

Education for All Policies, Politics and Progress

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UN Secretary General 2010

We do not need more pledges. If nations deliver on the financial commitments they have already made, we can achieve the goals.

There is clearly a lack of political will

Research themes

- Progress in access to basic education
- Policies for increasing access
- The role of political regimes in promoting access
- The role of political will in promoting access
- The drivers and inhibitors (political and non political) of policy implementation
- Ghana, India, Sri Lanka
- Documentary analysis and interviews with policy elites

Progress

Adult literacy rates

	1950	1990	2005
Ghana	20	40	65
India	28 (1960)	49	62
Sri Lanka	65	87	93

Policies

- Policies and plans for basic education pre-date independence and pre-date Jomtien
- **Sri Lanka** (independence 1948) – colonial state policies 1871 and ‘grants-in aid’ to promote expansion of English-medium and vernacular schools; 1931 constitutional change and universal suffrage increased social demand for education and ushered in the Free Education Bill of 1945; abolition of English as medium of instruction from 1950s
- **Ghana** (independence 1957)– Governor Guggisberg’s 16 guiding principles for the development of education; 1961 education act primary and middle school fee-free
- **India** (independence 1947) – 1920s and 1930s education acts passed in most provinces; Mahatma Ghandi’s vision for elementary education pervaded much of the independence movement; 1968 policy on access to elementary education

Political regimes and access

- Colonial state support for access to education cautious
- Nationalist struggles spur social demand for education pre and post independence years
- Military as well as democratic regimes have supported policies for access (Ghana: Provisional National Defence Council of General Rawlings, 1981-1992)
- Populist regimes push enrolment; non-populist push quality and standards

Political will and Access

- *A sustained commitment of politicians and administrators to invest the necessary resource to achieve specific objectives and a willingness to make and implement, policy despite opposition*

Examples of Political Will

- **Ghana, 1986/7 reforms.** Strong leadership from top (Rawlings and Secretaries, by passing of civil service, parallel planning and implementation). **Driver:** Ideological - anti-elite, pro-rural, populist
- **India, 1986 reforms.** Strong leadership from Rajiv Gandhi, Ministers and civil servants, creation of Action Plan. **Driver:** modernisation and post 'emergency'
- **Sri Lanka, 1997 reforms.** reforms a response to youth unrest, President's personal involvement in acceleration of policy formulation, in planning and in the identification of resources. **Driver:** youth unrest and state survival

Political and non political drivers and inhibitors of implementation

- Political will. Not only at national level, but also at local level - the 'double-edged' nature of political will
- Similarities: (D) technically sound plans, financial commitment, adequate human resources, ownership near to ground, M and E, perseverance, (I) financial wastage
- Differences: greater role in India played by civil society

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for development partners

- *The Politics, Policies and Progress of Basic Education in Sri Lanka*, CREATE Research Monograph no 38, London/Sussex
- *Access to Basic Education in Ghana: politics, policies and progress*, CREATE Research Monograph no 42, London/Sussex

Access to Elementary Education in India: politics, policies and progress, CREATE Research Monograph no 44, London/Sussex

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