

An inclusive and participatory way of delivering social services



ARFIE

European Network, 40 members from 11 European Countries sharing a common idea: a person with disability shall remain the main decision-maker in his/her future life projects and the social services staff should remain trained, skilled and qualified to offer an adequate support to the evolving needs of people with disabilities.



EU projects

ARFIE promotes EU funded projects to test and promote new methodologies in the provision of social services for people with disability and mental health problems, with the aim of:

- Improve the support, social inclusion and availability of services for people with disabilities, people with important dependency needs and with associated mental health needs;
- Promote quality staff training for social service providers.

New challenges

ARFIE works in different fields related to disability: employment, equal opportunities, new technologies, independent living, training for supporting staff...

A few years ago the network came across co-production as a tool to develop and deliver social services and, together with some valuable partners from different EU Countries, we decided to test it:

- ENABLE Project 2015-2017
- IN-CUBA Project 2018-2021

Co-production

It can be defined as a **way of doing** that sees **all the actors involved as equals contributors** towards the same goal.

In the field of social services provision it can be therefore considered as an **inclusive and participatory way of delivering services.**





Definition

Co-production can be defined as “***the process that literally turns services users from passive recipients into active shapers of public services because it means involving all stakeholders, including the people who use a service, in the process of determining what services are delivered and how they operate***”
(UK Co-operative Council)

