

Call for experienced qualitative researchers in Mauritania

This call is to recruit experienced qualitative researchers who can organise and collect narrative stories of change from pre-defined respondents using an approach to impact assessment called the Qualitative Impact Protocol - QuIP. This document provides more information on the QuIP approach, details the skills and experience required for undertaking data collection, and the terms upon which individuals or institutions should apply.

The deadline for responding to this call is 5th December 2022.

Expressions of interest should be sent to fiona@bathcdr.org

Les candidatures en français sont également invitées! Appel disponible en français.

About the role

We are seeking to recruit a representative who can act as a lead in-country researcher, whether in an individual or institutional capacity. Successful applicants should demonstrate a clear understanding of the QuIP approach, senior experience in qualitative research techniques and an ability to manage a team of more junior field researchers to ensure that data is of the highest possible standard. For this study, if there is sufficient budget, we are also planning to conduct some more in-depth anthropological observation work as well as the QuIP interviews. It would therefore be preferable to have more than one social researcher, at least one of whom can embed themselves in communities for periods of time to observe behaviours and activities within the community.

A set of [QuIP Guidelines](#) can be downloaded on our website. This includes a description of the role of Lead Researcher and example interview questions which will give you a good idea of a standard schedule used in the field. **Please refer to this when making your application.**

If successful, the Lead Researcher will recruit a team with the specific skills (language and thematic if relevant) required for the initial project, and the team will be trained in person by a Bath SDR representative. Lead Researchers will be accredited to recruit and train teams for any future QuIP projects commissioned by Bath SDR. Accreditation is not necessarily limited to one individual or institution per country as there may be different requirements for future projects, but once accredited you or your organisation will be a first point of contact for any work in that country and you will be a member of a growing international network.

In a QuIP study the project lead will discuss with you and finalise the following prior to the start of fieldwork:

- Lists and locations of households from which to select respondents, along with instructions as to what quota of interviews to complete for identified categories of respondent, and instructions on how to handle replacement of selected respondents in the event of any non-response.
- Details of how you should be introduced to the community in the study area, as well as to selected households, in a way that makes clear to them your independent research role.
- The draft household interview and focus group schedules.
- Details of the format of expected research outputs and mechanisms for assessing their quality.

About this contract

The study for which we are recruiting will take place in Mauritania but we do not yet know the exact districts. The study relates to a national cash transfer intervention managed by the Mauritanian government and the World Bank – *Tekavoul*. In addition to this intervention, some communities will receive different packages of additional support with a focus on improving relationships within families and reducing intra-household violence; it is these interventions which are the subject of this evaluation. The qualitative research will run alongside a randomised control trial run by Trinity College Dublin and the World Bank.

Qualitative fieldwork will take place at various points in 2023, with the majority of the data collection expected to take place in the second half of the year - this is to be confirmed. The team should be fluent in French, Arabic and any other relevant languages for this study (we appreciate that the locations are tbc) and able to translate annotated transcripts into either French or English for analysis. The team will need to be made up of at least one male and one female field researcher. Please note that the Lead Researcher can take the role of data collection if they wish.

Analysis of transcripts will be undertaken by the Bath SDR team, but the researchers involved will be invited to be involved in the final reporting and in future publications and presentations. We are also seeking an academic expert on social issues in Mauritania who can act in advisory capacity, so you can also put yourself or others forward for this role if appropriate.

Your application should include:

- A brief paragraph summarising your initial response to the QuIP approach; how you believe it would work in the local context, any concerns you have
- A CV with relevant experience in qualitative field research and list of any published references; the same for any suggested team members at this stage
- Availability to be part of this project
- Daily fee expectations (in GBP£) for the Lead Researcher role and for other team researchers
- Approximate costs for travelling (per km), and per diems

Criteria for selection

1. Qualifications and experience (particularly with qualitative research methods) including that of named field workers; including knowledge of country context, relevant languages, evidence that you have carried out similar work to a high standard in the past.
2. An appropriate mix of gender and other attributes across the research team.
3. The quality of context specific proposals about how you will conduct the study, including: evidence of awareness of different forms of potential bias in data collection and overall feasibility of the ethnographic observation and of QuIP interviews in the local context.
4. Price.

