

Mechanisms Reflective Identification Tool

This tool is intended to help implementation researchers and practitioners conceptualize the mechanisms, i.e., the processes or events through which implementation strategies operate to better select strategies that are matched to relevant determinants and the implementation context. We assume that work has already been done to identify determinants before this tool is used. Teams can use these questions to guide brainstorming and consensus building conversations at various stages of an implementation effort. This tool can help teams to build logic models and study protocols to select implementation strategies, propose candidate mechanisms, develop procedures to test and measure the mechanism, and to interpret and share results. The questions may be updated as the tool is refined, please check [Mechanisms Reflective Identification Tool \(MRIT\) | The F.A.S.T. Lab | Stanford Medicine](#) for the most up to date version for your future projects.

These questions are organized by steps; teams may wish to consider these questions in sections as they progress through a study or implementation effort, or use these as an early planning guide and return to sections or individual questions as needed.

Intervention/Practice to be implemented

Setting where implementation takes place

I. Selecting Implementation Strategies

1. Who should we involve in understanding our needs assessment findings regarding determinants and selecting strategies? Who has been missing?
2. What key determinants have been identified through existing research?
3. What key determinants emerged from a needs assessment?
4. *How* do these determinants impact implementation?
5. Which determinants are most important to target?
6. What needs to change? (E.g., individual cognitions, group dynamics, physical or social structures?)

7. *How* do they need to change? How might they be changed?
8. What are the strategies that might change them?
9. Is the strategy operationalized with enough specificity to allow for replication?

II. Developing a Logic Model

1. Who should be involved in developing logic models to ensure the best chances of identifying plausible mechanisms?
2. How does existing research inform thinking about mechanisms for the selected implementation strategies and context?
3. How do we think the implementation strategy will work?
4. What determinant does the strategy target?
5. How do we think the strategy will produce change? What informs these assumptions?
6. What proximal and distal outcomes do we expect?
7. Under what circumstances (for whom, in which contexts, with what combination of determinants) would we *not* expect to see these outcomes when using these implementation strategies?
8. What preconditions need to be in place for the mechanism to be activated?
9. What mediators or moderators should be accounted for?
10. What assumptions are we testing?
11. Are we missing any people, steps in the process, proximal outcomes or potential intermediate mechanisms?

III. Designing and implementing a Measurement Strategy

1. How can we measure the determinants, mechanisms, and outcomes?
2. What questions do we need to be asking, and when?
3. When do we expect to see targets change?
4. Are there precursors or signals we can detect early to indicate a change?

5. What approach to capturing these processes are most appropriate?
6. What existing data sources can we use? (E.g., EHR, routine monitoring and supervision data)
7. Do quantitative measures exist to capture the constructs and processes we assume we will see? Are the measures valid, reliable, and pragmatic? Are they appropriate for this context?
8. What qualitative or mixed methods approaches do we need to pursue?
9. Who do we need to survey, speak with, or observe, and how often to ensure effectiveness of this strategy?
10. What and how do we need to measure to determine if implementation is equitable?

IV. Interpreting

1. Who do we need to consult to interpret our findings?
2. What are the key trends or themes across our findings?
3. When did we detect desired changes?
4. Was there a dose-response relationship with the strategy and the target change?
5. What do the data tell us about the fit of the selected strategy with the target determinant?
6. How do the processes we examined interact to contribute to the outcomes we identified?
7. To what extent do the findings align with or deviate from existing theory and research?
8. What did we learn along the way to inform future data collection?
9. What did we learn that can inform existing theory?
10. When findings are unexpected, what theories did we develop (or can we consult) about why they occurred?
11. What did we miss?

V. Reporting

1. Is the strategy specified per reporting recommendations?

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2. Is enough information available for the replication of the methods?
3. Are measures available for other researchers to use?
4. Are null or negative outcomes reported to foster learning from these?
5. Who is the target audience for dissemination? What findings will be of greatest interest or reporting to them?