



Fig. 3.3 The Somalia Famine (2010-2012)

Impact of Underpopulation

- **Unstable economy:** Underpopulation has a negative effect on the economy causing deflation (decrease in the overall price levels of goods and services).
- **Decrease in pollution and environmental problems:** The pressure on natural resources and the basic infrastructure of the area decreases. Levels of pollutions also decrease.
- **Population ageing:** Due to decreased rates of procreation, there is an increase in the social and economic pressure on the youth who must expand the per capita output in order to support the economy. This also leads to a poor quality of life for the youth.
- **Labour shortage:** Declining populations could create labour shortages which could have both positive and negative effects. Sectors which require intensive labour would be adversely affected. However, shortage of

labour would increase the demand and reduce unemployment to some

Geo Fact

Canada has a land area 14,325 times larger than Singapore, one of the smallest countries in the world, but its population is only 7.3 times larger.

Some Facts About Population

- **Population Density** is not directly linked to the level of economic development, i.e. a high population density does not necessarily mean that an economy is better.
- **Overpopulation/Underpopulation** is not necessarily linked to Population Density. For example, Population Density in Japan is 330 per km², but is not said to be overpopulated. Population Density in Mali is 12 per km², but is said to be overpopulated.
- **Optimum Population:** This is when a country is making the best use of its resources. At this population level, the population can enjoy a high quality of life.

A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY (CANADA AND TANZANIA)

Both large and small countries can be underpopulated or overpopulated.

Here we will do a comparative study on one very large country Canada, as an example of underpopulation and one small country, Tanzania, as an example of overpopulation.

Canada is a huge country, the second largest in the world after Russia. Vast stretches of the country are almost totally uninhabited. In comparison to its area, Canada has a relatively small population. On the other hand, Tanzania is a small country, but it has one of the largest and fastest growing populations in Africa.

Canada is underpopulated because it has an advanced industrialised economy and so many valuable natural resources that it could easily provide extra people with a high standard of living. Tanzania is an overpopulated country with insufficient natural resources to provide basic needs to its people.

The information in the Table 3.1, will help you to understand why and how Tanzania differs from Canada.

(Note: GDP or **Gross domestic product** is the monetary value of all the finished goods and

Fact	Canada	Tanzania
Area (km ²)	9,984, 670 (2)	9,47, 300 (31)
Population (millions)	34.4 (37)	48.3 (28)
Average population density rate (People per km ²)	3.4 (229)	46.0 (158)
Annual population growth rate (%)	0.8 (136)	2.8 (18)
Net Migration (per 1000 inhabitants)	5.7 (22)	-0.6 (138)
Infant mortality rate (per 1000 live births)	4.9 (183)	45.1 (49)
Fertility rate (average number of children per woman)	1.6 (178)	5.0 (18)
Life expectancy (years)	81.4 (12)	60.8 (190)
Literacy (% of population)	99 (25)	69.4 (164)
GDP per capita (\$)	39, 057 (22)	1600 (199)
GDP per capita annual growth rate (%)	3.0 (127)	6.9 (32)
Access to safe drinking water (%)	99.8 (40)	58.2 (185)
Quality of Life Index	7.6 (14)	4.5 (109)
Human Development Index	0.91 (11)	0.5 (152)
Population Living in poverty (%)	9.4 (140)	80.0 (1-)
Value of exports (\$ billion)	407 (10)	5.9 (109)
Value of imports (\$ billion)	406 (12)	10.3 (98)

Table 3.1 Comparative Statistics of Canada and Tanzania (The figures in brackets indicate the world rankings of countries)

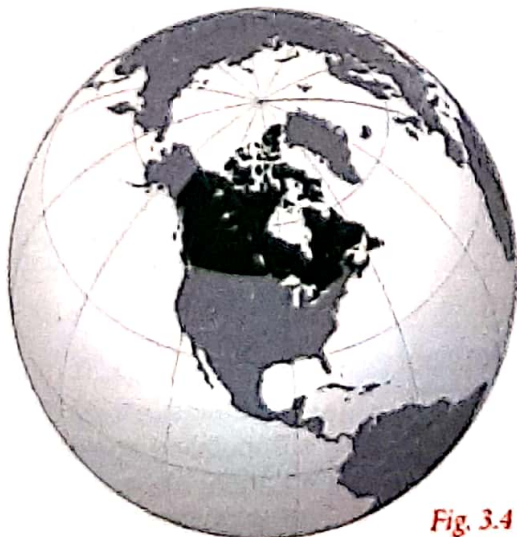


Fig. 3.4 Location of Canada and Tanzania in the World

services produced within a country's borders in a specific time period.)

Table 3.1 clearly shows that Canada is underpopulated.

- The infant mortality rate is very low and life expectancy is very high. This means that there is adequate medical care.
- Literacy rates are high. This means that there are adequate and effective educational facilities.
- Unemployment rates are very low. This means that most people have a suitably paid job.
- The Quality of Life Index rating is high by global standards. This shows that most people in Canada are generally satisfied with their standard of living.

Canada is rich in natural resources of which its greatest natural assets are its mineral resources such as oil and gas. Many of these are found in remote, wilderness areas. It has some very

important industries such as aircraft, timber, and oil refining. It is an important global producer of wheat. Healthcare is paid for by the state. It is one of the world's top ten trading nations.

On the other hand, the people of Tanzania do not even have access to safe drinking water, education and medical care. This is because rapid population growth makes it difficult to improve people's standard of living. It has high youth unemployment and most of its families depend on agriculture for their survival. In addition to this, AIDS and undernourishment is a big problem in this country. As a result, few people live beyond 65 years of age. Tanzania is a country with potential, but rapid population growth makes it very difficult to improve standard of living of its population.



Challenge Question

Collect some similar figures for your own country. Analyse and decide whether your country is overpopulated or underpopulated.

Mind Map

Population Change

Overpopulation

Causes

- Birth and death rates
- Poverty
- Illiteracy and lack of family planning

Impact

- Depletion of natural resources
- Environmental hazards
- Unemployment and poverty
- Health and sanitation
- Imbalance in trade

Underpopulation

Causes

- Fertility rate
- Emigration
- Disease
- Famine
- War and conflicts

Impact

- Unstable economy
- Decrease in pollution and environmental problems
- Population ageing
- Labour shortage

15.6.2020

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Answer the following questions -

1. Write the negative impact of underpopulation.
2. How underpopulation effect the environment?
3. Give reason - A large country can be underpopulated and developed.
4. What is GDP?
5. Write a short note on 'Canada an underpopulated country'.
6. What are the features of Tanzania as a overpopulated country?