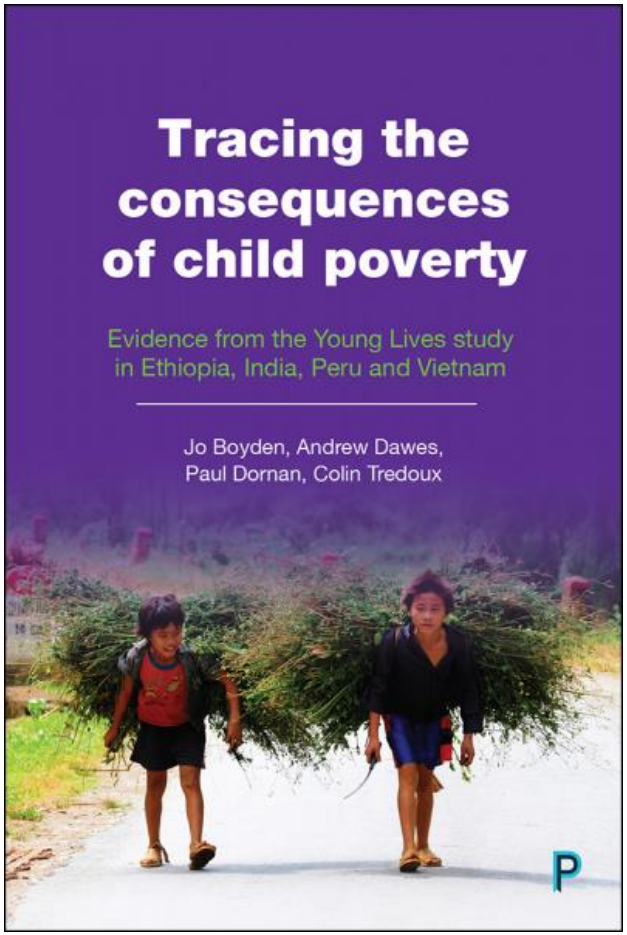
OXFORD DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Young Lives
An International Study of Childhood Poverty



'LAUNCH' PRESENTATION

Andy Dawes & Colin Tredoux
Discussant: Viviene Taylor

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

APRIL 10th 2019

https://policy.bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/tracing-the-consequences-of-child-poverty

Or tinyurl.com/young-lives-book

OVERVIEW

1. Welcome and process
2. Film: Introduction to the young Lives Study: Prof Jo Boyden
3. Film: Tracing the consequences of child poverty animation video that tells (mostly) all
4. Young Lives Design and Methods
5. Key Findings
6. Key Policy Recommendations
7. Discussant: Professor Viviene Taylor
8. Discussion

KEY PLAYERS IN THE YOUNG LIVES CAST

JO BOYDEN
DIRECTOR

PAUL DORNAN
CHIEF POLICY OFFICER

NGUYEN THANG
CD VIETNAM

ALAN SANCHEZ
CD PERU

MARTIN WOODHEAD
ASSOC DIRECTOR

RENU SINGH
CD INDIA

ALULA PANKHURST
CD ETHIOPIA

Introduction to the Young Lives study

Prof Jo Boyden

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p08yWI43A6c

Video

Tracing the Consequences of Child Poverty

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UvX2ewv3jdA

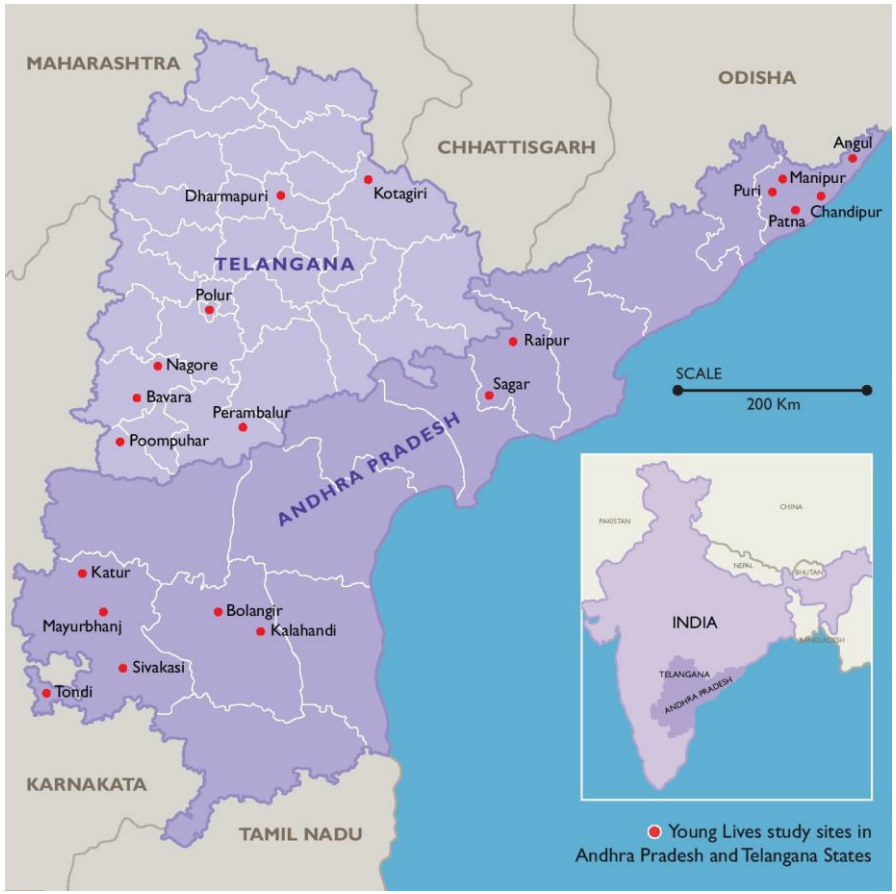
STUDY DESIGN AND METHODS

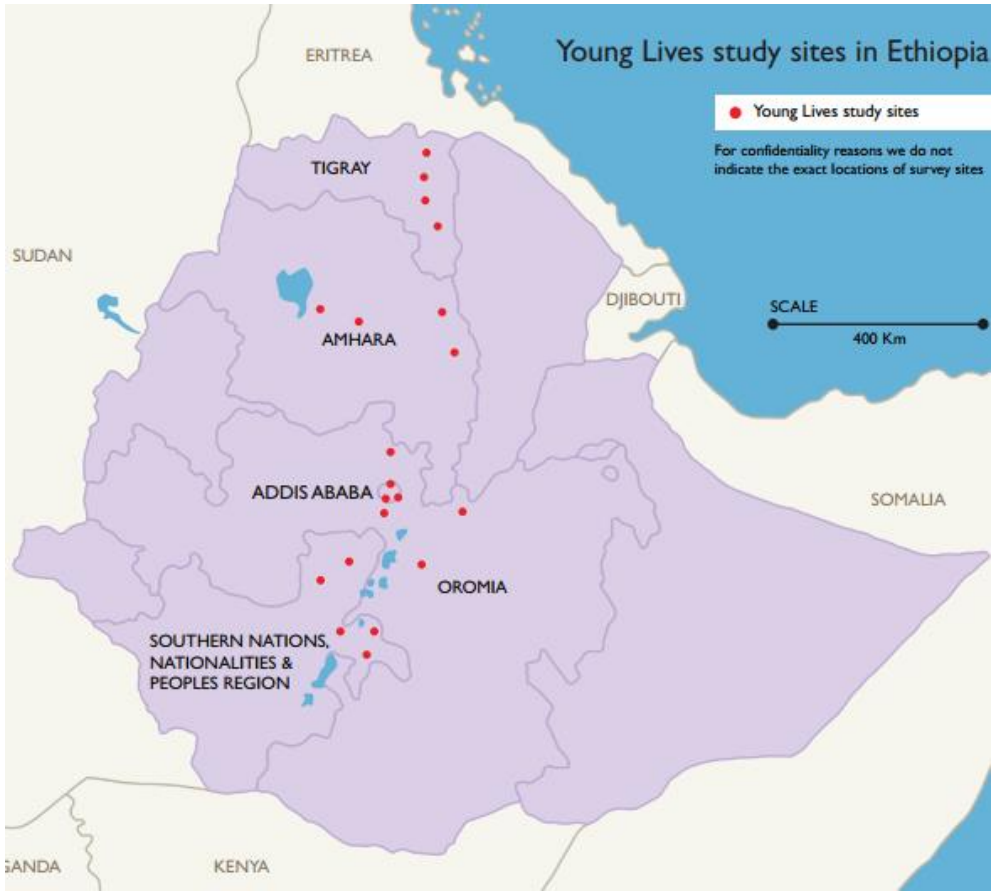
Sentinel site samples in each country

A **sentinel research site** represents a certain type of population; is expected to show typical trends affecting that group or area

1. 20 compact sentinel sites purposively selected in each country for intensive study at level of **houshold**, individual **child**, **community** and **school**
2. Each site: Random selection of Households
   - **100** with a child born in 2001-02 (Younger Cohort)
   - **50** with a child born in 1994-95 (Older Cohort)
3. Poor households oversampled

Country sentinel sites: India & Ethiopia



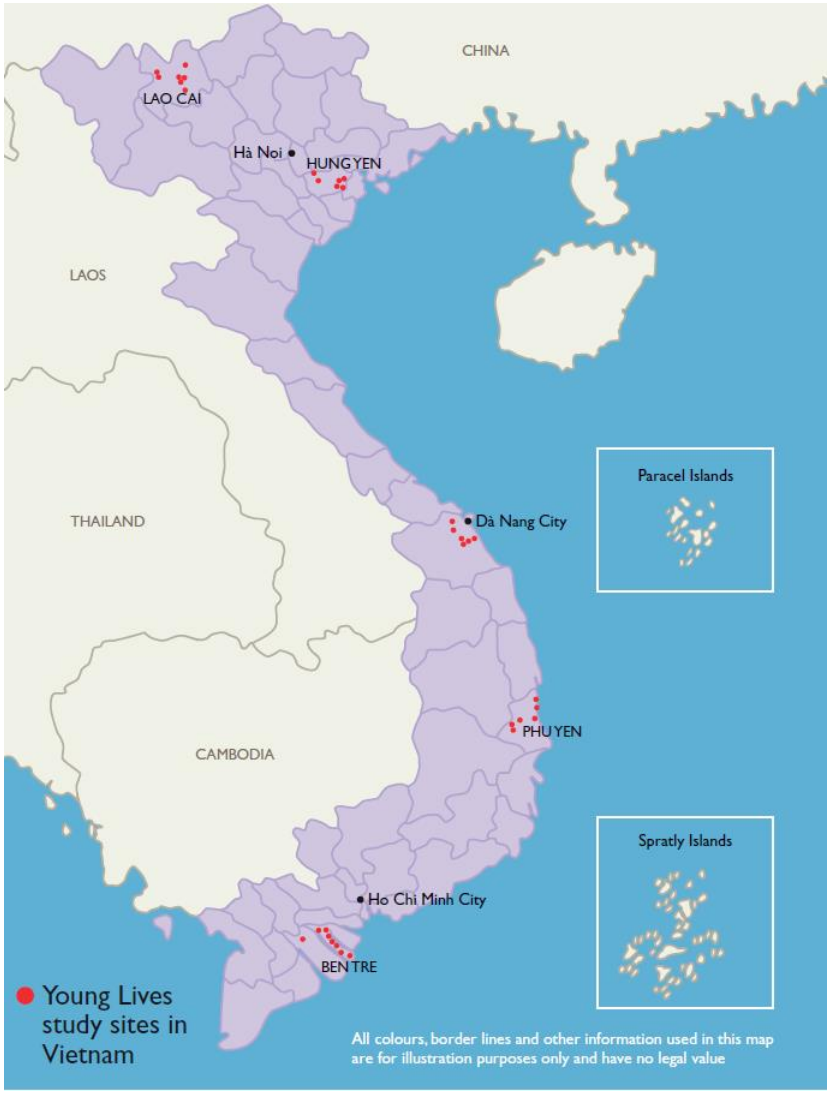


MAIN CHILD TEST LANGUAGES: Telugu
English

MAIN CHILD TEST LANGUAGES: Amharic
Oromifa Tigrinya (many others)

Country sentinel sites: Peru & Vietnam

MAIN CHILD TEST LANGUAGES: Castellano Quechua



MAIN CHILD TEST LANGUAGES: Vietnamese (54 OTHERS)

Value of a cross-national cohort study

Cross-national research is valuable, even indispensable, for establishing the validity of interpretations derived from single-nation studies.

In no other way can we be certain that what we believe to be social-structural regularities are not merely particularities, the product of some limited set of historical or cultural or political circumstances.

