

Global Food Security and Nutrition Status: Trends and Prospects

Will Masters

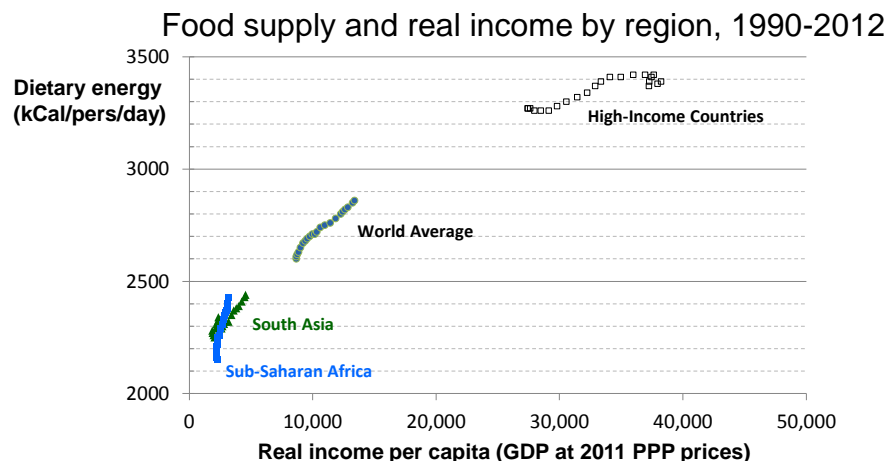
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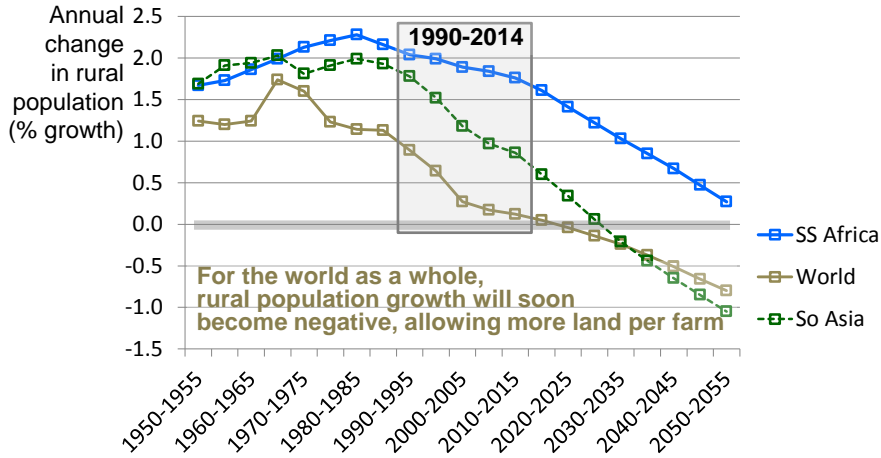
The race is on, but Africa & S. Asia still have far to go



Source: Author's calculations, May 2014. Real income is from World Bank, World Development Indicators (April 2014), downloaded from <http://data.worldbank.org>. Food supply is from FAO, Food Security Indicators (December 2013), downloaded from <http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-fs>. Each point is a 3-year average, from 1990-92 to 2010-12.

Rural population growth has started to slow (but 20 years later in Africa than it did in South Asia)

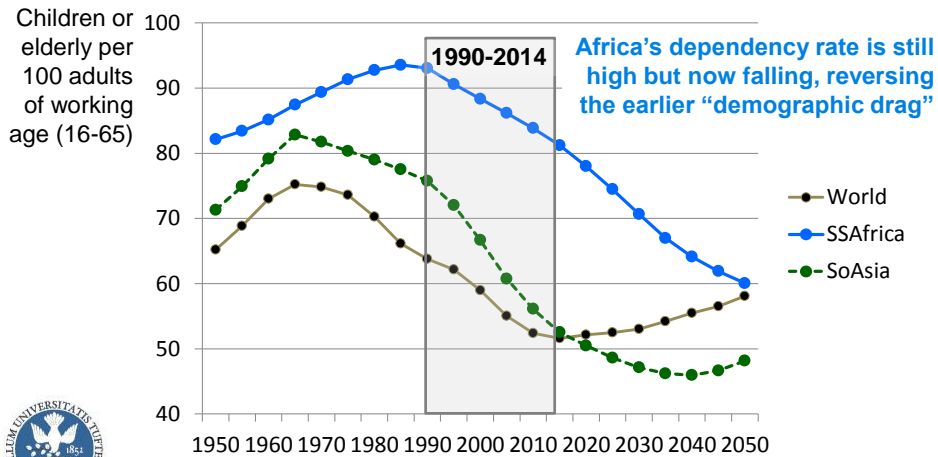
Rural population increase in Africa, South Asia and Worldwide, 1950-2050



Source: Calculated from UN Population Division, World Population Projections (<http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp>), accessed 11 Aug 2012, based on UN Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision and World Urbanization Prospects: The 2011 Revision.

