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### RESEARCH ARTICLE

## THE IMPLICATIONS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN NIGERIA.

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### Abstract

Human security and sustainable development all over the world hinges on successful environmental sustainability. Nigeria was a signatory to Agenda 21 in 1992 and has been introducing policies in its systems which include laws that serve the three tier governments (Federal, States and Local Governments) in its bid to achieve environmental sustainability. These laws and policies serves as instruments for environmental protection, planning, prevention and pollution control.

This study analyses the state of Nigeria environment before the inception of the Millennium Development Goal MDG 7 which was to ensure environmental sustainability and examines what happens after the programmes took off and ended. It examines sustainable practices in Nigeria that supports and encourages environmental sustainability. It identifies challenges to the achievement of environmental sustainability in the MDG 7 programmes. It also classifies the emerging environmental issues in the country. At the end, it advocates forward strategies in the achievement of environmental security in Nigeria.

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### Introduction:-

The discussion of environmental sustainability filters through nearly all political, social and economic discusses world over because of its importance to sustainable development and human security. The importance of the discussions and its processes is assumable essential and agreeable all over the world through different world bound programmes and agencies since the borders of nations could not hold globally for environmental change. Therefore, workable and achievable sustainable development programmes are imperative for environmental sustainability in every society.

Since man will continue to depend on its environment for consumption, utilization and socioeconomic relationships makes the processes of environmental sustainability for every society vital for the preservation of the entire world and its life components. Therefore the achievement of environmental sustainability is paramount to environmental security, economic development and human advancement.

Environmental sustainability involves making decisions that will be of interests to the universe by protecting and preserving the environment so that the nature will continue to support human life and other living organisms. The processes of environmental sustainability thrive mainly on workable sustainable policies that are globally advocated and supported and midwife by nations. Nigeria as a nation since the 1980's has consciously in diverse ways

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supported global environmental sustainability with the adoption of policy framework for environmental sustainability at different times.

#### LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES:-

The sustainable development deliberations and agendas of the 1990s, including the 1992 Earth Summit<sup>1</sup> is prime to the current direction for environmental sustainability. Agenda 21 (a product of the Earth Summit) is essential in encouraging environmental sustainability. Agenda 21 emphasizes the existence of synergies between the principles of environmental security and sustainable development to foster environmental sustainability

Thereby, the endorsement of eight MDG (Millennium Development Goal) goals in the year 2000 was in the aftermath of the Earth summit in 1992 held at Rio, Brazil (Nigeria was a signatory to Agenda 21). The kick off of MDG 7 programmes afterward encouraged and influenced the initiations and further adoptions of sustainable environmental policies in Nigeria and other nations of the world with the aim of ensuring and achieving environmental sustainability focusing on the targeted year 2015.

Earlier in 1989, Nigeria enacted its own National Policy on Environment. The Federal Republic of Nigeria and some of its state governments also promulgated some national environmental laws to encourage environmental sustainability prior to the kick of MDG 7 programmes. These laws serve as instrument for environmental protection, planning, prevention and pollution control. Such includes

- i. Federal Environmental Protection Agency act, Cap 131, Vol. IX p.6303, 1988
- ii. National Environmental Protection (Management of Solid Hazardous Wastes): Regulations, 1991.
- iii. National Environmental Protection (Effluent Limitation): Regulations, 1991.
- iv. National Environmental Protection (pollution and Abatement in Industries and Facilities Producing Waste) Regulations, 1991.

#### NIGERIA ENVIRONMENT AT A GLANCE:-

The table 1 below depicts MDG 7 targets, indicators, what was on ground before the inception of MDG 7 in 2000 and what happens after the programme took-off.

