Sustainability Leadership by More Minor Actors: Individuals and Families

Nkem Emezie-Ejinima

Family Definitions

The Universal Human Rights Declaration states that the family is the natural and fundamental unit of every society. It plays a crucial role in providing a suitable environment for the harmonious development of its members. It is the first and essential social group of community that an individual belongs to or is associated with. This definition only covers the scope of what and who constitutes a family. Therefore, a comprehensive, more inclusive notion of family acknowledges that family dynamics and fundamental characteristics can exist in a group of two or more individuals who may share goals, values, and even material things within the same abode. These two or more individuals are often related by blood, marriage, adoption, or some communal relations—in essence, this could include extended family members—while being in a committed fraternal

N. Emezie-Ejinima (✉)
Lagos, Nigeria
e-mail: nkemee@gmail.com

or familial relationship aimed at the good of all and residing together or communally. Former United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated in a 2010 report, "At the international level the family is appreciated but not prioritized in development efforts. Society largely overlooks the very contribution of families to achieving development goals. At the same time, there is consensus that, so far, the stability and cohesiveness of communities and societies largely rest on the strength of the family. In effect, the very achievement of development goals depends on how well families are empowered to achieve those goals. Thus, policies focussing on improving the well-being of families are certain to benefit development."

In the human context, the nature and role of the family are both biological as traditionally defined by society and related by affinities when seen in broader yet relatable terms. The complexity and social limitations associated with providing a precise definition of family or families have caused many to find more comprehensive constructs beyond the traditional description of the family.

Family in the Context of African Society

In the African context of human relations, a family goes beyond blood and represents people connected by lineage or kinship, affinity, or shared residence. While the nuclear family is traditionally the most common form of family, new perspectives of the family that are diverse from the traditional conceptions of the family have emerged.

In African society, such broader constructs exist because of the communal nature of familyhood. Therefore people from the same kindred, village, clan, age grade, and peer group may regard themselves as a family. Such is true in the context of sharing goals, values, belief systems, and material things—while having the freedom to reside independently or communally in the same compound in the case of a more rural setting. To exemplify this, one can find such broader constructs in the Igbo ethnic group's Umunna or the Yoruba's equivalent of Ebi or Ara. Those who form these family groups are not always related by blood but have distant family relations. They may also belong to the same clan or kindred; however, they are focussed on the same goal— nurturing, progressing, and preserving the development of the family and its environment for the present time and the future.

The basic unit of society is the family in the African community; it is often characterized by a household regardless of whether the members

are or whether they are biologically related. This traditional concept and understanding have been acquired and transplanted from the increasing connectedness of global societies and communities due to migration, marriage, trade, etc. There has been an evolution of previous sociological perspectives on the role of the family. Some of these perspectives may have been present but barely emphasized when acknowledging the role of the family in society.

In Africa, despite its importance, the family is undergoing tremendous changes and facing many daunting challenges, including increasing poverty, civil strives and conflicts, and vulnerability. These challenges create pressures on the family and constraints on every aspect of family life.

The Role of Family

The International Federation for Family Development (IFFD), in its 2017 submission to the United Nations ECOSOC, highlights the crucial role of the family in social development as a primary responsibility. It further states that this primary responsibility lies in "education and socialization of children and installing values of citizenship and belonging in the society." Regardless of the wide recognition of the unquantifiable role played by the institution of family, there continue to be various challenges in different parts of the world that affect, expand and stall the sustainable development of the family institution; this invariably affects the society as a whole.

In many instances, these challenges come from both the social and economic development of societies and, in other cases, as an effect of natural calamities, conflicts, and epidemics. The resultant impact creates new family-like structures that may not be biologically related but is associated with shared experiences and situations. Although these challenges affect the well-being of the individuals, families, development of their communities and societies, they also elevate the role of the family in these challenging periods. In these times, the natural, moral, and physical commitments to the well-being of the family members evolve to become targeted at building values, habits, and systems that contribute fundamentally to the social, economic, and environmental sustainability of communities and society. Given the evolving social climate of the world and increasing demand on the individual's role as a member of society, there is a need to expand further the part of the family in the

community, also noting that the family consists of individual actors who, in essence, carry out these roles and responsibilities. These various challenges to human existence, relations, and communities, on the individual and society, give the reason for the continued need to expand the role of the family in society and the sustainable development of society. To effectively address these challenges, there is a need for individuals, businesses, and governments to employ an integrated approach that places the family and family life at the centre of all development agendas, aimed at sustainability and dignity of human life.

