ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION AND HUMAN SECURITY IN NIGERIA: AN ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICAL PERSPECTIVE

Mark Omorovie Ikeke

Department of Religious Studies and Philosophy, Delta State University, Abraka

ABSTRACT

Environmental sanitation is crucial to living secured lives. A polluted environment causes health problems for humans. A dirty environment can provide breeding ground for mosquitoes, germs, and other organisms that endanger health. There is no way humans can live in a state of wellbeing and feel safe when they are attacked by harmful organisms. Environmental sanitation is important for human security and sustainability. The idea is that humans should take into consideration; the importance of the environment in development. A critical analytic method is used to examine the significance of sanitation to human security and sustainability in Nigeria. It will draw instances from Nigeria in showing the importance attached to environmental sanitation. The idea of environmental ethics which extends human obligations beyond human relations to human relationship with the earth will be highlighted. The paper finds and concludes that sanitation is imperative for human security and sustainability in Nigeria.

Keywords: Environment, Sanitation, Human security, Nigeria and Ethics

INTRODUCTION

Human security is incomplete without adequate and good human health. Human health is important to human security. It is difficult for people to enjoy security when they are ravaged by sicknesses and diseases, they live in polluted environments, and an environment inundated with sewage and other domestic and industrial wastes. A dirty environment breeds insects such as mosquitoes, poisonous germs and bacteria. These cause various sicknesses and diseases. When people are sick they live depressing, degrading, and de-humanizing lives. There is no gainsaying the fact that a healthy environment contributes to human health and security. People prosper better and live harmonious lives in a healthy environment. In good health people are bettered prepared to fulfill their roles as citizens of their nations, and carry out their roles in their families. The role of citizens is inclusive of working for a sustainable environment. Corporate citizens such as organizations and businesses, and government inclusive have a responsibility to ensure that development projects are carried out in a sustainable manner. By fostering environmental sanitation, this role is being carried out. The task of this paper is to examine the role or place of environmental sanitation in fostering human security from an environmental ethical perspective. In order to carry out the task of this paper, the paper will make some conceptual clarifications; discuss the environmental situation in Nigeria, argue for environmental sanitation as a question of human right and responsibility, and link environmental sanitation to human security and environmental sustainability. Thereafter the paper will conclude. It is to the conceptual clarifications that the paper now turns.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

The Business Dictionary (2012) defines the terms environmental sanitation as:

> Activities aimed at improving or maintaining the standard of basic environmental conditions affecting the well-being of people. These conditions include (1) clean and safe water supply, (2) clean and safe ambient air, (3) efficient and safe animal, human, and industrial waste disposal, (4) protection of food from biological and chemical contaminants, and (5) adequate housing in clean and safe surroundings. Also called environmental hygiene.

For Bellamy (2007: 382), sanitation is, "a general programme of environmental health to provide a safe source and distribution of portable water and proper collection of waste-water". In Uchegbu (2002:76), "sanitation is the arrangement for protection of health, especially the removal of human, industrial and domestic waste". It is important to note that sanitation is not limited to issues that deal with clean and portable water. In its broad sense it includes the whole process and procedures of keeping the environmental clean from waste (both domestic and industrial), keeping the surrounding air, and land free from all that could harm them and make them unfit for human usage and thus cause harm to human persons and other living organisms in the ecosphere and biosphere. It is called environmental sanitation because it has to do with the environment. The term, environment is here understood as defined by Hook (2008:77) to "refer to the entire global system. That is everything from the outermost reaches of the atmosphere to the earth's inner core. Inherent in this are all the factors that

influence the environment, from its geology to the fauna and flora as well as the entire prevailing climate". Micheals (2004:71) corroborates this by affirming that the environment is "the sum of all external conditions and influences affecting the development and life of organisms". The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2005) in her National Environmental Sanitation Policy declares that:

> Environmental Sanitation is defined as the principles and practice of effecting healthful and hygienic conditions in the environment to promote public health and welfare, improve quality of life and ensure a sustainable environment... The essential components of Environmental Sanitation include: (i) Solid waste management; (ii) Medical waste management; (iii) Excreta and sewage management; (iv) Food sanitation; (v) Sanitary inspection of premises; (vi) Market and abattoir sanitation; (vii) Adequate potable water supply; (viii) School sanitation; (ix) Pest and vector control; (x) Management of urban drainage (xi) Control of reared and stray animals; (xii) Disposal of the dead (man and animals); (xiii) Weed and Vegetation Control; (xiv) Hygiene education and promotion.

