



Consortium for Research on  
Educational Access,  
Transitions and Equity

A Review of Concepts from Policy Studies  
Relevant for the Analysis of EFA  
in Developing Countries

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## Summary

This paper aims to give an introduction to the central concepts and the literature of Policy Studies in education.

The first part of the paper addresses the questions of what policy is. How is it made and why is it relevant? It looks in particular at the role of the state and the Policy cycle framework which is an analytical tool that helps to analyse how policy is made and later implemented.

The second part then focuses on the central concepts. The two main paradigms of education policy studies relate directly to these central themes. On the one hand a series of policy concepts cluster around *social justice, inclusion* and the fight *against discrimination* on the basis of race, gender and disability. On the other lie the debates raging around *efficiency, effectiveness and quality* of education. These include the issues of accountability and measurement of pupil achievement. The role of the market is discussed and a short section on globalisation explains how the nature of education policy is changing in light of globalisation.

The last part of the paper four studies were chosen to look at how the concepts elaborated in the earlier part have been used in studies relating to EFA. The works chosen are: Myron Weiner's *The Child and the State in India* (1991), *Operation Blackboard, Policy Implementation in Indian Elementary Education* by Caroline Dyer (2000), Michael Sanderson's *Education, Economic change and Society in England 1780-1870* (1991) and *Social Origins of Educational Systems* by Margaret Archer (1984).

The paper concludes that the transferability of the concepts discussed above and their related debates to the context of EFA in developing countries require a re-contextualisation which takes into account the EFA priorities of equity and access. The basic question remains of how governments will manage to reconcile expanding the education system and creating a true EFA system, while maintaining high levels of quality. The role of education policy analysis is key in looking at this debate from a different vantage point.

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