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Title:

**Learning “Who We Are” By Doing:  
Processes of Co-Constructing Prosocial Identities in Community-Based Enterprises**

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**Abstract**

This study investigates how members in community-based enterprises (CBEs) engage in processes of co-constructing their collective prosocial identities. Based on an inductive analysis of 27 organizations that were formed explicitly as communities and sought to build alternative forms of production and consumption through innovative ways to pool and recombine resources, we found that all of the CBEs engaged in distributed experimentation that lead to epiphany sense-making. These two approaches triggered and enacted collective processes of shifts in identity or identity persistence. We advance a processual model that identifies approaches for how members of CBEs either embrace epiphanies in identity shifts or limit and react to epiphanies in identity persistence.

**Keywords:** Community-based enterprises; prosocial organizing; identity construction; epiphanies; distributed experimentation.

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**Executive summary**

Learning whether and how collective identities change - generally speaking, the collective notion of “who we are?” and “who we want to be?” – may have important consequences for organizations and for society. From an organizational standpoint, understanding how members co-construct their collective identities may encourage emergent processes of change towards common organizational visions. In addition, members of organizations may use this knowledge to steer these processes of co-construction towards desired identities. From a societal perspective, gaining awareness of collective identity co-construction processes may support organizations in the evolutionary learning necessary to deal with grand challenges (Ferraro et al. 2015). For those ventures seeking to instigate social change (Mair et al. 2012; Lawrence and Dover 2015), gaining this awareness may help them understand and fulfill their transformative potential.

We investigate how founding and incoming members engage in processes of co-construction of collective prosocial identities in the context of community-based enterprises (CBEs). Communities play an important role in instigating societal change (Rothschild-Whitt 1979) and a community’s collective identity strongly influences the transition into an enterprise (Peredo and Chrisman 2006). Therefore, the research goal was to explore how the collective identities of community based enterprises evolved over time. We collected and analyzed empirical data inductively in 27 CBEs involved in pooling food and energy resources for self-consumption in four European countries (Germany, Italy, Spain and The Netherlands) between 2012 and 2016. To guide our data interpretation, we inductively mobilized and adapted three constructs: identity construction processes in communities (Bartel and Dutton 2001; Petriglieri and Petriglieri 2010; Petriglieri et al. 2017); founder

identities oriented towards prosocial organizing, that is, orientations that benefit known and unknown others (Fauchart and Gruber 2011; Powell and Baker 2014); and two specific approaches to venture organizing, namely distributed experimentation (Furnari 2014; Ferraro et al. 2015) and making sense of epiphanies (Cardon et al. 2011).

Empirical findings from this study led to three insights that may inform members of CBEs – and more broadly, of new ventures – on how to organize activities to preserve or build their collective prosocial identities. First, we found that members engage in specific approaches to venture organizing that build, dissolve or preserve the collective prosocial identity of their new venture over relatively short periods of time (see Figure 1). Second, we discovered that, in the emerging processes of identity co-construction in CBEs, distributed experimentation triggers epiphanies – sudden, shocking realizations that alter the flow of individuals’ lives in unexpected ways (Denzin 1989). This discovery contributes to increasing knowledge about the role of distributed experimentation in evolutionary learning (Ferraro et al. 2015), not only for understanding complex challenges surrounding organizations but for understanding its evolving collective identity from the inside out. What triggers community identities to shift or persist, though, is the way members collectively make sense of these “generated” epiphanies. Third, after this initial epiphany trigger, we found that the processes for making sense of epiphanies (either as shifts in identity or persistence in identity) are progressive and iterative. Collective identity shifts take place by embracing negative and positive epiphanies over time. In identity persistence, by contrast, members limit and/or react to epiphanies. This study, then, adds depth to our understanding of identity co-construction processes (Downing 2005), highlighting ways that epiphanies are interpreted and discussed in groups rather than emphasizing the content of the epiphanies, themselves (Press and Arnould 2011) as the impetus for change or stability in prosocial community identities.

## Learning “Who We Are” By Doing:

### Processes of Co-Constructing Prosocial Identities in Community-Based Enterprises

#### 1. Introduction

The formation of an organization’s identity has typically been approached by exploring ways a founder’s identity influences the organizing of a new venture (e.g. Fauchart and Gruber 2011; Powell and Baker 2014; 2017). This study explores how collective approaches to organizing – that involve both founders as well as other incoming members - influence an organization’s identity. From this perspective, then, a number of questions become salient to explore: how does this process of identity collective construction (or co-construction) unfold over time? Are the collective identities of new ventures stable, or do they change? If the latter, what can members do to preserve or change their venture’s identity? These questions may be of interest to entrepreneurs concerned with shaping their venture’s identity to meet various entrepreneurial outcomes, but they are critical to those seeking to instigate societal change (Mair et al. 2012; Lawrence and Dover 2015) or to address grand social and environmental challenges (Dean and McMullen 2007; Dorado and Ventresca 2013). Given the complex and value-laden nature of such grand challenges, those seeking to address these challenges would find value in ascertaining how the collective identities of their ventures evolve in order to fulfil their transformational potential in society.

To address these broad questions, our research focuses on a specific type of new venture: community-based enterprises (CBEs). Communities play an important role in instigating societal change (Rothschild-Whitt 1979) as their collective identities strongly influence their transition into enterprises (Peredo and Chrisman 2006). Yet, little is known about how approaches to organizing in communities may influence their collective identities and thereby influence the identities of the organizations they co-construct. We seek to address this knowledge gap by, first, delving into the *processes of identity co-construction* in CBEs.

Second, given the importance of CBEs in instigating societal change, we focus on how *prosocial identities* are either maintained, built or dissolved over time during these co-construction processes. By *prosocial identities*, we mean the collective sense of “who we are” and “who we want to be” in helping known or unknown others without expecting benefits back (Gneezy et al. 2012; Hardy 2006). Third, we mobilize the concept of *approaches to venture organizing* to understand the set of coordinated activities that enact these processes of prosocial identity co-construction over time. These guiding constructs combine into this research question: *How do members of a CBE engage in venture organizing to co-construct their collective prosocial identity?*

We undertook an empirical analysis of 27 CBEs across Europe that were formed explicitly as communities that sought to build alternative forms of production and consumption through innovative ways to pool and recombine resources. The findings from this analysis offer a number of surprises in relation to our assumptions about the processes of co-constructing community identities. First, contrary to what was assumed (Peredo and Chrisman 2006; McKeever et al. 2015), we found that *collective prosocial identities are not immutable* in CBEs; instead, collective identities may be built or dissolved over relatively short periods of time when their members engage in certain approaches to organizing. Second, we discovered that – taken together – *distributed experimentation* (Furnari 2014; Ferraro et al. 2015) and *epiphany sense-making* represent key approaches that enact identity co-construction (Downing 2005) within CBEs. Specifically, our findings reveal that distributed experimentation triggers epiphanies and that the ways that members collectively make sense of these “generated” epiphanies may trigger whether community identities either shift or persist. Third, while epiphanies, by definition, “occur instantly” (Press and Arnould 2011, p. 658), the subsequent *processes of collective shifts in identity (or persistence) are progressive and iterative*. Collective identity shifts take place by embracing one epiphany -

either positive or negative - at a time. Identity persistence, by contrast, is enacted through a series of approaches that iterate the limiting of, and reacting to, epiphanies. Taken together, these three findings offer insights about approaches for organizing activities to preserve or build collective prosocial identities.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. In the next section, we delineate how our research builds upon three guiding constructs: (a) the co-construction of identities, specifically in the context of CBEs; (b) the characteristics of prosocial identities; and (c) approaches to venture organizing that may enact prosocial identity co-construction processes. We describe our analytical strategy in Section 3. Our empirical findings are presented in Section 4 by offering a model (Figure 1) that identifies approaches that enact identity shifts or identity persistence in CBEs. In Section 5 we discuss the model's contribution towards understanding the role of distributed experimentation and epiphany sense-making in processes of prosocial identity co-construction, as well as its boundary conditions. The article concludes (Section 6) by outlining our contribution to the fields of prosocial entrepreneurship and organizing.

## **2. Theory**

### **2.1. Processes of identity co-construction in community-based enterprises**

According to Peredo and Chrisman (2006), CBEs involve multiple individuals who collectively engage in an enterprise in response to shocks depriving the community of essential services or endangering their use of resource, e.g. increased violence, declining fishing yields, or closure of a local public school. This collective transition into an enterprise aims to “yield sustainable individual and group benefits over a short and long term” (Peredo and Chrisman 2006, p. 310). During this transition, community members may engage in a diversity of tasks, costs and benefits shared among members (O'Mahony and Ferraro, 2007;

Ratten and Welpel, 2011) that may challenge the entrepreneurial processes of the community and its outcomes (Somerville and McElwee 2011). Despite the challenges that community members may experience during transitions into enterprises (Somerville and McElwee 2011), little research has been conducted on the processes by which communities either change or keep their identities. For example, Peredo and Chrisman (2006) and Bowles and Gintis (2002) report that CBEs share common values and beliefs fostered by reciprocal trust and social relationships, but they did not explore whether these values and beliefs may change. McKeever et al. (2015) confirmed that community identities stabilize due to longstanding geographical, cultural and ethnic factors. By contrast, Foreman and Whetten (2002) found that members of rural cooperatives – communities of agricultural producers engaging in entrepreneurial processes – may experience conflicts among different members’ identities over time. Foreman and Whetten (2002) did not focus their research on possible changes in collective identity over time, yet, pointed out identity conflicts that lowered members’ commitment towards their organizations. This leaves open the question of whether and how identities may change as communities transition into enterprises.

