AGRODEP
Household survey data course
Dakar, 8-10 October 2012

Fieldwork operations

What happens when fieldwork is poor?

- A long and frustrating process of "data cleaning" becomes unavoidable

  The data lose their policy-making relevance

- Data quality is not guaranteed

  The process converges (at best) to databases that are *internally consistent*

- The process entails a myriad of decisions, generally undocumented

  Users mistrust the data

Key factors

- Manage the survey as an integrated project
- Implement the team concept in the organization of field operations
- Integrate computer-based quality controls to field operations
- Establish strong supervision procedures
- Ensure sufficient training
- Work with a reduced staff over an extended period of data collection

Options
for the integration of computer quality controls to fieldwork

1. Data entry in fixed locations

  -Cote d'Ivoire (1984)

  -Many other countries for almost 30 years

  -Iraq (2006 and 2012)

2. Data entry in the field

  -Nepal (1992)

  -Many other countries for around 20 years

  -Papua New Guinea (2009)

3. CAPI

  -Uganda (2010)
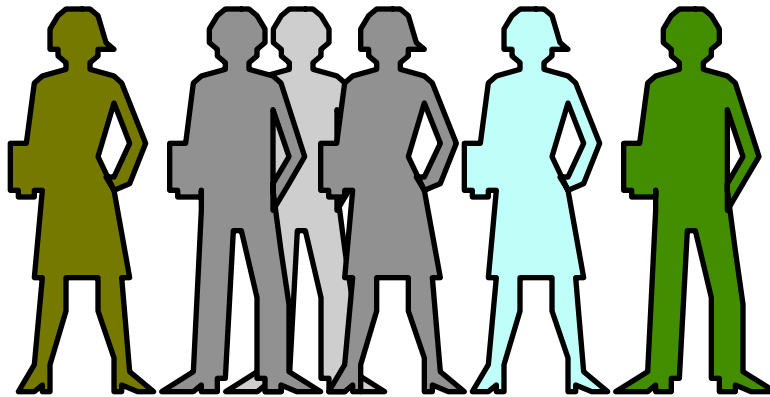
  -Ethiopia (2011)

1. Data entry in fixed locations
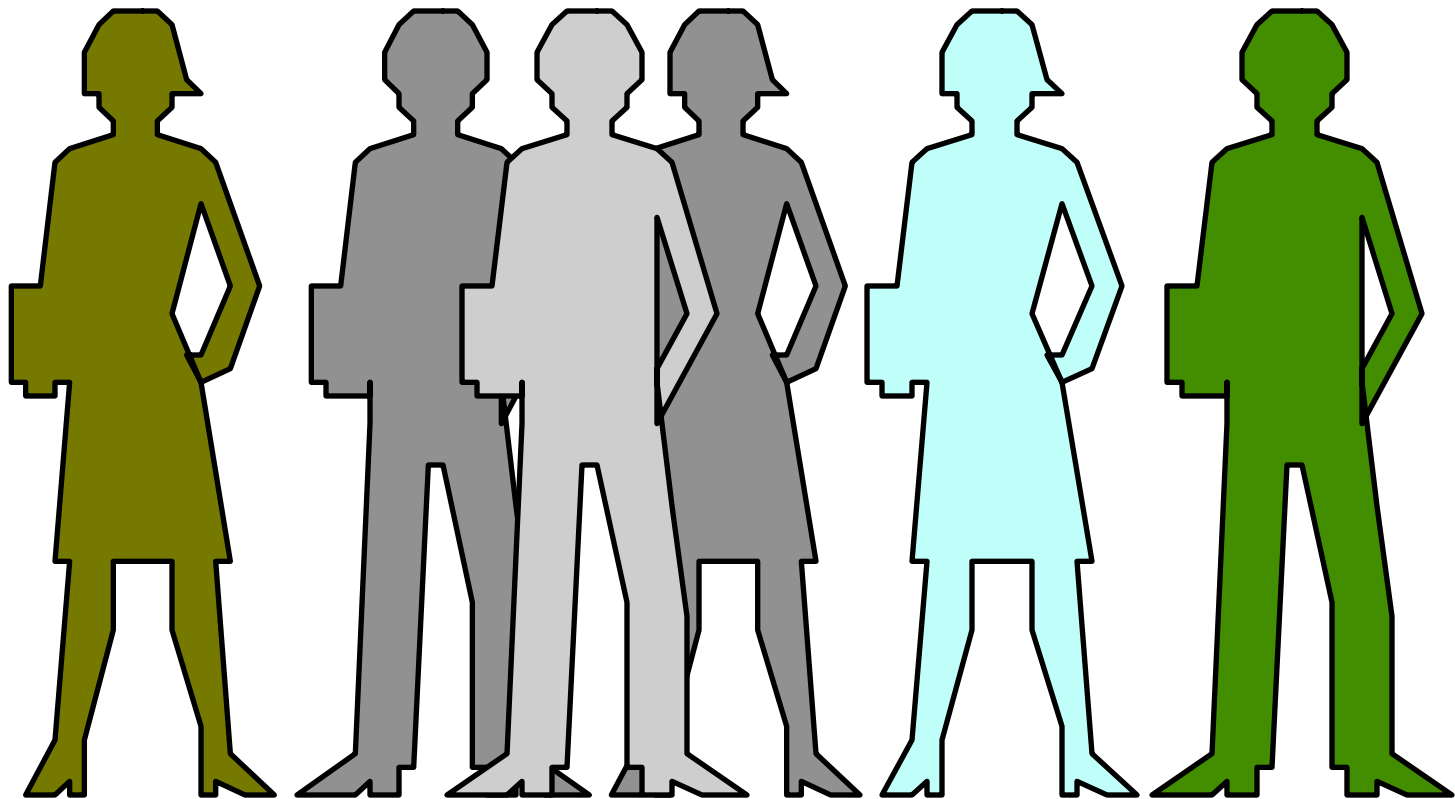
Supervisor   **Interviewers**   **Anthropo -metrist**   **Data entry operator**

The team and its tools

Supervisor   Interviewers   Anthropo-metrist   Data entry operator
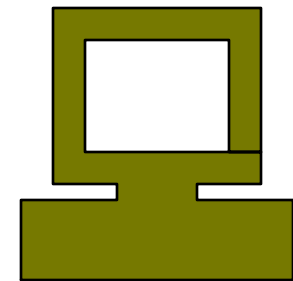
Two PSUs visited in a four-week period

