

# Attributing development impact: lessons from road testing the QuIP

James Copestake. Mokoro Seminar, Oxford, 11 January 2019





# Two arguments

## Scope

1. to integrate quantitative and qualitative approaches to impact evaluation
2. to extend the role of impact evaluation as a deliberative response to complexity

# Background and method

Reflections on use of the Qualitative Impact Protocol (QuIP) under commercial conditions during 2016 and 2019.

See

Copestake, J., Morsink, M. & Remnant, F., editors (2019)  
***Attributing Development Impact: the QuIP case book.***

Practical Action

# Design and testing of the QuIP

## 2012-2015 Design and piloting

- Assessing Rural Transformations (ART Project) ESRC/DFID action research project to design and test a qualitative impact protocol (the QuIP).
- Collaboration between Farm Africa, Self Help Africa, Evidence for Development and Universities in Malawi, Ethiopia and UK.
- 8 pilot studies (2 countries x 2 projects x 2 years) in Ethiopia and Malawi

## 2016-2018 Commercial testing

- Set up BSDR Ltd as a social enterprise to deliver more QuIPs
- 25 commissioned QuIP evaluations in 14 countries so far

# BSDR QuIP studies 2016-18

## Activities

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

## Countries

Bolivia  
Burkina Faso  
Ethiopia  
Ghana  
Kenya  
India  
Malawi  
Mexico  
Nepal  
Sierra Leone  
Tanzania  
Uganda  
UK  
Zambia

## Commissioners

Acumen  
Aga Khan University  
Bristol City Council  
C&A Foundation  
Concern Worldwide  
Diageo  
Self Help Africa  
Habitat for Humanity  
Itad  
MannionDaniels  
Mastercard Foundation  
Oxfam  
Save the Children  
Seed Global Health

# QuIP – design and data collection

1. A **flexible standard** for qualitative social research into causal drivers of change, adapted to purpose through **design deliberation** with the commissioner.
2. Interviews and focus groups **drill back** from reported change in selected outcome domains to multiple drivers of change.
3. Reliance on **self-reported attribution** with latent and case-specific counterfactuals (mechanism mining).
4. Mostly **purposive case/sample selection** from operational data.
5. Data collected by independent, local and **blindfolded** field researchers to reduce confirmation bias.

# QuIP – analysis and use

6. Field notes written up as text in **bespoke spreadsheets** (backed up by digital recording).
7. Inductive **exploratory coding** of outcomes and drivers of change.
8. Deductive **confirmatory coding** of attribution claims as explicit, implicit or incidental.
9. Use of frequency counts, dashboards, tables and charts to inform **interactive thematic analysis** of causal claims embedded in text.
10. Flexible **integration** with wider processes of evaluation, sense-making and deliberation.

# 1. Scope for qual/quant integration: combining use of text and numbers using dashboards

**11. Causal chain visual**

Source (49)

Target (22)

Attribution Summary (8)

(All)

Interesting, no change (9)

Negative Explicit (2)

Negative Implicit (4)

Negative Other (6)

Positive Explicit (1)

Positive Implicit (3)

Positive Other (5)

Gender Code (2)

(All)

F

M

Location Code 1 (2)

(All)

E

H

Location Code 2 (3)

(All)

D

S

U

Wealth Rank (3)

(All)

