Institutionalization Tracker:

Assessing the integration of an education initiative into a system

Purpose

This tool helps measure the progress of efforts to institutionalize[1] or mainstream an initiative within a formal education system. Institutionalization is one approach to scaling impact in education, also referred to as "vertical scaling." It is a process by which an initiative[2]—or components of one—becomes embedded within the formal education system and is led and sustained by government actors. The ultimate goal is that the initiative becomes part of the government's policies, plans, procedures, budgets, and daily activities; ideally, the initiative no longer stands alone or is branded separately, but effectively "disappears" into the broader system, helping to ensure its long-term sustainability.

As such, this tool seeks to measure integration of an education initiative into the existing education system. It is intended as a dynamic planning tool for implementers, policymakers, and funders to identify and address areas that require additional attention in the process of vertical scaling.

The tool is organized by education system building blocks, each of which is broken down into specific elements. For each element, there is a set of criteria to consider when assigning a score, and a column for providing an explanation for the score selected. The score is based on a scale of 1–4, with 1 representing "low institutionalization," and 4 representing "full institutionalization." It is important to keep in mind that the amount of progress required to move from a score of 3 to 4 is typically much greater than to move from 1 to 2.

This tool measures the progress of institutionalization efforts related to one government agency or ministry, specifically the ministry of education (MoE). However, it is possible to use this tool for a different ministry if more appropriate, which should then be specified when detailing assumptions. The tool is designed to track progress toward *national-level* institutionalization, but in a decentralized system it can instead track institutionalization for the appropriate subnational education authorities. Notably, the tool is not meant to determine if an initiative *should* scale, or to assess the strength of an education system. The tool does not track other important aspects of scaling, such as impact and quality, and so ideally should be complemented with other scaling metrics. In particular, it is recommended that this tool should inform the creation and/or refinement of a broader scaling strategy and be used in conjunction with a resource such as the Center for Universal Education's (CUE) "Scaling Strategy Worksheet."[3]

Guidance

The tool should be completed through a discussion between a group of key stakeholders engaged in a scaling process who can make decisions and act on the tool's findings. Often this would be a small, core group of individuals from the implementing organization, but could also include representatives from the government ministry or department that is expected to implement the initiative at large scale (i.e., the adopting institution), the organization funding implementation/scaling, and/or an intermediary organization (i.e., a neutral third party assisting with the scaling process.) Ideally, the same group of stakeholders should use the tool at regular intervals (approximately every six months) to assess progress and determine actions to strengthen and advance institutionalization efforts. If this approach is not feasible in the given context, the tool can also be drafted by an individual and then shared with a broader group of stakeholders for discussion.

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1 IDENTIFY ASSUMPTIONS

Before filling out the tool, the group of stakeholders involved should specify their assumptions. Each subsequent time the tool is completed, stakeholders should revisit these assumptions to ensure they still hold true or update them if necessary.

- Is the end goal to institutionalize all components of the initiative within the government system, or only some components? If the latter, which components are being institutionalized, which are not, and why? In this case, the word "initiative" in the tool represents the components being institutionalized and not the "entire" initiative.

- What is the ultimate goal for institutionalization and delivery at scale? Defining what is meant by institutionalization will directly inform what score each element is assigned.

- What is the target ministry for institutionalization efforts and why? Is the tool focused on institutionalization at the national or subnational level?

2 ASSIGN SCORE FOR EACH INSTITUTIONAL ELEMENT

The tool (see following page) is completed row by row, ideally through discussion with key stakeholders. For each element, the group agrees on the current stage of institutionalization (scored 1–4) and includes a few sentences in the final column detailing why this score was selected. Some rows might need to be slightly adapted to better suit the realities of the local context or initiative of focus. Some elements might also not be relevant depending on the context and initiative of focus; in this case, do not assign a score and note in the final column "N/A." If the current level of institutionalization is less advanced than the situation described by a score of "1," select "1" and include further information in the final column.

