

2026

Global Hunger Index

No Security Without Food Security



Key Messages

No Security
Without Food
Security

#ZeroHunger
#RightToFood

— Global hunger has worsened amid multiple crises.

The 2026 global GHI score of 18.1 (*moderate*) is higher than in 2018, interrupting the decline since 2000. Based on 2021–2025 data, it reflects a period of overlapping conflicts, climate extremes, and economic shocks. New geopolitical shocks, trade disruptions, and an intensifying El Niño threaten to further strain food and nutrition security, particularly in countries facing protracted crises.

— Progress has become more fragile across regions.

Hunger remains *serious* in Africa South of the Sahara and South Asia. Compared with 2018, GHI scores rose in Africa South of the Sahara and West Asia and North Africa, remained unchanged in Europe and Central Asia, and fell by less than one point in Latin America and the Caribbean and East and Southeast Asia.

— Conflict can drive hunger and undernutrition for decades and far beyond conflict zones.

Chronic, high-intensity conflict is linked to decades of lost progress against hunger. The Russia–Ukraine war has disrupted global food and fertilizer markets and has contributed to higher food prices globally, affecting food and nutrition security far beyond conflict zones. Shipping disruptions linked to the US–Israel–Iran war now pose similar risks. Food price spikes can have lasting effects on food and nutrition security and lifelong consequences for children’s growth and development.

— Food insecurity and insecurity reinforce each other.

Food insecurity is not only a consequence of crises; it can also create conditions that intensify them. The 2026 Global Hunger Index explores how inadequate access to food can deepen vulnerabilities, increase competition over scarce resources, and contribute to instability, further undermining livelihoods and food security.

— Food security must be embedded in security policies.

Security policies focusing mainly on military threats can overlook what enables people and societies to withstand crises. The report’s six regional contributions examine the role of resilient food systems, secure livelihoods, social protection, climate adaptation, and access to essential resources such as water in strengthening security. Together, they show why food and nutrition security must be systematically integrated into peace and security policymaking.

— Lasting progress against hunger requires sustained action and resilient food systems.

Long-term improvements since 2000 in countries such as Nepal, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, and Uganda show that substantial progress is possible. Lasting gains rarely result from a single intervention but reflect coordinated action to strengthen food system resilience, health, nutrition, education, sanitation, and social protection. National averages can still mask subnational disparities, and shocks, including climate extremes, can quickly put hard-won gains at risk.

Key numbers

Hunger is considered *alarming* in 8 countries and *serious* in 36. Among countries with 2026 GHI scores above 5.0:

32

countries face higher hunger levels than in 2018.

5

countries face higher hunger levels than in 2000—Fiji, Libya, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Syria.

20

countries have largely seen progress stall since 2018, with GHI scores unchanged or down by less than 5 percent.

57

countries will not achieve *low* hunger by 2030 according to the current trajectory.

Progress since 2018 has been notable in nine countries, where GHI scores have fallen by more than 20 percent, including Nepal, Rwanda, Togo, Uganda, and Venezuela.



In Yarmouk Camp, Syria, fresh produce is sold among buildings still scarred by war. Rebuilding food security after conflict means restoring livelihoods, local food systems and essential services—helping communities recover while reducing their vulnerability to future shocks.

Foreword

Security begins with the ability to meet people's most fundamental needs. Conflict, weather extremes, and geopolitical disruption are distinct challenges, but for millions of people they converge on the same immediate questions: Can I still afford food? Can I still make a living? Can we remain where we live? Can we withstand the next shock?

Food and nutrition security is not simply one concern among many. It is fundamental to people's health, livelihoods, and prospects for the future and thus to the resilience and stability of communities and societies. Hunger trends therefore offer an important indication of where progress is being sustained and where vulnerability is increasing.

The Global Hunger Index (GHI) comprehensively measures and tracks hunger at global, regional, and national levels, reflecting multiple dimensions of hunger over time. Past progress shows that substantial reductions in hunger are achievable. Since 2000, the global GHI score has declined from the *serious* to the *moderate* category. Yet, this hard-won progress is under threat. The recent trajectory is deeply concerning: since 2018, the global GHI score has risen, and hunger has worsened in 32 countries.

The deterioration since 2018 has been shaped by successive major shocks with global repercussions for food and nutrition security, including the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia's war against Ukraine. Since then, the US-Israel-Iran war has added new pressure on global food and nutrition security. Across these crises, disruptions to global supply chains and trade have contributed to higher food prices and increased energy, agricultural input, production, and transport costs, placing pressure on food systems and households worldwide.

At the same time, acute crises and longer-term pressures continue to undermine food and nutrition security. Conflict remains the primary driver of acute food insecurity, with consequences visible in both scale and severity. In 2025, Famine was confirmed in parts of Sudan and the Gaza Strip. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) defines Famine as the most severe level of acute food insecurity, marked by widespread starvation and acute malnutrition alongside excess deaths in an area. This is the first time, since respective reporting began two decades ago that Famine has been confirmed in two separate crises in the same year. Behind these classifications stand people whose human

right to adequate food is being denied. That right does not cease to apply when international commitments come under strain, and neither does the UN Security Council's unanimous condemnation of the starvation of civilians as a method of warfare (Resolution 2417).

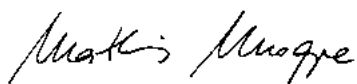
These pressures intersect with the growing effects of climate change. Climate change is increasing risks to agriculture by altering growing conditions and the frequency and severity of weather extremes. An intensifying El Niño adds a further near-term risk, with significant shifts in rainfall and temperature patterns expected across many regions. Although its relationship to climate change has yet to be established, the devastating flash flood in Nepal illustrates how quickly climate-related hazards can destroy homes, damage infrastructure, and disrupt livelihoods, putting food and nutrition security at risk.

The impacts on food and nutrition security can persist even after weather conditions improve, prices stabilize, or violence subsides. For affected people and communities, lasting harm to nutrition, health, and livelihoods can deepen existing vulnerabilities and grievances, with implications for social stability and longer-term security.

For this year's Global Hunger Index, we invited experts from six regions to reflect on the relationship between food security and security. Across different regional contexts, their essays examine how inequality, conflict, climate risks, resource scarcity, and exposure to global shocks shape this relationship. Together, these perspectives show why food and nutrition security must be integral to efforts to strengthen resilience, stability, and peace.

How resources are allocated in the name of security must be part of this discussion. Global military spending reached a record high in 2025, while official development assistance (ODA) declined in 2024 and 2025 and is projected to fall for a third consecutive year in 2026 (Liang et al. 2026; OECD 2026). This does not imply a simple choice between defense and development. However, against the backdrop of the hunger trends documented in the Global Hunger Index, it is worth asking whether current spending priorities sufficiently recognize that investing in food and nutrition security is also an investment in lasting security.

The message for policymakers is clear: If security is to be lasting, food security must be at its foundation.



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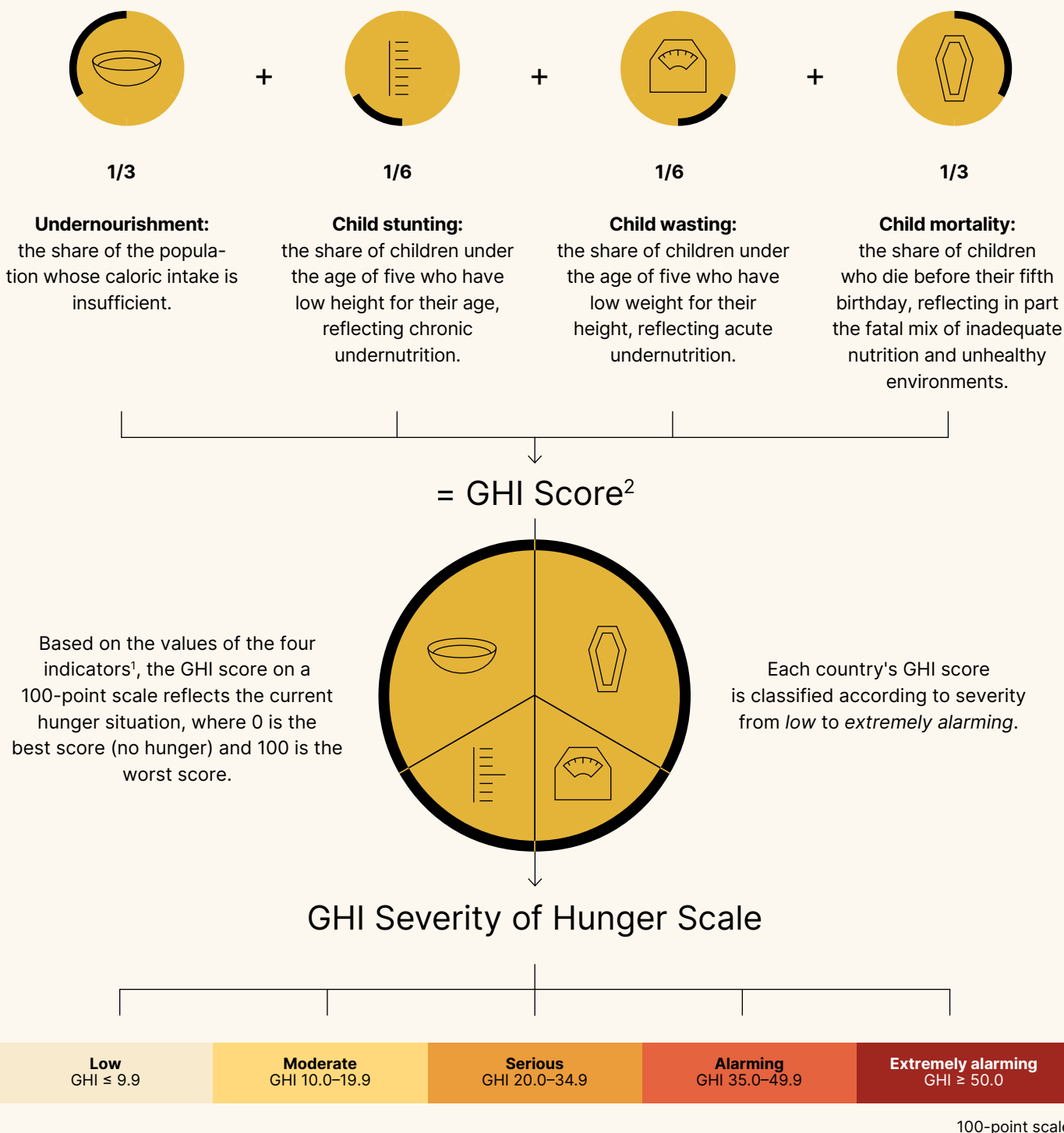
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Global Hunger Index

The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a tool designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger at global, regional, and national levels, reflecting multiple dimensions of hunger over time. Each country's GHI score is calculated based on a formula that combines four indicators¹ that together capture the multidimensional nature of hunger:



Note: The GHI scale has been adapted in its colors to better communicate that all levels of hunger warrant attention, including those classified as *low*, and to avoid associating low hunger with the absence of hunger.

¹ Each of the indicators is standardized; see Appendix A for details.

² GHI scores are comparable only within each year's report, not between different years' reports. To allow for tracking of a country's or region's GHI performance over time, this report provides GHI scores for 2000, 2006, 2012 and 2018, which can be compared with the 2026 GHI scores. For a detailed explanation of the concept of the GHI, the date ranges and calculation of the scores, and the interpretation of results, see Appendix A.

01



Mahamane Sidi Maïga, 65, planned to start the rice harvest the next morning. Overnight flooding destroyed his crop, fish ponds, equipment, and home in Toya, Mali. Early warning and flood preparedness aim to reduce such losses, which can take away both a season's harvest and the means to farm again.

Global, Regional and National Trends in Hunger

Note: The results in this 2026 Global Hunger Index report supersede all previous GHI results. Since underlying data are continually being revised by the respective agencies, historical GHI scores and indicator data are recalculated every year. Comparisons of the GHI over time can only be made by using the 2000, 2006, 2012, and 2018 scores and indicator data contained within this report.

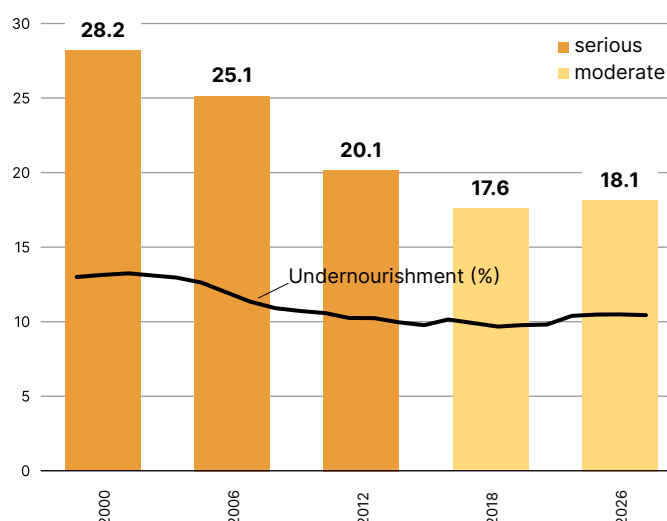
After nearly two decades of substantial improvement, global hunger has worsened compared with 2018—amid multiple overlapping crises. The 2026 Global Hunger Index (GHI) score of 18.1, considered *moderate*, is higher than the 2018 score of 17.6, marking an interruption in the long-term downward trend recorded since 2000, when the score stood at 28.2, considered *serious* (see Figure 1.1). The 2026 GHI scores reflect hunger conditions over the 2021–2025 period. This period was shaped by overlapping crises that placed mounting pressure on food and nutrition security, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war, geopolitical tensions, protracted conflicts, economic shocks, and more frequent and intense climate extremes, amid disruptions to the international order, erosion of international law, and severe reductions in humanitarian and development funding (FAO et al. 2026b; FAO et al. 2026c; Bunde and Eisentraut 2026). Between 2018 and 2026, three of the GHI's four component indicators, undernourishment, child stunting, and child wasting, deteriorated, while child mortality continued to slowly improve. While the GHI compares only five points in time, the continuous trend in the prevalence of undernourishment suggests that the recent deterioration may not necessarily represent a permanent reversal. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, undernourishment peaked in 2022 and has since declined, although it remains above pre-pandemic levels, with an estimated 645 million people undernourished in 2025 (FAO et al. 2026b).

Progress is increasingly fragile and remains uneven across regions. Hunger remains highest in Africa South of the Sahara and South Asia. The GHI finds a *serious* level of hunger in both regions. Compared to the 2018 GHI scores, hunger has increased in Africa South of the Sahara, whereas South Asia has seen the strongest decline of all regions (see Figure 1.3). According to the 2026 GHI scores and provisional designations, eight countries have *alarming* levels of hunger—all but

one in Africa South of the Sahara. Somalia has the highest GHI score in this year's report, followed by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad, and Madagascar. Four countries have insufficient data for the calculation of GHI scores but are provisionally designated as *alarming*: Burundi, Sudan, South Sudan, and Yemen. The post-2018 rise in the GHI is concentrated in Africa South of the Sahara and West Asia and North Africa, driven by worsened hunger situations in populous Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and in Malawi, South Africa, and Syria. These outweighed major improvements in, for example, Uganda, Togo, and Mozambique (see Figure 1.4). Progress has been limited elsewhere: GHI scores declined by less than one point in Latin America and the Caribbean and East and Southeast Asia, and remained unchanged in Europe and Central Asia.

Conflict remains a key driver of hunger amid the highest levels of armed conflict since the Second World War. The Uppsala Conflict Data Program recorded 65 state-based armed conflicts in 2025, the highest number since 1946, and interstate conflicts doubled for the second consecutive year, reaching a record eight conflicts in 2025 (Davies et al. 2026). In 2025, it was primarily conflict and insecurity that drove high levels of acute food insecurity across 19 countries and territories, affecting 147.4 million people. This includes five of the six contexts with populations in Catastrophe (IPC/CH Phase 5), the most severe level of acute food insecurity as defined by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) and Cadre Harmonisé (CH) (FAO et al. 2026c). For the first time in the history of IPC reporting, the area-level classification Famine (IPC Phase 5)—in which catastrophic deprivation is accompanied by extreme critical levels of acute malnutrition and mortality across an area—was confirmed in two countries and territories in a single year: in parts of the Gaza Strip of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Sudan (FAO et al. 2026c).

FIGURE 1.1 Global GHI Scores and Prevalence of Undernourishment in Recent Decades



Note: GHI scores for the year 2000 include data from 1998–2002; 2006 GHI scores include data from 2004–2008; 2012 GHI scores include data from 2010–2014; 2018 GHI scores include data from 2016–2020; and 2026 GHI scores include data from 2021–2025. Data on undernourishment are from FAO (2026). The undernourishment values are for the world as a whole, including countries both included in and excluded from the GHI. For a complete list of data sources for the calculation of GHI scores, see Methodology (Appendix A). Colors correspond to the GHI Severity of Hunger Scale.

Beyond acute food crises, chronic and high-intensity conflict is associated with the loss of decades of progress against hunger.

The median 2026 GHI score of countries in chronic and high-intensity conflict stands at 22.1 and is considered *serious*. That is one GHI severity category higher than the median GHI score of 15.2, recorded for countries at peace almost three decades ago. This gap reflects nearly a generation of foregone progress against hunger in countries affected by chronic conflict. Their score is also well above the median 2026 GHI score of 14.2 for other conflict-affected countries and 9.7 for countries without conflict in 2026 (see Figure 1.2). For this analysis, countries experiencing “chronic and high-intensity conflict” are those that recorded conflict events in at least half of all months during 2023–2025 and averaged at least five conflict-related deaths per 100,000 people per year according to the Uppsala Conflict Data Program Georeferenced Event Dataset. Countries with conflict events that did not meet both thresholds were classified as “conflict-affected”. This analysis shows that the consequences extend beyond short-term acute food crises: chronic and high-intensity conflict is associated with persistently higher levels of hunger and undernutrition, measured over decades rather than seasons.

Recent years have shown that conflicts in and between countries can profoundly disrupt agrifood systems far beyond their local boundaries.

The war between the Russian Federation and Ukraine demonstrates how disruptions in major food-producing regions can affect global food security: at the outset of the conflict, the two countries together accounted for nearly 30 percent of global wheat exports, with the Russian Federation also a leading fertilizer exporter, and the resulting disruptions contributed to the spike in global food prices in 2022 (FAO 2022a; FAO et al. 2023). In 2026, the disruptions to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz pose a similar risk, intensifying economic pressures and driving up agricultural in-

put prices (see Box 1.1). The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World identifies the conflict as a threat to progress toward Sustainable Development Goal 2.1 on ending hunger (FAO et al. 2026b). Whether it produces impacts on the scale of 2022 remains to be seen; what both episodes underline is the exposure of import-dependent, crisis-affected countries to disruptions in globally important markets (see Box 1.1).

The outlook remains worrying as new shocks hit countries and households already under strain.

Overlapping crises interact with structural vulnerabilities so that shocks strike hardest where coping capacity has already been eroded (von Grebmer et al. 2023; FAO et al. 2026c). In addition to the global ripple effects of the US-Israel-Iran war, a new El Niño event is developing, assessed as having a greater than 90 percent chance of being a very strong event during the Northern Hemisphere fall and winter of 2026–2027 (NOAA 2026), further worsening food and nutrition security prospects. FAO’s early risk mapping flags a high risk of drought across Southern Africa, the Sahel, South and Southeast Asia, the Central American Dry Corridor, and the Caribbean (FAO 2026a). In 2025, weather extremes were already the primary driver of acute food insecurity in 16 countries and territories, where 87.5 million people faced high levels of acute food insecurity, and economic shocks were the primary driver in a further 12 countries and territories, affecting 29.8 million people (FAO et al. 2026c). El Niño events in particular have repeatedly disrupted food security at scale: the 2023–2024 event brought Southern Africa its worst drought in over 100 years (OCHA 2024). A recent study finds that during El Niño, the risk of violent conflict is amplified, primarily in regions that experience drought-related stress, such as reduced water availability or agricultural strain (Bagwell et al. 2026).

While another global food crisis is looming, declining support is leaving efforts to reduce hunger underfunded. Financing

for food security and nutrition responses in food-crisis contexts declined in 2025 to levels last seen in 2016–2017, with only US\$10.55 billion of the US\$29 billion required received by the end of October—a shortfall that translated into reduced program coverage, humanitarian ration cuts, and hyper-prioritization of assistance (FAO et al. 2026c; FAO and WFP 2025). Nearly half (44 percent) of the global reduction in humanitarian assistance in 2025 was concentrated in five countries: Yemen, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Afghanistan, and South Sudan (FAO et al. 2026c). Four of these countries are among the eight countries with *alarming* hunger in this year's GHI, concentrating declining assistance where hunger is most severe. While higher Official Development Assistance (ODA) levels have been associated with reductions of 39 percent in child mortality, forecasting analyses project that a severe defunding scenario could result in 5.4 million additional deaths among children younger than 5 years (da Silva et al. 2026). In Africa, the abrupt withdrawal of funding in early 2025 was followed by a sharp increase in armed clashes, protests, and riots in the areas that had previously received the most support per capita, an effect that was substantially weaker in countries with stronger, more inclusive institutions (Rohner et al. 2026).

The same funding reductions are also eroding monitoring capacity—and where hunger goes unmeasured, it risks going unanswered (Andree et al. 2026). The GHI relies on sufficiently recent data for its four component indicators. Where required data is missing, a current score cannot be calculated, and some countries can only be assigned provisional severity designations. These pressures extend to wider monitoring systems: FEWS NET reporting was inter-

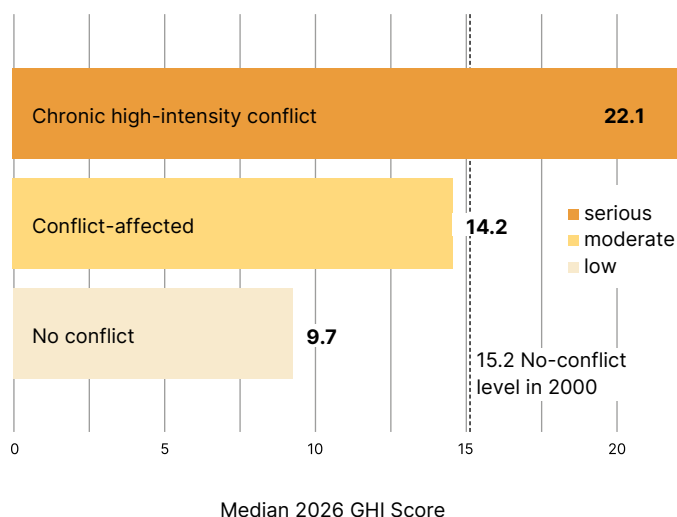
rupted from January to June 2025 following the pause in United States foreign assistance, while the Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC) 2026 reports the lowest country coverage with technically adequate acute food insecurity data in a decade and warns that funding and access constraints are putting food security data systems at risk (FAO et al. 2026c). In conflict-affected settings, limitations on access and data collection can make deteriorating conditions difficult to observe, and the absence of data should not be read as evidence of stability (Maxwell and Hailey 2021).

The following analysis captures how these overlapping pressures play out in different world regions and countries.

Africa South of the Sahara

Hunger in Africa South of the Sahara is the highest in the world and shows a reversal of previous progress. The region's 2026 GHI score of 27.5 is considered *serious* and is higher than in 2018, making this the region's first increase between reference years (see Figure 1.3). The increase in the GHI score was driven by the rising undernourishment and child stunting rates. Despite unchanged child wasting levels and slight reductions in child mortality, the region records the second-highest child wasting rate and the highest rates globally for the other three GHI indicators. These reversals track the region's overlapping crises: conflict and insecurity disrupt production, markets, and access in its largest and most severe food crises (FAO et al. 2026c); imports concentrated in wheat, other grains, and fertilizer left

FIGURE 1.2 Countries Experiencing Chronic and High-Intensity Conflict Have Considerably Higher Levels of Hunger as per Their GHI Scores



Source: Authors, based on the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset v26.1 (Davies et al. 2026; Sundberg and Melander 2013) and United Nations World Population Prospects 2024 (UN DESA 2024).

Note: Bars show median 2026 GHI scores across the 120 countries with GHI scores in all five reference years (2000, 2006, 2012, 2018, and 2026), grouped by conflict exposure (no conflict: 54 countries; conflict-affected: 55; chronic and high-intensity conflict: 11). Conflict exposure is classified over three years (2023–2025) using conflict events and fatality estimates from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program Georeferenced Event Dataset v26.1 (Davies et al. 2026; Sundberg and Melander 2013); state-based, non-state, and one-sided violence are all included. Countries with no recorded conflict event in the period are classified as having no conflict; countries with conflict events in at least half of all months and an average of at least 5 conflict deaths per 100,000 population per year (UCDP best estimates; population from the United Nations World Population Prospects 2024) as experiencing chronic and high-intensity conflict; all other countries with recorded events as conflict-affected. Thresholds are the authors' own and do not correspond to the World Bank FCS intensity tiers. The dashed line marks the median 2000 GHI score (15.2) of the 56 countries classified as having no conflict over 2000–2002; groups are classified per period, so group composition differs between 2000 and 2026. Countries lacking the data required for GHI score calculation cannot be shown; these include Sudan, classified as experiencing chronic and high-intensity conflict over 2023–2025, as well as Burundi, South Sudan, and Yemen, all conflict-affected over the same period.

food prices exposed to global shocks (Balma et al. 2024); and debt distress has narrowed the fiscal space for social protection, health, and nutrition services (FAO et al. 2026a; World Bank 2026a).

Somalia has made gradual long-term progress, but hunger remains at levels considered *alarming*. Somalia has the highest GHI score in this year's report, at an *alarming* 47.0. In 2026, the GHI score falls below the *extremely alarming* threshold for the first time among the reference years, marking a substantial long-term improvement from a score of 64.4 in 2000. Yet exceptionally high levels of undernourishment and child mortality show how severe and persistent the country's hunger burden remains. Undernourishment is very high at 56.5 percent, affecting more than half of Somalia's population, the highest in any country globally, while child mortality is also very high at 10.1 percent (see Figure 1.5). WHO attributes this burden to limited access to health services, protracted conflict and insecurity, and recurrent droughts and flooding (WHO 2023). Recent developments underscore the continued severity of Somalia's food and nutrition security situation. The La Niña-related failure of the seasonal Deyr rains in late 2025 compounded high levels of acute food insecurity and prompted the government of Somalia to declare a national drought emergency (FAO et al. 2026c; FEWS NET 2025).

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) records the second-highest GHI score, reflecting a reversal of earlier progress against hunger. The 2026 GHI score of 39.5 is considered *alarming*. Since 2018, undernourishment, child wasting, and child stunting have worsened, despite a continued decline in child mortality. Decades of protracted conflict, compounded by mass displacement, economic shocks, weather extremes, and sharp cuts to humanitarian assistance, continue to drive one of the world's largest food crises. In 2025, 27.7 million people faced high levels of acute food insecurity in DRC (IPC Phase 3 or above) (FAO et al. 2026c). These pressures now intersect with a major epidemic: since May 2026, DRC has faced its largest recorded outbreak of Ebola disease caused by Bundibugyo virus. WHO declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern (WHO 2026). It has affected 6 provinces in DRC, where more than 2.65 million people in affected health zones already face high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) (WFP 2026a). The interplay runs in both directions: WFP warns that hunger is itself undermining containment, describing food assistance as "frontline Ebola containment" (WFP 2026a).

Nigeria's GHI score recorded the largest point increase globally, from 28.2 in 2018 to 34.3 in 2026, approaching the *alarming* threshold (see Figure 1.4). During the COVID-19 crisis, Nigeria entered its deepest recession in four decades, while poverty increased amid rising prices (World Bank 2021). Pressure on household budgets later intensified

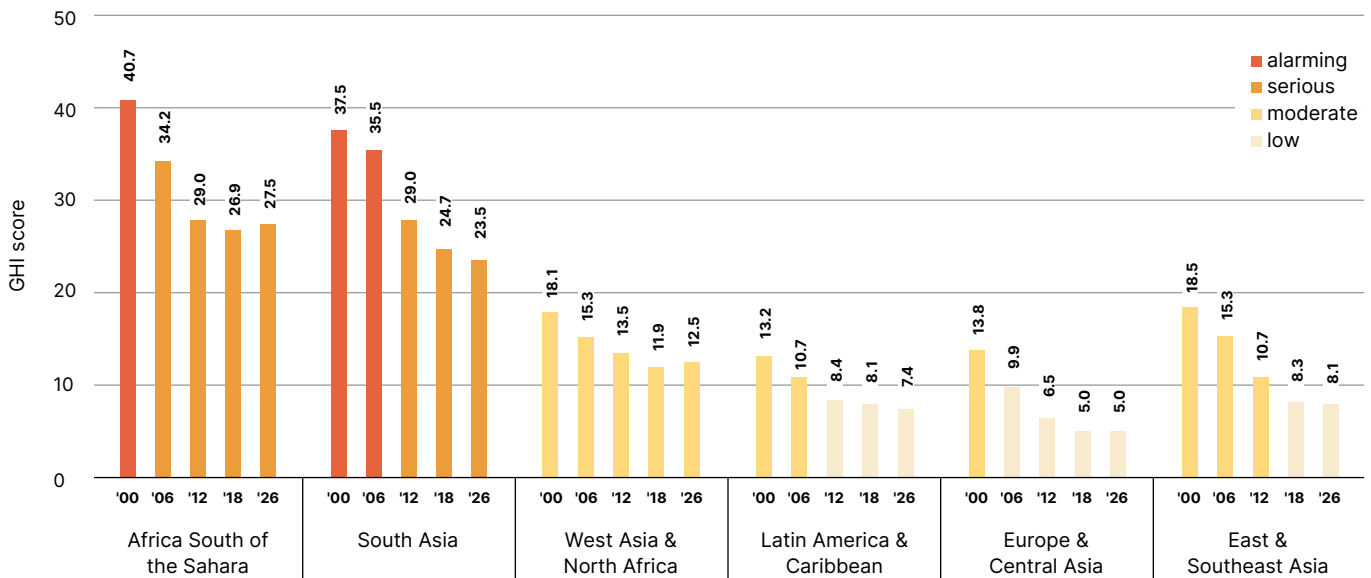
as currency depreciation and rising fuel and transport costs pushed food prices higher, while extensive flooding damaged farmland and production (FAO 2024a). Food insecurity conditions worsened in conflict-affected northern states, where insecurity restricted access to fields, pastures, and markets. By June 2026, Nigeria was classified as a hunger hotspot of highest concern, with 34.8 million people projected to face Crisis or worse (CH Phase 3 or above) from June to August (FAO and WFP 2026).

