Sustainable Development Goal-4
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Dear Friends,

This month we shall discuss the fourth Sustainable Development Goal: "Quality Education for All". In this blog, we shall try to explain:

a. What it is and why is this relevant

b. What are its indicators

c. What are the targets

d. Where do we stand in India?

e. What can we do to support the goal?

As stated earlier, I have little to contribute on my own. I have attempted to provide a few references, so that if anyone is interested in probing deeper, you could do so.
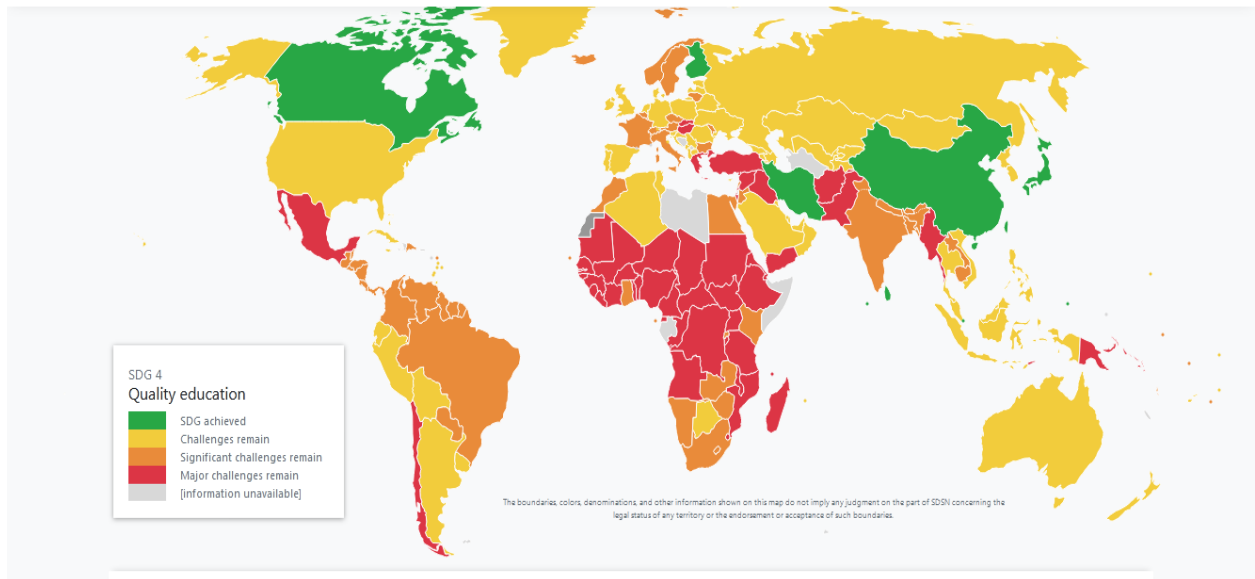
What is SDG 4 and why is this relevant [1]

When we think of education, we cannot forget the wonderful saying of Swami Vivekananda: "Education is the manifestation of perfection within". The designers of the SDGs understood the foundational role of education in the overall and sustainable development of the entire humanity. All the 3 preceding SDGs, poverty, hunger and health as well as subsequent SDGs: gender equality, and sanitation can be addressed through proper education.

The website on SDGs [1] defines it as 'inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning'. It must be inclusive: pointing towards the need for including all those who are usually left out of the normal process of education, like girls or children from poorer sections of society, and most importantly adult male and female who have missed the opportunity for basic education during their childhood.

The other important point is the concept of lifelong learning. In the present age of fast technological development, even a post-graduate becomes out-dated pretty soon, and must keep on learning the latest skills, tools and techniques to remain productive.

The following picture provides the global status in 2019 on this SDG [4]:

Sustainable Development Report Dashboards 2019
Transformations to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

SDG 4
Quality education

- SDG achieved
- Challenges remain
- Significant challenges remain
- Major challenges remain
- [information unavailable]

The boundaries, colors, denominations, and other information shown on this map do not imply any judgment on the part of SDSN concerning the legal status of any territory or the endorsement or acceptance of such boundaries.

India ranks at 115 [4] with an overall index value of 61.1. It comes under the category: 'Significant challenges remain'. Canada, Iran, China and Japan have achieved the goal. Challenges remain even in the US and Australia.
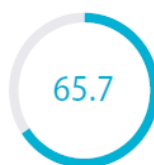

INDIA
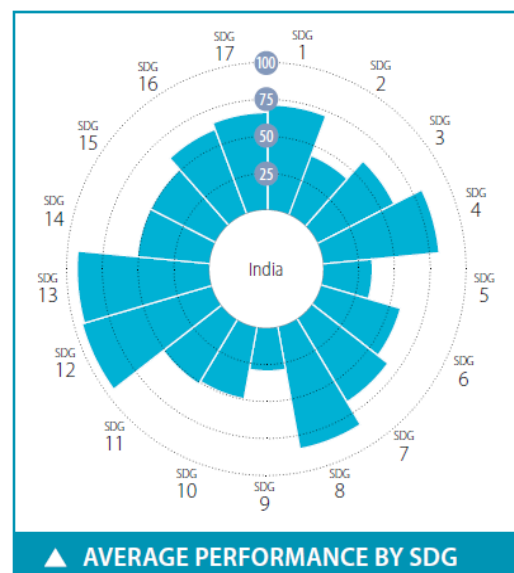East and South Asia

▼ OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Index score

61.1

Regional average score

65.7

SDG Global rank 115 (OF 162)

▼ SPILLOVER INDEX

100 (best) to 0 (worst)

▲ AVERAGE PERFORMANCE BY SDG

What are its indicators and targets? [2]

4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and Goal-4 effective learning outcomes.

4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and preprimary education so that they are ready for primary education.

4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.

4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.

4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.

4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

4.A Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, nonviolent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

4.B By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries.

4.C By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states.

What can we do to support the goal?

A number of NGOs are engaged in providing education, especially to children in remote areas, villages and urban slums. Each one of us could support this. 'Each one teaches one' could be the motto to be widely adopted by our youth. As I have stated before, at the cost of just a daily cup of tea, one can educate a child for a full year. One example: https://www.vrmvk.org/my-contribution-donation#vkv_child_education

All academic campuses could follow the example of Narendrapur Ashram of Sri Ramakrishna Mission. They run regular free evening school for adults in the neighbourhood engaged in

earning a livelihood through physical labour, like vegetable vendors, rickshaw pullers, and household maid servants, to mention a few. It is an innovative way for utilising the class-rooms that are normally closed during the evening hours.

Lobbying in favour of universal primary and secondary education, with the governments, private sector and the NGOs for appropriate policy measures and actual action are recommended by the UN website [1].

References
Source:
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   Accessed on April 30 2020 10:17 IST
2. Goal 4: Quality Education
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3. Why it matters?
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4. SDG Index Dashboard
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