

CD country case-study workshop 2013

Incorporating equity in epidemiological research: a brief introduction

Cesar Victora

Federal University of Pelotas, Brazil

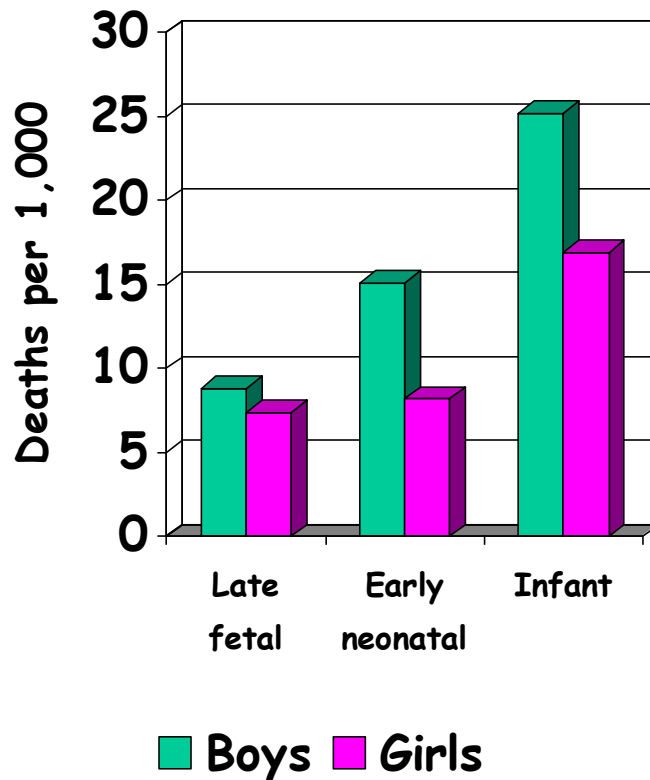


Equity in epidemiology

- Inequities: disparities that are unfair and avoidable
- Why worry about equity?
 - Moral reasons
 - Practical reasons



Inequalities by gender, Pelotas, 1993



- Higher death rates for boys than for girls
- Inequalities, not inequities

Source: Barros, Victora



Types of inequity

- Gender
- Socioeconomic status
- Geographic (provinces, districts, etc.)
- Urban / rural / slum
- Ethnic group
- Etc.



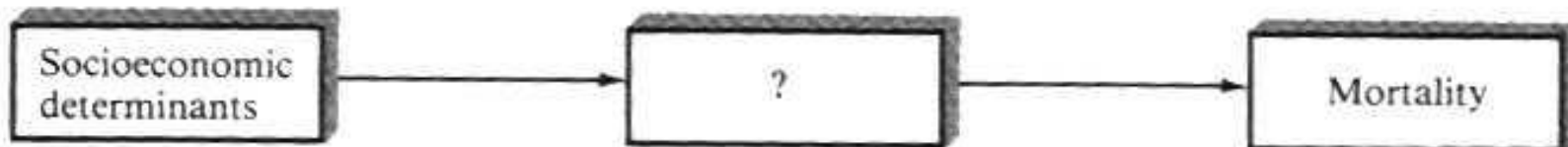
The different levels of inequities

- “An association between socioeconomic deprivation and ill-health has been found wherever and whenever it has been looked for” (Sir Douglas Black, 2001)
- “*and at whatever level of aggregation it has been investigated*”

