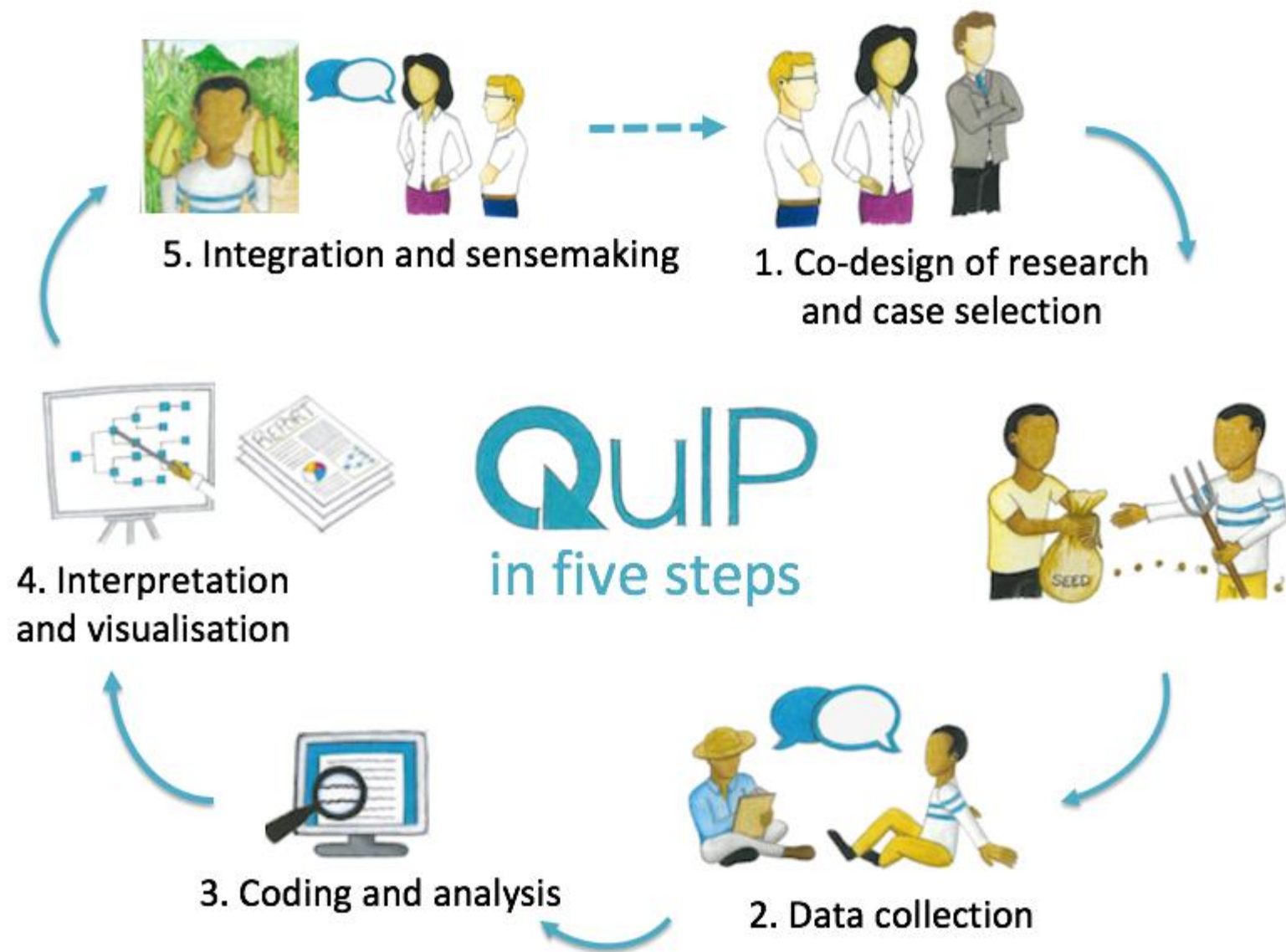


QulP Researcher Training

Introduction to QulP

Introduction to QuIP

- QuIP is a practical approach to helping organisations assess whether they are achieving the social and development goals they intended, and how.
- It does this by asking intended beneficiaries to explain what has changed in different domains of their lives (for better and worse), and what they think caused these changes.
- It can also be used to explore the factors behind change without reference to a particular intervention.



Division of roles

- QuIP is unusual in splitting the roles in a study in a very structured way.
- The **Lead Evaluator** is responsible for working with the commissioner, designing and managing the study, commissioning data collection from a field research team and overseeing analysis and reporting.
- The **Lead Researcher** is responsible for recruiting and training **Researchers** who are responsible for collecting data. Researchers are always local to the country, and preferably to the area where research is taking place. This ensures that local languages and dialects can be covered, and it helps with gaining access to communities when made more difficult by blindfolding.
- The **Analyst** is responsible for coding and analysing the data collected by the field team. This role is often fulfilled by the Lead Evaluator, but can be split if the types of skills required are different (e.g. thematic expertise vs qualitative coding expertise). They will work closely with the Researchers to cross-check any data and produce the final report.

