



Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030) and the Management of Water and Sanitation in Benue State 2016-2020

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Abstract

This paper examines Sustainable development goals and the Management of water and sanitation in Benue State between 2016 and 2020. The study was guided by two research questions and uses a survey research design. The Population of the study was 5,741,800 out of which four hundred (400) respondents were randomly sampled. The primary data was obtained through questionnaire, and oral interviews. Descriptive Statistical tools such as frequency tables and percentages was used to analyze and present the data. For the qualitative data interview excerpts were used to compliment the quantitative data. The findings revealed that Sustainable Development Goals contributed immensely by proving water to improve sanitation. The finding also revealed that United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals contributed immensely in the management of Water and Sanitation in Benue State from 2016 and 2020. It was therefore, recommended that government should make consultations with communities and vulnerable groups in order to understand particular areas where water supply is needed in order to improve sanitation and the standard of living in the state through contact with the groups via seminars and workshops among other things.

Key words: United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals, Management, Water, Sanitation

Introduction

Sustainable Development Goals are the continued and transited goals of the United Nations which means a capacity to maintain some entity, outcome or process overtime. It connotes improving and sustaining a healthy economic ecological and social system for human development. On September 25-27, 2015 during the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly, United Nations member states convened a special summit for the adoption of the post 20th development agenda. This special summit concluded with the adoption of the declaration "Transforming our World- the 2030 Agenda for sustainable Development" a universal call for action for the betterment of people, planet prosperity, peace and partnership which is unprecedented in both scope and ambition. To catalyze cooperative transformative action at the international scale, the 2030 Agenda includes a set of 17 universally applicable, integrated objectives for sustainable development, which are





accompanied by a total of 169 concrete targets and indicators. These objectives are officially referred to as the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

The SDGs build upon the expiring Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which guided global action on the reduction of extreme poverty in its multiple directions from 2000-2015 while the SDGs maintain the thematic work on poverty eradication targeted by the SDGs. They reflect a comprehensive perspective on international development and sustaining human life on this planet. By providing a set of integrated targets and progress indicators that SDGs are the key to the success of the 2030 Agenda, and will guide the development agenda and national policies of UN member states and their international cooperative within the 15 years. On the other hand, availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all is goal 6 out of the 17 goals of the SDGs.

Conceptual Clarification

Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable Development goals are the world's biggest promise, a global agreement to reduce poverty and human deprivation at historically unprecedented rates through collaborative action, it grew out of the various agreements and resolutions of world organizations in the past decade and it is aimed at addressing the ever-growing poverty among the populace, especially in developing countries. On the origin, the Goals reflect key aims of various United Nations (UN) development conferences in the 1990s, which are the product of many national, regional and international constitutions that involved millions of people and represented a wide range of interests, including those of governments, civil society organizations and private sector actors. These conferences emphasized the multidimensional nature of development within human well-being and its end. According to the report, the goals also built on the momentum created by the International Development Goals, devised in 1996 by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to define how its 23 bilateral donors would work together to improve lives in developing countries in the 21st century. The Organization for Economic Development (OECD) goal set an important precedent because they were time bound and quantifiable, and so could be monitored and helps mobilize support (UN 2003).

Moreover, it should be noted that, after the millennium declaration in September 2000, the partnership between rich and poor countries was reaffirmed in November 2001 to launch the Doha Round on International Trade. Soon after, world leaders met again at the March 2002 International conference on financing for development in Monterrey, Mexico, establishing a landmark framework for global development partnership in which development and developing countries agreed to take joint actions for poverty reduction. Later the same year, UN member states gathered at World Summit on sustainable development in Johannesburg, South Africa where they reaffirmed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as the world time-bound development goals (UN, 2002). As part of the social and democratic approach to governance in the global society, it represents an un-parallel global commitment to free human beings especially those in the third world regions from the bondage of absolute poverty and wretchedness to address many of the most enduring failure of human development. Unlike the objectives of the first, second and third UN development Decades (1960s, 1970s and 1980s), which mostly focused on economic growth, the goals place human beings and poverty reduction at the Centre of global development objectives (UN, 2003).