3 ANALYZE RESULTS

The results of the tool can be displayed in tabular format, or as a "radar graph" or "spider graph," to visually depict institutionalization progress for each element in order to facilitate group discussion (see Annex I for an example). It can be useful to compare results if multiple rounds of data are available, but this is not essential, and a radar chart can be helpful even with only an initial set of data. The visual display of the tool's results should help identify areas where there has been progress and where progress is stalling or nascent.

4 DETERMINE PRIORITY ACTIONS

Key stakeholders should review and discuss the results to determine a small number of priority areas to further the institutionalization process (See "Determine priority actions" section on page 12 for key questions to consider). The goal should not necessarily be to achieve scores of "4" across every element, but rather to identify a few priority elements, strategize about how to make progress on these priorities, and outline concrete and feasible actions to undertake within the next six to 12 months in order to make progress toward greater institutionalization. These key actions and next steps should ideally feed into a broader scaling plan and strategy for the initiative, as mentioned above. It is possible that key decisionmakers with the authority to act on the tool's findings might not be the same stakeholders as those filling it out, in which case communicating and sharing the results to spur action is an essential component of this step.

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SYSTEM BUILDING BLOCK	ELEMENT	QUESTION	LOW INSTITUTIONALIZATION	EMERGING INSTITUTIONALIZATION	SIGNIFICANT INSTITUTIONALIZATION	FULL INSTITUTIONALIZATION	EXPLANATION OF SCORE SELECTED
			SCORE = 1	SCORE = 2	SCORE = 3	SCORE = 4	
Scaling strategy	Vision and pathway	**Is there a clear vision and pathway for scaling the initiative within the MoE?**	MoE is interested in scaling the initiative within the education system but has not yet articulated a clear vision or pathway.	MoE is developing a vision for scaling the initiative within the existing system and a pathway for achieving this vision.	MoE has laid out a vision and pathway for scaling the initiative within the existing system and communicated the vision and pathway to key decisionmakers.	MoE has clearly articulated a vision for scaling the initiative within the existing system and laid out a pathway, approach, and timeline for achieving this vision. Vision and pathway have been communicated at all pertinent levels of the MoE. A process is in place to continuously revisit and refine pathway(s) as needed.	
Governance	Leadership	**Are there ongoing leadership and coordination efforts for the initiative (at first by champion(s), and later by a structured group within the MoE)?**	There is at least one champion or focal person for the initiative in the MoE. Discussions are underway with the champion(s), who may endorse the initiative in internal conversations but is not yet a public advocate.	Champion(s) or focal person(s) speaks publicly about the initiative and undertake(s) advocacy efforts to broaden the support base within the MoE for initiative's expansion.	At least one senior level official within the MoE publicly endorses the initiative. Champion(s) or focal person(s) are undertaking advocacy efforts for integration of initiative into existing systems, including advocacy for funding required for national scale. Structures are being developed to help coordinate elements of the initiative across the education system.	MoE has assigned personnel to support the management/governance of the initiative within the appropriate section of the MoE that takes responsibility for its implementation and institutionalization. Structures are in place to coordinate elements of the initiative across the education system.	
	Policy	**Does the initiative align with existing policies, or where policies do not exist, has the MoE implemented necessary policy(ies) to support the initiative?**	Originating institution is undertaking discussions with MoE around alignment of initiative with existing policy(ies).	Originating institution and MoE are adapting initiative to align with relevant existing policies. Where they do not exist, policy(ies) that include the initiative are in the process of development.	Adaptations to the initiative to align with existing policies are being tested. Where they do not exist, policy(ies) that include the initiative are being tested or implemented at small scale.	Initiative fully aligns with existing policies and/or policies that include the initiative have been adopted and implemented.	
	Planning	**Has the MoE included the initiative in national and subnational plans or strategies?**	Discussions are underway with MoE to include the initiative in national or subnational plan(s) or strategy(ies).	Piloting of the initiative is included in subnational plan(s) or strategy(ies).	Initiative is included in subnational plan(s) or strategy(ies) where implemented OR in national education plan(s) or strategy(ies) but only for part of the country.	Initiative is included in national education plan(s) or strategy(ies).	