It could be seen from the above comprehensive definition that environmental sanitation is very broad and comprises all that is involved in keeping every environment clean and in good condition for the flourishing of life and the planet. The environment here is inclusive of social, economic, cultural, physical, and every form of environment. Environmental sanitation is a key factor that enhances human security. The National Environmental Sanitation Policy previously mentioned enunciates that the policy "represents Nigeria's commitment and determination to provide an acceptable level of Environmental Sanitation, thereby enabling her citizens to achieve socially and economically productive lives." Human security depends on the people living socially and economically productive lives. This socially and economically productive life is not possible in a hostile and unhygienic environment. Environmental sanitation helps in creating that environment. Environmental sanitation then fosters human security.

But what is human security? It is the security that has to do with human persons, their lives and their properties. Chaturvedi (2008) in Dictionary of Political Science opines that security implies, to feel safe under a political dispensation in which wars are almost eliminated and normal conditions of harmony exist among states. Related to this concept is that of national security which implies defense projects and preparations to avert or fight wars. The above no doubt is a narrow definition of security. It is more than a feeling of absence of war and the presence of normal co-existence among nations. Security implies total health, wellbeing, and prosperity of the people or citizens of a given state or entity. Multiple factors contribute to people feeling safe and secured for them to carry out their daily duties and responsibilities. The existence of good governance, adequate environmental governance, provision of basic goods and services to enhance the lives of the people, provision of security agents and forces in place to protect human lives and properties, existence of efficient and effective laws, promotion of good harmonious relations among the citizens, and with those in public office, and peaceful relations with other states; are all important ingredients for human security.

Human security is not an abstract or simply theoretical concept. It is linked with the people of a given community or state enjoying the best life on a stable basis. Even when the term, security is seen from the lens of national security, according to Fwa (2007), it should be broadly defined to include nurturing of confidence among the citizens, preservation of national values and interests, freedom from fear, provision of good education, shelter, food, economic and environmental wellbeing, etc. Dopamu (2006:3) notes that there is no one single definition of security. He affirms that it includes "protection against law, violence, enemy acts, external aggression, danger, risk, attack, want, poverty, insufficiency, unemployment, environmental degradation, illiteracy, disease, oppression, suppression, inhumanity, destruction, rebellion, natural disaster and the like". The point that needs be made is that security embraces of all that enhances a better human life and all that makes it to flourish. Pink (2012) writes that the issue of human security has shifted from a statist perspective to that of the rights of the individuals. He avers thus: "Human security seeks to address the problems of development and human rights abuse not from a state perspective but from the perspective of the individual. Thus, the individual becomes the focal point of a global human rights regime under the human security paradigm." The United Nations Commission on Human Security as cited by Pink (2012) enunciates that: "to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms — freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. The Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme as cited by Pink (2012) outlined some key items that impact human security. They include: economic situations; food; health; environmental; personal (including violence and abuse); community; and political affairs. Anything that is dysfunctional in any of the above areas poses a threat to human security. Pink (2012) quotes the 1995 Commission on Global Governance report, Our Global Neighborhood that propounds that: "the concept of global security must be broadened from the traditional focus on the security of states to include the security of people and the security of the planet."

This paper is written from an environmental ethical perspective. It is important to understand what this means. Environmental ethics is the extension of ethics to include human relation with non-human lives and the entire cosmic reality. It is not only human persons that count in environmental ethics. Non-human animals, plants, trees, mountains, oceans, and the whole ecosystem are important realities that should be given consideration and human persons have obligations to protect the environment not simply for human wellbeing but for the entire planet. DesJardins (2006:12) avers rightly that: "environmental ethics is systematic account of the moral relations between human beings and their natural environment. Environmental ethics assumes that moral norms can and do govern human behavior toward the natural world". The environmental ethical perspective taken in this paper is to denote that environmental sanitation that this paper describes should not be done simply for human interest but for the wellbeing of the planet also.

