

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN CRISIS? A POST DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

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### ABSTRACT

Post developmental debate seeks for more ethical and equitable guidelines to development in the neo liberal order. The contradictions in much of Western development project at the post developmental era was opened in the late 1980s following the sustainable development discourse, the Rio Summit of 1992 and Agenda 21, furthered by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and a projected transition to Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs)at post 2015. Decades of overt forms of these development proclivities, Africa, parts of Latin America and Asia have not measured up to expectations of MDGs' targets. Several development decades reveal growing gaps and inequality among the rich and poor societies. Sustainable development seems to be in question or in doubt as it no longer seems a realistic agenda at a time of revaluing natural disasters arising from unsustainable consumption patterns and lifestyles of the high income societies such as tsunamis, cyclones, earthquakes, hurricanes etc. Is sustainable development in crisis? Does this not portend a rethinking on the sustainable development project? This paper will examine some of the key theoretical issues raised by the dynamics of sustainable development in light of post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and argues for realistic international development policy for effective implementation of SDGs.

**Keywords;** Sustainable Development, Poverty, Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs), Millennium Development Goals(MDGs),Post Developmentalism

## INTRODUCTION

What kind of development can be considered sustainable?. International development policy is at crossroads. By September 2015, governments plan to adopt a Post-2015 Development Agenda – supposed to shape the fundamental priorities, goals and strategies for development policy beyond 2015 to integrate all dimensions (social, economic and environmental) of sustainable development and being applicable to all countries in the world, including all policy areas beyond development policy in a narrow sense, in particular social, economic and environmental policy – and above all fiscal policy (Global Policy Forum,2014).

Although modern development dates around 1945, it has never been uncontested as there has been a variety of postulations seeking to illuminate the concept and practice of development. At the time of Western development construct, a number of development problems were elusive and others relatively unknown such as environmental sustainability.

A major paradigm in the development field is that “economic growth” must be a priority, and the environment can be fixed later when economic development has been achieved. Also, the current developed countries certainly did not consider “sustainable development” during their plight and quest for “economic growth”.

Initially the core meaning of development was economic growth, as in growth theory and Big Push theory which derived from the classical economists of the 1950s such as the Harrod-Domar growth model, which emphasized the need for investment capital for the developing societies to succeed. Similarly the modernization theory became part of this, as in Rostow’s Stages of Economic Growth which explores the remaking of non-industrialized societies in the pattern of the wealthier industrial societies(Amadi,2012).

A reaction to the modernization debate was the dependency school (Amadi,2012) which argues that the core meaning of development likewise was economic growth or capital accumulation but its distorted form was dependent accumulation which led to “dependent development’ and the ‘development of underdevelopment’ (Prebisch, 1959; Galtung, 1971; Wallenstein, 1976;Amadi,2012) .

At the end of World War II, the Marshall Plan was adopted which developed Eastern Europe, while Western aid failed to achieve similar feat in five decades among the periphery societies of the global South. This underscores the incipient crisis and doubts on Western aid as a plausible development model.

The 1960 was the UN development decade however, much of the development challenges such as poverty and inequality remained germane. In the 1970s, aid became a major strategy to prosecute the cold war with the two major Bretton Woods institutions involved in development work namely; the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Amadi,2012) .

The experiences of different countries in the global South began to diverge sharply in this period. On the one hand, the policies of import substitution faltered in Latin America and failed to gain momentum in Africa.

On the other hand, the 1970s saw the emergence of a new form of developmentalist state in East Asia, one based on subsidizing export industries rather than industries producing for the domestic market. Replicating the Japan’s earlier developmentalist feat, the economies of South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong, soon dubbed the East Asian

“Tigers,” grew rapidly through state-promoted shifts from import-substituting to export-oriented industrialization (see Evans, 1995).

In 1972 the Stockholm conference and subsequently, the Brundtland report of 1987, *Our Common Future*, gave renewed impetus to sustainable development. The 1980s, saw the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) of IMF and the World Bank, with stringent conditions such as privatization, devaluation of overvalued currency, reducing trade barriers, austerity measures and the requirement for balanced budgets.

At the end of the cold war, in the 1990s, neoliberalism became a new regulatory framework of the world economy and seemed apt at the time of re-valuing economic progress of the United States with market fundamentalism at post Washington Consensus. Significantly the environment was given its supposedly foremost global attention in the Earth Summit in Rio De Janeiro in 1992 as the summit produced a blue print for implementation of sustainable development namely; the Agenda 21. Similarly the human development paradigm became a major development lexicon replicated in the seminal annual UNDP human development reports (Amadi,2012).

In 2000 world leaders gathered at a UN General Assembly and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted at the Millennium Summit in September .The goals were to be realized by the year 2015. As the deadline approaches, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been adopted as post-2015 development agenda.

These elusive phenomena such as climate change, earthquake, cyclone, tsunami, erosion, hurricane, environmental pollution, ecological justice etc are now issues of concern as they reappear in current development debates. For instance, the environment which was a neglected component of development framings is now a central development issue and an important strand of sustainable development.

In this paper, we revisit existing view points on sustainable development in post developmental era in light of post 2015 development agenda. The aim is to identify the dynamics of the crisis of sustainable development. We argue that novel strategies should be adopted and implemented within the international development policy framework to check rising development failures which trigger the crisis of sustainable development such as unsustainable environmental consumption, lifestyles of the high income societies, poverty and global inequality.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Post developmentalism seeks for more ethical guidelines in pursuit of development project. It is a conscious break away from the neo liberal development project riddled with complexities, contradictions and inequality. It argues that; “ Everything that development used to represent appears to be in question, in crisis. There are various views of what this crisis means. One is that since development is in crisis, let’s close the shop and think of something entirely different – ‘beyond development’ (Nederveen Pieterse,2010).This is the position associated with post-development thinking. A different response is to qualify the crisis, acknowledging the failures of the development record but also its achievements, avoiding simplistic, one-sided assessments. Thus health care and education have improved even in the poorest countries and in countries where growth has been stagnant. Another reaction is to acknowledge crisis and to argue that crisis is intrinsic to development, that development knowledge is crisis knowledge. From its nineteenth-century beginnings, development thinking was a reaction to the crises of

progress, such as the social dislocations caused by industrialization. Hence questioning, rethinking and crisis are part of development and not external to it. ((Nederveen Pieterse,2010).

