Building Sustainability and Climate Resilience into Business Strategy: Where Does Your Strategy Stand?

INSIGHT REPORT FROM SURVEY OF PAN-AFRICAN RESPONDENTS

LAGOS BUSINESS SCHOOL
PAN-ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY
LBS Sustainability Centre
BS4CL AFRICA
PRME CHAPTER AFRICA
AMBA
AACSB
AABS

Survey of 107 African Organisations | BS4CL Webinar Series | 2025 - 2026

107	8+	16	69%
Respondents	Regions	Sectors	Webinar Attendees

About the Webinar Series

Building Sustainability and Climate Resilience into Business Strategy: This study discussed how organisations can embed sustainability into core strategy and operations. The session revealed that many organisations are still at early stages of integration, facing gaps in data systems, internal capacity, and organisational alignment

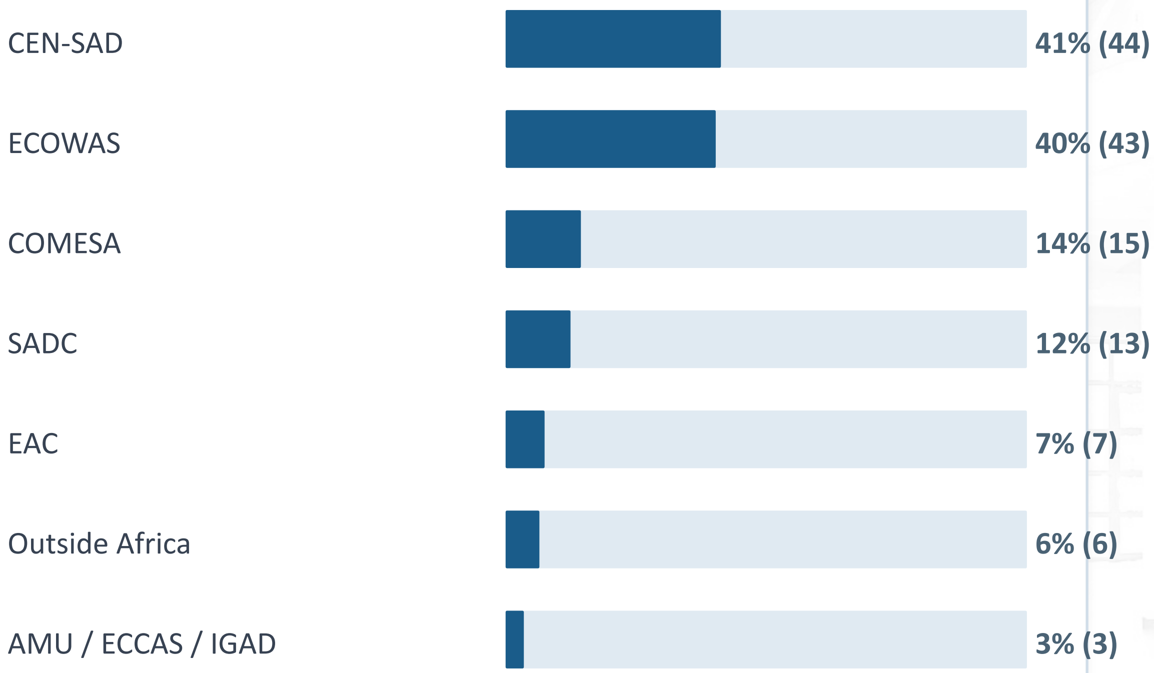
SECTION 1

Who participated and from where?

Geographic Representation

Respondents span 8 African regional economic communities

Regional Distribution (% of 107 respondents)



Key Insight

West Africa commands 80%+ of respondents (CEN-SAD + ECOWAS), validating BS4CL's stronghold. East and Southern African blocs (COMESA, SADC, EAC) represent a strategic expansion opportunity as regulatory momentum accelerates there.