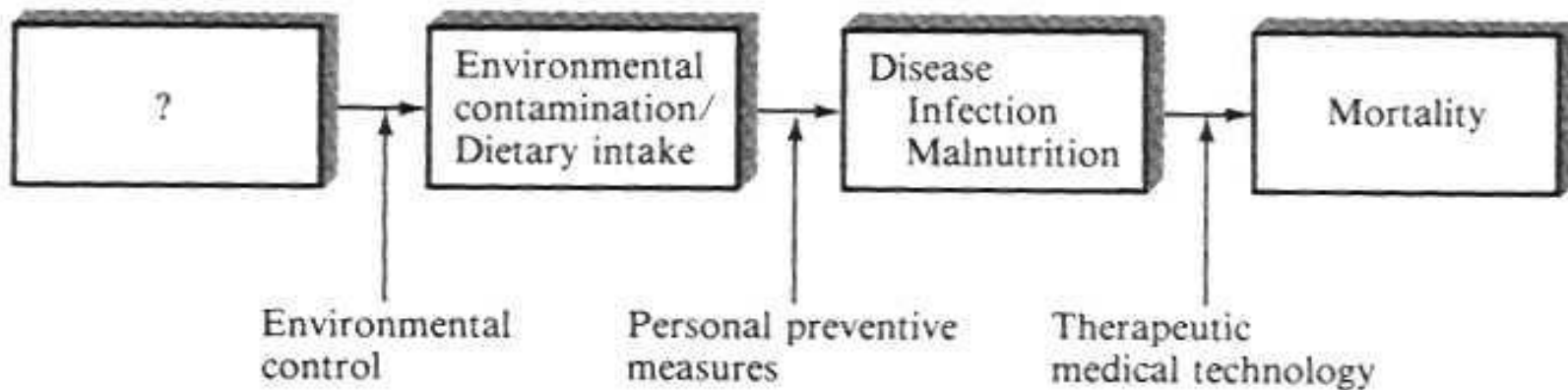


Mosley-Chen analysis

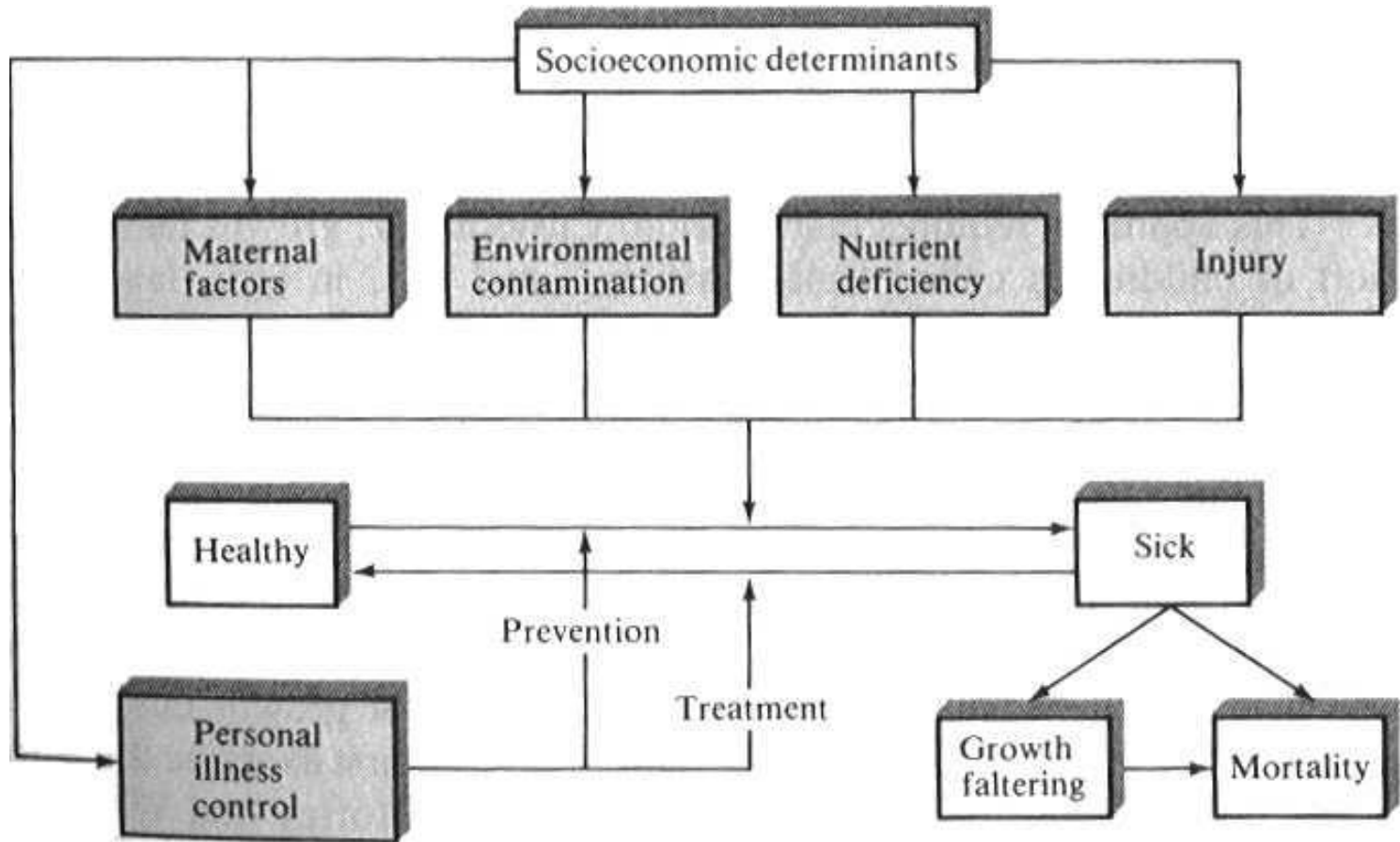
A Social science approach



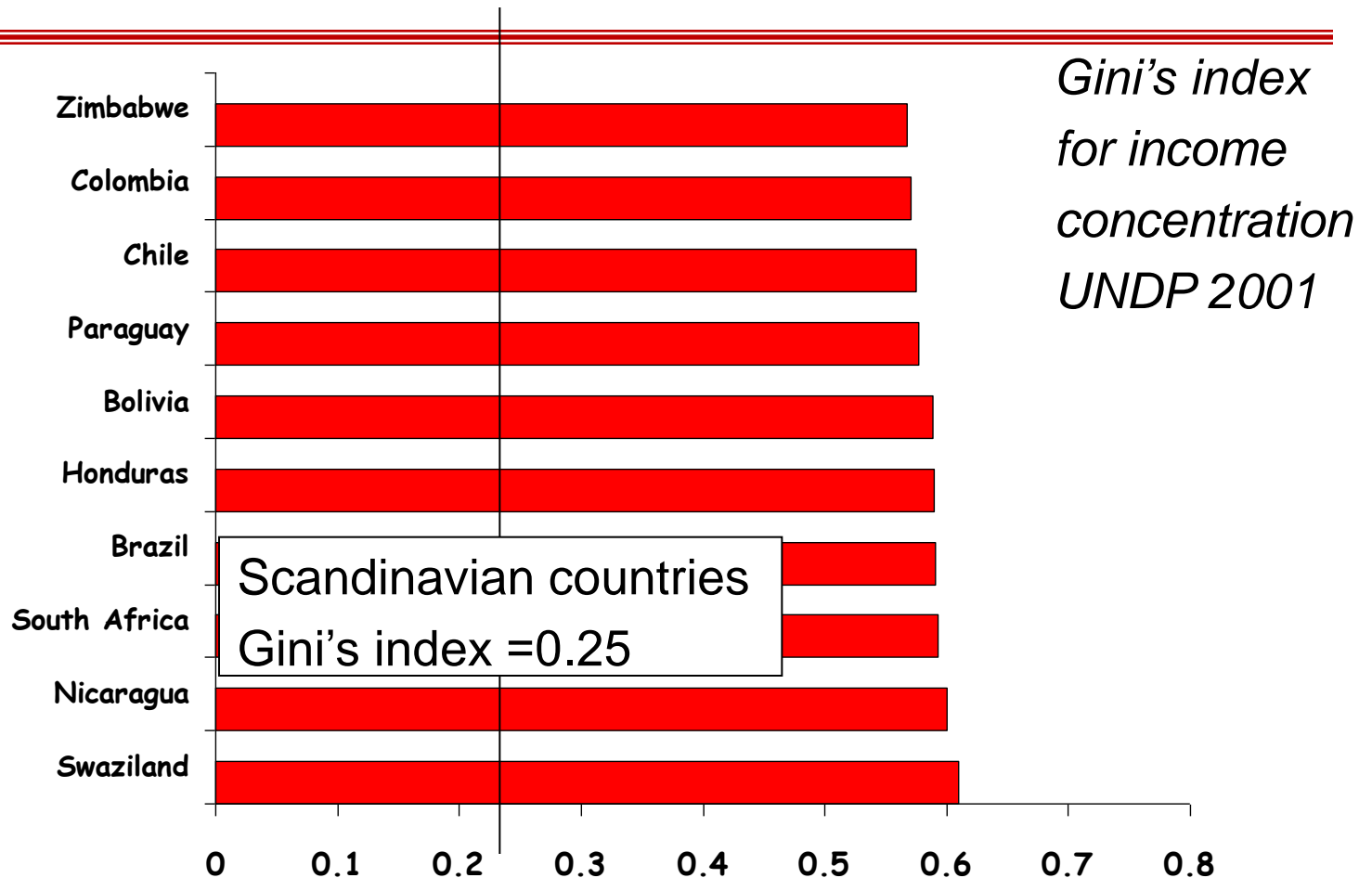
B Medical science approach



Mosley-Chen model for child health



World's 10 most unequal countries



IMR and land tenure: Rio Grande do Sul state



ESTRUTURA AGRÁRIA E MORTALIDADE INFANTIL NO RIO GRANDE DO SUL



The 1982 Pelotas Birth Cohort Study

Cesar G. Victora
Fernando C. Barros
J. Patrick Vaughan
**EPIDEMIOLOGIA
DA DESIGUALDADE**



- Population-based cohort of 6,000 individuals
- Follow up from birth to 30 years
- One of the longest and largest birth cohorts in LMICs





