Tool #1.1: Innovation Journey Roadmap

What is it?	Why use it?	When to use it?	How to use it?
This is a planning tool that will help you develop a simple chain of results starting with what your innovation provides in terms of activities/features all the way to the ultimate impact it may have on individuals, communities and systems. It will also help you match indicators to your objectives.	To demonstrate a logical continuum between your innovation activities or features, their deliverables, the changes they trigger, and the ultimate impact. And you need to measure all these developments as they occur. The Roadmap is the start of all impact measurement strategies!	Ideally, right from the start! A Roadmap can evolve along the innovation journey.	In teams. Should take ~2h=3h

Introduction: Where does your road lead?

Innovation is about introducing new elements that will lead to positive change. It is therefore critical that, as innovators, you have a vision of the ultimate impact you want to achieve and how your innovation will lead to this impact, through immediate results and longer-term changes. There are usually many layers of results between what a solution of any type achieves directly and a lasting change positively affecting people, communities, institutions, and/or systems. Understanding these middle steps between immediate results (also called deliverables or outputs), outcomes (or changes), and the ultimate impact, is critical to assessing whether any project (innovative or not) is achieving its objectives and is contributing, eventually to positive change (i.e. impact).

This is precisely what this Innovation Journey Roadmap will help you conceptualize and articulate *(see figure 1).* It is the **very first step of any solid impact measurement strategy** (also called monitoring, evaluation and learning strategy) *(see figure 2).*



Figure 1: The logical continuum between your innovation and the ultimate impact.

Innovators usually come upon their ideas by starting at either end of this spectrum. Some think of how a new solution can immediately improve the traditional system or approach and then visualize what larger change this could generate. Others begin with a vision to solve a great fundamental challenge and find which new tool or approach is needed to create that impact. Note that to make sure your innovation actually addresses an existing problem, it is highly recommended to always start with an existing problem (or opportunity).

This tool will help you decide what kind of evidence you should be gathering at different points along your Innovation Journey so that you are collecting the right information at the right time *(see figure 2)*.

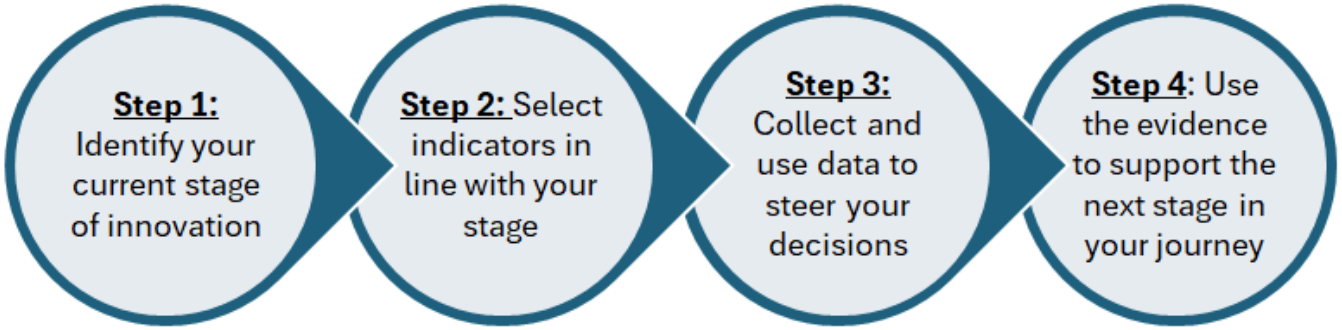


Figure 2: Applying the Innovation Journey Roadmap to identify the right type of evidence

Please bear in mind that this tool needs to be updated along your innovation journey as you will better understand how people and communities are reacting to your innovation and what change is actually taking place during your pilot.
Figure 3 below shows the format of the Innovation Journey Roadmap, while Figure 4 shows a concrete example of a theory for a generic solar phone charger solution

INNOVATION STAGE	PROBLEM DEFINITION	PLANNING	PROTOTYPING OR PILOTING	PILOTING OR SCALING	SCALING	AT SCALE
Timeframe	Before investing resources in solution development	Before testing the solution in a real-world setting	<3 month after launch and after each relevant pivot	6-9 months after project launch	>12 months or more depending on scale	~2-10 years depending on ambitions
Evidence Focus	**Problem** *How do you define the problem you are looking to solve?* Your problem statement	**Innovation Features** *Add below a list of features that make your solution innovative* Feature 1 Feature 2 Feature 3 etc..	**Immediate Results / Outputs** *What will direct users experience immediately when using the solution?* Experience 1 Experience 2 Experience 3 etc...	**Intermediate Results / early Outcomes** What are the initial changes that will take place when the innovation is being used regularly. Change 1 Change 2 Change 3 etc...	**Outcomes** What results do you expect to see when the solution becomes durably adopted by its users Outcome 1 Outcome 2 Outcome 3 etc...	**Social Impact** What lasting change did the prolonged use of your solution at scale achieve for the population(s) it serves? Impact 1 Impact 2 Impact 3 etc...