Most Conferences, unlike the Millennium Summit, did not specify numerical targets and timetables. The world summit for children in 1990 however did establish quantitative targets such as to reduce the under-five mortality rate by 33% or to 70% (1000 live births by the year 2000 (United Nations 1990). Additional quantitative targets were set for maternal mortality, nutrition, access to drinking water and sanitations, primary school enrollment and completion and adult literacy (Hulme, D 2009)

Consequently, Sustainable development relates to the principle of meeting human development goals while at the same time sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resource and ecosystem services upon which the economy and society depend (Cerin, 2006). While the concept of sustainable development has been relevant since time immemorial, it can be argued that the relevance deepens with the dawn of every day because the population keeps increasing but the natural resources available to humankind do not. Conscious of this phenomenon, global concerns have always been expressed for judicious use of the available resources.

The latest of such concerns translated into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The MDGs marked a historic global mobilization to achieve a set of important social priorities worldwide (Breuer, Janetschek, & Malerba, 2019). However, in spite of the relative effectiveness of the MDGs, not all the targets of the eight goals were achieved after being rolled out for 15 years (2000-2015), hence the introduction of the SDGs to continue with the development agenda. As part of this new development roadmap, the United Nations approved the 2030 Agenda (SDGs) for action to protect the planet, end poverty and guarantee the well-being of people (Taylor, 2016). The 17 SDGs primarily seeks to achieve the following summarized objectives.

- Eradicate poverty and hunger, guaranteeing a healthy life
- Universalize access to basic services such as water, sanitation and sustainable energy
- Support the generation of development opportunities through inclusive education and decent work
- Foster innovation and resilient infrastructure, creating communities and cities able to produce and consume sustainably
- Reduce inequality in the world, especially that concerning gender
- Care for the environmental integrity through combating climate change and protecting the oceans and land ecosystems.
- Promote collaboration between different social agents to create an environment of peace and ensure responsible consumption and production (Hylton, 2019; Saner et al., 2019; UN, 2017).

According to the United Nations Communications Group (UNCG) and the Civil Society Organization (CSO) (2017) platform on SDGs in Ghana, the SDGs are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. Adopted by 193 countries, the SDGs came into effect in January 2016, and aim to foster economic growth, ensure social inclusion and protect the environment. The UNCG-CSO (2017) argues that the SDGs encourage a spirit of partnership among governments, private sector, research, academia and civil society organizations (CSOs) with support of the UN. This partnership is meant to ensure that the right choices are made now to improve life, in a sustainable way, for future generations (Breuer et al., 2019).





Agenda 2030 has five overarching themes, known as the five ps: people, planet, prosperity, and peace and partnerships, which span across the 17 SDGs (Hylton, 2019; Guo, 2017; Zhai& Chang, 2019). They are intended to tackle the root causes of poverty, covering areas such as hunger, health, education, gender equality, water and sanitation, energy, economic growth, industry, innovation and infrastructure, inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, consumption and production, climate change, natural resources, and peace and justice. It can be argued from the SDGs that, sustainable development aims at achieving social progress, environmental equilibrium and economic growth.

A key feature of the SDGs is that their development objectives and targets are basically interdependent but interlinked (Tosun&Leiniger, 2017). It is argued that the SDGs entail complementarities or synergies as well as trade-offs or tensions which have implications for global and national contexts. The complementarities imply that addressing one goal could help to address some others at the same time. For instance, addressing issues of climate change could have co-benefit for energy security, health, biodiversity, and oceans (Le Blane, 2015). As opined by Fasoli, (2018), what needs to be noted is that, the SDGs are not stand alone goals. They are interconnected, implying that achieving one goal leads to achieving another and, therefore, they should be seen as indispensable pieces in a big and complex puzzle (Kumar et al, 2014). In order to take advantage of the complementarities among the SDGs, Taylor (2016) suggests that the various countries review the numerous targets to identify the ones most likely to be catalytic as well as those that have multi-pronged impacts, while also aiming to implement the entire agenda. The choice, according to Meurs and Quid, (2018), would have to be informed by country-specific priorities and resource availability. It is also worth noting that because of the complementarities of many of the goal and target areas, a single indicator may serve to measure progress across some goals and targets.

