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Voluntarism in Urban Regeneration: Civic, Charity or Hybrid?

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Research on urban regeneration

- ▶ Evaluations of the Urban Regeneration Act
- ▶ Private investments
- ▶ Collaboration with private businesses and enterprises
- ▶ Innovation
- ▶ Networks and embedding of the ABI
- ▶ Volunteers role
- ▶ Types of social capital in ABI's

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Area-based Initiatives—And Their Work in Bonding, Bridging and Linking Social Capital

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ABSTRACT In this article, we provide a conceptual and argumentative framework for studying how Area-based Initiatives (ABIs) can facilitate contact between networks in deprived neighbourhoods and external forms of power (linking social capital). These relations provide the residents and other members of civil society with crucial access to leveraging resources, ideas and information. Although few studies on linking social capital have been carried out in relation to urban regeneration, there is empirical evidence that suggests that it can play a positive role in establishing trust and relations between civil society and a municipality. We set out with a review of how social capital literature has been applied in an urban context, and then demonstrate empirical examples from Denmark of how, in different contexts (ranging from inner city ABIs to hybrid initiatives), they have facilitated processes that operationalise different forms of social capital (bonding, bridging and linking). The article concludes that ABIs contribute to creating linking social capital, but the extent of the contribution depends on the level of bonding and bridging social capital in the area. We argue that public planners as well as volunteers of the ABIs should increase their awareness about the potential of an ABI to create linking social capital in deprived neighbourhoods.

1. Introduction

Area-based Initiatives (ABIs) have been promoted for the last two decades by many Western European cities as a tool to tackle social exclusion and economic deprivation (van Gent *et al.*, 2009).¹ The core idea behind ABIs is that simultaneous and coordinated investment in different sectors, for example, employment, physical improvements and social initiatives in a neighbourhood will provide extra benefits, leading to increased social cohesion. Typically, ABIs are organised as temporary partnerships in which the central government agrees to support and fund local government projects that often also

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RESEARCH PAPER

Voluntarism in Urban Regeneration: Civic, Charity or Hybrid? Experiences from Danish Area-Based Interventions

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Abstract Area-based initiatives (ABIs) is a frequently used strategy within contemporary urban regeneration policies to tackle physical and social challenges in deprived neighbourhoods, a central idea characteristic of their approach is active involvement of local stakeholders as part of making robust and lasting improvements. The claim made in this article is that urban regeneration mobilises citizens through a narrow conception of “voluntarism” that tends to exclude vulnerable and socially marginalised citizens. The article presents a typology of voluntarism that makes a distinction between (a) social voluntarism, (b) civic voluntarism and (c) hybrid voluntarism, combining non-profit voluntarism with profit activities. Empirically, we draw on studies from ABIs in Denmark, where collaboration with charity organisations and hybrid organisations has been used to mobilise marginalised citizens in the urban regeneration area. We find that collaborations with charity-based and hybrid organisations are sparse and small-scale so far, but appear promising with regards to involve socially vulnerable groups.

Introduction
Voluntarism has become a central part of social welfare policies in most western societies (Dierckx *et al.*, 2013). The emphasis on mobilising voluntarism into public service provision is also mirrored in many European urban regeneration policies, where active involvement of local residents in deprived neighbourhoods is considered to be a cornerstone in their strategies (Atkinson 2008; Toics 2013). Many policymakers consider transformation of deprived neighbourhoods as one of the major challenges for cities today (see, e.g. Eu-Commission 2015; United Nations Development Programme 2016). The challenges that cities, and in particular deprived neighbourhoods are facing, are characterised by being a combination of social, physical, economic, institutional and environmental problems that are visible in the form of lack of social cohesion, poverty, job-losses and physical degradation (European Commission 2017).

Area-based interventions (ABIs), i.e. public-led and place-based programmes as in many European countries regarded as a central urban regeneration tool for tackling these multiple and complex problems (Atkinson 2008; Rhoads *et al.* 2005). ABIs can take many forms, but some of the core characteristics are that they apply integrated approaches, i.e. combine physical and social interventions simultaneously in neighbourhoods with a low socio-economic status (Agger and Jensen 2018a, b). There is a growing recognition in both the practice as well as the scholarly field within urban regeneration that in order to meet these challenges, these ABI-programmes, although publicly generated, need to include local and external actors, and especially to mobilise local stakeholders, such as citizens, residents, local business as well as volunteer organisations and interest associations (Toics 2018).