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Human resources	Personnel	**Are government teachers[7] delivering the initiative?**	Discussions are underway between MoE and originating institution about incorporating delivery of the initiative into activities/job descriptions for government teachers and the requirements to deliver the initiative at scale.	Teachers are authorized to deliver the initiative and are beginning to implement components of it with strong support from the originating institution.	Teachers deliver components of the initiative, with minimal support from the originating institution.	Teachers lead delivery of all aspects of the initiative. Job descriptions have been expanded to include activities related to the initiative (if necessary) and MoE sets clear expectations for teachers on requirements and anticipated outcomes.	
	Recruitment and retention	**Are there sufficient numbers of qualified teachers to deliver the initiative at scale?**	MoE has determined how many teachers are needed to deliver the initiative at scale and the qualifications required but does not yet have sufficient numbers.	MoE is planning and/or beginning to undertake a recruitment process to ensure a sufficient number of qualified teachers to deliver the initiative at scale.	Recruitment process is actively underway. MoE can provide many but not sufficient numbers of qualified teachers to deliver the initiative at scale.	MoE has sufficient numbers of qualified teachers to deliver the initiative at scale. These numbers are financed within the existing system without support from the originating institution, and there is a plan for sustaining the required numbers.	
	In-service training	**Does appropriate MoE in-service teacher training include the initiative?**	Originating institution delivers all training related to initiative. Discussions are underway to integrate initiative into appropriate MoE in-service training.	MoE is supporting the originating institution to deliver in-service training of the initiative but has not yet integrated training into the existing system.	Initiative is included in MoE in-service training, and MoE delivers training with support from the originating institution.	Initiative is fully integrated into MoE in-service training, and MoE delivers and finances training with no support from the originating institution.	
	Pre-service training	**Does appropriate MoE pre-service teacher training include the initiative?**	Originating institution delivers all training related to initiative. Discussions are underway to integrate initiative into appropriate MoE pre-service training.	MoE pilots integrating initiative into pre-service training, with support from the originating institution.	MoE pre-service training includes the initiative, and MoE delivers training with support from the originating institution.	Initiative is fully integrated into MoE pre-service training, and MoE delivers and finances training with no support from originating institution.	
	Supervision and support	**Is the initiative included in regular MoE supervision and support activities?**	Originating institution conducts all supervision and support activities related to initiative. Revisions to MoE's existing supervisory and support system and materials are underway to integrate initiative into existing activities.	MoE officials begin undertaking some supervision and support activities related to the initiative, with significant support from the originating institution.	MoE officials and originating institution jointly conduct supervision and support activities.	Supervision and support guidelines, processes, and tools related to the initiative are fully embedded and financed within MoE system. Supervision and support are funded and carried out by MoE with no support from originating institution.	

