



Scaling Up

From Vision to
Large-Scale Change

A Management Framework for Practitioners

Third Edition, 2020

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A TETRA TECH COMPANY

200 12th St South, Suite 1200
Arlington, VA 22202 USA

+1 703 979 7100

msiworldwide.com

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Acknowledgements

This document was originally published in 2006 and re-issued in a substantially revised Second Edition in 2012. The 9-year applied research effort on which it is based was made possible through generous support from the John D and Catherine T MacArthur Foundation. This Third Edition incorporates numerous insights and refinements gained through additional field testing and extensive feedback from readers of earlier editions.

The principal author of the current edition is Larry Cooley, drawing on important contributions from Richard Kohl and Rajani R. Ved who, respectively, co-authored with Mr. Cooley the First Edition and the Second Edition of the document.



CHAPTER 1:

Introduction

The concept of “scaling up” has become increasingly popular as concerned donors and service providers find themselves under pressure to reduce costs, improve social outcomes, and explain why it has proven so difficult to accelerate the spread of best practices. To support this effort, the SUM Framework was developed to serve three related objectives, namely:

- To provide an easily understood and straightforward way for donors and investors to assess the scalability of proposed interventions;
- To provide guidelines for designing pilot projects and other innovations “with scale in mind”; and
- To provide tools and approaches to help practitioners manage the scaling up process.

This field-tested framework and set of guidelines offer practical advice on how to carry out each of the ten key tasks needed for effective scaling up.

The Scaling Up Management (SUM) Framework and the guidelines presented in this document seek to improve the track record of taking solutions to scale by offering practical advice on a three-step, ten task process for effective scaling up. These steps and tasks include:

STEP 1: Develop a Scaling Up Plan

- ◇ Task 1: Create a Vision
 - » *The Model: What Is Being Scaled Up?*
 - » *The Methods: How Will Scaling Up Be Accomplished?*
 - » *Organizational Roles: Who Performs the Key Functions?*
 - » *Dimensions of Scaling Up: Where and For Whom Does Scaling Up Occur?*
- ◇ Task 2: Assess Scalability
 - » *Determining the Viability of the Model for Scaling Up*
 - » *Analyzing the Organizational and Social Context*

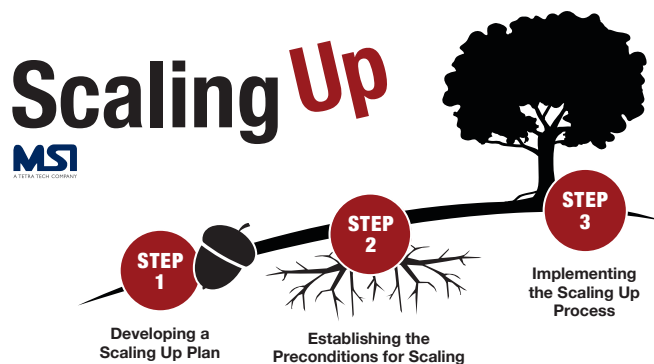
- ◇ Task 3: Fill Information Gaps
- ◇ Task 4: Prepare a Scaling Up Plan

STEP 2: Establish the Pre-Conditions for Scaling Up

- ◇ Task 5: Legitimize Change
- ◇ Task 6: Build a Constituency
- ◇ Task 7: Realign and Mobilize Resources

STEP 3: Implement the Scaling Up Process

- ◇ Task 8: Modify Organizational Structures
- ◇ Task 9: Coordinate Action
- ◇ Task 10: Adapt Strategy and Maintain Momentum



The theory and practice underlying the SUM Framework come from the discipline of “strategic management.” More specifically, Step 1 is based on best practices related to strategic planning in complex settings; Step 2 focuses on political and change management functions associated with consensus building, policy change, and resource allocation; and Step 3 emphasizes the operational aspects of complex, multi-actor reform.

In constructing this Framework, the use of the word “task” is deliberate. Each element of the Framework is conceived and presented as a task to be managed, not simply a category to be analyzed. To that end, the Framework outlines the necessary actions to be taken for each task, while also presenting alternative methods. An Annex to the document presents a sequenced list of questions to guide the scaling up process.



The SUM Framework has been applied to government-led, NGO and commercial interventions in maternal and child health, family planning, early childhood development, dropout prevention, bilingual education, literacy development, judicial reform, community policing, human rights, conflict mitigation, welfare reform, agriculture, food security, fish and wildlife conservation, climate change, youth development, resilience and livelihood enhancement. In addition to applications focused on scaling interventions

that began at small scale outside of government, the SUM Framework has been applied to situations in which experimentation and scaling up were undertaken by governments or donors as part of a deliberate strategy of reform.

The remainder of this paper is organized around the three steps and ten tasks featured in the Framework.



CHAPTER 2:

Planning for Scale

STEP 1: Develop a Scaling Up Plan

Hope is not a strategy for reaching scale. Planning for scale goes way beyond proof of concept and ideally starts during the design phase of pilot projects. This section of the Framework provides guidelines for Step 1 of the scaling up process, Developing a Scaling Up Plan, and includes four distinct tasks, namely:

- ◇ Task 1: Create a Vision
- ◇ Task 2: Assess Scalability
- ◇ Task 3: Fill Information Gaps
- ◇ Task 4: Prepare a Scaling Up Plan

Concrete results achieved during Step 1 include a realistic assessment of the prospects and parameters for scaling up and a road map for reaching scale. This step also includes identification of the documentation and support that will be needed later in the scaling up process.



“Successful” Pilot Project + HOPE ≠ Large-Scale Change

Task 1: Create a Vision

While there is no generally accepted definition of scaling, we adopt as a working definition the following:

“Scaling up is the process of expanding, adapting and sustaining successful policies, programs or projects in geographic space and over time to reach a greater number of people.”¹

A vision of success at scale and the pathway for reaching it (Task 1) becomes the yardstick for judging scalability (Task 2) and for deciding what more needs to be done before embarking on the scaling up process. Task 1 thus includes the following four elements:

- Clarify the model, innovation, or project to be scaled up—**what** is being scaled up?
- Identify the method or pathway of going to scale—the **how** of scaling up
- Determine the organizational roles involved in scaling up and delivering at scale—the **who** of scaling up
- Establish the expected scope of the scaling up effort and the dimension(s) along which scaling will occur—loosely speaking, the **where** of scaling up

Planning for scale goes way beyond proof of concept and ideally starts during the design phase

The following questions should be addressed when beginning Task 1:

- » *What organizational, process, and technical factors were critical to success on a pilot-scale?*
- » *Can the model be simplified without undermining its effectiveness? Is it absolutely necessary to replicate all elements of the model on a large scale?*
- » *Does the organization that carried out the pilot project have the desire and organizational capacity to expand its operations and deliver services on a substantially larger scale?*
- » *If not, which organization(s) are best suited and motivated to implement the model on a scaled up basis or to serve as partners in implementing the model?*
- » *Should the scaling up effort include policy change by the government or rely exclusively on voluntary*

¹ Hartmann & Linn, “[Scaling Up: A Framework and Lessons for Development Effectiveness from Literature and Practice](#)”, Wolfensohn Center Working Paper No. 5, Brookings, 2008

adoption by private and non-governmental organizations?

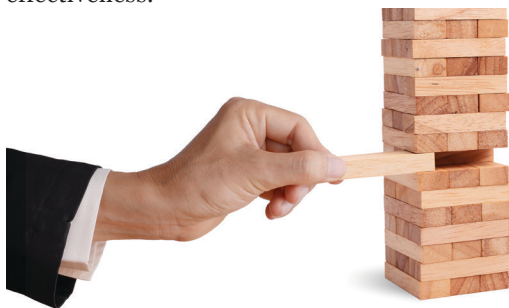
- » *Is there a need for one or more intermediary organizations to support the scaling up process? If so, what help is needed and which organizations are best suited to perform these roles?*
- » *Along what dimension(s) should scaling up take place?*
- » *What would scaling up look like if it were successful?*

The Model: What is Being Scaled Up?

Scaling up should begin by clarifying exactly what is to be scaled up. In the discussion that follows, we refer to this as the “model.” This model is normally embedded, at least initially, in a project or prototype and includes technical, process, and organizational components. We refer to unscaled models or the individual components of models as “innovations.”

Task 1 focuses on creating a concrete vision of what scaling up would look like if it were successful

An initial description of a model should focus on features that supporters of the model believe are essential to its effectiveness, including tacit elements of the model that are often invisible but central to the model’s effectiveness. Disaggregation of the model’s key elements facilitates simplification and finding the proper balance between fidelity to the original model and the streamlining that is usually essential for scaling up to be successful. In this sense, the process of scaling is, like the game of Jenga, a challenge of subtraction, not addition, looking for elements that can be removed without undermining the model’s effectiveness.