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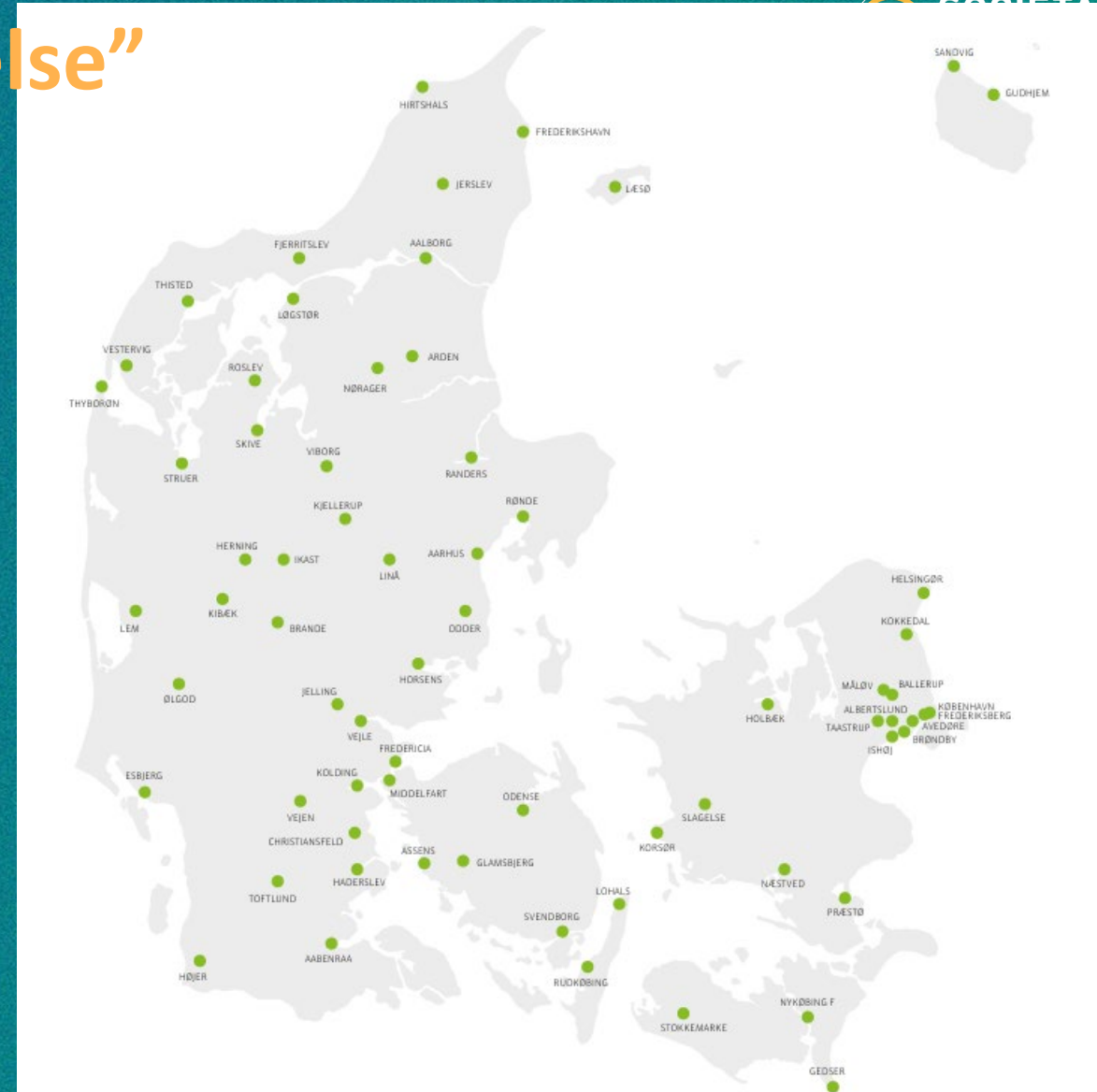
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Main points

- ▶ Urban regeneration programs traditionally focus on voluntarism as "charity" (altruistic-based) or "civic" (interest-based), and to a lesser degree "hybrid" charity (that combines for-profit and non-profit)
- ▶ The "hybrid" voluntarism in urban regeneration has mainly included smaller start-ups (socio-economic enterprises)
- ▶ National subsidies for Urban regeneration programs in Denmark (Area-based Interventions, or ABI's) have over the last decade moved to smaller towns with peripheral location, where hybrid charity organisations are more scarce. Instead, ABI's in smaller towns more often include local businesses without a formal volunteering certification (B corp or CSR), but with a local attachment

