

# PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR PERCEPTIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY IN KENYA

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**Practice, Barriers, Stakeholder Participation**



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## **About the Corporate Sustainability Survey Project**

This report seeks to find the public and private sector perceptions about corporate sustainability practices and climate change issues in Kenya. It has been prepared by the Kenya Climate Innovation Center Sustainability Initiative (KCIC-SI).

KCIC-SI is individually funded to collaborate with KCIC Research in the design and analysis of a major comparative survey of sustainability and climate change beliefs amongst the public and business managers in 8 counties in Kenya.

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## **About Kenya Climate Innovation Center- Sustainability Initiative**

KCIC Sustainability Initiative is a platform established by the Kenya Climate Innovation Center to equip decision makers, policy makers and managers with the relevant skills to deliver institutional value through sustainable strategies, while operating in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. We offer a suite of services to embed sustainability into short, medium and long-term strategies. Our approach is designed to support companies and organisations realise specific targets outlined by the Sustainable Development Goals adopted globally in 2015.

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## **Executive Summary**

This paper provides an account of interviews and questionnaire-based surveys of business entities and members of the public in Kenya and their responses to the emerging concept of corporate sustainability and climate change. The study was based within the 8 major towns in Kenya. We aim to explore the current relationship between public and private sector understanding and participation in sustainability issues and how this affects their concept of 'sustainable businesses.'

In the findings section, we first analyze the perceptions about sustainability and climate change concepts, strategies for sustainability integration, as well as the main challenges encountered by private and public sector in sustainability implementation. We present the private and public sector views on the state of corporate sustainability practice in Kenya as well as their participation in tackling the impacts of climate change.

The main finding reported is that majority of members of public surveyed are not aware of corporate sustainability while Kenyan business managers have only a generalist awareness of the concept. Meanwhile, the climate change phenomenon is widely understood by both groups. Our recommendations are that the assistance provided by policymakers and sustainability practitioners with regards to corporate sustainability should be critically reviewed, and this review should seek to understand the challenges faced by public members and businesses in comprehension and adoption of sustainable practices respectively. This report should, therefore, be used in conjunction with associated information when considering the best way to help prepare Kenyan businesses and the members of public for greater involvement in environmental and social best practice.

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## **Abbreviations**

BSDC	Business and Sustainable Development Commission
CBK	Central Bank of Kenya
CESRA	Centre for Social responsibility and accountability Kenya
CS	Corporate Sustainability
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
FKE	Federation of Kenya Employers
GCNK	Global Compact Network Kenya
KAM	Kenya Association of Manufacturers
KCB	Kenya Commercial Bank
KCIC	Kenya Climate Innovation Center
KEPSA	Kenya Private Sector Alliance
MTP III	Medium Term Plan Three
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNGC	United Nations Global Compact
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development

## **1. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS**

The purpose of this discussion paper is to provide a detailed overview of the public and private sector perceptions about the concepts of corporate sustainability and climate change in Kenya. Following a general introduction, the report presents theoretical contributions to sustainability and perception studies. The paper presents findings organized into four sub-sections:

- Key Perceptions regarding sustainability
- Sustainability Integration and Implementation Strategies
- Perceptions about sustainable practices in Kenya
- Perceptions about Climate Change

Because the analyses presented in this paper are quite detailed, we also provide in the next section a very brief summary of the key issues and findings on the topics above. In this way, we seek to make the links between the various components of the project clear. These key issues informed the design of the survey questionnaire. This was augmented by study of the literature of previous surveys, as well as stakeholder consultation process.

### **1.1 Why is This Research Needed?**

- The United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) argues that business managers act as an important link between businesses and society; therefore, they need to support actions directed at reducing the effects of climate change while enhancing sustainable practices in their organizations. Consequently, their perceptions about climate change issues and the sustainability agenda are of importance. Similarly, members of the public are considered to play a key role in the achievement of sustainable development; therefore, their views on sustainability and climate change issues are significant.
- There is a lack of knowledge regarding managers' and public perceptions of climate change and sustainability issues; their participation in sustainable practices; and the barriers they face while incorporating sustainability into their activities.
- Considering the significance of corporate sustainability and climate change issues in Kenya, perceptions among the business managers and members of the public on these concepts need to be understood. This study, therefore, explores those perceptions to allow understanding and incorporation of their concerns and priorities in policy and practice while reflecting the reality they live in with an effort to achieve a sustainable prosperity in Kenya.

## 1.2 What are the Key Findings?

- As compared to business managers, members of the general public are unfamiliar with the idea of 'corporate sustainability' in its contextual sense. However, they appear to identify positively with its values and priorities.
- There is evidence of widespread awareness and concern about climate change and sustainability among business organizations and public sector in Kenya. However, the members of public put more emphasis on personal or social issues as compared to the urgency for mitigating climate change or integrating sustainability principles into their lifestyles.
- The survey indicated a limited understanding of the drivers of climate change among the members of the public. The Kenyan business managers are well aware of the impacts of climate change and the solutions required for mitigating them.
- Members of public perceive the threats of climate change; however, majority sees it as a distant risk that does not necessarily require a sense of urgency in tackling it.
- The study reveals some evidence of willingness to integrate sustainable practices in business operations as well personal lifestyles mainly through contextually defined strategies.
- Business managers' interpretations of corporate sustainability could be viewed in terms of ethics and long-term profitability. Indeed, the practice of CSR is aligned to sustained economic performance and large increase in sales. On the other hand, members of public perceive Corporate Sustainability issues in a variety of ways. In particular, the willingness of companies to give back to the society is widely associated with the concept.
- While most of the managers attributed their sustainability initiatives and practices to the need to mitigate their company's social and environmental impacts, some use the initiatives to improve brand image, build trust, and reputation. In this effort, stiff business competition is regarded as a major challenge to sustainability integration since businesses are compelled to allocate insufficient resources for achieving sustainability.
- The members of public are quite pessimistic about the possibility to implement Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Kenya by 2030. They are skeptical as to whether government can be 'trusted' to genuinely promote sustainability. This is due to high level of cynicism towards the country's public institutions, including national and county governments. This is reflected in an apparently pervasive lack of trust in the goodwill and integrity of national government, and in doubts

about its ability or willingness to attain positive improvements in the quality of people's lives through adoption of SDGs.

- Overall, whilst there is substantial support for sustainability integration among the business organizations, there is also the substantial need for financial support from investors and the goodwill of the government and other key stakeholders to achieve sustainability integration. Similarly, members of public mentioned the need for financial support to kick-start their journey towards a sustainable lifestyle.

### **1.3 How should the findings be used to influence policy, practice & research?**

- There's a market for sustainable products and services. The public acknowledges their benefits and shares some challenges of access to sustainably produced goods and services.
- Corporate Sustainability practice in Kenya is relatively little known and is not yet deeply rooted in the consciousness of Kenyan public. Taking this into account, companies at the stage of strategy building should strive to make their stakeholders aware of their social and environmental sustainability initiatives.
- There is an immense opportunity for researchers, government agencies and sustainability practitioners to help businesses and members of public understand the links between climate change and their activities. The key to stimulating support for adaptive response or policies to address climate change is to package the issue in ways that align with the key stakeholders.
- Developing stronger linkages between research and awareness campaigns to spread useful information that is perceivable by members of public and business managers is crucial in helping them make informed choices (public) and management decisions (business managers) that will ultimately affect the direction of climate change adaptation in Kenya.
- Members of public view climate change as something that is likely to occur in the future and to 'others' who are probably far away and detached from them. Agencies entrusted with climate change communication should, therefore, endeavor to minimize such separateness from climate change realities by highlighting the fact that climate change impacts are already here. Policymakers should also adopt ways of making climate change and sustainability information more impactful to business managers and members of the public.
- Perceptions of sustainability issues are composite in nature, delineated by divergent expressions of agency, responsibility, and trust. Indeed, a probable alignment with sustainable practices is only likely to be realized if organizations

and individuals find the need to make a difference. Moreover, this urge to act sustainably can be achieved if it is firmly grounded upon the trust bestowed upon the government and its institutional capabilities to deliver the means to achieve the shift to sustainable practices.

- When combined with appropriate stakeholder pressure, regulation can stimulate a revolutionary shift towards sustainable practices especially for firms that are more likely to regard sustainability integration as a reactive issue from the outset.
- That is business organizations that perceive sustainability challenges as business opportunities can have a forerunner advantage over those that don't in the event of new regulatory measures. For policymakers and sustainability practitioners, formulating context specific instruments to help organizations identify sustainable business opportunities in the market may be the way to go.
- This research contributes to corporate sustainability scholarship on a specific level. By focusing on corporate sustainability practices in Kenya, this study contributes knowledge and insights to the relatively new field of corporate sustainability research in developing countries. Findings from the study provides a framework for developing theory about: how sustainable development goals and corporate sustainability initiatives are perceived, how businesses may respond differentially to impacts of climate change, how people and business organization integrate sustainability into their daily activities, and whether an active corporate sustainability agenda may give businesses a competitive advantage in times of demand for sustainable products or services.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

This report seeks to establish public and managers' practice and perceptions about corporate sustainability and climate change issues in Kenya. It has been prepared by Kenya Climate Innovation Center. The research has involved exploration of the attitudes and feelings of members of the Kenyan public and business managers towards a variety of social and environmental issues within the Kenyan context. This section establishes the research background, objectives, research contribution and the structure of the report.

### **2.1 Background**

Over the past twenty years, a growing body of research has focused on understanding public and private sector perceptions of sustainability and climate change. The analysis involved how people and businesses recognize, understand, practice and respond to climate change risks among other sustainability challenges (Aghion, et al. 2016; Bassi and Zenghelis 2014; Pattberg 2012; Øyvind 2009; Figge, et al. 2002). Exploring these aspects of climate change and sustainability is central to framing the socio-environmental contexts within which researchers and policymakers function. As a consequence, public and private sector perceptions act as compelling factors in defining these issues.

Up to now, most studies on perceptions of climate change and sustainability have been locally situated (e.g. (Hansen, Sato and Ruedy 2012; Taylor, et al. 2014; Ogalleh, et al. 2012; Onduru and Du Preez 2008; Fernández-Llamazares, et al. 2016; Tascioglu 2014). This research takes on this place-based research approach because there is an agreement that people are good natural observers of their local environment hence the appreciation for their perceptions, which are situated in unique cultural and ecological contexts. We recognize that such insights can provide important models and unique understandings of the concepts of corporate sustainability and climate change. The research adopts a comparative study across different stakeholders in the Kenyan corporate sector. Our approach is unique among comparative studies since the comparisons employed cut across different cultural and socio-economic contexts among the business managers and members of the public. We also conduct standardized data collection using locally-relevant indicators across a variety of contexts.

## **2.2 Research Objectives**

This study attempts to evaluate the perceptions and commitments accorded to climate change and sustainability issues by contemporary Kenyan companies and members of the public. Concurrently, we will endeavor to determine the motivations for adopting sustainable practices and the barriers encountered in sustainability implementation. By means of both qualitative and quantitative research approach, the study specifically addresses key sustainability and climate change themes in Kenya as perceived by members of the general public and managers from the private sector. This results in a set of identified 'motivators', 'strategies', 'developments' and 'barriers' to climate change mitigation and sustainability integration, as a basic framework for the alignment of the national strategic goals with corporate and individual levels of sustainability practice.

While a number of studies have investigated the corporate sustainability and climate change issues in recent years, these issue remains relatively understudied within the context of corporate performance in a developing economy. In fact, researchers have observed that very limited attention has been focused on understanding the motives for corporate virtue, challenges encountered in sustainability integration and perceptions about these concepts among business managers and members of the general public.

In this study, we attempt to bridge this gap with a quantitative exploratory study conducted with managers from over 209 Kenyan businesses and private sector organizations. We examine their views on why their own firms engage in corporate sustainability, how they perceive the concepts of sustainability and climate change, how they integrate sustainability in their activities as well as the barriers encountered in the process. To gain a comparative outlook in this research, we employ a structured survey to assess the views of 1523 members of public on these issues.

With this in mind, and drawing from the existing literature on the identified themes, this study attempts to portray the practice of and the perceptions about corporate sustainability and climate change in Kenya. To this end, the paper is built around the following five questions:

First, how do managers and the members of the public in this sample perceive of the terms corporate sustainability, corporate social responsibility and climate change? Second, how do managers and members of the public integrate sustainability in their business operations and lifestyles respectively? Third, what are some of the barriers encountered by members of public and managers in the sample in their attempts to



implement sustainability? What kind of support do they need to overcome these barriers? Fourth, how do members of the public and managers in the sample perceive the state of sustainable practices in Kenya? Fifth, how do managers and members of public in Kenya perceive the impacts of climate change as well as their roles in climate change mitigation?

### **2.3 Research Contribution**

Answering the questions above can make several useful contributions to the climate change and corporate sustainability literature and practice. In general, understanding corporate and public motives to engage in sustainability initiatives can assist sustainability practitioners and researchers predict when firms are likely to engage in such activities and advance various strategies for integration. Research on these concepts can also help Kenyan researchers, managers, policymakers, and members of the general public establish effective strategies for engaging the corporate sector in the sustainability agenda.

This study can also provide insight into strategies employed by firms in dealing with climate change impacts as well as sustainability integration – a critical component of effective strategic management (see Arijit , Lang and Baumgartner 2017). This research also contributes to corporate sustainability scholarship on a specific level. By focusing on corporate sustainability practices in Kenya, this study contributes knowledge and insights to the relatively new field of corporate sustainability research in developing countries. Findings from the study also provide a framework for developing theory about: how sustainable development goals and corporate sustainability initiatives are perceived, how businesses may respond differentially to impacts of climate change, how people and business organization integrate sustainability into their daily activities, and whether an active corporate sustainability agenda may give businesses a competitive advantage in times of demand for sustainable products or services.

Considering the significance of corporate sustainability and climate change issues; their perceptions among the business managers and members of the public need to be understood. In Kenya, just like other developing countries, business managers act as an important link between businesses and society; therefore, their perception of climate change issues and the sustainability agenda is of importance. Similarly, members of the public are considered to play a key role in the achievement of sustainable development; therefore, their views on sustainability and climate change issues are significant.

## **2.4 Content of the Report**

The rest of the report is structured as follows: The section that follows describes the research's point of departure. Following that, the qualitative and quantitative research approaches employed in the study is addressed, which are tailored to analyze the defined areas of interest. Next, the paper describes the main findings of the research within the private sector and members of the public, specifically addressing the practice of and perceptions about sustainability and climate change in Kenya. This section is also accompanied by synthesis of the findings on (1) Perceptions about CS and CSR; (2) sustainability implementation by businesses and members of public; (3) sustainable practice in Kenya; and (4) Perceptions about climate change and the strategies for tackling its impacts. The paper concludes with implications of the research findings, general research outlook and suggestions for further research on this subject.

### **3. POINT OF DEPARTURE**

#### **3.1 Defining Sustainability, Corporate Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility**

The conventional view on sustainable development puts emphasis on balancing social, economic, and environmental factors, in a framework referred to as the triple bottom line (see Elkington 1994). Considering sustainability within the business sector, all the pillars of sustainable development are a relevant point of focus. This is compounded by the fact that sustainability paradigm in one guise or another has been accepted as an important aspect of the modern Kenyan business landscape.

In recent times, the concepts of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and corporate sustainability (CS) have received increasing amounts of attention from both researchers and practitioners (Steurer , et al. 2005; Figge and Hahn 2004). In 1987, the Brundtland Commission described sustainability as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED 1987). The deliberations in the “Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future” emphasized on resource-efficiency and sustainability as organizations and individuals interact with the natural environment (Montiel 2008; Van Marrewijk 2003). Following the commission’s assessment of sustainability, corporate social responsibility and corporate sustainability have undergone multiple conceptual expansions and framing as researchers and practitioners pursue a deeper understanding of these concepts and their relevance within the corporate domain.

Corporate sustainability has invoked various inferences in the literature. According to Amini and Bienstock (2014), a concrete definition of corporate sustainability is achievable through an illustrative framework consisting of elements that are easily understandable and interpretable with respect to actual corporate sustainability activities and actions. In this light, corporate sustainability highlights the linkage between business strategy, innovation, regulatory compliance and sustainability and the significance of balancing the three aspects of sustainability- economic; equity/social; and environmental (Amini and Bienstock 2014, 7). In addition, Labuschagne, Brent and van Erck (2005) point out the necessity of continuous organizational adaptation for strategic business sustainability. According to them, corporate sustainability is the adaptation of the objectives of continuous development for social equity, economic efficiency, and environmental performance, into company's business strategy.

Rezaee (2017, 2) states that corporate sustainability “has recently advanced to the central stage of business strategies, and business scholars now consider CSR as a component of corporate sustainability.” Montiel (2008) views this subsumption as the transitional stage that a CSR implementing firm undergoes on its way to adopting CS. This transitional view on CS-CSR interrelations provides an inclusive platform that encourages both sustainability practitioners and academics to develop greater insights into corporate integration and performance. Inevitably, Elkington’s (2004) triple bottom line approach to Corporate Sustainability advocates that the long-term success of a business or corporation and the environment in which it operates demands an emphasis on integration of social sustainability, environmental sustainability, and economic sustainability.

Essentially, the triple bottom line approach establishes the significance of the interconnection between the three attributes of corporate sustainability (economic, natural environment, and social aspects) derived from their perpetual advantage (Elkington, 2004). Moreover, Elkington asserts that the dynamics which characterize the economic-environmental-social interfaces of sustainability generate unique impacts which compel for integrative strategies for addressing corporate sustainability. Consequently, businesses cannot completely separate their economic sustainability from social and environmental sustainability (Oertwig, et al. 2017; Rezaee 2017).

As can be inferred from the deliberations above, corporate sustainability is not a single faceted concept; it is the multidimensional approach for shaping an equitable, ethical, economical and transparent way of doing business while ensuring environmental sustainability (Van Marrewijk 2003).

On the other hand, with reference to Corporate Social Responsibility, Van Marrewijk (2003) asserts that the “one solution fits all” approach to CSR is too vague to be useful in academic debate or incorporate implementation. He proposes an alternative definition that focuses on an organization’s stage of development, awareness, and ambition. However, Smith (2011) sees this approach as ill-advised because “it exacerbates the problem of corporations having great difficulty implementing programs that can be managed and measured effectively” (Smith 2011, 3).

In an attempt to find a definition of CSR that can be universally applied, (ISO 2010) identifies seven core concepts with a substantial focus on stakeholder management and ethical behavior, all of which are parts of most current CSR definitions (Smith 2011). The core subjects of social responsibility include organizational governance; community involvement and development; human rights; labor practices; the environment; fair operating practices and consumer issues (ISO 2010).

As various businesses pursue the voluntary commitment to Corporate Sustainability and CSR in Kenya, each presents views on these concepts that align with their experiences. In the same manner, the current meanings ascribed to these concepts in practice and academia is therefore often biased towards specific interests and experiences.