Identifying the critical elements of a model must, of necessity, focus not simply on technical efficacy but on the entire “supply chain”. For example, a drought tolerant seed will only be scalable if farmers are willing to buy it, salesman are willing to sell it, seed producers are willing to produce it, and consumers are willing to buy it. Finding the combination of elements that meets all these conditions often requires unbundling and repackaging elements of the intervention, and often requires trade-offs.

Pilot projects have as their primary purpose the finding and testing of new solutions to particular problems. By definition, they include at least one technical, process, or organizational innovation. Examples of each would be: a new device or app (technical innovation); a novel service delivery approach (process innovation); or creative partnerships (organizational innovation). A pilot project can also take a model that has worked successfully in one context or for one problem and apply it to a new context or problem. Innovations and pilot projects often naively assume that, if successful, these innovative and novel features can and will be adopted more broadly. Using terminology discussed later in this chapter, they focus on “effectiveness” with the implicit assumption that “efficiency” and “expansion” will be addressed at some later date.

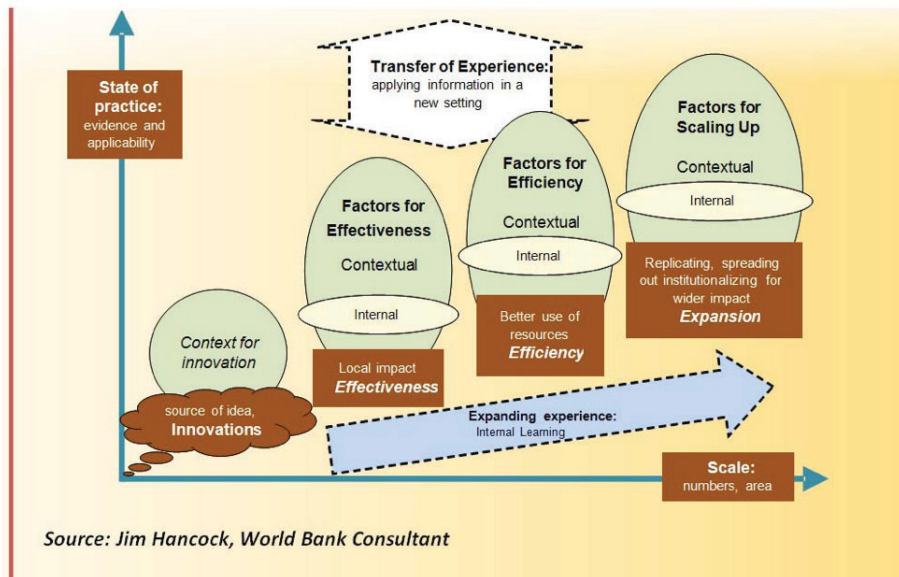
Second stage pilots are, in the best cases, designed to test whether the factors responsible for success in one context are transferable to other settings; to experiment with different bundling and unbundling options; and to test the feasibility of various adjustments that reduce unit cost or simplify some aspect of the model.

Demonstration projects take an existing model and raise awareness about its usefulness with the intention of making existing solutions better known and more widely accepted by decision-makers and potential users.

Many projects funded by foundations and other donors describe themselves as pilot or demonstration projects, as do most examples cited in the scaling up literature. It is important to note, however, that relatively few of these projects contain an obvious innovation or research component, few include communication and advocacy strategies, and many include elements that need not—or cannot—be reproduced on a large scale.



FIGURE 1: Conventional View of the Road to Scale



Developing a scaling plan includes clarifying, testing, refining, and simplifying the model – often over a period of years -- to tease out those elements essential to its success.

The Methods: How Will Scaling Up Be Accomplished?

The second element in Task 1 is articulating a strategy for how the model can best be extended to large numbers of people.² A frequent starting point is the above graphic that depicts the scaling up process as three successive stages: effectiveness (developing a solution that works), efficiency (finding a way to deliver the solution at an affordable cost), and expansion (developing a way to provide the solution on a larger scale).

While useful, this graphic is sometimes mistakenly understood to suggest that consideration of scale be deferred until proof of concept is established. Where this is the case, models are often burdened with elements that unnecessarily complicate the prospects for scale. As a result, more recent insights suggest the need to initiate attention to, and testing of, scaling considerations as early as possible in the innovation-to-scale process.

The SUM Framework disaggregates “expansion” methods into three categories—**expansion**, **replication**, and **collaboration**— distinguished from one another by the degree to which the “originating organization” (i.e., the organization that managed the initial project or developed the original prototype) continues to control implementation as the model goes to scale. These three approaches, and variants of each, are displayed in Table 1.

TABLE 1: Scaling Up Methods

Approach	Method
EXPANSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth • Restructuring or Decentralization • Franchising • Spin-off
REPLICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Adoption • Grafting • Diffusion and Spillover • Commercialization
COLLABORATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal Partnerships, Joint Ventures and Strategic Alliances • Networks and Coalitions

² We have described this elsewhere as requiring a “second theory of change” – i.e., a theory of how successful pilot efforts are translated into systemic change.

Expansion in this context refers to methods that depend on increasing the scope of operations of the organization that originally developed and piloted the model or prototype.

The most common form of expansion is *growth*, which normally occurs by branching out into new locations or target groups. Sometimes this growth is accompanied by *restructuring or decentralization*, which we regard here as a distinct method of expansion because of the special demands it places on the originating organization. Two other methods of expansion are *franchising* of the model to organizations operating as agents or clones of the originating organization, and *spinning off* aspects or parts of the originating organization to operate independently.

Replication involves scaling a particular process, technology, or model of service delivery by getting others, including the public sector and/or commercial providers, to take up and implement the model. In these cases, an arms-length relationship exists between the originating and “adopting” organizations. Replication can occur between organizations of the same type (e.g., NGO to NGO) or between organizations of different types.

One of the most common types of replication is *policy adoption*, where a model that begins as a pilot run by an NGO, community group, university, research lab or private company scales by becoming a program or practice mandated and often run by the public sector. Another common form of replication is *grafting*, where a model—or one component of a model—is incorporated into another organization’s array of services or methods of service delivery. *Diffusion and spillover* are other methods of replication and include both informal and more deliberate dissemination efforts. The use of social media, knowledge networks, and communities of practice are special cases of diffusion that bypass organizations by marketing new ideas directly to individuals. *Commercialization*, a fourth type of replication, refers to scaling efforts based on adoption of the model by the private sector or a social enterprise and operated as a financially viable venture.

In addition to these more deliberate scaling up methods, replication sometimes occurs spontaneously. While this form of scaling up is common in the private sector where profit provides the necessary incentive, cases of

spontaneous replication are much less common in the non-profit and public sectors.

Collaboration, the third approach to scaling up, falls somewhere between the expansion and replication approaches. Collaboration mechanisms run the gamut from formal partnerships to informal networks and include a number of innovative structures and governance arrangements. *Formal partnerships, joint ventures and strategic alliances* are increasingly common methods for organizing collaborative efforts, as are less formal *networks and coalitions* based on memoranda of understanding or merely a handshake. Typically, these arrangements include some division of responsibility among the collaborating organizations.

Some collaboration arrangements include the public sector as a key partner; many others are agreements among civil society groups and/or partnerships between NGOs and private firms, such as an NGO involved in education and awareness that partners with media organizations to co-create new methods of delivering products and services to an expanded audience. The growing popularity of social enterprise, the recognition by private firms of commercial opportunities among the poor, and the growing emphasis on corporate social responsibility, have greatly expanded opportunities for these types of partnerships.

Implementers and funders committed to far-reaching change understand that their goals often cannot be reached without the support of a critical mass of organizations and individuals working together to build a “field.” These pathways achieve scale indirectly by strengthening the capacity of, or support for, the field as a whole. Think, for example, of efforts by major league baseball owners and advertisers to promote the game of baseball, or efforts by coalitions of advocacy groups to end extreme poverty or school dropout. The shift from direct to indirect scaling pathways – like the shift from expansion to replication or collaboration – requires organizations to broaden their perspective and think in terms of collective action.



Balancing the Pros and Cons

Choosing among alternative scaling up methods involves balancing a number of considerations. Take, for example, the case of replication through the transfer of a model from an NGO to the public sector. The clear advantages of policy adoption are mandatory compliance and access to resources, as state and national governments have greater financial resources than most NGOs. Moreover, governments generally have greater public legitimacy, especially if they are democratic, and donors and foundations frequently view operating at scale on a sustainable basis as a more appropriate role for governments than for NGOs.

Policy adoption also has the advantage of occurring fairly rapidly in a system where decision-making is centralized and can cover a large area quickly. On the other hand, organizational congruence—the match between the skills, procedures, and values of the NGO and those of the government—can be a serious problem. For example, where the model being transferred involves a highly participatory approach, adoption by bureaucratic public agencies may be impractical. For this reason, policy adoption is typically more effective when the model involved is primarily technical and when process sensitivity and community participation are not critical to its success.