Similar disappointments on development promises is reasserted in post developmental debates(Escobar,1995;Esteva,1992). Post-development thinking also puts forth an anti-development position. This is still more radical for it applies not merely to the means (the state is accused of authoritarian engineering) but also to the goals (economic growth is repudiated) and the results (which are deemed a failure or disaster for the majority of the population) (Rahnema and Bawtree 1997; Nederveen Pieterse,2010).

From this theoretical perspective we can develop models to analyze the dimensions of debates on prevailing crisis of sustainable development, their causal linkages and effects on the poor societies and global environment.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The concept of sustainability has its roots in what might be called “the crisis of development,” that is the failure since World War II of international development schemes intended to improve the lot of impoverished peoples around the world.(Kibert et al.,2012). The concrete challenges of sustainable development are at least as heterogeneous and complex as the diversity of human societies and natural ecosystems around the world ( Kibert, et al,2012 ).

Development has thus suffered some conceptual imprecision which negatively affects its practice. Much of these which are found in the mainstream paradigm have in practice created “development victims” through unequitable and unsustainable lifestyles and environmental consumption of the high income societies.

Recent interest in undertaking to explore the sustainability interface within development context is informed by early works in the literature (Carson,1962) .More notably Gareth Hardin’s *Tragedy of the Commons*(1968) and the Club of Rome’s *Limits to Growth* (Meadows,etal;1972). These studies provide foundational theories in studying contemporary sustainable development as they foreshadow some form of environmental externalities, thus examining not necessarily the environment itself but the effects and implications of the outcomes of interacting with the environment.

Existing literature suggests that the practice and conceptualization of sustainable development may be complex, given the varied interpretations the concept can be subjected to (Amadi, Igwe and Wordu,2014). According to the Brundtland report of 1987,sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of the future from meeting theirs (Brundtland Report,1987).

Development is a “mother” concept with various meanings and applications even among the so called developed nations, issues of development still remains topical as it is continuous and dynamic. Considering the fact that the concept of sustainable development is now a central theme in contemporary development thinking, it becomes important to examine the term in details in the ongoing development debate.

Sustainable development has three components, environmental, economic and social .The literature on sustainability shows that it is a framework for ecological justice and equitable programs that continues to grow in importance and is finding application in an ever wider range of circumstances (Goodland,1997).

Robert Goodland tries to differentiate environmental sustainability from economic and social but argues that the concepts overlap as they have strong linkages. For instance environmental sustainability or maintenance of life support systems is a prerequisite for social sustainability(Goodland, 1997).

Economic sustainability focuses on that portion of the natural resource base that provides physical inputs, both renewable (e.g forests)and exhaustible (e.g minerals),into the production process. Environmental Sustainability adds consideration of the physical inputs into production, emphasizing environmental life support systems without which neither production nor humanity could exist (Goodland, 1997 ).

Social sustainability is achieved by systemic community participation and strong civil society(Goodland,1997)In exploring sustainable development from a post development perspective, we must avoid the reduction of the content of the environment and economy to what Vandana Shiva describes as “the belief in the sacredness of nature” assumed to be culturally produced in such a society (through the belief in deities and worships rooted in nature). The “surviving economy” gets ultimately reduced to culture and becomes part of a homogenous society. That way, we can call this homogenous economy a cultural economy as well (Shiva,1991).

Our contention is on rational and objective “consumption” of the environment, the absence of which has depleted and tainted nature. Novel theoretical debates seek to explicate a “ surviving economy” within environmental sustainability debate conceived as those societies that materially survive by “deriving livelihoods directly from nature through self-provisioning mechanisms. Sustenance and basic needs satisfaction is the organizing principle for natural resource use in the surviving economy...” (Shiva 1991: 32). Much of these societies are in the global South

Thus, it follows that both human and natural environment should be preserved for a healthy living. Critiques of sustainable development cast serious doubt not only on the feasibility and possibility of sustainable development but its long term practice which remains a hotly contested issue(Shiva,1991;Harvey,2005;2012; Sandel,2012;Davidson and Hatt,etal,2005).At no other time in human history has it ever been more plausible to win the war on global environmental unsustainability and institutionalize sustainable development (Amadi,etal,2014).

Esteva (1992) argues that, for two-thirds of the people on earth, the positive meaning of the word development, profoundly rooted after two centuries of its social construction, “is a reminder of *what they are not* (emphasis as in original). It is a reminder of an undesirable, undignified condition.

Optimists argue that 2015 is the year of sustainable development. Jeffery Sachs recently observes that the year 2015 will be our generation’s greatest opportunity to move the world toward sustainable development. Three high-level negotiations between July and December can reshape the global development agenda, and give an important push to vital changes in the workings of the global economy(Sachs,2015).

Subsequently, the prevailing conceptions of development focused on sustainability yet this provoked another round of debates on the meaning of ‘development’, which, more accurately, were debates about what is worthwhile development – about what development ought to be (Nederveen Pieterse,2010).

A growing number of voices contend that if development is to be a worthwhile objective of public policy, it could not be reduced to economic growth; rather, a number of other values had to be satisfied, (Nederveen Pieterse,2010)including well-being, equity, empowerment, human rights, cultural liberty, environmental sustainability, integrity in relation to corruption, ecological justice, gender equality etc.

As real-world experience has shown, however, that achieving agreement on sustainability values, goals, and actions is often difficult and painful work, as different stakeholder values are forced to the surface, compared and contrasted, criticized and debated. Sometimes individual stakeholders find the process too difficult or too threatening to their own values and either reject the process entirely to pursue their own narrow goals or critique it ideologically, without engaging in the hard work of negotiation and compromise( Kibert, et al.,2010 ). This repeated crisis has made several scholars to interrogate the plausibility of Western development enterprise(Rodney, 1972;Amin, 1972;Onimode,1989;Saches, 1992; Escobar ,1994; Rahnama & Bawtree ;1997; Nederveen Pieterse,2010 ; Ferguson,2008; Easterly, 2006; Amadi, 2012a).

Easterly (2006) underscores similar failures and indictment of the West's economic policies for the world's poor by criticizing Western developmentalism for being driven by *The White Man's Burden* -- a kind of utopian, social engineering where Western planners think they know all the answers to the development problems of the poor societies.

