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Practices, Research and Operations
in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Question and Answer (Q&A) Document Climate Knowledge Co-Production Webinar

Question: What methods/tools did you use to build common ground between people coming into co-production without prior connections or from divergent groups (e.g. farmer and pastoralist representative actors)?

Answer: Answered live in recording

Question: When you say “user” does that typically encourage input from those “actors”? Or does that imply that they are passive and not contributing to the tools/solutions agreed upon?

Answer: Answered live in recording

Question: How would this approach be used to co-produce knowledge on supplemental irrigation?

Answer: Answered live in recording

Question: At what scale can the co-production process be implemented? Ideally, how many stakeholders are engaged? I imagine there might be some tension between ensuring you engage a complete and representative group of stakeholders, but not so large that it precludes relationship-building and progress. I'd be curious to hear how SSN strikes that balance, and any key lessons/learnings re implementing co-production at scale.

Answer: Answered live in recording

Question: What are the ways in which SSN/partners are measuring the impact and quality of co-production?

Answer: Feedback from users is one of the best gauges of impact and quality. This can be done through interactive methods such as workshops, community meetings and reflection processes or user surveys and feedback channels. Setting up M&E goals that speak to the impact and quality is also key and you may need to do a baseline on for example perceptions of usefulness of a forecast so that you can see what change has occurred against that baseline.

Question: Is there a monitoring process to show how increased engagement is related to results in a systematic way?

Answer: I'm not aware of a bespoke process for this but generally there is good correlation between engagement and results IF you have agreed on what is important for all the actors involved (speaking to the principle on Value add for all involved). Monitoring methods described above are useful to consider.

Question: Who do you start with when launching the co-production process? How do you approach the community outreach?

Answer: This is context dependent, but it could be that you start with actors such as the government department responsible, traditional leader of community affected, civil society or humanitarian assistance organization. Working with organizations or individuals that already have trust of the community can make things much easier to get going.

Question: Are you aware of any good examples of co-production being effective for shorter engagements (e.g. weeks or months)?

Answer: Answered live in recording

Question: Is knowledge co-production considered as a research methodology for funding organizations?

Answer: Indeed, it is an approach that has a lot of support with development funders - for example in the manual many of the projects were funded from UKaid, USAid, among others. Some research funder are also seeing the benefits of the approach.

Question: Is co-production limited to the design of climate and weather information services or does it extend into delivery and evaluation?

Answer: Co-production is used in a range of different fields and is certainly not only about weather and climate services. In fact, the health sector has a lot more experience in co-production for example. Co-production can be used in delivery and evaluation as demonstrated in the 6 building blocks in the manual.

Question: How are the climate uncertainties addressed or managed in communicating the forecast?

Answer: This was one of the 10 principles we included in the manual to "improve transparency of forecast accuracy and certainty". This can be done by improving awareness of the skill and probability of forecasts or climate predications. This ensures there is a common understanding of what is possible and surfaces some of the limitations.

Question: Can you share best practice of how to engage both communities and different sectors of government (given that climate is a crosscutting issue) to co-produce evidence to support actions with multiple benefits (e.g. climate mitigation through non-polluting energy sources powering health facilities)?

Answer: Creating a level playing field for interaction is really important when mixing community and government stakeholders. If you do not you may find that power rests unequally and that the needs of one group are prioritized at the expense of the other. This is tricky to do of course but is often down to the facilitation of the engagements. Making sure that the workshop facilitator is a neutral actor can help for example as can encouraging input from the quieter stakeholders, mixing up the engagement with small groups/pairs/breakouts in addition to plenary style interactions. if appropriate, the use of digital platforms (e.g. polls, word clouds, Jamboards) can also open up the contributions to flow more readily from all and avoids overly dominant individuals hogging the floor.

Question: Does the community get paid in the co-production/knowledge exchange, especially because they have to take time out from their daily responsibilities to further usually the careers of those in power positions?

Answer: In many cases communities are not paid formally but may be given a contribution towards their expenses (e.g. transport allowance) and meals at meetings are generally provided. Some projects allow for honorariums to be paid but this is often dependent on the funders terms and conditions. The key to this is that there must be a value add for these participants otherwise as you say there is little incentive to be involved. The timings of meetings need to be thought of carefully to ensure that it is easier for the targeted community members to attend (e.g. does not coincide with other work obligations).

Question: How do we address the gap between climate information availability and relevance vs how to streamline the information to various institutions to ensure sustainable adaptation?

Answer: Communication and dialogue help to address the gap between what is available and what people actually need to make better informed decisions. Often weather and climate information on its own may not be enough so partnerships with the providers of the other information needed could be a critical step. The process of getting information into use is much easier when that information is valued and understood by the institutions you are working with.

Question: How does co-production can be used in an environment where national agency provides climate information service across the country? For instance, in Ghana, the Ghana Meteorological Agency provides climate information service mainly via television news. In that case, how can co-production be applied in a local context in such a case to ensure that the services are context-specific and benefit local communities?

Answer: In many countries there is a national agency responsible for all weather information and services. Capacity to be part of numerous co-production processes with different communities and specific needs can be a problem. Generally, where there is a specific/critical need – e.g. lives or livelihoods at risk – it can help to run a co-production process to ensure that service are tailored to the context. Staggering these processes might be necessary to not overwhelm the national meteorological agency. However, if there is a more general need for improvements in services a different approach might work better – e.g. having a feedback channel or perhaps a radio show to help explain how forecast/service works.