COSIE

Co-creation of Service Innovation in Europe

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Where Next for Co-creating Public Services?

Emerging lessons and new questions from CoSIE

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CoSIE

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1. Introduction

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Governments in some of the world's richest nations appear to be caught in a double challenge; they are faced with democratic demands to respond to increasing and new social needs that include: ageing populations; mass immigration; the rise of long-term, chronic health conditions such as diabetes; relatively high rates of unemployment for young people; a mental health epidemic; increasing loneliness across the generations; homelessness; and, new trends in substance misuse.

Recently, however, many developed economies have undergone a period of low-growth and the current COVID-19 crisis is leading to economic recession in many countries. If improvements in public wellbeing are to be achieved, they must result from policies designed to deliver social outcomes more effectively for less resources. Moreover, due to a progressive loss of legitimacy and in order to regain part of it, governments need to present social policies and services as a means of proximity to citizens and beneficiaries (Rosanvallon 2011).

Many models of innovation involve co-creation, which implies that people who use (or potentially use) public services work with providers to initiate, design, deliver and evaluate them (Voorberg et al. 2014, Torfing et al. 2019). The goal of the Co-Creation of Public Service Innovation in Europe project (CoSIE) is to contribute to democratic renewal and social inclusion through co-creating innovative public services by engaging diverse citizen groups and stakeholders in varied public services.

CoSIE assumes that co-creation becomes innovative if it not only concerns the reduction of the public expenditure, but if it manages also to meet social needs, and to empower the beneficiaries of policies, by changing socio-political relations and redistributing socio-political responsibilities. More specifically, it aims to a) advance the active shaping of service priorities by end users and their informal support network and b) engage citizens, especially groups often called 'hard to reach', in the collaborative design of public services. One way it does this is through the development of ten pilot cases, embedded in national contexts which strongly differ in socio-

cultural, socio-political and socio-economical dimensions. The subsequent comparison permits an examination of the existence of common enabling or hindering factors.

The CoSIE project builds on the idea that public sector innovations can be best achieved by creating collaborative partnerships between service providers (i.e. public sector agencies, third sector organisations, private companies) and citizens who benefit from services either directly or indirectly. Co-creation in CoSIE is an emerging, collaborative and power balancing activity that aims to enrich and enhance the value in public service offerings at any stage in the development of new service and during its implementation. It is manifested in a constructive exchange of different kinds of resources (ideas, competences, lived experience, etc.) that enhance the experienced value of public service. Individual and public value may be understood in terms of increased wellbeing, shared visions for the common good, policies, strategies, regulatory frameworks or new services.

This paper draws together some of the 'big ideas' emerging from CoSIE in the form of a discussion paper aimed at European, national and regional policy-makers. The big ideas emerging from CoSIE can be grouped together as ideas associated with conceptualising co-creation, implementing co-creation and evidencing co-creation:

Conceptualising co-creation

- Strengths or asset-based approaches are key to co-creation
- Co-creation is a moral endeavour

Implementing co-creation

- The role of technology in co-creation and innovation
- The role of professionals in co-creating public services
- Scaling up co-created innovations in public service reform

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- Challenges for evaluators
- Options for evaluating co-creation and strengths-based approaches

2. Conceptualising co-creation

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2.1 Strengths or asset-based approaches are key to co-creation

Empirical studies of social innovations across Europe and beyond highlight aspects of co-creation such as new provider-user relationships, revision of professional roles, collaborative forms of governance, reciprocity, co-operation, and collective empowerment (Evers and Brandsen 2016, Moulaert and MacCallum 2019; Oosterlynck et al. 2019). Voorberg et al. (2014) link co-creation and social innovation as 'magic concepts' that have become widely recognised as a reform strategy for the public sector (Fox et al. 2019). In public services there is evidence that citizens and intended beneficiaries – with many other stakeholders – can enhance mutual learning and help develop new solutions (Hartley et al. 2013).

The research and literature on innovation suggest different ways in which co-creation might support innovation. There are variations in detail and emphases but co-creation invariably attempts to reposition people who are usually the targets of services (i.e. have services done to them) as asset holders with legitimate knowledge that has value for shaping service innovations (Bassi et al. 2019). For example, the influential concept of Open Innovation urges businesses to seek commercial success by inviting customers to 'co-produce' and 'co-create' with them (Chesbrough 2011). This aligns closely with claims in the (social) innovation literature that the roles of innovator, producer and consumer overlap or merge (Grimm et al. 2013).

Open Innovation 2.0 builds on the Open Innovation paradigm but places more emphasis on engagement between industry, government, universities and communities and users (the so-called 'quadruple helix') to solve societal challenges sustainably and profitably (Curley 2016). This involves creating economic value in a way that also creates value for society by addressing its needs and challenges (Porter and Kramer 2011, Zokaei et al. 2013).

Innovation happens when a user becomes a co-creator of value.

It is possible to co-create shared value when companies shift from optimising short-term financial performance to optimising both corporate performance and social conditions, thus increasing the value shared by both the corporation and the society in which it is embedded (Porter and Kramer 2011). Innovation happens when a user becomes a co-creator of value – a concept similar to that described by Osborne (2018) in relation to public services where co-creation is "an interactive and dynamic relationship where value is created at the nexus of interaction" (Osborne 2018: 225). In this regard, the CoSIE project goes beyond the shared value paradigm, by reflecting on the production of benefits that correspond to diverse spheres of value: not only the economic sphere, but also the social and the cultural ones.

Thinking on co-creation often draws on models developed in the private sector (Brandsen and Honingh 2018). Some of the 'Design Thinking' methods used by CoSIE teams draw quite heavily on commercial rationales about 'customer experience' (Mager 2009). Short intensive events inspired by Design Thinking bring rapid results and can lead to quick wins. But the CoSIE project also illustrates that co-creation in public services cannot simply replicate thinking from the private sector. For example, for some user groups, especially more vulnerable ones, the roots of Design Thinking in commercial, competitive environments occasionally show rather starkly. The pace and language in some of its permutations can seem brutal as, for example, when ideas enthusiastically generated are summarily 'killed'. This aspect as well as the sheer speed and intensity can be rather disturbing for people more accustomed to passive roles. However, practical adaptations can be made, for example in the form of shorter sessions and more supportive mentoring. It may be more ethical as well as more effective to have as participants people who have overcome the most difficult times in their lives as they are better able to contribute than those still struggling.

Thus rather than simply replicate thinking from the private sector, co-creation in public services instead requires fundamental re-thinking of how service users are viewed: both what they bring to the co-creation of services and the purpose of the services that they help to co-create. As Osborne (2018) notes, for private sector service firms, the retention of customers and their repeat business is often key to profitability but for public services 'repeat business' may be a sign of service failure rather than success. Also, the reality of unwilling or coerced customers is often unfamiliar to the for-profit sector, but is a common in public services. For-profit firms often have a well-defined customer where public services often have multiple end-users and stakeholders, some or all of whom may have different and often conflicting definitions of a successful outcome of a service. For Osborne

(2018) these considerations imply both a need to re-consider of the issue of the role of voluntary agency in value creation and to recognise that value creation often has to be negotiated between stakeholders.

