Foundations of Scaling for Impact in Education

Welcome!

This online course is focused on introducing foundational concepts for scaling impact in education systems. We are delighted you are joining this course and engaging in the important work of critically thinking about what it means to scale impact in education.

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About the Course

Learning Principles



Spiral curriculum



Applied learning



Teamwork



Self-paced

Each module builds on the previous one, so it is recommended to take them in order. Other than that, it is up to you how and when to take the course. You can complete all of the material in a few days, or spread it out over a few months.

Welcome to the Scaling Foundations Course

We are delighted that you are joining this course and engaging in the important work of thinking critically about what it means to scale impact in education ecosystems.

Welcome!

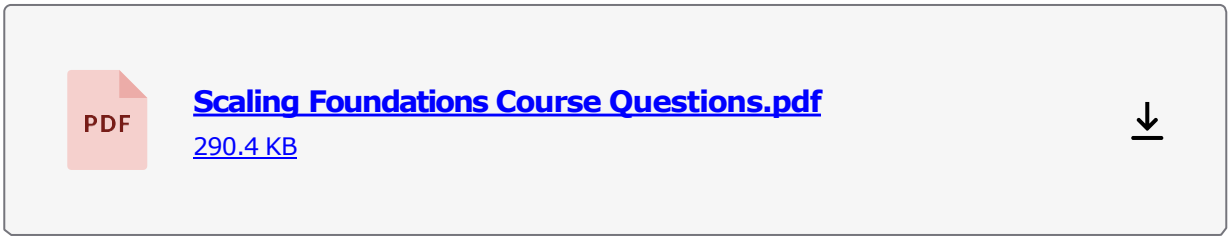


Video Transcript: Hi there. Welcome to the Scaling Foundations course. I'm Brad Olson, and I'm a senior fellow at the Center for Universal Education in the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC. And I lead the Millions Learning project from which this course comes. In the Millions Learning project, we've been studying and supporting scaling the impact of education innovations around the world for a decade now. And based on this learning that's come from our Real-time Scaling Labs, from our ROSIE work as part of the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange, from our own empirical learnings and our reflection, we've built all of that work into this course, and we're really excited about this course. It's meant to be interactive. It's meant to be concrete. It's meant to be accessible, and it's really designed to help you think about and advance your own scaling work in education. Whether you're taking this course by yourself or with a group, we hope that it contributes to your knowledge and it helps your confidence and your capacity around what it takes to scale promising innovations in education around the world, and we're just really happy that you'll be a part of this. Thank you very much.

This online course is focused on introducing **foundational concepts for scaling impact and applying them to your own work**. It includes key scaling research, videos, scaling stories, activities, reflection spaces, mini case studies, assessments, and much more.

This is not a theoretical course—it is meant to be practical and applicable to your own work in education. Throughout the course, you will have a chance to apply what you are learning through activities, tools, scalability assessments, and short-answer reflections.

Download the PDF below in order to complete the course activities, tools, scalability assessments, and short-answer reflections.



Make sure to download PDF copies of other tools you encounter throughout the course to complete on your own (you will see a download button on screen). Your reflections can inform your discussions with stakeholders, and will come in handy at the end of the course when you start pulling everything you have learned together into a draft scaling strategy.

Scaling cannot be done alone. While you can complete this course independently, we highly recommend that you take what you are learning back to share and discuss with your scaling partners and stakeholders. At the end of each module, there are some key discussion questions summarizing big ideas from the module that you can use to guide these discussions.

Course Map

How to use this course (this module)

Welcome, how to use the course, learning principles, where the information in this course comes from, glossary of key scaling terms

What is scaling for impact?

Why focus on scaling, what is scaling for impact (and what it is not), phases of scaling, and key principles for scaling

Scaling goals and optimal scale

Determining what creates impact, identifying what is core and what can be adapted, optimal scale, and developing scaling goals

Identifying pathways to scale

Understanding the relationship between scaling goals and pathways, categories of scaling pathways, brainstorming and selecting pathways

Scaling with people and partners

Scaling as a collaborative process, developing partnerships, dealing with opposition, the role of champions in scaling, stakeholder mapping

Engaging the broader environment in scaling

Levels of the ecosystem, different environmental factors to consider when scaling, responding to changes in the environment, windows of opportunity, and knowing when to pause or stop scaling

Using research and evidence to inform scaling

Tiers of scaling research, collaborative scaling research models, involving stakeholders in research and decisionmaking

Costing and financing for sustainable scale

Differentiating between costing and financing, costing terms and methods, key financing factors, communicating about costs and financing with partners

Assessing scalability and drafting a scaling strategy

Scalability assessment, developing a scaling strategy, sharing back what you have learned with your scaling partners, citations, further learning

How to navigate through the course



How much time will it take to complete this course?

There are 8 modules in this course. Each module takes between 60□90 minutes and builds on the previous one, so it is recommended to take them in order. Other than that, it is up to you to decide how and when to take the course. You can complete all of the material in a few days or spread it out over a few weeks.



How do I share what Iam learning with my team and scaling partners?

Each module ends with a summary page that includes a set of questions to discuss with your team members. These questions are similar to the questions you will have answered as you worked through the module. It is recommended that you bring your own responses from the course to discussions with your team, along with the discussion questions, so that you can workshop and refine your answers collectively.

Learning principles and approaches

We offer the following learning principles to keep in mind as you engage with the modules. Knowing that this course adheres to these principles should maximize what you take away from the content (and help you reflect on your own learning process, as well).



Spiral Curriculum

- A spiral curriculum means that we will introduce concepts and principles multiple times throughout the course. The first time they are introduced, you might not fully understand them or how to apply them, but we will consider them with greater depth each time they come up.

- Each time you return to a concept or principle, it will mean more to you.



Reflect and apply ideas to your own work

- To help capture your developing thoughts on scaling, reflection sections in each module include open-ended questions for you to think about in relation to your intervention.
- No evaluation is attached to them; they are intended to fuel your discovery and your approach to new understandings.
- The answers you provide will feed into the final exercise in the course, so we encourage you to engage thoughtfully as you answer each question to see how your thinking evolves.



Discuss with Your Team

- Scaling is a collective endeavor and key decisions should be made collaboratively, rather than by one individual.
- Our hope is that the course contents introduce you to key concepts that you then take and discuss further with team members and other stakeholders involved in scaling.
- Considering different opinions critically and their relationship to each other is fundamental to our view of learning.



Learn at Your Own Pace

- Determine your own pace as you engage in reflecting on the content in the course and completing reading, listening, and writing activities.
- Some activities are marked as "Optional." These activities are opportunities for additional learning.

How is learning as an adult different?



Video Transcript: Adult learning is different from children's learning. Unlike a child, you already have at least two decades of experience in formal education on which to draw, and so you are not necessarily forming new knowledge as much as you're transforming what you already know. A child is learning things for the first time. An adult is learning things on top of what they already know. Sometimes this means that this course is going to ask that you engage in concepts that you might already know, but maybe you know them a little bit differently, or maybe you know them with different terminology. Maybe it's important for this new learning to give you an opportunity to interrogate what you think you know and adjust your existing knowledge in conjunction with the new learning. Or maybe in other cases, this actually is new learning and you're learning it for the first time. Regardless, this is an exciting way for you to engage with new ideas around scaling and research and education improvement.

The research behind this course

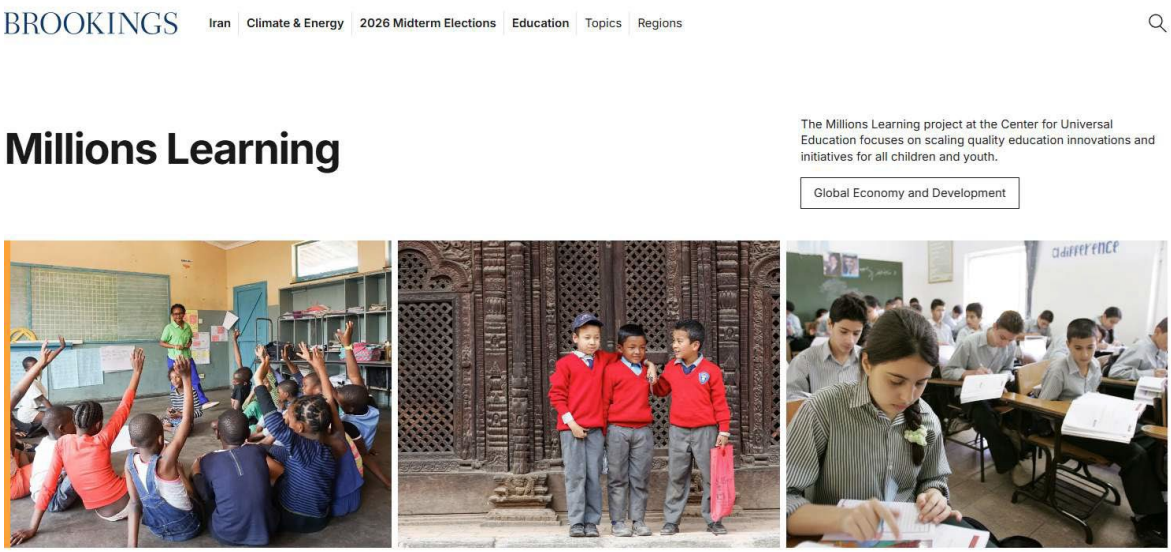
Where does the information in this course come from?

Unless otherwise noted, the information used in this course comes directly from research conducted by the Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution as part of the Millions Learning project. This includes the Real-Time Scaling Labs and two phases of the Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education ROSIE project (2021-2027) part of the Global Partnership for Education's Knowledge and Innovation Exchange.

This information draws predominantly from open access materials (including reports, blogs, briefs, and tools) published on the Brookings website between 2016 and 2025, a full list of which is included in the references page. Some of the videos used in the course were recorded at private webinars or events hosted by the Millions Learning team, but the information included in the videos also draws on the publicly released materials. The stories, examples, and tools included here

feature Brookings Senior Fellows and staff engaged in the project as well as Millions Learning project partners and collaborators from around the world.

Material drawn from other sources is cited, and links are included to the full work. For more information on the sources, you can go to the Millions Learning webpage or the references page at the end of this course.



How was this course developed?

This course was initially developed by Brad Olsen, Molly Curtiss Wyss, Maya Elliott, and Mónica Rodríguez as part of the [GPE KIX Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education](#) ROSIE project in 2024. ROSIE brings together dozens of researchers and practitioners to better understand the process of scaling impact in real time, generate actionable evidence,

support participants in their scaling/research, provide recommendations for scaling in global education, and strengthen links between research and practice. In 2021, 15 KIX applied research project teams joined ROSIE, working alongside the CUE team to think about, study, and deepen the impact of their work. In 2024, the ROSIE community was expanded to include 43 KIX teams working in 47 countries.

This course was pilot tested with 116 KIX Applied Research project participants in 2024, who shared their insights, feedback, and recommendations. This feedback directly informed revisions of the course and the development of a second version as a public good by Molly Curtiss Wyss, Maya Elliott, Eden Foster, and Brad Olsen in 2026.

Acknowledgements

This course was created by Maya Elliott, Molly Curtiss Wyss, and Brad Olsen and developed from research conducted by the Millions Learning team at the Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution between 2016 and 2026. This team included the following:

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- Rohan Carter-Rau, Research Analyst
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- Maya Elliott, Senior Project Manager and Research Analyst
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- Brad Olsen, Senior Fellow
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- Jenny Perlman Robinson, Nonresident Senior Fellow
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Glossary of key scaling terms

Adaptation

A modification, adjustment, or new approach initiated in response to a change in the environment, new information, useful feedback, or other factors. Continuous reflection and adaptation are key aspects of scaling.

Broader environment

Political, institutional, economic, social, cultural, and other factors that can affect how scaling takes place.

Capacity for scaling

An organization's ability to carry out new responsibilities or operations as scaling progresses and scaling pathways evolve. This includes an organization's structure, human resources, culture, expertise, and time. It also often refers to an organization's ability to build out the skills of other partners as scaling progresses.

Champions

Dedicated individuals willing to use their resources, connections, time, and expertise to support scaling—often in service of a broader goal, such as improving the education system or increasing attention to a particular subpopulation or topic. Champions can come from government, civil society, schools, local communities, or any other stakeholder groups involved in scaling.

Contextualization

Adaptation of an education innovation or approach to fit the particulars of a specific location, population, cultural history, or moment in time.

Costing

A methodology used to identify the cost of a new intervention or program, the cost to increase coverage, or the cost of incorporating a change in the design of an existing service. Costing leads to a more precise understanding of the financial resource requirements and implications of scaling the innovation, which makes it a valuable input to policy development, planning, prioritization, and budgeting processes. Costing can also support evidence-based advocacy by demonstrating the costs of different scenarios or approaches. (UNICEF Public Finance Toolkit, 2021).

Equity

Refers to fairness and justice and is distinguished from equality. Whereas "equality" means providing the same to all, "equity" means recognizing that we do not all start from the same place, and that acknowledgement of, and adjustments to, the imbalances are required. Equity is an ongoing process that requires identifying and overcoming intentional and unintentional barriers arising from bias or systemic structures. (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2023)

Financing

The act of obtaining or furnishing money or capital for a program or initiative.

Innovation

A program, idea, change, or practice that is new to a particular context (although it may be familiar elsewhere). It may come from the discovery of something brand new or as an adaptation or improvement to something that already exists. While we use the term "innovation" throughout the course, scaling impact can also be focused on initiatives, policies, approaches, and even ideas.

Institutionalization

The process by which a government gradually takes over the delivery and financing of an innovation and incorporates the innovation model (or elements of it) into the everyday functioning of the system.

Optimal scale

Defines scaling success not as continuous expansion or "bigger is always better," but rather as that point where magnitude, variety, sustainability, and equity of impacts are balanced in a way that maximizes the impact of the innovation. (McLean and Gargani, 2019, pg.83).

Partnerships

Long-term relationships among organizations, institutions, groups, and other actors who are united around and willing to work toward a shared goal.

Research

The systematic study of a phenomenon or hypothesis through observation and evidence in order to generate new knowledge or improved understanding about the topic. This process typically includes developing research questions, systematically gathering relevant quantitative and/or qualitative data, analyzing and making meaning of the data, and sharing results of the investigation.

Research *about* scaling

Research focused on collecting and using data to study, understand, and share with others "what works" in the scaling process IN GENERAL. It may draw lessons from a particular scaling experience, but its findings are meant to be useful beyond that specific case.

Research *for* scaling

Research focused on supporting the successful scaling of one specific innovation in a particular context. Data and analysis are conducted for the purpose of answering questions necessary to inform and advance the scaling in THIS PARTICULAR INSTANCE.

Resources

Both financial and non-financial supplies and capacities available for supporting the scaling effort.

Scalability

The ease or viability of scaling the impact of an education innovation in a particular context.

Scaling capacity

The organizational or institutional strength and ability to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of activities related to innovation. Also called *organizational scaling*.

Scaling goal

A concrete, measurable, long-term vision of impact at scale. It articulates the impact one hopes to achieve, when it will be achieved, and how one will get there. It can be useful to put forward one long-term scaling goal (sometimes called a "North Star Vision") and a series of intermediate goals on the way towards that long-term vision.

Scaling for impact

This course defines "scaling" as a range of approaches that expand and deepen IMPACT, leading to lasting improvements in people's lives. Scaling is therefore not just a goal but also a process of embedding an effective idea, approach, or intervention into widespread practice—ultimately creating a new normal sustained by the broader system.

Scaling pathways

The method for making progress toward a predetermined scaling goal—the "how" of scaling. Different pathways may be used to get to the same scaling goal, and often multiple pathways are pursued simultaneously.

Scaling phases

Breaking down the long-term scaling process into smaller, different stages—starting with the initial scoping of the problem and identifying potential innovations to address the problem, going all the way to full, optimal, sustainable scale. Each phase (or stage) entails different types of activities, demands different emphases, and requires different data and information.

Scaling strategy

A clear, measurable, and time-bound scaling goal and a high-level plan to achieve it and sustain its impact. A scaling strategy should guide ongoing scaling efforts but also be flexible enough to be regularly adapted based on new insights or data and changes in the broader environment.

Systems transformation

Restructuring education in a location so that it operates differently and better. Systems transformation is based on the principles that: education is an ecosystem of many parts (including both 'soft' systems and 'hard' systems) interacting with each other in interdependent, organic ways; a system's energy is located in the inter-relationships among parts (not in the parts themselves); and improving the system requires differently aligning, structuring, attaching, or otherwise engaging how the parts operate with each other.

Let's get started!



BEGIN MODULE 1

What is scaling for impact?



START MODULE

Module 1 overview

What is "scaling for impact"?

Too often, teams with a promising education initiative jump into scaling without thinking about what scaling for impact really means. Research shows that establishing a shared understanding of scaling is an essential first step for any scaling work. This module focuses on why it is important to focus on scaling for impact, what scaling for impact is (and isn't!), different phases of scaling, and some key principles to guide how you are thinking about scaling in your own work.

Learning objectives

1. Define scaling for impact
2. Understand common misconceptions about scaling
3. Consider ways you may already be thinking about "scaling for impact"
4. Explore different phases of scaling
5. Reflect on five key scaling principles

Key Terms

- **Scaling:** The Center for Universal Education (CUE) at the Brookings Institution defines "scaling" as a range of approaches that expand and deepen impact, leading to lasting improvements in people's lives. Scaling is therefore not just a goal but also a process of embedding an effective idea, approach, or intervention into widespread practice—ultimately creating a new normal sustained by the broader system.

- **Scaling phases:** Ways to break down the long-term scaling process into different stages, starting with the initial scoping of the problem and identifying potential innovations to address it, and going all the way to full, optimal, sustainable scale. Each phase entails different types of activities, demands different emphases, and requires different data and information.

- **Innovation:** We use the term "innovation" in this course as the focus of what is being scaled. An innovation can be a program, idea, or practice that is new to a particular context (although it may be familiar elsewhere). However, scaling impact can also be focused on formal initiatives, policies, and approaches.

Module Outline

- How do you define scaling?
- What does scaling mean?
- What does scaling for impact mean in education?
- Scaling is also...
- Phases of scaling
- Key principles for scaling
- Why focus on scaling?
- Translating scaling
- Scaling is not...
- How are you already engaging in scaling?
- What phase of scaling is your innovation in?
- How would you explain "scaling for impact" to others?

How do you define scaling?

If you have not already done so, download the PDF document below so you can complete the accompanying course activities that follow.

PDF

Scaling Foundations Course Questions.pdf
290.4 KB

What do you think about when you hear "scaling"? How do you define "scaling"?

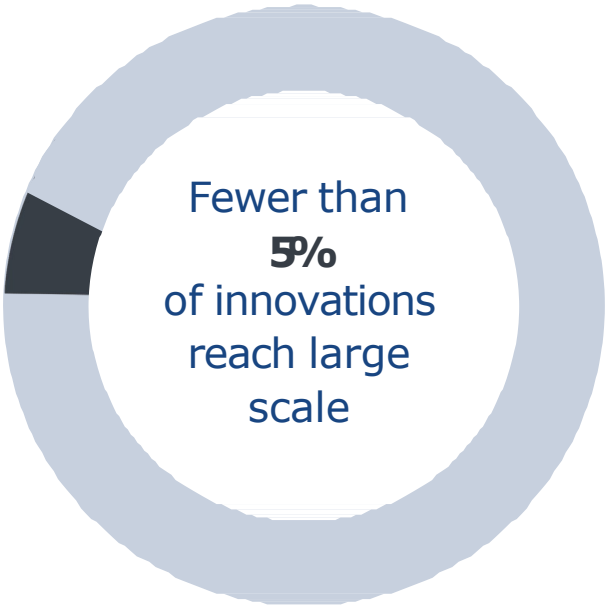
Take 2-3 minutes to reflect on this question and write your answer in the accompanying PDF document. This does not need to be perfect language—the idea is just to write down some reflections.

I think...

Why focus on scaling?



Many innovations and reforms around the world show strong results at small scale. When these new ideas, ways of working, or tools demonstrate that they can improve teaching and learning outcomes, we naturally want to expand them to reach more people and places over longer time horizons. However, research shows that very few—fewer than 5%—of innovations will ever reach large scale (Cooley and Howard, 2019).



The modern landscape of educational improvement is littered with short-term projects that succeeded for a short time only to later fade away, isolated efforts that never crossed into broad adoption, or specialized policy programs that never took hold.

Determining how to scale education that delivers quality learning experiences and outcomes for children is a key concern for governments and civil society groups. Questions of what policies are effective, how to allocate resources, and what specialized programs merit long-term investment are being debated in the halls of ministries of education across the globe every day. But when it comes to improving learning, we know much more about what is working in a particular location than about how to expand, replicate, or deepen those results to reach the millions of children who need them.

Why such a low success rate?

Expanding an innovation to new places, more people, and different modes of delivery is not as simple as "copy and paste." And much of what makes a scaling process successful lies outside of the innovation model itself and sometimes even beyond the direct control of implementers.

Scaling is not simple. It is a complex, long-term, non-linear process that requires experimentation (and some failure along the way), openness to change, collaboration, patience, and creative thinking. In the end, it is not enough to just have a great innovation. In order to pursue scaling, we need to be clear about how we are defining the process, what goal we seek, and what strategy we will use to get there.

Scaling and systems transformation

Brad Olsen talks about the relationship between scaling and systems transformation.



Audio transcript: Scaling is incredibly important because while there are many attempts to address low learning outcomes around the world, many of these efforts abide by a short-term project mindset. They have limited funding. There's a focus on proof-of-concept pilots. And as a result, many promising innovations suddenly end or fade away or become pilots to nowhere. As a result, scaling has become a popular way to embed a new practice or program into the daily lives of an education location so that it becomes the new normal and is sustained. And so essentially, we think about scaling in that way. What does it mean to carefully and thoughtfully embed a promising innovation so that it lasts the test of time? Cynthia Coburn suggests that scaling is not replication but spreading ownership. Paul Carlisle writes that he hopes we've moved past mere transfer, where you cut and paste an innovation into a new location, and that maybe we've even moved past the notion of translation, where we might offer surface translations of an innovation for a new location. But instead, we can see scaling as actual transformation. This is a way in which a promising innovation is brought to a location and the end users, the families, the teachers, the children, the youth, are able to engage in and transform the innovation as they embed it into their systems and their daily life at the same time that the innovation transforms for the better the work and the system in the location. This kind of mutual adaptation is the goal for scaling.

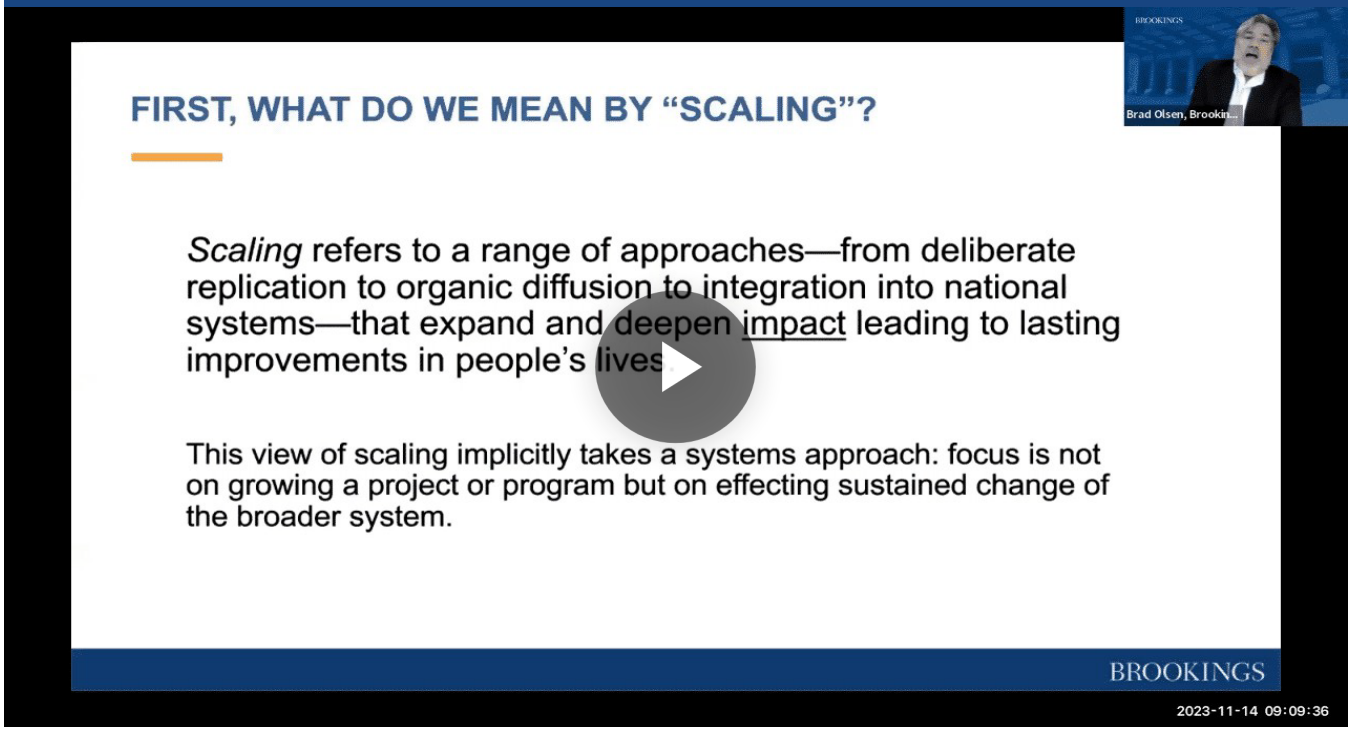
What does scaling for impact mean?

How scaling is defined influences how people develop their scaling strategies, how programs and policies are designed and implemented, how donors fund the scaling interventions, and how researchers study the work. There is no single accepted definition of scaling used across sectors and actors. Rather, the term "scaling" has been used in many different ways, describing a variety of both processes (for example, expansion, replication, spread, explosion) and outcomes (for instance, expanding to new countries or institutionalizing practices).

This course defines scaling as expanding, deepening, and sustaining the impact of a policy, program, practice, or idea. Scaling is therefore not just a goal but also a process of embedding an effective idea, approach, or intervention into widespread practice—ultimately creating a new normal sustained by the broader system.

For example, one education innovation might be the idea that providing students with breakfast at school will improve their ability to focus and engage in learning. This idea is the "innovation." The work of designing, implementing, and embedding a school breakfast program in schools is the work of "scaling." The continuous work of assessing and expanding the impact of the program on students so it makes a lasting difference is "scaling for impact."

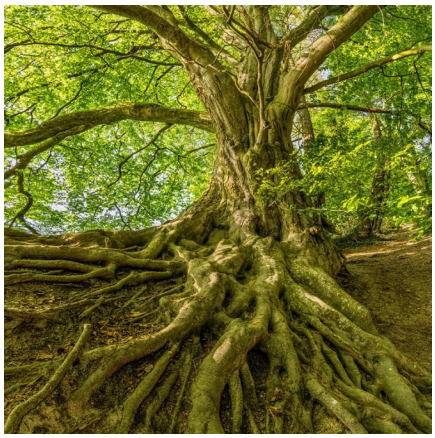
See the video transcript below.



Video transcript: When we talk about scaling, we're talking about a range of approaches. There are multiple ways to scale an innovation, and we're really focused on scaling impact, not scaling the innovation itself. Scaling the innovation, in other words, increasing the reach or the size of the innovation, might be a wonderful means to the end of scaling impact, but the focus always needs to be on the impact, the results of the innovation that can actually have an effect on the people in the location. And so, if the focus isn't always on the impact, if it ends up being shifted to scaling the innovation, then we might lose sight of what really matters. It's not the innovation that matters as an end goal. In some ways, scaling the innovation is almost like the delivery device for scaling impact. In thinking about it this way, ROSIE takes a systems approach. We understand that growing a project or program isn't the goal but creating a way so that the impact of the program is embedded inside the whole system. That raises the question, what's an education innovation? We think of an innovation as an idea or approach or a program or a technology, something that is able to bring change. It doesn't have to be new to the world. Instead, it can be new to the setting. We might think about small innovations or micro innovations, medium size, and macro ones. Micro innovations are those kinds of innovations typically focused on problems of practice in the classroom or the learning setting, maybe a digital device for literacy, maybe a new way of teaching algebra. Mid-size innovations are a little bit broader or deeper in scope and reach. For example, maybe offering free breakfast to all students in a particular location. And macro innovations are bold and/or big, maybe switching an entire location to multi-age classrooms or offering free secondary education in a whole country.

Remember! Lasting impact—not just size or scope—is the goal.





Optional - Other definitions of scaling

This course is focused on scaling impact in education, but scaling impact is a concept that can and has been applied to other social sectors. While we use the definition of scaling for impact above, it is worth noting that there are many different definitions and understandings of scaling. A few of these are shared below to showcase the diversity of views about what scaling means.

- CGIAR: "Intentional investments, strategies, and processes aimed at increasing innovation readiness and/or innovation use to contribute to positive impacts at scale."
- ExpandNet: "Deliberate efforts to increase the impact of innovations successfully tested in pilot or experimental projects so as to benefit more people and to foster policy and program development on a lasting basis."
- Hartmann and Linn (adapted from the World Bank 2005)"Scaling up means expanding, adapting, and sustaining successful policies, programs, or projects in different places and over time to reach a greater number of people."
- Humanitarian Innovation Fund: "Building on demonstrated successes to ensure that solutions reach their maximum potential, have the greatest possible impact, and lead to widespread change."

- International Institute of Rural Reconstruction: "Scaling up brings more quality benefits to more people over a wider geographical area, more quickly, more equitably, and more lastingly."
- Scaling Up Community of Practice: "Achieving sustainable development impact at scale."
- Spring Impact: "Scaling is about increasing social impact to better match the size of the problems that exist in society. This way, if your team is scaling a solution, you are dramatically expanding its impact in a way that is operationally and financially sustainable."



Optional: Translating scaling

"Scaling" is a concept that is challenging to translate into other languages. Below are some examples of how scaling has been translated across the globe. This list is neither exhaustive nor definitive—you may speak one of these languages yourself but translate the concept differently. Our purpose here is simply to illustrate the complexities of translating "scaling" and highlight the various nuances of non-English terms used to describe scaling impact.



French - Français

French has multiple terms for different aspects of scaling:

Généraliser – something becoming widespread or widely used, carrying a sense of applying a practice or providing access to a service for a whole population.

Étendre – to spread, roll out, extend, or enlarge, carrying a sense of expanding reach, size, and scope (often including a geographical implication).

Vulgariser – to popularize or make accessible to large numbers of people, carrying a sense of communication, public education, or widespread dissemination.

Mise à l'échelle – scaling up or expanding an idea tested through experimentation (often used as a more formal or scientific term).

Augmenter – to increase, improve, or enhance.

Spanish - Español

"Scaling" is an English concept that is often translated directly into Spanish as the verb ***escalar*** or the noun ***escalamiento***. However, because these words can sound literal or technical, teams frequently use a variety of synonyms to describe different aspects of the process:

Amplificar – to amplify; to enlarge something in breadth, scope, or intensity.

Crecer – to grow; to increase, usually in size, reach, or capacity.

Desarrollar – to develop; to expand and mature something over time.

Adoptar – to adopt; to take up or implement something within a new system.

Escalamiento – a direct translation of the English word "scaling." While it literally refers to the physical action of climbing or moving up through steps, it is widely used in development contexts to mean expanding an initiative.

Sostenibilidad – sustainability; the capacity of an innovation to be maintained over time without depleting resources.

Arabic - العربية

"Scaling" in Arabic can be translated in various ways depending on the context. Many education researchers prefer to use the compound term تطويرو توسيع (Tatweer wa Tawseea) to fully convey two goals of scaling:

تطوير (Tatweer) – to develop, improve, or advance; this captures the nuance of deepening quality and refining the innovation.

توسيع (Tawseea) – to expand, widen, or broaden; this captures the nuance of expanding reach to more people and places.

Portuguese - Português

In Portuguese, "scaling" is typically expressed using a combination of verbs and nouns depending on whether the focus is on growth or system-wide adoption:

Ampliar (or the gerund **ampliando**) – to expand, amplify, or broaden; this focuses on the active process of increasing the reach, scope, or volume of an initiative.

Escala – scale; usually used in phrases like **ganhar escala** (to gain scale) or **trabalho em escala**
(working at scale) to describe an initiative achieving widespread system adoption.

Russian - русский

Russian contexts often look beyond literal translations to find terms that capture the intentionality of growth. While the word **масштабирование** (masshtabirovaniye — scaling) is frequently used, descriptive phrases are often used to emphasize quality and purpose:

Распространение успешных практик (rasprostraneniye uspeshnykh praktik) – the dissemination of successful practices; this phrase emphasizes sharing validated methodologies and peer learning rather than just mechanical replication.

Расширение охвата (rasshireniye okhvata) – expanding reach or coverage; this highlights the active process of broadening access to a service or innovation.

Swahili - Kiswahili

In Swahili, "scaling" is often referred to using the verb ***kuongeza***, meaning "to increase/expand."

Kuongeza athari – to increase or amplify the effect/impact.

Hindi - हिन्दी

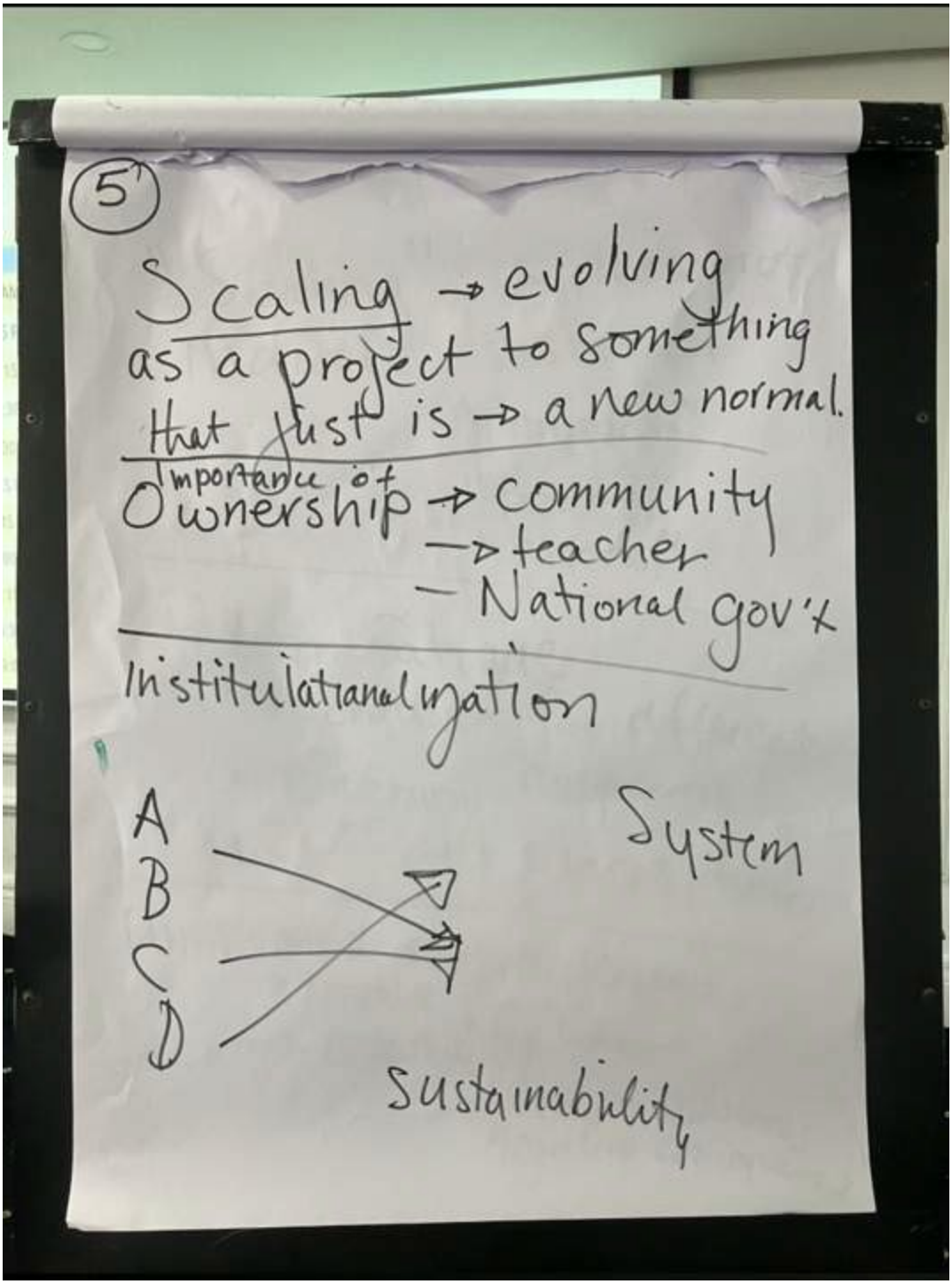
In Hindi, while teams occasionally use the phonetic loanword स्केलिंग प्रभाव (scaling prabhav), it is more common to use the following phrases that capture the active expansion of an initiative's reach and depth:

प्रभाव का विस्तार (Prabhav ka Vistaar) – the expansion or extension of impact; this is the most accurate equivalent for "scaling impact," focusing on spreading the positive outcomes of an innovation.

व्यापक बनाना (Vyapak Banana) – to make widespread, comprehensive, or universal.

Many organizations find that spending time defining "scaling" is an essential first step before they can begin to research, assess, or plan for the scaling process. Although it can be time-intensive, investing energy and effort upfront in establishing a shared definition is an essential step for fostering collaborative relationships based on a mutual understanding.

The pictures below showcase examples of how different scaling teams from around the world have defined what scaling means to them.



Scaling

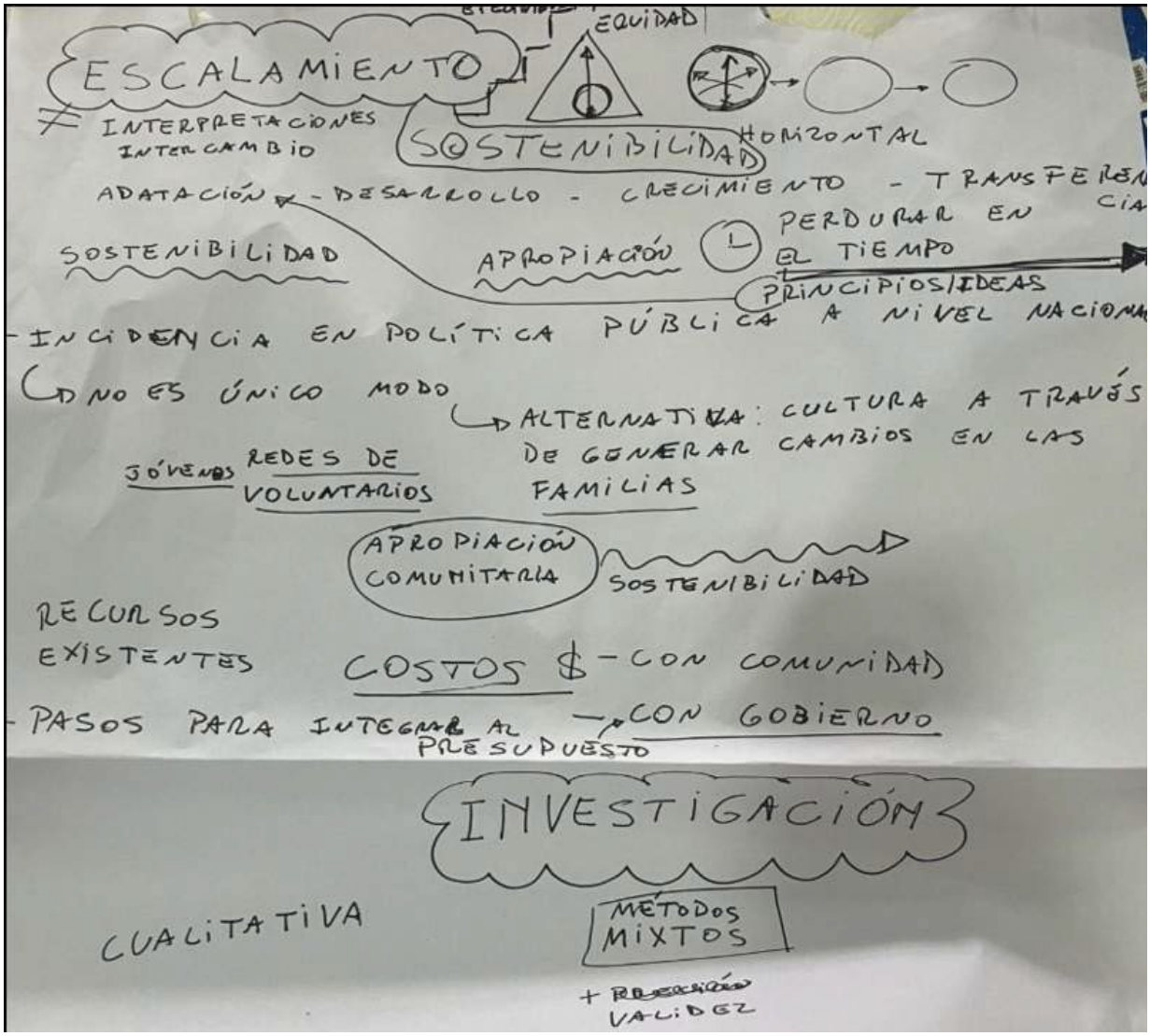
Mean to you

- Reaching more people, schools, areas
- expansion
- public inst.
- systematic
- deepening impact
- More services.
- Upgrading x advancement
- Inclusivity.
- Contextualization

Noticed multiple meaning

- Expansion
- More impact
- Mainstreaming

Use it better (language)


EQUIDAD
ESCALAMIENTO
≠ INTERPRETACIONES
INTERCAMBIO
SOSTENIBILIDAD
HORIZONTAL
ADATACIÓN - DESARROLLO - CRECIMIENTO - TRANSFERENCIA
SOSTENIBILIDAD
APROPIACIÓN
PERDURAR EN EL TIEMPO
PRINCIPIOS/IDEAS
- INCIDENCIA EN POLÍTICA PÚBLICA A NIVEL NACIONAL
NO ES ÚNICO MODO
ALTERNATIVA: CULTURA A TRAVÉS DE GENERAR CAMBIOS EN LAS FAMILIAS
JÓVENES
REDES DE VOLUNTARIOS
APROPIACIÓN COMUNITARIA
SOSTENIBILIDAD
RECURSOS EXISTENTES
COSTOS $ - CON COMUNIDAD
- PASOS PARA INTEGRAR AL PRESUPUESTO
CON GOBIERNO
INVESTIGACIÓN
CUALITATIVA
MÉTODOS MIXTOS
+ VALIDEZ

Groupe 2

* Qu'entend-on par Mise à l'échelle?
  - travail de longue haleine
  - Recherche => innovation => Vulgarisation
  - expansion d'une idée => expérimentation
  - mise à l'essai => mise à l'échelle

synonyme FR (Vulgarisation, dissémination, expansion, généralisation)

* Durabilité ?
  - Budget => apprentissage => appropriation => pérennisation =>
    implication des acteurs des
  - adhésion, une bonne communication, formation des acteurs, appropriation, auto-gestion du projet par la communauté

Exemple = projet SSAP

* Innovation ?
  - petit ou grand ; souvent descriptive
  - pratique nouvelle ou ancienne => nouveau résultat
  - création ou adaptation d'une recherche => viser un changement

How do you scale education innovations for impact

Video: Defining Scaling in Education

Video transcript:
Brad Olsen: I'm here today with Larry Cooley, and we thought that we would get together and have a conversation here at the Brookings Institution about some of the dimensions of scaling education innovations for impact, specifically in low- and middle-income countries, but we're not going to limit ourselves to that. There's an awful lot to say about this topic, and we thought we would just chat with you all.

