

Fiona Remnant

Bath Social & Development
Research

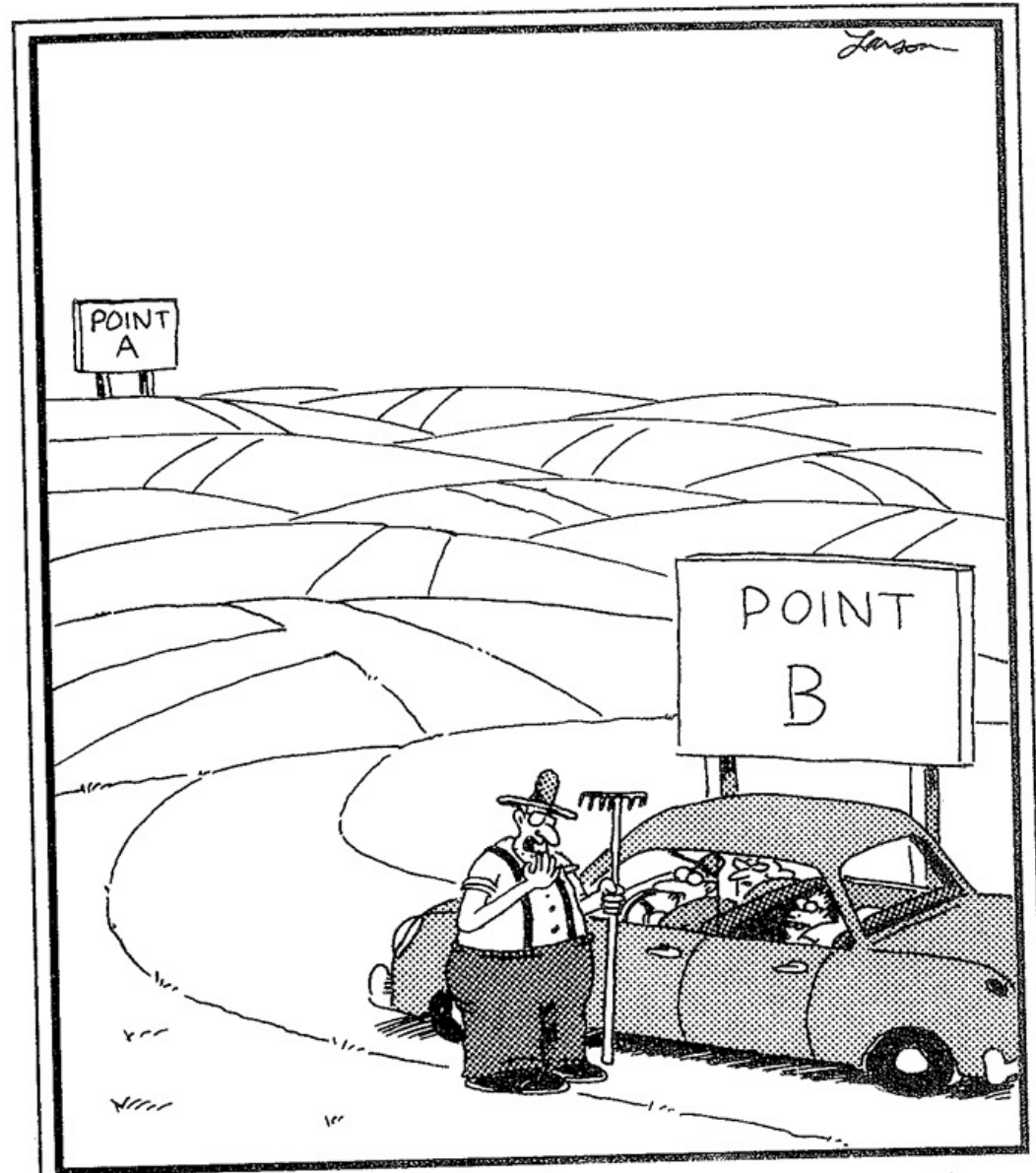
QUIP

Qualitative Impact
Assessment Protocol

Steve Powell

CAUSAL
MAP

MAKING CONNECTIONS



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

