'RE-DESIGNING THE ECONOMIC DISCOVERY OF WEALTH' A FRAMEWORK FOR DEALING WITH THE ISSUE OF POVERTY

Mohamed Buheji

International Inspiration Economy Project, Bahrain

buhejim@gmail.com

Abstract

The meaning of wealth has always been an interest for economists in the last few centuries. However, with the latest developments of the concepts of the behavioural economy followed by more focused socio-economic based approaches in the last few decades, wealth has been more re-visited and explored from other perspectives. In this paper, we shall examine the issue of poverty from both behavioural economies driven analysis and how inspiration based economy labs are dealing with it in reality. The case study covers how wealth is analysed and totally re-designed from the socio-economic perspectives, the demographics, the level of environment complexity and the sources of frustration to create the poverty problem solution. Besides, socio-economic issues, wealth would be discussed and presented from different perspectives. The functionality, the conflicts and the different interactions would be considered part of the wealth constructs and part of the outcome targeted also.

Keywords: Wealth, Poverty, Behavioural Economics, Inspiration Economy Lab, Social Engineering, Socio-Economy, Humanitarian Assistance

INTRODUCTION

Reviewing any socio-economic problem regardless of its nature carries with it default solutions preference that comes from foreseen physical, or materialistic wealth. However, wealth is rarely seen as opportunities and hidden opportunities. With the development of neuroscience and behavioural economics, wealth could be seen, managed and explored from different angles, (Sunstein and Thaler, 2009). Buheji (2017a, b) shown how each socio-economic issue is full of

a wealth of opportunities that could be discovered through inspiration economy labs that use socio-economic problem-solving techniques.

In this paper, we investigate the 'vectors of wealth' in the issue of poverty taking it from the perspective of the humanitarian assistance and support. In order to come up with an effective socio-economic solution, we need to understand the problem vectors, i.e. its anatomy and the type of opportunities it carries. Problem vectors carry not the only direction for the solution, but also quantified construct that carries more than one piece of information. However, studying the best socio-economic solution history shows that the best solution comes from non-financial vectors such as human capital, social and physical assets which help to retain a sustainable wealth of opportunities within each problem. Poverty, even though a complex issue. It carries inside it many hidden opportunities that need to be explored and exploited.

Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to explore how we can solve deep complicated socio-economic problems as poverty through multi-disciplinary perspectives and using the intrinsic powers and hidden assets.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Socio-Economic Problem Vectors

When we investigate socio-economic problem we need to explore vectors of growth and development, Nikolaevna and Anatolievich (2015). In order to investigate many complex socio-economic problems, buheji (2018a) stated the importance of using vectors on the wealth of opportunities which each of these types of problems carries within. Resembling problem vectors in physics, as shown in Figure (1) Buheji (2018a) sees that such an approach help to improve the scale of solutions possibility and would make the exploration for problem solution outcome more effective. Realising the problem vector lead to a better understanding of the magnitude and the direction, similar to any other problem in physics or math.

Figure 1. The Problem Vector Magnitude and Direction
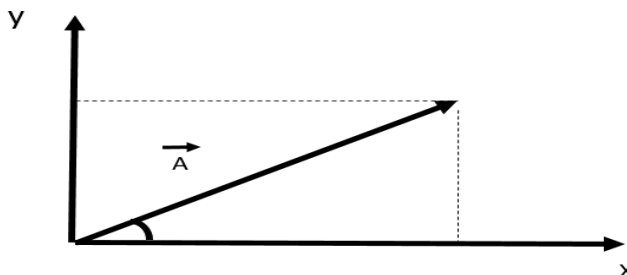
Source: Compiled by the Author

Through the metaphor of the problem vector, we can observe easily the accessibility and integration of the socio-economic issue with different problem opportunities that are considered to be challenging. Buheji (2918a) mentioned examples as to how the integration vectors as the scarcity of space would lead to the redesign of the public buildings, as schools, hospitals and social centres. This created more multi-purpose buildings owned by the community and enhanced the rate of occupancy and utilization in a small country as the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Selecting the problem vectors of the low utilisation of the public facilities in certain communities while other communities complaining about the non-availability of these facilities, brought the opportunity of integrating of the facilities between different communities and different specialities.