81%

West & Central Africa

33%

East, South & Other Africa

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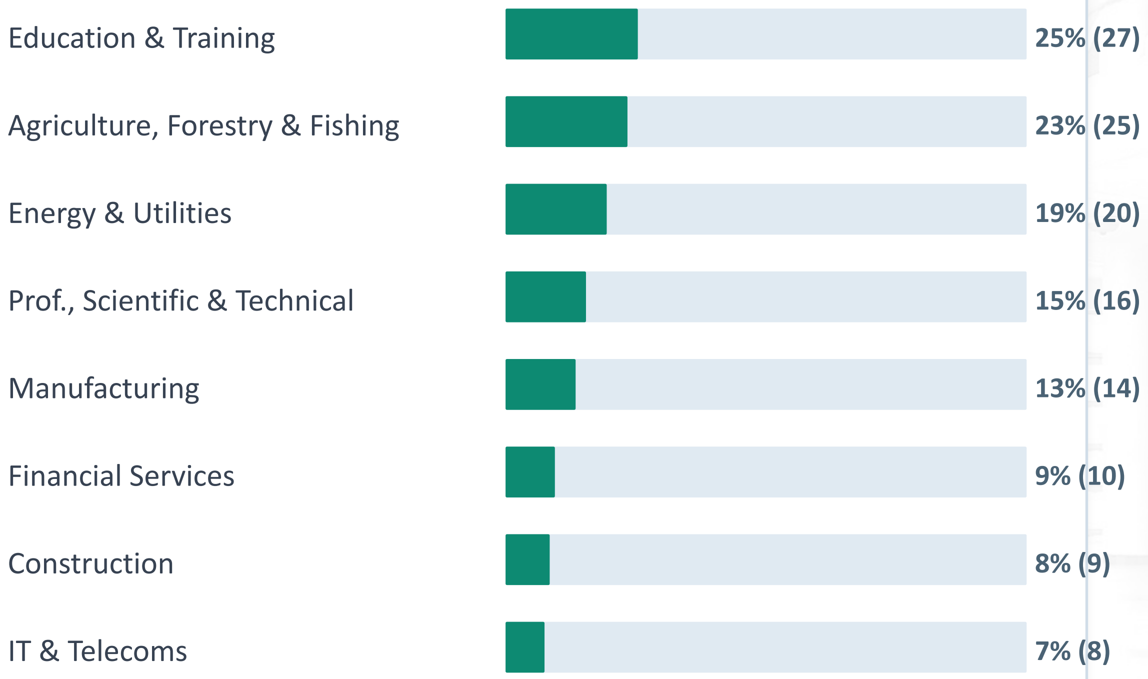
Sector Distribution

A diverse cross-sector respondent pool led by productive sectors

Top Sectors (% of 107 respondents, multi-select)



Inferential Insight: Productive Sectors Lead

Agriculture (23%), Energy (19%), and Education (25%) reflect Africa's economic backbone. These are also the sectors most exposed to climate risk and social disruption — making their high representation both urgent and strategic for BS4CL programming.

