



How inequalities develop through childhood

September 2015

Paul Dornan
paul.dornan@qeh.ox.ac.uk

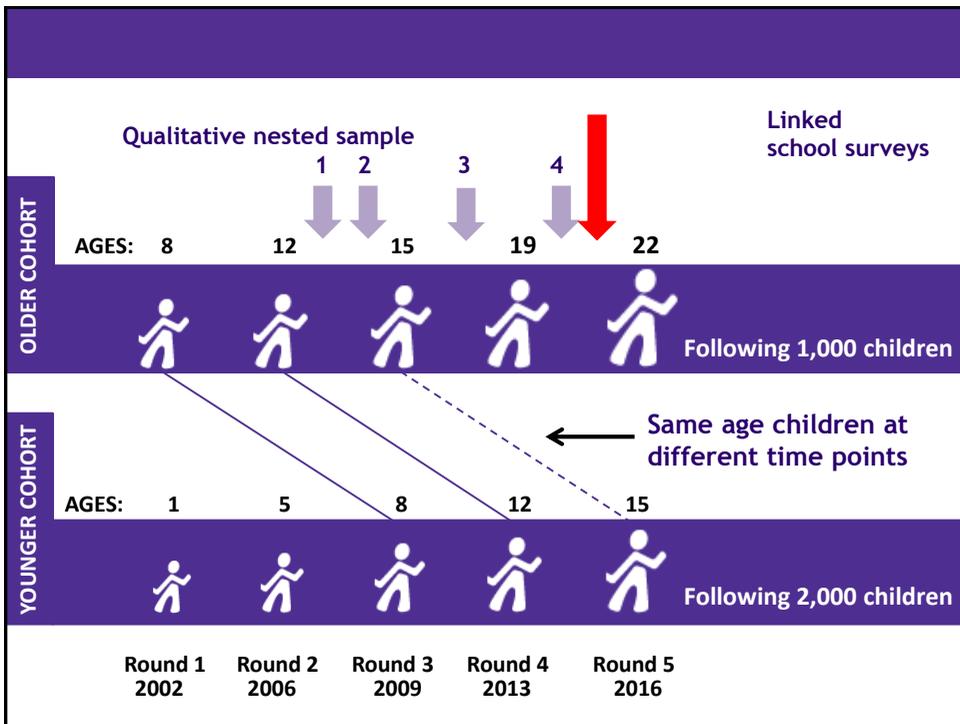
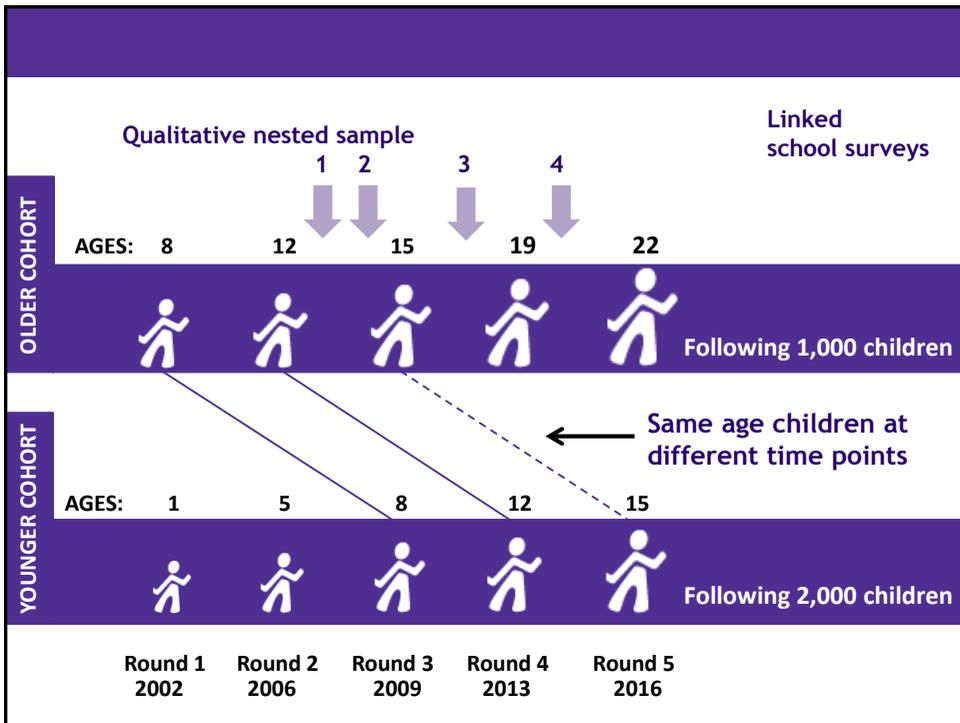
Overview

1. Young Lives study design
2. Three stories
 - Effective policies support multidimensional lives
 - Early intervention is a priority, plus later remediation
 - Identifying critical entry points is a priority to prevent pathways diverging
3. Conclusions

Study design

Study design

1. Four country study with similar instruments used at same age points across Ethiopia, India, Peru and Vietnam
2. Cohort design, with mixed method approach with both qualitative and quantitative data collected.
3. Data collected from child, household members, community and school
4. Acknowledgements:
 - Study participants
 - Funders - including DFID, DGIS, IrishAid, Children's Investment Fund foundation and others
 - Study collaborators



Effective policies support multidimensional lives

Context

1. Problem: children's lives are multidimensional, but siloed service delivery
2. Example: interrelationships between age points in domains of children's development
3. Evidence:
 - fundamental contribution of earlier healthy growth to wider development.
 - important interrelationships between learning and psychosocial development

