



CULTURAL TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

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| Article history: | Abstract: |
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| <p>Received: 6th March 2021 Accepted: 21th March 2021 Published: 6th April 2021</p> | <p>The study investigated the effect of cultural tourism on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Ubulor Unor, Delta State, Nigeria. The descriptive survey research elicited primary data from 150 residents of Ubulor Unor community with the use of a well-structured questionnaire containing 16 scale items, with four demographic items. The result of the inferential statistical analysis conducted with the aid of SPSS revealed that cultural festival had positive and significant effect on the two measures of sustainable development goals: SME development and residents' quality of life. The study concluded that cultural tourism has the capability to assist developing countries like Nigeria to achieve some of the SDGs. Entrepreneurs and their managers of tourism in Nigeria are expected to collaborate and promote the marketing of cultural tourism in Nigeria.</p> |
| <p>Keywords: Cultural festivals. SME development. Residents' quality of life</p> | |

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) confirmed the strategic importance of cultural and heritage tourism in international tourism consumption because it is one of the major elements of tourism product. Available statistics published by the world body in 2017, showed that cultural tourism accounts for almost 40% of tourism arrivals (UNWTO, 2018). Ioan-Franc and Istoc (2007) in agreement with the world body argues that tourism could be an alternative economic mainstay for regions only when the cultural attractions are highly capitalised.

The foregoing suggests that cultural tourism resources when properly developed and marketed can enhance the competitiveness of the tourism destination concerned with its attendant contribution to economic development. Lukpata and Asha (2014, p.41) argues that harnessing, "the cultural resources of Nigeria is the best bet to usher the country to the path of sustainable development".

Therefore, the paper argues that with the diverse ethnic nationalities in Nigeria with rich cultural heritage, the country could achieve some aspects of the Sustainable development Goals (SDGs) through capitalisation of its diverse cultural resources. Primarily, the SDGs form a cohesive and integrated aspirations which the world commits to achieving by 2030. Unfortunately for Sub-Saharan Africa, most of the goals are far from the targets set based on the assessment conducted between 2017 and 2019 (United Nations, 2020).

Extant literature shows that, there are ample empirical evidence to show that the effect of cultural tourism on sustainable development have been studied in various geographical contexts at a global scale including Nigeria. Examples include: Ekiti State (Olwatuyi & Ileri, 2016), Ikpe Oro in Akwa Ibom State (Sam, Akpo, Asuquo and Etefia (2014) Ajake and Amalu (2012), Ghana, (Bormann, 2015) Shiraz in Iran, (Aref, 2011) in the city of Salem, (Jeon, Kang, & Desmarais, 2014) Meshkingsahr (Ghanbari, Naghizadeh, & Ahmadian, 2018). However, a cursory assessment of the studies shows that the effect of cultural tourism on residents' quality of life (QOL) has not been studied in Nigeria. This current study attempts to fill the gap in literature by investigating the effect of cultural tourism on sustainable development goals using SME development and residents' quality of life as measures of sustainable development goals.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review and Research Model