Conflict remains the most destructive force behind hunger in the region. Four of the six largest conflict-driven food crises globally are in Africa South of the Sahara: Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, and South Sudan (FAO et al. 2026c). In Sudan, fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces began in April 2023 and displaced an estimated 13.6 million people amid what the UN describes as the world's largest humanitarian emergency (United Nations 2026). In 2025, the IPC confirmed Famine (IPC Phase 5) in two besieged towns, El Fasher and Kadugli. By May 2026, neither town could be assessed separately, and no entire area was classified in Famine; nevertheless, 14 areas were at risk of Famine and nearly 19.5 million people faced high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) (IPC 2025c; IPC 2026g). Cross-border displacement has extended the pressures across the region. In South Sudan, returnees fleeing the conflict in Sudan accounted for a large share of those facing Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in 2025, with four counties at risk of Famine under a worst-case scenario of escalating conflict, further displacement, and constrained humanitarian access (FAO et al. 2026c; IPC 2026e).

The conflicts and spillover effects described above also complicate the measurement of hunger in the GHI. In Sudan, ongoing insecurity has constrained IPC data collection and prevented FAO from updating its prevalence of undernourishment estimate beyond 2017–2019, while South Sudan lacks child wasting estimates for 2021–2025 (IPC 2025c; FAO et al. 2026b). Without the data required to calculate 2026 GHI scores, both countries are provisionally designated as *alarming* based on available indicator values, previous scores, and food crisis assessments.

Weather extremes are another major driver of hunger across the region, particularly in Southern Africa. Since 2018, GHI scores have increased by three points in Malawi and two in Zambia, while Madagascar, which returned to the *alarming* category in 2018, has seen its score edge up further to 36.5. The 2023–2024 El Niño-related drought sharply increased acute food insecurity in Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe during the 2024/25 lean season, although improved harvests in 2025 brought some relief (FAO et al. 2026c). Madagascar is highly exposed to weather-related shocks. Southern Madagascar experienced three consecutive droughts through 2020–2022, while erratic rainfall,

FIGURE 1.3 Regional 2000, 2006, 2012, 2018 and 2026 Global Hunger Index Scores



Source: Authors.

Note: See Methodology (Appendix A) for data sources. The regional and global GHI scores are calculated using regional and global aggregates for each indicator and the formula described in the Methodology (Appendix A). The regional and global aggregates for each indicator are calculated as population-weighted averages, using the indicator values reported in Appendix B. For countries lacking undernourishment data, provisional estimates provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) were used to calculate aggregates only but are not reported in Appendix B. Appendix D shows which countries are included in each region.

cyclones, and flooding continued to disrupt agricultural production and food and nutrition in the following years (FEWS NET 2022; FEWS NET 2026c). Looking ahead, the intensifying El Niño poses another risk of a major climate shock as FAO identifies Southern Africa as one of the regions at greatest risk of agricultural drought (FAO 2026a; WMO 2026a).

Economic shocks have exacerbated fiscal stress and hampered necessary investments. The COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and recent disruptions to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz have added to economic pressures across Africa, including through higher fertilizer and other import costs and narrowing African governments' fiscal space to invest in food security and nutrition (FAO et al. 2026a). High debt burdens have further constrained resources for food and agriculture, as rising debt repayments have left governments with fewer funds for agricultural development (FAO 2022d). By the end of 2025, 25 of 48 countries in the region were in or at high risk of debt distress (World Bank 2026a).

Despite these pressures, several countries continue to make progress. Uganda recorded the region's largest improvement: its GHI score declined by 8 points since 2018 to a score of 20.7, classified *serious* (see Figure 1.4). By 2026, the prevalence of undernourishment has fallen to 20.9 percent,

after peaking at 38.1 percent in 2018. While the 2018 deterioration was associated with consecutive poor agricultural seasons, crop and livestock pests and diseases, rising staple food prices, and a large number of people seeking refuge, improved harvests in 2023 and 2024 helped strengthen food availability and access (FAO and ECA 2018; FEWS NET 2023b). Togo moved into the *moderate* category with a score of 17.6, as undernourishment fell from a medium 21.3 percent to a low 10.2 percent. In 2026, Cabo Verde is the only country in the region with a GHI score considered *low*, at 6.9. Sierra Leone's GHI score has declined every reference year. Building on this progress, Sierra Leone is pursuing food sovereignty through its Feed Salone strategy, with self-sufficiency in rice, poultry, onions, and cassava flour among its key objectives (Sierra Leone MAFS 2023). While implementation milestones of the strategy have been achieved, constraints in productivity, inputs, and market access persist (IITA 2026).

Sustained progress against hunger rarely has a single cause. Studies from Ethiopia, Ghana, and Rwanda find that lasting reductions in undernutrition are associated not with any one intervention but with overlapping improvements in household wealth, parental and maternal education, agricultural production, health-service access, antenatal and skilled birth care, sanitation, disease prevention, and other nutrition-sensitive systems (Tasic et al. 2020; Otoo et al. 2025; Kalinda et al. 2023).

TAB. 1.1 Global Hunger Index Scores by 2026 GHI Rank

Note: Rankings and index scores from this table cannot be accurately compared to rankings and index scores from previous reports (see Appendix A).

Rank ¹	Country	2000	2006	2012	2018	2026	Rank ¹	Country	2000	2006	2012	2018	2026
2026 GHI scores less than 5, collectively ranked 1–24. ²	Armenia	20.3	14.4	7.8	6.2	<5	71	Indonesia	25.0	28.8	22.5	17.0	14.4
	Belarus	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	72	Nepal	37.0	30.8	24.4	18.4	14.5
	Bosnia & Herzegovina	9.5	6.3	<5	<5	<5	72	Myanmar	41.4	29.8	20.3	16.2	14.5
	Bulgaria	8.7	8.5	7.5	5.8	<5	74	South Africa	16.7	17.8	13.2	13.1	15.4
	Chile	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	74	Senegal	32.5	23.6	19.5	16.2	15.4
	China	13.8	9.1	<5	<5	<5	76	Eswatini	24.3	25.7	22.8	17.6	16.1
	Costa Rica	5.8	<5	<5	<5	<5	77	Cameroon	36.8	29.4	22.2	19.4	16.9
	Croatia	7.4	<5	<5	<5	<5	78	Comoros	35.7	27.7	25.1	19.0	17.6
	Estonia	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	78	Togo	37.4	29.4	25.9	24.3	17.6
	Georgia	11.7	9.2	7.1	<5	<5	80	Gabon	19.8	19.4	16.3	16.5	18.0
	Hungary	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	81	Guatemala	29.0	24.9	21.5	19.8	18.3
	Kuwait	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	82	Gambia	29.4	25.1	21.0	19.3	18.4
	Latvia	5.4	<5	<5	<5	<5	83	Botswana	29.8	27.8	23.3	21.1	18.7
	Lithuania	5.5	<5	<5	<5	<5	84	Bangladesh	34.6	30.0	27.3	20.0	19.2
	Montenegro	—	6.5	<5	<5	<5	*	Nicaragua	21.3	17.2	14.3	12.1	10–19.9*
	North Macedonia	7.4	6.5	<5	<5	<5	85	Lao PDR	43.8	29.5	21.5	20.1	20.0
	Paraguay	12.8	9.7	6.9	<5	<5	86	Côte d'Ivoire	32.8	34.1	26.4	21.0	20.2
	Romania	8.1	6.4	5.2	<5	<5	87	Tanzania (United Rep. of)	40.3	31.8	26.8	23.9	20.4
	Russian Federation	10.5	6.7	<5	<5	<5	88	Mali	40.6	36.0	27.1	22.4	20.5
	Serbia	—	5.9	<5	<5	<5	88	Uganda	35.8	30.5	25.1	28.7	20.7
	Türkiye	22.1	11.6	5.4	<5	<5	90	Mauritania	31.3	25.3	20.1	19.3	20.8
	United Arab Emirates	<5	5.2	5.2	<5	<5	91	Congo (Republic of)	35.3	31.8	29.0	24.9	20.9
	Uruguay	7.9	5.7	<5	<5	<5	92	Rwanda	49.6	35.7	27.0	26.7	21.0
	Uzbekistan	25.6	15.4	8.5	5.2	<5	93	Burkina Faso	44.3	36.4	30.3	25.1	22.1
25	Moldova (Rep. of)	18.3	18.9	6.4	5.4	5.0	94	Guinea	36.9	34.2	28.6	26.7	22.3
26	Mongolia	29.5	21.2	11.1	6.7	5.3	94	Zimbabwe	35.6	32.5	27.8	25.9	22.3
27	Argentina	6.5	5.4	5.4	5.5	5.5	96	Djibouti	41.4	35.3	28.1	22.7	22.5
27	Brazil	11.7	7.0	5.5	5.7	5.5	97	Namibia	26.6	26.5	24.2	21.7	22.9
27	Azerbaijan	25.3	15.5	10.6	7.1	5.5	98	Solomon Islands	18.7	18.5	21.7	21.2	23.4
30	Dominican Republic	15.2	14.3	11.0	8.3	5.9	99	Guinea-Bissau	37.7	29.8	28.3	23.1	23.9
31	Kazakhstan	11.9	13.0	8.8	6.1	6.0	100	Ethiopia	53.0	42.3	31.2	24.9	24.1
31	Tunisia	9.0	8.1	6.8	5.9	6.0	100	India	38.1	37.0	28.8	25.8	24.1
33	Colombia	10.7	11.2	8.7	6.7	6.1	102	Angola	61.7	39.1	23.2	24.0	24.3
33	Saudi Arabia	10.5	12.5	8.1	6.3	6.1	102	Benin	32.1	27.3	24.6	24.0	24.3
35	Mexico	9.7	9.4	7.4	6.8	6.2	104	Malawi	43.1	32.7	24.9	21.9	24.9
36	Peru	21.1	15.6	9.5	7.2	6.5	105	Kenya	35.6	29.8	23.4	23.4	25.0
37	Guyana	17.0	15.8	14.0	10.2	6.8	106	Pakistan	36.2	32.9	31.6	24.0	25.5
38	Cabo Verde	16.0	13.2	12.2	8.4	6.9	107	Mozambique	46.9	36.3	30.8	31.6	25.9
39	El Salvador	13.6	12.2	10.0	7.2	7.0	108	Afghanistan	49.8	38.1	31.5	28.4	28.6
40	Albania	15.2	15.7	9.5	6.2	7.1	109	Sierra Leone	57.7	47.2	33.8	32.3	28.7
41	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	12.4	9.8	9.1	8.3	7.2	110	Zambia	51.1	43.8	36.8	28.7	30.7
41	Panama	17.3	13.4	10.3	8.1	7.2	111	Papua New Guinea	31.4	30.8	36.4	31.4	31.5
43	Algeria	14.1	11.9	9.1	7.1	7.5	111	Syrian Arab Republic	14.8	17.1	19.2	28.0	31.5
44	Jamaica	8.3	8.4	8.3	7.8	7.8	113	Liberia	48.0	40.8	36.0	32.4	32.3
45	Kyrgyzstan	18.5	14.0	10.7	8.2	7.9	114	Timor-Leste	—	44.1	30.0	27.3	32.5
46	Venezuela (Boliv. Rep. of)	14.3	11.0	7.1	16.7	8.9	115	Central African Republic	46.8	44.4	37.1	34.5	33.1
47	Morocco	15.7	16.4	9.4	8.2	9.0	116	Niger	52.7	40.9	38.1	34.4	34.1
48	Jordan	10.2	7.6	8.5	9.5	9.4	117	Nigeria	37.3	32.5	31.0	28.2	34.3
48	Lebanon	11.0	11.4	7.0	7.2	9.4	118	Haiti	40.1	39.3	31.7	30.4	34.4
48	Turkmenistan	19.8	15.3	11.7	9.9	9.4	*	Korea (DPR)	43.8	32.6	29.0	27.4	20–34.9*
*	Slovakia	—	—	—	—	≤ 9.9*	*	Lesotho	—	—	—	—	20–34.9*
51	Thailand	17.2	12.5	12.2	11.4	10.0	119	Madagascar	41.9	39.2	33.6	35.7	36.5
51	Fiji	9.2	9.5	10.4	9.6	10.0	120	Chad	49.5	46.2	41.0	38.5	38.0
53	Sri Lanka	22.1	19.9	20.8	11.4	10.2	121	Dem. Rep. of the Congo	48.5	39.3	37.3	36.6	39.5
54	Ecuador	19.1	16.4	12.3	11.6	10.3	122	Somalia	64.4	60.8	59.6	51.1	47.0
55	Trinidad & Tobago	11.2	11.6	10.3	9.1	10.5	*	Sudan	—	—	—	26.0	35–49.9*
55	Egypt	16.5	14.6	16.0	11.6	10.5	*	Burundi, South Sudan and Yemen	—	—	—	—	35–49.9*
57	Oman	16.2	12.0	10.7	11.8	10.8							
58	Viet Nam	24.2	22.1	15.6	12.9	11.2							
59	Suriname	14.8	11.0	10.5	10.8	11.4							
60	Ukraine	12.8	10.8	9.7	9.8	11.6							
61	Iraq	22.9	20.1	17.2	13.5	11.9							
62	Honduras	21.7	17.6	13.5	12.9	12.3							
63	Tajikistan	39.2	31.8	24.2	14.9	12.7							
64	Libya	11.9	14.6	17.0	12.9	12.9							
65	Ghana	29.0	22.1	17.7	15.5	13.0							
66	Mauritius	15.1	13.8	13.3	12.5	13.2							
67	Philippines	23.9	22.2	20.1	15.3	13.5							
68	Malaysia	15.1	13.9	12.8	12.3	13.6							
69	Bolivia (Plurinatl. State of)	26.6	23.0	16.2	12.2	14.2							
70	Cambodia	39.8	26.8	21.3	15.2	14.3							

■ = low ■ = moderate ■ = serious ■ = alarming ■ = extremely alarming

Note: For the 2026 GHI report, data were assessed for 136 countries. Out of these, there were sufficient data to calculate 2026 GHI scores for and rank 122 countries (by way of comparison, 123 countries were ranked in the 2025 GHI report).

¹ Ranked according to 2026 GHI scores. Countries that have identical 2026 scores are given the same ranking (for example, Argentina and Brazil are both ranked 27th).

² The 24 countries with 2026 GHI scores of less than 5 are not assigned individual ranks, but rather are collectively ranked 1–24. Differences between their scores are minimal.

— = Data are not available or not presented. Some countries did not exist in their present borders in the given year or reference period.

* For 14 countries, individual scores could not be calculated and ranks could not be determined owing to a lack of data. Where possible, these countries were provisionally designated by severity: 1 as *low*, 1 as *moderate*, 2 as *serious* and 4 as *alarming*. For 6 countries, provisional designations could not be established (see Table A.3 in Appendix A).

National gains can also mask growing subnational pressures, especially where insecurity spreads. Togo's national improvement has continued even as its northern regions face rising displacement and humanitarian needs linked to spill-over from the Sahel crisis (WFP 2026f). In Uganda, all nine districts of Karamoja were classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) for April to July 2026, as erratic rains, depleted food stocks, high food and input prices, and pest and livestock disease outbreaks have constrained the 2026 planting season (IPC 2026h). And despite Rwanda's decline in child stunting, persistent hotspots remain in its Northern and Western provinces (Kalinda et al. 2023).

Looking ahead, African governments are seeking to address these pressures collectively through stronger regional cooperation on food system resilience. The Kampala CAADP Declaration, adopted as a collective mandate by the AU Assembly in January 2025, sets a common agenda for 2026–2035 to build more resilient and sustainable agrifood systems, including by raising agrifood output by 45 percent and tripling intra-African trade in agrifood products and inputs by 2035 (African Union Commission 2025).

South Asia

South Asia has the second-highest regional score in this year's report, with a 2026 GHI score of 23.5, considered *serious*. Although the region's GHI score has fallen substantially since 2000, when it stood at an *alarming* 37.5, most of that progress occurred before 2018. Among countries with sufficient data to calculate GHI scores, all have lower scores than they did in 2000.

The prevalence of undernourishment has remained largely unchanged between the 2018 and 2026 reference periods. FAO estimates put the number of undernourished people in South Asia (including Iran) at 218.0 million in 2023–2025, roughly one-third of the world's total (FAO et al. 2026b). For the first time, child stunting fell below that for Africa South of the Sahara and below the very high threshold, reaching 29.8 percent. By contrast, child wasting in the region has worsened since 2018 and now stands at a very high 15.8 percent—the world's highest rate. Evidence from longitudinal cohorts in low- and middle-income countries shows that the incidence of child wasting peaks between birth and three months of age (Mertens et al. 2023). Together with evidence on maternal risk factors in South Asia, this highlights the importance of improving maternal nutrition before and during pregnancy (Harding et al. 2018; Torlesse and Aguayo 2018).

High levels of acute food insecurity are expected to persist in South Asia. In Afghanistan, the main 2026 cereal-growing season was negatively affected by below-average rainfall

and above-average temperatures, while heavy rains and flooding caused localized crop losses in parts of Bangladesh and Pakistan (FAO et al. 2026c). The risk is compounded by the intensifying El Niño and the prospect of a deficient 2026 southwest monsoon, with the India Meteorological Department forecasting a 60 percent probability of below-normal rainfall across the Monsoon Core Zone, which encompasses most of India's rainfed agricultural areas (IMD 2026).

Afghanistan and Pakistan have the highest GHI scores in the region. They are also the only countries in South Asia where the scores have worsened since 2018. Although both countries have improved their GHI scores since 2000, moving from the *alarming* to the *serious* category, child stunting remains very high. Pakistan's stunting rate continues to fall, while Afghanistan's has edged up again since 2018. Child mortality rates continue declining in both countries from very high levels in 2000, now reaching medium levels. In Pakistan, undernourishment has climbed from low in 2018 to medium, and child wasting has risen toward the high threshold. Heavy monsoon rains and flash floods in 2025 affected more than 6 million people, destroying cropland and infrastructure (FAO et al. 2026c). At the same time, economic instability and the lasting effects of sharp food price inflation in Pakistan have eroded households' purchasing power and constrained access to food (Wieser and Meyer 2025; IPC 2025b). Undernourishment is now high in Afghanistan, affecting more than a quarter of the population. Afghanistan, a country with one of the world's largest food crises in 2025, is classified as being of very high concern in the June–November 2026 Hunger Hotspots outlook (FAO and WFP 2026). In 2025, weather extremes (drought, floods, and a major earthquake) became the primary driver of Afghanistan's acute food insecurity. Conditions were further worsened by prolonged economic deterioration and compounded by the large-scale return of 2.78 million Afghans from neighboring countries in 2025 alone, accompanied by sharp cuts to humanitarian assistance (FAO et al. 2026c; FAO and WFP 2026; OCHA 2026a).

India's GHI score, considered *serious* since 2012, mirrors the regional slowdown, with the score easing from 25.8 in 2018 to 24.1 in 2026. This represents a fraction of its steep improvement of 8.2 points between 2006 and 2012. Behind the score, the indicators pull in opposite directions: undernourishment improved to 9.8 percent in 2026, while child wasting climbed to 19.0 percent, the region's highest rate, and has remained very high at every reference year. Child stunting fell to 29.3 percent in 2026, moving from a very high to a high rate for the first time.

Consistent improvement in Bangladesh slowed in a pattern similar to India's, reaching a score of 19.2, down from a score of 34.6, considered *serious*, in 2000. Bangladesh's long-term improvement is a generational achievement, reflected in most underlying indicators. Child stunting, though

still high, has fallen by over 30 percentage points since 2000. Decomposition studies spanning this long decline consistently identify gains in parental—especially maternal—education and improving household living conditions as key drivers, with health, sanitation, and demographic factors in supporting roles (Headey et al. 2015; Kundu et al. 2025). Child wasting is the major exception. At 12.9 percent, it is high and has reached its highest level since 2000. While food security has improved on a national level in 2025, sub-national disparities persist, and displaced Rohingya were added to the FAO–WFP Hunger Hotspots list amid increased arrivals of refugees, more frequent floods, and reduced humanitarian assistance (FAO et al. 2026c).

Nepal has shown the region's strongest progress since 2000. Its score fell by 22.5 points, from an *alarming* 37.0 in 2000 to a *moderate* 14.5 in 2026. During the same period, child wasting nearly halved to 6.6 percent. Child stunting is down to 26.2 percent but still considered a major concern. A country case study of Nepal's two-decade stunting decline attributes progress to investments in nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive sectors: parental education, maternal nutrition, improved sanitation, maternal and newborn care, and poverty reduction. Investments were delivered through community health volunteers, successive health-sector plans, and donor partnerships, with remittances as an enabling factor (Conway et al. 2020). This is an example of a multi-causal achievement rather than the outcome of any one program. In August 2026, a devastating flash flood damaged infrastructure and disrupted livelihoods in Nepal; its longer-term effects have yet to be seen.

Sri Lanka has had the region's lowest score for every reference year, with undernourishment and child mortality both reaching very low levels, bringing its GHI score of 10.2 close to the *low* threshold. Despite this improvement, Sri Lanka was the only new addition to the Global Report on Food Crises' country coverage in 2025, following the impact of Cyclone Ditwah late in the year. This highlights how exposure to weather extremes can drive acute food insecurity even in countries with otherwise improving hunger indicators (FAO et al. 2026c).

West Asia and North Africa

After years of improvement, hunger in West Asia and North Africa is rising again. The region's 2026 GHI score of 12.5, considered *moderate*, is up from 11.9 in 2018, ending a steady decline from 18.1 in 2000. The increase is driven primarily by the prevalence of undernourishment, which has risen from 7.2 percent in 2012 to 10.1 percent in 2026. Today, roughly one in ten people in the region cannot meet minimum dietary energy needs. Child wasting has also edged up to

5.4 percent, considered medium and close to its 2000 level. Child stunting is virtually unchanged, and only child mortality continues to fall. Five countries in the region now have higher GHI scores than they did in 2018. The largest deteriorations occurred in the Syrian Arab Republic (+3.5 points) and Lebanon (+2.2 points), both affected by escalating conflict, whereas Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia experienced increases of less than one point. Together, these trends suggest that conflict has been a particularly important driver of the region's recent reversal, while also being closely linked to economic crises and drought (FAO et al. 2026c).

Yemen remains the region's most severe crisis and is the only country with *alarming* hunger. This designation is provisional, since no undernourishment data were available and no GHI score could be calculated. The available indicators and several reports leave little doubt about the severity of the situation. Nearly one in two children is stunted (47.4 percent), and more than one in six is wasted (16.8 percent), both among the world's highest rates and considered a very high public health concern (UNICEF et al. 2026). In the first countrywide analysis since 2022, the IPC projected 18.1 million people would face high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) between September 2025 and February 2026 (IPC 2025d). In Yemen, economic shocks are reported as the primary driver, themselves strongly linked to the conflict: import restrictions, currency depreciation, and airstrikes restrict movement and raise transport costs (IPC 2025d). Climate-related shocks, including floods and dry conditions, and severe funding shortfalls that have sharply cut humanitarian assistance compound these pressures.

Food insecurity has eased since the end of the Syrian Arab Republic's civil war. Nevertheless, it remains the only country in the region with hunger considered *serious*, and globally it has recorded the most substantial increase in GHI score since 2000, rising 16.7 points to 31.5. Undernourishment has reached a very high rate of 40.8 percent in 2026. Child stunting and wasting rates have improved since 2018, yet both remain high. The protracted impact of conflict, together with severe drought, poor economic conditions, and localized insecurity, continues to drive acute food insecurity (FAO et al. 2026c). Although the number of people facing high levels of acute food insecurity fell by 2.0 million between 2024 and 2025 (FAO et al. 2026c), Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes persist across much of the country as eroded incomes and shrinking assistance constrain food access (FEWS NET 2026d).

In the Gaza Strip, child nutrition deteriorated at "one of the fastest [rates] ever recorded in an urban setting", as described by the Global Report on Food Crises, followed by a recovery that remains partial and precarious (FAO et al. 2026c). In mid-August 2025, Famine (IPC Phase 5) was confirmed in Gaza Governorate, driven by protracted, intense conflict and severe restrictions on supplies entering

the territory. Following the October 2025 ceasefire and improved humanitarian and commercial access, no area was classified in Famine by December (IPC 2025a). The recovery remains fragile and incomplete: more than 1.2 million people, 59 percent of the population, were in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) in April–June 2026, with conditions projected to deteriorate again as funding shortfalls constrain assistance (IPC 2026a). Monitoring food insecurity and malnutrition in the Gaza Strip remains challenging. A child nutrition survey conducted in May–June 2026 was only able to cover parts of the Gaza Strip, with approximately 17 percent of the population outside its sampling frame due to access and security constraints (UNICEF 2026). Separately, FAO notes that conflict has constrained data collection, leaving its Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)-based estimates for Palestine unchanged since 2023 (FAO et al. 2026b).

Lebanon has recorded the second-largest increase in hunger in the region since 2018. Its GHI score worsened from 7.2 in 2018 to 9.4, with undernourishment nearly doubling to 11.1 percent. The food security situation remains tense after dry conditions halved cereal production in 2025 (FAO et al. 2026c). Following the severe escalation in hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah and extensive forced displacement in early March 2026, 1.24 million people, more than 20 percent of the population, were projected to be in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) between April and August 2026 (IPC 2026c).

The escalation of the US-Israel-Iran war since late February 2026 has severe implications for food security in the region and globally, with major shipping disruptions and an effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a critical chokepoint for global trade, energy supplies, and agricultural inputs (FAO 2026c; Hebebrand et al. 2026; Wellesley et al. 2017; World Bank 2026e; see Box 1.1 in GHI). Because GHI scores are based on indicators that predate the recent escalation of the conflict, the Islamic Republic of Iran's 2026 GHI score of 7.2 reflects conditions before the escalation. The score is considered *low* and represents Iran's best performance since 2000. Since the escalation, according to the World Bank, year-on-year food inflation in the country reached approximately 99 percent in February 2026 (World Bank 2026e). Yet there is no systematic measurement of acute food insecurity in Iran: the country falls outside IPC coverage and appears in the GRFC only for displaced populations, without qualifying data (FAO et al. 2026c).

Nonetheless, the region's long-term trajectory shows that substantial reductions in hunger are possible even amid persistent challenges. Iraq entered this series with the region's highest score, 22.9 in 2000, considered *serious*, yet it now stands at a *moderate* 11.9, with child stunting low at 9.4 percent, down from 28.0 percent in 2000. Egypt, at a GHI score of 10.5, is approaching the *low* category, with stunting roughly halved since 2000, though undernourish-

ment has risen from 4.8 to 8.4 percent. Egypt, Iran, Iraq, and Oman have each improved by a point or more in their GHI score since 2018. Iraq's government reports a fourth consecutive year of wheat self-sufficiency, crediting expanded cultivation and favorable rains, even as it acknowledges persistent water scarcity and has cut the price paid for wheat to farmers under budget pressure (Reuters 2026b). Affordability remains a concern in parts of the region: the share of people unable to afford a healthy diet in FAO's Northern Africa grouping rose to 34.8 percent in 2025, equivalent to 96.1 million people (FAO 2026c). The recent deterioration in hunger outcomes is concentrated in the region's conflict-affected countries, while progress has generally continued in countries that have remained relatively stable. Recent events have shown how quickly these conditions can change.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Latin America and the Caribbean has continued to make progress in reducing hunger. The region's 2026 GHI score stands at 7.4, considered *low*, clearly below its score of 13.2 in 2000. All four GHI indicators have improved at the regional level since 2000. Evidence from Peru links reductions in child stunting to drivers such as economic growth, poverty reduction, and the expansion of health services and social protection (Huicho et al. 2020). Furthermore, conditional cash transfer programs have been associated with reductions in child mortality in Brazil, Ecuador, and Mexico (Cavalcanti et al. 2023). However, the regional child stunting rate has increased since 2018, reaching 12.6 percent, with increases recorded in Costa Rica, Haiti, Jamaica, Venezuela, and the region's three largest economies, Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. The region continues to face a double burden of malnutrition, with adult obesity rising even as child stunting persists in some countries (FAO et al. 2026b).

Regional averages conceal a pronounced divide between the Caribbean and mainland Latin America. Undernourishment in the Caribbean is estimated at 16.6 percent in 2025, compared with 4.0 percent in Latin America (FAO et al. 2026b). The Caribbean also has the world's highest cost of a healthy diet, at 6.04 purchasing power parity (PPP) dollars per person per day in 2025. This is double the cost in Northern America and well above the global average of 4.28 PPP dollars. As a consequence, nearly half of the Caribbean population cannot afford a healthy diet (FAO et al. 2026b).

