Part 1: QuIP Coding

QuIP coding: Motivation

- Search for a **middle way** between long and short evidence feedback loops – between a few case studies and a large survey; how do we make the data from many case studies accessible and manageable?

- Perception that qualitative impact evaluation often falls short with respect to
  - **trustworthiness** (being credible, dependable, confirmable and open)
  - **relevance** (supply of generalisable, cost-effective and timely evidence)

Key features of QuIP coding

- A primarily **inductive** process; start with an empty codebook and code for drivers and outcomes as found in the text
- Systematic **deductive** coding of impact evidence as explicit, implicit or incidental to project actions
- Coding process is transparent: all coding captured in the annotated extracts.
- Demystifies the ‘black box’ of qualitative analysis process.

QuIP coding

Coding is focused on mining for causal claims in the stories - relationships between **cause and effect**. To this end we code:

- **Influence factors**: Drivers of change
- **Consequence factors**: Outcomes of these drivers, reported change/s
- **Sentiment**: Is change positive or negative for the respondent?
- **Attribution**: How far is change related to the project being assessed?

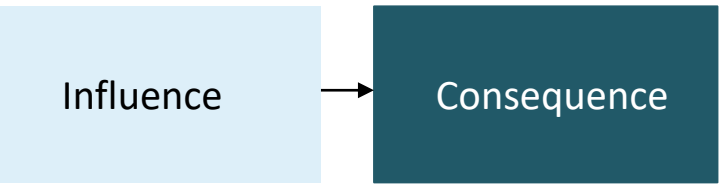
The analyst can then interrogate:

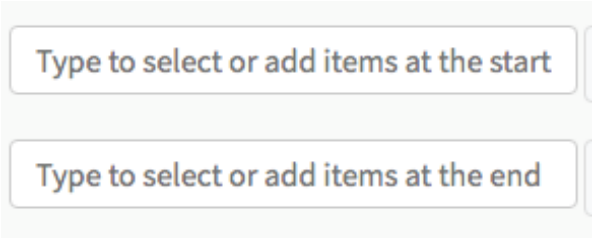
- The range of connections made by respondents, expected and unexpected
- Strength of project-related attribution between different respondent types

- We are looking for **stories of change**. Where there is no change, the data <u>won't be coded</u> – unless no change is part of a story, e.g. crops yields remained the same despite drought - due to use of new seed
- Answers can and should be **broken down** into different sections in order to allow for coding in different ways. This is important to track the relationship between different influences and consequences

Coding with factors

- **Influence and consequence** factor labels are unique to each project, you start with a blank list
- You will be selecting or creating factor labels in relation to a highlighted extract
- Factors are **influences** or **consequences** based on whether they are at the start or end of a causal claim





