

Introduction to Methods & Field Experiments Training

**October 6th – 10th, 2013
Abu Dhabi**

DAY ONE

Introduction to Impact Evaluation

Why are we here?

- I. Background**
- II. Understand the importance of this research project**
- III. Develop your capacity to “commission” and “consume” impact evaluations**

Why evaluate?

- Learn lessons to implement more effective programs that have societal **impacts**

Impact Evaluation Examples

Government led →



Progresa

← Led by donor/NGO



IRC Tuungane

World Bank/Gov't led →



National Solidarity Program

Session I (a)

EVALUATION IN THE M&E CONTEXT

What is Impact Evaluation?

**“Impact evaluation is not M&E,
it is R&D (Research and
Development).”**

Christopher Blattman, “Impact Evaluation 2.0.”

Overview

- Impact evaluation is still “exotic” to many NGOs & Government agencies
- Let’s review:
 - Why impact evaluation?
 - Recent NGO & Government experience
 - Why is evaluation lagging?
 - Recommendations

Why impact evaluation?

- Effective governance = good policies and programs + good implementation of policies and programs (Do the right thing and do it well.)
- Impact evaluation tells us whether we have good policies and programs.
- Put differently, impact evaluation informs policy making. (“M&E” informs program management.)

Evaluation is lagging

“...But for the most part, these evaluations have been *sporadic, inconsistently applied, and inadequately supported*. The units formed to conduct evaluations too often are short lived and under resourced. Training and capacity building for evaluation have been inconsistent across agencies and, in many cases, insufficient to achieve the needed evaluation capacity and sustain it over time.” AEA 2010

NGO & Government experience

- NGO and government experience:
 - US government:
 - Performance and Results Act (1993) followed by GPRAMA (2010) and even more recent calls by GAO and even USAID
 - Still not much impact evaluation.
 - OECD & international donors
 - 1995 Paris Declaration “managing for results”
 - Uneven progress

Why is evaluation lagging?

Why is evaluation lagging?

- M&E problem: Confusion about how impact evaluation relates to M&E. M&E is often just M.
- The accountability problem: accountability and learning produce conflicting incentives
- The ex-post problem: evaluation is seen to begin when the program ends
- The capacity building problem: capacity building for monitoring is different than for evaluation
- The methodology problem: recent debates on methodologies may scare program managers off
- The financing problem.

Recommendations

- The separation of monitoring and evaluation is crucial to institutionalizing evaluation. An evaluation policy is often key.
- Policy makers and program managers need **capacity building** in “commissioning” and “consuming” evaluations.
- Program managers need to be held accountable for (and rewarded for) learning, and not just implementation performance.

Session I (b)

WHY IMPACT EVALUATION?

What is impact?

Quick exercise

Write down a definition of
“project impact”.

Project impact

“The measured outcome with the project compared to the measured outcome without, or in the absence of, the project.”

“The extent to which the project altered the state of the world.”

Case study

“Subsidizing Vocational Training for Disadvantaged Youth in Colombia: Evidence from a Randomized Trial,” Orazio Attanasio, Adriana Kugler, and Costas Meghir. *AEJ: AE*, July 2011.

Case study

Jóvenes en Acción

- Subsidized employment skills training to poor young people living in urban areas
- Last cohort, 2005, was randomly assigned to training after selection, making use of oversubscription



Program design

- 3 months classroom training
 - Variety of for-project and nonprofit training institutions, 70 categories of courses
- 3 months on the job training
 - Legally registered companies, unpaid internships
- Daily cash transfer for expenses

What was the impact?