Major challenges of expansion as a scaling up method are the willingness and ability of management to undertake and implement necessary internal changes, and the capacity to secure sufficient financial resources to support the scaling up exercise and to operate at scale. And expansion across socially and politically diverse regions and audiences is a particular challenge.

The pros and cons of collaboration depend on the nature of the organizations, governance structures, and partnership models that are used. These methods have the greatest potential where organizations have different and complementary skills or resources, shared or overlapping objectives, and a high level of mutual trust. Networks between similar institutions, such as among NGOs, research institutes, or public sector agencies, can be powerful agents for scaling up, but because networks are voluntary and frequently lack external resources, the spread of the program or interventions may be slower and less uniform than with other strategies.

Table 2 displays some of the critical factors shaping choices among alternative scaling up methods, along with their implications, and Annex 1 provides additional details of the pros and cons of each of these pathways to scale.

TABLE 2: Choosing a Scaling up Method

Factors to Consider	
Type of Model	
Technology Intensive →	Any Method
Process Intensive →	Expansion or Collaboration
Comprehensiveness of Model	
Specific Practice →	Any Method
Complete Model →	Expansion
Capacity of Originating Organization	
Strong →	Expansion, Collaboration or Field Building
Weak →	Replication
Source of Financing	
Internal →	Any Method
External →	Replication, Collaboration or Field Building
Availability of Formal Evaluation and Documentation of the Model	
Yes →	Any Method
No →	Expansion
Observability of Results	
High →	Any Method
Low →	Expansion
Ease of Transfer to Other Organizations	
High →	Replication, Collaboration or Field Building
Low →	Expansion
Quality of Governance	
High →	Replication
Low →	Expansion or Collaboration
Presence of NGO Networks	
Strong →	Replication
Weak →	Expansion, Collaboration or Field Building
Social Homogeneity	
High →	Any Method
Low →	Replication, Collaboration or Field Building

Organizational Roles: Who Performs the Key Functions?

The third element of Task 1 is deciding who needs to do what in order for scaling up—and operating at scale—to be successful.

At least two different organizational roles are involved in scaling up: the **originating organization** that develops and pilots the model, and the **adopting organization** that takes up the model.³ Adopting organizations may be newly created for the purpose of taking up the model, or may be pre-existing.

In the case of expansion strategies, the adopting organization is a much larger and probably restructured version of the originating organization. In the case of collaboration strategies, the role of the adopting organization is sometimes shared between two or more partners. In the case of replication, the originating organization passes the baton to another entity entirely.

For most goods and services, there are only two kinds of “institutions” – commercial markets and governments – that can meet the twin tests of delivering services sustainably and at scale. Each of these two institutions, and occasionally philanthropy, has the delivery network, the funding base, and the incentive structure to deliver in perpetuity to large populations. NGOs, social enterprises, community-based organizations, universities, most philanthropies and other civil society groups play important roles in fostering new solutions, responding to emergencies, and meeting the needs of modest-sized populations, but rarely can they deliver and/or finance services to large populations over extended periods without engaging markets and/or governments.⁴ Put aptly by Patrick McCarthy, CEO of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, “a bad system will trump a good program –every time, all the time”. Scaling, in this context,

usually means helping to promote adoption of improved practices by government agencies and/or by private providers, and persuading governments or citizens to pay for those services.

When considering potential adopting organizations, it is important to look at how similar the organizational contexts, capacities, incentives, and values are; how much adaptation and capacity-building will be needed to those of the originating organization; and what resources will be required.

For example, community-based projects frequently owe their success to participation by program beneficiaries and stakeholders, including local ownership, volunteer labor, use of local resources, and priorities determined by community needs. Large public sector bureaucracies embody, almost by definition, exactly the opposite characteristics. Supply-driven and less responsive to local needs, they are unlikely to make extensive use of local resources or engender a strong sense of local ownership. While public bureaucracies have compensating virtues—legitimacy, resources, and infrastructure—differences in their processes and values may make transfer difficult, and may ultimately jeopardize the viability of scaling up in cases where these components are fundamental to the success of the model.

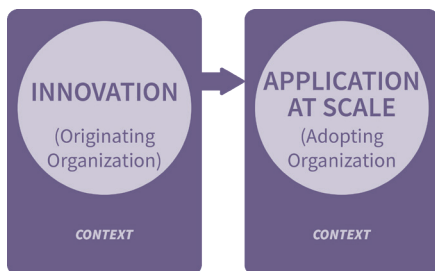
Considerations of compatibility apply equally to the social environments in which the originating and adopting organizations are embedded. If the vision of scaling up involves a new population or location, this requires, at the very least, a preliminary assessment of the context where scaling up will occur. The objective of this assessment is to ensure that the scaling up strategy takes into account opportunities and threats in the new environment and is able to adapt to the social conditions present in the new context. This should include an assessment of the supply and demand for the services that are to be provided and

³ R. Simmons and J. Shiffman, “[Scaling-up Reproductive Health Service Innovations: A Conceptual Framework](#).” Paper prepared for the Bellagio Conference: From Pilot Projects to Policies and Programs, 2003.

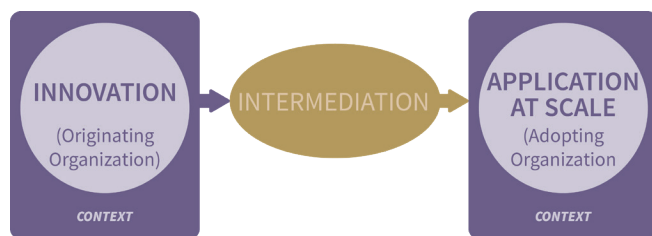
⁴ For an insightful exploration of the role of social enterprises in scaling development outcomes, see N. Agapitova and J. Linn, “[Scaling Up Social Enterprise Innovations](#),” Global Economy & Development Working Paper 95, Brookings, 2016.



whether there are any “competitors” likely to challenge or impede the scaling up effort.



Most scaling up discussions assume that the originating organization is also the organization that does the work needed to transfer the model or to take the model to scale. Experience and theory both suggest, however, that many of the tasks involved in successfully transferring or expanding a model are best done by, or with the assistance of, a neutral third-party or **intermediary organization** specifically charged with assisting in the scaling up process. The functions these organizations perform or support include: strategic planning, evaluation and documentation, fundraising, investment packaging and placement, advocacy and marketing, convening and coordinating stakeholders, change management, organizational development, process management, and systems strengthening. In strategies that depend on expansion or replication, intermediary organizations often play additional roles in assessing and strengthening the internal capacities required of originating and adopting organizations; and in the case of collaboration strategies for scaling up, intermediary organizations can be essential in designing and forming innovative partnerships.



Sometimes, but rarely, innovators, R&D units, social entrepreneurs or governments perform these functions on their own. In the case of fully commercial consumer goods,

Intermediation Functions
• Strategic planning
• Evaluation and documentation
• Fundraising
• Investment packaging and placement
• Advocacy and marketing
• Convening and coordinating stakeholders
• Change management
• Organizational development
• Process management
• Systems strengthening

a variety of specialized institutions -- investment bankers, impact investors, venture capitalists and consultants have evolved to fill the niche. These intermediaries become, in effect, the “clutch” that connects the twin gears of innovation and population-scale service delivery. Unfortunately, these institutions and this part of the innovation supply chain do not translate well into the world of social outcomes.⁵ Possessing neither the glamor of innovation, the immediacy of direct service delivery, or the prospect of charging and recovering significant transactional returns, funding for these intermediation functions – with a few notable exceptions -- falls between the stools.



There’s a second key difference between fully commercial consumer goods and social outcomes that compounds the challenges of reaching scale, and which makes key intermediation functions even more important. When consumer goods and services go to scale, the binding constraint is usually on the demand side and scaling usually

⁵ See, L. Cooley and I. Guerrero, "[The Broken Part of the Business Model in Taking Development Outcomes to Scale](#)," MSI and IMAGO Global Grassroots, 2016.

involves diffusion of innovation or contagion (“going viral”). By contrast, the binding constraint in scaling social outcomes often lies on the supply side where need does not reliably trigger supply, where decisions by governments and third party funders stand between supply and demand, and where a single-supplier model often operates. This reflects a classic “principal/agent” problem where beneficiaries are not in a position to pay the full cost of the services they receive.

In the case of *Expansion*, intermediation is especially important in helping organizations plan for and digest growth. Changes in the basic business model, financial management, leadership team, internal systems, and training regimes figure prominently in this process. In the case of *Replication*, the focus is on transfer of a model or innovation from its originator to another entity better able to deliver at scale. In this case, the ability to convene prominent stakeholders, mobilize support, market ideas, and negotiate differences loom large as intermediary functions. And where scaling takes place through *Collaboration*, support for the development, negotiation and instituting of shared value models, multi-stakeholder governance, and flexible accountability systems are particularly prominent intermediation functions.