The function of human security should in return help to foster the life and flourishing of other entities in the environment. As human persons keep the environment clean and healthy, not only human persons are secured or enhanced to proper but other organisms and life forms are secured and supported to flourish. It should be noted that environmental sanitation does not only contribute to human security. By the very fact that individual and corporate citizens are doing environmental sanitation to take care of the environment, they contribute to sustainability and sustainable development. Sustainability is here understood

to mean, "the process of maintaining, bearing, supporting, providing and supporting the life of man, animals, and other living organisms" (Stranks 2008: 409). There is no doubt that environment sanitation is a cardinal way of enhancing that there is a healthy environment for all living organisms to flourish. It should be done not just for the sake of humans but for the entire biotic good. By enhancing the wellbeing of humans and other organisms, environmental sanitation fulfils the goal of sustainable development of ensuring that present and future generations meets their needs. Sustainable development is understood here as "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987). The issues of environmental sustainability or sustainable development are some of the the implication of the environmental ethical perspective. This should be borne in mind as the environmental situation in Nigeria is examined.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION IN NIGERIA

A walk through Nigerian villages, cities, rural and urban areas leaves much to be desired. While there are clean villages and cities in Nigeria, the number of villages and cities in Nigeria that are in an untidy state could triple that of the clean ones. Go through a city like Warri, Ughelli, Sapele, and perhaps other major cities you see unkept gutters, streets filled with dirt, market places covered with waste and discarded items, etc. Despite the environmental sanitation day observed in some states in Nigeria; there are still many places in Nigeria that are polluted and dirty. On environmental sanitation days, people dig up and pack dirt from the gutters by the roadsides and heap them by the side of the gutters. Before you realize it especially if there is a heavy downpour, most of the dirt and garbage falls back into the gutters. On environmental sanitation days, it would seem some people have no place for that day in their programs; they are always in a rush to beat the 7.00 am and travel, thus often neglecting the sanitation of that day. Alabi (2010) cites a BBC documentary that describes the environmental sanitation situation in Nigeria thus:

> In Nigeria today as it has been for a long time now, living with waste as part of the natural environment has become a way of life. Though vastly improved from the situation of the late eighties/early nineties, it nevertheless remains true and was most recently brought to the fore by the documentary by BBC in which they depicted Lagos our "Centre of Excellence" as a vast slum.

While Alabi (2010) does not totally defend the BBC documentary or exonerates Nigeria, he thinks the BBC report is one sided. For him there are hardly any cities in the world where there are no beautiful areas like Victoria Island, Lekki, etc. But by the sides of these cities including New York, London, etc you can have undesirable places growing up. Alabi (2010) argues further that:

> Having said that though let it be noted that my aim for writing this article/paper is not as a defense piece for Lagos or even Nigeria for that matter. Though an incorrigible patriot, the sole purpose of my writing here is to offer a solution. The first step towards a solution is to admit that there is a problem. Irrespective of the congestion problems that our cities face, Nigeria and the vast majority of Nigerians are dirty. Please note that I

say this with respect to our people's attitude towards the environment and not necessarily their personal hygiene.

Environmental sanitation situation in Nigeria could be examined based on its location. In many rural places in Nigeria there is hardly any proper waste management technology. All types of waste are simply dumped into nearby bushes and forests. Waste in form of human faeces is passed into streams and rivers from which people get their drinking water. These pose serious health hazards in rural places. As regard urban places, Uchegbu (2002: 43) notes that: "in less developed countries, a large part of urban household waste is vegetable and putrescible materials, including human faeces". Nigerian suffers from poor and inadequate environmental sanitation standards. The Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (2011:55) states regarding Nigeria that:

> Rapid population growth has not been accompanied by an increase in the delivery of essential urban services such as water supply, swage and sanitation, collection and disposal of solid wastes. It is estimated that about 50% of the urban and 20% of the semi-urban populations have access to reliable water supply of acceptable quality. Overall effective urban water supply coverage may be as low as 30% of the total population due to poor maintenance and unreliability of supplies. Rural coverage is estimated at 35%.

Akinboade (2012) reports that during the observation of the Annual Environmental Sanitation Day, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) asserted many people die yearly as a result of poor sanitation in Nigeria. Nigeria also loses over N455 billion. According to Bisi Agberemi, as cited by Akinboade (2012), "the direct consequence of poor environmental sanitation is high morbidity and mortality rates due to sanitation-related diseases such as cholera, diarrhea, dysentery and typhoid. Children under five are the most vulnerable to the effects of poor sanitation and hygiene in the country." Akinboade (2012) further states that the Minister of Environment, Mrs. Hadiza Mailafia has said "poor environmental sanitation is still a major problem in our urban centers and communities. Heaps of refuse have continued to assault our visual senses in many cities across the country. This poses a serious threat to human health and national productivity. It is also a negative distraction to tourism and loss of wealth creating opportunities through recycling." The minister is not yet done, as cited by Akinboade (2012)