Motivation – addressing the attribution challenge

Even with effective change monitoring, how can social investors credibly assess their contribution to observed outcomes, particularly in complex contexts?

i.e. with less...

1. Enabling intended beneficiaries to voice their views in an **ethical** way

Survey slavery
Extractive data collection

2. Reflecting the **diversity** of their experiences

Focus on average effects
Over-simplification

3. Making **cost-effective** investments in finding out more

Obsessive measurement disorder

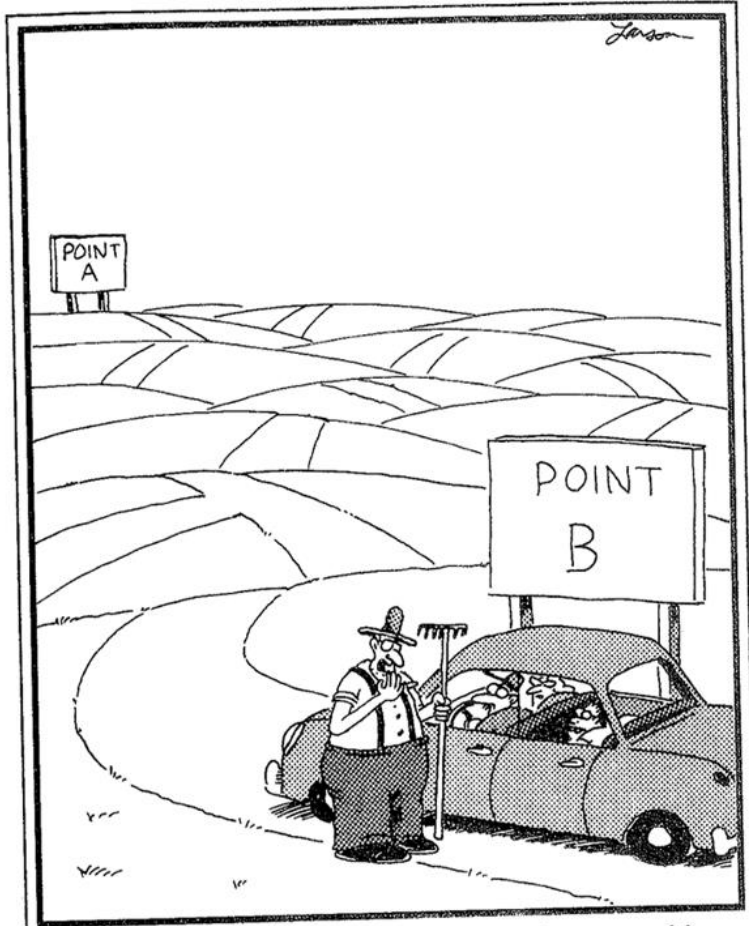
Features of QuIP

- **Self-reported attribution** (with latent counterfactuals) Not statistically inferred attribution based on exposure variation.
- **Eclectic** (contribution analysis, goal-free evaluation, outcome harvesting, most significant change, process tracing, realist evaluation...)
- **Dual purpose:** Exploratory (theory building) and Confirmatory (theory testing).
- **Bayesian in spirit** – augmenting prior theory incrementally; never starting with zero understanding.
- Designed for **complex contexts** (including presence of multiple causal drivers, measurement problems, rapid change and possible unintended consequences).

Features of QuIP continued...

- Focuses on making **qualitative data analysis** structured, transparent, accessible and useable.
- Uses **data visualisation – causal maps** - to make reported outcomes more digestible.
- **Good enough** – balancing credibility and cost-effectiveness; not aiming for absolute or universal truth.

Blindfolding



"Well, lemme think. ... You've stumped me, son. Most folks only wanna know how to go the other way."