Beyond these food system pressures, climate-related shocks remain a persistent threat to food security. Hurricane Melissa, one of the strongest storms recorded in the Atlantic, affected more than 5 million people across Jamaica, Cuba, and Haiti in 2025 (OCHA 2025b). In Cuba, the latest FAO-WFP Hunger Hotspots analysis finds that the storm

compounded long-standing pressures: prolonged economic contraction, declining domestic food production, limited fiscal space, and a severe energy crisis linked to fuel import restrictions (FAO and WFP 2026). Despite data limitations, the analysis identifies Cuba as at risk of worsening food security in the months ahead.

Haiti's 2026 GHI score of 34.4, considered *serious*, is the highest in the region and has deteriorated sharply since 2018, approaching the *alarming* category. Undernourishment is very high at 51.4 percent, affecting more than half the population and representing the second-highest prevalence globally. Stunting affects more than one in five children, wasting is the highest in the region at 5.0 percent, and child mortality, although roughly halved since 2000, remains the region's highest at 5.3 percent. In 2025, 5.7 million people faced Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above), an increase attributed mostly to gang violence, the protracted economic crisis, and the prolonged impact of weather extremes amid low agricultural production (FAO et al. 2026c). Escalating violence displaced 1.4 million people, and between March and June 2025 displaced people in Port-au-Prince were the only population in the region classified in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5). By September 2025, no population remained in Catastrophe, but acute food insecurity remained critical, particularly among displaced people (FAO et al. 2026c). For March–June 2026, the IPC projected that 5.83 million people would face Crisis or worse levels of acute food security (IPC 2026b). Humanitarian agencies warn that declining international funding is already reducing food, nutrition, and agricultural assistance (FAO and WFP 2026).

National averages can conceal severe food insecurity among vulnerable populations. Colombia has a GHI score of 6.1, considered *low*, down by more than 40 percent since 2000. However, in conflict-affected areas, violence by non-state armed groups has disrupted livelihoods, restricted movement, and limited access to land, markets, services, and food (FEWS NET 2026a). Colombia is also home to one of the world's largest displaced populations, including internally displaced people and Venezuelan refugees and migrants (UNHCR 2026a). Around 6.6 million people required food and nutrition assistance and livelihood support in prioritized areas in 2026, reflecting the combined impacts of conflict, displacement, eroded livelihoods, and the lingering effects of the 2023–2024 El Niño (FAO et al. 2026c). Guatemala continues to record the region's second-highest GHI score, after Haiti. Child stunting remains among the highest in the world, at 44.6 percent. Ethnic disparities are pronounced: Gatica-Domínguez et al. (2019) found that 61.1 percent of Indigenous children were stunted in 2014, compared with 33.9 percent of non-Indigenous children. Such disparities reinforce a long-standing insight from the human security literature: national averages can mask profound differences in food security, because access to food depends on people's entitlements and capabilities at the household

and community level (UNDP 1994; Sen 1981). Further progress in the region therefore runs through precisely those populations, from Indigenous children in Guatemala to the displaced of Colombia and Haiti, whose access to food remains least secure.

The region also offers examples of sustained progress.

Venezuela has recorded the largest reduction in undernourishment in Latin America and the Caribbean since 2018, representing one of the region's most significant recent improvements in food security. This improvement follows the exceptionally high levels of undernourishment reached during the country's economic crisis, when undernourishment rose almost fourfold between 2012–2014 and 2016–2018 (Tapia et al. 2022). While these gains have contributed to an improved GHI score, recent economic pressures may threaten future progress (IMF 2026). Peru has achieved the largest reduction in GHI score since 2000, with improvements across all four GHI indicators over the period. However, substantial disparities in child nutrition persist, with higher rates of child stunting in rural areas (INEI 2026). Guyana has likewise reduced its GHI score at every reference year since 2000, with all four indicators improving since 2018. Progress has not been universal in the region: Bolivia's GHI score has worsened from 12.2 in 2018 to 14.2 in 2026, the region's largest score increase after Haiti's, as undernourishment climbed from 13.6 percent to a medium 19.5 percent.

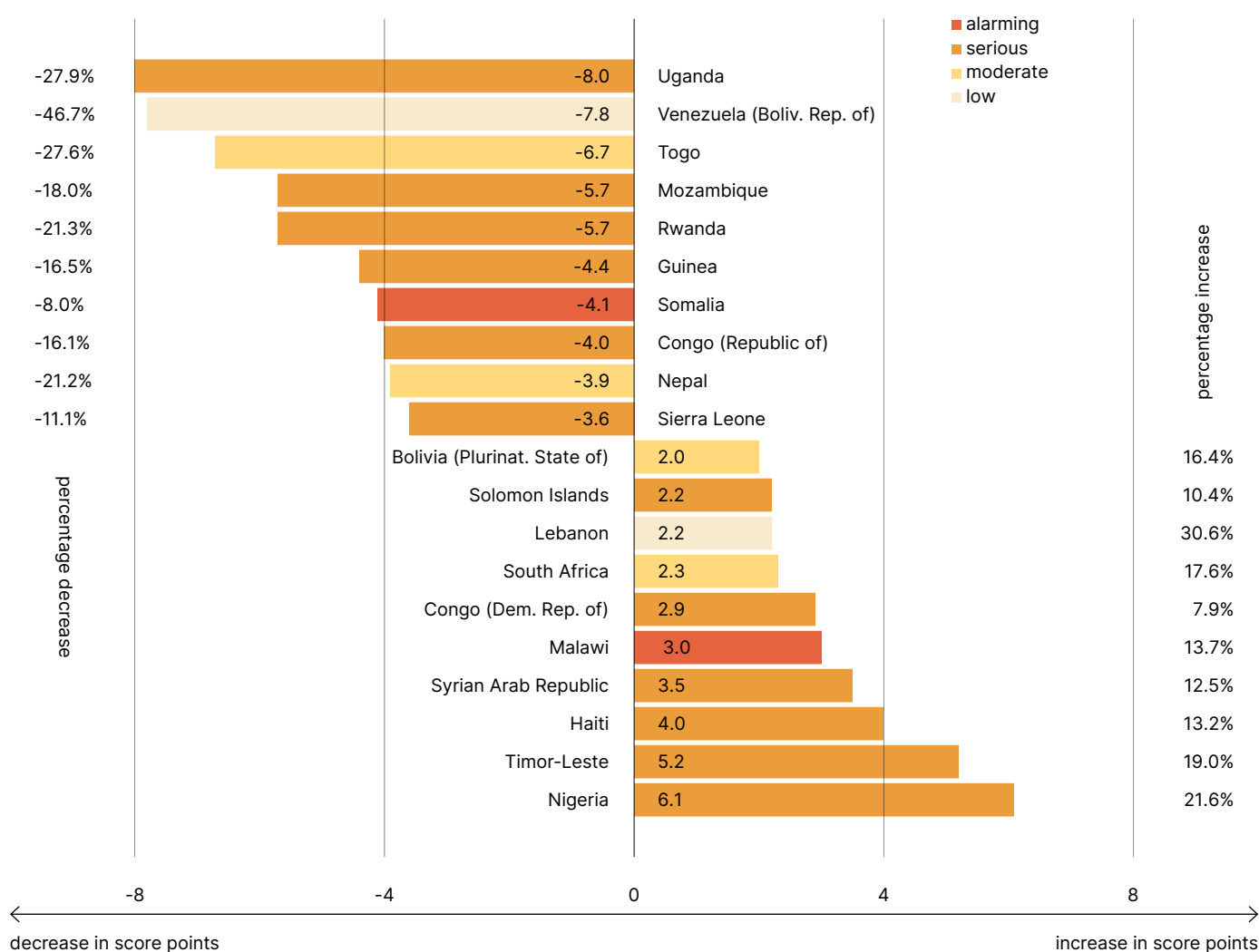
East and Southeast Asia

East and Southeast Asia has made substantial progress in reducing hunger since 2000, although improvements have slowed markedly since 2018.

The regional GHI score stands at 8.1 in 2026, having more than halved between 2000 and 2018 before largely plateauing. The regional average is strongly influenced by China's large population and its *low* GHI score of less than 5, masking substantial differences across the region. While China and Mongolia record *low* scores, five countries remain in the *serious* category, with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPR Korea) being provisionally designated and Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) on the threshold of the *moderate* category. Five of the region's fifteen countries have recorded GHI scores above their 2018 value. The region's remaining hunger burden is concentrated where some form of insecurity is present: armed conflict in Myanmar, political and economic isolation in DPR Korea, and acute exposure to climate shocks and global trade disruptions among the region's island states.

The clearest reversals are concentrated in the Pacific, where Solomon Islands, Fiji, and Papua New Guinea all have higher GHI scores than in 2000. Papua New Guinea

FIGURE 1.4 Highest Change in GHI score between 2018 to 2026



Source: Authors.

Note: Absolute change in score points (bars) and relative change in percentage (% beside the bar). Negative values indicate a falling score, positive values indicate a rising score from 2018 to 2026. Bars are colored in the GHI 2026 severity category of the respective country

has seen little long-term progress in reducing hunger, with its GHI score now back at roughly its 2000 level. Undernourishment is high and rising at 30.5 percent, while child stunting has remained very high, above 44 percent, for the past two decades. Persistent structural constraints include the predominance of subsistence-oriented rural livelihoods, diets heavily dependent on starchy staples, limited access to nutrition education and agricultural extension services, poor access to safe drinking water, and higher rates of undernutrition among the poorest households (Schmidt et al. 2024). Solomon Islands has slipped from the *moderate* to *serious* category since 2000, while Fiji has risen from *low* to *moderate*. The Pacific's unique geography and high exposure to climate change and natural disasters constrain food production and food security (FAO et al. 2024c). Fisheries, a key source of food and income, are increasingly threatened by warming seas, coral bleaching, ocean acidification, and overfishing, with maximum catch potential projected

to decline substantially in parts of the Pacific (FAO et al. 2024c). Growing dependence on imported foods further increases exposure to global market shocks, including those linked to distant conflicts (Brewer et al. 2023).

Timor-Leste once again records the region's highest GHI score (32.5). While child stunting and child mortality have continued to improve in Timor-Leste, undernourishment has risen and child wasting has more than doubled since 2018. These setbacks reflect a broader food security context in which repeated droughts, floods, and food price shocks continue to drive acute food insecurity (IPC 2024; WFP 2026e).

The provisionally designated DPR Korea remains in the *serious* category, while recent data are insufficient to calculate a 2026 GHI score. The underlying indicators point to mixed trends. Child stunting is declining, and child mortality remains low. Trends in undernourishment are difficult

to assess because no estimate more recent than the 2018 reference year is available, when undernourishment was estimated at a very high 47.0 percent, the highest level in the region. WFP reports that agriculture continues to fall short of meeting national food needs because of shortages of arable land, limited access to agricultural equipment and fertilizers, and recurrent climate-related disasters (WFP 2026b). Prolonged political and economic isolation compounds these constraints: the government has reiterated its aim of food self-sufficiency and declined recent offers of food assistance (Brachtendorf 2025; Salmón 2026). United Nations agencies, whose international staff left the country during the pandemic-era border closures, have not yet been able to return. According to the Special Rapporteur, no independent monitoring has been conducted in the country since 2017, making food insecurity difficult to assess and hindering efforts to identify and respond to needs (Salmón 2026).

Myanmar highlights the distinction between chronic hunger trends and acute food crises. Despite the country's current acute food security challenges, its GHI score continued to improve, declining to 14.5 as reductions in child stunting, child wasting, and child mortality more than offset an increase of 1.4 percentage points in the prevalence of undernourishment. The Global Report on Food Crises ranked Myanmar second globally for conflict intensity in 2025, with the March 2025 earthquake, the ongoing economic crisis, and access restrictions further undermining food security (FAO et al. 2026c). WFP projects that more than 12 million people, more than one in five, will face acute food insecurity in 2026 (WFP 2025; UN DESA 2024).

Overall, the region's long-term trajectory has been one of sustained progress in reducing hunger. Since 2000, Myanmar, Cambodia, Mongolia, Lao PDR, and—despite its recent reversal—Timor-Leste have each reduced their GHI scores by more than 20 points, while Indonesia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam have reduced theirs by more than 10 points. Cambodia's experience illustrates how rising household wealth, expanded parental education, improved water and sanitation, and wider access to maternal and child health services such as antenatal care and facility-based deliveries have supported improvements in child nutrition. The same analysis suggests this translation is fragile: progress slowed in a period when food price spikes and recurrent flooding may have muted the conversion of household gains into better child nutrition (Zanello et al. 2016).

Progress in reducing hunger has not always translated into better nutrition. Indonesia and the Philippines have both reduced their GHI scores by more than 10 points since 2000, yet child stunting remains high, at 22.6 and 27.7 percent, respectively. Improving child nutrition increasingly depends not only on sufficient or even affordable food, but on access to healthy and diverse diets, adequate health care, and sanitation.

Europe and Central Asia

After two decades of substantial progress, hunger reduction in Europe and Central Asia has stalled: the region's 2026 GHI score of 5.0, considered *low*, is unchanged from 2018. Only two countries in the region are in the *moderate* category: Tajikistan (12.7) and Ukraine (11.6); the other 24 are classified as *low*, including Slovakia, which was provisionally designated due to missing undernourishment data in all years. Declines in child stunting and child mortality rates compared to 2018 have been offset by increases in undernourishment and child wasting, leaving the regional GHI score unchanged from 2018.

The region's largest setback has occurred in Ukraine, where conflict has reversed progress in hunger reduction. Ukraine's GHI score rose from 9.8 in 2018 to 11.6 in 2026, returning the country to the *moderate* category. The increase was largely attributable to undernourishment, which more than tripled following the war's escalation, and reached 10.8 percent, the highest prevalence of undernourishment in the region. Acute food insecurity rose sharply after the escalation to full-scale war. The estimated number of people facing high levels of acute food insecurity declined between 2023 and 2025. However, the assessments did not cover the same areas and populations each year, making it difficult to determine how much of the decline reflects improved conditions (FAO et al. 2026c). Humanitarian operations are repeatedly disrupted by attacks on distribution sites, vehicles, and other assets (WFP 2026g).

Central Asia's long-term gains are substantial. Tajikistan reduced its GHI score from an *alarming* 39.2 in 2000 to a *moderate* 12.7 in 2026, the region's largest decline. This progress has been accompanied by the government's prioritization of food security in its National Development Strategy 2030, alongside World Bank crisis response support for farmers and maternal and child nutrition (Sevimli and Jungbluth 2022). Similar gains have been observed in Kyrgyzstan, where a decline in child stunting has been attributed primarily to poverty reduction, alongside improvements in maternal nutrition and paternal education. Land and health sector reforms, together with remittance income, created an enabling environment for progress (Wigle et al. 2020).

Overall, these experiences suggest that progress built on poverty reduction and deliberate food and nutrition security policy remains heavily influenced by remittances, trade, and climate conditions that lie largely outside national control (Sevimli and Jungbluth 2022). Climate change is compounding pressures in the region: in 2025, all 23 monitored glaciers in High-Mountain Asia lost mass, with substantial losses across the Tian Shan and Pamir Mountains, while decreased precipitation across Central Asia has contributed to drought conditions and reduced surface runoff (WMO 2026b).

The region's experience shows that deep reductions in hunger can be achieved and, across most of the region, held. The region's main setback is closely linked to conflict: the sole return to *moderate* hunger since 2018 has occurred in Ukraine, a country at war, while the durability of Central Asia's progress is exposed both to the war's economic transmission through trade and remittances and to mounting climate pressure (IMF 2022; WMO 2026b).

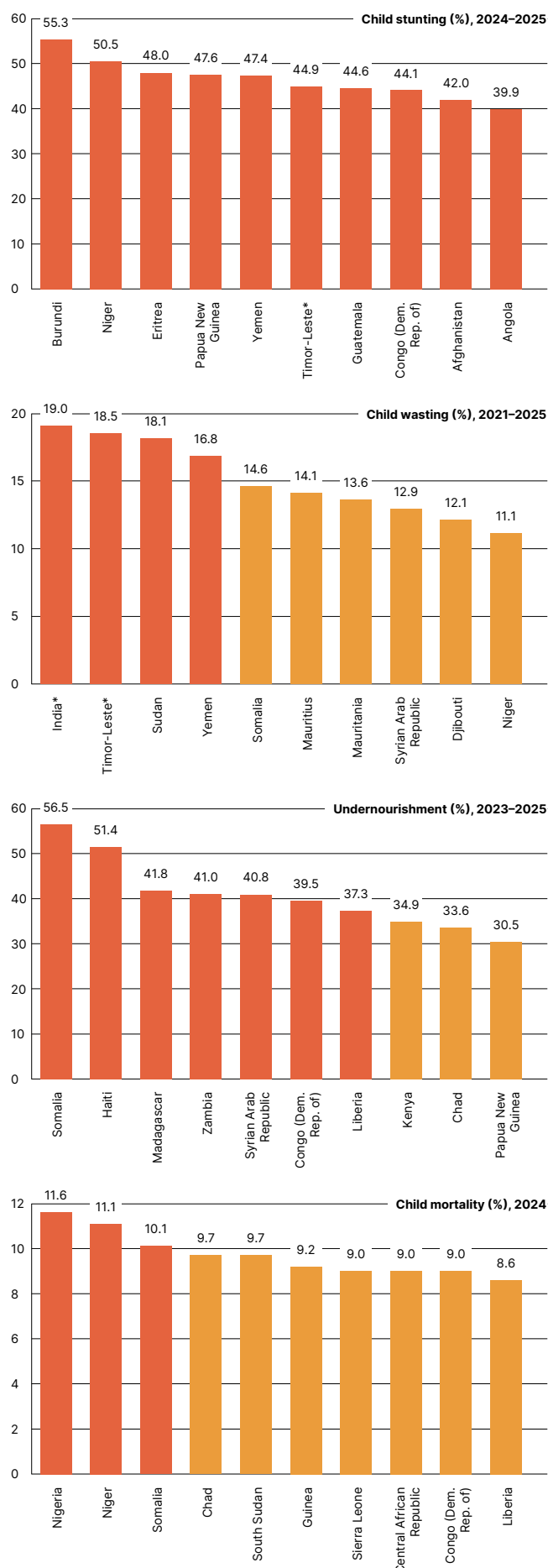
Lasting Gains Require a Broader View of Security

The overall substantial progress made in reducing hunger between 2000 and 2018 shows how much can be accomplished in less than two decades. Over that period, the global GHI score fell by more than one third, moving from *serious* to *moderate*. In 2026, progress has not merely stalled: for the first time in this series, the global GHI score has increased, and in many countries hunger levels exceed those recorded in 2018. These trends suggest that the world is moving further away from achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2, which aims to end hunger, improve nutrition, achieve food security, and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030.

The central message of the 2026 GHI is clear: progress against hunger can no longer be taken for granted. In many countries, particularly those affected by conflict, decades of gains are increasingly at risk of being reversed. Regaining momentum and avoiding further losses will demand action on the conditions driving hunger today: resolving and preventing conflict, sustaining humanitarian and development financing, reaching the displaced and marginalized populations that national averages conceal, and keeping the systems that measure hunger operating where needs are greatest.

Yet continued progress in a number of countries shows that gains remain possible even in difficult circumstances. The central lesson of the 2026 GHI is that hunger and insecurity are increasingly intertwined: where conflict, displacement, economic stress, and climate shocks converge, progress against hunger is fragile; where they are prevented or effectively managed, gains can endure. Protecting those gains and ensuring the right to food for all requires a broader understanding of security, because there can be no lasting security without food security.

FIGURE 1.5 Where The Indicators Of Hunger Are The Highest



Source: Authors (see Appendix A for data sources)

■ = High ■ = Very high * = survey values from 2026

BOX 1.1 What the US–Israel–Iran War Reveals about Global Food Systems and How Crises Turn into Hunger

The US–Israel–Iran war is the latest major global shock to food systems, following the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia–Ukraine war. Each has run a similar course: global markets absorb the disruption, and prices eventually settle, while the hunger left in its wake recedes far more slowly, and often not at all. The GHI has repeatedly demonstrated how recurring and overlapping crises erode resilience and response capacity in low- and middle-income countries, leaving vulnerable populations increasingly exposed to hunger and malnutrition, while high-income countries usually buffer the shock (von Grebmer et al. 2023).

Projections warn that already high levels of hunger may increase substantially. Acute hunger is estimated to rise by 45 million people (WFP 2026h), and by 2030, 8 to 19 million more people could be chronically undernourished than in a scenario without the war (FAO et al. 2026b). As the war makes global headlines, the mechanisms through which geopolitical shocks affect food security and nutrition are less apparent. This box examines how disruptions to trade, energy, fertilizer, prices, livelihoods, response capacity, and fiscal space can translate into longer-term hunger and malnutrition.

In an interconnected global economy, the consequences of conflicts can extend beyond the countries directly involved. The immediate damage is regional and severe. More than 4 million people have been displaced, and water desalination plants—protected under international humanitarian law—were damaged (UNHCR 2026b; IOM 2026; Geneva Water Hub 2026). The shock also ripples outward: the Strait of Hormuz blockade triggered immediate spikes in global energy and fertilizer prices that threaten food availability and household purchasing power worldwide (FAO 2026c). Approximately one-third of global seaborne fertilizer trade transits the Strait (UNCTAD 2026). The blockade is driving a projected 60 percent urea price surge in 2026, with fertilizer affordability at its lowest level since mid-2022 (Baffes and Temaj 2026). Any major reduction in fertilizer availability may represent an upstream threat to population-level nutrition and may increase the risk of premature death (Nasari et al. 2026).

The effects of the same shock vary widely depending on structural dependencies and countries' capacity to absorb them. Countries most dependent on fertilizer exports from the Gulf already carry disproportionately high burdens of undernutrition (Nasari et al. 2026). Graphic 1.6 shows that countries highly exposed to the shock through economic and fiscal pressures, trade, fuel and fertilizer dependence, or remittance and financial flows are often already experiencing high humanitarian vulnerability (ACAPS 2026). Countries with *serious* or *alarming* GHI scores are, with few exceptions, highly exposed. A country's capacity to absorb shocks depends in part on the fiscal space available to protect households and infrastructure, and on compounding pressures such as debt, conflict, displacement, and climate extremes

(Algieri et al. 2026; ACAPS 2026). Exposure to the current shock may also persist after hostilities end, as markets for key commodities and agricultural inputs, such as fertilizers, may take months to normalize. Continued supply constraints could affect planting seasons and crop yields (Vos 2026). Across Africa, smallholder farmers often operate on tight margins, leaving little room to absorb increases in fertilizer and energy prices (FAO 2026c).

Global indices can mask the price pressures households continue to face, a disconnect explaining why the crisis persists long after it leaves the headlines. The FAO Food Price Index has reflected the shock to some extent, with increases in vegetable oil and cereal subindices, and local prices surging amid already high inflation (FAO 2026b). Maize prices rose by about 15 percent in Ethiopia, bringing the year-on-year increase to 60 percent, while prices across markets in South Sudan increased by 7 to 25 percent (Algieri et al. 2026; AGRA 2026; Hinz et al. 2026). Even when global food price indices stabilize, local consumer prices in import-dependent countries tend to decline only slowly. The peak of the global price crisis is expected in late 2026 to early 2027, as harvests decline and transport and input costs stay high (FAO 2026f; Button 2026).

Rising food prices are associated with measurable increases in food insecurity, child undernutrition, and child mortality that can outlast the immediate shock. A 10 percent increase in food prices is associated with a 3.5 percent rise in moderate or severe food insecurity and an increase of up to 6.1 percent in severe wasting (FAO et al. 2025). A one-percentage-point food price hike correlates with higher under-five child mortality within the same quarter (Usman et al. 2025). In 2008, amid a global food price crisis, the number of people experiencing permanent damage due to childhood malnutrition rose by 44 million (World Bank and IMF 2009), while the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia–Ukraine war have added 119 million more people to long-term undernourishment projections for 2030 compared with a scenario without the two shocks (FAO et al. 2023).

One of the first ways households cope with rising food prices is by reducing consumption of nutrient-rich foods, often with lifelong consequences for child growth and development. A 5 percent real food price surge during pregnancy is associated with a 1.6 percent increase in child stunting risk (Headey and Ruel 2023). In Bangladesh, food price inflation was associated with increased risks of child stunting and poorer growth (Sadiqueen et al. 2024). Indonesia shows the full arc: when rice prices soared during the 1997–1998 Asian Financial Crisis, stunting prevalence rose by 3.5 percentage points, with urban children and the children of mothers with little education worst affected; longitudinal tracking found the same individuals remained shorter as adults and were more likely to be obese (Elmira and Qaim 2026). The consequences of the current disruption may thus

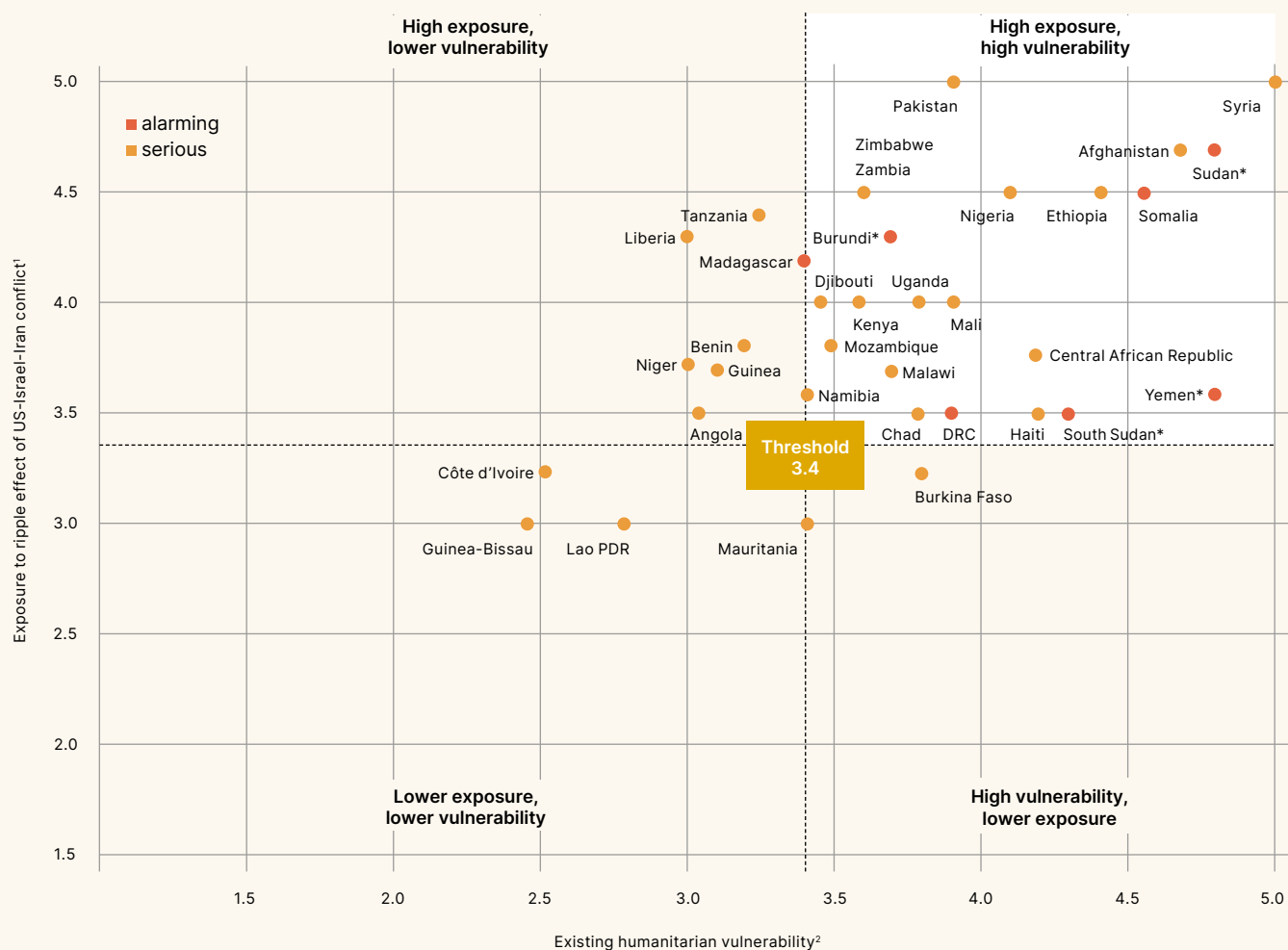
remain visible in adult health decades later. The question is how to interrupt this ripple effect before it translates into hunger—and how to make food systems better able to withstand the next shock.

Limiting the immediate impacts of a crisis is essential, but action on food and nutrition cannot wait until the crisis consequences are fully visible. As declines in household prices lag declines in global prices and assistance is often mobilized only once conditions deteriorate, it can arrive after the damage is done, with pregnant women and young children particularly vulnerable. Because early-life damage can be irreversible, protecting nutrition during pregnancy and the first two years of life cannot wait until conditions worsen. Financing, for example through national safety nets and humanitarian cash or voucher assistance, should therefore be triggered by forecasts rather than confirmation. Better crisis

response alone will not reduce exposure to the next shock. The current crisis also shows the risks created by heavy dependence on imported agricultural inputs, energy, and concentrated trade routes. Reducing these dependencies requires more diverse sources of essential inputs and stronger domestic and regional production and supply systems.

Each of the last shocks has been treated as an exception, yet the growing frequency and overlap of crises suggest that such disruptions may become more common. Their cumulative effects expose vulnerabilities across food systems and show why early action to prevent lasting harm must go hand in hand with efforts to make food systems more resilient and sustainable. Together, these measures can reduce exposure to future shocks, but they cannot substitute for diplomatic efforts to prevent and resolve the conflicts that set these shocks in motion.

