

Nutrition-sensitive agriculture and rural development



Scaling up note



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Guinea – Fouta Djallon Agricultural Rehabilitation
Project

Scaling up results in nutrition-sensitive agriculture and rural development

In 1977, IFAD made improving “the nutritional level of the poorest populations in developing countries” one of the principal objectives of its founding agreement. Since then, governments, civil society and development organizations also have come to recognize the central importance of nutrition – which comprises undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and overweight – to development. Not only is nutrition an outcome of economic growth, but, by improving human capital, it is also an essential input into economic and social development.

Focusing on nutrition also helps to build the resilience of poor households. Malnutrition can lead to illness, a serious problem for a poor family. Unforeseen health costs may force a household to tap savings, sell assets or go into debt, inevitably pushing the household further into poverty. In the longer term, those who are well-nourished in childhood grow up to have greater physical and intellectual capacities, leading to greater earnings over their lifetimes and providing a greater cushion to absorb shocks.

IFAD can play a vital role in development by investing to maximize the contribution that agriculture and rural development, working alongside other sectors, can make in eliminating malnutrition. The connections with agriculture are particularly strong for the rural smallholders at the core of IFAD’s work. These groups often earn their livelihoods from agriculture and related enterprises, and a large part of their diets frequently depends on what they produce.

Agricultural and rural development projects usually assume they have an inherent impact on nutrition because they contribute to general agricultural growth and increases in rural incomes. However, to tackle malnutrition effectively in the short and medium term, agriculture should take advantage of the many other ways that it can more directly affect nutrition. Those in the agricultural sector must also learn to partner more effectively with other sectors, especially health, education, and water and sanitation, in order to address the multisectoral causes of malnutrition more completely.

Given the scale of the problems of poverty and malnutrition, and the limited resources available, leveraging its resources to scale up results sustainably is an overarching priority for IFAD. This note highlights key considerations IFAD partners, stakeholders and staff should consider when scaling up IFAD investments for nutrition. Systematic scaling up ensures that a project is not a one-time event but a stepping stone towards more sustainable impact that improves the lives of the largest number of people.¹ While scaling up *is* about reaching larger numbers of people, the fundamental idea behind scaling up for IFAD is about *how* this expansion takes place. IFAD's approach focuses on working with others to define, initiate and support a process by which a project can grow and be sustained. Over time, these organizations, agencies and individuals should be able to continue and even expand the project with or without IFAD support.

What is to be scaled up?

Agricultural and food-based interventions to improve nutrition. Agriculture and food are the foundations of good nutrition. They make contributions to good nutrition through what people eat. Knowledge, attitudes, practices and resources affect the quantity of food consumed and the quality of diets. These elements of individual choice and circumstance mean that nutrition education and communication are fundamental to almost every investment that aims to improve nutrition.

Within this context, IFAD seeks to optimize the contribution of agricultural and food-based approaches to improving nutrition. IFAD aims to scale up nutrition results by scaling up those nutrition-sensitive agricultural and rural development projects that have explicit nutrition goals, activities and indicators (Box 1). For IFAD, this does not mean setting up stand-alone nutrition projects. Rather, IFAD will mainstream nutrition considerations into its traditional agriculture and rural development investments, seeking to maximize their specific contributions to improving nutrition. Other needed contributions (from the health sector, for example) should come through IFAD working in partnership with these other sectors.

Box 1: How can an agricultural project be made more nutrition-sensitive?

- **Step 1.** Explicitly incorporate improved nutrition into the objectives and indicators of the project. Identify specific actions that will ensure the project contributes to nutrition. For example, in a project to increase crop production, promote a nutrient-dense biofortified crop such as orange sweet potato.
- **Step 2.** To ensure the project has an impact on nutrition, trace the “impact pathway” – the steps from production to consumption needed for the intervention to improve nutrition. Design and implement project actions that will affect that pathway in a systematic way. For example, determine if a change in dietary habits is needed to encourage the consumption of orange sweet potato and, if so, implement actions to promote change.
- **Step 3.** Through policy engagement and partnerships, address opportunities and constraints that affect the pathway and the effectiveness of the intervention, such as the institutional environment, gender or environmental sustainability. For example, determine how the promotion of orange sweet potato affects women in terms of their time or income, how production affects the environment or how climate change affects the crops, and what other actors need to be involved. Design activities to address these factors, including coordination with other key actors, to help the project in its efforts to improve nutrition.

