**GRACE KERUBO NYARANGO**

STUDENT ID: UD74729BLES83444

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**UN Sustainable Development Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities *within and among countries***

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**Summary of the topics of discussion**

1. Definition of inequalities
2. Why is the UN’s goal of Reduced Inequalities important, in your opinion?
3. How is the state of Inequalities in the world?
4. What changes need to happen to achieve Reduced Inequalities?
5. Do you think it is possible to achieve Reduced Inequalities around the world? Why or Why not?
6. How can education lead to a world with Reduced Inequalities?
7. How can education improve in your community so that the next generation has the tools and mindset to obtain Reduced Inequalities?
8. How is this topic related to my studies at AIU
9. How will I use the knowledge gained to improve my country and community
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11. conclusion

# **1.0 Introduction**

The latest population data reveal that the world population has grown to a tune of 7.8 billion people, with approximately 385,000 babies born each day, or 140 million each year, one wonders how we can ever reduce inequalities with this numbers and disparities in population, age sex and race in a bid to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal number 10 on inequalities. This goal calls for countries and the world at large to reduce inequalities in income as well as those related to disability, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic status. In my opinion, reducing inequalities in the world requires strategic leadership, transformational change and new management as well as new public governance in the world order.

On the other hand, consider this; the world’s cities are growing rapidly. There are at least 548 cities with a population of one million or more with the majority of the population living in rural set up and unreached and living in poverty. This calls for leaders worldwide to come up with a plan of action with the aim to reduce inequalities. In my opinion this goal is important for a number of reasons, they include improving the common good, living in harmony and peacefully. This will encourage the spirit of brotherhood and uniformity. This will reduce incidences of war and competition among nations. Target 10.2 aims to promote universal social, economic and political inclusion by 2030 for all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic status. Further this goal is important to the UN as inequality brings about other related long-term problems that are both social and economic. This affects the rate of development worldwide and reduces quality of living among nations and people of all walks. The impact is more on children, the elderly, vulnerable and those suffering with disability. This aspects are the very interest of the UN’s sustainable development Goals.

Equality on the other hand is a state where every individual has equal opportunity to that which is available and to make the most of their lives and talent. The Kenya constitution 2010 section 27 provides equality and freedom from discrimination further, it provides for all citizens to enjoy equal rights in employment and all other aspects provided by the state. No one should be deprived of any chances due to where they come from, race, ethnicity, age or disability. It stipulates the full enjoyment of all amenities with equal rights and fundamental freedoms for both men and women.

## **1.1 Definition of Inequality**

According to the UNEP, 2013 inequality undermines social cohesion, brings about poverty and brings about social classes in a community thus slows development

What is inequality? It a state of unevenness, disparities in many aspects, it is the difference in social status, wealth, standard of living, size, amount, when you have more than the other person. This state bring about hatred, upheavals and may lead to war or clashes in society or even among nations. It is unfair situation where people have more rights than others (Webster, 1826)

There are various types of inequality; they include: Economic inequality, which is the difference in economic status, income, consumption or wealth. This has been the basis of crime in many societies in the world. Social inequality, which is the difference in social standing in society, class, education or employment. This result in most cases to poverty in most communities in the world. Political inequality often deals with influence over decision making and political power and unequal resource distribution and power. We have environmental inequality which is the unequal distribution of environmental aspects such as air or water, unequal access to natural resources and other ecosystems. This in most instances lead to social and economic inequality. Case in question the DR Congo that is always at war due to the natural resources that no one enjoys as members of the community. All this inequalities can be measured both within the country and across other countries (Vertical and Horizontal Inequality)

**Figure 1**. EU approach on inequality



**Source**: European Commission website

(EU, 2013-2019)

European Commission of reducing inequality is cantered in SDGS 1, 2,3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 15. This shows the partnership to achieve the SDGs. The same is enshrined in the EU treaties and is reflected in the European pillar of social rights. It carries out actions to include persons with disability both at the community and international level

