

# 2016

Synopsis

# GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX

GETTING TO ZERO HUNGER

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The *2016 Global Hunger Index (GHI)* report—the eleventh in an annual series—presents a multidimensional measure of national, regional, and global hunger. It shows that the world has made progress in reducing hunger since 2000, but still has a long way to go, with levels of hunger still serious or alarming in 50 countries. This year’s report hails a new paradigm of international development proposed in the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which envisages Zero Hunger by 2030, as one goal among 17, in a holistic, integrated, and transformative plan for the world.

## THE GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX

This report’s GHI scores are based on a revised and improved formula, introduced in 2015, that replaces the child underweight indicator of previous years with child stunting and child wasting and standardizes the component indicators to balance their contribution to the overall index and to changes in GHI scores over time. These changes reflect the current thinking in nutrition measurement and index construction.

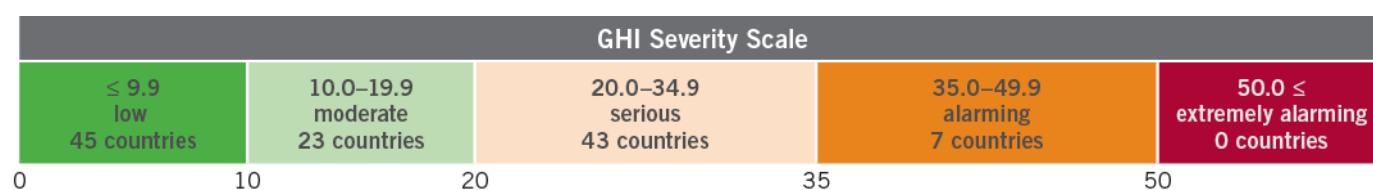
The 2016 GHI combines four component indicators into one index:

- ▶ The proportion of people who are undernourished;
- ▶ The proportion of children under age five who suffer from wasting (low weight for height, reflecting acute undernutrition);
- ▶ The proportion of children under age five who suffer from stunting (low height for age, reflecting chronic undernutrition); and
- ▶ The mortality rate of children under age five.

Data on the indicators come from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, the World Bank, Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), the United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME), and International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) estimates. The 2016 GHI is calculated for 118 countries for which data are available and reflects data from 2010 to 2016.

The GHI ranks countries on a 100-point scale, with 0 being the best score (no hunger) and 100 being the worst, although neither of these extremes is reached in practice. Values less than 10.0 reflect low hunger, values from 10.0 to 19.9 reflect moderate hunger, values from 20.0 to 34.9 indicate serious hunger, values from 35.0 to 49.9 are alarming, and values of 50.0 or more are extremely alarming ([Figure 1](#)).

FIGURE 1 NUMBER OF COUNTRIES BY HUNGER LEVEL



Source: Authors.

Note: Currently no countries fall in the extremely alarming category. Unfortunately, up-to-date data are lacking for several countries, including Burundi, the Comoros, and Eritrea, which appeared in that category as recently as 2013 and/or 2014.

# RANKING AND TRENDS

The number of hungry people in the world remains unacceptably high. About 795 million people are chronically undernourished, while roughly one in four children is stunted and 8 percent of children suffer from wasting.

That said, the GHI shows progress in the fight against hunger (Figure 2). The developing world's 2016 GHI fell by 29 percent from the 2000 GHI, from a score of 30.0 to 21.3. These global averages, however, mask dramatic differences among regions and countries. Africa south of the Sahara and South Asia have the highest 2016 GHI scores, at 30.1 and 29.0, respectively, reflecting serious levels of hunger. In contrast, the GHI scores for East and Southeast Asia, Near East and North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States range between 7.8 and 12.8, and represent low or moderate levels of hunger. Moreover, disparities within each region are important to recognize, and certainly assumptions cannot be made about a particular country based on the overall score of its larger geographical region.