Escobar (2000) observes that despite the initial and clear agreement on the need for some sort of development, the consensus around it gradually began to erode due to a number of factors. A social dimension of the backlash against development consisted in the increasing inability of the enterprise itself to fulfil its promises, coupled with the rise of movements that questioned its rationality.

The dilemma of unsustainable development is mostly found in the poor societies. According to Berger (1974), the discourse of development sacrifices rather than benefits Third World societies. What is needed, he argued, is a marriage of ethics and social change.

In our views novel ethical values are necessary in current development thinking. Similarly by reflecting on inequality and poverty. Goulet (1985) argues that development needs to be redefined, demystified, and thrust into the arena of moral debate. Wolfgang Saches (1992) re-echoes that the idea of development stands like a ruin in the intellectual landscape. Delusion and disappointment, failures and crimes have been the steady companions of development and they tell a common story: it did not work.

Weinstein ,(2008) reinforces the growing poverty and global inequality.Similarly, Nederveen Pieterse, (2010)demonstrates that the meanings of development had changed over time. He highlights, for instance, the shift from a development discourse emphasizing economic growth and industrialization in 1940, to a discourse focusing on structural reform and liberalization in 1980 and then the renewed emphasis on structural reforms, starting in 2000, as reflected in the Millennium Development Goals(MDGs).

In the last two decades, questions of sustainability have been interrogated given the lifestyles and consumption patterns of the high income countries.Global unsustainable consumption patterns reappears in post developmental thought as a central factor constricting sustainable development. American Scholar Juliet Schor points out that the 1990s and early 2000s have

been a period of rapid consumption growth for the average household, as consumption outpaced income growth, and savings rates declined (Schor, 1998,2005). Between 1993 and 2004, real personal consumption expenditures per capita rose from \$19,593 to \$25,973 (2000 dollars), or 33% (Schor, 2005).

American economist, Lester Thurow; argues that; “if the world ‘s population had the productivity of the Swiss, the consumption habits of the Chinese, the egalitarian instincts of the Swedes, and the social discipline of the Japanese, then the planet could support many times its current population without excessive pollution or deprivation for any-one. On the other hand ,if the world’s population had the productivity of Chad, the consumption habits of the United States ,the egalitarian instincts of India, and the social discipline of Yugoslavia, the planet could not support anywhere near its current numbers. Unfortunately, most humans seem to fall in the America-India-Chad-Yugoslavia category”(Thurow, 1992:226).

Much of the literature on sustainable consumption has focused on technological solutions. Currently popular approaches include notions such as eco-efficiency, Factor 10, the Natural Step, the hydrogen economy and bio-mimicry (McDonough and Braungart, 2002; Hawken et al., 1999;Schor,2005;Amadi etal;2014). This extends to concepts such as globalization which is one of the most discussed concepts in contemporary development, its positive impact on the Third World and sustainable development is unclear especially in a world of global inequality. Dominant literature from the Third World perspective is rather skeptical. Globalization could be conceived as the breaking down of barriers imposed by geographical boundaries, socio-economic and political borders(Rosenau,1996;Appadurai,1996;Ritzer 2010).

A number of perspectives argue that globalization implies the creation of a ‘world culture’ which fosters Western values (Hart,1996;Davidson & Hatt,etal,2005;Bello,2003). Scholarly evidence on technology and sustainable development challenges is provided in recent literature. For instance, Schor (2005)argues that technological change is a necessary, “but not sufficient condition for achieving sustainability. Indeed, the paradox of the current moment is striking never before have the technological means for achieving sustainability been more promising, yet actual rates of ecological degradation are at record levels”(p.310).

In China, recent studies have shown consumption disparity between rural and urban China. Jian-ping Li and Zhou-ping Shanguan (2012)demonstrate that the food energy intake of China presented a downward trend in the past 30 years; as a result the rural population obtained food energy mainly from cereals (71%), and the urban population obtained the food energy from meats, vegetable oil-fats, vegetables, and fruits in addition to cereals (46.7% of total). The increasing meat consumption was probably associated with the GDP growth and consumption expenditure.

Similarly, over the years China has had one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Because it also has the largest deposit of coal in the world(most of it low-quality and highly polluting),it is building coal-fired electric generating stations at a rate equivalent to 1,000megawatts a month to power its expansion(Worzel,1994:185 )at this rate ,by the year 2020,China will account for about 20percent of the world’s carbon-dioxide output (Worzel,1994:185). EU environmental official Tom Garvey has called this philosophy “pollute now, pay later.”

Schor observes that actual rates of ecological degradation are at record levels. A central cause of that degradation is the growth of US private consumption. As is widely recognized, US private consumption currently entails a globally

disproportionate use of resources, as measured by ecological footprint, measures of material weight, and numerous other indices and estimates (Schor,2005).

Sustainable development implies minimizing the use of exhaustible resources, or at least, ensuring that revenues obtained from them are used to create a constant flow of income across generations, and making an appropriate use of renewable resources. Canadian scholar Richard Worzel reports that Canadian Environmental Geneticist David Suzuki and Climatologist Ted Munn have argued that , “Whether global warming is a problem today or not, if humanity continues to dump carbon dioxide and other wastes into the Earth’s ecology in steadily growing amounts, we will certainly create problems, both those we expect and others we haven’t yet imagined” (Worzel 1994:191).

In the closing years of the last millennium, world leaders gathered in one of the largest ever UN summits and adopted the millennium declaration. The literature on MDGs suggest that its performance among the poor societies have been abysmal (Stevens and Moss 2003; Easterly, 2008). In exploring “How the Millennium Development Goals is Unfair to Africa” Easterly identified the biases against Africa in each of the MDGs. Such observations have been reinforced in broader elucidation of the failures of MDGs in Africa.(Amadi,2012)

Ecologists have returned to concepts such as ecological footprint, eco efficiency, greening, triple bottom line, de-materialism to interrogate the plausibility of sustainability in the business and corporate world.(Hart,1996, Hawken etal;etal,1999;Davidson and Hatt; etal ,2005; Schor, 2005).

It is pertinent to understand how the perceptions of the global North is reshaping sustainable development . Hart (1996) notes that the challenge is to develop *a sustainable global economy*: an economy that the planet is capable of supporting indefinitely. He argued that the planet as a whole remains on an unsustainable course. “Those who think that sustainability is only a matter of pollution control are missing the bigger picture. Even if all the companies in the developed world were to achieve zero emissions ....the earth would still be stressed beyond what biologists refer to as its carrying capacity’(p.67) .

