ENGAGEMENT IN SYSTEM OR STRATEGIC POLICY LEVEL CO-DESIGN

How to Use this Tool

Use this Tool when planning to undertake Co-Design of systems or strategic policies. This Tool is applicable for planning new or amended legislation or new approaches across a whole portfolio area.

Any Co-Design initiative at the level of systems or strategic policy shifts requires high level endorsement and mandate before it can have a realistic chance of success. Significant resources, including funding and staff time will need to be allocated to support the engagement of participants.

Frequently, external consultancy firms are engaged to manage the overall process. This has the advantage that such firms are neutral as to the outcome but experienced in the process. It can have the disadvantage that they do not have sufficient understanding of the specific issues of the sector involved.

It is fair to say that there have been mixed results in use of external consultants to manage stakeholder engagement in major reform in WA. Even so, it generally gives greater credibility to the process, leading to better buy-in from stakeholders if the facilitation of the process is seen to be independent.

Typically the process will involve multiple engagement mechanisms. These may include:

▶ Whole of sector workshops with government, community sector and community participants (including service users, their representatives, carers and family)

▶ Targeted workshops with particular cohorts of service users and providers, for example Aboriginal people and services, CALD community, and carers and family members of service users

▶ Establishment of an expert reference group with broad representation from within the relevant sector (including academic expertise, consumers, government, community sector, etc.)

▶ One-to-one interviews with key stakeholders

▶ Publicly open calls for input

▶ Draft discussion papers circulated publicly for comment

▶ Other drafts (policy statements, strategic

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plans, legislation, etc.) circulated for comment

▶ Public forums

▶ Other consultation mechanisms specific to the particular issue, such as use of community sector Peak Bodies to engage with members, native title representative body engagement with traditional owners, local government councillors and advisory bodies for local perspectives, etc.

As most system or strategic level reform has implications across the State, it is important to have regional input. As each of the regions of the State are themselves very diverse, it is important that there be local workshops or other engagement processes in each region.

Engagement in Large Scale Whole of Community Co-Design

There has not been much experience in Western Australia of whole of community engagement in Co-Design. However, some possible models for intensive involvement in large scale planning have been identified.

The most comprehensive WA resource canvassing the issues and describing models of engagement was developed back in 2006 by the Office of Citizens and Civics in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. Titled 'Working Together: Involving Community and Stakeholders in Decision-Making', it has six major sections: Initial Considerations, Scoping Your Project, Preparing the Community Participation Plan, Making the Plan Work, Managing Significant or Complex Issues and Evaluating the Community Participation Program.

The Appendices on the OECD Guiding Principles for Engaging Citizens, the International Association for Public Participation's 'Public Participation Spectrum' and a list of 19 'Methods and Models' for community engagement, are particularly valuable.

The resource can be accessed at

http://www.nrm.wa.gov.au/media/10536/ working_together_involving_community_ and_stakeholders.pdf

The key message in 'Working Together' is to involve the community early in the planning. There are many other crucial components and it is only through detailed and thorough planning that all of the components will come together for a successful, effective and rewarding program of community participation.

Examples of brief papers which summarise the evidence for the propositions in this Tool and which have further links to specific research, include:

Co-production in mental health – A literature review. Commissioned by Mind. Authors: Julia Slay and Lucie Stephens from nef, the new economics foundation. UK 2013

Right Here, Right Now – Taking co-production into the mainstream. David Boyle, Anna Coote, Chris Sherwood and Julie Slay. The Lab, nef and NESTA. UK 2010

WACOSS Discussion Paper: Co-design Principles to deliver community services in partnership in WA, 2016. On WACOSS website: www.wacoss.org.au