



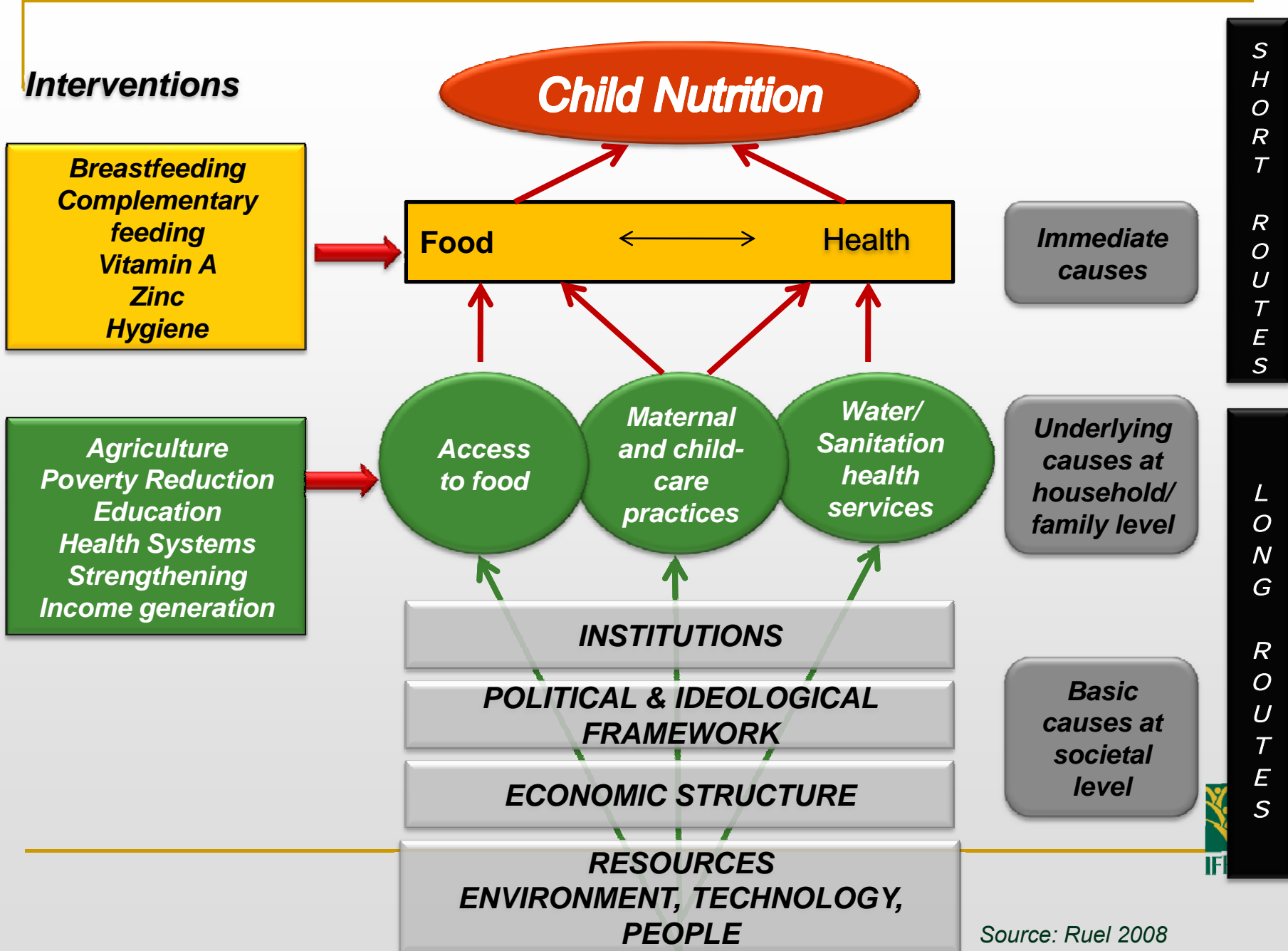
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Monitoring and Evaluating Nutrition Actions: *Filling the Evaluation Gap*

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Short and long routes to improving child nutrition



Source: Ruel 2008

The Evaluation Gap

- Billions of dollars are spent on programs each year
- But we still don't know what works, and at what cost
- We lack essential information for:
 - Advocacy and guidance
 - Decision-making on resource allocation, design, implementation, cost, cost-effectiveness
 - Replication + scaling up

Rigorous Evaluations of Social Programs are “Global Public Goods”

- To guide policymakers in selection and adoption of most effective programs
- To encourage introduction of programs in other contexts
- To stimulate scaling up of successful programs
- To prevent successful programs from being abolished

Some Guiding Principles in M&E

1. Generates information to **influence decisions**: need identified mechanisms to ensure use of info for decision-making
2. Generates **lessons learned** on what works, in which contexts, at what cost: need effective dissemination of findings
3. Activities must be **built into** the project design
4. Need to measure and document impact and **impact pathways**, based on “program theory”
5. Need to measure impact on final outcomes and **intermediary outcomes** (for plausibility)
6. Need to measure **contextual factors** (for replicability and scaling up); useful to use **mixed methods** (qual/quant)
7. Useful to measure impacts at **different levels**: individual, household, community

