

# **Bridging disconnections: narratives of collective social entrepreneurs on the energy poverty network**

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## **Abstract-**

The roadmap to a just energy transition faces the challenge of including vulnerable households. The networked nature of energy poverty invites responses from different actors, among them the social entrepreneur. The growing phenomenon of social entrepreneurship holds promise in responding to energy vulnerability due to its collective and hybrid nature, enabling active engagement in addressing this multi-actor problem. This study aims to contribute to the ongoing conversation on collective social entrepreneurship. Specifically, it delves into the experiences of social entrepreneurs who tackle energy poverty from a networked perspective. By analysing narratives from social entrepreneurs addressing energy poverty in Europe, we examine their perceptions of the network and their role in it. We find that the narrative of social entrepreneurship varies depending on the priority given to social aspects, which has implications for the approach towards the network. Framed by the theoretical lens of the multi-actor network, our findings extend the knowledge of the composition and relationships in the network, an approach scarcely addressed in the social entrepreneurship literature. By shedding light on bridging narratives, our findings provide evidence of the potential coordinating role social entrepreneurship can play in fragmented networks addressing grand challenges through its hybrid dimension.

**Index Terms-** Collective social entrepreneurship; energy poverty; networks; inclusivity; bridging; hybrid organisations; just energy transition

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