**Table 1:- Nigeria Environment at a Glance**

Targets	Indicators	Before MDG (i.e. year 2000)	After year 2000
<b>Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources</b>	<b>1.</b> Proportion of land area covered by forest (FAO)	Forested area was 14 per cent of the land area in 2000 (MDG Nigeria, 2010).	1. The current forested area in Nigeria is 9.5 percent of the percentage of land (UN Data, 2014).
	<b>2.</b> Ratio of area protected to maintain biological diversity to surface area (UNEP-WCMC)	Conservation area was about 2,155,740 ha while the Games and Wildlife sanctuaries is made up of 1,030,621ha (Olufemi and Ameh, 1999)	Conservation areas, Game and Wild life sanctuaries are still retained.
	<b>3.</b> Energy use (kg oil equivalent) per \$1 GDP (PPP) (IEA, World Bank)	Energy use (kg oil equivalent) per \$1 GDP (PPP) 2000-2004 was 721 (The World Bank, 2014)	Energy use (kg oil equivalent) per \$1 GDP (PPP) 2000-2009 was 721(The World Bank, 2014)
	<b>4.</b> Carbon dioxide	Carbon dioxide emissions	Carbon dioxide emissions

<sup>1</sup>Dankelman, I. (2013). On the Road to Sustainable Development: Promoting Gender Equality and Achieving Climate Change. In UNDP (2013). Powerful Synergies: Gender Equality, Economic Development and Environmental Sustainability. United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP).

	emissions per capita (UNFCCC, UNSD) and consumption of ozone-depleting CFCs (ODP tons) (UNEP-Ozone Secretariat)	metric tons per capita in 2000 is 0.6 (Trading Economics, 2014 citing World Bank Indicators)	metric tons per capita in 2010 is 0.5 (World Bank, 2014) while Nigeria achieved the Montreal Protocol for the phase out of CFC in 2010 (Daily Independent, 2014).
	5.Proportion of population using solid fuels (WHO)		117.8 million people uses non-solid fuel which include firewood, charcoal and other such cooking sources (PM News Nigeria, 2013) citing World Bank Report
<b>Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation</b>	1. Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source, urban and rural (UNICEF-WHO)	50 percent of the population has access to improved drinking water (WSMP Nigeria, 2008).	57percentpopulation has access to improved drinking water in 2012 (OSSAP/MDG, 2014).
	2. Proportion of population with access to improved sanitation, urban and rural (UNICEF-WHO)	26 percent of the population used improved sanitation facilities in 1990 and 30% in 2006 (WSMP Nigeria,2008).	33.7 percent in 2012 of the population used improved sanitation facilities in 2012
<b>Have achieved by 2020 a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers</b>	Proportion of households with access to secure tenure (UN-HABITAT)	69.6% Nigerians lives in Slums in 2000 (UN-Habitat, 2014)	62.7% lives in slums in 2009(UN-Habitat, 2014)

#### SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES IN NIGERIA:-

Nigeria still maintains its Conservation areas and Games reserves in different parts of the country to protect its biologically diverse environments. This includes National Parks such as Kanji Lake, Old Oyo, Cross River, Gashaka-Gumti, Yankari and Chad Basin. It also has Games and wildlife sanctuaries which include Alawa, Dagida, Kwale, Ologbo, Sambisa, Udi-Nsukka etc. The conservation area is about 2,155,740 ha while the Games and Wildlife sanctuaries is made up of 1,030,621ha<sup>2</sup>

The MDG programmes serve as major interventions in areas of safe drinking water and sanitation in urban and rural areas all over the nation. These were done with constructions of dams, water schemes by providing safe water through borehole (hand pumps and solar panels water schemes boreholes) and constructions of VIP toilets in urban and rural areas in different parts of Nigeria.

In 2010 through Resolution 64/292, the United Nations General Assembly declared access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a fundamental human right<sup>3</sup>. This is on the basis that access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation is essential for human dignity.

MDG 7 programmes progress reports showed increased in the population of people that have access to safe and drinking water and sanitation in Nigeria but the increments witnessed seems slow but encouraging. The report of WHO/UNICEF in 2008 which was a Joint Monitoring Program for water supply and sanitation in Nigeria shows that only 50 percent of the population has access to improved drinking water whose sources included household connections, public stand pipes, boreholes, protected wells and springs in 1990 (WSMP Nigeria, 2008). This report

<sup>2</sup>Olufemi A.O. and Ameh C.E (1999). Forest Resource Situation Assesment of Nigeria. EC-FAO Partnership Programme(1998-2002)

<sup>3</sup> The human right to water and sanitation. <http://www.un.org/waterforlife> assessed online November 29, 2014

