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A case of unsuccessful co-operation?

Be an Angel e.V.

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The Research Project

Models of Co-operation between Local Governments and Social Organizations in Germany and China– Migration: Challenges and Solutions (LoGoSO Germany China) is a comparative research project of the Freie Universität Berlin, the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster and the Chinese Academy of Governance, funded by Stiftung Mercator.

This comparative research project looks at the co-operation between state and social organizations (SOs) in China and Germany. It focusses on social service delivery in the area of integration of migrating populations with special attention to the fields of education, employment, vulnerable groups and social assistance (incl. legal aid) as a crosscutting issue to all of the fields. Within this subject area, the project wants to identify different models of state-SO co-operation and analyze which models are successful and why and where this co-operation is problematic. It aims to capture the different models of co-operation in Germany and China, to analyze and compare the underlying structures and to show potentialities for development.

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1 Introduction

Be an Angel is a registered association that started as a grass-roots initiative organized by a small number of friends. Their activities must be seen in conjunction with the inability of the Berlin State Office for Health and Social Assistance (LAGeSo, *Landesamt für Gesundheit und Soziales*) to cope with the quick increase in the number of newly arriving refugees in summer and fall 2015. The surge, and the lacking capacities of the State Office, led to a rising backlog in registering asylum applications and providing social assistance to the asylum seekers. Consequently, hundreds of refugees were waiting in line in front of the office, and often camping outside for many nights due to a lack of accommodation, leaving them without any public assistance in terms of shelter, food or clothing. This situation continued throughout the second half of 2015, including the winter months when bitter cold exacerbated health risks for the refugees waiting outside (Beikler and Vogt 2015; Muy 2016). Seeing their pressing and immediate needs, the founders of Be an Angel became active and supported a large number of persons, mainly by organizing private shelters as well as providing food. Since then, the activities of the association have proliferated, always adapting to the changing needs of the refugees who live in Berlin.

In the following chapter, the association will be depicted in broad strokes regarding its internal structures and development over time. The second chapter then focuses on the activities of the organization and its members, as well as the co-operation with the local government. It will demonstrate that the organization is highly successful in supporting the refugees that it serves and facilitating their access to various services and societal spheres. The members of the association are strongly engaged in service provision and advocacy work. At the same time, the account will show the difficulties the organization faces in co-operating with the local government, accessing funding and creating relationships. Thus, this report shall not be read as the story of a “failed organization” – much to the contrary – but rather as an important case that demonstrates barriers to collaboration between public actors and non-profit organizations. The goal is to provide lessons learned and offer advice on how collaboration could be improved and how the achievement of both the organization’s and the local government’s goals can be facilitated.

2 Information on the organization

2.1 General information

The registered association, Be an Angel, was founded in 2009 with a slightly different focus, namely conducting a charity auction to fund the medical costs for the treatment of a patient in a center for plastic surgery for victims of terror.¹ Afterwards, the activities of the association lay dormant when the founder and her fellow members became parents and time for volunteer work was scarce. However, in 2015, when the LAGeSo failed to accommodate the large numbers of newly arriving refugees, the association was reactivated (Luz 2015). The founder and her friends felt compelled to abate the “third world conditions at LAGeSo” (BAA_MA1)² by assisting the refugees. Some of this support was conducted individually and with high personal engagement, in particular by housing refugees in their private homes (Tölke 2016; Muysers 2015). However, the goal was not to create double structures and

¹ Source: <http://placet-berlin.de/veranstaltungen/2009-september/> (last accessed 02/10/2018).

² „(...) Dritte Welt Zustände am LAGeSo (...)“. Direct citations from the interviews have been translated by the author. The original will be given in the footnotes for easy reference. Each interview is coded by a reference to the organization and the interview partner. A list of all interviews that have been used for this case study is provided at the end of this report.

yet another organization. Therefore, the members of Be an Angel joined forces with other initiatives and organizations such as “Moabit hilft”. The aim was to build on the particular strengths of the members of Be an Angel and thereby contribute to raising awareness, increasing volunteer engagement and enhancing networking (Luz 2015).

2.2 Internal governance structures

“Working with minimal overheads, with donations going directly to projects that have a real and tangible impact, Be an Angel is part of a new movement of humanitarian aid.”³

Be an Angel is a non-profit registered association according to the German Fiscal Code (*Abgabenordnung*). This implies that it must conform to certain requirements such as a non-profit distribution constraint, not engaging in commercial activities and pursuing one of the goals named in the law, which include the promotion of assistance to refugees (§52 *Abgabenordnung*). An association can be exempted from corporate and value added tax if these requirements are fulfilled and the association is registered as charitable. This is the case for Be an Angel. Registered associations need to have at least seven members and are governed by the executive board (*Vorstand*) and the meeting of members (*Mitgliederversammlung*). The rights and duties of these bodies are laid down in the statutes of the association.

According to the website, Be an Angel now has one employee and one intern. The website also lists nine “founders and supporters”. Most of them have professional backgrounds in the fields of arts and culture. For example, the current chairman of the organization, Andreas Tölke, was a journalist for luxury goods and art before quitting his job to work for the association (Mayer 2018; Prengel 2017). The members of the association see their strengths as building networks between individuals, initiatives, businesses and the media and initiating collaboration on concrete projects while at the same time providing hands-on support. They are regularly supported by 16 volunteers. While the written statutes create clear organizational structures, the interview partners emphasize that there are no hierarchies in the organization and that interactions are rather informal: “(...) we are punks and rock ’n roll (...)” (BAA_MA1):

We regularly have a jour fixe in which members and interested persons participate. And apart from that, due to our wonderfully anarchical structures, it [engagement in particular fields, author’s note] always depends on the initiative of the individual, so if someone squeals and says ‘I want to do this and that, I want to take care of that’, there will usually not be anything where someone says ‘No, we do not do that.’ (BAA_MA1)⁴

However, while volunteers can immediately start working for the association in the fields of their interest, the interviewees emphasize that refugees’ personal lives shall be protected. Refugees arriving in Germany are already expected to describe their often burdensome and traumatizing experiences in front of public agencies and other organizations providing assistance. Therefore, they shall not be bothered any further by nosy volunteers, which is why new volunteers are instructed to focus on hands-on support rather than delving into their clients’ lives. This hands-on support often involves paperwork and dealing with public agencies, making the activities of the organization ever more “unsexy” (BAA_MA1), which makes the acquisition of new volunteers more difficult. Moreover, long-

³ <https://beanangel.direct/>, last accessed 15/10/2018.

⁴ „Wir haben regelmäßige Jour Fixe, an denen Vereinsmitglieder und Interessierte teilnehmen. Und ansonsten dank unserer wunderbaren anarchischen Aufstellung ist es immer eine Frage, wie initiativ der Einzelne ist, also wenn jemand quikt und sagt „ich möchte gerne das und das machen, ich möchte mich darum kümmern“, da wird es in der Regel nie irgendetwas geben wo einer sagt, das machen wir aber nicht.“

standing supporters partly have “their” refugees that they continue to support, which limits their availability for new tasks. Volunteers often work independently and only approach the association and its core team of “24/7-people” (BAA_MA1) when there are problems. In this sense, Be an Angel can be described as a grassroots and decentralized organization.