However, more fundamentally, in the for-profit sector it is generally assumed that service users have agency and capabilities that are sufficient for them to engage in the co-creation of services. But this is very often not the case in the public sector. The starting point for many public service is that they try to fix things for people in the short-term or encourage them to take action that fits the service's priorities, not their own (Wilson et al. 2018). This is a deficit-based approach that:

Drawing on private sector approaches: Design thinking in Poland

The target group of this pilot is older people from the Wroclaw municipality who live on a housing estate in the Popowice district of the city. It comprises flats built in the communist era and does not meet the needs of older residents very well. Co-creation is barely recognised in Poland. The project faced an established bureaucratic model

and a lack of concepts encouraging the involvement of stakeholders, particularly end-users, in public services. Against this background, the Polish CoSIE team cite the growing emphasis of commercial businesses on excellent customer experience, and drew upon human-centred design approaches intended to benefit both supplier and customer by putting the customer at the centre of innovation. The rationale is that services (commercial and public) are essentially relational and can improve their innovative capacities through new forms of social interactions, partnerships and value co-creation. Design Thinking, which also informs the 'hackathon' methods deployed in Estonia and Finland,

was at the heart of this pilot. As part of the Popowice pilot, a series of 'Design Thinking' workshops was organized in the local neighbourhood club. The 35 older citizens who participated were facilitated initially to clarify the problem and decide on its most important issues. Then they worked in groups on ideation of possible solutions and created a base of 108 ideas. From these ideas, they prioritised physical space for shared use of the seniors and other residents of the estate. In later workshops they went on to collectively select the features of such a place, its appearance, equipment and functional programme, also creating a series of possible business plans and ways to implement. The output was a

successful 'summer installation' built with the help of university students in a green space on the housing estate.

The team reflect that engaging seniors in direct ideation and design of solutions allowed them to create a bond with the pilot program and a greater willingness to cooperate on the shape of the service. Some modifications were made to the process as the workshops progressed to meet the needs of participants such as shorter sessions and more breaks. Attention to details of the experience such as a more attractive meeting place could have made the events better.

[L]eaves people without clarity about the changes they want to make or the knowledge, confidence or support to get there. It often only addresses a single (and often most visible) aspect of people's lives, without taking account of what else is going on. (Wilson et al. 2018: 5)

Wilson et al. characterise this as 'bad help'. This can be ineffective in a number of ways including failing to identify the underlying issue that led to the person accessing the service, and failing to share power and responsibility with the result that people feel disempowered (or 'done to') reinforcing inaction and dependency. Instead, public services need to adopt asset or strengths-based approaches, something that is often assumed in the for-profit sector.

Asset-based approaches start from the position that people have assets or 'strengths'. These include both their current intangible resources (perhaps skills, experience or networks) and their potential to develop new community and personal assets. They therefore draw together concepts of participation and citizenship with social capital (Mathie and Cunningham 2003). Thus, Baron et al. (2019) note that strengths-based approaches explore, in a collaborative way, the entire individual's abilities

Asset-based approaches start from the position that people have assets or 'strengths'.

and their circumstances rather than making the deficit that brought them to the service the focus of the intervention. Asset-based approaches don't impose the same structure on diverse communities. Instead they support citizens' development of their capacity and their opportunities to exercise agency in undertaking small acts that build meaningful relations. These can make huge

Houten: A distinct approach to co-creation in public services

The Dutch pilot in the municipality in Houten illustrates that "co-creation in public services cannot simply replicate thinking from the private sector and instead requires fundamental rethinking of how service users are viewed". The target group of this pilot are vulnerable job seekers at a long distance from the labour market. Most are recent migrants and have difficulties in finding paid work. They find traditional, formal job application procedures challenging, because they often have no job history in the Netherlands and do not fit job profiles used by potential employers. However, they have other skills and competences that are not asked for in application processes. They also need other ways of getting acquainted with potential employers. These aspects are taken into account in the CoSIE pilot. A feasibility study has been done with a block chain app with alternative information about skills and competences of this group of jobseekers. Also informal meetings have been organised where job seekers and potential employers can get to know each other in a different way and do some activity together, for example preparing a hot meal. In this setting people's assets and capabilities can be the focus of positive interactions between potential employees and employers.
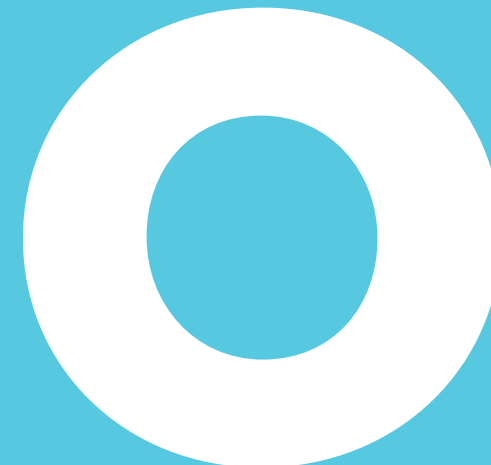
Co-creation in public services is intrinsically related to asset-based approaches.

differences in people's lives. This implies that services should be personalised and contextualised by community, asking questions such as 'what matters to people?' and not 'what is the matter with them?' (Prandini 2018).

Asset and strengths-based approaches cover a wide range of practices (Rippon and Hopkins 2015) often involving appreciative enquiry (Mathie and Cunningham 2003). Wilson et al. (2018) in their analysis of what they refer to as 'good help' suggest that recently there has been a move towards helping people to take action. Various techniques can be applied for this including: motivational interviewing; behaviour change techniques used in health-based programmes such as Ryan and Deci's (2000) Self-determination Theory that identified autonomy and competence as key to sustaining change; and Michie's (2011) COM-B model that encompasses three interacting conditions for behaviour change: capability, opportunity and motivation.

The wider use of asset-based approaches in public service raise several questions that insights from the CoSIE project can help to address. At the level of the individual, questions are raised about what capabilities people do and should have. We return to these questions in the next section. At the level of the organisation, questions are raised about how to organise and structure co-created, asset-based services implying as they do the need to change service environments, change the roles of professionals, make the most effective use of available technology and work out how to move from small to larger scale services. We return to these issues later. At the level of government and administration, a new approach to public management is implied, which has relationships between people at its heart.

New Public Governance provides a useful theoretical framework for thinking about a relational approach to public service reform. It acknowledges the increasingly fragmented and uncertain nature of public management in the twenty-first century (Osborne 2006), where multiple inter-dependent actors contribute to the delivery of public services and multiple processes inform the policy-making system. In this model, just as the relationships between organisations that deliver services are based on "relationships, where trust, relational capital and relational contracts act as the core governance mechanisms" (Osborne 2006: 382–383), so human relationships are given greater priority in the design of public services (Cooke and Muir 2012).