This third element of Task 1 involves identifying the organizations best suited to implement at scale and to perform crucial intermediation functions, and detailing the major organizational changes that scaling up will require of them.

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Dimensions of Scaling Up: Where Does The Scaling Up Occur?

So far, we have reviewed three of the four key elements of scaling up: the model, types and methods of scaling up, and organizational roles. The fourth and final element needed to

complete a vision of the scaling up process is **dimension**, or the scope and nature of the intended scaling up effort.

Though most discussions of scaling focus exclusively on the number of intended adopters and beneficiaries, the scaling of products, services or benefits can occur along any of the following five vectors:

- Geographic coverage (extending to new locations)
- Breadth of coverage (extending to more people in currently served categories and localities)
- Depth of services (extending additional services to current clients)
- Client type (extending to new categories of clients)
- Problem definition (extending current methods to new problems)

The fourth and final element needed to complete a vision of the scaling up process is **dimension**— the size of the intended scaling up effort and the vector along which the model or project is to be extended.

Putting Task 1 into Action

The scaling imperative often reflects donors’ or governments’ interest in fashioning a solution that can be provided to large segments of the affected population. In cases where the organization responsible for the innovation or pilot project does not share this emphasis on scale, a mismatch of expectations is likely. The best protection against this is clear and candid communication early on about each party’s vision for the scale of effort, and their willingness to work toward that future.

In the best-case scenario, scaling is anticipated during the initial design of a pilot project. In such cases, best practices suggest that the following elements be incorporated into the original design and implementation of the pilot project: doing a baseline survey; documenting the model; building in an ongoing method for monitoring, measuring, evaluating, and publicizing results; minimizing complexity



and unit cost; including adaptive design and second-stage pilots; and incorporating mechanisms to gain buy-in from policymakers and potential adopting organizations.

Task 2: Assess Scalability

The second part of the planning process is reaching pragmatic judgments about the **scalability** of the model or program in question.⁶ While some of the factors that affect scalability relate to the model itself, many relate to the institutions doing the scaling and to the larger context in which scaling up would take place. As a result, the task of assessing scalability should usually be undertaken at the same time as Task 1 to ensure that the vision and plan are fully informed by the realities of the situation.

While some of the factors that affect scalability relate to the model itself, many relate to the larger context in which scaling up would take place.

The following questions should be addressed when beginning Task 2:

- » *Do relevant stakeholders, potential partners, and intended beneficiaries perceive a need for this kind of model?*
- » *Has the model been documented, including the process component, and has its cost-effectiveness been objectively assessed? Does the evidence indicate that the model is more cost-effective than other approaches?*
- » *Are there obvious economies or diseconomies of scale?*
- » *How easily can institutional characteristics that were key to the outcomes achieved be replicated or enlarged?*
- » *Is there anything special or unique about the social or political context, or general circumstances of the pilot project (e.g., cultural, ethnic, or religious values/characteristics; distribution of power;*

homogeneity; economic conditions) that would need to be present for the model to be replicated successfully?

- » *Does the adopting organization have the appropriate organizational and implementation capacity, or the means to develop that capacity?*
- » *Does needed funding exist for replicating the model on a large scale?*
- » *Are the central mission, organizational culture, and values of the proposed adopting organization sufficiently compatible with those necessary to adopt and implement the model successfully?*

These issues are discussed in greater detail below.

Determining the Viability of the Model for Scaling Up

In analyzing the comparative scalability of various pilot projects, ExpandNet enumerated seven criteria based on characteristics of successful technological or economic innovations.⁶ To stand the best chance of being widely adopted, innovations [models] must be:

1. **Credible**, based on sound evidence or espoused by respected persons or institutions;
2. **Observable** to ensure that potential users can see the results in practice;
3. **Relevant** for addressing persistent or sharply felt problems;
4. Have a **relative advantage** over existing practices;
5. **Easy to transfer and adopt**;
6. **Compatible** with the existing users' established values, norms, and facilities; and
7. **Able to be tested or tried** without committing the potential user to complete adoption when results have not yet been seen.

⁶ R. Simmons, J. Brown, and M. Diaz. "Facilitating Large-Scale Transitions to Quality of Care: An Idea Whose Time Has Come." *Studies in Family Planning* 33, no. 1, 2002.



In addition, experience demonstrates that the easiest pilot efforts to scale up are those that involve a **clear and replicable technology** and **self-generate the financial resources** needed for expansion. This helps to explain why many of the most common examples of scaling up are commercial or fee-for-service products such as micro-credit, and why it has generally been easier to scale up innovations, such as cell phones, than models where process, values, and organizational contexts are critical.

Experience demonstrates that the easiest pilot efforts to scale up are those that involve a clear and replicable technology and self-generates the financial resources needed for expansion.

Analyzing the Organizational and Social Context

In many types of development projects, pilot-scale success or failure hinges on organizational factors. It is thus particularly important to identify the organizational features that need to be retained, recreated, or replaced for successful scaling up. In identifying the potentially unique or distinguishing features of the organization that implemented the pilot project --what we call elsewhere in this paper the "originating organization"-- relevant features include:

- Organizational culture, values and principles
- Credibility and reputation
- Staff skills and motivation
- Management and leadership style
- Supervision and quality control
- Accountability and incentives
- Financial resources
- External partnerships

The broader social and political context in which projects are located can also exercise substantial impact on the scaling up process.⁷ In a world where "context is king," it is important to assess the external environment in which the pilot project has been operating to identify contextual factors that may have been essential to the success of the model. Here again, the goal of the analysis is to identify features that need to be recreated or substituted if the model to be successfully scaled up. This analysis of the social context can be particularly important, as these factors are often invisible to those who -- like fish unaware that they swim in the ocean -- have no point of comparison. Especially noteworthy among the key factors that should be considered in such an analysis are the quality of governance; respective roles and fiscal capacities of national, state, and local governments; extent and nature of NGOs and NGO networks; prevailing cultural and religious norms; and the extent of social homogeneity.

The Scalability Checklist is best used as an aid for prioritizing alternatives and as a means for identifying some of the actions that can be taken to simplify the scaling up process.

The Scalability Checklist shown in Table 3 below is intended as a basic test of scalability based on the factors noted above. Every check placed in Column A indicates a factor that simplifies scaling up, and every check in Column C represents a complicating factor.

The Scalability Checklist is intended to stimulate, not substitute for, serious dialogue and analysis. It is best used not as a scorecard to determine what can be scaled up and what cannot, but as an aid to prioritize alternatives and as a means for identifying actions that can be taken to simplify the scaling up process.

⁷ See, for example, the discussion of "spaces" and "drivers" in Cooley & Linn, "[Taking Innovation to Scale](#)," MSI and R4D, 2014.

TABLE 3: Scalability Checklist

Assessment Categories	☺ A	← Scaling up is easier	☹ B	Scaling up is harder →	☹ C
A. How convincing is the scaling strategy?	1	Presence of a clear and compelling strategy for reaching scale		No articulated scaling strategy	
	2	Homogeneous problem, target group and setting—geography, language, economy, politics		Multiple, diverse contexts	
B. Is the intervention credible?	3	Robust evidence that the intervention works in diverse settings and for diverse target groups		Little or no robust evidence that the intervention works in diverse settings and for diverse target groups	
	4	Independent external evaluation		No independent external evaluation	
C. How strong is the support for change?	5	Supported by eminent individuals and institutions		Supported by few or no eminent individuals or institutions	
	6	Impact very visible to decision-makers and users, and easily associated with the intervention		Impact relatively invisible to decision-makers and users and/or not easily attributable to the intervention	
	7	Strong sense of urgency regarding the problem or need		Relative complacency	
	8	Strong and stable leadership coalition committed to change		Weak, divided, unstable or deeply conservative leadership coalition	
	9	Addresses an issue that is high on the national policy agenda		Addresses an issue that is absent from or low on the national policy agenda	
	10	Addresses a need that is sharply felt by the potential target group(s)		Addresses a need that is not sharply felt by the potential target group(s)	
	11	Faces limited opposition		Faces strong opposition	
D. Does the intervention have relative advantage over existing practices?	12	Current situation widely considered inadequate		Current situation widely considered adequate	
	13	Superior effectiveness to other alternatives clearly established		Little or no objective evidence of superiority to other alternatives	
	14	Substantially lower cost than existing or alternative solutions		Higher cost than existing or alternative solutions	
E. How easy is the intervention to transfer and adopt?	15	Implementable with existing systems, infrastructure and human resources		Requires significant new or additional systems, infrastructure or human resources	
	16	Small departure from current practices		Large departure from current practices	
	17	Fully consistent with government policy		Requires substantial change in one or more government policies	
	18	Few decision-makers involved in authorizing or approving adoption		Many decision-makers involved in authorizing or approving adoption	
	19	Proposed changes are highly structured or highly technological		Heavily reliant on process, values and/or flexibility	
	20	Low complexity or easily implemented component-by-component		High complexity and need for implementation as an integrated “package”	
	21	Compliance and quality of implementation easy to monitor		Compliance and quality of implementation difficult to monitor	
	22	Able to be tested on a limited scale		Unable to test without adoption on a large scale	

