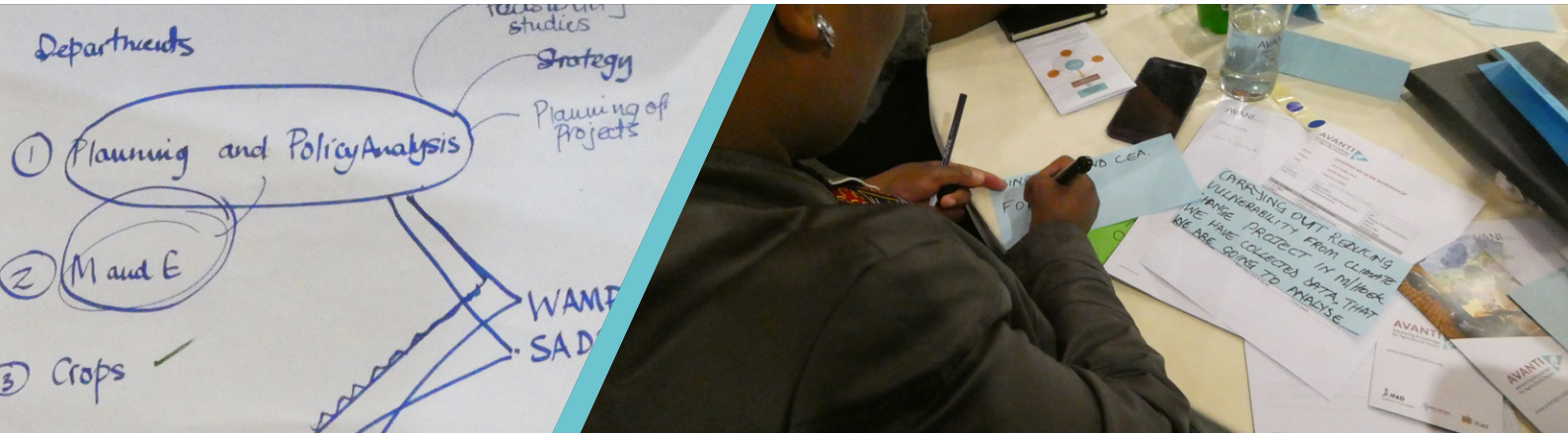


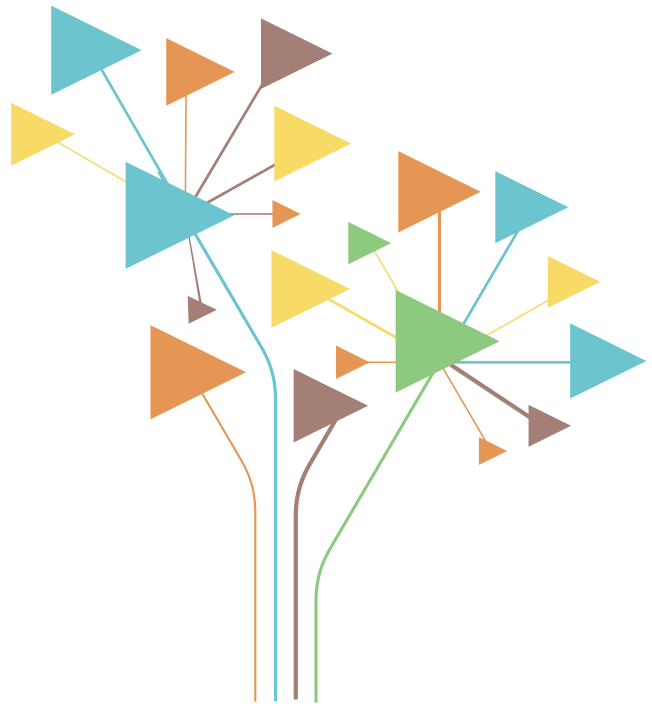
AG-Scan Implementers' Package: a guide to facilitating self-assessment in the agriculture and rural development sectors



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What is the AVANTI initiative?

AVANTI – Advancing Knowledge for Agricultural Impact was created to help identify opportunities and gaps in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacities and in systems within IFAD partner countries, and to address them through focused follow-up action. AVANTI did this by facilitating AG-Scans, which are systematic self-assessments of a country's capacity for results-based management (RBM) in the agriculture and rural development sectors.

AVANTI was funded by IFAD and was implemented by Helvetas and Itad between 2018 and 2022. Government ministries from the following 13 countries were also involved in the initiative: Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Laos, Lesotho, Mozambique, Peru, Rwanda, Samoa, Sierra Leone, Tunisia and Viet Nam.

The objective of the AVANTI initiative was to strengthen national governments' RBM practices and to contribute to improved reporting against the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This objective was achieved by deploying the AG-Scan methodology and by supporting the development of national action plans (APs), which were designed to leverage countries' strengths and address and identify their RBM gaps. The APs were led and owned by the leading government institutions that presided over agriculture and rural development.

What is the AG-Scan methodology and why is it important?

The AG-Scan methodology places capacity development within M&E at the centre of creating a results and learning culture within the institutions responsible for delivering agriculture and rural development interventions. A robust RBM culture is the foundation of meaningful planning, monitoring, implementation, and adaptation. Conducting an AG-Scan in a specific national context helps to draw attention to the most important gaps in capacities and systems – not only in the ministries responsible for rural development but also in the other governmental and non-governmental institutions supporting them – so that they can be prioritised for follow-up action.

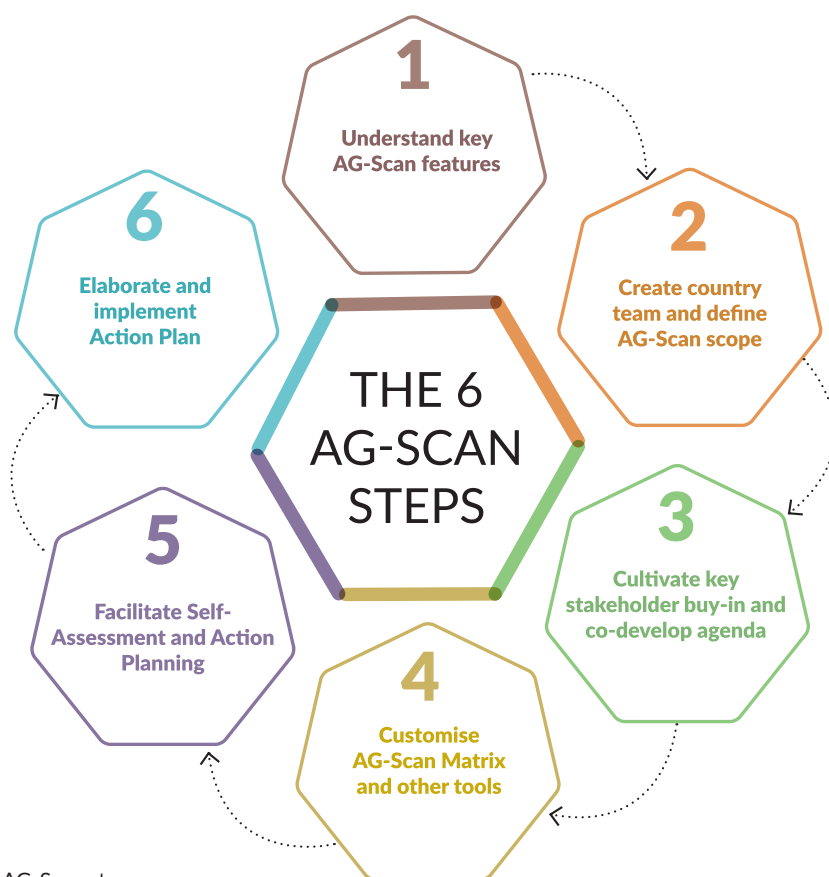


Figure 1. The six AG-Scan steps

Why create this AG-Scan Implementers' Package?

This Implementers' Package was created for those who want to directly facilitate self-assessments and to design APs to improve capacity for RBM and SDG monitoring in one or more government ministries or other institutions, using the AG-Scan approach. This would normally include AG-Scan methodological specialists, as well as representatives of the lead ministries for SDG monitoring and reporting. A fuller description of a typical AG-Scan country team is provided below, in [step 2](#).

The package includes the core steps and main activities in each step, which are supported by guidance, tools, specific tips, and examples for every activity. For decision-makers who would like to know more about AG-Scans but do not require the detailed instructions and templates provided here, [the summary version of the AG-Scan Manual](#) is recommended to obtain a general understanding of the AG-Scan approach. There is also an accompanying [user guide for remote/blended working](#), which was inspired by the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent focus on the engagement of stakeholders at a distance. This guide could also be used in other contexts where opportunities for face-to-face interaction are limited or unavailable.

The content of all these documents was based on the experiences of using AG-Scans worldwide, on the expertise and suggestions of the large group of experts who were engaged in AVANTI and on the lessons learned in diverse contexts.

