

**EVALUATION OF IFAD's  
CAPACITY AS A PROMOTER  
OF REPLICABLE INNOVATIONS  
FOR POVERTY REDUCTION  
IN COOPERATION WITH  
OTHER PARTNERS**

**2001**

## A. Why this Evaluation?

- IFAD is not anymore the only IFI with the mandate to fight rural poverty
- IFAD is small, its impact is limited by its size - It must play a Catalytic Role
- Multiply its Impact by promoting the replication and upscaling of innovative approaches is part of IFAD's raison d'être

## **B. The Four Evaluation Questions**

**Q 1.** How does IFAD understand Innovations?

**Q 2.** How do IFAD Instruments work?

**Q 3.** What is our experience with field-based Innovations?

**Q 4.** Does IFAD's organisation and culture enable staff and partners to innovate? <sup>3</sup>

# C. Highlights of Evaluation Findings

## Q 1. Understanding Innovations and Upscaling

- No clear Agenda for Innovations to guide operations
- No common understanding of Innovation and its process and therefore a variety of interpretations

- Innovation is conceived more as an improvement than a complete new way of doing things
- A large design - implementation gap
- Rather than an inventor IFAD must be considered a promoter of innovation through its partnership
- The importance of KM - learning and sharing

## Q 2. How well do IFAD Instruments work in Promoting Innovations?

### Loans:

- Promote/replicate previously tested, safe innovations to minimise borrower/lender risk
- Recognise areas needing innovations
- Identify promising approaches for future testing and adaptation

### Grants for Agri. Research :

- Test/adapt innovative technology and approaches in specific contexts

### Grants to NGOs:

- Test/adapt socio-economic/institutional innovations at local grassroots level

Partnership: • Strategic Partnership essential for upscaling proven/successful innovations and for identifying, testing, adapting

M&E:

- Identify problems needing innovative solutions
- Provide early information of problems in innovations and means of improvement
- Identify opportunities for replication and upscaling
- Independent Evaluation is an important contributor to IFAD's knowledge base on innovations

## Their Weaknesses

- Instruments not used systematically to promote innovations
- Not adequately synchronised with Innovation Process
- Limited capacity to generate learning from innovations
- Remoteness from the field reduced potential of the instruments
- Weak partners' capacity to promote innovations reduces instrument effectiveness and upscaling potential
- Inconsistent performance in promoting replicable innovations

