

# 2026

## ANNUAL FORUM PROCEEDINGS



 **SCALING**  
COMMUNITY *of* PRACTICE

# INTRODUCTION

The Scaling Community of Practice (SCoP) held its 9th Annual Forum from February 23rd to March 6th. Over one thousand people from 443 organizations registered for the event, which presented views from 60 speakers in 11 webinars over 2 weeks. Eight working groups hosted webinars, and there were plenaries on results from the SCoP's [study of mainstreaming scaling in funder organizations](#), the launch of the [Scaling Campaign 2026-2030](#), and a final summary and Call to Action.

Over the course of two weeks, six key themes emerged:

1. The decline in official development assistance is an opportunity to accelerate the shift toward locally owned, sustainable systems change.
2. Effective scaling must embed permanent change in local systems (transformational scaling), not just expand the reach of short-term projects (transactional scaling).
3. Genuine ownership requires country leadership and execution capacity from the outset, with external partners positioned as change agents, not project owners.
4. Well-designed, nationally led country platforms are useful mechanisms for coordinating finance, policy, and implementation toward transformational impact.
5. Transformational scaling requires embedding scaling into organizational culture, job descriptions, and performance metric. It cannot rely on individual champions.
6. Because scaling is fundamentally political, success depends on community-driven legitimacy, transparency, and a shared commitment to prioritizing results over organizational credit.

These six themes reinforce the Scaling Campaign 2026-2030's [Call to Action](#):

**All international development and climate actors are invited to collectively take specific action not only for one-off, short-term project outputs, but for long-term, locally led sustainable impact at the scale of the problem.**

## FIRST PLENARY SESSION

### TRANSFORMATIONAL SCALING IN PRACTICE: INSIGHTS FROM THE MAINSTREAMING INITIATIVE AND WHAT COMES NEXT

Larry Cooley, Scaling Community of Practice  
Johannes Linn, Scaling Community of Practice

Benjamin Kumpf, OECD-DAC  
Karlee Silver, GCC  
Natalia Borrero Guerrero, Fundación Corona

Jeff Bradach, The Bridgespan Group  
Homi Kharas, The Brookings Institution

The first plenary presented the findings of the SCoP's three-year initiative on **Mainstreaming Scaling in Funder Organizations**. This landmark action-research effort examined how **28 funder organizations** integrated scaling into their strategies, operations, and incentive systems. The organizations considered spanned multilateral development banks, bilateral official funders, vertical funds, international non-governmental organizations, and foundations. Co-chairs **Larry Cooley** and **Johannes Linn** presented the key findings in the final **Synthesis Report** and **Policy Brief**, then handed the conversation to a panel moderated by **Ben Kumpf** of the OECD, featuring Karlee Silver (Grand Challenges Canada), Natalia Borrero (Fundación Corona), Jeff Bradach (advisor and co-founder of Bridgespan), and Homi Kharas (Brookings).

The headline finding was uneven progress: scaling has become a topic of growing interest, but the needle is moving too slowly. Funders are active across all stages of the scaling pathway, but **there is no systematic handoff between those funding early-stage innovation and those with the capacity to support scale-up**. As Johannes put it, many promising initiatives are simply left to languish and never reach the populations that need them.

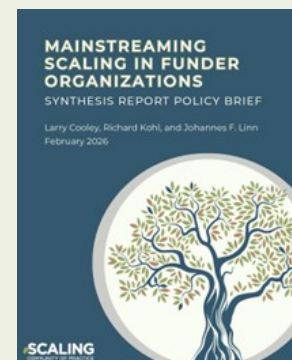
What emerged from the panel was less a debate about the findings and more a collective reckoning with why so little has changed despite so much being already known. **Jeff Bradach** referred to it as a "**knowing-doing gap**", where funders say the right things about systems change and then behave in wholly transactional ways. **Homi Kharas** said the **distinction between transactional and transformational scaling** was the most salient insight from the research, not because it was new,

but because seeing it documented so clearly made it harder to ignore. **Karlee Silver** offered a telling illustration from her own experience: one of her performance objectives had literally been to "solve early child development scaling." This example demonstrates how even well-intentioned organizations can encode **unrealistic accountability mechanisms** that undermine the collaboration scaling requires. Building on this, **Natalia Borrero** offered a quiet provocation: why is Fundación Corona's funding model, **leveraging grants 7:1 through partnership** to facilitate scaling, not the norm?

The Mainstreaming Initiative's findings directly inform the **Scaling Campaign 2026-2030**, which aims to translate these hard-won lessons into concrete action across the global development and climate ecosystem (see next section for more).