Figure 3: The stages of Evidence in the Innovation Journey Roadmap

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Figure 4: An example of Theory of Change for a solar phone charger solution.

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN! You can use the template provided here to add your inputs after each step.

Step One – Start with the ends and identify a challenge and your ultimate impact

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Evidence Focus	**Challenge** What if we could make sure that the phones of people living in off-grid communities never run out of power? Add a simple problem definition (less than 20 words)	**Innovation Features** Start here	**Immediate Results / Outcome**	**Intermediate Results / early Outcomes**	**Out** Start here	**Social Impact** What lasting change did the prolonged use of your solution at scale achieve for the population(s) it serves? Write shotr statements of fewer than 10 words each

Every innovation begins either with a challenge, an opportunity or a vision. An innovator starting with a challenge may be prompted to solve problems by asking questions such as "How can we make water points less susceptible to poor maintenance?" or "What if we helped children continue their development when schools are closed?." Those starting

with an opportunity may ask themselves "What if women had a way to send a distress signal if they felt threatened?" or "What would happen if we combined solar energy and electric bicycles to make it easier for rural populations to travel?." A visionary may simply start by imagining a world where every child is protected from all preventable diseases and work backwards to see what would need to change.

Regardless of what has inspired you to develop a new solution, it is important for you to understand what the **ultimate impact** of the successful implementation of your innovation at scale would look like. While the word "impact" can sometimes be used to mean any kind of results, it is used by monitoring and evaluation professionals (or impact measurement professionals) to describe positive lasting change generated by a project (or a product being used). Generally, the impact of a project (innovative or not) is not felt for several years after the implementation has been carried out (or after a product has started being used), as it reflects the evolution of a system or a permanent shift in the living conditions or status of beneficiaries/users.

- ➔ *Examples: Introducing a more fuel efficient cookstove may contribute to helping refugee households escape from extreme poverty through savings in the purchase of charcoal, more free time for the woman of the household and better respiratory health for all. Or a vocational training app may aspire to durably reduce youth unemployment in a low-income urban area.*

It is important to note that your innovation will likely contribute to achieving this ultimate impact (or goal) but that it is likely that other external inputs will be required. Still, it is helpful to try to define a **long-term vision** that is ambitious yet realistic and specific. "Ending world hunger" is a very nice ultimate goal but is unlikely to be achieved with one innovation. Please go ahead and write down (a) **short impact statement(s) for your innovation that will articulate your ultimate goal.** Try to imagine what will change in the world if you are completely successful. Do not look for specific indicators or targets – this should be one or at most three short narrative statements that tell people what you are aiming to achieve.

- ➔ *Example: A sustainable, resilient, and culturally acceptable food system that provides stable access to sufficient, nutritionally adequate, healthy and affordable food for present and future generations.*

Step Two – Now identify the innovation's features

Now that you have articulated the long term impact you wish to create, you will need to express what your innovation will *do* for or to users or beneficiaries (the features) that will generate change. Your *features* will be what your target

population experiences from interacting with your innovation and what set it apart from the current solutions being used.

- ➔ *Examples: A feature of a new improved cookstove may be that it uses less fuel for cooking purposes than traditional stoves. For a literacy app, it will be on-demand instruction available at home.*

These seem self-evident, but it is possible that an innovation contains multiple features, such as a training programme that equips farmers with skills in both Climate Smart Agriculture and Financial Literacy, or an electronic records system that digitizes data AND generates automatic alerts to users AND allows staff to perform remote case management. These elements are often understood as the **functions** of your innovation. They are what makes your solution different from "business as usual". Please think through these features and use the RIL Innovation Functions tool as needed:



Innovation Functions Tool_Sep

Once you have list of 1-5 features (if more than 5, you may want to consider whether your innovation is viable as a single product/service/approach or whether it may be better packaged as two or more separate solutions), please enter it in the box below - **We however recommend fewer features (3-4) to remain focused and realistic**.

