THE ZERO HUNGER REPORT CARD

2025

an index monitoring global food security

Zero Hunger Project

This flagship publication is the first research output of Zero Hunger Project.

Zero Hunger Project is an international coalition of community organizations working together to eradicate global hunger. It serves as a collaborative platform where individuals, advocates, and organizations from around the world come together to co-create solutions, share best practices, and expand community-driven efforts to address hunger. The project supports partner organizations through policy and advocacy efforts as well as capacity-building initiatives. It also hosts annual conferences and offers a certification program for professionals, organizations, and engaged community members committed to achieving Zero Hunger.

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2025

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Foreword

Hunger is not an abstract statistic. It is the quiet force that shapes lives, limits potential, and deepens inequality around the world. It is the child who goes to bed hungry in a wealthy nation, the farmer whose crops fail because of climate change, the family displaced by conflict with no access to nutritious food. Despite the world producing enough to feed everyone, millions are left behind, trapped in systems that fail to deliver on the basic human right to food.

The Zero Hunger Report Card 2025 was created to confront this reality. It presents a comprehensive view of food security across 50 countries, examining economic access, equity, environmental sustainability, and food quality. More than a collection of data, this report tells the story of our global food systems, highlighting where progress has been made, where gaps remain, and what can be done to transform hunger from a persistent crisis into a solvable challenge.

This report is both a mirror and a call to action. It reflects the inequalities, conflicts, and systemic failures that allow hunger to persist, while also illuminating the solutions and innovations emerging from communities, governments, and organizations around the world. It challenges us to rethink what is possible when knowledge, policy, and collective action are brought together with urgency and purpose.

I invite every reader to engage with this report, to learn from its insights, and to take action. Ending hunger is not a distant goal. It is a responsibility, a moral imperative, and a shared opportunity. Together, we can ensure that food is recognized as a fundamental human right and that Zero Hunger becomes a reality for all.

SUMAN ROY
CEO & FOUNDER
ZERO HUNGER PROJECT

Executive Summary

This report aims to raise awareness about the scale and complexity of global food insecurity and challenges assumptions that hunger is confined to certain regions.

Overview

COVID-19 first revealed the cracks in our globalized food system, and now, in 2025, those cracks are becoming increasingly larger. Conflict, climate change, and economic shocks drive food insecurity globally, and underlying factors, such as lack of education, gender inequality, and lack of health care infrastructure worsen the issue.

Food security research typically focuses on developing countries, but even in the wealthiest countries, where supermarkets are stocked with food from around the world, people are struggling to put food on the table. This report finds that hunger is an issue in every country.

With an overwhelming amount of data available, including both global indexes and national statistics, understanding food insecurity metrics can be challenging. This report addresses that challenge by synthesizing, contrasting, and comparing information from 20 global indexes, covering a wide range of factors including sustainable agriculture, climate vulnerability, dietary diversity, and economic access. Based on these indexes each country is then assigned a score out of 100.

20 INDICATORS

50 COUNTRIES

108 SOURCES

Suman Roy
CEO and Founder
Zero Hunger Project

> *"Today, we produce enough food to feed the global population, yet hunger persists,. Why? This paradox points to systemic failures rather than inherent shortages.*

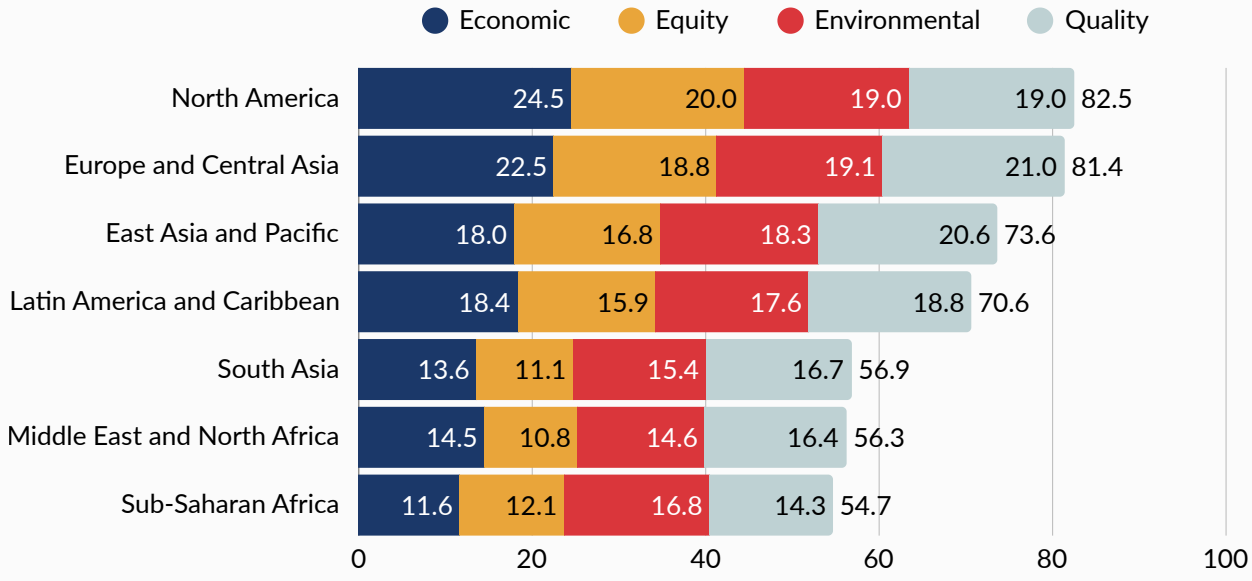
From this data, there are 3 main key takeaways:

Economic growth does not guarantee a sustainability food system
Countries with high GDP and strong market infrastructure, such as the United States and Saudi Arabia, often perform poorly on other food security indicators, such as food waste, water stress, and climate risk. This highlights a key disconnect: economic growth alone does not ensure a resilient food system. In fact, while industrialized food systems can increase access to food in the short term, they can cause environmental degradation, which is a threat to long-term access to food.

Governance and human rights drive food security
Countries that score highly across multiple dimensions of food security, such as Sweden, France, and Canada, tend to have strong institutions, legal protections, and low levels of corruption. In contrast, countries facing institutional fragility, such as Yemen, Sudan, and Nigeria, frequently have low scores for equity and economic indicators. This suggests that strong institutions are closely linked to reliable and equitable food access.

Food quality does not correlate with income
Food quality, which is measured through indicators like dietary diversity, undernourishment, obesity rates, sanitation, and food safety, varies greatly between countries. However, there were no specific trends related to region or income level. For example, India and Mexico have similar food quality scores, despite major differences in income, geography, and food systems. At the same time, Germany scores significantly lower than France, even though both are high-income European countries. These differences suggest that food quality is shaped by a complex mix of cultural, nutritional, and public health factors that do not necessarily correspond to a country's wealth.

Overall Region Scores



Glossary of Terms

Food Security: Food security was defined at the World Food Summit in 1996 as 'all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life,' and it is characterized by availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability.[1] Food insecurity ranges from mild (uncertainty about future food access) to severe (going days without eating). It is influenced by factors like income, food prices, social safety nets, and conflict, and is a key indicator of a country's well-being and resilience.[2]

Agrifood Systems: The interconnected systems that include all actors and processes involved in food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and disposal. This includes farmers, supply chains, food industries, markets, and consumers. Countries with strong agrifood systems often demonstrate better food security outcomes, especially when these systems are equitable, sustainable, and climate resilient.[3]

Climate Change: A long-term change in global or regional climate patterns, driven by human activities such as burning fossil fuels and deforestation. Climate change affects food systems through increased droughts, floods, pests, and crop failures, threatening food production and access. Countries' vulnerability and adaptive strategies are increasingly central to food security assessments.[3]

Extreme Poverty: Defined by the World Bank as living on less than USD $2.15 per day. People in extreme poverty face chronic food insecurity, poor nutrition, and limited access to health, education, and economic opportunities. Measuring and addressing extreme poverty is critical to assessing food insecurity and tracking progress toward hunger reduction.[4]

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): A set of 17 global goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 to address issues such as poverty, hunger, inequality, and climate change by 2030. SDG 2, "Zero Hunger," specifically targets ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture. Countries are scored on progress toward these goals to assess food security performance.[5]

The Right to Food: The Zero Hunger Project views food security as a human right by recognizing the ethical and social aspects of food access. Food was first recognized as a human right in the UN Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.[1]

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs): A medical condition that cannot be transmitted between people. Many NCDs, such as diabetes, are related to diet and nutrition.

Introduction

Zero Hunger Project is a global coalition of community organizations, researchers, and advocates working together to eradicate hunger through equitable policy, research, and community capacity building. Rooted in collaboration and social justice, it unites changemakers from grassroots networks to global institutions to strengthen food systems and advance the goal of Zero Hunger (SDG 2).

The Zero Hunger Report Card 2025 is the Project's first flagship publication and serves as a global index monitoring the state of food security across 50 countries. Drawing from 20 internationally recognized indicators and more than 100 data sources, the Report Card evaluates each country's performance across four key dimensions: economic access, equity, environmental sustainability, and food quality. Together, these indicators provide a comparative understanding of how nations are progressing toward achieving food security and highlight both strengths and systemic gaps.

The report challenges the misconception that hunger is confined to the developing world. It reveals that food insecurity exists in every country, shaped not by scarcity but by inequality, conflict, environmental degradation, and systemic barriers to access. While the world produces enough food to feed everyone, millions remain hungry. This paradox underscores the need for transformative, rights-based approaches that build resilient and inclusive food systems.

This inaugural report was researched and written by Amber McNeil, a youth researcher and member of the World Food Forum (WFF) Ontario Chapter, under the guidance of Suman Roy, CEO and Founder of the Zero Hunger Project. Amber brings a youth-led and interdisciplinary perspective that reflects the Project's commitment to intergenerational collaboration in advancing global food security.

Packed with compelling data, real-world case studies, and actionable insights, this report offers a fresh lens on global hunger. Readers will uncover inspiring stories of resilience, innovative solutions shaping communities, and critical lessons for policymakers, researchers, and changemakers. Dive in to see how the world is performing, understand the forces behind food insecurity, and join a movement dedicated to creating a hunger-free future.

Methodology

Indicator Selection Overview

Step 1: Selected Data Sources

- Gathered 20 different indicators from credible sources such as:
  - World Food Programme (WFP)
  - Economist Impact
  - United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
  - World Resources Institute
  - Global Child Nutrition Fund
- The following 4 pages outline all of the indicators

Step 2: Classified Each Indicator

- Assigned each of the 20 indicators to one of four categories:
  - **Economic:** Related to government spending, economic output, affordability, etc.
  - **Equity:** Related to gender, human rights, child rights, etc.
  - **Environmental:** Related to sustainability targets, growing conditions, food waste, etc.
  - **Quality:** Related to dietary diversity, obesity, malnutrition, food safety, etc.

Step 3: Scored Each Indicator

- Assigned a score ranging from 1 to 5 for each of the 20 indicators based each country's performance.

Step 4: Calculate Category Scores

- Since each category contains 5 indicators (20 total ÷ 4 categories), the possible scores for each category are:
  - Minimum score: 5 (1 point × 5 indicators)
  - Maximum score: 25 (5 points × 5 indicators)

Step 5: Calculate Total Country Score

- Add the scores from all four categories to get a total score:
  - Total possible score range: 20 (if scored 1 on all indicators) to 100 (if scored 5 on all indicators)

**The data collected for each index can be found in the annex

1. Economic Indicators

Indicator	Source	Unit	Justification
The Agriculture Orientation Index (AOI) for Government Expenditures (2021-2022)	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)	Score out of 3.5; 3.5=best	The AOI is a currency-free ratio between government expenditure on agriculture and the proportion of the country's GDP attributed to agriculture (agriculture also refers to forestry, fishing and hunting sectors). According to the *FAO*, a high Agriculture Orientation Index is important because it reflects a government's commitment to investing in agriculture, which is essential for improving food production, supporting rural livelihoods, and reducing food insecurity.[6]
Affordability Score- Global Food Security Index (2022)	Economist Impact	Score from 1-100; 100=best	According to the *Global Food Security Index (GFSI)*, food affordability is essential for food security important because it determines whether individuals and families can consistently access enough nutritious food, making it a critical factor in preventing hunger and malnutrition.[7]
GDP per capita (2023)	World Bank Group	USD ($)	According to the *Global Report on Food Crises*, modest GDP growth is directly linked to poverty alleviation. A high GDP is important for food security because it reflects a country's overall economic capacity to invest in agriculture, infrastructure, and social safety nets that ensure stable and equitable access to food for its population[8]
Food Safety Net Score- Global Food Security Index (2022)	Economist Impact	Score from 1-100; 100=best	Food safety nets are important because they provide essential support to vulnerable populations during economic shocks, natural disasters, or food price spikes, which ensures continued access to food and prevents hunger and malnutrition.[7]
Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (2023)	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Score from 0-1; 1=best	*The Human Development Index* reflects a country's overall progress in health, education, and income, which are factors that directly influence people's ability to access, afford, and utilize nutritious food. The *2023/2024 UNDP Human Development Report* references food or hunger 47 times, indicating the interconnectedness of food security and human development.[9]

2. Equity Indicators

Indicator	Source	Unit	Justification
Global Gender Gap Index (2024)	World Economic Forum	Score from 0-1; 1 is best	Global food security experts increasingly recognize that gender equality is essential for addressing hunger, as a more gender equal society can create transformative change within local and global food systems. In fact, the *2024 Global Hunger Index* was titled "How gender justice can advance climate resilience and zero hunger." [7]
Absence of Corruption Score- WJP Rule of Law Index (2024)	World Justice Project (WJP)	Score from 0-1; 1 is best	Corruption can severely impact food security by reducing food availability, diverting household away from food, and introducing risks like embezzlement, land grabbing, and sextortion throughout the food value chain.[13]
Fundamental Rights Score- WJP Rule of Law Index (2024)	World Justice Project (WJP)	Score from 0-1; 1 is best	The right to food was first recognized by the United Nations in 1948, and human rights ensure that access to adequate food is treated as a legal and moral obligation rather than merely a policy choice or charitable act.[14]
Percent of children receiving school meals (2022)	Global Child Nutrition Fund: Global Survey of School Meal Programs	Score of 1%-100%; 100 is best	School feeding programs are vital for overall food security because they not only improve dietary quality and health outcomes for children, especially in low-income households, but also have the capacity to enhance social inclusion, stimulate local food systems, and generate significant economic and environmental benefits.[3]
Percent of children who are undernourished	Global Hunger Index Score (2024)	Score of 1%-100%; 1 is best	Childhood undernourishment is one of the four key indicators included in the *Global Hunger Index*. It is an important measure of inadequate food intake and nutrition, which has serious long-term consequences for child health, development, and future economic potential. [11]

3. Environmental Indicators

Indicator	Source	Unit	Justification
SDG Index (2024)	Sustainable Development Solutions Network	Score from 1-100; 100 is best	*The SDG Index* offers a data-driven assessment of each country's overall progress toward achieving all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which contextualizes food security within the broader framework of sustainable development. Additionally, the performance on goals such as poverty, health, climate, and inequality directly impact the performance of SDG 2: Zero Hunger. [5]
Baseline Water Risk (2023)	World Resources Institute–Aqueduct Alliance	Score from 1-5	Water risk is a critical factor for food security because water scarcity, pollution, and climate-related disruptions significantly reduce agricultural productivity, compromise food safety, and worsen nutritional outcomes.[16]
Climate Risk Index: Overall Ranking (2022)	GERMANWATCH	Score from 1-150; 150 is best	Climate risk is a major threat to food security because increasing climate variability and extreme weather events disrupt agricultural production, damage natural resources, create uncertainty for farmers, which all lead to greater levels of food insecurity.[16]
UNEP Food Waste Index (household estimate, kg/capita/year) (2024)	United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)	Kilogram (kg); 0 is best	Food waste is a significant problem because it represents a market failure that leads to over a trillion dollars' worth of food being discarded annually, contributes 8–10% of global greenhouse gas emissions, uses nearly 30% of agricultural land, and exacerbates habitat loss. [18]
Political Commitment to Adaptation-Global Food Security Index (2022)	Economist Impact	Score from 1-100	Political commitment to climate adaptation is a vital indicator of food security because it drives the policies, investments, and long-term strategies necessary to protect food systems from the growing impacts of climate change.[7]

4. Quality Indicators

Indicator	Source	Unit	Justification
Dietary Diversity All-5 indicator % (2025)	Global Diet Quality Project	Score from 1-100; 100 is best	Dietary diversity is essential for food security because it improves people's health by ensuring access to a variety of nutrients. The production and consumption of a wide range of foods can also lead to more sustainable food systems.[19]
Prevalence of undernourishment % of population (2022)	World Bank Group Data	% of people who are undernourished; 0 is best	The proportion of the population not getting enough food to meet minimum dietary energy requirements is a quantifiable metric of the severity of food insecurity.[11]
% obesity by country- Global Obesity Observatory (2022)	World Obesity	% of people who are obese; 0 is best	Obesity, and other non-communicable diseases, are growing critical food security concerns linked to the rising consumption of ultra-processed foods.[22]
Sanitation and Drinking Water Score (2025)	Environmental Performance Index (EPI)	Score from 1-100; 100 is best	Access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation is necessary for food security, as it reduces the risk of waterborne diseases, supports effective nutrient absorption, and fosters the hygienic conditions necessary for maintaining health and proper nutrition.[8]
Food safety score- Global Food Security Index (2023)	Economist Impact	Score from 1-100; 100 is best	Food safety is fundamental to food security and public health, as it ensures that all individuals have access to sufficient food that is not only nutritious but also free from contaminants and disease risks.[24]

Methodology cont.

Indicator Limitations

Incomplete Index Coverage
Not all countries were included in every index used. Although, in some cases, comparable data was found in alternative documents, these sources were often from different years than the original index. This created inconsistencies in the dataset.

Estimate Reliability
When a country was not in a particular index and no equivalent data could be located, an estimated value was generated using government publications, academic literature, or credible news sources. I chose to estimate missing values (instead of omitting them) because this was the approach of the *2022 Global Food Security Index*, which states: "Where there were missing values in quantitative or survey data, *Economist Impact* has used estimates."[7] While every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of these estimates, the reliability of this data varies. In some instances, similar credible statistics were found; in others, the data is based on related themes. It is important to acknowledge that these estimates may reflect my positionality and potential bias, as well as the bias in the original data sources.

Out of Date Data
Certain indexes are 3+ years old. While every effort was made to include up-to-date information, this is not always possible. Given the rapidly changing global political and economic climate in the world throughout 2025, it is highly probable that many of the scores have since changed. This limitation presents the opportunity for further research.

Western Epistemologies
The indexes used in this report largely draw on Western epistemologies by prioritizing quantifiable metrics, standardized scoring, and expert-driven frameworks. This approach often overlooks local knowledge systems, Indigenous food practices, and culturally specific definitions of food security. Applying Western metrics can reinforce Global North perspectives and quiet diverse ways of understanding and addressing hunger.

Language Biases
All of the indexes and ratios were written in English. This likely led to the amplifying of the voices of English-speaking researchers and the quieting of non-English-speaking researchers. It also likely led to the overuse of knowledge from Western organizations. This language bias could potentially ignore the root causes of food insecurity in different contexts and lead to misguided policies.

No Indicator for Racial
While the equity-related indicators address gender equality, corruption, human rights, school food, and childhood malnutrition, none specifically measure racial equity. This leaves out an important part of the picture, especially in countries where food insecurity is deeply connected to racial inequality. For instance, in this index South Africa scores relatively well on equity measures, but this doesn't capture the full extent of racial and economic disparities.

