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Investing in rural people

IFAD's Support to Scaling Up of Results

EVALUATION SYNTHESIS



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IFAD's Support to Scaling Up of Results Evaluation Synthesis

**March 2017
Report No. 4407
Document of the International Fund for Agricultural Development**

Front cover: Peru - Management of Natural Resources in the Southern Highlands Project (MARENASS). Member of a group of women called Grupo Feria Agropecuaria in Peru. The group received training from MARENASS. ©IFAD/Pablo Corral Vega

Back cover: Madagascar - Rural Income Promotion Programme. A family run clove nursery in their own farm in Ambalatenina village, Madagascar. ©IFAD/R. Ramasomanana (left); China - Yunnan-Simao Minorities Area Agricultural Development Project. Livestock raising by the Yi minority in Jiangcheng County. ©IFAD/Louis Dematteis (right).

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Foreword

The Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD is pleased to present its evaluation synthesis on IFAD's support to scaling up of results. The synthesis provides a review of past evaluations and IFAD documents, drawing lessons and identifying factors of success and risks in IFAD's support to scaling up of results. It formulates recommendations that can further strengthen strategies and operations that have scaling-up potential.

IFAD defines scaling up as "expanding, adapting and supporting successful policies, programmes and knowledge, so that they can leverage resources and partners to deliver larger results for a greater number of rural poor in a sustainable way". Past evaluations and institutional reviews have concluded that scaling up is critical for IFAD in order to better deliver its mandate to reduce rural poverty.

IFAD introduced the notion of scaling up as a strategic priority in 2002, but only in 2010 did it start to articulate what it would mean for and require from the Fund. Since 2010, IFAD has increased its participation and leadership in international fora on this topic.

International experience shows that scaling up is not a one-off activity. It is a long-term iterative process that needs to be planned from the outset. In the typical IFAD project cycle, this means that scaling up requires attention at design (the need to keep the project scope focused) and during implementation (the need for better analysis of progress, results, and scalability prospects and constraints). Continued engagement beyond project completion is needed as well, to fine-tune promising interventions and to preserve the quality of design and implementation from risks associated with pressures for high disbursement and outreach.

IFAD's country presence plays an important role in scaling up. About half of the project- and country-level evaluations reviewed are reporting cases of scaling up, and these are three times more likely to be reported in countries where IFAD has an office. Other key factors that facilitate scaling up include government ownership, often thanks to the support and passion of like-minded individuals who act as champions. Preparing for scaling up also requires moving out of the "project box" and actively engaging in non-lending activities: knowledge management, partnership building and policy dialogue.

While other development partners are responsible for scaling up, IFAD needs to hone its tools and practices to spark their interest and support. As recommended by this synthesis, in order to enhance scaling-up opportunities, it will be important for IFAD to sharpen country strategies as well as the project development and implementation cycle, build stronger consensus among operational staff, and refine the definition of its corporate scaling-up targets and methods for verification.

This report includes the Management's Response, presenting the IFAD Management proposals on ways to implement the evaluation's recommendations. I hope that this evaluation synthesis will contribute to further the scaling-up agenda at IFAD for improved development effectiveness.



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Acknowledgments

The preparation of this evaluation synthesis report was led by Fabrizio Felloni, Deputy Director, Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE), with contributions from Anil Sood, senior consultant, and Prashanth Kotturi and Ieva Vilkelyte, Evaluation Research Analysts. Cristina Spagnolo, Evaluation Assistant, provided valuable administrative support.

The report benefits from comments of several IOE staff, who reviewed the draft approach paper and main report. In addition, Olivier Lafourcade, former senior manager at the World Bank, provided highly valuable comments and guidance to strengthen the document.

IOE also thanks IFAD Senior Management and staff from several departments and divisions, who provided insightful observations.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ARRI	Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations
CLE	corporate-level evaluation
COSOP	country strategic opportunities programme
CPE	country programme evaluation
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
IFAD8	Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources
IFAD9	Ninth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources
IFAD10	Tenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources
IOE	Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
NGO	non-governmental organization
PCR	project completion report
PMD	Programme Management Department (IFAD)
PPA	project performance assessment
PTA	Policy and Technical Advisory Division (IFAD)
QA	Quality Assurance
RIDE	Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness
RMF	Results Management Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Executive summary

I. Introduction

1. The objectives of this evaluation synthesis are to: (i) summarize findings from past evaluations, draw lessons and identify factors of success, good practices, risks and potential limitations in IFAD's support to scaling up of results; and (ii) formulate recommendations at a strategic level that can further strengthen the design and implementation of IFAD policies, strategies and operations that have scaling-up potential.
2. IFAD's most recent definition of scaling up is provided in its Operational Framework for Scaling Up of Results (2015): "expanding, adapting and supporting successful policies, programmes and knowledge, so that they can leverage resources and partners to deliver larger results for a greater number of rural poor in a sustainable way". The emphasis is thus on scaling up "results" rather than on approving larger loans.
3. **Time frame.** The time span of this synthesis extends from 2002 to 2015. Scaling up as an institutional priority emerged at IFAD in 2002. However, this synthesis devotes special attention to the period 2010-2015. In 2010, the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) completed a corporate-level evaluation (CLE) on IFAD's capacity to promote innovation and scaling up. In the same year, Management commissioned the Brookings Institution to conduct an institutional review of IFAD's capacity for scaling up.
4. **Sources of information and data.** Evaluation syntheses are typically based on secondary sources. In this case, these comprised Management documents and independent evaluations. The former included: (i) strategic-level documents (e.g. strategic frameworks, replenishment consultation reports); (ii) technical documents and working papers; (iii) country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs); and (iv) self-evaluation material, such as project completion reports and the annual Reports on IFAD's Development Effectiveness (RIDE). Independent evaluation reports included: (i) Annual Reports on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations (ARRI); (ii) CLEs; (iii) country programme evaluations (CPEs); (iv) project performance assessments (PPAs) and impact evaluations; (v) previous evaluation syntheses; and (vi) the database of ARRI ratings from project completion report validations (PCRv), PPAs and CPEs.
5. Secondary sources were triangulated through: (i) interviews with IFAD staff; (ii) key external informants; and (iii) an electronic survey of operational staff in the Programme Management Department (PMD). Content analysis of documents and coding of key information were performed, in part with the assistance of qualitative analysis software (NVivo).
6. A typical constraint faced in conducting an evaluation synthesis is the reliance on past evaluations, which may not provide all the desired contextual and explanatory elements. In this case, a specific constraint was that the projects evaluated were approved well before the 2010 Brookings review and the formulation of the 2015 Operational Framework for Scaling up. Only in the future will it be possible to evaluate the outcomes of the review and operational framework. In addition, past evaluations analysed pro-poor innovation and scaling up but assigned a single rating for the two, rendering it difficult to isolate specific findings on scaling up: this required specific content analysis of the evaluation reports.

II. Scaling up at IFAD

7. In 2002, IOE completed a CLE on IFAD's capacity as a promoter of replicable innovations. One of the recommendations was that IFAD should multiply its efforts to identify capable actors and develop "strategic alliances and partnerships to support the promotion and scaling up of innovations." Thereafter, IFAD placed engagement in scaling up at the heart of its Strategic Framework for 2002-2006 and upheld this commitment in its Strategic Framework for 2007-2010. The 2007 Innovation Strategy specified three routes for scaling up: (i) integrating an IFAD-funded project, or programme, into a broader public one; (ii) appropriation by partners (e.g. donors, governments, the private sector providing additional funding); and (iii) informing public policies through project experiences. The 2007 Knowledge Management Strategy set support to scaling up as one of its objectives.
8. Corporate targets on scaling up were introduced for the first time during the Consultation for the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD8), covering the period 2010-2012. One of the main targets was that, by 2012, Management's self-assessment would rate 80 per cent of projects moderately satisfactory or higher for scaling up at completion.
9. In 2010, IOE published a CLE on IFAD's capacity to promote innovation and scaling up. The evaluation found that, while performance in innovation in IFAD-funded operations had improved over time, performance vis-à-vis scaling up had not made progress to the same extent. Scaling up had been left to individual initiatives and skills of country programme managers.
10. Also in 2010, IFAD commissioned the Brookings Institution to undertake an institutional review of its scaling-up approach. The review reaffirmed that scaling up was "mission critical" for IFAD but noted that it required more explicit attention and a more comprehensive and systematic approach. The review also highlighted the need for significant changes in operational processes and practices, including operational instruments, human and financial resources management, and knowledge management. It was suggested that the three concepts of innovation, learning and scaling up – which had been previously conflated by IFAD into a single notion – be treated separately. The review emphasized that scaling up was not to be considered an objective per se but a means to achieve greater development impact.
11. The CLE on IFAD's institutional efficiency and efficiency of IFAD-funded operations, published in 2013, highlighted scaling up as an imperative for IFAD, particularly scaling up of impact. Two main arguments were put forth: (i) scaling up was needed to enhance coverage (geographical, number of beneficiaries) as well as size of results; and (ii) scaling up was necessary to improve the efficiency of IFAD's operations, as wider and larger results could be achieved with the same envelope of administrative costs. The CLE recommended that scaling up of impact and innovative approaches should be central to IFAD's business model.
12. The Report of the Consultation on the Tenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD10) stipulated higher targets (90 per cent of projects rated moderately satisfactory for scaling up at completion by 2018) and committed IFAD to have a strategy for innovation, knowledge management and scaling up in all project designs in the IFAD10 period (2016-2018). The IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025, prepared against the backdrop of Agenda 2030 and driven by the Sustainable Development Goals, the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the new global agreement on climate change, presented the triad of innovation, learning and scaling up as one of the principles for the Fund's engagement in a way that is "bigger, better and smarter".

13. The 2015 Operational Framework for Scaling Up was prepared by the Policy and Technical Advisory Division (PTA). Compared to the Brookings review, it presented an upgraded conceptualization of scaling up and a pathway articulated through a sequence of steps. The first of these is to pilot a new idea or a specific intervention. The second is to assess the quality and the potential of this intervention and extract the main lessons learned. The third step is to leverage additional resources from governmental agencies, private sector entrepreneurs, international development partners or community-based organizations. The objective is to achieve better results (additional, larger impacts or a broader area affected, or a higher number of beneficiaries) in a sustainable manner.
14. The above framework envisages both lending and non-lending activities as inputs to scaling up. In particular, non-lending activities would help extract lessons and experiences (knowledge management), reduce or remove policy obstacles, carry out policy dialogue/engagement and establish partnerships with key organizations. The 2015 operational framework reviewed key factors, or modalities, to engage main partners, as well as communities and beneficiaries' organizations.
15. **Other international organizations** such as the African Development Bank, the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), the International Food Policy Research Institute, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank have reflected on their scaling up experience. A common thread in their analysis was that scaling up required a long-term iterative process. Overall, five common elements have emerged: (i) plan for scaling up from the outset; (ii) start with well-designed, focused programmes and projects; (iii) ensure strong leadership commitment as well as institutional capacity to manage the transition; (iv) invest in continuous learning and in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to adjust pilot and programme design in light of the results; and (v) align incentives with the requirements of scaling up.

III. Findings and lessons learned

A. Relevance of the conceptualization and operationalization of scaling up

16. As noted, the full development of the scaling-up concept only came in 2010 with the Brookings review and was further refined in the 2015 Operational framework. Both are to be credited for bringing better theoretical conceptual clarity to scaling up. They established the logical steps, assumptions and conditions that, starting from project results, would lead to scaling-up opportunities.
17. The 2010 review gave IFAD exposure to the existing knowledge and literature on scaling up and an opportunity to engage in international forums on this topic. IFAD was also one of the leading agencies in organizing an event in Washington, D.C. in February 2015 to discuss the creation of a cross-sectoral community of practice for thought leadership and professional networking related to scaling up. The event brought together some 20 organizations (bilateral and multilateral development organizations, think tanks, private foundations and consulting companies).
18. The issue of scalability is not explicitly addressed by the 2010 review and 2015 framework. However, not all interventions are scale-neutral: an intervention may function well at a low scale but face problems when brought to a larger scale (diseconomy of scale). Conversely, an intervention may not be performing (or its costs may be prohibitive) at a small scale but be successful at a higher scale.
19. **Scaling up, IFAD's business model and project cycle.** This synthesis reviewed how the IFAD business model and project cycle matched scaling-up aspirations. It identified critical junctures and potential challenges. At the design stage, the challenge for IFAD is to keep project designs focused while serving poor groups of clients in disadvantaged areas. Projects often have to address basic needs (e.g. sanitation, potable water, access to transportation infrastructure), productive

activities (e.g. through extension, rural credit, marketing) as well as post-production activities (e.g. processing, access to markets, value chains). Past evaluations have found examples of over-complicated design, particularly when too many objectives were pursued and multiple agencies had to coordinate among themselves.

20. A key enabler of scaling up is regular assessment, starting from the early implementation stage, of the performance and results of project interventions and approaches. However, past evaluations have highlighted two constraints during implementation: (i) the slow pace of execution of activities during the initial years and (ii) weak M&E system. These constraints may lead to crucial information not being available until the project moves towards completion.
21. According to the Brookings review and the operational framework, IFAD should engage throughout the project cycle with development partners in non-lending activities – knowledge management, partnership development and policy dialogue. Compared to the past, IFAD now considers non-lending activities as a part of its business model. The challenge is to allocate commensurate human and financial resources.
22. Finally, the post-completion phase of a project is an important one: at this stage results tend to be more appreciated, project staff have acquired experience and champions may have emerged. However, without adequate engagement in knowledge management, partnership and policy dialogue, the project risks having no clear vision and plan for scaling up at the time of closure.
23. **Staff perceptions.** According to the interviews, managers believed that scaling up was well defined and that there were clear expectations of what IFAD staff were supposed to accomplish, in terms of both lending and non-lending activities. Staff members agreed that conceptual clarity on scaling up had improved compared to the past. However they also perceived three potential risks: (i) maintaining the scaling-up concept at a rather theoretical level without reflecting adequately on the implications for operationalization; (ii) emphasizing compliance with the procedures (e.g. having to write a mandatory section on scaling up in all project designs) rather than reflecting on the conditions for scaling up and focusing on demonstrated opportunities for scaling up; and (iii) reducing attention to innovation.
24. **Indicators for assessing scaling up: potential versus actual progress.** Targets for scaling up have been introduced since IFAD8. These focus on: (i) quality-at-entry of IFAD interventions; and (ii) project completion report ratings. Even at completion, Management's self-assessment is based on scaling-up "potential". However, the notion of potential is prone to subjective judgement and needs to be complemented with evidence on the type of scaling-up commitments made by development partners and on the measures taken by IFAD to promote scaling up. The bar for self-evaluation has also been set somewhat low, at "moderately satisfactory and higher".

B. Evidence of effectiveness: results achieved, common patterns and factors

25. **Almost all COSOPs since 2010 have made reference to scaling up, but few have articulated a strategy for it.** COSOPs showed good intentions and compliance with requirements, but few presented dedicated analysis of scaling-up opportunities and specific plans. Only two – Liberia and Viet Nam – included fully developed scaling-up strategies.
26. The 2011 Liberia COSOP included a framework defining the scaling-up vision, drivers, spaces, pathways and IFAD's role. The 2012 Viet Nam COSOP laid out a scaling-up strategy for the entire country programme, focusing on three ideas/innovations: market-oriented institutional capacity-building, empowerment of

poor farmers, and private sector development. The subcomponents and their vision were specific and quantifiable. They ranged from the introduction of value chains to local agencies (with a desired scale of 15,000 farmers in each IFAD-supported province) to public-private producers' platforms (with a desired scale of these platforms operating in every participating province and involving key stakeholders from multiple sectors). The drivers for these activities included government entities (national and local), district/commune and worker representatives, and private entities. IFAD's role was defined to include a variety of activities, such as carrying out impact evaluations, cost-benefit analyses and client surveys, maintaining policy dialogue with the Government, monitoring results and sharing lessons learned.

27. **Scaling-up targets are being met according to IFAD's self-assessment.** The 2012 RIDE, referring to the IFAD8 period, noted that ratings for scaling up in the period 2011-2012 were moderately satisfactory or above in 84 per cent of projects completed (better than the 75 per cent target for IFAD8). The 2016 RIDE, based on project completion report (PCR) ratings for the period 2012-2014, found that 97 per cent of ratings for scaling up were moderately satisfactory or higher, above the target of 90 per cent established for the Ninth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD9). As noted, the self-assessment hinges upon the notion of potential for future scaling up rather than actual scaling-up cases.
28. Comparisons between IOE and PCR ratings show that the former's are generally lower and that differences tend to be statistically significant. However, IOE evaluations provide a single rating combining innovation and scaling up; thus there is a limitation in the comparability between the PMD and IOE time series.
29. **About half of the CPEs and PPAs conducted since 2010 report cases of scaling up.** While in some of these cases (about a quarter) IFAD appeared to be the main driver of scaling-up initiatives (e.g. "auto-scaling", not entirely in line with the IFAD definition of scaling up), in the large majority of the reported scaling-up cases external partners had taken the initiative, mostly the government and other development partners. In a few cases, also private sector actors (e.g. for rural finance activities) took the initiative.
30. Most of the scaling-up cases observed (95 per cent) consisted of an attempt to broaden project geographical coverage to new areas. Other forms of scaling up were also observed. In fact, in 41 per cent of the recorded scaling-up cases, there were examples of project interventions informing public strategies or policies. Finally, in 16 per cent of the cases, an IFAD-funded project had been adopted by a larger programme, funded either by the government or a donor.
31. According to the evaluations reviewed, scaling up was three times more prevalent in countries where IFAD had an office: scaling up featured in 62 per cent of the evaluations in countries with an IFAD presence, compared to only 21 per cent in countries without one. Country offices may have enhanced IFAD's visibility and the quality of interactions with development partners, leading to greater interest from the government and international donors in supporting and reinforcing the results achieved by IFAD-funded projects. Similar findings came from the 2016 CLE on IFAD's decentralization experience, which showed that the opening of country offices helped promote partnership with governments, mobilized public funding and enhanced opportunities to participate in donors' thematic coordination groups.

IV. Factors enabling or constraining scaling up

32. **Government ownership.** According to the evaluations reviewed, government support was always crucial. While fiscal space appeared to be an important factor to open scaling-up opportunities (e.g. in Brazil and India), it was not a prerequisite. In fact, evaluations found several instances where governments were able to encourage and facilitate support, notably funding, from external donors when their own resources were not sufficient. Government ownership sometimes came under

the form of establishing a central unit in a ministry or public agency, specializing in smallholder agriculture or a sub-sectoral theme of pertinence to IFAD-funded projects (e.g. Uruguay), and also helping negotiate additional donor funding. Government ownership was often the result of the support of like-minded individuals acting as champions. Networking and partnership-building undertaken by IFAD staff, or sometimes project coordinators, were crucial in identifying and creating champions.

33. **IFAD leadership and extended engagement.** While in IFAD's definition scaling up is expected to happen through the support of development partners, in many instances it needed to continue to support a project through two or more phases before other partners could recognize the validity of a given development approach. Particularly when innovative approaches were introduced, it was clear that they needed further testing, development and fine-tuning.
34. Some evaluations also hinted at another reason for IFAD to remain engaged as its approaches were scaled up by other partners. That reason was design and implementation "fidelity". When larger publicly-funded programmes adopted approaches developed through IFAD projects, a risk emerged that the political pressure to achieve high coverage rates could affect the quality of targeting, preparation and eventually implementation results (e.g. scaling up of the self-help group approach in India). Another problem that emerged from some of the evaluations was the change of strategic priorities once a new government came into office. These elements militated towards IFAD's continued engagement.
35. **Non-lending activities.** The importance of partnership-building, knowledge management and policy dialogue was confirmed through evaluation experience. Partnerships were important to build interest and ownership by the government and other development actors. Conversely, without strong partnerships with national and local governments, even successful projects tended to work in isolation, as key decision makers in public organizations were not familiar with their experiences (e.g. Lao People's Democratic Republic, Dominican Republic).
36. Knowledge management was instrumental in providing evidence (including scalability analysis) to partners that a given intervention deserved being scaled up. Conversely, when little analytical work had been done or insufficient data were available on project benefits, it was more challenging to engage partners (e.g. in the Plurinational State of Bolivia with municipal governments).
37. **Policy dialogue.** Evaluations and case studies in India and Peru show that the approaches promoted through IFAD-funded projects informed state- or country-level legislative initiatives and sectoral policies. Conversely, in the Republic of Moldova, a non-conducive policy environment (banks being discouraged from offering long-term deposits) made it difficult for the financial system to scale up successful long-term credit and revolving funds established by IFAD-funded projects.
38. **Positive experiences in India, Peru and the United Republic of Tanzania are concrete illustrations of the factors involved.** Peru is often cited as a case of successful scaling up, where the Government, inter alia, passed legislative initiatives to facilitate the transfer of public funds to collective beneficiary organizations. The main drivers for scaling up were project ownership by government officials and communities, highly-committed project staff and limited turnover in the project management teams.
39. The case of India provides examples of three different scaling-up modalities: (i) expanded geographical coverage; (ii) shift of intervention packages from the project to the policy level; and (iii) adoption of project-level approaches by larger public programmes. There is little doubt that in India the presence of relatively abundant funding for public programmes (fiscal space) has been a positive factor,

but so has been the support and buy-in by state governments and local champions that have witnessed two or more phases of IFAD-funded interventions.