F. How good is the fit between the intervention and the Adopting Organization?	23	Strong prior collaboration between Originating and Adopting Organizations	No prior collaboration between Originating and Adopting Organizations
	24	Adopting Organization has operational capacity and financial resources to implement at scale	Adopting Organization lacks systems, delivery agents and/or resources to implement at scale
	25	Adopting and Intermediary Organizations have experience scaling similar interventions	Adopting and Intermediary Organizations lack experience scaling similar interventions
	26	Adopting Organization has physical presence and strong network and credibility in relevant contexts	Adopting Organization lacks footprint and credibility in relevant contexts
	27	Intervention fully consistent with norms, incentives and leadership style of Adopting Organization	Intervention conflicts with the norms, incentives and/or leadership style of Adopting Organization
	28	Demonstrable support for the intervention among staff of Adopting Organization	Active resistance by staff of the Adopting Organization
G. Is there a sustainable source of financing?	29	Budget implications clear, predictable and justifiable to those expected to bear the costs	Budget implications unclear, unpredictable and/or difficult to justify to those expected to bear the costs
	30	Requires small commitment of funds to begin transition to scale	Requires large commitment of funds to begin transition to scale
	31	External sponsors with long-term commitment to supporting the intervention	No external sponsors with long-term commitment to supporting the intervention
	32	Full cost of implementation at scale able to be absorbed within government budget or covered from other sustainable sources	No realistic prospect for funding full cost of implementation at scale within government budget or from other sustainable sources

Putting Task 2 into Action

Task 2 is most effective when carried out in conjunction with Task 1. In its most basic form, Task 2 involves: (1) filling out the checklist, (2) brainstorming options to simplify the scaling up process, and (3) carrying out special analyses of the organizational, social, and political contexts for scaling up. This process often benefits from the involvement of neutral third-party facilitators or analysts, possibly drawn from the same intermediary organization that supports other aspects of the scaling up process.

Task 3: Fill Information Gaps

In principle, the next task after developing a vision and completing a scalability assessment is the development of a scaling up plan. As a practical matter, however, Tasks 1 and 2 almost always reveal a number of information or documentation gaps that need to be filled before the

advancement of such a plan. Task 3 is dedicated to filling those gaps.

While rough approximations and anecdotal evidence suffice in some cases, governments and donor organizations increasingly demand solid evidence prior to initiating a serious effort to scale up a model or intervention. The items most frequently found to be missing include:

- Documentation of the model, including goals and distinguishing technical, organizational, and/or process elements
- Analysis of need or demand for the service among the larger population
- Analysis of the changes needed to make the model applicable to other parts of the country or to other target groups
- (Comparative) analysis of the costs associated with the model



- Evaluation of the model’s (comparative) impact and success
- Refinement and simplification of the model
- Analysis of the possibilities for achieving economies of scale
- Analysis of the institutional requirements for implementing the model
- Elaboration of the business model and cash flow associated with scaling and operating at scale
- Identification of the main actions and resources needed to transfer the model

Experience suggests that six months to one year is a realistic allowance for the time needed to complete Task 3 for most pilot projects. That same experience suggests that this stage of the scaling up process is a particularly vulnerable one, since it is often the case that neither the pilot project nor the potential adopting organization has a budget or dedicated personnel to conduct the needed analyses.

Task 3 typically begins with a review and mapping of decision-makers’ unmet information requirements, followed by the development of a schedule and budget for meeting these requirements. At the same time, a series of issues that can affect the credibility and persuasiveness of information and documentation must be considered. Among the considerations affecting the impact of information on decision-makers, particular attention should be given to finding credible interlocutors and translating technical findings into terms that make sense to the intended audience

The following questions should be addressed when beginning Task 3:

- » *What additional information or documentation is needed as a basis for planning and to address stakeholder concerns?*

Task 4: Prepare a Scaling Up Plan

Step 1 culminates in a practical and workable scaling up plan, and the consolidation of that plan is the work of Task 4. This relatively brief document (perhaps ten pages plus annexes) should summarize the thinking and analysis that took place throughout the previous three tasks of Step 1.

Step 1 culminates in a practical and workable scaling up plan that summarizes the thinking and analysis that took place to produce it.

In many cases, the intermediary organization that helped with the initial visioning (Task 1), scalability assessment (Task 2), and filling the information gaps (Task 3) can and should play a key role in pulling this material together during Task 4. Audiences for the plan are both internal (the originating organization and its Board of Directors) and external (networks, adopting organizations, government agencies, and potential funders); and the document should be written with these audiences in mind.

The scaling plan should be written with both internal & external audiences in mind

While a scaling up plan can be organized and presented in several ways, the following outline is a useful guide:

PART I

- **Summary** of the need including, where possible, hard data on the size and distribution of the problem (one paragraph)
- **Vision**, including a one to two paragraph history and description of the pilot project; one paragraph each on the model (“what”), methods (“how”), organizations (“who”), and dimensions (“where”) of the proposed scaling up effort
- **Evidence** supporting the value and feasibility of scaling up the model, summarizing any data that exists on the (comparative) impact and cost- effectiveness of the model, and establishing the demand for and applicability of the model outside the pilot area



PART II

- **Actions and timetable**, focusing particular attention on next steps and decision points, and assigning responsibility for each of these actions (see Chapter 3 of this document for additional guidance)
- **Resources**, identifying the budget and other means needed to support the scaling up effort and to operate at scale

The following questions should be addressed when beginning Task 4:

- » *Does the plan summarize the need, vision, and evidence for scaling up the model?*
- » *Does the plan include a clear description of proposed actions, timetables, roles, responsibilities, and resources?*



CHAPTER 3: Establishing Preconditions and Implementing a Scaling Up Process

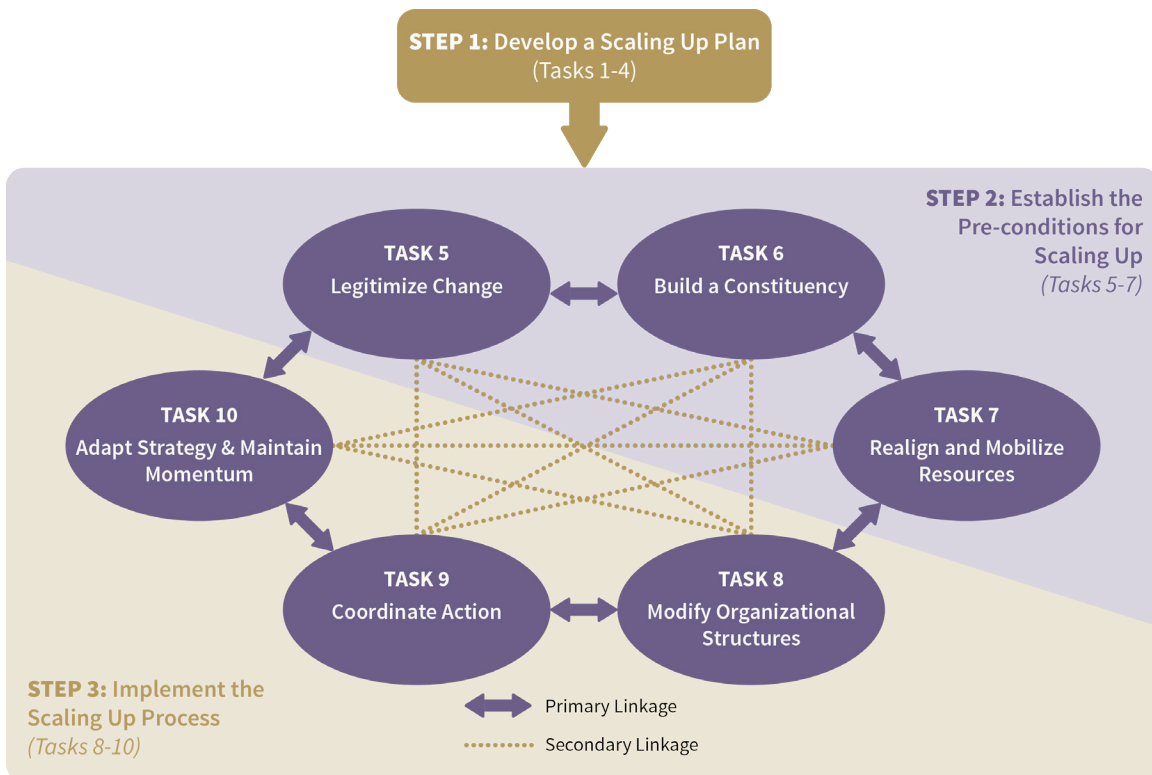
Steps 2 and 3 of the Framework focus on translating aspirations into reality. This usually involves action by many people — legislators, national leaders, activists, investors, service providers, and donors, to name but a few — and emphasizes the actions needed to reach agreement and to turn agreements into tangible results.