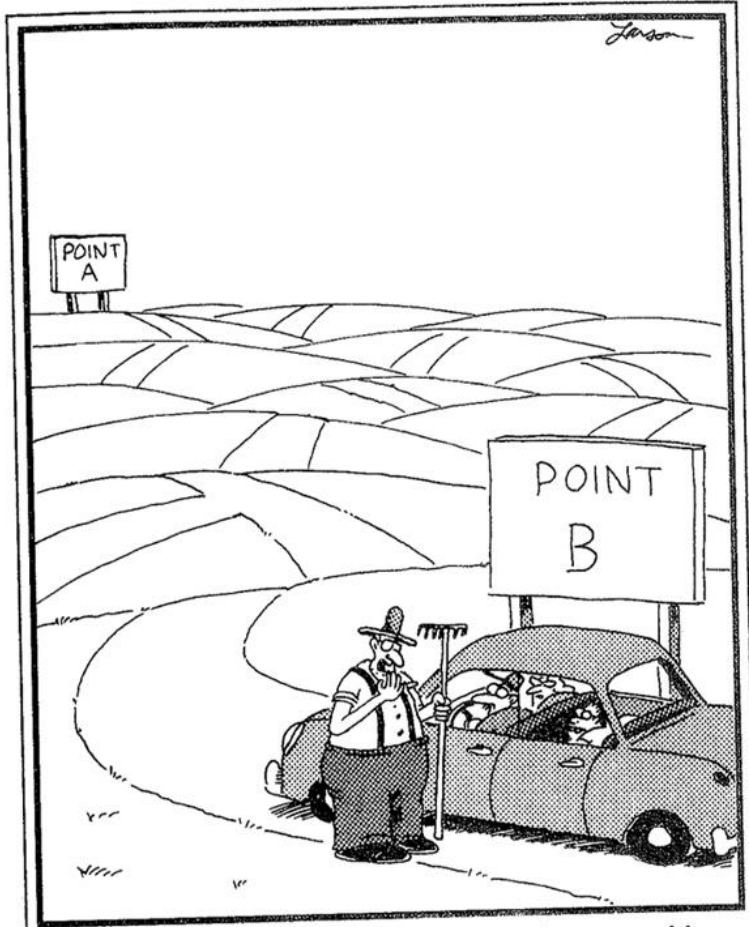
Why do it?

- To reduce pro-project, framing and confirmation biases
- To give equal weight to all possible drivers of change

Is it ethical?

- Informed consent
- Time-bound
- Greater good (should be proportionate)

Blindfolding continued...



"Well, lemme think. ... You've stumped me, son. Most folks only wanna know how to go the other way."

How far to go?

- A design choice – never zero nor 100%
- Only one way of reducing bias
- Can be temporary
- Can be combined with other sources
- Exploratory analysis can also be blindfolded.

Coding and visualising data

QulP has a very specific approach to how the qualitative data is coded once it has been written up. Once you have written up the narrative responses, they will be sent to the Analyst. The Analyst will have experience of qualitative thematic coding, and is trained to use the QulP approach. Their job is to search for causal claims in the stories - relationships between **cause and effect**.

So, 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?

Coding and visualising data continued...

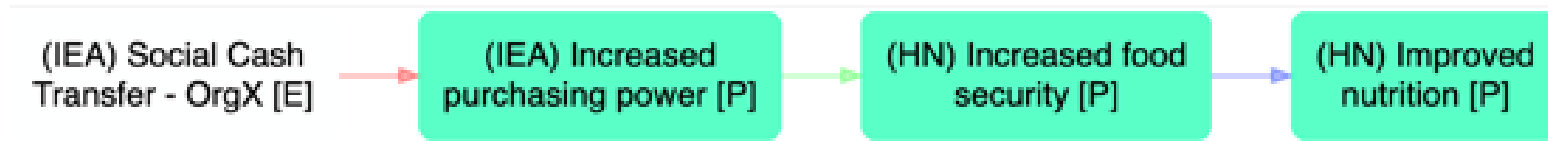
The analyst can then interrogate:

- 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 won't be coded – unless no change is part of a story, e.g. crops yields remained the same despite drought - due to use of new seed. **Influence and consequence** factor labels are unique to each project, this means that we are only coding what people have told us, **not what we expect them to tell us**.

Coding and visualising data continued...

Once the data is coded, we can then visualise it in the form of **causal maps**. These maps show us how people made connections between certain factors, and how many times that link was made by different people.