As a registered charitable association, Be an Angel cannot conduct commercial activities. This legal requirement led to the foundation of a separate limited liability company (GmbH) for operating the restaurant *Kreuzberger Himmel* that was established by the association in 2017 (see section 2.3). The company shall reflect the goal to empower refugees and ensure their full participation in society and thus includes refugees as company shareholders (BAA_MA1). In addition, the restaurant shall ultimately become economically viable and even financially support the activities of the association. In its starting phase, the restaurant is sustained by the starting grant of an investor, whereas the association Be an Angel is currently funded mainly by private donations and sustaining members (BAA_MA1). Fundraising campaigns – such as selling T-shirts and conducting charity auctions with works donated by famous artists – supplement these funds.⁵

Be an angel is also supported by designers such as the fashion label Lala Berlin or a jewelry designer, who donate part of their revenue to Be an Angel.⁶ In addition, the association is drawing on crowdfunding platforms such as betterplace.org for the particular needs of specific individuals, including the costs of visa and sponsorship for family reunification or for engaging a lawyer for a particular person and case.⁷ In sum, funding for Be an Angel is always precarious and time-limited, with fundraising consuming a lot of time.

2.3 Activities

The activities of the association are as manifold as the persons coming to and living in Berlin (cf. McGrane 2015). The diversity of activities is due to the fact that Be an Angel does not focus on a particular field of activity but sees the person of the refugee in his or her entirety and supports them in whichever field it is necessary. The clients interviewed for this case underline this encompassing engagement, stating that the members of the association assist them with any problem they have, be it a written communication from a public agency that they do not understand, the search for a language course or a job, or taking a negative asylum decision to court (BAA_NU1; BAA_NU2; BAA_NU3). The goal of Be an Angel’s members is to make themselves superfluous by empowering the individuals to deal with daily life in Germany on their own. However, this requires long-term and close chaperonage by persons who are familiar with the German societal and administrative systems (BAA_MA2).

The changing lives of the refugees in Berlin also result in changing support needs over time. Initial engagement in 2015 focused on immediate relief activities for those refugees that were left

⁵ One auction was conducted in July 2017, another in December 2017 (see <https://www.kunstleben-berlin.de/71572-2/#.WvBKRKSF0Uk>; <http://talkingaboutart.de/artweekend-tips-woche-492017/>; <http://beanangel.direct/steigern-sie-sich-rein/>; <http://www.artberlin.de/andreas-muehe-im-gespraech/>, all last accessed 03/10/2018) with the latter raising more than 40,000€ (<https://www.bz-berlin.de/liveticker/be-an-angel>, last accessed 03/10/2018).

⁶ See <https://hilfe-fuer-helfer.berlin/>, last accessed 03/10/2018; Hille-Fuchs 2017.

⁷ See <https://www.betterplace.org/de/organisations/25276-be-an-angel-e-v>, last accessed 03/10/2018.

unsupported by public actors.⁸ For example, the current chairperson was called by his friend, who asked if he could accommodate a few refugees for a few nights. This was the beginning of his very active engagement, leading to more than 400 refugees housed in his classy three-room apartment over the course of summer 2015. Moreover, he motivated friends to do the same and arranged for several hundreds of job applications and interviews (Hammer 2016: 58; Muysers 2015). The support provided by Be an Angel in 2015 also comprised the provision of food or clothing as well as phone cards to ensure the immediate supply of necessary basic goods for the newly arriving refugees. This engagement was sustained by the surge of “Welcome Culture” that encompassed large parts of the German society in the second half of 2015. As one interview partner put it: “(...) in 2015/16, you were hardly dressed appropriately if you weren’t accompanied by ‘your Syrian’ when going to a barbeque party.” (BAA_MA1)⁹ Consequently, willingness to engage in volunteer work was high.

Now, the activities have become ever more formal and frustrating, often consisting of accompanying refugees to public agencies or dealing with the necessary paperwork (BAA_MA1). The tasks of volunteers and members include supporting legal actions against the denial of asylum applications or requests for work permits.¹⁰ Moreover, despite the heterogeneity of refugees living in Berlin, a common challenge is finding housing. The local housing market in Berlin has become continuously strained and is considered “inaccessible” for refugees, because they are “at the end of the food chain” (BAA_MA1)¹¹. Temporary residence permits make refugees unattractive as renters to landlords who seek long-term contracts. Moreover, instances of discrimination against refugees occur. Practices such as “bribes” of 5,000 Euros abound in a market where the number of persons seeking apartments surpasses available offers by far (BAA_MA2; BAA_NU2). The association is trying to support refugees by keeping eyes and ears open for any available apartment and assisting refugees in communicating with landlords (BAA_MA2). However, the situation is so tense that even recognized refugees often remain in accommodations of the LAF that are legally intended for asylum seekers engaged in the asylum process. This creates administrative obstacles, because the districts are legally obligated to accommodate recognized refugees and pay for their housing costs, i.e. they have to pay back funds to the LAF that they have received from the Senate in the first place. Such proceedings occur so often that they are currently undergoing formalization (BAA_BA-FK).

Another field of support is access to the labor market. Volunteers and members try to ensure access either by finding employment directly or arranging internships or trainings (Prengel 2017; Peemöller 2018). Be an Angel focuses on jobs in gastronomy, where it has good relations with potential employers. In this regard, the newly established restaurant *Kreuzberger Himmel* is an important part and further development of Be an Angel’s philosophy. It will allow refugees to obtain gainful employment and/or qualification as well as promote exchange between Germans or autochthonous Berliners and refugees (BAA_MA1). As a high-class restaurant with elegant furnishings and prominent guests, the concept is viewed as the “second phase” of integration: it is not directed at people only with a political interest and does not display “Refugees Welcome” or other slogans to broadcast its political intention. Instead, exchange and contact with refugees comes naturally as part of “just” going out for a good dinner (Keseling 2018; Mayer 2018). The restaurant is also used for cultural events such as a photo exhibition,

⁸ For statements on the administrative failure and the beginning of the engagement of Be an Angel see <http://beanangel.direct/tagesthemen-beitrag-ueber-die-zustaende-im-lageso-berlin/>; <https://info.arte.tv/de/fluechtlinge-verheddert-im-behoerdendickicht>, both last accessed 03/10/2018.

⁹ „(...) 2015/16 war man ja kaum gut angezogen, wenn man nicht seinen Syrer bei der Grillparty dabei hatte.“

¹⁰ See <http://beanangel.direct/steigern-sie-sich-rein/>, last accessed 04/10/2018.

¹¹ “ der Geflüchtete in Berlin auf dem Wohnungsmarkt ist am Ende der Nahrungskette.“

concerts or readings.¹² These activities will be expanded in the future to contribute to cultural life in the neighborhood and foster the function of the restaurant as a place for exchange between the autochthonous population and the newcomers (BAA_MA1).

2.4 Networks

Collaboration and networking are understood as a key competence of Be an Angel's members. Be an Angel states on its website: "We have networks with public agencies and other volunteer initiatives, are working pragmatically and outcome-oriented, because we do not want any parallel societies."¹³ In practice, the association's networks comprise relationships and collaboration with a number of different actors that either are approached on a case-by-case basis, depending on the needs of the respective client, or are involved more structurally.

