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58th International Art Exhibition - La Biennale
di Venezia, *MayYou Live In Interesting Times*
Laure Prouvost, *Deep see blue surrounding you*
Courtesy: La Biennale di Venezia
Photo by: Francesco Galli

Indice

n.91

Editoriale

- 1 Oltre le emergenze: semi di
resilienza nelle comunità**
di Sandra Federici

Dossier: Emergenza, comunità, resilienza

- 7 Ricominciare altrove. Costruire
resilienza nonostante**
di Graziella Favaro
- 12 L'économie ou l'éthique : Katrina
et la résilience ambiguë à la
Nouvelle Orléans**
par Jean Godefroy Bidima
- 23 La spiritualità come forma di
resilienza per persone rifugiate e
richiedenti asilo**
di Paolo Ballarin
- 35 Emergenza e intercultura:
dove siamo oggi?**
di Silvia Festi e Sara Saleri
- 40 Città multiculturali e resilienti**
di Francesca Borga, Cristina
Demartis e Giordano Munaretto
- 44 Social Resilience and
Co-Creation: the Experience in
the City of Vejle**
by Anna Louise Kristensen



Letteratura

- 50 Una lettura di *La ville où nul
ne meurt* (Rome) di Bernard
Dadié: identità africana,
eternità romana, differenza
parigina**
di Colbert Akieudji
- 56 Geografia delle terre africane
nelle narrazioni letterarie**
di Francesca Romana Paci

Design

- 62 *Design Ethnography* per
l'educazione interculturale:
una ricerca dottorale nella
scuola dell'infanzia**
di Valentina Frosini



- 74** La 58ª Biennale di Venezia 2019: Anche quest'anno l'Africa segna la sua presenza di M.A. Schroth

Eventi

- 76** *Very important persons.* Una mostra sull'accoglienza a Bologna
- 78** "Words4link – Scritture migranti per l'integrazione": la sfida del pluralismo, un anno dopo di Elisabetta Degli Esposti Merli

Libri

- 80** Kaha Mohamed Aden, *Dalmar, La disfavola degli elefanti*
- 82** Louis-Philippe Dalembert, *Mur Mediterranée*
- 84** Ricordo di Andrea Stuppini

Fumetto

- 68** L'emigrazione italiana nel fumetto e nel *graphic novel* di Lorenzo Luatti

Arte

- 72** New Artworks by the Ghana Artist Ibrahim Mahama di M.A. Schroth

Sopra:
Terremoto in Emilia, 2012.
Fine del periodo nelle tende nel campo di accoglienza, San Felice sul Panaro (MO)
© Foto di Medardo Alberghini

A destra:
Statua di San Carlo, interno della chiesa dopo il sisma del 2012, Pieve di Cento (BO)
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Social Resilience and Co-Creation: the Experience in the City of Vejle

The Municipality of Vejle (Denmark) joined the 100 Resilient Cities Network in 2015 and began to identify, assess and overcome its challenges through inclusion and social cohesion.

by Anna Louise Kristensen

Cities across the globe are facing the physical, social and economic pressures of the 21st century. This makes it crucial for cities to build their resilience. According to the 100 Resilient Cities Network, urban resilience «is the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, and systems within a city to survive, adapt, and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience». ¹ When building resilience, it is necessary to look at the city holistically in order to ensure a more efficient resilience approach. By understanding the risks that threaten its stability and by strengthening its underlying fabric, a city can improve its overall trajectory and the well-being of its citizens (100RC 2019).

Two of the essential components for building urban resilience are inclusion and social cohesion: «Higher levels of social cohesion and positive social interactions serve to strengthen the overall fabric of the city, allowing communities to bounce back faster and rebuild themselves more efficiently after experiencing major shocks and stresses» (Bohrer-Kaplan et. al. 2019). Social cohesion improves both disaster preparedness and response and can facilitate a joint vision to build city resilience. A socially cohesive city enjoys a higher level of trust and goodwill, making it easier for community members and networks of communities to work together around disaster preparedness. Members of a socially cohesive city will also be more likely to connect to formal government recovery processes as well as to reach out to one another in the aftermath of a disaster. This allows affected communities to regroup faster following such an event (Bohrer-Kaplan et al. 2019). Building resilience is a common project for all individuals and actors in the city, since they all share the city's risks and challenges. In order to create a shared ownership, it is necessary to adopt an inclusive approach and engage different sectors and communities in the city's resilience efforts.