SECTOR SPOTLIGHT

Agriculture
Most Climate-Exposed

Energy
Strategic Anchor

Education
Future Leaders

SECTION 2

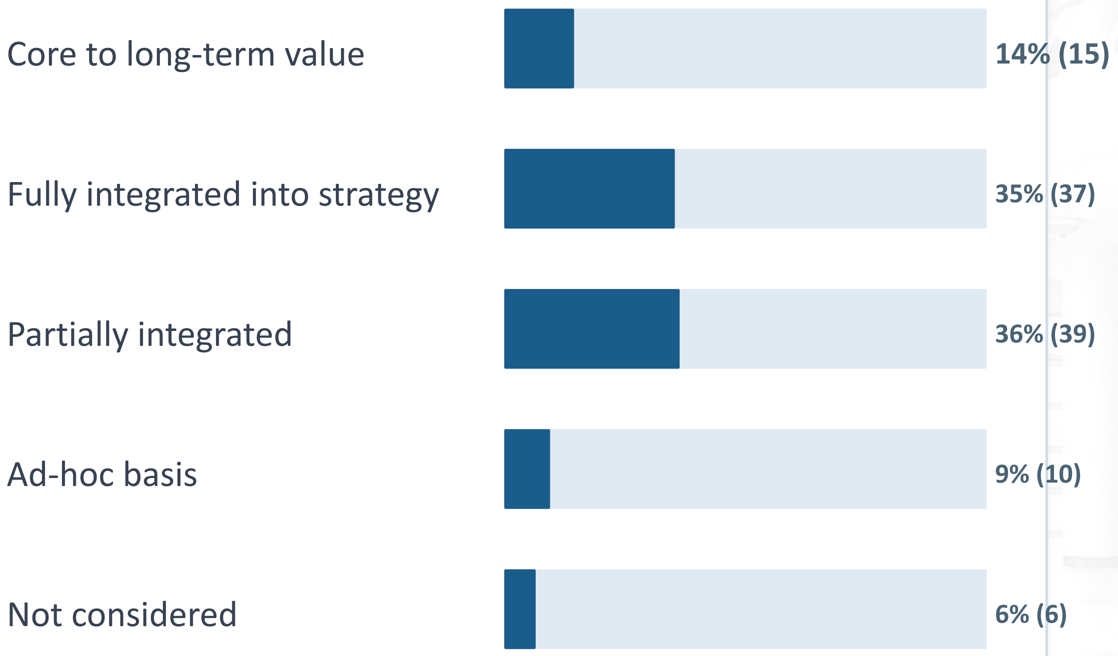
Sustainability Integration

How deeply is sustainability embedded in strategy

Depth of Sustainability Integration

Most organisations are in a transitional phase

Integration Level



The Integration Gap

Only 14% describe sustainability as core to long-term value creation. The 71% clustering in partial/full integration have absorbed sustainability language — but lack the data systems, governance structures, and incentives to make it transformational.

