai & Kharas, 2008, p. 158). Such corporations are the epitome of the imaginary in neo-management business literature of lean and nimble sites of creativity and innovation led by charismatic and heroic entrepreneurial leaders.

This discourse has traveled beyond global corporations and their philanthropies and has also "colonized" thinking in development agencies and government policies (Irani, 2019). Traditional bilateral donors are proactively seeking partnerships with the private sector and emulating some of their management structures, philosophies, and practices. For example, the Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade, responsible for Australia's aid and development, set up an "InnovationXchange" office with workspaces inspired by Silicon Valley companies with the intention of increasing private sector engagement (Australian Associated Press, 2013). More broadly, a series of discussion papers, manifestos, and reports have been produced under the banner of "Doing Development Differently" (e.g., Overseas Development Institute, 2016), drawing heavily on business management theories.

Social Entrepreneurship in International Development

The growing popularization of both social entrepreneurship and microfinance since the early 2000s represents a strand of international development activity with clear influences from contemporary capitalist cultures. Social entrepreneurship, in its popular definition, refers to the application of entrepreneurial thinking and qualities by citizens to solve problems and create social change (Bornstein & Davis, 2010). Microfinance involves an assemblage of subjects, actors, institutions, platforms, and discourses deployed to offer small loans to the poor, especially poor women (Roy, 2010; Schwittay, 2011a, 2015).

The academic and practice-based/industry literature associated with these concepts is littered with "conceptual franchising," wherein counter-hegemonic adjectives are added to a bourgeoise noun in an attempt to subvert its meaning (de Sousa Santos, 2014, p. 34). For example, the addition of "social" to

"social economy" is proposed to work against the logics of capital (Jessop, Moulaert, Hulgård, & Hamdouch, 2013). The same is attempted with the addition of "social" to "entrepreneurship," and more substantially in relation to a series of adjectives added to "capitalism": For example, Bill Gates' (2008) "creative capitalism," which draws on Prahalad's (2005) "bottom of the pyramid" notion, wherein the poor are reframed as underserved consumers who could be a source of profit if services were designed and priced to target them (Roy, 2010). Other adjectives commonly added to capitalism include "ethical," "inclusive," "compassionate," and "enlightened" (Jessop et al., 2013; Roy, 2010; Schwittay, 2011b). However, according to de Sousa Santos (2014), conceptual franchising is inherently limited since the debates remain within the "horizon of possibilities that is initially not its own" (p. 34).

When integrated into international development discourse, the representations of social entrepreneurship and microfinance center on "financially needy, and morally worthy poor individuals constituted as always ready entrepreneurs" (Schwittay, 2015, p. 63) and on ordinary people, from "street hawkers to elite technologists," who are recast as "entrepreneurs in potentia" (Irani, 2019, p. 2). Representations of "morally worthy" subjects center on the Third-World woman (Schwittay, 2015; Wilkins, 2016) and unemployed youth (Roy, 2010), each presented as ideal entrepreneurial subjects.

Discourses in both the social entrepreneurship and microfinance literature emphasize concepts of self-help and financial empowerment, which are pitted against traditional aid and development, which in turn are reframed as a "handout" or as charity and as having failed (Moyo, 2010; Roy, 2010). This is proposed to "free local actors in the Global South from the strictures of Western development practice" (Davis, 2016, p. 42). In doing so, however, entrepreneurial discourses shift the burden of development onto local communities (Dutta, 2011), promote individualized action over collective action (Schwittay, 2015), underserve the very poor (Gurumurthy, 2010), and target low-hanging fruit, ignoring substantive structural and political causes of poverty and injustice (Irani, 2019; Roy, 2010).

It is noteworthy that Roy's (2010) critical analysis of these trends nuances the debate in important ways. She argues that the microfinance initiatives, originally developed in Bangladesh by BRAC,[2] Mohammed Yunus, and the Grameen Bank, represent a Southern model of financial inclusion. Though Yunus and the Grameen Bank have been heavily critiqued for spreading patriarchal and neoliberal norms within development (e.g., Wilkins, 2016), Roy (2010) contends that the Bangladeshi model, though imperfect, emerged from a social justice frame that prioritizes pro-poor financial inclusion, having since been appropriated into more capitalist versions by the World Bank, Kiva, and others.