Therefore, problem vector a socio-economic problem vector can be reflected by the following framework where each problem opportunities are differentiated by it capacity and efficiency to the socio-economic solution expected, supported by the accessibility of the solution and then the other opportunities it brings in, as shown in Figure (2).

Figure 2. The Role of Problem Vector in developing the Scale of Problem Solution

Source: Compiled by the Author

Defining Wealth

There are many definitions of wealth however we would take the materialistic one that sees it as the abundance or profusion of anything that has exchange value. Seeing wealth from this perspective we'll see that we have more things exchange than money or physical assets. We have social assets, natural assets, knowledge assets besides our psychological asset. There

are even more assets based on the condition or the environment of the person or the country. For example, we can consider stability is an asset, level of cultural appreciation as an asset, etc.

Ineffective addressing of these assets when we tackle or evaluate the issue of wealth complicates the socio-economic problem further. This has led to many society corruptions that made the target of the decision makers focused on acquiring the power and capital wealth, at the expense of attempting to develop serious positive outcome-solutions. Obviously, in a sensible world, the government should never undertake to solve community problems, unless it finds that the community don't have the capacity to solve it themselves, as the more government solve the problems on behalf of the community, the weaker the community capacity would be to solve their own serious problems. This might be especially destructive when governments use resources to solve a problem that they know it would come back again, in a same or different form, after a few years.

The issue of wealth hence can be visualised through a socio-economic story that develops a solution that manifest 'social functions'. These social functions would establish specific recognized, or intended 'social patterns' which help to re-invent our communities lives and our personal life too. As mentioned in Buheji (2018a), visualising a story of getting out of the poverty for a Barbarian Farmers of al-Amazigh Village in Morocco would lead to capitalising on the village families' intrinsic strengths. This village had unique opportunities of sharing economy practices that manifested and differentiated its social wealth which helped to play a role in attracting its eco-tourism related services.

Wealth in Behavioural Economics

Behavioural economics incorporates wealth from the perspectives of psychology and the analysis of the decision-making, behind an economic outcome; such as the factors leading up to a consumer buying one product instead of another. Thus in behavioural economics, we can specifically propose an architected decision relevant to wealth, taking into account the assets that influence the psychological, social, cognitive, and emotional factors effect on the economic decisions (Sunstein and Thaler, 2009 and Cialdini, 1998).

Understanding Problem Wealth Vectors

There is scarcity in the body of knowledge about this new subject. However, based on 3.1, we need to always assess the nature and magnitude of the socio-economic problem which entails listing all the "forces", or the "wealth" within the problem that could help us to see, or visualise the desired goals, (Buheji, 2018a; Sunstein and Thaler, 2009). Buheji (2018a) designed a methodology for listing all the intrinsic power resources inside any socio-economic problem.

Table (1) is meant to visualise the socio-economic problem outcome through building a story that would link the type of assets inside each problem by describing the problem wealth, the potential opportunities it carries.

Table 1. Identifying the Capacity of Socio-economic Problem Wealth through realizing its assets

Type of Assets inside the Problem	Description of the Problem Wealth	Potential Opportunities	Plan for Outcome Story
Human Asset			
Social Asset			
Physical Asset			
Financial Asset			
Psychological Asset			

METHODOLOGY

Based on the above Table (1)type of forces or wealth shall be explored on two selected socio-economic issues relevant to the issue of poverty. Table (2) list the type of forces or wealth within to support the reader to utilise problem vectors effectively.