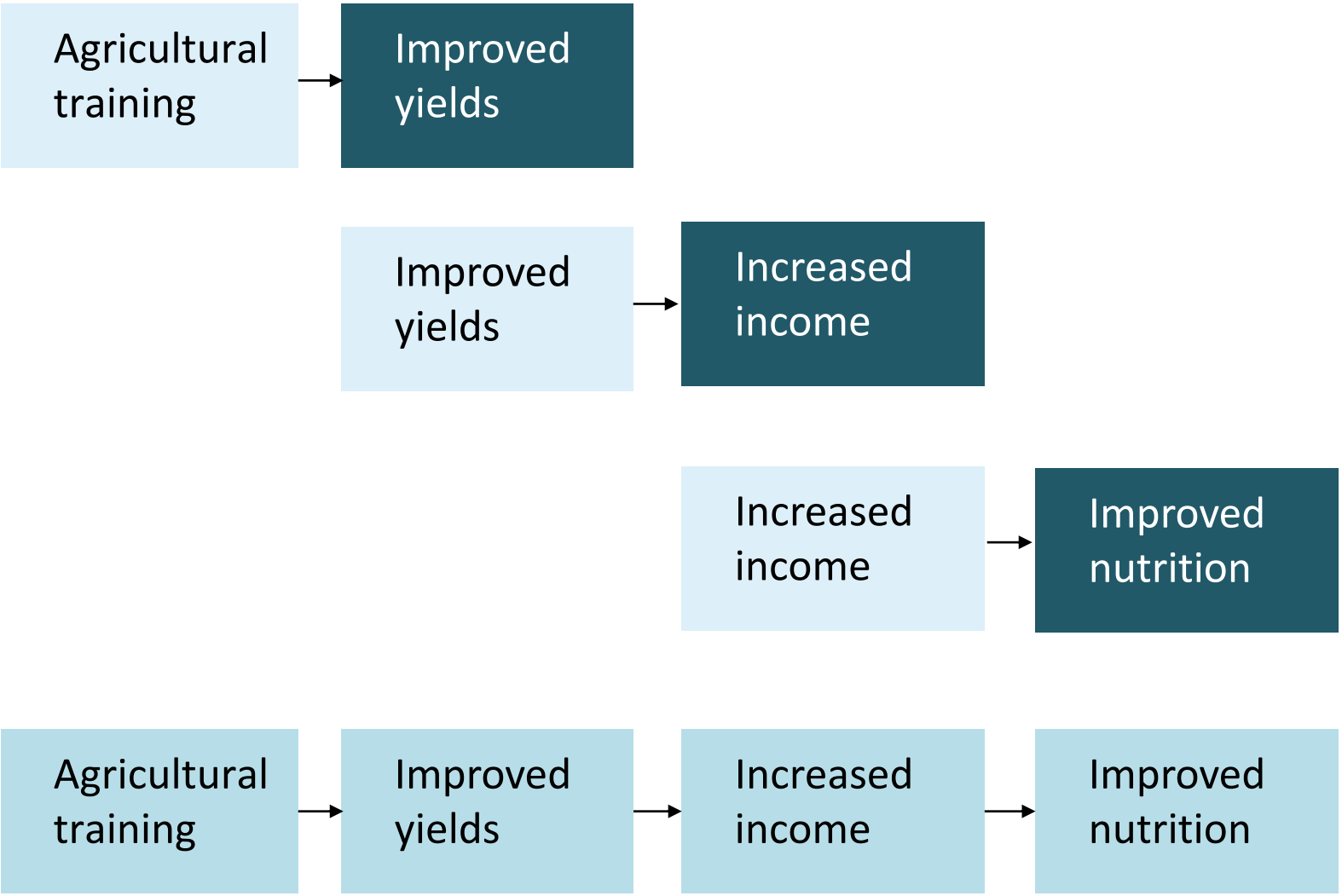
Building causal claims

- Selecting the starting **driver of change** (influence) may entail going back a few ‘causal steps’ and reading the respondent’s story as a whole.

- Sometimes the **root cause** is only mentioned once, but the effects referred to throughout the data. If you want to track this, use the same factor label every time a resulting impact is reported

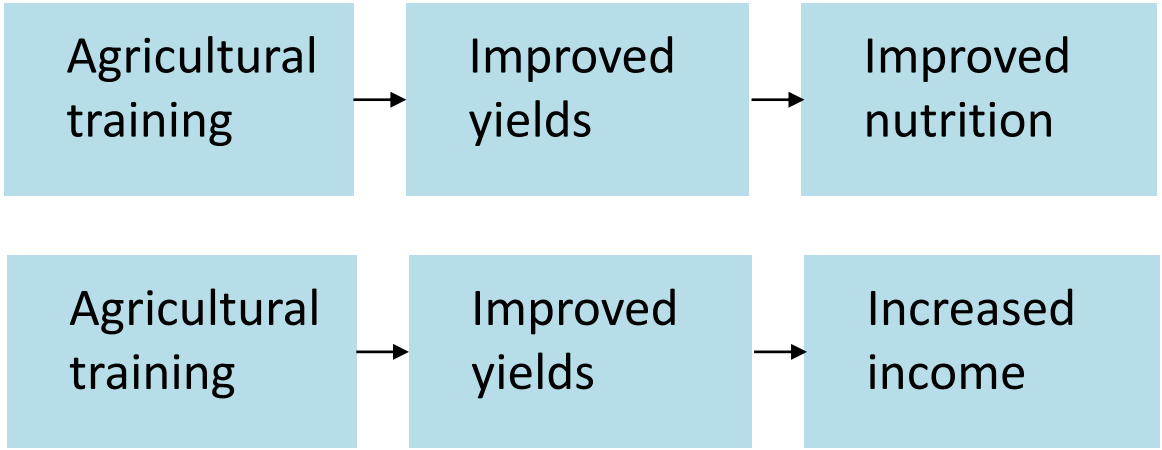
e.g. improved yields may be mentioned in relation to other impacts, but the cause for this only once – but you will want to ensure the root cause is linked. Make sure this is clear in the report notes as some statements may not contain reference to the source factor if looked at in isolation.

