

Final Report: Balancing Football and Non-Football Activities in Danish Football Clubs

Esben Rahbek Gjerdrum Pedersen

Copenhagen Business School

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Executive Summary

About the Study

In Summer 2015, we received a generous research grant from UEFA to analyse if, when and how Danish football clubs work with corporate social responsibility (CSR). Special emphasis was placed on the local dialogue and negotiations within the clubs which define the issues which are selected in and selected out in the day-to-day operations of the clubs. The project was carried out in collaboration with the Danish Football Association (DFA).

The study was implemented by running a survey among football clubs across Denmark and conducting qualitative interviews with selected Danish football clubs. The combination of methods allow for an exploratory analysis of everyday CSR practices as well as a more hypothesis-driven study of the relationship between the level of CSR activity and a variety of variables.

Overall Findings

This report summarises the main findings from the study. Some of the main findings from the analysis of the survey and interview data can be summarized as follows:

- Football clubs mainly spend time on football, but a number of practical and administrative tasks also take up time and resources. For instance, the recruitment of new volunteers and the collection of membership fees are considered as administrative burdens.
- Football clubs face a number of tensions in day-to-day operations, e.g. between grassroot/elite and football/non-football activities. These fundamental tensions are often rooted in limited volunteer resources and financial constraints.
- Most clubs have some kind of collaboration with external stakeholders, e.g. other football clubs, sport associations, and local municipalities. Football clubs are less likely to have partnerships with non-sport organisations, e.g. private companies, patient groups, healthcare providers, and foundations.

- Around half of the football clubs studied explicitly engages in CSR activities. However, a number of football clubs demonstrate social engagement without using the CSR label.
- Fairplay initiatives and refugee football represent some of the most common CSR activities among Danish football clubs. CSR is often informal in nature and take place in networks and partnerships. Few football clubs adopt formalised CSR systems and tools.
- Limited CSR engagement is often rooted in scarce volunteer resources and financial constraints. When football clubs find it difficult to maintain core football activities, they do not have resources to invest in new beyond-football initiatives. Moreover, football clubs often lack the competences needed to develop CSR programmes.
- Based on the findings from the study, it is argued that Danish football clubs are not exploiting the full potentials of CSR. For instance, cross-sector partnerships could potentially make an important contribution to the planning and implementation of the CSR initiatives. Public schools, healthcare providers, municipalities, labour unions, private companies, and foundations all have social agendas which are in sync with the CSR focus of Danish football clubs.
- Bringing CSR to the next level cannot be separated from addressing the fundamental tensions of the football clubs. In order to increase the strategic value, CSR activities should generate benefits for thee clubs, e.g. members, volunteers, and financial resources. Otherwise, CSR will be in competition with the core football activities.
- DFA and the local unions can support the football clubs with financial resources and specialized knowledge and competences. Moreover, they can play an active role in the dissemination and scaling of the CSR initiatives. DFA and the local unions can also contribute to networking and fundraising efforts which will lower the transaction costs of the individual clubs.

On the following pages, we will describe these findings in more detail. In addition, more results from the study will be disseminated through papers, articles, blogs etc. (see chapter on dissemination of findings).

Acknowledgements

A number of persons have made a positive contribution to this study. Most importantly, we would like to thank Anne Porskær, Mikkel Minor and Kenneth Reeh from DFA for their contribution to the implementation of this study. Moreover, we would like to thank UEFA for making this study possible and demonstrating flexibility and support in the implementation process. In addition, we also have to thank Francesco Rosati, Mia Mathilde Hansen, Annie Saugstrup and Jens Omer Pedersen, who have all contributed to the realization of this study. Last but not least, we would like to thank the Danish football clubs which have shared

their experiences, frustrations and hopes regarding club life in general and their CSR practices.

More Information

We welcome all feedback from researchers, football clubs, associations, and other stakeholders, who want to comment on the findings, share experiences, or draw attention to 'good' or 'bad' practice examples of CSR in the football sector. Moreover, feel free to contact us if you would like to receive new results from this study in the future.

Enjoy the reading!

Esben Rahbek Gjerdrum Pedersen

Professor

Copenhagen Business School Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility

Porcelaenshaven 18

DK 2000 Frederiksberg

Tel: +45 38 15 27 41

Email: erp.ikl@cbs.dk

About CSR in the Football Sector

- *Literature and Practice*

The Anatomy of CSR

For decades, there have been debates about the meaning and content of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and related terms such as corporate citizenship, corporate sustainability, corporate social performance etc.¹ Academics, consultants, policy makers, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have all offered different, and not always convergent, views on CSR. However, in an analysis of 37 different CSR definitions, Alexander Dahlsrud nonetheless identifies three recurrent characteristics of CSR: *stakeholders*, *voluntariness*, and *triple bottom line*.²

CSR is about stakeholders. Much CSR literature finds inspiration in stakeholder theory, which where mainstreamed by R.E. Freeman in the 1980s.³ Ultimately, stakeholder theory argues that an organisation has responsibilities toward the groups and individuals, who influence and/or is influenced by its activities (customers, employees, investors, public authorities, communities etc.). Paying attention to stakeholders will also benefit shareholders in the long run as it lowers risks, create new opportunities, stimulates commitment etc.

CSR is about the triple bottom line. From a CSR perspective, organisations have to balance financial, social and environmental concerns, also known as the triple bottom line (people, profit, planet). A myopic focus on short-term profit maximisation at the expense of e.g. employee health and safety is incompatible with CSR. Triple bottom line thinking is in line with stakeholder perspective, as they both represent a more holistic view of business, strategy and management.

CSR is about voluntariness. CSR has traditionally been considered as being beyond legal compliance. That is not to say that CSR is free of coercion and pressure. Often, CSR is the response to demands from powerful stakeholders (buyers, consumers, investors etc.). Recently, the voluntariness principle has been debated, as an increasing number of

countries are beginning to formulate CSR policies and regulations, e.g. reporting standards.⁴

At the more abstract level, Mark S. Schwartz and Archie B. Carroll propose that the broader business and society field draws on joint ideas of value, balance and accountability. Based on this framework, CSR means an emphasis on long-term societal value rather than short-term organizational goals. Moreover, societal value is best created through a process of balancing multiple, and competing stakeholder interests. Last, accountability implies that CSR rests on ideas of transparency and honesty in the disclosure of activities and impacts.⁵

Research on CSR in the Football Sector

Until recently, only few scholars were interested in CSR in sport and football. However, there is a small but growing literature on the topic, albeit mainly in specialized academic journals. As of today, the CSR efforts of the football/sport sector have received very little recognition in the mainstream literature on strategy, management, organization, and CSR/business ethics.

Football research typically draws on mainstream definitions of CSR. However, it is also argued that sport holds special characteristics compared to other industries, e.g. due to the importance of passion and devotion of sport.⁶ However, the CSR topics covered by football clubs do not always diverge radically from conventional companies, although there is often a strong community focus. According to the authors Kathy Babiak and Richard Wolfe, CSR in sport rests on the following pillars: labour issues, environmental sustainability, community affairs, philanthropy, governance, diversity and equity.⁷

The existing literature often adopts an instrumental perspective, which highlight the potential benefits of CSR for clubs (sponsorships, reputation, stadion development), partners (reputation, employee motivation, new markets) and local communities (learning, education, inclusion, development).⁸ So far, however, there is only limited evidence about the impacts of CSR and the underlying individual, organisational, and institutional drivers.⁹

Empirically, the majority of research on CSR in the football sector focuses on large, professional football clubs. This tendency may be caused by the fact that these organisations have more resources and are more visible in the public landscape. However, the consequence is that the multiple social and environmental initiatives of smaller, non-elite clubs are overlooked. The bias towards large players in the market is also found in CSR research more generally, where studies have been biased toward multinational corporations (MNCs).