C

G

P

## 11. Causal Chain Visualisation - Respondent Domain Count

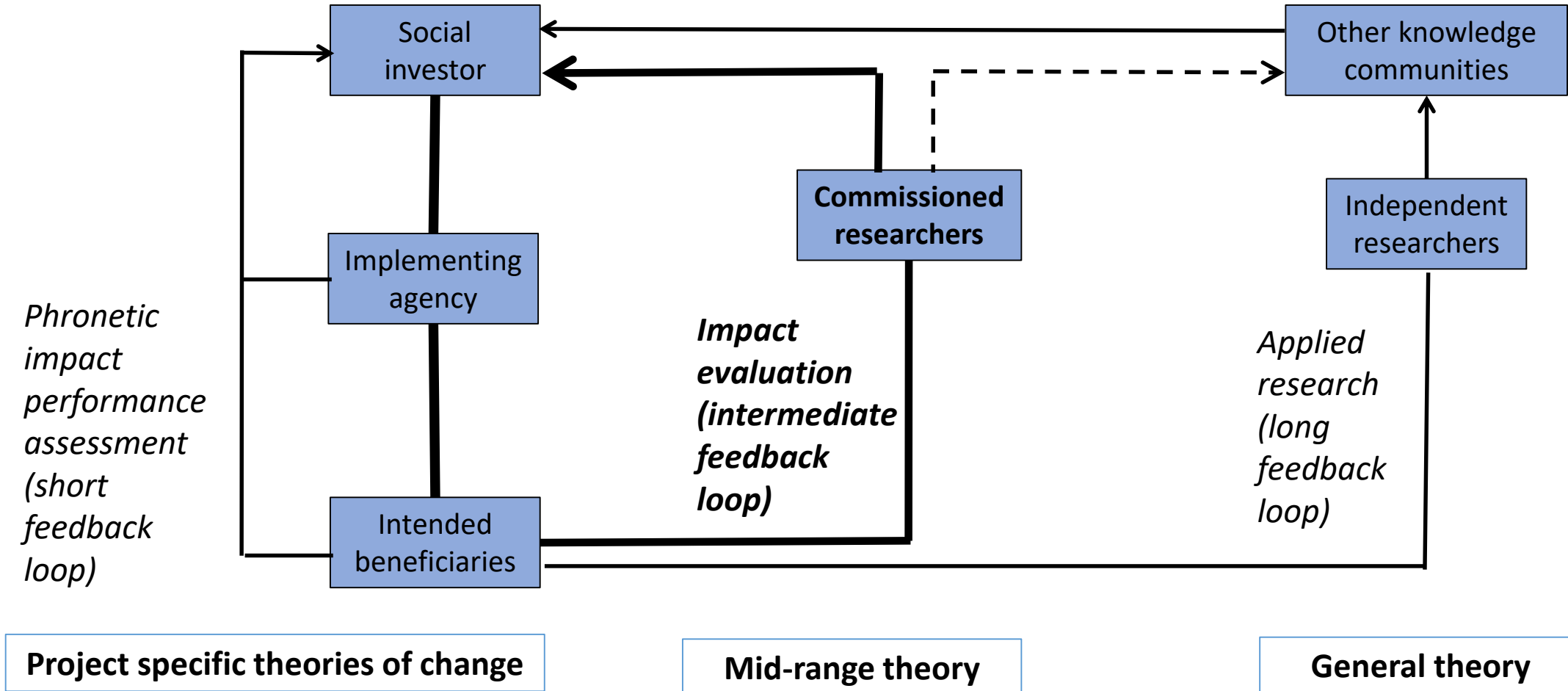
Driver of Change	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3
<input type="checkbox"/> (All)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (All)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (All)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (All)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON3	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON4	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON5	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON7	
<input type="checkbox"/> P1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON8	
<input type="checkbox"/> P10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON9	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> ...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Causal Chain Visualisation

Respondent ID	Question ID	Question Answer
DHFC-2	C1	My husband used to work as daily labor on watershed management to earn money. however, now that activity has ended and we could no more earn money from daily laboring which negatively affect my household income during six months. the livestock has decreased due to drought during the last six months which negatively affect the amount of food and income we make out of them.
	D1	There have been changes in the food items over the last six-months. This is related to both increase in cost of food items and loss of income sources. Purchasing food items are expensive and are very bad changes
		There have been changes in the food items over the last six-months. This is related to both increase in cost of food items and loss of income sources. Purchasing food items are expensive and are very bad changes
		As I have told you, last year drought was bad but different interventions from government organization and NGOs were supporting us. Now there are no more interventions while we are in a recovery period. In addition, I have no income source any more.
	E1	For the last six-months, I have been endeavoring to get food as I spend more money. And this is caused by the increase in price of food items and loss of income source. Happily, I do spend less on accessing clean water. Ultimately, spending more money on
DHFC-7	C1	Last time our income was better than this six months because last time we got different kind of help from different NGOs but now there is no help and we don't have any other income from other source except livestock.
	D1	Concerning the food, the variety of food that we had before is better than during the last six months because we were given different kind of food from different organization as there was drought but now there is no that much food that we get from support. The hard drought and we were given meat by NGOs. Every family was given a kilo of meat per a day but now there is no meat and we also do not consume different variety of food.
	E1	there is a change on what we spend money during the last six months. Now we spend more money for food than anything than before. It is because last year we got different kind of help including food from different NGOs but now we do not have that help. T
DHFG-2	C1	Previously, we got food support form NGOs and we didn't worry for food but in the last six months we don't get support of food.
	E1	Most of the time we spend more money on food during the last six months than ever before. It is because the price of food items is getting expensive while the value of our livestock has declined because of the drought. Mainly in the last two months we were
DHFP-10	D1	However, the amount food we consumed decreased last six months, because of the high price of the food stuffs. As a result, adults minimized their food intake and priority have been given for children.