### **Q 3. Lessons From Field Innovations:** **Features of Innovations that worked**

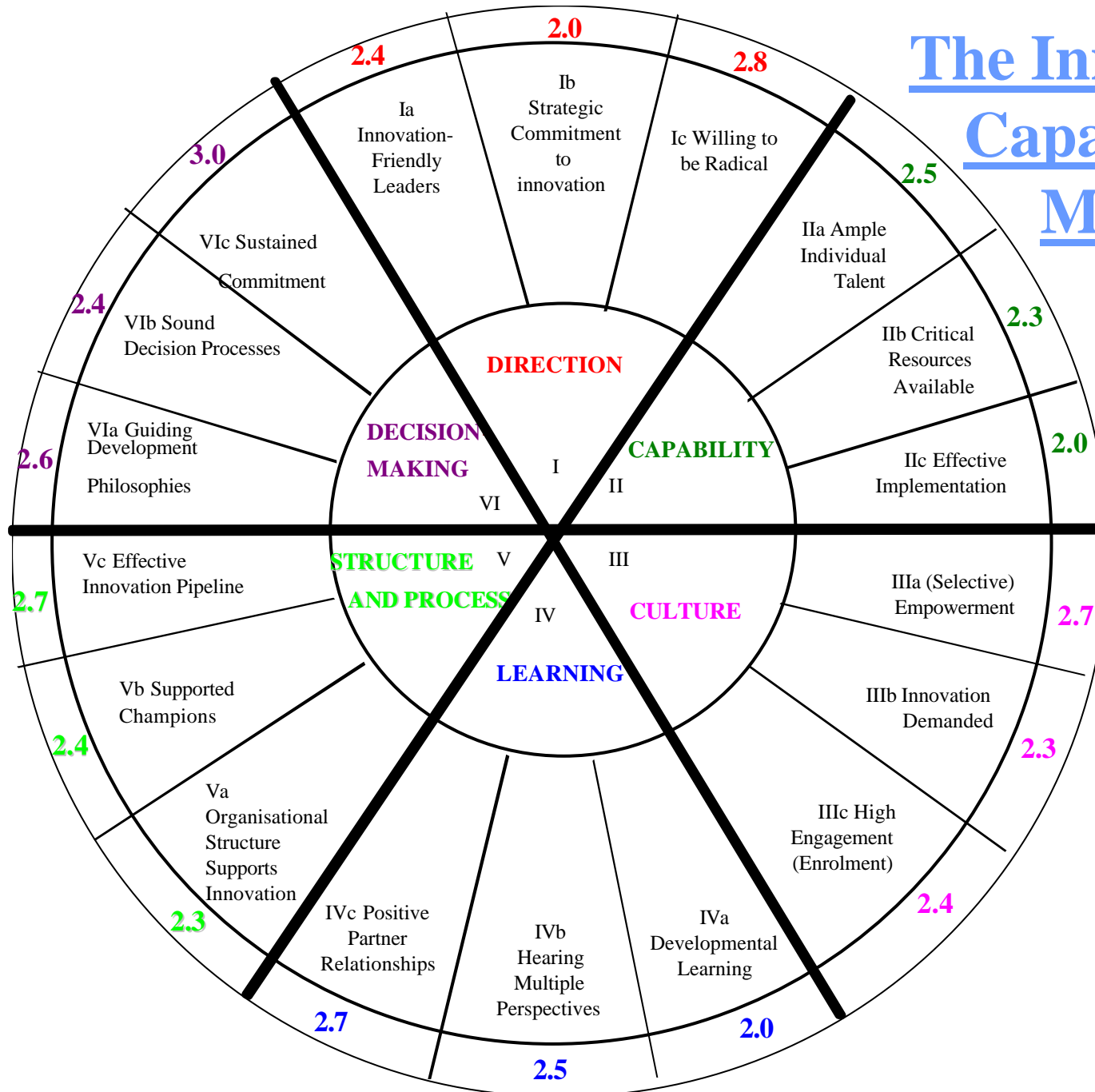
- Followed a more structured process
- Addressed a widely shared need of the poor
- Built on existing knowledge and technologies of the poor
- Built on exchange of farmers' knowledge
- Advantages clear to farmers/quick rewards<sup>9</sup>

- Affordable and low risk for the poor
- Consistent with cultural and social norms
- Flexible project design approach
- Genuine commitment by IFAD, project staff and CI
- Systematic IFAD follow up
- Facilitated by the right policy environment and effective partnership

## **Q 4. Does IFAD's Organisation and Culture Foster Innovations?**

- The Innovation Capability Model
- Staff and Partners' Perceptions
- The Existing Strengths
- Blockages to Innovations