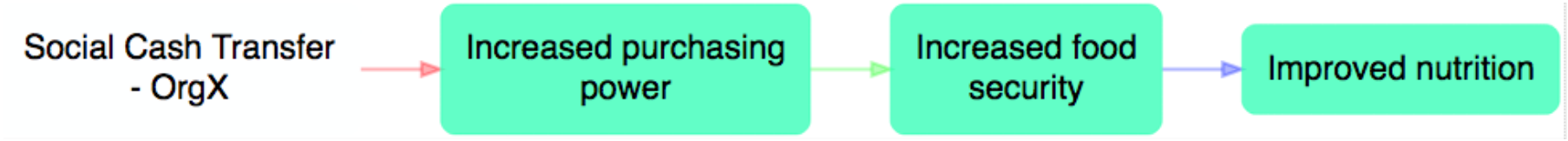
Building causal claims

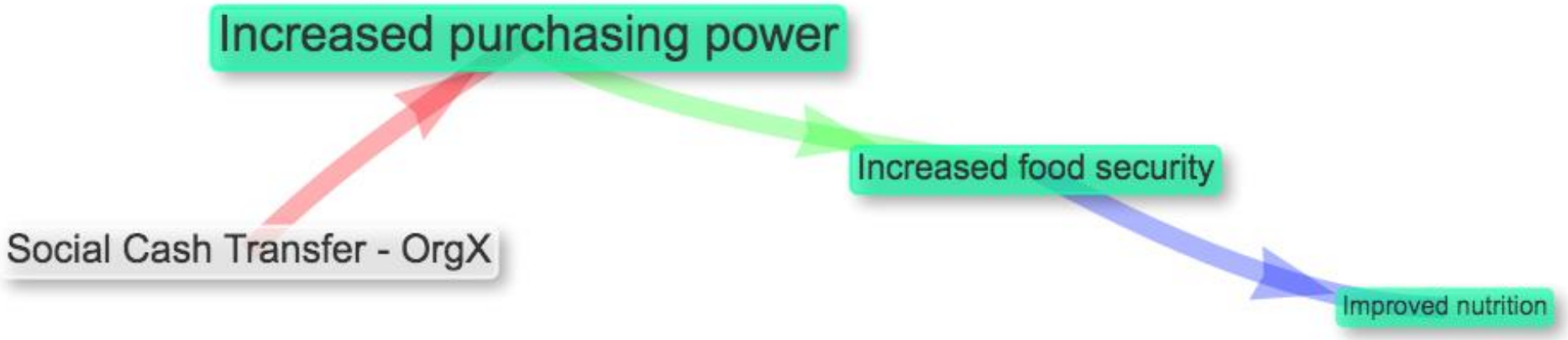


Building causal claims

Or…?




Social Cash Transfer - OrgX
Increased purchasing power
Increased food security
Improved nutrition


Increased purchasing power
Increased food security
Social Cash Transfer - OrgX
Improved nutrition

Labelling factors

Factors are shorthand labels, e.g.

- Social Cash Transfer- Org X: A social cash transfer was given by Organisation X.

