



Towards a conceptualization of power in energy transitions

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ELECTRICITY ACCESS & RELATIONS OF POWER



How do relations of power influence the process?



What is the potential for empowerment?

Conceptualizations of power

Action-theoretical conception

Constitutive conception – sociotechnical systems

Build on the work by Amy Allen, Andrea Nightingale, Steven Lukes, Michel Foucault, Madeleine Akrich and others...

Action-theoretical conception

Power as originating in human agency: a capacity

“having power is being able to make or receive any change, or to resist it (Lukes 2005: 69)

Contradictory understandings: power as relation, or as resource

Constitutive power

Constituting social relations and human—non-human interactions

Goes beyond human agency and intention to forces and pressures emerging from a multitude of interactions

Can emerge from non-human ‘actants’ or at the level of ‘networks’

Resulting understanding of power...

...as relational, situated, contingent and productive.

...as practices

...as emergent pressures from complex systems

...as encoded into and embodied in artefacts & infrastructures

...with domination and empowerment always in tension



Methods in Mawengi Case study

3 months 2012-2013

Total of 142 interviews

Group discussions

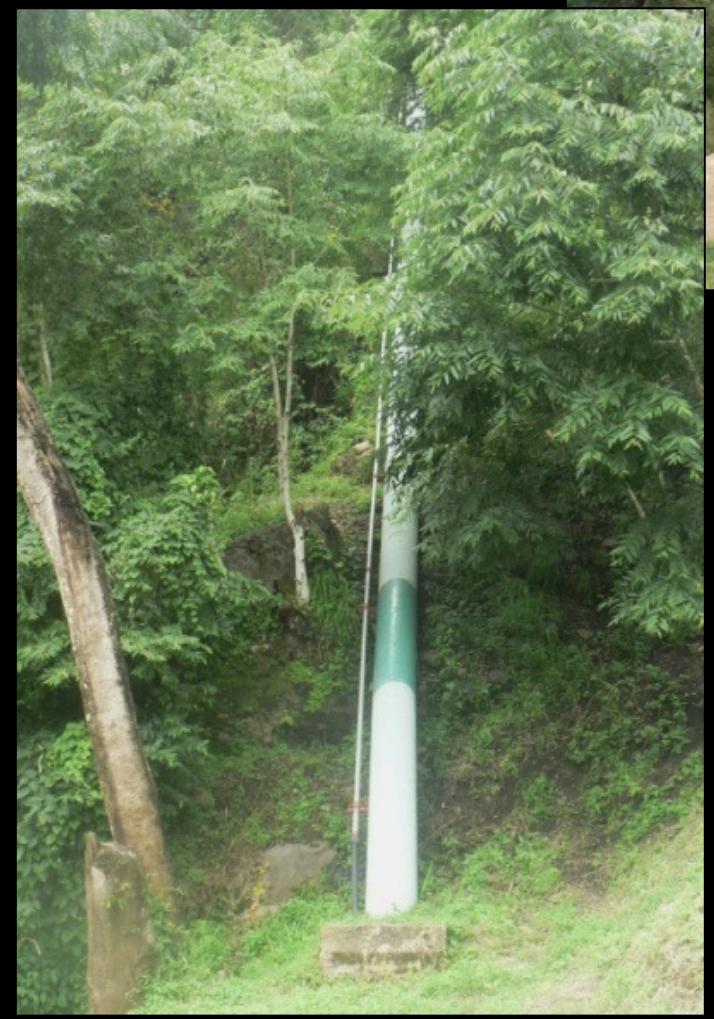
Observation

Sharing of preliminary results

Document analysis

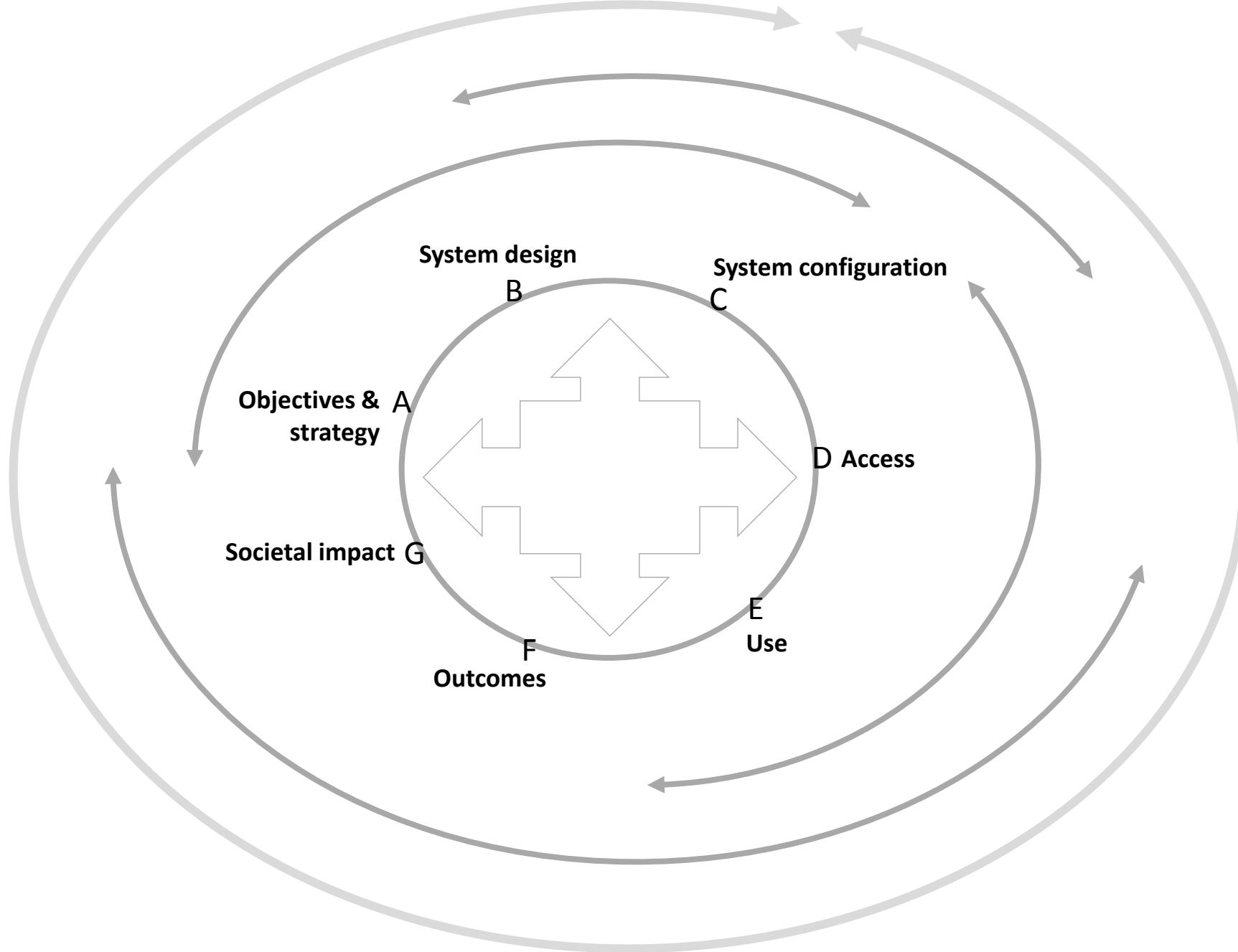
Informal interactions











The logic & shaping of the process
→ align with and contest existing social order

Translation from plans to practice: 'actants' and 'script'