Social Innovation in International Development

Relatedly, "innovation" has become a buzzword in development, discursively seductive in its signaling of fresh thinking and an appetite for change (Scott-Smith, 2016). The term is closely related to "entrepreneurship," where innovation may be considered integral to enterprise, but social innovation can also be seen as separate from economic activity. Within international development, humanitarian aid, and

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[2] BRAC has been formerly known as the Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee, as the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, and as Building Resources Across Communities.

public policy, innovation-focused initiatives such as innovation funds, incubators, and hackathons are widespread and growing (for examples see Friederici, 2017; Irani, 2019; Noske-Turner & Tacchi, 2016).

Conceptually and theoretically, there is a growing literature exploring and embracing "social innovation" (Hulgård & Ferreira, 2020; Jessop et al., 2013), "inclusive innovation" (Heeks, Foster, & Nugroho, 2014), and "changemaking" (Teasdale et al., 2020). Here again, adjectives (social and inclusive) are used to signal an intended focus on innovation for and with excluded people and groups and toward solving social problems. It is significant that some scholars present frameworks that seek to distinguish between superficial forms of social/inclusive innovation practices and those that are argued as more genuine. For example, Heeks and colleagues (2014) focus on the level of agency of marginalized groups, expressed through a ladder of inclusive innovation. However, while proponents seek to disassociate their definition of social/inclusive innovation from economic motivations, there is a recognition that the recent mainstream turn in social innovation is strongly influenced by new business management discourses (Hulgård & Ferreira, 2020; Jessop et al., 2013). Teasdale and colleagues' (2020) analysis of the real utopias presented by Ashoka found that far from transformational change, the organization aspires to a future where people are more adapted to the status quo of late capitalism under the stewardship of "changemakers."

New Spirit of Development?

In sum, these trends can be seen as representing a "new spirit" of development. The changing discourses, values, approaches, and ideologies represent a shift aptly described by Irani (2019) as "rendering development entrepreneurial" (pp. 13–18). Labeled as "ethical capitalism," "social economy," "social entrepreneurship," "social changemaking," or similar, this worldview involves an intrinsic justification that a capitalist spirit should be put to work for social purposes and that this represents a common good for development. The imagining of creative innovators, entrepreneurs, changemakers, visionaries, and leaders as "heroic figures" is applied to philanthropists as well as to local innovators.

This new spirit of development and associated concerns broadly form the framework against which the empirical focus of this article aims to interrogate the ways in which these discourses influence MCDSC practices.

Methodology

This study is driven by an interest in understanding how ideologies informed by contemporary capitalism are emerging in MCDSC practice and the discursive implications for the logics, theories, and methods of MCDSC. Inspired by Boltanski and Chiapello's (2018) analysis of business texts, and by Morris' (2003) analysis of MCDSC working papers and program documents to explore participatory and diffusion paradigms, this study examined MCDSC texts to identify the strategies and ideologies at play. MCDSC industry texts are an ideal source of contemporary discourses, values, and justifications since these are artifacts in which organizations communicate about themselves, often with donor and other stakeholder audiences in mind. An overall sample of 87 MCDSC documents was gathered through a database search primarily within the Communication Initiative, a clearinghouse website for the MCDSC field. The sampling was purposive and qualitative, seeking to generate a collection of texts that would provide rich, qualitative