In terms of geography, most studies have focused on football clubs in the UK. One reason may be that CSR is more institutionalised in the UK compared to other European countries.¹⁰ Less has been done to study CSR in other European countries and very little research exists on CSR and football in e.g. Africa and South America.¹¹ Therefore, there is a great need for exploring CSR in the football sector across different geographical, political, socio-economic, and cultural contexts.

CSR in International Football

Overall, there has been a general transition in sport from amateurs and voluntariness toward professionalization and commercialization.¹² Football is no longer just a hobby; it is also billion dollar industry.¹³ For instance, the revenue of Liverpool grew from 907,000 GBP in 1975 to 255,000,000 GBP in 2014.¹⁴ Therefore, given the growth of the global sport economy it is probably no surprise that especially large football clubs are increasingly met with demands for sustainability and responsibility.

Internationally, there has been a mushrooming of CSR initiatives in the football sector. For instance, in 2005 FIFA launched *Football for Hope*, which address number of CSR areas (e.g. HIV/AIDS education, gender equality, and peace building) and has been rolled out in 78 different countries.¹⁵ Likewise, UEFA has supported large number of CSR initiatives linked to diversity, inclusion, environment, health, solidarity, fan dialogue, peace and reconciliation.¹⁶ As part of the HatTrick programme, UEFA member associations can also receive support for projects which address social and environmental issues.¹⁷

At the national level, football associations and individual football clubs are also increasingly explicit about their societal commitments. For instance, a number of charitable football foundations has emerged in UK, which address CSR issues and has been said to reduce the tension between commercial and community objectives.¹⁸

Other organisations also use football as a vehicle to generate social and environmental benefits. As an example, Homeless World Cup Foundation (HWC) hopes to change the life of homeless people through football (see Text Box below). The initiative operate with a network of more than 70 national partners and has impacted more than one million homeless people across the world.¹⁹

Case Example: Homeless World Cup Foundation (HWC)

In 2001, Homeless World Cup Foundation (HWC) was founded by Mel Young, a social entrepreneur from Edinburgh. HWCs mission is to

inspire and energize homeless people to change their own lives. Today, HWC have 74 participating countries and more than 100,000 spectators for the Homeless World Cup. According to Mel Young, their way of working is quite simple: *“We simply work with homeless people [...] by getting them involved in football. In this way we can build homeless people’s self-esteem.”*²⁰ Moreover, according to Emma Sherry, La Trobe University, the Homeless World Cup *“[...] provides a key point of connection for participants, by linking participants to others outside of their immediate community, and developing relationships that provide leverage and access to resources that would be otherwise unavailable.”*²¹

CSR in Danish Football

Danish football clubs have long tradition for being engaged in CSR activities. These initiatives have targeted a variety of different stakeholders, including ethnic minorities, obese children, young criminals, unemployed academics, patients with diabetes, and inactive citizens.²² The Danish Superliga has been on the CSR Top 3 of the Responsiball ranking of national leagues from 2014-2016.²³

CSR is found among professional as well as non-professional clubs in Denmark. The initiatives are typically rooted in local communities. For instance, Brøndbyernes Idrætsforening (Brøndbyernes Athletic Association) gave financial contributions of DKK 15.2 million to their surrounding community.²⁴ Partners are also typically found locally, e.g. partner clubs and community groups. As an example, a large number of local football clubs have collaborated with municipalities on initiatives regarding health, school education, and social inclusion.²⁵

DFA has been active in promoting CSR, whether it concerns health, social inclusion, active youth, and fair play. The initiatives are often carried out in close collaboration with stakeholders, e.g. local football clubs, municipalities, and international football associations.²⁶ Most recently, the former Danish prime minister, Helle Thorning-Schmidt has become ambassador for a new initiative intended to promote football for girls and women.²⁷ The various initiatives are part of a broader strategy about emphasizing the benefits of football beyond sport. As noted by the CEO of DFA, Claus Bretton Meyer (our translation):

*“For us, football is the best sport and play in the world. But it is more than that. Football builds communities, contributes to our health and helps solving challenges regarding inclusion and long school days. It is a responsibility that we would like to take - together with others. Because football is part of something bigger.”*²⁸

Case Example: AGF wants to give young people MOT

Aarhus Gymnastikforening (AGF) collaborates with the organization MOT (Norwegian for “courage”) on building stronger youth environments in schools situated in Jutland. Jacob Nielsen, Managing Director in AGF, considers MOT as an obvious partner, as many schools in the region already work with the organisation. From the perspective of MOT, spokesperson Mark Vogel argues that: *“Recognising AGF’s strong position in the central part of Jutland, it has long been on our wish list to get the club involved in the project”* (Our translation). A number of professional players in AGF have agreed to become ambassadors of MOT, which implies that they will participate in MOT- events at selected schools. The partnership between AGF and MOT was kicked off in relation to a match against the competing club, Brøndby, which is also a MOT-club.²⁹

Method

- About the Survey and Interviews

About the Survey

The online survey took place in Spring 2016. The survey was sent to 885 football clubs with +100 members using contact details from DFA's own member database. 229 football clubs answered the survey which equals a response rate of 25.9 percent. The reason for choosing only football clubs with +100 members was that survey questions and the study more generally are considered most relevant for clubs with a minimum of organisation. The survey data was analysed using quantitative data software (SPSS).

The survey includes a number of questions regarding the respondents and the club (size, sources of income, profile etc.). Moreover, the survey includes questions addressing CSR and partnerships. The scales for CSR and partnerships were based on the existing literature and subsequent dialogue with DFA. Clubs not involved in CSR and partnerships are asked to indicate the reason(s) for why they do not engage in these activities. The survey was carried out in local language (Danish) but a translated version of the survey questions can be found in Appendix 1.

The Profile of the Survey Respondents

The football clubs taking part in this survey are spread across Denmark. The majority of clubs are situated in Jutland (48.7%) whereas 35.6% are placed in Zealand (including Copenhagen area). The remaining respondents (15.8%) represent clubs from other parts of Denmark (Fyn, Lolland-Falster, and Bornholm).

In terms of size, the large majority of clubs (74.7%) have 50 volunteers or less. Only 5.3% of the clubs have more than 100 volunteers. The majority of clubs (69.0%) generates revenues below 1 million DKK. 16.5% of the clubs have revenues between 1-2 million DKK and 14.6% above 2 million DKK.

When it comes to the profile of the respondents, 80.6% of the respondents were chairmen of the clubs. 4.8% are members of the board. 16.6% are

trainers in the club and 9.6% work with club administration. Several of the respondents occupy multiple roles in the clubs.

About the Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives from 13 Danish football clubs. Where the survey provided a broad overview of the CSR landscape among Danish football clubs, the interviews enabled a more in-depth analysis of everyday CSR practices. Moreover, the interviews gave rise to new insights about the daily club life of the clubs and the constraints for addressing CSR. The interviews also inspired new research questions which will be explored in future studies.

The interview guideline followed the same structure as the survey. The interview began with a number of general questions regarding the club and its characteristics (size, sources of revenue etc.). The discussions of the daily life in the club were followed by a number of more CSR and partnership-specific questions. However, in practice interviews are dynamic and the conversation moved back and forth between CSR-specific discussions and more generic issues. Therefore, the interview guideline mainly served as an overview of topics. All interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed using qualitative data software (Nvivo). The interview guideline can also be found in Appendix 2.

Profile of the Clubs participating in the Interviews

The identification of football clubs for interviews was made by the researchers in collaboration with DFA. The main selection criteria were geography and size as different types of clubs in different parts of the country were expected to face different CSR opportunities and challenges. Moreover, the interviews focused on football clubs with interest in CSR related activities.