Table 2. Type of Wealth or Forces Within the Socio-Economic Problem

Socio-Economic Problem	Wealth or Force of Problem
Reduce the gap between citizens' demands and their quality of life needs in Housing services through improving the choices and provision of a variety of options in non-villa packages (i.e. flats).	-Realised Quality of Life Gap for those citizens waiting for Housing Services. -A high percentage of young couples who need special services. -Citizens demands and choices of lifestyle are changing or can be changed to become more resilient and accepting other than villa options.
Enhance young girls' involvement in Woman village activities to ensure their equality in education and sustenance of their knowledge transfer.	-Availability of abundant knowledge from elder village endogenous women that can be disseminated to youth. -Availability of inequality conditions for girls in different countries where they can't join schools or get enough education.

APPLICATION OF WEALTH VECTORS ON HUMANITARIAN POVERTY SUPPORT SERVICES

Brief of Poverty Socio-economic Problem Vectors

The humanitarian services are meant to support people with poverty through different means. However, as one could observe most of the humanitarian services focus only one issue that the distribution of cooked food and other materialistic support.

Despite many types of sources of poverty, NGOs address people need only through the demand for food and shelter. In the case of the NGO Merhamet, which has semi-independent offices all over Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H), food and shelter is the focus of the organisation since the Bosnian Civil War in 1992.

There are 300 families with about 600 people need to be fed every day since they are categorised as families or people 'in need'. Merhamet cooks daily for those dependents a cooked meal and there are many families are on the waiting list. Merhamet was targeting to improve its efforts to collect charity or funds to manage or optimise the beneficiaries of these services. Most of those on the list of beneficiaries stay in need of such services until they die. 40% of the NGO beneficiaries are found to be of young age between the age of 16 to 39 years old.

The Classical Solution to such Problem

As many of humanitarian NGO's, Merhamet team would be stretching themselves for finding funds that would address the increasing demands to deliver more meals or service to those families in needs. The team would try to get also sponsorship from the government. Usually, such problem solution increases poverty in the same family as they become more independent on the support of the humanitarian services. The problem-solvers would start their solution by analysing the ways in which services are provided in relation to the NGO's vision and mission. Then solutions about diversifying the Merhamet services besides the two main meals and financial allowance would be process improved. i.e. cooked meals for more than 300 people a day and non-cooked food for 80 families a week would be improved, while financial support and clothes (where possible), would be re-evaluated.

**Improving the Economic Discovery of Wealth Vectors**

In order to come up with an effective socio-economic solution, the wealth problem vectors, i.e. its opportunities of wealth that lead are missed or hidden need to be analysed as follows:

Understanding the Problem Vectors

The main problem vectors that help to eliminate poverty are identified. The demographics and the role of the humanitarian NGO are also listed as part of the wealth problem vectors, as

shown in Figure (3). As per the story, the vectors carry opportunities that can be retrieved from the need to reduce the poverty in B&H through effective 'Poverty Elimination Programs' that would block unforeseen poverty enhancement, or poverty fertilization services. This means we need to understand how Merhamet as NGO is reducing poverty.

Figure 3. Problem Vectors for Elimination of Poverty in Merhamet Case
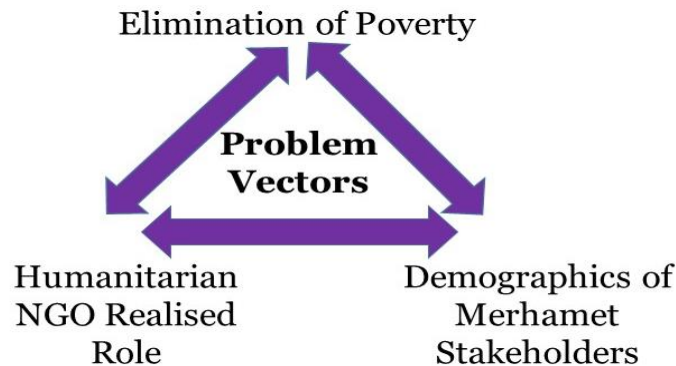
Source: Compiled by the Author

To put the problem in the proper perspective, understanding the current Merhamet beneficiaries and whether they represent the poverty population in the city of Bihac in B&H is a very important problem vector. Besides, it is very important to understand whether the NGO has clear demographics of the beneficiaries and their different assets capacities.