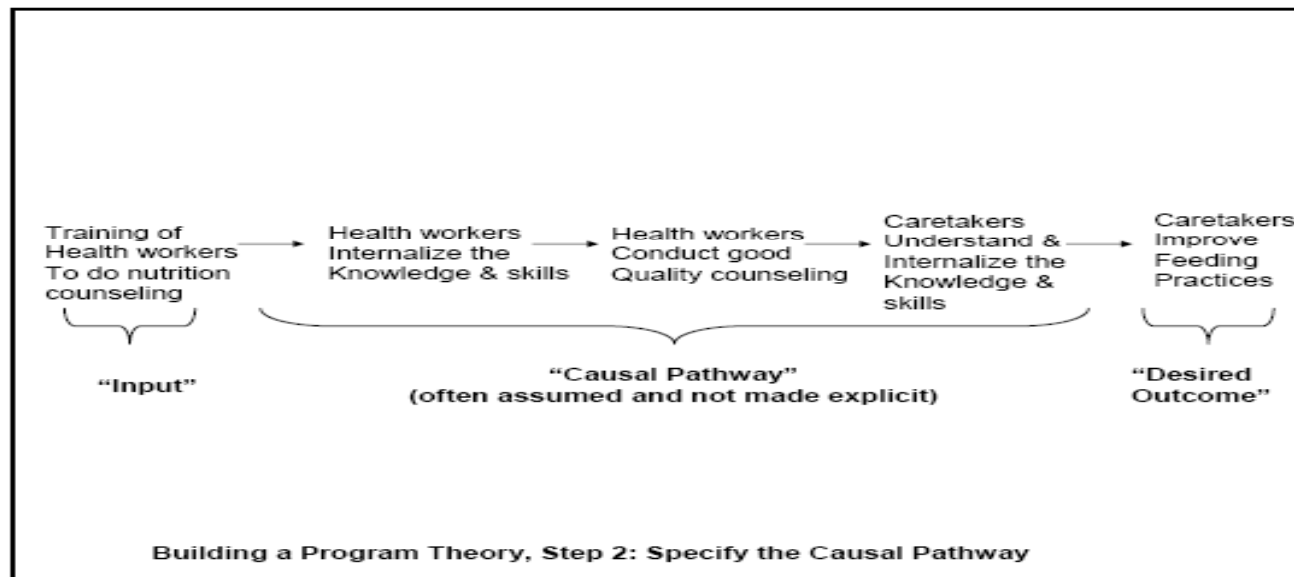
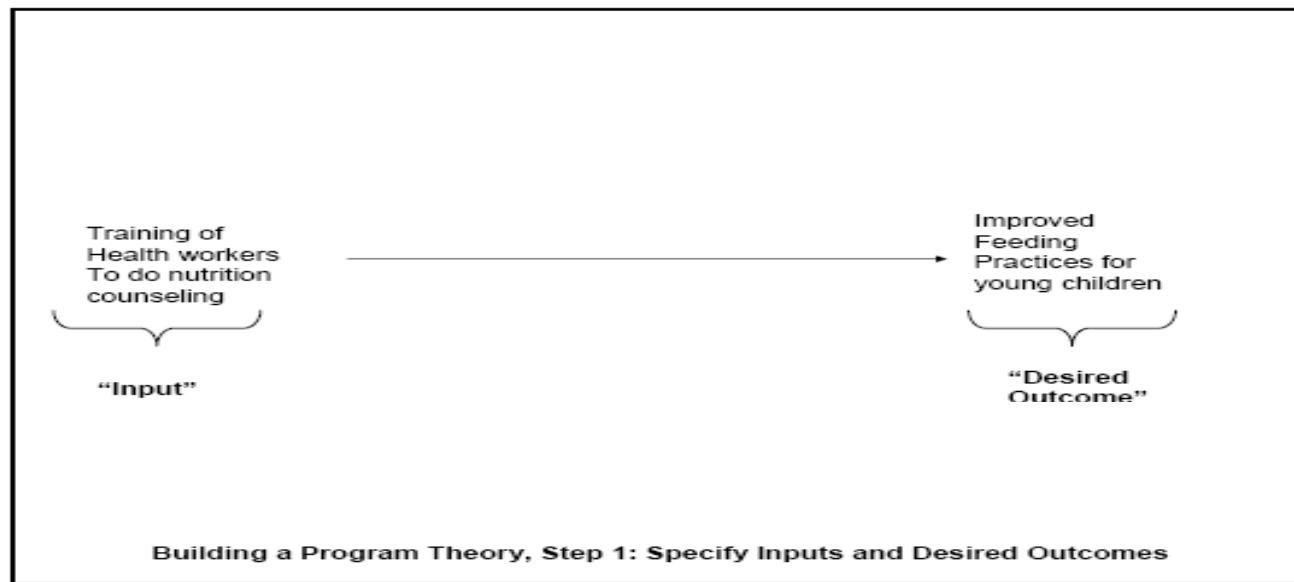


