



Joint Learnings of the D-Care Lab Community of Practice

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T2.2. JOINT LEARNINGS OF THE D-CARE LAB COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

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Joint Learnings of the Community of Practice for D-Care Lab Practitioners

The central object of transnational learning was the sustainable development of nine regional innovation labs. The transnational lab functioned as an incubator to provide the innovation lab concept by establishing a knowledge base to build upon, combining the existing expertise of the project partners in the field of promoting social innovation. Along with the series of seven workshops, the transnational lab provided the basis to develop impact-orientated social innovation labs to foster social entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial competencies and sustainable innovation structures in the field of home care.

Objective

The objective of the transnational lab was the transfer of academic research results in the field of social innovation development via an innovation lab approach and thereby use peer learning formats.

Partners were enabled to apply key assumptions from the research perspective to their respective regional D-Care Lab formats and to learn from each other. The related, central purpose was the knowledge exchange on how to build social innovation labs based on a variety of skills, competencies, and resources. The latter was taken up in a series of workshops, which enabled the successive construction and launch of the labs.

The transnational learnings can be seen as milestones in the set-up process of the labs, ranging from a first conception to a comprehensive scaling and diffusion strategy to sustain and diffuse the lab concepts. In focusing on learning aspects, the conducted lab cycle of the regional D-Care Labs during the project phase ensured the sharing of experiences and stimulate learnings upon the interplay of theory and practice of social innovation labs.

Approach

A diversity of perspectives is a crucial element of co-creation, especially when guided through an innovation process. The transnational learning approach has explicitly used multiperspectivity as a resource for implementing nine regional D-Care Labs. The designated goal of the transnational lab was to share academic findings in the field of social innovation research and to test and apply them together with the nine different organizations operating the labs. Accordingly, the special feature of the transnational format was to adapt the common object — social innovation labs for the field of home care — to the respective regional conditions and to embark on a joint learning journey in the process. It is this combination of a common learning cycle and methodologically structured workshops on the one hand, and different organizational, the welfare state, and demographic backgrounds on the other hand, which made the diversity of partners very fruitful.

The content and methods of the transnational lab function as a common reference against which the different perspectives and experiences are composed. Methods and trainings ensured the progress in the lab implementation. The transferred contents are at the same time designed to allow sufficient scope in the application and to invite collaboration and exchange. In other words: The productive reciprocity of a common goal dimension (the implementation of a regionally specific innovation lab) and the diversity of the regional partners enabled the exchange of knowledge and experience with the goal of mirroring and visualizing the respective regional specifics. The specific advantage was that the partners were able to sensitize each other to the institutional care and innovation systems and to learn about the different perspectives and experiences. The diversity of knowledge was in particular based on different organizational backgrounds, country-specific welfare and care systems, as well as demographic developments and the distinction between rural and urban regions. One of the most important learnings was, therefore, that the regional D-Care Labs had to consider their ecosystem of social investors, caregivers, national regularities etc.

The methodology in the transnational lab was designed to enable a moderated exchange between the partners as well as a collaborative problem analysis and solution finding and decision making. To give an example: The definition of relevant stakeholders was an iterative process, which started with quantitative and qualitative analysis to explore a variety of potential stakeholders in the field of innovative home care and then lead to concrete decision-making to define the most relevant ones for the D-Care Labs. As a result, a deep understanding of the stakeholders in an ecosystem led to the sustainable implementation of partnerships. However, the refinement of the regional-specific innovation and care policy, welfare state conditions etc. can be described as an ongoing learning process.