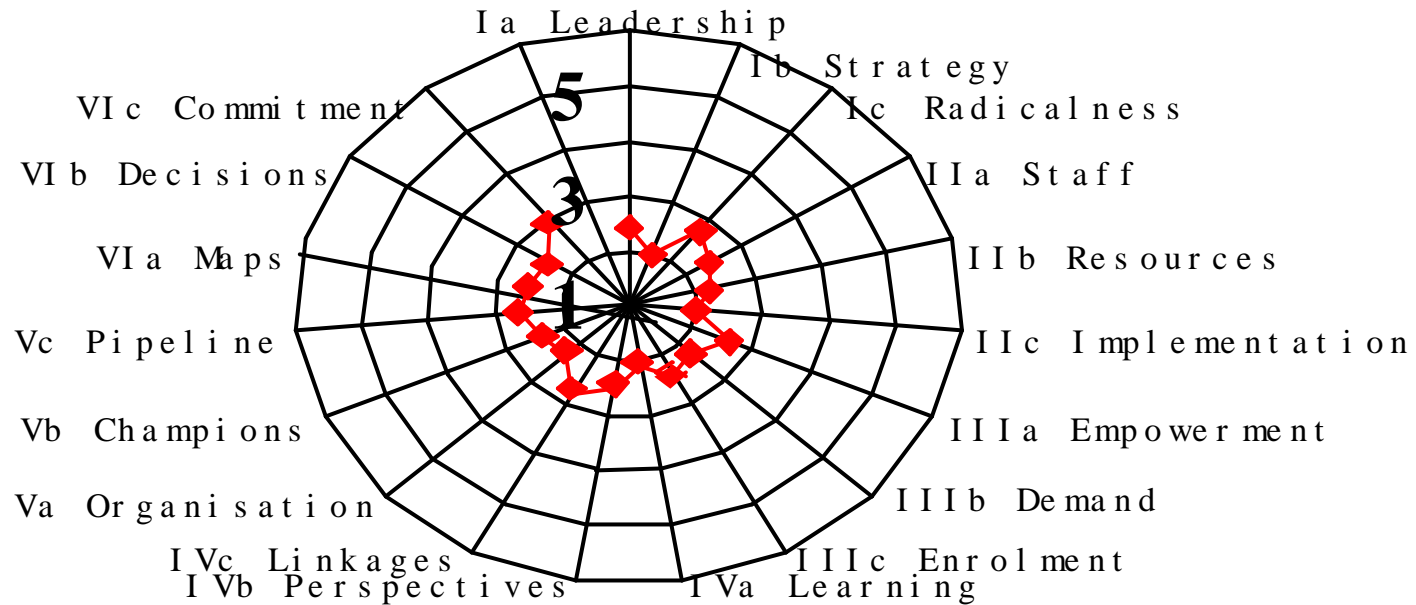
# The Innovation Capabilities Model



# IFAD Organizational Capabilities for Innovations

## Staff Perceptions

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## Partners' Perceptions

- Good perceptions from field partners on IFAD's innovative capacity and potential
- Perceptions from partners at HQ not so promising
- A gap exists between HQ and field perceptions
- Blockages to innovations at organisational level

## Existing Strengths in Innovations

- Staff committed to the search for innovative solutions
- Field work has been innovative and some was upscaled, despite numerous constraints