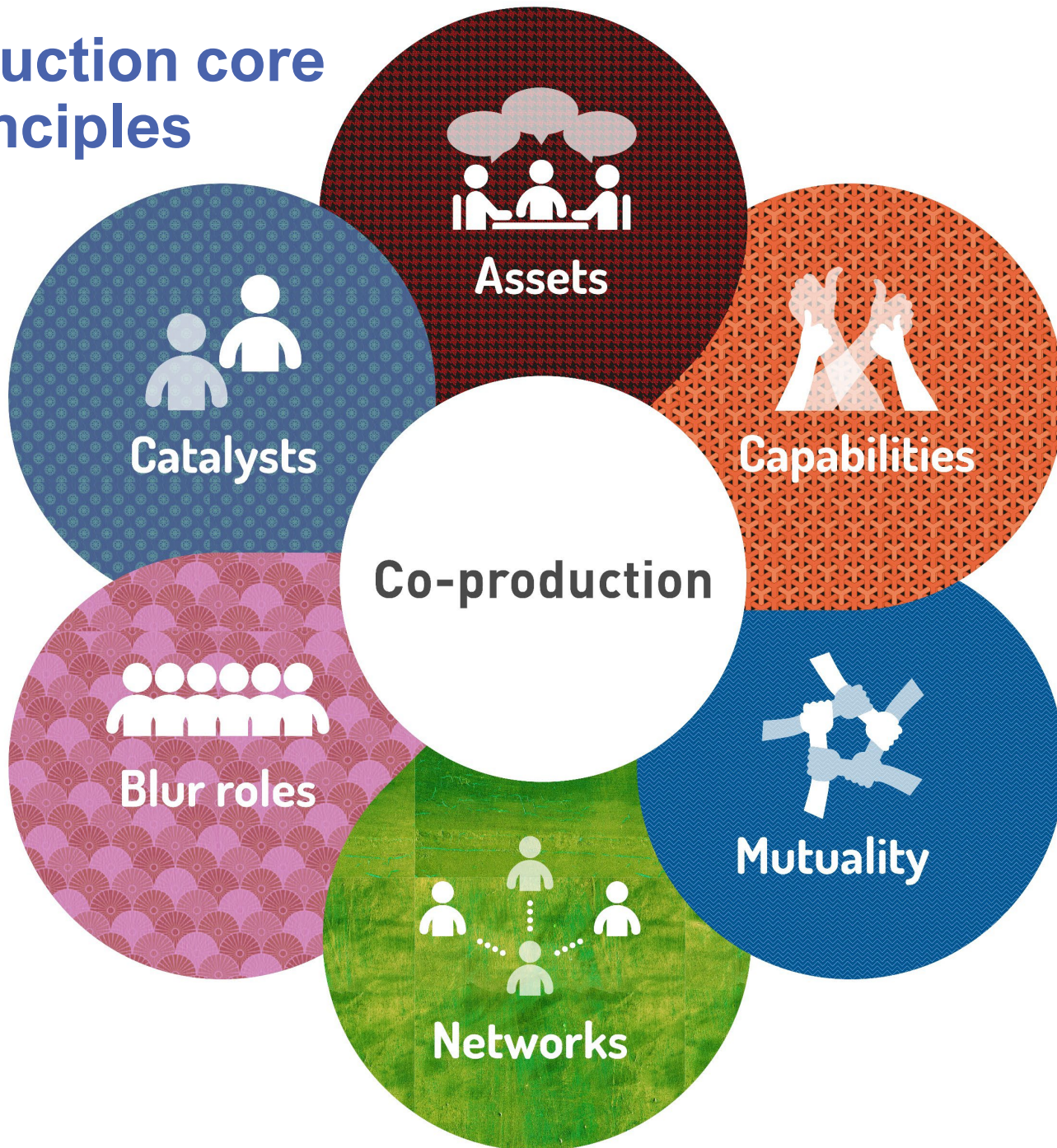
Relevance

- Economic crisis
- Cut in the public spending

Need to look for:

- a new way of developing and delivering public services;
- strengthening citizen engagement through a more inclusive, bottom-up and participatory approach.

co-production core principles



co-production core principles

- Recognising **people as assets**: equal partners in the design and delivery of services;
- **Building** on people's **existing capabilities**: co-produced services start with people's capabilities (not needs) and look for opportunities to develop them;
- **Mutuality and reciprocal partnership**;
- **Peer support** network alongside professionals;
- **Blurring roles**: blurring the distinction between professionals, users, family members, community representatives;
- Professionals as **catalyst of change**: Enabling professionals to become facilitators and thus catalysts of change (rather than simple service deliverers).

4 phases

In its application co-production consists of 4 phases:

- Co-design: planning of services;
- Co-decision: defining the allocation of resources;
- Co-delivery: implementation of services;
- Co-evaluation: analyses of services.

Disability field

Applied to the disability field, co-production can **foster beneficiaries' self esteem and independence**, as well as increase **awareness and knowledge of staff** on issues of equality, diversity and inclusion and how these should be core features of their daily work.



co-production

Co-production applied practice

- ENABLE Project 2015-2017: testing co-production in the planning and delivery of social services;
- IN-CUBA Project 2018-2021: application of co-production to the development of an incubation methodology addressed to people with intellectual disability.

More info available on <https://co-production.eu/>

EU Partnership

European partnership of social service providers from different Countries:

- APEMH (LU – Coordinator),
- ARFIE (EU),
- AMPANS (ES),
- CADIAI (IT),
- DeLork - HUBBIE (BE),
- FENACERCI (PT),
- Fondazione San Sebastiano Onlus (IT),
- OpenGroup (IT).



ENABLE

From Culture of Caring to Culture of Enabling:
Co-produce Services for People with Intellectual
Disability (<https://vimeo.com/232790264>)

The project involved a partnership focused on the design, delivery, and evaluation of dedicated projects (like a discotheque in Italy, which now is a stable monthly event) via co-productive focus groups involving beneficiaries, families, educators, representative of the local community.

Results

Through the project, the partnership was able to:

- **Plan and deliver services** together with service users, families, experts and communities, with the aim to improve the quality of life of people with intellectual disability;
- **Enable service beneficiaries and families** to be equal partners in the planning and delivery of services, enhancing their self-determination;
- Provide **opportunities for the development** and inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities;
- **Promote** the development, testing, nurturing and implementation of **innovative practices** in the field of training and learning;
- Promote activities that could **better prepare professionals** on equity, diversity and inclusion challenges in the training and learning environment.