Alama
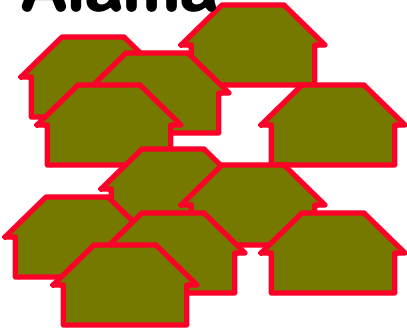
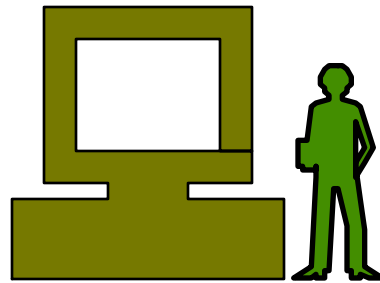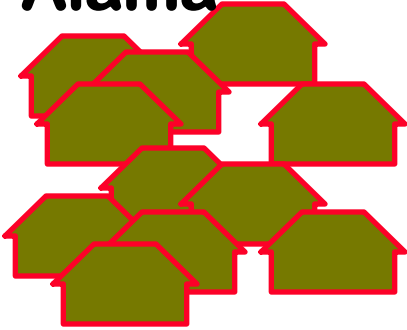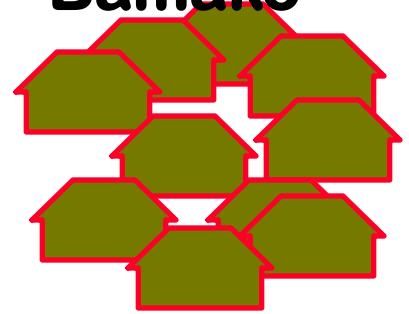**Bamako**
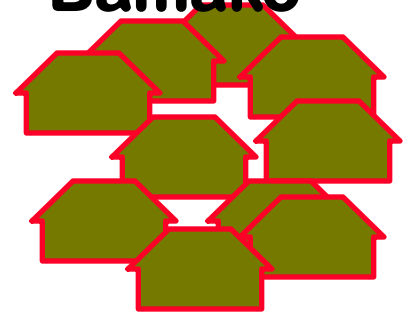
Regional Office

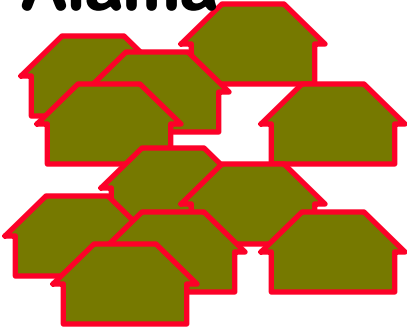# First week

Alama

Bamako

Regional Office

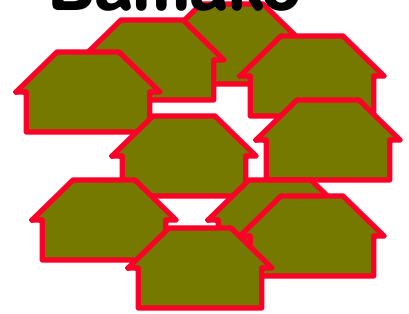**Operator remains in Regional Office**

Rest of the team travels to Alama

First week

Alama

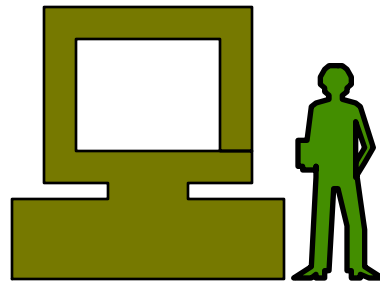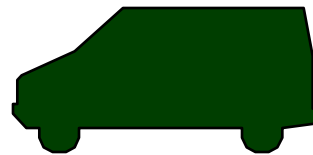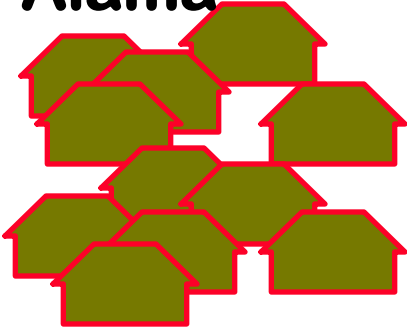**Bamako**

Regional Office

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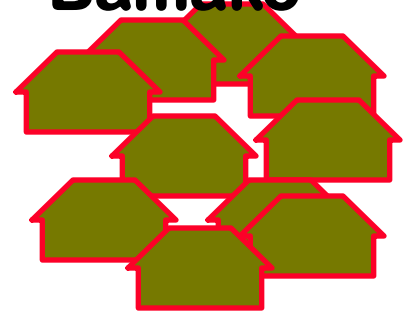**Bamako**

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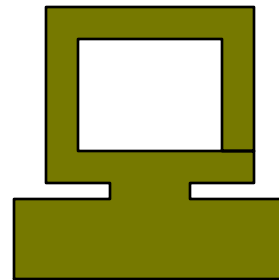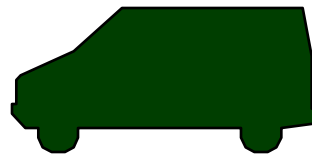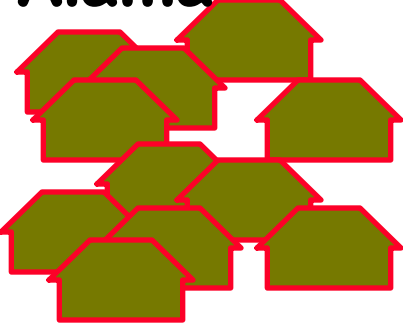**Rest of the team travels to Alama**

First week

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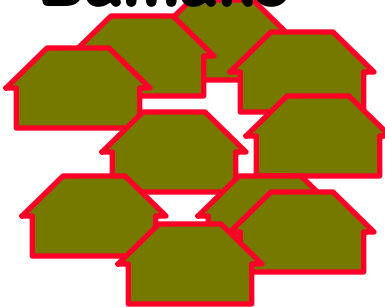**Bamako**

Regional Office

Operator remains in Regional Office

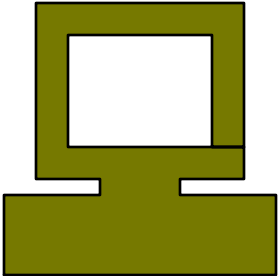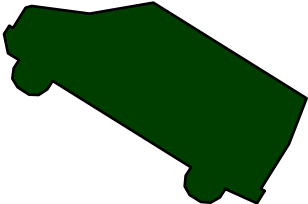**Rest of the team travels to Alama**

