

# Reshaping Local Social Initiatives: The Creation of *Social Purpose Clusters*

## THE PROJECT

### THE PROBLEM

The **big problem** this project is attempting to solve, is how to handle 'wicked' social problems, like **child poverty**, in Danish Municipalities.

We know that complexity, resource scarcity and competitive environments puts pressure on the welfare state and has made the public sector look towards more coordination, social innovation and new methods to address these problems, through a realization that these are rarely solved by the municipalities alone.

How can Esbjerg Municipality, through the new inter-organizational collaborative method **Collective Impact**, minimize the consequences of **child poverty** and succeed in the attempt for '**systemic change**'? What comes after New Public Management? And how can we use knowledge from the many successful **business clusters** to create similar networks in the social purpose system, to handle wicked social problems by **mobilizing local resources**?

### RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION

This PhD-project **contributes academically** with qualitative, empirical knowledge, within the growing **New Public Governance** research field in **Community Development** and **Public Administration** studies. It also intends to develop a new theoretical basis for alliance-driven social innovation in Danish municipalities – **Social Purpose Clusters**.

### PUBLIC AND COMMERCIAL POTENTIAL

It is unfortunately a known fact, that children who grow up in poverty are statistically more likely not to finish an education and enter the job market. Therefore, increasing social mobility and exploring new ways of supporting these children, ultimately **will secure better future perspectives, both for the individual and for society as a whole**.

### RESEARCH CHALLENGES

Dealing with, understanding, and ethnographically emerging in so many **complex organizational forms** within the network that makes up MedVind i Østerbyen.

Successfully integrate knowledge and perspective from business economics into community development and public administration – **merging two very different theoretical fields**.

## PROJECT PARTNERS

### MedVind i Østerbyen (Kultur og pædagogik, Esbjerg Kommune)

MedVind i Østerbyen is a Collective Impact initiative created through a partnership between Esbjerg Municipality and Lauritzen Fonden. The organization's goal is to prevent the long-term consequences of child poverty in the area, by facilitating, organizing, administrating and inspiring existing actors in the social purpose system, including civil society, business community, associations and public sector.

**MedVind** i østerbyen

### Syddansk Universitet, Institut for Sociologi, Miljø- og Erhvervsøkonomi (Campus Esbjerg)

The department of Sociology, Environmental and Business Economics covers research areas and activities with a focus on environmental and resource economics, rural research, cultural sociology, and innovation. The focal point of the research within sociology is civil society, Organizations and Rural development.

**SDU**  University of Southern Denmark

### Karoline Duus

Karoline has a BSc. in **Market and Management Anthropology** and a **MSc. in Cultural Sociology** with a specialization in Social Transformation Processes. She is an **ethnographic nerd**, has done fieldwork in Uganda and Sri Lanka, and is a huge fan of the anthropological, feminist, science fiction literature by Ursula Le Guin.



## OUR ADVISE FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT

1. View other researchers within your field as **colleagues – not competition**.
2. Make sure to **include and engage** people from your organization through creative communication.
3. Cultivate a **good relationship** with your supervisors – they are both your biggest critics and supporters.