The debate on “innovation enhancing environment” is a corollary of sustainability discourse where affluent societies could down play unsustainable life styles for sustainable environmental development. This is a component of de-materialism as such innovations according to Davidson and Hatt; etal (2005)are central to the success and practice of sustainability.

The shift in development paradigm from economic growth to human development in the 1990s with the UNDP human development reports have been plausible in explicating the dynamics of contemporary development in the context of human capacitation(Sen,1999)

UNDP(2010) provides an aggregate concept of human development on the basis of three criteria: (i) “Long and healthy life”, (ii) “knowledge” and (iii) “A decent standard of living”, respectively measured by life expectancy at birth, mean years and expected years of schooling and gross national income per capita at purchasing parity. The associated Human Development Index (HDI) is then adjusted on the basis of (iv) the inequality in the distribution of the specific features within countries, assuming that the unequal distribution of wealth is an undesirable feature of the development processes.

Corporate sustainability movements also attempt to apply sustainability to guide the behavior of business with respect to both society and the environment as well as its responsibility to stockholders ( Kibert, etal,2012).

Collier (2010) shows that proper stewardship of natural assets and liabilities is a matter of planetary urgency: natural resources have the potential either to transform the poorest countries or to tear them apart, while the carbon emissions and agricultural follies of the developed world could further impoverish them.

Whereas a vast intellectual discourse has been launched on sustainable development, there is no clear theoretical validation of global sustainability drivers and global standard of implementation. A review of the literature suggests that gap exists in policy pronouncement and implementation as the current research on the validation of post 2015 sustainable development goals(SDGs) agenda remains contested. For instance the developing countries demonstrate that “means of implementation” (MOI) must primarily come from the developed countries, the developing countries led by the Group of 77 have insisted. They must include finance and technology but also address global systemic issues such as fair rules of trade and investment, sovereign debt restructuring, financial regulation, intellectual property rights, access to new and additional financing and tax evasion and avoidance, just to name a few”(TWN,2014).

These are some of the foundational basis and novel contributions this paper seeks to make as it re-examines sustainable development and re-focuses attention towards broader considerations on issues such as environmental consumption, technological innovations, climate change vulnerability and mitigation etc. Peet and Hartwick(2009) aptly underscore this scenario as they contend that developmentalism is a battle ground where contention rages among bureaucratic economists, Marxists revolutionaries, environmental activists, feminist critics, postmodern skeptics and radical democrats. We examine some of these debates in light of resurgent crisis of sustainable development.

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN CRISIS? EXPLORING SALIENT ISSUES**

Vogel(2009) contends that modern economic class struggle--the unremitting fight over the distribution of the wealth created by social production that erupted in the 19th century and dominated the 20th-- underlies all of the major impending crises of the 21st century.

To refrain from a lifestyle that has calcified over time is difficult. Whereas economic growth has occurred in most Western societies for the past 30years, sustainable development has not occurred in any of these societies not even in Norway with the most modest consumption pattern .We shall argue in this direction to demonstrate that sustainable development in current thinking goes beyond the “attainment” of economic growth, rather entails the attainment of economic growth plus ecological equity, justice and fairness to environmental resource use. It aims to identify that which is “sustainable” in the context of meeting the development needs of the wider human and non- human species of present and future generations.

*Capitalism:* Harvey(2005) observes that ;’ “the process of neoliberalization has, however, entailed much ‘creative destruction’, not only of prior institutional frameworks and powers (even challenging traditional forms of state sovereignty) but also of divisions of labour, social relations, welfare provisions, technological mixes, ways of life and thought, reproductive activities, attachments to the land and habits of the heart. In a recent book John Foster, Richard York and Brett Clark(2011) demonstrate “Capitalism’s War on the Earth” to provide the increasing deleterious effects of capitalist accumulation on the environment. Vogel,(2009) re-echoes that increasing globalization, *the domination of the world economy by transnational capitalism*, is the primary global megatrend. This ever-increasing concentration of economic power is the cause of the two secondary global megatrends: rising economic inequality between people and among nations,

and runaway global climate change. Similarly, this global trend results “change in development tide”. Nederveen Pieterse,(2012) recounts that the development tide has turned in the twenty-first century. At the turn of the millennium, the landscape of capitalism, and the landscape of development, began to change. The USA experienced a series of crises: the dotcom collapse, the September 11 attacks, the Enron and Anderson series of corporate scandals, Hurricane Katrina, the subprime mortgage crisis and the financial crisis of 2008 and its ongoing ripple effects. The Federal Reserve’s easy credit regime of low interest rates papered over economic problems by facilitating excessive borrowing by consumers, banks and government institutions. Subprime mortgages were the latest layer of the pyramid scheme of Anglo-American finance.

These development crises remains elusive as Banik (2010) argues that there has not been much interest in fundamentally changing these local structures, because politicians, local elites and donor societies share incentives that favor the status quo. Banik shows how local elites appear to give primary importance to the protection of negative rights at the expense of promoting positive welfare rights that would mostly benefit the poor. There are other scholars which explore capitalism and its war on the environment (Harvey,2005;Collier,2010;Robinson,2015).

*Non global Adherence to Agenda 21* :An indicator of the crisis of sustainable development is means of implementation(MOI).For instance since the adoption of UN’s Agenda 21 despite its robust principles “uneven” and “inequitable” development remains a substantial global challenge. This was captured in the 2012 Rio+20 report. “We recognize that the 20 years since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 have seen uneven progress, including in sustainable development and poverty eradication. We emphasize the need to make progress in implementing previous commitments” (Rio Report,2012:4).

*Neo liberal Ideology and Unsustainable Development*: A number of studies have interrogated the plausibility of sustainable development in a neo liberal order(Hedges and Sacco, 2012; Comaroff and Comaroff,2001; Sandel,2012; Harvey, 2005; 2010; Crouch, 2011).David Harvey provides one of the most influential debates on the failures of neo liberal order in this direction. The process of neoliberalization as he argues has, however, entailed much ‘creative destruction’, not only of prior institutional frameworks and powers (even challenging traditional forms of state sovereignty)but also of divisions of labour, social relations, welfare provisions, technological mixes, ways of life and thought, reproductive activities, attachments to the land and habits of the heart (Harvey,2005).