Larry Cooley: I'm just happy to be here. Thanks for inviting me.

Brad Olsen: Let's start with a sort of introductory question. How do you define scaling in education?

Larry Cooley: Well, you think you started with an easy question, but you actually started with, I think, the hardest question of all. Figuring out what any person or any group or any entity means by scaling, in my opinion, is not a trivial question. It's a really important question. We're trying to scale not necessarily interventions. We're trying to scale outcomes. The interventions are a means to that. But the truth is you can't scale an outcome without scaling an intervention. You have to do something to produce the outcome. And at that point, it means also taking the interventions or something to scale. It could be a process. It could be a product. It could be a service. It could be a way of doing things. But whatever it is, at some point, there's a whole management task of trying to bring that to scale. The trick is, as you're doing that, to not lose sight of the outcomes that you care about.

Brad Olsen: Should scaling be the goal for every successful pilot or promising intervention?

Larry Cooley: So you get different answers from different people. I'll give you mine on this. I think if you're an NGO, if you're a philanthropy, if you're an individual, it needn't be. For example, I'll use this metaphor. If I were interested in the food business, I might choose to open one restaurant. I don't have to aspire to have it being McDonald's. But I think if you're public policy, you've got to think for everybody. You don't have the luxury of being able to say, I'm going to come up with this beautiful little solution for somebody. So I think, yes, if you're a major international donor, if you're a government of a country, you have to at least have the hope or some reason to have a fantasy even, that the thing you're doing could potentially scale to whatever you define the problem as being. It doesn't need to be everybody. If you decide it's for kids with special needs, then it should scale to the number of kids with special needs. If you decide it's people who are having trouble learning to read, then that's the population. But whatever it is, that's the denominator. And I think if you're in the public space, you don't have the luxury of being able to say we're cherry picking.

Scaling is also...

Other names for scaling

"Scaling" is a term that originates from the business sector. For many education stakeholders, it may feel like an unusual concept or technical jargon unrelated to their daily work.

Yet when we think about "scaling for impact" in education, many of the core principles and activities are things most education initiatives are already doing—people just don't always use the word "scaling" to describe them. If you use any of the following phrases when talking about your work, you are likely already thinking about the scaling process...



Other activities that you may be doing that are a form of scaling include:

- Diversifying activities: Adapting your core tools or methods so they can be used more widely or in completely new ways.
- Building coalitions: Establishing networks, learning communities, and stakeholder coalitions to champion and support your approach.
- Collaborating on research: Evaluating the impact of your work, including through second-stage pilots, adaptations, and validation studies when testing in a new location.
- Capacity building: Training and equipping peer organizations or local teams to use your approach effectively.
- System integration: Institutionalizing or mainstreaming a new approach into the everyday functioning of an existing school system.
- Advancing policy: Securing formal policy adoption or integration at the structural or ministerial level.

While all these activities can be forms of scaling, it is important to remember they must be focused on deepening or expanding an impact.

Scaling is not...(common misconceptions)

Common misconceptions about scaling

Research finds that it is not enough to simply identify effective education initiatives and work, on a technical level, to expand them to reach more people. Scaling and sustaining the impact of an education innovation requires integrating technical expertise with a deep understanding of local contexts and national systems, political strategy, collaborative partnership, and flexible adaptation—and having a shared vision. We will return to this truism many times over the course. Below is a list of some misconceptions about scaling, as well as some examples of what these misconceptions can look like in practice.

Scaling is not ...

- **An organization's growth strategy:** A way of simply growing the scaling organization's funding, status, or visibility.
- **An afterthought:** Something to think about only in the distant future, years after piloting or first implementing the innovation.
- **A "copy and paste" exercise:** Replicating the exact same approach in new places without deep contextualization or local adaptation.
- **A pure numbers game:** Focusing strictly on quantitative reach, numbers, and rapid growth rather than long-term, sustained impact.
- **A solution in search of a problem:** Focusing solely on promoting a pre-selected tool or innovation, rather than addressing a pressing, evolving problem.
- **One-size-fits-all:** Assuming that a single implementation model will function identically across diverse cultural, political, or economic landscapes.

Examples of scaling without impact (what not to do!)

Reach without impact

A new organization believes that giving every student in grade 7 access to an online platform will help improve learning outcomes. An initial pilot with one school in the capital city showed that some students with accounts on the platform used it to supplement their mathematics lessons and had higher exam scores at the end of the year.

The organization raises funds and gets support to buy access to the software for every student in grade 7 across the country. A large campaign is launched to encourage students to use the platform. However, user data suggests that uptake is limited and largely concentrated in a few schools in urban centers. A year later, there is no change in grade 7 student exam scores.

This is an example of scaling reach without impact—the approach focused on expanding access to everyone before assessing if impact could be maintained at scale. What worked in one small school in the capital was not true for schools in different contexts across the country. Although this program has increased reach, it has not created impact at scale.



Replication without contextualization

A new curriculum for teaching socio-emotional skills in preschools in country X has been shown to improve student behavior one year later in kindergarten. Excited about the evidence, the organization that created the curriculum suggests implementing it in country Y, where they also work. They bring the curriculum to the new country, translate it, and train preschool teachers how to use it. However, the teachers are reluctant to use the new approach, and observations show that the curriculum is not leading to the same levels of engagement as it did in country X.

Interviews with teachers and parents reveal that many of the lessons in the curriculum are hard to understand and do not align well with the social norms and values of country Y. The teachers support the idea of socio-emotional learning, but feel that the examples and activities in the curriculum are at odds with how they teach.

Simply translating the content of the curriculum into a new language was not enough. The content and approach also needed to be aligned to the new context. Additional review of the content should have been done with local stakeholders, including teachers, parents, education staff, and community leaders, to discuss how the activities could align with local values and highlight local stories and examples. This is an example of replication without contextualization. While the program was expanded, it did not create impact at scale.



A technical exercise outside the wider education system

A new teacher training approach that helps educators use student-centered learning techniques is piloted in two districts. Based on improved learning outcomes in those two districts, the decision is made to bring the approach to four more districts. The training materials are prepared and adapted for the new context. However, those districts are also undergoing a large curricular reform project, which has entailed many days of training and lots of change in schools. The new teacher training approach struggles to gain support, as it has to compete with the training days required for the larger reform, and many teachers associate it with the new curricular reform, which is unpopular. Data show that the program fails to produce much change in learning outcomes or teacher practices in the new districts. This is an example of scaling being viewed as a technical exercise independent of the wider system. While the training approach itself may have been effective, ignoring the larger environmental conditions meant the reputation of the program was undermined and it failed to create impact.



Optional reading:

The Myths of Scaling Up by Mary Burns

GO TO ARTICLE

Optional: How are you already engaging in scaling?

Optional

Think about your previous/current work in education. Could any of it be considering scaling? How does what you are already doing fit with the idea of "expanding or deepening impact"?

Write your answer in the accompanying PDF document. This does not need to be perfect language—the idea is just to write down some reflections.

I think...

Phases of Scaling

Scaling is a long-term and complex process, so it is useful to break scaling down into smaller phases—starting with the initial scoping of the problem and identifying potential innovations to address it, and going all the way to full, optimal, sustainable scale (your scaling goal). Doing it this way can make the work more manageable to plan for. **Each phase entails different types of activities, demands different areas of emphasis, and requires different data and information.**

There’s no single accepted approach to breaking down scaling into distinct stages. We like the International Development Innovation Alliance’s six phases of scaling, introduced here.

While there are distinct phases, it's important to remember that the process is not necessarily linear—it is possible to move forward through these phases at the same time that you are constantly cycling back to previous phases or forward to future phases.

IDIA's Six Stages of Scaling Innovation

Ideation

Defining and analyzing the development problem and generating potential solutions through horizon scanning of existing and new ideas

Research and Development

Further developing specific innovations that have potential to address the problem

Proof of Concept

When the intellectual concept behind an innovation is field-tested to gain an early, "real-world" assessment of its potential

Transition to Scale

When innovations that have demonstrated small-scale success develop their model and attract partners to help fill gaps in their capacity to scale

Scaling

The process of replicating and/or adapting an innovation across large geographies and populations for

Sustainable Scale

The wide-scale adoption or operation of an innovation at the desired level of scale/exponential growth, sustained by

Read more about IDIA's phases of scaling below.

Insights on Scaling Innovation

The International Development Innovation Alliance (IDIA□

GO TO PDF

Understanding phases of scaling

This video from a scaling webinar with Jenny Perlman Robinson summarizes the phases of the scaling framework developed by the International Development Innovation Alliance in 2017.

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript: Here is a continuum developed by colleagues at the International Development Innovation Alliance. And you'll see that they detail six distinct phases from ideation on the left-hand side, all the way to sustainable scale on the right-hand side. And there's a few things here I would highlight. The first is that the journey from phase one to phase six certainly does not happen overnight. And while there's no hard and fast number, it's estimated, on average, that sustainably scaling an initiative takes 15 plus years. Secondly, that each of these different phases of scaling might require different strategies, different types of partnerships and alliances, different monitoring and evaluation practices, and certainly different resourcing. Moving from one phase to the next, even though it might look this way in this graphic, is not necessarily equidistant. And by that, I would say that the timing and the effort and the complexity, for example, to move from phases four, five, and six, we find is oftentimes much greater, much longer, and much more complex.

Relatedly, a lot of the attention and resourcing to innovations has really fallen in the left-hand side, sort of phases one, two, and three, the piloting and the proof of concept. Again, these are critical parts of the process, but there's perhaps been both less attention and resourcing on that transition to scale. And that's where we find that a lot of really good innovations end up not continuing through. And sometimes that's referred to as the valley of death. And finally, despite this graphic looking quite linear, as we've talked about, scaling is anything but a linear process. That's not to say that there's endless growth But in fact, that the scaling journey is characterized more as a zigzag, where there's a few steps forward and a few steps back, might expand, you might contract, and that it's really this sort of iterative adaptive process along the way.

As you think about the phases of scaling, it is important to remember that scaling is a long-term, iterative process. It is completely normal to spend multiple years within a single phase, to move back and forth between stages as conditions change, and to intentionally pause or scale down when necessary.

What phase of scaling in your innovation in?

On average, how many years does it take to scale a new idea or approach into an existing system?

Take 2-3 minutes to reflect on this question and write your answer in the accompanying PDF. Focus your response on your overarching innovation or initiative, not a specific project or adaptation.

What phase of scaling do you think your innovation or initiative is currently in? Why?

Take 2-3 minutes to reflect on this question and write your answer in the accompanying PDF. Focus your response on your overarching innovation or initiative, not a specific project or adaptation.

5 key scaling principles

Along the way, it is crucial to keep some core principles of scaling in mind. These are not strict rules, but rather general ways of working that you should return to repeatedly when making decisions about scaling.

This video features Larry Cooley summarizing five key scaling principles. As you listen, think about which principles resonate with your own experiences.

See the video transcript on the next page.



Video transcript: Hello everyone, my name is Larry Cooley and I'm really glad to have this chance to talk with you today. I'm a senior fellow here at the Brookings Institution and also ran for many years a company called Management Systems International. My own personal professional field is what you might call large system change, but I've worked for the last 23 years particularly and specifically on this issue of scaling. Right now, that takes the form of leading a multi-country community of practice. We have about 5,000 members in 77 countries, all of whom are working on scaling of one thing or another in one way or another from one platform or another. But all of us have been trying to learn together about what it really means to scale effectively. In my own case, I've done this in a variety of sectors and countries, but the sector I've worked the most in is education, so I'm especially happy to be talking to you. So thanks very much for giving me a chance to share a few words with you. In particular, I'd like to share five lessons that I've learned along the way in terms of what it really takes to bring things successfully to scale. And I'll tell you that it's harder than it looks. I'm not saying that to discourage you. I'm saying that to forewarn you that basically to do something well is difficult enough, but to do it well and then to take it to scale, that's a double challenge. And so to think your way through that, I'm going to try to focus on five things, particularly on that notion of going to scale and staying there, taking anything good and making it the new normal. So here we go.

The first one I call fall in love with the problem before you embrace the solution. And that may sound simple, but I can tell you it's the hardest of all of them. Because once we start trying to do something, we become so committed to trying to do that as well as we can and as large as we can that we sometimes forget that it may not be the best solution or maybe the situation changed. So I sometimes describe this as having one foot on the accelerator while you still keep the other one on the brake. The idea being that as we move forward with anything, remain mindful of exactly why you're doing it. We sometimes talk about this as the five whys. If someone tells you why they're doing something, ask, "But why is that?" And then they'll tell you that, ask why one more time. Maybe they'll be mad at you by the time you get to five, but by the time you get to five, you'll be at the bottom of whatever that problem is and just keep that as squarely in your mind as you can as you move through the process. That's principle number one.

Principle number two, think subtraction, not addition. Here's what I mean by that. When we try to design solutions to problems, we try to make those solutions as good as we can. If you want to put that in social science terms, we try to get the maximum effect size. So, in order to try and make things as good as we can possibly make them, usually we add elements. Each element we add probably improves the impact of the thing we're doing. But at the same time, it adds to the cost, it adds to the complexity. So, if you're thinking like a scaler, you're not thinking, what can I add to make it better? You're thinking, what can I take away that would make it simpler or cheaper and still retain the bulk of the benefit? So, think about it another way. If you had a complicated intervention and I told you that you could cut the complexity or the cost by 50%, but you would lose 20% of the impact. My advice, take that deal. It's a good deal.

The third principle is about context. And you might think about it this way. Context is not only king, context is king and queen in this situation. Why do I say that? It's because long experience has taught me that the idea of cut and paste almost never works. Even the ones that have a strong technology foundation, it doesn't work. There's too much involved in what you might call the political economy or sometimes just the cultural differences or the organizational dynamics. For example, the way decentralization does or doesn't work in a country, the way budgeting does or doesn't work in a country, the way unions are or are not organized by teachers in a country, the way parents do or don't participate in the system, all of these things are not consistent from country to country, nor would you want them to be. Each one is tailored to its own circumstance, but the consequence of that is no matter how clear you think the intervention is, there's probably more than you think that has to happen to adapt to that circumstance.

And it's also the case that that is not going to be a straight line. You're going to learn about that as you go. So, there's going to be a major piece of adaptation and there's going to be a major piece of adaptive management that takes place along the way. So don't think you have a blueprint. you have a blueprint that's only a starting point and the key to this is going to be the ability to learn and change as you go ahead.

Number four, there are two concepts that sometimes are talked about together, but sometimes they get separated. The way I'd like to call this principle is that scale and sustainability are twins. They're twins that never should have been separated, but for the most part now find themselves in separate conversations.

And finally, a fifth principle, which is that there's a pathway to scale. It's not entirely predictable and it's definitely not straight, but there's a pathway. And I can tell you that it's usually a long pathway. Typically, in our experience, it ends up being about 15 years. That's the amount of time from something being a good idea to, in the best case, to being fully institutionalized and practiced as the new normal. Now, what I can tell you is that some things look much faster than that. But usually if you look underneath, if you understand the backstory, something was going on long before you knew about it, before it came to light, that made that 15 years possible. I've seen this play out in case after case after case. Sometimes I understand why it took that long. Sometimes I don't understand why it took that long, but I can tell you consistently it ends up taking that long. So, if you're operating with a one-, three- or five-year project, and one-, three-, or five-year funding, always be looking ahead. Where are you in that cycle? What comes after that? What's the handoff that takes place at the end? Because I can almost promise you, if you're relatively early in the scaling journey, you're not going to be at the end of it when you come to the end of that project. You're going to be somewhere further along the way, but with a path left to travel.

Remember the 5 key scaling principles:

1. Fall in love with the problem before you embrace the solution;
2. Think subtraction, not addition;
3. Context is king;
4. Scale and sustainability are twins;
5. Scaling is a long-term, non-linear process

How would you explain scaling for impact?

After completing this module, how would you explain the idea of "scaling for impact" to others?

Write your answer in the accompanying PDF. This is not an evaluation—it is meant to be helpful to you as you communicate with partners and stakeholders. Therefore, please use the language you use to communicate with your colleagues as part of your regular work.

I would describe it as...

Module 1 summary

What is scaling for impact?

In this section, we explored why scaling is important and what "scaling for impact" means.

By now you should know…

- That scaling for impact means expanding and deepening the impact of an approach
- Other names for scaling and other ways in which you may already be scaling impact in your own work
- Some key principles to guide your scaling decisionmaking, including: Fall in love with the problem before you embrace the solution; Think subtraction, not addition; Context is king; Scale and sustainability are twins; Scaling is a long-term, non-linear process

- Scaling is not about expanding reach, growing to new places, or replicating a model if impact is not created or sustainable
- There are different phases of scaling, but the process is not necessarily linear: a scaling pathway typically moves back and forth among different scaling stages

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In this module you completed the following activities and reflections:

- How do you define scaling?
- How are you already engaging in scaling?
- What phase of scaling is your innovation in?
- How would you explain "scaling for impact" to others?

Discuss with your team

1. Why do we believe scaling is important?
2. What does scaling for impact mean in terms of our own work?
3. What are we already doing that could be considered scaling by another name?
4. How will we translate and explain "scaling" to our stakeholders?
5. What phase of scaling do we think our innovation or initiative is in?
6. Which scaling principle(s) resonate with us? Why?

What is next?

The next module will explore how to identify what actions lead to impact, the idea of optimal scale, and how to develop a long-term scaling goal.

Scaling goals and optimal scale



START MODULE

Module 2 overview

Scaling goals and optimal scale

This section explores how to intentionally plan for impact at scale. You will be introduced to the concept of "optimal scale" and learn how to develop both long-term and intermediate scaling goals. This module is just a brief introduction to these deep topics, and we will return to them repeatedly in the modules to follow.

Learning objectives

1. Understand the relationship between actions and impact at scale.
2. Identify what is core to creating impact in your innovation and what can be adapted.
3. Understand that bigger is not always better and it is important to identify the optimal scale you are aiming for.
4. Identify key components of a scaling goal and start thinking about your ultimate vision of impact at scale.
5. Understand the relationship between scaling and system transformation, and how they work together to improve education systems.

Key Terms

- **Scaling goal:** The concrete, measurable, long-term vision of impact at scale. It is important to note that the scaling goal lays out the impact intended at scale, not just expansion to a certain size or scope. It can be helpful to think of a scaling goal as the final destination, or "new normal" you are trying to create. A scaling goal encapsulates the impact you are aiming to create at scale, for specific communities, in a specific timeframe.

- **Optimal scale:** Rather than seeking maximum size and scope, optimal scale is the point at which the magnitude, variety, sustainability, and equity of impacts at scale are balanced in a way that is widely endorsed by stakeholders. This means balancing not just how much impact is created, but also how diverse the impacts are, how long they last, and how fairly they are distributed, such that the benefits of scaling outweigh any negative effects.

Module Outline

- Understanding what creates impact
- Optimal scale
- Scaling goals
- Identifying what is core to creating impact in your initiative
- What is the optimal scale for your work?
- Start to develop a scaling goal

Understanding what creates impact

Identify the impact you want to scale

We know scaling is about sustainably expanding and deepening impact. This can take many different forms:

- **Scaling OUT** to reach more people, schools, and/or geographic regions.
- **Scaling UP** to shift formal government policy or infuse new practices into the existing public system.
- **Scaling DEEP** to change underlying mindsets, strengthen local capacity, or foster a broader social movement in support of an idea.

There is no single right way to scale, but it is essential to be clear, concrete, and intentional from the beginning about the scaling goal you are trying to achieve and the pathway(s) to best reach that goal.

The video below offers an overview of four steps you can take to determine your scaling goal and pathways, each of which we will dive into further in the rest of the module.

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript: The education space is full of innovative ideas, aimed at creating positive change inside and beyond the classroom. Yet, too often, these initiatives struggle to grow sustainably or achieve deep, lasting impact. A strong scaling strategy helps education innovators think intentionally about how to expand, deepen, and sustain their impact. Here are four steps to help you establish a scaling goal and determine the best pathway forward. While these steps seem simple, remember this is in fact a complex and iterative process that should be done collaboratively. Step 1: Articulate the impact you aim to create. Start by defining what outcome your organization wants to scale. Suppose your organization aims to improve teacher practices for supporting students with disabilities. Be concrete about what you're trying to scale. In this case, a teacher training course your organization has tested and shown to be effective for changing teacher practices. Step 2: Set a measurable scaling goal. Consider what it would look like for your impact to become the new normal in the education system. A well-defined scaling goal is measurable, time-bound, and focused on long-term impact. For instance, the goal might be for 60% of primary school teachers nationwide to implement inclusive classroom practices within 10 years. Step 3: Identify possible pathways to scale. Brainstorm the pathways available to achieve your goal. This is where you get to be creative. Maybe you'll deliver training to teachers directly. This might require additional funding or staff, or you could train local NGOs to run the course nationwide. You could franchise the course, allowing you to maintain more control. Alternatively, you might hand the course over to the Ministry of Education's teacher training program, shifting your organization's role to support and monitoring. Step 4: Clarify roles and responsibilities Scaling impact requires collaboration. Now that you have some possible pathways, think about who is involved in each. When your goal is achieved, who will be implementing the innovation? Who will pay? How might your role need to change? Consider budget, expertise, capacity, and any implications for equity, inclusion, and sustainability. Multiple pathways can be pursued but be mindful not to overwhelm yourself with too many. With all this in mind, review and finalize your scaling pathway or pathways.

After reviewing your resources and relationships, you might decide that your finalized pathway is to prioritize training other disability advocacy NGOs to deliver the teacher training course in new areas of the country. The following video will explore some benefits and trade-offs your team thought about to reach this decision and imagine how your pathway might need to change as scaling progresses. Use this guide as a springboard for discussions with your team, helping you identify a scaling pathway that is tailored to your context, skills and resources and will lead to deep, enduring impact.

Questions to determine impact

Question 1: What impacts are you trying to create at scale?

First, you need clarity on what specific impact(s) you want to achieve at scale. What specifically are you hoping to scale?



For example, you might be trying to increase secondary students' mathematics scores, change teacher classroom practices, expand parental engagement in school decisions, infuse new ways of using data into Ministry operations, systematize avenues for collaboration between school districts, institutionalize an innovative policy, or shift community attitudes about the importance of girls' education.

Select each card below to explore different types of impact.



New or changed mindsets, beliefs, or norms



New or changed policies, regulations, or structures



A social movement on behalf of an issue or idea



New or changed practices, behaviors, or ways of working

Question 2: What are you specifically doing to create this impact?

Next, you need to think about what specifically you are scaling. In other words, what are you tangibly doing to create the impact(s) you seek to scale? Detail what you are concretely trying to scale to create that impact, such as an intervention, a service, a technology, a training, or a curriculum.

There can be, and often are, multiple activities that contribute to a shared impact. However, it is important not

to assume that every component of your project or approach leads to or is essential to impact. Scaling research can play an important role in **determining which elements of your innovation or initiative are key to creating and sustaining impact**.



For example, if you want to see improved math skills among secondary school students in three rural regions of the country, what are you doing to improve math skills?

- Training math teachers in new pedagogical skills?
- Updating the mathematics curriculum?
- Creating a tutoring program for students struggling with math?
- Something else?

It is important to identify the specific actions that will be taken to create impact.

Questions 3 & 4: What is core to creating impact? What is not core and can be adapted or changed?



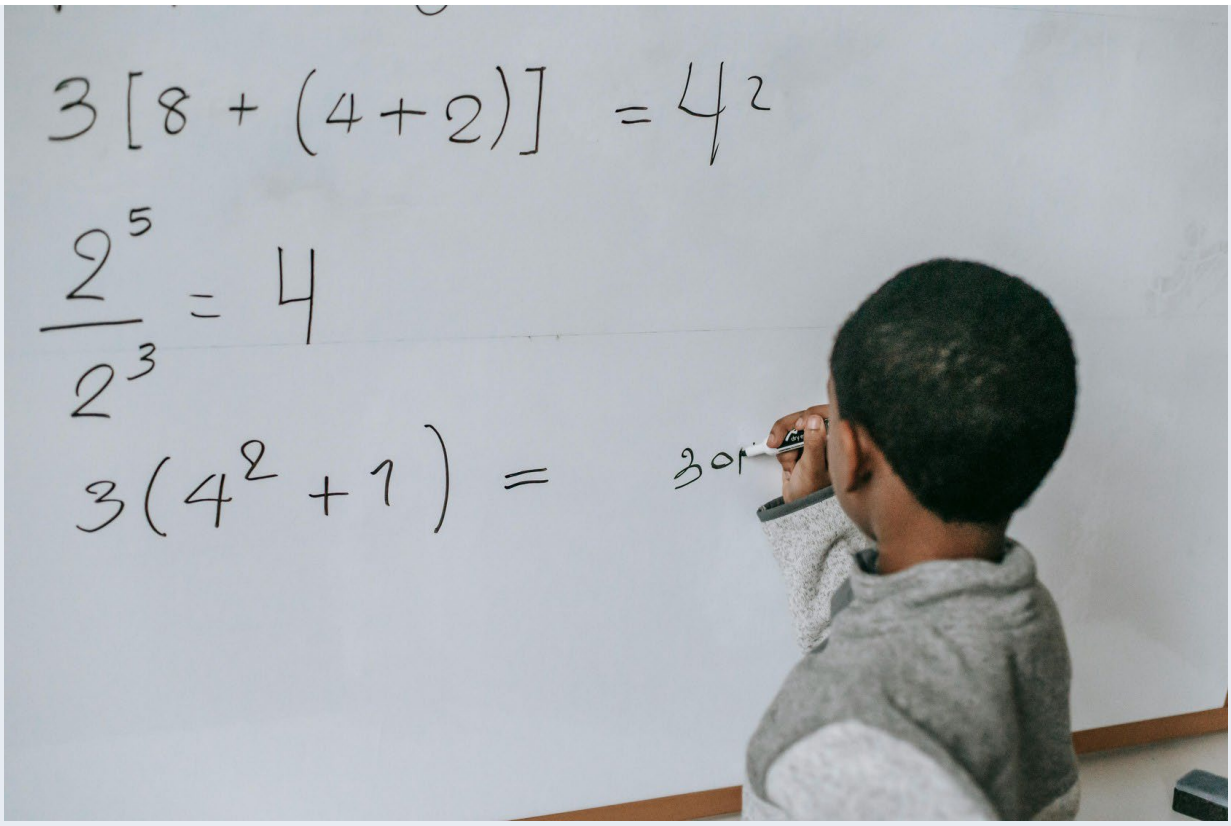
A common misconception among education teams is that they will be able to scale their initiative exactly as it was done at the pilot stage or by the originating organization. But early stage models are often complex, "gold-standard" approaches that are hard to scale.

Remember module 1 when Larry Cooley recommends, "Think subtraction, not addition" as a core scaling principle! This is because scaling often involves simplifying your approach, allowing other actors to adapt it, or adding pieces of it to existing programs, initiatives, or systems.

> Understanding **what parts of your innovation or initiative are core to creating impact (and which are not) is an essential first step when developing your scaling goal** and selecting scaling pathways. You don't want to create a scaling goal that will be impossible to achieve, or pursue strategies that will reduce the impact of your approach. And you don't want to disregard pathways that might require a simplified version of your innovation but will have long-term sustainability benefits.

This will be covered in more detail in the module on "Research to Inform Scaling." In the meantime, it can be helpful to think concretely about which core activities you want to scale to create deeper impact.

- What core components of the innovation or model do you absolutely need to scale to achieve the impact you seek?
- What components of the innovation must be adapted during scaling to respond to changing needs, contexts, or characteristics in order to achieve impact?
- What components of the innovation could be simplified or removed from the scaling process in order to achieve impact?



For example, you might be running an after-school program for secondary students to help improve mathematics outcomes. The program includes team problem-solving games, lesson review, 1:1 tutoring, and homework help.

However, after reviewing the data, your team has realized that the main components that lead to improved learning are the 1:1 tutoring and problem-solving games.

As a result you decide to focus on scaling these two activities through a variety of methods, rather than trying to get schools to adopt them all.

Evidence of Impact

Ensure your understanding of impact is based on evidence, not assumptions. When you are thinking about the impact you hope to create and the things you will do to create that impact, **it's important to base your answers on contextually relevant evidence and research** about what creates impact in education (and what does not). Many education initiatives hope that if they do a particular set of activities, then student learning outcomes will improve. However, until all activities have been implemented, adapted, and studied in a particular context, we cannot know if these activities will indeed produce better learning outcomes

- Perhaps only one activity improves learning, and the others do not.
- Perhaps the initiative works in one context but not in another.
- Perhaps the initiative does produce the intended outcomes, but an unexpected negative outcome is also created.

It's essential to have evidence to understand what specific actions lead to impact. Scaling research plays an important role in testing out these assumptions and generating the evidence needed to identify what is core to creating impact at scale.

Identifying what core components lead to impact

What impact(s) is your initiative or innovation trying to create at scale?

Focus on the specific outcomes (not activities) that your innovation creates that you want to scale for greater impact. Take 2-3 minutes to reflect and write your response in the accompanying PDF.

I think...

What are you specifically doing to create this impact? In other words, what activities or actions in your initiative do you know create this impact?

Make sure your response is based on data, not assumptions, about what creates impact. Take 1-2 minutes to list out the key components of your initiative that have been shown to produce the outcomes you are hoping to scale.

I think...

Identify what is core to your innovation and what can be adapted.

Reflect on your answer above. Are there other components or aspects that are core to your innovation? What parts of your innovation can be adapted, contextualized, or changed to improve scalability?

I think...

Optimal Scale

When thinking about the impact you are aiming to create at scale, it can be tempting to dream big! After all, the problems are often big, complex challenges. But **when it comes to scaling, bigger is not always better, and not all impact is positive**. Most innovations do not create just one change in the system; they initiate several direct and indirect impacts as they scale.

Therefore, it's very important to **think critically about what the right scale is for your work**. The concept of optimal scale, as defined by McLean and Gargani in their 2019 book *Scaling Impact: Innovation for the Public Good*, is very useful for considering the full collection of impacts that might be created through scaling—and what the ***optimal scale*** for your work may be.

Explore each aspect of impact in the accordion below.

Magnitude of impacts —

How much impact is created.

Often relates to reach, size, quality, or value.

Variety of impacts

How diverse the impacts are, what levels they occur at, and the **range of contexts** where impact has been shown.

Sustainability of impacts

How long the impact(s) last for.
Often a duration of time.

Equity of impacts

How fairly impacts are distributed.
This may include focusing on highest need over easiest to reach, ensuring that benefits are not unevenly distributed, that harms are not disproportionately borne by marginalized groups, and balancing benefits and harms in ways individuals accept.

Endorsement

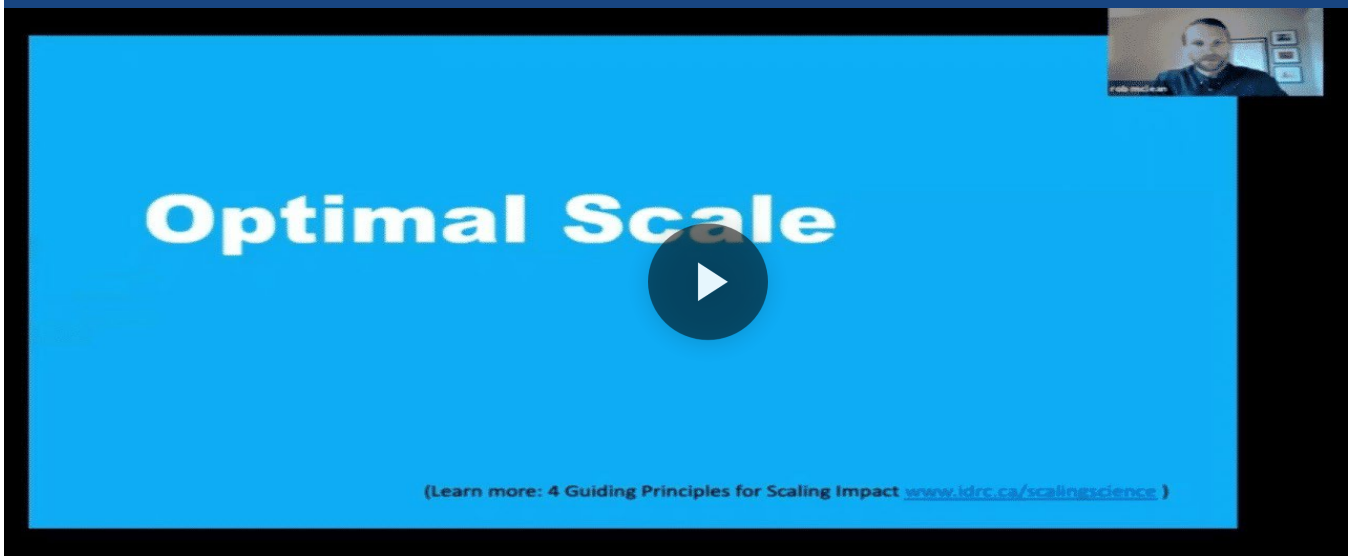
If all stakeholders—particularly the people most directly affected by implementation—had all the available information on potential benefits and risks, they would choose to scale the innovation.

Optimal scale is a nuanced concept that brings multiple dimensions of scaling into consideration. It underscores that **scaling always requires tradeoffs and that endless growth is rarely the right answer**. Scaling can bring a range of impacts—positive, neutral, and negative—and it is important to be sure that, when all weighed together, the people most affected by the scaling effort feel that scaling is justified.

> **To quote McLean and Gargani: "The search for optimal impact—not maximum impact—governs scaling toward balanced and judicious results."**

The video below from a 2020 GPE KIX webinar features Rob McLean, Senior Program Specialist at IDRC, explaining the notion of "optimal scale" in more detail.

See the video transcript below.

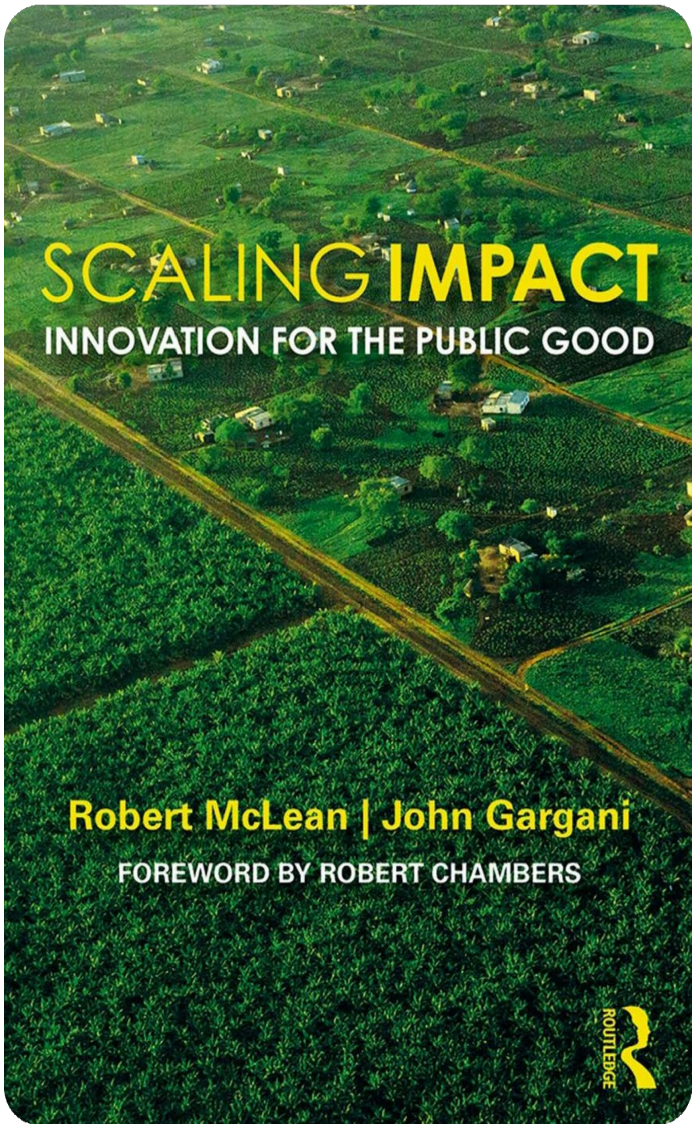


Video transcript: We've developed this principle, this idea of optimal scale. And simply put, it's a challenge to the bigger is better notion of scaling up and scaling out. And the principle really encourages our partners and ourselves in our work to think about optimal and how we might aim for that in our work rather than just continuous expansion. And so, this is one of the key takeaways we're hoping will sit well and be useful in your projects going forward. And so, what is optimal scale? Well, on the next slide, we provide the results of our research to unpack what really mattered, what really counted for good scale. And for us, there were at least four dimensions. So this is, again, a starting place that should and needs to be expanded and diversified but includes some measures of an optimal impact.

And the first is where we usually go when we think about scaling, and that's magnitude. So how much? How much coverage? How many districts are included? How many students? But the next three really help to diversify and create a broader view, a more holistic view of an impact. that could be measured and aimed for in scaling efforts. And so, variety is really about what kinds of impacts are being counted. Is it just about education outcomes, test scores, or employment opportunities for students involved in programs? What about economic return? Often a very convincing argument to present as a measure of the impact of your project to funders, governments, private sector investors, Equity is really all about the granularity of the impact. So, who benefits and who doesn't? Who's left behind by this intervention? Sustainability, as Jenny's noted very well, is really about the rigor or the long-term lasting capacity of the project that's being scaled. And how might this fare once your efforts and your funds are no longer addressing this scaling effort? And so, as the knobs here are showing, if we just go back one slide, the conventional wisdom would be that we want to turn them all up to the maximum and aim for the most we can across each of these dimensions.

But in reality, if we go to the next slide, it's not that simple. And we've learned time and time again in our review that there are almost always trade-offs between these dimensions. So, we think about the immense shift and disruption that's happened in education across the planet. We know well that we can't just aim for doing more without considering who's benefiting. So, this trade-off between more and equity comes into play in almost all of our education interventions these days. And so, thinking about in context, how your project can measure, can demonstrate, and can consider in a transparent way the trade-offs between at least these four dimensions of impact can help set you on a course for what we've been calling optimal impact. But what's really behind that term is an impact that matters for your constituents, your beneficiaries, and your unintended beneficiaries as well.

Scaling story: What happens when optimal scale is not considered before scaling



Read the case study of PlayPumps and how the concepts of optimal scale apply to their experience here: **Chapter 4 Optimal Scale**

Optional: What is the optimal scale for your work?

Answer the following questions in the accompanying PDF.

What is the optimal scale for your work?

Magnitude

How many people (or schools, classes, communities, etc.) are you trying to reach at scale?

Variety

What are the full variety or range of impacts that might result from your work? Think about both anticipated and unanticipated impacts, as well as positive and negative impacts that could result from scaling.

Sustainability

How long do you plan the impact(s)

to last? What is the plan for

sustaining these impacts?

Equity

Will the impacts be fairly distributed?

What are the possible equity impacts of scaling?

Endorsement

Do you believe that the stakeholders most closely involved or impacted by this work would agree to scale based upon the impacts you listed in your previous answers?

Are there changes you might need to consider to achieve a balance of impacts that all stakeholders will support?

Long-term scaling goals

Develop a measurable scaling goal

What is a scaling goal?

A scaling goal is the **concrete, measurable, long-term vision of impact at scale**. It lays out the impact you hope to achieve, when you will achieve it by, and for whom.

It can be useful to have one long-term scaling goal (sometimes called a "North Star Vision" since it guides your scaling efforts) as well as a series of smaller, intermediate goals that are milestones along the way toward that long-term vision.

This section focuses on identifying your long-term scaling goal, and the next sections will focus on developing intermediate goals and pathways to scale.

Questions to think about when developing a scaling goal

- What specifically will be scaled?
- What impact(s) will be created?
- Where are you scaling?
- How many people will be impacted?
- When are you hoping to accomplish scaling by?

Remember!

The core idea that should inform your answers to all these questions is:

- **Why are you scaling?**
- **What impact are you aiming to create?**
- **For whom?**

Example Scaling Goal



NORTH STAR VISION

Reach 100% of students in grades 3-6 with child-centered level-based instruction to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes, and institutionalize and sustain Programme d'Enseignement Ciblé delivery fully within the existing education system over the next five years.

Read more below

Scaling a foundational literacy and numeracy program in Côte d'Ivoire
Molly Curtiss Wyss and Jenny Perlman Robinson

GO TO ARTICLE

Activity: Assess the strength of these sample scaling goals

Read each of these scaling goals and assess them:

- Is this a strong scaling goal or is there something missing?
- Is it measurable, specific, and focused on long-term impact?
- Does it contain the key information about who, what, when, and where?
- How could it be improved?

Next to each goal (left column), is a card explaining what's missing and how the goal can be improved (right column).

All primary school students in Cambodia will have improved reading skills by 2045.

The "What" is missing - what are you doing to improve reading scores by 2045?
The "How many" is also not specific enough - how many students is all students in Cambodia? It would be good to focus on a specific grade of students, area of Cambodia, or overall number to make this goal more precise.

Distribute updated textbooks to all primary school students in Borno state in the next 18 months.

The impact is missing. This scaling goal is focused on numbers and achieving a project activity rather than impact. Why are you delivering the textbooks? What impact will it create? This goal is also imprecise - how many textbooks and how many students? It will be helpful to have specific numbers to make the goal measurable.

Next year, scale mathematics teacher coaching approach nationally through government delivery using existing personnel.	This timeframe for this goal is too fast! Remember scaling impact is a long-term process. It may take 10 □15 years to create a sustainable change, particularly when it comes to something as complex as teacher practices and working with government systems.
The Ministry of Education will take over implementation and financing of the the Playful Learning program.	The timeframe for this goal is missing. When and how will the takeover happen? The impact is also missing - what impact will be created by the government delivering the program.

Through peer coaching, increase scores on the national computer skills assessment for 6th standard students by 30% in the next six years.

This is a pretty good scaling goal! It lays out the what, who, and when. It's just missing information about where specifically this will happen.

Improve attitudes about gender equality among boys in secondary schools in Dornod province.

This scaling goal is not measurable. How will you know if boy's attitudes about gender equality have improved? This goal could be improved by adding more about how this impact will be measured and by when.

Increase youth employment rates in the capital region by 98% by 2040.

This scaling goal is hard to achieve! While it's good to set ambitious goals, its also important to be realistic, particularly when working on long-term goals like behavior change and education or employment outcomes.

