

Universals (?) & Intervention in Early Childhood

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PLENARY SESSION

*From Research to Practice: International
Perspectives on Early Childhood*

Head Start's 10th National Research Conference
Washington
22 June 2010



HUMAN TOUCH

Outline

- Every child is different & every child is the same
- Children in the West – and the Rest?
- Poor children → poor development
- The important early years
- Interventions to promote survival, health & development

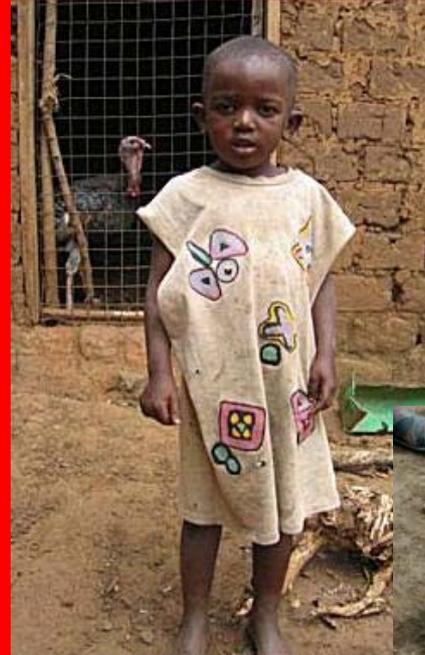
Richter, L. (2010). Global perspectives on the wellbeing of children. In C. Worthman, P. Plotsky, D. Schechter & C. Cummings (Eds), *Formative Experiences: The Interaction of Caregiving, Culture, and Developmental Psychobiology*. New York: Cambridge University Press

Children – Same & Different

Oslo, Norway
No 1 HDI



Freetown, Sierra Leone
No 177 HDI



Children in the West & the Rest

- Advances in, and quantity/quality of, scholarship in the West
- The Rest comprise 90% of all children
- Studying the Rest enables us
 - To see ourselves
 - Try to understand the interface of biology and culture

William Easterly (2006). *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Help the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good*. Penguin

Poor Children – Poor Development

- 6m children die from preventable disease each year
- 30 000 children die from poverty daily
- 1995 – Robert Myers 12 of 13 children will turn 1 year old
- Continue to live in the same conditions
- And **develop in compromised ways**

200 Million Children

- The Lancet series “child development” (2007) – **do not reach their potential**
- Stunting and poverty
 - Correlational studies → lower IQ, poor school performance
 - Longitudinal studies
 - Effect sizes of 1SD, equivalent to 0 IQ points
 - Stunting → 1 grade of schooling
 - Stunting and poverty → 2 grades of schooling

Grantham-McGregor S, Cheung Y, Cueto S, Glewe P, Richter L & Strupp B (2007). Developmental potential in the first 5 years for children in developing countries. *The Lancet*, 369, 60-70.

Cohorts

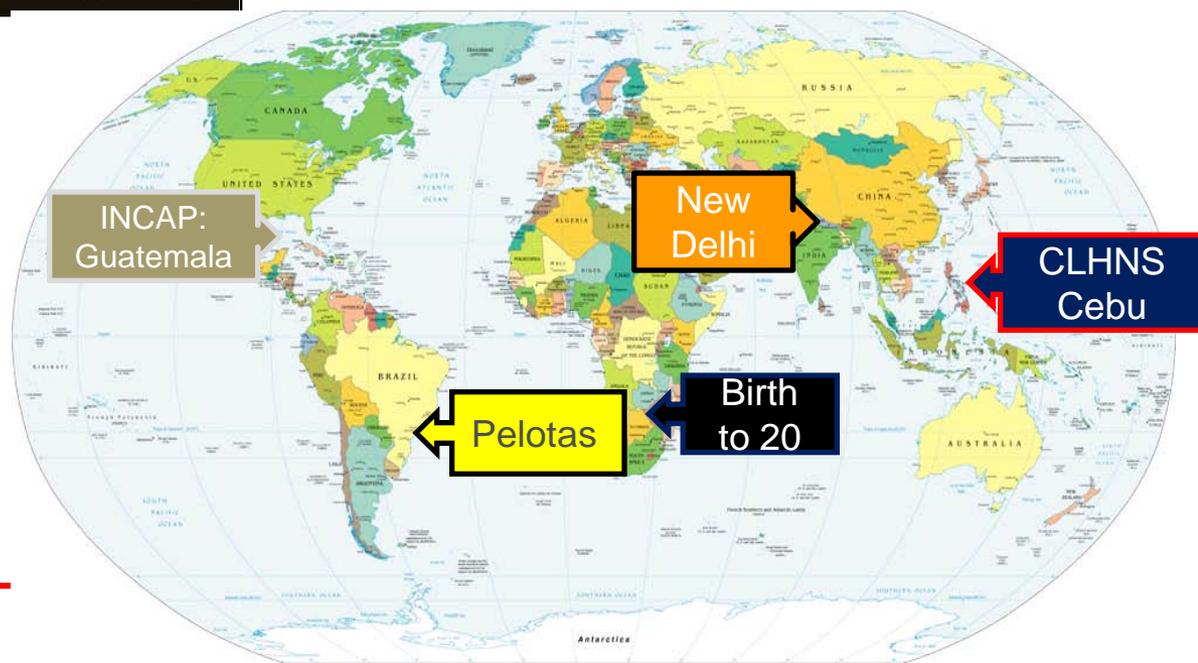
Consortium of Health Oriented Research in Transitioning Societies



The largest and longest running birth cohort studies in low- and middle-income countries

Followed up from birth to between 20 and 41 years

Pooled data analyses



Findings : Undernutrition

- Length in 1st year (not later) associated with **adult height**
- Growth in first 2 years (not 2-4y) → loss of 1y **schooling** (adjusted for confounders)
- Adult height → 8% increase in **income**
- Inter-generational effects on **birthweight**

Victora C, Adair L, Fall C, Hallal P, Martorell R, Richter L et al (2008). Maternal and child undernutrition: Consequences for adult health and human capital. *The Lancet*, 371, 340-357.

Martorell R, Horta B, Adair L, Stein A, Richter L (in press). Weight gain in the first two years of life is an important predictor of schooling outcomes in pooled analyses from five birth cohorts in low- and middle –income countries. *Journal of Nutrition*

Birth to Twenty (Bt20)

3 same-aged girls
at 15



Effective Interventions

- INCAP supplement in first 3 years → effects over 25 years
 - Higher **cognitive scores**
 - More years of **schooling**
 - 45% **higher earnings**
- Supplementation after 3y → NO EFFECTS

Hoddintot J, Maluccio J, Behrman J, Flores R & Martorell R (2008). Effect of a nutrition intervention during early childhood on economic productivity in Guatemalan adults. *The Lancet* 371, 411-416

A Worsening Situation

- 1 in 5 people (1.1b) live on <\$1 per day
- Half of all people (3b) live on <\$2
- 11 countries (10 in Africa) – 1 in 5 children die before age 5
- 18 countries (12 in Sub-Saharan Africa) slipped backwards on HDI

Basic Interventions

- Social protection, income transfers for the poorest and most destitute people
- Stop burgeoning institutionalization in Africa (as a consequence of AIDS and war)
- Strengthen families
- Support affectionate care of children

Promoting Care - Video

- Angola, civil war (1990's), displaced rural people flee to the cities
- Feeding centres for malnourished children
- International Child Development Programmes (ICDP)
- Promote emotional contact and human communication



ICDP

International Child
Development Programmes

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Thank you!