No need to evaluate all programs, or to measure all outcomes in all evaluations

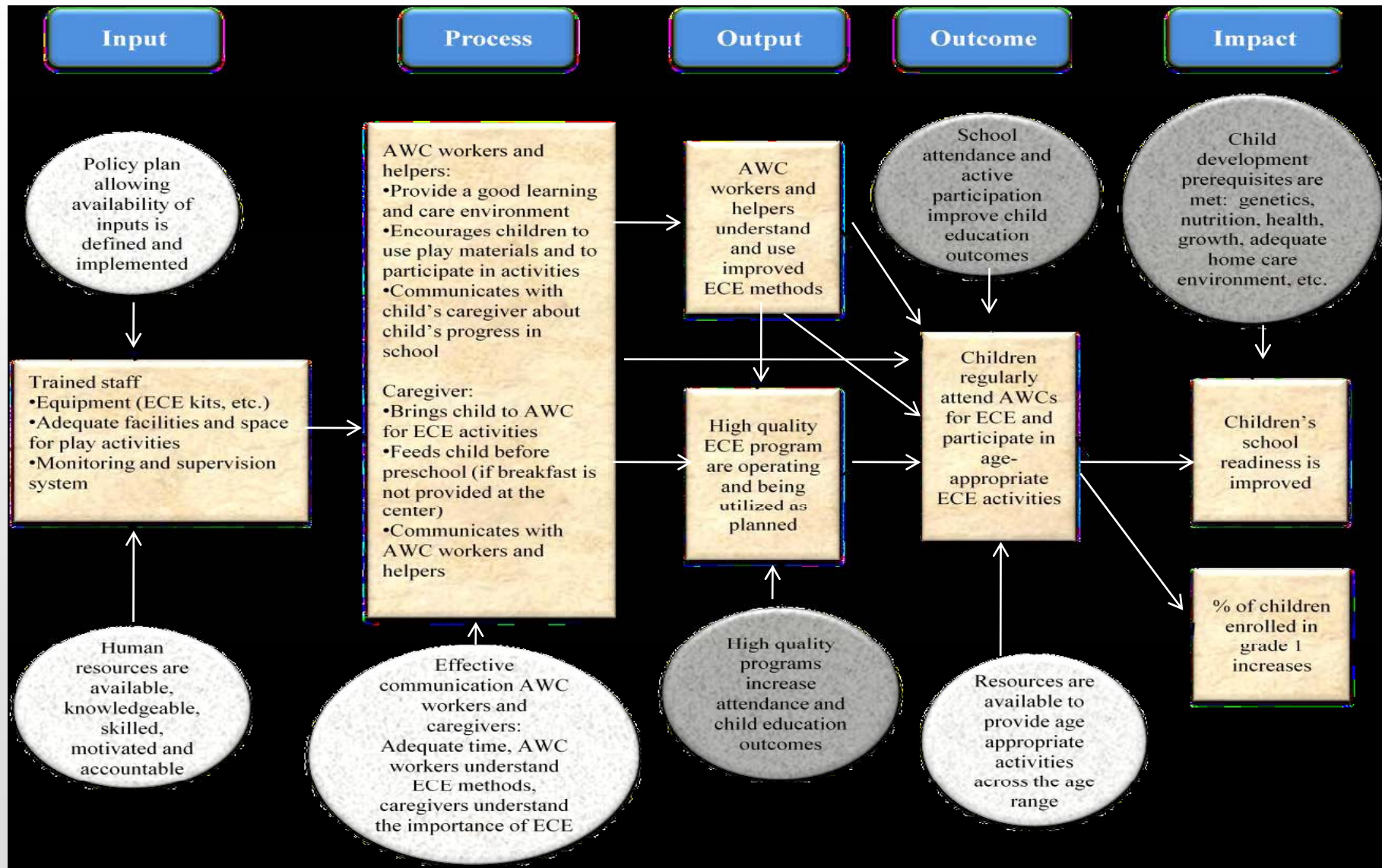
Impact Pathway

- The expected causal chain of events leading from project activities to outputs, to changes in the target population, to impact – i.e. to the achievement of project objectives:
 - From INPUTS → OUTCOMES → IMPACTS
- Focus on the impact pathway allows:
 - Understand how impacts are (or are not) achieved
 - Allows generalizability of findings
 - Provides key information for scaling up
 - Identification of indicators to document main steps along the impact pathway

Example of Impact Pathway



Example of Impact Pathway for Early Child Development Program



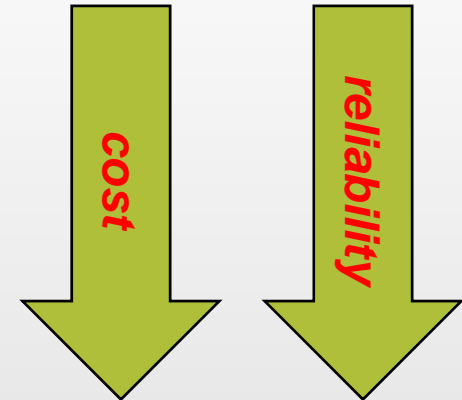
Types of Indicators: According to Objectives

- **Process indicators:** measure the inputs and outputs of the project (documents operational aspects, whether program delivered as planned)
 - Mainly for Monitoring
- **Outcome indicators:** refer to the range of intermediate effects of the project on the intended beneficiaries (e.g. maternal knowledge)
- **Impact indicators:** refer to the range of final effects of the project on the intended beneficiaries (e.g. poverty, nutrition, health of different target groups)

Impact Evaluation: Use Mixed Methods

Quantitative

- ❑ Pre and post intervention, no control group
- ❑ Pre and post intervention, with control group, but no randomization
- ❑ Pre and post intervention, with control group and randomization



Qualitative

- Help interpret quantitative results
- Help identify unexpected impacts, or effects on groups that are not captured by quantitative surveys, etc.



