






Enabling Stage-Based Learning: A Funder's Guide to Maximizing Impact

How to Optimize Learning from Innovation to Scale



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Introduction | The Challenge and Opportunity to Enable Learning

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) has the potential to unlock tremendous impact by enabling data-informed decision-making. However, while measuring results is critical to ensuring that resources are well spent, implementers often struggle with heavy reporting requirements from funders, which can divert attention from mission-critical work. In addition, the obligation to use “one-size-fits-all” reporting tools (e.g., log frames) or report against standard indicators and targets can sometimes lead implementers to distort their models, fast-track execution prematurely, or stick to a predefined plan instead of adapting to new challenges or lessons learned. At the same time, funders are frequently dissatisfied with the quality of implementers’ reporting, which can resemble “tick-the-box” exercises that obscure challenges and implementers’ approaches to resolving them.

To address these challenges, **IPA proposes the use of stage-based learning approaches, which ensure that learning activities are the right fit for the maturity of an intervention.** Aligning MEL requirements with the needs of a program as it matures reduces unnecessary monitoring activities and allows learning to evolve as interventions progress toward scale. In the early stages of a program, understanding the problem, identifying users, and validating a viable model is critical. In later stages, demonstrating impact and verifying consistent performance at scale is paramount.



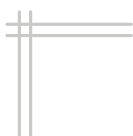
Our proposed solution to these challenges is stage-based learning, ensuring that learning activities align with an intervention's maturity.



Enabling Stage-Based Learning

This guide is designed to help funders ensure that their grantmaking processes align with the research and testing needs of the projects they fund. By encouraging implementers to consider their intervention's stage of development, and designing learning activities aligned with that specific stage, funders have the power to **ensure that MEL resources are used effectively and generate the most learning.**

Better learning will ultimately lead to better results. Funders that support implementers as they Ideate, Refine, Prove, Adapt, and Scale their interventions will see their funds have a greater impact in the long run, as implementers will have had the opportunity to use stage-based learning to improve the effectiveness of their interventions as they progress towards scale. The result will be a more effective development sector and better outcomes for program participants across the globe.



Evidence Spotlight

A recent study of a literacy program in Colombia found that iterative adjustments to the program's intensity and refinement of materials and approach **more than tripled the program's impact.***



What this guide is not:

- This guide and framework are specifically designed for interventions where scaling is feasible, rather than for all types of grant-funded programs. As a result, they may be less suitable for initiatives focused on driving systems change, such as advocacy efforts or capability-strengthening within government agencies.**
- This guide is not meant to be a comprehensive resource covering all the ingredients for successful scaling efforts. Instead, it focuses specifically on the MEL, learning, and evidence-related considerations to keep in mind during the stages of scaling.***

* Remedial Education: Evidence from a Sequence of Experiments in Colombia. Marinelli, Berlinski & Busso, 2023.

** The RFE Unit at IPA is presently working on developing frameworks for such cases and would be happy to share notes on them.

*** IPA has a [team](#) dedicated to supporting successful scaling efforts more broadly, where evidence is just one ingredient—albeit a major one—and is planning to release resources with this broader perspective in the coming months.

Document Overview

This guide begins with a description of the five stages of learning: **Ideate**, **Refine**, **Prove**, **Adapt**, and **Scale**, explaining *why* and *how* learning needs should shift as interventions develop.

The next five sections provide a deep-dive into each stage, as we present information on how funders can assist implementers by addressing four topics, each identified with an icon:



How to identify each learning stage



What to request in proposals at each stage



What kind of support to provide implementers at each stage



What implementers should report at each stage

The final section, **The Role of Funders Across All Stages**, discusses the implications of stage-based learning for funders. It covers how stage-based learning can guide funders' learning agendas and decision-making and how their practices can best support implementers across all stages.

Finally, **Appendix 1 contains a list of research and testing methods** that can be used during different stages of a project depending on what we refer to as their "learning focus."

What do we mean by “scaling”?






This guide will adhere to the Scaling Community of Practice's definition of scaling as a *"systematic process that results in a sustainable impact, affecting a significant and increasing proportion of the relevant need."** This definition highlights the goals of achieving a 'sustainable impact' and addressing the 'relevant need,' indicating that **the optimal scale for a program will vary depending on the context and magnitude of the problem being addressed.**

* Kohl, R. and J. Linn. 2022. "Scaling Principles." Scaling Community of Practice.

<https://www.scalingcommunityofpractice.com/wp-content/uploads/bp-attachments/8991/Scaling-Principles-Paper-final-13-Dec-21.pdf>

Stage-Based Learning | The Five Stages and Their Learning Focuses

The Stage-Based Learning framework, developed by Innovations for Poverty Action’s (IPA) Right-Fit Evidence Unit (RFE), is a powerful tool that facilitates learning at each stage of a project’s life cycle. Improving an intervention through stages can increase its impact while reducing the risk of costly mistakes. The Stage-Based Learning framework includes five stages: Ideate, Refine, Prove, Adapt, and Scale. Each stage features tailored learning approaches that make MEL processes more credible, actionable, cost-effective, and knowledge-generating. By applying this framework, programs can achieve their results more efficiently and scale up cost-effectively.

					
	Ideate	Refine	Prove	Adapt	Scale
OBJECTIVE	Draw insights from the context and existing evidence, create a Theory of Change for the intervention, and prototype its components with potential target participants	Ensure, through real-life piloting, that the first steps in the Theory of Change are working as expected Iterate as needed	Test that the intervention is causing changes in the final outcomes of interest	Further refine and adapt the intervention for a new context like a new geography, implementer, or target recipients	Continue to verify that the intervention is operating effectively as implementation reaches more participants
WHAT TO MEASURE	Focus on understanding the problem, reviewing relevant evidence, and gathering feedback on prototypes to assess and strengthen their viability	Focus on early signs of success such as changes in recipients’ knowledge, attitudes, and behavior	Focus on rigorously measuring impact , which typically requires comparison to a control group	Focus on ensuring the adapted model is relevant, operates effectively in the new context and is ready for cost-effective scale-up	Focus on implementation quality of the model

Stage-based learning:
 ————— Right-fit learning approaches evolve as an —————>
 intervention progresses towards scale

Enabling Stage-Based Learning

What are the key learning focuses that implementers should prioritize throughout Stage-Based Learning?



1. Challenge and Solution Alignment

What challenges does the target population face? How can we develop solutions that are well-suited to address them, leveraging existing literature and tools such as prototyping to test early intervention concepts?



