Approaches to Scaling Social Impact

Organizations face options about what to scale and how to scale their impact. The spectrum of goals and strategies for creating and scaling social impact ranges from impact through direct service to impact through indirect influence. By selecting combinations of goals and strategies from this “tool box,” organizations can craft a strategy for scaling social impact.

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Prepared by John Kalafatas
Approaches to Scaling Social Impact (with definitions)

Organizations face many options about what to scale and how to scale their impact. The spectrum of goals and strategies for creating and scaling social impact ranges from impact through direct service to impact through indirect influence.

### Impact through Direct Service
- **Increase Quantity and/or Quality of Impact:** Increase impact by providing existing programs more frequently or in greater quantity in current locations. Increase impact by improving quality of existing programs.
- **Diversify Communities Served:** Increase impact by offering existing programs to new groups of people in current locations.
- **Diversify Services Offered:** Increase impact by providing new programs addressing new issues in current locations.
- **Expand Geographically:** Increase impact by offering existing programs in new locations.

### Impact through Indirect Influence
- **Promote a Model:** Increase impact by encouraging the replication of your organization’s model by promoting your organization and its activities to others.
- **Influence Public Policy:** Increase impact by changing public policy in order to increase the number served or needs addressed, or to reduce the need that necessitated your social enterprise.
- **Establish a Social Movement:** Increase impact by creating cultural, political, or social change through a large-scale social movement that influences public opinion or collective action in support of an issue.
- **Change/Create Markets:** Establish new markets or influence existing markets to increase social impact providing by organizations in the market.

### Goals for Scaling Social Impact

**Organizational Branching and/or Affiliation:** Replicating branches in new locations that remain part of one, multi-site organization. Creating a network of affiliated but independent organizations connected by shared principles, goals, or activities.

**Expanding Org’s Delivery Capacities:** Making investments within your organization that improve and increase its effectiveness to deliver programmatic performance.

**Technical Assistance:** Providing technical assistance, training, or consulting to others interested in offering similar programs or activities.

**Knowledge Dissemination:** Sharing information with others through publications, the Internet, or presentations.

**Packaging/Licensing:** Packaging a successful program and licensing it to existing organizations in other locations.

**Partnerships/Alliances:** Collaborating with other organizations to deliver services or address needs in new locations.

**Research & Public Policy Development:** Researching and generating knowledge about the social issue and proposing public policy, i.e., a think tank approach.

**Influencing Public Awareness, Norms or Behaviors:** Using various means of communication to inform, educate, and influence public awareness, opinion, or action about the social issue.

**Direct Advocacy & Lobbying:** Engaging public policy makers, legislators, and other government officials to influence the legislative or resource environment for the social issue.

**Convening Networks:** Organizing social-purpose organizations or individuals from the same field into a network or association mobilized to advocate for shared goals and policies.