For consultants

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For consultants

This chapter explains how individual consultants and agencies can include Causal Map and/or Qualia in their next bid.

Causal Mapping – the evaluation evidence broker

Marshalling causal evidence at scale for Contribution Analysis and beyond.

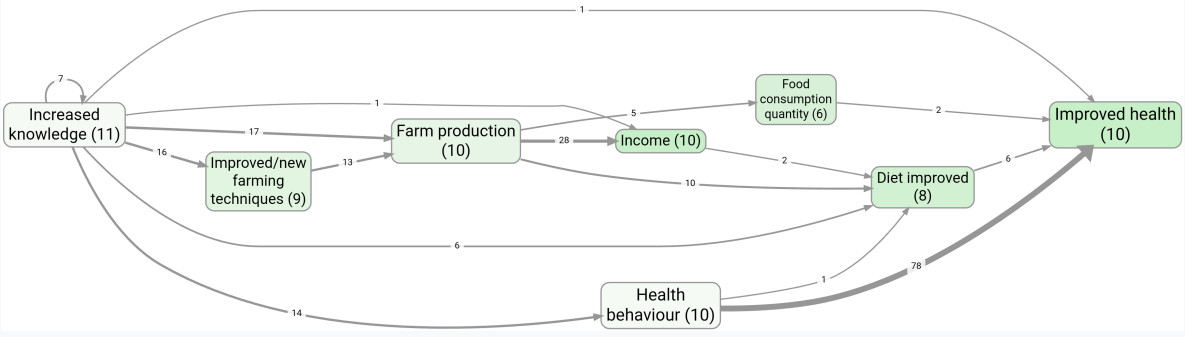
Causal Mapping is not primarily an evaluation method; it is a way of identifying and organising causal claims in support of evaluative judgement.

- It fits naturally with **Contribution Analysis (CA)**, while still adding value to other evidence-based frameworks...
- **Outcome Harvesting:** strengthen contribution claims by identifying the precise causal chain from outcome back to intervention.
- **Realist Evaluation:** identify Context-Mechanism-Outcome (CMO) linkages mentioned by sources.
- **QuIP:** strengthen causal contribution claims through explicit, source-grounded chains.

1 Link = 100 Claims

An arrow in a map can look simple (for example, *Training -> Knowledge*), but that single link can represent dozens or hundreds of auditable claims from different sources.

- It lets evaluators “double-click” into and examine the different sources for each link.
- Every claim has verbatim text attached to it.



Scaling analysis with AI

When you move from 10 interviews to 200, manual coding alone is too hard. "Asking ChatGPT" surrenders human judgement to a black box.

Causal Mapping uses AI as a low-level assistant to automate the extraction of traceable evidence nuggets, leaving evaluative judgements to the evaluator.

How causal mapping can help with Contribution Analysis

John Mayne's six Steps, plus one

1 Set out the Attribution Problem

Define the evaluation questions and the level of evidence required.

2 Develop the Theory of Change

Establish the logic of how the intervention is expected to lead to results.

Often there are multiple versions of the "official" theory, or none at all.

Causal mapping helps: Assemble theories of change from official documents.

3 Gather Evidence on the ToC

Collect existing and new evidence to populate the causal links.

Causal mapping helps: Assemble "empirical theories of change" from stakeholder evidence and test if the official theory matches up. There is even a *metric* for that.

4 Assemble the Performance Story

Build the contribution narrative based on synthesised evidence.

Causal mapping helps: Synthesises individual claims into verifiable chains with *path tracing* and *source tracing*.

5 Assess Alternative Explanations

Account for external influences and other drivers of observed change.

Causal mapping helps: Explicitly maps non-project influences mentioned by sources.

6 Revise and Strengthen

Refine the story based on gaps identified in the evidence base.

Causal mapping helps: Highlights weak links where evidence count is low.

7 Extend

Causal mapping helps: A single causal coding of all documents creates a causal database which can provide inputs to all the above steps, and a lot more too.

See how different stakeholder groups view the the project differently.