In the remainder of this Implementers' Package, you are provided with a step-by-step guide and with the approaches and tools that can be deployed in undertaking AG-Scans. At the start of the package, you are provided with information on the origins of the AG-Scan methodology. The package subsequently takes you through the requirements for the AG-Scan process. The tools and approaches are also described, and examples under each step of the AG-Scan process are provided.

STEP 1

Understanding the key AG-Scan features

Before you start your AG-Scan planning and put together your country team, you should be familiar with the approach, its rationale and all the essential steps in preparing for a self-assessment workshop and a subsequent Action Plan¹. These are briefly outlined for you below.

1.1 RBM and SDGs

The core objectives of the AG-Scan are to strengthen national governments' RBM practices and to contribute towards improved reporting against the SDGs. RBM can be described as:

[O]rienting all action and use of resources towards achieving clearly defined and demonstrable results. RBM increases transparency and accountability, allowing interventions to complement each other and avoid overlap and waste. Three interconnected processes, namely good planning, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), can greatly enhance the effectiveness of investment projects and plans.²

RBM is a mindset, a way of working that looks beyond processes, activities, products and services to focus on the actual social and economic benefits of projects and programmes.³

Thus, RBM is a combination of policies, systems, attitudes, practices, and behaviour aimed at ensuring a strong link between implementation, evidence and learning.

The development community and global governments also agreed on 17 goals and 231 associated indicators to actualise the SDGs and to achieve Agenda 2030. Governments and their partners face the universal challenge of measuring these indicators and of tracking progress against national targets.

Due to widespread challenges concerning indicator measurement and reporting, initiatives to improve M&E capacities attract the interest of many ministries. Agricultural and rural development ministries mainly work on the following SDGs: SDG 1 (end poverty), SDG 2 (end hunger), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 8 (decent work), SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), SDG 13 (combat climate change), and SDG 15 (protect life on land).

Find out more through the following links:

[The 17 SDGs](#)

[IFAD and the SDGs](#)

[The United Nations' guidelines for supporting country reporting on the SDGs](#)

¹ If you would like to know about the **origins of the AG-Scan methodology**, please see the following description of the [Managing for Development Results CAP-Scan methodology](#). This includes examples of CAP-Scan reports, from which the AG-Scan methodology was derived.

² FAO Investment Learning Platform, [Results-based management](#).

³ [UN Habitat Results-Based Management Handbook](#).

1.2 The AG-Scan process

The AG-Scan is a facilitated process for a practitioner-driven, in-depth reflection on agricultural and rural development sectors' capacities for RBM at the national level. Aside from the identification of priority areas for follow-up, AG-Scans should be designed to contribute to governments' abilities to report on and measure performance towards the SDGs. An AG-Scan usually consists of six steps, beginning with an initial scoping of the task and an analysis of the context, and ending with the approval of an AP to strengthen the RBM capacities of ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) and of collaborating non-state actor (NSA) institutions.

1.3 AG-Scan steps

The steps of the AG-Scan package have been designed and are presented in a consecutive manner. However, in practice, steps might overlap and happen in parallel, e.g., while working on overall understanding (step 1), you (AG-Scan implementers) may also start some of the tasks related to identifying contextual issues and key AG-Scan participants (steps 2 and 3).

The six steps are outlined in the diagram below:

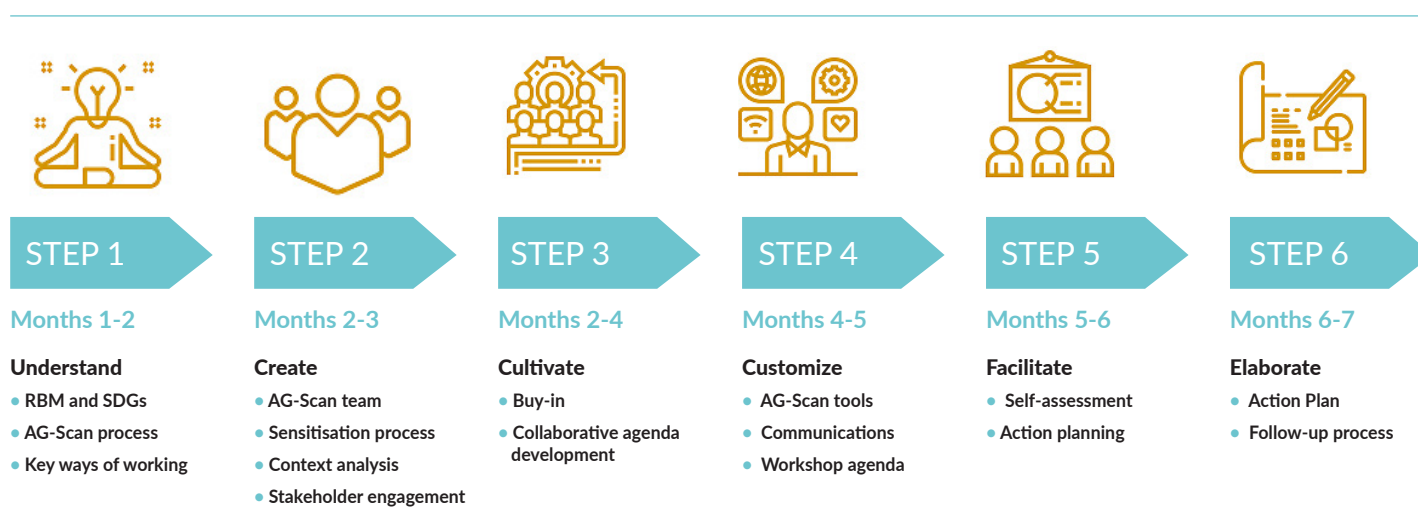


Figure 2. The AG-Scan Process

1.4 Key features of the AG-Scan approach

Four guiding principles are crucial to a successful AG-Scan: trust-building, inclusion, knowledge sharing and action orientation. This is because of the recognition that AG-Scans aim to be transformative, with a particular emphasis on human and institutional behaviour – it is ultimately collaborative behaviour and motivation that drive RBM.

Trust Building

AG-Scans endeavour to create an environment in which all relevant stakeholders can contribute their diverse and independent viewpoints and experiences. It is about bringing the right people together to reflect, share opinions and agree on actions to improve current practices. This includes people across hierarchies, sectors, government ministries and different departments. It is important that the AG-Scan self-assessment workshops start with and promote joint reflection and decision-making and that they establish networks that will continue once a workshop is complete. Hierarchies and power relations can obstruct knowledge-sharing and in-depth analysis. Therefore, the AG-Scan team should ensure that the environment is conducive to sharing opinions honestly and safely. There is also a need to identify and motivate champions to take up responsibilities for strengthening RBM and improving SDG monitoring and reporting beyond the AG-Scan workshop.

Inclusion

The contributions of diverse stakeholders across different sectors are essential for agricultural growth and rural development. Therefore, the country AG-Scan team needs to ensure that the workshop reflects the diversity of the key national actors and also that all the relevant groups can share their perspectives. Workshop facilitators should aim to achieve diversity across different parameters, including age, race, gender, geography, experience, and sub-sector. Furthermore, having an AG-Scan participant as a co-facilitator, where possible, can add significant value to the level of engagement and buy-in on the part of other AG-Scan participants: having a peer as part of the supporting team tends to validate the exercise and increase the chances that important contextual elements are taken into account.

Knowledge sharing

Communication and targeted knowledge sharing are essential for success in strengthening RBM capacities and in improving informed decision-making, policy-making and reporting on progress towards the SDGs. The AG-Scan provides an opportunity to practically demonstrate the advantages of having good communication procedures and habits in place, both externally and internally. Thus, the AG-Scan team should prepare collaboration spaces and showcase knowledge products and social media, which can be adopted by the engaged stakeholders.

Action orientation

The AP is the most tangible output from a country's AG-Scan and needs to fit realistically into the national stakeholders' rural development ecosystem and strategies. For this reason, identification of ongoing initiatives, adaptation to the country context, inclusion of national stakeholders and provision of local examples are all key to successful adoption of the AG-scan results and recommendations. The identified and selected actions are more likely to be taken up if they are concrete and if commitments for funding and follow-up are clear. Intelligence and audience-targeted messaging is important for the country AG-Scan team.

STEP 2

Create your country team and define your AG-Scan scope

Once you have agreed to conduct an AG-Scan, a "kick-off" call needs to be organised, in which the AG-Scan Team Leader (TL) explains the AG-Scan's context, process, participants, methodology, products and benefits, and shares the first experiences with the main country/regional counterparts (e.g., from a rural development ministry and/or an AG-Scan funding agency). These are briefly outlined for you below.