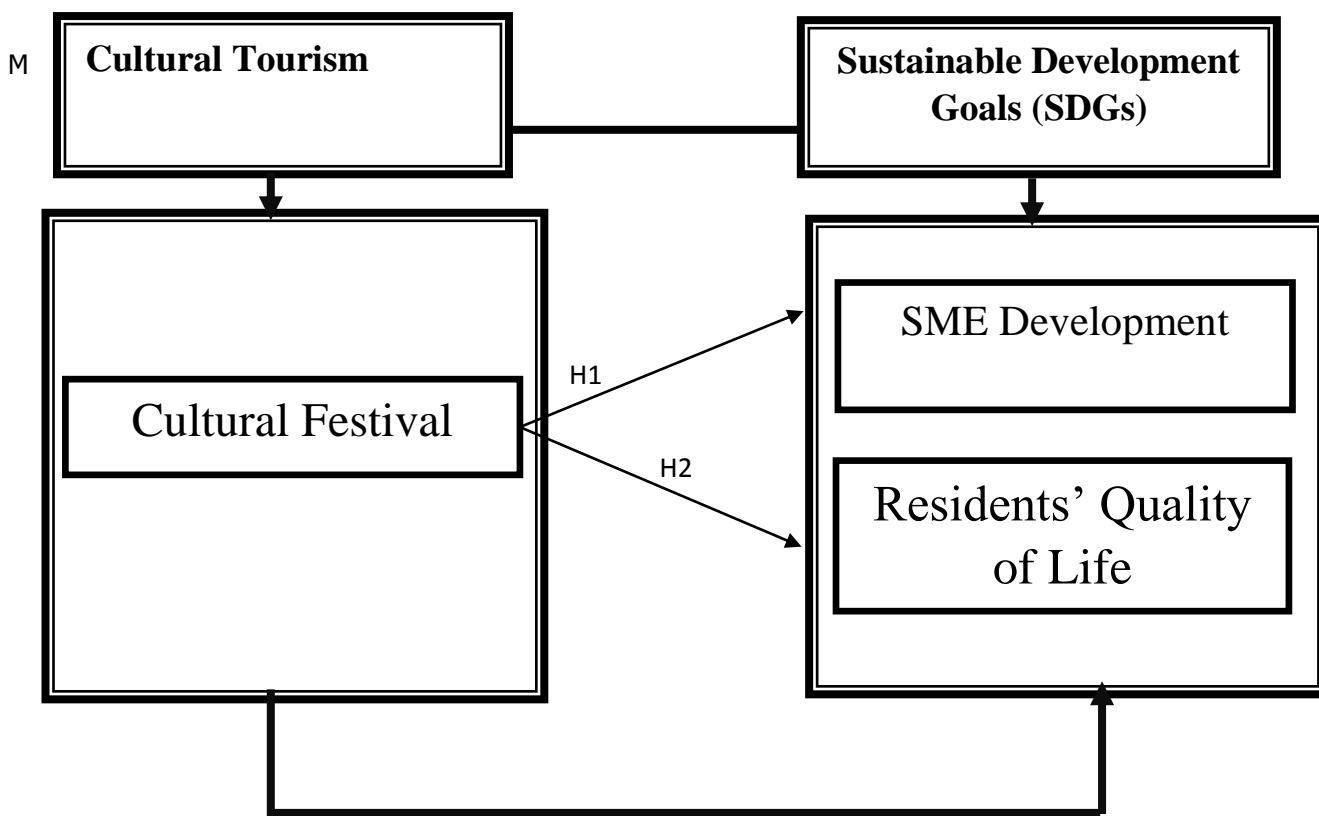


Figure 1: Conceptual and Operationalisation Model

The research model shown in Figure 1 above is a demonstration of the operationalisation process for the empirical study. It demonstrates that one dimension of cultural tourism (cultural festivals) is capable of engendering new businesses (SME development) and residents' quality of life of the local people as measures for sustainable development goals(SDGs).

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The United Nations (2015) developed the sustainable development goals to address pressing global challenges of our time, whilst building on the successes associated with Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The SDG is predicated on the quest by the global body to balance the three measures of sustainable development: economic sustainability, socio-cultural sustainability, and environmental sustainability. The thrust of the SDG is embodied in the 17 sustainable development goals (See Appendix A) which constitute a comprehensive and integrated issues of global aspirations which the world is committed to achieving by the Year 2030.

SME Development:

At a worldwide scale, tourism events marketing promoters are motivated by the prospect of economic gains to stage events such festivals. Through these events local entrepreneurs avail themselves of business opportunities (Ekeke, & Otopo-Sonari, 2017). Cultural events are part of attractions that pull visitors and tourists to rural and urban tourism destinations. The needs and wants of the visitors and tourists create the opportunities for businessmen and women to establish ventures with which they provide goods and services to them. In a study conducted by Ajake and Amalu (2012), cultural events in Cross River State which attracted tourists contributed to the income enhancement of the state in general through the provision of services to the tourists..

Quality of Life (QOL):

The World Health Organisation (WHO), defined quality of life (QOL) as "individuals' perceptions of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns" (World Health Organisation, 2019, p. 1). In other words, QOL is seen from a subjective perspective. Kim (2002) noted that quality of life is categorized into five domains: health and safety well-being, material well-being, emotional well-being and community well-being.

In tourism literature, QOL is analysed into two principal areas. The first area of emphasis deals with the relationship between activities in tourism and quality of life of tourists as they visit tourism destinations for touristic experiences. It is assumed that the primary reason why tourists visit destinations and participate in tourism activities is to enable them to enhance their quality of life in mental, physical and social terms (Griffin & Stacey, 2011). On the

other hand, the second category is concerned with the analysis of the quality of life of the residents living in the tourism destination because of tourism activities. In this current study, the residents' quality of life is the focus.