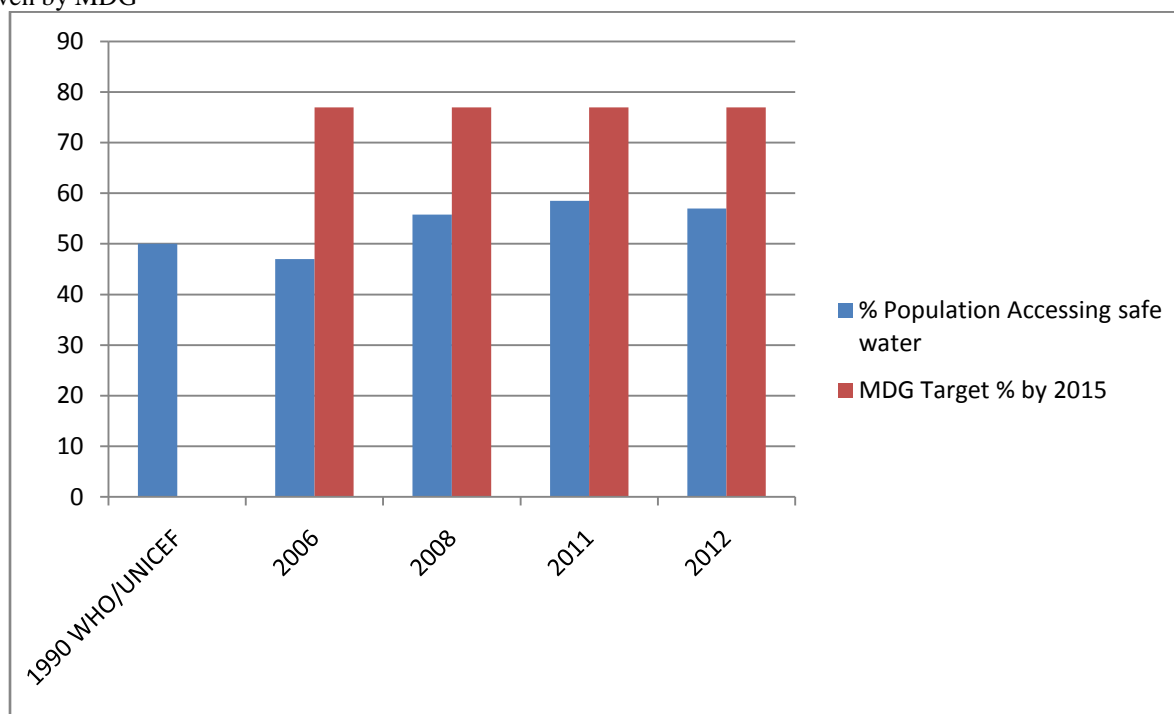
showed that as at 2006 the population of people that has access to improved-drinking water was 47 percent. While the OSSAP/MDG (Office of the Senior Special Assistance to the President on Millennium Development Goals) data of 2014 gave the population of people in Nigeria that had access to safe drinking water in 2008 as 55.8 percent, while it was 58.5 percent in 2011 and 57 percent in 2012. This is against the expected target of 77 percent by 2015<sup>4</sup>. The table 2 below extrapolated from the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program for Water Supply and Sanitation report of 2008 (WSMP Nigeria, 2008) and OSSAP/MDG data to show the percentages of people in Nigeria having access to drinkable water between the year 1990 and 2012.

**Table 2:-** Percentage of Population having Access to Drinkable Water in Nigeria between 1990 and 2012

Year	1990	2006	2008	2011	2012
% of Population drinkable water	50%	47%	55.8%	58.5%	57%

(Source: OSSAP/MDG, 2014 and WSMP, Nigeria, 2008)

The diagram below compares the percentage of population of Nigeria having access to drinkable water to the target given by MDG



**Figure 1:-** Percentages of Population Accessing Safe Drinking Water (WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programmes for Water Supply for 1990 and 2006 and OSSAP/MDG DATA-2008, 2011 and 2012) Compared with 2015 expected MDG Target

There has also been progress though slow in the percentage of population that has access to improved sanitation. The 2008 WHO/UNICEF report of a Joint Monitoring Program for water supply and sanitation in Nigeria reported that 26 percent of the population used improved sanitation facilities in 1990 and 30% in 2006 (WSMP Nigeria, 2008). While the OSSAP/MDG reported that 31.2 percent of the population used improved sanitation in 2008, while 33.7 percent in 2012 as against the expected 69.5 percent target of 2015<sup>5</sup>. This is represented in a table 3 below.

