



Lessons From A Middle Income Country (MIC) Scale up Framework

Excellent results in reduction of hunger and malnutrition have been demonstrated through many pilots. However, several programmes, whilst demonstrating good impact in the pilot phase, do not fare as well when scaled up. Success rates of many pilots also drop tremendously when handed over to local authorities. To address this recurrent challenge, and to foster large scale impact, WFP India developed a scale up framework which addresses often faced issues when taking a successful pilot to scale. The framework is based on a principle of analysing, innovating, demonstrating and scaling up for impact.

Phase 1: Pilot Design and Preparation

This phase includes a situation and policy analysis based on stakeholder mapping and engagement, identification of potential partners and formation of a multi-sectoral advisory group. Working together with the Government to ensure the pilot design is addressing the real need on the ground is essential both for relevance as well as building ownership within the Government from the start. The pilot is designed to address the 'problem' in a given geographic area within a time frame and systems and resources put into place for implementation. A baseline assessment is necessary for determination of benchmarks. A holistic implementation plan should also encompass monitoring, concurrent documentation and identification of partners. Requisite partnerships are developed and formalised. The pilot design is developed in close consultation with the government, ensuring efficient use of existing systems and resources. Regular consultation with the multi-sectoral advisory

group can provide essential insight into means of making the pilot sustainable and troubleshooting issues.

It is imperative that the proposed solution is aligned to the government priorities and addresses the identified gap - in knowledge, technology or approach - to create a desired positive impact sustainably.

Phase 2: Pilot Implementation

This is the phase where the planned activities are implemented, typically over one to three years. Concurrent process documentation, monitoring and stakeholder engagement aid in making the pilot responsive as requisite refinements to the pilot can be made as and when necessary. Periodic evaluations against quality benchmarks can flag the effectiveness of the pilot or determine areas for course correction and ensure that the impact is mapped against the baseline, generating evidence in support for scale up.

Phase 3: Advocacy and Learning Dissemination

Documentation, monitoring and evaluation would result in abundant data for analysis to reveal what works best and means of improvement. This analysis should be used in evidence-based advocacy with government and key stakeholders for scale up of successful pilots. The scale up could be vertical (institutionalisation through policy, polity, legal or budgetary change), horizontal (expansion, replication, geographical phased coverage) or spontaneous (sharing the experience with decision makers for their action).

Evidence of effectively addressing the identified gap, socio-economic and technical feasibility and alignment with government priorities will be essential to facilitate an agreement with the Government for scale up.

Some considerations that determine scalability of a pilot include:

- Establishing credibility with sound evidence of practicality and positive impact, thorough documentation and ongoing advocacy,
- Ensuring relevance both by addressing a felt need as well as ensuring alignment with government priorities,
- Demonstrating comparative advantage over other alternatives,
- Ensuring stakeholder convenience with thorough understanding of issues such as acceptability and satisfaction from the stakeholders,
- Evaluating ease in scale up in terms of requisite logistics, changes in current system and resources needed,
- Cost of scaling up.

It is worth noting that whilst some pilots may be found to be ineffective, they could still deliver a wealth of knowledge. It is essential that the ineffectiveness of a pilot should not deter documentation efforts and sharing of learnings on what did not work.

Phase 4: Scale up Support

In this phase, based on the results and learnings from the pilot, analysis of the government policies and related environment, an implementation model for scale up is created. The roadmap for scale up will include potential geographies, scale of operations, budgetary requirements, institutional arrangements (whether to be implemented through existing structures), ways of addressing capacity gaps, timelines, monitoring and evaluation plans and potential partnerships. A success parameter for this stage will be allocation of funds by the government for the scale up. WFP's role could be to provide management, monitoring and evaluation and advocacy support.

Challenges

Some areas that require further development include appropriate monitoring and evaluation indicators for WFP's impact evaluation. Given the thrust on working

through advocacy and existing government schemes, WFP needs to reassess means of mapping its impact. Further, it is necessary to ascertain how to measure changes in national capacity with this approach of embedding innovations in mainstream social safety nets. The needed monitoring and evaluation framework also needs to be aligned with WFP's corporate reporting needs.

WFP needs to foster ownership for the pilot across levels in the government and sustain a strong partnership with them. Changes in Government and their priorities can lead to lack of commitment for the intervention.

Some of these challenges require investment not just for WFP India but to make WFP responsive to the changing reality of working in MIC contexts.

WFP in India

The changing scenario in India from a food deficit country to a MIC with food surpluses has required WFP to respond with an evolving approach. However the paradox remains that whilst India is no longer food deficit, one in three of the world's malnourished children lives in India. WFP's vision of a world where hunger is no longer a reality would be unfeasible without considerable progress in India.

Government of India has policies and programmes in place to address the national hunger and malnutrition problem. Their expectation from WFP is to bring in innovative best practices, demonstrate results and support mainstreaming of effective solutions to enhance the impact of existing schemes, helping make Zero Hunger in India a reality. This requires WFP to intensively engage with the government and develop effective solutions through assessments, pilot implementation, documentation and advocacy.

WFP's current focus is to help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of India's food-based social safety nets. This involves innovative solution design, demonstration of impact through a pilot within existing systems and thorough analysis of feasibility and technical support for scale up.

This scale up framework has been a result of a process where WFP has been required to develop the roadmap and support in taking an innovation from a pilot impacting a few thousand people to an entire state with a few million people.