

## Education, Health and Youth Development; sectors with most CSR investments – Industry Report

Education, Health and Youth Development are the three sectors with the most investment by organisation through series of Corporate Social Responsibility interventions. This was revealed in an industry report published by ThistlePraxis, an assessment and strategy-consulting firm. At a formal report presentation event with leading professionals in the sector, which held recently in Lagos; Education garnered (52.1%) followed by Youth Development (35.56%) and Health (33.15).

Other highlights of the event included a Keynote by award-winning practitioner and academic, Dr. Uwem Ite as well as a panel conversation by CSR professionals from Unilever, Etisalat Nigeria, FCMB and IHS Nigeria. Experts opined that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) investments in education are yet to improve the standard due to wrong strategies employed by companies. **Prof. Abayomi Fawehinmi** – a Development & Leadership Consultant - advocated for stronger collaborations between private companies as the only effective approach to making visible impact in the education sector through CSR.

ThistlePraxis began the annual review on **The State of CSR in Nigeria** in 2011 with results that showed CSR was still thought of as a philanthropic duty in many establishments. This second edition was particularly significant as it was presented at an event with industry experts across Nigeria and the outcomes were discussed by many stakeholders as well challenges of CSR in Nigeria. Major findings of the report revealed that after five (5) years, education, youth development and health still rank highest in CSR spending respectively for many Nigerian organisations.

*“As pioneers, ThistlePraxis conducted this study to identify current trends and issues of CSR in Nigeria, and provide CSR professionals with credible data required to better carry out their responsibilities”,* said Ini Abimbola, Lead Consultant, ThistlePraxis. Delivering the goodwill message from event partners, IHS Towers, **Mr. Jimoh Umoru** – an Executive Director said that, *“CSR benefits surpass the costs and we urge companies to embrace CSR rather than viewing it as a burden”.*

**Dr. Uwem E. Ite** - a Sustainability and External Relationships Professional, delivered the Lead Speaker's Address on the topic, *'CSR in Nigeria: Why so slow in so long?'*. He pointed out that reporting, disclosure, and transparency are major issues affecting CSR and that the government/public sector, corporates, academia/civil society/NGOs, and CSR Professionals were all responsible in different ways, for the slow pace of CSR development in Nigeria. The Lead Speaker implored governments to facilitate the CSR agenda by providing **incentives** that motivate the private sector to engage in CSR. He charged small and medium scale businesses to also embrace CSR initiatives. **Dr. Ite** challenged CSR professionals to come together to set standards and form credible partnerships that can move the practice forward.

The panel, moderated by **Prof. Abayomi Fawehinmi** - Human Resources Professional, Development & Leadership Consultant, Social Entrepreneur, Patriot & Education Enthusiast; consisted of **Cima Sholotan** - Corporate Social Responsibility Manager, IHS Nigeria Limited; **Tomiwa Asaolu** - External Affairs and Sustainability Manager, Unilever Nigeria; **Oyetola Oduyemi** - Manager, Corporate and Social Responsibility, Etisalat Nigeria; and **Temitayo Ade-Peters** - Head, CSR and Sustainability, First City Monument Bank (FCMB). These leading professionals all participated in a reactive panel to share their perspectives and experiences. The panel concluded that collaboration between private companies on one hand and between the private and public sectors on the other hand were the only way the impacts of CSR investments can be better visible on stakeholders and the economy as a whole. During the audience reactive session, participants advised companies to also consider investing in low cost private schools and other educational institutions that cater for the poor, those with special needs and the vulnerable in the society.

The full report is available online on the industry portal and newswire, Sustainable Conversations™: [www.sustainableconvos.com](http://www.sustainableconvos.com)

## ABOUT THISTLEPRAXIS CONSULTING

ThistlePraxis Consulting is a Management Consulting firm that assists organisations of all sectors in improving their organizational effectiveness and business operations in order to achieve sustainable growth and profitability, through the delivery of innovative solutions and effective strategies.

In a summarised single focus through a six-point portfolio (Assessments & Audit, Corporate Performance & Strategy, Competence Development, Advocacy & Thought Leadership, Public Sector Effective, and Research & Reporting), our committed teams and seasoned faculty of experts advocate standards, responsibility and sustainability as key elements for ensuring profitability and tangible impact.

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