Aligning your actions and impacts when creating a scaling goal

Many education innovations claim their ultimate scaling goal is to improve student learning outcomes. However, the impact the impact they are creating is actually focused on another level of the education ecosystem. That's okay! Education ecosystems are complex and there are many different levers of change that can create impact. But it is important that **a scaling goal is specific, measurable, and accurately reflects the targeted impact** that can be created by the initiative or innovation.

For example, if an initiative is focused on education financing, the impact to scale might be an increased number of schools creating and using equitable school budgets. In the long-term, more equitable budgets may contribute to better learning outcomes, but it will likely require more longitudinal research to understand if and how that is happening. Therefore, the team should focus on the specific indicators of impact that come from using more equitable school budgets when they develop their scaling goal, rather than learning outcomes. **Even if this scaling goal is not directly focused on learning outcomes, it can directly contribute to transforming conditions in the education ecosystem** that improve learning for all students in the long-term.

Start to develop a scaling goal

Start to Develop a Scaling Goal

Write your answers to the following questions in the accompanying PDF.

What impact(s) are you trying to scale? Why? Review your answers to the questions about impact in the accompanying PDF, what leads to impact, and what is core to your innovation, as well as the optimal scale you are aiming for. Write one sentence summarizing what impact(s) you plan to scale.

How many people will be impacted at scale? Write a number or target group who will be impacted when you have achieved your scaling goal. Remember the concept of optimal scale and that bigger is not always better.

Where are you scaling? Write 1-2 sentences about the locations or target areas where you hope to create impact when at scale, including why these particular locations have been selected.

By when do you hope to have achieved this long-term scaling goal? Write a timeframe for scaling. This should be the time by which you hope to achieve your ultimate scaling goal. Remember, it can take 10-15 years to scale a change into a system sustainably.

Example Scaling Goal

By (WHEN), (HOW MANY) in (WHERE) will (DESCRIBE IMPACT) in through

(DESCRIBE WHAT YOU WILL DO AND WITH WHOM).

Example: By 2030, 2000 secondary students in San Pedro will have improved mathematics outcomes as a result of participation in after-school tutoring programs run by NGO Aprendemos and the local government of San Pedro.

Remember: this is a draft. You will continuously return to this goal and revise it in the coming modules.

Optional: Scaling and systems transformation

The relationship between scaling and systems change

As you read through this section, think about how your scaling goal may be linked to broader goals of system transformation in the context(s) where you work.

There has been some debate in the education sector about whether it is preferable to focus on scaling or systems change as the starting place for reform when trying to improve learning outcomes sustainably. This course does not see scaling and systems transformation as opposing ideas, but as **complementary processes that sit on a continuum of large-scale change.**

Systems thinking in education can be defined as the acknowledgement that any single education component or innovation interacts with dozens of system parts, organizations, forces, and levers.

This list of system parts includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- the school building and its manner of organizing activity
- the curriculum
- students' backgrounds; teachers as individuals
- teaching as a historical profession
- institutional governance
- accountability mechanisms at multiple levels
- funding influences
- the mediating power of communities
- cultural beliefs and mindsets
- national politics and education commitments
- the global development arena

Systems thinking holds that it is the **complex interactions among these system parts that propel the change** (or stasis) of a system. Transforming education systems therefore requires changing or reshaping some of those parts in ways that produce new interactions with all the others—leading to new practices, mindsets, policies, and institutional cultures. If done carefully, holistically, and with patient determination, this should lead to lasting change.

Scaling can attach impactful innovations to one or more key system parts in order to shift them and their interactions with

other parts, thereby strengthening or transforming the whole system.

Continue reading below

Enacting deep change in education: Scaling and systems transformation are engaged—should they marry?

Brad Olsen, Molly Curtiss Wyss, and Maya Elliott

GO TO ARTICLE

Module 2 summary

Developing an optimal scaling goal

In this section, we explored the concept of optimal scale and introduced some components of a strong scaling goal.

By now you should know...

- **Optimal scale** is the point at which magnitude, variety, sustainability, and equity of impacts are balanced in a way that is widely endorsed by stakeholders.
- A **scaling goal** is the ultimate "North Star vision" for impact at scale. It lays out the specific and measurable impact you aim to create, for whom, and by when. (You can also develop intermediate goals, which are stepping stones on the way to achieving the long-term scaling goal.)

In this module you completed the following activities and reflections:

- Articulate the impact you want to create

- Consider the optimal scale for your work
- Start to develop a scaling goal

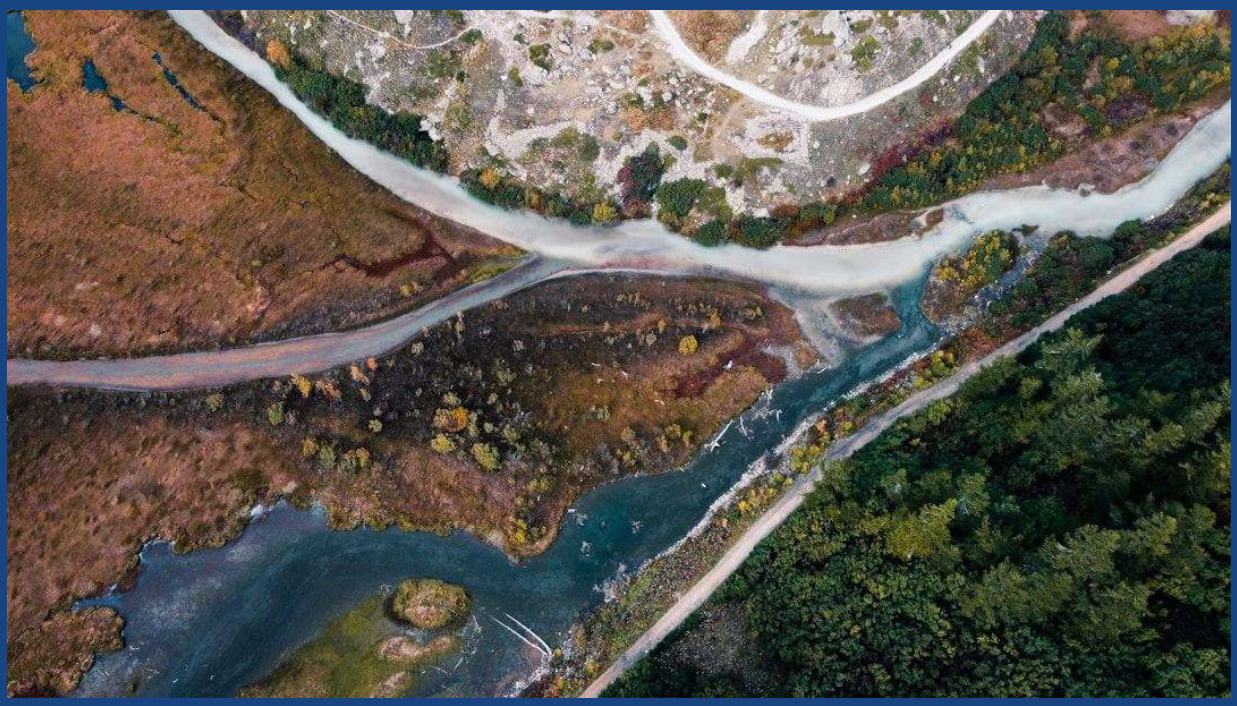
Discuss with your team

1. What impact are we trying to create at scale? What specific components of our initiative lead to impact? If we don't know this, what can we do to learn more about what is core to creating impact?
2. What is the optimal scale we are aiming for? How does it balance different aspects of impact, magnitude, variety, sustainability, and equity?
3. What is our ultimate scaling goal?
4. What are some of our intermediate scaling goals for the next few years?

What is next?

Now that we have covered scaling goals, we are going to start exploring different pathways to get to your scaling goal.

Identifying pathways to scale



START MODULE

Module 3 overview

Scaling Pathways

This section begins to explore how scaling happens by introducing the idea of scaling pathways. Scaling pathways are approaches or routes to travel to a scaling goal. Multiple pathways can lead to a scaling goal. This module introduces some broad categories of pathways and helps you to assess different pathways and start to identify which pathway(s) might be best for your initiative. This module is just a brief introduction to this topic; we will return to it again later in this course.

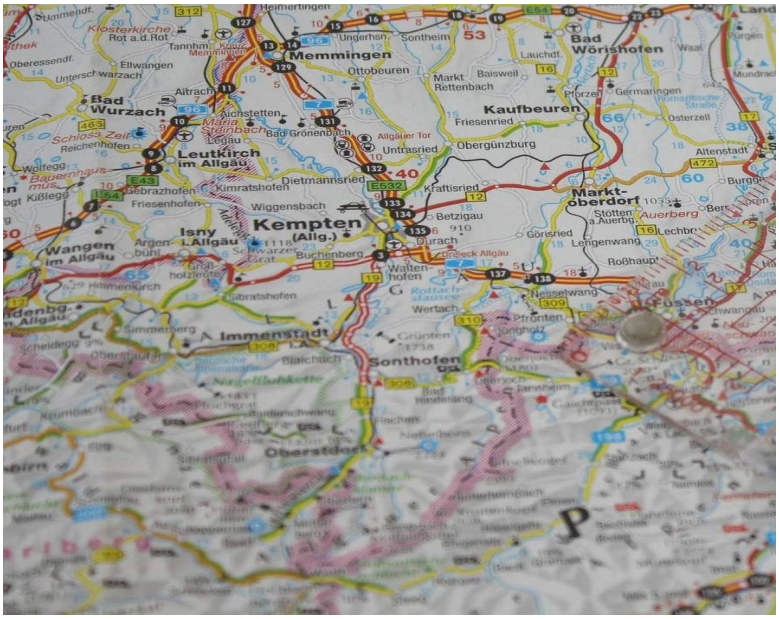
Learning objectives

1. Understand that scaling is a long-term process and there are many different routes toward scaling impact of an innovation.
2. Explore different dimensions of scaling pathways, including who will deliver, who will finance, and how roles will transition.
3. Start thinking about possible scaling pathways to reach your scaling goal.

Key Terms

The last module was focused on **optimal scale** and **scaling goals**. Remember, a scaling goal is the concrete, measurable, long-term **vision of impact** at scale. It is important to note that the scaling goal lays out the impact intended at scale, not just expansion to a certain size or scope.

Scaling pathways are ways to get to your scaling goal. Different pathways may be used to get to the same scaling goal, and sometimes multiple pathways are pursued. The particular names or approaches to pathways matter less than the understanding that there can be different routes to a shared goal.



It can be helpful to think of a scaling goal as the final destination, while the scaling pathways are the different routes taken to get there. Just like during a car journey, the routes—and even the vehicle—might need to change from the original plan based on new information and external changes, such as an accident on the road or additional traffic.

Scaling goals and pathways review

Rewatch the video below to review the steps for developing a scaling goal and pathways. The last module focused on steps 1 and 2. **This module will focus on steps 3 and 4.**

- Step1: Identifying the impact you want to scale
- Step 2: Establishing a measurable scaling goal
- **Step 3: Brainstorming possible scaling pathways**
- **Step 4: Selecting your scaling pathway(s)**

Re-read the video transcript below.



Video transcript: The education space is full of innovative ideas aimed at creating positive change inside and beyond the classroom. Yet, too often, these initiatives struggle to grow sustainably or achieve deep, lasting impact. A strong scaling strategy helps education innovators think intentionally about how to expand, deepen, and sustain their impact.

Here are four steps to help you establish a scaling goal and determine the best pathway forward. While these steps seem simple, remember this is in fact a complex and iterative process that should be done collaboratively. Step one, articulate the impact you aim to create. Start by defining what outcome your organization wants to scale. Suppose your organization aims to improve teacher practices for supporting students with disabilities. Be concrete about what you're trying to scale. In this case, a teacher training course your organization has tested and shown to be effective for changing teacher practices. Step two, set a measurable scaling goal. Consider what it would look like for your impact to become the new normal in the education system.

A well-defined scaling goal is measurable, time-bound, and focused on long-term impact. For instance, the goal might be for 60% of primary school teachers nationwide to implement inclusive classroom practices within 10 years. Step three, identify possible pathways to scale. Brainstorm the pathways available to achieve your goal. This is where you get to be creative. Maybe you'll deliver training to teachers directly. This might require additional funding or staff. or you could train local NGOs to run the course nationwide. You could franchise the course, allowing you to maintain more control. Alternatively, you might hand the course over to the Ministry of Education's teacher training program, shifting your organization's role to support and monitoring. Step four, clarify roles and responsibilities. Scaling impact requires collaboration. Now that you have some possible pathways, Think about who is involved in each. When your goal is achieved, who will be implementing the innovation? Who will pay? How might your role need to change? Consider budget, expertise, capacity and any implications for equity, inclusion and sustainability.

Multiple pathways can be pursued but be mindful not to overwhelm yourself with too many. With all this in mind, review and finalize your scaling pathway or pathways. After reviewing your resources and relationships, you might decide that your finalized pathway is to prioritize training other disability advocacy NGOs to deliver the teacher training course in new areas of the country. The following video will explore some benefits and trade-offs your team thought about to reach this decision and imagine how your pathway might need to change as scaling progresses. Use this guide as a springboard for discussions with your team, helping you identify a scaling pathway that is tailored to your context, skills, and resources and will lead to deep, enduring impact.

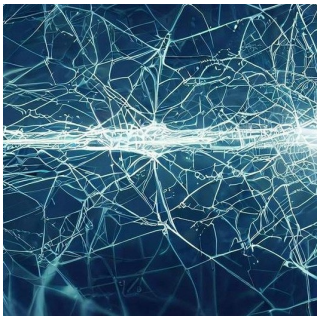
Module Outline

- Understanding what creates impact
- Optimal scale
- Scaling goals
- Identifying what is core to creating impact in your initiative
- What is the optimal scale for your work?
- Start to develop a scaling goal

Different pathways to scale

Brainstorm different pathways to scale



A **scaling pathway** is the method for making progress toward your scaling goal—the "how" of scaling.

Whether governments, civil society, and/or the private sector are engaged in scaling effective approaches, different pathways are taken. The pathway(s) chosen depend on the goals of the intervention, political environment, moment in time, resource constraints, and capabilities of the actors involved. Just like with a car journey, there are multiple options you can choose to match the route, vehicle, and goal of the trip. One is not

inherently better than the other; it simply depends on the goals, resources, and details of the specific trip.

While there are multiple pathways to scale, these are not mutually exclusive. **One or more of these pathways can and, depending on the context, most likely should be pursued at the same time.**

Types of scaling pathways

Determining which scaling pathway(s) to pursue requires identifying details of your scaling goal and then matching that goal with the unique characteristics of the innovation, the local context and enabling environment, resource assets and limitations, and your organization's own strengths and capacity. Many frameworks and terms exist for categorizing pathways, but the particular names or categories matter less than carefully examining the different options and purposefully selecting your approach.

Millions Learning broadly considers two categories of pathways: vertical and horizontal. Within each pathway are multiple strands and variations that can be pursued in a variety of ways. These pathways can also be combined towards a single scaling goal. Regardless of the pathway or pathways pursued, it is also important to consider Organizational Capacity for scaling.

Horizontal scaling

Horizontal scaling increases the breadth of coverage of an intervention, expanding from one geographic area to another or to additional beneficiaries to reach more people and communities. Some people call it scaling out, replication, or diffusion.

For example: An NGO trains and supports a CSO to start delivering their youth empowerment program in a new location.

Vertical scaling

Vertical scaling integrates key aspects of an initiative into broader government systems or policy at the national or subnational level and mainstreams delivery into normal operations (including budgets, processes, assessments, data, etc.). Some people call it scaling up or mainstreaming.

For example: The Ministry of Education works with an NGO to align their teacher training program with national STEM education standards and expand the program to additional schools.

Organizational capacity for scaling

Both categories of pathways require increasing the organizational strength and capacity of organizations, government actors, and/or innovators as scaling progresses in order to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of activities.

For example: An NGO embeds one of its staff members in the Ministry of Education regional office to support the government in scaling a social and emotional learning program in a new region of the country.

Additional examples of scaling pathways in education

In the video example at the start of this module, the team brainstormed four possible scaling pathways for their teacher training course:

- **Deliver training to teachers directly**
- **Train local NGOs to run the course nationwide**
- **Franchise the course**
- **Hand the course over to the Ministry of Education to implement**

The first three pathways are all examples of **horizontal** scaling. The fourth pathway is an example of **vertical** scaling.

Other pathways for scaling impact in education

- Embedding content into national curricula
- Incorporating elements of a program into in-service teacher professional development programs or pre-service training
- Supporting regional or district leaders to adopt the program and scale it region by region
- Creating open-source or public access resources and supporting other NGOs or groups to adopt and adapt them
- Building a social movement to advocate for the issue you are focused on
- Embedding a change into policy, law, or budgets
- Franchising a program or model

Remember:

- You can take **multiple pathways** to scale simultaneously.
- **Different locations** can pursue different pathways.
- Different pathways can be pursued during **different phases.**
- But all pathways should lead toward **the same goal: scaling impact.**

What pathways are you considering?

Brainstorm

What are some possible scaling pathways for your innovation you are considering or already pursuing?

Reflect for a few moments on this question and make a list of ideas in the accompanying PDF. They do not have to fall into the categories of vertical or horizontal, but if that's a helpful framework, you can start there. It is also okay if you do not have a definite answer yet. This is an opportunity for an open brainstorm. You will assess the benefits and drawbacks of different pathways in the next section, and then you can continue to revise these options in consultation with your partners and stakeholders.

I think...

Mini case study: Pursuing multiple pathways

Scaling story: What does it look like to pursue multiple scaling pathways for one innovation?

Mini case-study: PAL's approach to scaling foundational learning assessments

The **People's Action for Learning (PAL Network)**—a Global South-South partnership of many nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) working to promote foundational learning for children in low- and middle-income countries—identified that its member NGOs were pursuing multiple pathways to scale their innovation: a citizen-led assessment approach.

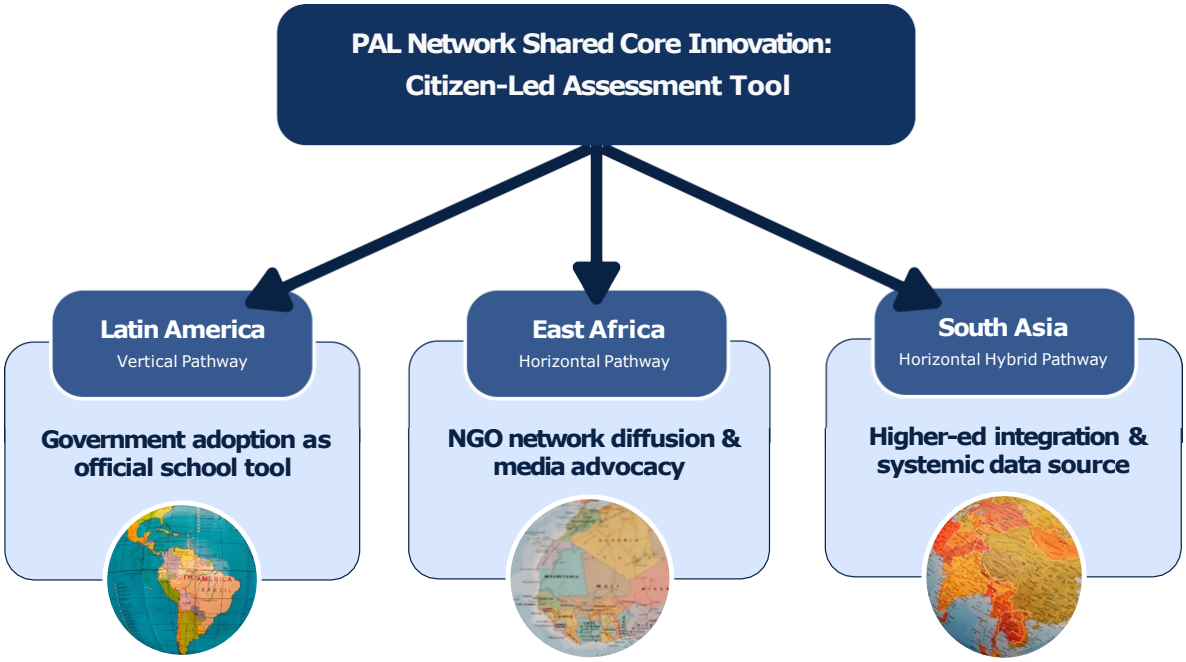
All network members anchored their innovation in three shared core principles:

- Critical literacy and numeracy skills acquired early in childhood require focused attention.

- A wide variety of societal actors can contribute to this foundational stage of learning.
- Schooling is often conflated with this actual learning, but the two are not synonymous.

These foundational beliefs were translated into a citizen-led assessment tool designed for all children, regardless of whether they are formally enrolled in school.

Interviews conducted during the implementation of PAL's assessment tool highlighted how uniquely each member navigated its own scaling journey.



In **one Latin American country**, two universities took advantage of a window of opportunity created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Regional governments wanted a tool that could help them assess children's learning during and after school closures. Given prior experience, these university partners were able to offer rapid training on the citizen-led assessment and the innovation scaled vertically (meaning it moved up the system) in several states as it **became the official formative evaluation tool** used in public schools.

In contrast, **a partner in East Africa** scaled its citizen-led assessment through horizontal scaling (in other words, spreading it out). Foundational learning and numeracy were already a priority issue in the target country, given existing bilateral donor funding for this topic. Government agencies supported the idea of assessing foundational learning, but had not yet taken up the PAL tools. Therefore, the PAL partner focused on **implementing the assessment through other NGOs** within the country, while using existing regional media and education networks to share findings with neighboring countries.

In **a South Asian country**, initial research about scaling showed that a similar horizontal scaling pathway through NGO partners at the district level has evolved into regular assessment implementation with universities and colleges, especially those that train teachers. This could be considered a different type of horizontal scaling—with the **assessment being integrated into existing practices** across the universities. Data and analysis of children's learning are now collected from most states in this country, with periodic reports becoming a key source of information even for governments. Participation in international forums and platforms has also helped create external visibility.

Doers, payers, and other considerations when evaluating scaling pathways

Now that you know that there are different pathways to arrive at the same goal and you know a bit about different types of scaling pathways (including vertical and horizontal approaches), it is time to think about how to assess these different pathways and identify the best one(s) to reach your scaling goal. When considering pathways, it helps to think about who will deliver the innovation during the scaling process and at scale, who will pay for the innovation during the scaling process and at scale, and what methods will be pursued to achieve the scaling goal. Pathways also consider how these roles will transition among actors over time.

Kevin Starr and Laura Hattendorf from the Mulago Foundation talk about determining the "doer" and "payer" at scale. They tell us that when trying to determine scaling pathways, it is important to answer the questions:

- **Who will be delivering the initiative when the scaling goal is reached? (Doer)**
- **Who will be financing the initiative when it operates at large scale? (Payer)**

"The Doer and the Payer: A Simple Approach to Scale"

GO TO ARTICLE

Who is doing the work at scale?

Think about who you envision will ultimately be delivering your innovation at scale. If this actor is different from who is doing it now, how will this transition happen? Are you handing over full control when the work is at scale, are you delivering the innovation collaboratively for the long-term, or delivering the innovation on your own?



The originating organization



Public sector workers (teachers, inspectors, school heads etc.)



Other NGOs or community organizations



Government officials (elected or appointed leaders)



Private sector companies or partners



A coalition of actors

Changing roles

If you are not doing the work of implementation at scale, what will be your organization's role at scale?

Look through the list below to explore some possibilities (though these are not exhaustive).

- **Direct delivery of the innovation**
- **Monitoring and evaluation**
- **Training and capacity building**
- **Researching adaptations**
- **Advocacy and building buy-in**
- **Reaching those left behind**
- **Supporting learning communities**
- **Sharing the innovation with others**
- **We will no longer be involved**

Who will be paying at scale?

Think about who will pay for ongoing delivery at scale.

Some possible options could be:

- Bilateral or multilateral funding
- Government budget allocations (national)
- Government budget allocations (state, district, or other subnational)
- User fees or other profit generation from the innovation
- City or local council service budgets
- Private philanthropy funds or grants
- Private sector partnerships or innovative financing models
- In-kind donations of time or resources from the community

Additional considerations when evaluating scaling pathways

BUDGET	EXPERTISE	CAPACITY	EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND SUSTAINABILITY

How much will it cost to implement this at scale?
How will budget be shared by different stakeholders? (More on this in the module on "Costing and Financing for Scaling").



BUDGET	EXPERTISE	CAPACITY	EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND SUSTAINABILITY

What skills, knowledge, or expertise will you need?
How will this change as scaling progresses? (More on this in the section on "Transitioning roles during scaling").



BUDGET	EXPERTISE	CAPACITY	EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND SUSTAINABILITY

What capacity do different actors currently have to implement this at scale?
What capacity needs to be built or shared between partners? (More on this in the module on "Scaling with People and Partners").



BUDGET	EXPERTISE	CAPACITY	EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND SUSTAINABILITY

What are the equity and inclusion tradeoffs of this pathway? How can they be addressed? Is this pathway sustainable? (More on how to assess this in the section on "Equity considerations").



Assessing and adapting scaling pathways

Scaling pathways, once chosen, **are not static** but need to be continually revisited and revised along the way based on progress made, lessons learned, and changes in the broader environment.

The following video shares an example of how a scaling pathway might be adjusted during the process.

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript: You've chosen a scaling pathway, your team is making progress, and then something unexpected happens. Challenges arise; new opportunities appear. This is all part of the journey. In the first video, we looked at how to choose a scaling pathway that fits your goals, resources, capacity, and context. Here, we explore how your pathway might shift and how to respond when it does. Let's return to an earlier example of a teacher training program designed to help educators adopt more inclusive practices. After reviewing possible pathways, your team initially decided to prioritize training other NGOs to deliver the course in new regions. it seemed promising, low cost, and able to build on existing partner relationships. However, several years in, you've learned some things. Supporting NGOs is taking more resources than expected. Some partner NGOs lack experience in education, so your team is spending extra time supporting them. Some NGOs have made big changes to the training and the data shows that this may be diminishing the program's impact.

Then, a new opportunity arises. The government begins revising the National Teacher Training Guidelines and invites your organization to join the consultation committee. Your team pauses, reviews the data, and reassesses your pathway. Scaling pathways are like travel routes. They're meant to get you to your goal, and they can adjust along the way. Maybe a road is unexpectedly closed, maybe a new shortcut appears, or maybe a detour leads somewhere even better than you'd planned. After regrouping, talking to partners, and importantly, looking at the evidence, including impact and cost data, you decide to add an additional pathway, working with government to embed key aspects of your training into the revised National Teacher Training Guidelines. Now, you and your team will need to think about government capacity, how core elements of the program will be maintained, and how to transition your role to support the government. You don't want to completely abandon your original pathway, so you also identify three partner NGOs you have already trained and together develop a cost-sharing model to continue training other NGOs.

Of course, pursuing multiple pathways brings trade-offs. Resources must be shared. New expertise is needed. Coordination becomes more complex. To manage this, your team forms an internal scaling unit focused on partner coordination, real-time analysis of data, and making sure both pathways remain aligned with your long-term scaling goal.

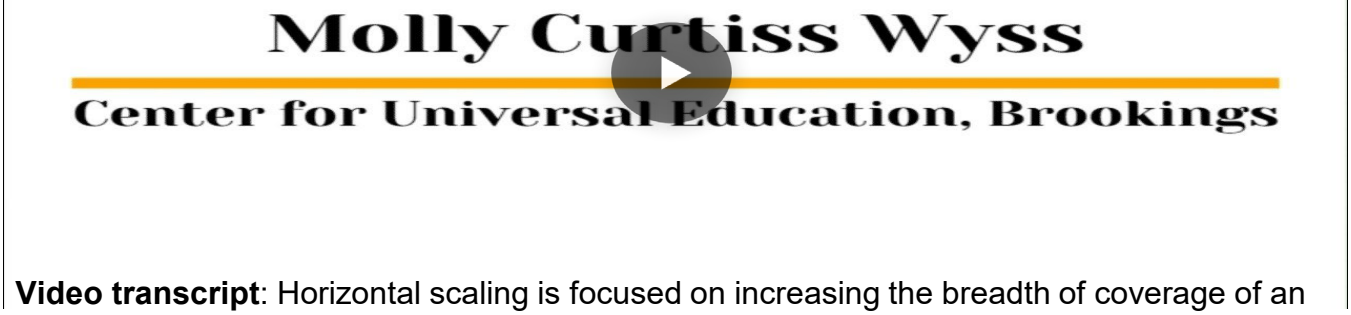
These videos are here to help you think strategically about scaling. The real work begins when you apply these ideas to your own context. Don't hold onto a plan that no longer fits. As your context evolves, it's okay for your pathway to change. What matters is staying intentional and flexible working collaboratively and remaining focused on the impact you're trying to create.

Optional: Additional examples of scaling pathways and alternative pathways frameworks

Interested in exploring more examples of scaling pathways?

Watch the videos below, which include different examples of pathways in both the horizontal and vertical scaling categories.

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript: Horizontal scaling is focused on increasing the breadth of coverage of an intervention, expanding from one geographic area to another or to additional beneficiaries in order to reach more people and communities. Some people call this scaling out, replication, or diffusion. There are a lot of different options of what horizontal scaling can look like. One is about growing an organization such that the presence, reach, and operations of the organization that is already delivering the innovation are expanded so they can operate in more locations or reach more communities with impact. Another option is franchising the innovation, where other organizations adopt the model in order to deliver it in new locations or to new communities as agents of the original organization. In this approach, the original organization retains some control over who is implementing the innovation and how they're doing it. A third version is providing open-source access so that the innovation materials and approach are made freely available and other organizations can implement the innovation in their own contexts and communities, but without any control being retained by the implementing organization or the original organization.

A fourth example is through fostering a social movement where different groups and organizations that share a focus on a specific problem or an intended impact are brought together through an ongoing campaign, network, coalition, or movement. A final example is commercialization, which is something you might see more often in scaling in the private sector, where the innovation model is adopted by a company or a social enterprise and made commercially available. It might be helpful to concretize this through a specific example.

So, in this hypothetical, ABC organization has developed and tested a learning assessment tool for secondary school students. And it wants to scale this tool to all schools in country Y. One way they could pursue a horizontal scaling pathway is through expanding their own direct implementation. So, this would mean that ABC organization would grow its own presence and activities in the country so that they can deliver the assessment with impact at scale themselves This would include securing additional resources from their funder to open new offices in each region, hire additional staff, and build their internal capacity. In this case, ABC organization would remain the implementer or the “doer” at scale, and their current funder would remain the one paying. One thing they need to consider though, is whether this source of funding is truly sustainable at scale over the long term. And if not, if they can find a more reliable source of resources. Another option for scaling horizontally would be through commercialization where ABC organization could sell the assessment tool to business T who would then sell access to interested customers. In this alternative horizontal approach to scaling, this business would be the implementer or the “doer” at scale and their customers would be the payers. One consideration here is whether this approach has equity concerns and risks leaving out marginalized users who cannot pay for the product.

A third version of scaling horizontally in this case would be through franchising delivery where ABC organization engages and trains other NGOs who are already working in different parts of the country to deliver the assessment tool in the communities in which they're operating. In this case, these other NGOs are implementing at scale and their funders or resources are funding at scale. One consideration here is that ABC organization may lose some oversight over how the assessment is being adapted and implemented by these other NGOs. A fourth version is to make the innovation open source. So finally, ABC organization could scale the impact of the assessment tool horizontally by making it freely available to all the education NGOs and school leaders across the country who can then choose to use the assessment tool as they wish to support their own work. So similarly, in this case, the other NGOs and organizations are the “doers” at scale and their funders are the payers. One caveat here that ABC organization needs to consider is that this pathway risks growing the reach of the tool but sacrificing its impact.

See the video transcript on vertical scaling pathways below.



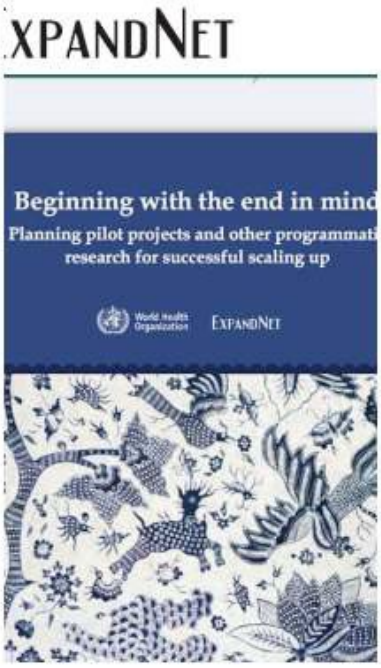
Video transcript: The next scaling pathway we'll talk about is called vertical scaling. Vertical scaling focuses on integrating key aspects of an innovation or initiative into broader government systems at the national or sub-national level and mainstreaming its delivery into normal operations, including budgets, processes, data collection, assessments, job descriptions. Some people call this scaling up or mainstreaming. There are a few different examples of what vertical scaling might look like. One is institutionalization, where the government gradually takes on both delivery and financing of the initiative and incorporates the model or just elements of it into its everyday functioning that eventually becomes part of the new normal or the way that the government operates. Policy influence is another example of vertical scaling in which changes are made to the way that this problem or opportunity is being addressed at the policy level. We might see influences in political, regulatory, legal, budgetary systems in ways that support delivering and sustaining the impact of the innovation.

So, if we want to go back to our original example, where ABC organization wants to scale its assessment tool, they could also pursue a vertical scaling approach. If they focused on institutionalization, ABC could scale the impact of their innovation by working with the government to gradually incorporate the use of this assessment tool into the activities and job descriptions of public school teachers, such that eventually it would become the standard practice across the country for how secondary school students are assessed in the classroom. In this case, eventually the government would serve as both the doer and the payer implementing at scale. One consideration here is that through this vertical pathway to scale, ABC organization needs to carefully plan for this gradual handover to ensure it takes place without loss of impact. This means assessing the government's capacity, teachers' engagement, potential constraints in the school ecosystems. And this also means working collaboratively with the government to determine how ABC's own role will shift over time to support this process.

Other scaling pathways frameworks









This course introduces a framework for understanding two broad pathways to scale here: vertical and horizontal. However, there are many different ways to envision scaling pathways.

It does not matter which framework you choose; what matters is that you have a clear sense of how the pathway(s) you are pursuing contribute to your scaling goal.

- **What can apple trees tell us about scaling IDRC**
- **A Guide to Scale Pathways Spring Impact**
- **Scaling Management Framework MSI**
- **Scaling Pathways CASE at Duke**
- **Scaling Up Hartmann & Linn**
- **The Scaling Scan CGIAR**

Evaluating scaling pathways

Assessing scaling pathways

Answer the following questions in the accompanying PDF.

Look back at the brainstormed list of pathways that you developed. Pick one pathway to explore further. Think about the answers to each question below as it relates to this pathway.

- In this pathway, who will be the implementer (doer) at scale?
- In this pathway, who will be the payer at scale?
- What will your organization's role be at scale?

I think...

Are there any specific equity, inclusion, or sustainability concerns with this pathway you want to consider further?

I think...

Recall your scaling goal from the previous module. Does this pathway lead to that scaling goal? Do you need to consider other potential pathways to reach your goal?

I think...

Look back at the brainstormed list of pathways that you developed. Pick a second pathway to explore further. Think about the answers to each question below as it relates to this pathway?

- In this pathway, who will be the implementer (doer) at scale?
- In this pathway, who will be the payer at scale?
- What will your organization's role be at scale?

I think...

Are there any specific equity, inclusion, or sustainability concerns with this pathway?

I think...

Consider the two (or more) pathways you looked at. Which pathway(s) do you think make the most sense to focus on to create impact at scale? Why?

I think...

Intermediate scaling goals

Review the long-term scaling goal you developed in the previous module. Then reflect on the scaling pathway or pathways you identified.

What are 2-3 intermediate scaling goals you want to focus on based on these pathways and your ultimate scaling goal?

Example:

Long-term scaling goal: By 2030, 2,000 secondary students in San Pedro will achieve improved mathematics outcomes by participating in after-school tutoring programs jointly run by the NGO Aprendemos and the San Pedro local government.

Scaling pathways: Horizontal Scaling through expanding the capacity of Aprendemos and scaling the program into new schools. Vertical Scaling through training in-service mathematics teachers in core remedial tutoring techniques to institutionalize the practice.

Intermediate goals: By 2027, 500 secondary students will demonstrate improved math outcomes through the after-school tutoring program, and 40% of San Pedro schools will host the initiative. By 2029, 50 teachers will serve as confident master coaches, training other teachers on the Aprendemos math tutoring approach.

I think...

Module 3 summary

Identifying pathways to scale

In this section of the course, we explored how scaling happens through scaling goals and different pathways to scale.

By now you should know…

- Scaling is neither static nor linear—you may need to update or change your pathways as scaling progresses.
- There are multiple pathways to scaling impact. Different pathways can be used to pursue the same scaling goal, but it is important not to overwhelm yourself with too many options.
- It is important to consider who will be the "doer" and the "payer" at scale, as well as any budget, expertise, equity, and sustainability considerations when selecting a scaling pathway. These answers contribute to your choosing the right pathway(s).

In this module you completed the following activities and reflections:

- What pathways are you considering?
- Evaluating scaling pathway(s) options

Discuss with your team

1. What are some of the pathways to scale we are considering pursuing?
2. What pathways to scale do we want to learn more about?
3. Who will be the doer and the payer at scale in our selected pathway(s)? Are they already doing this role? If not, how will this transition happen?

What is next?

Now that we have covered how scaling happens, we will move into some of the key relationships between people and partners that can impact scaling.

Scaling with people and partners



START MODULE

Module 4 overview

Scaling with people and partners

Scaling is a collaborative endeavor. It is extremely rare for any one actor or organization to possess all the skills and connections required to scale sustainably and equitably. Even when governments are leading the way, they often reach out to civil society, communities, or the private sector for key expertise, connections, or resources they lack.

Therefore, **a critical aspect of scaling is forging alliances with other stakeholders** in order to combine resources and skills towards a shared scaling goal. Another critical aspect is cultivating leaders and champions both within and outside of the government who can support the scaling process. This module will explore people and partnerships to support scaling.

Learning objectives

1. Understand that scaling is a collaborative process involving many partners and stakeholders.

2. Think about goals you may share with other partners and actors and how you can collaborate in pursuit of these shared goals.

3. Consider the role of different types of champions and how they can be identified and engaged to support sustainable scaling.

4. Identify potential opposition and stakeholders who stand to lose from your scaling efforts, and plan how to bring them into the process.

5. Plan for how scaling roles and responsibilities will evolve among actors as scaling progresses, and plan for how you will build and share capacity for scaling over time.







Key Terms

- **Stakeholders:** People with an interest or concern in the topic or effort, or who may be impacted by the scaling.
- **Partnerships:** Long-term relationships among organizations, institutions, groups, and other actors united around a shared goal.
- **Champions:** Dedicated individuals willing to use their resources, connections, time, and expertise to support scaling—often in service of a broader goal, like improving the education system or serving a specific subpopulation.
- **Capacity for scaling:** An organization's ability to undertake new roles or operations as scaling progresses and pathways evolve. This includes an organization's structure, human resources, culture, and time. It also often refers to an organization's ability to increase the skills of other partners as scaling progresses.

Module Outline

- Partnerships
- Opponents, critics, and absent stakeholders
- Reflecting on your partners and champions
- Transitioning and evolving roles during scaling
- Optional: Tools for stakeholder mapping
- Champions
- Mini case study: Scaling the FEP in Jordan
- Capacity for scaling
- Optional: Assessing partners' capacity and roles

Partnerships for scaling

Partnerships are long-term working relationships among organizations, institutions, groups, and other actors united around a shared goal. Research shows that the following actions contribute to effective scaling partnerships:

- Establishing a clear, shared goal;
- Aligning incentives toward meeting this goal;
- Ensuring the innovation's impact reaches the learners;
- Building trust among partners.

Explore each element in the accordion below.

Establish a clear, shared goal

Interventions that have effectively leveraged partnerships in support of scaling typically focus on addressing a binding constraint or key challenge that all partners feel is an urgent priority, such as a lack of high-quality early childhood

development opportunities or a shortage of qualified teachers. Alternatively, partnerships can also be forged to respond to a sudden window of opportunity for change.

Despite the complexity and scope of these challenges, successful partnerships often find a way to clearly define and explain to broad audiences what problem they are targeting, what shared outcomes they hope to achieve, and what their strategy is. A clear and collaboratively developed goal is important to ensure partners are aligned and working toward the same end point.

Align incentives

A focus on shared outcomes is important to help partners align incentives, which is essential so that the time, skills, knowledge, and efforts of multiple individuals are channeled in ways that produce jointly valued outcomes. What do we mean by incentives? Hartmann and Linn (2008) say incentives are a key means to drive behavior of actors and institutions towards scaling.

In the absence of a profit motive in education, other incentives are needed to substitute for market forces, such as rewards, competitions, evaluations, and pressure through political processes. Because diverging incentives and scaling visions can be a hindrance to scaling, it is important to clarify each partner's motivations, incentives, and vision for success from the start.

Ensure accountability to learners

Successful alliances for scaling impact ensure that each partner is held to account for mutually agreed upon results. According to Hartmann and Linn (2008), a functioning accountability system includes three elements: availability and use of information, mechanisms for monitoring performance, and existence of adequate incentives for compliance. When it comes to scaling impact, it is not just accountability as to whether a program or policy is achieving good learning

outcomes, but also whether it is creating the conditions for effective scale and sustainability.

Build trust

At the core of partnerships is trust. This cannot be created overnight, but takes significant time and effort, including making time for regular and frank conversations, developing a shared agenda and discussing incentives, honestly sharing limitations and challenges, and engaging in collaborative decisionmaking and problem-solving. This is especially important when working across diverse stakeholder groups.

Scaling story: Building trust

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript: Something we've learned in our scaling journey is how important it is for us to build trust and relationship with our scaling partners. And that takes time and it takes a level of flexibility of us as an organization and of what we invest in in the early stages. So a good example of this is with our Ahlan Simpson work with the Ministry of Health in Jordan. When we first started working with them, they were interested in having us partner with them on a smoking cessation campaign, which has connections to early childhood development with reducing secondhand smoke exposure for young children and whatnot. But it really wasn't exactly what we were intending to scale up, but we said yes to working with them. And that was a crucial point in our scaling journey because it built up that trust as well as the credibility and showed us in practice how we were working directly on needs that this ministry had so that we could build up that time to then work together to identify wider systems level needs across early childhood development ultimately getting us to the stage we are today where we are scaling up early childhood development resources integrated across primary health care centers in Jordan.

For more on these concepts, look at *Millions Learning: Scaling up quality education in developing countries* by Jenny Perlman Robinson, Rebecca Winthrop and Eileen McGivney and *Scaling Up: A Framework and Lessons for Development Effectiveness from Literature and Practice* by Arntraud Hartmann and Johannes F. Linn.

Millions learning: Scaling up quality education in developing countries

GO TO ARTICLE

Scaling Up: A Framework and Lessons for Development Effectiveness from Literature and Practice

GO TO ARTICLE

Competition: A challenge or an asset?



In many cases, there are multiple innovations operating in the same context trying to address similar problems. For example, there may be multiple edtech innovations being proposed to the Ministry of Education for adoption, or several different literacy programs being used in schools in the same city.



