

Business and Sustainability Goals: How Far Is Nigeria Engaging?

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How to cite this paper: Ojeme, C. E. (2023). Business and Sustainability Goals: How Far Is Nigeria Engaging? *Open Journal of Business and Management*, 11, 2215-2231. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojbm.2023.115122>

Received: July 10, 2023

Accepted: September 10, 2023

Published: September 13, 2023

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Abstract

This study explores the role of government in promoting business sustainability in agriculture in an emerging country. Goal 1 to 3 of the United Nations sustainability targets eradicating poverty and hunger which is a significant problem in emerging economies like Nigeria. 70 questionnaires were distributed to participants in order to find out about government's role in promoting sustainable agriculture and partnership with agricultural entrepreneurs to provide quality and sustainable food both for now and the future. The result shows poor orientation towards sustainability and a lack of initiatives towards climate change.

Keywords

Sustainability, Agriculture, Business, Government, Climate Change, Nigeria

1. Introduction/Background

The United Nations in 2015 set 17 sustainable goals to be achieved by 2030 for all nations of the world, whether developed, developing or underdeveloped (UN, 2015). The expectation is that Governments of nations and other stakeholders such as business practitioners would immediately inculcate and institute novel strategies towards ensuring the achievement of best practices positively affect human and animal well-being, environmental, social and economic development (Cekanavicius et al., 2014).

There is evidential recognition that unless urgent steps are taken by Governments to address the concerns related to climate change, poverty, human rights, eco-diversity and environmental degradation in their countries now, future generations would suffer (UN, 2011).

There is evidence that people are living longer and as UN projects, over 10 bil-

lion people would be living on planet earth by 2100 (UN, 2011). There is thus, a need to ensure that the world's resources are used in such a way that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs (Brundtland, 1987). However, it is noted that Government lacks the financial capacity to address the issues of sustainability and that a large portion of the financial requirements necessary to pursue this agenda will come from the private sector (Alsaleh & Mahroum, 2014).

This implies that Government-Business partnerships are essential to pursuing sustainable goals. This article employs the use of qualitative data in exploring the depth of the sustainability issue with a focus on climate change as it affects goals 1, 2 and 3 in Nigeria.

Research in sustainability focuses on economic, social and environmental issues. This is important especially as derivable from the definition of sustainability development, which is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland, 1987). Therefore, there is the implication that natural resources need to be sustained, which is, that there needs to be continuity or ability to regenerate resources. Sustainability development from the environmental perspective is hinged on the ability to use resources from the environment in such a way that the resources are not depleted or permanently damaged (Emmanuel-Ebikake et al., 2014).

However, the causes of environmental hazards currently facing the world have varying effects in different locations. For example, Collier et al. (2008), provides that Africa's contribution to climate carbon emissions is atypically minor given the level of economic development and futuristic prediction. Yet, there is concern that the effect of climate change on Africa is severe, given that the rate at which climate is changing in Africa is faster than other parts of the world and the responses to articulating and developing adaptability strategies is lacking (Collier et al., 2008). There is also concern that since many African countries depend largely on agriculture for economic development, the effects of climate change can have serious economic implications in Africa (Collier et al., 2008).

The roles of Government in regulating business activities while at the same time partnering these businesses towards achieving the sustainability goals provide an interesting dilemma for this study, because government needs businesses in their territories to boast economic growth, yet government has the responsibility of ensuring businesses comply with strict regulations. The political dynamics is such that businesses are increasingly involved in the policy making processes (Bach & Unruh, 2004), which triggers the question of whether government can truly regulate businesses' sustainability practices effectively.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The UN Sustainability Goals

Sustainability development goals is an important pursuit for all nations of the

world set by the UN in 2015. The expectation is that all nations of the world, whether developed or developing should be engaging in shared sustainable practices that engender peace and prosperity for all in planet earth with an achievement target of 2030. All countries of the world are expected to work towards ending poverty, improving health and well-being, reducing inequality, working towards promoting economic growth while at the same time tackling issues that bother on climate change and aquatic preservation (UN, 2015).