Synthesis Report



Policy Brief

## SECOND PLENARY SESSION

### LAUNCHING A MOVEMENT TO EMBED "TRANSFORMATIONAL SCALE" IN DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION

Larry Cooley, Scaling Community of Practice  
Alan Robbins, Devex  
Ndidi Okonkwo Nwuneli, The ONE Campaign

Poonam Muttreja, Population Foundation of India  
Jordan Fabyanske, Integral

Abdihakim Ainte, Office of Prime Minister of Somalia  
Simon Winter, RF Catalytic Capital

The second plenary marked the formal launch of the **Scaling Campaign 2026-2030**, which represents the SCoP's move from a peer-learning network to a movement. A network has loosely connected nodes that facilitate communication and learning while a **movement shapes narratives and builds collective action through leaders**, without any one organization "owning" the agenda. The session made the case for *members* to start pushing for systemic change across the institutions, governments, and funders that shape development and climate action at scale.

The Campaign's three outcomes – adoption of scaling practices and standards, a connected and skilled global community, and demonstration of scaling in practice – were presented not as an organizational to-do list, but as a theory of change for reaching a tipping point where transformational

scaling becomes the norm rather than the exception.

The panel, led by **Alan Robbins** of Devex and featuring Jordan Fabyanske (Dalberg Catalyst), Poonam Muttreja (Population Foundation of India), and Ndidi Okonkwo Nwuneli (the One Campaign), picked up on the "knowing-doing gap" from the first plenary and asked: **if we know what needs to change, why hasn't it?** **Jordan Fabyanske** reframed the challenge as "belief work." The problem is not ignorance of what transformational scaling requires. The problem is that funders want to believe they can achieve their objectives without the hard, slow work of true co-creation with governments and communities. The current rupture in ODA has stripped away that convenient assumption. **Poonam Muttreja** brought in the ground-level view from India, arguing that the only

#### Phase 1

- **Connected, informed and empowered** development and climate actors
- **Facilitated the sharing and cross-fertilization** of ideas and best practices within and across sectors

#### Phase 2

- **Developed and disseminated** scaling knowledge and best practices
- **Promoted a scaling mindset and effective scaling practices** for development and climate interventions

#### Phase 3

- Create a tipping point where a systematic emphasis on **transformational scaling becomes standard practice** across the global institutional development and climate ecosystem

**Outcome: Adoption of scaling practices and standards**

across major funders, implementers, and partner countries, enabling bold actors to optimize limited resources by integrating a transformational scale approach.

**Outcome: A connected, skilled global community**

through country and sector platforms that show how coordinated approaches deliver stronger and more equitable outcomes.

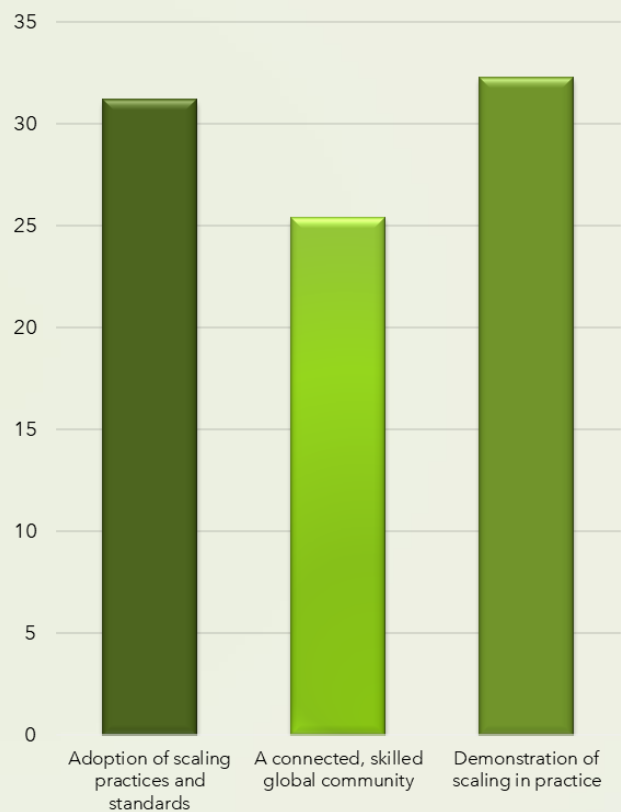
**Outcome: Demonstration of scaling in practice**

that shares evidence, tools, and results to strengthen capabilities, accountability, and accelerate learning across regions.