While there is not one model that can make agriculture or rural development more nutrition sensitive, there are multiple opportunities for action. As noted, agricultural interventions typically aim to improve nutrition by increasing food production and raising incomes. These actions make important contributions, but the impact of income alone on nutritional status may be limited and can take years to show the effects. In addition, increases in food production do not necessarily translate into improvements in diets or nutrition. Without social and behavioural changes, consumption patterns, and food storage and preparation practices may stay the same, even if incomes, production and productivity increase. A more extensive and targeted approach is needed for faster and more effective results.

The most effective approach will aim specifically to promote the availability, accessibility and consumption of diverse, nutritious foods through actions all along the supply chain, from production to consumption (Box 2). Agronomic interventions, such as biofortification² and improvements in soil health, can raise the nutrient values of crops. Adoption of improved crops or production systems can increase the diversity and nutritional value of production. Higher incomes and more diverse production can lead to better food choices and diets when combined with nutrition information, such as labelling or media campaigns, education, and behaviour change communications.

¹ Linn, J. 2012. Lessons on Scaling Up: Opportunities and Challenges for the Future. Brief 20. In J. Linn, ed. 2020 Focus 19. *Scaling Up in Agriculture, Rural Development, and Nutrition*. International Food Policy Research Institute: Washington, D.C.

² Biofortification is the improvement of the nutritional value of crops, generally a specific micronutrient. This is most often done through conventional plant breeding, which IFAD supports, rather than genetic modification.

A more diverse food system can also underpin diversification of the diet and provide additional benefits in terms of more stable income, production and prices. Efficient input and output markets and reducing waste of particularly nutritious foods can help change relative prices to favour a healthy diet. Certain processing, storage, transport and home food preparation activities can preserve or improve nutrient values. Energy- or time-saving devices such as sorghum hullers can reduce the amount of time it takes to prepare more nutritious foods, making them more attractive. Promotion of homestead production, when combined with women's empowerment and behaviour change communications, can improve nutrient intake.

Box 2: Agriculture and food system interventions for better nutrition

Available, accessible, and diverse nutritious foods

Enabling environment

- Policy environment and development priorities
- Economic, social, cultural and physical environment
- Health, food safety, education, sanitation, and infrastructure
- Gender roles and environmental sustainability

Food system elements	Nutrition opportunities	Policy tools
Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable intensification of production • Nutrition-promoting farm systems, agronomic practices, crops, livestock, fish and wild foods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Micronutrient fertilizers – Biofortified crops – Integrated farming systems, including fisheries and forestry – Crop and livestock diversification • Stability for food and nutrition security • Nutrition education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – School and home gardens • Nutrient-preserving on-farm storage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and agricultural policies to promote availability, affordability, diversity and quality • Nutrition-oriented agricultural research on crops, livestock and production systems • Promotion of school and home gardens
Post-harvest supply chain "from the farmgate to the retailer": marketing, storage, trade, processing and retailing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrient-preserving and nutrient-enhancing processing, packaging, transport and storage • Reduced waste and increased technical and economic efficiency • Food fortification • Reformulation for better nutrition (e.g. elimination of trans fats) • Food safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation and taxation to promote efficiency, safety, quality and diversity • Research and promotion of innovation in product formulation, processing and transport
Consumers (advertising, labelling, education, safety nets)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition information and health claims • Product labelling • Consumer education • Social protection for food and nutrition security <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – General food assistance programmes and subsidies – Targeted food assistance (prenatal, children, elderly, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food assistance programmes • Food price incentives • Nutrition regulations • Nutrition education, behaviour change communication and information campaigns

Source: FAO. 2013. *The State of Food and Agriculture: Food Systems for Better Nutrition*. Rome: FAO.