Communities, per se, often represent lively spaces for members to challenge, re-imagine, adjust, and re-establish their individual identities over time (Petriglieri and Petriglieri 2010; Petriglieri et al. 2017). In other words, communities provide suitable venues for members to engage in identity work and play. Members *work* on their identities when creating, maintaining, and displaying personal and social concepts of their self in coherent and desirable ways (Snow and Anderson 1987; Ashforth et al., 2000; Bartel and Dutton 2001). Furthermore, members also *play* with their identities when they engage in provisional, but active, trials of possible future selves (Ibarra and Petriglieri 2010; Petriglieri et al. 2017). Compared to other organizations seeking to regulate members’ identity by leveraging their experiences of uncertainty, confusion, and anxiety (Alvesson and Wilmott 2002), the

relational and sentient nature of communities may provide suitable “holding environments” that support their members physically, socially, and psychologically when engaging in construction processes of their own identity (Petriglieri and Petriglieri 2010: 44). For example, business school students feel encouraged to craft provisional identities by establishing relationships of reciprocal loyalty with other members of their business school community (Petriglieri and Petriglieri 2010; Petriglieri et al. 2017). In other circumstances, community members may align their own identity to their community identity over time (Bartel 2001; Press and Arnould 2011). For example, members strongly identified with their communities when engaging in outreach activities that informed and supported fellow members with a different socio-economic status (Bartel 2001).

Because communities represent suitable spaces for members to work and play on their identities, we explore the process of collective construction of identities in communities, and how these collective identities may or may not change during the transition into enterprises. We situate our focus on identities in the interplay with prosocial organizing.

## **2.2. The interplay between prosocial identities and venture organizing**

In co-constructing community identities, CBEs are fertile sites for delving into the role of enterprises as agents of social change (Mair et al. 2012; Lawrence and Dover 2015), thereby contributing to the current interest in prosocial entrepreneurship. The emergent nature of work and play, as communities develop into enterprises, provides a vivid context within which to observe if and how venture organizing influences the co-construction of prosocial identities over time. A key issue in prosocial entrepreneurship addresses the relationship of the founders’ prosocial motivations and identities with the actions and outcomes of their ventures (Shepherd et al. 2015). Prosocial entrepreneurship challenges the notion that entrepreneurial actions are driven only by the opportunity to accrue self-centered benefits (Miller et al. 2012; Shepherd et al. 2015); instead, prosocial motivations entail an interest in

helping others without the expectation of future rewards (Batson 1987; Grant and Berry 2011). To date, research has addressed questions around how, when, and why the prosocial motivations of venture founders shape entrepreneurial action (Miller et al. 2012; Shepherd et al. 2015). In addition, recent studies on founder identity theory show that prosocial identities – of which prosocial motivations represent a key dimension – influence entrepreneurial actions and outcomes (Fauchart and Gruber 2011; Powell and Baker 2014 and 2017). This work considers how founders’ identities drive the strategic choices of new ventures (Fauchart and Gruber 2011), their responses to adversity (Powell and Baker 2014), and how members’ commitments are structured (Powell and Baker 2017).

According to social identity theory, an individual’s sense of belonging to social groups or categories shapes identity (Tajfel 1978). Building upon this theory, Fauchart and Gruber (2011) suggests that a founder’s understanding of “what I am” and “what I want to be” drives venture organizing. Drawing on this notion in the context of sport ventures, Fauchart and Gruber (2011) developed three distinctive typologies of founders’ social identities that influenced the strategy of their firms: 1) “Darwinians,” displaying a “self-oriented” frame of reference; 2) “communitarians,” oriented towards a “known others” frame of reference and, 3) “missionaries,” who are characterized by a frame of reference oriented toward “unknown others.” Along with frame of reference (i.e., the relevant others that founders compare or relate themselves with), a second dimension of founder identity involves *social motivation*, in other words, what drives their actions, and the third dimension entails the founder’s *self-evaluation*, i.e. how founders assess themselves. In relation to perspectives on prosocial organizing, these studies help to distinguish fundamentally prosocial identities from those directed towards self-centered benefits (Shepherd et al. 2015).

Delving further into how prosocial identities underlie venture organizing, Powell and Baker (2014 and 2017) integrated social identity theory with identity theory. Unlike social

identity theory, identity theory focuses on how individuals construct their identity based on their roles in organizations (Stryker 1980): An individual member's identity in an organization may be shaped by the behavioral expectations of others, for example, their peer members or co-founders (Stryker 1980). Powell and Baker (2014) found that founders responded differently to adversities – transforming, sustaining or accepting their strategies – depending on whether or not their social and role identities were congruent to each other. Furthermore, by taking a within-group perspective (Bartel and Wiesenfeld 2013), Powell and Baker (2017) investigated collective identity on the basis of the interplay between multiple founders' identities. They discovered that although all founders aspired to be community helpers, some were predominantly “communitarian” while others were mainly “missionary.” Furthermore, as multiple founders sought consensus among their differences, the interplay of their identities influenced both the organization structure of the new venture and their sustained commitment to it.

Powell and Baker's (2017) conclusion that “there is some level of malleability such that founder identities can be shaped even during relatively short periods of venture organizing” (p. 42) motivates our current endeavor to inform the literature on the construction of community identities (Section 2.1) and on prosocial organizing (this section). We use specific approaches to venture organizing (Section 2.3) as guiding constructs to explore how collective identities are co-constructed within CBEs.

### **2.3. Approaches to venture organizing in processes of identity co-construction**

Overall, approaches to venture organizing refer to coordinated, multiple activities to support the emergence of new organizations – activities like writing a business plan, acquiring resources, or finding customers (Carter et al. 1996; Gartner and Carter 2003). The entrepreneurship literature suggests that one-size-fits-all approaches to organizing may not be effective in new venture creation (McKelvey 2004; Meyer et al. 2005) because the outcomes

of organizing activities are inherently entangled with many contingent factors outside the control of the founders (McKelvey 2004). As this strand of the literature does not, to date, provide guidance on how venture various organizing approaches may enact the co-construction of identities, we inductively advance two approaches that may play a role in this process: *distributed experimentation* and *making sense of epiphanies*.

The first approach, *distributed experimentation*, plays an important role in elaborating provisional selves, as the extant literature has found in multiple contexts such as professional development (Ibarra 1999) and communities of practice (Handley et al. 2006). Specifically, the “distributed” feature of experimenting – that is, engaging in experiments simultaneously among multiple and diverse members of an organization or community – was found to be an important stepping stone for engaging collectively in addressing complex issues (Reay et al. 2006; Ferraro et al. 2015). According to Furnari (2014), the creation of occasional, informal, and time-limited spaces for distributed experimentation among individuals from different fields – such as hobbyist clubs, hangouts, workshops, or meet-ups – may drive the genesis of new practices. In addition, the community organization literature points to the significance of distributed experimentation on crafting the vision of a community in multiple settings, such as in the early kibbutzim of the 1960s (Simons and Ingram 1997) or in pioneering food, media, health, and education communities of 1970s California (Rothschild-Whitt 1979).

The second approach that may enact the co-construction of identities is *making sense of epiphanies*. Epiphanies are shocking events that alter the flow of individuals’ lives in unexpected ways (Denzin 1989). While epiphanies occur instantly (Press and Arnould 2011), entrepreneurs may interpret and frame them to engage in personal transformations (Cardon et al. 2011). For example, when epiphanies such as entrepreneurial failure occur, individuals may “come to view failure positively, as an event that was meaningful in their lives and engendered lessons worthy of carrying forward in both personal and professional life

domains” (Singh et al. 2015, p. 163). Members of new ventures may make sense of these events and shape their collective identity by co-creating dramatic and narrative processes in interaction with their stakeholders (Downing 2005). These realizations may lead also to individual identity work (Shepherd and Williams 2016), as well as organizational identification (Ashforth et al. 2008; Press and Arnould 2011).

We utilize these two approaches of distributed experimentation and making sense of epiphanies to explore the process of the co-construction of prosocial identities in CBEs. In so doing, we reformulate our research question specifically as: *How do members of CBEs co-construct their collective prosocial identity through distributed experimentation and making sense of epiphanies?*

### **3. Methods**

#### **3.1. Research context**

We cross-compared 27 cases of food and energy communities across four European countries (the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, and Germany; Table 1) to study the co-construction processes of prosocial identities in CBEs. Food and energy communities emerged across Europe and other Western countries during the 1990s, with interest accelerating in the 2000s. CBEs emerged from heterogeneous origins – political movements, associations promoting organic and locally-grown food or non-fossil energy sources, cultural organizations, schools, universities, or neighborhood associations (Feenstra 1997; Dentoni et al. 2017). Because of their varied origins, such communities may take different names across and within countries (Pascucci et al. 2013), including “community gardens,” “social gardens,” “urban orchards,” “vegetable box schemes,” “community-supported agriculture,” “energy foundations,” “energy communities,” or “solidarity-based purchasing groups”.

Despite the diversity of origins and names, these communities have three key features in common – critical for selection into this study. First, all consider themselves explicitly as *communities*. Formed from a nucleus of a few individuals who already knew each other (e.g. friends, neighbors, teacher-student or trainer-trainee, peer members in another association), these groups rely on trust relationships established either before or soon after the creation of the community. These relationships are strongly embedded in local networks, and are influenced by geographical and cultural proximity (Mount, 2012). Second, grounded in these relationships, community members explicitly seek to build an *alternative* form of production and consumption to what they consider and criticize as the “mainstream” market for purchasing food (e.g. supermarkets, convenience stores, restaurants) and energy supplies (e.g. gas and electricity companies). This critique of mainstream markets may manifest itself in various ways, such as, dissatisfaction with quality or price, or in a striving to make more socially and environmentally sustainable choices (Forssell and Lankoski, 2015). Ultimately, what transpires in all the selected communities is a desire to instigate social change in ways that address or at least cope with various facets of grand challenges. Third, as part of this quest for alternatives to the mainstream, all groups rely on constantly seeking *innovative ways to pool and recombine resources* –such as land, agricultural equipment, membership fees, food storage/distribution space, biogas installations, or wind turbines for energy supply – to create value for themselves, their community and/or society as a whole (Miralles et al., 2017). Based on these three features, the 27 food and energy communities were suitable cases to enhance the likelihood of finding heterogeneity in these organizations’ collective identity processes and related organizing activities enacting them.

### **3.2. Data collection**

Given the inductive nature of our investigation, this study entailed an iterative process from data to theory with purposely selected cases to provide evidence of the conceptual categories

emerging from the research question (Yin 2013). Findings emerged from our interpretation of the empirical patterns (Eisenhardt 1989) and, accordingly, the theoretical lenses described above that were used to analyze these cases were employed in multiple stages during the analytical process (see section 3.3).