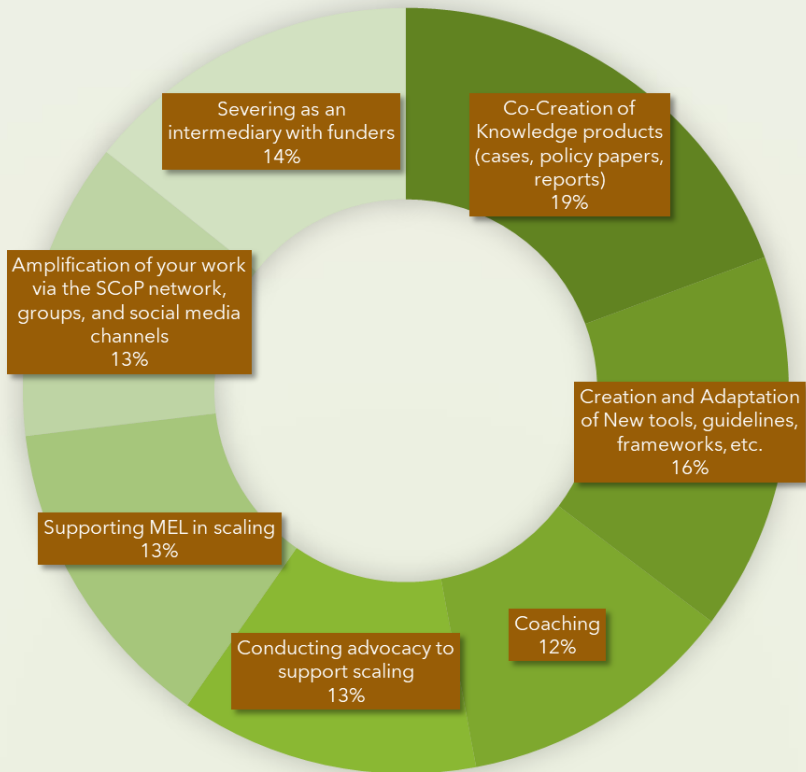
way to make scaling stick is to build it into the delivery structure from day one. Scaling needs to be in performance metrics and incentives. Her example of a 180-episode television campaign that reached 150 million viewers, credited to the Government of India and not the donors, illustrated a clear scaling pathway with true local ownership. **Ndidi Okonkwo Nwuneli** offered a sharp criticism, "I've literally had people, ... ask me, 'If Africa gets its act together, I'm not going to have a job.'" People resist transformational scaling because they do not see themselves in the future it describes. Therefore, the advocacy and communications of the Scaling Campaign cannot be afterthoughts, but must be strategic imperatives.

The session closed with **Larry Cooley** presenting three organizational paths for the Campaign's SCoP Secretariat: a dedicated secretariat, a dispersed model across partner organizations, or a fully organic and voluntary structure. He asked the audience to get involved however they could: **join the movement, advocate within their organizations, work with the SCoP, provide core funding, or engage in other creative activities to support the scaling agenda .**

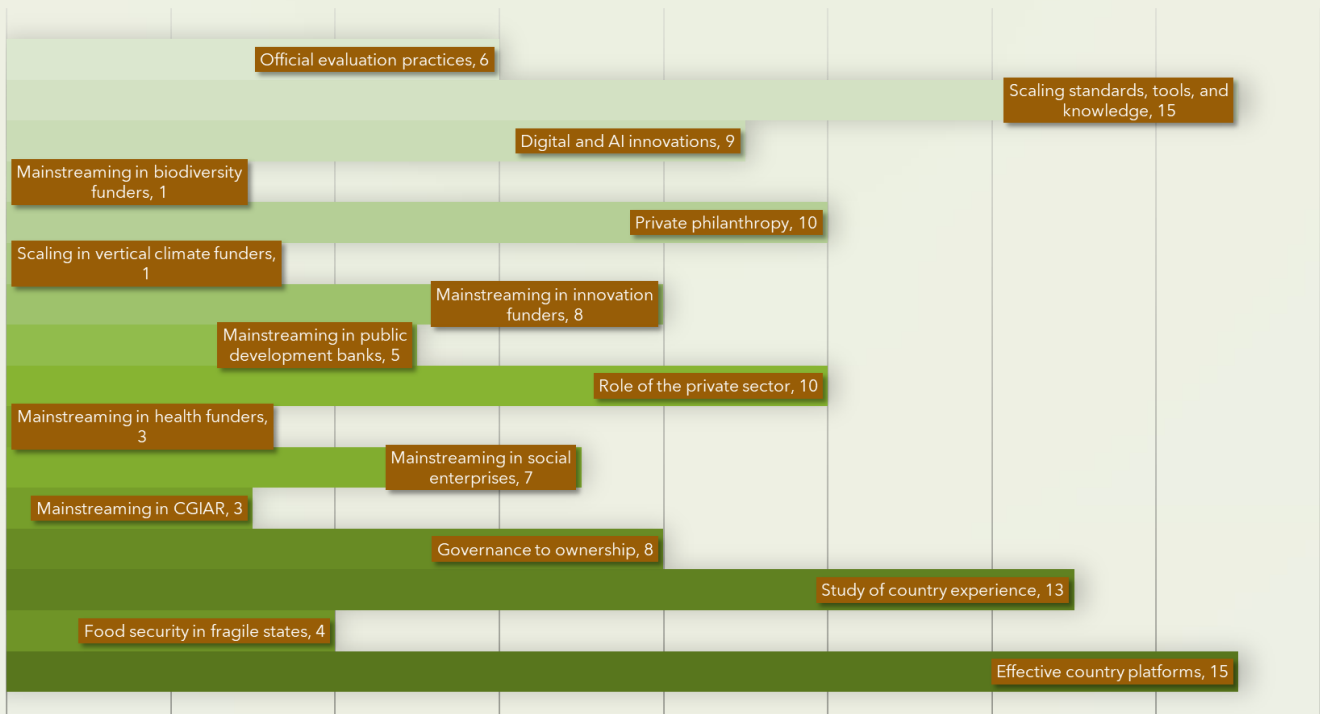
**Which Campaign Outcome area has the greatest interest/relevance for your organization?**