Kohn (1987: 713) (*External Validity)*

Value of studying within-country variation

Comparisons within countries (like **NIDS**) of:

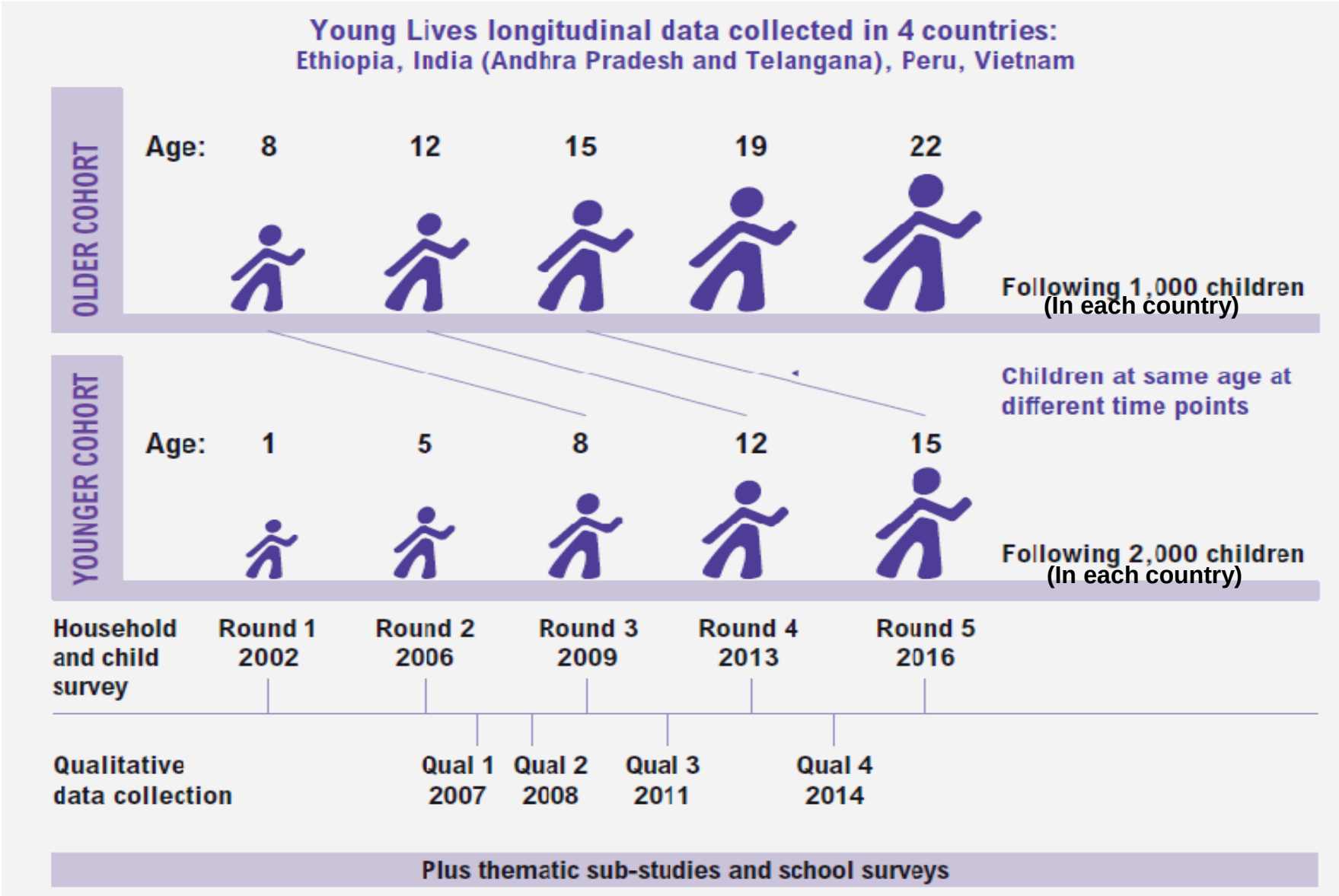
1. Wealthier and poorer households
2. Urban / Rural / Region
3. Static and migrant families and children
4. Ethnic majority and minority children
5. Girls and boys

Developmental science and longitudinal studies

Longitudinal cohort data:

- Permits in-depth exploration, over time, of the developmental outcomes for children exposed to multiple deprivations and stressors.
- Provides insight into factors that enable children to thrive despite the odds.
- Informs actions that need to be taken to reduce the impact of disadvantage and realise the SDGs.

Cross-sequential cohort design



Study attrition and deaths 2002-2016

	Younger Cohort		Older Cohort	
	Attrition	Deaths	Attrition	Deaths
Ethiopia	5.3	4.3	17.7	1.1
India (UAP)	3.7	2.3	7.6	1.7
Peru	8.2	1.2	14.1	0.8
Vietnam	2.5	0.7	8.6	0.3

Percentages of 2002 sample

Conceptual framework
Ecological / systems & life course development

Societal context

Household context

Children's development: key development periods and transitions

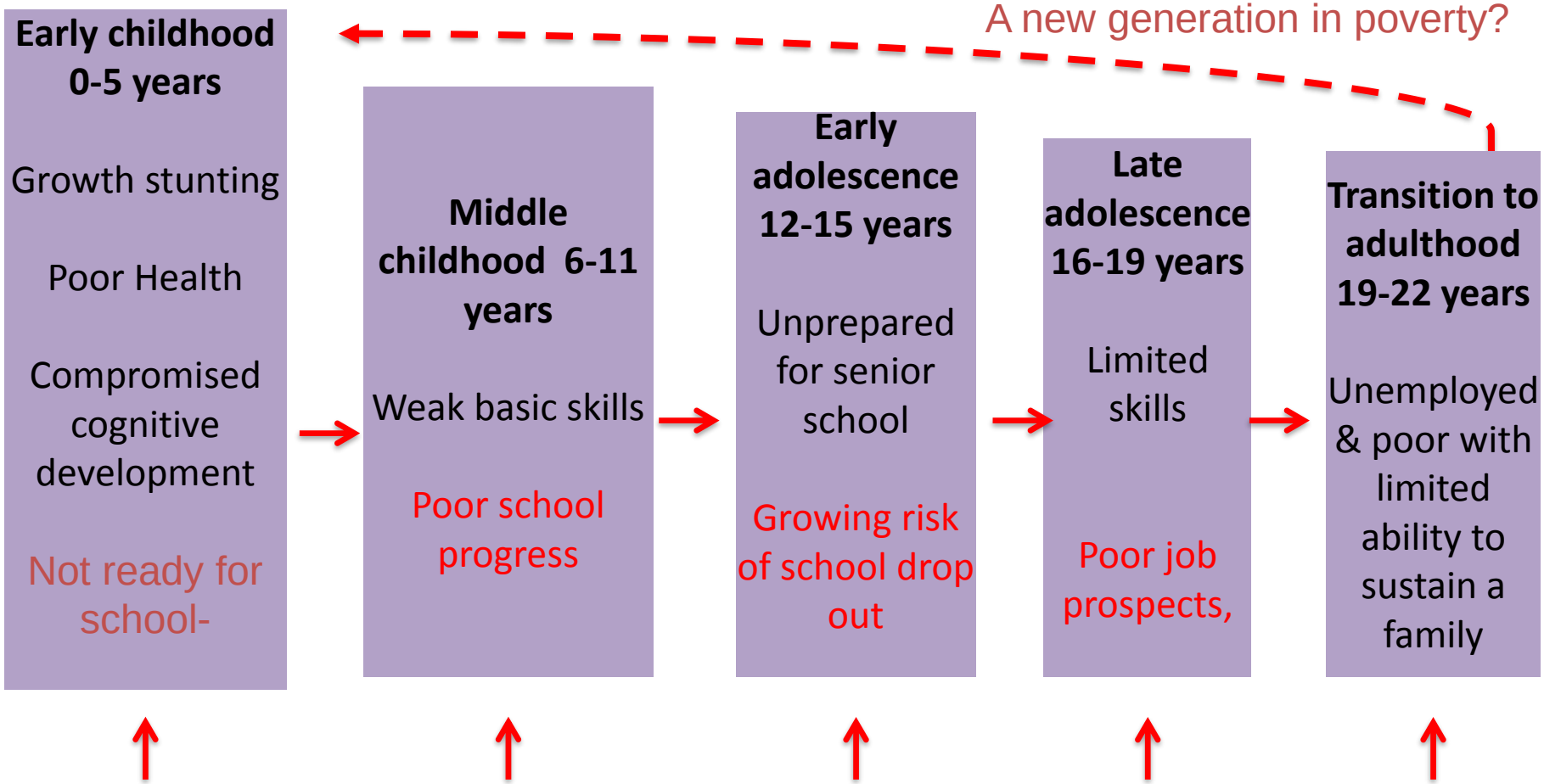
Institutional context (esp. school)

Impact of events moderated by protective factors

Life Events
Family ill-health
Death
Livelihood change

Nature of events shaped by contexts

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: DEVELOPMENTAL CASCADE



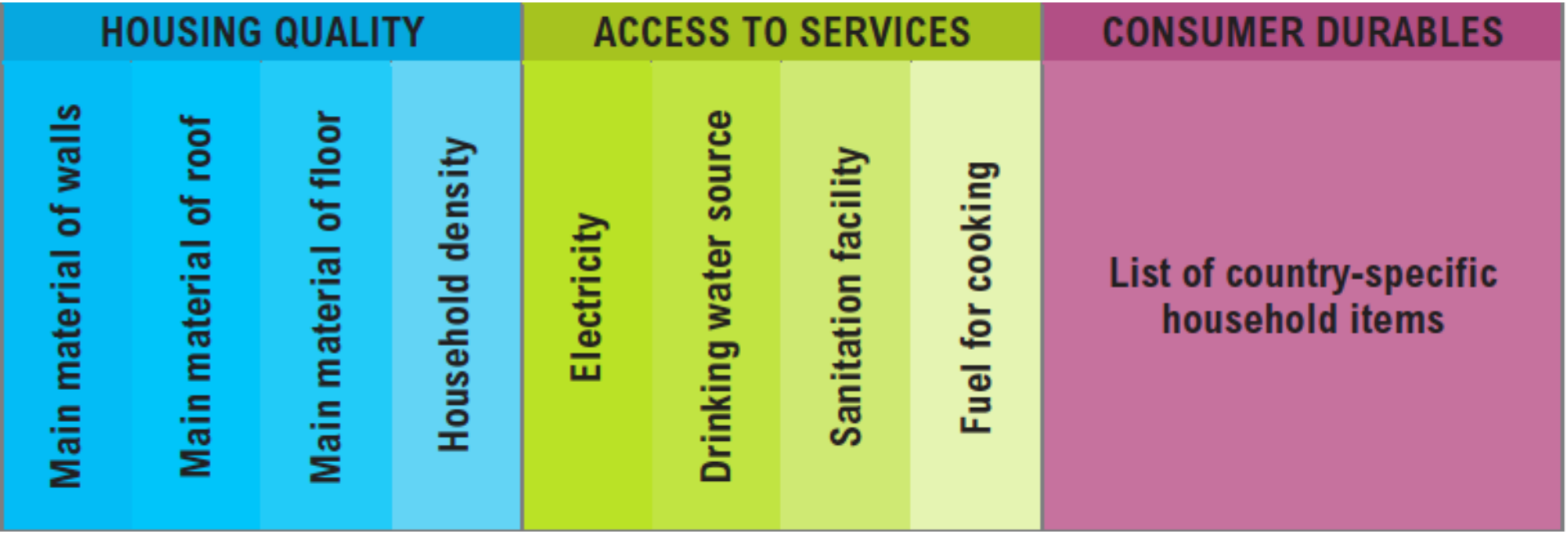
Household Context: Poverty; food insecurity; family stress; shocks

Policy &Institutional Context: Inadequate access to social protection; Weak basic services; Limited opportunities to learn and progress in school; Poor public health services

Main measures considered here

- Wealth Index
- Child growth Height for Age Z Score (WHO)
- Language Development:
  - Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) (5,8,12,15yrs)
  - Comprehension (8 & 15yrs)
- Cognitive Development Assessment (CDA) (5yrs)
- Young Lives Mathematics Tests

