

**Mwangi M. Ndegwa | MLIFE Foundation | Education: Overcoming systemic racism and  
Historic Harm**

Imagine a young mind, brimming with curiosity, like a star waiting to ignite. Now, imagine countless such minds, yearning for knowledge yet shrouded by the darkness of educational inequity. These are the Black children across the globe, our future leaders, scientists, artists – their potential dimmed by a legacy of injustice and the harsh realities of the present. Greetings everyone. My name is Mwangi Ndegwa.

Education, the cornerstone of opportunity and progress, remains out of reach for far too many Black students due to a complex web of historical injustices and ongoing systemic barriers. For centuries, colonialism and slavery actively denied Black people access to education. Even after emancipation, systems like Jim Crow laws and the Bantu Education Act deliberately hindered Black educational attainment. The echoes of these injustices continue to shape the educational landscape today.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, a staggering 60% of youth between the ages of about 15 and 17 are still not in school. The high cost of education further hinders access, furthermore, these disparities are not limited to Africa, in the United States, 45% of Black students attend high-poverty schools, compared with 8% of white students.

**The UN should facilitate a multi-pronged approach to dismantle** this legacy and create accurate educational equity in a digital age.

*They should pressure Governments to:*

- **Increase Investment:** Allocate more resources to improve infrastructure, expand teacher training programs, and provide needs-based scholarships prioritizing Black students.
- **Reform the different Curriculars:** Develop inclusive and culturally relevant curricula reflecting the contributions of Black history and thought.
- **Bridge the Digital Divide:** Invest in expanding internet access, particularly in underserved communities, and provide technology training for students and educators. This includes equipping libraries with computers and other digital resources.

*The Black Diaspora should work with the UN to:*

- Raise awareness of educational inequities Black communities face globally.
- **Invest in Mentorship Programs and** connect with Black students through mentorship programs like MLOVE.
- **Increase Financial Support:** Donate to organizations improving educational opportunities in Black communities worldwide.
- **Encourage Investments globally:** Encourage businesses in the diaspora to invest in educational infrastructure and create job opportunities within these communities.

In conclusion, by investing in resources, embracing culturally relevant education, fostering mentorship from the diaspora, and integrating technology into our libraries, we can empower Black students to claim their rightful place as leaders in a digital age.

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NSBA Black students

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