Child dependency is also falling fast (but 20 years later in Africa than it did in South Asia)

Child and elderly dependency rates by region (0-15 and 65+), 1950-2030



Development brings many simultaneous changes

- Positive trends accumulate and spread
...and can facilitate resilience against negative shocks
- But negative trends also arise and can spread

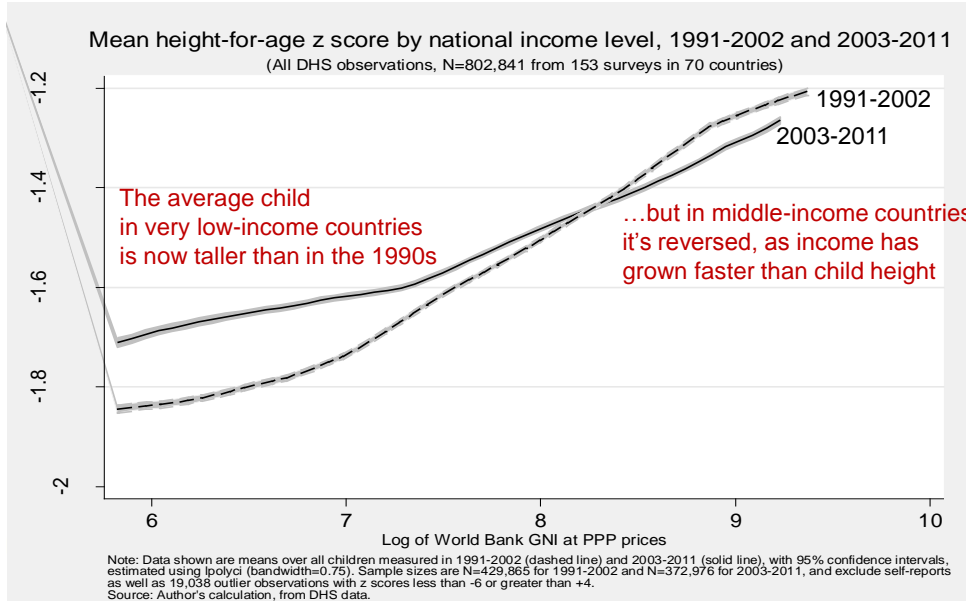


Amai Nickson and family at Chakuma Village, Zimbabwe (Sept. 2010)
25 years after I taught in the classroom at right (with Tadius Shumba)

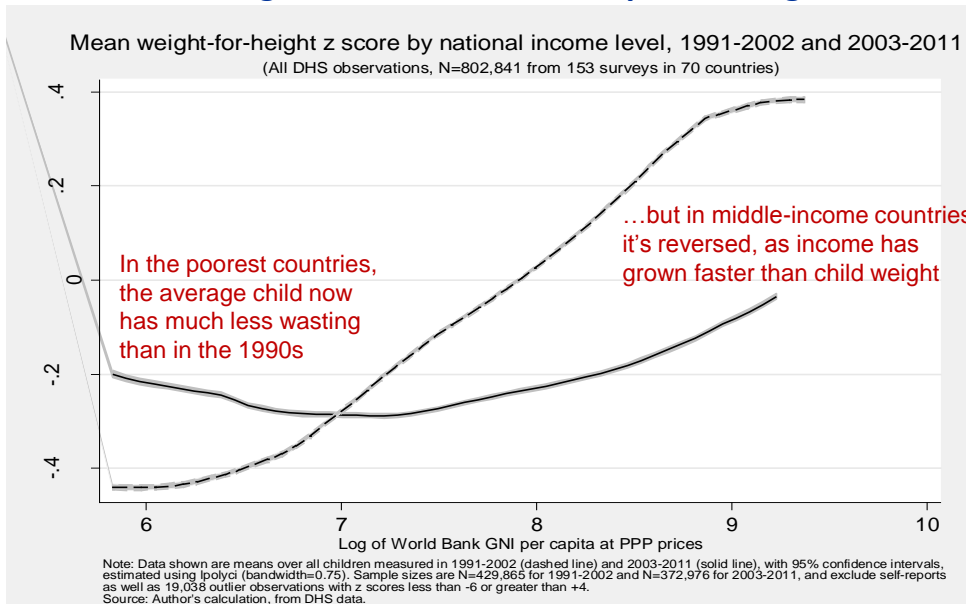
Globally, are we winning?