insights into how the broader trends outlined above manifest within the MCDSC field. A mix of filters (i.e., filtering for "private sector" or "foundations" under "organization type") and free text and Boolean searches (including "entrepreneurship," "social entrepreneurship," "innovation," etc.) was applied. The 87 texts spanned a 10-year period from 2010 to 2020. Additional searches to follow leads were undertaken where more information to build cases was required, some of which are more recent. ICT initiatives were included if they somehow linked to communication processes; however, initiatives that solely focused on building tech solutions were not included. The first phase of analysis involved a broad-brush qualitative approach to coding and analyzing all the texts gathered using Nvivo to identify a first set of emergent categories and themes. Through this process, six cases were selected that both illustrated the themes most clearly and directly and offered examples across a breadth of MCDSC approaches, spanning media development, edutainment media/media for development, community media, and participatory communication. These selected cases were analyzed in-depth using qualitative and iterative processes of shifting between emergent themes and theorization in line with procedures discussed by Tracy (2020). The six cases are summarized in Table 1, and the sources for each are detailed in Table A1, Appendix.

Table 1. Summary of the Six Entrepreneurial MCDSC Cases Analyzed in Depth.

Case Org.	Type of MCDSC	Type of Actors Involved
Search for Common Ground (SFCG)	Media for development: Edutainment	International NGO focusing on peace building. Was recognized for innovation by Skoll Foundation, a private foundation associated with social entrepreneurship.
GSMA (originally Groupe Speciale Mobile [GSM] Association)	Media for development: mHealth	Corporate/ private sector industry trade body in telecommunication.
International Fund for Public Interest Media (IFPIM)	Media development: media enterprises	NGO–foundation collaboration, with founders and funders including Luminate (connect with Omidyar Foundation), BBC Media Action, Craig Newmark Philanthropies, National Endowment for Democracy, and Macarthur Foundation.
Social Entrepreneurship for Young Community Media Makers (SEYMM)	Media development: community media entrepreneurs	Funded by European Commission Erasmus +.
Restless Development:	Participatory communication: youth movements	International NGO, originally set up as a voluntourism organization.
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	Participatory communication: design thinking	Multilateral United Nations (UN) agency, one of the most influential UN agencies in the MCDSC field.

Note. See Table A1, Appendix, for a list of sources.

First, it is important to highlight that although a large number of texts were reviewed, the qualitative methodology with purposive sampling means that it is not possible to make claims about the

comparative degree of influence or dominance of social entrepreneurialism within the field based on these data. Instead, the focus is on generating understandings of meanings and implications of the worldviews as represented in the sample. Second, the sample is primarily constituted of documents by larger, often international MCDSC organizations and agencies since these are more typically published on the Communication Initiative website. Consequently, this study is best understood as an analysis of discourses in these larger agencies, and a different experience would likely emerge in smaller community-based organizations.

The next section analyzes the conceptual shifts emerging in the operationalization of entrepreneurial MCDSC, beginning with an analysis of shifting conceptualizations of communication, followed by changing conceptualizations of development and social change.

Analyzing the Operationalization of Communication for Social Changemaking

Changing Conceptualizations of "Communication"

The conceptualization of "communication" has been foundational in distinguishing MCDSC approaches. A modernization view of communication is informed by a sender-receiver model of top-down information dissemination (Manyozo, 2012; Morris, 2003), while in the participatory paradigm communication is conceptualized as a process of horizontal or bottom-up dialogue (Dutta, 2011; Manyozo, 2012). How, then, do entrepreneurial approaches influence the conceptualization of "communication"? The six cases analyzed indicate an understanding of communication as being associated with particular types of leadership and mobilization.

Heroic, Charismatic Leadership

An emphasis on particular forms of leadership, often told in the form of hero narratives, is common at both local and organizational levels, drawing frequently on the concept of changemakers. For example, the documentation by Restless Development, a development agency that trains and mentors young people in leadership, emphasizes their approach to identifying and supporting exceptional, local leaders who are charismatic and inspiring and who mobilize for change in their communities (Restless Development, 2016). Their reports and content spotlight individual youth; for example, one YouTube video entitled "Expert Communication for Community Progress" highlights Paul Katemba, a Tanzanian man involved with Restless Development, as a well-networked and well-liked local leader (Restless Development, 2013). The video shows him speaking at outdoor community meetings about the usefulness of banks and microloans, with children in school, with the council members, trying (in vain) to get a mobile signal to connect with networks, shaking hands with people as he walks around, and it includes testimonials attesting to his hard work and likability. The video ends with Katemba saying, "Progress does not come easily; we need to commit ourselves. We need to share our ideas and resources to achieve the goals" (Restless Development, 2013, 8:43–8:55), echoing values of self-reliance (discussed in more detail below) and persistence framed as core to the work of changemakers. Hero narratives also emerge from agencies, such as the content about the SFCG founders who won a Skoll Award in 2006 and who were subsequently framed on the Skoll website and YouTube videos as heroic entrepreneurial changemakers (Skoll Foundation, 2006, 2018).

