

2026

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Synopsis

Global Hunger Index

No Security Without Food Security

October 2026



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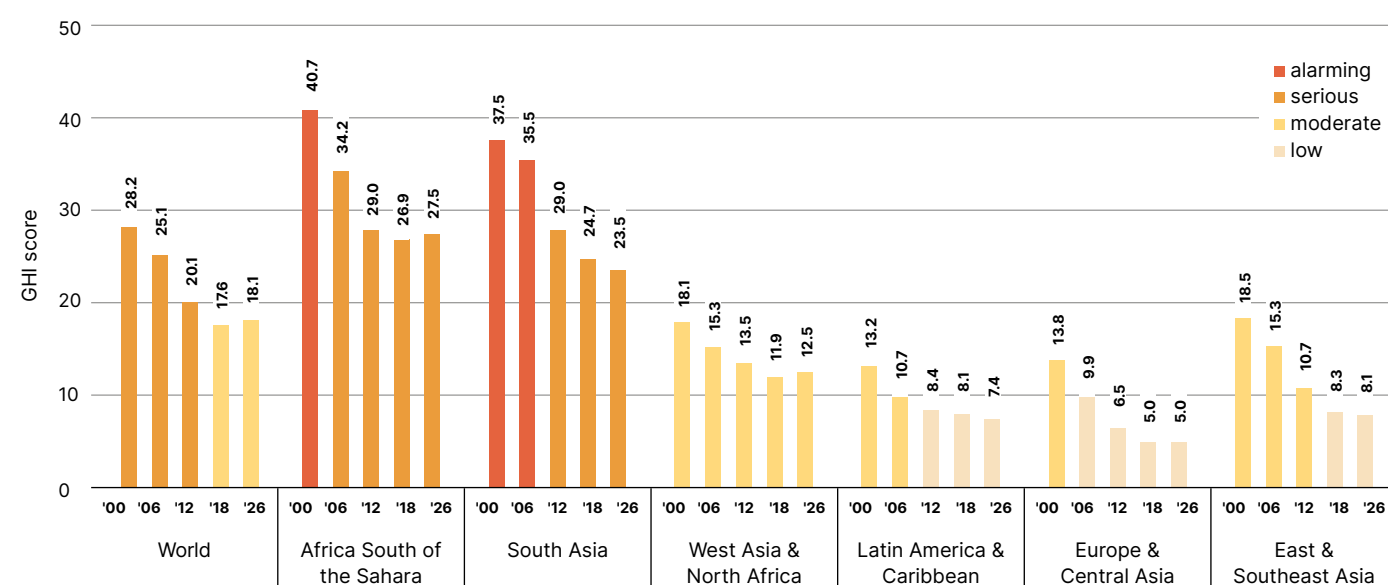
Overlapping crises threaten progress against hunger. At the same time, food insecurity can exacerbate crises and instability. Governments must therefore systematically integrate food and nutrition security into peace and security policy.

After nearly two decades of substantial improvement, global hunger has worsened compared with 2018—amid multiple overlapping crises. The 2026 GHI score is 18.1, considered *moderate*, higher than the 2018 score of 17.6, marking a reversal of the steady decline from a *serious* 28.2 in 2000. The reversal since 2018 is visible in three of the four GHI indicators: undernourishment, child stunting, and child wasting have increased, while child mortality has seen a slight reduction. At the regional level, hunger is *serious* in Africa South of the Sahara and South Asia, while regional GHI scores have increased since 2018 in two regions: Africa South of the Sahara, and West Asia and North Africa. At the national level, hunger is classified as *serious* in 36 countries and as *alarming* in 8 countries: Burundi, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madagascar, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Yemen. GHI scores have increased in 32 countries since 2018. If progress continues at the pace observed since 2000, 57 countries will not reach *low* hunger by 2030.

Growing geopolitical tensions, conflict, climate shocks, and economic uncertainty are hampering efforts to achieve Zero Hunger by 2030. Conflict remains one of the primary drivers of acute hunger, while the number of state-based armed conflicts reached its highest level since World War II. Extreme weather and economic shocks add further layers of insecurity, hitting hardest where conflict has already weakened livelihoods and coping capacity. These pressures reinforce one another: conflict and insecurity drive hunger, while food and nutrition insecurity deepens vulnerability, erodes resilience, and can contribute to further instability. Food and nutrition security must therefore be treated as an integral part of lasting security.