2. Implementation Quality

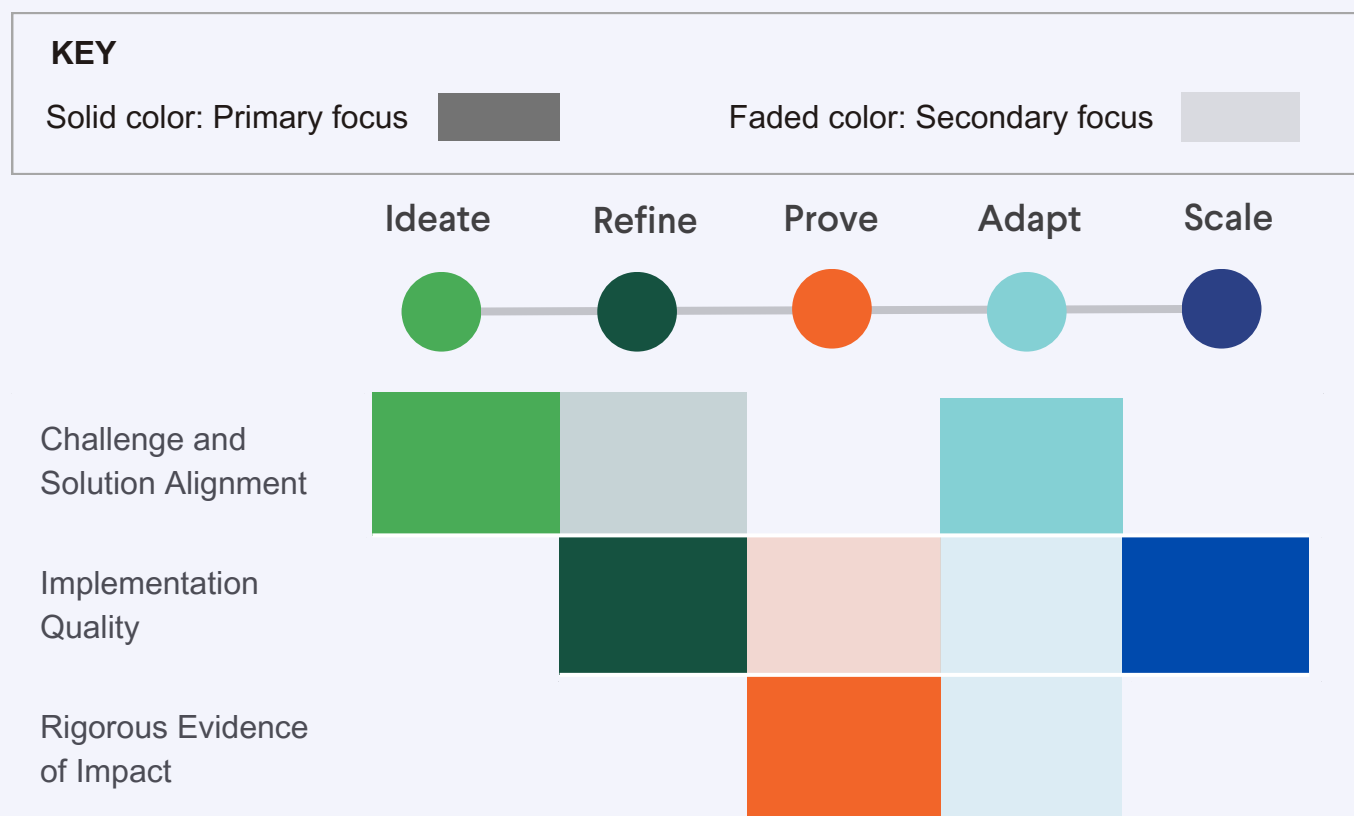
How well are proposed activities being implemented? Are they generating the expected outputs and achieving anticipated early outcomes? If implementation is not going as expected, what needs to change?



3. Rigorous Evidence of Impact

What is the progress on the intended final outcomes? How much impact can be attributed to the intervention?

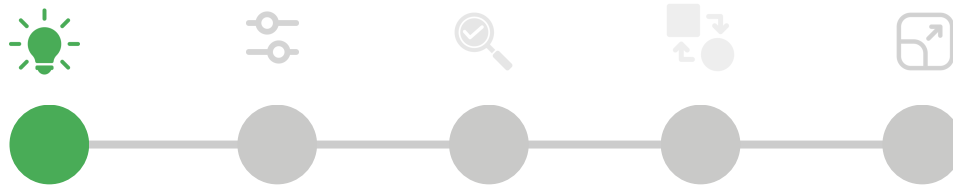
What should be the learning focus at each stage?



For the methodologies recommended for each stage, please refer to Appendix 1.

Stage-Based Learning | Ideate

Ideate



At this stage, the focus is on testing the *alignment between the initial challenge and solution*. It includes understanding the user and the problem, reviewing existing evidence on what has and has not worked, and gathering detailed feedback on prototypes to refine the intervention design.



Stage Identification

An intervention is in the Ideate stage if there are fundamental questions about the key components of the design or the relevance of the intervention to the problem or context. This stage is most common when implementers aren't sure how to solve a problem or have a new idea they want to try.



Proposals

Implementers should propose a plan to understand the problem, the users, and how existing evidence could be leveraged to address the problem. This plan should include a strategy for testing initial concepts and developing a Theory of Change that represents how the proposed solutions would help address the identified problem.



Support

Funders who have successfully supported implementers at this stage have **avoided setting specific reach or impact targets, encouraged starting small and leveraging existing evidence, and allowed flexibility** in intervention or product design.



Reporting

Funders should request implementers to report their learnings about the problem, users, and initial concepts and how these insights informed the refinement of the product's or intervention's design.

Ideate



How to know if an intervention is in this stage?

An intervention is at the Ideate stage if **there are fundamental questions about the design or key components of the intervention**, such as:

- What is the **specific problem** the intervention is looking to solve?
- What should the **aim of the intervention** be?
- Who should be the intervention's **recipients**?
- What **products or services** should be delivered?
- How should the products or services **be distributed**?

Illustrative Example: During the COVID-19 pandemic, a project in the Ideate stage aimed to tackle mental health challenges faced by students. Facing product/service uncertainty, the implementer proposed to prototype several options. They employed tools such as paper mockups and a simple WhatsApp bot to user-test a series of interventions with a small group of participants and refine them based on the feedback received before committing to one idea.



What should funders ask for in proposals at this stage?

Some **questions funders should ask implementers to address in proposals** at this stage include:

- How will they **strengthen their understanding of the problem**?
- How will they **use the existing literature to inform their ideas** on how to address the problem cost-effectively?
- How will they develop an **initial Theory of Change** for the proposed intervention?
- How will they **design and test initial prototypes** or Minimum Viable Products (MVPs) of the intervention with a small group of target participants to improve the idea?
- How will they **build time and space** into their testing **to make changes to their design**?
- Who could be the possible **implementers and funders** for this kind of program **at scale**?

At the Ideate stage, **a larger proportion of the project budget should be allocated to MEL activities than at any other stage**, as testing, learning, and iteration are central to this phase and implementation is minimal (e.g., prototyping intervention components with small groups of participants). While learning requires a relatively larger proportion of the budget, the focus should be on inexpensive methods that prioritize quick insights over strict scientific rigor.

Ideate

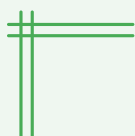


What have we seen funders do well at this stage?

Learning-focused funders realize that Ideate is an early stage in the design of an intervention, which means that they:

- **Don't set specific reach, outcomes, or impact targets**—instead, they focus on encouraging implementer learning through iteration.
- **Are flexible with the design of the intervention**, even being open to drastically modifying the design based on feedback from users or other data.
- **Are supportive of allocating a significant proportion of the budget for this stage to reviewing the existing literature and early testing** of the intervention with a small sample of potential users.
- **Are not expecting a final product** that is ready for implementation at scale.
- **Encourage the use of existing literature** to understand what strategies have been successful and which ones have not, and the reasons behind their success or failure.

Instead of relying on traditional targets, which are binary measures of success, **a more effective approach during this stage is to establish decision rules**. For example, an implementer might set a threshold for participant engagement in focus groups to determine whether a specific program component should be further iterated on or if a more significant redesign is needed.



At this stage, funders should be supportive of allocating a significant proportion of the budget to reviewing the existing literature and early testing of the intervention with a small sample of potential users.



Ideate



What should implementers report at this stage?

During the Ideate stage, reporting should primarily focus on what the implementer has learned about the intervention design, rather than on impact outcomes.

Depending on the level of involvement desired by funders, implementers may be asked to report on some or all of the following:

- **What are the various program design options** that were explored to effectively address the identified needs of the typical user? **How was literature used** to define and refine those options?
- **What was learned** about the users, the problem, and the nature of the solution?
- **How was the design of the intervention modified** to act on these learnings?
- What is the intervention's Theory of Change, and what are the **next high-priority learning questions** and iterations to test based on what did not work or what is at risk?

A Theory of Change is a visual representation that outlines how a program intends to create an impact on the world. It serves as the foundation of an effective data collection system as it helps organizations identify the critical elements of their program that need to be tracked to ensure that it is functioning as intended. It also helps generate credible research questions.