Through a process of snowball sampling, we identified and approached an initial 77 communities, that is, groups referring to themselves as communities, that were seeking to build alternatives and innovative ways to pool and recombine resources. From these, we selected 27 communities [community supported agriculture (CSA) groups in the Netherlands (Cases 1-7) and Italy (Cases 8-9), consumer groups and community gardens in Spain (Cases 10-24), and energy communities in Germany and the Netherlands (Cases 25-27)] willing and able to offer sufficient data for our analytical strategy. Data was collected between 2012 and 2016 (Table 1).

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For each of the 27 selected cases, data collection involved primary and secondary sources including: semi-structured interviews, focus groups, field visits, reviews of online resources and documents (websites; social media; statutory laws or other documents stating the rules shared among members), as well as searching for relevant data in journal articles, magazines, and blogs describing the members' activities and their meaning (Table 1). The form of contact made with each case depended on the structure of the community: some were contacted via a publicly available email address or telephone, others were called by friends or peers in their network. When possible, we tried to engage multiple members within each group covering different functions (e.g., members of the board, if a board existed; members outside the board; and members with production and distribution tasks; etc.). Table 1 reports on the number of members interviewed per case without specifying the position held by each interviewed community member. While most of the primary interviews were conducted with

members informally holding leadership positions in their group, it was beyond the scope of this research to investigate the in-group dynamics underlying identity change – that is, whether different constituencies within the community organizations may engage in different identity construction processes. The primary data collection focused on encouraging interviewees to narrate around three themes: 1) the general history of their community from its origins to the time of the interviews, including its functioning and challenges; 2) the nature of members' activities, with a specific focus on their perceived roles within the community, and how these CBEs may have changed over time; and 3) the nature of the value that members aimed to create with their group and why this was important to them. All the material collected from primary and secondary data was transcribed, filed, and used for analysis.

### **3.3. Analytical strategy**

Consistent with a process of iteration from data to theory, we progressively engaged with: insights into the nature and identities of CBEs (Peredo and Chrisman 2006), prosocial founder identities (Fauchart and Gruber 2011) and approaches to organizing (Carter et al. 1996) as theoretical lenses to analyze our data. The five inductive stages that constituted our analytical strategy are described as follows.

#### **Stage 1: Identifying identity meanings in CBEs**

In our first round of coding, two of the authors – one directly involved with the data collection and the other playing an outsider role – identified meanings in our primary and secondary data around the concept of CBEs (Peredo and Chrisman 2006). In contrast with the communities examined by Peredo and Chrisman (2006), most of our communities relied upon a relatively short common history and unified identity: 18 were founded after 2010, seven between 2000 and 2009, and only two cases have a longer history, being founded in 1994 and 1999 respectively (Table 1). Furthermore, unlike the communities transitioning into

enterprises studied by others (Somerville and McElwee, 2011; Foreman and Whetten, 2002), our cases focused, primarily, on communities that were formed for their own consumption as opposed to production for external customers. For example, our selected cases from the Netherlands (Cases 1-7) all arose from consumers' initiatives to engage with a farmer, or a group of farmers, to grow and consume fruit, vegetables, and local produce. In the two Italian cases (Cases 8-9), groups of consumers formed a community to buy and distribute food products from local farmers ensuring good quality, respect for the environment, and human rights. The fifteen cases from Spain (Cases 10-24) represent a collection of grassroots initiatives of consumers engaging collectively in forms of gardening and farming in their neighborhoods to grow and consume fruit and vegetables. Three communities located in Germany and the Netherlands (Cases 25-27) emerged from groups of residents who decided to collectively produce energy instead of buying it from the national grid.

## **Stage 2: Assessing collective prosocial identities of CBEs**

In our second round of coding, the same two authors clustered the identity meanings identified in Stage 1 into the three dimensions of community identity informed by (Fauchart and Gruber's (2011) typology. Yet, in contrast with Fauchart and Gruber's (2011) identity typology, and in line with Powell and Baker (2017), we have applied the identity typology at the group level rather than at the individual level as reported in Table 2.

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Specifically, the three key dimensions of identity at a community level are:

- Social motivation as community: what are the main reasons for the members to join the community and engage in its activities?
- Self-evaluation as community: what are the most critical points for assessing the extent to which the community is performing well? What really matters for its members?

- Frame of reference as community: who are the others within or outside the community that members tend to make comparisons to? Who do members consider as relevant?

During this stage of coding we noticed that in the “production for own consumption” nature in some of the communities an absence of the “pure” business-, self-, and competitive-oriented type of identity, which had been described and assessed as “darwinian” in Fauchart and Gruber (2011) and Sieger et al. (2016). Instead, particularly in the initiatives with farmers as founders, we noticed that some communities were not oriented towards ensuring the benefit of the “known others” (in-group members) as communitarians, or the “unknown others” (out-group individuals) as with missionaries. Rather, these communities fulfilled specific needs of individual participants, thus assuming a sort of hedonic and individualist connotation. We decided to code this stronger self-orientation as “utilitarian” rather than Fauchart and Gruber’s (2011) “darwinian.”

We had two realizations in analyzing identities at the community level. First, almost all the community identities that we analyzed were hybrids – that is, simultaneously combining some utilitarian, communitarian, and missionary features – to different extents. Therefore, we added percentages reflecting the relative shares of these three (see Appendix 1). Second, none of the communities had a prevalence of the missionary identity, although most of the communities had at least some missionary identity elements (26 out of 27). Therefore, we focused on describing the utilitarian and communitarian nature of the communities.

De Bioakker (Case 1) illustrates an example of a predominantly utilitarian group. Initiated by a farmer in 2007, De Bioakker provides local members with fresh produce, herbs, and flowers. Their social motivation is to sustain the production of organic and locally grown products, both to the benefit of members, who enjoy an improved diet, and to the farmer, in

terms of stabilizing his income. As the farmer noted, “[group] members join *my farm* mainly to help *my project*, and *to get fresh local food*, and the ability to pick it on their own.

Members give lots of suggestions. Mostly I reply that *you can do it by yourself* because I don’t have time. For example, they will ask: can you organize a dinner? I will reply: No, I don’t have time. But you can do it. And they do it. And I join them.” The utilitarian basis for self-evaluation is straightforward too. This is how the farmer proudly presents his garden to encourage new members to join: “Members [...] harvest their own vegetables. *Prices are therefore 40% lower* than in the store. So, the members get the *best quality* for the lowest price. And *fresher! Adventure and experience*, too [as this] is also a perception garden.” In utilitarian group identities like this one, the frame of reference is therefore the member and the specific contribution to, and benefit from, the community and its entrepreneurial activities.

As a counterexample, communitarian community identities have a predominant prosocial orientation towards “known others.” For example, in Case 18, a couple of members engaged in the community garden of Huerto City in Valencia, Spain, and told us that “the [community garden] project started to facilitate the *empowerment of people to grow food on their own and locally*.” Their social motivations rely on creating an urban garden managed on the principles and practices of organic agriculture and to improve the quality of life of the neighborhood. One of them said: “What we want is to have the widest range possible of varieties and a rich biodiversity to *promote greater learning about the care and needs of each crop*.” The group is concerned with how individuals contribute to the project and how the outcomes are affecting the participants. As another member indicated, “the financial capital available to the association comes from monthly fees of the collaborators and from money that arises from the implementation of various courses or activities. Money is given by the collaborators and in the workshops, always by conscious contribution, meaning that each

person individually assesses what the workshop has brought her/him, *the effort of others* and *their personal economy gives the amount that he/she thinks is appropriate.*”

### **Stage 3: Distinguishing identity shift and persistence in CBEs.**

We assessed changes in community identities at Stage 3. For each community, we assessed identities both at  $t=0$ , which is the time when the community was founded, and  $t=1$ , which represents the time when the last round of data collection was held, that is, between 2012 and 2016. On the basis of a comparison between  $t=0$  and  $t=1$ , we distinguished between identity-shifting communities and identity-persisting communities.

Through this analytical stage, four types of changes in community identities emerged inductively (see Appendix 1): (1) communities that shifted from a prevalence of utilitarian identity elements towards a prevalence of communitarian identity elements (coded as  $U \rightarrow C$ ); (2) communities that shifted from a prevalence of communitarian identity elements towards a prevalence of utilitarian identity elements ( $C \rightarrow U$ ); (3) communities that persisted with a majority of utilitarian identity elements over time ( $U \rightarrow U$ ); and (4) communities with a majority of communitarian identity elements were retained over time ( $C \rightarrow C$ ). Along with these four types of changes, one community (Case 25) persisted with seemingly equal communitarian and utilitarian elements over time ( $U/C \rightarrow U/C$ ). The following two examples illustrate the distinction between identity persistence (that is,  $U \rightarrow U$ ,  $C \rightarrow C$  or  $U/C \rightarrow U/C$ ) and identity shift (that is, either  $U \rightarrow C$  or  $C \rightarrow U$ ) in CBEs.

L'Horta (Case 19), a community engaging in the recovery of degraded land in Valencia, shows a persistent utilitarian identity over the years. One of the members mentioned: “when we started, I was wanted to *include more ecological products to our shopping, for commercial reasons, as the prices in the shops were much more expensive, if we could get together to order the products. [...]* So, what became clear was that consumption would be “kilometer-zero” (to say it somehow), meaning that *the production place had to be*

*as close as possible* and that the *main purpose of the group is to recover the land*. Since *through the acts of consumption recovery of the land is possible.*” Then, stressing the persistence of a utilitarian identity of the group – i.e. being concerned about the benefits of the individuals rather than the group – as an issue to be addressed in the near future, the same member stated: “The reality is that – time and desire are missing. *I know when I buy, what I buy and what I am supporting and strengthening*. I know where my money goes and to which economy and what I want to support and for what I am betting. *I do not know in what way the group will end*, if eventually this has been just a way to start and to bring closer together the neighbors, the citizens and the people, the organic farming and a different way of life because on the other hand I also argue: *wouldn't it be good to bring this philosophy to the local stores?*”

Others communities experienced a shift in their collective identity, either towards or away from prosociality. For example, some communities shifted to a more communitarian identity over time (U → C). In the community garden of Burjassot, Spain (Case 12), one of the founders stated: “At the time [the garden was initiated] a political interest also emerged in regards to the garden, which required working through a council, and the proposal was redirected to create a social garden. We did not have a leisure garden, but a social garden. Roughly the basis of our project was to help the families *to get decent food they could not afford otherwise.*” As noted by this founder, the community shifted over time to more communitarian identity by focusing on associations rather than individuals or families and becoming more conscious of the collective benefits of social gardening: “we are really happy to have such a *good representation of so many diverse groups* [now], and also we understand that a plot that belongs to an association is used by many users. Moreover, the role of these associations is crucial because they create a *much-needed dynamism in the garden*. As they have associative experience, they know how to manage an association [...] Thanks to the

knowledge they had for belonging to other associations, in this way our community of gardeners works much better now.”