40. The United Republic of Tanzania is a special case in that IFAD has participated in a sector-wide approach to support the agricultural sector. This has opened up opportunities to fund farmer field schools and participatory planning at the district level – approaches that were relatively new to the country – through financial resources from other development agencies (the African Development Bank, Government of Ireland, Japanese International Cooperation Agency and World Bank).

V. Conclusions

41. The scaling-up journey has been long and scaling up remains a work in progress. While IFAD has been emphasizing scaling up at least since 2002, conceptual clarity grew with the 2010 Brookings review and the 2015 Operational Framework for Scaling Up of Results. Since 2010, Management has continuously ratcheted up the emphasis on scaling up and IFAD has also gained better visibility and leadership through its continued engagement in international forums.
42. Overall, the current conceptualization of scaling up is sound and draws from evaluative evidence and past project case studies. Two qualifications can be made. First, scalability analysis deserves more emphasis (not all interventions may be successfully scaled up; or they may require specific conditions or additional interventions). Second, in the IFAD project cycle there are critical nodes and potential challenges to scaling up, notably: (i) keeping design focused despite the wide range of needs in the field; (ii) limited availability of evidence during the early stage of a project cycle; (iii) mobilizing adequate resources for non-lending activities; and (iv) the need to support scaling up after project completion, when attention typically concentrates on new lending opportunities.
43. Staff buy-in is essential to implement the operational framework on scaling up. Operational staff recognizes an improvement in conceptual clarity compared to the past. However, they also caution against three possible risks: (i) the risk of viewing scaling up as a theoretical exercise rather than something that can be put into practice; (ii) concentrating on universal, mandatory application of scaling up rather than focusing on fewer operations with the best prospects for and evidence of success; and (iii) the risk that a single-minded focus on scaling up might draw attention away from innovation, itself an important part of IFAD's mandate.
44. Ultimately, scaling up rests upon the decision of other development partners, notably governments. IFAD has the opportunity to draw the interest of development partners in its operations and to foster ownership and willingness to scale up. This is where non-lending activities are crucial. The review of the evaluations suggests that one of the most important risks to be avoided is that of projects working in isolation, without establishing a dialogue with local and national governments, non-governmental institutions and other international agencies operating in the same area or thematic subsector. Partnerships and policy dialogue are crucial when the policy and institutional environment is not conducive. These issues may be addressed and gradually mitigated by engaging in forums on sectoral policy reform and in donor working groups.
45. Scaling up takes place when other partners converge in supporting certain interventions and approaches. This requires the extended engagement of IFAD, often through several project phases. Partners need to be convinced of IFAD's own buy-in in the first place. Even when interventions seem promising, they may need fine-tuning or improvements, requiring further support from IFAD before they are ready to be scaled up. Moreover, IFAD needs to be engaged when it is necessary to maintain the quality of design and implementation in a context of political pressure for high disbursement and outreach.

VI. Recommendations

46. **Recommendation 1. Strengthen the country programme and project cycle to enhance scalability.** This requires attention during the preparation of COSOPs, at project design, during implementation and after project completion.
- 1 (a) Elaborate a scalability assessment and pathway to scaling up in COSOPs as well as in project designs. Until further insights into scalability and evidence of sustained benefits emerge, COSOPs and projects should be selective, prioritizing areas where the prospects for success and sustainability are considered high and are aligned with IFAD's strengths and comparative advantages.
 - 1 (b) Assess scalability conditions during implementation (including potential constraints deriving from project design and implementation and from public policies) and share findings with potential champions in the government and with other partners (e.g. donors, private entities, community organizations and their federations).
 - 1 (c) When there are promising scaling-up opportunities, continue IFAD engagement beyond project completion through further financing phases, partnerships and policy dialogue, so as to strengthen ownership by the government and other development partners, fine-tune the approaches and facilitate the adoption of proven approaches by larger programmes, public strategies and policies.
47. **Recommendation 2. Build stronger consensus and incentives in-house to support scaling up.** In order to clarify the concept of scaling up and motivate staff, IFAD should promote exchanges between operational staff and exposure to concrete scaling-up experiences (e.g. through country visits).
48. **Recommendation 3. Set targets based on evidence on scaling up pathway preparation rather than generic potential.** It will be important to make the assessment more objective. At the project completion stage, the assessment needs to focus more on the concrete steps (e.g. analysing evidence of scalability, sharing lessons, networking) that have been taken to encourage development partners' interest and commitment to scaling up, and on the agreements made with the partners and timeframe to implement them.
49. **Recommendation 4. IOE should rate innovation and scaling up separately.** To date, evaluation reports have assessed innovation and scaling up with a single rating for the two, in conformity with the past when IFAD merged the two notions. However, as noted in the Brookings review and in the 2015 Operational framework, the two concepts, though related, do not coincide. For better conceptual clarity and in order to enhance comparability between self-assessment and independent evaluations, there should be separate ratings for innovation and for scaling up.

IFAD Management's response¹

1. Management welcomes the Independent Office of Evaluation's (IOE) evaluation synthesis report (ESR) on IFAD's support to scaling up of results and is pleased that the report reflects most of the progress made and evolution of thinking on scaling up in IFAD.
2. However, given the nature of the evaluation synthesis and the time frame covered, the ESR could not draw conclusions on the effectiveness of the new approach put in place by IFAD during 2015/2016 as a result of the Tenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD10) commitment on scaling up. Nonetheless, Management notes that the recommendations of the synthesis are in line with the new scaling up approach – as defined in IFAD's Operational Framework for Scaling Up Results, issued in December 2015 – and they are already being implemented.
3. While the Operational Framework is intended to provide structured and consistent guidance to IFAD country teams on how to mainstream this approach into operations, both systematically and throughout the project cycle, Management acknowledges that operational staff awareness and consensus with regard to the new approach need to be strengthened, as recommended by the ESR.
4. A detailed response to each set of recommendations is presented here below:
5. **Recommendation 1. Strengthen the country programme and project cycle to enhance scalability.**
 - (a) Elaborate a scalability assessment and a pathway to scaling up in country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs) as well as in project designs. Until further insights into scalability and evidence of sustained benefits emerge, COSOPs and projects should be selective, prioritizing areas where the prospects for success and sustainability are considered high and are aligned with IFAD's strengths and comparative advantages.

Agreed. Management is fully committed to using the procedures and processes that are in place to ensure that the scalability of IFAD operations is properly assessed and enhanced.

According to the Operational Framework, from the outset (country strategy and project design) and throughout the project cycle, scalability will be assessed and scaling-up pathways defined to ensure that successful projects are not a one-time intervention, but stepping stones towards a wider and sustainable impact on poverty. The pathways identified to implement the scaling-up strategy are meant to include non-lending activities (policy engagement, partnership-strengthening and knowledge management) that are instrumental for establishing, among other things, the fiscal and financial space most badly needed to attain the expected scale in a sustainable manner.

The Operational Framework has introduced a number of questions to be answered at each step of the project cycle to assess scalability. More specifically, box 6 of the operational framework "Questions to consider before project scale-up" provides the basis for a scalability assessment. Sustainable scalability is also to a large extent assessed during the quality assurance

¹ The Operational Programming and Effectiveness Unit (OPE) sent the final Management response to the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD on 12 January 2017.

process through the questions asked for the purpose of rating the scaling-up process.²

In addition to the above, as part of the Development Effectiveness Framework, Management is pursuing several initiatives that will help enhance both the way project results are measured, and the delivery and monitoring of non-lending activities at the country level.

- (b) Assess scalability conditions during implementation (including potential constraints deriving from project design and implementation and from public policies) and share findings with potential champions in the government and with other partners (e.g. donors, private entities, community organizations and their federations).

Agreed. As noted above, the Operational Framework provides for scalability assessment throughout the project cycle, including during implementation. Supervision and implementation support are important knowledge sources for building consensus through engagement with rural communities, government officials at different levels and other development partners, both public and private.

- (c) When there are promising scaling-up opportunities, continue IFAD engagement beyond project completion, through further financing phases, partnerships and policy dialogue, so as to strengthen ownership by the government and other development partners, fine-tune the approaches and facilitate the adoption of proven approaches by larger programmes, public strategies and policies.

Agreed. Management agrees with IOE that scaling-up is a lengthy process, typically lasting beyond a one-time IFAD intervention. As indicated in the Operational Framework, scaling up requires carefully laid out and supported pathways, and these usually cover a longer time horizon. Along with the provisions of the Operational Framework, and aligned with the ESR recommendation, Management will ramp up ongoing efforts to promote the scaling up of successful interventions along well-defined pathways that could cover subsequent financing phases, and would ensure creation of the spaces needed to enable scaling up on a sustainable basis. Moreover, as required in the Framework, the pathways will be defined with intermediate objectives to measure whether they are moving in the right direction.

6. **Recommendation 2. Build stronger consensus and incentives in-house to support scaling up.** In order to clarify the concept of scaling up and motivate staff, IFAD should promote exchanges between operational staff and exposure to concrete scaling up experiences (e.g. through country visits).

Agreed. Management fully agrees with the recommendation and is committed to building stronger awareness around the scaling up methodology as defined in the Operational Framework. Training events will be held through the Country Programme Manager Academy to facilitate and promote exchanges among staff on scaling up. An e-learning scheme is also being developed to complement face-to-face learning. Management will also ensure that learning events are pursued to showcase and reflect on the successes and challenges related to scaling up.

² For example: "Extent to which the project design clearly identifies the specific models/interventions to be scaled up, based on evidence which demonstrates that tested models/interventions are effective and efficient. How realistic is the model for taking the project to scale? Have the risks to scaling up been identified correctly and mitigated?"; "Extent to which the project has identified, described and assessed the main pathways and the key drivers (government, private sector, development partners and project beneficiaries) that will provide scalability and sustainability beyond the project's life."; "Extent to which the project has adequately identified the right institutions and assessed their capacity to take the programme forward, including the potential for leveraging additional partners, resources or policy changes to reach the desired scale."

7. **Recommendation 3. Set targets based on evidence on scaling up pathway preparation rather than generic potential.** It will be important to make the assessment more objective. At the project completion stage, the assessment needs to focus more on the concrete steps (e.g. analysing evidence of scalability, sharing lessons, networking) that have been taken to encourage development partners' interest and commitment to scaling up, and on the agreements made with the partners and timeframe to implement them.

Agreed. The Operational Framework in the section "Self-evaluation and scaling up" proposes a set of questions that focus on concrete assessments rather than "potential". The Operational Programming and Effectiveness Unit of the Programme Management Department is taking steps to better reflect this approach in the project completion review guidelines, and to ensure that the assessment of scaling up at completion is more focused on the concrete steps taken in developing the scaling up pathway. In this connection, the review process put in place since December 2015, to enhance the quality of the project completion reports, includes a more rigorous review of the performance ratings.

8. **Recommendation 4. IOE should rate innovation and scaling up separately.** To date, evaluation reports have assessed innovation and scaling up with a single rating for the two, in conformity with the past when IFAD merged the two notions. However, as noted in the Brookings review and in the 2015 Operational Framework, the two concepts, though related, do not coincide. For better conceptual clarity, and in order to enhance comparability between self-assessment and independent evaluations, there should be separate ratings for innovation and for scaling up.

Agreed. Management welcomes this recommendation, and IOE's decision to align with the self-evaluation systems in this regard. In fact, Management agrees that while innovation and scaling up are closely related, the two concepts are different, and the same assessment may not necessarily apply to both.

Ghana - Rural Enterprises Project - Phase 2. The project provided training on making soap.

©IFAD/Nana Kofi Acquah



IFAD's Support to Scaling Up of Results Evaluation Synthesis

I. Introduction

A. Background and objectives

1. **Background.** This evaluation synthesis was approved by the Executive Board of IFAD in its 116th session of December 2015.^{1 2} Scaling up of results is one of the main corporate-level priorities for the tenth replenishment period of IFAD (2016-2018). The topic was chosen following the selectivity framework of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE).³ Previous evaluative evidence exists on this topic. In 2002, IOE conducted a corporate-level evaluation (CLE) of *IFAD's Capacity as a Promoter of Replicable Innovation in Co-Operation with other Partners*. In 2010, it completed a CLE on *IFAD's Capacity to Promote Innovation and Scaling Up*. The "promotion of pro-poor innovation, replication and scaling up" is one of the standard criteria for project-level evaluations contemplated in the 2009 Evaluation Manual of IFAD as well as in its 2015 edition.
2. **Objectives.** The objectives of this evaluation synthesis are to: (i) draw findings and lessons from past evaluations, and identify common patterns, factors of success, good practices, risks and potential limitations in IFAD's support to scaling up of results; and (ii) formulate recommendations at a strategic level that can strengthen the design and implementation of IFAD policies, strategies and operations that have scaling-up potential.
3. The main audience of this evaluation synthesis comprises IFAD Governing Bodies, Member States, Management and operational staff. The report may be of interest to development practitioners and international development evaluators as well, with the understanding that findings relate to IFAD's own experience.
4. **Operational definition.** At IFAD, the definition of scaling up has evolved. The most recent definition is in the *Operational framework for scaling up of results* (2015):⁴ "expanding, adapting and supporting successful policies, programmes and knowledge, so that they can leverage resources and partners to deliver larger results for a greater number of rural poor in a sustainable way".⁵ The emphasis of the 2015 Operational Framework is set on scaling up "results" rather than funding larger projects. The operational framework emphasizes the importance of leveraging external financial resources, knowledge, policies and political capital from other public, private, community-level and international actors to bring results to a larger scale in a sustainable manner.

B. Scope and methodology of the synthesis

5. **Time frame.** The broad time span of the evaluation is set from 2002 to 2015. Scaling up as an institutional priority emerged at IFAD in 2002. However, this synthesis devotes special attention to the period 2010-2015. There are several

¹ Evaluation syntheses were introduced by IOE, further to the 2010 *Peer Review of IFAD's Office of Evaluation and Evaluation Function*, as a measure to strengthen the use of evaluation findings, learning and feedback loops. Evaluation syntheses are different from other IOE products, as they are prepared to primarily promote learning and collective reflection, and to improve IFAD's development effectiveness. They aim to bring together lessons from IFAD evaluations while also capturing evaluation-based lessons from other international financial institutions, United Nations organizations and bilateral agencies on a given theme.

² <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/116/docs/EB-2015-116-R-2.pdf>.

³ The selectivity framework considers in particular the following factors: (i) strategic priority of the theme for IFAD; (ii) contribution to filling a critical knowledge gap; (iii) availability of adequate evaluative evidence; (iv) timeliness with respect to corporate processes; and (v) serving as a building block for other IOE evaluations, including the provision of methodological fine-tuning for future evaluative work on the same topic.

⁴ The full framework is available at: http://www.ifad.org/knotes/scaling_up/framework.pdf. A summary was presented to IFAD's Executive Board in December 2015. See <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/116/docs/EB-2015-116-R-38.pdf>

⁵ IFAD presented a different definition of scaling up in its 2007 Innovation Strategy: Scaling up means implementing – or enabling the implementation of – a practice on a greater scale.

reasons for this special focus. It was from this year that the topic gained a higher profile in the corporate strategies and discourse. In 2010, IOE completed a CLE on IFAD's Capacity to Promote Innovation and Scaling Up. In addition, IFAD's Management commissioned an Institutional Review of IFAD's Capacity for Scaling Up.⁶

6. In line with the second edition of the Evaluation Manual (2015), evaluation syntheses focus on learning and adopt evaluation criteria on a selective basis. Criteria are used as general conceptual guidance and there is no rating for them. This synthesis uses the following two criteria: (i) relevance; and (ii) effectiveness. They refer to the relevance and effectiveness of IFAD's strategic effort in scaling up, not to the relevance of individual project design or the effectiveness of individual projects to achieve their own objectives.
7. **Relevance** mainly refers to the way in which scaling up has been conceptualized and operationalized at IFAD, at a corporate level. Relevance refers to the evolution of the scaling-up concept. Guiding questions included the following:
 - Has scaling up been clearly and consistently defined in the context of IFAD? Is there a shared understanding of the concept? Has a theory of change been outlined at some stage?
 - Has the definition been informed by adequate analytical work and review of IFAD's own experience and institutional model?
 - Has the concept of scaling up been operationalized? Have guidelines, tools, notes, etc. been provided? Has it been reflected in policies?
 - Have targets been set in a clear, measurable and time-bound fashion? Do targets reflect outcomes/results? Are the objectives and targets reflected in normative guidance for design, supervision and implementation support, review and final assessments of country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs) and projects/grants?
 - Have resources been earmarked to support scaling up? Has support (e.g. guidance by technical advisors, resource kits, training modules) been provided to relevant IFAD operational staff in order to promote scaling up at the strategic and operational levels? Have incentives been provided to IFAD operational staff in order to promote scaling up at the strategic and operational levels?
8. **Effectiveness** refers to the available evidence on: (i) how IFAD paved the way towards scaling up at the time of COSOP and project preparation and throughout the implementation of country programmes and individual projects; (ii) whether and why scaling up took place. The effectiveness questions refer to past interventions that have been evaluated. They do not apply to the implementation of the 2015 Operational Framework, as it would be too early to find evaluative evidence. Questions include the following:
 - To what extent is scaling up being reflected in COSOP and project design?
 - What types of scaling up are being promoted by IFAD (via different "pathways" and "auto-scaling up")?
 - In which country contexts is IFAD promoting scaling up (HIC, MIC, LIC, fragile states)?
 - What evidence is available on IFAD's scaling-up performance from IOE evaluations or management self-assessment sources?
 - What are the main factors (enablers and constraints) that have contributed to performance (e.g. the role played by IFAD and its partners, the enabling environment, other external conditions)?

⁶ The review was carried out by the Brookings Institution.

9. **Sources of information and data.** The main sources for this evaluation have been secondary data. They have been complemented and triangulated through: interviews with IFAD staff and managers as well as with key external informants; and an electronic survey of operational staff in the Programme Management Department (PMD).
10. *A desk review of the documents produced by IFAD Management* in the period 2002-2015 covered:
 - i. Strategic-level documentation (strategic frameworks, mid-term plans, scaling up frameworks, reports of replenishment consultations, the Annual Reports on IFAD's Development Effectiveness (RIDE), and the President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions - PRISMA);⁷
 - ii. Early studies and working papers prepared by the Strategy and Knowledge Department in the period 2007-2013;
 - iii. Recent notes on country and thematic scaling up prepared in 2015 by the Policy and Technical Advisory Division of (PTA) as well as Regional Divisions of PMD.
 - iv. COSOP documents prepared by IFAD in 2015 (as an example of the most recent treatment of scaling up in country strategies);
 - v. Project design reports prepared in 2015 (as an example of how the scaling-up process was envisaged in the latest available completed project designs), including the related Quality Assurance notes;⁸ and Quality Assurance Ratings⁹ in the period 2013-2015 when detailed questions on scaling up were applied; and
 - vi. The database of ratings of project completion reports (PCRs) maintained by PMD.
11. Documents covered under (iii) to (v) above were included specifically to better capture the current state of affairs with respect to scaling up.
12. The synthesis drew on *material from independent evaluations* at IFAD produced in the period 2010-2016. This included: (i) seven Annual Reports on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations (ARRI); (ii) nine CLEs; (iii) 28 country programme evaluations (CPEs); (iv) 46 project performance assessments (PPAs)¹⁰ and two impact evaluations; (v) eight evaluation syntheses; and (vi) the database of ARRI ratings, notably those from project completion report validations, PPAs and CPEs.
13. Concentration on evaluations conducted since 2010 is due to the fact that scaling up was given more attention after the introduction of the 2009 Evaluation Manual and after the publication of the 2010 CLE on IFAD's Capacity to Promote Innovation and Scaling Up. As elaborated upon in this report, a caveat is that to date independent evaluations have not rated scaling up separately from pro-poor innovation.
14. This synthesis was also informed by *interviews with IFAD Management and staff* in order to better establish the context in which the reflection, objectives and targets on scaling up have evolved at IFAD, capture the perceptions of managers and staff on strengths and weaknesses of the current system, understand their priorities and

⁷ PRISMA (President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions) is a source of information on follow-up to evaluations related to scaling up.

⁸ Together with Quality Enhancement, Quality Assurance is one of the main stages of the internal ex ante quality assessment process for project design at IFAD.

⁹ At present, IFAD treats confidentially the ratings of Quality Assurance. Accordingly, the titles of the project rated were not released to IOE.