Much of this discourse appears to draw on popularized ideas of the archetypal charismatic "transformational leader" in business management texts (see especially Bass, 2008) who are heroic figures with exceptional abilities and qualities, are highly charismatic, and inspire followers (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2018, pp. 76–78; Yukl, 1999). These "exceptional beings" have a natural capacity "for a vision, who knows how to communicate, and get others to support it" (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2018, p. 76). Hero stories, such as by Restless Development and SFCG, present optimistic stories of individual changemakers that tend to gloss over the structural privileges, resources, and power that enable heroic acts by some and not others, individualizing social action and change processes, and valorizing initiative over labor (Irani, 2019, pp. 78–80). The individualization of change processes with no clear call for participatory and democratic processes can deny marginalized groups a voice in change processes (Teasdale et al., 2020).

Leadership is not completely new in the MCDSC literature. Most obviously, Rogers' (1983) diffusion of innovations theory, aligned with the modernization paradigm, includes "change agents" (pp. 312–326) and "opinion leaders" (pp. 271–311) who seek to influence the behaviors of others to adopt innovations. Rogers (1983) framed leaders as influencing followers through "persuasion," which marks an important distinction from entrepreneurial MCDSC, where good communication and leadership appear to be about trust, connections, relationships, and charisma to "inspire" and "mobilize." In the business management literature, and reflected in notions of "changemaking," terms like "persuade" and "motivate" are viewed negatively due to connotations of "manipulation" (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2018, p. 80).

More contemporarily, Figueroa, Kincaid, Rani, and Lewis' (2002) communication for social change model also references leaders. Their description is most suggestive of traditional leaders and trusted people as being important in collective action. In comparison with these discussions of leadership in community-based participatory processes, the conceptualization of good communication in the entrepreneurial MCDSC cases does not indicate a commitment to horizontal, democratic, dialogical, and inclusive praxis. For example, in the SEYMM project, which produced learning modules that combined community media training with modules on social entrepreneurship, individual changemakers ("social entrepreneurs") are encouraged to use media to create communities around themselves and their causes, which contrasts with traditional conceptualizations of community media as being collectively owned (Social Entrepreneurship for Young Community Media Makers, 2016, 2019). This fits with entrepreneurial leadership values of drive, vision, and action orientation, which are emphasized over dialogue, consensus, and collective action.

Mobilization

Building on this, mobilization was presented as core to the work of entrepreneurially minded leaders and therefore a concept closely associated with the notions of good communication in the cases analyzed. First, the idea of "mobilization" can be associated with processes to assemble and engage with audiences as "communities," as in the case of SEYMM. Within the sample of texts that related to media development and community media, mobilization was associated with cause-driven styles of "mission journalism" to mobilize audiences as "communities." Mobilizing communities (audiences, followers, subscribers) was also a common recommendation for entrepreneurial media business models (Luminate, 2020a, 2020b; see also Clarke et al., 2020; Posetti, 2019), in this way giving journalists and media makers a more prominent role in revenue generation. A second use of the concept of mobilization is with reference to the mobilization of

social movements, as was explicit in the case of Restless Development. Originally founded as a voluntourism-focused organization, Restless Development now positions itself as a "youth movement" (Restless Development, 2016). The Restless Development model for change states that its aim is to "improve lives through community engagement and mobilisation, with youth leadership at the heart of all interventions" (Restless Development, 2016, p. 14) seeking to mobilize "2.5 million young changemakers" (Restless Development, 2016, p. 20). In both uses, mobilization with entrepreneurial influences strongly links communication with local organizing and engagement processes.