> There is undoubtedly a correlation between sanitation and health related issues such as reduction in infant and maternal mortality, high incidence of HIV/AIDS, poverty and hunger... .Sanitation related diseases are known to be responsible for deaths especially among children and infants from sicknesses such as malaria, diarrhea, cholera, etc. Improved sanitation reduces the risk of infection that may result in maternal and child deaths.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the standard of environmental sanitation in Nigeria is very poor and has little to be desired. It is important to highlight the fact that the issue of environmental sanitation borders on human rights and responsibilities. The consciousness of citizens needs to be raised to imbibe of culture of environmental ethical responsibility.

It is in order to do this adequately that the paper now examines environmental sanitation in relation to human rights, and thereafter links environmental sanitation to issues of human security.

ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION AS A QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITY

A fundamental argument in this paper is that the issue of environmental sanitation borders on that of human right and responsibility. In section 1.4.1 of the Nigerian National Environmental Sanitation Policy, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2005) declares that: "A pleasant environment, which is hazard free and promotes healthful living, is a fundamental right of all Nigerians." The United Nations have clearly enunciated a human right to a clean and healthy environment. Every human being has a right to live and flourish in healthy environment. In the Declaration of the United Nations (1972) on the Human Environment, principle one states that:

> Man has the fundamental right to freedom, equality and adequate conditions of life, in an environment of a quality that permits a life of dignity and well-being, and he bears a solemn responsibility to protect and improve the environment for present and future generations. In this respect, policies promoting or perpetuating apartheid, racial segregation, discrimination, colonial and other forms of oppression and foreign domination stand condemned and must be eliminated.

Environmental sanitation is part of the strategic process of ensuing that the environment is kept clean, hygienic, and conducive to human living. Human life, wellbeing and dignity are seriously threatened in a hostile and devalued environment. It is right for the declaration to propound that it is a solemn responsibility to protect and improve the environment. It is a responsibility not to be taken for granted or trivialized. When this responsibility is taken for granted it is the security of human lives that is at stake. As the 1972 Declaration states further: "The protection and improvement of the human environment is a major issue which affects the well-being of peoples and economic development throughout the world; it is the urgent desire of the peoples of the whole world and the duty of all Governments" (article 2). This implies that the economic health and wellbeing of peoples depends on the health status of the environment. Sanitation which is one of the means of improving and keeping the environment clean and healthy becomes of paramount importance to all. There is a right to a safe and healthy environment. And since environment sanitation is one of the means of ensuring this right is realized, it right and fair to say that the issue of environmental sanitation is a question of human right and responsibility. The Organization of African Unity (1981) in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights provides for a right to safe and healthy environment. The Charter declares: "All peoples shall have the right to a general satisfactory environment favorable to their development."

The right places responsibility on nation-states, organizations and individuals to foster this right. Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights asserts that:

"The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health." The realization of this right according to the present Covenant says will depend on "the improvement of all aspects of environmental and industrial hygiene." It is practically difficult to enjoy a full measure of life, a good standard of living, and enjoy physical and mental health in an unhygienic environment. This is why the Covenant endorses the fact that states have a duty to create the conditions necessary for attaining physical and mental health. By implications states like Nigeria have the legal right to make environmental sanitation laws that obligates all citizens to participate in environmental sanitation to create the healthy environment for people to flourish. The state also has the legal right to implement those laws and punish offenders. The citizen has a right to a hygienic environment that fosters the realization of a good standard of living with physical and mental health. On the other hand, the citizen also has a duty to ensure that he/she obey environmental sanitation laws in order that others may enjoy their right also. It is not enough to expect the state to create a healthy environment for you. Realize that you are a member of the state and it is citizens who make up the state. Today more than ever before, it is proper to speak of environmental citizenship. You are not just a political or social citizen, you are a citizen of the earth, you have duties to nurture and protect the environment. The universally acknowledged human right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness becomes meaningless if there is no healthy and clean environment in which the human being will pursue these rights. If your right to life is endangered by a polluted and unhygienic environment, you cannot even enjoy that right.