At the macroeconomic level, public investments and policies including trade and sectoral policies, can affect prices of more nutritious foods and shape food systems to encourage nutrition-enhancing production or consumer demand. Well-designed and well-targeted consumer information campaigns may also increase demand for more nutritious foods.

Safe and sufficient water, good hygiene and sanitation are also essential. Consistently unsafe water and unhygienic conditions can lead to repeated bouts of illness that can affect the individual's need for and ability to benefit from food and results in chronic undernutrition.

A focus on nutrition brings along with it a focus on gender. Women usually take care of household needs and most of the agricultural work. For the youngest children, the mother often chooses what the child eats, and women are often the most influential in determining what the family eats as well. Women's knowledge, education, social status, health and nutrition, and their control over resources are key factors that affect nutritional outcomes. Gender-sensitive projects that focus on the family – working with men as well as women – can address these factors so that women influence the selection and production of crops and livestock, and choose and prepare nutritious foods for their families. Projects that are gender and nutrition sensitive will recognize the burdens of work inside and outside the home, and allow women time to take care of children and other family members.

Climate change is also related to nutrition. Changes in temperature and rainfall patterns affect productivity and production, including the ways food is stored, packed and transported. This affects the kinds of crops that can be grown or animals that can be raised and their nutritional value.

Broadly, the change to make agriculture and rural development more nutrition sensitive must build on specific interventions that affect different parts of the system. Their effectiveness will depend on a multiplicity of actors across levels – from the public and private sectors and civil society. Coordinated multisectoral action is thus essential to improving nutrition. At the same time, in order to benefit from synergies among the different actions in different sectors, there must be convergence, with actions in various sectors coming together to occur in the same place at the same time.

Scaling up pathways

Scaling up requires a carefully thought-out process. This entails an assessment of which activities should be scaled up and how they can be supported; whether they will work on a large scale; and whether the needed capacities, resources, institutions and other elements of an enabling environment are available or can be created. The process, including a learning framework, should be mapped out from the start. This mapping should identify scaling-up partners, including community actors and project participants, and determine how to motivate them. The plan should establish clear goals, actions and timelines, and set up a solid system of monitoring and evaluation for management, impact assessment and advocacy.

IFAD's roles in the process include: (i) identifying and refining the model projects and approaches to be scaled up; (ii) bringing the lessons from the projects, as well as from partners and other sources, to the scaling-up experience; (iii) leveraging partners and resources to help the projects scale up in a sustainable way; and (iv) strengthening capacities of implementing partners.

IFAD has three primary pathways for supporting scaling up: project financing, knowledge generation and sharing, and policy engagement.

Project financing

IFAD initiatives to make investments more nutrition sensitive employ essentially two approaches: (i) integration of nutrition considerations and indicators into existing elements of a project to give it a nutrition-promoting aspect (i.e. a typical project component, such as enhancing production, will use a new technology or have a new goal, such as the use of biofortified crops instead of traditional ones); or (ii) adding nutrition-promoting activities to the project itself (i.e. a complementary activity, such as nutrition education or behaviour change communication, will make the project more likely to improve nutrition).

Ensuring that a project reaches its full potential requires: (i) undertaking an assessment of what factors (economic, social, political, institutional) affect the various steps along the impact pathway; and (ii) developing a strategy to address them. This may involve engaging with multiple stakeholders and potential partners as their influence, activities or resources may be quite helpful to the project and to sustainable scaling up.

Sustainability will be assured through a mix of government policies and private-sector involvement (particularly in development and financing of value chains), as well as the increased nutritional knowledge and changing consumption habits of consumers. Securing the interest and commitment of communities, particularly women's groups, will help to ground and expand nutrition-sensitive approaches as the groups adopt and spread ideas and interventions through their own social and organizational networks. Targeted research to address knowledge gaps will ensure policies and programmes are effective and evidence based.