Like "leadership," "mobilization," has a history of use in the MCDSC literature. First, mobilization has been associated with communication for vaccine programs in organizations like UNICEF, where it describes quite top-down strategies to build and deploy coalitions across governments, health systems, volunteers, and societies (Obregón & Waisbord, 2010). Mobilization in entrepreneurial MCDSC has some similarities with these types of social mobilization efforts, insofar as both make a claim to bottom-up processes while in most cases actually being driven by development agencies or other authorities. Claims to being a "social movement," however, need interrogation. Compared with social mobilization around specific political struggles (Suzina & Tufte, 2020) the cases analyzed do not present as being driven by political causes. This resonates with Irani's (2019) findings that entrepreneurial social change activity tends to be framed positively as "opportunity," and "away from the threatening work of building social movements" (p. 2). In this way, the concepts of leadership and mobilization in entrepreneurial MCDSC are less associated with political social movements and more with neo-management techniques wherein leaders present "exciting 'visions' which make people aspire by themselves" (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2018, p. 459).

Changing Conceptualizations of "Development" and "Social Change"

Entrepreneurial MCDSC carries alternate meanings and visions for "development" and "social change." Three thematic dimensions are discussed here: optimism, scale, and autonomy.

Optimism

Within many of the cases, there is a saturation of optimism and chic. Social change is associated with creativity, boldness, fun, and an appetite for big ideas with almost utopian visions of doing things differently. This emerges through excitement around new media business models and start-ups (Luminate, 2020a, 2020b), positivity around young, empowered changemakers (Cohen, 2013; Restless Development, 2016; Social Entrepreneurship for Young Community Media Makers, 2016, 2019), and the celebratory representation by of heroic and bold innovators (Skoll Foundation, 2006, 2018). Changemakers, especially local and young changemakers, are presented as enthusiastic, passion-driven, and hungry for positive change. Negativity is hardly tolerated; instead, the emphasis is on being "collaborative rather than agonistic, technical rather than political, constructive rather than complaining" (Irani, 2019, p. 66). Restless Development's 2030 vision document repeatedly uses the motif of turning negatives into positives and problems into solutions, with a call for "rewriting the narrative" (Restless Development, 2016, p. 5). It suggests that in the era of "peak youth," "never before and never again will there be such a large generation of young people ready and able to deliver change in their communities. This is not just a demographic statistic. It is a historic opportunity" (Restless Development, 2016, p. 5).

It is notable that within the cases analyzed there is an absence of any discussion of structural or political change, which has been argued as fundamental to social change (Dutta, 2011; Thomas & van de Fliert, 2014). As Irani (2019) has noted, the intolerance of negativity and politicization risks the prioritization of short-term wins over longer-term transformation and leads to a form of development that avoids disturbing existing social orders.

Scale and Speed

The concept of the scale of social change was also a key theme. In terms of organizations, the analyzed texts reveal a skepticism toward massification echoing popular business management literature, favoring bespoke, nimble, local, and fast action while, at the same time, almost an obsession with scale and scaling-up. There were cases that highlighted "decentralized" organizational structures such as "hubs" (Restless Development, 2016), while others included explicit suggestions to work in leaner, smaller teams, such as in the Human-Centered Field Guide on Demand for Health Services, produced by UNICEF Communication for Development with other UNICEF sections (UNICEF, n.d., 2020). With many similarities to participatory communication practices, this field guide is emblematic of a growing presence of design and designers in development (Irani, 2019; Schwittay, 2014). Alongside emphasizing working in small teams, working fast "in weeks not months" (UNICEF, 2020, p. 15), the guide transforms the messy work of community engagement into neat and manageable packages of "user" engagement activity (Irani, 2019, p. 55). Throughout the guide, however, is an apparent contradiction, where bespoke, local solutions are believed to be better but where simultaneously the allure of scaling up "fueled the entrepreneurial imagination" (Irani, 2019, p. 151), underscoring a belief that small ideas can become major, successful enterprises or solutions.