Paid employment for women

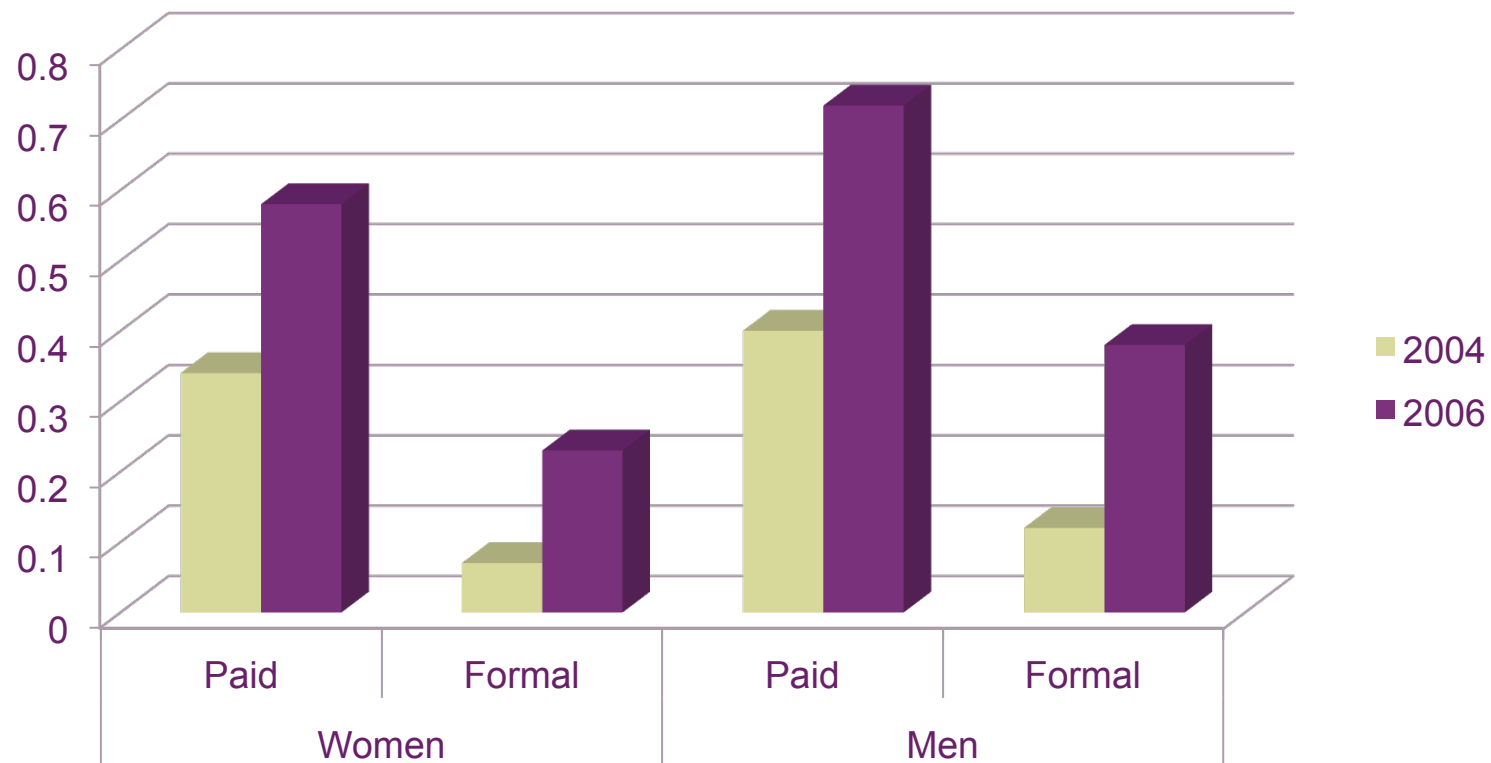
We do not know whether there were other changes in the labor market between 2004 and 2006

	Before	After
Project	0.346	0.618
Comparison		

This analysis is outcome monitoring.

What else was going on?

Descriptive statistics for paid and formal employment before and after the project for the full sample



So, based on outcome
monitoring, is there
project impact?

What was the impact?

Paid employment for women

	Before	After
Project		0.618
Comparison		0.550

This analysis could be considered basic program evaluation.

What was the impact?

Paid employment for women

	Before	After
Project		0.618
Comparison		0.550

But we do not know whether the project participants are the same kind of folks as the non-participants.

This measurement could be considered program evaluation.

So, based on basic
program evaluation, is
there project impact?

How can we measure project impact?

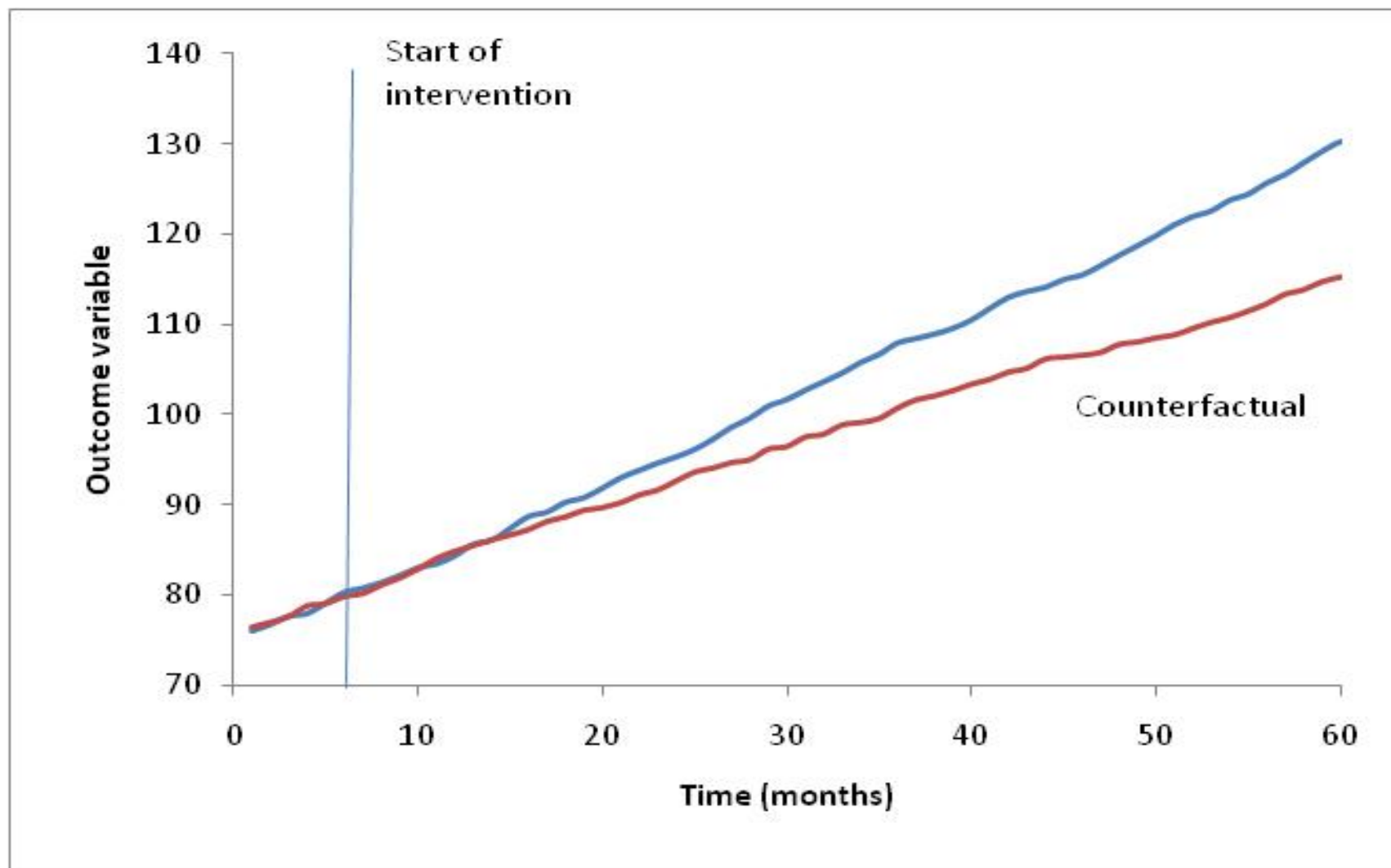
What was the impact?