Fadei (2008) of the United Nations Environmental Protection argues that:

The Human Rights declaration is a manifest where all these rights and their explicit or inexplicit linkages are defined and recognized. Many of the fundamental rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have significant environmental dimensions, including the right to life, right to health, right to safe and healthy working conditions, and the right to adequate housing and food. The Declaration affirms that "everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this declaration can be fully realized." It is evident that a healthful environment is an essential prerequisite for such a social and international order. The Stockholm Declaration on human environment which is also a landmark in establishment of many international environmental agreements and institutions, affirms that "Both aspects of man's environment, the natural and the manmade, are essential to his well-being and to the enjoyment of basic human rights — even the right to life itself, and states in its first principle that 'Man has the fundamental right to freedom, equality and adequate conditions of life, in an environment of a quality that permits a life of dignity and well-being, and he bears a solemn responsibility to protect and improve the environment for present and future generations'."

The fundamental human rights guaranteed in sections 33 and 34 of the Nigerian constitution are meaningless without a safe environment in which to enjoy them. Section 20 accounts that the Nigerian state is to improve and protect the air, land, water,

forest and wildlife of Nigeria. The point that need be said is that the rights to a safe and healthy environment and by implications, environmental sanitation, and a means of ensuring the right are issues and questions in ethics. They border on what the human person ought to do. It borders on the issue of right and wrong. It is right to preserve and keep a clean environment that will foster human health and security. It is wrong not to preserve and keep a clean environment. A government that does not have an adequate environmental governance regime to keep and preserve environmental health is failing in one of its responsibilities. One of the seven Millennium Development Goals by which the performance of government is assessed is environmental sustainability. Keeping a healthy and clean environment that will ensure that people are safe, free from sickness and diseases should not be left to people's consciences or done on voluntary basis. Your personal behavior affects the health of the environment and thus affects other people's health. This is why it is important to move the talks about environmental awareness, protection, etc beyond private or personal matters to that of public health and public affairs issue. It is an environmental ethical question, for human security and wellbeing and that of other lives on the planet depends on it. It is important to see then that when environmental sanitation is done to keep the environment clean and healthy, human security is also ensured.

TOWARDS ENHANCING ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION, HUMAN SECURITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Environmental sanitation is an issue that should not be separated from the issue of human security. When the environment is secured in terms of adequate environmental governance, promotion of environmental social justice, preservation of a clean and healthy environment; then people's health and wellbeing will be protected and they will have a peaceful environment to flourish. A clean and healthy environment in which the water sources are free from poisons and toxins, every form of human and domestic waste is properly disposed, the atmosphere is free from poisonous gasses is a booster to human health. The Nigerian National Environmental Sanitation Policy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2005) states in item 1.4.2 that:

> There cannot be a healthy nation without a healthy environment. Scientists have warned over the years that
> an unhealthy population and a degraded environment will hinder progress towards development goals. In
> Nigeria, there is now a greater understanding of the principal threats to the environment and public health.
> These are associated with a variety of factors, including those related to poor Environmental Sanitation.

There is need to have serious environmental awareness campaign to help people realize the link between environmental sanitation and human health and security. From Alabi (2010) it could be seen that there is need for environmental sanitation re-orientation in Nigeria. He writes thus:

> Environmental sanitation reorientation: Environmental sanitation as a way of life. Having stated the above and
> having opted for the dual approach to environmental sanitation, we must now consider the place of
> environmental awareness and conscientization as a working process towards that end. The government has
> indeed done much through advertisement and the like to bring this to our people. But this is not enough. Not
> only does this need to be reiterated, the messages have to be reinforced through popular culture mediums like

music (afro hip-hop for instance), films (Nollywood) and by the corporate social responsibility drives of our businesses who are essentially better at cooking up or at least implementing interactive projects for it. For example I see no reason why a quarterly or biannual award of best environmentally clean street, district, business premises, L.C.D.A, local government council (for states this can be annually) cannot be initiated through some public/private or purely private initiative.

