

The Church in Nigeria as a Catalyst for Economic Equity: Exploring Its Impact on Sustainable Development

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Abstract

The Church in Nigeria, a dominant religious and social institution, holds immense potential to address economic inequity and promote sustainable development in a nation characterized by abundant natural resources juxtaposed against persistent poverty. This study aims to critically evaluate the Church's role as a catalyst for economic equity by analyzing its theological teachings, historical contributions, and contemporary initiatives, including charity, advocacy, and empowerment programs such as vocational training and microfinance schemes. Despite its influence, challenges such as corruption, theological divisions, and regional instability hinder its socio-economic impact. Previous studies, such as Okpala's analysis of church governance and Bowler's critique of prosperity theology, highlight these issues but lack a comprehensive framework integrating theology with sustainable development. This research fills this gap by applying Niebuhr's "Christ and Culture" model to assess the Church's contributions to economic equity and sustainable development. Employing a qualitative methodology, the study utilizes case studies and document analysis to investigate Nigeria's major Christian denominations, justified by their significant social influence across diverse regions. Findings reveal the Church's alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 (No Poverty), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and 10 (Reduced Inequalities) through initiatives like skills acquisition programs and policy advocacy, though systemic challenges persist. Recommendations include enhancing theological education to emphasize social justice, strengthening partnerships with NGOs and government, and improving transparency in resource management. By leveraging its moral authority and extensive network, the Church can drive equitable and sustainable development in Nigeria, fostering a more just society.

Keywords: Economic Equity, Sustainable Development, Nigeria, Theological Foundations, SDGs

Introduction

Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation and largest economy, faces stark economic disparities despite its abundant natural resources. Over 86 million Nigerians live in extreme poverty, representing nearly 50% of the population (Kazeem, 2018). The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emphasize eradicating poverty (SDG 1), promoting decent work (SDG 8), and reducing inequalities (SDG 10) as critical for sustainable development (United Nations, 2015). In this context, the Church in Nigeria, encompassing Catholic, Protestant, Pentecostal, and African Initiated Churches, emerges as a key actor in promoting economic equity. With over 90 million Christians, Nigeria hosts one of the world's largest evangelical populations, granting the Church significant moral and social influence (Operation World, 2025). The Church's role is grounded in biblical mandates and theological traditions that advocate justice, compassion, and care

for the marginalized. This reality has largely been one of the banes of Nigeria's socio-political stability. This is because the human agents engaged to perpetrate the insecurity bedevilling the country, such as terrorism, kidnapping, banditry, and other related heinous acts, are largely the uneducated, poverty-stricken, marginalized and wretched population, which Omosor (2013) portrayed as the interface between religious fundamentalism and political terrorism in Nigeria.

From Catholic social teaching to Pentecostal social engagement, the Church in Nigeria has historically and contemporarily addressed economic inequities through charity, advocacy, and empowerment initiatives. However, challenges such as corruption, theological divisions, and regional instability complicate its efforts. Previous studies, such as Okpala's (2019) analysis of ecclesiastical governance and its impact on community development, and Bowler's (2013) critique of prosperity theology, underscore these hurdles but often fail to provide a holistic framework that integrates theological principles with practical, sustainable development strategies. This study addresses this gap by employing H. Richard Niebuhr's "Christ and Culture" model to evaluate the Church's transformative potential in reshaping Nigeria's economic landscape.

Through a qualitative methodology involving case studies of major denominations (e.g., Catholic, RCCG, and Anglican) and document analysis of church reports, policy documents, and scholarly works, this research examines the Church's contributions across diverse regions. Findings indicate alignment with SDGs through programs like vocational training and microfinance, which foster economic empowerment, though systemic barriers persist. This study explores how the Church in Nigeria catalyzes economic equity, its contributions to sustainable development, and strategies to overcome barriers, drawing on Nigeria-specific examples and scholarly insights. Ultimately, recommendations focus on enhancing theological education for social justice, forging stronger partnerships with NGOs and government, and ensuring transparent resource management to amplify the Church's impact.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts H. Richard Niebuhr's "Christ and Culture" model, as outlined in his seminal work (Niebuhr, 1951), to analyze the Church's engagement with Nigerian society in promoting economic equity and sustainable development. Niebuhr's framework delineates five paradigmatic ways in which Christianity interacts with culture:

- (1) Christ against Culture, where the Church opposes secular society as inherently corrupt, leading to withdrawal or confrontation;
- (2) Christ of Culture, emphasizing harmony and agreement between Christian values and cultural norms;
- (3) Christ above Culture, a synthesis where faith elevates and completes cultural achievements;
- (4) Christ and Culture in Paradox, acknowledging tension and duality between divine ideals and human realities; and
- (5) Christ the Transformer of Culture, where the Church actively seeks to redeem and reshape society through transformative action.

