

Afghanistan: Clean Water and Good Sanitation

Clean, drinkable water and good sanitation have been for decades a big problem for Afghanistan. Well, the constant wars initiating in every moment, have affected the country in a giant way. So much that people from rural places cant have water for their villages. Afghanistan's population is quite big, an approximately 38.9 million inhabitants. 73.9% of them are rural, and 25% are urban people. But either way, it affected the same amount to both parts of the population. The type of government they have is the Islamic Republic. Most of us know that Afghanistan is a country that cultivates the majority of its land, 58.8% of its land is used for cultivation, the major crops are wheat, rice, and cotton. On the other side, its exports are fruits and tree nuts.

As I said before, Afghanistan is a big country, it approximately measures about 65,286 hectares or 52,860 km². Afghanistan is located in central Asia, near Iran and other countries. This means that its climate is often very dry and arid continental, it has irrigated land, also small but fertile river valleys, deep gorges, deserts, high plateaus, and high mountains which in some seasons are covered in snow. Afghanistan's climate is always or most of the time extreme, with this I mean that when the season is hot it can get until 48* Celcius, and when its cold the temperatura can drop to -25* celcius. This shows that afghanistan can not only suffer from sanitation, but also from extreme weather and climate changes, that provoke diseases in the countries population.

We al know that afghanistan in also considered one of the most dangerous countries of Asia in the middle east área. As I mentioned before, war between terrorist groups are very common. Here is were the the lack of wáter come in play and makes everything worse, causing a lot of deaths among villages and different families, that die from hunger or dangerous disseases.

Most of the afghan populaion lives in rural parts of the country, this means that families divide in small villages were they sow and cultivate different crops for them toe at. Various studies have said that a typical family size is of 6 people, or probably 7 but most times it cannot be more tan 7. The dwelling of houses in which afghan families live are very simple, their made of mud, with flat roofs. This dwellings are made with big wooden poles and then coated with a mixture consisting of mud and straws. This little houses in which they live, ar considered very strong, because of the way the build it, the thick mud walls, many times can support a bullet impact without going through it.

An afghan's daily diet could be very easy or simple, most of the time it consists of rice, barley, milk and fruits such as grapes. Pomegrants are also used for afghan dishes, melons and others could be included. Families that live in villages, normally get their food by cultivating fruits or rice which is very common. We have to keep in mind that afghanistan is a country with lots of difficulties due to war. But they are able to produce the right food and amount to keep them alive and healthy. Most families have different ways to cook their food, and sometimes it also depends in what do they have to eat. This is one way: They season and coock small pieces of fish and then wrap them in a rice flour made paper.

Afghan rural families, are most likely to get their food from their own crops, since they live in a very fertile country, but for the meat, is common for them to raise cows that provide milk and protein. Now, in other occasions food is delivered in trucks through humanitarian crossings in Uzbekistan, Pakistan and other neighbor countries, to warehouses located in Afghanistan.

All of us know that most of the afghan population is located in rural areas of the country, for this specific reason the agricultura its the largest sector of Jobs or employment in Afghanistan. The average wage for this job is of 450 dollars.

When talking about education system in afghanistan, its not the best thing. The system has been devastated for around 3 decades of different common conflicts, like wars as I stated before. Education in afghanistan is a very important step for the country to make progress, but unfortunately, for many of the children of the rural places, finishing Elementary school is a long distant dream, almost imposible to achieve.

Now, in the other hand the health system in afghanistan has improved in a big way compared to the health system before. Over the lat 17-18 years everything has improve with increasing coverage of health services.

Somewhere around 2018, 3,135 health places were functioning with no issues, this made a huge advance, ensuring acces to education to more tan 80% of the population.

We saw that the afghan health system has improved in a very big way, which has helped a lot to the country in different ways. On the other side, when talking about snitation and technology, almost more tan 67 percent of the population have clean drinkable wáter, through wáter sources that are protected from contamination. In terms of toilets, nota ll people have acces to them. 80% of the population has letrines and toilets, but only 20% or 45% have safe and improved ones. Now, the acces of electricity in Afghanistan was measured at 97.7% in 2019, according to the world bank collection od development indictors, this tells us that most people of the coutry had acces to electricity. Recently the majority of the people are able to connect through phones.