Some general recommendations are as follows:

- ▶ Do not underestimate the time required for negotiating and for the preparation of the AG-Scan with the lead ministry. Depending on the availability of the required staff, this could take months rather than days or weeks.
- ▶ Make sure that your expectations and responsibilities are clear to all the institutions and persons involved (terms of reference (ToR), contract, workload, budget and conditions).
- ▶ Be clear and realistic about the overall AG-Scan's time frame (always more than six months); workload (25-35 days of working time each for the Team Leader (TL) and the Associate Consultant (AC) and 50 days for the In-Country Expert (ICE)); and associated expenses (e.g., travel, accommodation and workshop expenses)
- ▶ If feasible, you might want to have substitutes for key roles in case of unforeseen unavailability.
- ▶ The AG-Scan TL should alert other implementers and key clients about unexpected obstacles, incidents, delays, and new situations – such as staff changes.
- ▶ When contacting the representatives of core funders or governments, be respectful and formal, especially when you are not yet familiar to people.

2.1 Set up your AG-Scan country team

This section provides a description of a typical AG-Scan team configuration. It can be used as a starting point for those new to the approach. We recommend a complimentary mix of team members in terms of experience, gender, skills, and methodological and thematic knowledge.

Keep in mind that AG-Scan implementers are facilitators of a participatory process and not evaluators. Thus, ideal attributes for the team members are excellent communication, facilitation, analytical, sensitivity and leadership skills. In addition, having a wide personal network is also a desirable quality. Furthermore, the mastery of national languages (at least for part of the team) and availability are also crucial attributes.



Country AG-Scan Team Leader

The TL is responsible for guiding an AG-Scan country team in analysing the national context of the rural development sector, promoting the AG-Scan within the relevant institutions, ensuring the engagement of key national actors, preparing customised tools and facilitating a participatory self-assessment workshop. Moreover, they are responsible for brokering concrete actions and accompanying the elaboration of a national AP for improving RBM and SDG's M&E. Furthermore, the TL also plays a knowledge-brokering role in the wider development community, through their participation in relevant networks and events.

Associate Consultant

The AC assists the TL and the ICE and supports the logistics and recording of all workshop proceedings during the AG-Scan workshop. During the workshop, the AC is the main rapporteur and ensures the documentation and sharing of the key discussions and the main takeaways. Moreover, they also ensure that commitments and activities are well-reflected in the APs.

In-Country Expert

The ICE needs to have a certain level of recognition and respect within the government and among the key stakeholders. In addition, they must also have an intimate knowledge of the country's rural development context. They coordinate and negotiate with the national stakeholders and move the AG-Scan process forward. The ICE should be a self-driven and motivated communicator and is usually identified through the Government Coordination Person (GCP) or through the networks of implementing parties.

Government Coordination Person

The GCP convenes and coordinates national government officials and key non-state actor (NSA) participation. They accompany and promote the AG-Scan process within the host ministries. The GCP must have the gravitas to establish initial contact with key senior government officials, to promote the AG-Scan in relevant government circles and to achieve buy-in and ownership by stakeholders throughout the process. In some cases, it may be more effective to have a GCTeam, a coordinating team, with representatives of key ministries, who may collectively have more influence over engagement and follow-up of an AG-Scan.

Champions

AG-Scan champions are persons who have a specific interest in the AG-Scan outcomes and process, concrete thematic knowledge on key topics (e.g., climate change or nutrition), and a high level of motivation to engage. They should be identified quickly and given concrete tasks within the country AG-Scan process so that they can engage in and contribute to the workshop's design, the identification of useful knowledge products and the sharing of knowledge. These persons can ensure follow-up and M&E after the AP elaboration and can be a point of crystallisation for a national network or a community of practice.

Liaison Officer (optional)

If an AG-Scan is undertaken with the sponsorship of a donor (such as IFAD, as in the case of AVANTI), it can be highly useful to have a liaison officer who is based in the funding institution and who ensures that the AG-Scan products (publications) and learning (events) are effectively disseminated.

Find out more through the following link:

[Terms of reference of the AG-Scan facilitation team – the TL, AC, ICE and GCP](#)



2.2 Kick-off

The AG-Scan needs to be a demand-driven process. The role of identifying the demand of a country to lead an AG-Scan may be prompted by an external funder, who can help to connect the AG-Scan implementing team with their key in-country counterparts. However, it is ultimately the Ministry of Agriculture (or similar) that will decide what the purpose and the potential added value of the exercise is, and whether the AG-Scan will proceed or not.

In a joint kick-off call, the AG-Scan TL presents: the overall concept and approach; the methodology and procedures; the products and benefits; and clarifies the doubts and questions of the client. Initial decisions regarding the scope, participants and timeline need to be taken.

The following are links to examples of a typical contact email and of the subsequent kick-off call to start the process:

[Sample contact email and agenda for kick-off meeting](#)

[Example of a kick-off presentation from Rwanda](#)

Below is an example of a country roadmap, with suggested next steps and actions (you should share this with funders and the main client representative if identified).



| | Activity | Estimated Timing |
|---|--|------------------|
| 1 | Craft the AG-Scan process – preparations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scoping and definition of approach. Identify and engage GCP and national consultant. | Weeks 1-8 |
| 2 | Create AG-Scan team and conduct context analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compose and contract the team. Introductory kick-off call between TL, GCP and ICE. Literature review and contextual analysis (report). Stakeholder mapping – identify key players and workshop participants. Expert interviews. Agree workshop venue, dates and programme. | Weeks 8-14 |
| 3 | Cultivate further buy-in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send invitations to speaker and all participants. Validate context and stakeholder analysis with key actors. Prepare the event – logistics. | Weeks 10-16 |
| 4 | Customise matrix and other tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare matrix and all other inputs and materials for the assessment. Communicate and promote the event (inform national media). Design agenda for self-assessment workshop. | Weeks 14-18 |
| 5 | Self-assessment workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inscription and welcome (programme). Onboarding and roles. Assessment with LEAPS⁴ (country profile). Identify champions and knowledge products. Social reporting – interviews. Evaluation. | Week 20 |
| 6 | Action planning workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss and prioritise areas and actions. Start detailed planning (e.g., funding of activities). Next steps and commitments (elaboration of AP). | Week 21 |

Figure 3. Sample AG-Scan Roadmap

⁴ LEAPS = Leadership, Evaluation and monitoring, Accountability and partnerships, Planning & budgeting and Statistics. These are the 5 RBM pillars used in AG-Scans. [See section 4.1 Customise the Matrix](#) for more details.

2.3 Context and stakeholder analysis

As part of the scoping activities, you will need to undertake desk research to provide the AG-Scan team with background information on existing strategies, initiatives and case studies. The desk research will help you to identify the key stakeholders and documents that will be useful for the AG-Scan process (scoping and participants) and for the design of the self-assessment workshop (content, working groups and thematic inputs).

The review could provide information on the following:

- ▶ The main features of the country (population, area, key characteristics of agriculture and commerce, climate change and poverty factors, and inequality and conflicts, etc.).
- ▶ Relevant national and sector development policies, strategies, impact assessments, evaluations, and plans (e.g., voluntary national reviews of SDGs).
- ▶ Sector expenditure reviews, medium-term expenditure frameworks (MTEFs) (or equivalent for the client ministry) and discussions with the Ministry of Finance.
- ▶ Detailed overview of the agriculture and rural development sectors (the main economic drivers, challenges, and initiatives).
- ▶ The status quo of M&E, SDG reporting and RBM (key SDGs, responsible MDAs and key NSAs).
- ▶ Potential hints on how to tailor presentations to introduce the AG-Scan to governments and other key stakeholders.

Aside from a picture of the status quo concerning RBM and the SDGs in the country, the above information will provide insights into which institutions should be represented in the AG-Scan workshop, as well as possible entry points for action following the AG-Scan.

2.4 Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement is integral to the AG-Scan process. Support from the AG-Scan funder's country team and the general relationship between ministries and the funder can boost the trust-building and engagement process. This is an opportunity for you to refine the previously conducted desk research and to identify champions within the departments and institutions who could already be signed up for the workshop. Although ministries with a rural development mandate are the key stakeholder in this context, the AG-Scan implementing team should also promote the engagement of non-governmental institutions, academia, and donor agencies in the AG-Scan, particularly as these actors often play pivotal roles in supporting the achievement of the SDGs.



You can support this engagement process by sharing videos and photos from previous AG-Scans to capture the ambience of the self-assessment workshops and to make the methodological explanations more interesting and easier to relate to. Moreover, you should also use outputs such as summary sheets, country profiles and APs from other countries, and testimonials post-AG-Scan to show the usefulness of the process. An AG-Scan is not only a training or capacity-strengthening exercise but also a key strategic reflection and knowledge-sharing process, which aims to improve planning, budgeting, and project implementation.

It may be necessary to undertake a “promotional tour” at the beginning of an AG-Scan process as a strategy for initiating stakeholder engagement. This involves meetings between the TL and AC (and the locally based staff of funders, if relevant) and the GCP and the key staff of relevant institutions. These meetings ensure that there is a full understanding of the organisational context before you start the design of the AG-Scan process.