There are social cash transfers from government also occurring in this community, so this is deliberately flagged as being from Org X to ensure the attribution is differentiated.

You can use the labels to tell you other things about your factors, including sentiment and attribution.

Attribution

We use codes in **influence factor** labels to signify the extent to which causal claims are attributable to the project, or to factors relevant to the project. The QuIP approach uses two main flags:

- Explicit
- Implicit

Any other factor not flagged is presumed to be ‘Other’

Attribution: Explicit

Influence factors labelled as '**Explicit**' refer to a clear mention of an activity or intervention in the commissioner's theory of change

If the commissioner or their agent is mentioned by name it should always be [E] (Explicit); *"We received training in new irrigation techniques from Organisation Y; since then I have changed the way that I look after my crops and my yields are much better."*

Sometimes it can be very clear that they are referring to intervention activities even without citing a name, so the example above may not contain the name but you may be confident from other evidence provided that it is referring to a project intervention.

Explicit is akin to 'smoking gun' evidence of impact in process tracing.

Attribution: Implicit

Influence factors labelled '**Implicit**' are there to help you pull out factors which are relevant to the project or the commissioner in analysis. This can therefore be relatively flexible, depending on what the evaluation requires. Implicit is akin to 'hoop test' evidence in process tracing.

- These may be factors which sound like a project intervention, but you are not sure who delivered them (lack of a cited name or other evidence)
- Activities delivered by another agency, but which are very similar to the theory of change, e.g. another irrigation project which it would be important to flag up to the commissioner. The factor label can contain the name of the agency in this case, e.g. 'Govt irrigation training'

Attribution: Implicit

- The factors may have featured in the project's theory of change, as risks or assumptions beyond the project's control but that will affect what it achieves, e.g. the weather – you may not want to code a reference to bad weather as an 'Explicit' reference to the project, but if drought was an assumption in the ToC, it is relevant to bring it to the fore in analysis.

- Most factors that are incidental to a project will have formed part of the wider theory of change of the project. However, sometimes a study will throw up previously unknown incidental factors which do impact on the ToC, indeed this may be the most important evidence generated – and flagging it will ensure it isn't missed.

Anything without the short codes is considered to be 'Other', and by implication of less direct interest to the project.

Attribution

- Whether factors are flagged as Explicit or Implicit is up to you and the commissioner to decide, **based on how it is most useful to analyse the factors at the end**. This will be clearer once you do some analysis yourself.
- Using short codes to flag up different types of factors will enable you to sort and filter the aggregated data efficiently, so think about how it would work best for the study when presenting analysis

Where is there evidence of commissioner activities, or activities which may contribute to or hinder expected and unexpected outcomes?

	Short code	Explanation
Explicit	[E]	A driver / influence factor explicitly linked to the project or to explicitly named project activities. Can lead to positive or negative outcomes.
Implicit	[I]	A driver / influence factor which closely resembles the specific mechanism by which the project aims to achieve impact, or has an impact on expected outcomes, but with no explicit reference to the project or project activities. Can lead to positive or negative outcomes.

Sentiment

Is the consequence of this positive or negative?

- Sentiment labels are used to flag whether **consequence factors** are positive or negative from the perspective of the respondent's wellbeing.
- What we code is the analyst's perception of the sentiment of the respondent

[P] – Positive change

[N] – Negative change

If you are not sure, or it is an intervening factor with no clear pos/neg impact on its own – don't use anything!

Increased food security [P]
Social Cash Transfer - OrgX [E]
Improved nutrition [P]
Increased purchasing power [P]

Sentiment

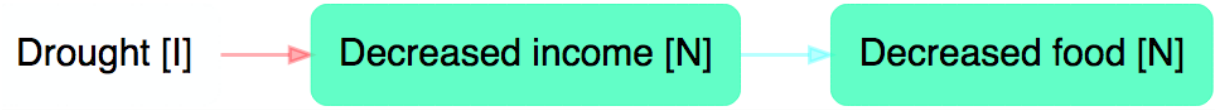
Sentiment codes may not be applicable to **all** consequence factors – use your judgement to think about where it makes sense in a chain for you to be able to search for positive outcomes.

