

FOOD SECURITY

Insurmountable gaps?

References

CURRENT SITUATION
(latest available data)

- Better situation
- Above average
- Below average
- Worse situation
- Insufficient data

EVOLUTION
(since 1990 or closest available year)

- ➔ Significant progress
- ➔ Slight progress
- || Stagnant
- ➔ Slight regression
- ➔ Significant regression

Complete table at: www.socialwatch.org/statistics2007

Summary: CURRENT SITUATION (colour) EVOLUTION (arrow-icon)	COUNTRIES ¹ (BCI value, 0-100)	UNDERNOURISHMENT (%)	ESTIMATED LOW BIRTH WEIGHT ² (%)	UNDER-5 CHILD MALNUTRITION (weight for age) (%)
—	Afghanistan (—)			39
—	Albania (95)	6	5	14
	Algeria (95)	5	7	10
	Angola (—)	38 ➔	12	31 ←
—	Antigua and Barbuda (—)		8	
—	Argentina (94)		8	4
—	Armenia (96)	29	7	4
—	Azerbaijan (91)	10	12	7
—	Bahamas (—)		7	
—	Bahrain (99)		8	9
➔	Bangladesh (57)	30 ➔	36	48 ➔
—	Barbados (99)		11	
—	Belarus (97)	3	5	
—	Belize (91)		6	
➔	Benin (73)	14 ➔	16	23 ➔
—	Bhutan (69)		15	19
➔	Bolivia (80)	23 ➔	7	8 ➔
—	Bosnia and Herzegovina (—)	9	4	4
←	Botswana (91)	30 ←	10	13
➔	Brazil (89)	8 ➔	8	6
—	Brunei Darussalam (97)		10	
—	Bulgaria (97)	9	10	
	Burkina Faso (71)	17 ➔	19	38 ←
←	Burundi (56)	67 ←	16	45 ←
➔	Cambodia (59)	33 ➔	11	45
	Cameroon (70)	25 ➔	13	18 ←
—	Cape Verde (92)		13	
➔	Central African Republic (—)	45 ➔	14	24
➔	Chad (43)	33 ➔	22	37
➔	Chile (99)	4 ➔	6	1
➔	China (93)	12 ➔	4	8 ➔
➔	Colombia (89)	14 ➔	9	7 ➔
—	Comoros (72)		25	25
←	Congo, DR (—)	72 ←	12	31
➔	Congo, Rep. (80)	34 ➔		15 ➔
—	Cook Islands (—)		3	
	Costa Rica (96)	4	7	5

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	Cote d'Ivoire (77)	14 →	17	17 ←
—	Croatia (97)	7	6	1
—	Cuba (99)		5	4
—	Djibouti (78)		16	27
—	Dominica (94)		11	
→	Dominican Republic (85)	27	11	5 →
→	Ecuador (81)	5 →	16	12 →
→	Egypt (90)	3	12	6 →
→	El Salvador (80)	11	7	10 →
—	Equatorial Guinea (59)		13	19
	Eritrea (67)	73	14	40
—	Estonia (99)	3	4	
→	Ethiopia (50)	46	15	38 →
—	Fiji (99)		10	
→	Gabon (82)	5 →	14	12
←	Gambia (70)	27 ←	17	17
—	Georgia (95)	13	7	3
→	Ghana (66)	12 →	16	22 →
—	Grenada (92)		8	
→	Guatemala (72)	23 ←	12	23 →
→	Guinea (68)	24 →	16	26
—	Guinea-Bissau (—)		22	25
→	Guyana (81)	9 →	13	14 →
→	Haiti (—)	47 →	21	17 →
	Honduras (76)	22	14	17
→	India (71)	20 →	30	47 →
→	Indonesia (85)	6 →	9	28 →
	Iran (91)	4	7	11
—	Iraq (79)		15	12
—	Israel (99+)		8	
→	Jamaica (95)	10 →	10	4 →
←	Jordan (99)	7 ←	12	4
—	Kazakhstan (95)	8	8	4
→	Kenya (68)	31 →	10	20 →
—	Kiribati (88)		5	
—	Korea, DR (—)	35	7	23
→	Kuwait (99)	5 →	7	10
—	Kyrgyzstan (96)	4	7	11
→	Lao, PDR (58)	21 →	14	40 →
—	Latvia (99)	3	5	
	Lebanon (96)	3	6	4
	Lesotho (69)	12 →	13	20 ←
←	Liberia (—)	49 ←		26
—	Libya (—)		7	5
—	Lithuania (97)		4	
—	Macedonia, FYR (97)		6	6