Country Selection Overview

Including all 193 UN-recognized countries was neither realistic nor feasible given the scope of this project and availability of data. Instead, a representative sample was selected from the seven World Bank regional units:

1. Europe and Central Asia
2. North America
3. East Asia and Pacific
4. Latin America and Caribbean
5. South Asia
6. Middle East and North Africa
7. Sub-Saharan Africa

The initial goal was to include the eight most populated countries from each geographical unit. However, North America, according to the World Bank, includes only Canada and the United States. Additionally, the 8th most populated country in South Asia is the Maldives[25], but there was very limited information available on its approach to food insecurity. Instead, Sweden was included in the report, as there were no other Northern European countries initially included.

Country Selection Limitations

Limited Global Coverage

This country selection approach aimed to balance geographic diversity and population coverage and captured 82.8% of the global population (approximately 6.56 billion people).[25] However, it only accounts for just over 25% of nations in the world.

Excludes Nations with Small Populations

Nations with small populations face unique economic, social, and environmental conditions that impact food insecurity. This is especially true for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), which face even greater barriers to food security due to their remote geography. [26] However, these countries were not included in this report due to their small population.

Absence of Central Asian Representation

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan are included in the World Bank geographical classification under “Europe and Central Asia.” However, these countries did not have large enough populations[25] to make it into the report. Thus, the data for “Europe and Central Asia” is only reflective of Europe.

Regional Differences Not Represented:
Assigning a single score to an entire country can ignore significant regional disparities that exist within borders. For example, in Canada, Indigenous communities are disproportionately impacted by food insecurity,[2] but this may not be fully captured by the national-level indexes. Similarly, regional discrepancies were found in every other country evaluated in the report. Although some of these regional differences are included in the "Highlights and Challenges" sections of the report, they are not always adequately reflected in the overall assessment.

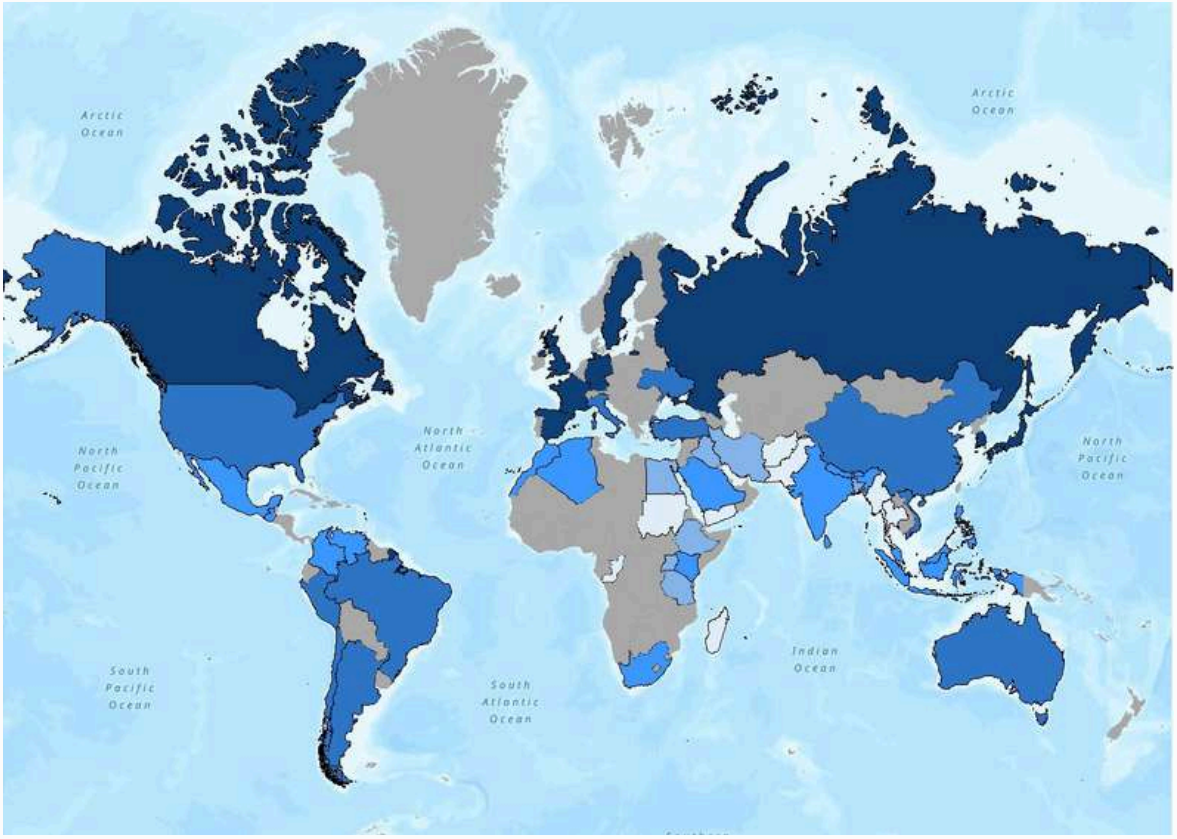
Exclusion of Certain Severely Food-Insecure Countries:
Several countries facing the most severe acute food insecurity globally[27] were not included due to their population. These include:

- **South Sudan:** South Sudan gained independence from Sudan in 2011 but has continued to experience high levels of political instability and violence. Over 1 million refugees from Sudan have arrived in refugee camps in South Sudan and 85% now face high levels of hunger and food insecure.[28] Additionally, South Sudan is especially vulnerable to climate impacts including both droughts and floods. As a result of these compounding factors, approximately 7.7 million people are classified as acutely food insecure, giving it the 4th highest rate of food insecurity globally from 2023-2024.[29]
- **Haiti:** Approximately 5 million people faced acute levels of food insecurity, and 0.3 million children suffered from malnutrition in 2023. This crisis was primarily driven by conflict, as armed gang violence has limited the movement of people and goods throughout the country.[8] Haiti also faces high climate risk,[17] and extreme weather events, such as erratic rainfall negatively impact crop yields and food security.[8]

Exclusion of Certain High-Performing Countries:
Similarly, several of the highest performing countries were also not included due to their population. These include:

- **Finland:** Finland ranked top on the *Global Food Security Index 2022*. With a robust welfare system, stable political environment, and strong agricultural policies, Finland has some of the best rates of food security globally. Despite being in a northern climate with a short growing season, Finland leverages advanced technology to ensure year-round access to food for its population.[7]
- **Ireland:** Ireland ranked 2nd on the *Global Food Security Index 2022*. Ireland has a temperate climate and fertile land, and it is a major exporter of dairy and meat products. Ireland also invests heavily in strong social protection and safety net programs to ensure food access for vulnerable populations.[7]
- **Norway:** Norway ranked 3rd on the *Global Food Security Index 2022*. Like Finland, the majority of Norway's land is not suitable for agriculture, but it ensures food availability through a combination of imports and domestic production. The Government of Norway places a high priority on public health, nutrition, and environmental sustainability.[7]

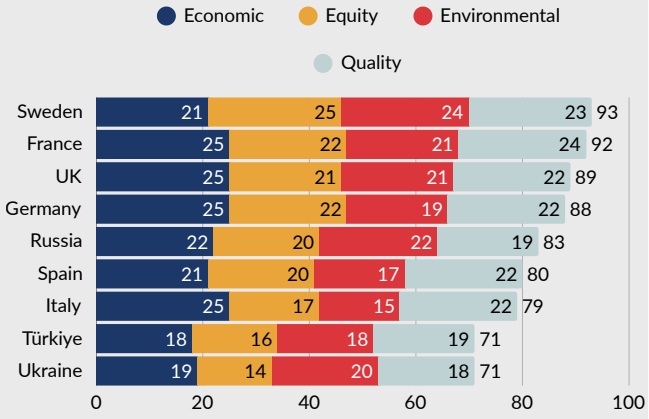
Global Overview



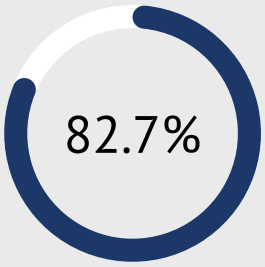
≥ 80	70-79.9	60-69.9	50-59.9	< 50
Sweden France Japan United Kingdom Germany Canada South Korea Russia Spain	USA Italy Argentina Australia China Vietnam Brazil Peru Chile Turkey Ukraine	Colombia Sri Lanka Malaysia Mexico Indonesia Philippines Saudi Arabia South Africa Morocco Guatemala Bhutan Venezuela Algeria India Nepal Kenya	Egypt Iran Bangladesh Tanzania Uganda Iraq Ethiopia	Pakistan Democratic Republic of Congo Yemen Myanmar Sudan Afghanistan

Europe

Coountry Breakdown



Average Score



Regional Insights

The nine countries evaluated in Europe consistently lead global food security indexes, with strong performance across all four indicator groups. Economic access is high, supported by stable GDPs, public food safety nets, and well-funded agricultural sectors. Equity indicators such as gender equality, corruption, and human rights protections also score highly. Although sustainability scores are slightly lower than other indicators, they remain strong overall. Ukraine and Türkiye score comparatively lower across all indicators, but still rank relatively high compared to the global average. These findings suggest that food systems in Europe are relatively resilient to both environmental pressures and economic pressures.

Sweden

BACKGROUND

Population: 66,650,800[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 584,960.48[33]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: CFB- Oceanic (cool summers, no dry season)[34]
Rural Population: 11%[35]

Report Card Score

93

Sweden ranks 1st overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 1st out of the 9 countries evaluated in Europe. It performs strongest on equity indicators, with a perfect score of 25.

Highlights

- **Food Policies and Nutritional Guidelines:** Sweden's nutritional guidelines are not quantitative but instead list foods that should be consumed more frequently and those that should be consumed less often.This is a more holistic understanding of healthy eating than most nutritional standards.[22]
- **Eco-friendly School Food Program:** National school food guidelines promote environmentally conscious food production, and schools are required to report food waste biennially. Efforts to curb food waste have included expanding refrigerated storage in schools.[31]
- **Food Affordability:** A small proportion of the population in Sweden lives below the poverty line[32], and there is a strong presence of food safety net programs for those who do. According to the *Global Food Security Index (GFSI)*, Food is generally both affordable and accessible across Sweden.[7]

Challenges

- **Dependency on Imports:** Sweden is a net agricultural importer, as it imports significantly more food than it exports. Due to its cold climate, climate change is unlikely to negatively impact agricultural production. However, climate change strains the global system of food interdependency. So, if a region that exports food to Sweden experiences agricultural loss due to climate change, this could impact food security.[32]
- **Weak Agricultural System:** A large proportion of Swedish people live in urban areas, which has resulted in decreased domestic agricultural production. Migration is predicted to further increase the urban population, and by 2050, the *UN World Population Prospects* predicts that 93% of people in Sweden will live in cities. This could even further decrease Sweden's agricultural production.[32]

France

BACKGROUND

Population: 66,650,800[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 3,051,831.61 [33]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: CFB- Oceanic (cool summers, no dry season)[34]
Rural Population: 18%[35]

Report Card Score

92

France ranks 2nd overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 2nd out of the 9 countries evaluated in Europe. It performs strongest on economic indicators, with a perfect score of 25.

Highlights

- **School Food Program:** France's National Food Program (*Program National pour l'Alimentation*, *PNA*) is an exemplary model for other countries, as it provides both healthy meals and nutrition education to all children enrolled in public school. All food served in the program is in line with *Public Health France*'s dietary guidelines.[36]
- **Sustainable Agrifood Systems:** The Government of France has implemented various programs aimed at transitioning towards sustainable agriculture, including agroecology. There has also been a recent push to meaningfully include women and youth in the agrifood system.[37]
- **Food Waste Reduction Initiatives:** France has implemented measures to combat food waste, including waste reduction initiatives in school food programs, which have resulted in a more circular food economy.[37]

Challenges

- **Food Security Inequity:** Food insecurity disproportionately affects equity-seeking groups, such as women, particularly single mothers, young people, and individuals with lower incomes. These groups specifically struggle to afford nutrient-rich diets.[38]
- **Long-term Consequences of COVID-19:** The pandemic exacerbated existing socioeconomic inequalities and created new ones, leading to increased food insecurity in France.[38]
- **Insufficient Food Charity Systems:** While food charities attempt to address food insecurity, they are not enough to meet the demand. Even farmers, the very people who grow and produce food, are frequent food bank users.[38]

Figure 1: A market in France

United Kingdom

BACKGROUND

Population: 69,551,300 [25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 3,380,854.52 [33]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: Oceanic (cool summers, no dry season)[34]
Rural Population: 15%[35]

Report Card Score

89

The UK ranks 4th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 3rd out of the 9 countries evaluated in Europe. It performs strongest on economic indicators, with a perfect score of 25.

Highlights

- **Balanced Food Supply:** The UK maintains a relatively stable food supply by sourcing approximately 62% of its food domestically. However, it is still reliant on imports for foods such as fruits, vegetables, and seafood.[39]
- **High Food Safety Standards:** *The Food Standards Agency (FSA)* and *Food Standards Scotland (FSS)* create, enforce, and uphold detailed and effective food safety regulations. These policies have resulted in high levels of public confidence in the safety of the UK food supply.[39]
- **Shift Toward Sustainable Agriculture:** Although large scale, industrial farms have historically dominated agriculture in the UK, recent initiatives, including environmental land management schemes, are promoting more sustainable practices by monitoring and incentivizing environmentally responsible land use.[39]

Challenges

- **Climate Change Impacts on Production:** Increasingly frequent extreme weather events are disrupting domestic food production. Key crops, such as wheat and cereals, have been impacted the hardest, which has contributed to inflation. [39]
- **Poor Dietary Health:** A significant portion of the UK population fails to meet recommended dietary guidelines, as there is often overconsumption of fats, sugar, and salt. Like elsewhere in the world, lower-income households particularly struggle to afford a nutritious diet.[39]
- **Vulnerable Populations at Risk:** Food insecurity disproportionately affects individuals with disabilities and older adults. *The UK Food Security Report 2024* highlights that this is likely because these groups have greater restrictions to their mobility, so are less able to purchase and prepare food.[39]

Germany

BACKGROUND

Population: 84,075,100[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 4,525,703.90[33]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: CFB- Oceanic (cool summers, no dry season)[34]
Rural Population: 22%[35]

Report Card Score

88

Germany ranks 5th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 4th out of the 9 countries evaluated in Europe. It performs strongest on economic indicators, with a perfect score of 25.

Highlights

- **Strong Agricultural Sector:** Germany is the largest food exporter in the EU and exported USD 46.9 billion worth of food in 2018.[32] Germany is also making progress in sustainable farming through strong regulations on chemical pesticide use and efficient water management systems.[40]
- **Progress in Food Waste Reduction:** Through public awareness campaigns, improved handling and storage practices, and policies that encourage surplus food donations, Germany is actively reducing food waste. These efforts have positive environmental benefits, while lowering economic costs while enhancing food security.[40]
- **Support for Local Food Systems:** Although Germany is still heavily reliant on imports, the government has implemented policies to promote local food systems, including policies that encourage direct sales from farmers to consumers, investment in local processing and distribution, and raising awareness about the benefits of locally produced food. [3]

Challenges

- **Dependence on Imports:** Despite strong domestic agricultural production, Germany remains reliant on food imports. This exposes the country to global market volatility, trade disruptions, and supply chain risks that could affect food availability and affordability in the future.[3]
- **School Food Program:** Only 37.4% of students have participated in a school food program in Germany, with cost being a barrier to participation for many students. Additionally, while the government has implemented nutritional standards for healthy school food, these standards are often not met.[36]

Figure 2: A Christmas market in Germany

Russia

BACKGROUND

Population: 143,997,000[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 2,021,421.48[33]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: DFC- Subarctic (cool summer, no dry season)[34]
Rural Population: 25%[35]

Report Card Score

83

Russia ranks 8th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 5th out of the 9 countries evaluated in Europe. It performs strongest on economic and sustainability indicators, both achieving a score of 22.

Research Limitations

- **Out-of-Date Data:** Russia's score of 83 is not necessarily accurate for the current food security climate. As mentioned above, many of the indexes used to form these scores were from 2-3 years ago. So, given the rapidly changing socio-political situation in Russia to the ongoing war, it is possible that Russia would have achieved a lower score if using more recent data.

Challenges

- **Food Price Inflation:** Three years into the war and sanctions, food prices continue to climb. An article published in The Moscow Times in May 2025 reported that the cost of borscht, which is a traditional soup made with staple vegetables, has increased by 87%. A nationwide potato shortage has caused potato prices to spike by 166.5%. The proportion of income that Russians are now spending on food is the highest since the war began.[42]
- **Underperforming Crop Yields:** Water supply issues and drought have lead to growing challenges, especially for vegetable crops such as onion and cabbage.[42]

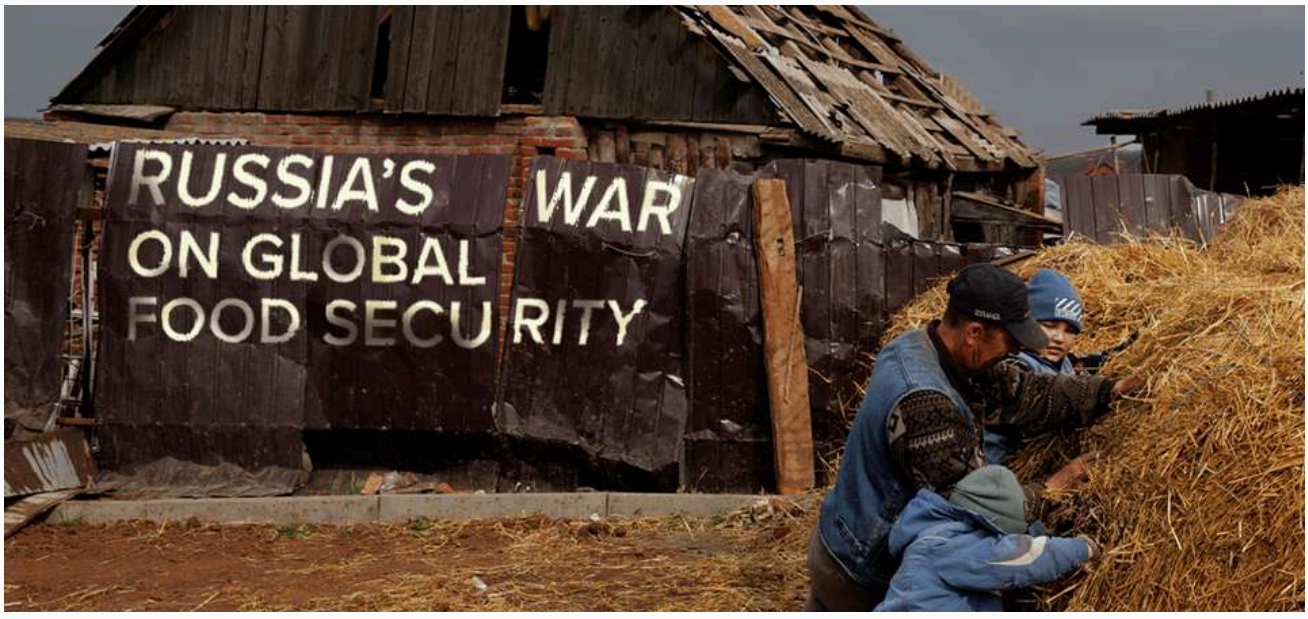


Figure 3: A family standing by haystacks

Case Study 1: Impacts of the Russia-Ukraine War on Global Food Security

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, international food markets have been thrown into instability, leading to food price inflation and food insecurity across Europe and much of the world.[39]

Both countries are major agricultural exporters; Russia is the world's largest wheat exporter and Ukraine is also a large-scale exporter of wheat, corn, and soy. Since the start of the war, Russia has systematically targeted Ukraine's agricultural sector. Farmland has been destroyed, export routes disrupted, and storage facilities attacked.[41]

As Ukraine's agricultural exports rapidly declined, Russia quickly took over and increased its grain exports. This strategy is no secret: in August 2023, Russian President Vladimir Putin stated that Russia intends to "replace Ukrainian grain" on the global market. This is a blatant example of agriculture being used as a strategic front in this war, as Russia exercises its soft power in international markets. The consequences of these attacks have been severe, leading to diminished Ukrainian exports and rising grain prices across Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia.[41]

To counter Russia's aggression against Ukraine, countries such as Canada, the United States, and members the European Union imposed economic sanctions.[41] However, agricultural exports were deliberately excluded from these sanctions to prevent a catastrophic impact on global food security. Russia's wheat, fertilizer, and other critical supplies were deemed too essential to restrict. Despite the exemption of agricultural goods, input costs such as energy and fertilizer spiked, causing even greater food inflation across Europe. UK was particularly impacted, and it experienced the highest of all countries in the G7 in 2023[39]

The war has also disrupted shipping routes that lead connect Europe to Asia and Africa, such as the Black Sea. As a result, less agricultural goods were exported outside of Europe, and countries in Asia and Africa also experienced price inflation.[41] For example, food inflation in Egypt rose from 20% before the Russia-Ukraine war to 63% in 2023, which makes a healthy diet out of reach for many families.73

The Russia-Ukraine war has disrupted the global food supply chain in profound and far-reaching ways, which calls attention to the fragility of the global food system.[42]

Spain

BACKGROUND

Population: 47,889,958[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 1,620,090.73[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: Mediterranean (hot, dry summer)[31]
Rural Population: 18%[32]

Report Card Score

80

Spain ranks 9th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 6th out of the 9 countries evaluated in Europe. It performs strongest on economic and quality indicators, with a score of 22.

