

Global Hunger Index - India

What is the issue?

\n\n

\n

- Washington-based International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) has recently released the Global Hunger Index (GHI) report.

\n

- India's low 100th rank among 119 countries calls for serious attention to the issue.

\n

\n\n

What is Global Hunger Index?

\n\n

\n

- The GHI score is a multidimensional index composed of four indicators:

\n

\n\n

\n

1. proportion of **undernourished** in the population.
2. **mortality** rate of children under the age of five (deaths per 1000 live births).
3. proportion of children under five suffering from **wasting** (low weight for height).
4. proportion of children under five suffering from **stunting** (lower height than typical for age).

\n

\n\n

\n

- India's 100th rank is worse than the likes of North Korea, Bangladesh, and Iraq.

\n

- And is only better than Pakistan and Afghanistan among Asian countries.

- \n
- Notably, India is at the high end of the “serious” category.
- \n

\n\n

What is the anomaly in this regard?

\n\n

- \n
- India is the world’s second largest food producer; but is also home to the second highest population of under-nourished in the world.
- \n

\n\n

- \n
- India has taken some successful measures in addressing lack of access to food.
 - E.g. The Food Security Act, mid-day meals, ICDS, etc.
 - Also, India has witnessed a decline in stunting and a sharp fall in under-5 mortality in the last 25 years.
 - India is thus not "hungry" in terms of calorific intake.
 - However, the **calorific intake is poorly reflected in the physiological outcomes** such as height and weight.
 - More than one-fifth of Indian children under five are 'wasted' and over a third are 'stunted'.
 - Therefore, despite the relative progress over the years, the numbers remain still high for child wasting and stunting.
- \n

\n\n

What is the cause?

\n\n

- \n
- Household's poor access to **sanitation**, one of the factors that GHI also points out, is said to be the prime cause for child wasting and stunting.
 - Poor sanitation causes poor absorption of nutrients.

\n

- Also, the ill-effects of **open defecation** and **water contamination** are hampering the possible positive results of nutrients intake.

\n

- Notably, water-borne diseases like diarrhoea have been responsible for most of the under-5 deaths.

\n

\n\n

What should be done?

\n\n

\n

- It is essential for India to take measures on improving sanitation and fighting related infections.

\n

- The children and their caregivers should be trained to follow hygienic practices and take healthy foods.

\n

- Inequality in all its forms must be addressed to meet Sustainable Development Goal 2 of Zero Hunger for everyone by 2030.

\n

- This can not only improve India's ranking but also render meaningful its efforts on food security.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Financial Express

\n\n

\n\n

\n