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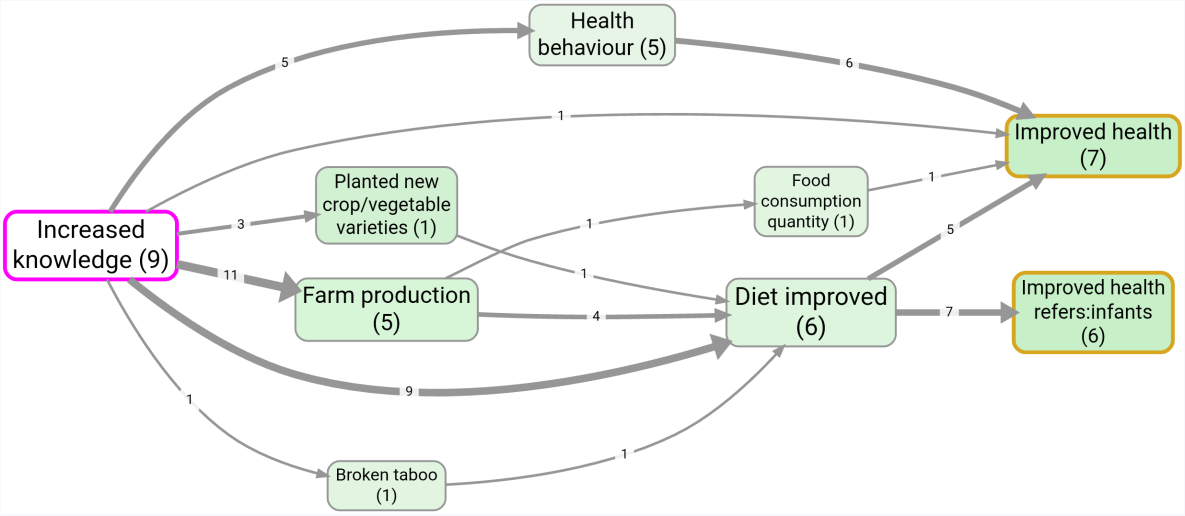
Factor	Significant	custom_# Age of the main respondent - 20-45	custom_# Age of the main respondent - 46+	# Citations	# Sources	In-Degree	Out-Degree	Outcomeness	Avg Incoming Sentiment
Increased knowledge	No	158	72	230	18	22	208	0.096	0.000
Farm production	Yes	89	68	157	16	76	81	0.484	0.000
Health behaviour	No	93	58	151	17	26	125	0.172	0.000
Improved health	No	89	54	143	17	136	7	0.951	0.000
Diet improved	Yes	78	23	101	18	81	20	0.802	0.000
Income	Yes	44	44	88	15	47	41	0.534	0.000
Planted new crop/vegetabl	No	42	20	62	13	28	34	0.452	0.000
Improved/new farming tec	Yes	20	24	44	14	21	23	0.477	0.000
Ability to buy food	Yes	14	23	37	12	17	20	0.459	0.000
Food consumption quantit	No	22	15	37	17	31	6	0.838	0.000

Visualise pathways.



Provide evidence for individual narratives.

Bundle: Diet improved; Diversified >> Improved health

Source: MNY-5

The meals I buy in the market have changed because I have the option to buy various goods. The spare food type has change as I now have access to better seeds for my farm and some material.

Increased

The motive for this change is in the varieties of foods cultivated in my farm, in my livestock creation and also in the food varieties from the market.

More variety

The reason is as a result of the varieties and the different foods. We have a variety of good in the market. Some from my garden and it is the reason I am healthy.

Source: MSX-1

Increased

MORE FOOD VARIETIES THAT GENERATED A GOOD NUTRITION IN THE FAMILY overall AND WE ALSO CONSERVE MORE FOOD. Increased from the introduction production of horticulture such as tomatoes, onions these enabled more food. With tomatoes and onions we could now do stew to avoid only eating green vegetables.

More variety

AFTER, THE GOOD WAYS OF CONSERVATION OF FOOD AND VARIETIES IN FOODS HELPED A GOOD RESULT IN THE HEALTH OF THE FAMILY.

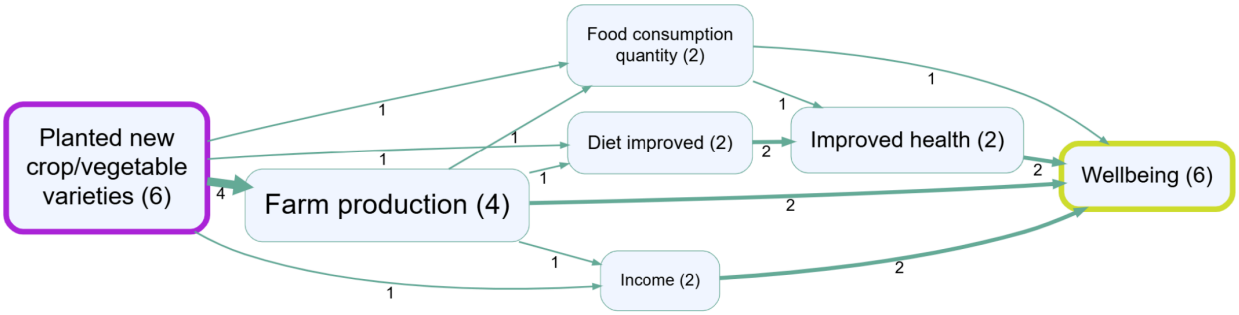
[Why causal mapping ?]

