



MORE



Multifunctional role of women as a key driver for rural development

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**MORE research study on multifunctionality of rural
women as a new paradigm for rural development**

An Analysis of Co-Creation and Community Engagement Approaches for Enhanced Rural Women's Role

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Co-creation concept

The concept of co-creation has become increasingly valuable over time. This concept is linked to processes of active citizen collaboration between different interest groups. Its objective is the search for strategies for the design of interventions in order to respond to social problems or needs (Jirón, 2015). To this end, they focus on the processes of creating goods and services. According to the different social realities that we found, co-creation allows strengthening the capacities of each of those involved in the project, consolidating a territorial governance driven by the social and cultural values of the territory and building appropriate channels to respond to the needs (Bocanegra et al, 2017).

This concept differs from others such as “co-production” in that the involvement of the different actors is not limited exclusively to the implementation of the actions but also in their design phase (Vaz-Álvarez et al, 2021). Accordingly, for a co-creation methodology to be of value, the following conditions must be met:

- The exchange of opinions and ideas in spaces for discussion is undertaken;
- The objective of the project must be shared by all those involved;
- Benefits are obtained from the target group;
- The promotion of Promoting social transformation and learning democratic values is made.

In terms of methodological aspects and concrete strategies from a co-creation perspective, the following points stand out (Riccò et al, 2021):

- The needs analysis is concentrated around a territory with specific characteristics and criteria established,
- The community and stakeholders should be involved in all phases of the project (e.g., participatory appraisal, design and implementation),
- Spaces and dynamics of exchange between members of the community is promoted.

Today, co-creation methodology has been taken into many sectors, including education and social innovation. We found numerous cases of co-creation projects in rural areas where one of the terms repeated in many of the examples analyzed is "Digital Hubs".

Some studies have investigated the advantages of technology in rural areas, enabling them to be better connected and to combat the challenges of being in isolated or remote areas (Kaur, 2019). The concept of a "Rural Digital Hub" does not have made a great impact in the literature; however, digital hubs are gaining more relevance in academia. Even so, the definition is not entirely clear since the definition of the term depends to a large extent on the characteristics of the "digital hub" to which we refer. At a general level, we can relate this concept to the idea of collaborative digital learning communities. We found some common characteristics among the different examples of "Rural Digital Hubs" analyzed that can help us to define these digital learning communities (Villar-Urbe, 2019):

- Physical or online spaces that offer services to a community,
- Different agents are involved (community, stakeholders, social entities, etc.),
- They are spaces for the exchange of information, debate, dialogue, ideas and opinions,
- They aim at the inclusion of vulnerable groups,
- They try to bridge the digital divide,
- Networking spaces are created.

Online and offline tools

Collaborative work requires individual and collective effort to achieve a common goal. There are online and offline techniques, dynamics and instruments that facilitate cooperative and collaborative work and that are common among the participants and members of the "Rural Digital Hubs". Below we list and define some of these tools (Hernández & Guárate, 2017):

- *Brainstorming*: a group technique to obtain ideas on a given topic, project or problem situation,
- *World Café*: a structured discussion technique that allows knowledge to be shared on a topic in small groups,
- *Role Play*: a role-playing technique that involves specific behaviors, either unconsciously or consciously, to be acted out in an adopted role,
- *Conceptual Mapping*: a technique used to summarize and visualize all the parts involved in an issue and their connections,
- *Storytelling*: communication technique (e.g., best practice, success story, etc.). This technique helps to generate greater engagement,

- *Problem tree*: technique for solving a problem or question. The different components of the issue are arranged vertically, progressively going into detail as the question to be solved progresses,
- *Phillips 66 and 22*: discussion in small groups to exchange and present their ideas on a specific part of a topic, an issue in order to draw conclusions. Once the initial discussion dynamic has been completed, the conclusions are presented to the collaborative working community. This can be done in small groups or in pairs.

