

Quality education and the other Sustainable Development Goals

In September 2015, the United Nations introduced the new Sustainable Development Goals, which succeed the Millennium Development Goals. The SDGs outline a new and ambitious global effort to reduce poverty and hunger, improve health, enable equality, protect the planet and more. Real progress will not be achieved unless all children receive a quality education.

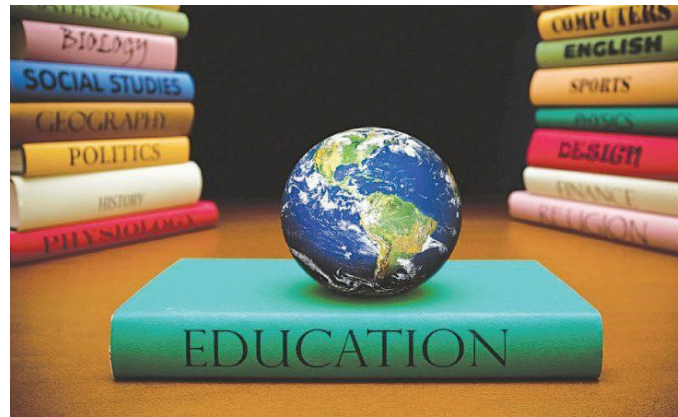


Figure 1. Education as a way of acquiring new information and knowledge

SDG 1. No poverty

Education and poverty are directly linked. Having an education is one of the ways to achieve financial stability. According to UNESCO, a decrease of 12% of global poverty rate is possible if all students in countries with low income left school with basic reading skills. UNESCO also found that one additional year in education increases the earnings of individual by up to 10 percent and increases the annual gross domestic product (GDP) by 0,37%.

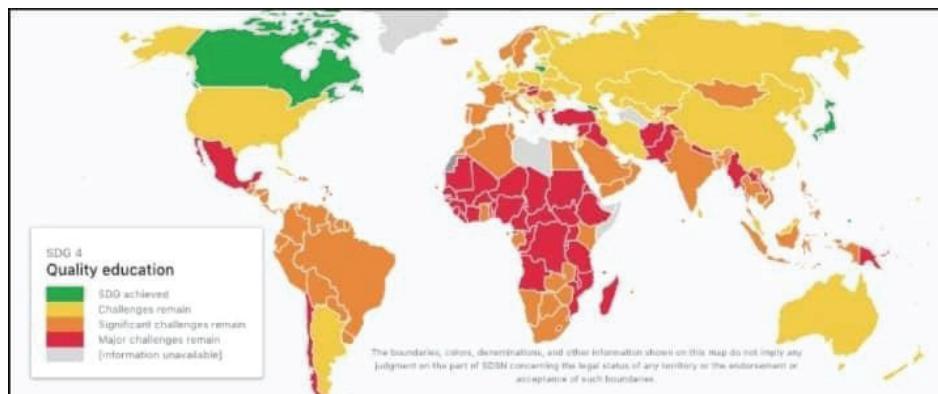


Figure 2. Quality education includes health and poverty.

SDG 2. No hunger

Education is the key to fighting hunger. UNESCO research shows that approximately 47 million children from low income countries are lagging behind in education as a result of malnutrition in early childhood.

Education is also crucial in acquiring the necessary knowledge to increase the production and with that income of the farmers, especially women farmers. Literacy and up to date knowledge can help in preventing problems which can lead to disasters such as famines, floods, droughts.

SDG 3. Good health and well-being

Education is crucial to educate people on substances and alcohol abuse, prevention and mental health issues. Quality education is connected with less vulnerability to health risks.

It can also help with information about family planning, reproductive health and sex education.

A study in Lancet magazine showed that 4 million deaths of children are prevented due to the global increase of the education of women.

SDG 5. Gender equality

Education enables girls and women to reach their full potential – being equal with men and boys - in their homes, communities, all public spheres, workplaces and institutions of while having the equal opportunities to succeed. It is also putting an end to traditions and practices that hinders their mental and sexual health.

According to World Bank, one additional year in education can increase the income of women by up to 20%. According to the same research by World Bank and Plan International some countries are losing more than 1 billion dollars annually because they are not educating girls and boys at the same level.