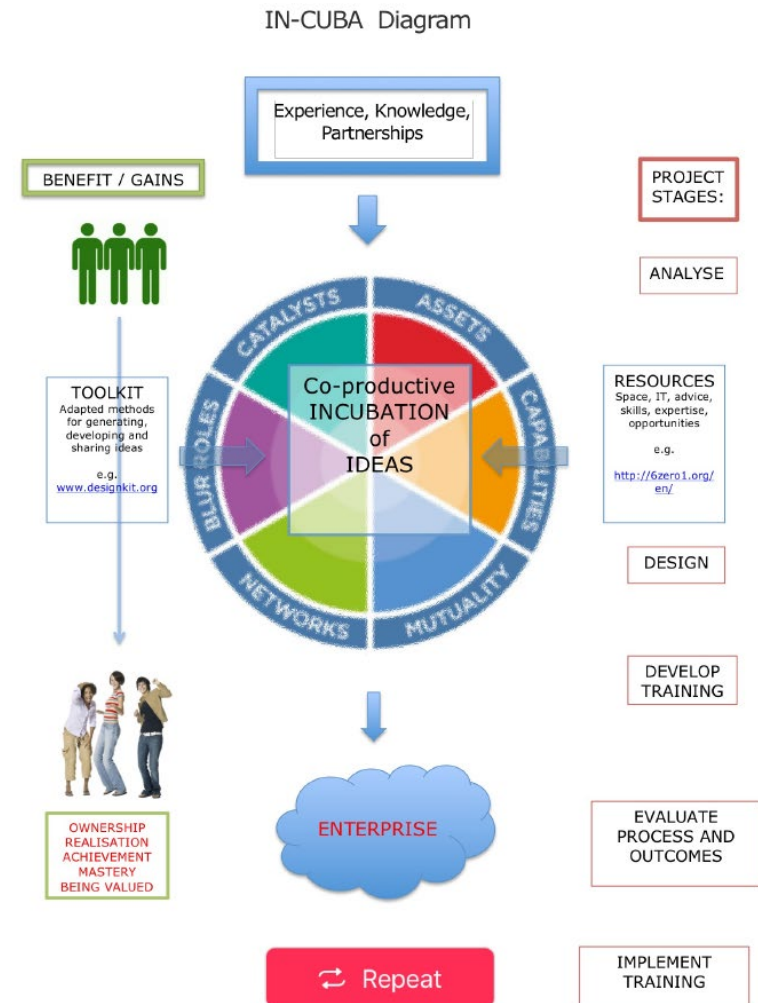
Impact

The results of this project were very positive, but its impact was even more impressive as all the service providers involved decided to **introduce co-production in their own statutes** as a way of organising and delivering services, on an equal ground with beneficiaries.

IN-CUBA

Incubators for CO-productive Enterprises and Social Inclusion. The Project wanted to go a little further and foster social inclusion by:

- **Developing a methodology based on co-production to incubate project and ideas**, and identify the necessary supports to transform them into enterprises;
- **Testing the results in dedicated pilot actions**;
- **Evaluating the impacts** on the quality of life of the users as well as the overall impacts of the project in terms of social inclusion.