Face-to-face meetings are recommended for this initial effort to build trust and achieve buy-in. The preliminary results of the desk research should be presented and discussed, including the recognition of existing efforts to strengthen RBM and an indication of the main challenges faced by the sector in relation to RBM.

Your AG-Scan approach and its context (e.g., who is promoting/funding it and why) will illustrate how this process can contribute to the identification of the priority needs and activities. Your description of the AG-Scan methodology should also provide national counterparts with a clear picture of the stages and the anticipated timing associated with the AG-Scan. In addition, you should also highlight the importance of engaging key actors within government and within collaborating NSAs. It is also helpful to have promotional materials (leaflets, presentations, and links to videos and websites) that you can leave with the meeting hosts.

Find out more through the following links:

[Photos from AG-Scan workshops](#) (to showcase the ambience).

[The AVANTI brochure](#)

STEP 3

Cultivate key stakeholder buy-in and co-develop agenda

In step 2, you started to engage with the key stakeholders, who will help to ensure that the AG-Scan objectives adequately reflect the key government ministry’s needs and that the process unfolds as smoothly as possible. In step 3, your aim is to strengthen those relationships, whilst bringing other important actors on board.

3.1 Set up your communications tools

It is important that you carefully plan the communications and related outputs with the people and institutions engaged in the AG-Scan and its implementation. This involves designing templates – including the logos of key MDAs and other relevant organisations and having a customised letterhead for external communications.

Internally, it is also very helpful to have a platform on which the AG-Scan implementing team can exchange ideas, prepare, and update various AG-Scan materials, and store secondary information, etc. The latter is particularly useful if you intend to conduct more than one AG-Scan, as the materials and information collected for the first AG-Scan(s) can be repurposed for future ones, thereby increasing efficiency and building up a cache of resources.

When the date of the workshop is approaching, you might consider setting up a tool for ad hoc communications among the facilitation team, which could be used in cases where brief but rapid responses are required (e.g., a shared group using applications such as Signal or WhatsApp, or a similar smartphone-enabled tool).

3.2 Ensure stakeholder buy-in

At this stage, you will have identified a lead agency (e.g., the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development) and a GCP or group to steer the AG-Scan process. Although, as the AG-Scan implementing team, you are still the main technical supporter of the process, it is essential that you continue to cultivate a sense of ownership on the part of your in-country counterparts, as they will be the ultimate owners of the AG-Scan follow-up. Energy and enthusiasm for the process can be built and maintained by having regular online or face-to-face exchanges and by supporting the onboarding of more stakeholders. These are essential steps in ensuring that the right people and institutions engage meaningfully in your AG-Scan workshop.

Here too, you can engage additional stakeholders in validating the findings of the context and stakeholder analysis. This process creates an opportunity to refine your findings based on local expertise, intelligence, and the most up-to-date status of the RBM, SDG and policy landscape. In addition, interviews with key informants will help you to detail the following:

- ▶ The key issues related to SDG measurement and reporting.
- ▶ The most influential government ministries and departments/NSAs in the RBM and SDG space.
- ▶ Contextual considerations, e.g., relevant logistical, cultural, or political issues (e.g., is there an upcoming election or a sector development planning process to consider? Are there barriers or enablers to gender, youth, or other diversity aspects?).
- ▶ Research gaps that need to be filled before the AG-Scan workshop.

Going through the above together will help you to clarify who should be invited and encouraged to participate, and which aspects of the RBM ecosystem warrant the most attention during the workshop.

3.3 Programme and invitees

It is crucial to establish a shared understanding between the AG-Scan country team and key counterparts in-country of the goals and scope of the AG-Scan. This will position you well to prioritise the main areas of focus as well as who to invite. At this stage, the GCP is well-equipped to send invitation letters to potential participants, including the staff of the government ministries and of external institutions/contributors. In addition to the GCP, the AG-Scan team members can leverage their existing relationships and advocate for workshop participants who may come from civil society, the international donor community or academia.

A sample workshop agenda is shown below.

| AG-Scan self-assessment workshop | |
|--|---|
| Day 1 | |
| 08:30 | Registration |
| 09:00 – 09:30 | Participant introductions |
| 09:30 – 10:00 | Overview of SDG-related activities in the country |
| 10:00 – 10:30 | Introduction to AVANTI and the AG-Scan |
| 10:30 – 11:00 | Break |
| 11:00 – 11:30 | Customising the AG-Scan |
| 11:30 – 12:30 | A look at RBM and its importance |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch |
| 13:30 – 14:15 | The AG-Scan methodology in detail |
| 14:15 – 16:45 Including short break | Assessing MEL for the agricultural sector in country XX – Round 1 Group work and plenary |
| 16:45 – 17:00 | Wrap-up |

| AG-Scan self-assessment workshop | |
|--|---|
| Day 2 | |
| 08:30 | Registration |
| 09:00 – 09:30 | Recap and reflections on Day One |
| 09:30 – 10:00 | Plenary for Round 1 continued |
| 10:00 – 11:30 Including short break | Assessing MEL for the agricultural sector in country XX – Round 2 Group work and plenary |
| 11:30 – 12:30 | Assessing MEL for the agricultural sector in country XX – Round 3 Group Work |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch |
| 13:30 – 14:00 | Plenary for Round 3 |
| 14:00 – 15:00 | AG -Scan profile from the assessment – what do we think about it? Plenary discussion and possible adjustment |
| 15:00 – 15:30 | Break |
| 15:30 – 16:30 | Prioritisation of areas for follow up |
| 16:30 – 16:45 | Evaluate workshop |
| 16:45 – 17:15 | Conclusion and certificates |

| AG-Scan action planning workshop | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 08:30 | Registration |
| 09:00 – 09:15 | Participant introductions |
| 09:15 – 10:00 | Overview of priorities from self-assessment |
| 10:00 – 10:30 | Identification of priority areas for inclusion in action plan |
| 10:30 – 11:00 | Break |
| 11:00 – 12:00 | Creation of initial Action Plan |
| 12:00 – 13:00 | Lunch |
| 13:00 – 14:00 | Refinement of Action Plan |
| 14:00 – 14:30 | Next steps and closing |

Figure 4. Sample AG-Scan self-assessment and action planning workshop agendas

3.4 Logistics and budget

Logistical arrangements are an important aspect of the AG-Scan self-assessment workshop preparation. These include the booking of the venue, the accommodation and the relevant international and local travel arrangements. This is best done collaboratively and through a clear division of labour between your AG-Scan core team and the in-country team. The joint planning of logistical arrangements is another way of strengthening team cohesion and country ownership of the AG-Scan process. Good logistical arrangements give participants confidence in both the process and the product of the AG-Scan.

Another important consideration is the overall budget for the AG-Scan. As a complex process, which has a variety of actors and which takes place in an evolving context, it is not always easy to predict the actual costs and fees associated with it. Therefore, regular budget monitoring (and adjustment, if necessary and feasible) is required.

Of course, different facilitation roles for the workshop should also be clarified, because at least two facilitators will be needed: one focusing more on the human dynamics and the session setup, and the other focusing on the orchestration of the relevant templates and tools to enable the participants to generate outputs that feed seamlessly into the reporting and the action planning process.

Finally, there may be a communications element (e.g., photos, videos and blogs), for which a well-informed professional or team should be responsible. The level of resources put into this aspect of an AG-Scan depends on who the targeted audience(s) is/are – beyond the immediate participants – and how they can be best informed and updated ([see section 4.4 for more details](#)).

STEP 4

Customise the AG-Scan matrix and other tools

This step is where you put together the essential materials to prepare for the AG-Scan self-assessment, which includes any explanatory presentations and customising the tools to fit the specific context.

4.1 Customise the matrix

The AG-Scan matrix is the main tool for self-assessment across the following five RBM-related pillars of the AG-Scan:

| Pillar | Summary |
|--|---|
| Leadership | Assessment of interest, commitment and political will by decision makers and senior management in promoting a culture of results, including evidence-based decision making. |
| Evaluation & monitoring | How does the sector use monitoring and evaluation functions in decision making, management and accountability? |
| Accountability and partnerships | Assessment of accountability and transparency by government to citizens and partners and vice versa. |
| Planning and budgeting | How does government use results for planning and budgeting? |
| Statistics | Supply, ability and availability of data and information to feed into decision making processes. |

Figure 5. The five LEAPS Pillars



Each pillar includes four to eight sub-dimensions, which workshop participants will have to assess using the criteria outlined in the table below. The criteria represent a continuum, from little integration to the full integration of such practices and thinking into day-to-day planning, implementation, learning and reporting.