## 2. The QuiP as a deliberative response to complexity

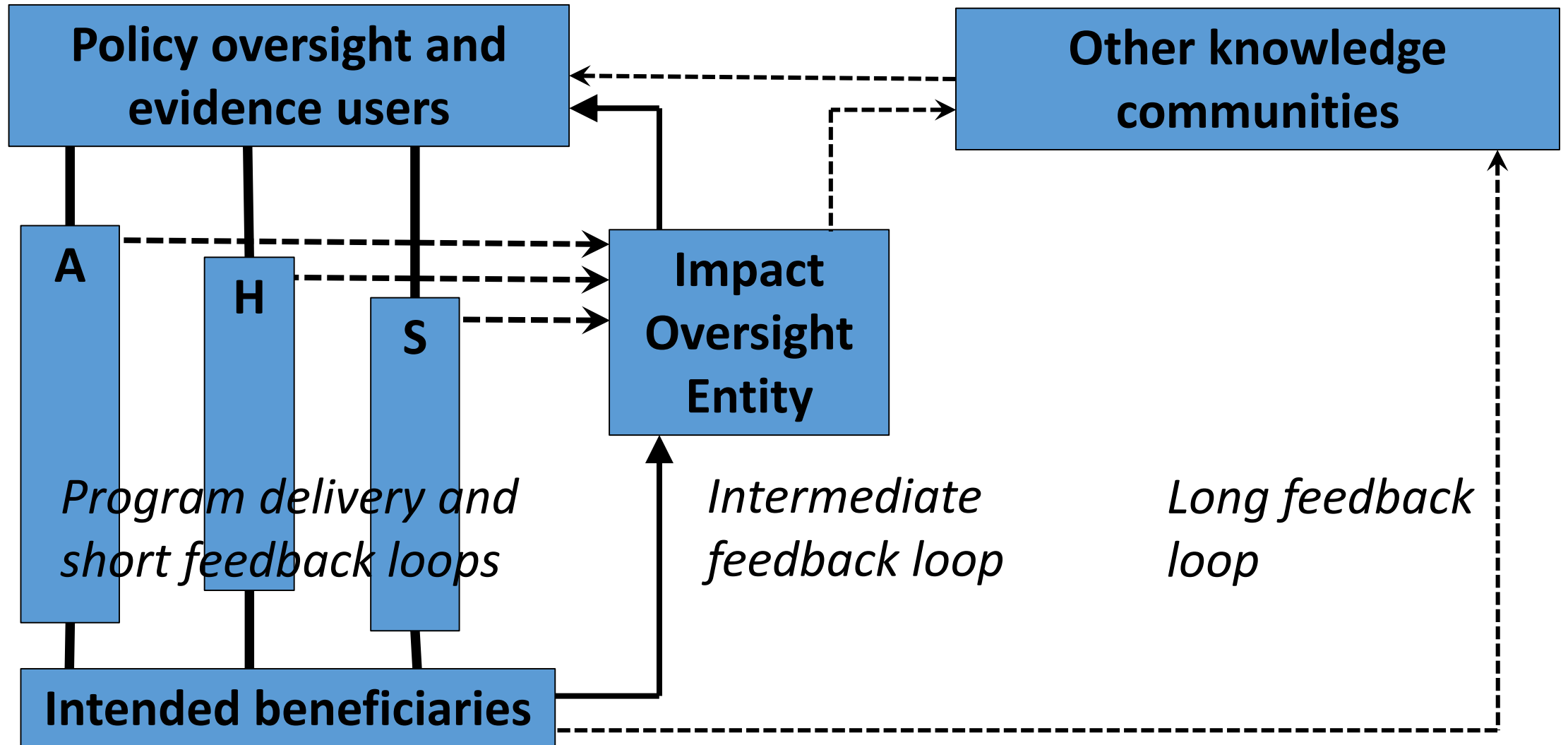


# Aspirations

Deepen the dialogue over qual/quant integration in impact evaluation and research.