According to the UN (2018) sustainability report, Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) differ from Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in that SDGs are global goals focused on global economies whereas MDGs focused mostly on developing countries. The content of SDGs is broader in scope and focuses on addressing root causes of poverty and the development of goals that benefit everybody (UN, 2018). Two key areas with SDGS are that countries must have expertise in developing means of implementation which includes generating capacity building and technology application and developing strategies to tackle climate change and its impacts (UN, 2018). According to UN (2015), the 17 SDGs with a 2030 envision to transform the world include: Goal 1. No poverty; goal 2. Zero hunger; goal 3. Good health and wellbeing; goal 4. Quality education; goal 5. Gender equality; goal 6. Clean water and sanitation; goal 7. Affordable and clean energy; goal 8. Decent work and Economic growth; goal 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; goal 10. Reduced Inequality; goal 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities; goal 12. Responsible Consumption and Production; goal 13. Climate Action; goal 14. Life below Water; goal 15. Life on the land; goal 16. Peace, Justice Strong Institutions and goal 17. Partnership to achieve the goal.

The goals are expected to contribute significantly towards the transformation of the world at least by 2030 (UN, 2015). However, some of the goals present an essential intervention for partnerships because of the negative and costly impact to human life, for example goal 13, Climate action, goal 1, No poverty, goal 2. Zero hunger and goal 3. Good health and wellbeing.

2.2. Goal 3 and Goal 13

The vision of goal 3 and 13 are related to promoting good health and wellbeing. Goal 3 focuses on Good Health and Wellbeing while Goal 13 focuses on Climate Change (UN, 2015). The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2019) provides in its 2018 report that global warming is increasing at an alarming rate now, with an estimation that between 2030 and 2052, global warming could reach an alarming high of over 1.5 degree centigrade above pre-industrial (IPCC, 2019). Since pre-industrial age, induced human activity has been having significant impact on global warming with an estimation of over 0.87-degree centigrade contribution by human activity between 2006 and 2015. The implication of this, is that sea surface air and sea surface temperatures are rising. This is causing alterations to climate change and extreme weather conditions that portends human, biodiversity and aquatic calamity in the future if not tackled now.

According to IPCC (2019), these global warming issues and its risks are largely dependent on the magnitude and rate of the warming, geographic location, levels of development and vulnerability, choices and the expertise of implantation strategies of mitigation.

The World Health Organization (2018) provides some current negative statistics on health and wellbeing as a result of human activities. According to WHO (2018), nine out of ten people now breathe polluted air which is responsible for 7 million deaths yearly, more than 90% of children are exposed to polluted air, towns, cities and villages are all exposed daily to polluted air which is closely related to climate change (WHO, 2018). One third of deaths from stroke, lung cancer and heart disease are caused by breathing polluted air, over 4.2 deaths in 2016 were traceable to ambient air pollution alone while household cooking with polluted air caused over 3.8 million deaths in 2016 (WHO, 2018). The significance of this statistics is that there is no restricted country because air is all around us. Of the 7 million deaths due to air pollution, Southeast Asia region had 2 million, 2 million in Western Pacific region, nearly 1 million from African region, over 500,000 from Eastern Mediterranean region, 500 deaths in European region and 300,000 deaths in America (WHO, 2018). The WHO report also provides that low and middle-income cities suffer the greatest fatalities while the impact of air pollution in high income cities has been reduced by 49%. The implication of this is that air pollution is a worldwide phenomenon. Air pollution emanates from several sources such as industrial and energy supply, transport which is induced by the level of carbon emissions into the atmosphere, waste management, household energy, dust agricultural practices amongst others, WHO (2018). In addition to the statistics above, the World Economic Forum (2016), premature deaths linked to air pollution cost global economy hundreds of billions of dollars in cost due to lost labour income.