Here is an example of how the criteria are described in the commitment sub-dimension of the Leadership pillar:

| Criterion | Description in the Leadership pillar, sub-dimension: commitment |
|----------------------------|---|
| Awareness | Senior sector management asserts the importance of RBM. However, no concrete initiatives have been initiated. |
| Exploration | A small number of managers in the sector agencies investigate RBM tools and apply them sporadically. However, initiative is not consistent or mandated. |
| Transition | Full commitment across sectoral agencies to RBM. New RBM practices are systematically adopted. Most, but not all, staff support the initiative and most, but not all, units practice RBM. |
| Full Implementation | All units practice comprehensive and systematic RBM systems. Staff report that benefits outweigh the costs of RBM. The organisation is learning how to use and continuously adapt RBM. |

The unit of analysis for the assessment is the ministry that presides over agriculture and rural development. However, this may vary with the context. In group discussions, there could be various entities used as references, for example, a ministry, an inter-ministry or multi-stakeholder coordinating group, a department or an agency, etc. Your decision regarding which of these entities to focus on will depend on the national context, the mix of participants at the workshop, the specific interest and scope, and the amount of time that you have for the AG-Scan workshop.

The task of customising a generic AG-Scan matrix to the local context includes elements such as the following:

- ▶ Reviewing national use of terminology and language.
- ▶ Incorporating cross-cutting issues (e.g., gender and climate).
- ▶ Incorporating national SDG priorities.
- ▶ Recognising that agriculture may be the responsibility of more than one ministry.
- ▶ Reflecting how national ministries may not have jurisdiction over authorities that have been de-centralised to district governments.
- ▶ Removing LEAPS sub-dimensions that may not be applicable to the context.

Ideally, this customisation of the matrix is done in collaboration with key AG-Scan actors, either shortly before or as an initial part of the workshop. It is important that you keep the resulting descriptive phrases as short and simple as possible in order to minimise misunderstandings and significant differences of interpretation.

Find out more through the following links:

Here are some examples from AVANTI on how the matrix can be adapted for gender and climate change considerations:

[Example of adapting the AG-Scan matrix to the topics of nutrition and climate change](#)

[Integrating gender in the AG-Scan matrix](#)

4.2 Prepare other AG-Scan tools and materials

There are various tools and templates that you will need to prepare in advance, including the following:

AG-Scan-specific materials

- 1) **Final AG-Scan matrix:** This is the adapted matrix described in section 4.1, above. You should have multiple hard or soft copies for participants to look through as you explain how the matrix is constructed. You should also have copies with specific LEAPS pillars for the groups that are focusing on one pillar.
- 2) **AG-Scan profile and journal:** this is where you will record the assessment scores and the associated summary notes of the participants in the discussions about the different pillars and their associated sub-dimensions.
- 3) **AG-Scan AP template:** although the initial AP should be created in a second workshop, participants will want to know what it comprises, as their AG-Scan discussions will lead directly to the formulation of the AP.

General workshop materials

- 1) **Participant list and related forms:** Here, you may want to include a media waiver form if you will be using participants' images in photos/videos after the workshop. You may also want to include a checkbox for permission to use participants' email addresses for future contact. The latter is a legal requirement, according to growing numbers of data protection laws.
- 2) **Attendance certificates:** many participants appreciate – and some may require for administrative purposes – a certificate of participation in the AG-Scan.
- 3) **Evaluation form:** This could be in hard copy, but it is more flexible if you use an electronic form (e.g., a survey that the participants can fill out on their mobile phones at the end of the workshop, or an online form). In most cases, you will have more participant reactions if you build time into the workshop for people to respond to the evaluation questions, than if you distribute an evaluation to be completed afterwards.

Find out more through the following links:



[AG-Scan profile and journal](#)

[Template: Workshop participant list and consent for media-email-newsletter subscription](#)

[Template: Participant certificate](#)

[Template: Action Plan](#)

[Template: Evaluation form](#)

4.3 Create workshop presentations

Presenting the AG-Scan approach or the RBM needs in a country is an opportunity for you to gain the key stakeholders' engagement in the AG-Scan and to highlight the benefits that the process can bring to their work and the work of others (e.g., in various departments, ministries and organisations). It is also an important moment for you to draw attention to the broader context, e.g., the current state of the art in relation to SDG monitoring and reporting, or any other national, regional or global processes that are relevant. In addition, whatever specific initiative your AG-Scan is part of – and who the main implementers and sponsors are – should also be highlighted. The summary presentation should provide a concise description of the overall process, including all of the steps from the initial planning to the workshop, and how it connects to what follows (e.g., the AP).

Note: We often assume that when we use the same terminology we have the same understanding, but this is very often not the case. It is, therefore, advisable to include some plenary reflection on the key concepts, such as RBM, which will not only help to ensure there is a shared understanding of such concepts, but which will also start building a sense of common purpose among the workshop participants.

Examples of AVANTI AG-Scan presentations can be found through the following links:

[AVANTI AG-Scan presentation Ghana](#)

[AVANTI AG-Scan presentation Samoa](#)

4.4 Create a communications plan for the AG-Scan

It is crucial that you plan for communications during and after the AG-Scan. As a key moment in a longer-term process, the AG-Scan workshop provides you with an opportunity not just for collective reflection and action planning, but also to strategically bring others on board who do not participate directly, and to create a shared record of what took place.

It is often important – and highly useful in terms of the visibility of the AG-Scan – to create a communications package that covers both the creation of relevant materials for the participants and also for other audiences – potentially including the broader public. To support this, it is very useful to have a media consultant to oversee this aspect of the workshop. This person (or small team, depending on your communications ambitions) can create attractive photos and videos of the process (including participant interviews) and can also create a strategy for communications using relevant social networking channels.

The media consultant can undertake the following tasks:

- ▶ Prepare the media waiver form that the participants will sign at the beginning of the workshop (granting you permission to use their images).
- ▶ Take photos and videos, based on your agreed terms.
- ▶ Identify key participants who could be approached at different moments in the workshop to contribute to blogs and attend other events, etc. It is good to have a mix of such people, who can contribute from different perspectives (e.g., M&E, governance, learning, etc.). This is also important from an authenticity point of view, as the participants are, by far, the most powerful advocates of the AG-Scan process, due to their direct experience and ongoing interest.
- ▶ Consider budgeting for professional photographers and videographers.
- ▶ Organise a publicity plan with the in-country team, including the local mainstream media, where applicable.

Find out more through the following links:

Template: [ToR for media consultant](#)

Template: [Branding guideline for video production](#)

4.5 Design facilitation process and additional tools

An essential feature of the AG-Scan process is its participatory and inclusive nature. It creates space for individual engagement and collaborative thinking, which enhances solidarity amongst participants. It also promotes sharing of different perspectives and experiences that, collectively, will contribute to more nuanced understandings, peer learning and shared solutions.

Your workshop should, therefore, be designed to be as interactive as possible. This means ensuring that your workshop participants often work in smaller groups rather than in plenary. We have found the level of active participation to be greater in smaller groups, i.e., four to seven people.



There is a wide range of possible facilitation methodologies, so you need to choose the ones that serve you best in reaching your expected outcomes. For example, you may want to consider how to balance participation regarding gender, across different levels of seniority or across various departments. You also need to consider who is best placed to inform and take part in discussing the different LEAPS sub-dimensions. This needs to be balanced delicately, as a group that is too homogenous often results in less creativity or a lack of varied perspectives. However, too much diversity of experience on a topic could create difficulties such as the dominance of one or a small number of participants (the so-called experts), or in spending too much time trying to build a collective understanding.

For example, imagine that an AG-Scan planning group decides it is important to gather a wide range of perspectives on one or more of the sub-dimensions. In such a case, having one small group would be insufficient. Using an approach such as the [World Café](#) – or another such format that also rotates groups – would allow a much larger number of people to contribute to the assessment, without taking up a huge amount of time. In this way, you can have groups of a manageable size, whilst at the same time preserving diversity by having several rounds of discussion on each sub-dimension.

Tip: It may be worth starting the self-assessment by analysing one sub-dimension in plenary. This way, you can go through any uncertainties or common questions with all the participants before they move into smaller groups for subsequent discussions. The main drawback to this is the possibility that some participants may feel too constrained to express their opinions in plenary, so you may want to validate the responses in that sub-dimension by using a sub-group at another point. It is also useful to have a few additional questions prepared in relation to each sub-dimension to deepen the discussion if there is a need.

In addition to making the event participatory, it is equally important to make it as inclusive as possible. For example, you will need to consider gender diversity (and possibly other aspects, depending on the context) among the participants. It may be necessary to include an affirmative action component to ensure the participation of women and non-senior staff. There are also various other elements that you should include, and these are summarised in the [checklist for gender inclusivity](#).

Find out more through the following links:

[Guidelines for integrating gender considerations into workshops](#)

[Guideline: Facilitation tools for meetings and workshops \(Seeds for Change\)](#)

[Guideline: Participatory facilitation \(Participatory methods group, IDS\)](#)

4.6 Create a detailed agenda

Based on the above, you need to create an organisers' agenda, which includes information on timing, session methodologies, the roles and responsibilities of members of the facilitation team, and any special materials or equipment needed for each session. Based on this, you can create a less detailed overview agenda for participants.

Although often considered purely logistical, the characteristics of the venue and the setup of the workshop space are important factors that you need to think through.

