

# Maria's viewpoint



I have lived in Cochabamba all of my life, all of my family live here and I am worried about them, especially my grandparents.

My grandparents have very little money and they cannot afford the increase in water costs. They used to collect rainwater but now they have been told that this is taxed too.

We are trying to be careful with water, and use as little as we can. This is not always easy. We need water for so many things - cooking, cleaning, drinking, watering our crops and keeping ourselves cool. I don't know if we can afford to do all of these things if the water prices continue to rise.

# Eduardo's viewpoint



I am in the Bolivian Army, and whilst the disputes have been happening we have been drafted in to help keep the peace.

This is very difficult because I have seen many people that I know and I understand that they are angry with the situation. I would be too if I lived in Cochabamba. Some of my friends live there and they have had to sell belongings in order to afford water.

Many people have been injured, including other soldiers. The protests started peacefully, but then they became violent - especially when we were forced to use water cannons to break up the protests.

## Gloria's viewpoint

Me and my friends participated in the protests. We felt it our obligation to do so.

So many people in our country can barely afford to pay their bills as it is. I can understand why the water was privatised, but it should not cost as much as it does. People are very angry, they need water. They shouldn't tax rainwater either.

People are only protesting because they are angry, we are usually very peaceful here. Victor Hugo Daza did not deserve to die. He was in the wrong place at the wrong time.



# Anthony's viewpoint



I work for Bechtel and I have been commuting between Cochabamba in Bolivia and California in the USA to help set the contract up for their water.

Our company will ensure that the water supply is clean, that the pipes are maintained and that it is available to all those that need it. This costs money and the price rise is unavoidable. People need to pay for water.

Whilst I appreciate that the costs may be above what most people can afford, at least they will now have clean water.

If people want it, they will find a way to pay for it.

# Mayor's viewpoint



I am the Mayor of Cochabamba. One of my priorities is to build a new dam - in order to do this we need to raise money.

Through working with Bechtel/Aguas Del Tunari we will be able to secure the funds in order to build the dam. The World Bank turned down our plan to build the dam.

I understand that people are angry, but in the long run, the dam will be very beneficial to our people - it will help us to have more water.

I'm sure eventually people will accept that this is the way forward.

## Gabriel's viewpoint

I am a shopkeeper here in Cochabamba. I can understand why people are angry, however they should have kept the protests peaceful.

My shop was destroyed in the protests. The windows were broken by the bullets from the army. They shot into the crowds as people were getting too angry. My business is now ruined.

The government need to listen to what is happening here in Cochabamba, no-one can afford this situation. The prices of water need to drop.



## Stakeholder viewpoints task sheet:

Stakeholder	Their role	View on Bechtel	View on the increased water price
Maria			
Eduardo			
Gloria			
Anthony			
The Mayor			
Gabriel			

**Information sheet: Cochabamba, Bolivia**

Cochabamba is a city in Bolivia, South America. Bolivia is an LEDC and many people earn less than \$100 a month.

In the year 2000 a company called Bechtel/Aguas del Tunari bought the rights to the water supply. The company were required to invest in the construction of a much needed dam in Bolivia so therefore dramatically raised the water rates (how much the water costs). Bechtel were based in California, USA - a place very different to Bolivia.

People had paid for their water before, but now the costs had increased by 35% - costing people over \$20 a month. Although this doesn't seem like much, \$20 was more than they spent on food and the majority of people in Cochabamba earned less than \$100 a month.

One of the managers of Aguas del Tunari, Geoffrey Thorpe was famously quoted saying "If people didn't pay for their water bills their water would be turned off".

People could not afford to pay these water bills. Many people took to the streets in protest against Aguas del Tunari. In January 2000 massive protests took place in Cochabamba. There were also strikes in the city that lasted for four days.

On February 4<sup>th</sup> 2000, thousands of protesters were met by troops and policeman planning to stop them. There were huge fights involving tear gas. Almost 200 protesters were arrested. 70 protesters and 51 policeman were injured.

In April 2000 the protesters took over the city centre, making their demands for the water rates to be decreased very clear. The Bolivian government called a state of emergency in Cochabamba.

On the 8th April more violent protests broke out and an army captain shot into the crowds, killing a 17 year old boy Victor Hugo Daza. This sparked more anger.

On the 10th April an agreement was signed by the Bolivian government that guaranteed the withdrawal of Aguas del Tunari. It gave the water control back to the city. The water prices returned to their pre-2000 levels.

**Task:**

Write a letter to the UN to explain why the water in Cochabamba, Bolivia should be made public again.

**Success criteria:**

- Your letter must explain the problems in Cochabamba.
- It must include viewpoints.
- It must include facts and statistics.
- You must write in paragraphs.





### Teacher notes

#### Starter:

Students to write down three bullet points to explain why water is important and three ways in which water could cause conflict. Students should be ready to share their answers with the rest of the class.

#### Main:

Where is Bolivia? Challenge students to find where Bolivia is on the world map. Students are then to describe the location of Bolivia using the key words. They must underline where they have used the key words in their answer.

Watch the Youtube video clip up to 2.30. This will show what happened in Cochabamba. Whilst watching the clip they should answer the four questions on the sheet. The answers are then revealed on the slide.

**Caution:** After 2.30 minutes there are some images that some students may find upsetting.

Discuss the information on the board to give them an overview of the situation.

#### Carousel activity:

Put the six viewpoints out onto tables. Students will get two minutes at each table in order to fill out their worksheet. There is an extension task if they get this done quickly.

#### Letter writing task:

Read through the information sheet as a class. Students can then use this and the viewpoints worksheet to help write a letter to the UN about why the water should be made public again. There are success criteria on the slide.

#### Plenary:

If this is the answer what is the question?

#### Examples of questions:

1. Bechtel - What is the name of the water company in California?
2. Victor Hugo Daza - What is the name of the boy that died?
3. 35% - How much had water costs increased by?
4. 4 days - How long did the strikes in the city go on for?
5. 200 - How many protestors were arrested?
6. Rainwater - What source of water was taxed?
7. <\$100 a month - How much do many people earn less than?
8. California - Where is Bechtel based?

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