

Review of SDG implementation and interactions among goals

Discussion on SDG 4 – Quality education

Tuesday, 9 July 2019, 3:00-6:00 PM

Making the Sustainable Development Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs, a reality by 2030 is perhaps the greatest commitment that the Member States of the United Nations have assumed, since the Agenda demands to guarantee the full exercise of all human rights, with a strong emphasis in that that guarantee includes all the people. "No one left behind", "No one left out" is the great call for inclusion of the 2030 Agenda.

With regard to the human right to education, the commitment of SDG 4 is that by 2030, States must "Guarantee **inclusive, equitable and quality education** and promote **lifelong learning opportunities for all**".

The persistence of inequalities in our societies has deep roots in the discrimination and marginalization of large sectors of the population, an attitude that is the cause of conflicts and crises that affect the world, and are contrary to the solidarity needed to build peace. The inclusion of all people requires overcoming these barriers and taking seriously the concept of lifelong learning, which implies considering not only the school models of education, regular basic education, but also non-formal and informal models, that are also part of the national education systems.

We are convinced that education is a powerful instrument to transform lives and, therefore, transform the world, but not any education, but that which is an instrument of sustainable development, social justice, authentically democratic societies, global citizenship, the culture of peace that the whole world requires. A quality education that assumes the multiple dimensions of diversity to design models and strategies that are relevant to the characteristics of different societies but, in particular, focused on people and their dignity.

Quality education, like any profound transformation of education and the world, is not possible without the performance of teachers with a solid training within the framework of human rights, which will allow them to understand the indivisibility of human rights that are at the core of all SDGs that make up the 2030 Agenda, and to demand a comprehensive attention and multisector interventions to advance in the fulfillment of SDG 4. Likewise, the poor working conditions of many teachers in the world do not contribute to the expected learning achievements.

The latter requires greater and better investment in public education, which, in turn, implies a substantive tax reform and a strong political will to fight against tax evasion and avoidance in order to achieve tax justice absent in the world, as well as against the increasing privatization of education, an unregulated process that is allowing national and international companies to find in education, at all levels, an excellent and easy source of enrichment. Low-cost, low-quality private schools, with poorly paid teachers, not only violate the right to education, but also deepen inequalities in societies that do not consider education as a right, but rather as a commodity people buy and therefore receive the education that can pay for. Without an adequate and sufficient budget, there is no possibility of exercising rights.