## Signs of Progress

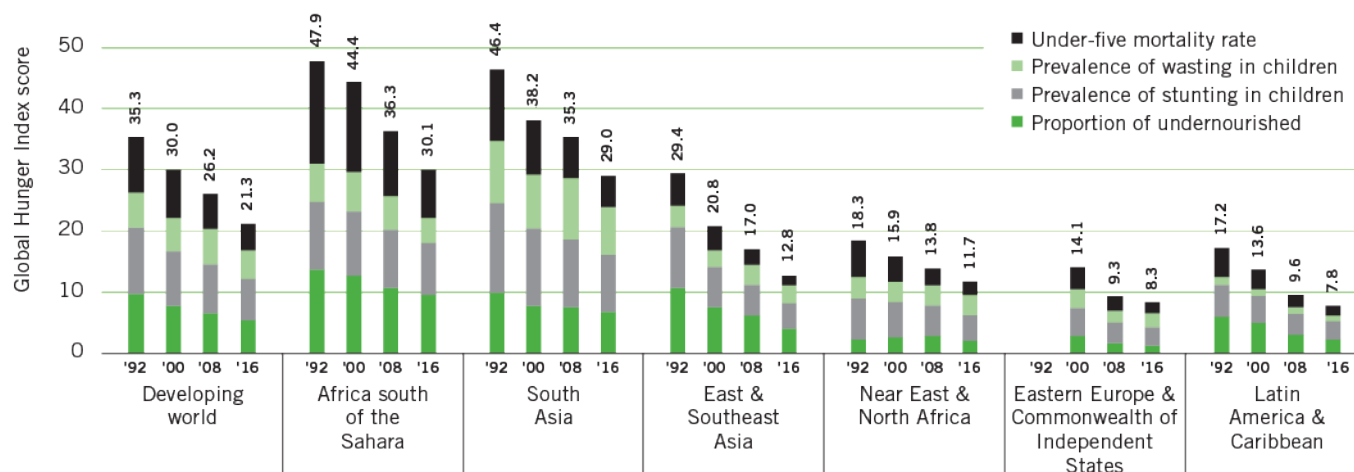
Between the 2000 GHI and the 2016 GHI, 22 countries made remarkable progress, reducing their GHI scores by 50.0 percent or more. Further, 70 countries made considerable progress, with

scores that dropped by between 25.0 percent and 49.9 percent, and 22 countries decreased their GHI scores by less than 25.0 percent. Despite this progress, 50 countries still suffer from serious or alarming levels of hunger.

Since 2000, Myanmar, Rwanda, and Cambodia have seen the largest percentage reductions in hunger of all the serious and alarming countries, with 2016 GHI scores down by just over 50 percent relative to the 2000 scores in each country. Each of these countries has experienced civil war and political instability in recent decades, and the improvements in part may reflect increased stability.

This year's report does not include GHI scores for 13 countries (Bahrain, Bhutan, Burundi, the Comoros, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Libya, Papua New Guinea, Qatar, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and the Syrian Arab Republic) because data on the prevalence of undernourishment, and in some cases data or estimates on child stunting and child wasting, were not available. Based on the data and estimates for the GHI indicators that are available, as well as information from international organizations specializing in hunger and malnutrition, and the existing literature, we have identified 10 of these 13 countries (all with the exception of Bhutan, Bahrain, and Qatar) that are cause for significant concern.

FIGURE 2 DEVELOPING WORLD AND REGIONAL 1992, 2000, 2008, AND 2016 GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX SCORES, WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY COMPONENTS