Despite the above statistics, Collier et al. (2008) provides that the effect of climate change to Africa is distinctive, that is, the way climate change affects Europe is different from the way it affects Africa, for example, whereas there is high contributions of carbon emissions to climate change in Europe, the same cannot be said of Africa as Africa is developing and economic activity has not generated carbon emissions as much as its developed counter-part (Collier et al., 2008). In the next section, this article discusses most likely negative effect that climate change can cause to African economy.

2.3. Climate Action and Africa: Goal 1 to 3

Climate change because of carbon dioxide emissions and greenhouse gases is contributing largely to fatalities and mortalities worldwide (WHO, 2018). The effect varies in different locations with increasing negative impact on farming and agriculture and the problem of adaptation being noted in Africa (Collier et al., 2008). The implication of this is that goal 1. No poverty; goal 2. Zero hunger and goal 3. Good health and Well-being is emerging as major sustainability crisis

area for Africa.

Hulme et al. (2001), provide comprehensive research which shows clearly that climate temperature has increased in the last 100 years with high chances of future increase by 2100. However, just like Collier et al. (2008), Hulme et al. (2001), also provide that it is not clear whether the causes of these changes are naturally induced or influenced by human activity. What is certain, is that temperature continues to increase in Africa with less rainfall and this has devastating effect widely (Hulme et al., 2001).

The World Bank (2007) mentions that farmers' ability to effectively respond and adapt to the rise in temperature is severely limited with many citing poverty and inability to borrow as reasons for poor adaptation. Collier et al. (2008), provides that Government has a role in providing information, incentives and economic environment to facilitate such adaptations. The World Bank (2007), states that when farmers are unable to adapt, it could potentially generate a forward or backward-looking behaviour with a potential to relocate or change business. This means that tackling poverty, hunger and improving good health and well-being becomes even harder to achieve. Thus, Schaper (2010) suggests that market-based solutions is the key to addressing sustainability issues. In essence, government and business have a major role to play in addressing sustainability goals 1, 2 and 3 in Africa.

2.4. Climate Change and Agricultural Impact in Nigeria

As has been enumerated above, there is clear evidence that global warming poses a serious threat to the world. Thus, it is expected that nations of the world begin to articulate, develop and implement strategies to addressing the impact of climate change.

Climate change can be identified by variations and changes in climate through the statistical tests which shows changes in properties in climate, and which persists for a sustained period (IPCC, 2019). As mentioned above, climate change can be caused by natural causes or human induced activities. Some natural causes include changes in solar radiation, eccentricity of the earth's orbit and changes in the earth's axis of rotation while that of human induced activities include factors such as industrialization, fossil fuels, gas flaring amongst others (Akpodigaga & Odjugo, 2010). While it is not in the place of this article to analyse the technical details surrounding carbon emissions and the geological dimensions of Anthropocene, the focus here is how climate change contributes to goals 1 to 3 in Nigeria as a developing African country through the agricultural link.

Akpodigaga and Odjugo (2010), provides that climate change in Nigeria affects agriculture and food security negatively with an increasing risk of causing hunger to millions for many years to come. One negative impact with regards to how climate change is affecting Nigeria's agricultural system is that there is a shift in the kinds of crops cultivated as farmers struggle to adapt to changing

climate. According to Akpodiogaga and Odjugo, this means farmers are no longer growing preferred crops but are now growing crops based on climate. Ayuba et al. (2007), assert further that in Northern Nigeria, there is significant desert encroachment and increasing arable lands thereby denying farmers of farmland and grassing fields. Thus, there is shortage of food and crop failure.

