

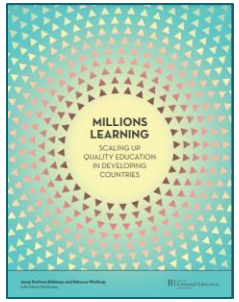
From Access to Impact

Government decisionmaking and scaling of EdTech in South and Southeast Asia

Molly Curtiss Wyss & Brad Olsen

Millions Learning: 10 years of studying and supporting scaling

Shared Goal: To generate useful evidence and provide practical recommendations around **processes of scaling in global education** and build stronger links between research and practice.



2016

A study of where and how quality education has scaled in low- and middle-income countries, including identification of 14 core ingredients for scaling and 14 in-depth, retrospective case studies from around the globe.



2018

Real-time Scaling Labs (RTSLs) - 2018-2023
CUE and **6 partner institutions** around the world co-created Real-time Scaling Labs (RTSLs)—a participatory, action research approach to learn from, support, and document education interventions as they scale in real time. The ultimate goal was to support initiatives as they deepen and expand while simultaneously gaining deeper insight into how policymakers, civil society, and the private sector can most effectively work together to bring about large-scale transformation in the quality of children's learning and their development. The labs offered concrete opportunities for peer learning and exchange through in-person and virtual convenings while also generating knowledge on the "how" of scaling impact.

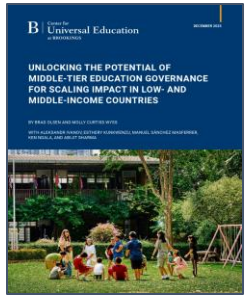
2020



Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education (ROSIE)
A partnership between the Center for Universal Education (CUE) at Brookings and the Global Partnership for Education's (GPE) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX). ROSIE brings together researchers and practitioners working in 29 low- and middle-income countries to study the process of scaling education initiatives for impact. In 2021, **15 KIX grantee teams** joined ROSIE, working alongside the CUE team to think about, study, and deepen the impact of their work.

Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education (ROSIE) 2.0 and Global Learning Community
ROSIE is now working and learning alongside all GPE KIX Teams across 5 thematic cohorts: Data systems, GESI, TPD, ECD, OOSC.
4 active cohorts represent **42 teams encompassing 91 partner organizations in 51 countries**. Developing a Scaling Course and Learning Community, carrying out new research on scaling.

2026-7



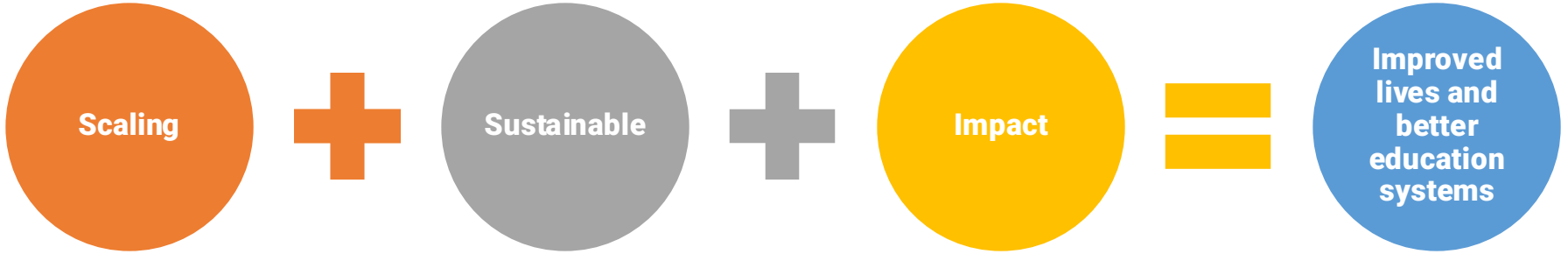


What is “scaling impact”?

Scaling = a range of approaches—from deliberate replication to integration into national systems—that expand and deepen an innovation, initiative, program, or policy leading to lasting improvements in people’s lives.

Impact = focus on *results*, not size or reach of the intervention by itself.

Sustainable = the innovation becomes the "new normal." Its effects do not fade quickly; the scaling effort somehow changes the system so it operates differently (to produce better outcomes).



Why focus on scaling?

- Only a small number of education innovations ever reach sustainable scale, often because of lack of fit among the **innovation or program,** the **scaling strategy,** and the **broader environment**.