FIGURE 1.6 Countries With *Serious* Or *Alarming* GHI Scores Are The Most Exposed And The Least Able To Absorb The Shock



Source: Adapted from ACAPS (2026), Global: Impacts of the conflict in the Middle East, Figure 1 / Annex 2. GHI severity: GHI 2026 scores; The threshold of 3.4 identifies countries that are highly exposed and vulnerable; derived from the underlying scales.

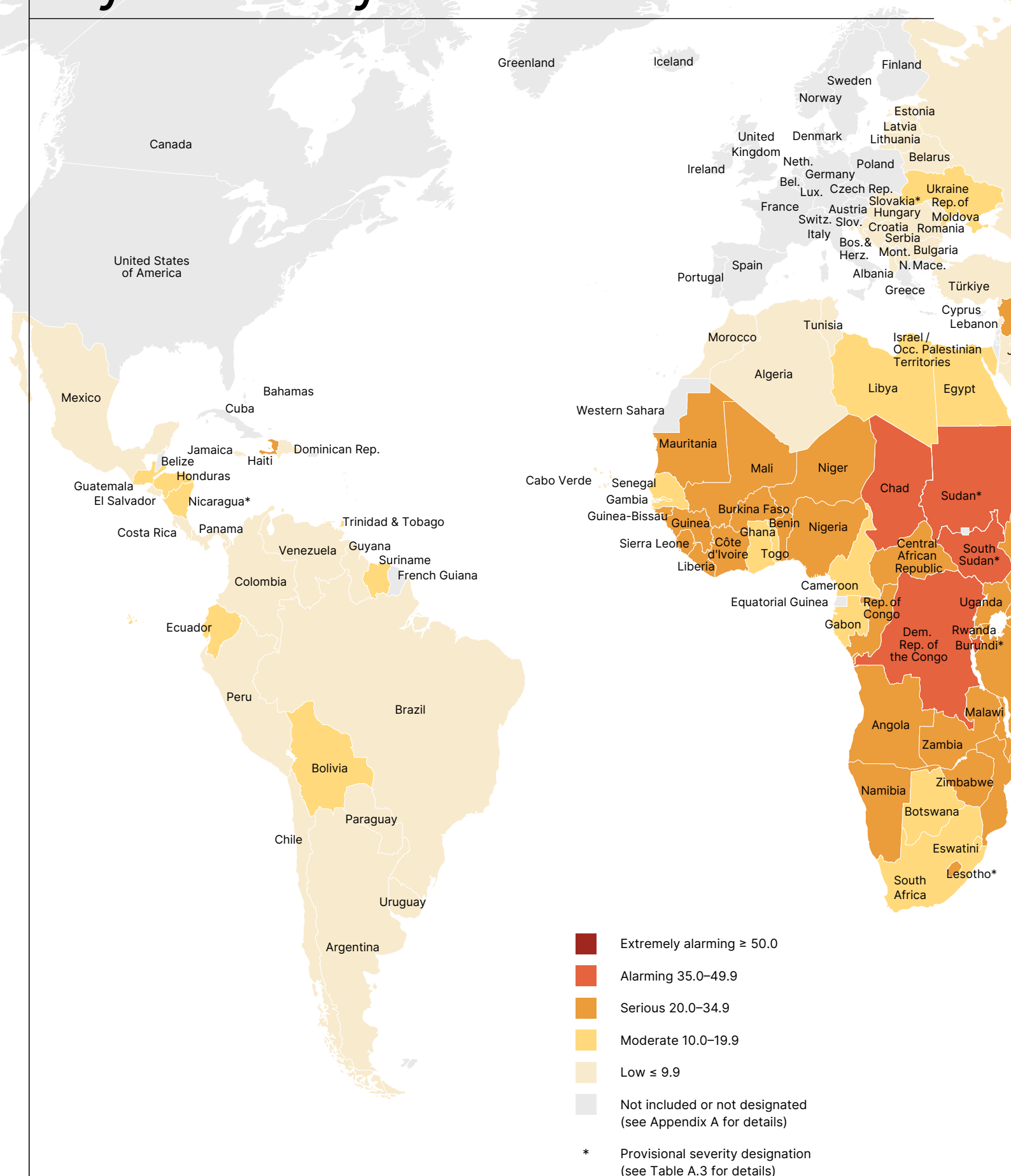
¹ Originally 'Strongest exposure pathway'; included pathways: trade/fuel/fertilizer, economic/fiscal, remittance/financial;

² Originally 'Humanitarian baseline vulnerability' For nine GHI countries, ACAPS data is missing: Congo, Rep., India, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Solomon Islands, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste, Korea (DPR)* and Lesotho*

* countries with provisional GHI designation.

FIGURE 1.7

FIGURE 1.7 2026 Global Hunger Index by Severity



Note: For the 2026 GHI, data on the proportion of undernourished are for 2023–2025; data on child wasting are for the latest year in the period 2021–2025 for which data are available; data on child stunting are for 2024–2025 and data on child mortality are for 2024. GHI scores were not calculated for countries for which data were not available and for countries that did not meet the GHI inclusion criteria; see Appendix A for details.

Recommended citation: Welthungerhilfe (WHH), Helvetas, and, Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV), and Helvetas. 2026. "Figure 1.7: 2026 Global Hunger Index by Severity." Map in *2026 Global Hunger Index: No Security Without Food Security*. Bonn: Welthungerhilfe; Bochum: Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict; Zürich: Helvetas.

02



At a market in Jhapa, Nepal, Jitni Devi Mandal loads cucumbers grown along the Kankai River onto a truck. Her harvest is one link in a wider system: from local trade to global markets, secure food supplies depend on reliable connections between producers and consumers.

No Security Without Food Security? Regional Perspectives

The relationship between food security and security plays out differently across the world. The following essays bring together perspectives from different regions, illustrating how conflict, climate change, inequality, geopolitical tensions, and disruptions to food systems interact in distinct regional contexts.

Renewed militarization, geopolitical tensions, and intensifying power politics are placing state-centered notions of security increasingly at the forefront of political agendas. Yet today's interconnected crises expose the limits of viewing security primarily through this lens. Armed conflict, climate change, environmental degradation, economic shocks, inequality, and forced displacement often reinforce one another in ways that transcend traditional policy boundaries.

Food security lies at the intersection of many of these dynamics. Conflict remains one of the most destructive drivers of hunger, disrupting food production, destroying livelihoods, and displacing millions of people. At the same time, food insecurity can deepen vulnerabilities and increase pressure on societies and institutions, demonstrating that security depends not only on the absence of conflict but also on people's ability to access adequate food and sustain their livelihoods.

Recognizing these interconnections, the 2026 Global Hunger Index argues that food security is not only shaped by peace and stability but is itself an integral component of a broader concept of security.

To explore what this means in practice, the following essays examine what "No Security Without Food Security" means in different regional contexts. Together, the essay authors explore how the relationship between food security and security differs across the world, shaped by distinct political, environmental, and socioeconomic realities.

The views expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Global Hunger Index (GHI), its partner organizations, or the authors' affiliated institutions.



Food and Human Security in an Age of Polycrisis – A Latin American Perspective

Global military expenditures to ensure security continue to reach record levels, yet hundreds of millions of people still experience hunger (Liang et al. 2026; FAO et al. 2026b). This contrast raises a deceptively simple question: What security, and for whom?

From a Latin American perspective, this question has particular resonance. The region has long grappled with competing understandings of security: one centered on protecting the state, the other on protecting people. Despite producing enough food to feed its populations and supplying agricultural commodities to global markets, millions continue to experience food insecurity because of inequality, social exclusion, and unequal access to land, resources, and opportunities (Salazar and Muñoz 2019; FAO et al. 2024b). This paradox illustrates a broader global challenge: Security cannot be measured solely by military strength if people's most basic needs remain unmet.

In 1994, following decades of Cold War rivalry, the Human Development Report introduced the concept of human security, offering an alternative perspective (UNDP 1994). It shifted the focus of security from investing in arms to investing in human development, arguing that true security means enabling people to live free from fear, free from want, and with dignity. Three decades later, this vision remains partially realized. Although the number of people experiencing hunger declined modestly to an estimated 645 million in 2025, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO et al. 2026b), global military expenditure reached US\$2.887 trillion in 2025, marking the eleventh consecutive year of growth and the highest global military burden since 2009 (Liang et al. 2026). As geopolitical rivalry once again dominates international politics, the persistence of hunger reminds us that lasting security cannot be achieved if people

lack reliable access to food, livelihoods, and the resources they need to live with dignity.

Food Security and Structural Inequality

The 1994 Human Development Report identified seven interconnected dimensions of human security: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political security (UNDP 1994). Food security is particularly salient because hunger rarely exists in isolation from social, environmental, and political events. It can undermine people's ability to earn a living, maintain their health, and participate fully in social and political life (FAO et al. 2024a; Pecorari and Cuesta 2023). Food deprivation marks the point at which human insecurity becomes most immediate and visibly linked to structural inequality.

This understanding was anticipated by Amartya Sen's entitlement approach (Sen 1981), which demonstrated that famine is not primarily caused by food shortages but by people's inability to access food. Contemporary famines and large-scale food crises are rarely the result of scarcity alone; they are amplified by political decisions, institutional failures, and mechanisms of social exclusion. The consequences are especially pronounced among people already facing marginalization because of poverty, gender, ethnicity, or geographic location.

From a human security perspective, food systems can be seen as structures of power that determine access to food, distribute risks unevenly, and often exclude marginalized groups. Dependence on imports and agricultural inputs, exposure to volatile global markets, and limited capacity to absorb shocks create vulnerabilities that disproportionately affect poor households, rural communities, and women (FSIN and GNAFC 2024).



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Food insecurity therefore reflects political choices as much as agricultural production.

Although the region is a major agricultural exporter capable of feeding far more than its own populations, chronic malnutrition persists. Guatemala illustrates this paradox particularly well. An estimated 44.6 percent of children under five are affected by stunting, one of the highest prevalence rates in Latin America (see Appendix B, GHI 2026). Moreover, stunting is marked by pronounced subnational inequalities, with predominantly Indigenous and rural regions experiencing substantially higher prevalence than the national average (Gatica-Domínguez et al. 2019). In contexts where food insecurity intersects with historical exclusion, unequal access to healthcare and productive resources, and persistent gender inequality, Indigenous and rural women bear a disproportionate share of this burden (FAO 2025b). The region demonstrates Amartya Sen's observation that people often starve, not because there is no food but because they lack the socioeconomic entitlements to access it (Sen 1981).

Today, Latin America continues to demonstrate what is possible with a human-security approach. Deep inequalities, violence, climate-related shocks, and economic volatility still undermine food security for millions (FAO 2025c). At the same time, the region has generated important policy lessons, as reducing hunger requires more than increasing food production. Conditional cash transfer programs pioneered in Latin America, such as Bolsa Família in Brazil and Progres/Oportunidades/Prospera in Mexico, have shown the importance of social protection in improving food access and dietary diversity. By combining income support with investments in health and education, such programs have sought to address longer-term dimensions of poverty and social inequality (Stampini et al. 2025). Latin America has become a global leader in the legal recognition of the right to adequate food, with at least 15 countries explicitly enshrining the right in their constitutions (FAO 2020). Together with the progressive recognition of the right to food, these experiences demonstrate that rights-based social protection is an essential component of both food security and human security.

"Security cannot be measured solely by military strength if people's most basic needs remain unmet."

Shift toward Human Security

Latin America's own history illustrates why a broader understanding of security matters. For decades, the National Security Doctrine, promoted throughout Latin America during the Cold War, framed security in terms of protecting the state against perceived internal and external threats (Buitrago 2003; de León-Escribano 2010). Within this framework, hunger and poverty were generally treated as social and development concerns rather than as security concerns. The democratic transitions of the 1980s and 1990s were accompanied by broader debates about security and development. As military rule receded across much of the region, greater attention was paid to issues such as poverty, inequality, governance, and citizen well-being. These shifts helped create space for human-security approaches that viewed social exclusion and unequal access to opportunities as important challenges to long-term stability (de León-Escribano 2013).

What Security and for Whom?

The resurgence of security as a predominant concern on the global political agenda, marked by military rearmament, geopolitical rivalry, and escalating conflicts, has not been accompanied by a decline in global hunger. On the contrary, the progress toward Zero Hunger stagnates. This reality compels us to return to the fundamental question posed at the outset of this essay: What security, and for whom?

Latin America's experience demonstrates that lasting security cannot be achieved through military strength alone. Societies become more secure when they reduce inequality, strengthen resilient food systems, and ensure that everyone has access to adequate food. Food security and human security are therefore not competing priorities but mutually reinforcing objectives.

As long as considerable numbers of people continue to be deprived of the fundamental resources necessary to live with dignity, no society can be regarded as genuinely secure. The true measure of security is more than the capacity to defend territory; it is the ability to ensure that people can live free from fear, free from want, and with dignity.

Security Dynamics and Food Insecurity in the Sahel

Food and nutrition security is particularly fragile in the Sahel region as it faces severe climatic conditions and an entanglement of economic, health, and security crises (Olivier de Sardan 2023). This fragility is reflected in worsening food insecurity across the region. Over the past decade, the prevalence of severe food insecurity increased markedly in Western Africa, based on FAO's regional grouping, from 11.2 percent to 19.6 percent (FAO et al. 2026b). The Cadre Harmonisé estimates that 47.4 million people, or 11.8 percent of the population across 15 countries, were facing high levels of acute food insecurity by mid-2025 (CILSS et al. 2025). Food insecurity hotspots are concentrated in areas such as the tri-border zone between Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger and the Lake Chad Basin, which are also the territories highly affected by insecurity (CILSS and FSIN 2025).

The close geographical overlap between areas affected by food insecurity and those affected by broader insecurity illustrates the interconnected nature of these two challenges. In the Sahel, this relationship is not linear but circular: food insecurity contributes to insecurity, while insecurity further aggravates food insecurity. Understanding and breaking this vicious cycle is therefore essential for achieving both regional stability and lasting food security.

Recurring droughts and rainfall variability since the 1970s have contributed to persistent food insecurity across many Sahelian communities (IPCC 2021).

Food Insecurity can become a contributing factor to insecurity, particularly where it interacts with existing social, economic and political pressures (OECD 2022). Climate change can reinforce these pressures by affecting the natural resources on

which agricultural and pastoral livelihoods depend and increasing competition over their use (Tarif 2022).

Food Insecurity as a Driver of Insecurity

For many farmers, the expansion of cultivated areas has become an important strategy (in the absence of innovation and transformative agricultural policies and practices) to increase agricultural production in a context of rapid population growth. In parts of the Sahel, agricultural extensification has expanded cultivation into pastoral areas and livestock corridors, while growing land pressure has shortened or eliminated fallow periods (Robert 2010). In parts of Burkina Faso and Niger, for example, changing livelihood strategies in response to drought have brought farming and pastoral activities into closer competition for land and water resources, increasing tensions and, in some contexts, the risk of conflict (Tarif 2022).

These dynamics have generated another form of insecurity: land insecurity linked both to the loss of land and to growing conflicts over land. In turn, these conflicts, together with recurring food deficits, have forced many households to deplete their productive assets, deepening poverty and increasing vulnerability.

Persistent poverty has created fertile ground for the spread of insecurity in recent years in the Sahel. Several factors have contributed to the spread of insecurity, including poor political and economic governance, weak states, and the rise of violent extremist movements. Those recruited by non-state armed groups are overwhelmingly rural young people with few prospects. As recent studies by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) and United Nations Development



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Programme (UNDP) highlight, motivations for joining armed groups are not solely ideological (UNDP 2023). For many, economic marginalization and limited livelihood opportunities are important factors shaping recruitment (Thérout-Bénoni et al. 2016).

How Insecurity Deepens Food Insecurity

Once insecurity becomes entrenched, the relationship reverses. Insecurity—whether linked to communal conflicts, armed groups, or state forces—deeply disrupts food systems. It restricts access to agricultural land, limits the mobility of pastoralists, disorganizes local markets, and disrupts supply chains. In addition, livestock theft, including cattle rustling linked to armed groups, and the taxes imposed by such groups on populations living in areas under their influence further aggravate the situation (Assanvo 2019; UNODC 2024).

Beyond the loss of productive assets suffered by farmers and pastoralists, insecurity also constrains humanitarian access and increases the risk of high levels of malnutrition, particularly among children and pregnant and lactating women (UNICEF 2024).

These measures disrupt regional trade and undermine the complementarities between countries, which are essential elements of the region's food security (CILSS 2026).

The Sahel therefore faces multiple, intertwined forms of insecurity that mutually reinforce one another.

Breaking the Vicious Cycle

Discussions within the framework of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA), co-led by the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC/OECD) and CILSS under the auspices of ECOWAS and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), have highlighted the need to move beyond the current response paradigm (RPCA 2026). A new approach is needed that places food security at the center of the political agenda as a pillar of regional security. In this context, the humanitarian-development-peace nexus provides an important framework for addressing immediate needs while simultaneously strengthening resilience, livelihoods, and peacebuilding efforts. Reversing current trends will require significant investments in resilient food systems, rural infrastructure, agricultural productivity, education, and decent employment oppor-

“Insecurity—whether linked to communal conflicts, armed groups, or state forces—deeply disrupts food systems.”

This vicious cycle also undermines regional economic security. Indeed, the political fragmentation currently observed in the Sahel and the decline of economic integration can partly be attributed to insecurity. The withdrawal of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), after accusing the bloc of failing to support their fight against insecurity, has deepened regional political and economic fragmentation (Asadu 2024; OECD 2025a, OECD 2025b). Political tensions between Sahelian and coastal countries have led to restrictions on pastoral mobility—essential for pastoralists' food security—as well as trade disruptions caused by export bans on food products.

tunities for young people. Such investments can strengthen livelihoods, reduce structural vulnerabilities, and diminish the appeal of armed groups (UNDP 2023).

At the regional level, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and Chad have committed to accelerating sustainable irrigated agriculture as part of efforts to advance food and nutrition sovereignty and strengthen the resilience of food systems, through the 2025 Dakar+10 Declaration (World Bank 2025b). These commitments reflect a growing recognition that strengthening domestic food systems is not only an economic priority but also an investment in resilience and stability.

Global Shocks, Regional Consequences: Food Security and Stability in the Horn of Africa

The disruptions to trade unfolding in the Strait of Hormuz have rippled through the Horn of Africa (HoA)—here comprising Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda—further eroding the region's already fragile baseline of stability and food security. Following the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia–Ukraine war, this latest shock is not the primary driver of food insecurity or instability in the region.

Insecurity and instability have long shaped the development trajectory in the region, stretching from the famines in Ethiopia and Somalia in the 1980s and 1990s to the war-related hunger currently unfolding in Sudan. Crises originating in distant places are often transmitted through global markets and supply chains, placing additional pressure on regional food systems, vulnerable economies, and already strained governance structures. The Strait of Hormuz disruption is thus merely the latest entry in a long ledger, one that underscores a longstanding policy dilemma in the region, in which the relationship between food insecurity and instability perpetuates a reciprocal dynamic. Food insecurity can aggravate political instability and conflict, while insecurity further disrupts food production, markets, and access to food.

As the US–Israel–Iran war unfolded, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and UNDP cautioned in a joint brief that while the world focuses on oil and gas, fertiliser shortages pose a more urgent risk to African economies. (AfDB et al. 2026). Against a backdrop of protracted conflict, five consecutive years of worsening acute food insecurity through 2024, and dependence on imported food and agricultural inputs (FSIN and GNAFC 2024), the trade disruption is not an exceptional geopolitical event or an isolated challenge, but

a structural reality best understood as a stress test of the region's food security and political stability.

Food Systems as the Transmission Mechanism

To understand how these external disruptions translate into food insecurity, it is necessary to examine the structure of the region's food system.

Food systems in the Horn of Africa are closely connected to the Middle East through trade in food and agricultural inputs. Ethiopia and Kenya rank among Africa's largest fertilizer importers (Ecofin Agency 2025); together with Sudan, they source fertilizers from suppliers across North Africa and the Gulf, including Egypt, Oman, and Saudi Arabia (World Bank 2026d).

At the same time, HoA countries export meat, pulses, dried and fresh fruits to Middle Eastern markets (World Bank 2026c). The region's exposure therefore extends beyond imports: the current conflict has disrupted Kenyan tea shipments through the Strait of Hormuz and related Red Sea routes, while airspace closures and higher freight costs have sharply curtailed meat exports to Middle Eastern markets (Nzilani 2026; Hlatshwayo 2026). By reducing incomes for farmers, pastoralists, and traders, as well as foreign-exchange earnings for affected countries, these disruptions can further weaken households' purchasing power and countries' capacity to finance essential imports.

Structural Vulnerabilities

The ripple effects of the current crisis are reaching a region already facing multiple overlapping vulnerabilities, including conflict,



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displacement, climate stress, and restricted humanitarian access across Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, and South Sudan (OCHA 2026b; Gomo 2026). For Sudan, disrupted shipping routes added weeks to delivery times and increased the cost of humanitarian food supplies (WFP 2026c). These external pressures compounded conflict-related disruptions within the country, where fighting continued to restrict access to fields and inputs and limit agricultural production across Greater Darfur and Greater Kordofan (IPC 2026f).

reduce excessive external dependency and strengthen the resilience of regional food systems, future geopolitical crises, wherever they originate, are likely to worsen food insecurity and heighten existing risks to political stability and security across the Horn of Africa.

Increasingly, governments in the Horn of Africa are moving beyond crisis response toward structural interventions designed to strengthen domestic stability and address persistent external shocks. Several recent initiatives illustrate this shift.

“...while the world focuses on oil and gas, fertilizer shortages pose a more urgent risk to African economies.”

Ethiopia faces a different but related convergence of pressures. Ongoing conflict in Amhara and parts of Tigray continues to disrupt livelihoods (WFP 2026i). While southern and southeastern areas continue to face the effects of the severe 2020–2022 drought, marked by five consecutive below-average rainy seasons through the October–December 2022 season (FEWS NET 2023a). Recent fuel shortages have added another layer of strain, increasing transport constraints and disrupting market activity (FEWS NET 2026b). In Somalia, these external pressures are being absorbed by households already weakened by drought, insecurity, displacement, and declining humanitarian assistance, with higher fuel, transport, and imported food prices reducing what families can afford (IPC 2026d). Kenya illustrates yet another pathway: higher fuel and commodity prices have particularly affected urban households (World Bank 2026f) and spilled into public discontent, with fuel price increases triggering a nationwide public transport strike and protests (Reuters 2026a).

A Way Forward

While the crisis triggered by the US–Israel–Iran war will eventually come to some form of resolution, the structural vulnerabilities it has laid bare may not. Unless governments

In Ethiopia, investments in domestic fertilizer production, agricultural transformation, and industrial development are intended to reduce dependence on imported inputs and strengthen economic self-reliance (Addis Standard 2026). Elsewhere, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania are discussing a joint regional refinery intended to reduce East Africa’s dependence on imported refined fuel and exposure to global supply shocks (Government of Kenya 2026; Reuters 2026c).

These national efforts must now be matched by regional contingency planning, coordinated through institutions such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the East African Community. Regional preparedness should encompass the prepositioning of essential agricultural supplies and strengthening of logistics capacity at strategic ports such as Djibouti and Mombasa. It should also safeguard agricultural production in key food-producing regions such as Kordofan, Darfur, Tigray, and Lower Shabelle. Early warning systems, including those of the African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the East African Community (EAC), should be linked to trade policies under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), so shocks trigger action before food insecurity worsens.

Investing in Climate Security: Protecting Asia's Food Systems and Livelihoods

Asia is highly exposed to climate-driven food insecurity, yet adaptation finance flows to the region remain inadequate relative to the scale of its exposure and needs.

The region is home to an estimated 292 million people who are facing chronic hunger in 2025 (FAO et al. 2026b). Among children under five, Asia accounts for a large portion of the global burden, with a wasting rate of 8.9 percent, against the 6.7 percent global average, and a stunting rate of 21.8 percent, heavily driven by South Asia (Global Nutrition Report 2026).

Climate change is accelerating these pressures on food security, reducing food production, undermining livelihoods, increasing poverty, driving migration, and weakening the resilience of rural communities. Without increased investment in adaptation, these risks will continue to grow.

Climate Change Is Placing Asia's Food Systems under Growing Pressure

Over the last few years, record-breaking floods, storms, and droughts have hit the region. China's Yangtze River basin—which produces about 70 percent of the country's rice—was hit by severe floods in 2020 (Wang et al. 2022) and then experienced historic drought conditions just two years later (Yu et al. 2024). Pakistan's 2022 floods left a third of the country under water and affected 33 million people (UN Pakistan 2022). In 2024, tropical cyclone Yagi destroyed crops in Viet Nam and southern China (UN Viet Nam 2024). In late 2025, a wave of cyclones and monsoon rains triggered catastrophic flooding and landslides across Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand (OCHA 2025a). Overall, these and other disasters have contributed to declines in food production, food shortages,

and high food prices, heightening food insecurity, and increasing pressure on livelihoods.

These pressures are expected to intensify. The World Meteorological Organization finds that Asia is warming nearly twice as fast as the global average. Oceans are warming, glaciers are retreating, and extreme heat, drought, and flooding are becoming more frequent. Sea-level rise is encroaching on fertile deltas and coastal food production areas (WMO 2025). The implications for food production are severe. For example, studies of tropical rice systems have found that every 1°C rise in average nighttime temperatures during the dry season corresponds with a 10 percent yield loss (Peng et al. 2004). Yields decline even further when seawater intrusion, flooding, and storm damage are layered on top (Schneider and Asch 2020).

Asia's food systems are especially vulnerable due to their producer demographics. The region is home to nearly three-quarters of the world's smallholder farmers, who contribute about 60 percent of its agricultural production (Joshi 2024). Most rely on rain-fed agriculture, lack crop insurance, and have little capital to absorb extreme weather damage (Raghavan et al. 2019; ASEAN 2025a, ASEAN 2025b). A single shock can trigger severe income loss, push households into hunger and poverty, drive migration that erodes farming communities and over time erode community resilience (Upadhyay 2024; Kalantari et al. 2024).

Fisherfolk face the same pressures. In parts of Asia, aquatic foods provide up to 50 percent of dietary protein (FAO 2022c). An estimated 52.7 million people in Asia were employed in the primary fisheries and aquaculture sector—representing 85 percent of the world total (FAO 2024b). Now, warming seas and acidification, along with increasing levels of illegal, unreported, and unregulated



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fishing, are shrinking fish stocks. Storms are making fishing more dangerous and less viable. At the same time, inland waters are drying up or becoming more polluted (FAO 2024b). The livelihoods of coastal communities and the protein security of millions are increasingly precarious.

These impacts on production are coupled with food price inflation. In Asia, the median food price inflation rose from 1.9 percent in February 2019 to a peak of 7.9 percent in May 2022 (FAOSTAT 2026). Food inflation affects low-income households the most, which spend 40 to 60 percent of their income on food (UN ESCAP 2024). Persistent food inflation can erode trust in public institutions and increase the risk of social unrest, particularly where governments struggle to cushion vulnerable households. Sri Lanka's 2022 economic crisis demonstrated how rising food prices and shortages can reinforce wider economic grievances and contribute to widespread public unrest (OHCHR 2022).

The Southeast Asia Climate Outlook Surveys, published by the ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute, found that seven in ten Southeast Asians experience some form of food insecurity—up from six in ten in 2023 (Figure 1) (Seah et al. 2024). The survey also found that food insecurity does not only affect poorer households; one in ten respondents in the highest-income group also reported experiencing frequent food insecurity.

"Without sustained investment, governments are left 'firefighting' food crises ..."

Despite these impacts on food security, the response to this accelerating crisis is inadequate. Globally, less than half of one percent of the finance farmers need for climate adaptation is being delivered (Bakhtary and Rodezina 2025). In South and Southeast Asia alone, the annual funding gap for agricultural adaptation is US\$153 billion (CIIP 2026). This is due, in part, to the lack of government investment. For example, all Southeast Asian countries, except for Thailand, consistently spend less than 10 percent of their national budgets on agriculture (Ludher and Teng 2025), even as climate shocks become more frequent.

Without sustained investment, governments are left "firefighting" food crises instead of reducing future security risks

through long-term adaptation. The cost of inaction is rising faster than the cost of adaptation. It is estimated that every US\$1 invested in resilience today can generate up to US\$10.50 in avoided disaster losses and economic benefits in the future (Brandon et al. 2025). Investments in climate adaptation are therefore not only an investment in food security, but also in regional resilience and long-term stability.

Adaptation Is an Investment in Food Security and Regional Resilience

Making production systems more resilient and adaptable will require funding to scale climate-resilient crop and aquaculture varieties, regenerative production models, applied R&D, and rural infrastructure that reduces post-harvest losses. This is where philanthropic capital and development finance institutions can co-invest most effectively, de-risking technology transfer to smallholders.

Crop and weather-index insurance, smallholder credit, and social safety net programs for both rural and urban poor also need to be brought to scale. Blended finance can mobilize private capital, but it must be matched by sustained government budget commitments.

Closing the gap will take more finance—but it will also require better coordination. A major obstacle is the fragmented governance of food security and climate resilience. Several regional bodies pursue similar objectives yet often work in parallel. Greater regional coordination could improve information sharing, emergency response, regional trade, and the deployment of adaptation measures. It would also ease pressure on funding, for example by having harmonized early warning systems, a common negotiating position on food-trade barriers, and blended finance instruments that complement rather than compete with one another for the same donors.

Adaptation is no longer simply an environmental issue. It is an investment in food security, livelihoods, and regional stability. Asia's experience demonstrates that closing the adaptation gap will be essential not only to protect food systems but also to prevent climate-related food insecurity from becoming a broader security challenge across the region.