Young Lives Wealth Index



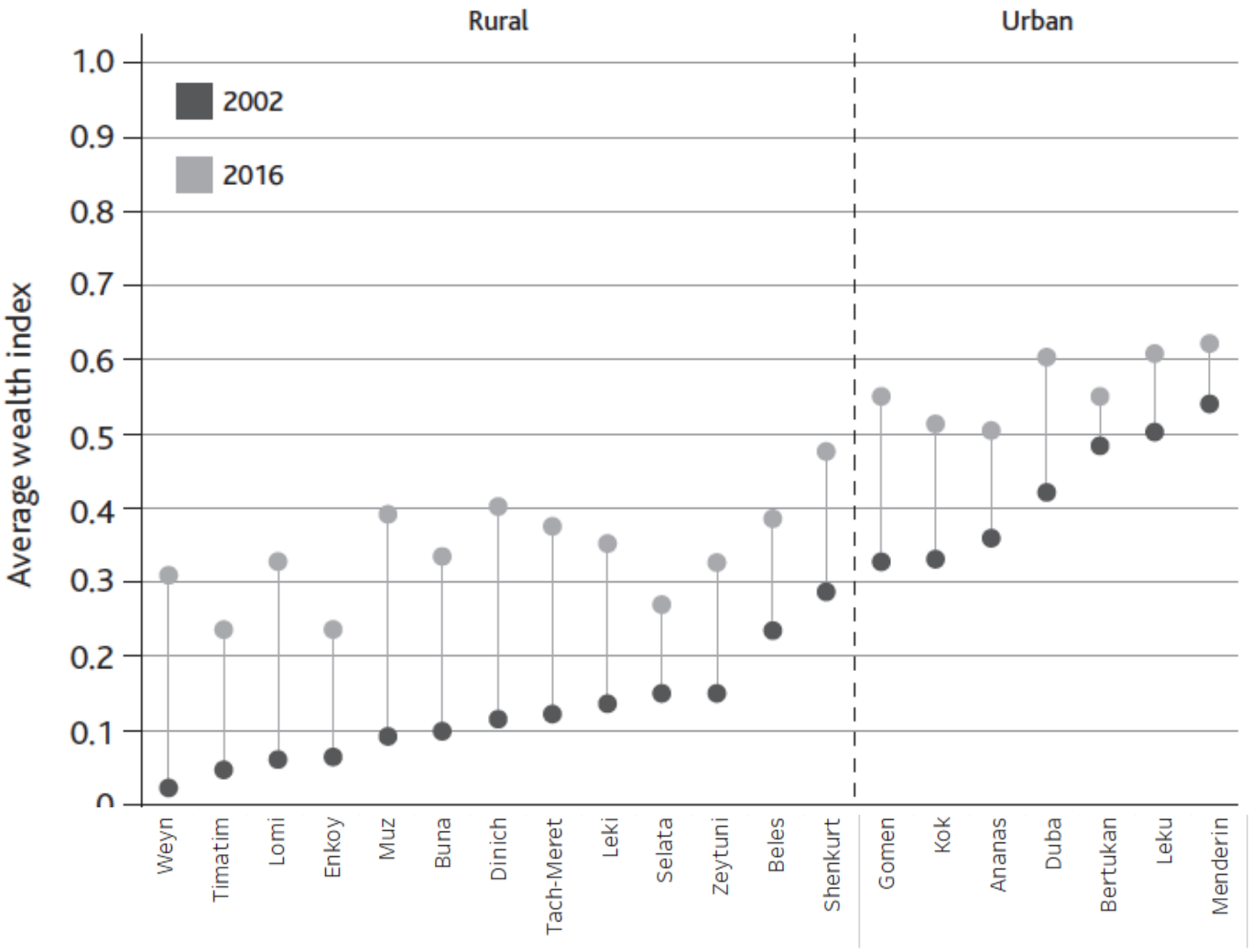
$$\text{WEALTH INDEX} = \frac{\text{HOUSING QUALITY} + \text{ACCESS TO SERVICES} + \text{CONSUMER DURABLES}}{3}$$

Briones, C. (2017). How many rooms are there in your house? Constructing the Young Lives Wealth Index. *Young Lives Technical Note, 43.*

TRACING THE CONSEQUENCES OF CHILD POVERTY

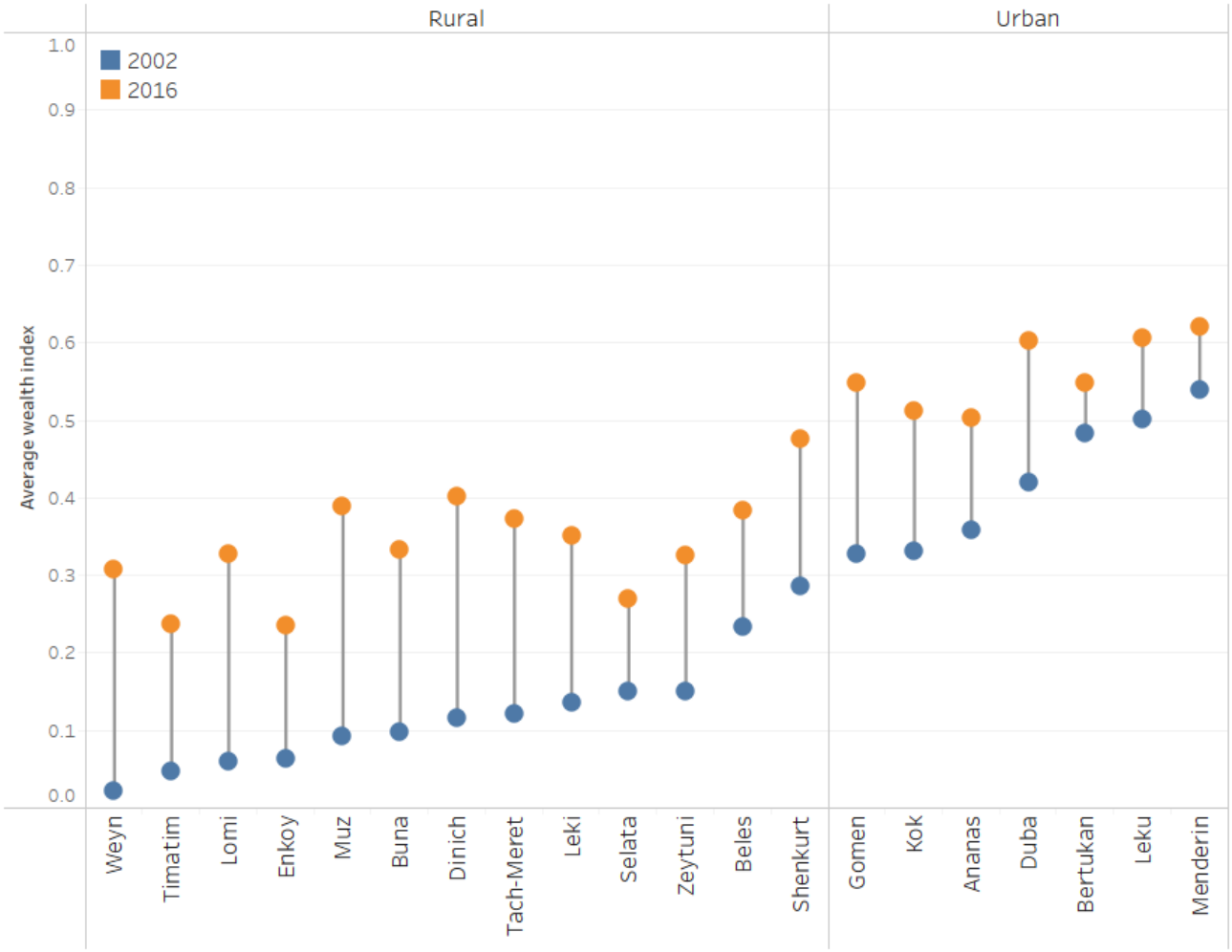
KEY FINDINGS

Wealth levels improve but relative positions remain static: eg Ethiopia



COHORT FAMILIES COMBINED

Improving material conditions but ongoing disparities (Ethiopian communities)



It is very sad to talk about our toilet. There is no toilet in the compound and near our house so we are supposed to walk 3–5 minutes and pay 0.25 cents to use one. This might be tolerable for adults but it is very difficult for children.

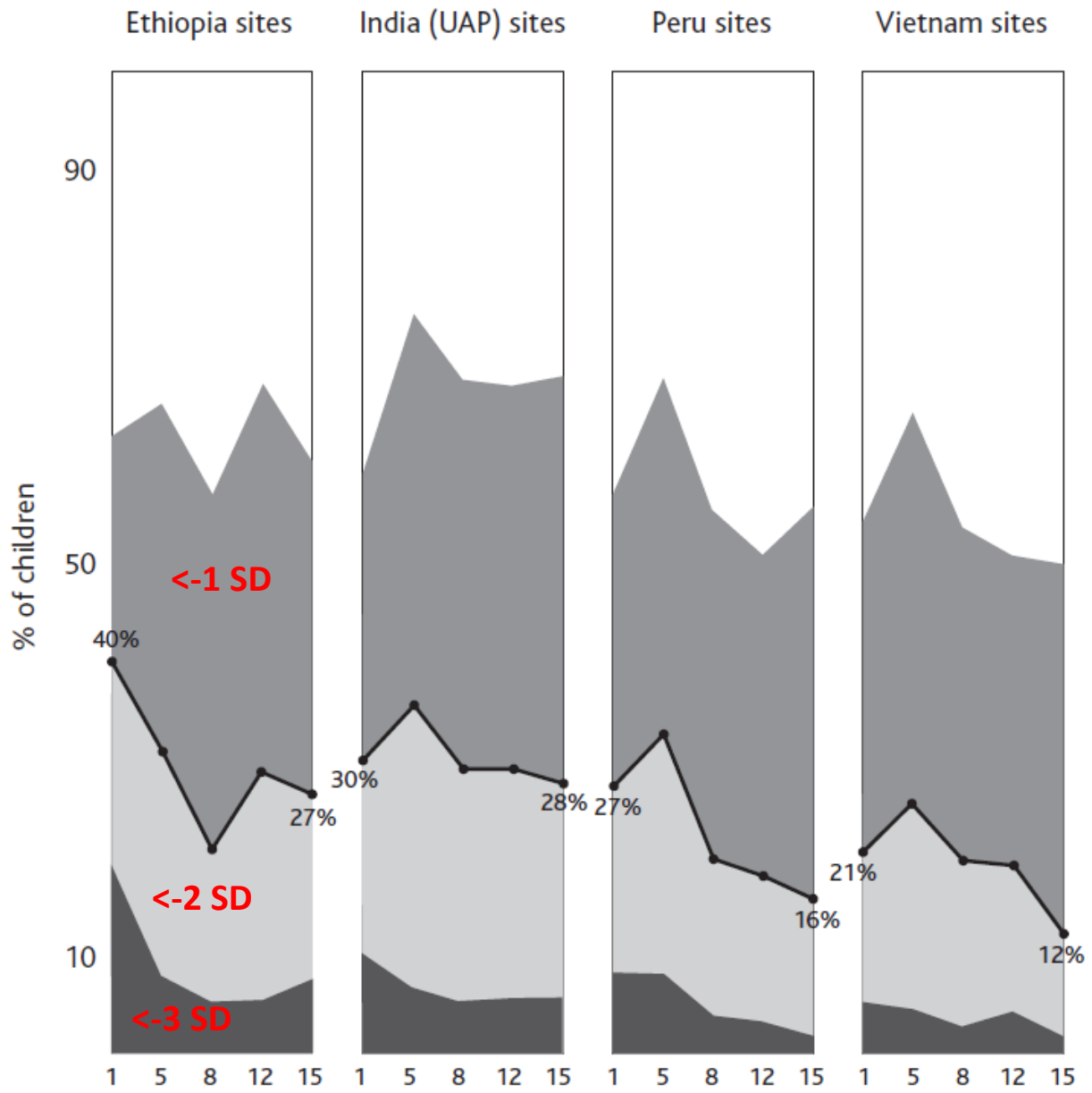
Mother, urban Ethiopia

A KEY ADVANTAGE OF THIS LONGITUDINAL STUDY:

We could measure physical growth status

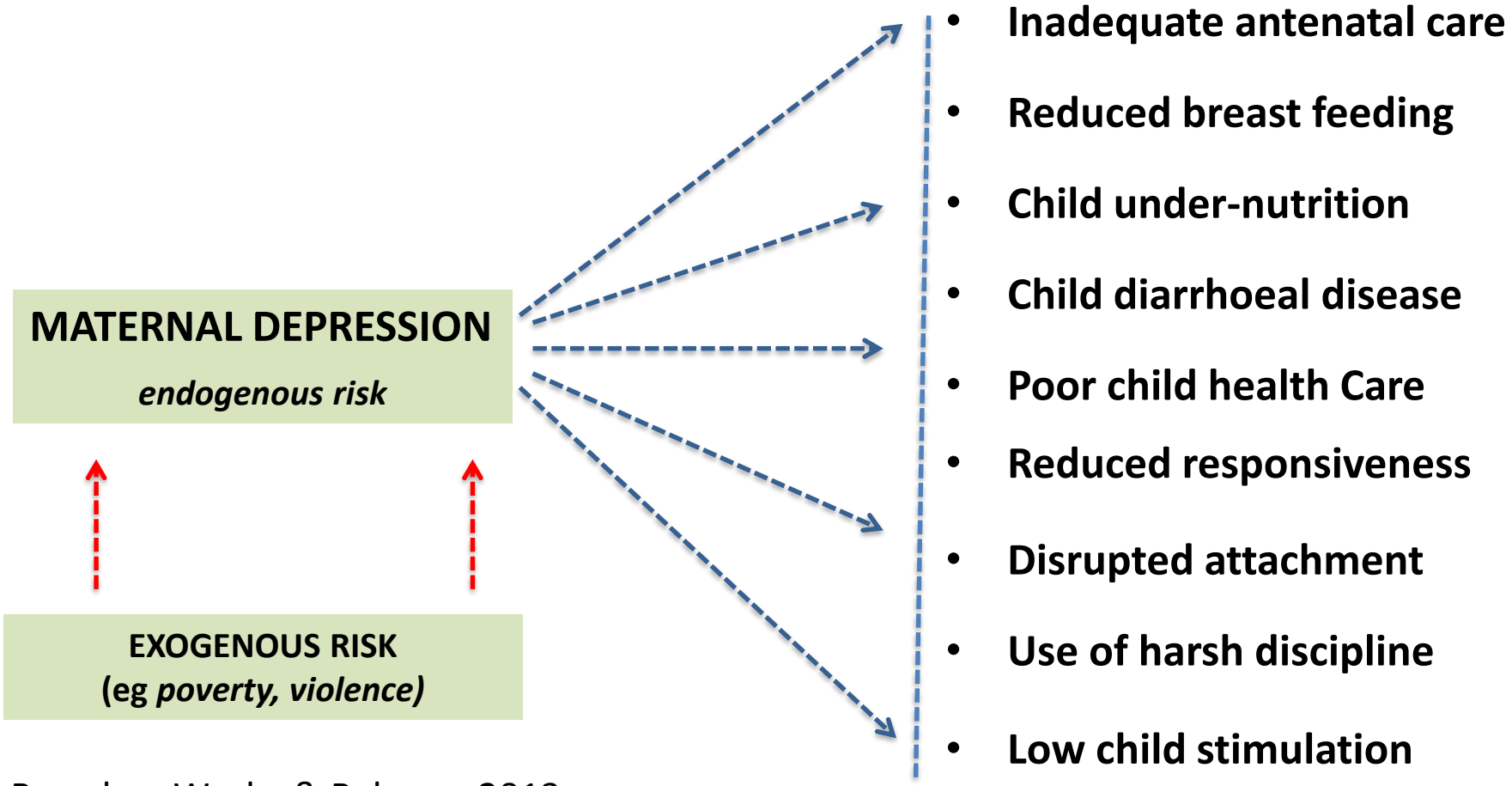
GROWTH STUNTING (Height for Age < 2 SD below WHO reference median)

Stunting rates : 1-15 years



Key Finding: Poverty predicts risk for maternal depression in early childhood

Maternal depression, in turn, predicts stunting and later cognitive deficit



Based on Wachs & Rahman 2013

Correlates of growth recovery

Post-infancy recovery is associated with 4 factors:

- maternal height
- poverty level
- social protection measures
- sanitation and health services.

Post-infancy recovery is associated with a key human capital outcome:

Poor performance on **maths** and **vocabulary** tests (at 8yrs and 12yrs) is not determined by early stunting (those who were never stunted do best of all).

EDUCATION

(Young Lives Household and School Effectiveness surveys)

Generational shift in access to school

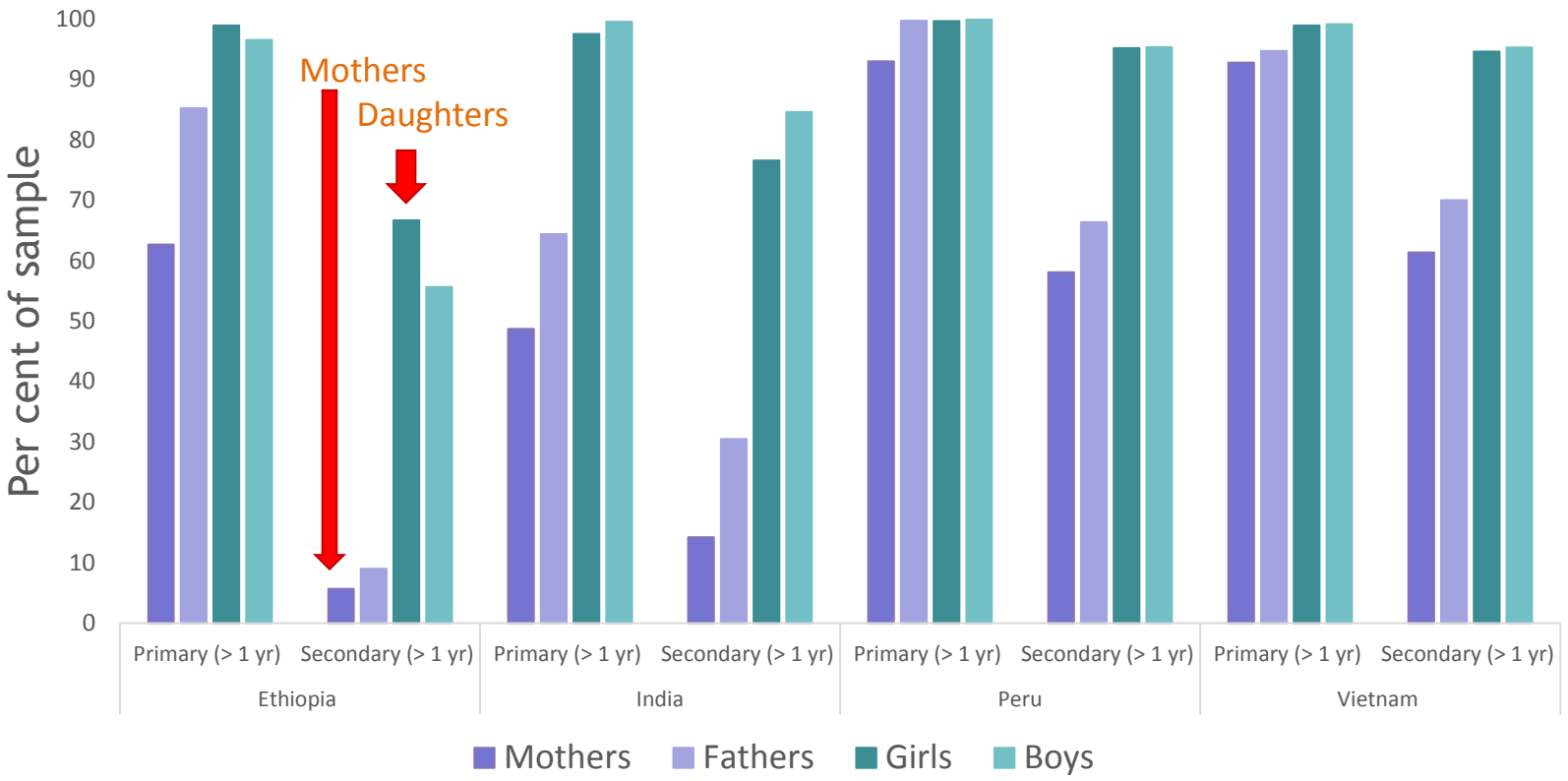
If one can learn and study hard, they will always have a good job

Girl, Ethiopia

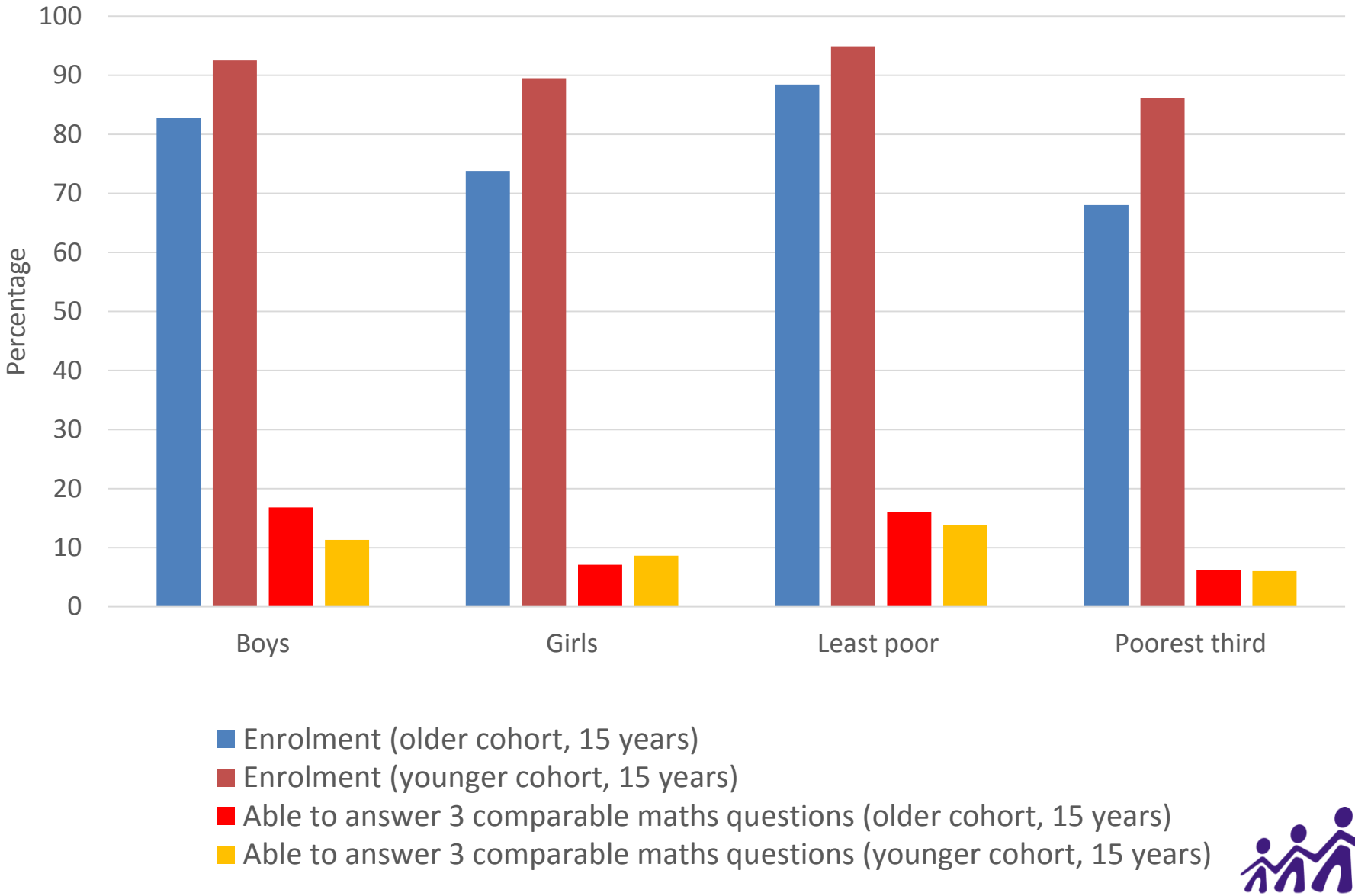
We're not going to suffer like this in the mud … it's better that I go and study.