Three interviews were conducted in Jutland, one on Fyn, three on Zealand (outside Copenhagen), and six in the Copenhagen area. According to DFA statistics, four clubs had 0-500 members, five clubs had 501-1000 members, and four clubs had more than 1000 members. The majority of interviewees (7) were chairmen of the clubs. The remaining interviewees were one junior chairman, one honorary club member and four managers.

Danish Football

- *The Daily Life of Danish Football Clubs*

In Your Own Words...

In the beginning of the survey, respondents were asked a simple, open question: - *What is the main reason for being active in the club?* The results show that the respondents overall express high levels of commitment to the club and football more generally. References to “friendship”, “community”, and “love of football” are common and many respondents indicate that they have been active in club life for decades. Overall, football in itself hold qualities which are considered valuable to the respondents. On the contrary, football is rarely seen as a means to an end (e.g. health), although some respondents view the club as having an important function in keeping the the local community alive.

The high level of engagement may be caused the fact that the survey respondents and interviewees are mainly chairmen and other key resource persons within the club. At least, a number of participants in the study indicate that a lot of volunteers are driven by personal motives (their own children playing football). Moreover, some clubs experience a marketization of football where players and their parents view themselves as customers in a shop rather than members of a club. For instance, one interviewee argues the following:

“We live in 2016 where the expectation is that when you pay for a product (...) then you do not have to do anything because you pay (...). Why should I do something when I pay? Earlier, we did not see this tendency as clearly as we do now.”

The Business of Football is...Football

As seen from the graph below, the results from the survey show that football is in fact the key activity among Danish football clubs. However, the results also indicate that football is associated with administration, planning, and meetings, which may take up resources from football-related activities.

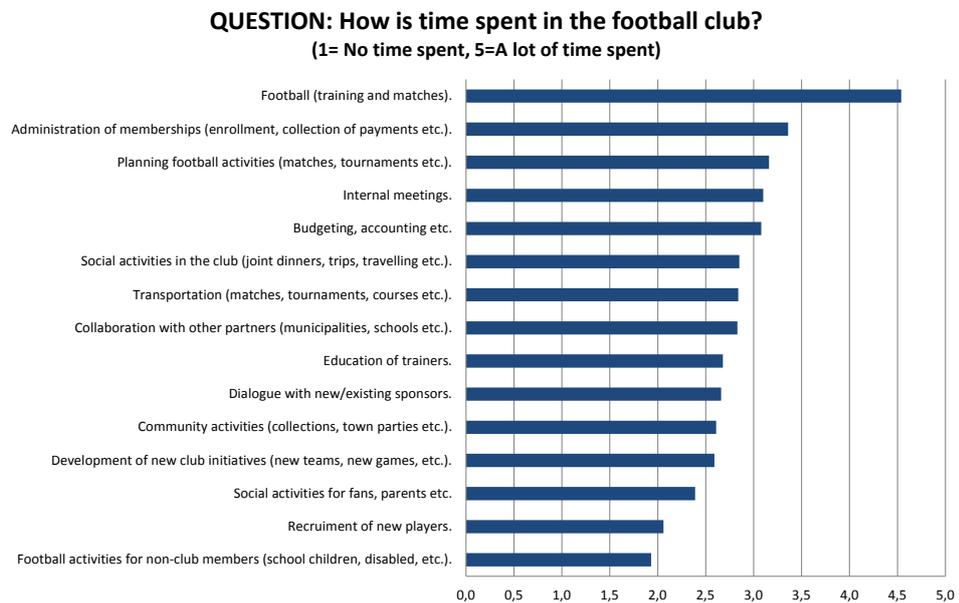


Figure 1: How is Time Spent?

Sources of Revenues

Membership fees constitute the main source of income for the Danish football clubs. Moreover, football clubs also benefit from sponsorships and public support. The financial structure of the football clubs can be a source of tension, as it is often difficult and time-consuming to collect membership fees. Combined with limited volunteer resources, this issue causes a lot of frustration and has brought a few clubs close to bankruptcy. As noted by one of the survey respondents (our translation):

“We find it difficult to convince people to pay their membership fees on time. During the last two years, this issue has occupied 75% of the board’s work.”

Membership administration can also be a challenge when football clubs struggle to recruit new volunteers. Few volunteers join a football club to collect membership fees. Moreover, it can be uncomfortable to exclude players because their parents have not paid their membership fees on time. This can also have negative influences on the teams. Therefore, it is probably no surprise that there seems to be different practices regarding membership administration among the football clubs.

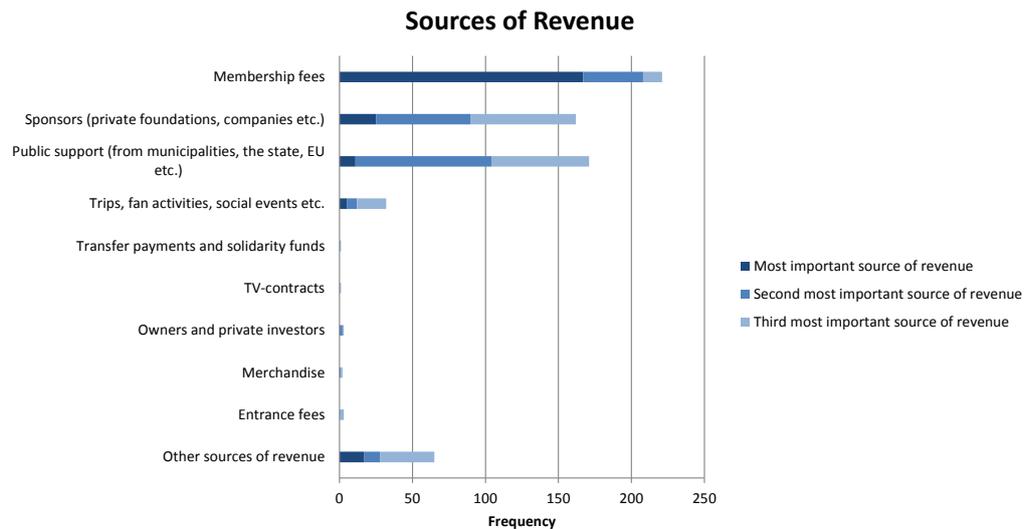


Figure 2: Sources of Revenue in Danish Football

Tensions and Debates

The survey includes a question regarding tensions experienced by football clubs. The dimensions are inspired from the existing literature on CSR and football. The results indicate that football clubs mostly experience tensions between football/non-football activities and grassroots/elite. When it comes to the former, the tension between football/non-football activities are often rooted in limited volunteer resources. When it comes to the latter, grassroots/elite discussions also have a financial dimension, as the costs of focusing on the elite (typically senior teams) often have to be covered by non-elite activities at the junior level. To quote a survey respondent:

“Membership fees mainly come from junior football whereas the majority of costs are linked to older, more elite teams. No end results, as it is still a debated topic. We introduce differentiated membership fees for A- and B-teams and an elite fee and hope that it will minimise some of the discussions and dissatisfaction”.

QUESTION: How much do you discuss the following themes in the club?