This competition can be challenging. However, if you keep in mind the scaling principle of being problem-driven, rather than solution-focused, this competition can become an asset. By focusing on the shared challenge to address, it is possible to build coalitions of actors and potentially leverage the best of each to accelerate progress for all.



Working groups that bring together actors focused on similar innovations can be a powerful mechanism for creating advocacy and awareness around the topic to maximize available resources. Collaborative working groups can also be effective for presenting a united front.



Decisionmakers are confronted with many innovations to choose from. Bringing them into these multistakeholder groups—so they can be part of the conversation and assess for themselves which innovations or combination of innovation components best addresses their goals—is another strategic way of turning competition into an asset.

Champions

The word "champions" is used often in scaling conversations and can mean different things. It is therefore important to define and think strategically about what exactly a champion is, and is not.

A champion is a dedicated individual willing to use their resources, connections, time, and expertise to support scaling—often in service of a broader goal like improving the education system. Champions can come from government, civil society, schools, local communities, the private sector, or any other stakeholder group.

Scaling quality learning requires champions and leaders at all levels—inside and outside the classroom and education ecosystem. It includes visionary leaders at high levels to co-design or lead an initiative; mid-level leaders with proximity, knowledge, commitment, and political will to scale and sustain an innovation; and local leaders who might not be as well known as government officials but whose everyday efforts contribute to children learning or community acceptance. In short, **champions are credible, determined, and connected individuals with the vision and the skills** to motivate others, foster commitment, and secure resources to move from idea to adoption in an education system.

Some ways to identify and engage champions in scaling

Sharing evidence of impact

This includes sharing qualitative and/or quantitative evidence of impact through reports, conversations, and presentations and inviting prospective champions to experience the impact of the innovation themselves through site visits or learning exchanges.

Reaching out to leaders at different levels

This includes expanding outreach beyond national leaders to include mid-level decisionmakers, state and local authorities, actors outside the education sector, and school leaders and teachers.

Investing time in relationship-building

This includes taking the requisite time to understand potential champions' own goals and aspirations, and finding opportunities to share or publicize these champions' own work through conferences, publications, and events. This kind of work requires continuous informal updates in addition to formal points of connection and open, trusting communication.

Engaging partners in scaling research

This is essentially treating champions as scaling partners in some or all aspects of the work. It is a time-intensive (and sometimes messy) level of champion engagement and often requires sacrificing some ownership over the innovation. But if done well, it can be effective for enabling genuine co-creation, which contributes to all of the aims of engaging champions including a diversity of viewpoints, establishing additional effort, and adding to the commitment of the scaling effort.

CONTINUE

Scaling stories: Nurturing relationships at all levels

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript: We found that as they were meeting, they were able to open up more about issues related to them. They were able to say things that they don't normally say when they are meeting as government officials. It was like a free space for them to interact more and interact better. I think that interested them more and they joined together to ensure that they did the best of their ability. So, they also found visits to schools as a great opportunity to learn about the Learner Guide program. One of them said, indeed seeing is believing, because when I listened to you explaining the program it did not have the same effect. I don't think it does justice to the My Better World program if you listen rather than you see it for yourself. And he said for himself he felt like he now had to rethink the way he would relate with non-government actors in dealing with those aspects of the work that we do that supports government to make their work better but also to feel more comfortable working with non-government actors.

Be aware of some common misconceptions about champions.

A champion is not:

A promoter who is only engaged for public events

A champion is a co-creator and should be actively engaged in the scaling process.

A common mistake is to only engage champions for public events or presentations or when final research is available.

Champions should be engaged throughout the process (when possible) to get their advice and feedback on the strategy.

This will create more genuine buy-in and can help teams benefit from champions'

A representative of an entire entity or group

A champion is an individual with their own interests and perspectives.

While these may be informed by their experiences and position in the system, it is important to not assume they speak on behalf of an entire group or institution.

A champion is not a short-cut to fostering buy-in from stakeholder groups.

A shortcut to institutionalization or government ownership

A common confusion is that if a key high-level government member can become a champion, they will be able to unlock government funding for the program or help get the program into official policies.

In reality, budgetary and policymaking processes are complex and not under the influence of one individual.

A more realistic understanding of champions is that they can provide insights into these processes, identify possible windows of opportunity, and give useful feedback about how the innovation can align with current priorities.

An entire organization or institution

There is a distinction between partners and allies (which tend to be groups, organizations, or institutions) and champions, who are specific individuals.

The role of a champion is slightly different from a partner organization because it is dependent on the position, personality, and background of that specific person.

Optional: Types of Scaling Champions

Explore the tabs below to learn more about each type of scaling champion, what they care about, and some ways to engage them.

Systems-change champions

Who?

- Systems-change champions are most likely mid- to high-level individuals inside government, although not exclusively in ministries of education. In some cases, they are former government officials.
- These champions are usually charismatic, experienced, driven by concern about a specific problem in their context, and have a wide network of influence. Because they are charismatic and good at maintaining relationships, these champions tend to value personal connections. While they are needs-focused, they are typically not idealistic and have a realistic view of the current political economy, how to accomplish things in the public sector, and what progress is feasible.

What do they care about?

- They are individuals focused on addressing a tightly identified issue or problem, rather than promoting any specific innovation. They are more likely to support a coalition effort than an individual project, and likely to advocate for contextualization if an innovation is being transferred from another location.
- Because they are problem/opportunity-focused, they are interested in impact. Therefore, a combination of offering them qualitative data and inviting them to observe outcomes first-hand can be effective for garnering their interest.

How to engage?

- It is better to approach these champions for substantive input or advice on an issue rather than try to "sell" them on the innovation itself.
- Systems-change champions are not simply promoters but instead expect to be thought partners who influence the scaling approach. It is important to genuinely seek their advice and feedback. However, because of their time constraints, professional responsibilities, and need to be perceived as independent, they cannot be expected to be deeply involved in the daily work of scaling nor can they attend every meeting. It is important to identify specific moments when they can be strategically involved.
- Systems change champions often play an important role in the following: High-level events where hierarchy and representation matter; individual meetings where they can connect the scaling team to different government agencies and departments; and strategy sessions where their knowledge of windows-of-opportunity can inform the scaling strategy.
- This type of champion is hard to cultivate! In success cases, a systems-change champion is usually part of the scaling journey from the beginning, rather than brought on later. However, that does not mean that it is not useful to look for these champions to engage at other stages of the scaling process.

Innovation champions —

Who?

These are individuals who have actually experienced the innovation in a positive way—as implementers or beneficiaries (or both)—and want to promote it to their peers. These champions are specifically focused on the impact of the innovation itself (more than the problem/opportunity) and how to expand it to others.

What do they care about?

They are likely to be "early adopters"—curious people willing to try out new ideas and push for innovation as a general principle. Like systems change champions,

they are often driven by a desire to address an identified need or effect concrete change (though often at a more local level). If they see that the innovation creates positive change, they will spend time persuading peers of its value.

Why?

- Innovation champions are often less likely to create change at the policy level, but they can be instrumental for scaling and sustaining the innovation at the classroom, school, or community level. They typically work or live in the site of the innovation.
- They are important to scaling because of their credibility and connections to their peers. Particularly for innovations that involve teachers or community members, a recommendation from a near-peer often carries greater weight than a policy mandate or directive from a supervisor. These champions can fill that role.

How to engage?

- Similar to systems-change leaders, innovation champions should be viewed as thought partners, rather than just promoters. They likely have valuable insights about what is and is not working with the innovation in their context and how it can be adapted for improved uptake.
- It is important not to presume that innovation champions represent their peer group. They are individuals stepping up to support the innovation. They might be early adopters or outliers, and the reasons they choose to support the innovation might not convince others in their peer group in the same way (for more, see Rogers' work on Diffusion of Innovations and late-stage adopters).
- These types of champions are typically quite busy, and so it is critical to respect their time and engage them in genuine—not tokenistic—ways, which may include: (1) Inviting them to share their experiences with the innovation with their peers through observations, testimonials, and participation in public meetings, as well as through virtual platforms such as WhatsApp groups; and (2) creating authentic spaces for them to contribute concretely during innovation design and strategy meetings and making sure to show them how their contributions are having a positive effect on scaling.

Champions of the wider concept

Who? What do they care about?

These are champions focused on the broader concept of which the specific innovation is a part. For example, they may be champions of topics such as STEM education, socio-emotional learning, or foundational literacy. These champions may operate in one country, across several countries, or in the global sphere.

Why?

As "connectors," they can be valuable for linking the innovation to a wider community of similar innovations and implementers. Though unlikely to champion the specific innovation itself, they are well positioned to lend support by featuring the innovation as one example of the wider topic.

Champions of the organization

Who?

These are champions who have partnered with or supported the scaling organization in the past.

Why? What do they care about?

They are less focused on the specific innovation but deeply familiar with the organization that is developing, adapting, and implementing the innovation and are willing to speak on behalf of the organization to other stakeholders.

Champions of people impacted by the issue

Who? What do they care about?

These are champions who have personal experience with the issue the innovation addresses and are willing to lend their support if they see that the innovation genuinely meets the needs of identified beneficiaries.

Why?

These individuals may be champions for a specific community or group (for example, displaced populations or children with disabilities) or for a specific geographical area. These champions are highly knowledgeable about the context and can provide valuable insights on relevant barriers that might impede adoption or uptake. They can also be influential for ensuring that equity considerations are integrated throughout the scaling strategy.

How to engage?

These champions should not be viewed as representatives or the sole "voice" of a community, unless they have been empowered to do so (for example, a representative of a teacher's union or a community-action group).

Internal scaling champions

Who? What do they care about?

These are champions within an institution or organization who are already knowledgeable about scaling impact and are committed to incorporating scaling principles into the organization's daily ways of working in a system.

Why?

These people will ask direct, concrete questions about impact, sustainability, and ownership in order to push an organization's thinking forward and advocate for a "scaling mindset" among system participants.

Optional Reading:

Engaging champions for scaling in education: ROSIE thematic brief

GO TO ARTICLE

Opponents, critics, and absent stakeholders

As critical as it is to cultivate relationships with supportive stakeholders at different levels of the ecosystem, it can be equally important to understand potential opponents or those in the education system who stand to lose from an innovation being scaled. **Often, these opposing forces are not present during a pilot stage**—when an initiative does not threaten the status quo or potentially take the place of other innovations—but can become a factor once an initiative has reached a certain size and scaling is underway.

Reducing resistance can often be a more effective strategy than simply "pushing harder" to scale a particular intervention. As such, it is important to **proactively identify and engage early in the scaling process with potential opposition and those who stand to lose from scaling.** This means engaging them in conversation, working to understand and address their concerns, including their voices in the process, and considering how to reduce their potential to be a disruptive force.

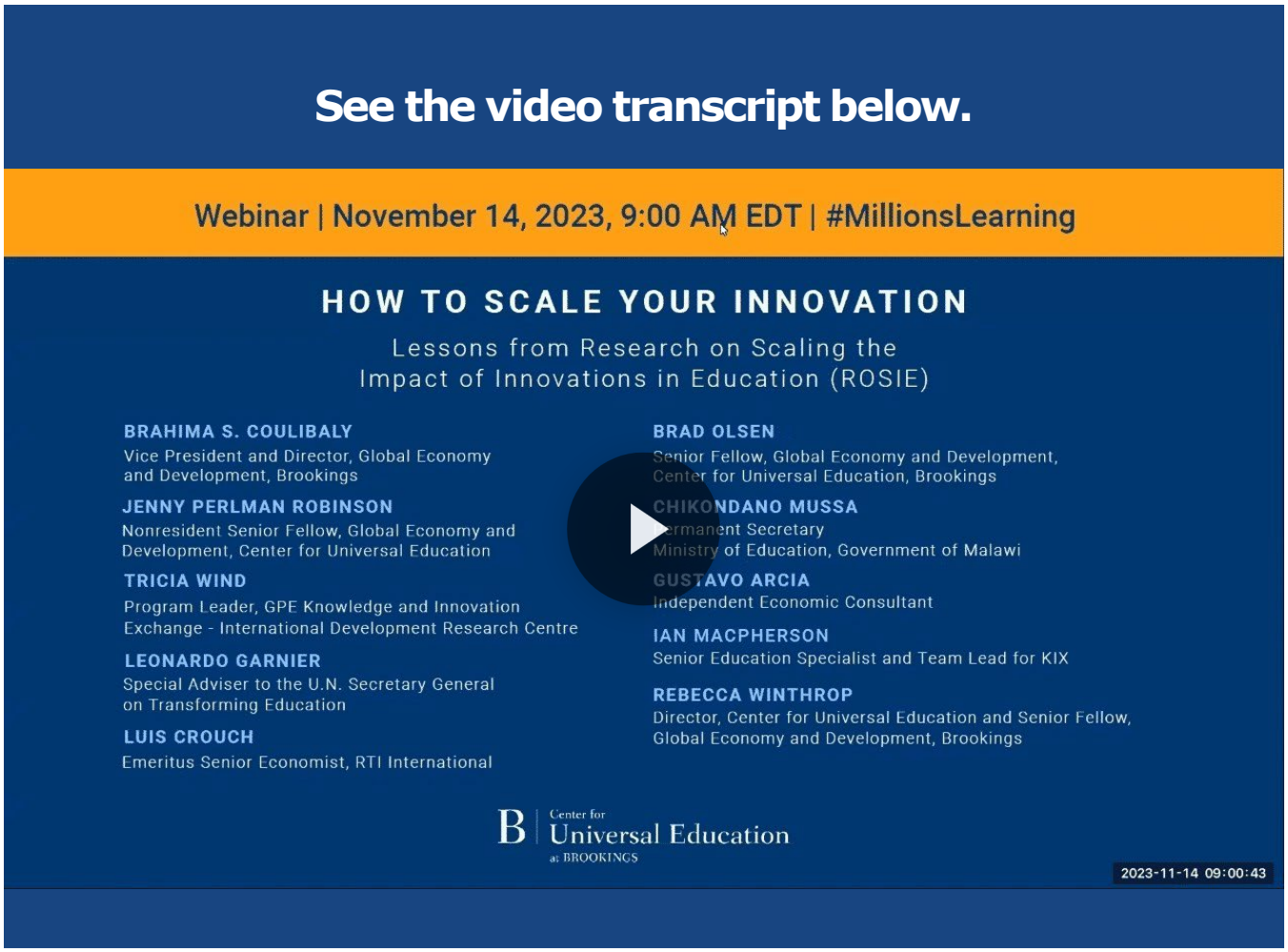
It is especially key to **examine the root causes of opposition or resistance** and consider how your scaling strategy can be adjusted in response. It is not unusual for concerns about a new innovation to derive from social or political factors in the broader environment. Or it can be about ego: bringing someone into the effort makes them feel more included than leaving them outside the work.

Scaling discussion: The role of champions and opponents in scaling

This recorded conversation comes from a public Brookings event from November 2023 that shared findings from the Research on Scaling the Impacts of Innovations in Education study. The full recording can be found here: How to scale your innovation: Lessons from Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education (ROSIE).

This conversation clip features:

- Jenny Perlman Robinson, Nonresident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution,
- Leornardo Garnier, Special Adviser to the U.N. Secretary General on Transforming Education and former Minister of Education of Costa Rica,
- Luis Crouch, Emeritus Senior Economist, RTI
- International Tricia Wind, Program Leader, GPE KIX IDRC



Video transcript:
Jenny Perlman Robinson: We will start by asking you all the same question. In your experience and your perspectives, what kind of people do you believe are essential to include in a scaling approach and any insights as to how best to engage them? So Leonardo, can I turn it over to you?

Leonardo Garnier: Yes, thank you. I'll try to speak not as a special advisor to the UN Secretary General, but rather as a former Minister of Education, because it's more to the point here on how to scale up projects. I like very much your emphasis on scaling impact. There are so many pilot projects that never go beyond that, precisely because they don't ask the questions you're asking. I think that what is critical is to understand that you need to involve people at the different levels of government. Of course, you need champions at the highest level of government. If you have the heads of state interested, of course, if you have the ministers of education or related fields convinced that this is a significant program that should be scaled up, that is critical. But I think you need to identify leaders, not just at the political level, but also at the technical, at the directorial level of the institutions. You have to identify not just the leaders or who will be your champions, you have to be very dedicated also to identify the sources of resistance, who are those persons or parts of the institutions that will likely oppose, fear, or be indifferent to the project, and then develop a strategy how to win them over. In terms of the government, there is a very difficult balance because you want the government and the authorities to be in love with the project and to be their champions.

Leonardo Garnier: However, there is a risk that if they own it very much, not just as national authorities, but even in a partisan way, that governments change. Something that Brad said is you have to be wary of the political cycle. So, if one project is very much felt in a country like belonging to a political party or to a specific minister, then the chances of continuity are lower. So this balance between convincing current authorities to champion it but to champion it as a national transformation not as their personal or their parties political is very important. So this combination, I think, is critical. Having political and technical staff, a narrative that is national in nature, gaining the championship of the current authorities, but making sure that the process will go beyond the current government.

Jenny Perlman Robinson: Wonderful. Thank you so much, Leonardo. And Luis, I'd love to turn to you to jump in here.

Luis Crouch: Sure. I think the question is phrased in terms of what are the kinds of people that you typically deploy or need at different stages of implementation or scale up. And I would say it's always the same people. The types of people don't vary. What varies is how intensely they are involved. So, you typically need people who are advocacy experts, political economy experts, or kind of consensus building experts. And I think Leonardo expressed it very well when he said, some people are going to be opposed. You need people who are good project managers. I mean, this stuff takes logistics and coordination. And, you know, you have different actors involved. They all need to be coordinated. That's stronger in the middle. And then you need also people who are pedagogical experts or experts in the subject matter.

And two quick things to add is that it's not just beginning, middle, and end. There's a pre-beginning. And the projects that I find that are most sustained and scaled are the ones that do a good job with the pre-beginning, which is actually figuring out what it is that the government or the country needs. So, there's a pre-beginning, and then there's a post-end. Namely, you don't want the innovation to just be a branded thing that gets added on to what the government does, but part of how the government regularly does things. And that requires that there's a post-end, if you will. Lastly, the best champions are the ones that you don't engage, are the ones that engage you. So being in the middle of things and understanding and getting picked out by people who are the champions that want to solve a problem rather than you picking them is not always possible, but it may be a good way to frame things, letting people identify you rather than you identifying them.

Jenny Perlman Robinson: It's so helpful how you sort of talked about the sequencing of these various actors. It reminds me of one of our colleagues who was supposed to be with us today, Larry Cooley, who often says we need to fall in love with the problem, not the solution. And as you rightly say, to dedicate enough time on the front end to really understand the needs, as well as on the back end to ensure it becomes just the new normal in the way of working, which I think those two bookends often get shortchanged. But Tricia, would love to bring you into this conversation. Could you share your thoughts as well?

Tricia Wind: When I think about this point about not everybody is a champion or an ally, and what do we do about critique and resistance, I actually think that one of the recent publications from this initiative from Brookings was really helpful in just talking about teachers and thinking about the different teachers that are involved. For instance, at the pilot level, maybe there are some teachers who are involved as the original early adopters, people who actually really embrace the opportunity to try something new.

And then as things expand and impact is increasing, there's a need to engage a much broader set of teachers whose realities are different, who maybe were not supported through the scaffolding of the pilot initiative, but are being asked to implement a new thing in their regular work. And maybe the quality of the implementation from the point of view of the early adopters is not as good. But this is an opportunity to learn, not to see people as resistors so much as folks that we can really learn from to understand what are the points of resistance? What does that come from? What are the institutional inertias and the other competing demands that need to be acknowledged and respected and then see how this innovation can actually really work in the real world.

And then maybe just this point about how the actors that need to be engaged evolve over time. And I think this takes us back to scaling as a journey and that journey has a destination that actually unfolds over time. Because today we're talking about what we understand as optimal scale for this initiative at this moment, but that will change as a context changes, maybe as our understandings and our appreciation of different equity needs evolves. So maybe today's idea of what is optimal scale is at a particular point, but two years from now, we actually realized that it could be improved in a new way by growing that impact in a different set. So that new mindset of scaling will require a new look at the stakeholder mapping exercises.

Jenny Perlman Robinson: That's great. Thank you so much, Tricia. And thanks for reminding us just this dynamic nature of scaling.

Mini case study: Scaling the Financial Education Program in Jordan

In recognition of the importance of financial literacy for young people and in response to concerns around low levels of youth financial inclusion, the Kingdom of Jordan created the National Financial Education Program (FEP) as a core pillar of its National Financial Inclusion Strategy. To make this vision a reality, beginning in 2014, the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Jordanian nonprofit INJAZ, the Central Bank of Jordan, and other key partners from the financial and education sectors worked together to design, develop, and implement a phased rollout of the program across the country.

Today, FEP is a compulsory class for all school students in grades 7-12. The course offers a full curriculum dedicated to financial literacy that is designed to be interactive, engaging, and relevant to students' daily lives.

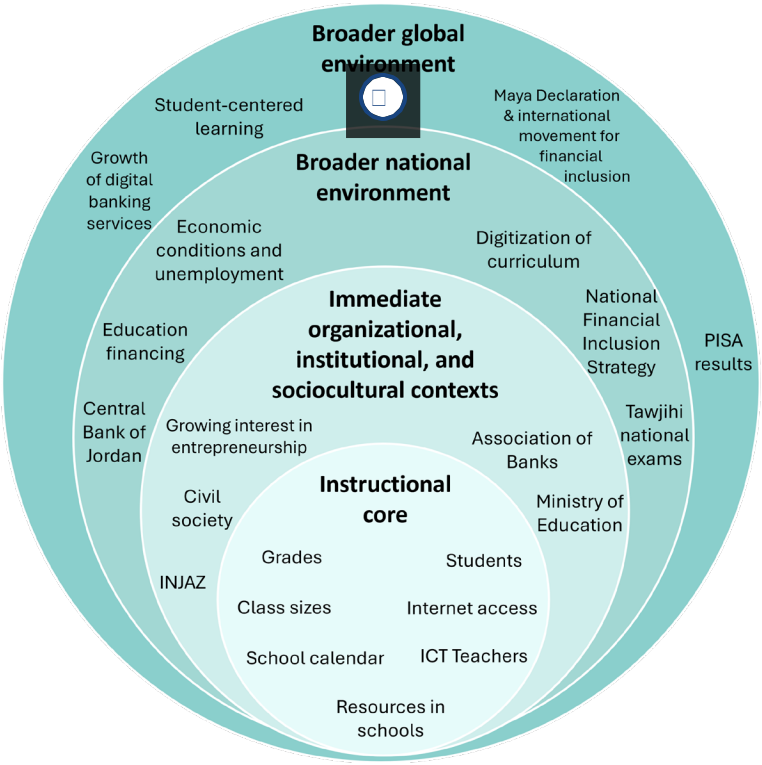
This mini case study will highlight how the broader environment, innovative partnerships, and champions played a role in the scaling of the FEP in Jordan.



Broader Environment

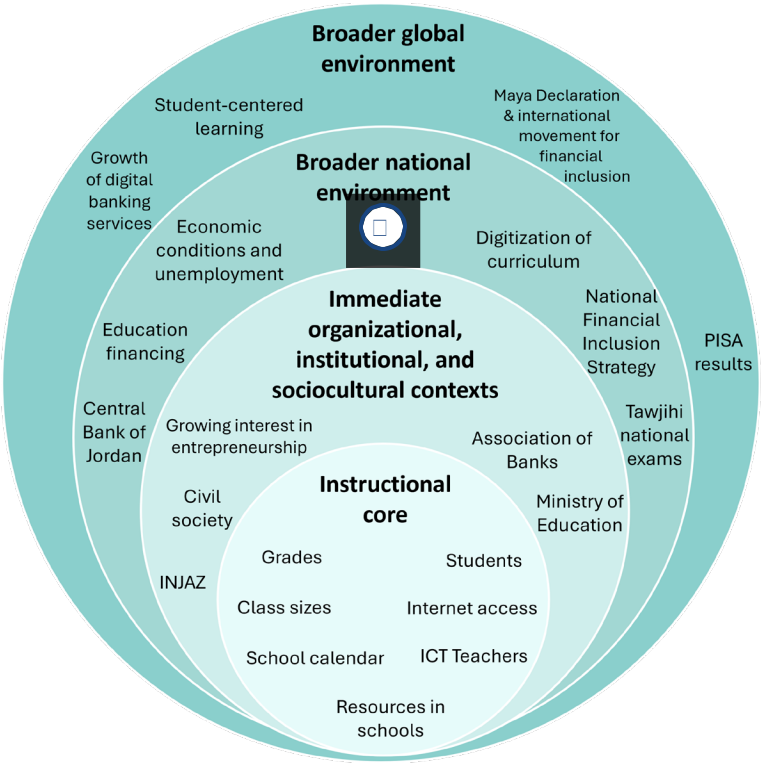
In the case of FEP, a newfound global momentum for financial inclusion and financial education, alongside international reports revealing low levels of financial literacy in Jordan, created urgency and therefore momentum on the part of a few high-level champions. This brought critical support for scaling FEP.

Below learn more about how different levels of the environment affected scaling in this case.



International momentum

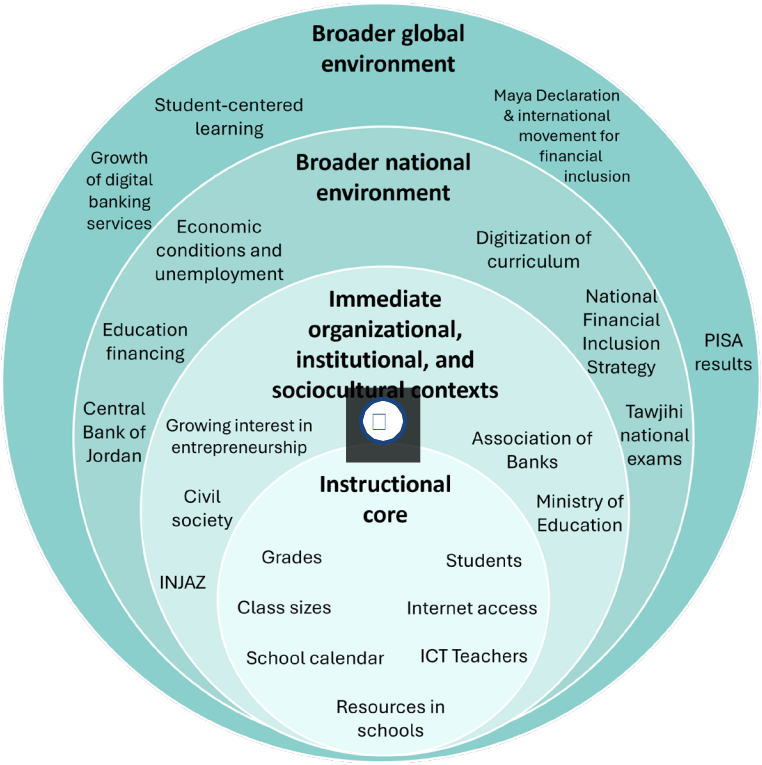
The decade before the launch of the FEP saw growing recognition of the importance of financial literacy and inclusion at the international level. In 2011, the Alliance for Financial Inclusion, a policy leadership alliance owned and led by member central banks and financial regulatory institutions, launched the Maya Declaration, a global initiative for responsible and sustainable financial inclusion that aims to reduce poverty and ensure financial stability for the benefit of all.



National alignment

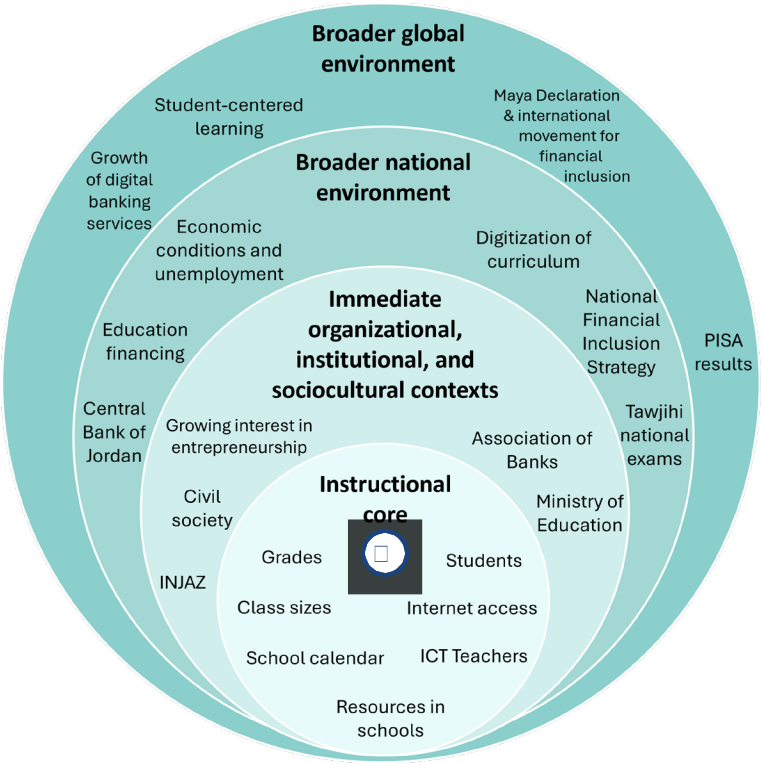
Within Jordan, advocacy efforts leveraged global momentum for financial education to gain traction for change at the country level, utilizing international data to highlight high levels of financial exclusion in Jordan, low levels of financial literacy in Jordan, and global benefits of financial education. The issue of high youth unemployment was also used to highlight the importance of equipping youth with 21st century skills like financial and digital literacy.

The 2017 launch of Jordan's National Financial Inclusion Strategy provided additional political support for scaling the FEP in schools across the country. Although the FEP and other financial inclusion programs pre-date it, the NFIS was a deliberate effort to bring these different approaches together to address the multiple facets of financial inclusion at a national level.



Education system context

While there were great successes with getting support from high-level champions, obtaining consistent buy-in at other levels of the system proved to be more of a challenge. A number of adaptations had to be made to the scaling approach to foster buy-in at other levels.
Within the education system, many teachers had high workloads and/or expertise in subject areas other than financial literacy, which initially translated into low buy-in for FEP. Alongside this were challenges around teacher shortages and working conditions that also constrained quality implementation of FEP. However, there was also interest in the new curriculum and the new student-centered approaches to learning amongst some educators.



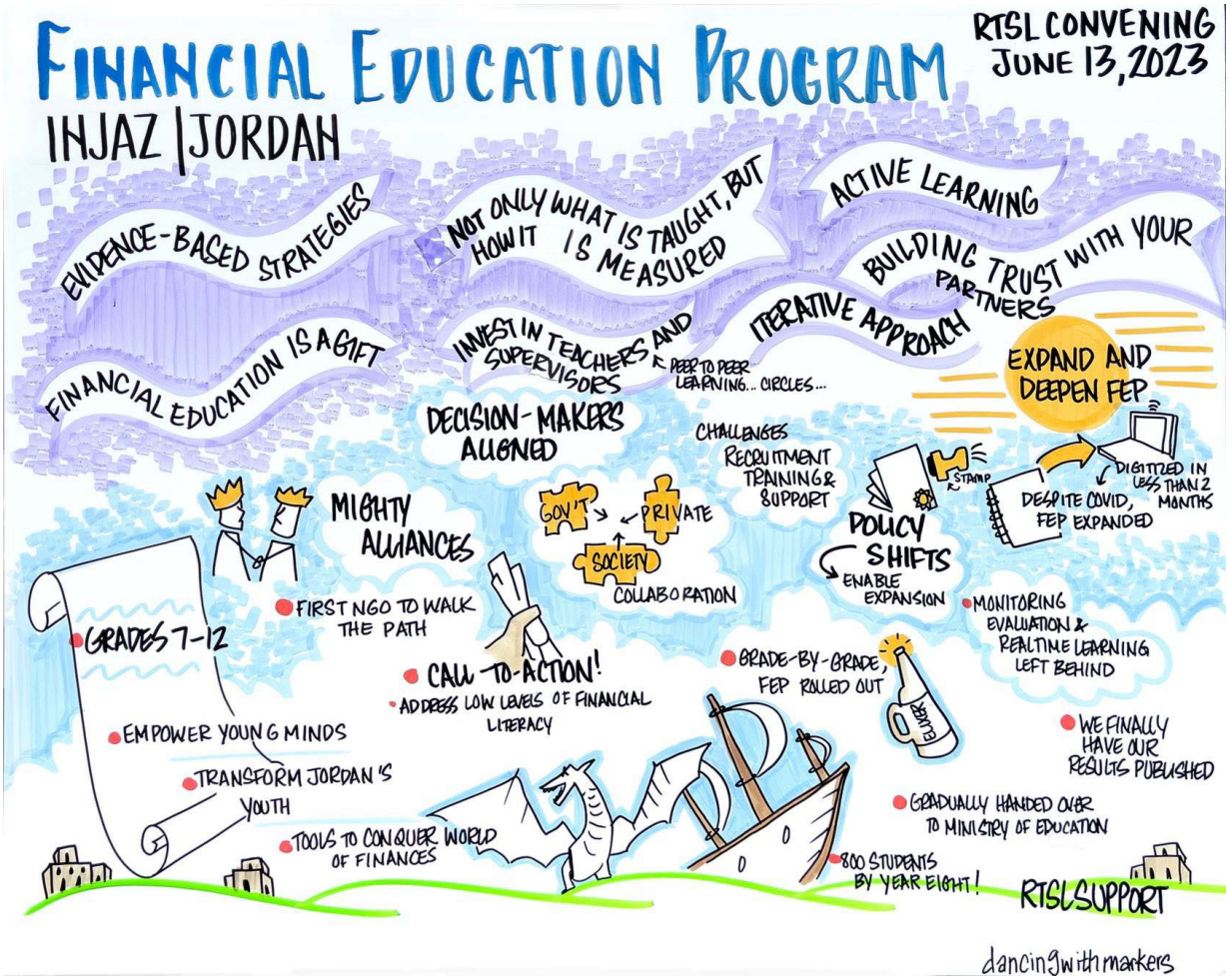
Teaching and learning environment

Preparation for the critically important Tawjihi exam in the higher grades emphasizes rote memorization and learning for the test, which further disincentivized teachers from adopting new interactive learning approaches used for FEP or focusing on topics outside the exam content, such as financial literacy.

Innovative partnerships

The partnership between the Central Bank of Jordan, Ministry of Education, and local NGO INJAZ, along with other key national institutions and other stakeholders, was crucial to the FEP and a groundbreaking approach within the Jordanian education system. The complementary expertise and responsibilities of each partner offered important contributions that strengthened and advanced the scaling process.

An essential feature of this partnership was its funding approach. To finance FEP, the CBJ and all commercial banks agreed to contribute a portion of their local annual profits. From the beginning of the project until 2019, each bank contributed 0.15% of local annual profits with a minimum contribution of 20,000 JOD. Starting in 2020, the proportion increased to 0.3% of local annual profits, with a minimum contribution of 40,000 JOD, as resource needs for scaling FEP grew and simultaneously an economic downturn due to the pandemic decreased bank profits. These contributions were in addition to annual contributions from the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation and the Al-Hussein Fund for Excellence. Funding was channeled through and governed by the Central Bank of Jordan.



The partners shared responsibilities in the following ways:

Financing

The involvement of the banking community and other key partners, secured through Central Bank of Jordan leadership, ensured financial support through **a dedicated contribution of a percentage of bank profits** during the scaling process. The end goal was for FEP to be fully financed by the Ministry of Education.

Curriculum content

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education curriculum department, as well as key national institutions, INJAZ and the Central Bank of Jordan led the development of the FEP framework, curriculum, teachers' and students' manuals, training manuals, and supporting materials. Each new grade level was developed over a three-year cycle, with an initial draft that was then tested for a year by teachers. Once teacher and student feedback was collected, the content was revised before being finalized and rolled out. This iterative process allowed for adaptation to take place and incorporated student and teacher perspectives on the final content.

Training

INJAZ conducted the training of Ministry of Education supervisors, who then trained teachers. Over time several new training approaches were also tested to foster greater buy-in and support for teachers. For example, a direct training approach was tested in which INJAZ and financial experts directly trained teachers of the higher grades, where there were more complex financial concepts.

Leadership

The Ministry of Education took the leadership role in implementing the program across all schools and ensuring that the regulatory, organizational, and administrative procedures aligned with existing standards.

Oversight

The Central Bank of Jordan Project Management Office provided general oversight and served as the focal point coordinating between the partners. Implementation was also monitored and supported by two multisectoral governing bodies established by a decree from the prime minister's office, each with diverse members from the government, banking sector, civil society, and academia.

Partnership challenges



Even though this multistakeholder partnership was key to scaling, it also created challenges to overcome. The **diversity of the stakeholders** involved in the FEP and the fact that this partnership was a new way of working meant that initially different sectors struggled with what would be deemed appropriate, acceptable, and innovative in the program.

Turnover was also a big challenge. Between 2014 and 2021, there were ten Ministers of Education in Jordan and changes in leadership at other levels of the Ministry of Education and the Association of Banks. As a result of this turnover, the partners needed to frequently restart advocacy for FEP, relying on the strength of the key champions' connections in the education ecosystem to maintain buy-in. INJAZ also attempted to mitigate the challenges of turnover by institutionalizing relationships through Memoranda of Understanding with the MoE and engaging a large spectrum of stakeholders, so relationships were not concentrated with just a few individuals.

Champions



Efforts to scale the Financial Education Program in Jordan also saw great successes with getting support from high-level champions. Dr. Ziad Fariz, the **governor of the Central Bank of Jordan**, played a pivotal role in championing the idea of financial education and securing **support from the Prime Minister** to formalize the program and institute the governance bodies. His stature was also essential for convincing the private banks to invest in financial education and focus on its long-term benefits, rather than targeting more immediate and visible gains. Due to her standing within the youth entrepreneurship and financial education ecosystem, **the CEO of INJAZ**, Deema Bibi, also played an important role in scaling FEP. Other critical champions advocating for FEP were located within the **Association of Banks** in Jordan, the **Ministry of Education**, the **Al-Hussein Fund for Excellence**, and the **Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation** and served as advocates both within and outside their institutions.

However, **obtaining consistent buy-in at other levels** of the system, including from mid-level bureaucrats and teachers, **proved to be more of a challenge.**

This underscores the important lesson that **prominent and powerful champions for a program are not equivalent to system-wide demand or buy-in**; a mandate from the top and a plan for scaling does not automatically translate into support from all players.

Lessons from scaling the Financial Education Program in Jordan



Scaling the FEP in Jordan offers an exciting case study of significant scaling success, with a coalition of diverse stakeholders willing to support the journey from an initial idea, through continuous refinement and testing, all the way to the ultimate goal of full government ownership and delivery of the program in grade 7-12 classrooms across Jordan. One of the reasons for this success is a public-private partnership (PPP) model that broke with traditional ways of working and brought together contributions from diverse actors for funding, advocacy, and implementation.

Curtiss Wyss, Molly, Jenny Perlman Robinson, Maya Elliott, and Ghulam Omar Qargha. Rep. Improving Financial Literacy Skills for Young People: Scaling the Financial Education Program in Jordan. Brookings Institution, November 7, 2022.

Reflecting on your partners and champions

Partnerships for scaling

Write your answers to the following questions in the accompanying PDF.

Who do you consider a partner or an ally of your innovation?

What is their contribution or role in scaling?

I think...

Do you have a specific person or people who are champions for your work and support scaling?

I think...

What kind of champion are they? What role can they play in scaling?

- Systems-change champion
- Innovation champion
- Champions of the wider concept
- Champions of the organization
- Champions of the people impacted by the issue
- Internal scaling champions

I think...

Who are some of the people or actors who might oppose scaling? Why?

Try to think of specific groups or actors and what leads you to believe they might be opposed. Be careful about your assumptions or biases.

I think...

What can you do try to address this opposition or concern?

I think...

Capacity for scaling

Assessing and building partners' capacity for scaling

As discussed previously, no organization or institution can do everything equally well, and **it is rare for one organization to have sufficient capacity, resources, and expertise to undertake scaling alone.** This is why, regardless of pathway, scaling is usually a collaborative endeavor that brings together partners with complementary skills.

Not all partners have the same skills or will be able to complement in helpful ways. That is why it is important when identifying partners to assess organizational strengths and weaknesses and **select partners with complementary skills.** It is also critical to honestly identify areas where capacity needs to be built or developed further as scaling progresses. This is a normal and expected part of any scaling process.

Further, **scaling often requires different skillsets and knowledge than were required during the pilot stage**, even for the originating organization. It is important to honestly

interrogate if there is sufficient organizational and staff capacity to not only take on operations with a larger size and scope, but also incorporate the new activities and skills that scaling requires (including building the capacity of other stakeholders).

> **Capacity for scaling** refers to an organization's ability to undertake new roles or operations as scaling progresses and pathways evolve. This includes an organization's structure, human resources, culture, and time. It also often refers to an organization's ability to increase the skills of other partners as scaling progresses.



How and when to talk about capacity?

Candid conversations between partners should be held early and often about what activities or scaling strategies are truly feasible and what steps can be taken at the outset to address limitations, including how roles might shift over time.

However, capacity can be a tricky issue to discuss across stakeholder groups. Insufficient human resources or expertise can be a challenging limitation to admit for anyone. NGOs may be reluctant to raise the issue of capacity limitations openly with government counterparts or funding partners. Similarly, government actors may be hesitant to acknowledge or unaware of critical capacity gaps that might impact scaling—especially around resources, monitoring and supervision practices, and teacher retention. But without honest assessment of these constraints and joint problem-solving to address them, capacity often can become a stumbling block for quality implementation and scaling.

Capacity building with government

For initiatives focused on institutionalizing an innovation into government systems as the scaling goal, it is important to realistically assess all aspects of government capacity. It can be tempting to assume that, if it has the will and the financing, a government will have the capacity to deliver and sustain an initiative at scale. However, scaling research has consistently shown that this is not the case. **Even when an education ministry truly wants to adopt an initiative at large scale, capacity constraints related to time, human and financial resources, and skillsets are a common obstacle** and are compounded by the challenges of a large bureaucratic system. In past work, we have seen that this issue can be especially true for data collection and analysis and for teacher training.

As part of this assessment of stakeholder capacity, **it is crucial to acknowledge that ministries of education operate under greater demands and complexities than most nongovernmental actors**—with complicated bureaucracies and regulations to navigate, larger constituencies to represent and serve, limited budgetary flexibility, and broader mandates with more (and often competing) goals to pursue. What is a priority issue for an NGO may just be one among many issues for a ministry. This does not mean it is not important, but it may mean the ministry is not able to dedicate as much time or act as urgently as the NGO hopes. One must work within this reality.

Optional reading:

Partnering with government for scaling education innovations: What's the difference among government permission, support, engagement, and co-creation?

GO TO ARTICLE

Scaling story: Collaborations that build capacity for scaling

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript: My name is Diego Vázquez Bruce. What has worked very well for our project is a combination of three elements. First, we had a focal point at the Ministry of Education who provided direct access to authorities, allowing us to discuss any issues or areas where we needed to align the project with the needs of education officials. Second, we had a national coordinator with a strong reputation and deep knowledge of the local context, who served as our representative figure. And third—crucially—we had a monitoring, evaluation, and learning board composed of diverse stakeholders from the education ecosystem, including teachers, families, and authorities; this enabled us not only to disseminate project results immediately but also to co-design strategies for adapting to contextual changes and for scaling up.