Published case studies rarely describe in any detail the tactics and considerations involved in implementing a scaling up plan; thus, there are few documented best practices on which to base step-by-step guidelines. The discussion in this section augments the published literature with insights drawn from twelve years of MSI fieldwork and lessons learned on two closely related topics, organizational development and managing policy change.

This two-part section presents, respectively, Steps 2 and 3 of the scaling up process. **Step 2, Establish the Preconditions for Scaling Up**, includes three tasks: legitimizing change (Task 5), constituency building (Task 6), and realigning and mobilizing resources (Task 7). **Step 3, Implement the Scaling Up Process**, is comprised of three additional tasks: modifying organizational structures (Task 8), coordinating action (Task 9), and adapting strategy & maintaining momentum (Task 10).

These six tasks and the links between them are displayed in Figure 3, illustrating that although the six tasks have a logical sequence, each task affects and is affected by each of the others, and it is sometimes necessary to double-back.

FIGURE 3: An Overview of the Scaling Up Process



STEP 2: Establish the Preconditions for Scaling Up

The intended result of Step 2 is that the decisions and resources needed for scaling up are approved and in place. This requires getting the issue onto the agenda of key decision-makers, aligning constituencies to support needed changes, and securing the required resources. The following sections explore each of these tasks.

Task 5: Legitimize Change

Given all the issues that compete for attention and resources, progress in scaling up a new model requires that decision-makers believe that change from the *status quo* is imperative. For this to be the case, they must see the problem or opportunity as compelling and the affected constituency (or market) as a priority. They must also believe that existing approaches are inadequate or unsustainable, and that better solutions are available.

Because change often represents a significant break from tradition and requires shifts in attitudes as well as actions, it is important that change be advocated by “champions” who enjoy widespread credibility. These individuals can come from public, non-profit, or private sectors. However, if government policy adoption is the chosen method of scaling up, it is essential to attract high-level government involvement and support at the earliest feasible date.

Building legitimacy has been termed by some as a process of “going slow to go fast.” Experience suggests, and the literature on scaling up confirms, that there is a systematic tendency to underestimate the importance of this task. This is in part because donors and technocrats are impatient or uncomfortable with political or consciousness-raising activities and prefer to focus on capacity-building and service delivery. It also complicates matters that opportunities for legitimation are unpredictable and frequently linked to a crisis or other attention-focusing events. Numerous case examples indicate, however, that inattention to legitimation results in a need to return to this task later in the process.

Legitimation is essential for getting policies approved and budgetary priorities adopted, for attracting potential adopting organizations, for persuading funders and investors to provide support, and for ensuring a warm reception of the model among new locations and client populations.

Establishing or increasing legitimacy can be accomplished through a variety of methods, including:

- Enlisting prominent spokespersons or celebrities as advocates
- Developing and popularizing images, slogans, and symbols
- Creating “blue-ribbon” commissions
- Establishing high-level advisory boards
- Mounting local, national, and international media campaigns showcasing success
- Implementing public education programs

Information plays a critical role in legitimizing change as it is vital to demonstrate that the proposed innovation or model is successful, cost-effective, and feasible. This is normally achieved through publicizing the model and its effectiveness, building on the documentation and evaluation materials assembled during Step 1, and packaging those materials for a wider audience.

The following questions should be addressed when beginning Task 5:

- » *What more needs to be done to persuade relevant decision makers, funders, and opinion leaders that new solutions are necessary and desirable?*
- » *What more needs to be done to persuade relevant decision makers, funders, and opinion leaders that the proposed model is successful, cost-effective, and feasible?*
- » *Which spokespersons, conveners, messages, and methods are most likely to have an impact on these audiences?*



Task 6: Build a Constituency

Implementation requires active and ongoing support to overcome common tendencies toward inaction and backsliding. This requires getting beyond a passive acceptance of the need for change and mobilizing distinct constituencies in favor of specific changes and models.

Implementation requires active and ongoing support to overcome common tendencies toward inaction and backsliding.

The most reliable constituencies are those who can hope to benefit directly from implementation of the new model, but support can also come from organizations and individuals who support the change philosophically or politically.

Beneficiaries of the current system and existing providers are among those who often resist change as are those whose budgets would need to be reduced in order to free up resources necessary for scaling up. If the originating organization is an NGO or sub-national government unit, other NGOs and government units may feel threatened both in terms of competition for funding or in terms of recognition, reputation, and visibility. The task of constituency building includes understanding and overcoming these sources of resistance.

Among the tools that can help to guide Task 6, stakeholder analysis, network mapping, and Force Field Analysis are particularly useful.

Among the tools that can help to guide Task 6, stakeholder analysis, network mapping, and Force Field Analysis are particularly useful. These tools help to identify the hurdles through which a proposed change passes to become approved and implemented; the actor(s) in charge of each step; how one can gain access to these actors; who might support or oppose these efforts; what resources they are able to mobilize for the purpose; and what arguments are likely to be persuasive to each of these groups.

The following questions should be addressed when beginning Task 6:

- » Which organizations, organizational units, or individuals are responsible for key decisions regarding the funding and implementation of scaling up? Who has the authority to make decisions within these organizations?
- » What arguments, appeals, or advocacy strategies are likely to be persuasive to decision makers?
- » What are the most effective networks and alliances for carrying out this advocacy, and how can they be most efficiently mobilized and organized?
- » How can buy-in from the leadership and staff of potential implementing organizations best be achieved?

Task 6 normally includes a determined effort to mobilize new constituencies and implement a systematic market development or advocacy strategy. It often includes efforts to secure formal adoption of new policies and funding by the government or by potential adopting organizations. Like legitimation, this task can begin in conjunction with the planning process detailed in Step 1.

Task 6 normally includes a determined effort to mobilize new constituencies and implement a systematic advocacy strategy.

Task 7: Realign and Mobilize Resources

The resources for scaling up and for operating at scale are rarely in place at the outset, and old priorities do not disappear simply because new priorities arise. Funding for operating a new model at scale implies a redirection of budget and operational priorities, or somehow securing additional resources. Almost always, this entails overcoming inertia or active resistance, particularly when budgets are stretched, the new model is additional to or more costly than the current alternative, and the new model does not self-generate the resources it requires. Task 7 is concerned with securing the human and financial resources necessary to support the scaling up process and to sustain operating at scale.



Funding the transition period (i.e., the scaling up process) is aptly referred to by some as crossing the “Valley of Death,” given the absence of resources earmarked for such purposes and long lead times normally needed to change funding priorities. In addition to complicating the scaling up process, this raises the potential for gaps or shutdowns once resources for a pilot project are exhausted.

The resources for scaling up and for operating at scale are rarely in place at the outset, and old priorities do not disappear because new priorities arise.

Moreover, the resource problem is not simply financial. Often, no individual, team, or agency is charged with managing the scaling up process and coordinating the introduction of new programs, policies, or approaches necessary to implement the new model; and, adopting organizations often lack the necessary organizational skills and systems to deliver the new product or service, and to maintain quality at scale.

The following questions should be addressed when beginning Task 7:

- » *What additional human, institutional, and financial resources will be needed to support the process of “going to scale,” and what needs to be done to ensure that these resources are available?*
- » *What human, institutional, and financial resources will be needed for “operating at scale,” and what needs to be done to ensure that these resources are available?*
- » *What new partnerships will need to be established, if any?*

The culmination of Tasks 5, 6, and 7 -- if successful -- is a set of decisions by adopting organizations to scale up the model; the commitment to provide the resources needed for the scaling up effort and for operating at scale; and a foundation of legitimacy and support that can help sustain the scaling up effort through the difficult implementation stage that lies ahead. These are the intended results of Step 2 and set the stage for successful implementation.



STEP 3: Implement the Scaling Up Process

Tasks 8, 9, and 10 are devoted to implementing the scaling up effort. First and foremost, these tasks involve creating or transferring the organizational capacity needed to apply the model at scale. Once this capacity is created (Task 8), Task 9 focuses on implementation of the scaling plan, including mechanisms for accountability and overall coordination. Task 10 (adapt strategy and maintain momentum) covers monitoring and evaluating progress, performance, and fidelity, and the use of that information to adapt strategy, inform public oversight and sustain commitment.

Task 8: Modify and Strengthen Organizations

Implementing meaningful large-scale change almost always calls for the creation of new organizational structures or for major changes to existing ones. Even when this is not the case, there is an enhanced need for sharing information and resources and for more concerted coordination, particularly during the transition period. Task 8 includes developing and executing institutional capacity-building and organizational development plans for all organizations with major roles to play in either the scaling up process or subsequent efforts to operate at scale.

