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# **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN NIGERIA: A REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION EFFORTS AND CHALLENGES**

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**Abstract:** The Sustainable Development Goals were adopted by the United Nations member states in 2015 to achieve equity and prosperity by 2030. There are solutions Networks which monitors the activities of countries and regions in the work of implementing the SDGs and also records their information. It is a successor and improvement on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which ran from 2000 to 2015. Gender equality and women's empowerment is integral to each of the 17 goals. The UN 2020 Progress Report on SDGs 2030 across the world were reviewed and found out that many nations will not meet the 2030 target including Nigeria. Though progress had been made five years since the adoption of the SDGs worldwide. The Nigerian voluntary national review 2020 was developed while facing with challenges from Covid-19 pandemic, massive flooding across the nation, insecurity and corruption. Our modest attempt to answer the research questions derived from the four ranking SDGs in Nigeria became framework of appraisal. The research concluded that progress has been made but not at sufficient speed to realize the SDGs by the 2030 target. It was recommended that everything we do during and after this Covid-19 pandemic must be with strong focus on building more equal, inclusive and sustainable economies.

**Keywords:** Appraisal, Covid-19 pandemic, Gender equality, Implementation, Sustainable development

## **Introduction**

Sustainable development is defined as

development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The concept of needs goes beyond simply material need and includes values, relationship and participation. It can be achieved through eradicating poverty and hunger, guarantying a healthy life, universal access to basic services such as water, sanitation, sustainable energy support the generation of development through inclusive education and decent work. Members of a community must share in the cost and benefits of development. That is all community members must participate in development.

Sustainable development means better ways of doing things without compromising the health status of the people. Therefore, sustainable development includes –economic growth, environmental stewardship and social inclusion.

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Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a collection of 17 global goals designed to be a blue print to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. The Sustainable Development Goals, set in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and intended to be achieved by the year 2030, are part of a United Nations Resolution called “The 2030 Agenda” The 17 goals are broad and interdependent each of the Sustainable Development Goals has a list of targets which are measured with indicators. The year by which the target is meant to be achieved varies between the year 2020 or 2030 or no end date given (Bleut, 2015).

There are a total of 169 targets for the Sustainable Development Goals. Each has between 5 to 20 targets (or about 10 on average). Each of these targets has one, two or three indicators to measure progress towards reaching the targets. In total, there are 232 approved indicators to measure compliance. There are United Nations official initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Solutions Network which monitors the activity of countries and regions in the work of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and also records the information. The Goals were adopted by the United Nations member states in 2015 as a universal call action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030

All 193 member states of the United Nations have adopted 17 goals to be achieved by 2030. The Sustainable Development Goals offer a framework and blue print for achieving sustainable global prosperity and commit participating countries to individual and joint action for the good of all on the planet. The Sustainable Development Goals are successor to and improvement on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which ran from 2000 to 2015. (MDGs 2015)

According to Nigeria’s Road to SDGs Country Transition Strategy (2015) The SDGs seek to build on and complete the unfinished business of the MDGs, realize the human rights of all; achieve gender equality in all sectors and spheres of life; and importantly, strike a balance between economic, social and environmental dimensions of development.

The outcome document inter alia, calls on member states to “develop as soon as practicable, ambitious national responses to the overall implementation of this (new) Agenda...in order to support the transition to the SDGs and build on existing planning instruments, such as national development and sustainable development strategies.” A review of the MDGs implementation in Nigeria reveals that the country has registered mixed results across the goals, geographic areas and gender groups. Despite progress on some indicators, many of the goals and targets have not been met. Strikingly, the jump from the MDGs to the SDGs is not simply a question of extending the timeline and the ambition of the goals. New goals have been added, entirely new sectors have been introduced and the number of indicators has more than doubled.

Achieving the SDGs will depend on completing the unfinished business of the MDGs, broadening the focus of the MDGs to new activities and sectors, and deepening these successes to ensure that the achievement of the SDGs is truly universal and no one is left behind (as described, for example, in Goal 1 to eradicate poverty).

Rotimi (2016), indicated that the SDGs extend the MDGs in many ways but particularly by seeking to profoundly link the social, economic, and environment aspects of goals. This in turn implies linking across time ensuring that the short-term achievement of improved human well-being in the long term by damaging the underpinning social and environmental capital on which our global life support system depends.

Sustainable Development encourages to conserve and enhance resource base by gradually changing the ways in which we develop and use technologies. Countries must be allowed to meet their basic needs of employment,

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food, energy, water and sanitation. Stabilizing and reducing carbon emissions is key to living with environmental limits. It ensures improved quality for present and future generations noted World Commission on Environment and Development (2017).

