

# Rural Sustainability, Self-Sufficiency, and Resilience as a Tool for Combating Sub-Saharan Africa's Urban Poverty/Unemployment Crisis

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SUPERVISED BY

Prof. Dr. Arc. Moses Madubueze Okonkwo  
(Dip.; M.Sc. Arch; Ph.D. Arch; Maarches; Fce; Fcai)  
Department of Architecture,  
Nnamdi Azikiwe University,  
P.M.B 5025 Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.

**Abstract:- Poverty is a serious cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabrics of our national growth and development as a region. Government policies, actions, and inactions are mostly responsible for these menaces in sub-Saharan Africa. They have made these policies in isolation from the common good and exonerated the opinions of the "common man". They have constantly developed the urban areas for their own best interests while ripping off the rural areas, polarizing them and placing a poverty tag on them. This has often become counterproductive and detrimental to the overall national and regional output.**

The rural areas in these regions need to be given equal consideration as their urban counterparts. Humans exist there and also have needs for good hospitals, roads, technology, and contemporary infrastructure. Common resources need to be evenly distributed to control rural-to-urban migration, and these rural areas must be supported to stand on their own and harness their own wealth in order to discourage excessive migration and manpower losses in these areas. We all need to rise to the task of rewriting these wrongs and creating a wholly sustainable society for ourselves and generations yet unborn.

**Keywords:- Rural Sustainability, Self Sufficiency And Resilience; A Means Of Combating Urban Poverty/Unemployment Crisis In Sub Saharan Africa.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

### ➤ Synopsis

Sustainable and self-sufficiency planning policies are all-encompassing. It takes into consideration a nexus of factors such as economic, physical, socio-cultural, psychological factors. In the 21st century, global poverty and unemployment rates are more prevalent in third-world countries' cities and urban metropolitan centers. The most significant challenge for governments and policymakers is the pressure to attend to society's infrastructure and economic needs. Various issues are troubling the facts mentioned

earlier, resulting from excessive rural-urban migration of inhabitants, mainly searching for greener pastures, better environments, and living conditions. In trying to eliminate this dilemma, governmental policies, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, have started programs that have often transited from poverty alleviation to poverty reduction without achieving the desired goal. These policies have frequently failed because of the gross neglect and abuse of the rural areas and their abundant resources. The government could not promulgate relevant, sustainable planning policies that would have ensured rural sufficiency and resilience.

Take, for example, my home country of Nigeria, using a pragmatic approach in the rural and urban context. Most urban centers prosper because of the resources provided by their rural counterparts. For food, land, recreation, raw materials, and resources, urban centers rely heavily on rural areas. These rural areas are constantly on the giving end, and they are always helping the urban centers without receiving equal treatment in return. The government invests more of the budget allocations of the various states in urban areas, neglecting the needs of the rural population, resulting in poor or non-existent basic amenities in rural areas. For this reason, relatively poor infrastructure, social inequity and justice, and a poor environment leading to overall poor output plague individuals in these areas.

## II. RURAL SUSTAINABILITY AND SELF SUFFICIENCY

### ➤ Definition

Sustainability has for years refused to yield to a unanimous acceptable definition. The Dictionary of English language has defined sustainability as "the ability to be maintained at a certain rate or level" or "the avoidance of the depletion of natural resources to maintain an ecological balance." The most often quoted definition comes from the UN World Commission on Environment and Development. They defined sustainability as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Most scholars

have chosen the latter definition as a yardstick for determining the sustainable index of parameters under study.

Rural sustainability and self-sufficiency are connected to developing and preserving physical and human capital and the frequently competing aims and objectives of economic growth and resource preservation. It includes agricultural development and protecting natural resources such as minerals, forests, fisheries, scenery, and increasing rural access to infrastructure, education, housing, and amenities. This discourse attempts to promote economic growth while preserving renewable resources and reducing socioeconomic inequality between the rural-urban settings and dwellings.

Governmental policymakers and other stakeholders have outlined this concept through multiple perspectives that apply to nonurban, small towns, and open areas, depending on their political philosophies. The present global concern of rural sustainability and sufficiency policymakers and professionals should expand and diversify the rural economy, decrease inequalities, and use land and natural resources to allow for regeneration while bearing sustainability in mind. When properly put in the right perspectives, these measures will improve the quality of life in rural areas. It will discourage rural-urban migration, mitigate urban sprawl, deliver social equity and justice, encourage all-inclusiveness, and preserve our planet from impending doom that stares us in the face.

Urban regions now account for a substantial portion of the population and economic production. In terms of the environment, cities are putting more strain on land, energy, and resources as they expand, posing more ecological hazards. Because of their growing relevance, ecologically friendly solutions for metropolitan areas offer a lot of promise for reducing resource use.

Socially, metropolitan areas in Sub-Saharan Africa and beyond provide opportunities for individuals from all backgrounds to connect, as well as places where poverty and social exclusion are visible. Overcoming these obstacles is critical to building a just society and affecting many other factors, including the environment, economics, health, and safety. The ability of these rural regions to cope with significant changes as agriculture and forestry dominate the rural areas is crucial in rural development.

#### ➤ *The Way Forward*

Prosperity and environmental sustainability are inextricably linked. Therefore, human settlements can only maintain their prosperity when ecological and social objectives are fully integrated with economic goals.

States now have an unprecedented opportunity to help rural communities help themselves by providing them with data and technology, offering technical help, and encouraging them to develop comprehensive plans. The process starts with the recognition that rural extended self-sufficiency and sustainability need not simply imply containing urban growth, preserving unprofitable farming activity, or economic development in isolated small towns. Still, a

complete overhaul of the planning programs and policies, to make for all-inclusiveness. Bridging this wide gap that has existed over the years and providing for the basic needs of rural development is key to a sustainable future. The overall idea is to develop good policy templates to enhance social change and sustainable economic growth for the rural community's ongoing progress. The goal is to improve their life quality and preserve the environment.

We can achieve this through:

- Education and policy programs on sustainable development in the regional and rural contexts.
- Developing planning templates for sustainable urban and rural futures.
- Revisiting the various impacts of human activities on natural systems.
- A comprehensive perspective on ecological, urban, and regional planning.
- Implementing and utilizing sustainable urban and rural infrastructure policies and practices.
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation research and study programs.
- Ecosystem sustainability assessment.
- Sustainable urban and rural technologies.
- Smart cities and communities.

### III. CONCLUSION

The governments of sub-Saharan Africa need to be more responsible, responsive, and accountable for the concerns and needs of the rural areas. The wide gap and class differences that exist between its citizens need to be checked. They need to appreciate that poverty eradication, alleviation, and their numerous policies do not just respond to mere talks and deceitful release of press statements on national dailies and media houses to attract sympathy from the United Nations, but a holistic, direct, concrete and altruistic approach towards these agitations from rural areas that consistently stare us in the face. More is expected of our leaders and government if this monstrosity called poverty is to be decimated.

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