First week
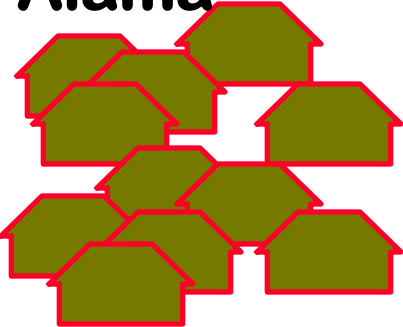
Alama

Bamako

Regional Office

Operator remains in Regional Office

Rest of the team travels to Alama

First week

Alama

Bamako

Regional Office

Operator remains in Regional Office

They complete first half of questionnaires in all selected households

Rest of the team travels to Alama

First week

Alama

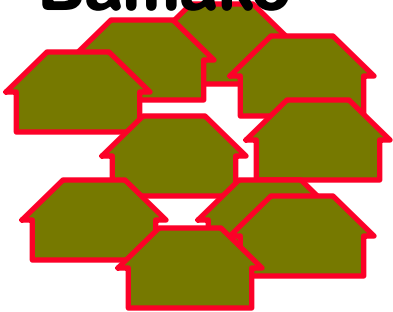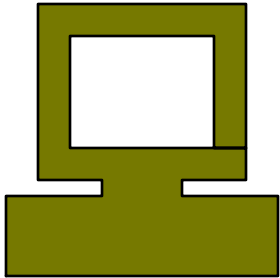**Bamako**

Regional Office

Operator remains in Regional Office

Rest of the team travels to Alama

First week

Alama

Bamako

Regional Office

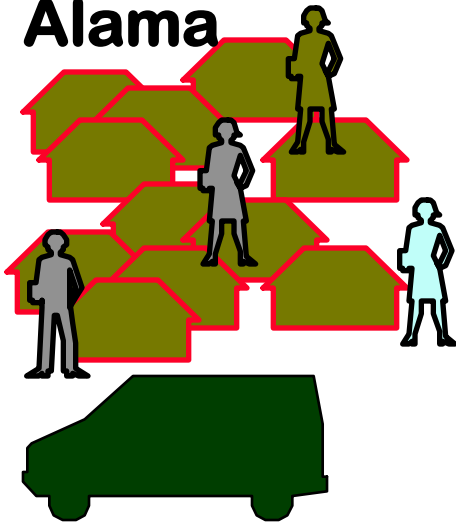**Operator remains in Regional Office**

Rest of the team travels to Alama

First week

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Regional Office

Operator remains in Regional Office
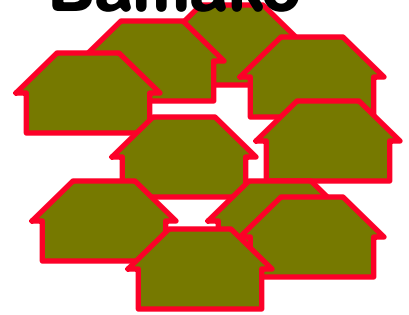
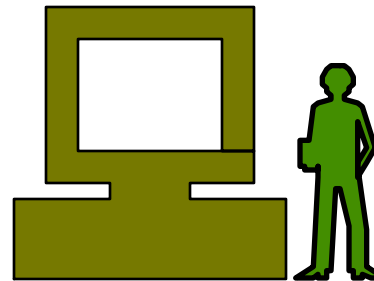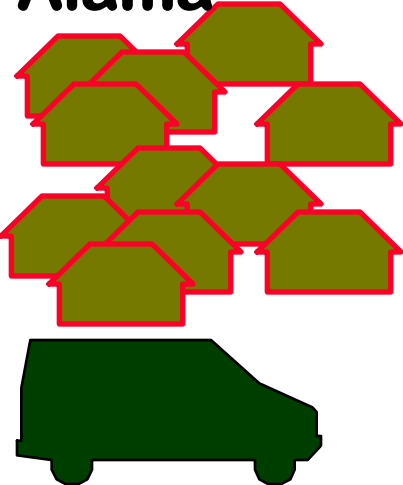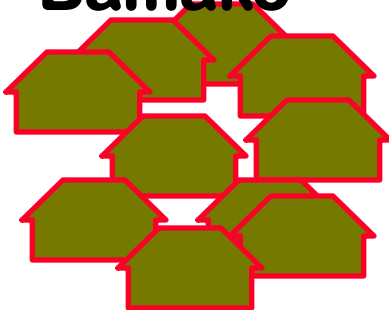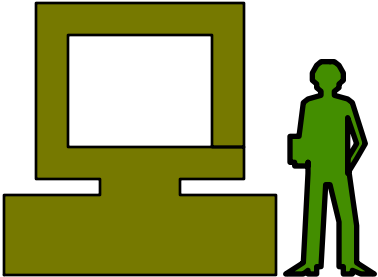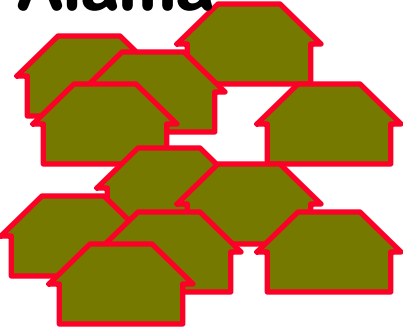**Rest of the team travels to Alama and back**

First week

Alama
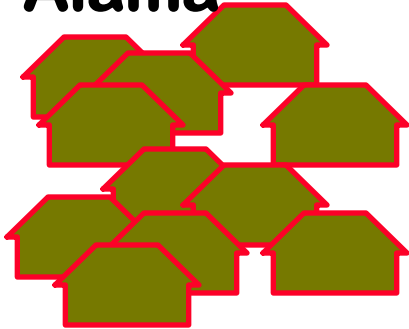
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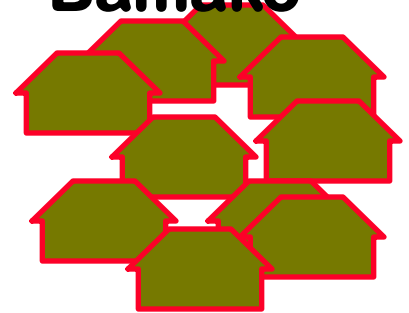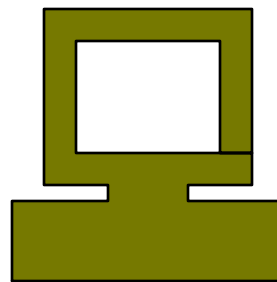
Regional Office