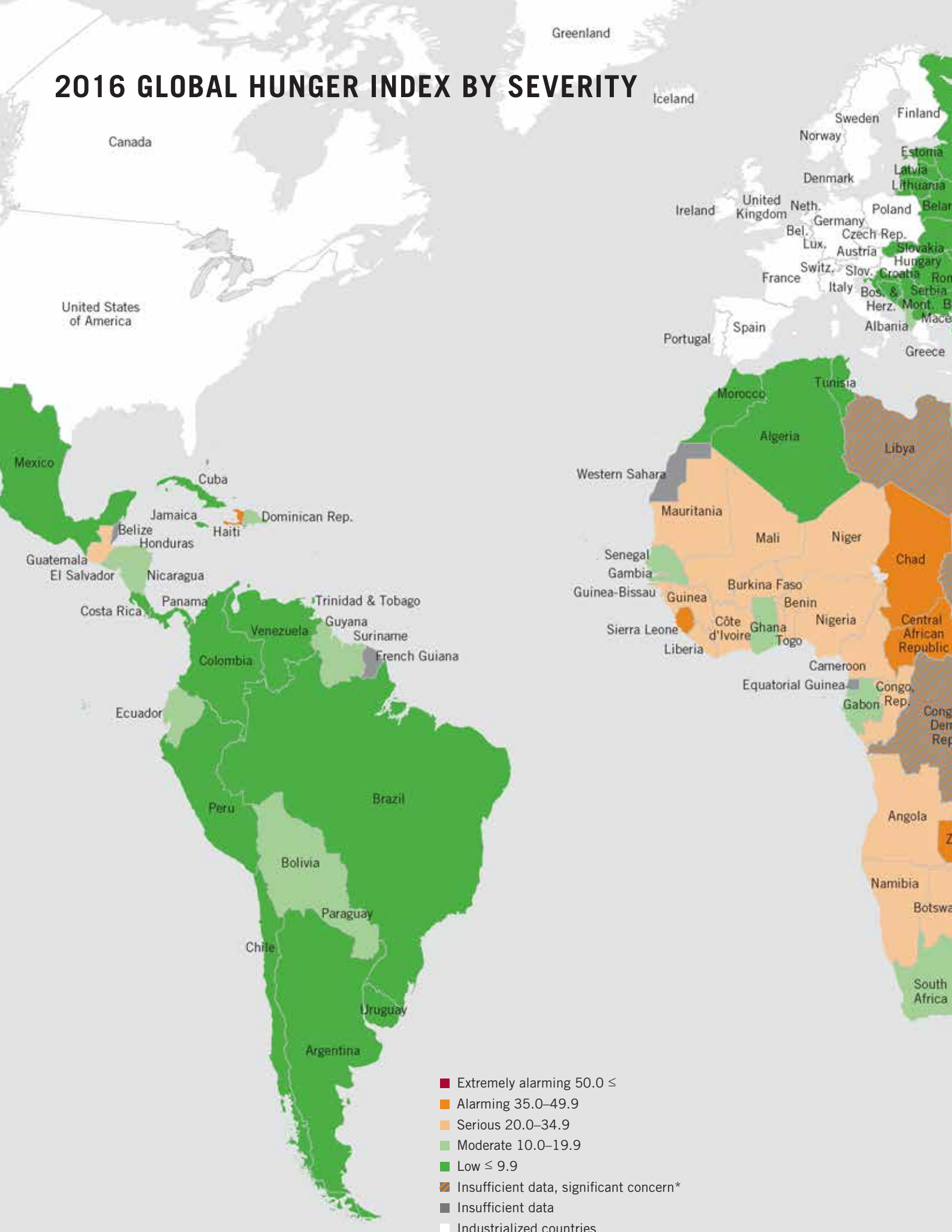


Source: Authors.

Note: For data sources, see Appendix B, [www.ifpri.org/ghi/2016](http://www.ifpri.org/ghi/2016). A 1992 regional score for Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States was not calculated because many countries in this region did not exist in their present borders.

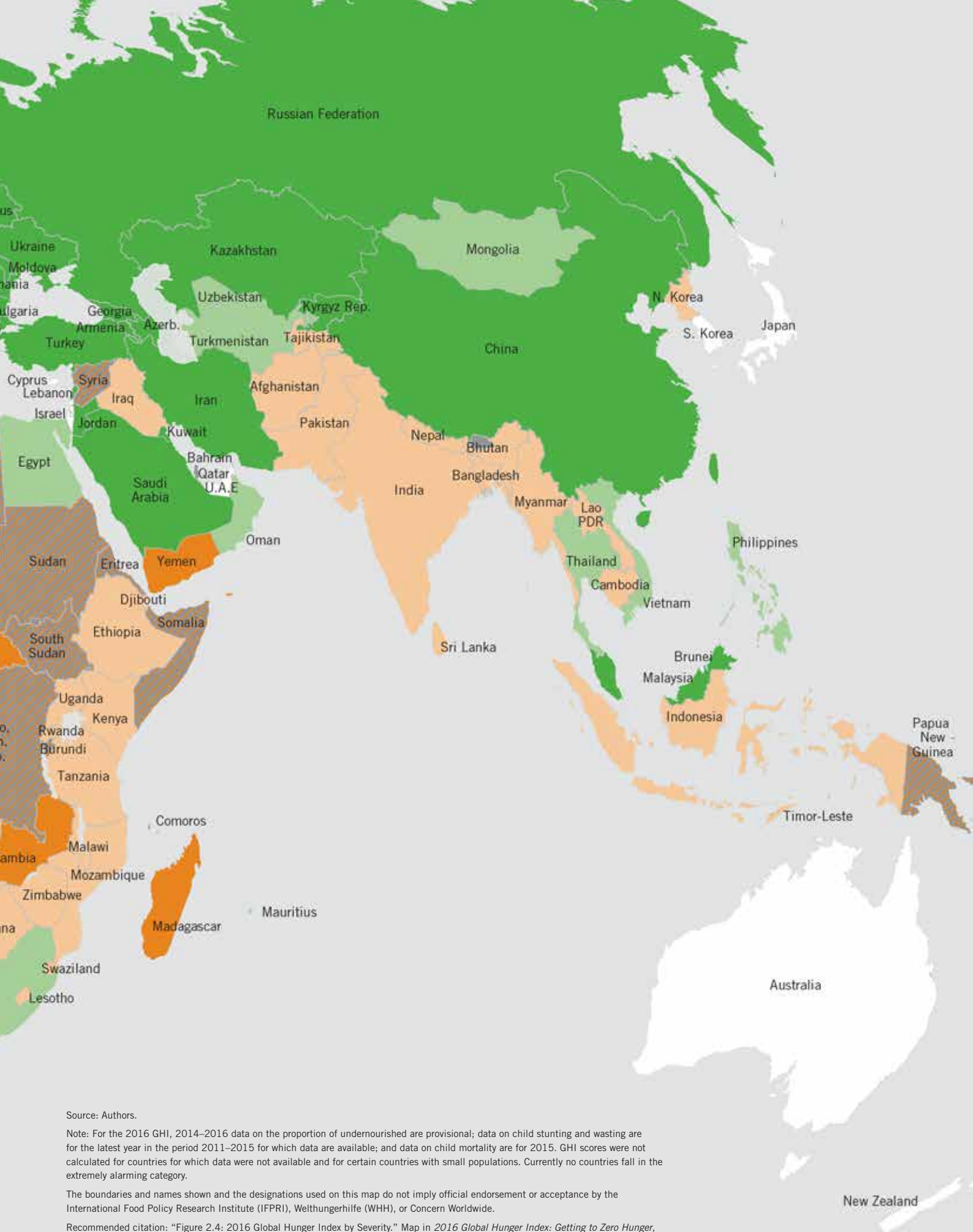


# 2016 GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX BY SEVERITY



- Extremely alarming 50.0 ≤
- Alarming 35.0–49.9
- Serious 20.0–34.9
- Moderate 10.0–19.9
- Low ≤ 9.9
- Insufficient data, significant concern\*
- Insufficient data
- Industrialized countries

\*See Box 2.1, [www.ifpri.org/ghi/2016](http://www.ifpri.org/ghi/2016)



Source: Authors.

Note: For the 2016 GHI, 2014–2016 data on the proportion of undernourished are provisional; data on child stunting and wasting are for the latest year in the period 2011–2015 for which data are available; and data on child mortality are for 2015. GHI scores were not calculated for countries for which data were not available and for certain countries with small populations. Currently no countries fall in the extremely alarming category.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Welthungerhilfe (WHH), or Concern Worldwide.

Recommended citation: "Figure 2.4: 2016 Global Hunger Index by Severity." Map in *2016 Global Hunger Index: Getting to Zero Hunger*, by K. von Grebmer, J. Bernstein, D. Nabarro, N. Prasai, S. Amin, Y. Yohannes, A. Sonntag, F. Patterson, O. Towey, and J. Thompson. 2016. Bonn, Washington, DC, and Dublin: Welthungerhilfe, International Food Policy Research Institute, and Concern Worldwide.

## Subnational Scores

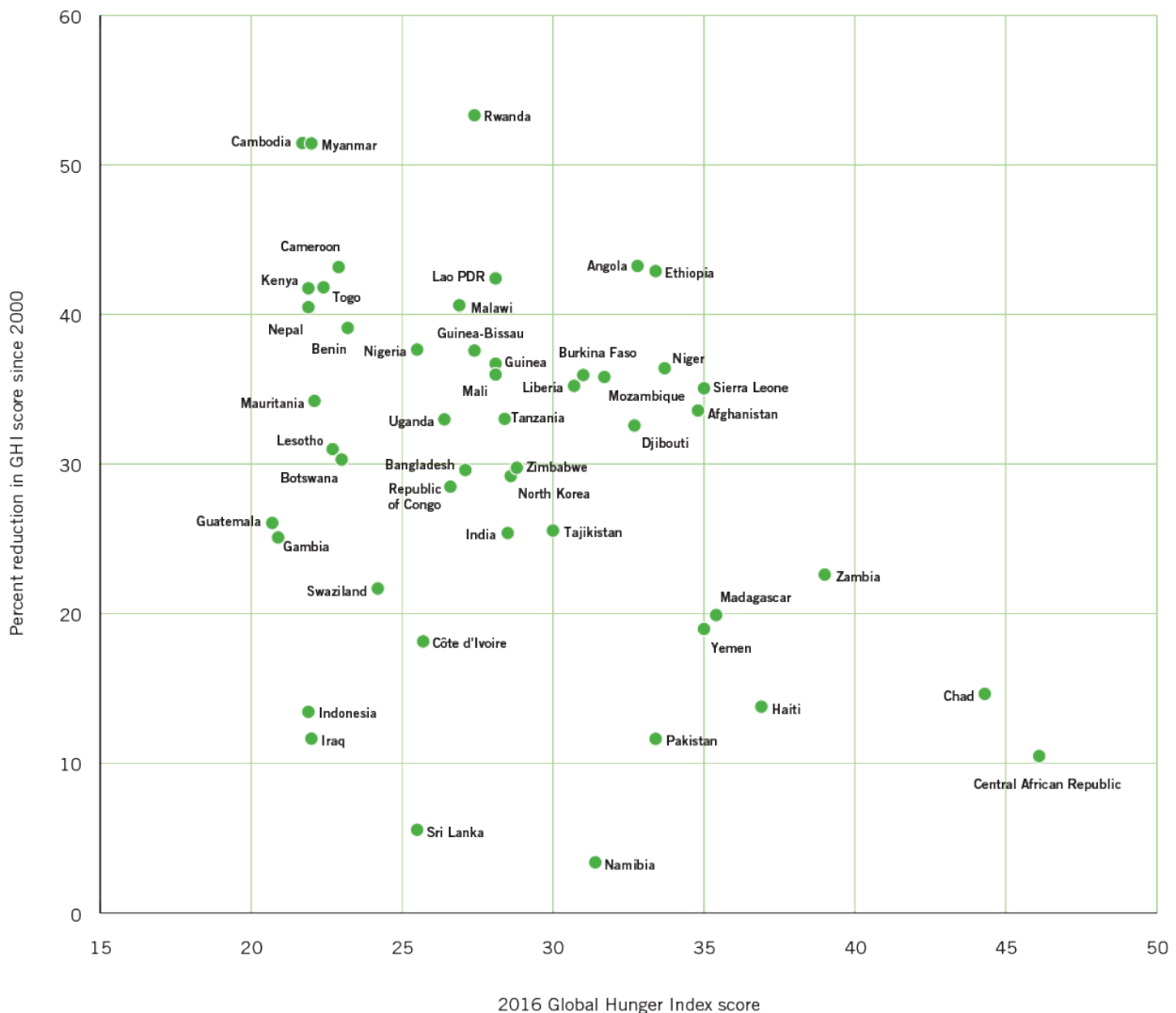
The 2030 Agenda emphasizes the importance of using disaggregated data to ensure that no one is left behind in the development process. The GHI indicators are not consistently available at the subnational level, and investment in collecting these data is required. However, the *2016 Global Hunger Index* report shows that inequality of the GHI indicators can exist for countries at all levels of the GHI Severity Scale. For example, both Jordan and Mexico have low national levels of hunger and undernutrition, but state-wise, individual indicators vary substantially. Mexico at a national level has low hunger and an overall stunting level of 13.6 percent according to the most recent data, but the southern state of Chiapas, affected by food insecurity, poor sanitation, and disease, has a stunting level of 31.4 percent. Also, within Zambia and Sierra Leone—countries in the alarming category—GHI indicator values vary widely. In Cambodia, which has seen impressive reduction in its GHI