### **3.2 Public and private sector perceptions of corporate sustainability and climate change**

Perceptions are non-static and dependent on many factors. For instance, while for some organizations and members of the public, unsustainable practices might generate anxiety and concern while others can be completely unaware or even unconcerned about them. Oltra and Sala (2014) suggest that such complexity in public perceptions of sustainability issues should direct research on perception of risks associated with unsustainability to incline towards the following themes: “a) identification and accounts of the public concerns associated with risk, b) contextualization of risk situations, c) identification of the cultural meanings and associations linked to specific risk areas; d) articulation of policy objectives in risk beyond risk minimization, such as improving equity and institutional trust and reducing inequality and vulnerability, e) designing programs for participation and joint decision making; f) designing programs for the evaluation of risk management and organizational structures to identify, monitor and control risks” (Oltra and Sala 2014, 5).

On a more general level, public and private sector opinions and concerns about corporate sustainability have not been well researched and documented in Kenya. On the other hand, levels of awareness on climate change and associated research on perceptions are high (Mutunga, Ndungu and Muendo 2017; Ndambiri , et al. 2012; Ogalleh, et al. 2012; Asayehegn, et al. 2017). These surveys primarily focused on perceptions of smallholder farmers. Ndambiri , et al. (2012) for instance, stated that the majority of the respondents in their study perceive unpredictable climatic variables as a consequence of climate change. Their data also revealed high-level identification of adaptation strategies when respondents were asked how they cope and adapt to climate change and variability. In another instance, using logistic regression model framework to investigated factors influencing peoples’ perception of climate change in Kenya, Ndambiri , et al. (2012) discovered that majority of their respondents (farmers) were well aware that climate was changing. Meanwhile, Mutunga, Ndungu and Muendo (2017) discovered that farmers in drier areas are more conscious of climate change and thus perceive climate change more, compared to those in wetter areas. This is consistent with Howel, et al. (2003) and Brody, Peck and Highfield (2004) findings that

environmental characteristics play an important role in shaping public perceptions of environmental risks.

From a neo-institutional perspective, private sector perceptions of corporate sustainability are most informative when viewed in the appropriate context, which is informed by observed practices and anticipated responsibilities in the environments in which they operate (Hahn 2005). From this standpoint, firms align their practices to their institutional expectations on commitments towards sustainability motivated by the need to gain the social license of operation (Suchman 1995). Such external constraints can have a massive influence on choices that organizations make in terms of adopting sustainable practices. In Kenya for instance, the private sector lobby organization, KEPSA<sup>1</sup> is already contributing towards climate change adaptation initiatives in the country. KEPSA recently participated in a stakeholder consultation forum for mainstreaming climate change into the Medium Term Plan Three (MTP III) for Kenya's vision 2030 development blueprint.

Ability to perceive and associate with what is socially and environmentally responsible is probably the most significant step an organization can take in their journey towards sustainability. In this context, an emphasis on perception of climate change and sustainability concepts is a prerequisite for sustainability implementation.

### **3.3 Public and Private Sector Engagement on Corporate Sustainability**

Against the backdrop of a biosphere clinging to a shrinking natural resource base and societies shackled by inequality, several approaches have been employed to minimize impact while enhancing sustainability. From a business perspective, Rogelio and Kallenberg (2003) maintain that firms can activate the impetus for enhanced operational efficiency through adoption of sustainable practices. This is confirmed by Schaltegger and Synnestvedt (2002) who asserts that the potential for long-term profitability of a firm is pegged on its nature of engagement with environmental and social issues. On the basis of their empirical study, there is evidence of association environmental sustainability and economic success of a business organization.

Businesses, regardless of their size, are central to sustainable development. As mentioned before, 90% of active businesses in Kenya are SMEs. While individual SMEs naturally are smaller and are presumed to have less impact on sustainability than larger enterprises, the fact is that smaller and medium enterprises dominate the

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<sup>1</sup> See "Your Climate Change and Business Briefing Note Series, April 2014". The business case for action on climate change builds on the notion that the private sector can lessen its risk through planning, and at the same time act on opportunities. <http://kepsa.or.ke/2017/03/22/15788/>

Kenyan business landscape (KNBS 2017). Therefore, after examining what sustainability means for them, businesses have to learn how they can incorporate the social and environmental concerns into their strategies so as to address their social and environmental impacts while staying competitive. It is important to note that firms have different approaches to and motivations for engaging in sustainable practices. They also differ in how these practices are integrated into management values and commitments towards sustainability. In some instances, firms engage in sustainable practice owing to institutional pressure hence diminishing the correlation between management values and sustainability practices (Kaplan and Norton 2001). In other cases, the choice to engage in and integrate sustainable practices into business strategy can be the management's long-term commitment to sustainability (Figge, et al. 2002).

In recent times, corporations in Kenya have regarded corporate sustainability as the panacea which will reduce the country's poverty index, enhance social equity and combat environmental degradation. Bob Collymore, the CEO of Safaricom (largest telecom company in Eastern Africa) and a commissioner in the Business and Sustainable Development Commission (BSDC), stated<sup>2</sup> that, "the fact that the poverty index in Kenya still sits above 40 means that businesses must take a leading role in fixing these problems by leveraging their greater ability to create jobs, to innovate and to drive economic growth."

From a public sector perspective, it has been argued that one of the main rationales for effective public engagement in sustainability and climate change issues is that they are key stakeholders and can greatly influence the nature of decisions geared towards the sustainability agenda (NRC 1996). Public participation in sustainability is also important in understanding the potential link between organizations' sustainability performance in the public policy and corporate sustainability debate (Darnall 2009).

However, while previous research largely shows the importance of private sector engagement in sustainability, their success is still dependent on their strategic engagement with their stakeholders (mostly members of the public). Those advancing for a greater level of public engagement in sustainability decision making argues that "local knowledge should never be ignored by planners seeking to improve the lives of communities experiencing the greatest social and environmental risks" (Corburn 2003, 420). Similarly, Cass (2006) identifies normative, substantive and instrumental

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<sup>2</sup> Sustainable business models could open economic opportunities worth at least US\$12 trillion and up to 380 million jobs a year by 2030. This was recently revealed by more than 35 CEOs and civil society leaders of the Business & Sustainable Development Commission. See: <http://biasharaleo.co.ke/index.php/2017/02/20/bob-collymore-businesses-must-play-an-active-role-in-fixing-the-global-problems/>

justifications for fostering public participation in environmental decision making. Either way, a range of barriers still exist in engagement in sustainability issues among businesses and members of the public. Del Brio and Junquera (2003) argues that in order to engage in sustainability effectively, firms (especially those smaller in size) must overcome barriers such as inadequate financial resources, the peculiar characteristics of their organizational structure, reactive approach to management (only implementing what legislation require), lack of sustainability training, the limited level of technological access, and the perception for a low level of innovation.

As the concept of corporate sustainability becomes embedded into Kenya's business vocabulary and practice, there is a little doubt that firms have to get support in their engagement with sustainability. The foundation for the current study is that there is specific kind of support which individual businesses and organizations might consider to be lacking in their attempts to engage in sustainable practices. Engagement in sustainability here can be understood as a means with which firms work collaboratively with and through members of the public, consumers and other stakeholders to address issues affecting their social and environmental well-being.

### **3.4 Climate Change Risk Communication**

By covering news, and vital events, the daily media shape the dominant cultural, social and political picture of society including their perceptions about climate change. Accordingly, Brody, Peck, and Highfield (2004) assert that it is imperative that the members of public are granted access to accurate information in an apprehensible format.

According to Mittal and Mittal (2013), mass media can be divided into two categories: traditional mass media (print newspapers, radio, and television) and "new" media (organizational websites, personal websites, and blogs). Different types of communication channels can play a distinct role during in the public perceptions of climate change issues. Rogers' (1962) "Diffusion theory" predicts that mass media channels are more effective at generating awareness knowledge and are thus relatively more important at disseminating knowledge about climate change. Regardless of the significant role of mass media in enhancing climate change knowledge transfer, interpersonal channels of communication still allow for a two-way exchange of information. The bidirectional flow of information is therefore more likely to shape attitudes, which means that interpersonal channels are relatively more important at the "persuasion stage" in the climate change communication strategy.

Numerous efforts have been made in the last years to convey information about climate change in Kenya. The information is mainly available for the public through TV and



Radio commercials. Research in the field of climate change risk communication is very low. Murungi (2013) analyses the strategies for climate change communication on the arid and semi-arid areas in Kenya with a focus on arid lands information network. Oltra and Sala (2014) states that Public communication in relation to environmental risks is often aimed at:

1. Increasing public awareness and understanding of environmental risks
2. Modifying individuals' attitudes and risk perception from environmental risks
3. Stimulating actions to reduce environmental risks
4. Stimulating action to protect from or minimize exposure to environmental risks.

Irwin (1995) advanced the “public ignorance model” which proposed that a change in knowledge produces a change in behavior, following a linear path from knowledge, awareness to intention and behavior. So, for instance, members of public being alerted about the risks of climate change will take some action to mitigate or adapt to the phenomenon. Or, for example, informing the public about the impacts of fossils fuel on global warming will contribute to reducing the use of a private car. This model might be partially right, as sometimes the level of understanding about a particular risk, such as climate change, among the public is significantly low (Oltra and Sala 2014). However, the inclusion of climate change messages in mainstream media over sustained periods of time does not require firms and other stakeholders to abandon other means of creating awareness.

According to EPA (1991), there are limitations associated with communication of environmental risks to members of the public. Some include: messages delivered via mass media might be highly technical for laypeople or they might find difficulties in assessing them; source problems, that is, risk communicators might have limitations in their message delivery; oversimplification, bias in media coverage; and receiver problems (from lack of interest to difficulties in understanding). Therefore, it is necessary to deliver effective content and conduct testing of messages before delivery. Additionally, Wartenberg (2009) proposes a careful consideration of the audience so as to tailor receiver-compatible content. Other strategies include improving the quality and the visual display of the information transmitted so as to enhance appeal (Wartenberg 2009).

Effective delivery of climate change messages requires strategic selection of media designed to reach specific stakeholders. Each stakeholder will have a different salient audience. For business organizations, customers and investors can be the targeted audience, but for government or regulatory agencies, firms and members of public may be of particular significance. Depending on the target audience, communicators need to identify key stakeholders and segments first and then establish the proper channels to deliver the message on climate change.

### 3.5 Corporate Sustainability in Kenya

In terms of Corporate Sustainability policy and practice, Kenya, among other African countries, only recently started to pursue the agenda. The concept is still subject to varied interpretations, conceptualizations, and operationalization. Cheruiyot and Tarus (2015) attribute this to theoretical underdevelopment and inappropriate contextual application of the concept.

At a national level, a milestone in the diffusion of the corporate sustainability concept and supporting practices has been the formation of the Global Compact Network Kenya (GCNK). The Global Compact Network was first launched in Kenya in 2005 by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) with five local businesses. It was re-launched in 2007 to allow for greater private sector ownership, this time in partnership with a trinity of leading private business organizations in Kenya namely Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM), Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) & Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE). The strategic objective of Global Compact Network Kenya (GCNK) is to spearhead and catalyze actions aimed at promoting good business practices by building capacity and awareness of ethics, integrity and Corporate Social Responsibility in furtherance of the UN Global Compact's 10 principles.

Table 1: Business sectors Registered in the Global Compact Network Kenya

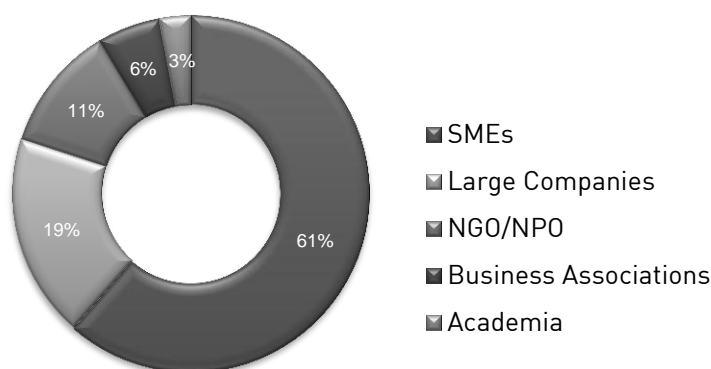
TOP SECTORS	Participants
Support Services	18
Construction & Materials	11
Food Producers	10
Travel & Leisure	7
Technology Hardware & Equipment	7

Source: [www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org)

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, there are 310,000 registered companies in Kenya. However, only 140 companies are participating in the GCNK, representing 0.05% of the total registered businesses in the country. In this regard, the

involvement of the private sector in the sustainability agenda cannot be underscored against the backdrop of Kenya's National Climate Change Action Plan 2013-2017 (NCCAP) report that climate change impacts will cost Kenya 2.4 percent of GDP per year (see (NCCAP 2013).

Figure 1: Categories of organizations participating in the GCNK



Among the limited number of civil society organizations that work on the transparency and sustainability in company operations are Centre for Social responsibility and accountability Kenya (CESRA) and CSR Kenya. Both organizations have formed a network of individuals, organizations, and corporate companies in Kenya dedicated to fostering sustainable best practice between all types of organizations and end users with a purpose of instilling consumer confidence and advancing a trustworthy and socially responsible nation (<http://www.csrkenya.org/>).

While the national legislation includes special provisions on labor rights and environmental conservation, issues of corruption and bribery still plague Kenyan businesses, state departments and agencies (Akech 2011). With this in mind, Corporate Sustainability engagement is critical for Kenyan businesses, in order to avoid or to preempt legal or regulatory sanctions by the government or to gain competitive advantage. Cheruiyot and Tarus (2015) highlight high poverty and inequality levels in Kenya as another motivation for private sector engagement in corporate sustainability. "Therefore, businesses are increasingly expected to address social problems and to shoulder greater social responsibilities, in addition to addressing social issues for which it is more directly responsible, such as environmental pollution, product safety and quality, and social inequities" (Cheruiyot and Tarus 2015, 94).

Therefore, the government's pursuit for sustainable practices backed by the private sector and organizations such as KAM, KEPSA, FKE, CESRA, CSR Kenya and GCNK would imply the success of the corporate sustainability agenda which could be expected to be reflected in the adoption of the GCNK's principles. This plausibility appeared accurate when Kenya Commercial Bank CEO, Joshua Oigara, stated that, "the shift in the perceived role of corporations as solely profit generators to agents of transformative change has become clearer than ever before with SDGs. Business, from micro-enterprises to multinationals, has a vital role to play in achieving each of the SDGs. This means fostering a dynamic and well-functioning business sector, while protecting labor rights and environmental and health standards"<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> KCB Sustainability is anchored in 3Ps i.e. Planet, People and Profit. Their approach involves creation of value for a wide range of stakeholders, including shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers, communities and Government, with particular consideration for the needs of future generation. See: <https://kcbgroup.com/sustainability/>

## **4. RESEARCH APPROACH**

This chapter discusses the research approach that was adopted for the empirical study that examines perceptions on corporate sustainability among Kenyan companies and the members of the public. The empirical work for this study was carried out in Kenya. There were visits to 209 companies comprising large organizations and SMEs operating in Kenya. Companies were chosen from different industries including Tourism, Finance, Health, Agriculture, Transport & Infrastructure, Building & construction and ICT.

The research population consisted of 1523 respondents (members of the public) and 209 company representatives constituting a range of industries. The size of companies sampled in the study ranged from 10 to above 1000 employees. Data was gathered throughout the month of August 2016. A quantitative survey-based methodology, supplemented by a small number of qualitative interviews was used to collect the data. In total, 1723 questionnaire surveys (for public members and business leaders) and 30 qualitative interviews (with business leaders) were administered in eight major towns across the eight counties of Kenya.

### **4.1 Study Context**

In developing economies like Kenya, small, medium and large enterprises form the backbone of the economy. Despite this, the business sector has received criticism in recent times regarding the negative social and environmental impacts of their operations and their hesitance in embracing sustainable practices (Constantine 2016). In addition, according to the 2017 survey by KNBS, 80 percent of the 800,000 jobs created in the year came from the informal sector which is dominated by the SMEs. Since these enterprises represent 98 percent of all business in Kenya (KNBS 2017), they have a huge potential for contributing to a more sustainable world. However, most existing research on sustainability has focused exclusively on large companies, yielding findings which may not completely align with small enterprises in developing economies (Mwangi, et al. 2013).

Across both private and public sectors, large enterprises often have teams of decision makers which yield a variety of opinions and approaches to business operations and strategies (Baden-Fuller 2003). In contrast, the business owner or manager often makes all the decisions in small enterprises with less than 10 employees. In this case, the manager's perception about sustainability and climate change issues are likely to

influence the business's priorities which become particularly striking when studying SMEs' perception of sustainability (Wicker and Becken 2013).

Embedding sustainability in business practices can minimize businesses' environmental and social impacts. As stated above, SMEs are an important backbone for the Kenyan economy and often integral to the supply chain of larger enterprises. While large firms are embracing and benefitting from sustainability (Pilot 2014), the Kenyan SMEs are being left behind (Gatukui and Gatuse 2014). We, therefore, study the perception of the Kenyan business leaders, members of the public, government representatives and members of the civil society about corporate sustainability and climate change. It is worth noting that the role of the private sector and research was very much overlooked in the implementation of the MDGs in Kenya (UNDP 2017). It was only in the latter part of the MDGs that some outreach activities with the private sector started to take off, which had little or no impact on the implementation of the MDGs (UNDP 2017). With the spirit of leaving no one behind, this study puts significance on revealing the views of relevant actors and players on sustainability and implementation of the SDGs in Kenya.

## **4.2 Interview sessions**

The aim of the key informant interviews was to investigate further the perceptions of business leaders regarding sustainability and climate change. Before the individual interviews, the informants were provided written and verbal information concerning the study and informed consent was obtained. Interviews were conducted with Senior Managers, Directors, and CEOs of companies in the eight locations whose responsibilities are solely in management. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. The selection of interviewees was judged by the researchers to be the most appropriate because we observe that strategic sustainability decisions are made at the executive level of business leadership.

The companies contacted had all responded to the original survey questionnaire. They were then selected to be a representative sample of industry sector, size of the company, and geographical location. The interviewees agreed to participate in a voice-recorded interview through introductory telephone communication. Each agreed to a visit in their respective office timed for their convenience to participate in a face-to-face interview with the researchers. All interviews were recorded digitally. The objectives of the interviews were to:

- 1) Investigate the degree to which business leaders understand the concept of corporate sustainability and climate change;
- 2) Assess how the businesses integrate sustainability in their competitive strategies and challenges encountered while doing so;
- 3) Identify how businesses are implementing corporate sustainability; and
- 4) Investigate specific solutions that organizations propose to address climate change.

