Knowledge Management

in a box

Using Feminist Co-Creation as a Knowledge Translation Tool

FACILITATORS GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

Share-Net International has dedicatedly increased efforts to the translation of knowledge, and to this end has been implementing different knowledge translation methodologies across activities.

One significant activity has been that of the Co-Creation Conference. Since the first Co-Creation Conference in 2019, the methodologies used have evolved and this toolkit aims to give guidance to the Share-Net International Country Hubs and other organisations wishing to **implement co-creation processes for knowledge translation based on feminist principles**. It offers a step-by-step guide to facilitate a feminist co-creation workshop.

Share-Net
International

Share-Net International (SNI) is a knowledge platform on sexual and reproductive health and rights established in 2013. We focus on strengthening the role that knowledge can play in developing evidence-based policies and practices and ensuring that resources are used strategically and to maximum effect. SNI is a membership network composed of non-governmental organisations, researchers, policymakers, implementers, young people, advocates, students, the media, and companies operating in the sexual and reproductive health and rights field.

The network has an additional seven hubs in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Colombia, Ethiopia, Jordan, and the Netherlands. As a knowledge network, our mission is to strengthen linkages between research, policy, and practice through generating, sharing, translating, and promoting the use of knowledge for the development of better policies and practices in sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Visit *www.share-netinternational.org* to learn more.

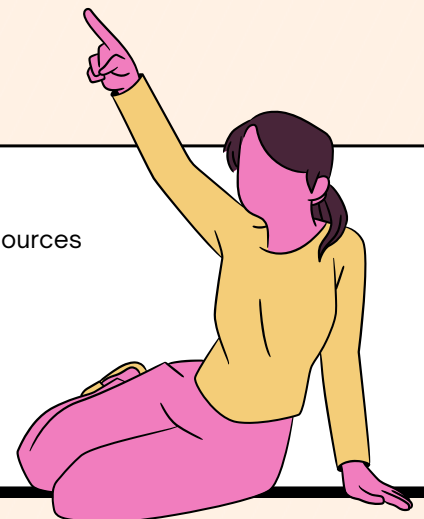# FEMINIST CO–CREATION AS A KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION TOOL

Co-Creation is a participatory, inclusive, and creative process encouraging active engagement from all participants who will develop a knowledge product together. It emphasises the importance of inclusivity and challenges the notion that experts exclusively possess scientific or academic knowledge, instead giving equal value to the insights gained through lived experience. By employing feminist co-creation as a methodology for knowledge translation, the objective is to **make existing knowledge accessible, comprehensible, and freely available**, and turn it into a product that can inform policy, update practices (for example, programme activities or lobby and advocacy campaigns) and challenge norms and values.

Feminist co-creation is motivated by the pursuit of mutual understanding, equality, and fairness. It addresses[1] and **confronts power imbalances by challenging the concentration of power** within a select few and **redistributing authority** to marginalised groups. This approach is founded on collaboration, exchange, learning, consensus, and mutual benefit.

1. Adapted from 'Feminist Realities out power in action. An Exploratory toolkit' by AWID in 2019. www.awid.org/resources/feminist-realities-our-power-action-exploratory-toolkit

Principles of
Feminist Co-Creation

- Seeks to prevent co-opting of spaces, voices, and resources
- Seeks to reclaim narratives
- Seeks to disrupt systems and power structures
- Makes knowledge more accessible
- Requires active listening and continuous dialogue
- Creates change together through collaboration

FACILITATING A CO–CREATION WORKSHOP FOR KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION

For a more optimal feminist co-creation workshop, having multidisciplinary working groups of 6 to 8 people is preferred. To make sure that **all relevant stakeholders are involved in the development of the knowledge product**, it is important to identify who needs to be invited to be part of the co-creation process prior to the workshop. That includes ensuring that the **target group is meaningfully engaged** throughout the process (designing the co-creation workshop, participating in the workshop, developing, implementing and disseminating the product). For instance, if your focus topic is contraceptive methods for young people, young people themselves should be involved in the conceptualisation of the workshop, have decision-making power and be able to participate in the co-creation workshop.

