



POVERTY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: ITS IMPLICATIONS TO SUB-SAHARA COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT: *The study focuses on the linkage between poverty and sustainable development and its implications for Sub-Saharan countries. It examines the interplay between poverty, climate change, and sustainable development in the areas of causes, synergies, trade-offs, and adaptations. Finally, it offers insights into possible pathways to poverty mitigation options for Africa and moves her into the path of poverty sustainable development goal. The study is qualitative. All reviewed works of literature revealed that climate change, population growth, poor policy structures and institutional setting, poor savings, poor rural community libraries, and inequality in resource distributions, amongst others, are poverty panaceas in Africa. The implications of this paper are that it showcased the necessity for governments and the international community to take both proactive and reactive steps towards reducing poverty, which is now a major hindrance to the implementation of SDGs. Another implication is that the study provides a reference for less developed regions to make reasonable and integrated arrangements for their sustainable development. The paper concluded that there is an urgent need by government at all levels to integrate these factors into sustainable development, thereby moving toward the goal of sustainable development for poverty. Summarily, the study recommended that African leaders should stop paying lip service to sustainable development implementation. They should increase expenditure on social services and amenities, and the international community should be genuine in their international assistance to Africa.*



INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a situation where the population is living under \$2 a day. Clement and Dickson (2021) categorised it into the following thresholds: the chronically poor living below \$1.25 a day, the transient poor living below \$2.00 a day, and the non-poor living above \$2.00 a day. In the views of Casillas and Kammen (2010), poverty is not about not having enough money to meet basic needs like food, clothing and shelter; it means a lack of adequate financial resources such that individuals, households and entire communities do not have the capacity to acquire fundamental necessities for a flourishing life. This means being so poor that they struggle to obtain food, clothing, shelter, and medical care.

According to Walter et al. (2021), poverty is one of the central elements in the transformative promise of the 2030 agenda, which says leave no one behind. Ironically, ending poverty in all ramifications everywhere is the first sustainable development goal but has now become its abattoir. It is often aggravated by a lack of access to employment opportunities and by various forms of discrimination.

The World Vision organisation, in 2019, describes poverty in this way: “Poverty is hunger; poverty is lack of shelter”. Eradicating extreme poverty for all people everywhere by 2030 is a pivotal goal of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, extreme poverty is defined by the body as surviving on less than \$2.15 per person per day. As of 2017, the purchasing power parity of many countries all over the world witnessed remarkable declines, bringing extreme poverty to the fore, and here in 2024, the purchasing power of the currency of many African countries (including Nigeria) is close to worthless. It is now prompting their Central banks to consider the decimalisation of their currencies. In the words of Zulu and Richardson (2013), poverty is now a threat to sustainability in the sense that it militates against the execution of certain SDGs, e.g. SDGs 1 and 7, SDGs 2 and 8, and SDGs 3 and 8. Poverty brings difficulty in meeting community needs, which often leads to pressure on land, over-exploitation of soils and deforestation. According to the authors, many people living in poverty work on the land but do not have access to training on how to protect the environment. This puts increased pressure on the land and results in the decline of crop yields.

Problem of the Study

Sub-Sahara countries are characterised by a multitude of existing and emerging challenges, including but not limited to corruption, ineffective governments, conflicts, turbulence, hunger, child abuse, social vices, violence against women and the girl child, displacement from homes, insecurity, child marriages, unemployment, climate change, poor infrastructures, coups and attempted coups, oppressions, intimidations, oppressive government, negative international influence, HIV/AIDs, different pandemic diseases, poverty, greenhouse gas (GHG), social injustice, absence of water and food, high cost of living, poor health care, amongst others, but the outstanding among them is poverty, which happen to be the root cause of other problems. Many attempts by different bodies to remedy these situations have not yielded the desired results. The problem of this paper, therefore, is to examine the relationship between poverty and sustainable development and its implications for Sub-Sahara countries and also to unravel how poverty can be reduced in Sub-Sahara countries using indigenous African solutions.



