

# The link between water access and poverty

There are around 20 developing countries around the world that are classified as 'water scarce' due to physical scarcity or economic scarcity.

## Economic Scarcity - Nigeria

Some countries have enough water, however they cannot access the water due to either high prices or a lack of infrastructure/technology. In Nigeria people living in the urban poor areas often have to pay more for their water than other areas. This is because there is no mains supply in this area. As a result of this water is provided by private individuals who can afford to drill a borehole to access underground aquifers. However, the owner of the borehole then sells this water onto the tens of thousands of water vendors that operate in Nigeria.

Water vendors then deliver the water to houses built without sanitation, inflating the price hugely to make a profit. Water vendors pay around £0.05 per jerry can of water, and sell it on for double the price, making around £3.20 per day.

Therefore those that are living in poverty are at the mercy of the private individual who has a monopoly over the water market. If the price of water increases too much, it then forces people to use water from dirty, polluted streams. As a result this creates a cycle of poverty to which people cannot escape.

## The Water Poverty Index:

The water poverty index shows how general poverty is linked to water poverty. The country's index rating is scored on five factors each out of 20. The 5 factors that are scored are:

1. **Resources** - the quantity of surface and groundwater that is available per person, as well as its quality
2. **Access** - the time and distance it takes in order for someone to access a sufficient and safe water supply
3. **Capacity** - how well the community manages the water that is available
4. **Use** - how the water is used domestically, industrially and agriculturally
5. **Environment** - the ecological sustainability of the country, including management and regulation of water.

Overall the index links household welfare with water availability and indicates the degree to which water scarcity is impacting on populations.

<b>Developed Country - Canada</b>	<b>Developing Country - Ethiopia</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Each person in Canada uses on average 800 litres of water per day</li> <li>- Water is often used for domestic activities such as watering the lawn, filling swimming pools, and keeping golf courses and parks healthy.</li> <li>- Canada has a water poverty index of 78. This means that water poverty and scarcity are not a problem in Canada</li> <li>- Around 12% of water is used for agriculture, 69% in industry and 20% in domestic use</li> <li>- Canada has a score of 20/20 for its access due to the infrastructure in the country. This means that all homes have a mains supply of water, which can easily be accessed.</li> <li>- Use in Canada is low at 6.9/20, and this is because it will be using the water economically in activities such as fracking and oil extraction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Each person in Ethiopia uses around 1 litre of water per day</li> <li>- There are a variety of issues regarding water such as shortages, high pollution levels and the risk of disease.</li> <li>- Ethiopia has a water poverty index of 45 meaning that there is poverty as a result of water scarcity.</li> <li>- Around 93% of water is used for agriculture here, with 6% used in industry and just 1% used domestically.</li> <li>- Ethiopia has a score of 3.1/20 for its access. This is because people often have to walk many miles in order to access water. It is also because the country isn't developed enough to build the infrastructure to have a mains supply of water to homes</li> <li>- Use in Ethiopia is higher at 8.1/20 as it will not be using the water economically, rather it will be using it in agriculture to earn money and feed families.</li> </ul>