Europe Needs a Nutrition Continuity Strategy for a Polycrisis Era

The recent convergence of climate shocks, geopolitical conflict, supply chain disruptions, financial instability, and democratic fragility has revealed that food security in Europe is inseparable from broader questions of national and regional security. Recent crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war, and disruptions to the Strait of Hormuz, demonstrate that even relatively wealthy regions remain vulnerable to cascading supply shocks affecting their food systems and food security.

Europe has so far weathered such disruptions better than many regions of the world because of its fiscal capacity, institutional strengths, and well-funded social protection systems. Resilience, however, should not be mistaken for immunity. European food systems depend heavily on global flows of fertilizers, natural gas, animal feeds, vitamins, minerals, and other strategic inputs (European Commission 2022). Disruptions to any of these key supply chains can rapidly affect food availability, access, affordability, consumer agency, and/or nutritional quality (European Commission 2025). These vulnerabilities have implications beyond food security, including for public health, economic performance, and wider social cohesion and resilience.

Unlike some other regions of the world, Europe is unlikely to face widespread food shortages given its high level of self-sufficiency in key agricultural products and stable food supply (European Commission 2023a). Its challenge is different: maintaining the continuity of complex food and nutrition systems during prolonged crises while ensuring that economically vulnerable households can continue to access adequate and nutritious food. In 2025, 92.7 million people—20.9 percent of the EU population—were at risk of poverty or social exclusion, underscoring that food

insecurity in Europe is often a question of affordability and unequal access rather than overall availability (Eurostat 2026).

Europe depends on global supply chains for agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and protein feeds, but also for vitamins, medical nutrition products, infant formula, and other specialized foods required by vulnerable populations. Disruptions to supply chains can create risks for food production and access to nutritionally important products, with potential implications for nutrition and public health (European Commission 2025). In such circumstances, the issue is no longer simply whether enough food exists, but whether populations can maintain adequate nutrition over time. In an era of recurring and interconnected crises, Europe must therefore focus on nutrition continuity—the ability of societies to sustain nutritional adequacy throughout future food crises.

Here, nutrition continuity refers to continued access to calories, proteins, essential fats, vitamins, and minerals, as well as the maintenance of public nutrition services such as school meals, maternal nutrition programs, and clinical nutrition support. Importantly, it also recognizes that different population groups face different risks during crises and therefore, require different forms of protection.

Particular attention must be paid to vulnerable groups. Women, children, older adults, people with chronic illnesses, migrants, refugees, and low-income households can face heightened risks if food systems are disturbed (WHO 2020; WHO 2022). Disruptions in access to nutritious foods and specialized nutrition products can have serious consequences, particularly for people with specific nutritional and medical needs, even when overall food supplies remain adequate. School meal programs and food assistance



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systems can become particularly important safety nets during periods of crisis, such as during the COVID-19 crisis (Rossi 2020).

Nutrition Continuity is a Security Issue

When nutrition falters, the security implications are significant. Food insecurity and nutritional decline can erode trust in institutions, drive social tensions, undermine health outcomes, and amplify existing inequalities. From one side of Europe to the other, food and nutrition stress has fed political instability, migration pressures, and humanitarian emergencies. Siege-induced hunger in Bosnia contributed to the largest displacement in Europe since 1945 (UNHCR 2012). The 2022 price shock following Russia's attack on Ukraine triggered export and import restrictions by several EU member states, briefly fracturing the single market in grain (European Commission 2023b). In the UK in 2023/24, record food bank demand has become a recurring feature of political debate over whether the social security system provides enough for people to afford essential goods (Trussell Trust 2024; UK Parliament 2024). Farmer protests across France, Germany, Poland, Belgium, and the Netherlands in 2024 blocked roads, border crossings, and access to major cities, increasing pressure on the EU to weaken or delay several agricultural and environmental policies (Abnett 2024).

Following the 2007–2008 global financial crisis, stress testing became a standard tool for identifying vulnerabilities and assessing the banking sector's resilience to severe systemic shocks. Yet, no comparable process has yet been applied systematically to food systems.

European institutions and member states should establish regular food system stress tests that model complex, multi-hazard scenarios involving climate impacts, conflict, energy disruptions, supply chain failures, and financial shocks. These exercises should assess not only food availability and access but also nutrition continuity, with explicit attention to women, children, older adults, migrants, and other vulnerable populations. Results should inform contingency planning, strategic reserves, and emergency response mechanisms.

The recent Food Alert workshops organized in 2024 by partners including Sciences Po, Chatham House, and the European Policy Centre, involved European institutions and regional stakeholders and began exploring how food system stress testing can help policymakers anticipate and prepare for cascading disruptions. Such exercises offer a practical mechanism for identifying hidden dependencies, testing response capacities, and strengthening coordination among key sectors and governance institutions before a crisis occurs.

A European Nutrition Security Strategy should therefore place nutritional continuity at the center of resilience planning. It should ensure that food systems are prepared to supply sufficient quantities of food and safeguard adequate nutrition for all populations throughout future food crises. This may require some degree of stockpiling, logistical preparation, adjustments to procurement regulations, policy planning, and training at different levels of public administration—from Brussels down to local communities (schools, hospitals, nursing homes, etc.).

Achieving SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) now requires a more holistic understanding of “security”. The challenge is no longer simply preventing hunger or starvation; it is ensuring that societies can maintain equitable access to adequate nutrition during periods of prolonged disruption. By treating food and nutrition systems as strategic security assets, Europe can strengthen resilience at home while supporting global efforts to realize the right to adequate food for all in the most vulnerable and crisis-affected regions.

“Resilience, however, should not be mistaken for immunity.”

Food systems should therefore be viewed not merely as structures requiring protection, but as strategic assets whose resilience directly affects local, national, and regional security by safeguarding nutrition. Maintaining adequate nutrition throughout a crisis underpins public health, social cohesion, and societal resilience.

Building a European Nutrition Security Strategy

Preparing for future crises requires moving beyond traditional food security planning to engage central banks and other financial actors from whom we can learn useful lessons.

Water, Energy and Food Security in the WANA Region: An Interconnected Challenge

The West Asia and North Africa (WANA) region faces a food security dilemma rooted in water scarcity, energy dependence, climate- and water-related shocks, conflict, and global market volatility. As one of the world's most land- and water-scarce regions, its capacity for domestic food production is constrained, contributing to heavy dependence on food imports, while several WANA countries also depend on imported oil and gas for electricity generation, transport, and energy-intensive water desalination (FAO 2022b; IEA 2025). These interconnected pressures affect people's livelihoods and can undermine human, economic, and regional security.

Water scarcity is a particularly acute constraint. Average freshwater availability is approximately 480 cubic meters per person per year (World Bank 2025a), below the 500 cubic meter threshold for absolute water scarcity, while agriculture accounts for nearly 83 percent of available freshwater withdrawals (de Waal et al. 2023). Because agriculture consumes the vast majority of available freshwater, water scarcity directly constrains domestic food production and increases dependence on food imports.

Where water scarcity intersects with conflict and institutional fragility, its effects can extend well beyond food production. In Yemen, for example, long-standing groundwater depletion, combined with conflict and institutional collapse, has fueled local disputes over water and land, damaged critical infrastructure, reduced access to safe water, and deepened food insecurity and humanitarian need (Abo-Thraiss et al. 2025). Energy dependence adds another layer of vulnerability. Imported sources supplied 74 percent of Jordan's energy needs in 2024 (Jordan Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources 2025), Morocco's energy-dependency ratio stood

at 87.5 percent (Kingdom of Morocco 2024) and Lebanon imports nearly 97 percent of the energy it uses (World Bank 2026b).

Together, water scarcity, energy dependence, climate shocks, and conflict shape food security across the region—not only in terms of availability but also accessibility, affordability, and stability. Food may be available, but it remains inaccessible and unaffordable to many due to inflation, instability, and conflict. In Syria, more than 7 million people, around 29.5 percent of the population, are acutely food insecure (WFP 2026d, FAO 2026g). In Lebanon, around 874,000 people, roughly 17 percent of the population, were estimated to face crisis-level or acute food insecurity between November 2025 and March 2026 (FAO 2026d).

The region's food trade patterns reveal a broader dilemma for food security. Many WANA countries export fruits, vegetables, olive oil, dates, and processed food, while importing essential staples such as wheat, maize, vegetable oils, sugar, and animal feed. Morocco and Jordan illustrate this dilemma: despite exporting high-value produce—including tomatoes, citrus fruits, squash, cucumbers, eggplants, apricots, and berries—they remain heavily dependent on cereal imports (World Bank n.d.a, World Bank n.d.b, FAO 2025a, FAO 2026e). The risk emerges when dependence on staple imports is concentrated among a group of suppliers, currencies, or transport routes. Disruptions can then pass rapidly from global markets to domestic prices, dietary quality, and household deprivation. In conflict-affected settings, damage to farms, roads, ports, water systems, and power networks magnifies this exposure. Food security therefore becomes a matter of economic resilience, public trust, and regional stability.



Dr. Majd Al Naber, a Jordan-based expert in integrated water resources management and the water-energy-food-environment (WEFE) nexus. Her work focuses on environmental security, water governance, and climate change in West Asia and North Africa.

Addressing this dilemma requires an integrated understanding of resource security. A water–energy–food–ecosystems (WEFE) nexus approach recognizes that the objective is not simply to produce more, but to produce more efficiently and generate greater nutritional, economic, and social value from every unit of water and energy.

Priorities include reducing water losses, enhancing water productivity, expanding safe wastewater reuse, improving irrigation efficiency, supporting drought-resilient crops, and powering water and food systems with renewable energy. Nature-based solutions, such as watershed restoration, rainwater harvesting, and soil conservation, should be treated as productive infrastructure.

These interventions must become embedded within national and regional security and resilience planning, with benefits

measured across natural resources, livelihoods, ecosystems, and human well-being. Resilience does not mean producing everything domestically. Rather, it means managing dependency strategically, diversifying suppliers and trade routes, increasing resource productivity, strengthening local capacities, and protecting people from overlapping deprivation.

Linking WEFE planning with multidimensional deprivation indicators can help identify populations exposed to multiple overlapping risks and better target resources and support. In the WANA region, water and energy security are not only prerequisites for food security, but also fundamental to dignity, stability, and human security. Investing in resilient water governance is therefore not only an environmental or economic priority—it is a security imperative.

Across regions, the threats may differ—armed conflict, climate change, geopolitical tensions, water scarcity, economic shocks, or fragile institutions—but the authors generally agree that societies are more secure when their food systems are resilient, inclusive, and able to ensure access to adequate food for all.

The regional perspectives show that food insecurity is rarely an isolated problem. It is linked to inequality and exclusion in Latin America, reinforces cycles of violence and instability in the Sahel, exposes vulnerabilities to external shocks in the Horn of Africa, reflects deep interdependencies between water, energy, and food systems in West Asia and North Africa, and is increasingly shaped by climate risks across Asia. Even in Europe, where widespread famine is unlikely, maintaining nutrition continuity has become an important element of resilience and preparedness.

Together, these contributions highlight the need to move beyond siloed approaches: food security cannot be treated in isolation from social cohesion, political stability, economic resilience, environmental sustainability, and peace.

It must be understood as an integral component of a broader concept of security. As the 2026 Global Hunger Index argues, security frameworks that focus primarily on states and borders are insufficient in an era of interconnected and overlapping crises and must prepare for compound and cross-border shocks. Peace and security policies cannot sustainably prevent or resolve crises without protecting people's access to food and livelihoods, and upholding their right to adequate food.

Placing the right to adequate food at the center of peace and security policymaking is therefore not only a moral and legal imperative. It is an investment in society's capacity to withstand shocks while upholding people's dignity.

03



The greenhouse in Dodoma is a classroom for Esther Kamanija and Hillary Rweyemamu. As part of hands-on vocational training, they grow and manage crops while preparing for work in agriculture or to start businesses of their own.

Policy Recommendations

The 2026 Global Hunger Index highlights how sociopolitical, ecological, and economic shocks intersect, undermining the resilience of food systems within and across borders, while rising food insecurity can in turn deepen instability. The following recommendations call on governments, donors, and other actors to adopt a people-centered, rights-based understanding of security and systematically embed food and nutrition security in resilience, peacebuilding, and security policies grounded in the right to adequate food.

1. Embed food and nutrition security into security policies

Food and nutrition security must be a cross-cutting policy priority within a people-centered, rights-based understanding of security, requiring inter-ministerial coordination, inclusive decision-making, and sustained public investment.

- **Governments must integrate food and nutrition security into national security**, civil protection, and resilience frameworks and reflect it in national crisis preparedness plans.
- **Governments must establish permanent interministerial coordination mechanisms** to ensure policy coherence and publicly report progress on the right to adequate food.
- **Governments should ensure meaningful participation of affected communities**, civil society, and marginalized groups in food and nutrition security policy design, implementation, and monitoring through accessible and accountable mechanisms.
- **Investments in food system resilience must be treated as strategic security investments** and reflected in public budgets through dedicated, predictable, multi-year funding and transparent criteria informed by national risk assessments.

2. Accelerate investment in resilient and sustainable food systems

Strengthening food system resilience requires managing external dependencies and reducing excessive reliance on a limited number of suppliers, trade routes, and critical inputs.

- **Governments must prioritize long-term investment in local and regional food systems**, and promote diversified supply chains, stronger regional trade, and climate-resilient, resource-efficient agriculture to reduce dependence on concentrated sources of critical inputs and vulnerability to climate, economic, and geopolitical shocks.
- **Public investment must support rural infrastructure and create the conditions for responsible investments by private actors and cooperatives** in local and regional food value chains, from processing and storage to transport and market access.
- **Governments must expand social protection and risk management systems** that help households withstand shocks. They should ensure equitable access to affordable, healthy diets, insurance, financial services, targeted assistance, and essential nutrition services that scale rapidly during crises.

3. Strengthen food and nutrition security information systems and crisis prevention

Preventing food crises requires strong food and nutrition security information systems that identify deterioration early, and processes that translate warning signs into timely action before emergencies arise.

- **Governments and donors must sustain predictable funding for data collection and analysis** of food and nutrition security, and ensure safe access for independent assessments in crisis-affected and hard-to-reach settings.
- **Governments and donors must strengthen people-centered early warning systems** that combine robust hazard and impact data, and forecasts with local knowledge, and link agreed triggers to pre-agreed, pre-financed action.
- **Donors must halt and reverse cuts to food and nutrition security and humanitarian assistance, and provide flexible, multi-year funding across** the humanitarian-development-peace nexus for sustained crisis prevention, response, and recovery. Affected and at-risk communities and local civil society organizations must have decision-making power and ownership to ensure people-centered locally led action.

4. Intensify diplomacy and prevent conflict-induced hunger

Ending conflict-induced hunger demands diplomacy, humanitarian access, strict adherence to international law, and accountability.

- **Governments, the UN Security Council, and regional actors must intensify preventive diplomacy** to avert escalation and support inclusive peace processes, and strengthen **humanitarian diplomacy in ongoing conflicts** to press for ceasefires, respect for international humanitarian law, and the protection of civilians and objects indispensable to their survival. Peace agreements and recovery plans must uphold the right to adequate food and restore livelihoods and access to land and markets.
- **Conflict parties must guarantee rapid and unimpeded humanitarian relief** to affected populations, in accordance with international law and the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence.
- **Judicial authorities must independently investigate alleged violations and, where warranted, prosecute those responsible**, for using **starvation as a method of warfare** or unlawfully attacking food and water systems or obstructing humanitarian relief, in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2417.

Appendixes

In Labweh, northeastern Lebanon, locally grown fruits and vegetables are turned into mounneh using traditional methods such as drying, pickling, fermenting, and canning. Preserving the harvest in this way allows seasonal produce to be enjoyed and sold long after it has been picked.



APPENDIX A

Methodology

Note: The results in this 2026 Global Hunger Index report supersede all previous GHI results. Since underlying data are continually being revised by the respective agencies, historical GHI scores and indicator data are recalculated every year. Comparisons of the GHI over time can only be made by using the 2000, 2006, 2012, and 2018 scores and indicator data contained within this report.

The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a tool designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger at global, regional, and national levels, reflecting multiple dimensions of hunger over time¹. The GHI is intended to raise awareness and understanding of the struggle against hunger, provide a way to compare levels of hunger between countries and regions, and call attention to those areas of the world where hunger levels are highest and where the need for additional efforts to eliminate hunger is greatest.

How the GHI is Calculated

Each country's GHI score is calculated based on a formula that combines four indicators that together capture the multidimensional nature of hunger:



Undernourishment: the share of the population whose caloric intake is insufficient;



Child stunting: the share of children under the age of five who have low height for their age, reflecting chronic undernutrition;



Child wasting: the share of children under the age of five who have low weight for their height, reflecting acute undernutrition; and



Child mortality: the share of children who die before their fifth birthday, reflecting in part the fatal mix of inadequate nutrition and unhealthy environments.²

Using this combination of indicators to measure hunger offers several advantages (see Table A.1). The indicators included in the GHI formula reflect caloric deficiencies as well as poor nutrition. The undernourishment indicator captures the food access situation of the population as a whole, while the indicators specific to children reflect the nutrition status within a particularly vulnerable subset of the population for whom a lack of dietary energy, protein, and/or micronutrients (essential vitamins and minerals) leads to a high risk of

illness, poor physical and cognitive development, and death. The inclusion of both child wasting and child stunting allows the GHI to document both acute and chronic undernutrition.

BOX A.1 What is meant by “hunger”?

The problem of hunger is complex, and different terms are used to describe its various forms.

Hunger is usually understood to refer to the distress associated with a lack of sufficient calories. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) defines food deprivation, or undernourishment, as the habitual consumption of too few calories to provide the minimum dietary energy an individual requires to live a healthy and productive life, given that person's sex, age, stature, and physical activity level.³

Undernutrition goes beyond calories and signifies deficiencies in any or all of the following: energy, protein, and/ or essential vitamins and minerals. Undernutrition is the result of inadequate intake of food in terms of either quantity or quality, poor utilization of nutrients in the body due to infections or other illnesses, or a combination of these immediate causes. These, in turn, result from a range of underlying factors, including household food insecurity; inadequate maternal health or childcare practices; or inadequate access to health services, safe water, and sanitation.

Malnutrition refers more broadly to both undernutrition (problems caused by deficiencies) and overnutrition (problems caused by unbalanced diets that involve consuming too many calories in relation to requirements, with or without low intake of micro-nutrient-rich foods). Overnutrition—resulting in overweight, obesity, and noncommunicable diseases—is increasingly common throughout the world, with implications for human health, government expenditures, and food systems development. While overnutrition is an important concern, the GHI focuses specifically on issues relating to undernutrition.

In this report, “hunger” refers to the index based on the four component indicators (undernourishment, child stunting, child wasting, and child mortality). Taken together, the component indicators reflect deficiencies in calories as well as in micronutrients.

By combining multiple indicators, the index minimizes the effects of random measurement errors. These four indicators are all part of the indicator set used to measure progress toward the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

¹ For further background on the GHI concept, see Wiesmann, von Braun, and Feldbrügge (2000), Wiesmann (2006), and Wiesmann et al. (2015).

² According to Black et al. (2013), undernutrition is responsible for 45 percent of deaths among children under the age of five.

³ The average minimum dietary energy requirement varies by country—from about 1,640 to 2,024 kilocalories (commonly, albeit incorrectly, referred to as calories) per person per day for all countries with available data for 2025 based on FAOSTAT Suite of Food Security Indicators.

APPENDIX A

GHI scores are calculated using a three-step process:

Step 1: Values are determined for the four component indicators for each country, drawing on the latest published data available from internationally recognized sources.

Step 2: Each of the four component indicators is given a standardized score based on thresholds set slightly above the highest country-level values observed worldwide for that indicator since 1988.⁴ For example, the highest value for undernourishment estimated in this period is 76.5 percent, so the threshold for standardization is set slightly higher, at 80 percent.⁵

In a given year, if a country has an undernourishment prevalence of 40 percent, its standardized undernourishment score for that year is 50. In other words, that country is approximately halfway between having no undernourishment and reaching the maximum observed level. Here are the formulas used to standardize each indicator:

- $\text{Prevalence of Undernourishment} / 80 \times 100 =$
standardized undernourishment value
- $\text{Child Stunting Rate} / 70 \times 100 =$
standardized child stunting value
- $\text{Child Wasting Rate} / 30 \times 100 =$
standardized child wasting value
- $\text{Child Mortality Rate} / 35 \times 100 =$
standardized child mortality value

Step 3: The standardized scores are aggregated to calculate the GHI score for each country. Undernourishment and child mortality each contribute one third of the GHI score, while child stunting and child wasting each contribute one sixth of the score, as shown in the formula (Figure A.1). This

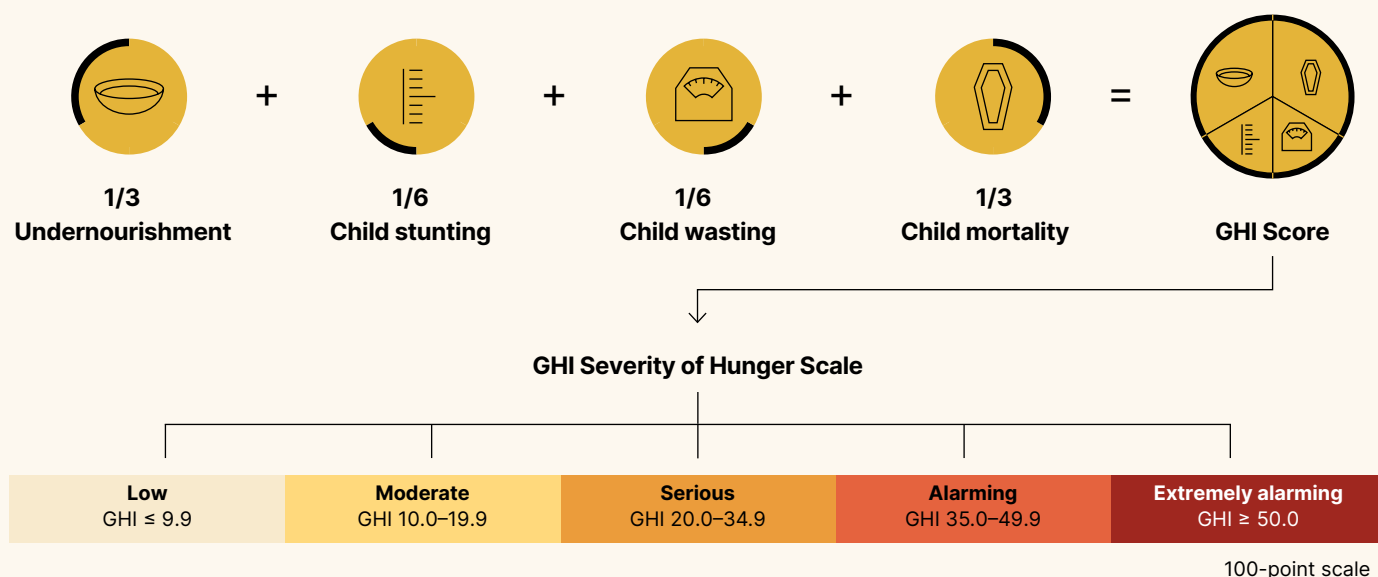
TABLE A.1 How the four indicators underlying the GHI capture the multidimensional nature of hunger

	 	
Undernourishment	Child stunting / Child wasting	Child mortality
— Measures inadequate food access, an important indicator of hunger — Refers to the entire population, both children and adults — Is used as a lead indicator for international hunger reduction targets, including Sustainable Development Goal 2 (Zero Hunger)	— Go beyond calorie availability, consider aspects of diet quality and utilization — Reflect children's particular vulnerability to nutritional deficiencies — Are sensitive to uneven distribution of food within the household — Are used as nutrition indicators for SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)	— Reflects that death is the most serious consequence of hunger, and children are the most vulnerable — Improves the GHI's ability to reflect deficiencies of essential vitamins and minerals — Complements stunting and wasting, which only partially capture the mortality risk of undernutrition

⁴ The thresholds for standardization are set slightly above the highest observed values to allow for the possibility that these values could be exceeded in the future.

⁵ The threshold for undernourishment is 80, based on the observed maximum of 76.5 percent; the threshold for child wasting is 30, based on the observed maximum of 26.0 percent; the threshold for child stunting is 70, based on the observed maximum of 68.2 percent; and the threshold for child mortality is 35, based on the observed maximum of 32.6 percent. While the thresholds were originally established based on the maximum values observed between 1988 and 2013, covering 25 years' worth of available data prior to the methodological review process, these values have not been exceeded since then.

FIGURE A.1 Composition of GHI scores and severity designations



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calculation results in GHI scores on a 100-point scale, where 0 is the best score (no hunger) and 100 is the worst. In practice, neither of these extremes is reached. A value of 100 would signify that a country's undernourishment, child wasting, child stunting, and child mortality levels each exactly meets the thresholds set slightly above the highest levels observed worldwide in recent decades. A value of 0 would mean that a country had no undernourished people in the population, no children younger than five who were wasted or stunted, and no children who died before their fifth birthday.

- those GHI indicator values that are available;
- the country's last known GHI severity designation;
- the country's last known prevalence of undernourishment;⁷
- the prevalence of undernourishment for the subregion in which the country is located; and/or
- an assessment of the relevant findings of the 2024, 2025, and 2026 editions of the Global Report on Food Crises (FSIN and GNAFC 2023, 2024, 2025; FAO et al. 2026c).⁸

Where the Indicator Data Come From

Data used in the calculation of GHI scores come from various UN and other multilateral agencies, as shown in Table A.2. The GHI scores reflect the latest revised data available for the four indicators.⁶ Where original source data were unavailable, estimates for the GHI component indicators were made based on the most recent available data.

How Hunger Severity Is Determined for Countries with Incomplete Data

In this year's GHI report, 136 countries met the criteria for inclusion in the GHI, but 14 had insufficient data to allow for the calculation of a 2026 GHI score. To address this gap and give a preliminary picture of hunger in the countries with missing data, provisional designations of the severity of hunger were determined based on several known factors (Table A.3):

For some countries, data are missing because of violent conflict or political unrest (FAO et al. 2017; Martin-Shields and Stojetz 2019), which are strong predictors of hunger and undernutrition. The countries with missing data may often be those facing the greatest hunger burdens. Of the four countries provisionally designated as *alarming*—Burundi, Sudan, South Sudan, and Yemen—it is possible that with complete data, one or more of them would fall into the *extremely alarming* category. Similarly, DPR Korea and Lesotho might fall from *serious* to *alarming*, and Nicaragua from *moderate* to *serious*. However, without sufficient information to confirm that this is the case, we have conservatively categorized these countries as *alarming*, *serious*, or *moderate*. In some cases, even a provisional severity designation could not be determined, such as if the country had never previously had a prevalence of undernourishment value, GHI score, or GHI designation since the first GHI report was published in 2006.

⁶ For previous GHI calculations, see von Grebmer et al. (2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, 2009, 2008); IFPRI, WHH, and Concern Worldwide (2007); Scherer et al. (2025); Wiemers et al. (2024) and Wiesmann, Weingärtner, and Schöninger (2006).

⁷ Previously published undernourishment values, GHI scores, and GHI severity classifications are not considered valid once superseding reports have been issued, but are used as benchmarks to consider the plausibility of a country falling into a broad range of undernourishment.

⁸ The Global Reports on Food Crises report on acute food insecurity, which is different from chronic hunger as measured by the prevalence of undernourishment. However, the 2024, 2025, and 2026 GRFCs were used to confirm whether a country experienced extreme hunger crises such as famine, threat of famine, and/or repeated hunger crises in 2023, 2024, and 2025.

TABLE A.2 Data sources and reference years for the Global Hunger Index component indicators, 2000, 2006, 2012, 2018, and 2026

Indicator	Data Sources	Reference Years for Indicator Data				
		2000 GHI-Scores	2006 GHI-Scores	2012 GHI-Scores	2018 GHI-Scores	2026 GHI-Scores
Prevalence of undernourishment	FAO 2026 ^a	2000–2002 ^a	2005–2007 ^a	2011–2013 ^a	2017–2019 ^a	2023–2025 ^a
Child stunting and wasting ^{b, c, d, e}	WHO 2026; UNICEF et al. 2026; UNICEF 2026, 2013, and 2009; MEASURE DHS 2026	2000, 1998–2002 ^b	2006, 2004–2008 ^c	2012, 2010–2014 ^d	2018, 2016–2020 ^e	2024, 2021–2025 ^f
Child mortality	UN IGME 2026 ^a	2000	2006	2012	2018	2024

Note: The number of countries for which sufficient data were available to calculate GHI scores for each year or time span is shown in parentheses.

^a Three-year average.

^b Data collected from the years closest to 2000; where data from 1998 and 2002 or 1999 and 2001 were available, an average was used.

^c Data collected from the years closest to 2006; where data from 2004 and 2008 or 2005 and 2007 were available, an average was used.

^d Data collected from the years closest to 2012; where data from 2010 and 2014 or 2011 and 2013 were available, an average was used.

^e Data collected from the years closest to 2018; where data from 2016 and 2020 or 2017 and 2019 were available, an average was used.

^f The latest data gathered in this period.

APPENDIX A

Understanding and Using the Global Hunger Index: FAQs

Which countries are included in the GHI?