**Table 3:-** Percentage of Population Using Improved Sanitation between 1990 and 2012

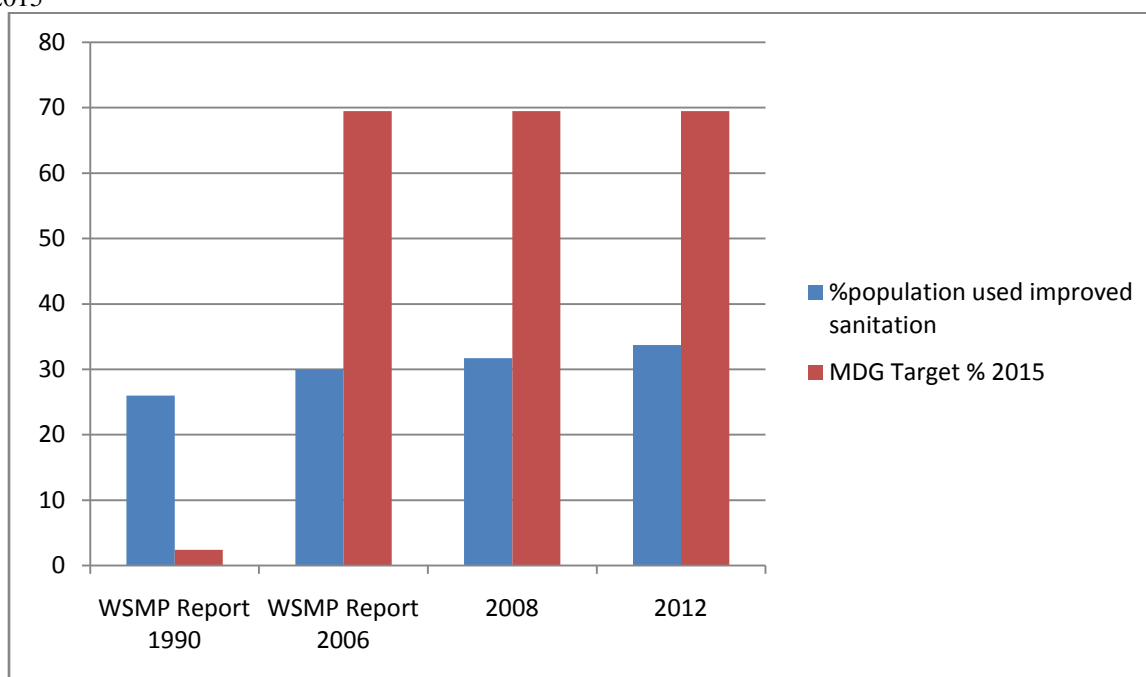
<sup>4</sup> The source of the Data is OSSAP-MDG in UNDP in Nigeria. Retrieved online <http://www.ng.undp.org>

<sup>5</sup> ibid

Year	1990	2006	2008	2012
% Population with improved sanitation	30	36	31.2	33.7

(Source: OSSAP/MDG, 2014 and WSMP Nigeria, 2008)

The Figure 2 below compares the percentage of population with improved sanitation with the expected MDG target of 2015



**Figure 2.** Percentages of Population that Used Improved Sanitation (WHO/UNICEF/WSMP Joint Monitoring Programmes data for 1990 and 2006 and OSSAP/MDG DATA-2008 and 2012) compared with 2015 expected MDG Target.

When safe water delivery and sanitation were enhanced, there must have been corresponding enhancements of some other MDG goals that lean on them. Therefore, poverty reduction will be enhanced (MDG goal 1), school enrolment will be increased (MDG goal 2), women and girls dignity enhanced (MDG goal 3), child mortality will be reduced (MDG goal 4), pregnant mothers will be prevented from diseases (MDG goal 5) and HIV/Aids patients will be prevented from being susceptible to opportunistic diseases such as water borne diseases (MDG goal 6).

