

SCALING UP IMPACT THROUGH GEF SUPPORT

Concept Note

Why we want to study scaling-up

The purpose of this study is to understand the process of scaling up impacts through GEF support. GEF has invested significantly in piloting technologies and approaches, some of which have transformed markets and national government systems when scaled up. As evidenced by its more recent portfolio, GEF now seeks to scale up the impacts of its support by investing in projects and programs that aim to scale up rather than pilot interventions. However, given its limited resources, GEF must leverage the comparative advantages of its partners to achieve global environmental benefits on a larger scale. Another scaling-up challenge it must address are the emerging new types of stakeholders and concerns that the original intervention may not have considered before.

By identifying key factors and conditions, GEF can design projects that have a greater likelihood of scaling up impact. This study will develop a framework for scaling-up in the GEF, drawing lessons from both successful and unsuccessful scaling-up initiatives in completed projects, as well as from the experiences of other institutions.

What we mean by scaling-up

Based on the literature and GEF project documents, scaling up the impact of GEF support means increasing both the quantity and quality of impact, i.e.: 1) increasing the magnitude of global environmental benefits, 2) expanding the geographical area covered by interventions, and 3) fundamentally changing the behavior of populations and institutions, or the target system's structure and processes in a way that results in a higher magnitude of global environmental benefits. In addition, these impacts must be sustained at that larger scale, and ideally catalyze further impact in a positively reinforcing feedback loop.

Figure 1 shows our understanding of scaling-up in the GEF based on literature and document reviews, and the areas which this study will assess and draw lessons from. The yellow rectangles represent the types of interventions to which GEF provides support for scaling up impact. GEF may support more than one of these types of interventions in a single project or program, thus working simultaneously at multiple scales. GEF may support not only the implementation of a technology or approach to be scaled up, but also the enabling factors and conditions that allow scaling up to take place. Examples of the latter type of interventions are policy development and partnership creation. Pilots are interventions aimed to test or demonstrate the extent to which they produce desired benefits at a certain scale; they do not always involve innovations.

Enabling factors and conditions may be broadly classified into two categories: drivers and spaces (Cooley and Linn 2014). Drivers are factors and conditions that catalyze the scaling-up process and push it forward. Spaces are those necessary for an intervention to expand into larger areas. The indicators of achievement are the measures we will use to assess the extent to which outcomes and impacts have been scaled up, based on the definition of scaling-up mentioned above. The specific drivers, spaces and scaling-up pathways are expected to vary depending on the focal area and type of intervention.