The "transformation" paradigm is particularly relevant here, as it posits that Christianity should not merely critique or accommodate culture but actively convert it toward justice and redemption. In the Nigerian context, this model is employed to assess how the Church's initiatives—such as advocacy for fair resource distribution and empowerment programs—reflect transformative engagement. For instance, it evaluates whether church-led microfinance schemes (e.g., by the Anglican Church) transcend mere charity to restructure economic inequalities, aligning with SDGs by fostering systemic change. By applying this framework, the study critiques passive or paradoxical approaches (e.g. prosperity gospel's individualism) and advocates for transformative strategies that integrate theology with socio-economic action, providing a lens to measure the Church's impact on sustainable development.

This research employs a qualitative methodology to explore the Church's role in economic equity and sustainable development in Nigeria. Data collection involves case studies of major Christian denominations, including the Catholic Church, Redeemed Christian Church of God

(RCCG), Anglican Church, and others, selected for their widespread influence across Nigeria's diverse regions. These cases highlight initiatives in urban centers like Lagos and rural areas in northern states, ensuring regional representation. Document analysis complements this by examining church annual reports (e.g., Caritas Nigeria, 2023; RCCG, 2024), scholarly articles, policy documents from organizations like the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), and SDG-related reports from the United Nations.

The qualitative approach is justified by the need to interpret complex social and theological dynamics, allowing for thematic analysis of how Niebuhr's transformation paradigm manifests in church activities. Data were analyzed thematically, coding for alignments with SDGs, challenges, and transformative impacts. Ethical considerations include anonymizing sensitive community data and relying on publicly available sources to ensure accuracy and respect for religious sensitivities. This method fills the gap in prior studies by integrating theological critique with empirical evidence from church initiatives.

Theological Foundations of Economic Equity in Nigeria

The Church in Nigeria's pursuit of economic equity is deeply rooted in theological traditions that emphasize justice, stewardship, and communal responsibility, rather than isolated prooftexts. These foundations draw from scriptural narratives, patristic teachings, and modern theological developments, adapted to Nigeria's context of resource abundance amid poverty.

Biblical Mandates and Nigerian Context: At its core, the biblical vision of economic equity stems from the prophetic tradition and covenantal ethics, which view justice as integral to God's kingdom. For instance, Isaiah 1:17's call to "seek justice, correct oppression" is not a mere command but part of a broader prophetic critique of exploitative systems, echoing Amos 5:24's demand for justice to "roll down like waters." In Leviticus 25, the Jubilee year—mandating land restitution, debt forgiveness, and slave release—represents a systemic reset against inequality, prefiguring eschatological renewal.

Jesus extends this in Matthew 25:31-46, where care for the marginalized (the "least of these") is tied to eternal judgment, emphasizing solidarity over charity. These texts, interpreted through liberation theology lenses (e.g., Myers, 2017), resonate in Nigeria, where corruption and wealth disparities mirror ancient Israel's injustices. Nigerian theologians like Fasoro (2013) apply them to critique neo-colonial economic structures, urging the Church to advocate for redistribution amid poverty affecting 50% of the population (Transparency International, 2020).

Catholic Social Teaching: Catholic Social Teaching (CST) offers a systematic theological framework, evolving from *Rerum Novarum* (1891), which defends workers' rights against industrial exploitation, to *Laudato Si'* (2015), linking economic justice with ecological stewardship. CST's principles—human dignity, subsidiarity, solidarity, and the preferential option for the poor—form a coherent ethic against individualism. In Nigeria, the Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) embodies this, promoting fair wages and sustainable practices, aligning with SDG 1 by addressing poverty's structural roots rather than symptoms (Pope Francis, 2015; Fasoro, 2013). This teaching grounds the Church's role in transforming exploitative systems, such as oil revenue mismanagement in the Niger Delta.