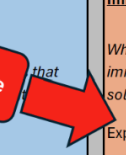
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Step Three – Continue with immediate initial results or outputs

What happens when your users or beneficiaries directly interact with your solution? What immediate benefit is triggered by the full use of your service, tool or approach? The answer to these questions will constitute the first results (or outputs) that your solution will be able to claim. In the Pilot and Scaling Data Tools, you will be looking to express these results in terms of Output Indicators. Here, however, you may use a simple narrative to explain what **initial results** you expect to see once your innovation is in use or as a result of the activities around your innovation (e.g. training).

Please note that these outputs are often experienced by *users* who may not be the *final beneficiaries* whose lives you are ultimately trying to improve. For example, a tool that helps Community Health Workers (CHW) geolocate at-risk households will not directly and immediately help these households. Instead, the solution will first create change among CHW's and health facilities' understanding of where vulnerability "hotspots" are located. You do not need to address the results of each function or activity – it is more helpful at this stage to concentrate on the initial experience(s) that will be generated for users. Verifying whether or not the features of your solution are generating these expected early results should be the focus of your prototyping and initial pilot phases.

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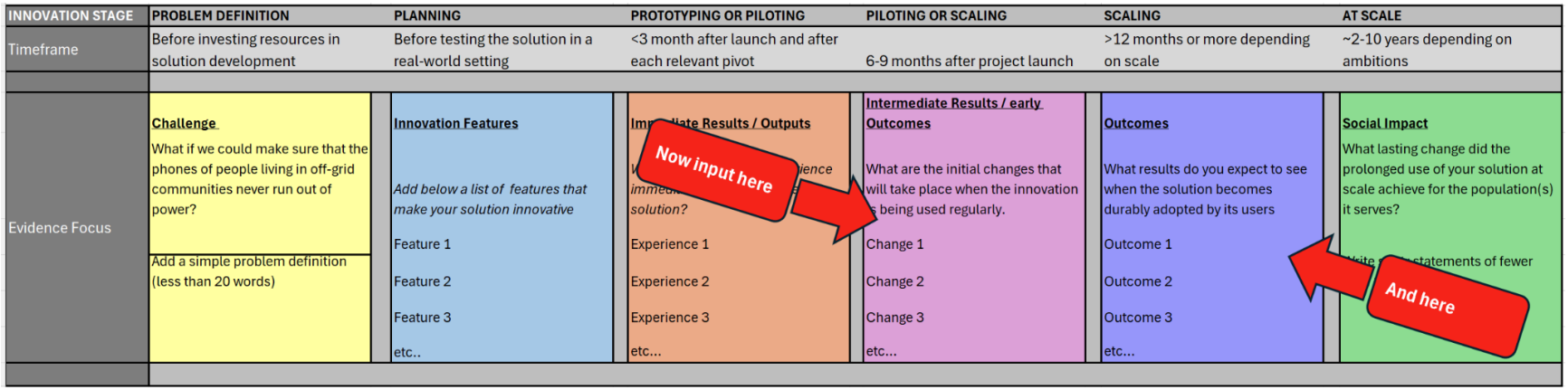


Step Four – Move to the outcomes

The last step in developing your Innovation Journey Roadmap is to link your immediate results with your ultimate vision. People sometimes like to jump straight from one to the other, without thinking through all of the steps in between. For instance, an innovator introducing a new kind of entrepreneurship training for youth may think that once the participants have learned how to open a business, their economic outlook will have automatically improved. The reality is that **a lot needs to happen between the moment the youth has completed the course and when their**

income will actually steadily improve. They will need to find capital to start their business, register their company, find customers, etc. These steps in the Roadmap are **critical** because they imagine what people will do with the direct benefits (the outputs) of the innovation, how the solution will directly or indirectly benefit others, and, in some cases, how the primary direct users will help create change for the final beneficiaries.

You are free to add as many or few intermediate steps to your Simplified Theory of Change as you wish – it will depend on how wide the gap is between your Outputs and your Vision (we recommend between 1 and 3). To begin, try to visualize what happens after the Outputs are achieved. What new changes are taking place that lead closer to the achievement of your vision? Repeat the process until you have **a logical chain of results** all the way from Inputs to Impact. The steps before your vision is reached are known as **Outcomes**. These are the kind of **changes** you would expect to achieve at the end of the full implementation of your idea through a single project.