## How could the Scaling Campaign help you achieve your goals?



## Of these 16 initiatives, which one(s) are or would you like your organization to work on?



## THIRD PLENARY SESSION

### ANNUAL FORUM REVIEW AND SCALING CAMPAIGN CALL TO ACTION

Todd Kirkbride, Scaling Community of Practice

Julie Howard, Independent Consultant

Charlotte Coogan, Scaling Community of Practice

Yashodhara Rana, Eleanor Crook Foundation

George McCarthy, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

Simon Winter, RF Catalytic Capital

Larry Cooley, Scaling Community of Practice

Johannes F. Linn, Scaling Community of Practice

Rather than recapping what had already been covered in depth across the previous ten sessions, this session focused on crosscutting themes (see Summary above) and three forward-looking questions:

- Who will join the movement?
- What do members think the Campaign should prioritize?
- What happens next?

**Julie Howard** started the session with a summary of the two-week forum and a tribute to Johannes Linn and Larry Cooley, the SCoP's longtime Co-Chairs.

**Todd Kirkbride** then announced the SCoP's new strategic partners: ExpandNet, Spring Impact, IPA, and IDIA. **Yashodhara Rana** (Eleanor Crook Foundation), **George "Mac" McCarthy** (Lincoln Institute of Land Policy), and **Simon Winter** (Rockefeller Foundation Catalytic Capital) presented how the scaling agenda and the SCoP support their work as funding organizations. Strategic partners and funder testimonials demonstrate that at the Campaign is not a SCoP Secretariat project but a coalition, and that the **SCoP is empowering other organizations to build a movement** that can carry the scaling agenda forward at field level.

The session then turned to the audience, whose live poll responses gave a candid picture of where the community sees both the greatest opportunity and the most significant friction. **Participants named localization and the shift of power and control, the knowing-doing gap, and the messaging around scaling as the Campaign's most pressing challenges.** Participants most wanted the Campaign to help them with **co-creation of knowledge products, tools, guidelines, and frameworks**, which points the need for a SCoP Secretariat to develop additional resources and coordinate the growing movement.

**Larry Cooley** and **Johannes Linn** closed with a candid account of the Campaign's organizational reality. Three paths remain open:

1. A dedicated secretariat, which is the preferred model but requires resources not yet secured
2. A dispersed secretariat anchored in strategic partners
3. A fully organic and voluntary movement with no centre

Larry was direct, **the dedicated SCoP Secretariat model could run out of steam in months without new funding.** He framed this not as a crisis but as a rallying call.

Strategic  
Partners

EXPANDNET



ipa Innovations for  
Poverty Action



## Scaling Campaign 2026-2030: Call to Action

Actors take specific action to invest not only for one-off short-term project outputs, but for **long-term, locally led sustainable impact at the scale of the problem**:

- **Governments:** Forge national consensus to design and navigate pathways to sustainable scale by embedding effective solutions in public systems at scale
- **Private sector:** Leverage innovation, investment and delivery mechanisms for impact at scale
- **Researchers:** Strengthen the evidence base for scaling development outcomes
- **Intermediaries:** Catalyze and anchor the scaling process as champions and by mobilizing technical and financial resources
- **Funders:** Make transformational scaling outcomes a core institutional priority at country level and support the Scaling Campaign, including with field-building support for the SCoP Secretariat

*Watch the official launch of the Scaling Campaign's Call to Action*

[Watch now](#)

## HEALTH WORKING GROUP SESSION

### USING EXPANDNET'S FRAMEWORK, TOOLS AND ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORM TO ADVANCE COUNTRY AND GLOBAL SCALING GOALS

Tendai Gatora, Spark Health Africa

Ginette Hounkanrin, Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF)

Laura Chiron, ExpandNet Secretariat

Haris Ahmed, Aga Khan Foundation Pakistan

Chipo Mupure, Spark Health Africa

Sada Danmusa, Office of the Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

Pratima Musburger, ExpandNet Secretariat

Dr. Mojisola Odeku, Sustainable Health Consult Ltd

This session provided an opportunity for 95+ global health and development practitioners, policymakers, and implementing partners to come together to learn about how the [ExpandNet/WHO framework and scaling guidance](#) can and have been used to strengthen country-level scaling outcomes. The session briefly introduced ExpandNet's systematic approach to scaling as well as its forthcoming Scale-Up Learning Center (SLC), an open access digital learning and collaboration platform to support governments and partners in planning for and managing scaling processes.