Sustainable development is largely about people, their well-being and equity in their relationships with each other in a context where nature-society imbalances can thereafter become economic and social stability. Sustainable Development is important for economic growth because:

- i. Environment must be conserved while development is taking place.
- ii. Resources must be cited in such a way that something is conserved for future generation.
- iii. The standard of living of all people must be raised (U N Publication 2020)

The Sustainable Development Goals 2030 according to UN Publication (2015) including the following:

<u>SDG</u>	<u>SDG</u>
1.	No poverty
2	Zero Hunger
3	Good Health and Well-being
4	Quality Education
5	Gender Equality
6	Clean Water and Sanitation
7	Affordable and Clean Energy
8	Decent Work and Economic Growth
9	Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
10	Reducing Inequality
11	Sustainable Cities and Communities
12	Responsible Consumption and Production
13	Climate Action
14	Life Below Water
15	Life on Land
16	Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
17	Partnerships for the Goals

Gender equality and women's empowerment is integral to each of the 17 goals. Only by ensuring the rights of women across all the goals we will get to justice and inclusion, economies that work for all, and sustaining our shared environment now and for future generations.

### Statement of the Problem

Despite the huge investments in time, money and energy on the Millennium Development Goals which ran from 2000 to 2015 at the end of the day much was not achieved and in the same 2015 Nigeria adopted SDGs which end by 2030 five years into the programme much has not been achieved. According to African Sustainable Development SDG Index Ranking Nigeria scored 47.07 43 position out of 52 countries in the Index Ranking.

Gender equality is a right. Fulfilling this right is the best chance we have in meeting some of the most pressing challenges of our time- from economic crisis and lack of health care, to climate change, violence against women and escalating conflict. Women are not only more affected by these problems but also possess ideas and leadership to solve them. The gender discrimination still holding too many women back holds our world back too (UN Women's 2018 Flagship Report).

Some of the important measures of sustainable development goals 2030 UN DESA's Statistics Division 2019 include:

- a. Technological advancement for innovation
- b. Reduce, reuse and recycle appraisal
- c. Promoting environmental education and awareness.

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d. Resource utilization as per caring capacity

e. Improving quality of life including social, cultural and economic dimensions

We do not have technology centre or research institute with up to date science laboratory for innovation. There are few industries that can service the comprehensive need of extraction, processing, production, manufacturing, packaging and distributive functions. The laboring populations that generate the wealth of our nation are visibly weak and unhealthy. This makes productivity to fall below capacity which translates into underdevelopment. Many of our hospitals are mere consulting rooms and electricity supply rates and prize are disappointing. Environmental education and awareness are not the priority of the ruling class.

There are erosion gullies and flooding of erosion across many states of Nigeria. Since 1960 an estimated one third of the world's arable lands have been lost through erosion and other degradation, (UN World Commission on Environment and Development 1987). These factors are hindrances to realization of Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Five years since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, the 2020 report notes that progress had been made in some areas, such as improving maternal and child health, expanding access to electricity and increasing women's representation in government. Yet even these advances were offset elsewhere by growing food insecurity, deterioration of the material environment and persistent and pervasive inequality UN 2020 progress report on SDGs 2030.

Challenges include: Slower economic growth, long lasting corruption and inequality unfavourable demographic in various forms and wide spread epidemics, depletion of natural resources, gender inequality, and unequal distribution of wealth. Poverty and exclusion unemployment climate change, conflict and humanitarian aid building peaceful and inclusive societies building strong institution of governance and supporting rule of law. Political barriers: Includes inadequate economic, social and environment methods for policies, plans and projects are the major barrier combating the implementation of sustainable development goals UN 2020 progress report on SDGs 2030.

The covid-19 pandemic has unleashed an unprecedented crisis, causing further disruption to SDG progress, with the world's poor and most vulnerable affected the most. Using the latest data and estimates, the annual stock taking report on progress across the 17, goals shows that it is the poorest with disabilities, migrants and refugees – who are being hit the harder by the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Women are also bearing the heaviest brunt of the pandemic's effects. Now, due to Covid-19, an unprecedented health, economic and social crisis is threatening lives and livelihood, making the achievement of goals more challenging – (UN secretary General Antonio Guterres noted).

The key findings about the impact of the Covid-19 on sustainable development goals by the United Nations Progress Report 2020 include:

- An estimated 71 million people are expected to be pushed back into extreme poverty in 2020, the first rise in global poverty since 1998. Lost incomes, limited social protection and rising prices mean even those who were previously secure could find themselves at risk of poverty and hunger.
- Underemployment and unemployment due to the crisis mean some 1.6 billion already vulnerable workers in the informal economy – half the global workforce – may be significantly affected, with their incomes estimated to have fallen by 60 percent in the first month of the crisis.

