



Global Health Security Index 2021

Why in News

Recently, the [Global Health Security \(GHS\) Index 2021](#) has been recently released.

- In India [NITI Aayog](#) releases its own [health index](#).

Key Points

- **GHS Index:**

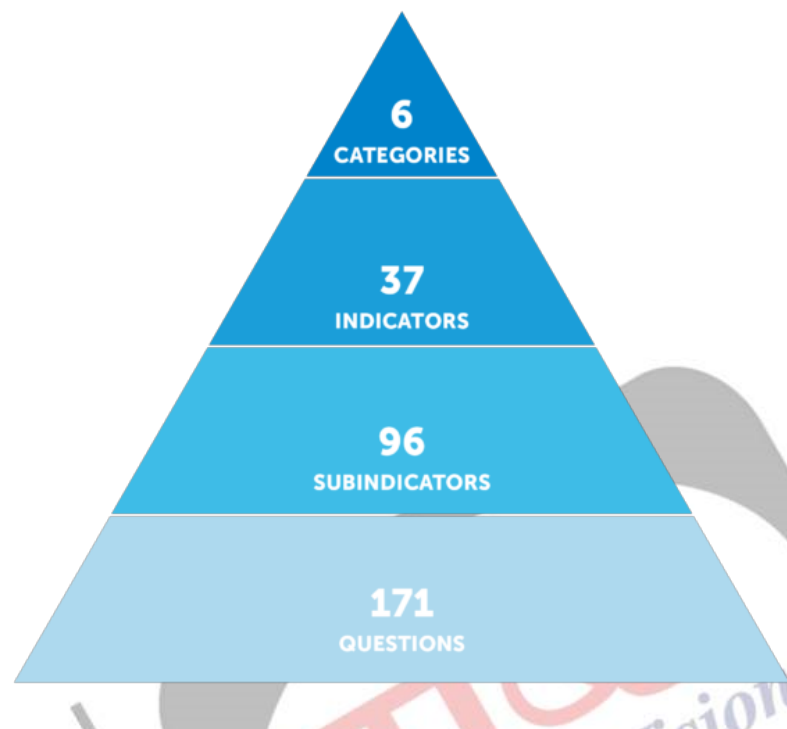
- **About:**

- It is an **assessment and benchmarking of health security** and related capabilities across 195 countries.
- It has been developed in partnership by the **Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI)** and the Johns Hopkins Center.
 - NTI is a **nonprofit global security organization** focused on reducing nuclear and biological threats imperiling humanity.
 - Johns Hopkins Center was **created to recognize the crucial role of communication in public health**.

- **Methods of Ranking:**

- The GHS Index assesses countries' **health security and capabilities across six categories**.

GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY INDEX FRAMEWORK



- The six categories are as follow:
 - **Prevention:** Prevention of the emergence or release of pathogens.
 - **Detection and Reporting:** Early detection and reporting for epidemics of potential international concern.
 - **Rapid Response:** Rapid response to and mitigation of the spread of an epidemic.
 - **Health System:** Sufficient and robust health system to treat the sick and protect health workers.
 - **Compliance with International Norms:** Commitments to improving national capacity, financing plans to address gaps, and adhering to global norms.
 - **Risk Environment:** Overall risk environment and country vulnerability to biological threats.
- The index measures countries' **capabilities from 0-100**, with 100 representing the highest level of preparedness. The GHS Index scoring system includes three tiers.
 - **Low Scores:** Countries that score between 0 and 33.3 are in the bottom tier.
 - **Moderate Scores:** Countries that score between 33.4 and 66.6 are in the middle tier and
 - **High Scores:** Countries that score between 66.7 and 100 are in the upper or "top" tier.

▪ Ranking:

◦ India's:

- India, with a **score of 42.8 (out of 100)** has slipped by **0.8 points since 2019**.

◦ World:

- Three neighbouring countries of India like **Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives** have **improved their score by 1-1.2 points**.
- The world's overall performance on the GHS Index score slipped to **38.9 (out of 100) in 2021**, from a score of 40.2 in the GHS Index, 2019.
- In 2021, **no country scored in the top tier of rankings** and no country scored above 75.9.

▪ **Overall Performance of the Countries:**

◦ **Unprepared for Future Epidemic:**

- **Countries across all income levels remain dangerously unprepared** to meet future **epidemic and pandemic** threats.

- This, even as **infectious diseases are expected** to have the greatest impact on the global economy in the next decade.

◦ **Insufficient Health Capacities:**

- All countries had insufficient health capacities.

- This left the **world acutely vulnerable to future health emergencies**, according to the Index that **measured the capacities of 195 countries** to prepare for epidemics and pandemics.

◦ **National Public Health Emergency:**

- **65% of assessed countries had not published and implemented** an overarching national public health emergency response plan for diseases with epidemic or pandemic potential.

◦ **Medical Countermeasures:**

- **73% of countries did not have the ability** to provide expedited approval for **medical countermeasures**, such as vaccines and antiviral drugs, during a public health emergency.
- Thus, the **world was acutely vulnerable to health emergencies** in the future.

◦ **Lack of Financial Investments:**

- Most countries, including **high-income ones, have not made dedicated financial investments** in strengthening epidemic or pandemic preparedness.

- Close to **79% of the 195 countries assessed had not allocated national funds** within the past three years to improve their capacity to address epidemic threats.

◦ **Public Confidence in their Governments:**

- A whopping **82% of countries** have **low to moderate levels** of public confidence in their government.

- Health emergencies demand a **robust public health infrastructure** with effective governance. But the trust in government, which has been a key factor associated with success in countries' responses to Covid-19, is low and decreasing.

▪ **Recommendations:**

◦ **Allocate Health Security Funds:**

- Countries should allocate **health security funds in national budgets** and conduct assessments using the 2021 GHS Index to develop a national plan to identify their risks and fill gaps.

◦ **Additional Support:**

- International organizations should use the **GHS Index to identify countries most in need of additional support.**
- **Involvement of Private Sector:**
 - The **private sector should use the GHS Index to look for opportunities** to partner with governments.
- **New Financing Mechanisms:**
 - Philanthropies and funders **should develop new financing mechanisms** and use the GHS Index to prioritize resources.

Status of India's Health Response

▪ Underprepared:

- The **influenza A (H1N1) outbreaks since 2009** in Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and other States have acutely underscored the need for better detection, awareness of symptoms and quarantining.
- **Covid-19 pandemic** has also shaken the foundations of India's healthcare system.

▪ Low Expenditure:

- Health expenditure by the government in India is **less than 1.35%** of **Gross Domestic Product**, which is low for a middle-income country.

▪ Availability of Health Professionals:

- There is **one doctor for every 1,445 Indians** as per the country's current population estimate of 135 crore, which is lower than the **World Health Organization (WHO)** prescribed norm of one doctor for 1,000 people.

▪ Impact of Climate Change:

- India's health status is **being worsened by climate shocks.**
 - According to the **Climate Vulnerability Index**, more than **80% of Indians live in climate vulnerable districts.**

Source: DTE

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/global-health-security-index-2021>