This toolkit will give guidance to facilitate a co-creation workshop. **This guide is designed for a three-day workshop, but it can be adapted for a longer or shorter period of time.** Each step can be a session of the workshop and its duration can vary depending on the available time. The type of activities and questions will need to be adapted to the participants if needed, and facilitators need to be mindful of the way they participate - making sure that all participants have space to share and exchange. In addition, it is important to note that not all knowledge products will be finalised before the end of the workshop and planning next steps is key to the success of the finalisation of the product(s).

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS!

- Share a clear agenda and objectives per session with the participants.
- Set ground rules with the participants at the beginning of the session and get back to those when necessary.
- Be aware of the energy and feelings of the participant so you are able to identify when a break is needed, things are not clear or the ground rules need to be reminded. Include icebreakers and energisers through the sessions.
- Make sure all participants have the space to participate and that all knowledge is valued in the same way.
- Adapt the questions or activities in a way that they are accessible and understandable for all participants.
- End your workshop with a feedback activity where participants can share what have they liked and what should be improved.
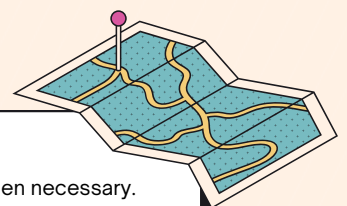
While facilitating a co-creation workshop it is important to use inclusive methodologies and activities that can be tailored to the needs of the participants. Moreover, methodologies should **include activities that will motivate the participation of people with different learning styles and different personalities**.

Co-Creating
Step-by-step

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GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER AND CREATING A SAFE SPACE

STEP 2
SETTING THE SCENE AND PRIORITISATION

STEP 3
DEVELOPMENT THE BLUEPRINT FOR THE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCT

STEP 4
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STEP 6
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STEP 1

GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER AND CREATING A SAFE SPACE

Getting to know each other and identifying the key skills, knowledge, and experiences that each participant brings to the table is an important step to take before starting the co-creation process. It is important to **map the strengths, skills, and expertise of each of the participants** as well as their backgrounds. Therefore, the objective of this session is to get to know your co-creation colleagues and to check if all the groups that need to be represented in the process are there.

Suggested exercise
Each participant shares their name, pronouns, organisation where they work, expertise, and inform if they have specific needs that should be taken into consideration throughout the workshop (this last point can also be shared privately with the facilitator). In addition, each participant answers an ice-breaker question, for example 'if you could have one superpower, what would it be' .

In addition, during this session, the facilitator needs to create a comfortable space so that all participants are confident sharing their opinion and lived experiences. As topics on sexual and reproductive health and rights are sometimes sensitive, it is important to **dedicate time to create trust and a safe space for all participants** to share their experiences. Take a moment to set up group agreements for the workshop together and revise the agenda and objectives of each session.

Suggested exercise
Ask participants to share their ideas about group agreements, and check with others if they agree with the proposed rules. It is important to write them somewhere so you can come back to them as and when needed. If participants do not have ideas, you can share some from the list below to start conversation or complete the list.

## Tips for facilitators!

Examples of group agreements:
- I am entitled to my opinion and experience, regardless of whether others think it is right or wrong.
- Everyone else is entitled to their opinion and experience, regardless of whether I think it is right or wrong.
- Discuss, don't argue.
- Respect each others time by being on time.
- Focus on the workshop and do not get distracted by external inputs (emails, text messages, etc).
- Practice active listening - listen to everyone's opinions and experience without interrupting or arguing afterwards.
- Disclose my opinions and experience without trying to convince others that I am right.
- Share the groups time equally.
- Take a break when needed.