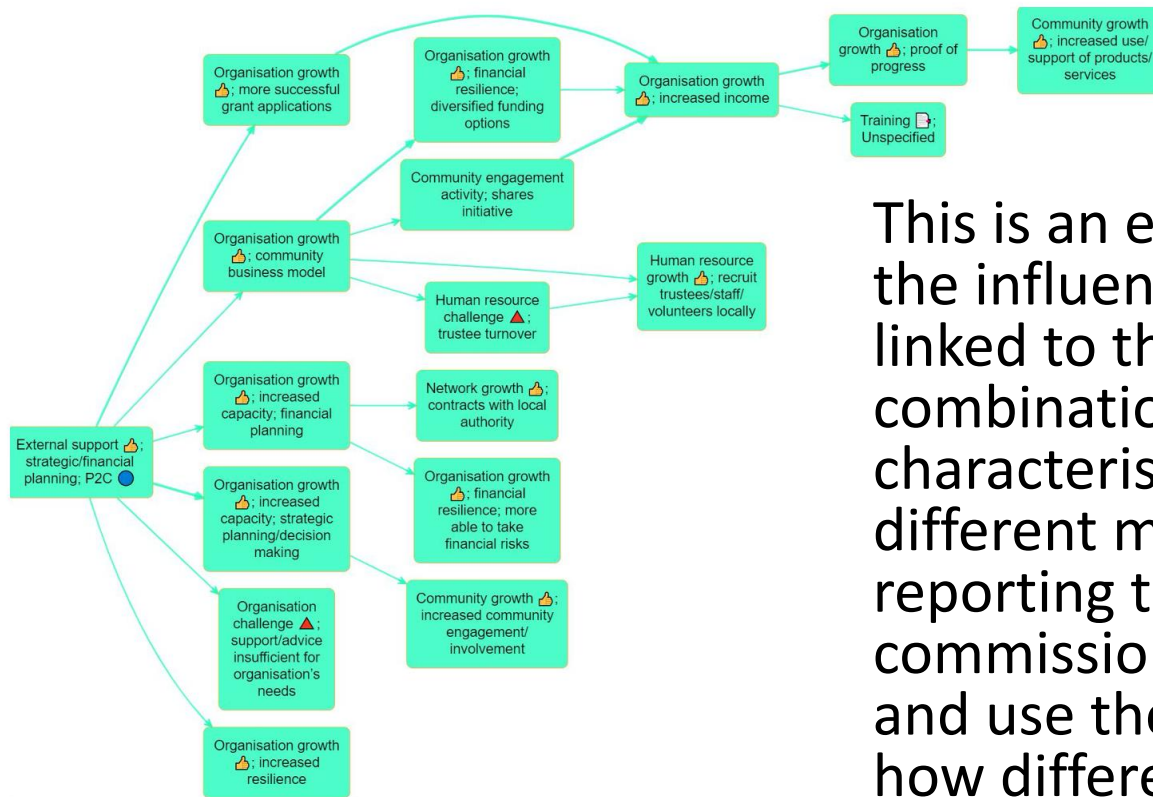


Coding and visualising data continued...



Business development support *explicitly* attributed to P2C

Causal map showing
all outcome paths
driven by P2C's
business
development
support



This is an example of a causal map looking at the influence of one particular factor which is linked to the project. You can search for any combination of factors, or use the characteristics of respondents to create different maps. These maps are used for reporting to commissioners, and the commissioners can also create their own maps and use them in workshops to understand how different pathways apply to different types of respondent or project.

The QulP story so far

Design and pilot testing (2012-15)

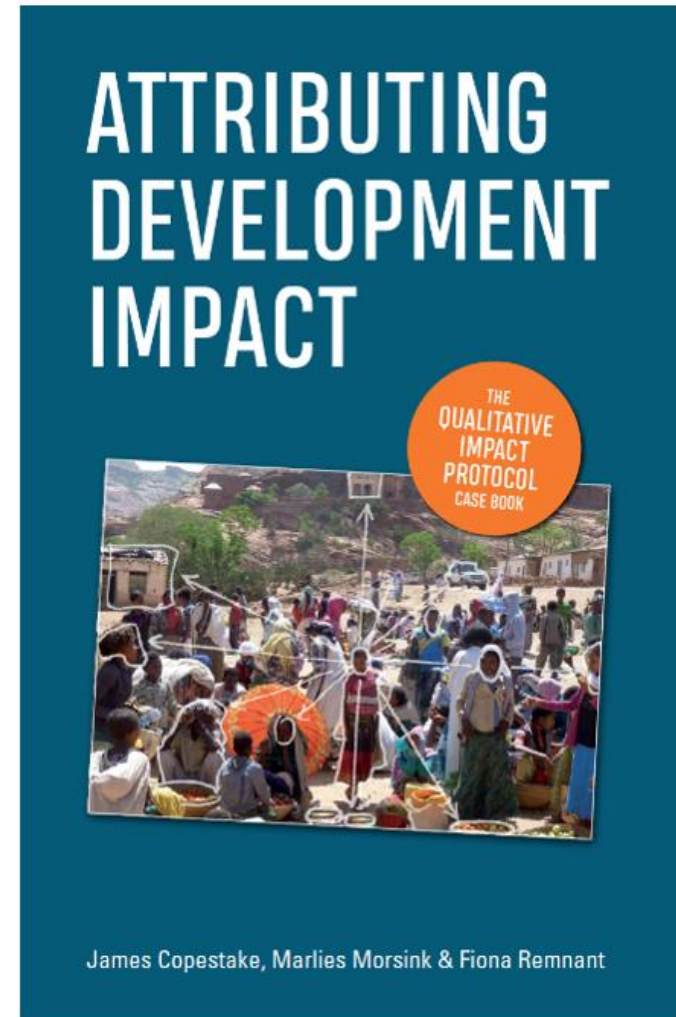
Grant funded collaborative action research to design and test a qualitative approach to impact assessment – tested in Malawi and Ethiopia.