For example, in 2015 Be an Angel collaborated with a number of other initiatives and organizations to provide immediate relief (in terms of food or health care; see Herrmann 2015) or to inform the broader public about possibilities for individual engagement and the benefits and pitfalls of offering private housing to refugees (Luz 2015).¹⁴ This collaboration has turned into permanent relationships with a number of initiatives such as "Moabit hilft". Most of these initiatives are part of a young and diverse social movement (cf. Pries 2018). This diversity is an asset on the one hand, while on the other hand it partly makes communication and collaboration difficult (BAA_MA1). These difficulties are reinforced by the broad variety of projects conducted by the initiatives, which are partly redundant and further contribute to the lack of transparency (BAA_MA2). Even so, the initiatives have strongly professionalized in the few years since their establishment and a core of a few organizations have developed a division of labor. Be an Angel has acquired a good reputation for fostering employment integration, while others focus on legal assistance or unaccompanied minors (BAA_MA1). However, this does not imply that Be an Angel does not address those issues when a refugee seeking help is affected by them. Instead, the particular expertise is used as a "back-up" for more complicated cases, i.e. Be an Angel draws on external experts to supplement their own capacities, if necessary (BAA_MA1; BAA_MA2).

The association also has strong relationships with the union of restaurants and hotels (DeHoGa, *Deutscher Hotel- und Gaststättenverband*), which facilitates activities to foster labor market integration. These connections, as well as networks to other unions of potential employers, will be expanded in the upcoming months to inform businesses about the possibilities and regulations regarding employment or training of refugees. This shall help to achieve a better match between the need for qualified labor on the one hand and the available refugee workforce on the other hand. Moreover, it shall contribute to reducing administrative barriers for refugee employment.

To serve unaccompanied minors, Be an Angel draws on the expertise of a local church community and Leuchtturm e.V., another association, to find foster families in collaboration with the local Youth Offices.¹⁵ Moreover, the church community is renting out the rooms for the *Kreuzberger Himmel*,

¹² Cf. <https://www.facebook.com/beanangelberlin/> (last accessed 09/10/2018).

¹³ „Wir sind mit Behörden und andere Helfergruppen vernetzt, arbeiten pragmatisch und lösungsorientiert, weil wir keine Parallelgesellschaft wollen.“ (own translation, see <http://beanangel.direct/steigern-sie-sich-rein/>, last accessed 04/10/2018).

¹⁴ See also <https://www.refugees-welcome-meetup.de/2017/06/01/ankuendigung-be-an-angel-solidrinks-bantabaa/>, last accessed 03/10/2018.

¹⁵ See <https://www.st-bonifatius-berlin.de/02/2017/sei-ein-engel-be-angel>, last accessed 03/10/2018.

thereby assisting the association's activities (Keseling 2018). Be an Angel is also engaged internationally, collaborating with NGOs (non-governmental organizations) such as Human Rights Watch and providing donations in kind to refugees in Belgrade.¹⁶

Despite this widespread collaboration and the good networks of Be an Angel, other providers and initiatives can be viewed as competitors in certain fields. For example, all organizations are seeking the same resources in the fields of housing and childcare, where apartments and places are limited. In housing, for example, the situation is described as so tense that "When we hear that somewhere the mother-in-law has died, we are essentially standing at the coffin with a signature to get the flat." (BAA_MA2)¹⁷

3 Information on the program and the co-operation with the local government

As there is no particular program in which Be an Angel collaborates formally with the local government, this section focuses on the barriers to collaboration faced by the association. This will provide insights into the conditions of success for cross-sectoral collaboration in refugee integration in Berlin and thus further our knowledge on local governance in integration policy.

3.1 General information on the selected program and its development

According to the interview partners, Be an Angel is not structurally involved in policymaking in Berlin. While this might be due to the short existence of the organization (or rather its recent engagement in refugee reception and integration), its members also complain that there is a lack of coherent involvement of non-profit organizations in policy formulation in Berlin in general. Members of Be an Angel think that the particular exclusion of refugee initiatives in policymaking is due to the fact that refugees cannot vote, which diminishes their voice in public policy. The association tries to remedy this by vocal advocacy and lobbying on behalf of the refugees and by empowering them to speak up for themselves. Advocacy is conducted by an active Facebook page, which is used to inform the public about the situation of refugees in Berlin, about difficulties with administrative procedures, bureaucratic hurdles for employment, and also about the successes of Be an Angel in facilitating integration.¹⁸ Members of the association are also highly visible in the media, including online, print media and television.¹⁹ In addition, short videos discussing the activities of Be an Angel are published online, explaining for instance, why it can become necessary to file a complaint in the social court to secure the right to receive social assistance. In the video, Be an Angel also explains how such legal proceedings are also used as a tool to apply political pressure and thereby ultimately contribute to structural changes at LAGeSo.²⁰

However, despite these lobbying and advocacy activities, the interviewees noted that some organizations have easier access to policymakers than others. For example, they criticized the current revision of the Master Plan and the development of an Integrated Concept for Integration. The "Master Plan for Integration and Security" (Senat Berlin 2016), is the city's integration concept, which outlines

¹⁶ See <https://beanangel.direct/about-us/>, last accessed 15/10/2018.

¹⁷ "(...) wenn man hört, irgendwo ist die Schwiegermutter gestorben, stehen wir im Prinzip am Sarg mit einer Unterschrift, um diese Wohnung zu kriegen."

¹⁸ See also <https://www.facebook.com/beanangelberlin/> (last accessed 09/10/2018).

¹⁹ Cf. e.g. <https://info.arte.tv/de/fluechtlinge-verheddert-im-behoerdendickicht>, last accessed 04/10/2018.

²⁰ Ann Esswein in <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cuUL1W8seQA&feature=youtu.be>; Andreas Tölke in <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ttnABJHjke&feature=youtu.be>; both last accessed 07/05/2018.

various activities to foster the integration of newcomers in Berlin. The plan also contains funding for these activities, supplementing regular budgetary funds. While the plan understands integration as a task of both society and the local government, the establishment of the plan and the determination of the measures foreseen in it have been widely criticized as a top-down procedure without participation of civil society actors. Moreover, its contents are criticized because it focuses too much on security issues rather than empowerment and participation (Garrelts 2017). The Master Plan is currently being revised by the Senate Administration with the explicit goal of enhancing participation of civil society, among other measures by a series of meetings called “Integration in Dialogue” (“*Integration im Dialog*”) where interested organizations and citizens can provide input into the policy-making procedure (Abgeordnetenhaus Berlin 2018).

Policymakers and some organizations praise the revision of the Master Plan as a successful, open and participatory process. In particular, access by established organizations (cf. BR_BBZ_MA; KA_MA) and those with networks close to the public administration appears to have worked well (cf. BR_SenIAS). Nonetheless, the meetings “Integration in Dialogue” are mainly fora for consultation, while ultimate decisions remain with the policymakers. In addition, expert working groups on particular topics were established with members of the administration and organized civil society. However, the interviewees of Be an Angel describe the selection of participating organizations for the working groups as selective and dependent upon personal networks. This resulted in the exclusion of Be an Angel’s representatives from these working groups despite the fact that they explicitly announced an interest in participating (BAA_MA1). In order to compensate for the resulting lack of direct participation, Be an Angel drew on the good connections to other non-profit organizations: Together with eight other organizations, they formed an action alliance for information-sharing and joint contributions. Moreover, they organized a conference together with associations participating in the working groups to discuss their results and provide further input (BAA_MA1).