Inclusion in the GHI is determined based on prevalence of undernourishment and child mortality data dating back to 2000. Countries with values above the “very low” threshold for one or both of these indicators since 2000 are included in the GHI. Specifically, countries are included if the prevalence of undernourishment was at or above 5.0 percent and/or if the child mortality rate was at or above 1.0 percent for any year since 2000. Data on child stunting and child wasting, the other indicators used in the calculation of GHI scores, are not included in the inclusion criteria because their availability varies widely from country to country, with data especially limited for higher-income countries.⁹

Non-independent territories are not included in the GHI, nor are countries with very small populations (under 500,000 inhabitants), owing to limited data availability. Because data for all four indicators in the GHI formula are not available for every country, GHI scores could not be calculated for some. However, where possible, countries with incomplete data are provisionally categorized according to the GHI Severity of Hunger Scale based on existing data and complementary reports (see Table A.3). Several of these countries are experiencing unrest or violent conflict, which affects the availability of data as well as the food security and nutrition situation in the country. It is possible that one or more of these countries would have a higher GHI score than Somalia—the country with the highest 2026 GHI score—if sufficient data were available.

Why is a certain country’s GHI score so high (or so low)?

The key to understanding a country’s GHI score lies in that country’s indicator values, especially when compared with the indicator values for other countries in the report (see Appendix B for these values).

For some countries, high scores are driven by high rates of undernourishment, reflecting a lack of calories for large swathes of the population. For others, high scores result from high levels of child wasting, reflecting acute undernutrition; child stunting, reflecting chronic undernutrition; and/or child mortality, reflecting children’s hunger and nutrition levels, in addition to other extreme challenges facing the population. Broadly speaking, then, a high GHI score can be evidence of a lack of food, a poor-quality diet, inadequate child caregiving practices, an unhealthy environment, or a combination of these factors.

While it is beyond the scope of this report to provide a detailed explanation of the circumstances facing each

country with a GHI score, Chapter 1 describes the situation in select countries. Furthermore, this report offers other avenues for examining a country’s hunger and nutrition situation: country rankings based on the 2026 GHI scores appear in Table 1.1, GHI scores for selected years for each country appear in Appendix C, and regional comparisons appear in Appendix D. (Further detailed information on the scores of each country can be found on the GHI website: www.global-hungerindex.org.)

Does the 2026 GHI reflect the situation in 2026?

The GHI uses the most up-to-date data available for each of the GHI indicators, meaning the scores are only as current as the data. For the calculation of the 2026 GHI scores, undernourishment data are from 2023–2025; child wasting data are from 2021–2025, with the most current data from that range used for each country; child stunting data are from 2024, and child mortality data are from 2024. Any changes that occur in 2026 are not yet reflected in the data or scores in this year’s report.

How can I compare GHI results over time?

Each report includes GHI scores and indicator data for four reference years in addition to the focus year. In this report, the 2026 GHI scores can be directly compared with the GHI scores given for four reference years—2000, 2006, 2012, and 2018 (Appendix C). The reference years are selected to provide an assessment of progress over time while also ensuring there is no overlap in the range of years from which the data are drawn.

Can I compare the GHI scores and indicator values in this report with results from previous reports?

No—GHI scores are comparable within each year’s report, but not between different years’ reports. The current and historical data on which the GHI scores are based are continually being revised and improved by the United Nations agencies that compile them, and each year’s GHI report reflects these changes. Comparing scores between reports may create the impression that hunger has changed positively or negatively in a specific country from year to year, whereas in some cases the change may partly or fully reflect a data revision. Moreover, the methodology for calculating GHI scores has been revised in the past and may be revised again in the future. In 2015, for example, the GHI methodology was changed to include data on child stunting and wasting and to standardize the values (see Wiesmann et al. 2015). This change caused a major shift in the GHI scores,

⁹ Even though food insecurity is a *serious* concern for segments of the population in certain high-income countries, nationally representative data for child stunting and child wasting are not regularly collected in most high-income countries. In addition, although data on child mortality are usually available for these countries, child mortality does not reflect undernutrition in high-income countries to the same extent that it does in low- and middle-income countries.

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and the GHI Severity of Hunger Scale was modified to reflect this shift. In the GHI reports published since 2015, almost all countries have had much higher GHI scores compared with their scores in reports published in 2014 and earlier. This does not necessarily mean their hunger levels rose in 2015—the higher scores merely reflect the revision of the methodology. The 2000, 2006, 2012, 2018, and 2026 GHI scores shown in this year's report are all comparable because they all reflect the revised methodology and the latest revisions of data.

Can I compare the GHI rankings in this report to those in previous reports to understand

how the situation in a country has changed over time relative to other countries?

No—like the GHI scores and indicator values, GHI rankings cannot be compared between GHI reports, for two main reasons. First, the data and methodology used to calculate GHI scores have been revised over time, as described above. Second, the ranking in each year's report often includes different countries because the set of countries for which sufficient data are available to calculate GHI scores varies from year to year. Thus, if a country's ranking changes from one report to the next, this may be, at least in part, because it is being compared with a different group of countries.

TABLE A.3 Existing Data and Provisional Severity Designations for Countries with Incomplete Data

Country	2026 GHI provisional severity designation	Child stunting, 2024 (%)	Child wasting, 2021–2025 (%)	Child mortality, 2024 (%)	Last GHI categorization	Last prevalence of undernourishment value (%)	Subregional prevalence of undernourishment (%)	Range of prevalence of undernourishment values for provisional designation (%)
Slovakia	Low	3.9	1.1	0.6	Low (2025)	3.1 (2025)	<2.5	0–18.7
Nicaragua	Moderate	12.6	1.1	1.1	Moderate (2024)	19.6 (2024)	5.4	12.6–36.6
Korea (DPR)	Serious	16.6	—	1.7	Serious (2024)	53.5 (2024)	<2.5	N/A
Lesotho	Serious	35.0	1.6	6.0	Alarming (2023)	46.0 (2023)	11.9	12.0–48.0
Burundi	Alarming	55.3	7.8	4.7	Extremely alarming (2014)	67.3 (2014)	25.8	31.1–67.1
South Sudan	Alarming	30.0	—	9.7	Alarming (2025)	22.3 (2025)	25.8	N/A
Sudan	Alarming	35.4	18.1	6.2	Serious (2024)	11.4 (2024)	25.8	25.4–61.4
Yemen	Alarming	47.4	16.8	3.8	Alarming (2024)	39.5 (2024)	12.5	25.7–61.7
Bahrain	Not designated	4.6	1.1	0.9	—	—	12.5	N/A
Bhutan	Not designated	17.9	5.1	1.7	—	—	10.6	N/A
Eritrea	Not designated	48.0	—	3.4	—	—	25.8	N/A
Equatorial Guinea	Not designated	17.1	3.6	6.8	Extremely alarming (2014)	61.3 (2014)	29.3	N/A
Maldives	Not designated	14.2	7.8	0.5	—	—	10.6	N/A
Qatar	Not designated	5.4	1.6	0.6	—	—	12.5	N/A

Source: Authors, based on sources listed in Appendix A and previous GHI publications included in the bibliography.

Note: Years in parentheses show when the relevant information was published in the GHI report. Designations based on FSIN and GNAFC (2023, 2024, 2025) and expert consultation.

*Authors' estimate.; N/A = not applicable; — = not available.

Data Underlying the Calculation of the 2000, 2006, 2012, 2018, and 2026 Global Hunger Index Scores

Note: The colors shown in the table represent the following categories:

Very low Low Medium High Very high

They are based on thresholds for the different indicator values, as follows:

Category	Undernourishment	Child wasting	Child stunting	Child mortality
Very low	<5%	<2.5%	<2.5%	<1%
Low	5–<15%	2.5–<5%	2.5–<10%	1–<4%
Medium	15–<25%	5–<10%	10–<20%	4–<7%
High	25–<35%	10–<15%	20–<30%	7–<10%
Very high	≥35%	≥15%	≥30%	≥10%

Note: Threshold values for the prevalence of undernourishment are adapted from FAO (2015). Threshold values for child stunting and child wasting are from de Onis et al. (2019). Threshold values for child mortality are adapted from those shown in UN IGME (2026b) but condensed into the five categories shown.

APPENDIX B Data underlying the calculation of the 2000, 2006, 2012, 2018, and 2026 Global Hunger Index scores

Country	Undernourishment (% of population)					Child wasting (% of children under five years old)				
	'00-'02	'05-'07	'11-'13	'17-'19	'23-'25	'98-'02	'04-'08	'10-'14	'16-'20	'21-'25
Afghanistan	45.8	26.6	19.7	23.0	27.8	9.0*	9.1	9.5	5.1	3.6
Albania	4.8	8.7	4.6	4.3	5.6	6.3*	7.3	4.6*	1.6	3.8*
Algeria	7.3	5.8	3.4	2.6	< 2.5	3.1	4.1	4.1	2.7	4.2*
Angola	67.8	36.0	14.0	15.9	17.4	8.1*	8.2	5.4*	4.9	5.2
Argentina	3.0	3.3	3.6	3.7	2.8	2.1*	1.2	1.8*	1.7	1.6*
Armenia	28.6	10.7	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	2.5	5.4	4.1	4.4	2.9*
Azerbaijan	17.8	3.1	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	9.0	6.8	4.9	3.7*	3.5
Bahrain	—	—	—	—	—	1.7*	1.4*	1.2*	1.2*	1.1*
Bangladesh	15.4	15.5	17.3	12.1	8.2	12.5	11.9	12.2	8.4	12.9
Belarus	2.7	3.2	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	1.6*	2.2	1.3*	1.3	1.3
Benin	14.3	11.6	10.0	11.5	11.1	9.0	5.1	4.5	5.0	8.3
Bhutan	—	—	—	—	—	2.6	4.5	5.9	3.4*	5.1
Bolivia (Plurinat. State of)	26.6	26.0	18.1	13.6	19.5	1.6	1.5	1.5	2.0	2.3
Bosnia & Herzegovina	3.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	7.4	4.0	2.3	3.4*	3.1*
Botswana	28.1	25.3	20.7	20.9	18.2	5.9	7.3	6.6*	5.6*	5.3*
Brazil	10.5	5.1	2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	3.0*	1.8	2.3*	3.4	2.1*
Bulgaria	4.9	6.3	3.7	2.6	< 2.5	5.2*	4.7	5.9	4.6*	4.5*
Burkina Faso	22.4	16.5	14.4	15.1	11.7	15.5	11.3*	10.7	8.4	9.8
Burundi	—	—	—	—	—	8.1	9.0	8.0	4.8	7.8
Cabo Verde	16.1	14.1	15.3	9.9	8.1	3.8*	3.4*	2.8*	2.4	2.1*
Cambodia	19.7	14.4	8.5	5.6	4.7	17.1	8.5	11.0	8.3*	9.6
Cameroon	24.2	11.2	4.1	6.3	4.9	7.3	7.6	5.7	4.3	4.0*
Central African Republic	35.9	33.0	28.7	24.4	29.8	10.4	12.1	7.4	6.5	5.2
Chad	34.4	28.6	23.5	28.3	33.6	13.9	16.2	16.3	13.6	10.8
Chile	2.9	2.7	3.9	3.3	< 2.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3*	0.3*
China	10.0	6.0	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	2.5	2.9	1.9	1.9	1.5*
Colombia	8.6	11.3	8.6	4.2	4.1	1.0	1.6	0.9	1.6	0.9*
Comoros	24.7	16.1	15.2	12.8	16.5	13.3	9.6	11.2	7.2*	5.1
Congo (Republic of)	26.3	30.5	35.1	28.6	25.0	10.1*	8.0	6.0	7.1*	5.2
Costa Rica	4.6	3.3	2.6	< 2.5	< 2.5	1.7*	1.5*	1.3*	1.8	1.1*
Côte d'Ivoire	18.9	17.5	15.1	10.1	11.4	6.9	14.3	7.6	6.8	8.1
Croatia	10.6	2.7	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	1.2*	1.1*	1.1*	1.1*	1.1*
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	26.8	27.4	32.0	34.0	39.5	15.9	10.4	8.3	6.4	7.2
Djibouti	40.8	24.6	18.6	13.4	14.7	13.4*	17.0	12.4	10.6	12.1
Dominican Republic	19.7	18.9	10.7	5.2	< 2.5	1.5	1.7	2.4	2.2	1.3*
Ecuador	20.0	15.0	8.5	11.4	10.8	2.7	2.1	2.4	1.4*	0.7
Egypt	4.8	5.4	5.7	6.4	8.4	6.9	5.3	9.5	4.9*	3.3
El Salvador	7.0	9.2	8.6	6.4	5.3	1.5	1.6	2.1	1.3*	2.9
Equatorial Guinea	—	—	—	—	—	9.2	2.7	3.1	3.2*	3.6*
Eritrea	—	—	—	—	—	15.0	—	14.6	—	—
Estonia	3.6	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	1.7*	1.4*	1.5*	1.6*	1.6*
Eswatini	9.9	14.3	22.7	15.5	15.1	1.7	2.9	1.4	1.9*	1.8
Ethiopia	46.1	32.7	20.7	16.6	19.9	12.4	12.4	9.8	6.8	5.6*
Fiji	3.6	5.0	7.6	6.2	7.2	7.4*	6.4	6.4*	5.8*	4.6
Gabon	10.6	14.5	13.4	17.6	23.3	4.2	3.7*	3.4	3.4*	3.4
Gambia	16.9	15.5	9.6	16.1	17.5	9.1	7.4	9.5	6.1	6.7*
Georgia	6.6	5.3	8.3	5.4	< 2.5	3.1	3.0	0.6*	0.6	0.6*
Ghana	14.8	10.4	7.7	7.5	6.4	9.9	6.0	6.2	6.8	5.8
Guatemala	22.5	18.2	14.9	13.4	12.7	3.7	1.9*	1.6*	1.9	0.8
Guinea	18.0	16.8	12.2	10.6	8.7	10.3	11.0	7.6	9.2	6.4
Guinea-Bissau	15.6	15.9	20.0	12.3	20.0	11.8	4.8	6.2	6.4	4.3*
Guyana	5.7	7.6	8.3	3.2	< 2.5	12.1	8.3	6.4	6.5	3.9*
Haiti	48.0	45.9	39.8	41.2	51.4	5.5	10.2	4.6	3.7	5.0
Honduras	21.1	16.9	13.0	13.1	14.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.9	1.1*
Hungary	< 2.5	2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	1.3*	1.2*	1.1*	1.1*	1.1*
India	18.1	18.9	13.2	10.5	9.8	17.9	20.0	15.1	16.9	19.0**
Indonesia	18.1	18.1	9.5	6.0	6.3	5.5	14.6	13.5	10.5	8.4
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	4.9	6.9	9.2	8.0	6.7	6.1	4.8	4.0	4.3	4.0*
Iraq	20.1	16.5	13.9	14.8	13.4	6.6	5.8	6.5	3.0	3.6*
Jamaica	7.2	7.3	8.0	6.4	8.0	3.0	3.7	3.0	3.2	2.1*
Jordan	9.0	5.6	8.7	13.9	12.2	2.5	1.9*	2.4	0.6	2.3
Kazakhstan	6.5	9.4	5.6	3.0	< 2.5	2.5	4.9	4.1	4.0*	4.6
Kenya	31.8	26.1	19.9	24.6	34.9	7.4	6.9	6.0	6.7	4.5
Korea (DPR)	35.9	37.0	43.7	47.0	—	12.2	8.5	4.0	2.5	—
Kuwait	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	2.1	3.0	2.4	2.2	3.5
Kyrgyzstan	12.9	8.0	7.0	5.9	4.8	2.7*	3.4	2.8	2.0	3.0
Lao PDR	30.9	17.4	8.7	8.3	10.0	17.5	7.4	5.9	9.0	10.7
Latvia	5.2	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	1.9*	1.6*	1.6*	1.7*	1.7

Note: The colors shown in the table represent the following categories: ■ = low ■ = moderate ■ = serious ■ = alarming ■ = extremely alarming

— = Data not available or not presented. Some countries did not exist in their present borders in the given year or reference period. *GHI estimates. ** Survey value due to missing official estimate or newly released data: 1999/2001, 2005/2007, and 2012: Nicaragua; 2023: Bolivia; 2024: Angola, Chad, Kazakhstan, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Turkmenistan, Zambia; 2025: Bangladesh, Nepal, Niger; 2026: India, Timor-Leste

Country	Child stunting (% of children under five years old)					Child mortality (% of children under five years old)				
	2000	2006	2012	2018	2024	2000	2006	2012	2018	2024
Afghanistan	55.5	50.3	43.5	41.2	42.0	13.2	10.5	8.1	6.5	5.3
Albania	29.9	26.1	16.5	11.1	7.4	2.7	1.9	1.1	0.9	0.9
Algeria	22.4	17.1	12.0	9.7	8.9	4.2	3.3	2.7	2.4	2.2
Angola	47.5	34.2	31.4	39.1	39.9**	18.5	12.0	7.2	5.6	4.9
Argentina	9.3	7.6	7.0	8.2	10.7	1.9	1.6	1.3	1.1	1.0
Armenia	17.1	20.0	14.2	8.9	6.2	3.1	2.3	1.7	1.3	1.0
Azerbaijan	24.3	24.5	16.4	10.0	6.8	7.4	4.9	3.3	2.4	1.8
Bahrain	10.8	8.4	6.5	5.2	4.6	1.2	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.9
Bangladesh	54.9	47.4	38.3	29.8	24.0**	8.6	6.0	4.4	3.3	3.0
Belarus	5.4	4.0	2.4	1.5	1.1	1.3	0.8	0.5	0.3	0.2
Benin	34.8	35.8	34.2	33.3	33.2	13.5	11.7	10.3	8.9	7.5
Bhutan	44.8	38.9	29.1	21.1	17.9	7.8	5.3	3.5	2.4	1.7
Bolivia (Plurinat. State of)	33.0	28.3	20.0	13.8	13.8**	7.1	4.8	3.2	2.2	1.6
Bosnia & Herzegovina	12.5	10.9	9.2	8.4	7.9	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Botswana	30.3	28.9	24.7	22.5	21.0	8.0	6.6	5.4	4.1	3.3
Brazil	9.9	7.2	6.6	7.5	8.9	3.4	2.3	1.7	1.5	1.4
Bulgaria	8.7	8.7	7.2	6.1	5.5	1.7	1.2	1.0	0.7	0.6
Burkina Faso	40.4	39.8	32.0	23.0	19.5	17.6	14.4	11.2	9.1	7.5
Burundi	63.0	60.0	55.4	53.4	55.3	15.2	11.7	8.0	5.8	4.7
Cabo Verde	15.9	11.6	8.4	6.2	5.3	3.6	2.8	2.4	1.5	1.1
Cambodia	50.6	43.7	34.0	25.2	22.0	10.5	5.9	3.7	2.4	1.8
Cameroon	37.4	36.6	32.3	28.7	27.2	14.4	12.4	10.1	7.9	6.5
Central African Republic	43.2	43.0	39.6	38.8	38.9	16.5	14.3	12.2	12.0	9.0
Chad	42.2	41.3	37.4	33.3	36.7**	18.2	16.2	13.9	11.8	9.7
Chile	2.9	2.2	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.7
China	20.0	12.3	7.5	5.5	4.5	3.7	2.2	1.3	0.9	0.6
Colombia	17.4	15.3	12.7	11.6	11.6	2.5	2.1	1.7	1.4	1.2
Comoros	43.8	40.3	31.6	22.4	17.4	8.0	6.3	5.3	4.6	3.9
Congo (Republic of)	33.6	29.9	23.1	18.9	16.3	11.2	8.0	5.8	4.8	3.9
Costa Rica	7.1	6.4	6.7	8.1	10.6	1.3	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.0
Côte d'Ivoire	32.4	32.2	28.7	23.5	20.3	14.0	11.7	9.5	7.8	6.4
Croatia	6.3	4.6	4.4	3.9	3.3	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.6
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	46.0	45.4	42.9	42.5	44.1	18.5	11.9	9.6	9.2	9.0
Djibouti	31.8	31.9	27.8	23.4	20.9	9.8	8.5	7.1	5.9	4.9
Dominican Republic	10.1	8.8	8.0	6.9	5.6	4.0	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.1
Ecuador	27.2	28.8	24.3	20.0	17.7	3.0	2.3	1.7	1.4	1.3
Egypt	25.9	25.4	23.5	16.1	12.9	4.7	3.6	2.9	2.5	2.2
El Salvador	28.7	22.4	15.5	11.1	9.4	3.2	2.3	1.7	1.3	1.0
Equatorial Guinea	38.3	32.3	24.9	19.5	17.1	15.4	12.7	10.2	8.3	6.8
Eritrea	43.4	48.0	51.5	50.2	48.0	8.5	6.5	5.1	4.2	3.4
Estonia	2.1	1.6	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.1	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.2
Eswatini	35.7	33.5	27.9	22.2	18.9	11.2	10.6	6.3	5.0	4.5
Ethiopia	56.9	50.4	42.1	37.2	35.5	14.0	10.2	7.5	5.6	4.5
Fiji	6.0	7.0	7.0	6.3	7.2	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.4	2.9
Gabon	25.5	22.7	17.2	14.8	13.7	7.3	6.2	4.9	4.0	3.3
Gambia	27.7	26.2	22.5	17.6	14.0	11.3	8.7	6.7	5.2	4.2
Georgia	16.2	13.9	8.9	6.0	4.7	3.6	2.1	1.2	1.0	0.9
Ghana	32.8	28.8	22.3	17.8	15.6	10.0	7.9	6.0	4.6	3.6
Guatemala	53.2	52.0	47.7	45.4	44.6	5.2	4.1	3.2	2.5	2.1
Guinea	33.1	35.5	33.6	29.3	26.6	16.6	13.3	11.8	10.8	9.2
Guinea-Bissau	33.4	30.6	28.0	27.6	28.3	17.5	13.9	10.4	8.2	6.7
Guyana	14.4	17.2	14.8	9.7	7.1	4.7	4.1	3.6	3.0	2.5
Haiti	30.4	26.6	23.1	21.5	21.6	10.3	8.6	7.5	6.3	5.3
Honduras	36.4	29.8	21.8	19.4	17.9	3.7	2.9	2.3	1.8	1.5
Hungary	4.4	3.7	3.6	3.1	2.9	1.0	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.4
India	50.0	47.2	41.7	35.6	29.3**	9.2	7.1	5.2	3.7	2.7
Indonesia	39.8	39.6	34.6	27.3	22.6	5.1	3.9	3.0	2.3	1.8
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	14.8	8.1	5.6	5.1	4.8	3.6	2.5	1.8	1.4	1.1
Iraq	28.0	26.5	19.8	13.1	9.4	4.4	3.9	3.2	2.7	2.2
Jamaica	7.2	6.3	6.1	6.4	6.9	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8
Jordan	10.8	9.3	7.8	8.0	7.7	2.6	2.1	1.8	1.5	1.3
Kazakhstan	16.1	15.3	11.2	6.8	7.9**	4.2	2.9	1.6	1.0	0.9
Kenya	38.6	36.7	29.0	22.0	17.9	9.5	6.7	5.1	4.4	3.9
Korea (DPR)	52.5	39.1	25.8	19.6	16.6	10.0	3.3	2.6	1.8	1.7
Kuwait	3.7	4.5	4.9	4.7	4.5	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	0.8
Kyrgyzstan	28.3	21.9	15.9	12.0	11.0	5.1	3.8	2.6	1.9	1.7
Lao PDR	48.9	46.8	40.5	33.6	29.9	10.0	7.4	5.2	3.8	2.9
Latvia	3.3	2.7	2.1	1.8	1.7	1.4	1.0	0.7	0.4	0.3

APPENDIX B Data underlying the calculation of the 2000, 2006, 2012, 2018, and 2026 Global Hunger Index scores

Country	Undernourishment (% of population)					Child wasting (% of children under five years old)				
	'00-'02	'05-'07	'11-'13	'17-'19	'23-'25	'98-'02	'04-'08	'10-'14	'16-'20	'21-'25
Lebanon	7.4	6.2	4.8	5.9	11.1	2.8*	6.6	2.0*	2.1*	1.3
Lesotho	—	—	—	—	—	6.0*	5.6	3.3	2.1	1.6
Liberia	35.0	35.4	36.5	35.3	37.3	7.4	7.9	5.6	3.9	3.8*
Libya	3.7	5.2	8.9	11.4	18.7	5.4*	6.5	10.2	5.4*	3.5
Lithuania	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	5.6*	5.0*	4.6*	4.7*	4.9
Madagascar	33.4	30.6	28.8	38.1	41.8	8.4*	10.8	6.6	6.4	7.2
Malawi	23.2	19.3	14.2	18.3	24.5	6.8	4.2	3.9	1.5	1.8
Malaysia	2.5	3.4	3.5	2.9	< 2.5	15.3	13.2	11.3*	9.7	11.0
Maldives	—	—	—	—	—	13.4	12.3*	9.9*	9.1	7.8*
Mali	14.3	10.3	6.2	5.0	12.1	12.6	15.4	10.4	9.4	5.4
Mauritania	9.8	9.3	6.1	7.6	11.0	15.3	13.6	11.7	11.5	13.6
Mauritius	5.9	5.4	6.5	6.8	4.9	14.2*	14.0*	13.0*	11.4*	14.1*
Mexico	2.8	3.7	4.1	3.7	3.1	2.0	3.5	1.6	1.4	1.0
Moldova (Rep. of)	24.3	27.8	5.3	< 2.5	< 2.5	3.8*	5.8	1.9	3.5*	3.3*
Mongolia	30.0	26.5	13.1	6.3	< 2.5	7.1	2.7	1.0	0.9	2.7
Montenegro	—	3.0	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	—	4.2	2.8	2.2	2.6*
Morocco	5.8	4.8	4.3	3.6	6.5	4.0*	10.8	2.3	2.6	2.7*
Mozambique	36.4	27.3	21.6	32.4	22.3	8.1	4.8	6.1	3.9	3.8
Myanmar	38.6	21.0	7.4	3.2	4.6	10.7	8.9*	7.9	7.4	5.9*
Namibia	15.7	22.0	22.9	21.7	20.1	10.0	7.6	7.1	6.5*	6.7
Nepal	23.7	16.0	9.3	4.4	5.2	11.3	12.7	12.4	10.9	6.6
Nicaragua	25.8	20.9	16.9	15.5	—	2.3	1.1	2.2	1.3*	1.1*
Niger	23.1	17.0	15.0	10.4	12.9	16.2	12.1	15.8	14.1	11.1
Nigeria	8.7	9.2	11.9	12.1	22.2	12.4*	10.2*	10.2	6.8	8.4
North Macedonia	6.7	4.1	2.6	< 2.5	< 2.5	1.8	3.4	1.8	3.4	1.9*
Oman	16.3	7.4	6.7	6.7	7.1	7.8	8.8*	7.5	9.3	6.9*
Pakistan	20.4	15.7	15.1	10.9	16.1	14.1	12.2*	12.7	7.1	9.8*
Panama	23.3	13.5	7.4	5.0	4.7	1.4*	1.2	1.2*	1.1	0.9*
Papua New Guinea	26.7	27.9	28.6	28.5	30.5	8.2*	4.3	14.1	6.9*	6.6*
Paraguay	10.3	6.0	< 2.5	2.7	4.1	1.6	1.1	2.6	1.0	1.1*
Peru	20.4	14.9	6.6	6.0	5.7	1.4	1.0	1.3	0.5	0.6
Philippines	18.5	17.0	14.1	6.5	3.4	8.0	7.1*	7.0	5.5	5.4
Qatar	—	—	—	—	—	1.8*	1.6*	1.3*	1.3*	1.6
Romania	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	4.3	3.2*	3.2*	3.2*	2.1*
Russian Federation	4.2	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	4.9	3.3	1.1*	1.2*	1.2*
Rwanda	37.6	30.4	24.7	32.2	22.6	8.7	4.9	3.1	2.1	1.6*
Saudi Arabia	4.6	3.9	3.2	< 2.5	< 2.5	7.0*	11.8	4.9*	3.9	4.3*
Senegal	21.1	14.6	11.6	7.5	5.3	10.0	8.7	8.7	7.8	10.2
Serbia	—	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	—	4.5	3.7	2.6	3.3*
Sierra Leone	50.0	35.5	21.1	27.9	25.3	11.6	10.2	6.1	5.7	6.3
Slovakia	—	—	—	—	—	1.3*	1.2*	1.1*	1.1*	1.1*
Solomon Islands	11.2	13.1	19.8	20.9	27.0	6.7*	4.3	6.0*	5.8*	5.6*
Somalia	70.0	69.7	67.4	56.1	56.5	19.3	13.3	12.4*	15.5*	14.6*
South Africa	3.6	3.3	4.6	6.1	11.2	3.8*	5.4	3.3*	3.6	2.8*
South Sudan	—	—	—	—	19.1	—	—	22.7	—	—
Sri Lanka	16.8	13.5	10.0	5.4	4.9	15.9	15.2	21.3	9.9	9.3
Sudan	—	—	—	10.8	—	—	—	15.8	14.0*	18.1*
Suriname	11.4	8.0	8.8	9.7	12.7	7.0	4.9	5.0	5.5	4.8*
Syrian Arab Republic	7.5	6.0	7.7	23.3	40.8	4.9	10.3	11.5	16.0*	12.9*
Tajikistan	40.0	35.1	22.2	11.6	8.0	9.4	7.8	9.9	5.6	6.4
Tanzania (United Rep. of)	32.8	27.0	21.6	23.3	19.1	5.6	3.5	5.3	3.5	3.3
Thailand	17.3	10.6	9.3	7.6	5.4	7.4*	4.7	6.7	7.7	7.2
Timor-Leste	54.9	25.7	13.6	14.5	16.9	13.7	21.3	9.9	8.3	18.5**
Togo	28.5	23.1	20.8	21.3	10.2	12.0	6.0	5.5	5.7	4.6*
Trinidad & Tobago	10.3	10.5	5.9	6.1	10.4	5.2	5.4*	6.4	4.6*	4.5*
Tunisia	4.0	4.0	3.2	< 2.5	2.8	2.9	3.4	2.8	2.1	2.9*
Türkiye	30.6	12.6	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	3.0	1.0	1.9	1.7	1.3*
Turkmenistan	6.0	4.4	4.6	3.5	4.1	8.0	7.2	4.8*	4.1	3.3
Uganda	21.2	19.2	20.3	38.1	20.9	5.0	6.2	4.2	2.8	3.2
Ukraine	2.7	< 2.5	< 2.5	3.3	10.8	8.2	6.7*	6.7*	6.9*	6.5*
United Arab Emirates	< 2.5	3.8	3.9	2.9	< 2.5	5.3*	4.7*	4.8*	4.9*	4.9*
Uruguay	3.6	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	1.6	1.4	0.6	1.4	1.2*
Uzbekistan	18.9	10.0	< 2.5	< 2.5	< 2.5	9.0	4.4	3.9*	1.8	2.4
Venezuela (Boliv. Rep. of)	14.1	6.5	< 2.5	23.5	5.3	3.9	4.8	3.1*	3.6*	2.8*
Viet Nam	19.5	14.9	8.8	6.9	6.1	6.1	10.6	6.7	5.4	4.4
Yemen	—	—	—	—	—	15.9*	13.8	14.9	12.9*	16.8
Zambia	50.3	48.1	41.0	31.5	41.0	5.9	5.6	6.2	4.2	2.5
Zimbabwe	32.8	28.7	29.6	31.4	18.4	8.3	7.2	2.9	2.9	5.1