- Scaling is a non-linear, long-term complex *journey* of change management, not just a destination.

- Scaling promising innovations not only improves communities and individuals, but also changes systems.

- Scaling is a mindset and a collection of knowledge, principles, and practices. In this way it is a full skillset that must be learned.

Some key scaling principles



Remain problem focused



Plan for scale from the beginning



Prioritize simplification and scalability



Adapt the innovation for its intended location



Don't neglect the importance of context



See scaling as a flexible, multi-stakeholder undertaking



Recognize that scaling is a long-term, non-linear process

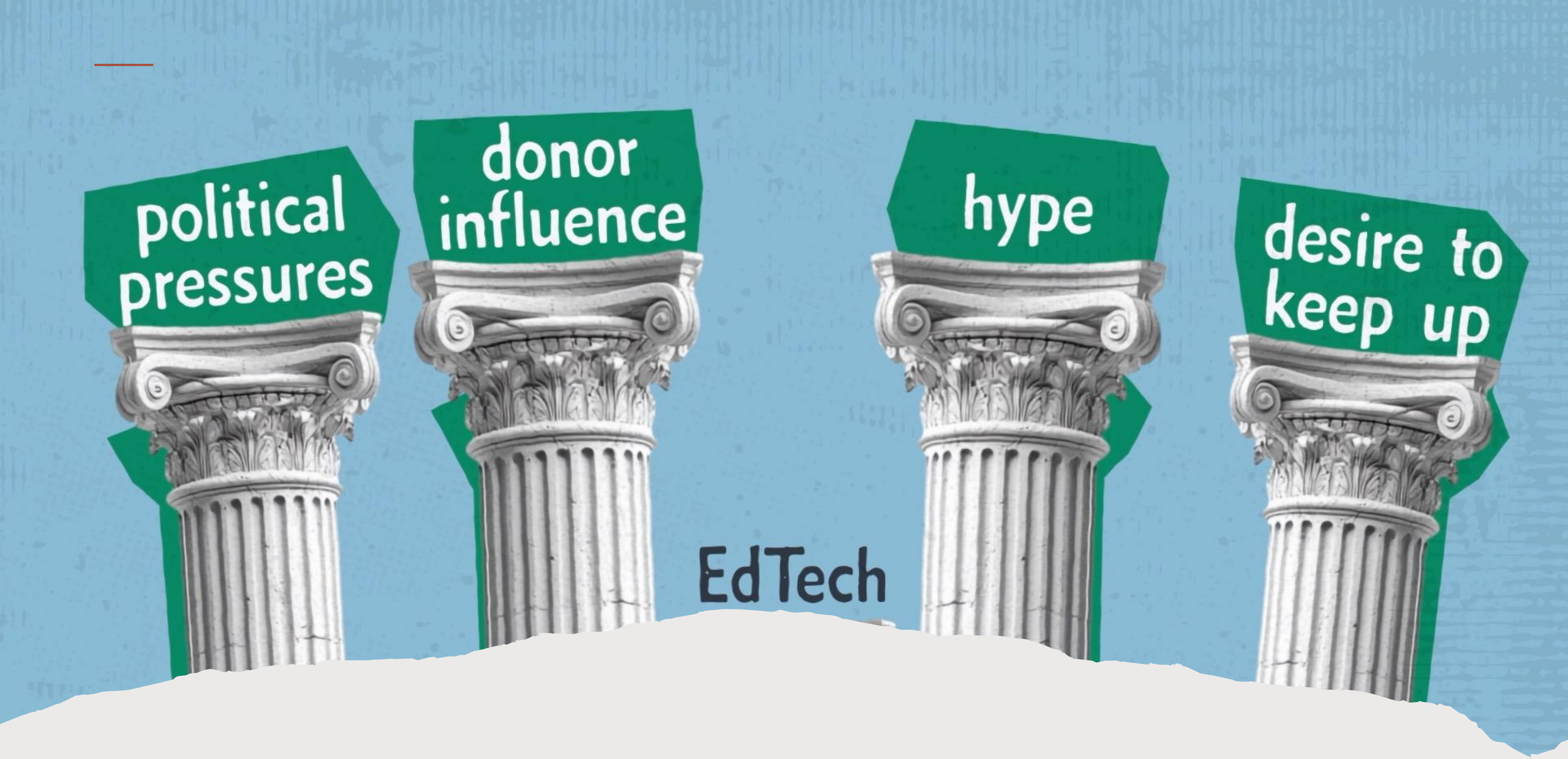


Is scaling different for education technology?