Include Causal Map and QualiaInterviews in your next bid

Preparing a bid? Need to apply a "causal lens"?

Research and evaluation consultancies are increasingly getting asked to "apply a causal lens". Sometimes that's possible with quantitative data. But how to rigorously identify, synthesise and visualise causal narratives within qualitative data like interviews and reports?

That is what causal mapping is for. At Causal Map Ltd., we can provide that expertise.



Two ways to use causal mapping:

- As a light overarching framework for your entire project. Assemble a database of causal evidence from different kinds of sources like interviews and reports. Make sense of it at scale (we can use AI for this, but in a structured and robust and checkable way).
- Just as one part of your project, to answer specific questions...

Questions you can answer

- **How does the whole system work**, according to your sources? How is it **changing**? Where are the leverage points?
- What's the evidence that our intervention led to **expected outcomes**, and how?
- What **unexpected outcomes** were there?
- Does the **reality** match the plan?
- Do the young people see this **differently**?

💡 Tip: add **conversational AI-led interviews** to your bid: see the next page.

Add Qualia to your next bid

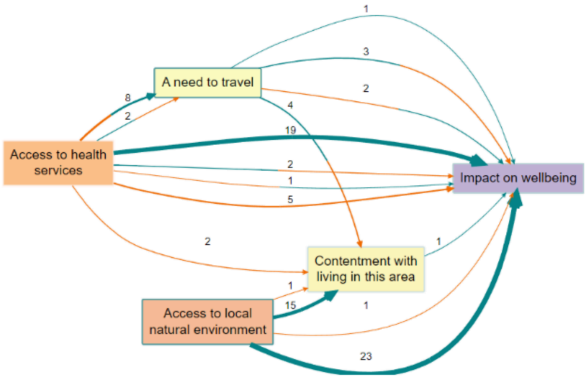
Interviews are deep but expensive. **Questionnaires** are cheap but shallow.

Qualia is our AI interviewer. Qualia can conduct conversational interviews with any number of respondents, in almost any language.

We find that respondents are on average more candid with Qualia than with a human interviewer. As with any data collection, some respondents drop off right at the start. But we find that once they start talking, they mostly can't stop (!), producing transcripts of multiple pages.

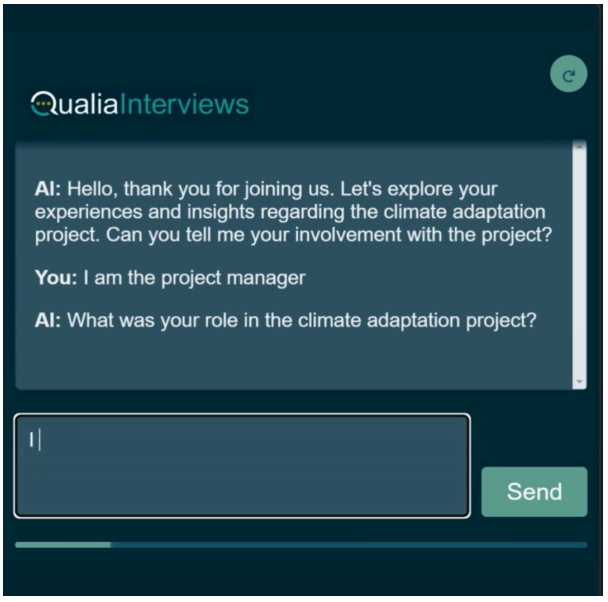
Put Qualia in your next bid:

- Conduct some KIs face-to-face and then get Qualia to follow the same interview guideline but extending your reach to dozens or hundreds of stakeholders.
- Why bother with a traditional questionnaire when you can use Qualia to find out what people are **really** thinking, but at the same scale?



Qualia interviews are very cost-effective. Often, clients engage us for a day or two to help with setting up and monitoring the interview.

You get an automated report. Or download the transcripts for further analysis. Or we can use Causal Map to make sense of the stories at scale.



You can set your Qualia interviews to be fully GDPR-compliant: no data leaves the EU, not even for AI processing; no data is stored outside our own EU servers and no data is used to train models.