In sum, Be an Angel states that it is hardly involved in policymaking even though they have become responsible for the implementation of policies and deal with the consequences. One interview partner formulates this rather drastically, explaining that the association is compensating for the shortcomings of public agencies: “We are sorting out the shit [mess] that the administration and politics have done.”²¹ With the activities outlined in section 2.3 of this report, Be an Angel is providing services that could theoretically be funded by public agencies or even be seen as public tasks. For example, placing refugees in training or paid employment is a task that is legally assigned to the employment agencies (for short-term German unemployed persons and asylum seekers during their asylum procedure) and job centers (for long-term German unemployed persons and recognized refugees as well as “tolerated” persons; cf. Gluns 2018a). These agencies often work together with private or non-profit organizations, e.g. to provide training or additional qualifications. However, collaboration is restricted to legally certified organizations, thus advantaging long-established providers and hindering funding opportunities for new organizations such as Be an Angel (cf. Klie *et al.*: 31).

There is also the possibility to get paid for this. In this case you would have to be certified, then you could get funding per each placement in training or employment. We cannot [obtain these funds], because we do not have the 2,500 Euros for the certification procedure; or rather we do

²¹ “Um es ganz brachial zu formulieren: Wir schleppen die Scheiße raus, die Verwaltung und Politik angerichtet hat.”

not have anyone who can do that and familiarize himself or herself with it. This means that we are doing the work of the state – for which other agencies get a lot of money – for free. (BAA_MA1)²²

Other funding opportunities e.g. for supporting volunteers, are usually of short duration and provide only limited amounts of funding. For example, in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, organizations could apply for 2,000 Euros each (BAA_BA-FK). This is hardly sufficient for funding an entire organization, even if it could be used to recompense the efforts of volunteers. Another problem with obtaining public funding is that most of the funds are project-based. This implies that new projects have to be created to access the funds, whereas operation and overhead costs are rarely included (BAA_MA2). Moreover, time-limited funding creates high turnover of organizations and initiatives and thereby adds to the lack of transparency of the constellation of actors in the field of integration (BAA_BA-FK). For an organization such as Be an Angel, such project-based funding sources are hardly suitable. Their goal is to provide encompassing and continuous support that is tailored to the needs of each individual, which means their activities encompass a range of different fields rather than clearly delineated activities in a particular project. This type of service provision would require a continuous funding stream in order to fully achieve their objectives.

3.2 Distribution of responsibilities in the program

Responsibilities in the local public administration in Berlin have undergone many changes, with the creation of new agencies such as the State Office for Refugees (*Landesamt für Flüchtlingsangelegenheiten*, LAF) and the Coordination for Refugee Management (*Koordination Flüchtlingsmanagement*), there were new tasks created and existing tasks required reassignment among public agencies (cf. Gluns 2018b). This dynamic has created, or rather reinforced, a lack of transparency of public administration in the field of integration, which can also create impediments to collaboration. This can lead to instances of public agencies working at cross-purposes, e.g. when responsibilities are unclear or even passed back and forth between public agencies (cf. BAA_MA1). Even if both interviewees representing Be an Angel have been active in the field for several years now and are highly engaged, they still have trouble finding the persons in charge of certain issues. Moreover, they observe that there is a lack of knowledge among some public employees regarding their respective field of activity. In those cases, due to their long-term engagement, the members of Be an Angel partly feel compelled to give advice that might improve public service provision to their clients, but state that some public employees are reluctant to implement their suggestions (BAA_MA2).

The lack of transparency of the administrative procedures in terms of the asylum application, and the provision of social assistance, is also confirmed by the interviewed users. They describe how they hardly understand what is happening to them, what is requested from them and who is responsible for which kind of services or information. For example, a refugee who applied for relocation from Cottbus to Berlin in order to take up work, stated that he was left without any information regarding the procedures to be conducted and the duration of the application process:

²² „Es gibt ja auch die Möglichkeit, dass man sich das bezahlen lässt, zum Beispiel müsste man dann zertifiziert sein, da würde man über Bildungsgutschein pro vermittelten Ausbildungsplatz oder Job Geld kriegen. Kriegen wir gar nicht, weil wir die 2500 Euro für das Zertifizierungsprozedere nicht haben, beziehungsweise auch keine Person, die das machen kann und sich da einarbeiten kann. Das heißt also, wir machen die Arbeit des Staates, wo andere Agenturen richtig Geld für kriegen, einfach umsonst.“

I also do not know that. I have no information. [Name of a member of Be an Angel] is doing that for me and I do not know how that works. We wrote two complaints last month. I have not yet received a reply. (BAA_NU1)²³

Oftentimes, the refugees do not even know the ways in which they already receive assistance from public agencies. Asked about financial and other assistance that he receives, one interviewed user states “Nobody helped us, nobody paid for us.” (BAA_NU2). However, when asked in more detail about the procedures regarding language courses, health care etc., he said that an “office” in the group accommodation arranged for a language course that was paid for by the job center, he received a health insurance card he can use when going to the doctor, and that his children are going to public schools. Thus, even when assistance is provided and used, it may not always be clear which public agencies are involved and how they help. This hinders the autonomy of the refugees regarding their lives as independent subjects, rather than passive objects of public procedures and structures. Taken together, the convoluted assignment of responsibilities among public agencies in Berlin hampers assistance to refugees and also make it difficult to achieve the policy goals laid out in the Master Plan for Integration and Security, which include the empowerment of the refugees to live independently.

The refugee coordinators in the District Offices have the task of bridging these cleavages and directing all requests to the responsible stakeholders, be it the Youth Office, the job center, refugee accommodations or the social housing department. However, there are only three coordinators in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, who must deal with all kinds of requests, pass on information between public and private actors, be present in networking bodies, gain and maintain an overview of the various NPOs active in the district as well as other districts, and be knowledgeable in the different policy fields dealing with integration (BAA_BA-FK). This workload requires setting priorities and arranging for an internal division of labor, whereby the different employees focus on certain topics.

Most public actors acknowledge the difficulties in accessing housing in Berlin and strive to help, if possible. For example, the district Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg is currently institutionalizing a project called “housing scouting” (*Wohnscouting*) that shall provide encompassing counselling services to all homeless persons irrespective of their legal status and migration background. These services are offered in collaboration with nonprofit organizations.²⁴ Moreover, a roundtable on Alternatives for the Public Accommodation of Refugees has been institutionalized together with two Senate agencies in order to enable exchange between different actors in the housing market. However, the impact of these measures is constrained by the lack of available housing offers (BAA_BA-FK).