<div style="border:1px solid black;">STEP 2</div>

SETTING THE SCENE AND PRIORITISATION

Once you have mapped who is in the room and set up some group agreements, it is time to set the scene, prioritise the topics and focus on identifying which knowledge product(s) need to be developed. Therefore, the objective of this session is to share **motivations and needs**; share **context analyses**; and discuss and **agree on the problem** as well as the approach used to address it.
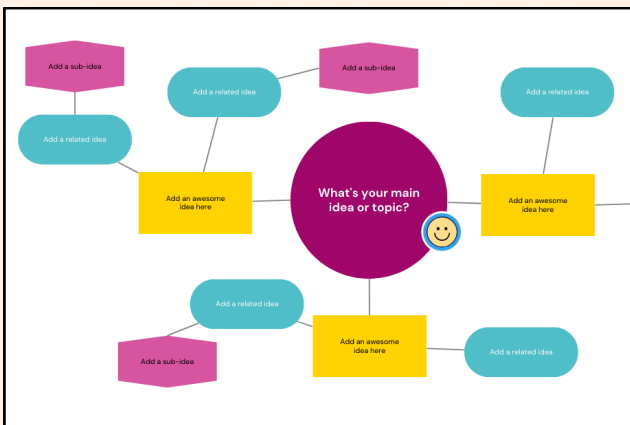

Suggested exercise: Mind mapping
This exercise will foster reflection and will help participants organise their thoughts around a specific topic. Participants will use a flipchart sheet to make a map of an issue or topic. The map organises the factors that influence or affect a problem and shows how these factors interact with each other in cause-and-effect or other relationships. Participants can use different colours and shapes to highlight those factors and interactions

Figure 1: Mind map template (see Annex A)

Guiding questions
- What are your motivations and needs? Also, in terms of working together, what are the specific needs of the participants, etc.
- What sexual and reproductive health and rights issue or problem will be addressed, why and for which specific target group(s)? Who are you trying to influence and who are the beneficiaries
- What knowledge product(s) would be beneficial to develop that could contribute to addressing this sexual and reproductive health and rights problem or issue? What do you want to achieve with the product?
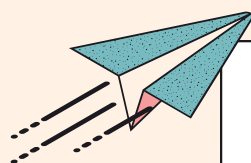
Tips for facilitators!
- Start broad and slowly focus.
- Repeat the question in different ways to help participants to elaborate ideas. Adapt the questions to the participants.

STEP 3

DEVELOPING THE BLUEPRINT FOR THE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCT

The aim of this session is to **discuss advocacy objectives**; share the vision for the impact of the knowledge product; discuss what types of knowledge products have worked in the past, and why; and share lessons learned from past success as well as what might be not-so-successful.

Guiding questions and activities
- What are your objectives with this knowledge product? (What are you trying to achieve with this knowledge product?)
- How does the knowledge product contribute to changes in policy or practice, who will use it and what is the likelihood of achieving success?
- Any lessons learned from previous knowledge products that could support this one? (Checklist disability friendly programmes)
- Participants prepare a short presentation of their idea (max 2 min) to be presented at the feedback/peer-review session.

Tips for facilitators!

- Focus on the objectives of the knowledge product(s).
- Repeat the question in diverse ways to help participants to elaborate ideas.
- Aim to have a maximum of three objectives, but leave it open if more come, and try to reduce and sharpen up in the next session.
- Appoint one person to present the idea during the feedback/peer-review session.
- Repeat the question in different ways to help participants to elaborate ideas. Adapt the questions to the participants.

STEP 4

PEER–REVIEWING AND FEEDBACK

Regular peer-review and feedback is needed in any co-creation process. You can facilitate that between different groups/participants in an interactive way by using engaging exercises. Depending on the time available for the co-creation workshop, you can have several rounds of peer-review to encourage cross-group learning and exchange.

Suggested exercise: Gallery walk

One person per group will stay next to the flipchart to present the messages that the group has developed to the other workshop participants. This person will collect feedback and comments from the other participants. They will have 2 minutes to share their pitch outlining their problem, proposed approach, and potential activity/knowledge product.
The rest of the group will move around to listen to the presentation of other groups' ideas and give feedback. If needed, the group facilitator will take notes of the feedback.
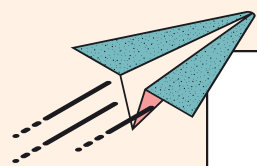
Tips for facilitators!

