Comparative Gap Frame Analysis:
Evaluating Sustainability and Development in Nigeria and Ghana

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Abstract

In this paper, we present a comparative Gap Frame analysis, assessing the sustainability and development challenges of Nigeria and Ghana across waste management, social integration, peace and cooperation, and education. The Gap Frame, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), provides a detailed examination of each country's performance, highlighting both unique and shared obstacles. The analysis reveals Nigeria's pronounced challenges across all dimensions. In waste management, both countries face severe deficiencies, necessitating systemic improvements. Social integration issues are particularly acute in Nigeria, with significant concerns over tolerance and minority rights. Peace and cooperation analyses underscore Nigeria's struggles with legal rights and a high terrorism threat, while Ghana displays relatively better conditions. Education is a critical concern, with Nigeria's low enrolment rates and quality of education demanding urgent reform, and Ghana also facing substantial challenges despite better indicators. Targeted recommendations include enhancing waste treatment, enforcing anti-discrimination laws, strengthening legal systems, and investing in education. These strategies are vital for overcoming challenges and progressing towards sustainable development. The paper advocates for a multifaceted approach involving policy reform, community engagement, and international cooperation. This study provides insights into the broader African and global context for sustainability and development, emphasizing the urgency for collaborative action. It underscores the potential for significant strides towards a sustainable and prosperous future with sustained commitment and strategic efforts. The findings aim to inspire continued efforts towards the SDGs and enhancing citizen well-being in Nigeria and Ghana.

Keywords: Sustainability, GapFrame Analysis, SDGs, Nigeria, Ghana

1. Introduction

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were agreed upon in 2015 by the global community after an extensive political alignment process among multiple stakeholders including global business and NGOs. For the period 2015–2030 the SDGs now set the new global agenda, with 193 nations having signed up to the 17 underlying goals. The 17 SDGs aims at sustainability, peace, and prosperity for both People and Planet now and in the future. They recognized that addressing the major challenges in the SDG is everyone's responsibility including the Government [1]. However, there is increasing dissatisfaction with the global economic and political systems in addressing this increasingly complex global challenge, most especially in the Global South (GS) countries. To enhance translation of SGDs into relevant actions, GapFrame framework developed by [2] is utilized. This paper aims to analyse four critical issues impeding Nigeria from achieving the SDGs. These are waste, education, peace and cooperation and social integration.

2. Overview of Nigeria

The Federal Republic of Nigeria is in West Africa and spans an area of 923,769 square kilometres (356,669 sq. mi), making it the 14th-largest country on the continent. In 2023, it has a population of over 230 million, (the largest in Africa and the sixth largest globally) [3]. Nigeria comprises 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, with the capital city being Abuja. Lagos, the country's largest city, is one of the world's most populous metropolitan areas and the second largest in Africa. Nigeria is therefore a significant player in both regional and international dynamics, Within Africa, it acts as a regional power, and on a global scale, it is a middle power and an emerging market. The World Bank classifies Nigeria as an emerging market, a testament to its rapid economic growth and increasing influence on the global stage [4].

Nigeria's economy stands as the most substantial in Africa and is positioned as the 31st-largest worldwide by nominal GDP, and 26th-largest by purchasing power parity (PPP). With a GDP of 440.78 USD Billion and a GDP per capita of 2,085.0 USD, it underscores the nation's considerable economic scale [5] This financial prowess has earned Nigeria the title of "Giant of Africa," referencing its impressive population and economy. However, despite these promising economic indicators, Nigeria continues to grapple with substantial development challenges. Its ranking in the Human Development Index remains disconcertingly low, underscoring systemic issues like inequality, poverty, and lack of access to essential services that still need significant attention and investment.

3. Overview of Ghana

The Republic of Ghana is in West Africa, covering an area of 238,535 square kilometres (92,099 sq. mi), making it the 82nd-largest country in the world. As of 2023, it has a population of about 32 million people, positioning it as one of the more populous nations in Africa [6]. Ghana is composed of 16 regions with the capital city being Accra, which is also one of the largest and most vibrant cities in the country. As a nation, Ghana plays a crucial role in regional dynamics within West Africa and has a growing influence on the international stage.

Economically, Ghana is known for its diverse and rich resources, including gold, cocoa, and oil, making it an upper-middle-income economy. It's the 73rd-largest economy in the world by nominal GDP and ranks 72nd by purchasing power parity (PPP), with a GDP of around 72 billion USD and a per capita income of approximately 2,200 USD [6]. This economic status has positioned Ghana as an important player in the African continent, often referred to as the "Gold Coast" for its rich resources and economic potential.

Despite its economic strides, Ghana faces its share of challenges. It is working to improve its standing in the Human Development Index, addressing issues such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure. Like many of its neighbours, Ghana is striving to balance economic growth with sustainable development and social equity, aiming to ensure that its progress benefits all segments of the population.

