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Southern Africa, Factor 9: Water & Sanitation

Southern Africa: Social Business to Build Infrastructure and Reinforce the Water Pipes

Southern Africa is full of people, home to roughly 45 million. This country has been stricken by affects from the long standing apartheid to the devastation that diseases such as HIV/AIDS and TB have caused. Now another crisis looms in the distance: Water. As the population cultivate, the demand for water increases. There are numerous reasons why the water supply is running low. Some of those reasons were climate change and stolen water. Now I have found another reason: getting cut off for no reason. Sometimes the water can get cut off and no one will be notified leaving everyone clueless. Godeliève Niragira, mother of four in Gikungu, says that they have running water sometimes. Sometimes they have to camp outside the tap and stay there until they have enough water to fill a jug or a bucket. No water means no can attend to their hygienic problems. Thus it causes a scare to most of the people thinking it may cause some type of epidemic disease. There was no running water at all in Gikungu until a neighborhood association raised 600,000 Burundian francs (\$465, six months' salary for a middle-class professional) to outfit 120 houses with plumbing. "It's better than nothing," says a member of the association. Despite steps forward over the past few years, Sub-Saharan Africa "remains at the back of the queue" in terms of drinking water and sanitation, says George Yap, executive director of WaterCan, a Canadian NGO active in East Africa. He says access to drinking water goes hand in hand with access to improved sanitation and hygiene education, which is much less widespread. The United Nations had hoped to halve the proportion of the world's population without access to drinking water and sanitation, but has acknowledged that "improvements in sanitation are bypassing the poor" and "the sanitation target appears to be out of reach." United Nations Development Programme statistics confirm a gap between drinking water and sanitation coverage. In Botswana, one of the more prosperous countries of Southern Africa, over 90 percent of the population has access to safe drinking water, but only 60 percent has improved sanitation.

The rural cities are the ones getting the most effect from the lack of caring. If they were to focus on taking care of the rural population, most of the problems would disappear. The rural communities are where the damage to the water supply is full effect due to lack of sanitation supplies and knowledge of keeping water clean. Countless water-borne and water-based diseases stream through South Africa water supply. This is causing countless diseases and premature death with the young kids being so vulnerable. The Village Clean Water Project has been working continuously on making wells and tries to get fresh water set up. In addition to health benefits and better productivity, the clean water source can lead them to a better time; better chance at cultivation, education, and prosperity. It can all be used to increase the quality of life in the village at all levels. The only water for them to get is in shallow wells or mud-holes. The children and women are the ones who are more likely to get sick from the water seeing how they tend to it at least six hours per day. Water and sanitation goes hand in hand in some sorts. In areas water is often contaminated and filled with disease. There is often not enough water to go around so in rural and poor parts of Africa it gives off a sense that they are dirty people. In wealthier places water is taken for granted in Africa every drop count. The bright side is that there are people who are trying to help out in South Africa. Kind of like the USAID: The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and The Coca-Cola Company (TCCC) have partnered through the Water and Development Alliance (WADA) initiative to bring more than 12,000 people in Ramotshinyadi Village of South Africa access to clean drinking water. Malik Jaffer, USAID/Southern Africa HIV/AIDS technical officer, expects the WADA project to improve health in the region. "USAID wants to help South African children and their families get the basic essentials they need to lead happy, healthy lives," he says. "Without clean water and sanitation, these kids don't stand a chance." WADA is investing a total of \$1.6 million over a three years

period to build the appropriate water infrastructure in Ramotshinyadi Village - a priority health district in Limpopo Province--and two other villages, ensuring that every street has water pipes. WADA is a joint initiative between USAID and The Coca-Cola Company that operates in 22 countries worldwide, contributing to protecting and improving the sustainability of watersheds, increasing access to water supply and sanitation services for the world's poor, and enhancing productive uses of water. The Alliance is a positive example of how public-private partnerships can give localized support to those with the greatest needs for water and sanitation services, ensuring that water resources are managed to serve future generations.

The factor that I chose affects the agriculture in a great way, such as crops and water usage. The household income is pretty low in Southern Africa often leading to hunger and dehydration. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) face challenges from the availability of food to the weather and climate change. The common factor now that is affecting many families is the amount of water allowed. There isn't that much water to be rationing out and the weather is very iffy so there is no telling on how the crops might turn out. The nutrition is off the table. Nutrition is the last thing on their mind, water is so scarce that they barely have enough to take baths and make food. This status is still very high. It is slowly coming down thanks to all the different organizations and support groups. Things such as droughts, floods, wildfires, pests, diseases, civil unrest, and human conflict are also things that cause my factor to be so great. The situation is very severe it could go either way each day. In some ways the environment is really being looked over. The water does not seem as if it wants to cooperate with the rural areas. With these major problems it would really compromise the way my factor would live. The population is drastically dropping mainly because of water and sanitation reasons. If you can't even drink water you're going to eventually die from dehydration. There are countless groups and organizations that are working continuously to find a way to get Southern Africa the necessities that it really needs. The pursuit of economic and political stability is an important part of the regions goals, as demonstrated by the SADC. In terms of economic strength, South Africa is by far the dominant power of the region. Some key factors affecting the food security within the regions including political instability, poor governance, droughts, populations growth, urbanization, poverty, low economic growth, inadequate agricultural policies, trade terms and regimes, resource degradation and the recent increase in HIV/AIDS.

Data on agricultural production trends and food insecurity especially in term of food availability for Southern African Development Community (SADC) – Food, Agriculture and Nature Resource (FANR) Directorate. Water provision cannot be separated from two other inter-related-factors-sanitation and health. This is because one of the primary causes of contamination which remains one of the leading causes of illness and death in the developing world. Providing daily water needs is a burden on households with inadequate services in a number of ways, in addition to the direct threats. Often water has to be carried long distances to the house which takes time and effort, a burden borne mainly by women and children. In urban and urban fringe areas water is often only available from vendors at a price which is usually several times more expensive than the water provided through formal services and of poor quality.

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