Girl, rural Peru

More 22 year olds have been educated than their caregivers, and for longer

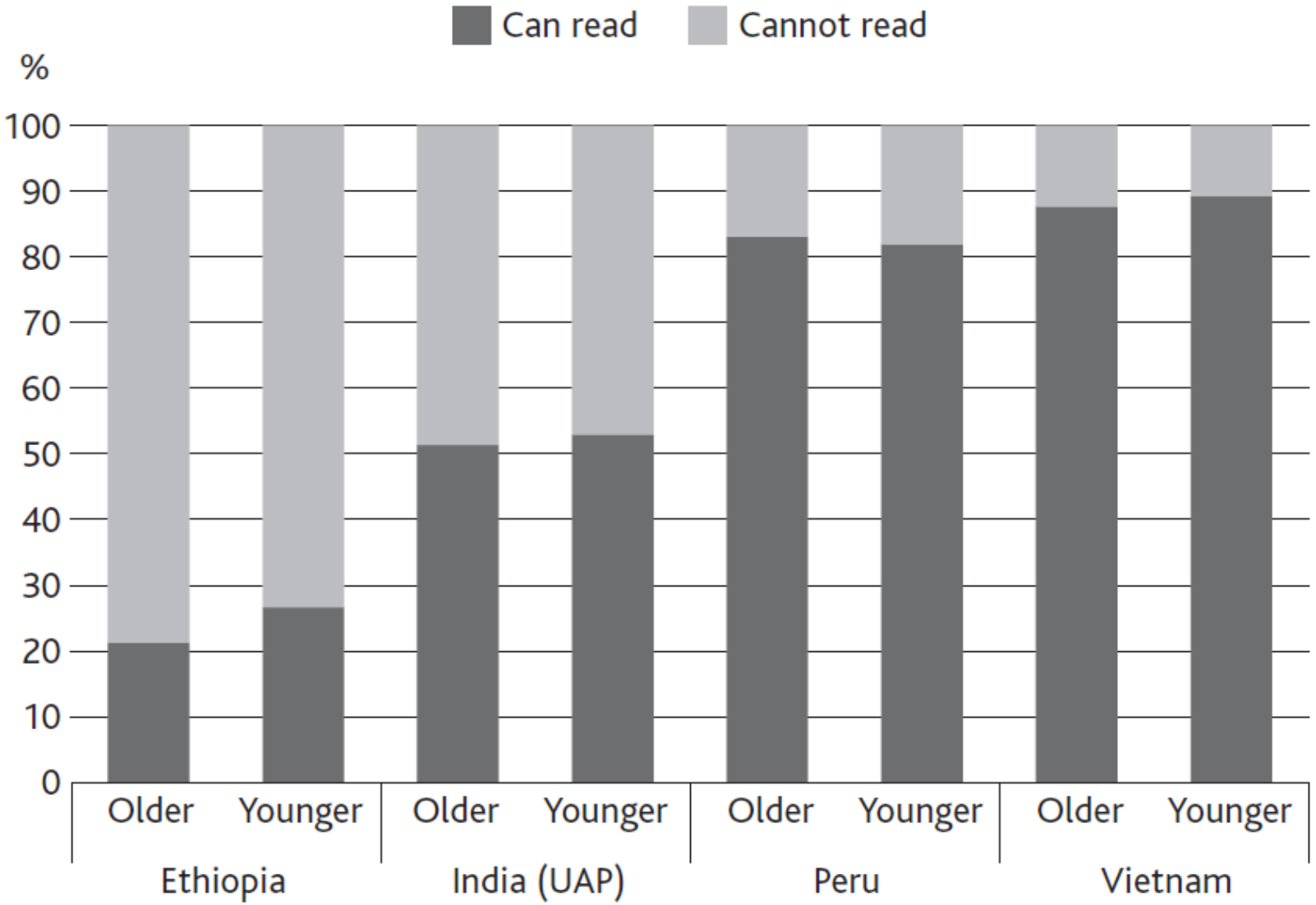


Pro-poor access, but access isn't learning (India)



Reading levels at age 8 yrs - not a lot of change

Older cohort 2002 and Younger cohort 2009



Characteristics of classrooms that add value
Vietnam

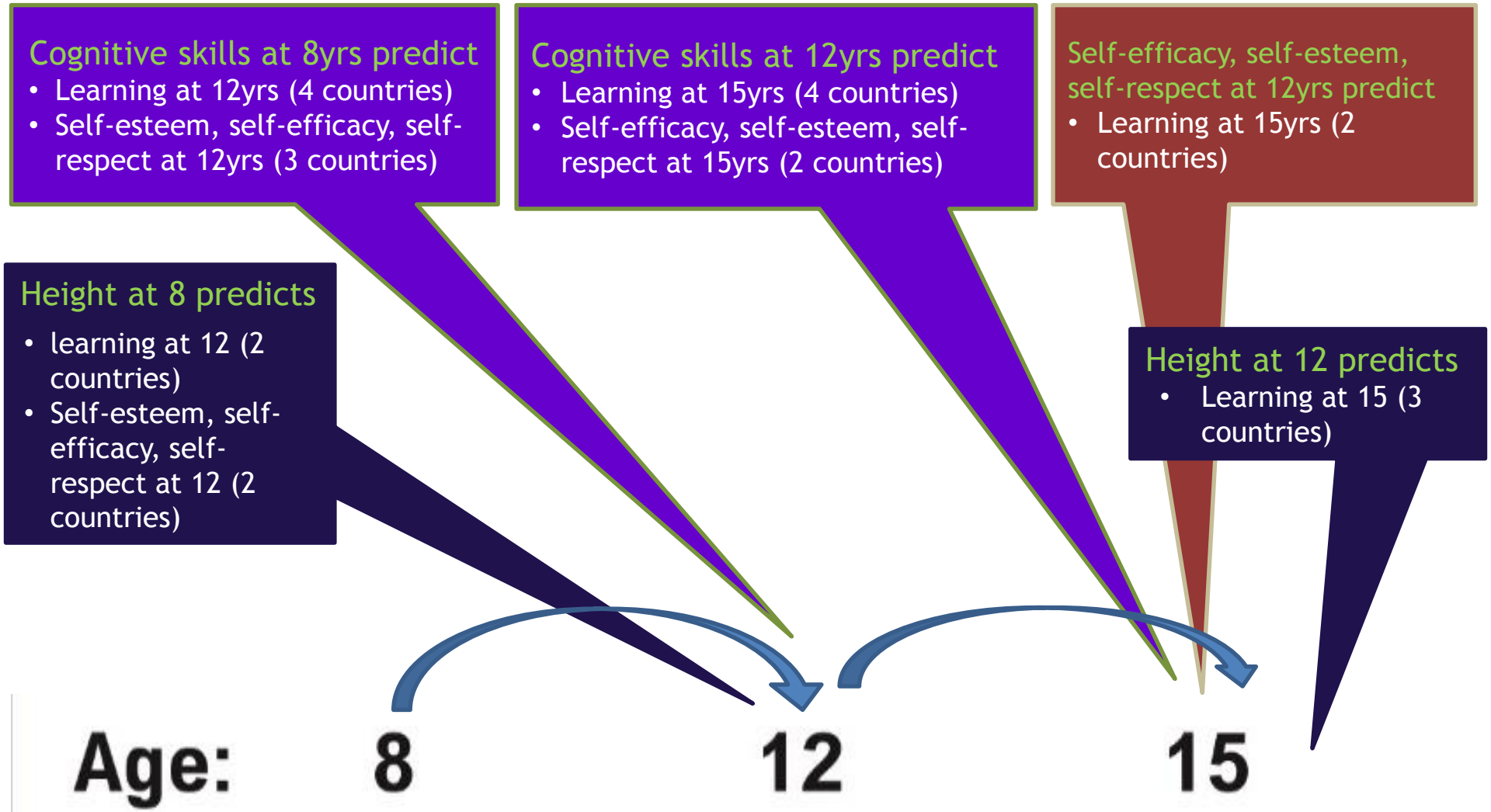
1. Better classroom and teaching resources
2. Teachers better trained
3. Teachers more committed to teaching
4. Teachers evaluated more frequently
5. Teachers less likely to have work outside school
6. Teachers believed they could make a difference
7. Teachers less likely to believe background / ethnicity dominates children's ability to learn

DEVELOPMENTAL CASCADES

Influences on development across childhood and adolescence

Young Lives evidence

A positive cascade across linked domains



Sources: Sanchez (2013); Dornan and Woodhead (2015)

Predictors of completing secondary school
Early learning & caregiver education

Example 1: India (UAP)

More likely to complete secondary school if:

- a boy
- can read at age 8
- sense of self-efficacy at age 12
- father educated to secondary school level
- not undertaking paid work, or having less than 3 hours of unpaid work at age 12

Example 2: Vietnam

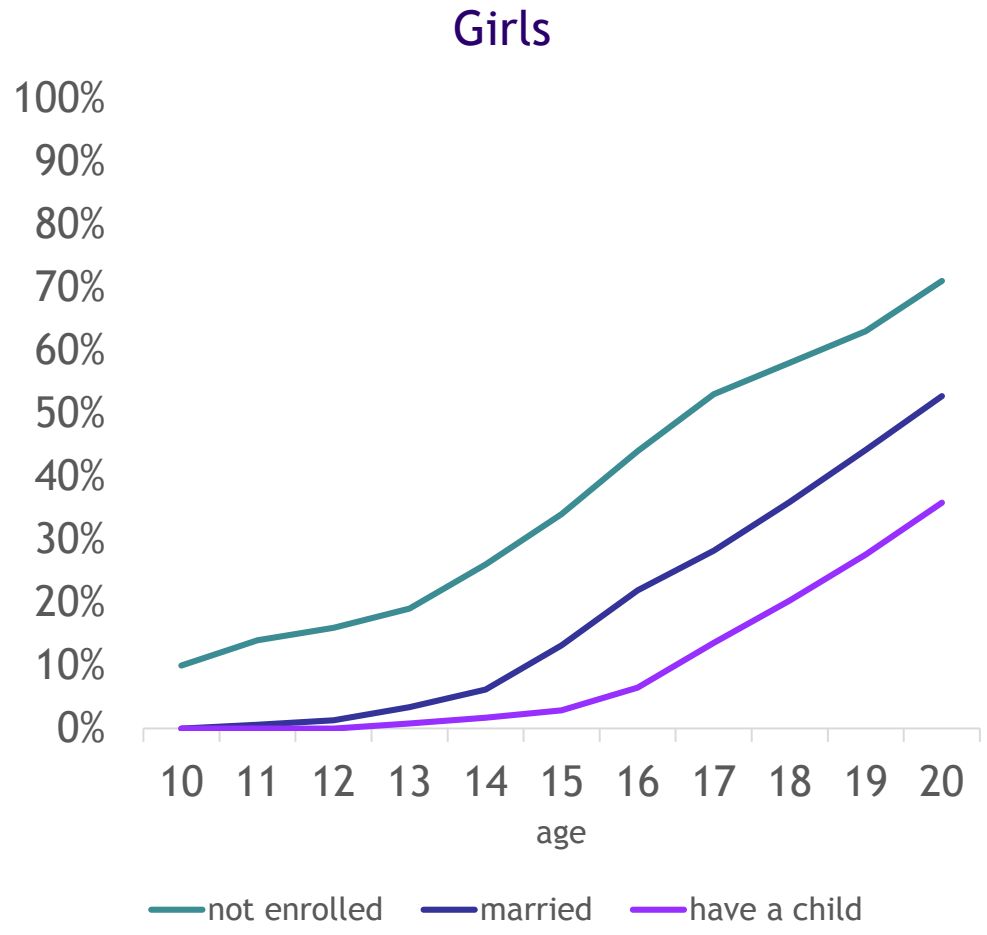
More likely to complete lower secondary education level if:

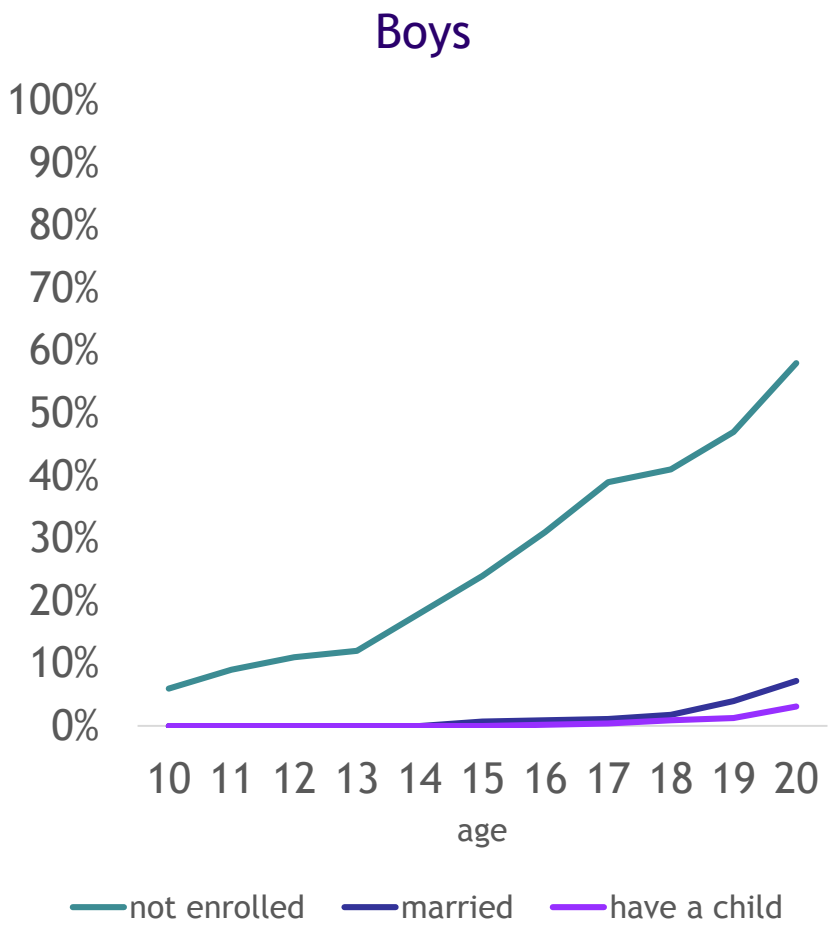
- performed well in tests at age 12
- household had more assets and higher consumption expenditure
- caregivers completed at least lower secondary education

Source: Singh and Mukherjee (2015); Duc and Tham (2013)

Gender makes a difference

School-leaving, marriage and parenthood: evidence from India





Source: Briones (2017)

WHAT MATTERS AND WHEN?

Modelling language and quantitative ability longitudinally in the 4 Young Lives countries

How to integrate complex findings?

