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Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina is located in Southeastern Europe near Croatia and Italy. The terrain consists of mountains, valleys, agricultural land, forests, and rivers. Although Bosnia and Herzegovina has many different types of lands, most of Bosnia and Herzegovina is covered with agricultural land, as it houses animals that are used for consumption and selling purposes. Most of the citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina speak in the Bosnian language. There are many countries surrounding Bosnia and Herzegovina that speak a similar language. These countries include Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia. Since they are so similar, the languages of these countries can also be spoken in Bosnia and Herzegovina alongside the Bosnian language. Bosnia and Herzegovina is projected to have a population of 3.8 million people by July of 2020, according to the Central Intelligence Agency. Of the population, most of the urban population resides in the valleys and in wide areas around agriculture, as there is more access to water. Most of the rural population tends to reside in the mountainous and forest regions.

While few parts of the country are still dealing with the effects of poverty after the Bosnian War in the 1990's, urban populations have more of an advantage. Urban populations reside around agricultural land and valleys, which happen to have more towns and civilians. This land is also more developed than the mountainous regions. The valley has more access to water because there are plenty of rivers nearby. Even though water is accessible, the country still implements archaic ways of life when it comes to the water supply. Water is more accessible due to the implementation of many wells across the area. This allows for a family to travel and collect the amount of water they need.

Being in the mountainous and forest regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the rural population is less developed than the urban population. The rural population has less access to water because there are not many rivers flowing through the area due to the slope structure of a mountain. Due to this, wells with water are spaced far apart to cover certain land areas. This makes it more troubling and non-sustainable for families because they must travel long distances to collect water and bring it back to their homes. Rural populations also have less access to many other things such as communication via the internet, as one in an urban population would have.

While these two populations differ in their development, most of their values and everyday actions are similar. Since the Bosnian War in the 1990's, the number of family size in Bosnia and Herzegovina, both in urban and rural populations, has started to decrease. Today, families have an average of 4 family members in their household. This is much different compared to the average family size of 6-8 before the war. Bosnia and Herzegovina is also known for its unique taste in cuisine. Bosnian cuisine is closely related to Turkish, Greek, and Mediterranean meals. The most popular dishes consumed in Bosnia and Herzegovina are Cevapi, Sarma, and Baklava.

The Bosnian War has also impacted Bosnia and Herzegovina in a rather negative way. Air pollution from coal power plants have created a problem. There are many coal power plants that release toxins in the air which travel for miles. These toxins have affected and endangered some of the animals that are being consumed for food for survival. With no animals around, the country will starve because animals are the main source of food. This can lead to famine in most areas. Illegal deforestation has also become a common sight amongst citizens. Most of the wood looted from the trees has been used for military and illegal exporting. Looters have been gathering wood from illegal parts of the forest and taking more than expected. With deforestation

on the rise, the air will not be able to produce enough clouds without the moisture retained from the water vapors. These water vapors are released from the trees and into the air. With no clouds, the clouds will not be able to release rain that would eventually fill rivers, wells, and help the crops grow. This could lead to a shortened food and crop supply, as well as not enough oxygen.

In addition to these problems, the biggest problem that Bosnia and Herzegovina has been facing is water and sanitation. As discussed above, urban populations have more access to water because they are surrounded by many rivers and more wells. Urban populations also attract many tourists due to their beautiful attractions. To keep attracting tourists, they need to have clean and useable water to keep their cities flourishing. Many rural populations have a much smaller water supply, but one thing these populations have in common is that the water is not always the easiest and safest to come by.

There are two river basins that provide fresh water: the Sava River basin and the Adriatic Sea basin. These basins run through many smaller river paths and are pumped underground up to the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since the war, these rivers have become polluted with toxins from coal power plants, deforestation, and inadequate wastewater disposal. There is no filtration system that runs through the river and into the wells. Any objects and bacteria that flows through the water will not get filtered. This water can eventually find its way into individual's homes. Without a clean and close water supply, families in Bosnia and Herzegovina suffer. Families are not able to care for their animals that will eventually be consumed. In addition to homemade meals, families use lots of water to wash away bacteria and germs when prepping. Without water and their most consumed food, families will start to experience a decline in nutrition.

Even though wells have been implemented throughout the land, none of them will be useful if they do not provide a safe water supply. They are also spaced far apart from each other which makes it non-sustainable for families because they must travel far to collect water. To provide Bosnia and Herzegovina with more access to a safe water supply, more wells need to be implemented WITH filtration systems, especially in rural areas. It would give the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina more access to water with closer and more convenient wells. The filtration system would be able to clean the water as it exits the well. It will help filter out any objects and particles that flow through the water. It can prevent citizens from drinking contaminated and polluted water, which can get them sick. This solution will also allow the citizens to be able to prep meals safely and care for the animals they consume to maintain proper nutrition.

With this idea, there can be many issues that could arise without the proper planning and support. The government usually takes the initiative of building and funding the wells, but they are not able to provide enough wells for each neighborhood and area due to the enormous costs that come with building and maintaining them. They usually work towards maintaining wells in urban populations with attractions rather than in rural populations. Many citizens have spoken out about this issue. They have communicated directly with the government. The issue seemed to be heard and understood because the government worked hard to start providing more wells. Even though the government has stepped up, more needs to be done. Building wells can take time and it requires unique resources. To help build even more wells--with filtration systems never implemented before-- in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are many organizations that can aid in this mission.

Organizations such as WaterisLife and water.org can help fund and build wells. Their focus is building wells in places that need it most, especially in less developed areas. WATERisLIFE has also found a way to provide filtered water. Each of these organizations can help restore the water supply. Alongside these organizations, Bosnia and Herzegovina's citizens can even become involved. Many villages in Bosnia and Herzegovina act like one big community, so when an issue occurs, they work together. These citizens can help by hosting fundraisers and building wells together. While the actual process of building wells can be difficult, it is easy to spread the word and encourage others in the community to participate in the process. Volunteers who know the basic structure of wells and how they are made, can help aid other volunteers during the process. The more individuals involved in the process can help lead to quicker results. The money fundraised can help build the wells and aid in a solution when a problem with the function of the well occurs. They will be able to keep the wells working properly and maintained for years to come, offering a sustainable solution.

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I was also able to get information about Bosnia and Herzegovina from my parents who have witnessed these problems firsthand when growing up there.

Most pictures were from Google and Bing.