Cultural Tourism

Culture describes a way of life of a people. It is the "patterns of behaviour and thinking that people living in the social groups, learn, create and share" (Oluwutuyi & Ileri 2016, p.1). The components of culture include, language, beliefs, rituals, technology, rules of behaviour, arts, styles of dress, religion, ways of producing and cooking food, political and economic system (Redmond, 2009). Mathieson and Wall (1982) argues that culture consist of "12 elements viz: handicrafts, language, traditions, gastronomy, art and music, history, local work architecture, religion, educational system, dress and leisure activities". When tourists travel for the purpose of experiencing the culture of a people, it is described as cultural tourism. This explain why Ioan-Frank and Istoc (2017, p.89) noted that cultural tourism "covers a wide range of independent activities, connected with other economic branches, that play major role in the developing tourism industry". Rotich (2012) defined cultural tourism as,

The subset of tourism concerned with a country or region's culture, specifically the lifestyle of the people in those geographical areas, the history of those peoples, their art, architecture, religion(s) and other elements that help shape their way of life.

Boniface (1998) identified the top five cultural tourism activities as consisting of visits to museums or art galleries, attending performing arts or concerts, visiting history/heritage buildings, visiting arts/cultural events. The buying of actual products such as arts and crafts, traditional clothings of the people constitute a significant aspect of cultural tourism..

Cultural Festival:

Cultural festival is a cultural event made up of series of events with a common theme displayed within a time period. Communities develop and celebrate festivals by promoting what a community represents. For the current study, the focus is on the cultural festivals of Ubulu-Unor town in Delta State of Nigeria: the Ine festival, Iwu festival and Iwaji festival (New Yam festival) of the people

Empirical Review and Hypotheses Development

Cultural festivals and SME Development

For regions of the world with cultural attractions, Ioan-Franc and Istoc (2007) argues that tourism could be regarded as an alternative economic activity to other economic development activities, especially in tourism destination where the resources are highly capitalised. This is made possible as entrepreneurs establish tourism and hospitality service organisations to enable them meet the needs of visitors and tourists.

Amalu and Ajake (2012) examined the effect of Calabar Carnival on the economy of the residents of the metropolis in terms of income received from tourism related jobs during the period of the celebration. The statistical results showed that the carnival which is a tourism product influenced economic activities which enhanced the level of income generation to the residents. Eja, Out, Yaro, and Inyang (2011) examined the relevance of Christmas festivals in the development of sustainability of the hospitality industry in the Calabar metropolis. The study which used secondary information which covered festive and non-festive periods showed that the festivals contributed greatly to the prosperity of the hospitality industry.

Sam, et al (2014) investigated the socio-economic impact of tourism development in Ikpe Oro community which is a forest community in Akwa Ibom State. The statistical analysis showed a significant relationship between employment generation and infrastructural facilities and tourism development. In the Volta region of Ghana, Bormann (2015) found that cultural tourism had significant effect on sustainable development.

From the foregoing, we can hypothesize that,

H1: Cultural festival has significant effect on SME development.

Cultural festivals and Residents' Quality of Life

Tourism as a complex industry provides, "employment opportunities and tax revenues and supports economic diversity" (Aref (2011, p.26) and therefore expected to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of the people in the destination (Puczko & Smith, 2001)

In Iran, Aref (2011) examined the effect of tourism on quality of life in Shiraz. The statistical results showed that tourism had the positive effect on quality of life of residents of Shiraz in terms of income and employment, community wellbeing and emotional wellbeing. In the results, health and safety well-being proved to be least favourable in terms of the effect of tourism on quality of life.

In the city of Salem, Jeon, et al (2014) examined the effect of seasonal attributes on residents' perceived quality of life residents' perception of tourism impacts in the context of cultural-heritage tourism. The study which had 347 residents living in of the city of Salem as respondents found that perceived economic benefits, perceived social costs, environment sustainability positively affected residents' perceived quality of life. In Meshkinsgahr, Ghanbari, et al, (2018) examined the effect of tourism on quality of life. The descriptive research used questionnaire to generate primary data from the residents. The result revealed poor quality of life in the city. The residents affirmed that tourism had both positive and negative effects in the city.

From the foregoing, it could be hypothesized that,

HA₂: Cultural festival has significant effect on residents' quality of life.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design:

A descriptive survey research design was adopted to enable the achievement of the research objective. It was considered appropriate because the empirical study required the collection of primary data that deal with the perception of the residents of the Ubulor Unor community in Delta State with a focus on the effect of cultural tourism on SDGs.

Sample and Sampling Technique:

The population of the study was made up of members of the Ubulor Unor community who are usually present during the community festivals. The judgemental sampling technique was adopted in questionnaire administration. The research assistant was useful in interpretation of the items to majority of the respondents.