## CHALLENGES TO THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN NIGERIA

### Inability to Enforce Environmental Laws:-

The inability of the Federal Government of Nigeria to enforce its environmental laws is a bane to the achievement of environmental sustainability in the country. For example, there have been enabling laws and policies guiding against gas flaring, the Federal Government of Nigeria has not the political will to end gas flaring (flaring of gas started since the discovery of oil about fifty years ago) even with its negative environmental consequences.

The Minister of Environment of Nigeria, Laurentia Laraba Mallam said if the gas that is being flared is annexed it could meet 40 percent of Nigeria energy needs (ThisDay Live, 2014). Gas flaring contributes to global warming (i.e. climate change), causes environmental pollution and ecological disturbances and destructions. Environmental pollution due to gas flaring may lead to health challenges of residents around the flaring spots. It affects the growth of vegetation around flaring spots and leads to contaminations of surrounding water bodies thereby affecting the survival of fishes and other aquatic life (Ubani and Onyejekwe, 2013). The Niger Delta women of Nigeria still lament for the environmental degradations that is due to gas flaring and other unsustainable practices. This could be viewed in line with the following quotation

“We are farmers, fisherwomen and hunters. With all the flaming and pumping of oil into our swamp areas, the oil companies have denied us every living thing. Today, we have no hope, while they are making billions of naira with

our gifts from God. They don't care or hear our cry; they only throw tear gas on us, beat us, and drive us out of our land" (Ihayere, Ogeleka and Ataine (2014 p.17 citing Singh et al., 1995; Sagay, 2001; Akpan, 2003).

The government of Nigeria gave a deadline of the year 2008 for gas flaring. Though, Nigeria now piped liquefied natural gas from its petroleum to some industrial estates in Lagos, Ota and Agbara for electric power supply from its oil installations. Nevertheless, there has not been an end to this environmentally unsustainable practice of the petroleum industries

#### **Project Duplication and Site:-**

Politician interference in identification of project site and location has affected the placement of project in appropriate site/location where it will have more impact on its community. This hijack or influence of project to the political leaders in government preferred site or location instead of considering the peoples need is a gimmick used by the politicians to attract political patronages or gains. This makes the projects at times not to be assessable to the expected users. Projects such as water and VIP (Ventilated Improved Pit) toilets were sometimes sited and located in places without consideration of its community's choice for location and site. At the end the project were many times located and sited far from its expected users. For example, water borehole project that is sited far from the expected users will increase the travel time of women and girls whose cultural roles are always to fetch water for the family.

There were communities where the projects allocated to their communities by the MDG program had been in existence through other national or state partnership programmes such as European Union, other agencies or one of the three tiers of government. This duplication of project robs other areas in the same community that may have needs for the project thereby hindering the focus of MDG.

#### **Project maintenance:-**

Lack of maintenance of some of the existing projects such as water boreholes in mostly rural areas was a hindrance in the achievements of MDG 7 programmes. For instance, water bore holes constructed by the MDG in some areas that developed faults or malfunctioned after put to use for sometimes by the people were later abandoned due to the need of minor repairs.

#### **Conflicts and Security issues:-**

The Security situation of the North Eastern parts of the country affected the implementation of the MDG 7 programmes in the Nigeria North Eastern States.

### **EMERGING ISSUES IN NIGERIA ENVIRONEMENT:-**

#### **Climate Change, Natural Resources and Biodiversity:-**

Nigeria natural resources have been threatened by climate change and unsustainable approach to its management. Thereby, biodiversity loss being witnessed in different areas could be adduced to global change and over use of the nature resources. Women in most parts of the world especially in the third world could be seen as being closer to nature and its resources than its male counterparts.

Thereby, harm to nature may equals harm to women, because of this pervasive perception that women are closer to nature<sup>6</sup>. Even though this report agrees with Jackson (1993), that the closeness to nature by women may not be inherent but a socially constructed relationship with natural resources which varies for different groups and for individual women during the course of a lifetime. Even though women are close and at most times responsible for the use of the nature resources but in practicality most of them have no control over it because of culture and traditions of their societies.