4. The Gap Framework

There are numerous sustainability frameworks for sustainable development management. Their emergence and prominence demonstrate the rapidly increasing importance of the issues and challenges they address. Furthermore, the concept of sustainability is

evolving and used in different ways, therefore there is a need for better understanding. However, the Gap Frame embraces an outside-in perspective and offers a state-of-the art approach that combines the insights of the three relevant frameworks, it identifies priority concerns that must be quickly addressed on a national, regional, and global level to make the desired future state of the world more realistic and achieve the UNESCO 2030 Sustainability Agenda. It translates the 17 sustainability development goals into 24 issues which are structured into four sustainability dimensions: planets, society, economy, and Governance [2]. The evaluation extends across 190 countries including Nigeria, 22 regions, and includes a global perspective. The Gap Frame (GF) describes the issues based on the gap the country has into five levels (see Figures 1a and 1b).
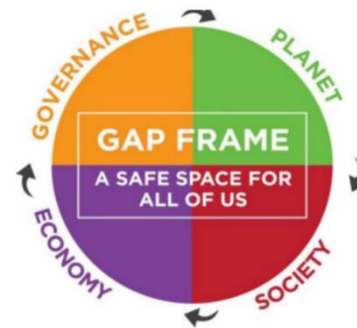

Figure 1a. Gap Frame Sustainability Dimensions [2]

Figure 1b. Gap Framework Weighting [2]

The Gap Frame tool uses a five-tiered criteria system based on a ten-point scale as demonstrated in Figure 1 above to evaluate issues relevant to a country's development and the well-being of its inhabitants. The following are the defined criteria:

- Threat: Scores below 5 represent severe issues that need immediate and significant improvement. These threats affect both the country in question and humanity at large.

- Critical: Scores from 5.1 to 6.6 signal critical issues that demand urgent action. These problems are far from the "safe space" and negatively impact the well-being of the planet's inhabitants.

- Watchlist: Issues with scores ranging from 6.7 to 7.4 are on the "watchlist," requiring careful monitoring to determine if improvements are being made.

- Safe Space: A score range of 7.5 to 8.8 is defined as the "safe space" using the 80:20 principle. Although it does not represent the maximum or ideal value, it's deemed adequate within the context of the four dimensions used.

- Towards ideal: Scores exceeding 8.8 indicate progress towards an ideal state.

The tool emphasizes the need to address issues with scores below 6.6 urgently, rather than striving for the last 20% of perfection.

5. Comparative Gap Frame Analysis of Nigeria and Ghana

According to the Gap Frame, Nigeria is ranked 3.0/10 with society as the greatest threats at an index of 3.0/10, Governance is also at the threat level of 4.4/10 while economy is critical at 6.2/10 and planet is at the watchlist of 6.8/10.Based on GF, Nigeria is at a threat level in achieving the SDGs. Furthermore, amongst the 24 issues set by the Gapframe, four critical issues are at threat level in Nigeria. They include Waste, Social Integration, Peace and Cooperation, and Education. It is imperative to compare these issues with that of Ghana, a country present in the same region, West Africa.

5.1. Waste Management

Waste management is a critical environmental and public health issue, referring to the processes used to minimize the adverse effects of waste on health, the environment, and aesthetics. The Gap Frame provides a comprehensive analysis of waste treatment issues, indicating the degree of threat each country faces based on its waste management practices [7]. This section compares the waste management issues in Nigeria and Ghana using the Gap Frame data.

5.1.1. Nigeria Waste Management Challenges. Recovered and Recycled Municipal Waste (0/10): Nigeria's score of 0/10 in this category indicates an alarming absence of municipal waste recovery and recycling. This dire situation poses a serious threat to environmental sustainability and public health, impacting various Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) such as SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production). The ineffective waste management practices in Nigeria not only compromise urban living conditions but also affect other areas, including SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG 14 (Life Below Water), and SDG 15 (Life on Land) due to the potential for widespread pollution and related health issues.

Wastewater Treatment (0.1/10): The Gap Frame analysis places Nigeria's wastewater treatment efforts at a threat level of 0.1/10. This score reflects the country's inadequate infrastructure and policies to manage and treat wastewater effectively. Poor wastewater management contributes to water pollution, adversely affecting clean water access (SDG 6) and impacting aquatic ecosystems (SDG 14).

5.1.2. Ghana Waste Management challenges. Recovered and Recycled Municipal Waste (0/10): Like Nigeria, Ghana scores 0/10 in recovered and recycled municipal waste, indicating a critical need for developing and implementing effective waste recovery and recycling programs. This lack of waste management infrastructure threatens sustainable urban development (SDG 11) and responsible consumption patterns (SDG 12).

Wastewater Treatment (1.0/10): Although still in the early stages, Ghana's score of 1.0/10 in wastewater treatment shows a slight advancement over Nigeria. This indicates some efforts towards addressing wastewater issues but highlights the need for significant improvements to protect water resources (SDG 6) and marine life (SDG 14).

5.1.3. Comparative Insights. Both Nigeria and Ghana face severe challenges in waste management, with virtually non-existent systems for municipal waste recovery and recycling.

Figure 2. GapFrame comparative analysis of Nigeria and Ghana Waste Management Issues

While Ghana shows a marginally better score in wastewater treatment as seen in Figure 2, both countries

are far from the ideal state and need to prioritize waste management to meet their SDG commitments. The lack of proper waste and wastewater treatment in both nations poses a threat to environmental sustainability, public health, and overall well-being, underlining the urgent need for concerted actions and investments in sustainable waste management practices.

5.2. Social Integration

Social integration is the crucial process of incorporating minority groups into mainstream society to ensure equality, respect, and inclusion for all [8]. The Gap Frame provides a detailed analysis of social integration issues, highlighting the severity of challenges in Nigeria and Ghana. This section discusses the social integration challenges in both countries, emphasizing the need for improvements.

5.2.1. Nigeria's Social Integration Challenges. Tolerance of Homosexuals (0.5/10): Nigeria's score of 0.5/10 reflects a profound lack of tolerance toward homosexuality, placing it in the "Threat" category of the Gap Frame. This indicates a severe deficit in societal acceptance and legal protections for the LGBTQ+ community. Such a low score underlines the urgent need for policy reforms, awareness programs, and societal change to respect and protect the rights of individuals regardless of their sexual orientation, aligning with human rights standards.