¹⁰ This synthesis paid special attention to the PPAs as they are informed by country missions, interviews with partners and field visits, including notably the government, international development agencies, civil society organizations and beneficiaries' communities.

help triangulate and explain findings from the desk review. The people interviewed were selected based on their knowledge of and involvement in the conceptualization, operationalization of scaling up at IFAD. The interviewees are listed in annex III.

15. The synthesis team also conducted *interviews with representatives from comparator organizations and key external informants*. The objective was to understand how the topic of scaling up is understood and implemented in other organizations that support development activities that can be likened to IFAD's or have produced relevant conceptual work (e.g., GIZ, Inter-American Development Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Brookings Institution).
16. Finally, the synthesis was supported by an *electronic survey* circulated to IFAD operational staff, those in the front line to support scaling up, in order to gather their perspectives on scaling up at IFAD. The questionnaire was sent in April 2016 to professional staff (permanent as well as short-term) from the PMD front office, regional divisions, PTA and the Environment and Climate Division (at headquarters and country offices) and divisional server lists, which were adopted as a communication entry point. This amounted to a total potential population of about 200 respondents. Responses were received from 60 staff (30 per cent rate of response),¹¹ of whom 42 were at headquarters and 18 in country offices.
17. **Analysis of information and data.** The evaluation synthesis has triangulated between qualitative and quantitative secondary data, interviews with IFAD managers, staff and key external informants, and a survey of operational staff. Databases of ratings from ex ante quality assurance, self-assessments and independent evaluations are maintained by IFAD-PMD and IOE.¹² For both PMD and IOE ratings, descriptive or inferential statistical analysis has been conducted in order to compare trends.
18. The analysis of ratings was supplemented by a content analysis of documents and coding of key information.¹³ This has focused on PPAs and CPEs conducted since 2010, as well as CLEs, COSOPs and Replenishment documents, and has been assisted inter alia by qualitative analysis software (NVivo) to help track the number of times certain concepts, statements or findings appear in the documentation and the association between these findings.
19. **Constraints and limitations.** The boundaries of evaluation syntheses are determined by budget and time allocations as well as by an approach based largely on desk study and secondary data treatment. This synthesis faced additional challenges. First, while IOE has discussed pro-poor innovation and scaling up in dedicated sub-sections of its reports, it has conflated the ratings of the two, maintaining the traditional focus on innovation and scaling up as a part of the same process. It is thus difficult to disentangle the specific rating for scaling up in IFAD's independent evaluations conducted so far. PMD, in conducting self-assessment of the PCRs, has provided separate ratings for innovation and scaling up. The main constraint is that PMD ratings refer to the "potential" for scaling up rather than actual scaling up.

¹¹ In the "medium" range of email survey response: 20 to 40 per cent. See, for example, Nulty (2008), and Markovitch (2009).

¹² Both PMD and IOE have signed a harmonization agreement on the methodology for self-evaluation and independent evaluations since 2005 (with a revision in 2011). PMD has used the harmonized methodology mostly for PCRs, where the criteria are almost the same (PMD here adds a few additional criteria for internal analytical purposes). Instead, in the case of project status reports, there are a few more differences between the PMD and IOE criteria and indicators. The main reason is that project status reports have to review a number of fiduciary and administrative aspects (as well as provide some data used in the Results Measurement Framework of IFAD), which are not part of the IFAD evaluation criteria.

¹³ For example, information was coded on the presence/absence of a scaling-up case, on the nature of scaling up and on the enabling and constraining factors.

20. Second, while IFAD's officially introduced the notion of scaling up in 2002 and the 2010 Brookings Institution Review marked a fundamental milestone, the operational framework was introduced only in 2015. For this reason, its full operationalization and results will be captured only in the years to come and reach full implementation maturity several years from now.
21. While it is not possible to fully overcome these limitations, this evaluation synthesis tried to mitigate them by: (i) triangulating across data and information collected from multiple sources and methods (e.g. desk review, interviews, qualitative and quantitative data); (ii) conducting content analysis of recent evaluation reports and Management documents (including Quality Assurance minutes) in order to extract information that relates specifically to scaling up without the conflated discussion on innovation; and, more in general, (iii) placing special emphasis on the most recent evaluation cohorts.

C. The process

22. IOE prepared a draft approach paper and peer-reviewed it internally. The draft approach paper was shared with IFAD Management in February 2016, and was then revised, taking into account their comments as well as the inputs from a senior independent advisor, Mr Olivier Lafourcade, former senior manager at the World Bank. Interviews with IFAD Managers and staff were held at headquarters in early March. Additional interviews with key external informants were held in Washington, D.C. and via Skype between March and May 2016.
23. Based on the evidence captured through the desk review, data analysis and interviews, IOE prepared a draft report, which was first subjected to a peer review process within IOE and reviewed by a senior independent advisor. It was then shared with IFAD Management for comments. Emerging findings and recommendations were discussed in a dedicated workshop held at IFAD on 25 October 2016. IOE finalized the report after receiving comments from Management and the senior independent advisor.

II. Scaling up as an evolving concept at IFAD

A. Evolution of the conceptualization

24. The evolution of thinking on scaling up at IFAD is presented in table 1. Scaling up was first featured in the Strategic Framework for 2002-2006 (*Enabling the rural poor to overcome their poverty*), with the recommendation that IFAD “has to become more systematic in identifying, validating and scaling up innovation”.
25. IOE conducted a CLE of IFAD’s Capacity as a Promoter of Replicable Innovations in Cooperation with other Partners. This evaluation was completed in 2002 and found that at that time IFAD had “*not put sufficient emphasis on the identification of innovative and capable actors and institutions and the development of strategic alliances and partnerships to support the promotion and scaling up of innovations*” (paragraph 7 -Overview of Major Findings). See box 1 for excerpts from the recommendations of the evaluation.

Table 1

Chronology of corporate documents of relevance to scaling up

2002	CLE IFAD’s Capacity as a Promoter of Replicable Innovations in Cooperation with other Partners Strategic Framework 2002-2006
2007	Strategic Framework 2007-2010 Innovation Strategy; Knowledge Management Strategy
2008	Report on the Consultation of the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD’s Resources
2010	CLE IFAD’s Capacity to Promote Innovation and Scaling Up The Brookings Institution’s institutional review of IFAD’s scaling-up approach
2011	Report on the Consultation of the Ninth Replenishment of IFAD’s Resources Strategic Framework 2011-2015
2014	Report on the Consultation of the Tenth Replenishment of IFAD’s Resources
2016	Strategic Framework 2016-2025

Source: Compiled by IOE.

Box 1

2002 Evaluation of IFAD’s Capacity as a Promoter of Replicable Innovations in Cooperation with other Partners: Excerpts from recommendations related to scaling up

Specify the stages of the innovation process and integrate them into current operations. The innovation process needs to be specified and better understood at the institutional level and integrated into IFAD’s current operations. This would help sharpen the focus of operations on replicable innovations and on scaling up. The exact stages of the process should be flexible and adapted according to the specificity of each case. Based on IFAD practice the stages can be broadly defined as follows:

- i) Recognize a need/opportunity for innovation;
- ii) Scout for and select with potential users a promising innovative solution;
- iii) Test (in order to check users’ reactions) innovation performance and impact;
- iv) Modify and improve as a result of test results;
- v) Extract and share lessons learned from innovation;
- vi) Promote by “marketing” or dissemination the innovation; and
- vii) Facilitate replicating/upscaling innovation by users with support from various agencies

Align organizational processes and innovation promotion. As a first step to operationalize the above-mentioned principles, it is crucial to increase the alignment between organizational processes on the one hand, and the stage of innovation and scaling on the other. This requires reorienting current processes to meet the requirement of innovation promotion.

continued

Strengthen staff/managers' capabilities and orient IFAD's culture for promoting innovation. [...] IFAD should grow beyond being a project factory and become an institution that encourages creativity and risk-taking and manages innovation as an integral part of its operations. This implies that the ultimate goal of any project extends beyond "direct impact" to achieving replicability and scaling up of successful innovative approaches.

IFAD directly supports innovation and, together with its partners, facilitates its processes and promotes its replication and scaling up.

- In the future, PMD and OE shall adopt the following guiding principles that are required to integrate the stages of the innovation process into operations:
Include the replication and scaling up of innovations as part of the project cycle and ensure appropriate advance planning for this purpose.
- In order to operationalize the above guiding principles, PMD is requested to:
Promote the scaling up of innovations into IFAD's core business through appropriate marketing skills, to be built up through training and recruitment.

Source: CLE IFAD's Capacity as a Promoter of Replicable Innovations in Cooperation with other Partners (2002).

26. IFAD's engagement in scaling up was stipulated in its Strategic Framework for 2007-2010 as part of the triad of "Innovation, learning and scaling up", which featured as one of the main principles for engagement.¹⁴
27. In 2007 IFAD prepared an Innovation Strategy, which introduced three notions of scaling up: (i) organizational scaling up (when an IFAD-funded project or programme is integrated into a broader public programme); (ii) appropriation by partners (when another donor – a government, or a private sector organization or foundation – decides to provide sizeable additional funding and expands a project or an intervention); and (iii) scaling up from practice to policy (when elements of a given project or intervention are integrated in a public strategy or become part of the normative).¹⁵ The 2007 Knowledge Management Strategy underlined the role of knowledge management in support of scaling up.
28. Corporate targets on scaling up were first introduced during the consultation for the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD8), which covered the period 2010-2012.¹⁶ For the first time, the Fund included a corporate target for "innovation, learning and/or scaling up". The target was defined as minimum percentage of projects rated 4 (moderately satisfactory) or higher along this criterion at the entry point (i.e. design quality assurance), implementation and completion. The target was set at 90 per cent at entry and 80 per cent at implementation and completion, to be achieved by 2012 (see box 4). Ratings were those from self-assessments by IFAD Management.
29. The year 2010 brought about two important developments. First, IOE published a CLE on IFAD's Capacity to Promote Innovation and Scaling Up. The evaluation found that, while performance in innovation in IFAD-funded operations had improved over time, performance vis-à-vis scaling up was weak: scaling up was largely left to individual initiatives and skills of country programme managers. Among the main factors hampering performance in scaling up, the 2010 CLE identified: (i) little attention to knowledge management, partnership-building

¹⁴ The others were: (i) Selectivity and Focus; (ii) Targeting; (iii) Empowering Poor Rural People; (iv) Effective Partnerships; and (v) Sustainability. Specifically, on scaling up, the 2007-2010 Strategic Frameworks notes that "innovation without scaling up is of little value: all engagements will thus be expected to have internal learning arrangements, as well as mechanisms for feeding lessons to the higher, usually national, level" (paragraph 12).

¹⁵ The Strategy notes, "For IFAD, scaling up requires the mobilization of different partners, capabilities and resources in IFAD corporate activities and throughout the programme cycle, from design to implementation, supervision and evaluation. Effective knowledge management, cultivation of strategic partnerships, robust policy dialogue focused on specific challenges and opportunities for innovation, and cofinancing initiatives are central ingredients of sustainable scaling up" (paragraph 13).

¹⁶ IFAD8 consultations, fifth session, December 2008.

and policy dialogue; (ii) the Fund's past operating model (which did not allow it to perform supervision directly or to provide implementation support); and (iii) the lack of country presence (box 2; see also table 1, annex II).

Box 2

CLE on IFAD's Capacity to Promote Innovation and Scaling up (2010): Excerpts from conclusions and recommendations related to scaling up

Conclusions:

- Previous achievements in scaling up have been driven by individual initiative and commitment, rather than systematic IFAD processes.
- IFAD has often lumped together innovation, replication, and scaling up as one unique concept. While these areas are certainly related, they are still distinct and require independent focus and resources.
- Scaling up has been hampered by a lack of attention to non-lending activities such as knowledge management, as well as operating practices which did not allow IFAD to conduct direct supervision and implementation support.

Recommendations:

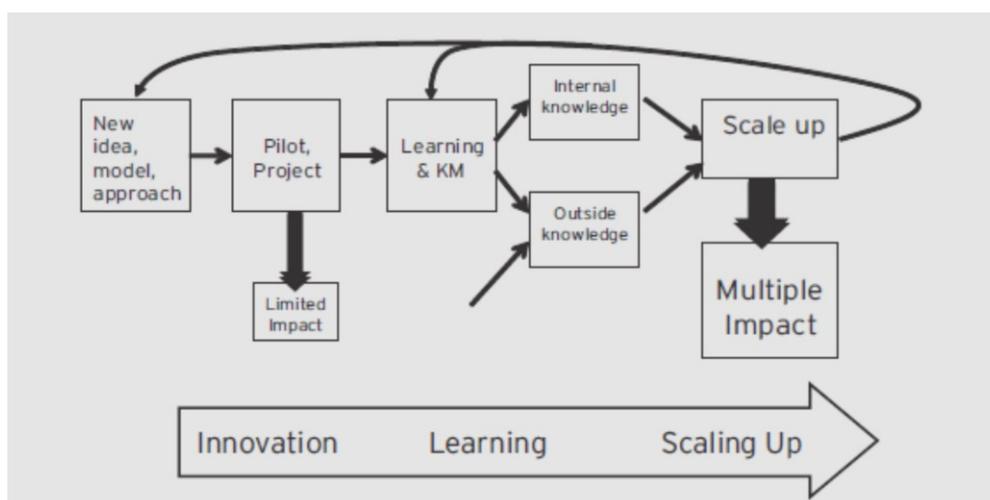
- IFAD must treat scaling up as mission-critical. This means setting clear corporate targets and monitoring IFAD's progress in meeting those targets.
- IFAD must devote time and effort to non-lending activities, especially in the area of knowledge management, which the report found to be especially limited.
- In particular, IFAD must make more effort to exchange scaling-up experiences and lessons within and across the five geographic regions. At the project and staffing levels, IFAD should consider including knowledge management in the annual performance evaluation process.
- IFAD's country-level agenda should be driven by scaling up, which means focusing on a few key areas that have high growth potential.

Source: CLE 2010.

30. Second, also in 2010, PMD commissioned the Brookings Institution to undertake an institutional review of IFAD's scaling-up approach.¹⁷ The review reaffirmed that scaling up was mission-critical for IFAD but required more explicit attention, a more comprehensive and systematic approach, and significant changes in operational processes and practices, including operational instruments, knowledge management and human and financial resources management (figure 1). The review suggested separating the three concepts of innovation, learning and scaling up: not every innovation needs to be scaled up and, conversely, scaling up does not necessarily have to apply to innovations. Importantly, the review emphasized that scaling up was not to be considered as an objective *per se* but as a means to greater development impact.

¹⁷ J. Linn, A. Hartmann, H. Kharas, R. Kohl and B. Massler (2010), Scaling Up the Fight Against Rural Poverty. An Institutional Review of IFAD's Approach.

Figure 1
Innovation, learning and scaling-up linkages according to the Brookings Review



Source: J. Linn, A. Hartmann, H. Kharas, R. Kohl and B. Massler (2010).

31. In the subsequent IFAD Strategic Framework 2011-2015, innovation, learning and scaling up were presented among the eight principles for engagement of IFAD (excerpted quotes in box 3).¹⁸ In 2011, a report on the Consultation for IFAD9, echoing the latest strategic framework, committed to mainstream a systematic approach to scaling up in all projects and country programmes. This would require improved capacity for policy analysis and engagement, and expanded partnerships with governments, bilateral and multilateral agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector.
32. New targets were also established for the percentage of projects rated 4 and higher (MS+) for scaling up at entry point and for project implementation outcomes related to "replication and scaling up". For project rating at entry point, the baseline was 2010 and the target was set at 80 per cent by 2015. For project outcomes (level 2 of the Results and Impact Management System), the target was set at 90 per cent by 2015 (box 4).

¹⁸ The others were: (i) a differentiated approach based on country context; (ii) targeting; (iii) supporting the empowerment of poor rural people; (iv) promoting gender equality and women's empowerment; (v) creating viable opportunities for rural youth; (vi) effective partnerships and resource mobilization; and (vii) sustainability.

Excerpted quotes from Strategic Frameworks 2007-2010 and 2011-2015**Strategic Framework 2007-2010**

"All elements of IFAD's country programmes will be expected to be innovative. Yet innovation without scaling up is of little value: all engagements will thus be expected to have internal learning arrangements, as well as mechanisms for feeding lessons to the higher, usually national, level."

"IFAD will apply a number of principles of engagement: selectivity and focus; targeting; empowering poor rural people; innovation and scaling up; effective partnerships; and sustainability. All of them are central to IFAD's identity and understanding of its role in contributing to global efforts to reduce poverty; and they will guide the organization in defining both".

"This process of innovation and scaling up is central to the vision of IFAD's role; country and project strategies will explicitly articulate how both objectives will be achieved."

Strategic Framework 2011-2015

"Responding to a changing environment – with new challenges linked to environmental degradation, climate change and agricultural and food market transformations – requires a capacity to innovate and learn. At the same time, making a serious dent in rural poverty and achieving MDG1 under current circumstances calls for a more systematic focus on scaling up where appropriate."

"Scale up successful approaches and innovations, when appropriate, by treating scaling up as 'mission critical', and building on recent efforts to better understand the preconditions for successful scaling up and to systematize IFAD's approach in this regard; and review existing policies and strategies on knowledge management and innovation to develop an integrated innovation, learning and scaling-up strategy focused particularly on RB-COSOPs and projects."

33. The CLE on IFAD's Institutional Efficiency and Efficiency of IFAD Funded Operations, published in 2013, highlighted scaling up as an imperative for IFAD and emphasized, for the first time, the scaling up of impact. Two main arguments were put forth: (i) scaling up was needed to enhance coverage (geographical, number of beneficiaries) and intensity of results; and (ii) scaling up was necessary to improve the efficiency of IFAD's operations, as wider and larger results could be achieved with the same envelope of administrative costs. The CLE recommended that scaling up of high-impact, innovative approaches emerging out of IFAD-supported projects and programmes should be central to IFAD's business model.
34. The Report on the Consultation of the Tenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD10) (2014) again presented targets for projects receiving a rating of 4 and higher (MS+) for scaling up at entry point and for project implementation "outcomes" related to replication and scaling up (box 4).¹⁹ It committed IFAD to have a strategy for innovation, knowledge management and scaling up in all projects designs in the IFAD10 period (2016-2018). The IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025, prepared against the backdrop of the Agenda 2030 driven by the Sustainable Development Goals, the 2015 Addis Ababa Agenda for Financing for Development and the new global agreement on climate change, presents an "impact pathway", again showing the triad of innovation, learning and scaling up as one of five principles for the Fund's engagement in a way that is "bigger, better and smarter".²⁰

¹⁹ For project rating at entry point, the baseline was 2014 and the target was set at 85 per cent by 2018. For project outcomes (level 2 of the Results and Impact Management System) the target was set at 90 per cent by 2018.

²⁰ The others were: targeting; empowerment; gender equality; and partnerships.

Replenishment commitments related to scaling up

IFAD8 Commitment

The IFAD8 Results Management Framework (RMF) set the following targets for scaling up (as part of the innovation, learning, and/or scaling up criteria):

Per cent of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better by 2012:

- At entry: 90 per cent of projects
- During implementation: 80 per cent of projects
- At completion: 75 per cent of projects

IFAD9 Commitment

- Strengthen country programme development, monitoring and management processes to ensure systematic attention to scaling up, broader partnership-building, more rigorous policy analysis, and active engagement in national policy dialogue on agriculture and rural development.
- Strengthen knowledge management processes to enhance IFAD's capacity to better capture and harness evidence-based knowledge for scaling up.

The RMF created during the Ninth Replenishment set a target of having 90 per cent of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better at completion regarding replication and scaling up.

IFAD10 Commitment

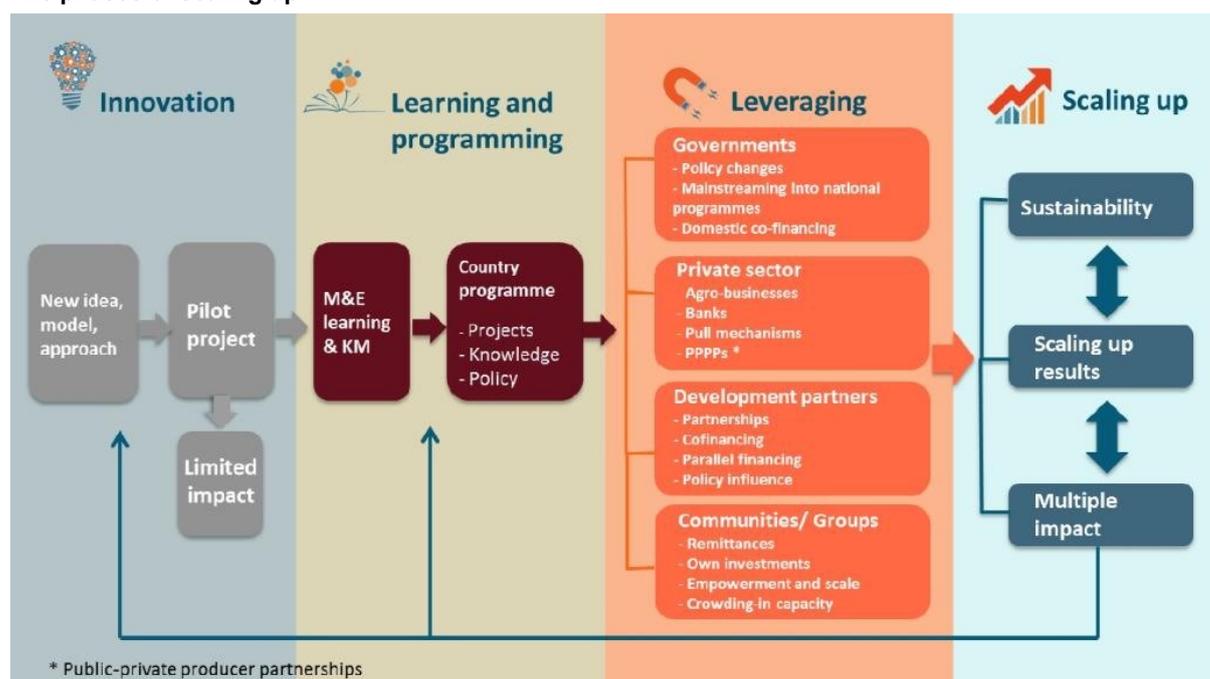
- Implement a scaling-up process, based on a series of tools, partnerships and training events, plus a new operational framework, to be developed and distributed to the Executive Board for information.
- 100 per cent of project design reports to define an approach for innovation and scaling up.