Paid employment for women

	Before	After
Project	0.346	0.618
Comparison	0.328	0.550

$$(0.618 - 0.346) - (0.550 - 0.328) = 0.150$$

The attribution problem



Counterfactual

- The *counterfactual* outcome is how program participants would have performed in the absence of the program.

What was the impact for men?

Paid employment for men

	Before	After
Project	0.427	0.702
Comparison		

Outcome monitoring suggests positive.

What was the impact for men?

Paid employment for men

	Before	After
Project		0.702
Comparison		0.689

Basic program evaluation suggests positive, but very little.

What was the impact for men?

Paid employment for men

	Before	After
Project	0.427	0.702
Comparison	0.358	0.689

$$(0.702 - 0.427) - (0.689 - 0.358) = -0.056$$

Impact evaluation reveals none to negative impact.

Counterfactual vs. comparison

- Not all comparisons are counterfactuals.
- Difference in difference is the easiest (but often imprecise) way of moving to a counterfactual from a comparison.
- There are many better ways.
- Not all counterfactuals, however, are “controlled.”

MINI INTERLUDE

When is an IE appropriate?

- Any time you really want to know project impact.
- When there is no proof of concept for widely implemented (or very costly) interventions.
- To test pilot interventions or designs for possible scale up.
- IE can answer much more than impact depending on the evaluation design

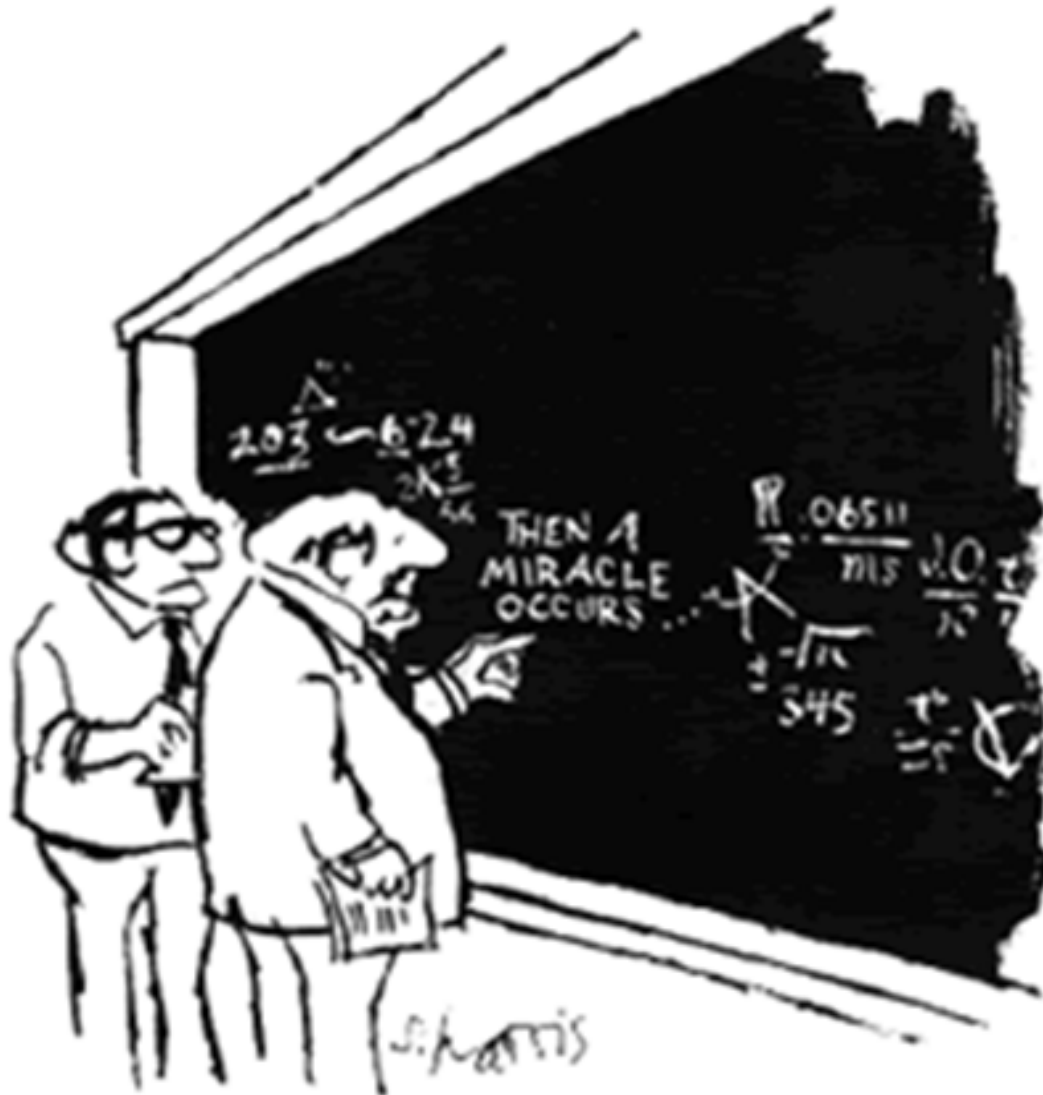
Where do I begin?