Pentecostal and African Initiated Church Perspectives: Pentecostal theology, influenced by Acts 2's communal sharing and James 2's faith-with-works ethic, balances personal empowerment with social responsibility. While prosperity gospel variants (critiqued by Bowler, 2013) emphasize individual blessings, broader Pentecostal thought, as in Owoeye (2005), integrates Holy Spirit empowerment for communal upliftment. African Initiated Churches, like the Aladura, fuse biblical motifs with indigenous communalism, viewing economic equity as holistic healing (Peel, 1968). In Nigeria, this manifests in community cooperatives, reflecting a theology of *ubuntu*-like solidarity. These perspectives, when transformative, counter theological divisions by prioritizing justice over materialism, fostering sustainable development.

Historical Role of the Church in Nigeria's Economic Equity

Colonial and Missionary Era: The Church's role in Nigeria's economic equity began with missionary activities in the 19th century. Christian missions, particularly Catholic and Anglican, established schools and hospitals, introducing Western education and healthcare that empowered Nigerians economically (Makozi & Ojo, 1982). These institutions produced educated elites who challenged colonial economic exploitation, contributing to Nigeria's independence movement (Omotoye, 2006). Missions also provided vocational training, fostering economic self-reliance.

Post-Independence and Liberation Theology: Post-independence, the Church in Nigeria addressed economic inequities amid political and economic challenges. The rise of liberation theology in the 1970s, though less prominent than in Latin America, inspired Nigerian clergy to critique systemic poverty and corruption (Fasoro, 2013). The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) advocated for social justice, influencing policies on education and healthcare access (Uchegbue, 2013).

Contemporary Pentecostal Growth: Since the 1980s, Pentecostal churches have proliferated, driven by Nigeria's economic challenges, including unemployment and poverty (Longe, 2017). While some churches have been criticized for promoting materialism through prosperity teachings (Onah & Ugwu, 2008), others have established schools, hospitals, and empowerment programs, contributing to socioeconomic development (Kadota, 2013). This historical trajectory underscores the Church's evolving role in Nigeria's economic landscape.

Contemporary Initiatives for Economic Equity in Nigeria

Charity and Direct Aid: The Church in Nigeria is a major provider of direct aid, addressing immediate economic needs. The RCCG's Christian Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative operates food banks, free healthcare clinics, and scholarship programs, directly supporting SDG 1 (CSR Reporters, 2024). Deeper Life Bible Church has built schools and health centers in rural areas, offering free education and medical care to the poor (CSR Reporters, 2024). These efforts provide immediate relief to Nigeria's impoverished communities.

Advocacy and Policy Influence: The Church in Nigeria engages in advocacy to address systemic economic inequities. The Catholic Church's JDPC advocates for fair trade policies and debt relief, aligning with SDG 10 (Fasoro, 2013). CAN and PFN have campaigned for policies addressing unemployment and corruption, urging government accountability (Uchegbue, 2013). For example, the Kaduna Peace Declaration, a joint Christian-Muslim initiative, promotes equitable resource distribution and peacebuilding, fostering economic stability (Discover Global Society, 2024).

Economic Empowerment Programs: Economic empowerment is a cornerstone of the Church's efforts. The RCCG runs skill acquisition centers, providing vocational training to unemployed youths and women (CSR Reporters, 2024). The Methodist Church in Nigeria offers microfinance loans to women entrepreneurs, reducing gender-based economic disparities (Methodist Church of Kenya, 2023). The Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) provides scholarships and business startup support, fostering economic independence (CSR Reporters, 2024). These programs align with SDG 8, promoting decent work and economic growth.

Environmental Sustainability and Economic Equity: The Church in Nigeria increasingly connects economic equity with environmental sustainability. Following Laudato Si', Catholic dioceses promote sustainable agriculture to combat food insecurity, a critical issue in Nigeria's conflict-affected regions (Pope Francis, 2015). The Anglican Church's Green Anglican initiative supports eco-friendly farming in northern Nigeria, enhancing economic resilience for farmers (Green Anglican, 2023). These efforts address the economic impacts of climate change, supporting SDG 13 (Climate Action).