Field work in
Pelotas,
1980's



Before handing over to Aluisio for
methods,

a few thoughts about how
countries may improve equity

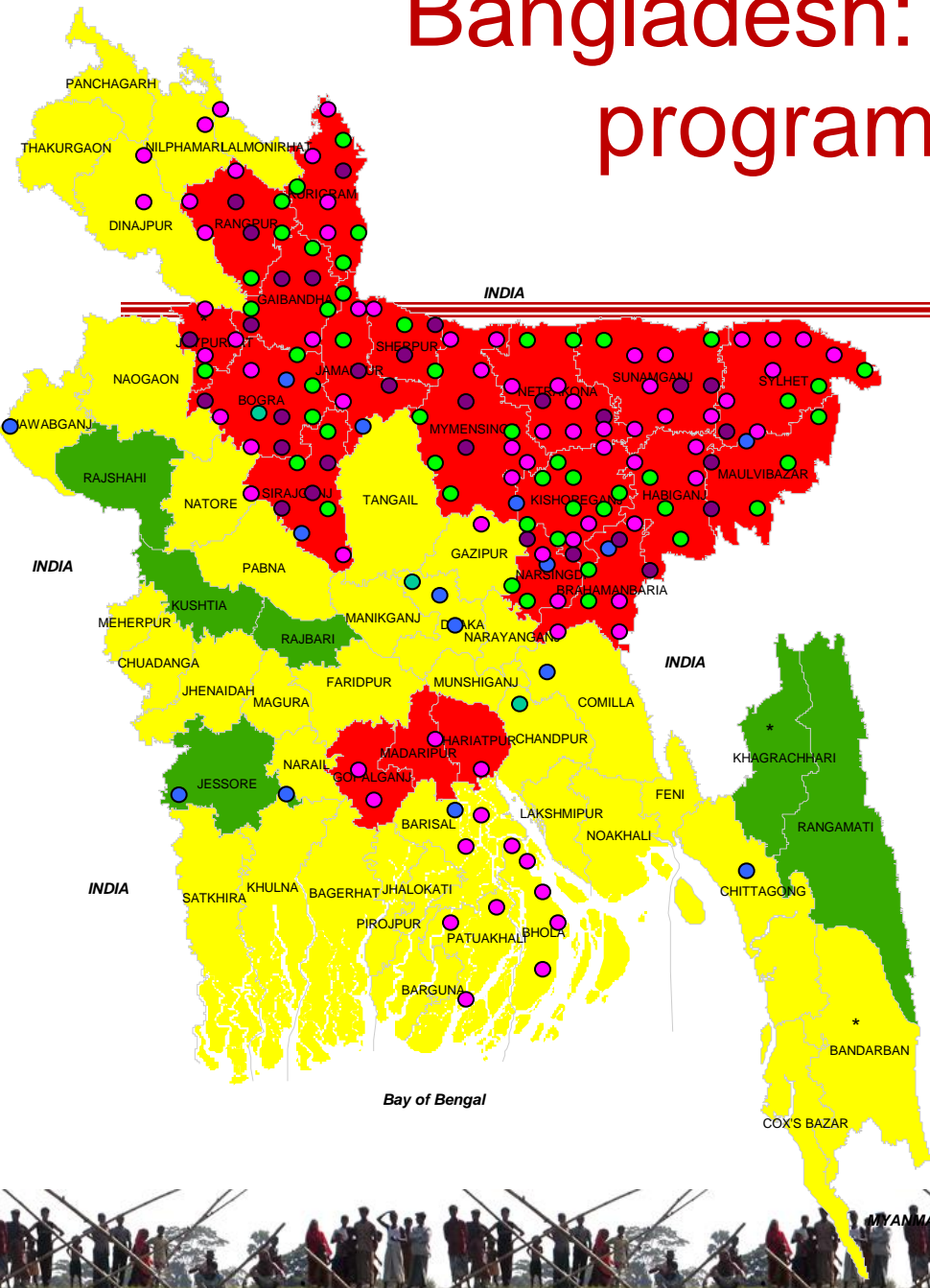


Equity: what can countries do?

- Recognize that health services often contribute to increasing inequities
- Prioritize diseases of the poor
- Consider the pattern of inequity
- Deploy/improve services where the poor live
- Employ appropriate delivery channels
- Remove financial barriers (user fees, etc)
- Monitor implementation, coverage and impact with an equity lens



Bangladesh: how equity can drive program implementation



- 2002
- 2003
- 2004
- 2005
- 2006

By 2006, 148 of 159 sub-districts in the “red” areas had IMCI

Why is equity important?

- Human rights
- Practical reasons
- It is possible to improve equity in health – by mainstreaming equity into health management, monitoring and evaluation



Incorporating equity in epidemiological studies

- Is always possible – and useful
- Must be planned ahead of time
- Does not necessarily require large sample sizes
- May show effects or associations that would not be evident in the whole-sample analyses
- Findings must be interpreted in light of delivery channels
- Failure to incorporate equity is a missed opportunity