Transitioning and evolving roles during scaling

Another important consideration when assessing capacity for scaling is how roles of stakeholders will need to shift over time, and **what skills and capacities will be required as this transition occurs**.

If key responsibilities will transition from one partner (say, the implementing NGO) to another partner (say, the National Teacher Training Institution) it is important to plan in detail for how this transition of roles will take place. Almost always, capacity must first be built at multiple levels of an education system. It is not enough to focus on implementation only.

If ownership, training, and/or financing are being transitioned to another institution, it is important to know what support roles must be in place to ensure quality implementation. In other words, how the transition will work is important and so too is ensuring the group taking on the responsibilities has sufficient capacity to do the new work required of them.

This includes carefully considering:

- How can **each aspect of the program**, including monitoring, evaluation, and learning, be incorporated into existing processes while maintaining quality?

- How can broader **ownership of each aspect** be fostered and supported?
- What **capacity and knowledge constraints** exist that the original organization can help address, and what gaps exist with which it cannot help?

While these changes may be an uncomfortable prospect for originating organizations to consider—especially when it includes gradual loss of control or attribution—it is nonetheless essential when expanding and sustaining impact over the long term.

Often, **there is an assumption that there will be a clear point in the scaling process when the original organization will suddenly declare "mission complete"** and cease to be involved, but the reality is that frequently there is a continuing (albeit shifting) role for the organization to play during and after the formal handover. This may require gradually transitioning control to the government or other actors, while continuing with support roles such as providing training or conducting external M&E. In other cases, it might require shifting to more of an advocacy role—continuing to build and sustain a constituency for the change desired.

It is beneficial for all scaling partners to have clear, shared understandings of how scaling includes these progressive changes in roles and responsibilities and plan for these changes concretely from the beginning. Neglecting this aspect runs the risk of teams staying too long in roles that other stakeholders should take on or inadvertently inhabiting new roles they ultimately are not well suited for.

An example of how roles may shift during scaling

Evolving roles are not just about organizations; individuals may also see their roles shift as scaling progresses. For example...

Individual	Initial roles	New roles over time
Researcher	Design proof of concept study and assess effectiveness of innovation.	Train government inspectorate staff on how to collect and assess innovation impact results.
Head Teacher	Introduce the new innovation and generate buy-in among staff.	Provide opportunities for peer learning and continuous professional development. Speak to other school heads about the innovation.
NGO Project Lead	Plan and implement initial pilot test of the innovation in three schools.	Support partner NGOs with training about how to implement the innovation in new regions.

Optional: Capacity and evolving roles assessment

Planning for evolving roles

The "Scaling Capacity Planner" tool can be useful to help you to identify key roles in your initiative and detail the capacity of different actors to fill these roles now and at scale. The goal of this assessment is to understand where capacity is lacking and may need to be built, and to help delineate if and how roles will shift so you can plan accordingly. The directions for completing the assessment are below.

Download the tool and work with your team to complete the table. You should save a copy to refer to later when you develop your scaling strategy.

PDF

Scaling Capacity Planner.pdf
178.7 KB

Part 1: Role and capacity assessment

For each role, name who holds each responsibility now and who you envision will hold it at scale. Then rate the at-scale actor's capacity to undertake this role sustainably—strong, partial, or low—considering people, resources, skills, time, authority, and note key gaps.

Role Who...	Currently	At Scale	Capacity to sustain this role at scale Rate *strong*, *partial*, or *low* and note key gaps
implements the innovation?			
supervises and monitors the implementers?			
trains the implementers?			
collects and manages data for monitoring, evaluation, and learning?			

Directions

1. In column two, write the name of the stakeholder or partner or actor who is currently responsible for the task listed.

2. In column three, write the name of the partner or stakeholder who will be responsible for this role when implementing the initiative at scale. If the same actors will do the role at scale, write their name again. It is still important to assess this partner's capacity to do this role at scale.

3. In column four, rank the current capacity of the partner to do this role at scale.

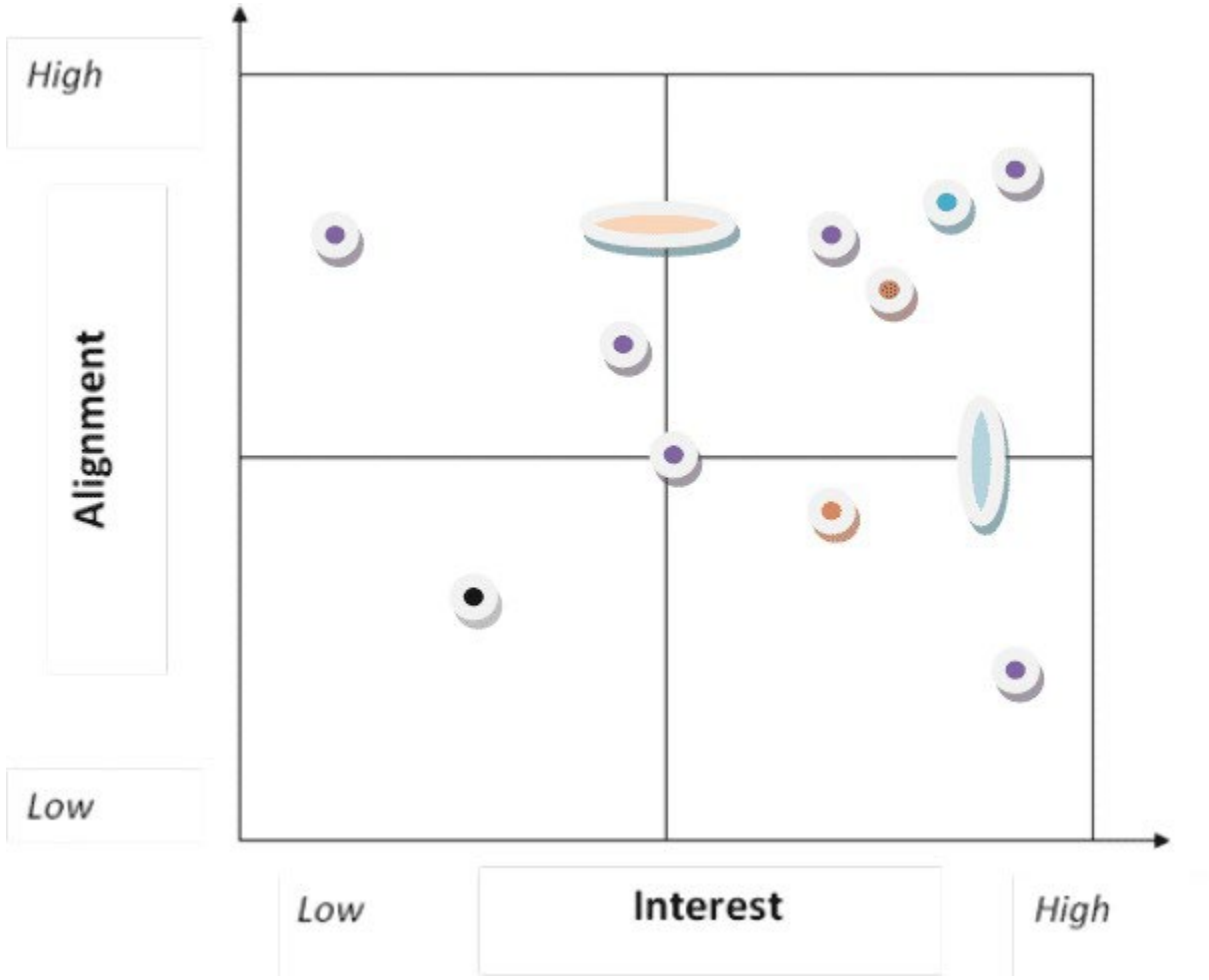
4 Once you complete all rows, review your responses and answer the reflection questions to identify 1) areas where capacity may need to be strengthened; and 2) role transitions that will need to be planned for as scaling progresses.

5 Use the final chart to turn these reflections into actionable next steps.

Optional: Tools for stakeholder mapping

Interested in mapping key stakeholders around your innovation?

The following list of tools can be used to find, identify, and delineate different stakeholders in the education system. These tools are not essential, but can be helpful to guide discussions about stakeholders, opponents, partners, and champions. As with many scaling tools, we recommend working through them collaboratively and updating them periodically throughout the scaling process to help track what changes are happening among stakeholders and how that is impacting scaling.



Stakeholders: Alignment, Interest, Influence Matrix

A stakeholder analysis technique that can be used for identifying and classifying stakeholders. Mostly used for strategic planning, it can also be used for monitoring changes in stakeholders. There are three dimensions to the tool:

- Alignment: To what extent does the stakeholder agree with the initiative's goals and approach?
- Interest: To what extent is the stakeholder already engaged in the issues or the field of the initiative? (e.g. are they committing resources, speaking out, or setting objectives?☐
- Influence: To what degree can they sway the debate? Are they in a position of authority and can they use it to put pressure on decision-making?

ACCESS TOOL

Table 10: Stakeholder Analysis

STAKEHOLDER	INTEREST IN ISSUE	RESOURCES AVAILABLE	RESOURCE MOBILIZATION CAPACITY	POSITION ON ISSUE
Name of group or individual	Nature and level of interest in the issue (e.g., high to low)	Resources available to support or oppose scaling (economic, information, legitimacy, etc.)	How easily the group can mobilize resources in pursuit of objectives (high or low)	Position on the issue (e.g., pro or con), ranked on a scale of -3 to +3

MSI Stakeholder Analysis

This tool supports stakeholder analysis to inform the process of constituency building by identifying and examining potential sources of support and opposition to the scaling of a particular intervention. It is a tabular presentation of key stakeholders and their interests, positions, and resources relevant to scaling the intervention.

ACCESS TOOL

Take it a step further!

- After mapping stakeholders, think about what types of information about the innovation or scaling strategy each stakeholder is likely interested in and would need in order to contribute. Not all stakeholders have the same interests or decisionmaking authority.

- Think about what role each actor could play in scaling, and what information they would need to make scaling decisions. It's alright if you don't have all of this information yet; part of this activity is to help you identify what information you might need to collect in the future to bring others onboard.

- Partners and stakeholders may also be able to provide needed information themselves. Consider how such an information exchange can be overlaid onto your stakeholder map.

Module 4 summary

Scaling with people and partners

In this module, we examined relationships for scaling—including partnerships, alliances, and champions. We also covered how to build capacity for scaling and plan for transitioning roles among partners.

By now you should know…

- The role of partnerships and the need for collaborative approaches to scaling.
- The importance of identifying support and opposition and thinking about how to engage and maintain diverse stakeholders in scaling.
- Different types of champions that can support the scaling process and different ways to engage them.
- The necessity of discussing capacity issues and evolving roles among partners.

In this module you completed the following activities and reflections:

- Reflecting on your partners and champions
- Assessing partners' capacity and roles

Discuss with your team

Stakeholders and partners

Who are the different partners we are currently or will be engaging in scaling? For each partner, consider:

- Alignment: To what extent does the stakeholder agree with the initiative's goals and approach?
- Interest: To what extent is the stakeholder already or potentially engaged in the issues or the field of the initiative? (e.g. are they committing resources, speaking out, or setting objectives?)
- Influence: To what degree can they sway the discussion? Are they in a position of authority and can they use it to put pressure on decisionmaking?

These questions are adapted from the Outcome Mapping Learning Community's Alignment, Interest, Influence matrix.

Champions

- What champions are currently involved in our initiative?
- What different or evolving roles do we hope these champions will play in our scaling journey?
- How do we plan to foster opportunities for genuine engagement among champions?

These questions are adapted from the ROSIE thematic brief "Engaging champions for scaling in education."

Opposition

- Who are possible opponents to scaling?
- Why might they be opposed to what we are doing?
- How can we engage with them?

Transitions

What are the 1-2 biggest role transitions that we foresee during the scaling process?

Now that we have explored how to engage people and partners in scaling, we will widen out to the broader environment. The next module explores how scaling interacts with different levels of the ecosystem, various environmental factors and actors that influence scaling, and how to adapt scaling plans when the environment changes.

Engaging the broader environment in scaling



START MODULE

Module 5 overview

Engaging the broader environment in scaling

Scaling success does not rely solely on the innovation itself (or even the scaling strategy). **The broader environment also carries significant influence on a scaling journey.** This section provides a brief overview of some broader environmental factors that can affect scaling in order to introduce these topics as a starting point for deeper learning and investigation.

Learning objectives

1. Understand different levels of the broader environment that interact with scaling—from international trends all the way down to the instructional core in the classroom.

2. Assess different factors and actors in the broader environment that can affect scaling—ranging from politics to community demand to the structure of the education system itself.

3. Explore how to adapt to changes in the broader environment—including pivoting to respond to windows of opportunity and pausing the scaling when conditions are unfavorable.

4. Reflect on equity considerations at each level of the broader environment and how you will take these into account in your scaling efforts.



Key Terms

- **The broader environment** comprises the political, institutional, economic, social, cultural, and other factors in a specific context that can affect how scaling takes place.

- **Systems transformation** works to restructure education in a location so the system operates differently and better. Systems transformation rests on the idea that a system is made up of many parts and the interactions and relationships between these parts are as important, if not more, than the parts themselves. Therefore, systems transformation requires finding ways to differently align, structure, or engage how these parts interact and operate together.

Module Outline

- Broader environment
- Adapting to changes in the environment
- Scaling and systems transformation
- Explore actors and factors in broader environment
- Reflecting on the broader environment
- Tools for assessing the broader environment

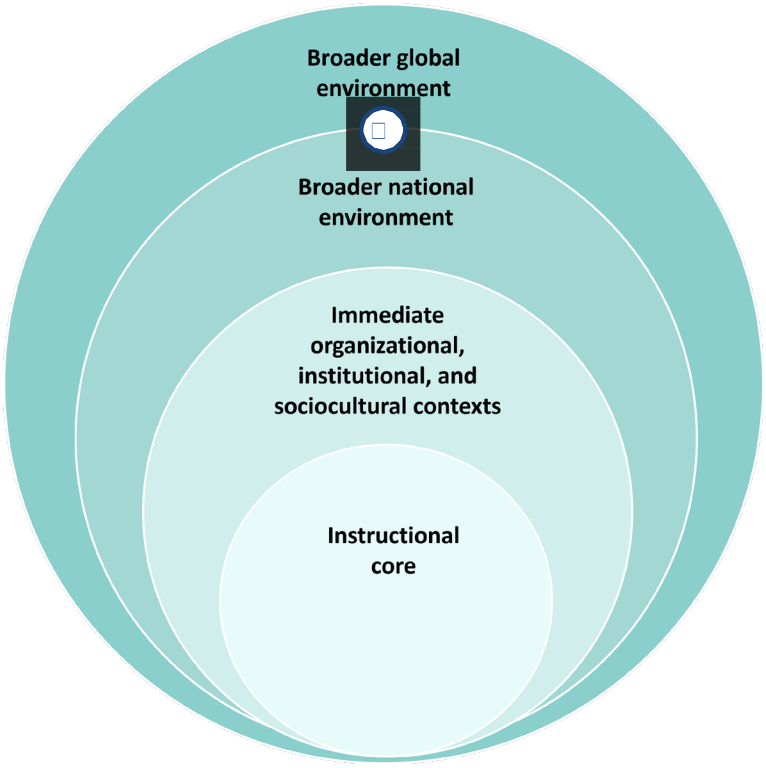
Broader environment

Scaling in a broader environment

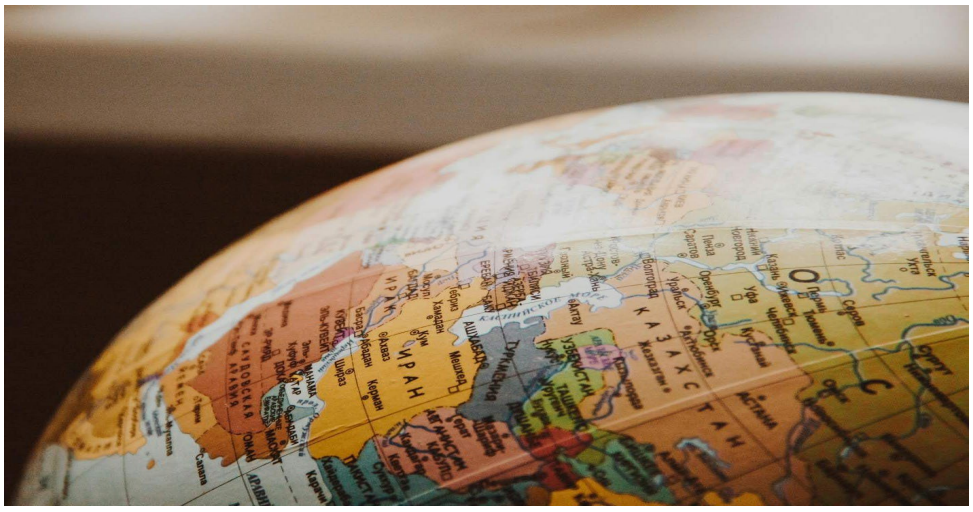
When it comes to scaling, resources matter and evidence matters and the skills of the scaling team matter. But scaling does not happen in a vacuum. **All education initiatives are influenced by the broader environment in which scaling takes place.** Political, institutional, economic, social, cultural, and other factors play a critical role in scaling "successes" or "failures." This means that prevalent ideologies and mindsets, priorities, politics, resources, social and cultural practices, gender norms, and power dynamics all influence if and how an initiative scales. This also means that external shocks or catalysts—such as a snap election, natural disaster, or global pandemic—will produce unanticipated windows of opportunity or roadblocks for scaling.

Visualizing the broader environment: An ecosystem approach

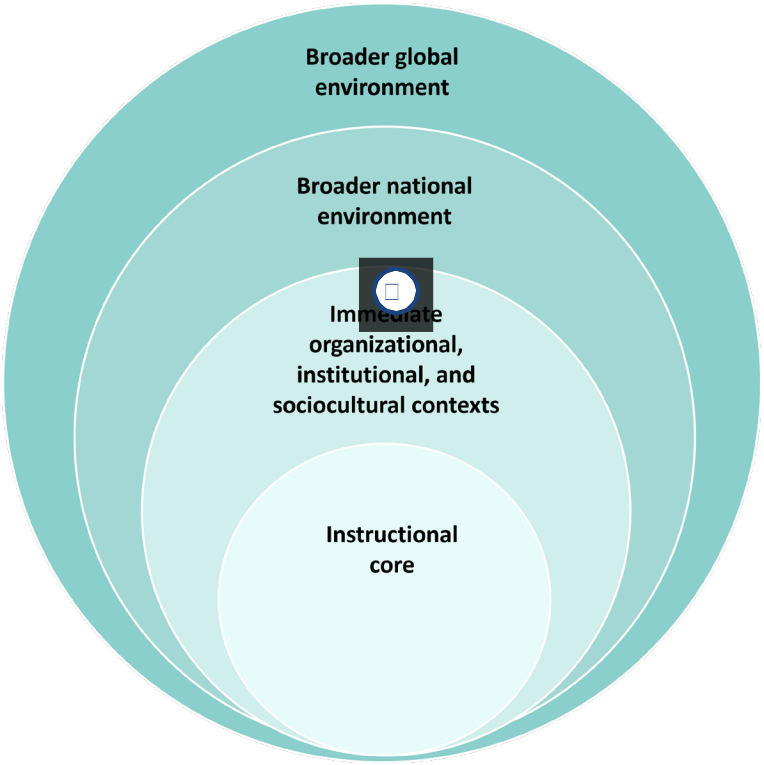
Explore the levels of the broader environment below.



Global and national environment



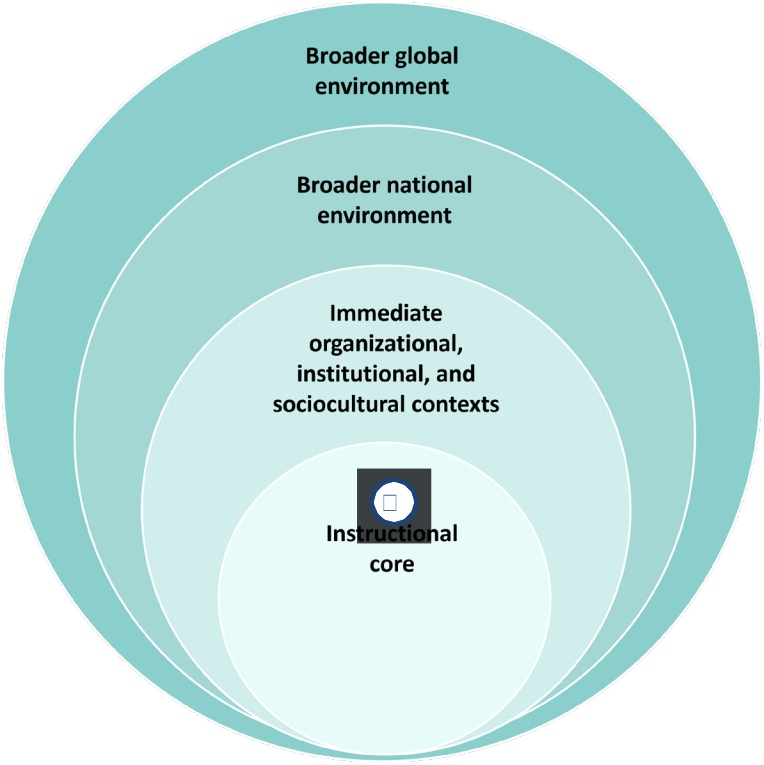
Including existing policies and priority issues, political and economic conditions, prevailing ideologies, funding and resource constraints, social and cultural practices, and power dynamics.



Organizations, institutions, and sociocultural contexts



Including the specific organizations, institutions, and socio-cultural practices and beliefs of the local context that influence scaling. Also includes government structures concerned with delivering, monitoring, resourcing, and regulating education services, as well as nongovernmental actors such as civil society, nongovernmental organizations, and teacher unions.



Instructional core



At this level, scaling is shaped by student characteristics (such as prior knowledge, learning styles, and cultural/personal backgrounds); teacher characteristics (such as training, beliefs, and collegial arrangements); curriculum standards (and assessment/testing arrangements and underlying ideologies about learning and purposes of education); resources (such as textbooks, classroom features, and technology); the culture of the school and its leadership; and family and community engagement in school life.

Equity within scaling goals

- When you think about scaling the impact of your innovation in a particular education system or context, do you have specific goals or targets related to equity and inclusion?
- What specific groups or populations are included in these goals? Why?
- Do these goals focus on equity and inclusion in terms of shifting access to education, learning gains, long-term outcomes, and/or existing policies and structures?
- Are there intersecting inequities that need to be considered further?

Applying an equity lens to education ecosystems

As you assess each level of the broader environment and how it might influence your scaling journey, make sure to interrogate what equity and inclusion factors are present at the level of the ecosystem and if/how your efforts will take on, work with, or address these realities directly. It is important to be aware of how scaling within the system might inadvertently replicate existing inequities in education access, quality, and outcomes.
For example, if you are scaling an innovation in local public secondary schools, are there certain populations of students—such as girls or students of low economic status—who will be more likely to be excluded because they are not well served by the existing system? It is also important to consider how different types of marginalization or exclusion can overlap and intersect.

Below are a few questions you might consider when assessing your scaling goals and how the broader environment might impact them:

1 National environment

- Do existing policies create, reinforce, address, or exacerbate education inequities? For whom?
- Which equity and inclusion topics are currently a political priority? What is being done at the national level to address them?
- Which equity and inclusion issues are not currently a political priority? Are there individuals, incentives, or systems at the national level that oppose or constrain progress on these issues? Why do they do that?
- How are those groups being marginalized or excluded being engaged in considering possible solutions?

2 Organizations, institutions, and socio-cultural contexts

- What organizations and institutions are working on equity and inclusion issues related to your scaling goals? Can you join them or create partnerships to increase attention to your equity goals?
- What individuals, organizations, or institutions oppose or constrain these goals?
- Are there existing elements of the social and cultural context that can be leveraged to support equity and inclusion issues?
- Are there elements of the social and cultural context that constrain progress on equity and inclusion issues? Can they be addressed?

3 Instructional core

- What kind of students does the education system serve best in terms of access, learning, and long-term outcomes?
- Whom does it leave out? Why is this?
- What kind of equity mindsets do teachers and students bring to the work, and should these be addressed or harnessed in some way?
- What social and cultural norms and mindsets about learning and education do teachers, students, and families bring to the school that might actually constrain equity and inclusion goals?
- How are marginalized students being included in the work of diagnosing the challenges they face and considering potential solutions?

Hard and soft system parts at all levels

It is important to note that, at each level, scaling is shaped both by the visible, tangible parts of the education systems—such as existing laws, policies, technologies, and funding practices, as well as by more intangible, unspoken parts of the education system—such as mindsets, historical beliefs, and cultural norms. These visible parts are often called "hard system parts," while the less visible, unspoken parts are often referred to as "soft system parts." For example, access to quality education might be available equally for both boys and girls on paper. However, gendered “soft system parts” such as cultural masculinity norms influencing how boys engage in school or implicit biases in teachers’ expectations of girls can reinforce patriarchal structures and perpetuate inequitable outcomes. As such, it is essential in the scaling process to critically examine and address both types of system parts, so that the latter do not continue to function as hidden biases or barriers impeding your work.

Scaling discussion: Engaging with politics when scaling

This recorded conversation comes from a public Brookings event held in November 2023 to share findings from the Research on Scaling the Impacts of Innovations in Education study. The full recording can be found here: **How to scale your innovation: Lessons from Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education (ROSIE).**

This conversation clip features:

- Jenny Perlman Robinson, Nonresident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution
- Leonardo Garnier, Special Adviser to the U.N. Secretary General on Transforming Education and former Minister of Education of Costa Rica

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript:

Jenny Perlman Robinson: Taking advantage of your former hat of sitting in policy, as you said, as a former minister of education in Costa Rica, among other roles, I'd love if you have any thoughts about what scaling teams can do to really think about effectively engaging with government, as you said, at various levels, at the highest level, but perhaps at the technocrat and other levels. Any sort of insights there for us?

Leonardo Garnier: Maybe two or three very, very short points. One is that you have to identify a problem that is felt as a real problem by the educational community and by the government. You cannot just come from outside and give them a problem, or worse, give them a solution to a problem they are not feeling as their own. So the ownership aspect is very important.

Leonardo Garnier: And this requires a narrative. And this narrative has to be developed with the educational community, with the teachers, with the students, with the families, so that it becomes embedded in the social contract of the country. It is not something that comes from outside, it does not come from the ministry. Something that the educational community is is feeling very much.

Embedded with the second very much related to this has to do with communications. Sometimes in in government or in politics people are reluctant… and as a former colleague in the government told me, “I don't waste my time in with journalists I have too much to do, I have to work.” And no, I would say communicate, communicate and communicate. It is essential that what you're trying to do is really understood by the people at the different levels, by the teachers, by the technical staff. That's completely essential. And not just to communicate like in a neutral way. You have to understand that educational systems are, as the word says, systems, but they are also systems of power. There are a very complex structures of power, respect, privilege. And so, you have to understand how your innovation affects that system of power within the educational system so that you can really both take advantage of it, recognize the merits, make your champions at the different levels of the ministry, participate in the reform. But as I said at the beginning, how to win over, and I know the word neutralize sounds bad, but believe me, you will need to neutralize some people or some aspects of your ministry. So basically, what I would end up saying is that this is both a technical and a political issue.

And many times, when you're in government, people think that the word politics is like a bad word and that we should be very technical about our reforms. If you don't understand that politics is about politics, then you will not be successful. But if you don't understand that politics needs a good technical solution, you're also wrong. So, mixing those two aspects of a scaling up as a technical and a political process is essential, and communications are critical for the success that we want to have. Turning to teachers, we need to learn how to engage them. They are in an almost impossible situation. We ask them to transform education but to do it in very difficult conditions. We ask them to change but change for them might be scary. We tell them something, and we've been saying this for, I don't know, 50, 60, 70 years, to go from rote teaching by memory and all those things to an active learner-centered pedagogy, but they might perceive this as something that reduces their power in the classroom, their authority, and they are scared. So, they keep reproducing the old ways of teaching. And this is becoming even more worrisome for them with the digital technology and artificial intelligence. Suddenly they feel that they are not respected. One thing I'd say is we need to find in this different sorts of transformations and while scaling them up, ask what are the new sources of authority and respect for teachers so that they really feel that this is their project? That is one thing.

And the second thing that I was going to say before, Brad mentioned it, we sometimes think that we can plan these reforms in a very orderly fashion. And we have…I will use a musical analogy. We think that politics is like classical music, that we have the score from the beginning, that everything that will happen as written and it will go on. Politics is very much more like jazz. You have a general idea of what you want to do, where you want to live, how it should sound, and then you improvise as things go changing in the process. And that's the way in which you know how to do with teachers, you know what to do with your curriculum division. That capacity to change as the process evolves, I think, is critical for the success of scaling up these processes. At the end, it will not look like your first draft, but the impact, as Brad said, the impact has to be there.

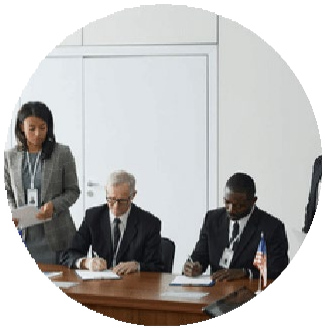
Explore actors and factors in the broader environment

The different actors and factors in the broader environment that will affect scaling

1

Policy, Politics, and Power

Scaling is influenced in intersecting, but distinct, ways by policy, politics, and power in a given location.



Policy

Laws, processes, plans, and other formal agreements that decisionmakers create and commit to enacting.

When scaling, it is important to consider what policies, programs, and plans are in place, and how the innovation aligns (or doesn't) with these formal plans.



Politics

Actions done by individuals, parties, or coalitions to achieve power and carry out governance of a country or other area.

Politics is associated with policymaking, but it also includes other priorities and agendas that will help a group maintain or gain influence or power.

Politics is an important part of scaling as it can help create and leverage support and attention for the issue the innovation addresses. Alternatively, politics can result in de-prioritization or pushback against the issue. There are also risks associated with political transitions and turnover.



Power

The capacity or ability to direct or influence the behavior of others or the course of events.

Some power is obvious, like the ability to enact policy mandates, while other power may be less visible, like the power to influence other actors to accept or reject a change.

Knowledge of power dynamics is a key resource for scaling. It requires close relationships with a variety of actors in the ecosystem and a strong understanding of the historical, cultural, and economic context.

2

Education system features



The education system is an ecosystem itself that sits within the broader ecosystem of a particular location and operates across multiple levels, from national institutions all the way down to classrooms and parent-teacher groups.

Understanding the education system, both on paper and in practice, is essential for scaling education innovations. Even if the goal is not institutionalization, innovations are still likely to interact with multiple levels and actors in the system.

Some key considerations about the education system that can become scaling stumbling blocks if they are overlooked include:

1. **School calendars:** When are the school breaks? When are the exam periods? how do schedules vary between regions and even schools?

2. **Staffing levels:** Are there enough teachers in schools? Are teachers teaching the subjects they are trained for? Are there a lot of teachers on short-term contracts who may turn over next year?

3. **Administration:** How is education policy administered? Is it top-down from a national ministry or does it come from a regional office? Who ensures schools are aware of new education policies or programs?

4 **Types of schools:** In many contexts the education system is made up of an increasingly diverse set of public, private, religious, and other types of schools. Which schools are your program working with? Who oversees which schools? Where are communities sending their children to school?

5 **Funding allocation and disbursement:** How are education budgets allocated and at what level? How is money disbursed and how frequently does this happen? Do disbursements arrive on time and in full? Are there challenges with payment processes that may impact scaling?

6 **Parent and community involvement:** Who is involved in the governance of schools? Who is not involved? What opportunities exist for community involvement in the school structure, curriculum, or activities?

7 **Infrastructure:** What is the quality of school buildings and other education infrastructure? Do schools have what they need to be able to implement the program? Are there infrastructure problems that make school hard to access or unsafe for some students? What does this mean for who participates in the program?

Community demand and civil society



"One essential element of designing with scale in mind is to develop programs and policies that students, parents, or teachers actually want—not just what governments, implementers, or donors think they need.

Participatory approaches not only ensure more appropriately designed interventions but also generate the buy-in and create champions needed to support and sustain scale."

Perlman Robinson, J., Winthrop, R., McGivney, E. (2016) Millions Learning: Scaling Up Quality Education in Developing Countries, pg. 57

It's important to engage civil society actors in scaling in genuine ways and ensure the alignment is based on a lasting, share interest or commitment to change that scaling your innovation can contribute to.

Mindsets, Behaviors, and Social Norms

Scaling an innovation often requires engaging with people's beliefs, practices, and norms. This can include taken-for-granted assumptions about concepts such as "schooling," "learning ability," and "marginalization." When thinking about the broader environment, it's helpful to consider prevalent mindsets, behaviors, and social norms around education that influence individuals' evaluations, decisions, and everyday practices—and that may influence how scaling takes place.

MINDSETS | BEHAVIORS | SOCIAL NORMS

An established set of attitudes or beliefs held by a person that informs how they think.

People may have specific mindsets about the purposes of education that may influence how they value an innovation. For example, if stakeholders primarily view the purpose of education as helping prepare students for the workforce, they may not be persuaded by an innovation focusing on play-based learning. It is important to understand this mindset so that the connection between play-based learning and future skills development can be made to these stakeholders.

Mindsets are complex, personal, persistent, and developed over a long-time. This makes them hard to change. For groups focusing on scaling a particular change in beliefs or mindsets, it is important to first understand individuals' mindsets and then engage with them through relevant examples and connections to their experiences. And it's important for those engaged in scaling to also be aware of how their own beliefs and mindsets are shaping their work and be open to changing their own beliefs.



Behaviors are the way a person acts or conducts themselves.

While mindsets are about how individuals **think**, behaviors concern what people **do.** They may include regular actions, like daily practices, or more unexpected actions that take place when people are confronted with change or new situations.

Understanding behaviors is crucial for scaling, because what people say and what they do are not always the same. Looking specifically at people's behaviors can reveal a lot about what is working with scaling, what is not, and what else might be going on. For example, many programs conduct teacher training sessions and then follow up with teachers to see how they are adopting the new practices. While many teachers report (and genuinely believe) that they have changed their practices, observations of classrooms may reveal that, in fact, many teachers are teaching the same way as they were before—their mindsets may have changed, but their actions have not. This is important to understand because while the training happened, impact may not be created if it doesn't result in different practices in the classroom.

Analyzing these behaviors—and how they link to mindsets and norms—is essential to evaluating how different actors react to the scaling process.



Social norms are the shared standards or expectations for how a person should act in a group or society.

Social norms are complicated combinations of historical, cultural, economic, religious, and other beliefs and behaviors. They are not about just the individual, but also about a society at large, and how an individual is empowered to act in that society. Social norms can play a big role in scaling, but they are not always obvious or named explicitly, which is why deep knowledge of the context and engagement with a wide array of stakeholders is crucial. Not all actors are influenced by the same social norms, so it is important to spend time listening and learning from others' experiences. For example, a scaling program that requires teachers to stay after school for professional development twice a month may seem like a good idea, but after consulting with female teachers and learning that this approach creates challenges around social norms related to returning home late at night, the program may need to adapt its schedule.

Much like mindsets and behaviors, social norms are deeply embedded, complex, and hard to change.



Adapting to changes in the environment

Contextualization and Adaptation



Contextualization

Contextualization is the adaptation of an education innovation or approach to fit the specifics of a unique dynamics of a location, population, and/or moment in time. The amount of contextualization needed (and the time it requires) when transferring an existing innovation to a new context is often underestimated.

Contextualization often requires both surface changes (for example, translating existing materials into the local language or aligning them with government learning standards) **and deep changes** (for example, assessing how content in the materials

may need to change to align with local cultural norms and values). Tracking these changes not only enables scaling teams to assess if and how they are working—and whether the contextualization changes the intended impact—but it can also generate important insights about the equity aspects of the innovation, and which elements of the model are core to impact and should NOT be adapted.

Adapting to Environmental Factors

"Effective education approaches are more likely to take root and spread when they align with country priorities. Scaling requires a certain aptitude for opportunism—not bound by rigid strategy, but flexible enough to take advantage of windows of opportunity."

Winthrop, Perlman Robinson, McGivney, (2016) Millions Learning: Scaling Up Quality Education in Developing Countries

The broader environment is always changing in ways that can either hinder or help scaling. This means that it is not enough to consider how the ecosystem might impact scaling only at the beginning of the scaling journey; rather, scaling requires an ONGOING process of monitoring the environment, reflecting on its implications, and adapting your scaling accordingly. This is not easy, since environmental factors often lie outside the control of project teams and change frequently. Nevertheless, it

is an essential piece of the scaling puzzle. You might not be able to change the broader environment, but you can fit your scaling efforts strategically into it as you conduct your work!

It can be helpful to **distinguish between enabling or constraining factors in the environment on the one hand, and sudden temporary opportunities or obstacles on the other.** While this might seem like a subtle difference, it is an important distinction. Enabling and constraining factors are long-term features of a system for which scaling will need to account. They typically cannot be avoided or ignored. Windows of opportunity and obstacles are unexpected changes that emerge in the environment and will require reacting to (or taking advantage of) in real-time and making concomitant changes to your scaling plan in response.

Explore the terms below.



Enabling Environment

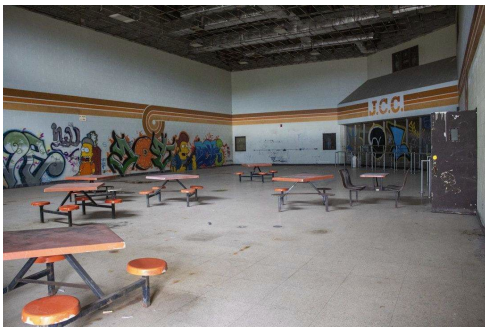
Enabling factors are **aspects of the education ecosystem or broader environment that can facilitate scaling.** They are (mostly) consistently present in the system.



Window of Opportunity

Windows of opportunity are short-lasting **specific moments in time that arise and, if used well, present a chance to accelerate scaling.**

This could be a new administration coming to power



Constraints in the Environment

Just like there are factors in the environment that can enable scaling, so too are there **factors that can constrain scaling or create challenges**.



Obstacles

Obstacles are **specific, time-bound challenges or opposition that emerge during the scaling journey** and deserve an agile response or adaptation to address or mitigate them.

Scaling story: Responding to the changing environment of the COVID-19 pandemic



In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic led to widespread school closures; this meant that many education initiatives that were part of the GPE KIX ROSIE research project had to rapidly adapt.

Some initiatives whose innovations relied on digital learning devices inside schools instead **began printing their materials and supporting learning facilitators to visit homes** and drop off the printed materials, or broadcast lessons on radio stations. Other teams altered their teacher training programs by adapting content, reducing contact hours, offering asynchronous and synchronous online sessions for teacher convenience, and developing and deploying informational videos and checklists to guide teachers' work in the absence of in-person mentoring.

Once schools reopened, teams had to adapt and adjust again. For example, one innovation had to **invest additional funds to refurbish internet servers, computers, and tablets in participating schools once students returned to the classroom.** This was because ICT maintenance had not been budgeted and the technology fell into disrepair during school shutdowns. Several teams reported that teachers, suddenly worn out and overwhelmed with the socioemotional needs of students, were unable to commit to educational trainings or new pedagogies. One team discovered increased interest in their learning assessment tool because stakeholders began noticing learning loss due to school closures and this topic became a high priority.

Knowing when to speed up and slow down

Windows of Opportunity

Scaling is not a steady march; sometimes progress slows to a crawl and sometimes it races forward. As you heard in the video, being prepared to take advantage of new opportunities for progress is a critical aspect of scaling. These "windows of opportunity" **often arise unexpectedly or during periods of sudden change**—such as a new administration making a policy change, a team having a chance encounter with key decisionmakers, or a crisis opening up a new (or increased) need for the innovation. While it is difficult to plan for the unknown, you can make sure to **continuously monitor the environment for potential opportunities and prepare your own team** to seize them if and when they do come. In this way, agility and attentiveness get rewarded!

Too many impactful innovations don't scale because the teams involved let windows of opportunity pass by because they failed to notice them, were unprepared to act, or held too fast to their existing plan. **Responding to windows of opportunity requires knowing what data you have,** how to repackage and present it, and maintaining a high degree of internal flexibility—because it is unlikely that new opportunities will align precisely with what you are already doing.

This does not mean that you should respond to every environmental change or switch direction all the time. **A balance is needed.** It is essential to be clear on the impact you want to create at scale, what you are willing to adapt versus what you are not, and how your innovation or idea can contribute to a new or adjusted goal. This scaling mindset can help you determine when a pivot to a new opportunity may be a distraction versus when it can open up a new pathway.

How to navigate tradeoffs and surprises when scaling

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript:

Brad Olsen: We often talk about scaling as a nonlinear iterative process and something that has to change in real time based on the information we receive, based on changing circumstances, external shocks to the system. But it's easier said than done. So how would you recommend that scaling teams go about their work of deciding whether or not it's time to change direction or even think about scaling down or pivoting to something else?

Larry Cooley: You can't pivot all the time on everything. And so having some standards by which you would judge when it's time to pivot and what it means to pivot is important. If you're a researcher, you say, okay, you learn something, maybe we just drop it and go over to something else. But the opportunity cost of switching all the time is not insignificant either. And so, lots of tiny pivots are not only inevitable, but desirable. Big pivots, they've got a fairly high threshold. The biggest pivots I know have come with either a political regime change or with one of these big external factors that suddenly materialized in a way different than you'd been expecting.

Brad Olsen: Is there a tendency when there's some significant external shock to the system for folks in scaling teams to say, gosh, this creates a new opportunity. I should let go of what I've been doing and seize the moment.

Larry Cooley: Well, I think they should think that, to tell you the truth. Scaling things tend to be more like policy change. There are windows of opportunity. So, you're knocking on the door for five years. It won't budge. All of a sudden, something happens, the door is ajar. If you're ready, you kick in the door and you move. If you're not, by the time you get yourself organized, the door is closed again. So, I found that the opportunities for scaling are like that, that something will happen, usually in the external environment, but not always. Something will happen. It will create the chance to really move forward with something that's going to make things better. And if you're ready to move, then that's your moment. And you move with alacrity. If you basically have to just start the research at that point, by the time you're ready, it's gone. So, I think people who see an opportunity and jump on it are right.

Pausing or stopping scaling

Sometimes conditions in the broader environment change in a way that makes scaling progress impossible for a period of time. This could result from anticipated events like political transitions or unplanned events like a natural disaster. **Shifts might take place at the partner or community level**, leading to a pause in operations, or at the classroom level in a way that makes scaling no longer feasible. In other cases, **it can become increasingly clear that the innovation is not a good fit** for a particular context (at least in this period of time). In these circumstances, it is important to remember that scaling is not a given; it may be time to consider pausing the scaling effort or scaling down and moving on.