Reframe impact evaluation as part of local/national civil society deliberation.

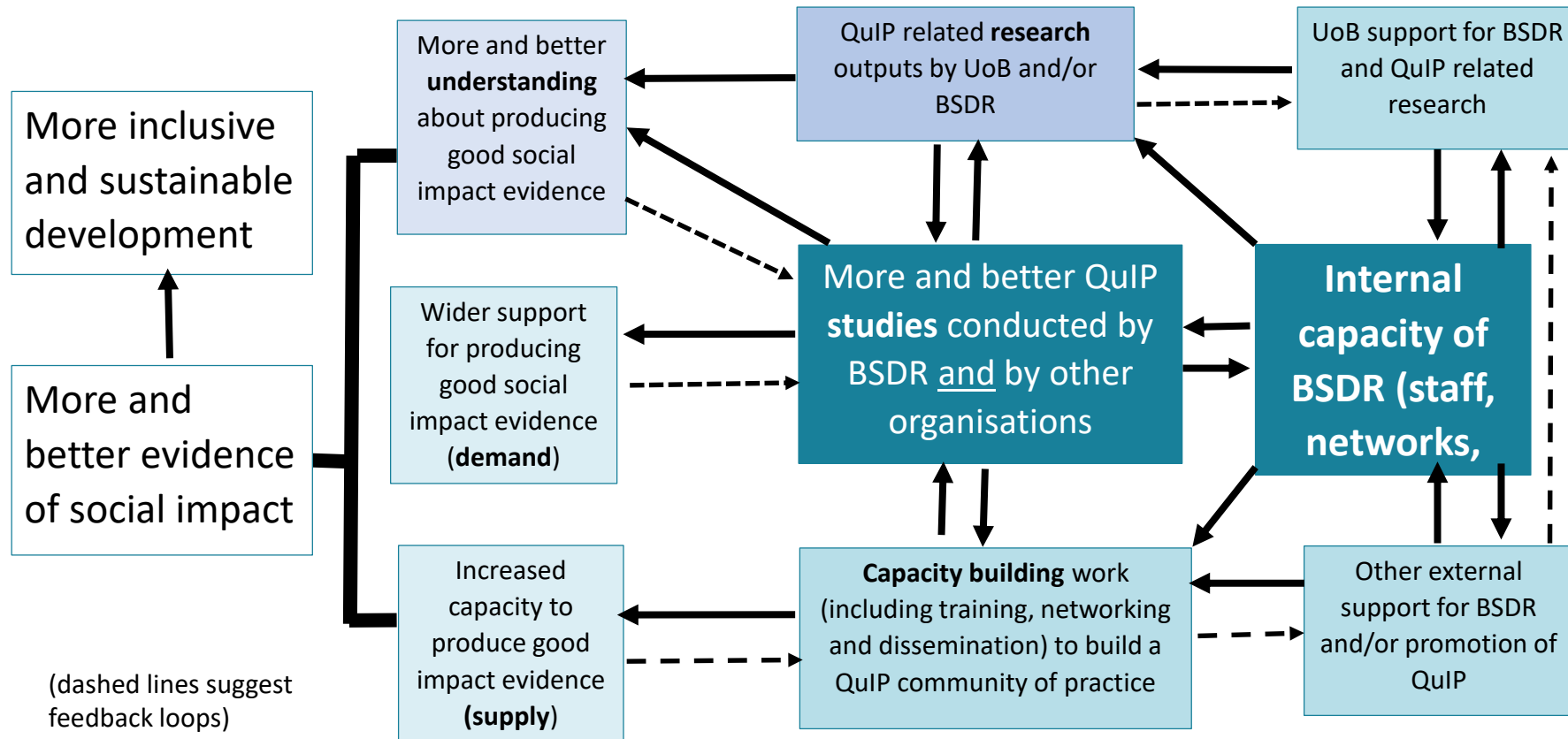
Explore integrated approaches to impact evaluation of multi-component interventions in complex contexts (see next slide)