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- The more than one billion slum dweller worldwide are acutely at risk from the effects of Covid-19, suffering from lack of adequate housing, no running water at home, shared toilets, little or no waste management systems, overcrowded public transport and limited access to formal health care facilities.
- Women and children are also among those bearing the heavy brunt of the pandemic's effects. Disruption to health and vaccination services and limited access to diet and nutrition services have the potential to cause hundreds of thousands of additional under-5 deaths and tens of thousands of additional maternal deaths in 2020. Many countries have seen a surge in reports of domestic violence against women and children.
- School closures have kept 90 percent of students worldwide (1.57 billion) out of school and caused over 370 million children to miss out on school meals they depend on. Lack of access to computers and the internet at home means remote learning is out of reach of many. About 70 countries reported moderate to severe disruptions or a total suspension of childhood vaccination services during March and April of 2020.
- As more families fall into extreme poverty, children in poor and disadvantaged communities are at much greater risk of child labour, child marriage and child trafficking. In fact, the global gains in reducing child labour are likely to be reversed for the first time in 20 years.

The report also shows that climate change is still occurring much faster than anticipated. The year 2019 was the second warmest on record and the end of the warmest decade of 2010 to 2019. Meanwhile, ocean acidification is accelerating; land degradation continues; massive numbers of species are at risk of extinction; and unsustainable consumption and production patterns remain pervasive UN SDGs targets and indicators July 2017.

## **Research Questions**

The research questions were raised from the four ranking sustainable development goals in Nigeria which are as follow:

- SDG 10 Reduced inequality
  - SDG 1 No poverty
  - SDG 5 Gender equality
  - SDG 16 Peace, Justice and strong institutions Nigeria SDGs 2019.
1. At the present rate of SDGs can Nigeria eliminate inequality by 2030?
  2. At the present rate of SDGs can poverty be reduced to the nearest minimum by 2030?
  3. At the present rate of SDGs can Nigeria achieve gender equality by 2030?
  4. At the present rate of SDGs can Nigeria achieve peace, justice and strong institution by 2030.

## **United Nations 2020 Progress Report On SDGS 2030 across the World**

This section of the research work was based mainly on the UN Progress Report 2020.

The progress report 2020 on the 2030 sustainable development goals are the following:

1. **End poverty in all its forms everywhere:** The UN explain extreme poverty rate have fallen by more than half since 1990 while this is remarkable achievement. One in five people in developing regions still live on less than \$1.90 a day. Millions more make little more than this daily amount and are at the risk of sleeping back into extreme poverty.
2. **End hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.** United Nations: explains: It is time to rethink how we grow, show and consume on food. If done right, agricult ure,



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forestry and fisheries can provide nutrition food for all and generate decent incomes, while supporting people's centered rural development and protecting the environment.

3. **Ensure healthy lives and promotes well-being for all at all age:** The United Nations explains: Significant stride have been made in increasing life expectancy and reducing some of the common killers responsible for child and maternal mortality. Major progress has also been made on increasing access to clean water and sanitation, reducing malaria, tuberculosis, polio and the spread of HIV/AIDs.

4. **Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote life long learning:** The United Nations explains: obtaining a quality education underpins a range of fundamental development drivers. Major progress has been made toward increasing access to education at all levels, particularly for women and girls. Basic literacy skills across the world have improved tremendously, yet more efforts are needed to achieve universal education goals for all. For example, the world has achieved equality in primary education between girls and boys, but few countries have achieved that target at all levels of education because of free and compulsory primary and secondary education adopted in many nations including Nigeria.

5. **Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls:** The United Nations explains: Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision making progress will fuel sustainable economics and benefit societies and humanity at large and end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere. This requires legal framework in place to enforce gender equality for all countries.

6. **Ensure access to water and sanitation for all:** "The United Nations explains: clean water is a basic human need, and one that should be easily accessible to all. There is sufficient fresh water on the planet to achieve this. However, due to poor infrastructure, investment and planning, every year millions of people – most of their children – die from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene

7. **Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all:** The United Nations explains: Energy is central to mainly every major challenge and opportunity the world faces today. Be it per jobs, security, climate change, food production or increasing incomes, access to energy for all is essential. Transitioning the global economy towards clean water and sustainable sources of energy is one of our greatest challenges in the coming decades. Sustainable energy is an opportunity- it transform lives, economics and the planet. Reliable modern energy electricity supply renewable energy including solar.

8. **Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all:** The United Nations explains: Roughly half the world's Population still lives on the equivalent of about 2\$ a day. And in too many places, having a job does not guarantee the ability to escape from poverty. This shows an uneven progress requires us to rethink and reset our economic and social policies aimed at eradicating poverty. Achieving higher levels of economic productivity through diversification technological upgrading and innovation including through a focus on high value added and labour intensive sections by 2030.

