



## Food Security

### Description

#### What is food security?

- Food security means making sure everyone in a society can easily get enough safe and healthy food at a reasonable cost. It involves factors like how much food is produced, how easy it is to get it, and whether people can afford it. The main aim is to guarantee that everyone has consistent access to enough food to stay healthy and active, considering economic, social, and environmental aspects.

#### Impact on food insecurity on the human body:

- Without enough nutritious food, bodies miss out on the building blocks they need. It causes stunted growth in children and weakens their immune systems, making them vulnerable to infections and chronic diseases.
- The stress and anxiety of not knowing where the next meal will come from take a toll on mental health. Food insecurity is linked to increased rates of depression and anxiety.
- Food insecurity also affects the education of children. Being absent from school due to illness or low energy disrupts learning.
- Malnutrition also affects their thinking abilities, putting their future at risk and continuing a cycle of poverty and poor health through generations.

#### Current global status:

- The global food security situation is concerning, with recent setbacks despite some progress. According to the World Bank, in 2022, approximately 783 million people faced hunger, a rise of 122 million from 2019, largely due to the pandemic, conflicts, and extreme weather.
- Places of conflict, especially the Gaza Strip, face an alarming humanitarian crisis, with over 90% of its population grappling with acute food insecurity, reaching catastrophic levels.
- Geopolitical events, particularly Russia's invasion of Ukraine, have led to an increase in trade-related policies

, disrupting the normal flow of food supplies globally.

- High domestic food price inflation and varying levels of food security among different income groups and regions.

### How can India help?

- India is very good at finding affordable solutions to complex problems, which no other country is able to do, as seen earlier in Mission Chandrayan 3. India can use its expertise to develop affordable and effective solutions for the complex challenges faced in agriculture. This will benefit not only the nation but also hold promise for global agricultural advancements.
- India can increase its investment in research and development in the agriculture sector. This way, India can propel research initiatives that contribute not only to India's food security but also benefit other nations by sharing the findings.
- India promoted millets during its G20 presidency in 2023, which are called superfoods because of their rich nutritional content, affordability, gluten-free nature, and adaptability to diverse climates. As the world's largest producer of millets, India can significantly enhance food security by providing an affordable, resilient, and nutritious alternative, particularly beneficial in regions susceptible to environmental and economic challenges.
- Situated between the Middle East, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia, India is well-positioned to provide food aid and collaborate on regional food security initiatives.
- India can leverage its strong geopolitical ties with other countries, along with its global rankings as the 2nd-largest producer of rice and wheat, to advocate for rule-based, transparent, and robust international agri-food value chains, ensuring accessible and affordable food.

### Conclusion:

Achieving food security is not just a noble pursuit, but a vital necessity. It is woven into the fabric of individual health, societal progress, and a more equitable future. By addressing its root causes and implementing sustainable solutions, we can ensure that every plate is full, every mind is nourished, and every individual is empowered to reach their full potential. India stands in a strong position to make a significant contribution to this global endeavour. However, it needs to first strengthen its own food security and simultaneously play a substantial role in global efforts to achieve food security for all.

### Your Turn...

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