The notion of scale perhaps most clearly influences the way that evaluation is used. Small-scale testing is thought to lead quite directly to learning and scale-up. In the case of the IFPIM, an agenda led by Luminate, a foundation associated with the Omidyar Network (established by a founder of eBay) in close collaboration with BBC Media Action (IFPIM, 2022), positions itself as, among other things, a potential "catalyzer" and "incubator of fresh approaches" (Luminate, 2020a, p. 5), with an emphasis on an "agile," "What Works Unit" (Luminate, 2020a, p. 39) to systematically share learnings across geographies. Restless Development's model of change claims to be "testing, scaling and delivering" (Restless Development, 2016, p 17) and achieves its scaling up of youth collectives by building a cascading set of "coalitions, platforms and labs" (Restless Development, 2016, p. 19). In this way, learning-based, adaptive evaluation processes are often more intuitively part of program designs in ways that accountability- and donor-driven evaluation approaches are generally not (Lennie & Tacchi, 2013). On the other hand, there is more reference to "testing" models, as in Restless Development's strategy (Restless Development, 2016, p. 17), and using evidence to make a business case for "investment" and scale-up, as in Luminate's (2020a) IFPIM feasibility report, indicating that dominant evaluation approaches based on scientific and experimental paradigms still predominate.

Autonomy

There is a valorization of autonomy, self-reliance, and self-determination, which becomes entwined with a particular notion of "empowerment" and social change. "Community empowerment" has been a "key idea" in MCDSC, referred to commonly (and vaguely) as a process wherein communities become empowered through gaining knowledge, communicating about issues, making decisions, and taking action (Waisbord, 2005). In the entrepreneurial MCDSC cases, "empowerment" comes to mean autonomy, and particularly financial self-sufficiency. This valorization of autonomy occurs at both the individual and organizational levels.

At the individual level, the concept of "economic empowerment" is frequently invoked. The targeting of women for micro-entrepreneurship activity has been based on highly normative, neoliberal assumptions that the "good woman" is the most deserving and responsible (Roy, 2010; Schwittay, 2015; Wilkins, 2016). In the cases analyzed, however, the group most targeted for economic empowerment, was the youth. Individual self-reliance as empowerment was promoted through the highly neoliberal framing of self-driven enterprises as a mainstream employment solution. These discourses were strongly present in, for example, SFCG's reality TV show in Rwanda, *Zamuka* (Nuwakora, 2014; Search for Common Ground, 2014). This edutainment program was intended to inspire youth to become entrepreneurs by following four aspiring entrepreneurs. Embedded within this is a normalization of risk, failure, and hardship as almost rites of passage for young entrepreneurs, with the apparent promise of becoming the ideal type of the self-managed, flexible, adaptive, creative worker. This responsibilities youth (and women) for a systemic lack of formal employment options in the context of a failing modernization utopian dream of a gradual shift toward salaried, stable, industrialized labor for all (Li, 2017). An entrepreneurial mentality becomes a technical solution wherein youth who are otherwise "surplus to the needs of capitalism" can create their own jobs (Li, 2017, p. 1249). In this way, edutainment is directly used to promote "the neoliberal ethos that holds them responsible, as individuals, for taking initiatives, making choices, working on their CVs, keeping up their grades, and attempting to gain a competitive edge" (Li, 2012, p. 106) under the banner of livelihoods and economic empowerment.

At the organizational and implementation levels, financial self-sufficiency as "empowerment" is also clear. This was addressed most directly in relation to both mainstream and community media. Financial viability and sustainability have long been of particular concern in relation to community media (da Costa, 2013; Jallov & Jannusch, 2014). Additionally, NGOs are often involved in supporting or managing community media with development funding, leading to what has been called the "NGOisation" of community media (Pavarala, 2020). When infused with notions of social entrepreneurship, this influence blurs the previously relatively clear lines between nonprofit and profit-making activities. The SEYMM case shows a deliberate effort to combine social entrepreneurship with community media.