Note: The colors shown in the table represent the following categories: ■ = low ■ = moderate ■ = serious ■ = alarming ■ = extremely alarming

— = Data not available or not presented. Some countries did not exist in their present borders in the given year or reference period. *GHI estimates. ** Survey value due to missing official estimate or newly released data: 1999/2001, 2005/2007, and 2012: Nicaragua; 2023: Bolivia; 2024: Angola, Chad, Kazakhstan, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Turkmenistan, Zambia; 2025: Bangladesh, Nepal, Niger; 2026: India, Timor-Leste

Country	Child stunting (% of children under five years old)					Child mortality (% of children under five years old)				
	2000	2006	2012	2018	2024	2000	2006	2012	2018	2024
Lebanon	18.8	15.7	11.4	9.6	10.1	2.0	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.8
Lesotho	42.1	41.6	37.5	33.7	35.0	10.8	11.5	8.1	6.9	6.0
Liberia	45.0	40.5	34.6	29.4	26.9	19.5	12.6	10.0	8.9	8.6
Libya	19.8	28.3	25.8	16.7	9.2	2.8	2.2	1.5	1.2	1.0
Lithuania	2.9	2.4	1.9	1.6	1.6	1.1	0.9	0.5	0.4	0.3
Madagascar	56.1	53.7	48.2	42.3	38.4	10.4	8.1	6.7	6.5	6.2
Malawi	56.1	52.7	43.5	35.8	37.8**	17.1	10.3	6.8	5.2	4.9
Malaysia	19.3	18.3	18.1	20.8	24.3	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Maldives	33.8	24.8	16.3	14.7	14.2	3.9	1.9	1.2	0.8	0.5
Mali	40.0	35.6	29.2	24.9	23.2	19.0	15.5	12.4	9.6	7.3
Mauritania	39.2	31.0	25.2	22.9	21.5	9.8	6.8	5.4	4.5	3.7
Mauritius	12.4	9.8	8.2	7.9	7.8	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Mexico	20.3	16.5	13.2	12.7	13.1	2.7	2.1	1.8	1.5	1.3
Moldova (Rep. of)	12.9	9.6	6.8	5.2	4.2	3.1	1.9	1.6	1.5	1.6
Mongolia	29.7	21.4	12.3	8.6	7.1	6.3	3.7	2.3	1.6	1.3
Montenegro	—	8.5	8.5	8.1	8.0	—	1.0	0.6	0.3	0.2
Morocco	25.3	19.6	15.6	14.1	13.7	5.2	3.9	2.8	2.0	1.6
Mozambique	48.6	46.0	42.6	38.9	37.0	16.5	11.9	8.6	7.0	5.9
Myanmar	45.9	38.1	31.2	26.9	24.5	8.9	7.4	5.7	4.5	3.7
Namibia	29.7	28.8	24.0	18.7	29.5**	7.8	6.6	5.3	4.8	3.9
Nepal	55.9	48.9	39.7	31.1	26.2**	7.9	5.7	4.4	3.3	2.5
Nicaragua	24.0**	21.6**	17.3**	15.0*	12.6*	3.7	2.8	2.1	1.5	1.1
Niger	52.1	49.1	45.0	44.7	50.5**	22.8	16.2	13.0	12.2	11.1
Nigeria	41.8	40.3	36.9	34.4	39.5**	17.7	14.1	12.2	11.7	11.6
North Macedonia	8.6	8.5	5.7	4.3	3.8	1.6	1.3	1.0	0.8	0.3
Oman	14.6	12.1	11.2	11.9	12.9	1.7	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.0
Pakistan	40.3	44.7	43.9	38.1	33.6	10.8	9.4	8.2	6.8	5.6
Panama	18.3	21.2	20.2	16.0	14.0	2.6	2.1	1.8	1.6	1.5
Papua New Guinea	37.1	44.6	47.7	47.0	47.6	7.2	6.5	5.6	4.8	3.9
Paraguay	18.5	16.1	9.4	5.0	3.2	3.4	2.9	2.4	2.0	1.6
Peru	34.4	27.1	18.1	12.4	10.6	3.8	2.5	1.8	1.5	1.3
Philippines	34.5	34.0	31.9	28.8	27.7	3.7	3.2	2.9	2.8	2.6
Qatar	9.4	7.5	6.3	5.8	5.4	1.2	1.0	0.9	0.7	0.6
Romania	13.5	11.6	8.8	7.6	7.0	2.1	1.7	1.1	0.7	0.7
Russian Federation	17.7*	12.9*	3.1*	3.2*	2.9*	1.9	1.3	1.0	0.6	0.5
Rwanda	48.7	48.1	41.3	33.5	29.8	18.4	9.3	5.4	4.4	3.8
Saudi Arabia	11.0	12.1	12.5	11.7	11.1	2.2	1.5	1.1	0.8	0.6
Senegal	24.6	20.9	18.2	17.6	17.2	12.9	8.1	5.8	4.8	3.7
Serbia	—	7.9	5.9	5.3	4.6	—	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.5
Sierra Leone	38.7	37.8	33.3	28.5	25.2	22.3	18.7	14.4	11.2	9.0
Slovakia	5.8*	5.0*	4.4*	4.1*	3.9*	1.0	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.6
Solomon Islands	31.1	33.2	31.9	29.6	29.8	3.1	2.9	2.6	2.4	2.0
Somalia	33.6	33.2	29.4	25.7	23.9	17.3	17.3	18.5	13.6	10.1
South Africa	26.6	25.8	22.3	22.1	24.4	7.1	7.7	4.3	3.5	3.5
South Sudan	39.1	35.3	31.0	30.1	30.0	18.0	13.1	9.9	13.4	9.7
Sri Lanka	19.8	19.0	15.9	12.1	10.1	1.6	1.3	1.0	0.8	0.6
Sudan	38.3	37.9	35.9	34.7	35.4	10.2	8.3	6.9	5.8	6.2
Suriname	13.6	10.6	8.3	8.1	8.0	3.1	2.6	2.2	1.9	1.6
Syrian Arab Republic	28.3	29.4	26.5	26.5	23.5	2.3	1.9	3.4	3.2	1.8
Tajikistan	41.3	35.3	25.7	16.8	13.1	7.8	4.7	3.5	3.1	2.8
Tanzania (United Rep. of)	47.6	43.5	37.7	32.5	29.9	12.8	8.7	6.2	4.8	3.7
Thailand	16.1	16.2	14.1	12.4	12.3	2.2	1.7	1.3	1.1	0.9
Timor-Leste	—	57.0	52.7	47.3	44.9**	—	8.4	6.6	5.6	4.8
Togo	31.6	29.4	26.4	24.2	23.0	11.9	9.9	8.3	6.8	5.6
Trinidad & Tobago	5.3	7.2	8.5	8.0	7.8	2.9	2.7	2.4	2.2	1.9
Tunisia	12.5	10.7	8.9	8.6	8.9	2.9	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.2
Türkiye	17.4	14.9	9.2	6.5	5.5	3.7	2.3	1.6	1.2	1.0
Turkmenistan	26.5	19.5	12.6	8.4	9.2**	6.9	5.0	4.3	4.4	3.9
Uganda	44.0	40.4	33.4	26.3	23.5	14.4	9.9	6.7	5.3	4.9
Ukraine	22.6	20.5	18.0	15.7	11.7	1.8	1.4	1.1	0.9	0.8
United Arab Emirates	0.4*	0.4*	0.5*	0.4*	0.4*	1.1	1.0	0.8	0.7	0.5
Uruguay	16.3	12.6	9.0	7.0	6.5	1.7	1.4	1.0	0.8	0.7
Uzbekistan	29.0	20.2	13.2	8.7	6.7	6.1	4.2	2.5	1.6	1.3
Venezuela (Boliv. Rep. of)	17.6	16.3	12.2	11.0	11.7	2.2	1.8	1.8	2.4	2.4
Viet Nam	41.1	32.1	25.5	21.5	19.2	3.0	2.5	2.3	2.0	1.7
Yemen	55.3	53.8	48.5	46.0	47.4	9.3	6.7	5.2	4.7	3.8
Zambia	52.1	48.8	40.8	33.9	32.1**	15.2	9.5	6.9	5.5	4.8
Zimbabwe	33.1	34.3	31.0	24.5	23.7	9.9	8.8	6.8	5.6	6.5

APPENDIX C 2026 Global Hunger Index Scores and Their Changes since 2018

Country	With data from							Country	With data from						
	2000 '98- '02	2006 '04- '08	2012 '10- '14	2018 '16- '20	2026 '21- '26	Absolute change since 2018	% change since 2018		2000 '98- '02	2006 '04- '08	2012 '10- '14	2018 '16- '20	2026 '21- '26	Absolute change since 2018	% change since 2018
Afghanistan	49.8	38.1	31.5	28.4	28.6	+0.2	+0.7	Lebanon	11.0	11.4	7.0	7.2	9.4	+2.2	+30.6
Albania	15.2	15.7	9.5	6.2	7.1	+0.9	+14.5	Lesotho	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Algeria	14.1	11.9	9.1	7.1	7.5	+0.4	+5.6	Liberia	48.0	40.8	36.0	32.4	32.3	-0.1	-0.3
Angola	61.7	39.1	23.2	24.0	24.3	+0.3	+1.3	Libya	11.9	14.6	17.0	12.9	12.9	0.0	0.0
Argentina	6.5	5.4	5.4	5.5	5.5	0.0	+0.0	Lithuania	5.5	<5	<5	<5	<5	—	—
Armenia	20.3	14.4	7.8	6.2	<5	—	—	Madagascar	41.9	39.2	33.6	35.7	36.5	+0.8	+2.2
Azerbaijan	25.3	15.5	10.6	7.1	5.5	-1.6	-22.5	Malawi	43.1	32.7	24.9	21.9	24.9	+3.0	+13.7
Bahrain	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Malaysia	15.1	13.9	12.8	12.3	13.6	+1.3	+10.6
Bangladesh	34.6	30.0	27.3	20.0	19.2	-0.8	-4.0	Maldives	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Belarus	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	—	—	Mali	40.6	36.0	27.1	22.4	20.5	-1.9	-8.5
Benin	32.1	27.3	24.6	24.0	24.3	+0.3	+1.3	Mauritania	31.3	25.3	20.1	19.3	20.8	+1.5	+7.8
Bhutan	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Mauritius	15.1	13.8	13.3	12.5	13.2	+0.7	+5.6
Bolivia (Plurinat. State of)	26.6	23.0	16.2	12.2	14.2	+2.0	+16.4	Mexico	9.7	9.4	7.4	6.8	6.2	-0.6	-8.8
Bosnia & Herzegovina	9.5	6.3	<5	<5	<5	—	—	Moldova (Rep. of)	18.3	18.9	6.4	5.4	5.0	-0.4	-7.4
Botswana	29.8	27.8	23.3	21.1	18.7	-2.4	-11.4	Mongolia	29.5	21.2	11.1	6.7	5.3	-1.4	-20.9
Brazil	11.7	7.0	5.5	5.7	5.5	-0.2	-3.5	Montenegro	—	6.5	<5	<5	<5	—	—
Bulgaria	8.7	8.5	7.5	5.8	<5	—	—	Morocco	15.7	16.4	9.4	8.2	9.0	+0.8	+9.8
Burkina Faso	44.3	36.4	30.3	25.1	22.1	-3.0	-12.0	Mozambique	46.9	36.3	30.8	31.6	25.9	-5.7	-18.0
Burundi	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Myanmar	41.4	29.8	20.3	16.2	14.5	-1.7	-10.5
Cabo Verde	16.0	13.2	12.2	8.4	6.9	-1.5	-17.9	Namibia	26.6	26.5	24.2	21.7	22.9	+1.2	+5.5
Cambodia	39.8	26.8	21.3	15.2	14.3	-0.9	-5.9	Nepal	37.0	30.8	24.4	18.4	14.5	-3.9	-21.2
Cameroon	36.8	29.4	22.2	19.4	16.9	-2.5	-12.9	Nicaragua	21.3	17.2	14.3	12.1	—	—	—
Central African Republic	46.8	44.4	37.1	34.5	33.1	-1.4	-4.1	Niger	52.7	40.9	38.1	34.4	34.1	-0.3	-0.9
Chad	49.5	46.2	41.0	38.5	38.0	-0.5	-1.3	Nigeria	37.3	32.5	31.0	28.2	34.3	+6.1	+21.6
Chile	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	—	—	North Macedonia	7.4	6.9	<5	<5	<5	—	—
China	13.8	9.1	<5	<5	<5	—	—	Oman	16.2	12.0	10.7	11.8	10.8	-1.0	-8.5
Colombia	10.7	11.2	8.7	6.7	6.1	-0.6	-9.0	Pakistan	36.2	32.9	31.6	24.0	25.5	+1.5	+6.3
Comoros	35.7	27.7	25.1	19.0	17.6	-1.4	-7.4	Panama	17.3	13.4	10.3	8.1	7.2	-0.9	-11.1
Congo (Republic of)	35.3	31.8	29.0	24.9	20.9	-4.0	-16.1	Papua New Guinea	31.4	30.8	36.4	31.4	31.5	+0.1	+0.3
Costa Rica	5.8	<5	<5	<5	<5	—	—	Paraguay	12.8	9.7	6.9	<5	<5	—	—
Côte d'Ivoire	32.8	34.1	26.4	21.0	20.2	-0.8	-3.8	Peru	21.1	15.6	9.5	7.2	6.5	-0.7	-9.7
Croatia	7.4	<5	<5	<5	<5	—	—	Philippines	23.9	22.2	20.1	15.3	13.5	-1.8	-11.8
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	48.5	39.3	37.3	36.6	39.5	+2.9	+7.9	Qatar	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Djibouti	41.4	35.3	28.1	22.7	22.5	-0.2	-0.9	Romania	8.1	6.4	5.2	<5	<5	—	—
Dominican Republic	15.2	14.3	11.0	8.3	5.9	-2.4	-28.9	Russian Federation	10.5	6.7	<5	<5	<5	—	—
Ecuador	19.1	16.4	12.3	11.6	10.3	-1.3	-11.2	Rwanda	49.6	35.7	27.0	26.7	21.0	-5.7	-21.3
Egypt	16.5	14.6	16.0	11.6	10.5	-1.1	-9.5	Saudi Arabia	10.5	12.5	8.1	6.3	6.1	-0.2	-3.2
El Salvador	13.6	12.2	10.0	7.2	7.0	-0.2	-2.8	Senegal	32.5	23.6	19.5	16.2	15.4	-0.8	-4.9
Equatorial Guinea	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Serbia	—	5.9	<5	<5	<5	—	—
Eritrea	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Sierra Leone	57.7	47.2	33.8	32.3	28.7	-3.6	-11.1
Estonia	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	—	—	Slovakia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Eswatini	24.3	25.7	22.8	17.6	16.1	-1.5	-8.5	Solomon Islands	18.7	18.5	21.7	21.2	23.4	+2.2	+10.4
Ethiopia	53.0	42.3	31.2	24.9	24.1	-0.8	-3.2	Somalia	64.4	60.8	59.6	51.1	47.0	-4.1	-8.0
Fiji	9.2	9.5	10.4	9.6	10.0	+0.4	+4.2	South Africa	16.7	17.8	13.2	13.1	15.4	+2.3	+17.6
Gabon	19.8	19.4	16.3	16.5	18.0	+1.5	+9.1	South Sudan	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gambia	29.4	25.1	21.0	19.3	18.4	-0.9	-4.7	Sri Lanka	22.1	19.9	20.8	11.4	10.2	-1.2	-10.5
Georgia	11.7	9.2	7.1	<5	<5	—	—	Sudan	—	—	—	26.0	—	—	—
Ghana	29.0	22.1	17.7	15.5	13.0	-2.5	-16.1	Suriname	14.8	11.0	10.5	10.8	11.4	+0.6	+5.6
Guatemala	29.0	24.9	21.5	19.8	18.3	-1.5	-7.6	Syrian Arab Republic	14.8	17.1	19.2	28.0	31.5	+3.5	+12.5
Guinea	36.9	34.2	28.6	26.7	22.3	-4.4	-16.5	Tajikistan	39.2	31.8	24.2	14.9	12.7	-2.2	-14.8
Guinea-Bissau	37.7	29.8	28.3	23.1	23.9	+0.8	+3.5	Tanzania (United Rep. of)	40.3	31.8	26.8	23.9	20.4	-3.5	-14.6
Guyana	17.0	15.8	14.0	10.2	6.8	-3.4	-33.3	Thailand	17.2	12.5	12.2	11.4	10.0	-1.4	-12.3
Haiti	40.1	39.3	31.7	30.4	34.4	+4.0	+13.2	Timor-Leste	—	44.1	30.0	27.3	32.5	+5.2	+19.0
Honduras	21.7	17.6	13.5	12.9	12.3	-0.6	-4.7	Togo	37.4	29.4	25.9	24.3	17.6	-6.7	-27.6
Hungary	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	—	—	Trinidad & Tobago	11.2	11.6	10.3	9.1	10.5	+1.4	+15.4
India	38.1	37.0	28.8	25.8	24.1	-1.7	-6.6	Tunisia	9.0	8.1	6.8	5.9	6.0	+0.1	+1.7
Indonesia	25.0	28.8	22.5	17.0	14.4	-2.6	-15.3	Türkiye	22.1	11.6	5.4	<5	<5	—	—
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	12.4	9.8	9.1	8.3	7.2	-1.1	-13.3	Turkmenistan	19.8	15.3	11.7	9.9	9.4	-0.5	-5.1
Iraq	22.9	20.1	17.2	13.5	11.9	-1.6	-11.9	Uganda	35.8	30.5	25.1	28.7	20.7	-8.0	-27.9
Jamaica	8.3	8.4	8.3	7.8	7.8	0.0	0.0	Ukraine	12.8	10.8	9.7	9.8	11.6	+1.8	+18.4
Jordan	10.2	7.6	8.5	9.5	9.4	-0.1	-1.1	United Arab Emirates	<5	5.2	5.2	<5	<5	—	—
Kazakhstan	11.9	13.0	8.8	6.1	6.0	-0.1	-1.6	Uruguay	7.9	5.7	<5	<5	<5	—	—
Kenya	35.6	29.8	23.4	23.4	25.0	+1.6	+6.8	Uzbekistan	25.6	15.4	8.5	5.2	<5	—	—
Korea (DPR)	43.8	32.6	29.0	27.4	—	—	—	Venezuela (Boliv. Rep. of)	14.3	11.0	7.1	16.7	8.9	-7.8	-46.7
Kuwait	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	—	—	Viet Nam	24.2	22.1	15.6	12.9	11.2	-1.7	-13.2
Kyrgyzstan	18.5	14.0	10.7	8.2	7.9	-0.3	-3.7	Yemen	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lao PDR	43.8	29.5	21.5	20.1	20.0	-0.1	-0.5	Zambia	51.1	43.8	36.8	28.7	30.7	+2.0	+7.0
Latvia	5.4	<5	<5	<5	<5	—	—	Zimbabwe	35.6	32.5	27.8	25.9	22.3	-3.6	-13.9

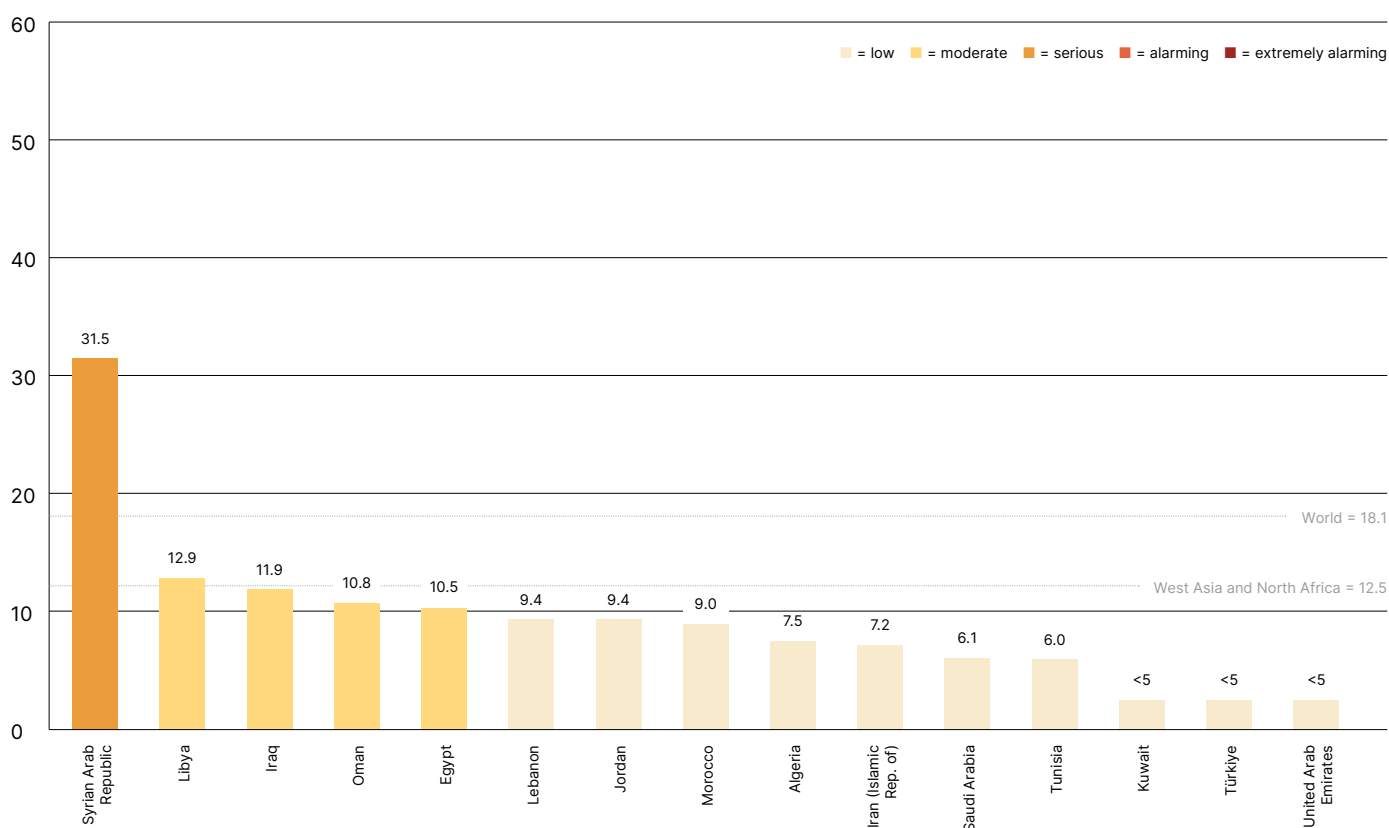
Note: -x.x = The Global Hunger Index score has improved. +x.x = The Global Hunger Index score has worsened. — = Data are not available or not presented.

See Table A.3 for provisional designations of the severity of hunger for some countries with incomplete data. Some countries did not exist in their present borders in the given year or reference period.

■ = low ■ = moderate ■ = serious ■ = alarming ■ = extremely alarming

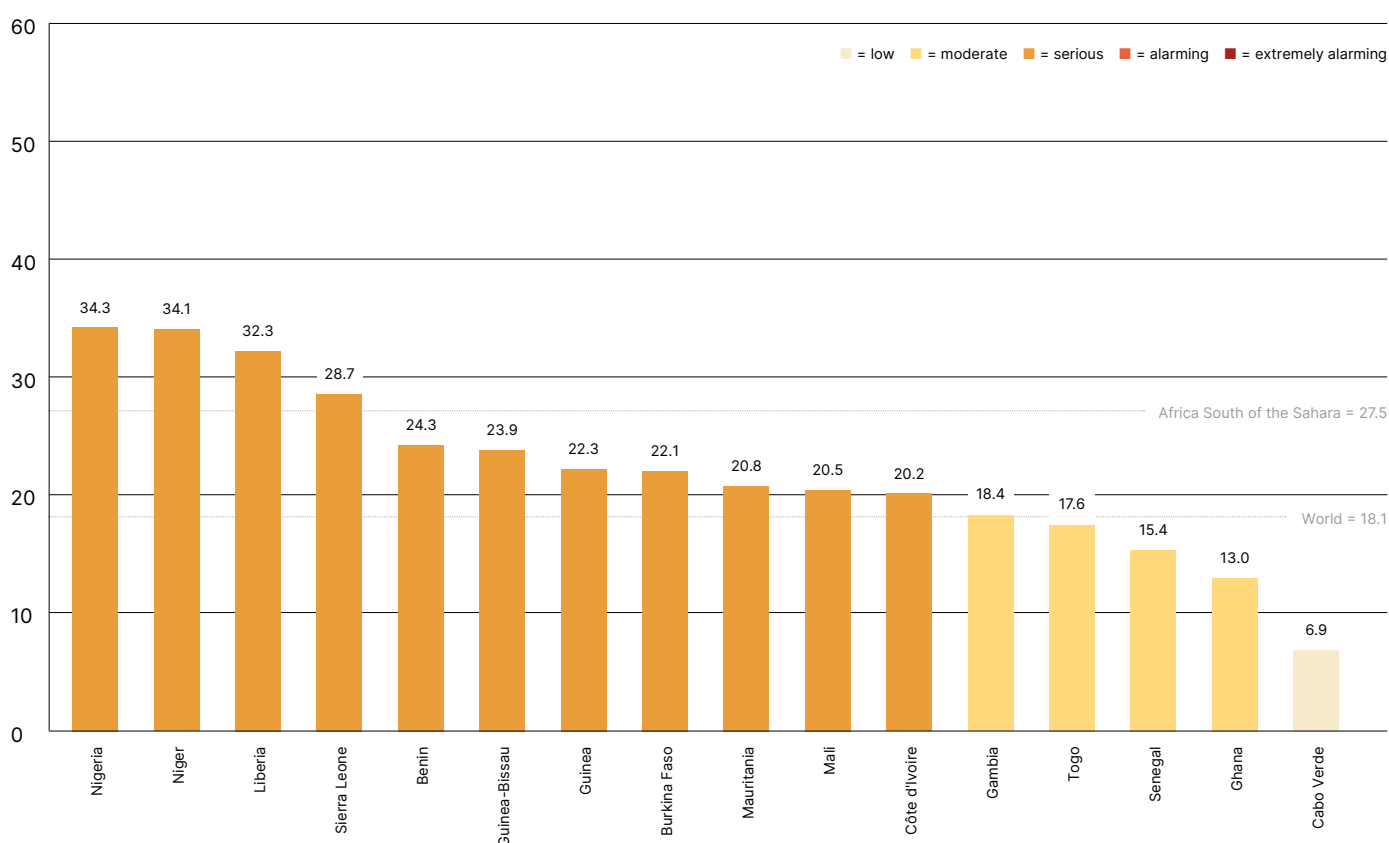
APPENDIX D Regional Ranking of Countries by 2026 GHI Score

West Asia and North Africa



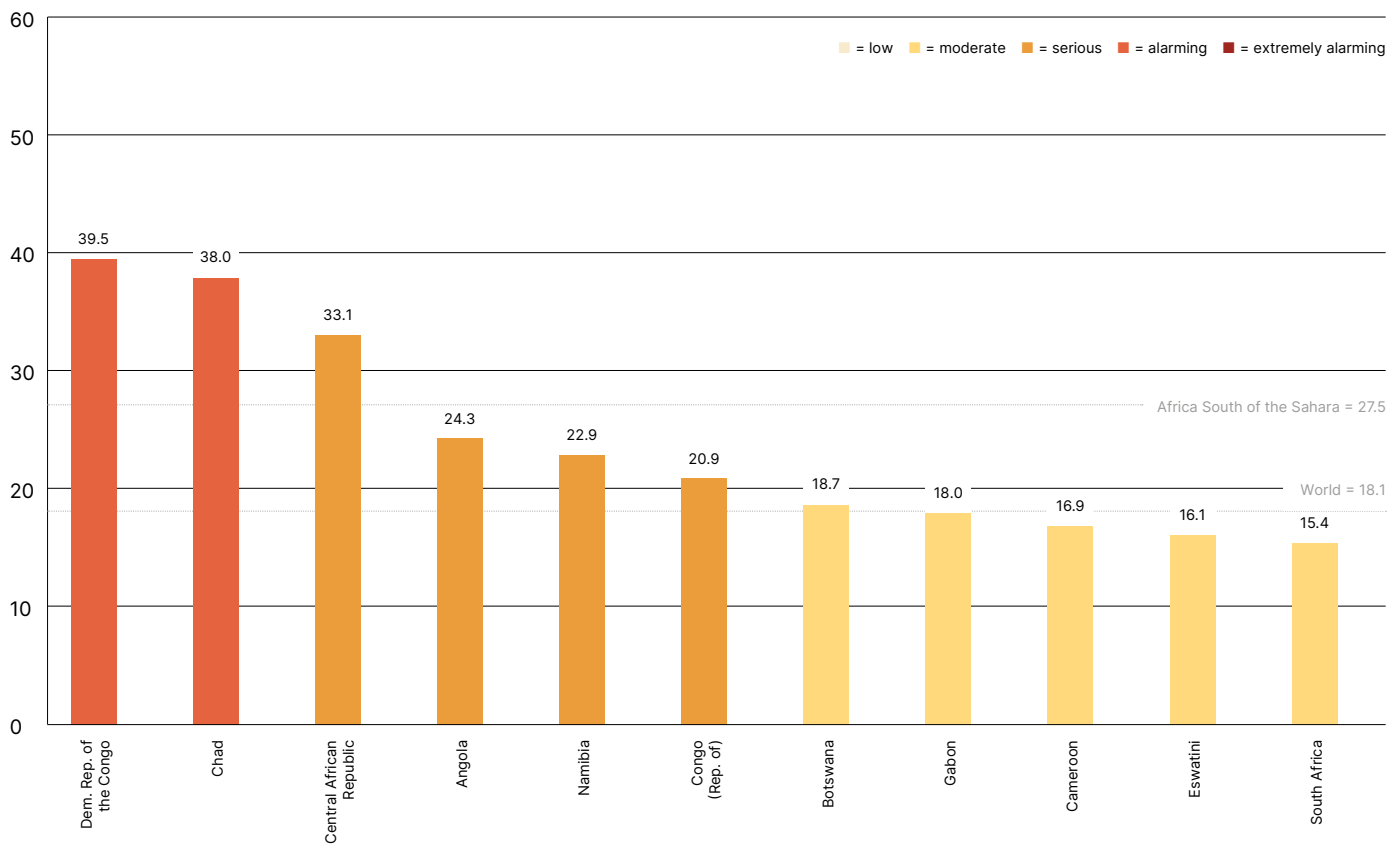
Note: Bahrain, Yemen and Qatar are in the West Asia and North Africa region but are not shown, owing to insufficient data for the calculation of GHI scores. Existing data and provisional indicator values for these countries were included in the calculation of regional and global GHI scores. See Table A.3 regarding provisional designations of hunger severity for countries with incomplete data. Countries with GHI scores of less than 5 are presented in alphabetical order.