Commercial testing (2016-)

Set up Bath SDR Ltd as a social enterprise to deliver QulPs in a wider range of contexts. 40+ commissioned QulP evaluations in 20 countries.

Continued action research (2016-)

Ongoing learning and publication on how to do impact evaluation better, including [“Attributing Development Impact: The QulP case book” \(2019\)](#)



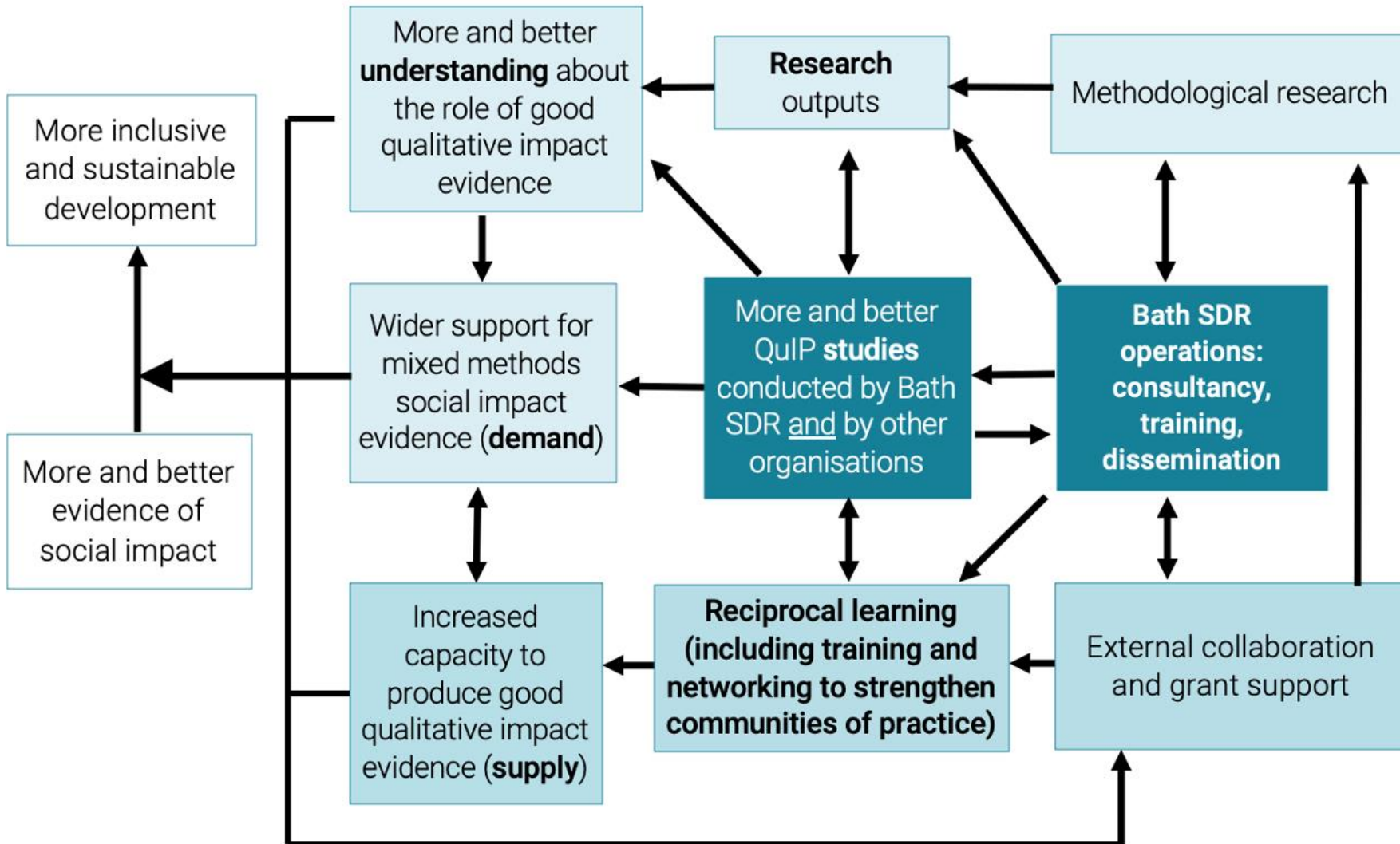
Thematic areas where QuIP has been applied:

Child nutrition	Medical & midwife training
Climate change adaptation	Microfinance
Community mobilisation	Rural livelihoods
Early famine response	Value chain improvement
Factory working conditions	Sexual & reproductive health rights
Housing improvement	Organisational development

Countries



Bath SDR theory of change



Reflections

- What two issues do you find most **intriguing** and **potentially attractive** about the QuIP?
- What two issues do you find most **confusing** and/or **potentially problematic** about the QuIP?