The contribution of Agriculture to economic development in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. Scholars have mentioned the important role agriculture plays in Nigeria's economy (Lynch et al., 2001; Olajide et al., 2012). It is agreed that agriculture contributes significantly to economic and sustainable development in Nigeria, hence much attention must be given to anything that threatens it. Even though, much focus has been on crude oil in Nigeria, agriculture has contributed significantly to GDP, for example, between 1970 and 2010, the agricultural sector contributed to over 34.5% of GDP to Nigeria's economy but dropped in 2017 to 29.15% (National Bureau of Statistics, 2017). The drop in agricultural productivity necessitated a \$200 m credit awarded by the World Bank to Nigeria in 2017 towards supporting agricultural productivity and improving livelihoods (World Bank, 2017). This shows that agricultural development has a big impact on the prosperity of Nigeria and provides livelihood for many.

Finally, agriculture remains an important sector that can become a future reference point for economic development in Nigeria (Ayinde et al., 2011). Agriculture remains a major source of livelihood and employment for more than 50% of the labour force (Manyong et al., 2005). However, the issue of climate change has become a major concern and threat to agricultural production in Nigeria, and if not addressed can lead to food security issues (Ekpenyong & Ogbuagu, 2015). Currently, there are problems of adaptation by farmers to the changing climate leading to elimination of farming certain tropical crops and some farmers are beginning to change occupation and business (Collier et al., 2008). This presents a dangerous scenario for Nigeria's future.

2.5. Government and Business Relations

The interactions between Government and Business present an important influence in the extent to which climate action can be addressed in Nigeria. The background of this relationship and the interactions cover areas such as interactions that lead to policy making, regulation, ideologies, and institutional inputs amongst others.

A prominent discussion that emanates from the relationship between Government and Business is that of who regulates and influences policy decisions (Balleisen & Moss, 2010). This is especially important because there is blame to whichever party fails. In the case of Nigeria, which operates a centralist style, regulation and policy making usually emanates from Government. Herbert (2015), states that Government chooses to rule over regulation and policy making when the market system fails or is not deemed strong enough to solve societal problems. Hence, it can be inferred that Government has a huge role with regards to

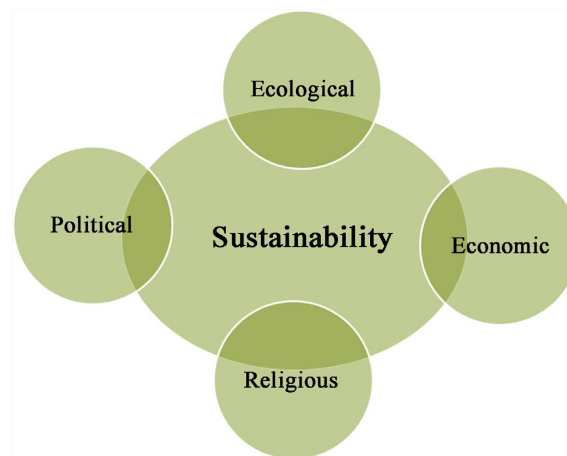
sustainability regulations in Nigeria.

In the case of climate change and with regards to issues of sustainability, Government and Business cooperation is needed as neither can be seen to fail. [Manyong et al. \(2005\)](#), states that a regulator balances the system by receiving information from the environment and then adjusts its performance system in the light of that performance. To address any sustainability issue as is being discussed in this article, Government and Business both a role to play. The question thus, is what is the extent of Government-Business relations in Nigeria with addressing climate change issues?