To achieve this, respondents were asked how their organization:

- had been affected by climate change;
- integrated sustainability in their business operations;
- Perceive the sustainable development goals
- Propose strategies for effective implementation of the sustainable development goals
- Prefer to receive information on climate change and sustainability

The methodology is based on analyzing the perspectives of managers in regards to sustainability and climate change issues. The interviews focused on informants' views on climate and sustainability issues. An interview guide was used and structured according to the purpose of this study. This approach was used to ensure that important points were covered and questions tailored to the relevant issues. The collected information is used to examine and develop an understanding of the CEO's perceptions about climate change and sustainability practices or initiatives.

It is important to mention that secondary documents and archival records were also used to support participant contributions. The authors were not part of the research team, but were granted access to the data and used them on a secondary basis.

### **4.3 Structured Surveys**

The study covered a total of 1,523 randomly selected members of the public sampled in clusters of households in 8 towns; Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru, Eldoret, Nyeri, Kakamega and Machakos. The survey conducted among the members of the public asked questions related to:

- Demographics (i.e., the highest level of education attained, marital status, religion, age, and gender);
- Understanding the sustainability concept (i.e., the meaning of corporate sustainability and sustainable development goals, perceived roles of

stakeholders in implementing SDGs, preference towards companies embracing sustainable practices) and;

- Discernment of Climate Change issues (i.e., understanding of the climate change phenomenon and its impacts, anticipated risks of climate change, perceived roles of businesses in the climate change agenda)
- Preferred media to receive information on climate change and sustainability (i.e., preferred channel and frequency of press release)

In total, 209 questionnaires were delivered to selected companies in eight counties of Kenya. The response rate was enhanced through physical delivery and collection of feedbacks. The range of industry-sector companies responding to our survey was as follows: Tourism (13.46 percent), Finance (6.25 percent), Health (24.04 percent), Agriculture (16.83 percent), Transport & Infrastructure (11.06 percent), Building & construction (21.15 percent) and ICT (7.21 percent).

With regard to the survey conducted among the businesses, there were a total of 23 items in the survey for participants to answer. The estimated survey time was between 10 to 15 minutes. Each section of the instrument served a purpose to examine the respondent's views towards sustainability and climate change issues.

Part I of the survey covered demographic questions. The purpose of the demographics section was to find out population information about respondents in the private sector. There were a total of five demographic questions to be answered from gender, age, religion, physical impairments, and highest education level achieved. Part II on the background of the organization and Part III covered the objective questions of the survey organized into three sections: Section A- sustainability, Section B- Climate Change and Section C- Communicating information on Climate Change and Sustainability.

There were 13 items to be answered in section A of the survey that focused on the respondents' understanding of the concept of corporate sustainability and climate change, interactions with SDGs, motivations for sustainable practices in their organizations, barriers in integrating sustainability in business strategies, role of stakeholders in implementing sustainable practices, and predicted future of sustainability agenda in Kenya. The business executives were also asked to describe the perceived difference between Corporate Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility. Examining the respondents' understanding of the difference between these terminologies was important because it helped to identify different stakeholders' perception about what represents the socio-environmental responsibility of the business and the kind of strategies that might be implemented into different business



environments and the nature of the relation between these concepts and the competitiveness of firms.

Section B of the questionnaire focused on climate change and how business leaders view and act on the issue. There were ten items for consumers to answer. The following thematic areas were explored:

- The idea of climate change and what it meant to the businesses;
- Perceived impacts of climate change on business operations;
- Anticipated risks in the wake of climate change and;
- Strategies for climate change mitigation and adaptation

Section C of the questionnaire focused on the preferred media to receive information on climate change and sustainability by the respondents. There was a total of three items to be answered regarding preferred media of communication. Survey participants were able to choose the preferred media channel, suggest the time of the day favored for communication and how frequent they would wish to access the information. It was important to have a basic understanding of their views on climate change and sustainability communication because the way we relay information on these matters affects the way people think about them. For scientific evidence to shape people's actions – both personal behaviors and business practices– it's crucial that climate change science and sustainability be communicated to the businesses effectively.

#### **4.4 Sample Size and Criteria**

The demographic information gathered by the survey is presented in Table 2. Although the research team attempted to randomly collect the sample data, the gender sample distribution was found to be noticeably skewed toward male respondents, with the male sample group accounting for more than half of the data. There was a broad spread of literacy among the survey respondents from the members of the public category, with 10 percent having only a primary school education and 2 percent no schooling at all. Respondents with a tertiary educational level constituted 43 percent of the total number of public respondents, which is relatively high.

Considering the assumption that sustainability practices implemented by organizations selected for the study would potentially be benchmarks for the rest of organizations in Kenya, the study attempted to select respondents (1523) across the major towns in Kenya. More than half of the respondents (56.7 percent) were selected from Nairobi while those from Kakamega represented 2 percent of the sample size in the public member category.

Table 2: Characteristics of respondents (Members of public) in the study

Gender	Male	Female							Total
Frequency	876	647							1523
%	57.5	42.5							100
Age Category (Years)									
Age	18-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	>50	No answer	
Frequency	385	515	320	155	81	33	30	4	1523
%	25.3	33.8	21.0	10.2	5.3	2.2	2.0	0.26	100
Location of Respondents	Nairobi	Mombasa	Kisumu	Nakuru	Eldoret	Nyeri	Machakos	Kakamega	
Frequency	863	249	118	86	69	62	46	30	1523
%	56.7	16.3	7.7	5.6	4.5	4.1	3.0	2.0	100
Highest Level of Education	High School	Bachelors	Masters Degree	Primary	No formal education	No answer			
Frequency	668	570	79	154	30	22	1523		
%	43.9	37.4	5.2	10.1	2.0	1.4	100		

While individual SMEs naturally are smaller and have less impact on the socio-environmental factors of an economy than larger businesses, the fact is that SMEs dominate the business arena in Africa (see, e.g., ( Fjose, Grünfeld and Green 2010). In Kenya, for example, SMEs constitute 98 percent of all business in Kenya and contribute 3 percent of the GDP (CBK 2017). As a consequence of this dominance, it is quite natural that the SMEs were targeted to participate in the present research. Other organizations from the public and civil society spheres were also interviewed: Two significant county governments were chosen to represent newly formed counties in the interviews. Nine civil society organizations were also invited to participate in the key informant interview.

Among the three sectors of the Kenyan society (public, private, and civil society), a total of 47 organizations were chosen to participate in the key informant interview for this study. The interviews were carried out in a four-month period. Under the “Market sector” category in table 2, the research team was particularly interested in exploring any differences in sustainability perceptions between the different sectors in the Kenyan economy.

Moreover, the participating organizations were chosen according to their sustainability initiatives, indicated by information collected from their websites, as well as their efforts in striking a balance between the pillars of sustainable development, innovation, and business continuity. Eight Medium sized businesses were also considered in accordance to the following criteria: Relevance of the organization in the country’s economic, social, and environmental aspects; leadership image in the economic sector they operate according to information available on the Internet; well-grounded organizational reports including relevant information on how they embed sustainability

actions in the organizational culture and leadership commitment indicating strategic focus on corporate sustainability.

According to the selection criteria presented, the participating organizations in the key informant interview are listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Characteristics of organizations in the study

No. of Employees	Market Sector							Total
	Tourism	Finance	Health	Agriculture	Transport & Infrastructure	Building & construction	ICT	
<10	0	2	30	23	10	15	6	85
11-50	28	8	14	9	7	22	6	94
51-100	0	0	3	1	3	3	1	11
101-500	0	0	2	1	2	2	0	7
501-1000	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
>1001+	0	3	0	1	1	2	1	8
Total Frequency	28	13	50	36	23	44	15	209
%	13.46	6.25	24.04	16.83	11.06	21.15	7.21	100
<b>Organizations in the Key Informant Interview</b>								
<b>Public</b>	Ministries	Regulatory Agencies	County Governments	Public Universities				
	5	4	2	6				17
<b>Civil Society</b>	Advocacy							
	9							9
<b>Private</b>	Telecoms	Healthcare	Transport					
	1	2	1					4

## 4.5 Limitations of methodology

There was a limitation of the type of questions used in the questionnaire. The open-ended and closed pre-structured questions had their own weaknesses. The former required time and mental efforts, and based on the study findings one can see that respondents were hesitant to detail their answers. Meanwhile, the pre-structured questions did not allow respondents to give responses impromptu.

Some of the limitations of this research approach are that the findings offer a specific view related to one country. Although the study was conducted among enterprises and members of the public in Kenya, the topic of sustainability and climate change is regionally and internationally relevant. Consequently, the questionnaire and the interview results are likely to be vulnerable to issues of bias. Enterprises and organizations with a specific interest in corporate sustainability may have been keen to

share their views and because of the localized nature of the research, results do not automatically have national or international significance.

Another limitation of the scope of the study has been caused by the limited amount of time for conducting the research. This has been taken into account when the study was in its initial stage of planning. Thus, for managing both the collection and analysis of data it was decided that the sample had to be reasonable in size. This might have caused a difficulty in drawing any generalizations about all enterprises and other members of the public in Kenya on the basis of the results of the study.

Time restrictions did not allow the inclusion of other methods for data collection and analysis. The research findings are mainly based on analysis of the data from the questionnaires and interviews as the primary source of information. The results of the study would be more grounded if contributed by analysis of focus group discussions with key stakeholders in the corporate sustainability and climate change sectors (i.e., policymakers, CEOs, farmers, students, representatives of inter-governmental organizations, etc.).

Again, two aspects of the survey that could potentially affect the rendering of findings are also acknowledged: To begin, the question on the term corporate social responsibility was always presented after the question on the term corporate sustainability, which could bias the answers regarding the former term. Regardless, the responses in the findings section show the little overlap in respondents' answers to those questions. In this study, respondents were asked about their current perceptions of corporate sustainability. Members of the public might have instead reported what they thought the terms should stand for, which could undermine some of the conclusions. Nevertheless, it is in our view that the majority of the respondents offered their current perceptions and therefore the analysis proceeds accordingly.

Finally, there are other assessments that could have been utilized in this study. The selection of the methodology in this particular research is a reflection of empirical data collected over preferences or views in only eight towns in Kenya. While it can be argued that all the data in this study have a national reach, they may not necessarily reflect the prevalent corporate sustainability practices and opinions on climate change found within each county in Kenya.

## **5. FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS**

The collected data consists of interview notes, and survey responses. In separate post-interview content analysis sessions, the researchers sorted and structured the collected data per interview and per survey. The main recurring themes and concepts in the data led to a set of four project characteristics: 'Perceptions of Sustainability'; 'Sustainability Integration and Implementation'; 'Sustainability in Kenya: Reflections'; and 'Perceptions about Climate Change'. This set of project characteristics acts as a framework of analysis for unveiling the perceptions of the Kenyan public and business managers on sustainability and climate change.

All respondents articulated their views using a variety of discourses and narratives, drawing upon their experience, beliefs, views, and observations. Drawing from the survey and interview findings, it is evident that participants possessed some degree of awareness of sustainability and climate change. Most acknowledged the role of businesses in contributing towards realizing a sustainable Kenya. Despite their concern about climate change and the recognition of its impacts, most managers and members of public considered it a problem that can be tackled through collective action from all stakeholders.

### **5.1 Perceptions Regarding Sustainability**

This section of the paper presents the part of the survey, which was designed to elicit managers' and the members of public's perceptions of sustainability in three areas: Familiarity with sustainable terms, understanding of the sustainable development goals and companies' sustainability priorities.

#### **5.1.1 Familiarity with Sustainability Terms - CS and CSR**

##### ***Corporate Sustainability***

Given how commonly the term 'corporate sustainability' and 'Corporate Social Responsibility' are used in this era marked by global efforts to promote sustainable development, it is important to understand if Kenyan consumers and leaders in the corporate sector have an understanding of the terms. To get a generalized understanding of how business managers perceive the term 'corporate sustainability', the responses were categorized into three themes on a variety of behaviors, attitudes, and practices that elicits concept.

Table 4: Managers' Perceptions of Corporate Sustainability

What do you understand by corporate sustainability?	%	Categories	Theme
Businesses operate sufficiently to ensure profits are made for the continuity and to pursue the set goals	36.8%	Being sustainable means achieving long-term profitability in an ethical manner	Business strategies that ensure ethical profit-making in the long-term
It is a long term ethical corporate practice of the business	12.4%		
Strategies businesses use to survive in the unforeseeable future	4.3%		
Corporate Sustainability is a body that deals with finances	1.4%		
Consistency of businesses in socio-economic environment	6.2%		
Engage in businesses that are environmental friendly to avoid environmental pollution	10.0%	Corporate Sustainability is considered from an environmental perspective	Strong environmental performance indicates commitment to corporate sustainability
Client satisfaction through provision of good products/services	2.9%	Corporate sustainability objectives can provide social value	Profitability with a positive impact on consumers, people and communities
Businesses providing employment opportunities to the public	1.4%		
Proper utilization of resources by businesses for future generation	1.0%		
Businesses working by the standards of sustainability e.g. human rights	1.0%		
Don't Know	22.5%		

As observed in Table 4 above, 22.5 percent of managers in the survey do not understand the term corporate sustainability. For 77.5 percent of managers who indicated that they understand the term, we further examine the terms they associate with the concept. Indeed, 61.1 percent of the managers perceive that businesses are sustainable if they are in for the long haul in terms of profitability and ethical practices. Only 10% of the respondents associated strong environmental performance with corporate sustainability. Meanwhile, 6.3% of business managers link the term 'corporate sustainability' with business objectives that yield social value.

The data collected during interviews with respective business managers did not yield any specific examples of companies or organizations with minimal awareness of the term 'corporate sustainability'. Given the extent to which corporate sustainability may have already diffused across the private sector, perhaps it would be impossible to find a company that is entirely ignorant of this concept. Interestingly, when managers were asked what they understand by the term 'corporate sustainability', many of the responses focused on the wider view based on sustained profitability and environmental conservation:

*"...being in a sound state in terms of finances, environmental care and social responsibility"-*  
(Business Association)

*"...it's all about doing business with the society and environment at large, in mind. It's a new concept of corporate governance where you partner with other players to see that one is not exploiting another"-* (Government ministry)

*"It is mainstreaming issues of environmental along sustainable development priorities. It is looking both externally (looking beyond the business like focusing on the environment, outside of the organization's main business) and internally (focusing on the business and its internal aspects including employees and profit making) e.g. developing environmental systems"-*  
(Environmental Consultancy)

*"...corporate continuity in the long run in three aspects: 1. Ability to sustain a business, 2.focus on the environment, 3.making profits/return on investment"-* (Government Agency)

*"...it is the mainstreaming of issues of environmental sustainability and embracing activities that help minimize wastage and maximize profits"-*(Academia)

*"...is the way the organization sustains itself e.g. how much they spend, revenue they get and the growth curve in terms of human capability and revenue... focus on environmental issues, and social issues."-* (Civil Society)

In the second segment of data collection seeking perceptions of the members of the public on the term 'corporate sustainability', this study employed a survey instrument involving 1523 respondents. We observe that majority (79.8 percent) of the members of the public in the survey were not familiar with the term Corporate Sustainability. Meanwhile, 20.2 percent of the respondents acknowledged that they understand the term and 8.1 percent did not respond. However, although the term was rarely recognized among the members of the public, most of the respondents (43.2 percent) of respondents that understood the term did accurately capture the broad sense of the term as being about a business strategy aimed at helping economic projections/growth in all business aspects.

An important aspect of CS performance of companies depends essentially on how the concept, its dimensions, and mode of practice are perceived by key stakeholders, majorly, the members of the public. The survey findings reveal that majority of the Kenyan public is unaware of the term corporate sustainability in contrast to managers who are mostly well aware of the term. This means that the pressure to operate sustainably is diminished among the business organizations since majority members of the public are unable to demand what they are unaware of (Vogel 2006). Consequently, lack of adequate demand for corporate virtue may diminish the motivation for sustainable practices in sustainably run organizations owing to the risk of their 'good deeds' going unnoticed.

Of the three themes that the business managers associated with the concept of corporate sustainability, majority insisted on profit-making as an important component of corporate sustainability. In fact, it can be observed that the managers associate the term 'sustainability' with persistence of profitability into the future. As Kenya becomes more connected and global challenges like climate change, environmental pollution and social inequality loom over business organizations, it is imperative for business managers to adopt a comprehensive view of corporate sustainability which incorporates all the social, environmental and economic dimensions so as to survive. These findings support other scholars' claims that the changing global business climate may now require companies to find innovative ways of adopting corporate sustainability and perceiving the concept in much wider scope (see Campbell 2007).

As can be understood from the definitions, corporate sustainability is not a single faceted concept but a broad one which generally captures the social, environmental and economic dimensions of an organization's practices.

### ***Corporate Social Responsibility***

Taking into account research results it must be concluded that CSR concept is relatively known among business leaders that operate in Kenya since all of the managers in the survey study responded that they understand the term. However, as observed by Cheruiyot and Tarus (2015), the findings reveal that the term is majorly associated with "incorporation of formal and informal ways in which business makes a contribution to improving governance, social, ethical, labor and environmental conditions". Accordingly, the majority (78.9 percent) of the managers and their designates stated that Corporate Social responsibility entails giving back to the society, 3.8 percent said it is a self-regulated mechanism through personal conviction or will, while 1.4% said that CSR is taking action responsibly to ensure there is no exploitation of resources. Unfortunately, more than 11% percent of respondent business leaders knew nothing or close to nothing about CSR.

These perspectives are supported by statements made by some of the interviewed business managers. Moreover, the informants talked about corporate social responsibility as a concept antithetical to unethical businesses practices. To the managers, this was generally perceived as a good correlation, since they regarded ethics as a very important virtue for the long-term success of business ventures:

*"It is the ethical means of giving back to society using the profits and benefits one gets in the business"*- (Transport and Infrastructure)



*"It is the capacity of an institution to be a source of benefits to stakeholders that are close to it, both in terms of interest and space"-{Academia}*

*"Ability or willingness of any business to observe its surroundings with dignity including the society"- {Professional/Business Association}*

*"It is what an organization endeavors to do which is not its core business e.g. service provision in social related issues like food, water, clothing, and housing to the community"- {Professional Association}*

*"It is the ethical and moral obligation of every business organization worth its salt to embrace and give back to the society" – {Agriculture}*

*"It is an organization's plans and strategies to give back to the communities or the surrounding environment"-{Tourism}*

The findings from the interviews reinforce the perceived lack of consensus and a single standard to define and implement CSR (Hopkins 2004). Consequently, as observed in the statements above, this definitional quandary may generate many diversions in terms of how different CSR practitioners perceive the elements that represent the concept. This can be attributed to the ever-changing and dynamic character of CSR and its expansion of practices in response to stakeholder demands (Snider, Paul Hill and Martin 2003). Moreover, it is worth noting that informants do not emphasize on the 'self-regulatory and voluntary aspect' of CSR implementation. Regardless, the majority of managers' perceptions about CSR generally embodies the promise of societal evolution toward more socially equitable societies in which stakeholder concerns are put into considerations ( similar observations are made by ( Dyllick and Hockerts 2003).