The RMF created during the Tenth Replenishment set a target of having 90 per cent of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better at completion regarding innovation and scaling up.

35. The 2015 Operational Framework for scaling up was prepared by PTA, which had taken over the focal-point responsibility for scaling up from the Strategy and Knowledge Department. It provides an expanded conceptual scheme (close to a "theory of change"), which is shown in figure 2. The first step in the pathway is that of piloting a new idea or a specific intervention which, on its own, may be successful but with limited impact in view of the limited resources allocated.²¹ The second step is to assess the quality and potential of this intervention and extract the main lessons learned (the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems at the project level and knowledge management activities would be a key element). The third step is to leverage additional resources, which may come from governmental agencies, private sector entrepreneurs, international development partners or community-based organizations (organizations of beneficiaries). The goal is to achieve larger results (additional, larger impacts or a broader area affected, or a larger number of beneficiaries) in a sustainable manner.

²¹ It is to be noted that, in the past, scaling up was always connected to innovations. At present, it applies to any activity which is supported by IFAD, whether it can be defined as innovative or not.

Figure 2
The phases of scaling up



Source: IFAD's operational framework for scaling up of results (2015).

36. It is important to note that the framework envisages both lending and non-lending activities as inputs to scaling up. In particular, the non-lending activities would help extract lessons and experiences (knowledge management), reduce or remove policy obstacles, carry out policy dialogue/engagement, and establish partnerships (partnership building) with key organizations.
37. The 2015 Operational Framework articulates the enabling conditions for scaling up to happen, known as scaling-up *spaces*.²² It also reviews key factors or modalities to engage the main partners, such as governmental partners, private sector partners (including the public-private producer partnerships that IFAD intends to promote to support agricultural value chain development), development partners (United Nations organizations, international financial institutions, CGIAR [formerly known as the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research] and the Global Forum on Agricultural Research, non-profit organizations and foundations), as well as communities and beneficiaries' organizations (here the emphasis is on building apex organizations which would link with public and private actors, as appropriate).
38. The 2015 Operational Framework also examines how a scaling-up path would need to be incorporated in the IFAD results-based COSOPs and Country Strategy Notes,²³ how it should be defined in a project design and followed up through the implementation of a project and the management of a country programme. In doing so, the operational framework identifies criteria and guiding questions to be used during the quality enhancement/quality assurance of COSOP and project preparation, as well as for supervision missions, country results reviews and project status reports. Finally, the framework identifies South-South and triangular

²² These are presented as eight "spaces" which may act as conducive factors or as constraints: (i) fiscal and financial; (ii) political; (iii) policy; (iv) institutional; (v) cultural; (vi) partnership; (vii) learning; and (viii) environment. They are derived from Hartmann A. and J. Linn (2008), *Scaling Up: A Framework and Lessons for Development Effectiveness Literature and Practice*. Working Paper 5, Washington, D.C.: Wolfensohn Center for Development, Brookings Institution.

²³ Country Strategy Notes are prepared instead of a fully-fledged COSOP in those countries where the government and IFAD cannot define a programme in the medium term or when a three-year cycle allocation is not higher than US\$5 million.

cooperation as an additional form of scaling up: exchanging ideas, approaches and lessons between developing countries, with IFAD playing the role of broker.

39. In 2015, in a joint effort to document scaling-up experience at the country level and across thematic areas of practice, PMD produced: (i) *Country Scaling-up Notes* for Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Peru and Sudan; and (ii) a set of *Thematic Scaling-up Notes*.²⁴ In 2016 IFAD's Asia and the Pacific Division prepared an ad hoc paper on its experience in scaling up successful innovations at the project level [G. Thapa and Hessel, S. (2016)]. Finally, the 2016 Knowledge Management Action Plan is also meant as an element of support to scaling up.
40. The framework and its implications for IFAD's business model are further reviewed and assessed in the section on *Relevance*.

B. Lessons from other organizations on scaling up

41. The paragraphs that follow provide a summary of experiences and reflection on the topic of scaling up in other development organizations. While the mandate and business model of these organizations may differ from IFAD's, their experiences provide useful insights.
42. **Scaling up is a process that needs to be prepared well from the outset.** A GIZ evaluation of its "Corporate strategy on scaling up and broad impact" considers three different types of scaling up: (i) horizontal (the gradual rollout of activities to cover an ever wider geographical area); (ii) vertical (achieving a broader impact by means of institutionalization); and (iii) functional (extending the breadth of issues covered by a project or programme). The evaluation identifies political frameworks in partner countries, engagement at multiple levels of government, government/partnership ownership, cofinancing by partners, robust evidence-based learning mechanisms and the international reputation of GIZ as the success factors for scaling up at GIZ. It recommends that GIZ: (i) enshrine scaling up in the design stage; (ii) create a checklist of success factors during implementation; (iii) strengthen knowledge management and partnerships; (iv) monitor the scaling up process; and (v) facilitate the feedback loop of project scaling up.
43. The World Bank report titled "Lessons from practice: Assessing scalability" is based on the 22 "Development Marketplace" pilot projects that sought to demonstrate the effectiveness and potential of innovations in contributing to the enhancement of rural livelihoods (IFAD had also contributed to these through its grant programme). The report suggests that scaling up is an iterative process, not a "two-year demonstration project". In addition, the report recommends keeping innovation focused, establishing a robust M&E systems for a sound evidence base, and ensuring that the critical levers needed for the transition from pilot to scale are in place.²⁵
44. The African Development Bank has examined the requirements for successful scaling up in the context of fragility and conflict in its paper "Taking AfDB's development impact to scale in fragile situations" (2015). The requirements include: (i) sound design of pilots designed at the outset for reaching a large scale; (ii) investment in institutional development to build the organizational capacity and leadership to manage going to scale; and (iii) learning continuously in real time, adjusting pilot and programme design in the light of results.

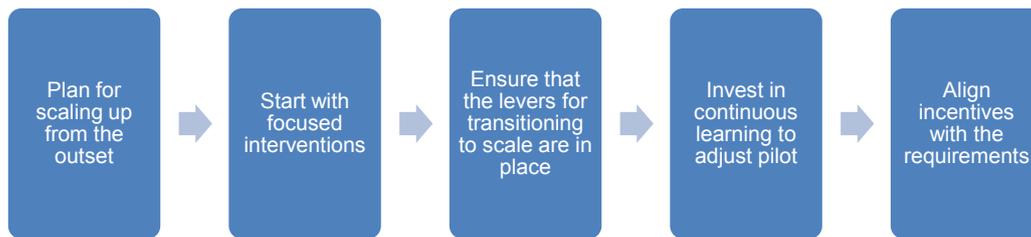
²⁴ Agricultural water management; Climate-resilient agricultural development; Gender equality and women's empowerment; Inclusive rural financial services; Land tenure security; Nutrition-sensitive agriculture; Smallholder institutions and organizations; Smallholder livestock development; and Sustainable inclusion of smallholders in agricultural value chains.

²⁵ In 2015 IDA (International Development Association)-World Bank approved a "scaling-up facility". However, this is a different notion of scaling up compared to IFAD's. The IDA facility will be on a one-off basis and consist of making available additional financing (in total up to US\$5 billion) on non-concessional terms, mainly for infrastructure, to countries that borrow at concessional terms.

45. The Inter-American Development Bank has focused on the scaling up of innovations as part of the operations of the Multilateral Investment Fund. Lessons from its experience include the importance of: launching pilots as part of a clear plan with the objective of scaling up; engaging the “client” for scaling up from the outset, taking full account of the priorities of the client; and aligning incentives with the requirements of effective scaling up.
46. The International Food Policy Research Institute, under its 2020 Vision programme, compiled in 2012 a series of write-ups from various authors, including IFAD staff, on scaling up in the fields of agriculture, rural development and nutrition. The spaces needed for scaling up are identified as institutional space, policy space, fiscal space, political space, partnership space and learning space. The major drivers of scaling up are: successful models and ideas; vision and leadership; external catalysts such as political and economic environment; and incentives and accountability for scaling-up efforts.
47. The UNDP guidance note on “Scaling up development programmes” visualizes the various scenarios/pathways in scaling up and identifies the main challenges. These include the short duration of pilot interventions, limited and donor-driven financing, weak M&E systems, insufficient knowledge management, and low country ownership. The note points to the necessity of strong leadership, the importance of empowering accountable local organizations and, importantly, developing well-designed programmes and projects.
48. The World Health Organization, along with ExpandNet, elaborated on a conceptual framework for scaling up in a paper titled “Nine steps for developing a scaling-up strategy”. The paper defines scaling up as “deliberate efforts to increase the impact of successfully tested health innovations so as to benefit more people and to foster policy and programme development on a lasting basis.” The nine steps to scale up are defined as follows: (i) planning actions to increase the scalability of the innovation; (ii) increasing the capacity of the user organization to implement scaling up; (iii) assessing the environment and planning actions to increase the potential for scaling-up success; (iv) increasing the capacity of the resource team to support scaling up; (v) making strategic choices to support vertical scaling up (institutionalization); (vi) making strategic choices to support horizontal scaling up (expansion/replication) (vii) determining the role of diversification; (viii) planning actions to address spontaneous scaling up; and (ix) finalizing the scaling-up strategy and planning the next steps.
49. **A common thread that runs across the above is that scaling up is a long-haul, iterative process.** The five major lessons and common themes that emerge from the experience and analysis of these institutions are highlighted below (see also figure 3) and they are further referred to in the Relevance section of this report when reviewing the business model of IFAD. An aspect which is not singled out is that of the assessment of the conditions for scalability. This aspect is further discussed in the Relevance section.
 - Plan for scaling up from the outset; the pilot should be part of a clear plan;
 - Start with well-designed, focused programmes and projects;
 - Ensure that the levers for transitioning from pilot phase to scale are in place, particularly strong leadership commitment and backing as well as institutional capacity to manage the transition;
 - Invest in continuous learning to adjust pilot and programme design in light of results and in M&E to gather evidence of value-added;
 - Align incentives with the requirements of scaling up.

Figure 3

The scaling-up process – A simplified scheme from international experience



Source: IOE elaboration from the available literature (2016).

Key points

- Scaling up first appeared in IFAD's official documents and discourse in 2002, when it was included in the Strategic Framework for 2002-2006. In 2009 it was included in the RMF for the IFAD8 Period, covering the period 2010-2012.
- In 2010, IOE published the CLE on IFAD's Capacity to Promote Innovation and Scaling Up, which found scaling-up performance to be weak due to, inter alia, little attention to non-lending activities and lack of country presence.
- In 2011, a report on the Consultation on the Ninth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources set new targets for the period 2013-2015. Under IFAD10, the Fund committed to have a scaling-up strategy in all project designs and confirmed the targets for ratings at entry and at completion.
- Other organizations, such as GIZ, the World Bank, the African Development Bank, International Food Policy Research Institute, and UNDP have reflected on scaling up. A common thread is that scaling up is a long-term iterative process that needs to be planned from the outset and requires: strong leadership commitment and institutional capacity to manage the transition; investment in continuous learning to adjust the programme according to evidence gathered; and incentives that are aligned with the requirements.

III. Findings and lessons learned

A. Relevance of the conceptualization and operationalization of scaling up

50. Striving for scaled-up impact from IFAD interventions is different from a focus on their direct impact. It goes well beyond and cuts across other institutional priorities. Embedding such a shift within the organization expectedly entails a long journey, supported by long-term, sustained attention to a number of aspects.
51. This section on Relevance focuses on the conceptualization and operationalization of scaling up at IFAD, not on the relevance of the objectives and design of each project, as would be done in a project-level evaluation. The aim is to underline the points of strength of the conceptualization, possible gaps, its congruence with IFAD's business model and business cycle, as well the degree of support from staff who are in charge of translating concepts into country programmes and projects. The findings presented draw upon extensive documentary review, interviews of managers, country programme managers and senior staff in PMD, and an electronic survey of IFAD operational staff in Rome and in country offices.

A.1 Clarity and robustness of the approach to scaling up

52. As noted, while the notion of scaling up had already been introduced as early as 2002, the full development of the concept and an understanding of its implications from an institutional and operational point of view only came in 2010 with the Brookings Review and was further refined in the 2015 Operational Framework. When reviewing the relevance of the approach to scaling up, these documents are the obvious point of reference.
53. **The conceptualization has been sound and grounded in past evaluations and institutional reviews.** The 2010 Review and the 2015 Operational Framework can be credited for bringing better theoretical conceptual clarity to scaling up. They were informed by past evaluations. They established the logical steps, assumptions and conditions that, starting from project results, would lead to scaling-up opportunities (figures 1 and 2).
54. The underlying theory of change in the 2015 Operational Framework takes many of the components from the 2010 Review and expands upon them with greater clarity. It also insists with more vigour on the importance of leveraging partners' resources (compare figures 1 and 2), particularly in the case of governments, donors, the private sector, communities, and grassroots associations and their federations. Both the 2010 Review and the 2015 Operational Framework emphasize the importance of learning from pilot experiences in order to prepare a scaling-up pathway. They highlight the role of non-lending activities, notably the management of existing knowledge, as a key ingredient for scaling up.
55. The 2010 Review exposed IFAD to the existing knowledge and literature on scaling up and helped it engage in and lead international fora and events on this topic. Thanks to this and follow-up engagement, IFAD has contributed to case studies and exchanges with other international organizations, such as the World Bank and the International Food Policy Research Institute. IFAD was also one of the leading agencies in organizing an event in Washington, D.C. in February 2015 to discuss the creation of a cross-sectoral community of practice for thought leadership and professional networking on scaling up. The event gathered some 20 organizations (bilateral and multilateral development organizations, think tanks, private foundations and consulting companies).
56. **The issue of scalability.** The 2010 Review and 2015 Operational Framework do not directly address the issue of scalability. However, not all interventions are scale-neutral: an intervention may function well at a low scale but face problems when brought to a larger scale (diseconomy of scale). Conversely, an intervention

may not be performing (or its costs may be prohibitive) at a small scale but successful at a higher scale (e.g. tipping point or threshold to achieve economy of scale).²⁶ To take an example from IOE evaluations of the last decade, research and extension activities generating and disseminating new varieties of cassava that were resistant to the mosaic virus in West Africa were successful. They were funded initially by IFAD and CGIAR, but other multilateral and bilateral donors provided additional support. However, extension activities resulted in significant surplus production. In the absence of improved processing technology, one of the downsides of this success was diminishing farm-gate prices of cassava in several countries.

57. In principle, IFAD has the *grant* instrument that could help test new ideas and approaches, with a lower risk-aversion profile, as well as help assess scalability. However, the 2014 CLE on the IFAD Policy for Grant Financing found that grants generally had weak linkages with corporate- and country-level priorities. Many grant designs were not adequately connected to IFAD's country operations and strategies or to broader corporate priorities. The new 2015 Policy for Grant Financing seeks to address these weaknesses.
58. The evaluation synthesis on South-South cooperation identifies a set of regional grant-funded initiatives that, if properly harnessed by country programmes, could contribute to scaling up by facilitating policy discussion between countries that are informed by IFAD-funded project experiences. They include the Specialized Meeting on Family Farming of MERCOSUR (which the CPEs in Argentina and Brazil found instrumental to foster exchanges between policy makers from various countries in the region), a new grant to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Secretariat and, to some extent, the Support to Farmer's Organizations in Africa Programme.
59. **Scaling up, IFAD's business model and project cycle: critical junctures and potential challenges.** Reviewing how the "theory of change" of the 2010 Review and 2015 Operational Framework matches IFAD's project cycle and business model is important. The 2010 Brookings report recommended "a comprehensive approach to formulate an institutional strategy focused on scaling up" along with changes in IFAD's "operational processes and institutional practices" (see also table 1, annex II). The 2015 Operational Framework introduced the requirement to look more closely at scaling up at the time of COSOP or project design, supervision, mid-term review and completion.
60. Experience from other international organizations (see section II.B above) suggests that scaling up requires preparation and needs to be considered from the design stage. Uncertainty or risks to scaling up need to be presented explicitly. Means of verification or risk management have to be explained in the project context. These now receive more attention in the context of the Quality Assurance process at IFAD.
61. In addition, international experience points to the importance of formulating focused project designs in order to enhance scalability. The challenge for IFAD is to keep project designs focused while serving poor groups of clients in disadvantaged areas. Such interventions often address basic needs (e.g. sanitation, potable water, access to transportation infrastructure), productive activities (e.g. through extension, rural credit, marketing) as well as post-production activities (e.g. processing, access to markets, value chains). Combining basic needs, production and post-production interventions may be justified from a development perspective but also leads to implementation challenges. Past evaluations (e.g. ARRI 2015) have found examples of over-complicated design, particularly when too many objectives were pursued and multiple agencies had to coordinate project activities.

²⁶ See, as a reference, Feinstein, O.N. (2015), Getting to scale: how to bring development solutions to millions of people, *Development in Practice*, 25:2, 289-290.

62. A regular assessment, starting from the early implementation stage, of the performance and results of project interventions and approaches is a key enabler of scaling up. Key instruments available to IFAD are direct supervision and project implementation support and project mid-term reviews. Past evaluations have highlighted two typical constraints: (i) the slow pace of implementation during the first two to three years of implementation, which means that there is “little to be seen”; and (ii) weakness of M&E systems (notably the assessment of results). These imply that crucial information and implementation experience may not be available until a project moves into the latest years of its life span. The Impact Assessment Initiative, which IFAD launched in 2012, is a step towards palliating the scarcity of information on results. Yet it is equally important to work on improving M&E systems.
63. According to the 2010 Review and the 2015 Operational Framework, throughout the project cycle, IFAD would need to engage with development partners in non-lending activities, such as knowledge management, partnership development and policy dialogue. This is because IFAD and its partners need to learn what deserves to be scaled up and what are the conditions and pathways to do so, based on the available evidence. While attention to non-lending activities was limited in the past, IFAD now considers them a part of its business model. The Fund’s attention to these has increased (e.g. 2016-2025 Strategic Framework and IFAD10 commitments, among the most recent examples). The challenge is now to allocate commensurate human and financial resources.
64. Finally, the post-completion phase of a project is an important one. It is generally at this stage that results are better appreciated, project staff have built up experience, champions may have emerged, and other partners may be interested in further support. Moreover, sustainability prospects may be better consolidated at this point. However, without strong evidence on the results, without previous engagement in knowledge management, partnership and policy dialogue, there is the risk that IFAD and the government arrive at completion without a clear vision and plan for scaling up, even when interventions on the ground are showing promising results.²⁷

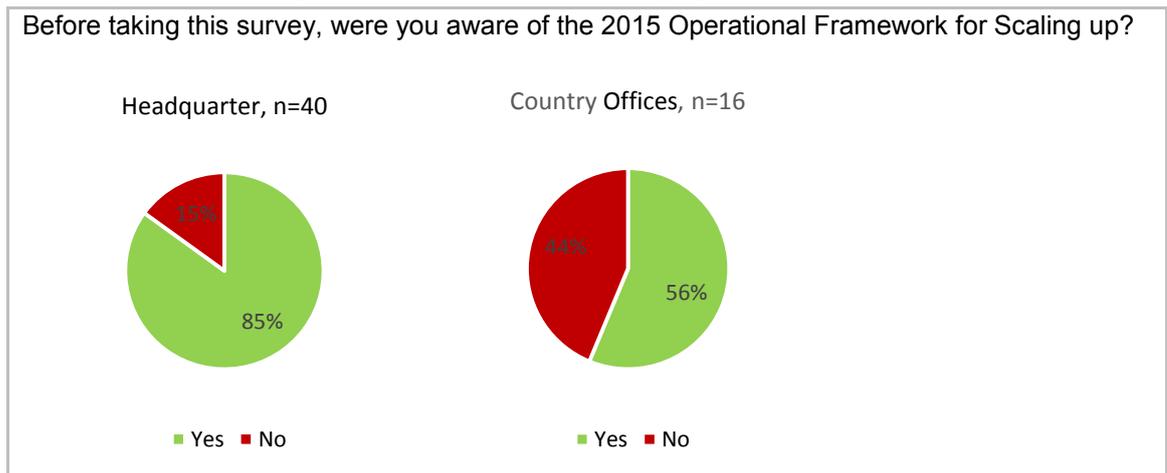
A.2 Progress towards common understanding

65. **Staff awareness of the conceptual framework for scaling up is uneven.** In an organization, conceptual clarity and cogency of conceptual frameworks is only one of the facets of relevance. The practical need to bring definitions and theory of change to the knowledge of staff is fundamental. In addition to preparing the Operational Framework, PTA worked on a number of communication products (notes and blogs) and companion papers. It also shared visual presentations at regional portfolio review workshops and a number of other events.
66. The electronic survey administered by IOE to PMD operational staff and long-term consultants, for the purpose of this synthesis, enquired about their awareness of the Operational framework. On the positive side, a large majority of respondents (85 per cent) located at the headquarters were aware of the existence of the framework. However, only 56 per cent of the responding staff based in the country office were aware of the framework (figure 4), suggesting that distance from headquarters may have been a barrier to the sharing of the concept and the related institutional priorities.