Aim and Objectives of the study

The broad aim of the study is to examine the relationship between poverty and sustainable development in Africa and its implications for Sub-Saharan countries. The specific objectives are:

- i. To examine the concept of poverty
- ii. To evaluate the concept of sustainability and sustainable development
- iii. Examine the relationship between climate change and poverty;
- iv. To identify the causes of poverty in Sub-Sahara countries;
- v. To identify the implications of poverty to sustainable development for Sub-Sahara countries;
- vi. To recognise ways of reducing poverty in Sub-Sahara African countries;
- vii. To identify solutions to poverty in Sub-Saharan countries;
- viii. To identify African solutions to Africa's existing and emerging challenges;

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are many theoretical frameworks guiding the study of sustainable development. These include the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF), the DFID Resilience Framework, the Rights-Based Approach framework and the Capability Approach framework. However, the study hinged on the DFID Resilience Framework propounded and developed by the UK Department For International Development (DFID) in 2011. It was a build-up on the Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) as a result of the increasing number of people affected by natural and human disasters and climate change. This has resulted in increasing efforts being made in social protection, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, aiming to build the resilience of poor and vulnerable communities in developing countries. This theory is related to this paper in the sense that Sub-Saharan African countries are developing countries full of disasters, both human and naturally generated, with the full effect of climate change, bad governance, conflicts, pandemics, various forms of social vices and highly infested with poverty.



Conceptual Review

The various concepts mentioned in the specific objectives were reviewed under this heading:

The Concept of Poverty

The term poverty, according to Christen and Schmidt (2012), refers to the state or condition in which families, people or communities lack economic resources and other essentials for a minimum standard of living. It is a state that describes a lack of financial means to either meet one's basic needs or attain a quality of life much beyond basic needs. Another definition, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics (2021), explains that poverty is the inability of individuals to meet their needs, both food and non-food. Shi et al. (2019) brought in the concept of human poverty, which they viewed as a term not just limited to the economic status of the people but also involved various other sectors, which include lack of education, negligence of the health care system, discrimination and disparity.

The modern approach to the study of poverty reflects various aspects of human development to decide whether a person is poor or not. The concept includes not only money and food but also other aspects like shelter, clothing, clean drinking water, health care, and environmental sanitation, amongst others (Deonandan, 2019). The UN, in 2017, identified four kinds of poverty: absolute, relative, situational and generational, while the poverty line typically specifies the income or level of spending required to purchase a bundle of essential goods, such as food, clothes, house, safe water and education.

The Concept of Sustainability and Sustainable Development

In the broadest sense, sustainability, according to Bostrom et al. (2018), refers to the ability to maintain or support a process continuously over time. In business and policy contexts, sustainability seeks to prevent the depletion of natural or physical resources so that they will remain available for the long term (Bexell & Jonsson, 2017). On the other hand, according to Musango and Brent (2011), sustainable development is a way of organising society so that it can exist in the long term. This means taking into account both the imperatives present and those of the future, such as the preservation of the ecosystem, the natural resources or the social and economic equity. Regeer (2009) further saw it as a form of human development in which resources are used to meet the human needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is closely related to quality of life, which refers to the general health and wellbeing of individuals and societies.

Sustainable development, from the views of Kemp et al. (2005), describes policies, projects and investments that provide benefits today without sacrificing environmental, social and personal health in the future. These policies are often described as green because they focus on limiting the impact of development on the environment. Sustainability is broken into four distinct dimensions, known as the four pillars of sustainability: Human, social, economic and environmental dimensions.



Climate Change and Poverty

X-raying the relationship between climate change and poverty, Epstein and Theuer (2017) opined that lower-income countries tend to have a higher vulnerability to climate change. According to them, drought assailability is a term that depicts the manner in which an individual or the environment may be influenced by its activity. In other words, climate change is also known as climate risk. Assailability is a part of climate endangerment. Climate change adynamia varies between towns, locations, settlements and nations. It can broaden or reduce within periods of time.

In the views of Ugwu and Ogunremi (2019), the susceptibility of human beings and the environment in relation to climate change is determined by some factors inimical to sustainable development. These include unhealthy use of the ecosystem, cultural factors, deprivation, segregation, colonial mentality, disparity and governance. As a result of this, the effect of climate change is higher in some regions than in others. Some areas within a location may have higher vulnerability as a result of deprivation, ineffective governance, wars and clashes. Certain living patterns are climate change-prone, thereby increasing its sensitivity. Examples of these include fish farmers, animal rearers and subsistence farmers.