Minority Discrimination (0.2/10): With a score of 0.2/10, Nigeria faces extreme challenges regarding minority discrimination. This includes discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, gender, or other characteristics. The "Threat" level score points to prevalent discriminatory practices and attitudes that severely undermine social cohesion and equality. There's a critical need for comprehensive strategies to combat discrimination and promote inclusivity and respect for diversity in Nigerian society.

5.2.2. Ghana's Social Integration. Tolerance of Homosexuals (0.7/10): Ghana's slightly higher score of 0.7/10 still indicates significant issues with tolerance towards the LGBTQ+ community. Like Nigeria, this score is within the "Threat" category and calls for substantial improvements in legal frameworks, societal attitudes, and protections to ensure the LGBTQ+ community is accepted, and their rights are safeguarded.

Minority Discrimination (5.1/10): Ghana's score of 5.1/10 suggests a relatively better situation compared to Nigeria, but still indicates room for improvement. Efforts must continue to address any form of discrimination and to further enhance inclusivity and

equality for all minority groups within Ghanaian society.

5.2.3. Comparative Insights. Both Nigeria and Ghana face significant challenges in social integration, particularly concerning the tolerance of homosexuals, where both countries exhibit low scores indicating a widespread lack of acceptance and legal protection for the LGBTQ+ community. However, Ghana demonstrates a comparatively better performance in minority discrimination as shown in Figure 3, suggesting a more inclusive environment for various minority groups. Despite this, both countries urgently need to adopt and implement comprehensive policies, education, and awareness programs to promote social integration, respect for diversity, and equality for all members of society.

The Gap Frame scores provide a starting point for understanding and addressing these complex issues, but they must be supplemented with in-depth local context and additional data to effectively guide policy and societal change.
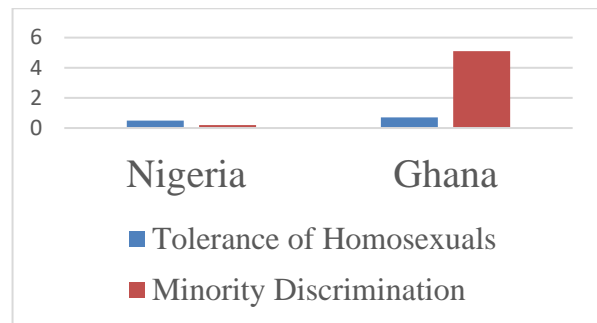

Figure 3. GapFrame comparative analysis of Nigeria and Ghana Social Integration Issues

5.3. Peace and Cooperation

Peace and cooperation are vital for sustainable development and the well-being of societies, as articulated in Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16). This goal emphasizes the importance of promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, providing access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable institutions. The Gap Frame analysis of Nigeria and Ghana offers a comparative insight into each country's challenges and status concerning peace and cooperation.

5.3.1. Nigeria Peace and Cooperation Challenges. Freedom of Assembly (0.0/10): Nigeria's score of 0.0 indicates a dire situation where the right to peaceful assembly is either non-existent or severely limited. This "Threat" level status calls for immediate attention and

reforms to ensure citizens can freely express and assemble without fear of repression or violence.

Freedom of Movement (2.5/10): With a score of 2.5, Nigeria faces significant restrictions on the freedom of movement. This impediment affects individuals' rights to travel, work, and live freely within the country and abroad, necessitating urgent measures to alleviate these constraints.

Strength of Legal Rights (5.0/10): Nigeria's legal system provides some protection for rights but has notable deficiencies that place it at the border of "Threat" and "Critical" categories. Enhancing the legal framework and its enforcement is crucial for protecting citizens' rights and fostering a just society.

Terrorism (0.8/10): The low score of 0.8 reflects a high degree of terrorist activity and threat in Nigeria, posing significant risks to national security and citizen safety. Comprehensive counter-terrorism strategies and international cooperation are imperative to address this critical challenge.

5.3.2. Ghana's Peace and Cooperation. Freedom of Assembly (10/10): Ghana scores a perfect 10, indicating a highly favourable environment for freedom of assembly. This suggests that Ghanaians can freely gather and express their views, a positive sign of a functioning democratic society.

Freedom of Movement (10/10): Similarly, Ghana's high score in freedom of movement reflects minimal restrictions, allowing individuals to move freely within

and outside the country, enhancing personal and economic freedoms.

Strength of Legal Rights (5.8/10): Although better than Nigeria, Ghana's score indicates room for improvement in its legal system to ensure robust protections and enforcement of rights for all citizens.

Terrorism (8.6/10): Ghana's comparatively high score suggests a lower level of terrorist activity and threat, contributing to a more stable and secure environment. However, vigilance and preventive measures remain essential to maintain this status.

5.3.3. Comparative Insights. Comparing Nigeria and Ghana, it's evident that Ghana fares better in terms of peace and cooperation, with significantly higher scores in freedom of assembly and movement and a lower level of terrorism threat. In contrast, Nigeria faces severe challenges across all indicators, reflecting a critical need for targeted interventions and reforms to improve security, legal protections, and the overall stability of the country, as seen in Figure 5. These issues require a multifaceted approach, including policy reforms, security enhancements, and international cooperation, to create a more peaceful, just, and inclusive society.