There is a greater need for sharing information and resources and for more concerted coordination, particularly during the transition period

The need for change is most apparent in the adopting organization(s) that are expected to implement the model on a scaled up basis.⁸

Transfer of know-how is one of the most neglected aspects of scaling up. In addition to procedures such as process re-engineering and training, this often requires a substantial simplification of the model, particularly when resources necessary for intensive mentoring and capacity-building are not available.

Many small scale interventions are successful because they offer competitive salaries; hire highly motivated, mission driven staff; or provide other non-financial means of reward or recognition. They also often use staff who are not burdened with competing demands on their time. For scaling up to be successful, these same conditions need to be replicated at scale, or other ways of dealing with issues of motivation and workload need to be addressed.

In cases where the values and norms of the adopting and originating organizations are dissimilar, part of the scaling up effort requires transforming the model or aligning the values of the organizations so that transfer can occur. This is especially the case when the originating organization is an NGO or university and the adopting organization is a government agency or corporation, given the natural differences between these types of organizations and the history of distrust between them in many countries.

A particularly weak point for many scaling up projects is the additional burden placed on the staff of the originating organization which is often expected to provide training, mentoring, and other support for the adopting organization(s) while continuing to run its own programs.

As noted earlier in this document, a key lesson in recent years is the critical need to create or strengthen intermediary organizations to facilitate the process of scaling up. The principal reason for this is that the tasks involved in **going to scale** (change management) are distinct from **operating a successful pilot** (innovation) and **operating at scale** (administrative efficiency). During Step 1 -- the “*planning*” step – key intermediation functions include strategic planning, impact evaluation and operations research. During Step 2 – the “*political*” step – the focus of intermediation shifts to convening and coordinating stakeholders, fundraising, investment packaging, advocacy and marketing. And during Step 3 – the “*operational*” step – the emphasis is on change management, organizational development, and systems strengthening. These functions frequently spell the difference between success and failure, and performing them effectively is a central element of Task 8.

⁸ Note: This same logic applies when scale is achieved by expanding the originating organization given the shifts in values, systems and incentives that normally accompany exponential growth.

The following questions should be addressed when beginning Task 8:

- » *What needs to be done to encourage and assist the originating organization to relinquish control and make the changes necessary for the successful transfer and scaling up of the model?*
- » *What changes need to be made in the organization expected to implement the model of scale?*
- » *Which organization(s) are responsible for the transfer process and what changes do they need in their own capacity – structure, staffing, or operations – to do this successfully?*

Task 9 includes the instituting of action plans, coordinating mechanisms, and governance procedures for the scaling up activity and for operating at scale.

Task 9: Coordinate Action

Task 9 focuses on establishing and applying the management processes, coordination mechanisms, and accountability procedures needed to ensure that decisions and capacity are translated into action.

Scaling up usually involves multiple agencies and institutions, and processes normally need to go beyond top-down “command and control.” This requires coordination among organizations that are often not in the habit of working with one another.

Since coordination and cooperation take time, cost money, and entail a loss of autonomy by participating organizations, these efforts only succeed when perceived benefits outweigh costs for each of the organizations involved. As a practical matter, this puts a premium on clearly articulating roles and responsibilities and establishing tangible incentives for working together and penalties for the failure to do so.

Particularly when a coalition, network, or working group forms to support or oversee the scaling up process, tools like Joint Action Plans or Organizational Responsibility Charts are helpful for disentangling the respective roles

of individuals and groups. Tools like these offer systematic ways of brokering agreements about the major activities to be done and clarify for each activity: who must approve it; who is responsible for executing it; who should be providing tangible support; and who needs to be kept informed.

While these plans can be completed by analysts, they are often most effective when used interactively by the directly affected parties as a way to clarify, streamline and strengthen their working relationships.

The following questions should be addressed when beginning Task 9:

- » *Are action plans and budgets in place for implementing the scaling up effort and, if not, what more needs to be done?*
- » *Have responsibilities been clearly allocated and efficient mechanisms established for coordinating the scaling up effort?*
- » *How will mutual accountability be established and conflicts resolved?*

Task 9 includes establishing action plans, coordinating mechanisms, and governance procedures for the scaling up activity and for operating at scale.

It is important to track the effects of introducing the new model and to make adjustments if the results differ from what was intended.

Task 10: Adapt Strategy & Maintain Momentum

Successful scaling rarely proceeds in a straight line or follows a pre-determined blueprint. The same kind of tinkering that was needed to develop the original model is likely to be needed as the roll-out process encounters unexpected obstacles and opportunities. The most successful scaling strategies therefore include resources to monitor the scaling process and the flexibility to make changes based on experience.

It is also the case that innovations often lose their impact

as they go to scale. This can result from diluting the fidelity of the original model or from unforeseen problems in applying it more broadly. For these reasons, it is important to track changes in outcomes associated with introducing the new model, and to make adjustments if the results differ from what was intended. Particularly important to assess are any effects associated with changes in the model itself, changes in the venue or social context in which it is applied, or changes in the people providing the services. Ideally, such monitoring and evaluation begins early in the process with baseline assessments of the effectiveness of the pilot project during Step 1.

It is not uncommon for scaling to take upward of 15 years, even for highly productive new models and technologies. Since this is considerably longer than the time horizons of most donors or governments, it is important to provide a steady flow of maintain momentum as well as monitor progress.

In addition, there is a need to monitor the implementation of the scaling up process. Besides the usual requirements for sound project management, it's important to anticipate the questions and concerns of the broader audience involved in approving, funding, and implementing the scaling up process. This puts a particular premium on conducting monitoring and evaluation in a credible, public, and transparent manner, and there is considerable value in involving beneficiaries and independent third parties

in this effort. This monitoring is a catalyst for maintaining momentum and accountability, and for keeping the scaling up process on track following the adage, "what gets monitored gets done."

Task 10 includes creating multiple avenues for feeding information back to the public and to decision makers, and for ensuring that it is widely discussed. The press, academia, and non-partisan monitoring organizations can play important roles in this process. Some of the approaches and techniques used for this task include:

- Citizen oversight panels
- Market research studies
- Open-access websites
- Third-party M&E
- Comparative scorecards
- Sustained media coverage

The following questions should be addressed when beginning Task 10:

- » *Are there adequate procedures for documenting the progress, lessons learned, and impacts of the scaling up effort?*
- » *What mechanisms will most effectively ensure that this information is fed back to key stakeholders and the broader public, and used to make necessary course corrections?*



CHAPTER 4:

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned have emerged in the course of applying the SUM Framework for more than a decade. Many of these lessons are reflected in the latest versions of the Framework itself. We would like to draw particular attention to the following:

Lesson 1: Simplify

The more one can simplify a model without losing the basis of its effectiveness, the more feasible it is to scale it up. This reverses the logic of most pilot projects which add elements in an effort to maximize effectiveness. It also runs contrary to the general reluctance of most organizations to simplify, repackage, or relinquish control over their models for the purposes of scaling them up.

Lesson 2: There's No Substitute for Markets and Governments

Serious scaling efforts should include explicit strategies for integration into commercial markets and/or government policy. Commercial markets are the world's most cost-efficient scaling mechanism, but they aren't right for everything or for everybody. The only other institution able to fund and deliver most goods and services sustainably at scale is government which almost always plays a role either directly and indirectly in facilitating access by at risk populations.

Lesson 3: Context is King

Scaling efforts routinely underestimate the significance of social, political, cultural and economic context. Especially where scaling involves transferring responsibility to or from government, it is highly dependent on the particularities in specific localities, states, and countries. These dynamics are further complicated where there is a history of mistrust between the government, NGOs, universities, and the private sector.

Lesson 4: Prioritize Intermediation

"Innovation" is currently prioritized by governments, donors and foundations relative to the lack of assistance for scaling up successful innovations. There is a conspicuous

deficit of support for and investment in intermediary organizations with the skills and mandate needed to help organizations scale up successfully.

Lesson 5: Plan Backwards

If planners and implementers are intent on reaching scale, they need to begin with an eye on scale and a strategy for achieving it; invest heavily in information and communication; focus early on unit costs and implications for current service providers; and provide the flexibility needed for adaptation on the road to scale.

Lesson 6: Begin Advocacy and Ownership Early

Nobody likes scaling somebody else's idea. The chances for taking an innovation to scale are substantially increased by establishing an advisory board and other mechanisms to promote early buy-in from key decision makers and potential adopters.

Lesson 7: Tailor Evidence to the Audience

Data from prototypes and pilot projects are rarely tailored to the decision criteria or decision-making styles of policymakers. Data on effectiveness is necessary, but usually not sufficient. It is important that information be demand driven and that those providing it be prepared to experiment with content, style, and format until they get it right.

