

Approach to effective management of sustainable development in Nigeria

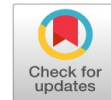
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Abstract: Over the years Millennium Development Goals has been a global issue. The United Nations (UN) recently changed the Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals and this singular act declares the current exigency of the growing phenomena of sustainable development at the Global and National Strata. Nigeria is a prominent signatory to the UN and its agenda/programmes and has to key in well into this new order by providing sustainable development to its citizens. However, achieving sustainable development which is a continuous process, particularly in Nigeria requires proper planning and coordination and therefore demands effective management of sustainable development in Nigeria. Using the methodology of library research and descriptive writing, it operationalizes the concept of development, sustainable development and management; highlights issues of poor economy/poverty; bad governance, corruption, insurgency and terrorism, etc. as obstacles to sustainable development in the country. It also identifies some key area of sustainable development for Nigeria such as agriculture, education, energy, atmosphere and climate change (environment) biotechnology and capacity building etc. The paper recommends among other, the conscious and effective planning organizing, coordinating and controlling (management) of the sustainable development process, particularly by ensuring that the nations scarce resources like minerals and the environment are under controlled utilization/preservation to the utmost benefit of the present and future Nigeria.

Key Words: : Management, Development, Environmental and sustainability

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INTRODUCTION

Development is the process of economic and social transformation that is based on complex cultural and environmental factors and their interactions. There is much global concern about the need to pursue development in every aspect of human/societal well-being and development to the extent that ideas, strategies, global partnerships, etc. are being forged towards this agenda. The need to reduce poverty and maintain sustainable development across communities and nations is gaining more practical emphasis and attention. Every society or nation is at a certain level of development at any point in time and that is why Rodney (1972) conceives development as a phenomenon which is inherent in all societies. He also maintains that it does not matter whether a society is in a position to creatively harness and utilize the objects of nature at its disposal to improve its living conditions on a sustainable basis.

This definition/description of development as far back as 1972 underscores the word sustainability. The concepts of sustainability and sustainable development have attracted meanings to different scholars, institutions, organizations, etc, depending on their specific orientation, focus and disposal (Duru & Chibo, 2012; Montasser & El-Nakeeb, 2017; Wu, 2016). The idea of sustainable development in any nation is a laudable one that will definitely have some challenges particularly in the developing climes such as Nigeria. The state of infrastructural, socio-economic and human development is still at a deplorable condition and appears to be at the incubation or take-off state with numerous constraints militating against its growth. Saha (2006), opines that, development in most developing countries is not only at a low stage but significantly retarded by forces of bad governance, corruption and all sorts of economic and social frauds.

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The paper explores what needs to be done to actually sustain sustainable development in Nigeria Considering her status in terms of human and infrastructural under-development. It looks into the concept of management and how it can be applied in the proper utilization and maximization of the phenomenon of sustainable development in Nigeria situation. If sustainable development means a process of change in which resources exploitation, direction of investment, orientation of technological development, and institutional change are basically in harmony so as to meet the current and future human needs and aspirations while at the same time gradually arresting and eliminating activities which are progressively leading to unacceptable degradation, then it is in effect, a process that may require effective management to be really be sustained and maximized. This forms the thrust of this paper the need to articulate strategies, synergize and foster the effective management of sustainable national development in Nigeria. Against this background, the paper sets out to explore the following:

1. The concepts of development, sustainable development and management.
2. Some issues/factors undermining sustainable development in Nigeria.
3. Some key areas of sustainable development for Nigeria.
4. Some measures for effective management of sustainable development in Nigeria.

OPERATIONALIZATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Development

Development is one of the most commonly used words in human and societal issues but a very big concept that particularly helps to define the level of human growth and advancement. The term development is a dynamic concept that has received varying interpretations and explanations among authors, scholars and researchers particularly in the developing nations. One popular definition/description of development remains that of Rodney (1972), which conceives development as a phenomenon which is inherent in all societies. He stated that every part of the world including Africa was in fact developing before the coming of the white man with his colonialism. He maintains that it does not matter whether a society is primitive or modern provided that society is in a position to creatively harness and utilize the objects of nature at its disposal to improve its living conditions on a sustainable basis.