[An example – Our generic solar phone charge solution]

Let's go back to our initial example one more time.

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Step Five – Adding Activities to your Roadmap

Congratulations on filling in the core elements of your Roadmap! You should now have a good vision of how your innovation journey will take you from the challenge you are looking to solve (or in whichever stage you currently find yourself) all the way to the ultimate impact you want to achieve. Obviously, generating these increasingly important changes will require a lot of work on your part to enhance your solution, plan for its success and sustainability, ensure solid implementation and lead your team. It is therefore important to connect each stage of the journey with key **activities** that will help you obtain the results you have entered into the Roadmap. These activities can cover a wide range of actions that you feel are necessary to reach the objectives you have set for yourself. For instance, you will need to have a solid business plan in place before you start to invest the time and resources in scaling your project. Or you may think that you will need to join an incubator programme as soon as you have a prototype ready. It may be hard to anticipate all of the activities that you will need to complete along the full journey and we encourage you to focus on what you need to achieve in your current phase and the one that follows.

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Key activities (a more complete work plan will be necessary)	**Key Activities** *Add below a list of activities that need to take place when you are exploring a challenge to solve* Activity 1 Activity 2 Activity 3 etc..	**Key Activities** *Add below a list of activities that need to take place when planning your innovation project* Activity 1 Activity 2 Activity 3 etc..	**Key Activities** *Add below a list of activities that need to take place when testing your solition in a real-world setting* Activity 1 Activity 2 Activity 3 etc..	**Key Activities** *Add below a list of activities that need to take place when continuing to test and preparing to scale your innovation* Activity 1 Activity 2 Activity 3 etc..	**Key Activities** *Add below a list of activities that need to take place when scaling up your solution* Activity 1 Activity 2 Activity 3 etc..	**Key Activities** *Add below a list of activities that need to take place to ensure the sustained success and continued social impact of your solution at scale* Activity 1 Activity 2 Activity 3 etc..

Adding these activities should help you think through some of the more operational evidence you will need to collect to assess your progress, as well as visualize what sort of investments in time, personnel or funds you may need to move to the next phase of your journey. Given how different these activities will be depending on the type of innovation and business model you are pursuing, it is hard to provide you with a comprehensive list. Reading through the whole Toolkit and consulting other innovation guides suited to your project (e.g. from startup incubator and accelerator programmes or non-profit tools like the Elrha/HIF guide) may help you identify suitable inputs. As a general rule, you may want to make certain that you regularly consult your direct users, establish and maintain contact with potential clients, donors and investors, and make regular updates to your innovation and your planning tools.

Below is an example of what the key activities might look like for our fictional solar phone charge startup.

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Key activities (a more complete work plan will be necessary)	**Key Activities** *Interview with potential customers in remote areas *Document review on existing solar charging solutions *Consultations with industry experts *Market analysis -- competitors on market, customer demand, etc... *Feasibility study etc...	**Key Activities** *Initial go-to-market plan *v1/MVP Production *Business licenses/permits and distribution agreements *Pilot project planning (including use of RIL evidence toolkit!) *Development of initial communications materials / platforms *Trademark/patent/IPR registration etc...	**Key Activities** *Hiring and training of distributors * Set up of customer hotline / user consultations *Collection and review of initial data *Design pivots and development of product v2.0 *Outreach to TelCos for scaling partnerships * Application to accelerator programmes and innovation awards *Product certification etc..	**Key Activities** *Pilot data collection and analysis *Updated production plan * Updated Business Model and marketing strategy based on pilot results *Updated communication materials, including pilot case study and user testimonials *Investment readiness planning *Constant Quality Improvement (CQI) Plan etc..	**Key Activities** *Customer survey and outcome harvesting *Initial external investments or loans for national scaling *v2.1 or v3 development *Marketing campaign and media outreach strategy * Expanded distribution channels / strategic partnerships for geographic scaling * Business / CSR certifications (Social Enterprise, Green labeling, etc...) etc..	**Key Activities** *Export strategy *Industrial manufacturing deal *Independent assessment *CSR Reporting *New product line development etc..

Step Six– Adding indicators to your Innovation Journey Roadmap

Don't worry – this is the final step! Now that you have listed both your objectives for your whole journey and key activities for your current and next phase of expansion, you can move on to identifying the key indicators you will need to collect. **Indicators** are measurement thresholds that will help you assess whether you have achieved the expected results/outputs and changes/outcomes. Please start by thinking through the types of indicators you will need to gather in order to demonstrate the chain of results you expect to obtain. You can obtain guidance on how to select and organize indicators by clicking on this link: How to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework — NCVO Knowhow and refer to this toolkit's tool #1.3 on pilot data management.