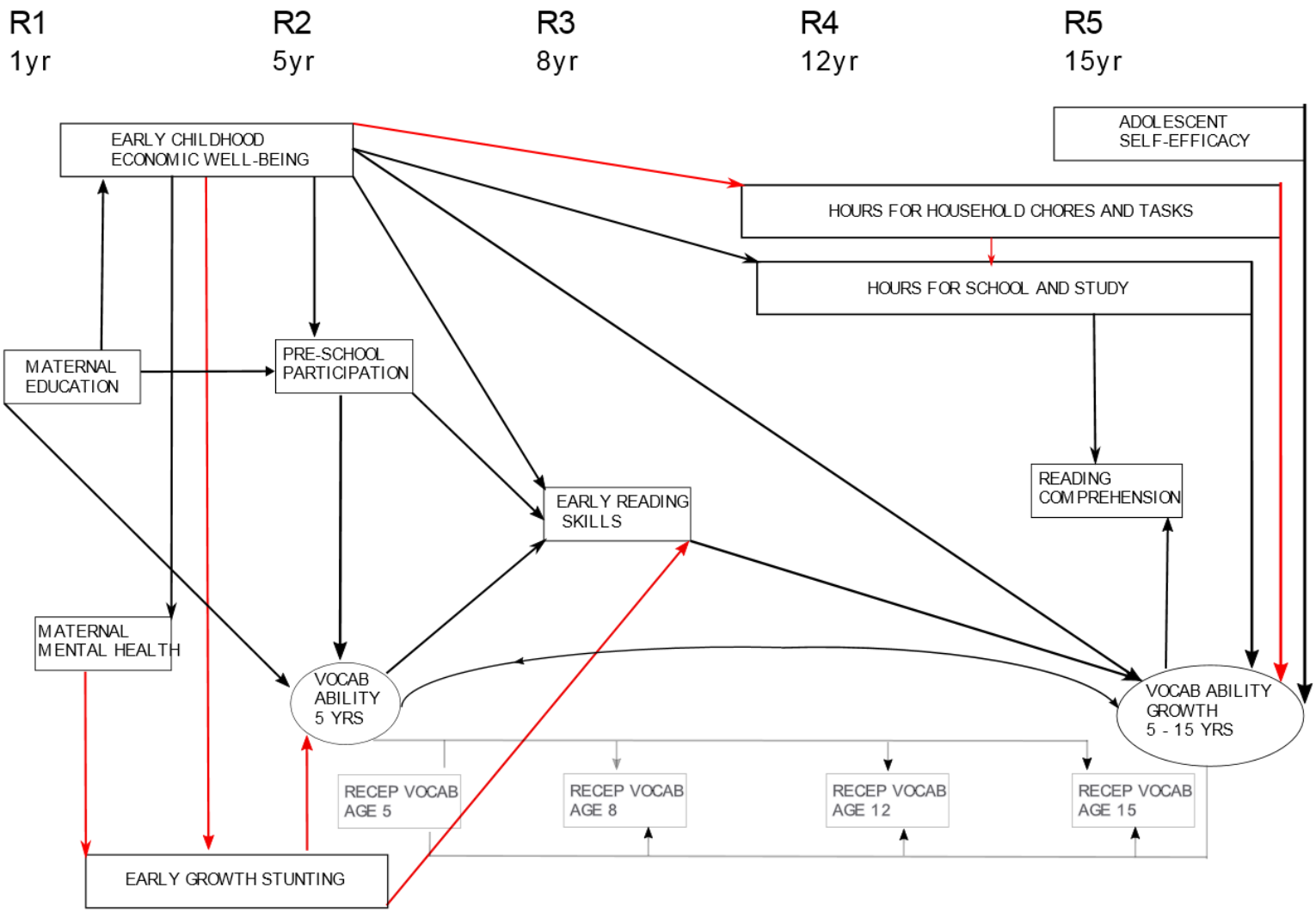
- Many factors are important in the development of the YL children
  - physical growth
  - mother's wellness
  - material resources
  - availability of pre-school care
  - quality of pre-school care
  - investment of parents in education
  - need to assist with household tasks
  - time for study
  - and many, many other factors (over 800 papers published on YL data)

What are the important outcomes?

- Given the nature of YL data, we opted for development of language and quantitative abilities
  - important for successful graduation from school, and the many things thus enabled
  - important achievements in their own right
    - Round 6 data – funding not obtained yet, but looks promising – will allow us to look at outcomes in adult life (employment, continued health, etc)

Integrating the findings

- We wanted to consider a range of important factors on the outcomes in question, bearing in mind their inter-correlatedness, over time
- We considered the following type of model for language and quantitative ability (over all 4 countries, N > 7000)



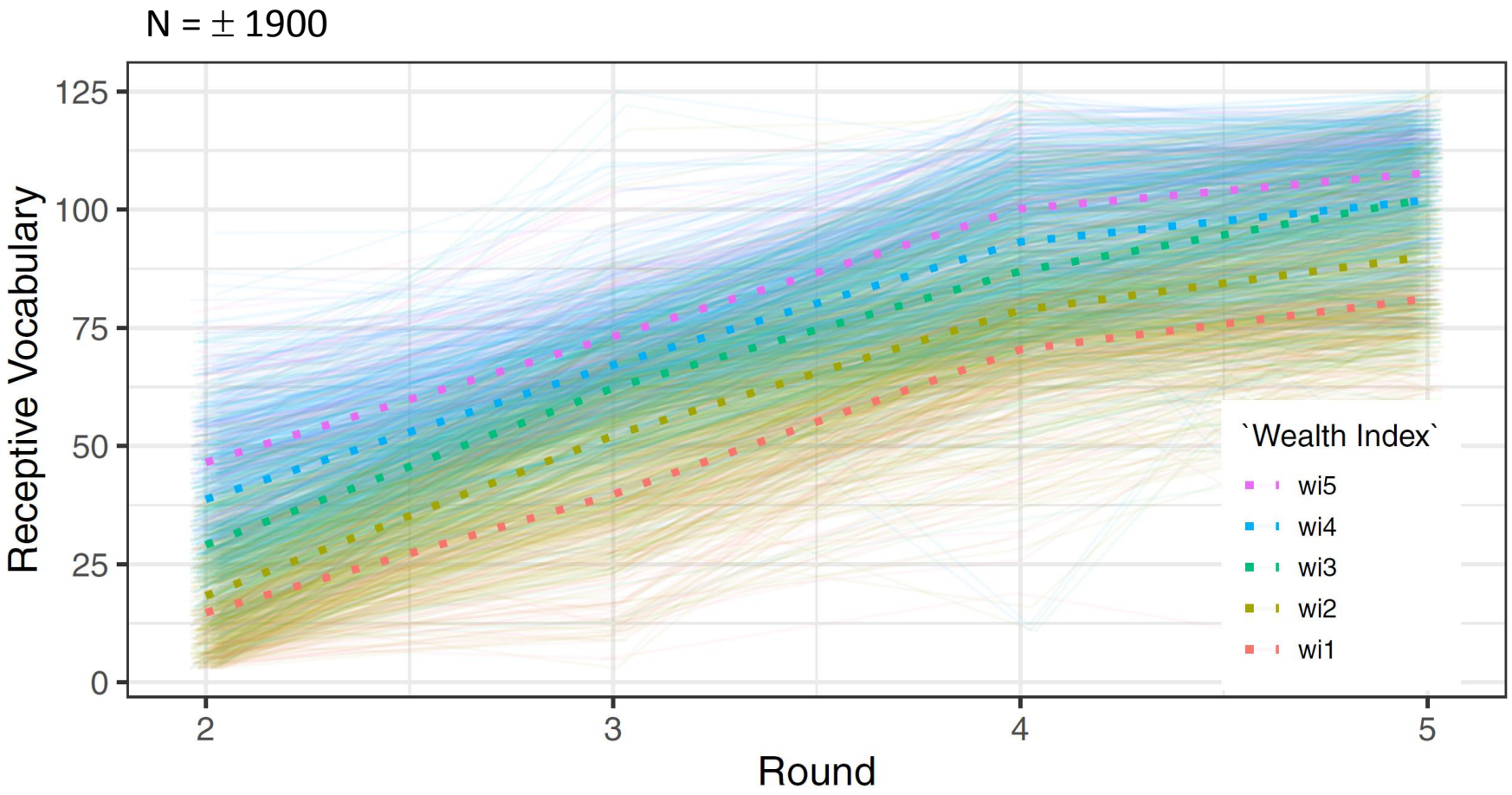
Black lines = expected positive relationships

Red lines = expected negative relationships

Analysis - considerations

- That is a very complex model to analyse, and required making a lot of assumptions
- Many possible ways of modelling it, none that we are aware of that is optimal
- We opted for latent growth modelling
  - allowed us to model change over time
  - taking into account differences between individual children
  - but without being able to take into account some important things (eg change in predictors over time)

Modeling change in language ability, Peru

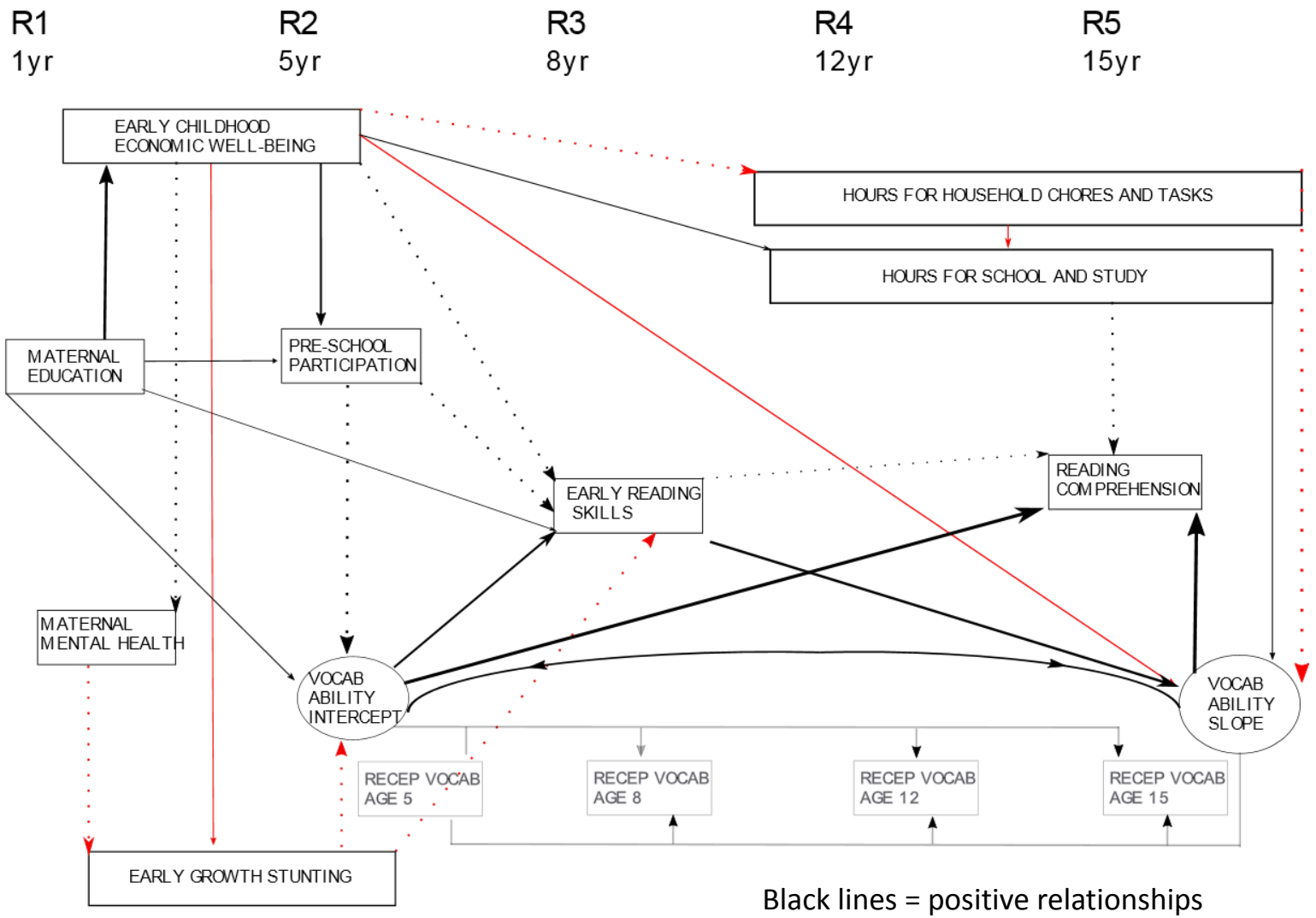


Growth in receptive vocabulary from ± 5 to 16 years.