## **1.2 Why is the UN’s goal of Reduced Inequalities important, in your opinion?**

From the foregoing, this Goal is important to the UN as it is the wheel that turns the other SDGs. There is great risk if nations rise against each other due to uneven distribution of resources and other inequalities, the other SDGs will not be achieved as you will require a combined effort to maintain the gains already made in the other goals. It is very important to address inequality in order to achieve the other goals. This will need partnership in all the goals in order to achieve the related targets for 2030. Despite important gains made since 2000 in lifting people out of poverty, inequalities and large disparities remain in income and wealth, access to food, healthcare, education, land, clean water and other assets and resources essential for living a full and dignified life. It is worthwhile to not that majority of the people living in rural areas and who are engaged in farming especially women, children, youth, and people living with disabilities fall at the bottom of the pyramid. Climate change has greatly affected the demographic landscape with low income, reduction in decent work political crisis as well changes in technology has led to increase in inequality. This trend if not checked will affect the next generation and therefore have great impact on the gains already made in the achievement of other SDGs by 2030.You require manpower, resources, peace and wellbeing of all persons for you to succeed. Inequality can breed crime, disease and environmental catastrophes and defeat the very benefit that would have improved the quality of life for all. (Worldbank, 2019) (Sustainable Development Goal 10 – Reduced Inequalities/UNDESA, 2019)

From the foregoing, it is evident that SDG 10 is of uttermost importance to the UN if all the other SDGs have to be met by the year 2030. Second, it is related to the 16 SDGs and their relevant targets. We need to understand that we cannot achieve development if the world is unequal and people are excluded from opportunities, services and basic needs. There is need to address the social, economic and political aspects of any society. Internationally there is also need for equal distribution of Finances in order to achieve the expected targets. The element of finance may not be easy, this will call for the UN to mobilize resources and distribute them to the most need countries to bring them to the expected standards if they have achieve all SDGs by 2030.

# **2.0 The state of inequality in the world**

The gap between the rich and the poor is vast growing globally. This is undermining the fight against poverty which is SDG: 1 “end poverty in all its forms everywhere”. This is damaging most economies and tearing societies apart worldwide (Oxfam, 2022). A great number of the world population is living in poverty while a few rich people receive the best reward in life. It is evident in other big corporations are under taxed and so are the rich in the world rich nations. Most of the policies disadvantage the poor, women and children bear the burden in most societies with little social protection support. This aspects contributes greatly to my field of study **“social protection**”

According to the Oxfam report of 2022, 1pecent of the world’s rich people are six times richer than 6,9 billion people, almost half of the population is living on USD 6 a day, only 4 cent of every dollar come from tax on wealth, the rich avoid 30 percent of their tax liability meaning they enjoy more benefits than the poor, for every 5 children one (I) will not have an opportunity to attend school, every day 10,000 people die due to lack of access to health care facilities, 100 million people are pushed into poverty every year. The rich are more likely to live longer than the poor as they have access to better living standards, men own 50 percent of the world’s wealth than women, 22 richest men in the world have more wealth than all the women in Africa. The unpaid care work done by women is estimated to be USD 10.8 trillion a year and estimated to be three times the size of technology industry.

The above facts indicate that as much as women provide greatly to economic growth they are unpaid/underpaid/ offer free services. They also make the largest proportion of the world’s largest household, and children suffer or even die before the age of 5 years. This scenario confirms why the UN’s SDG 10 is important. The world Leadership/Governments have a responsibility to act now to build a new humanity and reduce inequality in order to steer economic development. Inequality has been see to be one of the reasons of unrest in South Africa. The Picture below shows a state of unrest

There are 2billion people who live on USD 1 in the world. While there are 1 million who live above the poverty line. The poor struggle to even have clean water while a few rich people have more that they have. In many parts of the world more people live in poverty. This is the disparity in the society and most people don’t understand how the other person survives. The rich and politicians are not willing to step out and help the poor.