Qualitative Impact Protocol: QuIP

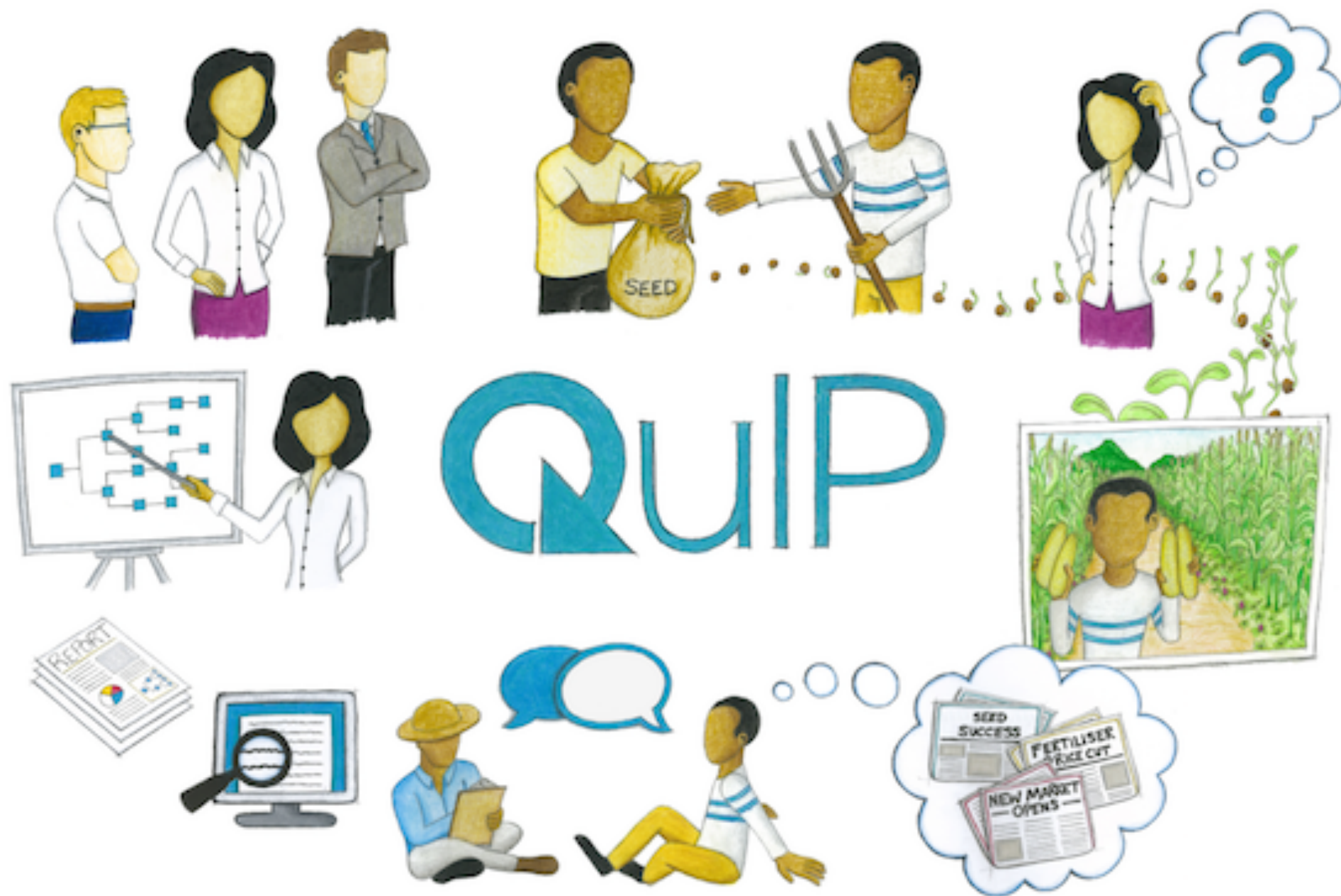
- Assessing Rural Transformations - ESRC/DFID research, University of Bath 2012-2015

What works for whom, when and in what contexts?