In any case, planners should ensure that the project does not have unintended negative consequences on nutrition (for example, by increasing the burdens on women's time).

Box 3 describes one such scaling-up experience relevant for IFAD, that of orange sweet potato. The example shows the need to identify and leverage the engagement and resources of the different actors that affect the scaling-up potential of the project.

Box 3: Scaling up biofortified crops – the example of orange sweet potato

Biofortification aims to develop micronutrient-rich crops that will increase micronutrient intakes and provide nutritional benefits to the population at large. The orange sweet potato (OSP), for example, is one crop that has been developed to address vitamin A deficiencies. From 2007 to 2009, HarvestPlus, a programme of CGIAR, and its partners distributed OSP to more than 24,000 households in Mozambique and Uganda. Pilot project activities were designed to understand how to scale up OSP interventions. Studies carefully analysed the impact pathways and the steps and actors that needed to be involved in scaling up. Lessons learned included the need to establish a critical mass of farmers to produce and consume OSP; to develop markets, with a special focus on improving consumer acceptance; and to integrate promotional activities into the usual programming of relevant institutions. Women were key to the success of the approach, as caregivers and as producers and retailers of OSP. It was thus important to reach women with messages on production, as well as consumption and nutrition. Because men often controlled family resources and made production decisions, it was important to reach them as well. Studies also found that women made more effective extension workers than men.

Source: Bouis, H. and Y. Islam. 2012. Delivering Nutrition Widely through Biofortification: Building on Orange Sweet Potato. Brief 11. In J. Linn, ed. *2020 Focus 19. Scaling Up in Agriculture, Rural Development, and Nutrition*. Washington, D.C: International Food Policy Research Institute.

Further guidance for planning and design can be found in the Guiding Principles for Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture developed through an inter-institutional process led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Box 4 provides a summary.

Box 4: Guiding principles for improving nutrition through agriculture

Plan

1. Incorporate explicit nutrition objectives, actions and indicators consistent with an explicit pathway of impact in the design of agricultural projects, programmes and policies.
2. Assess the local context to understand how best to address nutrition problems.
3. Identify and mitigate potential harms to nutrition of agricultural investments.
4. Collaborate and coordinate with other sectors.
5. Increase equity through ensuring participation, access to resources and decent employment for the most vulnerable.

Take action

6. Empower women and ensure equal access to resources and technologies, services and information. Support women's voices in household, farming and other business decisions.
7. Incorporate nutrition promotion, education and behaviour change communications in project activities.
8. Maintain or improve natural resources, including biodiversity. Manage water resources to reduce illness and ensure safe household water sources.
9. Facilitate diversification of production and livelihoods to improve availability and resilience. Increase production of nutrient-dense crops and small-scale livestock and fish.
10. Increase incomes through production and development of value chains for a variety of nutritious foods.
11. Improve processing, storage and preservation to retain nutritional value, address food safety and reduce post-harvest losses (with positive effects for income and prices).
12. Expand markets and market access for nutritious foods.

Create a supportive environment

13. Promote availability, access and consumption of diverse nutritious and safe foods. Ensure policy and programme coherence to support nutrition throughout the supply chain.
14. Improve governance for nutrition by drawing up a national nutrition strategy and action plan, allocating adequate budgetary resources, implementing nutritional surveillance activities and supporting multisectoral collaboration.
15. Promote gender equality and environmental sustainability.
16. Strengthen technical, strategic and managerial capacities at national, subnational and local levels.
17. Develop information systems to support analysis, monitoring, management and evaluation of consumption, production, processing and marketing aspects of nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food systems.
18. Advocate for improving nutrition through agriculture at global, national, subnational and local levels.

Sources: Adapted from FAO. 2013. *The State of Food and Agriculture. Food Systems for Better Nutrition*. Rome: FAO; and Herforth, A. and C. Dufour. 2014. Key Recommendations for Improving Nutrition through Agriculture: Establishing a Global Consensus. *SCN News* 40 (2013): 33-38.