To ensure that the problem is set in the right perspective we need to understand how Merhamet deals with the cases assessment and to what socio-economic standards. This means we need to review the families in-need and how poverty, or level of wealth is categorised. A thorough review after carrying out a random sampling of the beneficiaries' cases shown that 80% of the families in-need, need to be re-assessed again according to more precise criterions.

A table was established to help detect the priority weight matrix that would measure the special demographics of the poverty cases. Poor families who received two services from the NGO were reviewed again. The reasons for providing cooked food for each family were re-evaluated again too. Besides the different updated criteria for eligibility of the services; cases to those families and individuals in-need were categorised as per their age eligibility and functionality. For example, from 60 - 75 years= green, i.e. most eligible for support. While 59 - 45 years= yellow, which means have a high probability to be either turned to be out of the waiting list if fit to be trained for self-sufficiency. The rest of ages of 44 – 30 years = red, 29 years and below too, which means these type of individuals should not receive any type of help or support, or should receive temporary assistance services.

In order to make each person live with dignity and be fully independent a specific amount was considered as per the following: For a single person = US $35 per week and for a whole family of 4 = US $150, per week.

The Proposed Solution

The problem defined here is about re-considering the best way of dealing with poverty through making the humanitarian Non-Profit or Non-Government Organisations (NPO's or NGO's) work in exploring the condition wealth not weaknesses in the potential beneficiaries and emphasising that poverty food and shelter support realised as a temporary service, not a guaranteed permanent one.

Therefore, the framework of problem vectors discussed and represented in Figure (3) was applied to manage the complexity of the socio-economic issue and accurately use more qualitative and quantitative diagnosis of each vector and what opportunities it carries within.

The first step towards an effective solution was to get youth, from the families 'in need' and cases supported by Merhamet, to get involved in the management of the NGO services. Then a plan was set to building a network that ensures the interaction between those youths and the youths from the donating families. The plan helped to develop a team in Merhamet that helped the efforts in eliminating poverty among the beneficiaries.

The Merhamet team managed to gradually remove the waiting list of those applicants that of 'lower priority' for support while improving the knowledge in those codified as yellow cases, i.e. those 'in needs' but still can be semi-self-sufficient. The observation forms were set for collecting a fresh collection of the socio-economic status data of the families who receive more than one service (i.e. the upper threshold). Criterion such as: gender, marital status, age, ability & functionality, diseases, government support, support from other NGOs, family support, homelessness, financial situation, duration of support from the NGO, number of children/dependents, type of humanitarian services received, transport, were set for defining the weight for each family currently in the support program. The purpose was to define which families are in red and yellow codes that need to be prepared to be out of the list as they are competent enough to be independent and create in fact social and economic contribution.

The problem-solving experts reviewed the codified "green" cases, i.e. those of families proven to be in poverty, in order to reduce their number. The cases on the waiting list were re-examined and a selection for more families in need as per the weight was admitted to the beneficiaries approved list. Those not in priority for exiting, i.e. those coded as yellow or red cases, were registered for rehabilitation and productive family programs.

The Merhamet humanitarian services were re-engineered towards effectively attempting to minimise the impacts of poverty in the city of Bihac. The extent of the implementation of Bosnia's poverty reduction strategy was analysed to see if poverty really is reducing.

An outline was set for the type of services to be delivered alongside daily meals, depending on the type of functionality of the individual or the family in need. i.e. mentorship programmes for young people, care and cleaning for the elderly and the disabled, etc. A plan was designed so that families would go through a training program that would skill them to cook if they receive dry food, or fresh food. A special scheme program for the homeless led by youth teams was established to be a new scheme of Merhamet.