Lesson 8: Focus on Systems and Incentives

For sustainable change to occur, it is essential to replicate or substitute for the incentives that contributed to the original success of the model and to ensure that a viable "business model" exists for each actor in the "service delivery supply chain." For many of these actors, the imperative to minimize risk outweighs the incentive to maximize expected value.

Lesson 9: Educate Funders on Scaling Up Realities

The average time for scaling up a successful pilot to national application is 15 years. Securing and maintaining the needed commitment and resources over this period calls for an obsession with solving problems at scale. It also calls for tangible milestones, strategic communications, and an explicit strategy for maintaining momentum.

Lesson 10: The Devil is in the Details

The transition onto large, sustainable delivery platforms requires countless adjustments and accommodations, many of which are not initially apparent.



CHAPTER 5:

Conclusion

Scaling up has drawn the attention of a widening circle of donors, philanthropists, governments, NGOs, activists, social investors and researchers galvanized by the challenge of solving big problems and reaching large numbers of those in need. Despite this growing interest and an expanding array of documented cases, relatively little evidence-based guidance exists about how to maximize prospects for new and innovative products and service delivery models achieving and sustaining outcomes at scale.

Written primarily for officials charged with making funding decisions and implementing programs, this paper seeks to provide concrete advice derived from theory and practice. It is intended to inform decisions regarding:

- Selecting projects with the potential to go to scale,
- Designing projects to maximize their scalability; and
- Managing the scaling up process

The SUM Framework is organized as a series of steps and tasks based on the conviction that scaling up **can be successfully planned and managed**. It is our hope that future years will witness a growing number of entrepreneurial idealists able to bring ever-increasing professionalism to the scaling up process.



ANNEX 1:

Pathways to Scale

	Core Idea	Pros	Cons	Primary Activities
Direct Pathways				
Expansion	Focuses on increasing organizational size, operational scope or geographic spread	Provide a high degree of comfort to originators and funders because they embody conventional standards of organizational success and offer the ability to retain operational and cultural control over the intervention.	In the social sector, there are few cases of successful scaling to population-level impact using expansion strategies	
Replication	Persuade other organizations, including public sector institutions, to take up or mandate an innovation, process, concept or model. In most cases, methods under this approach involve an arms-length relationship between the Originating and Adopting Organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to transfer implementation to larger or more sustainable platforms • In the case of transfer of responsibility to the public sector, can ensure mandatory compliance, provide access to greater financial resources and cover a large geographic area 	Requires the Originating Organization giving up control and the Adopting Organization agreeing to implement someone else's idea. This is particularly difficult in interventions where culture, ideology or other tacit elements are key to the operating model's effectiveness.	To be effective, requires an intensified focus on evidence, learning and standards to replicate the theory of change in diverse structures, institutions and environments. Also requires a nuanced understanding of the incentives of potential implementers, and the capacity of those entities to deliver consistent results under a different organizational umbrella.
Collaboration	These strategies include various forms of division of labor through formal partnerships, strategic alliances and coalitions. They include a growing array of innovative structures and governance arrangements reflecting the need to leverage the strengths and motives of various types of organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced competition • Opportunity for specialization and leverage of each organization's distinctive capabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires a degree of release of intellectual property or brand • Need to respect and accommodate the objectives and business models of each institutional partner 	Typical functions for the Originating Organization within coalitions often include quality control, advisory support, learning and dissemination of best practices. The same organization(s) often also provides intermediation functions on behalf of a variety of service providers.
Indirect Pathways				
Field Building	Field building uses Replication and Collaboration strategies but emphasizes building "the field" by focusing on the "ecosystem." Key players in such ecosystems typically include policymakers, community groups, NGOs, advocacy groups, service-delivery groups, think tanks, funders, investors and beneficiaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as for Replication and Collaboration above, but more extreme • Potential for exponential growth in outcomes without corresponding growth in the Originating Organization 	<p>Same as for Replication and Collaboration above, but more extreme</p> <p>More attenuated relationship with direct beneficiaries, sometimes resulting in initial challenges with staff members and board members more accustomed to the "high touch" world of client contact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the field by raising awareness of an issue to generate support and funding • Improving the performance of existing players already in the field • Creating a shared identity, standards of practice, knowledge base and leadership to support improved policy and funding • Political strategies focused on advocacy and lobbying



ANNEX 2:

Summary of Questions for Developing and Implementing a Scaling Up Strategy

STEP 1: Develop a Scaling Up Plan

Task I: Create a Vision

- » What organizational, process and technical factors were critical to success on a pilot scale?
- » Can the intervention be simplified without undermining its effectiveness? Is it absolutely necessary to replicate all elements of the intervention on a large scale?
- » Does the organization that developed the intervention or carried out the pilot project have the desire and organizational capacity to expand its operations and deliver services on a substantially larger scale?
- » If not, which organization(s) are best suited and motivated to implement the intervention on a scaled- up basis or to serve as partners in implementing the intervention?
- » Should the scaling up effort include policy change by the government or rely exclusively on voluntary adoption by private and non-governmental organizations?
- » Is there is a need for one or more Intermediary Organizations to support the scaling up process? If so, what help is needed, and which organizations are best suited to performing these roles?
- » Along what dimension(s) should scaling up take place?
- » What would scaling up look like if it were successful?



STEP 1: Develop a Scaling Up Plan (cont'd)	Task 2: Assess Scalability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Do relevant stakeholders, potential partners and intended beneficiaries perceive a need for this kind of intervention? » Has the intervention been documented, including the process component, and has its cost-effectiveness been objectively assessed? Does the evidence indicate that the intervention is more cost-effective than other approaches? » Are there obvious economies or diseconomies of scale? » How easily can institutional characteristics that were key to the outcomes achieved be replicated or enlarged? » Is there anything special or unique about the social or political context, or general circumstances of the intervention or pilot project (e.g., cultural, ethnic or religious values/characteristics; distribution of power; homogeneity; economic conditions) that would need to be present for the intervention to be replicated successfully? » Does the Adopting Organization have the appropriate organizational and implementation capacity, or the means to develop that capacity? » Does needed funding exist to replicate the intervention on a large scale? » Are the central mission, organizational culture and values of the proposed Adopting Organization sufficiently compatible with those necessary to adopt and implement the intervention successfully?
	Task 3: Fill Information Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » What additional information or documentation is needed as a basis for planning and to address stakeholder concerns?
	Task 4: Prepare a Scaling Up Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Does the plan summarize the need, vision and evidence for scaling up the intervention? » Does the plan include a clear description of proposed actions, timetables, roles, responsibilities and resources?
	STEP 2: Establish the Preconditions for Scaling Up	Task 5: Legitimize Change
Task 6: Build a Constituency		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Which organizations, organizational units or individuals are responsible for key decisions regarding the funding and implementation of scaling up? Who has the authority to make decisions within these organizations? » What arguments, appeals or advocacy strategies are likely to be persuasive to these decision-makers? » What are the most effective networks and alliances for carrying out this advocacy, and how can they be most efficiently mobilized and organized? » How can buy-in from the leadership and staff of potential implementing organizations best be achieved?



STEP 2: Establish the Preconditions for Scaling Up (cont'd)	Task 7: Realign and Mobilize Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » What additional human, institutional and financial resources will be needed to support the process of “going to scale,” and what needs to be done to ensure these resources are available? » What human, institutional and financial resources will be needed for “operating at scale,” and what needs to be done to ensure these resources are available? » What new partnerships will need to be established, if any?
STEP 3: Managing the Scaling Process	Task 8: Modify Organizational Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » What needs to be done to encourage and assist the Originating Organization to relinquish control and make the changes necessary for the successful transfer and scaling up of the intervention by the Adopting Organization? » What changes need to be made in the organization expected to implement the intervention at scale? » Which organizations are responsible for the transfer process, and what changes do they need in their own capacity--structure, staffing or operations--to do this successfully?
	Task 9: Coordinate Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Are action plans and budgets in place for implementing the scaling up effort and, if not, what more needs to be done? » Have responsibilities been clearly allocated and efficient mechanisms established to coordinate the scaling up effort? » How will mutual accountability be established, and conflicts resolved?
	Task 10: Adapt Strategy and Maintain Momentum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Are there adequate procedures for documenting the progress, lessons learned and impact of the scaling up effort? » What mechanisms will most effectively ensure that this information is fed back to key stakeholders and the broader public and used to make necessary course correction?



Founded in 1981, MSI is a 700-person international development consulting firm headquartered in Arlington, VA and serving clients worldwide. MSI provides management consulting services to governments, local organizations, foundations, corporations and international donor agencies in more than 50 countries. In 2016, MSI was acquired by Tetra Tech and now forms part of the Tetra Tech family with 20,000 employees and offices in 450 locations worldwide.

Scaling Up

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Third Edition, 2016



A TETRA TECH COMPANY

200 12th St South, Suite 1200
Arlington, VA 22202 USA

+1 703 979 7100

msiworldwide.com