Vejle Municipality has been working on resilience and social

cohesion for many years. When the city of Vejle became a member of the 100 Resilient Cities Network in 2015 it adopted a more strategic approach, which led to the development of its Resilience Strategy in 2016. Vejle's Resilience Strategy integrated social resilience and co-creation and developed several initiatives to promote these key action areas. This paper will review some of those initiatives and actions aimed at making the city more resilient. These include, among others, the 100 Resilient Cities Network, Vejle's Resilience Strategy and finally a successful initiative based on inclusion and co-creation.

100 Resilient Cities

In 2013, the Rockefeller Foundation launched 100 Resilient Cities (100RC), a non-profit organisation dedicated to helping cities all over the world to become more resilient to the social, economic and physical challenges of the 21st century. Between 2013 and 2015 the 100RC received over 1000 applications from prospective cities seeking to join the 100 RC network. By May 2016, 100 cities had been selected from 6 continents and 47 countries. ²

Bearing in mind that the current approach to urban governance is often silo-oriented, the goal of 100RC has been to encourage cities to think proactively, to collaborate through their interconnected challenges and to create solutions in an integrated, inclusive, risk-aware and forward-looking manner. ³ In order to achieve this and hereby help cities to become more resilient, the 100RC supported the cities in four key areas:

1. *Funding for a Chief Resilience Officer:* The member cities received financial and logistical guidance on creating a new position within the city government. This new role was a Chief Resilience Officer, whose purpose was to lead the city's resilience efforts.

2. *Development of a Robust Resilience Strategy:*

The member cities received technical support from experts to develop a robust and holistic Resilience Strategy that reflect-



Vejle Harbour, 2019
© Vejle Kommune

ed each city's needs.

3. *Platform of Partners*: All the cities were provided with access to an innovative Platform of Partners from private, public and non-profit sectors who were able to help them to develop and implement their Resilience Strategies.

4. *Network of member cities*: As members of the 100RC network, the cities were included in a global network of 100 cities who could learn from, and help, each other by sharing knowledge and best practices. By joining the network, they committed themselves to developing and sharing solutions to societal issues of the 21st century.

The city of Vejle in Denmark is one of the 100 cities which make up the network. Being a member of the network enabled Vejle to implement its resilience efforts even more strongly. The following section presents Vejle's vision to transform challenges into possibilities through the city's Resilience Strategy.

Vejle's Resilience Strategy

In 2015, Vejle became the only Scandinavian member city of the 100RC network. Despite Vejle's relatively small size and population, the city had already been addressing the important issue of resilience prior to joining the network. It had launched several projects, but the 100RC network made it possible to approach the topic more strategically. The membership and technical support it received led to the launch of Vejle's Resilience Strategy in March 2016. The Resilience Strategy is the first of its kind in both Denmark and Europe and focuses on the period from 2016 to 2020.

In order to create an efficient Resilience Strategy, the city of Vejle had to first analyse its challenges and risks. Vejle's main challenges relate to climate change (especially flood risks), urbanisation, infrastructure demand, demographic changes in society, changing industries, global economy and new technology. These challenges are addressed through four main action areas in the city's Resilience Strategy:⁴

1. *A Co-creating City*: Through productive partnerships across



public and private sectors, Vejle wants to create the resilient city of tomorrow. The city will centralise resilience as an integrated part of the municipality's development plans and create collaborations between the municipality, the educational institutions and the business sector.

2. *A Climate Resilient City:* Due to rising sea levels, increased rainfall and its unique geographical location, Vejle is extremely susceptible to flooding. As part of the strategy, Vejle wants to turn the water into an asset instead of a challenge. The city will look to innovative solutions, which will create new urban environments whilst at the same time protecting the citizens from the water. Furthermore, Vejle will create public-private partnerships to supply resources to increase resilience and ensure growth through the use of sustainable resources, re-

newable energy and green transport.