Key learnings along the workshop series

The centrepiece of the development of the regional labs was the series of workshops. Those accompanied the project partners in their mutual development over the project period 2020-2022. The academic team offered input in the form of lectures, workshops, worksheets, and exchange spaces, providing impetus to the participants. At the same time, the participants gave feedback and shared their results, so that approaches, ideas and building processes could be further developed on basis of this. The workshop series consisted of seven modules, which are briefly described below:

- I. Kick-Off Transnational Lab: Needs assessment and Innovation Labs (23rd – 24th July 2020)
- II. Social Business Model Canvas for Innovation Labs (09th – 11th September 2020)
- III. Business Modell Canvas and lab infrastructure (08th – 12th December 2020)
- IV. Social Innovation Methods I: Train the trainers (24th – 25th March 2020)
- V. Social Innovation Methods II: System Innovation and Transformative Change (22nd – 23rd September 2021)
- VI. Transnational Learning and Impact Measurement (1st February 2022; 22/23rd March 2022; 22-24th May.2022)
- VII. Diffusion Strategies (20th – 22nd September 2022)

Workshop I: Needs assessment & Innovation Labs

The first event was intended to be a kick-off event. The two-day workshop introduced the participants to the characteristics and functions of social innovation labs and their role as intermediaries. They also received knowledge about qualitative and quantitative needs assessment to run an innovation lab for innovative care solutions in the respective regions. They were sensitized to the innovation process as a whole conducted in an innovation lab. This included elements of setting up an innovation lab, design thinking approaches for social innovations, the analysis of regional social needs and the role and development of regional social innovation networks. For the transfer to the own regional laboratories working materials were offered for application.

Workshop II: Social Business Model Canvas for Innovation Labs

For the second workshop, the focus was on the Social Business Model Canvas, including key success factors, customer and user segments, value proposition, the function of different channels, customer relationships, key activities, resources and partnerships, cost structures and revenue streams. First, the theoretical basics about the creation of Business Model Canvas as a social enterprise were conveyed and underpinned with best practices. Subsequently, the participants were provided with material to develop a Social Business Model Canvas for D-Care Lab. The social business models were intended as a basis for social investor acquisition and financing social innovation.

Workshop III: Business Modell Canvas and Lab Infrastructure

The third workshop centered on the internal lab structure. The project partners formulated the needs of support to proceed with digital lab planning. Based on that the academic team presented a systematic overview to address lab partners within different formats before and within the lab process. The participants gained knowledge about access and activation strategies as well as lab cycle planning and digital and physical infrastructure. In this framework, they were introduced to the Miro board as digital facilitating tool. In the context of the business model navigator, the refinement of Social Business Model Canvas with BMN-Pattern Cards and the pitching session took place. Finally, the Stakeholder Network for D-Care Lab was developed through the application of ‚Regional Social Innovation Ecosystems‘.

Workshop IV: Social Innovation Methods, Train the trainers

According to the transnational ‚Lab of the labs approach‘, the methods were applied to the regional D-Care Labs in order to further develop them in this workshop through generating and structuring data in the needs assessment (empathy maps, interview simulation, point of view), ideation and Prototyping and moderation skills (do’s and don’ts in facilitating workshops). One main point was the exchange of lab experiences to prepare the ‚train the trainers-session‘. With the support of an external trainer, creativity methods and creativity techniques were used and practiced.

Workshop V: Social Innovation Methods: System Innovation & Transformative Change

Here one important point was to social innovation methods and tools used to improve and share quality of the regional labs. The main goal was to gain a deep understanding of the system innovation approach, learn how to map and analyze systems, learn about the patterns of change in such innovation systems and get to know and discuss respective lab approaches. The participants worked in particular with the System Innovation Lab Handbook with theoretical background as well as tools for practitioners. The handbook as a practical tool enables to work on obstacles and challenges of the lab-surrounding homecare and social innovation systems to reach out to multilevel stakeholder.

Workshop VI: Transnational Learning & Impact Measurement

This session provided a theory-based introduction to impact measurement in the field of social innovation. Taking up previous steps of impact orientation in social innovation (theory of change, Social Business Model Canvas as well as the transnational strategy for D-Care Labs) the consortium defined a research-based concept of impact (what do we mean, when we talk about impact in the field of social innovation), sharpened their view on a lab specific impact analysis is needed, what are indicators of

impact (along the differentiation between outputs, outcome and impact) and how to develop impact indicators.

