



The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2024

For Prelims: [United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization \(FAO\)](#), [Human Development Report 2021-22](#), [Global Multidimensional Poverty Index MPI 2022](#), SOFI 2024, [Food security](#), [Undernourishment](#), [Anaemia](#).

For Mains: [Welfare Schemes](#), [Issues Relating to Poverty & Hunger](#)

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Why in News?

Recently, the "**State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2024**" (SOFI 2024) report, published by [FAO](#), [IFAD](#), [UNICEF](#), [WFP](#), and [WHO](#), presents a critical analysis of global food security and nutrition trends.

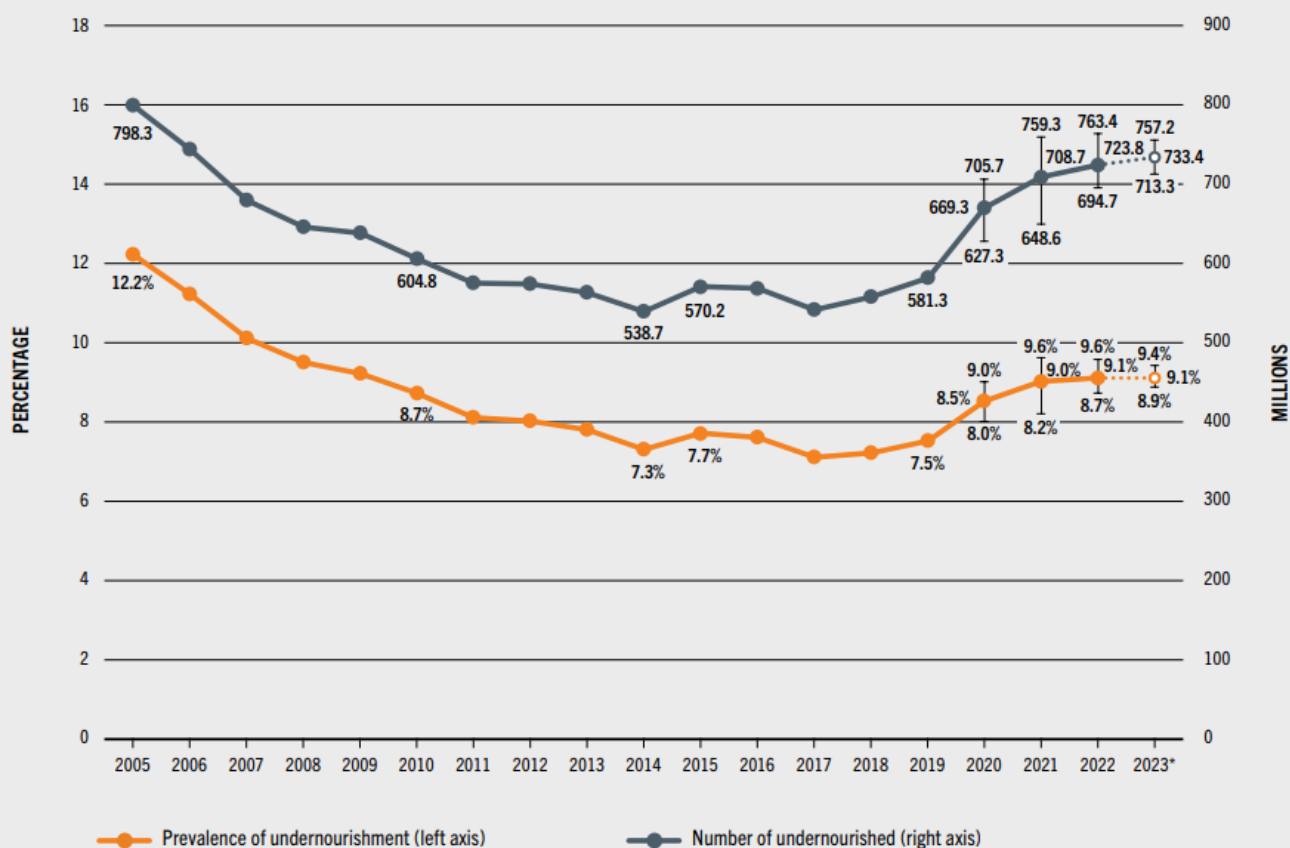
- This year's report **emphasises the urgent need for increased financing to end [hunger](#), [food insecurity](#), and [malnutrition](#)** in all its forms.

What are the Key Findings of the SOFI 2024 Report?

- **Global Prevalence of Undernourishment:** Between 713 and 757 million people faced hunger in 2023, with **one out of eleven people in the world and one out of every five** in Africa facing hunger.
 - Asia, despite having a lower percentage, still **harbours the largest number of [undernourished people](#)** (384.5 million).