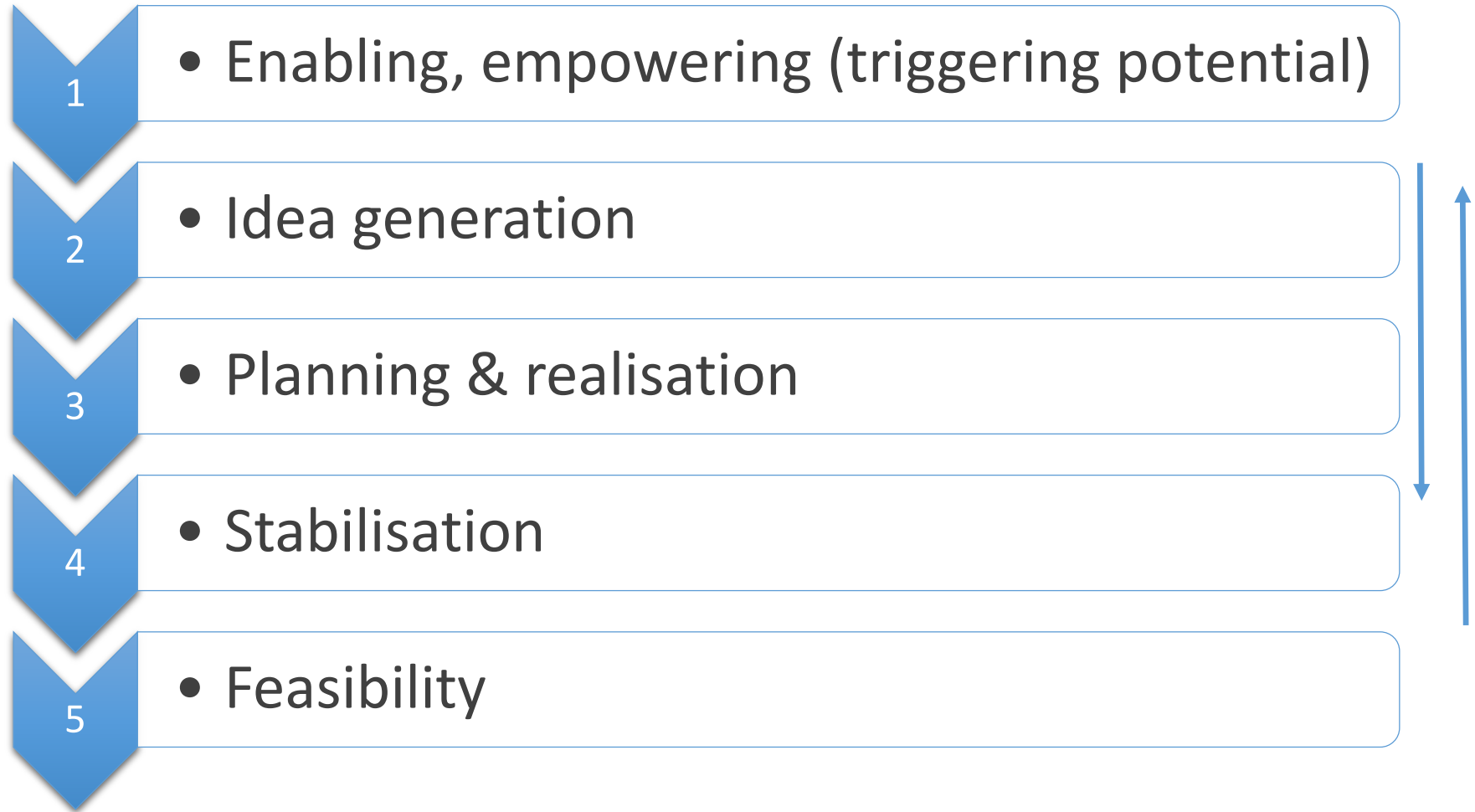
Enterprise

The concept of **enterprise** should be considered in its **widest possible meaning: something** that is **attempted or undertaken**, especially if it requires boldness or courage
(*Cambridge Dictionary*)





The IN-CUBA Methodology



Co-productive Focus Groups



**The key to develop all
the activities: planning,
testing, evaluating.**

...also online



Focus Groups

FGs were organised following guidelines elaborated by the partnership.

These were further adapted when it was not possible to meet (confinement) and partners decided to meet beneficiaries virtually via virtual focus-groups.



Result

These two projects showed how co-production has positive effects on the delivery of services (both projects had impacted on the way the service providers involved develop and organise their services) and ultimately on beneficiaries. Info and results of both action are available on the website co-production.eu

Deeper impact

The experience developed during ENABLE and INCUBA is extremely positive and went beyond what was initially foreseen, witnessing **a process of personal and professional growth** for the persons involved, and in particular **for beneficiaries and service providers**: while service providers discovered and adopted new innovative ways in organising and delivering services, service beneficiaries discovered new perspectives opportunities on a personal but also on a professional level (in Belgium through the project two beneficiaries set an IT assisting service).

What next

Our network, together with our partners, will keep working to promote and support co-production:

- as a way to **foster equal opportunities** and **social inclusion** for disadvantaged groups;
- as a way to favour **self-determination** and **active participation** of persons with intellectual disabilities and in general of all disadvantaged groups;
- as a process (via dedicated focus groups) to **create and make available new opportunities** for people with intellectual disability.

Thank You

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