*Poverty and Inequality*; The MDGs have also served to highlight some of the world’s most persistent challenges, most notably the scourge of inequality. When national averages on poverty reduction, hunger, child mortality or education are disaggregated between the rich and poor, urban and rural areas, ethnic groups, or by gender or disability, we can see that some individuals and some groups are lagging a long way behind. Inequality is deeply rooted in countries’ history, politics and governance. It can manifest itself in lack of access to services, resources, power, voice and agency. And it can have costly and disastrous consequences (Save the Children,2012).

Is the International Development Goal on poverty, which calls for reducing by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day by 2015, achievable? The answer depends on prospects for growth and for the distribution of income. If countries were to continue to grow as they did over the period 1990-95, and all benefited equally, then the global poverty targets will be met. But past trends may not be a good predictor of growth. Predictions made in January 1998 indicated that

most regions were expected to reach the goals. The exception is Sub-Saharan Africa, where growth is expected to fall short (World Bank,2002).

In Africa, much of the debate about sustainable development challenge has focused on the region's severe poverty. The United Nations announced that, 'Eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today' (UN, 2002b).

Paul Collier examines the plight of the poorest billion people on the planet, the vast majority of whom reside in Africa. He attributes the extreme poverty of the fifty-eight countries that harbor the poorest billion individuals to one, or a combination, of four "traps": a conflict trap, a natural resources trap, the trap of being landlocked with bad neighbors, and a poor governance trap (Collier,2007).

There is no question that poverty has become widespread. The World Bank estimates that between 1985 and 2000, the number of persons living below the poverty line will rise from 180 million to 265 million (World Development Report,1992). By 1990, the combination of rapid population growth and an economy in crisis had lowered per capita gross national product to \$340, making this region one of the least developed in the world ( Mabogunje, 1995).

Today, it is estimated that there are approximately 820 million people living on less than \$1.25 a day. The absolute numbers of poor people are cutting off from the prosperity promised by Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Sachs,2005).Even where living standards have improved, other values of worthwhile development have not been met, and the worst of cases have been characterized by combinations of stagnant well-being, inequality, climate change vulnerability, green house emission, gender inequality, disempowerment, human rights lapses, cultural repression, environmental unsustainability, global corruption, racial discrimination etc.

In this growing skepticism on the commitment of the affluent societies to the development of the poor societies, Jeffrey Sachs observes; "I have increasingly understood the yawning gap between what the rich world claims to be doing to help the poor and what it is actually doing. (Sachs,2005)He further states, "Since September 11, 2001, the United States has launched a war on terror, but it has neglected the deeper causes of global instability. The \$450 billion that the United States will spend this year on the military will never buy peace if it continues to spend around one thirtieth of that, just \$15 billion, to address the plight of the world's poorest of the poor, whose societies are destabilized by extreme poverty and thereby become havens of unrest, violence, and even global terrorism'(Sachs,2005).

That \$15 billion represents a tiny percentage of U.S. income, just 15 cents on every \$100 of U.S. gross national product, or GNP. The share of U.S. GNP devoted to helping the poor has declined for decades, and is a tiny fraction of what the United States has repeatedly promised, and failed, to give. It is also much less than the United States should give, both to solve the crisis of extreme poverty and thereby to provide for U.S. national security(Sachs,2005).

**Table 1. Population living on less than \$1 per day, 1987, 1990, and 1998**

<i>Regions</i>	<i>Number of people living on less than \$1 a day</i>		
	<i>(millions)</i>		
	<i>1987</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1998</i>
East Asia and the Pacific	417.5	452.4	267.1
(excluding China)	114.1	92.0	53.7
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	1.1	7.1	17.6
Latin America and the Caribbean	63.7	73.8	60.7
Middle East and North Africa	9.3	5.7	6.0
South Asia	474.4	495.1	521.8
Sub-Saharan Africa	217.2	242.3	301.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,183.2</b>	<b>1,276.4</b>	<b>1,174.9</b>
(excluding China)	879.8	915.9	961.4

*Source ;World Bank 2002*

**Table 2. Percent of people living on less than \$1 per day, 1987, 1990, and 1998**

<i>Regions</i>	<i>Percent of people living on less than \$1 day</i>		
	<i>1987</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1998</i>
East Asia and the Pacific	26.6	27.6	14.7
(excluding China)	23.9	18.5	9.4
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	0.2	1.6	3.7
Latin America and the Caribbean	15.3	16.8	12.1
Middle East and North Africa	4.3	2.4	2.1
South Asia	44.9	44.0	40.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	46.6	47.7	48.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>28.3</b>	<b>29.0</b>	<b>23.4</b>
(excluding China)	28.5	28.1	25.6

*Source ;World Bank 2002*

**Table 3. Population living on less than \$2 per day, 1987, 1990 and 1998**

<i>Regions</i>	<i>Number of people living on less than \$2 a day</i>		
	<i>(millions)</i>		
	<b>1987</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1998</b>
East Asia and the Pacific	1,052.3	1,084.4	884.9
(excluding China)	299.9	284.9	252.1
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	16.3	43.8	98.2
Latin America and the Caribbean	147.6	167.2	159.0
Middle East and North Africa	65.1	58.7	85.4
South Asia	911.0	976.0	1,094.6
Sub-Saharan Africa	356.6	388.2	489.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,549.0</b>	<b>2,718.4</b>	<b>2,811.5</b>
(excluding China)	1,796.6	1,918.8	2,178.7

*Source ;World Bank 2002*

**Table 4. Percent of people living on less than \$2 per day, 1987, 1990 and 1998**

<i>Regions</i>	<i>Percent of people living on less than \$2 a day</i>		
	<b>1987</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1998</b>
East Asia and the Pacific	67.0	66.1	48.7
(excluding China)	62.9	57.3	44.3
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	3.6	9.6	20.7
Latin America and the Caribbean	35.5	38.1	31.7
Middle East and North Africa	30.0	24.8	29.9
South Asia	86.3	86.8	83.9
Sub-Saharan Africa	76.5	76.4	78.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>61.0</b>	<b>61.7</b>	<b>56.1</b>
(excluding China)	58.2	58.8	57.9

*Source ;World Bank 2002*

*Socio-environmental Deprivation:* According to the World Commission on Water for the 21st Century, more than half of the world's major rivers are so depleted and polluted that they endanger human health and poison surrounding ecosystems. In many large cities in the developing world the drinking water supply is contaminated. Only half of Southeast Asia's 550 million people have access to safe drinking water. (Hinrichsen & Robey, 2002 ). There is also pollution from heavy metals.

