



Global Hunger Index 2020

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Why in News

India has been **ranked at 94 among 107 countries** in the **Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2020**.

Global Hunger Index

- **Annual Report:** Jointly published by **Concern Worldwide** and **Welthungerhilfe**. It was **first produced in 2006**. It is **published every October**. The **2020 edition** marks the **15th edition of the GHI**.
- **Aim:** To comprehensively measure and track hunger at the global, regional, and country levels.
- **Calculation:** The **GHI scores** are calculated each year to assess progress and setbacks in combating hunger. It is calculated on the basis of **four indicators**:
 - **Undernourishment:** Share of the population with **insufficient caloric intake**.
 - **Child Wasting:** Share of children under age five who have **low weight for their height**, reflecting acute undernutrition.
 - **Child Stunting:** Share of children under age five who have **low height for their age**, reflecting chronic undernutrition.
 - **Child Mortality:** The mortality rate of children **under the age of five**.
- **Scoring:**
 - Based on the values of the four indicators, the GHI determines hunger on a **100-point scale** where **0** is the **best possible score** (no hunger) and 100 is the worst.
 - Each country's GHI score is **classified by severity**, from low to extremely alarming.

Key Points

- **Global Scenario:**

- **Worldwide Hunger:** Represented by a **GHI score of 18.2** (moderate level), down from a **2000 GHI score of 28.2** (serious).

- **Factors:**

- The **Covid-19** pandemic and the **resulting economic downturn**, as well as a **massive outbreak of desert locusts** in the Horn of Africa and other crises, are **exacerbating food and nutrition insecurity** for millions of people.

It needs to be noted that **2020 GHI scores do not reflect the impact of Covid-19** on hunger and undernutrition.

- The above mentioned crises come on top of **existing hunger** caused by **conflict, climate extremes, and economic shocks** (random, unpredictable events).
- **Region-wise Performance:** **Africa South of the Sahara** and **South Asia** have the **highest hunger and undernutrition levels** among world regions, with 2020 GHI scores of 27.8 and 26.0, respectively—both considered serious.
- **SDG 2 Progress:** The world is not on track to achieve the second **Sustainable Development Goal** - known as **Zero Hunger** for short - **by 2030**.

- **Indian Scenario:**

- **Overall Performance:**

- With a **score of 27.2**, India has a level of hunger that is “**serious**”.
- It **ranks 94 out of 107 countries** in the Index. In **2019**, India’s rank was **102 out of 117 countries**.

- **Comparison with Other Countries:**

- **India features behind** Nepal (73), Pakistan (88), Bangladesh (75), Indonesia (70) among others.
- Out of the total 107 countries, **only 13 countries fare worse than India** including countries like Rwanda (97), Nigeria (98), Afghanistan (99), Liberia (102), Mozambique (103), Chad (107) among others.

- **Performance on the Indicators:**

- **Undernourishment: 14%** of India’s population is undernourished (2017-19). It was 16.3% during 2011-13.
- **Child Wasting: 17.3%** (2015-19), it was 15.1% in 2010-14.
- **Child Stunting: 34.7%**, it has improved significantly, from 54% in 2000 to less than 35% now.
- **Child Mortality: 3.7%**, it was 5.2% in 2012.

Where India stands

The Global Hunger Index score is computed using four indicators — undernourishment, child wasting, child stunting and child mortality. A country's GHI score is classified by severity — low (dark green), moderate (light green) and serious (yellow)



RANK	COUNTRY	2020 SCORE
1-17*	China	<5
64	Sri Lanka	16.3
73	Nepal	19.5
75	Bangladesh	20.4
78	Myanmar	20.9
88	Pakistan	24.6
94	India	27.2
99	Afghanistan	30.3

*17 countries have scores of less than 5 and are collectively ranked 1-17

Some Related Initiatives by India

- **Eat Right India Movement**: An outreach activity organised by the **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** for citizens to nudge them towards eating right.
- **POSHAN Abhiyaan**: Launched by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development** in 2018, it targets to **reduce stunting, undernutrition, anemia** (among young children, women and adolescent girls).
- **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana**: A **centrally sponsored scheme** executed by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development**, is a **maternity benefit programme** being implemented in all districts of the country with effect from 1st January, 2017.
- **Food Fortification**: Food Fortification or Food Enrichment is the addition of key vitamins and minerals such as iron, iodine, zinc, Vitamin A & D to staple foods such as rice, milk and salt to improve their nutritional content.
- **National Food Security Act, 2013**: The National Food Security Act, (NFSA) 2013 legally entitled up to **75% of the rural population and 50% of the urban population** to receive subsidized food grains under the Targeted Public Distribution System.
- **Mission Indradhanush**: It targets **children under 2 years of age and pregnant women** for immunization against **12 Vaccine-Preventable Diseases (VPD)**.
- **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme**: Launched on **2nd October, 1975**, the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme offers a package of **six services (Supplementary Nutrition, Pre-school non-formal education, Nutrition & health education, Immunization, Health check-up and Referral services)** to children in the age group of **0-6 years, pregnant women and lactating mothers**.

Suggestions

- Governments, private actors, and NGOs should carefully coordinate their **responses to overlapping food and health crises** and work with community organizations to make sure interventions are culturally acceptable, reach the most vulnerable, and preserve local ecosystems.
- **Food should be priced not only by its weight or volume but also by its nutrient density**, its freedom from contamination, and its contribution to ecosystem services and social justice.
- Governments should **expand access to maternal and child health care**, as well as **education on healthy diets and child feeding practices**.
- **Supporting smallholder farmers** in becoming sustainable and diversified producers; governments and NGOs must seek to improve those farmers' access to agricultural inputs and extension services, coupling local and indigenous agricultural knowledge with new technologies.
- **Existing human rights-based multilateral mechanisms** and international standards—such as the Committee on World Food Security—must be strengthened to support inclusive policy making and sustainable food systems.

Source: TH