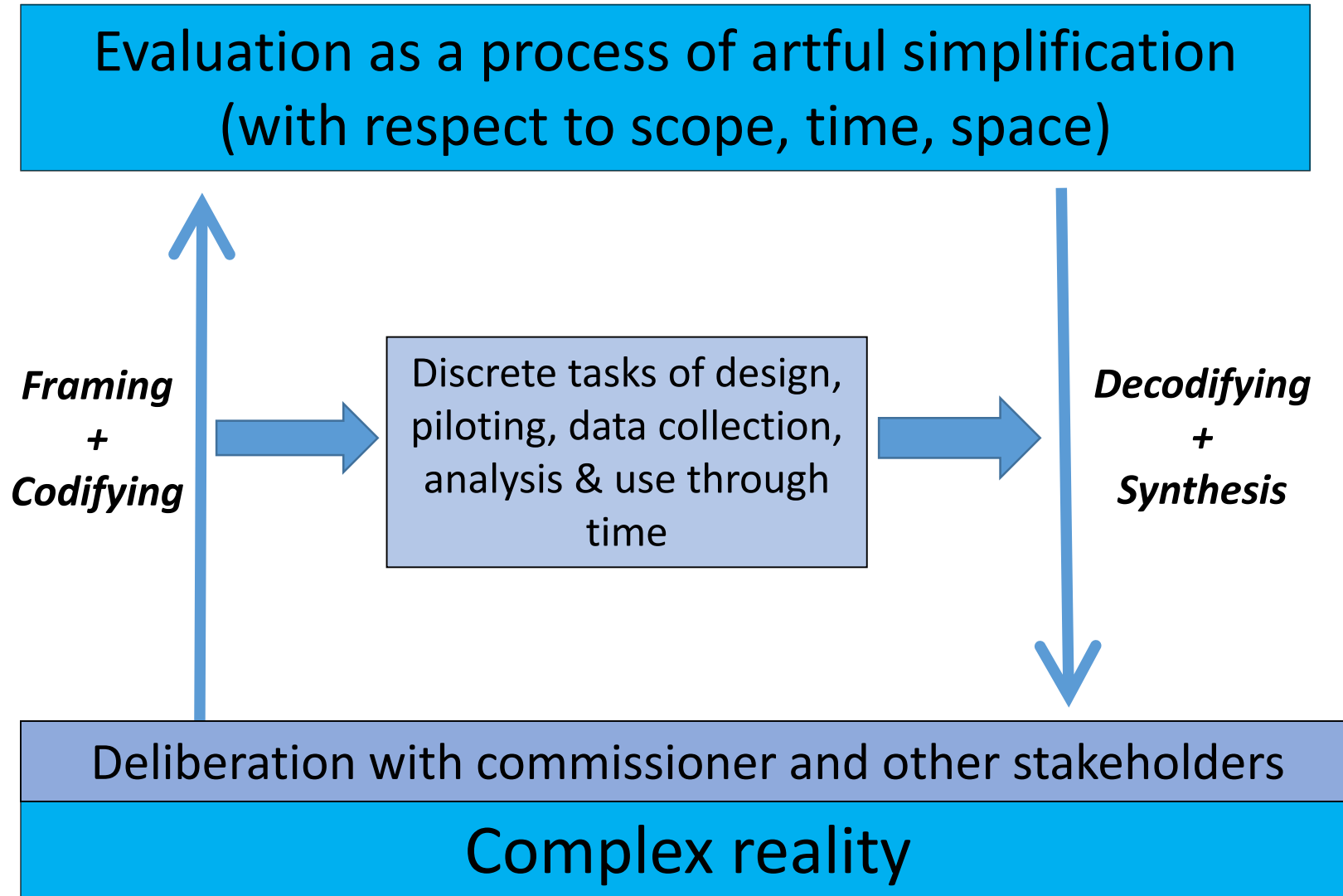
# Supplementary slides



# BSDR theory of change

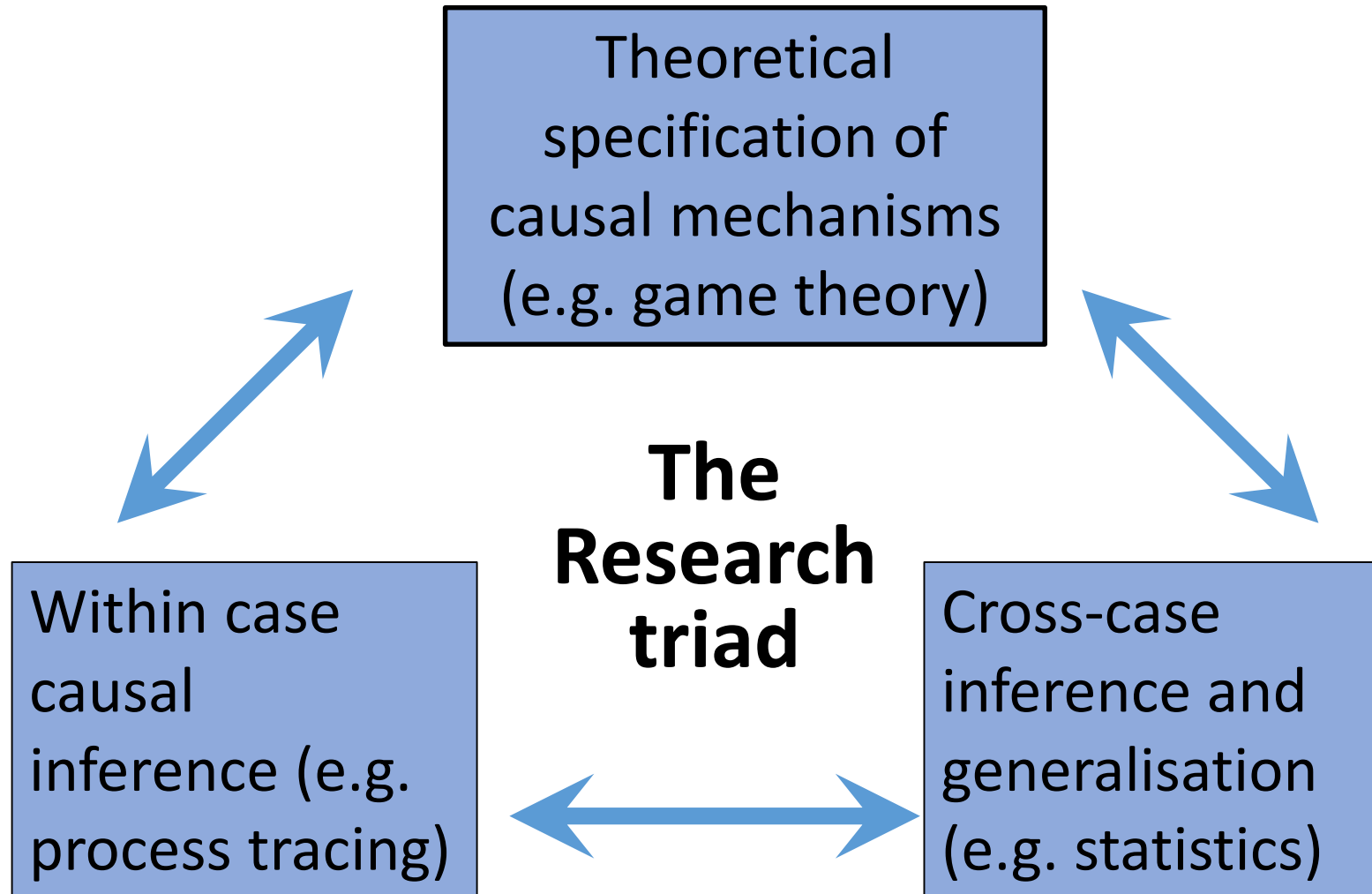


# Quantification as codification



*“... the distinction between quantitative and qualitative enquiry hinges... on the point at which information is codified, or otherwise simplified. Early codification permits rigorous statistical analysis, but also introduces restrictive assumptions which limit the range of possible findings”*