- In some cases it may be harder to establish whether an outcome was clearly positive or negative, or indeed it was an intervening factor and simply a means to an end (e.g. attended classes)
- The ’end’ of a chain would usually be coded, and can be helped by the closed and follow-up questions; is that a good or a bad change?
- The intermediate steps are optional – don’t forget that for some chains the ‘intermediate’ label may indeed be the end of the chain!

Coding example

"There have been negative changes in the food we eat during the last six months. This is related to the drought, the increase in price of food items and loss of income sources. But the water we drink has improved during this period as NGO X drilled a borehole in our village which made it possible to survive here."

Extract 1: There have been negative changes in the food we eat during the last six-months. This is related to the drought, the increase in price of food items and loss of income sources.



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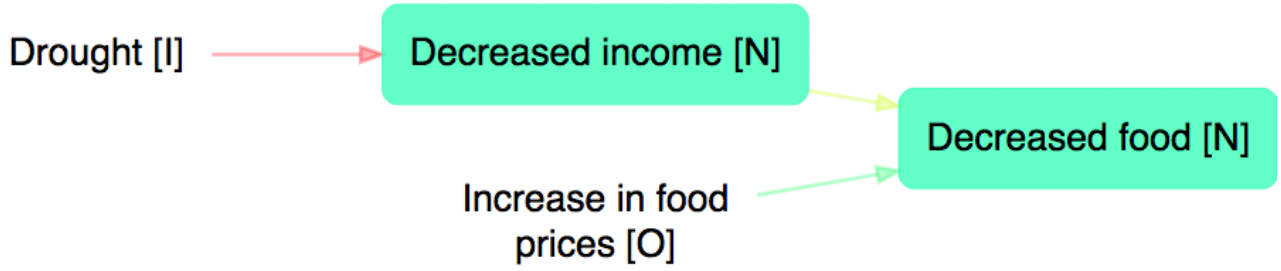

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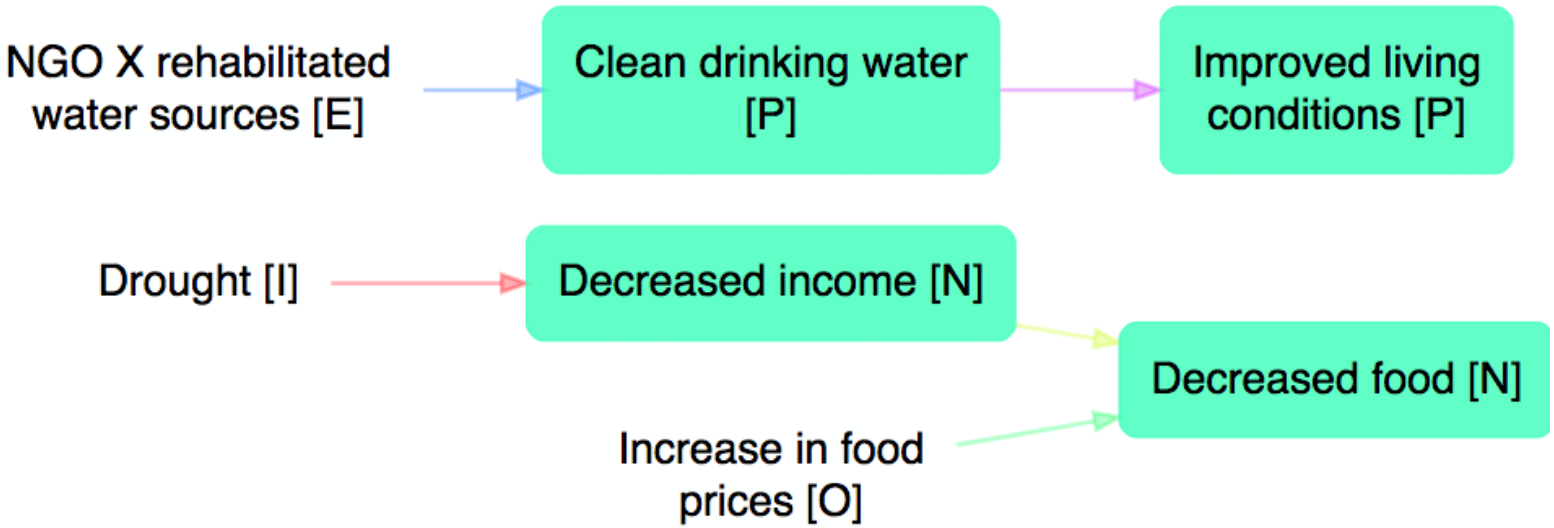