A central premise of the session was the recognition that promising health innovations often show strong pilot results but fail to translate into wider implementation. Discussions emphasized that scaling is more than just expanding an intervention package geographically. Scaling involves embedding key components within relevant systems to enable continued expansion and sustainability of positive health outcomes over time. Session participants reflected on the importance of developing a robust scale-up strategy, aligning stakeholders, and ensuring that innovations are designed for the systems where they will be scaled.

Speakers highlighted how the ExpandNet/WHO scaling framework and guidance provided a structured and evidence-based approach to navigating scaling complexities. They shared ways they used the guidance to support multi-stakeholder teams in moving from innovation testing to broader expansion by building government partnerships and ownership, working to identify sustainable financing, and ensuring appropriate monitoring approaches. The three

country experiences demonstrated how to adapt the ExpandNet/WHO scaling approach for strategic planning, real-time adaptation, and health system strengthening. In each country, scaling resource teams used the guidance to identify gaps in current approaches and develop priorities for expansion and institutionalization. Speakers stressed the **practical challenge of determining when an intervention is ready to scale and the need for sufficient evidence of effectiveness, appropriate government engagement, and understanding of the systems to sustain implementation on a larger scale.**

The Health Technical Working Group Co-Chairs, session moderator and panelists all recognized the value of ExpandNet's forthcoming Scale-up Learning Center (SLC) as a platform for professionals working across the global health and development community to build their scaling skills and knowledge. Participants were invited to preregister for the SLC at [slcprereg.expandnet.net](https://slcprereg.expandnet.net) to be notified when the first SLC modules are released and also to visit the [Expandnet.net](https://expandnet.net) website to immediately access the guidance tools (in English and French) that were used for the case experiences presented by panelists.

SLC  
Home Curriculum Info Learning Tracks FAQ Contact Us ExpandNet Website Preregister Now

## Welcome to ExpandNet's Scale-up Learning Center

The Scale-up Learning Center (SLC) is an open-access online platform designed to equip global health and development professionals with practical scaling know-how.

From testing and refining an intervention package to developing a scale-up strategy and managing the scaling process for lasting, system-level impact—the SLC supports expertise across the full scaling trajectory.

Join our learning community and gain skills to expand the reach and sustainability of your work.

Strategic management of the scaling-up process

Plan for scale up during project design and implementation

Develop a scaling-up strategy

## NUTRITION WORKING GROUP SESSION

### SQ-LNS TASK FORCE AND SCALING

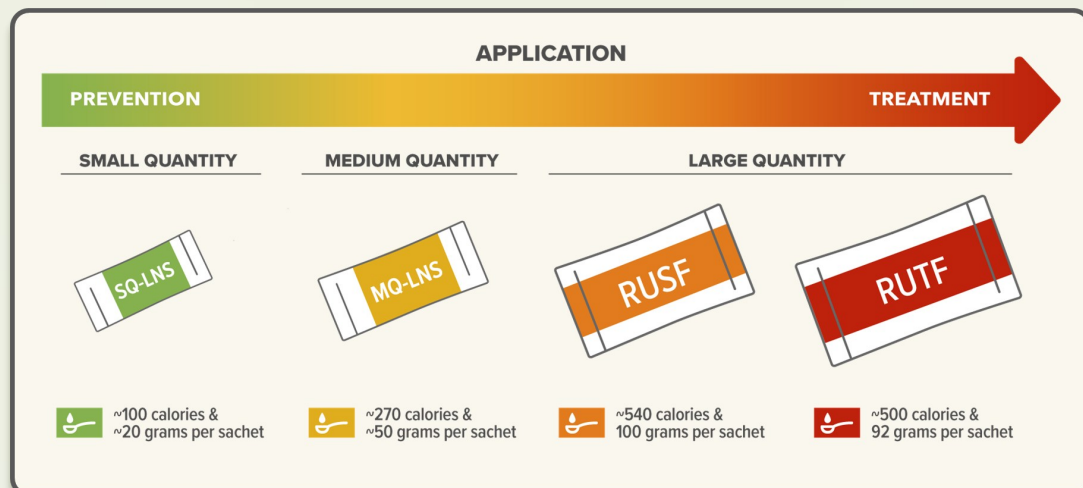
Charlotte Coogan, Scaling Community of Practice  
Kathryn Dewey, University of California, Davis

Christine McDonald, University of California, San Francisco  
Christine Stewart, University of California, Davis

The evidence for small quantity lipid-based nutrient supplements (SQ-LNS) is irrefutable. With a benefit-to-cost ratio of almost 14 to one, SQ-LNS can reduce stunting, wasting, anaemia, vitamin A deficiency, and all-cause child mortality. Since 2024, SQ-LNS has been included in WHO guidelines, the World Bank's Investment Framework for Nutrition, and the Child Nutrition Fund. The last of these, the Child Nutrition Fund, is a financing mechanism that enables countries like Nigeria and Burkina Faso to procure SQ-LNS at scale for the first time.