Each line is a child's personal growth trajectory

Lines are colour coded by wealth index

Modeling change in language ability, all 4 countries



Black lines = positive relationships

Red lines = negative relationships

Thickness of line is proportional to effect size

Solid lines = found in all 4 countries

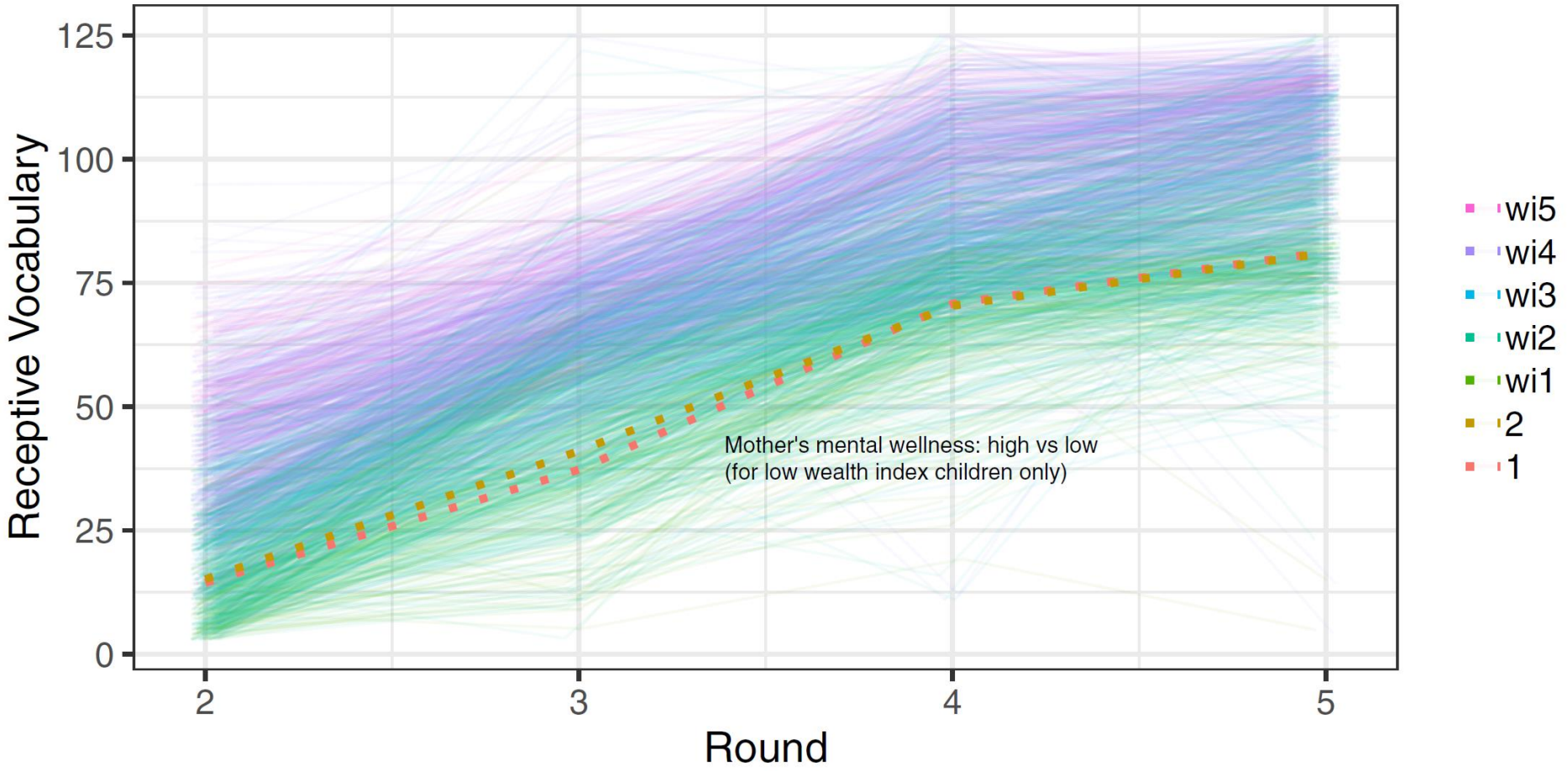
Dashed lines = found in at least 2 countries

Summarising effects of interest

- Individual variables
  - Economic well being (wealth index at/before 5yrs)
  - Mother's education
  - Language ability at 5yrs
- Strong paths
  - Economic well-being → stunting…→… language growth
  - Maternal education → preschool, early literacy → (onward)
- Country-varying paths
  - Economic well-being → M. mental wellness…→… stunting
  - Paths through pre-school attendance/quality
  - Time on house chores → language outcomes
  - Time spent studying in / out of school → language outcomes

