

Name of your approach to assess societal impact	<p>Co-evaluation of real-world labs with structuration theory Matthias Wanner, Wuppertal Institut (approach developed in co-operation with Karoline Augenstein, Daniel Lang & Timo von Wirth)</p>
Approach description	<p>We understand RwL as "infrastructures" for transformation and try to grasp their longer-lasting structural effects. In order to assess the structural changes caused/influenced by the lab and the experiments we deploy the lens of structuration theory (Giddens). There, four modalities are described that facilitate the reproduction of structures in a given system.</p>
Concepts used in the approach	<p>These modalities are: interpretative schemes, norms, authoritative and allocative resources. Their implications for RwL research have been described in Schneidewind et al., 2018 (gaia). The four modalities have been used to develop a series of related questions for the evaluation of RwL effects/outcomes. Questions concerning interpretative schemes, for instance, ask if concepts and terms have been mutually defined and coined. Norms draw the attention to e.g. processes of decision-making and if they were altered, questioned, strengthened etc. Allocative resources mostly refer to financial resources than are allocated to the lab/experiment, but also working hours of volunteers etc. With authoritative resources we e.g. ask about newly established/used political and public power to push the lab's issue. We used these modalities and questions in two workshops for the co-evaluation of structural effects of five td/transformativ projects for co-productive city-making in a neighbourhood in Wuppertal/Germany. The data is/will be qualitatively analysed.</p>
Key challenges	<p>The approach is not intended to detect/describe chains of effects and clear causalities. The quite abstract perspective is a challenge for both researchers and practice partners. The four modalities mostly focus on capabilities, communication, interpretations and non-physical impacts and do not cover all types of aspects that the participants mentioned (e.g. concrete outcomes like a new digital networking map) or the literature on evaluation lists (e.g. CO2 reduction or technological). In the end, the approach tries to detect if new/altered ways and capabilities to find (sustainability) solutions were found and built. It does not focus on concrete (and countable) outputs and outcomes. For instance it would not ask "how many plastic bottles were recycled in project XY" but rather "is there a new understanding of the urgency of recycling plastic bottles among the project partners (+x) and are there new ways, processes and capacity to deal with it?".</p>
Visualization and narratives	<p>In the workshop we used a simple visualisation on how to get from project processes and outputs to distant effects and from</p>

	there to the structural impacts. We're still working on how to generalise it and how to visually present the results of our workshops.
Strengths and weaknesses	<p>Strengths: medium and long-term perspective on structural effects of td/tf research without getting lost in project details and superficial changes and outputs; Potentially good comparability of the outcomes of different projects</p> <p>Weakness: strong sociological bias; limited/special scope of project outcomes on an abstract level that often does not cover visible project outputs and outcomes.</p> <p>Both S and W: difficult/impossible traceability of impacts (attribution gap) -> frees the mind of participants, one doesn't get lost in questionable relations/causal chains; but also sometimes not fully satisfying</p>
Learn more	publication in progress

Schneidewind, U., Augenstein, K., Stelzer, F., & Wanner, M. (2018). Structure matters: Real-world laboratories as a new type of large-scale research infrastructure. A framework inspired by Giddens' structuration theory. *GAIA - Ecological Perspectives for Science and Society*, 27(S1), 12–17.