²⁷ In the future, some improvement could come as a result of the revision of the PCR process. While the PCR is formally a duty of the borrowing government, country programme managers are now considered responsible to support the process. This means that more attention could be devoted to *ex post* learning, which may provide better hands-on experience on what deserves or does not deserve being scaled up. Future evaluations may assess to what extent this has happened.

Figure 4

Knowledge of the 2015 Operational Framework for scaling up

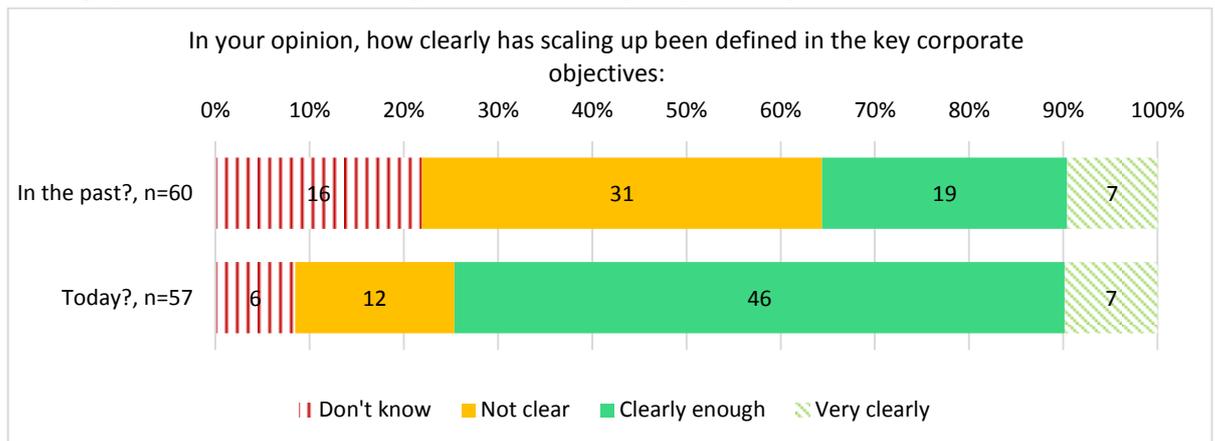


Source: Evaluation Synthesis Electronic Survey (2016).

67. Knowing that a policy or a strategic document exists is not the same as understanding its contents and implications, and knowing how and when to apply it. During the interviews held at headquarters, differences in views emerged between the responses of representatives from Management and operational staff. Managers believed that scaling up was well defined and there was a clear corporate vision and expectation of what the organization should do, both in terms of lending and non-lending activities. Some managers were of the opinion that the notion of scaling up had always been ingrained in IFAD’s *modus operandi* and that the 2015 Operational Framework could simply be considered as a re-statement.
68. Staff members interviewed agreed that conceptual clarity on the corporate objectives for scaling up had improved compared to the past, particularly after the shift of the institutional responsibility to PMD (PTA). Still, many staff members asserted that the 2010 Review (and, to some extent, the recent Operational Framework) did not present scaling up in a way that resonated with staff experience of IFAD operations. They sometimes perceived the lexicon related to scaling up as rather “theoretical”, turning the whole concept into a “mystique”, rather than rooting it in practical experience.
69. According to the e-survey findings, from a time difference perspective, there are signs that corporate objectives on scaling up have become clearer. Although the sub-sample is small, the responses from staff based in country offices show a larger issue of lack of clarity (figures 5 and 6).

Figure 5

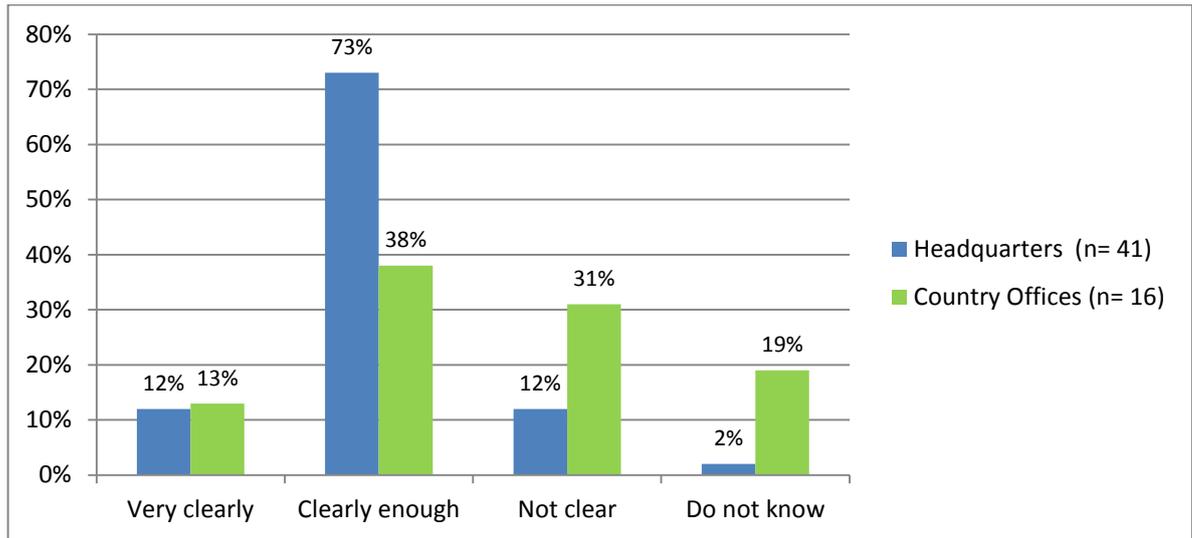
Scaling up has become more clearly defined in the key corporate objectives



Source: Evaluation Synthesis Electronic Survey (2016).

Figure 6

Differences between staff at headquarters and at country offices regarding the clarity of the scaling up definition today



Source: Evaluation Synthesis Electronic Survey (2016).

A.3 Indicators, guidance, tools and training

70. **Indicators: potential vs actual scaling-up path.** As previously explained, targets for scaling up have been included in the RMFs since IFAD8. These targets are focused on: (i) quality-at-entry of IFAD interventions, where they mainly refer to ex ante expectations, intentions and plans; and (ii) project completion report ratings (i.e. self-assessment). At project completion, the self-assessment is based on scaling up "potential". This is defined as developing partners showing some degree of interest (box 5) in scaling up. It is understandable that, in many instances, scaling up may have not yet started at the time of project completion. However, the judgment on partners' interest could be reinforced and better linked to evidence by explaining what type of commitments have been made, at what level, and the concrete steps made by IFAD and the project managers to generate evidence, promote learning, and network with partners so as to encourage their commitment to scale up. Another related observation is that, both at entry and completion, the bar for self-evaluation is set somewhat low at "moderately satisfactory or higher".

Key questions adopted to assess scaling up in PCRs and independent evaluations**2015 PCR Guidelines**

Potential for scaling up. The rating measures the extent to which the project is positioned to have some of its approach and/or innovations implemented on a larger scale or replicated elsewhere by the government or other partners. The rating assesses whether steps were already taken in this regard only at the "highly satisfactory" level.

(6) Highly satisfactory. Development partners have already started to scale up or replicate certain elements of the project implementation strategy, project initiatives or innovations.

(5) Satisfactory. Development partners have shown strong interest in certain elements of the project implementation strategy and good potential for scaling up and replication exists.

(4) Moderately satisfactory. Development partners have shown some interest in selected project initiatives. Some potential for scaling up or replication exists within the country.

(3) Moderately unsatisfactory. Development partners have shown little interest in project approaches and initiatives. Limited potential for scaling up or replication exists at the local level only, or on a very limited scale.

(2) Unsatisfactory. Slight potential for scaling up or replication may have existed at the local level only, or on a very limited scale, but no concrete action was taken to promote it.

(1) Highly unsatisfactory. There is no potential for scaling up or replication. This particular area did not receive any attention in the course of implementation.

2009 IOE Evaluation Manual (first edition)

Were successfully promoted innovations documented and shared? Were other specific activities (e.g. workshops, exchange visits) undertaken to disseminate the innovative experiences?

Have these innovations been replicated and scaled up and, if so, by whom? If not, what are the realistic prospects that they can and will be replicated and scaled up by the government, other donors and/or the private sector?

2015 IOE Evaluation Manual (second edition)

Innovation and scaling up: The extent to which IFAD development interventions: (i) have introduced innovative approaches to rural poverty reduction; and (ii) have been (or are likely to be) scaled up by government authorities, donor organizations, the private sector and other agencies.

1. What evidence was used to justify scaling up, and were successfully promoted innovations documented and shared to facilitate scaling up?

2. Has IFAD proactively engaged in partnership building and policy dialogue to facilitate the uptake of successful innovations?

3. Based on the information available, have these innovations been scaled up and, if so, by whom? If not, what are the prospects at the time of evaluation that they can and will be scaled up by the government, other donors and/or the private sector? What were/are the pathways to scaling up?

4. Extent to which the project has adequately identified the right institutions and assessed their capacity to take the programme forward, including the potential for leveraging additional partners, resources or policy changes to reach the desired scale.

5. Adequacy of the project's M&E system to assess progress of the scaling-up pathways through relevant intermediate and other indicators, including after the project has been completed in order to assess its sustainability and scale.

Source: RMF IFAD10; PCR Guidelines (2015); IOE Evaluation Manual (2009 and 2015).

71. **Guidance, tools and training.** Until 2015, the Strategy and Knowledge Department served as the focal point for advancing the scaling-up agenda. Focal-point responsibility has now been transferred to PTA in PMD, bringing it closer to operations. This has contributed to a significant step-up in the production of tools and guidance relating to scaling up, in line with the commitment made under IFAD10. PTA, within PMD, has since taken the lead and shepherded the

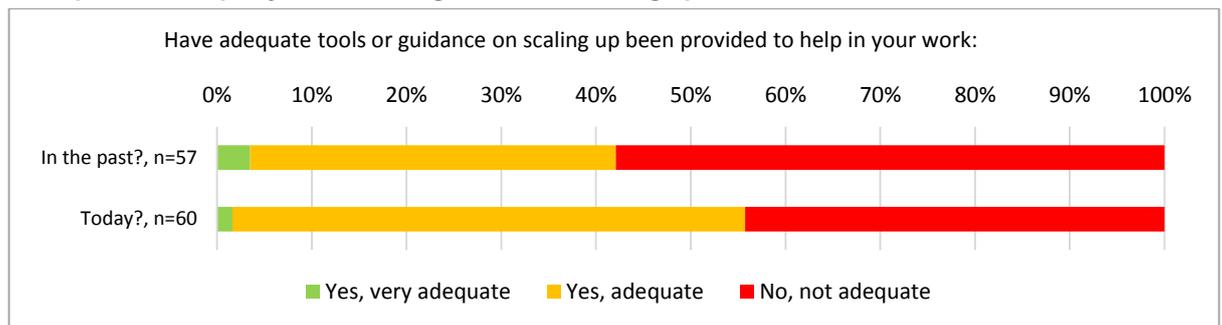
development of the Operational Framework for Scaling Up in 2015. PTA has also launched a training campaign to disseminate the framework in Rome and selected country offices.

72. As a follow-up to the 2015 Operational Framework for Scaling Up, guidance to operational staff is being modified. In particular:
- (i) COSOPs – The 2015 Guidelines for preparation and implementation of a Results-based COSOP require an analysis on scaling up that draws on lessons learned and past results.
 - (ii) Project design – The 2011 Guidelines for Project Design already included generic prescriptions for scaling up (“if a project design pursues a scaling-up agenda, the key aspects of the scaling-up approach should be reflected in the relevant parts of the report”). The 2015 Operational Framework provides further guidance on defining a vision and preparing a scaling-up path. Moreover, as of 2016, all new project concept notes need to address scaling up (the template for concept notes has been amended); if the project does not envisage scaling up, it will be required to explain the reason for it.
 - (iii) Supervision – The current Guidance Note for Supervision Aide-Memoire requires supervision reports to assess “the extent to which the project is positioned to translate its approach and/or innovations on a larger scale.” It should be noted that this guidance document is being further amended.
 - (iv) PCRs – One of the key objectives given in the latest 2015 PCR guidelines is to identify potential for the replication or scaling up of project best practices. The attention to be given to scaling up increased substantially compared to the 2006 PCR guidelines.
 - (v) IOE reports– The 2015 (second) edition of the Evaluation Manual provides updated guiding questions focusing on partnership-building and scaling-up pathways, and on documentation of scaling-up efforts. However, similar to the first edition, there is no provision for a separate rating for scaling up.
73. Importantly, IFAD10 consultations led to a ratcheting up of the commitment related to scaling up: “100 per cent of project design reports to define an approach for innovation and scaling up”. As noted, as of 2016 all new project concept notes need to include a section on scaling up (or an explanation as to why this is not contemplated). On the one hand this reflects corporate commitment. On the other hand, according to some of the staff members interviewed, there is a risk that this requirement, if not properly contextualized, may lead to a “check the box” attitude, forcing “compliance” even in contexts not suited to scaling up. This falls short of the required internalization of scaling up and adaptation to specific contexts (scaling up as a means and not as an end). Another related concern of staff was that the promotion of scaling up, focusing on compliance, may reduce attention to innovation, which entails a certain amount of risk-taking.
74. **While noting improvements compared to the past, part of the operational staff found that guidance and tools did not fully respond to their needs.** A part of the challenge relates to the effectiveness of dissemination efforts. PTA has undertaken dissemination activities and seminars, including in the field offices. Staff responding to the e-survey recognized that there had been improvements compared to the past. However, a sizeable 45 per cent of the survey respondents indicated that they considered tools and guidance still not adequate (figure 7). This was corroborated during interviews: many staff members found that guidance and tools were not always resonating with their experience in project preparation and implementation support. One of the reasons may have been that some staff had yet to benefit from training and learning events related to scaling up. The e-survey results indicated that 37 per cent of headquarters and 60 per cent of country office

staff had not participated in any learning/training event related to scaling up (figure 8).

Figure 7

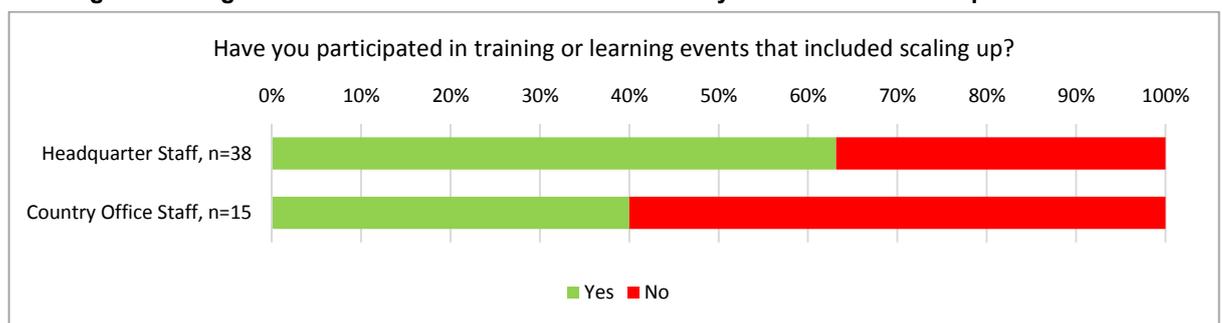
Perception of adequacy of tools and guidance on scaling up



Source: Evaluation Synthesis Electronic Survey (2016).

Figure 8

Training or learning events have reached fewer staff at country offices than at headquarters



Source: Evaluation Synthesis Electronic Survey (2016).

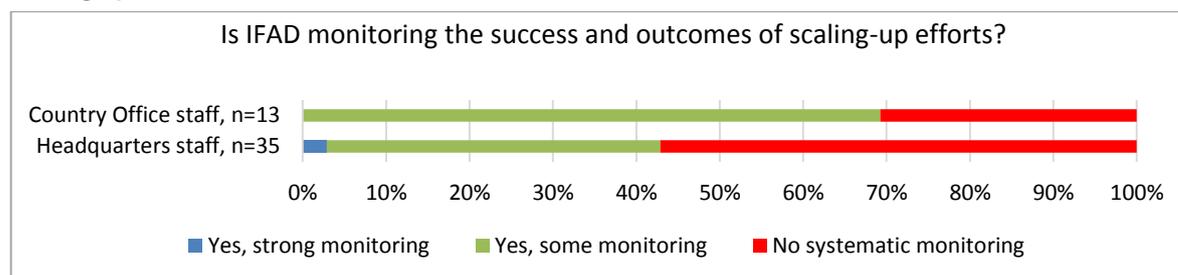
75. Operational staff had some **concerns for resources, incentives and monitoring of outcomes of scaling up, with some differences between headquarters and country offices.** In particular:

- Over half (58 per cent) of IFAD staff responding to the survey believed that IFAD did not provide sufficient resources for scaling up. According to several staff members interviewed, there was an increase in the demand to demonstrate attention to scaling up at project design (particularly at the Quality Assurance stage) and at completion, but this was not matched by earmarked resources, for example, to better conceptualize a scaling-up pathway at design or carry out a prospective scaling-up study during implementation. Staff acknowledged that, in 2016, project design budgets had been supplemented by US\$60,000 for a number of purposes, although this did not include supplementary budget specifically earmarked for scaling-up efforts.
- Mixed views were expressed regarding the perceived incentives for staff to work on scaling up. According to 57 per cent of the e-survey respondents at headquarters, there were insufficient incentives for scaling up. During interviews, the main emerging point was a perception of limited recognition/reward for staff. However, a different view emerged in the e-survey from country office, where 61 per cent of staff reporting perceiving positive incentives and some form of recognition.
- Mixed views were also expressed regarding the monitoring of the outcomes of scaling up. Half of the e-survey respondents reported that IFAD was not monitoring the success and outcomes of its scaling-up efforts in a systematic manner. Again, country office staff were more likely to provide positive feedback

(figure 9). Their presence in the countries may give them a better understanding of scaling up and its consequences.

Figure 9

More than half of IFAD staff believe that IFAD is not systematically monitoring the outcomes of its scaling up efforts



Source: Evaluation Synthesis Electronic Survey (2016).

Key points

- Scaling up entered IFAD’s discourse in 2002 but was properly conceptualized through the 2010 Brookings Review. The review process latter helped the Fund absorb practices from other international organizations while enhancing visibility and leadership in international fora. The 2015 Operational Framework for Scaling Up aimed to better root the concept into IFAD’s operations.
- The scaling-up models proposed in the 2010 Review and the 2015 Operational Framework are conceptually sound, draw from international experience and from past IFAD evaluation findings. The Framework does not explicitly address the item of scalability: not all interventions can be scaled up, or they may need to meet certain conditions before being scaled up.
- IFAD has updated and sharpened its guidance on scaling up at COSOP preparation and at several stages of the project cycle. There are still critical nodes in its business model, notably: (i) challenge to preparing a focused design against the wide range of needs in the field; (ii) limited availability of evidence during the early stages of a project cycle; (iii) the challenge of mobilizing resources to match new ambitions for non-lending activities; (iv) how to best support scaling up after project completion.
- There are differences in views between managers and operational staff at IFAD, as well as between headquarters and country office staff. Staff have perceived an improvement in their awareness of scaling up and in the clarity of its objectives and targets. Yet they perceived risks of: (i) “mysticizing” the concept and not making commensurate resources, tools and incentives available; (ii) emphasizing compliance with the procedures rather than reflection on the conditions for scaling up; and (iii) reducing attention to innovation.