At the close of the 1992 Summit, Maurice Strong, the Conference Secretary-General, called the Summit a “historic moment for humanity”. Although Agenda 21 had been weakened by compromise and negotiation, he said, it was still the most comprehensive and, if implemented, effective programme of action ever sanctioned by the international community (Worzel,1994)

*Non Indicators to measure global sustainable Development:* One central issue has been the absence of definitive measurement of sustainable development and fixed criteria for attainment of sustainability. Sustainable development does not mean sacrificing economic growth, but an opportunity for countries to have more resources, green environment, effective management of human, plant and animal species. The world is faced with problems of how to achieve sustainable development as the environment is depleted, with several species endangered, others go extinct.

*Loss of Biodiversity:*A number of scholarly literatures are discussing aspects of the sustainable development crisis. As the UN conceded in the Johannesburg Declaration, ‘The global environment continues to suffer. Loss of biodiversity continues, fish stocks continue to be depleted, desertification claims more and more fertile land, the adverse effects of climate change are already evident, natural disasters are more frequent and more devastating, and developing countries more vulnerable, and air, water and marine pollution continue to rob millions of a decent life. Humanity is already past the point of sustainable development’ (UN,2002a).

*Environmental Degradation:* Environmentalism and Ecology are at the centre of sustainable development debate. The destruction of the ozone layer by the emission of ozone-depleting substances, including chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and nitrous oxide, is said to be a major factor in global climatic changes. Agricultural chemicals, including herbicides and pesticides, are also contaminants of water and soil and pose health risks to humans and animals. Dumping toxic waste in the high seas, which perhaps constitutes the cruelest human activity, has also been a factor of degradation (Third World Network,2011).

Many African countries have already lost a significant quantity of their soils to various forms of degradation. Many areas in the continent are said to be losing over 50 tons of soil per hectare per year. This is roughly equivalent to a loss of about 20 billion tons of Nitrogen, 2 billion tons of Phosphorus and 41 billion tons of potassium per year. Serious erosion areas in the continent can be found in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea, Ghana, Nigeria, Zaire, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Senegal, Mauritania, Niger, the Sudan and Somalia .

At the global level, studies on environmental degradation have been undertaken since the 1970s mainly by OCED(1975,1989),The World Bank 1991 and some research institutes and universities( Hussein,2007). In countries of South Asia such as Pakistan a recent World Bank report demonstrates that environmental degradation is threatening to undermine Pakistan growth prospects. According to the study - Pakistan Strategic Environmental Assessment – the degradation of its resource base and high burden of disease is costing Pakistan at least 6 percent of GDP or about Rs. 365 billion (US\$ 6 billion) annually(World Bank ,2007).

The report further shows that nearly 50 percent of the environmental damage cost is attributed to illness and premature mortality caused by indoor and outdoor air pollution. Indoor air pollution alone is the reason for 30,000 child deaths per year. Around one-third of the cost, or 1.8 percent of GDP, is due to death and illness resulting from waterborne diseases caused by

inadequate water supply, sanitation, and hygiene. In addition, reduced agricultural productivity due to soil salinity and erosion accounts for about 20 percent of the cost.(World Bank,2007)

In the Arab Mediterranean countries, question of the economic cost of environmental degradation was raised with the development of National Environmental Action Plans(NEAP).It presented ,based on 1990 data the first estimates in order of magnitude of the cost of environmental degradation in the region, particularly those related to the impact on human headline associated with a lack of safe drinking water and appropriate sanitary measures and those on the degradation of natural resources(mainly erosion and soil salinity)( Hussein,2007).

In Latin America and the Caribbeans (LAC),made up of four sub regions namely; the Amazon, Andean , Caribbean and Central American .Most important regional environmental problems are (not in order of priority and detailed below): loss of ecosystem services and biodiversity, degradation of land, forests, water and coastal environments ( LAC Policy Brief,2009 ). The *Amazon sub-region* which is the planet’s most extensive forest zone and one of the most diverse ecosystems on earth (shared by Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Surinam, and Venezuela), is facing an accelerated ecosystem transformation and environmental degradation(LAC Policy Brief,2009). Information related to biodiversity is available for the different countries, but there are no statistics available showing the updated information about this problem for the whole region. Plants are believed to be declining most rapidly in Brazil and Ecuador. Peru, together with Brazil, is among the countries with highest number of known threatened birds and mammals. One in every four mammals and one in every eight birds are facing a high risk of extinction. The ecosystem transformation is caused by i.a. economic activities, infrastructure construction and establishment of human settlements( LAC Policy Brief,2009).

The average deforestation rate in LAC is high (0.50% per year, on par with the global average), however, with large variation between and within sub-regions. Between 1990 and 2000, the forests lost in LAC (470,000 km<sup>2</sup>) constituted half of the world’s total loss( LAC Policy Brief,2009).

**Table 5. Costs of Environmental Degradation (Asia-Pacific Region)**

Country	Damage	Annual Cost (\$B)	% GDP
China	Lands	13.9-26.6	3.8-7.3%
	Urban pollution	6.3-9.3	1.7-2.5%
Indonesia	Jakarta’s air	2.2	2.0%
Philippines	Air, water, health	0.3-0.4	0.8-1.0%
Thailand	Air, health	1.6	2.0%

Source: Asian Development Bank

**Table 6.** Estimated deaths & DALYs attributable to selected environmental risk factors(LAC)

WHO estimates	Water Sanitation & Hygiene		Indoor air pollution		Outdoor air pollution	
	Country	Diarrhoea deaths/year	Diarrhoea DALYs/100 0 capita per year	Deaths/year	DALYs/100 0 capita per year	Deaths/year
Costa Rica	100	1	100	0,3	200	0,3
Guatemala	2 900	9	3 300	7,4	400	0,4
Bolivia	3 700	15	1 200	5,0	1 000	1,2
Brazil	15 000	3,6	4 100	0,6	12 900	0,6
Peru	3 900	6	1 500	1,8	3 100	0,8
Colombia	2 300	3	1 900	0,8	2 700	0,4
Haiti	5 000	20	2 900	13	500	0,7
Dominican Republic	1 100	5	<100	0,3	500	0,4

*Source: WHO, 2007(data from 2002)*

*Climate Change:* One central threat to sustainable development is climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports that by 2020, up to 250 million people across Africa are expected to face increasingly severe water shortages (IPCC,2007). A climate model produced by the United Kingdom Meteorological Office predicts that by 2080, 30 percent of the earth's surface will be subject to extreme drought, compared with 3 percent at the beginning of the twenty-first century(Renton ,2009).