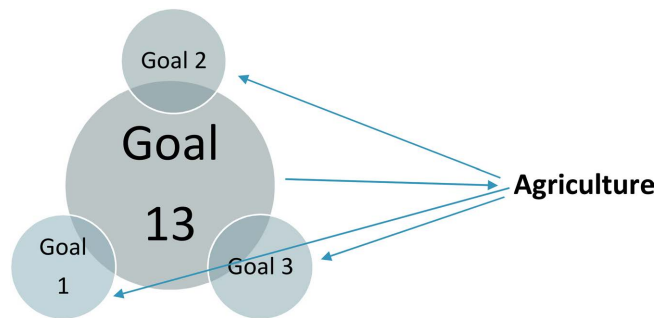
[Pecival et al. \(2013\)](#), addresses the relationship between Government and Business from the point of greening, which is an expectation for businesses to operate responsibly without negatively impacting the environment. Pecival's analysis originates from the perspective that the world's population is increasing dramatically, for example, between 1900 and 2000, the world's population jumped three times more than previous history with a jump in population from 1.6 billion people to over 6.1 billion people ([Pecival et al., 2013](#)). In the midst of this phenomenon is the issue of carbon emission and fossil fuel which is a major contributor to climate change. The concern here is that as population is increasing, human and business impact is also increasing. For example, there was a record of over 8.3 billion tons of carbon emission in the atmosphere in 2007, a jump from 1.6 billion in 1950 ([Pecival et al., 2013](#)). Thus, there is requirement for government to monitor business operations and their compliance to greening. Is this the case with Nigeria? [Olson \(2008\)](#), states that businesses are now required to be green, and this drive is being championed by government through legislations, customer concerns and community pressure. Thus, government regulation is expected to drive the change that can possibly address carbon emissions and climate change. Green business strategy thus epitomises a business strategy that helps a business enterprise make decisions that impacts the environment positively ([Olson, 2008](#)).

The connection between the analysis above and the agricultural sector in Nigeria is that while climate is having an impact in agriculture, government has a responsibility of supporting agricultural farmers to adapt to the changing effects of climate change on farming. Government also needs to regulate business practices in Nigeria in such a way that the effects of business in one sector do not have a negative repercussion in another business field. Heavy industrialized and technological dependent businesses need to be regulated properly to mitigate rebounding effect in other businesses. Also, the cost of addressing climate change and other sustainability targets cannot be borne by government alone, business contributions to the cost is essential ([Alsaleh & Mahroum, 2014](#)). This study thus, investigates the role Nigerian government is currently playing in addressing the potential issue of climate change and its effects in agriculture and how this is affecting hunger, poverty and health and wellbeing.

2.6. Theoretical Considerations/Conceptual Perspective



2.6.1. Theoretical Considerations (Munasinghe, 2002)



2.6.2. Conceptual Perspective

The summary of the above diagrams is that firstly sustainability development can be underpinned theoretically by political, economic and social principles. A fourth dimension, religion being the spiritual dimension that motivates people to act with moral and ethical responsibility. Political dimensions relate to a need for the social system of a place to be preserved so that human integrity can be upheld. While the ecological perspective seeks to encourage behaviours that maintains the robustness of biological and physical systems, the economic theory relates to maximising income and the same time preserving the environment (Munasinghe, 2002). The theoretical concepts of sustainability imply that in pursuit of one goal, another should not suffer. For example, countries want to increase economically, yet this does not mean that social stability, or environmental degradation (Rogers et al., 2008). There should be a balanced application in the relationships amongst all the domains of sustainability without one suffering or paying the price for another to thrive.

3. Methods

3.1. Research Approach

Saunders et al. (2009), provides that the methods or approach used in collecting

data should justify the objectives of the research. In this regard, questions were set to provide answers that will contribute towards addressing the problems highlighted in this study.

The research used qualitative questionnaires to obtain data from a wide range of participants in government and agricultural sector in Delta area of Nigeria. The qualitative questionnaires were designed and sourced from research articles covering topics relevant to the research. The qualitative questionnaires were structured to briefly cover demographics and then twelve open-ended questions. Questions covered Nigeria's response to sustainability targets, government response to changing climatic conditions, effect of climate change on agriculture, government's support to farmers in the face of adverse climate change, government response to addressing carbon emissions, contribution of agriculture to economic development. It also included government's role in promoting green business, government's role in promoting ethical and moral behaviour towards preserving biological and physical habitats, government's strategy towards promoting the social systems, government's support for health and wellbeing, government's role in addressing poverty and government/business cooperation in supporting agricultural development in Nigeria.