#### **Stage 4. Clustering CBEs according to identity shift or persistence**

After distinguishing between identity-shifting and identity-persisting communities, we clustered our 27 community cases according to these two emerging categories. At this stage, we found that 16 out of 27 communities shifted their identity (7 cases towards communitarian and 9 cases towards utilitarian) while 11 communities persisted with their initial identity (see Appendix 1; Table 3). This analytical stage provided us with an anchor to explore how approaches to organizing were associated with and enacted co-construction processes of either identity shift or identity persistence in CBEs.

#### **Stage 5: Exploring approaches for enacting identity shift or persistence in CBEs**

We followed the empirical example used in Smith (2014) to inductively analyze the approaches to organizing (Carter et al. 1996) that enacted a shift in identity, or the persistence of identity in the 27 cases. Two researchers first developed “thick descriptions” for each case, involving a brief narration of the community history where members’ activities took place. These thick descriptions included four key issues that members invariably had to address through their daily activities in the community: resource allocation, community organization, development of community products and services, and the development of a community vision.

On the basis of these thick descriptions, one researcher coded the approaches to organizing with the following question in mind: *How are community members responding to the issues they experienced in the community over time?* Similar to Smith (2014), three types of codes emerged: 1) members’ everyday activities in the community; (2) the meaning of the members’ activities; and (3) members’ decisions. For each case, an average of twenty codes with recurring approaches were extracted, for a total of approximately 540 codes. At this

stage a second researcher, playing an outsider role, verified this list of codes against the given operational definition of approaches (Smith 2014).

Finally, these emerging codes were positioned in a temporal sequence to closely understand which, and how, approaches to organizing were associated with and enacted, processes of identity co-construction in CBEs. At this stage, we discovered that distributed experimentation and making sense of epiphanies, followed by re-organizing, represented key approaches enacting identity co-construction processes.

#### **4. Findings**

Three key findings are synthesized in Figure 1 and described in detail in the following subsections. First, depending on how CBE members make sense of epiphanies, divergent processes of identity co-construction were enacted – either towards or away from a prosocial identity (Figure 1, under “approaches for making sense of epiphanies”). In particular, identity-shifting communities were more likely to *embrace negative and positive epiphanies*. Conversely, identity-persisting communities engaged in *limiting the exploration of alternative paradigms* and *reacting to negative epiphanies*. Second, once divergent processes of identity co-construction are enacted, different CBEs *re-organize* accordingly (Figure 1, under “approaches for acting upon epiphanies”). That is, identity-shifting communities re-organize with an underlying change from their initial identity, while identity-persisting communities re-organize to maintain their initial identity. Third, prior to enacting divergent processes of identity co-construction, all CBEs engaged in various forms of *distributed experimentation*, which *acted as a “generator” of epiphanies* (Figure 1, under “approaches for generating epiphanies”).

--- INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE ---

#### **4.1. Making sense of epiphanies as an enactor of divergent identity co-construction processes**

The first empirical finding suggests that *different ways of interpreting epiphanies will enact divergent processes of identity co-construction in CBEs*. Specifically, identity-shifting communities engaged more frequently in various forms of embracing positive and/or negative epiphanies (Table 3). This pattern emerged both in communities transitioning towards a more utilitarian identity (89% of cases) and, to a slightly lesser extent, in communities shifting towards more a communitarian identity (71%). Conversely, identity-persisting communities engaged more often in various forms of limiting epiphanies (in 9 out of 10 cases) and/or reacting to epiphanies (in all 10 cases; Table 3).

--- INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE ---

Approaches for making sense of epiphanies, that is, approaches that enacted processes of identity co-construction, emerged into specific dimensions. We describe these dimensions in the following paragraphs.

**Embracing negative epiphanies.** Identity-shifting communities were more likely to display four dimensions of embracing negative epiphanies (Table 4). First of all, some members *realized that some of their activities were not worth their time*. “Projects were very interesting but all participants had families and many different projects at a time so we could not find the time to push them” confessed a member of Mateta de Fenoll (Case 24) when revisiting her first years of community engagement. Second, some members started *questioning their own values*. Again, the case of Mateta de Fenoll was emblematic: “Since the beginning, the social activities did not work out (...). Even so, it has been useful to realize what we wanted to have from such a project” (Case 24). Third, community members *gained awareness that other members were not engaged in the same activities, or to the same extent, as themselves* (Table 4). For example, one of the founders of the Nieuwe Ronde (Case 5) in

the Netherlands said: “first [we] started with [a] vegetable box system. [Then] during the first year we faced some problems, mainly internal conflicts. When using a vegetable box system [we noticed that] it did not work and that a self-harvest system was preferred. The vegetable box made members less connected with the farm.” Similarly, in the German community of CHPP Nuremberg (Case 27), the problem of lack of engagement and differences in the evaluation of the value of time spent in the community was a source of reflection. “How come they are so passive? Is it because they did not expect to have to bother about it?” wondered one of the community leaders, reflecting on why her peers did not seem concerned enough about the higher costs of alternative energy than they initially expected. Fourth, *quitting the community* was another form of embracing negative epiphanies. One of the founders of the Spanish community garden Aixada con Eixida (Case 13) reported that “the first half-year was a period of giving energy, time, and money and it was a great riddle for the participants. [Yet] It was a waiting time in which many people realized it was not a project for them. After a while, just three persons were left and they are the ones we are now.”

**Embracing positive epiphanies.** Along with embracing negative epiphanies, identity-shifting communities also embraced positive epiphanies. Similarly, four dimensions of embracing positive epiphanies emerged from these communities (Table 4). First, many members realized that something unexpected was in the value of their time. Some understood that simply the act of touching the soil, as well as the plants and the food stemming from the land was giving them joy; others enjoyed the sharing element with other people they knew in the community or with the diversity of cultures that they encountered; and others started to appreciate the feeling of gaining mastery of an, initially, unfamiliar environment, such as a garden. Second, members became aware of other members’ engagement. In other words, members gained consciousness of what an experience meant to them by observing how others engaged in community activities. “The garden was very inspiring for people. And

people like it a lot. And they are congratulated for it a lot” celebrated a Dutch community leader in Us Hof (Case 4) when recalling how their peers responded to one of his initiatives. Third, some members realized that they *gained energy from unexpected resources*. For example, they learned that the habit of dedicating time to cultivating the land and engaging with their peers was worth their time. Others felt that the cultural diversity of the group or the exposure to develop hands-on technical skills offered them an unprecedented learning experience. Fourth, some members *formed unexpected attachments to things as an extension of themselves*. For example, members developed feelings of attachment towards the commonly cultivated land or the growing of vegetables themselves and, perhaps more surprisingly, even for the computer software managing the food distribution lists or the biogas installation machine. Through attachment to these objects, members contributed to the shifting of their collective identity.

**Limiting epiphanies.** Three forms of limiting epiphanies often emerged in identity-persisting communities (Table 4). Members *used initial values to constrain experimentation*. The case of L’Horta (Case 19) illustrates that much experimentation took place among members, yet not outside the boundaries of initially set values: “So far, we meet once a month. Thus, there is only time to get organized for the purchase, not to get into deep topics and debates,” said one of the members. Second, members engaged in planning, signing contracts, or adopting technologies that *specified future goals* (e.g. using a specific type of computer software for organizing food distribution to members, a pipeline system for biogas installation, or irrigation networks); these activities made the organization more efficient but limited the options for re-organizing processes. Third, despite the distributed experimentation, members of these communities often *followed established procedures and routines*. In the case of L’Horta, for instance, “[...] every month two people are in charge of orders for vegetables, and two other people take orders for legumes, but legumes orders are

taken each month and a half or two months.” While many members engaged in experimentation, rotation among tasks and communication among members was more limited. This constrained members’ deeper reflections on alternative ways of doing things.

**Reacting to negative epiphanies.** Different from identity-shifting communities, identity-persisting communities reacted to the negative epiphanies in one or more of the following five forms (Table 4). First, members used a negative epiphany as a *confirmation for their initial values*. In doing so, they often focused their attention on aspects of the negative experience that clashed with their own values, for example blaming themselves for having too much trust in others in the community (as in Case 1). Second, despite their negative experiences, members responded by *holding on to their initial values* to overcome the organizational challenges. The case of Ca Favara, Spain (Case 17), which remained communitarian despite a number of misfortunes, is emblematic. Despite having endured robberies and damage by outsiders walking their dogs over their land, they insisted that a fence would contradict their way of seeing their community. A member claimed: “What is certain is that this is a place where everyone goes, looks at the garden, and values it positively.” Third, some members *engaged in mediating conflicts in goals and values among members*. For example, many communities realized that working through frictions and resolving misunderstandings was part of the community life. Fourth, some members *sought support from external stakeholders*, such as the municipal council, other communities, the civil society organization the community was stemming from, or even the local church. Finally, it should be noted that this approach was often not harmless, as members in four out of 10 cases reacted to these negative epiphanies by quitting their community.

--- INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE ---

An analysis of the cases also revealed how these approaches of making sense of epiphanies unfold and relate to each other as part of the processes of identity co-construction (see Figure

1, under “approaches for making sense of epiphanies”). Specifically, *approaches of embracing negative and positive epiphanies* – that enacted identity shifts in communities - *took place iteratively over time*. As a collective phase of reflection after negative epiphanies, for instance, community members started searching for other epiphanies as well.