- Identify the intervention of interest and obtain detailed project information.
- Based on the learning objectives, determine whether an IE is appropriate.
- **Map out the theory of change.**

Session I (c)

THEORY OF CHANGE

Theory of change

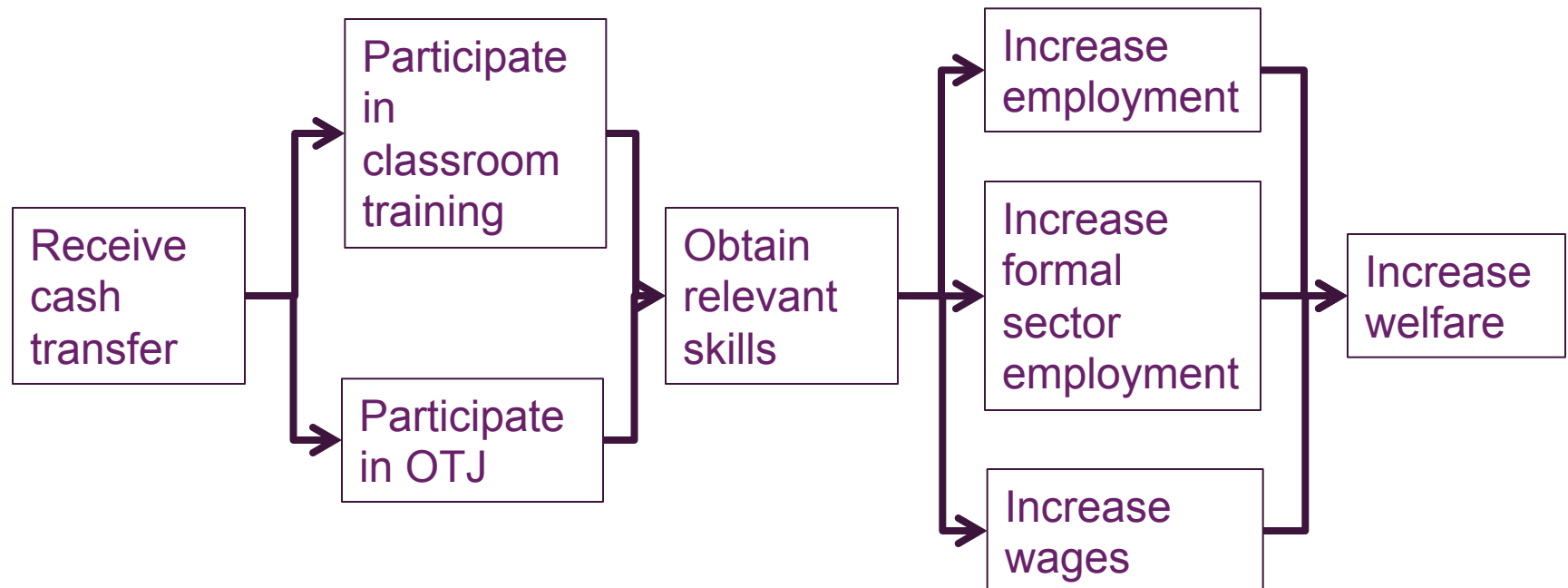


“I think you should be more explicit here in Stage 2...”