The second section of the survey data collected from the members of public revealed that only 28 percent understood the term Corporate Social Responsibility. When asked about their scope in understanding the concept of corporate social responsibility, most of the respondents (86.8 percent) were of the opinion that CSR referred to the willingness of companies to give back to the society. Another 1.6 percent perceived it as the roles/mandates of the corporations. The Table 5 below shows the themes members of the public associate with the term CSR.

Table 5: Public Perceptions of Corporate Social Responsibility

What do you understand by corporate social responsibility?	Frequency	Percentage
Companies' willing to give back to the society	371	86.8%
Roles/Mandates of the corporate	7	1.6%
Non-profit generating projects in a society	5	1.2%
How companies grow the country's economy	4	0.9%
Encouraging men and women to share ideas on development and public works	3	0.7%
Improving living standards	3	0.7%
Business security	2	0.5%
Short term engagements with developers e.g. China	2	0.5%
Interacting with the people	2	0.5%
Implementation of the law	1	0.2%
No Response	27	6.3%

The results from the survey reveal that majority of the public holds a viewpoint that CSR encompasses the willingness of a business entity to give back to the society. Indeed, they share similar perceptions about the meaning of CSR with the business managers. Nevertheless, despite this very narrow conceptualization of CSR towards society, an increasing number of researchers (see e.g. (Jenkins 2005) have recently highlighted the risks of leaving out critical issues in the concept of CSR if such perception is adopted by CSR practitioners.

### ***Identifying the definitional differences between CS and CSR***

Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Sustainability are terms that are often seen together and sometimes even used interchangeably (Pirnea, Olaru and Moisa 2011). To avoid confusion during their work, in particular when talking to non-specialists, business leaders ought to adopt a pragmatic definition of the sustainable terms that are applicable within a specific context. The study aimed to reveal to what extent the respondents understood the points of difference and congruence between the two terms. More than half (72% percent) of managers indicated that they know a great deal about the difference between sustainability and corporate social responsibility compared to 32.1% of the public who confirmed the same.

Figure 2: Managers' Response on whether there is a difference between CSR and CS

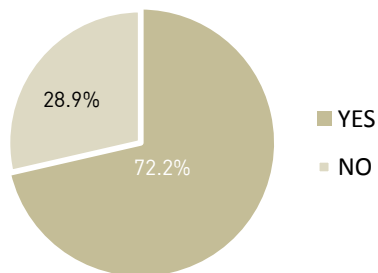
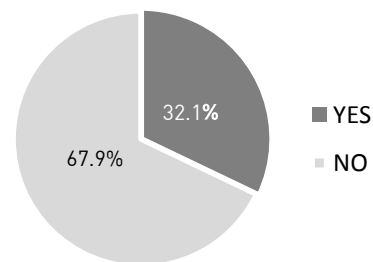


Figure 3: Public Response on whether there is a difference between CSR and CS



Among the managers and civil servants that were interviewed, the difference between corporate sustainability and corporate social responsibility was not very clear. Some pointed out there was a definitional difference between the two terms:

*"Yes. CSR is the ability of an institution to be aware of its surroundings, while corporate sustainability is the ability of any business to stay in business"*-(Professional Association).

*"Yes. CSR is not core business whereas corporate sustainability is integrated to the core business of an organization"*-(Health).

*"Yes. Corporate sustainability looks at the future generation needs whereas CSR looks at the current generation"*-(Government).

*"Yes. CSR is looking outside the organization but Corporate sustainability is looking at the internal systems on how operations are done within the organization"*-(Environment).

*"Yes. Corporate sustainability is considering future generations and goals while CSR is giving back to the society"*-(Communications).

Remarkably, other informants indicated that there was a very slight difference or no difference at all between the meaning of CS and CSR owing to the interdependent relationship between sustainability and corporate responsibility:

*"I don't know the difference"* – (Civil Society).

*"No. They have the same underlying concept of social benefits of common good, however, CSR is mostly used in brand strategic planning whereas Corporate sustainability is a more long-term and an obligatory role to be met as part of corporate governance"*-(Agriculture).

*"There is no difference. To be sustainable you need to be responsible"*-(Academia)

*"There is no difference"*-(Professional Association).

The identification of definitional differences between CS and CSR has been previously addressed, for example by (Montiel 2008; Olaru, et al. 2010 and; Visser 2008). Similarly, this research addresses the specific focus on perceived differences among key actors in the sustainability agenda, that is, members of public and business managers. The research shows that majority of managers are aware of the differences between the two terms. In addition, a pattern emerged in the managers' responses as three core themes could be identified to form the basis upon which the differences in meanings emerged, these are perceived relevance of the concepts in business success, consideration of stakeholder needs, intergenerational equity, and operational principles.

Looking at the definitions above, it seems clear that the terms CSR and CS can mean a number of things to a variety of people and, while there may be no objection to the definitional differences expressed in the findings, they are far from holistic. They highlight the need to derive a set of universally-applicable principles which define sustainability at all scales, disciplines, and aspects of human endeavor (Santillo 2007).

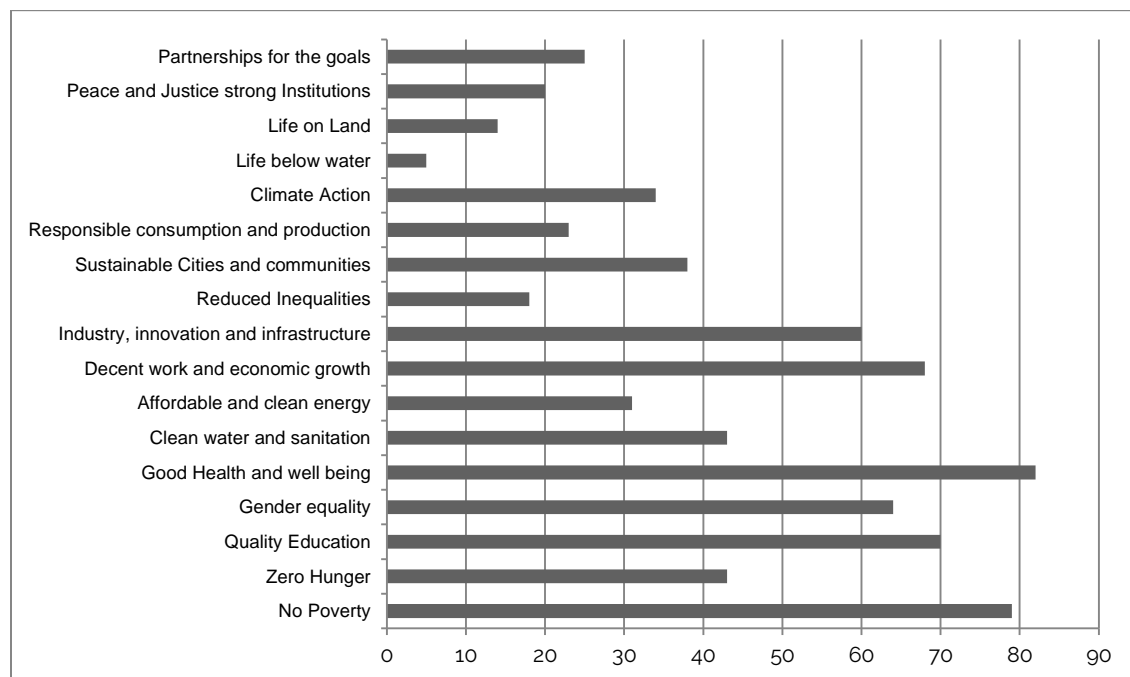
#### **4.1.2 Familiarity with Sustainable Development Goals**

##### ***Awareness of sustainable development goals***

Increasing awareness about SDGs is significant in helping Kenyan businesses get a jumpstart in organizing regional and national partnerships and even positioning themselves as leaders in sustainable development using the goals as a branding keystone. To get involved, business leaders need to be aware of the SDGs and the opportunities present in the 5Ps of the sustainability agenda: Prosperity, People, Planet, Peace, and Partnership (UN 2015). The key question, therefore, was what does Kenyan business managers and experts know about Sustainable Development Goals? The majority (73.7 percent) of the business managers indicated that they know a great deal about SDGs, and about one-third (26.3 percent) indicated that they do not know about sustainable development goals.

Respondents were then asked to rank the 17 sustainable development goals, in order of priority in their business operations or organizational goals. Figure 4 shows that majority of the managers and experts (53.2 percent) regarded 'good health and well-being' as the most important goals that align with their activities or business models. Another 51.3 percent of managers noted 'No poverty' as in line with their business strategies.

Figure 4: UN Sustainable Development Goals aligned with business strategies



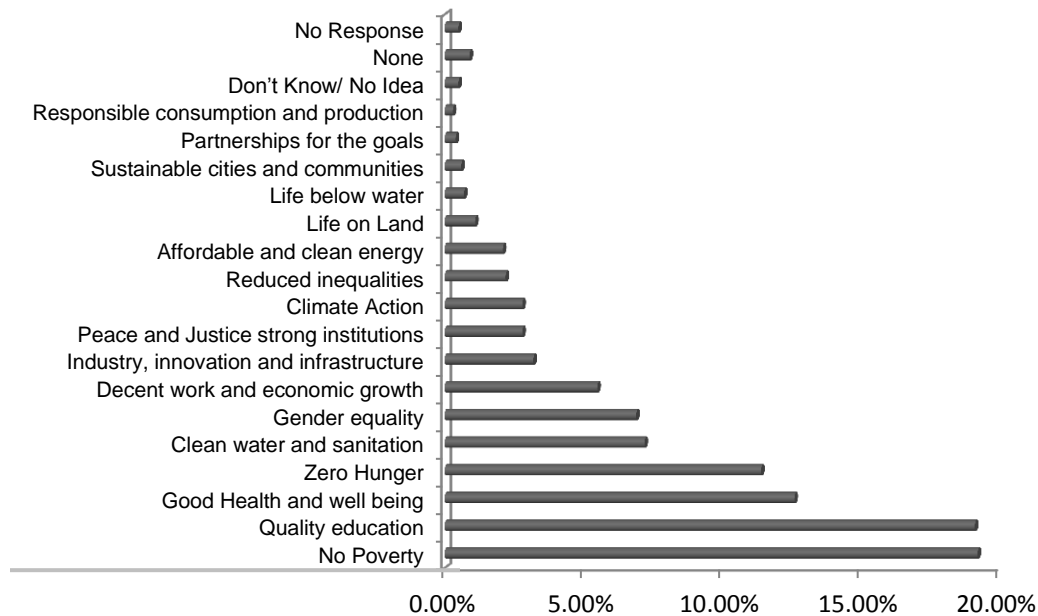
The managers interviewed in this study indicated that they are aware of the SDGs. The passage below outlines how SDGs was discussed by the informants:

*"Yes, I have heard of them. They are the United Nations (UN) set goals after the expiry of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015"- (Government)*

*"Yes, they are precedents of the Millennium Development Goals that expired in 2015"- (Agriculture).*

Similarly, 19.2 percent of the members of the public who participated in the survey identified with Goal number one: 'No poverty'. Indeed, the Sustainable Development Goals underwent two years of painstaking negotiation by all UN Member States with thousands of public interest organizations providing their commitment and expertise. Eradication of poverty in its all forms was given the first priority and it seems to align with the immediate social realities of the respondents. Goal Number 12: Responsible consumption and production received the least association (0.3 percent) with the members of the public.

Figure 5: SDGs that are of significance to the Members of Public



The United Nations emphasizes the significance of collaboration and integrated approaches to effectively implement the SDGs. Accordingly, the majority of the actions aimed at implementing the SDGs will be successful in Kenya if both the private sector and members of public play a critical role in coordinating the efforts towards the attainment of the goals. There is thus the need to assess the awareness and perception of both groups to SDGs as they will play a significant role in the implementation of the targets in both the vision 2030 and SDGs. The findings will be useful to provide evidence to help promote awareness campaigns and thus foster a sense of social responsibility among managers and members of public and expand their perspectives on social and environmental sustainability agenda both locally and regionally.

Figure 4 indicates that more than half of the managers (53 percent) believe that SDG number 3: '*good health and well-being*' is of most priority to them. This was followed by '*No poverty*' and '*quality education*'. These goals align with the social and economic pillar of Kenya's Vision 2030, therefore, enhancing the domestication of SDGs to interpret the goals according to the local development contexts- a major priority of the Kenyan government (Kimani 2016). Meanwhile, survey results represented in Figure 5 reveal that majority of the Kenyan public view 'eradication of poverty' as the most important SDG. A closer look at the priority placed by the public on the need to eliminate poverty is supported by a recent census data which indicated that 45.2 percent of Kenyans are in poverty ( Samoei, et al. 2015).

Similarly, the survey findings that majority (73.7 percent) of the business managers indicated that they know a great deal about SDGs, is supported by Google's city-level data which shows that the search popularity of the term "sustainable development goals" was higher in Nairobi, than in Geneva, Washington, D.C., and New York in 2015<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> In trying to learn a little more about the general public's perceptions of SDGs, Google search terms can paint a picture of the popularity of the SDGs across time and across countries. See <https://www.devex.com/news/sdgs-according-to-google-trends-87188> for 2015 trends.

## 5.2 Sustainability Integration and Implementation

### 5.2.1 Integrating sustainability into business practices and lifestyles

Although many companies have indicated awareness of sustainable terms (CS and CSR) in the previous sections, their focus in sustainability endeavor remains incomplete without implementation of a distinct sustainability strategy. Many social analysts argue that the strategy in question should describe generic possibilities to deal with the challenge of sustainability, for instance, with different environmental and social aspects of business activities (Baumgartner and Ebner 2010).

When asked about what they are doing or intend to do, to integrate the sustainable development goals into their business strategies on both social and environmental aspects, ‘ensuring gender equality in all sectors’ stood out for social aspect at 34.0 percent among the managers. For the company initiatives aimed at integrating environmental sustainability into business operations, 53.6 percent of the managers identified proper waste management as a critical. Table 6 shows companies’ social and environmental sustainability integration practices currently in place to improve and mitigate negative impacts. The table is based on the actual responses and perspectives of managers who were surveyed. After reviewing their responses, the themes in Table 6 are put together to represent the managers’ strategies for integrating and responding to their companies’ sustainability impacts and initiatives.

Table 6: Business sector Initiatives for sustainability integration

Social aspect	Environmental aspect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender equality in all sectors</li> <li>• Equal employment opportunities</li> <li>• Provision of quality goods and services</li> <li>• Gender representation of staff</li> <li>• Support women empowerment</li> <li>• Ensuring employees are well paid and in time</li> <li>• Educating the society</li> <li>• Social and economic empowerment through team building</li> <li>• Provision of health schemes about hygiene</li> <li>• Offering loans at cheaper interest rates</li> <li>• Development of social amenities</li> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Environmental conservation</li> <li>• Work life balance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of power saving equipment</li> <li>• Environmental conservation</li> <li>• Proper waste management</li> <li>• Put more effort on green initiatives</li> <li>• Protect the lives of sea and land creatures</li> <li>• Initiating building resilience to curb climate change risks for businesses</li> <li>• Provision of harmless products which are friendly to the environment</li> <li>• Use of irrigation schemes</li> <li>• City council who collect garbage should be well paid</li> <li>• Registered for incineration</li> <li>• Funding of projects in environmental conservation</li> </ul>



The informants from different sectors have different ways of incorporating corporate sustainability into their strategies including the use of clean energy, involving the community in their business, inculcating CSR in the strategic plan to guide the business, compliance with environmental laws and the sustainability policy, proper waste management, water management, and partnering with others to implement CSR:

*"We invest in the ecosystem of our business, that is, the suppliers, neighbors, communities, employees, shareholders and all other stakeholders. We make the ecosystem happy and healthy across Africa in a sustainable manner by being good. We have to be good to the planet by not harming the environment"* (Manufacturing).

*"I look at the sources of energy and make sure the energy is available. I also make sure that workers are well paid so they can be able to support their families."* (Professional Association)

*"Finance: We are providing financial support to all this green initiatives projects in Turkana. Use of solar energy: We are now moving to wind as we have already moved to geothermal. Use of environment: We fund and support issues that concern the environment. It is now a policy through the relevant ministry. We also want to do this at a global level."* (Government)

*"We have integrated sustainable matters into our curriculum at the university in environmental sustainability and resilience. We provide training to transform the mind-set and attitude of the community in the matters of sustainability."* (Academia)

*"The issues of efficient use of clean energy, engines used in our fleet are cost effective. We do comply with NEMA regulations in responsible disposal of used engine oil, grease, spare parts and scrap. This looks into the goal of clean and healthy environment"* (Transport and Infrastructure)

*"As an association, we engage the society at large in community development and decision-making processes that pertain to this association...we offer outreach clinic to the lower socio economic group of society..."* (Professional/ business Association)

*"We ensure proper waste management, water management, compliance with environmental laws and following the sustainability policy"* (Environment)

*"We partner with other ministries e.g. Ministry of Health to reduce malnutrition and stunted growth. We are also involved with agricultural research and extension services"* (Government Agency)

Remarkably, when asked to describe how they integrate specific sustainable development goals in their business and organizational activities, many strategies emerge, for instance, the managers integrate goal Number 1 (No Poverty) by:

*"Ensuring farmers get the right information and short courses. We advise them on the right seeds to use that are suitable for the environment. Increase in farmers' profit margin is key in fighting rural poverty and ending hunger."* - (Professional Association)

*"We set aside resources to support poverty eradication."* - (Professional Association)

*"We have managed to create jobs both indirectly and directly and about 10,000 farmers benefit from this program and it is not just about the job creation but about the impact it has on the communities on healthy and happy living."* - (Manufacturing)

*"We empower women"* - (Construction).

*"We ensure giving equal opportunities to either gender.....as an organization, we do have a target on gender mainstreaming.....We have disability issues which are also mainstreamed"* - (Agriculture)

*"Through sensitization and Involvement of community on community-based tourism projects"* - (Government)

*"Some of the clients overseas come to participate in building classes and planting trees...we also have specific projects for the poor women in Kibera"* - (Manufacturing).