3. *A Socially Resilient City:* I: In order to prevent social polarisation, Vejle wants to strengthen the social cohesion of the city and launch initiatives that will contribute to an increased feeling of solidarity among the citizens of Vejle. The main focus is to create a set of values and welfare solutions that will work across departments in the municipality. The shift will be from a compensation-based approach to an approach whereby citizens are encouraged to make the changes themselves with the support of the municipality and the public services. In addition, Vejle will create new urban spaces and build social housing to strengthen community cohesion.

4. *A Smart City:* Vejle aims to be a Resilient Smart City. This entails protecting the city from cyberattacks, fostering inclu-



Koncert in Byrparken
© Vejle Kommune

sion of all citizens in the digital society, bolstering the trustworthiness of using data and increasing the strength and efficiency of its digital infrastructure. Among other things, Vejle will use smart technologies to create an efficient and economically robust society as well as to help the city's children to develop their digital skills.

Besides the four strategic action areas, Vejle's Resilience Strategy also foresees 100 initiatives and actions that will help to solve both existing and future societal challenges.

Resilience Business Cup

"A Co-creating city" is one of the cornerstones of Vejle's Resilience Strategy and is based on the notion that everyone can contribute to building a resilient city, whether they are

individuals, communities, companies or public sector bodies. The main focus of this action area is to create a resilient city by involving the city's citizens as well as its public and private operators. Resilience is a collective matter and by adopting this strategy, Vejle seeks to involve all those who are interested - on local, regional, national and international level.⁵ One of the initiatives that promotes the aspect of co-creation is the Resilience Business Cup (RBC) supported by the 100RC collaboration. The Resilience Business Cup is a competition and a conference held every other year that aims to bring together start-ups, corporates, and municipality figures as well as the 100RC network to find innovative solutions to the world's economic, societal and physical challenges.

The first Resilience Business Cup was held in 2018 at Spinderihallerne in the city of Vejle. 1000 start-ups from around the world signed up to join the competition. A screening process, designed by an expert panel from Grundfos, Siemens Gamesa and Impact+, selected the final 10 start-ups to participate in the competition.⁶ On the 25th of October 2018, the competition opened with various keynote speakers from Vejle Municipality and corporate bodies, who presented the Municipality's particular challenges relating to water, energy and social resilience. During the two days of the competition, the ten start-ups developed potential solutions to Vejle Municipality's main challenges in collaboration with corporate bodies and industry and growth experts. The start-ups pitched their innovative solutions to the Resilience Business Cup judges, who then selected a winner from each category. The winners were rewarded with the opportunity to collaborate with relevant businesses, Vejle Municipality and RBC2018 partners to fine tune their business models and further develop their solutions. Furthermore, the judges also announced the winner of the Impact prize which spanned the different categories.⁷ The winner from the energy category was Deedster from Sweden, who developed an app that makes sustainable living easier and more fun. Among other things, the app is able to calculate your carbon footprint and give you an overview of your consumption's impact on the planet. The winner of the water category was Aquobex from Great Britain who also won the Impact prize. Aquobex create and develop sustainable strategies to reduce the impact of flood risk. Lastly, Ygdra from Denmark won the prize in the social resilience category. Ygdra develops interior designs and toys for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The overall aim of the Resilience Business Cup 2018 was to develop and implement innovative solutions to tackle Vejle's challenges, whilst at the same time sharing knowledge and solutions with other cities around the world via the 100RC network. The Resilience Business Cup is a good example of an initiative that, through co-creation, makes use of the society's different resources as a way of developing solutions to the challenges of the 21st century.

An app to participate

The Swedish start-up, Deedster, was the winner of the energy

category with their app which enables users to influence and control their own consumption. Their digital platform addresses sustainability in a fun and user-friendly way and is developed in cooperation with World Wildlife Fund (WWF). Based on the fact that today's society and consumerism are far from sustainable, the Deedster app seeks to make it fun and rewarding to change behaviour and attitudes. The app makes users aware of their consumption and lifestyle and gives them a clear picture of how this lifestyle affects the planet. Through different initiatives, the app encourages users to do sustainable deeds in order to lower their carbon footprint.⁸

In order to increase awareness of sustainability and to encourage sustainable living among users, the app has four functions: *Calculation of carbon footprint*: based on the consumption and lifestyle of the user, the app automatically calculates their carbon footprint. In order to do this, the app needs to know about the user's habits relating to food, transportation, accommodation and shopping.