West Africa



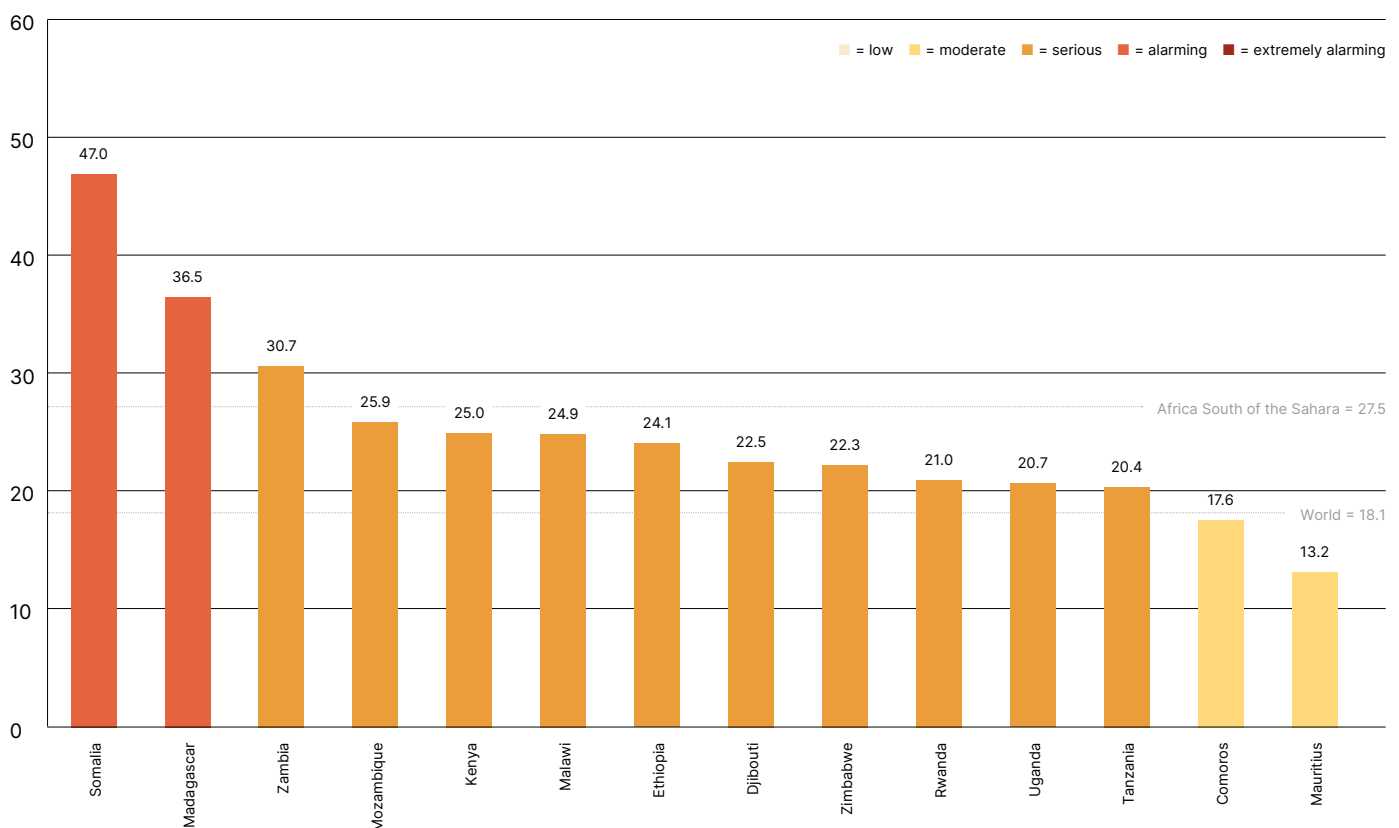
APPENDIX D Regional Ranking of Countries by 2026 GHI Score

Central and Southern Africa



Note: Equatorial Guinea and Lesotho are in the Central and Southern Africa subregions but are not shown, owing to insufficient data for the calculation of GHI scores. Existing data and provisional indicator values for these countries were included in the calculation of regional and global GHI scores. See Table A.3 regarding provisional designations of hunger severity for countries with incomplete data.

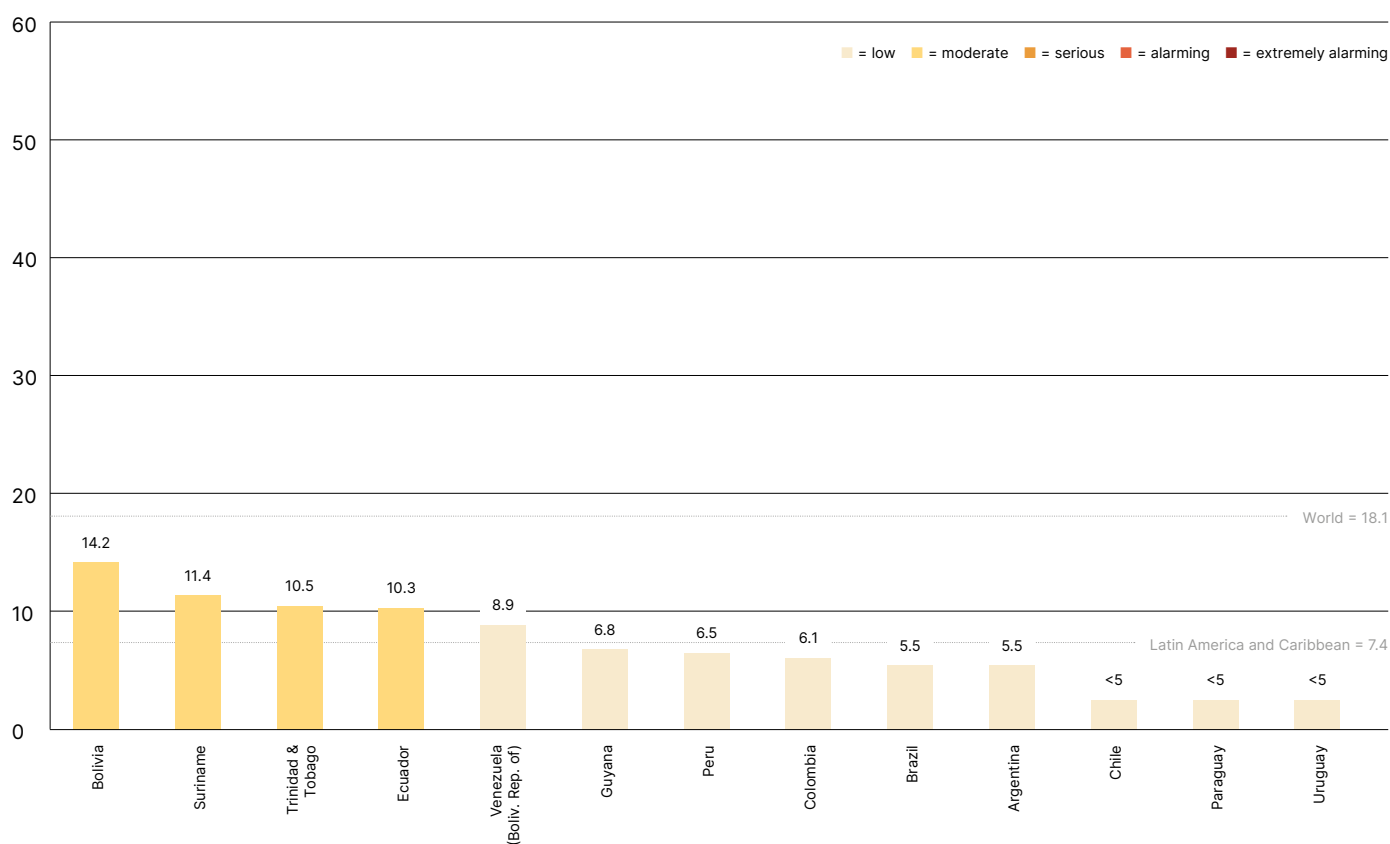
East Africa



Note: Burundi, Eritrea, South Sudan, and Sudan are in the East Africa subregion but are not shown, owing to insufficient data for the calculation of GHI scores. Existing data and provisional indicator values for these countries were included in the calculation of regional and global GHI scores. See Table A.3 regarding provisional designations of hunger severity for countries with incomplete data.

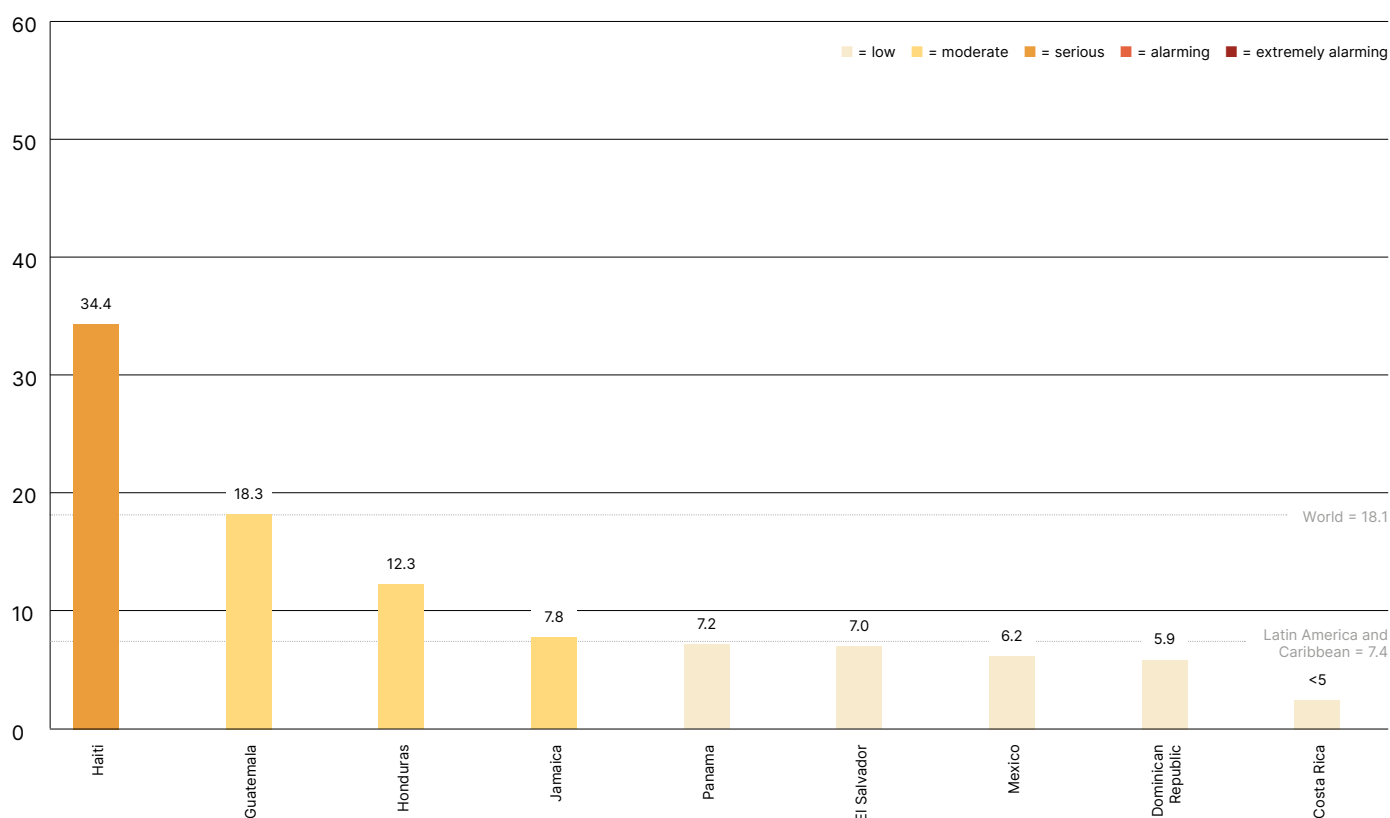
APPENDIX D Regional Ranking of Countries by 2026 GHI Score

South America



Note: Countries with GHI scores of less than 5 are presented in alphabetical order.

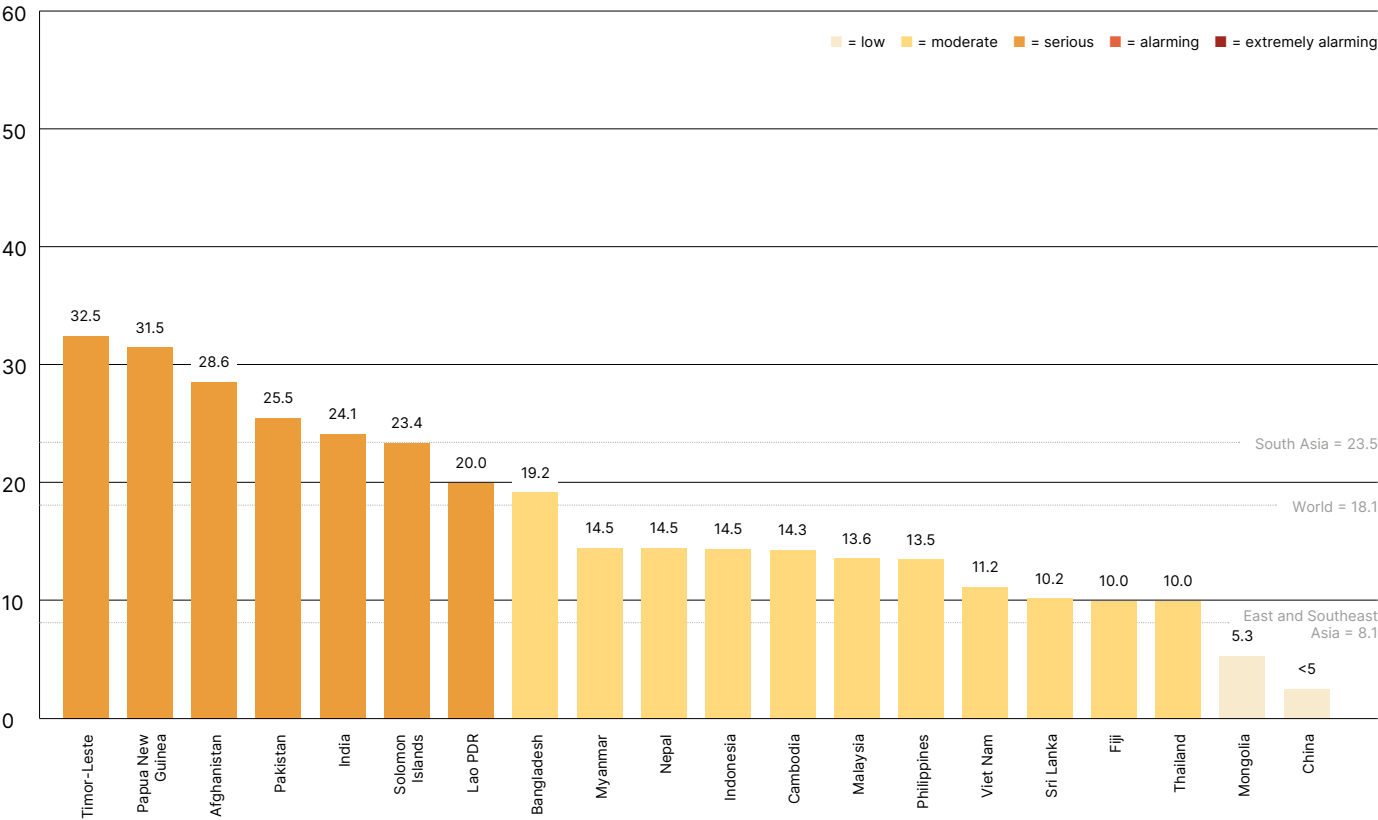
Central America and the Caribbean



Note: Nicaragua is in the Central America and the Caribbean subregion but is not shown, owing to insufficient data for the calculation of GHI scores. Existing data and provisional indicator values for these countries were included in the calculation of regional and global GHI scores. See Table A.3 regarding provisional designations of hunger severity for countries with incomplete data.

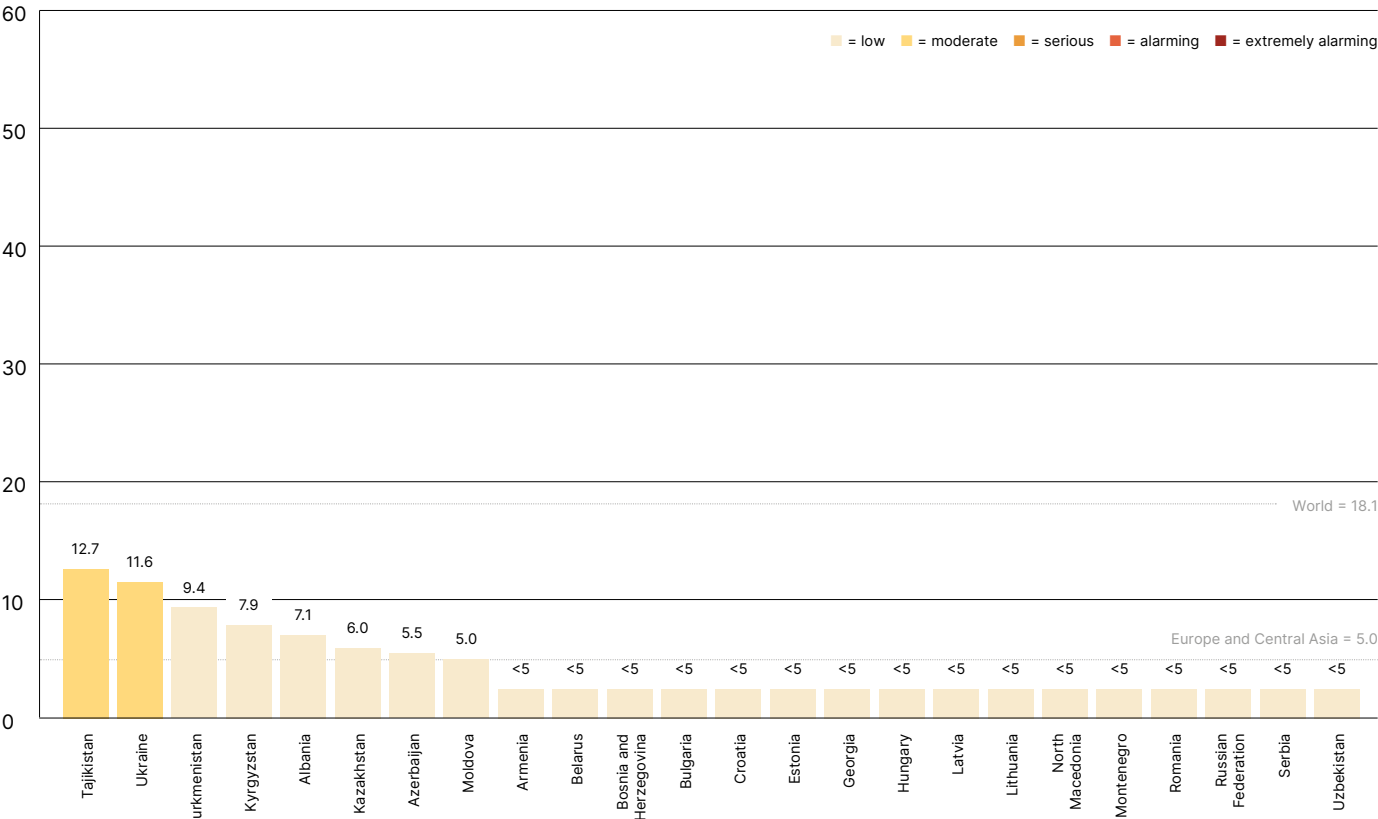
APPENDIX D Regional Ranking of Countries by 2026 GHI Score

South, East, and Southeast Asia



Note: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka are in South Asia for the purposes of Figure 1.3, whereas the remaining countries are in East and Southeast Asia. Bhutan, DPR Korea and Maldives are not shown, owing to insufficient data for the calculation of GHI scores. Existing data and provisional indicator values for these countries were included in the calculation of regional and global GHI scores. See Table A.3 regarding provisional designations of hunger severity for countries with incomplete data.

Europe and Central Asia



Note: Slovakia is in the "Europe and Central Asia" subregion but is not shown, owing to insufficient data for the calculation of a GHI score. Existing data and provisional indicator values for this country was included in the calculation of regional and global GHI scores. See Table A.3 regarding provisional designations of hunger severity for countries with incomplete data. Countries with GHI scores of less than 5 are presented in alphabetical order.

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Resources for Understanding Hunger and Malnutrition

The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a tool for assessing hunger at global, regional, and national levels. Among its strengths are the following:

- **Measuring and tracking long-term trends.** The 2026 GHI scores are based on the most up-to-date data available for the underlying indicators for each country. This GHI report also includes GHI scores for 2000, 2006, 2012, and 2018 to show trends in hunger over time.
- **Reflecting both the quantity and quality of food and diets.** The four indicators underlying GHI scores—undernourishment, child stunting, child wasting, and child mortality—reflect deficiencies in calories (quantity) as well as in important micronutrients (quality).
- **Complementing other reports and resources.** The countries where GHI scores are high—indicating that calories are chronically insufficient and/or children's growth and well-being have been hampered by under-nutrition—are particularly vulnerable to food crises and stresses, which are reported by other sources.

Other resources offer additional important perspectives on hunger and malnutrition. The following is a selection and brief description of those resources.

Resources on Structural Drivers of Hunger

- **World Risk Report and World Risk Index** The World Risk Report is an annual technical report and index ranking of global disaster risks published jointly by the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV) at Ruhr University Bochum and Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft. It highlights the interactions between extreme natural events, the negative impacts of climate change, societal inequalities, and disaster risk reduction.

Central to the report is the World Risk Index. The report draws attention to the structural factors that increase risk, including weak infrastructure, poverty, and fragile food systems—key drivers of food insecurity and hunger. <https://weltrisikobericht.de/worldriskreport/>

Resources on Food Crises and Early Warning Systems

- **Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET)** FEWS NET, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network, provides real-time assessments and short-term projections of acute food insecurity around the world. <https://fews.net/>
- **Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS)** The Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS) continuously monitors food supply and demand and other key indicators for assessing the overall food security situation in all countries of the world. <https://www.fao.org/giews/en/>
- **Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)** The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is an initiative led by 15 international development agencies to improve analysis and decision-making on food security and nutrition. <https://www.ipcinfo.org/>
- **Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC)** This annual report produced by the Global Network against Food Crises gives an overview and country-by-country update on acute, crisis-level food insecurity. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/global-report-food-crises-grfc>

Resources on Food and Nutrition Security

- **The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI)** This annual report—by FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO—is designed to chart progress toward ending hunger, achieving food security improving nutrition, and to analyse the challenges for achieving this goal in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. <https://www.fao.org/publications/sofi>
- **Global Nutrition Report (GNR)** The Global Nutrition Report reports on countries' progress toward meeting global nutrition targets, evaluates the health- and planet-related impact of poor diets, assesses the nutrition financing landscape, and provides an overview of reporting on past Nutrition for Growth (N4G) commitments. <https://globalnutritionreport.org>
- **Voices of the Hungry Project** This project of FAO uses the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES), an experience-based measure of household or individual food security. The project provides up-to-date, internationally comparable information about food insecurity. <https://www.fao.org/in-action/voices-of-the-hungry/resources/research/en>

Partners



Who we are

Welthungerhilfe is one of the largest private aid organizations in Germany and has no political or religious affiliations. It was founded in 1962 as the German section of the Freedom from Hunger Campaign, one of the first global initiatives to fight hunger, initiated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

What we do

From rapid disaster relief through to reconstruction and long-term development cooperation projects with national and local partners, we provide help from a single source. In 2025, we supported more than 19 million people in 37 countries together with 320 local partner organizations.

How we work

Welthungerhilfe follows the principle of empowering people to help themselves to sustainably improve their living conditions, through approaches ranging from fast disaster relief to reconstruction and long-term development cooperation projects with national and international partner organizations.

Our vision

A world in which all people can exercise their right to a self-determined life in dignity and justice, free from hunger and poverty.

With the financial support of:

LED Liechtenstein Development Service



Who we are

The Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV) is one of Europe's leading academic institutions on humanitarian crises. Rooted in international humanitarian and human rights law, we combine interdisciplinary expertise from law, social science, geoscience, and public health.

What we do

We study the causes and consequences of humanitarian crises, their legal dimensions, and the responses of states, international organizations, and NGOs. Promoting humanitarian law and principles is central to our mission.

How we work

Our team of professors as well as doctoral and postdoctoral researchers leads national and international projects, shares findings widely, and provides expert commentary on current crises.

Our vision

We strengthen humanitarian education through the NOHA Master in Humanitarian Action and the Academy for Humanitarian Action (aha), preparing and training the next generation of committed humanitarian professionals.



Who we are

Helvetas is a leading private organization for development cooperation and humanitarian response in Switzerland. It has been founded in 1955 and is denominationally neutral and politically independent.

What we do

Helvetas supports disadvantaged people who want to actively improve their living conditions. Through partnership-based development cooperation in 35 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe, we create fair opportunities for all. We provide humanitarian aid following disasters and in times of crisis. We empower our partners to stand up for fundamental rights. In Switzerland, we advocate for coherent foreign and economic policies that meet the needs of people in the Global South.

How we work

Sustainable development can only succeed if the right framework conditions are in place, and if it is managed locally. To achieve this, Helvetas works on a long-term basis with partners who share the same values, because they know the local challenges and needs best.

Our vision

Helvetas' vision is a just world in which all people determine the course of their lives in dignity and security, using environmental resources in a sustainable manner.

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Cover Photo: On market day in Ethiopia's Borena Zone, beef cattle farmer Dama Boru, 53, joins traders and other farmers bargaining over livestock. At markets like this, wider shocks become visible: drought, insecurity, and rising costs can affect both the value of livestock and the price families pay for food. Mahad Usman/Helvetas, Ethiopia 2025.

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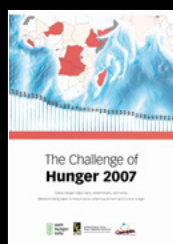
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21 Years of Tracking World Hunger

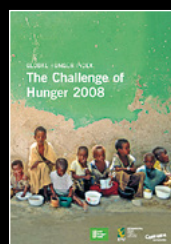
Since 2006, the Global Hunger Index has been reporting on the state of hunger globally, by region and by country.



Case Studies in the Post-Conflict Countries of Afghanistan and Sierra Leone



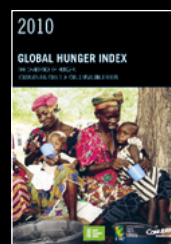
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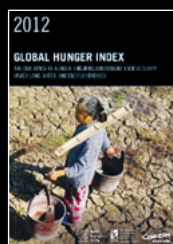
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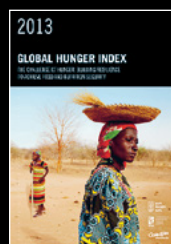
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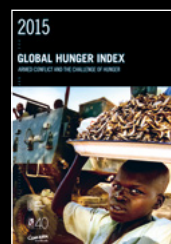
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