3.3 Co-operation with the local government

Despite these difficulties in cooperating with public actors in Berlin, the members of Be an Angel rely on the activities of a number of public agencies in their work. For example, according to public policy, recognized refugees should leave the group accommodations for asylum seekers and live independently in their own apartments. If they cannot cover their rent from earned income, it is paid for by the job centers. Thus, when Be an Angel assists refugees who want to move to their own apartments, they can obtain financial assistance from the job centers. Similar procedures apply for asylum seekers who have the right to live in their own apartments after a few months. Such “decentral

²³ „Ich weiß das auch nicht. Ich habe keine Informationen. [Name des Mitarbeiters] macht das für mich und ich weiß nicht wie das funktioniert. Wir haben im letzten Monat zwei Klagen geschrieben. Ich habe bis jetzt keine Antwort bekommen.“

²⁴ See www.wohnscouting.de, last accessed 07/11/2018.

accommodation” should be the rule according to state law in Berlin (Schammann and Kühn 2016: 12). In their case, the State Office for Refugees (*Landesamt für Flüchtlingsangelegenheiten*, LAF) covers the rent payments if asylum seekers do not have of sufficient incomes. However, in order for the public agencies to meet the costs of housing, there are bureaucratic procedures to be observed. They require that a particular offer for a rental contract be submitted to the job center or LAF, whose employees verify that the offer complies with the standards for rental subsidies. Afterwards, a contract can be signed, and rents are paid for, or supplemented by, the respective public agency. According to the interview partners, though, this process often stalls in practice:

And in parallel to this, we have noted – because we are always accompanying refugees to the job centers or the LAF to arrange for rent subsidies for the apartments they have rented – that, even if all documents are there and in order, rents are not paid. [...] Whereupon we have had cases where the landlord of the newly found apartment has thrown them out after three months, because rents were not covered and nobody in the LAF can tell us what is responsible for it. (BAA_MA1)²⁵

Similar difficulties have been encountered with the association’s activities for work integration. Be an Angel not only acts as a counselling agency for refugees, but also as an employer in the case of the *Kreuzberger Himmel*, giving them broad experience in dealing with public agencies in the field of labor market integration. As an employer, Be an Angel can access the regular support offers of the public job centers and employment agencies for unemployed persons. However, cooperation between the responsible public agencies is not always sufficient. For example, the employment agency has an “Employers’ Service – Team Asylum”, which is responsible for assisting employers who want to employ refugees. The job centers, on the other hand, are responsible for disbursing subsidies to employers engaging refugees. According to the experience of the interview partners of Be an Angel, collaboration between the two is not sufficient, creating barriers and time lags in accessing support. While employers with a social mission may be willing to overcome such barriers, other – purely profit-driven – businesses likely shy away from such bureaucratic obstacles, which thus diminish the impact of the assistance measures (BAA_MA1).

The members of Be an Angel see three causes for the difficulties in coordination between public agencies. Firstly, they attribute some of the hurdles to the leeway that public employees have regarding approval of work permits or confirmations of rent payments. Depending on the respective case worker, the amount of discretion is often used to the detriment of refugees, i.e. resulting in restrictive decisions (BAA_MA1). However, the interviewees acknowledge that other public employees try to do their best to assist refugees in finding employment, training or housing. Nonetheless, such well-meaning employees are – secondly – often blocked by structural barriers. In particular, austerity policy in Berlin has diminished the public workforce that is available for handling the applications for work permits, for providing information etc. (Tölke 2016). Thus, the caseworkers are overstrained and cannot devote sufficient time and resources to each case, which also includes time spent on coordination or communication with other agencies (BAA_MA1; BAA_MA2). Thirdly, the lack of transparency in responsibilities of public agencies in Berlin implies that a lot of time is also devoted to

²⁵ „Und parallel dazu haben wir festgestellt, da wir ja immer mit den Geflüchteten mitgehen, zum Beispiel in das LAF oder in das Jobcenter, um Mietübernahmen durchzukriegen, für die Wohnungen, die die angemietet haben. Dass da, obwohl die Bescheide alle vorhanden und richtig eingereicht wurden, die Miete halt nicht kommt. [...] Worauf wir schon Fälle hatten, dass nach drei Monaten der Vermieter der neugefundenen Wohnung, sie wieder rausgeschmissen hat, weil die Miete nicht übernommen wurde und keiner uns sagen kann im LAF, woran liegt es jetzt.“

finding the right person in to assist in the particular issue faced by an individual refugee and, if necessary, coordinating the activities of the various public agencies involved.

Despite these difficulties, some instances of collaboration between Be an Angel and public actors are visible. For example, the District Mayor provided an office for the association in the District Office (*Bezirksamt*) of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg without requiring a lot of paperwork. The location of the office in close proximity to the restaurant *Kreuzberger Himmel* facilitates work for the employees of Be an Angel (BAA_MA1). Moreover, its location in the District Office facilitates collaboration with the District Representative for Integration, who is based in the same building. Even so, this has not been achieved so far, because neither the Representative nor the personnel of Be an Angel have yet approached one another to enter into contact (BAA_MA1; BAA_MA2). However, Be an Angel had only moved into the offices six weeks prior to the interview, which is a very short time to engage in networking activities, i.e. contact between the association and the District Representative might yet be established.

The experience of other organizations in Berlin shows that becoming acquainted with the District Representatives for Integration, as well as other District agencies, can be an important resource for refugee initiatives (cf. KA_MA; KA_JA1; KA_BA-R). Firstly, they are nodal points in the networks on refugee integration:

And I am always saying that I am sort of the classical coordinating entity. So, I have a general idea about each of the fields, but in essence I am mainly doing referrals and trying to find the one who actually springs into action. (BAA_BA-FK)²⁶

In addition, the District Offices usually also dispense funds from the Master Plan for Integration and can facilitate access to other funds as well (cf. Senatsverwaltung für Finanzen 2017; BAA_BA-FK; as well as the other reports of this work package). Be an Angel has itself experienced the importance of local networks in the past – or rather, it has experienced the barriers that lacking networks can impose:

In fact, we have once been in a situation that we found out about this [funding opportunity], searched for it, ultimately also found the responsible person, who said: ‘Excuse me, it is 12 o’clock, it has been official since 10am, this funding opportunity, and since 10:05 it is all distributed.’ This basically implies that already before, internally, by the decision-makers, funds had been handed through to the established organizations, and we as newcomers did not have any chance to obtain anything. (BAA_MA2)²⁷

This quote, as well as the statements of public interview partners, point to the fact that proactively engaging in networking activities with public employees can be a cost-intensive but ultimately rewarding endeavor (cf. BAA_BA-FK).

Apart from instances of cooperation regarding labor market integration, Be an Angel is involved in finding foster families and legal custodians for unaccompanied minors together with Leuchtturm e.V. and the local Youth Office, as mentioned before. Custodians are needed if a minor migrant, who is not

²⁶ „Und ich sage immer, ich glaube ich bin diese klassische Koordinationsstelle dann. Also ich habe von allen Bereichen bisschen Ahnung, aber ich leite im Prinzip nur weiter und versuche dann den zu finden, der tatsächlich aktiv wird.“

²⁷ „[...] tatsächlich sind wir einmal in die Situation gekommen, dass wir davon erfahren haben, das gesucht haben, irgendwann auch den Ansprechpartner fanden, der dann sagte: ‘Hören Sie mal, es ist 12 Uhr, das ist seit 10 Uhr offiziell, diese finanzielle Förderungsmöglichkeit, und seit 10:05 ist alles verteilt.’ Das bedeutet ja, dass das schon vorher im Prinzip, intern, sozusagen, von den Entscheiden, an die etablierten Organisationen, schon durchgereicht wurde, und wir als Newcomer überhaupt keine Chance hatten, überhaupt da heranzukommen.“

accompanied by his or her parents or legal guardian, wishes to apply for asylum or conduct other legal or administrative matters. Custodians can be employees of the youth office or individuals who are appointed by the family courts if they are suitable to represent the interests of the minor.²⁸ However, the large number of newly arriving unaccompanied minors since 2015, put a strain on many local youth offices – including in Berlin²⁹ – and increased the need for private custodians. The endeavors of Be an Angel in this regard thus help to ease the strain on the Youth Offices and improve support to young refugees.