Knowledge generation and sharing

To develop the evidence needed to support scaling up, the project itself should be considered a laboratory for innovation. Project activities should be rigorously monitored and evaluated. Studies, most often done in partnership with national or international research organizations, should analyse the enabling environment, including political commitment, capacity, learning platforms and institutional arrangements. This information will provide the evidence needed before moving to a larger scale, and undergird discussions among stakeholders on what, if, and how to scale up.

Because the emphasis on making agriculture and rural development projects nutrition sensitive is relatively new, some key gaps exist around the general approach as well as specific interventions. Important work remains to be done to know exactly what to do and how to do it, and to determine where the greatest opportunities are. In other words, it is important to know which interventions are likely to have the greatest impact and greatest net benefit.

This would include effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of actions that might affect the overall agriculture and food system or specific elements of it, such as behavioural change. Further research is also needed on how to make implementation more effective, including institutional aspects of delivery, capacity, and multisectoral collaboration and engagement with the private sector. Systematic monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of IFAD projects could make an important contribution to filling knowledge gaps.

For example, some may question the feasibility of introducing nutrition as an objective into a project, believing that that would take away from a preferred focus on raising incomes and production. In Bangladesh, it was suggested that households raise small fish – fish that had little demand in the market but high nutritional value for the family. They were to be raised in the same ponds as larger fish being produced for income. There was some resistance, as it was thought that introducing these small fish into the same ponds would reduce the productivity of the larger fish, and thus harm incomes. Yet, using an IFAD grant, the WorldFish Center, an international research organization, found that this was not the case. WorldFish also showed families how to incorporate the small fish in the diets of children to improve nutrition (which was difficult to do with the larger fish). The research thus addressed an important knowledge gap about how to integrate nutrition considerations into a project and accomplish traditional objectives of improving incomes as well as capturing nutritional benefits. The grant is currently being scaled up to the regional level.

Policy engagement

Through stakeholder dialogue and engagement, IFAD can help create an enabling environment for scaling up. In addition to reinforcing efforts to mainstream nutrition-sensitive agriculture and rural development into the broader development environment, and so support its investments, IFAD can also link with partners to support implementation of the parts of the project where IFAD does not have a comparative advantage.

IFAD can also play key roles as a trusted convener and knowledge broker. It can work to build the evidence base (and so convince stakeholders of the validity and feasibility of the approach) and to facilitate activities and mechanisms that bring various sectors or agencies together to underpin more effective multisectoral action. For example, IFAD can work to strengthen the understanding of traditional partners, such as the ministries of agriculture, of the importance of nutrition and how agriculture and rural development can contribute to reducing malnutrition. It can step up its work with actors it has not typically partnered with, such as the ministries of health, planning and education, to complement its investments. It can also work closely with communities to improve their links to nutrition-related services, such as agriculture and home extension, maternal and child health services, and water and sanitation. IFAD can also partner with research centres that provide nutrition-relevant products, such as biofortified crops, or important advice, such as how to create the most nutritious home gardens using local varieties.

As one example, in India, IFAD has been working for many years to improve the livelihoods of tribal communities in the State of Odisha. A new project now builds on this experience and explicitly incorporates nutrition objectives and actions, shaping activities from homestead production to value chains to maternal education to be more nutrition sensitive. Empowerment activities centre on strengthening village development committees, which will link to a range of actors relevant to improving nutrition. A broad understanding of the multisectoral nature of the causes of malnutrition led to an explicit partnering with the Odisha State Department of Health and Family Welfare. This department will complement IFAD's actions with attention to the more health-based interventions. Links have also been made with national agricultural research centres.

At the country level, IFAD is coordinating more with other United Nations agencies, namely FAO, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization, which have primary mandates to improve nutrition, as well as REACH, the principal United Nations-sponsored programme to coordinate nutrition action at the country level. Of course, IFAD should support national multistakeholder nutrition platforms as well. Promoting such cross-sectoral dialogue can help to integrate nutrition into agricultural strategies and agriculture into nutrition strategies, such as those sponsored by the ministries of health and education.