While there are no strict rules for creating a Theory of Change, it typically comprises four main components: Activities, Outputs, Early Outcomes, and Final Outcomes. It is valuable to distinguish between Early and Final Outcomes, as the former can be credibly monitored without requiring a counterfactual, while the latter requires a rigorous impact evaluation to measure them, which has implications on when it is appropriate to measure them (see Refine and Prove stage). **A sound Theory of Change also includes Assumptions, which are the conditions that must hold for a part of a program to function as expected.**



Resources

- [IDEO's Field Guide to Human-Centered Design](#)
- [IPA Resources for Theory of Change and Program Design](#)
- [Article by Mary Ann Bates and Rachel Glennerster: "The Generalizability Puzzle"](#)

Ideate



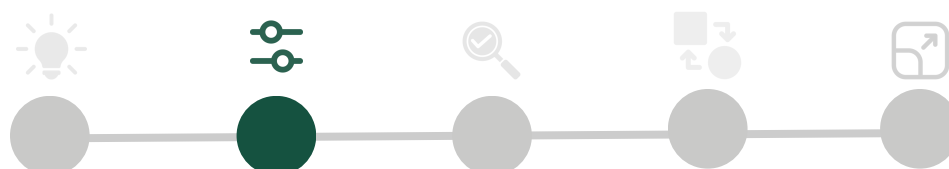
A Case from the Portfolio

Prototyping and Early Testing of a Virtual Platform for Educators in Colombia

- In partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and various agencies of the Colombian government, IPA provided support for the **Ideate stage of Conectar para Educar, an initiative that aimed to enhance the skills of early childhood education agents working in rural areas of the country.**
- This process started before IPA's involvement, with the **design of an online learning platform using a human-centered approach and the development of the content** that would be transmitted through the platform. The IDB's role was wider than just funding the initiative. It also included co-creating the strategy with the government agencies, supporting its implementation, and co-designing the program's evaluation methodology.
- **The IDB and IPA supported the government agencies in defining and implementing a two-cycle learning agenda, focused on iterative learning questions prioritized for each cycle based on their actionability.** Answering the questions in the learning agenda required user-testing the learning platform with a small number of educators and validating, through surveys and focus groups, whether the program's key assumptions held true and were in line with its theory of change.
- The agencies used this agenda to gain insights into the program's implementation and identify successes to carry forward, as well as areas where the design could be improved. **For example, the agenda revealed that the Conectar para Educar model required some modifications, such as adapting the content to make it more relatable to participants' experiences and finding alternative delivery mechanisms for areas with poor internet access (a key assumption of the model).** It also revealed that some implementation components were working as expected and achieving some key early outcomes.
- After making necessary adjustments, **the program can be piloted with a larger group of education agents in Colombia, with future scaling in mind.** This process is currently pending.

Stage-Based Learning | Refine

Refine



This is the stage for iteratively testing an intervention to assess its *implementation quality* and *early signs of effectiveness*. This helps inform decisions for building a scalable version and improved design by defining what (if any) aspects need further refinement before moving to the next stage.



Stage Identification

An intervention is considered to be in the Refine stage **once it has been completely designed and its key components have been ironed out** with a small group of recipients.



Proposals

Implementers should outline **a plan to pilot the intervention in real-world conditions** to determine if outputs and early outcomes are being met, validate key assumptions in the model's Theory of Change, and iteratively refine the approach by identifying and addressing implementation challenges. *(Note: outputs and early outcomes are defined on the next page).*



Support

Funders who have been successful in supporting implementers at this stage have done so by allowing and **encouraging iteration and experimentation** while restraining from imposing strict reporting requirements that hinder implementers from making changes to the intervention during the pilot.



Reporting

Funders should ask implementers to **provide evidence of their outputs, early outcomes, and validation of key assumptions in the Theory of Change**. Additionally, implementers should report key challenges they faced during pilot implementation and how they overcame them. Funders should avoid requesting final outcome data until there's evidence that key early outcomes are being achieved.*

* Measuring effects on final outcomes, commonly referred to as conducting impact evaluations, would be suboptimal at the Refine stage. Final outcomes typically take longer to materialize and require a larger scale to be credibly assessed against a comparison group. This approach would undermine the purpose of the Refine stage, which is to maximize insights from relatively quick and cost-effective iterations before committing more resources to support an impact evaluation (see Prove stage).

Refine



How to know if an intervention is in this stage:

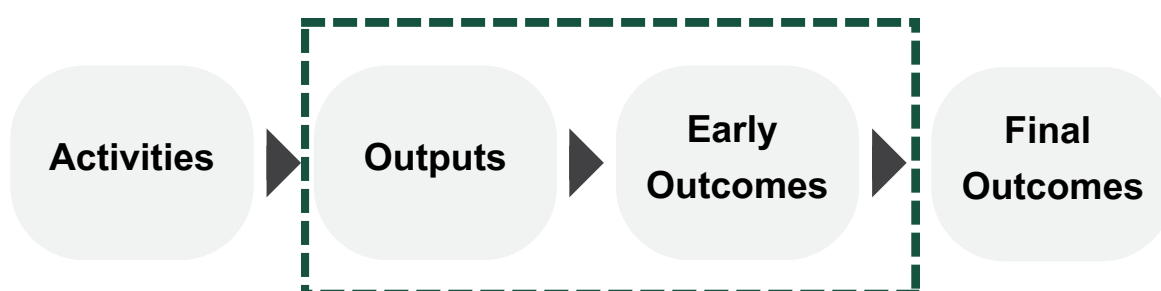
An intervention is in the Refine stage when there is more confidence in its design, as key components have been tested successfully with a small group of recipients.

During this stage, important questions arise:

- Can the intervention components that were user-tested with a small group of recipients **be implemented in a full intervention pilot carried out in real-life conditions?**
- **Will the intervention show early signs of effectiveness**, such as changes in early outcomes like knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and skills of participants?
- Is there potential for the intervention to **provide sustainable benefits to its recipients?**
- Does the intervention have a **reasonable pathway to scale** to greater reach based on technical, administrative, and human resource requirements?
- (How) can we achieve the **same or better early outcomes at a lower cost?**

In this stage, **it is especially important to track outputs and early outcomes. Outputs are defined as the direct results of the program's activities (e.g., training sessions delivered), while early outcomes are usually the changes in knowledge, attitudes, behavior, and skills** that occur in the short term due to the outputs taking place. Early outcomes are critical because they are typically attributable to the intervention (and therefore don't require comparison groups, unlike final outcomes), provide quick feedback for program iteration, and are generally cost-effective to collect.

The Theory of Change and the Refine Stage Focus



The Refine stage is focused on ensuring *implementation quality*, the success of which is typically reflected by outputs and early outcomes of the Theory of Change

Refine

☰ What should funders ask for in proposals at this stage?

Funders should ask implementers for a plan to pilot the intervention in real-world conditions. This will allow them to quickly identify opportunities to improve the design and implementation. To do this, they should ask implementers:

- **How do they plan to pilot** the intervention? How will they ensure that the pilot conditions are representative of what implementation would look like at scale?
- **What are the key assumptions and learning questions** regarding the intervention that they aim to confirm or address during the pilot? **How will they integrate feedback loops** into the pilot timeline to iteratively refine the intervention based on the responses to these questions?
- **How would they collect the data** that would allow them to know if the pilot was successful or not? (see the section below on “*What should implementers report at this stage*”)
- **How would they use the data collected** to make decisions and refine the intervention?

A pilot is a test of an intervention in a real-life setting but on a smaller scale. It is usually applied to a specific set of recipients in a particular location and for a limited period. To generate the most learning, a learning agenda and prioritized learning questions should be defined from the start. Pilots demand flexibility, close monitoring, and dedicated spaces for reflection so that the implementer can effectively identify challenges, learn from them, refine, and adjust the intervention.