For example, one scaling team realized that **a change in the political context in a region meant that they needed to shift their activities** from scaling to new schools to researching what was happening with the innovation in existing schools instead. They did not stop their work but focused it differently.

In another case, a scaling team realized that the partnership they had established was not working as planned and, as a result, **the innovation was not having its intended impact on learners and families.** After data-informed collective reflection,

the team decided to scale down this scaling pathway and identify an alternative scaling approach. In a third case, a team was implementing their scaling strategy when a natural disaster occurred. Recognizing that scaling **the innovation was no longer a priority for the government or local communities** (because they had other more pressing concerns), the team paused the innovation and chose to partner with the government on urgent response efforts to keep children learning during the climate emergency. Such a move not only supported the continuity of learning for children but also increased the community's respect for the organization (a kind of capital that would benefit them when they returned to the scaling).

These cases highlight the importance of **responding to the broader environment as a part of scaling**. Sometimes this means taking advantages of "windows of opportunity" to scale aggressively, and other times it means recognizing that scaling needs to pause or wind down.

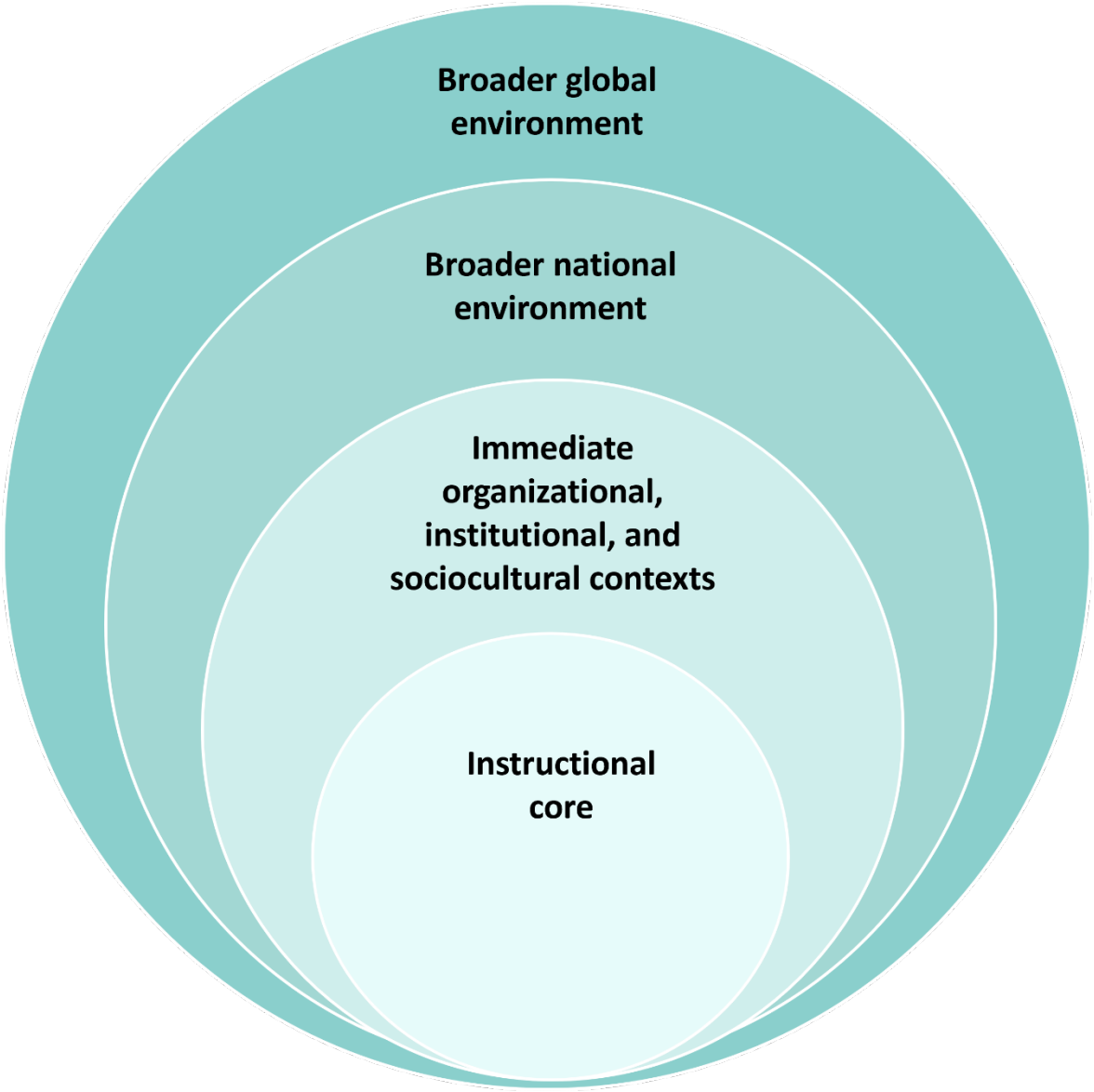
Optional reading

"What to do when it's not the right time to scale" by Larry Cooley and Molly Curtiss Wyss

GO TO ARTICLE

Reflecting on the broader environment

Consider the different levels of the environment



What factors in the broader global and/or national environment do you need to consider as you think about scaling? Are there equity dimensions you might want to consider?

Reflect and then write your response in the accompanying PDF.

I think...

What factors in the immediate cultural context and/or at the instructional core do you need to consider as you think about scaling? Are there equity dimensions you might want to consider?

Reflect and then write your response in the accompanying PDF.

I think...

What are some possible changes that could happen in the environment (at any level) that could impact scaling? For example, upcoming elections, economic conditions, new education reforms, etc.

Reflect and then write your response in the accompanying PDF.

I think...

How might you need to adapt your innovation as it scales into new environments (contextualization)? Are there equity dimensions you might want to consider?

Reflect and then write your response in the accompanying PDF.

I think...

Optional: Tools for assessing the broader environment

Interested in mapping the broader environment that surrounds your innovation?

The following tools can be used to explore dimensions of the environment and relationships between actors. You do not need to use all or even any of these tools. They are introduced here for teams who wish for a tool to guide their internal conversations about the broader environment and its stakeholders. Like other scaling tools, it is recommended that these be used collaboratively, returned to, and updated periodically throughout the scaling process. Make sure to consider not only what changes are happening in the broader environment and how they are impacting scaling, but also how scaling may be impacting the broader environment!

Remember that, given the importance of system transformation, scaling your innovation changes the system at the same time that the system changes your scaling approach.



ExpandNet: Assessing the environment and planning actions to increase the potential for scaling-up success (page 16)

This tool interrogates the diverse environments for scaling and helps teams establish realistic expectations about pace and scope for scaling.

ACCESS TOOL



Visible Network Labs: Ecosystem mapping tool

This is a tool for teams employing a systems or network approach in their work. By visually understanding how entities within a system are interconnected, interdependent, and interacting—you can identify ways to shift the system toward the improved and more equitable outcomes you desire

ACCESS TOOL

Module 5 summary

Engaging the broader environment in scaling

In this module, we examined how the broader environment can impact scaling.

By now you should know…

- The importance of identifying enabling factors and constraints for scaling at multiple levels of the ecosystem—from electoral politics to community demand to the structure of the education system.
- How to assess and respond to emergent changes in the ecosystem—including being ready to seize windows of opportunity, pivot when scaling barriers arise, and pause or scale down when conditions turn unfavorable.

- The role of adaptation as a central part of any scaling journey. This includes contextualizing components of the innovation to better fit the context of a specific location, while also maintaining core elements essential to impact.

In this module you completed the following activities and reflections:

- Reflecting on the broader environment
- Exploring actors and factors in the broader environment that impact scaling

Discuss with your team

1. Where in each level of the environment is there support or opposition for our innovation?
2. What potential changes could occur in the broader environment that would impact scaling?
3. Discuss some of the following factors and actors in our particular environment that will affect scaling. What do they look like, how do they influence our work, how can they either enable or impede scaling?
    - Policy, politics, and power
    - Education system features
    - Community demand and civil society
    - Mindsets, behaviors, and norms
4. Do we see any possible windows of opportunity on the horizon right now that we can prepare for? How shall we prepare?
5. What potential changes in the environment or indicators can we imagine that might necessitate pausing or stopping scaling? How can we keep an eye out for these?

Now that we have covered how the broader environment can impact scaling, we will turn to how research and evidence can be used to inform scaling.

Using research and evidence to inform scaling



START MODULE

Module 6 overview

Using research and evidence to inform scaling

To do that accurately, collecting and using the right data is required. Research is essential for continuously assessing scaling progress, understanding whether impact is being maintained at scale, learning from adaptations, and documenting what you are learning to inform future scaling decisions. Scaling research is typically collaborative, so this module covers not only research methods for scaling but also strategies for engaging in collaborative research and share data/findings with others.

Learning objectives

1. Understand different research methods that can generate evidence to inform scaling.

2. Think about what kinds of research will be needed at different points in a scaling journey, what kinds of data are needed to answer different questions, and how information can be analyzed to inform scaling decisions.

3. Start thinking about what information you will need to make decisions for your scaling work.

4. Brainstorm how you will document your scaling process, how and when you will share findings from your research, and who will be involved in the research process.

Key Terms

- **Research** is the systematic study of a phenomenon or hypothesis through observation and evidence in order to generate new knowledge or improved understandings. The process typically includes developing research questions, systematically gathering relevant quantitative and/or qualitative data, analyzing and making meaning of the data, and sharing findings.

- **Research for scaling** is focused on supporting the successful scaling of a specific innovation in a particular context. Data and analysis are conducted for the purpose of answering questions necessary to inform and advance the process of scaling your innovation in this particular instance.

Module Outline

- Defining research for scaling
- Learning from adaptation and contextualization
- What types of scaling research are you doing?
- How are you sharing your scaling research?
- Optional: Scaling research planning tool and worked examples
- Three examples of scaling research
- Equity considerations for scaling
- Collaborative scaling research models
- Sharing scaling research with stakeholders

Defining research for scaling

Scaling research

What do we mean by research?

When we talk about research generally, we are referring to systematically studying a phenomenon or hypothesis through observation and evidence in order to generate new knowledge or deepen understanding about it.

The process typically includes:

- Identifying a problem or question you want to investigate
- Developing careful research question(s) or hypotheses to test
- Designing instruments, tools, and procedures to gather the data you will need to investigate your research question(s)
- Systematically gathering relevant quantitative and/or qualitative data
- Organizing, analyzing, and making meaning of the data
- Packaging, writing up, and sharing findings

- Developing new research questions based on what you have learned for the next round of data collection

Research is not a one-time effort. These steps are often done in a cycle, with findings generating new questions and spurring further investigation. Importantly, sharing findings is also something that should be done in an ongoing way with different stakeholders, not just at the end of a research project.

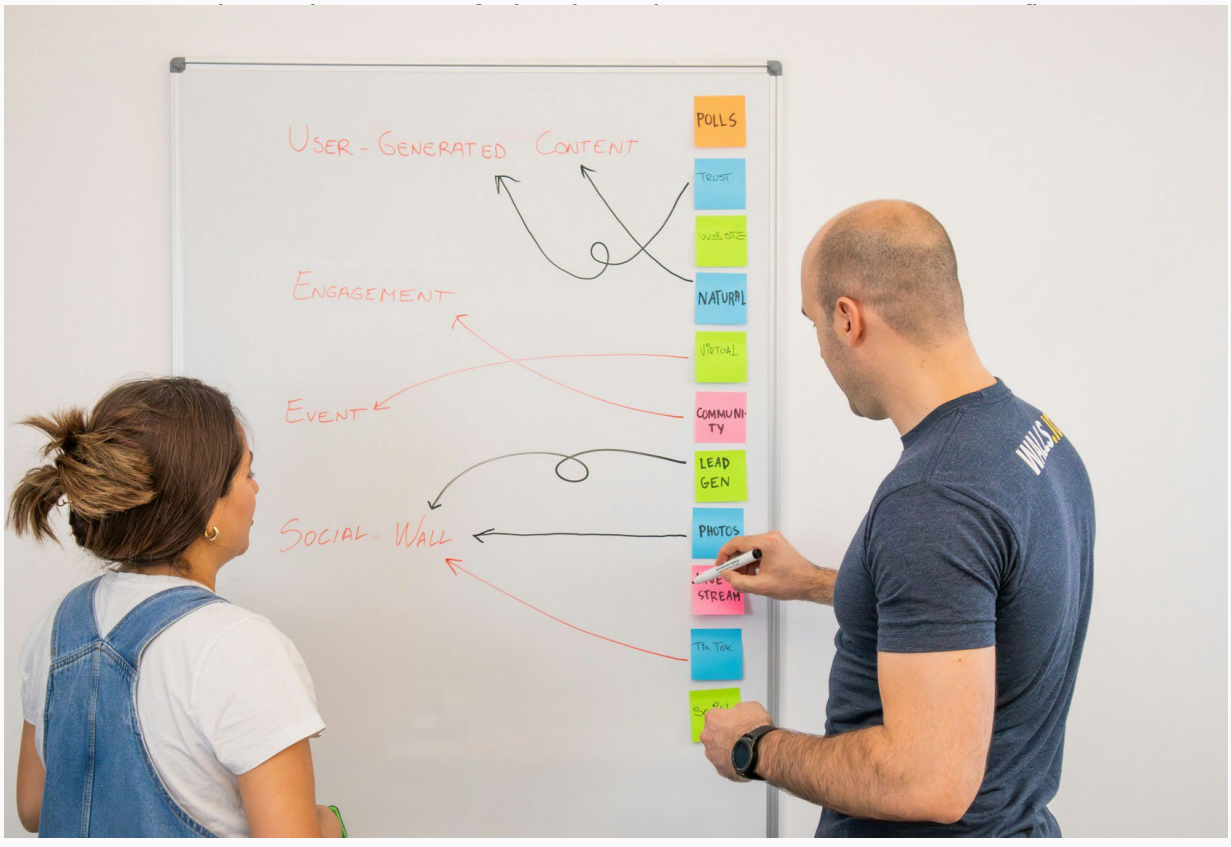


Evidence and experience reveal that scaling requires different types of research and data use at different stages of the scaling process: the information needs change, and so research plans must change too. However, "relatively few research or pilot projects generate the critical information needed to go beyond proof of concept and provide a basis for assessing scalability, streamlining delivery, informing advocacy, and guiding scaling" (Cooley and Howard, 2019).

This underscores a key tenet of research for scaling: **it is not solely about assessing the impact of the model.**

Scaling also requires information and data about:

- If and how the scaling process is happening—including whether progress is being made toward scaling goals, what is working and not working during the scaling process, and what variations in impact are seen across geographies, schools, or populations
- Whether key elements of the innovation are being maintained during scaling and what adaptations could be tested to improve the innovation, its impact, and/or the scaling strategy
- What levels of support and buy-in from stakeholders are occurring across the system; how effective the current strategies for strengthening ownership and addressing opposition among stakeholders are
- How the innovation compares to other initiatives or the status quo in terms of costs, efficacy, impact, or processes
- Where current capacity and human resource limitations are constraining scaling and how these could be addressed

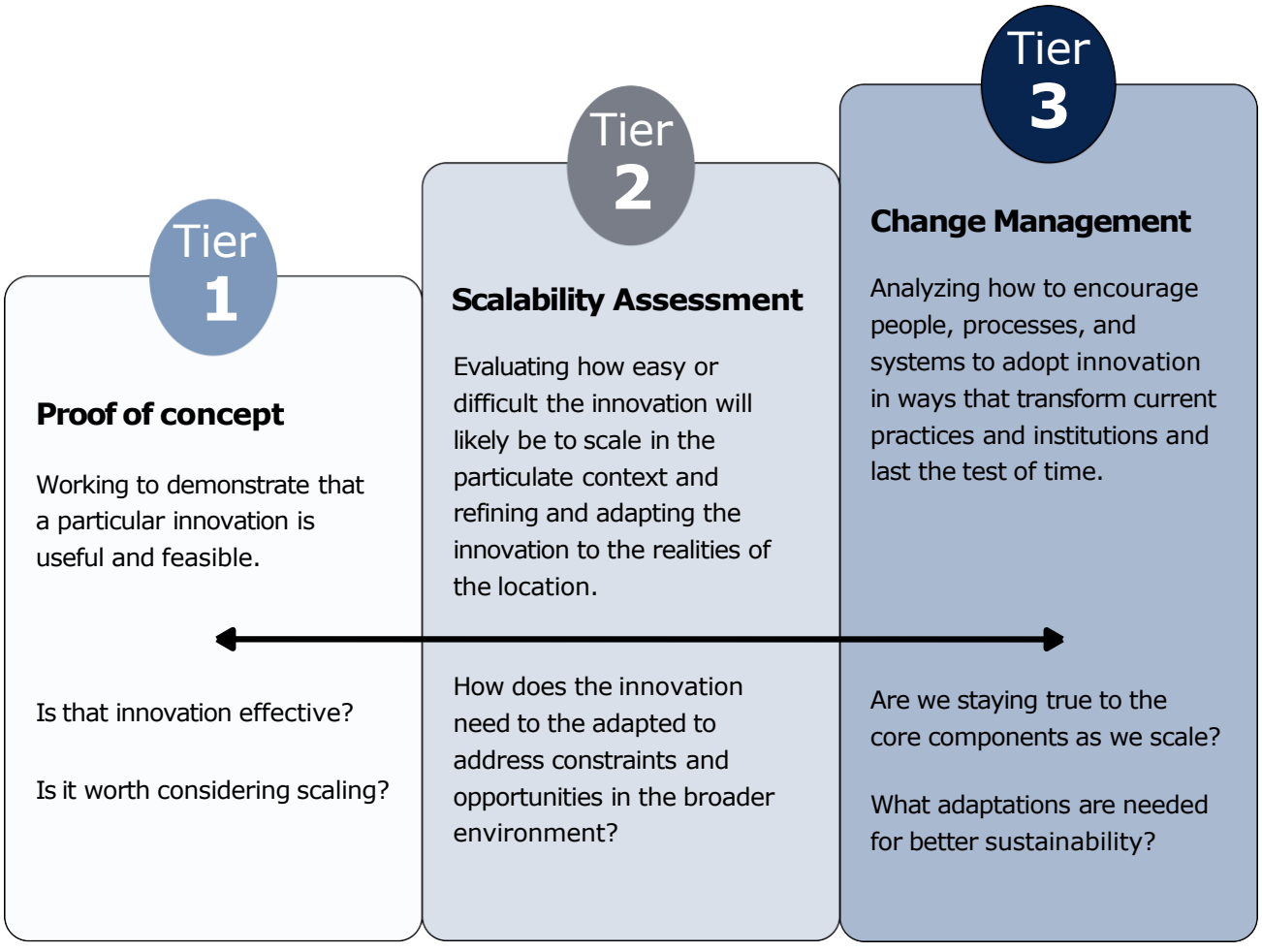


Scaling as continuous learning

Research should not be done just for its own sake (or because funders request it). Research should also not be done solely for the purposes of project advocacy or with end results already in mind. In fact, **the goal of research for scaling is to regularly test assumptions, learn, and use the results** to inform improved action. This requires being open to surprising (or undesirable) results and contradictory or confusing findings and using those to learn about and adapt the scaling effort. Scaling research should always be guided by curiosity and an **openness to the possibility that scaling your innovation is not the right step.**

Different types of research for scaling

Cooley and Howard and the Scaling Up Community of Practice suggest framing scaling research into three different (but overlapping) tiers:



See the audio transcript below of the description of the 3 tiers of scaling from Larry Cooley.



Audio transcript: Okay, so one kind of evidence is what's called here tier one, the proof-of-concept information. That's the kind we're most used to, which is the evidence about whether something works. That usually comes out of pilot testing, impact evaluation, RCTs if we do them. I would say as a community, we're pretty good at this. We can always do better, but we're pretty good. The second tier is the kind of evidence that decisionmakers need to refine or streamline things or to test its scalability. It worked here; would it work there? It worked at this price point; would it work at that price point? Things of that sort. There I think we're not so good. And the third is the kind of information people need to actually go through the scaling process. And that is, as we go to larger scale, is it still delivering outcomes? What's happening to economies of scale, are they going up or are they going down? How do we have to keep tweaking the model or the rollout for continuous improvement? How do we track whether institutionalization is happening? These are other scaling information outputs, but I would say we're least good at that last tier.

Now that you've explored the tiers of research, test your understanding by matching each scenario below to the corresponding tier.

Pre- and post-test data to see if a new math curriculum is contributing to improved numeracy

- ◯ Tier 1 Proof of Concept
- ◯ Tier 2 Scalability Assessment
- ◯ Tier 3 Change Management

SUBMIT

Qualitative data from teachers who have been implementing a new life skills program for the past three years to see how their opinions of the program have changed over time

- ◯ Tier 1 Proof of Concept
- ◯ Tier 2 Scalability Assessment
- ◯ Tier 3 Change Management

SUBMIT

Qualitative data from community members ad teachers about cultural fit of a new curriculum module

- ◯ Tier 1 Proof of Concept
- ◯ Tier 2 Scalability Assessment
- ◯ Tier 3 Change Management

SUBMIT

Cost-effectiveness data comparing two different models of an after-school mentoring program

- ◯ Tier 1 Proof of Concept
- ◯ Tier 2 Scalability Assessment
- ◯ Tier 3 Change Management

SUBMIT

Process data looking at how funds are being distribute at the district level to support stipends for youth in a new national mentoring program

- ◯ Tier 1 Proof of Concept
- ◯ Tier 2 Scalability Assessment
- ◯ Tier 3 Change Management

SUBMIT

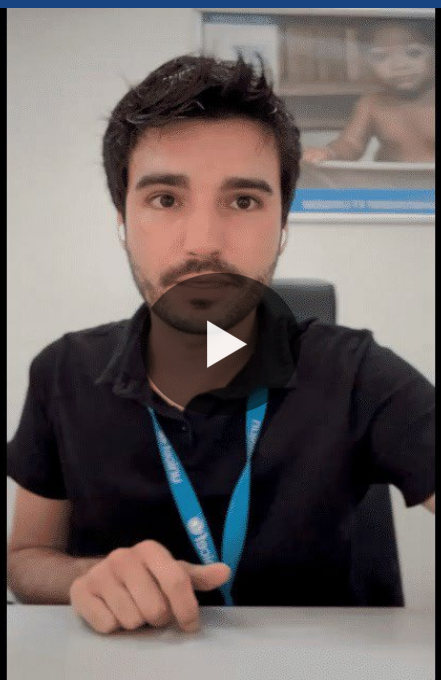
Cost-effectiveness data comparing two different models of an after-school mentoring program

- ◯ Tier 1 Proof of Concept
- ◯ Tier 2 Scalability Assessment
- ◯ Tier 3 Change Management

SUBMIT

Scaling Story: Using existing data

See the video transcript below.



Audio transcript: Hi there, my name is Renaud Comba. One element that worked really well for the Data Must Speak Positive Deviance research has been the use of ministries of education administrative data set. That is their EMIS data, their examination data, or any other data set that they may have. And one, it worked particularly well because ministries of education spend tons of money every year to collect data and high-quality data from every single school in a country. And some of these countries are even innovating by using CAPI devices such as tablets or electronic devices to collect the yearly data points. The Data Must Speak team co-created this research from the outset with ministries of education, high level, but also technical folks, as well as development partners and unions. And leveraging existing data sets allowed those stakeholders to better understand the potential and the value of this data. It's not always just about descriptive statistics, but it can also be about econometrics to find valuable and policy relevant findings.

They are empowered to continue to collect this data every year, but they also put in extra effort to make sure that the data collected is of high quality. But most importantly, using administrative data sets allows for a greater ownership of the country and of the ministry that we work with for this research. It is their data, it is their findings, and it is their action that's going to transform this research into action. So why not leverage those administrative data set more often, not to not only scale positive behaviors and practices found as part of the Data Must Speak research, but to also think through optimal scale of other innovations and programs that work within a context and within a country?

Optional reading:
The Role of Research for and about scaling education innovations: ROSIE Thematic Brief

GO TO ARTICLE

Mini case study: Three examples of scaling research

Examples of how one innovation can use multiple different kinds of research to support scaling



Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL)

These examples are all drawn from the same innovation, called Teaching at the Right Level, or TaRL.

Teaching at the Right Level is a remedial education approach that supports educators to identify students' basic literacy and numeracy skills rapidly and regularly through quick assessments, and then to adapt and target instruction to address individual student learning needs.

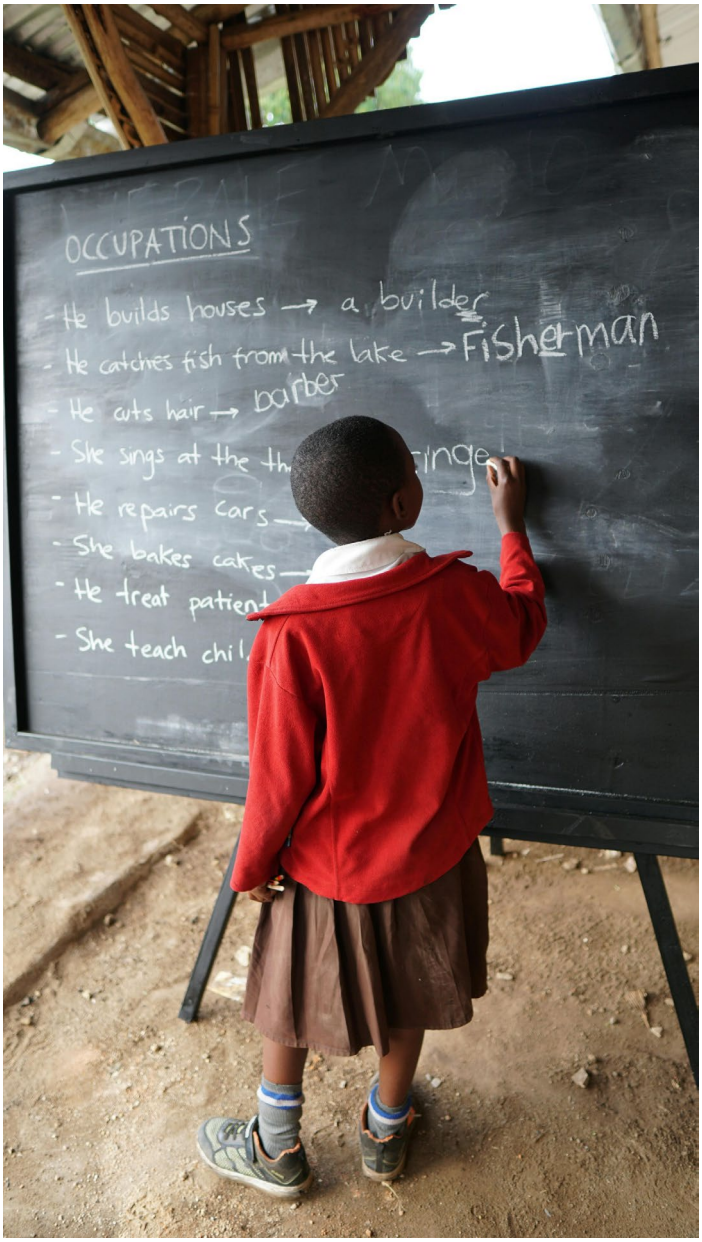
Today, TaRL is being implemented in numerous countries around the world, including Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, and Zambia.

This mini case study will showcase three examples of scaling research being carried out by TaRL teams to illustrate how different kinds of research can be used to support scaling the same innovation. As you explore these examples, think about the different information generated to support scaling TaRL.



Tier 1 : Proof of concept

TaRL was originally pioneered by Pratham in India. Beginning in 2001, The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (JPAL) partnered with Pratham to rigorously test the approach and conducted six Randomized Control Trials (RCTs) of different versions of TaRL implemented in seven states in India. Two RCTs were also conducted on TaRL-inspired programs in Kenya and Ghana. The initial aim was to demonstrate the impact of the model on improving learning outcomes. Later on, the aim evolved to focus on how to evaluate, adapt, and refine TaRL models for efficient and sustainable scaling. These initial tests and refinement are examples of "Proof of Concept" research.



Tier 2: Scalability Assessment A/B testing

In Botswana, scaling TaRL is a partnership between the Ministry of Education and Skills Development and local NGO Youth Impact. Since 2016, TaRL has expanded from a numeracy pilot in a single school, to a numeracy and literacy program implemented in over 20 percent of primary schools across all regions of the country.

A key factor in the success of scaling TaRL in Botswana has been the ongoing data-driven adaptation of the model through the use of A/B testing. A/B testing is a methodology traditionally used by the technology sector, which Youth Impact has applied in the social sector. This methodology randomly allocates participants to multiple versions of a program or intervention—'treatment A' or 'treatment B'—and conducts rapid tests of these different options, enabling causal inference to detect if one version improves desired outcomes more than the other. A/B tests give quick feedback, allowing for rapid iteration and cost-effective optimization of day-to-day operations using short-term indicators of success.

For example, in 2020 Youth Impact considered A/B tests to look at the ratio of mentors to teachers, the frequency of checkpoint assessments, different ways of grouping students, and the content of materials. The purpose of these tests is not simply learning about all the different possible variations but to determine the most scalable version of TaRL moving forward. Therefore, this research is an example of "Assessing Scalability."



Tier 2: Use data to inform decisions when scaling change in education

Since 2019, the Ministry of National Education and Literacy (MENA) has been leading the process of testing, implementing, adapting, and scaling the Programme d'Enseignement Ciblé (PEC), a French language version of TaRL in Côte d'Ivoire. The process started with an extensive piloting phase to identify and compare effective innovations for improving learning outcomes. After testing a few different innovations and identifying PEC as the most impactful, MENA and a selection of partners from the philanthropic community and chocolate and cocoa companies adapted and scaled TaRL from 50 schools in 2018 to over 991 schools in 2021, with the eventual goal of full national scale. As part of this journey, costing research was carried out to help inform decisions about the scope and pace of scaling and what aspects of the approach, particularly related to teacher training, needed to be adapted to enable scaling in a sustainable way. For more about how this costing data was used, watch the video below. This research is another example of "Assessing Scalability" research.

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript: Hello, I am Faustin Kofi from Côte d'Ivoire. I work for the Ministry of National Education as an Inspector General and also manage the scaling-up laboratory in the country. I would like to share a brief story regarding our efforts to scale up the "targeted instruction" approach. Our goal was to train all teachers in this method. We realized it was crucial to revise our training strategy; the "cascade" training model not only risked a loss of quality as the training filtered down, but—more importantly—the cost of training every teacher was prohibitive. The Ivorian government simply could not afford it. Consequently, after discussions with our partners, we had to drastically reduce the number of training days and adopt a different approach: hybrid training. Simulations showed that the total cost of scaling up using hybrid training would be 16 billion CFA, whereas the training model initially proposed by our partners—even before factoring in other scaling-up costs—exceeded 23 billion. For us, running these simulations was essential; it highlighted the importance of rethinking our approach when scaling up an initiative. Thank you.



Tier 3: Change Management

In Zambia, TaRL goes by the name "Catch Up." Catch Up was first piloted by the Zambian Ministry of General Education, with support from the JPAL Africa policy team along with non-governmental organizations Pratham, Innovations for Poverty Action Zambia, UNICEF Zambia, VVOB education for development, and ZESSTA. Catch Up began in 2016 and is now in more than 6400 schools across the country.

In its current phase, a key research focus is sustainability of the TaRL approach under government implementation. To support sustainable implementation of TaRL, the Busara Center for Behavioral Economics, TaRL Africa and VVOB have designed a research study to assess how teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and motivations can influence foundational learning.

The study will use a variety of methods to understand how teachers' beliefs influence classroom practices, and how these beliefs can be part of solutions to improve and enhance quality delivery of foundational learning. This research is looking at how to foster lasting impact of the TaRL approach, and therefore it is an example of the third tier of scaling research, "change management."

Research about the scaling process

In addition to their specific research projects, the teams also documented their scaling work with reflection reports, checklists, notes from key meetings, and other sources of data to keep track of what they were learning about the scaling process itself.

This information was used for periodic reflection meetings, where the scaling team and a diverse group of stakeholders would come together to reflect on scaling progress and identify areas for adaptation and further research.

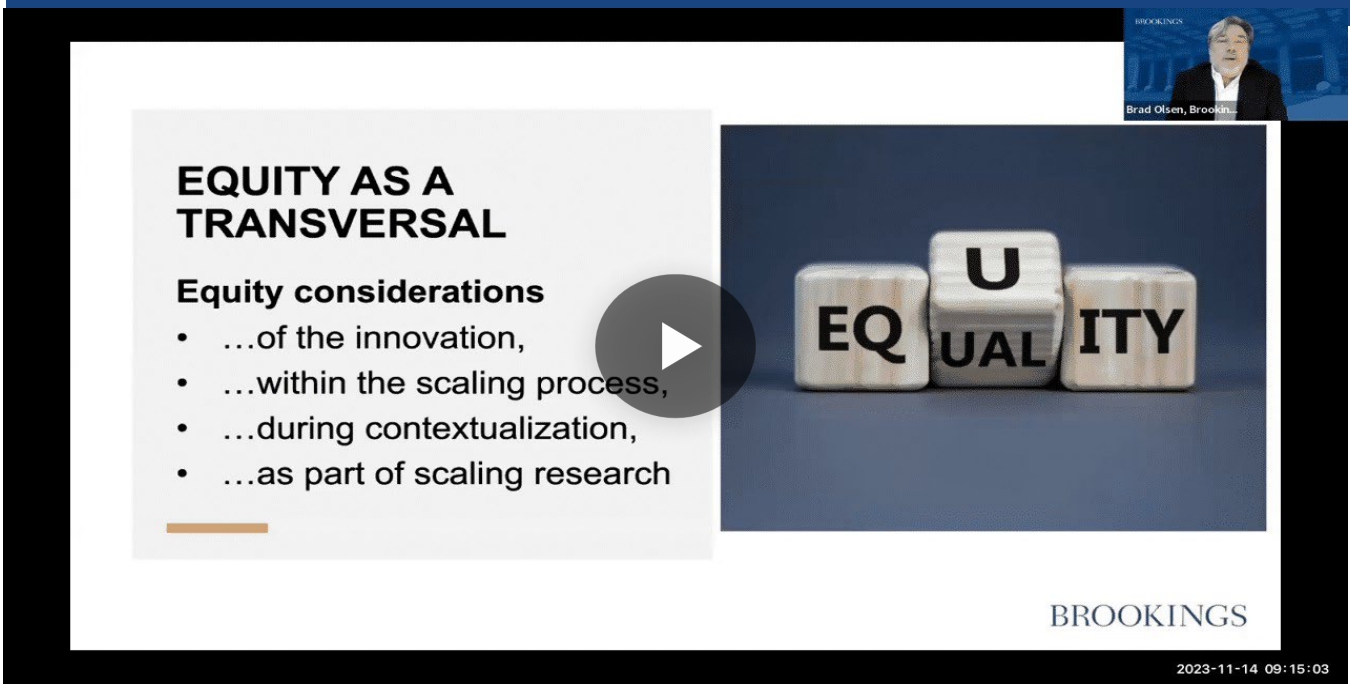
To learn more about each of these examples, explore the following case studies and research:

- Improving children's reading and math at large scale in Côte d'Ivoire The story of scaling PEC
- Adapting, innovating, and scaling foundational learning: Four lessons from scaling Teaching at the Right Level in Botswana
- How do teachers' beliefs and intentions influence the delivery of teaching practices in Zambia?
- Teaching at the Right Level

Equity considerations for scaling research

Unless directly incentivized to do so, it can be difficult (and time consuming) to collect the right data needed to explicitly investigate equity when scaling. But, for many, **equity is a critical component of scaling success and researching scaling**. Therefore, it is important to foreground equity and think proactively about how to integrate equity dimensions into your research questions, study design, data collection, analysis, and data sharing and reflection activities.

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript: We cannot talk about scaling without talking about equity. And one of the things that we've found is that equity considerations are diminished when equity is seen as a standalone topic or just a single dimension of the work. Instead, we think that equity is woven through every aspect of scaling. It's almost like a ribbon that weaves through all of the trees of a forest. We can think about equity considerations within scaling in four different dimensions. One of them is the innovation itself may be designed with equity in mind. A second dimension is the actual scaling work may prioritize equity considerations. In other words, as the scaling proceeds, what kinds of differential equity results flow and ebb over time? Some equity considerations may increase, others may decrease. Thirdly, when an innovation that's worked in one place is being contextualized in a new location, equity has to be rethought. Equity is always context dependent. And so what kinds of dimensions around equity in one location don't always have the same meaning in another location? And then fourth, as researchers are engaged in the work alongside their scaling to better understand how their scaling is having effects on various subpopulations and what kind of adaptations need to be made during the scaling process, we think it's incredibly important to prioritize equity. That means collecting data on subpopulations. It means engaging in equity-based research. It means using research on equity in scaling in order to increase the visibility of equity as an important transversal topic.

Equity considerations

What data do you need to understand equity issues related to your scaling?

Are you currently collecting disaggregated data (or disaggregating your already collected data) in ways that can answer your questions about equity and inclusion?



Is the research examining issues of variability—in other words, how implementation, adaptation, and effects of the scaling look different across different geographies or in different populations?

Given that the effects of an innovation (i.e., its impact) may be different for different sub-populations as the innovation scales, how are you capturing and measuring this in terms of equity? What aspects of variability are you looking for? What are you leaving out?



Will the voices and experiences of marginalized or underrepresented groups be represented in data collection and analysis? Will these groups be able to look at what you are finding along the way so they can confirm or disconfirm your interpretations (this is called member checks)?

Who will own this data? How will the people who provided the data be informed about its use? Will they be given, and be able to use, your results?



How will you share data and analysis?

What audiences are you trying to reach? What formats will work best for different audiences? How will you actively engage them in discussions about the analysis and findings? What groups might not be pleased with your focus or findings on equity, and how will you address that?



Scaling research example

Inclusive Home-Based Early Learning Project in Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe

Ejuu, G., Locoro, V., Nandera, M., Omoding, M., Mafabi, L.W., Kutosi, G.W. et al., 2022, 'Community's knowledge, attitude and practices towards inclusive home based early childhood education in Uganda: Lessons for scaling deep' South African Journal of Childhood Education12□1□, a1117. https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v12i1.1117

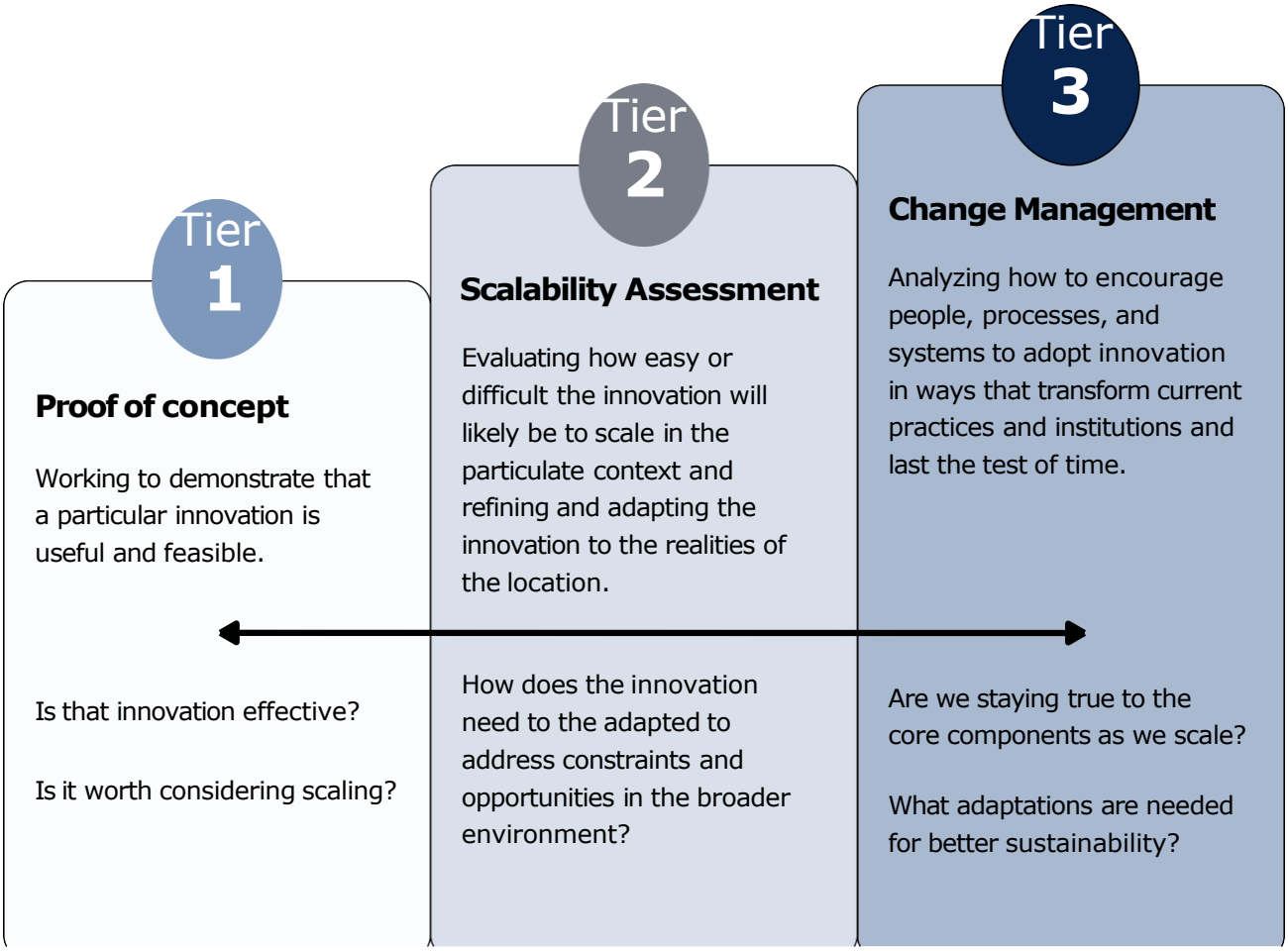
GO TO ARTICLE

What types of scaling research are you doing?

Answer the following questions in the accompanying PDF.

What is one example of scaling research you are currently planning or doing? What research question does it seek to answer?

I think...



Review the three tiers of scaling research above. Which tiers does this research fall into?

I think...

Are you doing any research to understand specific equity aspects of your innovation or initiative? What are you doing? What are you learning?

I think...

Optional: Collaborative models of scaling research

One of the most important takeaways of this course is that **scaling is a collaborative process. It cannot be done alone.**

When it comes to scaling research, this means that diverse stakeholders should be meaningfully engaged in the beginning-to-end process of research design, data collection and analysis, and research-based decisionmaking about scaling. While there is no one right way to undertake collaborative scaling research—and the particulars can and should vary by context, innovation, and stakeholders involved—we have identified a few elements of collaborative scaling research that are critical.

Collaborative research…

1. Seeks to "get the whole system into the room" by engaging diverse stakeholders who have different roles, viewpoints, positionings, and priorities and therefore bring distinct views of the problem to be addressed and how the system currently functions.

2. Strives for a non-hierarchical approach, in which the diverse roles and perspectives are all valued and considered equally, not included merely as tokens of collaboration.

