



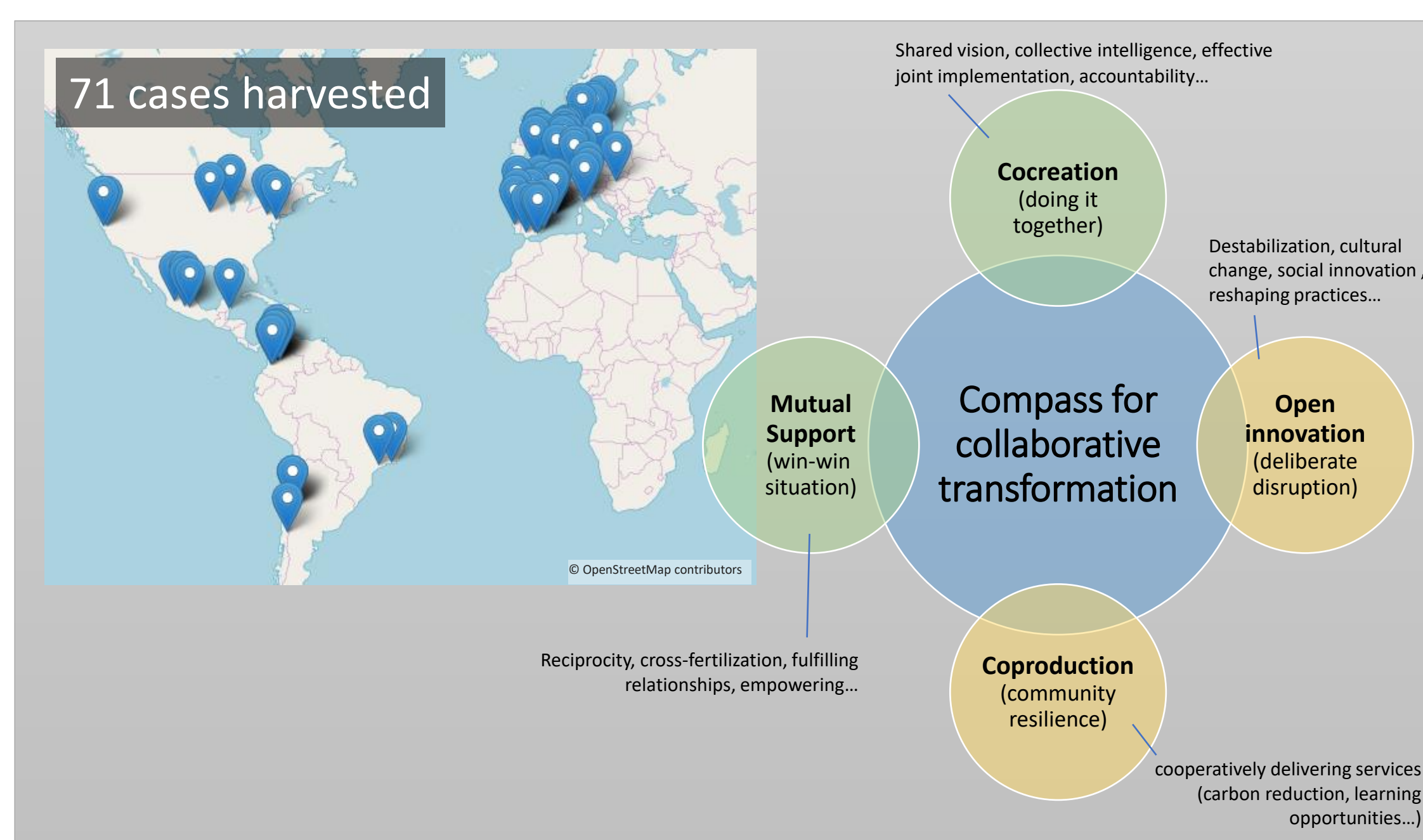
Municipalities in Transition

collaboration between citizen-led initiatives and local governments

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Objectives

- Facing limits, such as planetary boundaries, is an opportunity to reimagine society. Worldwide, many citizens are joining together to strengthen resilience and sustainability.
- Some of the initiatives have unintended results, like raising conflict with local public administration. Previous research demonstrates that the nature of these interactions can either obstruct community-led initiatives, or act as powerful enablers.
- The Transition Movement started the “Municipalities in Transition” action-research project in 2017. The objective is to create a clear **framework for how grassroots initiatives and Municipalities can create sustainable change together.**



Methods

- A participatory-action research approach uses a “**Compass for Collaborative Transformation**” as a heuristic.
- The work developed until 2019 included mapping and assessing impactful collaborative experiences around the world, co-designing an agreed framework, testing and refining in **six pilots**. There is a growing Community of Practice.

Kispest (Hungary), La Garrotxa (Spain), Santorso and valsamoggia (Italy), São Paulo (Brazil) and Telheiras (Portugal)

Results

- The framework developed is comparable to a **cooperative game**: a grid is used with columns corresponding to different local actors and rows to categories of actions (e.g. using new technologies or fostering relations). The first step in this “board game” is to set out the main transformative initiatives already happening in the community, providing a baseline. The game unfolds by using joint efforts to occupy new “squares”, some of which are considered to be leverage points (therefore providing extra “points”). From each house players can get access to “cards” presenting a diversity of tools and guidelines on how to use them. The rules of the game also include a governance model and the support of tutors.
- A systemic approach is in the core of the methodology initially developed in Italy (Rossi et al., 2014): Transition principles are imbedded in the collective performance of local institutions. This methodology is believed to be **powerful enough to cope with high levels of complexity and uncertainty and simultaneously simple and flexible** to be relatively easy to learn and to use in “real life”.

The cooperative game

+ Governance model	Actions	Actors							
		Municipality Political	Municipality Organization	Controlled Entities	Suppliers	Organizations	Businesses	Public	Network
+ Evaluation cycles	Vision	●				●	●		
	Organization		●						
+ Database of tools	Planning	●	●			●	●	●	
	Technical aspects								
+ Leverage cells	Relations								
	Cult Change					●	●	●	●
	Network								

Measuring the governance imprint of the local transformative collaborations

Conclusion

- A systemic and operational framework was developed through participatory action research in order to promote **synergies** in the interplay between local governments and civil society, challenging existing practices and founding a supportive environment for new “transition patterns” to emerge and develop. This can act as a leverage point for wider social transformation.

Voices of the pilots
[Video](#)

<http://municipalitiesintransition.org>