Defining the nonprofit sector
A cross-national analysis

Lester M. Salamon and Helmut K. Anheier
CONTENTS

List of figures vii
List of tables viii
List of contributors ix
Series editors' foreword xi

Chapter 1: Introduction: In search of the nonprofit sector
Lester M. Salamon and Helmut K. Anheier 1

Part I Conceptual equipment 9

Chapter 2: The challenge of definition: Thirteen realities in
search of a concept Lester M. Salamon and
Helmut K. Anheier 11

Chapter 3: Toward a common definition Lester M.
Salamon and Helmut K. Anheier 29

Chapter 4: Toward a common classification
Lester M. Salamon and Helmut K. Anheier 51

Part II Defining the nonprofit sector in developed societies 101

Chapter 5: France Edith Archambault 103
Contents

Chapter 6: Germany Helmut K. Anheier and Wolfgang Seibel 128
Chapter 7: Italy Gian Paolo Barbetta 169
Chapter 8: Japan Takayoshi Amenomori 188
Chapter 9: Sweden Tommy Lundström and Filip Wijkström 215
Chapter 10: The United Kingdom Jeremy Kendall and Martin Knapp 249
Chapter 11: The United States Lester M. Salamon 280

Part III Defining the nonprofit sector in developing societies 321
Chapter 12: Brazil Leilah Landim 323
Chapter 13: Egypt Amani Kandil 350
Chapter 14: Ghana Lawrence Atingdui 369
Chapter 15: India Siddhartha Sen 401
Chapter 16: Thailand Amara Pongsapich 446

Part IV Defining the nonprofit sector in post-socialist societies 469
Chapter 17: Hungary Éva Kuti 471

Part V Conclusion 493
Chapter 18: Conclusion Lester M. Salamon and Helmut K. Anheier 495

Index 506
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Though the growth of the nonprofit, voluntary or third sector has been widely recognized throughout the world, considerable confusion persists about how to define this sector or what it contains. Defining the nonprofit sector fills this major gap, at both the global level through a comparative analysis and at the national level.

In the book's first part, Lester M. Salamon and Helmut K. Anheier provide the building blocks for a common definition and a common classification of this sector internationally whilst still recognizing the incredible diversity of voluntarism around the world. The main body of the book is a rich panorama of the nature of the nonprofit sector in thirteen nations from the developed, developing and post-socialist worlds. Included are the US, the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Japan, India, Brazil, Egypt, Thailand, Ghana and Hungary.

Defining the nonprofit sector demonstrates beyond doubt that the division of societies into public and private sectors is much too simplistic. A third sector with its own characteristic features and dynamics has already emerged as a powerful force in the global economy.

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