



ZIMBABWE EZEKIEL GUTI UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF LAW, BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE AND ECONOMICS

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS, MARKETING AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

EXAMINATION PAPER

MODULE CODE : MBA513
MODULE TITLE : ENTREPRENEURSHIP
DURATION : 3 Hours
LEVEL : 1.1
DATE

28 NOV 2025

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

1. No cell phones are allowed in the examination venue.
2. Use of silent, non-programmable calculators is allowed.
3. Answer question number **one (1)** in Section A (Compulsory) and any other **three (3)** questions in Section B.
4. Begin each question on a new page.
5. The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets []
6. Show all workings, where applicable.

SECTION A (COMPUSORY 40 MARKS)

Unilever: Embracing Sustainability for Growth

Polman's vision for Unilever was rooted in the company's history. William Lever had always seen Lever Brothers as much more than a vehicle for making money for himself: he saw no trade-off between seeking to make a profit and seeking to improve society. Its products helped to improve public health and hygiene, and the company treated its employees with dignity and respect. After it became Unilever and grew into a multinational corporation, it continued to make everyday products and to treat its employees well. But when Polman took over, he decided to refashion Unilever so that social responsibility moved from an important facet of the company to become its driving force. He had always seen business as needing to play an important role in the development of a more just and equal society.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, other factors had to be taken into account: climate change, globalization, population growth, scarcer natural resources, greater individual wealth, an expanding middle class in both the developed and developing worlds, more informed and demanding customers, and more active shareholders.

In 2010, Unilever unveiled the new concept through which it would apply Polman's vision: its Sustainable Living Plan, which would be applied to every aspect of the company's operations, from top to bottom. Launching the plan, Polman summarized its ambitions: "We have to develop new ways of doing business which will increase the positive social benefits arising from Unilever's activities while at the same time reducing our environmental impacts. We want to be a sustainable business in every sense of the word". But, he added, "We do not believe there is a conflict between sustainability and profitable growth" *In 2010, Unilever unveiled the new concept through which it would apply Polman's vision: its Sustainable Living Plan, applied to every aspect of the company's operations.*

He outlined vision, strategy, and targets: "Our vision is to create a better future in which people can improve their quality of life without increasing their environmental footprint. Our strategy is to increase our social impact by ensuring that our products meet the needs of people everywhere for balanced nutrition, good hygiene, and the

confidence which comes from having clean clothes and good skin. "We recognise that, to live within the natural limits of the planet, we have to decouple growth from environmental impact. This starts with our own operations. We now send zero waste to landfill across our entire global factory network, cut CO2 from energy by 47% per tonne of production in our operations, many of our factories run on renewable energy and we'll be carbon positive by 2030. "However, our impact goes beyond our factory gates. The sustainable sourcing of raw materials and the use of our products by the consumer at home have a far larger footprint. That's why our plan is designed to reduce our impacts across the whole lifecycle of our products. Innovation and technology will be the key to achieving these reductions". Polman announced three hugely ambitious targets as a part of the USLP: to help more than a billion people take action to improve their health and wellbeing by 2020; to decouple Unilever's growth from its environmental impact by 2030, achieving absolute reductions across the product lifecycle and halving its environmental footprint; and enhancing the livelihoods of "hundreds of thousands" of people involved in its supply chain by 2020.

Polman told us: "Consumers are asking for it and citizens are asking for it. The circular economy and issues like climate change are becoming more and more relevant. People want to have food that is more natural or organic. People are moving from a concept of 'my world' to 'our world'. Millennials are more purpose-driven". That also applies to Unilever's own staff. "We have no problem attracting millennials: about 50 percent of the people who work for Unilever are millennials. And they want to make a difference in life. There is absolutely no question about it: they are an engine for change". The other key element making sustainability possible is technology. "Technology has developed very rapidly and is opening up new possibilities. Electric vehicles are one example: very soon electric vehicles will be more popular than internal combustion engines. At Unilever we find that moving to zero waste in our factories and shifting to renewable energy makes economic sense. Increasingly data shows that companies operating more responsibly tend to perform better because they reflect the needs of society better. They probably set more realistic targets, they make more data public, which lowers the cost of capital, and so on.

"Implementing our Unilever Sustainable Living Plan is not that difficult, as long as we are all aligned on the direction we need to take and why it needs to be done. But what

you need to focus on is the speed and skill of implementation". "What we find is that our brands with a social purpose are an enormous engine for innovation. Our Sustainable Living Brands, as we call them, grow 70 percent faster than the rest of our portfolio. An example is in water-scarce regions, such as parts of Africa, where rinsing out the soap suds from laundry accounts for around 70 percent of domestic water use".

"It is really the energy that comes from people in terms of having a meaning, having a purpose, that drives innovation"

With our Sunlight soap brand we developed a new anti-foam molecule called SmartFoam which breaks down suds more quickly. This reduces the amount of water needed, as well as speeding up the process of rinsing. People prefer that product, they see the multiple benefits, and the brand grows by addressing a societal problem. "Take Domestos, or Domex as it is called in India, our toilet-cleaning product. If you just sell toilet-cleaning products, that is not a very exciting thing. But if you address open defecation, suddenly you start to innovate quite differently. For example, we have just launched the first small powder sachet, Domex Toilet Powder. The brand provides an affordable toilet-cleaning solution to consumers. And not surprisingly the brand is growing "Or take Lifebuoy soap, with its mission to help a child reach the age of five. So far, we have reached 426 million people with handwashing behavior-change programmes in developing countries. We do that because we want to help enhance people's wellbeing, and at the same time the brand is growing very well. "But it also works in developed markets. Our compressed deodorant technology is a good example. Scientists at our R&D facility in Leeds, northern England, reengineered the spray system of our aerosols to reduce the flow rate. Using 50 percent less propellant gas and 25 percent less aluminum in the packaging, we have reduced the carbon footprint per can by about 25 percent. This also means that more cans can be transported at a time, resulting in a 35 percent reduction in the number of lorries on the road. We felt so strongly about it that we did not patent the technology to encourage wider industry use".

Questions

- a) Critically evaluate the key entrepreneurial initiatives undertaken by Unilever in its Sustainable Living Plan. **(10 marks)**

- b) Discuss the extent to which these initiatives achieved their intended goals of doubling business size while halving environmental impact and improving social impact. **(10 marks)**
- c) Compare and contrast Unilever's approach to corporate entrepreneurship with other sustainability-focused companies. **(10 marks)**
- d) What unique challenges and opportunities did Unilever face as a large, established consumer goods company? **(10 marks)**

SECTION B

QUESTION 2

Innovation and change are inseparable yet people tend to have negative attitudes towards the two. Discuss the above assertion highlighting any five strategies one can apply to manage resistance to new ideas. **[20 marks]**

QUESTION 3

Evaluate the role of the Zimbabwean Government in promoting Entrepreneurship in Zimbabwe. **[20 marks]**

QUESTION 4

Comment on the view that 'franchising is an imperialistic tactic to keep third world countries tied to their apron strings'. **[20 marks]**

QUESTION 5

Examine the challenges that organisations in Zimbabwe are encountering in their efforts to embrace Entrepreneurship. As Masters Students of Entrepreneurship recommend the mitigatory measures Zimbabwean organisations can adopt to address these challenges. **[20 marks]**

END OF EXAMINATION.....

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