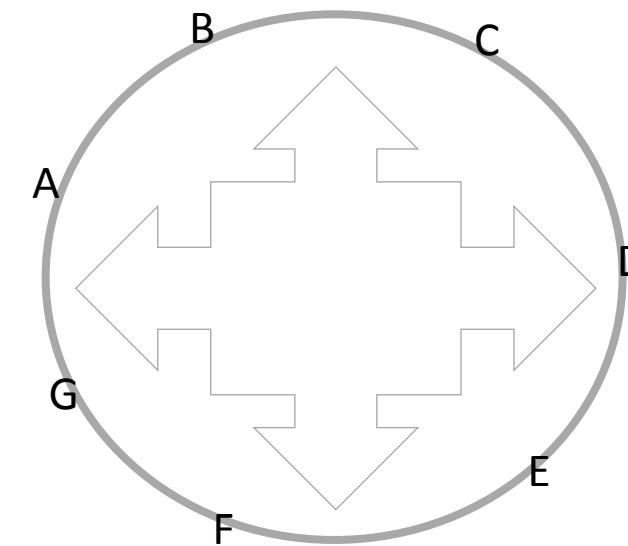
Existing distribution of resources

Division of labour

Decision-making influence

Dominant discourses & institutions

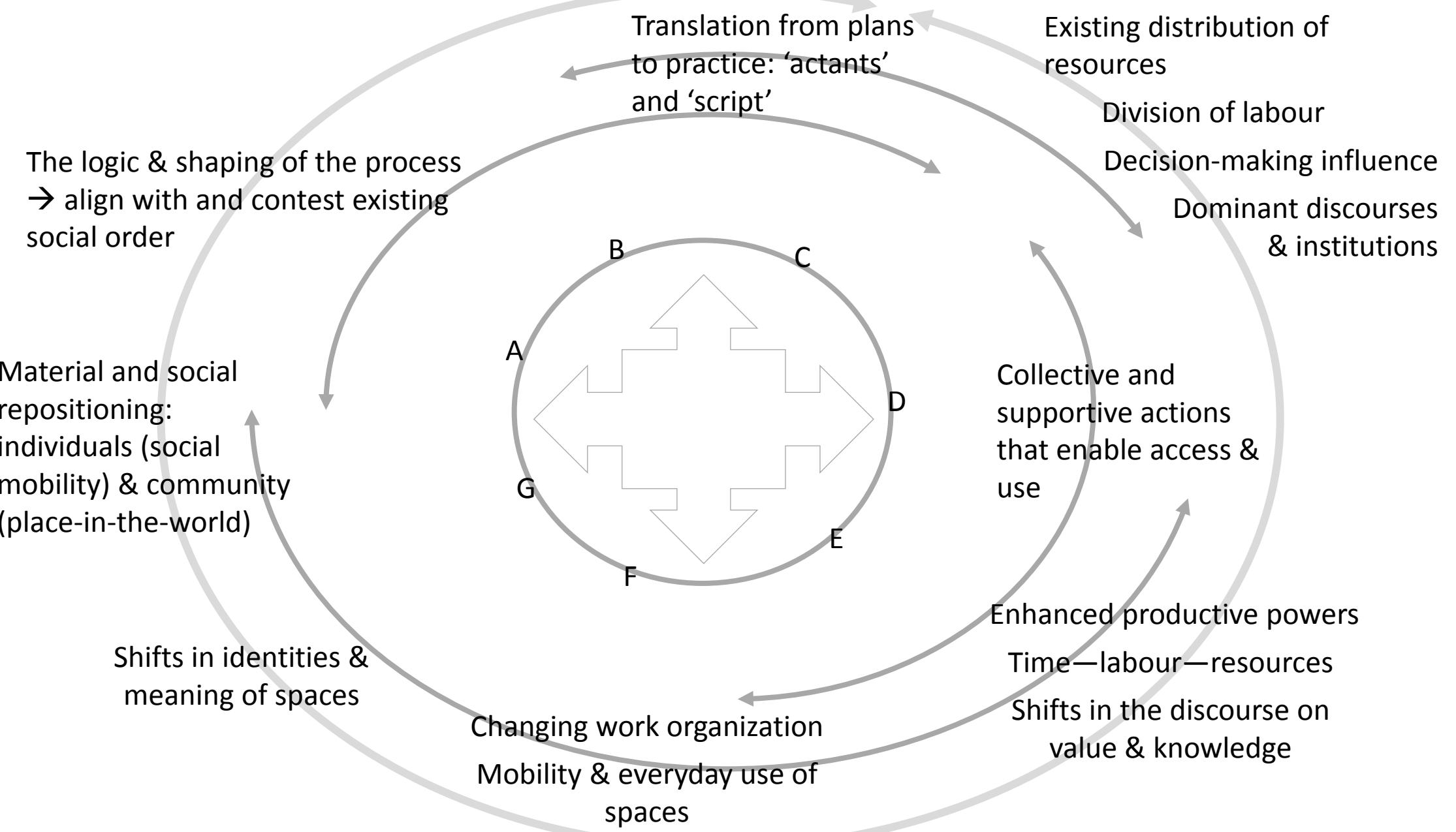
Collective and supportive actions that enable access & use





labour—time—resources
Shift the discourse on value

New and shifting identities
and meaning of space





DYNAMIC OUTCOMES

- Individual level: social mobility increased
- Group level: Growing gap between rich and poor
- System level: positive feedbacks emerge; local arena for negotiation and learning