Funders should ask implementers to pilot the intervention in real-world conditions to learn and refine it further.

Refine



What have we seen funders do well at this stage?

We have seen successful funders in this stage:

- Support implementers by **encouraging iteration, reflection, and flexibility** in intervention activities.
- **Refrain from using overly strict reporting requirements that limit implementers' ability to change** the intervention during the pilot or successive iterations of the pilot.
- **Refrain from asking for impact data at this stage**; instead, they make it clear that they expect implementers to develop a version of their program that achieves their targeted early outcomes.
- **Provide enough time for multiple pilot iterations**, ensuring thorough testing and refinement.

At this stage, **successful funders have also supported communities of practice**, enabling implementers or grantees working on similar interventions and learning agendas to share lessons learned and support each other in refining their approaches.



What should implementers report at this stage?

Implementers should report **an assessment of the pilot to inform intervention refinements**, including:

- **Key learnings** and validation of assumptions (e.g., Are participants motivated to continue with the program? Is the schedule of activities appropriate for participants to attend?).
- **Output data** (e.g., # of sessions carried out, # of participants per session).
- **Early outcome data** (e.g., % change in knowledge, observations of changes in practices)

Implementers might also consider a **process evaluation on a piloted intervention** to validate assumptions and assess whether outputs and early outcomes are being achieved. This evaluation focuses on the initial components of the intervention's Theory of Change and can be conducted without a counterfactual. The primary goal is to identify areas needing refinement before moving forward with large-scale implementation or impact evaluation.

Refine



Resources

- [SSIR Article: Ten Reasons Not to Measure Impact—and What to Do Instead](#)
- [APM: What is the Difference Between a Trial and a Pilot?](#)



A Case from the Portfolio

Refining Innovative Interventions to Reach Out-of-School Children

- The LEGO Foundation's Creative Solutions initiative was a workstream funded by The LEGO Foundation that **supported partners in testing and scaling innovations to improve access to education for vulnerable children in refugee contexts.**
- **The LEGO Foundation identified a need to enhance grantees' focus on active testing and adaptation to find better solutions for out-of-school children.** They identified that traditional MEL frameworks and reporting tools, which are usually created for reporting to donors, tend to discourage the motivation and ability to adapt. These frameworks, along with a lack of stage-relevant research and testing methods, can compromise iteration, meaningful reflection, and the use of learning after final report submissions.
- The LEGO Foundation partnered with IPA's RFE Unit as a Learning Partner to support impactful, sustainable, and scalable humanitarian programs. **RFE worked closely with partners to streamline their Theories of Change, focusing on key learning and risk areas.** This was followed by refining indicators to be credible, actionable, responsible, and transportable (CART). The project focused on critical program areas where intuition was strong, but evidence of effectiveness was limited.
- **This led to conducting process evaluations on program pilots and ongoing 'pause and reflect' workshops to encourage use of data to improve program design.** The evaluations assisted grantees in identifying what was working well and areas that needed improvement.
- At the same time, **The LEGO Foundation championed an environment that promoted iterative learning.** It encouraged open communication about successes and failures among partners and endorsed a personalized, flexible learning approach for RFE to adapt according to partners' levels of innovation and testing opportunities.

Stage-Based Learning | Prove

Prove



This is the stage for testing the effectiveness of the intervention and gathering rigorous evidence of its impact on final outcomes. It involves generating evidence of a relationship between the intervention and changes in final outcomes through a well-designed impact evaluation.



An intervention reaches the Prove stage when **there is credible evidence that the initial parts of its Theory of Change hold**, particularly its outputs and early outcomes, and there is a need to quantify the intervention's impact on the intermediate or final outcomes.



Implementers should provide evidence of implementation taking place as planned, including how key design features will remain consistent throughout the evaluation; **explain how the impact evaluation will support program refinement efforts or contribute to research and policy-related agendas**; and propose using credible research designs like randomized controlled trials (RCTs) or strong quasi-experimental studies.



Funders who have successfully supported implementers at this stage have **made sure interventions are ready for rigorous testing on final outcomes**, connected implementers with researchers, and encouraged the use of credible research methods.



Funders should request the **results of the impact evaluation along with MEL data to understand implementation fidelity**. They might also request pre-analysis plans, cost-effectiveness analysis, and dissemination plans.

Prove



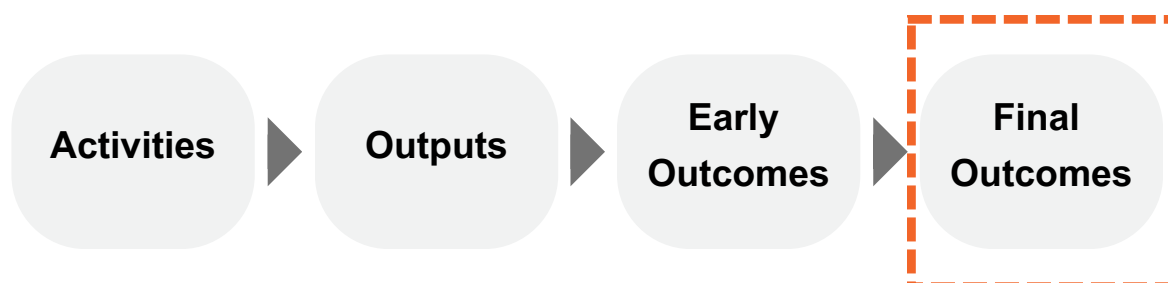
How to know if an intervention is in this stage?

An intervention is in the Prove stage **when most of the following questions are answered positively:**

- Does the program team have a **clear understanding of the Theory of Change guiding the intervention**, which shows a clear pathway from inputs to intended final outcomes and defines the hypothesis that could be tested?
- Is there credible evidence **showcasing the effectiveness of the intervention on components that don't require a counterfactual**, like outputs and early outcomes?
- Does the intervention currently **lack rigorous evidence demonstrating the impact on the desired outcomes** in similar contexts?

To credibly evaluate the impact of an intervention for attribution, **it is important to compare the program's outcomes to what would have happened had it not been implemented.** When feasible, the most rigorous way to do this is using RCTs, widely regarded as one of the most credible evaluation approaches in development research. RCTs involve randomly assigning participants to either the program or a comparison group, allowing researchers to attribute any differences in outcomes to the program itself rather than any other factors.

The Theory of Change and the Prove Stage Focus



The Prove stage focuses on *rigorous evidence of impact*, which encompasses final outcomes of the Theory of Change



Prove

☰ What should funders ask for in proposals at this stage?



When evaluating proposals in the Prove stage, it's important to **ensure the impact evaluation will be conducted in a high-quality, credible way**. Here are some key questions to consider:

- Is the implementer proposing a **credible and well-defined research design**, such as an RCT or a high-quality quasi-experimental study?
- Are there **qualified experts who will act as Principal Investigators (PIs)**, and do they have the necessary skills and experience to oversee the research and evaluation process?
- Is there a compelling case that explains how the impact evaluation will **contribute to the advancement of knowledge for the program itself and inform a research agenda** or decision-making process in the relevant field or sector?
- Is there **sufficient understanding and support from key stakeholders**, including the implementer, relevant communities, and other decision-makers, for conducting an impact evaluation?
- If needed and feasible, will the research **contribute to further program refinement by including programming variations** in different arms of the research design?

Given the significant costs involved in data collection and analysis, organizations must carefully consider the tradeoffs of conducting an impact evaluation. The organization must have the intention to use the evidence, regardless of the results.



To credibly evaluate a program's impact, its outcomes should be compared to what would have happened had it not been implemented. When feasible, the most rigorous way to do this is using an RCT, one of the most well-regarded evaluation approaches for determining attribution in development research.



Prove



What have we seen funders do well at this stage?