Summary: CURRENT SITUATION (colour) EVOLUTION (arrow-icon)	COUNTRIES ¹ (BCI value, 0-100)	UNDERNOURISHMENT (%)	ESTIMATED LOW BIRTH WEIGHT ² (%)	UNDER-5 CHILD MALNUTRITION (weight for age) (%)
←	Madagascar (63)	38	17	42
→	Malawi (63)	34	16	22
→	Malaysia (98)	3	9	11
—	Maldives (86)		22	30
	Mali (66)	28	23	33
—	Malta (99+)		6	
—	Marshall Islands (94)		12	
→	Mauritania (75)	10		32
→	Mauritius (99)	6	14	15
→	Mexico (94)	5	8	8
—	Micronesia (—)		18	
—	Moldova (96)	11	5	4
→	Mongolia (96)	28	7	7
	Morocco (78)	6	15	10
→	Mozambique (61)	45	15	24
→	Myanmar (73)	5	15	32
→	Namibia (86)	23	14	24
→	Nepal (55)	17	21	48
→	Nicaragua (74)	27	12	10
→	Niger (55)	32	13	40
→	Nigeria (63)	9	14	29
—	Niue (—)		0	
—	Oman (97)		8	18
	Pakistan (60)	23	19	38
—	Palau (—)		9	
—	Panama (91)	25	10	8
—	Papua New Guinea (73)		11	
→	Paraguay (85)	15	9	5
→	Peru (86)	12	11	8
→	Philippines (77)	19	20	28
—	Qatar (97)		10	6
—	Romania (96)		8	3
—	Russian Federation (97)	3	6	3
→	Rwanda (51)	36	9	23
—	Samoa (97)		4	
—	Sao Tomé and Príncipe (78)		20	13
	Saudi Arabia (95)	4	11	14
→	Senegal (72)	23	18	17
—	Serbia and Montenegro (—) ³	10	4	2
←	Sierra Leone (—)	50	23	27
—	Singapore (—)		8	3
—	Slovakia (—)	6	7	
—	Slovenia (99)	3	6	
—	Solomon Islands (—)		13	
—	Somalia (—)			26
—	South Africa (87)		15	12

Summary: CURRENT SITUATION (colour) EVOLUTION (arrow-icon)	COUNTRIES ¹ (BCI value, 0-100)	UNDERNOURISHMENT (%)	ESTIMATED LOW BIRTH WEIGHT ² (%)	UNDER-5 CHILD MALNUTRITION (weight for age) (%)
→	Sri Lanka (—)	22 →	22	29 →
—	St. Kitts and Nevis (99)		9	
—	St. Lucia (96)		10	
—	St. Vincent and Grenadines (95)		10	
←	Sudan (81)	27 →	31	41 ←
→	Suriname (85)	10 →	13	13
←	Swaziland (77)	19 →	9	10
→	Syrian Arab Republic (87)	4	6	7 →
←	Tajikistan (86)	61 ←	15	
	Tanzania (70)	44 →	10	22 →
—	Thailand (—)	21	9	18
—	Timor-Leste (—)		12	46
→	Togo (70)	25 →	18	25
—	Tonga (94)		0	
	Trinidad and Tobago (98)	11	23	6
→	Tunisia (95)		7	4 →
→	Turkey (92)	3	16	4 →
—	Turkmenistan (—)	8	6	12
—	Tuvalu (89)		5	
→	Uganda (63)	19 →	12	23
—	Ukraine (97)	3	5	1
—	United Arab Emirates (98)		15	14
→	Uruguay (95)	3 →	8	5
—	Uzbekistan (—)	26	7	8
—	Vanuatu (85)		6	
	Venezuela (94)	18 →	9	5 →
→	Viet Nam (90)	17 →	9	27 →
—	West Bank and Gaza (96)		9	5
←	Yemen (64)	37 →	32	46 ←
→	Zambia (75)	47	12	20 →
←	Zimbabwe (76)	45	11	17 →

- Notes:** (1) OECD countries are not included.
(2) Due to changes in the methodology of the sources the construction of data series presents comparability problems.
(3) Prior to separation.

Source: The State of the World's Children 2007, UNICEF (www.unicef.org/sowc07).

For more detailed information on the reference years of the data see complete tables at: www.socialwatch.org/statistics2007

DEFINITION OF INDICATORS:

Undernourishment (%): Percentage of undernourished in the total population. Undernourishment is the result of food intake that is insufficient to meet dietary energy requirements continuously. The World Health Organization recommended that the average person needs to take in a minimum of 2300 kcal per day to maintain body functions, health and normal activity. This global minimum requirement of calories is broken down into country-specific differentials that are a function of the age-specific structure and body mass of the population. Last available data: 2001-2003; evolution since 1990-1991.

Estimated low birth weight (%): Percentage of newborns weighing less than 2.500 grams, with measurement taken within the first hours of life, before significant postnatal weight loss has occurred. Last available data: 1998-2005.

Under-5 child malnutrition (underweight for age, %): Percentage of children under five whose weight for age is less than minus two standard deviations from the median for the international reference population ages 0 to 59 months. The reference population adopted by the WHO in 1983 is based on children from the United States, who are assumed to be well nourished. Last available data: 1995-2005; evolution since 1990.

FOOD SECURITY Insurmountable gaps?