Sustainability and Sustainable Development

The Brundtland Commission, in its 1987 report Our Common Future, defined sustainable development that gave context to its harmonizing feature. It is a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This concept contains various constituent parts that espouse sustainable development. This chapter will focus on social or cultural Sustainability, political Sustainability, Economic Sustainability, and Environmental Sustainability.

Sustainability in the early period of its introduction describes it as maintaining an ecological balance through practices that avoid the depletion of natural resources. While it puts context to what sustainability entails, it narrows the action of sustainability by making it appear as a purely ecological or environmental concept. However, more inclusive definitions embed the other aspects of community and society; these include the social, economic, and political dimensions—these subsequently show the social equity, conservationist, and human dignity that sustainability espoused.

Sustainability in the context of these minor actors—individuals and families—means the action or activity of making ends meet or meeting family needs without jeopardizing the opportunities, abilities, or tools of future generations of individuals and families to do the same.

Sustainable development is a holistic concept. It is that process of development that improves the quality of life of a community of persons and community life in general between two points in time, that is, the present point of time and the future point to come.

The United Nations realizing the need for sustainable development, adopted seventeen goals on September 25, 2015; these goals are the

Sustainable Development Goals. The focus of these goals was in line with their plan to alleviate poverty, ensure prosperity, and achieve a better and more S future for all people and the world by 2030.

Given that the SDG agenda addresses economic development, shared economic prosperity, and the total well-being of communities, sustainable development encompasses both behavioural and human aspects.

The United Nations Rio + 20 Conference outcome acknowledged that people—individuals—are at the centre of sustainable development and a need for "holistic and integrated approaches to sustainable development." Therefore, one can opine that the innate family role of transmission of values, habits, and systems to its members gives weight to the critical role that individuals and families play in sustainable development. This opinion includes the holistic human development of its members, recognizing cultural practices and family traditions, and handing it down to future generations.

In considering the importance of these small actors, individuals and families in sustainable development, the chapter will take the following into context; Social Sustainability which ensures the preservation and accessibility of resources that keep individuals and families secure in their personal, civic, and cultural rights as a member of society. Economic Sustainability maintains access to, preserves, and protects resources required to meet their needs and secure sources of livelihood.

Political sustainability allows individuals to attain and preserve the rights and necessities of just and fair leadership that protects individuals from harm and discrimination. Environmental sustainability maintains ecological and environmental integrity and balances the consumption and replenishment of humans–individuals' natural resources.

Mr. Kofi Annan, the former UN Secretary-General, opined that "the very achievement of development goals depends on how well families are empowered to contribute to the achievement of those goals." While being a fundamental unit to the growth of society, the family is also a key actor and agent for sustainable development—socially, economically, politically, and environmentally.

Individuals and Families as Actors in Social Sustainability

Social Sustainability is all-encompassing of our humanity, relationship with others, and environment. Notions such as cultural identity and values, collaboration and communitarianism, equity and empowerment,

and institutional stability all form part of the social constructs of human society to which families belong and therefore have the responsibility to protect and preserve. Culture is an integral part of sustainable development, as it concerns how individuals comprehend and recognize the entire worth of natural resources and other individuals.

Culture is a connector of generations, and it connects the past, present, and future families through cultural networks that are often scattered all over the world. The migration of people also brings the migration, merging, and up-scaling of culture. These give credence to the context that the migration of families causes the redistribution of culture and wealth, which inevitably helps alleviate poverty—a goal of sustainable development.