- Good field partners perception
- Member States committed to innovation promotion
- Demonstrated willingness to confront blockages
- Existing instruments have potential for innovations

# Organisational Blockages to Innovations

- No clear Innovation Agenda to guide operations
- Organisational culture does not support the promotion of innovations
- Lack of related skills and competencies
- Perception of two different sets of values (the approval culture versus creativity/ innovations)
- Focus on project, rather than replicable innovation

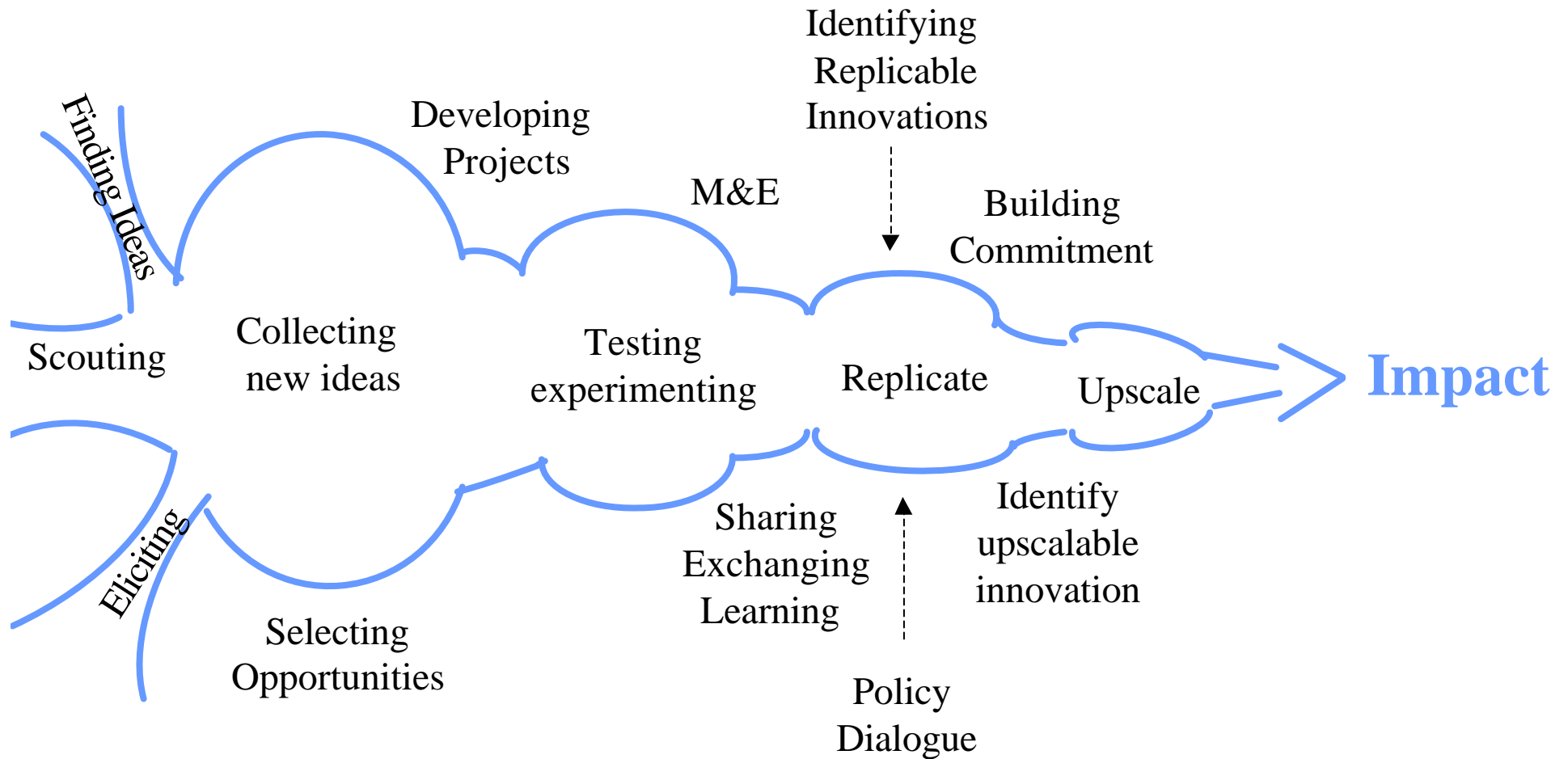
# **D. Summary of the Evaluation's Recommendations**



