

Foreword

Economies and organizations and have been forced to transform themselves from growth orientation and profit-centric to sustainable orientation and governance-centric” for various reasons. Becoming sustainable, ensuring development with governance strategies in place is one of the most important aims of any country. Therefore, the issues concerning sustainable development, governance strategies, economic growth and societal development growth have attracted the attention of both practitioners and researchers over the last decade. Despite, or maybe due to, the attention drawn to the subject, a clear agreement on what is sustainable development, what constitutes governance strategies is, and especially how this should be developed remains lacking. Further, empirical literature on sustainable development and governance as well as economic growth at global level in general and more specific at African level is rather frail. Some scholars also argue that there is a conflict between sustainable development and governance. According to them, a country cannot pursue both. However, seriously speaking sustainable development and governance strategies are the key for better growth in Africa. In fact, they are two sides of the same coin for social and economic development.

Handbook of Research on Sustainable Development and Governance Strategies for Economic Growth in Africa will, hence, deepen the understanding of the two broad terms sustainable development and governance and the strategies required to promote growth in Africa. It will provide evidences at the country-level on sustainable development and governance issues and help to understand the implications on economic growth and prosperity in Africa. This publication will also deepen the understanding of the two broad terms sustainable development and governance and the strategies required to promote growth in Africa. It will provide evidence at the country-level on sustainable development and governance issues and help to understand the implications on economic growth and prosperity in Africa. This is of relative significance, since most of the countries in the Africa stand at the cusp of economic and social transformation. It is a common understanding that theories and practices of sustainable development have developed and continue to build up, based on the historical issues and state of affairs, which are country based, and needs regional contextualization. Thus, there is a dire need for understanding sustainable development theoretical and practical concerns thereof in relation to sub-Saharan Africa. How they carve out their sustainable development goals will definitely will have a great implication on their sustenance, economic growth and global inclusiveness in decades to come but also have significant ramifications on the global setting.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were the first global development goals, which were set to help governments of the world to orient their policies, end poverty, and improve the lives of poor people by 2015. However, the popular criticism levelled against MDGs is that they were too narrow and left out many people and their needs. Moreover, the MDGs implementation has been inconsistent and even the

Foreword

success has been varying in all countries. Due to this erratic implementation and even different degrees, success after 15 years of implementation there remains unfinished business of the MDGs. This led to the UN member states met in Rio to frame the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDGs seek to build on the MDGs and complete what these did not achieve. The SDGs are more inclusive and sustainable, and, as the UN secretary general noted in December 2014, they seem not to “leave no one behind”. However, in order for the SDGs to address systemic challenges across economic, social, and ecological dimensions of sustainable development they require appropriate institutional support to effectively integrate them into institutions and practices, to coordinate activities, and to mobilize resources for implementation. Crucial then is the financing for the sustainable development goals. Governments alone will not be able to do so, hence, there is need to seek alternatives for financing and approaches for effective utilization of resources that too which are scarce. Here effective governance strategies would be essential and this leads to intensification of the role of governance to ensure economic and all-inclusive growth.

Other critical issues, which emerge in pursuit of sustainability, are land use conflicts, displacement, urban planning, development agenda, institutional structures, intergovernmental fiscal transfers, decentralization, local governance, overseas ownership, multiple perspectives for poverty reduction, child welfare, population growth, inequality, agricultural schemes. Role of education, public sector, mass transport, electronic media, civil society organizations, women - participation, representation and equal opportunities for leadership, community participation, also become dynamic. Politics, elections, democracy, political followings’, legal framework, human rights, activism, advocacy also impinge on the goals to be set. Some of these critical issues grouped partially or individually including tourism, hospitality, have all been subject of research lately. Yet, there is no comprehensive research to identify the linkage and nexus between sustainable development and governance strategies especially in the African context. What is more, the advancements in society and technology leading to convergence of information, communication, and technology, coupled with acceleration in globalization, competitive environments, and changing customer’s preferences have created new challenges as well as opportunities. This can be for leveraging knowledge about sustainable development and governance strategies, which can affect value creation significantly of the abundant natural resources, which nature has endowed and exist in the region.

Handbook of Research on Sustainable Development and Governance Strategies for Economic Growth in Africa, edited by Dr. Kassa T. Alemu and Dr. Mulunesh A. Alebachew, provides not only a valuable window but examines a variety of new phenomena that have either not received the attention of scholars or requires deeper investigation to build reliable theory. In that, the book will provoke both students and practitioners of Africa to understand their contexts and to determine whether and how “offerings” for sustainable development will need fresh and innovative ways of imagination. The academics and researchers writing in this book emphasize the primacy of sustainable development – incremental or radical – through governance strategies, approaches and cases to motivate individuals, organizations that desire to remain significant in an intensely competitive world. Such strategies or offering, as the breadth of ideas show, need not be one-dimensional, i.e., merely internally-focused; rather, sustainable development policies married with effective governance strategies can cover the gamut of all operations that permeate all stakeholder interests to add economic, social, value-added services for the benefit of the society as a whole.

This book will provoke thinking about sustainable development, governance strategies and economic growth from various country perspectives like Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Horn of Africa, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. Apart from that, it will provide key lessons and best practices through case studies in sustainable development, governance strategies and economic development. Resourceful one can definitely say; the radical structure of the book along with the chapters grouped therein facilitates and offers opportunities for thinking out of the box.

To conclude, ‘the traditional approaches for ensuring sustainable development are surfacing and today richer and innovative ways such as reengineering, green world, collaborative approaches, cooperation rather than competition for sustainability and inclusive growth are the focal point. The Internet’s ability to reach new segments and reduce cost through streamlining of the knowledge and expertise is another promising area to explore for sustainable development and governance strategies as the ideas of crowd-sourcing, cloud computing using web-based platforms reach out to new markets, which will be built on harnessing the capability of the various regions and segments of society.

Sustainable approaches with effective governance in place and strategies well designed for economic and overall development will always be the way ahead for all countries. Such approaches will not only provide competitive edge but will also be more economically viable; as they will be people-friendly and sustain or even revitalize the ecologies in which they thrive. It is for the creative individual to spot the myriad of opportunities for multiplier effect. The diversity of perspectives on sustainable development, governance strategies, alliances and opportunities for economic development in general and for Africa in particular, that this book offers promises interesting reading. If it spurs lively debate and discussion among practitioners and encourages academics to build better comprehensive theories of sustainable development, governance strategies and economic development models, the book will have served as a crucial springboard.

Neeta Baporikar

Namibia University of Science and Technology, Namibia