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Curriculum and materials	Curriculum/ standards	**Is the initiative incorporated into the MoE's existing curriculum/standards?**	Initiative is not incorporated into existing MoE curriculum/standards, but discussions are underway between MoE and originating institution about where and how to incorporate initiative into existing curriculum/ standards.	Policy is being drafted to integrate initiative into existing MoE curriculum/ standards.	MoE has developed a plan and timeline for integrating the initiative into existing curriculum/standards. Revisions to initiative's curriculum are being piloted, if relevant.	Initiative is fully integrated into official curriculum/ standards. MoE is fully responsible for updating curriculum.	
	Procurement and distribution	**Is the MoE creating, procuring, and distributing sufficient quantities and quality of the necessary teaching and learning materials within its normal logistics system?**	Originating institution is fully responsible for creation, procurement, and distribution of materials. Discussions are underway between MoE and originating institution about teaching and learning materials needed for the initiative.	MoE staff tasked with supporting the initiative have assessed normal procurement and distribution systems to identify where materials for the initiative can be integrated within existing systems and processes.	MoE staff use government funds to create, procure, and distribute materials via existing MoE systems. Originating institution plays a role in funding, procuring, and/or distributing materials.	Creation, procurement, and distribution of sufficient, quality teaching and learning materials related to the initiative are fully funded by government and included in MoE systems (forecasting, supply, distribution, and oversight).	
Information	Data management	**Is the initiative integrated into the MoE's Education Management Information System (EMIS) or alternative existing data management system?**	Originating institution conducts all data management related to the initiative. Discussions are underway about integrating the initiative into the MoE's EMIS or alternative existing data management system.	MoE plans to include the initiative in the MoE's EMIS or alternative existing data management system. MoE is working with the originating institution to define next steps and timeline for adapting and taking over data management activities.	MoE has included initiative in EMIS or an alternative existing data management system and begun actively collecting, managing, analyzing, storing, and using data with some support from the originating institution.	MoE independently conducts all data management activities related to the initiative with no support from originating institution; initiative is fully integrated into EMIS or alternative existing data management system.	
	Monitoring, evaluation, & learning (MEL)	**Has the MoE defined and implemented a strategy for monitoring and evaluating the initiative and using results to modify the initiative?**	Originating institution conducts all MEL related to the initiative. Discussions are underway with the MoE about developing a MEL strategy that can fit the MoE MEL structure.	MoE plans to integrate a MEL strategy related to the initiative into existing structures and is working with the originating institution on a plan and timeline for its implementation.	MoE has integrated a MEL strategy related to the initiative into its MEL structure and routinely uses results to feed back into the design and operations of the initiative, but MEL activities related to the initiative receive occasional support from the originating institution.	MoE regularly monitors and evaluates the activities and impacts of the initiative within existing structures and uses the results to feed back into designs and operations, without any support from the originating institution.	
	Learner assessment	**Is assessment of learning outcomes related to the initiative integrated into official MoE learner assessments?**	Originating institution conducts all assessments of learning outcomes related to the initiative. Discussions are underway about integrating assessment of learner performance relative to the initiative into existing assessments.	MoE has developed a plan and timeline to take ownership of assessment of learning outcomes related to the initiative within its existing system.	MoE conducts assessment of learning outcomes related to the initiative—with support from originating institution—but this has not yet been integrated into existing assessments.	Learning outcomes related to the initiative are assessed as part of official MoE learner assessments. Originating institution plays no role in learner assessment.	

