

**The sustainable development in Africa  
(Prospect and challenges)**

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**Abstract :**

Sustainable development is at the core of global policy discourse because it focus in environmental, economic and social consideration.

Africa's sustainable development constrained by corruption, infrastructure deficits, insecurity and reliance in primary products, in this context we must learn about the concept of sustainable development and its importance for Africa and the prospects and challenges it faces.

**Keywords:** sustainable development, prospects, challenges, economic, concept.



**Abbreviation:**

SD	Sustainable development
GDP	Gross domestic product
AEO	African economic outlook
AFDB	African economic Bank
MDGS	Millennium Development Goals
ILO	International Labor Organization
ADB	African Development Bank
WHO	World Health Organization
AFF	African Forest Forum
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

## **Introduction**

Sustainable development is the type of development that takes into consideration not only the economic dimensions but also the social and environmental dimensions, ensuring the responsible utilization of available resources to meet the needs of individuals while preserving the rights of future generations. The world faces the risk of environmental degradation that must be overcome without forsaking the needs of economic development, as well as social equality and justice. Sustainable development requires improving living conditions for all individuals without exceeding the Earth's capacity to sustainably support increased use of natural resources. Sustainable development is conducted in three main areas: social growth, preservation of natural and environmental resources, and social development.

### **I-The concept of sustainable development**

Sustainable development is an organizing principle that aims to meet human development goals while also enabling natural systems to provide necessary natural resources and eco system services to humans<sup>1</sup>. The desired result is a society where living condition and resources meet human needs without undermining the planetary integrity and stability of the naturel system<sup>2</sup>. Sustainable development tries to find a balance between e economic development environmental protection and social well- being<sup>3</sup>.

Sustainable development now days has focus on economic development social development and environmental protection for future generation.

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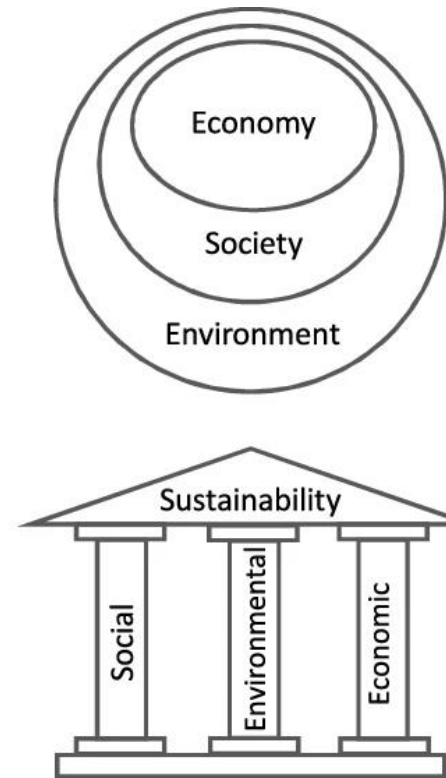
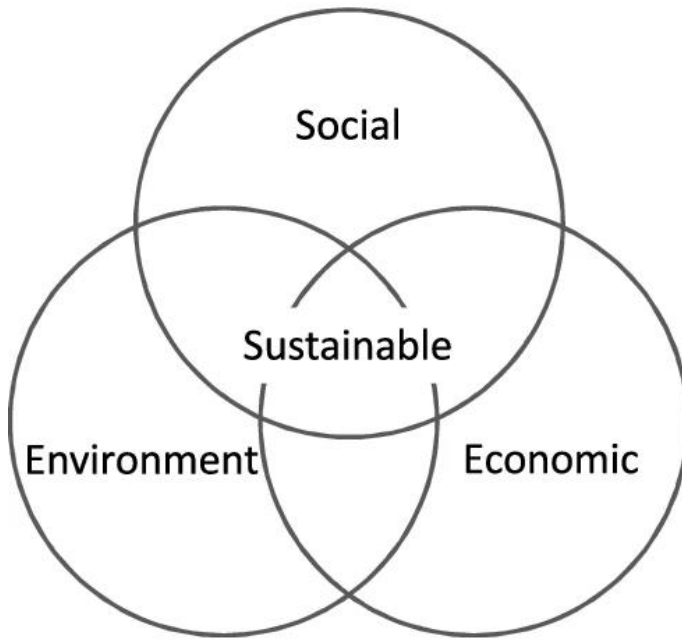
In 1987, the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development released our common future commonly called the Brundtland report<sup>4</sup> the report included a definition of “sustainable development” which is now widely used.