9. **Build resilient, infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation:** The United Nations explains: Investments in infrastructure – transport irrigation, energy and information and communication technology – are crucial to achieving sustainable development and empowering communities in

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many countries. It has been recognized this growth in productivity and income and improvements in health and education outcomes requires investment in infrastructures.

10. **Reduce inequality within and among countries:** United Nations explains: The international community has made significant strides toward lifting people out of poverty. The most vulnerable nations- the least developed countries, the land- locked developing countries and the small island developing states –continue to make inroads into poverty reduction. However, inequality still persists and large disparities remain in access to health and education services and other issues.

11. **Make cities inclusive, safe resistant and sustainable:** The United Nations explains: The challenges cities face can be overcome in ways that allow them to continue to thrive and grow, while improving resource use and reducing pollution and poverty. The future we want includes cities of opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation and more.

12. **Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns:** The United Nations explain: Sustainable consumption and production is about promoting resource and energy efficiency, sustainable infrastructure and providing access to basic services, green and decent jobs and better quality of life for all. Its implementation helps to achieve overall development plans, reduce economic environmental and social costs, strengthen economics competitive and reduce poverty.

13. **Take Urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts:** The United Nations explains: Affordable, scalable solutions are now available to enable countries to leapfrog to cleaner, more resilient economics. The pace of change is quickening as more people are turning to renewable energy and a range of other measures that will reduce emission and increase adaptation efforts.

14. **Conserve and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources:** The United Nations explains: Our oceans: Their temperature insulation chemistry and ecosystem play a fundamental role in making earth habitable. Our rainfall, drinking water, weather, climate, coastlines, much of our food and even the oxygen in the air we breathe are all ultimately provided and regulated by the sea. Throughout history, oceans and seas have been vital conduits for trade and transportation. Careful management of essential global resource is a key for sustainable future, presenting and significantly reducing marine pollution of all kinds by 2025.

15. **Sustainably manage forest, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss:** The United nations explains forests cover 30 percent of the earth's surface and in addition to providing food security and shelter, forests are key to combating climate change. Protecting biodiversity and the homes of the indigenous population. Thirteen million hectares of forests are being lost a year while the persistent degradation of dry lands has led to desertification of 3.6 billion hectares.

16. **Promote justice, peaceful and inclusive societies:** The united nations explains; The promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, the provision of access to justice for all and building effective, accountable institutions at all levels. This aims to promote peaceful societies at national levels, as well as the role of cooperation of the international level war and peace, terrorism, military spending, nuclear weapons, homicides, human right corruption and violence and rights of churches.

17. **Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development:** The UN explains, it requires partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society. These inclusive partnerships built upon principles and values, a shared vision and shared goals that place people and the planet at the center, are needed

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at the global, regional, national and local level respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable developments.

### **Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (2030) in Nigeria**

The Federal Government of President Mohammadu Buhari put some mechanisms in place to achieve the implementation of the SDGs 2030 target. The President appointed Princess Orelope – Adefulire as Special Assistant to the President on SDGs in the Presidency which is a carryover from the MDGs under the Presidency too.

There is Senate Committee on SDGs which provide oversight functions for SDGs while Federal House of Representatives Committee on SDGs provide appropriation for SDGs. There is also inter-ministerial Committee on the SDGs. There is private sector advisory group and the civil society strategy group on SDGs. The Federal Government worked together with the States Governments through their SDGs Desk Officers. These are the people that implement the SDGs in their different states and local government areas. The 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) with their 169 targets form the core of the 2030 agenda. They balance the economic, social and ecological dimensions of sustainable development on the same agenda for the first time.

President Mohammadu Buhari's government introduced the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) in 2017 as a policy option. It is a medium term all round development initiative focused on restoring growth, investing in people and building a globally competitive economy. The focus is to stabilize the macro environment achieve agriculture and food security, ensure energy sufficiency in power and petroleum products security improve transformation, infrastructure and drive industrialization (Egwuatu & Kolawole, 2019). It is expected to cover four years until 2020. This is where the implementation of sustainable development goals was anchored.

According to Nigeria's Road to SDGs (2015) in the course of delivering the MDGs, several partnerships were successfully established which supported the implementation of MDGs programmes and projects. The partnerships ranged from those that are internal between the Federal, State and Local Governments; between MDAs; between government, civil society organizations and communities – to partnerships – between the Nigerian government and international aid agencies, private firms and foreign governments.