ABI in Denmark: "Områdefornyelse"

- ▶ National program for area-based urban regeneration since 1998
- ▶ 5-year program, part Urban Renewal Act
- ▶ Costs shared between national and municipal level
- ▶ Aim of engaging the local community for regeneration of the town, village or neighborhood, and motivate for private investments
- ▶ Since 2015 increasingly aimed at smaller towns



+200 programs as per 1.1.2018

Why do we need voluntary associations to contribute to urban regeneration?

- ▶ Area-Based Initiatives (ABI) has become a main urban regeneration approach in many countries
- ▶ ABI's focuses increasingly on creating ownership and co-investments in the urban development amongst local actors (both within the public, civic and market-based domain)
- ▶ Voluntary associations are important actors for driving and maintaining the regeneration process.
- ▶ A challenge for ABI's is to anchor initiatives amongst local actors, in order to continue the regeneration
- ▶ ABI's should improve and prioritize their outreach to hybrid voluntary associations

Three types of voluntarism in urban regeneration

Type	Social Voluntarism (Altruistic-based)	Civic Voluntarism (Interest-based)	Hybrid Voluntarism (non/for profit –based)
Characteristic	Helping socially disadvantaged groups without receiving payment or benefits.	Non-paid work and activities in organisations or with peers, which strengthens the local social capital in the community	Mix of non-profit and for-profit; voluntarism with socio-economic and ethic aim. Socio-economic enterprises, hybrid organisations, B-corp, CSR-and ESG-policies etc.
Potentials for ABI	Link to disadvantaged groups and individuals Anchoring of social initiatives at the end of the ABI	Participation and voluntary work in ABI-activities Empowerment of individuals Anchoring networks after the ABI programme	Local jobs creation Making facilities available Anchoring of ABI initiatives

ABI in a small town (Kolind, app 2.000 inhabitants) consisting of projects with different types of local actors. "Place-based co-production": 1+1=3

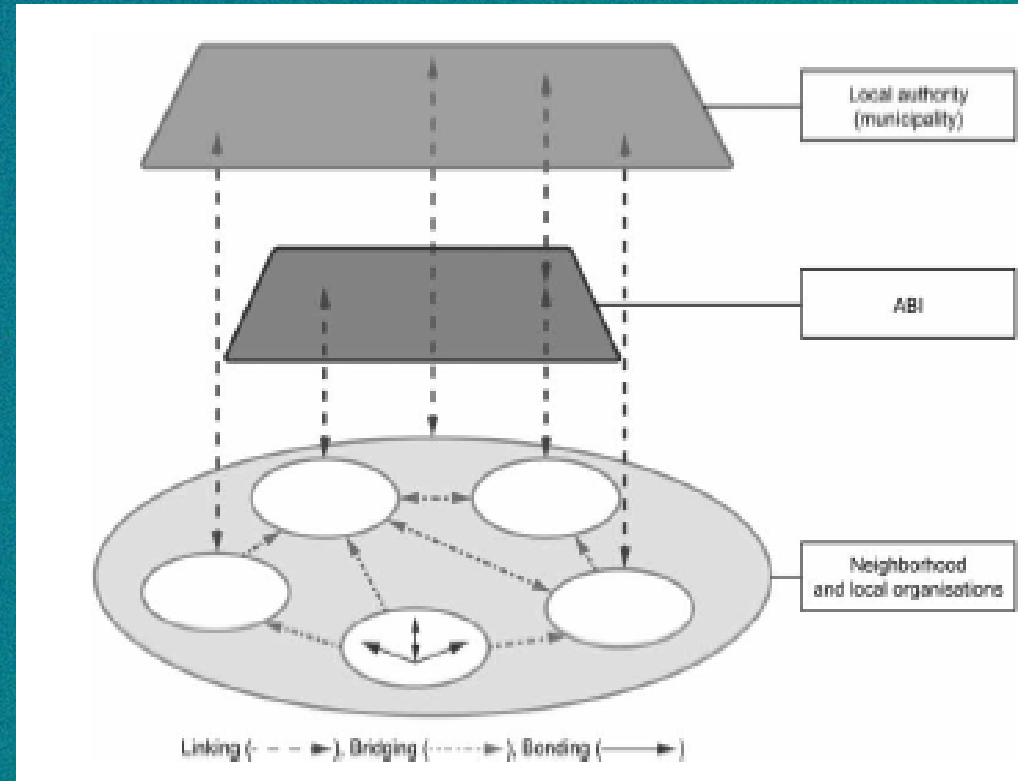


ABI as a leverage for further investments:

Budget: 1.5 mill €
Private investments: 1.1 mill €
National renewal funds: 0.2 mill €
Other finances: 0.2 mill €
Total: 3.0 mill €

Area-based Initiatives: Bridging, bonding and linking social capital

- Planners in ABI's typically focus on creating bridging and bonding social capital in the civil society (empowerment)
- However, creating linking social capital is a essential way to bring in resources from funds, investors, municipal departments etc.)
- For the municipality, establishing contacts to local associations, networks, individuals, private enterprises, ngo's is valuable for delivering urban poicies in general



Different types of social capital in ABI.
Source: Agger and Jensen (2015) Area-based initiatives – and their work in bonding, bridging and linking social capital. *European Planning Studies*, 23

Strengths and challenges for ABI's

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spurring private investment • Creating local networks collaboration and governance forms • Becoming central parts of urban development policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation and collaboration in ABI's between public sector and market / civil society • Collaboration across municipal departments • Embedding of ABI's: Local ownership to ABI's, continuous development of local initiatives • Difficult to measure permanent social changes from ABI's

Examples of types
of companies in
ABI's

Strong place attachment

Smaller shops,
struggling to
survive, limited
resources or
motivation for social
responsibility

Family company with
a long history in the
area

Weak social
responsibility

Strong social
responsibility

Larger chain shops,
supermarkets etc,
without B-corp
certification or CSR
policy

Large companies
with B-corp
certification or CSR-
policy

Start-ups with few
resources but a large
veneration for the
area

Weak place attachment

Examples on small-scale social environmental and sustainability initiatives under the ABI's



- Residuals from local cafes, beer-brewers and juice producers used for growing crickets
- Excrements from crickets used as fertilizer for local tomato production on roofs in the neighborhood



Small social enterprise helping to grow garden and training residents at a mens' hostel

- Companies (LEGO and a local newspaper) "adoptating" of school class with many pupils from different ethnical backgrounds



Foto: Orla Lund, JydskeVestkysten

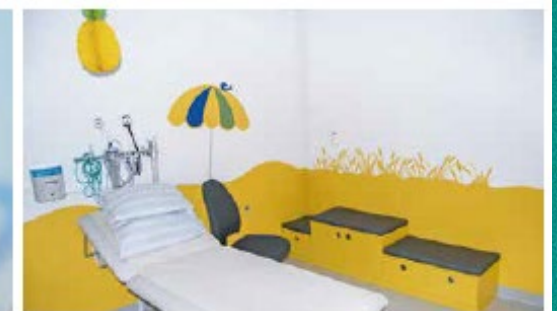
- Local photography company offering children in distressed area to make photos of their local area and display them in outdoor gallery



Place-attachment of CSR-initiatives? (example: Phoenix group)

■ Commitment to society

With regard to our responsibility to society, we have been making long-term investments in charitable projects all over the world and supplement this through funding activities in the local areas and regions of our locations. We focus on activities relating to children's health and on promoting scientific advances in pharmaceutical research. In Germany, we are considering the introduction of a policy on donations and sponsorship.



Supporting children's hospitals – nicely decorated rooms and personal assistance make hospital stays more pleasant for children.



Finland – the hospital will be fitted with furniture by the end of 2017.



Charity race in Hungary – employees raised almost EUR 1,000 to treat ill children.

Can area-based regeneration increase the local place-attachment amongst local companies?

- ▶ ABI's should be more active in pursuing the potential of involving hybrid voluntary organizations in the urban regeneration
- ▶ ABI's should promote the advantages of being involved in the urban regeneration
- ▶ ABI's should offer hybrid voluntary organisations suggestions on how to implement social responsibility initiatives in their local area
- ▶ Are hybrid voluntary organizations willing to go for a more local approach of social responsibility, as compared to a more global approach? Or can they pursue both goals?
- ▶ Churchill said: *"You make a living by what you get – but you make a life by what you give"*. Does it make a difference whether the giving is local?

Thanks for your attention!

Questions?