*"We make donations and help on the case to case basis.....with the fees paid by tourists/guest when they plant trees; we use the money to support the education of children with neighboring schools."* - (Tourism)

In terms of integrating the goal number 1 aimed at achieving zero hunger by 2030, some managers asserted that:

*"We help on issues of malnutrition in the country, clean water, and sanitation"* - (Professional Agency)

*"...Ensure sustainable food production system and implementation of resilient agricultural practices. We also help maintain the ecosystem, and strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change"* - (Government)

*"We have projects on ending hunger and improving nutrition. There is an integrated nutrition project that we run that focus on ensuring food security, maternal health and Children's health."* - (Health)

Other managers emphasize that:

*"Sustainable agriculture is what we are doing by advising farmers to nourish and take care of their cattle so as to increase milk production."* - (Professional Association)

*"We are concerned with sustainable agriculture for food security."* - (Health)

*"We intend to do market access , linking the farmers to the markets and we ensure there is food security by increasing food productivity and ensuring that food quality is adhered to and is of high standards"* -(Agriculture)

#### Other managers comment:

*"We cascade the SDGs down to the common mwananchi...we bring ownership; to localize and contextualize them for livestock farmers needs e.g. helping framers dealing with cattle rustling and by educating farmers"*- (Professional Association)

*"The University offers dietetics as a course"* - (Academia)

*"We have collaborated with other key sectors such as the devolved units and the county governments such as the ministry of agriculture to ensure food security and disease surveillance for plants and animals."* - (Government)

From the findings above, organizations have different approaches to integrating CS into their management values and also share different motivations behind their sustainability commitment. It might be the case that a firm feels institutional pressure and thus perceives that CS integration is more or less a case of 'forced compliance' for instance to *"comply with NEMA regulations in responsible disposal of used engine oil, grease, spare parts and scrap"* (informant in the transport sector). Indeed, there might be these cases where there is little correlation between management values and sustainability practices. On the other hand, the management's approach to CS integration can also be based on their long-term commitment to sustainability. This is true when an informant from the health sector asserts that: *"We are concerned with sustainable agriculture for food security."* All in all, the awareness of SDGs in relation to the general business goals makes it easier for sustainability managers to choose and define how to integrate the goals into business activities ( Benn , Dunphy and Griffiths 2006).

In some of the analyzed cases, the managers in specialized fields identified integration strategies that incorporated SDGs which are in line with their organization activities. For instance, an informant from the health sector emphasized engaging in projects aimed at ensuring food security while improving maternal and children's health.

In some cases, organizational culture can act as a special trigger for corporate sustainability integration besides the company's economic vision and mission (Linnenluecke and Griffiths 2010). In addition to this critical role in motivation for CS integration, organizational culture can also form the initial foundation for establishing sustainability integration strategies at the rejection phase of CS growth (Benn, Dunphy and Griffiths 2006). Majority of managers in the survey study, who were just starting out in the sustainability integration journey therefore embedded "gender equality in all sectors" and encouraged a culture of "energy saving within their premises".

Finally, sustainable integration, as envisioned by the informants, focuses on both sustainability of the environment (e.g., minimizing environmental damage) as well as social concerns, for instance, practicing community development, disease prevention and enhancing food security. Indeed, some studies have argued that adopting a sustainability perspective can actually serve as the impetus for enhanced operational efficiency thus increasing the potential for long-term profitability (Haanaes, et al. 2013). In a related finding in this study, an informant in the manufacturing industry shares their story:

*We use energy saving bulbs in our office premises; no hydrocarbons. We utilize agricultural wastes in Tanzania like the coffee husks, macadamia nuts and saw dust which we use to generate electricity that we use here. To surprise you 80% of our energy consumption is what we generate ourselves, the power grid from Kenya Power serves as standby" (Manufacturing).*

In addition, in a separate study, Hansen et al. (2009) find that improving operational efficiency, along with other sustainability initiatives, can give rise to innovations that inspire new business opportunities.

Developing a sustainable lifestyle requires a lifelong commitment, that is, to learning, experimenting, exploring, and committing to increase sustainable practices (Miller and Bentley 2012). Members of public were asked about the strategies they use to incorporate sustainability into their lifestyle. The survey question wanted to inquire about their personal role and sense of responsibilities for achieving a sustainable lifestyle. Majority of the survey participants (13.3 percent) identified 'providing for self and family' as a significant role in embracing a sustainable lifestyle. Another 12.8 percent identified their roles in environmental conservation, through tree planting as one of the ways to incorporate sustainability into their lifestyles. 26.7 percent of the 1523 respondents either didn't respond or could not name strategies for incorporating sustainability in their lifestyles.

Other responses included: Practicing responsible citizenship (8.9%); Being a role model in environmental conservation in our area (7.9%); Investing in farming (6.8%); Educating

the society/taking my children to school/ getting an education (6.0%); Using alternative sources of energy, and preventing the wastage (2.0%); Creating awareness by promoting sustainability (1.8%); Partnering with the various bodies in sustainability projects (1.6%); Campaigning for good leadership/ electing good and visionary leaders (1.6%); Supporting the poor and disadvantaged families/supporting the less privileged (1.4%); Since I am a county health worker, I advise my community on health issues (1.2%); Coordinating peace with other people (1.2%); Reporting anything that is against development and/or corruption (1.1%); Championing gender equality (1.1%); Serving the public through my own business (1.1%); Creating employment (0.9%); Controlling my expenditure through planning and budgeting (0.8%); Community sensitization/mobilization for people to become better people (0.7%); Challenging the sustainability implementation process (0.3%); Waste management (0.3%); By ensuring all my constitution rights are followed by the government (0.2%); Ensuring that my employees are well paid (0.1%); Maintaining a balanced diet (0.1%); None/Nothing (21.0%); Don't Know/ No Idea (4.1%); and No Response (1.4%).

Encouraging sustainable lifestyles is among the targets in the SDGs and in the UN ten year frameworks of programs on sustainable consumption and production. The survey findings reveal unique manifestations across sustainable lifestyles domains which differ in terms of locations, cultures, and societal organizations. At the same time, lifestyle choices, for instance 'providing for self and family' or 'engaging in tree planting', as revealed in the survey findings, despite the contextual differences, these needs that shape lifestyle choices do share a set of characteristics that help spark interest, motivate action, and reinforce new practices (UN Environment 2016).

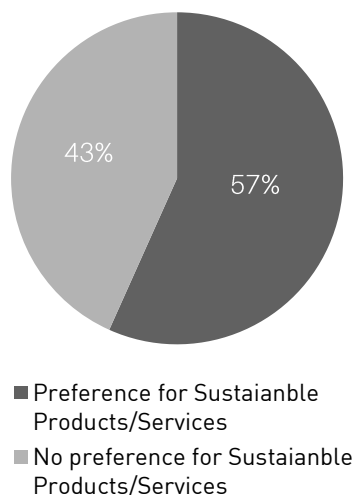
It is important to note that the strategies that the members of public use to integrate sustainability in their lifestyles are inherently holistic yet the basic needs for an inclusive and environmentally sustainable society still emerge. The responses illustrate that there is a tendency to focus on domains such as partnership for sustainable growth; enhancing food security; environmental conservation; supporting visionary leadership; and enhancing well-being. This reflects the opportunity to develop strategies that can help members of public realize their various sustainable lifestyle choices together in a comprehensive, desirable, and achievable manner. Indeed, Brown and Vergragt (2016) suggest that an intentional pursuit of sustainable lifestyles links the agenda to private and public best practices in framing and engagement on the issue. This is important because, reframing aspirations and priorities, supporting behavior change, and shaping new social values is the ultimate goal of integrating sustainability into people's lifestyles (Axon 2017).

Respondents were asked about their preference towards sustainable products/services. A total of 56.7 percent (863 respondents) indicated that they would be willing to purchase products/services from companies that embrace sustainability and reject those that don't. From these findings, we can contend that integrating sustainability values in business operations can contribute to market growth since more than half of the Kenyan public has a preference for sustainable products. Therefore, to start with, firms can use sustainable marketing to differentiate their products based on social and environmental impacts.

On the other hand, 660 respondents (43.3 percent) claimed they do not have any particular preferences for sustainable products/services. For sustainable products to succeed in the market, firms need to act consistently accordingly to their values so as to earn the consumers' trust. Since 122 of public (18.5 percent) who lack the preference for sustainable products claim that their choices are based on quality, which according to them, is not necessarily dependent on product/service sustainability, marketers need to play a vital role in creating inspiring communication and building trust. This is all more important for firms operating in developing economies, where consumers are not as savvy as their counterparts in the developed world (Anayo 2011).

Further, 82 (12.5 percent) claimed to be more concerned about the cost of product/service over the means of production (it does not matter whether it's produced sustainably or not). About 60 respondents who declined the preference for sustainable products/services indicated that they are unable to differentiate them from those that are produced unsustainably. Similarly, other respondents (1.5 percent) claimed that their indifference to sustainable products/services can be attributed to lack of adequate supply in the Kenyan market. It should be noted that 26.8 percent of respondents who declined the preference for sustainable products could not justify their choice.

Figure 6: Preference for sustainable products/services among the Kenyan public.



### 5.2.2 Drivers for implementing sustainable practices

Managers in the survey attributed their sustainability initiatives and practices to the need to mitigate their company's social and environmental impacts. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that managers interviewed consider that sustainable initiatives are associated with positive financial results and good relationship with various stakeholders. All in all, it should be noted that sustainability literature has yielded mixed results in terms of the relationship between sustainable practices and a firm's financial success. For instance, on the one hand, some studies have proposed a positive correlation (see Qingqing and Crowther 2012; Zadeh, et al. 2014; Pilati and Prestamburgo 2016; King and Lenox 2001 and; Dunphy 2011). On the other hand, some studies have suggested limited or lack of association or between a firm's sustainability and profitability (see Aguinis and Glavas 2012; Amit 2014; Shuo, et al. 2015 and; Barnett and Salomon 2006).

When asked about the factors that drive action on sustainability in their organizations, majority (67.9 percent) said they pursued sustainable practices to improve brand image, build trust, and build reputation, 45.9 percent were motivated by the need to save costs, 49.8 percent mentioned the need to increase employee satisfaction, engagement, and retention as the drivers for sustainability (see Figure 7, below). In reference to the Dylick's classification sustainability strategy (Dylick 2000), it is noteworthy to state that the managers in the study have adopted an extroverted – legitimating strategy. This is a sustainability integration approach that focuses on external relationships and the license to operate (Dylick 2000, 66).

Figure 7: Drivers of sustainability integration in select Kenyan companies and organizations.



The following are managers' responses to the motives behind their company's current sustainability initiatives. One manager argues that their desire to achieve "profitability and performance" drives them to pursue sustainable practices.

Another manager asserts that:

*"The fact that Tourism is dependent on nature 70% as well as market drives because consumers are becoming more sustainability-conscious"*-(Tourism)

Other managers argue:

*"Our business is nature-based and we focus on the community and the environment"*-(Civil Society)

*"Availability of funds and show of goodwill by the government"*-(Professional Association)

*"Desire to achieve CSR and it is a mandate by law"*-(Government Agency)



### 5.2.3 Underlying barriers to the broader integration of Corporate Sustainability

In the previous section, majority of the interviewed managers claimed that implementing corporate environmental and social sustainability strategies is imperative to improve the business brand image, build trust, and build the reputation. Despite this encouraging outlook, a confluence of global and local social and environmental challenges is putting more pressure for urgent adoption of corporate social and environmental strategies. According to the survey responses, not enough Kenyan businesses have fully integrated social and environmental sustainability into their long-term decision-making due to a number of challenges: Majority of the respondents (22.5 percent) claimed that stiff business competition compels them to allocate insufficient or no resources for corporate sustainability, 13.9 percent claimed that insufficient funds derail corporate sustainability integration. Similarly, 9.1 percent of the respondents said that high cost of doing business is also a significant barrier to sustainability integration.

The classical and emergent obstacles that organizations face with respect to social and environmental sustainability efforts were investigated in some depth. At this point, it is apposite to note that inadequate finance is the most visible barrier to sustainability integration among the respondents in the survey study. On contrary to this popular belief, Porter and Kramer (2006) maintain that the major obstacle to sustainability integration is primarily due to their failure to link business strategy to sustainability initiatives. They add that to succeed, firms need to perceive sustainability integration as a process of cumulating shared value rather than as a PR campaign (Porter and Kramer 2006).

Regardless, the informants revealed that the biggest challenge with regard to incorporating corporate sustainability in businesses and organizations is financing. It emerged that businesses and organizations are incapacitated because they do not have sufficient funds to integrate corporate sustainability in their business. The respondents alluded to the fact that businesses do not have the extra money to set aside to make sure that their businesses adhere to corporate sustainability:

*“Huge financial cost when you want to integrate sustainability, limited resources, for example, renewable energy, there is new technology coming up in the country therefore there is high cost in terms of corporate sustainability and human nature; the acceptance of the whole corporate sustainability concept is hard and also people being able to access resources and ensure that they are not exploiting the resources in an unsustainable way.”* - (Professional Association)

*“High cost of electricity and erratic power outages and blackouts result in using generators which is a more expensive source of generating electricity.”* - (Agriculture)

*"Lack of funding in projects and programs geared towards sensitizing farmers to catch up with appropriate methods of family techniques."* - (Professional Association)

Other challenges are poor infrastructure, lack of awareness, fluctuation of food commodities prices, unemployment among the youths, community conflicting interest, technical incapability, lack of application of modern technology, lack of goodwill and cooperation from stakeholders:

*"Funding is not enough, resources are inadequate and infrastructure is poor."* - (Government ministry)

*"Inadequate funding particularly in primary health care, the government should provide more funding in addressing preventive diseases"* - (Key private sector player)

*"Lack of awareness and lack of funding"* - (Business/Professional Association)

*"Inadequate funding, price fluctuation of food commodities, lack of application of the modern technology and failure to make a breakthrough in agricultural research"* - (Government ministry)

*"There are delays of protocols, priority issues and lack of sufficient funds"* - (Construction)

*"There is the challenge of lack of cooperation between agencies whose roles overlap with our functions. The stakeholders are also highly disintegrated and to bring them together is a problem. There's also the challenge of funding e.g. for training and facilitation as well as extracting (enacting or implementing) programs"* - (Tourism)

*"energy saving "jikos," we have provided seedlings to the community free of charge but still you will find people cutting down trees especially in Mau forest"* - (Academia)

*"High unemployment among the youth, the government lacks commitment in addressing some of the issues like gender equity"* - (Agriculture)

*"The challenges are enormous because as a profit-making entity we have to do a lot of tradeoffs. We want to take care of the society at large but of course we have to be in existence as a business sense e.g. in compliance with National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) regulations there are a lot of processes one undergoes when setting up a kind of venture of project e.g. a depot and fuel station"* - (Transport and Infrastructure)

*"Community conflicting interests e.g. the community needs water but our main business is connectivity"* - (Communications)

A manager representing a business association mentioned "lack of proper sensitization and lack of good will in terms of implementation by the stakeholders" as another barrier to sustainability integration in the SMEs registered with their body. This barrier was also identified in other source which emphasizes on the significance of SMEs awareness about their social and environmental impacts, and understanding the relevant legislation and how environmental issues affect them (Stokes and Rutherford

2000). Such an approach will help businesses adopt proactive rather than reactive strategies when dealing with sustainability management.

In addition, the dilemma of balancing profitability and integration of sustainability targets for key actors was shown to be a barrier. This mainly relates to the low interest in sustainability considerations, in relation to commercial and functional requirements.

#### **5.2.4 Support Needed to Implement Sustainability**

From the previous findings, the study reveals a disconnect between business operations and sustainability. This observation is majorly attributed to inadequate resource allocation for sustainability implementation. Furthermore, the individuals involved in executing sustainability may be poorly trained and are by large lacking specific skills needed to implement sustainability. Indeed the survival and sustainable growth of businesses and organizations are threatened by obstacles that must be swiftly addressed to ensure sustainable growth. In this regard, managers were asked about the kind of support or tools needed to integrate corporate sustainability into their businesses or organizations. As observed in the previous section, the majority of the respondents (20.6 percent) said they need financial support while 18.2 percent mentioned the need to review government policies so as to achieve higher priority for sustainable business models.

Despite the fact that the suggestions were not directed to a specific entity, the responses were reviewed and assigned to respective stakeholders based on the thematic characteristics. The Table 7 below summarizes the survey findings.

Table 7: Support needed by business organization to enhance sustainability implementation

From Government	%
Government policy review, analysis and proper planning	18.2
Creation of awareness to the public on corporate sustainability	7.2
Reduction of the tax rates	5.3
Provision of education and research services	3.8
Development of projects in infrastructure	2.9
Government should counter intermediaries	2.4
From investors	
Funding e.g. through provision of credit facilities	20.6
From Suppliers	
Provision of quality and affordable products and services	10.5
Provision of proper equipment for waste management	8.1
From Company Management	
Marketing of sustainable products	2.9
Partnership amongst organizations	2.4
Creation of employment to support growth of the businesses	1.9
Encourage a healthy competition amongst organizations	2.4
Don't Know/No response	13.9

The managers that were interviewed generally mentioned financial assistance as the major need. Others required advice on sustainability matters. (Hillary 2000) suggests that this advice should be company specific, face to face and preferably delivered on site. For others, favorable government policies to create enabling environment, awareness creation and elimination of institutional hurdles that hinder corporate sustainability are the main support needed to incorporate sustainability into businesses and organizations:

*"Automated business procedure, financial assistance, and technology assistance"*-(Construction)

*"Good financial support, we also require collaboration and networking with several national and international organizations for best practices"*-(Tourism)

*"If we can get some help in educating the public e.g. sponsorship since it so expensive to do so"*-(Civil Society)

*"Government should create an enabling environment by having favorable policies for the civil society to play their role"*-(Civil Society)

*"We need support from the government to make membership mandatory because there is a problem of self-regulation. Some guides who are not our members do not subscribe to our way of thinking and thus leads to poor implementation of national laws and regulations pertaining to the guiding profession"*-(Professional/Business Association)

*"Capacity building, and training on areas of governance"*-(Communications)

While awareness about sustainability is the first process towards its implementation, the surrounding enabling environment is also of utmost importance if the concept was to be successfully implemented by members of the public. The survey findings revealed that most people would like to be provided with financial support in order for them to incorporate sustainability in their lifestyles. This is shown by 35.5 percent of the respondents indicating financial support to the youth and general public as a support they need in incorporating sustainability in the day to day life. Others indicated the creation of employment opportunities (8.8 percent), empowerment of the public on sustainable programs (7.2 percent), and education on sustainability (4.6 percent).

## 5.2.5 Perceived Roles of Stakeholders in Sustainability Implementation

### *Managers' Perceptions*

The survey question sought to reveal a general opinion that managers have in regards to the roles that other stakeholders need to play to support businesses in the pursuit of corporate sustainability. The stakeholders, in this case, included shareholders, customers, regulatory agencies, supplies and etc. Remarkably, the following responses emerged from the survey: 20.6 percent of the respondents said that the stakeholders should set their own goals towards achieving the SDGs, 13.4 percent of the managers felt that all the stakeholders should participate in creating awareness on sustainability and SDGs whereas 11.0 percent of the respondents were of the opinion that all stakeholders should set rules and regulations which should be adhered to in regards to social and environmental issues. Table 8 below includes the managers' suggestions on roles of stakeholders in sustainability integration and implementation reviewed and ordered into 16 themes.