Prior to sending questionnaires to participants, the researcher made initial contacts with heads of departments in ministries and other agricultural NGOs. The correspondences between the researcher and the heads of departments included an introduction to the research which provided detailed information about the research.

Consent letters detailing ethical responsibilities of the researcher and rights of the participants were sent. The heads of the departments were then responsible for allocation of questionnaires to staff. The researcher dealt with the heads who were in turn responsible for both the distribution and the collection of the questionnaires. The time frame for which questionnaires were allocated, received, and posted to the researcher was over 60 days. The total number of qualitative questionnaires received was 70. The demographic data information is provided below:

Age	Sex	Occupation	Number
18 - 28	20 males, 11 females.	Administrative workers, Secretaries, volunteers.	31
29 - 39	16 males, 12 females	Managers, directors, entrepreneurs, supervisors, junior staff/workers.	28
40 - 50	2 males, 2 females	Department heads.	4
50 - 60	3 females, 2 males	Senior staff, managers.	5
60 - 70	N/A	N/A	Nil
N/A	No information	No information.	2

Data 1 Demographic Distribution.

From the data, several themes were identified and summarised below based on the responses to various questions asked. The various themes which are identified as relevant to the research questions are provided below;

- Poor and Ineffective Sustainability Response
- Poor and Ineffective Sustainability Policy Implementation
- Poor Government and Business Relationship

Some key words identified in the data collected are presented below.

3.2. Themes/Key Words of Responses

No	Nigeria's Response to Sustainability Targets	Government's response to Climatic conditions
1.	Poor response	Government Non-Priority
2.	Politicalised	
3.	Quite Poor	Poor enforcement
4.	Very poor	No Response
5.	Implementation is poor	Negative, late approach
6.	Inadequate	Inefficient
7.	Inadequate	Poor response
8.	Rare/reactive	Not encouraging, lack of enlightenment
9.	No visible target	Passive response
10.	Poorly/reactive	Poor
11.	Not working	Very poor, not encouraging
12.	Research Stations, carrying out survey	The use of dams to serve as irrigational purposes during dry seasons
13.	Fairly, slow implementation	Slow, because of poor implementation of its policy
14.	Poor	Poor, none
15.		No proactive action
16.		Not much, few plant trees
17.	Poor	Average, some states respond well
18.	Negative	Usage of wood, deforestation and encouraging afforestation
19.	Poor	Nothing
20.	Moving far away from target	Nothing, but now constructing drainages
21.	No planning	No strategy in place
22.	Response is slow	Little measures
23.	Poor response	Poor response

Continued

24.	Commitment demonstrated but policy implementation is poor	Seeking help from international communities on environmental deforestation, erosion control etc.
25.	Average, need for improvement	Slow implementation of policies
26.	Low rate response, high growth rate and increase in hunger.	Poor response
27.	Responding by increasing in-country production of goods, improving socio-economic market and encouraging entrepreneurs	Little to nothing
28.	Pegged	Right steps not being taken, not doing enough
29.		No serious plans
30.	Responding by championing local production	Nothing reasonable
31.	Encouraging local agricultural products while closing borders	Indifferent to climate change, continuing flaring of gas in southern Nigeria
32.		No clear measures
33.	Reluctant and unconcerned	None interest, internal interventions
34.	Slow, not meeting targets	Not been tackled
35.	Very slow, very poor	Very slow, very poor
36.	So slow, do not meet target	Very poor, not proactive, reactive
37.	Not much effort	No funding, little effort
38.	Fair response, problem of continuity`	No evidence of responding
39.	Fairly, slow implementation, lack of continuity when government is changed	Poorly
40.	Fair	No response
41.	No record of response	Government does not understand adverse effects hence poor response
42.	Very poor, not encouraging	No funding, no research
43.		Not a priority
44.	No response	Dams provided in some northern countries to help irrigation
45.	Slow and no implementation	Always prefer late response despite the need for timely response
46.	Not responding adequately	Attempting to resettle cattle in affected areas
47.	Very poor	Nonchalant, not responding
48.	Responding poorly, little attention to renewal, no plan	Not responding