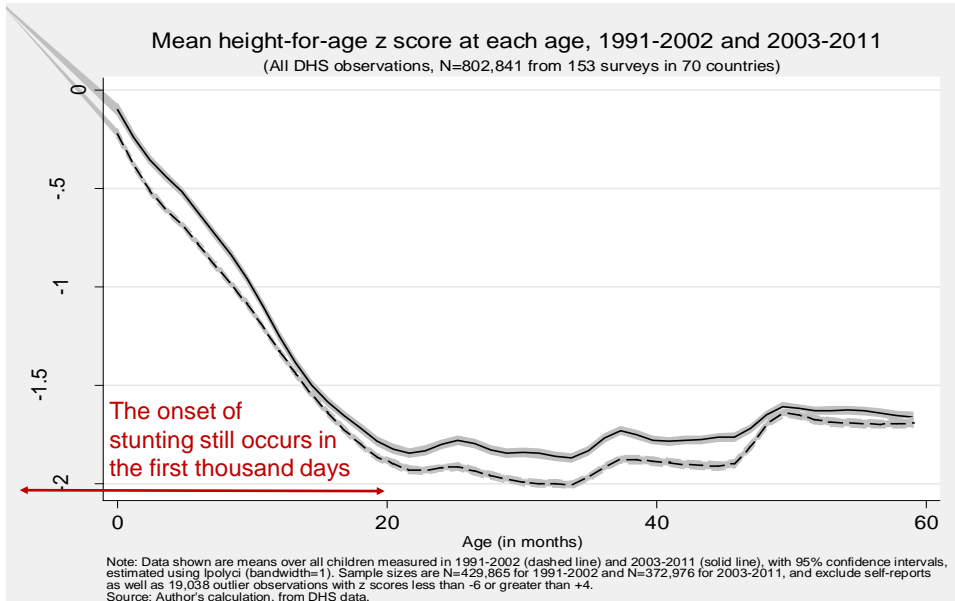
The child height - income relationship is now less steep



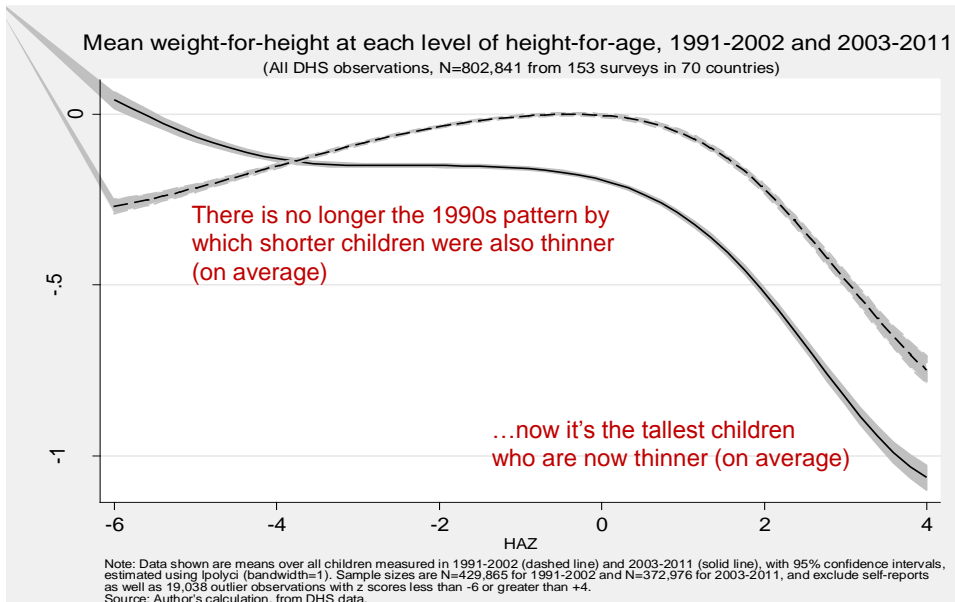
The child weight - income relationship is no longer clear