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The case of Conditional Cash Transfer Programs:

Using Rigorous Evaluation Designs in Social Programs

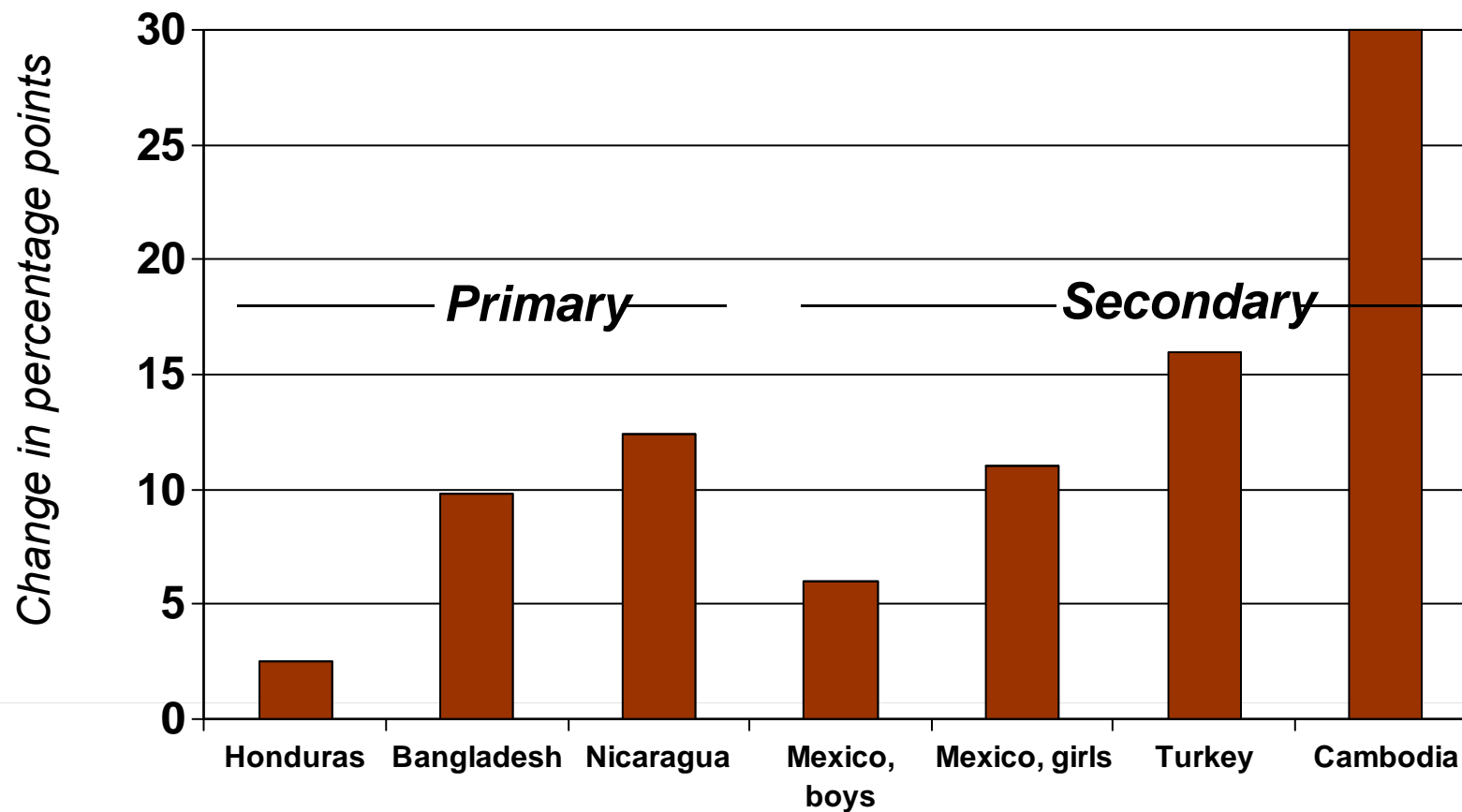
Conditional Cash Transfer Programs (CCTs)

- Cash transfers targeted to poor households
 - often woman within HH
- Transfer is conditional upon:
 - enrolling children in school (often focus on girls)
 - complying with schedule of health care visits
- Some provide direct nutritional supplements
- Some also provide resources to improve supply and quality of services