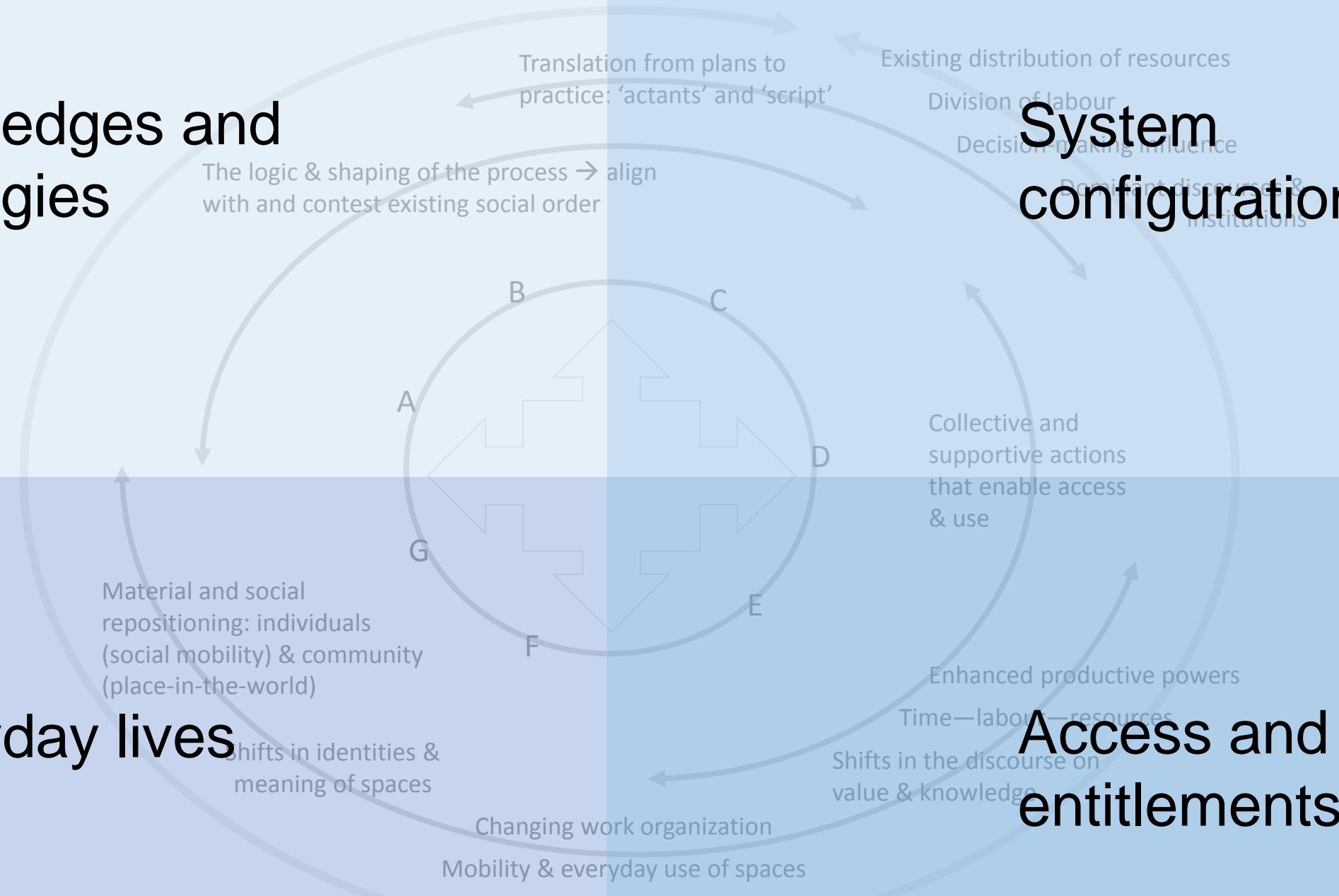


Knowledges and ontologies

System configurations

Everyday lives

Access and entitlements



A wide-angle photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there are several simple brick houses with corrugated metal roofs, some with thatched roofs on top. The terrain is hilly and covered in lush green vegetation, including large trees and smaller shrubs. The sky is clear and blue.

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!