3.4 Assessment of the effect of the program

As mentioned before, Be an Angel has provided accommodation and immediate services to hundreds of newly arriving refugees in Berlin since 2015. This includes 1,800 persons who have been accompanied during the administrative procedures of the asylum application and related topics. Moreover, 800 persons have been assisted in filing motions for urgent action to receive social assistance and 120 persons have been accompanied to hearings at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (*Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge*, BAMF). In order to reduce discrimination in the housing market and foster independent living, Be an Angel is also acting as principal tenant for 20 apartments.³⁰ They have assisted 70 persons in finding employment or training (BAA_MA1; Peemöller 2018). For example, Be an Angel organized an internship for a young Syrian woman in a hotel in Berlin, who is now participating in training there to become a hotel specialist (Prenzel 2017). Taken together, these numbers represent a huge success for an organization that almost exclusively consists of volunteers. In addition, over the course of the last three years, the organization has professionalized and expanded both in terms of its size and the diversity of its activities. Such organizational growth and development can also be understood as an indicator of success in terms of meeting an existing need and finding the resources for the expansion.

The importance of the organization's services is also underlined by the interviewed users. One of them was left without any sustenance in front of the LAGeSo for 15 days before being told that his application had been lost and he would have to undergo the entire procedure once more (BAA_NU3). In addition, all of the interviewees stated that without the information and support obtained from Be an Angel, they would not have been able to navigate the German administrative system e.g. in terms of obtaining funding for a language course, receiving the permission to move to Berlin or obtaining a working permit. The standardized information provided by public agencies about how to obtain an apartment in Germany does not help in fostering independence. For example, one user explains that he already knew about the general procedures in the German housing market, but that the leaflets provided did not help if his e-mails stating interest in housing offers remain unanswered due landlord preferences or even discrimination (BAA_NU2). Moreover, the information provided by LAGeSo was initially only been in German (Tölke 2015). The employees and volunteers of Be an Angel thus supplement public information and services and try to overcome barriers by individualized support and by accompanying refugees to potential employers or landlords in order to reduce discrimination or reservations and to facilitate communication.

The *Kreuzberger Himmel* is a steppingstone for employment in Germany. For example, one interviewed user had worked as a cook for 20 years in high-class restaurants and hotels before coming to Germany,

²⁸ Cf. <https://b-umf.de/p/vormundschaft/>, last accessed 09/10/2018.

²⁹ <http://encourage-ev.de/>, last accessed 09/10/2018.

³⁰ All data retrieved from <https://beanangel.direct/about-us/>, last accessed 15/10/2018.

but did not obtain qualified employment here because he does not have the formal certificates required by the German job market (Peemöller 2018; BAA_NU2). In the organization's restaurant, he can at least continue working, and thereby proving his experience when applying for other positions, even if the employment does not help in obtaining formal certificates of qualifications that are needed in the strongly regularized German labor market (BAA_NU2). Another young refugee would like to work as a waiter in Berlin and is currently doing an internship at the *Kreuzberger Himmel* to improve his German language capacities and collect first experience on the job (BAA_NU1). Even if these are only understood as first steps, they can be helpful in accessing gainful employment in the long run.

In addition, Be an Angel is trying to support refugees in achieving family reunification. The importance of these services is underlined by two of the interviewed users who state that the time spent in Germany without their families, and the experience of watching their children grow up via Skype, counts among the worst years of their lives (BAA_NU2; BAA_NU3). Apart from the direct emotional impact of not having their families near them, both describe how worrying about their families hinders their integration because they cannot focus things like language acquisition. Moreover, they underline how the inability to become active themselves and organize their lives was wearing them out. This lack of autonomy includes having to wait for the decision of the BAMF and, if applicable, the decision of the court regarding the appeals procedure, waiting for the political decision if and how family reunification for refugees with "subsidiary protection" was allowed, waiting for a working permit and an individual apartment – all the while being left with hardly any information while at the same time being confronted with the expectation that they should engage in language courses and/or internships to build a future in Germany which they do not know if they will ever have the chance to live (BAA_NU2; BAA_NU3). Be an Angel is trying to assist them in regaining control over their lives and becoming active members of society by helping them to find employment, housing and obtaining a say in the matters that concern them.

The success of Be an Angel and the *Kreuzberger Himmel* is also certified by the website of "Social Impact", an agency that provides qualification and counselling for young social enterprises and promotes social innovation. They list the association as an "inspiring example" of a social startup.³¹ The concept and food of the *Kreuzberger Himmel* are also praised by various reviewers in local, regional and national media:

The cooks, who can only work as kitchen help due to German bureaucracy – as we learned – are professionals and you can note that in the precision and artisanry of the dishes. (Gassert 2018, author's translation)

At the same time, this quote also demonstrates how the "exuberant bureaucracy" (BAA_MA1)³² in Germany hinders work integration and thereby limits the success of Be an Angel. Regulations regarding the employment of migrants and refugees are often unclear to employers, who are also not always aware of the manifold possibilities for support, e.g. in terms of financial supplements for the salary in the first months of the employment, additional language courses or qualifications for refugees to obtain the necessary certificates. Finally, employers are often not familiar with intercultural exchange. Even if they have employed migrants before, they may not be aware of the specific situation of refugees in terms of legal regulations and/or experiences and living situation (BAA_MA1). Therefore,

³¹ See https://socialimpactstart.eu/teams/ansicht-suche/news/be-an-angel-ev-mit-kreuzberger-himmel/?tx_news_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=News&tx_news_pi1%5Baction%5D=detail&cHash=b6bd33dd415601204ecc2f1a3a5e3f04, last accessed 03/10/2018.

³² "überbordende Bürokratie".

when Be an Angel is trying to organize placement in work, it has to provide a lot of information to potential employers in order to clarify legal regulations and enhance the transparency of the supportive measures they can access.

Thus, while Be an Angel can be considered as successful in its work, the effect of the organization's activities could be enhanced by removing administrative barriers and providing a smooth collaboration of all the actors involved. In particular, communication and collaboration between the different job centers and other public agencies are mentioned repeatedly as a crucial hindrance for achieving the commonly pursued goals such as promoting decentral accommodation and fostering employment. A refugee moving from the responsibility of one job center to another will often experience problems regarding the handover of responsibilities for rent payments, which can result in his or her losing the rental contract (BAA_MA2). Similarly, interviewees describe how the lack of communication between various public entities exacerbated the housing situation for refugees, who are currently accommodated in a hangar in the former airport on the Tempelhofer Feld. In this case, achievement of the policy goal of quickly clearing all emergency accommodations in Berlin is stalling because a newly constructed container accommodation, by the same provider, which is located directly outside the hangar – and which would represent an improvement in living conditions for the refugees – is left vacant because it does not comply with the zoning regulations of the property. The interview partners relate this instance as an example of a lack of communication between various public entities where information is not passed on, thus hampering collaboration (BAA_MA1).

