

Towards Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals: How Far Can Africa Go in the Face of Dwindling Commodity Prices?

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The sustainable development goals (SDGs) are initiatives designed by world leaders to make the world a better place to live in. Embedded in the seventeen (17) SDGs are specific action plans targeted at tackling fundamental issues of poverty, hunger, health, insecurity, climate change and resource conflict to mention just a few. Despite the significance and the all-encompassing characteristics of these goals, Africa, where most of the issues to be addressed through the SDGs abound is currently experiencing a downturn considering the prices of its main source of revenue plummeting. The continent is one of the fastest growing economies in the world with favourable weather and large landmass for agriculture. Africa is a continent relying majorly on natural resources (agriculture and solid minerals contributing 55-97 percent of Gross Domestic Product) to provide the much needed improved welfare. Apart from the dilapidated infrastructure situation resulting from long years of neglect, the continent is also faced with the problem of climate change, corruption, youth unemployment and rising urbanisation thereby putting a strain on the meagre income accruing to the continent. This paper therefore investigates the extent to which the SDGs is achievable in the face of the dwindling prices of the continent's exportable commodities. This is because implementation of projects and programmes targeted at addressing some of the core issues highlighted in the SDGs remains a herculean task because the much needed income is not available. The paper therefore suggests re-prioritisation and implementation of low cost, inclusive but highly impactful projects and programmes targeted at addressing hunger, poverty and other primary needs of the vulnerable inhabitants of the continent. Government and the private sector in these countries should team up to add value to primary agricultural commodities as well as solid minerals exploited in the continent instead of selling it at give-away prices to shrewd buyers from industrialised nations. Also, investment in primary infrastructural facilities will also reduce production cost and enhance growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in Africa.