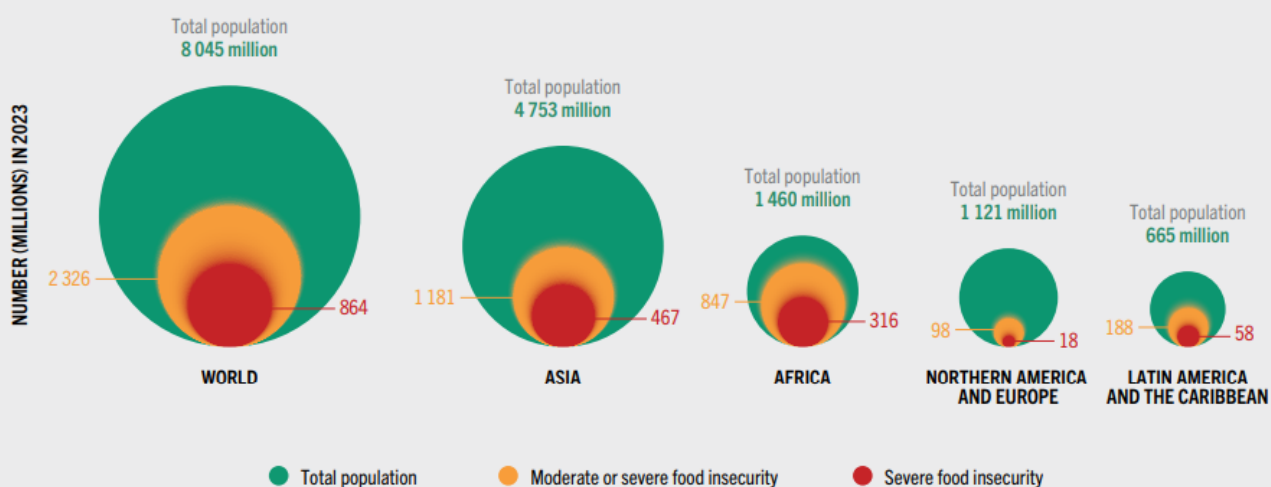
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GLOBAL HUNGER ROSE SHARPLY FROM 2019 TO 2021 AND PERSISTED AT THE SAME LEVEL TO 2023



- **Food Insecurity:** Approximately 2.33 billion people experienced moderate or severe **food insecurity** in 2023. Severe food insecurity affected more than 864 million people globally.

THE CONCENTRATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD INSECURITY BY SEVERITY IN 2023 DIFFERED GREATLY ACROSS THE REGIONS OF THE WORLD



- **Cost of a Healthy Diet:** The global average **cost of a healthy diet** rose to USD 3.96 in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms per person per day in 2022. Despite this increase, the number of people unable to afford a healthy diet fell to 2.83 billion in 2022.

- **Regional Disparities:** The **cost of a healthy diet is highest in Latin America** and the Caribbean and lowest in Oceania. The recovery in affordability has been uneven, with significant setbacks in Africa.
- **Stunting and Wasting:** There have been **improvements in reducing the prevalence of [stunting](#) and [wasting](#)** among children under five. However, progress is insufficient to meet the 2030 ([SDG](#)) targets.
 - The rate of exclusive breastfeeding among infants under six months has increased but **is still below the 2030 target.**
- **Obesity and Anaemia:** Obesity rates are rising globally, and **[anaemia](#) in women aged 15 to 49 years is increasing**, posing significant public health challenges.
- **Current Levels and Gaps:** Public spending on **food security and nutrition remains inadequate**, particularly in low-income countries. Private financing flows are also difficult to track, exacerbating the funding gap.

COMPOSITION OF PUBLIC SPENDING ON FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION IN SELECTED LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES

	Benin	Brazil	Georgia	India	Kenya	Mexico	Nigeria	Philippines	South Africa	Uganda
(% annual average)										
Food consumption and health status (core definition)	65	31	50	85	75	56	55	40	55	73
Food consumption	50	14	39	83	53	40	33	37	35	59
Food availability	23	11	30	45	21	34	23	33	10	28
Food access	19	1	7	35	31	0	8	3	18	25
Food utilization	9	1	2	3	0	6	2	1	7	6
Health status	14	17	11	2	20	17	21	3	19	14
Practices	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Health services and environmental health	14	17	11	4	22	17	21	3	19	13
Major drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition (extended definition)	35	69	50	15	25	44	45	60	45	27

What are the Key Highlights Related to India in the Report?