How can we **credibly** test causal claims of multiple actions in complex contexts in a **timely** and **cost-effective** way?

If I do x in the context of a & b, can you tell me what happened to a & b, and how much x had to do with it – notwithstanding z?





QuIP Features: Data sources

- Collect open-ended **stories of change** from intended beneficiaries
- Mitigate confirmation bias with **exploratory** / goal-free questions and optional 'blindfolding'
- Contribution analysis relies on **self-reported attribution** from **purposely selected respondents** rather than statistically inferred based on exposure variation.

QuIP Features: Data Analysis

- Uses **causal mapping** as main way to analyse reported links between cause and effect – open to all possible influences on change
- Uses a standardised approach to coding of qualitative data, and innovative data visualisation through an interactive dashboard - break open the black box of qualitative data!


QulP in practice

Stage 1: Design

- Co-designed with commissioner; broad impact 'domains' based on theory of change
- Small purposive **sampling** frame; individual & focus groups (24+4 / 48+8)

Stage 2: Data collection

- Open-ended questioning conducted by trained independent researchers, where possible without knowledge of the project



Who knows
what
'truth'?

Prioritising the views of intended beneficiaries using goal free interview methods; respondents express their views on why change happens, without restrictions of confirmation or social bias.


'What has changed and why did this change occur?'

Stage 3: Analysis

Standardised data coding and analysis process conducted by qualitative coding experts using bespoke causal mapping software:

- Coding the links people make between cause and effect – what caused what

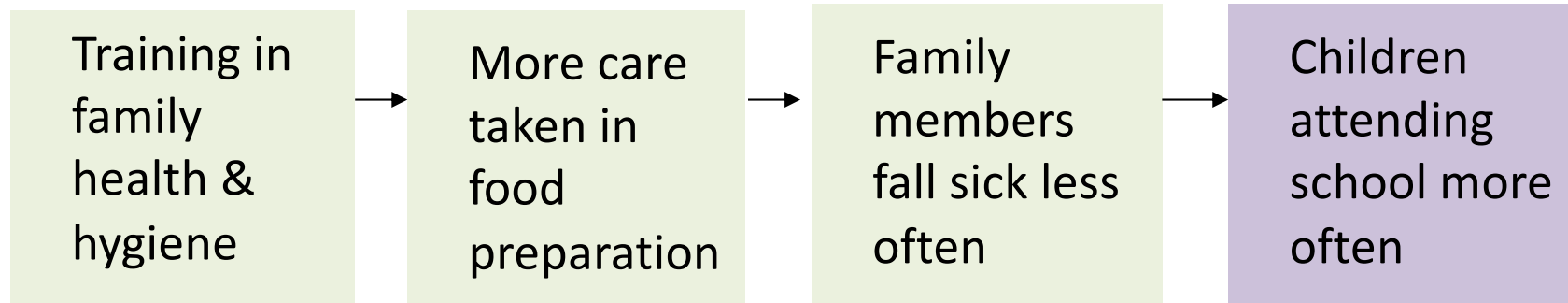
Rapid **semi-automated generation of summary tables and visualisations** to aid analysis.



The
power of
words

Rigorous, judgement-free coding of qualitative data maintains the power of respondents' voices to reach up the hierarchy. Accessible and interactive presentation means quantifying data, but without losing sight of the **words and meaning**.

