

**So you're ready to design your next product, service, or campaign. How do you get started with Co/Act?**

## Toolkit Guidance

The Co/Act Toolkit consists of seven modules, and each Co/Act module includes key concepts and terms, an activity (or activities), and tips and tricks that are key in developing user-centered products, services, or campaigns. Modules can be done over the course of a few days or over a period of months. While Co/Act gives you the flexibility to pick and choose your modules, later modules build on the insights from previous ones. You should engage with all modules in the following order for the most holistic experience.

### SUGGESTED MODULE ORDER

1. Ecosystem Mapping
2. Identifying a Target Audience
3. User Personas
4. User Research & Assumption Testing
5. Brainstorming & Ideation
6. Rapid Prototyping & Usability Testing
7. MVP Backlog

## Selecting Participants and Facilitators

For human-centered design approaches to be inclusive and their products to work for a wide audience, it is essential that they bring unique and different voices into conversation with one another. The most successful use of Co/Act will include 4–6 (no more than 8) individuals with different perspectives and expertise. Your participant group needs to be gender-balanced and include individuals of different sexual orientations and gender identities, races, age, disabilities, and ethnicities. Your Co/Act participants may include your IT expert, your community outreach and gender or inclusion expert, and the program manager expected to implement your idea. You can also decide the inclusion of organizational leadership and other higher-level stakeholders (such as donors) as core participants based on buy-in, organizational culture, or other relevant factors. Remember, as all modules build on previous work, you want to try to have the same group of people involved in all activities for this process.

As you go through the modules, you will note that some of the activities require a facilitator. While you can certainly hire an external facilitator and/or human-centered design expert to lead these activities, Co/Act has been designed to be used directly by you and your team. For those activities requiring a facilitator, you can designate a member of your team to play that role. It doesn't have to be the same person every time. The following resources on facilitation are useful to review as you create a safe and collaborative space:

- [The Identity Wheel exercise \(pg 55\)](#) by the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) can help you explore your own positionality and how it can affect your reach and relations to the other Co/Act participants.
- [Training for Change](#) has many tools and resources for online and in-person facilitation.
- [NDI's Men, Power, and Politics Guidance](#) has more information on gender-inclusive facilitation.

## Do No Harm

As you move through the Co/Act toolkit, remember the principle of Do No Harm (DNH). DNH is an analytical and practical approach that helps minimize risk and avoid unintended consequences. DNH does not remove risk, but rather helps identify any potential adverse effects.

Before you begin, consider an initial analysis or assessment to understand your context and any potential unintended harms. Think through how you might mitigate the risks, perhaps through alternative approaches, options, or partnerships. As you design and implement your product, service, or campaign, revisit and update your mitigation strategy to reflect emerging vulnerabilities and risks that may have not existed or were not as high risk initially. Work closely with the communities most impacted to ensure their needs and priorities are properly reflected in the final product and that the result does not cause additional harm or exacerbate existing vulnerabilities.

### Don't forget!

Successful products, services and campaigns often take multiple attempts to get right. Human-centered design is grounded in the idea of iteration, constantly adapting and improving based on user feedback. So as you go through the Co/Act Toolkit, remember that the first attempt of your product, service, or campaign will require revision. That is to be expected and all part of the process! As your idea comes to life, completing additional cycles of the Co/Act Toolkit will help you further refine your product, service, or campaign.

A couple final tips before you start:

- Document, document, document! As you go through the exercises, remember to write down key discussions and insights. If you like, you can designate a person to take notes for each activity (remember, it doesn't have to be the same person every time)
- Creativity can be hard. Each Co/Act module has specific suggestions you can use if you get stuck, but also remember to take breaks (stretching, food, music, etc) to keep the energy flowing.

**Ready to start? Turn to the Ecosystem Mapping module to start your Co/Act journey.**