(1=Never discussed, 5= Very often discussed)

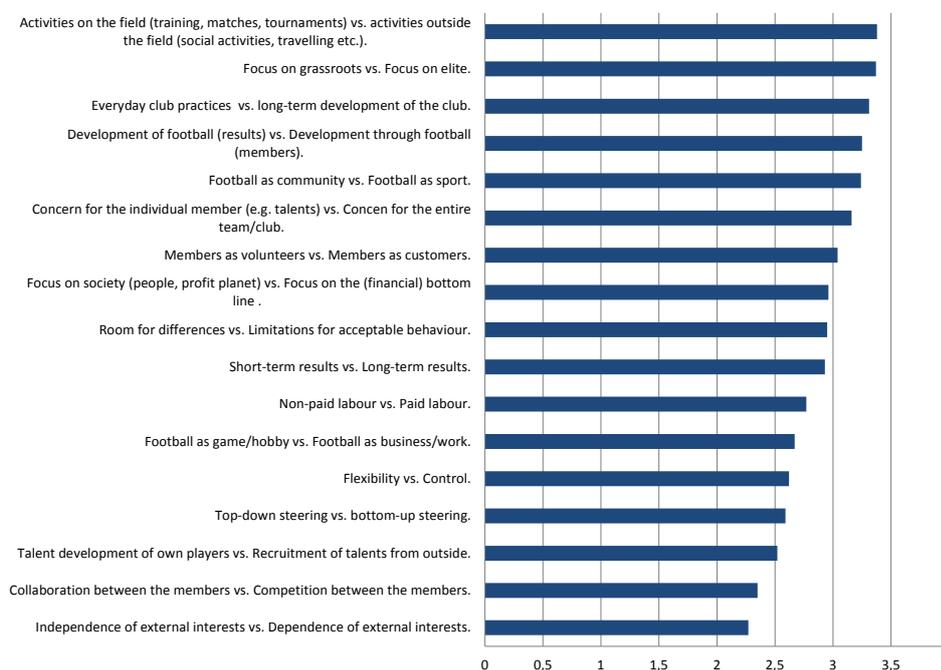


Figure 3: Tensions experienced by football clubs.

Survey respondents were also asked to give a concrete example of a debated issue and indicate the solution (if any). The respondents listed a lot of different tensions. However, the majority of tensions are linked especially to teams (junior/senior, elite/non-elite) and volunteers (recruitment, retention etc.). Moreover, some respondents also address challenges linked to partners (other clubs, municipalities, sponsors etc.) and player/parent attitudes (e.g. the marketization of football).

To give a concrete example, one tension concerns parent involvement. On the one hand, parent support is crucial for running the club. On the other hand, the clubs loose players if they demand too much from the parents. As noted by one of the survey respondents:

"We lose a lot of players (children) this year due to other interests and lack of parent support to the local club. It is too easy to move a child just because we demand more parent involvement (...). We do not have the solution to how we retain the children (read: parents) and how we get parents to contribute more to the training instead of just criticizing the volunteers"

Fundamental constraints

The tensions above are often rooted in challenges linked to lack of volunteers and financial resources. When volunteers are buried to their neck in day-to-day operations, it is difficult to find the time to develop new activities, including CSR and partnerships. According to one of the respondents, the club has an ongoing discussion about new focus areas, as new initiatives require more work from the board which in turn affects daily operations. Likewise, another survey respondent argues the following (our translation):

"It is difficult to find time to innovate, when it is the same people who are responsible for operations. Operations is the highest priority in the club and it is difficult to find time for anything else."

Partnerships in Danish Football

- The Importance of Stakeholder Collaboration

Who Matters and Who Doesn't?

Some Danish football clubs address social and environmental issues through collaboration with different stakeholders, including municipalities, companies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and schools. Partnerships are also supported centrally from DFA, which for instance has tried to establish regional business networks addressing CSR and build closer ties with local municipalities.³⁰

Overall, almost nine out of ten clubs in the survey (87.3%) indicate that they have collaboration with external parties. The results also show that collaboration is often narrowed to stakeholders directly involved in football, e.g. partner clubs, DFA/DFA local unions, and other football and sport organisations. There is much less collaboration between the clubs and other external stakeholders (e.g. healthcare, civil society organisations, businesses etc.).

One exception is the local municipalities, which are directly involved in the football activities (infrastructure, financial support etc.) but also collaborate with the clubs on a variety of social projects, e.g. concerning unemployed or ethnic minorities. For instance, one of the clubs interviewed has collaborated with the local municipality and DFA on a project for young people outside the job market. Other clubs have similar initiatives.

QUESTION: To what extent do your club collaborate with other organisations ?

(1=Very loose collaboration, 5= Very close collaboration)

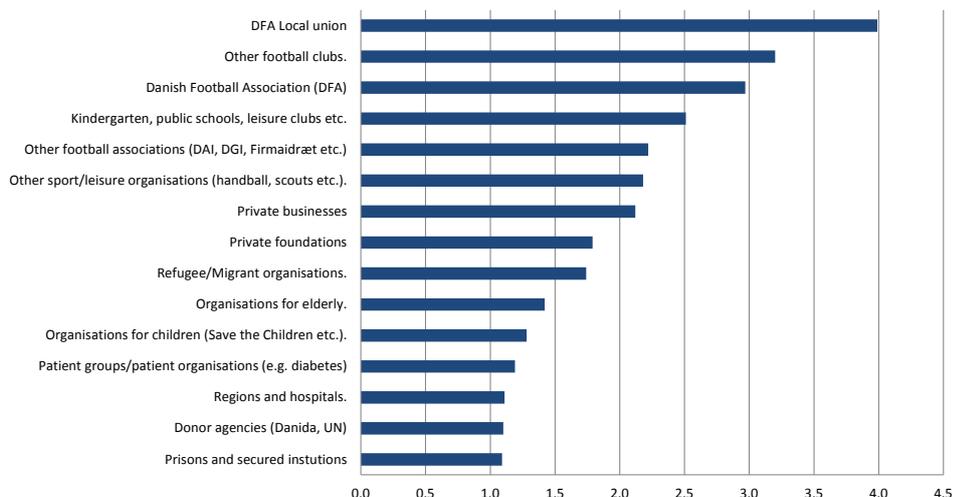


Figure 4: Football clubs and stakeholder collaboration.

Barriers for Partnerships

Football clubs indicating no collaboration give different reasons for their lack of stakeholder engagement. Lack of procedures/standards and time are some of the most frequently mentioned reasons. Limited volunteer resources, poor infrastructure, and lack of recognition and knowledge are all part of the explanation why football clubs seems to ignore partnership opportunities in relation to CSR.

QUESTION: To what extent does the following statements reflect your club's view on collaboration with other organisations

(1=Totally disagree, 5=Totally agree)?:

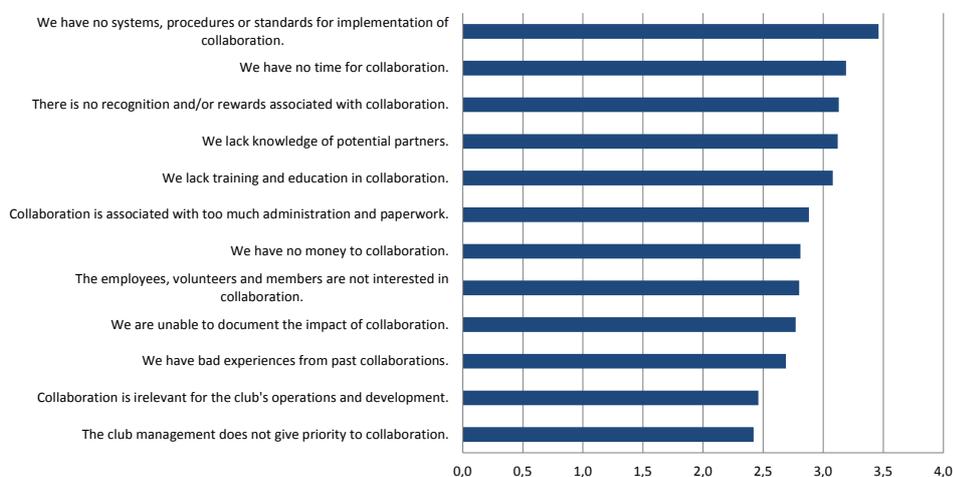


Figure 5: Barriers for collaboration and partnerships.