Themes

It is useful to break down your list of detailed factor labels into thematic groups; this may be easier to do once you have finished coding, or it can be used as a way of following a theory of change when coding

For example:

- *Income, expenditure and assets*
- *Farming and food production*
- *Food consumption*
- *Health and nutrition*
- *Weather and climate*
- *Personal circumstances*

Themes

- (IEA) Social Cash Transfer - Org X [E]:

This has been labelled as being part of a theme called Income, Expenditure and Assets using the label (IEA), which also includes other factors, such as:

- (IEA) Increased purchasing power [P]

- (HN) Increased food security [P]

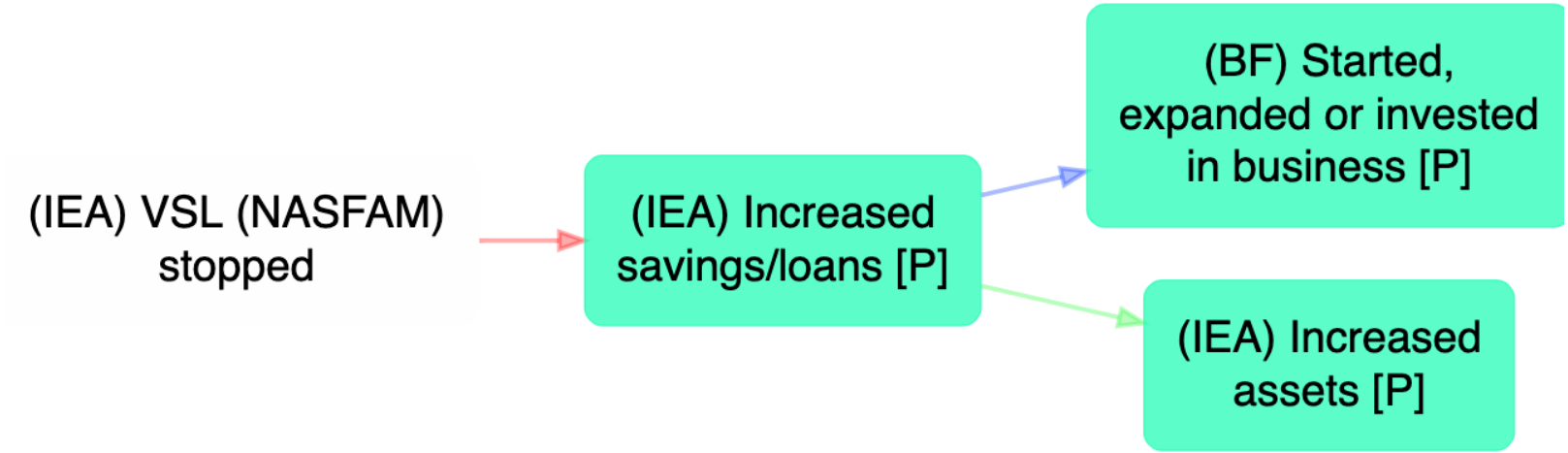
This is part of a theme called Health & Nutrition (HN), also including:

- (HN) Improved nutrition [P]