Type of indicators	Description	Examples
Uptake and activity indicators	Uptake indicators are usually linked to the user experience of your innovation and the activities you have put in place to promote and support its deployment/commercialization and use.	• # of active users • Average user satisfaction rating • # of facilitators/distributors trained • # of community focus group discussions held • # of devices produced
Immediate Results/Output indicators	Output indicators will help measure the immediate results expected out of the innovation functions (i.e. its use). These indicators need to be highly customized to the innovation. For instance, the immediate result expected from a new type of water filter will be a certain quantity and quality of water provided. For a school fee payment app, the results would be % of successful initial payments. It is recommended that these indicators be disaggregated (i.e. split) by certain key demographics (gender, age group, income level,etc..) to see if the solution is working as expected across different groups.	• % of target users who register for product or service • # or % of successful transactions performed • % of participants who complete onboarding/training • Amount of product transferred to individuals/communities • Information acquired by individuals/communities • Immediate cost savings or efficiencies generated
Intermediate Reslults/Outcome indicators	Outcome indicators aimed at measuring the changes resulting from the innovation use or activities related to the innovation. They are often more complicated to identify as they require capturing an evolution, e.g. an increase, an improved, a decreased state of affairs etc. (and therefore often require a baseline).	• Project drop-out/retention rates • Changes in knowledge, attitudes and practices • Changes in routine social indicators (school enrollment, specific morbidity rates, malnutrition status, household purchasing power, etc…) • Long term savings / efficiencies generated
(Social) Impact indicators	Impact indicators measure sustained transformation that fundamentally improve a population's living standards, welfare or social development. These indicators are usually quite broad	• Overall rates (Mortality, Malnutrition, Literacy, Employment, Economic Growth, etc…)

	(macro-level) and your solution may only partially contribute to reaching certain targets. The Sustainable Development Goals are examples of Impact indicators. You will also find these in National or Sector Development Plans or Humanitarian Response Plans, depending on your setting.	• Major changes in systems or policies (i.e., the solution becoming part of a national system) • Secondary impacts (savings generated re-invested elsewhere)

Whereas your output indicators will need to be tailored to your specific functions, your outcome indicators will be more useful if they are standardized. Using standard indicators will allow you to compare your results to those obtained by the system/product/approach you are looking to replace as well as to possible competing solutions. You can find lists of standard humanitarian and social indicators here through these directories:

- UNOCHA Indicator Registry: https://ir.hpc.tools/
- SDG Indicators List: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/ (scroll down to open the document in the language of your choice)
- U.S. Department of State / USAID Master Indicator List: https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/260455.xlsx
- Self-reliance index and indicators: https://www.refugeeselfreliance.org/sri.

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Indicators	**Problem imapct indicators** *How would you quantify the challenge(s) you are tackling? How many people are impacted locally or worldwide? How is this impact being felt in terms of human development, environmental protection or other broad areas?* Indicator 1 Indicator 2 Indicator 3 etc..	**Activity indicators** *Add indicators that will help you assess progress on your product design and pilot planning objectives* Activity indicator 1 Activity indicator 2 Activity indicator 3 etc..	**Immediate Results/Output indicators** *Add below what you want to measure when your product or serivce starts to become used by individuals or groups. You can also include measurement of key activities that need to be carried out during an early pilot project.* Output indicator 1 Output indicator 2 Activity indicator 1 etc..	**Intermediate Results / Outcome indicators** *Add below what you want to measure when your product or service has been used regularly over a full cycle (season, school year, project period, etc...) You can also include measurement of key activities that need to be carried out during this phase.* IR/Outcome indicator 1 IR/Outcome indicator 2 Activity indicator 1 etc..	**Outcome Indicators** *Add below how you will measure results obtained as an increasingly important part of the population uses your solution regularly.* Outcome Indicator 1 Outcome iIndicator 2 Activity Indicator 1 etc..	**Social Impact Indicators** *Add below the lasting change you want to create once your innovation reaches its full potential. You should link to the ndicators from the Problem Definnition and/or add others as needed* Impact Indicator 1 Impact Indicator 2 Impact Indicator 3 etc..