Assessing progress towards the SDGs will rely on an even more elaborate system of measurement, covering more sectors and more indicators. There is an urgent need, therefore, for an increase in both the quantity and quality of data. Moreover, the role of data cannot be limited to simply measuring aggregate national progress towards the goals. As research and experience with the MDGs attests to, real-time feedback from policies on how they are performing, how public services are operating, and localized differences in impact will be fundamental to achieving the responsive governance needed to calibrate and drive progress. During the transition timeframe from MDGs in SDGs, Nigeria will seek to build on existing foundations, employing innovative techniques to improve understanding of the SDGs, communicating effectively across all levels of government, and permeating across all echelons of society, with a focus on inspiring every community to innovate, motivating Nigerians to implement the goals.

SDGs communications will respond to stakeholder/actor engagement and participation, focus on both short and long-term goals and objectives, and will be reviewed strategically on a regular basis to respond to information on SDG performance and implementation. In this section, multiple stakeholders/actors have been identified who will



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be involved in the decision making/participation process. The Communication Objectives of the transition strategy are to:

- Continue communicating on the ‘unfinished business’ of the MDGs;
- Provide reliable, up-to-date, adequate, timely and reasonably complete information for SDGs implementers at all levels, for partners in the private sector and the development community, and for all Nigerians;
- Provide at periodic intervals data that will show the general performance of the SDGs across all levels of the Nigerian society during the transition.

Repositioning Local Government as the SDGs Tier of Government, Local Government is pivotal to the achievement of the SDGs because it is the only tier of government that can feasibly understand, monitor and react to the millions of activities that will collectively add up to the SDGs. Chairman of the Local Government should be provided with the mandate and responsibility for pursuing and coordinating progress towards the SDGs within their local government area, Nigeria’s Road to SDGs Country Transition Strategy (2015).

As primary agents of their development and the ultimate beneficiaries of the SDGs, citizens have a pivotal role to play not only in terms of efforts and action towards the achievement of the goals but also in terms of the associated monitoring of the progress towards these goals. Community participation is the process by which individuals, families or communities assume responsibility for their own welfare and develop a capacity to contribute to their own and the community development by being involved in the decision making process in determining goals and pursuing issues of importance. SDGs Implementation Efforts in Africa 2019. According to Erhum (2015) economic development that is hinged on environmental sustainability is critical to the attainment of sustainable economic development. The quest for economic development must be balanced with the need for responsible environmental management. This balancing requires policies, legislations and regulations which improve natural resource management and support sustainable resource use. The 17 goals to be implemented basically is to ensure, zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable energy, decent work and economic growth, industry innovation are infrastructure, reduction of inequality urgent action to combat clamant change and its impact promoting peaceful and inclusive societies sustainable development among others. These goals capture the essence of development in any nation and have as its slogan to “leave no one behind”

SDGs were expected to be pursued in an inclusive and people centered manner, hereby focusing on institutional and policy strengthening and supportive of the program and projects. This was designed to focus in six thematic area-policies, data management, institutions, partnership, communication and finance. To be carried out in 3 phases according to the specific need of each zone.

Phase 1: 2016 - 2020

Phase 2: 2020 - 2026

Phase 3: 2026 – 2030

It requires that all hands must be on desk, federal, states and local government areas However, some hindrances were noticed which included inadequate financial resources for investment in SDGs- related activities, crisis in the North East, militancy in the Niger delta, corruption, unstable policies, weak social institutions and disregard to the rule of law. Some former heads of state are stronger than the Nigerian state and have refused to account for

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their stewardship while in office and nobody is questioning them. They forget that governance is a social contract between the government and the people they governed.

The impact of covid-19 nearly collapsed the Nigerian economy. There was no money, food and frustration that many Nigerian died because of the corona virus disease. Some Nigerians even attempted or actually committed suicide. The lockdown from March 2020 to September 2020 nearly collapsed the Nigerian economy. The Federal Government and State Governments were forced to divert attention to giving palliatives to the most vulnerable in the country. Flooding was killing many Nigerians and erosion flooding swept away many farm lands during 2020 raining season.

### **Nigerian Sustainable Development Goals 2030 Voluntary National Review 2020**

Nigeria's 2020 Voluntary National Review (VNR) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) focused on the key issues of poverty (SDG-1), and an inclusive economy (SDG-8), wealth and well-being (SDG-3), Education (SDG-4), Gender Equality (SDG-5), and the enabling environment of peace and security (SDGs-16), and Partnership (SDGs). This focus is based on Nigeria's current development priorities and the development objective of President M. Buhari. The VNR is being developed while facing with challenges from COVID-19 pandemic testing the effectiveness of Nigeria's public Health systems and the collapse of oil price, for an economy still getting 86% of public revenue from oil and gas. Nigeria's 2017 VNR outline the institutional dimensions for creating and enabling policy environment for the implementation of the SDGs through the Economic and Recovery Growth Plan (ERGP) 2017-2020 it focused on economic, social and environmental dimensions of development that make it consistent with the aspirations of the SDGs.