Paraphrasing, what members in many communities thought: “If I did not find this prosocial activity worth my time, and if the other members were disengaged too, then perhaps we are not a prosocial community?” Or, similarly, but in an opposite direction, members may have had the same train of thought, yet shifted collectively towards a more prosocial identity. Once they started questioning their own identity, members often subsequently engaged in embracing positive epiphanies. In this case, the train of thought may be paraphrased as: “If I unexpectedly found value in this prosocial activity, and/or others did too, then perhaps we are a prosocial community”.

As with the process of embracing epiphanies, the *approaches of limiting epiphanies and reacting to epiphanies also relate to each other iteratively* (Figure 1). In limiting epiphanies, community members established formal or informal rules (for example, only growing or purchasing organic products, or deciding that food delivery takes place only in-person during community meetings) or technology (e.g. for example, linking to a biogas installation or setting up computer software for managing food procurement) that address future goals. While welcoming their members to widely experiment with new communal activities, identity-persisting communities did not “make room” for members to self-reflect and re-discuss their underlying community identity. Along these lines, the approach of reacting to epiphanies also iteratively reinforces the enacting of community identity persistence. For example, members would show a wide range of reactions yet some re-framed the shocking event to reinforce their own initial values. Others, while recognizing unexpected outcomes, held on to their initial values and continued being moved by them.

## 4.2. Re-organizing as an approach for acting upon epiphanies

After making sense of epiphanies (i.e. either embracing, or limiting and reacting to, epiphanies) and therefore enacting divergent processes of identity co-construction, most of the communities engaged in re-organizing (Figure 1, under “approaches for acting upon epiphanies”). Twenty-five out of 27 communities went through a process of re-organizing (Table 3). Despite the similarity of this approach, communities re-organized around different resources and values depending on their (molded) identity. For example, communities that “learning to be” prosocial dedicated time and space to socializing meetings within and outside their community. Conversely, communities that “learning to be” less prosocial focused their resources more on improving product delivery efficiency.

Five forms of re-organizing emerged overall (Figure 1). Members *built new resource complementarities*. After realizing they were more communitarian than before, for example, members in the Spanish community garden Huerto City (Case 18) decided to use the common garden space to provide learning and social events for children. Conversely, after finding their community to be more utilitarian than they initially thought, members of two Italian groups (Cases 8 and 9) leveraged their networks with organic stores and farmers’ markets to distribute their food from farm to their homes more efficiently. As a second dimension of re-organizing, community members engaged in *taking up new tasks*, for example, developing computer software to manage the food supply more efficiently, or creating and joining a committee managing the group finances. Third, members participated in re-organizing by *convincing and inspiring others*. For example, in CHPP Nuremberg, Germany (Case 27), an energy community sharing a biogas installation, members sought to connect with new potential peers by focusing on the social importance of their relationships. Fourth, members developed an *awareness of the complexity of organizing*. In Nahwärme Schneeren, also in Germany, where members share the use of a wind turbine (Case 26), a

participant confessed that he found it challenging to depend on the different interests and initiatives of twenty peers, as well as to reconcile them. Aware of this complexity, members in this community consciously took a slower and more participatory approach in taking decisions together and enacting them. Finally, re-organizing involved *engaging with new stakeholders*. For example, members approached municipal councils or other public institutions for permission to use new pieces of public land to grow food for the community.

Looking at the broader process of identity co-construction, these forms of re-organizing followed and were shaped by how community members made sense of epiphanies (Figure 1). Terra y Canya (Case 14) is an example of community re-organizing with an underlying identity shift towards more a utilitarian identity after a negative epiphany. Since “many people have become detached from the project because they do not have time for the gardening” – as one senior member recalled – the community adopted more contractual agreements and rules to give the land owner more control over the gardens, to hire a technician and to give users more autonomy in managing their own plots of land. Similarly, other identity-persisting communities re-organized after limiting or reacting to epiphanies. The community garden of Benimaclet (case 10), for example, reacted to negative epiphanies around the use and distribution of water for irrigation. As a reaction to these water issues, “a member in one of the assemblies said: We need to stop seeing this as fifty plots and [start seeing] it as a big garden that we all manage”, and her intervention was recalled by many in the community. In the process of re-organization, members opted for coordinating more meetings and engaging in more participatory decisions around water use and distribution.

### **4.3. Distributed experimentation as a generator of epiphanies**

The third key finding of this study entailed the role of distributed experimentation as a generator of epiphanies in the process of identity co-construction in the communities (Figure 1, under “approaches for generating epiphanies”). Independently of whether their identity

changed over time or not, all communities engaged in some form of distributed experimentation in the early stages of their existence (Table 3).

The “distributed” feature reflects that founding members and most, if not all of the other community members engaged in experiments. Before engaging in these communities, most members had not, previously, been involved in organizing activities in a community or new venture. For instance, beforehand, they were involved in choosing, assessing, cooking, and eating food, or perhaps installing and using energy sources in their households. But during this experimentation phase in these communities, members: reached out to, and learned from stakeholders; tried out multiple coordinated activities; participated, and encouraged participation with the community; deliberated over and made joint decisions on emerging issues; and/or understood new relationships with materiality (e.g., what it takes to grow fruit/vegetable plants, or how to actually install a wind turbine).

Focusing on the various facets of distributed experimentation in the context of our studied food and energy communities, distributed experimentation revolved around five dimensions. First, members engaged in *reaching out and learning from stakeholders*. For example, some members gained inspiration on how to create a community from social movements and neighborhood associations with which they were familiar, others from academic courses or short training sessions. Some members contacted cultural associations, or agronomic or irrigation experts to learn how to grow their own food within their incipient community. In addition, some members visited established communities or solicited information from municipal councils. A second dimension of distributed experimentation entailed members *trying out multiple coordinated activities*, such as cultivating the land, procuring vegetable and fruit seeds, building a greenhouse or irrigation pipelines, engaging with local farmers to procure food, or organizing association finances. To coordinate this variety of activities, members experimented with multiple ways to interact, for example

through meetings, email, or creating committees. Third, distributed experimentation involved *participating and encouraging participation*: members attended meetings, applied for subscriptions, got to know each other, and developed an interest for the common space provided by their community; reminded each other about forthcoming meetings and required tasks; exchanged opinions with each other; and encouraged and inspired others within and outside the community to follow their example. *Deliberating on emerging issues and making joint decisions* represents a fourth dimension of distributed experimentation. During community meetings, one-to-one interactions with the leaders, or sometimes via email or through “WhatsApp,” members discussed and undertook decisions as a novel collective entity. Finally, *understanding new relationships with materiality* was the fifth dimension for members to experiment in their community. For example, members experimented with ways to provide consistent care for growing plants, such as irrigating, protecting plants from pests, and monitoring their growth week after week, or experimenting with how to connect their own home to a community-accessed biogas installation or a wind turbine.

These forms of distributed experimentation were crucial for members to begin to know themselves and each other better as a community (Figure 1). “This was a very beneficial project *to realize what we like, what was interesting and then adapt it* to our area. Some people [...] started a garden, that is working. Other members have set up different gardens. So, it has served as initiative, even if something did not work out, it was *useful to realize what we wanted to have* from such a project,” confessed one of the members of Valencian group, Mateta de Fenoll (case 24). Through new ways of interaction with each other or actors outside their community, or by undertaking new activities in new spaces and with new materials, community members developed a better idea of what they liked and valued as well as what was not worth their time and energy. As such, these approaches to

organizing often preceded a subsequent phase when these communities changed their identity or at least considered changing it.

## **5. Discussion**

The inductive interplay of theory and empirical case data has been guided by the research question: *How do members of CBEs co-construct their collective prosocial identity through distributed experimentation and making sense of epiphanies?* As summarized in the processual model (Figure 1), the key findings of this exploration unveil that: 1) distributed experimentation appears to naturally occur in CBEs and generates either positive or negative epiphanies among community members; 2) making sense of these generated epiphanies enacts divergent processes of identity co-construction that involve either changing or preserving their initial collective identities; 3) as an outcome of this process, community members re-organize their activities according to the realized underlying identity shift or preserved identity. These findings contribute to understanding the role of distributed experimentation (section 5.1) and epiphany sense-making (section 5.2), as well as explaining processes of identity co-construction (section 5.3) in CBEs. On the basis of these findings, we delineate the boundary conditions of the processual model (Figure 1) with related directions for future research (section 5.4).

### **5.1 Distributed experimentation**

Members of organizations (including communities, e.g. Rothschild-Whitt 1979) widely experiment when seeking alternative solutions to grand challenges (Ferraro et al. 2015) or to instigate social change (Mair et al. 2012). The CBEs in our empirical study are no different: most community members engage in innovative forms of resource recombination for production and consumption purposes. What is surprising, relative to the extant literature,

though, is that distributed experimentation systematically plays a role as a generator of epiphanies.

The notion of distributed experimentation as a generator of epiphanies offers a new and different perspective on the role that distributed experimentation may play in CBEs, and perhaps, in other forms of organization. Distributed experimentation is not only an approach for communities to realize “what works” and “what does not work” in contexts of uncertainty and turbulent, non-linear change (Furnari 2014; Ferraro et al. 2015), rather, distributed experimentation may be seen as a necessary action for revelation (Weick 1995; Weick et al. 2005). That is, distributed experimentation is an approach available for communities to purposively trigger surprises. The valuable purpose of triggering *surprise* lays in progressively learning “who we are” as a community – especially when these communities are in the process of turning themselves into enterprises.

Relative to other forms of new ventures, though, communities may benefit significantly from this deeper inward-looking perspective generated by these experiments, since building a common identity plays an important role in shaping the activities of communities. As such, members – especially in situations where they are aware that multiple, conflicting identities co-exist in the community - may engage purposively in distributed experimentation as a process of building or shifting their collective identity.

## **5.2. Epiphany sense-making**

Our empirical findings confirm that surprising events in the history of new ventures - such as epiphanies - are constructed collectively (Downing 2005) and used by entrepreneurs when framing their failures (Cardon et al. 2011; Singh et al. 2015). Adding to this literature, we found that making sense of epiphanies plays a pivotal role in enacting how the collective identity of a community evolves over time. Two specific features of this finding deserve

further attention: first, the iterative process of making sense *one epiphany at a time* and, second, the notion of “*making room*” that underlies how epiphanies are embraced.