Continued

49.	Slow response	Slow response
50.	Response is not commendable	Poor
51.	Noncompliance	Noncompliance
52.	Low compared to other countries	Lackadaisical response
53.	No response	Static, very poor
54.	No sustainability plan	They don't even know if there are climatic conditions, zero response
55.	Poor implementation, lack of focus	Poor response, poor implementation process
56.	Shameful	Lifeless response
57.	Very slow	No record
58.	Very discouraging	Lack of political will power, poor implementation of policies
59.	Negative approach	Negative response
60.	Poorly and reluctant	Dormant
61.	Indigenous food production	Planting of trees
62.	Politicalised	Complacent
63.	Little or no implementation	No response
64.	Nothing is being done	Preference for reactive measures
65.	Far behind MDGs, not to mention SDGs	No policies are working

Key themes from Data Collected.

3.3. Key Findings

The summary of the findings in this research indicates poor engagement with sustainability practices in Nigeria. There is poor commitment to the implementation of sustainability development in Nigeria with the implication that meeting the 2030 UN sustainability goals would be impossible. Furthermore, there is danger of worsening cases of hunger, poverty, and climate change due to poor implementation of sustainability development.

4. Analysis

4.1. Poor and Ineffective Sustainability Response

Problems of sustainability in agriculture can affect diverse areas of agricultural development and practices. In a developing nation like Nigeria, such problems can be more conspicuously felt such as severe environmental and ecological disaster which can prevent effective farming productivity and increase poverty and health problems.

The question on government's response to sustainability was asked to find out

how the Nigerian government is responding to managing environmental sustainability and its effects on agriculture, since agriculture plays an important part of Nigeria's economy and there is a demand for nations to address sustainability issues.

These are problems clearly present in developing countries like Nigeria where poverty, hunger and unemployment is significantly high (Danaan, 2018). Unfortunately, responses on this question show that sustainability response in Nigeria is poor. Some terms used by participants include that it has become a "politicalised affair", "government is slow", "there is no response at all", "response is poor", "low", "negative", "reluctant", amongst other terms. Some statements by participants with regards to this include:

There has never been a record of Nigeria effectively meeting up to proposed sustainability effectively not to talk of meeting up to proposed sustainability target—Anonymous

"The response is very slow because emphasis is not placed on that aspect of the economy"—Anonymous

"There is no response of the government towards a sustainability target that is supposedly intended to develop the country"—Anonymous

The responses which show a poor and negligent approach to addressing sustainability issues in Nigeria present a dangerous implication for the future prosperity of Nigeria. This is because if the needs of today cannot be met by a country, and compromises the ability of future generation to meet their needs, the future generation of that country will be severely affected (Sacks et al., 2019). As part of the goals of the Brundtland report (Brundtland, 1987), there is a requirement for the continual improvement of the living standards of the people.

The implication is that there is a bleak future for the country economically, socially, and environmentally except there is a coordinated and responsible action by government, business and society to address the issues of poverty, health and well-being in society (Sacks et al., 2019). But this is clearly absent in Nigeria leading to a risk of environmentally unsustainable development which is capable of depleting natural resources potentially leading to severe social and economic consequences.

4.2. Poor Sustainability Policy Implementation

Another theme which is induced from the findings of this study is that the implementation of sustainability policies to help tackle climate change, hunger, health and wellbeing in Nigeria is poor. Respondents in this study are unaware of any practical policy enacted by government on sustainability.

Questions on climate change and government's behaviour towards promoting good preservation practice of biological and physical habitats show that there is no awareness of government intervention in these areas. The responses below illustrate this point.