Examples of indicators based on our solar phone charger example

INNOVATION STAGE	PROBLEM DEFINITION	PLANNING	PROTOTYPING OR PILOTING	PILOTING OR SCALING	SCALING	AT SCALE
Timeframe	Before investing resources in solution development	Before testing the solution in a real-world setting	<3 month after launch and after each relevant pivot	6-9 months after project launch	>12 months or more depending on scale	~2-10 years depending on ambitions
Evidence Focus	**Challenge** What if we could make sure that the phones of people living in off-grid communities never run out of power?	**Innovation Features** *Recharging >50% of phone battery in 2 hours via solar pannel *Compatible with all smart and feature phones *High durability and robustness *Affordbale for all phone owners	**Immediate Results / Outputs** *Customers able to purchase product locally * Users able to connect device to phone and properly start the charging process * Phone battery charges as expected	**Intermediate Results / early Outcomes** *Users able to extend phone use due to incrased access to energy * Cost savings from reducing charging costs materialze *Users able to continue using phones when traveling for extended periods	**Outcomes** *Increased levels of phone ownership by lower income households *Cost savings from charging costs productively reinvested by households *Improved sense of secuirty for individuals working outside of home	**Social Impact** *Improved connectivty of off-grid communities (SDG 9c) * Reduced reliance on energies from fossil fuels in low-income communities(SDG 7) * Reduced incidence of Gender Based Violence in rural communities
Key activities (a more complete work plan will be necessary)	**Key Activities** *Interview with potential customers in remote areas *Document review on existing solar charging solutions *Consultations with industry experts *Market analysis -- competitors on market, customer demand, etc... *Feasibility study etc...	**Key Activities** *Initial go-to-market plan *v1/MVP Production *Business licenses/permits and distribution agreements *Pilot project planning (including use of RIL evidence toolkit!) *Development of initial communications materials / platforms *Trademark/patent/IPR registration etc...	**Key Activities** *Hiring and training of distributors * Set up of customer hotline / user consultations *Collection and review of initial data *Design pivots and development of product v2.0 *Outreach to TelCos for scaling partnerships * Application to accelerator programmes and innovation awards *Product certification etc..	**Key Activities** *Pilot data collection and analysis *Updated production plan * Updated Business Model and marketing strategy based on pilot results *Updated communication materials, including pilot case study and user testimonials *Investment readiness planning *Constant Quality Improvement (CQI) Plan etc..	**Key Activities** *Customer survey and outcome harvesting *Initial external investments or loans for national scaling *v2.1 or v3 development *Marketing campaign and media outreach strategy * Expanded distribution channels / strategic partnerships for geographic scaling * Business / CSR certifications (Social Enterprise, Green labeling, etc...) etc..	**Key Activities** *Export strategy *Industrial manufacturing deal *Independent assessment *CSR Reporting *New product line development etc..
Indicators	**Problem imapct indicators** 1. Cell phone ownership rate in off-grid settlements (disgragated by gender) 2. Hours of access to electricity available to off-grid households 3. Cost of charging a phone in an off-grid settlement etc..	**Activity indicators** 1. Number of inhabitants surveyed 2. Number of potential distribution channels identified 3. Number of visitors on website and social media page etc..	**Immediate Results/Output** 1. Number of chargers sold (broken down by buyers' demographics) 2. Number of devices returned 3. Number of sales agents hired etc..	**Intermediate Results / Outcome** 1. Percentage of users reporting increased phone use 2. Percentage of users reporting lower charging costs 3. Percentage of female users reporting more regular access to functioning phone etc..	**Outcome Indicators** 1. Percentage of households with mutli-phone ownership 2. Percentage of female phone owners reporting higher sense of security when outisde the household 3. Percentage of device owners reporting increased professional or educational use of phones etc..	**Social Impact Indicators** 1. Percentage of off-grid households with access to solar energy solutions 2. Percentage of off-grid households who own at least one smartphone 3. Incidence rate of Gender-Based Violence in rural communities etc..

Reminder: You do not need to fill in all of the indicators for each stage of the journey at this time. You can focus on adding the ones you need for your current phase and the one that will follow, although it is strongly recommended that you also include your Problem Impact indicators. When you are ready to start a pilot or to enter a new phase of scaling, you will have an opportunity to develop your use of indicators more deeply using this toolkit's tool #1.3 on pilot data management.

One final note: By fully filling out this Innovation Journey Roadmap, you now have a document that can function as a basic Theory of Change and a Logic Framework for your solution, two types of documents that may be expected if you are partnering with INGOs, UN agencies or public social innovation funds.