Note down your answers for discussion later!

QuIP Researcher Training

Data collection

Your role

As researchers, your role is:

- to interview project beneficiaries, encouraging them to provide a full and accurate account of changes that have occurred, over a clearly specific time period (recall period)
- to phrase and sequence questions carefully
- to allow respondents to explain in their own words what has changed and why
- to prompt for more information – for all changes mentioned

At the end of the study, you will also be required to reflect on your field experiences in a joint team field report

QulP questionnaire

- Each questionnaire is unique to the project it is assessing.
- Questionnaires are designed with the commissioner and piloted by the researchers.
- Questionnaires are designed around domains relating to the project's Theory of Change (ToC) and based on a period of time you will be asking people to refer to in their answers (recall period) during which we would expect some change to have occurred
- QulP questionnaires include:
 - Open-ended questions
 - Supplementary probing questions
 - Closed questions

Domains

The questionnaires are typically designed to ask questions about areas of people's lives where we expect some change to have occurred, but we **never** ask about inputs or interventions.

The questionnaire will be split into sections called Domains, these each include a combination of Open Questions where the respondent is encouraged to reply at length and freely, their answers are documented in full; and questions with set answers to choose from - these are called Closed Questions.

Example domains

Example domains for a rural livelihood study:



**Farming
income**



**Other
income**



**Food
production**



**Food
consumption**



Health



Relationships

Example domains for QulP studies undertaken in other sectors include:

- Living conditions
- Access to services
- Learning environments
- Collaboration & communication
- Gender equality / gender relations
- Job satisfaction & productivity
- Children's wellbeing
- Voice & agency
- Enabling environment

Recall period

- The recall period is determined with the commissioner, fixing a period during which they expect changes to have occurred, or would like to find out changes which have occurred. This is then used as the **reference point** for stories of change throughout the interview, asking people to recall any changes compared to the time at the start of the recall period, and the present day.
- At the beginning of the questionnaire you will ask respondents to recall an **important event** in their lives which will help them to think about what life was like at that point. Good examples are births, marriages or significant local events. This acts as a good anchor for recalling life 'before', and helps them to think about what has changed during the period being discussed. It's worth keep bringing them back to these examples - ask them how life is now compared to that time before?
- You need to ensure that the recall period is well understood right from the start, and used appropriately throughout. You will need to practise this with your colleagues before going into the field.

Types of Questions

Open-ended questions

Designed to stimulate discussion around a selected topic.

Supplementary probing questions

Used to sustain and to deepen the conversation but don't need to be used if this happens naturally without them.

Closed questions

Follow open-ended discussion of the same topic and can be a useful way of drawing each discussion to a conclusion.

e.g. Food production

Open: Please tell me how your ability to produce your own food has changed in the last three years, if at all.

- *Is there anything you produce more/less of?*
- *In which seasons have changes been most pronounced?*
- *What are the reasons for these changes?*

Closed: Overall, how has the ability of your household to produce enough food to meet its needs changed over the past three years?

- ☐ *Worse* ☐ *Better*
- ☐ *Same* ☐ *Not sure*

Probing

- It's very important that you **probe** respondents in interviews to generate further explanation, e.g. Why did you decide to do that?
- With regards to a QulP study, this means encouraging interviewees to expand on points they have raised during their responses in order to highlight and clarify links between drivers and outcomes within a project.
- The example on the right shows how probing might be used to elicit more information about a root driver of change. This is very important if we are to be able to create the causal maps.

For example:

"We are eating better food"

What is the reason for this?

"We have more money"

What is the reason for having more money?

"Our income has increased"

Why is this?

"Because of the change to the crops we are growing which I talked about before."

Starting the interviews

- You will be given a sampling list ahead of data collection. Where possible arrange appointments with respondents in advance to save time.
- Be clear where you are from and introduce this as an independent study about changes in people's lives in this area (you will be given an introduction letter which is produced in conjunction with the lead researcher).
- Warn people in advance how long it will take (usually around 1 hour).
- Introduce yourself and explain who you are and what you are doing. It is important that you strike up a good rapport with the respondent; you are cultivating a 'storyteller-listener' relationship rather than 'interviewer-interviewee'.

Starting the interviews continued...

- Ensure that the respondent is comfortable with the format of the interview and that you obtain informed consent at the start of the interview. You will be asked to record the interview if you can get consent for this. Make sure you explain that recordings are only used for writing up notes and quality control; these recordings are not passed to commissioners and will not be shared with anyone outside of BSDR and the research team. If you cannot get permission for recordings you need to make sure you have a note taker with you.
- Start by setting a clear recall period – the whole interview hinges on change during a clear set period.
- The first question should help to anchor the recall period, but make sure to keep coming back to the recall period to remind the respondent.

