

# UN SDGs Key to the Innovation of Hong Kong's Future in Education: Empowering Young Global Citizens

*Advancing inclusiveness and equality in quality education for all requires students to learn and act as young global citizens. KIDSforSDGs is all-in!*

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EINPresswire.com/ -- As 2020, the year marking the beginning of the Decade of Action, draws to an end, many children and their education has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. It has unleashed an unprecedented crisis and caused further stress to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), or the Global Goals, and their progress in quality education for all in countries around the world. In Hong Kong, the educational landscape has also been transformed, and an innovative approach to education through the lens of the UN SDGs hold the key to building back better.



Kenneth Kwok, Founder of KIDSforSDGs and Global Citizen Capital

As the global community embarked on the ambitious SDGs starting a few years ago, that it has committed to reach by 2030, it is incumbent upon all of us to consider how we will attain them. A first step in education is to determine where there are relationships, how strong they are, and in what direction they flow. How Hong Kong can Innovate on its educational approach starts on better understanding the role of education, captured by SDG 4 (Quality Education) in relation to the other 16 SDGs. [KIDSforSDGs](#), as Hong Kong's leading initiative in empowering the next generation of young SDG advocates and young global citizens, focus on the intersectionality of SDGs to bring forth holistic education.

There is no doubt that education plays a foundational role in the realization of the SDGs. With a particular focus on improving life opportunities and outcomes for the most marginalized in society, the SDGs were formed to build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals

(MDGs). In addition to serving as the focus for SDG 4, education directly contributes to the goals addressing poverty reduction and reduced inequalities, health and nutrition, economic growth and labor market opportunities, as well as peacebuilding and the promotion of democratic institutions.

Primary education, in particular, is recognized as a catalyst to meeting many of the most important development challenges that exist today. As governments and the international community increasingly focus on meeting the needs of citizens

across all income levels, it is crucial to continue to focus on the needs of the most marginalized and disadvantaged. It is equally critical that education programming benefit from the most rigorous research available, as education has a transformational role to play in addressing all

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Hong Kong needs to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. This will truly create sustainability for our next generation!”

*Kenneth Kwok, Founder,  
KIDSforSDGs*

sustainable development.

Education is a basic right and elementary to human dignity. SDG 4 also has reciprocal linkages across the 2030 Agenda. Access to quality education is an avenue for social mobility and reducing inequalities. Education is essential for building the knowledge base we need to tackle critical challenges like climate change. Education will help youth prepare for employment in the high-skill jobs of the fourth industrial revolution. In addition, education is a foundation for peaceful societies and effective institutions.



Kenneth Kwok, Founder of KIDSforSDGs and Young SDG Advocate

development challenges in the post COVID-19 era. Here, top academic institutions such as ITS Education in Hong Kong leads by example with their Young Changemaker Incubator Program.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is universal, holistic and indivisible, with a special imperative to leave no one behind. Education and the achievement of SDG 4 plays a central role in building sustainable, inclusive and resilient societies. Much progress was made under the MDGs toward universal primary school enrollment, and from 2021 onwards, SDGs need to aim to raise the bar and make education a catalyst for broader change toward

[Global Citizen Capital](#), a founding partner of KIDsforSDGs, is committed towards education serving as a foundational component for all of the SDGs. While the links have yet to be articulated clearly for some of the more specific goals, the importance of education as a pillar for the achievement of human development challenges is both indisputable and comprehensively established. Based on public research from UNDP and UNICEF, investments in education for primary-aged children from marginalized groups, including out of school children, are likely to be strongest in SDGs 3 (Good Health and Well-Being); 5 (Gender Equality); 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth); 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). Education overall had the strongest links, in addition to the goals mentioned above, with SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger). Moving forward, it is crucial that investments in education for the most marginalized are made based upon solid research and evidence.



According to [World Economic Forum](#) and its Education 4.0 initiative, the gap in quality education in the post COVID-19 world is further widened by limited innovation in learning systems, which were largely designed to mirror factory-style growth models. Public and private sector leaders to reset primary and secondary education frameworks, and co-design content and delivery that deliver on children's needs for the future. Hong Kong and its education systems need to actively adapt and innovate in alignment with the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

To scale the impact of SDG innovation in education, diversity and inclusion of and protections for vulnerable groups in the context of education need to be strengthened. This requires educators, among others, are to take measures to counter discrimination and abuse against anyone no matter their race, ethnicity, nationality, class, caste, religion, belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender or language. Additionally, it should be further enshrined the right to education for persons of all minority communities, including rights to access all levels of education, to be free from discrimination in the context of accessing and participating in the education system, to be provided with teachers and materials geared toward accommodating specific conditions (with a renewed focus on mental health), and to access technical and vocational training schools and systems.

Education is essential for sustainable development, but innovation in education that are not accompanied by concurrent progress in other aspects of human well-being will fall short of

enabling all people to realize their full potential in life. KIDSforSDGs believes that education has a transformational role to play in addressing the development challenges that the world faces today and over the next 15 years. Its primary contribution will focus on supporting Hong Kong schools to innovate, based on a holistic SDG blueprint.

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