According to Eurostat (2019), climate change susceptibility can be divided into two interwoven groups: economic vulnerability, which relates to socioeconomic variables. The other is geographical vulnerability. Individuals who are more prone to climate change are people living under the poverty line of \$2 a day, local dwellers, females, children and the elderly. Casillas and Kammen (2012) said that there exist several mechanisms in assessing climate change susceptibility. Since climate vulnerability disproportionally affects low-income countries, climate change susceptibility has metamorphosed into a transnational measure in terms of its management, funding and other international schemes.

From the angle of Dooley and Kartha (2018), climate susceptibility involves a wide range of insertions, interpretations and postulations in academic research. It is defined in the third Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as the level to which a system is vulnerable to and cannot bear harsh climatic conditions, including climate susceptibility and extremes. The IPCC Sixth Assessment Report in 2022 stated that "methods to appraising and analysing climate change vulnerability were discovered in the last IPCC evaluation. Even their report in 2020 revealed that there is more than fifty percent probability that global temperature rise will reach or surpass 1.5 degrees C (2.7 degrees F) between 2021 and 2040. Recent studies by Ioannis et al. (2024), however, revealed that, as a result of the high-emissions pathway, the world may hit this threshold even sooner by 2037.

Since poorer countries always have fewer resources and weaker infrastructure, they are more susceptible to climate change effects. Poverty makes individuals exert pressure on the ecosystem, leading to large families and inappropriate human waste disposal. This brings about arthritic living situations, putting more insistency on the vulnerable ecosystem to sustain their livelihoods, and degradation of the environment, amongst others (Ramutsindela & Mickler, 2020)

According to Einsiedel et al. (2013), developing countries will be the most severely affected by accelerating climate change, and they are likely to emit more than half the annual global total of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as early as 2030. This action will influence poverty conditions in two different ways: reducing the livelihoods of the poor and influencing their



physical well-being, in so doing, increasing their susceptibility to climate change. In the primary arena, people who are financially susceptible to climate change are those who are not well prepared for it because they do not have the economic wherewithal to do so.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also called global goals, were accepted by the United Nations in 2015 as a clarion voice to stop deprivation, maintain the ecosystem and make certain that by 2030, all communities will experience comity and abundance. The seventeen sustainable development goals were integrated in such a way that civility in one of them will find expression in another and that their movement must go at the same level as socio-economic and ecosystem sustainability. Human beings are the essential element of sustainable development, as they seek to meet their needs and organise their lives so that they can deal with natural resources with knowledge and wisdom (OECD, 2017).

According to Gottenhuber and Mulholland (2019), many developed countries feel obligated to help other countries that are far behind in fulfilling SDGs. According to them, the sustainable development goals were fashioned to stop or reduce deprivation, lack of food, HIV/AIDS and unfair treatment against the female gender, amongst others. Creativity, managerial knowledge, technologies, and economic capital from society are necessities for accomplishing the SDGs in every area. Furthermore, sustainable development, according to Brundtland Report (1987), popularly known as *Our Common Future*, is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Sustainability is now the foundation for today's global framework for international cooperation.

Causes of Poverty in Sub-Sahara Countries

According to SDSN (2015), UN (2015), and Eurostat (2020), poverty is a global problem, but it is more prominent in Africa. More than seven hundred million individuals are living on less than \$1.90 a day in that part of the world. That number also includes extreme poverty, which is defined by the UN (2015) as "a condition characterised by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to services". Globally, at least 1.8 billion people use drinking water sources that are contaminated with faeces, and a chunk of the population comes from sub-Saharan countries (Cass & Devine-Wright, 2010). The countries are characterised by no basic health care, de-enfranchised girl children, dependent women, poor childhood nutrition, degraded environment, abandoned children in conflict, and child marriages, amongst others. What causes poverty in the Sub-Sahara countries therefore includes:

i. Lack of good jobs/job growth: This is the first reason that causes poverty as opined by the authors in the Sub-Sahara countries. When you do not have a good job, getting a good income becomes difficult. Even in some Sub-Sahara countries, traditional jobs like farming are disappearing. A good example is DRC, where the majority of the populace that stay in villages are deprived of their natural resources by colonial masters. In addition, approximately half of the population lives in poverty. Even in nations like Nigeria, Ghana, the Republic of Benin, Togo, and others, where large people do have jobs, those jobs are not paying enough, and they are living under the poverty line both in the urban and rural areas.