Highlights

- **Implementation of a National Food Strategy:** In early 2025, Spain introduced a comprehensive National Food Strategy (*Estrategia Nacional de Alimentación, ENA*) aimed at enhancing food security, sustainability, and innovation across the entire food system.[43]
- **High Agricultural Income:** Spain ranked first among all countries in the EU for agricultural income. It is the world's leading exporter of olive oil, which provides economic opportunity for growers across the country.[43]
- **School Food Program:** A new law mandates that all public and private schools in Spain must serve daily portions of fruits and vegetables and include fish at least once a week. The regulation also emphasizes the use of seasonal, locally sourced, and organic produce, aiming to improve children's nutrition and reduce dietary inequalities.[44]

Challenges

- **Food Insecurity:** Despite increasing economic opportunities throughout the country, approximately 1.8 million people in Spain continue to face food insecurity. [43]
- **Decline of Small-Scale Fisheries:** Coastal regions are struggling with aging populations and depopulation, which is adversely affecting traditional fishing communities. Additionally, small-scale fishers struggle to access EU funds, which are often allocated to larger industrial operations. This has created many challenges for these communities and impacted the access to fish across the country.[43]
- **Climate Change Impact on Agriculture:** Climate change poses a significant threat to agriculture in Spain, with increasing temperatures and water scarcity affecting crop yields and livestock. The government of Spain recently recognizes this is one of the primary challenges for the agri-food sector.[43]

Italy

BACKGROUND

Population: 59,146,300[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 2,300,941.15[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: CSA- Mediterranean (hot, dry summer)[31]
Rural Population: 28%[32]

Report Card Score

79

Italy is tied with the USA and Argentina at 10th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and is 7th out of the 9 countries evaluated in Europe. It performs strongest on economic indicators, with a perfect score of 25.

Highlights

- **Innovative Social Support:** Italy recently launched Dedicated to You (*Dedicata a te*), a social welfare program that provides low-income individuals with financial assistance to purchase food and access public transportation. This program has successfully alleviated daily economic pressures for many families.[45]
- **Food Safety:** Italy holds a perfect score in food safety in the 2022 *Global Food Security Index*. This is the result of the country's strong regulatory standards and infrastructure for food quality and hygiene.[7]
- **Progress in Sustainable Agriculture:** Italy is making measurable progress in building resilient, sustainable agricultural systems through increased support for organic and agroecological farming practices.[37] There has also been an increase in urban agriculture initiatives in many major Italian cities.[46]

Challenges

- **Food Insecurity:** Although Italy is globally known for its culinary scene, 22% of people experience food insecurity. This number is disproportionately higher for recent immigrants and asylum seekers.[47]
- **Policy Gaps:** The headquarters of the *Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)* are located in Rome, Italy, making it an epicenter for global food policies.[3] Yet, its domestic policies fall short of eliminating hunger throughout Italy. Italy does not have a food security strategy, and there are few national efforts to improve food security.[47]
- **Nutrition Challenges:** Italy does not have national nutritional standards, and many people do not get adequate nutrients. The exception is protein, as the average Italian person consumes adequate high-quality protein.[37]

Türkiye

BACKGROUND

Population: 87,685,400[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 1,118,252.96[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: CSB- Mediterranean (warm, dry summer)[31]
Rural Population: 23%[32]

Report Card Score

71

Türkiye ties with Ukraine, ranking 20th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and last out of the 9 countries evaluated in Europe. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 19.

Highlights

- **Strong Agricultural Sector:** Türkiye has favourable climatic conditions and fertile soils, which has allowed it to become a global leader in agriculture and key contributor to food exports. It produces a large share of the world's raisins, figs, and cherries and is the world's largest hazelnut grower, producing 70% of global production.[48]
- **School Food Program:** *Ministry of National Education* and the *Ministry of Health* administered a *Healthy Nutrition and Physical Activity Programme* in schools throughout the country. Although there are still not universal school meals, this program is an important step toward improving nutritional awareness from an early age.[49]
- **Protein Consumption and Dietary Diversity:** Over the past decade, protein consumption has increased throughout Türkiye, with the average person consuming 109 grams of protein per day.[49] Additionally, Türkiye has strong dietary diversity, specifically when measured for dietary factors that protect against noncommunicable diseases.[50]

Challenges

- **Food Insecurity Among Refugee Populations:** Türkiye has one of the largest refugee populations globally; it currently hosts 3.2 million Syrian refugees. According to the *UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)*, many Syrian refugees cannot cover their expenses or basic needs, including the access to adequate nutrition.[48]
- **Inflation:** The rising cost of food is a growing problem globally, and Türkiye is one of the hardest hit countries; it currently holds the fifth-highest food inflation rate in the world. This is making it particularly difficult for low income families to afford a healthy diet. [29]
- **Challenges for the Agricultural Sector:** Although the agricultural sector is strong, it faces many problems. More than 80% of agricultural enterprises are small-scale, and many of these producers face barriers to accessing international markets and value chains. Additionally, there is high levels of rural-urban migration due to the lack of financial and social incentives for staying in rural areas, this threatens the future of food production.[49]

Ukraine

BACKGROUND

Population: 87,685,400[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 1,118,252.96[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: CSB- Mediterranean (warm, dry summer)[31]
Rural Population: 23%[32]

Report Card Score

71

Ukraine ties with Türkiye, ranking 20th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and last out of the 9 countries evaluated in Europe. It performs strongest on economic indicators, with a score of 19.

Research Limitations

- **Out-of-Date Data:** Ukraine's score of 71 does not capture the full story. As mentioned above, many of the indexes used to form these scores were from 2-3 years ago. So, given the rapidly changing socio-political situation in Ukraine due to the ongoing war, it is probable that Ukraine would have achieved a lower score if using more recent data.
- **Lack of Highlights:** Our team was unable to find many examples of food security highlights.

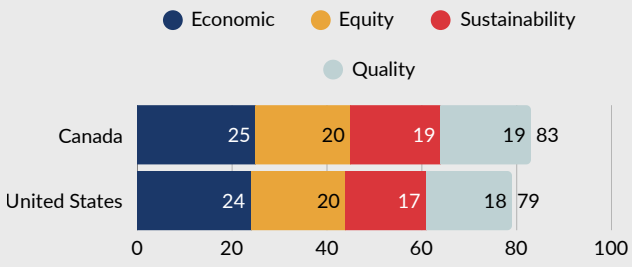
Challenges

- **Conflict-Induced Food Insecurity:** The war in Ukraine greatly impacted the agrifood sector through supply chain blockages and the destruction of physical infrastructure such as homes, dams, and ports; this decreased food access and availability.[8] The war also impacted diet quality and diversity throughout the country.[50]
- **Ukrainian Refugees:** There are 6 million Ukrainian refugees worldwide, and 5.9 million are living across Europe, the majority of whom are women and children. It is challenging for Ukrainian refugees to meet their minimum food needs, especially for people with disabilities and the elderly.[8]
- **Impact on Agriculture:** Prior to the war, 40% of exports from Ukraine were agricultural. Since the start of the war, it is estimated that Ukraine's agricultural sector has experienced USD $10 billion in damages and USD $70 billion in losses. This has impacted food security not just in Ukraine, but across the European Union and the world.[8]

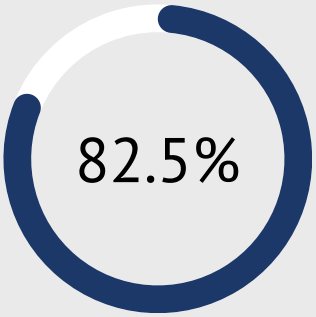
Figure 4: Two men standing in a wheat field in Ukraine

North America

Coountry Breakdown



Average Score



Regional Insights

Canada and the USA, the two countries in North America show consistently high scores in economic and equity indicators, supported by strong institutional frameworks and high levels of public investment. Compared to other countries, food is relatively affordable and social safety nets further contribute to secure access. Sustainability scores are lower than the other indicators, particularly for food waste and adaptation to climate risks. Quality indicators such as dietary diversity are moderate, with obesity levels pulling down scores, especially in the USA. The USA performs slightly weaker than Canada overall.

Canada

BACKGROUND

Population: 40,097,761[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 2,142,470.91[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: DFB- Humid Continental (Warm Summer)/ DFC- Subarctic (Cool Summer)[31]
Rural Population: 18%[32]

Report Card Score

82

Canada ranks 6th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 1st out of the 2 countries evaluated in North America. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 23.

Highlights

- **Poverty Reduction:** Canada has achieved notable reductions in poverty over the past decade, which is driven by comprehensive social support programs such as the *Canada Child Benefit*, *Employment Insurance*, and income assistance. These efforts are further strengthened by the work of a well-established charitable sector.[51] However, many organizations argue that these government and charitable programs are still not adequate in alleviating poverty for all.[2]
- **Low Undernutrition Rates:** Undernutrition is rare among children in Canada, with fewer than 5% affected. This is the result of widespread access to food and healthcare.[5]
- **Food Safety:** Canada is recognized as a global leader in food safety, supported by a comprehensive regulatory framework that includes the *Safe Food for Canadians Act* and the oversight of agencies such as the *Canadian Food Inspection Agency*.[7]

Challenges

- **Only G7 Country without a National School Food Program:** Although Canada has a low childhood undernutrition score, School Food Programs remain underdeveloped across the country. Despite a federal investment of $1 billion in April 2024, a universal school food program still does not exist.[52]
- **Indigenous Peoples Disproportionately Experience Food Insecurity:** Indigenous Peoples in Canada experience rates of food insecurity 5-6 times the national average. Over 46% of First Nations people in Canada experience food insecurity.[2]
- **Rising Cost of Food:** The cost of food continues to rise due to factors such as climate change, corporate concentration, and supply chain issues. The average monthly grocery bill has reached $880.94 USD, which makes a nutritious diet unaffordable for many families.[53]

Case Study 2: The Corporatization of Food Charity in Canada

Graham Riches, a social work professor and pioneer in the study of the political economics of food insecurity in Canada, first introduced the concept of the "depoliticization of hunger" in 1999.[54] Essentially, he argues that the Government of Canada has intentionally corporatized food, handing control of the food system to capitalist markets and framing food as a commodity rather than a public good and human right. Over 20 years later, Riches continues to argue that the Canadian government's depoliticization of food and reliance on the corporate food charity model enables the state to evade its social policy obligations.[55]

The first food banks emerged during the recession of 1980, as an emergency response to hunger, and rapidly expanded across Canada over the following decades.[55] However, emergency food relief was never intended to be a long term solution to food insecurity, as it fails to address, and may even perpetuate, the political economic structures that cause food insecurity in the first place.[56] This is evident, as food banks first emerged in the 1980s, and rapidly expanded over the following decades, yet food insecurity levels have also worsened over this time (Rideout, 2007).

Despite the evidence that corporate charities do not address the root causes of hunger, the government continues to support them as the main method of addressing food insecurity.[54] In a press release on April 3, 2020 Justin Trudeau stated: *"Many Canadians rely on food banks and local food organizations to feed their families and find support in hard times….Today, we are giving food agencies the support they need to keep helping Canadians through this difficult time"*[51] highlighting the government's continued reliance on food banks.

The corporatization of food charity, particularly through partnerships between "Big Food" and food bank networks further highlights the commodification of food. "Big Food," a $1.5 trillion industry, has monopolized or oligopolized many aspects of food production and distribution, which drives up prices and further limits access to affordable, nutritious food.[57] Corporate support for food charity creates a "win-win" for corporations and the government: Big Food companies experience tax incentives and positive public relations, and the Government effectively deflects attention from the need for structural policy solutions. Yet, for those facing food insecurity, this corporate-charity nexus is a "lose-lose," as it prioritises temporary relief over substantive change in food policy.[54]

Figure 5: Canned and packaged food from a Canadian food bank

The United States of America

BACKGROUND

Population: 340,110,988[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 27,720,709.00[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: Extremely variable[31]
Rural Population: 19%[32]

Report Card Score

79

The USA ranks 10th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and last out of the 2 countries evaluated in North America. It performs strongest on economic indicators, with a score of 22.

Research Limitation

- All of the indexes were used prior to the ongoing trade war. Economists predict that the newly imposed tariffs will impact food security in the US and globally.[58]

Highlights

- **Food Remains Relatively Affordable:** In the *Global Food Security Index (GFSI)*, the USA ranked high in affordability, which is important for food access and security.[7]
- **Low Rates of Childhood Undernutrition:** Less than 5% of children under the age of 5 experience undernutrition, which is very low compared to global standards.[11]
- **Food Safety:** Like Canada, the US is a top performer in food safety, with strict regulations that prevent food-borne illnesses and many systems ensuring compliance to these regulations.[7]

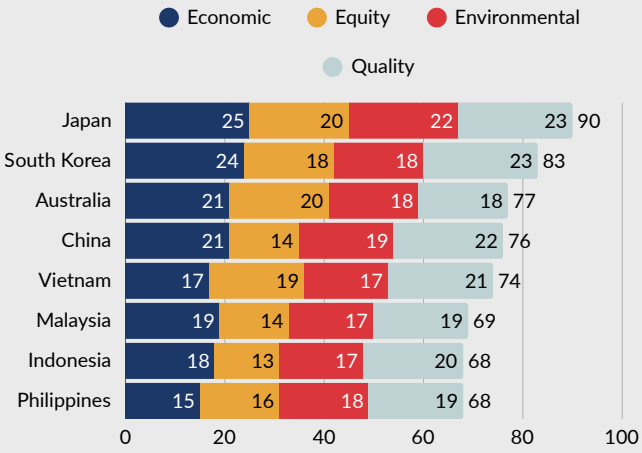
Figure 6: The cereal aisle in an American grocery store

Challenges

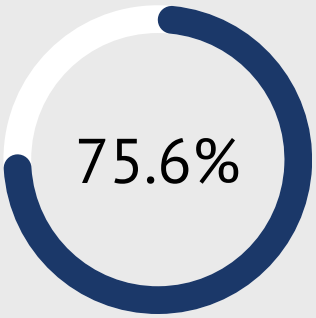
- **High Rates of Obesity:** Obesity and nutritional quality remain a large concern. A 2023 study from the *U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* found that in over 23 states 35% of adults were obese.[59] This is one of the highest rates in the world.
- **Certain States are more Deeply Impacted:** States, such as Utah, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Washington, New Hampshire, Colorado, Maryland, Wyoming, Rhode Island, Idaho have made significant progress on poverty reduction, with poverty rates of under 9%. However, there are high rates of food insecurity in many other states: New Mexico, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Kentucky, Oklahoma, West Virginia all have poverty rates greater than 15%. [60]
- **Food Insecurity in Puerto Rico:** Due to many overlapping systemic factors, there are high rates of food insecurity in Puerto Rico. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, 40% of Puerto Rican families reported experiencing food insecurity [61]

East Asia and Pacific

Coountry Breakdown



Average Score



Regional Insights

The eight countries evaluated in East Asia and the Pacific have a wide range scores, with higher-income countries such as Japan, South Korea, and Australia performing strongly in food quality and equity. Economic access is also strong across most countries in the region. However, sustainability scores are lower, with widespread exposure to climate and water risk, and equity scores vary due to differing levels of corruption and rights protections. Lower-income countries in the region, such as Indonesia and the Philippines, tend to score lower overall, but still relatively high compared to other geographical regions. These findings indicate that the region is experiencing rapid development, but that its food system remains unsustainable.

Japan

BACKGROUND

Population: 123,103,000[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 4,204,494.80[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: DFB- Humid continental (warm summer, no dry season)[31]
Rural Population: 8%[32]

Report Card Score

79

Japan ranks 3rd overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 1st of the 8 countries evaluated in East Asia and Pacific. It performs strongest on economic indicators, with a perfect score of 25.

Highlights

- **School Food Program:** The National School Food Program (*Kyushoku'*) is an official part of the school system, written into the *School Lunch Act of 1954*. It doesn't just feed kids, it also teaches nutrition, introduces regional culture, and supports local agricultural production.[36]
- **Government Commitments for Food Security:** Japan maintains a strong relationship with the *Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)* and leverages its power to promote food security both in Japan and globally.[62]
- **Low Undernutrition Rates:** Less than 2.5% of Japan's population is undernourished, which is one of the lowest undernutrition rates globally. However, the prevalence of overweight individuals is slowly increasing.[62]

Challenges

- **Decreased Agricultural Production:** Since the 1980s, food production in Japan has been steadily declining due to low wages, job precarity, lack of arable land, and other factors. Agriculture is one of the most susceptible sectors to climate change, and the changes in weather have already decreased agricultural productivity.[62]
- **Globalization:** Japan's food self-sufficiency rate stands at around 40%, making it heavily reliant on food imports. This dependency exposes the country to risks from geopolitical tensions, trade disruptions, and global price volatility, all of which can affect food availability and affordability across different regions.[62]
- **Slight Increase in Obesity:** There has been a slight increase in obesity throughout Japan over the past decades.[62]

Figure 7: Lunch program at a Japanese preschool

Australia

BACKGROUND

Population: 26,974,000[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 1,728,057.32[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: BWH- Hot desert[31]
Rural Population: 13%[32]

Report Card Score

77

Australia ranks 13th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 3rd of the 8 countries evaluated in East Asia and Pacific. It performs strongest on economic indicators, with a score of 21.