The UN Conference on SD, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 2012, brought some key issues to the fore, including decent jobs, energy, sustainable cities, food security and sustainable agriculture, water oceans and disaster readiness which call for priority attention. In the area of food and agriculture for instance, DESA (2013) estimate that about 800 million people are undernourished globally, and about 220 million hectares of additional land would be needed to feed the world's growing population by 2030.

Water and Sanitation

Water is an inorganic, transparent, tasteless, odorless, and nearly colorless chemical substance, which is the main constituent of Earth's hydrosphere and the fluids of all known living organisms (in which it acts as a solvent (Reece, 2013). It is vital for all known forms of life, even though it provides no calorie or organic nutrients. Its chemical formula is H₂O, meaning that each of its molecules contains one oxygen and two hydrogen atoms, connected by covalent bonds. Two hydrogen atoms are attached to one oxygen atom at an angle of 104.45° (Fellows, 2017). "Water" is the name of the liquid state of H₂O at standard ambient temperature and pressure. It forms precipitation in the form of rain and aerosols in the form of fog. Clouds are formed from suspended droplets of water and ice, its solid state. When finely divided, crystalline ice may precipitate in the form of snow. The gaseous state of water is steam or water vapor. Water moves continually through the water cycle of evaporation, transpiration (evapotranspiration), condensation, precipitation, and runoff, usually reaching the sea.



According to World Health Organization, the term sanitation refers to the provision of facilities and services for the safe disposal of human urine and feces. The word sanitation also refers to the maintenance of hygienic conditions, through services such as garbage collection and wastewater disposal (Tilley; Ulrich; Lüthi; Reymond, Zurbrügg, 2014). Sanitation includes all four of these technical and non-technical systems: Excreta management systems, wastewater management systems (included here are wastewater treatment plants), solid waste management systems as well as drainage systems for rainwater, also called storm water drainage. However, many in the WASH sector only include excreta management in their definition of sanitation. Another example of what is included in sanitation is found in the handbook by Sphere on "Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response" which describes minimum standards in four "key response sectors" in humanitarian response situations. One of them is "Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion" (WASH) and it includes the following areas: Hygiene promotion, water supply, excreta management, vector control, solid waste management and WASH in disease outbreaks and healthcare settings (Gates Foundation, 2010).

Sanitation refers to public health conditions related to clean drinking water and adequate treatment and disposal of human excreta and sewage (Paranipe, 2017). Preventing human contact with feces is part of sanitation, as is hand washing with soap. Sanitation systems aim to protect human health by providing a clean environment that will stop the transmission of disease, especially through the fecal oral route. For example, diarrhea, a main cause of malnutrition and stunted growth in children, can be reduced through adequate sanitation (Sphere Association, 2018). There are many other diseases which are easily transmitted in communities that have low levels of sanitation, such as ascariasis (a type of intestinal worm infection or helminthiasis), cholera, hepatitis, polio, schistosomiasis, and trachoma, to name just a few.

The term environmental sanitation is used to cover the wider concept of controlling all the factors in the physical environment which may have deleterious impacts on human health and well-being. In developing countries, it normally includes drainage, solid waste management, and vector control, in addition to the activities covered by the definition of sanitation." Sanitation can include personal sanitation and public hygiene. Personal sanitation work can include handling menstrual waste, cleaning household toilets, and managing household garbage. Public sanitation work can involve garbage collection, transfer and treatment (municipal solid waste management), cleaning drains, streets, schools, trains, public spaces, community toilets and public toilets, sewers, operating sewage treatment plants, etc. (PRIA, 2019). Workers who provide these services for other people are called sanitation workers.