Supervisor gives Alama questionnaires to DEO

Rest of the team travels to Alama and back

Second week
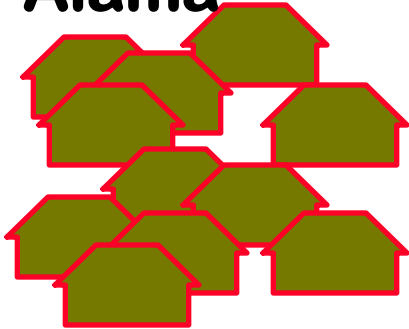
Alama

Bamako

Regional Office

Operator enters first week data from Alama
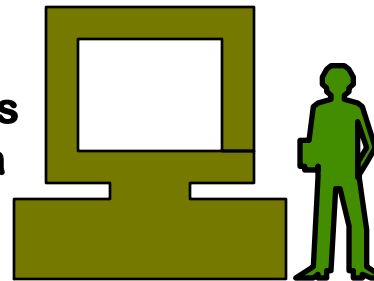
Rest of the team travels to Bamako

Second week
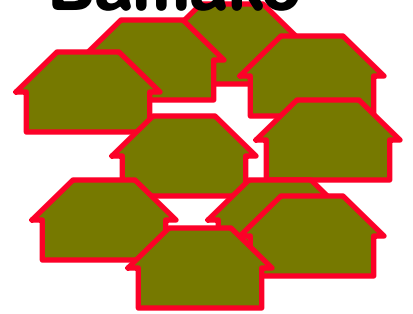
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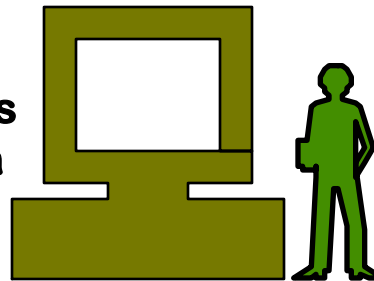
**Regional
Office**

**Operator enters
first week data
from Alama**

**Rest of the
team travels
to Bamako**
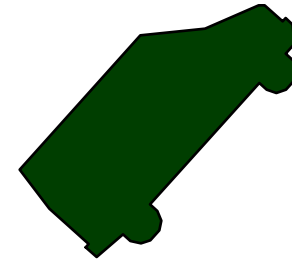
Second week
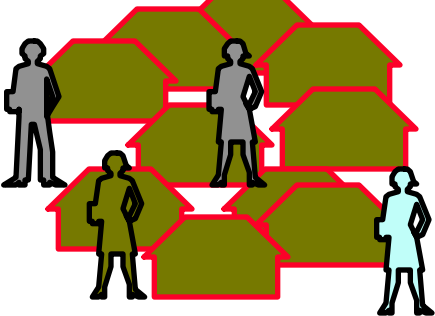
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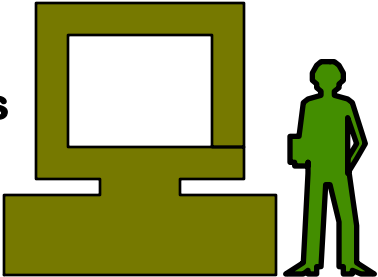
Regional Office

Operator enters first week data from Alama

Rest of the team travels to Bamako
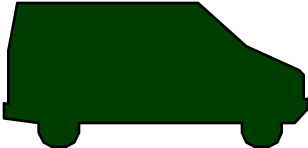
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Second week

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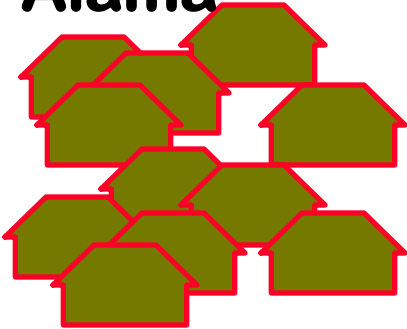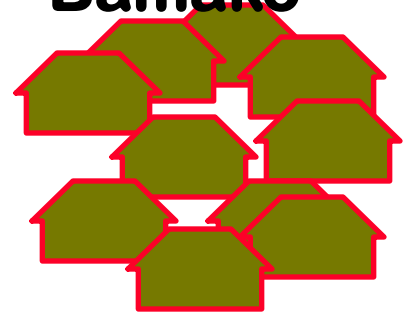
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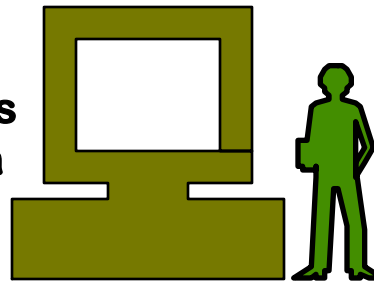
Regional Office

Operator enters first week data from Alama

Rest of the team travels to Bamako and back

Second week
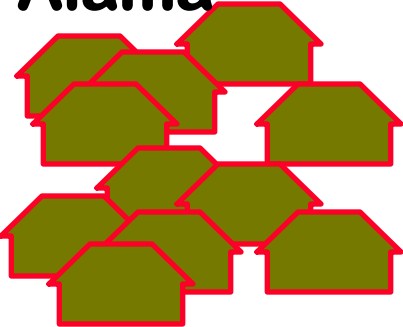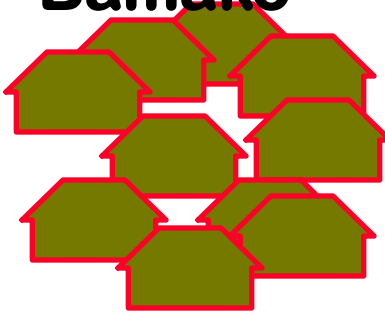
Alama

Bamako

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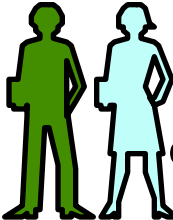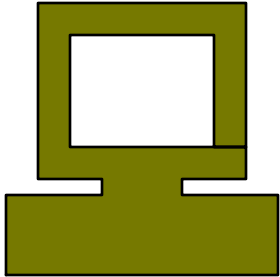
Supervisor gives Bamako questionnaires to DEO. DEO gives back Alama questionnaires with flagged inconsistencies
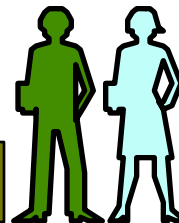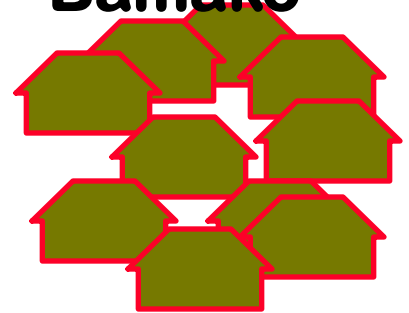
Rest of the team travels to Bamako and back