The study

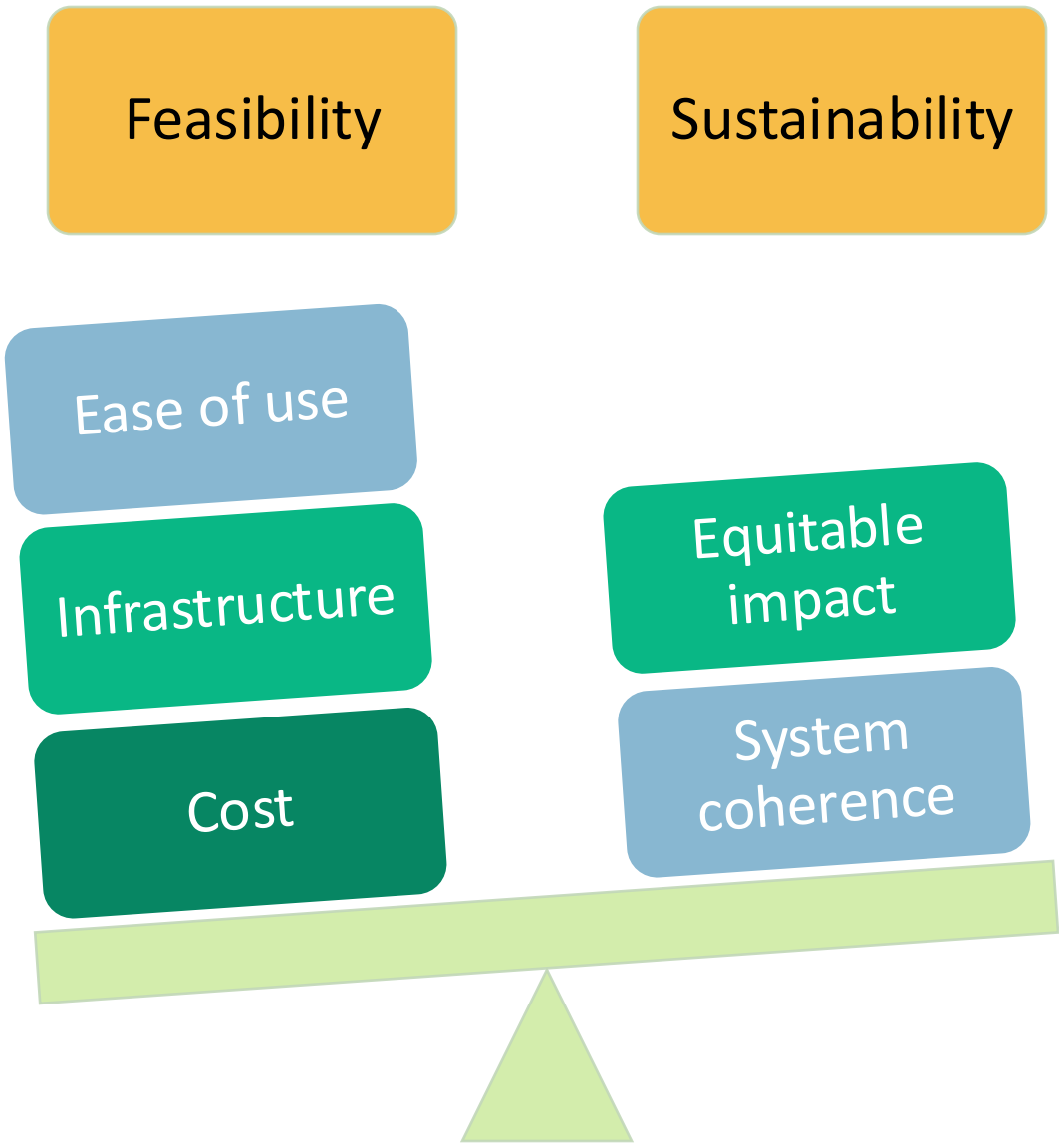
A literature review (57 pieces) and 12 semi-structured interviews to examine how governments in South and Southeast Asia make decisions about what EdTech innovations to adopt and scale.