71%
Partial or full integration

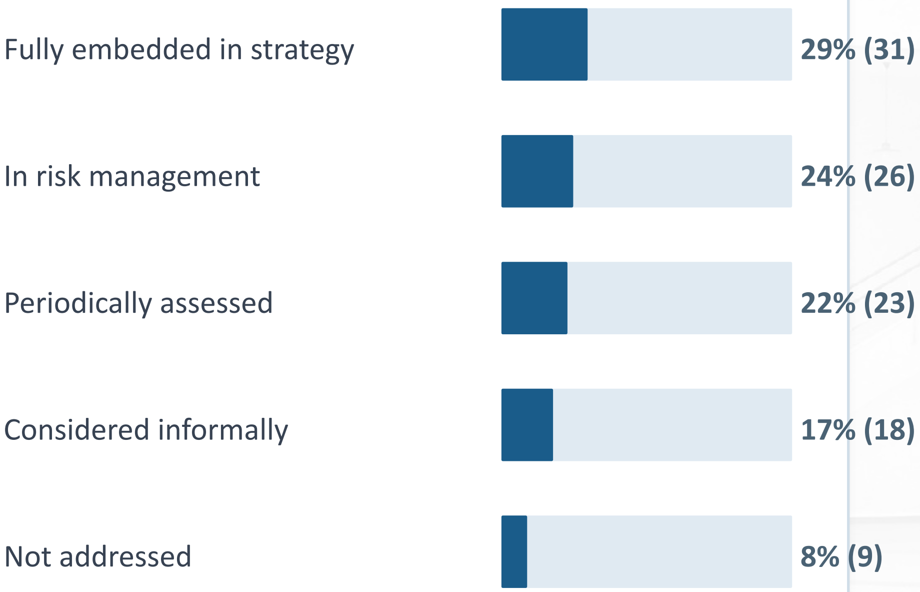
14%
Core to value creation only

15%
Ad-hoc or not considered

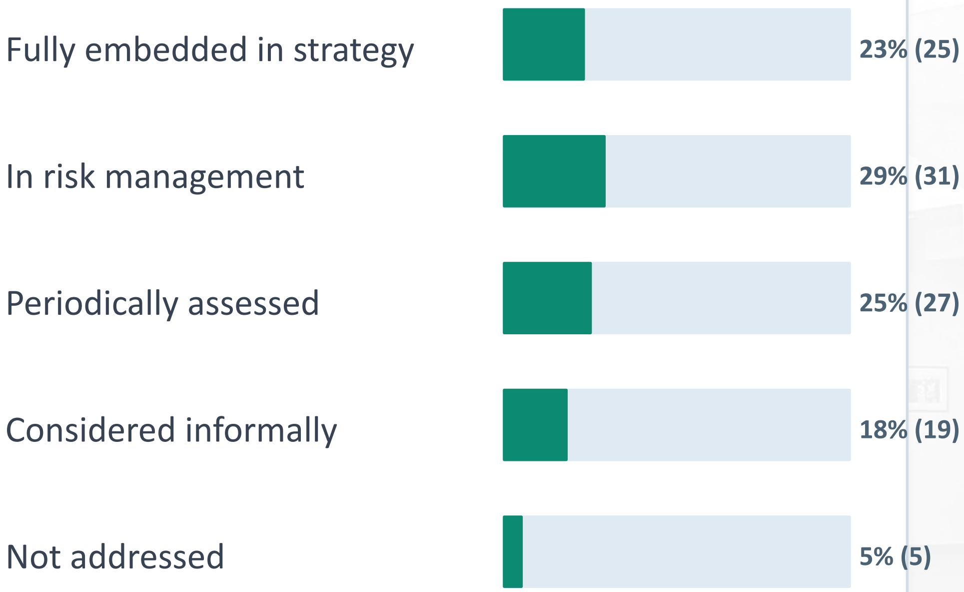
Climate & Social Risk Management

Both are managed, but neither is fully embedded

Climate Risk Approach



Social Risk Approach



Silos, Not Integration

Social risk is slightly more embedded than climate risk — reflecting lived experience of instability across the continent. However, both are managed in silos rather than as an integrated ESG risk portfolio. 47% still treat climate risk informally or not at all.

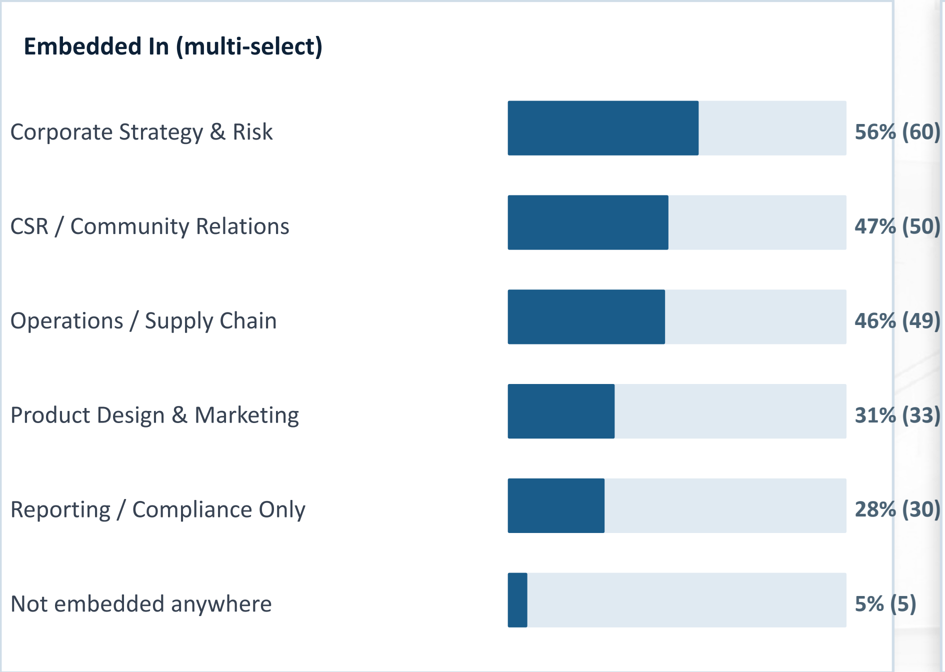
SECTION 3

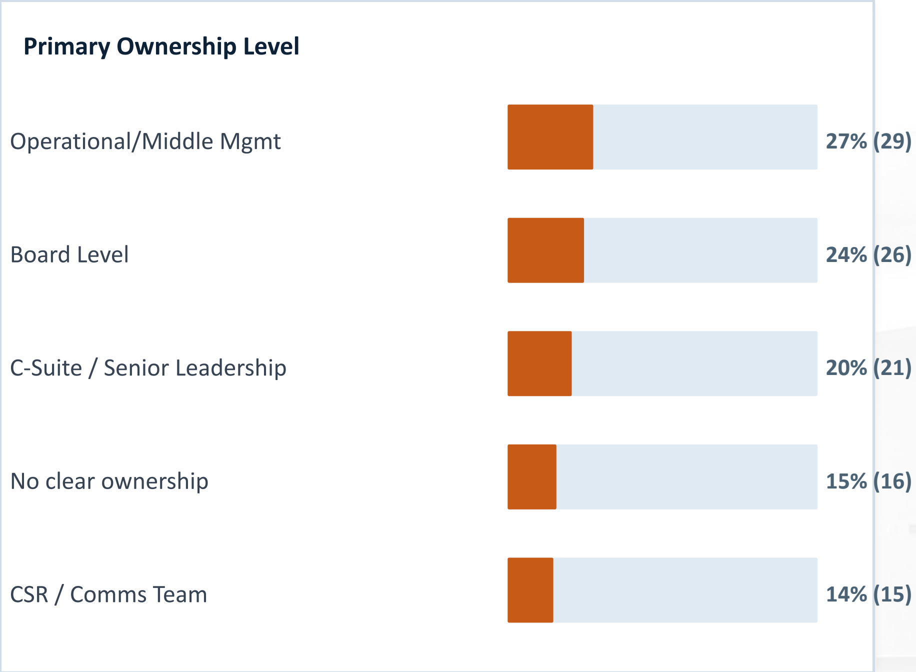
Ownership & Governance

Who is accountable for sustainability?

