RESEARCH FINDINGS

Overcoming inequality: why governance matters

Kevin Watkins
Overcoming inequality: why governance matters


Kevin Watkins
There has been strong progress towards many EFA goals, but...

Key targets for 2015 will be missed – and time is running out

Governments are failing to tackle inequality, as are current approaches to governance reform

Aid to education is stagnating and donors are not meeting their commitments
Outline

➢ Chapter 1 – Education for All: human right and catalyst for development

➢ Chapter 2 – The Dakar goals: monitoring progress and inequality

➢ Chapter 3 – Raising quality and strengthening equity: why governance matters

➢ Chapter 4 – Increasing aid and improving governance

➢ Chapter 5 – Policy conclusions
EFA & the MDGs

- Education for some – global and national inequalities persist
  - The global divide: between the world’s richest and poorest nations
  - The wealth gap: within countries, children from the richest households up to 5 times more likely to be enrolled that those from the poorest
  - The quality divide: many children leave school lacking basic literacy and numeracy skills
**EFA & the MDGs**

- The global divide: between the world’s richest and poorest nations

**OECD countries:**
- By age 7, almost all children are in school
- At 17 yrs, 70% are in secondary school

**Sub-Saharan Africa:**
- At age 7, only about 40% are in school
- At 17 yrs, 30% are in secondary school...but 20% still in primary

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![Diagram showing proportion enrolled by age and level of education for OECD countries and Sub-Saharan Africa.](image)
The wealth gap:

Children in the poorest 20% of households more likely to drop out than those in the richest 20%.

Grade attainment by wealth quintile in sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.
EFA & the MDGs

EFA as a foundation for the MDGs

- The Education for All agenda is broader than the MDGs
- Education can help unlock progress on the MDGs:
  - Broad-based growth to halve extreme poverty
  - Reducing child and maternal mortality
  - Tackling child malnutrition
  - Strengthening democracy and citizenship
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Monitoring EFA

- Early childhood education and care (ECCE) is still neglected
  - Malnutrition as a barrier to EFA – 1 in 3 children suffer worldwide (higher in South Asia)
  - Economic growth not enough – Despite growth, India’s child mortality is declining too slowly
  - Successful programmes make a difference
    - Mexico: conditional cash transfer programme achieving gains in school progression and learning
    - Bolivia: integrated programme provides nutrients and learning environments for poor children under 6 with gains in learning and child health
    - Philippines: nutrition programme registered improvements in cognitive development
  - Rich countries also face problems
    - United States: poor and ethnic groups lagging behind in ECCE, leading to inequalities in educational outcomes
Monitoring EFA

- Steady but uneven progress in universal primary education (UPE)
  - Since 1999, the primary NER for developing countries has increased at twice the rate of the pre-Dakar decade
  - Fewer children out of school in 2006 than in 2000
    - Ethiopia and Tanzania have each reduced their numbers of out-of-school children by 3 million since Dakar.
    - Nepal and Bangladesh have increased enrolment of girls and the disadvantaged.
    - Mauritania, Morocco and Yemen have registered strong gains.
  - ... but the world is not on track for UPE by 2015
Monitoring EFA

- **75 million children out of school in 2006**
  - Nigeria: 8.1
  - India: 7.2
  - Pakistan: 6.8
  - Ethiopia: 3.7
  - Bangladesh: 1.4
  - Kenya: 1.4
  - Niger: 1.2
  - Burkina Faso: 1.2
  - Ghana: 1.0
  - Mozambique: 1.0
  - Philippines: 1.0
  - Yemen: 0.9
  - Mali: 0.8
  - Turkey: 0.7
  - Brazil: 0.6
  - Senegal: 0.5
  - Iraq: 0.5

- **at least 29 million children out of school in 2015**
  - Partial projections in 134 countries (which represent two-thirds of out-of-school children in 2006)
  - Nigeria and Pakistan together represent about one-third of the out-of-school population

- nearly half of these in sub-Saharan Africa alone
- 55% girls - who are more likely never to have been in school than boys

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- Millions of children
- 2006
- 2015
Monitoring EFA

Tracking country progress: changes in net enrolment ratios and survival rates for a selection of countries over a 6-year period
Global, regional and national inequalities are a barrier to progress in UPE

- **Wealth**: children from rich and poor backgrounds move in different worlds.
  - Poor children are heavily over-represented in out-of-school numbers:
    - In Cameroon, Kenya, Indonesia, Nicaragua – poorest 20% make up over 40% of out-of-school children