4 Conclusion

The case of Be an Angel demonstrates how an association can be involved in many networks and at the same time be left fending for itself in instances where collaboration and cooperation are not sufficient. The social movement of various initiatives and organizations providing support, as well as the numerous public entities involved in integration in a city as large and diverse as Berlin, result in an intricate maze of actors that is hard to permeate, even by experienced and locally-embedded actors, let alone newly arriving refugees (cf. BAA_NU1). At the same time, knowledge about the different actors and multipliers is a prerequisite of successful collaboration. Such oversight is partially hindered by the turnover of organizations and initiatives as well as by spokespersons of the respective organizations (BAA_BA-FK).

The perception is that local government is not creating clarity in regards the constellation of actors and support offers:

BAA_MA1: [...] even if the Senate itself had asserted that there are too many superimposable offers. There is no clever interconnectedness, not at all.

BAA_MA2: You can see that also on the websites of the Senate.

BAA_MA1: Oh, terrible!

BAA_MA2: Once you get started on those, you end up in madness, because it is designed in such a confusing way that there are no clear cross references to certain pools, where you could get some addresses or something else; that does not exist at all.³³

³³ BAA_MA1: [...] obwohl der Senat das selbst festgestellt hatte, dass es viel zu viel deckungsgleiche Angebote gibt. [...] Da gibt es keine gescheite Vernetzung, überhaupt nicht.

BAA_MA2: Das sieht man aber auch auf den Internetseiten des Senats.

The interview partners also criticize that many funding programs are not tailored to the needs of the refugees. They suspect that programs are designed at the drawing board by persons who hardly have any contact with refugees, resulting in duplication, whereas certain groups such as young single men³⁴ are left with hardly any support at all (BAA_MA1). At the same time, the District Office states that they initiated and participated in a number of different networks to prevent parallel offers of different providers. So far, Be an Angel has not been part of these rounds, but the interviewee expressed the intention to invite them to the next meeting of a network of organizations providing piloting functions for refugees (BAA_BA-FK).

Apart from the lack of coordination of various non-profit offers, the interviewees see the lack of coordination between the different public agencies as the main hindrance to their goals and activities:

So I am the one who has to carry the can of the terrible small daily consequences of that failed policy by waiting in line, in public agencies, where one hand does not know what the other is doing, or where eight job centers have to be networked that don't want to be networked. (BAA_MA2)³⁵

This quote also contains criticism of the diversity of public agencies in Berlin, which is congruent with statements by other interview partners. In particular, they underline that the administrative structures and procedures in the field of integration diverge between the twelve districts in Berlin (BAA_BA-FK; KA_MA; KA_JA1). An example of this divergence is that the funds from the Master Plan Integration – a Berlin-wide funding program – are disbursed in different ways by different districts (AWO_FBL). Similarly, while all districts have official representatives for integration, some of them are perceived as active key persons in the field whereas others are less visible (KA_MA).

According to the interview partners, the best way to solve these problems would be to “cut the Gordian knot” (BAA_MA2) and re-design the administrative structures completely, but they are aware that is highly unlikely. Instead, they propose to appoint a responsible person in the administration, i.e. following a case management model, where different responsibilities are bridged by one person in charge of a particular refugee, disposing of all the information needed to support him or her. In fact, Be an Angel has participated in developing a pilot project in which a one-stop agency is focusing on the individual living situation of a certain refugee and arranging for all the support offers needed, instead of being responsible only for a clearly delineated field of action. Moreover, it should provide ongoing support and remain in close contact with employers rather than ending assistance after placement in work or training has been achieved (BAA_MA1).

Lastly, the interviewees recommend developing better support structures for the volunteers who do much of the integration work in Berlin. Supporting them in terms of providing coordination, infrastructure or even a little funding would enhance the motivation for volunteering and would increase the impact of the initiatives' work (BAA_MA2). As associations such as Be an Angel are fostering goals explicitly stated by the Senate in the Master Plan for Integration, this would also further

BAA_MA1: Ach, furchtbar!

BAA_MA2: Wenn man da einmal anfängt, dann endet man im Wahnsinn, weil es dann so unübersichtlich dann doch gestaltet, dass es gar keine klaren Querverweise gibt zu bestimmten Pools, wo man sich dann ein paar Adressen sich herausholen könnte oder so, das gibt es überhaupt nicht.

³⁴ The interview partner refers to 16 to 25 year-old youngsters and denominates them half-jokingly as “Prolls”, which is a term referring to persons with a rather low social status and uncouth behavior.

³⁵ „Also ich bin der, der die täglichen kleinen schrecklichen Folgen dieser verfehlten Politik ausbadet, indem ich also in Schlangen stehe, in Ämtern stehe, wo die eine Hand nicht weiß was die andere macht, oder acht Jobcenter untereinander vernetzt werden müssen, die alle nicht miteinander vernetzt werden wollen.“

the achievement of public policies. However, the interviews with public representatives conducted for this research project suggest that such funding is already available at the level of the Senate and the districts in Berlin (e.g. BAA_BA-FK; KA_JA1; KA_JA2). Thus, increasing the transparency of available funding and support offers might be sufficient to enhance the satisfaction of initiatives and the motivation of volunteers.

The lack of coordination between different public agencies in Berlin in general has similarly been stated by other organizations (cf. the other reports in this work package) and can therefore be understood as an obstacle common to many associations working in the field of integration. Even so, other initiatives do access public funding and cooperate more strongly with the city. Consequently, there must be barriers inherent to the structures or strategies of Be an Angel that exclude them from such cooperations. One of them is the objective of providing comprehensive and continuous support, i.e. not limited to a particular field of activity but based on the needs of the respective individual.

In addition, there are no project subsidies for generalists like us, which means that we would have to disaggregate the association into little slices and fudge a way to write a project proposal [...]. (BAA_MA1)³⁶

Funding programs should thus be broad enough to include various target groups and topics, be it support with family reunification, labor market integration, education, housing or health care. As public programs usually require some kind of evaluation to legitimize the provision of public funds, the indicators of success should be chosen in a way that considers individual needs and preconditions. Some persons will have easier access to the labor market whereas others have to overcome more obstacles, either structurally (such as a mismatch between qualifications and the requirements of the local labor market) or individually (e.g. in terms of health conditions or a lack of qualifications, including language capacities). Programs that merely measure the number of persons placed in internships or paid work could result in cherry-picking if organizations are submitted to strong economic pressure.

Apart from these structural barriers to cooperation, the analysis conducted for this case study has shed light on the very vocal advocacy role that Be an Angel performs for its clients.