"There is little response from the government towards climatic conditions and

they tend to be nonchalant”.

“Lack of political will power and implementation of policies”.

“There has been no record of Nigeria responding to climatic change”.

“I do not think the government places climatic conditions as a priority to its goal of nation building. Quite poorly I must say”.

The responses above do not show that government in Nigeria is working on any actionable and systematic policy approach towards addressing climate change. Policy interventions and strategies are needed by government to implement SDGs such as climate change (Sacks et al., 2019). Unfortunately, this is not evident from the responses in this study.

Effective utilization of policy instrument is required to progressively address sustainability development issues on ecological, economic and social sustainability dimensions (Xie et al., 2021). Nigerian government must be proactive with engaging in effective policy design that addresses environmental degradation which will help foster purposeful, planned and systematic action towards achieving sustainable goals.

Since climate change presents an important SDG dimension that can negatively affect agricultural development in Nigeria and subsequently aggravate poverty and hunger problems (Collier et al., 2008), it is therefore imperative that there is continuing development of policy designs and allocation of policies to all dimensions of the SDG. This has become urgent for Nigeria due to the present and future dangers not taking action holds for Nigeria, if these practices are neglected.

4.3. Government and Business Relations

The role of government towards regulating business relations as well as ensuring good business practice is important. There is need to jointly address the issues confronting climate change between government and business. Government’s support in regulating corporate behaviours and at the same time supporting business growth for economic transformation is important.

This study does not find any meaningful relations between government and business in Nigeria with regards to fostering greening and sustainable business practices. Hence, it is difficult to highlight any meaningful collaboration between government and business or any regulatory practice that ensures businesses are supervised towards maintaining corporate social responsibility and sustainability. There is an expectation that government should be promoting greening business practice as an indicator that it is prioritising and showing commitments towards reducing environmental footprints.

In this study, the findings show that there are no meaningful relations between government and business towards jointly addressing environmental issues. This needs to change because of the positive impact this relationship can bring to economic development and sustainability.

5. Conclusion and Way Forward

This article on business and sustainability goals in Nigeria was designed to explore government's response and interventions in promoting sustainability with active partnership and involvement of businesses in Nigeria.

Three key goals of sustainability have important consequences for Nigeria, and they include a need to reduce poverty, zero hunger and good health and wellbeing. With rising poverty levels in Nigeria, there is significant risk of mortalities. Agriculture, an important sector in Nigeria is at risk of poor productivity due to climate change influences such as extended dry seasons, floods, soil degradation amongst others. This can further lead to increased poverty, hunger and underdevelopment of communities, cities and the nation at large.

Therefore, there is urgent need for Government to ensure effective implementation of sustainability policies to ensure that goals of sustainability targeting a drastic reduction of poverty and hunger are achievable by 2030. Government in Nigeria should be empowering sustainable farming amongst business farmers to encourage quality production of food and ensure food security both now and in the future. Empowering sustainable farming could involve engaging all actors responsible for the production and supply of agricultural products, driving knowledge, driving skills related to food safety, capacity building in agricultural production, greening the supply chain, promoting recycling, reuse, community education program amongst others (Kusnandar et al., 2019; Soderstrom & Weber, 2019). Everything we do today has significant effects on the quality of lives tomorrow.

6. Limitation of Research

This study focused largely on government-business partnership in promoting sustainable agricultural and business development in Nigeria. It would benefit in future research if the data collection can be more geographically expansive, considering other regional areas of Nigeria. It would also benefit if more agricultural entrepreneurs and local farmers can be largely included in the data collection to get a deeper and more holistic perspective of the issues of government and business relations in promoting agricultural sustainability.

Future research should do a comparative analysis between Nigeria, a developing nation and other developed nations in the order to assess what is different in a developed nation in comparison with a developing nation and how the gap in agricultural sustainability may be bridged.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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