One major target of environmental sanitation is to clear away waste from the land, rivers, and air with the aim of keeping it clean and healthy for human habitation and activities. Rajagopalan (2011: 203) defines waste as "any material that is not needed by the owner, producer, or processor. Humans, animals, other organisms, and all processes of production and consumption produce waste". The above just mentioned author defines types of waste to include domestic, factory, oil industry waste, extractive industry waste, plastic waste, waste from food processing, E-waste, nuclear waste, biomedical waste, etc. According to him it is difficult to enumerate all the effects of waste on humans and the environment. This fact not withstanding this present author notes that a great proportion of waste generated in Nigeria could be hazardous and make the environment unhealthy for human living. There should be no doubt that Nigerian market places and cities are afflicted with garbage and dirt. You see waste thrown into street gutters, waste thrown into the open market square, plastic waste and papers thrown on roads and streets, waste water and decayed food thrown into the open streets, etc. Can all these cause harm and make human lives unsecured? They certainly can. On the danger that poor sanitation can cause, UNICEF and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council noted: "The discharge of untreated wastewater and excreta into the environment affects human health by several routes, namely, polluted drinking water, entry into the food chain, for example, fruits, vegetables, and fish; bathing and recreational contact with contaminated wastes; and by providing a breeding ground for flies and insects that spread disease."

In Nigeria, cities are often over flooded and people made homeless, displaced, and even some die as result of blocked drainages and waterways filled with waste. Properties and businesses worth millions of naira are often lost in flood arising from blocked drainages. People who have lost businesses and even relatives in situations like this can hardly feel safe. Life becomes unbearable and hard for them. An environmental littered with waste and garbage, stagnant and stale water, often provides breeding ground for mosquitoes, germs, bacteria and deadly viruses that cause harm to humans and elicit diseases. Sick people live in a state of insecurity as their health and lives are endangered. Valuable financial resources that could be invested into meaningful life projects are spent treating sickness and diseases arising from an unclean and unhealthy environment. Life is made less secure as financial resources that should have been used to live are spent on disease. Poor sanitation results in a lot of sicknesses. The United Nations Environmental Programme (2010) report, "Over half of the world's hospital beds are occupied with people suffering from illnesses linked with contaminated water and more people die as a result of polluted water than are killed by all forms of violence including wars." The United Nations World Water Development Report outlines: "Diarrheal diseases are the most destructive of the faeco-oral diseases, causing around 1.6 to 2.5 million deaths annually, many of them among children under the age of five who live in developing countries." Pink (2012) correctly links the issue of human security to human sanitation and heath. Though he focuses on children, what he writes is applicable to every area of human life. Pink (2012) argues that:

It is imperative to recognize the critical link between clean water and adequate sanitation in the protection of child health. In many instances, inadequate sanitation and open sewage systems severely contaminate water supplies, causing disease and death. The human security approach is a relevant framework for the analysis of child rights due to its emphasis on security threats to the individual. Of the seven major security threats enumerated under the human security paradigm, five are highly relevant to the issue: threats to health, food, environment, community, and economic security.

World Health Organization (2008) report concluded: "the impact of diarrheal disease on children is greater than the combined impact of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria; the provision of improved sanitation and drinking water could reduce diarrheal diseases by nearly 90%. Latest estimates indicate that improvements in sanitation and drinking water could reduce the number of children who die each year by 2.2 million." The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2005) in its National Environmental Sanitation Policy state in item 1.4.3 that:

> The Environmental Sanitation related diseases exacerbate poverty by diminishing productivity and household income. In addition, the national cost of lost productivity, reduced educational potential and huge curative health costs constitute a major drain on the local and national economy. Besides, a dirty environment with its attendant health consequences, prevailing in most of our cities, can discourage tourists/investors and undermine the economic benefit of tourism to the country. Consequently, wide-ranging actions are required to solve Environmental Sanitation.

A vital way to promote human health and security is to keep a clean and healthy environment. A clean and healthy environment as this paper proposes can be sustained through environmental sanitation. Environmental sanitation as this paper proposes; should not be limited to just a day in a month or water or waste issues. Environmental sanitation must be seen as including daily sanitation in homes, and neighborhoods, daily sanitation in factories and industries, daily sanitation in organizations and public institutions, and in every area and sector of life. Uchegbu (2002: 76) is right to state that "basic sanitation should be a daily routine whereby man keeps his surroundings clean," and "the refuge generated should be well stored for easy collection and disposal by appropriate authority concerned". A great challenge in Nigeria in terms of environmental sanitation is that the state of collection of waste is very poor and waste can be left on public refuge bins for weeks and even months, causing a public health nuisance. The consequences of poor environmental sanitation especially poor waste management is attested to by Uchegbu (2002) when he avers further that: "the principal consequence of highly deficient water supply and waste disposal is the heavy presence of disease, with consequent suffering and hardship, stunted human growth and development, and diminished productivity" (p.76). In order to ensure good sanitation, Uchegbu (2002: 85) proposes the followings:

> In order to ensure effective waste management and basic sanitation in urban and rural areas in Nigeria, a separate department to be called environmental Safety Department need to be created whose responsibility is

to educate both the public and health or sanitary inspectors on how to dump wastes and the appropriate method in disposing them. Secondly, this department at local and state levels should always organize lectures, seminars and symposia for sanitary workers on how to ensure adequate safety while on duty. Asses to these, a weekly or monthly magazine entitles "You and Your Waste" should be launched by the three tiers of government and interpreted in different languages in Nigeria. This will guide the public and sanitary workers on how to dump and collect or dispose waste respectively.