2.2 Co-creation is a moral endeavour

Co-creation in public services is intrinsically related to asset-based approaches (see above). Partners and stakeholders throughout the CoSIE pilots are inspired by the moral rather than the efficiency and effectiveness promise of co-creation. Rationales for the CoSIE pilots expressed in needs analyses overwhelmingly emphasise issues of social justice for people who are marginalised and lack power. They typically refer either explicitly or obliquely to people's assets.

Asset-based approaches are based on people exercising agency to define their own goals in order to meet needs that they define as important. But this is not simply about giving people choice. As Fox argues:

> *Choice cannot be the organising principle of life. Human beings want and need to organise themselves around the hopes, interests and ambitions for themselves, their family and their community. If they had the choice, people would choose the 'good life' above all other things. (Fox 2013: 2)*

Alongside choice, people need a guiding vision of a good life, well lived (Cottam 2018). This seems a promising line of argument for asset-based approaches and aligns with arguments for human rights that draw on concepts of agency and purpose therefore implying that asset-based approaches and co-creation in public services are not simply desirable, but morally necessary. For example, the neo-Kantian philosopher Gewirth

(1978, 1996) shows how the rational individual must invest in society and in social solutions in order to satisfy their basic needs. The starting point of his argument is that human action has two interrelated, generic features: voluntariness and purposiveness. Gewirth goes on to show that the two basic human needs or goals which are required to allow the individual to act are freedom and wellbeing. This is a normative or moral argument. Gewirth shows that, if the individual claims that they have a right to freedom and well-being, they must also recognise that all prospective, purposive agents have the same rights, an idea he captures in something akin to a 'golden rule' that he calls the Principle of Generic Consistency. To put it another way, once it is accepted that freedom and well-being are basic human needs in the sense that they are preconditions for human action and interaction (Doyal and Gough 1991), then a moral argument can start to develop which says that freedom and well-being ought to be recognised as universal rights and that a failure for other people and wider society to do so is logically inconsistent.

The idea of co-creating public services implies a fundamental re-thinking of the role of the welfare state and hence the relationship between individuals and the state (Cooke and Muir 2012).

> *The current welfare state has become an elaborate attempt to manage our needs. In contrast, twenty-first-century forms of help will support us to grow our capabilities. (Cottam 2018: 199)*

The Capabilities Approach is referenced in both the literature on co-creation and asset-based approaches. For example, discussion of capabilities and explicitly the capability approach (Sen, 1990, Nussbaum, 1988) have feature in the approach to asset-based working or 'radical help' advocated by (Cottam 2018) and underpin the concept of 'good help' promoted by NESTA (Wilson et al. 2018). The basic insight behind such a capabilities approach is that acquiring economic resources (e.g. wealth) is not in and of itself a legitimate human end (Sen, 1990, 2009). Such resources, commodities, are rather tools with which to achieve wellbeing, or 'flourishing living' (Nussbaum 1988). The capabilities approach assumes that each citizen is entitled to a set of basic capabilities, but the question is then, what are these capabilities (Claassen 2016)? Nussbaum provides a substantive list of ten capabilities based on the notion of a dignified human life (Classen and

Individuals co-create with public services to grow their capabilities.

Duwell 2013) whereas Sen adopts a procedural approach and argues that capabilities should be selected in a process of public reasoning (Claassen 2016). But as Claassen (2016) describes, both the substantive objectivist list theory of well-being (the Nussbaum approach) and proceduralist reliance on democratic reasoning (the Sen approach) have been criticised and it's not clear what the basic capabilities are that we are all entitled to.

Recently, these two strands of thinking – capabilities theory and Gewirth's normative, or moral, theory – have been drawn together. Claassen (2016) recognises the criticisms that have been made of capabilities theory, particularly the challenge of describing what the basic capabilities are that we are all entitled to. Arguing that Nussbaum's substantive list is 'perfectionist' but that Sen's procedural approach to defining capabilities is 'empty' he develops a capability theory of justice which aspires to be substantive but not perfectionist. He does this by following the approach adopted by Gewirth (Claassen and Dowell 2013) and using a conception of individual agency (instead of well-being or human flourishing) as the underlying normative ideal to select basic capabilities (Claassen 2016).

Using this approach basic capabilities are those capabilities people need to exercise individual agency. A particular conception of individual agency is implied, one in which individual agency is necessarily connected to social practices and where basic capabilities are those necessary to for individuals to navigate freely and autonomously between different social practices (Claassen 2016).

We can draw a number of tentative conclusions from this discussion, which while philosophical in nature, have real-world implications. At the heart of co-creation is the concept of individuals exercising agency and "agency becomes the normative criterion for the selection of basic capabilities required for social justice" (Classen 2018: 1). Individuals co-create with public services to grow their capabilities. From a policy perspective this implies that co-creation necessarily involves adopting asset-based practices and that co-creation is a necessary practice in public service reform, not merely desirable. From a practice perspective, the focus on supporting individuals to develop their capabilities suggests new modes of working for organisations and front-line staff, which are radically different, requiring organisations and

3. Implementing co-creation

My Direction and the challenge of new roles for front-line workers

The pilot known as 'My Direction' operates in the English criminal justice system. It is intended to help people on probation to become more active participants in their own rehabilitation. It does this by making the sentence plan better able to take into account issues the service users themselves consider important.

The pilot is informed by theory from criminology called 'desistance'. Although co-creation is novel in criminal justice, desistance emphasises agency, relationships and assets in ways that closely reflect its principles. One of the innovations in My Direction was an 'enabling fund'. Service users could request small sums of money

to spend on their own rehabilitation goals (what mattered to them) in ways that lay outside the scope of available services. The idea was adapted from practice in social care where funds in lieu of services (direct payments, personal budgets) have become well-established means of personalisation. For some front line workers this was a step too far in shifting responsibility away from their professional control. They lacked trust in service users' ability to spend the money appropriately and feared blame in the event of misuse.

As a mechanism for moving from passive to active user interactions, the enabling fund was boldly innovative in the probation context. Although less utilised than originally hoped, some case managers and service users alike suggested that it signified an incentive to engage, and to enhance motivation towards desistance from crime.

staff to fundamentally re-think their purpose and how they relate to service users. From a research and evaluation perspective, the extensive work on operationalising the capabilities approach over the last 20 years or so points to potential evaluation frameworks for understanding the implementation and impact of CoSIE. We return to all of these issues below.

3.   Implementing co-creation

Three broad issues seem key to implementing co-creation: the changing role of professionals and organisational structures, the role of technology and the challenge of scaling up.

3.1 The role of professionals and organisational structures in co-creating public services

The social challenges public services face are increasingly complex and traditional public services often look ill-suited to address them, in part because they were designed as bureaucracies, to solve a problem and remove responsibility from the individual (Hannan 2019).