In addition, the academic team provided and presented a blueprint of impact categories. In this context, exchange and bottom-up development of relevant impact categories and indicators has taken place for developing a common impact measurement tool on the basis of nine regional D-Care Lab impact models. The above-described process resulted in the publication of an impact measurement report on the basis of the measurement results.

Workshop VII: Final Pitch and diffusion strategies

The seventh workshop took place on 22nd and 23rd September 2022 and focused on the topic of diffusion strategies. It offered the participating partners the opportunity to work with previously created templates (UHEI) and to concretize their own diffusion strategies. The intention was to create a platform for mutual learning and experience exchange among lab practitioners in the different regional labs. First, however, the focus laid on a recap of their lab journey, where the partners could reflect and define the added value and benefits of the transnational learning approach. Another relevant topic on this point was the sustainability of regional D-Care Lab models. Because of this, moderated peer counselling took place to refine the sustainability concepts of the regional labs. An overview of academic research and strategic approaches of diffusion and scaling in social innovation had been provided for the partners, which highlighted the differences of scaling in social innovation compared to conventional market-based scaling concepts. As a linkage to D-care labs as innovation formats, the guiding question was, how to foster the diffusion of a social innovation lab program in macroregional contexts. Therefore, the developing of strategic approaches and pitching of each regional lab diffusion and scaling strategy on the basis of a template designed by UHEI took place. A diffusion strategy report by the UHEI team analyzed and summarized the results of this process.

Conclusion

The most important outcome: it is demonstrated that transnational learning is of great importance for the individual process phases. The expertise of the partner organizations running the regional D-Care Labs is a vital resource for the transnational learning approach. The transnational learning approach followed the deep belief that innovation is rooted in a diversity of perspectives. Therefore, one of the core objectives of the labs' transnational lab was to make the different perspectives and experiences of the partners fruitful in a co-creative learning process. The lessons learnt reports show that this goal could be fulfilled. All nine D-Care Labs went through the same processes in the series of workshops offered. Each of them shared their experiences and learning processes. Thus, they could be actively accompanied on their individual path and enabled to develop in a structured manner. Participants were familiarized with the characteristics and functions of social innovation labs and their own role as facilitators. They also acquired knowledge about methods to perform the qualitative and quantitative needs analysis and their importance for the implementation of an innovation lab for innovative care solutions in the respective regions. They were enabled to apply the presented social innovation methods and share their lab experiences, e.g., during the "train-the-trainer session". Within the sixth workshop, relevant impact categories and indicators were shared and, in a bottom-up process a common impact measurement tool based on nine regional D-Care Lab impact models was developed. In the final workshop, participants shared not only their own solutions and findings but their experiences with the Labs by identifying concerns, stress-causing factors, and irritations.

Multiperspectivity can be highlighted as a fundamental resource for the implementation of the nine regional D-Care Labs. The explicit goal of the transnational lab — to communicate scientific findings in the field of social innovation research and to test and apply them together with the nine operating organizations — could be achieved through the individual components presented. Accordingly, the special feature of the transnational format was the adaptation of the common object — social innovation labs for the field of home care — to the respective regional conditions. In doing so, the partner organizations embarked on a common learning journey that could be reflected and shared in the workshops. The combination of a common learning object, methodologically structured collaborative workshops, and different organizational background concerning welfare state and demography made the diversity of perspectives fruitful: partners were able to raise each other's awareness of their institutional embeddedness in care and innovation systems and learn about different perspectives and experiences. The diversity of knowledge was based on the different organizational backgrounds, country-specific welfare, and care systems, as well as demographic developments and the distinction between rural and urban regions. In this sense, one of the most important findings was: regional D-Care Labs

need to consider their respective ecosystem! The diversity of social investors, caregivers, national legal frameworks, and policies, etc. - must be considered and harnessed to best support social innovation.