In furtherance, he posits that development in human society is a many sided process, which at the level of the individual implies increased skill, and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well being. At the society level, development implies an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationships. A society is said to be economically developed when its members jointly increase their capacity to deal with the environment. This capacity for dealing with the environment is dependent on the extent to which they put that understanding into practice by devising tools (technology) and on the manner in which work is organized. This description of development elaborately explains the phenomenon of development as an all important practical experience both at the individual and societal levels.

However, Nigeria like other countries of the world is obviously developing since according to Rodney (1972), development is inherent in all societies; what is also clear is that Nigeria is among the less developed nations- or in other words under-developed nations as at now. Hogan (2006) avers that, about 120 nations in the world have systems of production and distribution based upon low-technology base and upon strong social ties. These are said to be under developed. He went further to state that such countries have problems of crime, class inequality, juvenile delinquency and suicide, prostitution and drug use. This evident in Nigeria with the rising incidences of crime, insurgency and terrorism, social inequality, corruption, local and international prostitution, kidnapping, etc. it is this situation in Nigeria that calls not just for development in order to permanently do away with most of these negative issues and reposition the country for greatness.

Sustainable development

Sustainable development is a process for meeting human development goals while sustaining the ability of natural systems to continue to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services upon which the economy and society depend.

It does appear more sensible to think that development in all its positive ramifications is a concept that makes more meaning and impact when it is maintained and improved upon over time. Development not sustained may be as good as development for today and tomorrow. It is on this simply premise that sustainable development as a phenomenon matters to individuals, communities, nations and the world. Sustainable development has been interpreted in many different ways, but its main philosophy is to approach development in such a way that balances the different but competing needs within environmental consciousness and order for the advancement of human society. Although sustainable development is defined in multiple ways, a landmark definition by World Commission on Environment and Development (1987), states that, sustainable development is, development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Basically, sustainable development is about finding better ways of doing things and having things good both for the future and the present generations; it is a more active and holistic approach to development. Another apt definition of sustainable development is that of Burnett (1992) which propounds that, sustainable development is a process of change in which resource exploitation, direction of investment, orientation of technological development, and institutional change are basically in harmony so as to meet the current and future human needs and aspirations, while at the same time gradually arresting and eliminating activities which are progressively leading to unacceptable degradation.

From a general approach, sustainable development is a process for meeting human development goals while maintaining the ability of natural systems to continue to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services upon which the economy and society depend. Sustainable development has been described in terms of three dimensions, domain or pillars. In the three dimension model, these are seen as economic, environmental and social, or ecology, economic and equity (United Nations, 2014). Below is a diagram showing the three dimensions and some other indicators.

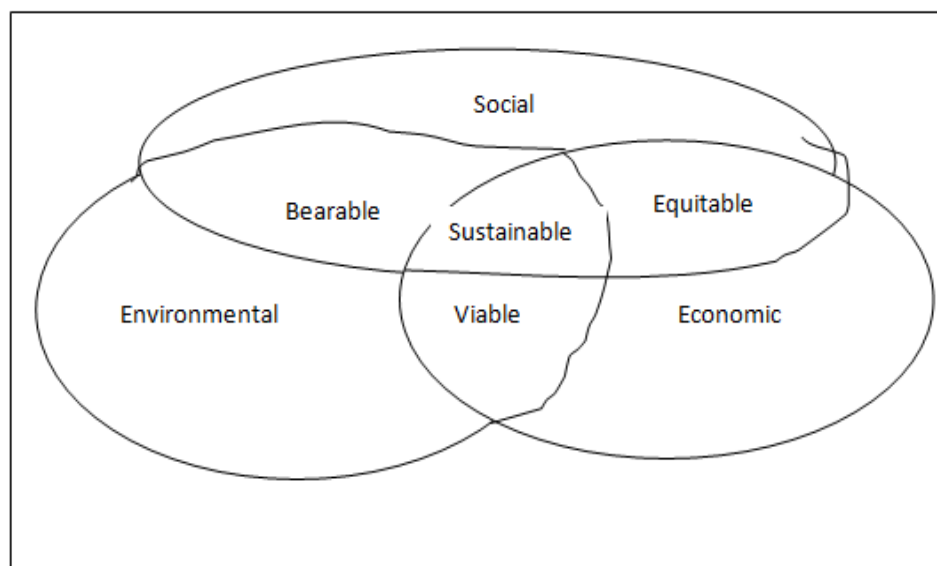


Figure 1. Scheme of sustainable development at the confluence of three constituent parts. Source: Sustainable Development (2005)