At the same time, hunger is becoming harder to measure and respond to. In several critical contexts, including Burundi, DPR Korea, Lesotho, South Sudan, Sudan, and Yemen, data gaps prevent the full calculation of the 2026 GHI scores,

FIG. 1.1 Global and 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.

leaving the severity of hunger only partially visible. Access constraints and funding shortfalls are weakening food security and nutrition information systems, especially in conflict-affected settings. Where hunger goes unmeasured, it risks going unanswered. Humanitarian and development financing for food sectors in food-crisis contexts has meanwhile fallen to levels last seen in 2016–2017. As needs grow, funding shortfalls are forcing cuts across major operations and limiting the reach of assistance.

At the national level, continued progress offers clear evidence that hunger can still be reduced. Since 2018, 31 countries have reduced their GHI scores by at least 10 percent, including 9 countries that achieved reductions of more than 20 percent. Uganda recorded the largest improvement in Afri-

ca South of the Sahara, although parts of the country continue to face acute food insecurity. Compared with 2018, Togo moved from the *serious* to the *moderate* GHI category, while Nepal achieved South Asia's strongest long-term progress.

Across these examples, progress has not resulted from any single intervention, but from several factors combined, including sustained investments and political commitment across areas such as nutrition, health, education, and sanitation. Yet national trends can conceal severe food insecurity among particular populations and regions, while sudden shocks can put hard-won progress at risk. Ensuring that efforts reach the populations most at risk and help build resilience to conflict and shocks is essential to reducing hunger and strengthening the foundations of lasting security.

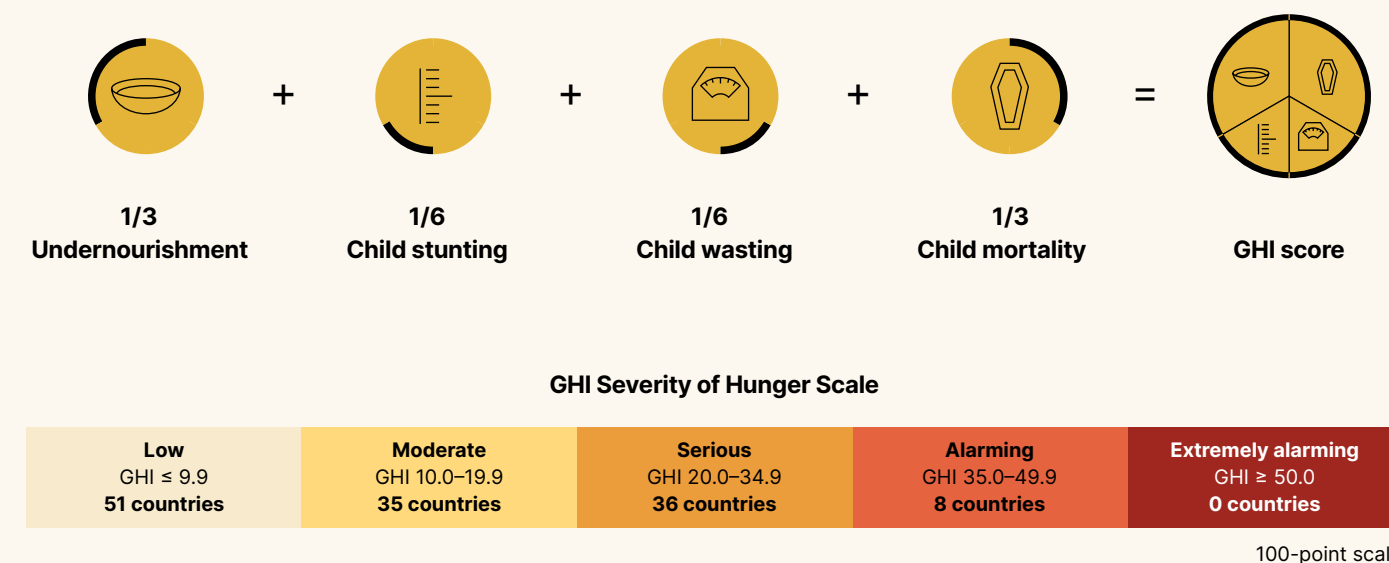
BOX. 1.1 About the Global Hunger Index Scores

The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a tool for comprehensively measuring and tracking hunger at global, regional, and national levels. GHI scores are based on the values of four component indicators.

- **Undernourishment:** the share of the population that is undernourished, reflecting insufficient caloric intake.
- **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.
- **Child mortality:** the share of children who die before their fifth birthday, partly reflecting the fatal mix of inadequate nutrition and unhealthy environments.

calculate the GHI scores come from published UN sources (the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and the United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation), the World Bank, and the Demographic and Health Surveys Program. Of the 136 countries assessed, 14 did not have sufficient data to allow for the calculation of a 2026 GHI score, but provisional designations of the severity of hunger were nevertheless assigned to 8 of those countries based on other published data. For the remaining 6 countries, data were insufficient to allow for either the calculation of a GHI score or the assignment of a provisional designation.