(Chancel, 2022) Posits that in every region of the world with the exception of Europe the bottom part of the pyramid consist of the poor whose earnings is less than 15 percent, which is less than Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa regions while the share of the rich of 10 percent is more than 40 percent or even 60 percent. On the other hand when you compare the wealth index, the share at the bottom who are 50 percent take 2 percent of the world wealth while the 10 percent at the apex take 76 percent. This is not withstanding the fact wealth is the key to future economic development

Power and influence. Further the report reveals that the rich population in the world is growing faster at the rate of 38 percent between 1995 and 2021 while the growth of the poor for the same period captured a 2 percent growth. At the same time the wealth owned by the rich 1 percent rose from 7 percent to 11 percent. The report further indicates that Global wealth inequality is more pronounced than income inequality. The poor population who are the majority owned 2 percent of the wealth while the rich 10 percent owned 76 percent of the all the wealth. Figure 1 below shows the state of the world wealth and income inequalities. This state of affairs if not checked may lead to a world full of unhappy people and finally lead to low economic development. The gap between the rich and the poor will also be pushed further. Figure 2 shows the percentage of income and wealth inequalities globally as recent as the year 2021.

**Figure 2 Global income and wealth inequalities, 2021**



**Source:** Global inequalities report, 2022

However, currently, there is an improvement in the inequality gap between countries. The inequality gap reduced at the top 10 percent of the rich few people while the bottom 50 percent of the population, the pace was slow (dropped from 50 percent to 40 percent). Over the years many countries have become rich while their governments have remained poor. This is because the private sector in this countries has shown high growth in wealth while the public sector remain poor. This was made was made even intense with the setting in of COVID-19. This meant that most governments had no option but to borrow heavily from the private in order to combat the pandemic. Gender inequalities in income on the other hand remain high. Some countries have reported great progress while others have reported a reduction in women total earnings in the past 30 years compared to men. In some countries the gender gap is positive not necessarily a discrimination. The gap is significant over the life time of a worker, this gap is smaller as one gets into employment and increases as one grows older. This gap is also seen when women get married and get children. They may be forced to work part-time in order to get time to take care of the children. In poor families, this may reduce the income compared to men and hence in single households this leads to income and wealth inequality. In Kenya for example, women were first employed on contract and resigned from active employment when they got married. This affected the family income and wealth. Some countries, have low women participation in the labor force and may not feature much in analysis thus bringing out the inequalities between women and men in employment.

For example Philippines has the highest rates of inequalities in the world. Majority of the 99, 2 million population live below the poverty line. This has been made worse as most families tend to live in large units with one head of the family providing for this large households. This state of affair has affected majority of the Philippines particularly school going children. In my opinion, this requires that the government must put in mechanisms to close the inequality gap. Social and economic inequality is seen to be the most serious aspect that the Phillpino government must deal with. The Government has however come up with initiatives to help majority of the citizens earn a better and stable income. ChildFund has worked hard in this country to see that families and especially children have the necessary resources. They have establishing early childhood centres that have helped more than 8000 children enrol in programs that provide food, nutrition and basic health care as well as education opportunities. This is with a view to provide more prospects to the citizens in order to earn a higher income and improve their livelihood. "Better education, better healthcare, social safety nets, and stronger and broader economic growth, especially in agriculture, are the keys to lowering inequality," Edwin Lacierda, a spokesperson for the Philippines' president, said in a news briefing in Manila earlier this year.

This statement is proof enough that education is the key to unlocking better opportunities and hence improve standards of living in the world

# **3.0 Changes that need to happen to achieve Reduced Inequalities**

Many changes need to happen to reduce inequality in the world. There has to a deliberate change in policy. There is need to learn from some of the countries that have in place mechanisms to reduce inequalities. Some of the policies used include redistributing wealth to invest in the future in order to meet the challenges of the next generation.in my opinion this may work for some countries while some may struggle to achieve this due to governance issues. In my country for example the gap between the rich is so big and the leadership has not deliberately taken any step to openly declare the need to reduce the gap. This state may apply to many countries in the region. Given a chance, after my study at AIU I will lobby for policies that favour the poor in order to uplift them from a state of poverty.