The Church's Impact on Sustainable Development in Nigeria

The Church in Nigeria, as a dominant religious and social institution, plays a pivotal role in addressing economic inequity and promoting sustainable development in a nation rich in resources yet plagued by persistent poverty. By leveraging its theological foundations, extensive grassroots networks, and partnerships, the Church aligns with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This section integrates church-led initiatives with an analysis of their transformative impact,

applying Niebuhr's "Christ and Culture" model to evaluate how these efforts redeem societal structures. Systemic challenges are also examined to provide a balanced assessment. Church-Led Initiatives and Their Alignment with SDGs Churches and faith-based organizations in Nigeria address economic disparities through innovative programs that combine immediate relief with long-term strategies. Below is an integrated analysis of key initiatives, demonstrating their contributions to SDGs and transformative potential:

- i. **Caritas Nigeria's Fair-Trade Advocacy (SDGs 1, 8, 10):** Collaborating with farmers in Abia and Enugu, this initiative promotes sustainable farming and fair markets, increasing incomes by 30% for 1,500 farmers (Caritas Nigeria Annual Report, 2023). Under Niebuhr's transformation paradigm, it reshapes exploitative supply chains, fostering equity.
- ii. **Dunamis International's Health and Education Programs (SDGs 1, 3, 4):** In northern states, free services reached 10,000 individuals in 2024, with 70% of vocational trainees gaining employment (CSR Reporters, 2024). This transforms conflict zones by building human capital.
- iii. **Christian Aid's Livelihood Interventions (SDGs 2, 5, 8):** The Wheat Out-Grower Project in Kaduna boosted incomes by 25%, while microfinance supported 2,000 women in Plateau (Christian Aid Nigeria, 2024). It empowers marginalized groups, aligning with gender equality and economic growth.
- iv. **Redeemed Christian Church of God's (RCCG) Vocational Training Centers (SDGs 4, 8):** Training 3,000 in Lagos and Ogun, with 60% employment outcomes (RCCG Social Impact Report, 2023), this initiative transforms unemployment into opportunity.
- v. **Living Faith Church's Microenterprise Support (SDGs 1, 8):** Seed funding for 1,200 businesses in Oyo and Delta increased revenues by 40% (David Oyedepo Foundation, 2024), promoting resilience.
- vi. **Catholic Relief Services' (CRS) Agricultural Development Projects (SDGs 2, 13):** The "Thrive" program in Adamawa enhanced yields by 35% for 5,000 farmers (CRS Nigeria, 2023), addressing climate impacts.
- vii. **Anglican Church's Women Empowerment Programs (SDGs 5, 8):** Training 2,500 women in Anambra and Imo since 2022 (Anglican Communion Nigeria, 2023) reduces gender disparities.
- viii. **Salvation Army's Community Savings Groups (SDGs 1, 8):** Supporting 1,800 in southern states with 20% savings increases (Salvation Army Nigeria, 2024).
- ix. **Baptist Convention's Youth Entrepreneurship Program (SDGs 4, 8):** Training 1,500 in urban areas, with 50% starting businesses (Nigerian Baptist Convention, 2023).
- x. **Methodist Church Nigeria's Rural Cooperative Development (SDGs 2, 8):** Benefiting 1,000 farmers in Benue with 30% income gains (Methodist Church Nigeria, 2024).

beyond specific initiatives in broader contributions to SDGs, the Church's impact manifests in:

1. **Poverty Alleviation (SDG 1):** Food distribution by Caritas reached 1.2 million (Caritas Nigeria, 2023).
2. **Vocational Training (SDG 8):** RCCG trains 5,000 youths annually (RCCG, 2024).
3. **Microfinance (SDG 8):** Anglican programs loaned to 3,000 women (Anglican Diocese of Enugu, 2023).
4. **Fair Resource Advocacy (SDG 10):** CAN lobbies for land access (CAN, 2022).
5. **Sustainable Agriculture (SDG 2):** Methodist training for 2,500 farmers (Methodist Church Nigeria, 2024).
6. **Environmental Stewardship (SDG 13):** ECWA planted 10,000 trees (ECWA, 2023).
7. **Clean Water (SDG 6):** LWF boreholes for 20,000 (LWF, 2024).
8. **Education (SDG 4):** Baptist free education for 15,000 children (Nigerian Baptist Convention, 2023).
9. **Gender Equality (SDG 5):** Presbyterian cooperatives for 1,800 women (Presbyterian Church Nigeria, 2024).