Impacts of CCTs on Poverty, Income, Food Consumption

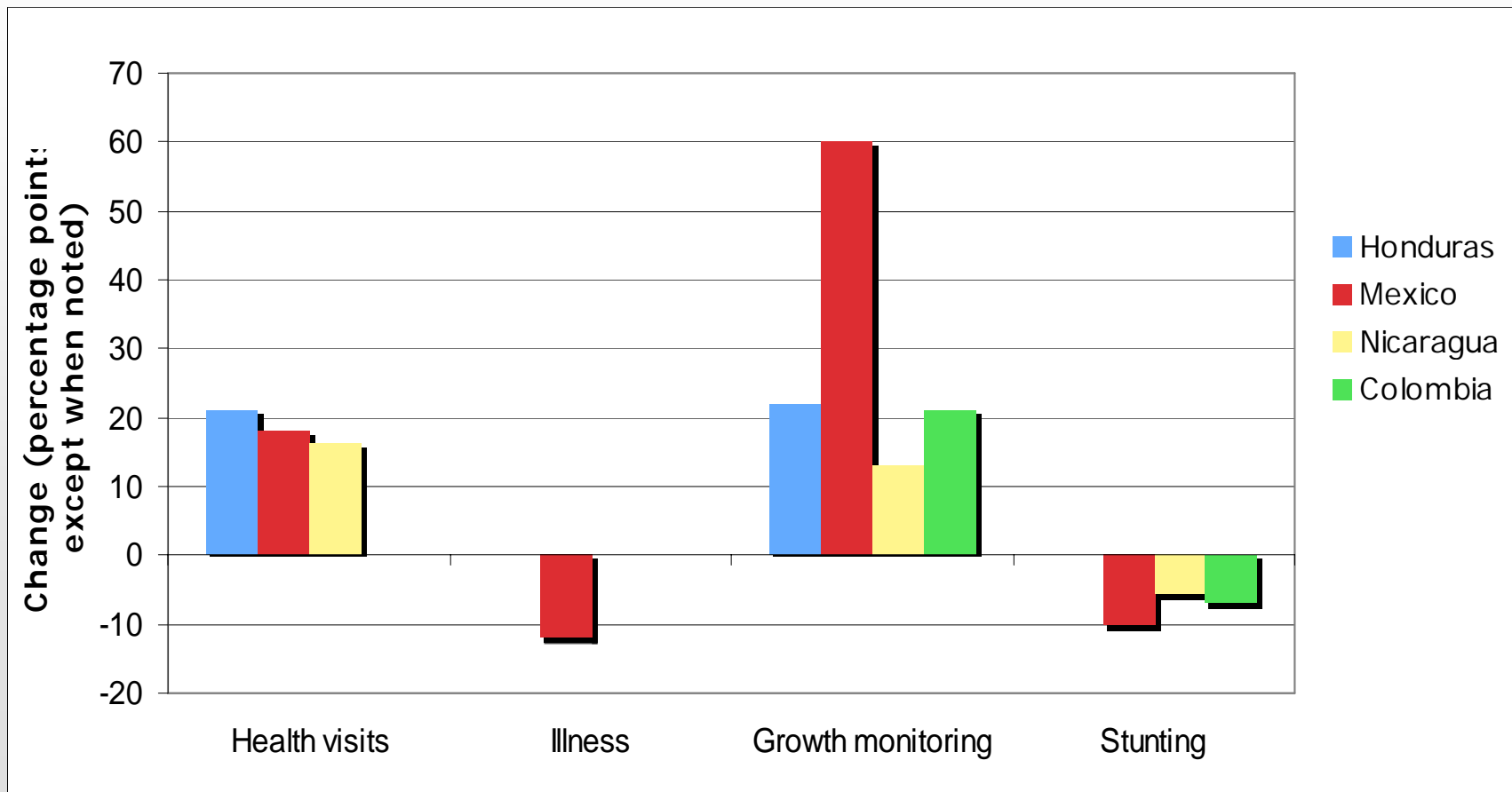
- Progresas - Mexico:
 - Reduced poverty by 8% ; Poverty gap by 24%
 - Severity of poverty by 35%
- Nicaragua – Red de Protección Social:
 - Increased per capita expenditure by 18%
 - Mostly among poorest households (30%)
- Other:
 - Increased energy intake and diet quality

Impacts on School Enrollment



(Sources: Schultz 2001; Skoufias 2005; IFPRI 2003; Maluccio & Flores 2005; Filmer & Schady 2006; Ahmed 2006; Khandker et al. 2003; Ahmed et al. 2007)

Impacts of Conditional Cash Transfers on Health and Nutrition



(Sources: Skoufias 2005; Gertler 2000; Hoddinott 2007; IFPRI 2003; Maluccio and Flores 2005)
NB: Growth monitoring for Mexico is % (not pts); Colombia: no info; Honduras stunting: no change

