Attributing development impact: lessons from road testing the QuIP
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
Reflections on use of the Qualitative Impact Protocol (QuIP) under commercial conditions during 2016 and 2019.

See

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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

www.bathsdr.org
## BSDR QuIP studies 2016-18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Commissioners</th>
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<td>Child nutrition</td>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>Acumen</td>
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<td>Climate change adaptation</td>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>Aga Khan University</td>
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<td>Community mobilisation</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Bristol City Council</td>
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<td>Early famine response</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>C&amp;A Foundation</td>
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<td>Factory working conditions</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
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<td>Housing improvement</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Diageo</td>
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<td>Medical &amp; midwife training</td>
<td>Malawi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Microfinance</td>
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<td>Rural livelihoods</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
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<td>Value chain improvement</td>
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<td>Sexual &amp; reproductive health rights</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Mastercard Foundation</td>
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<td>Organisational development</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
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<td></td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Save the Children</td>
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<td>Zambia</td>
<td>Seed Global Health</td>
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**Organisational development**

Bath Social & Development Research Ltd

QuIP
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
2. The QuiP as a deliberative response to complexity

Phronetic impact performance assessment (short feedback loop)

- Social investor
- Implementing agency
- Intended beneficiaries
- Commissioned researchers
- Other knowledge communities
- Independent researchers

Impact evaluation (intermediate feedback loop)

Project specific theories of change

Mid-range theory

General theory

Applied research (long feedback loop)
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)
Policy oversight and evidence users

Other knowledge communities

Intended beneficiaries

Impact Oversight Entity

Program delivery and short feedback loops

Intermediate feedback loop

Long feedback loop
Supplementary slides
More inclusive and sustainable development

More and better evidence of social impact

More and better understanding about producing good social impact evidence

Wider support for producing good social impact evidence (demand)

Increased capacity to produce good impact evidence (supply)

BSDR theory of change

QuIP related research outputs by UoB and/or BSDR

QuIP studies conducted by BSDR and by other organisations

Capacity building work (including training, networking and dissemination) to build a QuIP community of practice

Internal capacity of BSDR (staff, networks,)

UoB support for BSDR and QuIP related research

Other external support for BSDR and/or promotion of QuIP

(dashed lines suggest feedback loops)
“... 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)
Theoretical specification of causal mechanisms (e.g. game theory)

Within case causal inference (e.g. process tracing)

Cross-case inference and generalisation (e.g. statistics)

The Research triad

“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
QuIP: quant integration

QuIP 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.

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**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).

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**Obstacles**

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

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*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)

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

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


