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Of the United Nations’ eight Millennium Development Goals, four are related to public health: to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; to reduce child mortality; to improve maternal health; and to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases (Haider & Rogers, 2005). With the commitment of 189 U.N. member nations to achieving these goals in the years to come (Millennium project, 2006), improving public health has never become so significant, intensive, and time-bound in a global sense.

Identified as an “adaptation [of marketing] to public health imperatives” (Manoff, 1985, p. 35) and one of the “key health communications tools” (Merrick, 2005, p. xxv), social marketing has been playing a pivotal role in the improvement of public health since its launch about four decades ago (e.g., Coreil, Bryant, & Henderson, 2001; Kotler & Lee, 2008; Kotler & Zaltman, 1971; Ling, Franklin, Lindsteadt, & Gearon, 1992; Manoff, 1985). This role is continuing and expanding today in achieving the U.N.’s Millennium Development Goals in general and in reaching individual nations’ public health-related goals in particular.
Unfortunately, little has been done to synthesize and showcase the practice and success of social marketing in helping to improve public health in the world. This book is the first substantial effort to present in-depth stories of public health campaigns successfully conducted in different parts of the world using the social marketing model.

Featuring success stories from 15 countries spread out across five continents, the book examines how social marketing is used as a strategy for influencing positive health behaviors in the world today. Our book highlights successful and measurable health behavior–changing campaigns launched by governments, citizens, and (in one case) corporations. Each chapter focuses on a unique public health challenge and social marketing solution.

This book is positioned as a supplementary textbook for upper-level undergraduate and graduate courses in social marketing, public health, health communication, international marketing, international advertising, consumer behavior, social change, and public communication. The book’s central theme is that knowledge, techniques, and technologies now exist to organize and implement effective health programs globally. To facilitate the book’s use in the classroom, discussion questions are provided at the end of each chapter, and a PowerPoint presentation has been created for each chapter as well.

We would like to thank all the chapter authors earnestly. They come from a broad spectrum of intellectual, professional, and cultural backgrounds. Without their valuable contributions, this volume would not be as rich in breadth and depth.

We wish to express our heartfelt thanks to Jones and Bartlett, the book’s publisher. In particular, we want to thank Mr. Robert W. Holland Jr., Jones and Bartlett President and Publisher, and Mr. Michael Brown, Publisher for Jones and Bartlett’s public health books, for their keen interest and strong support of this book. We especially appreciate the excellent assistance of Jones and Bartlett’s Ms. Katey Birtcher, a former Associate Editor and current Acquisitions Editor of the Clinical Nutrition list, Ms. Tracey Chapman, a Senior Production Editor, and Ms. Catie Heverling and Ms. Teresa Reilly, two Editorial Assistants.

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