Clean water and sanitation is one of the most fundamental goals, since water is the foundation resource for healthy ecosystems, thriving communities and thus, stable economic development. The World Economic Forum (WEF)'s 2015 Global Risk Report ranked 'water crises' as the highest impact risk out of 28.2. It continues to rank as the third highest risk in terms of impact in the 2016 report. While 2.6 billion people gained access to 'improved drinking water' (compared to a 1990 baseline) during the period corresponding to the Millennium Development Goals, which ran from 2000 to 2015, 663 million people are still reliant on sources like unprotected wells and springs.

Theoretical framework





Although there are extant competing theories in social sciences that can guide a study of this nature, the theory that best captures this research work is structural functionalism, or simply functionalism. The Structural-Functional approach is derived from earlier uses of functionalism and systems models in anthropology, Sociology, Biology and Political Science. The Structural-Functional approach sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. The approach looks at society through a macro-level orientation, which is a broad focus on the social structures that shapes society as a whole, and believes that society has evolved like organisms. It also looks at both structure and social functions. Functionalism addresses society as a whole in terms of the function of its constituent's elements: namely norms, customs, traditions and institutions. For parsons (1951), "structural-functionalism" came to describe a particular stage in the methodological development of social science, rather than a specific school of thought. The structural functional approach is originally a macro sociological analysis, with a broad focus on social structures that shape society as a whole (Gad, 2003).

More so, structural-functionalists like Almond and Powell (1965) posited that for proper understanding of the structures (institutions) in the society, there is need to place them in a meaningful and dynamic historical context. In political analysis therefore, structural functionalism can be described as a means of explaining basic functions of the political structures in the political system (Olaniyi, 2001). In other words, functionalism explains the relationship between the structures on the one hand and between the parts and the whole on the other hand. It is thus the contributions of each structure that help to sustain the political system.

Despite the critique and shortcomings of the theory, the concept function can conveniently be used to know the state of inaction of many institutions and approaches for development as Almond has made strenuous efforts to acquaint his readers with the new paradigm or concepts and has exposed his intention. The search for new concepts is not an ad hoc matter. It reflects an underlying drift towards a new and coherent way of thinking about studying politics that is implied in such slogans as behavioral approach.

Consequent upon the above, we can say that Almond's theory has special significance. The political, cultural, economic and other elements today can very easily create impact upon different states. This influence is never a one-way traffic.

Situated within the study, the postulations of the structural functional analysis are relevant in understanding and analyzing the role of the United Nations Sustainable Development Sustainable Goals and the management of water and sanitation in Benue State. United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are structures created globally and in Nigeria and Benue inclusive. The declaration of the Goals with about 189 countries including Nigeria from its traditional approach serve like the traditional political system, its operations in Nigeria and Benue State has brought to fore the tendencies to improve sanitation as institutions or structures and functions.

Furthermore, as a system consisting of interrelated parts or components United Nations Sustainable Development Goals cannot operate or exist in isolations. Put differently, the Goals consist of different goals like, Management of water and sanitation etc. There must be a collaboration between United Nations, Nigeria and States, each of these must interact and work together to keep these goals work in order to achieve the needed development effectively. Besides, the interactions with bodies like the Federal Government, State and





Local Government and others must be sustained in an atmosphere of intergovernmental relations aimed at delivering quality service in a timely, satisfactory, honest effective and transparent manner. These are inevitable as Almond aptly stated where there are functions, there must be structures to perform them (Okoli, 2000).

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this paper is to examine sustainable development goals and the Management of Water and Sanitation in Benue State 2016-2020. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- i. To examine the impact of United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and the Management of Water and Sanitation in Benue State from 2016 and 2020.
- ii. To find out the impact of United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals in the Management of water and sanitation in Benue State from 2016 and 2020.

Research Methodology

The research uses a survey research design. This design seeks to describe, explain or interpret existing conditions, Prevailing circumstances, existing relationship, attitudes, beliefs and so on.

Population and sample size of the Study

The population of Benue state is about 5,741, 800.(2020 projection)(NBS, 2019). The said population is distributed among the 23 local government areas of Benue State. However, it is only the sample size of the selected local government areas that is considered in this study.