Funders recognize the significant commitment of resources and time involved in conducting an impact evaluation and support implementers to ensure evaluations are credible, actionable, responsible, and knowledge-generating. To do this they:

- **Consider investing in the credibility provided by independent experts** given that impact evaluations tend to be particularly technical undertakings and that they will often be useful beyond the specific grantee.
- **Avoid funding simple pre-post comparisons** of outcomes without a control group that are ill-equipped to assess true impact.
- **Encourage implementers to use the results** of the evaluation to refine the intervention or, if the results are negative and the evaluation shows no impact, reflect on larger adaptations or discontinue the intervention entirely.
- Use the results of the impact evaluation to **generate broader knowledge beyond the specific program**.

RCTs are widely regarded as the most reliable research method and are strongly recommended. In certain situations, quasi-experimental approaches—such as difference-in-differences and regression discontinuity—can accurately assess a program's effectiveness. However, they typically require significant assumptions, and the credibility of quasi-experimental methods varies greatly. For this reason, they should be carefully considered to determine feasibility and credibility before being used.



While RCTs are strongly recommended, other quasi-experimental approaches can accurately assess the effectiveness of a program in certain situations.



Prove

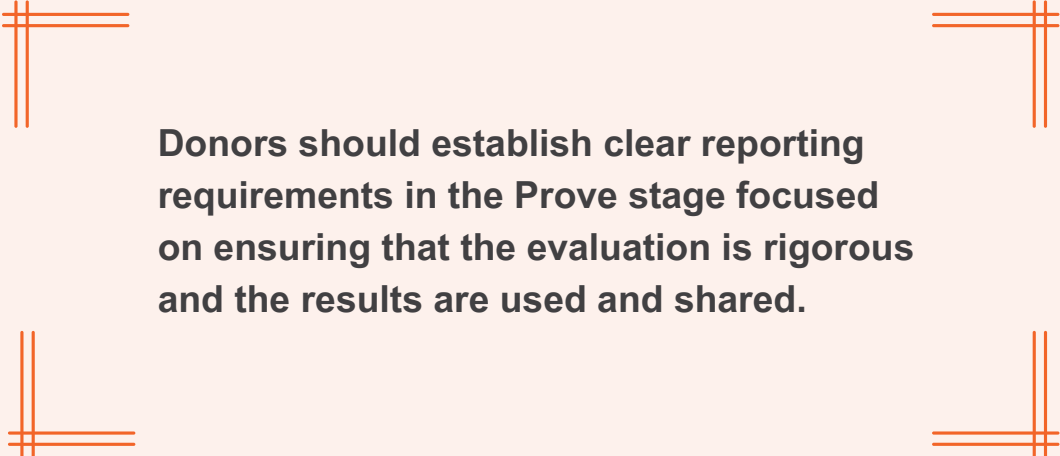


What should implementers report at this stage?

Donors should establish clear reporting requirements in the Prove stage focused on ensuring that the evaluation is rigorous and the results are used and shared.

These requirements may include:

- **Pre-registration and pre-analysis plans:** Outlines the study's methodology, hypotheses, and analysis strategies in advance to prevent data manipulation or bias.
- **Cost-effectiveness analysis:** Allows consideration of the impact of the intervention in relation to the resources used, as well as comparison to other intervention options.
- **MEL data:** Tracks progress in implementation fidelity during the evaluation and provides deeper insight into the drivers of evaluation results.
- **Impact evaluation results:** Often includes the outcomes of interest, magnitude of impact, statistical significance, sub-group analysis, unintended consequences, and sustainability of the results over time.
- **Dissemination plan:** Ensures that the study's findings will be made available to relevant stakeholders, including policymakers, to inform decision-making and maximize the impact of the research.



Donors should establish clear reporting requirements in the Prove stage focused on ensuring that the evaluation is rigorous and the results are used and shared.

Prove



Resources

- [Book by Rachel Glennerster and Kudzai Takavarasha: Running Randomized Evaluations](#)
- [WorldBank blog post about pre-analysis plans](#)

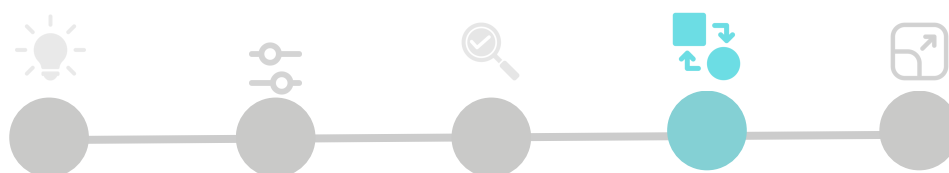


A Case from the Portfolio

Impact Evaluation Shows that Targeted Math Lessons Delivered by Mobile Phone Raise Education Scores in the Philippines

- IPA, in partnership with the Philippines Department of Education (DepEd) and the NGO Youth Impact, **introduced an initiative called mEducation to address the educational challenges brought about by COVID-19.** This program utilized mobile phones as an educational tool to mitigate learning losses. IPA performed an impact evaluation of the program that involved 3,492 Grade 3 and 4 students from 110 schools in Regions IV-B, VI, and IX.
- **The education program yielded remarkable results, showing a significant 40 percent increase in the math skills of children in the Philippines.** For every 100 students who participated, six more students were able to solve math problems compared to those who did not receive the program. Likewise, for every 100 participants, there were 18 more students who could correctly complete subtraction problems, 18 more for multiplication, and 13 more for division than in the group that did not receive the intervention.
- The [mEducation](#) initiative is being implemented in the Philippines as part of a global effort to replicate the program in five countries, including India, Kenya, Nepal, the Philippines, and Uganda. **This emphasizes the significance of testing an intervention in diverse settings to determine its efficacy in generating positive outcomes, such as learning gains, in varied contexts.**

Adapt



This stage focuses on refining a model once its effectiveness has been established, ensuring *alignment between challenges and solutions* in new contexts. To achieve maximum scale, most interventions are eventually implemented across diverse geographies, populations, modalities, and often through different implementing organizations, such as governments. The term "new context" encompasses any of these variations.*



Stage Identification

An intervention is in the Adapt stage if there is **existing evidence of impact** in other contexts, and **the intervention will be implemented in a new context where** it is understood that a similar challenge exists and a similar Theory of Change would apply.



Proposals

Implementers should develop a plan to understand the underlying causes of the challenge for the target users in the new context in which the intervention will be applied. They should also outline how existing evidence can be leveraged to address the problem within this new context. Additionally, they should include a strategy for piloting and iterating the intervention design to **ensure effective adaptation.**



Support

Funders who have successfully supported implementers **have encouraged them to understand their program's Theory of Change, validate it in different contexts, and allow for flexibility** in the design to make adaptations.



Reporting

Funders should request that implementers report on the results of **validating key assumptions in their Theory of Change for the new context**, along with the outputs of activities and evidence of early outcomes.

* Even when scale-up occurs within the same context where the intervention was developed and proven to work, this phase is still valuable in simplifying and/or reducing the cost of the intervention in preparation for potential scale-up.

Adapt




How to know if an intervention is in this stage?


An intervention is likely in the Adapt learning stage when there are fundamental **questions about the application of a proven intervention in a new context**, such as:

- Does the **challenge in the new context have a similar underlying cause** that the intervention is likely to address?
- Does the same **Theory of Change** apply?
- Can the **model be simplified** without undermining its effectiveness? Is it absolutely necessary to replicate all its elements on a large scale?
- Can the intervention be **implemented successfully and in a cost-effective way** in the new context?
- What challenges or opportunities are presented, and **how can they be addressed or leveraged?**
- **What should be adapted** about the intervention for it to be successful?