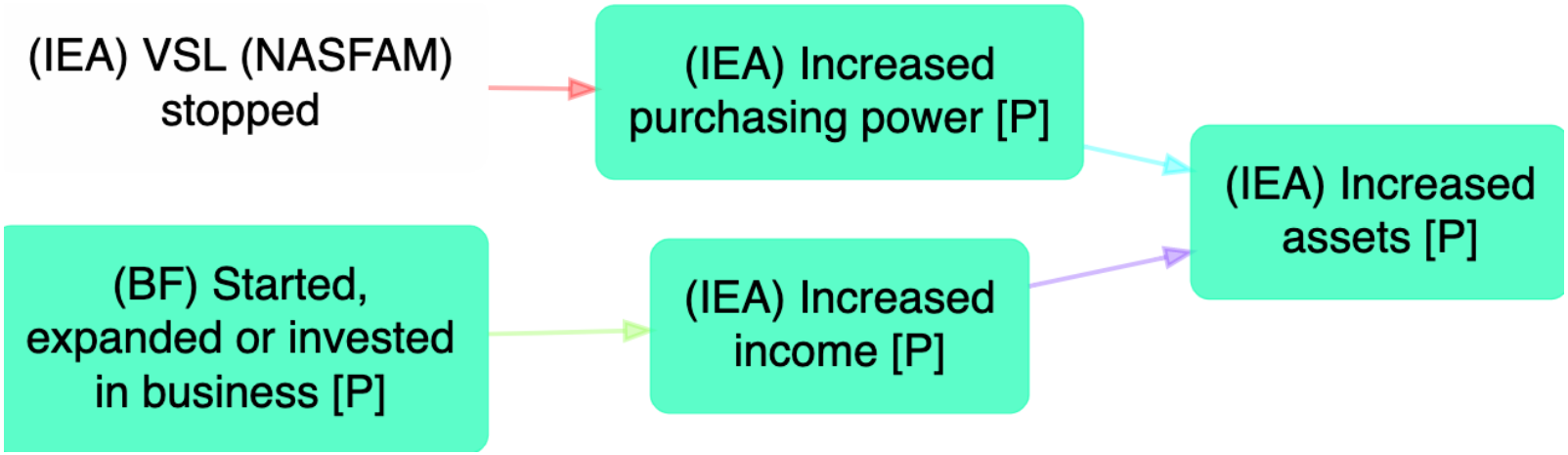
Themes

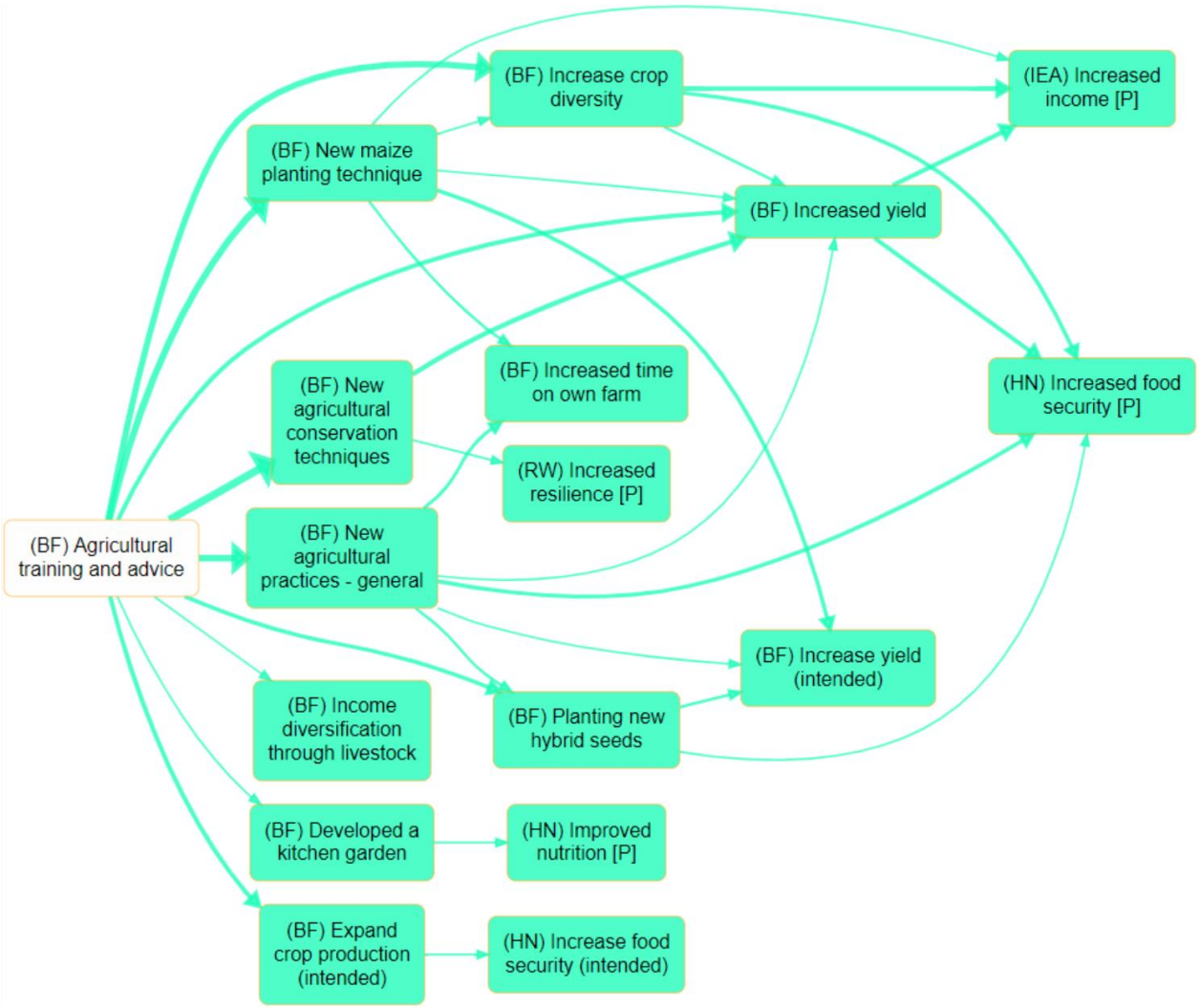
(IEA) Social Cash Transfer - OrgX [E]
(IEA) Increased purchasing power [P]
(HN) Increased food security [P]
(HN) Improved nutrition [P]

As you continue coding, you will find statements which contain more complex combinations of causal links; more than one chain…



Or…


(IEA) VSL (NASFAM) stopped
(IEA) Increased purchasing power [P]
(IEA) Increased assets [P]
(BF) Started, expanded or invested in business [P]
(IEA) Increased income [P]


(BF) Increase crop diversity
(IEA) Increased income [P]
(BF) New maize planting technique
(BF) Increased yield
(BF) Increased time on own farm
(HN) Increased food security [P]
(BF) New agricultural conservation techniques
(RW) Increased resilience [P]
(BF) Agricultural training and advice
(BF) New agricultural practices - general
(BF) Increase yield (intended)
(BF) Income diversification through livestock
(BF) Planting new hybrid seeds
(BF) Developed a kitchen garden
(HN) Improved nutrition [P]
(BF) Expand crop production (intended)
(HN) Increase food security (intended)

Focus group discussions

- Use the same approach to coding if the questionnaire was the same and you are going to compare the data with individual questionnaires.
- If individuals have different responses, these can be coded as such, but…

CAUTION: Numbers from coding don't carry the same meaning in FGDs; if 4 people say 1 thing and 1 person says something different – this is not reflected in any weighting!

- Make sure FGDs have narrative explanation to highlight majority and minority views, don't rely only on analysis of coding alone

Coding in context

- Coding takes practice for it to make sense, so your next task will be to try out coding on some real data!
- You can also look at some example QuIP reports to understand how the data is used in context – links to some reports are included in the separate pdf in this presentation.