The response speed for those who apply for help was improved. Different university students and especially those of social studies college were deployed to re-study and frequently assess the NGO's cases every month, as part of an internship program. Plans were set to reduce the number of young people who receive meals from the NGO's service by 20% every year, as they have both the physical assets and functional capacity wealth that make them to contributors not receivers of humanitarian services. The target of Merhamet shifted gradually, over a period of six months, towards reducing the number of those on the waiting list, with higher priority given to those individuals who score less in their functionality. Since the waiting list carried lots of youth, entrepreneurial mentorship support services were enlisted as part of Merhamet new partnership strategy.

Discussion groups at Merhamet started a monthly meeting with youth volunteers. These groups started to implement the different suggestions that help to develop the process of applying, updating and accepting cases. Based on all this progress, the beneficiaries now could be frequently evaluated and assessed for the development and utilisation of their human capital, natural capital (land, property, etc.), physical capital, financial capital and social capital.

A stream mapping to improve "Throughputs and Outcomes" of each family status were started to see the input and the output conditions after training and mentoring services are delivered. The NGO established partnership programs for the development and recruitment of families in need.

The NGO worked also in developing more sustainable funding in terms of finding donors and sponsors, as well as costing the services and then marketing it: i.e. cost to feed a family per day or per year, the cost for bakery, etc. The strategic team started to apply methods that help to consistently move the beneficiaries from being dependent to independent cases, i.e. Cases that don't qualify to Merhamet. This means that Merhamet strategic team would work more on building better 'Capacity vs. Demand' based on adjusting the input and output of cases, creating more independence in Merhamet business model. The project created more pull towards

independent beneficiaries: i.e. those who receive their daily meal without support. Yet there is still a need for more checks to be done even for 'green cases', i.e. those families and individuals codified as being 'in need', so that they get qualified towards being more independent.

Outcome of Problem Solution

By re-engineering the processes, the list of those 'in needs' in Merhamet has cleared and showed a clear categorisation for those beneficiaries in real need and those that could be moved to the less in need if they were qualified to be more independent. This helped to provide faster services without long waiting lists and made Merhamet ready for any crisis besides raised its capacity for the provision of more relief as a humanitarian agency.

One of the main outcomes of this problem-solving lab is that Merhamet is more confident that it provides services according to real needs. Besides, Merhamet managed to strengthen its presence in the community by building new focused partnerships that helped in accomplishing more effectively focused services. Getting Merhamet beneficiaries gradually coded as (red) and (yellow) which are consistently removed from the waiting list helped to create a model for eliminating the causes of poverty. A development, management and operational teams were established to collaborate together to ensure that these practices are sustained.

A matrix using the weightage table was set to move the conditions and fitness of those in support services from being only 'estimated' to being 'forecasted' in order to measure those really 'in need' and distinguish them from those who should be outside the list. A partnership program based on a win-win scenario was established. The Social services' university students and faculty agreed to provide and manage periodically a planned social study for the beneficiaries' cases, as well as providing youth volunteers with the needed evaluation skills.

One of the other main outcome of the problem-solving lab is that the Merhamet strategic team shifted its focus on improving the livelihoods of its beneficiaries by assessing them in terms of their socio-economic conditions: i.e. through focusing on the different assets and competencies available within each family and thus qualifying most of them to be more productive family. A collaboration plan was set by the Social Development Ministry in the government to improve the situations of those beneficiaries who are unemployed, without household and people who are affected by war.
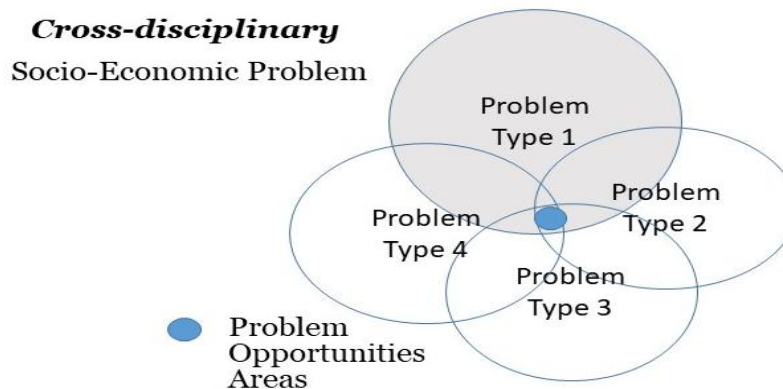
DISCUSSION
Simplifying the Complexity of Assets of Wealth in Cases of Poverty