Building causal claims



View statements one by one

1 332

Show filters Clear all filters

Create and edit links Multi-edit Codebook

Info A note about this statement

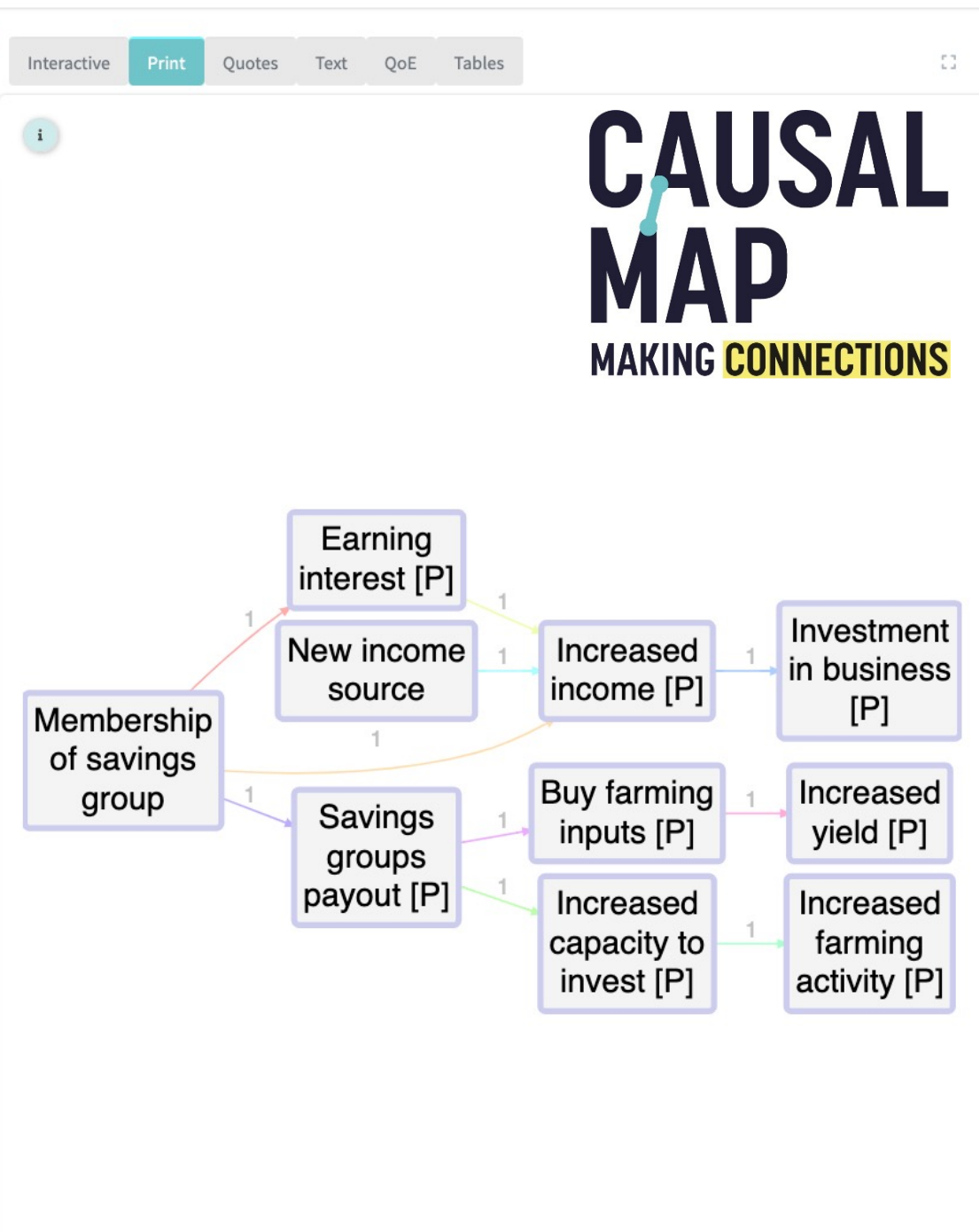
I have seen a small change in my income between 2018 when I just finished college and now. After I graduated from college, I joined the Osawe savings group on recommendation from my parents. After joining the group, I saw that my money started growing slowly through the group activities of borrowing and saving. In our group, you can save as little as K20 and earn an interest of K4 on it. Earning this interest was very helpful for me to have monies available in term of emergencies. Before I joined the savings group I never had a lot of money. But now saving in our savings group and earning interest is a good thing. Especially at the end of the cycle, I receive my savings which I can invest. I am currently into farming. I grow groundnuts, beans, cassava and maize. Before (2018) my farming was on a smaller scale. However, I now have more income due to the savings group and I am able to grow more crops. I have other sources of income beside farming and the savings group. I am the lead peer educator at the rural health centre. In this role, I am invited to workshops where I get a sitting allowance. I invest this money in my business ventures. The amount I now earn has increased because I am investing money from my savings group especially the end of