The GHI categorizes and ranks countries on a 100-point scale: values of less than 10.0 reflect *low* hunger; values from 10.0 to 19.9 reflect *moderate* hunger; values from 20.0 to 34.9 indicate *serious* hunger; values from 35.0 to 49.9 are *alarming*; and values of 50.0 or more are *extremely alarming* (as shown below).

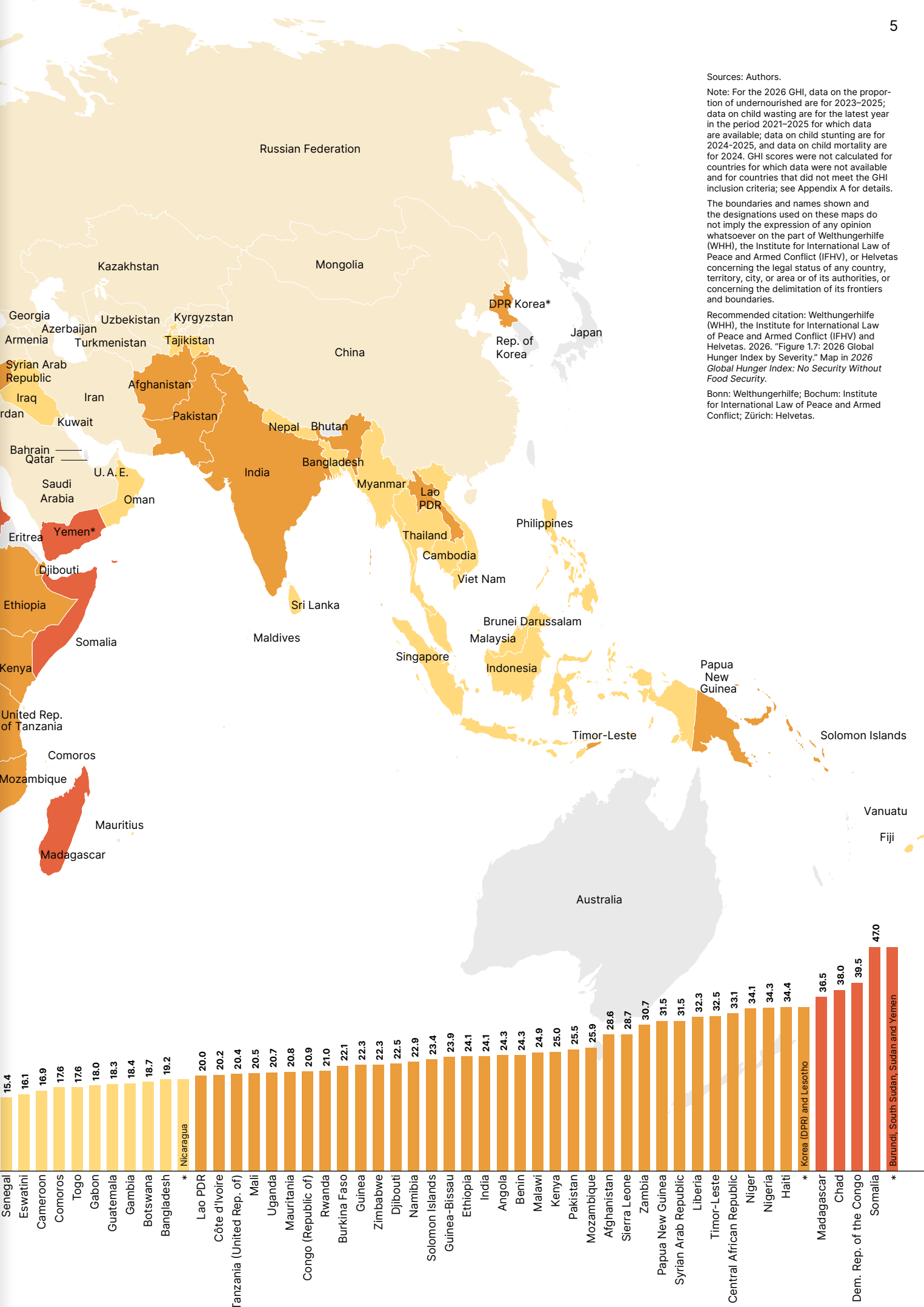
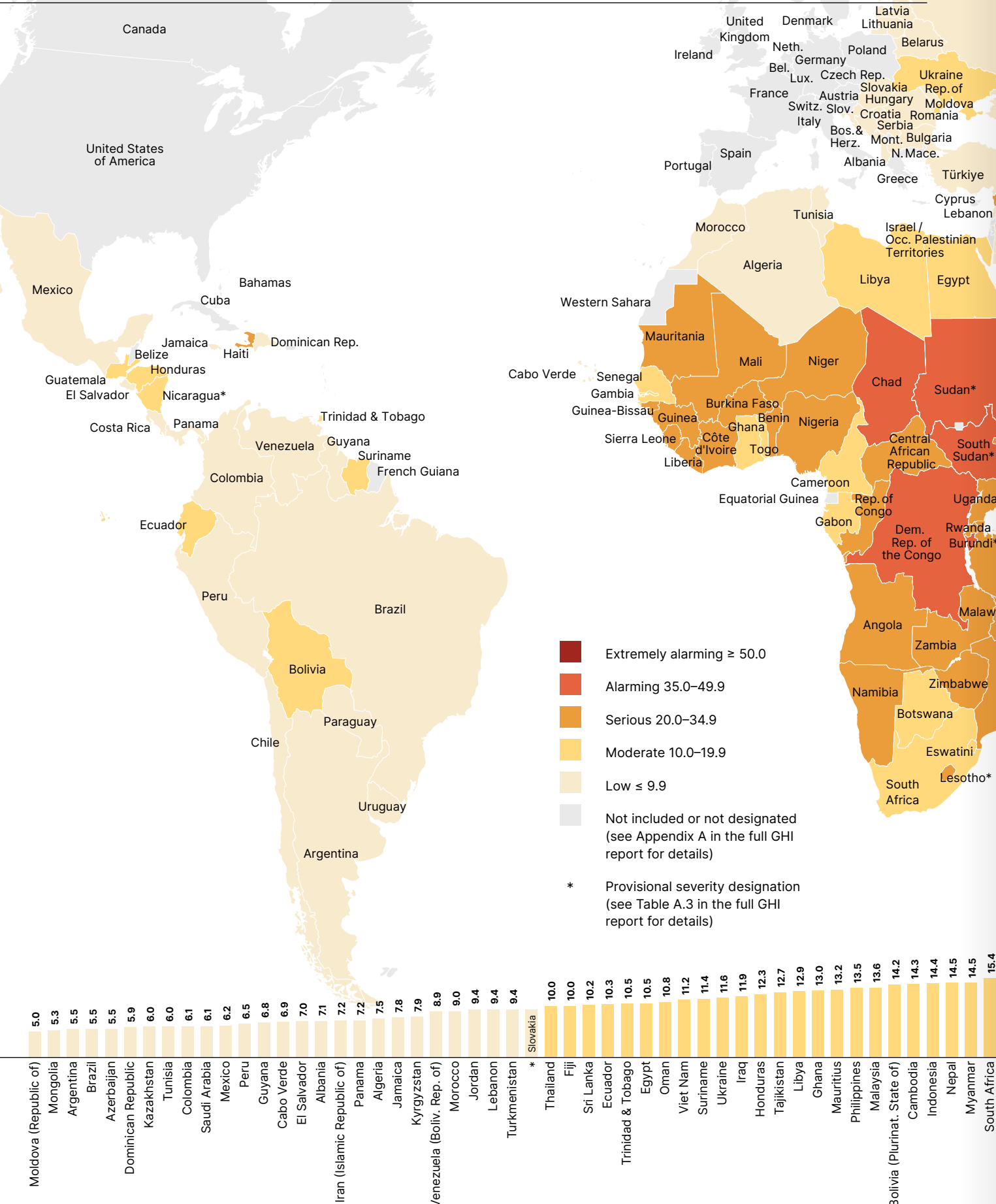