While one might not necessarily agree with all the points raised by Uchegbu, it is important to note that basic environmental sanitation is important and necessary. There are already in the country and in every state ministries of environment, and departments in charge of waste disposals and issues of public health; there are equally environmental sanitation laws and regulations in place, what needs be done is for government to continue to strengthens the departments and ministries responsible for environmental protection and public health, and a massive environmental awareness and education aimed at sensitizing citizens to carry out their environmental responsibilities and thus contribute to human security and the wellbeing of the planet. One phenomenon that exacerbates the challenge of environmental sanitation that has been noted in passing is the growth of cities. Murck (2005) notes that one of the features that characterize rapid urbanization in less developed countries is the growth of squatter settlements; and many urban areas in these countries lack good infrastructure and services like good roads, good water supply, and electricity. You can imagine what will be the state of the urban center lack adequate and basic infrastructure, what will be the state of these squatter settlements. They are the centers of criminality, violence, poverty, ethnic rivalry, and many other problems. Murck (2005) hits a point when he categorically sees the features of urban centers and squatter settlements as having implications of people's lifestyles and the biophysical environment. It is important for government, organizations and individuals to bear this in mind. Government should enact and implement people oriented policies that encourage provision of social enmities in all rural places to discourage rural-urban migration; while at the same time improving and renovating squatter settlements and urban renewal. Government already have in place some fundamental regulations that can inspire environmental sanitation in both rural and urban places. The National Environmental Standards and Regulation Enforcement Agency in the 2007 Act states in section seven that authority is to comply with environmental laws both local and international on environmental sanitation and pollution prevention. Section 8 the Agency is empowered to control harmful substances that pollute or make the environmental unclean.

Private organizations can help support the good policies of government and help in creating healthy settlements both in rural and urban places. Individuals should see what they can do to improve their personal hygiene, engage in environmental sanitation, and many can equally live viable and sustainable lives in rural places, rather than congesting the cities thereby creating more environmental and public health problems. This would not be the place to discuss the various impact of urbanization. To do so would be to go beyond the scope of this paper. It suffices to mention here, using insights from Murck (2005) that impact of urbanization include urban environmental risk, climatologic changes, technologic hazards, and vulnerability to social problems.

Invariably when environmental sanitation is carried out and it enhances human security, it equally precipitates sustainability as noted previously. When environmental sanitation is carried out, it helps to create conditions and an environment which is healthy for both human and non-human lives to flourish. A dirty and polluted environment is not conducive for flourishing of human life and organisms, and if the environment and the lives in it do not flourish, human life is endangered and humans cannot adequately meet their needs. And when humans cannot adequately meet their needs, it implies they are not developing in a sustainable manner. You can see the imperative of environmental sanitation then to the questions of sustainable development. Oyeshola (2008: 222-223) has noted that one thing that has destroyed and damaged the environment in Nigeria and thus negatively impacted human health is industrial waste. In Nigeria it is not only individuals but companies are expected to carry out sanitation and meet environmental health safety standards. It is not within the purview of this work to discuss the origin, history and theoretical framework of sustainable development. It suffices to note that because of the environmental consequences of development activities, the idea came to fruition and grounding in the Bruntland Report.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

The policy statement of the Nigerian Environmental Sanitation helps in providing some answers to how Nigeria can help foster environmental sanitation and thus increase human security and sustainability in the land. The statement declares: "The failure of the numerous efforts to address the problem of Environmental Sanitation has been attributed to various factors. Prominent among these are: unhealthy socio-cultural practices; poor Environmental Sanitation education and awareness; low literacy level; bad governance over the years; disregard for the rule of law and other forms of indiscipline." The policy states among the solutions it will implement are the promotion of socio-cultural and behavioral changes. This will involve advocacy through sensitization, declaration of an annual sanitation day, reviewing of the school curricula, education and communication of environmental sanitation materials. And when this is done and the environment is protected through sanitation, it will enhance the life of humans and other organisms to flourish. As is known these other organisms and the resources of nature are vital to human existence and survival, which is a vital goal of sustainable development.

