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Assignment 3: Choose two or three of the Sustainable Development Goals and discuss, based on observations you've made during your internship and other experience/knowledge, how they interconnect with one another, and how this impacts how the goals should be addressed.

Goal Four: Quality Education - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Goal Six: Clean Water and Sanitation - Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

I have chosen to speak about Sustainable Development Goals four and six; Quality Education, and Clean Water and Sanitation. Based on my observations from living on Lake Bunyonyi, in the Kabale region of Uganda, I will discuss how these goals interconnect, and their impacts. The inability to access quality education, or any education, is still an issue that is devastatingly unequal in our world; concurrently, access to clean water and sanitation is too. From my experience so far, I have noticed that access to quality education, and clean water are issues that people contend with on a daily basis around Lake Bunyonyi. The Sustainable Development Goals four and six, are therefore very relevant, and the improvement to the quality of one, will in some way have impact on the quality of the other.

I've noticed that education is important to the people here, and although there is much support and work being done to increase quality and access to education, there are still issues that students and families face. School attendance seems to be a problem in this area of Uganda; due to lack of resources, gender inequalities, geography, and awareness, some students must leave school before graduating or cannot attend school regularly. I have heard that more and more children are finishing their studies, especially female students, who are usually the first to stop if a family does not have enough funds. There is still a discrepancy, however. In rural areas of Uganda, families are generally very large, it is not unusual to have six or more children in a family, and although public schools in Uganda are less than private schools, families are still required to pay school fees each term, and many poorer families cannot afford these fees. This makes it very difficult for poorer and vulnerable children to finish their studies, which gives them a disadvantage in the job market, as they may not be able to continue schooling in college, or a vocational training. To meet SDG's target 4.1, "By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes", we must work hard on creating partnerships between governments, education boards, and Rights-based organizations, to allocate enough financial resources, so all children are able to attend school and finish studies, regardless of their wealth.

Furthermore, access to safe drinking water and sanitation systems on school properties, are very important for the wellbeing of all students whom attend. Most of the schools around Lake Bunyonyi may have a water system in place, such as, rain barrels, however, it is either not functioning, or is not a sufficient water supply for the whole school. Therefore, children either go without water for the day, drink soda because it is cheaper, or retrieve water directly from the lake. Schools try to boil water before consumption, but due to lack of resources and time, it seems that this is not often the case. There also seems to be a lack of awareness when it comes to knowledge about safe drinking water. Children learn habits from

their parents, and it seems that many people around the lake believe that the lake water does not need to be boiled before consumption. In order to improve knowledge and awareness, it may be beneficial to include water education within the primary school curriculum. This might already be in place in some schools, as there are many water projects happening around Uganda. By incorporating this sort of education into the school curriculum, it would be beneficial for all students, families, and something that could help combat preventable water born illnesses. Furthermore, increasing access to funds, and infrastructure, via water initiative partnerships, schools would have the resources to build safe and sustainable water systems for their students.

Lastly, I have heard that lack of, or dirty sanitation facilities at schools is problem in the Kabale region. This is particularly important for female students, and must be addressed to help reach SDGs target 6.2, “By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations”. Although there may be toilets on school premises, they can be quite unsanitary due to lack of running water and supplies. This can become a problem for female students, and more specifically girls who are menstruating. This could hindrance school attendance for young females if they don’t have the resources to buy sanitary products, or may be embarrassed to come to school. Increasing hygienic sanitation facilities, and educating young girls on simple, and cheap hygiene techniques would be very valuable to help with school attendance, and help decrease gender disparities within schools.

In summary, by addressing infrastructure and resource issues, increasing awareness around clean water and sanitation, and creating a system where access to free primary and secondary school, is essential. This will help create a system where all students, including the most vulnerable and poor, will have access to quality, equitable, and free education. I think, focus should be put on creating sustainable partnerships between Rights-based organizations, school boards, and the government, to work toward these goals.