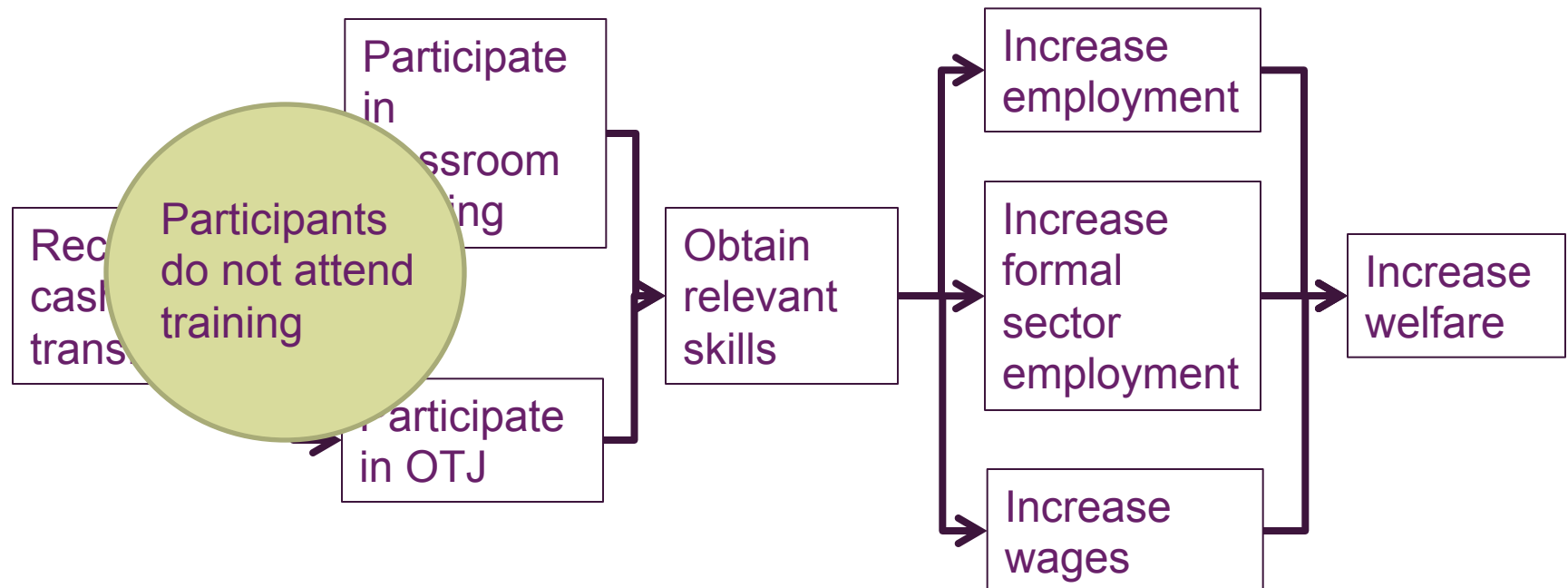
Vocational training theory of change



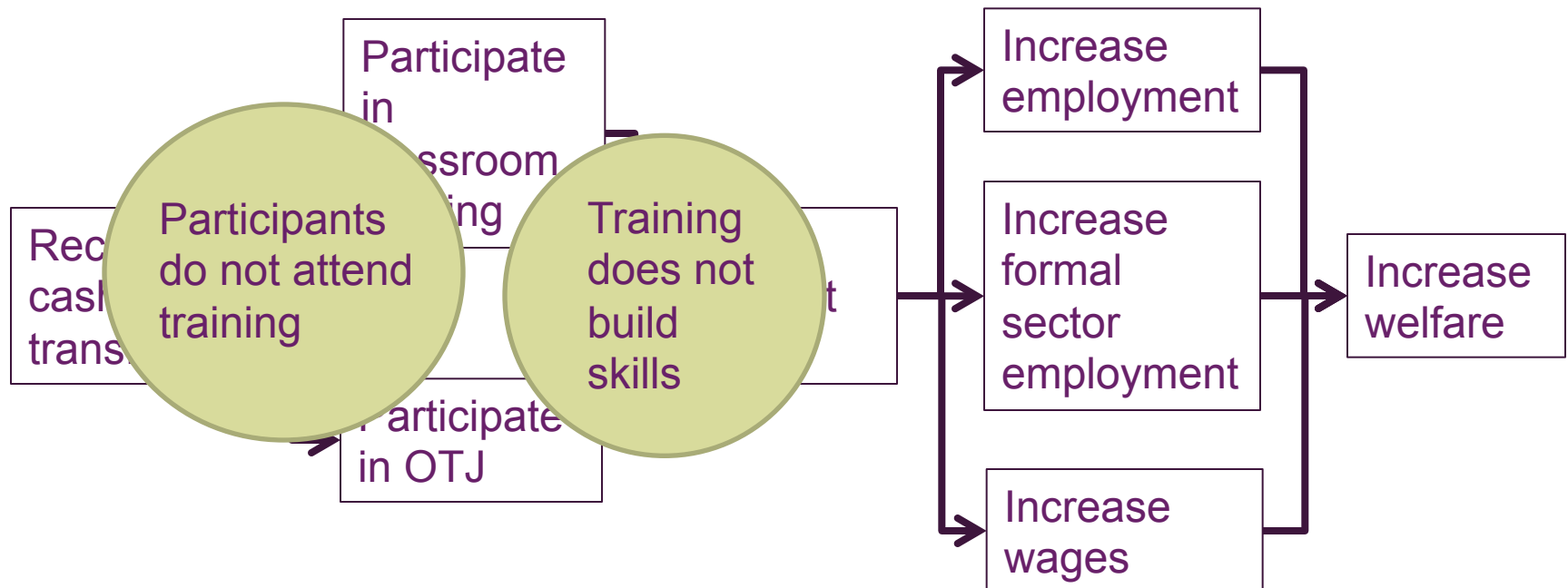
Vocational training theory of change