CSR Practices among Danish Football Clubs

- *The Many and the Few...*

CSR Activities among Danish Football Clubs

About 50% of the football clubs in the survey indicate that they engage in CSR activities. The relatively low level of CSR activity in the Danish football sector differs from previous studies. One of the explanations probably relates to sampling as previous research typically has focused on large, commercial football clubs.

Fairplay is by far the most common CSR activity which has also been promoted by DFA and the local unions. Moreover, the Danish football sector has also been influenced by the migrant crisis. Therefore, quite a few football clubs have opened their doors for refugees and migrants. Other common themes involve transparency, equal opportunities and anti-discrimination.

QUESTION: What is covered by your club's CSR?

(1=No engagement, 5= Significant engagement):

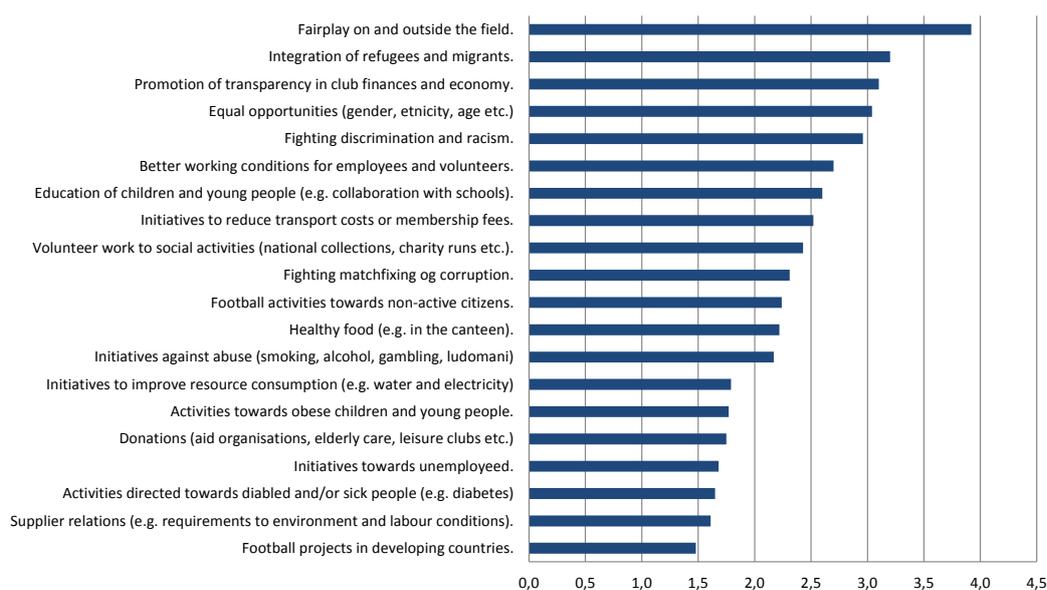


Figure 6: CSR issues covered by the football clubs.

Overall, environment is deemed less relevant by the participants in this study. A likely explanation is that football facilities are typically owned and controlled by the local municipalities. Therefore, clubs pay little attention to environmental impacts of the club.

CSR Reluctance

Some interviewees were reluctant to use the term CSR. They saw CSR as a branding tool for things they were already doing, e.g. special terms for children from vulnerable families or social inclusion of people living on the margins of society. As noted by one of the interviewees (our translation):

“I am not happy about the name CSR (...) because in my world CSR has something to do with companies. There is a huge difference between what we are doing and what a company is doing. Well, to me in a company it is the marketing department which has been smart (...) and found out something social that can be done. However, to us it is a natural part of what we are doing. You know, the thing about reduced membership fee. That has always been possible. And it has also been possible to go on trips even though you did not have money. There is also a homeless person down here (...). It is not a CSR project. It is something we have always done.”

In some clubs, CSR can best be described as implicit rather than explicit.³¹ Here, interviewees were sometimes a bit cynical towards football clubs which are very vocal about their CSR commitments. An example concerns football for migrants and refugees, which is on the agenda of many clubs but only communicated by few. Some interviewees express reservations against over-communicating such types of CSR activity.

Types of CSR Engagement

When it comes to formal engagement of CSR, the results further support the view that CSR is not on the top of the agenda in the football sector. Few football clubs have formal systems and tools in place to address CSR issues. The most common approach to CSR is participation in networks and partnerships.

QUESTION: How does your club work with CSR?

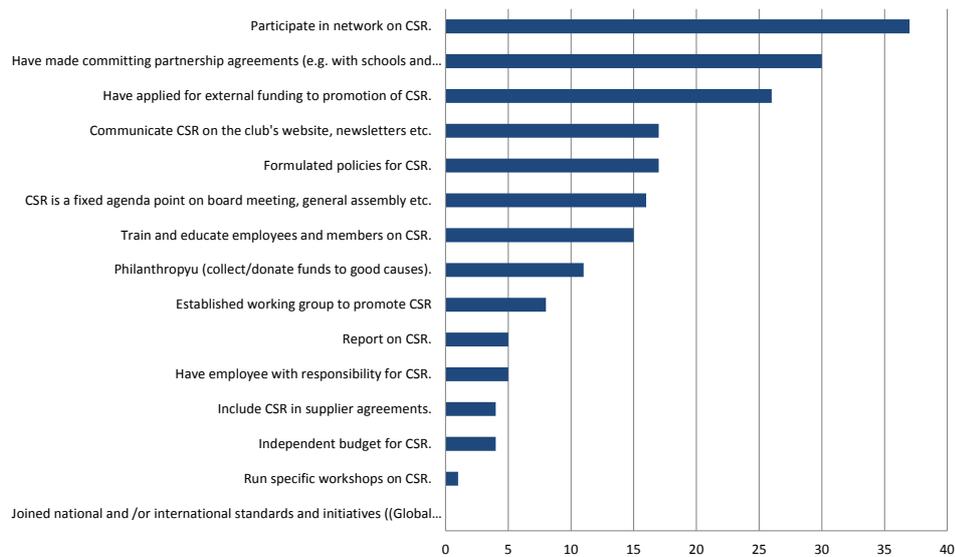


Figure 7: Types of CSR Engagement.

The survey results as well as the interviews indicate that many activities can best be described as peripheral CSR.³² They can be characterized as projects which are not linked closely to the situation and activities of the club. Therefore, there is a risk that a lot of these initiatives are not integrated permanently in the local clubs. On the plus side, the informal approach implies that there is not much paperwork associated with CSR. Moreover, clubs in general seem to be quite pragmatic when met with stakeholder requests, e.g. players in difficult financial situations or municipalities looking for support to their clients. As noted by one of the interviewees (our translation):

We very often have people (...) on job training (...) and I actually think we are very good at it, because this is a voluntary organization. We do not have some kind of production that we need to finish now. If you come down here and feel bad, we can send you home. Then you can try again tomorrow (...). And those we get are really far out. It is not persons who can get a normal job tomorrow. They are really far out. But I think we handle them well (...). As long as we have them for some time, they usually make progress and are ready for the next step.