Concept of sustainable development

The concept of sustainable development has its source from the international customary law. But the concept received its major recognition in 1972 at United Nations Conference in Stockholm. The Concept was first coined and defined by the Brundtlands commission of 1987 but gained global cognition and commitment in the Rio-declaration of 1992. Recently, several conferences have been held to access the progress of the concept starting with the Johannesburg conference of 2002.

Global commitment

The principle of sustainable development is enshrined in principle 1 of the Agenda 21 of Rio-declaration as follows: They are entitled to healthy and productive life in harmony with nature. The principle can be found in the following international and national legal instruments: 1985 Vienna Convention, 1989 Based convention and 1987 Montreat Protocol. Nationally, the principle has been found:

1. The Australian case of conservation of SA Inc. Vs. The Development Assessment Commission and Tuna Board Onwers Association.
2. The Indian Case of Ap pollution control Board Vs Nayudi.
3. The Nigeria Cases of SPDC vs. Abel Isaiah and Case of SPDC.

Management

Management is the organization and coordination of the activities of a business in order to achieve defines objectives. Management is often included as a factor of production along with machines, materials and money.

The concept of management as a business function and a way of life means different things to different people, institutions and organizations. It is one concept that clearly lacks a universally acceptable definition probably because of its nature as a discipline, scope as a practice and targets as a way of life. The term management has been used in different ways to describe an essential aspect of organizational activities which determines how people should work and the materials to be used in achieving organizational goals. To some extent everyone is considered a manager in so far as the person has some form of decision or control to make over the work of an organization (Agu, 2003). From a simple note, Onah (1981) defines management as, the organization and control of human activities directed towards specific ends or objectives. Nwosu (2002) opines that, management is the art or science of using available resources men, money, materials and machines to achieve organizational goals.

The term management has also been used to connote slightly different meanings: as a process, as a people and as a discipline. As a process, it is the phenomenon of combining and utilizing organizations resources to achieve goals, which includes planning, organizing, directing and controlling as concerns the use of resources (Agu, 2003). Drucker (1990) sees management as a people and a discipline. As a people, it refers to those who guide and control the activities of others in an organization, and make major decisions, including policies. As a discipline, it means a field of study which is offered in a higher institution of learning. The search for better ways of management encouraged the establishment of management programs in tertiary academic institutions to carryout researches in the theory and practice of management in order to expand knowledge and discover solutions to challenges and problems of organizations and even nations.

Management has functions and they are the broad areas of activities through which managerial processes are accomplished. The functions apply to all organizations, but what may differ are the scope, style and procedures adopted; some of the prominent functions including planning, organizing, directing and controlling. In a formal management situation, the performance of a manager may be determined by how well he or she performs these functions (Odunlami, 2013). Again, Hogan (2006), postulates that, management is a process of planning, organizing and coordinating and directing the productive process in an economic enterprise. The term is also applied to those persons, organized in a hierarchy, who carry out the management process, that is, who perform these tasks or functions. Steveson (2014), views management as, that comprehensive approach and practice that dwells in the domain of human utilization of systems and procedures in an organizational structure that is directed towards achieving goals and objectives. In this paper, management is perceived mainly from its meaning and impact as a process.

PROBLEMS OF MANAGING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

The following are critical factors undermining the management of sustainable development processes in the country:

1. Insurgency/terrorism
2. Lack of rule of law

3. Issues of corruption
4. Poor policy implementation/monitoring
5. Poor economy/poverty
6. Bad leadership/governance
7. Ethnicism/nepotism
8. Discontinuity of programmes/projects
9. Poor level of national integration
10. Environmental exploitation/indiscipline

