



## Mains Practice Question

### Case Study

As a civil servant, you have been appointed as the District Collector of your district. One day, you receive a complaint from a local NGO stating that a government-run school in a remote village in your district is not providing students with proper facilities and infrastructure. The NGO has also provided you with photos and videos as evidence of the poor conditions at the school.

Upon investigation, you find that the allegations made by the NGO are true and the schools in your district are indeed in a poor state. You also find out that they lack basic facilities such as clean drinking water, proper classrooms, and proper sanitation facilities etc.

You are faced with a dilemma - on one hand, you want to take immediate action and improve the conditions of schools in your district to provide the students with a better learning environment. On the other hand, you are aware that the process of improving the school's facilities will take time and money, and you are not sure if the funds allocated for the district will be sufficient to cover the costs.

As a district collector what would you do in this situation?

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### Approach

- Start your answer by Briefly introducing the case.
- Discuss about various stakeholders involved in the case.
- Discuss various ethical issue involved in the case.
- Discuss the course of action that should be taken by District Magistrate.
- Conclude accordingly.

### Introduction

- The case revolves around the investigation done by an NGO that there is lack of basic necessities in various government schools in a district, so, as a district magistrate what action I would take to solve this issue.

### Body

- **Stakeholders involved:**
  - Me as a district collector
  - Local NGO, which provided details of the poor condition in schools.
  - Government officers dealing with funds for the schools
  - Students who are studying in these schools.
  - Families of these Students.
  - Society at large.
- **Ethical issues involved:**
  - **Duty to the public:** As a civil servant, I have a duty to serve the public and ensure that basic facilities and services are provided to the citizens, particularly to children who are

entitled to an education.

- **Transparency and accountability:** It is important for me to be transparent and accountable in my actions and decisions, and to ensure that the funds allocated for the district are used efficiently and effectively.
- **Conflicting loyalties:** In this case, I may feel torn between my duty to the public and my loyalty to my superiors, who may not prioritize the improvement of the school's facilities due to budget constraints.
- **Professional ethics:** As a civil servant, I have a professional obligation to act in the best interests of the community and ensure that the public trust is upheld. Failing to address the poor conditions of the schools in my district would be a breach of this obligation.
- **Responsibility towards children:** The children in the government-run school are entitled to receive a proper education and a safe learning environment. The poor conditions of the school are depriving them of this right and as a civil servant I'm responsible for the maintenance of the infrastructure as well the basic necessities in the school premise.
- **Responsibility of Parents:** As a responsible citizen, parents should keep a check on the functioning of school where their students are studying and complaint to the relevant authorities.
- **Values of Society:** As a responsible community, society needs to raise their voice against this issue, which violates human rights and exploits the future of the country. Further, the society could do various types of protests and mark their impact on deaf ears of the government.

▪ **Course of action:**

- **Document the issue:** First, I would inspect the issue myself and would investigate the matter and document the evidence provided by the NGO as this would be necessary to justify my actions and secure any funding.
- **Prioritize immediate needs:** The needs of that particular school in my district would be prioritized, where the investigation has been done by the NGO, therefore, I would ensure that basic necessities like toilets, hygiene, drinking water to be addressed first.
- **Report the issue to your superiors:** Afterwards, the whole scenario would be reported to my superiors and would raise a formal request to apply for additional funds to improve the school's facilities. Further, also provide them with the evidence collected by the NGO to support your request.
- **Seek external funding:** If the funds allocated for the district are insufficient or the seniors reject my request for extra fund, then I would explore the possibility of seeking external funding from organizations or individuals who are willing to support the improvement of the school's facilities.
- **Work with the local community:** Alternative solutions to improve the school's facilities would be identified by working with the local community.
  - For example, renovation work could be started by trying to mobilize volunteers or donations of materials or supplies from local businesses.
- **Monitor and evaluate:** Lastly, I would try to regularly monitor the situation and evaluate the progress of my plan making any necessary adjustments along the way.
- **Advocate for change:** Nevertheless, if I'm unable to resolve the issue at the local level, then I would try to advocate for change at the state or national level by bringing the issue to the attention of higher authorities or the media.

## Conclusion

In this case, it is important for me to prioritize the well-being of the students and ensure that they have access to proper facilities and infrastructure. It is also important for me to be transparent and accountable in my actions and to consider all possible options before making a decision. As a civil servant, I have a duty to serve the public and to act in their best interests, even if it means challenging the status quo or going beyond my immediate responsibilities.