B. Effectiveness: evidence on results achieved, common patterns and key factors

76. This section is dedicated to summarizing evidence from past evaluations on scaling up. The aim is to derive patterns, common traits and underlying factors of importance for IFAD in fine turning its scaling-up agenda. Findings in this section should not be interpreted as an assessment of the implementation of the 2015 Operational Framework for Scaling Up, which will only be feasible in the future.
77. This section starts by discussing how scaling up is presented in country strategies (COSOPs). It then moves to the analysis of trends of IFAD Management’s ratings related to scaling up from PCRs, as well as IOE ratings from the ARRI database.²⁸ Thereafter the discussion shifts to the content analysis conducted on a sample of project-level evaluation reports to unearth more information on scaling up as recorded in past evaluations. While PCRs and evaluations relate to past operations,

²⁸ www.ifad.org/evaluation/policy_and_methodology/tags/1852158.

it is also necessary to review what may lie ahead in the future. For this reason, ratings assigned by the "Quality Assurance" process of project design in the recent years have been considered as indicators of IFAD Management's appreciation of *ex ante* plans for scaling up in recent project design cohorts.

B.1 Scaling up in COSOPs

78. **Almost all COSOPs since 2010 have made reference to scaling up, although few have articulated a real strategy for it.** Scaling up has been mentioned in 33 of the 35 COSOPs approved from 2010 to 2015. The level of coverage given to scaling up has varied from COSOP to COSOP and so has the degree of detail in identifying specific approaches or projects that provide scaling-up opportunities.
79. The review of the documentation suggests that, between 2012 and 2013, COSOPs tried to better identify specific projects and project features to be scaled up (10 out of 15). A common theme continued to be the emphasis on improved knowledge management and its dissemination as basic groundwork for scaling up. Additionally, improved policy dialogue, alignment with country priorities, and partnership with governments were highlighted as integral elements for successful scaling up. Five of the six COSOPS approved in 2014 and 2015 did not detail the specific projects or elements of projects that were to be scaled up but rather recommended the scaling up of successful practices as they occurred.
80. **Examples of good practices in Liberia and Viet Nam.** Overall, COSOPs approved between 2010 and 2015 showed good intentions and compliance with requirements, but few provide strong analysis of scaling-up opportunities and specific plans. Only two included fully developed scaling-up strategies. The 2011 Liberia COSOP paid special attention to scaling up by including a framework that defined the ideas, vision, drivers, spaces, pathways and IFAD's role. The 2012 Viet Nam COSOP included a general scaling-up strategy for the country programme that detailed the desired scale, drivers, spaces, pathways and IFAD's role (box 6).

Two cases of good practice: COSOPs for Liberia and Viet Nam

The **2011 Liberia COSOP** included a framework for scaling up a specific project: the Agriculture Sector Rehabilitation Project. It specified what it would scale up — “the recapitalization of smallholder farmers with rice seed, cassava cuttings and livestock as well as capacity reinforcement at farmer and MOA levels”— and where: “the project will be scaled up to four additional counties.” The project was planned to be initially tested in four counties, allowing results to be measured relative to baselines and to allow qualitative assessments to be carried out which would inform scaling up.

The above framework considered multiple drivers and spaces for scaling up, including:

- Leadership – Government
- Champions – The Ministry of Agriculture, project management units and the private sector
- External catalysts – Increasing food prices, dependence on food imports, youth and female unemployment, peace keeping
- Incentives – Government desire for poverty reduction and an increase in rural employment, inputs; service providers’ desire for a larger economic base and employment creation; and rural and youth population desire for jobs and increased incomes.

The framework envisaged a number of spaces (political, policy, natural resource, learning, institutional & organizational, cultural, financial/fiscal, and partnership) for scaling up, and articulated how the scaling up would be integrated into these spaces and how they could be instrumental to the success of scaling up. The framework emphasized that the Ministry of Agriculture would be strengthened during the first phase of the project so that it would become a leader during the second phase. Importantly, the framework defined IFAD’s specific role for scaling up: supporting the drivers, scaling up financial support, helping maintain focus, continuing policy dialogue with the Government to ensure that scaling up is addressed in government strategies, and supporting M&E.

The **2012 Viet Nam COSOP** laid out a scaling-up strategy for the entire country programme, focusing on three ideas/innovations (with multiple sub-components): market-oriented institutional capacity building; empowerment of poor farmers; and private sector development. The sub-components and their vision, “the desired scale,” were specific and quantifiable; they ranged from the introduction of value chains to local agencies (with a desired scale of 15,000 farmers in each IFAD-supported province) to public-private producers’ platforms (with a desired scale of these platforms operating in every IFAD province and involving key stakeholders from multiple sectors). The drivers for these activities included government entities (national and local), district/commune and worker representatives, and private entities. The strategy planned to create space for scaling up through financial and political support from Government entities, policy reform and local and institutional capacity building. IFAD’s role was to include a variety of activities such as conducting impact evaluations, cost-benefit analyses and client surveys; maintaining policy dialogue with the Government; building capacity (often through technical assistance) of local entities; ensuring that scaling up was included in local budgets; monitoring results; sharing these results and lessons learned; and helping the Government promote investment and business.

Source: COSOPs Liberia and Viet Nam.

B.2 Review of self-ratings and independent ratings

81. **According to IFAD’s self-assessment, scaling-up performance has improved and corporate targets are being met.** The percentage of PCRs rated moderately satisfactory or higher (MS+, figure 10) for scaling up has increased since 2007, exceeding 80 per cent in all the years since 2010. In the same period, the proportion of projects rated as satisfactory and above (S+) at completion also increased from 48 per cent in 2011 to 74 per cent in 2014.²⁹ The average PCR rating on scaling up in the 2007-14 period is 4.42. The period can be broken into two, with an equal number of years. In the sub-period 2007-10, the average rating

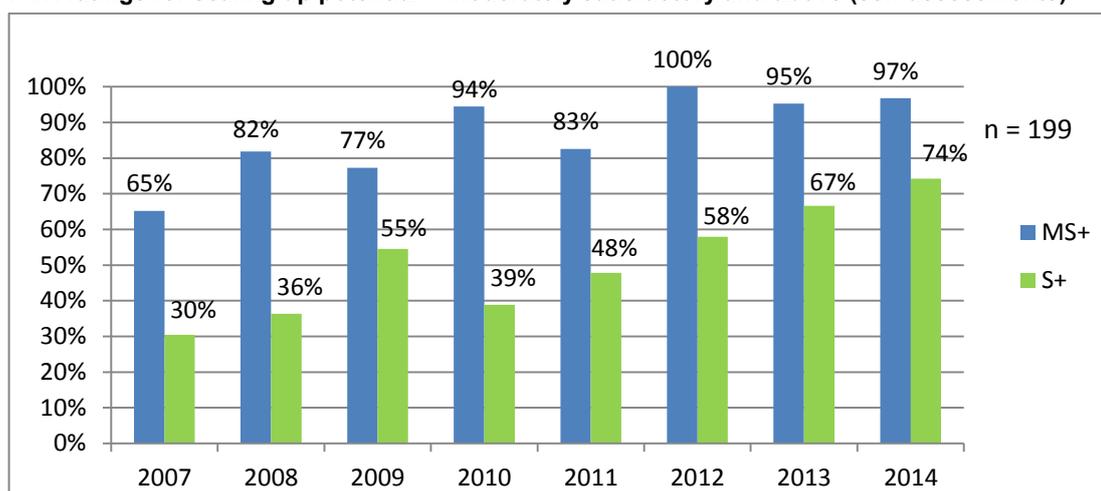
²⁹ The year of reference is the year of project completion, following a practice adopted by the RIDE and the ARRI. In this section, the time series period is that of 2007-2014, in order to show longer-term trends.

was 4.17, while in the period 2011-14, the average PCR rating increased to 4.61; the difference between the two averages is statistically significant at 5 per cent.

82. The RIDE of 2012, referring to the period 2010-12 (IFAD8), had noted that ratings for “innovation, learning and scaling up” in the period 2011-12 were moderately satisfactory or above in 84 per cent of projects completed, already above the target for IFAD8 (75 per cent). In the single year 2012, the percentage of projects rated MS+ was already 93 per cent. The 2016 RIDE, based on PCR ratings for the period 2012-2014, found that 97 per cent of ratings for scaling up were moderately satisfactory or higher, above the target of 90 per cent established for IFAD9 for the period 2013-15 (the self-assessment criterion of scaling up hinges upon the notion of “potential” for future scaling up, rather than actual scaling up).

Figure 10

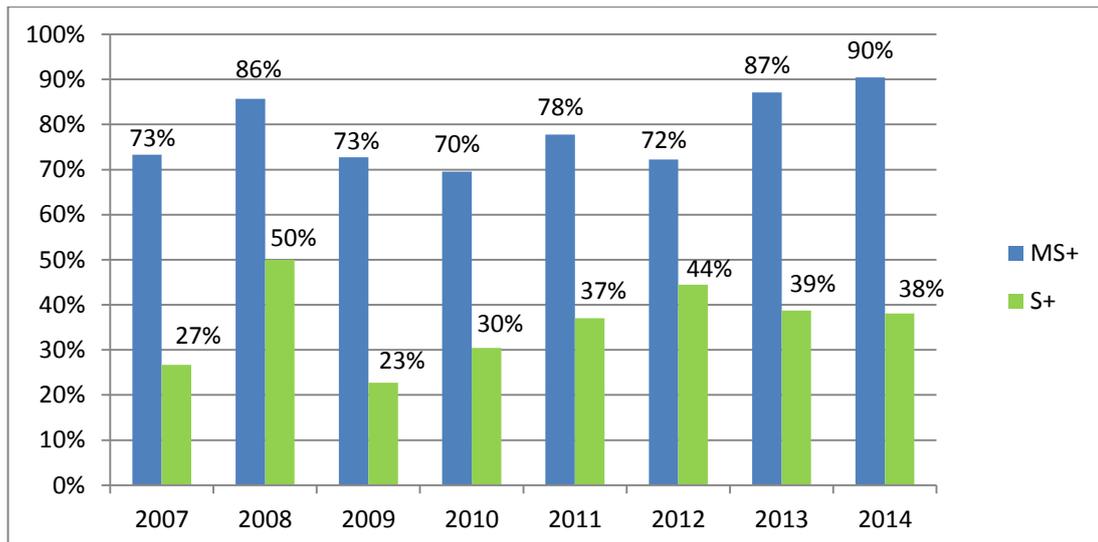
PCR ratings for scaling up potential – moderately satisfactory and above (self-assessments)



Source: IOE elaboration from PCR ratings database.

83. **IOE’s combined ratings on innovation and scaling up display some increase after 2010.** As shown in figure 11, the IOE ratings exhibit an increasing trend between 2010 (MS+ at 73 per cent) and 2014 (MS+ at 94 per cent). However, there is no clear trend in terms of the frequency of S+ (satisfactory or higher) ratings. Comparisons between IOE and PCR ratings across the period 2007-2014 show that IOE ratings are generally lower (table 2, annex II), and the difference is statistically significant for all regional divisions combined, as well as individually for West and Central Africa, Near East, North Africa and Europe and Asia and the Pacific divisions. However, it is important to note that IOE evaluations provide a single rating combining innovation and scaling up; thus there is a limitation in the comparability between the PMD and IOE series.

Figure 11
Independent evaluation ratings for innovation and scaling up

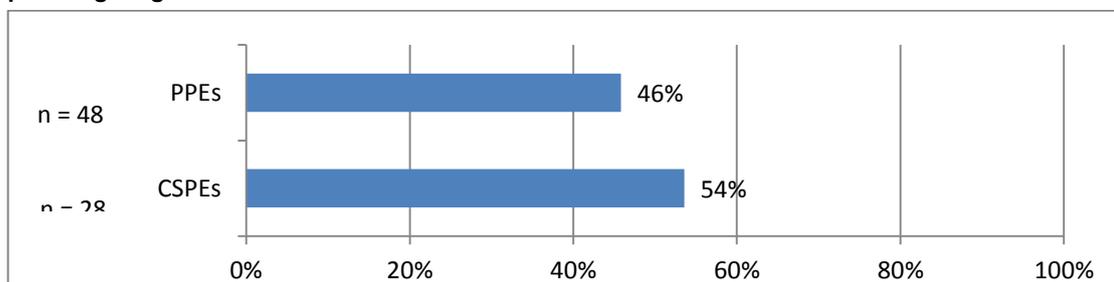


Source: Elaboration from ARRI database.

B.3 Characteristics of scaling up – evaluation content analysis

84. As already noted, IOE reports have discussed innovation and scaling up separately but assigned a joint rating. For this reason, this evaluation synthesis analysed the text of these reports and coded key information contained therein, in order to gather further details on scaling up. This section is based on content analysis of the CPEs as well as PPAs, impact evaluations and interim evaluations conducted by IOE between 2010 and 2015,³⁰ thus including the cohort of evaluations that followed the publication of the Evaluation Manual (first edition 2009).
85. **About half of the CPEs and PPAs conducted since 2010 report cases of scaling up.** More precisely, 54 per cent of CPEs and 46 per cent of PPAs completed between 2010 and 2015 showed some evidence of scaling up having already taken place or being firmly planned (figure 12). In the remaining cases, there was no clear evidence of plans to scale up.

Figure 12
Proportion of PPAs and CPEs that found instances of scaling up taking place or at an advanced planning stage



Source: 2010 to 2015 project evaluations and CPEs.

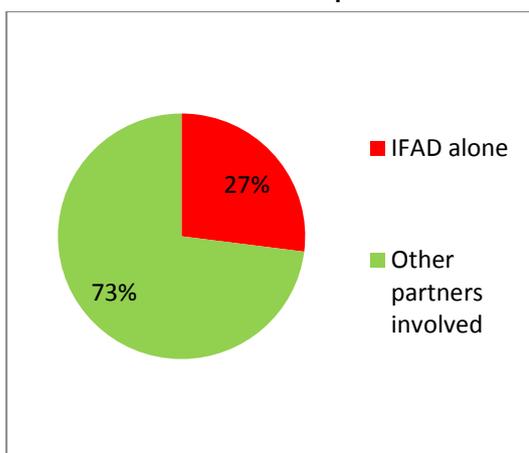
86. **Distribution of the scaling up cases by type of partners involved.** In about 27 per cent of the evaluations where a case of scaling up was found, IFAD was the only promoter of the initiative (i.e. "auto-scaling", not entirely in line with the IFAD definition of scaling up). Instead, in three quarters of the observed scaling-up cases, external partners had contributed to funding scaling up (figure 13.a). When other partners were involved, the government and other development partners

³⁰ IOE conducted interim evaluations of projects (between two phases) and completion evaluations (when no follow-up phase was envisaged) until 2010. Since 2011, these evaluations have been discontinued and replaced by project performance assessments, carried out with a smaller resource envelope.

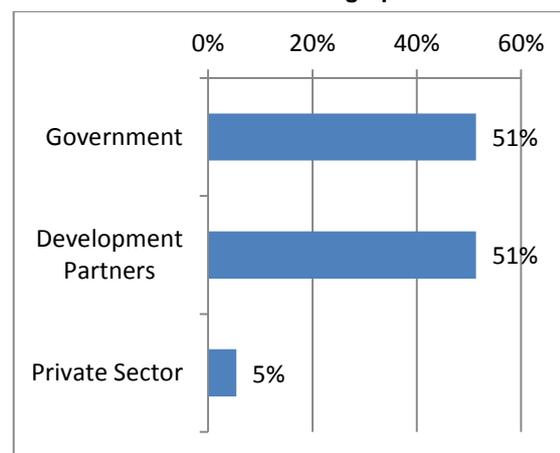
were the most frequent occurrence (51 per cent each) and, in a few cases, the private sector (5 per cent, figure 13.b).³¹

Figure 13

a. On its own vs. with other partners



b. Partners involved in scaling up

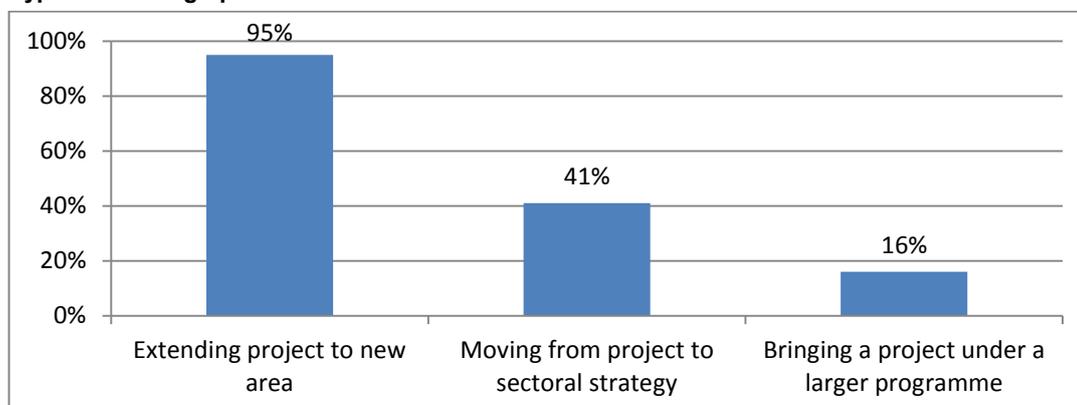


Source: 2010 to 2015 project evaluations and CPEs.

87. **Characteristics of scaling-up cases.** Based on the type of information available in the evaluation reports, three main patterns of scaling up could be identified: (i) broadening the geographical coverage of a project (area expansion); (ii) turning a project approach into part of a public policy (national or local); and (iii) bringing an IFAD-funded project under the umbrella of a larger programme. These patterns are of course not mutually exclusive from a logical point of view: each instance of scaling up may fall into two or more typologies.
88. Scaling up mostly happened through project area expansion, but there were cases of larger programmes and sectoral strategies drawing from project experiences. Of the evaluations where scaling up was observed, almost all (95 per cent) recorded attempts to broaden geographical coverage to new areas (figure 14). In 41 per cent of the recorded scaling-up cases, there were examples of project interventions finding their way towards public strategies or policies. Moreover, in 16 per cent of the recorded scaling-up cases, an IFAD-funded project had been taken under the auspices of a larger programme, funded either by the government or a donor.

Figure 14

Types of scaling up observed



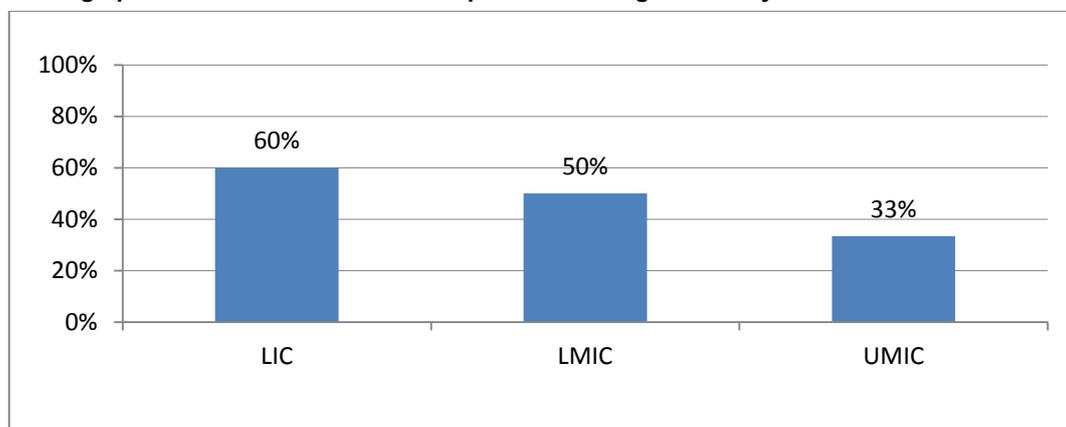
Source: IOE elaboration (2016). Percentages do not sum up to 100 per cent as multiple typologies of scaling up may apply to the same project.

³¹ Percentages do not sum up to 100 per cent as these cases are not mutually exclusive: the government and development partners may be simultaneously involved in scaling up.

89. **According to the content analysis, scaling up was recorded more often in lower-income countries than in upper-middle income countries.** Sixty per cent of the evaluations conducted in lower-income countries and 50 per cent of those in lower-middle-income countries referred to some form of scaling up. The proportion in upper middle-income countries was lower at 33 per cent (figure 15). This is counter to the commonly held expectation that more space for scaling up exists in countries with higher income levels. In part this is due to the availability of funding from international donors, which compensated for public financial resource constraints.