Case Example: Kickstart with Brøndby

Kickstart with Brøndby is a project that involves young people who have had run-ins with the law and tries to help them get back on track. The goal is to help them and break down the barriers they have to the labour

market. Brøndby has offered this to neighbouring municipalities and the municipalities have been able to book places for their young welfare recipients. Kickstart with Brøndby offers weekly schedules that are individually planned and it involves a mixture of work assignments and courses. Kickstart with Brøndby is a 13-week project and everything takes place at Brøndby Stadium.³³

Barriers for CSR

Football clubs not engaging in CSR activities were asked to indicate what they saw as the main barriers. Here, the results show that lack of knowledge, skills and expertise seems to be the main constraint for CSR. Most importantly, few clubs had a local change agent who was able to lead the way in terms of CSR. Here, it is also important to bear in mind that volunteers are often driven by personal motives (their children playing in the club). They are not necessarily interested in CSR or the development of the club more generally. Therefore, while many clubs officially have dozens of volunteers, in practice there may only be a handful of individuals interested in development activities.

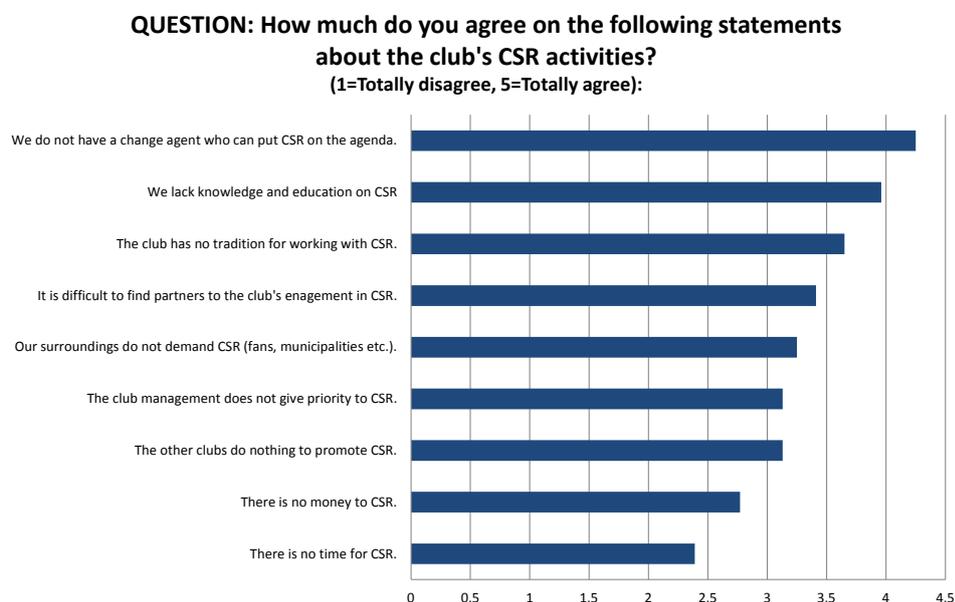


Figure 8: Barriers for CSR.

Case Example: Football and Refugees in Denmark

Refugee Football is becoming increasingly widespread in the Danish

football sector. The overall goal is to integrate refugees through football as a universal language. Some clubs offer the refugees to practise with them and gradually let them settle into teams which suit their abilities. Other clubs offer the refugees free season tickets or free match tickets. Refugee football can be initiated by the football club, the local authorities, or by individuals. Many refugee football projects have also been supported by e.g. the Sports Confederation of Denmark (DIF), The International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Danish Football Association (DFA).

According to DFA, football makes it possible to meet and develop friendships across language, culture and ethnicity. Therefore, DBU has focused on how football can contribute to ethnic integration in Denmark. Bent Clausen, vice-president of DBU, argues that: *“We have a responsibility to strengthen community activities in areas where there are special needs and vulnerable citizens. Especially when we know that football can make a difference for the individual and the local community [...]”*.³⁴

Next Steps

- *Where to Go?*

Promises and Practices of CSR

CSR in football can potentially bring about multiple benefits for citizens and society. However, the results from this study indicate that only a limited number of Danish football clubs are engaged in CSR activities. At least, the clubs do not label their social and environmental commitments as CSR. As mentioned in the report, some football clubs are reluctant to use the CSR term, which are considered as corporate rhetoric and consultant smartness.

According to the survey respondents and interviewees, barriers for CSR are often rooted in internal factors, i.e. limited volunteer resources, financial constraints, and lack of CSR competences. This finding differs from CSR studies among private companies which often highlight external barriers for CSR (lack of customer demand, lack of investor interest etc.). In football clubs, the development of new activities is dependent on the active support of volunteers.

The question is how football clubs can overcome the barriers mentioned above? Over the years, football clubs have engaged in a variety of CSR activities directed toward multiple stakeholders, including unemployed academics, patients with diabetes, migrants and refugees, former criminals, etc. However, many CSR initiatives remains on the project level and have never become integrated and institutionalized in the football sector.

The findings from this study indicate that it is necessary to develop CSR activities which are in line with daily club practices. CSR initiatives should be linked to the needs and wants of societies as well as clubs. In private companies, CSR is often characterized as “bolt on” rather than “built in” because the social and environmental activities are not integrated in core strategy and operations.³⁵ The need for “built in” CSR is even more important in football clubs because they are primarily driven by volunteers with scarce resources.

Collaborative Opportunities

There seems to be fairly obvious opportunities for strengthening CSR among football clubs in collaboration with external stakeholders. However, even though many football clubs are well aware of these opportunities, they struggle to find the volunteer resources necessary to run these partnerships. Below are a few examples of potential partners:

- *Public schools.* Schools are a core partner for football clubs as a substantial amount of club members are school children. However, a practical challenge for strengthening the partnerships with school is that most volunteers have day jobs. However, more could be done to integrate football in teaching (e.g. school project weeks) as well as integrating teaching in football (e.g. educating children and teachers in voluntary work).
- *Health organisations.* There are obvious opportunities for collaborating more closely with healthcare providers, patient groups etc. Football can be used actively as prevention of a variety of lifestyle diagnoses. The growing emphasis on population health and outcome based care also provides new opportunities for collaboration between healthcare and football clubs.
- *Municipalities.* Football clubs are often deeply rooted in the local community. There are numerous opportunities for deepening the relationships with municipalities on community affairs, whether it concerns marginalized youth or lonely senior citizens. Moreover, there may be opportunities for collaboration on environmental issues regarding urban planning, climate change and nature-based solutions. For instance, football fields can be used for sport as well as water reservoirs in situations of extreme rain.
- *Private companies.* Many football clubs are not very professional in attracting sponsors and establishing other types of relationships with the private sector. Building closer ties with companies could potentially reduce some of the financial constraints. Moreover, being partners in corporate volunteering programmes could potentially attract more volunteers to football.
- *Labour unions.* Labour unions are increasingly interested in CSR. Therefore, labour unions and their members could potentially contribute to CSR programmes in the football sector as sponsors, partners, members, and beneficiaries. Moreover, labour unions could also facilitate access to the private sector.

DFA and the local unions have a central role to play in CSR initiatives which move beyond individual clubs. Examples could include development of ready-to-use teaching programmes for public schools, development of CSR business networks, design of massive online open courses (MOOCs), establishment of strategic partnerships with

public/private organisation, leading major fundraising efforts (e.g. EU programmes), and coordinating dissemination of 'good practices'.

Dissemination of Findings

- *Presentations, manuscripts etc.*

Work in Progress

The project has generated a number of insights that is considered valuable for scholars and practitioners worldwide. In the months to come, we therefore hope to prepare a number of manuscripts targeting different stakeholders. All manuscripts are well under way but can still be considered as work-in-progress documents. Especially the academic manuscripts require comprehensive reviews and analyses. Therefore, we have not included the texts as appendices. UEFA will receive copies of the academic papers once completed.