Good Practices

Co-creation projects are understood as those whose activity is based on the principle of collaborative participation in order to respond to a problem or need. The following are some examples of co-creation projects in the rural context within the European framework:

Title of Co-creation	Mujer Rural Emprendedora/ Entrepreneur Rural Women
Keywords (meta tag)	Female entrepreneurship, gender gap, depopulation
Provided by	Human Smart LAB
Description	
<p>This project aims to promote female entrepreneurship by promoting ecosystems that allow for the creation of new opportunities in the rural world. With the intention of reducing the gender gap, promoting sustainability and reducing the depopulation of rural areas, this project raises, as a priority, intervening in the field of female entrepreneurship and technology in an attempt to achieve a more efficient, creative economic ecosystem and profitable, as well as inclusive and diverse within this context. Among the actions of the project, the aim is to create a meeting point for women entrepreneurs and business women with the aim of promoting women's business initiatives in rural areas through ICT, promoting digital development, encouraging the involvement of different sectors, and creating physical meeting spaces and virtual dialogues through the creation of rural HUBs. Among the actions of the project are: a diagnosis of female entrepreneurship and the digital gender gap in rural areas, definition of the needs and opportunities of women, creation of co-creation laboratories for the development of HUBs for women entrepreneurs in the delimited rural area, and pilot tests in the different HUBs established in the Andalusian territory.</p>	
Reference Link (if any)	https://humansmartlab.org/mujeremprededora/



Title of Co-creation	RURITAGE Heritage for Rural Regeneration
Keywords (meta tag)	Rural regeneration, social innovation, cultural heritage
Description	
<p>This project seeks to promote sustainable development through the improvement of the cultural and natural heritage of rural areas. The main objective is rural regeneration. For this, its actions are focused on the development and transfer of skills and abilities, in a community context where the different actors and local communities are involved in a participatory process involving heritage management. Likewise, new forms of collaboration are favored where the development of capacities and the mutual learning approach between the reference models are promoted. This four-year project identifies six systematic areas of innovation as paradigms for heritage-based regeneration strategies: pilgrimage, local foods, migration, arts and festivals, resilience, and landscape. The activities and actions that are carried out are aimed at obtaining as a result a set of tools and services for rural communities to promote regeneration strategies led by heritage. Among the results obtained throughout the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of an interactive web page that is built on the basis of an atlas of territories resulting from the interactions between people and the landscape (RURITAGE Atlas). • A descriptive set of good practices and innovative solutions for rural regeneration (RURITAGE Replicator Tool Box & My Cult-Rural Toolkit). • Wide selection of tools to promote change and collect responses from rural communities (RURITAGE Serious Games kit, DSS, Regeneration Guidelines). • Encourage the interaction of people with their rural landscape (RURITAGE Troubadour). 	
Reference Link (if any)	https://www.ruritage.eu/project/



Title of Co-creation	Rural 3.0 Service Learning for the Rural Development Service-Learning for the Rural Development (RURASL)
Keywords (meta tag)	Service-learning, social entrepreneurship, rural communities
Description	
<p>The objective of this project is to promote the development of skills and knowledge to promote changes in the rural context. Through innovative learning teachings such as the service-learning teaching methodology, it is intended to stimulate social entrepreneurship of university teaching staff and rural entities through transnational cooperation between higher education institutions and rural partners. Among the expected results of the project are: to obtain an analysis of the needs detected in the beneficiary group in the eight participating countries (Spain, Portugal, Croatia, Germany, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Austria, Italy), practical cases and good practices in cutting-edge technology of rural education in service-learning, a course in service-learning and social entrepreneurship, and meetings between individuals and groups with the aim of sharing and building knowledge based on their experiences (Hubs).</p>	 <p>RURAL 3.0 SERVICE LEARNING FOR THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT</p>
Reference Link (if any)	https://galsinma.org/otros-proyectos/rurasl-es



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