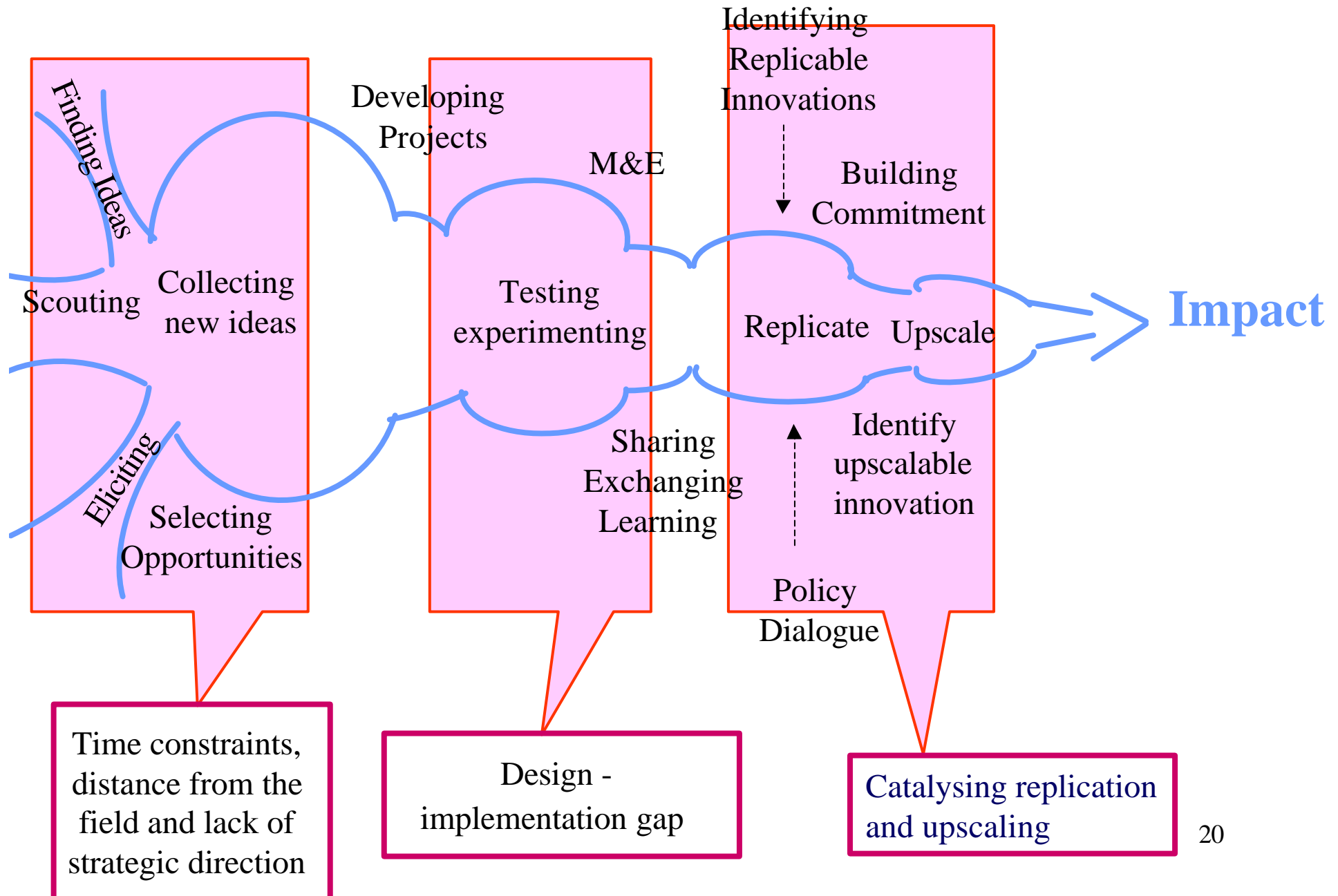
## What is “Innovation” for IFAD?