Third week

Alama
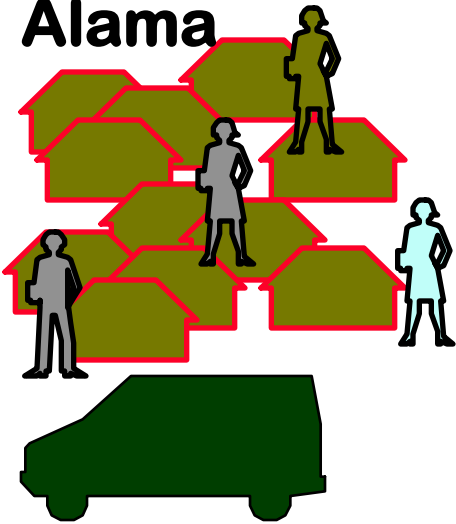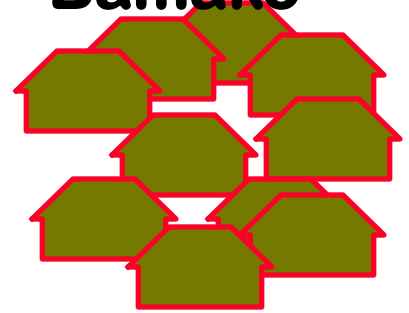
Bamako
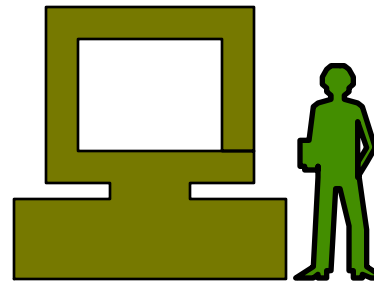
Regional Office
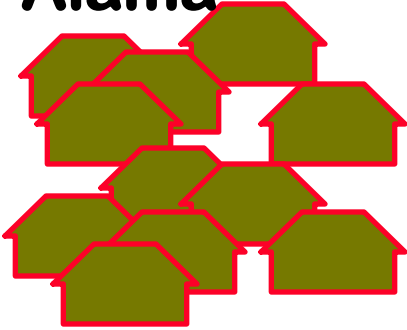
Operator enters first week data from Bamako

Team completes second half of questionnaires.
**They correct inconsistencies from first half**

Fourth week

Alama

Bamako

Regional Office

Operator enters second week data from Alama. **Corrects inconsistencies from first round**
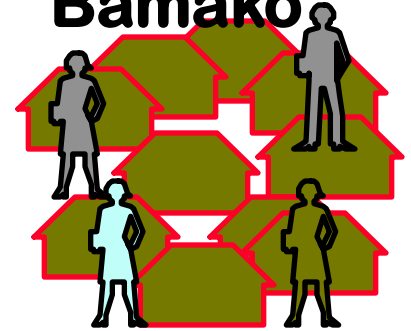
Team completes second half of questionnaires. **They correct inconsistencies from first half**

The result is a clean data set, ready for analysis immediately after data collection
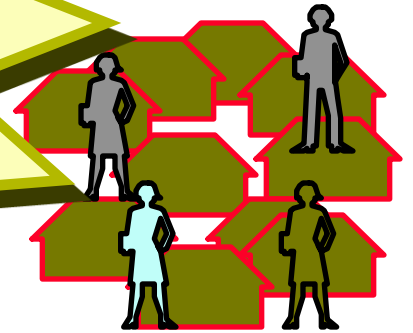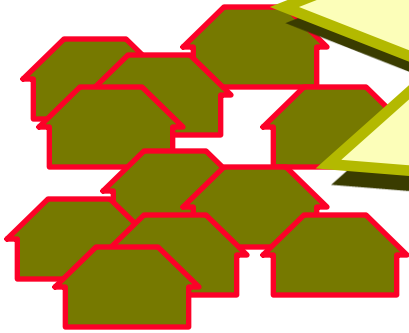
2. Data entry in the field
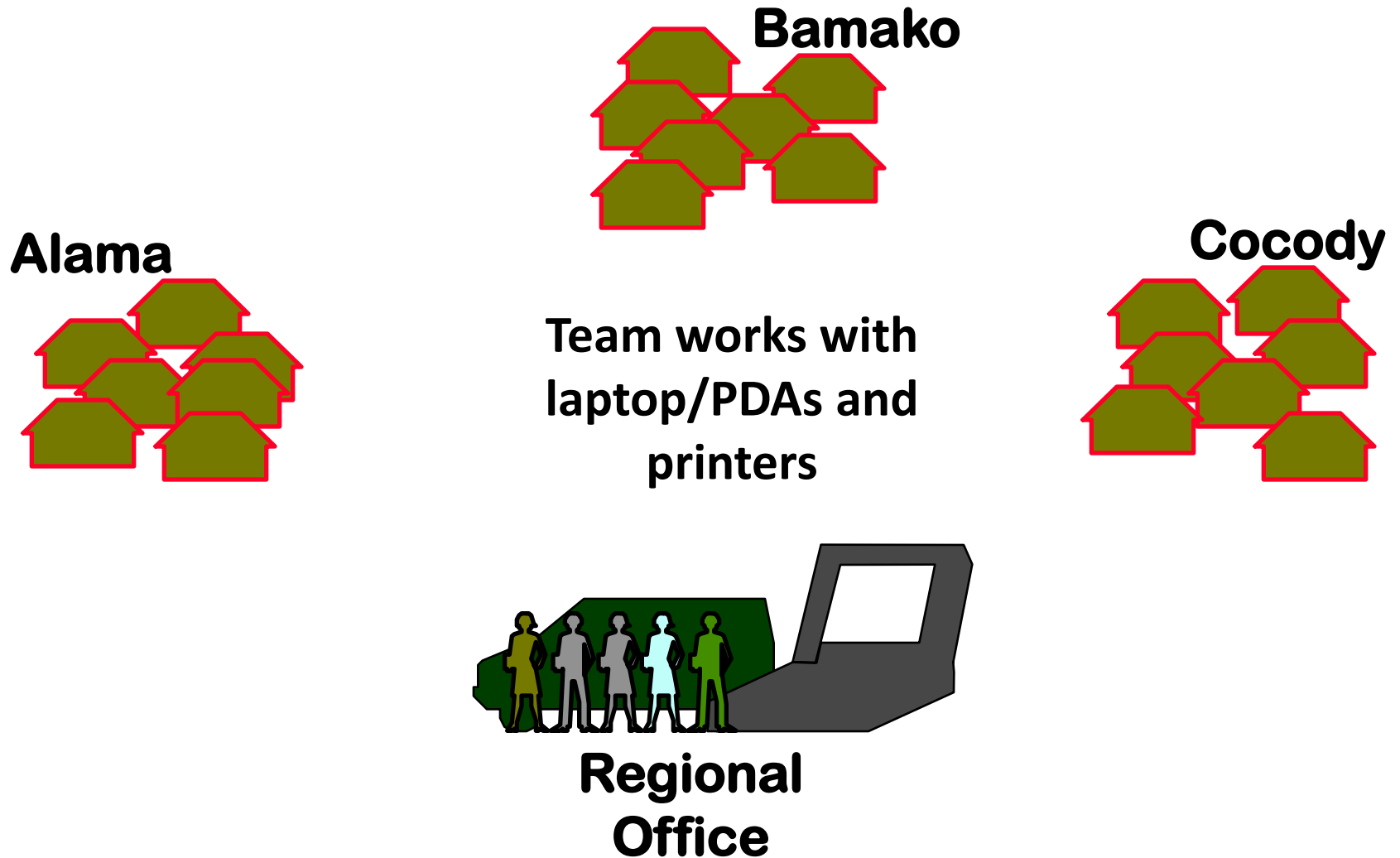
Bamako