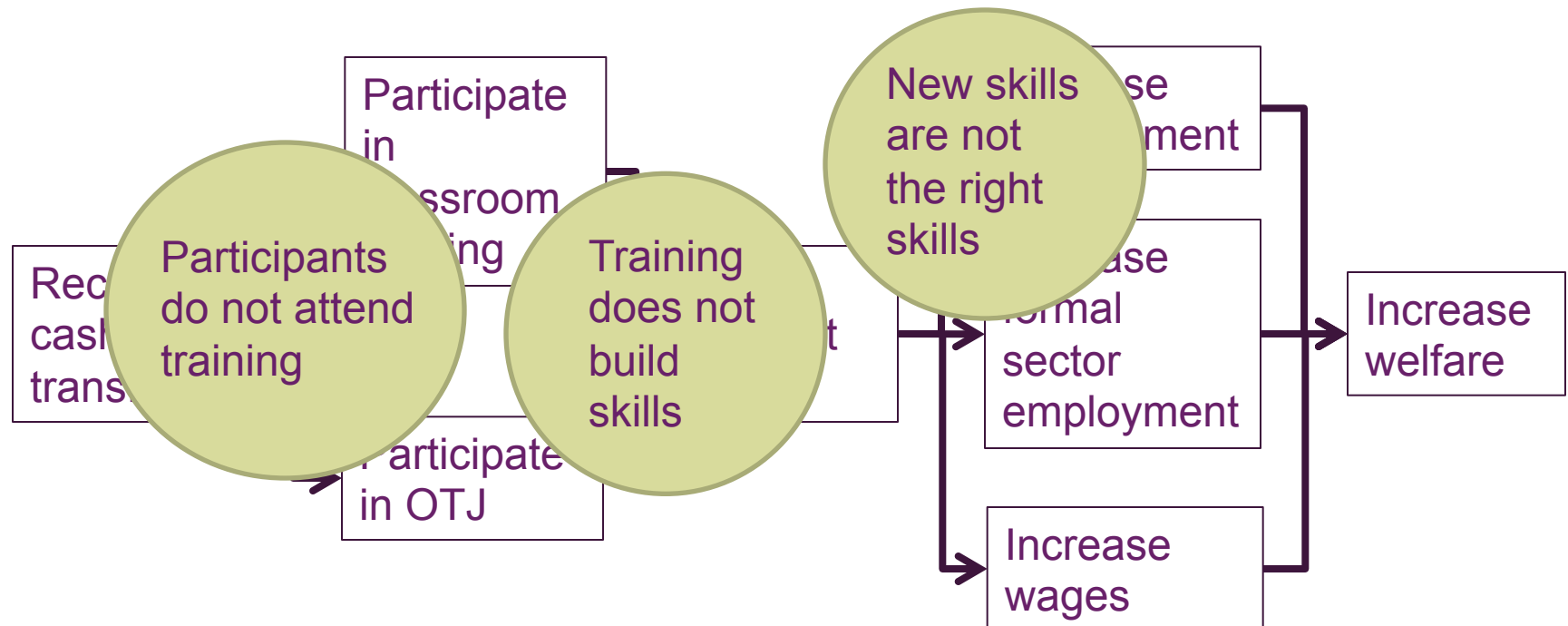
Vocational training theory of change



Vocational training theory of change



Vocational training theory of change