One fundamental concern to this paper is that the promotion of socio-cultural and behavioral changes requires ethical rearmament. Nigerian citizens need to imbibe an ethics of environmental preservation and protection. They need to take both mandated environmental sanitation and their own personal environmental sanitation serious. It behooves the academy as the center of learning and character formation to taken up this serious challenge of propagating an environmental sanitation ethics that will foster human health, human security and the wellbeing of the planet. If every discipline in the academy can take this challenge serious and foster it, Nigeria will have a more secured environment for human and biotic flourishing; and thus promote sustainability.

REFERENCES

Akinboade. L. (2012). S*anitation: Nigeria loses N455bn annually — UNICEF*. Retrieved on 12 September 2012, http://www.vanguardngr.com12012/06/sanitation-nigeria-ioses-n455bn- annually-unicef!

Alabi, J.O. (2010). *Nigeria and Environmental Sanitation*. Retrieved on 12 September 2012, http://nigeriamasterweb.com/biog/index.php/20 10/10/05/ti tie 10

Bellamy, P. (2007). *Dictionary of the environment*. New Delhi: Academic India Publishers.

Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria. (2011). *Sustaining or environment for integral human development*. Abuja: Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria.

Chaturvedi, A.K. (2006). *Dictionary of Political Science*. New Delhi: Academic India Publishers.

DesJardins, J. R. (2006). *Environmental Ethics: An introduction to Environmental Philosophy*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth.

Dopamu, A.P. (2006). "African Religion and national security: The Yoruba perspective." In M.a. Folorunsho, 1.0. Oyeneye, RI. Adebayo (Eds.), *Religion and national security* (pp.2- 13). Ijebu-Ode: National Association for the Study of Religion.

Environmental sanitation. *BusinessDictionary.com.* Retrieved September 17, 2012, from BusinessDictionary.com website:

      http://www .businessdictionary.comldefinitionlenvironmental-sanitation.html.

Fadei, H. (2008). *Human Rights for Human Environment*. Retrieved on 12 September 2012, http://www.unspecial.org/UNS679/t29. html

Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2005). *National environmental sanitation policy*. Retrieved on 12 September 2012, http://tsaftarmuhalli.bIogspot.com/2O1 1/07/national- environmental-sanitation.html

Fwa, K.L. (2007). "Towards evolving a defence and security policy for Nigeria: Challenges in the 21st century." In O. Machu & M. L. Yesufu (Eds.), *Contemporary strategic studies: Theoretical perspectives and policy options* (pp. 97-118). Kaduna: Medusa Academic Publishers.

Hook, P. (2008). *The little book of environmental principles*. London: New Holland Publishers.

Micheals, F. *Lotus illustrated dictionary of environmental studies*. New Delhi: Lotus Press.

Murck, B. (2005). *Environmental Science*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons Press.

Organization of African Unity. (1981). African Charter on Human and Peoples Right. Retrieved on 12 September 2012, http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/z1afchar.htm

Oyeshola, D. (2008). *Sustainable Development: Issues and challenges in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Daily Graphics.

Pink, R. (2012). *Child rights, right to water and sanitation, and human security*. Retrieved on 12 September 2012, http://www.hhijourna1.org/index.php/hhr/articIe/view/479/736

Rajagopalan, R. (2011). *Environmental Studies: From crisis to cure*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stranks, J. (2008). *A-Z of the Environment*. London: Thorogood Publishing Limited.

Uchegbu, S.N. (2002). *Environmental management and protection*. Enugu: Spotlite Publishers.

United Nations. (1972). *Declaration on the Human Environment*. Retrieved on 12 September 2012.

http://www . unep.orgJDocuments.Multilin gual/Default. asp?documenti d=97&articl eid= 15

03

United Nations. (1966). *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights*. Retrieved on 12 September 2012. http://www2.ohchr.org/eng1ish/1aw/cescr.htm

World Commission on Environment and Development. (1987). Towards Sustainable Development. In T. Easton (Ed.), *Environmental Studies* (pp. 198-202). Boston: McGraw Hill.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Dr. Mark Omorovie Ikeke is a Lecturer I in the Department of Religious Studies and Philosophy, Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria.