

Understanding Design
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Module - 04
Start of Section 3
Lecture – 20
Sustainability practices in daily life

That is fascinating. This is how the idea of sustainability gets built, not just into the environmental approach, but also the economic approach.

And the dabbawalas are a great example of the economic approach and where sustainability can be applied.

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The dabbawalas are very famous in Bombay, they have a famous system of markings which brings food in dabbas to thousands of office goers from their homes and its a great system design and where these guys never get the dabbas mixed up even though its a huge and complex operation, but even they have become very alert to sustainability issues with regards to the food waste generated in the dabbas.

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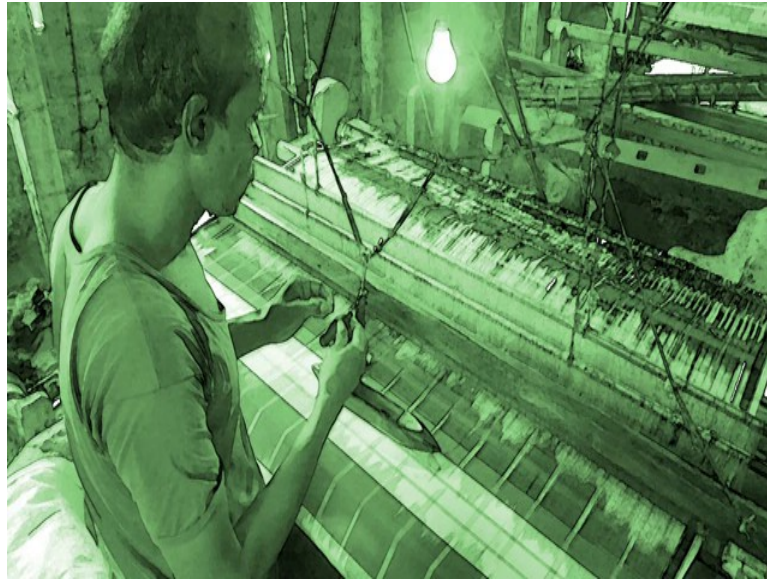


Yes that too is a great example of a closed loop system. So, we have looked at environmental factors and economic factors and do you remember what the third factor of sustainability was? That is right, the socio cultural factor would you like to tell us about that one, Gitanjali?

You know its wonderful that designers are becoming moreover the communities they impacting with their work and you know the social impact of their design and for this point actually I would like to share with Ravi has to say.

So, another important aspect to design for sustainability is keeping in mind the social and cultural factors. How do we include local communities local groups of people and make them active stakeholders in the product that we are designing. Now in this I would like to talk about livelihood especially with respect to the crafts communities which is something that I feel quite strongly about.

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We in India have the luxury of whole diversity of crafts and traditions that have been in play for many hundreds of years and they come from a context where they have actually incorporated sustainable design into their products by way of using natural materials. Also being able to regenerate whatever materials that they will be using from natures. So, they have a certain culture of doing that also.

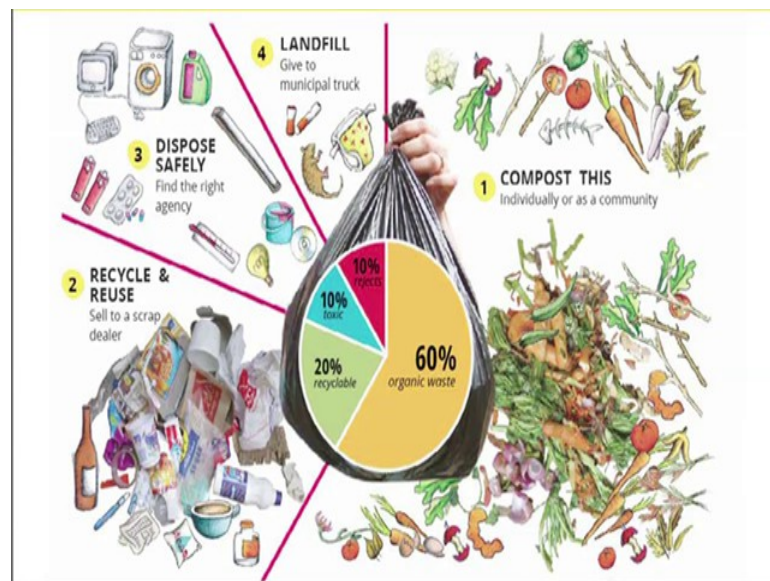
So, if we can tie that up with some of the mainstream products that are being designed, then it creates a much more steady livelihood stream for some of these crafts people who are heavily skilled because unfortunately in our circumstances right now the craft community is working in parallel to the other economy. And what is happening is, many of these craftspeople are subsisting on something you know anywhere from 1500 to 2000 rupees a month.

So, how can we as designer be very conscious of the fact that we can produce some of these products using their skills and improving the elegance of the products, but at the same time creating a livelihood stream for them which is steady and they can also improve their lot? So, as an example for design for sustainability keeping the social and cultural factors in mind daily dump is an excellent example. (Refer Time: 04:52)

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So, the daily dump was innovated by the design of Poonam Bir Kasturi who was concerned about household waste management. So, she explored ways to get householders to compost at home with organic wastes like vegetable peels and leftover food into terra-cotta pots.

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Terracotta, why is not that fragile?

Well terracotta spores and so, it controls the excessive water that is discharged during decomposition and using terracotta provided the potters with a steady income or simultaneously helping urban families to do their bit to solve the city's waste problem.

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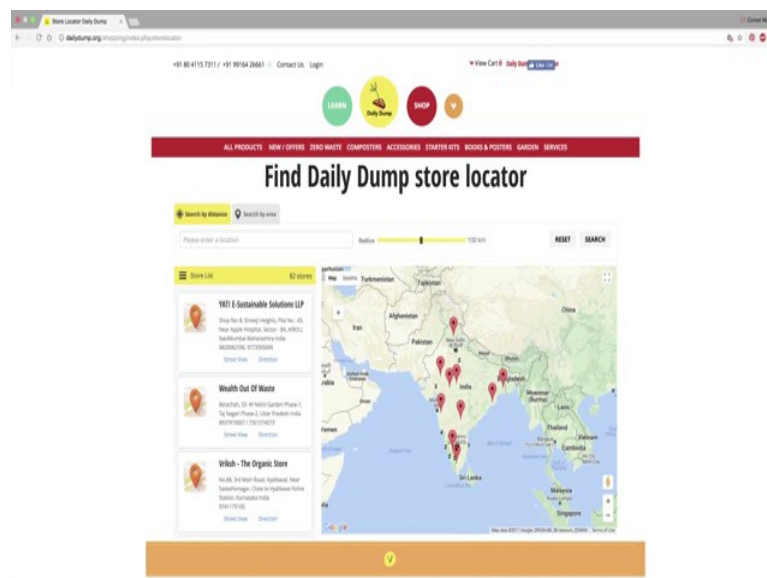
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So, the system actually changed the behaviour of families and entire residential areas in disposing of the kitchen waste.

So, there is the third lens where the socio cultural aspect of sustainability gets interest.

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Daily dump has partners in various cities and their website gives more details. The link is given in our resource tab, you can see it later.

Well I am sure you touched upon some of these things, you know, in design and society module.

We did, but it is always good to have a fresh perspective for a broader and even a deeper understanding.