Recommendations for practitioners and organisations

Co-production doesn't require large budgets or complex systems. It requires intentional practice.

1. Start with relationships

Trust is essential, especially where trauma is present:

- Use consistent facilitators where possible
- Allow time for trust to develop
- Do not rush participation to meet deadlines – safety and predictability matter.

2. Be clear and honest about purpose and influence

One of the biggest mistakes with co-production is over-promising the decision-making power that women will have, when certain courses of action have already been ruled out. Women should understand from the start:

- What the work is about
- What decisions are open to change as well as those that are not
- How their input will shape outcomes – transparency prevents frustration and builds trust.

3. Provide practical support to participate

Consider that removing barriers is part of sharing power. This includes:

- Accessible materials
- Easy-read summaries
- Travel reimbursement
- Flexible meeting formats
- Additional preparation time
- Advocacy support if requested.

4. Adapt communication

- Use clear, respectful language
- Avoid jargon and acronyms
- Check understanding without being patronising
- Don't dilute complex information, break it down and explain it accessibly.
- Make sure that the meaning of an easy read document is the same as the original document. Don't let things get lost in translation.

5. Share power intentionally

Professional roles carry real and perceived power. Co-production requires you to actively balance this by:

- Inviting women to co-chair discussions
- Sharing draft materials early
- Documenting how decisions were reached
- Showing clearly what changed because of lived experience input.

6. Close the loop

After engagement:

- Share what was agreed
- Explain what could not change and why
- Show how people's input influenced final outcomes.