Highlights

- **Grocery Code of Conduct:** Australia has implemented measures to address price inflation at grocery stores, including a grocery store code of conduct that caps price inflation. Although prices continue to rise, price inflation has been less severe than in other countries, such as Canada.[2]
- **Commitment to Agricultural Support:** The government recently released a plan titled *Feeding Australia* that aims to make the agricultural sector more sustainable and resilient. However, it doesn't specifically address food security in remote and First Nations communities. [66]
- **Strong Dietary Diversity:** In 2020, only 0.5% of people in Australia and New Zealand were unable to afford a nutrient-adequate diet, and only 0.2% were unable to afford an energy (calorie) sufficient diet.[22] However, it is possible that this statistic has changed since that date.

Challenges

- **High Rates of Childhood Obesity:** Australia and New Zealand have some of the highest rates of childhood obesity in the world.[16]
- **Food Insecurity in Indigenous Populations:** Similar to other countries, Indigenous peoples in Australia experience disproportionate rates of food insecurity and hunger.[16]
- **Food Insecurity in Low-Income Families:** 48% of Australian families who earn less than A$30,000 ($19,575 USD) experience food insecurity. Homeless people, older people, single parents, and university students are all at greater risk.[66]

Figure 8: A variety of Indigenous foods from Australia

China

BACKGROUND

Population: 1,416,100,000[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 17,794,783.04[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: BSK- Cold semi-arid (steppe)[31]
Rural Population: 35%[32]

Report Card Score

76

China ranks 14th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 4th of the 8 countries evaluated in East Asia and Pacific. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 22.

Highlights

- **Self-Sufficiency Focus:** China is the world's largest food producer and exporter and is currently working to further boost domestic agriculture. It is specifically focussing on soybean production, as it aims to further reduce reliance on imports.[67]
- **Robust Infrastructure:** The country has strong national infrastructure and effective distribution systems that support food access.[18] Considering China's population of over 1.4 billion,[25] these strong supply chains are imperative.
- **Low Hunger Levels:** Compared to other countries in the region, China has low levels of hunger and child undernourishment. This is the result of widespread food access and effective food safety and sanitation systems.[11]

Challenges

- **Environmental Threats:** Water scarcity and climate risks pose significant threats to the stability of food production. Likewise, water excess has led to yield anomalies of wheat, which is one of most produced goods.[37]
- **Gender Inequality:** Gender inequality hinders inclusive participation in the food system. This is particularly in rural and agricultural areas, where women face greater economic barriers.[10]
- **Food Waste:** An estimated 27% of food went to waste in China between 2014 and 2018, which is equal to approximately 349 million tonnes of food. This happens at various levels of the food supply chain, including transportation.[67] However, infrastructure has greatly improved since that date,[25] so it is possible that food waste has declined, as well.

Figure 9: A rice paddy field in rural China

Vietnam

BACKGROUND

Population: 101,599,000[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 429,716.97[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: CWA- Monsoon-influenced humid subtropical (dry winter)[31]
Rural Population: 61%[32]

Report Card Score

74

Vietnam ranks 15th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 5th of the 8 countries evaluated in East Asia and Pacific. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 21.

Highlights

- **School Food Program:** Vietnam operates a daily school meal program that is run by the department of education. Families pay a small monthly fee for the school meal; for families that cannot afford this fee, there are some limited government subsidies.[68]
- **Agriculture Production:** Agriculture is a key part of Vietnam's economy, accounting for 24% of the GDP, with rice production accounting for a large proportion of all agricultural production. This is the result of the *Doi Moi Reforms* in 1986, which aimed to make Vietnam one of the global leaders in rice production and it continues to be successful today.[69]
- **Economic Growth:** Ongoing economic growth has resulted in a steady decrease in poverty rates over the past decade. Although there is still a lot of progress to be made, this has resulted in improved food security throughout the country.[69]

Challenges

- **Childhood Stunting:** Vietnam has high rates of childhood stunting: 8 million children under the age of 5 are impacted. Additionally, 58% of children in Vietnam have micro-nutrient deficiencies, and children of ethnic minorities are disproportionately impacted. [11]
- **Food Waste:** Due to inadequate infrastructure and transportation logistics, 8.8 million tons of food go to waste every year. F*oodbank Vietnam* has implemented programming to help farmers rescue and divert surplus food, which has improved the issue to some extent. However, food waste remains a challenge.[70]
- **Impact of COVID-19:** The economic constraints and supply chain interruptions lead to high levels of inflation, making food less affordable. This coupled with high rates of income losses and unemployment resulted in high rates of food insecurity. [70]

Figure 10: Food waste and garbage in Vietnam

Malaysia

BACKGROUND

Population: 35,977,800[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 399,705.17 [30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AF- Tropical rainforest (no dry season)[31]
Rural Population: 21%[32]

Report Card Score

69

Malaysia is tied with Mexico at 23rd overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and is 6th of the 8 countries evaluated in East Asia and Pacific. It performs strongest on economic and sustainability indicators, with scores of 21.

Highlights

- **Collaboration Between Stakeholders:** Collaborative efforts between governments, the non-profit sector, and the private sector have led to greater technical advancements in the agricultural sector.[69]
- **Affordability:** Although food prices have continued to increase in other upper-middle income countries, food has remained relatively affordable for people living in Malaysia.[69]
- **Bio-fortified Foods:** In Malaysia, both private and government schools have school food programs, which provide children with an estimated ¼ of their daily requirements.[68] Additionally, to combat nutritional deficiencies, pre-schools across the country provide children with iron-fortified beans, and Vitamin-A fortified plantains and maize. This has had a significant impact on children's overall iron and Vitamin-A intake.[34]

Challenges

- **Climate Change:** In Malaysia, food production is a challenge due to climate-related risks, such as monsoon flooding; water management is also a continual challenge. These environmental factors negatively impact the production of food.[69]
- **Impacts of COVID-19:** COVID-19 significantly impacted the agrifood system in Malaysia. Supply chain blockages and economic constraints resulted in decreased agricultural production, which drove food price inflation.[69]
- **Limited Agricultural Production:** Agriculture makes up 6-8% of GDP in Malaysia, but the majority of the sector is focused on industrial crops like rubber and palm oil. The exception to this is the region of Kedah, which is known as the "Rice Bowl of Malaysia," as it produces 40% of the countries rice.[69]

Figure 11: Biofortified lentils and beans

Indonesia

BACKGROUND

Population: 285,721,000[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 1,371,171.15[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AF- Tropical rainforest (no dry season)[31]
Rural Population: 41%[32]

Report Card Score

68

Indonesia ties with the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa at 25th overall out of the 50 countries included and 7th out of the 8 countries included in South Asia. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 22.

Highlights

- **Food Production and Gender Equality:** Through a community development initiative, Indonesia promoted sustainable fishery and aquaculture practices by providing production inputs, establishing processing facilities, and improving market access. The project led to a 78% increase in fishing productivity, a 5% reduction in post-harvest losses, and a 27% rise in women's empowerment.[16]
- **Strong Dietary Diversity:** According to the *Global Diet Quality Project 2022*, Indonesia was one of only six countries (out of 41 surveyed) where a majority of the population (60%) consumed all five essential food groups on a daily basis.[50]
- **World Food Forum (WFF) National Chapter:** On October 2, 2024, Indonesia launched a National Chapter of the *World Food Forum (WFF)*, backed by the FAO Indonesia Office and in partnership with key government ministries. The initiative, driven by the Presidential Staff Office under Dr. H. Moeldoko, is a platform for youth to engage in sustainable food systems through community events and policy innovation.[64]

Challenges

- **Corruption in the Palm Oil Industry:** Indonesia continues to convert forests into monoculture oil palm plantations to meet demand for cooking oil, biofuels, and industrial goods. This threatens biodiversity, reduces food system resilience, and undermines indigenous food sources.[37] A South Korean palm oil corporation began operation on Indonesian wetlands without prior consultation or compensation to local residents. Residents who refused to leave were harassed and in some cases, forced to leave their land. [13]
- **High Climate Risk:** Indonesia experiences significant exposure to natural hazards, such as flooding, and lacks robust infrastructure to adapt. These vulnerabilities have negatively affected crop yields and contributed to increased hunger in many regions.[11]
- **No National School Feeding Program:** According to the 2022 State of School Feeding Report, 0% of children participated in school feeding programs in Indonesia.[71] However, this has recently changed, and aqt the beginning of 2025, Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto implemented an ambitious, multi-billion dollar school feeding program, aiming to feed 82.9 million people by 2029. The first few pilot programs have had varied success.[72]

Philippines

BACKGROUND

Population: 116,787,000[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 437,146.37[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AF- Tropical rainforest (no dry season)[31]
Rural Population Percentage: 52%[32]

Report Card Score

68

The Philippines ties Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa at 25th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and last out of the 8 countries evaluated in South Asia. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 18.

Highlights

- **School Feeding Programs:** In 2023, 3,491,028 children were fed through school meal programs throughout the Philippines. Parents whose children participated in the program noted positive developmental changes, including improved immune systems and greater enthusiasm following the onset of school meal programs.[34]
- **Low Rates of Undernutrition:** Childhood undernutrition is relatively low in the Philippines, with 5.9% of children experiencing undernutrition.[11] To adequately address undernutrition in children, the Philippines implemented both food and nutrition programs with other public health initiatives, such as water, sanitation, and hygiene practices, and immunization.[3]
- **Improving Infrastructure:** Through ongoing investment in infrastructure, the Philippines has achieved relatively strong value chain efficiency, which has significantly improved access to food across the country.[73]

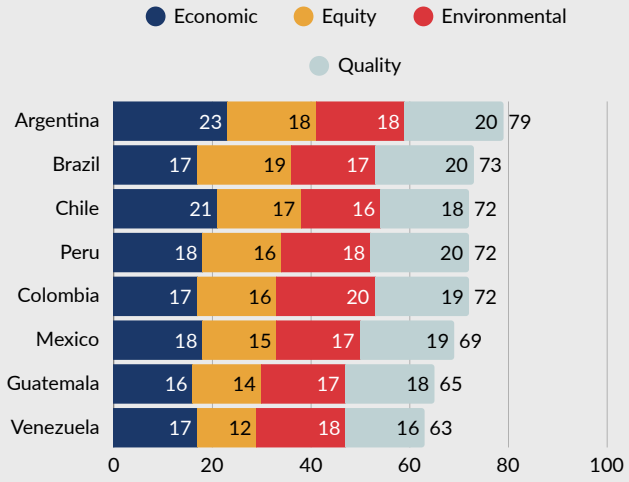
Challenges

- **Food Insecurity Among Farmers:** Farmers, specifically small-holder farmers, are more likely to experience food insecurity, and are more prone to global economic shocks that increase food prices.[74]
- **COVID-19 Pandemic:** The COVID-19 pandemic impacted actors across every aspect of the Philippines' agrifood system. The economic strain of COVID-19 impacted crop planting and harvest times, decreasing crop yields and overall agricultural productivity.[74]
- **High Climate Risk:** The Philippines is highly susceptible to natural disasters, including flooding, and it has low adaptive capacity to these challenges.[11] According to the *Climate Risk Index*, the Philippines is prone to recurring extreme events, and it ranked 10th worst globally for extreme weather, which can present challenges for constant and sustainable food supply.[17]

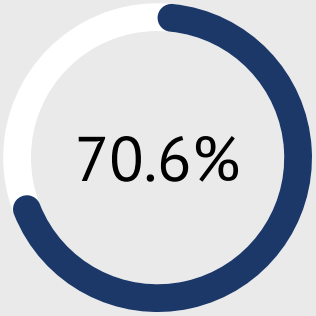
Figure 13: Aftermath of extreme weather in the Philippines

Latin America and Caribbean

Coountry Breakdown



Average Score



Regional Insights

The eight countries evaluated in Latin America and the Caribbean show moderate to strong performance in food quality and equity, which is the result of widespread school feeding program, human rights protections, and relatively diverse diets. Economic scores vary depending on national income and inequality levels, while sustainability indicators, specifically climate risk, tend to be lower. Venezuela achieves the lowest score in the region, which suggests the correlation between political instability and food insecurity. These findings imply that Latin America and Caribbean have made strides towards food insecurity but continues to face structural barriers to sustainability and equity within the food system.

Argentina

BACKGROUND

Population: 45,851,400 [25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 646,075.28[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: **CFA-** Humid subtropical (hot summers, no dry season)[31]
Rural Population: 8%[32]

Report Card Score

79

Argentina ranks 11th overall out of the 50 countries accessed and 1st out of the 8 countries in Latin America and Caribbean. It performs strongest on economic indicators, with a score of 23.

Highlights

- **Productive Agricultural Production:** Argentina has a strong agricultural sector and is one of the world's leading producers of soybeans, corn, and wheat. This results in both strong domestic food availability and export revenue.[75]
- **Safety Net Programs:** The government has implemented several food assistance and social protection programs, including the Food Card initiative (*Tarjeta Alimentar*), which is a part of the countries' National Plan to Eradicate Hunger (*PACH*). This program supports low-income families with direct transfers to purchase food.[75]
- **Comparatively Low Rates of Hunger:** Compared to other countries in the same region, Argentina has low rates of childhood malnutrition and childhood wasting. It scored in the "low hunger" category of the Global Hunger Index.[11]

Challenges

- **Rising Cost of Food:** Food prices are rapidly increasing in Argentina. Despite government efforts to minimize inflation, Argentine experienced the world's highest rate of food inflation from 2023-2023, at 183%.[29] This dramatically eroded household purchasing power and making nutritious food increasingly unaffordable.[75]
- **Economic Instability:** Recurring economic instability, coupled with high debt and currency devaluation, continues to strain public welfare systems and limit the government's ability to respond to growing food needs.[75]
- **Increased Rate of Childhood Stunting:** Despite having relatively low rates of rates of hunger, childhood stunting, which refers to children who have low height for their age due undernutrition, increased by 4 percentage points in the past 4 years. [11] This could be attributed to the rising cost of food.

Figure 14: Expensive produce at a fruit stand in Argentina

Brazil

BACKGROUND

Population: 211,140,729[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 2,173,665.66 [30]
Climate: AW: Tropical savanna climate[31]
Rural Population: 12%[32]

Report Card Score

73

Brazil ranks 16th overall out of the 50 countries accessed and 2nd out of the 8 countries in Latin America and Caribbean. It performs strongest on economic indicators, with a score of 23.

Highlights:

- **Food Safety Net Programs:** *The Program for Food Acquisition (PAA)* is a key initiative aimed at addressing food insecurity in Brazil since 2003. This program allows and enables solidarity kitchens and other social programs to purchase of food from family farmers.[3]
- **Coordinated Food Security Efforts:** One of Brazil's key food safety net programming is the *National Food and Nutrition Security System (SISAN)*, which coordinates federal, state, and municipal efforts to food insecurity. Other key initiatives including the Alimenta Brasil Program, and conditional income transfers through Auxílio Brasil have significantly advanced food and nutritional security. [24]
- **Conditional Cash Transfer Program:** *Bolsa Família* is the world's largest conditional cash transfer program. The program targets women living in rural areas; it has empowered women by reducing poverty through incomes and employment opportunities. This has boosted health and education outcomes for their children [11]

Challenges:

- **High Rates of Food Insecurity:** Poverty and inequality are closely tied to food insecurity in Brazil. Widespread food insecurity affects over half of Brazil's population, with 58.7% of people facing some degree of food insecurity, and 15.4 million people experiencing severe food insecurity.[16]
- **Climate Risks:** Climate change and droughts exacerbate food insecurity in Brazil, affecting agricultural production and access to healthy food. [3]
- **Corruption:** Corruption within Brazil's food system remains a significant concern, particularly involving major meatpacking companies like JBS. In 2017, JBS executives admitted to paying over $150 million in bribes to nearly 2,000 politicians, resulting in a record $3.2 billion fine. In 2023, a Brazilian Supreme Court judge suspended $2.1 billion of fines imposed under a 2017 leniency agreement, despite JBS' continued involvement in environmental violations, such as purchasing cattle from illegally deforested areas in the Amazon and Pantanal regions.[13]

Case Study 3: Brazil's National School Feeding Program (PNAE)

Brazil's Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar (PNAE) stands as one of the world's most expansive and longstanding school food programs, and it plays a vital role in promoting food security and childhood nutrition across the nation.

PNAE is funded primarily by the National Fund for the Development of Education, which is a federal agency that allocates financial resources for school infrastructure, personnel, and food education initiatives. The funding is distributed using a collaborative intersectoral governance model that integrates federal, state, and municipal levels of government.[36] The program provides free nutritious meals to 100% of students in public education, including those in early childhood, elementary, secondary, and certain adult literacy programs.[77] In an effort to be fully inclusive, the program provides additional funding for Indigenous and Quilombola communities.[36]

There are a few unique features of the PNAE:
1. A legal mandate to source at least 30% of food from local family farmers; this ensures that the program doesn't just support childhood nutrition, but also strengthens the local economy.[77]
2.The program also employs trained nutritionists who collaborate to ensure that all meals meet daily dietary needs while respecting cultural traditions around food.[77]
3. Each program has a School Meal Council, which is an independent local body responsible for monitoring food quality, storage, preparation standards, financial execution, and overall resource use.[36]

As a result of these measures, meals are freshly prepared on-site in well-equipped school kitchens and served immediately.[77] Overall, Brazil's PNAE is a model of how comprehensive policy and government coordination can strengthen local food systems.

Figure 15: An example of school lunches in Brazil

Chile

BACKGROUND

Population: 19,859,900[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 335,533.33[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: CSB- Mediterranean (warm, dry summer)[31]
Rural Population: 12%[32]

Report Card Score

72

Chile ties with Peru and Colombia at 16th overall out of the 50 countries accessed and 3rd out of the 8 countries in Latin America and Caribbean. It performs strongest on economic indicators, with a score of 21.

Highlights

- **Low Rates of Undernutrition:** Since the late 1980s, Chile has successfully undergone a nutritional transition, and today it has very low levels of undernutrition This demonstrates the country's ability to implement impactful public health and nutrition strategies.[33]
- **Strong Food Policies:** The introduction of the *National Food and Nutrition Policy (NFNP)* in 2017 reflects a comprehensive and structured approach. This policy incorporates multiple components and the Social Determinants of Health (SDH) to address the broader causes of food and nutrition insecurity.[33]
- **Promoting Healthy Eating Among Children:** Chile has strict rules of food advertising towards kids, aiming to reduce the exposure of unhealthy foods for children. In addition, they have created health regulations on packaged foods, aiming to curb the growing issue of overnutrition throughout the country.[3]

Challenges:

- **High Rates of Food Insecurity:** Poverty and inequality are closely tied to food insecurity in Brazil. Widespread food insecurity affects over half of Brazil's population, with 58.7% of people facing some degree of food insecurity, and 15.4 million people experiencing severe food insecurity.[16]
- **Climate Risks:** Climate change and droughts exacerbate food insecurity in Brazil, affecting agricultural production and access to healthy food. [3]
- **Corruption:** Corruption within Brazil's food system remains a significant concern, particularly involving major meatpacking companies like JBS. In 2017, JBS executives admitted to paying over $150 million in bribes to nearly 2,000 politicians, resulting in a record $3.2 billion fine. In 2023, a Brazilian Supreme Court judge suspended $2.1 billion of fines imposed under a 2017 leniency agreement, despite JBS' continued involvement in environmental violations, such as purchasing cattle from illegally deforested areas in the Amazon and Pantanal regions.[13]

Peru

BACKGROUND

Population: 34,576,700[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 267,603.25[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AF- Tropical rainforest (no dry season)[31]
Rural Population: 21%[32]

Report Card Score

72

Peru ties with Chile and Colombia at 17th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 4th out of the 8 countries in Latin America and Caribbean. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 20.