Interdependent domains

Example: interdependencies between domains of development



	Height at 15 years	Cognitive skills at 15 years	Psychosocial development at 15 years
Height at 12	Predicts later height in four countries	Predicts later learning in three countries	Does not predict later psychosocial development
Cognitive skills at 12	Predict later height in one country only	Predict learning in four countries	Predict later psychosocial development in two countries
Psychosocial development at 12	Does not predict later height	Predicts learning in two countries	Predicts later psychosocial development in one country only

Source: Sanchez, A. (2013) The structural relationship between nutrition, cognition and non-cognitive skills: evidence from four developing countries, Young Lives Working Paper 111

Interdependent domains

Example: interdependencies between domains of development



	Height at 15 years	Cognitive skills at 15 years	Psychosocial development at 15 years
Height at 12	Predicts later height in four countries	Predicts later learning in three countries	Does not predict later psychosocial development
Cognitive skills at 12	Predict later height in one country only	Predict learning in four countries	Predict later psychosocial development in two countries
Psychosocial development at 12	Does not predict later height	Predicts learning in two countries	Predicts later psychosocial development in one country only

Source: Sanchez, A. (2013) The structural relationship between nutrition, cognition and non-cognitive skills: evidence from four developing countries, Young Lives Working Paper 111

Interdependent domains

Example: interdependencies between domains of development



	Height at 15 years	Cognitive skills at 15 years	Psychosocial development at 15 years
Height at 12	Predicts later height in four countries	Predicts later learning in three countries	Does not predict later psychosocial development
Cognitive skills at 12	Predict later height in one country only	Predict learning in four countries	Predict later psychosocial development in two countries
Psychosocial development at 12	Does not predict later height	Predicts learning in two countries	Predicts later psychosocial development in one country only

Source: Sanchez, A. (2013) The structural relationship between nutrition, cognition and non-cognitive skills: evidence from four developing countries, Young Lives Working Paper 111

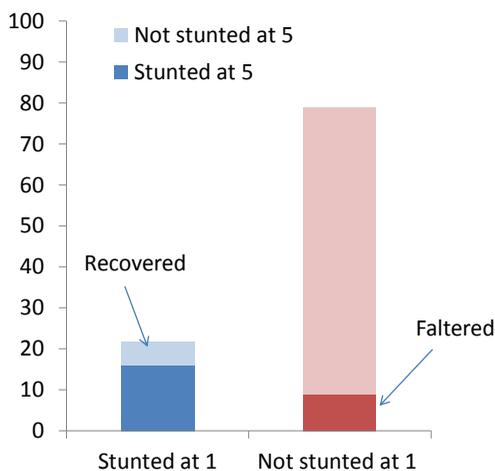
Physical development - early is best but never too late?

Context

1. Problem: high levels of stunting, concentrated among the poorest households. Long term consequence for health and development
2. Example: comparing children's stunting status between 1 and 5 years
3. Evidence:
 - Height trajectories not totally 'fixed' infancy, both recovery and stunting happen
 - Positive change has been associated with learning gains

Change in height status post infancy

Example: change in height for age status between 1 year and 5 years, Vietnam



Why?

Factors which seem important -

- Mothers height
- Household socio-economic status
- Policy - school feeding programmes
- Infrastructure

Lundeen et al (2013) 'Growth faltering and recovery in children aged 1-8 years in four low - and middle income countries: Young Lives', Public Health Nutrition

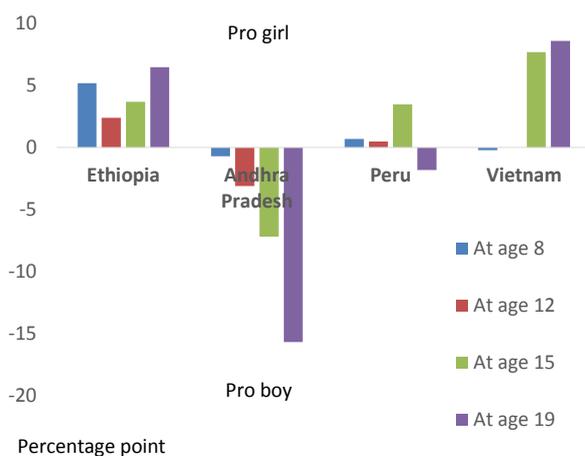
Identifying critical entry points as a priority to prevent pathways diverging

Context

1. Problem: considerable concern about gender inequities, key question about how these come about
2. Example: how education enrolment rate changes with age for boys and girls
3. Evidence:
 - Small gaps in early childhood, gaps grow through adolescence
 - Not always pro-boy.

HOW, WHEN AND WHY GENDER INEQUITIES FORM

Gender gaps in enrolment by age



Why?

Decision making - by households and children - over who stays in school shaped by:

- > economic pressures
- > institutional structural
- > socio-cultural context

Conclusions

- Cross sectional data necessary but not sufficient to evaluate what matters
- Key contributions of longitudinal data
 1. Link earlier circumstances and later outcomes to understand how child development is shaped
 2. To identify change in children's lives, to inform the timing of interventions
- Survey data publically archived, lots of working papers on website

Thank you!

Study website: www.younglives.org.uk

Dornan, P and Woodhead, M, 2015, 'How inequalities develop through childhood: Life course evidence from the Young Lives cohort study', Florence: UNICEF Office of Research

Young Lives, 2015, 'What can longitudinal research tell us about children's life-chances?' Technical note

Systematic and life course differences in the ways in which services are experienced

Example: access to preschool, entrance and exit from formal school in Andhra Pradesh