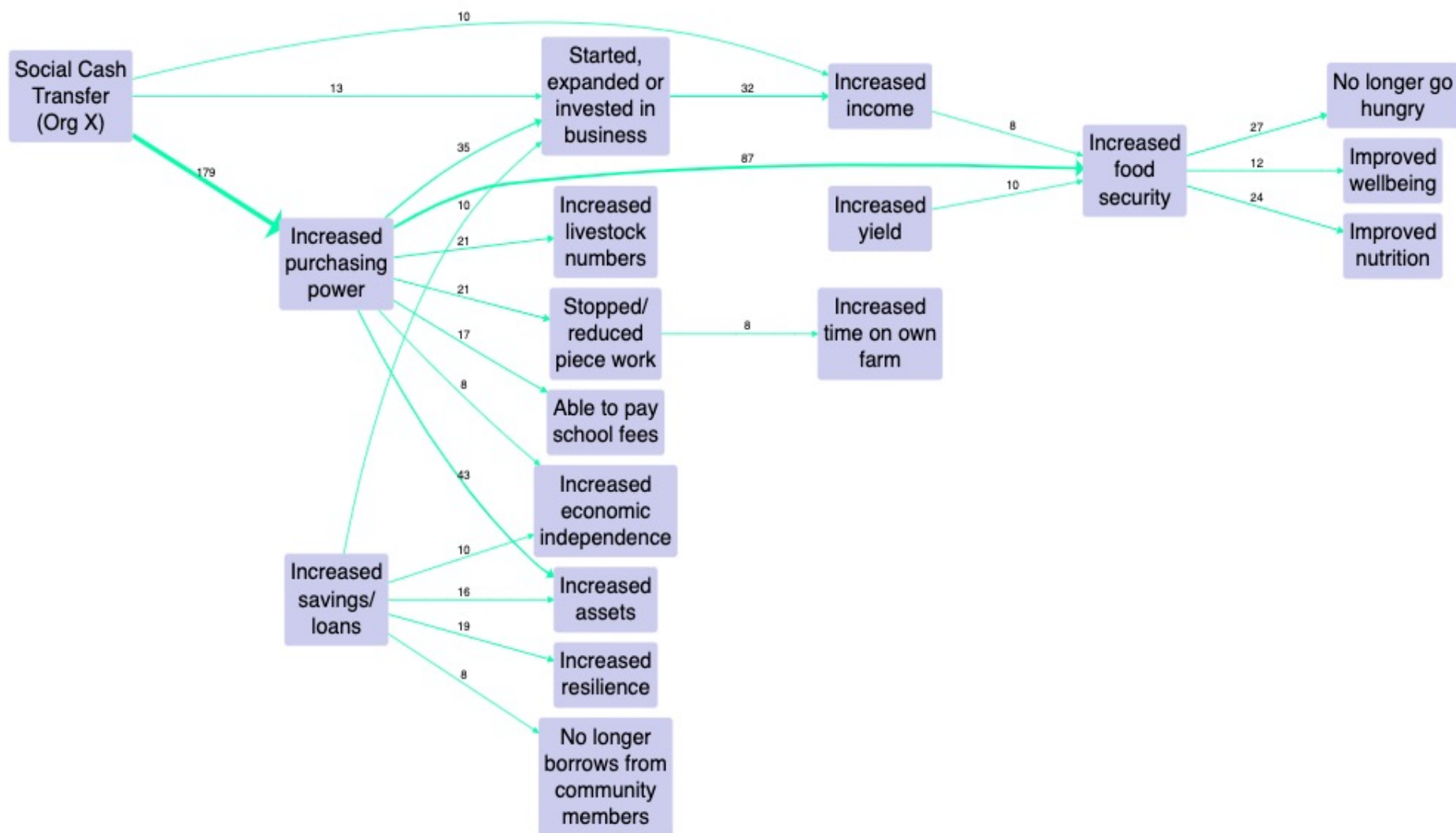
Type to select or add factor(s) at the start

