



Standing  
Panel on  
Impact  
Assessment

# **Our Experience**

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## What works?

- Qual approaches for diagnosis and design. This includes:
  - Design of intervention
  - Design of Impact Assessments
- Qual approaches at the intermediate stage. The data collected can be used for:
  - Feedback to the intervention
  - Understanding mechanisms as they happen
  - Data collected at this stage can be used in the Impact Assessment
- Qual approaches for impact assessments

## What works?

- [Contd]Qual approaches for impact assessments
  - Example 1: RCT with qual
    - Qual integrated with quant from the very beginning
    - Qual “units” can be a sub-sample of quantitative sample, both treatment and control
    - Followed at much higher frequency than quant sample
    - Attribution from the quantitative design, mechanisms (the “how”, “the why”) from the qual
  - Example 2: Process tracing (can be used for assessment of policy influence)
    - Generate competing hypothetical causal mechanisms
    - Use all available evidence, both quant and qual, to link intervention to outcome
    - Qual data can include documents (policies, reports, working papers, proposals etc.), interview/focus group data, notes made during workshops, minutes of meetings etc.

## What does not work?

- *"We don't have enough budget for an RCT, let's use qualitative methods."*
  - True, qual doesn't cost as much as an RCT, but ToC and associated research questions must determine methods
- *"Let's use survey enumerators to conduct interviews."*
  - Good qualitative data is only as good as the skills of the interviewer or moderator. Requires a skilled team. Invest time and resources in hiring and training.
- *"Problem with qual is that it lacks rigor."*
  - Be transparent about methods - sampling strategy, selection criteria, design of tools, piloting, data management, ethics
  - Document systematically, start early
  - Analyze data with rigor
- *"Can we add some qual quotes to the report?"*

- Qualitative approaches are important in the methodological toolkit
- Mixing methods is a win-win
- Qualitative data can get bloated and become messy, but that only means it is capturing the real world!
- There is a need to bring more rigor to qualitative data collection
- There is a need to improve “qualitative literacy” and use of “qualitative logic”

# Thank You

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