For afghans, living in this conditions is something very difficult, and there's more things that makes their situation even worse. Barriers to healthy eating because of the cost of healthy food. And lack of time and the competing priorities.

WATER SCACITY:

The severity of this specific topic in Afghanistan is actually very bad, more than 70% of the population has a very big lack of drinkable water. And if somehow they have wáter, most of the time its contaminated which could be too much of a risk to consume it. Throughout the last couple of years, this situation has not gotten better, people from the country are very worried since nothing gets better. Thera are alot of Things that contribute to this tren, but the first and most important one are the years of war and instability that affected wáter sectors of the country.

This trend has not only affected the rural part of the country but also the urban sectors of it. During the summer season, also combined with drought, has led to many studies to prove that most of the wells will soon dry up. This also affects many villages, because people wouldn't have water for their crops, which soon would dry out as well. And in the urban part, it has actually led to problems between the same population.

On the other hand, the way this impacted man itself, was that in the areas where there is no water, young men deprived of economic opportunities, because they decline agricultural work, so they are forced to join the Taliban to be able to provide food to their family.

The way this affects the environment is even more devastating, since it promotes climate change, and the access to clean water disappears.

THERE COULD BE MANY SOLUTIONS FOR THIS PROBLEM, BUT THESE ARE TWO OF THEM:

Create water filters that clean water that had been used already, the strengths of this is that the water scarcity will reduce throughout the country, and the weakness is that it could be very expensive.

On the other side, we could harvest rain water, strength is that people would have water forever that could be purified, to be drinkable. In my opinion these two solutions would be the best options to stop water scarcity in Afghanistan. These options would provide water as soon as we have winter seasons, which tells us that water could be unlimited.

These solutions could perfectly meet all the needs of the population in Afghanistan, and that is precisely why I thought about them. The option I'm going for will be the water filters, we will collaborate with different companies that relate to our topic or projects, to get some financial support. The filters will be installed in different communities of main parts of the country, for them to be able to feed a good amount of people. As I stated before, this project cannot be achieved without economic support, and that's why we will unite with different companies. The only role that community members have, is to use water in a proper way, and not waste it in an unnecessary way.

The filters will be under the control of the United Nations, so they could not be manipulated by other people, during the project, we will be informing people for them to know what will be done. It will be sustainable with help of different organizations.

ORGANIZATIONS THAT COULD BE INVOLVED

I really like this project, this can be done, as I stated before we would need to involve some organizations that have fought for this controversial issue "Water Scarcity and Sanitation". Some of the projects that I considered we could involve in this were:

Project WET, what this project has done is research, write and also publish water education materials since 1984. It states that most comprehensive collection of award-winning water educational books. I decided to consider this project, since they've been doing it for quite a long time, so I would assume they know a lot about the topic.

WORLD WATER COUNCIL: This organization is obviously has focused on the same topic, for me it's very good. This organization started on 1995, it has a good amount of time **batteling for wáter scarcity, unlike the Project WET, this** has les years, which would tell me that the first one has more experience, What made me consider this one , is the award they won on 2010, they recognised the right to acces drinking wáter and also sanitation. Which for me is the most important thing about it.

In conclusión, the severe wáter scarcity of afghanistan, could be stopped, or at least reduced. This would give the country a very big impulse for it to continue improving their different systms, and finnaly in several years become a developed country with improved water systems for the population. It would be an amaizing experience t osee this issue dissappear with this Project. If this Project is done succesfully this country could go from one of the dryest countries, to a very rich, in nature, and other Things. The water problem in Afghanistan is connected to different branches of the country. Its very likely that if the water scarcity reduces, the education and health systems will improve, for the population to have better attentions, in the different systems. Families would be able to grow crops and healthy food, while kids Will have very good education, and be able to finish their learning careers.

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