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Implications in the Evaluation of SDG 4: What the Numbers Really Tell Us

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Implications in the Evaluation of SDG 4: What the Numbers Really Tell Us

Ellen Noe

Abstract

The United Nations has taken the primary role in leading the charge to eradicate poverty around the world. By establishing the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, 169 member nations agreed to work towards poverty eradication and development. The 17 goals each provide targets and indicators, established by the General Assembly, to guide member nations towards achievement. This paper researches the implications associated with monitoring and evaluation of SDG 4, universal quality education, and the ability of developing nations to collect and report on the indicators created for the goal. This research asks the questions, does the data provided give an authentic understanding of the reality of education in Nicaragua?; and what needs to be done, in the case of Nicaragua, in order to best measure SDG 4? To answer these questions, qualitative and quantitative data was gathered from a desk review and interviews with Nicaraguan teachers to create a case study. The case study was then compared to the quantitative data provided for four SDG 4 indicators chosen by the researcher. Comparing the case study to the data, the results found that the data alone did not provide an authentic understanding of the state of education in Nicaragua. The results gathered that the data provided for SDG 4 was minimal due to the lack of political will in Nicaragua, minimal collaboration, inability to collect data, and the disconnect between the SDG 4 indicators and the reality of education in Nicaragua. Because of these barriers to monitoring, evaluation and reporting, the SDGs will find similar results in 2030 as the MDGs did in 2015, minimal progress in low income developing nations.