Sachs (2015), reports that in the 22 years since the world signed the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change at the Rio Earth Summit, there has been far too little progress toward real action. As a result, 2014 is now likely to be the warmest year in recorded history, a year that has also brought devastating droughts, floods, high-impact storms, and heat waves.

Key findings of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, finalized in 2005 and so far most comprehensive survey of the ecological state of the planet, include: 60% of world ecosystem services have been degraded Of 24 evaluated ecosystems, 15 are being damaged, About a quarter of the Earth's land surface is now cultivated. People now use between 40 percent and 50 percent of all available freshwater running off the land. Water withdrawals have doubled over the past 40 years. Over a quarter of all fish stocks are overharvested. Since 1980, about 35 percent of mangroves have been lost Nutrient pollution has led to eutrophication of waters and coastal dead zones Species extinction rates are now 100-1,000 times above the background rate (LAC Policy Brief,2009 ).

Across Europe, America, Latin America, Asia and Africa are natural disasters. Such as droughts in parts of Africa, such as Ethiopia in the mid-1980s; increased erosion and sedimentation of reservoirs; degradation of coastal zones; and general changes in habitats, floods, tropical cyclones , especially in the West Indian Ocean Islands. Islands states, such as Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, coastal states, such as Niger Delta Nigeria, Mozambique, are also vulnerable (AEO, 2002;Amadi,2014a).

The ENSO floods in 1998 in East Africa resulted in human suffering and deaths, as well as extensive damage to infrastructure and crops in Kenya, Mozambique in 2000, Kenya in 1997-1998, the 2012 Niger Delta flood in Nigeria, sparked major emergency relief as hundreds of people lost their lives and thousands were displaced. The cost in Kenya alone was estimated at US\$1 billion (Ngecu and Mathu, 1999; AEO, 2002; Amadi, 2014a).

In Asia, the Japanese Okushiri, Hokkaidō tsunami which struck Okushiri Island of Hokkaidō on July 12, 1993, the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami with over 230,000 people killed in 14 countries bordering the Indian Ocean. (Amadi, 2014a).

The Haiti earthquakes of 2012, the US Atlantic hurricanes Andrew 1992, Katrina 2005, Irene 2011, Sandy flood, 2012 and the 2013 Tornado etc are evidence of environmental disaster.

A recent study captured the effects of the 2012 Niger Delta flood in Nigeria, “the usual large floods were predicted by the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NIMET). Government at all levels failed to act on time resulting to the worst humanitarian crisis in Nigeria since the end of the civil war in 1967 to 1970. Communities in a record 30% of the country’s landmass were submerged by the floods affecting an estimated 7.7 million persons. Well over 300 people were killed while more than two million people were displaced from their homes, farmlands, and homes were inundated in 30 of the 36 states of Nigeria” (Social Action Report, 2012; Amadi, 2013).

The Horn of Africa is equally one of the regions of the world which has been most seriously affected by the adverse impacts of global climatic changes, although the region is an insignificant player in the production of the industrial emissions that generate global warming (TWN, 2011).

*Population Explosion:* Population growth is also an issue. Robert Kaplan demonstrates how the challenges of population explosion threatens the planet (Kaplan, 1996) For instance, Asia’s urban population profile increased from 27% (0.7B people) in 1980 to 38% (1.4B) in 2000 and will rise to 50% (2.3B) in 2020 (World Resource Institute, 1998) In 1650, after nearly 1 million years of human existence, the world’s population reached 500 million. Two hundred years later, the population doubled to 1 billion people (circa. 1850; Valentine, 2010). It took only 80 years for the next doubling of population (2 billion in 1930), and then only 37 years to double again (4 billion in 1967) (Ehrlich, 1968). The UN estimates that the world’s population will reach 8 billion by 2025 (UNESCAP, 2002; Valentine, 2010).

**Table7. Population of Asia's Megacities**

City	World Rank	1995 Millions	2015 Millions
Tokyo JP	1	26.96	28.89
Bombay IN	5	15.14	26.22
Shanghai CH	6	13.58	17.97
Calcutta IN	8	11.92	17.31
Seoul KO	10	11.61	12.98
Beijing CH	11	11.30	15.57
Osaka JP	12	10.61	10.61
Delhi IN	15	9.95	16.86
Tianjin CH	19	9.42	13.53
Manila RP	20	9.29	14.66
Jakarta ID	22	8.62	13.92
Dhaka BG	23	8.55	19.49

Source: UN Population Division

**Table 8. Population of developing countries living in poverty**

	1981	2001
Total population earning less than \$1 per day	1.48 billion	1.09 billion
% of population earning less than \$1 per day	40.4%	21.0%
Total population earning less than \$2 per day	2.45 billion	2.74 billion
% of population earning less than \$2 per day	66.7%	52.9%

Source: Chen and Ravallion (2005)..

About a third of the people in the Third World's cities live in desperately overcrowded slums and squatter settlements, with many people unemployed, uneducated, undernourished and chronically ill. Conditions will worsen as their numbers swell and transport, communication, health and sanitation systems break down. One solution to urban excesses is to divert industry and its induced labor migration away from the megacities towards surrounding areas (World Bank,2007).

*Globalization and Technology:* Technology and Globalization for instance have resulted complexities and development crisis. Some countries have availed themselves of the opportunities of keying into technological advancement, improve the standard of living of their people and production advancements within globalization in the process achieve high economic growth, while a great majority are in poverty ,will such inequality result sustainable development? History provides countless examples of technology failing to keep pace with unfettered population and consumption growth. Indisputably, technological progress in industrial efficiency has improved the financial well-being of the majority of citizens in industrialized countries (Simon and Kahn, 1984). However, progress has being realized through unsustainable use of natural resources and exploitation of environmental sinks (Meadows, et al;. 2005).