Any intervention that has been proven through rigorous impact evaluation(s) may be suitable for adaptation. **At its core, the Adapt stage is about ensuring that the new context presents a similar challenge and that the intervention can produce similar outcomes once adapted to the new context.** The learning activities at the adapt stage are similar to the ones used at the Ideate and Refine stages. However, if the Theory of Change is altered at this stage, it may be necessary to conduct an impact evaluation to determine whether the outcomes remain consistent. This will be further discussed in the next pages.



Implementers should consider not only the evidence of impact, but also the way that the solution fits a challenge in the new context, and what conditions in the new context need to be considered and addressed.



Adapt

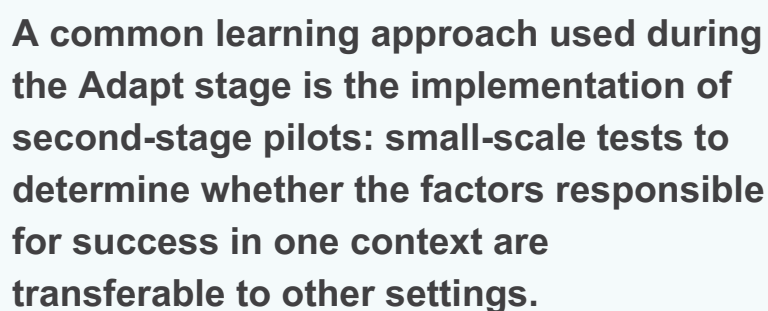


What should funders ask for in proposals at this stage?

Funders should consider asking implementers to address the following questions in their proposals when their interventions are in the Adapt stage:

- What **evidence of impact** exists for the proposed intervention?
- **What insights do they already have about the problem in the new context**, and what evidence suggests that the intervention is likely to be a good fit? What other solutions were considered?
- **What are they seeking to learn** through the implementation of the intervention in a new context, and why?
- How will they **identify and design adaptations** to the original intervention?
- How will they collect and utilize data to **evaluate the alignment between challenges and solutions**, as well as to **assess implementation quality** and early indicators of effectiveness?
- If the implementer is proposing an **impact evaluation**, what is the rationale?

A common learning approach used during the Adapt stage is the implementation of second-stage pilots. As explained in the book "Scaling Up: From Vision to Large-Scale Change," these pilots are small-scale tests or trials of an intervention or program that aim to *"test whether the factors responsible for success in one context are transferable to other settings; to experiment with different bundling and unbundling options; and to test the feasibility of various adjustments that reduce unit cost or simplify some aspect of the model."**



A common learning approach used during the Adapt stage is the implementation of second-stage pilots: small-scale tests to determine whether the factors responsible for success in one context are transferable to other settings.

Adapt

✔ What have we seen funders do well at this stage?

Funders recognize that the purpose of the Adapt stage is to **assess the suitability of an intervention in a new context**, which means that they:

- **Fund in-depth assessment of the context** to confirm initial understanding of challenge-solution fit and gather information on potential adaptations.
- **Allow flexibility for testing, piloting, and iteration** as the intervention is adapted to the new context and the Theory of Change is examined and refined.
- Avoid specific outcome or impact targets, and instead **prioritize evidence of quality, cost-effective implementation, and early signs of effectiveness**.
- Encourage implementers to **think about scale if the adaptation is successful** and make funding available for scale-up.
- **Allocate funds for learning** about adaptation to be widely disseminated.
- Recommend the **involvement of the ultimate at-scale implementer in the adaptation process** to avoid the need for an additional adaptation stage later on.

A needs assessment is a useful learning approach at the start of the Adapt stage to understand if the problem can be addressed by an existing solution. For instance, consider an [immunization program](#) that incentivized parents with lentils to have their children vaccinated. In this case, the first priority for Adapt stage learning is to conduct a needs assessment on whether children are already receiving vaccinations in this new context before considering whether this particular incentive might encourage a change. **This example highlights the importance of understanding which conditions of the original intervention need to hold in the new context so that its outcomes are maintained once adapted to the new context.**

Involve the ultimate at-scale implementer in the adaptation process to avoid the need for an additional adaptation stage later on.

Adapt



What should implementers report at this stage?

Metrics that implementers should report at this stage are **similar to those for the Ideate and Refine stages**. These might include:

- **Key learnings** about the new context (e.g., Are the key assumptions from the Theory of Change holding in the new context? Do the users have similar needs?)
- What are the **various adaptations that were explored** to effectively address the identified needs of the typical beneficiary in the new context?
- How was the **design of the intervention refined** to incorporate these learnings?
- **Output data** to confirm that the implementation is taking place as expected and outputs are being achieved (e.g., % of planned sessions carried out, % of participants per session)
- **Early outcome** data to confirm early signs of implementation effectiveness (e.g., % change in knowledge, observations of changes in practices)
- **In some cases, an impact evaluation** may be necessary to confirm that the intervention is producing the expected results at the final outcome level in the new context (see below)

While impact evaluations are not typically deemed necessary during the Adapt stage, they can prove to be helpful when program assumptions or adaptations imply changes to the program's Theory of Change.* In such cases, **it may be necessary to conduct an impact evaluation to determine whether the outcomes remain consistent** despite the introduction of new assumptions or adaptations to the program's Theory of Change.

In addition, impact evaluations and cost-effectiveness analyses in new contexts may be valuable for expanding the evidence base for an intervention or garnering political support in a new context. Ultimately, the decision about whether or not to conduct an impact evaluation when adapting a proven intervention will require a thorough assessment of the strength of existing evidence and the nature of key mechanisms in the Theory of Change to determine whether additional impact evidence is necessary.

* In some cases, additional impact evaluation may be necessary because effects could differ at a larger scale. This isn't about concerns over implementation quality, which can be assessed without impact evaluations, but rather when there are conceptual reasons why impact might change with scale. For instance, a cash transfer may have a greater effect per beneficiary when given to a small group of households than when distributed widely in a region due to potential inflationary mechanisms—what economists call "general equilibrium effects."

Adapt



Resources

- [Article by Mary Ann Bates and Rachel Glennerster: “The Generalizability Puzzle”](#)
- [Article by Kevin Starr and Laura Hattendorf: “The Doer and the Payer: A Simple Approach to Scale](#)



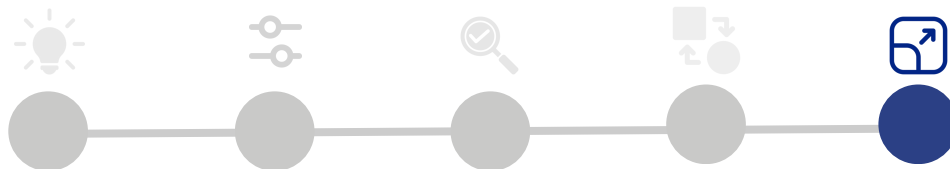
A Case from the Portfolio

Adapting a Model for Adolescent Mothers to a New User: Venezuelan Migrant Women

- **With funding from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, IPA and the Colombian NGO, Juanfe Foundation collaborated to adapt their proven “360 Grados” model for a new target population.** Instead of their previous targeting of adolescent mothers, the adapted version of the intervention would now target Venezuelan migrant women. The core of the program remained the same: increase labor market access through a mixed approach of soft skills training via psychosocial support, hard skills training, and labor readiness workshops.
- To adapt this intervention to the new population, IPA’s support to the Juanfe Foundation involved designing a learning agenda that included the most important and uncertain assumptions, and a MEL plan to test them with the program’s users during the intervention’s pilot. **Through this process, the most crucial learning questions were identified, such as whether unpaid care work, transportation, or the need to earn an income would hinder participation, and whether the Venezuelan women were interested in the program.**
- The pilot and data collection activities enabled IPA and Juanfe to identify factors that needed adaptation. **For example, unpaid care work could potentially hinder women’s participation in the program, as Venezuelan women had less access to childcare than Colombian women. Therefore, Juanfe is currently assessing the program’s schedule to accommodate women’s need to care for their children.** Moreover, IPA provided support to the Juanfe MEL team to enhance their capacity for collecting, learning, and using data to refine other aspects of the program.