10. **Health (SDG 3):** Adventist centers serve 50,000 (Adventist Health Services, 2023).
11. **Peacebuilding (SDG 16):** CAN workshops for 3,000 leaders (CAN, 2022).
12. **Youth Empowerment (SDG 8):** Catholic training for 4,000 youths (Catholic Archdiocese of Onitsha, 2023).
13. **Disaster Response (SDG 1):** Christian Aid aided 55,000 flood victims (Christian Aid, n.d.).
14. **Financial Cooperatives (SDG 8):** Assemblies of God supported 2,000 (Assemblies of God Nigeria, 2024).
15. **Partnerships (SDG 17):** UNDP collaborations for 10,000 farmers (UNDP, 2021).

These efforts, viewed through Niebuhr's lens, demonstrate transformation by redeeming economic structures, though scalability varies.

Challenges to the Church

Despite its significant contributions to economic equity and sustainable development, the Church in Nigeria encounters a multitude of challenges that constrain its overall impact and effectiveness. Financial constraints represent a primary obstacle, as limited funding from sources like tithes and donations severely hampers the ability to scale up programs, particularly in smaller rural congregations where resources are scarce, and initiatives such as vocational training cannot be expanded without additional support (Smith, 2019). Bureaucratic structures within church hierarchies further exacerbate delays, with rigid governance processes slowing decision-making and resource allocation, as evidenced by stalled community projects in regions like Imo State due to prolonged approval times from diocesan boards (Okpala, 2020).

Theological divisions also pose a substantial barrier, as varying doctrines across denominations lead to inconsistencies in prioritizing development efforts; for instance, while mainline churches may focus on collective social justice, others emphasize personal spiritual growth, ultimately diluting unified action on economic issues (Bowler, 2013). Closely related is the influence of the prosperity gospel, which is prominent in churches like Winners' Chapel and shifts emphasis toward individual wealth accumulation rather than addressing broader systemic inequalities, thereby undermining goals of communal economic equity and potentially exploiting congregants in poverty (Onah & Ugwu, 2008; Omosor, 2019). Perceptions of corruption further erode public trust in the Church, with Nigeria's low ranking on global indices highlighting allegations of financial mismanagement in some megachurches, which in turn discourages participation and partnerships essential for development work (Transparency International, 2020).

Historical associations with colonialism fuel ongoing skepticism, as many Nigerians perceive the Church as a remnant of foreign influence that prioritizes external agendas over local needs, complicating its credibility in leading indigenous development efforts (Duffy, 2014). Security threats from groups like Boko Haram disrupt programs extensively, with over 200 churches destroyed in Borno State between 2019 and 2024, forcing the redirection of resources toward rebuilding rather than expansion and leaving vulnerable communities underserved (Operation World, 2025). Similarly, herdsman-farmer conflicts in the Middle Belt halt agricultural and economic initiatives, as seen in the suspension of farming programs by the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) in Benue State amid violent attacks that endanger participants and infrastructure (ECWA, 2023).

Societal mistrust compounds these issues, with widespread views on platforms like X portraying churches as profit-driven enterprises rather than altruistic institutions, which undermines their moral authority and ability to mobilize communities for sustainable projects. Limited technical expertise within many churches leads to overdependence on external partners for implementing complex programs like sustainable agriculture, fostering a cycle of reliance that hampers long-term self-sufficiency (Christian Aid, n.d.). Regional disparities result in uneven impact, where robust networks in southern Nigeria contrast with access challenges in the north due to insecurity and poor infrastructure, limiting equitable distribution of benefits (LWF, 2024).

Overreliance on foreign aid diminishes the Church's autonomy, as funding cuts from international donors in 2022 reduced programs by 30% for organizations like Caritas Nigeria,

making initiatives vulnerable to external fluctuations and less sustainable (Caritas Nigeria, 2023). Gender disparities in leadership roles within patriarchal denominations restrict women's involvement in decision-making, thereby hindering progress on gender-focused initiatives aligned with SDG 5 and perpetuating inequalities in program design and implementation (Presbyterian Church Nigeria, 2024). Inadequate monitoring and evaluation systems contribute to a lack of accountability, with many churches, including the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), failing to consistently track outcomes of vocational programs, which reduces effectiveness and donor confidence (RCCG, 2024). Finally, competition among denominations fragments collective efforts, as rivalries between groups like Catholics and Pentecostals complicate coordination in joint projects, such as those under the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), leading to duplicated resources and missed opportunities for greater impact (CAN, 2022).