Proponents of cultural identity and preservation may find that western influences on culture appear hostile. Still, one could argue that when aspects of culture, either practices or attitudes, are relinquished for the greater good of that human society, it becomes an act of sustainability. An example could be the cultural practice of inheritance by male children alone in some African cultures; this practice births discrimination and exempts female children and descendants. Social Sustainability also constitutes poverty alleviation, promoting inclusion and participation, and avoiding actions that create social cohesion. Family activities involving the socialization of children in the household like storytelling, games, and sharing or household responsibilities or chores provide teachable moments. It is an excellent opportunity to transmit values and ideals on social responsibility, resource management, respect for the environment, and acceptable attitudes and behaviour to spur sustainable development. In Eastern Africa, children learn from folk tales from their grandparents that excessive tree cutting can cause the rains to cease.

Family traditions come out of cultural values, habits, and identity promote social sustainability. It allows an individual to have a sense of belonging somewhere, allowing one to thrive and fulfil their potential. Another family practice that highlights the importance of family in sustainable development is routines, which cuts across rural and urban family life. Habits create order, respect for other people's time, build planning skills in individuals, and foster stability in everyday living. Suppose one regards cultural values, habits, and family traditions as integral to social sustainability. In that case, it can mean that those behaviours, attitudes, belief systems that individuals imbibe from the diverse family structures and formation fulfil today's basic human needs and prepare

individuals to fulfil those of the future. Routines build and sustain continuity, protection, and stability in family life. They are visible in actions such as the understanding between parents of their responsibilities and tasks, time for work, play, rest, and general standards of upbringing.

Social Sustainability becomes a continuum across generations. As visible in assimilation and transmission of virtues and habits to individuals. Its dissemination to families and workplaces, transmission to generations ahead, and migration to many parts of the world. Examples include perseverance—in the context of Family and social Sustainability, the ability to find good in hard times, acts of fairness in treating others—a form of social justice, respect for material goods, and using things prudently.

As the building block of communities, the family transfers social, economic, environmental, and political behaviour patterns and survival skills across generations. Examples of this transfer abound.

Family members in countries underwent socio-political stress passed on to their children through various communal actions and survival strategies. It can also be noted in the act of older children teaching the younger ones simple tasks which these younger ones learn and can teach others at play or school. All of these require the collaboration of individuals and families; such collaborations resulting from the equity in sustainable family systems birth a spirit of communitarianism that empowers individuals for their families, businesses, organizations, and public life. It is then plausible to affirm that family actors promote the social and institutional stability required to foster sustainable development.

The activities of the family and individuals in transmitting and preserving family values, spirituality, and goals, maintaining and extending cooperative relationships with other families continue to impart economic or environmental sustainability.

Individuals and Families as Actors in Economic Sustainability

Most definitions see Sustainable development as an economic notion; economic sustainability focusses on the market allocation of resources for growth and consumption. This notion is because the fundamental nature of natural resources makes it possible for economic growth to reach the masses and the less economically buoyant individuals. However, this notion only took into context the macro-level of society exempting small actors whose economic activities start at the micro-level—in the home,

at the local market, in the family business, at the workplace, and so on. Family structures in Africa are complex and may include extended family relations and polygamous arrangements. Thus, economic sustainability becomes more challenging than in the west.

Individuals being both consumers and producers while belonging to various family formations and structures of family life may often find that access to different resources, such as labour and raw materials, from the surrounding environment can be challenging. Economic Sustainability in the context of family life addresses the efficiency in how individuals and families find, manage, and control resources in the home. This economic sustainability includes both the financial and physical areas of family life.
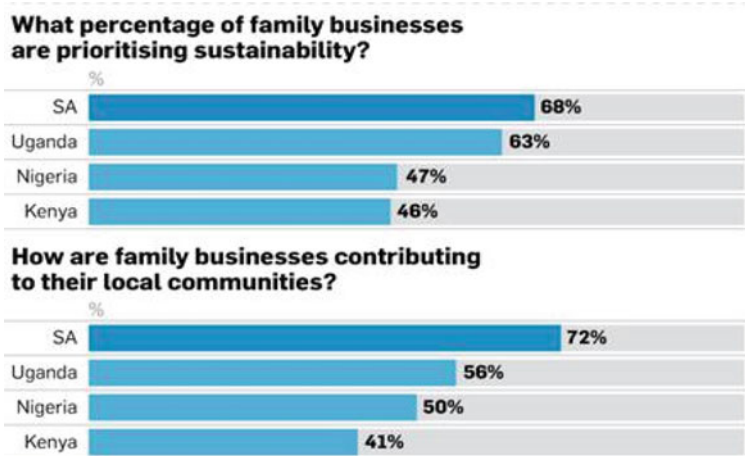
Family Farming and Small-Scale Farmers