SDG (3) Health and Well-being poor health outcome such as high rate of maternal mortality there has been a decrease from 157% to 132%. COVID-19 challenged health system by exposing how unprepared we are to tackle public health emergencies Nigerian current access to clean water is 64% which is above average SDG-4 Education: out of School Children is a major challenge a demographic challenge that relates to interplay between employment SDG-11 education SDG-4 poverty SDG-1 and digital economy SDG-17. In Nigeria's 200 million population regional disparities are significantly observed with 78% of South West Children able to read and write while only 17% of North Eastern Children can. With only 1.6 of GDP to education more need to be done. SDG-8 inclusive economy: Nigeria's informal economy is one of the largest on the continent estimated at 53% of the labor force and accounting for 65% all non-jobs are informal. Youth have a combined rate of unemployment and under employment rate of 55.4% or 2.5 million.

According to Nigeria's 2020 Voluntary National Review (VNR), Alignment of national planning to SDGs; good strides have been made in the domestication process of the SDGs in Nigeria. First, there is an ongoing realignment of the National Statistical System (NSS) with the requirements and indicators of the SDGs. Second, Nigeria has developed its home-grown 'Integrated Sustainable Development Goals (SDG model) – an analytical framework for assessing how policy making can better address the indivisible nature of the SDGs. Third, the Nigeria's 2020 VNR report has drawn on past evaluations across the Seven priority SDGs and has an ongoing evaluation of the country's performance in SDG 2&4. This attempt to systematically use evaluations is an innovation in the VNR context. Nigeria should strengthen the evidence-based planning and accountability mechanisms at State level for accelerating the SDG decade of action. The post-ERGP National Development Plan (2021-2030) will be pivotal in advancing the achievement of the SDGs in Nigeria.

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### **Appraisal of the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals 2030 in Nigeria 2020**

A modest attempt was made to answer the research questions derived from the four ranking Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria. These became the framework of appraisal. The research questions were:

- (1) At the present rate of Sustainable Development Goals can Nigeria eliminate inequity by 2030?
- (2) At the present rate of Sustainable Development Goals can poverty be reduced to the nearest minimum by 2030?
- (3) At present rate of Sustainable Development Goals can Nigeria achieve gender equity by 2030?
- (4) At the present rate of Sustainable Development Goals can Nigeria achieve peace, justice and strong institutions by 2030?

### **At the Present Rate of Sustainable Development Goals can Nigeria eliminate inequity by 2030?**

The massive persistence of poverty, particularly in rural areas, according to Idriss (1992), represents a problem for the popular acceptance of continue economic adjustment; and it represents a problem for growth itself. The problem lies not only in the unintended consequences of the prevailing development paradigm, but in the viability of the paradigm itself.

According to Idriss most of the forces creating poverty are essentially social. They reflect systems of resources allocations that are made by societies and as such can be reversed. Pricing policies, credit systems, social and productive services which neglect the poor, as well as gender discrimination, are not nature, universal and inevitable facts and neither is the poverty they give rise to. Stiglitz (2009) noted that:

The globalization of the economy has benefited countries that took advantage of it by seeking new markets for their exports and by welcoming foreign investment. Even so, the countries that have benefited the most have been those that took charge of their own destiny and recognized the role government can play in development rather than relying on the notion of a self-regulated market that would fix its own problems. But for millions of people globalization has not worked. Many have actually been made worse off, as they have seen their jobs destroyed and their lives become more insecure. They have fell increasingly powerless against forces beyond their control. They have seen their democracies undermined, their cultures eroded.

Those who intervened in the market process like the Asian Tigers were better off but Africans took the 'rubbish' as was packaged for them without any contribution. Africans are now suffering exploitation, this has widened the gap between the rich and poor. Poverty is less a failure of the poor, than a failure of policy makers to grasp their potential according to Idriss (1992). As individuals, many of the poor are virtually unreachable. As member of associations and groups they create their own channels for institutional access. The dynamics of poverty are reversible, but only in collaboration with the poor themselves. The most valid spokesmen of the poor are the poor themselves.

The mobilization and enhancement of the resources and activities of the poor themselves can uphold their dignity and free them from the shackles of misery-while at the same time making a vital contribution to overall sustainable growth poverty alleviation involves creating conducive conditions under which people will receive their income from their work. Most of the forces creating poverty are essentially social. They reflect resource allocations that are made by societies and as such can be reversed. Pricing policies, credit systems and social and productive services which neglect the poor, as well as gender discrimination, are not natural, universal and inevitable facts and neither is the poverty they give rise to.