The priority requirements are as follows:

- ▶ A sufficient number of small rooms to accommodate breakout groups, as small group discussions are a central feature of an AG-Scan workshop.
- ▶ If there is a need for translation, you should leave more time for the sessions and an audio setup will be needed to support it.
- ▶ Arrangements will need to be made for participants with specific needs (e.g., access, audio and visual) and dietary requirements.

Once your venue has been booked, it is important to ensure that you have an initial meeting with the venue managers to deliberate on how your session will work and what you expect from them. You should plan to arrive at the venue a day before the workshop to allow you to arrange the physical layout and to test the equipment.

You should also consider the following questions:

- ▶ Will you be using flipcharts or will you be using masking tape to hang posters on the wall?
- ▶ Will participants need to use breakout rooms or outside spaces? If so, which will you need and when will you need them?
- ▶ Will you require Wi-Fi use, passwords, or any other technical requirements?
- ▶ Are the lighting and acoustics conducive for videos and photos? If not, what can be done to improve this?

Remember to **inform presenters** about the timeslots you have reserved for them and try to obtain their presentations well in advance so that you can ensure the presentations fit with the time allocated for the session.

Tip

The vast majority of presenters take substantially longer to deliver their presentation than they initially think. Therefore, it is a good idea to tell them that they have about 70 percent of the time you will actually allocate to them. For example, if you want to have a presentation of 15 minutes, inform the presenter they should prepare a 10-minute presentation.

Finally, the facilitators should have a planning meeting on the eve of the workshop. During this meeting, they should go over the agenda again and ensure that all facilitators have a shared understanding of their roles – e.g., Who will lead each session? Who will take notes? Who will manage which workshop materials and who will ensure that timekeeping and breakout sessions run smoothly?

STEP 5

Facilitate self-assessment and action planning

The core of the AG-Scan is comprised of the combined self-assessment and action planning workshops. This is where you will facilitate various discussions with AG-Scan participants, including the analysis of important capacity strengths and weaknesses, the prioritisation of areas to improve and the development of an initial AP to do so.

The self-assessment workshop (usually two days) involves a detailed participatory and inclusive self-assessment of capacities, and a prioritisation exercise to identify the most pressing areas for future action. The action planning workshop (0.5-1 day) involves a reflection on and the refinement of the prioritisation – established during the self-assessment workshop – and the creation of a draft AP as a roadmap for the follow-up and approval of the relevant decision makers.

Under ideal circumstances, you will have a diverse set of institutions represented by a mix of 20-40 participants, who come from different levels within those institutions and who can move the post-AG-Scan agenda forward together and within their respective institutions. This can be achieved through topic-specific working groups (e.g., regarding climate change, nutrition, or youth employment monitoring).

The action planning workshop often involves a smaller group of people, facilitated in collaboration with the GCP or, even better, a coordinating group. It is important to have this workshop shortly after the self-assessment workshop, to tap into the energy generated in this event and to discuss the priority areas while they are fresh in everyone's mind.

It is recommended that you hold the action planning workshop at least two days after the self-assessment workshop. This way, the action planning workshop participants will have an opportunity to reflect on the experience and on the results of the self-assessment before moving to a more concrete action orientation. The facilitation team will also have an opportunity to fully process the results of the self-assessment, which will feed into the AP workshop.



5.1. Day one - The AG-Scan self-assessment

The workshops begin with an outline of the objectives and the key concepts, which helps participants to gain a common understanding of both the purpose and the context. The few participants who have been part of the planning will be fully informed, however, the majority of the other participants will not be as familiar with the whole process. This introductory segment typically includes the following elements:

- ▶ The workshop objectives and summary programme.
- ▶ The background of the AG-Scan (relevant programmes, institutions, and discussions).
- ▶ An explanation of key concepts, such as RBM.
- ▶ Presentation(s) about relevant national initiatives and the knowledge coming out of the AG-Scan context analysis and other, closely related initiatives. Examples of these include the achievements and challenges regarding M&E and SDGs in the country, and input from the lead agency, which links the AG-Scan to its ongoing planning and implementation efforts.

At this stage, everything is in place to take the workshop participants into the core activity of the AG-Scan: the self-assessment. The first thing to do is to provide a more detailed overview of the AG-Scan process, as follows:



Figure 6. The six AG-Scan steps

As described in section 4.1, the AG-Scan self-assessment is framed around the LEAPS pillars, relating to RBM: Leadership, Evaluation and monitoring, Accountability and partnerships, Planning and budgeting, and Statistics.

The self-assessment is mainly conducted in small groups, and it is guided by the AG-Scan matrix, which provides a framework to enable the participants to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of existing capacities, in line with the above LEAPS pillars. The matrix provides a set of questions for 30 sub-dimensions of LEAPS, which participants assess against the following criteria:

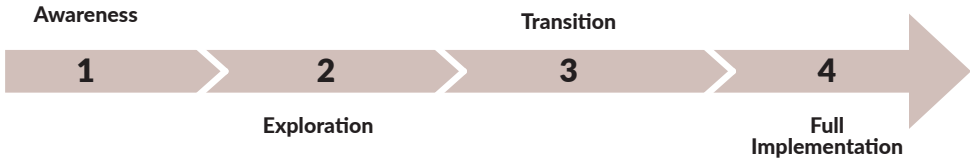


Figure 7. The AG-Scan self-assessment criteria

The main segment of the self-assessment workshop is the collective assessment of the capacities relating to the different sub-dimensions of the LEAPS pillars. This requires in-depth discussions about those sub-dimensions and the allocation of a rating, based on the above-mentioned rating criteria (awareness = one, exploring = two, transition = three and full implementation = four). These ratings are not meant to be absolute or to act as benchmarks to other institutions or countries, rather, they are a way to stimulate discussion, to capture evidence of strengths and weaknesses and to develop consensus within each group about where on the scale they would put the different capacities within the LEAPS sub-dimensions and, later, to prioritise the areas of action.

| RBM Pillars Components | Criteria for Each Progressive Stage | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| | Awareness | Exploration | Transition | Full Implementation |
| LEADERSHIP | | | | |
| Commitment (Are sector leaders actively working for RBM?) | Senior sector management asserts importance of RBM. But no concrete initiatives have been initiated. | A small number of managers in sector agencies investigate RBM tools and apply them sporadically. But, initiative is not consistent, nor mandated. | Full commitment across sectoral agencies to RBM. New RBM practices are systematically adopted. Most, but not all, staff, support initiative and most, but not all units practice RBM. | All units practice comprehensive and systematic RBM systems. Staff report benefits outweigh costs of RBM. Organisation is learning how to use/ and continuously adapt RBM. |

Figure 8. Sample assessment of Leadership Pillar, sub-dimension Commitment

The above figure shows how the matrix integrates the LEAPS pillars and their associated sub-dimensions with the criteria for the self-assessment. In this case, we are looking at the leadership pillar and its first sub-dimension: commitment. The key question related to this sub-dimension is as follows: Are sector leaders actively working for RBM? Each assessment criterion, from awareness to full implementation, includes a description of what things might look like for a department, ministry, or sector, etc., fitting that description.

Each of the sub-dimensions is discussed in plenary or in small groups. It is advantageous for you to promote individual thinking before initiating a group discussion. This can be done in the following way:

- ▶ Set up groups according to who has the most knowledge/expertise about the different components (e.g., one group could focus on Leadership, another on Evaluation and monitoring, etc.).
- ▶ Within the groups, each member should record their main points on sticky notes or cards.
- ▶ One member should act as the facilitator of the discussion, looking at the various points (either strengths or challenges in relation to the sub-component).

- ▶ The facilitator should insist that the evidence and examples supporting the points raised are provided by the participants.
- ▶ A second member should take notes of the key points.
- ▶ The group should come together to assign a rating of 1-4 for each sub-component on the awareness–full implementation scale.
- ▶ At the end of the session, each group should present its ranking and justification of each sub-component in plenary.
- ▶ The plenary discussion will lead to either the validation or the revision of the ranking.

Of course, this is difficult to describe, so it is worth taking the full group of participants through a discussion of one sub-dimension, using the matrix. This will allow for open questions to clarify the tasks and to show how each sub-dimension or question can be discussed and rated by the group discussing it. This can then be followed by the participants working in smaller groups, which tends to be easier and more engaging.

The ratings for each sub-dimension are gathered in the **AG-Scan journal** and are then used to produce an **AG-Scan profile** of that institution across the LEAPS pillars and sub-dimensions. Below, is an example of what the profile could look like.