It contains two key concepts within it:

The concept of “needs”, in particular, the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given, and the idea of limitation posed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.

### **Sustainability**

Several visual representations of sustainability and its three dimensions: the left image shows sustainability as three intersecting circles. In the top, right it is a nested approach<sup>5</sup>.



## II-Prospects of sustainable development in Africa

The prospects of co-chairing sustainable development in Africa on the issue of economic growth and poverty reduction, current trends paint to assiduous efforts on the part of African government to make progress<sup>6</sup>. the economic development communities need several different types of capital including human, physical and natural capital- investment prospect. For economic development, demand a cyclical accumulation of such forms of capital.

Currently, several African countries are among the fastest growing economies in the world. In this regard, sub-Saharan African's regional debt – to GDP. Ratio is extremely low. The SD agenda of the continent additionally Africa and Asia were the only regions that continued to grow

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at rates of 5 to 7% in the face of global financial crisis<sup>7</sup> based on I.M.F for costs, Africa will grab seven of the top of 10 places on the next 5 years.

With regard to population, Africa presently has 3% of the world market, but with 15% of the world's population, 60% of the world's uncultivated arable land and a fast-growing proportion of the world's discovered valuable resources, its potential for growth over the next ten years is greater than China's over the same period<sup>8</sup>.

In relation to environment, health and sanitation, African countries are encouraged to ensure that decent work and social as well as acceptable environmental practices are part of SD strategies. In order to leverage the opportunities for labor, governments would have to place emphasis on skills and education that facilitate job transition and improve employability; there must also be equal employment opportunities for all irrespective of gender. For the environment to be sustained, developing countries must adopt and implement policy options to improve energy efficiency, temporarily reduce fish catch to allow for recovery, and protect forests and drastically reduce atmospheric pollution<sup>9</sup>

In order to enhance the prospects towards food safety, Africa needs a radical shift in its agricultural system that answers its food needs (African Agenda, 2012). This is consistent with the AU's declaration of 2014 as the year of Agriculture. There is therefore the need for African governments to invest more in Agriculture and food security<sup>10</sup>.

There is need for financial and technological assistance to Africa to accelerate the rate of development. This is not to say that the lack of

money and cutting-edge technology is the root of the lack of SD; however, emphasis must be put on governance if sustainable development can be achieved<sup>11</sup>. To further strengthen democracy towards the attainment of SD in Ghana, President Dramani Mahama, after the Supreme Court announced its verdict on the election petition indicated that, “I know that in the last eight months, we have had several hurdles to overcome- issues of governance, labor, energy, economy and education. I know, too, that because the world does not stand still when a goal is met or a mandate is delivered, over the coming years, from time to time, we will continue to face our fair share of challenges. There are various reforms the must take place, and bold decisions that must be made. I assure you that I am prepared to make those decisions and ensure that those reforms are implemented”<sup>12</sup>. The statement by President Mahama suggests the intentions of the Government of Ghana to continue to build the strength of democratic institutions and embark upon the necessary reforms needed to keep the country of the path of SD.

### **III-The Challenges of Sustainable Development in Sub-Saharan Africa**

The term sustainability reflects the need for careful balance between economic growth and environmental preservation. There are several challenges to sustainable development in Africa. They include:

#### **1-Poverty:**

Most developing countries across the globe are poor especially countries in Sub-Sahara Africa, Latin America and some parts of Asia. According to the 2007 African Economic Outlook, a publication of the



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African Development Bank, African countries have been able to sustain GDP growth of 5.4 per cent over the past five years. However, political stability, good economic management policies and an improved institutional environment, have catalyzed the growth process in some countries. In spite of these economic trends, the scourge of poverty is still having a major impact on the Africa continent.

