Core Implementation Capacities: Co-Creation Partners & Processes

Background

What is it?

Co-creation involves key partners that work together to develop local resources and abilities to support effective strategies across communities. The full range of partners includes: 1) leadership and staff from service delivery agencies; 2) state/local funders and policymakers; 3) intermediary and purveyor organizations that provide general implementation and program-specific support; 4) community parents, families, and other partners; and 5) researchers and evaluators. Different partners can be involved at different levels. Together, co-creation partners combine valuable perspectives, resources, and abilities to ensure what it takes to lead, manage, support, problem-solve, and maintain change.

What does it look like when Co-Creation is working well?

Co-creation partners are actively involved across a full range of activities to build, organize, and align the visible infrastructure needed for effective implementation (e.g., listening sessions to explore readiness, coaching support activities, fidelity assessment processes). Local agencies are sharing ideas to manage mutual problems; funders and policy makers are ensuring ongoing communication with state and local leaders; program (purveyor) organizations are enhancing resources to be locally and culturally responsive; and community members are guiding program support activities and transferring learning about the program to others. Across wide-ranging involvement, (ranging from being informed and consulted to directly involved, collaborating, and co-leading in decision making), co-creation is a choice that needs transparent, intentional, and active support to move from current to elevated roles for effective implementation.

Why is Co-Creation important?

No one organization is responsible for "what it takes" for effective implementation and scaling. Co-creation leverages the "lived experience" into developing and supporting culturally relevant and appropriate services. Community partnering helps to ensure that the leadership and management, delivery support, and problem solving functions necessary to support change are happening. Such collaboration has been shown to lead to knowledge and evidence that are more implementable and attention to local needs and increased relevance and impact of implementation activity. Expecting that collaboration can occur without a supporting infrastructure is one of the most frequent reasons why it fails. Deliberate and resourced attention to co-creation helps ensure "what it takes" for effective implementation.

Co-Creation Best Practices

The following best practices draw from current research and practice applying the concept of co-creation to developing local capacities for effective implementation.

➔ Each of the five co-creation partners
- o are actively involved in building local implementation capacities.
- o contributes resources (i.e., time, effort, connections, financial) to the development of local implementation capacities.
- o actively shares perspectives and generates new knowledge for the development of local implementation capacities.

➔ A written partnership engagement plan (developed or adopted)
  o identifies co-creation partners and outlines their roles and responsibilities
  o outlines who will be responsible for engaging co-creation partners and strategies for engagement.
➔ Learn and improve co-creation processes (in the plan and active, in real-time) with data feedback loops
➔ Create opportunities for partners to self-organize into meaningful roles

Important Knowledge & Skills

✚ Organizational assessment
✚ Collaborative, shared facilitation
✚ Adaptive leadership (see PRIS-General; in particular, regulating instinct and nature of leaders and organizations to retreat to regular way of doing things)
✚ Proficiency in engagement of co-creation partners (rationale, benefits, challenges of the process; who they are, how they can support implementation, how to engage them)
✚ Understanding the priority of equity, diversity, and inclusion in creating change
✚ Understanding and managing power dynamics
✚ Understanding and helping to design teaming structures that integrate co-creation partners (also see Leadership and Implementation Teams)
✚ Understanding the interface and linkages with other implementation capacity domains, and how they support co-creation partners and processes
✚ Knowledge of how co-creation best practices can be measured in the CCA (NCIC-TP proxies)

Resources and Tools

- Implementation Capacity for Triple (ICTP) Simulation Lab, click on Co-Creation Partner Support in the vidual , https://ictp.fpg.unc.edu/ictp-simulation-lab
  o Learning Modules: Community Readiness Parts 1 & 2
  o Community Implementation Capacity Readiness Tool
- International Association for Public Participant (IAP2), Spectrum of Public Participation
- Co-Creation Case Study: Active Involved Community Partnerships in California Child Welfare System (forms and functions)
- Implementation Brief: The Potential of Co-Creation in Implementation Science, Allison Metz, National Implementation Research Network, 2015, https://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/sites/nirn.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/NIRN-Metz-ImplementationBreif-CoCreation.pdf
- Conditions for Co-Creation, https://i2insights.org/2018/10/09/conditions-for-co-creation/#more-11614
- 10 Ways to Build School-Community Partnerships, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lc_8Qjl2GPU

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* NOTE: Other local activities _specific to program rollout_ are occurring at the same time as these implementation capacity activities.

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What does building capacity for Co-Creation look like? What might progress look like?

The Co-Creation aspects described above take place across stages of implementation. Below, we use three functional stages of implementation to outline some questions that can guide the work of building workforce development capacity. *Please know* - each stage of implementation does not discreetly end as another begins. As we engage in the work of a certain stage [and learn], we might find the need to go back to address an issue that we missed previously or delve deeper into another issue that needs more attention.

Assessment, Exploration & Readiness *"From where are we starting? What are our strengths and areas of development?"*	Installation *How can we develop, acquire, repurpose, and strengthen resources for what it takes to effectively support this program?*	Initial Implementation *How are we doing, now that the program is being delivered? What are we seeing, what are we learning?*
▪ What other program have been implemented and scaled well in the community? ▪ Who has been involved? In what? How? ▪ To what extent do we have clear goals for engaging a range of partners in developing "what it takes" for effective implementation?	▪ How are goals, roles, and responsibilities for partners in this implementation work documented, shared, acted upon? ▪ Who is responsible for engaging co-creation partners and strategies for engagement? ▪ Have agreements with partners been established? ▪ What does the partnership plan say about the goals for the extent of participation in developing what it takes for effective implementation? To what extent are these expectation shared?	▪ How are various co-creation partners actually involved in supporting "what it takes" for effective implementation? ▪ How are we using data and feedback loops to understand and improve co-creation processes (in the plan and active, in real-time)? ▪ Create opportunities for partners to self-organize into meaningful role

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