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THEME: Strengthening Research and Innovations for Climate Adaptation and Sustainable Development

Climate Change and Corporate Social Responsibility Agenda in a Developing World Context. A Case Study of Corporates in Kenya

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Abstract

Climate change has taken center stage in the world today, with UN and other organizations calling for conceited effort and response to mitigate its effects. Many countries have headed the call as witnessed by the series of UN climate change conferences. Countries have drafted legislations. In Kenya, there is the Climate Change Act of 2016. Despite Sub-Saharan Africa not a major emitter of green gases it bears the brunt of it. The continent has suffered heightened drought, poverty and conflict. Despite, the government coming up with climate change mitigation measures, it also appeals to other stakeholders including the corporate sector to join in the campaign. This paper uses stakeholder theory and focuses on how the corporates can use their corporate social responsibility (CSR) and be part of the taskforce to fight for climate change resilience, coping and adaptive capacity. It further uses Kenya as a case study for a developing world context. Among the corporates, CSR as a concept is still at nascent stage; and so is the level of climate change awareness and mitigation. Despite some corporates taking some CSR initiatives in environment, most of the CSR activities are small, scattered, ad hoc and mere public relations events. These CSR initiatives lack sustainability, relevance and impact to address social issues affecting the masses and more so climate change related needs. The paper makes a call for corporates to have a more unified CSR agenda that prioritizes climate change needs especially for women, the marginalized and pastoralists' community. These communities have experienced loss of their livelihood due to climate change induced droughts as witnessed in the 2016-2017 drought. These corporates should forge partnerships with other pro- climate change organizations to undertake bigger projects which have impact, are long term and sustainable. There is need for increased reporting and disclosure of CSR and climate change activities for the relevant stakeholders among the corporates. Implication for research and practice are also included.

Key words: Corporate social responsibility, climate change, adaptive capacity, Sub- Saharan Africa, developing economies, stakeholder theory