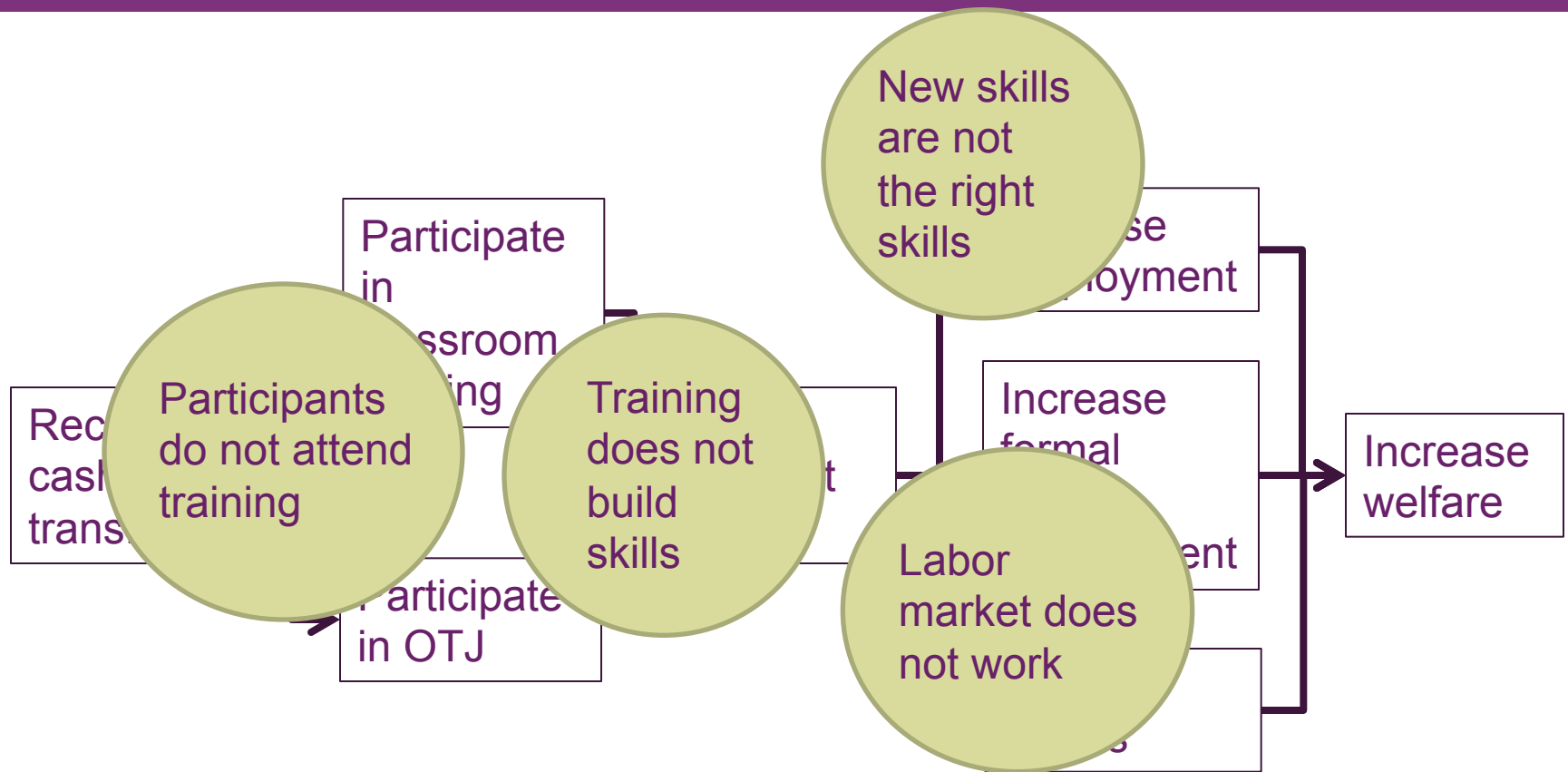


Are the skills the right ones?

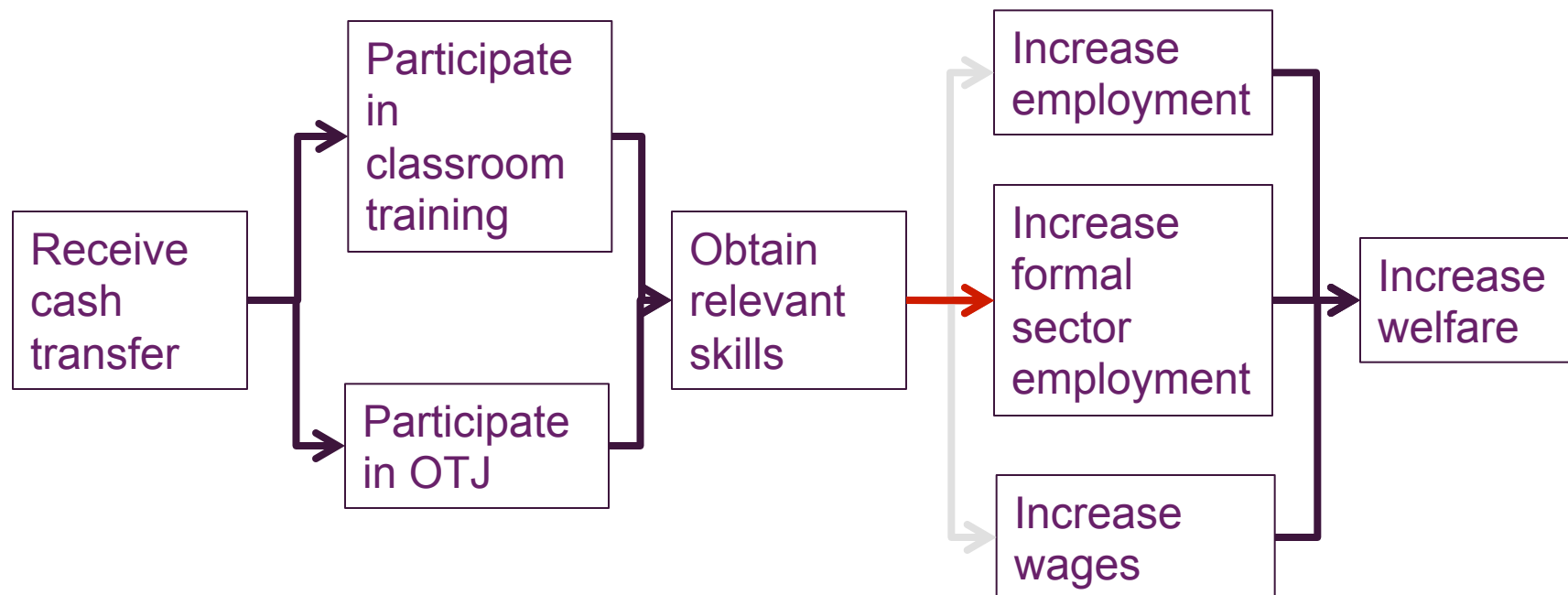
TABLE A1—DISTRIBUTION OF TRAINING COURSES

