

Sustainable development critical thinking

[Education](#), [Sustainability](#)



The world commission on environment defines sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising on the ability of future generations to survive. (OECD, 1987)

Sustainable development emphasizes on the importance of quality of life and ensures that the decisions made by individuals and corporations today, take into consideration the social, economic and environmental issues without negatively impacting on the future generations' ability to sustain itself. It's thus built on these three major pillars that must be taken into consideration when developing a long term plan to meet the goals and objectives of sustainable development (Environment: Canada, 2002).

Sustainable development in the world will be achievable if a couple of issues are addressed. These include: climate change, water quality and availability, clean air, wild life conservation, protection of the ecological system and biological resources.

The general thinking in the world today has been that only corporations have been at the forefront in environmental degradation and thus should entirely be responsible in addressing sustainable development. While this may be partly true, it must be understood that each one of us has played a role in the problems that the world is experiencing today in one ways or another and should thus be actively involved in the sustainable development efforts (Environmental and Natural Resource Management, 2010).

The quest for sustainable development in the world has witnessed the involvement of many companies. Unilever, a global manufacturing company, for instance has made a landmark in many nations in its efforts to conserve

resources. It has been involved in a number of activities all geared towards improving the quality of human life.

It has done this by initiating or sponsoring conservation efforts in many parts of the world and especially Canada, India and many parts of Africa. Its recent effort has been launching and assisting in many projects that address water consumption at the local, regional and global frontiers. In Canada for instance, Unilever is behind the creation of a marketing campaign that advises customers on how to save water. (Unilever, "Canada: education of consumer on water conservation", 2010)

It has also been involved in the reduction of liquid discharge (Unilever, "Our every day needs", 2010). This project involves the treatment of effluents and creation of water for irrigation and it has been a huge success in India. Unilever has also been involved in the clean up of Lake Constance that borders Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

The efforts by Unilever and many other multinationals are not and have not, however, been sufficient enough to meet the diverse needs for sustainable development as proven by the still persistent need for on going efforts towards sustainable development. Since each one of us contributes to the environment in one way or the other, its imperative that more efforts should be directed towards this end. This can only be done through partnerships amongst the stake holders.

We can address these issues by partnering with the multinationals in the efforts to attain sustainable development at personal, local and national

levels. Partnerships between and among multinationals in the coordination of efficient production activities will go along way in addressing the sustainable development issues (CESD, 2007).

Partnerships with governments, political stakeholders, individuals and non governmental organizations will also create lasting changes in the way things are done, creating efficiencies in production and consumption. This could be done through the institution of policies and legislation that ensures that there are laws that guide the code of behavior in individuals and corporations regarding the use of resources (Unilever: *Our sustainability strategy* , 2010).

References

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