These Gap Frame evaluations provide a starting point for understanding the complex and context-specific nature of peace and cooperation issues in Nigeria and Ghana.
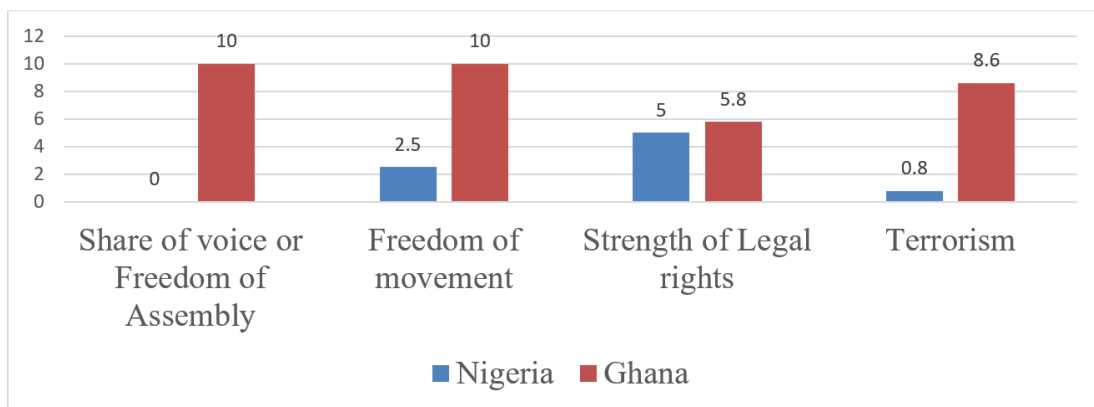

Figure 5. GapFrame comparative analysis of Nigeria and Ghana Peace and Cooperation Issue

However, these scores should be complemented with in-depth analyses and local insights to develop effective strategies and interventions.

5.4. Education Issues

Education is a cornerstone for societal development and empowerment, directly impacting Sustainable

Development Goals 4 and 5, which focus on quality education and gender equality, respectively [9]. The Gap Frame analysis provides a comparative perspective on the educational challenges in Nigeria and Ghana, highlighting areas where urgent attention and reform are needed.

5.4.1. Nigeria's Education Challenges. Primary School Enrolment Rate, Net % (0.0/10): Nigeria's

extremely low score signifies a critical lack of primary school enrolment (see Figure 6). This "Threat" level situation indicates that a significant portion of children are not receiving basic education, necessitating immediate interventions to remove barriers and increase access to education.

Quality of the Educational System (3.1/10): The poor quality of Nigeria's educational system is reflected in its low score, indicating issues with infrastructure, teacher training, curriculum, and funding. Comprehensive reforms are required to address these deficiencies and elevate the standard of education.

Youth in Educational Training (n/a): The absence of data for this indicator highlights a gap in monitoring and assessment, which is critical for understanding and addressing the needs of the youth. Effective strategies are needed to ensure young people receive the education and training necessary for future employment and societal contribution.

Adult Literacy (4.2/10): The adult literacy rate in Nigeria indicates that a significant portion of the adult population lacks basic literacy skills. Targeted programs are needed to improve literacy, which is vital for individuals' economic and social participation.

5.4.2. Ghana's Education. Primary School Enrolment Rate, Net % (5.5/10): Ghana's score, while better than Nigeria's, still indicates challenges in achieving universal primary education. Efforts must continue to ensure every child has access to quality primary education.

Quality of the Educational System (4.7/10): Ghana's educational system shows a slightly better quality than Nigeria's but still requires significant improvement (see Figure 6). Investments in teacher training, infrastructure, and curriculum development are essential to enhance educational standards.

Youth in Educational Training (n/a): Like Nigeria, the lack of data for Ghana impedes a comprehensive understanding of youth education and training. A focus on data collection and analysis is necessary to inform policies and programs targeting youth education.

Adult Literacy (6.7/10): Ghana's higher adult literacy rate compared to Nigeria's reflects better educational outcomes. However, continued efforts are needed to ensure all adults have the literacy skills required for full participation in society.
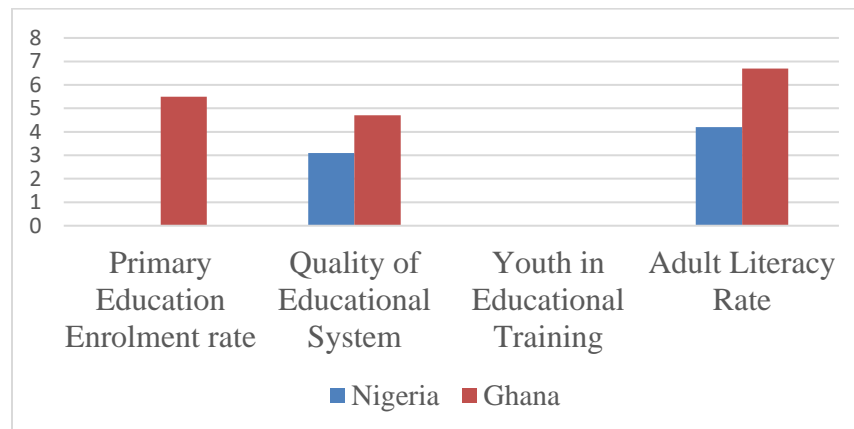

Figure 6. Gap Frame comparative analysis of Nigeria and Ghana Education Issues

5.4.3. Comparative Insights. Our research study shows that Nigeria and Ghana face significant educational challenges, with Nigeria exhibiting more severe issues across all indicators. Ghana's relatively better scores indicate some advancements in education but highlight the need for continued efforts to improve access, quality, and outcomes. For both countries, comprehensive educational reforms are crucial to improve enrolment rates, enhance the quality of education, address data gaps, and increase literacy levels among adults.