Where Sustainability Lives – and Who owns it

Fragmented ownership limits strategic impact





Sustainability needs Board/C-Suite authority to influence capital allocation and enterprise risk decisions. The 27% sitting at middle management level — and 15% with no ownership at all — explains why good intentions rarely translate into structural change.

Governance Alert: Only 44% at Board or C-Suite Level

SECTION 4

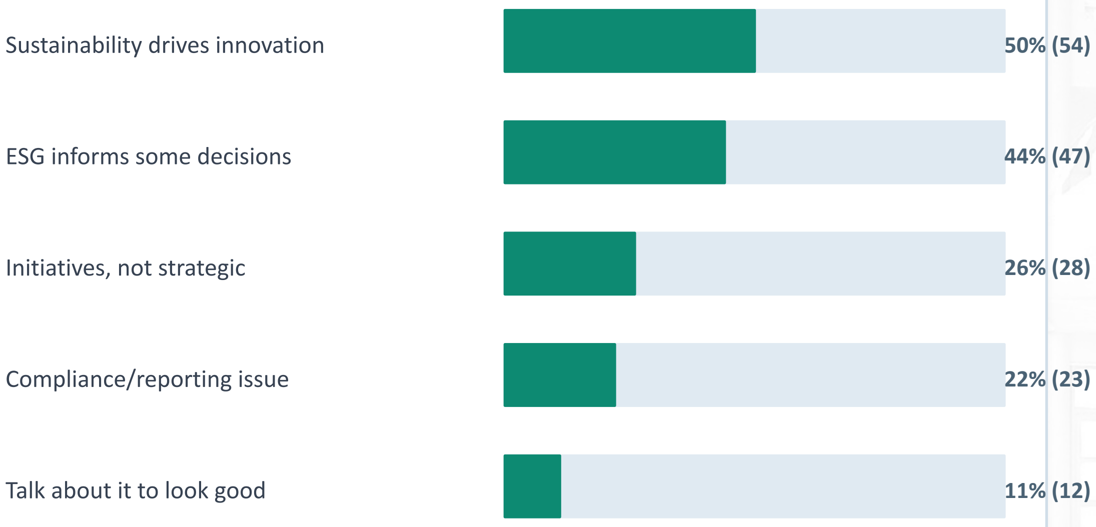
Strategic Self-Assessment

How do Organisations see themselves

The Aspiration-Executive Paradox

What organisations say vs. what the data reveals

How Organisations Describe Themselves (multi-select)



⚠️ *50% say sustainability 'drives innovation' yet only 14% call it core to value creation — revealing a gap between aspiration and embedding.*

The Aspiration-Execution Paradox

The simultaneous rise of aspiration (50% claim sustainability drives growth) and limitation (22% say it's only compliance; 15% have no ownership) reveals a performative layer that masks underdeveloped practice. This is the defining challenge for African organisations.

Top Barrier (single select)