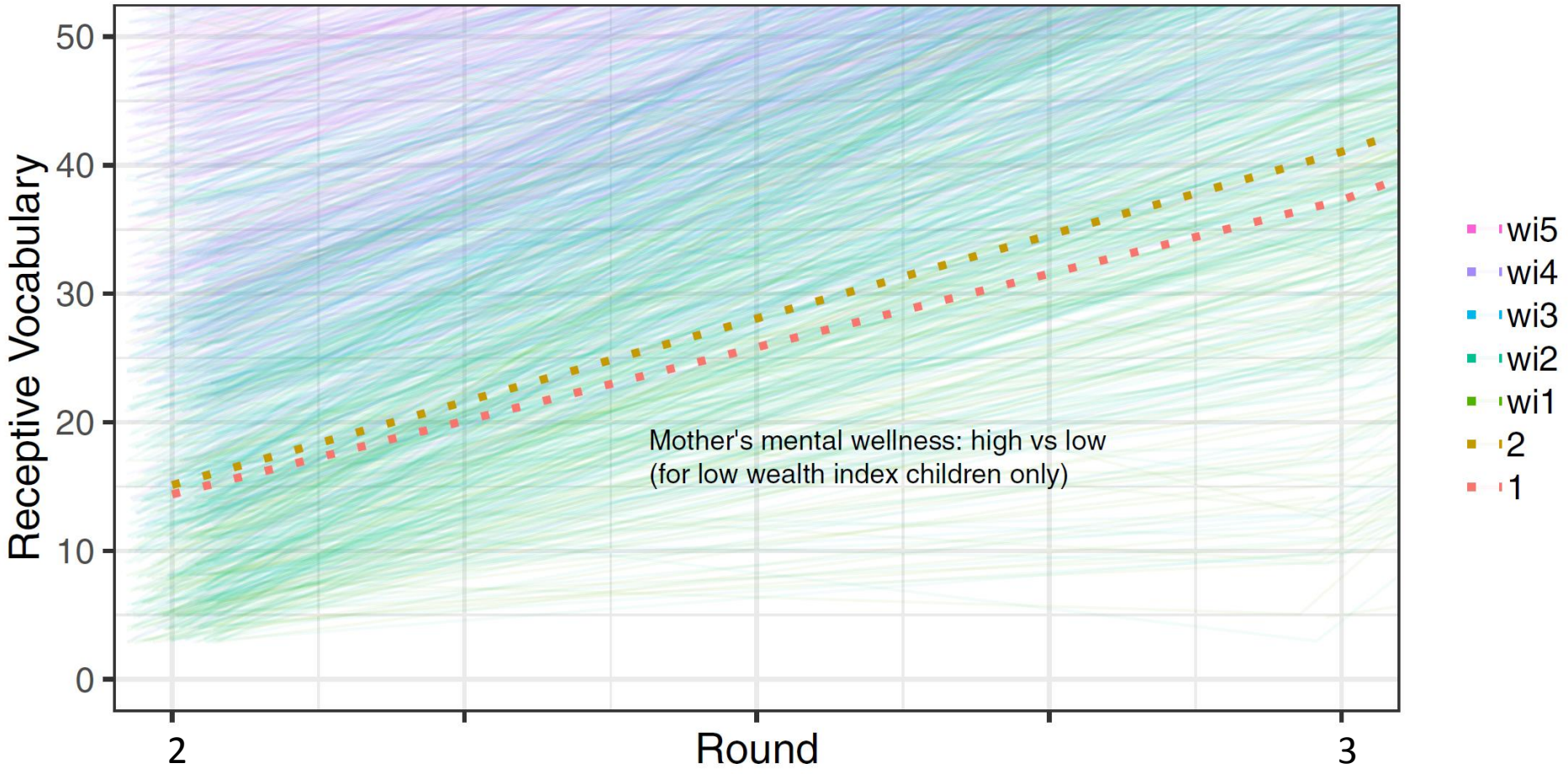
Ilustrating effects, Peru data

Mother's mental wellness



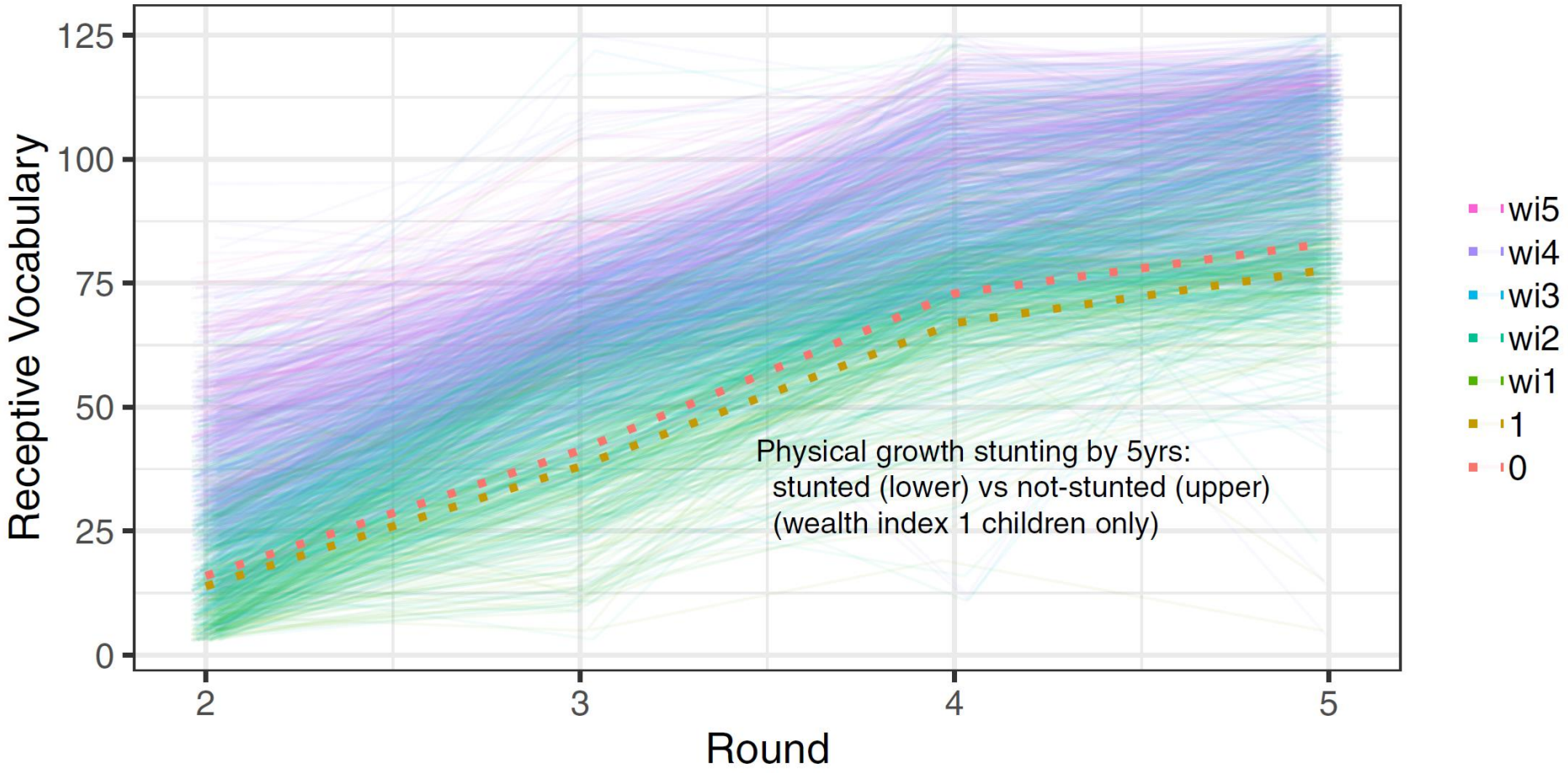
Ilustrating effects, Peru data

Mother's mental wellness



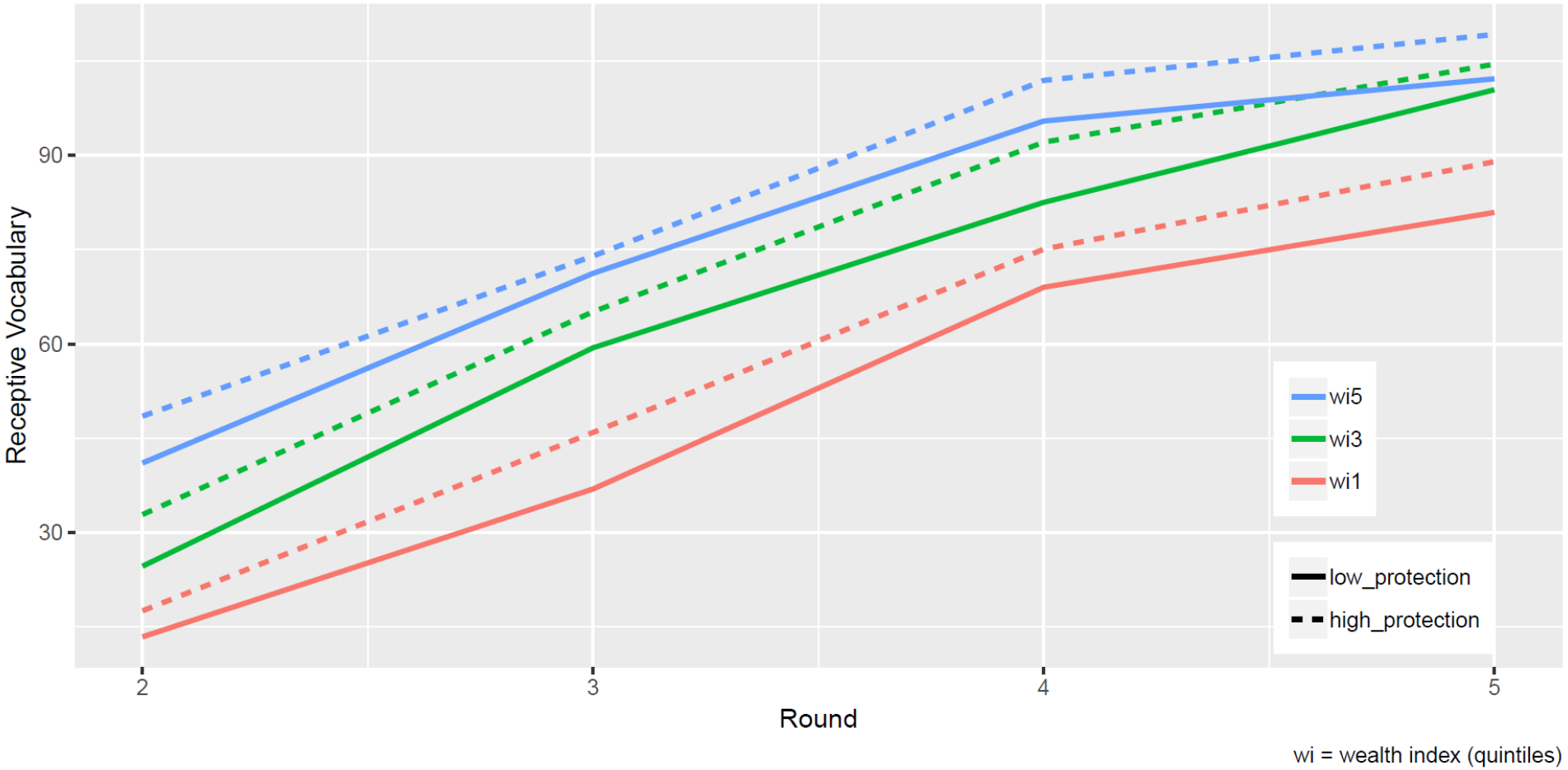
Ilustrating effects, Peru data

Growth stunting

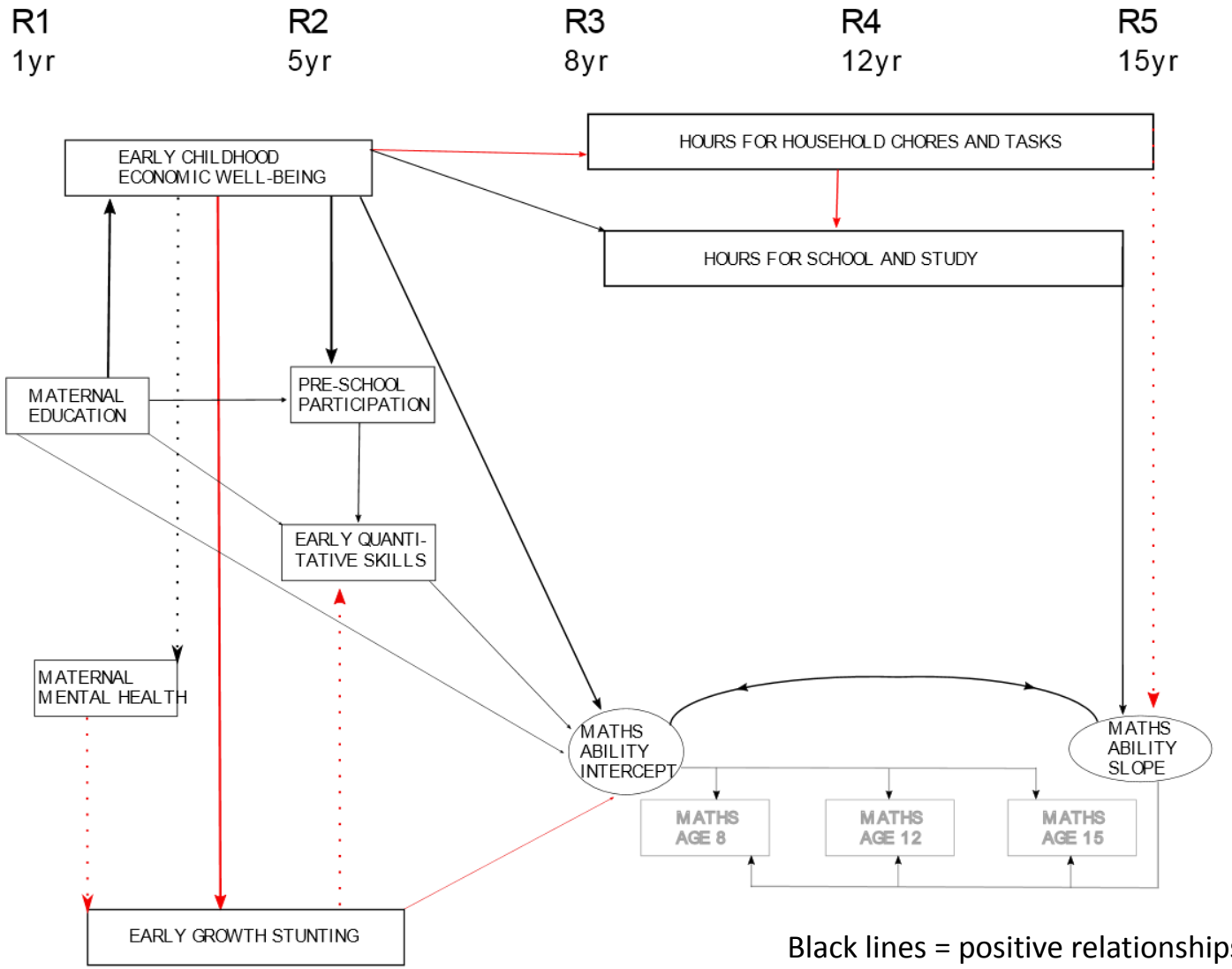


Ilustrating effects, Peru data

A combination of protective factors : high and low scorers



Modeling change in quant ability, all 4 countries



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Modeling change in quant ability, all 4 countries

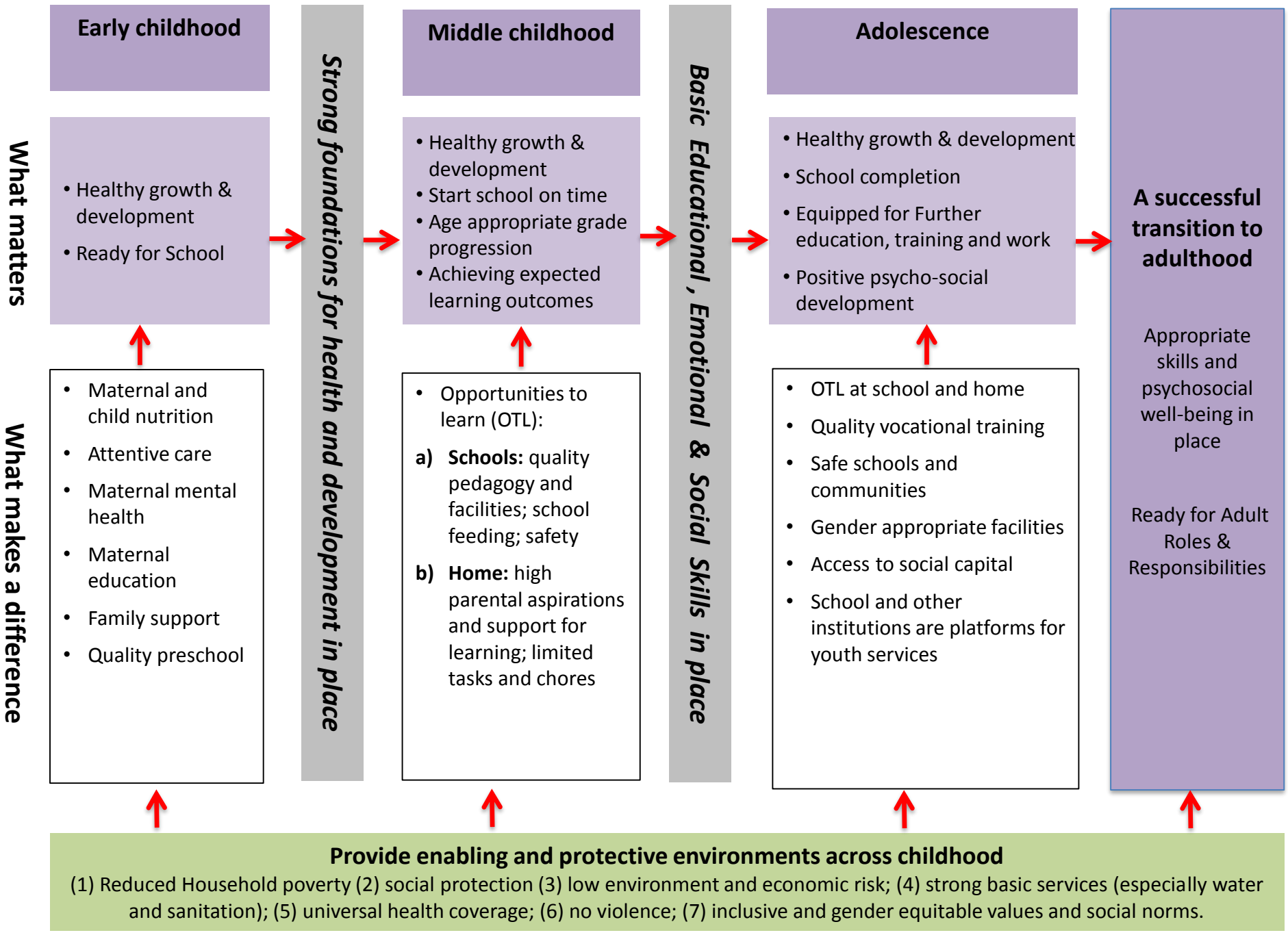
- Similar key factors to development of language ability, with some nuances
  - eg direct effects of early economic well-being seem limited to factors in rounds 1-3

Modeling change : limitations and prospects

- Assumptions for this kind of modelling seen as problematic by many
  - direction? Bi-directionality?
  - unincluded variables could be at work, confounding things
  - we were not able to include changes in predictor variables, eg change in wealth index over the rounds
  - we were unable to include a measurement model for some of our scale predictors
- But the prospect of integrating many predictors and pathways (cascades?) over several countries to understand development of children and the connection to varying wealth remains important

POLICY & INTERVENTION

Promoting positive cascades


Early childhood
Middle childhood
Adolescence
A successful transition to adulthood
What matters
What makes a difference
• Healthy growth & development
• Ready for School
• Healthy growth & development
• Start school on time
• Age appropriate grade progression
• Achieving expected learning outcomes
• Healthy growth & development
• School completion
• Equipped for Further education, training and work
• Positive psycho-social development
Appropriate skills and psychosocial well-being in place
Ready for Adult Roles & Responsibilities
• Maternal and child nutrition
• Attentive care
• Maternal mental health
• Maternal education
• Family support
• Quality preschool
• Opportunities to learn (OTL):
a) Schools: quality pedagogy and facilities; school feeding; safety
b) Home: high parental aspirations and support for learning; limited tasks and chores
• OTL at school and home
• Quality vocational training
• Safe schools and communities
• Gender appropriate facilities
• Access to social capital
• School and other institutions are platforms for youth services
Strong foundations for health and development in place
Basic Educational, Emotional & Social Skills in place
Provide enabling and protective environments across childhood
(1) Reduced Household poverty (2) social protection (3) low environment and economic risk; (4) strong basic services (especially water and sanitation); (5) universal health coverage; (6) no violence; (7) inclusive and gender equitable values and social norms.

http://younglives.org.uk