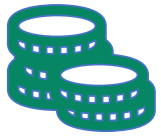


Motivation: What's driving adoption isn't evidence.

Feasibility is central to EdTech selection, but short-term considerations often trump long-term **sustainability**.



Scaling and sustaining the impact of EdTech innovations is constrained by the broader environment, shocks to the system, *and* by the decisions made about which EdTech to adopt.



Underestimated total costs



Fragmented landscape



Misaligned incentives



Insufficient capacity & buy-in



Shallow contextualization



What about AI?

- Faces scaling constraints similar to EdTech, but with the risk of exponential amplification
  - Insufficient infrastructure, capacity, regulation → potential to exacerbate inequities
  - Lack of impact data, especially for local contexts
  - Inequities and bias built into the models
  - Risks of worsening learning outcomes

- But countries are exploring how to productively and safely incorporate AI into their education systems;
  - Vietnam piloting an AI curriculum that emphasizes security, ethics, and contextualization
  - Sri Lanka encouraging teachers to use AI to lighten workload

So what needs to change?

Six shifts to support scaling the impact of EdTech.

1. *Start* with the hardest-to-reach.

2. Focus on purpose, not product.

3. Strengthen institutional capacity.



Six shifts to support scaling the impact of EdTech.

4 Invest in contextualization.

5 Prioritize system coherence.

6 Fund, support, and demand data on the impact of EdTech.



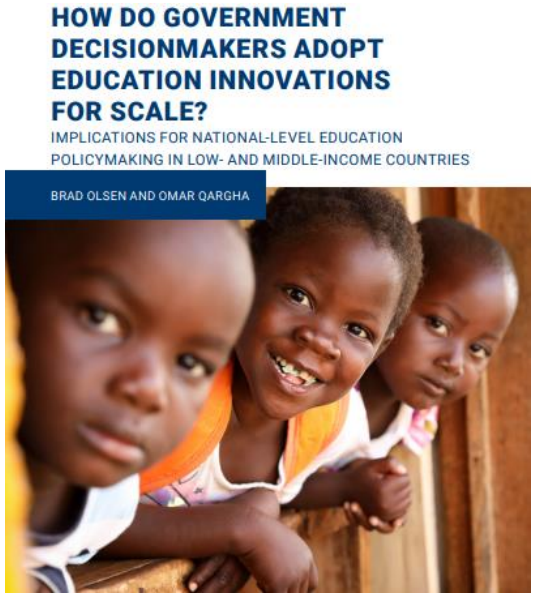
Questions for the room:

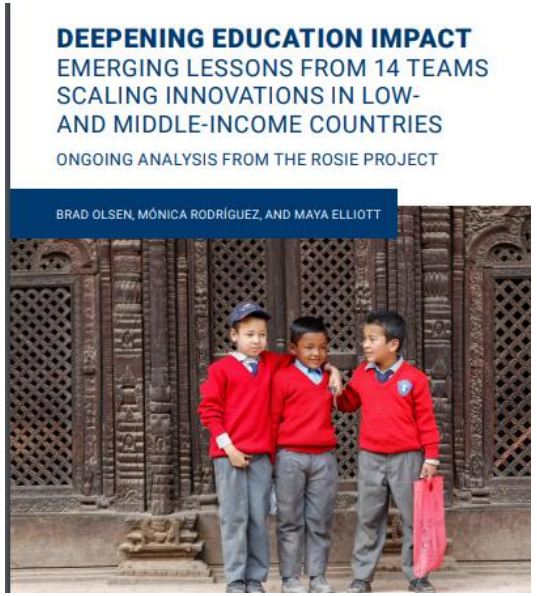
1. What parts of this presentation resonated with your work and experience? What do you see that diverges from our presentation?

2. What do you think it will take to shift the incentives driving EdTech decision-making to place more emphasis on impact and sustainability?

3. Where do you see the most promising paths for improving how to adopt, adapt, and support EdTech for scaling?









Some Available ML Research and Resources

- 6 scaling story videos
- 5 scaling tools and worksheets
- 4 country case studies about scaling in education
- 3 cross-cutting reports with lessons about scaling
- 3 thematic briefs about equity, champions, and scaling research
- 3 reports about how government decisionmakers think about scaling
- 1 online Scaling Foundations course