The sample for this study comprises four hundred (400) respondents of the total population of 5,741, 800 people in Benue State. This is based on minimum sample size requirement as proposed by Taro Yamane in Emaikwu (2019) who state that for a study of a known population N and error level, the minimum size requirement should be given by the formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Table 1 Proportionate Sampling of Respondents in the selected LGAs

S/N	Local Government Areas Sampled	Population	Proportionate Sampling	Sample
1	Katsina-Ala	303,400	303,400/1,875,600x400	65
2	Vandeikya	316,600	316,600/1,875,600x400	68
3	Makurdi	405,500	300,377/1,875,600x400	86
4	Guma	262,100	194,164/1,875,600x400	56
5	Otukpo	359,600	266,411/1,875,600x400	77
6	Oju	227,400	168,491/1,875,600x400	49
	Total	1,875,600		400

The researcher adopted simple random sampling technique and accessed individual respondents, this was done based on the number of questionnaire given at individual local government. The total of (400) questionnaires was administered through one on one contact with the respondents in the six Local GovernmentAreas of Benue State accordingly after which the questionnaire was collected, collated and analyzed.

Method of Data Collection



This research used both primary and secondary method of data collection, this is generally categorized into three basic areas; the questionnaire, the interview and the secondary data. The primary data is obtained through questionnaire and oral interviews while the secondary data is obtained through books, journals, etc. The data is hereby presented below

Table 2: Respondents Opinions on UN SDGs Projects found in their Areas

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Skill Acquisition	80	20.5
Water and Sanitation	95	24.4
Educational	72	18.5
Health care service	90	23.1
None of the above	48	13.5
Total	385	100.0

Source: Field work 2021

Table 2 shows data on UN SDGs projects found in their respective areas. The data revealed that 80(20.5%) of the respondents opine that there is skill acquisition UN SDGs project in their area. 95(24.4%) were of the view there is water and sanitation SDGs project in their vicinity. 72(18.5%) agree that there is educational project of UN SDGs project in their area. 90(23.1%) were of the view there is health care services projects of UN SDGs project in their locality and 48(13.5%) of the respondents were of the opinion that none of UN SDGs project is found their areas. This result means that UN SDGs project such as Skill Acquisition, Water and Sanitation, Educational and Health care service are found in Benue State.

Table 3: Areas/Projects SDGs has contributed substantially in the State

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Skill Acquisition	92	23.9
Water and Sanitation	101	26.2
Educational	127	33.0
Health care services	65	16.9
Total	385	100.0

Source: Field work 2021

Table 3 presents data on areas/projects SDGs has contributed substantially in the state. The data revealed that 92(23.9%) have UN SDGs projects in area of skill acquisition. 101(26.2%) have projects in the area of water and sanitation, 127(33.0%) and 65(16.9%) experienced UN SDGs project in areas of educational and health services respectively. This results thus implies that UN SDGs projects are mostly experienced in the areas of education, water and sanitation, skill acquisition and least area is health care services.

Table 4: Respondents opinions on whether the water provided by SDGs improve sanitation in the State



Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	70	18.2
Agree	172	44.7
Disagree	47	12.2
Strongly disagree	96	24.9
Total	385	100.0

Source: Field work 2021

Table 4 shows respondents' opinions on whether the water provided by SGDs improves sanitation in the area. The data reviewed that 70 (18.2%) and 172 (44.7%) of the respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that water provided by SGDs improves sanitation in the area. While 47(12.2%) and 96(24.9%) of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree respectively that water provided by SGDs improves sanitation in the area.

Empirical evidence in the Management of Water and Sanitation in Benue State

The result of the study implies that SDGs has improved the living standard of the people in the State especially in area of water and sanitation.

Complementing the quantitative data, an interview with Prof. Mrs Magdalyene Dura, the Special Advisor to the Governor of Benue State on SDGs and Sir. D.A Bem, a community leader of Nongov community development area in Makurdi aver that:

UN SDGs contributed immensely in the area of water supply and sanitation because they provide water to improve sanitation in the State.