ii. Dearth of proper education: Deprivation is a merry-go-round terrain, and with the absence of good education, the people will be incapable of making good their conditions. According to



the Chronic Poverty Report (2005), not less than 170 million individuals will be extreme poverty-free if they have access to foundational reading aptitude. Unfortunately, in several Sub-Sahara areas, people are not getting educated. In Nigeria alone, especially in the northern part of the country, more than 26.5 million children are out of school, roaming the streets begging for alms and doing menial jobs. The story is not different in Sudan, Chad, Niger, DRC, amongst others. The root cause for this phenomenon differs between places. In some areas, families require children to work to support the family. There may be no nearby schools or outright discrimination, especially against the girl, for marital or other reasons.

iii. War, clashes/conflict: Wars and clashes have a big effect on deprivation. In periods of warfare, economic activities grind to a halt. Production is reduced to the barest minimum, including the GDP of the country. It becomes hard to get things going as both local and foreign businesses suffer. Investment is at its lowest ebb. War and conflicts make families and individual to be fugitives. Women become the breadwinners of the home, as their husbands have been killed or conscripted into the army. They still have to deal with the issues of sexual harassment and socio-discrimination.

iv. Weather/climate change: Climate change has the capacity to make more than 100 million people poor in the next ten years or more. Climate change is the driving force behind the shortage of rainfall and terrible stormy weather. It can ruin successful nations and take less developed ones into further abyss. Coming out of it is near-impossible, particularly for subsistence farming communities, where they lack the sufficiency to take care of themselves and not talk of setting aside for the next planting season.

v. Social injustice: Poverty is usually the end result of every unfair treatment, whether it is female sexism, racialism or any type of unjust act. Individuals who suffer unjust acts have problems getting a proper education, accessing job opportunities and getting economic empowerment that can take them from the clutches of deprivation. Other causes of poverty here include income distribution inequalities, inability to get through to economic resources and other basic social services, and lack of opportunities, amongst others. When inequalities persist, especially in an extreme way across economic, social, political or environmental dimensions, sustainable development and social cohesion will always be beyond reach. Subgroups such as women/girls, minor religious bodies and other racial minority groups are more susceptible to social injustice.

vi. Absence of water and food: With the absence of essentials such as water and food, it will be very difficult to surmount the grip of poverty, and the non-availability of these basic needs is prevalent in Sub-Saharan countries. Their principal goal in life is to strive for food and water. There is no capacity for savings because all resources are geared in the direction of making food and water available. If there is no food or enough sustenance, they will lack the required energy to carry out physical work. There is also a greater probability of them getting sick often, which will further worsen their economic conditions.

vii. Non-availability of basic infrastructure and amenities: Basic infrastructure, including bridges, roads, public transport, the internet, housing, electricity, water systems, and standard markets, amongst others, are lacking. When communities are separated, they channel a larger part of their resources, energy and time to enable them to move from one location to another. Moreover, with the continued absence of roads, railways, and water transport systems, journeys take an extremely long time. If the public transport system does not exist, getting a good job,



going to work, marketing, storing and moving between locations, towns, and villages will be difficult. The availability of social amenities and infrastructures enhances the connection between people, services and the economic resources they require to improve their financial status and life conditions. This implies that if basic infrastructures are non-existent, their life situations will not get better.

viii. Absence of governmental roles: Many Sub-Saharan African governments are either unwilling to serve the people or unable to do it. Government action or attitude here may include performing below acceptance level in the area of not providing for their basic needs, cancelling or cutting social welfare-related programs, misappropriating funds from those in dire need of them, not providing security, defaulting in building enduring infrastructures, or physically oppressing the masses. If any government is unable to satisfy the desire of the people, their lives will, in most cases, remain that way, and governments of Sub-Saharan countries are good examples.