From the knowledge gained, i purpose to work with the county government to come up with initiatives that target the poor households to assist them come up with projects/businesses that give them an income to meet their basic needs. This is with a view to increase income and employment in the community, increase services and extend social protection to the people. Home ownership is a crucial element for building intergenerational wealth. Offering cheap credit facilities may enable many households to own property thus empowering people.

In a world riddled with inequality in all aspects, there is the need to increase minimum wage. Studies show that higher wages for the low paid workers has helped millions come out of poverty and add to the country’s economic development. The state has to deliberately take upon itself to put in polices in place that encourage savings and acquisition of property as a way of building income for families. For example most of the East African countries have developed policies that seek to expand social protection to the informal sector in order to mitigate old age poverty. This is one of the pathways to wealth creation.

Governments across the globe need to invest in quality education for all. This has however seen many countries introducing free education bearing in mind that areas with high education level and low school dropouts have posted high economic development. However, this has not been achieved due to lack of adequate budget. Differences in education has been the root cause of inequality across generations. Investing in early education may increase economic mobility and contribute to productivity and hence decrease inequality. There is need to institute tax reforms so that the rich pay the same tax rate as the rest. In my country there is an element of the rich and powerful evading to pay tax while the poor working middle-class and the poor cannot escape paying tax

Many countries are building low cost/affordable housing. However, residential segregation should be avoided in order to boost economic development. This aspects tend to group the poor and middle class in one location and the rich in the most affluent part of the country. This social classes most of the time lead to attempted crimes. Policy makers should take it upon themselves to prioritise some of the above policies with a view to creating a fair and inclusive society

# **4.0 Do you think it is possible to achieve Reduced Inequalities around the world? Why or Why not?**

There is a positive move by the UN to reduce inequality at the same time there has been a debate around the world on the need to reduce inequality. This is due to the fact that inequality reduces economic growth and increases poverty up to the community level. With the onset of COVID- 19 the gap on inequality has been pushed further. This has necessitated the UN Secretary General to call for solidarity for all to join hands in support to the worst economic crisis with a view not to leave anyone behind. This is with a view to ensure that all have access to basic amenities and service. This call an emergency fund for economic support to assist the poor communities around the world. At an IMF-World bank meeting delegates agreed that there is need to put in initiative to reduce inequality. They however differed on the priorities list to be used to reduce inequality. This would have been the opportune time to call for action and initiatives and possible policies to reduce poverty as the world is experiencing the same tide of the pandemic. In my opinion, Governments would have been more receptive to join hands and put in place policies that would bring change in reducing inequality.

Inequality breeds vices such as crime, diseases, environmental degradation, harms poverty reductions and all other efforts to reduce poverty, causes low self-esteem, affects economic development social wellbeing in any community. This is evident that we cannot achieve and sustain economic/social development if we continue to exclude others from access of essential services and social protection. The leadership must rise up and hold the bull by its horns and be our brother’s keepers if we must end/reduce inequality. Think of the next generation.

In my opinion, reduction of inequality is possible and the world can be seen as a good place to live for all and ensure a life of dignity. This can be achieved through deliberate change and development of political, social and economic policies. This policies should be universal/standardised and geared towards addressing the needs of the disadvantaged and vulnerable in the societies. The world leaders should purpose to reduce the inequality gap with a view to reduce poverty, hunger and improve access to basic amenities. There is need to invest in health facilities to the grass root/communities around the world, provide affordable housing and provide jobs and job security, social protection and child care and affordable education and necessary resources to the vulnerable communities. All this calls for transformative and strategic leadership.

Strategic leadership seeks to empower and promote inclusiveness. This will bring people to the realization of working together to achieve the goal. This can spur social and economic growth, ensure equal opportunity and reduce income and wealth inequalities and eliminate discrimination among communities and nations. If we allow more representation of all stakeholders and less developed countries in decision making particularly on the most pertinent issue that affect societies, this can provide a medium to effective, solid, credible and accountable solutions that can be applied across the board equitably. ((UN), May, 2020)

From the foregoing discussion it is evident that social and economic inequalities tears the social fabric, it undermines social cohesion prevents nations, communities and individuals to flourish. (Pickett, 24th January, 2014). In this regard, world leadership have a task to increase social and economic inclusion of all in order to reduce inequality. Yes in my opinion it is possible to reduce inequality and make the world a better place for all to live in.