- When developing the agenda, make sure you plan time to explain the exercise and to allow participants to visit more than one group.
- For the exchange discussion, you can plan 15 min. This will allow enough time for the pitch, clarifying questions and feedback.

STEP 5

INCORPORATING FEEDBACK AND FINALISING PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Once the feedback has been provided, each group will come back together and incorporate the feedback and comments where needed. Therefore, the objective of this session is to further develop the knowledge product by incorporating the feedback and comments.

Suggested exercise
Share the feedback that the group has received and analyse it together.
Ask participants to choose the comments and suggestions that are relevant and achievable and incorporate them into their knowledge product.

Guiding questions
- How will you meaningfully involve your target group(s) in developing and implementing your knowledge product(s)?
- Why is your partnership well positioned to create this knowledge product? What are the roles of the different partners involved?
- Are there any gaps or issues that should be discussed to strengthen the knowledge product proposal?
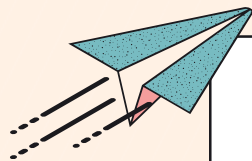
Tips for facilitators!
- Make sure that participants do not get stuck on one particular feedback point.
- If comments are not clear or relevant, skip them.
- Repeat the question in different ways to help participants to elaborate ideas. Adapt the questions to the participants.

STEP 6

NEXT STEPS AND IMPLEMENTATION OR DISSEMINATION OF THE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCT

The objective of this last step is to map the gaps and remaining pieces to be developed, agree on the timeline and next steps, and divide tasks and responsibilities.

Make sure to assign a note taker to ensure that clear actions and next steps are registered on paper or a shared digital document. After the workshop, it is important to inform the target group about what has been done during the co-creation process and how the final knowledge product is going to be implemented and used. **It is crucial to check with the target group several times, maybe 6 months and 1 year after the development and implementation of the product to see what the impact has been.**

Guiding questions
- Are there any remaining pieces to be developed during this last session or after it?
- What is the estimated budget required for the further development of this knowledge product?
- What are the next steps?
- Who should take on the different roles needed within the group to finalise the knowledge product?
- What is the timeline for the next steps? (Really make sure the group has clear action points, including who will be in the lead in the next steps)
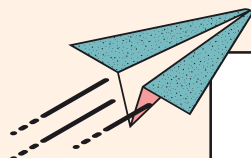
Tips for facilitators!

- Repeat the question in different ways to help participants to elaborate ideas!
- Adapt the questions to the participants.

STEP 7

EVALUATION

It is important to gather feedback from the participants on how the workshop went in order to adapt and improve for the next one. Participants can highlight what went well, what needs improvement, and share recommendations. Facilitators need to ensure anonymity. This can be done in many different ways, and can be done either at the end of the workshop or at the end of every day.

Suggested exercise
Give post-its of three colours (1 to 2 per colour) to each participant and ask them to write:
- Something that worked well
- Something that could be improved
- Recommendations for future workshops

They can all stick their post-its on a flipchart.
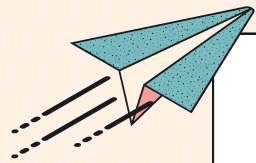
Tips for facilitators!

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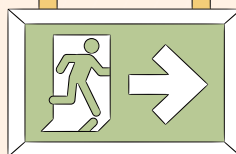
STEP 8

DEBRIEF AND CHECK–OUT

Before leaving the room, it is important to check with the participants if the next steps are clear and address any unanswered questions. Facilitators can invite participants to share their main takeaways of the workshop.