The GHI scale has been adapted in its colors to better communicate that all levels of hunger warrant attention, including those classified as *low*, and to avoid associating *low* hunger with the absence of hunger.

Source: Authors.

Note: These tallies reflect the 122 countries for which GHI scores were calculated based on data from 2021–2025 and the 8 countries that were assigned GHI designations on a provisional basis (1 as *low*, 1 as *moderate*, 2 as *serious*, and 4 as *alarming*).

2026 Global Hunger Index by Severity



Sources: Authors.

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.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on these maps do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of Welthungerhilfe (WHH), the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV), or Helvetas concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city, or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers and boundaries.

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Bonn: Welthungerhilfe; Bochum: Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict; Zürich: Helvetas.

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).

No Security Without Food Security? Regional Perspectives

Renewed militarization, geopolitical tensions, and intensifying power politics are placing state-centered notions of security at the forefront of political agendas. Yet today's interconnected crises reveal the limits of this perspective. Conflict, climate change, economic shocks, inequality, and displacement often reinforce one another. The 2026 Global Hunger Index emphasizes that food security lies at the heart of these dynamics and is itself an integral component of broader security.

The following essays explore what “No Security Without Food Security” means across regional contexts.

Carmen Rosa de León-Escribano, researcher at Guatemala’s Teaching Institute for Sustainable Development (IEPADES), asks: What security, and for whom? From a Latin American perspective, she argues that security cannot be measured solely by military strength if people’s basic needs remain unmet. Although the region produces enough food, millions remain food insecure because of inequality, exclusion, and unequal access to resources. Hunger is rarely caused by scarcity alone; political decisions and institutional failures also shape it. The recognition of the right to food and rights-based social protection can strengthen both food security and human security.

Abdoulaye Mohamadou, Executive Secretary of the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), describes the relationship between food insecurity and insecurity in the Sahel region as circular. Climate change, competition over land and natural resources, weak governance, and limited livelihood opportunities contribute to conflict. In turn, insecurity restricts access to agricultural land and disrupts pastoral mobility, markets, supply chains, humanitarian access, and regional trade. Breaking this cycle requires placing food security at the center of the political agenda and investing in resilient food systems, rural infrastructure, agricultural productivity, education, and decent employment.

Moses Chrispus Okello, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Security Studies, examines the impacts of the US-Israel-Iran war as another stress test for food security, economies, and political stability in the Greater Horn of Africa. Heavy dependence on imported fertilizer and fuel allows distant crises to spread through global markets and supply chains into regional and local food systems, worsening food insecurity and instability. The effects are most acute where conflict, displacement, climate stress, and shrinking fiscal space have already weakened resilience. However, food insecurity is likewise worsening in countries with apparent stability as food prices rise. Okello calls for regional fertilizer production, less input-intensive agricultural methods, diversified supply routes, contingency planning, and stronger early warning systems.

Majd Al Naber, expert in integrated water resources management and the water-energy-food-ecosystem (WEFE) nexus, argues that there can be no food security without water and energy security in West Asia and North Africa. Drought, water shortages, and unsustainable water use have displaced rural populations, fueled social unrest, and intensified tensions. With average freshwater availability below the threshold for absolute water scarcity, the region's dependence on external resources increases vulnerability to climate shocks, conflict, and global market volatility. Addressing this dilemma requires a water–energy–food–ecosystems nexus approach that improves resource productivity, reduces water losses, supports drought-resilient crops and renewable energy, and embeds resilience within national and regional security planning.

Elyssa Kaur Ludher, Visiting Fellow at the ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, maintains that Asia’s climate adaptation gap is becoming a food security and regional security threat. Extreme heat, floods, droughts, storms, and rising sea levels reduce food production and, in turn, lead to rising food prices, thereby deepening poverty, eroding trust in institutions, and increasing social tensions. Yet adaptation finance remains inadequate relative to the region’s exposure and needs. Closing the gap requires greater investment in climate-resilient production, rural infrastructure, insurance, credit, and social protection. Better coordination among regional institutions is equally essential to strengthen early warning systems, emergency responses, and the efficient deployment of adaptation finance.

Chris Hegadorn, Professor at Sciences Po in Paris, argues that Europe needs a nutrition continuity strategy for an era of polycrisis. Europe is unlikely to face widespread famine, but it depends on global supplies of fertilizer, natural gas, animal feed, vitamins, and minerals. Prolonged disruptions can affect affordability, nutritional quality, and public health. Vulnerable groups—including women, children, older adults, and low-income households—face the greatest risks. Europe should treat food and nutrition systems as strategic security assets and introduce regular food system stress tests. These should inform contingency planning, strategic reserves, public nutrition services, and emergency responses that safeguard adequate nutrition throughout prolonged crises.

Across all regions, the authors show that food security is deeply intertwined with resilience, governance, stability, and peace. Placing the right to adequate food at the center of peace and security policy is therefore essential to protecting livelihoods, preventing crises, and building more stable and secure societies.

Policy Recommendations

These recommendations call on governments, donor organizations, 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
 - **Governments must integrate food and nutrition security into national security**, civil protection, and resilience frameworks and reflect it in crisis preparedness plans.
 - **Governments must establish permanent inter-ministerial 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
 - **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
 - **Governments and donors must sustain 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
 - **Governments, the UN Security Council, and regional bodies 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 the UN Security Council Resolution 2417.

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