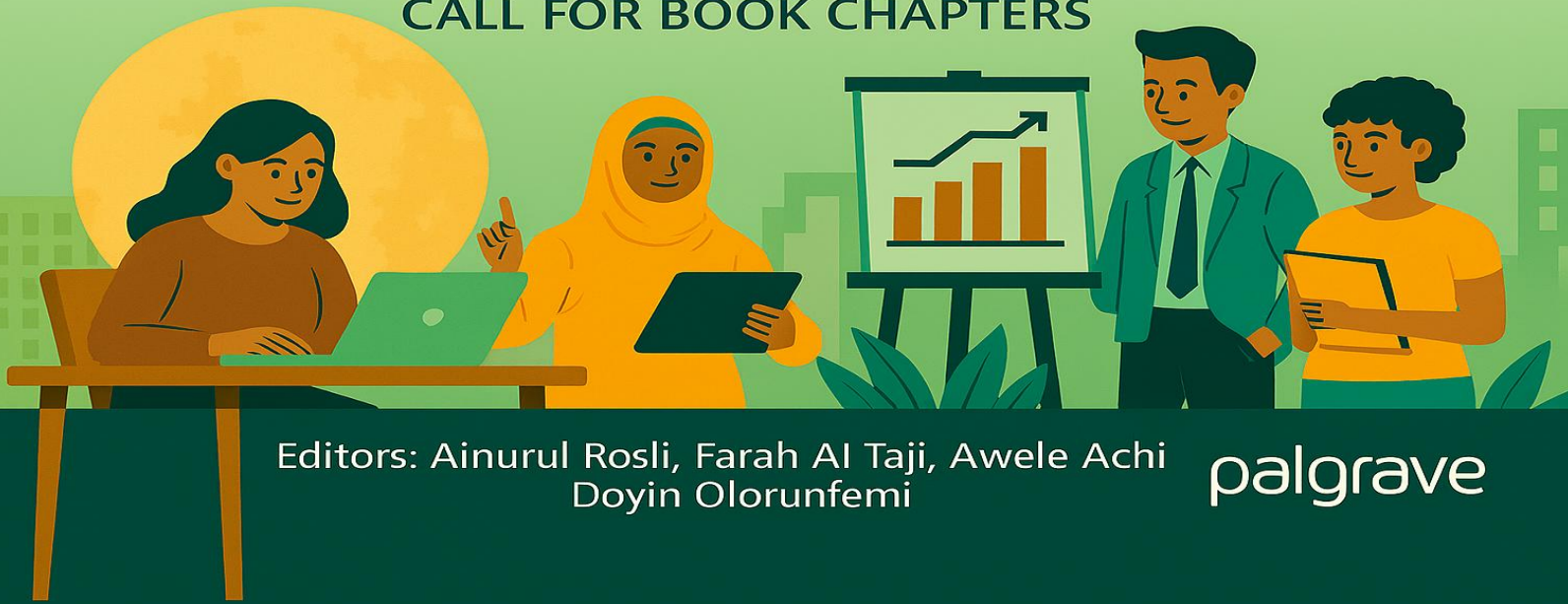


Impact Entrepreneurship in the Global South:

Social Value, Power, and Gender in Solidarity Economies
CALL FOR BOOK CHAPTERS



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Background

Entrepreneurship has long been known as a survival mechanism and a transformative force, especially in the Global South (Granados et al, 2022). In times of economic crisis, entrepreneurs across Africa, Latin America, Southeast Asia, MENA region, and the Pacific have drawn on cooperative structures, mutual aid networks, as well as religious & indigenous knowledge systems to sustain livelihoods and protect communities (Dufays & Huybrechts, 2014; Olorunfemi, 2025; Vershinina et al., 2020). These solidarity economies create social value through collective action, relational trust, and community-embedded practice, beyond the support of formal institutions. Thus, the question of who benefits from social value, and on what terms it is embedded in the very assumptions scholars and practitioners use to define it is necessitated (De la Cruz Jara & Spanjol, 2025). In solidarity economies of the Global South, where the boundaries between economic and social life are often inseparable from community, gender, and ecology, these definitional tensions can help determine whose contributions are recognised, whose needs are addressed, and whose experiences of value are made legible to those who fund and evaluate them. What is less visible and less often discussed is what happens when impact entrepreneurship falls short, and who bears the cost when it does.