Type to select or add factor(s) at the end

quote

Type to add hashtags





Stage 4: Use of evidence

- Summary report of evidence, starting point for project level **debriefing** between project staff and researchers
- Easy to drill down from summary evidence to raw data for QA, auditing, **peer review** and learning purposes.
- Triangulation workshops, stakeholder feedback & de-briefing etc.

Handing back power

Encouraging partners and commissioners to really engage with the findings takes the power of judgement away from evaluators and into the hands of those who have the power to effect change. Discussing findings with respondents further shares the power to change.



Charlotte Flowers/Tearfund

Why QuIP and not quant survey?

- Survey questions are closed, so depend on prior knowledge of change. QuIP is exploratory, allows respondents to tell you what is important, including unexpected drivers.
- QuIP does not require a control group to infer impact, or such a large sample size
- A survey generates average treatment effects – answers the question ‘how much impact?’. QuIP reveals more complex and diverse causal mechanisms and answers the questions ‘for whom, how and why?’
- Combining findings across multiple studies and using hierarchical coding will allow you to generalise theory at ‘mid-level’ and then zoom in to specific contexts



What impact has Voscur had on VCSE organisations, and what other factors affected their ability to deliver services?

Interviewed representatives of 24 organisations who received intensive support from Voscur in the year before

“QuIP first identifies the cause and effect of change before seeking to link them to specific interventions. In this way it provides rich intelligence about the environment, as well as the effectiveness of Voscur’s services”

04

Improved planning is the most crucial step between Voscur's support and positive organisational outcomes

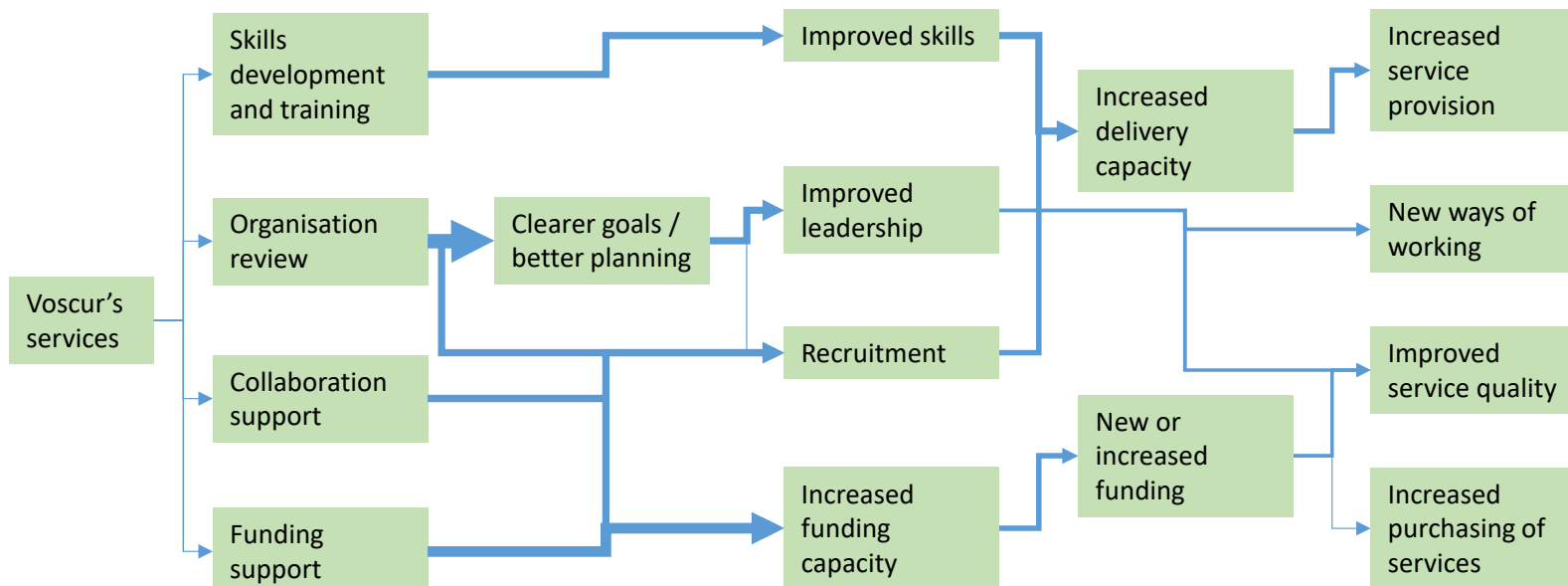
Most of the positive impacts created by Voscur resulted from its support for strategic planning, skills development, funding and collaboration.

