

QUIP and Process Tracing compared

Process Tracing best practices	Relevance to the QUIP
1. Cast the net widely for alternative explanations.	The exploratory nature of the QUIP (use of open ended questioning and mitigation of potential pro-project bias) makes it open to a wide range of explanations, as does accommodation of multiple cases, and triangulation against evidence from focus groups, and other sources.
2. Be equally tough on the alternative explanations.	Evidence on project related and incidental drivers of change are collected and analysed in the same way.
3. Consider the potential bias of sources of evidence	Blindfolding aims to reduce the dangers of intervention-induced bias.
4. Take into account which explanations are most or least likely to explain a case.	Collection of data for multiple households (and through focus groups) helps to mitigate the risk of attaching too much weight to 'freak' instances.
5. Make a justifiable decision when to start.	Start linked to commencement of the intervention being evaluated and theories regarding its likely impact pathway.
6. Be relentless in gathering diverse and relevant evidence, but make a justifiable decision when to stop.	The number of cases assessed and process of selecting them can be adjusted to increase diversity of evidence, with the limit determined by accumulated experience of when diminishing marginal returns arise to increasing the number of interviews. Credibility is also enhanced through comparison with evidence of change in key variables obtained through quantitative monitoring
7. Combine process tracing with case comparisons when useful for the research goal and when feasible.	Comparison between households is integral to the approach. Standardization of the protocol also facilitates such comparisons. Sampling across complex contexts is a key issue in order to be able to address the counter-hypothesis that results are the product of selecting freak examples or outliers.
8. Be open to inductive insights.	The exploratory aspect of the QUIP (openness to respondents' own unprompted causal explanations) makes it open to these and to gaining insight into unforeseen consequences.
9. Use deduction to ask "if my explanation is true, what will be the specific process leading to the outcome?"	Interpretation of evidence is aided by triangulating it against steps in the prior theory of change for the project, and staged un-blindfolded triangulation whereby implementing staff can comment on findings.
10. Remember that conclusive process tracing is good, but not all process tracing is conclusive.	The methodology does not rule out being inconclusive about the relative contribution of different causal drivers identified.