# **5. 0 how can education lead to a world with Reduced Inequalities?**

Education is a game changer in many aspects. In my own community i see many children struggle to get basic education. Many travel long distances to access school. Most of this schools lack the essential infrastructure and Teachers. They go a whole day at a tender age without foo needless to say the basic amenities and further social security and health care. Most families survive on one meal a day and the children have to put up with this harsh environment. Yet this children are expected to compete with the urban schools exams and the rich children who enjoy good facilities in the most prestigious schools in the country. This shows the level of poverty in most of the less developed countries or in poor households.

How then can education reduce inequalities? Various studies and research indicate that over time education reduces inequality in communities and the world at large. Many scholars agree that inequality starts with faulty education. A strong education can act as a key that leads to political, economic, racial, judicial, gender and health based inequalities. I started my early learning in one of the rural schools in my village, I remember trekking long distance every morning to school (pre-Unit). At one point I had to stop going to school to take care of my younger brother and this was a short-lived relieve. One sure thing in my mind was to strive to work internationally and today I count myself as a middle-class member of society. However many of the children did not escape poverty in my village. This is evident that education changes lives for the better yet this may not be true to many children in the most countries especially in many youths.

“By the 1970’s, America had the most prestigious educational systems. In the 1990’s, the gap between the minority and white students had narrowed, but this has remained difficult to close”. There is need to close this gap to facilitate economic development and cohesion now and for the future generation.

Education not only gives one skills, but the ability to think on how to get the opportunities and move out of poverty. Educational inequality leads to income inequality. Some parts of in most countries cannot attract qualified teachers and this pushes the inequality further. Race gender and economic status for example in Boston has brought a lot of inequalities. Schools help children cultivate the culture that is necessary to close the inequality gap. City schools do better than the rural schools (Corydon Ireland, 15th February, 2015). This report reveals that good schools help close the inequality gap and help reduce poverty and violence. Quality early childhood learning contributes to breaching the inequality gap.

Education is an important aspect promotes development and knowledge. It equips one with live skill, values, understanding and wisdom necessary for a sustainable world. This in turn facilitate social equity and economic development in any society and nation. With skills and knowledge, people are able to conserve forests and protect the environment for a better tomorrow/ next generation. It enables people to make key decisions that affect self and the society and translate to a better standards of living. Education helps address aspects such as poverty elevation, improves values that are important for the SDGs. It facilitates peace, human rights gender equality, corporate responsibility, addresses governance issues, enables people to take care of the planet and live quality life. It promotes healthcare which is key for a health nation (UN decade of sustainable development, UNESCO, Nairobi Cluster, 2006).

Education promotes partnerships of all members of society, it enables deliberation and engagement of various stakeholders such as governments, non-governmental organizations, private and public sector and the international community. This promotes trade, development, knowledge sharing and better collaboration in science and Technology. This will enable the world to become a better place for all humanity

Evidence from developed countries show the importance of education in community development and empowering the next generation. Education promotes values and virtues in society, it helps us understand ourselves and other’s culture and behavior. It provides one with tools of survival in all aspects of life. There are many dimensions of education, environmental education enables people in the community to know how to take care of the environment and natural resources that are key for community development and empowers the next generation. Development education provides avenues for interdependence and interconnectedness among the community, international world and the next generation. It enables us to communicate and create dialogue to the outside world, it reduces poverty, promotes social justice, it improves quality of life and links the current and future generation.