The Gap Frame scores provide a baseline understanding of the educational landscape in Nigeria and Ghana. However, these scores should be complemented with detailed local context and additional data to effectively guide policy decisions and interventions aimed at achieving inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all.

6. Critical analysis of National Voluntary Review (NVR)

Nigeria's 2020 NVR focuses on SDG-1, SDG-3, SDG-4, SDG-5, SDG-8, SDG-16, and SDG-17. The basis of focusing on this SDG'S are developmental priorities of President Buhari's administration [10]. SDG-1 identified expansion of social protection and security schemes without discrimination and

strengthening the educational system. Addressing insecurity in the north-eastern part of the country also strengthens the development of women will boost the economy as people currently live below $1.25 daily.

SDG-4 identified the poor quality of education in Nigeria which indirectly affects SDG-8, SDG-1, and SDG-17. The NVR went further to address the fact that 78% of southern-western children could read full sentences whereas only 17% of Norther-eastern children can. Also, the GDP allocated for education is just 1.6% and stated that the country needed to increase this allocation as well as improve the infrastructure, quality, and quantity of Education Staff. SDG5 sheds light on women in elective and managerial positions. They recognized the key area for action to include selecting female candidate for these positions.

SDG-8, the NVR addressed issues of 38% between 15-24 not enrolled in any kind of education, employment, meaning that the youths are unskilled and cannot foster economy development. They identified key areas for action which include vocational training to increase employability. SDG16 addresses the issue of corruption which journalists and media personalities are always attacked and threatened by state security officials as reported by amnesty international, 2017. This tramples on freedom of expression, assembly, and association and identified, the key actions should centre on accelerating the implementation of the African Union protocol on human rights.

7. Critical Analysis of Nigerian National Action Plan

Nigeria has two NAPs: NAP Open Government partnership and The NAP UNS1325. While Nigeria's NAP Open Government Partnership (OGP) refers to Nigeria's National Action Plan as part of its participation in the Open Government Partnership. The NAP outlines the country's commitments for improving transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in governance over a designated time.

The Nigeria's NAP UNSCR 1325 on the other hand, is Nigeria's National Action Plan developed in response to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 [11]. It outlines the country's strategic approach to implementing gender equality and women's involvement in peace and security efforts, as per the global guidelines of UNSCR 1325.

The NAP Open Government partnership captures inclusion and diversity; it sets commitment 14 to increase the voice and enhance participation of the vulnerable by implementing existing policies which promote inclusion and protection of girls and sexual abuse survivors. This will answer SDG-6. Expected outcomes include Gender equality bill. Timeframe

October 2019 till February 2022. Key Indicators of measuring the implementation include on time passage of the bill and percentage compliance with the girl child act. To answer SDG-4, it aims to increase service delivery of education. Its focus was on the staff delivery of the educational system rather than addressing the educational issues included in the NVR as presented in section 3.0 of this paper. Asides that, no action was set to address the issue of Waste.

It addresses insecurity and transactional border crime to improve freedom of movement, by developing actions to increase border patrols and strengthening local vigilante groups to help fight insurgence and kidnapping and increasing civilian and local vigilante groups. The main indicator it sets are the number of kidnap culprits arrested and number of successful return victims. Milestones includes the liberation of Boko Haram occupied areas of parts of northern Nigeria. It also addressed inclusivity of the minority girl child into government policies and justices for crimes such as rape.

Despite most of the work done on peace and cooperation and social integration, it failed to address issues regarding strengthening of the legal right of all its citizens and annulment of the no same-sex act. It failed to show a timeframe and accountability to its stakeholders on the set goals.

8. Critical Analysis of Ghana's National Action Plan for Women and Girls (GHANAP 2)

GHANAP 2 is a strategic initiative designed to build inclusive, secure, and peaceful societies for women and girls in Ghana, aligning with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) [11]. This plan is an evolution from GHANAP 1 (2012-2015), aiming to address its predecessor's challenges and prioritize specific areas for more effective implementation.

8.1. Key Pillars and Goals

GHANAP 2 is structured around four central pillars:

- Participation: This pillar seeks to enhance the participation and representation of women in decision-making and peace processes at all levels, aiming to shift the narrative from women being mere participants to key decision-makers.

- Protection: It focuses on improving measures for the protection and promotion of human rights of women and girls, particularly in conflict situations and peace support operations, ensuring their safety and dignity.

- Prevention: The plan emphasizes the need to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, recognizing this as a prerequisite for a peaceful society.

- Relief, Recovery, and Rehabilitation: It ensures equal access to and provision of specific needs of women and girls in all relief and recovery efforts, acknowledging their unique experiences and needs in such scenarios.

8.2. Challenges and Gaps Identified from GHANAP 1

Despite the initial efforts, GHANAP 1 faced several challenges, which GHANAP 2 seeks to address. These include:

- The absence of a coordinated inter-ministerial steering committee to guide and monitor implementation.

- An insufficient dedicated budget and a robust fundraising strategy to support the initiatives.

- Limited awareness among security institutions and the public, which is crucial for the broader acceptance and success of the plan.

- An absence of a pool of women equipped with the capacity in Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) to lead and advocate for these initiatives effectively.

8.3. Implementation Strategy

GHANAP 2's approach to overcoming these challenges includes:

- Building the capacity of women for increased participation in decision-making and peace processes.

- Developing a critical mass of stakeholders knowledgeable about issues of WPS.

- Strengthening advocacy for the effective implementation of legislations and policies on WPS and enhancing institutional structures.

- Enhancing collaboration between different stakeholders, recognizing the power of collective effort.

- Creating a strong resource base for implementation, acknowledging that financial and material resources are crucial for sustained action.