Introduction section

- The initial section is an opportunity to collect basic information about the individual respondent (e.g. age, sex, occupation, education level, etc.) and basic information about the household (e.g. number of members, number of under 16s, etc.)
- Every study will take a slightly different approach to this, follow the instructions you are given.

A1. Please can you tell me a little about yourself?

Respondent head of the household?	Sex	Age Range	If under 16, in full-time education?	If over 16, in employment?	Residency in household in last 12 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male • Female 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <16 • 17-30 • 31-50 • >50 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	1. Farmer 2. Govt. Employee 3. Private sector 4. Trader/ entrepreneur 5. Skilled Labourer 6. Unskilled Labourer 7. Housewife 8. Student 9. Unemployed 10. Unable to work 11. Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • < 6 months • > 6 months

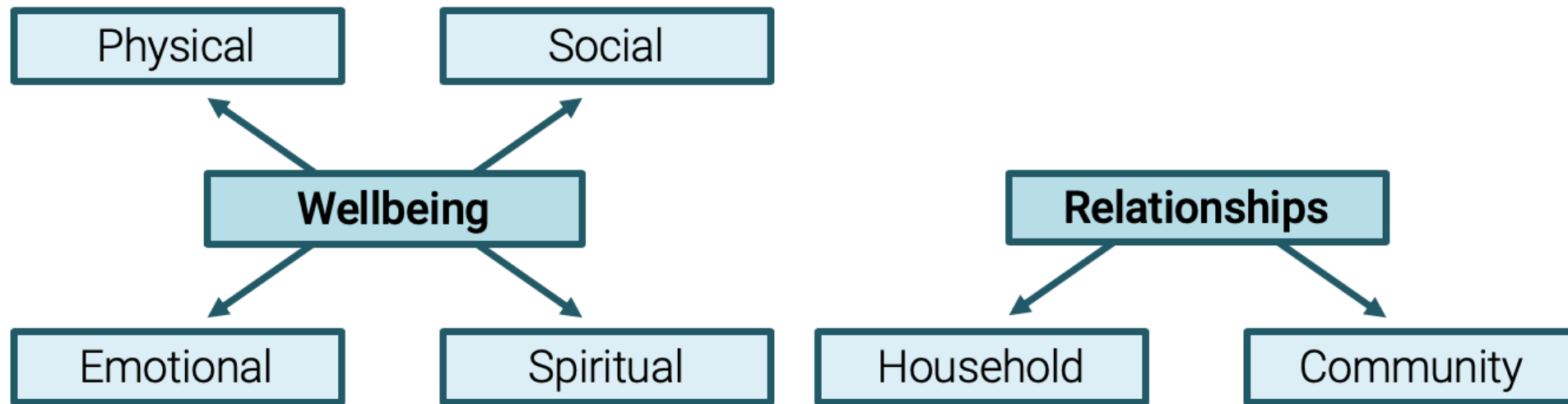
A2. Please can you tell me about others in your household?

Age Range	Sex	If under 16, in full-time education?	If over 16, in employment?	Residency in household in last 12 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <16 • 17-30 • 31-50 • >50 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male • Female 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • < 6 months • > 6 months

A3. What is the sex of the head of the household?

Core domains

Two domains included in most QulP studies (but not all!):



External relationships

- In some questionnaires there is a section at the end which is used as an opportunity to find out if any other organisations, projects, or interventions are impacting respondents' lives (which haven't been mentioned yet).
- Respondents are asked to list all organisations they've interacted with over the time period alongside any changes experienced as a result.
- Respondents are asked to rank these organisations in order of relative importance to them.

This may not be included in your questionnaire.

Notes

- Respondents are given an opportunity to ask questions and give any final comments or reflections at the end.
- You also have space to write any observations about the interview or household which you can do once you have left. For example, you might make observations about the house/community or comment upon the respondent's engagement.

Section E. Please don't forget to thank the interviewee for their participation and invite them to ask you any questions they have. Note down what these are, and if they prompt issues relevant to the research that you would like to share. Please also note down any observations you have about the respondent and the interview process (e.g. were they relaxed, were there distractions, or do you think their answers were influenced by other people present at the interview?)
E1. Questions Asked By Respondent:
E2. Other Observations