SECTION 5

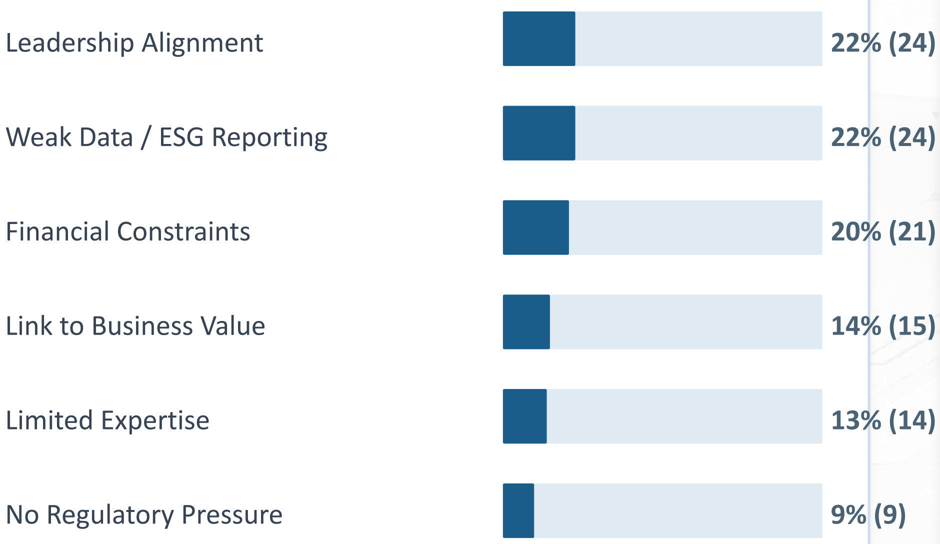
Acceleration Pathways

What can move the needle faster?

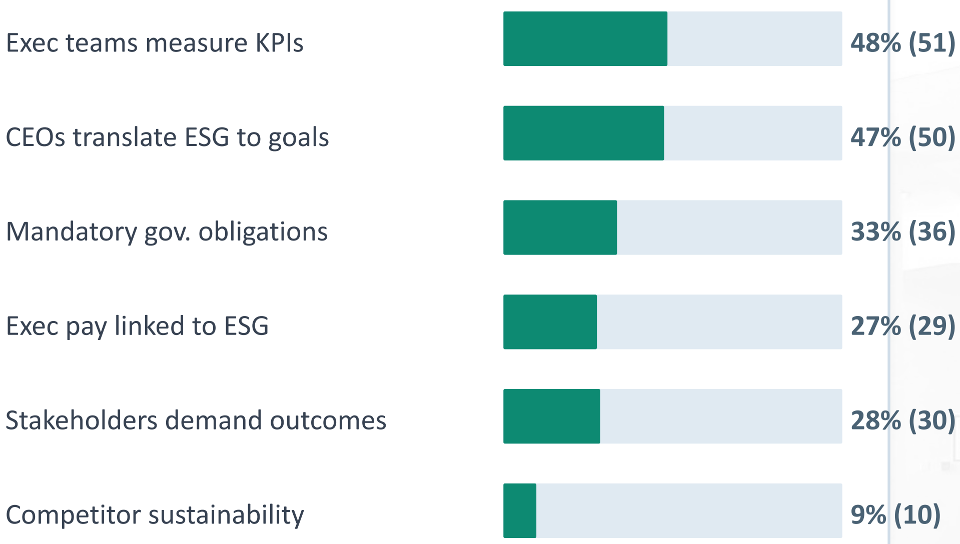
What can be fixed – and what will accelerate Change

12-month gaps vs. long-term drivers

Gaps Closeable in 12 Months



Top Adoption Accelerators (up to 3 selected)



Leadership Is the Master Lever

Financial constraint tops the biggest barrier list — yet organisations rank leadership alignment and ESG measurement as the most closeable near-term gaps. Combined with the finding that CEO/executive action (47-48%) dwarfs competitive pressure (9%) as an accelerator, the conclusion is clear: Africa's sustainability acceleration will come from within, not from market forces.

SECTION 6

Recommendations

Strategic Priorities for BS4CL Africa

Strategic Recommendations for BS4CL Africa

Five priority actions informed by the survey findings

01

Build the Business Case

Create ROI toolkits and African focused case studies translating ESG into cost reduction, risk mitigation, talent retention, and access to concessional finance.

02

CEO & Board Leadership Track

Launch a dedicated executive masterclass and board sustainability governance module — targeting the 56% still below C-Suite ownership.

03

ESG Measurement Accelerator

Deliver a practical, Africa-contextualised KPI library and digital reporting toolkit to close the data and metrics gap cited by 22%.

04

Sector-Specific Curriculum

Develop tailored content for Agriculture (climate adaptation), Energy (just transition), and Education (institutional sustainability).

From Conversation to Conviction to Embedded Action

This survey affirms that sustainability is no longer peripheral for African organisations — it is an active, if uneven, strategic conversation. The critical opportunity for BS4CL Africa lies in accelerating the journey from conversation to conviction, and from conviction to embedded, measurable action.

Where leadership is aligned, measurement systems exist, and the business case is understood, sustainability becomes a genuine driver of resilience and competitive advantage.

Align
Leadership First

Measure
What Gets Managed

Embed
In Strategy & Ops

Scale
Across Africa

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