Academic Manuscripts

At present, we are working on two academic manuscripts that are intended for submission to well-reputed academic journals. The first manuscript examines how tensions shape football practices more generally, where the second looks more closely at the relationship between tensions and CSR/partnerships. It should be noted that there are no guarantees that the papers will be accepted as these journals often have rejection rates well beyond 90 percent. the two papers are as follows:

- *Abstract Manuscript 1: Striking a Balance: A Tensions-as-Practice Perspective on Oppositional Demands in Everyday Organisational Life.* This study examines how organisations cope with tensions manifested within and between practitioners, praxis and practices. The concept of balance is introduced as a key construct in developing a practice-oriented understanding of how organisations establish social orders to reconcile permanent and temporary organizational tensions. Empirically, the paper draws on evidence from an online survey among 229 Danish football clubs as well as insights from interviews with representatives from 13 football clubs.
- *Abstract Manuscript 2: More than a Game: How Organisational Tensions Shape CSR Practices in Football Clubs.* The objective of this

study is to examine how organisational tensions shape the adoption and use of CSR among Danish football clubs. Recently, the CSR literature has moved from a focus on integration, alignment and shared value to an emphasis on contradiction, tension and paradox. However, little is known about how broader organisational tensions influence the degree to which organisations engage in CSR activities. The study is based on an online survey with respondents from 229 Danish football clubs and interviews with representatives from 13 local football clubs.

We plan to submit the articles to recognised journals within organisation studies and the business and society field (e.g. Organisation Studies, Management Decision, Business and Society, Journal of Business Ethics, and Non-profit Leadership and Management). Once accepted, UEFA and DFA will of course receive copies of the finished manuscripts.

A third manuscript is under development, which look more closely at the underlying values of the Danish football clubs. However, this manuscript is still at an immature stage and requires additional data collection.

Popular Articles and Blogs

In collaboration with DFA, we also plan to prepare a number of shorter articles directed towards football practitioners and the general public. The underlying idea is that it will be easier to disseminate the results to a broader audience with smaller stories through communication channels already used. So far, we have drafted for articles, which are all in local language (Danish). All articles will be discussed with DFA before publication. Translated summaries of the articles are found below:

- *Abstract article 1: How Football Clubs Work with CSR.* A lot of Danish football clubs collaborate with local stakeholders on improving the local community. The clubs want to be part of the local community and enjoy much local support and attention, which can be used to create awareness of societal challenges. In particular, the clubs are engaged in a broad range of social activities which promote social inclusion, gender equality, fair play, ethnic integration, and health
- *Abstract article 2: When the Interaction between the Football Club and the Parents become a Buyer-Supplier Relationship.* Volunteers in football clubs feel that new generations of players and parents consider themselves as customers and the club as a commercial sport provider. However, active commitment of players and important are essential for sustaining a strong football community, which is based almost entirely on voluntarism.

- *Abstract article 3: Voluntariness is taken as granted.* Football clubs are in great need for volunteers. Busy jobs, school reforms, and competition from other sport/games reduce time for being part of the football community. The question is if the ideals of voluntariness are slowly diminishing?
- *Abstract article 4: Refugee Football: Challenges and Opportunities.* It is becoming increasingly popular to use football as a vehicle for integrating refugees in the Danish civil society. Some initiatives are driven by the clubs whereas others have been initiated by municipalities or other stakeholders. Early evidence indicates that the global language of football can also generate local benefits for refugees, clubs and communities.

In addition to the articles above, we plan a sort blog post about the governance of CSR among Danish football clubs. The blog will mainly draw on insights from article 1 above. The blog will present the multiple CSR activities in the Danish football sector and discuss related challenges and opportunities. The blog is expected to be posted on the CBS Business of Society (BOS) blog, <http://blog.cbs.dk/bos/>.

Future Dissemination and Outreach Activities

We hope to submit one of the academic papers to the 2017 colloquium of the European Group for Organizational Studies, that will be hosted by CBS, July 6-8 2017.³⁶ Acceptance of the paper will make it possible to present the findings to leading organisational scholars across the world.

In June 2018, CBS will host a major, international partnership conference, the 6th biennial International Symposium on Cross-Sector Social Interactions (CSSI 2018). As part of the conference, we plan to organise a number smaller sessions, where scholars and practitioners present and discuss collaboration within a number of predefined topics. The working title of one of the sessions is 'Collaboration and the community: the case of sport.' Here we plan to present the findings from the study and provide examples of successful partnerships. We hope that UEFA will be interested in joining the event as experts and participants.

Appendix 1

The Online Survey (English Translation)

- 1. To what local union does your club belong?**
 - DFA Jutland
 - DFA Zealand
 - DFA Fyn
 - DFA Copenhagen
 - DFA Lolland Falster
 - DFA Bornholm
 - Don't know

- 2. Type in your club's CFR number**

- 3. What is your current function in the club (multiple response)?**
 - Chairman of the board
 - Vice chairman of the board
 - Board member
 - Manager, paid
 - Administration, paid
 - Trainer, volunteer
 - Trainer, paid
 - Administration, volunteer
 - Other function
 - Don't know

- 4. Number of employees (full-time equivalent)?**

- 5. Number of volunteers (not receiving salaries from the club. Reimbursements and free services do not count as salaries)?**

- 6. Annual revenue of the club?**

7. What are the main sources of revenue (1= most important, 2=second most important, 3=third most important).

- Membership fees
- Entrance fees
- Merchandise
- Trips, fan activities, social events etc.
- Owners and private investors
- TV-contracts
- Transfer payments and solidarity funds
- Sponsors (private foundations, companies etc.)
- Public support (from municipalities, the state, EU etc.)
- Other sources of revenue

8. In your own opinion: What is the main reason for being active in the club?

9. How is time spent in the football club? (1= No time spent, 5=A lot of time spent):

- Football (training and matches)
- Transportation (matches, tournaments, courses etc.)
- Planning football activities (matches, tournaments etc.)
- Social activities in the club (joint dinners, trips, travelling etc.)
- Recruitment of new players
- Education of trainers
- Social activities for fans, parents etc.
- Internal meetings
- Administration of memberships (enrollment, collection of payments etc.)
- Budgeting, accounting etc.
- Community activities (collections, town parties etc.)
- Football activities for non-club members (school children, disabled, etc.)
- Dialogue with new/existing sponsors
- Collaboration with other partners (municipalities, schools etc.)
- Development of new club initiatives (new teams, new games, etc.)

10. How much do you discuss the following themes in the club? (1=Never discussed, 5= Very often discussed):

- Focus on grassroots vs. Focus on elite

- Development of football (results) vs. Development through football (members)
- Concern for the individual member (e.g. talents) vs. Concern for the entire team/club
- Football as game/hobby vs. Football as business/work
- Football as community vs. Football as sport
- Everyday club practices vs. long-term development of the club
- Top-down steering vs. bottom-up steering
- Short-term results vs. Long-term results
- Members as volunteers vs. Members as customers
- Collaboration between the members vs. Competition between the members
- Independence of external interests vs. Dependence of external interests
- Activities on the field (training, matches, tournaments) vs. activities outside the field (social activities, travelling etc.)
- Non-paid labour vs. Paid labour
- Room for differences vs. Limitations for acceptable behaviour
- Flexibility vs. Control
- Talent development of own players vs. Recruitment of talents from outside
- Focus on society (people, profit planet) vs. Focus on the (financial) bottom line

11. Can you give one example of an issue in relation to the club's operations and development, which has sparked internal debate? What was the result (if any)?

12. Does your club collaborate with other organisations (other clubs, charity organisations, municipalities, schools etc.)?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

13. (IF YES TO QUESTION 12) To what extent does the club work with the following organisations (1=Very loose collaboration, 5=Very close collaboration):

- Other football clubs
- Danish Football Association (DFA)
- DFA Local union
- Other football associations (DAI, DGI, Firmaidræt etc.)
- Other sport/leisure organisations (handball, scouts etc.)