Due to contracting budgets, the political default is shifting towards treatment over prevention. So, despite being cost-effective at about USD 50 per child per year, SQ-LNS is struggling to secure funding for scaling. Meanwhile, the restructuring of major technical organizations has created real risks, such as loss of expertise, stalled momentum, and duplication of effort. Coordinating bodies like the SQ-LNS Task Force can mitigate some of these risks.

The SQ-LNS Task Force is a multistakeholder coordination platform to scale the use of SQ-LNS globally. Kathryn Dewey, Christine McDonald, and Christine Stewart of the University of California at Davis presented the Task Force and the **two core challenges that define its *raison d'être*: financing and fragmentation**. The Task Force is building delivery platforms that can be sustained through government systems, improving cost-effectiveness to survive constrained budgets, and coordinating across a fragmented funder landscape. SQ-LNS function as an **"incentive anchor."** It can draw caregivers to health posts, improving uptake of vaccinations, wasting screening, and other services. This framing could allow SQ-LNS to unlock co-financing from other sectors, improving the financial outlook and reducing fragmentation. Nigeria's programmatic scale-up, targeting 2 million children with locally sourced SQ-LNS through the Child Nutrition Fund, was offered as early proof of what country-led, multi-partner scaling can look like when the conditions are aligned.



## FRAGILE STATES WORKING GROUP SESSION

### (DE-)SCALING IN FRAGILE AND CONFLICT AFFECTED STATES IN THE AGE OF FUNDING CUTS

Kris Inman, Social Impact

Pallavi Roy, SOAS University of London

Robert Chase, The World Bank

Rob Jenkins, USAID (*formerly*)

Ivy Kuperberg, International Financial Corporation

Bumi Camara, African Development Bank

Robert Chase (Practice Manager for Social Policy in the World Bank's West Africa Region), Robert Jenkins (Strategic advisor and former Senior Executive at USAID), Ivy Kuperberg (Country Officer for Haiti at the International Financial Corporation), and Bumi Camara (Chief Fragility Economist at the African Development Bank) took on the key question: in fragile and conflict affected states (FCAS), where scaling is already difficult, what does the withdrawal of finance mean?

Meaningful scale in FCAS is less about financial volume or geographic reach and more about **deepening impact through locally grounded, adaptable interventions**. Operating effectively in fragile contexts requires a clear understanding of how systems work in practice rather than in design. Rules change fast, local logic governs, and market conditions shift incentives in unpredictable ways. Supporting the domestic private sector means aligning with existing incentives and strengthening what is already functioning, not introducing entirely new models. The African Development Bank's shift in framing from "fragile states" to "transition states" reflects a more nuanced recognition that vulnerability is not uniform and requires targeted, flexible responses. Complementing standard concessional finance with transition support facilities can reduce inadvertently penalising countries with weaker starting conditions. Rigid funding silos and structural barriers within donor institutions compounded context-specific challenges, limiting the flexibility that fragile contexts demand.

Three core insights emerged from this session:

1. Scaling in FCAS is not simply a financing problem. It is also a governance problem. For scaling efforts to be effective and sustainable, they must contribute to strengthening local coping capacities from the outset. Capital without governance-aware design can create dependency rather than resilience.
2. No single agency has the mandate or capacity to address fragility alone. Development finance institutions must build genuine partnerships across public and private actors. But private sector participation in FCAS contexts is often scarce, difficult to establish, or tied to donor-driven agendas that do not align with community needs.
3. The dissolution of USAID and broader official development assistance cuts represent a pivotal moment. The withdrawal of even a minority share of external financing can undermine far larger government-funded systems: **losing a 25% external contribution in a sector can stall service delivery and waste prior investments**, as governments rarely have the capacity to absorb the gap at speed.

The path forward requires pragmatic combinations of targeted development finance institution financing, private sector engagement (where genuinely feasible), and interventions designed around the specific governance capabilities and constraints of each context.