ix. Absence of proper medical care: Poor people are in a higher position to be inflicted with poor health conditions. In other words, a higher percentage of those who are sick are poor people. This is so because medical care, in most cases, is high in price, far above the ordinary man in the street. With the absence of sufficient resources for healthcare, the underprivileged will face a critical dilemma in choosing between healthcare and other essentials such as food and in all likelihood, food will take the front burner. Poor people who are sick get complicated cases; drained of their health and energy, they cannot work, which makes their conditions even more precarious. Even when they desire to find a solution to their health challenges, the financial implications are above their meagre resources, making their situation a vicious cycle.

v. High costs: This is a situation where prices of goods and services are on the soaring side. Even the basics are too expensive. According to Eurostat (2020), penurious families, on a global level, spend between 60% and 80% of their resources on essentials like food, and food prices are highly unstable in many areas. As such, when there is an increase in the prices of goods and services, the hapless will keep reducing their essentials. The cost of shelter is another need that is increasing. World shelter market prices have been on the increase while the growth of income has remained stunted. UN (2017), SDSN and IEEP (2019), and Niestry (2019) also identified the following as causes of poverty in Sub-Sahara countries: Lack of shelter, Limited access to clean water resources, Food insecurity, Physical disabilities, Lack of access to health care, Unemployment, Absence of social services and Gender discrimination.

Implications of Poverty to Sustainable Development for Sub-Sahara Countries

In 2019, Eurostat said that all African problems are poverty-related. Poverty has restrained proper collaborations and exaggerated differences among certain sustainable development goals. e.g. SDGs 1, 3, 7, and 8. The following are the implications of poverty in hindering the achievement of sustainable development in Sub-Sahara countries:

- i. Poverty has a significant relationship with sustainability. As such, it frustrates its achievement. The implication of this is that many Sub-Saharan countries will not be able to achieve sustainable development as long as they remain poor. For example, difficulty in meeting community needs often leads to pressure on land, over-exploitation of soils and deforestation, all of which are part of sustainable development goals. Many individuals dwelling in deprivations work on the land but cannot get through to acquire



the necessary skills how to protect the environment. This puts increased pressure on the land and results in the decline of crop yields.

- ii. **Inability to eliminate poverty.** In 2013, the European Commission (EC) recognised eliminating poverty in all its types and manifestations, including impoverishment, as the world's highest and most demanding task, and it is an essential prerequisite in achieving sustainable development. This implies that, without eradicating poverty, achieving sustainable development in Sub-Saharan countries is near impossible. This makes the saying of the UN (of 2017b) true: "Without ending poverty, we cannot build prosperity; without building prosperity, we cannot tackle environmental challenges, and without environmental sustainability, we cannot end poverty"; a vicious cycle, you may say. Poverty encourages desert encroachment by improper usage of wood and other forest products as fuel for cooking, crafts and housing, thereby dispossessing susceptible individuals from accessing other essential products wood can provide, thereby hastening the movement of poverty together with environmental degradation.
- iii. **Poverty incubates dissatisfaction and resentment:** There is this popular saying that "a hungry man is an angry man. As dissatisfaction and resentment continue, it will lead to anger, collaborations, groupings, secret and open gatherings, resistance and then coup d'état. Where these exist, sustainable development is very far away. The implication is that Sub-Sahara countries will continue to experience turbulence, conflicts, riots and social vices because of poverty.

Reducing Poverty in Sub-Sahara African Countries

UN (2016); Eurostat (2019); Cayla & Osso (2013) suggested the following as the ways to reduce poverty in Sub-Sahara countries: promotion of economic growth, which will increase wages and widen job opportunities for people experiencing poverty, the improvement of education, the promotion of microfinance programs, ending all conflicts, initiate and improve the farmers' training. Establish gender equality, Ensure clean water, Reinstatement of good healthcare, Make education a priority, make international aid a more significant part of legislation, and involve all sectors of the government in the development process, amongst others.

The Solution to Poverty in Sub-Saharan

According to the UN (2015), a sustainably managed environment is a prerequisite for socio-economic development and poverty reduction. The natural environment supplies ecosystem goods and services that provide income, support job creation and poverty alleviation, contribute to safety nets and reduce inequity. Using the SDGs goals, SDSN (2015), SDSN and IEEP (2019) suggested the following as solutions to poverty in Sub-Sahara African countries:

- i. **Educate Children:** Education is one of the best solutions to poverty. In the global arena, the lowest level of education, such as writing, arithmetic and reading, can provide life opportunities for children that otherwise would not have. The vicious cycle of poverty in Sub-Saharan African countries cannot be eradicated without children being educated. Making more children accessible to education, especially the female ones, is the window to eradicate deprivation countries are seeking. Even up to the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, an average of 619 million youths are without rudimentary mathematics, reading and writing knowledge.