First, while different from each other, the approaches of embracing or resisting epiphanies are both iterative (Figure 1). Through iteration, community identities either shift or are preserved one epiphany at a time. In both identity-shifting and identity-preserving communities, epiphany sense-making unfolded through a progressive realization about “who we are” as a community. Therefore, while epiphanies *per se* “occur instantly” (Press and Arnould 2011, p. 655), our empirical findings show that this is a process of an iterative sequence of epiphanies that embodies identity shift (or resistance) in communities.

A second emerging feature of epiphany sense-making entails the underlying feature of “making room” in embracing epiphanies or, vice versa, of “avoiding to make room” in resisting epiphanies. Our findings show that, when making sense of epiphanies, community members dedicate collective resources such as time, space and energy for a deeper, collective re-thinking process. This process of allocating organizational resources to “make room” for deeper reflection may be seen as a kind of intellectual munificence (Aragón-Correa and Sharma 2003) that may contribute shifting individual member identities (Castrogiovanni 1991). Conversely, in situations where identities did not shift, members limited allocating resources for a deeper, value-laden change. In what might be considered a riskier alternative (given the progressive nature of this identity change), members in identity-preserving identities reacted to epiphanies by holding on to their initial values, mediating conflicts between members, or seeking confirmation from external stakeholders. These findings seem to highlight that, similar to other contexts of organizational life (Brown and Eisenhardt 1997), establishment of routines and processes in organizations tends to hinder deeper processes of reflection and paradigm-shift (Matthews 2010; Teece 2012).

From a practical perspective, community members may consciously use this iterative process of “making room” (or, vice versa, as “avoiding making room” when resisting epiphanies) to steer or preserve the collective identity of their community. Community members seeking to preserve their community identity may try to de-couple distributed experimentation from “making room” to generate epiphanies. For example, while continuing experimenting new ways of recombining resources and generating epiphanies, community members may limit opportunities for collective meetings, events or online discussions – thus, avoiding making room for a deeper reflection on what these epiphanies mean to the community. Conversely, members seeking to trigger identity shifts may want to purposively combine wide experiments with “making room” for their peers in deeper reflections on what these surprising outcomes may mean for their collective identity.

### **5.3 Collective processes of prosocial identity construction**

While CBEs can act as agents for social change (Peredo and Chrisman 2006; Lawrence and Dover 2015), our empirical cases identify CBEs that are not, necessarily, predominantly prosocial in nature. The CBEs in this study involve hybrid blends of utilitarian, communitarian and (to a minor extent) missionary identities similar to other types of new ventures (Fauchart and Gruber 2011). When looking at changes in these identity blends over time, the most remarkable discovery emerges: many CBEs, but not all, shifted their identity significantly over a relatively short period of time. This surprising finding suggests that prosocial motivations, at the community level, are malleable. Even if communities begin with prosocial identities, these identities may change or persist, based on how the activities of the community’s members are made sense of and acted upon. In other words, in every CBE there may be seeds for the emergence of - or if already grown, the decline of - prosocial identities from these hybrid blends.

This notion that *prosocial identities are malleable over time* enriches our understanding of how prosocial organizing takes place (Battilana and Lee 2014). That is, the organizational processes of balancing orientations toward known and unknown others, and in between multiple and conflicting identities, may potentially involve relatively rapid identity shifts over time. Only recently has this field delved into the study of the co-construction of values in organizations (Gehman et al. 2013). While the literature on identity work and play describes the progression towards redefining identities at an individual level (Shepherd and Williams 2016) and in communities (Petriglieri et al. 2017), the findings from this study contributes to understanding how this progression takes place at a collective level. Therefore, issues around when and how the collective identities of communities – and, more broadly, other types of organizations - turn towards or away from prosociality remains fertile ground for development.

More precisely, our empirical findings provide insights into *which approaches, and how these approaches to organizing, enact changes in prosocial identities* over time. By exploring relationships among distributed experimentation, making sense of epiphanies and the subsequent process of re-organizing, we contribute to understanding how collective identities interplay with approaches to organizing (Powell and Baker 2017). While our study focused on the collective level of identities, it may be helpful for future research to explore the dynamics that link individual and collective spheres of identity co-construction (Powell and Baker 2017), particularly in situations in which the in-group dynamics of learning “who we are” generates conflicts, as our evidence indicates that members sometimes quit as part of this process.

Finally, while we know that new venture organizing is strongly influenced by founder identity (Fauchart and Gruber 2011; Powell and Baker 2014) or the interplay of identities among multiple founders (Powell and Baker 2017), our empirical findings show that ventures

may re-organize, significantly, soon after their creation, in a relatively rapid process of identity change or resistance. Looking beyond this study of CBEs, these findings open up avenues of research to explore how approaches to prosocial organizing may vary between recently founded ventures and other organizations that may have recently engaged in identity co-construction processes.

#### **5.4 Boundary conditions**

The choice to study community based enterprises raises issues about the generalizability of our processual model (in Figure 1) to other kinds of organizations - including new ventures - engaged with prosocial identities. We studied relatively early-stage communities - most of them having been created approximately 10 years ago - relative to those studied by Peredo and Chrisman (2006) or McKeever et al. (2015). Relative to early-stage CBEs, the collective identity of more mature and established organizations - including communities that are not undergoing transitions into enterprises – may be less malleable to identity shifts. Likewise, the nature of early-stage CBEs may be more susceptible to distributed experimentation and the epiphany sense-making of its members compared to other types of organization.

The cases used for this study involve CBEs seeking to build alternative forms of production and consumption. Communities with members that see themselves as consumers may (or may not) be more prone to engage in collective identity changes compared to communities that see themselves as producers (such as rural cooperatives found in Foreman and Whetten 2002). Consumer communities have been widely studied in the consumer behavior literature (e.g., Thomas et al. 2012; Martin and Schouten 2014; Dolbec and Fischer 2015; Scaraboto 2015). Particularly relevant to our findings, Press and Arnould (2011) found that consumers and producers engage in similar processes of individual identity construction in communities, and that one of the possible pathways in this process involves epiphanies. It would be valuable to conduct a similar analysis of the co-construction of collective prosocial

identities among consumers – which may give shape to future studies of prosocial consumer organizing. On the basis of our findings, we suggest that members that see themselves as (actively experimenting) consumers may have stronger predispositions for embracing epiphanies relatively to other members seeing themselves as producers – taking into consideration that “what they want” and “who they are” are typical questions that individuals ask themselves while consuming (Vargo and Lusch 2004) and who are seeking to expand their locus of value creation (Grönroos and Voima 2013). This line of inquiry may open up socially relevant avenues of investigation across the fields of consumer behavior and new venture creation.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study sought to contribute to the growing interest in prosocial entrepreneurship (Shepherd 2015), and more broadly, prosocial organizing (Gehman et al. 2013; Battilana and Lee 2014) by shedding light on the processes of identity co-construction in CBEs. We found that while the collective identities of some CBEs remain stable (either prosocial or not), they shift in other CBEs (either towards or away from prosociality) even in relatively short periods of time. Second, we identified distributed experimentation and making sense of epiphanies as two interconnected approaches to organizing that enact processes of prosocial identity co-construction. We discovered that distributed experimentation acts as a “generator” of epiphanies, while the way members make sense of these generated epiphanies triggers divergent processes of identity co-construction. Finally, our findings shed light on how the divergent processes of identity persistence and identity shifting unfold. Both these processes are progressive and iterative: when identities shift over time, the community “makes room” for deeper reflection and questioning its initial paradigm – one epiphany at a time.

Conversely, in identity preserving communities, members collectively limit and react to epiphanies.

The findings from this study provide connections between the fields of prosocial entrepreneurship and organizing to the broader theoretical frameworks around identity construction and the context of grand challenges. Identity theories offer insights into how organizations shape their participants' identity work and play, although, primarily, at an individual level (Ibarra and Petriglieri 2010; Petriglieri et al. 2017). In turn, when ventures are new, founders' identities influence their organizations and their response to shocks (Fauchart and Gruber 2011; Powell and Baker 2014). Our findings hint that this identity construction process – towards or away from prosociality – may take place collectively as a form of co-creation among founding and incoming members.

The inductive discovery of the importance of distributed experimentation in the identity co-construction process brings about a connection with organizing in the context of grand challenges (Ferraro et al. 2015). What our findings offer, in the context of grand challenges, is that distributed experimentation plays an important role in learning “who we are” by engaging in new activities leading to surprising, sudden realizations – i.e. epiphanies. Whether prosocial epiphanies are embraced or resisted, and whether communities then iterate re-organizing processes for prosocial identity shifts or continue persistence in a pro-social identity is subject to a variety of realizations and actions. While our findings are limited to the context of CBEs, these discoveries suggest pathways to inform practice at the intersections of the fields of prosocial organizing and identity theories. The realization that prosocial identities of CBEs are malleable should be both a concern and an advantage to those promoting prosocial values. Prosocial identities in communities can persist or change, and, communities that do not do not start with prosocial orientations can embrace the

epiphanies that are invariably before them. How we embrace or resist the surprises that await us, then, is the challenge that faces us all (Currie 2013).

