

Global Hunger Index, 2021

October 16, 2021

In news– India slipped to 101st position in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2021 of 116 countries, from its 2020 position of 94th.

About Global Hunger Index (GHI)

- The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a tool designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger at global, regional, and national levels.
- **The report for GHI, prepared jointly by Irish aid agency Concern Worldwide and German organisation Welt Hunger Hilfe.**
- **The GHI score is calculated on four indicators –**
 - **Undernourishment.**
 - **Child wasting** (the share of children under the age of five who have low weight for their height, reflecting acute undernutrition).
 - **Child stunting** (children under the age of five who have low height for their age, reflecting chronic undernutrition).
 - **Child mortality** (the mortality rate of children under the age of five).
- In GHI, “hunger” refers to the index based on four component indicators. Taken together, the component indicators reflect deficiencies in calories as well as in micronutrients.



GHI-2021

- GHI states that the fight against hunger is dangerously off track.
- Based on the current GHI projections, the world as a whole – and 47 countries in particular – will fail to achieve even a low level of hunger by 2030.
- It showed that 18 countries, including China, Brazil and Kuwait, shared the top rank, with GHI scores of less than five.
- For the 2021 report, data was assessed for 135 countries. Out of these, there were sufficient data to calculate GHI scores for 116 countries (in comparison, 107 countries were ranked in the 2020 report).
- It highlighted that worsening conflict, weather extremes associated with global climate change, and the economic and health challenges associated with the covid-19 pandemic are all driving hunger.

India's ranking & performance

- The share of wasting among children in India rose from 17.1 percent between 1998-2002 to 17.3 per cent between 2016-2020.
- GHI mentioned the **level of hunger in India as “alarming”** with its GHI score decelerating from 38.8 in 2000 to the

range of 28.8 – 27.5 between 2012 and 2021.

- It is now behind its neighbours Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal.
- India's position on the first indicator, child mortality, has improved in 2021 compared with 2020. Position on two indicators, i.e., child wasting and child stunting, has remained unchanged in 2021 compared with 2020
- However, India has shown improvement in indicators like the under-5 mortality rate, prevalence of stunting among children and prevalence of undernourishment owing to inadequate food.

India's neighbours

Neighbouring countries like Nepal (76), Bangladesh (76), Myanmar (71) and Pakistan (92), which are still ahead of India at feeding its citizens, are also in the 'alarming' hunger category.

India's opposition to its rank

- The Government of India has challenged India's poor ranking in the Global Hunger Index 2021 and the methodology used calling it "devoid of ground reality and facts".
- The government further said that the report "completely disregards the government's massive effort to ensure food security of the entire population during the COVID-19 period

Concern Worldwide

It works with the world's poorest people to transform their lives. It is an international humanitarian organisation dedicated to tackling poverty and suffering in the world's poorest countries.

Welthungerhilfe

It is one of the largest private aid organisations in Germany, independent of politics and religion. It was established in 1962, as the German section of the “Freedom from Hunger Campaign”.

Some of the initiatives of government of India

- **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).
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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 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.