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Global Challenge Deep Dive: Quality Education

In 2015, member states of the United Nations came together to organize a multi-layered plan with the intention of bringing peace and prosperity to the world by 2030. There is an intention to end global poverty that can only be achieved through development in other areas. To do this, the members categorized 17 goals which aim to tackle this initiative through sustainable development. One of these 17 goals is quality of education.

For there to be no global poverty, quality of education is required. Without education, we cannot advance in any way, nor can we achieve the other UN goals for sustainable development. Per the United Nations (n.d.), pursuing quality of education, “ensures inclusive and equitable quality education and promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all” (para. 1). While the world is making advancements towards this goal and has for centuries, progress is slow. Still, 300 million children lack the proper education and literacy, and in 2030, 84 million children will be out of school. Since the pandemic, 4 in 5 countries of the 106 studied suffered learning losses since the pandemic. It is evident there is a need (United Nations, n.d.).

The United Nations has a detailed agenda on how these goals are attained and measured. There are seven components to be considered, though they can be summarized as follows: equal education for young boys and girls and for men and women; increase the number of youth and adults who have skills for employment; ensure that such learners acquire skills to promote sustainable development, human rights, and global citizenship; upgrade educational facilities;

and increase the supply of teachers (United Nations, n.d.). All of the following can be measured by enrollment rates, proportion of adults with information and communication technology skills, level of proficiency in functional literacy and numeracy skills, proportion of schools with basic services, and proportion of teachers with required qualifications (United Nations, n.d.).

To try and quantify the importance of education is unnecessary because education and education reforms are needed everywhere. Even highly successful social democratic societies still see issues such as racism and sexism which is something that only starts to be resolved with education. Though, it is worth noting many nations in Africa and few in South East Asia pose the greatest challenge in providing the right educational resources due to low income areas and highly rural communities. In underdeveloped countries we often see women not going to school and becoming pregnant at a young age, preventing them from having any kind of educational autonomy. It is places like Sub-Saharan Africa that are desperate for SDG #4 to help them and their communities find a way to make education more accessible.

There are countless benefits for businesses that engage in SDG efforts and specifically those that work towards SDG #4. First, a business would open up a world of opportunities by participating in global initiatives. As a result, you open yourself up to new markets, which ultimately, is a goal for businesses. Second, by corporations choosing to invest in education rights and other important philanthropic efforts, this builds trust for stakeholders and may even attract new customers who highly value these types of businesses. Furthermore, by investing in sustainability efforts, you may find ways to cut costs. While it may seem as though this would only apply to engineering and infrastructure, you can save money by investing in education as well. Let's say a company invests in a rural community in Africa and sets up not only a scholarship fund, but a new school. The scholarship fund will allow students to pursue a higher

education which will allow them to have a higher chance of success and perhaps loyalty towards the company that granted the scholarship. Also, if a company invests in a school that is sustainable, it would require less costs in the future.

While this does seem appealing, there are some challenges that businesses face in actively supporting SDGs and SDG #4. Working in a global setting, there are many moving parts when having to implement a new project. This requires collaboration with reliable companies for an endeavor of this caliber to be successful. Once past a collaborative stage, implementation comes next. In a global market, changes in operations and supply chain could happen at any time, so business teams need to be ready to adapt to such changes. Last, for any goal to be accomplished, there needs to be proper measurement. For there to be reports, progress checks, invoices, and audits, measuring tools are essential in providing this information (Feria, 2023). Oftentimes, projects rely on these reports to continue funding for their programs, further emphasizing why businesses need to ensure there are correct measurement tools.

For marketers, there are a few ways in which they can support this SDG. As we become a more globalized and connected society, social media is how most people access their information. Marketers should use social media to spread awareness about their cause and work towards achieving quality education for all. Next, companies should look at marketing their projects internally and externally. Externally, this can look like marketers reaching out to investors and other organizations to accept donations, form partnerships, and/or start a campaign. Internally, companies can encourage their employees to volunteer or donate in any way they can (Feria, 2023). Companies can also hold events, classes, or retreats for their employees to get a better understanding of the company's efforts towards this SDG.

Every citizen deserves a quality education. This fundamental right can only be guaranteed by the help and investment of businesses and organizations. It is up to the marketing strategists of these companies to raise awareness of this cause, promote it, and to keep up with implementation.

Works Cited

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