



# Sustainability Strategies in Ethiopian Business Paradigms: An Action Research Exploration

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## Abstract

Sustainable development has become a critical agenda for businesses in Ethiopia, reflecting broader African efforts to balance economic growth with environmental and social responsibilities. An action research approach was adopted, involving semi-structured interviews with 30 small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across different sectors in Ethiopia. Data collection included qualitative discussions on current sustainability initiatives. A thematic analysis revealed that SMEs predominantly focus on waste management and energy efficiency measures. The proportion of businesses implementing corporate social responsibility programmes is higher among those with longer operating histories, suggesting a potential learning curve effect. The findings suggest that while there are nascent sustainability efforts in Ethiopia's business sector, there is significant room for improvement, especially in the adoption of more ambitious and integrated sustainability strategies. Business leaders should prioritise strategic partnerships with stakeholders to enhance their sustainability practices. Governmental support through policy incentives could also play a pivotal role in fostering sustainable development in Ethiopian businesses.

**Keywords:** *Ethiopia, Sustainable Development, Business Ethics, Sustainability Strategies, Community Engagement, Participatory Research, Stakeholder Analysis*

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