Shortlisted candidates will be contacted to arrange a follow up online interview.

About Bath Social & Development Research

Bath SDR is a non-profit research organisation set up by a small team of researchers from the [Centre for Development Studies \(CDS\)](#) at the University Bath, with a broad remit to provide research, training, advisory and consultancy services contributing to policies and practices promoting sustainable local, national and global development, well-being and social justice.

To date Bath SDR has defined its remit as being to promote better standards of qualitative and mixed methods impact evaluation of public and private investments with explicit social and development goals. We are independent of the University of Bath but continue to work closely with CDS where QuIP was developed. Bath SDR continues to develop and disseminate the QuIP in a wide range of contexts and has now trained numerous data collection teams and analysts and conducted over 70 QuIP studies in more than 20 different countries. More information can be found on our [website](#), as well as links to some [example outputs](#).

We are constantly growing our network of trained researchers in countries across the world in order to meet demand. Some further information on the QuIP and the specific project follows, but please also see the [QuIP Briefing Paper](#) and more resources available online.

About the Qualitative Impact Protocol

Individuals and agencies who commit to actions with social and development goals need evidence about whether they are indeed achieving what they intended. This evidence should help them decide whether to carry on, to expand or change what they are doing. They also need to inform those with whom they work, including people intended to benefit from the actions and those helping to finance it. In diverse, complex and rapidly changing situations it is not obvious how best to obtain evidence about whether they are indeed achieving what they intended.

The Qualitative Impact Protocol, or QuIP, was designed to try to help meet this need. Its main purpose is to serve as a reality check on whether the social effects of a planned activity or set of activities on intended beneficiaries is as expected, or whether it is having unintended consequences. It may reveal harmful effects and throw light on other factors – some perhaps unexpected – that are affecting hoped-for changes. And it can also highlight variation in causes and effects across a group of intended beneficiaries. The approach is not so good at revealing the *magnitude* of changes, and for this reason some people refer to it as a way of assessing impact contribution rather than attribution. However, it can usefully assist in estimating the magnitude of possible impacts when used in combination with other methods.

In contrast to quantitative methods, the QuIP sets out to generate case-by-case evidence of impact based on narrative causal statements elicited directly from intended project beneficiaries without the need to interview a control group. Evidence of attribution is sought through respondents' own accounts of causal mechanisms linking 'project' activities to impact indicators, alongside hard-to-measure confounding factors. This contrasts with methods that rely on statistical inference based on variable exposure to 'project' activities, such as randomised controlled trials. The narrative data collected in a QuIP study can usefully complement quantitative evidence on changes obtained through routine tracking or monitoring of key project indicators.

There are strong ethical grounds for asking people directly about the effect of actions intended to benefit them. Doing so can also contribute practically to learning, innovation and wider accountability. But doing so entails finding credible ways to address potential response biases. The QuIP does this by arranging for qualitative data collection to take place with as little reference as possible to the specific activity being evaluated, and by giving equal weight to all possible drivers of change in possible domains of impact (such as increased food security or household income) of interest. This is achieved by working, where possible, with field researchers who are completely independent of the organisation responsible for the actions being evaluated. Indeed where possible field researchers are 'blindfolded' from knowing the identity of the organisation being evaluated, hence also details of what it is doing, and the theory of change behind its actions. Data collected from respondents in this way take the form of narrative statements about causal drivers of change in selected areas of their life. Another researcher (who is not blindfolded) then organises and analyses these using a standardised approach to coding – causal mapping. Where available, this analysis can then be compared to known interventions and outcomes from monitoring data, helping to build a more detailed picture of what has really changed and why.

Even if potential response bias is absent, another potential limitation of self-reported evidence of impact is that it is limited by what respondents actually know and regard as most important. Use of the QuIP does not depend on believing that respondents are all-knowing or best placed to judge how their lives are being changed. It can be used alongside other forms of data collection analysis to identify important cognitive gaps between different subjects. For example, if project staff and intended beneficiaries do have widely contrasting perceptions then it is likely to be useful to know this.

Please note that Bath SDR uses the QuIP methodology and name under licence from the [University of Bath](https://www.bath.ac.uk/) who hold the QuIP trademark.