# **6.0 How can education improve in your community so that the next generation has the tools and mindset to obtain Reduced Inequalities?**

In view of the above discussion, it is important to improve education in my community in order to empower the next generation with values necessary for survival and preservation of the environment. Education can improve in my community through empowering the youth and protection of the environment. There is need to ensure that the youth and the teachers are well equipped with the necessary skills to protect the community resources so that the next generation has the tools and mindset to reduce inequality. There is need to enhance the knowledge on protection and conservation of the environment and personal development

Education can improve in the community through initiatives that promote social inclusion which is the aim of ECO-UNESCO’s program. This will be with a view to prevent drug that is important in the wellbeing of the people in my community. Emphasis should be made to encourage the youth who are the backbone of my community and medium of knowledge to the next generation. This will enable them take an active role in social development in my community.

After completion of my program in AIU, I will lobby the government to put in place Sustainable development programs for the youth where they learn new skills and learn to communicate globally and explore avenues for business opportunities for their advancement and the good of the community. Given the opportunity and funds being available. It will be of great use to build tertiary institutions where youth learn and equip themselves with entrepreneurial skills that will enable them face tomorrow with boldness and vend for their families. This will be with a view to reduce poverty and reduce inequality in the community.

Example of Ireland shows the advantage and benefit of the Education for sustainable development (ESD) programs in any society. This are avenues for inter-sectorial collaboration in many fields and help the youth create networks that will enable them progress in life. They will create links with the non-governmental organizations and local community that will see new development n the community. This will engage the youth who would otherwise engage in crime and other related vices that will create a generational gap in the society.

This topic relates very well to my field of study in various aspects. Social protection is an important aspect as far as inequality is concern. There a lot of inequalities between the aged, children, women and men, between the well to do in society and the vulnerable. Social protection deals with aspects of inequality and puts in place initiatives that aim to bring equity in resource distribution and wellbeing and care for the aged, children, and the vulnerable groups in society, which ties very well with the SDG 10 on reduced inequality

The knowledge gained from my program at AIU will enable me champion increase in economic inclusion of the youth in community projects, create decent work with a view to provide high incomes, improve social amenities and ensure access to social protection which the subject of study and interest. I will advocate for pro-poor policy development and transparent systems. I will focus on extension of social protection the youth, children and the vulnerable group.

# **7.0 Conclusion**

Reducing inequalities is one of the most important aspects if we have to achieve the 17 SDG by 2030. It is one of the most important step each county must take in order to increase population well-being. All types of inequality, such as social, political, environmental, economical, vertical and horizontal must be top on each country’s agenda**.** Improving standard of living will enable any country to develop and flourish.

It is evident that a lot of changes need to be made especially developing new policies whose aim is to reduce inequality in order for the world to be a better place for all. Less developed countries (LDC) need to learn what other countries are doing to improve the livelihood of the vulnerable in their communities. Greater efforts should be made to create awareness of many opportunities that one could use to better their lives and at the same time work on their social wellbeing. Governments should try to reduce gender inequality, create jobs, provide access to proper sanitation and clean water and education their population especially provide early learning for the children.

From the literature on this topic, i have learnt that some of the policies used to reduce inequalities include redistributing wealth to invest in the future in order to meet the challenges of the next generation. Though this may work for some countries while some may struggle to achieve this, it will be better for one to try. Given a chance, after my study at AIU I will lobby for policies that favour the poor in order to move them from their current state to a better standing in the community. I would want to see, children in poor homesteads go to school, have a meal in a day, access health care and receive basic needs, mothers having time with their children and not spend long hours tiling the fields that give them not enough income to cater for the children. I would like to see the government/leadership put in place initiatives for the teenagers in the rural arears to stop urban migration in search of employment.

Inequality in all aspects in the world should be dealt with on an urgent basis through the implementation of effective measures. This is necessary for the sustainable and inclusive growth of people, society, country and the economy of any nation, as well as the next generation. That education is the key to unlocking better opportunities and leads to better standards of living in any nation and the world at large. Needless to say, **Education is a game changer in many aspects**. Hence, in order to minimize inequality, we must first comprehend its roots and implications, which are often complicated and deeply rooted in social, economic, political, and environmental systems and resources. Finally, it is also necessary to empower women and create chances for young and disadvantaged groups; to enhance economic inclusion and generate good work, better salaries, values and ethics; and to increase economic inclusion and create decent job and higher incomes in order to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

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