You always quarrel. Or rather, we never quarrel, we are always mercilessly friendly. But you are always busy trying to achieve the best possible outcome for the refugees with one public employee or the other. (BAA_MA1)³⁷

Despite the declared friendliness, their advocacy includes many statements in the (social) media that are in opposition to public policies or that denounce shortcomings of their implementation in practice. As journalists who are trained in getting their message across, they often use a sarcastic tone which is highly successful in raising public attention but does not necessarily promote collaboration. For example, their Facebook page has an entry with a photo of a lighter with the inscription “Still not ♥-ing jobcenter” and the adjoining text:

A small souvenir by one of our Palestinians... Magnificent! In contrast to the widespread perception that many people who arrive here are kissing our feet in gratitude for the wonderful alimentation by the job center, a Syrian who has recently started an employment has summed it up wonderfully: ‘Actually, I currently have two jobs: my work and the job center.’ The paper wars to be fought in

³⁶ „Dazu gibt es keine Projektfördermittel für Generalisten wie uns, das heißt wir müssten den Verein scheinbar zerlegen und uns aus den Fingern saugen wie wir einen Projektantrag stellen können [...]“

³⁷ „Man streitet sich halt dauernd. Oder, wir streiten uns nie, wir sind immer gnadenlos freundlich. Man ist halt dauernd damit beschäftigt mit irgendwelchen Behördenmitarbeitern das Beste für den Menschen herauszuholen.“

order to take up employment beggar description. In particular if you are confronted with 'Public Authority German' [Behördendeutsch] that even Germans only understand after the second reading. In addition, job centers are generally trying to push people into precarious work. [...] In essence: Away from the job market. You can do it that way, but in this case it will turn out... (Facebook post by Be an Angel, 01/06/2018)³⁸

Such statements can create confrontational relationships with public actors despite the generally congruent goals of public agencies and non-profit organizations (cf. Zimmer 2010: 209f). In this sense, the lack of collaboration between public actors and Be an Angel can be described as the consequence of conflicting logics of action and conflicting strategies. While the public administration is based on rules-based interactions, division of labor and a functionally differentiated and generally hierarchical structure, Be an Angel strives for all round services to persons in need, providing support tailored to the specific situation of each individual. Moreover, even if the stated goal of the public administration is also to achieve integration, there are structures which prevent its full achievement. In particular, the legal differentiation between several categories of migrants and refugees creates legal barriers to employment. Moreover, case workers can use their legal room to maneuver in a restrictive way and some frontline staff even act in outrightly racist ways (BAA_MA1). If such instances are made public by Be an Angel, this can create feelings of collective conflicts even if they refer to individual employees and not to public agencies as a whole.

To improve access to public funding and further public support, Be an Angel could consider the following strategies: While hybrid structures are typical for many non-profit organizations that engage in both advocacy and service provision, this can create difficulties regarding the relationships to other actors. Therefore, a clearer differentiation between the two tasks within the organization, or a division of labor with other organizations, could help to clarify the respective roles and enable collaboration. Similarly, creating umbrella organizations or networks to conduct advocacy and lobbying activities on behalf of similar initiatives or organizations can increase political clout while at the same time protecting individual organizations from entering into confrontational relationships with public agencies, which can ultimately hinder the achievement of their goals for their clients (cf. also AWO_FBL).

Moreover, while the comprehensive services provided to refugees are a strength of the association, they hinder participation in public programs. For instance, becoming a certified provider for labor market integration can facilitate cooperation (cf. the report on the field of education in this work package). Investing the time and resources for such a certification procedure on the one hand, creates up-front costs that may be hard to gather for an organization which is mainly working with volunteers. On the other hand, it would provide a continuous stream of funding in the long run, which can then be used to foster the organization's activities and goals. To increase efficiency, this investment should focus on a field that is perceived as the core of the organization – e.g. labor market integration or

³⁸ "Das kleines Mitbringsel von einem unserer Palestiner ... Herrlich! Entgegen der viel verbreiteten Meinung, dass viele Menschen, die hier angekommen sind, vor Dankbarkeit auf den Knien rutschen über die wunderbare Alimentierung aus dem Job Center, hat es ein Syrer, der gerade einen Job angefangen hat wunderbar zusammen gefasst: „Eigentlich habe ich gerade zwei Jobs: meine Arbeit und das Job Center.“ Was an Papierkrieg an steht um eine Beschäftigung anzufangen geht eigentlich auf keine Kuhhaut. Besonders dann nicht, wenn man mit Behördendeutsch konfrontiert ist, dass selbst Deutsche erst nach zweimaligem Lesen wirklich durchdringen. Dazu kommt, dass die meisten Jobcenter in der Regel versuchen Menschen in prekären Beschäftigungsverhältnissen zu bringen. [...] Hauptsache: Weg vom Arbeitsmarkt. Kann man so machen, wird dann aber ..."

unaccompanied minors – while other activities should be considered supplementary. This would help to focus energy and resources without giving up the goal of providing comprehensive support.

Apart from these recommendations to Be an Angel, the Senate and the Districts could also greatly contribute to improving collaboration. In addition to increasing networking and coordination by creating a transparent database of available non-profit support offers, public actors could enhance the impact of public programs by basing them on a clear needs assessment to prevent duplicates. In addition, public programs should be designed in a way that supports non-profit organizations in achieving their full potential. Non-profits are generally assumed to be closer to individuals and social service users than public agencies (cf. Zimmer 2010). Therefore, they should know best which type of service is needed and how to provide it to meet the respective needs. Public programs should thus give NPOs the freedom to undertake the activities that are deemed necessary, i.e. target groups should be defined more broadly and measures should not be prescribed upfront. Moreover, durations of public programs should be long enough to enable organizations to continuously carry out the work that is needed. Nonetheless, some oversight is necessary to guarantee the efficacy and legitimacy of the spending public funds. In order to meet both this requirement, and leave sufficient leeway to the respective organizations, indicators of success should be developed jointly to prevent pressure and overburdening the organizations with bureaucracy.

Taken together, such changes to public programs would contribute to improving cooperation between non-profit organizations such as Be an Angel and the local government. This in turn would help both actors achieve their stated goals, which are actually more in congruence than it might seem at first sight. They would also help to build on the respective strengths of each sector, with volunteers and initiatives being able to act more flexibly and innovatively and individually accompanying refugees, whereas public administration would be able to provide basic services, stability, funding, and oversight functions (cf. BAA_BA-FK).

Interviews:

AWO_FBL	Arbeiterwohlfahrt (AWO), Director of the Department for Women and Youth (<i>Fachbereichsleitung Frauen und Jugend</i>)
BAA_BA-FK	Be an Angel e.V., District Office Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg (<i>Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg</i>)
BAA_MA1	Be an Angel e.V., employee 1
BAA_MA2	Be an Angel e.V., employee 2
BAA_NU1	Be an Angel e.V., user 1
BAA_NU2	Be an Angel e.V., user 2
BAA_NU3	Be an Angel e.V., user 3
BR_BBZ_MA	Bridge network, Counselling Center for Young Refugees and Migrants (<i>Beratungs- und Betreuungszentrum für junge Flüchtlinge und Migranten</i>), employee
BR_SenIAS	Bridge network, coordinator at the Senate Administration for Integration, Labor and Social Affairs (<i>Senatsverwaltung für Integration, Arbeit und Soziales</i>)
KA_BA-R	Kein Abseits! e.V., District Office Reinickendorf, Refugee Coordinator (<i>Bezirksamt Reinickendorf, Flüchtlingskoordinatorin</i>)
KA_JA1	Kein Abseits! e.V., Youth Office (<i>Jugendamt</i>)
KA_MA	Kein Abseits! e.V., employee

5 References

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