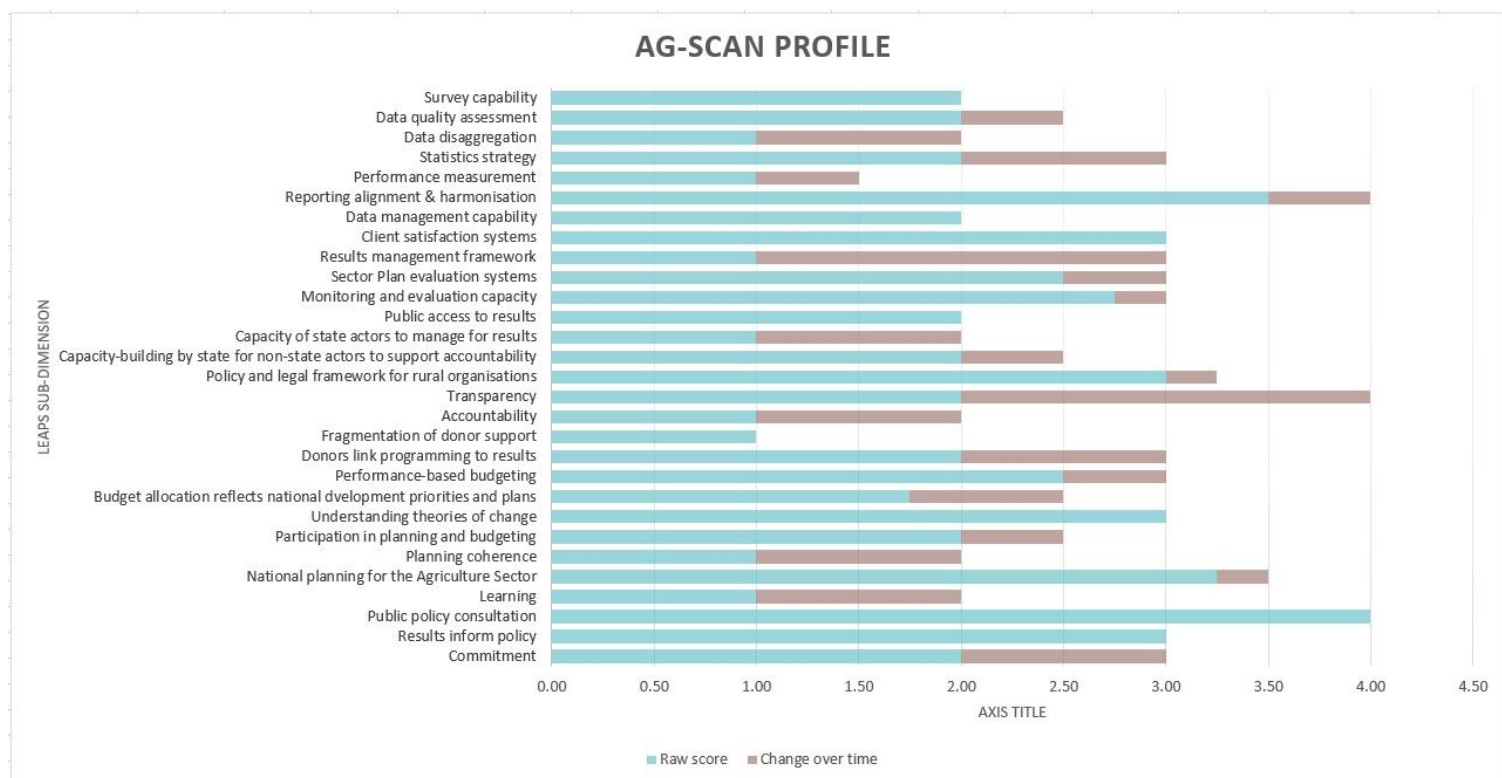


Figure 9. Sample AG-Scan Profile

The above profile includes two sets of results: the initial rating (in green) and the revised rating (in brown). This could happen in the event that a group's rating is revised after having been discussed in plenary or in another group, after which a revision is agreed upon. Again, the specific ratings of each sub-dimension are not as important as the discussion about the groups' rationale behind the rating and the examples or evidence that they have used to support this consensus.

If all goes well, all the above discussions and reflections will fit into one full day. In preparation for the second day of the self-assessment workshop, the facilitation team will need to have a closer look at the results so they are ready for the prioritisation exercise.

5.2 Day two - Prioritisation

The initial self-assessment, using the AG-Scan matrix as a framework, creates a visual representation of where the participants think the assessed institutions are in relation to the LEAPS sub-dimensions; however, this is not sufficient to feed into the action planning. There are two reasons for this:

- 1) There is no realistic scenario in which a follow-up on every identified area is feasible, as there will always be limitations in capacity and resources. It is, therefore, crucial to prioritise the areas that can be collectively pursued.
- 2) In order to be as strategic as possible in deciding where follow-up action is needed, the group needs to look more closely at the range of issues, in order to prioritise them.

This prioritisation can be done in various ways. For example, workshop participants can rank each LEAP sub-dimension according to the level of urgency and importance it represents. Or, if the initial self-assessment (on day one) shows recurring themes across the pillars or sub-dimensions, these themes can be used to focus your prioritisation exercises.

This can be done in an efficient way by using a smartphone-enabled tool to ask participants how they would assess the priority of the issues identified in the self-assessment. This polling of the participants is also an energising and engaging experience, which allows you to go through all the LEAPS sub-dimensions relatively quickly. For this, you could use a scale of 1-5 (one being not urgent/not a priority and five being decisive for RBM). This is shown in figure 10, below.

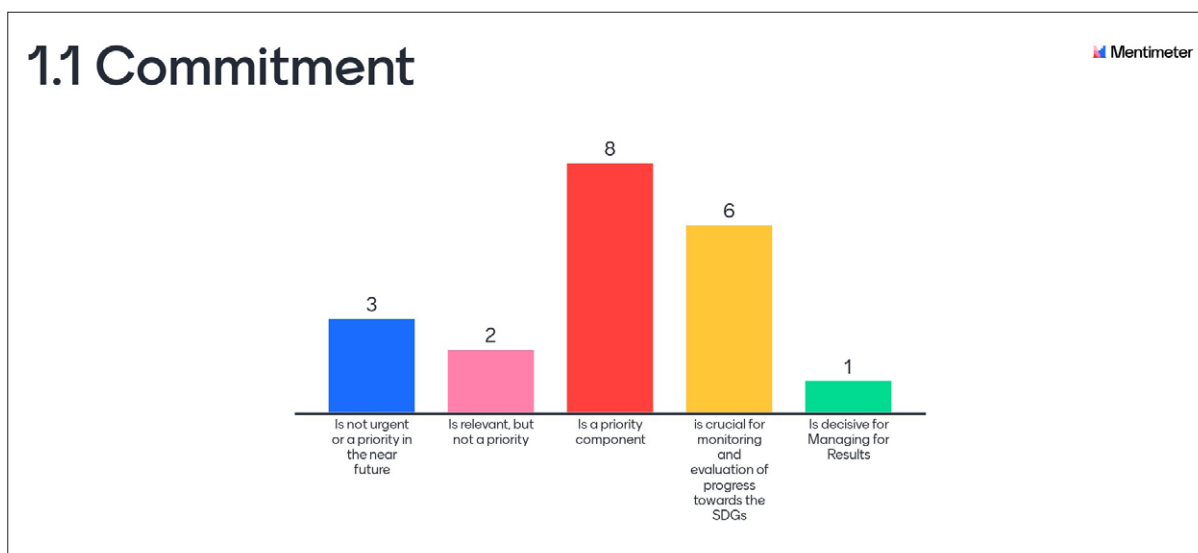


Figure 10. Sample AG-Scan prioritisation result

In this way, every participant provides their input by using a clear set of criteria. A significant additional advantage of the smartphone solution is that it ensures anonymity and, thereby, encourages participation across hierarchical levels.

The results of this exercise provide a very useful resource to feed into the action planning workshop, along with the scoring from the self-assessment as an additional reference.

Prioritisation using recurring themes

An AVANTI AG-Scan, which was conducted in Lesotho, provides an example of this alternative way of prioritising. In this case, the workshop participants identified five priority areas, which were mainly based on the recurrence of each theme or the relative importance in measuring the SDGs. As participants reviewed the contents of their discussions, which were recorded on sticky notes and flipcharts, there were recurrent keywords/themes, such as lack of coordination, capacity and skills, and inadequate human and financial resources. For example, the following was recorded: lack of coordination (a) among leadership of different departments; (b) of evaluation and monitoring efforts across departments and ministries; and (c) of planning and budgeting efforts across departments.

Furthermore, inadequate skills and capacity at all levels (from senior to technical) were also noted, not only in designing and collecting data, but also in interpreting and using data to inform policy and decision-making. The group then went further to define aspects of the LEAPS sub-dimensions that were critical to the achievement of the SDGs. They also identified Accountability and M&E structures as the weakest pillars.

| Priority area | Reason for prioritisation |
|--|--|
| Coordination – within the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, with the Bureau of Statistics and with NSAs (such as the United Nations, NGOs and the private sector). | A recurring theme identified under L, E, P and S. |
| Capacity and skills – including the ability to interpret data. | A recurring theme identified under L, E, P and S. |
| Financial and Human resources – performance-based budgeting. | Recurring theme across all sub-dimensions. |
| Accountability of/and towards NSAs – including beneficiaries and mandating MAFS to hold all actors to account for data that contributes towards SDGs in the sector. | Key issue underpinning poor progress in SDG measurement. |
| Implementation and improvement of existing M&E structures within government – leveraging existing systems for sustainability. | Key issue underpinning poor progress in SDG measurement. |

Figure 11. Alternative prioritisation example

In either of the above cases, you will have the self-assessment rankings as well as the prioritisation results as a basis for action planning in the second AG-Scan workshop.