Entrepreneurs themselves may experience burnout, financial loss, and reputational harm (Granados & Rosli, 2020); employees and resource providers face precarious conditions (Bacq et al, 2026), or beneficiaries may find their needs misread or their agency diminished. These unintended consequences, systemic trade-offs, and darker outcomes accompany even well-intentioned social ventures (Bacq et al, 2026). These tensions are further compounded by the structural complexity of hybrid organisations, which must simultaneously pursue social and commercial logics that generate distinctive managerial challenges around mission drift, impact measurement, and conflicting stakeholder demands (Al Taji & Bengo, 2019). The literature shows that these harms are gendered (Bacq et al., 2026; Irene, 2017), with women entrepreneurs frequently bearing household and community costs when ventures struggle. However, other studies show that women entrepreneurs also demonstrate an agentic role in navigating and responding to such challenges, extending beyond the personal and familial spheres to position themselves as key agents of social innovation (Al Taji & Refai, 2026). Understanding impact entrepreneurship transparently requires paying attention to these invisible outcomes, to ensure it is held to a higher, more transparent standard.

Central to that standard is the question of what gets measured, and by whom? Theories of change, for instance, follow the conceptions of what outcomes matter and to whom; what Muñoz and Gamble (2024) identify as the fundamentally political question of what counts as value, and for whom, and which results are legible to investors and policymakers. This challenge is complicated by what de la Cruz Jara & Spanjol (2025) discern as the persistent conceptual heterogeneity of social value across business domains, shaping which forms of value creation are funded, measured, and deemed legitimate. Social impact measurement is known as proliferating terminology, contested definitions, and methodological heterogeneity (Rawhouser et al. 2019). Given that the majority of empirical studies draw data from industrialised country contexts, more insights are required from those minority attending to the so-called developing or emerging economies. Who participates in formal markets also shapes who participates in defining impact. For example, the contributions of marginalised actors, such as waste pickers, informal traders, and women operating outside formal economic boundaries, remain invisible to the very systems that claim to assess their welfare. Insights that can help demonstrate how power operates hegemonically to normalise measurement practices that serve prevailing institutional interests are welcome (see Granados et al, 2022).

The social impact research currently draws on quantitative secondary data and conceptual frameworks developed in and for industrialised country contexts (Rawhouser et al., 2019), while qualitative, inductive,

longitudinal, and community-embedded approaches - including case studies, diary methods, grounded theory and participatory inquiry, remain underrepresented despite their particular suitability for capturing social value as it is lived and enacted in the Global South (Ciambotti et al., 2023; Muñoz & Gamble, 2024; Olorunfemi, 2024). We welcome methodological diversity and innovation, and especially invite contributions that bring non-extractive, context-sensitive, and reflexive research designs to bear on the questions of ‘how’ and ‘why’ it poses.

Taken together, these patterns suggest that measuring social impact in the Global South is not simply a technical challenge but a governance and gendered question that need to be explored. Women entrepreneurs in the Global South navigate challenges that go beyond individual disadvantage, shaped in large part by systemic bias and by legal and financial frameworks (Granados et al., 2022; Peter et al., 2024). It further restricts the sectors women can enter, mainly due to cultural norms that are shaped by patriarchal and colonial narratives, which shape the scale at which they can operate, and the legitimacy accorded to their enterprises and leadership (Irene, 2017; Onoshakpor et al., 2024). For many women entrepreneurs, navigating unfamiliar regulatory environments, linguistic barriers, and the dual responsibility of sustaining livelihoods locally or in their new context as migrants (Billore, 2011; Chreim et al., 2018). And yet, women-led solidarity economies have consistently demonstrated adaptive capacity drawing on community networks, relational resources, and bricolage to generate social value in contexts where formal institutions have been absent or inadequate.

About this Book (Published by Palgrave Macmillan)

This book takes the tensions previously discussed seriously. It brings together empirical, theoretical, and practitioner-grounded contributions that examine impact entrepreneurship in the Global South through the intersecting lenses of social value, power, and gender, the three terms that structure its title and its ambition. Following Granados et al.'s (2022) call for research that confronts "taken-for-granted institutionalised power relations" and resists the reproduction of class, ownership, ethnicity, and postcolonialism, the contributions collected here pursue a more transparent, more rigorous, and ultimately more justifiable account of what entrepreneurship can and cannot do for those at the margins of global capitalism. This is a volume about who benefits, who bears the costs, who gets counted and, above all, who decides.