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**Table 1. Case description of selected community-based enterprises (CBEs)**

Case #	Number members at t=1	Organization aims and activities	Year of foundation (t=0)	Year of interview (t=1)	Country	# people interviewed or listened	# documents consulted
1	240	Bioakker: Agricultural self-harvest scheme	2003	2014	The Netherlands	10	13
2	160	In Het Volle Leven: Agricultural self-harvest scheme	2006	2014	The Netherlands	19	5
3	97	De Volle Grond: Vegetable box scheme	2010	2014	The Netherlands	34	8
4	40	Us Hof: Agricultural self-harvest scheme	2014	2014	The Netherlands	4	3
5	275	Nieuwe Ronde: Agricultural self-harvest scheme	2005	2014	The Netherlands	4	15
6	95	Asum te Technum: Agricultural self-harvest scheme	2013	2014	The Netherlands	14	2
7	200	Niuewe Akker (Haarlem): Agricultural self-harvest scheme	2009	2014	The Netherlands	110	19
8	25	Gasualmente: Consumer-led group procuring food from several farmers	2010	2012	Italy	2	18
9	30	BibiGAS: Consumer-led group procuring food from several farmers	2008	2012	Italy	2	1
10	300	Benimaclet: community garden self-managed by group of users	2011	2014	Spain	2	7
11	100	Bicihuertos: community gardens privately owned by agricultural expert but self-managed by users	2012	2014	Spain	2	7
12	300	Burjassot: community gardens owned by the municipality but self-managed by users	2012	2014	Spain	2	5
13	15	Aixada con Eixida: Community garden based on solidarity and social cohesion principles	2012	2014	Spain	5	2
14	15	Terra i Canya: Self-organized community garden driven by food sovereignty principles	2013	2014	Spain	3	3
15	90	Huertos del Turia: community gardens privately owned by agricultural expert but self-managed by users	2012	2014	Spain	2	5
16	300	La Coscollosa: community gardens owned by the municipality but self-managed by users	2011	2014	Spain	3	6

17	15	Ca Favara: Community garden recovering degraded land and creating social cohesion by self-organized users	2013	2014	Spain	1	3
18	100	Huerto City: Self-organized community garden driven by food sovereignty principles	2012	2014	Spain	85	6
19	250	CSOA L'Horta: Community garden recovering degraded land and creating social cohesion by self-organized users	2012	2014	Spain	85	15
20	19	Patraix: Self-organized consumer group of volunteers driven by food sovereignty principles	2011	2014	Spain	3	8
21	20	Cabasset D'Arrancapins: Self-organized group of families ordering food from farmers and distributors	2013	2014	Spain	3	14
22	18	Algiros: Self-organized group of families ordering food from farmers and distributors	2012	2014	Spain	2	13
23	15	l'Hort del Carmen: Self-organized community garden driven by food sovereignty principles	1999	2014	Spain	3	5
24	15	Mateta de Fenoll: Self-organized group of families ordering food from farmers and distributors	2008/9	2014	Spain	3	2
25	550	Dorpsmolen Reduzum: consumers' foundation running a wind turbine	1994	2016	Germany	4	15
26	20	CHPP Nuremberg: house owners association using wind energy	2012	2016	Germany	2	6
27	55	Nahwärme Schneeren: village-based cooperative generating house heating from wind	2009	2016	Germany	5	10

**Table 2. Collective dimensions of identity applied to the empirical context of CBEs**

<b>Identity dimensions</b>	<b>Variance of meanings</b> (categorization derived by our analysis of identity meanings/statements)		
<b>Social motivations of the community</b>	<i>Orientation towards the individual members:</i>  - Entrepreneurial action of the community is oriented towards benefits for its members as individuals	<i>Orientation towards the known others in the community:</i>  - Entrepreneurial action of the community is oriented towards collective benefits or for groups within the community	<i>Orientation towards the unknown others outside the community:</i>  - Entrepreneurial action of the community is oriented towards collective benefits also for other groups in society
<b>Self-evaluation of the community</b>	<i>Individualism:</i>  - The community or groups within the community are concerned about the (lack of) contribution of individuals as well as benefits/gains for individuals	<i>Collectivism:</i>  - The community or groups within the community are concerned about the (lack of) in-group dynamics	<i>Universalism:</i>  - The community or groups within the community are concerned about other communities, the interaction with them and the related societal dynamics
<b>Frame of reference of the community</b>	The individual member.	The community as a whole; known others.	Society as a whole; unknown others.
<b>Type of group social identities</b>	Utilitarian	Communitarian	Missionary

**Table 3. Relationships between typologies of identity change in communities and their enacting approaches**

Typology of identity change in community	Approaches (aggregate dimension)	Frequency of approaches across cases				
		<b>U → C (7 cases)</b>	<b>C → U (9 cases)</b>	<b>U → U (5 cases)</b>	<b>C → C (5 cases)</b>	U/C → U/C (1 case)
All communities	Distributed experimentation	100%	100%	100%	100%	n.a.
<b>Identity-shifting communities</b>	<b>Embracing negative epiphanies</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>89%</b>	0%	20%	n.a.
	<b>Embracing positive epiphanies</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>78%</b>	20%	0%	n.a.
<i>Identity-persisting communities</i>	<i>Limiting epiphanies</i>	29%	22%	<b>100%</b>	<b>80%</b>	n.a.
	<i>Reacting to epiphanies</i>	14%	22%	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	n.a.
All communities	Re-organizing	100%	100%	60%	100%	n.a.

**Table 4.A. Distinctive identity-shifting approaches: aggregate dimensions, narrative themes and quotes.**

Aggregate dimension	Narrative themes	Quotes
Embracing negative epiphanies	1. Realizing one's time is undervalued	It was a waiting time in which many people realized whether or not it was a project for them (Case 13). Many people have become detached from the project because they do not have time for the gardening (...), they thought it was not such a serious project (Case 14). Other (community leaders) may have gotten tired of the group dynamics, etc. (Case 20). The projects were very interesting but all participants had families and many different projects at a time so we couldn't find the time to push them (Case 24).
	2. Questioning one's own values	The vegetable box system didn't work since it made members less connected with the farm (Case 5). We invest too much time in field activities and maintaining a good internal organization (Case 13). Often it becomes a day of drinking and partying which, ultimately, for us is counterproductive (Case 13). There is no more room for tools (...), to have them in common, (it would be) a chaos. Nowadays, each one brings the planting tools he/she uses (Case 16). There is a big dilemma between the search for an organic product versus the comfort of getting the stock next to you (Case 17). Since the beginning, the social activities didn't work out (...). Even if it didn't work out, it has been useful to realize that we wanted to have such a project (Case 24). After two years we started wondering, because the gas bills were high (...) if I don't care, nobody cares (Case 26).
	3. Becoming aware of others' disengagement	One neighbor was active in the beginning, but stopped when he realized that there was little feedback (Case 26). Participation is a major problem (...) the current situation where everyone lives in cities does not make it easy to have hands to come help with the garden work (Case 13). The reality is that people do not respond, and it is always the same people who come to clean, help and maintain the garden (Case 16). You hear comments like "(...) if you come at 6 in the morning, there is no one in the garden so you can throw in your plants whatever you want." "You can throw things and hide them." (Case 16). We realized that if they don't have the garden really close to home, many people will not come (Case 24).
	4. Quitting the community	Pedro complains of the great competition that has emerged and which he believes is responsible for the decline in the number of users in his garden (Case 11). After this [self-]selection time, just three people were left and a couple in their fifties (Case 13). As the objectives of the thirteen people were different, quite a few people dropped out of the project. In the end, we are left with five who share similar ideas (Case 14). There has been a renewal of the group. For various reasons the founders cannot be as present (Case 20).
Embracing positive epiphanies	1. Realizing that something unexpected is in the value of one's time	By self-harvesting, members get to know the land and know the community. It develops natural ties (Case 5). He likes the fact of growing food for people he knows (Case 5). They first become members, they feel how nice it is to work in the garden and then become volunteers (Case 7). We are really happy to have such a good representation of so many diverse groups (Case 12). Anyhow, this was a very beneficial project for realizing what we like, what is interesting, and then adapting it to our area (Case 20). It has advantages, that you have the background, so that you maybe can learn the ropes more easily. That you can speak to the firms at their level after some time (Case 27).
	2. Becoming aware of others' engagement	The garden was very inspiring for people. And people like it a lot. And they congratulate for it a lot (Case 4). In those common spaces, where they put their posters, they have their blackboards and their meetings (Case 12). What I like is that there have not been discussions in five years (...). I think that we have not suffered the ravages of time, so I guess that something must be working (Case 24). The board (...) shifted towards attracting (...) because sharing similar ideals made managing easier (Case 27).
	3. Gaining energy from unexpected resources	I feel supported in a psychological way. Because everybody seems to act in a positive way makes me work harder (Case 4). Nowadays, socializing and getting to know people like Klaas encourages me to volunteer (Case 5). We now have a computer network in which there are worksheets or columns and you fill them with whatever you want (Case 20). That's how you start, you make mistakes, you learn from the experienced farmers in the area, etc. And it is in the field where you learn (Case 24).