Innovation is a process through which IFAD, together with its partners, provides improved and replicable ways to deal with development problems/opportunities faced by the rural poor in specific contexts, and promotes their upscaling.

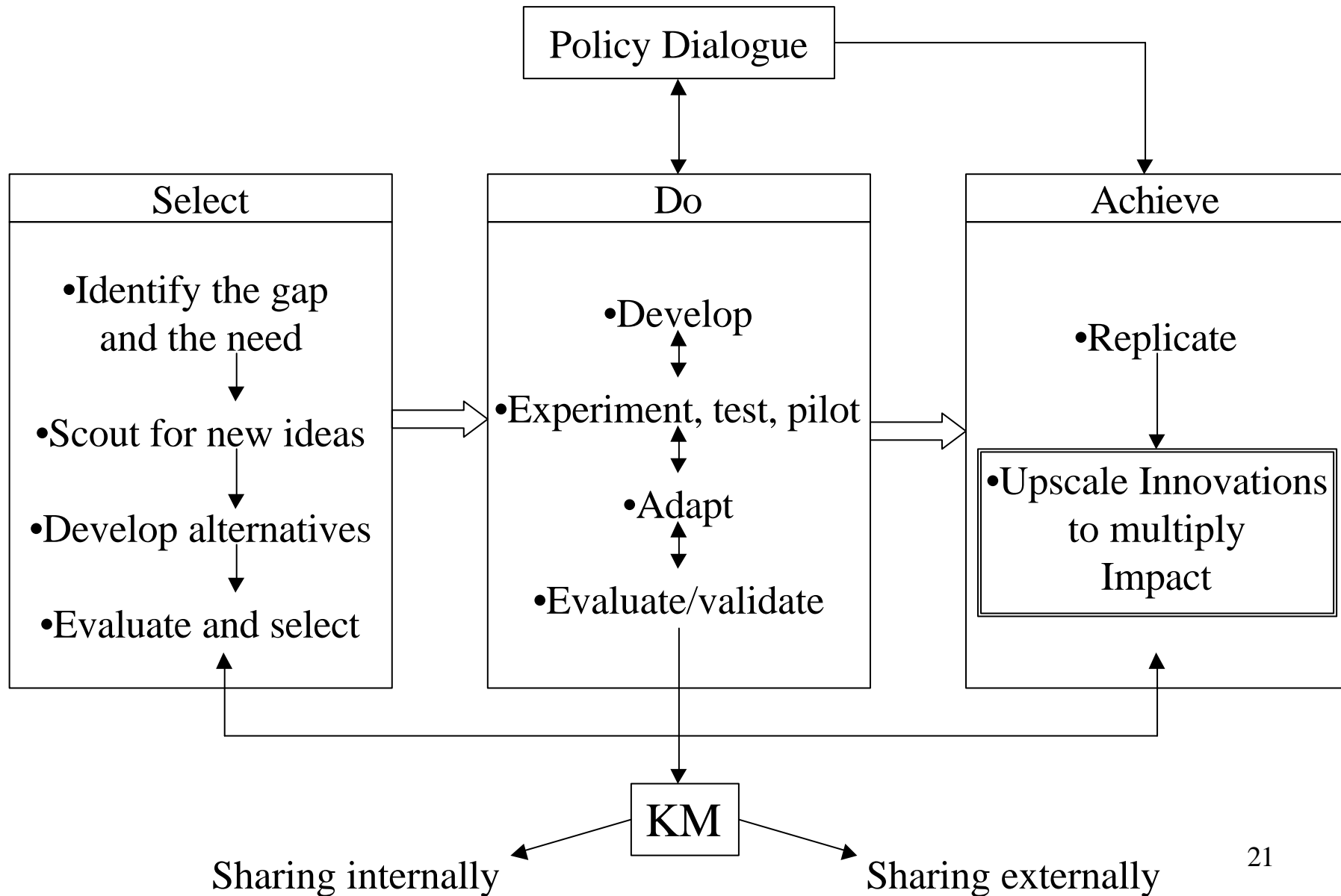
# Identify Low Capability Areas



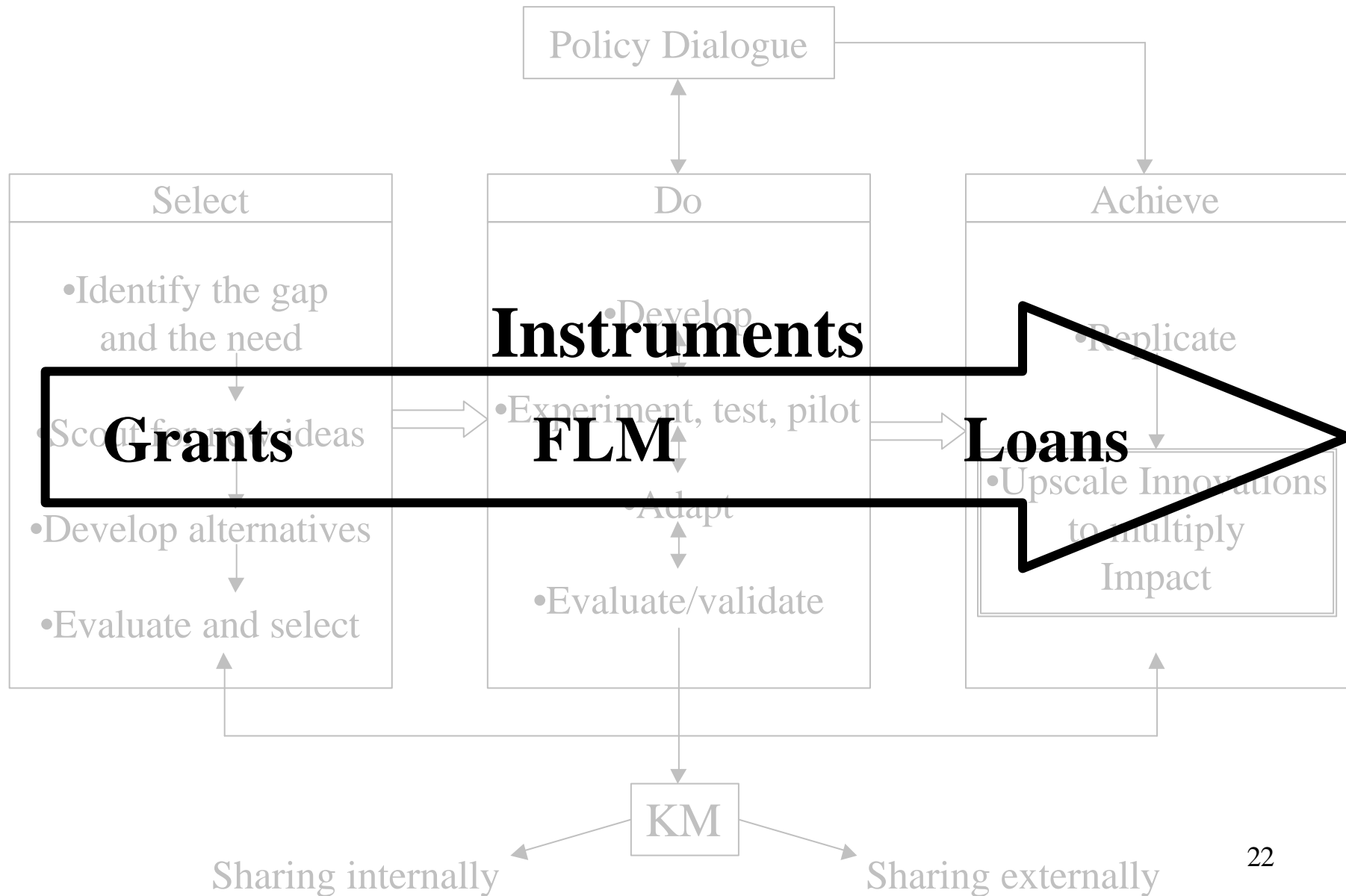
# Identify Low Capability Areas



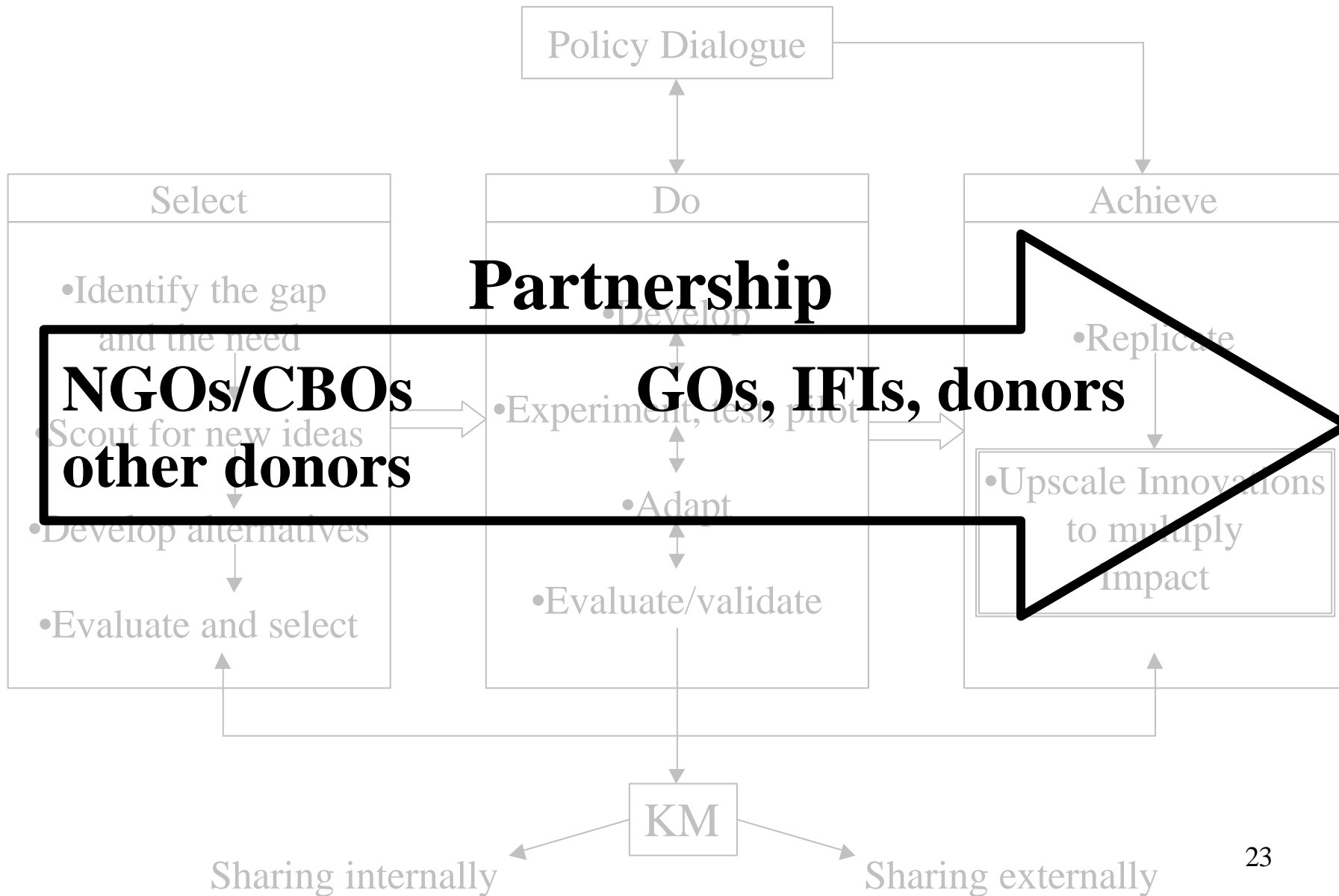
# From the idea to the Replicable Innovation Chain