## MONITORING & EVALUATION WORKING GROUP SESSION

### PARTNERING FOR IMPACT: MOROCCO'S EXPERIENCE USING EVIDENCE AND EVALUATION TO SCALE EDUCATION REFORMS DELIVERING IMPACT

Rachna Nag Chowdhuri, Senior Impact Advisor

Imane Fahli, Senior Public Policy Advisor

Ghali Fikri, Ministry of Education, Morocco

Andreas de Barros, UCI School of Education

Aparna Krishnan, J-PAL

John Floretta, J-PAL

Morocco's Pioneer Schools program demonstrates what government-led, evaluation-informed scaling can look like when the conditions are right. When the Ministry of Education launched the program in 2022, the starting point was sobering: national assessments showed fewer than 20% of students had mastered foundational skills, a gap deepened by the learning losses of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Pioneer Schools program leveraged and integrated an intensive remediation program before the start of the school year; structured pedagogy during the year, formative assessments and certifications for teachers and other stakeholders. Armed with impressive results from the evaluation of the pilot program in the first year of the program on learning outcomes, the program expanded to more schools. The government also focused on adapting reforms to tackle challenges faced in middle schools, including issues of dropouts and social and emotional well-being of students. Over the following years, the program demonstrated that the right interventions could produce strong results and that **building evaluation into the program design from the outset fundamentally changes how scale is achieved.**

The panel brought together three experts closely engaged with the program: Andreas de Barros, Assistant Professor at the School of Education, University of California, Irvine and associated with J-PAL's Morocco Innovation and Evaluation Lab; Imane Fahli, a senior public policy advisor; and Ghali Fikri, advisor and member of the Morocco Education department's reform unit. They discussed how a strong commitment to concurrent evaluation allowed the program to learn and adapt as the program scaled year on year. There was a

concerted focus on building a monitoring and evaluation culture beyond individual studies. Decision makers within government, advisors and researchers committed to engage for the longer-term and be flexible to timelines and constraints. This commitment to evaluation and learning enabled a unique opportunity to evaluate a composite of evidence-based interventions at scale, and the impact on learning at scale.

The results were striking, learning gains in Pioneer Schools more than tripled compared to control schools, with over half a standard deviation improvement across Arabic, French, science, and mathematics, and a 30% reduction in dropout rates. The middle school evaluation included the first large-scale assessment of social-emotional outcomes in a lower-income country.

The session's Q&A drew out a less visible dimension of the story: the political economy of implementation. Bringing teachers on board required genuine buy-in through incentive structures, clear communication, and the kind of long-term, collaborative engagement between government decision-makers, advisors, and researchers that cannot be manufactured on a short project timeline. As John Floretta observed in closing: "the situation in Morocco shouldn't be exceptional, but it is, and that is precisely why it matters."

## YOUTH EMPLOYMENT WORKING GROUP SESSION

### SERVICE LEARNING AT SCALE: YOUTH AGENCY, SOCIAL COHESION, AND THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

Charlotte Coogan, Scaling Community of Practice  
Elizabeth Vance, International Youth Foundation (IYF)

Miguel Primo Armendáriz, International Youth Foundation (IYF)  
David Kakishiba, East Bay Asian Youth Center (EBAYC)

This session began with a simple question: why does service learning appear across education systems around the world but often fail to achieve its full potential?

The answer, as the discussion unfolded, lies in how we understand its purpose. Service learning is powerful not because it adds volunteer hours to school. It is powerful because it reconnects learning to public purpose. At a moment when many young people struggle to see how what they study relates to the world they will inherit, service learning can bridge that divide, if it is designed with intention.

Two extraordinary leaders helped explore what that design looks like in practice: David Kakishiba (Executive Director of the East Bay Asian Youth Center and longtime Oakland public education leader) and Miguel Primo Armendáriz (Country Director for the International Youth Foundation in Mexico and a former senior leader within Mexico's public technical education system).

David began with a practitioner's insight: meaningful service learning begins by listening. If young people cannot see how their engagement connects to their interests, frustrations, or aspirations, they will not meaningfully participate. We must engage young people's interests, their anger, their pain, and their hopes for the future. Service learning is not a destination but a process that helps students move beyond acquiring knowledge toward applying it. The goal is critical thinking and teamwork that produce something real.

Miguel brought a systems perspective: governments are drawn to service learning

because it can scale quickly and cost-effectively. Unlike many reforms, it does not require building a parallel delivery system. It can be embedded within existing schools, public agencies, and community partnerships. But, scale alone does not produce impact, "scale without rigor produces activity, not impact."

Across both perspectives, a shared lesson emerged: **the most powerful service learning sits at the intersection of youth relevance and institutional relevance.** Young people must see how the work connects to their own future. Institutions must see how youth participation advances real community priorities. When those two forms of relevance align, service learning becomes more than a teaching method – it becomes a mechanism for strengthening the relationship between young people and the systems meant to serve them.