The Freund and Williams’s formula at 0.05 level of significance was used to determine the sample size because the population was large and unknown. A total sample size of 150 residents was determined with a retrieval rate of 120. All the retrieved research instruments were useful and therefore subjected to statistical analysis.

Demographic Profile of Respondents:

The analysis of the respondents’ profile showed the following: (70) respondents (58.3%) were male while (50) respondents (41.7%) were female residents. This implies that male respondents were of the majority. The information on age brackets of the respondents showed that 15 respondents (4.2%), were less than 20 years, 40 respondents (33.3%) were within 20–29 years, 41 respondents (34.1%) were within 30–39 years while 34 respondents (28.4%) were greater than 40 years. This information shows that majority of the respondents were within the ages of 30 – 39 years. Information on the respondents’ level of education revealed the following: FSLC (24) (1.8%) SSCE (50) (28.4%), B.Sc/HND (44) (36.6%), M.Sc/MBA/MA (nill) (0%), Ph.D (2) (1.8%). The residents’ marital status were recorded as follows: married 67 respondents (58%), widow/widower 2 respondents (1.6%), Single 49 respondents (40.8%), divorced 2 respondents (1.6%). Majority of the respondents sampled were married.

Measurement Instrument and Questionnaire design

A well-structured questionnaire was used as the major instrument for data collection. A five-point Likert-type scale anchored by: Strongly Disagree [SD](1). Disagree [D](2), Agree [A](3), Agree fairly strongly (4) and Strongly Agree [SA](5) was used to express the degree of agreement with the items or otherwise. All the items were not adapted from extant literature. Items of cultural tourism and SME development were developed for the study while items for residents’ quality of life were adapted from Aref (2011).

Research Results

Reliability Analysis:

The essence of reliability analysis is to ascertain whether the variable measures what it intended in the study. The table below shows the result of reliability analysis on all the four variables used in the study through the use of Cronbach’s Alpha with a value of .979. The information in Table 1 indicates that the Cronbah’s Alpha on all variables were greater than 0.7 which makes the instrument reliable.

Table 1 Reliability Statistics

| | |
|------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .979 | 14 |

The value indicate that the data collection instrument is internally consistent and could therefore be used for statistical analysis.

Inferential Statistics

Test of Hypotheses

The variables were correlated to ascertain the degree of relationship existing between them.

TEST OF HYPOTHESES

DECISION RULE

If $PV < 0.05$ =Reject H_0
 If $PV > 0.05$ = Accept H_0

Test of Hypothesis 1

Effect of cultural festivals on SME development

H_{01} : Cultural festivals has no significant effect on SME Development.

H_{A1} : Cultural festivals has significant effect on SME Development.

Table 4 Regression analysis showing the effect of cultural festivals on SME Development.

Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted Square | R | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-----------------|---|----------------------------|
| 1 | .719 ^a | .517 | .513 | | .71562 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Cultural festivals

ANOVA^a

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 64.772 | 1 | 64.772 | 126.481 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 60.428 | 118 | .512 | | |
| | Total | 125.200 | 119 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: SME Development

b. Predictors: (Constant), Cultural festivals

Coefficients^a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | -1.061 | .297 | | -3.568 | .001 |
| | Cultural festivals | .822 | .073 | .719 | 11.246 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: SME Development

Table 4, R is .719, while the R Square is .517 and adjusted R square is .513. The value of the R Square is an indication that 51.7% of the variance in SME development can be explained by the changes in independent variables of cultural tourism brand. The ANOVA Table 5 the model is significant (F (1, 118) =126.481, p=000 <.0005. This implies that cultural festivals has significant effect on SME development. Accordingly, therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

HA₁: Cultural festivals has significant effect on SME Development.

Test of Hypothesis 2

Effect of cultural festivals on residents' quality of life

HO₂: Cultural festivals has no significant effect on residents' quality of life

HA₂: Cultural festivals has significant effect on residents' quality of life.

Table 4 Regression analysis showing the effect of cultural festivals on residents' quality of life.

Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .744 ^a | .553 | .549 | .51452 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Cultural festivals

ANOVA^a

| Model | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 38.687 | 1 | 38.687 | 146.140 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 31.238 | 118 | .265 | | |
| | Total | 69.925 | 119 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Quality of Life

b. Predictors: (Constant), Cultural festivals

Coefficients^a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.955 | .214 | | 9.150 | .000 |
| | Cultural festivals | .635 | .053 | .744 | 12.089 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Quality of Life

Table 4, R is .744, while the R Square is .553 and adjusted R square is .549. The value of the R Square is an indication that 55.3% of the variance in sustainable development goal can be explained by the changes in independent variables of cultural tourism. The ANOVA Table 5 in the model is significant (F (1, 118) =164.140, p=000

$p < .0005$. This implies that cultural festivals has significant effect on residents' quality of life . Accordingly, therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

HA₂: Cultural festivals has significant effect on residents' quality of life

Discussion of Findings

The objective of this research effort was to determine the effect of cultural tourism on sustainable development goals in Delta state Nigeria. In this survey, only one dimension of cultural tourism (cultural festivals) was measured against two measures(SME development and residents' quality of life) of sustainable development goals. The hypothesized relationships discussed as follows.