KEY AREAS OF SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR NIGERIA

The United Nations Division for sustainable development lists the following areas as coming within the scope of sustainable development; agriculture, education, international law, energy, atmosphere, sustainable tourism, biodiversity, biotechnology, finance, technology, capacity building, forest, toxic chemical, climate change, fresh water, institutional arrangement, human settlement, land, transport, industry, water sanitation (Duru & Chibo, 2012). Looking at these above listed areas of sustainable development, it is apt to say that sustainable development encompasses almost every aspect of human endeavor and concerns and this may be the reason it is now a global agenda. Oshodi (2012) submits that, sustainable development is an all inclusive development agenda that is strategically focused on controlled utilization of resources, growth of opportunities and investments and positive change in quality of human life and the environment for today and tomorrow. In as much as Nigeria is a signatory to UN declarations and agenda, its efforts towards sustainable development may be tailored to suit its own peculiar developmental challenges. In other words, Nigeria may not have the capacity to deal with the entire processes of sustainable development as it has been widely identified by the United Nations because of the challenges of socio-economic, infrastructural, insecurity and corruption issues, etc.

The paper, therefore, tries to encapsulate the core areas of immediate interest and attention for Nigeria as it pursues sustainable development in this 21st century. These areas are the ones that should matter most at this point in time and also have capacity to engender other areas as times goes on. They are also fundamental areas that can aid the diversification agenda that has been talked about too often as a way of moving away from one resource (oil-based) economy the country has been known for. The paper submits Ten (10) key areas that can become effective areas of emphasis/attention for sustainable development in Nigeria and they include:

1. Agriculture
2. Education
3. Energy (Power)
4. Atmosphere/climate change (Environment)
5. Capacity building
6. Industrialization
7. Biotechnology
8. Finance
9. Technology
10. Democratic/institutional reforms

Promoting effective management of sustainable national development in Nigeria

The concept of management, development, sustainability and sustainable development are all linked from different perspectives. From a simple perspective, it somewhat apt to state that sustainable development may be equated with development management. In this sense, sustainable development which basically is development sustained or maintained for the interest of the people of today and the future is about the sustenance of the development plan and processes in terms of implementation, monitoring an output. In the case of Nigeria which is a developing nation facing enormous challenges that are counter-development, the entire idea of sustainable development becomes more daunting or even appears not feasible.

From a more theoretical and practical approach, management is a process and development/sustainable development is a critical process that requires commitment, resources and time to get running. The fundamental meaning of management connotes that it is a process. Those who see it as a process, define it as the process of combining and utilizing organizations resources to achieve goals.

At a national level, like in the case of Nigeria, management would therefore imply the process of combining and utilizing the nations resources (citizens, minerals, land, and other assets) to achieve national objectives and targets. This is exactly what national development pursues. In considering ways of making effective management of the sustainable development area and processes for Nigeria, concrete, practical and goal oriented steps/measure must be put in place. According to Burnett (1992) sustainable development means the process of change in which resources exploitation, direction of investment, orientation of technological development and institutional changes are basically in harmony so as to meet the current and future human need and aspiration, which at the same time gradually arresting and eliminating activities which are progressively leading to unacceptable degradation. This definition elaborately captures the true essence and scope of sustainable development and seems more exigent for developing nations like Nigeria.

However, Perman (2003) identifies (6) Six broad concept of sustainability that will be considered in the context of the function of the management for the purpose of empowering actual sustenance of the process sustainable development in Nigeria. The six concepts are:

1. Sustainable development as capacity and consensus building.
2. A sustainable state is one in which consumption is none declining through time.
3. A sustainable state is one which intensifies minimum conditions for ecosystem stability and resilience through time.
4. A sustainable state is one in which the national capital stock is non-declining through time.
5. A sustainable state is one in which resources are managed so as to maintain a stable yield of resources service.
6. A sustainable state is one in which resources are managed so as to maintain production and opportunities for future.

These six broad concepts of sustainability are somewhat in tandem with key areas of concern of sustainable development as enunciated by the United Nations, as well as those areas highlighted in this paper for Nigeria. On this note, Nigeria can manage its own sustainable development processes by firstly, improving on capacity and consensus building. Management has functions such as planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling which are relevant if capacity and consensus building can be intensified in Nigeria. The process of empowering citizens to be self-reliant, entrepreneurial and creative (capacity building) together with growing consensus of ideas, values and interests (National integration) can be promoted by the application of the managerial function of planning which entails the process setting policies, procedures, methods, rules and regulations which are necessary to guild the use of resources in achieving goals (Udunna, 2011).