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Nigeria has six-tier model of class structure as in most industrial societies. The terms social and economic inequalities simply refer to the existence of socially credited inequalities. Sociologists use income, education and occupation prestige to measure social class. The social classes in Nigeria include: capitalist class, upper middle class, lower middle class, middle class, working class and classless. These classes are as a result of unequal distribution of income in our society mainly because of our weak social institutions.

Nigerians have been appealing to the conscience of political leaders to make their salaries and allowances realistic by receiving what government officials receive in other similar countries or reduce to a reasonable percentage but they refused. They live in luxury while the people whose money they are using and electorate that voted them into power are living in penury. Some are even attempting or actually committing suicide because of the frustration caused by bad leadership

### **At the Present Rate of Sustainable Development Goals can Poverty be reduced to the Nearest Minimum by 2030?**

Poverty is absolute state by any objective measure the poor are materially deprived to the point where survival often becomes an issue. The poor are materially deprived in comparison with the majority of the population and gender discrimination perpetuates poverty. According to Neubek (1979) unable to produce or unable to demand rewards for their contribution to production, and thus unable to consume, millions live out their lives in a state of economic deprivation. A persistent theme in the economics of the poor is the need for some sort of transfer of resources to them from more productive and dynamic sectors of accumulation. This perspectives is not that growth achieved by the privileged will pull the poor out of poverty, but that the mobilization and enhancement of the resources and activities of the poor themselves can uphold their dignity and free them from the shackles of misery, while at the same time making a vital contribution to overall sustainable growth (Idriss, 1992).

The Federal and State Governments have embarked on poverty alleviation programmes which include more recently Fadama I, II, III and additional Fadama III. Millennium Development Goals etc and currently Sustainable Development Goals. Admittedly, progress has been made but poverty has not been eradicated mainly because of gender, inequality, corruption, weak institutions and non-observation of the rule of law and bad leadership.

Former President Olusegun Obasanjo, while delivering a speech at a consultative forum in Abuja on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2020 noted that today Nigeria is fast drifting to a failed and badly divided state. Economically our country is becoming a basket case and poverty capital of the world and socially, we are firming as an unwholesome and insecure country. Obasanjo also said that the country was becoming a basket case economically.

### **At present rate of Sustainable Development Goals can Nigeria achieve gender equity by 2030?**

According to the UN “gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world” UN 2017 progress on sustainable development goals

“Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health, decent Work, and representation in political and nurture sustainable economic that benefit societies in their constitutions as of 2014”.

The Core strategies for achieving the objectives of the National Gender Policy (2006) include:

- Policy, partnership and programme reforms through mainstreaming of gender concerns at all levels;
- Gender education and capacity building to enhance necessary technical expertise and positive gender culture;
- Legislative reforms to guarantee gender justice and respect for human right and

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- Economic reforms for enhanced productivity and sustainable development, especially that which addresses the needs of women and children, and other vulnerable groups.

The National policy on Women noted that “affirmative action of proportionate ratio or 30% representation will be employed to increase the total representative seats in each of the legislative houses, executive arms, and party hierarchy. This shall be reserved for women for a trial period up to the year 2010 (National Policy on Women 2000). That policy is in fact already outdated in the International World because at the UN Conference on Women in 1995 held in Beijing, China, the achievement of the threshold of 30% was by the year 2000AD. All the Nations of the World, including Nigeria accepted this being signatory to the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action. The UN and all the 167 Nations accept that the best indicator to ensure larger proportion of the female gender (Akade, 2009).

Despite unprecedented human development efforts in the past three decades, a widespread pattern of inequality between men and women still persists. This is the result of centuries of neglect to focus on gender issues. In the developing world in particular, where women have been regarded as non-persons for generations, progress towards achieving recognition has been slow and progress towards achieving gender equality has been slower. This has affected development adversely (Turning promise into action UN Publication 2016). There is no gender equality in the Nigeria society Even the 35% affirmative action clause accepted by the Nigeria Government is not even achieved though effort have been made towards its realization. The Supreme Court of Nigeria on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014 set aside Igbo customary laws of inheritance that deny women access to their father’s property. What of community property?

The problem is not remembering women but what is the percentage of inclusiveness. The 35% affirmative clause is not maintained because the interest of governments at different level is to see that women are included without bothering themselves about the ratio of men or women in practice. Women are not giving more than 10% in most positions that require decision taking or anywhere at all. For instance, out of 36 state governors none is a woman. In the Ninth National Assembly out of 109 Senators only seven are women out of 360 members of the House of Representatives only twenty are women. The question we can ask ourselves is out of the total number of ministers in the Federal Executive Council how many are women and in the different states of the federation how many commissioners are women in each state? Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and its successor Sustainable Development Goals strongly recommended gender equality in order to achieve any meaningful development.