Most of the culture and traditions in many parts of Nigeria makes women to be closer to the environment than their male counterpart. The cultures and traditions at most times delineate care giving responsibilities to the female than the male. Women manage natural resources daily in their roles as farmers and household providers<sup>7</sup>. Thereby, they have direct contact with the natural environment as they collect essential items like fruits, vegetables, medicinal

<sup>6</sup> See Beauvoir (1988), Brown and Jordanova (1982), MacCormack (1980) and Othner (1974) cited by Jackson C (1993). *Doing What Comes Naturally? Women and Environment in Development*. World Development, Vol. 21, No12 pp. 1947-1963

<sup>7</sup> FAO (2014). *Understanding the Gender Dimensions of Natural Resources Managemnt is a Starting Point for Reversing Environmental Degradation*. [Http://www.fao.org/gender](http://www.fao.org/gender)

herbs, fuel wood, fodder, water etc. for their every day and family needs<sup>8</sup>. Hence, negative impacts on the environment may affect them than their male counterparts.

### **Nigeria Forests and Women:-**

Record is showing that desertification is spreading and the forested area is falling in Nigeria. The area of forest fell from 14 per cent of the land area in 2000 to 12.6 per cent in 2007, against the target of 20 per cent by 2015 (MDG Nigeria, 2010). The current forested area in Nigeria is 9.5 percent of the percentage of land (UN Data, 2014).

Forest is important for environmental sustainability because of its huge ability as carbon sink and unique water shedding properties while deforestation contributes to global greenhouse gas emission. The existing gender roles that exists in societies reflects in different ways men and women use forests such that forests meet women livelihood and cultural needs of their families and communities through gathering of forests products such as fuel wood, fodder for animals<sup>9</sup>. It has other very important cultural and traditional role to Nigeria women. The women activities in the forest include trading in herbal medicine (Fasola, 2003). Thereby, the reduction in the percentages of forest to land will affects the activities of women their by impacting negatively on their livelihood.

### **Slums Development in Nigeria and Women/Girl Child:-**

Increase in the numbers of shanties and slums in Nigeria are slowing down the processes of achievement of environmental sustainability in the country. In the developing world, 33 percent of the urban population lives in slums, with sub-Saharan Africa having 62 per cent of its urban population living in slums (UN-Habitat, 2013). 90% of the entire global population growth between 2000 and 2025 of 1.7 billion people is expected to take place in urban areas of developing countries<sup>10</sup>.

Urban society is expected to be a decent society with improved livelihood. Nigeria has been witnessing unprecedented rapid urbanization for some time now. The urban population growth rate of Nigeria is estimated as 3.8 percent between 2010 and 2015 while the urban population as at 2013 is 50.9 percent (UN Data, 2014). As in most global south nations, Nigeria rapid urbanization is accompanied slums development. Residents of the slums are mostly poor and deprived as compared to other residents in an urban society.

The UN-Habitat in the “2013 State of the World Cities” document enumerated the urban slum population at mid-year by major area in Nigeria as 26,549,000 in 1990, 31,538,000 in 1995, 36,951,000 in 2000, 42, 783,000 in 2005, 45,195,000 in 2007 and 47,612,000 in 2009. The data shows that the urban population at mid-year continually increased from the 1990 to 2009. While, the data of UN-Habitat (2013) also shows that the proportion of urban population living in slum area is decreasing in Nigeria. The following table depicts the UN-Habitat (2013) data

**Table 4:- UN-Habitat (2013) Proportion of Urban Population Living in Slum Area**

<b>Year</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Proportion%</b>	77.3	73.5	69.6	65.8	64.2	62.7

The problems of most slums settlement in Nigeria is the lack of governmental presences (basic life improving amenities are not provided in several slums). Such include the non availability of safe water for consumption and sanitation and health facilities. Other environmental components that have been put in place to propelled sustainable development parameters are mostly not seen in slums and squatters where they are essential in increasing the level of their livelihood.