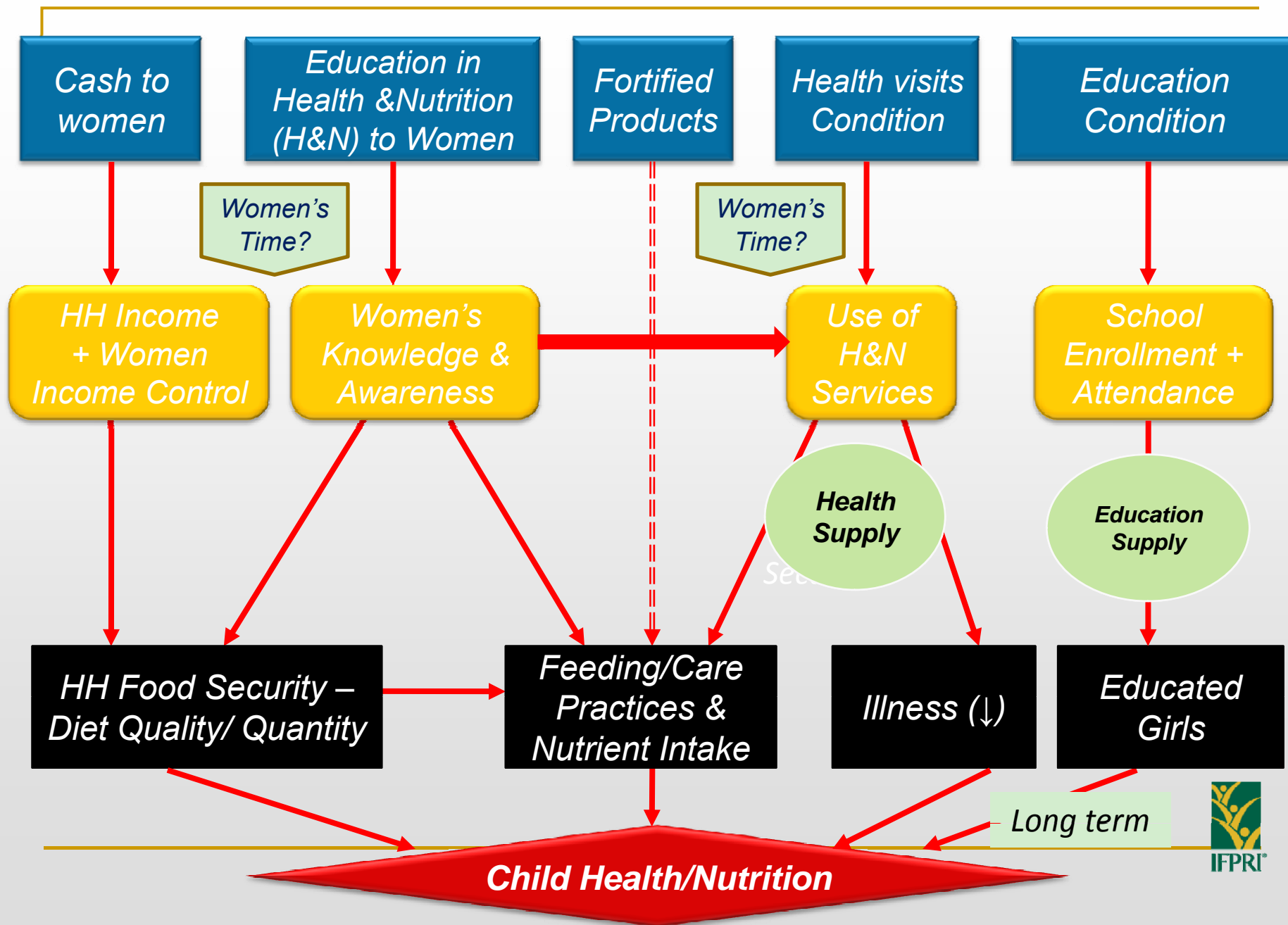
What Have we Learned?

- Programs have played important role in:
 - Reducing poverty, improving diet quality
 - Improving health, education and nutrition outcomes
 - Empowering women
- Effectiveness depends on:
 - Design, implementation, delivery
 - Context (institutional, political, sociocultural)



Created a culture of rigorous impact evaluation of social programs

But HOW do CCTs Impact Child Nutrition?





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An Evaluation of a Food Aid Program in Haiti