score since 2000, improvements have been uneven between provinces. Such examples of subnational disparities serve as a springboard for further research into the specific circumstances, challenges, and causes of hunger at the subnational level.

## Bad News

Seven countries still suffer from alarming levels of hunger. The majority of these are in Africa south of the Sahara; the two exceptions are Haiti and the Republic of Yemen. The two worst-scoring countries in this year's GHI are the Central African Republic and Chad (Figure 3). These two countries have also had relatively low percentage reductions in hunger since 2000. In the Central African Republic, violence and mass displacement caused by a four-year-long civil war have taken a heavy toll on food production. Chad, which has also had a long history of civil war, has faced deteriorating food security due to a recent influx of refugees and extreme weather events.

FIGURE 3 HOW COUNTRIES HAVE FARED SINCE 2000



Source: Authors.

Note: The countries included are those with 2016 Global Hunger Index (GHI) scores equal to or greater than 20, reflecting either serious or alarming hunger levels. This figure features countries where data were available to calculate GHI scores. Some likely poor performers do not appear, due to missing data.

# TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD: HOW THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS WILL HELP US ACHIEVE ZERO HUNGER\*

## A New Agenda for Development

In 2015, the world reinvented cooperation for development. In a 193-nation consensus, the world adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a blueprint for action that integrates the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda sets a clear objective for all countries and all people to transform our world to ensure that people and our planet thrive by ending poverty and hunger, reaching the most vulnerable first; by prioritizing human rights, addressing injustice, and empowering women; and by building resilience and tackling the impacts of climate change. The Agenda's ambition to end hunger and malnutrition is captured in Sustainable Development Goal 2, which includes the achievement of food security, improved nutrition, and sustainable agriculture, as part of a comprehensive set of interwoven actions that will contribute to social justice, an end to rural poverty, and improvements in people's health and well-being.

## Innovative Approaches

The full potential of the 2030 Agenda will not be borne out by individual actors working alone, but by new and innovative approaches that align multiple actors behind the common goal of ending poverty and hunger. Mirroring the nature of the Agenda, the Zero Hunger Challenge—a multistakeholder platform for collective action, including governments and UN agencies, research institutions, and individuals—seeks to end hunger and malnutrition for all by 2030. Similarly, IFPRI's Compact2025, with its global knowledge and innovation hub for sharing evidence-based, action-oriented strategies, underscores the importance of research and knowledge for the delivery of development gains. These projects highlight the potential of innovative approaches that bring together multiple actors in support of country-led action.