The managerial function or organizing also comes in place in capacity and consensus building in Nigeria. Organizing involves determining the activities to be performed in order to achieve goals, and who performs what, providing the necessary materials, defining the authorities, responsibility and relationship between members and units of the organization and establishing a system or means of coordinating the effort of workers (Anyanwu, 2012). Functions in capacity and consensus building by applying the rule of law and engaging political will in doing what is right and needful to empower its citizens towards higher productivity and also galvanizing the various peoples and interests to a national consensus for national progress. According to Perman (2003) concepts of sustainability number (2), (4) and (5), a sustainable state is:

- a) One in which consumption is non-declining through time.
- b) One in which the natural capital stock is non-declining through time.
- c) One in which resources are managed so as to maintain a stable yield of resource service.

These three concepts of sustainability are interrelated and seem to focus on the areas of living conditions and the economy of citizens/nation over time. They highlight the challenges of poverty, low

per capital income, resource management and living standard of citizens. The managerial functions of planning, organizing, coordinating, and controlling are fundamental for the effective operations of sustainable development processes in Nigeria. Cole (2002) conceives planning as, entailing the establishment of policies, methods, procedures and dos and don'ts that are necessary in the process of utilizing resources for achieving set goals of any organization or system. Even though there are some policies already in place to tackle poverty and other issues relating to poverty, resource management and the economy of Nigeria, such as, Poverty alleviation programmes, more needs to be done in terms of conceiving better ideas, methods and procedures of ameliorating the poverty condition of Nigerians. Obed (2010), stresses that, the poverty situation of Nigerians is such that is worrisome and deteriorating by the day with no working measures to counter it.

Again, the managerial functions of organizing and coordinating often go together. This is because organizing involves determining the activities to be performed in order to achieve goals, and who performs what, providing the necessary materials, defining the authorities, responsibilities and relationship between members and units of the organization and establishing a system or means of coordinating the efforts of the workers (Agu, 2003). On the other hand, coordinating entails the effective combination and balancing of activities performed in an organization. This is essential in order to avoid duplication and waste of efforts and to ensure even and fair distribution of organization of work among individuals, units and departments of an organization (Silas, Ajetunmobi, & Enwereuzo, 2017). Achieving poverty alleviation, resource management and general socio-economic development may not be a reality if the country continues to lack proper organization and coordination of its activities. Identifying the right ways to go about pursuing the national poverty/economic challenges, choosing the individuals (technocrats, experts and quality persons), defining a clearly authorities, responsibilities and ensuring the efficient coordination of the efforts of the Nigerian Workforce can enhance Nigerias fight against poverty and economic downturn. Ogunsanya (2014) argues that, tackling the syndrome of poverty cannot be effective when there are still obvious national lack of the right measures and systems of coordinating the efforts of Nigerian workers.

The managerial function of controlling can be said to be lacking seriously in the management of almost all the countrys affairs. There seems to be no order in many ramifications when one considers the state of Nigeria in terms of development. Ekong (2011) opines that, there is no political will and the right leadership to control the people and their affairs for their common good. In facing the challenge of poverty issues, socio-economic under-development in the midst of abundant human and natural resources, Nigeria must entrench the basic principle of controlling (which is a fundamental function of the art of management). Controlling involves comparing outcomes of actions or results with the standards, goals or plans. It evaluates actual performance and takes actions to ensure that they are in line with plans and expectations. Control activities are designed to keep an organization focused on targets (Odunlami, 2013). In the case of the prevailing situation in Nigeria, the first point to apply controlling in its affairs may be from the point of leadership. The right and credible leadership have to be in place and must discharge its functions and responsibilities for the country with power and determination. Control measures must be applied in budgeting, authorization and approval of public funds, exploitation of resources, and general management of Ministries, Department and Agencies of Government (MDAs), etc. there has to be enhanced and close monitoring of governments, governments MDAs, projects and activities. Monthly reports should be made compulsory for all MDAs, government parastatals, etc. These control measures can make citizens, organizations and institutions to avoid many negative tendencies that seem to propagate poverty and economic stress on the nation and its people.