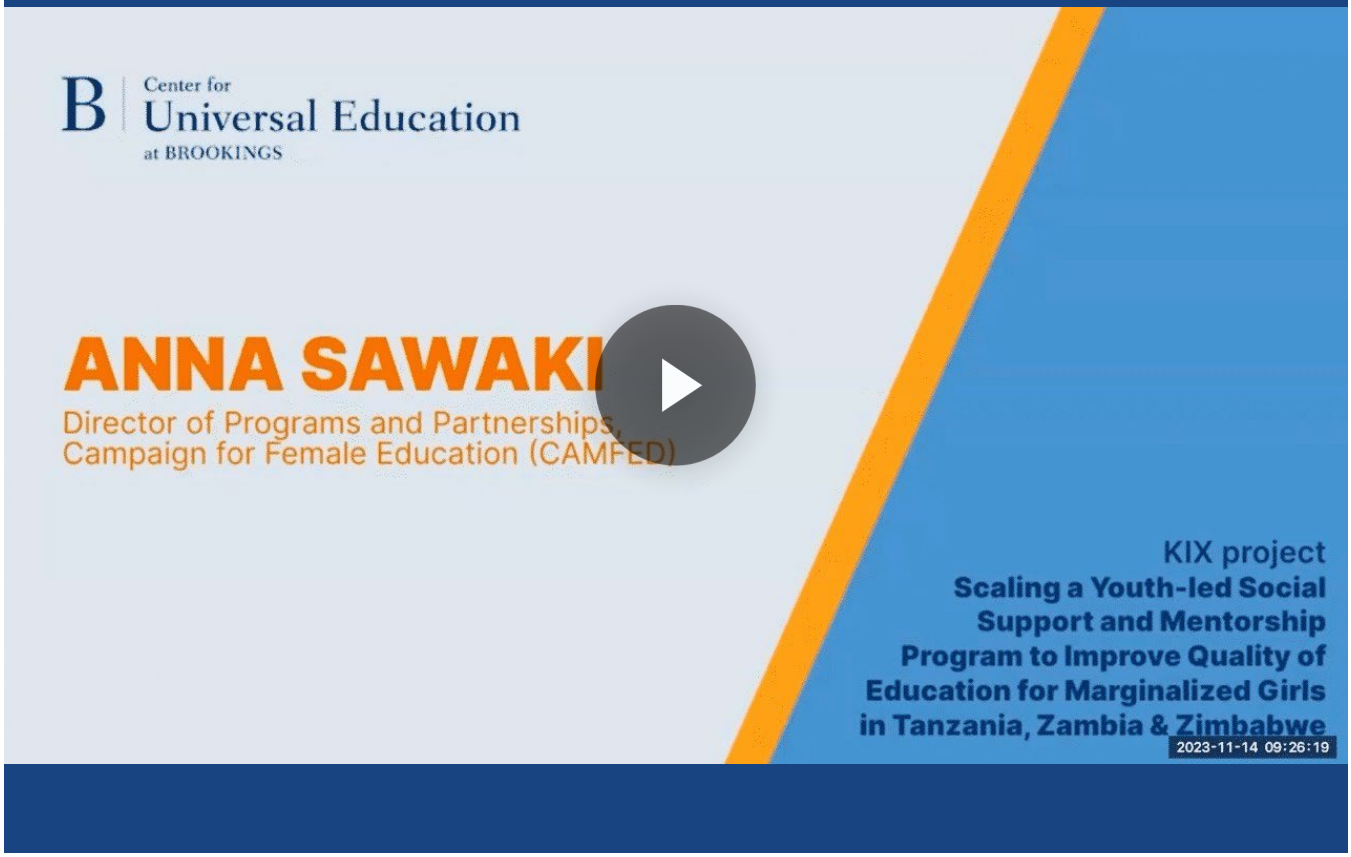
3. Is problem- (not solution-) driven, meaning that it focuses on how best to address an identified, pressing problem rather than on how to expand or grow a particular innovation.

4 Deliberately considers the motivations, incentives, power dynamics, risk tolerances, resources, and priorities of the diverse stakeholders involved—and seeks to artfully align all actors around a shared vision for scaling success.

5 Includes and engages those people directly impacted by the issue as experts and advocates who can help ensure the scaling research adequately and accurately takes equity considerations into account.

Scaling Story: Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript:
Anna Sawaki: My name is Anna Sawaki. I'm the Director of Programs and Partnership. One thing that worked very well with our scaling is our collaboration with the government, where through this collaboration, we were able to form the Scaling Advisory Committee, which brought together members of the government and non-government stakeholders. And throughout the implementation of this committee, members of the committee had an opportunity to come together to co-design and implement the research, looking at elements of our youth-led mentorship model, how best they fit into the government priorities, and how can we work together to scale it to the non-government partner schools. And all the time, the members of the committee were able to learn, advise, and provide some insights of how best we can work with the system to make sure that this best practice, this best model, can reach out to more students. And we are seeing this as a best model because as we move forward to scale it to the other districts, we see some differences on how the government is taking ownership of the program. It's now not about CAMFED. Rather, the government taking lead to make sure that this program is reaching out to more students by selecting the youth to participate in the program, selecting the teachers to oversee the program, selecting the schools themselves, providing facilities. And to us, that's a new trajectory. It doesn't look like we are expanding to new districts or schools. But rather, the government is taking ownership to make sure that this proven model is reaching more students and making sure that they learn, thrive, and transit to other pathways of life.

Tricia Wind: Normal applied research projects, they'll probably include a stakeholder mapping exercise at some point to think through who are all the relevant actors and institutions, the relationships among them, the power dynamics that connect them around the situation, the problem, and the solutions that we're looking at. However, sometimes that can be kind of a static stakeholder mapping, just sort of a here and now. When it comes to scaling research, that stakeholder mapping needs to anticipate change because scaling is all about change. So, it needs to be prospective more than just sort of static. And I think that example from CAMFED that we heard about was quite an interesting example because CAMFED actually developed and implemented that Learner Guide program that Anna Sawaki was talking about. And so, they developed all kinds of stakeholder relations. In addition to these two elements that were brought together through our program, the governor added a new one to the program as well, which is a new one to the program, around their role as the implementer. But even so, when they started their scaling research, they did a whole new stakeholder mapping exercise to think through who would become the stakeholders as the initiative would scale and how it would be integrated then into the government systems. And that required a whole different set and a wider set of people and agencies. And it differed in Tanzania compared to the other countries in which it was going to be changed and adapted and contextualized to see how it would fit in those country contexts as well.

Example: The Real-time Scaling Lab Model

In 2018, the Center for Universal Education at Brookings and partner institutions around the world (including INJAZ Jordan, CAMFED, Transforming Education in Cocoa Communities, Youth Impact, and the International Rescue Committee) co-created Real-time Scaling Labs (RTSLs)—a participatory, action-research approach to learn from, support, and document education interventions as they scaled in real time. The ultimate goal was to support initiatives as they deepened and expanded impact. But it was also about gaining insight into how policymakers, civil society, and the private sector can effectively work together to bring about large-scale transformation in the quality of children's learning and development. The labs pursued a multi-stakeholder, collaborative approach to scaling support and research.

What was learned from the Real-time Scaling Lab approach to collaborative scaling research?

WHEN is the right time for a scaling lab?

Scaling is a long-term and staged process, and an RTSL is not likely to be useful at every stage. An RTSL is not a good fit for a situation where stakeholders are exploring "what" to scale—searching for innovations or piloting initiatives—or for efforts that do not yet have a clear vision to scale. An RTSL is most useful once scaling is underway for examining questions about how to advance the process and address challenges and constraints as they arise.

WHO should be involved?

In each lab, two local individuals served as key figures in the RTSL, with the salary costs shared between partners. The scaling lab manager (SLM) planned and facilitated the multistakeholder lab convenings. The scaling lab researcher (SLR) documented the scaling process and collected additional data for decision making. Over time, many SLRs and SLMs became "scaling champions" within their own organizations and among their peers. A deep understanding of the local context and a strong network across the education ecosystem were essential prerequisites for these roles.

The RTSL process aimed to regularly convene stakeholders from a diversity of roles and perspectives who were already involved or would need to be involved in the scaling process. The intention was to include both high-level and technical-level policymakers and implementers and for the same individual to participate in the entire process. Lab membership was decided based on criteria developed by each partner institution, the SLM, and SLR, with input from CUE. Member institutions typically remained stable, but often individual members changed.

WHERE should a lab be hosted?

The exact location of each lab (within government, within an NGO partner, as an independent entity) depended on the context and each partner. Hosting the RTSL within the government facilitated stronger buy-in for the process from other stakeholders and helped bring key government actors into the ongoing scaling conversations earlier than might be typical. At the same time, operating the lab within the government brought challenges of existing hierarchies, bureaucracy, and last-minute decisions. Whether the RTSL was hosted within or outside government, it needed to be a distinct group and not embedded into existing groups in order to retain the lab's independence, its ability to convene a wide cross section of actors, and set its own agenda.

WHAT activities should the lab focus on?

- Developing a common understanding of scaling
- Co-designing a scaling goal and strategy
- Identifying data needs for scaling decisions
- Collecting, using, and analyzing data
- Sharing evidence and expertise among lab members
- Facilitating application of scaling tools and resources
- Collaborative decisionmaking

HOW to balance co-creation and direct guidance?

In each case, the RTSL structure and approach differed, based on the preferences and needs of the partner and key stakeholders. Striking a balance between taking the time to co-create the scaling strategy and research and maintaining sufficient momentum to address urgent problems required constant re-evaluation and adjustments in each lab. The RTSL team found it could be helpful to bring drafts and plans to stakeholders for consideration rather than expecting the lab group to develop plans from scratch, due to the many constraints on lab members' time.

What have we learned about the Real-time Scaling Lab model?

GO TO ARTICLE

Sharing scaling research with stakeholders

It is not enough to simply collect data and conduct/publish research. **Scaling research is only useful if it informs future scaling decisions.** This means that research findings must be shared in ways accessible, actionable, and directly useful to the relevant education decisionmakers. **This requires careful planning about how and when findings are shared, and with whom.**

In this next video, Brad Olsen and Larry Cooley discuss how to communicate research findings with scaling stakeholders. As you watch the video, think about who the primary audiences for your scaling research are and what the best ways to communicate research findings with them will be.

See the video transcript below.

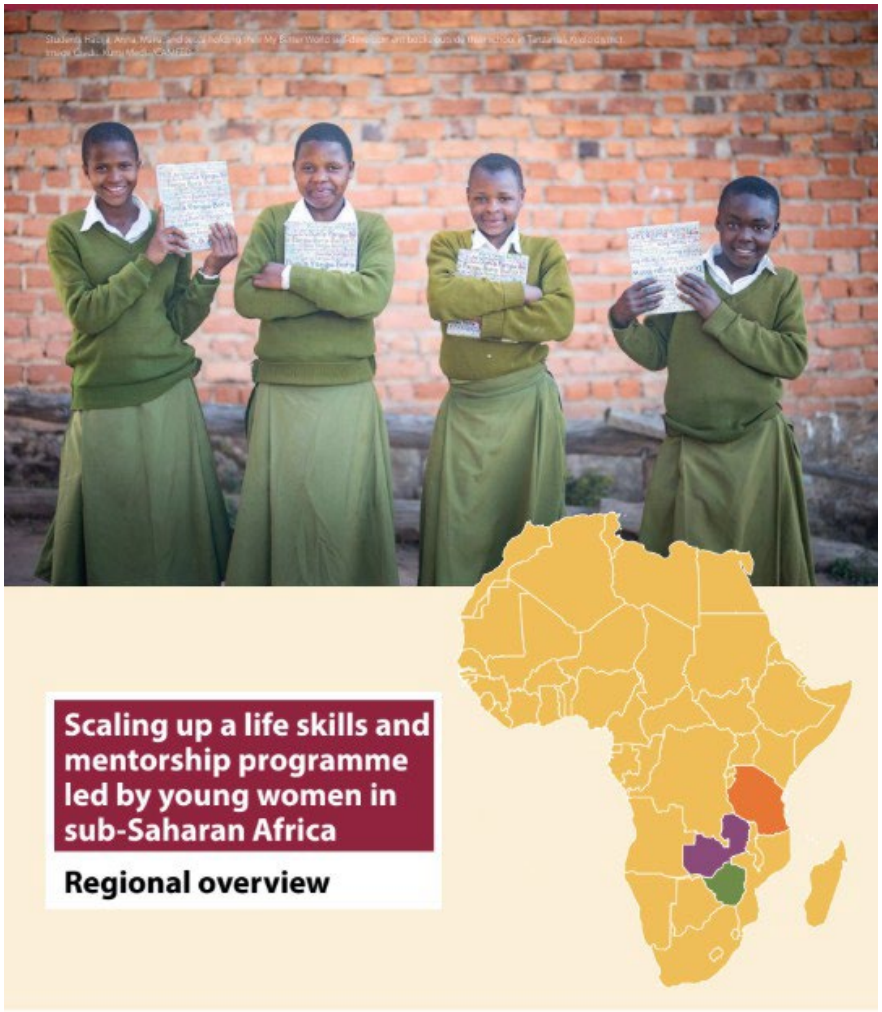


Video transcript:
Brad Olsen: In your years of work around scaling, what kinds of scaling outputs have you seen that work? And what kinds of scaling outputs have you seen that maybe aren't so successful? I know it depends on the audience, the purpose, the context, and the details. But are there any lessons learned that you can share with us?

Larry Cooley: Nope. Precisely because of what you just said. I honestly believe that we're in the influence business. And that it's better, even though most of us, including myself, are social scientists by training, it's better to think like a management consultant for this purpose. Which is that you're trying to help somebody do something. Maybe it's helpful to frame it as the difference between management questions and empirical questions. Empirical questions are how much, which kind, where, and so on. Management questions almost always begin with a should. Should we do this or should we do that? Should we do it this way or should we do it that way? Should we do it here? Should we do it there? You can't directly collect data on a "should." You can only collect data on an "is." So, trying to find the way people are going to use empirical data to inform a management decision, to me, is the art form that we're all part of. I personally have never had much luck presenting reports to people and having them change. It just isn't the way most people consume information, particularly very senior people. They trust their instincts. They trust trusted sources, and they trust things that really speak to their lived experience. They're also trying to fit this into a context where they're either trying to make a decision about what to do if they're implementers or what policies to approve if they're their decisionmakers. So in my experience, the more interactive, the better and trying to guess what format somebody's going to consume in is almost always a fool's errand. So I say, and you said that by way of introduction, but I want to say it is the main point on this, that getting inside the skin of whoever it is you're trying to speak to and figuring out how they consume information and what would be dispositive for them is the entire secret to this game.

So if I work that backwards, I've had particularly good luck with learning events, but that's because if you can get the right people there and get them to be a little bit vulnerable and exposing their own lack of certainty about things, you've got a much better chance than if you're trying to lead with your evidence and hope that they simply consume it. Second one, I think I've had good luck with things called data rehearsals. It wasn't exactly on your list, but it's kind of on your list, which is where you get people to answer a hypothetical question. "You asked me how many or what percentage of people are adopting something? What if I told you it was 68%? What would you do with that data?" And until you can figure out how people would consume it, you don't understand. The extent to which you're framing of the evidence isn't matching their framing of the problem. And it takes a little bit of give and take before that works. Another thing that I've learned is that seeing is often believing. So, something that gives people a visual experience or any direct engagement with whatever the intervention is usually has impacts you would not necessarily have imagined or predicted. And a fourth, I was just going to list another one, is that people tend to learn more from outliers than from averages. So, if you can highlight in some cases, places, or incidents, or circumstances in which whatever the intervention is work particularly well or particularly badly, people are more prone to draw conclusions from that than simply moving averages over time.

Examples of Scaling Research Outputs from GPE KIX

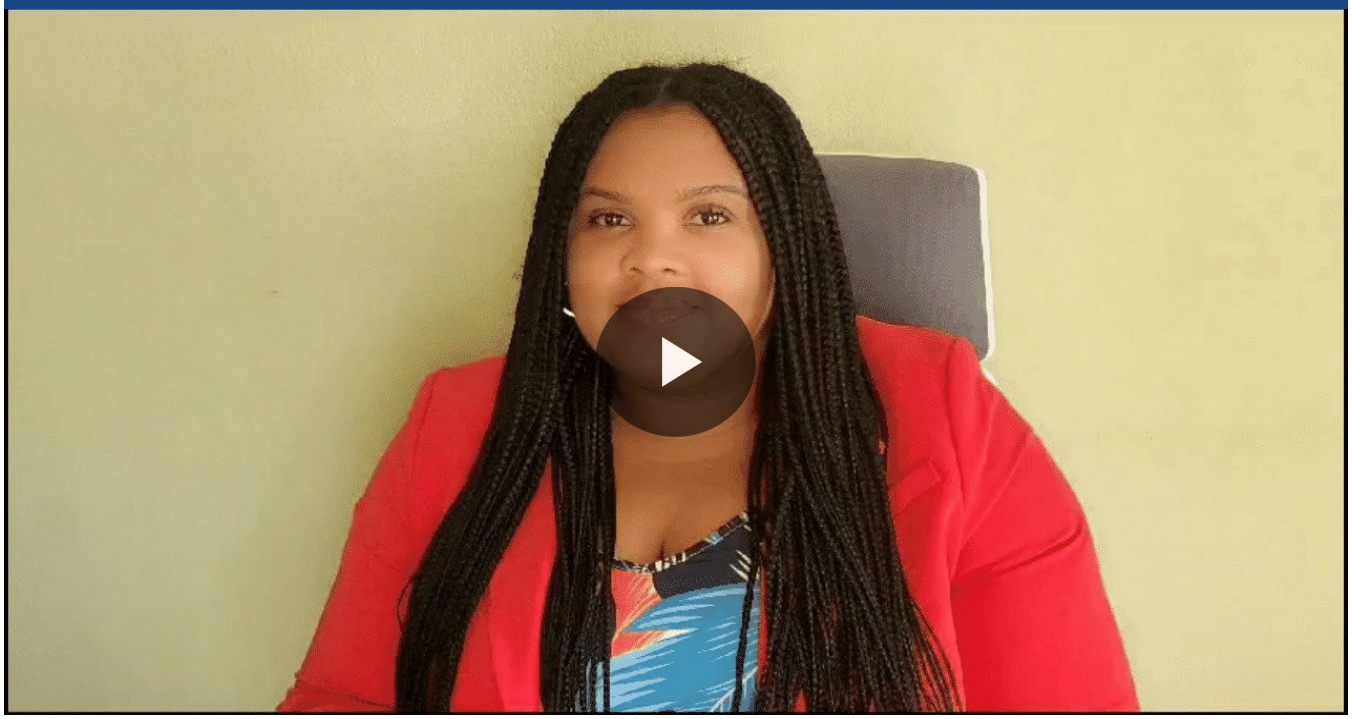


Scaling up a life skills and mentorship programme led by young women in sub-Saharan Africa
Regional overview

GO TO ARTICLE

Scaling story: Decisionmakers and Data Use

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript: One of the challenges we noted regarding data and data use in our project was in relation to the administrators. Early in our discussion with the administrators about scaling, we asked about the elements that they would find necessary to scale an innovation. One of those elements that they mentioned was high-quality data. Later, as we re-engaged them in discussions about scaling, we encouraged them to outline that scaling pathway by which an innovation would be developed and then taken up into the system. Interestingly, we noted that data was not featured in that innovation scaling pathway. This implies that there's a bit of a disconnect between what administrators feel they should do, what they want to do, and the actual practices of the Ministry of Education. It also suggests that administrators would need more support and more capacity building to be able to scale an innovation. So that they could create new processes to integrate data into their decision-making. For instance, this would look like identifying key points in the innovation scaling pathway where data would be necessary, the kind of data that they would find useful, and perhaps how that data could be presented.

Equity considerations when scaling



It is important that the findings of any research conducted with communities, schools, families, students, educators, or other stakeholders are shared back to them. There is a long history of researchers extracting information from communities without sharing with the communities themselves. **To ensure equity is prioritized, it is important to include stakeholders (especially children, families, and teachers)** in designing the research, analyzing the data, and disseminating findings. That is better than merely using stakeholders as data sources, which can seem extractive and neglects the value of their input and engagement. This can be achieved in many different ways.

Communities and education stakeholders have valuable perspectives that may shed light on the research findings and provide useful context to the conclusions. Additionally, **it is important to think about how different stakeholders prefer to engage with the information** and what procedures can ensure that the information is accessible to those who too often are left out. Simply sharing a paper or report may not be useful for every audience. Short infographics, briefs, radio spots, plays, and community discussions are all methods for sharing information from a research study with communities. But each **needs to be tailored to the specific individuals you are trying to reach**. For example, when planning a community dissemination event, think about where it is held, what time of day and time of year, in what language, how it is structured, etc. to ensure you are not inadvertently excluding certain groups.

No matter your approach, **it is critical to reflect on how the work you are doing is being shared** with the people who gave their time, insights, and experiences to your research and how it can be used to improve the lives of those affected by the issues studied. They helped you by giving you access or sharing their perspectives—make sure you don't forget them!

How are you sharing your scaling research?

Answer the following questions in the accompanying PDF.

Who are the different audiences for your scaling research?

I think...

What do you know (or would like to learn) about how this audience uses information to make decisions?

I think...

Pick one specific audience from the list above. What are 1-2 formats or strategies you are considering for sharing your research findings with this audience?

I think...

What information might you need to ensure the formats and avenues you use for information sharing are tailored to the needs and interests of this audience?

I think...

Module 6 summary

Using research and evidence to inform scaling

In this module, we explored research for scaling and the three tiers of scaling research as well as considered collaborative research and how to engage stakeholders in scaling research and findings dissemination.

By now you should know…

- Research for scaling is about generating evidence that will help you make scaling decisions for your particular scaling project.
- It is not enough to collect information and share it at the end of a project. It is important to identify who your target audiences are at the beginning, and how you will engage them and share information during and after the research process. Different audiences require different kinds of engagement, information, and presentation formats.

- It is important to consider the equity implications of your research: the research questions, processes, and communication strategies.

- There are three tiers of research that generate different kinds of information about scaling: (a) proof of concept, (b) scalability assessment, and (c) change management research. Scaling processes require all three.

In this module you completed the following activities and reflections:

- What type of research are you doing

- Three examples of scaling research from Teaching at the Right Level

- Scaling research planning tool and worked examples

- Sharing your research with stakeholders

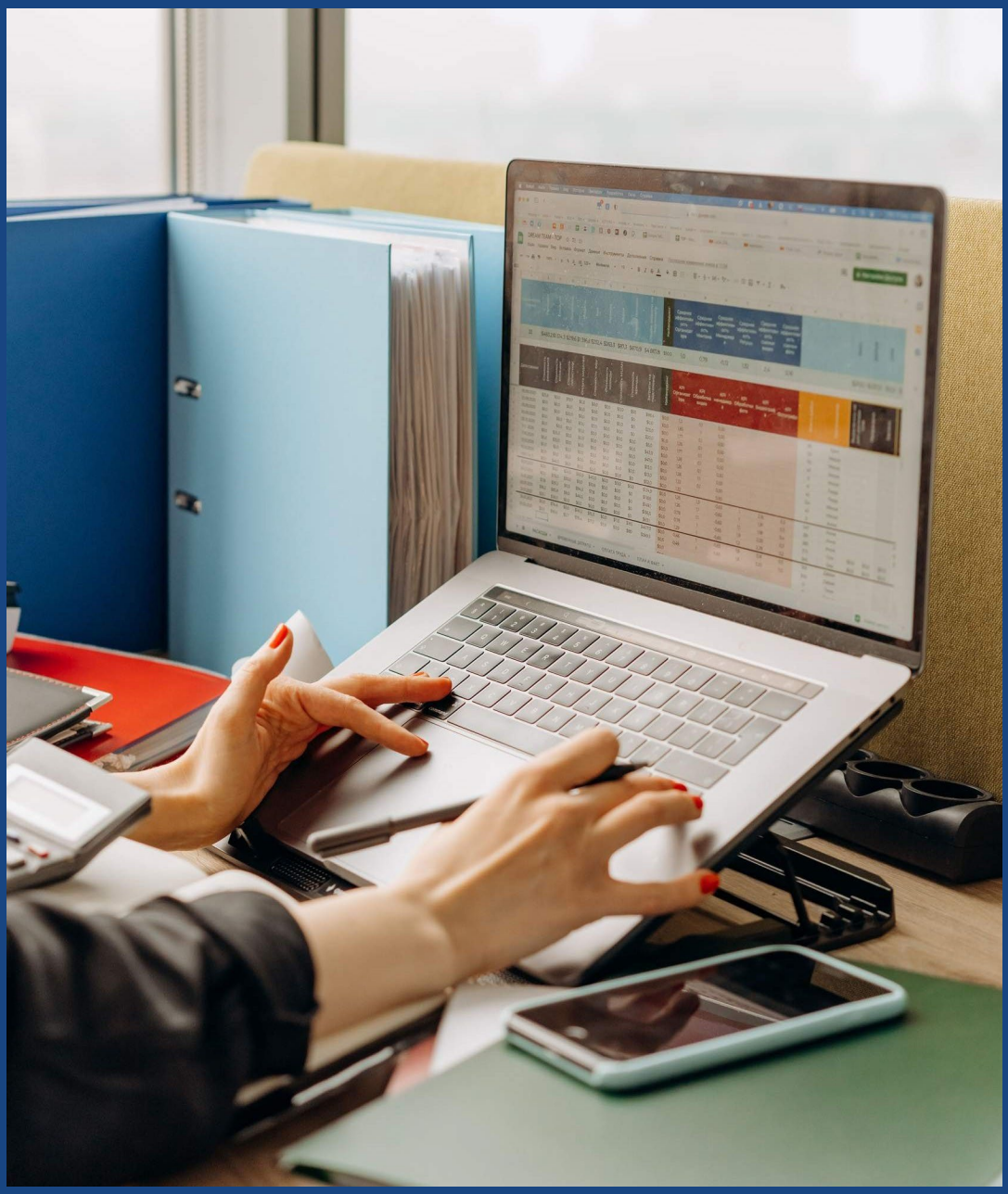
Discuss with your team

1. What scaling research question(s) are we thinking about and want to answer?
2. How can we answer questions about scaling through our current monitoring, evaluation, and learning, and research activities? How will we need to collect additional data (and what kind) to answer our research question(s)?
3. Are we incorporating equity considerations into our research work? How so?
4. How will we engage different stakeholders in our research during the beginning, middle, and end?
5. Who are our audiences? What formats are we using to communicate with them? With what frequency? What should we change here?

What is next?

Now that we have looked at how research can inform scaling, we are going to dive more deeply into how to collect and use cost data to inform scaling decision-making we will and present different financing options to reach your scaling goal.

Costing and financing for scaling



START MODULE

Module 7 overview

Costing and Financing for Sustainable Scale

It is no surprise that adequate resources—human, financial, institutional, and organizational—are essential for scaling. Creating equitable impact that is sustained requires thinking about how these different types of resources will be identified, cultivated, and maintained during the long process of scaling. In particular, gathering and using accurate costing data is essential for identifying financing needs and making good scaling decisions.

This section focuses on financial resources. It will first provide a brief overview of costing terms and methods and then discuss some key financing factors that impact scaling and sustainability. The aim of this chapter is to introduce some relevant issues that you will continue to explore throughout your scaling journey.

Learning objectives

1. Understand how cost data can support scaling decisionmaking.
2. Consider who incurs costs during scaling—including financial costs, in-kind costs, and time contributions.
3. Understand the difference between costing and financing, and explore different financing options for scaling.
4. Identify some of the challenges with middle-phase financing for scaling in particular.
5. Align financing options with your potential scaling pathway(s).

Key Terms

- **Resources:** Both financial and non-financial supplies that can support scaling. Examples of resources used in education include:
  - **Staff** (teachers, Ministry inspectors, curriculum developers)
  - **Technology** (computers, internet connections, smartphones, apps)
  - **Systems** (payroll, Education Management Information Systems)
  - **In-kind donations** (food, office supplies, learning materials, spaces)
  - **Materials** (textbooks, learning materials)
  - **Buildings and infrastructure** (classrooms, community spaces)
  - **Volunteer time** (peer mentors, parent volunteers)
  - **Money** (funding, budget allocations, fees)

- **Costing:** A methodology used to identify the cost of a new intervention or program, the cost to increase coverage of an intervention or program, or the cost of incorporating a change in the design of an existing service. Costing supports a more precise understanding of the financial resource requirements and implications, which makes it a valuable input for policy development, planning, prioritization, and budgeting. Costing can also support evidence-based advocacy by demonstrating the costs of different scenarios or approaches (UNICEF Public Finance Toolkit 2021).

- **Financing:** The act of obtaining or furnishing money or capital for a program or initiative.

Module Outline

- Cost data for scaling
- Equity considerations and costing
- Matching financing to your scaling pathway(s)
- Costing methods
- Flexible financing for scaling
- Optional: Tools for costing and additional resources on financing

Remember!

Scaling is not about maintaining or growing a project, but about creating lasting impacts that improve the system and can be sustained.

Cost data for scaling

The role of costing in scaling

Gathering accurate cost data and conducting good cost analyses is a critical component of planning for scale and informing decisions about which interventions to implement, adapt, and expand. Information on program effectiveness alone is not enough to inform decisions about what to invest in and what to scale. It is also **essential to understand the costs of implementation at scale, how those costs compare to alternatives** or the status quo, and whether the system has the resources to support delivery at scale.

Cost data capture the full, disaggregated cost of implementing an education intervention. This is distinct from a project budget in that it goes beyond the direct costs to deliver the program to also take into account the costs of goods and services that are often considered "free"—such as volunteer time or donated resources—as well as opportunity costs, infrastructure and overhead, and costs spread over a long time period.

There are several reasons collecting and using cost data is important for scaling:

- Cost data can help make the case for scaling, supporting decisionmakers to determine how to use their limited resources most effectively to achieve their policy goals. They want significant impact at low cost, so having the calculations ready will help them to embrace your innovation.

- Cost data can be used to strengthen accountability—to keep track of what it costs to implement a program and how money was actually spent.

- Cost data provide critical information needed in order to identify and secure long-term financing. It is challenging to assess the resources needed for scaling (and where to find them) without knowing the disaggregated costs of delivery.

- Cost data enable implementers to forecast and plan for scale—estimating what a program might cost when implemented in a different context, at a different time, at a different pace, or at a larger scale. Costs may differ widely between contexts and at different scales, so it is important to not assume that the cost at small scale can be generalized to costs at large scale.

- Cost data enable cost analyses, which can provide decisionmakers with information about the benefits or outcomes of a program relative to its costs; this also enables comparison among similar programs.

Key Costing Terms

- **Costs**: The monetary expression of the value of resources required to develop and/or implement an innovation. Includes expenditures, contributions, participant time, and other inputs. Expressed as the total cost of the innovation.

- **Budgets:** A projection of the innovation's expected expenditures. This is what you think the program will cost.

- **Expenditures:** The amount of money spent developing, researching, and implementing an innovation. This is what is actually spent to implement the program.
- **Contributions**: In-kind or monetary donations that support the development or implementation of an innovation.

What's the difference between "price" and "cost"?

Price

The monetary amount required to obtain one item.

Example: The price of one textbook is 10 USD.

Cost

The monetary amount required to obtain the full number of items

Example: If an initiative needs 100 textbooks for a pilot (and the price is 10 USD), the cost of textbooks for the project is 1000 USD.

There are different types of costs to consider. Not all costs are monetary. In fact, in education, a lot of costs are units of time, effort, or in-kind contributions. Understanding the different kinds of costs incurred to create impact is important for accurately planning for scaling.

Explore each type of cost below.



Financial costs

Monetary expenditures



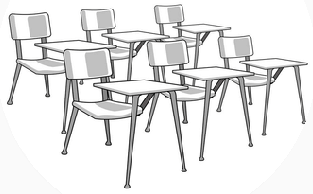
In-kind costs

Spaces, people, resources, and time donated by government, partners, or communities.



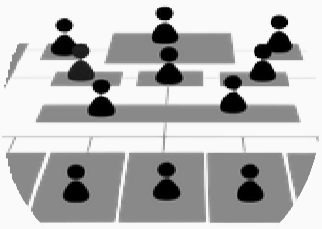
Opportunity costs

What was given up by participating. Usually calculated in terms of time and lost income.



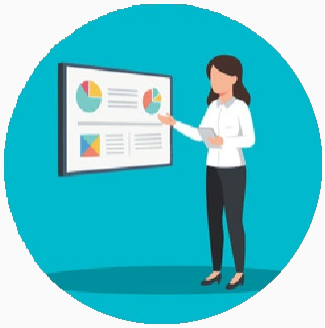
Resource costs

Places (venues, schools, etc.) and things (technology, materials, etc.) used for the program.



People costs

Labor (staff or participant time) expended on the program.



Shared costs

Expenses that benefit multiple partners and cannot be assigned to one stakeholder. For example, co-hosting trainings or sharing staff time.

Adapted from: Walls, Elena, Caitlin Tulloch, and Christine Harris-Van Keuren. 2024. Cost Analysis Guidance for USAID□Funded Education Activities, third edition. Washington, D□□ United States Agency for International Development.

Understanding some key costing distinctions



It can be easy to confuse or conflate different costing terms and concepts. For many, it is like learning a new language. It is important, however, to understand the distinctions between each term in order to accurately identify what kinds of cost you are looking at when conducting a costing exercise. For example, confusing start-up costs with recurring costs is a common mistake many innovators make which can cause their innovation to appear more expensive than it really is. Likewise, failing to distinguish between fixed and variable costs can create challenges when planning budgets for future years of scaling.

As you read through the table below, think of an example of each type of cost from your own work.

FIXED VS. VARIABLE COSTS	START-UP VS. RECURRING COSTS	OVERLAPPING VS. SHARED COSTS

Fixed costs do not change as scaling progresses.
For example, office rent is likely be a fixed cost. It stays the same regardless of scaling (unless new offices are opened).

Variable costs change in response to scaling.
For example, the costs of textbooks will depend upon how many students are involved in the program.

FIXED VS. VARIABLE COSTS | START-UP VS. RECURRING COSTS | OVERLAPPING VS. SHARED COSTS

Start-up costs are one-time expenses used to set up a program or innovation.

For example, costs related to designing the curriculum for a program are a start-up cost.

Recurring costs are ongoing costs to maintain the innovation.

For example, software subscription costs may be recurring costs that must be paid monthly to keep a data dashboard running.

FIXED VS. VARIABLE COSTS | START-UP VS. RECURRING COSTS | OVERLAPPING VS. SHARED COSTS

Overlapping costs are the costs of resources that contribute to multiple activities.

For example, the salary for a MEL manager who works across multiple programs or projects.

Shared costs are expenses that benefit multiple partners and cannot be assigned to just one stakeholder.

For example, co-hosting a training with another organization.

Costs at different phases of scaling

As you scale, costs will change. The cost of a pilot does not reflect the cost when scaling. Contextualizing your innovation carries new costs. Depending on the scaling pathway(s), costs to your organization will change as it adopts new roles in the scaling journey, such as advocacy or monitoring and evaluation. Understanding not only the costs of delivering your innovation, but also how your costs might change as you scale, is a critical step in a successful scaling journey.

Development/ Research

These costs are often incurred at the beginning of an innovation.

For some activities it can be difficult to know when development ends and implementation begins.

Implementation

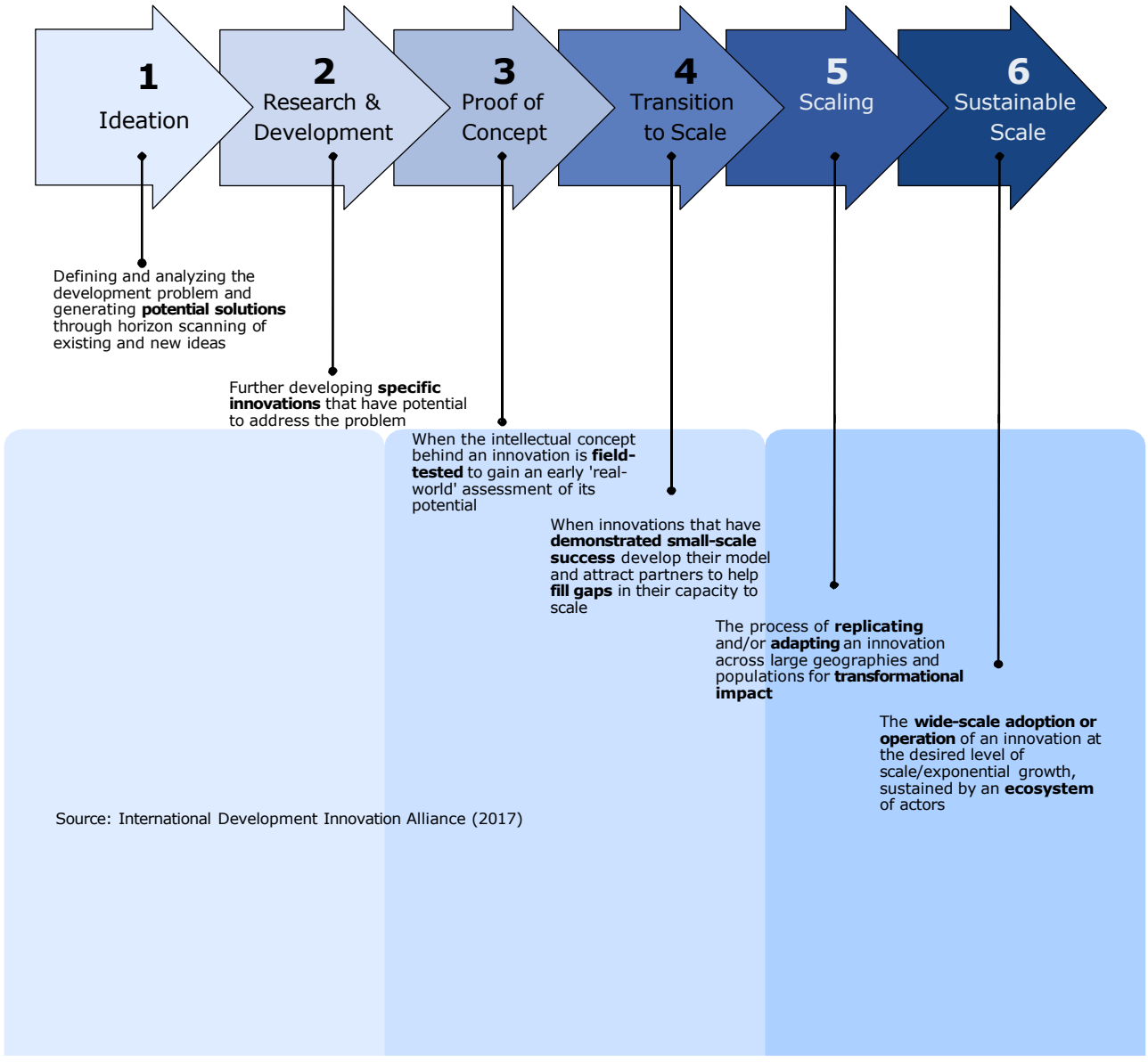
These costs are incurred after an innovation's development or research has concluded.

Often aligns with the beginning of some type of impact assessment.

Scaling

These costs are incurred as scaling is planned and progresses.

They have to do with additional expenditures related to reach, new contexts, new activities, cost sharing between partners, etc. These costs will depend on the scaling pathway(s) being pursued.



Source: International Development Innovation Alliance (2017)

Economies of Scale

During scaling, costs per student (or teacher or other beneficiary) often decrease as more individuals are reached—a phenomenon known as "economies of scale." This occurs because, in the early stages of a project, all of the fixed and variable costs are concentrated on only a few beneficiaries. As the activity scales, however, the total costs are spread over a larger number of beneficiaries and therefore the per-individual costs typically decrease.

However, there is typically a point where this decrease will diminish or "flatten out," meaning that your economies of scale have been achieved (or maxed out). This is the point where adding more beneficiaries will not further reduce the cost per individual.

For example, in the IRC's Ahlan Simsim project, an analysis of the Remote Early Learning Program found that the cost per child flattened out at $150 per child, meaning that further scaling would not reduce the per-beneficiary cost in a meaningful way.

This analysis helped them identify the minimum recommended scale for the program to be cost-effective.

Select to read the full "A Small Price to Pay" report

GO TO REPORT

Costing methods

Assembling a costing team



Just like with other aspects of scaling, costing is a collaborative effort. It cannot be done alone or siloed within a finance department. **Collecting, analyzing, and using cost data should ideally involve all stakeholders** involved in an initiative, **especially those who will incur the costs.** It can be useful to think about who is on your "costing team" before carrying out any costing work. Potential team members can include:

- Program designers who are familiar with the costs of the program

- Local implementers from the different contexts where you are scaling
- Program decisionmakers
- Finance team colleagues who know about budgets and expenditures
- Partners who are sharing costs now or in the future

Example

- Our costing question is about the costs versus benefits of conducting a teacher refresher training.
- To answer this question, we will use a cost-benefit analysis.
- To do a cost-benefit analysis, we will need data about the costs of implementing the refresher training and data about learning outcomes related both to teachers who attended the training and teachers who did not attend the training.
- This information will help us understand if the refresher training helps extend the impact of the program, and if so, it will help us advocate to the government about the need to incorporate a refresher training into the annual training schedule and budget.

Different costing methods can inform scaling

Explore each tab below to learn about the method and what question it answers

Cost Benefit Analysis —

Assesses **the "per-beneficiary cost" of an innovation against its "per-beneficiary benefits"** and is measured in monetary terms.

Answers the question: Do the benefits of this innovation outweigh the costs?

Cost Effectiveness —

Estimates the **cost of generating a given effect** of the innovation.

Answers the question: Which of these two comparable innovations has the highest impact and fits within the government budget?

Cost Efficiency —

Estimates the **cost of producing a given output.**

Answers the question: What is the estimated per-student/teacher/participant cost to implement the intervention?

Cost Economy

Analyzes an innovation's components and the **cost of the resources to develop and/or implement it.**

Answers the question: How much did we spend on different components of the innovation?

The methods above are just a few of the available costing methods you might come across. Increasingly, as public-private partnerships become more common, other methods such as the 'Social Rate of Return' and the 'Social Return on Investment' are also becoming common.

Before selecting a costing method, you should **think about what question you want to answer, and what data you have available** or are able to obtain. This might be a good time to **reach out to a scaling costing expert** for guidance.

Collecting Cost Data

One way to think about collecting cost data is to imagine a recipe (which is basically a list of ingredients). Continue reading to explore some common "ingredients" you may need to cost when scaling education innovations.

1

Detail your ingredients

Start with all costs associated with implementing the innovation or program. This includes the categories of costs in this carousel. Explore them now.

Note: Implementation costs typically do not include costs associated with start-up costs or additional research and monitoring activities that would not be part of implementation at scale.