Another interview with Philip Shirsha, the SDGs Desk Officer, Makurdi Local Government and Chief Mrs. Gladys Erdo Wan-Gbaa, President, Nongov Women Development Association(NOWODA) in Makurdi revealed that:

SDGs has made a lot of impact in the State to improve sanitation. they added that in Area of health care services, water and sanitation as well as education, SDGs has contributed immensely for the socio-economic wellbeing of the people.

Also, an interview with Ezekiel Otumola, Desk Officer Oju LGA and Sunday O Ominyi revealed that:

UN SDGs has done so much concerning water to improve sanitation, the interviewee added that they provided motorized borehole at Owori Obotu and Ebonda- Ukpa. It was revealed that, SDGs has made remarkable impact in the area of water and sanitation.

In a separate interview with HRH, Chief Nelson Ibe, District head of Ibilla, in Oju LGA and Baba Ngbede, SDGs Desk Officer in Otukpa LGA.

It was revealed that SDGs has impacted so much in the area of water and sanitation.

In Katsina-Ala Local government, an interview with Michael Gwayem, the SDGs Desk Officer and Moses Ugede, GaambeYa Youth Leader revealed that:

SDGs made remarkable impact in the area of water and sanitation as they provided solar powered bore hole in areas like Tor-Donga, Utange Council ward, Joo-Mbatyough in Ikuravtiev II among other areas. There are also motorized bore holes at Tavachan in Michihe council ward, one at PHC Agu in Mbajir council ward and so many other places.

Also complementing the above, the SDGs desk officer in Vandeikya LGAMr Emmanuel Vembe and Kunav Youth Leader, FanenYohol added that:



The SDGs has made remarkable impact in the area of water and sanitation by providing motorized bore hole at Yaasah in Mbagbera and Tsar Mbaduku and several other places in Vandeikya LGA of the State.

The Community leader in Makurdi Sir D.A Bem and Makurdi Local Government SDGs desk officer, Mr. Philip Shirsha also revealed from the interview that:

The Basic problem faced by the UN SDGs is that of funding; this Sir D. A Bem points to the issue of state having difficulty to pay for the counterpart funding of UN SDGs projects. Though it has tried so much in the area of water and sanitation.

Supporting the above, Guma LGA Desk Officer, Mrs. Ann Kwaghngu and Mr. Benjamin Iwan President General, Nongov Community Development Association (NOCDA) in Guma LGA reviewed that:

The SDGs in the state has done much under this scenario as they provided water to improve sanitation, they mentioned so many areas where solar powered bore holes are provided, like Tsav-num, Ikyuan, Andyar. Gbajimba, Daudu, Yelewata and several other places in Guma LGA.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the findings it was revealed that UN SDGs projects such as Water and Sanitation, are found in Benue State. These projects are of much benefits as they have contributed immensely in improving the sanitary condition of people in the area of water and sanitation which guarantee peoples' health as they access clean and drinkable water.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the following conclusions are drawn: United Nations through Sustainable Development Goals have contributed immensely to the management of water and sanitation in Benue State between 2016 and 2020 to a greater extent. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are put forward: Government should make consultations with communities and vulnerable groups in order to understand the particular area of need in order to provide water to enhance the sanitary condition of the people through contact with the groups via seminars and workshops. Adequate and accurate data should be collected with a good research from the various communities in desperate need of water in order to improve sanitation of the people so that SDGs projects in water and sanitation will be provided through professionals and seminars. The United Nations should impress upon the developed countries such as the US, UK, Japan and Canada to sustainably transform their own societies and economics while contributing to achieving Sustainable Development in the developing countries. The UN should support countries by facilitating approaches that are conducive to meaningful participation, engagement and dialogue as well as capacity building for all countries. The United Nations should promote appropriate technology and innovation as evidence shows that the trade-off between environmental and economic outcomes, for instance, can be overcome through the use of appropriate technology. Above all, Breuer et al. (2019) add that the UN should involve not only governments, but also other key stakeholders such as private sector, NGOs, and civil society in the global agenda and create feedback loops to hold all responsible entities accountable to make sure that the SDGs are actually implemented.

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