Education and knowledge - Deedster quiz: users can test their knowledge of sustainability with the Deedster quiz. The quiz will challenge the user regardless of his/her level of knowledge on sustainable living. *Act by doing deeds*: users can lower their carbon footprint by doing sustainable deeds. Every day the user receives suggestions and ideas on how to reduce their CO₂ emissions. The suggested activities are not time-consuming and can be done in just a few minutes. For instance, buying draught beer instead of beer in bottles or buying a book in a paperback instead of hardback. Having completed the deed, the user will then be able to see how much CO₂ he/she has saved.

The Deedster challenge: users can compete with family, friends or colleagues to compare whose carbon footprint is the biggest. Users can also compare their present carbon footprint with a past one.

"Deedster for companies" is a challenge that seeks to develop an organisation's culture through gamified climate action and group challenges. If a company chooses to participate, the Deedster team will tailor the content specifically to that organisation. Before the company begins the competition, the Deedster team will introduce the challenge at a Kick-off meeting and give an inspiring talk about climate change. During the competition the teams have access to a scoreboard, which tracks both the team's and the organisation's progress in saving CO₂. This will encourage employees to do more sustainable deeds in order to improve their ranking. At the end of the challenge, a winning team is announced.⁹

One of the organisations that has participated in the "Deedster Challenge for Companies" is Vejle Municipality in Denmark. The Municipality of Vejle invited all of its citizens to join the climate challenge, which was launched with the aim of reducing the CO₂ emission and enhancing sustainable living in the Municipality. 35 teams participated in the challenge that ran from the 14th of November to the 12th of December 2019. By the end of the challenge, the winning team had saved 2.040 kg CO₂e by doing 537 sustainable deeds and in total all the teams

put together had saved 28.346 kg CO₂e and carried out 8.161 sustainable deeds.¹⁰

More than 100 companies and organisations have used Deedster Challenge to engage their employees in the battle against climate change.

Conclusion

Social cohesion and inclusion are crucial to ensuring effective resilience efforts. The fabric of a society will be weakened if citizens are not included in formal governance processes, in informal networks or in day-to-day social interactions. When we make use of all resources in our society, we have a better chance of surviving, adapting and growing no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks we experience.

When developing its Resilience Strategy, Vejle became aware that the challenges of the city demanded a stronger focus on inclusion and social cohesion. This was reflected in two of the main action areas of the Resilience Strategy, entitled "A Co-Creating city" and "A Socially Resilient city". One of Vejle's initiatives aimed at inclusion and co-creation was the Resilience Business Cup, which sought to bring together start-ups, corporate bodies, the municipality and the 100RC network with the aim of developing innovative solutions to the world's economic, societal and physical challenges. This event was a triumphant success. It saw the development of various resilience initiatives and the establishment of collaborations on both a national and international level.

Cities around the world continue to face the risks and opportunities that come with the escalating consequences of climate change, globalisation and rapid urbanisation. It is an ongoing issue that affects us all, which is why it is even more important to engage, include and consider everyone.

*
In order to create a shared ownership, it is necessary to adopt an inclusive approach and engage different sectors and communities in the city's resilience efforts.
 *

NOTES

- 1 - From "100 Resilient Cities" website, <http://100resilientcities.org/resources>, consulted on December 2019.
- 2 - From "100 Resilient Cities" website, <http://100resilientcities.org/about-us>, consulted on December 2019.
- 3 - From "Resilient cities, resilient lives. Learning from the 100RC network", available at <http://100resilientcities.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/100RC-Report-Capstone-PDF.pdf>, consulted on December 2019.
- 4 - For Vejle's Resilience Strategy see "100 Resilient Cities" website, <http://100resilientcities.org/strategies/vejle/>, consulted on December 2019.
- 5 - *Ibidem*.
- 6 - See the website of Spinderihallerne space, <https://www.spinderihallerne.dk/udvikling-og-projekter/projekter-i-huset/resilience-business-cup/>, consulted on December 2019.
- 7 - *Ibidem*.
- 8 - See the website of Stockholm School of Entrepreneurship (SSES), <https://www.sses.se/stories/deedster/>, consulted on December 2019.
- 9 - See the website of Deedster app, <https://www.deedster.com/for-organisationer>, consulted on December 2019.
- 10 - Vejle Kommune, "Vejle Klimarejse", in <https://www.vejle.dk/om-kommune>