**Copestake & Moris (1993)**

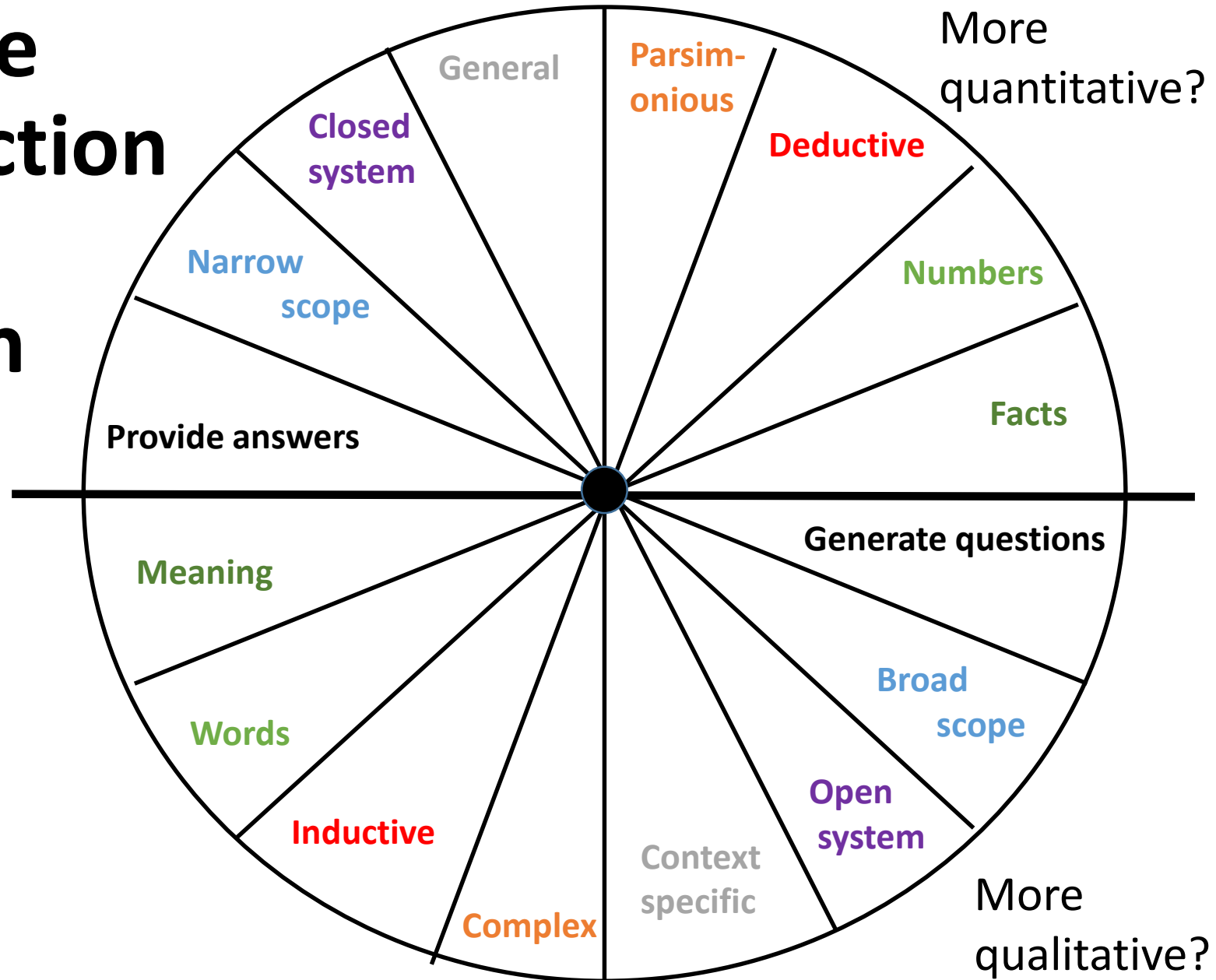


*“Good multimethod and causal mechanism research means a relative balance between the three corners of the research triad.”*  
(Goertz, 2017:3)

# Deconstructing the qual/quant distinction as a step towards deeper integration

Distinguishing between the different characteristics and attributes associated (or conflated) with each opens up possibilities for transcending the distinction in reviewing different tasks in the research process:

e.g. induction + deduction -> abduction





# QulP: quant integration

QulP is best used alongside quantitative monitoring of change in key performance indicators (including to inform case selection – see next slide).

It has attributes associated with quantitative approaches: e.g. use of frequency counts to produce summary tables and charts.