Highlights

1. **School Feeding Program:** Peru has a strong school feeding program, which helps improve children's nutrition and supports their academic development; this program is partly sponsored by the *U.S. Department of Agriculture*, .[71]
2. **Diversified Agriculture:** Peru has implemented innovative supply-side solutions including the production of diversified products, such as the expansion of quinoa production,[73] and the implementation of agroforestry systems in the Amazon.[37]
3. **Community Organization:** Small independent community food soup kitchens initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic led to food policy roundtable. This was an example of grassroots mobilization can lead to large-scale advocacy and mobilization initiative within the agrifood sector.[73]

Challenges

1. **High Rates of Food Insecurity:** According to the FAO, over half of the population, totalling 16.6 million people, are moderately food insecure.[77]
2. **Childhood Malnutrition:** Childhood malnutrition is a growing concern in Peru. An estimated 38% of Indigenous children, 24% of children in rural areas suffer from malnutrition. This not only negatively impacts people's health, but it also has negative impacts on the economy, as it decreases people's productivity.[77]
3. **Limited Public Health Initiatives:** Peru has limited healthcare access and struggles to keep physicians and nurses. This is an especially large issue in rural areas. As a result, the impacts of malnutrition are even more pronounced.[77]

Colombia

BACKGROUND

Population: 53,425,600[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 363,493.84[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AF- Tropical rainforest (no dry season)[31]
Rural Population: 18%[32]

Report Card Score

72

Colombia ties with Chile and Peru at 17th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 4th out of the 8 countries in Latin America and Caribbean. It performs strongest on sustainability indicators, with a score of 20.

Highlights

- **School Meal Programs:** COVID-19 led to improvements in Colombia's School Feeding Program, and some regions across the country now operate childhood nutrition programs year-round, even during school breaks.[34] Colombia has School Feeding Committees that spark citizen participation on issues social and environmental challenges.[79]
- **Comparatively Low Rates of Childhood Undernutrition:** On the *Global Hunger Index*, Colombia ranked relatively well compared to other countries on the report. Less than 10% of children experiencing malnutrition, but this is still a relatively high number[1]
- **Improved Food Security:** Household capacity to purchase and afford a nutritious diet has improved since 2023. This is the result of various community lead efforts and efforts from international organizations, such as the *World Food Programme (WFP)*, which funded job training and entrepreneurial support.[80]

Challenges

- **Hunger Among Immigrant Populations:** An influx of migrants from neighbouring countries alongside internal displacement resulted in certain populations and regions experiencing acute food insecurity.[8]
- **Climate Risks:** Colombia is prone to climate risks, such as drought and rainfall, which impact not only food access but also safety and livelihoods. The impacts of El Niño throughout 2024 increased rural poverty and food insecurity in many regions of the country.[81]
- **Civil Unrest:** Armed groups are increasingly targeting civilians, and indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities are disproportionately impacted. This civil unrest has driven internal conflict and contributed to food insecurity.[81]

Figure 16: The preparation of school lunches in Colombia

Mexico

BACKGROUND

Population: 131,947,000[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 1,789,114.43[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: BSK- Semi Arid climate[31]
Rural Population: 18%[32]

Report Card Score

69

Mexico ranks 24th out of the 50 countries evaluated and 6th out of the 8 countries evaluated in Latin America and Caribbean. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 19.

Highlights

- **High Rates of Food Security:** A national study covering 2,471 municipalities found that 90% of the population had adequate food availability. This is likely the result of the improved food distribution infrastructure across much of the country.[82]
- **Gender Equality Improvements:** Mexico has made strides in gender equality, and it is now one of only 2 countries in Latin America with equal shares of men and women in parliament. This advancement is important to food security, as gender-inclusive governance can lead to more equitable food policies, greater investment in nutrition programs, and improved access to resources for women farmers and caregivers, who play a central role in household food security. [10]
- **Agricultural Production:** Mexico possesses favourable environmental and social conditions in many regions for agricultural and livestock production. These regions strengthen local food systems and contribute to domestic food supply resilience.[82]

Challenges

- **Childhood Undernutrition:** Although Mexico has made improvements in overall food security, childhood undernutrition remains a persistent concern. Stunting and malnutrition rates among children have increased since 2016, which has lead to long-term health and developmental impacts.[11]
- **Unhealthy Diet:** Low consumption of fruits and vegetables, combined with high intake of sugary beverages, has contributed to increasing rates of childhood and adolescent obesity.[16] This is particularly prevalent in low-income communities, where access to nutritious food is even more limited.[47]
- **Food Insecurity for Indigenous Peoples:** Chronic malnutrition disproportionately affects indigenous populations. This disparity is rooted in historical, socioeconomic, and cultural inequalities, as well as limited access to infrastructure and essential services that support food security.[82]

Guatemala

BACKGROUND

Population: 18,687,900[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 104,450.21[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AM- Tropical monsoon (short dry season)[31]
Rural Population: 47%[32]

Report Card Score

65

Guatemala ranks 30th overall out of the 50 countries accessed and 7th of the 8 countries in Latin America and Caribbean. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 18.

Highlights

- **Commitment to Human Rights:** In 2024, the government administration took early steps to prioritize governance improvements, such as integrating the *Presidential Commission for Peace and Human Rights* into the Cabinet. This demonstrates the cabinets intent to address structural inequalities and strengthen human rights protections.[83]
- **New Research Developments:** The government released a plan for 2024-2028, titled the *Mano a Mano Interinstitutional Initiative for Poverty and Malnutrition Reduction*. This report aims to coordinate efforts across various government sectors to address food insecurity and malnutrition in a more holistic manner.[83]
- **Global Commitment to Food Security:** Guatemala made progress by aligning its food security strategies with international frameworks and goals. For example, *The World Food Programme's Country Strategic Plan (CSP 2021–2025)* aligns with the national development agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).[83]

Challenges

- **Low Social Spending:** A major challenge facing Guatemala is the persistently low level of public investment in social protection. Although social spending increased slightly to 7.9% of GDP in 2024, this remains among the lowest in the Latin America and Caribbean region, with just 1.4% allocated specifically to social protection. This underinvestment limits the country's ability to reduce poverty and ensure equitable access to essential services.[83]
- **Childhood Malnutrition:** Malnutrition, particularly among children, continues to be a severe public health issue. In 2024, 47% of children under five were affected by stunting, placing Guatemala sixth in the world for prevalence. Children in Indigenous and rural communities are disproportionately impacted.[83]
- **Climate Vulnerability:** Guatemala's vulnerability to climate change further exacerbated food insecurity. The transition from El Niño to La Niña in 2024 led to extreme weather events, including droughts and heavy rains, which damaged over 54,000 hectares of crops and impacted approximately 117,000 households.[83]

Venezuela

BACKGROUND

Population: 28,516,900[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 482,359.32[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AM- Tropical monsoon (short dry season)[31]
Rural Population: 12%[32]

Report Card Score

63

Venezuela ranks 32nd overall out of the 50 countries accessed and last out of the 8 countries in Latin America and Caribbean. It performs strongest on sustainable indicators, with a score of 18.

Highlights

- **Research Efforts:** The application of standardized tools, such as the *Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)* and food consumption scores, has enabled researchers and policymakers to reliably assess the state of food security and identify the most affected populations.[71]
- **Humanitarian Aid Efforts:** International organizations, including the *World Food Programme (WFP)* and the *Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)*, have increasingly focused attention on Venezuela's food crisis, leading to greater global awareness and the potential for expanded humanitarian support.[71]

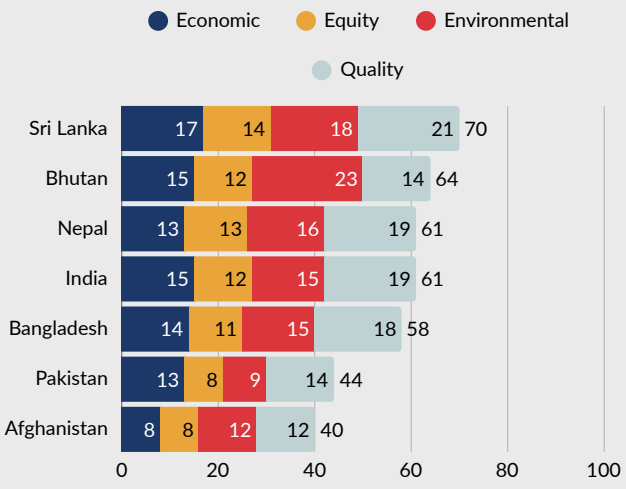
Challenges

- **Political Crisis:** Venezuela is experiencing a humanitarian emergency and political crisis. As a result, economic instability, marked by hyperinflation without a corresponding adjustment in wages, has forced many households to deplete their livelihoods and resources just to meet basic food needs.[71]
- **High Rates of Food Insecurity:** Food insecurity in Venezuela is alarmingly widespread, with only 9% of households considered food secure, while 22% are experiencing moderate to severe food insecurity and the remaining 69% are classified as marginally food secure. Many families have had to reduce meal frequency and substitute preferred foods, in order to adapt to the limited availability and access to food.[71]
- **Weak Infrastructure:** The combined impact of inadequate access to clean water, weakened healthcare infrastructure, and poor sanitation has significantly worsened nutritional outcomes, particularly for children and mothers. These compounding crises have resulted in increased rates of malnutrition and infant mortality.[65]

Figure 17: A teacher holds a sign reading "Minimum wage to Maduro (president of Venezuela) to let him know how hard it is"

South Asia

Coountry Breakdown



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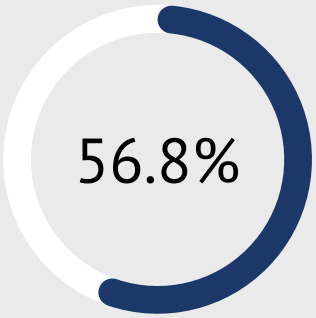


Regional Insights

The seven countries evaluated in South Asia consistently score at the lower end of global food security measures. Economic access remains limited, despite moderate improvements in affordability in some areas. Economic and equity indicators are particularly weak, which is the result of persistent governance challenges. Sustainability scores are also low, with countries in the region facing significant water stress and climate exposure. Quality indicators are the highest, as the result of moderate dietary diversity, but still low compared to global averages. Nepal and Pakistan score lowest within the region. These findings suggest that food systems in South Asia remain fragile and are deeply affected by structural inequalities, both within the region and globally.

Sri Lanka

BACKGROUND

Population: 23,229,500[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 84,356.86[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AF- Tropical rainforest (no dry season)[31]
Rural Population: 81%[32]

Report Card Score

70

Sri Lanka ranks 21st overall out of the 50 countries included and 1st out of the 8 countries included in South Asia. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a 21.

Highlights

- **Women-led Agricultural Cooperatives:** In regions affected by conflict and climate change, women-led cooperatives have improved household food security, enabled climate-resilient farming practices, and fostered collaboration across ethnic and religious divides.[84]
- **Climate-Smart Agriculture:** To combat erratic rainfall and prolonged droughts, Sri Lanka is increasingly investing in climate-resilient agriculture. Programmes providing drought-resistant seeds, improved irrigation techniques, and training for smallholder farmers.[84]

Challenges

- **High Levels of Food Insecurity:** 24% of the population, totalling 5.5 million people, are facing high levels of acute food insecurity, and people who work in the informal sector are greatly affected.[8]
- **Rising Food Prices:** Sri Lanka's ongoing economic crisis, intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic, has sharply reduced household purchasing power. Combined with soaring food prices, this has driven widespread food insecurity; by October 2022, over half of households (54%) were facing acute food shortages.[85]
- **Childhood Malnutrition: P**regnant women and children are disproportionately affected by food insecurity. In 2023, approximately 10% of children under five experienced wasting—a critical indicator of acute malnutrition.[85]
- **Climate-Related Disasters:** Extreme weather events, including intense flooding during the southwest monsoon, damaged agricultural lands and devastated the livelihoods of over 75,000 farmers.[8] Ongoing climate threats like sea level rise further endanger ecosystems vital to food production.[85]

Figure 18: A women's agricultural cooperative in Sri Lanka

Bhutan

BACKGROUND

Population: 796,682[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 2,898.23[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: CWB- Subtropical highland with dry winter[31]
Rural Population: 56%[32]

Report Card Score

64

Bhutan ranks 31st overall out of the 50 countries included and 2nd out of the 8 countries included in South Asia. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 21.

Highlights

- **Equitable Development:** Bhutan is globally known for its commitment to happiness, cultural, and ecological preservation.[63]
- **Seed Saving:** A recent study found that 97% of households in Bhutan save seeds in some capacity, and the remaining are procured through government-run seed programs. This promotes autonomy over Bhutan's food systems and relative self-sufficiency at the household level.[63]
- **School Feeding Program:** The government of Bhutan has had complete ownership and management of the school feeding program since 2019. The food served in the program includes fortified rice and oil to ensure that children are getting adequate nutrition.[78]

Challenges

- **Childhood Stunting:** Bhutan has an alarming rate of childhood stunting, with 34.1% of children experiencing stunted growth due to inadequate nutrition.[11]
- **Low Wages for Farmers:** People working in the agricultural sector in Bhutan struggle to earn a living wage, specifically for farmers producing rice and potatoes.[3]
- **Challenges for Market-Oriented Farming:** Bhutan has attempted to sell its agricultural goods in the international market, but it faces various barriers. For example, while a lot of the food produced is organic, there is minimal oversight in the production process, and thus cannot be labelled as 'organic.' So, the international market does not recognize, and is not willing to pay for, the true value of the produced grown in Bhutan.[63]

Figure 19: Sustainable agriculture in Bhutan

Nepal

BACKGROUND

Population: 796,682[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 2,898.23[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: CWB- Subtropical highland with dry winter[31]
Rural Population: 56%[32]

Report Card Score

64

Bhutan ranks 31st overall out of the 50 countries included and 2nd out of the 8 countries included in South Asia. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 21.

Highlights

- **Challenging Patriarchal Norms:** In some regions of Nepal, patriarchal structures shape family dynamics. In response, an initiative titled *The Nutrition Smart CommUNITY* has advocated for a community-based approach to the right to food. This program trains women on how to prepare affordable and nutritious meals and has already had decreased the rate of childhood malnutrition.[11]
- **World Food Forum (WFF) National Chapter:** The Nepal Youth Chapter of the WFF launched in 2023 and has support from the FAO office in Rome, Italy and the support of a WFF Local Youth Action Team. The team mobilizes resources and provide a platform for youth to engage in the local agrifood system.[64]
- **Adaptation for Smallholders in Hilly Areas Program:** A $37.6 million program funded in part by the Nepal Government and in part by participants' contributions. The program strengthened smallholder farmers' capacity to adapt to climate change and climate-related risks.[16]

Challenges

- **Malnutrition in Rural Areas:** Although dietary diversity is improving in urban areas, people living in rural areas often do not have an adequate diet. Specifically, women in rural areas are disproportionately impacted by malnutrition.[50]
- **Lack of Access to Healthy Food:** Only 1.1% of Nepalese adults consume at least 400 grams of fruits and vegetables each day, which is the minimum recommended amount.[73]
- **Childhood Stunting:** In 2019, 31.5% of children under the age of 5 experienced stunting. Although this is an improvement since 2011, when the rate was 40.1%, it is still an alarming rate.[73]

WORLD FOOD FORUM Nepal

Figure 20: World Food Forum Nepal Chapter Logo

India

BACKGROUND

Population: 1,463,870,000[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 3,567,551.67[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AW- Tropical savanna (wet and dry seasons)[31]
Rural Population: 64%[32]

Report Card Score

61

India ranks 34th overall out of the 50 countries accessed and 4th out of the 8 countries in South Asia. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 19.

Highlights

- **Declining Poverty Rates:** Feeding over 1.4 billion people is undoubtedly a challenge. Yet, poverty in India has decreased in recent years, falling from approximately 21.9% in 2011 to 10.4% in 2017-18.[86]
- **Significant Food Producer:** India has strong agricultural self-sufficiency and high production capacity. It is a leading global producer of food grains (rice, wheat, pulses), and fruits and vegetables (ranked second).[86]
- **Non-profit Organizations:** There are many non-profit and grassroots organizations across India working towards improving food security across India. A few notable examples include *Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation's Feed The Need* initiative, Community Fridges in Gurugram,[86] and the Centre for Indian Knowledge Systems (CIKS) in the state of Tamil Nadu.

Challenges

- **Undernourishment and Malnutrition:** Despite high food production, 16% of India's population (224.3 million people) is undernourished. Additionally, a significant portion of children suffer from child-wasting (17.3%) and stunting (30.9%).[86]
- **Agricultural Sector Vulnerabilities:** Although 65% of the entire population live in rural areas and 54.6% of the workforce works in agriculture, the agricultural sector faces chronic issues. Sustainable and reliable agriculture have been hindered by reduced land ownership (80% of farmers operate on small holdings), limited irrigation, low agricultural financing, and minimal government initiatives.[86]
- **Food Delivery and Distribution:** The primary issue in India is not food shortage but an inefficient and fragmented food delivery and distribution system. Approximately 40% of India's food is wasted due to inadequate post-harvest infrastructure, including a lack of cold storage and unsafe warehouses, leading to significant financial losses and contributing to hunger despite abundant production.[86]

Bangladesh

BACKGROUND

Population: 175,687,000[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 437,415.33[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AW- Tropical savanna (wet and dry seasons)[31]
Rural Population: 60%[32]

Report Card Score

58

Bangladesh ranks 37th overall out of the 50 countries included and 3rd out of the 8 countries included in South Asia. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 18.

Highlights

- **Improved Dietary Diversity:** Education initiatives including digital media and integrated community efforts led to improved dietary diversity for children, which was a previously very severe issue. Agricultural training also led to increased fruit and vegetable consumption.[73]
- **Social Safety Net Programs:** Bangladesh's Food Program, *Khaddo Bandhob Karmasuchi*, provides 30 kg of highly subsidized rice to the country's poorest households during the lean seasons between harvests (March–April and September–November)
- **School Feeding Program:** The government of Bangladesh began operating a school feeding program in 2010, with technical assistance from the *World Food Programme (WFP)*, which was previously operating the program. There is an intentional effort to provide income generating projects for women in the program, and for women to hold positions on the *School Management Committee (SMC)*, which makes decisions regarding the program.[34]

Challenges

- **Rohingya Refugee Crisis:** The Cox's Bazar district, located in southeastern Bangladesh is facing a severe food crisis. In this region, over 1 million Rohingya Refugees live in camps and are not legally allowed to work; they are also not legally allowed to return to Myanmar. They are entitled to depend on humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs. Only 16% of Rohingya refugee children receive a nutritious diet.[8]
- **Climate Change:** In 2022, monsoon rains caused landslides and flash floods that impacted 7 million people and displaced 2 million. Simultaneously, a separate region of the country experienced heatwaves and cyclones. These severe weather events impact food production and make food less available across the country.[8]
- **Corruption Impacting Food Security:** In the 2021 Corruption Perceptions Index, *Bangladesh ranks 147 out of 180 countries*. The cost of corruption is paid by households, who are resultantly unable to afford a nutritious diet.[13]

Pakistan

BACKGROUND

Population: 255,220,000[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 337,912.30[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: BWH- Hot desert [31]
Rural Population: 62%[32]

Report Card Score

44

Pakistan ranks 48th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 7th out of the 8 countries evaluated in South Asia. It performs strongest on economic indicators, with a score of 13.