For NGOs associated with community media and more broadly undertaking MCDSC work, these discourses present entrepreneurialism as an enabler of autonomy, and self-reliance becomes the responsibility of these organizations. This rests on the narrative of the "new development financing landscape" apparently replete with new and alternative funding options (Taggart & Power, 2022, p. 109) promising liberation from the control of "charity" (Roy, 2010), aid (Moyo, 2010), "big D Development" as "a

post-second world war project of intervention in the 'third world'" (Hart, 2001, p. 650), and its associated bloated bureaucracy, interference, corruption, and apparent failure. This claim of representing some alternative to traditional development emerges even though most of the cases analyzed remain ostensibly within a big D Development context. A notable exception to this in the sample is an mHealth guide published by the GSMA, the global industry body for mobile companies and operators (Groupe Speciale Mobile Association, 2012). This guide outlines ways to support women's access to technologies. Here, the mobile access gender divide is used to reframe women as an untapped, lucrative market, describing these customers as loyal and likely to influence other family members. It then suggests that one way to access this market is through providing mHealth services to women, especially on pregnancy and maternal health topics, to help build their digital literacy and build a positive brand. The remainder of the toolkit describes how to create appropriate content, typical of many media for development and mHealth guides. In doing so, GSMA is making a business case for producing mHealth media for development content as a strategy to access untapped markets (Groupe Speciale Mobile Association, 2012). This goes beyond a co-option of communication to "do good" for "looking good" purposes (Enghel & Noske-Turner, 2018), instead using "doing good" methods as a gateway for making good profits. It similarly represents more than a trend of NGOs in the MCDSC space becoming corporatized (Dutta, 2011; Thomas, 2014, 2015) since here corporations (not development agencies) undertake MCDSC work without any pretense that it is anything other than good business to do so.

Autonomy is one of the hallmarks of Boltanski and Chiapello's (2018) characterization of the new spirit of capitalism, where autonomy is "an absolutely central value of the new industrial order" (p. 190). Applied to individuals, NGOs, and other organizations, the emphasis on autonomy leads to a discursive rejection of the traditional aid and development models in entrepreneurial MCDSC. There is a deep skepticism of big D Development and traditional development experts, which is associated with donor dependence and control. This may account for some of the reasons for agencies distancing themselves from the label of "development organizations" preferring instead "movements," as in the case of Restless Development.

Conclusion

There is an urgent need for scholars to recognize the growing assimilation of global capitalist values in MCDSC practice and pay critical attention to where these trends undermine social justice goals. In this article, I have argued that just as the "new spirit of capitalism" underscores the rise of celebrity entrepreneurs positioning themselves as the answer to social and economic injustice (Chakravartty & Sarkar, 2013), there is a new spirit within MCDSC. This discourse justifies the employment of capitalist mechanisms in MCDSC on the basis that it serves an overall common good. I propose the concept of *communication for social changemaking*, a reference to the ways in which the entrepreneurial worldview brings a heightened emphasis on communication as leadership by "changemakers," which echoes a popularized version of heroic transformational leadership drawn from business management literature. Additionally, "changemaking" is deployed to convey an aspiration for autonomy over the development destiny, discursively rejecting top-down, donor-controlled big D Development but at the same time maintaining, even extending, global capitalist orders. One effect of this is to make actors in the Global South—not only youth and women but also NGOs—responsible for mobilizing and self-funding social justice.

This article has offered empirical and analytical weight to the shifts that McAnany (2012) forecasted. It has shown how social entrepreneurship discourses and values are being absorbed in the MCDSC field across a broad spectrum and in various ways. It has influenced strategies, goals, funding terms, and methods across media for development and edutainment, media development, community media, and participatory communication. A decade after McAnany (2012) first published on the entrepreneurial paradigm of communication for development, this article has shown that its emergence and implications are more complicated than they initially seemed, and a number of problematic shifts have been discussed.