5.2 Evaluation and closure

Because the action planning workshop is held separately – and it often involves a smaller group of AG-Scan participants, mainly the GCP and others who are directly tasked with taking the AP forward – it is good to conduct a workshop review exercise to obtain participants' feedback on the self-assessment and their learning. It is also a good moment to remind participants of the progress that you have all made together, and how the results will be used in the next step of your action planning.

The feedback questionnaire should be short and should include open-ended questions, with a combination of ratings and comments. In this way, you can obtain a quick indication of the general reaction (by averaging the ratings of different workshop elements), whilst, at the same time, capturing qualitative feedback about what they liked and areas for future improvement.

Find out more through the following link:

[Template: AG-Scan workshop evaluation sheet](#)

5.3 Facilitate the action planning workshop

The setup of the action planning workshop is subject to some variability, as it will depend partly on who and how many people participate in this step of the AG-Scan process. It will also depend on what kind of prioritisation exercise that you conducted. If you only have a small number of people at your workshop, you could conduct the workshop as a series of facilitated conversations about what your priority areas are, what could be done to take them up, who could take responsibility for doing this and what resources would be needed to make it happen. If your action planning workshop has more participants, you might consider breaking into thematic or topic groups to tackle the different priority areas. Ideally, you want to have an expert representing each of the LEAPS pillars; however, quite often, one official may be conversant in more than one pillar.

The prioritisation session from day two of the self-assessment workshop should give you a small number of priority areas to discuss. The action planning workshop will then be used to achieve the following:

- 1) Define the outcomes of the AP regarding what capacity is expected to improve and for whom across the prioritised areas (which could be expressed as who will be doing what differently a year from now).
- 2) Specify the main assumptions made in how completing a certain set of activities will contribute to the capacity outcomes.
- 3) Clarify the set of activities that need to be taken up to strategically improve capacities for RBM within those priority areas.
- 4) For each activity you should undertake the following:
 - a. Estimate the resources needed to effectively take up the activity.
 - b. Suggest where these resources can/could be found.
 - c. Designate a responsible person or group to steer the activity.
 - d. Provide an indication of when the activity would begin and end.

| SN | Activity | Resources needed | Completion date | Responsible Institution | Remarks |
|--|---|--|-----------------|---|--|
| Issue identified for improvement 1: Weak results-based management capacity | | | | | |
| 1.1 | Pass principles and results-based management (RBM) | Relevant experts | August 2023 | Ministry of Planning | Opportunity to leverage next meeting of SDG coordinating group |
| 1.2 | Identify the type of modality for delivering training and design specific courses on leadership, RBM and theory of change | Relevant Experts | March 2023 | Ministry of Planning | |
| Issue identified for improvement 2: Inadequate logistical support for data collection | | | | | |
| 2.1 | Formulate SDG related policy based on data and evidence collection | Cost of hiring resource persons | June 2023 | Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development | |
| 2.2 | Provide logistics for data collection at all levels | GPS, Tablets, Programmable calculators, Laptops, Dedicated | December 2023 | Bureau of Statistics | Funding for required equipment not yet budgeted |
| Issue identified for improvement 3: Public consultations not comprehensive | | | | | |
| 3.1 | Empower (train) public managers on the results-based management approach | Relevant Experts | April 2023 | Public Service Training Institute | |

Figure 12. Sample initial AG-Scan Action Plan

At this stage, it is crucial to ensure that there is clarity and agreement regarding the next steps. To help you to achieve this, you could create a small steering group (which has the advantage of being anchored in different departments and/or ministries). This could include NSAs, such as donors or civil society organisations (CSOs), who could play key roles in the steering group. Alternatively, if your follow-up is anchored in a pre-existing initiative (e.g., a multi-stakeholder SDG coordinating group, some of whose members participated in the AG-Scan), it will likely be easier to maintain momentum over the AP implementation period.

As a result of these discussions, you will produce a draft AP, which will need to be refined, shared, approved by the lead ministry (and by others, if several leads are identified) and implemented in the following weeks and months. Ordinarily, the GCP holds the overall responsibility for implementing the AP and for holding the other members of the implementation team to the action tasks that were assigned to them.

5.4 Reporting

A report on the whole AG-Scan process, including the action planning workshop, should be compiled and circulated to all key stakeholders. The style and length of this report depends very much on the anticipated audience(s) you are targeting. Below, is an illustrative example of the contents of an AG-Scan report:

- ▶ A summary of the country context, in terms of the SDGs, development plans and initiatives, etc.
- ▶ An overview and the highlights of the AG-Scan process, in the specific country case.
- ▶ A summary of the main findings, in relation to the LEAPS pillars and their respective sub-dimensions (this forms the core of the report).
- ▶ A summary of the prioritisation exercise at the end of the self-assessment workshop.
- ▶ An overview of the AP generated during the action planning workshop.
- ▶ An account of the participant evaluations and the lessons learnt during the course of the AG-Scan.
- ▶ An indication of what will/should happen as a follow-up to the AG-Scan.

In addition to the formal report described here, you may also want to produce an account of the AG-Scan in the country and the key outcomes arising from it (2-4 pages long). Also – particularly if you contracted a media consultant or team – you may want to produce an attractive short video to capture the results and atmosphere of the AG-Scan⁵. The latter can be distributed widely to support further outreach.

For internal reporting (i.e., to the main ministry clients of the AG-Scan), the full results of the self-assessment (adapted AG-Scan Matrix, journal, profile, and prioritisation results) and the action planning workshop (initial AP) should be included as annexes.

Find out more through the following links:

[Template: AG-Scan report](#)

Examples: AVANTI AG-Scan summary reports.

[Ghana](#)

[Lesotho](#)

[Peru](#)

[Sierra Leone](#)

[Vietnam](#)

⁵ For an example of such a product, see the [summary video from an AG-Scan in Samoa](#)

STEP 6

Elaborate and implement the Action Plan

There is a wide variety of possible post-AG-Scan processes, depending on the national context, interest, opportunities, etc. For this reason, a well-defined process for the further development of the initial AP and an associated campaign to promote its adoption and implementation cannot be outlined here.

Although we cannot provide a blueprint here for designing the follow-up process, the following elements should be included:

- ▶ RBM/SDG monitoring – a working group should be created, (facilitated by the GCP), and it should, at the very least, represent the main ministries implicated in follow-up. However, it would be even better if crucial NSAs could also be included in this group.
- ▶ A clear, six-month road map should be drawn up to connect with the most important decision makers and the most important initiatives, which could boost the support for the AP and its feasibility.
- ▶ A goal to either finish the AP or to integrate it into an existing capacity development initiative within approximately six months is a good milestone to aim for. The closer the implementation is to the creation of the plan, the more likely it is that the AG-Scan participants will be ready, able, and willing to promote and support it.
- ▶ Some elements of the AP can be implemented without further preparation, but others will require either or both of the following: approval by the relevant decision makers or funding (e.g., to cover training, consultancies, and meetings). In this case, concrete ideas about where and how to obtain the required buy-in and resources are invaluable in helping to maintain the momentum of this process.

Ultimately, a critical mass of involved and motivated people within the key institutions – along with fortuitous conditions for taking up the main elements of the AP – is necessary to ensure that the time and effort that was put into an AG-Scan is rewarded through the AP's successful and meaningful implementation.

In addition to adapting and using the AG-Scan approach and the tools, tips and templates that come with it, it is important that you continue to keep the end goal in mind. This applies equally to AG-Scan facilitators and to participants. With a shared vision and a shared commitment, the insights shared throughout the AG-Scan process can contribute meaningfully to the development of core capacities to strengthen RBM and, thereby, to strengthen sustainable rural development in the country.

Find out more through the following link:

[Template: AG-Scan Action Plan](#)

Acronyms

| | |
|-------|--|
| AC | Associate Consultant |
| AP | Action Plan |
| GCP | Government Coordination Person |
| ICE | In-Country Expert |
| IFAD | International Fund for Agricultural Development |
| LEAPS | Leadership, Evaluation and monitoring, Accountability and partnerships, Planning & budgeting, and Statistics |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MAFS | Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security |
| MDAs | Ministries, Departments and Agencies |
| MTEF | Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks |
| NSA | Non-State Actor |
| RBM | Results-Based Management |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| TL | Team Leader |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |

Along with this document, a wide variety of additional resources published through the AVANTI initiative are available here: <https://bit.ly/Avanti-Publications>

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