Figure 15

Scaling up in the reviewed evaluation reports according to country income status

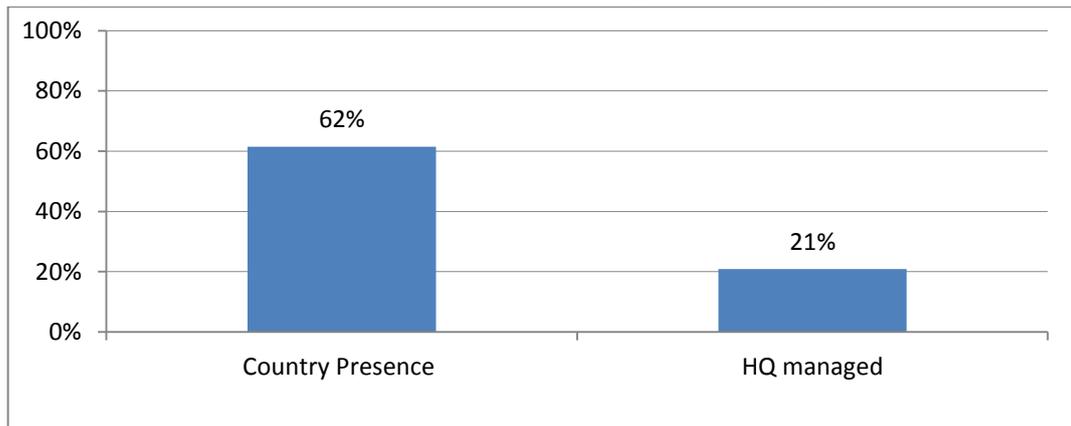


LIC = lower income country; LMIC = lower middle-income country; UMIC = upper middle-income country.

Source: 2010 to 2015 project evaluations and CPEs.

90. Another counter-intuitive finding was that the frequency of scaling-up cases was slightly higher in countries classified as “fragile” (56 per cent) than in those that were not (47 per cent). However, as noted by the 2015 CLE on IFAD’s Engagement in Fragile and Conflict-affected States and Situations, the definition of fragility adopted by IFAD tends to be too broad and encompasses a wide range of countries and situations.
91. **According to the evaluations reviewed, scaling up has been almost three times more prevalent in countries where IFAD had an office.** As shown in figure 16, scaling up features in 62 per cent of the evaluations in countries with IFAD presence compared to only 21 per cent in countries without IFAD presence. Having an office may enhance IFAD’s visibility and quality of interactions with several development partners. It may also lead to enhanced interest from the government, international donors and others to provide support and broaden the scope and reinforce the results achieved by IFAD-funded projects. Supporting evidence comes from the on-going CLE on IFAD’s decentralization experience (2016), which has found that average ratings for innovation and scaling up in the period 2005-15 were higher for countries with an IFAD office and that this difference (4.40 against 4.04) was statistically significant at 5 per cent.

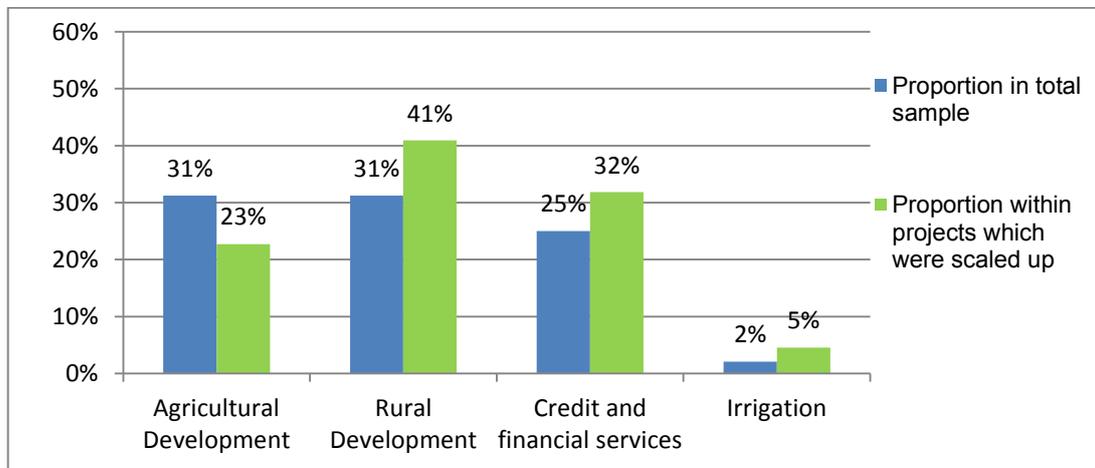
Figure 16
Scaling up in the reviewed evaluation reports according to IFAD country presence status



Source: 2010 to 2015 project evaluations and CPEs.

92. **The project thematic area does not appear to make a difference for scaling up opportunities.** IFAD’s thematic classification for projects comprises ten categories: agricultural development, rural development, livestock, credit and financial services, irrigation, fisheries, settlement, processing and marketing, research, and extension and training. According to the review of this synthesis, the distribution of scaled-up projects by thematic category resembles the distribution of all projects (whether scaled up or not) reviewed by the same category, suggesting that the project theme has little influence on scaling up, other things being equal (figure 17). There is only a slightly higher prevalence of scaling-up cases for “rural development projects” and for “credit and financial services” projects, and slightly lower for “agricultural development” ones. As observed by past evaluations, the IFAD thematic classification does not necessarily reflect the actual nature of project activities.³² Moreover, many IFAD projects are multi-component, and scaling up may concern only a set of activities and results (e.g. rural finance activities in the context of a broader integrated development project).

Figure 17
Scaling up by thematic area



Source: 2010 to 2015 project evaluations.

³² After projects are approved by the Executive Board, a project type is assigned, through a fixed formula and based on the allocation of costs among the project sub-components. If 50 per cent or more of the project costs (exclusive of costs for project management and M&E) are associated with one of the IFAD project types, then that type is assigned to a project. If not, the project reverts to Agricultural Development.

B.4 Factors enabling or constraining scaling up

93. The content analysis of evaluation reports helped identify the enabling or constraining factors connected with the recorded cases of scaling up. They are presented below.
94. **Government ownership.** Government support was crucial in almost all cases. While fiscal space appeared to be an important factor to open up scaling-up opportunities (e.g. in Brazil and India), it was not a necessary requisite. In fact, evaluations found several instances where the government was able to encourage and facilitate support, notably funding, from external donors. In Uganda, for example, the Government was instrumental in mainstreaming certain approaches of the IFAD-funded Area Based Agricultural Modernization Programme (e.g. use of revolving funds and preparing mini-projects tailored to an area's micro climate and agro-ecological characteristics) through funding from the African Development Bank.
95. Government ownership sometimes came under the form of establishing a central unit in a ministry or public agency, specializing in smallholder agriculture or a sub-sectoral theme of pertinence to IFAD-funded projects. One example was found in the evaluation of the Uruguay Rural Project. A new General Directorate within the Ministry of Livestock and Agriculture was established which directed public funding to propagate project approaches and facilitated the negotiation of funding from the Inter-American Development Bank.
96. Government ownership was often the result of the support and passion of like-minded individuals who acted as champions, and not necessarily of the whole ministerial apparatus. Networking done by IFAD staff or project coordinators was crucial in identifying and building champions.
97. **IFAD leadership and extended engagement.** While in IFAD's definition scaling up is expected to happen through the support of development partners, in many instances IFAD needed to continue supporting projects or a set of development activities through two or more phases before other partners could recognize that they were valid and worth pursuing. In some instances this was due to the fact that certain projects or approaches were found to be broadly promising but needed further testing, amendment or fine-tuning.
98. Examples of the above can be found in evaluations undertaken in Brazil. While state and federal Government ownership emerged, respectively, to support the Gente de Valor Project (Bahia) and the Dom Helder Camara project, this was also the fruit of IFAD's support to two project phases. Similarly a recent CPE in Bangladesh underlines the importance of IFAD's steadfast support to innovation in small-scale infrastructure and microfinance through several project phases before it started generating attention from the national government, international donors and NGOs.
99. Some evaluations also hinted to design and implementation fidelity as another reason for IFAD to remain engaged as its approaches are scaled up. When larger publicly funded programmes adopt approaches developed through IFAD projects, there may be a risk that political pressure to achieve high coverage rates may compromise the quality of implementation and of the results. As an example, the 2015 India CPE noted that selected public programmes had adopted the self-help group approach (supported by IFAD in the country since the late 1980s). However, the CPE noted that there was a tendency to place high priority on maximizing outreach, which could affect the quality of targeting and training of group members. Another problem that projects have faced in several countries has been the change of strategic priorities for the rural sector once a new government comes to office. These factors militate towards IFAD's continued engagement.

100. **The basics: overall project achievement and sustainability.** Sustainability and positive overall achievement of a project are a natural requisite for scaling-up prospects. Sustainability of benefits is mentioned explicitly in several evaluations as a key element in bolstering scaling up (e.g. evaluation of the China Rural Finance Sector Programme, the 2012 CPE in Nepal). Conversely, weak sustainability or poor overall project achievement hampered the scaling up of individual components that were performing well (e.g. evaluations of the Georgia Rural Development Programme for Mountainous and Highland Areas and the Jordan National Programme for Rangeland Rehabilitation and Development).
101. While the above findings are rather intuitive, this synthesis has explored the association between the incidence of scaling up and: (i) overall project achievements (as an indicator of project success), measured by independent evaluation ratings; and (ii) sustainability of benefits (also measured by independent evaluation ratings).³³
102. Table 2 presents a cross-tabulation between observations on scaling up from content analysis (i.e. whether scaling up was or was not recorded) and the evaluation ratings of overall project achievement and of sustainability (positive vs. negative rating zone).³⁴ Ideally, scaling up should take place when a project or intervention is in the positive zone for overall project achievement and sustainability prospects. By the same token, it may not be prudent to scale up when these conditions do not hold. Recalling the previous discussion on scalability, not all interventions or results are necessarily to be scaled up. Those that are found to be not successful or not sustainable should not be scaled up unless the reasons for weak performance and low sustainability are analysed and can be addressed. Likewise, a scalability analysis also needs to be conducted for operations that are found as successful and sustainable. A priori, it is not obvious that they will continue to be successful and sustainable when they are moved to a larger scale (e.g. there may be “diseconomies of scale”).
103. As presented in table 2, the observed cases of scaling up almost always (95 per cent) corresponded to projects found to be overall successful (i.e. received an evaluation rating of 4 or higher for overall achievement) and in most cases (77 per cent) sustainable (conversely, however, 23 per cent of projects scaled up had sustainability issues according to their evaluations). Table 2 also shows that, out of the cases where scaling up was not observed, the majority of projects had a positive rating for overall achievement (77 per cent) and for sustainability (62 per cent). These may have represented missed opportunities for scaling up. The review of these evaluation reports suggests that other factors were responsible for this, such as lack of ownership by the government, lack of support from potential donors, or a non-conducive policy environment

³³ Sustainability is one of the criteria that typically scores lower in independent evaluations of IFAD projects, as recurrently reported by the ARRI. For example, according to the 2015 ARRI, sustainability had the second lowest average rating (3.71) after efficiency (3.65) over the period 2002-2014. The 2016 ARRI found that in 2012-14, 69 per cent of projects had ratings for sustainability in the positive zone, up from 63 per cent in 2011-2013.

³⁴ A “positive” zone is understood as ratings from 4 (moderately satisfactory) to 6 (highly satisfactory). A negative zone is that of ratings from 1 (highly unsatisfactory) to 3 (moderately unsatisfactory).

Table 2

Cross-tabulation between observations of scaling up and ratings on overall project achievement and sustainability

	<i>Scaling up observed</i>	<i>Scaling up not observed</i>
A. Overall project achievement rating		
A1. In the positive zone (4-6)	95%	77%
A2. In the negative zone (1-3)	5%	23%
B. Sustainability rating		
A1. In the positive zone (4-6)	77%	62%
A2. In the negative zone (1-3)	23%	38%

Source: IOE desk review and elaboration (2016).

104. **Non-lending activities.** The importance of activities such as partnership building, knowledge management and policy dialogue is recognized at IFAD as a factor of support for scaling up. As noted above, partnerships are important to build interest and ownership by the government and other development actors. While good examples have been found in Brazil, India, Peru and Tanzania, some evaluations also highlighted examples of what may happen without partnerships. The fundamental problem was that of interventions which, though successful, tended to work in isolation so that their experiences were not sufficiently known to key decision makers in the public sector or to other development partners.
105. In the case of the Oudomxai Community Initiatives Support Project in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, good initiatives and practices in community mobilization had not been disseminated to provincial governments, donors, NGOs or researchers. Similarly, the South Western Region Small Farmers Project in the Dominican Republic had proven the viability of a number of export crops in the project area, but the evaluation found no trace of efforts to build strategic alliances with the Government or donors to further promote the experience.
106. Knowledge management was also closely tied to the capacity to provide partners with evidence, including scalability analysis, that a given intervention deserves being scaled up. Conversely, absence of analytical work or credible data made it difficult to convince partners of projects' benefits. According to the PPA of the Bolivia Management of Natural Resources in the Chaco and High Valley Regions Project, the project piloted innovative resource management activities. However, the absence of well-established evidence on their results made it challenging for the project team to engage in meaningful discussions on options and conditions for the central or municipal governments to uptake some of these activities out of their own resources.
107. Policy dialogue. Evaluations and case studies in India and Peru (see box 7) show that the approaches promoted through IFAD-funded projects informed state or country level legislative initiatives and sectoral policies so that these could be implemented under the window of national, state or sectoral programmes. Policy dialogue in these cases stimulated government ownership. A contrasting example comes from the evaluation of the Moldova Rural Business Development Programme. Here one of the constraints to the scaling up of the programme's rural finance approach was the non-conducive policy and industry practices concerning long-term credit. Banks were discouraged from offering long-term savings products and this created an imbalance between the maturity of their assets and liabilities so that banks could not scale up the successful long-term revolving funds established by the IFAD-funded projects.
108. **Positive experiences in India, Peru and Tanzania.** Further illustrations of crucial factors supporting scaling up are presented in box 7. Peru is an often-cited

case of successful scaling up at the portfolio level. The main drivers for scaling up in this case were project ownership by Government officials and communities, dedicated project staff and limited turn-over in the project management teams.³⁵

109. CPEs in India and in Tanzania illustrate examples of scaling up with the Government (in India, both at the state and federal levels), as well as with international donors and the Government (Tanzania, both on the mainland and in Zanzibar). The case of India is particularly interesting because it records three different notions of scaling up: expanded geographical coverage; shift of intervention packages from the project to the policy level; and adoption of project-level approaches by larger public programmes. There is little doubt that in India the presence of relatively abundant funding for public schemes (fiscal space) has been a crucial support factor, but so has been the support and buy-in by state governments and local "champions" that have witnessed two or more phases of IFAD-funded interventions.
110. In Tanzania, IFAD participated in a sector-wide approach to support the agriculture sector. This opened up opportunities to fund farmer field schools as well as participatory planning at the district level, approaches that were relatively new to the country, through financial resources from other development agencies (the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency and the Irish Government).

Box 7

Examples of successful scaling up

India – Government-led scaling up

What was scaled up? A number of IFAD interventions in India – from specific approaches to entire projects – have been scaled up. The Odisha Tribal Empowerment and Livelihoods Programme (OTELP) is being scaled up by the state government of Odisha through a US\$100 million state programme called OTELP+ which aims to converge interventions with existing central government-funded schemes with a foreseen outreach of 90,000 households in 1,500 villages spread over 525 micro-sheds.

The North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Project for Upland Areas has now reached its third phase. The third phase is funded exclusively by the Government of India (central level) to the tune of US\$90 million to expand to new districts targeting 58,850 beneficiary households in 1,177 villages. Parallel to this, a World Bank project (North East Rural Livelihoods Project) has also been expanding similar approaches to four new states of North Eastern India.

In Madhya Pradesh, the Shaurya Dal (or "bravery squad"), a community-level initiative to stem alcoholism, gambling and domestic violence, tested within an IFAD-supported project, will be scaled up as a part of women's empowerment strategy (state policy level) of the Madhya Pradesh state government.

Drivers of scaling up. Some of the main drivers of the scaling-up experience in India have been successful projects, prolonged engagement with the state governments and the fiscal space available to scale up interventions.

Tanzania – Project- to policy-level scaling up

What was scaled up? IFAD invested in the sector-wide programme – Agriculture Sector Development Programme (ASDP) – in mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. ASDP on mainland Tanzania, including its multi-donor basket fund, constituted a new way of organizing cooperation in agricultural development between the Government of Tanzania and its development partners, including IFAD. The adoption of District Agricultural Development Plans across the country was an institutional innovation that made local agricultural development planning more participatory and was scaled up across the country. IFAD's contribution to the basket funding helped in influencing the modality of District Agricultural Development Plans.

³⁵ Similar observations were made in past IOE evaluations in Peru, such as the one of the Puno-Cusco Corridor Project (2006) and of the Management of Natural Resources in the Southern Highlands Project (2002).

In the Zanzibar sub-programme, the farmer field school approach was also disseminated, accompanied by two local incremental innovations, the Farmer Facilitators and the Community Animal Health Workers, who help train neighbour farmers and extend benefits to a larger population. ASDP operations in Zanzibar have also been effectively mainstreamed into the Government's policies, thus leading to scaling up from project to policy.

Drivers of scaling up. In the mainland, the basket fund financed a sector-wide approach, helped IFAD to leverage funding from other donors, and enabled access to the policy makers. In Zanzibar, IFAD was the sole donor operating in the agriculture sector, and project implementation was embedded in the Government structures. This helped in mainstreaming the project's approaches into the Government's policies.

Peru – From projects to laws

In the 1990s in Peru, IFAD realized the limitations in providing only financing services in a middle-income country. Hence, it focused on innovations, partnership building, and taking innovations to scale.

What was scaled up? With the Promotion of Technology Transfer Project to Peasant Communities in the Highlands (FEAS), IFAD introduced a highly participatory and demand-driven method of letting communities choose, plan, cofinance and implement technical assistance. The approach was implemented, with progressive refinements and an impact on policies, in a number of subsequent IFAD projects in the country. For example, as a part of the Development of the Puno-Cusco Corridor Project, the Government formulated two new laws to facilitate the transfer of public funds from the Government to collective beneficiary organizations under a modality called "*nucleo ejecutor central*".

Drivers of scaling up. The main drivers for scaling up, as recorded in the Peru country scaling-up note, are project ownership by Government officials and communities, dedicated project staff and continuity of staff within the project teams.

Source: Peru Country Scaling Up (2015); CPE India (2016); CPE Tanzania (2015); Asia and the Pacific Division paper on Scaling Up: Thapa, G. and Hessel, S. (2016).

B. 5 Information from recent Quality Assurance on the design of future projects

111. After reviewing assessments of past projects, this synthesis turns to the cohorts of future projects. As already noted, IFAD has an established process for ex ante quality control of project design culminating in the "Quality Assurance" (hereinafter referred to as QA). QA is the third of the three formal steps for internal clearance of a loan-funded project proposal at IFAD.³⁶ QA is administered by the Office of the President and Vice President of IFAD³⁷ at an arm's length from PMD. Ratings from the QA can be used as an indicator to observe current trends in the ex-ante assessment of design quality as it pertains to scaling up.
112. While QA ratings have been recorded since 2008, the definition of the criteria that concern scaling up has changed in recent years in order to monitor trends during different replenishment periods. In order to present data in a consistent manner, the discussion here concentrates on the indicators adopted by QA for the IFAD9 period (2013-2015). During this period, out of 92 project designs that underwent a QA, 65 (71 per cent) were rated for scaling up. These were the designs of projects expecting to scale up previous experiences or that had anticipated future scaling up opportunities. Until 2015, QA accepted that a project did not mandatorily need to include scaling-up plans. Instead, starting from 2016, all project designs will be required to include a scaling-up section in their concept note.

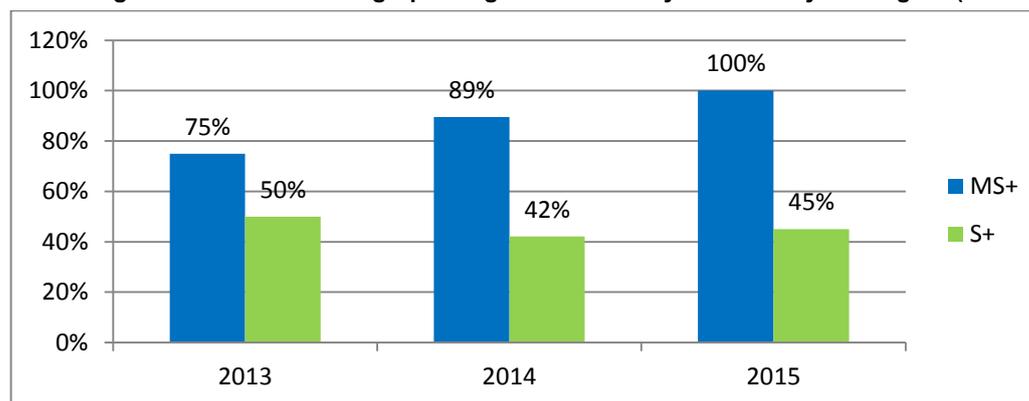
³⁶ The steps that precede QA are: (i) the Operation and Strategic Management Committee's discussion of the project's concept note; and (ii) the Quality Enhancement of the initial design proposal administered by PTA.