The other concepts of sustainability as enunciated by Perman (2003) states that a sustainable state is one which:

- a) Strategize minimum conditions of ecosystem stability and resilience through time.
- b) Resources are managed so as to maintain production and opportunities for the future.

These two concepts emphasizes environmental discipline and friendliness as well as the provision of economic opportunities for the future begins from the present and this is in accordance with the ultimate goal of sustainable development which aims at utilizing resources in such a way that meets the needs

of present and future citizens. The four managerial functions of planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling are systematic agents that can promote the sustainable development processes for Nigeria. Odunlami (2013), postulates that, no nation, including the advanced ones, can handle its national development issues without due application of basic management principles of setting development plans, organizing and coordinating these plans with devoted monitoring regime. Nigeria at this point in time is not free from the danger of climate change and environmental degradation. The occasional flooding, gas flaring, erosion and the increasing cattle rustling and other anti-environmental issues calls for a change of attitude from the governments, civil societies, organizations and particularly all Nigerians. Everybody is in a position to help counter environmental degradation in one way or the other by planning and setting out ways to better the environment. Proper waste management, tree planting, less zero gas flaring and other steps can be taken to minimize environmental decay/degradation.

Measures to instill ecological discipline and order as well as empower productive/economic opportunities for Nigeria require the application of organizing and coordinating Nigerians to be environmentally conscious and friendly with a growing sense of creativity, entrepreneurship, skills and manpower development, investment, etc. Nwosu (2002), states that, the organizing process blends the resources of the organization in a manner which leads to optimal achievement of the goals. It is noteworthy to emphasis that environmental order and economic opportunities to meet the needs and aspirations of Nigerians today and in the future must be perceived and managed through the art of controlling. Controlling entails the efficient comparing and monitoring of actions or results relating to the plans set out to organize and contribute efforts at propagating environmental/economic sustainability in Nigeria.

SUMMARY

Sustainable development is a positive phenomenon in any human society or nation including Nigeria. Given the state of Nigerias development and the challenges confronting the nation and its citizens in terms of infrastructural, social and economic development, etc, sustainable development is no doubt the best way forward but this demand taking right and urgent steps/measures. Among these measures is the effective management of the process of providing sustainable national development in Nigeria. The view of this paper is that the deliberate, articulate and strategic planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling (management) of sustainable development processes and the controlled utilization/preservation of the nations resources to the greatest benefit of the present and future Nigerians within the context of environmental order and discipline must be the focus into future.

CONCLUSION

The interest and aim of this paper is to highlight the need and ways to effectively manage the process of sustainable development only thrives where development prevails. The challenges before Nigeria is that it is still a developing nation that is facing issues of insecurity, insurgency and terrorism, unemployment, corruption, infrastructural decay and other issues, that are significantly undermining her efforts to maintain increasing level of development. With negative development issues, sustainable development appears not feasible or practicable. The paper, therefore, emphasizes the need for the effective management of keys areas of sustainable development for Nigeria if it is to be sustained in Nigeria, and submits some measures necessary for achieving this national aspiration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above discussions and analysis in this paper, the following recommendations have been made:

1. The conscious and effective planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling (management) of the sustainable development areas and processes, particularly through ensuring that Nigerias scarce resources like minerals and the environment are under controlled utilization/preservation for the good of all Nigerians (both present and future).
2. Sustainable development in Nigeria requires that development processes, plans and implementation are not abandoned when there is change of government. This act is a major impediment to sustainable

development in Nigeria.

3. Social vices such as corruption, ethnicity, nepotism, religious intolerance, insurgency and terrorism as well as crimes, etc, are all elements of under development that cannot be allowed to continue if sustainable development is to be sustained in Nigeria.

4. Sustainable development must be perceived as a process that its principal actor or facilitator is the government. The Nigerian government must offer to its citizens good governance through the delivery of democracy dividend which are in line with the features and expectations of sustainable development.

5. The most important factor for empowering sustainable development in Nigeria remains having peaceful and orderly environment within which national development plans can be implemented. In view of this necessity, all Nigerians must help in finding ways of ensuring that the country remains peaceful and together.

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