> *Getting people back into work, solving crimes, fixing broken bones; these all benefitted from hierarchy and stability, not only to solve the problem but to do so effectively and efficiently. Yet the social challenges these bureaucracies are now required to address are increasingly complex; this complexity highlights the ineffectiveness of traditional, hierarchical approaches. (Hannan 2019: 9–10)*

We have seen this repeatedly in the CoSIE project. A core lesson from the implementation of co-creation is that taking co-creation seriously often involves discarding cherished assumptions.

One of the initiators of the Valencia pilot reported that "our preconceived ideas came tumbling down around our ears" when potential users of the proposed service were handed blank sheets of paper and asked to draw or symbolise how they saw a business-related service for the unemployed. As another example, the assumption that paid employment is the only or most appropriate goal for some people at a very long distance from the labour market was challenged through the stories gathered in Houten (the Netherlands). The Houten pilot leader – a municipal employee – reports "despite all my good intentions, I discovered that in the end I was fulfilling our agenda not the agenda of the citizens. In fact, I did not even know what their agenda was! I missed the broader perspective and the person as a whole".

One part of the solution to this problem is to empower people to help themselves through adopting models of asset-based working (see above). However, asset-based working involves huge changes for organisations and their workforces. One illustration of the challenges of delivering asset-based approaches that give people scope for co-creating services is the perennial organisational and professional challenge of how to respond to and manage the 'risks' presented by the people they work with.

As Fox (2018) documents the State and the professionals who work in public services often struggle to develop meaningful relationships with service users, constrained as they are by rigid thinking about 'risk' and 'safeguarding' and 'resource allocation'.

Asset-based working involves huge changes for organisations and their workforces.

Moving from 'deficit-based' approaches to 'asset-based' ones require front-line staff and their organisations to fundamentally re-think their concepts of risk, from the way they assess it, to the language they use to describe it, to the ways they respond to it. This doesn't mean ignoring risk, but
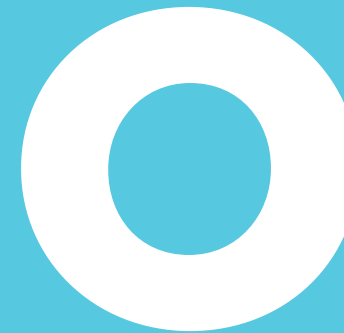
Re-thinking the values that underpin professional practice in Sweden

The Swedish CoSIE pilot aims at preparing organisational infrastructure for more systematic co-creation in Personal Assistance (PA) services in the city of Jönköping. These are services for adult citizens who have a variety of physical and cognitive disabilities, supporting them to manage their lives and participate in society.

Co-creation has been an integral part of national policy in Sweden, and also of local municipal service reform in Jönköping, for several years. Nevertheless, in the municipal Personal Assistance service, aspects of the service context (high staff turnover, small teams mostly working in the user's home,

and a weak and fragmented professional culture) have restricted co-creation. The Jönköping pilot has undertaken a long journey towards PA provision in which the service user as its primary beneficiary has a more active role and influence over the service delivery and value creation. It has done this by foregrounding the roles and responsibilities of professionals.

The main intervention was engaging an external 'action researcher' who facilitated front-line PA managers in regular reflective sessions to explore and challenge their thinking and boost their role as capable change actors. As professionals working with people with varying disabilities, they and their staff now increasingly realise that doing good as deemed from their own perspective is not always right. The first step is taken when the service professional does not treat herself as an expert but starts from the user's needs and perspective. Co-creation requires specific ethics built on a capability approach with its reliance on person's abilities and resources (whatever they may be).

Changing governance and recognising the need for multiple agencies in new configurations in Italy

The Italian CoSIE pilot, which is addressing the issue of childhood obesity, is an example of the inclusion of multiple inter-dependent actors in the delivery of public services. The co-creation process in this pilot was initially started by an institutional public actor belonging to the urban health system. Since the beginning of the project, however, this actor has engaged in gathering a large number of stakeholders belonging to other public institutions, the third sector and the private sector. This led to the creation of a 'Consulting Committee'. The name

'consulting' rather underplays its significant role in governance as it has become much more central than originally envisaged to the generation of ideas and defining the guidelines of the project.

The Consulting Committee is composed of family paediatricians, the Public Health Department, the Primary Care Department, schools, sports associations, local administrators, and representatives of the food industry and food distribution. This committee met regularly in order to innovate and design the object of the co-creation process: an app for smartphones to be delivered to families with overweight or obese children. The consulting committee was split in six working groups to discuss the potential content of each section of the app. (e.g. food menus, map of activities in the city, reminder for visits and check-ups). Eventually, the process involved direct representation of families in order to evaluate the work done by the Consulting Committee and to co-create the functions of the app.

it almost certainly does mean addressing people's underlying needs rather than just the 'risk' that they presented with and drawing on people's wider assets that reside in their relationships with their families, friends and communities when responding to 'risk'.

Often the first reaction of professionals toward innovation is resistance or even hostility. In public bodies this is particularly the case in professions that exhibit a high level of technical and procedural knowledge, for example, surgeons, nurses, teachers and probation officers who are all depositaries of a set of standardised knowledge that they apply to each individual case. They operate following what has been defined as 'inward look' (Boyle and Harris 2009) and they have difficulties in adopting an 'outward look', meaning recognising the 'lay knowledge' and 'resources' of people in caring about themselves and the others they are related with. This is a problem for organisations that want to move towards asset-based and co-created ways of working where staff will need to operate an 'outward look' to deliver complex interventions that are social and not technical (Mortensen et al. 2020).

Another way to understand this challenge is in relation to the interventions and solutions that public services deal with. Mortensen et al. (2020), citing Rogers (2011) note that public sector solutions can ideal typically be defined as either complex interventions/human procession solutions where the problem is complex and the intervention is adaptive, or, as simple interventions where the problem is simple and the intervention is politically regulated and standardised. Simple interventions in this sense might typically include medical procedures delivered by surgeons, pedagogical approaches used by teachers or criminal justice interventions delivered by probation officers. They are all interventions with clear cause-effect connections between interventions and outcomes, wide stakeholder agreement concerning the goal of the intervention and the skills required to deliver the intervention are of a technical

and procedural character (Mortensen et al. 2020). By contrast, complex interventions are social and not technical, implying that the problem constantly changes and that interventions to address the problem are socially dependent and adaptive. This means that there is no single, 'best' solution" rather the solution is context dependent, and open for negotiation between stakeholders of the intervention (Mortensen et al. 2020).

Thinking about the role of professional staff, the support of public servants (and employees of independent service providers) is therefore vital if co-created, asset-based services are to develop. As Hannan (2019: 10) points out:

[I]t is the person on the frontline who knows the context, the person and the situation the best: a teacher, a social worker, a town planner, a community engagement worker, a care worker. For people like these, hierarchical decision-making processes slow down the ability to act, respond nimbly and in a timely fashion to what they see in front of them. By the time authority is sought, and given, the optimum moment to act has often passed.