Before the group disbands, ensure that there is a WhatsApp or Telegram group, or an email thread with all email addresses included. It is important that members of each group have each other's contact details.
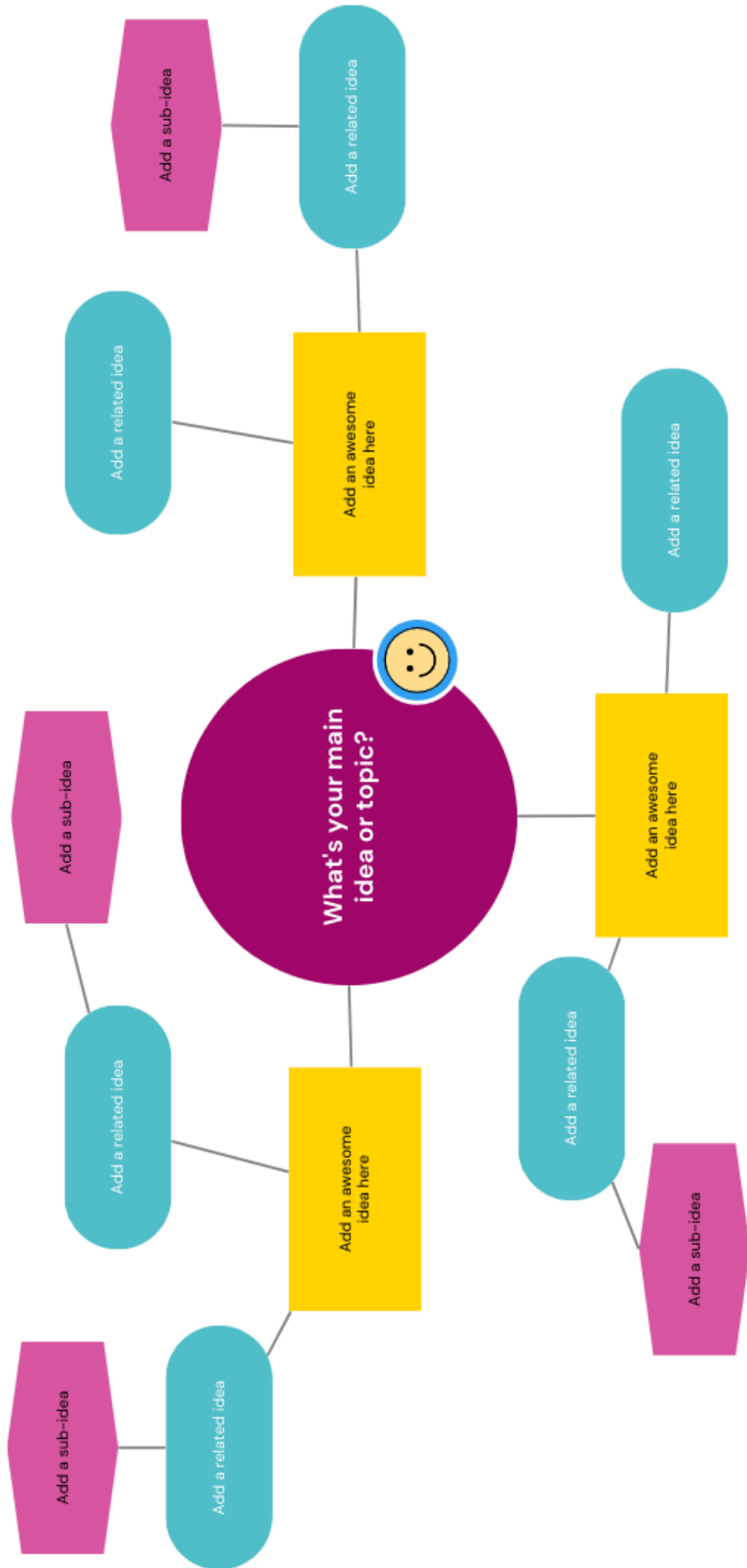
Tips for facilitators!

- This activity can be done at the end of each day, or at the end of the whole workshop.
- Let each group decide their preferred mode of communication and what contact information they are comfortable sharing.

ANNEX A

Mind Map

What's your main idea or topic?

Add an awesome idea here

Add a related idea

Add a sub-idea

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