

Bangladesh progresses a little in global hunger index

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Online Desk: Bangladesh has made a little progress in terms of score in the Global Hunger Index with continuous development in cutting child undernourishment.

In the 2023 index, however, Bangladesh ranks 81st out of the 125 countries with sufficient data for calculation, down from 76th among 116 countries in 2022, reports bdnews24.com.

With a score of 19.0 in the 2023 Global Hunger Index, Bangladesh has a level of hunger that is moderate. Higher scores mean less improvement in the index. The country's score was 19.1 last year.

The Global Hunger Index, a tool for comprehensively measuring and tracking hunger at global, regional, and national levels, is a peer-reviewed annual report, jointly published by Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe

GHI scores are based on the values of four component indicators. The indicators are:

- Undernourishment: the share of the population with insufficient caloric intake.
- Child stunting: the share of children under age five who have low height for their age, reflecting chronic undernutrition.
- Child wasting: the share of children under age five who have low weight for their height, reflecting acute undernutrition.
- Child mortality: the share of children who die before their fifth birthday, partly reflecting the fatal mix of inadequate nutrition and unhealthy environments.

Based on the values of the four indicators, a GHI score is calculated on a 100-point scale reflecting the severity of hunger, where 0 is the best possible score (no hunger) and 100 is the worst. Each country's GHI score is classified by severity, from low to extremely alarming.

Bangladesh is among even countries that have achieved reductions of five points or more between their 2015 and 2023 GHI scores.

The others are Chad, Djibouti, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mozambique, Nepal, and Timor-Leste.

These reductions in hunger are particularly impressive given the challenges facing the world and the stagnation in hunger levels at the global level in recent years, the report said.

In a case study – 'Strengthening Farming and Nutrition Knowledge in Bangladesh' – the report shared the story of Hosenare Aktar, 28,

Hosenare is a participant in the Collective Responsibility, Action and Accountability for Improved Nutrition (CRAAIN) programme in Bagerhat.

The programme, which aims to assist 500,000 people, works to improve participants' nutrition through activities involving government, civil society, the private sector, and community groups.

As part of the programme, Hosenare received training on nutrition, climate-smart agriculture techniques, water use, and sanitation and was provided with a goat and four ducks. Her participation helped her build up her small farm while enabling her family to withstand the negative consequences of climate shocks such as typhoons and flooding.

“Before the CRAAIN project,” she says, “there was nothing here. Since receiving the training and different types of counseling, I have created my farm.”

Hosenare has been able to produce a surplus for sale. “For the last three months the vegetables I grew went to my family to eat, and I lent some to my neighbor. I also sold [produce worth] around 1,000 taka [€8.30], which I will keep and use for my child’s education.”

She continues: “I feel empowered and have a dream of increasing my small farm. I received just 1 goat, and now I have 3. I dream of having 10 or more to help me earn more and preserve my farm.”

Hosenare also transfers her new knowledge to others in her community: “All of my neighbors have increased their interest in learning from me. I am counseling them on how to cultivate and how to do better.”