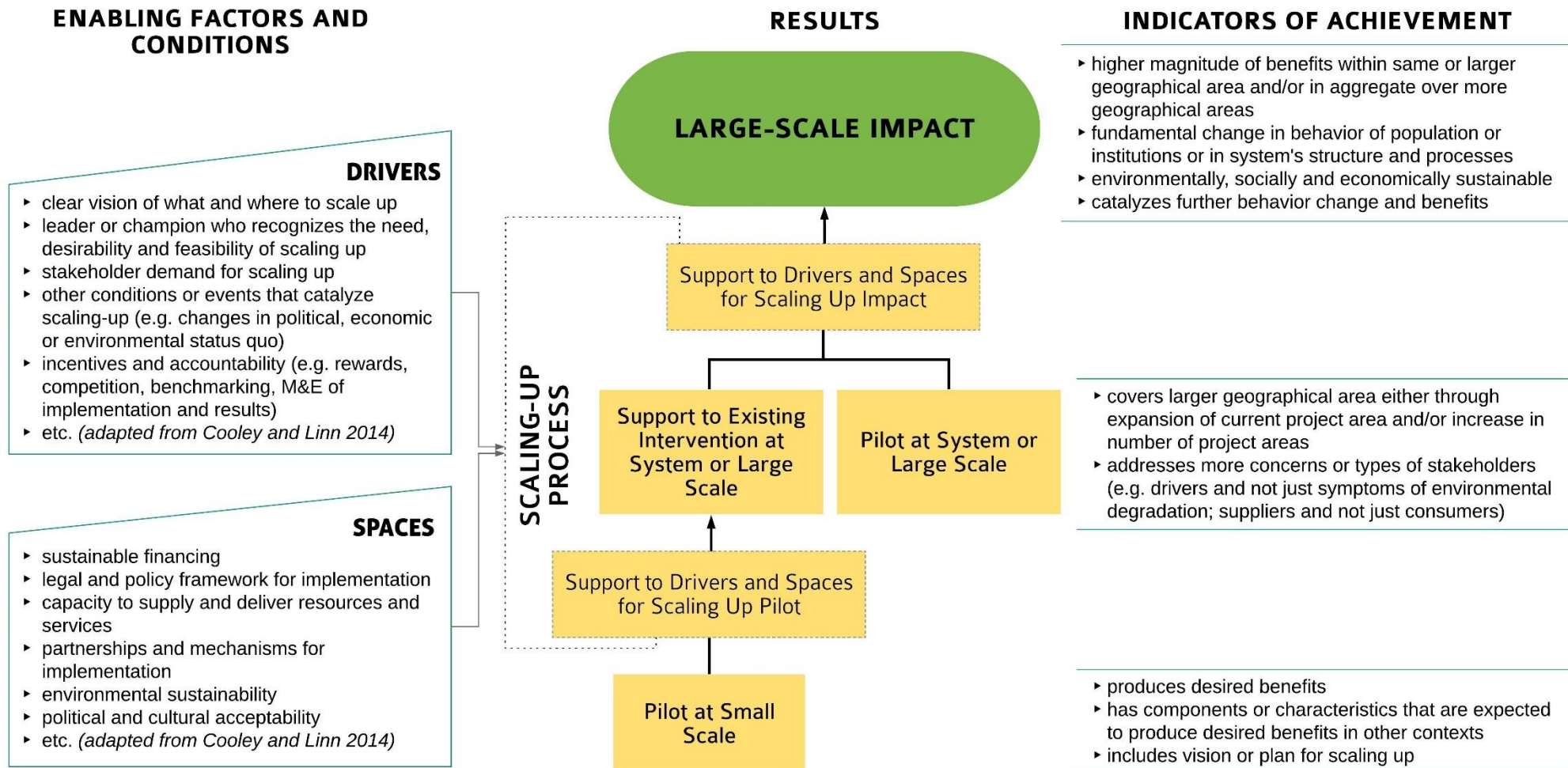


Figure 1. Framework for scaling up impact in the GEF and the corresponding indicators for assessing achievement of results

Note: Yellow rectangles indicate types of interventions that GEF supports to scale up impact. GEF often supports more than one of these types of interventions within a single project or program. As larger-scale impact is typically achieved over the long term, GEF has also provided support to similar types of interventions through sequential projects or programs that build on previous results over several years.

While financing may also be scaled up as a means of scaling up impact, this is neither a necessary nor sufficient factor. This study will examine financing only in the context of assessing the cost-effectiveness of the scaling-up process, as well as its links to financial sustainability.

Objectives and Key Questions

The study aims to develop a framework for assessing the likelihood of scaling-up taking place. This framework is intended for use not just during project design or implementation, but also at project completion and beyond. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the ways that scaling-up has taken place through GEF support?
2. How does the scaling-up process in the GEF compare to that in other sectors and institutions, especially in similar partnerships?
3. What factors, conditions and project design characteristics contribute to or hinder scaling-up in GEF-supported interventions?
4. Under what conditions does GEF support have a comparative advantage to scale up interventions?

Methods

- *Literature review and synthesis.* The paper will summarize the different definitions and models of scaling-up in GEF policy documents and in the broader literature, drawing from various sectors and fields of study. From this, an initial framework for assessment has been developed (see Figure 1) and will continue to be developed using the findings.
- *Key informant interviews.* Members of the GEF partnership, other institutions and partnerships, and authors of key literature on scaling-up will be interviewed on their experiences and perspectives on the scaling-up process. The findings will complement the synthesis of definitions and models of scaling-up gathered from the literature.
- *Portfolio review of successes and failures.* A portfolio of completed projects that aimed to scale up outcomes or impacts will be identified from the Progress towards Impact database, Transformational Change study longlist, and other relevant GEF IEO studies and evaluations. These projects will be reviewed using the initial framework to identify different pathways of scaling-up, and the factors and conditions contributing to or hindering successful scaling-up. The results of this review will be used to verify and refine the framework.
- *Case study analysis.* For selected cases of successful and unsuccessful scaling-up initiatives, more in-depth information will be obtained through document reviews, field visits, and interviews with GEFSEC and project implementation staff to analyze the delivery pathways, factors, conditions and costs leading to their respective outcomes. A systematic comparative analysis will be done to identify key factors using the initial framework for assessment. As scaling-up processes often take place beyond the project implementation period, field visits will be carried out to verify and update results reported in terminal evaluations. Potential case studies of both successful and unsuccessful scaling-up will be identified for each focal area.
- *Verification of results.* Specific methods to objectively verify results reported in project documents and interviews will be used. The choice of methods will depend on the types of environmental, socioeconomic and process-oriented results to be assessed.
- *Quality-at-entry review.* Time permitting, a second portfolio review will be done on projects and programs that are under implementation. The revised framework will be used to assess the likelihood that their scaling-up objectives will be achieved, based on the project or program design.

Stakeholder Engagement and Dissemination

Stakeholder engagement will be sought throughout the study, with the following objectives: 1) to solicit stakeholder feedback and comments to improve the relevance and accuracy of the study, and 2) to promote the utility of the study, by facilitating learning and dissemination once the study is complete. At least one senior peer reviewer with extensive experience in scaling-up research will be engaged through a collaborative relationship to provide feedback. An interim product will be circulated among stakeholders interviewed at the corporate level to solicit feedback and insights on other areas for investigation.

The study's findings will be presented in a report to the GEF Council, and disseminated to members of the GEF partnership, as well as to a more public audience. A knowledge product that will summarize key findings will also be produced and disseminated. A learning event, including a face-to-face session and a webinar, will be organized to share the main findings.

Timeline

PERIOD	ACTIVITY
January 2018	Literature Review and Synthesis
February – March 2018	Development of protocols for portfolio review Portfolio Review Development of Initial Framework Interviews with GEF Secretariat
April – June 2018	Interviews with GEF Agencies Creation of database of cases Draft of initial findings and revised framework based on interviews
July – August 2018	Interviews with other partnerships Case study selection and preparation
September - October 2018	Circulation of interim report to corporate stakeholders for feedback Field visits Portfolio and case study analyses (testing of revised framework)
November – December 2018	Case study analysis and verification of results Refinement of Framework and Report Writing
January 2019	Quality-at-entry review (applying revised framework to GEF-6 projects and programs)
February - March 2019	Finalization and circulation of draft report Formatting of report for Council
June 2019	Presentation to Council
post-June 2019	Dissemination and knowledge exchange activities