- ii. **Provision of Clean Water:** Children having access to clean water is one of the ways to bring solutions to poverty in Sub-Sahara Africa, as contained in SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation). Clean water near homes can shield families from water-related diseases, and it will also save them from walking long and tortuous distances to get safe drinking water. This, in the same vein, will afford them ample time to go to school early and learn. According to Cherian (2015), one-third of individuals in the world have not come through to clean, drinkable water, and with the absence of safe water near their homes, leaving the grip of deprivation may not be possible.
- iii. **Ensuring primary medical care:** Inexpensive and reachable medical care is crucial to poverty solutions in sub-Saharan countries, as contained in SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being). According to Chaturvedi and Shukla (2014), close to 100 million individuals are forced into severe poverty annually due to expenditure on medical care. For example, in Malawi, World Vision constructed the Chimbalanga Health Centre to treat people in the villages for water-related illnesses, such as diarrhoea, as well as for preventable diseases like pneumonia and malaria. To ameliorate deprivation, low-priced goods and services should be made within the reach of the people when and where they are needed. The relevant bodies should incorporate health care awareness, deterrence, medical aid, and restoration into the total package.
- iv. **Empowering the female gender:** Communities with equal gender treatment receive greater enjoyment from sustainable development and quicker economic bloom, as contained in SDG 5 (Gender Equality) (Clancy et al., 2012). Women who are empowered are outstanding for young girls to emulate in their various towns and villages, and they also have a higher probability of educating their female children. For example, in Nigeria, women petty traders are organised into mini-cooperative groups to access funds either from the government as grants or from micro-finance banks as short-term loans. Groups of this nature are helping to endow women all over the globe. Even at this, the female gender, over the globe, is still seriously marginalised in their benefits and chances of upliftment. The female gender has all the fundamental human rights as the male gender. However, in situations where those rights are set aside, ignored, violated or overlooked, not only do the female gender suffer, but the whole people get entangled in poverty.

In the views of the UN (2015), less than 50% of working-class females are looking for jobs, and this statistic has not altered for the past 25 years. In northern Sub-Saharan African countries, females are highly restricted in relation to education. They are still spending more than 7 times as much as males in unrewarded household jobs and caregiving. With limited alternatives available, it is no longer uncommon worldwide that unequal numbers of female are out of school in comparison with their male counterpart. The UN also established that $\frac{2}{3}$ of 750 million adults without basic education are women. With these statistics, a gender equality program is crucial for any poverty alleviation solution to be effective. When looking for means to delimitate deprivation in line with SDG 5, World Vision put together gender equality activities with other forms of programs to achieve their goal. These include empowering women with economic resources by giving soft credit facilities, skills and entrepreneurship techniques, inviting sponsors to assist females in continuing education programs, building decent and safe toilets for females in schools and keeping safe from force and early marriages to prevent school dropouts.