Poverty is a complex issue that needs to be tackled from cross-disciplinary approaches so that the sources of poverty are eliminated and the assets of wealth are optimised. For example, if we

manage to create more asset of wealth opportunities through exploring, discovering, or restoring or rehabilitating these assets then we are actually creating more independent individuals or families. Hence, designing the proper channels, within humanitarian NGOs and the beneficiaries in-needs community, would help to ensure the uniqueness of this community and its ability to create a positive breakthrough.

Tackling a socio-economic issue as poverty from cross-disciplinary perspective helps to bring assets from multiple disciplines to people in-need. Here, the opportunities of the problem solutions, or their outcome, would be reshuffled or re-engineered. For example, observing the way the wealth of the human capital is utilised in the communities or families of in-needs, make us appreciate the lost or the hidden opportunities of wealth in such a category. Hence, governments and decision-makers, including NGOs need to see how they are creating from their services better independent human capital using cross-disciplinary collaborative socio-economy.

Figure 4. Cross-Disciplinary Approach for Socio-Economic Problem

CONCLUSION

From the case of Merhamet, and what discussed earlier in the tables (1) and (2) including what discussed about the Al-Amazigh village women, one could confirm that poverty can be eliminated by the management of the hidden or seen wealth of assets and their opportunities through effective counselling of the mindset and self-awareness.

Improving the economic discovery of wealth assets through vectors of wealth problem need to be further studied through the implementation of assessment of further cases of poverty and showing the results of such cross-disciplinary approach on the targeted group of the beneficiaries in-need. More field experiments for such wealth of hidden assets need to be tested in relevance to Levitt and List (2009). The study has one identified one limitation that is carried

based on the experience of the researcher and scarcity of literature on the subject. Further studies are highly recommended to develop a knowledge community empirical based literature that shows problem-solving alternatives for complex socio-economic issues.

REFERENCES

Buheji, M (2018a) Re-inventing Our Lives- A Handbook for Socio-Economic Problem Solving, Author House, UK.

Buheji, M. (2018b) The Art of Capturing Opportunities—Screening Arab Social Entrepreneurs. American Journal of Industrial and Business Management, 8, pp. 803-819.

Buheji, M and Ahmed, D (2017a) Breaking the Shield- Introduction to Inspiration Engineering: Philosophy, Practices and Success Stories, Archway Publishing, Simon &Schuster, USA.

Buheji, M (2017) Understanding Problem Solving in Inspiration Labs, American Journal of Industrial and Business Management, 7, pp. 771-784,

Buheji, M and Ahmed, D (2017b) Understanding the Role of 'Inspiration Productivity, International Journal of Current Advanced Research Volume 6; Issue 3; April 2017; Page No. 2866-2871, http://journalijcar.org/sites/default/files/issue-files/1679-A--2017.pdf

Buheji, M and Ahmed, D (2016) In Search for Inspiration Economy Currency—A Literature Review. American Journal of Industrial and Business Management, 6, 1174-1184.

Cialdini, R (1998) Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion. London: Collins.

Levitt, S. and List., J (2009) Field experiments in economics: the past, the present, and the future. European Economic Review, 53(1): 1–18.

Nikolaevna, L and Anatolievich, S (2015) Economic Research Series, CyberLeninka; Belgorod State National Research University Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of Higher Education, issue 3, pages 48-55. https://ideas.repec.org/a/scn/032413/16057130.html , accessed: 1/1/2019.

Sunstein, C and Thaler, R (2009) Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth and Happiness. 1st ed.