

Social investors understand that to truly scale the impact of promising approaches to reducing poverty, significant resources are required, usually beyond those of a single investment group.

At the Opportunity Collaboration, action-oriented individuals find each other, mobilize resources and execute new investment strategies.



CANADA: “When I first heard about the Opportunity Collaboration, I declined to attend. It seemed like too much of a commitment of time and money,” says Gerhard Pries of the Sarena Investment Funds. “But in a subsequent conversation, I heard something that struck me: the event was not going to be just another meeting of the minds with lots of talking. The organizers insisted that they wanted deals struck; they wanted to see ‘ink on paper.’ I changed my mind and decided to go.”

Shortly before Gerhard attended the Opportunity Collaboration, his triple bottom line impact investment firm, Sarena Asset Management Inc, launched a new fund to invest in the private equity markets in developing countries. “We believe private capital is part of finding effective solutions to global poverty and environmental issues. The Opportunity Collaboration was a place I could talk with others about it, and find individuals who were looking for a place to invest their money. I’m happy to say we found some of them.”

Directly as a result of relationships formed at the Opportunity Collaboration, the Sarena Frontier Markets fund gained approximately \$2 million in new investment capital. According to Pries, “Any new investment has follow-on effects. These investments could, in the next years, blossom into much more. I’m very optimistic about that.”

If we want to be results-oriented, and not just spend another 5 days being friendly, then we have to be clear about what we’re looking for from others, and what we can offer to them.

—Gerhard Pries



“There were also a number of people at the Opportunity Collaboration who were considering launching a fund like ours. They decided to join us instead of creating their own new fund.” In Pries’ view, joining forces in this manner is an important outcome of the Opportunity Collaboration.

“It takes many players to change things in the world. A venue like this brings the right people together to catalyze ideas. The Opportunity Collaboration directly helps move capital into industries with social and environmental impact. It was worth the investment.”