However, there is a tendency in co-creation/co-production to focus on the service user with relatively little thought given to the implications for professionals (Hannan 2019). Thus, the scientific literature on co-creation/co-production is usually oriented to the role of users/clients in the process of service design. There is a systematic underestimation of the role, tasks and responsibilities of professionals in the co-creation and co-production processes (Osborne and Strokosch 2013, Mortensen et al. 2020). The involvement and contribution of professionals are often taken for granted and Osborne and Strokosch (2013) describe this as one of the main weaknesses of scientific studies on the topic. Mortensen et al. (2020), however, do consider the challenges facing frontline staff. They argue that co-production creates a break with the former roles of frontline staff as either the providers of services to passive clients or customers, instead giving them the role of the 'professional co-producer' expected to motivate and mobilise service users' capacities and resources. Mortensen et al. argue that these 'professional co-producers' are often subject to multiple pressures as they handle top-down and bottom-up expectations simultaneously as well as potential horizontal pressures stemming from the expectations of staff from other organisations.

This change leads to a requirement for frontline staff to build new capacities, professional competencies, and skills to take on a more responsive and inclusive approach (Mortensen et al. 2020). But the existing literature is often sketchy when it comes to describing what this actually means. CoSIE is helping to define practical solutions.

The importance of relational working, and skills and values such as empathy and good communication and listening skills (Mortensen et al. 2020, Needham and Mangan 2016) are important, but creating these is challenging. It may well start with value-based recruitment practices, but also implies new approaches to staff training, different ways of assessing people's needs and different understandings of how 'cases' are managed with new connections and divisions of labour. All this can lead to profound questions about the reconfiguration work and who performs it (Glucksmann 2009; Wilson et al. 2017). Reflective practice is likely to be central to the new, relational way of working if 'trained incapacity' is to be avoided where professional co-producers struggle to respond to competing requirements of top-down, bottom-up and horizontal pressures while trying to work in new ways when their training took place in an earlier service delivery paradigm (Mortensen et al. 2020). However, perhaps more fundamentally, professional co-producers will have to 'unlearn' previous practice and make a conscious break with previous value systems that shaped their prior professional training and practice.

Professional co-producers will have to 'unlearn' previous practice and make a conscious break with previous value systems.

Part of the solution may also be to ensure that more professionals either have lived experience themselves or that people with lived experience are part of the team they work in. During the 3rd social Hackathon in Estonia, Tiia Järvpõld - an artist who paints with her toes and a champion of personal assistance services - stated that being included is just an illusion. Public servants and institutions think that people

with disabilities can give advice, but they are still the ones who need help, not someone who can speak with us or make decisions. In her view, every social worker or expert shaping social policies should have a consultant with special needs, maybe someone on the payroll. "How long can you talk with them voluntarily and run up against the wall with your wheelchair again and again."

In addition to changing the way that professionals work, organisations can also change by adopting the Open Innovation model in which the focus is on distributed innovation processes where organisational structures are flatter, based on networks rather than hierarchies, organisational boundaries are more permeable and knowledge flows across organisational boundaries (Chesbrough and Bogers 2014). One potential model that might address some of the challenges associated with the move to asset-based working is the self-managing team (Laloux 2014), defined as by Vregelaar (2017: 4) as "groups of interdependent individuals that can self-regulate their behaviour on relatively whole tasks". Vregelaar (2017) identifies the advantages of self-

managing teams as: bringing more flexibility; increasing quality of work life; reducing absenteeism and employee turnover; increasing job satisfaction; and organisational commitment. There seem to be overlaps between the concept of self-management for professionals and working in asset-based ways with service users.

3.2 The role of technology in co-creation and innovation

Technology, and particularly digital technologies, have been seen as important for improving public sector innovation capabilities and Osborne and Strokosch (2013) suggest that the advent of 'digital governance' and 'new public governance' have led to a further reformulation of co-production. But, while new tools for e-participation hold out the promise of widespread access of citizens to the policy formulation process the engagement of citizens is still very low (Roszczynska-Kurasinska et al. 2017) and digital divides exist, not only in developing countries but also within

Co-Crea-Te: Combining digital and non-digital platforms

Approaches to the use of digital technology embodied within the CoSIE pilots are diverse, and they have encountered both challenges and opportunities in implementation. Platforms deployed in some of the CoSIE pilots involve digital media but spaces, events and artefacts (e.g. pop-up installations) have also been successful. Digital and non-digital platforms are not mutually exclusive. The pilot in Valencia, Spain, working on enterprise projects with unemployed residents, for example, makes exemplary use of both digital media and a dedicated physical space for co-working known as The Co-Crea-Te. The Co-Crea-Te space has set up its own communication channels in LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and all these social networks are being run by the occupants themselves (each one has been assigned to one participant). The webpage is also run by the participants along with technicians. It includes a forum for launching questions and/or questionnaires for testing new ideas, and also a platform for reserving the various meeting rooms available at Co-Crea-Te.

There is a communications committee made up of members of the Co-Crea-Te community with knowledge and/or skills in social networks (volunteers/users and mentors). In common with many other roles, it has emerged somewhat organically rather than been pre-planned. This body liaises with the communication department of Valencia City Hall in order to strengthen and exploit existing networks. The communications committee carries out an analysis of tweets/impressions/profile visits/followers on a monthly basis and reports back on the evolution of the service's social networks to the Friday meeting. The committee also analyses social media to obtain information about whom who the pilot is reaching, to identify those they would like to involve in its network of followers and external agents.

seemingly connected populations (United Nations 2014). Much thinking in relation to the role of technology in co-creation and social innovation comes from the business world (Townsend 2013). But, as we know, the relationship that business has with its customers is often very different to that the public sector has with its service users (see Osborne 2018 for example). As Lember et al. (2019: 1) note: "Despite growing interest in the potential of digital technologies to enhance coproduction and co-creation in public services, there is a lack of hard evidence on their actual impact."

Much of the focus in relevant literature to date has been on the use of social media (Lember et al. 2019). Studies have pointed out that while social media has the potential to extend government services and engage citizens to innovation processes, it has simultaneously introduced new challenges related to accessibility and social inclusion (Bertot et al. 2012). Of particular interest has been whether opportunities for co-creation through digital technologies "will exist for all, or only a selected few" (Lember et al. 2019). Lember et al. (2019) identify opportunities for digital technologies to enhance co-creation, but they also question the assumption that such technologies will necessarily support co-creation:

> *[T]hey may also reduce the need for direct interaction and, by implication, for co-production and co-creation; or they may empower citizens to self-organise, bypassing existing organisations. (Lember et al. 2019: 8)*

The CoSIE project does not see digital governance and e-government as the answer to improving public service innovation and its focus is not primarily on the interface between people and technology, but instead on the relationships between services, citizens and communities (Fox et al. 2019). Not all the CoSIE pilots have managed to incorporate social media into co-creation. This was partly because digital exclusion (for example of older residents in a Polish urban housing estate) was even deeper than the pilot teams had imagined.

It was unsurprising that digital exclusion would be an inhibiting factor (Sakellariou 2018) but that was not the only issue that limited opportunities for co-creation through digital technologies. In the UK pilot in criminal

justice, professionals and service users alike associate social media with shame and stigmatisation. This was not unfounded, as revealed in one of the Community Reporter stories made by a service user who lost his job when his crime came to his employer's attention through social media.

In Nieuwegein there was no substitute for human interaction, particularly in the early stages of the project. The Nieuwegein pilot site was a neighbourhood with a relatively high proportion of vulnerable inhabitants. Many initiatives had failed and dialogue between the municipality and inhabitants was at a very low level. Inhabitants were particularly distrustful of on-line, digital communication with municipality services. A multidisciplinary team, chaired by the mayor, decided on a new approach in which each household was visited, time was taken, ears were open, and needs and wishes were heard. Three hundred and sixty households were visited in the process of establishing the CoSIE pilot.

Nevertheless, it has become clear in the investigations of the project that the generic infrastructure of social media and open data has a potential role to play in the development of co-creative approaches to wellbeing services. Two vital points here are meanings of 'data', and issues of provenance, trust, confidentiality and safety. It is axiomatic that wider conceptions of 'data' for co-creation activities are required (for example accessible representations of service interventions). Moreover, there is often a core set of facilities, resources and information management functions that must be provided under the governance umbrella of local service environments at a number of levels in order to enable the widespread adoption and implementation of co-creation and associated practices.

Clearly then there is a need for further research on the role of technology in co-creation, particularly the analysis of socio-technological factors and the dynamics within complex systems that lead to failures. Jalonen et al. (2020) have suggested that ideally value co-creation builds on a dynamic balance between exploitation and exploration activities. Exploitation is characterised as refining, selecting, implementing and executing operations, whereas exploration is an organisational activity based on searching, risk taking, playing, experimenting, discovering and innovating (March 1991). The key question, therefore, to be asked is to what extent digital technologies distort the co-creation process. Where the exploration dominates and exploitation

is subservient, the result is a kind of pop-up participation. The opposite, participative diversion, may emerge when exploration activities decrease and exploitation remains at high levels. Where digital technologies do not support either exploration nor exploitation, there is a risk of co-destruction powered by systemic distortion (Jalonen et al. 2020)[1]. The diverse approaches to the use of technology in co-creation embodied within the CoSIE pilots provides an opportunity to contribute to this evidence-base.

3.3 Scaling up co-created innovations

Co-created services often start with like-minded groups of individuals, but this raises questions about their potential to be scaled-up.

The term 'scaling-up' encompasses activities of spreading, diffusing, disseminating, and adopting (Shiell-Davis et al. 2015). It is related to concepts such as 'spread' and 'diffusion', but how they are understood varies across fields and sectors (Shiell-Davis et al. 2015). Albury (2015) challenges the idea that scaling-up is primarily about informational issues or primarily a supply-side issue (i.e. by increasing the pipeline of innovations the likelihood of spread and diffusion is increased). Instead, he draws attention to the importance of thinking about and shaping the demand for innovation. Albury (2015) also challenges the assumption that innovations spread and scale through transfer from one organisation or locality to another. Instead he notes that while this might work for some incremental innovations, for more systemic, radical or disruptive innovations scaling-up involves the innovative organisation scaling-up, increasing its market share and displacing less innovative organisations. However, Davies (2014) argues that we should focus less on organisational growth as a means of spreading innovation and more on non-growth strategies such as replication and dissemination.

Albury (2015) develops a conceptual framework of three mechanisms for scaling and diffusion that research has shown to be promising in health and social care. The first mechanism is based on organic growth situated in three interacting communities: a community of innovators (or practice) who are structured, facilitated and supported to use disciplined co-design and innovation methods; a community of potential adopters; and, a community

of interest, not yet committed to adoption, but interested in developments. The second mechanism focuses on building the widest possible range of stakeholders (service users, citizens, policy-makers, managers and professionals) to mobilise demand and build a movement. The third mechanism on developing an enabling ecosystem covering dimensions such as culture, leadership, investment funds, rewards and incentives and an appropriate regulatory framework. Building on these ideas and a series of empirical case studies, Albury et al. (2018) suggest enablers for scaling innovation can be divided between those that are within the remit of innovators and those that create the conditions for spread at a system level.

For innovators in pursuit of spread, four enablers are:

- Building demand through existing networks and narratives
- Using evidence to build demand
- Balancing fidelity, quality and adaptability
- Scaling vehicles rather than lone champions.

Enablers at a system level are:

- Capitalising on national and local system priorities
- Using policy and financial levers to kick start momentum
- Commissioning for sustainable spread
- The role of external funding spread.

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1 For more on systemic distortion in complex systems, see Bella 1997 and King et al. 2002)

A stream of the social innovation literature (eg Mulgan et al. 2007) has recognized the fact that (social) innovation processes seems to follow a sort of "spiral path" starting from the recognition of a need to change (or an unmet demand) and eventually ending with a complete systemic change (when the innovation is adopted by all the actors involved, it stops to be an "innovation" and became a "common praxis"). This path usually follows six steps (in a later version they became seven) but the authors admit that not all the social innovation processes end with their full adoption, generating a "systemic change". Actually, the majority of them are barely able to overcome the third step (prototyping phase). A very successful social innovation often ends at the level of sustainability (of the specific program, or project, or service or process) and very few of them are able to reach the further step "scaling up" the experience to other context, services or programs. The (social) innovations that are able to elicit (generate) a stable and enduring "systemic change" are very rare (uncommon). Another stream of social innovation literature (Ganugi and Koukoufikis 2018, Moulaert and McCallum 2019) refers to three dimensions to be achieved to make the innovation sustainable: the satisfaction of unmet needs, the community empowerment and the governance transformations. Many innovations achieve only episodic changes of governance, but a few innovations manage to achieve durable changes, by then being instutionalized.

There are clear implications here for the co-creation process. Often local experiences remain at the stage of piloting (in case of services) or prototyping (in case of goods). This is complicated by the fact that in 'co-creation' the public sector plays a crucial role. It is by definition one of key actors of the success or failure of the co-creation trial. That means that all levels of public administration (from the political one trough the managerial one until the front-line professionals) must be involved to reach the desired levels of scale and sustainability. Since the success or failure of a co-creation initiative is by large a matter of changing in a enduring way the "mind-set" (way of doing business as usual) of the people working in the public administration it is easy to understand that the level of involvement and commitment of the upper levels of the hierarchy structure play a key role (key factor, driving force) in the process. Evers and Brandsen (2016) recognise the value of for local contexts of small, temporary initiatives, while arguing that the central/local dichotomy is somewhat misleading because social innovation is by nature multi-level. They also comment on scaling as more likely for innovations that align with national / regional priorities (eg culture / economic development) than, for example, services for the 'hard to reach'.

For the CoSIE pilots scaling up is mostly still in the future, but there is an extensive evidence base we can draw on when thinking about how pilots might scale-up, much of which draws on practice in health and social care. One of the most extensive reviews is Greenhalgh et al.'s (2004) systematic review of the literature on the spread and sustainability of innovations in health service delivery and organisation. They found that most empirical studies had focused on the short-term adoption of simple innovations by individual adopters. Studies of complex innovations (especially those requiring an organizational- or system-level adoption decision and a recurrent budget line); of the non-adoption and abandonment of innovations by individuals; and of local scale-up, distant spread, and long-term sustainability were sparse (Greenhalgh et al. 2017). Greenhalgh et al. (2004) identify attributes of innovations, that from the perspective of prospective adopters, explain a high proportion of the variance in adoption rates of innovations. These include: their relative advantage; their compatibility with the values, norms and perceived needs of intended adopters; that they are perceived by key players as simple to use; that they can be experimented with by intended users on a limited basis; that the benefits of an innovation are visible to
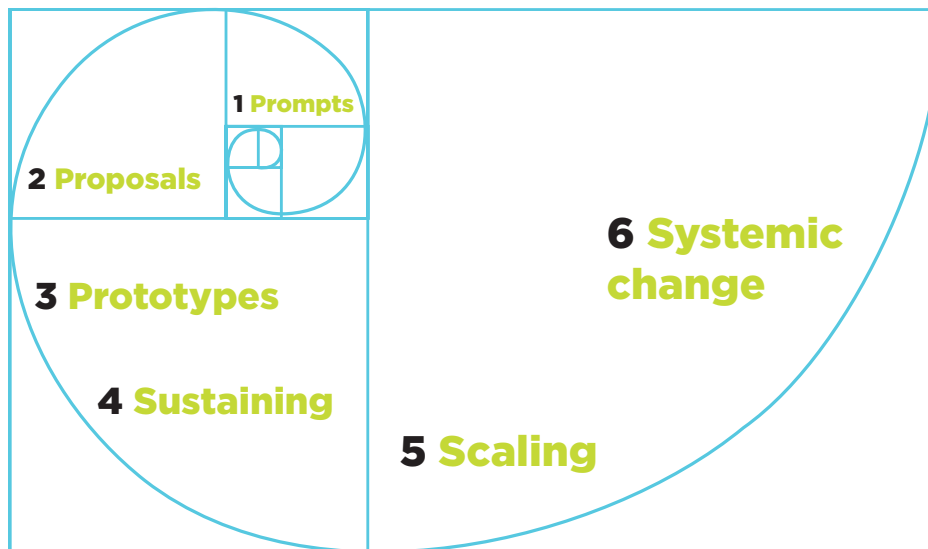
intended adopters; and whether a potential adopter can adapt, refine or otherwise modify the innovation to suit his or her own needs. Greenhalgh et al. (2004) then go on to highlight the important roles played by the organisational conditions and capabilities of adopters; interactions between innovators and adopters; system and cultural readiness; quality and structure of social networks; opinion leaders; and champions (Albury et al. 2018).

What comes across strongly from Greenhalgh and colleagues review is the complexity of both the concepts and the evidence on scaling-up and the lack of simple one-size-fits-all models. More recent reviews have echoed this. For example, Shiell-Davis et al. (2015) undertook a review of theoretical concepts to consider 'How can small scale innovation be effectively scaled up to create large scale transformational change?' They find a good deal of evidence on scaling-up initiatives and innovations, but no agreement on which approaches to use or on what constitutes success. They suggest, when thinking about scaleability, it is important to consider both 'hard' components like metrics, and 'soft' components like socio-cultural factors and distinguish two broad approaches to scaling-up: top-down and bottom-up models. They found that top-down models place emphasis on hierarchy, with decision-making and key roles being clustered primarily at the top tiers of an organisation or setting. By contrast bottom-up approaches locate the impetus, power, and action to people in 'frontline' positions or those not in positions of prestige and influence and this model is closely aligned with community empowerment, community-based organisations, and civic engagement.

4. Evidencing and evaluating co-creation in public service reform

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Shiell-Davis et al. (2015) in a review of the evidence on scaling-up innovations find that being evidence-based is the most common requirement for an innovation to be spread and scaled-up. They found that to demonstrate effectiveness, most innovations needed to have been evaluated and supported by empirical data, published in reports or in peer-reviewed journals. In terms of evaluation methodology they suggest that:

> *Having multiple and creative ways to assess and evaluate the adoption and implementation of an innovation helps to embed it within the larger system. (Shiell-Davis et al. 2015: 2)*

However, developing an evidence-base for co-creation and associated strengths-based approaches is challenging.

4.1 Challenges for evaluators

One problem is dealing with complexity. Relational public services, particularly those concerned with wellbeing and development, are seldom provided or experienced in isolation, whether their intended beneficiaries are individuals, social groups, whole communities or locations, or, indeed, the wider economy and society. The challenge being that, in any individual service design and development context, the focus tends to be on the definition, provisioning and delivery of interventions to address identified interests, needs and policies. The issues and requirements of the wider contexts in which these developments take place and in which the resulting services are delivered are many and complex. These interdependencies generate a requirement to consider the service environment at a number of levels:

- Technical and human infrastructure which provide reusable resources, knowledge and capabilities,
- structural issues of service intermediation and brokerage and how these are managed, sustained and supported
- issues of service governance.

Issues of co-creation and co-production appear at all of these levels and the interactions between. The multiplicity of services and the requirement for specialisation in response to the complexity and long term nature of many cases of need, generates a requirement of intermediation and brokerage between the individual service provisions and the client. Wellbeing services are, necessarily, relational and their multi-agency and often extended delivery creates a need for information channels and instruments such as catalogues and booking systems, profiling tools and collaborative case management and record systems. These are requirements that generate the need for shared platforms and infrastructure. As a consequence of the multiplicity of services and service components we have discussed, questions of service governance cannot be concerned with evaluation of individual services but also of the joint efficacy and efficiency of the set of services that have been combined in a service plan or pathway. In addition to the service level and the case level evaluations there is also an evaluation at the population level which examines whether the available range and capacities of services meets current and expected needs. Finally, there is governance at the political level which balances the resources deployed on wellbeing and development with the other demands of the state.

The challenge of evaluating complexity is linked to another evaluation challenge, which is conceptual and revolves around whether the intended outcomes of co-creation and co-production initiatives are explicit and therefore susceptible to evaluation. As Brix et al. (2020) note, New Public Governance assumes that co-production leads to beneficial outcomes, but reviews of the evidence-base for co-creation and co-production in public services does not provide clear-cut support for this proposition (Steen et al., 2018, Cluley et al. 2019). For example, in their systematic review of co-creation and co-production, Voorberg. (2014) identify over a hundred empirical studies of co-creation and co-production between public organisations and citizens (or their representatives) but only 14 papers evaluated the outcome of co-production in terms of an increase (or decrease) in service effectiveness, leading Voorberg et al. (2014: 16) to conclude that:

> *[G]iven the limited number of records that reported on the outcomes of co-creation/co-production, we cannot definitely conclude whether co-creation/co-production can be considered as beneficial.*

Brix et al. (2020: 169) argue that this is because "co-production is a complex, social phenomenon, which implies that there cannot be a clear cause-effect relationship between co-production activities and their outcomes." This echoes the Rogers' (2011) concept of public sector solutions that are complex interventions/human procession solutions where the problem is complex and the intervention is adaptive. Thus the objectives for implementing co-production are often not explicitly formalised (Brix et al. 2020, Voorberg et al. 2014) making outcome evaluation difficult.