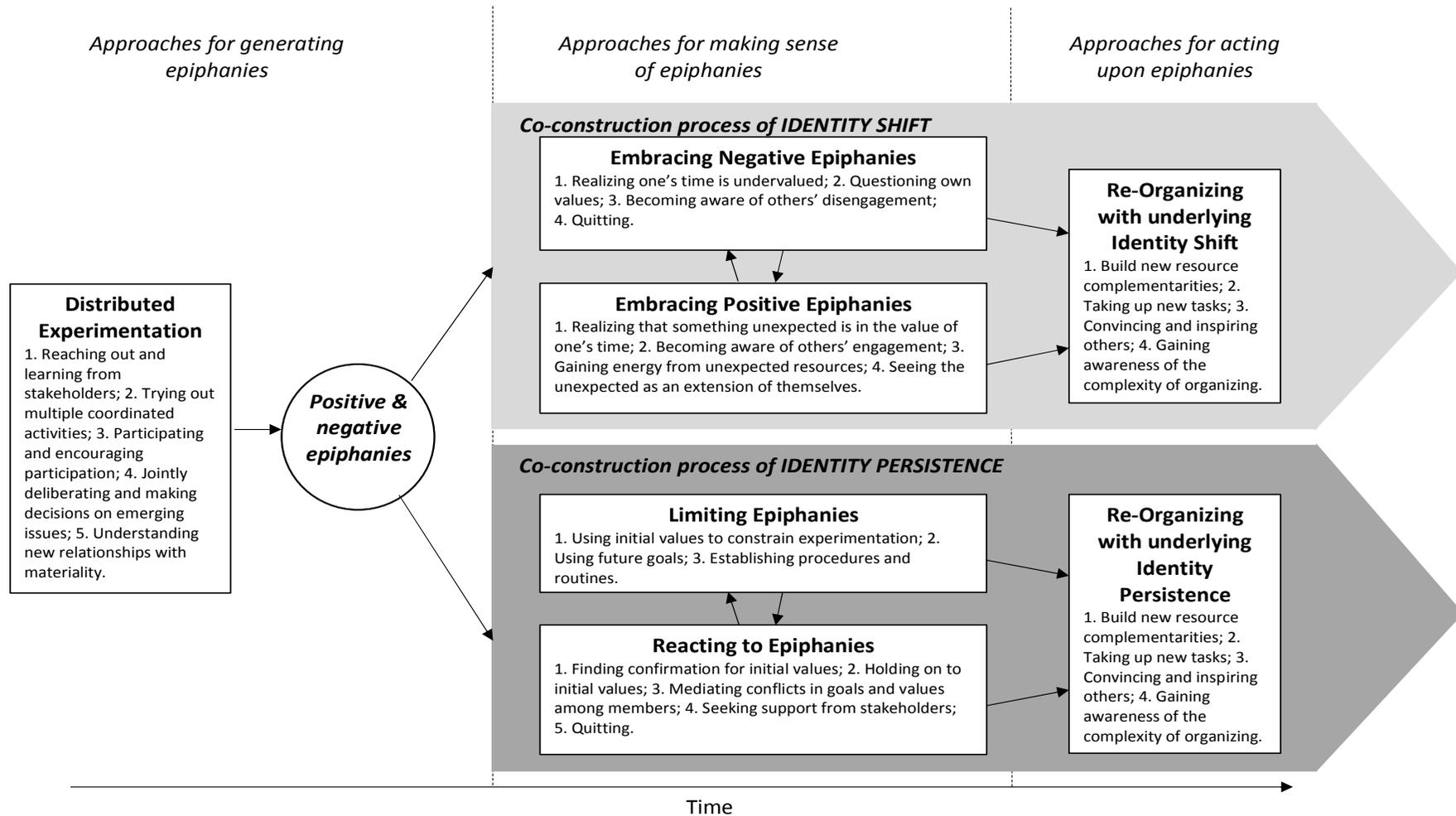
	4. Seeing the unexpected as an extension of themselves	<p>We are encouraging a sense of ownership, not financial ownership of course (Case 4).  When we ask people, they always say because the vegetables are so nice (Case 7).  The orders, to handle the computer network, the economy, the fees, the distributions, etc. The welcoming committee is responsible for making the initial training of the new member (Case 20).  We additionally have optimized things inside the installation ourselves (...) then we see potential to optimize ourselves (Case 27).</p>
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**Table 4.B. Distinctive identity-persisting approaches: aggregate dimensions, narrative themes and quotes.**

Aggregate dimension	Narrative themes	Quotes
Limiting epiphanies	1. Using initial values to constrain experimentation	<p>There are lots of suggestions. Mostly I reply that you can do it by yourself. Because I don't have time (Case 1).  Some people like that and they come. But a lot of people don't have time, or they don't like it so they don't come (Case 2).  This is not just about having a garden plot like those you can rent. Here everything belongs to everybody, the conflicts with water affect everyone (Case 10).  We meet once a month. So there is only time to get organized for the purchase, not to get into deep topics and debates. (Case 19).  This is a participatory group and not a supermarket. Therefore, the (new member) leaves the email address and we include it the lists and from next week on he/she can start ordering (Case 21).</p>
	2. Using future goals, i.e. planning, signing contracts, technology	<p>When you want to harvest in the garden you have to sign a contract as a family (Case 2).  One of the most important things that was settled was a commission to scout for producers. Always with the premise that they had to be organic farmers (Case 21).  The delivery commission is rotating (among members), so at some point everybody does it. All the other committees are fixed, each one accommodates himself in the one that fits him the best (Case 21).  We have a software tool in which we place an order and the system automatically sends the order to each of the producers. (...) All this was a mess without an informatics system (Case 22).  "Because the wind turbine is ours", you then say. A bit chauvinistic, but (...) you want to profit from it together (Case 25).</p>
	3. Establishing procedures, routines and ways of doing things	<p>This system works only with confidence. (...) I don't look when people come. So I trust them that they take only what they need (Case 2).  They have a WhatsApp group concerning the feeding of the pig. Yeah we communicate with that (Case 6).  Our organization is based on four levels, the level of awareness, engagement, training and enthusiasm. And according to the state each person is within these different levels, the different teams are formed (Case 18).  We do not pay what we take. We have a box and each one, when convenient, puts some money (Case 21).</p>
Reacting to negative epiphanies	1. Finding confirmation for initial values	<p>In one summer, he went for a holiday (...) When he comes back, it was one big mess. That was the last time. And I said to myself I won't do that again (Case 1).  We tried during the first three or four years to get them involved. We sent them emails like "we have lots of work in the garden" but they didn't reply. For us they are more like customers (Case 3).  They arranged a piece of land that had not gone into the design of the plots. It worked for a while but not long (Case 10).  What is certain is that it is a place where everyone goes, looks at the garden, and values it positively (Case 17).  Increasing the offer of products would require (...) much more organization, availability, etc. And are you really willing to do that? (Case 19).  Gradually a desire to demand vegetables in bulk started and more organization was needed because two people were needed to organize the distribution of vegetables (Case 22).</p>
	2. Holding on to initial values	<p>Now I tried to get the work done with other people (...) I made a deal: if you work in the garden for 24 hours you get a free ticket for the music festival for three days. Yeah and then they get vegetables from me (Case 6).  A girl in one of the assemblies said: "We need to stop seeing this as 50 plots and see it as a big garden that we all manage". (...) Precisely what sometimes you forget, you go to your plot and you cannot see far beyond (Case 10).</p>

	<p>We have suffered some robberies from outsiders this summer ... they took two pepper plants and a watermelon, and this enters in a normal risk. But we do not want a fence (Case 17).</p> <p>The attitude of Reduzum is not letting go easily (...), we have the conviction that it will finally work out (Case 25).</p>
<b>3. Mediating conflicts in goals and values among members</b>	<p>If we take a decision with it and I feel that someone is not happy about it I will go to that person and ask how can we solve this (Case 2).</p> <p>The reality is that this is a large garden, what your neighbour does affects you both for good and bad; if the water does not reach the fields, we all lose (Case 10).</p> <p>In the end, every friction makes relationship (Case 22).</p>
<b>4. Seeking support from stakeholders</b>	<p>There was a time we went together to the community council to talk to the politicians. It's always better to do that together than on your own (Case 2).</p> <p>We had some help from other groups from Benetússer and La Llavoreta, and they lent us their statutes and so on to fix all those things (Case 19).</p> <p>Through the association 15M we make a barter market in the neighbourhood (Case 21).</p> <p>Also the church does (invest in the village). And the village council also wants to contribute something (Case 25).</p>
<b>5. Quitting the community</b>	<p>In this year and a half there have been people who got tired and left, thus when a plot is abandoned someone new is called to occupy it (Case 10).</p> <p>We are currently in a transition period, as some people who had participated in the initiative from the beginning chose to go (Case 18).</p> <p>Some people quit as expected and it is like we are now, usually we are from 12 to 16 families (Case 19).</p> <p>When a bigger organization appeared and there were more tasks, some people decided to leave the group as they had no time or did not want to devote their time to make some organizational tasks for the consumer group (Case 22).</p>

**Figure 1. Conceptual model: approaches enacting co-construction processes of identity shift and persistence**



**Legend:** Arrows indicates temporal sequence of events (before/after). The rectangles indicate approaches to organizing. The circle indicates events. The light/dark grey arrows underlying the rectangles indicate two divergent processes that are enacted by different overlapping approaches to organizing.

## Appendix 1

### Identity-shifting and identity-persisting communities.

Case #	Type of identity traits when the community was founded (t=0)	Prevailing identity when the community was founded (t=0)	Type of identity traits at the time of the interviews (t=1)	Prevailing identity at the time of the interviews (t=1)	Typology of identity change in community
1	U50, C20, M30	U	U50, C20, M30	U	U → U
2	U70, C15, M15	U	U70, C20, M10	U	U → U
3	U70, C15, M15	U	U70, C15, M15	U	U → U
4	U60, C20, M20	U	U45, C45, M10	U/C	U → C
5	U40, C30, M30	U	U30, C50, M20	C	U → C
6	U20, C50, M30	C	U20, C50, M30	C	C → C
7	U60, C00, M40	U	U35, C35, M30	U/C	U → C
8	U20, C40, M40	C	U40, C20, M40	C	C → U
9	U10, C10, M80	M	U40, C40, M20	U/C	C → U
10	U10, C80, M10	C	U10, C80, M10	C	C → C
11	U20, C60, M20	C	U40, C40, M20	U/C	C → U
12	U50, C30, M20	U	U30, C50, M20	C	U → C
13	U30, C70, M00	C	U60, C40, M00	U	C → U
14	U00, C80, M20	C	U60, C20, M20	U	C → U
15	U80, C20, M00	U	U40, C60, M00	C	U → C
16	U40, C40, M20	U/C	U60, C20, M20	U	C → U
17	U00, C80, M20	C	U00, C80, M20	C	C → C
18	U10, C70, M20	C	U10, C70, M20	C	C → C
19	U40, C30, M30	U	U40, C30, M30	U	U → U
20	U00, C50, M50	C	U40, C40, M20	U/C	C → U
21	U20, C50, M30	C	U20, C50, M30	C	C → C
22	U60, C20, M20	U	U60, C20, M20	U	U → U
23	U30, C40, M30	C	U60, C20, M20	U	C → U
24	U35, C35, M30	U/C	U60, C40, M00	U	C → U
25	U40, C40, M20	U/C	U40, C40, M20	U/C	U/C → U/C
26	U80, C00, M20	U	U50, C30, M20	C	U → C
27	U40, C40, M20	U/C	U30, C50, M20	C	U → C

**Legend:**

U = prevalence of utilitarian/collective hedonists identity over collaborative collectivists and missionaries / universalists

C = prevalence of collaborative collectivists identity over utilitarian/collective hedonists and missionaries / universalists

M = prevalence of missionaries / universalists identity over utilitarian/collective hedonists and collaborative collectivists

UT/CO = equal balance between utilitarian/collective hedonists identity and collaborative collectivists identity

UXX = percentage of utilitarian/collective hedonists identity

MXX = percentage of missionaries / universalists identity

CXX = percentage of collaborative collectivists identity