

## FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS WITH SCALE-UP PRACTITIONERS & RESOURCE TEAM MEMBERS

### PURPOSE

Focus group discussions (FGDs) were held with staff at the beginning, middle and end of the Standard Days Method® (SDM) scale-up process to learn from their experiences using a systematic approach to expansion and to understand how engagement in scale-up affected them personally. This information provided useful insight into effective practices to support scale-up and to inform the type of training and support practitioners need to effectively do their job of supporting expansion. These questions could also be used with members of the resource team supporting scale-up.

### HOW IT WAS DEVELOPED AND USED

The tool was guided by elements of the WHO/ExpandNet *Nine steps for developing a scaling-up strategy*, including the innovation, resource and user organizations, environment, and scale-up strategies. Three focus group guides were developed to reflect the changing emphases and issues encountered during different scale-up phases. These questions allowed reflection on scale-up opportunities and barriers, and provided insight into the ability of the scale-up team to apply a systematic approach.

The initial FGD questions were used in discussions with IRH country teams – including field and headquarters staff – one year into the scale-up process during an annual staff meeting. Discussions were facilitated by an IRH staff member or ExpandNet colleague and audio-recorded. Additional rounds of FGDs were held in subsequent years. Action items

emerging during the conversations were documented for follow-up by team members.

### VALUES

The FGDs provided insights into staff values relating to the scale-up processes. For example, FGDs specifically asked about the application of the principles of the ExpandNet model, including attention to innovation values, such as informed choice, male involvement, and addressing other gender or equity issues, through scale-up activities.

### LESSONS LEARNED

- The FGDs provided a moment for staff across the different countries to step back and reflect on the scale-up process and use of a systems-oriented approach to scale-up. Such shared reflections and discussions provided staff different ways of thinking about scale-up, which enriched their country strategies.
- An initial idea to hold annual FGDs with resource teams in country was not systematically implemented, because of the way different resource teams were constituted, e.g. some resource teams were informally constituted, while others were integrated into existing structures and it was not always feasible to conduct FGDs in such settings.

### KEY REFERENCES & RESOURCES

World Health Organization/ExpandNet, 2010. *Nine steps for developing a scale-up strategy*. [http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2010/9789241500319\\_eng.pdf](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2010/9789241500319_eng.pdf)



## Focus Group Discussion Guide: One Year into Scale-Up

### Objectives:

- Assess the trajectory of the innovation package (adaptation, leveraging resources, training on the innovation)
- Reflect on the composition and role of the resource team, and determine the skills needed to move the innovation forward.
- Describe stakeholder involvement and assess leadership and ownership of the innovation
- Assess sustainability of the innovation at this point of the scale-up process.

### Discussion Questions:

1. Looking back to the beginning of the scale-up process, how has the innovation package been adapted or changed? Describe the adaptation. Has the adaptation been sufficient? Is it evidence-based?
2. What is being done, other than training, to roll out the innovation? Should more be done, and why? If you had additional resources, what more would you do?
3. How do you feel about partner involvement, commitment, and ownership of scale-up at this point?
4. To what extent, if any, has your work to roll out the innovation strengthened systems capacity? Give examples.
5. Do you see any changes in your [your organization's] role since scale-up began? Are you consciously judging when you can step back? What steps are you taking?
6. Describe to what extent you are using a systems approach (e.g. the ExpandNet framework) to conceptualize and plan out the scale-up process. In what ways do you find it more or less useful?
7. How has guiding the scale-up process affected you personally?



## Focus Group Guide: Midway into Scale-Up

### Objectives:

- Assess the trajectory of the innovation package (adaptations, leveraging resources, training on the innovation)
- Reflect on the composition, skills, and role of the resource team, and determine the adjustments needed to move the innovation forward.
- Describe stakeholder involvement and assess leadership and ownership of the innovation
- Assess sustainability of the innovation at this point of the scale-up process and determine steps to achieve sustainability in the second half of the process.

### Discussion Questions:

1. Do you feel that enough is being done in terms of advocacy for the expansion/integration of the innovation? What are the bottle necks, skills, resources? What more could be done?
2. Are you getting enough support from headquarters? Are you getting the right kind of support? What more could be done?
3. How do you feel about partner involvement, commitment, and ownership of scale-up at this point? PROBE: Is there fatigue? Is there greater buy-in? Are you seeing organizations make the transition from user to resource organizations?
4. Who owns the scale-up process in terms of political leadership?
5. What new, if any, organizations have assumed involvement, responsibility and ownership of scale-up? To what extent are donors involved?
6. Describe to what extent you are using a systems approach (e.g. the ExpandNet framework) to manage this phase of scale-up. In what ways do you find it more or less useful?
7. How do you monitor scale-up progress? What are you doing to know what is going on in the scale-up process? Do you have enough information? What can you do to get more information?
8. How has guiding the scale-up process affected you personally?



## Focus Group Guide: Nearing Completion of Scale-Up

### Objectives:

- Assess the trajectory of the innovation package (adaptations, resources, trainings, effect on health systems) and its potential to contribute to the evidence-based scalability of the innovation.
- Reflect on the evolution of the skills and roles of resource team members and organizations as scale-up progressed.
- Describe stakeholder involvement and capacity to sustain the innovation beyond the scale-up phase.
- Assess the sustainability of the innovation following scale-up.

### Discussion Questions:

1. In your opinion, will integration/expansion of the innovation be sustained after the funding support for scale-up ends?
2. What is still needed to get the innovation to scale? Is this a feasible goal? (Take into account factors such as the user organizations, resource team/organizations, and the larger environment.)
3. What needs to be done this year to support continued expansion and consolidation of the innovation? At the local level? At the global level? Describe to what extent you used a systems approach (e.g. the ExpandNet framework) throughout the scale-up process. In what ways have you found it more or less useful?
4. How has your role in the scale-up process evolved since scale-up began?