The secondary drivers and outcomes of from these interventions rarely had simple one-to-one relationships: rather the causal chains from different activities interrelated and reinforced each other in different ways.

The diagram below shows links between positive drivers and outcomes that illustrates the effects of changes and trends that a wide range of organisations could identify with.

The weight of connecting lines indicates the strength of connection between drivers and outcomes.

We identified the need for trustees with particular skills and recruited a lawyer and PR person. Grant funding allowed us to develop a longer term strategic plan we're just now putting into place.



05

Difficulties for organisations can quickly impact service users but may force positive changes too

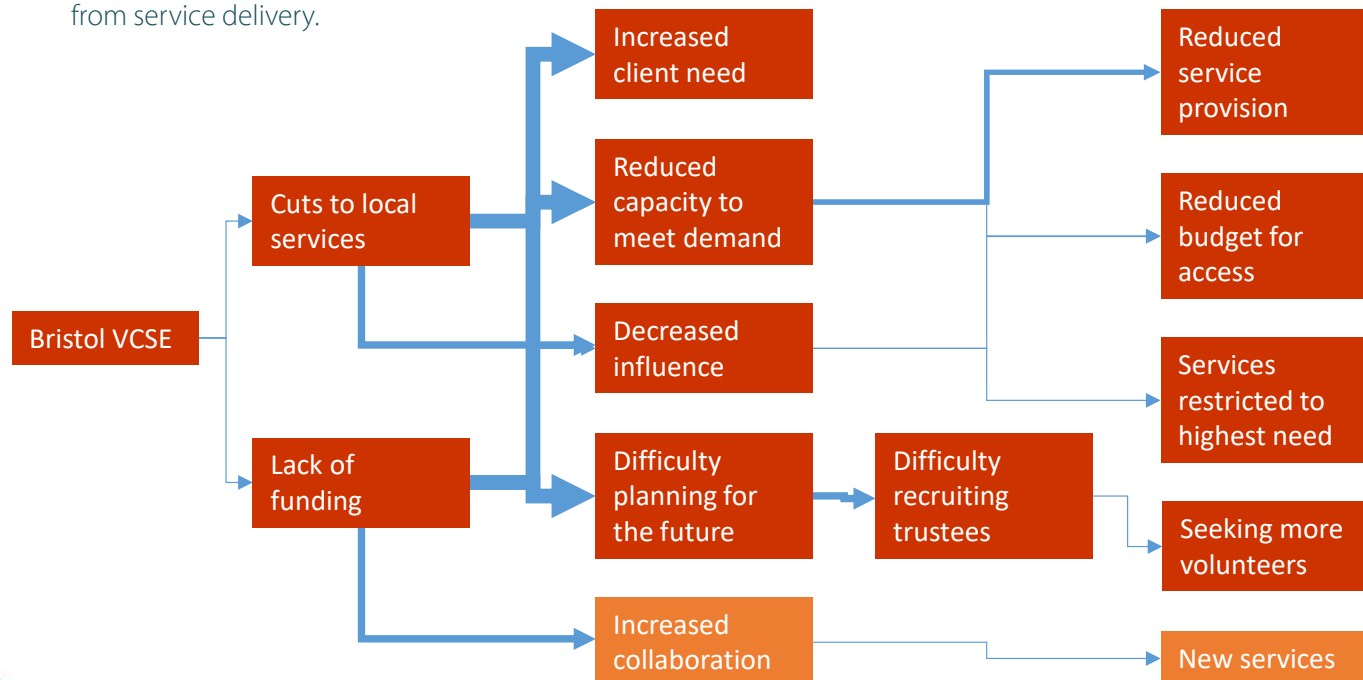
For organisations which had not managed to adjust to the new operating climate, lack of funding and increased demand from clients produced a negative spiral of diverting resources into fundraising and away from service delivery.