The number of slums increased in Lagos mega-city, the Nigeria economic hub from 40 to 100 (Akiyode citing UNDP, 2003 and Adelakan, 2009). Most slums in the highly urbanized coastal towns like Lagos mega-city are situated in flood prone environment. Water security is not adequate in most of the slums when they are mostly not connected to government pipe borne water. Government health facilities including hospitals and primary health care centers (PHC) are mostly not found in slums and squatters. Thereby, residents of slums are predisposed to health challenges.

<sup>8</sup> There is resemblance in Nigeria and Bangladesh experiences as highlighted by Jahan M (2008). The Impact of Environmental Degradation on Women in Bangladesh: An Overview. Asian Affairs, Vol. 30, No. 2: 5-15, April-June, 2008

<sup>9</sup> Gender@UNFCCC (undated). Preservation of Tropical forests. Retrieved from <http://www.gendercc.net> on December 5, 2014

<sup>10</sup> According to Brockerhoff, cited in Lundqvist, J., Appasamy, P. and Nellyat, P. (2003). Dimension and approaches for third World city water security. *Phi. Trans. R. Soc Lond* doi: 1098/rstb.2003:1382

There is a relationship between gender and inhabitation. The women and girls are cultural constructed to care for the family. Thereby, hindrances to decent living affect the female folks than its male counterparts. Water insecurity or lack of to safe water and sanitation which is common to the slums as mentioned earlier has more impacts on the women folks. Health implications or challenges in home that may be caused by negative environmental consequences in slums are affective to the female folks than their male counterparts because the female folks have been placed by the culture as society care giver.

#### **Water Shortage and Inadequate Sanitation in Nigeria and Women/Girl Child:-**

Shortage of drinkable water and sanitation may engender public health challenges which at many times have gender implications. Consumption of unsafe water may leads to diseases which include diarrhea and typhoid fever. Safe water is essential for the survival of young children. The achievement of MDG goal 4 which emphasised the reduction in child's mortality was not achievable because of the inadequacy of safe water and sanitation in some places. For instance, 97,000 mothers lose a child yearly to diarrhoea caused by lack of unsafe water and poor sanitation (WaterAid, 2013). Thereby about 18% of deaths of children under five years old are linked to diarrhea<sup>11</sup> which could be avoided with safe supply and improved sanitation.

WaterAid (2013) in its document "*Keep your promises on sanitation and water*" reported that 68 percent of women in Nigeria lacked safe toilets thereby increasing the risks of illness, shame, harassment and violence. In its survey across five slums in Lagos, Nigeria, it realized that one in five had first or second hand experience of verbal harassment and intimidations, or had been threatened or physically assaulted in 2012 when going to toilet.

Traditionally and culturally, household chores relating to fetching of water for the family are assigned to women and the girls. The National Gender Policy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2006) lamented that daily, women must travel long distances (as far as 2 km in many rural areas in Nigeria), facing hot and dusty weather conditions, to gather water while additional time is expended as women must often wait in queues at wells and other water gathering sites in order to gain access to water. "Women and girls who must spend hours a day seeking water cannot spend that time at school or in income-generating activities"<sup>12</sup> For example, in Billeri, Bauchi State of Nigeria where it takes so long to draw water from the 150 metre deep thereby making children to have little time to go to school that is located far from the community (BNRCC, 2011).

#### **Global Environmental Change in Nigeria and Women:-**

Nigeria like every other nation in the world is in the riddle of global environmental change and environmental degradations. Nigeria was ranked sixth among the countries (193 countries were rated) that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change in a 2013 Climate Change Index<sup>13</sup>. Its natural resources are being threatened and distorted by global climate change. "It is increasingly evident that women are at the centre of the climate change challenge. Women are disproportionately affected by climate change impacts, such as droughts, floods and other extreme weather events, but they also have critical role in combating climate change" (Daily Trust, 2013 citing UNFCC).

While there have been unsustainable managements of its nature capitals and environmental components. The unsustainable approaches coupled with global environmental change which include climate change have sometimes initiated negative environmental conditions in different parts of the country. These included flooding, erosion, biodiversity loss and water insecurity.