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ABSTRACT EN

Cities today face a growing variety of social, economic and physical challenges. In order to overcome such threats, a city must work on building its resilience through inclusion and social cohesion. An inclusive resilience approach that involves all actors and communities of the city will ensure that the city stands on stronger foundations and is more cohesive, so that citizens reach out to each other, before, during and after a disaster. This paper will focus on the importance of inclusion and social cohesion in building city resilience, presenting the city of Vejle and its resilience efforts as an example.

Anna Louise Kristensen

has a master's degree in Aesthetics and culture from Aarhus University in Denmark and is currently working as a project manager and fundraiser at Vejle Municipality. She is currently working on the AMARE-EU project that seeks to help cities build resilience taking into account those who due to linguistic, social, economic and cultural factors are at severe risk in case of disasters and stresses.

Resilienza sociale e co-creazione: l'esperienza nella città di Vejle

Il network "100 Resilient Cities", lanciato dalla Rockefeller Foundation, definisce la resilienza urbana come «la capacità di individui, comunità, istituzioni, aziende e sistemi interni alla città di sopravvivere, adattarsi e crescere, a prescindere dal tipo di stress cronici o *choc* acuti che sopportano».

I punti cardine di una strategia che implementi la resilienza di una città sono due, l'inclusione e la coesione sociale: una società inclusiva e coesa è in grado di prepararsi meglio ad eventuali traumi o disastri, e a rispondere in maniera molto più efficace in caso questi accadano. I suoi membri aderiscono in misura maggiore a programmi governativi di soccorso e ricostruzione, oltre ad essere più solidali tra di loro. Per creare una società più resiliente è quindi necessario adottare un approccio inclusivo e coinvolgere tutti i settori della popolazione, dal momento che tutti condividono i rischi e le sfide della stessa città.

L'articolo porta l'esempio della città di Vejle, in Danimarca. Entrata a far parte della rete "100 Resilient Cities" nel 2015, la città nel marzo 2016 ha lanciato una "Resilience strategy" supportata e sostenuta dall'intervento del network. La strategia elaborata si fonda su 4 punti: co-creazione (ovvero partnership tra pubblico e privato nella progettazione e creazione della città a venire), resilienza climatica (trasformazione dei rischi climatici in risorse, da gestire in un'ottica "green"), resilienza sociale (creazione di un set di valori e soluzioni di *welfare* trasversali rispetto alla popolazione) e nuove tecnologie (protezione dai *cyber*-attacchi e riduzione del *digital divide*). La città affianca a queste quattro aree di azione anche una serie di iniziative come la Resilience Business Cup (RCB), una conferenza e competizione aziendale che mette allo stesso tavolo *start-up*, aziende e città per trovare soluzioni innovative alle sfide affrontate dall'umanità a livello globale. La RCB si tiene ogni anno e la prima edizione è stata proprio a Vejle nel 2018. Su più di 1000 aziende e *start-up* partecipanti, un gruppo di esperti provenienti dal mondo delle grandi *corporation* ne ha selezionate dieci. Il loro compito era quello di fornire soluzioni innovative per uno dei tre campi in cui la città potrebbe affrontare le sfide più difficili: la gestione dell'acqua, quella dell'energia e la resilienza sociale. I vincitori si aggiudicano la possibilità di collaborare con le grandi aziende *partner* dell'iniziativa e con la città per sviluppare ulteriormente le loro soluzioni e migliorare il loro modello di *business*.

In conclusione, le sfide generate dal cambiamento climatico, dalla globalizzazione e dalla rapida inurbazione sono sempre più vicine, e abbiamo molte più possibilità di superarle se riusciamo a sfruttare tutte le risorse presenti nelle nostre società, rendendole più inclusive e più coese.