- v. **Enhance children's food nutrition:** In the views of Chen and Qi (2018), terminating poor nutrition is one of the costless ways to end poverty. This solution is embedded in SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being). The side effects of poor nutrition in relation to economic, development, health and social implications are enormous. They are critical, dangerous, serious, life-threatening and long-lasting. These have effects on people, including their families, settlements, communities, villages, towns, and countries in general. Giving babies and children the best nourishment is one of the best methods of fighting poverty. It will improve children's total wellness throughout their lifetime. Not only will they live through poverty, but they will also come out strong as students, workers, home builders, and leaders of tomorrow. On the other hand, poorly nourished babies and children are stunted in growth throughout their lifetime, both at the physical and cognitive levels. In 2021, it was on record by the UN that an average of 150 million young children under the age of 5 were experiencing stunted growth.
- vi. **Supporting Environment Programs:** Climate change is seriously increasing poverty, as contained in SDG 13 (Climate Action). In fact, any reasonable way to end poverty must involve environmental programming, not only in underdeveloped countries but around the globe. It is estimated that, between 2030-2050, climate change is likely to initiate approximately 250,000 deaths on its own each year. These deaths will be from malaria, poor nutrition, stress, drought, diarrhoea and heat. According to Chowdhury (2010), a good way to support environmental programs is what was done by Guatemala children in 2011, when they planted trees to undo the result of desert encroachment brought about by bush burning and using wood as fuel. They grew up with more knowledge on how to protect the environment than their parents. The United Nations opined that 75% of the world's poor people staying in local villages depend on the ecosystem, such as the lakes, forests, oceans and soil, as the source of their sustenance. Harsh atmospheric conditions execute catastrophes with these agents, and young children in poor countries are the ones who suffer the most.
- vi. **Reaching young children in crises:** This is treated in SDG 16, which talks about Peace and Justice - Strong Institutions. The number of families worldwide living close to crisis areas has been twice as great since 2017 (World Bank, 2018). This is important to be known in the sense that, in areas where crises brew, continuous repetition of turbulence, disorderliness and fighting oftentimes keep people cornered in poverty cycles. Involuntary supersedure is an important issue in sustaining or even etherifying poverty. Above 82 million individuals presently have been pressured to move from their ancestral homes because of persecution, crises, non-recognition of human rights and conflicts (UNHCR, 2019).
- vii. **Prevent child marriage:** This is a serious issue mentioned in SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being). Child colligation is a complete dereliction of female fundamental human rights and, in most cases, the root cause of child civil union with its life-long consequences. The reason for this is that females, compared to matrimony, abandon education on time and become pregnant. In the absence of school, females cannot get better employment, and they will remain in poverty and without a means of livelihood throughout their lives. With insufficient family resources, their female children may not be able to acquire the necessary education. In India, for example, members of the Hena Girl Power group were instrumental in eliminating child civil unions in their locality. Deprivations generated by COVID-19 also cause large numbers of families to uphold



this behaviour. Children's colligations also have a prolonged effect on societies and communities. Cibiru et al. (2016) said the behaviour is a hindrance to socio-economic enhancement over the world. Upon this, each year, an average of 12 million young females are coerced into marriages in defiance of their consent. UN (2017) also records that more than 650 million girls globally are in child marriages.

Africa's Solution to Africa Challenges

The UN, the World Bank, and the WHO, amongst others, have made their suggestions and recommendations on how to bring solutions and reduce poverty in Sub-Saharan countries. So far, their suggestions, recommendations and solutions have not yielded the desired result. When searching for methods to cut short deprivation and poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa countries, the following could be applied as generated by African authors: Okolie (2003); Begashaw (2019); Mabogunje (2004); Clement and Dickson (2021); Ugwu and Ogunremi (2019).

i. Protection of the girl child: Girls should be protected from the consequences of child marriage by Africans. This can be done by helping homes in tough places in the world so that they can care for their wards without resulting to putting them into early marriages;

ii. Enlightenment campaigns on female education: There should be enlightenment toward encouraging females to be educated; African leaders and institutions, non-governmental organisations, and international sponsors should be involved to advocate on behalf of the girl child in sub-Saharan countries; donors should be invited to assist in female education. The involvement of the government must be deliberate.

iii. Making available wood cooking stoves: Africa should go back to basics with refinement. Wood-preserving cooking stoves using vegetable waste and cow dung (thereby protecting the environment and, at the same time, allowing mothers to raise money by other means) should be produced. This action will assist in restoring the degraded environment, incorporating farmers in large tree afforestation works in their areas, and also assisting in bearing down climate change by using eco-friendly handouts to assist homes in susceptible villages.

iv. Making sufficient food, water and security available for internally displaced persons: Food rationing in camps will make a vast difference between life and death for individuals who have fled turbulence areas. When families runoff from their abodes, they leave behind their security, source of living and homes, thereby creating conditions of intense deprivation. Presently, new generations of young children are commencing their lives in IDPs as a result of bandits, insurgency, kidnappers and Boko Haram menace.

v. Respecting and reinstating African culture: In Africa, there is no gender quality principle; it is alien to the continent. Men always remain the head, and females are subordinate to the men. This does not mean that females should not be empowered or attain any level in life but should not be made equal to men.