There are hundreds of millions of hungry people in the world, and this cannot be explained by lack of resources, since enough quality food is produced on the planet for the whole of the world's population. Nevertheless, every five seconds a child dies from hunger-related causes.¹ Food is a human right, and states are under the obligation to ensure access to sufficient quantities of appropriate supplies for all their citizens. This is a basic right, and failure to fulfil it puts all other rights at risk, starting with the right to life itself.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), "The Right to Food is the right of every person to have regular access to sufficient, nutritionally adequate and culturally acceptable food for an active, healthy life. It is the right to feed oneself in dignity, rather than the right to be fed."² The challenge that countries face when it comes to fulfilling the right to food is not just to achieve food security but to achieve genuine food sovereignty.

The concept of food security is the notion that "all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs."³ This means food should be available, people should be able to acquire it, the supply should be stable, and the products should be of good quality, hygienic and safe.

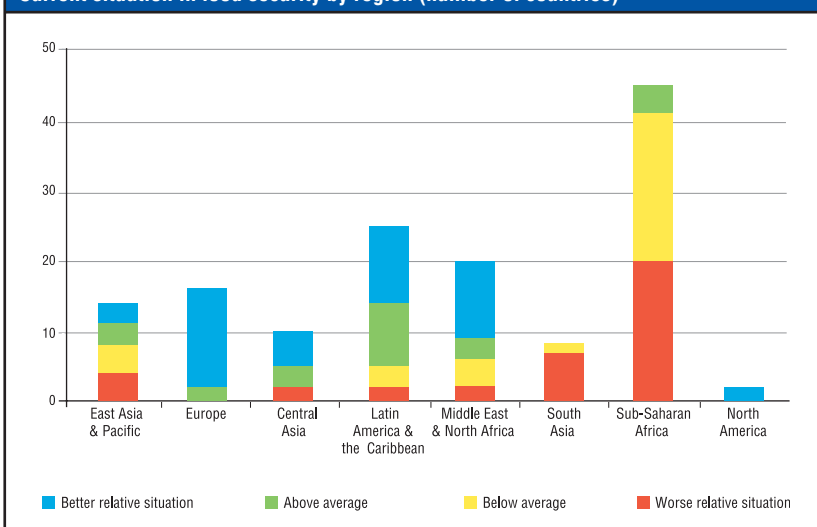
The problem of hunger goes beyond the serious effects of widespread famine; it also has an impact on people's future development. "Most poor people who battle hunger deal with chronic undernourishment and vitamin or mineral deficiencies, which result in stunted growth, weakness and heightened susceptibility to illness."⁴

There are enormous food security gaps between different countries in the world, and this can be summed up in one simple fact: in the countries in the better situation, one in 20 children under five suffers from malnutrition, whereas in the countries in the worse situation the ratio is one in three. In Bangladesh, India and Nepal, for example, nearly half of all children under five are the victims of malnutrition.

Hunger on the planet is not distributed randomly, as can be seen from the chart that shows food security in different geographical regions. There is a stark contrast between the reality in North America and Europe, which are in the better situation group, and what is happening in Sub-Saharan Africa and

		Under-5 child malnutrition (underweight for age) (%)	Undernourishment (%)	Estimated low birth weight (%)
Worse relative situation	Average	35	39	69
	Number of countries	30	27	30
Better relative situation	Average	6	7	7
	Number of countries	40	35	45
Total	Average	18	20	12
	Number of countries	125	109	129

Current situation in food security by region (number of countries)



Current situation and evolution in food security (number of countries)

	←	↶		↷	→	Total
Countries in worse situation	5	3	5	6	8	27
Countries below average	0	2	5	9	7	23
Countries above average	0	2	3	8	4	17
Countries in better situation	0	1	5	13	1	20
Total	5	8	18	36	20	87

above all in South Asia, where most of the countries are in the worse relative situation in terms of food security. In the other regions of the world countries are very different as regards their capability to provide food security for their populations. It should be noted that for many of the more developed countries no information is available for the indicators that make up this dimension, and this is a relative classification, so the countries in the better relative situation group are not necessarily up to the level of the developed countries in terms of food security.

As to recent evolution, the countries that have made progress on these indicators form the predominant group, but the data also show a discouraging evolution in some places. There has been significant regression in five countries – Burundi, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tajikistan and Yemen – and all five are currently in the worse relative situation group. Another worrying aspect is that various countries have not improved in this respect, but rather have stagnated or even regressed slightly. ■

1 Black, R., Morris, S. and Bryce, J. (2003). "Where and Why Are 10 Million Children Dying Every Year?" *The Lancet*, Vol 361, 28 June. Available from: <www.cfwshops.org/download/child_survival.pdf>.

2 <www.fao.org/righttofood/index_en.htm>

3 FAO (1996). World Food Summit, Plan of Action, Para. 1. Rome, 13-17 November. Available from: <www.fao.org/wfs/index_en.htm>.

4 Bread for the World Institute (2004). *Are We On Track To End Hunger? Hunger Report 2004. 14th Annual Report on the State of World Hunger*. Washington, D.C.