Table 8: Managers' Perceptions of roles of stakeholders in corporate sustainability implementation

Set goals towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals	20.6%
Create awareness to the public on the SDGs	13.4%
Set rules and regulations which should be adhered to in regard to the environment	11.0%
Avoiding corruption	7.2%
Use of market friendly products with better pricing	5.3%
Use of green energy	4.8%
Funding of various projects in line with the SDGs	4.3%
Proper waste management/Provision of waste management facilities	3.3%
Embrace carbon friendly technologies	2.9%
Provision of employment opportunities	2.9%
Carry out research through partnering with other organizations	2.4%
Embrace innovation and responsibility	2.4%
Ensure a good working environment	1.9%
Ensure healthy competition	1.9%
Reporting issues on the breach of sustainability to the authorities	1.4%
Partner with/Embrace more private sector businesses	0.5%
Don't Know	13.9%

The informants' expectations from stakeholders in as far as corporate sustainability is concerned include personal responsibility on the part of the staff and for them to perform their duties as stipulated in their contracts, and active participation in corporate sustainability integration. Some of the responses include:

*"We expect our staff to take it upon themselves and bear part of the responsibility to achieve these goals"- (Academia)*

*"We also have a program for the staff where we have planted trees and we work closely with ecotourism Kenya"- (Government Ministry)*

*"Our shareholders engage in philanthropy work e.g. I have personally built a class an administration block for one school in Samburu. We are also involved in Conservation issues through our chairman who runs a conservation center to teach young people on conservation"- (Professional association)*

## **Public Perceptions**

In the previous sections, members of public were asked to share their perceived roles in the sustainability agenda. In this section, however, members of public were asked about what roles they thought other stakeholders should play to address sustainability concerns in Kenya. The stakeholders were categorized into Government, Companies, Civil Society and Academia. The findings were reviewed and the three most observed themes per stakeholder category were recorded as shown in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Public Perceptions of roles of various stakeholders in sustainability implementation

<b>Government</b>	of 100%
Formulates rules and regulation that touches on the overall sector of the economy	22.8%
The government should provide the most funds needed for financing development	11.7%
Fight against corruption	6.4%
<b>Civil Society</b>	
Protect Kenyans' rights and the laws of the country	25.7%
Create awareness to the public through provision of enough information on the current issues	14.0%
Monitor government by keeping in check all the governmental activities and issues relating to corruption	12.3%
<b>Private Sector</b>	
Should create more employment opportunities	24.4%
Should assist the government to fund/advise on development projects which are sustainable	17.0%
Should be able to create more private enterprises for innovation and development	5.4%
<b>Academia</b>	
Produce articles to articulate the sustainability process	33.2%
Produce evidential declaration on SDG's	7.9%
Should provide quality education and services	5.2%

The respondents (1523) were also asked to rate their perceived level of stakeholders' involvement and participation in sustainability implementation on the scale of 1 to 10. The result in Table 10 was obtained.

Table 10: Public Perceptions of stakeholders' level of involvement in sustainability implementation

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Government	3.9%	8.3%	16.1%	19.9%	24.5%	14.1%	7.6%	2.9%	2.0%	0.7%
Civil Society	2.2%	4.5%	10.4%	17.9%	27.4%	18.4%	10.6%	5.6%	2.4%	0.7%
Private Sector	3.0%	4.7%	7.1%	15.0%	27.2%	17.8%	11.7%	8.1%	4.0%	1.4%
Academia	2.4%	3.3%	9.5%	12.8%	23.6%	18.5%	14.8%	9.1%	4.0%	1.9%

Majority of the respondents indicated that the government is the least involved (3.9 percent) in sustainability implementation. This is a challenge for the government, owing to the fact that the public perceives their central role in the sustainability agenda. The government was followed by the private sector at 3 percent. People's perceptions of the role of central government in sustainability implementation appeared to reflect a deep sense of distrust and a general lack of faith in the ability or willingness of the government to respond to sustainability concerns. On the other hand, academia was viewed as the most involved in sustainability implementation (1.9 percent). Surprisingly, quite a number of respondents (27 percent) believe that the private sector has a moderate level of involvement in sustainability implementation.

### 5.3 Sustainability Practice in Kenya: Reflections

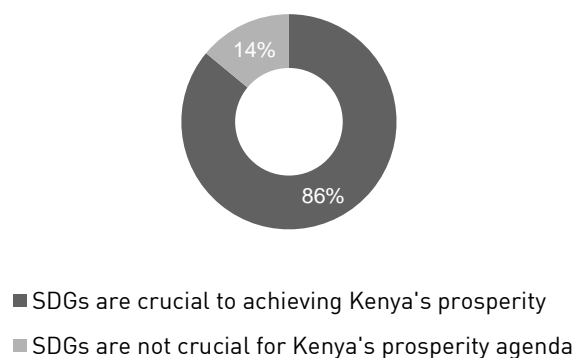
Following the remarkable recent ban on plastic production and use in Kenya, the country has “branded itself regionally and internationally as clean and green”. The country has picked five key areas from the new sustainable development goals to guide its development for the next 15 years. In light of these ambitious programs, the study wanted to gauge whether these events are having an impact on the state of sustainability in the country in terms of perceived essentialness of SDGs in Kenya; perceptions about corporate sustainability practices in Kenya; and the future outlook on sustainability agenda in Kenya.

#### 5.3.1 Perceived essentialness of SDGs in Kenya

Implementation of SDGs inherently involves many different stakeholders operating at many different scales, from national governments to the private sector, to NGOs, to members of the public, and many more. As a key stakeholder in the sustainability agenda, it can be tough to get the members of public working together at the right time and place to realize the success of SDGs by 2030 without gauging the level of importance they attach to the goals.

When asked about the importance of SDGs in realizing prosperity in Kenya, the majority of the members of public (86 percent) were of the opinion that SDGs play a crucial role in achieving sustainable development in the country. The respondents who were pro-SDGs were also of the opinion that the goals are important in various ways including development and improvement of the well-being of the country (33.5 percent), and improvement of living standards (16.6 percent). Indeed, the considerable awareness of members of the public, including the sense of connection between the SDGs and Kenya’s vision 2030, is noticed when 7.9 percent of the respondents claimed that the goals will assist Kenya in achieving vision 2030.

Figure 8: Public perceptions of essentialness of SDGs in Kenya’s development agenda





On the contrary, 14 percent of the respondents claimed that the SDGs are impertinent to the Kenyan state of affairs. Similarly, the majority of the respondents (23.5 percent) in this group appeared to accept this position based on the perceived high levels of corruption and ethnicity in the country. Indeed, this pessimistic perception of the socio-political state of affairs might be assumed to rob the citizenry of real influence on sustainability matters. Another 10.8 percent cited lack of recognition/implementation by the government as the trigger of their pessimism in the success of SDGs in Kenya. Finally, 8 percent of respondents in this category stated that Kenya has more pressing needs that are of more significance compared to SDGs while 6.1 percent draw their pessimism from the unpopularity of the goals in the country.

### **5.3.2 Evaluating the state of Sustainable Practices in Kenya**

To what extent is corporate sustainability fit for Kenyan businesses? How are businesses engaging in the sustainable practices? As key stakeholders in the sustainability agenda, how do the members of public deal with unsustainable practices in their immediate environment? What are the respondents' verdicts on the future of sustainability in Kenya? These are some of the questions that the study explores in attempt to establish an overview of the state of sustainability in Kenya. The following sections present findings on the enumerated items.

#### ***Public Perceptions***

Majority of the respondents (13.5 percent) believed that corporate sustainability is a good business approach and suits should be effectively adopted by Kenyan companies. However, 11 percent of the respondents were of the opinion that Kenyan businesses have not adopted the concept. Another 5.2% had a contrary opinion that corporate sustainability practice in Kenya only focuses on profit maximization. Others viewed CS as a concept that will achieve equal prosperity for all (5.0 percent). Meanwhile, only 4.3 percent of the members of public associate the practice of corporate sustainability in Kenya with environmental conservation and sustainable production.

When asked if businesses in their immediate environments adopt sustainable practices in their activities, 52.7 percent of respondents believe that the businesses around them embraced sustainability in their operations while 47.3% of the respondents believed otherwise.

It is worthy to note that 29 percent of the members of public who acknowledged sustainable practices among businesses in their neighborhoods attributed this to employment opportunities that are generated by the businesses. Another 10.5 percent pegged their perception of the companies' environmental conservation initiatives, 6.6

percent attributed the perceived sustainable practices on improvement of their living standards, while 5.6 ascribed a company's sustainability based on their infrastructural development in their areas of operations. On the other hand, respondents who indicated that businesses around them are unsustainable claimed that environmental pollution by companies influenced their perception (42.9 percent). Other negative impacts that influenced their perceptions include loss of employment (8.9percent), gender inequality/discrimination (4.4 percent), lack of engagement (4.3%), poor quality products and price inflation (2.6 percent) among other effects that were considered as statistically insignificant.

As key stakeholders in the sustainability agenda, it would only make sense to inquire how the members of public dealt with the unsustainable practices in their immediate environment. The majority (76.1 percent) stated that they do not report these violations to the authorities or regulatory agencies while 23.9 percent indicated the willingness to report the noticed infringements on social and environmental sustainability. Majority of the respondents reported cases of breach to their local leaders. Other authorities, to whom such cases were reported, in order of priority, include local government officials; environmental advocacy organizations and civil societies; national government officials; and the company officials.

Perhaps one of the most striking features of this part of the survey was the degree of pessimism expressed about the future of sustainability in Kenya (i.e. whether Kenya will be able to achieve the SDGs by 2030). To the majority of the respondents (66.9 percent), the future was bleak; they believed that Kenya will not be able to achieve all the SDGs by 2030. While for the other group (33.1 percent), the future was unpredictable but the goals will be attainable by 2030.

Figure 9: Public's perception of Kenya's ability to implement SDGs by 2030

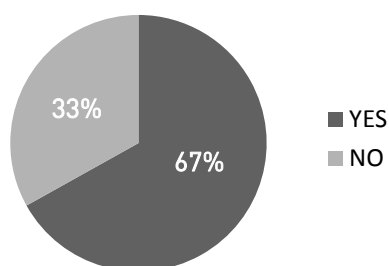
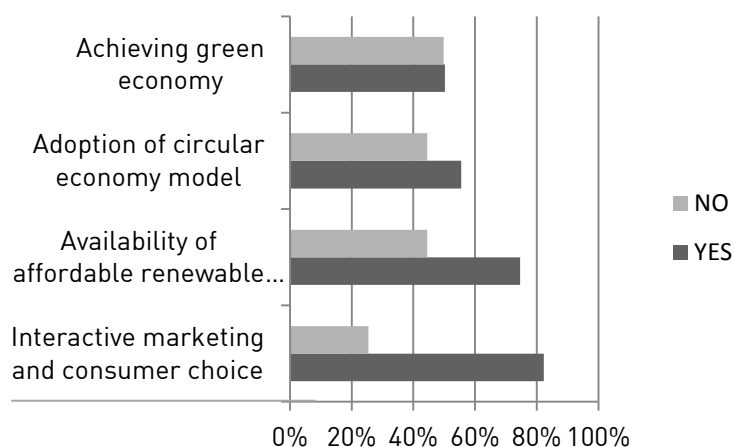


Figure 10: Manager's perception of Kenya's ability to implement SDGs by 2030



Among the respondents who believe that Kenya will attain SDGs by 2030, the majority (7.5 percent) based their optimism on the fact that the country has enough resources to achieve the goals. Another 6.8 percent defended their stance on government's involvement on the agenda. On the contrary, more than half of respondents who expressed pessimism towards the ability of Kenya to attain SDGs by 2030 pegged their views on deep-seated corruption and ethnicity that is derailing progress in the country. 7.7 percent stated poor implementation of SDGs as an impediment while 3.6 percent perceived the achievement of the goals as a pipe dream.

### ***Managers' Perceptions***

This section of the paper presents survey and interview responses on managers' perceptions about the future outlook of sustainability in Kenya. Unlike the members of the public, the managers were more ambivalent in their predictions about the future of sustainability in Kenya. Indeed, all the survey respondents (209) expressed optimism in achieving a sustainable future.

The survey questions sought to find their perceptions about the future outlook on four aspects of sustainable business practices in Kenya: Interactive marketing and consumer choice; availability of affordable renewable energy; adoption of the circular economy model; and achieving a green economy. 82.3 percent, 74.6 percent, 55.5 percent, and 50.2 percent of the respondents believed that all these are achievable by 2030 in their respective order (see Figure 10 above).

Findings from the key informant interviews confirmed that while some respondents regarded consumers as enlightened therefore having better choices, others said that the consumers' choice is not determined by whether the products they buy are sustainable or whether they are made by companies that embrace sustainability, therefore, some felt the future is bright with regards to interactive marketing and consumer choice while others felt the future is bleak:

*"It is bright-we have an enlightened society because education in Kenya has improved"*- (Academia)

*"Bleak because the consumers do not care if the products they consume come from sustainable companies"*-(Academia)

The key informants generally regarded the future of affordable renewable energy as bright because of the innovations in the sector and developments in solar energy:

*"Bright-There are more innovations, alternative energy, saving 'jikos' and solar driven energy which has been embraced by organizations and individuals,"*- (Academia)

While the progress made on going green was appreciated by the qualitative research respondents, some mentioned that utilization of biodegradable materials has a long way to go in Kenya:

*"Bright-There is the reclamation of forests. Poaching is being fought sufficiently"* - (Academia)

*"Bleak because use of the biodegradable materials has not been fully adopted"* - (Academia)

On recycling, the general implication that arose from qualitative results is that recycling has a bright future in Kenya:

*"Bright-Street boys collect used plastics and sell them as well as used cups of hot drinks. In Kibera, I saw waste used to create energy for cooking"* - (Academia)

*"Bright because I see a lot of reuse and recycling"* - (Academia)

## **5.4 Perceptions about Climate Change**

Developing countries such as Kenya play a critical role in international climate change negotiations due to their rising national emissions and increasing vulnerability. Yet, we currently know little about how key stakeholders, particularly, managers of business organizations and members of public perceive this concept. This section of the paper presents interview and survey findings which aim to elicit the perceptions under inquiry.

### **5.4.1 Familiarity with the Concept of Climate Change**

This section of the study investigated the meanings that survey respondents associated with the scientific theories of global climate change.

#### ***Managers' Perceptions***

Survey results were reviewed and categorized into four major themes in an attempt to present the respondents' perception about the concept of climate change (see Table 11 below). The general results of the questionnaire were that 73.2 percent (n=153) perceive climate change as "the change in weather conditions". Yet, 16.3 percent of respondents were of the opinion that climate change is global warming caused by emissions. However, it was found that a surprisingly a small percentage (1.3 percent) were unaware of the climate change phenomenon. This was cause for optimism since it was

very unlikely that businesses and organizations would make adjustments to address climate change risks if they were unaware of the concept in the first place.

Table 11: Managers' perceptions of the concept of climate change (n=209)

Themes associated with climate change concept	n	%
Change in weather conditions	153	73.2
Global warming due to emissions	34	16.3
Continuous change of the atmosphere	2	1.0
Negative effects of human action impacts on weather	11	5.3
Don't Know	9	1.3

Indeed, the informants similarly shared the perception of 'a change in climatic condition caused by human actions' and of a fundamental observation that climate change is accompanied by increase in temperature. This was articulated in considerable detail by the following responses:

*"It is the change of weather and environmental conditions in the long run brought about by humans polluting the environment"*-(Agriculture)

*"Changes that have occurred as a result of humanity effect on the environment and particularly global warming which has brought extreme weather events"*-(Environment)

*"Adverse/negative changes in the environmental and climatic cycles"*-(Communications)

*"About the earth becoming hotter due to emissions in the atmosphere"*-(Tourism)

*"Weather patterns changing over a long time"*-(Civil Society)

The managers' view that climate change is caused by human activities might be closely related to the degree of their concern about impacts of business activities on the environment. Another common perception was that climate change is "the observed changes in weather conditions". This view seems to be closely aligned to the usual trend for people's views to be easily shaped by inter-annual climate variation (Anåker , et al. 2015). Particularly, people make their discernments about climate change based on the weather, not the climate.

### **Public perceptions**

The public perceptions associated with climate change were investigated; 82.9 percent of the respondents perceived the concept to mean weather or seasonal changes over a given time. Only 2.9 percent understood climate change to be synonymous to global warming/atmospheric imbalance. Others perceived it as an increase in atmospheric

temperatures (2.5 percent), damage to the ozone layer (1.2 percent), and atmospheric pollution (0.7 percent). Some 0.9 percent of respondents appeared to have no opinion on this issue while 7 percent the respondents said they did not know enough about climate change to form an opinion as shown in Table 12 below.

Table 12: Public perceptions of the concept of climate change (n=1523)

Themes associated with the concept of Climate change	n	Percent %
Weather change/season changes over a given time	1263	82.9
Global warming/Atmospheric imbalance	44	2.9
Increase in atmospheric temperatures	38	2.5
Involves damages to the ozone layer	19	1.2
Atmosphere being polluted	11	.7
Environmental movement of different air conditions	5	.3
The friendly environment of business day	5	.3
Emission of the carbon dioxide gases	3	.2
It is a natural occurring phenomenon	3	.2
Sudden rise in sea level	1	.1
Don't Know/ No Idea	117	7.7
No Response	14	.9

Similar to the views of managers, the majority of the members of the public, when asked about climate change, tend to integrate this with weather changes and global warming. It was observed that the most frequent misconception among the public (1.2 percent) is that ozone is, in some way, responsible for climate change. Among the managers who held this belief, a majority of them were under the impression that the ozone layer keeps the earth cool. Consequently, responses like “*climate change is the destruction of the ozone layer which allows more heat from the sun to reach earth.*” This is, of course, a mistaken assumption, but still a correct approach in general. Although the ozone layer plays no role in lowering the atmospheric temperature, it does filter out some harmful radiations from the sun (Allen , Nogués and Baker 1998).

All in all, these responses reflect the trend of making judgments about climate change phenomenon based on abnormal weather patterns. In particular, the response from the public illustrates how this trend may influence the perception that climate change is — or will be — a sudden, catastrophic phenomenon, hence deemphasizing the efforts that need to be channeled towards addressing the cumulating impacts of climate change.

#### 4.4.2 Perceived impacts and threats of climate change

It is one thing to acknowledge negative impacts associated with a phenomenon but quite another to have fears relating to some of its dimensions. The term ‘impact’ is used in this section to denote the ‘negative effects’ while the term ‘threat’ denotes ‘risks’. The following sections present findings on perceived impacts and threats of climate change at organizational and country level.

##### **Managers’ Perceptions**

The respondents were asked to state the impacts that climate change has on their organizations. The majority, 39.5 percent said that unpredictable weather patterns such as rainy seasons disrupt their business activities, and 19.2 percent mentioned increased vulnerability to poor health due to changes in weather patterns. See Table 13 below for perceived impacts of climate change on organizations.