Stage-Based Learning | Scale

Scale



This is the stage for ensuring that the intervention’s *implementation quality* is maintained when reaching more participants. It involves carrying out ongoing monitoring to confirm the program is operating effectively as implementation reaches more participants.



An intervention is in the Scale stage if **there is sufficient evidence that it has a positive impact on its key outcomes and has been adapted** to be implemented with quality and at scale in the contexts being considered.



Implementers should **propose a plan to continuously monitor the intervention** to ensure implementation quality and to confirm the need for the intervention persists.



Funders who have effectively supported implementers at this stage have required implementers to set **clear standards for what good looks like at scale and supported the implementer in identifying the most cost-effective ways** to implement the intervention to achieve a greater impact.



Funders should request implementers to **report monitoring data, confirming that output and early outcome targets are met**. They should no longer request implementers to track final outcome data at scale (except in rare cases where it is necessary to continuously reverify that the intervention is still needed).

Scale



How to know if an intervention is in this stage?

An intervention is considered to be at the Scale stage if it has been successfully proven and adapted and **will be implemented in other contexts to reach more users**. This typically means that:

- The intervention **has completed all previous learning stages**, including having gone through one or multiple successful impact evaluations and having been refined to the specific context being considered for scaling
- The implementer has a **clear plan to implement the intervention cost-effectively** at scale

In the latter learning stages, **it is common for the intervention to be at different stages in different contexts**. As a result, an intervention may be at the Scale stage in some contexts but at the Adapt stage in others. Depending on how quickly an intervention was expanded, an intervention can also be “at scale” in terms of reach but still in the Prove or Adapt stage in terms of learning.



What should funders ask for in proposals at this stage?

Funders should ask implementers to address the following questions in proposals at this stage:

- Has the intervention **been rigorously tested**? Is there consistent, positive evidence of the intervention's impact on targeted outcomes in contexts similar to where it will be scaled? Has it been successfully piloted in the context and with the implementer with which it is intended to be scaled up?
- **What are the implementer's expectations for scale** in terms of geographic expansion and target population? Do they anticipate **additional adaptations** and testing in line with these expectations? **How fast do they want to scale**?
- What level of **engagement and involvement can the implementer expect from other partners**, like the government, in the scaling process?
- How will the **implementer ensure and track implementation quality**? What specific methods or strategies will be used to ensure implementation fidelity?

MEL budgets at the Scale stage are usually a smaller proportion of the overall budget, in comparison to other stages. If implementers are only proposing to conduct continuous monitoring, this should be less resource-intensive than other stages.

Scale



What have we seen funders do well at this stage?

Funders have supported implementers to design evidence-based scaling processes by:

- Agreeing to **clear standards for what ‘good’ looks like at scale**, including objective guidelines for program targeting to ensure that it continues to reach the recipients who stand to gain the most from the intervention.
- **Supporting partner efforts to monitor implementation quality at scale**, for example, by tracking early outcomes such as changes in practices, behaviors, and knowledge.
- Supporting their partners to **leverage efficiencies of scale**, driving cost-effectiveness.

Depending on the intervention's nature, various methods exist to test implementation fidelity at scale. These methods may include external observations, such as classroom observations, tracking early outcomes through post-training knowledge tests when applicable, and mystery shopper-style tests, where organizations hire individuals to act as regular customers and interact with their services and products.



What should implementers report at this stage?

Some metrics that implementers should report include:

- **Output** data (e.g., # of sessions carried out, # of participants per session)
- **Early outcome** data (e.g., % change in knowledge, % of participant uptake)
- Metrics that capture the **quality of implementation** if not already captured in outputs and early outcomes



Various methods exist to test implementation fidelity at scale. These may include external observations, tracking early outcomes through post-training knowledge tests when applicable, and mystery shopper-style tests.



Scale



Resources

- [Article by Rachel Glennerster: When do innovation and evidence save lives?](#)



A Case from the Portfolio

Strengthening Evidence-Informed Education in Ghana for Improved Learning

- **The Ministry of Education (MoE) worked toward evidence-informed education in Ghana when deciding to integrate targeted instruction into the Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcomes Project (GALOP)**, a US\$219 million initiative funded primarily by the World Bank and Global Partnership for Education. This approach aims at reaching low-performing students at the level they are and has been proven to improve learning outcomes and close learning gaps in multiple contexts.
- The inclusion of targeted instruction into GALOP is the result of years of piloting and adaptation of the targeting instruction program to the Ghanaian context. In 2010-2013, the Ghanaian government conducted a national pilot of a targeted instruction program with IPA and found that many teachers didn't comply with the program. **Building on this research, IPA, UNICEF, and government partners evaluated the effect of increased management engagement on program compliance** in the Strengthening Accountability to Reach All Students (STARS) program.
- **MoE has now incorporated the results of STARS into GALOP and is scaling up targeted instruction to 10,000 low-performing primary schools, reaching over two million students across the country.** To monitor the fidelity of implementation as the program scales, IPA has been providing support to the MoE as a research and learning partner.
- IPA has been providing technical assistance to support the standardization of teacher training, develop MEL tools and indicators, design and conduct targeted training for the Ghana Education Service staff. **The goal is twofold: ensure fidelity of implementation at scale, but also strongly focus on strengthening the capacity of the MoE to ensure the sustainability of the program.**

The Role of Funders

What does it mean to be a “learning-centric” funder?

Instead of solely verifying achievements midway through or at the end of a program, a learning-centric funder emphasizes ongoing learning throughout intervention design and implementation. This approach transforms both the interventions and the grantmaking process, enabling implementers to engage in iterative cycles of design, testing, and evaluation, fostering progressive improvements. By harnessing their influence in these pivotal areas, funders can equip implementers with the tools needed to make well-informed decisions, adapt their strategies, and ultimately, maximize their impact.

How does this approach support funders’ learning?

At the project level, the framework accelerates meaningful learning for grantees, which in turn benefits funders. By refining their strategies for grant design, reporting expectations, timelines, and communication, funders can transform programs from those that yield minimal impact and waste resources into optimized initiatives that positively influence millions and provide valuable insights for both implementers and funders. At the portfolio level, this approach fosters learning that facilitates the strategic allocation of resources toward developing and scaling the most promising innovations.

How can funders facilitate cross-implementer learning?

Funders are in a unique position thanks for the close relationships they have with a wide range of implementers. This offers the potential to create learning opportunities between implementers. By developing platforms to share successes and failures with Stage-Based Learning activities, implementers can benefit from the experience and insight of their peers when designing future learning approaches. Examples of platforms that can be used to facilitate cross-implementer learning include communities of practice, events, newsletters, or documents compiling key lessons learned across a funding portfolio.

Key Funder Actions for Stage-Based Learning



Encourage failure as an opportunity for growth

Funders can empower implementers to foster an environment that prioritizes continuous improvement and views failure as a learning opportunity. By promoting a culture of psychological safety, implementers are encouraged to explore innovative solutions and learn from both successes and challenges. Strategies to support this include encouraging implementers to share how insights are used to refine programs, rather than focusing solely on successes, and providing resources, tools, and technical assistance to strengthen their capacity for learning and adaptation.

Budget for flexible learning cycles

When designing grant timelines and budgets, it's crucial to account for iterative learning cycles and request that implementers incorporate stage-appropriate learning approaches. These cycles involve asking key questions, collecting and analyzing data, reflecting on insights, and—most importantly—implementing changes based on the findings. To support this process, it's essential to avoid rigid budgets and timelines set too far in advance as they often lack the flexibility required for iteration. Funders can ask implementers to develop work plans that prioritize the best opportunities for learning and allocate specific periods for reflection. Additionally, funders can encourage implementers to share their learnings and explain how they will use these insights to refine and improve the intervention.