Guidance for interviews

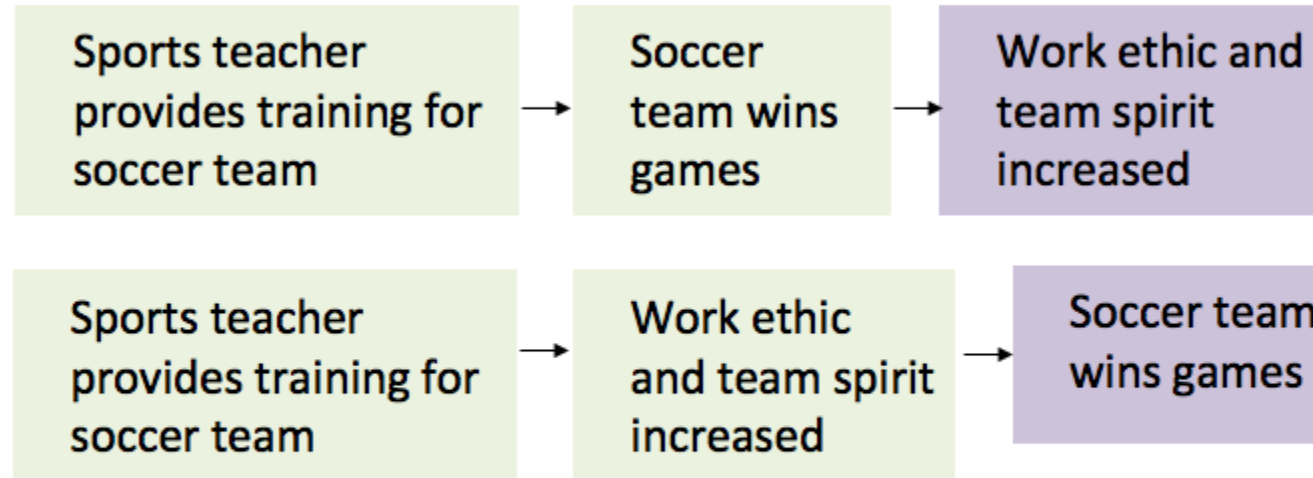
- Your role is to use these questions to get to the root cause of change, whilst avoiding bias...
- Do not prompt respondents to focus on those activities that you think may be of most interest to any particular organisation – your role is to provide rounded and reliable evidence about what is happening in a particular area.
- Respect what respondents say and faithfully record it – do not try to second guess what they mean. If you are not sure, ask them to clarify; think about the analyst!
- The 'closed' questions should help to summarise whether they feel positive or negative.
- The open-ended questions are designed to stimulate discussion around a selected topic. The questions in italics are to guide a more specific conversation within that topic.
- Stick to the questionnaire as it is designed, but allow respondents to expand on an area as the conversation flows naturally. If they answer one of the next questions naturally in conversation, you do not need to ask it again.

Guidance for interviews continued...

- Closed questions should follow open-ended discussion of the same topic, and can be a useful way of drawing discussion of them to a conclusion.
- If positive or negative change in any area is reported without explanation, you should use the supplementary questions to probe for why the interviewee thinks this change happened.
- Try to go back as far as you can to the root cause of change, e.g.
 - “We are eating better food”
What is the reason for this?
 - “We have more money”
What is the reason for having more money?
 - “Our income has increased”
Why is this?
 - “Because of the change to the crops we are growing which I talked about before.”
- If necessary continue to probe until you have all the information about the **root cause**.

Documenting stories of change

Spot the difference:



The order in which you write up the story is important!

Focus Groups

- FGDs are a way of enabling people to speak more freely with their peer group, and to see if there any differences between different types of groups.
- If you have focus groups to run, make sure you do this with two researchers; one to facilitate and one to take notes.
- You will usually be asking very similar questions, but based on experiences of 'people like you, in this community'.
- Some questions may require people to reflect on their personal experiences; we are trying to find out what this type/group of people experience on the whole, so understanding whether they think their experiences are different to other people in the community is important.
- Also note down if there are any big differences between participants, they may not all have similar experiences and opinions!
- Use good facilitation techniques to ensure everyone gets a say, e.g. pass a stick around, make sure it isn't dominated by one or two people!

Ethical conduct

- You will be given a Code of Conduct to read and sign. It is very important that you take the time to read this properly, and consider everything it contains. You will be familiar with much of it, but it is always good to reinforce the following points:
- **Respect:** you as the researcher must recognise the capacity and rights of all individuals to make their own choices and decisions, including the right not to participate.
- **Beneficence:** your primary responsibility is to protect the physical, mental and social wellbeing of all participants.
- **Justice:** you should endeavour to ensure that potential risks to participants do not outweigh the benefits of participation.
- If you have **any** concerns that the study does not meet any of these important criteria, then you must raise this either with the Lead Researcher, or with a BSDR representative. You should never feel pressured into doing anything that you feel uncomfortable about, and if whilst undertaking research you come across any circumstances which concern you, you should feel free to report these. You can always email info@bathskr.org or contact the relevant authorities after speaking to your Lead Researcher.

THANK YOU for following this course patiently.

We look forward to speaking with you on the live call, when we will review the questionnaires, practise the techniques needed, and discuss any concerns or questions you may have.