Poverty is the foremost development challenge confronting Africa. It is linked to the environment in complex ways, particularly in natural resource- based African economies. About **two thirds** of the population in Africa countries lives in rural areas, deriving their main income from agriculture. These activities have not only worsened the situation of the poor living in Africa today<sup>13</sup>.

### **2-Rapid Population Growth:**

A population growth rate of 2.5 per cent in Africa according to the World Bank (2009), Africa's population may double in less than 30 years. This rapid population growth has put a lot of stress on Africa's ecosystem. Problems such as food security, land tenure, environmental degradation and lack of water supply are often related to high rates of population growth.

Food production are slower than population growth, per capital levels of production and food self-sufficiency will fall<sup>14</sup>.

### **3-Rapid Urbanization/ Urban Development:**

The majority of Africa's population growth is expected to take place in urban areas. Rapid urbanization in Africa has been accompanied by new

and challenging environmental problems. A sizeable proportion of urban dwellers in Sub-Sahara Africa live in slum conditions, without durable housing or legal rights to their land. At least one-quarter of African city dwellers do not have access to electricity. The World Health Organization (2002) reported that an estimated 43 percent of urban dwellers had access to piped water.

Research reveals that the urban environment appears to worsen at a faster rate than urban population size increases, with the result that the marginal environmental cost of additional residents rises over time<sup>15</sup>.

#### **4-Deforestation**

Deforestation can lead to a number of environmental maladies that over time can greatly lower agricultural yields and increase rural hardships. Clearing of vegetation at high elevations may increase the exposure of cultivated lands at lower altitudes

According to the African Forest Forum (AFF) Africa has about 650 million hectares of forests and woodlands, covering 28 per cent of its total land area<sup>16</sup>.

Environmental Impact of Extractive Industries: For a continent that is dependent on its natural resources to achieve growth, the challenge of ecologically friendly sustainable development is daunting. Current patterns of extraction of non-renewable resources such as gold, diamonds and crude oil have had an untold impact on the environment. In Nigeria, oil spills and gas flares have polluted the environment significantly for more than 50 years the loss of productive land, surface and groundwater

pollution, and soil contamination are part of the legacies of oil and mineral exploration<sup>17</sup>.

### **5-Climatic Variability and Natural Environmental Hazards:**

The Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) study suggests that Africa will suffer greater effects of climate change than any other region of the world. Projections include the decrease in rainfall in the already arid areas of Eastern and Southern Africa.

The Report released by IPCC in 2007 shows that Sub-Sahara African can expect major consequences from Global warming involving larger and more severe heat waves, hurricanes, floods from heavy rains, prolonged droughts, losses of valuable species of crops and fishes losses. Sub-Sahara Africa is vulnerable to and will be hit particularly hard, by greenhouse gas-induced climate change. The IPCC report concluded that by 2020, agricultural production, including access to food, in many countries and regions in Africa is projected to be severely compromised by climate variability and change<sup>18</sup>.

## **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, it must be noted that Africa continues to face challenges related to sustainable development and its economic, social, and environmental components. Despite the efforts made in this context to improve human livelihood through optimal utilization of natural resources while preserving the environment, which is a central axis in sustainable development, Africa still grapples with economic, social, and environmental problems. This makes the implementation of a sustainable development plan in Africa challenging. Nevertheless, Africa, with its resources and through the collaboration of its nations within the framework of the African Union, strives to commit to the application of sustainable development to overcome poverty, ensure food security, improve health, provide safe drinking water, establish sanitation systems, build adequate housing, and meet other life necessities. These remain fundamental goals for all African nations that continue to face significant challenges hindering sustainable development in the region.

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