## Taking Action

The 2030 Agenda must be fully owned and implemented by actors at all levels. Member states must take the lead in implementation of the Agenda by making it relevant to their national contexts and building in the capability that is necessary for whole-of-society support for development action. They will do this by putting in place ambitious, locally owned national development plans that are aligned with the Agenda, ensuring that all people understand what their governments have committed to, and allowing them to hold their leaders accountable.

**By ending rural poverty and empowering women; by transforming agriculture and food systems in a way that makes them inclusive, resilient, and sustainable; and by preserving ecosystems and natural resources, we can achieve Zero Hunger.**

## Role of Data in Action and Accountability

Accessible, reliable data and information will be essential for decision making, implementation, and accountability over the next 14 years. Ensuring inclusive development requires data that are fully disaggregated by age, gender, income group, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, and geographic location for policy making. Governments must set indicators that are relevant to their national contexts, and ensure follow-up and review processes that are comprehensive, participatory, and open.

## A Comprehensive, Integrated, and Universal Plan for Zero Hunger

Delivering on the promise of the 2030 Agenda will not be possible without rapid progress toward ending hunger and malnutrition; at the same time, a lasting end to hunger and undernutrition cannot be achieved in isolation. By ending rural poverty and empowering women; by transforming agriculture and food systems in a way that makes them inclusive, resilient, and sustainable; and by preserving ecosystems and natural resources, we can achieve Zero Hunger.

\*This section is the contribution of David Nabarro, Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Climate Change.



# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## Make a Whole-of-Government Commitment to Zero Hunger

- Integrate actions to deliver Zero Hunger into national development plans, with targets and indicators for hunger, food security, nutrition, and sustainable agriculture that are ambitious, appropriate to national contexts, and adequately financed.
- Work with finance and planning ministries to estimate national budget requirements for investments to deliver Zero Hunger, and provide long-term funding pipelines to ensure that the investment plans can be sustainably delivered.
- Prioritize policy coherence for sustainable development at national and international levels, so the intended impacts on reducing poverty and malnutrition are achieved.
- Coordinate across key sectors and programs, including agriculture, nutrition, health, social protection, education, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), to realize Zero Hunger.
- Focus on poverty eradication and food and nutrition security within the national agricultural policies of countries affected by hunger.
- Promote healthy, diversified, and sustainable diets through agricultural, environmental, and social policies that influence what food is produced and consumed.

## Transform Our Food Systems to Transform Our World

- Promote innovative approaches that are people-centered, economically viable, and sustainable to make farming part of the solution to climate change.
- Improve infrastructure, technology, transportation, and distribution systems to minimize food loss, and develop effective policies to reduce food waste and conserve natural resources.
- Prioritize agricultural production for food and nutrition security over the production of biomass for energy and material use in all agricultural policies.

- Significantly reformulate agricultural policies in the Global North so they do not hinder the development of agricultural markets in the Global South.
- Sustainably increase the agricultural productivity of smallholder farmers by securing access to land, markets, knowledge, and financial services.

## Leave No One Behind

- Address the structural inequalities that exist within international trade and financial systems.
- Ensure national and international policies and programs are designed to improve the food and nutrition security of the most excluded population groups.
- Strengthen the political, economic, and social participation of women and other excluded groups. Governments must abolish any discriminatory laws, policies, and practices leading to inequalities in access to education, health services, productive resources, and decision-making processes.

## Measure, Monitor, and Hold to Account

- International organizations and national governments must support the collection of independent, open, reliable, and timely data that are fully disaggregated by age, gender, income, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, and geographic location to enable inequalities to be tracked and addressed for disadvantaged populations.
- In industrialized countries, indicators need to be developed to assess the impact of their policies at a global level, particularly in the Global South.
- International organizations and civil society must hold governments to account by holding participatory and transparent national follow-up and review processes. This requires a free and enabling environment for civil society that is supported by all governments.

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For full references, see the full report at [www.ifpri.org/ghi/2016](http://www.ifpri.org/ghi/2016).