Excessive flood is becoming normal occurrences in some parts of Nigeria during the yearly raining season. It has in many times affected lives and properties in different parts of the country. For example, flooding caused by the

<sup>11</sup> Vanguard 2014, Vanguard Nigeria Newspaper. Nigeria May Miss MDG Target for Water, Sanitation –UNICEF on July 08, 2014. <http://www.vanguardngr.com> assessed 25, November 2014

<sup>12</sup> This statement was in the press releas by Mr. Oluseyi Abdulmalik on behalf of WaterAid Nigeria and titled International Women's Day , WaterAid Working to Inspire Change on Water Sanitation for the 2014 International Women's Day (It can be seen in ThisDay Nigeria Newspaer, March 13, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> This report is by the British Risk Consultancy Maplecroft. Its evaluation included exposure to extreme climate-related events; the sensitivity of populations in terms of health, education, agriculture dependence and available infrastructure and adaptive capacity of the countries to combat the impacts of climate change. Punch (2013). Nigeria Ranks Sixth in the Climate Change Index. Punch Nigeria Newspaper, November 4, 2013. Retrieved online <http://www.punchng.com> on November 27, 2014.



overflowing of Goronyo dam in Sokoto State in the North western Nigeria led to the displacement of people from their home in Sokoto, Kebbi and Jigawa states between June and August 2010 while Ibadan city in the South Western part of Nigeria witnessed a disaster through flooding due to torrential rains in few hours which led to submerging of many houses with more than fifty people unaccounted for and several families loses both in human and material (Akiyode, 2013 citing Fagboun, 2011).

International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) identified Nigeria Coastline as low lying coast that is susceptible to flooding (Adelakun, 2009). Flooding may be exacerbated by climate change. Thereby, there has been risk of flooding and erosion around the highly populated southern coast. For example, in the recent years, there has been recurrence flooding in the metropolitan Lagos city which is a lagoon corridor in the coastal area of Nigeria especially during the yearly raining seasons.

Ugwu and Ugwu (2013) in a paper on “*Gender, Flood and Mental Health*” surmised that performing reproductive responsibilities in a flood disaster camps and keeping a continual vigilant eye on young children, even as they cry for food in such helpless situations, are emotion- provoking and stress- laden. In this research paper the writers quoting flood victims at Igga Camp-Enugu State, Nigeria where some of the women have this to say:

“Since we came here (flood camp) we are faced with myriad of problems; such as looking after our children, lack of clean water, poor toilet facilities as we have to use „bush system”; no drugs or mosquito nets to shield us from mosquito bite, and above all, one of us delivered of a baby boy without the assistance of any midwife or traditional birth attendant.”

#### **Conflicts, Insecurity in Nigeria and Girl Child”:-**

The entire north eastern section of Nigeria has been in crisis for some time now which has made development impossible. Thus, programmes designed to ensure environmental sustainability in this region are hampered. A reserved forest which supposedly a plus to environmental sustainability in the North Eastern region, the Sambisa Forest has been the abode or enclave of Boko Haram insurgency. Over 100 Chibok school girls in Borno State in the North East of Nigeria kidnapped by the Boko Haram terrorist group in the night of April 14, 2014 were taken to the Sambisa forest by their abductors.

#### **Conclusion:-**

Environmental degradation and poverty are intrinsically related. Therefore poverty reduction and pro-poor growth will encourage environmental sustainability and sustainable development.

Local action should be encouraged through building of local capacity on the importance of environmental policies and concerns in order to ensure environmental sustainability. This could be done through regular environmental education in every locality and media broadcast. Also, non-governmental organizations (NGO) should initiate environmental sustainability sensitization projects and programmes that are grassroots oriented in different parts of the nation intimating the populace with the importance of sustainable environment to human and its society.

There is need for enforcement of sustainable environmental policies. Climate change is a threat multiplier. Thus, it is important that Nigeria government ends gas flaring in the Niger Delta region (gas flaring contributes to greenhouse gases and global warming). Thereby, aligning with environmentally sustainable policies will show the nations full commitment to the principle of environmental sustainability and sustainable development.

In order to have an inclusive programme, there should always be a gender consciousness stakeholders need assessments in every locality before projects and programmes are sited. This will encourage the engendering of the projects and programmes which supports its sustainability.

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