

Final Essay Assignment

A fictional scenario

You have just been hired by the World Bank as a junior program officer, and your first assignment is in South Asia. The Indian government wants to construct a huge power plant with World Bank loans in Gujarat, not far from the Pakistan border. The government anticipates that this plant will provide power to half the state and alleviate ample misery suffered by the poorer classes, especially those in Gujarat's large cities. This is particularly timely given the demands for energy from industries in this state and the lack of sufficient sources of energy for further growth. Advocates of the project add that the additional power can support the expansion of the brick kiln industry in this area, further supporting local development efforts to provide micro loans to local people starting their own brick kilns.

Critics are concerned about safety, even though the type of power plant being built has not yet been announced. They fear that India may be risking millions of lives within the province, the country and this may further already-hostile relations with neighboring Pakistan. Many also fear quality of health may decline in the area, particularly as local people are already assuming that evil spirits are suddenly being attracted to the region. They think that the spirits may also cause greater ethnic tensions to result as well. Local women's groups are clamoring to have some say in designing the project and ensuring a community development dimension is incorporated into it.

Environmentalists from Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka have joined with ones from India in protesting against it. Local community leaders have raised the concern that this project could further aggravate sectarian conflicts and SAARC has lodged a concern that this might provoke greater political tensions in the area.

The Assignment

You need to take a position on this project, but you're not confident about what to do. Remember, you are interested in backing the government of India financially, but you remain committed to creating sustainable solutions. You realize that Gujarat has been undergoing rapid urbanization in the past two decades, though its rural areas remain impoverished. It needs some way to generate more power and hence provide for a better standard of living for its people.

You recall reading a set of issue papers in Eugene, Oregon, which are now accessible at: <https://blogs.uoregon.edu/intl442and542/project-information/> (go to each of the three sets of issues, and listen to the oral presentations within Panopto in Canvas). These papers address the range of issues being raised around this project.¹ Based on your review of these papers, identify (and explain) **three** substantive issues that are your greatest concerns in moving ahead with this power project and explain why they are your concerns. What proposals can **you** make to address this dilemma constructively? How are you going to argue your position?

Length and syntax: It's difficult to clarify this as you are submitting it within Canvas as one long essay (not by pages), but it needs to include a great deal of facts. Normally if you were to submit this by paper the length requirement would be 3-4 pages double-spaced. Be careful of *how* you write it also to ensure you get full credit for what you are trying to say. Use embedded citations to note sources used.

Due: The Canvas portal for submitting your essay will remain open for one week (you can submit it any time during that week). It will open for submissions on Thursday June 4 at 2 pm and will **close for submissions one week later, June 11, at 2 pm.**

¹ While of course you may draw upon other information learned in this course, you are being asked to focus, in particular, on the group projects as **your primary source of information** and inspiration for this essay.