Highlights

- **Agricultural Self-Sufficiency:** Pakistan is the 8th largest wheat producer and 5th largest sugarcane producer globally. Because of its large-scale agricultural, it is self-sufficient in many major staples.[87]
- **Agricultural Economy:** Agriculture is the largest employer in the country; it provides essential livelihoods to 75% of the population.[87] However, being so heavily reliant on agriculture can also lead to economic instability and vulnerability to environmental change.[2]
- **Commitment to Food Security on the Global Stage:** Following the *UN Food Systems Summit*, Pakistan created a *National Food Systems Pathway* and included a food systems approach in its *National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)*. This demonstrates that it recognizes the role of food in sustainable development.[87]

Challenges

- **Child Malnutrition:** 2.1 million children under the age of 5 suffer from acute malnutrition, which is a significant humanitarian concern.[8]
- **Gender Inequality in Agriculture:** Despite 75% of women and girls in rural areas engaging in agricultural work, this is largely unpaid. Many female producers face barriers accessing credit and selling their goods in the market. [8]
- **Barriers to Agriculture:** Pakistan's strong reliance on agriculture makes it highly vulnerable to climate events. Heavy floods in 2022 severely impacted cereal production, and heavy rains and monsoons in 2023 further submerged farmlands, both of which resulted in substantial crop losses.[8] Additionally, crop yields in Pakistan have been significantly impacted by threats such as desert locusts and other infestations.[37]

Figure 20: Agricultural production in Pakistan

Afghanistan

BACKGROUND

Population: 43,844,100[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 17,233.05[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: BWK- Cold Desert/ DSB- Warm, dry summer:[31]
Rural Population: 73%[32]

Report Card Score

40

Afghanistan ties with Yemen as the poorest performing country of the 50 countries evaluated. It performs strongest on sustainability and quality indicators, with scores of 12.

Highlights

- **Improved Harvest:** 2024 saw an above average harvest, which slightly reduced the number of people experiencing severe food insecurity.[89]
- **Some (Limited) Humanitarian Assistance:** Although there are still many barriers to providing food assistance to Afghan people, there have been some improvements in the security of humanitarian organizations, which has led to a slight increase in food and aid distribution.[8]

Challenges

- **High levels of Malnutrition:** In Afghanistan, 46% of the population is facing acute food insecurity, which total at nearly 20 million people. Additionally, 3.2 million children under the age of 5 experienced acute malnutrition. Factors contributing to food insecurity include war, natural disasters, limited health and nutrition services all contribute to these high rates. [11]
- **Taliban Takeover:** Over the past 2 decades there was a shift from agriculture to more urban activities, but after the Taliban takeover in August 2021, these urban based jobs collapsed. Adding to the issue, after the takeover, there was a freeze of international assistance.[88] There are currently 5.7 million people who were forcibly displaced, and displaced people face unique barriers to food security.[8]
- **Natural Hazards:** Natural hazards and extreme climate continue to impact food production. Afghanistan is prone to earthquakes, flooding, drought, and landslides which impact its ability to grow food and feed its population. Additionally, over 80% of families do not have access to clean drinking water.[17] Climate change is severely impacting farmers and the agricultural sector as a whole.[88]

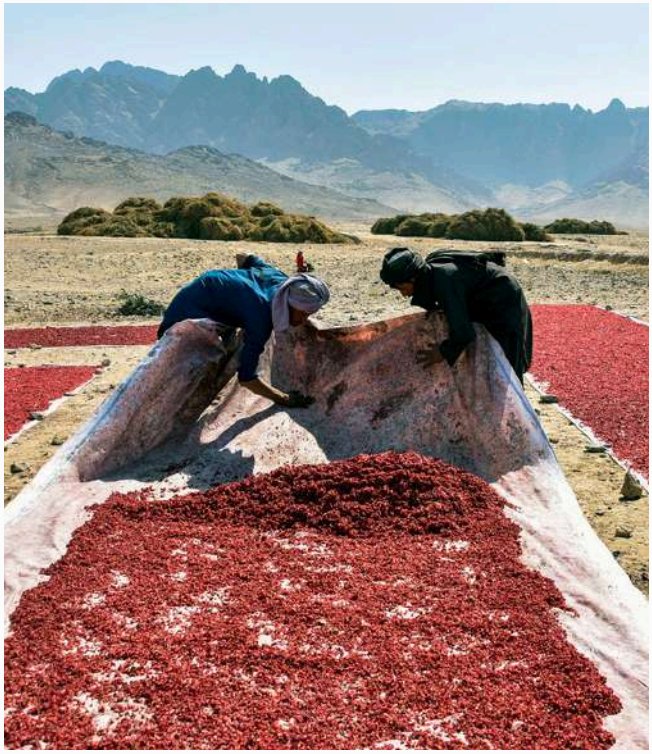
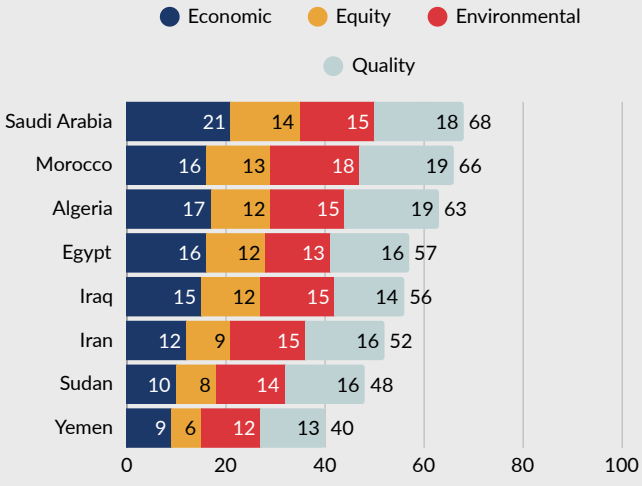


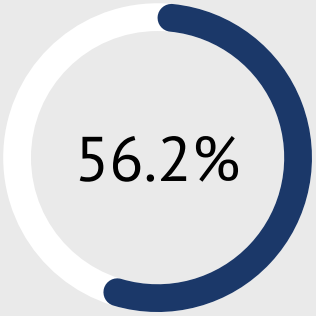
Figure 20: Two people drying red chilli peppers in Afghanistan

Middle East and North Africa

Coountry Breakdown



Average Score



Regional Insights

The eight countries evaluated in the Middle East and North Africa show a wide range of results, with scores from 40 to 70. Food affordability and infrastructure are relatively strong, but equity and sustainability scores are more uneven. Countries affected by conflict or instability, such as Yemen and Sudan, show much lower scores across all dimensions. Water stress and reliance on food imports also contribute to low sustainability scores across the region. These findings suggest that the impacts of political instability and lack climate risks have compounding impacts of food security throughout the region.

Saudi Arabia

BACKGROUND

Population: 34,566,300[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 1,067,582.93[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: BWH- Hot desert [31]
Rural Population: 15%[32]

Report Card Score

68

Saudi Arabia ties with Indonesia, the Philippines, and South Africa at 26th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 1st out of the 8 countries evaluated in The Middle East and North Africa. It performs strongest on economic indicators, with a score of 21.

Highlights

- **Childhood Nutrition:** Saudi Arabia has low levels of childhood undernutrition and stunting; in 2023, only 3% of children were undernourished.[11]
- **Food Safety Net Programs:** *Eta'am* is the primary food bank in Saudia Arabia, and it has run since 2011. In April 2022, during Ramadan, the food bank delivered food to over 900000 people in 19 countries. It also has strategic alliances with partner organizations to divert food waste from landfills and towards deserving people.[90]
- **Food Policy Efforts:** Saudi Arabia released the report *Vision 2023* in 2016, with an aim to diversify its economy through a period of 5-year phases. Through this program, it implemented many social protection programs.[91]

Challenges

- **Rising Obesity Rate:** Saudi Arabia's obesity rate is higher than the regional average; 42.7% of men and 32.7% of women in Saudi Arabia are overweight.[21]
- **Lack of Water Supply:** With a desert climate, water supply remains a challenge. This impacts domestic grain production, and results in a high dependency on food imports.[90]
- **Urban Density:** Over 81% of the land is agricultural, yet 85% of the population lives in urban areas. This results in various problems within the agricultural sector, most notably as a labour shortage.[90]

Figure 22: Innovative irrigated agriculture in a desert in Saudi Arabia

Morocco

BACKGROUND

Population: 38,430,800[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 144,417.10[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: BSH- Hot semi-arid[31]
Rural Population: 35%[32]

Report Card Score

66

Morocco ranks 29th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 2nd out of the 8 countries evaluated in The Middle East and North Africa. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 19.

Highlights

- **Training in Climate-Smart Practices:** The Moroccan government implemented *The Green Morocco Plan* and the *Generation Green Program*, which are focussed on improving agricultural efficiency and enhancing rural development. Additionally, The World Bank recently financed a 250 million dollar initiative called the *Transforming Agri-food Systems Program*, which enhances rainfed agriculture, improves climate risk management, and gives farmers greater access to markets.[92]
- **School Food Programs:** Morocco's school food programs are expanding, and many schools have now implemented a gardening program that is used to teach youth about the importance of environmental sustainability.[36]
- **Food Safety:** Morocco has high food safety standards compared to the rest of the region, and it received a high food safety score on the Global Food Security Index.[7]

Challenges

- **Food Insecurity Following the 2023 Earthquake:** The September 2023 Earthquake in Morocco resulted in a humanitarian crisis and large spread food insecurity.[73]
- **Political Commitment to Food Security:** The government of Morocco does not have a food security strategy or agency, and it lacks a plan of how it will combat and address food insecurity.[7]
- **Rural Poverty and Limited Infrastructure:** There is a notable urban-rural divide in Morocco with rural areas experiencing much higher rates of food insecurity and poverty. Many rural regions lack access to markets, storage facilities, and agricultural support services. This limits farmers' ability to grow, store, and distribute food efficiently.[93]

Figure 24: Strawberry harvesting in Morocco

Algeria

BACKGROUND

Population: 47,435,300[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 247,626.16[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification:
BWH- Hot desert[31]
Rural Population: 25%[32]

Report Card Score

63

Algeria ranks 33rd overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 3rd out of the 8 countries evaluated in The Middle East and North Africa. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 19.

Highlights

- **Lower Rates of Hunger:** Algeria has made progress in reducing hunger and malnutrition. The country scored in the "low hunger" category of the 2024 *Global Hunger Index*.[11]
- **Affordable Food:** In the *Global Food Security Index*, Algeria performed well in affordability. Compared to other countries in the MENA region, it has a low number of people living below the poverty line, a strong presence of food safety net programs, and strong food safety legislation.[7]

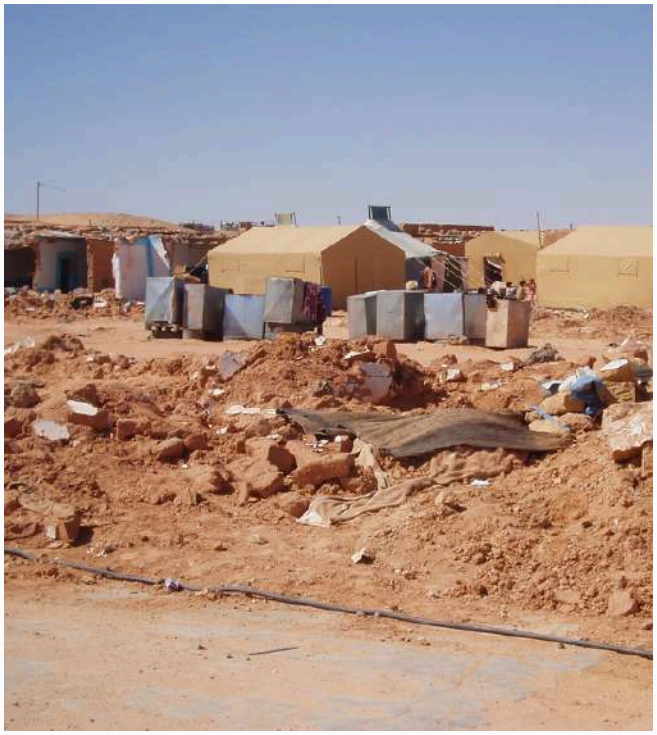


Figure 24: The Sahrawi refugee camp in Algeria

Challenges

- **Refugee Food Crisis:** The Sahrawi refugee camps, located near Tindouf, Algeria have operated for nearly 50 years, and 173 600 people remained in these camps in 2023. People living in these camps face harsh conditions and limited economic opportunities; around 28% of Sahrawi refugees face acute food insecurity, and children experience high levels of acute malnutrition.[8]
- **Reliance on Imports:** Like many import-reliant countries, Algeria is vulnerable to global food price fluctuations. With high unemployment and an economy heavily tied to oil, many households face reduced purchasing power and rising food insecurity risks.[11]
- **Climate Risks and Drought:** Algeria faces increasing pressure from climate change, including frequent droughts, extreme heat, and desertification, which undermine crop yields and livestock production. Water scarcity remains a pressing issue, with agriculture consuming the majority of available freshwater, putting further stress on food systems, especially in arid and semi-arid zones.[17]

Egypt

BACKGROUND

Population: 118,366,000[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 396,002.50[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: BWH- Hot desert[31]
Rural Population: 57%[32]

Report Card Score

57

Egypt is tied with Tanzania at 38th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 4th out of the 8 countries evaluated in The Middle East and North Africa. It performs strongest on economic and quality indicators, with scores of 16.

Highlights

- **Food Subsidy Program:** *The Tamween Smart Card system* is one of the world's largest food-subsidy programs and reaches around 70% of households. Although the program provides temporary relief from hunger, it often results in the over-consumption of starchy and calorie-dense foods that are not balanced or nutritious.[73]
- **Agricultural Investment:** Egypt invests in agricultural development and irrigation modernization to enhance domestic food production and reduce reliance on food imports. [73]
- **School Meals:** School Feeding Programs are expanding throughout Egypt and other countries in the MENA region. In partnership with the *World Food Programme (WFP)*, Egypt provides daily meals to children in underserved communities, which has improved both nutrition and educational outcomes.[73]

Challenges

- **Climate Change Vulnerability:** Egypt faces high vulnerability to climate change, including water scarcity and extreme temperatures, which threaten crop yields and long-term food security. Due to the compounding crises of climate change and water scarcity, it is essential to adapt farming systems to be more resistant to these shocks.[73]
- **High Levels of Inflation:** Food inflation in Egypt rose from 20% before the Russia-Ukraine war to 63% in 2023, which makes a healthy diet out of reach for many families. This further demonstrates the importance of the food subsidy programs outlined in the highlights.[73]
- **Rural Poverty:** Egypt struggles with high levels of rural poverty, which limit smallholder farmers' access to modern farming technology, credit, and markets, ultimately constraining productivity and food availability.[73]

Figure 25: Agricultural land in Egypt

Iraq

BACKGROUND

Population: 47,020,800[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 250,842.78[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: BWH- Hot desert[31]
Rural Population: 28%[32]

Report Card Score

56

Iraq ranks 40th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 5th out of the 8 countries evaluated in The Middle East and North Africa. It performs strongest on economic and sustainability indicators, with scores of 15.

Research Limitation

- Our team was unable to find many examples of food security highlights in Iraq.

Highlights

- **School Feeding Programs:** School meals are an important educational and public health tool in conflict settings. School meals are becoming increasingly common in Iraq. [73] However, there is little data available on the scope and effectiveness of this program. It lacks the personnel to carry out monitor and evaluation efforts. [34]

Challenges

- **Refugees and Asylum Seekers:** Displaced person unique barriers to food security. 7% of the 300 000 Syrian refugees and asylum seekers living in Iraq experience acute food insecurity.[8]
- **Decline of Agricultural Land:** Agricultural Industry has been rapidly declining since the early 2000s and today it accounts for only 5% of Iraq's GDP. This is the result of rapid population growth, which is leading to urban sprawl and the loss of agricultural land; this could result in a food insecurity crisis in the near future. Additionally, Iraq is one of the Arab countries most impacted by climate change, yet it is also falling behind regional and global standards for modern agriculture and climate-resilient agriculture.[94]
- **Conflict:** Conflict and instability are one of the main drivers of food insecurity in Iraq, and globally, food insecurity is often highest in conflict-affected areas.[8]

Figure 26: Influx of Syrian refugees in Iraqi Kurdistan

Iran

BACKGROUND

Population: 92,417,700[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 404,625.66[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: BWH- Hot desert[31]
Rural Population: 23%[32]

Report Card Score

52

Iran ranks 42nd overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 6th out of the 8 countries evaluated in The Middle East and North Africa. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 16.

Research Limitation

- Iran's score of 52 was calculated prior to the military escalation between Iran-Israeli, which began on June 13, 2025. As outlined in the *Global Report on Food Crises*, conflict and instability are the main drivers of acute food insecurity worldwide. It is likely that the conflict will cause widespread hunger across the country.

Highlights

- **School Feeding Programs**: Despite facing considerable food security challenges, Iran has benefited from international support. In 2024, the *World Food Programme (WFP)* provided school meals to nearly 9,000 refugee children and 650 teachers.[95]
- **Employment Support for Refugees:** *The WFP* also implemented income-generating initiatives for Afghan refugees, such as craft and bag-making projects, These workshops contributed to greater household resilience and self-sufficiency.[95]
- **Improved Food Security:** With each publication of the *Global Hunger Index*, Iran's score has improved; it was 13.7 in 2000 and went down to 7.4 in 2024. Although there is still progress needed, there has been some improvement [11]

Challenges

- **Acute Food Insecurity for Afghan Refugees:** Iran hosts 4.5 million Afghan refugees, many of whom lack the legal documentation to secure employment. This leaves them vulnerable to unsafe conditions, and leaves them disproportionately vulnerable to food insecurity.[8]
- **High Food Prices:** With inflation reaching 38.9% in January 2024, the cost of living has risen sharply, making nutritious food unaffordable for many families.[8]
- **Climate Risks:** Iran is prone to natural disasters, including Earthquakes, droughts, and floods, which regularly disrupt food production. The agricultural sector consumes 90% of the countries' water usage, further contributing to the issues of water scarcity and food system stress.[82]

Sudan

BACKGROUND

Population: 51,662,100[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 109,265.50[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: **BSH- Hot semi-arid**[31]
Rural Population: 64%[32]

Report Card Score

48

Sudan tied with the Democratic Republic of Congo at 46th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 7th out of the 8 countries evaluated in The Middle East and North Africa. It performs strongest on quality indicators, with a score of 16.

Geographical Note

- Sudan sits on the border of Sub-Saharan Africa and the MENA region, and it is often classified as both regions, depending on the source.

Research Limitation

- Our team was unable to find many examples of food security highlights in Sudan.

Challenges

- **Ongoing Conflict:** Sudan is experiencing East Africa's largest food crisis due to an ongoing conflict between the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) since April 2023. The conflict has disrupted food production by destroying land for cultivation and limiting seasonal activities and livestock movement.[8]
- **Internal Displacement Crisis:** 7.7 million people were displaced by the end of 2023. Many of whom sought refuge at refugee camps in South Sudan, where they also experienced famine-like, or in some cases, actual famine, conditions.[8]
- **Economic Challenges:** High inflation coupled with the depression of the local currency resulted in an economic catastrophe and the collapse of the overall banking system. This has led to an estimated 3 million children under the age of 3 in Sudan experiencing acute malnutrition. [8]
- **Climate Change:** Sudan is among the worst impacted by climate change, as it has led to increased extreme weather and unpredictable temperatures. This adds to the existing challenges preventing domestic food production.[8]

Figure 27: World Food Programme trucks deliver humanitarian aid to people in Sudan

Yemen

BACKGROUND

Population: 41,773,900[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 21,606.16[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: BWH- Hot desert[31]
Rural Population: 60%[32]

Report Card Score

40

Yemen ties with Afghanistan for last out of the 50 countries included in the report. It ranks low across all indicators, but it's highest score is on quality, with a 13.

