

Water Quality Case Protagonist Decision Analysis

Mr. Mishra, Hindu Priest

As a Hindu priest, you play an important role in leading the community. You know the Ganges river is sacred, but suspect it may nonetheless be the cause of the many ill and dying believers you have seen lately. What is your stance on the pollution of the river? Is it your responsibility to become involved in restoring the health of the Ganges? If so, what actions do you take? How do you respond to members of the community coming to you with worries about the Ganges?

Mayor of Varanasi

As the head of the city, the mayor officially speaks for both the government and the community as a whole. What strategies could you propose to the residents of your city to improve the quality of the Ganges? You need the support of your city to be successful in your endeavors to restore the river. What reason do you give for wanting to restore the river's "holy" and "curative" properties or its ecological and economic benefits to the area?

Prime Minister of India

You need to make policy decisions for the entire country. What strategies or policies are needed to address the problem(s) of the polluted Ganges? How do you appease both residents living below the poverty line and the big industries that are providing jobs and boosting the economy? What economic or cultural problems do you think may arise when water sanitization procedures and regulations are proposed along the Ganges and in the basin? Given what you learned from the Ganges Action Plan, how will you be better prepared to confront these issues in the future? How do you delegate responsibilities of water sanitization among your country?

World Health Organization (WHO)

The primary role of the WHO is to direct and coordinate international health within the United Nations' system. What new standards and policies do you promote for acceptable urban and rural pollution, "safe" water for bathing and ritualistic practices, and legitimate cremation grounds surrounding the river? To what extent do you need to intervene to resolve the water sanitation problems of the Ganges?

Local Physician leader

You have been elected the local physician leader by members of your community for the next three years. How will you work with other regional healthcare professionals, local and national government and local families to create good health? You are working with limited funds allotted by the government. How do you treat the vast numbers of patients coming to you inflicted with typhoid, jaundice, gastrointestinal disease, diarrheal disease and other water-borne ailments? What plans and strategies do you implement to help your community, keeping in mind the financial and time constraints of your position?

Resident of Varanasi living beneath the local poverty line

You live with your spouse and two children near the river bank. In order to support your family, you started to work at a young age and only received a few years of elementary schooling. You work in a small-scale spinning and weaving shop producing textiles for the community, but this does not allow you to afford a toilet or proper waste collection. You and your family defecate outside and bags of waste pile up next to your home. What do you need to know or receive in order to be able to adapt newer, more sanitary habits?