However, the process of globalization signifies a new social condition destined to give way to new global consciousness. By interconnecting and networking the self-contained societies, globalization gradually constitutes a conscious global social condition.

The dispersal of stakeholders in sustainable development thinking roughly correlates with the disciplinary sprawl of sustainability debate. It may not seem plausible to generalize about Sustainable development – the question is, whose sustainable development? Different stakeholders have different takes on what sustainable development means and how to achieve it. This is not a minor point but a fundamental circumstance. Sustainable Development is a multidimensional field .Novel issues raised include climate change, global inequality, civilizations, environmentalism, greening, population growth, others and perhaps more crucial in recent sustainable development debate is same sex marriage and sustainable human development in the context of procreation. (Amadi,2014).What are we sustaining and for who? Most discernible include; Nature -Earth, Biodiversity, Ecosystems, Life support-Ecosystem services, Resources, Environment, Community- Cultures Groups, Places, People -Child survival, Life expectancy, Education, Equity, Equal opportunity, Economy- Wealth, Productive sectors, Consumption, Society- Institutions, Social capital ,States, Regions.

On the other hand, what has remained contested and internally challenged is how it should be sustained. Recent evidence suggest that sustainable development has been elusive.The problems of the rhetoric of sustainable development lies within the poor practice of greening, eco-efficiency, equality, unsustainable consumption. The global dichotomy in which the world is divided between “developing” and “developed” “rich /poor, centre/periphery is accompanied by social exclusion, discrimination and marginalization of the South as the later drudges under the influence and hegemony of the North such dichotomy makes it difficult to draw the line between the two groups. In the absence of a single criterion of a country's development, such divisions can only be based on convention among researchers.

The World Bank, for instance, uses GNP per capita to classify countries as low-income (GNP per capita of \$765 or less in 1995), middle income (including lower-middle income, middle income, \$766 to \$3,035, and upper middle- income, \$3,036 to \$9,385), or high-income (\$9,386 or more)(WorldBank,2007).

The prevailing global inequality finds relevance in an expression of “international lawlessness” in which the international system remains largely flawed as a system of “global struggle” and “asymmetry”. The natural resource sustainability at post natural resources transparency initiative EITI in 2002 further interrogates the tenacity of sustainable development as the natural resource rich but poor countries such as Nigeria, Angola, Benin, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tomi and Principe, South Sudan etc still experience resource “marginalization and non -transparency”-“Resource curse” linked with Western economic interest has been a dominant mode of characterizing these poor areas. Collier argues that France without Africa is like a car without petrol (Collier, 2010;Amadi and Alapiki,2014).

The failure of these initiatives means that the proportion of those living in abject poverty has remained relatively steady over the past 60 years, around 1 in 5 people. The poor continues to live on the edge of survival, with abominable living conditions, malnutrition, disease, and little prospect for a better future.

### **Conclusion and Policy Direction**

The underlying premise of this paper is that in order for development to be sustainable, it has to be comprehensive—it has to successfully balance economic goals with technological, social and environmental. SDGs must be pro people ,pro poor and pro- development. It should take cognizance of the development goals, the nature of poverty, global hunger, the burden of infectious diseases (Ebola Virus, HIV/AIDS, TB, Malaria), the knowledge revolution, stages of modern globalization, international migration, and the costs of government corruption and global economic asymmetry.

Achieving the SDGs will require deep reform of the global financial system. Resources need to be channeled away from armed conflict, tax loopholes for the rich, and wasteful outlays on new oil, gas, and coal development toward priorities such as health, education, and low-carbon energy, as well as stronger efforts to combat corruption and capital flight (Sachs,2015).

Similarly, a recent Global Policy Forum publication describes possible entry points for shaping fiscal policy in accordance with sustainability criteria and shows how to use them in order to achieve environmental-social budgets. It uses the budget cycle as a tool in identifying such entry points, from the drafting of the budget to policy implementation and monitoring of the results (GPF,2014 ).

In September 2015, world leaders will meet again to approve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to guide national and global policies to 2030. And in December 2015, leaders will assemble in Paris to adopt a global agreement to head off the growing dangers of human-induced climate change. The fundamental goal of these summits is to put the world on a course toward sustainable development, or inclusive and sustainable growth.(Sachs,2015) .

Developing countries have argued that committing to and achieving the SDGs will be an impossible task without adequate means of implementation (MOI) and a genuine global partnership for development, in the ethos of an enhanced Goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals, not partnerships in the plural (TWN,2014).

MOI remains the most fiercely contested issue in the negotiations of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals at the United Nations headquarters in New York. With the release of the Co-Chairs’ revised version of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) ‘Zero Draft’ on 30 June, the intergovernmental negotiations during the final session of the Open

Working Group (OWG) in mid-July becomes even more critical. The OWG Co-Chairs are Ambassadors Macharia Kamau of Kenya and Csaba Korosi of Hungary (TWN,2014).

Beyond the MOI other critical challenges such as changes in global fiscal policy and the discriminatory global policies by the G8 countries are issues.

The paper suggests that effective sustainability drivers through *implementation* and *enforcement* will have the potential for advancing this field of inquiry and provide virile post 2015 SDG framework.

Most failures of the sustainability practice stems from the fact that it largely assumes “policy character” informed by discourse of Western “experts” and often the same purveyors of unsustainable development.. Despite the fierce influence of dependency theory on the uncritical elements of such development paraphernalia as the Western modernization theory, much radical strategic overhaul has not taken place among the poor societies (Amadi,2012).The ongoing sustainability discourse is at the best a corollary of existing paradigm devoid of cutting edge trends. Arguably, “sustainability” as a development term and practice is underestimated at the time of interrogating the activities of certain institutions such as Western oil multinational corporations and the structure of the international capitalist system.

The increasing incidence of natural disasters, inequality, poverty, environmental degradation, pollution, Ebola Virus, HIV/AIDS, population explosion, global corruption, unsustainable environmental consumption point to critical re-evaluation of the sustainable development paradigm. Large number of humanity in the poor societies are missing out on the ongoing sustainable development project. The world’s current sustainable development crisis may in fact provide a chance for radical pioneering change.

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