- Kindergarten, public schools, leisure clubs etc.
- Private businesses
- Private foundations
- Organisations for elderly
- Organisations for children (Save the Children etc.)
- Prisons and secured institutions
- Regions and hospitals
- Donor agencies (Danida, UN)
- Refugee/Migrant organisations
- Patient groups/patient organisations (e.g. diabetes)

If others, please specify:

14. (IF NO TO QUESTION 12) To what extent does the following statements reflect the club's attitude to collaboration with other organisations (1=Totally disagree, 5=Totally agree):

- We have no time for collaboration
- We have no money to collaboration
- We have bad experiences from past collaborations
- We have no systems, procedures or standards for implementation of collaboration
- We lack knowledge of potential partners
- Collaboration is associated with too much administration and paperwork
- We lack training and education in collaboration
- Collaboration is irrelevant for the club's operations and development
- The club management does not give priority to collaboration
- We are unable to document the impact of collaboration
- There is no recognition and/or rewards associated with collaboration
- The employees, volunteers and members are not interested in collaboration

If others, please specify:

15. Does your club work with corporate responsibility (CSR) (integration, environment, equal opportunities etc.)?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**16. (IF YES TO QUESTION 15) What is covered by your club's CSR?
(1=No engagement, 5= Significant engagement):**

- Donations (aid organisations, elderly care, leisure clubs etc.)
- Healthy food (e.g. in the canteen)
- Activities towards obese children and young people
- Supplier relations (e.g. requirements to environment and labour conditions)
- Fighting discrimination and racism
- Initiatives against abuse (smoking, alcohol, gambling)
- Better working conditions for employees and volunteers
- Fighting match-fixing and corruption
- Football activities towards non-active citizens
- Fair play on and outside the field
- Equal opportunities (gender, ethnicity, age etc.)
- Education of children and young people (e.g. collaboration with schools)
- Promotion of transparency in club finances and economy
- Activities directed towards disabled and/or sick people (e.g. diabetes)
- Initiatives to reduce transport costs or membership fees
- Initiatives to improve resource consumption (e.g. water and electricity)
- Volunteer work to social activities (national collections, charity runs etc.)
- Integration of refugees and migrants
- Football projects in developing countries
- Initiatives towards unemployed

If others, please specify:

17. How does your club work with CSR? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE)

- Have formulated CSR policies
- CSR is a fixed agenda point on board meeting, general assembly etc.
- Run specific workshops on CSR
- Established working group to promote CSR
- Independent budget for CSR
- Have employee with responsibility for CSR
- Include CSR in supplier agreements
- Have applied for external funding to promote CSR
- Participate in network on CSR
- Report on CSR
- Joined national and /or international standards and initiatives (Global Compact, ISO 14000, 26000 etc.)
- Train and educate employees and members on CSR

- Have made committing partnership agreements (e.g. with schools and donor agencies)
- Communicate CSR on the club's website, newsletters etc.
- Philanthropy (collect/donate funds to good causes)

If others, please specify:

18. (IF NO TO QUESTION 15) How much do you agree on the following statements about the club's CSR activities? (1=Totally disagree, 5=Totally agree):

- There is no time for CSR.
- There is no money to CSR.
- The other clubs do nothing to promote CSR.
- The club management does not give priority to CSR.
- Our surroundings do not demand CSR (fans, municipalities etc.).
- It is difficult to find partners to the club's engagement in CSR.
- The club has no tradition for working with CSR.
- We lack knowledge and education on CSR
- We do not have a change agent who can put CSR on the agenda.

19. Do you have questions or comments to the survey?

20. Type in your email address, if we can contact you

Appendix 2

-The interview Guideline (English Translation)

1. Interviewer(s) about the project

- What the project is about.
- The role of CBS in the project.
- the results of the project.

2. Introduction/background questions:

- Personal background (occupation, years in the club, motivation)
- How would you describe the club to a person from outside? Why should you sign up for this club?
- History of the club (age, members, rise/fall, why, what is the primary focus)?
- Management and operation (roles in the club, the leadership and decision-making)
- Relationship to DFA

3. The club's general priorities:

- From your perspective, how would you describe the club activities (Grassroot/Elite, junior/seniors, ladies/men, football/non-football activities, etc.)?
- Are there any specific areas which are often a subject of debate in the club? Something that is overlooked? Something you should do more about? Something you should focus less on?
- How are these discussions solved? (if they are solved) Are there any fundamental dilemmas that are never solved in a football club?

4. Collaboration/Partnerships:

- To what extent does the club collaborate with private/public/volunteer organisations? Examples. How outreach has the club been?
- How did these partnerships come into being? (is it a parent who started it, a company has approached the club, the club has approached the public etc.)?
- What were the experiences? (good as bad)?

5. CSR:

- Can you provide examples on how your club work with sustainability/CSR? Hands-on examples.
- Are there other CSR areas where the club plans to use more resources? Could the club improve on certain areas?
- Are there CSR areas which the club has intentionally decided not to address? If so, which?

6. The CSR-process:

- Where does the CSR-initiatives come from? Are they initiated top-down (e.g. from DFA) or are they grassroot initiatives started by committed individuals within the club?
- What are the motivations behind the initiatives? (money, engage the local community, pressure from DFA etc.)
- How have the ideas been met by the other stakeholders? (by the board of directors, sponsors etc.) To what extent has there been support to the projects?
- How has the club managed to get funding for the activities? To what extent has it been easy to finance the projects?
- Is everyone in the club involved in the CSR-projects (parents, players, etc.). Or is it isolated initiatives carried out by one person?
- Has the club started CSR-initiatives that have come out unsuccessfully? What went wrong? Are there CSR-projects that have been "killed" early in the process? Why?
- Have the clubs been forced to balance different interests to implement CSR-projects?

- In general, what are the biggest challenges from implementing CSR-projects?

7. CSR Experiences:

- What are the primary benefits from the CSR-projects? Can you come up with examples of tangible and measurable effects of the CSR work? Challenges in documenting the work?
- How would you like to be measured if your contribution to society should be documented?
- How does the club communicate CSR (newsletters, Facebook, press releases, reports etc.)? Who do you want to reach with the communication (DFA, local society, firms etc.)?
- Does the club have any examples on stakeholder reactions from the communication (new members, new volunteers, media coverage etc.)?

8. Cooperation with DBU:

- What role has DFA played in the CSR-work (if any)? (facilitator, sponsor, barrier etc.)
- Do you collaborate with DBU on CSR initiatives? Are you satisfied with the collaboration?
- What role should DFA play in order to promote CSR?

9. Final remarks:

- Have we forgotten something?
- Does the club have some material/documentation about the club's CSR-activities?
- Is it OK for us to get back to you if we have further questions?

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- ³² Aguinis, H. and Glavis, A. (2013), Embedded Versus Peripheral Corporate Social Responsibility: Psychological Foundations, *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 6 (2013), 314–332
- ³³ <http://brondby.com/nyhed/2014/01/29/broendby-cares-nyt-projekt-skal-kickstarte-unge-fans>
- ³⁴ Minor, M. (2015). DBU sætter fokus på fodbold og integration. DBU. [online] Available at: https://www.dbu.dk/nyheder/2015/marts/dbu_integration [Accessed 21 Nov. 2016].
- ³⁵ Grayson, D. and Hodges, A. (2008), Corporate Social Opportunity: 7 steps to make corporate social responsibility work for your business, Greenleaf Publishing.
- ³⁶ For more information about the conference, see: http://www.egosnet.org/2017_copenhagen/general_theme