Research Limitation

- Our team was unable to find many examples of food security highlights in Yemen.

Challenges

- **Food Insecurity at an All-Time High:** An estimated 18 million people from Yemen do not know when they will be able to have their next meal.[8]
- **Ongoing Civil War:** Yemen is experiencing crisis, as 4.5 million people are experiencing internal displacement. Displaced populations face unique barriers to food security due to food availability, transportation, utilization, and stability. Displacement also lessens the capacity that mothers' have to care for their children and can lead to childhood malnutrition. The Civil War has also weakened the country's economy and resulted in one of the highest poverty levels in The Middle East.[8]
- **Agricultural Workforce:** 28% of the workforce in Yemen works directly in agriculture,[8] and 3/4 of Yemenis rely on agriculture at least to some capacity to survive. Yet, agriculturalists face many challenges producing adequate food. There is a greater need for alternative energy sources and improved water collection to support agriculture, but the current conflict prevents this from happening.[96]
- **Catastrophe Level of Food Insecurity:** The Global Report on Food Crises found that 31000 people were in the Catastrophe phase of food insecurity (the level before famine) in 2022.[8]

Figure 28: Humanitarian food assistance waiting to be delivered in Yemen

Case Study 4: High Risk of Famine in Gaza

Famine is not just a humanitarian crisis; it is the collapse of a food system so severe that people begin to die from hunger. While food insecurity exists in many forms, famine is the most extreme and dire stage, with high rates of starvation, acute malnutrition, and mortality.[89]

According to the *United Nations' Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)*, a famine is the 5th phase of food insecurity and is declared only when all three of the following thresholds are met:[97]

1. At least 20% of households face an extreme lack of food
2. At least 30% of children suffer acute malnutrition
3. Two adults per 10,000 people die each day "due to outright starvation or to the interaction of malnutrition and disease"

It typically arises from compounding factors such as armed conflict, climate extremes, economic collapse, and restricted humanitarian access. [97] In the last decade, famine has been officially declared in only a few instances: Somalia in 2011, South Sudan in 2017 and again in 2020, and the Farfur region of Sudan in 2024. Today, the Gaza Strip is confronting conditions that dangerously mirror those past crises.[89]

The Gaza Strip is a small and densely populated territory, just 365 square kilometers in size, situated along the eastern Mediterranean coast. Since the escalation of war in October 2023, food insecurity in Gaza has reached catastrophic levels. As of May 2025, the entire population of approximately 2.2 million people is classified as facing acute food insecurity, and one in five individuals are experiencing starvation.[98] The toll on children has been especially alarming; 15.6% of children under the age of two are suffering from malnutrition. This is well above the 30% IPC threshold that contributes to a famine classification.[99]

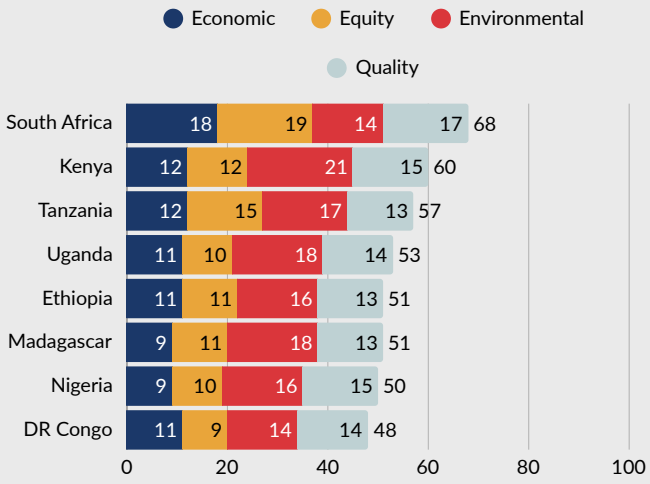
On March 2, 2025, access to humanitarian aid to Gaza was obstructed. United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres described the situation as “what may be the cruellest phase of this cruel conflict,” noting that international aid had been blocked for 80 consecutive days.[100] The lack of food, clean water, and medical supplies has created a perfect storm of deprivation. This has caused widespread starvation, and pushed the region onto the brink of famine.[101]

While Israel reported in May 2025 that roughly 300 trucks of humanitarian aid had crossed into Gaza, the United Nations reported that only a one-third of those deliveries reached warehouses inside the territory. It is still far from enough. Humanitarian agencies estimate that a minimum of 500 aid trucks per day are required to meet the basic needs of Gaza's population.[100]

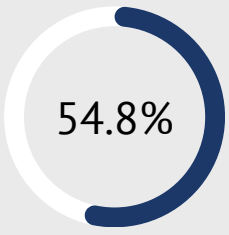
Famine is a rare but catastrophic event that signals the total failure of social, economic, and political systems.[89] Unless there is an immediate and sustained scale-up of humanitarian assistance, alongside safe and unimpeded access for aid delivery, Gaza risks becoming the next official famine of the 21st century, a tragedy that should never happen.[99]

Sub-Saharan Africa

Coountry Breakdown



Average Score



Regional Insights

The seven countries evaluated in South Asia consistently score at the lower end of global food security measures. Economic access remains limited, despite moderate improvements in affordability in some areas. Economic and equity indicators are particularly weak, which is the result of persistent governance challenges. Sustainability scores are also low, with countries in the region facing significant water stress and climate exposure. Quality indicators are the highest, as the result of moderate dietary diversity, but still low compared to global averages. Nepal and Pakistan score lowest within the region. These findings suggest that food systems in South Asia remain fragile and are deeply affected by structural inequalities, both within the region and globally.

South Africa

BACKGROUND

Population: 64,747,300[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 380,699.27[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: BWK- Cold desert[31]
Rural Population: 31%[32]

Report Card Score

68

South Africa ranks 27th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 1st out of the 8 countries evaluated in Sub-Saharan Africa. It performs strongest on economic indicators, with a score of 25.

Highlights

- **School Food Program:** *The National School Nutrition Program (NSNP)* is government funded and supplemented by private investments, provides daily school breakfasts to children. Beyond nutrition, the *NSNP* also operates a deworming program to improve children's health and actively promotes Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) practices. Many participating schools have further integrated gardening programs that educate the younger generation about food cultivation.[78]
- **Government Food Security Programs:** The government has implemented various programs including the *Food Security Capacity Building Programme*, Special Programme for Food Security, and Fortune 40 incubation programmes, all designed to build resilience and improve food access at the household level.[102]
- **Rural Agriculture:** South Africa has a high rural population, with sufficient land for growing food. Backyard fruit and vegetable gardens are a common practice that supplement food supply and contribute to great food security.[102]

Challenges

- **Extreme Wealth Inequality:** South Africa is commonly coined as the world's “most unequal country.” 10% of the population owns 80% of the nation's wealth. This extreme inequality is deeply intertwined with race and significantly impact access to education and opportunities within the labor market. Throughout South Africa, food insecurity rates are highest among individuals and households with lower incomes.[102]
- **Rising Obesity:** Over the past few decades, South Africa has seen a notable shift towards more Westernized consumption patterns. This dietary change has contributed to increased rates of obesity, particularly among women.[102]
- **Climate Change Impacts on Food Production:** South Africa is vulnerable to the effects of climate change and suffers from more severe droughts and devastating floods. These extreme weather events directly disrupt and reduce local food production, exacerbating food insecurity.[102]

Case Study 5: History of the "Right to Food"

Although the basic necessity of food is undeniable, it was not until 1948 that it was first recognized as a basic human right. The first recognition of the right to food came in Article 25 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR):

"Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and wellbeing of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control" (UN General Assembly, 1948).

The UDHR was founded on the basis of humankind and decency, and international courts and tribunals continue to reference the UDHR. However, the declaration is a non-binding instrument, making it largely unenforceable at the international level.[54] Thus, the right to food, more specifically the right to be "free from hunger" (United Nations, 1966, p. 6), was further codified in 1966 through the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (henceforth ICESCR). Canada, alongside 170 other nation-states ratified the ICESCR in 1976, and unlike the UDHR, the ICESCR is legally enforceable.[103]

Hilal Elver, the former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, argues that using international human rights law to enforce the right to food is still contentious, as many nations argue that the right to food is not justiciable. Furthermore, leading non-governmental organisations, such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International still do not recognize food as a human right. As a result, the responsibility of enforcing the right to food largely falls on national governments, which opens space for a lot of ambiguity.[103]

As of 2023, the right to food was written and ratified in the constitutions of 84 nations, either explicitly or implicitly.[103] The Constitution of South Africa has the most progressive recognition of the right to food, making 3 explicit references to the right to food in its constitution. The right to food was first written in the South African constitution in 1996. Specifically, section 27(1)(b) ensures the right to food for all people, section 28(1)(c) provides for the rights of every child to basic nutrition, and section 35(2)(e) ensures the rights of every prisoner to sufficient nutrition.[104]

Although there are various debates about the efficacy of the right to food in South Africa's constitution, with many scholars arguing that this is a tokenist effort that does little to impact national or provincial food security initiatives, it is still serves as an example for other countries.[104] After all, recognizing the human right to food is the first step towards the realization of the right to food.

Kenya

BACKGROUND

Population: 57,462,276[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 108,038.59[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AW- Tropical savanna (wet and dry seasons)[31]
Rural Population: 70%[32]

Report Card Score

60

Kenya ranks 36th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 2nd out of the 8 countries evaluated in Sub-Saharan Africa. It performs strongest on environmental indicators, with a score of 21.

Highlights

- **Government Led Initiatives:** The government has implemented programs to increase and improve crop productivity. It is also creating a grain reserve to improve cereal availability for Kenyans and to sell to other countries, aiming to boost Kenya's economy through the cereal market.[105]
- **International Organization Led Initiatives:** *UNICEF* implemented a successful cash transfer program for 12500 families across Kenya, which transfers 2000 shillings ($15.48 USD) bimonthly.[105]
- **Business-Led Initiatives:** Kenya has been implementing improved agricultural technology, with the help of both small and large businesses. For example, *Solar Freeze* provides smallholder farmers with solar-powered cold storage, which prevents food waste.[105]

Challenges

- **Impacts of Climate Change:** Kenya experienced a severe drought lasting from 2020 to 2023, which led to the loss of both livestock and crops. Following this, there was intense rainfall resulting from El Niño, which subsequently led to further crop damage.[8]
- **Childhood Malnutrition:** In 2023, approximately 1 million children suffered from malnutrition. This is the result of a lack of food, especially foods like milk, and inadequate health infrastructure and promotion.[8]
- **Rising Cost of Food:** Food insecurity across Kenya significantly worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic and has yet to fully recover.[8] This ongoing challenge is further exacerbated by the high costs of fertilizer and fuel, which have driven up market prices for food.[105]

Figure 29: Squash sold at a market in Kenya

Tanzania

BACKGROUND

Population: 70,545,900[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 79,062.40[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: BSH- hot semi-arid [31]
Rural Population: 63%[32]

Report Card Score

57

Tanzania ties with Egypt at 38th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 3rd out of the 8 countries evaluated in Sub-Saharan Africa. It performs strongest on environmental indicators, with a score of 17.

Highlights

- **Progress in Childhood Nutrition:** Although childhood malnutrition rates remain high at 23.8%, this is nearly 10% less than in 2000, when the childhood malnutrition rates were 32.6%.[8]
- **FRESH Initiative:** There is an NGO lead initiative called *Fruit and Vegetables for Sustainable Healthy Diets (FRESH)* that aims to increase the scale of fruit and vegetable production in Northern Tanzania, through improved agricultural techniques, such as intercropping.[73]
- **Increased Knowledge of Pest Management:** New agricultural programs have introduced insect nets and upgraded irrigation systems, helping farmers manage pests more effectively and stabilize production.[37]

Challenges

- **Regional Food Insecurity:** Northern and Northwestern Tanzania experience disproportionately high levels of food insecurity, driven by limited agricultural productivity and poor food access.[8]
- **Climate Vulnerability:** Tanzania is susceptible to climate extremes, ranging from heavy rainfall to intense dry spells. This impacts crop production and food access. Pest outbreaks in the southern and central regions of the country compound this crisis, and exacerbated food insecurity.
- **Limited Economic Access to Nutrition:** With an average income of just $2.33 per person per day, the cost of a nutritious diet is unaffordable for a large proportion of the population.[73]

Figure 30: Fresh produce sold through the Fruit and Vegetables for Sustainable Healthy Diets (FRESH) program

Uganda

BACKGROUND

Population: 51,384,900[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 48,768.96[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AF- Tropical Rainforest[31]
Rural Population: 73%[32]

Report Card Score

53

Uganda ranks 41st overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 4th out of the 8 countries evaluated in Sub-Saharan Africa. It performs strongest on environmental indicators, with a score of 18.

Highlights

- **Increased Public-Private Partnerships:** Organizations like *TechnoServe* and *Partners in Food Solutions (PFS)*, through initiatives like *SAFE (Solutions for African Food Enterprises)*, are successfully sharing technical and business expertise with food entrepreneurs across Uganda. This collaboration aims to make food production more efficient, thereby enhancing the availability, affordability, and nutritional quality of food for Ugandans, and crucially, creating stable market opportunities for smallholder farmers.[106]
- **Join Decision-making about Land Management:** A study in Uganda found that sustainable land management involving multiple stakeholders, across public and private sectors, lead to households and communities becoming more resilient to the impacts of climate change.[11]

Challenges

- **Land Grabbing:** The government prioritizes foreign investment and agri-business, often at the cost of smallholder farmers and Ugandan citizens. Land ownership in general is very challenging, as it is difficult to acquire even basic information regarding how to purchase land.[13]
- **Acute Food Insecurity:** Food insecurity is high, especially during the lean season for crop production. In 2023, approximately 1.8 million people were suffering from food insecurity. In 2023, Uganda had approximately 1.6 million refugees, which suffered from disproportionately high rates of food insecurity and were highly dependent on humanitarian aid for their basic needs.[8]
- **Childhood Malnutrition:** A lack of available food led to high rates of malnutrition among women and children. In the Karamoja district in Northeastern Uganda, only 2.9% of children received adequate nutrition.[8]

Figure 31: Volunteers producing food at Partners in Food Solutions

Ethiopia

BACKGROUND

Population: 135,253,453[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 163,697.93[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AW- Tropical Savanna[31]
Rural Population: 77%[32]

Report Card Score

51

Ethiopia ties with Madagascar at 43rd overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 5th out of the 8 countries evaluated in Sub-Saharan Africa. It performs strongest on environmental indicators, with a score of 16.

Highlights

- **Low Import Dependency:** Ethiopia has a low cereal import dependency, meaning its food system is largely domestically sourced, which has the potential to boost self-sufficiency. However, this also leaves the country vulnerable to climate change and creates challenges for economic diversification.[71]
- **Sustainable Water Use:** Ethiopia scores high on sustainable water use in agriculture, indicating potential for growth in eco-friendly food production practices.[107]
- **Progress in Poverty Reduction:** Although food insecurity is still a widespread issue, government efforts and international aid have made measurable progress in poverty reduction and emergency food access, especially in conflict-affected areas.[107]

Challenges

- **Widespread Poverty:** Despite progress in poverty reduction, over 68% of the population in Ethiopia continues to live in multidimensional poverty. Food systems suffer from low investment, inflation, and currency instability, limiting access to affordable, nutritious food.[107]
- **Severe Climate Vulnerability:** Ethiopia is among the most climate-vulnerable countries. Droughts, deforestation, and environmental degradation threaten the sustainability of smallholder agriculture and increase the risk of food crises.[107]
- **Poor Diet Quality:** Only 26% of households can afford a nutrient-adequate diet, despite 93% affording enough calories This reflects poor dietary diversity, especially among children, with high rates of stunting and micronutrient deficiencies.[50]

Figure 32: Traditional Ethiopian food served on an injera flatbread

Madagascar

BACKGROUND

Population: 32,740,700[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 15,790.11[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AM- Tropical monsoon[31]
Rural Population: 59%[32]

Report Card Score

51

Madagascar ties with Ethiopia at 43rd overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 5th out of the 8 countries evaluated in Sub-Saharan Africa. . It performs strongest on environmental indicators, with a score of 18.

Highlights

- **Nutrition at Schools:** To combat the ongoing problem of micronutrient deficiencies among children, an initiative called *The Mavitrika Mianatra (MaMi)* project began serving boiled rice water to children at schools in an effort to increase children's nutritional intake.[34]
- **Agricultural Belt:** There is a 30km strip of land surrounding the capital city, Antananarivo, which has a population of 3 million people. This land produces rice, cassava, and a wide range of vegetables for the people of Madagascar.[37]
- **Debt-for-food Security Swap:** *The World Food Programme (WFP)* has implemented a successful initiative where debt was reallocated towards a school feeding program.[16]

Challenges

- **Gender Inequality:** In Madagascar, women and girls face limited economic opportunities, high rates of violence, and are disproportionately impacted by the impacts of climate change, such as a prolonged drought across the southern region of the country. Additionally, they are the hardest hit by food insecurity.[11]
- **Childhood Malnutrition:** Almost 40% of children under the age of 5 are stunted.[26] This resulted from the lack of food, limited health and nutrition services, and limited water sources.[8]
- **Internal Displacement:** As of January 2024, there are over 1 million displaced people in Madagascar as the result of extreme weather events. Intense rainfalls and cyclones have impacted the limited seasonal food production already existent.[8]

Figure 33: Agricultural field in Madagascar

Nigeria

BACKGROUND

Population: 237,528,000[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 363,846.33[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AW- Tropical savanna (wet and dry seasons)[31]
Rural Population: 46%[32]

Report Card Score

50

Nigeria ranks 45th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and 7th out of the 8 countries evaluated in Sub-Saharan Africa. It performs strongest on environmental indicators, with a score of 18.

Highlights

- **School Food Program:** Nigeria has a large, country-wide school food programme that is funded by the federal government. It involved nutritionists to ensure that the food is up to the correct standard for childhood development.[34]
- **Agroecological Diversity:** Nigeria has many diverse agroecological zones that specialize the production of distinct crops and livestock. A greater emphasis on region-specific agriculture can lead to greater food security and economic growth.[108]
- **Agri-Innovation:** *The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)* and the *Government of Nigeria* are establishing an Agri-Innovation and Digital Agriculture Platform. The government aims to work with various stakeholders to develop workshops, resources, and training on enterprise development, improved efficiency, and harvest loss prevention.[109]

Challenges

- **Widespread Malnutrition and Food Insecurity:** According to the Global Report on Food Crises, Nigeria has the largest number of people facing acute food insecurity worldwide. On the *Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)*, Nigeria is classified as Phase 4 (Critical); this is just one level below famine. Over 5.9 million children in Northeastern and Northwestern Nigeria suffer from malnutrition, which is among the highest rates globally.[8]
- **Internal Displacement and Population Growth:** In Nigeria, the number of internally displaced people is rapidly increasing, which has led to an exacerbated food crisis.[8]
- **Fragmented Action between Stakeholders:** Governments, agro-industries, and consumers are all working separately, with little cohesion between the different groups. Policies are often top-down and developed without meaningful input from farmers, leading to unintended harm.[108]

Figure 34: People preparing food in Nigeria

Democratic Republic of Congo

BACKGROUND

Population: 112,832,000[25]
GDP (Millions): US$ 66,383.29[30]
Primary Köppen Climate Classification: AM- Tropical monsoon (short dry season)[31]
Rural Population: 53%[32]

Report Card Score

50

The Democratic Republic of Congo ranks 47th overall out of the 50 countries evaluated and last out of the 8 countries evaluated in Sub-Saharan Africa. It performs strongest on environmental and quality indicators, with a scores of 14..