- **India is home to 194.6 million undernourished individuals**, the highest in the world.
 - The number of undernourished people has decreased from 240 million in the 2004-06 period to the current figure.
- **55.6% of Indians**, translating to 790 million people, **cannot afford a healthy diet.**
 - This proportion has improved by about 3% points compared to 2022.
- **13% of India's population suffers from chronic undernourishment, indicating prolonged food insecurity.**
 - In the [Global Hunger Index \(GHI\) 2023](#), India ranked 111th, highlighting significant issues in food security.
- India has the highest **prevalence of wasting (18.7%) in South Asia** and a high prevalence of stunting (31.7%) in children under five years.
 - 27.4% of babies born in India have **low birth weight**, the highest in the world, reflecting maternal malnutrition.
- **53% of women in India are anaemic, the highest in South Asia.** The global prevalence of anaemia in women aged 15-49 is expected to increase, driven significantly by South Asia.
- The prevalence of **obesity in children under five years is 2.8%**, and in adults, it has risen to 7.3%. A significant portion of the Indian population is **physically inactive, contributing to the rise in obesity.**
- The report highlights the **increasing issue of both undernutrition and obesity co-existing within the same population**, driven by common factors such as poor diet quality.
- The **consumption of [ultra-processed foods](#) is linked to adverse health outcomes.**

The **majority of food products** by top global manufacturers in key countries, including India, are **deemed unhealthy by WHO standards**.

- India's public spending on food security and nutrition has seen some increases, but the report suggests that **there is still a need for more effective allocation and utilisation of resources to address the root causes** of food insecurity and malnutrition.
 - The **Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated food insecurity and malnutrition issues in India**. The economic downturn, loss of livelihoods, and disruptions in food supply chains have had lasting impacts on food access and affordability.

What are the Related Initiatives Taken in India?

- [National Food Security Act \(NFSA\) 2013](#)
- [National Food Processing Mission](#)
- [Mission Poshan 2.0](#)
- [Integrated Child Development Services \(ICDS\) Scheme](#)
- [Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana \(PMMVY\)](#)
- [Mid-Day Meal Scheme](#)
- [Scheme for Adolescent Girls \(SAG\)](#)
- [Mother's Absolute Affection \(MAA\)](#)
- [Poshan Vatikas](#)
- **Other Policies:**
 - [Minimum Support Prices \(MSP\) for Agricultural products](#)
 - [Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana \(PMFBY\)](#)
 - [National Horticulture Mission](#)



What are the Key Recommendations in the Report?

- **Increase Public Investment:** The report highlights the need to **increase public spending on food security and nutrition** by boosting budgets for programs that reduce hunger and malnutrition and involving local communities in their **planning and implementation** to improve effectiveness and sustainability.
- **Mobilise Private Sector Investment:** Encouraging **private sector investment through innovative financing** mechanisms such as **social bonds, green bonds, and sustainability-linked bonds** can provide additional resources for food security initiatives.
 - Strengthening global partnerships and aligning national policies with international frameworks can enhance the exchange of knowledge, technology, and resources for greater impact.
- **Promote Climate-Resilient Agriculture:** Developing and implementing **climate-resilient agricultural practices** is critical to mitigate the **impact of climate change** on food production. This includes **investing in research and development** of **drought-resistant crops** and sustainable farming practices.
- **Improve Agrifood Systems:** Enhancing the **efficiency and sustainability of agrifood systems** through better infrastructure, logistics, and market access can help reduce food loss and

waste.

- **Comprehensive Nutrition Programs:** The report calls for **integrated nutrition programs** that address both undernutrition and overnutrition. This includes initiatives to promote balanced diets and physical activity to combat rising obesity rates.
- **Focus on Vulnerable Populations:** Policies should focus on supporting **vulnerable groups**, like small farmers, women, and children, by improving nutrition for **pregnant women** and young children through exclusive breastfeeding and providing essential vitamins and minerals.
- **Strengthen Data Collection, Monitoring and Reporting:** Improving **data collection and integration with national databases** is essential for **tracking food security** and nutrition, enabling **better policy-making** and identifying areas that need improvement.

Drishti Mains Question:

Q. Examine the key challenges faced by India in ensuring food security. Discuss the underlying factors contributing to these challenges and suggest effective measures to address them.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q. Which of the following is/are the indicator/indicators used by IFPRI to compute the Global Hunger Index Report? (2016)

1. Undernourishment
2. Child stunting
3. Child mortality

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1, 2 and 3
(d) 1 and 3 only

Ans: (c)

Q. How do District Rural Development Agencies(DRDAs) help in the reduction of rural poverty in India? (2012)

1. DRDAs act as Panchayati Raj Institutions in certain specified backward regions of the country.
2. DRDAs undertake area-specific scientific study of the causes of poverty and malnutrition and prepare detailed remedial measures.
3. DRDAs secure inter-sectoral and interdepartmental coordination and cooperation for effective implementation of anti-poverty programmes.
4. DRDAs watch over and ensure effective utilization of the funds intended for anti-poverty programmes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
(b) 3 and 4 only
(c) 4 only

(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Ans: (b)

Mains:

Q. Can the vicious cycle of gender inequality, poverty and malnutrition be broken through microfinancing of women SHGs? Explain with examples. **(2021)**

Q. Despite Consistent experience of high growth, India still goes with the lowest indicators of human development. Examine the issues that make balanced and inclusive development elusive. **(2019)**

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/the-state-of-food-security-and-nutrition-in-the-world-2024>