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Finance	Finance	**Are all aspects of delivering the initiative financed by the government?**	Originating institution and/or external donors fund all costs associated with the initiative, but discussions are underway with MoE around government provision of direct or in-kind financing.	Originating institution and/or external donors fund expansion of the initiative. Government provides some support (direct and/or in-kind costs) and is developing a plan to reduce external financing to zero over time.	Government funds at least half of all costs associated with the initiative and is working to reduce external financing further over time but receives ongoing external support.	Government funds all costs related to the initiative, and initiative is included in government budget.	
Stakeholder engagement	Demand generation	**Is the MoE engaged in generating demand and buy-in for the initiative among potential beneficiaries and key stakeholders in the education ecosystem?**	Originating institution undertakes all demand-generation and engagement activities. Discussions are underway between MoE and originating institution about strategies for generating demand and buy-in among potential beneficiaries and key stakeholders.	Originating institution leads demand-generation and engagement activities, with informal support for the process from at least one MoE staff person, including by identifying ways to generate demand and build buy-in via MoE's existing channels.	Demand-generation and engagement activities are an official part of the MoE's workplan, and MoE leads activities related to demand-generation and buy-in among potential beneficiaries and key stakeholders with ongoing support from originating institution.	MoE leads all activities related to demand-generation and buy-in with no support from originating institution.	
	Opposition	**Is the MoE identifying and engaging with potential opponents to scaling and those who stand to lose from the initiative becoming widespread?**	MoE with support from originating institution is working to identify potential opponents to scaling and those who stand to lose from scaling the initiative.	MoE is developing a plan to engage with potential opponents to scaling and those who stand to lose, to better understand and address their concerns and/or reduce their opposition.	MoE is beginning to engage with potential opponents to scaling and those who stand to lose, to work constructively to address their concerns and/or reduce their opposition.	MoE is actively engaging with potential opponents and those who stand to lose, working to address their concerns and/or reduce their potential to be a disruptive force to scaling.	
Equity and inclusion	Equitable, inclusive access	**Has the MoE ensured marginalized and disadvantaged learners will have equitable access to the initiative?**	MoE has taken no steps to address the specific needs of marginalized and disadvantaged learners to ensure equitable access to the initiative. Discussions are underway between MoE and the originating institution about potential barriers to accessing the initiative for marginalized and disadvantaged learners.	MoE has undertaken analysis to identify the specific needs of marginalized and disadvantaged learners or has accepted analysis conducted by the originating institution but has not yet taken steps to ensure equitable access to the initiative.	MoE has developed a strategy to ensure equitable access to the initiative for marginalized and disadvantaged learners and has begun implementation in some pilot areas.	MoE has implemented a strategy at the national level to provide equitable access to the initiative for marginalized and disadvantaged learners, including providing additional human and/or financial resources, and has accountability mechanisms in place to monitor how these learners are served.	

Determine priority actions

| What are a few priority elements for next 6–12 months? | What are concrete actions required to progress for each element? | By when? | Who will lead? |

Annex I: Sample radar graph

One way to visually display the results of the Institutionalization Tracker is through a radar or spider graph. This type of chart can both support discussions about which elements of institutionalization to prioritize as action items moving forward and visually display progress over numerous uses of the tool. Below is an illustrative example of a radar graph showing two rounds of results.
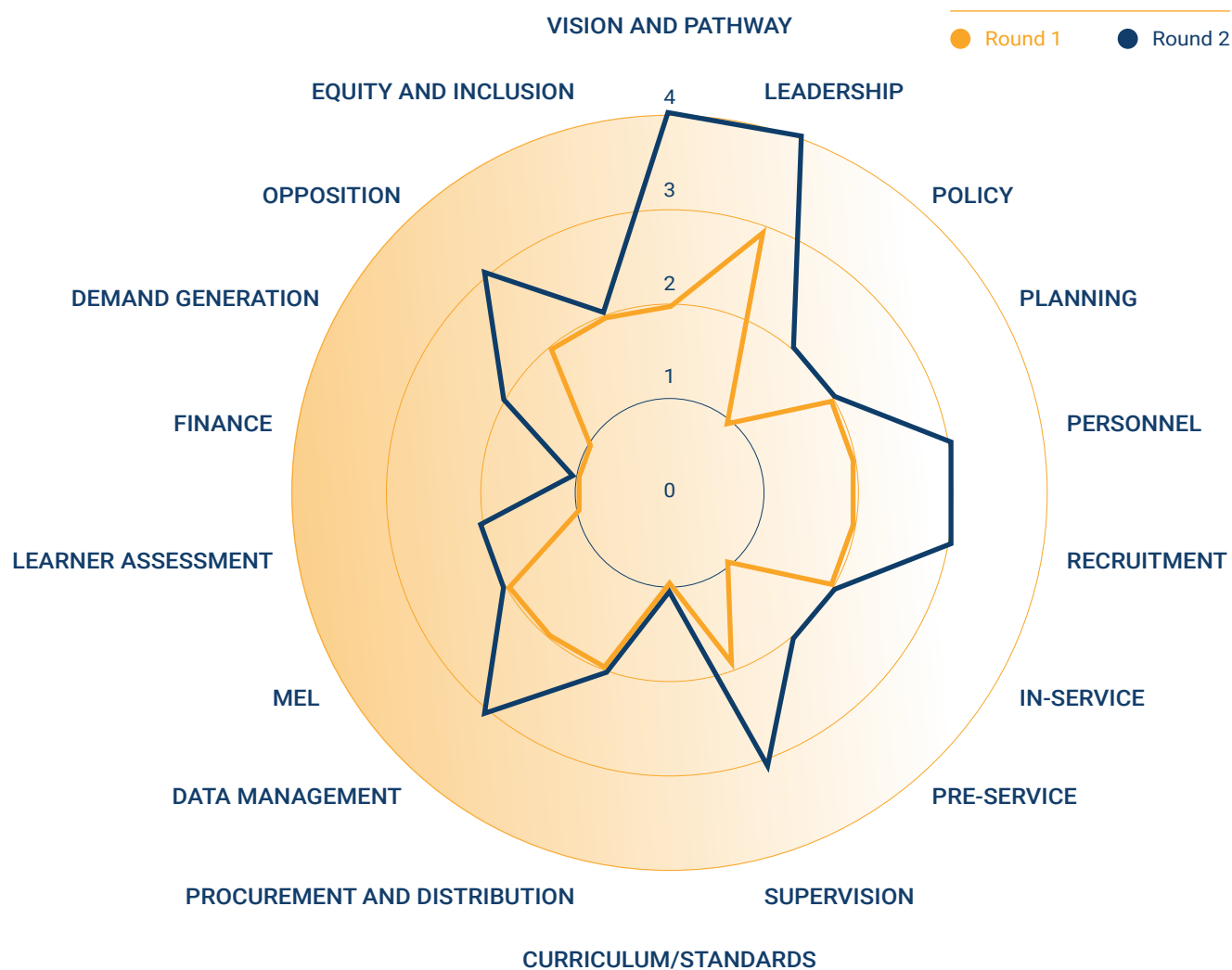
Endnotes