Your contribution to this Book.

We invite submissions that engage with, but are not limited to the following themes:

Theme 1: Plural Economies, Local Logics, and Situated Solidarities

The first theme grounds the book in the rich diversity of economic and social practices emerging from the Global South. It explores how local epistemologies, communal reciprocity, and culturally rooted ontologies generate alternative logics of value and impact that challenge Western, individualist models of entrepreneurship.

By engaging with the relational and care-based foundations of local solidarity systems, often sustained through women's labour and community stewardship, the section highlights how these gendered practices uphold collective well-being and resilience. It also considers how such practices negotiate power when interfacing with state, philanthropic, or market actors.

Core contributions: Culturally situated theories of impact; local perspectives on value and legitimacy; gendered and relational bases of solidarity.

Theme 2: Ecosystems, Institutions, and Power Relations in the Social and Solidarity Economy

This section analyses how institutional and ecosystem dynamics shape the sustainability and transformation of solidarity economies. It examines the interplay between market, state, and civic actors, focusing on how norms, funding architectures, and governance regimes define who participates, whose knowledge counts, and whose impact is valued.

Through a critical lens, it exposes structural inequalities, including gendered barriers to leadership, finance, and voice that persist within institutional frameworks. It advances an agenda for inclusive and reflexive ecosystem building that recognises diverse contributions to collective impact.

Core contributions: Power and institutional analysis; gendered participation and leadership; inclusive governance; collaborative policy frameworks.

Theme 3: Digitalisation, Data Justice, and Technological Inclusion

Theme Three turns to technology, analysing how digital transformation reshapes organising, accountability, and equity within the social economy. It explores both the enabling potentials and exclusionary risks of digitalisation—from platform economies to AI-driven impact analytics.

The chapters engage with the politics of infrastructure and data governance, highlighting how algorithmic bias, measurement conventions, and epistemic gaps can make Southern and gendered experiences of social impact invisible. It advocates for *data justice* and inclusive digital design that empower communities, particularly women and marginalised groups, to define and evidence value on their own terms.

Core contributions: Critical digital and data studies; gendered digital divides; algorithmic and epistemic justice; inclusive impact measurement.

Theme 4: Intersectional Futures, Resilience, and Policy for Inclusive Solidarity Economies

The final section synthesises intersectional perspectives on inclusion, resilience, and transformation. It examines how gender, age, class, and other axes of identity shape participation, leadership, and benefit distribution in solidarity economies. It foregrounds policies and institutional innovations that strengthen justice, adaptability, and ecological sustainability.

Through case-based insights, this theme reimagines the future of impact and solidarity economies as plural and interdependent, anchored in gender-responsive governance, multilevel collaboration, and community-centred resilience.

Core contributions: Intersectional inclusion; gender-aware policy innovation; resilience and sustainability through solidarity.

Submission Guidelines

- ✚ Please submit a structured abstract of approximately 500 words (excluding references) to impactbookgs@gmail.com. Abstract should have the following subtitles.
 - Title
 - Book Theme aligned with
 - Background Literature, including theoretical framing.
 - Design/methodology/approach.
 - Findings
 - Research limitations/implications (*optional*)
 - Practical implications (*optional*)
 - Social implications (*optional*)
 - Originality/value and/or contributions.
- ✚ The deadline for abstract submission is Friday, 12th June 2026, at 23:30 (CET). Decisions on acceptance will be communicated by 29th June 2026.
- ✚ Full paper submission (max 5000 words excluding references and tables) is due by 30th September 2026, at 23:30 (CET).
- ✚ Expected publication date is May 2027
- ✚ **Editorial Note:** We warmly encourage submissions from scholars and practitioners based in, or working closely with the Global South, and we strongly recommend collaborative authorship with colleagues from these contexts where appropriate. This is central to the volume's commitment to accurate representation, epistemic inclusion, and richer contextual insight.
- ✚ For pre-submission enquiries, please send an email to impactbookgs@gmail.com

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