In Africa, IFAD should engage more with the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, which has sponsored the development of national agricultural investment plans throughout the continent. One of its four pillars of action highlights the need to address problems of nutrition through agriculture, thus providing IFAD with an excellent point of entry.

And finally the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement is a global initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General to generate increased commitment across multiple actors, especially among governments, to reduce malnutrition. SUN promotes country-level networks of stakeholders, including the United Nations, and assists with funding for nutrition governance. The country commitment made to SUN may help to leverage sectoral as well as multisectoral action to address malnutrition.

Key drivers for scaling up

Individuals and institutions, including leaders from government agencies and development partners who see the benefits of this approach to improving nutrition, are likely to be the main drivers of scaling up a project. Communities and individuals participating in the project can play key roles in making the case for expansion. They can provide the foundation of sustainability as well as transfer awareness to other communities, increasing demand and building momentum for nutrition-sensitive development. Networks among different actors, including project staff, non-governmental organizations, government and research organizations, can also help to accelerate the process and promote expansion.

Still, the merits of the approach will likely need to be built up through evidence and dialogue, because each sector tends to have its own understanding of the causes of malnutrition and tends to work in its own silo. However, these different sectors are essential to implementation and success, so they must be engaged, educated and incentivized to act.

Whereas certain sectors, such as agriculture, may focus primarily on the contribution that their sector can make to improving nutrition (and this may be appropriate in the context of scaling up an IFAD project), broader support may be found among political leaders and cross-sectoral ministries (such as the ministries of planning or finance) that see improving nutrition as a key national goal, especially if the government has incorporated the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) or the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its plans. Thus, they may be significant players, at least in making sure that each sector optimizes its contributions and

that the commitments each sector makes are followed through and measured, thus driving expansion, as well as policy and programme coherence. Issue-based ministries, such as the ministry for women and child development, are also important allies. They may have significant technical advice and strong potential for collaboration in programmes and policy.

Development partners, including bilateral and multilateral development agencies, civil society and non-governmental organizations, can help by communicating with authorities to keep attention on nutrition and by providing technical and financial support. Working in this political context to obtain the support of the highest authorities can create the policy space essential for sectoral and cross-sectoral action. And while the government usually provides, and scales up, public goods such as agricultural research and programmes that promote nutrition behaviour change or oversee food safety, the private sector will be especially important in scaling up projects that are more directly tied to the market, such as the development of nutrition-sensitive value chains. Dialogue may be needed to help those in the private sector understand that they will receive economic benefits from their involvement in nutrition-related activities, such as marketing of more nutritious foods or use of more nutrient-preserving or nutrient-enhancing processing, transport and storage. In other cases, the government may need to develop policies or provide incentives, especially those that address market failures, to get the engagement of the private sector.

Key spaces for scaling up

These actors, who will drive the scaling-up process, must also take actions in specific spaces in order to garner the support, or at least to avoid the hindrances, of others.

Policy and institutional spaces. Given the multisectoral imperative of action on nutrition, any one organization is unlikely to have the range of action, resources or capabilities needed to scale up an intervention by itself. A scaling-up plan should identify the roles and responsibilities of each partner organization as well as determine who will lead the overall process and what the accountability mechanisms and needs for capacity strengthening are.

Key institutions such as the ministry of agriculture must support integrating nutrition into their activities, even if this necessitates some diplomacy to foster a more multisectoral approach. The IFAD country office in the Lao People's Democratic Republic has explicitly tried to address these issues. IFAD had already introduced nutrition-related activities into its projects, when in 2013, as part of strengthening the enabling environment, it began working with the national government and United Nations partners to support the development and implementation of the country's first coordinated multisectoral nutrition plan. This multisectoral plan, now being implemented, addresses undernutrition by embracing a set of priority interventions from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Ministry of Education and Sports, and the Ministry of Health. IFAD is supporting this plan through technical assistance and support for multisectoral planning at the national, provincial and district levels, and work with the National Nutrition Secretariat and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to raise awareness, understanding and commitment to action.