The family unit is the human resources and human capital trade operational. Family members take on different consumer, economical, and productive roles within the workforce—formal and informal, the household, and community. How individuals and families learn to manage resources and preserve them affects the community and society. As these actors engage in production, utilization, and preservation of the resources available to them, individuals—young and old alike—learn and imbibe how to manage economic resources and work in the home; this then transmits to the workplace.

Families' structure and composition in developing countries are evolving as accessibility and availability of resources declines, forcing families to migrate or reallocate family labour. Households in Africa, particularly in the rural areas, often have a fragmented economic structure.

In the rural African families and communities, one witnesses the collaboration amongst families in farming and trading the farm produce. Small-scale farmers, including family farming units, manage ten hectares. They are identified by family-focussed ideals that support the stability of the farm household system, utilizing family labour for production and the farming produces for both family consumption and commercial use. In an analysis of fifteen case studies in Africa, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations concluded that organic agriculture practised by small-scale and family farmers brings benefits to the community in health, environmental preservation, and job creation. It noted that the sustainable nature of smallholder agriculture could represent a crucial driver for decent rural jobs.

Family Businesses and Community Economic Growth

During the global pandemic, the PwC Family Business Survey of 2021 provided some proof that African family businesses are adaptable and sustainable. The report commented that these family businesses took a people-first approach and supported their local communities during the pandemic. The report noted that in contrast to global averages, where there is a more significant focus on sustainability and reduction in carbon footprints, family businesses in Africa have more focus on supporting local communities. These findings show that family businesses across Africa focus on creating assets for future generations and building a legacy.

What percentage of family businesses are prioritising sustainability?
%

SA	68%
Uganda	63%
Nigeria	47%
Kenya	46%

How are family businesses contributing to their local communities?
%

SA	72%
Uganda	56%
Nigeria	50%
Kenya	41%

Source PwC Africa's Family Business Survey 2021 retrieved from www.news24.com

Collaborative Wealth Creation and Economic Sustainability

Rural households often face difficult trade-offs in decision-making about natural resources, as they seek to balance the challenging demands of managing the environment with the family's economic survival. In these cases, families device innovative ways of fostering economic growth by

joining family resources of land and labour to increase the production of goods to be traded.

Children get sent to live with more well-off relatives in the city in hard times. The male ones learn a trade, and the female ones work in the small family grocery store, often referred to as a provisions store; this is with the hope that they return to teach and train other young members of the family. This quasi-formal vocational training cuts across families in both rural and urban settings. In the commercial hubs across Africa, one can find pockets of family businesses where siblings and extended relatives train younger relatives to own their companies and prepare others.

In the Southeast region of Nigeria, the Igbos are synonymous with business and trade. The wealth creation system, which is entrepreneurial by nature, is characterized by co-creation, patience, support, and several years of learning the skill or trade. It is referred to as Imu Ahia or Imu Oru. After many years of learning, the mentee gets a start-up package of either commercial goods for trading or funds to start their trade. This apprenticeship programme directly correlates with economic sustainability as it provides the education and financing for wealth creation, employment, and economic power. The mentee goes on to become a mentor, and the cycle continues.

This cycle is replicated across sectors and becomes a tool of economic sustainability and a driver of economic growth in society. When individuals, either solely or within a family, participate in various activities learn to thrive socially—collaboratively or as a unit—they spur economic progress and sustainability. The resultant effect is that families can succeed economically and share their best practices with other families.