**At the present rate of Sustainable Development Goals can Nigeria achieve peace, justice and strong institutions by 2030?**

Goal 16 has the target of promoting the rule of law, equal access to justice and strong social institutions where nobody will be above the law but equal before the law. Peace and justice cannot be separated because peace can only reign where there is justice. This will mean including women in all decision making processes both in the family and society at large as well as granting inheritance rights to both boys and girls both in the family and community at large. Nigeria has weak institutions giving rise to powerful men like Olusegun Obasanjo, Ibrahim Babangida and Mohammed Buhari all former and serving Presidents of Nigeria and others who have refused to give account of their tenures as Presidents because of our weak institutions.

Nigeria is violating the principle of using the best people they have to get the best result. If we do not promote the principle of excellence, what do you think will be our best results by using people who are not competent, our



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weak people as our front runners in Nigeria? Nationsbuilding would therefore mean finding permanent solution to the problems of revenue allocation, population census, nature and practice of Nigeria federalism, religious intolerance, ethnicity and indigene ship problems the North/South dichotomy and neo-colonial pressures (Ake 1982). These have not given room for peace to reign in Nigeria; therefore Nigeria is a country in crisis.

President Obama of the United States of America attributed the root cause of the challenges that have befallen Africa to poor governance arising from lack of visible dividends from democracy and lack of attention to unaligned frustrations and corruption (Obama, 2014). Good governance entails transparent and accountable management of human, economic and financial resources for the purpose of equitable and sustainable development (ADC, 2011). The World Bank defines it as the “manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development” (IFAD, 1999). These things have not given room for justice and without justice there can be no peace.

## **Conclusion**

Poverty is more than lack of income and resources to ensure a sustainable livelihood. Its manifestations include hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, social discrimination and exclusion as well as the lack of participation in decision making. Economic growth must be inclusive to provide sustainable jobs and promote equality.

- Orelope – Adafulire SSA to President on SDGs 2020.

Achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment is integral to each of the 17 goals. Only by ensuring the rights of women and girls across all the goals will we get to justice and inclusion, economics that work for all, and sustaining our shared environment now and for future generations. The research concluded that progress has been made but not at sufficient speed to realize the SDGs by the 2030 target. It is mainly because of gender inequality, corruption, insecurity, weak social institutions and natural disasters like erosion and flooding of water which have affected many Nigerians causing many deaths and loss of livelihood.

The covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria is being gradually relaxed. This is because all the preventive strategies are no longer in full force: staying at home, restricting the number of passengers in a vehicle, schools and churches have been reopened respectively and even 2020 West African School Certificate Examination (WAEC) has been taken. The covid-19 pandemic has gone more than half way but the impact have not gone. This is because the Nigeria economy that was almost collapsed is gradually picking up but things have not fully returned back as usual. The prices of items have gone up again more than even the period of the covid-19 pandemic lockdown from March to September, 2020. This time around because of the End Sars Protest in late October 2020 but the lockdown has been relaxed

## **Recommendation**

Adequate financial resources are required for investment in the SDGs related activities. There is the need for poverty alleviation, youth empowerment, entrepreneurship education and effective leadership. Strong social institutions, observation of the rule of laws and reviving the economy because of the damage done by the impact of covid-19 on the economy is inevitable. Sustainable Economic growth requires societies to create the conditions that allow people to have quality jobs that stimulate the economy while not harming the environment. Job opportunities and decent work conditions are also required for the whole working population.

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Everything done during and after this (Covid-19) must be with a strong focus on building more equal, inclusive and sustainable economies that are more resilient in the face of pandemic, climate change, and the many other global challenges facing Nigeria. The first step to achieving that is to have a good primary and secondary education system as well as good health care system. It is observed that efforts to control our environment must be intensive due to gender equality must be implemented and not just remembering women like the case today. The research equally recommended that October 2020 protest by the Nigerian Youths against police brutality and bad governance should not be taken for granted. This actually reemphasized the call by many prominent Nigerians across the country for restructuring Nigeria which was the original plan after Nigerian Independence in 1960. However, President Muhammadu Buhari single handedly refused the idea of restructuring as if we are under a military ruler, The Youths should be called for a round table discussion by our leaders at all levels of governance where proper apology should be tendered to them especially, the discovery that palliatives were hidden inside strong rooms while many Nigerians died or committed suicide because of starvation mostly during the lockdown period of covid-19 pandemic. The palliatives were reserved for their yet unborn children and other atrocities committed by them against the citizens of this country. The level of insecurity in Nigeria means that Nigeria is already sitting on a keg of gun powder. It is said that he who lives in a glass house does not throw stones because of the likely resultant damage. A word is enough for the wise.

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