1. Expandnet's Scaling-Up Framework uses the following definition: "Institutionalization (policy, political, legal or vertical scaling up) is embedding the innovations in policies, structures, and operational guidelines." See: https://expandnet.net/scaling-up-framework-and-principles/

2. The term "initiative" in this tool can be used to refer to an education program, model, or policy in its entirety or specific components of the model or approach. It is important to specify what is meant by initiative for the individual group filling out the tool at the beginning of the process, so there is clarity throughout when selecting the scores.

3. Jenny Perlman Robinson, Molly Curtiss Wyss, and Patrick Hannahan, "Scaling Strategy Worksheet: Planning for Scale," (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, July 2021).

4. The originating institution develops and pilots the initial education initiative, whether that be a model, approach, prototype, etc. and the adopting institution takes up the model for large-scale implementation. Here "institution" can refer to a state or non-state organization, institution, agency, or department. See: Ruth Simmons and Jeremy Shiffman, "Scaling-up Reproductive Health Service Innovations: A Conceptual Framework," Paper prepared for the Bellagio Conference: *From Pilot Projects to Policies and Programs* (2003).

5. Adapted from *Tool 11: Assess Institutionalization of Initiative Package* in "Basic Toolkit for Systematic Scale up: A Companion to the Scale-up Coordinator's Guide for Supporting Country-led Efforts to Systematically Scale-up and Sustain Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health Initiatives," (June 2019). The guide and toolkit were produced as a collaboration between the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) flagship Maternal and Child Survival Program (MCSP) and the ExpandNet global network, https://www.mcsprogram.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Basic-Toolkit-for-Systematic-Scale-Up.pdf.

6. http://saber.worldbank.org/index.cfm.

7. Marc Tucker, "9 Building Blocks for a World-Class Education System," (Washington, DC: National Center on Education and the Economy, 2016).

8. In this tool, CUE uses the term teacher to include teachers, as well as other individuals tasked with delivering an education initiative, such as teacher trainers, coaches, mentors, rural facilitators, and other types of educators. The personnel required can be specified in the assumptions table at the start of using the tool.

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