Collaborative economic growth is prevalent in the micro-financial activities of the family group in rural and semi-urban settings. The most popular is a collective saving or thrift system where group members contribute to a legal pot for the monthly collection of individuals within the same group. Note that these groups are family members or community members of the same age-grade or living together who are frequently not related by blood but regards themselves as family. This family-like group aligns with the chapter's earlier noted definition of family in the African context. This collective saving, termed ajo or esusu, assists members in money matters. This accessibility to funds is usually within a shorter timeframe than the member waiting months to accumulate the income needed to start a trade, scale up, or handle capital projects that may not be necessarily attainable with other sources of income or

economic activity. This system over the years has made the unbankable even more bankable and has given rise to the economic power of the many rural family groups. The financial sector has designed products targeted at smaller-income families. In contrast, the Fintech sector continues to innovate new technologies aimed at the younger generation to relieve pressure on the natural resource base. This example shows how family actors, in their bid to remain economically sustainable, force financial inclusion and innovation, which inevitably leads to sustainable development and progressive economic growth.

When individuals, family members, family units, and family groups as a whole succeed together economically, they are more inclined to take on more economically sustainable actions such as debt avoidance. Also, they can do other activities that indirectly affect their environment but keep their costs low, such as recycling or reusing materials in their family home and businesses.

Individuals and Families as Actors in Political Sustainability

The family unit is an individual's first experience of social life and adopts basic ideas, norms, belief systems, behaviours, and attitudes. In light of this, every individual has to comply with specific family rules, traditions, and procedures until a particular stage or until they attain independence. Throughout their growth, the family transmits certain socio-political norms and relations to the individual. These encapsulate the way decisions are made and carried out in the home, issues resolution, and the delegation or division of responsibilities amongst parents or siblings. While the transmission of these attitudes, norms, or beliefs may not be direct, one must emphasize that children adopt many values and ideals from the family unit that frame their political attitudes as adults and individuals of society. Just as children naturally support a parents' preferred football team, it is therefore correct to suggest that the same principle can occur on an individual's political affiliation to certain parties or political ethos. The family is the principal actor in an individual's attachment to a political system or party. In his article Family Impact on Individual's Political Attitudes and Behaviors in the International Journal of Psycho-Educational Sciences, Turan noted authoritarianism as an excellent example of the transmission of political attitudes from the family to the individual. He explained that authoritarian authoritarianists tend to

be obedient to those higher than themselves and should not criticize. The subordinates tend to think that they should not resist orders. The method of raising children leads to identifying the authoritarian personality, which may include political value judgement and attitudes, such as disturbing political competition, being hierarchically organized, thinking that everyone has a particular place in society.

In creating context to the role that individuals and families play in political sustainability, it is necessary to define political sustainability as taking actions that meet current political goals and resource needs without jeopardizing the future's political goals and resource needs. To be deemed sustainable, these actions must support and advance political choices, items on a political agenda that provide for the social–political landscaper to meet present needs while protecting and preserving that for future needs of generations to come.

The rural areas and villages run a solid political system though not necessarily democratic but inclusive of the various factions—women groups, youth, men, and so on—these groups have a say as to what is being provided for by the ruling head of the community. The often rotational nature of this system and the fear of losing the crown creates continuity of values and allows for the migration of sustainability-inclined actions from one ruling family to another.

The participation, cooperation, and coordination between individuals in a family in even the simplest decision-making activities such as owning a pet, family meals, or vacation destination, build the awareness of their right to be part of decision-making that affects their lives as citizens of society.

One can affirm that individuals from childhood to adulthood retain many of the attitudes and choices of the family into their future and their own families. Political interest and participation, party selection, and support are no different. We can see this in the many families worldwide who have inherited political ethos and followed the political paths of their parents or grandparents. Often, the items on the political agenda reflect the family's political views and ideas; this proves that the political socialization of children forms the political identity they possess in adulthood—the cycle continues throughout generations.

Political Dynasties and Political Sustainability

As families are their micro-political system, how parents and family heads utilize their political role will likely increase an individual's yearning for political participation and, inevitably, power. One finds this in the political family dynasties of the continent. In Congo-Brazzaville, President Denis Sassou-Nguesso appointed his son Denis-Christel as a cabinet minister. The creation of political dynasties by incumbents is prevalent in Central Africa. In Gabon, President Ali Bongo Ondimba is the son of former President Omar Bongo (in power 1967–2009).

Kenya's Uhuru Kenyatta is an example of the same political dynasty; he has long been prepared to follow in his father's legacy, Jomo Kenyatta. Society is driven and grown by the input of diverse thoughts, ideas, and perspectives. In the case of a government continuing to rule with the same ideology over the years, it is improbable for a progressive society to exist.