8.4. Stakeholder Analysis

The plan outlines a well-coordinated approach where different stakeholders, including government bodies, NGOs, and community organizations, pool their efforts together for organized implementation and monitoring. This collective approach is vital for ensuring that the initiatives have a wide-reaching impact and are sustainable in the long term.

In summary, GHANAP 2 represents a comprehensive and thoughtfully structured plan that addresses the previous action plan's challenges and sets specific goals and strategies to promote the rights and participation of women in peace and security matters in Ghana. It reflects an understanding of the nuanced challenges faced in this realm and provides a clear roadmap for addressing them. However, the success of GHANAP 2 will ultimately depend on its effective implementation, continuous monitoring, and the willingness of all stakeholders to adapt and respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. As such, GHANAP 2 is not just a plan but a commitment to ongoing action and advocacy for building a more inclusive and peaceful society for women and girls in Ghana.

9. Critical Analysis: Detailed Comparison of Ghana's GHANAP 2 and Nigeria's NAPs in Women, Peace, and Security

Ghana and Nigeria, as leading nations in West Africa, have both committed to enhancing the roles of women in peace and security by adopting National Action Plans (NAPs) in alignment with the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325. This detailed analysis provides an in-depth comparison of the measures taken by each country, shedding light on their respective strengths, challenges, and the nuances of their approaches.

Ghana's GHANAP 2 (2020-2025)

i.   Comprehensive Approach: GHANAP 2 builds on its predecessor's foundation, aiming to rectify previous shortcomings and significantly boost women's participation in peace and security matters. It outlines a detailed implementation strategy with specific goals, strategies, and indicators for success. This focused approach ensures that every action is targeted and measurable, potentially leading to more effective outcomes. In contrast, Nigeria's broader approach might lack this level of specificity, which could lead to a diffusion of focus and less measurable impacts.

ii. Inclusion and Diversity: Emphasizing the inclusion and representation of women at all decision-making levels, GHANAP 2 sets a clear trajectory for enhancing women's roles. It acknowledges the multifaceted nature of peace and security and the necessity of diverse perspectives. This commitment is backed by concrete strategies to empower women, which seems more structured and direct compared to Nigeria's plan, which, while inclusive, might not provide the same level of detailed roadmap and targeted measures.

iii. Protection Measures: With a strong emphasis on improving the protection and promotion of human rights of women and girls, especially in conflict situations, GHANAP 2 identifies specific areas of vulnerability and outlines targeted strategies for protection. This comprehensive detailing might give Ghana an edge in effectively safeguarding women's rights, as compared to Nigeria, where the protection measures might be broad and less specified.

Nigeria's NAPs:

i. Dual Approach: Nigeria's dual approach, with the NAP Open Government Partnership and NAP UNSCR 1325, covers a wide spectrum, addressing governance issues alongside women's security. This broad scope allows Nigeria to tackle various aspects simultaneously. However, the challenge lies in maintaining a concentrated focus on each area, particularly women's peace and security, which might get overshadowed by broader governance issues, unlike Ghana's more concentrated focus.

ii. Inclusion and Protection: NAP UNSCR 1325 in Nigeria highlights the crucial roles of inclusion and protection, setting specific commitments to elevate the voice of the vulnerable and enhance women's participation in governance and peace processes. This approach is commendable; however, it might benefit from the type of detailed, step-by-step implementation strategy seen in Ghana's GHANAP 2, which could ensure more systematic progress and accountability.

iii. Legal and Policy Framework: With various frameworks supporting women's rights and participation, Nigeria has a solid foundation for action. The challenge, however, lies in the effective implementation and harmonization of these policies to ensure they translate into tangible benefits for women. In comparison, Ghana's targeted approach in GHANAP 2 might provide more focused directives for policy implementation, ensuring that legal and policy measures are effectively coordinated and applied.

Critical Observations:

i. Implementation and Coordination: For GHANAP 2, the real test will be in overcoming the coordination and implementation challenges noted in its first iteration. Effective implementation requires not just a robust plan but also strong leadership, coordination among various stakeholders, and a clear accountability mechanism. Nigeria's dual NAP approach requires meticulous coordination to ensure that each aspect receives the attention it deserves, and that women's peace and security issues are not marginalized.

ii. Resource Allocation: The success of both countries' NAPs hinges significantly on the allocation and efficient use of resources. Adequate funding, human resources, and logistical support are fundamental to bringing these plans to fruition. The commitment of the government and the support of international partners will be crucial in this regard.

iii. Monitoring and Evaluation: Both countries must commit to continuous monitoring and evaluation to assess progress, understand challenges, and recalibrate strategies as needed. Ghana's detailed indicators and expected outcomes provide a clear path for assessment, which Nigeria could emulate to ensure a more structured evaluation process.

Both Ghana and Nigeria have demonstrated a commitment to UNSCR 1325 through their respective NAPs. However, Ghana's GHANAP 2, with its focused approach and detailed implementation strategy, appears to offer a more structured pathway for enhancing women's roles in peace and security. Nigeria's broader scope, while comprehensive, could benefit from more concentrated strategies, enhanced coordination, and a more detailed monitoring mechanism to ensure that women's peace and security issues receive the necessary focus and resources. The ultimate effectiveness of these plans will depend on their robust implementation, continuous monitoring, and the sustained political and societal will to drive the necessary changes.