## EDUCATION WORKING GROUP SESSION

### THE HIDDEN ARCHITECTURE OF EDUCATION MINISTRIES: HOW GOVERNMENT REALLY WORKS (AND WHY IT MATTERS FOR SCALE)

Molly Curtiss Wyss, The Brookings Institution  
Dr. Muna Ngenda, Elimu-Soko

Dr. Mwanakhamis Adam Adeir, Ministry of  
Education and Vocational Training, Zanzibar


Jackson Mahenge, Elimu-Soko  
Nedjma Koval, INTEGRATED International

Scaling education reform requires navigating a different kind of challenge than designing a good intervention. It requires understanding how governments actually work: the decision-making hierarchies, the competing priorities, the long institutional timelines, and the conditions under which external innovations can genuinely embed in public systems. Dr. Mwanakhamis Adam Adeir, Deputy Principal Secretary of Zanzibar's Ministry of Education unpacked the decision-making process within Ministries of Education using the Elimu-Soko pilot to explore how governments function in practice and propose strategies for engaging them effectively in support of scaling.

Partnerships must begin with engagement at the highest levels of ministry leadership to ensure alignment with national priorities across key reform areas such as curriculum, teacher management, and digitalization. Formalizing partnerships

through Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and integrating them into existing government systems avoids parallel structures and supports sustainability. Engaging Ministry staff in pilot design and implementation can ensure capacity constraints are considered and long-term knowledge transfer and continuity are supported after external partners leave. Strong results in literacy and numeracy gains, coupled with the model's practicality, informed the ministry's decision to scale the Elimu-Soko pilot.

In the discussion that followed, participants highlighted broader lessons for effective government-led partnerships, including the importance of government ownership, alignment with public systems, and flexible, adaptive implementation. Despite challenges such as limited staff capacity, competing priorities, and budget constraints, the session underscored that **sustainable scale depends on designing interventions that fit within government systems and priorities from the outset.**




Published in the Stanford Social Innovation Review

### The Education Sector Has an Adoption Gap

Evidence alone is not enough.  
Governments need adoption systems.

Our SSIR article reveals what keeps proven ideas stuck at pilot phase:

- A bottleneck between pilot and scale
- Governments lack clear pathways to institutionalize success
- Adoption systems are missing



[Read more](#)

## CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP SESSION

### CAN COUNTRY PLATFORMS DELIVER CLIMATE ACTION AT SCALE?

Johannes F. Linn, Scaling Community of Practice

Karin Kemper, Scaling Community of Practice

Matthew Eldridge, Scaling Community of Practice

Alexia Latortue, Center for Global Development

Josué Tanaka, London School of Economics'  
Grantham Research Institute

Filipe Borsato da Silva, Banco Nacional de  
Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social (BNDES)

Amar Bhattacharya, The Brookings Institution

The answer to the question posed in the title of this session turned out to be “yes”, but only **if country platforms are designed for the harder task of transformational rather than transactional change.**

The session was opened by Karin Kemper (Senior Advisor to the Scaling Community of Practice and Co-Chair of its Climate Change Working Group) and moderated by Matt Eldridge (Climate and Development Finance Advisor at the Gates Foundation and Co-Chair of the Climate Change Working Group). Johannes Linn (non-resident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution and Co-Chair of the Scaling Community of practice), Alexia Latortue (Distinguished Fellow at the Centre for Global Development and former Assistant Secretary at the U.S. Treasury), Josué Tanaka (Visiting Professor at the London School of Economics and former EBRD climate finance leader), Filipe Borsato da Silva (Climate Finance Investment Manager at BNDES), and Amar Bhattacharya (Senior Fellow at Brookings and Visiting Professor at the London School of Economics) served as panellists.

The distinction between transformational and transactional scaling framed the session’s central challenge. Although country platforms often function as coordination mechanisms for discrete projects, their real value lies in aligning finance, policy reforms, and institutional capacity around a shared national vision to enable long-term, systemic change. Country platforms are closely tied to broader reforms of the international financial architecture. Several practical lessons emerged:

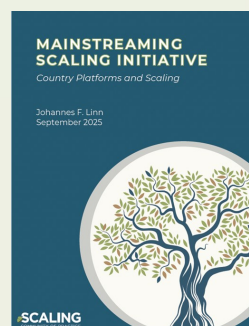
1. Strong country leadership - anchored in ministries of finance and supported by technical capacity - is essential. Ownership

must extend beyond central government to include utilities, development banks, private sector actors, and civil society.

2. Clarity of focus matters. Platforms that are too broad risk becoming unwieldy. More targeted approaches are better positioned to deliver results.
3. While platforms aim to mobilize large-scale capital, funding remains fragmented, with different providers operating under separate mandates and timelines and persistent tensions around concessionality, risk, and coordination.

Finance can support, not drive, national ambition.

The overall conclusion was sober: country platforms hold real promise, but their effectiveness depends on disciplined design, realistic expectations, and sustained alignment across actors. They are not a shortcut to scale. But when the conditions are right—strong country leadership anchored in finance ministries, a clear and bounded focus, and genuine integration of public and private stakeholders—they can become a critical tool for delivering climate action at the scale the problem demands.



Country Platforms