On the other hand, as McAnany (2012) suggested, it is important to remain open to operational benefits. In response to problems of donor-driven development, funding precarity, and institutional challenges with enabling genuinely participatory approaches, practitioners on the ground, especially in the Global South, have indicated an interest in these entrepreneurial approaches (Elliott et al., 2020; Noske-Turner & Tacchi, 2016). This opens up further avenues for action research that explore ways of appropriating elements of communication for social changemaking within social justice frames. For example, could popularized, neo-management notions of leadership be challenged by the nascent work on Freirean theories of leadership and communication (Jian, 2019; Mitra, 2013), and perspective on design justice pedagogies (Costanza-Chock, 2020)? Are there ways to decenter economic drivers in favor of social change outcomes by drawing on emerging literature on feminist and emancipatory entrepreneurship (Calás, Smircich, & Bourne, 2009) or by engaging with collectives and cooperatives? In this process, it will also be vital to listen to practitioners to understand how they balance the desire for greater strategic and financial autonomy with commitments to collective action, solidarity, and social justice. Given that entrepreneurial MCDSC is likely a growing trend, future field-based research must seek to explore how organizations on the ground have or could appropriate communication for social changemaking to retain core social justice values.

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Appendix

Table A1. Summary of Sources Used in the Empirical Analysis.

Case Org.	Year	Source Title	Source Reference
Search for Common Ground (SFCG)	2006	Search for Common Ground (Skoll Award)	Skoll Foundation (2006)
	2013	Interim Narrative Report Democracy and Development in Action, Through Media and Empowerment (DAME)	Search for Common Ground (2013)
	2013	Millennial Social Entrepreneurs Meet About Smashing World Problems	Cohen (2013)
	2014	Encouraging Entrepreneurship and Alternative Livelihoods	Search for Common Ground (2014)
	2014	Final Draft Report for Progress Evaluation of SFCG's Entrepreneurship-Focused Initiatives Programme: "Let's Do It Project and Legacy for Tomorrow Project"	Nuwakora (2014)
	2018	John and Susan Marks | Search for Common Ground	Skoll Foundation (2018)
Groupe Speciale Mobile Association (GSMA)	2012	Striving and Surviving: Exploring the Lives of Women at the Base of the Pyramid	Groupe Speciale Mobile Association (2012)
International Fund for Public Interest Media (IFPIM)	2020	Enabling Media Markets to Work for Democracy: An International Fund for Public Interest Media	Luminate (2020a)
	2020	International Fund for Public Interest Media at Rightscon	Luminate (2020b)
	2022	International Fund for Public Interest Media	International Fund for Public Interest Media (2022)
Social Entrepreneurship for Young Community Media Makers (SEYMM)	2016	Social Entrepreneurship for Young Community Media Makers	Social Entrepreneurship for Young Community Media Makers (2016)
	2019	Social Entrepreneurship for Young Community Media Makers—Intellectual Outputs (and Available Downloads Including the Conceptual Framework; 8x Learning Units; Assessment	Social Entrepreneurship for Young Community Media Makers (2019)

		and Impact Scales Strategy; SEYMM Pilot Trainings Evaluation Report)	
Restless Development	2013	Expert Communication for Community Progress	Restless Development (2013)
	2016	Unleashing the Power of Youth to Change our World: A New Vision for 2030	Restless Development (2016)
	2017	From Development to Change: A New Generation With a Model for Change	The version used for analysis is no longer available; request an archive copy from the author.
UNICEF	n.d.	Human Centred Design 4 Health	UNICEF (n.d.)
	2020	Demand for Health Services Field Guide: A Human-Centred Approach	UNICEF (2020)
Supplementary sources			
DW Akademie	2020	From Start to Success: A Handbook for Digital Media Entrepreneurs	Clarke and colleagues (2020)
Reuters Institute (University of Oxford)	2019	Lessons in Innovation: How International News Organisations Combat Disinformation Through Mission-Driven Journalism	Posetti (2019)