Relationship between cultural festivals and SME development

From Multiple Regression Analysis, cultural festival had positive and significant effect with SME development guest ($B=0.719$; $p=.000$). Thus, the alternative hypothesis (HA₁) is accepted as there is a significant positive relationship between cultural festival and SME development in in Ubulu-Unor, Delta State, Nigeria. The result of this study is consistent with the previous studies such as Eja, et al (2011).

As expected, the tourist arrivals for the purpose of touristic experiences event tourism such as cultural festivals will naturally create business opportunities. Tourism service providers are desirous of availing themselves of the opportunities created will need to start a new business which will serve as the vehicle to exploit the opportunities.

Relationship between cultural festivals and residents' quality of life

From Multiple Regression Analysis, cultural festival had positive and significant effect with residents' quality of life ($B=0.744$; $p=.000$). Thus, the alternative hypothesis (HA₁) is accepted as cultural festivals had a significant positive effect of residents' quality of life in Ubulu-Unor, Delta State, Nigeria. The result of this study is consistent with the previous studies such as Eja, et al (2011). Aref (2011) and Ghanbari, et al (2018)

The tourism activities that take place with multiple effects contributes to improve the residents' quality of life in terms of participating in leisure and economic activities. Consequently, the residents can generate incomes, and enjoyment of social amenities created in the community to support tourism activities.

CONCLUSION

The study investigated the effect of cultural tourism on sustainable development goals in Ubulu-Unor town of Delta State of Nigeria. This research effort achieved its objectives to by ascertaining the effect of one dimension of cultural tourism (cultural festivals) on two measures of sustainable development goals (SME development and residents' quality of life). The outcome of the inferential statistics using Multiple Regression Analysis revealed that cultural festivals had strong, positive, and significant effect on SME development and residents' quality of life. It can thus be concluded that cultural tourism could help developing countries like Nigeria to achieve some of the SDGs.

STUDY IMPLICATIONS

Based on its findings, this current study has critical implications for tourism policy development and implementation, as well as tourism management and marketing. The implications are hereby discussed under academic, practitioner and regulators' perspectives.

On the academic side, this current study makes very significant contribution to the cultural tourism marketing potentials in Nigeria and how it links with the achievement of some of the sustainable development goals such as Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 8 and 10. Overall, the current study finds support for promotion of collaborative marketing initiatives between tourism entrepreneurs, National Tourism Organisations and Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) and the local people, which should be recognised as a strategic imperative for the successful marketing of cultural events. It therefore gives tentative support for cultural tourism marketing as a subset of destination marketing, which has the capability to enhance the achievement of competitive advantage in the global tourism marketplace.

On the practitioners' side, the significant effect of cultural tourism on SME development and residents' quality of life is highlighted. It therefore implies that cultural tourism marketers and DMOs could benefit from the study. For example, given the robust relationship between cultural festivals and SME development ($B=719$) and residents' quality of life ($B=744$) respectively, creative industry marketers ought to pay attention to regional tourism marketing initiatives in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria with a view to harnessing the marketing potentials of cultural events in other communities.

On the regulators' side, the study makes significant contribution to the effect that the promotion of cultural tourism in communities could activate the process of achieving some of the sustainable development goals such as ending poverty and thus enhancing the residents' quality of life. This implies that relevant tourism agencies at the federal, state and local levels could activate both promotional and facilitation strategies with a view to improving the destination image and reputation thereby increasing the competitiveness of the local destination.

LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Even though it has high level of significance, this current study is still limited in certain areas. For example, majority of the respondents relied on the interpretation of the research assistant to comprehend the items in the research instrument. Thereafter, the research assistant completed the questionnaire on their behalf. This is considered a limitation because of the apparent gap that may have occurred due to misinterpretation and

misrepresentation. However, within the parameters set to enhance interpretation and comprehension, the results should be deemed acceptable to a reasonable extent. Further studies should be conducted in other cultural milieus in South-South and other geopolitical zones in Nigeria with a view to enhancing the generalizability of this research findings.

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APPENDIX 1 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.