Women's groups may be particularly important in the institutional space for scaling up. These groups often have nutrition as a core concern and may have significant community-level capacities for implementing and scaling up. Their involvement may be as critical to success and sustainability as that of public institutions.

Strategy and learning spaces. As emphasized above, the initial project provides an opportunity for learning. The project structure and time line should give ample opportunity for reflection about what or how to scale up. IFAD can consider how to use its various grant facilities to engage with competent research organizations (such as those from the CGIAR) to carry out the needed studies and apply internal learning processes more systematically.

Financial space. Whether finance is a constraint depends on the country and project context. One challenge – but also an opportunity – when mainstreaming nutrition is that the entry points for nutrition, as well as the depth and scope of action, vary by project. In some cases, the integration of nutrition into a project may incur a minimal cost. In other cases, it may be more significant. For instance, the cost differential of choosing between a typical variety of bean and an iron-rich variety may be marginal in terms of input and production costs. However, if the agricultural research system needs to do more basic scientific work to develop and release the micronutrient-rich variety, the costs may be larger. Scaling up and sustainability will thus be subject to the pathways and sustainability of the different entry points, which will determine the particular fiscal requirements. Funding will likely be needed for the analytical studies, and monitoring and evaluation needed to understand implementation, impact and scaling-up processes, including identifying where resources will come from once current funding ends.

Cultural space. Changes promoted by the interventions may run against some customs or beliefs. For example, many societies have special foods that they traditionally give children during the first two years – but often these foods are not sufficiently nutritious. Improving the diet of these young children may require changes in strongly held practices. Similarly, rural families may have deep attachments to particular foods, and can be sceptical of efforts to introduce new fruits, vegetables or animal products into their diets. The interventions may also highlight the roles of women and encourage gender equality, challenging traditional gender relations and authority.

Monitoring and evaluation

Based on an analysis of the initial scaling-up strategy, optimally project managers should identify key activities, outputs and milestones that will indicate how the scaling-up process is progressing. Participatory analyses and studies should gauge the interest and motivations of key actors and assess progress in each of the spaces described above.

As part of the learning approach and of making a project nutrition sensitive, intermediate (process) and final (impact) indicators of outputs and outcomes, along with potential risks, should be identified as part of monitoring and evaluation. Analyses should also ensure that institutional partners in agriculture, education and health, along with the private sector and civil society, are engaged and incentivized, and that multisectoral coordination mechanisms are established and working. The process should allow for adjustments and corrections as needed over time as the project is implemented. Analyses of costs, benefits, impacts, and implementation and operational constraints and solutions should be done to make sure that scaling up is feasible and justified.

The sort of monitoring and evaluation framework conducive to generating the learning needed to underpin scaling up goes beyond the simple indicators of IFAD's Results and Impact Management System (RIMS), which are higher-level goals, and is more in line with what is needed for a project baseline. The focus is more on the actual processes and direct effects of the project, as well as on what institutional considerations planners must monitor and take into account if they wish to scale up.

Key messages

- Maximize the contribution of agriculture and rural development to nutrition by applying a nutrition lens to design project interventions.
- Begin to develop a scaling-up strategy at the project design stage. Monitor it as the project goes forward.
- Foster strong commitment and institutions across the public sector to garner understanding and to promote strategic leadership using agriculture and food-based approaches to address nutrition.
- Engage the private sector. In a way that will make sense to them from a business point of view, show private sector actors how to undertake nutrition-sensitive actions, what those actions are, and how to scale them up.
 - Smallholders and their institutions, including at the community level, are key to taking up and facilitating expansion.
 - Businesses are important for integrating nutrition-related products and processes into their core activities, particularly value chain development.
- Build the evidence base on working in and scaling up nutrition-sensitive agriculture and rural development; strengthen capacities; and generate knowledge for design, implementation and monitoring for management, evaluation and advocacy.
- Pay close attention to how the project affects women and encourage gender equality.
- Recognize nutrition education and behaviour change communications as key elements of project design.

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