GLOBALISATION AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA - THE KATSINA STATE EXPERIENCE

Presented by

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INTRODUCTION

The topic given to me presented a multi-layered and compounded issue which must be deconstructed to be fully understood from the experience of Katsina State.

First of all, Globalisation is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon that describes the increasing interconnection and interdependence of countries, economies, cultures, andindividuals across the world.

It is driven by various factors such as advancements in technology, international trade, investment, migration, and the dissemination of knowledge and culture.

And, the regional economic integration is a process through which countries within a specific geographic region collaborate to reduce or remove barriers to trade, investment, and labour mobility.

This integration is often achieved through treaties, agreements, or common rules that aim to create a unified economic space, where goods, services, capital, and sometimes labour can move

more freely. Regional economic integration can take various forms, each representing different levels of commitment and coordination among member countries.

While, sustainable development is a multidisciplinary concept that aims to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Originating from the Brundtland Report published by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, the term has evolved to encompass various economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

In addition to that, several studies have sought to understand why Africa has failed to develop uniformly. For Instance, West African countries which include Nigeria and by extension Katsina State have failed to advance rapidly despite the expansion of globalization and regional economic integration.

Therefore, Globalization has allowed me in the few months I have been the Governor of Katsina State to meet several ambassadors including those of the United Kingdom, Turkey, Bulgaria, Saudi Arabia and Qatar among others.

I have also met with several private sector companies from various countries including China and Turkey. The state has received several proposals to attract investors with a promise of rapid development and economic prosperity.

Conventional wisdom dictates that regional economic integration should yield more results than globalization. Katsina State should trade more with Niger Republic and Benin Republic than it does with China or Turkey. However, the reality is often the opposite.

Most of the imported items in circulation are from other continents and regional integration mechanisms like ECOWAS and AfCFTA have failed to allow states like Katsina to key into international trade effectively.

This is partly because sub-nationals do not have full control over the borders and trade agreements are conducted at the centre.

The border control implication is key because when the borders in Katsina State were closed, beneficial trade activities disappeared.

Renewed interest from local and foreign investors in agriculture and mineral resources presents a new frontier for sustainable development in Katsina State.

We have received proposals for vast investments in agriculture which can lead to export markets.

In term of solid minerals, the state has vast deposits of lithium, gold, emerald, and many other mineral resources which are attracting the interest of foreign companies.

Our experience in Katsina State is to partner with such investors and add as much value to raw materials as possible. This is the key to making it sustainable and increasing the economic prosperity of our people.

Another benefit of globalization is the presence of multilateral organizations such the World Bank, United Nations, and Islamic Development Bank in Nigeria.

Katsina State has been a major beneficiary of their presence with grants, loans, and technical assistance.

The African Development Bank has made a significant impact on the African Project and their push for regional integration can be improved upon.

The African Union's Agenda 2063 must be diffused to sub- national levels to allow Katsina State and others key into it effectively.

However, Globalization and regional economic integration can hamper or promote sustainable development in Africa and Katsina State if utilized properly.

CONCLUSION

Our states need access to global markets for our raw materials and investors should be willing to add value at source. Regional economic integration will benefit states that border or are in close proximity to other countries more than those at that do not.

Finally, my vision for Katsina State is to harness the power of sustainable development from within and then look out to the region and global community to leverage on our competitive and comparative advantages.

THANK YOU!!