Table 13: Managers’ Perceptions of climate change impacts on organizational operations (n=209)

Perceived impacts	n	%
unpredictable weather patterns such as rainy seasons can disrupt business activities	68	39.5
Poor health due to changes in weather patterns	33	19.2
Climate change affects agricultural yields	27	15.7
Floods leads to damage of infrastructure and property	14	8.1
Drought/famine	7	4.1
High costs in prices of food stuffs and products	6	3.5
Risks in losing of tourists	5	2.9
High temperatures	5	2.9
Unreliable climate change	2	1.2
Reduced competition of resources and food	2	1.2
Poverty	1	0.6
Poor management of environmental resources	1	0.6
No Response	1	0.6

Generally, the informants supported the fact that climate change has affected several organizations and this was found to be unique to different sectors:

*“Yes. I see that students who come to school to study agriculture and also the students who rely on agriculture for fees are totally affected”* -[Academia]

*“It has affected our building e.g. we have corrosion of paint on our building, there are cracks on walls...the prolonged cold season increases the number of patients suffering from Tuberculosis (TB) etc.”* - (Health)

*“We can no longer rely on rain-fed agriculture you cannot predict the planting, plowing and preparation season because of the erratic weather”* -[Government]

*"Resources have been diverted to climate change and floods affect communication"*-  
(Communications)

More central to the threat issue, when asked an open-ended question about specific judgments that shape their perceptions about climate change outcomes in terms of organizational and country level threats, unique responses came up:

*"Employees in the agriculture sector will be threatened since agriculture is threatened"*-  
(Professional Association)

*"Low student admission"*-(Academia)

*"There is likely to be the emergence of new diseases which are expensive and hard to treat"*-  
(Health)

*"It can kill business due to reduced earnings"*-(Communications)

The findings below represent perceived climate change risks Kenya's social and environmental landscape as perceived by survey respondents (n=209). The survey asks general questions of threat. They do not ask about specific threats to the respondent nor do they put the perceived threat of climate change into the context of perceived threats from other environmental and social problems.

Drought and hunger (32.2percent) was perceived as a major threat by majority of the respondents. This was followed by: Diseases and deaths related to the emission of gases(10.2percent); Floods that lead to damage of infrastructure (8.7percent); poverty/high cost of living/inflation (5.1percent); Poor environmental and economic status (3.2percent); Loss of biodiversity (2.9percent); Erratic weather changes/global warming (2.8percent); Food shortage/Poor crop production (2.8percent); Desertification (1.4percent); Political and social risks (1.4percent); Environmental pollution (1.3percent); and Loss of irrigation schemes (1.2percent). The Responses from less than one percent of the sample size included: Risks of losing tourists from visiting our country (0.9percent); Shortage of natural resources (0.9percent); Distortion of the economy (0.8percent); Increased spending by government on curbing climate change effects (0.6percent); Failure to fulfill the SDGs (0.5percent); Deterioration of water catchment areas (0.5percent); Inability to contain climate change situation (0.5percent); Sudden increase in demand of goods and services (0.5percent); Landslides (0.5percent); Failure to get proper information about climate change concerning weather updates (0.4percent); Risks of acquiring donor support (0.2percent); Culture change among people (0.2percent); Unemployment (0.1percent); None (7.9percent); No Response (6.6percent); and Don't Know/ No Idea (5.9percent).



In response to anticipated company/organization specific threats in the wake of climate change, Table 14 below shows the managers' perception.

Table 14: Anticipated threats from climate change (n=209)

Anticipated company /organization risks in the wake of climate change	n	%
Poor production leading to low profits and shut down of businesses	74	35.4
Loss of revenue	28	13.4
Poor health conditions	18	8.6
Flooding disrupting activities and causing damage	9	4.3
Unemployment	9	4.3
Drought/famine	7	3.3
Delay in payment of debts in businesses	7	3.3
High cost of living/Poverty	6	2.9
Poor infrastructure development	5	2.4
Increased government taxation	3	1.4
Fluctuations in the sales of goods and services	3	1.4
High temperatures	2	1.0
Environmental pollution	2	1.0
Blockage of drainage systems	1	0.5
Difficulty in water harvesting	1	0.5
Fluctuation in the market share	1	0.5
None	25	12.0
Don't Know	5	2.4
No Response	3	1.4

### ***Public Perceptions***

Survey respondents were asked open-ended questions for specific impacts of climate change on country-level social and environmental attributes. They were also encouraged to share any other impacts they could think of. Respondents identified multiple impacts as described: Drought and hunger were the major risks identified by the majority, 490 respondents (32.2 percent). Other risks anticipated included diseases and death (10.2 percent), floods (8.7 percent), poverty arising from inflation of commodity prices (5.1 percent), poor environmental and economic conditions (3.2 percent), and loss of biodiversity (2.9 percent), erratic weather and changes /global warming (2.8 percent); food shortage/poor crop production (2.8 percent); Desertification (1.4 percent); Political and social risks (1.4 percent);

Similarly, survey respondents also observed some prominent negative impacts of climate change such as: Environmental pollution (1.3 percent); Loss of irrigation schemes (1.2 percent); Risks of losing tourists from visiting our country (0.9 percent); Shortage of natural resources (0.9 percent); Distortion of the economy (0.8 percent); Increased spending by government on curbing climate change effects (0.6 percent);

Failure to fulfill the SDGs (0.5 percent); Deterioration of water catchment areas (0.5 percent); Inability to contain climate change situation (0.5); Sudden increase in demand of goods and services (0.5 percent); Landslides (0.5 percent); Failure to get proper information about climate change concerning weather updates (0.4 percent); Risks of acquiring donor support (0.2 percent); Culture change among people (0.2 percent); Unemployment (0.1 percent). About 7.9 percent could not identify any anticipated impacts while 6.6 percent did not respond.

One striking finding among the responses from the members of the public is the proportion of perceived threats for others (or general e.g. economy) as compared to the anticipated outcomes for the respondent. This finding and that obtained from the business managers in the previous section strongly imply that interpretations of survey data on perceived threats should carefully distinguish whether the question implied personal or general threats. In that case, the findings are likely to be different.

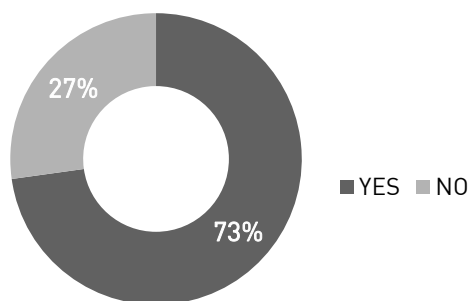
#### **5.4.3 Roles of public and private sectors in combating climate change**

Having shared their perceptions on climate change, current concerns, and future anxieties, respondents were asked who was responsible for meeting these aspirations (including what they would do to enhance mitigation), and what personal role and sense of responsibility they placed on themselves. In an attempt to explore the question 'what will stakeholders do to combat climate change,' the findings presented here focused on the perceived roles of public and business organizations.

##### ***Roles of Members of Public***

Members of public were asked to select one from two choices- either "YES or NO" depending on their perceived role in curbing climate change. The majority (72.8 percent) of the respondents believed that members of the public have a role to play in curbing climate change while 27.2 percent were of the contrary opinion that Kenyans do not have a role to play in curbing climate change as presented in Figure 11 below.

Figure 11: Do Members of Public have a role in Climate Change Mitigation?



Quantitative analysis revealed that there a variety of ways that members of public can participate in curbing climate change, for instance by: putting more effort on green initiatives (n=455); Adopting environmentally friendly practices (n=159); eliminating harmful gases from the environment (n=85); making laws to protect forest (n=82); cooperating with the government to set policies and by reporting any alarming case (n=56); proper garbage collection/Create proper drainage systems (n=55); and having educational programs on climate change (n=36).

Our results suggest that 20 respondents stated that the public can curb climate change through the reduction of Carbon dioxide emissions. Others stated enhancing awareness on issues concerning climate change (17); fully supporting innovation (12); Use of renewable energy (12); engaging in activities that do not trigger climate change (11); building of dams/ practicing irrigation schemes (10); curbing the diverse weather patterns (6); being responsible on environmental issues (6); praying to God (4); funding of project to curb climate change (4); ensuring peace and harmony in the society (3); recycling of waste products (3); fighting corruption (3); and supporting the government initiatives (1). About 25 respondents did not understand the question while 43 did not respond.

### ***Roles of Business organizations***

The perceived role of business organizations in curbing climate change was investigated; 13.9 percent of respondents perceived practicing sustainable as a role that business organizations can contribute. Other responses included: Proper waste management/Recycling (13.4 percent); avoiding environmental pollution through emissions (13.4 percent); Creation of awareness to the public (11.0 percent); Use of products that are friendly to the environment (7.2 percent); ensuring there are enough

resources to curb climate change (4.8 percent); environmental conservation (3.8 percent); ensuring good drainage systems in place (3.3 percent); regulation of long term laws on environment (1.9 percent); practicing irrigation technologies (1.9 percent); working together with stakeholders in the area of climate change (1.0 percent); retrenchments (0.5 percent); water harvesting during rainy seasons (0.5 percent); none at the moment (11.0 percent); none (2.9 percent); don't Know (8.6 percent); no response (1.0 percent).

From the key informants, partnerships and collaborations and awareness creation on climate change were largely mentioned as the key to mitigating climate change while others said they did not have immediate plans to address the issues of climate change;

*"We develop mitigation strategies in our strategic plan. We focus more on research and the factors affecting climate change by seeking collaborations and partnerships with other institutions in academia and the private sector"*-(Academia)

*"We intend to set the agenda of climate change on the continental stage by lobbying to government support and subsidize the public transport sector, especially with carrier buses to reduce carbon emissions and decongesting the Central Business District (CBD)"*-(Transport and Infrastructure)

*"We intend to carry out extensive awareness campaigns on the importance of conserving the environment"*-(Professional Association)

*"We intend to increase health education. We want to be involved in the preventive measures rather than curative through medical camps and surveys. We are targeting children on diagnosis and congenital problems. We have the CSR of mater heart run and immunization programs in Mukuru kwa Njenga slums"*-(Health)

*"No immediate plans but there are conversations around this e.g. green data centers and renewable energy"*-(Communications)

The first point to note is that most of the organizations in the study have distinct ways of examining and addressing both climate change adaptation and mitigation depending on the nature of their business. An informant from a higher education institution in Kenya declared that their role is specialized in promoting innovation and research to tackle emerging challenges like climate change by turning them into driving forces for the economy. The institution, for instance, creates specialized knowledge in climate technologies, climate change adaptation strategies for vulnerable communities etc. Other informants, especially from professional organizations see their role in promoting societal awareness and attitudinal change with respect to environmentally sound behavior change.

To conclude this section, although most respondents remained eager about their ability to do their part in climate change mitigation and adaptation, their actions would have to be consistent, meaningful at a local level, linked to clear paths of action, and reflective of their the nature of their business or environment. However, even if all these conditions were in place, the stakeholders have to gracefully wear the cap of valuable change agents in addressing the impacts of climate change so as to fight skepticism and other obstacles that might come their way.

#### **5.4.4 Preferred means for receiving climate change messages**

Communication channels enable messages to go from one individual to another. This section of the study presents the findings to the following questions: What channels of communication do members of public prefer for receiving information about climate change issues? How frequently do they prefer to receive such information? What is the most appropriate time to convey the messages to enhance reception? What is the most favorable social media site for receiving information on climate change risks or impacts?

The survey findings represented the views of public on the preferred means for receiving climate change information. The findings were as follows: Majority of the surveyed respondents prefers to receive information on climate change and sustainable development through TVs. Others through radio, social media, print media, SMS/calls, emails, and brochures.

Majority of the respondents who preferred to receive information on climate change risks through TV and Radio would like the information to be aired in the evening (5 pm - 7 pm) and in the morning (6 am-8 am). Among the two options, nighttime was the most preferred time for receiving climate change messages.

The majority (77.5percent)of the respondents who would like to receive information on climate change and sustainable development through social media preferred to receive the information through Facebook, followed by Twitter, Blogs, LinkedIn (in that order of preference).

## 5.5 Summary of Findings

As compared to managers, members of the general public are unfamiliar with the idea of 'corporate sustainability' in its contextual sense. However, they appear to identify positively with its values and priorities. Actually, majority align sustainable practices with the possibility of achieving a good 'quality of life'. The principal findings from the research may be summarized as follows:

- There is evidence of widespread awareness and concern about climate change and sustainability among business organizations and public sector in Kenya. However, the members of public put more emphasis on personal or social issues as compared to the urgency for mitigating climate change or integrating sustainability principles into their lifestyles.
- The survey indicated a limited understanding of the drivers of climate change among the members of the public. The managers are well aware of the impacts of climate change and the solutions required for mitigating them.
- Members of public perceive the threats of climate change; however, majority sees it as a distant risk that does not necessarily require a sense of urgency in tackling it.
- There's a market for sustainable products. The public acknowledges their benefits and shares some challenges of access to sustainably produced goods and services.
- The study reveals some evidence of willingness to integrate sustainable practices in business operations as well personal lifestyles mainly through contextually defined strategies.
- Assigning of responsibility to adopt feasible measures and strategies to address climate change and enhance corporate sustainability mainly to government, businesses, academia, and the civil society.
- It is learnt from the interviews that managers' interpretations of corporate sustainability could be viewed in terms of ethics and long-term profitability. Indeed, the practice of CSR is aligned to sustained economic performance and large increase in sales. On the other hand, members of public perceive CSR issues in a variety of ways. In particular, the willingness of companies to give back to the society is widely associated with the concept.
- The study's findings revealed interesting insights related to sustainability integration and implementation. Majority of the members of public believe that sustainability implementation is practicing responsible citizenship or being a role model in environmental conservation. Managers, on the other hand, put

emphasis on social issues such as ensuring gender equality while exercising environmental sustainability through energy saving initiatives.

- While most of the managers attributed their sustainability initiatives and practices to the need to mitigate their company's social and environmental impacts, some use the initiatives to improve brand image, build trust, and build the reputation. However, stiff business competition is regarded as a major challenge to sustainability integration since businesses are compelled to allocate insufficient resources for achieving sustainability.
- Corporate Sustainability initiative in Kenya is relatively little known and is not yet deeply rooted in the consciousness of Kenyan public. Taking this into account, companies at the stage of strategy building while taking into account the social interests of the society and environmental sustainability should also strive to make their stakeholders aware of their initiatives.
- On the perceived differences in definition and understanding between the themes of CSR and CS, it turned out that members of the general public have the least amount of knowledge as compared to the managers.
- The members of the public are quite pessimistic about the possibility to achieve SDGs in Kenya by 2030. They are skeptical as to whether the government can be 'trusted' to genuinely promote sustainability. This is due to high level of cynicism towards the country's public institutions, including national and county governments. This is reflected in an apparently pervasive lack of trust in the goodwill and integrity of national government, and in doubts about its ability or willingness to attain positive improvements in the quality of people's lives through the adoption of SDGs.
- People's inclination to attend to information about the environment is affected strongly by their sense of 'agency' - that is, by whether or not they feel a capacity to influence events associated with that information. They are also influenced strongly by their degree of trust in the purveyors of the information. These realities may have apparently perverse implications for the credibility and authority of any sustainability 'indicators' proposed in good faith by the local or central government.
- Against the backdrop of intensely skeptical attitudes towards implementation of SDGs by 2030, business managers identify 'good health and well-being' as the most important goals that align with their activities or business models. Meanwhile, members of the public identify mostly with sustainable development goal number 1- 'No poverty'.
- Overall, whilst there is substantial support for sustainability integration among the business organizations, there is also a substantial need for financial support

from investors and the good will of government and other key stakeholders to achieve sustainability integration. Similarly, members of public mentioned the need for financial support to kick start their journey towards a sustainable lifestyle.



## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of our study has been to shed light on public and private sector understanding of the concepts of corporate sustainability and climate change. We have also elucidated the possible obstacles to public and private sector engagement with sustainability as well as the strategies employed in current sustainability practice in Kenya.

The study has involved robust surveys and interviews, both with members of the general public in Kenya and with representatives of businesses and other private sector organizations committed to progress on the 'sustainable development' front.

In Chapter 4, we summarized the main substantive themes to emerge from the interviews and surveys. In this final chapter, we offer further more general conclusions, based on our interpretation of the study findings and their wider possible implications and recommendations for practice.

### 6.1 Study Implications

In highlighting the relationships between perceptions, barriers, sustainability practices and commitment to sustainability in the Kenyan context, this study holds several implications for policy and sustainability management.

#### 6.1.1 Managerial Implications

First, findings show that members of the public and managers have a weak knowledge of the concept of CSR. Spontaneously, both managers and the public perceive CSR as the willingness of a business entity to give back to the society. One explanation could be respondents' ineffective efforts to communicate their actions (for managers) or inability of the members of the public to frame the concept to effectively capture their expectations from businesses in terms of CSR. This implies that managers should improve their communication efforts through the channels suggested in the study to make their initiatives more clear and perceivable for members of the public.

Moreover, it seems that there are more members of the Kenyan public do not understand the concept of CS as compared to CSR. Corporate Sustainability managers should, therefore, enhance communication of company sustainability practices in all areas of their operations to increase awareness among their consumers and members of the public. Furthermore, it would also be worthy for managers to step-up the number of sustainable practices to harvest the social license as well as benefits accrued at the fiduciary level.

It is also worth noting that majority of the managers represented in the study insisted on profit-making as an important component of corporate sustainability. In fact, it was observed that the managers associate the term 'sustainability' with persistence of profitability into the future. However, as Kenya becomes more connected and global challenges like climate change, environmental pollution and social inequality loom over business organizations, it is imperative for business managers to adopt a comprehensive view of corporate sustainability which incorporates all the social, environmental and economic dimensions so as to survive- this is a matter supported in previous research (Stavins 2006). Again, the very competitive business landscape in Kenya may now require companies to find innovative ways of adopting corporate sustainability and perceiving the concept in much wider scope.

The findings in this study stated that various CS, CSR and Climate change mitigation initiatives generate different managers' and public attitudes. Overall it can be stated that managers' perceptions of these initiatives are broader in scope than members of the public. This merit of know-how can help managers to develop strategies to enhance their performance in regards to climate change adaptation and corporate sustainability. Consequently, such efforts can boost organizational trust among employees and with the members of the public. Employees that are more committed to sustainable practices and consumers that are aware of the company's efforts towards achieving sustainability ultimately lead to long-term productivity.

### **6.1.2 Policy Implications**

The rapid growth of the consumer market in Kenya represents a significant opportunity for businesses that are able to interpret these trends and the possible alternatives and adapt their business strategies to cater for consumers that are rapidly developing tastes and preferences for sustainable products/services. From these study findings, we can contend that integrating sustainability values in business operations can contribute to market growth since more than half of the Kenyan public has a preference for sustainable products. Therefore, to start with, firms can use sustainable marketing to differentiate their products based on social and environmental impacts.