Adding to these, religious extremism and fanaticism present formidable obstacles, as they exacerbate social tensions and lead to violent conflicts that disrupt development initiatives, particularly in regions where ideological clashes between Christian and Muslim communities foster fear and mistrust, ultimately obstructing inclusive societal progress. Manipulation of religion for cultural, ethnic, or political gains further complicates the landscape, as such exploitation intensifies existing divisions and hinders the Church's ability to promote unified sustainable development goals across diverse groups. The failure of religious leaders to effectively challenge corruption and unjust structures within society represents another critical challenge, with some Christian figures tacitly collaborating in mismanagement or benefiting from nepotism, which weakens the Church's moral stance and impedes efforts to address systemic economic inequities.

Low levels of awareness about the SDGs among church members and leaders pose a significant barrier, stemming from poor communication between government and the populace, which limits the Church's capacity to align its grassroots programs with global development frameworks and mobilize congregations effectively. Conflicts between religious beliefs and specific SDGs, such as SDG 5 on gender equality, create internal resistance, where conservative interpretations of Christian teachings on gender roles restrict full endorsement and implementation of initiatives promoting women's empowerment.

Moreover, government resistance and conflicts of interest undermine the Church's role, as authorities often view poverty alleviation efforts as political indictments or encroachments on state responsibilities, particularly when Church doctrines like those on birth control clash with public policies, leading to exclusion from national programs. Religious bias and suspicion from other faith groups perceive Church initiatives as veiled proselytism, resulting in outright rejection or sabotage of programs, while discriminatory targeting of aid only to Christian members exacerbates interfaith tensions and reduces overall impact.

Internal incompetence arising from bureaucratic preferences for appointing church members over qualified experts leads to poor execution, with some staff even sabotaging projects for personal gain, further eroding program efficacy. Rigid interpretations of religious teachings hinder adaptability to modern sustainable practices, limiting the Church's flexibility in adopting innovative environmental or economic strategies essential for long-term development. Finally, the lack of serious commitment to interreligious dialogue initiatives weakens collaborative efforts, as superficial engagements fail to bridge divides, perpetuating conflicts that divert resources from development to crisis management.

Conclusion

The Church in Nigeria serves as a vital catalyst for economic equity, leveraging its theological foundations, historical legacy, and contemporary initiatives to address poverty and inequality. Through charity, advocacy, empowerment programs, and environmental stewardship, it aligns with SDGs, fostering sustainable development. Case studies like Caritas Nigeria and Dunamis International demonstrate tangible impacts on communities. However, challenges such as corruption, theological divisions, and regional instability necessitate strategic interventions. By embracing collaborative governance, ethical leadership, and inclusive dialogue, the Church can

enhance its role in Nigeria's socio-economic transformation. Its moral authority and community networks position it uniquely to bridge grassroots action with policy advocacy, contributing to a more equitable and sustainable Nigeria.

Recommendations

To strengthen its role as a catalyst for economic equity and sustainable development in Nigeria, the Church should:

- i. Enhance Theological Education: Develop programs emphasizing economic justice and social responsibility, addressing prosperity gospel distortions to unify efforts (Bowler, 2013).
- ii. Strengthen Partnerships: Collaborate with government, NGOs, and interfaith groups to scale up initiatives, as seen in the Kaduna Peace Declaration (Discover Global Society, 2024).
- iii. Improve Financial Transparency: Address corruption perceptions by adopting transparent financial practices, rebuilding public trust (Transparency International, 2020).
- iv. Expand Empowerment Programs: Increase investment in vocational training and microfinance, targeting youth and women to address unemployment (CSR Reporters, 2024).
- v. Promote Interfaith Dialogue: Build on initiatives like the Kaduna Peace Declaration to foster inclusive economic development across religious divides (Discover Global Society, 2024).
- vi. Leverage Technology: Use digital platforms to raise awareness and deliver programs, especially in conflict-affected areas (Christian Aid, n.d.).
- vii. Address Security Challenges: Partner with security agencies to protect economic programs in volatile regions, ensuring access to vulnerable communities (Operation World, 2025).
- viii. Invest in Capacity Building: Train church leaders in project management and monitoring to improve program effectiveness.
- ix. Foster Interdenominational Unity: Encourage joint initiatives through platforms like CAN to reduce rivalry and pool resources for greater impact. By addressing these challenges and implementing these recommendations, the Church can leverage its moral authority and grassroots networks to drive equitable and sustainable development in Nigeria, aligning with global goals and fostering a more just society. These strategies can amplify the Church's impact, fostering a just and sustainable economic future for Nigeria.

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