How Rigorous Evaluation Can Help Change Policy

WV-Haiti Title II MCHN Program

Service Delivery Points

Rally Posts

Identification of beneficiaries
Primary health care & nutrition services

CHILD BENEFICIARIES

- Rally Posts
- Mothers' Clubs

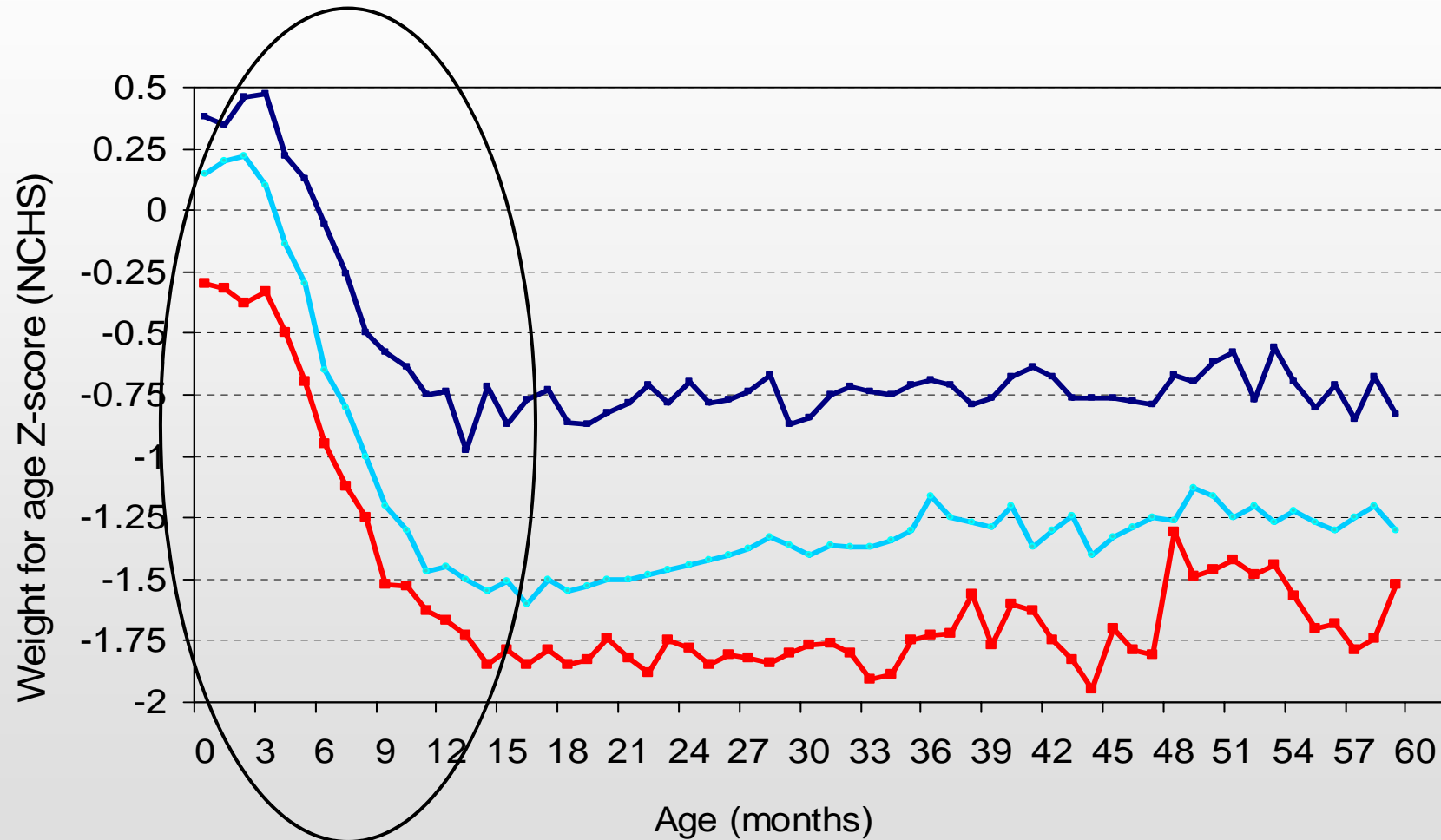
PREG/LACTATING WOMEN

- Pre/post natal clinics
- Mothers' Clubs

Eligible to receive food at:

Food distribution points

First 2 years: Period of Most Rapid Growth and Vulnerability to Growth Faltering



— Africa

— Latin America and Caribbean

— Asia



Shrimpton et al. 2001

Main Objective of Evaluation

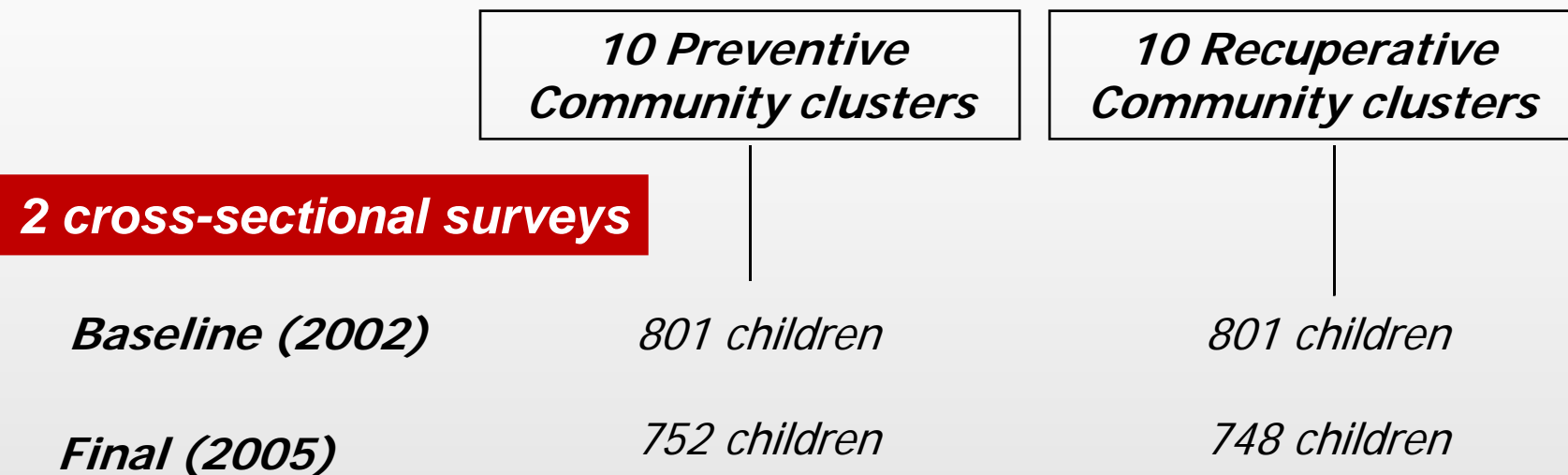
Compare 2 models of targeting a food assisted-MCHN program:

- Preventive approach (target all children < 2 y)
- Traditional, recuperative approach (target underweight children (WAZ < -2))

Assess their:

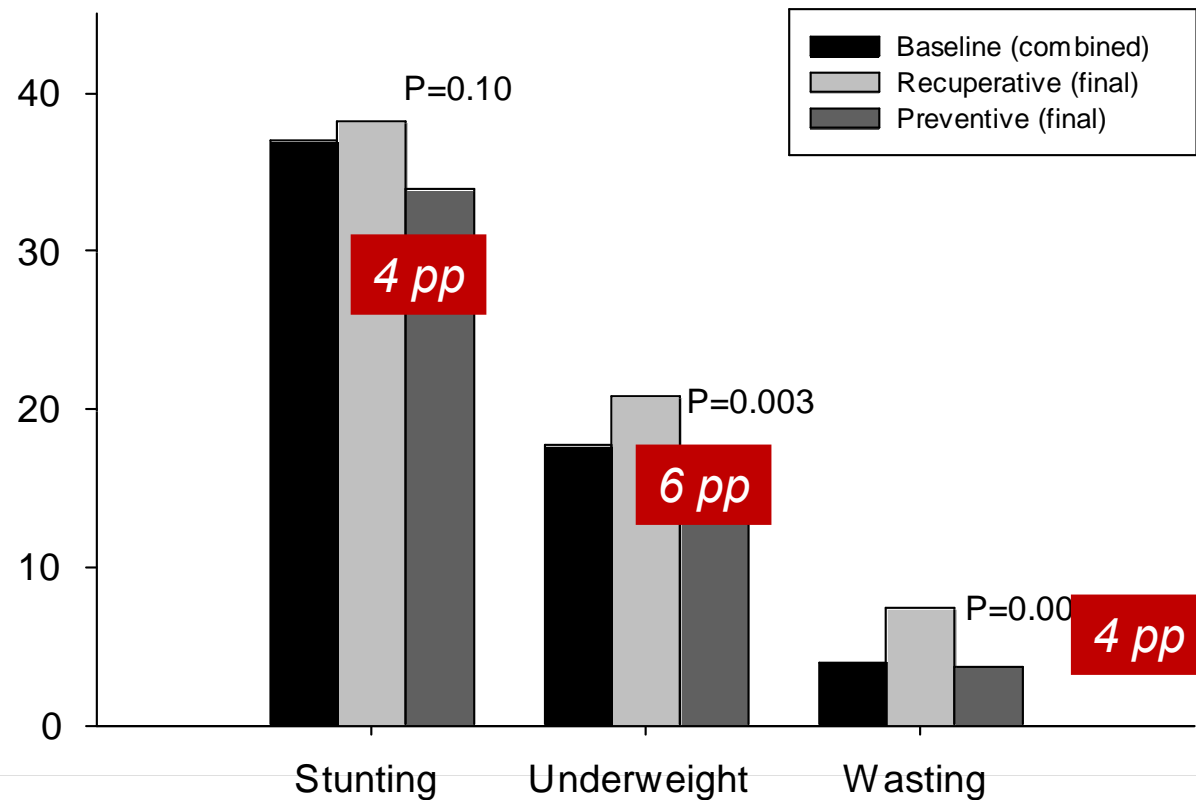
- Impact on child nutritional status
- Cost, cost effectiveness

Evaluation Design: Cluster randomized



Age range of index children: 12-42 mo (exposed to program for at least 6 months in preventive program communities)

Results: Undernutrition Lower in Preventive Model after 3 Years (crisis years)



Results Contributed to Policy Change within USAID

- Rigorous design
- Measured impact on several intermediary outcomes:
 - Household food security
 - Maternal knowledge, practices
 - Child morbidity
- Assessed dose-response (age group that benefited month)

Results Contributed to Policy Change within USAID- 2

- Researchers – Implementers worked closely together at all steps of evaluation
- Other stakeholders involved at all stages
- Communicated and disseminated results through workshops, **publications for different audiences**
- Results are plausible and make sense
- 1st rigorous evaluation of such programs

Conclusions

- We have an evaluation gap: too few; too weak – especially of complex programs
- Need global learning from rigorous evaluations: strong designs, based on program theory, documenting impact pathways, cost, cost-effectiveness
- Need evaluations for global advocacy and for decision-making (which program, which design, which target group, how to replicate, scale up, etc.)