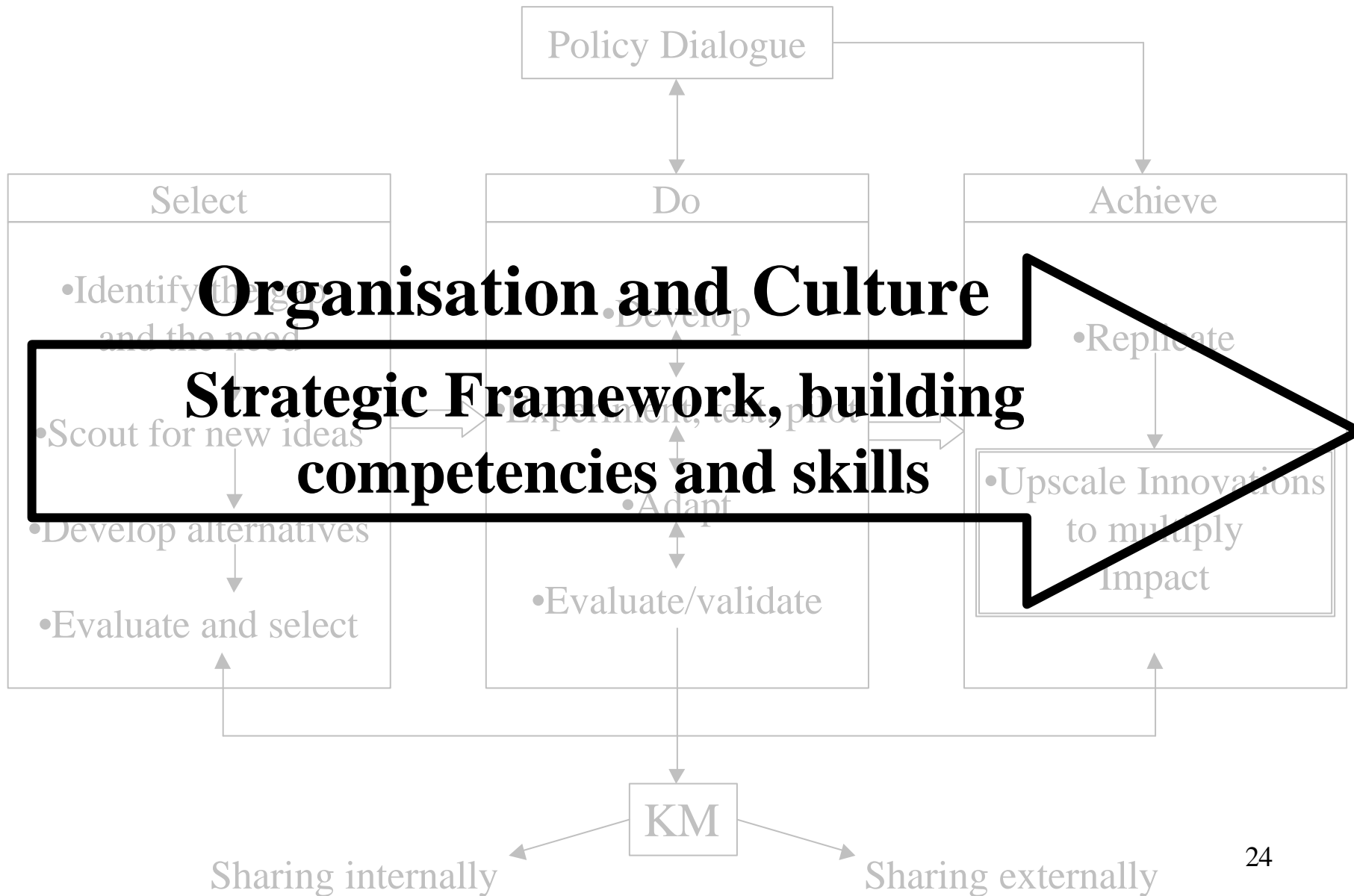
# Synchronise Instruments



# Reconfigure Partnerships



# Adjust Organisation and Culture



# Build on Strengths and Address Blockages