³⁷ The QA unit does not release the title of the projects to which the ratings refer. IOE could only access the ratings, the regional division and year of QA but no further data that could identify an individual project.

113. In the IFAD9 period, the QAs considered the below sub-criteria for scaling up, rated them and aggregated these rating in an overall rating for scaling up:
- The design clearly identifies the specific models/interventions to be scaled up;
 - The design provides evidence which demonstrates that tested models/interventions are effective and efficient;
 - The design identifies the scale at which the programme currently works and the scale dimensions to be achieved;
 - The design clearly lays out how the larger scale will be achieved, by identifying the institutional, policy, fiscal and financial requirements which need to be developed in order to reach the larger scale.
114. Looking at the overall QA scaling-up rating, there is an increasing trend between 2013 and 2015 in the percentage of project designs that received a rating of moderately satisfactory and higher (MS+) for scaling up. However, the proportion of projects rated satisfactory or higher (S+) remained more or less constant (figure 18).
115. In terms of the specific sub-criteria adopted by QA, increasing trends are also observed within them, although with variations (table 3). The sub-criterion related to the identification of the specific interventions to be scaled up (sub-criterion a) received the highest percentage of ratings of moderately satisfactory and above (MS+), while the sub-criterion on evidence demonstrating the effectiveness and efficiency of the models to be scaled up (sub-criterion b) was the one with the lowest percentage of MS+ ratings. As for the percentage of ratings of satisfactory and above (S+), there are either no clear increasing trends or more modest increases.
116. In sum, based on QA ratings, those projects that envisaged scaling-up options appear to have paid increasing attention to this topic, although this increase mainly relates to the “moderately satisfactory” rather than fully satisfactory ratings.

Figure 18

Percentage of QA overall scaling-up ratings of moderately satisfactory and higher (IFAD9)



Source: IOE analysis of QA data (2013-2015).

Table 3
Specific sub-criteria for scaling up in QA 2013-2015

<i>Extent to which the project design</i>	<i>Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or higher (satisfactory or higher in brackets)</i>		
	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>
a. Identifies the specific models/interventions to be scaled up	100% (75%)	89% (58%)	100% (79%)
b. Provides evidence that tested models/interventions are effective and efficient	62% (31%)	87% (47%)	81% (38%)
c. Identifies the scale at which the programme currently works and the scale dimensions to be achieved	53% (16%)	79% (47%)	68% (26%)
d. Identifies the institutional, policy, fiscal and financial requirements in order to reach the larger scale	79% (37%)	95% (50%)	85% (40%)

Source: IOE analysis of QA data (2013-2015).

117. Consistent with past evaluation findings, also in the QA minutes, plans for scaling up have been observed with higher frequency in countries where IFAD has an office (81 per cent against 68 per cent). This may also reflect better opportunities to obtain support and funding from the government, and cofinancing from international organizations or other sources that have been facilitated by more direct contacts.

Key points

- Almost all the COSOPs approved since 2010 mentioned scaling-up plans. However, few COSOPs have outlined a clear strategy for the intended scaling-up pathway.
- The average PCR self-assessment ratings for scaling up have been increasing since 2011 and so has the percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory and above and satisfactory and above. Based on these self-ratings, targets for IFAD9 will be achieved or exceeded. Independent evaluation ratings do not follow the same trend but there are limitations in comparability.
- The synthesis conducted content analysis and coding of information, in order to better identify examples of scaling up and factors associated with it. In about half of the evaluations examined there was evidence of scaling up that had taken place or was firmly planned. In a quarter of these cases, scaling up was in fact an initiative of IFAD alone. Instead, in the remaining three quarters, it happened though the combined support and leadership of the government, other development agencies, IFAD and, in a few instances, private sector actors.
- Scaling up was more likely to be observed where IFAD had country presence. Enablers of scaling up included the engagement in non-lending activities, the presence of “project champions” in the government, and trust in IFAD’s experience and mandate. Country presence and non-lending activities can be credited for helping IFAD and its partners to understand what approaches or intervention packages could be considered for scaling up and for helping projects to partner with national and local government agencies, thus avoiding isolation.
- Factors supporting scaling up included basic elements such as overall quality of project achievements and sustainability prospects. In the majority of cases when no scaling up had been observed, project evaluations had a positive assessment of the overall achievements and sustainability. This suggests that there may have been a number of missed opportunities for scaling up.
- Even if scaling up requires support from external development partners, IFAD engagement is often required as “proof” that the intervention is sound, as well as to refine and fine-tune certain interventions which may have a good chance to be successful but require more elaboration. IFAD’s intervention may also be needed to “protect” the original quality of design and implementation, particularly under political pressure.
- The percentage of QA ratings of moderately satisfactory or higher improved in the period 2013-15, with a peak in 2015, while the proportion of projects rated satisfactory and above remains more or less constant. Scaling up was more likely to be planned ex ante when there was an IFAD country office.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

A. Conclusions

118. Past evaluations and IFAD strategic documents have recognized scaling up as “mission-critical” for the Fund. Scaling up is necessary to deliver the Fund’s mandate. Higher impact through scaling up without a commensurate increase in administrative costs would also markedly increase the Fund’s impact efficiency.
119. **The scaling up journey has been long, and scaling up remains a “work in progress”. However, since 2010, Management has continuously ratcheted up the emphasis on scaling up.** Striving for scaled up impact from IFAD interventions cuts across other institutional priorities and goes beyond the focus on the individual project cycle. Embedding such a shift within the organization expectedly entails a long-term, sustained effort. While IFAD has emphasized scaling up at least since 2002, attention has not always been sustained. The Innovation Strategy in 2007, the 2010 CLE on Innovation and Scaling Up, the 2010 Brookings Review, the inclusion of scaling up targets in the Results Measurement Framework (IFAD8, IFAD9 and IFAD10), and the Operational Framework (2015) were important steps in the long journey.
120. Since 2010, IFAD has further engaged in and gained better visibility and leadership at international fora. IFAD has also stepped up its efforts to provide tools and guidance to operational staff. Moreover, the assignment to PTA in PMD as a champion for scaling up has brought the focal point closer to IFAD’s operations on the ground.
121. The 2010 Brookings Review and the 2015 Operational Framework schematic approach to scaling up are conceptually clear and informed by evaluations, institutional self-assessments and international experience. Inter alia, they emphasize the importance of learning from pilot experiences in order to prepare a scaling-up pathway. They highlight the role of non-lending activities, notably the management of existing knowledge, as a key ingredient for scaling up.
122. **The issue of scalability has not been acknowledged forcefully.** Certain interventions may present economies or diseconomies of scale: they may be successful or cost-effective only at a certain size, and other complementary interventions may need to be introduced as the size changes.
123. **In the project cycle there are critical nodes and potential challenges to scaling up.** International experience suggests that focused, well-conceived project design facilitates future scaling up. However, because of the characteristics of its target group, IFAD projects cater to basic needs, productivity enhancement as well as post-production aspects. Partly for this reason, many projects are quite complicated, with a large number of components and sub-components and with implementation arrangements involving several agencies.
124. Evidence on project outcomes and impact is required to assess scalability prospects during implementation. However, M&E is a weak aspect of most projects. Combining weak M&E with the chronic problem of slow implementation pace during the first three to four years results in limited evidence on what works, what could be scaled up and in what conditions until the late stages of the project cycle. Since 2012, the Impact Assessment Initiative has striven to enhance the evidence base on projects’ impacts and this is an important step forward. If impact assessment takes place at the end of the project cycle and has findings of importance for scaling up, this will require follow-up action either in the context of a new IFAD-funded project or through other partnership activities so that the approach can be supported by other developing partners.

125. **Staff “buy-in” is essential to implement the operational framework on scaling up. Three concerns emerge from operational staff perceptions.** There are some difference between the support from senior management, on the one hand, and the views of operational staff, on the other. First, operational staff believe that resources and incentives provided for scaling up are limited, compared to the corporate profile and priority of the topic. Second, they believe that the IFAD10 commitment to virtually universal, “mandatory” application of scaling up, without clear prioritization, misses recognition of the context. This approach is different from that of focusing on a few operations with the best prospects for and evidence of success (scalability analysis) and where IFAD might have a clear comparative advantage. Third, their perception is that the single-minded focus on scaling up risks crowding out attention away from innovation, itself an important part of IFAD’s mandate.
126. **Both IFAD’s self-assessment system and independent evaluations show examples of scaling-up progress.** According to its self-assessments (as synthesized in the RIDE), IFAD is well poised to achieve or exceed the scaling-up targets set for the IFAD9 period. In the past three years, the proportion of projects that Management rated fully satisfactory or higher for scaling up has increased notably. As noted, these ratings refer to the “potential” for scaling up. Ratings from independent evaluations do not exhibit the same trends. IOE’s assessments focus on actual scaling up, and to date IOE has adopted a single rating for innovation and scaling up, so there is limited comparability.
127. This synthesis has found cases of scaling up that had already taken place or were firmly planned in half of the evaluations reviewed. Of these scaling-up cases, one fourth were in fact “auto-scaling”, where IFAD had mobilized additional funding but without evidence of strong initiative by other partners. In the remaining three quarters, other key partners, such as the government, a donor agency or a private sector entity, engaged with IFAD in various combinations and with some degree of ownership.
128. **Government ownership, sustainability, non-lending activities, country presence and IFAD’s leadership and extended engagement are among the key enablers for scaling up identified by past evaluations.** Ultimately, scaling up rests upon the decision of other development partners – and notably governments, which can facilitate access to funding from international donors. While “fiscal space” contributes to scaling up, it does not emerge as a necessary condition: government ownership appears to be of higher importance. This explains why many scaling-up cases were observed in low-income countries where fiscal space is constrained. Governments could in fact facilitate support from other donors. Ownership is often tied to individual champions rather than to the full ministerial apparatus.
129. IFAD has the opportunity to spark the interest of development partners in its operations, and foster ownership and willingness to scale up. This is where non-lending activities are crucial. The review of the evaluations suggests that one of the most important risks to be avoided is that projects work in isolation, without establishing a dialogue with local and national governments, NGOs and other international agencies operating in the same area or thematic sub-sector.
130. Partnerships and policy dialogue are crucial when the policy and institutional environment is not conducive and when there is limited fiscal space. These problems may be addressed and gradually mitigated by engaging in fora on sectoral policy reform as well as in donor groups so that other international agencies may be interested in supporting approaches and intervention packages developed through IFAD projects.
131. While scaling up happens when other partners converge in supporting certain interventions and approaches, this requires extended support from IFAD, often

through several project phases. Partners need to be convinced of IFAD's own buy-in in first place. Even when interventions seem "promising", they may need more fine-tuning or improvements, requiring further support from IFAD before they are ready to be scaled up. Moreover, IFAD needs to be engaged when it is necessary to protect the quality of design and implementation under high disbursement and outreach pressure.

132. Country presence is strongly associated with the ascertained scaling-up cases: as found by the recent (2016) CLE on this topic, country presence has significantly promoted partnerships with governments and other development partners.

B. Recommendations

133. Scaling up merits continued emphasis but needs to be considered as a means to foster broader and higher development impact rather than an end in itself. It should not be promoted as a universal obligation to be complied with, but calibrated according to the individual project and development context. It is also important to avoid the perception that emphasis on scaling up may obfuscate attention to supporting innovation, which is an important part of IFAD's mandate, given that the two can be promoted at the same time. This is further articulated in the below recommendations.
134. **Recommendation 1. Strengthen the country programme and project cycle to enhance scalability.** This requires attention in the preparation of country strategies (COSOP), at project design, during implementation and after project completion.
 - 1.(a) Elaborate a scalability assessment and a pathway to scaling up in country programme strategies (COSOPs) as well as project designs. Until there are further insights into scalability and evidence of sustained benefits, IFAD should be selective, prioritizing areas where the prospects for success and sustainability are considered high and which are aligned with IFAD's strengths and comparative advantages (based on previous experience). The above scaling-up pathway will require, inter alia, emphasis on sustainability and, to the extent possible, economic viability, minimizing subsidies and dependence on project support in the long term.
 - 1.(b) Assess scalability conditions during implementation (including potential constraints deriving from the project design and implementation as well as public policies) and share findings and knowledge with potential champions in the government and with other partners (e.g. donors, private entities, community organizations and their federations).
 - 1.(c) When there are promising scaling-up opportunities, continue IFAD engagement beyond project completion, through further financing phases, partnership and policy dialogue, so as to strengthen ownership by the government and other development partners, and facilitate the adoption of proven approaches by larger programmes, public strategies and policies.
135. **Recommendation 2. Build stronger consensus and incentives in-house to support scaling up.** In order to "demystify" and clarify the concept of scaling up and motivate staff, IFAD should promote exchanges between operational staff and exposure to concrete scaling-up experiences (e.g. through country visits).
136. **Recommendation 3. Set targets based on achievements and evidence on scaling-up pathway preparation rather than generic "potential".** It will be important to make the assessment more objective. At the project completion stage, the assessment needs to focus more on the concrete steps (e.g. analysing evidence, sharing lessons, networking) that have been taken to encourage development partners' interest and commitment to scaling up, as well as on the agreements made with the partners and timeframe to implement them.

137. **Recommendation 4. In the future, IOE should rate innovation and scaling up separately.** So far, evaluation reports have assessed innovation and scaling up but provided a single rating for the two, in conformity with the past when IFAD merged the two notions. However, as noted in the 2010 Brookings Review and in the 2015 Operational Framework, the two concepts are related but do not coincide. For better conceptual clarity and in order to enhance comparability between self-assessment and independent evaluations, there should be separate ratings for innovation and for scaling up.

Senior independent adviser's report

1. This reviewer was asked to submit comments and observations on the final draft of the report: IFAD's Support to Scaling Up of Results – Evaluation Synthesis, prepared by IFAD's Independent Office of Evaluation, as well as on the conduct of the evaluation process. This reviewer had previously submitted ample comments on (a) the draft approach paper; and (b) a previous version of the draft report, before its submission to the comments of IFAD management. This reviewer wishes to express his appreciation and pleasure for being part of this evaluation exercise.
2. This final comment concerns both the conduct of the evaluation, and the conclusions and recommendations of the report. Overall this assessment in both cases is highly positive. The evaluation team, its leadership and the IOE staff involved in this exercise should be complimented for the excellence of the job done.
3. Substantial adjustments have been made to the previous version of the report reviewed and commented upon by this reviewer. The result of these adjustments, essentially in matters of presentation, is to render the report more sharply focused, more readable and more convincing, without modifying much in substance from the previous version: the content, the analysis, the evidence presented, the main conclusions and recommendations remain substantially unchanged.
4. This reviewer in particular wishes to acknowledge the extent to which his previous observations, comments and suggestions have been taken into account in the preparation of the final draft. Admittedly, and predictably, not all comments and suggestions have been agreed to (see below). This reviewer acknowledges the fact that several of the questions raised may have fallen outside the nature and scope of this exercise. Yet, there is no major point of the report which this reviewer disagrees with.
5. As anticipated the report places major emphasis on ways to improve the performance and effectiveness of IFAD's policy on scaling up from an internal point of view, i.e. what can and should be adjusted within IFAD's own way of operating to reach such an objective. The report responds well to this question and it offers credible, commendable answers, acknowledging that the key question to be addressed is that of the incentives for all actors to buy-in and perform in the proposed new directions.
6. Thus, in this reviewer's view, the main strengths of the report lie in the following elements:
 - (a) The report is highly informative; it is well written and clearly presented;
 - (b) The analysis covers the full range of issues associated with the subject matter, it draws on considerable in-house experience as well as on experience from other development institutions;
 - (c) It reaches conclusions that follow clearly from the analytical work conducted in the study;
 - (d) It makes a set of relevant, practical and implementable recommendations that are consistent with the findings;
 - (e) The report in all aspects responds fully to the terms of reference for the evaluation and to the norms and standards of IFAD for such an exercise;
 - (f) This report should result in bringing about a significant improvement in the treatment by IFAD of a complex difficult issue, which however entails considerable prospects for increased impact of IFAD's activities.
7. This reviewer acknowledges unambiguously the prolonged and sustained effort made by IFAD to address this critical matter and consistently to seek ways to

improve its performance and effectiveness in this area. Nevertheless there are two areas of some discomfort which are worth mentioning:

- (a) Perhaps added emphasis could have been given to the issue of who in the end are the expected beneficiaries of scaling up. Some discrimination between lending and non-lending activities could have been further elaborated upon, as they may address different types of beneficiaries;
 - (b) Likewise, added emphasis could be given to the need to seek inputs from governments and other donors/partners about their own views concerning IFAD's past experience, current policy and expected strategy for the future. In this context, the recommendation to focus on the COSOPs to map out the path toward increased scaling up makes particularly good sense.
8. This reviewer fully concurs with the assessment made in the report that (a) IFAD is serious and professional in addressing the issue of scaling up; and (b) there are several ways in which to make IFAD more effective and relevant in pursuing improved performance in this area, particularly from an internal point of view. The conclusions and recommendations presented in the report are fully convincing in this respect.
9. This reviewer expresses hope that this excellent evaluation exercise will find prompt implementation of the specific recommendations as formulated in the report.

Complementary tables

Table 1
CLE 2010 and 2010 Review on Scaling up: Main messages and progress to date

<i>CLE 2010: Innovation and scaling up – Excerpts from key recommendations on scaling up</i>	<i>Management follow-up (extracted from Management's response and PRISMA 2011)</i>
Treat scaling up as mission-critical. Scaling up is essential if IFAD is to contribute to wider impact on rural poverty. It is imperative that concrete approaches and strategies for scaling up be already articulated at the time of COSOP formulation and project design. The role and contribution of direct supervision and implementation support as well as country presence in support of scaling up should be clearly defined.	Scaling up has been treated as "mission critical" in PMD [...]. An institutional review on scaling up in IFAD has been conducted by the Wolfensohn Centre for Development, and findings were presented to IFAD. It found examples of scaling up of successful development initiatives.
Adequate resources and space need to be allocated towards non-lending activities, which are essential for scaling up, and staff competencies further developed to ensure success in this area. [...]. At the project level, improvements in monitoring and evaluations systems are essential.	The focus on non-lending activities has increased in recent years. This includes increasing the focus on partnerships and policy dialogue as key dimensions of country presence. At the corporate level, IFAD is engaging more effectively in policy dialogue, including through initiatives such as the Rural Poverty Report and the Smallholder Conference. Various measures to strengthen the knowledge management culture in IFAD are underway.
IFAD should set corporate targets for scaling up and monitor and report on them annually. In this regard, it is also important to underline the accountability framework for scaling up, which would ensure that this critical phase in IFAD's innovation journey is given due attention and resources.	This is included as a part of the Results Measurement Framework and reported annually by Management through the Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness.
It is [...] recommended that in the future, innovation be assessed and reported upon as a separate process from scaling up.	PMD reports separately between innovation and scaling up.
<i>Key messages of the 2010 Review</i>	<i>Progress made to date (based on desk review and interviews held at the IFAD headquarters)</i>
Turning IFAD into a scaling-up institution requires a comprehensive approach to formulate an institutional strategy focused on scaling up.	The IFAD10 replenishment created a commitment to have all projects address scaling up. IFAD created the "Operational framework for scaling up results" in 2015.
Significant changes are needed in IFAD's operational processes and institutional practices, including its operational instruments, knowledge management, and human and financial resource management	Scaling up has received attention from senior management. Some progress has been made in adapting the guidance available to staff on the project cycle. There has not (yet) been a comprehensive review of instruments and business processes. One of the concerns of IFAD staff is that attention to scaling up may risk "crowding out" the importance of innovation and testing.
In managing this institutional change, there are risks to be avoided: creating a new "mantra;" forgetting that scaling up is a means to an end, not the end itself; creating excessively burdensome processes; and spreading IFAD's human resources too thin. In designing and implementing IFAD's scaling-up agenda, it is therefore essential to keep messages focused and the processes simple.	While agreeing on the importance of scaling up, staff members highlighted that these risks are real. For example, the commitment made as a part of IFAD10, of all projects addressing scaling up, is sometimes viewed as "another checkbox to fill". While corporate objectives are now becoming clearer, there are still questions from staff on how to operationalize the concept.

Source: IOE elaboration (2016).

Table 2
PMD and IOE average ratings for innovation and scaling up 2007-2014^a

	<i>Overall Average</i>	<i>West and Central Africa Division</i>	<i>Near East, North Africa and Europe Division</i>	<i>Latin America and the Caribbean Division</i>	<i>East and Southern Africa Division</i>	<i>Asia and the Pacific Division</i>
PCRs/PMD	4.42	4.25	4.55	4.25	4.45	4.54
ARRI/IOE	4.11	3.81	4.06	4.03	4.20	4.32
Diff IOE – PMD	-0.31**	-0.44**	-0.49**	-0.22	-0.25	-0.22**

^a. PCR ratings are for scaling up only. IOE ratings are for innovation and scaling up combined.

** Statistically significant at 5 per cent.

Source: PCR and ARRI databases.

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