Enabling Stage-Based Learning



Shift focus from rigid reporting targets to “targets for action”

Funders should shift focus away from rigid and predetermined reporting targets towards more actionable learning. Encouraging the sharing of learnings and adaptations is often more informative than simply assessing whether or not a specific target was hit. This shift also promotes transparency and nurtures a collaborative learning community between funders and implementers, and it allows for indicators to meaningfully inform decision-making.



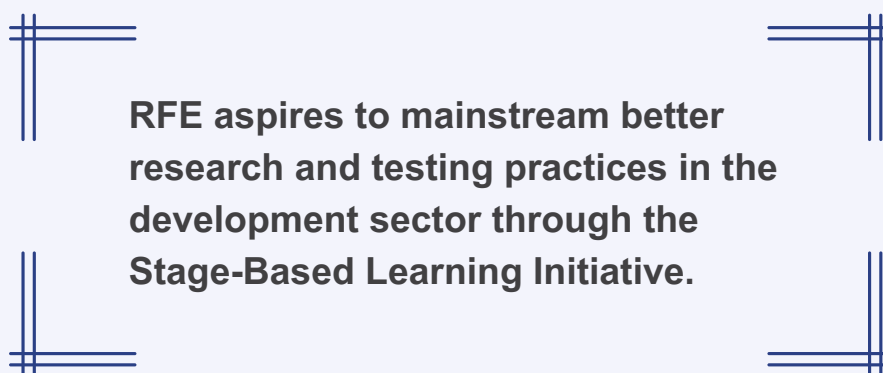
Create and share funder learning agendas

Funders can establish pathways to incorporate implementers' insights into their own decision-making processes and those of other organizations, acknowledging the significant value of lessons learned from on-the-ground experiences. However, it is essential for funders to maintain a balance, ensuring they do not overwhelm implementers with requests that may conflict with their own learning priorities. Establishing a foundation-wide learning agenda can help mitigate this issue by providing a structured framework that aligns funder inquiries with grantees' existing priorities. By clearly defining key learning questions within this agenda and sharing them with grantees, funders can collect relevant data that addresses their learning needs while minimizing the burden on implementers. This approach allows funders to harness valuable insights from implementers while respecting their autonomy in the learning process.

About IPA's RFE Unit and the Stage-Based Learning Initiative

IPA's Right-Fit Evidence (RFE) Unit has delivered nearly 50 advisory engagements since our launch in 2017 with some of the development and humanitarian sectors' leading nonprofits, funders, and government agencies, helping them to create and use evidence more effectively. RFE's direct advisory work focuses on improving the practices of organizations with which we engage, which means the scope of our impact on the broader sector is limited by the size of our team and the bespoke nature of our engagements. These limitations sparked our desire to launch an initiative with the goal of making a broader contribution to the development and humanitarian sectors.





The Stage-Based Learning initiative aims to mainstream improved monitoring, evaluation, and learning practices in the development sector. By building on existing ideas and forming strategic partnerships, we aim to generate momentum and practical approaches for more credible and impactful learning practices. This initiative focuses on funders due to their unique ability to influence both their own practices and those of the implementers they support. Additionally, funders play a critical role in shaping expectations and norms around what constitutes effective evidence generation and use. Given the wide implications of research and testing, our target audience within funders includes both program and MEL leaders.









RFE aspires to mainstream better research and testing practices in the development sector through the Stage-Based Learning Initiative.

We hope this guide will be the first of a series of resources within the proposed Stage-Based Learning initiative. With the support of learning-centric partners, IPA aspires to develop additional public goods and spark conversations with funders and implementers. We encourage anyone with interest in or ideas for developing resources or events focused on how funders and implementers can apply stage-appropriate research and testing activities to reach out to us. We are also available to provide tailored support through specific engagements. Please be in touch at right-fit@poverty-action.org.




Appendix 1 | MEL Approaches for Implementers

 Ideate		
Learning Focus	Generic Learning Question	Example MEL Approach
 Challenge and Solution Alignment	Does the activity respond to a need (as perceived by the recipients)?	Needs assessment (focus groups, targeted surveys)
	What are the current best-buys in the sector for the final outcome of interest?	Literature review and identification of benchmarks, cost-effectiveness analysis of different models
	Are there other organizations that have implemented this activity?	Landscape assessment (literature review, desk review, expert interviews) and identification of key lessons
	Is the idea feasible to implement in the context?	Prototyping features, feasibility assessment (focus groups, expert interviews)
	Is the idea feasible to implement at the ultimate intended scale?	Needs assessment (for understanding the size of the problem), expert interviews, rough costing analysis
	Can the idea be improved before being implemented?	Prototyping sprints, focus groups, beneficiary feedback
 Refine		
Learning Focus	Generic Learning Question	Example MEL Approach
 Implementation Quality	Are outputs being achieved?	Monitoring a pilot to track output indicators
	Are early outcomes (changes in knowledge, attitudes and/or behavior) being achieved?	Monitoring a pilot to track early outcome indicators, A/B test, process evaluation
	Is this the most efficient way of achieving the expected early outcomes?	Monitoring a pilot, A/B test, prototyping and user testing, literature review
	Is the intervention being implemented as expected at scale?	Continuous monitoring of early outcome indicators on a sample, mystery-shopper style tests

Enabling Stage-Based Learning

 Prove		
Learning Focus	Generic Learning Question	Example MEL Approach
 Implementation Quality	Are outputs being achieved?	Monitoring output indicators
	Are early outcomes (changes in knowledge, attitudes and/or behavior) being achieved?	Monitoring early outcome indicators, process evaluation
 Robust Evidence of Impact	Is the intervention having an impact on final outcomes?	Experimental / quasi-experimental impact evaluation of the intervention (for interventions with direct recipients)
	Is the intervention cost-effective and how does it compare to the existing best buys in the sector?	Impact evaluation, plus cost effectiveness analysis, and cost-adjusted comparison to existing benchmarks
 Adapt		
Learning Focus	Generic Learning Question	Example MEL Approach
 Challenge and Solution Alignment	Does the activity respond to a need (as perceived by the recipients)?	Needs assessment (focus groups, targeted surveys)
	What are the current best-buys in the sector for the final outcome of interest?	Literature review and identification of benchmarks
	Are there other organizations that have implemented this activity in the past or currently?	Landscape assessment (literature review, desk review, expert interviews) and identification of key lessons
	Is the idea feasible to implement in the context?	Prototyping features, feasibility assessment (focus groups, expert interviews)
	Is the idea feasible to implement at the ultimate intended scale?	Expert and key stakeholder interviews, rough costing analysis
	Can the idea be improved before being implemented?	Prototyping sprints, focus groups, beneficiary feedback
 Implementation Quality	Are outputs being achieved?	Monitoring output indicators
	Are early outcomes (change in knowledge, attitudes and/or behavior) being achieved?	Monitoring early outcome indicators, A/B test, process evaluation

Enabling Stage-Based Learning

 <p>Rigorous Evidence of Impact</p>	Is the intervention having an impact on final outcomes in the new context?	Experimental / quasi-experimental impact evaluation of the intervention (for interventions with direct recipients)
	Is the intervention cost-effective and does it compare to the existing best-buys in the sector?	Impact evaluation, plus cost effectiveness analysis, and cost-adjusted comparison to existing benchmarks
 <h3>Scale</h3>		
Learning Focus	Generic Learning Question	Example MEL Approach
 <p>Implementation Quality</p>	Are outputs being achieved?	Monitoring output indicators
	Are early outcomes (change in knowledge, attitudes and/or behavior) being achieved?	Monitoring early outcome indicators, process evaluation
	Is this the most efficient way to achieve the expected impact?	Monitoring, A/B test plus cost-benefit analysis of different models
	Is the intervention being implemented as expected at scale?	Continuous monitoring of early outcome indicators on a sample, mystery-shopper style tests