Political sustainability requires responsible leadership. Responsible leadership is not only the willingness of a leader to hand over power and authority after the expiration of their governing tenure but their acceptance of differing perspectives—either nationalist or democratic. The continued existence of political dynasties can prevent sustainable development. Civil society must educate and support families to understand how political decisions, actions, and inactions may affect political sustainability.

Individuals and Families as Actors in Environmental Sustainability

The family represents one of the primary ways human society operates and adapts to meet its needs and communicate family values and expectations in various environmental circumstances. Environmental sustainability entails the integrity of the ecosystem and ensuring that the consumption rate of natural resources harvested for current use does not surpass the speed of regenerating or replenishing for future use.

The quest for economic relevance and political power in communities across Africa has increased how families appropriate their family lands for sale. As a result, rural communities face the challenges of urbanization and the change in land–person ratio in an area, thus placing additional pressure on the resource base.

In addition, families migrating from one region to another while taking with them some best practices may also migrate those shorter-term land-use practices that are not sustainable.

While the family unit may propagate waste, it is also at the centre of environmental sustainability. City families have begun to utilize the skills and the tools available to preserve the environment. From an increase in carpooling amongst colleagues and families whose kids are in the same schools to the use of public transport and low carbon emission means of transportation, all of which positively affect the environment sustainability trajectory. Rural families play a crucial role in managing natural resources and their communities' livelihood. In many regions of the world, Africa included, rural communities account for a sizeable proportion of the labour force in food systems. They present as farmers, harvesters and collectors, distributors, and store owners.

Their contributions, irrespective of gender, are integral to biodiversity conservation. This indispensable role is because of their local knowledge and expertise of the land and its properties. This knowledge includes the needs of the land, environment, and community as a whole. One finds that environmental sustainability is engrained into individuals' social and family life and passes on from generation to generation. The purpose of educating within the family children and youth about the various benefits of the environment and its products is to also pass on the traditional knowledge in medicinal plants, which contribute significantly to sustaining agriculture, food security, nutrition, and health amongst the rural communities. By this, they can also remain economically sustainable in ensuring the multi-usage of their crops for nutrition and healthcare.

Families living in the city adopt widely varying practices that promote environmental sustainability. In addition to those previously noted, it is essential to highlight how certain practices amongst younger families indicate a growing environmentally sustainable generation. These practices include home gardening and increased growth of organic food, which helps minimize waste. It is common in many home gardening families to find that food waste converts to compost for the home garden. Such socially responsible practices of reducing waste and reducing pollution of waterways from non-biodegradable products such as polythene bags encourage the recycling and reuse of items and resources. Young family members, through family socialization, acquire these practices and take them on into adulthood and the workplace, thus creating a cycle of environmental sustainability.

In examining the importance of small actors such as families in promoting sustainable development, one must also acknowledge that family businesses that continue to shape the world economy across various sectors have a huge role in environmental sustainability. Seeing that economic, social, and political ideas, values, and belief systems begin in the family unit, one can affirm that family businesses have the capacity and potential to lead sustainable development transformations. This leadership spans regions and industries, from energy exploration to shipping and even agriculture. Family businesses tend to be values-led and are driven by the mission to protect their legacy for the generations to come. As such, they possess clear advantages that can enable them to influence the actions of others—from employees to institutions they collaborate with to influencing and contributing to policies that will drive genuine sustainable development.

CONVERTING SUSTAINABILITY IDEAS TO PRACTICES

Responsible leadership is critical in turning ideas on sustainability, and the theories of it, into practices. Understanding the importance of human dignity and the dimensions of human existence—physical, emotional, and spiritual—is vital in responsible leadership. Such an understanding allows leadership to make human connections that can forge a call to action appeal to the conscience of others and collaborate in the conversion of sustainable ideas to practices.

Individuals in a leadership position across all sectors and levels must integrate the broader social and environmental context into daily life activities. Family and community leaders can change the mindset of individuals on sustainability by commending and rewarding the sustainability practices of their members. Rewards and commendation can encourage people to make decisions that are in line with sustainable development goals and make the practice of sustainability a competitive and worthwhile advantage.