Necessity also produced invention: changes in funding led to new collaborations and services (highlighted in orange below) with organisations seeking fresh ways to serve their clients.

The diagram below shows links between negative drivers and outcomes that illustrates the effects of changes and trends that a wide range of organisations could identify with.

The weight of connecting lines indicates the strength of connection between drivers and outcomes.

We're doing all of it - trying to get funds from trusts, businesses, academia, the NHS - but have even less time for service delivery now as without a council grant we're fundraising for staff salaries too.



What impact has the Bright Ideas programme had on community businesses, and what other factors affected their ability to work effectively?

Interviewed representatives of community businesses who received mentoring, grants and other business support.

“By using this ‘deep dive’ approach, the research findings present a rich picture of the assortment of factors influencing change within the community business sector”

Bright Ideas – how Power to Change impacts its grantees

Through the Bright Ideas programme, Power to Change aims to support community groups to start, develop and grow their enterprises. In addition to grant funding of up to £15,000, the programme provides community groups with support and advice to develop, test and launch their business idea. The programme is delivered in partnership with Locality.

In early 2020, Bath Social and Development Research (BSDR) undertook an evaluation of the capacity-building support provided

by the programme, using their Qualitative Impact Protocol (QulP) methodology. The QulP methodology is purposefully open-ended and exploratory. By using this 'deep dive' approach, the research findings present a rich picture of the assortment of factors influencing change within the community business sector.

The QulP study found that Bright Ideas impacts on community businesses in several ways. These include:

- business advice enabled organisations to strengthen their capacity to plan ahead and make strategic decisions for the future

- grant funding increased both income and confidence
- networking support encouraged organisations to learn from each other, inspiring new ideas.

All these outcomes were voluntarily identified by grantees and attributed to the Bright Ideas programme. This enabled BSDR to create a causal map showing drivers and primary outcomes attributable to the business development support provided.

Figure 4: Causal map showing outcomes driven by Bright Ideas business development support*



*The causal claims are codified by applying labels to the relevant portion of text, including: an **influence** factor (the reported cause/driver of change) signified by the money icon, a **consequence** factor (the reported outcome/change), visible on the right-hand side of the diagram, a **sentiment** label (whether the consequence is perceived to be positive/negative) signified by the 'thumbs up' icon or orange triangle, an **attribution** label (how closely the influence aligns with the programme's theory of change) signified by the turquoise dot. The numbers on the diagram indicate the strength of references, with higher numbers indicating the outcome was referenced a greater number of times.



"la Caixa" Foundation

C&A Foundation



AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY



QuIP: In summary

- Getting to the heart of attribution, but not quantification: *What has changed and what caused that change?*
- Uses purposive sampling strategies for learning: the power of positive deviance
- Strong focus on causal mechanisms, not simply outcomes
- Visualising findings using powerful causal maps
- Promoting beneficiary feedback by putting their voice at the heart of the evaluation. Options to close the loop with un-blindfolding workshops.