10. Recommendations for Sustainable Development in Nigeria and Ghana

Based on the comparative Gap Frame analysis, the following detailed recommendations are proposed for Nigeria and Ghana to address challenges in waste management, social integration, peace and cooperation,

and education, thereby fostering sustainable development:

i. Enhance Waste Management Systems

a. Develop and Implement Recycling Programs: Both countries should establish national recycling strategies, including the creation of recycling facilities, community recycling programs, and incentives for businesses and individuals to participate. Educational campaigns should be conducted to raise awareness about the benefits of recycling and proper waste segregation.

b. Improve Wastewater Treatment: Upgrade existing wastewater treatment facilities and construct new ones to meet the increasing demand. Introduce modern treatment technologies and practices, enforce regulations on industrial discharge, and promote the reuse and recycling of treated wastewater for agricultural and industrial purposes.

ii. Promote Social Integration and Inclusivity

a. Enact and Enforce Anti-Discrimination Laws: Both governments should pass comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that protects all citizens, including minority and LGBTQ+ communities. Establish a dedicated body to monitor, report on, and address discrimination cases. Ensure law enforcement agencies are trained to handle such cases sensitively and effectively.

b. Implement Awareness and Education Programs: Launch nationwide campaigns to promote understanding, tolerance, and respect for diversity and human rights. These should include educational programs in schools, community workshops, and media campaigns to challenge stereotypes and promote inclusivity.

iii. Strengthen Peace and Cooperation

a. Improve Legal and Judicial Systems: Undertake judicial reforms to ensure independence, efficiency, and accessibility. Enhance the capacity of legal institutions to handle cases promptly and fairly. Provide legal aid services to ensure access to justice for all citizens.

b. Counter-Terrorism Efforts: Develop a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy that includes intelligence sharing, community policing, and deradicalization programs. Ensure that counter-terrorism measures respect human rights and do not exacerbate tensions.

c. Promote Civic Engagement: Create platforms for dialogue between government and citizens.

Encourage participation in governance through public consultations, participatory budgeting, and community projects. Protect the rights to assembly, expression, and movement through policy reforms and education.

iv. Reform and Invest in Education:

a. Increase Access to Primary Education: Eliminate school fees, provide free school meals, and build schools in underserved areas to address barriers to education. Implement catch-up programs for out-of-school children to integrate them into the education system.

b. Improve Quality of Education: Invest in teacher training, curriculum development, and educational infrastructure. Introduce innovative teaching methods and technology in classrooms. Ensure schools are safe and supportive environments for all students.

c. Focus on Adult Education and Literacy: Establish adult literacy programs and vocational training centres to provide adults with essential skills and knowledge. Promote lifelong learning opportunities for all citizens.

v. Data Collection and Monitoring

a. Enhance Data Systems: Strengthen national statistical offices and data collection methods to provide reliable and timely data. Use technology to improve data collection and analysis. Make data accessible and transparent for informed policymaking and public accountability.

vi. Regional Cooperation and Best Practices

a. Share Knowledge and Strategies: Establish a regional platform for Nigeria, Ghana, and other neighbouring countries to share experiences, strategies, and best practices in addressing common challenges. Organize regular meetings, workshops, and joint projects to facilitate learning and collaboration.

vii. International Support and Collaboration

a. Seek International Partnerships: Engage with international organizations, NGOs, and development partners to gain technical, financial, and strategic support. Participate in global initiatives and agreements to benefit from shared resources and knowledge.

viii. Continuous Evaluation and Adaptation

a. Regularly Update Policies and Strategies: Establish mechanisms for the regular review and evaluation of policies and strategies. Adapt and update them based on feedback, changing conditions, and new insights to ensure they remain effective and relevant.

By adopting these recommendations, Nigeria and Ghana can make significant strides towards addressing their sustainability challenges, improving the quality of life for their citizens, and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. However, it's crucial to recognize that these recommendations should be adapted to the specific context and needs of each country, with the involvement and support of local communities, stakeholders, and international partners.

11. Multistakeholder Identification

To effectively achieve the detailed recommendations for sustainable development in Nigeria and Ghana, various stakeholders need to be engaged. Their involvement and collaboration are crucial to the success of each initiative:

Enhance Waste Management Systems:

- Government Ministries and Agencies: Environmental protection, urban planning, and local government bodies.

- Private Sector: Waste management companies, recycling firms, and industrial organizations.

- Communities: Local community leaders, residents, and community-based organizations.

- NGOs and Environmental Groups: Organizations focused on environmental protection and sustainability.

- International Partners: Development agencies and international environmental organizations.

Promote Social Integration and Inclusivity

- Government: Ministries of justice, social welfare, and human rights commissions.

- Civil Society: NGOs, advocacy groups, and community organizations working on human rights and social inclusion.

- Educational Institutions: Schools, universities, and training centres to integrate inclusivity in curricula.

- Media: To promote awareness and understanding through campaigns and programming.

- International Human Rights Organizations: To provide support, resources, and monitoring.

Strengthen Peace and Cooperation

- Government: Ministries of justice, interior, and defence; judicial system; and law enforcement agencies.

- Local Communities: Community leaders, peace-building NGOs, and citizen groups.

- International Agencies: UN entities, regional security organizations, and foreign governments for support and collaboration.

- Think Tanks and Academic Institutions: For research, policy analysis, and dialogue facilitation.

Reform and Invest in Education:

- Government: Ministries of education, finance, and local educational authorities.

- Schools and Teachers: To implement and advocate for quality education.

- Parents and Students: To engage in and support educational reforms.

- Private Sector: Businesses and industries to invest in and support educational initiatives.

- International Education Organizations: For expertise, funding, and best practices.

Data Collection and Monitoring

- National Statistics Offices: For data collection and analysis.

- Government Departments: To provide and use data for policymaking.