Alama

Cocody

Team works with laptop/PDAs and printers

Regional Office

2. Data entry in the field

Bamako

Alama

Cocody

Operator travels with the rest of the field team

Regional Office

2. Data entry in the field

Bamako

Alama

Cocody

Data entry and validation almost immediate

Regional Office

2. Data entry in the field

Bamako

Alama

Cocody

Reduced trips to and from Regional Office to selected PSUs

Regional Office
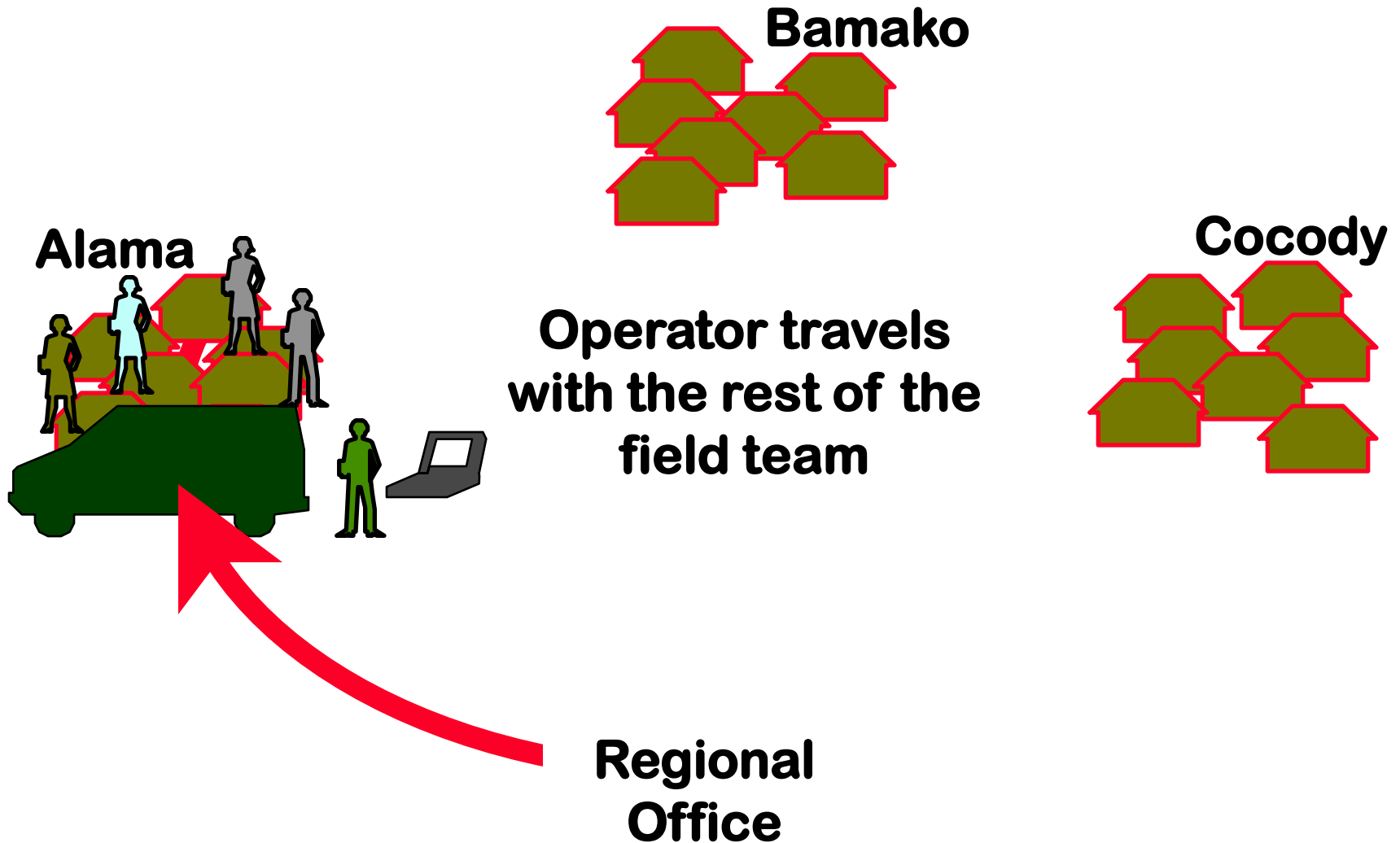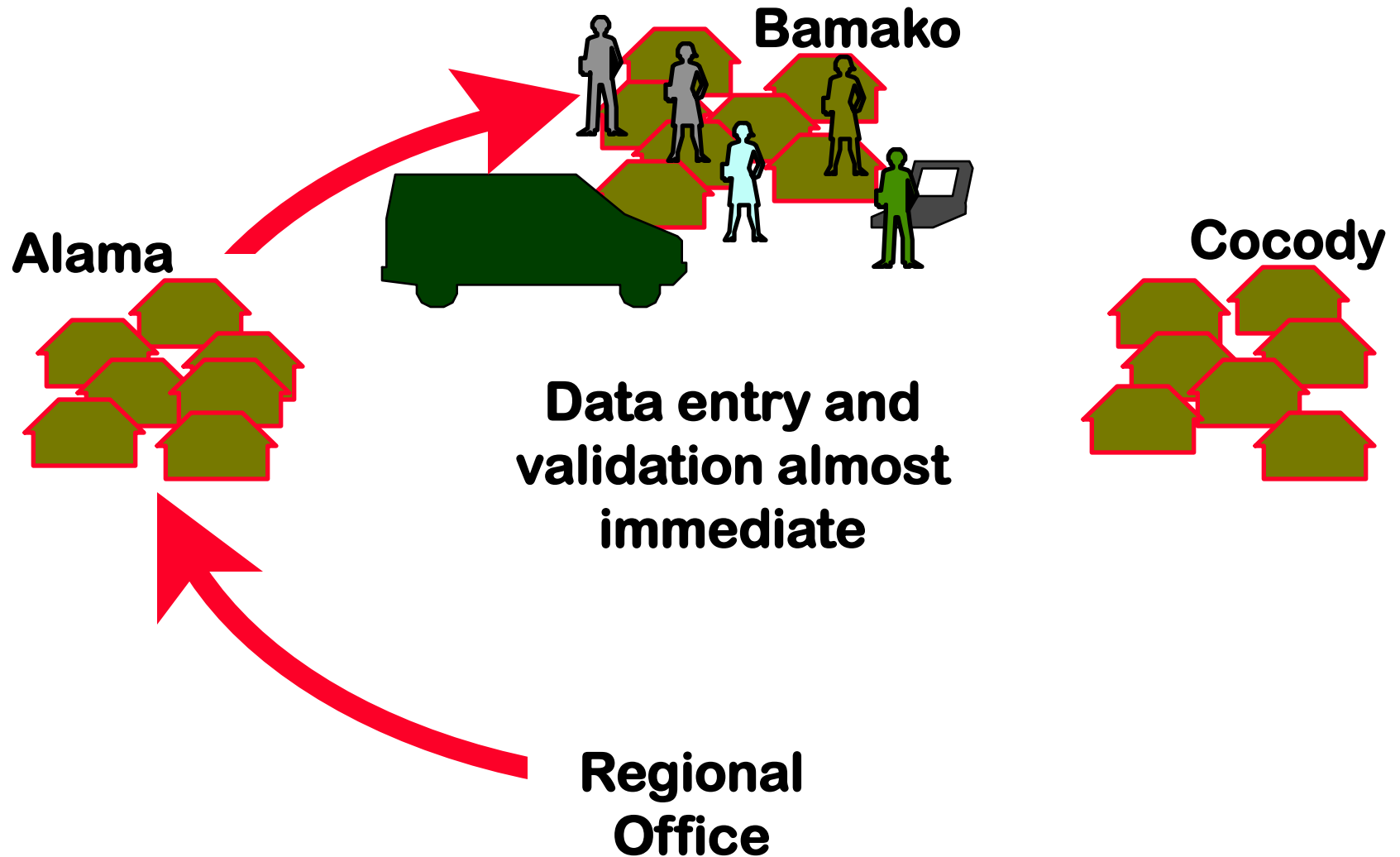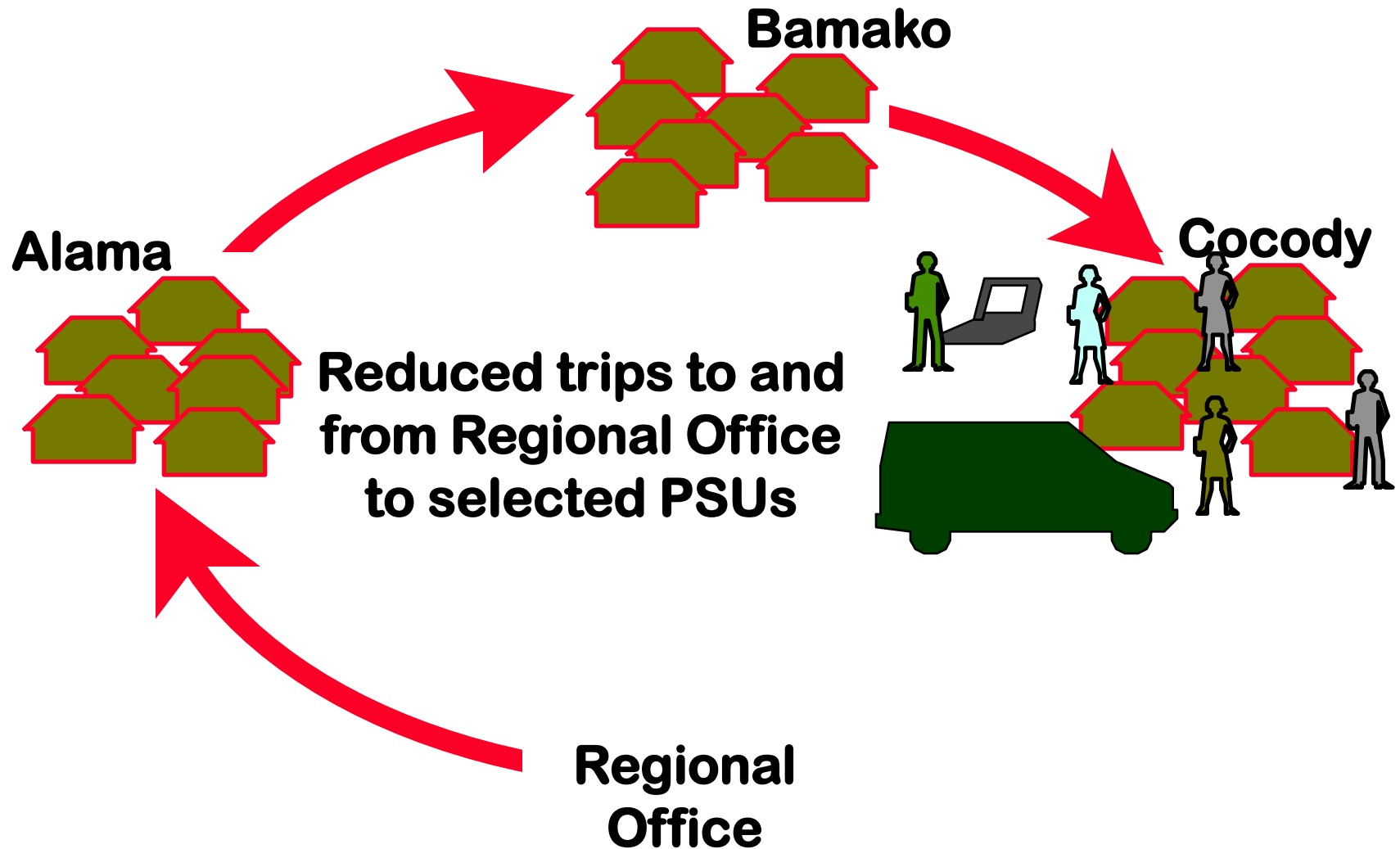
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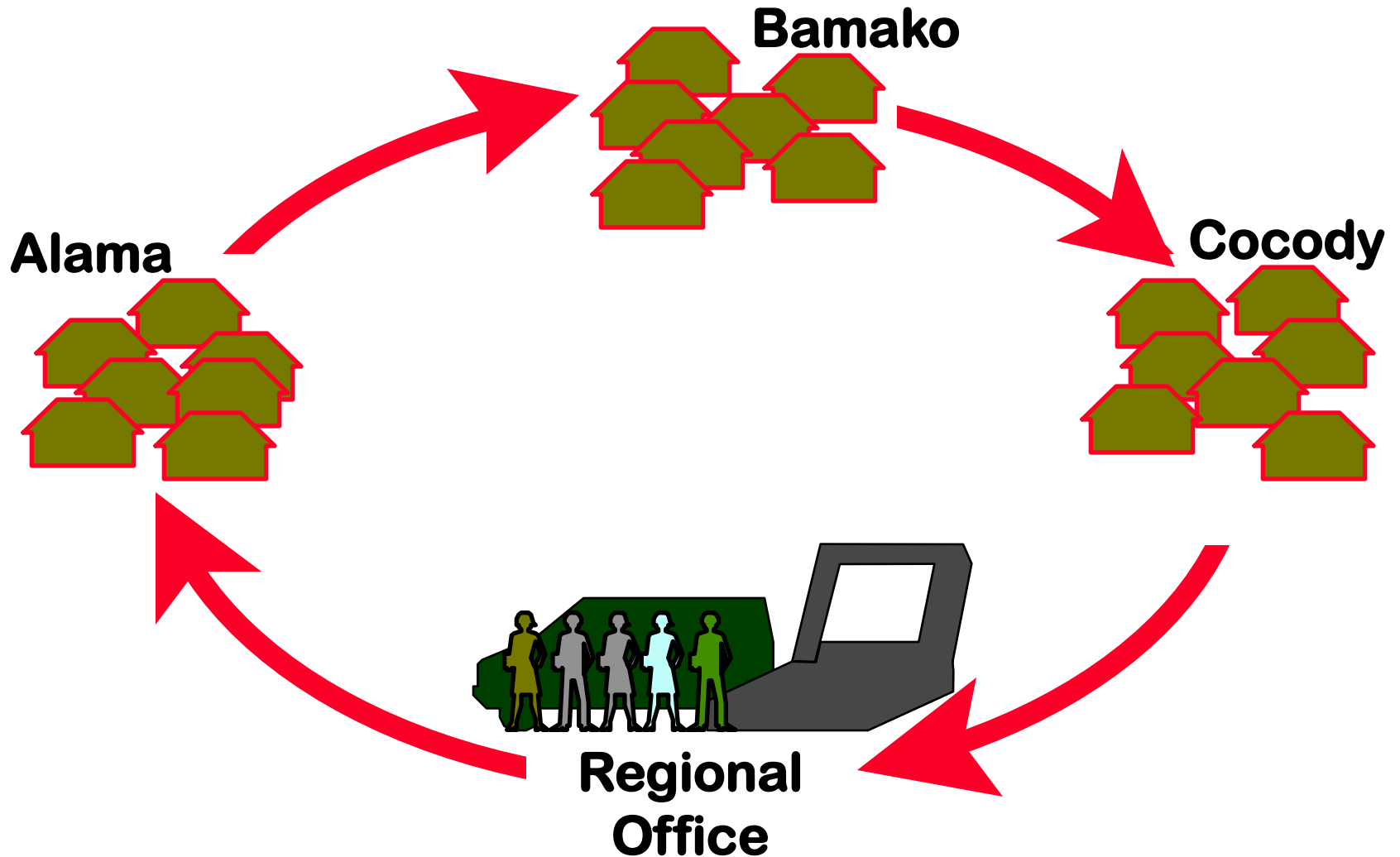
Benefits of integration