It can be a more flexible and cost-effective alternative way of challenging prior views: one that can also reveal more about case-specific variation in impact (if less about its typical magnitude).

It can also complement quantitative studies (see box)

## Complementary use

1. Exploratory analysis, scoping and identifying variables
2. To confirm or challenge impact claims based on quantitative impact assessment and/or theory.
3. To identify mechanisms to explain correlations, instead of relying on theory or speculation.
4. To drill down into specific issues or address gaps.
5. As a potential input into quantitative analysis (e.g. for Bayesian updating; micro-simulation).

# Qual-quant interactions in case/sample selection

## Step 1

Define population frame of intended beneficiaries to be studied over time and space.

## Step 2

Use internal monitoring data to analyse correlates across the population (socio-economic characteristics, exposure to the intervention, context and outcomes)

## Step 3

Stratify the population drawing on this analysis and relevant theory.

## Step 4

Select cases taking into account exploratory and confirmatory goals (see box) and judgements about likely marginal costs and benefits to increasing the sample size and changing its composition.

### Selection criteria

To serve exploratory goals: aspire to 'saturation' by maximising variation in SEC and context of cases.

To serve confirmatory goals: Aspire to maximise Bayesian updating by testing theory across contrasting cases (e.g. negative and positive deviants).

### Obstacles

- Weak or missing monitoring data
- Lack of clarity about relevant theory
- Geographical dispersion of population
- Arbitrary budget constraints

**A typical solution:** two stage sample of 24, from two purposively selected clusters with stratified random selection within each.

# Examples of QuIP studies (from the book)

Study	Rationale for selecting QuIP	Use of quantitative data
<b>Diageo</b> ; malt barley procurement; Ethiopia.	Exploratory deep dive focused on potential negative unintended consequences. Internal and external audiences.	<u>Sampling</u> informed by statistical analysis of commercial procurement data.
<b>C&amp;A Foundation</b> ; garment worker training; Mexico.	Good fit with the goal to empower workers. Test of mid range theory. Internal and external audiences.	<u>Parallel confirmation</u> of a difference-in-difference study of workers' capabilities. Integration of conclusions.
<b>Habitat for Humanity International</b> ; housing microfinance; India.	Exploratory study and to test mid range theory. Internal and external audiences.	<u>Sampling</u> from loan portfolio data. <u>Complementary</u> to financial performance and portfolio quality assessment. Integration of conclusions.
<b>Tearfund</b> ; church and community mobilisation; Uganda.	Good fit with empowerment goals. Exploratory (develop ToC), mostly for an internal audience. Seeking alternatives to a more quantitative approach.	<u>Follow-up confirmation</u> of internal assessments and other studies, including a difference-in-difference impact evaluation.
<b>Save the Children</b> : agriculture & nutrition project Tanzania.	Need to report to donor. Substitute for an abandoned RCT. A test of mid-range theory (efficacy of intervention bundling)	<u>Sampling</u> drew on baseline and operational data.

# More examples

Study	Rationale for selecting QuIP	Use of quantitative data
<b>Frome Town Council</b> ; promoting use of green spaces; England.	Seeking inexpensive ways to check on whether and how the council was making a difference. Internal audience.	None!
<b>Oxfam</b> ; producing fairtrade coffee; Ethiopia.	Qualitative follow-up to a difference-in-difference impact study, focusing on impact on time use and gender relations. Testing ToC	In depth follow-up to a difference-in-difference impact analysis, from which sample was drawn.
<b>Peace Corps</b> : (Global Seed Health Partnership); Tanzania, Malawi, Uganda	To stimulate internal reflection on how best to place volunteer educators in Africa	Basic information about number of volunteers to inform sample selection.
<b>Acumen</b> ; impact investment; India.	Seeking a low cost approach to assessing social impact of investments alongside financial performance assessment.	Lean QuIP data used for statistical analysis.
<b>Self Help Africa</b> ; integrated area development; Zambia.	Seeking alternatives to experimental impact evaluation approaches for assessing contribution.	Complementary to nutrition surveys and income assessments using IHM.



# References

Copestake, J., Morsink, M. & Remnant, F., editors (2019) *Attributing Development Impact: the QULP case book*. Practical Action.

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