- Research Institutions and Universities: For independent monitoring and analysis.

- International Organizations: For support, capacity building, and standard setting.

Regional Cooperation and Best Practices

- Regional Bodies: Such as ECOWAS and African Union for policy coordination and support.

- Neighbouring Countries: For knowledge exchange and joint initiatives.

- Regional NGOs and Civil Society: For cross-border collaborations and advocacy.

International Support and Collaboration

- Foreign Governments and International Agencies: For technical and financial support.

- Global NGOs and Foundations: For expertise, resources, and partnerships.

- Multinational Corporations: For investments and corporate social responsibility initiatives.

Continuous Evaluation and Adaptation

- Policy Makers and Government Officials: For regular review and adaptation of policies.

- Monitoring Bodies and Watchdogs: Such as auditor general's office and independent commissions.

- Academia and Think Tanks: For ongoing research, evaluation, and feedback.

- Community Feedback Mechanisms: Including town hall meetings and citizen report cards.

Engaging these stakeholders in a coordinated and collaborative manner is essential for the successful implementation of each recommendation. Their involvement ensures that initiatives are well-informed, inclusive, and sustainable, ultimately leading to meaningful progress in sustainable development.

12. Multistakeholder Management Approach

The stakeholder map approach categorizes stakeholders based on their level of interest and influence. Here's how the stakeholders identified for sustainable development initiatives in Nigeria and Ghana can be managed using this approach:

High Influence, High Interest (Key Players)

These stakeholders have significant power to impact the project and a high level of interest in its success. Engage them closely and regularly.
- Government Ministries and Agencies: They can formulate and enforce policies. Involve them in decision-making and ensure they are accountable for implementing initiatives.

- Private Sector (Waste management companies, businesses, and industries): They have the resources to implement large-scale changes. Collaborate through partnerships, incentives, and regulations.

- International Partners and Agencies: Provide technical, financial, and strategic support. Maintain regular communication and align initiatives with their support frameworks.

High Influence, Low Interest (Keep Satisfied):

The stakeholders have the power to impact the project but may have less interest in its daily operations. Keep them satisfied and informed.

- Regional Bodies (ECOWAS, African Union): They influence regional policies and can provide support. Update them on progress and seek their input for regional alignment.

- Multinational Corporations: Can provide investment and CSR initiatives. Ensure their activities align with sustainable goals and keep them informed about opportunities for involvement.

Low Influence, High Interest (Keep Informed)

The stakeholders are highly interested in the project but have less power to influence its outcomes. Keep them informed and engaged.

- Local Communities and Community-Based Organizations: They are directly affected by the initiatives. Keep them informed through community meetings and involve them in local decision-making.

- Civil Society and NGOs: Can advocate for and support initiatives. Provide regular updates and involve them in awareness campaigns and feedback mechanisms.

- Educational Institutions: Play a role in shaping future generations. Keep them informed and involved in curriculum development and educational reforms.

Low Influence, Low Interest (Monitor)

The stakeholders have minimal interest and influence but should still be monitored for any changes.

- Research Institutions and Universities (outside of direct partnerships): May not be directly involved but can provide valuable insights. Monitor for research developments and potential collaborations.

- Media (not actively involved in campaigns): Has the power to shape public opinion. Monitor media portrayal of initiatives and be ready to provide information and corrections as needed.

- Strategies for Engagement: Regular Meetings and Workshops: For Key Players and those with high interest to keep them engaged and informed.

- Reports and Newsletters: For all categories, especially those to keep satisfied or informed,

providing regular updates on progress, challenges, and opportunities.

- Public Consultations and Forums: Mainly for those with high interest to voice their opinions and provide feedback.

- Surveys and Feedback Mechanisms: To gauge the effectiveness of initiatives and gather suggestions from all stakeholders.

By categorising and engaging stakeholders according to their influence and interest, Nigeria and Ghana can effectively manage their involvement, ensuring that each initiative is well-supported, transparent, and geared towards sustainable success.

13. Conclusion

In conclusion, the comparative Gap Frame analysis of Nigeria and Ghana has provided a detailed and nuanced understanding of the sustainability challenges and development issues facing these two significant African countries. The analysis across the dimensions of waste management, social integration, peace and cooperation, and education reveals both unique and shared obstacles that require a concerted effort from governments, communities, and international partners to overcome.

Nigeria and Ghana, despite their different contexts and scores, share a common imperative: the need to accelerate progress towards sustainable development and improved quality of life for their citizens. Nigeria, with its more severe challenges across all indicators, requires urgent and comprehensive reforms, particularly in enhancing social integration, strengthening peace and cooperation, and improving education. Ghana, while performing comparatively better, still faces significant challenges that must be addressed to sustain its progress and ensure that no one is left behind.

The recommendations provided offer a roadmap for both nations to address their respective issues. These include enhancing waste management systems, promoting social integration, strengthening legal and security frameworks, investing in education, and improving data collection and monitoring. Implementing these strategies will not only move Nigeria and Ghana towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals but also foster a more stable, prosperous, and equitable future for all their citizens.

Ultimately, the journey towards sustainability and improved quality of life is ongoing and requires the commitment and participation of all sectors of society. This analysis and its recommendations should serve as a catalyst for continued dialogue, collaboration, and action among stakeholders at all levels. As Nigeria and Ghana continue to navigate their unique paths, the lessons learned, and the progress made will offer valuable insights not only for these nations but for the entire African continent and other countries facing similar challenges. The success of these efforts will depend on the sustained commitment, innovation, and resilience of all involved, as they work together to build a more sustainable, inclusive, and prosperous future.

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