DISCUSSION GROUPS TOPIC DESCRIPTIONS
(Wed. evening, Sept. 26)

ICT4D

**Leader – Shaun Ferris, CRS**

Having access to information is a critical prerequisite for scaling at all levels. Information and communication is the glue that brings together people and ideas and forges relationships that lead to transactions. ICT offers a means to connect people living in remote areas, and leapfrog many areas of activity where infrastructure and markets have failed. Leapfrogs,

- Mobile has enabled people to communicate
- Mobile enables financial transactions to take place
- Remote sensing provides a means of establishing a plot/farm record
- Sharing of data on who can provide and who needs specific products
- Extends rural advisory services, where face to face is not possible
- When combined these data points will support credit scores that will channel the right finances to people.

In time, these systems will help to identify and organize people, build credibility and trust among customers and clients, and these factors will support financing that is essential for scaling to take place. Discussion:

**Input side:** What innovative methods are being used to collect data and transform that in near and real-time information that can be accessed anywhere in the world?

**Output side:** What apps (or other digital tools) are really helping farmers and other actors along the value chain improve decision making on a large scale?

Monitoring & Evaluation

**Leader – Paul Winters, IFAD**

Having good and timely information is a critical prerequisite for scaling as it helps with building credibility among customers and clients, raising financing for scaling from funders and investors, and forming strategic partnerships with the government and other key stakeholders. However, when we define scaling as a system change, what indicators can we use to monitor that? Counting the number of farmers doing X or Y, is not enough. We need to move from output to outcome indicators, to measure not only the progress in terms of scaling out (horizontal) but also scaling up (vertical). How do we measure those indicators? How do we attribute them? Do we want that?

Institutionalization of Scaling
Leader: Johannes Linn, Brookings Institution

Many organizations are confronted with a growing need to show the impact, or the effectiveness, of the resources put towards alleviating poverty and ending hunger. But, how do you gear your organization towards scaling? In this session, we will discuss the experience of some organization that went down that path. The experience ranges from setting up scaling units, developing scaling strategies, adapting the vision and mission, changing HR and admin procedures, internal capacity building on scaling and integrating it in the communication strategy.

Seed Systems

Leader, Louise Sperling, CRS

This session will focus on critical leverage points needed to scale up the delivery of modern varieties and quality seed among smallholder farmers, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. While seed is a sector that can potentially contribute to families’ food security, nutrition, income and farming resilience goals, across much of Africa, only a handful of crops/seed types can be delivered at scale (e.g. hybrid maize and vegetable seed) with much of this seed business unfolding in medium and higher potential areas. In contrast, rigorous data shows that smallholders still source over 90% of their seed from informal systems with the local markets, which is particularly important for accessing seed of most of the legumes. A key broad challenge to leverage the strengths of the formal sector with the informal: what catalytic links can and should be made?

Discussion specifically will focus on real options for:

- Extending delivery, including information, to ‘Last Mile’ areas
- Widening the overall crop portfolio of quality seed accessible to smallholders
- Specific options for moving ‘climate-smart’ and nutritionally-enhanced crops and varieties (to high stress zones and among malnourished populations)

Responsible Scaling of Agricultural Innovations

Co-Leaders - Seerp Wigboldus, Wageningen University; Robert McLean and Tricia Wind – IDR

Scaling up (agricultural) innovations is not just about asking, “how to make it happen”. It also requires asking what wider implications this may have, which includes potential negative (side-) effects. Nearly all grand challenges facing humanity originate from the scaling of innovations. The clearest example is climate change and the scaling of carbon emissions resulting from growing numbers of livestock, growing use of fossil fuels, etc. It illustrates the need for considering what makes for ‘responsible’ scaling of innovations and for considering questions such as: Who decides whether scaling particular innovations is a good idea; Who really benefits short-term and long-term (inclusiveness issues); How could it affect long-term sustainability
(social, economic, and environmental) and farmer resilience/vulnerability; Who are the ‘winners’ and who are the ‘losers’ involved? These are just some of the (societal) concerns which need to be considered. Addressing these questions helps to enrich perspectives on scalability and connects to issues related to food ethics, food justice, and food sovereignty. Questions to explore in this session may include: What important (potential) effects and wider implications tend not to be part of what informs decision making in scaling initiatives? Is it possible to develop principles for ‘responsible scaling of agricultural innovations’?