- **Other inequalities**:
  - gender – over half the countries in sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia and the Arab States have yet to achieve gender parity in primary education
  - location (rural v. urban)
  - minorities
  - language
  - disability
Inequalities based on wealth in primary attainment

Net attendance rate and primary attainment among the poorest and the richest 20%
Education quality – the learning divide

- Low average level of learning in many developing countries relative to developed countries
- PISA assessments place over 60% of children in Brazil and Indonesia scoring in the lowest score quintile
- Absolute learning levels in many countries are very low
- Global learning divide mirrored by social-economic divide within countries
Acute teacher shortages still a problem

- To achieve UPE by 2015, we will need to recruit and train:
  - Sub-Saharan Africa - 3.8 million teachers
  - East Asia - 4 million teachers
  - South and West Asia - 3.6 million teachers

- National pupil/teacher ratios mask large disparities between rich-poor, rural-urban, indigenous-non-indigenous areas.

- the majority of non-trained teachers are concentrated:
  - in rural areas in India
  - in the poorest area of Ghana
Monitoring EFA

Little progress in reducing numbers of illiterate adults

- Still **776 illiterate adults** in 2006, two-thirds are women. This represents 16% of the global adult population.

Projected number of adult illiterates (age 15+), by gender and region, 2015

- **Projections for 2015** – at least **700 million illiterate adults**
- **Literacy gap** – Adult literacy rates can vary up to **40 percentage points** between the richest and poorest households within a given country.
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Governance for equity

Governance reform in education

- Education governance = the formal and informal processes through which policies are formulated, priorities identified, resources allocated, and reforms implemented and monitored

Bad education governance is seen in:
- overcrowded, underfinanced schools
- absent teachers
- unaccountable to families
- high levels of inequality
- low levels of learning

Good governance aims for:
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Equal opportunity for all citizens
- Enhancing the voice and participation of citizens

The governance reform agenda:
- Decentralize to sub-national bodies
- Devolve authority and decision-making to schools and parents
- Expand choice and competition
- Flexible recruitment and financial incentives for teachers
Evidence and lessons

- Financial decentralization comes with threats to equity
  - Lesson: governments should retain a strong role in leveling the playing field

- Devolution to schools can perpetuate and over-burden local providers
  - Lesson: governments need to create an enabling environment to strengthen ‘voice’ and build capacity

- Choice and competition is not a panacea for state failure, or a prescription for equity
  - Lesson: if public sector provision is broken, the governance challenge is to fix it
  - Lesson: avoid blueprints – and don’t export them

- Recognize the limits to contract teacher recruitment and performance-related pay
Governance for equity

- Failure to integrate education into poverty-reduction strategies
  - Weak linkage to the EFA agenda
  - Poor targeting and limited consideration of equity in target-setting
  - No link between education and broader governance reforms
  - Poor integration of cross-sectoral policies

The lesson: integrate education into wider strategies for overcoming poverty and inequality
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Donors are failing to deliver on their Dakar commitments

- Aid commitments: global shortfalls and education deficits
  - Donors falling short of 2010 commitments: meeting these requires additional US$30 billion
  - In 2006: aid to basic education US$5.1bn (same as 2004)
  - Aid to basic education in low income countries: US$3.8bn but US$11bn needed annually to meet EFA goals

Fast Track Initiative under threat:
- Potential financing gap of US$2.2bn by 2010
Equity matters

- Donors vary in their commitments to basic education in low-income countries

Some countries such as the Netherlands and UK allocate over 60% of aid to basic education in low income countries.

...France, Japan and Germany allocate only a small fraction.
The Paris agenda: a mixed record

- Improving aid governance: Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005). Until now, progress is variable:
  - Shift from projects to programmes
    - Increase from 33% to 54% in 2005-2006
  - National ownership
    - Conditions vary (India v Mozambique)
  - Aligning aid to national priorities & improve predictability
    - Some positive examples, but some donors unwilling to work through national structures
      » Despite Mongolia’s strong financial management system, only 17% of aid is managed through it
  - Improving donor coordination to reduce inefficiency
    - Progress in some countries (Ethiopia – over half of missions were joint missions in 2007), but...
      » In 2007, the Niger hosted 600 donor missions – less than 100 were joint
      » In 2005, 18 countries had to deal with 12 donors for basic education alone
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Conclusions

Policy recommendations:

- Get serious about equity – and set targets for reduced disparities
- Strengthen links between education planning and poverty-reduction strategies
- Back EFA targets with equitable financing
- Commit to quality education
- Recognize the limits to choice and competition
- Deliver on aid commitments (now)
EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009

www.efareport.unesco.org