Another significant implication of these findings is that there is an immense opportunity for researchers, government agencies and sustainability practitioners to help businesses and members of public understand the links between climate change and their activities. As suggested by (Berrang-Ford, Ford and Paterson 2011) the key to stimulating support for adaptive response or policies to address climate change is to package the issue in ways that align with the key stakeholders.

There is also an opportunity to enhance awareness about the merits and demerits of different policy mechanisms that may blend into future policy frameworks to enforce reductions in Kenya's carbon emissions. Developing stronger linkages between research and awareness campaigns to spread useful information that is perceivable by members of public and business managers is crucial in helping them make informed choices (public) and management decisions (managers) that will ultimately affect the direction of climate change adaptation in Kenya.

The implications of the present study reveal that members of the public discount the risks of climate change in both temporal and spatial dimensions. The majority view the phenomenon as something that is likely to occur in the future and to 'others' who are probably far away and detached from them. Agencies entrusted with climate change communication should therefore endeavor to minimize such separateness from climate change realities by highlighting the fact that climate change impacts are already here. Again, the majority of public communication on climate change often frames climate change around impersonal global impacts, such as rising temperatures and rising sea levels. Since problem perception influences the nature of adaptation practices, it is only practical for policymakers to put emphasis on local threats by raising awareness on impacts that affect specific localities to enhance the acuity through which adaptation will be approached (Leiserowitz 2006).

The study revealed that managers and members of the public cite presumably short-term extrinsic incentives such as implementing energy conservation measures as the core climate change mitigation strategy. However, such approaches are less likely to succeed since they are not embedded with the need to realize long-term environmental goals. Preferably, organizations should adopt extrinsic policy options alongside internal policy preferences. Such an approach will most likely ensure that practical adaptation and mitigation strategies are leveraged by long-term incentives of pro-environmental choices and effective policy support instruments (Shafir 2012).

Engrossed in their day-to-day concerns, members of the public are less likely confronted with thoughts about climate change or sustainability issues. In fact, most Kenyans continue to view climate change as a non-urgent issue as compared to poverty, corruption or healthcare. Putting the theory of information costs into context, the public will only know to such an extent that they find useful to them. Policymakers should, therefore, adopt ways of making climate change and sustainability information more impactful to managers and members of the public.

For policy purposes, people's perceptions are far less important than their actions. In practical terms, can managers and members of the public embrace the sustainable

development goals with an enthusiasm that appropriates anticipation for a real alteration in behavior at the individual or organizational level? In terms of sustainability, an organizational policy decision, for instance, can assume two basic patterns, the choice to support sustainability initiatives or the choice to redesign strategy so as to integrate sustainability. Our analysis of the study is that all things being equal, the majority of the Kenyan businesses and members of public will support national initiatives to encourage sustainable practices as long as they do not demand immediate and immense changes in lifestyle choices. This implication is supported by the research data as well as insights from (Hurlstone, et al. 2014) suggest that positive gain frames increase pro-environmental attitudes and support for mitigation and adaptation policies as compared to negative loss scenarios.

Another implication of the present analysis is that strategies for public and private sector engagement on sustainability agenda based on sharing the perceived benefits of sustainable practices alone, even if tailored to individuals' or organizational needs and actions for success, will not be sufficient in itself. Perceptions of sustainability issues are composite in nature, delineated by divergent expressions of agency, responsibility, and trust. Indeed, a probable alignment with sustainable practices is only likely to be realized if organizations and individuals find the need to make a difference. Moreover, this urge to act sustainably can be achieved if it is firmly grounded upon the trust bestowed upon the government and its institutional capabilities to deliver the means to achieve the shift to sustainable practices. However, if distrust in institutions is indeed a significant factor diminishing public support for sustainable practices, as some of the findings presented in this study suggest, one option to increase adoption of sustainable practices would be to seek strategies for increasing trust.

The study reveals that some distinct characteristics exist within business organizations, pegged on their market and entrepreneurial preferences, which eventually expedite proactive attitudes towards sustainable practices. However, it is notable that these attributes are not inherent in all business organizations. Consequently, for business managers who are more likely to regard sustainability integration as a reactive issue from the outset, regulation can be used as an instrument for augmenting sustainable practices. As suggested by Bell (2002), regulation is a necessary backdrop for newer approaches to function effectively. When combined with appropriate stakeholder pressure, the resulting mix can stimulate a revolutionary shift towards sustainable practices (Jansson and Nilsson 2010). To appropriately address this need for regulation among lagging companies while encouraging committed companies to continue embedding sustainability practices in their activities, policymakers should endeavor to 'opening up the participatory and political space' to enable new voices to contribute to

integrated thinking and solutions’ (Ashford and Hall 2011, 1). In this undertaking, understanding the relationships and perceptions presented in this study is likely to be of help to Kenyan regulators.

Finally, from a business perspective, one conclusion based on our findings is the significance of approaching sustainability issues in a proactive manner. That is business organizations that perceive sustainability challenges as business opportunities can have a forerunner advantage over those that don’t in the event of new regulatory measures. For policymakers and sustainability practitioners, formulating context specific instruments to help organizations identify sustainable business opportunities in the market may be the way to go. This could, for instance, be achieved by conducting an assessment of potential sustainable future customer preferences and how present sustainability challenges may result in new regulations for consumers and businesses. Similarly, it is also important to share such viewpoints with the private sector that tackling sustainability challenges should not diminish profitability. Sustainability practitioners, business organizations that are sustainability-driven and policymakers should execute this communication effort.

## **6.2 Future Research**

Overall, this study suggests a number of areas for future research. First, the differences in sustainability perceptions and practice between large and small companies within a given industry could be investigated, or research could be conducted within individual industries using larger sample sizes. Motivations for corporate sustainability could also be compared between firms with different levels of consumer-business interactions, between firms operating in different institutional setups, and between sectors facing divergent reputational or legitimacy risks. The research could be replicated with qualitative methods such as focus group discussion to uncover underlying reasons for observed industry differences on motives for corporate sustainability. Similarly, triangulation methods can be handy in revealing the perceptions of managers regarding corporate motives for integrating sustainability (Oppermann 2000). These suggestions might engender disparate outcomes than study presenting only the perceptions of managers.

Secondly, both managers and public seems to have a limited understanding of the points of difference and congruence between corporate sustainability and corporate social responsibility, yet a clear distinction between these concepts are when talking to non-specialists (for sustainability practitioners or managers) or to understand a company’s responsibilities in terms of sustainability (for consumers or members of

public). Future research could explore the extent to which understanding the difference between the two terms can shape what employees and members of public expect from companies in terms of sustainable practices. CS and CSR have underlying meanings that affect corporate practice in different ways.

The conducted research can also stimulate the basis upon which a continuation of a research based on case studies of individual companies from different sectors where views and opinions of management, employees, and consumers as primary stakeholders can be confronted.

The study revealed the need for integration of the society and business so as to enhance trust between these two stakeholders. A research on how Kenyan businesses can reinforce a positive momentum to strengthen the confidence in the society is therefore required.

As a research addressing sustainability and climate change perceptions, our study is place-based. While this approach is informative, comparative studies across sites are important for building the generalized theory around why and how people understand and interpret sustainability issues and climate change risks. Future research can present cross-sectional findings from different country contexts to illustrate a novel comparative approach to unraveling the complexities of local versus regional perceptions around sustainability and climate change (preferably across East Africa).

This study provides an additional reference related to manager's perceptions of CS and CSR activities in an organization. Therefore, future research may explore employee's perceptions of CSR in the service industry, manufacturing, and other organizations that implement CSR and CS. In addition, there is still lack of research about employee's perceptions on corporate sustainability in relation to organizational commitment.

Some of the findings on perceptions recorded in this study may have been anchored on politically inclined disputations and contestable mythos about sustainability and climate change phenomenon. This possibility could inform future qualitative work. For instance, what are some things that would make managers think that integrating sustainability is a poor economic decision? What are some strategies that can be employed to endorse sustainability as a panacea for an organization's financial stability in developing economies? How are public's perceptions of cumulating social and environmental ills related to their knowledge of what is being done to mitigate them? These are some of the inquiries that, at least initially, would fit investigation through further ethnographic work.

### 6.3 Outlook

This research entails a broad study of perceptions of sustainability issues including climate change in terms of meaning and practice in multiple stakeholder realms the main purpose being to determine the barriers and opportunities within the Kenyan context. It examines perceptions of sustainability issues both at the managerial level and at consumer levels (views of the members of the public) through a descriptive-empirical research strategy. The study is based on survey data and interviews among business managers from different industry sectors in Kenya.

This study has examined the differences between the managers' and public perceptions of sustainability and climate change as well as their commitments to these issues in Kenya. In confirming three out of four hypotheses, the study verifies the role of all three constructs for how business organizations and members of the public deal with sustainability issues. As such, this study contributes to the current literature in at least three ways. First, the study makes a theoretical contribution in highlighting the difference in perceptions about sustainable terms between business managers and members of the public in general.

Moreover, in further analyzing the components of sustainability integration and implementation, rather than just the general concept, the study sheds light on the intricate nature of the relationships that exist between a firm's strategic orientations and commitment to sustainability. Furthermore, the study shows that there is a strong relationship between commitment to sustainability and sustainability practices, furthering our insight into the workings of actual behavior in firms and their sustainability commitment. A third, more practically oriented contribution, of the study, is that it furthers our understanding of commitment to sustainability in the Kenyan context. Given the fact that Kenya, as a country, has significant environmental and social challenges, this is important information for policymakers.

This is one of the first studies to present a comparative analysis on perceptions about sustainability issues among the Kenyan business managers and members of the public. As such, it could be used as a starting point for future research that could, for example, further elucidate how different types of businesses in different sectors perform and compare public perceptions and employees' perceptions in relation to sustainability. Further work would also gain from examined stakeholder interactions and comparisons in relation to sustainability commitment and practices.

This research provides opportunities to bridge the gap between the perceived and practiced sustainability, specifically within the private and public domains. In order to bridge this gap, the main findings of this study can be leveraged for policy formulation

by means of frameworks and insights. An overall policy formulation framework capturing the complexity of sustainable practices and accompanied perceptions across sectors and players may be difficult to establish. Regardless, integrating the identified critical facilitators and barriers into policy frameworks is a prerequisite for the alignment of the operational level (perceived and practiced sustainability) with a firm's desired sustainability.

We still need more theoretical development to flesh out issues such as the differential choices on preferred SDGs among managers and members of the public, as well as views on climate change threats. Considering that point of view, this study serves as an important step towards stimulating further research in exploring the differences in managers' perceptions of sustainability and climate change and the public perspectives on such issues within the context of a developing economy like Kenya. It is our intention that this study will lead to continued deliberation on this topic.

#### **6.4 Recommendations for Sustainability Practice in Kenya**

1. It is vital to involve all Kenyan stakeholders, and above all public administration, in the promotion initiatives aimed at enhancing information on corporate sustainability. Indeed the research findings proved that the government plays a key role in the sustainability agenda and their influence must be taken into account – precisely this category of stakeholders is largely responsible for regulation and leadership in increasing Sustainability in Kenya.
2. Business managers lacking the knowledge about Corporate Sustainability need to be complemented by the provision of knowledge and information, in particular on good examples of sustainable practices in their sectors. This can be achieved in terms of research conducted at the universities and social research institutes level as well as the promotion of knowledge in this area by showing the essence of the CS concept. Without a doubt, there is a large need of making businesses aware that Kenyan consumers are increasingly paying attention to the sustainability of products or services they are purchasing. For the sake of the country's social good, Kenyan businesses should start to realize that corporate sustainability has its benefits and can yield both economic and social rewards if adopted properly.
3. Increasing awareness of the impacts of climate change on businesses and livelihoods may encourage firms to adopt sustainable practices in their operations



or motivate people to change their behavior and take effective actions that mitigate the impacts of climate change. Regardless, this will not be enough if stakeholders including government, businesses, civil society, and academia do not take into account other internal or external barriers to embracing sustainable practices and behaviors. Stakeholders can consider the interventions aimed at behavior modification from basic approaches such as the provision of information to multifarious and stakeholder involvement strategies.

4. It is advisable for Kenyan business managers and members of the public to adopt a broader view of sustainability. That is, they should aim at understanding the main drivers, risks, and opportunities for individuals and for organizations. This is beneficial because research shows that finding creative ways of incorporating sustainability can benefit an organization's employees, customers, and other players along the supply value chain. It also benefits the members of the public through improved well-being owing to quality environmental and social conditions inherent in sustainable societies.
5. Kenyan CEOs and Business managers ought to define in detail what sustainability means to their firms. This is important because a clear definition and robust measures for success will eventually lead to sustainability practices that focus on worthy goals or targets. In addition to the tailoring of sustainability goals, business managers should endeavour to engage all of their stakeholders. It only makes sense that, including customers, suppliers, investors, and employees in deliberations about sustainability agenda is more likely to yield results that are all-encompassing.
6. For Kenyan entrepreneurs, firms and individuals in pursuit of sustainability, it is important to remember that you are not alone. Examples of best practices for sustainability are available all around the world and are easily accessible in this age of global connectivity. In Kenya, national and industry-specific initiatives exist that can help businesses become more sustainable, for instance, with the support of organizations such as Global Compact Network Kenya (GNCK). Also, The Government of Kenya's NCCAP includes a wealth of information on climate change. The plan and its background documents are available at <http://www.kccap.info>. KEPSA provides information on climate change; including the "Climate Change and Your Business" briefing note series that provides examples of successful private sector responses to climate change. Tap into their knowledge base and learn from their experience.

7. The higher the organizational level at which managers define the need for sustainability integration, the greater the probability of successful implementation. A responsible manager should, therefore, seek to identify the individuals in their company whose acceptance is essential to the success of the sustainability integration and actively engaged them. This is because new programmes and strategies tend to lose momentum quickly when senior management isn't delivering the message.
8. In the initial stages of sustainability integration, there's a possibility that overt resistance to change in practices might crop up. Managers should strategically adopt measures that will ensure that there are no issues that are overlooked in the sustainability implementation plan. So the beginning of wisdom is to anticipate opposition, sustainability integration needs "sustainability champions" to nurture the process and help communicate the importance of sustainability to all levels of the company.
9. When adopting sustainability into your lifestyle or in business operations, it is critical to take it step by step. It is the small changes that can lead to significant milestones towards achieving sustainability in the future. Embracing sustainability is an evolution, not a revolution. The process of the evolution is one of many smaller answers combining into larger and more sustainable social changes.
10. Adopt a proactive view of sustainability. If you're going to talk the talk, you have to walk the walk. In short, it is beneficial for Kenyan firms to view sustainability as a means for achieving long-term growth while protecting, sustaining and enhancing the human and natural resources that will be needed in the future. This means that sustainability should not be viewed as a marketing venture because there is the likelihood that consumers will see through that if the organization ceases to make real environmental and social progress.
11. Remember the Pearson's Law: "That which is measured improves. That which is measured and reported improves exponentially". Seek to measure, monitor and review your progress in sustainability practice. Tracking progress is vital to establishing the value of sustainability initiatives. Develop clear metrics, review them regularly, and continue to set reachable goals. Take, for instance, Safaricom, a leading Telecommunication Company in Kenya sets clear annual

targets and key performance indicators for energy consumption, rate of waste recycling, greenhouse gas emissions, and water consumption in their premises.

12. Invest in your operations and invest in the future. Sustainability initiatives don't always require large capital investments. Majority of the businesses in the report said the biggest challenge was inadequate finances for investing in sustainability integration. Such firms can start by adopting a conservative strategy that is oriented mostly towards internal measures which focuses on minor but crucial system processes such as enhancing cost efficiency through energy saving strategies. Within this strategy, management's commitment and investment in appropriate technology, robust health and safety for employees, and environmental integrity can yield a tremendous amount of sustainable value.
13. The report indicates that the public is skeptical as to whether the government can be 'trusted' to genuinely promote sustainability. Unfortunately, the government as a key stakeholder in the sustainability agenda cannot directly counter the way other stakeholders may perceive the state of sustainability in the country. With such level of cynicism, the promotion of sustainability can actually result in a public backlash. There are instances where regulatory agencies and firms are accused of "collaborative green-washing" or probably trying to steer attention away from negative industry outcomes to avoid consumer boycotts or loss of corporate legitimacy. In cases where there is a widespread negative perception and distrust on government's ability to deliver on sustainability, one opportunity for communicators is to genuinely position the country's sustainability initiatives as a benefit to the individual citizen and stakeholders. State-owned energy firms, for instance, should promote sustainability efforts into renewable energy, for example, to enhance energy supply for the present and the future and potentially lower energy costs for customers. By aligning their interests with those of public, the state ensures an alignment between sustainability investment and stakeholder perceptions.
14. Another strategy for overcoming a negative reputation is through partnerships with sustainable organizations, for example, through the establishment of business coalitions to tackle larger social and environmental issues in areas of operations. This can include: providing local infrastructure (identified as very important by members of the public in this report), education facilities, and inclusive supply chains. The association between businesses has the potential to create affect transfer, hence enabling one firm to borrow goodwill from the other.

15. In order to prevent unwilling association between perception and reality on sustainability practice, business managers should embed sustainability activities in their business strategy and within their wider PR initiatives. This approach ensures that business activities do not mottle the perception of company sustainability practice. Take, for example, if corporate sustainability is a key business strategy, the company should make an effort to educate their sales department on how to incorporate sustainability initiatives into their client prospecting strategies. The PR manager should also incorporate sustainability messaging into their communication channels such as social media platforms where stakeholders with a keen interest in company sustainability practice can access them. The goal here is to send a coordinated and consistent message on sustainability across all company activities via available channels.
16. In this report, we found that most members of the public perceive climate change as a non-urgent and psychologically distant threat which tends to postpone mitigation responses. The Kenyan government and policymakers can adopt these “best practices” to mend public policy for climate change mitigation. The government and other stakeholders should: frame climate change as a presently unfolding phenomenon; put emphasis on affective and experiential public sector participation; and tailor policy frameworks that favor immediate adaptation responses.
17. The report revealed that Kenyans prefer social media as a channel for receiving information on climate change issues. Often people need assistance in getting started in the process towards adopting practices for climate change adaptation and sustainable living. Information sharing is a significant part of such support and should, therefore, be delivered at an appropriate time and through preferred channels. Support organizations and sustainability training providers need to be enthusiastic about environmental and social concerns and issues in their presentations. This presents hope that members of the public and businesses managers will always get involved in the pursuit of sustainability goals.
18. The demand for sustainable lifestyles by members of public highlighted in this report is quite inspiring. However, they are also relatively modest when considering the dominant and widespread marketing campaigns that promote unsustainable consumption in Kenya. Nevertheless, there are numerous ways to scale up the suggestions identified in this report. One promising strategy could be to form a coalition of business associations, civil society, marketing executives,

government agencies, and other relevant stakeholders to counterpunch the unsustainable consumption camp and establish alternative aspirational visions to achieve sustainable practices in Kenya.

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