Highlights

- **Targeted Agricultural Support:** Programs focused on delivering agronomic training and inputs are reaching millions of smallholder farmers, with a strong emphasis on women and youth empowerment.[107]
- **School Feeding in a Conflict-Affected Setting:** Responding to the ongoing conflict, school feeding programs were adapted to include take-home meals when on-site meals were not possible.[34]
- **Humanitarian Assistance:** The DRC was one of the highest earning recipients of humanitarian funding for food assistance, and it received over USD 0.5 billion in 2023. While this funding was essential, it was not a long-term solution, nor was it adequate to address the complex needs of people living in the DRC.[8]

Challenges

- **Conflict-driven Displacement:** The ongoing conflict in the DRC, particularly in the eastern regions, has forced large populations from their homes, disrupted food supply chains, and limited humanitarian access. As a result, 3.4 million people face acute food insecurity, and 2.6 million children under the age of five suffer from acute malnutrition. Similar to other conflict-affected countries, the DRC's food crisis is deeply rooted in instability.[8]
- **Climate Vulnerability:** The DRC is especially susceptible to climate related impacts, which can delay the start of the agricultural season and impact local production, which undermines the already fragile food system.[8]
- **Economic Instability:** The depreciation of the local currency, along with other economic shocks, has many staple foods out of reach for many families.[8]

Figure 34: Agricultural field in the DRC

Key Findings

2025 has been marked by global food crises; catastrophic hunger plagues countries around the globe, with Haiti, South Sudan, Ukraine, and Palestine being some of the most impacted. Hunger is not merely the result of poor harvests, it is a symptom of broader dysfunction and inequality.

There are many key findings that can be drawn from this report, including a lot of variation between different sets of indicators.

Economic Indicators

Top Performers

- Argentina, Chile, UK, Germany , France, and Italy have the highest economic scores.
- Indicates strong investment in agriculture, affordability, GDP per capita, Food safety nets, and general human development
- These scores indicate strong public and private sectors.

Lowest Performers

- Yemen, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, Sudan,Madagascar, and Nigeria have the lowest economic scores.
- These countries performed poor across most or all economic indicators.
- Besides Madagascar, these countries are all experiencing political conflict, which is likely a contributor to the poor economic performance.

Notable Outliers

- Saudi Arabia, Argentina, and South Africa perform significantly higher than other countries in their respective geographic regions.
- The Middle East and North Africa has the greatest variation for economic indicators, ranging from 21 for Saudi Arabia to 9 for Yemen.

Equity Indicators

Top Performers

- Sweden, The United Kingdom, Canada, the USA, France, and Germany have the highest equity scores.
- Indicates strong rule of law, gender equality, and school feeding programs.

Lowest Performers

- Yemen, Sudan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Nigeria have the lowest equity scores.
- Indicates gender inequality, corruption, lack of access to legal protections or public services, and weak governance.

Notable Outliers

- Although Vietnam ranks 5th in East Asia and Pacific overall, it ranks 2nd in equity indicators.
- Brazil ranks highest in Latin America and Caribbean, likely due to it's school food and social support programs.

Environmental Indicators

Top Performers:

- Sweden (24), France (21), Germany (22), UK (21)
- Indicates strong climate action, low water risk, and better food waste management.

Lowest Performers:

- US (11), Yemen (13), Afghanistan (12), Uganda (14), DR Congo (14)
- Suggests that environmental indicators are not directly linked to wealth. Rich countries can underperform due to physical geography and water stress, high household food waste, or political inaction on climate change.

Notable Outliers:

- Bhutan (23) scores significantly higher in sustainability than the other categories of indicators. This is due to its high scores in water risk and climate risk, which are the result of its physical geography.
- The majority of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa perform stronger in environmental indicators than in the other categories of indicators.
- The majority of countries in Latin America and Caribbean also perform stronger in environmental indicators than in the other categories of indicators.

Quality Indicators

Top Performers

- France, Sweden, Argentina, Brazil, the United Kingdom, and Sri Lanka have the highest quality scores.
- Indicates high dietary diversity, strong sanitation systems, and low undernourishment.
- Suggests that, like environmental indicators, quality indicators are also not necessarily tied to wealth. Lowest Performers
- Yemen, Afghanistan, The Democratic Republic of Congo, and Nigeria have the lowest quality scores.
- All four countries experience conflict and political instability, which suggests that conflict is linked to undernutrition, limited food safety, and poor sanitation.

Notable outliers

- The US has a lower score than Canada, possibly due to higher obesity rates and health disparities.
- Sri Lanka scores significantly higher on quality indicators than the other countries in South Asia. This is because it has low levels of obesity, and scored high on dietary diversity and food safety.

This report found that food insecurity and hunger are issue in every country, regardless of income level, geography, population, or climate. While some countries and regions are impacted to a greater extent, every country faces its own unique challenges that require equally as unique solutions. Indeed, a 90-page report could be written about each continent, country, city, and community. Let this report serve as a foundation for deeper inquiry, greater accountability, and above all, coordinated action.

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Annex

Black text indicates that the value was available directly from the index, ratio, or report. This is the most accurate data.

Blue text indicates that the information was not drawn directly from the index. This data is relatively accurate but may be from a different year. The source can be found in the references.

Red text indicates that the information could not be found. These values are estimates based on news reports, academic articles, or other reports on related topics. This is the least accurate data and based on rough estimates.

A complete dataset, with links to the original information can be found at https://www.zerohungerproject.com/

Economic Indicators

	The Agriculture Orientation Index (AOI) (2021-2022)	Affordability Score- Global Food Security Index (2022)	GDP per capita (2025)	Food Safety Net Score- Global Food Security Index (2022)	Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index
France	2.57	91.3	$44,690.90	100	0.92
Japan	2	89.8	$33,766.50	100	0.925
United Kingdom	4.81	91.5	$49,463.90	100	0.946
Germany	2.74	87.9	$54,343.20	100	0.959
Canada	5.22	88.3	$53,431.20	100	0.939
South Korea	2.17	76.8	$33,121.40	100	0.937
Russia	1.64	77.8	$13,817.00	100	0.832
Spain	0.11	89	$33,509.00	100	0.918
United States	0.77	87.1	$82,769.40	100	0.938
Italy	2.86	89.5	$39,003.30	100	0.915
Argentina	2.19	62	$14,187.50	100	0.865
Australia	0.14	93.3	$64,820.90	100	0.958

China	0.9	86.4	$12,614.10	100	0.797
Vietnam	0.21	84	$4,282.10	100	0.766
Brazil	0.34	63	$10,294.90	73.2	0.786
Colombia	0.29	64.6	$6,947.40	73.2	0.788
Peru	0.3	79.7	$7,906.60	100	0.794
Chile	0.4	82.4	$17,067.80	100	0.878
Türkiye	0.4	58.4	$13,105.70	100	0.853
Ukraine	1.97	66.6	$5,069.70	47.6	0.779
Sri Lanka	0.54	61	$3,828.00	74.4	0.776
Malaysia	0.15	87	$11,379.10	100	0.819
Mexico	0.5	76	$13,790.00	100	0.789
Indonesia	0.2	81.4	$4,876.30	100	0.728
Philippines	0.24	71.5	$3,804.90	73.2	0.72
Saudi Arabia	0.1	83.2	$32,094.00	100	0.9
South Africa	0.56	63.4	$6,022.50	73.2	0.741
Morocco	0.37	74.6	$3,771.40	74.4	0.71
Guatemala	0.39	65.2	$5,762.80	52.4	0.662
Bhutan	0.55	58.4	$3,711.30	50	0.698
Venezuela	0.8	41.8	$15,943.60	26.8	0.709
Algeria	0.33	66.8	$5,364.00	79.3	0.763
India	0.47	59.3	$2,480.80	73.2	0.685
Nepal	0.28	52.7	$1,377.60	26.8	0.622
Kenya	0.15	41.7	$1,952.30	26.8	0.628
Bangladesh	0.51	52.1	$2,551.00	26.8	0.685
Egypt	0.22	65.2	$3,457.50	100	0.754

Tanzania	0.35	45.8	$1,224.50	26.8	0.555
Iraq	0.71	35	$5,565.10	50	0.695
Uganda	0.47	48.3	$1,002.30	26.8	0.582
Iran	0.19	35	$4,465.60	50	0.799
Ethiopia	0.09	32.9	$1,272.00	47.6	0.497
Madagascar	0.2	39.5	$506.20	26.8	0.487
Nigeria	0.12	25	$1,596.60	0	0.56
Sudan	0.05	35.2	$1,080.10	53.7	0.511
DR Congo	0.13	46.9	$627.50	26.8	0.649
Pakistan	0.13	59.9	$1,365.30	73.2	0.544
Yemen	0.2	46.4	$477.40	0	0.47
Afghanistan	0.08	35	$415.70	0	0.496

Equity Indicators

	Global Gender Gap Index	Absence of Corruption Score- WJP Rule of Law Index	Fundamental Rights- WJP Rule of Law Index	School Food Programs	Global Hunger Index (GHI Score)
France	0.781	0.75	0.74	71.1	0
Japan	0.663	0.82	0.78	61.5	5
United Kingdom	0.789	0.83	0.8	24.6	0
Germany	0.81	0.84	0.86	37.4	2
Canada	0.761	0.82	0.82	19	0
South Korea	0.696	0.67	0.75	99.9	31.4
Russia	0.708	0.42	0.78	91	5
Spain	0.797	0.73	0.78	24.6	0
United States	0.747	0.73	0.68	46.3	5
Italy	0.703	0.65	0.72	17	0

Argentina	0.772	0.46	0.68	25.8	6.6
Australia	0.78	0.83	0.78	0	5
China	0.684	0.54	0.25	14.6	5
Vietnam	0.715	0.42	0.46	95	11.3
Brazil	0.716	0.45	0.5	94.8	6.6
Colombia	0.745	0.39	0.51	42.3	5.7
Peru	0.755	0.33	0.59	58.4	7.4
Chile	0.781	0.69	0.72	42	5
Türkiye	0.645	0.45	0.31	100	9
Ukraine	0.722	0.34	0.59	10	8.6
Sri Lanka	0.653	0.49	0.49	27.5	11.3
Malaysia	0.668	0.57	0.49	17.7	12.7
Mexico	0.768	0.27	0.47	4.4	6.1
Indonesia	0.686	0.42	0.49	0.42	16.9
Philippines	0.779	0.43	0.41	19.8	14.4
Saudi Arabia	0.647	0.45	0.43	36.8	6.9
South Africa	0.785	0.46	0.63	59.4	12.5
Morocco	0.628	0.41	0.43	14.8	9.2
Guatemala	0.697	0.34	0.53	42.2	18.8
Bhutan	0.651	0.47	0.51	38.4	30
Venezuela	0.699	0.26	0.29	23	15.1
Algeria	0.612	0.45	0.43	1	6.7
India	0.641	0.41	0.46	23.9	27.3
Nepal	0.664	0.41	0.52	7.2	14.7
Kenya	0.712	0.27	0.48	8.06	25
Bangladesh	0.689	0.33	0.3	6.8	19.4

Egypt	0.629	0.37	0.24	31.7	13.2
Tanzania	0.734	0.41	0.44	28.3	22.7
Iraq	0.228	0.45	0.43	4	14.9
Uganda	0.706	0.27	0.34	16.8	27.3
Iran	0.579	0.38	0.2	0.06	7.4
Ethiopia	0.709	0.41	0.28	5.9	26.2
Madagascar	0.72	0.27	0.46	4.7	36.3
Nigeria	0.65	0.32	0.42	11.5	28.8
Sudan	0.568	0.35	0.32	7.5	28.8
DR Congo	0.609	0.3	0.4	0.57	24
Pakistan	0.57	0.32	0.37	0	27.9
Yemen	0.492	0.38	0.2	4.3	41.2
Afghanistan	0.444	0.3	0.25	0	30.8

Sustainability Indicators

	SDG Index	Baseline Water Risk: World	Climate Risk Index: Overall	UNEP Food Waste Index	Political Commitment to
France	82.8	1.916452159	28	61	96.3
Japan	79.9	1.967749978	69	12	80.5
United Kingdom	82.2	1.298003739	39	76	96.3
Germany	83.4	2.041904513	17	78	96.3
Canada	78.8	1.233315456	96	79	91.4
South Korea	77.3	2.381249355	86	25	25.8
Russia	73.1	1.167592537	112	8	66.8
Spain	80.7	3.940242667	5	61	96.3
United States	82.2	2.604411175	7	73	76.9
Italy	79.3	3.344018796	3	107	96.3

Argentina	74.4	1.834917254	68	91	40.8
Australia	76.9	2.906718433	36	58	66.2
China	70.9	2.800257843	51	76	66.2
Vietnam	73.3	2.112769594	81	72	34.5
Brazil	73.8	1.037909741	50	94	59.7
Colombia	70.3	0.496141456	79	70	53.2
Peru	71.9	3.743217047	109	88	61.5
Chile	77.8	4.471868674	111	88	47
Türkiye	70.5	3.386483429	120	102	65.8
Ukraine	74.8	1.372503853	163	69	41.1
Sri Lanka	67.4	2.361447216	88	76	56.5
Malaysia	69.3	1.032631026	91	81	24.6
Mexico	69.3	3.995019932	98	105	61.2
Indonesia	69.4	2.669162882	93	53	28
Philippines	67.5	2.026275245	43	26	53.5
Saudi Arabia	64.9	4.980808426	154	105	28.3
South Africa	63.4	4.167753556	20	47	50.9
Morocco	70.9	3.988406127	154	113	68.7
Guatemala	59.4	1.026662175	22	91	63.1
Bhutan	72.5	0.367776177	126	19	80
Venezuela	62.5	1.820253759	104.17	93	21.2
Algeria	70.5	3.873999102	99	113	28.5
India	64	4.107794474	49	55	58
Nepal	67.1	3.18229337	78	93	49.5
Kenya	62.2	0.788210351	131	81	71.7
Bangladesh	64.3	2.660561137	46	82	38.7

Egypt	69.1	4.851625216	170	163	32.3
Tanzania	58.2	1.90521696	115	152	46.1
Iraq	64.2	4.146234505	118	143	50
Uganda	56.1	0.198089531	37	110	71.3
Argentina	74.4	1.834917254	68	91	40.8
Australia	76.9	2.906718433	36	58	66.2
China	70.9	2.800257843	51	76	66.2
Vietnam	73.3	2.112769594	81	72	34.5
Brazil	73.8	1.037909741	50	94	59.7
Colombia	70.3	0.496141456	79	70	53.2
Peru	71.9	3.743217047	109	88	61.5
Chile	77.8	4.471868674	111	88	47
Türkiye	70.5	3.386483429	120	102	65.8
Ukraine	74.8	1.372503853	163	69	41.1
Sri Lanka	67.4	2.361447216	88	76	56.5

Quality Indicators

	Dietary Diversity All-5 indicator %	Prevalence population experiencing undernourishment	Percentage population experiencing obesity- Global Obesity Observatory	Sanitation and Drinking Water Score	Food safety score- Global Food Security Index
France	100	3	10	88.2	94.8

Japan	70	3	5.57	78.1	99.6
United Kingdom	100	3	27.63	100	100
Germany	100	3	20.99	100	94.8
Canada	50	3	26.73	95.5	99.7
South Korea	63	3	7.24	90.1	100
Russia	23	3	24.77	76	98.7
Spain	75	3	16.15	93.8	94.8
United States	44	3	42.74	96.2	100
Italy	75	3	17.81	98.6	100
Egypt	69.1	4.851625216	170	163	32.3
Tanzania	58.2	1.90521696	115	152	46.1
Iraq	64.2	4.146234505	118	143	50
Uganda	56.1	0.198089531	37	110	71.3
Argentina	74.4	1.834917254	68	91	40.8
Australia	76.9	2.906718433	36	58	66.2
China	70.9	2.800257843	51	76	66.2
Vietnam	73.3	2.112769594	81	72	34.5
Brazil	73.8	1.037909741	50	94	59.7
Colombia	70.3	0.496141456	79	70	53.2
Peru	71.9	3.743217047	109	88	61.5
Chile	77.8	4.471868674	111	88	47
Türkiye	70.5	3.386483429	120	102	65.8
Ukraine	74.8	1.372503853	163	69	41.1
Sri Lanka	67.4	2.361447216	88	76	56.5
Malaysia	22	3	22.41	53.5	93.6
Mexico	54	3	36.86	58.2	94.5

Indonesia	60	7	11.52	33.2	85.7
Philippines	36	6	8.96	42.4	79.8
Saudi Arabia	0.54	3	42.45	65.4	94.8
South Africa	22	8	31.35	25	93.7
Morocco	40	7	22.53	50.9	90.7
Guatemala	49	13	27.57	31.3	86.4
Bhutan	16	22	12.68	35	60
Venezuela	20	18	23.33	47.8	80.4
Algeria	39	3	24.56	64.1	92.4
India	28	14	7.51	25.4	85.3
Nepal	38	6	7.18	34.3	77.8
Kenya	38	35	12.87	21	66.4
Bangladesh	21	12	5.41	32	76
Egypt	37	9	45.59	52.6	71.1
Tanzania	19	24	12.95	20.6	35.2
Iraq	44.6	16	41.41	57.8	40
Uganda	32	37	8.05	23.6	28.4
Iran	54	7	25.08	64.9	50
Ethiopia	9	22	2.9	18.4	39.6
Madagascar	22	40	4.45	12.9	25.4
Nigeria	23	18	12.84	14.3	52.6
Sudan	24	11	17.45	39.1	43.9
DR Congo	49	37	6.89	25.6	13.6
Pakistan	23	21	23.69	28	51
Yemen	23	40	14.06	29	37.9
Afghanistan	19	30	19.59	32.3	20

Closing Remarks

As we conclude the Zero Hunger Report Card 2025, the insights and stories within remind us that ending hunger is both urgent and possible. This report highlights the systemic challenges, innovative solutions, and resilient communities driving change around the world. It is a call to action for policymakers, researchers, grassroots leaders, and citizens alike to work collectively toward equitable, sustainable, and inclusive food systems. The journey to Zero Hunger requires commitment, collaboration, and bold ideas, and every action counts. To continue exploring these conversations and amplify the impact, scan the QR codes below to access our Zero Hunger Podcast and the companion book, where we share deeper insights, inspiring stories, and actionable solutions shaping a hunger-free future.

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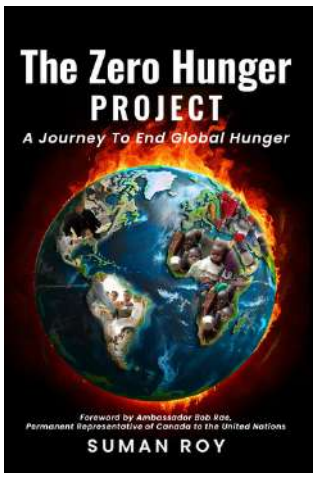

A Hunger-Free, Resilient World

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