

India's performance in Global Hunger Index & its initiatives to address Malnutrition

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Global Hunger Index

The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger globally and by country and region. The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) calculates GHI scores each year to assess progress and setbacks in combating hunger.

GHI Methodology

GHI scores are based on four indicators:

- **UNDERNOURISHMENT:** the share of the population that is undernourished (that is, whose caloric intake is insufficient);
- **CHILD WASTING:** the share of children under the age of five who are wasted (that is, who have low weight for their height, reflecting acute undernutrition);
- **CHILD STUNTING:** the share of children under the age of five who are stunted (that is, who have low height for their age, reflecting chronic undernutrition); and
- **CHILD MORTALITY:** the mortality rate of children under the age of five (in part, a reflection of the fatal mix of inadequate nutrition and unhealthy environments)

Data on above indicators are mainly obtained from UN agencies such as FAO, UNICEF, WHO and World Bank.

GHI Severity Scale (as per GHI 2017 Report which is different from GHI 2014 Scale)

≤ 9.9	10.0-19.9	20.0-34.9	35.0-49.9	50.0 ≤
Low	Moderate	Serious	Alarming	Extremely Alarming

Country Global Hunger Index Scores by Rank

As per Global Hunger Index-2017 Report					
Total No. of Countries Ranked	India's Rank	Year wise GHI Scores of India			
119	100	1992	2000	2008	2017
		46.2	38.2	35.6	31.4
As per Global Hunger Index-2014 Report					
Total No. of Countries Ranked	India's Rank	Year wise GHI Scores of India			
76	55	1995	2000	2005	2014
		26.9	25.5	24.2	17.8

(Source: Global Hunger Index 2017 & 2014 Reports)

Comments on comparability of year on year GHI Ranks/Scores

It is made clear that year on year comparisons of a country's ranks, scores or indicators would not be accurate due to several reasons:

- As per the GHI scores, India has actually improved its Global Hunger Index score in the last decade (2008 to 2017) from 35.6 to 31.4
- GHI scores are based on current and historical data that are continuously being revised and improved by the United Nations agencies that compile them
- Each year's GHI report reflects these changes
- GHI scores from different years' reports are not directly comparable with one another which is evident above
- Even the GHI Severity Scale is differently constituted in 2014 and 2017 reports
- In 2014, India was ranked 55 out of 76 countries. In 2017, it included 44 more countries in the ranking list and India has been ranked 100 out of 119 countries.
- Actually, the newly added 44 countries got added above India therefore the rank of India slipped to 100 out of 119 countries.
- Comparing India's rank of 55 and GHI score of 17.8 in 2014 with the 2017 GHI rank of 100 and corresponding GHI score of 31.4 (concluding that India slipped 45 places in the GHI ranking) is not only erroneous but a gross misrepresentation of facts.

India's initiatives to tackle Malnutrition

In recent times, India has taken several measures to tackle malnutrition of children and mothers. Some of the important measures are as follows:

- NITI Aayog in consultation with stakeholders has formulated and released National Nutrition Strategy emphasizing importance on interdepartmental convergence, setting up clear targets and real time monitoring.
- Following the announcement of Hon'ble PM, maternity benefit to pregnant women and lactating mothers (Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana- PMMVY) has been initiated to provide Rs. 5,000 Cash Transfers on fulfillment of necessary conditions related to health and nutrition.
- The cost norm for supplementary nutrition has been increased. The Government has provided an additional Rs.12000 Crores to fight malnutrition over next three years in the country by revising cost norms for supplementary nutrition provided in Anganwadis and in the scheme for adolescent girls. The cost norms have now also been linked to the Food Price Index which will enable the Government to increase the cost norms annually without any hindrance.
- Supplementary Nutrition Rules 2017 have been notified.
- Fortification of food provided under Government welfare programmes like ICDS, MDM and PDS has been made mandatory.
- A joint letter signed by three Secretaries, from Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation advising on collective monitoring of programs related to them at field level to ensure the desired nutrition outcomes sent to the Chief Secretaries of States/UTs on 8.8.17
- The Ministry of WCD has started digitalization of MIS and Monitoring under ICDS. In this regard, ICDS-CAS system has been developed and piloted.

- The ICDS-Systems Strengthening & Nutrition Improvement Project (ISSNIP) has been approved to extend it to 162 districts in next three years for real time monitoring of ICDS and its outcomes.
- In convergence with MNREGS under ICDS more than 1.1 lakhs of Anganwadi Centres constructed for effective delivery of ICDS services.
- 113 most backward districts (on nutrition parameters) have been identified for taking up action in mission mode.
- National Nutrition Mission (NNM) has been conceptualized and sent for approval to bring in desired convergence among different Ministries/Departments and expand digital monitoring to all districts. It is proposed to constitute a Technical Secretariat under NITI Aayog to support in its monitoring and providing technical guidance.

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