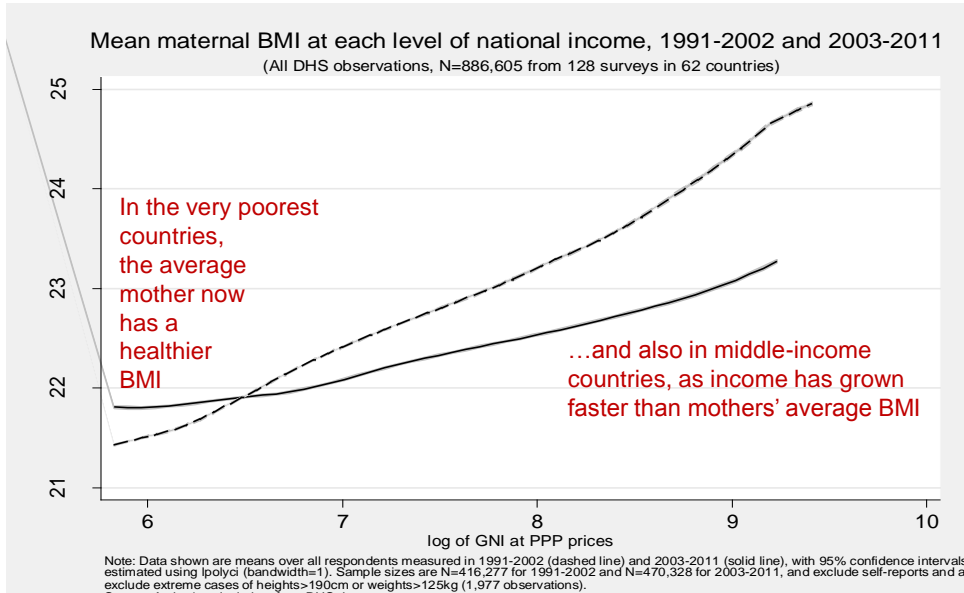
At each age, the average child is now (slightly) taller



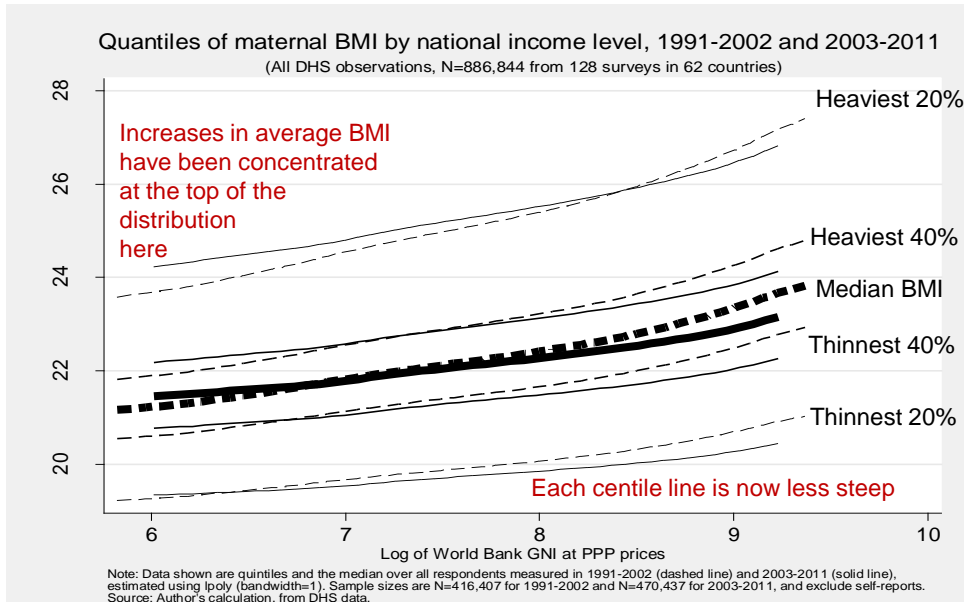
Only the tallest children are now very thin



Mothers' weight - income relationship is also less steep



In poor countries, mothers' weight distribution has widened



In conclusion...

- **The global distribution of heights and weights has improved**
 - The poorest countries have taller, bigger children
 - ...and also bigger mothers
- **Time lags and compositional changes make changes hard to see**
 - We need careful disaggregation
 - ...without losing sight of the aggregate shift
- **A large and growing literature uses the DHS treasure-trove**
 - Often combining countries to expand variance
 - Often merging with other kinds of data to explain trends

