

## GEOG 370 Geography of Sustainable Development

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### Final exam Q 3

**Write an essay showing how government policies can challenge and hinder sustainability.  
Give four (4) examples from peer reviewed articles!**

- Proper policies of development are the most important part of sustainable development.
- Unfortunately, throughout the last few decades' policies of development failed to achieve economic and social development in the developing countries.
- The development theory which adopts top-down policies **failed** to enhance the people standard of living and to eradicate poverty.
- This is basically a **centralization** policy which everything is taken care of by national governments without involving people.
- Instead poverty rates have increased in the developing nations.
- Failure of development policies because it was based on **bias** and unequal distribution of wealth which exemplified through **urban bias**, **lack of credit** for the poor and **lack of land ownership**.
- For example, the poor are the first to suffer from programs involving government cuts
- In Thailand, small farmers' sector produces more than two-third of agricultural production and received only 10% of the total government expenditure.
- In Philippines and Sri Lanka small producers were prevented from enjoying the improved prices of their products.
- They have to spend such good prices in other services (i.e. gas, spare parts, transport, storage etc..) and high taxes.
- Ethiopian government in a move to maximize food crop production, it diverted a large part of agricultural inputs and extension services to agro-ecologically advantaged zones (State owned large farms).
- depriving the arid and semi-arid areas of these vital inputs.
- Unfortunately, the production would not be distributed to food-deficit areas, instead it goes to urban centers.
- In **Mexico**, agrarian reforms involve the distribution of relatively unproductive lands to small-hold farmers.
- Therefore, contrary to these policies, proper policies are those which encourage farmers to make benefit of their production.
- Policies which are economically viable, otherwise farmers will stop producing and most of them either sell their farms or migrate to cities.
- Hence the country will suffer from food insecurity.
- Another form of the top-down policies has involved the local people in the decision-making through what is called "**decentralization**".
- In this approach some of the central government power will be delegated to the states

- This is one form of **people participation** since the community is allowed to take part in the decision-making to ensure success of development projects in their geographical locations.
- Policies of decentralization also failed because of the lack of coordination between the central governments and the states.
- The main reason behind this failure is that central governments did not provide state governments with **financial support, experts, training and technical know-how**.
- However, since early 1980s, the World Bank imposed the application of Structural Adjustment Program (**SAP**) policy which continues to present.
- This policy is based on sharp cut in government expenditure (No subsidies, no improved infrastructure, no transportation, etc..).
- This policy failed to achieve sustainable development, because governments were not allowed to contribute to any form of development projects.
- Instead, the private sector is encouraged to take care of the development process.
- As a result, the number of the poor and poverty has increased which has led to rural-urban migration that resulted in rapid urbanization mainly in the African continent.
- Poverty has increased to the extent that in 2003 the World Bank published a report in which the administration felt guilty for not financing rural development programs.
- On the other hand, we believe that successful policies of sustainable development are those which are based on empowering people to be self-reliance.
- These are the policies in which people help themselves by themselves since all of the policies that imposed from outside failed to provide the local communities with tools of a better life.
- In this regard, self-help or self-reliance policies that based on local knowledge and experience which is practiced by the local communities for centuries have proven to be a more successful policies of sustainable development in the developing countries