So often, putting ideas into practice can become daunting because of the number of views. The same can be said of sustainability ideas being put to practice. Responsible leadership can help streamline what ideas or sustainable development goals can have a tangible impact on the family, constituent, or community. Integrating the approach from that idea has a more significant ripple effect as it can be measured and further expanded. For instance, commencing a repurposing of plastic or glass containers in

the family to save the environment can be developed to include selling it in rural craft centres, which becomes a means of wealth creation. Other families or individuals can pick on such a practice to implement in their homes.

Responsible leadership at private and public levels must collaborate with civil society to educate and engage with families, small businesses, and individuals. Such cooperation will help raise awareness, implement these ideas, and allow these small actors—individuals and families—to become more accountable in creating measurable impact towards attaining sustainability and sustainable development goals.

Strengthening the Institution of Family

This chapter aimed to portray, the family as an economic and social development element towards sustainability. It is the very basis for human capital formation. So far, this chapter has highlighted specific actions of these small actors indicative of the role played in the various dimension of sustainable development. It has shown how families provide for the present, preserve for continued living and use, and protect the future generation. Thus, understanding the sustainability links between family practices and sustainable development in the African region is an integral element in re-orientating leaders, policymakers, governments, and the like to meet the evolving need of the people and environment. Modernization and the quest for economic power and conservation of financial and economic resources are causing families to adopt more nuclear forms as extended family traditional structures seem to be a thing of the past. Consequently, individuals in families assume greater economic responsibility. In supporting themselves, their livelihoods, and their families, they may lose some who acquire sustainability values. While the chapter concludes that strengthening the family institution is critical to sustainable development, it is important to include how to achieve it. These recommendations do not lie in the hands of governments alone but also in business and institutional leaders, educators, and civil society.

Firstly, all stakeholders of society have a legal and ethical duty to create family-friendly policies and laws at all levels of an organization to protect the moral, religious, and social values of the family and its community so long as it respects the rights and dignity of all. In addition to this, there must be measures to gauge and ensure the implementation of these policies.

Secondly, the financial sectors, welfare-focussed society groups, or government parastatals must begin to see the family unit as an economic unit, not just as a social unit. As such, they are to ensure the financial participation of family members in sustainable development activities. These could come in the form of offering moderately priced credits, grants, and hire purchase equipment to enable families to build on income-earning projects, facilitate the creation of thrifts and cooperatives to foster collaborative earning, economic growth, and achieve generational wealth.

Thirdly, governments must include civil society groups or representatives of families in enacting laws to ensure that society's political sustainability remains progressive in its trajectory. Policymakers should consist of families at the core of development plans or policies that affect their total well-being. It is the role of these representatives to bring to the fore challenges and issues faced by families and work towards ensuring that governments make laws that protect family rights and respect the dignity of human persons.

Lastly, ensure that children's formal and informal education focusses on reorienting individuals on improving systems, practices, and tools that can be used in various environmental methods—farming, fishing, carpentry, construction, and so on—to mitigate environmental degradation. This last point also calls for a re-evaluation of the various curricula across institutions to include learning opportunities and issues on sustainability.

In conclusion, the world continues to regard itself as a global village. Therefore, global leaders, regulators, civil society and governments alike must collaborate and create disciplinary measures so that organizations and institutions that fail to support the sustainable development of communities and regions in which they operate their businesses can answer to the law.

Points to Ponder

- How can the impact of migration and globalization on the family unit be mitigated given the trade-offs with the adoption of western cultural influence?
- Can cultural integration promote sustainability, given the adoption of western cultural influence by different family members may lead to differing and sometimes conflicting values?

- Given the high levels of poverty and joblessness, how can individuals and families seek the balance between enhancing livelihood and preserving resources to promote sustainability?