vi. Making education a priority: Education should be made an item of topmost importance, beginning with child endorsement together with other programs that can enhance community development. African rich men should be wooed to sponsor education by giving purposeful educational gift items such as scholarships, internships, building and equipping schools, hiring



security to protect schools from bandits' invasion, etc., and there should be deliberate funding by the government.

vii. Provision of clean water and a safe environment: In line with SDG 6, safe water and environmental cleanliness should be made a top goal in the transformation process and immediate action in sub-Saharan African countries. Some channels enhance access to safe water by supplying sufficient, safe water directly or raising meaningful resources to buy safe water for the communities. Safe water can also be produced from borne holes.

viii. Enhancing children's nutrition: Our local and indigenous food such as crayfish, soya beans, dry fish, tapioca, garri, pepper soup, owhowhri, banga soup, periwinkle, oysters, shrimps, okaka, bitter leaf soup, ogazi soup, afan, iriboto soup, egbagba soup, iriboerharhen soup, amongst others, can be shared as regular and emergency food items in occasions where families are unable to provide for themselves. They are highly medicinal and nutritious, far better than canned foods and imported synthesised foods that are at variance with African origin. These foods can also be provided to assist poorly nourished young children or help their families improve food security. Sub-Saharan African countries can partner with foreign governments or international bodies to create programs on newborn and childhood nutrition to enhance maternal care.

ix. Provision of health care: Our roots and herbs should be harnessed into syrups, tablets and capsules or even taken in their natural state under guidance. This will provide medical care to families and children in dire need. There are herbs that can handle children's medical care below and above 5 years. These include Iyeke leaves, mango leaves, neem leaves, scent leaves, guava leaves, papaya leaves, pear leaves, lime leaves, sour soup leaves, uyara leaves, bitter leaf, lemon grass, pear seed, lime, lemon, sour soup, palm kernel pomade, castor oil, ori, mango stem, pawpaw roots, garlic pulps, ginger roots, cinnamon, honey, turmeric, dogoyaro leaves, moringa leaves, origbon, leaves, amongst others. These, if well combined, will prevent and also treat illnesses and diseases such as teething problems, fever, convulsion, common colds, catarrh, diarrhoea, stomach pains, body pains, typhoid, joint pain, chest pain, ulcer, malaria, pneumonia amongst others, and during pandemic periods they will help to safeguard families and children from sudden death.

METHODOLOGY

As a qualitative paper, search engines such as JSTOR, Google, Wikipedia, Bing, etc., were used to surf the internet on issues concerning poverty and sustainable development, as well as personal experiences as they relate to Sub-Saharan African countries.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Sub-Saharan countries lacked basic amenities and needs, which their politicians capitalised on for their political manifestos year in and year out. These include: lack of education for children, no clean water, no basic health care, impoverished girl child, poor childhood nutrition, poor or lack of environmental programs, abandoned children in conflict, frequent child marriages, poor infrastructures, poor housing, the continuous collapse of the national grid, very poor road



network, amongst others. These are key factors in poverty that have frustrated the implementation of SDGs in Sub-Saharan African countries. There is, therefore, an urgent need by governments at all levels to integrate these factors into a sustainable development blueprint to move Sub-Sahara African countries into the path of poverty sustainable development goal.

The study recommended that Sub-Sahara African leaders should see poverty in the sub-Sahara as a project to implement and to achieve. The paper recommends that African leaders, governments, African institutions, philanthropic African organisations, public-spirited individuals, and agencies, amongst others, should stop paying lip service to sustainable development implementation. They should increase expenditure on social services and amenities. The international community should be genuine in their international assistance (in the forms of aid and grants) to Sub-Saharan African countries without strings attached. Other recommendations include:

- i. Provision of basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, clean water and sanitation;
- ii. Education of the girl child and every other child and prevention of early marriages;
- iii. Make available affordable and environment-friendly energy;
- iv. Empowerment of the girl child and women, provision of industries, innovation, infrastructures and inequalities reduction.
- v. Meeting and rescuing children in conflict-afflicted areas and re-settle them;
- vi. Provisions of jobs and hands-on services for gainful engagements;
- vii. Carryout school feeding, street feeding, IDP camps feeding and other feeding programs and creating sustainable towns and communities;
- viii. Re-orientations of sub-Sahara countries' politicians and leaders towards good governance, provision of decent jobs and economic growth.

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