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## **Editorial: “This is not to say that our work is done .....**”

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**Biographical notes:** Paul W. Thurman, MBA is Clinical Professor, School of International and Public Affairs and Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University in New York, USA. His consulting and management experience spans strategic visioning, operations and change management, and technology strategy and implementation and executive coaching. He has been a Visiting Professor and Research Fellow at leading graduate schools including the London Business School and the Haas School of Business at Berkeley and is CEO at Thurman and Associates, a consultancy he founded in 2000. He is Associate Editor of *International Journal of Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation*

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Poverty, entrepreneurship, and sustainability – these three terms are bantered about in business, social, and economic contexts a great deal these days...and more so than they were when we first started editing this Journal a year ago. With more ‘developed’ nations at risk of economic and financial default, increasing uncertainty about global markets, at times with respect to true corporate social responsibility, we still remain quite positive and hopeful that the general trends toward poverty alleviation through sustainable, business-building programmes will remain strong.

However, this is not to say that our work is done; far from it. A section of papers in this issue of *IJSEI* is focused on three key themes:

- *Poverty* is not just an economic concept; it is one that goes far beyond ‘income’, and must be addressed at a social, policy, and business level if we are to truly make a difference. Identification is relatively easy, as is waxing poetic about grand social and intervention strategies to alleviate poverty. But really understanding root causes – not simply symptoms – is hard work, and quantifying both impacts and remedies is even harder. These challenges should not keep us from our broader pursuits, though, of addressing it – in real and nominal economic and social terms – every single day.
- *Entrepreneurship* is not just about starting a business – it is about starting and managing a going concern that not only stimulates jobs and economic growth in the usual definitions of these terms, but also does ‘good’ from a social and cultural perspective. It is not about starting a coffee shop or a tailoring/dry cleaning store; it is about starting these in places and in ways that help others – even if only one or two people – to get jobs, learn skills, contribute to the local social fabric, and to create success stories far beyond the ‘headlines’ of daily business journals. All marketing may be local; the same is true with entrepreneurship.
- *Sustainability* is like ‘strategy’ in a business context – everyone uses this term, but few really know what it means ... and even fewer can ‘do’ it. While many analysts, academics, and advisors focus on sustainability as an output, we believe the case studies shown in this text point to it as a key *input* for change. Without a focus on creating meaningful, going concerns that affect environments beyond the ‘four walls’ of a business – at the very earliest stages of business planning – few, if any, ventures will truly create lasting change for their broader communities.

Thus, we hope the scientific papers – and real stories from the frontline battle for poverty reduction in meaningful, sustainable ways – contained in this issue not only stimulate more thinking and research in terms of longer-term strategies and approaches to help society, but also translate into practical on-the-ground tactics and ideas that any entrepreneur, social investor or advocate can immediately use to start making differences *today*.