

# Contaminated Drinking Water

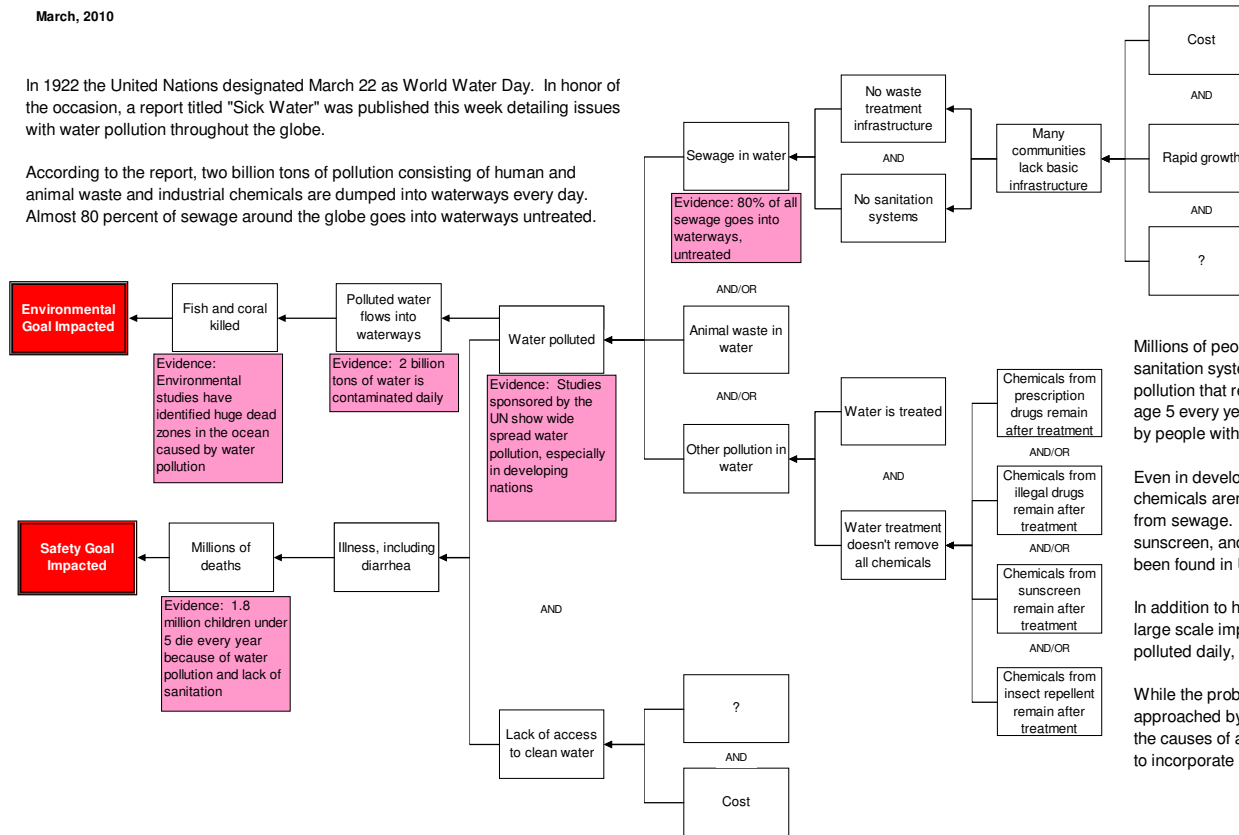
World  
March, 2010

A thorough root cause analysis built as a Cause Map can capture all of the causes in a simple, intuitive format that fits on one page.

In 1922 the United Nations designated March 22 as World Water Day. In honor of the occasion, a report titled "Sick Water" was published this week detailing issues with water pollution throughout the globe.

According to the report, two billion tons of pollution consisting of human and animal waste and industrial chemicals are dumped into waterways every day. Almost 80 percent of sewage around the globe goes into waterways untreated.

Even more detail can be added to this Cause Map as the analysis continues. As with any investigation the level of detail in the analysis is based on the impact of the incident on the organization's overall goals.



Millions of people lack basic infrastructure including access to clean water, sanitation systems and water treatment facilities. The massive water pollution that results from this situation kills nearly 1.5 million children under age 5 every year. Over half of the hospital beds in the world are occupied by people with illnesses caused by drinking contaminated water.

Even in developed nations, water pollution is a problem because many chemicals aren't removed by the water treatments that kill the pathogens from sewage. Chemicals from antidepressants, birth control, illegal drugs, sunscreen, and insect repellent are just some of the pollutants that have been found in US drinking supplies.

In addition to human illnesses caused by dirty water, water pollution has a large scale impact on the environment. Over two billion tons of water is polluted daily, resulting in death of fish and choked coral reefs.

While the problem of water pollution isn't a problem that is traditionally approached by root cause analysis, a Cause Map can be built to examine the causes of a wide range of issues. This Cause Map could be expanded to incorporate as many causes as desired.

## Cause Map High Level



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