SDG 6. Clean water and sanitation

Education about water is important in monitoring the quality of water with the goal to reduce contamination. Education about these issues is helping in better use of water, developing resources for reusing. Another important thing is raising awareness of the importance of water and that way encouraging all people to take active part in their communities in better water management and sanitation.

SDG 7. Affordable and clean energy

Just like education, affordable and clean energy is essential for social, economical and ecological development of a country. Better educated people would recognize and acquire new practices and technologies that would help themselves and the development of communities. With the education those people will know how to build and maintain energy infrastructure that will sustain their countries for long time.

Education is crucial in achieving SDG 7 because it promotes energy efficiency and encourages us to research for other possibilities and clean energy sources.

SDG 8. Decent work and economic growth

Education is one of the strongest drivers of progress and economic prosperity. Quality Education aims to reduce the unemployment rate by increasing access to training opportunities. It also raises awareness about child work and aims to prevent this from happening in all existing forms.

Education empowers productive employment, meaning that women and rural populations who gained access to education, shifted from a choice between agricultural or household-oriented work to a multiple choice work.

SDG 9. Building resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization

When people become more educated it is more probable that they develop critical skills in technical sciences. Well planned infrastructure makes the children to get the needed educational opportunities. Better infrastructure in remote areas enables the children to go to school easy and fast.

Investing in science, scientific research and innovation is going to upgrade the industrial sectors everywhere in the world. In many reports it was noted that the development of wireless telecommunications enabled the countries that were behind to skip the investment in infrastructure which more developed countries did in the 20 century.

SDG 10. Reduced inequalities

Quality education raises awareness about current inequalities and contributes to ensuring that laws and social programs primarily protect disadvantaged and vulnerable people. Education also helps in promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, without exceptions.

As we note the improved education in children from different geographical, demographic and



cultural background it is expected that we see an improvement in a country's income inequality. Across 114 countries for the period 1985–2005, an extra year of average education was associated with a reduction of the income Gini coefficient (a measure of inequality between individuals) by 1.4 percent (UNICEF 2015 Investment Case for Education citing Patrinos and Psacharopoulos, 2013).

SDG 11. Sustainable cities and communities

Educated people are more likely to understand, support and create creative solutions that provide more sustainable cities and communities. Quality education provides the knowledge and tools for monitoring air quality and waste management. This is one of the ways community tackle climate change.

World Bank has Sustainable Cities Initiative in which are included raising awareness programs, creation of policy reforms and tasks that require not only basic but advanced level of education.

SDG 12. Responsible consumption and production

One of the consequences of lack of education in many developing countries is inappropriate waste management. Education of consumers can lead to changes in lifestyle and more informed choices. Education must be in direction of choosing green and eco friendly options.

Quality education contributes to reducing the generation of waste through the introduction of the 5 'Rs' – Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Recover. Through education, the scientific and technological capacities in developing countries can be strengthened moving towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

SDG 13, SDG 14 and SDG 15.

Climate Action. Life below water. Life on Land

People with higher level of education show greater concern for the environmental welfare. Education programs about environment are responsible for important advances in national and regional efforts to combat climate change, protect aquatic life and terrestrial ecosystems. But that kind of education can only reach the full potential when residents of the country or a region have the basic learning skills that come with primary and secondary education.

SDG 16. Peace, Justice and strong institutions

Education is a tool to promote peace, justice and equality for sustainable development. Education is crucial in achieving SDG 16, because educated citizens will be consulted by the decision makers in the country for things that concerns children and adults. In more developed countries it is more likely that the correct information will be presented to its citizens, as well as fundamental freedoms will be protected.

SDG 17. Partnership for the goals

Partnerships are proven as the most effective way to achieve strong development results. The Global Partnership for Education is an example of how working together can improve progress in education and other development sectors. When the most important players work together, we see greater impact with available resources. We are seeing real progress in developing countries that strive to bring quality education to their children and move ever closer to the global goal of education for all.

Resources and further reading:

1. <https://www.sopact.com/perspectives/sdg-indicators>
2. <https://colectivocomunicacion.com>
3. <https://www.peace-ed-campaign.org/mk/17-ways-education-influences-the-un-sustainable-development-goals/>
4. <https://en.unesco.org/themes/education/sdgs/material/04>