People



- Staff salaries
- Payments for trainers or others service providers
- Time from participants

Facilities



- School space
- Venues for trainings or events
- Supply depots
- Office space

Materials and supplies



- Textbooks
- Learning aides
- Training materials
- Software
- Research tools

Food and beverage



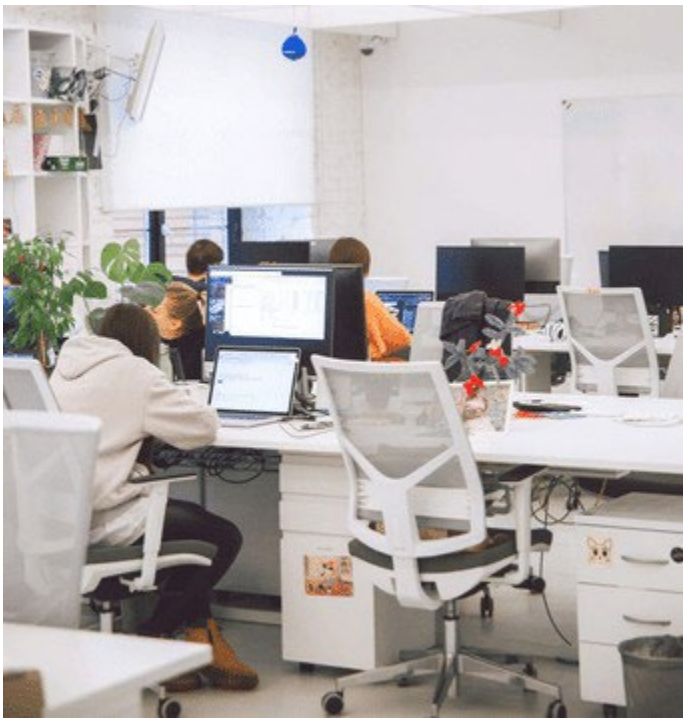
- Snacks and refreshments for program activities
- Catering for events and trainings

Transportation



- Car and driver for travel to project sites
- Transportation to trainings or events
- Other travel costs

Overhead



- Office space
- Administrative staff
- Insurance or legal costs
- Communications staff

2

Categorize your ingredients

Once you have a good grasp of the cost of resources used during implementation, you can organize them into sub-categories relevant to your innovation such as:

- Government training
- Classroom instruction
- Teaching and learning materials
- Meetings
- Program administration and overhead
- Reporting
- Development or research
- Monitoring
- Assessment and evaluation

3

Identify quantities for ingredients

Then think about how much you will need of each ingredient. When calculating the amount, consider if the cost is:

- Start-up investment or recurring
- Fixed or variable
- Financial or in-kind

It's important to consider if quantities will vary based on location or other context factors. For example, if you are conducting site visits in a remote area, you might need to allocate more days or resources than you do for site visits in an urban area.

4

Think about how your ingredients might change at scale

Cooking for 50 people is different from cooking for 500. Think about how your ingredients will change as your program scales. There may be cost efficiencies as your program scales.

Cost simulation exercises can be useful for estimating costs under different scaling scenarios.

Equity consideration and costing

Equity, contextualization, and costing

When doing costing work, it’s important to ask not just "how much does it cost?" but also "who incurs the cost?"

Remember that costing is not only about financial resources; it also includes people's time and effort! Additionally, costs incurred are not always the same for everyone participating in the program, and not all of these costs are compensated or recognized. Similarly, some costs—like space, utilities, and materials—may be provided in-kind and thus are not always included in budgets.

However, if you are planning to scale a program to a new location or to reach more people, all of these ingredients are critical to understand in terms of what it really costs to implement the program and what it might cost at increased scale.



Parents and community



Teachers and school leaders



Local government

For example, an in-school reading program may seem inexpensive at first glance because it only requires a one-time purchase of books. But if the program requires teachers to stay late for a training once per month, that is an additional time cost for those participants. While the program may presume that teachers' time is covered by their salary, teachers (and their professional union) may feel differently. The extra time burden and the fact that this time is not available for other work likely will not impact all teachers equally. For example, those with care responsibilities outside of work—predominantly women—will have to pay for childcare during the training or identify another person to provide the care. This adds to the personal cost.

As noted previously, **a common challenge faced in many education ecosystems is how much is already expected of teachers**. They have multiple responsibilities and an ever-growing list of tasks in addition to teaching. Therefore, even though it might seem that the innovation is only requiring a small

increase in their workload, it may create fatigue or resentment for teachers. This could result in their opposition to the innovation, lower quality of delivery, or other challenges that constrain scaling success. Again, this burden is not evenly distributed across all teachers, but will be experienced differently depending on gender, geographic location, socioeconomic status, etc. Such differential distribution can perpetuate existing inequities or create new ones for groups who already shoulder disproportionate inequities.

A great innovation that is too expensive for an education system to maintain will not be sustained and thus cannot create lasting impact. An innovation that relies on volunteers for delivery may work at first, but struggle when economic conditions change and volunteers need paid work. A program that relies on schools to provide in-kind contributions for venues and materials may face difficulties scaling in a new location where these contributions are unavailable. This is why identifying not only what something costs, but also calculating the nuanced costs and asking who pays for it are critical components of costing.

Equity-based adaptations



Costing for scale should not be considered a "race to the bottom," in which you try to reduce costs as much as possible so that decision makers will view it favorably. **Sometimes a more expensive version of an innovation is ultimately more impactful, more sustainable, or more equitable.** For example, some approaches to teacher training that are more expensive than others per-learner may also demonstrate significantly stronger effects on teacher practice and student learning outcomes, making them in fact more cost-effective and worth the additional expense. Conversely, investing less money in ineffective solutions is not cost-effective for policymakers or school systems and is ultimately a poor use of limited resources because they will not generate lasting impact at scale.

Also, it is important to remember that not all beneficiaries have the same costs. **It may cost more to deliver an intervention to students in a remote rural area than to those located in a large**

city with more civic resources and less travel time. Similarly, developing inclusive adaptations that ensure children with different learning needs can participate may create new costs but ultimately many will agree that it is worth the additional cost. Contextualizing learning materials and teaching methods for minority groups—especially deep contextualization that goes beyond translation—requires both financial and time costs.

These additional costs do not mean that these activities should not be pursued. **Whatever adaptations might be needed to ensure equity is addressed in your scaling approach will likely have cost implications.** Proactively planning for these costs and articulating clear justifications for the additional expenditures are two important parts of costing and financing for scale.

Five key costing take aways

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript: Hi, this is Chris van Keuren with SALT Analytics here to give you your top five takeaways from this cost analysis course. Number one, begin with the end. Always think about why you're going to conduct a cost analysis, who's going to read it, and for what reason. What decisions are going to be made as a result of this analysis?

Number two, begin early. The earlier you can begin before the implementation starts, the better. Costs that are captured concurrent to implementation are always more accurate than going back retrospectively and trying to estimate the cost.

Number three, stakeholder analysis. When you're thinking about cost analysis, don't just think about it from the cost perspective of the donor. Always try and think about it from all the different stakeholders who are going to be involved. What is the cost to the government? What is the cost to the community? What is the cost to another organization you might be partnering with? What is the cost to a parent? And especially when you're thinking about it from the cost from a parent or a family or a caregiver's perspective, it is much more important to think about it in terms of their time as opposed to monetizing those costs. Because those costs are always going to come out potentially low, and it's going to mask how much it could impact the family. For example, knowing that an activity could take a parent five hours a week is more important than understanding that that time may be less than $20. It helps you understand and value the perspective more to think about the time more than the cost.

Number four, not all cost analysis are created equal. You do not have to be super detailed with every single one. Some are easy. You just do them on the back of an envelope fast. No problem. However, others are going to be high stakes, high cost. For those, you really are going to have to invest some time, get different brains around the table, make sure everybody's in the right place, and then you're going to be able to do it. Make sure that everybody's costs are considered from multiple stakeholder perspectives.

Number five, be sure to look at costs from a per beneficiary perspective from when you're at a pilot to versus when you're going to scale. Because very likely, those costs are going to be different. Often, the per beneficiary costs when you're in a pilot phase will be higher than when you're reaching a wider group of the population. So, understand what those costs look like as you move along your scaling journey.

I'm going to give you one more bonus takeaway from this cost course. And that's this, do not fall in love with your point estimate. Every single assumption that you make with your cost analysis is going to change that estimate. So don't fall in love with that. Instead, marry the idea of best use of resources. Think about how you can use to their best and highest use the resources that you have available so that you can make the largest impact to the group of people that you are most trying to serve. So don't fall in love with your cost estimate, but do marry the idea of best use of resources. Thanks.

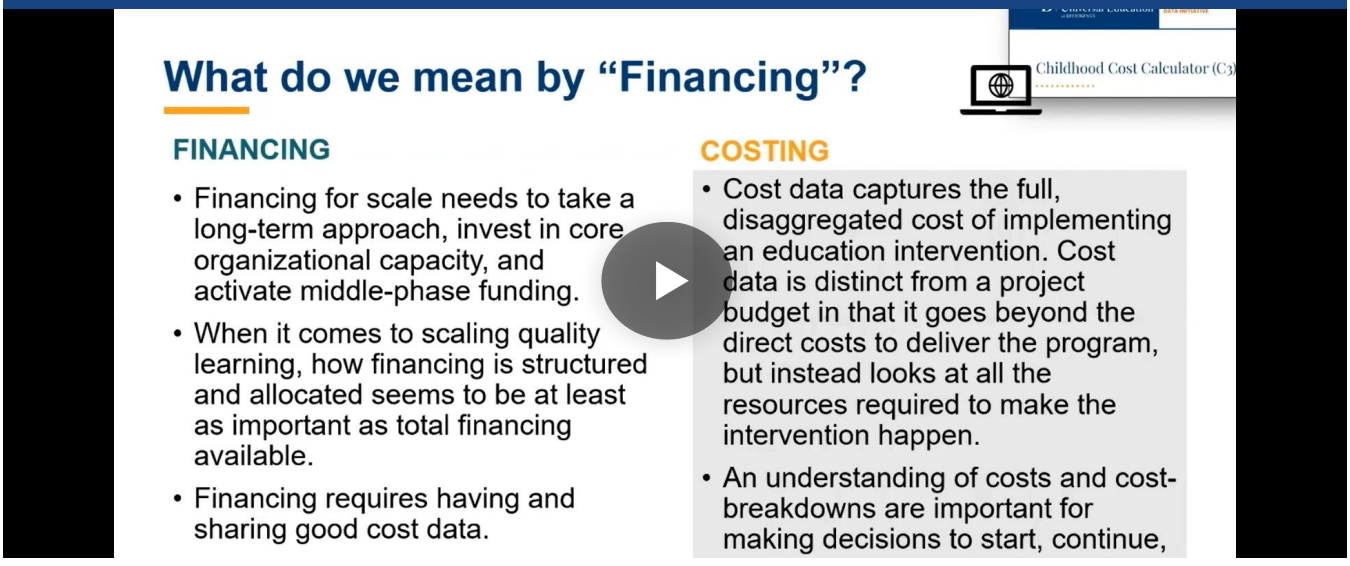
Flexible financing for scaling

Flexible and Sustainable Financing for Scaling

Once you know the potential costs of delivering your innovation at scale, it becomes essential to find the resources to support sustainable delivery. This is called financing, a critical element of scaling. In these current times, insufficient resources are a primary constraint.

The video below from a webinar with the Scaling Up Community of Practice introduces some key elements of financing for scaling, how it differs from costing, and the particular importance of flexible middle-phase financing for scaling.

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript: We all know that designing and delivering at scale requires resources, and often the more you grow, the more resources you need. It's important that these resources be dependable and sustainable over the long term, which of course is usually not the case with project funding. To complicate matters, when it comes to scaling quality learning, we've seen that how financing is structured and allocated seems to be at least as important as the total financing available. Both stability and flexibility of financing are necessary for scaling to occur in ways that contribute to lasting change. We've seen that regardless of the source, financing for scale needs to take a long-term approach, invest in core capacity, and leverage middle-phase funding. Of course, identifying and securing financing for scaling also requires collecting, analyzing, and using cost data. When we talk about cost data, we're talking about capturing the full disaggregated cost of implementing an education intervention. We distinguish this from a project budget in that it goes beyond the direct cost to deliver the program to instead look at all of the resources required to make the intervention happen in that context at scale. An understanding of costs and cost breakdowns is important for making decisions on whether to scale a specific intervention or program and how to do so. While these two topics are closely related and very important, for this discussion, we'll focus just on the former, identifying and securing sustainable financing.

So, the fact that sustainable financing is both critical for scaling and difficult to secure is not a revelation. However, long-term sustainable financing isn't the only challenge. Funding the middle phase between pilot and full scale is also difficult, so much so that the literature has referred to this time as the Valley of Death. Without flexible and dependable funding during this period, many interventions die in the middle phase of scaling. Why is this the case? The scaling literature, as well as experience, have found that new ideas and pilots generally don't have much difficulty finding funding. People are always excited to fund promising, innovative new ideas. At the other end of the spectrum, large established programs can sustain their funding from national budgets. So what is often missing is support for this middle phase of scaling. Research has shown that crossing the Valley of Death requires greater coordination and collaboration among government agencies and donors, including greater segmentation and transparency about who funds what at which stage of the scaling cycle.

Flexibility

We know scaling is an iterative, adaptive process that must be adjusted in response to changes in the broader environment and ongoing learning. Because of this, flexible financing (funding that can be spent in ways not predetermined) is critical. If resources must always be spent rigidly in accordance with the initial proposal, opportunities to strengthen and adapt scaling along the way will be neglected. Conversely, **financing that permits reasonable changes to scaling plans and reallocation of budget lines offers room in the scaling process for experimentation, growth, contextualization, and course correction**. As this course emphasizes, it is not possible to predict everything about scaling in advance and plan a budget accordingly. However, it is possible to build iteration and adaptation into the budget.

It is never too early to start thinking about financing

Without stable (but flexible) financing that provides resources over a multi-year period, **many interventions die during the "middle phase" of scaling**—after the pilot but before full-scale. The scaling literature refers to this period as the "valley of death," a time in the scaling process that is particularly important but often under-emphasized. **Collaborative partnerships and innovative financing mechanisms are two ways that initiatives can navigate this middle phase of scaling.** Crossing the "valley of death"—because it is so different from either the pilot stage or the final-scale stages—often requires greater coordination, collaboration, and transparency among government agencies and donors. Clarity on who funds what parts of the scaling journey at which stage is key.

It is important to **think beyond your current financing to plan for securing the next phases of resources.** You began this work when you considered who might be the "payer" at scale for your innovation (during our module on scaling pathways), but don't stop there. Become familiar with how government planning and budget cycles work in your target locations and take these into account early in the process of developing your scaling strategy. Explore different **possibilities for securing additional resources through new partnerships or financing models** in the medium term. Understand what additional information you need in order to identify next steps in financing.

Like with all other elements of scaling, **financing does not occur in a vacuum.** Particularly for financing scaling efforts that will require some degree of institutionalization into government systems, it is important to understand not just the overall cost of the intervention, but also how it compares to existing expenditure.

Therefore, when thinking about what information to share when talking about financing, incremental and opportunity costs are often more important than "total" cost or returns-on-investment.

Possible models for financing scaling and at-scale delivery

- **Market-based financing**
Customers pay for the goods or services offered through the innovation (such as subscribing to an education application or "app").

- **Integration into government budgets**
Taxes and other government revenues pay for delivery of the innovation. This could be integration into the education budget at a particular level (such as a national or regional budget), or "stacked financing" across national, regional, and municipal budgets.

- **Public-private partnerships (PPP)**
A partnership between government and private sector actors pays for delivery of the innovation. There are many different ways PPPs can be structured, depending on the context, needs, and purpose of the partnership. PPPs may also employ innovative multi-partner financing approaches, such as results-based financing, impact bonds, or pooled funding mechanisms.

- **Long-term support from development or philanthropic organizations**
Bilateral organizations such as the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), multilateral organizations like the World Bank, or private philanthropy such as family or corporate foundations pay for delivery of the innovation.

Questions to consider

In the early stages, especially, it is useful to consider and answer the following questions:

Given our stated scaling goal, how do we envision mobilizing resources that will provide sustainable funding for the innovation at scale?

Can the innovation or elements of it be delivered through the existing system or by leveraging existing infrastructure, human resources, budget lines, etc.?

What financing options can we explore to bridge the middle phase (between pilot/current funding and our long-term scaling goal)?

What budgetary processes should we consider adopting for mobilizing longer-term domestic financing in our country of focus? How does this work in this country? What is the timeline for these processes?

Matching financing to scaling pathways

Think back to the scaling pathway(s) you selected earlier in the course. What financing do you need for this pathway? If the financing will change as your scaling progresses, how will you manage that transition?

Write a few sentences in the accompanying PDF.

I think...

What cost data or additional information do you need to refine these options and start to develop a strategy for financing?

Look at your list above. In the accompanying PDF, write a list of information or data that you would need to refine these options. This does not have to be an exhaustive list. It is just an initial brainstorm to help you think about what types of cost and finance data you will need to make scaling decisions.

I think...

Scaling XChange Call to Action

Optional: The importance of Global South perspectives on scaling impact



Researchers and innovators in the Global South are working to find solutions to address global challenges. Unfortunately, too often good ideas and innovations go underutilized—the program ends and funders move on before impact can be made. The Scaling Xchange community created the call to action linked below as a first step toward building a community of funders, implementers, researchers, and innovators who share their vision: a world in which innovation and research from the Global South lead to sustainable and equitable impact for the public good.

Optional reading:
Scaling the impact of innovation and research
A Call to Action from the Global South.

GO TO ARTICLE

Optional: Tools for costing and additional resources

Costing tools and resources to support with cost data collection and analysis

- **C3 Childhood Cost Calculator:** An interactive tool to calculate the costs of different education and early childhood programs.
- **Cost Analysis for Education Projects:** Resources and Reflections: A summary of costing resources compiled by the Center for Global Development
- **UNICEF Public Finance Toolkit:** A guide for selecting, adapting, and applying public financial analysis tools.
- **JPAL Costing Template:** A template for estimating costs for interventions.
- **Childhood Cost Data Initiative:** An initiative at the Brookings Institution that aims to build global momentum to generate comparable cost data on programs seeking to improve the development of young children and adolescents.

- **IRC Small Price to Pay:** A 2024 report from the International Rescue Committee on what the Ahlan Simsim initiative tells us about the cost of delivering early childhood development programs to crisis-affected children.
- **Financing New Approaches to Scale:** This brief from Duke Fuqua CASE discusses four common strategies social enterprises pursue to support the design and testing of innovations to support impact at scale.

Financing Resources and Research

Securing Funding For Scale

Spring Impact



Financing Scale in Humanitarian Education Innovation

INEE, Humanitarian Education Accelerator



Cost Analysis Guidance for USAID-Funded Education Activities

USAID



Module 7 summary

Costing and financing for scaling

In this module, we explored some key topics related to mobilizing resources for scaling—including how to gather and use cost data for scaling decisionmaking and the role of flexible long-term financing.

By now you should know…

- How costing data can inform scaling and planning for scaling; the relationship between costing and financing.
- The middle phase of scaling can be the most challenging phase to support financially. It is important to start thinking about financing the next phase of scaling EARLY, and to be transparent with yourself and others about how financing needs may change as scaling progresses.

- Scaling pathways and financing details must be aligned. When identifying financing possibilities, it is important to think about how they align with your long-term scaling goal and scaling pathway(s).
- Key costing terms, different cost analysis methods (and the questions they can answer), and identifying the "ingredients" of costing.
- The importance of thinking about not just what costs are incurred, but who incurs them.
- That costing includes not only financial resources but also in-kind contributions and sometimes hidden resources such as time and effort.

Discuss with your team

1. How do we see (and what are) the costs of implementing our innovation shifting over time based on our scaling goal and pathway(s)?
2. What are some potential options for middle- and long-term financing for scaling the innovation, based on our scaling goal and pathway(s) we have identified? What additional information do we need to refine these options and develop a strategy for financing?
3. Does our current financing align with our scaling goal and pathway(s)? In what ways does it align, and in what ways does it not? Will our financing needs transition or change to meet our scaling goal?

What is next?

You have now covered all of the core content in this course.

Congratulations!

The next, final section brings together everything you have learned and written so far to help you assess your innovation's scalability and start developing your scaling strategy.

Final Assessment Overview

Congratulations on completing all of the modules of the Scaling Foundations course!

By now you have explored:

- Scaling impact
- Principles for scaling
- Scaling goals
- Phases of scaling
- Scaling pathways
- Optimal scale
- Partnerships for scaling
- Champions
- Addressing opposition
- Transitioning roles during scaling
- Capacity for scaling
- Contextualization
- Equity considerations when scaling
- Research for scaling
- Tiers of scaling research
- Collaborative scaling processes
- Responding to windows of opportunity
- Flexible financing for scaling
- Environmental influences on scaling
- Costing for scaling
- Adapting to changes in the environment

This final section will bring together everything you learned in two activities:

Scalability Assessment

This assessment tool will help you assess different components of scalability, including technical considerations, potential fit within the system, broader support, and ethical justifications for scaling your innovation. It is not a definitive measure of whether or not you should scale, but instead is a tool to help you and your project team develop clarity and think critically about what aspects might make scaling your innovation easier or harder. This information should help you to identify areas where additional research is needed, determine strategic next steps, and consider if you should proceed with scaling at this time.

Starting a Scaling Strategy

A scaling strategy is a living document (meaning it will change and grow over time as you adjust and add to it) developed collaboratively by your team, your scaling partners, and key stakeholders. It includes a vision of impact at scale, chosen pathway(s) to scale, key partnerships and how roles will transition during scaling, details on adapting and contextualizing the initiative, your scaling research plans, environmental considerations to keep in mind, and financing options for your scaling. Think of this like a roadmap to your scaling destination.



Completing this activity will pull together your answers from throughout this course, give you an opportunity to review and update them now, and then produce them as one coherent document you can bring to your team and stakeholders to work on as you build your full scaling strategy.

Pause and Reflect

As mentioned throughout this course, not every innovation can or should scale. Scaling is about more than simply designing and implementing an innovative idea or impactful program; it is about expanding and deepening impact based on local demand, solid evidence, an enabling environment, productive partnerships, support from a variety of stakeholders, clear scaling pathways, feasible costs, a willingness to engage in ongoing learning/adaptation, hard work, and other factors introduced in this course.

If after going through these modules, you feel that you have learned quite a lot but do not think a focus on scaling is right for your innovation at this moment, that's perfectly fine. In fact, it is a great outcome. **The goal of this course is to help you think deeply about scaling impact and what it means for your work in education.** Not everyone—in fact, not even a majority of people—who complete this course will decide to scale their innovation. It is better to learn that early. But…

If you decide you *do want* to consider scaling as a next step, continue to the scalability assessment activity. This will support you to examine which factors are likely to facilitate scaling and which factors may present challenges. If after completing the scalability assessment, you are still confident that you want to explore scaling, then continue on the scaling strategy reflection.

If you decide scaling is *not right* for your innovation, you may still find it helpful to try the scalability assessment because it can clarify your thinking about why scaling is not right or not right yet. But in this situation, you do not need to complete the scaling strategy: you can consider your work on this course complete.

Regardless of your decision, we hope you have found this course interesting, informative, and useful for growing your own thinking about scaling for impact in education!

Scalability Assessment

Assessing Scalability



This scalability assessment will help you assess the **innovation design**, **fit with the existing education system**, **support in the broader environment**, and **ethical justifications for scaling your initiative**.

It is **not a definitive measure of whether you should scale**. Instead, it is intended to be a tool to help you and your project team start thinking critically about **what aspects might make scaling easier or harder** so you can research these further and make decisions about what next steps to prioritize.

This an exercise. It is okay if you do not have answers to every question. The goal of this activity is to help you start thinking through different aspects of scalability. You can change and revise your answers as your research progresses. The prompts will encourage you to reflect on the feasibility of scaling your innovation and how you are approaching scaling.

Each portion of the scalability assessment starts with a brief overview text followed by 3–5 questions for each category. You can navigate through the questions and record your answers in the accompanying PDF. Be sure to save your results so you can discuss your assessment with your team.

Remember to focus on the *impact you want to scale* as you think about these questions.

Innovation design considerations

How feasible is scaling the technical aspects of the innovation in its current form?

This section is designed to help you think through how feasible it is to scale your initiative in its current form. These questions can help you identify which technical elements of the innovation might make scaling easier and which might make it harder.

How complex is your innovation?

Scaling up is easier ← → Scaling up is harder

- ☐ Low complexity
- ☐ Moderate complexity
- ☐ High complexity
- ☐ I don't know

How strong is the evidence of effectiveness for your innovation?

Scaling up is easier ← → Scaling up is harder

- ☐ Strong evidence from multiple settings, including the one you are scaling in
- ☐ Moderate evidence, or evidence from a different setting
- ☐ Limited evidence, or still gathering evidence of impact
- ☐ I don't know

How adaptable is your innovation?

Scaling up is easier ⟵ ⟶ Scaling up is harder

- ☐ Easy to adapt
- ☐ Possible to adapt but requires work
- ☐ Hard to adapt or not intended to be adapted
- ☐ I don't know

Education system fit considerations

How feasible is scaling in the current education system?

This section is designed to help you think through how well your initiative fits or aligns with the existing education system in your context of focus, in order to assess which elements might make scaling easier and which might make it harder. It is important to consider the system as it exists in reality, not as it stands on paper.

The initiative is implementable with infrastructure (schools, materials, technology, etc.) already in the system.

Scaling up is easier ⟵ ⟶ Scaling up is harder

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

The initiative is implementable with the existing human resources (teachers, trainers, supervisors, data specialists, etc.) already in the system.

Scaling up is easier ⟵ ⟶ Scaling up is harder

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐ I don't know

The initiative is aligned with current government policies and regulations.

Scaling up is easier ⟵ ⟶ Scaling up is harder

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐ I don't know

If the answer to the previous question is "strongly disagree", is the initiative changing current government policies or practices in ways that have local support?

Scaling up is easier ⟵ ⟶ Scaling up is harder

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐ I don't know

The initiative attempts to address equity issues or disparities that currently exist in the system.

Scaling up is easier ⟵ ⟶ Scaling up is harder

- [ ] Strongly agree
- [ ] Somewhat agree
- [ ] Strongly disagree
- [ ] I don't know

Environmental considerations

How much support is there for scaling in the current ecosystem?

This section is designed to help you think through where there is support for scaling and where support may be lacking. These questions can help you identify which elements of the broader environment might make scaling easier and which might make scaling harder.

Is there political support for the initiative?

Scaling up is easier ⟵ ⟶ Scaling up is harder

- [ ] Strong support at all levels
- [ ] Varying support at different levels
- [ ] Low support/ still building support
- [ ] I don't know

Is there community support for the initiative?

Scaling up is easier ← → Scaling up is harder

- ☐ Strong community support
- ☐ Varying support at the community level
- ☐ Low support/ still building support
- ☐ I don't know

Is there support from educators for the initiative?

Scaling up is easier ← → Scaling up is harder

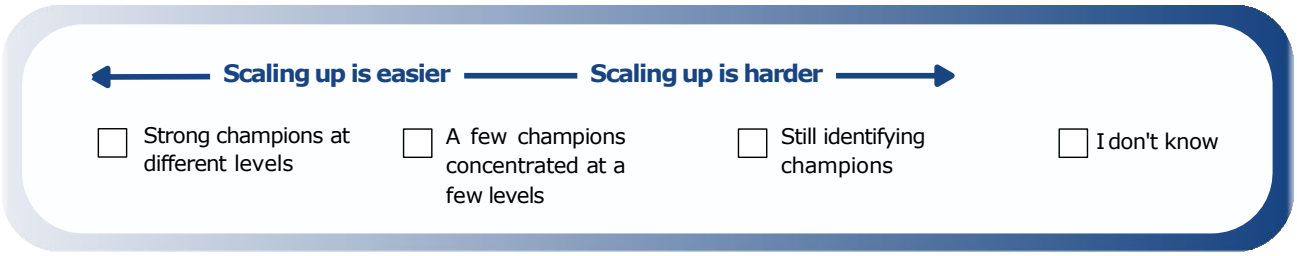
- ☐ Strong support from many educators
- ☐ Moderate support from some educators
- ☐ Low support/ still building support
- ☐ I don't know

Are there existing collaborative networks that can support the initiative?

Scaling up is easier ← → Scaling up is harder

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Are there champions at different levels who support the initiative?



Justification considerations

How justified is scaling?

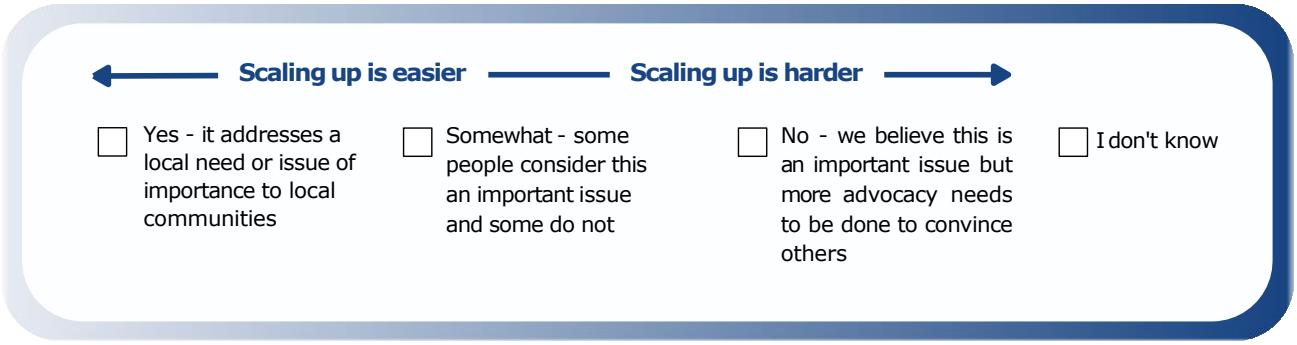
It is not enough to consider if something feasibly *can* scale—we also must consider if something *should* be scaled.

Introducing a change into an existing system often creates knock-on effects which may be positive or negative. Resources are scarce in education systems and so it is possible that scaling one initiative will lead to a reduction in attention or resources to other aspects of education. What is desired by local communities in one context may not be as much of a priority in other contexts. It is important to seriously consider and even research the ethical benefits and drawbacks of scaling and not default to assuming that if something works well, it should scale.

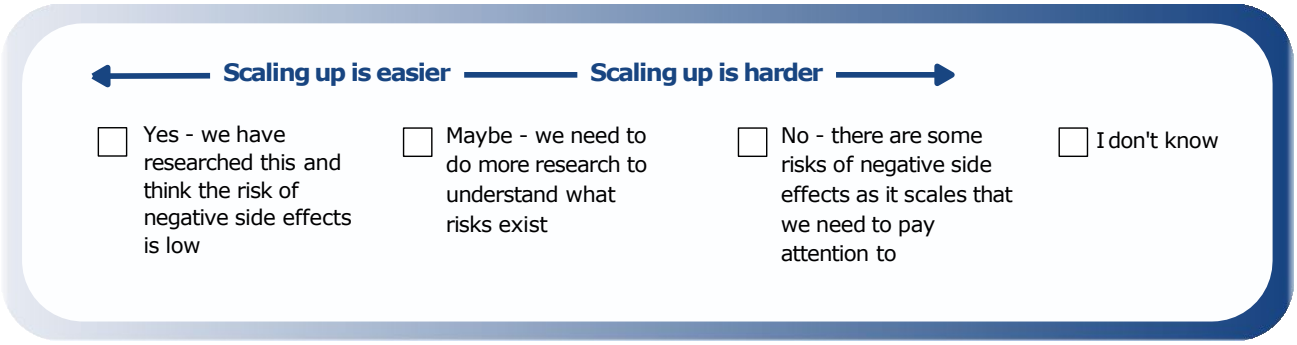
For more on this, it can be helpful to read "Justification" in Scaling Impact for the Public Good by McLean and Gargani (2019) to dive more deeply into what it means to consider whether scaling is justified.

Another important text that dives into this topic is Ethically Scaling by Peter Sutoris.

Does the initiative address a significant, persistent problem or capitalize on an opportunity that affects learners and is a priority for local communities?



Does the initiative have low risks of negative side effects as it scales?



Does the initiative alter educator workloads or conditions?

Scaling up is easier ← → Scaling up is harder

- ☐ Yes - it does in ways appreciated or valued by educators
- ☐ Yes - but initially it will require more work for educators to learn how to use it
- ☐ No - the initiative improves the education system at large but not specifically for educators
- ☐ I don't know at this stage

The budget implications are clear, predictable, and justifiable for those who are expected to bear the costs.

Scaling up is easier ← → Scaling up is harder

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

The initiative engages with equity issues and includes stakeholders from marginalized communities in scaling decisions.

Scaling up is easier ← → Scaling up is harder

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ I don't know

Optional: What other questions are you thinking about as you consider whether scaling is justified?

I think...

Sources

The questions in this module are adapted from two resources:

Scaling Impact: Innovation for the Public Good

by Robert McLean and John Gargani
Part 2 4 Guiding Principles Justification, optimal scale, coordination, & dynamic evaluation

The Education Scalability Checklist

by VVOB, STiR, Educate!, MSI, Pratham, and CUE Brookings

Making sense of your results

Discuss with your team

Guiding questions

- Where do we predominantly see areas, topics, and items that make scaling easier for us?
- Where do we predominantly see areas, topics, and items that make scaling harder for us?
- Where are there gaps or places where we need more information in order to ascertain an accurate picture of scalability for our innovation?

Based on all these factors—technical dimensions, fit, environment, and ethical considerations—do you think scaling is the right decision at this stage? Why or why not?

YES

What are the 2-3 most pressing elements that make scaling harder and that you want to address?

For example, are there technical elements of the innovation that can be simplified? Can you analyze constraints in the broader environment and identify adaptations to better align your work with the education ecosystem?

NO

What alternative path forward do you see?

For example, can you conduct additional advocacy to generate community support for the initiative? Are there components of your current innovation that can be repurposed, or can you pivot to a new kind of work that is similar but more scalable?

What is a scaling strategy?

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript: A scaling strategy is a tool to support organizations planning for or in the process of scaling an education initiative. It includes guidance for articulating a clear, measurable, and time-bound scaling goal and pathways to scale, as well as adaptations, equity considerations, and research plans. It also lays out a high-level strategy for addressing environmental forces, maintaining partnerships, growing organizational capacity, and mobilizing sustainable financial resources. It's important to remember that it's not one and done. A scaling strategy is a dynamic planning document to periodically revisit and update based on new insights, data, and changes in the environment.

This final activity in the course is just the first step in developing a strategy. Creating and refining a scaling strategy is an ongoing process that often takes place over several months, not in a single sitting. And it should be tailored to the context. A scaling strategy should result from the collective thinking of key actors involved. The composition of the group developing and refining the strategy will necessarily differ depending on context, initiative, and stage of scaling. A small team should create the first draft of the strategy, drawing directly from previous discussions and existing data, including from any stakeholder mapping, political economy analysis, or previous scaling plans. Additional background research to fill gaps and triangulate information is sometimes necessary and other scaling tools can also help inform the strategy development. Once there is an initial draft of the scaling strategy, the narrative or subsections can be brought to a broader group of stakeholders for input and discussion. Developing an abridged version, or a visual representation of the strategy can help in these discussions with a broader group of stakeholders.

This scaling strategy here will draw from all of the work you've done so far in the course and pull it together for your review and refinement. We recommend you bring these initial responses back to your team for continued discussion and development of the scaling strategy.

Scaling Strategy Planning

Read each Scaling Strategy Planning question below, reflect, and then write your answer in the accompanying PDF. You have already answered many of these questions throughout the course. In these cases, review your response and revise as needed.

The aim is to put all of these questions together into a skeleton document that can be used to start building out a cohesive scaling strategy and research agenda.

Scaling Strategy Planning Questions

Scaling for Impact

Look back at your definition of scaling. Is there anything you would change or add to this definition now? Copy your response into the space below and then add any updates or changes.

Scaling Phase

Look at your reflection on your current phase of scaling. Having learned more about scaling goals, pathways, and many other factors, do you think this answer is still correct? Or do you think you are in a different phase than you originally thought? It's okay to change your answer as your thinking about scaling deepens! Copy your response into the space below and then add any updates or changes.

Optimal Scale

Look back at your assessment of optimal scale for your innovation. Is there anything you would change or add? It's okay to change your notion of the optimal scale for your innovation if your thinking has evolved over the course. Copy your response into the space below and then add any updates or changes.

Scaling Goal

Look back at your draft scaling goal you developed. Is there anything you would change or add to your scaling goal? Copy your response into the space below and then add any updates or changes.

Look back at your intermediate scaling goals. How would you update or change them now that you have reflected on some other factors and actors that can impact scaling? Copy your response into the space below and then add any updates or changes.

Scaling Pathway(s)

Look back at your scaling pathways brainstorm and comparison. Is there anything you would change or add? Are there new pathways you would like to consider now? Copy your response into the space below and then add any updates or changes.

Partnerships for Scaling

Think back to who you have identified as partners in your scaling work. Is there anyone else you would like to add? Are there new partnerships you would like to cultivate? Copy your response into the space below and then add any updates or changes.

Champions

Think back to who you identified as champions in your scaling work. Is there anyone else you would like to add to or remove from this list? Copy your response into the space below and then add any updates or changes.

Capacity for Scaling

Review your responses in the capacity and evolving roles tool. What institutional or organizational capacity might be lacking for large-scale implementation of your innovation and how might you address this? How might your organization’s role shift or transition in the scaling process?

Research to inform scaling

Review your responses in your scaling research planning tool. Is there anything you want to add? How will you move this research forward?

Scalability Assessment

Think back to the results of the scalability assessment. Pick one question where you answered "I don't know." What kinds of information would you need to be able to answer this question? How could you get this information as part of the research you are planning to carry out?

Documenting Learning

How will you document your learnings about the scaling process? How will you reflect on and use these learnings?

Contextualization

Look back at your reflection on the environment and contextualization. What are some aspects of your innovation that you will need to contextualize as you scale? Copy your response into the space below, and then add any updates or changes.

Adaptation

Review your reflections about what is core to your innovation's impact. What other aspects of your innovation could be adapted or contextualized? What is a "nice to have" but not a requirement? Copy your response into the space below and then add any updates or changes.

Equity Considerations

How are you incorporating equity considerations into your scaling research and approach? Copy your response into the space below and then add any updates or changes.

Broader environment factors that may impact scaling

Consider your analysis of enablers and constraints in the different levels of the environment that may impact scaling. Is there anything you would add or change to this analysis? Copy your response into the space below and then add any updates or changes.

Costing & Financing

Review the possible financing options you have identified that align with your scaling pathways. Consider what costing information you need to inform your scaling pathways. Copy your response into the space below and then add any updates or changes.

What are your top 3 next steps to further build out your scaling goals and strategy?

Congratulations!

Well done on pulling together all your thinking from throughout the course and putting together the start of a scaling strategy.

Congratulations on completing the course!

You have reached an impressive milestone! Please take a moment to celebrate your own hard work and dedication in completing this course!

See the video transcript below.



Video transcript: Well, thank you very much. I hope you've enjoyed the course. I hope that it's contributed to your knowledge of scaling impact and that it's also supported your ability to advance your own work. We hope to hear from you. If you've got suggestions for how we can improve the course or some feedback for us or if you could tell us how you're using the course, we'd be delighted to hear from you and so I hope you'll reach out. Take care and stay in touch.

In this course you learned:



Key concepts

This course has provided you with a broad overview of key concepts related to scaling impact in education. From determining optimal scale to navigating relationships in the broader ecosystem to planning for long-term sustainability, this course has introduced you to some of the foundational concepts that inform scaling work.



Practical skills

This course has equipped you with practical skills that are directly applicable to real-world situations. You've gained the ability to put your newfound knowledge into action and make a tangible impact, from writing a scaling goal to evaluating scaling pathways to developing research plans.



Adaptability

Change is a constant, and this course has taught you how to adapt and thrive in dynamic environments. You've learned how to identify what is core and what can be adapted, when to make changes to address equity and contextualization needs, and when to pause and reassess your scaling plans.

What's next?

As you know well by now, scaling cannot be done alone! Take what you have learned from this course and bring it back to your colleagues and stakeholders to discuss, adapt, and collaboratively revise into a full-fledged scaling plan. Across this course, you have developed a portfolio of scaling reflections to build your discussions around, including:

- **A definition of scaling for impact**
- **Scaling pathways to consider**
- **Stakeholder mapping**
- **Scaling capacity planning**
- **Ideas for engaging stakeholders in scaling research**
- **Equity analysis**
- **Optimal scale for your project**
- **A long-term scaling goal**
- **Partners and champions to engage**
- **Plans for adapting to shifts in the environment and opposition**
- **Costing for scaling**
- **Contextualization plans**
- **Identifying what is core to your innovation and what can be adapted**

- **Intermediate scaling goals**
- **Education ecosystem analysis**
- **Research plans to inform scaling**
- **Financing options**
- **Scalability assessment**

Updating your Scaling Strategy

Once an initial scaling strategy has been developed, it can be tempting to consider it "done" and to turn focus and energy to implementing the strategy. However, scaling is an iterative process that requires ongoing adaptation, refinement, and course corrections based on data collected, lessons learned, and changes in the broader education environment, such as new policies or leadership changes.



Once an initial scaling strategy has been developed, it can be tempting to consider it "done" and to turn focus and energy to implementing the strategy. However, scaling is an iterative process that requires ongoing adaptation, refinement, and course corrections based on data collected, lessons learned, and changes in the broader education environment, such as new policies or leadership changes.

These guiding questions are designed to complement the development of a strategy for expanding and deepening the impact of an education initiative or innovation.[1] They are intended to support individuals and institutions in the process of scaling to regularly and collaboratively reflect on issues and opportunities arising related to the scaling strategy, to PLAN and TEST adaptations, and to periodically REFLECT and REFINE based on these changes. The ultimate goal is to support and strengthen the process of scaling impact in education.

The **Guiding questions for adapting and refining a scaling strategy** tool can help you and your stakeholders to regularly and collaboratively reflect on issues and opportunities arising related to the scaling strategy, to PLAN and TEST adaptations, and to periodically REFLECT and REFINE based on these changes. Scaling strategies are living documents that should grow and change as scaling progresses.

Guiding questions for adapting and refining a scaling strategy tool

ACCESS TOOL

Want to learn more about Scaling?

Continue on to the next page to explore Scaling Communities of Practices and additional research and resources on scaling impact.

Want to learn more?

Additional Resources and Communities to Support Your Scaling Work

Millions Learning Scaling Tools and Case Studies



Millions Learning Scaling Research and Tools Library

VISIT SITE

Communities of Practice



Scaling Up Community of Practice

VISIT SITE



GPE Knowledge and Innovation Exchange

VISIT SITE



ScalingXchange Call to Action

VISIT SITE

Additional Scaling Resources

Scaling Impact: Innovation for the Public Good

Rob McLean and John Gargani

VISIT SITE

Scaling Up Toolkit

MSI

VISIT SITE

Scaling Guides

ExpandNet and WHO

VISIT SITE

Scaling Tools

Millions Learning

VISIT SITE

Scaling Scan Tool

CIMMYT

VISIT SITE

A Guide to Scale Pathways

Spring Impact

VISIT SITE

Education Scalability Checklist

VVOB, Educate!, Partham, CUE, MSI, STiR

VISIT SITE

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