Course name	Number of courses	Course name	Number of courses
Inventory and warehouse assistant	18	Agricultural machinery mechanic	1
Taxi/bus driver	2	Cashiers' assistant	2
Electrician	16	Plumbers' assistant	2
Management assistant	3	Seamstress/industrial textile prod.	17
Security guard/building maintenance	8	Library assistant	3
Secretary/administrative assistant	34	Gas station assistant	3
Sales representative		Seamstress/industrial textile prod.	17
Bakery assistant		Library assistant	3
Kitchen/cooking assistant		Gas station assistant	3
Archival assistant		Environmental assistant	3
Pharmacy assistant		Organic waste processor	1
Doctor/dentist/nurse assistant		Industrial production operator	4
Carpenter		Flower cultivation	5
IT assistant			
Clinical lab assistant			
Auto/motorcycle mechanic			
Human resources assistant			
Welding assistant			
Graphic design assistant			
Refrigeration equipment repair			
Data entry assistant			
Client relations assistant			
Upholster			
Wooden furniture painter			
Preschool teacher assistant	10	Tourism assistant	1
Accounting assistant	10	Wooden machine operator	1
Foreign trade assistant	2	Molding and foundry worker	2
Beautician	4	Vocational training teacher	2
Mail delivery assistant	10	Journalism assistant	1
Real estate assistant	2	Bank teller	3
Busboy/waiter/waitress	10	Physical rehabilitation	1
Recreation assistant	11	Food processing	4
Call center/telemarketing assistant	5	Quality control assistant	1
Surveyor assistant	9	Worker safety assistant	1
Gas installations	1		

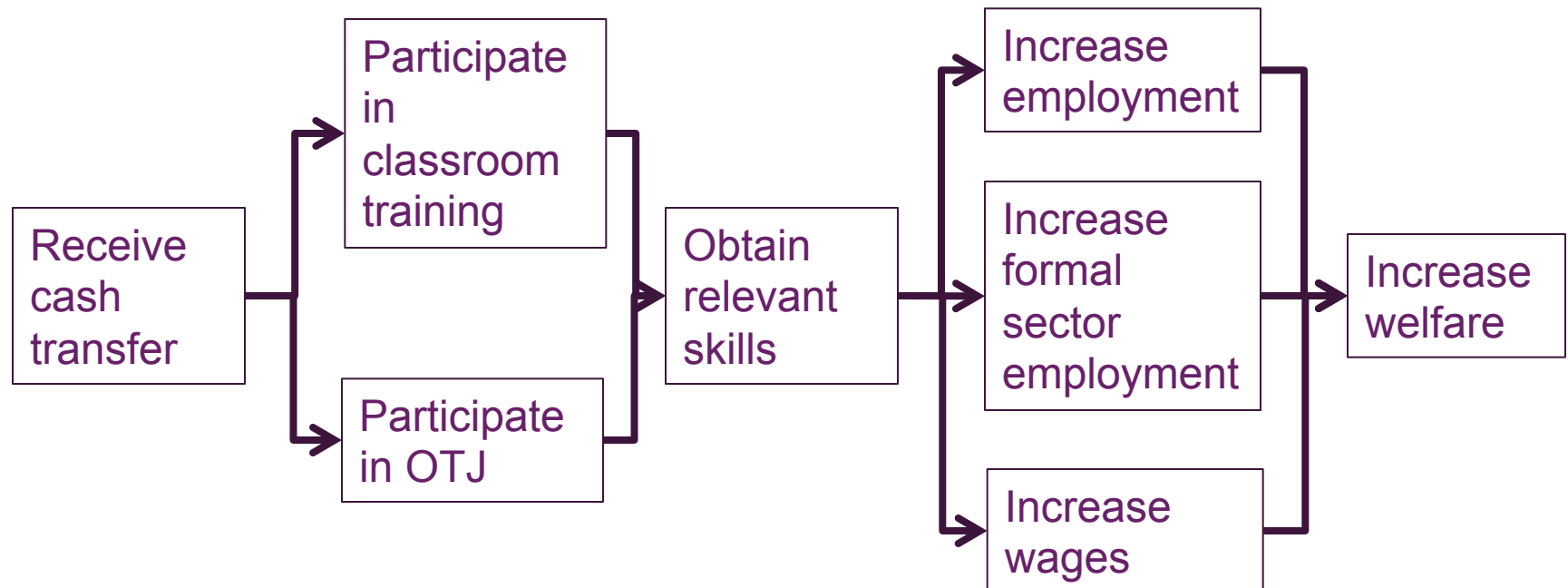
Vocational training theory of change



Vocational training theory of change



What are possible evaluation questions?



What are possible evaluation questions?

- Do selected trainees require the cash transfer to participate?
- Is one type of training more effective than the other? Or are they interdependent?
- Which skills are the most relevant?
- What outcomes are most affected by vocational training?
- How are the impacts different for different groups?
- What are the long-term impacts?

Group discussion

- Review your group's case study
- Map out the theory of change for your project
 - Intervention
 - Mechanisms and intermediate outcomes
 - Final outcomes
- Debrief the whole group