

Global Hunger Index 2021

What is the Global Hunger Index?

The Global Hunger Index aims to track hunger at the world, regional and country levels. It is an annual report (peer-reviewed) published by Concern Worldwide of Ireland and Welthungerhilfe (a German non-profit organization).

Global Hunger Index Scoring

GHI ranks countries on a 100 point scale, 0 representing zero/no hunger. The GHI scores are based on four indicators. Taken together, the component indicators reflect deficiencies in calories as well as in micronutrients. Thus, the GHI reflects both aspects of hunger (undernutrition and malnutrition).

1. **UNDERNOURISHMENT**: the share of the population whose caloric intake is insufficient.
2. **CHILD STUNTING**: the share of children under the age of five who have low height for their age.
3. **CHILD WASTING**: the share of children under the age of five who have low weight for their height.
4. **CHILD MORTALITY**: the mortality rate of children under the age of five (a reflection of the fatal mix of inadequate nutrition and unhealthy environments).

GHI Severity Scale				
≤ 9.9 low	10.0–19.9 moderate	20.0–34.9 serious	35.0–49.9 alarming	≥ 50.0 extremely alarming

Global Hunger Index 2021

India ranks **101st out of 116 countries** in the GHI 2021 rankings. With a score of 27.5, India has a level of hunger that is 'serious'.

- India has slipped 7 positions from its 2020 rank of 94.
- India is ranked behind most of its neighbouring countries. Their ranks are given below:
 - Pakistan – 92
 - Sri Lanka – 65
 - Nepal – 76
 - Bangladesh – 76
- There are only 15 countries that are ranked below India in the 2021 index.
- According to the latest data, India has the highest rate of child wasting among all the countries in the index.

- However, India has shown improvement in other indicators such as the under-5 mortality rate, prevalence of stunting among children and prevalence of undernourishment owing to inadequate food.