Another problem is methodological and revolves around the relative merits of participatory versus objective, 'scientific' evaluation methodologies when evaluating co-creation and strengths-based approaches. If interventions are co-produced or strengths-based then it might follow that research should also use participatory or co-produced methodologies (an obvious corollary of co-produced interventions), but this is not always straightforward. Richardson (2013) notes that participatory and co productive approaches to evaluation have tended to align with methodologies which focus on multiple forms of knowledge and on the principles and values of empowering practice but that also deprivilege the idea of objective evidence of policy effectiveness. In contrast, traditional, broadly positivist or post-positivist approaches to evaluation tend to privilege independent and objective methods and have typically been non-participatory. In a recent study Allen et al. (2019) note the tension within health and social care between co-produced research and producing evidence of quantifiable outcomes using validated outcome measures: for example psychometric tools to measure subjective wellbeing.

4.2 Options for evaluating co-creation and strengths-based approaches

Given these challenges, what is the best way forward for evaluating co-creation and strengths-based approaches?

A number of commentators have suggested that, given the nature of co-creation, co-production or personalised approaches evaluation should be theory-led, starting with the elaboration of mid-level, programme theory (Durose et al. 2017, Brix et al. 2020) that takes account of local contexts as framing conditions for outcome evaluation (Brix et al. 2020). Based on their review of the co-production literature, five rationales are identified by Brix et al. (2020) as overall outcomes that represent the logic for an organisation adopting co-production: 'realisation of innovation potential'; 'better individual well-being and citizen empowerment'; 'increased effectiveness and efficiency'; 'mobilisation of resources'; and 'increased democracy'. This is not intended to be a definitive list, but to reflect different theoretical traditions that have shaped co-production and that might be relevant outcomes in a programme theory developed for a specific programme.

Faced with similar challenges around the complexity of programmes, Fox and Morris (2019) note that evaluators working in various sectors have developed and adopted alternative approaches to impact evaluation. These start by switching from discussing 'attribution' to what is termed 'contribution', recognising the importance of supporting factors in understanding impact in more complex settings (Mayne 2012, Stern et al. 2012). These alternative impact evaluation designs are not simply 'qualitative' alternatives to 'quantitative' impact evaluation. As Fox and Morris (2019) explain, their proponents are generally critical of relativist perspectives associated with some researchers working in the qualitative tradition. They propose impact designs that their advocates argue enhance causal leverage in circumstances of complexity and uncertainty by foregrounding participants' perspectives, an understanding of the context, and multiple causes or causal packages that lead to impact. Perhaps the best known approach in this broad tradition is Realist Evaluation (Pawson and Tilley 1997). Pawson and Tilley's starting point is to argue that the post-positivist experimental evaluation is flawed because its attempt to reduce an intervention to a set of variables and control for difference using an intervention and control group strips out context. Instead evaluators need a method which "seeks to understand what the program actually does to change behaviours and why not every situation is conducive to that particular process." (Pawson and Tilley 1997: 11). They assume a different, 'realist' model of explanation in which "causal outcomes follow from mechanisms acting in contexts" (Pawson and Tilley 1997: 58) and the practical starting point for a realist evaluation will be construction of a mid-level theory such as a theory of change.

Case-based approaches, as another example of these alternative impact evaluation designs, are, like Realist evaluation, based on generative understandings of causation rather than the statistical counterfactual-based perspective (Byrne et al. 2009, Stern et al. 2012). Moreover, advocates of case-based approaches reject the 'disembodied variable' of quantitative approaches (Byrne 2009: 4). The case is a complex entity in which multiple causes interact:

> *It is how these causes interact as a set that allows an understanding of cases . . . This view does not ignore individual causes of variables but examines them as 'configurations' or 'sets' in their context. (Stern et al. 2009: 31)*

Befani and Stedman-Bryce (2017) suggest that case-based methods can be broadly typologised as either between case comparisons (such as qualitative comparative analysis) or within case analysis (for example contribution analysis). Brix et al. (2020) make the case for contribution analysis in evaluating the outcomes of co-production, arguing that it is an approach that addresses cause-effect questions using theory-based evaluation to infer causation.

The approaches to impact evaluation described above are methodologically neutral in that they do not provide clear guidance on how to collect data and assess its strength in relation to a contribution claim (Befani and Stedman-Bryce 2017). Befani and Stedman-Bryce (2017) propose combining the principles of Process Tracing and Bayesian Updating to provide clear guidance on what data to collect; when and how; together with standards to measure how much the evidence increases or decreases confidence in a contributional claim. Durose et al. (2017) in a discussion of the state of the evidence base on co-production in public services also argue that theory-based and knowledge-based routes to evidencing co-production are needed. They cite a range of 'good enough' methodologies which community organisations and small-scale service providers experimenting with co-production can use to assess its potential contribution, including appreciative inquiry, peer-to-peer learning and data sharing. Storytelling is particularly

important in co-production processes as it helps to build 'shared commitment and understanding' (Layard et al. 2013) and allows for the representation of 'different voices and experiences in an accessible way' (Durose et al. 2013). Durose et al. (2017) argue that storytelling is particularly important in co-production, not only in evidencing the significance of its relational dynamics but also in representing different voices and experiences in an accessible way. They argue that the approach offers a way to draw on the insights of the people working in co-productive ways, rather than assuming that they are too 'close' to the case study to be able to offer valid insights. Storytelling by Community Reporters is an important element of the CoSIE model (see box), providing a key mechanism for users and beneficiaries of services to co-produce evidence that informs both the design of the pilots, but also their ongoing evaluation. — – -

Community Reporting

The CoSIE project uses the Community Reporting model developed by People's Voice Media (peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk). Community Reporting is a storytelling methodology that supports citizens to use digital tools to share their own lived experience: stories that highlight their aspirations, needs and perceptions, as well as gathering stories from their peers. It uses experiential knowledge (i.e. lived experience stories) as a catalyst for bottom-up change processes between citizens, and services and institutions. As a research methodology Community Reporting is a citizen-led, peer-to-peer methodology that facilitates equity in the power dynamic and relationship between researcher and participant. It allows people with lived experience to help shape the evaluation and set the agenda. The predominantly audio-visual outputs produced are fed into the wider evaluation and also used during dissemination to 'bring to life' key messages and issues.

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