- Provides reliable and timely databases
- Provides immediate feedback on the performance of the field staff, allowing early detection of inadequate behaviors
- Ensures that all field staff applies uniform criteria throughout the full period of data collection
- Solves inconsistencies through direct verification of households reality, rather that through office guessing
- Is consistent with the total quality culture

Other factors of survey quality
Core Staff Team

- Composition
  - Survey/Project manager
  - Field operations manager
  - Data manager

- Dedicated to the project in all three phases
  - Design and Preparation
  - Implementation
  - Dataset documentation and initial tabulations

Other factors of survey quality
Field Supervision

- Visual scrutiny of completed questionnaires

    -Less critical if computer quality controls are implemented (computers do it better than people)

- Visual observation of interviews

    -Some of this is needed, but not too much

    -Continuous training of interviewers

- Check-up visits

    -Critical, and can only be implemented by human supervisors (computers cannot do it)

    -Need to be frequent and random

- Supervisors must be supervised too

Other factors of survey quality Training

- Perhaps the most underestimated factor of data quality
- For a typical multi-topic survey, count 3 weeks
  - More if the survey will use special instruments (anthropometric, GPS, etc.)
- Three components
  - Academic
  - Class exercises
  - Field practice
- Common training for all team members
  - But supervisors and DEOs will need additional training in their specific tasks
- More than 4-5 teams will need either
  - Decentralized training, or
  - Parallel classes in a central location
  - Central is better, but can be more expensive
- Trainers must be trained too
  - Training materials and training programs can be developed as part of the training of trainers

Example: Day 2 of interviewer training

- Definition of household (and dwelling, family, etc.)
- Pictorial of a sample household
- Slide with an empty roster (explain case conventions, encodings, skip patterns, etc.)
- Fill the roster for the sample household (need for legible handwriting, recording of ages, use of a calendar of events, etc.)
- Role playing (trainer as a respondent, simulating borderline cases)
- Role playing (trainees interview each other)