Actionable Recommendations

Private leadership	Public leadership
Promote small-scale businesses and family businesses by purchasing and recommending their products and services to the workplace and other networks.	Create and develop civil organizations to strengthen sustainability practices, knowledge, and representation across various sectors and levels of society and ensure that organizations are held accountable for non-participation or noncompliance.
Educate individuals in the family and workplace on practical ways to live sustainability in the home, workplace, community, and along with their work or business value chain by affirming that sustainability can begin on an everyday personal level.	The public sector should share knowledge and research findings to help communities, businesses, and manufacturers make more informed decisions.
Model the habits that promote sustainability—responsible use of material goods, order and prudence in the allocation of resources, and dignity of labour which drives one to support, mentor, and contribute to the development of individuals who in turn develop societies.	Develop national plans that educate small-scale farmers and develop their entrepreneurial capacities.
	Incorporate sustainability ideas and practices into the national curriculum to arm individuals with the knowledge and tools to create viable livelihoods in rural areas.

REFERENCES

Åhman, H. (2013). Social sustainability—Society at the intersection of development and maintenance. *Local Environment, 18*(10), 1153–1166. https://doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2013.788480

Birch, A. H. (1993). *The concepts and theories of modern democracy*. Routledge.

Birkeland, I. (2012, April 12–17). *Global sense of place? A cultural turn for place and sustainability education*. Scientific paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Conference.

Birkeland, I., & Soini, K. (2010, August 24–27). *Developing the role and meaning of cultural sustainability in cultural policy*. Scientific paper presented at the International Conference in Cultural Policy Research.

Broniatowski, D., & Weigel, A. (2008). The political sustainability of space exploration. *Space Policy, 24*(3), 148–157. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.spacepol.2008.06.004

Butt, M. S. (2019, May 15). *Role of the institution of family in the sustainable development of societies*. https://www.tihek.gov.tr/upload/file_editor/2019/05/1558618319.pdf. Accessed 22 September 2021.

Dasgupta, R. (2018). Handbook of children's rights: Global and multidisciplinary perspectives. *The International Journal of Children's Rights, 26*(2), 381–383. https://doi.org/10.1163/15718182-02602008

Duxbury, N., & Jeannotte, M. S. (2011, March). Introduction: Culture and sustainable Communities. *Culture and Local Governance / Culture et Gouvernance Locale, 3*(1–2), a unique double issue on 'Culture and sustainable Communities'.

Duxbury, N., & Jeannotte, M. S. (2012, April). Including culture in sustainability: An assessment of Canada's integrated community sustainability plans. *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development, 4*(1), 1–19.

Fields, J., & Casper, L. M. (2001). *America's families and living arrangements 2000* (US Census Bureau, Table FG3, pp. 20–537). Government Printing Office. Table FG3 at: http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/hh-fam/p20-537/2000/tabFG3.pdf

Food and Agriculture Organisation. (2012). Smallholders and Family Farmers, Sustainability Pathways.

McGregor Sue, L. T. (2000, July 18). *Family perspective in sustainable consumption and development*. Mount Saint Vincent University.

Mensah, J. (2019). Sustainable development: Meaning, history, principles, pillars, and implications for human action: A literature review. *Cogent Social Sciences, 5*(1), 1653531. https://doi.org/10.1080/

Şafak, S., Yertutan, C., & Erkal, S. (2011). Sürdürülebilir Kalkınma ve Çevre Bilincinin Oluşturulmasında Ailenin Rolü [The role of family in creating awareness of sustainable development and environment]. *Sosyo Ekonomi, 1*, 145–158. Retrieved 22 September 2021 from http://www.sosyoekonomi.hacettepe.edu.tr/110107.pdf

Satterthwaite, D. (1997). Sustainable cities or cities that contribute to sustainable development?. *Urban Studies*, *34*(10), 1667–1691.

Sulastri, L., & Dulkiah, M. (2017). The impact of cash transfer on family's attitude and copying mechanism. *JASPER, 7*(1), 102. https://doi.org/10.15575/jp.v7i1.1861

Turan, E., & Tıraş, Ö. (2017, September). Family's impact on individual's political attitude and behaviour. *International Journal of Psycho-Educational Sciences, 6*(2), 103–110.

Ventura, R. (2001). Family political socialization in multiparty systems. *Comparative Political Studies, 34*(6), 669–691.

Report of the United Nations Secretary-General, 2010, A/66/62–E/2011/4, p. 4, Box 1.1.

Article 10 of International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights.

Article 16 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Article 23 of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.