Trend for Indicator Values - India

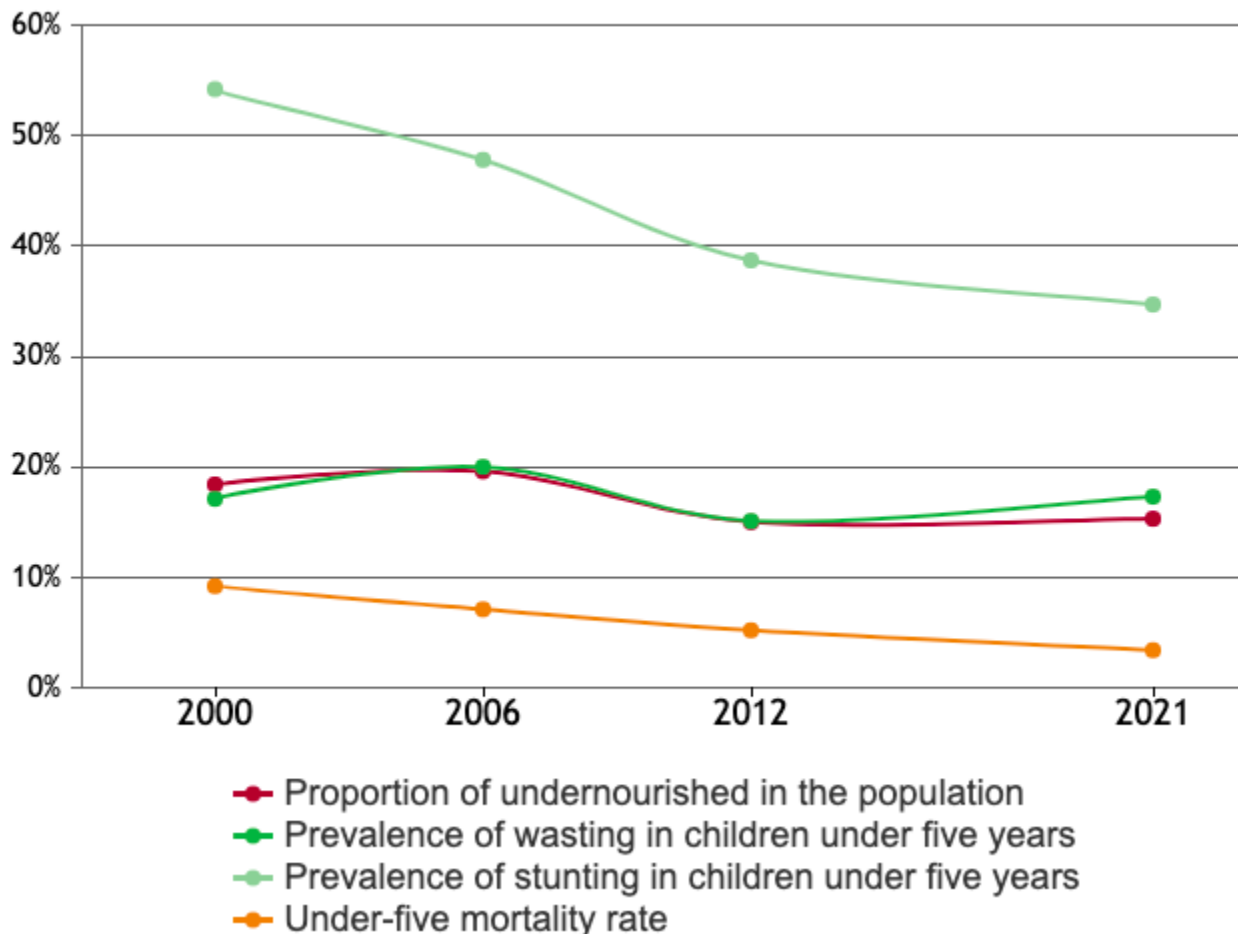


Image source: <https://www.globalhungerindex.org/>

Government of India's Response to India's GHI 2021 Ranking

The Union Ministry of Women and Child Development issued a criticism of the latest GHI ranking (2021) in which India's rank was lowered to 101, saying that the agencies did not do their 'due diligence' before releasing the report.

- The government has argued that the estimates by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) regarding the proportion of the undernourished population were devoid of "ground reality and facts."
- It also called the methodology used by FAO "unscientific" and alleged there was no methodology to measure undernourishment.

Read more about this development in [CNA dated 18 Oct 2021 under editorial 'Alarming hunger or statistical artefact'](#).

Global Hunger Index 2020

Salient Points:

1. Worldwide hunger is 18.2 (moderate) down from 2000 level of 28.2 (serious)
2. How many are undernourished? – Nearly 690 million people
3. How many children are suffering from stunting? – 144 million children
4. How many children suffer from wasting? – 47 million
5. What was the child mortality in 2018? – 5.3 million children died before they turned five.
6. Which region has the highest hunger and undernutrition levels – Africa (south of Sahara) and South Asia — [Desert Locust](#), Covid-19 and following economic challenges are factors for food and nutrition insecurity for millions of people but the impact of the pandemic hasn't been accounted for in 2020 Global Hunger Index.
7. Which countries show alarming levels of hunger? – Chad, Timor-Leste and Madagascar
8. [Sustainable Development Goal](#) of Zero Hunger is difficult to achieve by 2030- Around 37 countries are expected to fall short to even reach low hunger by 2030.

India's Performance in GHI 2020

1. India has a 'serious' hunger level.
2. India's score in 2020 GHI is 27.2.
3. The ranks of some of India's neighbours in the 2020 Global Hunger Index are:
 - Nepal – 73
 - Pakistan – 88
 - Bangladesh – 75
 - Afghanistan – 99
4. India has improved significantly w.r.t the child stunting levels.
5. India's performance on the GHI's indicators:
 - Undernourishment – 14 percent of India's total population is undernourished.
 - Child Wasting – 17.3 percent of children are reported to be wasted.
 - Child Stunting – 34.7 percent of children are reported to be stunted which was 54 percent in 2000.
 - Child mortality – 3.7 percent of children died before the age of five.

Read about the [Important Government Schemes in India](#) at the linked article.

India's Rank on Global Hunger Index 2018-2021

The table below mentions India's performance in the last three years in the Global Hunger Index.

Global Hunger Index – India's Rank

2021 GHI	101 out of 116
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2020 GHI	94 out of 107
2019 GHI	102 out of 117
2018 GHI	103 out of 119

Global Hunger Index 2019

The Global Hunger Index 2019 report mentioned a rise of 37 million in the number of hungry people as compared to 2015.

Furthermore, the hunger level in multiple countries still hasn't reduced or has got higher than 2010 and approximately 45 countries are set to fail to achieve 'low' levels of hunger by 2030.

- For the year 2019, India has ranked 102nd amongst the 117 that were mapped for the Global Hunger Index.
- With a score of 30.3 on the Hunger Index Scale, India is one of the 47 countries categorized with "Serious" levels of Hunger.
- Compared to the 2018 GHI report where India was ranked 103rd amongst the 119 countries that were mapped, the situation hasn't improved in the country.

Why is India ranked Serious on the Global Hunger Index?

The Global Hunger Index 2019 report also mentioned that the Child Wasting rate in the country was extremely high at 20.8% which is higher than all other countries.

- The share of wasting among children in India marked a steep rise from 16.5% in the 2008-2012 period to 20.8% in 2014-2018.
- According to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund ([UNICEF](#)), child wasting is a strong predictor of mortality among children (under 5 years of age).

India and Other Countries on the Global Hunger Index

- India is behind every other country except Afghanistan amongst the South Asian countries.
- Indonesia, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan (in that order) are all ahead of India.
- 17 countries including China, Belarus and Turkey have the top rank in Global Hunger Index 2020, with a score less than 5.