

GS PAPER 1

Society

International Day of Girl Child

Syllabus: Role of Women And Women's Organization

In News

- The International Day of the Girl Child is celebrated annually on 11th October. The main aims of the day are to promote girl's empowerment and fulfilment of their human rights while also highlighting the challenges that girls face all over the world.
- Launched in 2012 by the **United Nations General Assembly**, it aims to focus on issues like education, equality, child marriage, access to services regarding puberty and sexual health, and addressing issues around gender-based violence.
- The theme for 2018 is **With Her: A Skilled Girl Force**
- The United Nation states that there are 1.1 billion girls today brimming with talent and creativity. However, violence, discrimination and the lack of equal opportunities serve to thwart the dreams and potential of many of them.
- Today's generation of girls are preparing to enter a world of work that is being transformed by innovation and automation. Educated and skilled workers are in great demand, but roughly a quarter of young people – most of them female – are currently neither employed or in education or training.
- Of the 1 billion young people – including 600 million adolescent girls – that will enter the workforce in the next decade, more than 90% of those living in developing countries will work in the informal sector, where low or no pay, abuse and exploitation are common.
- The theme will mark the beginning of a year-long effort to bring together partners and stakeholders to advocate for, and draw attention and investments to, the most pressing needs and opportunities for girls to **expand existing learning opportunities, attain skills for employability and prepare them for a successful transition into the world of work.**

Global Hunger Index

Syllabus: Poverty and Developmental Issues

In News

- The Global Hunger Index was recently released. It is a peer-reviewed publication released annually by **Welthungerhilfe and Concern Worldwide**.
- **Four main indicators** are used to calculate hunger levels in the report. The 2018 scores reflect data from 2013-2017.
- The first indicator is **undernourishment**, which is the share of the population which is undernourished and reflects insufficient caloric intake.
- The next three indicators use data for children under five: **child wasting** (low weight for height), reflecting acute under-nutrition; **child stunting** (low height for age), reflecting chronic under-nutrition; and **child mortality**.

India's Performance

- Overall, India has been ranked at **103 out of 119 countries** in the Index, with hunger levels in the country categorised as "**serious**". Its ranking has dropped three places from last year.

- India has **GHI of 31.1** making the country fall in the ‘**serious**’ category. The best-performing countries have a GHI score as low as 5 (*Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia* etc).
- Out of the four parameters, three are dedicated to children below the age of five years. And in all this, India **performed poorly** with a GHI score of 30.5.
- India has shown improvement in three of the indicators over the comparable reference years. The percentage of undernourished people in the population has dropped from 18.2% in 2000 to 14.8% in 2018. The child mortality rate has halved from 9.2% to 4.3%, while child stunting has dropped from 54.2% to 38.4% over the same period.
- However, the prevalence of child wasting has actually worsened in comparison to previous reference years. It stood at 17.1% in 2000, and increased to 20% in 2005. In 2018, it stands at 21%. The only country with a higher prevalence of child wasting is the war-torn nation of South Sudan.
- Many **neighbouring countries** like China (25th), Sri Lanka (67th), Myanmar (68th), Nepal (72nd) and Bangladesh (86th) stood ahead of India.

Global Findings

- Despite improvement over the last two decades, globally the level of hunger still falls into the “serious” category. As per the Index, the level of hunger and undernutrition worldwide fell to 20.9, down from 29.2 in the year 2000.
- The Index projects that at the current rate of progress, 50 countries will fail to reach the low hunger category by 2030. This puts the UN’s Sustainable Development Goal 2, which aims to end hunger by 2030, in jeopardy.
- **Highest rates of undernourishment:** Zimbabwe, Somalia, and CAR
- **Highest stunting rates:** Timor-Leste, Eritrea, and Burundi
- **Child Wasting** is most prevalent in **Djibouti** (16.7 %), **India** (21.0 %) and **South Sudan** (28.6 %).
- The **highest under-five mortality rates are** in Somalia (13.3 %), Chad (12.7 %), and CAR (12.4 %).
- Child wasting is high across South Asia, constituting a “**critical public health emergency**”. It is associated with a low maternal body mass index, suggesting the need for a focus on the nutritional status of the mother during pregnancy.
- In South Asia, maternal BMI and access to improved water and sanitation are more closely associated with rates of child wasting than household wealth, suggesting that a reduction in poverty alone may not be sufficient to correct the problem.
- Factors that could reduce child stunting in South Asia include increased consumption of non-staple foods, access to sanitation, women’s education, access to safe water, gender equality, and national food availability.

Why India’s Rank Is Low?

Despite steady economic growth and self-sufficiency in food grains production, high levels of poverty, the country is home to one-quarter of all undernourished people worldwide. The reasons are:

- **Poverty trap** – poverty ridden do not have enough money to buy or produce enough food. In turn, they tend to be weaker and get trapped into poverty hunger nexus.
- **Dietary ignorance** – Many people do not know about the nutritional component about their diets. They often do not complement their children’s diet with sufficient nutritional components. As a result we see the incidents of child stunting, child wasting etc.
- **Socio Cultural Factors** - Hunger in India also has **age, gender and caste** dimensions. Compared to men, women more often forgo meals to feed their children. This is evident from the World Bank’s report which says that 60% of those who are hungry are female. Caste and tribe are structural factors which predispose certain groups to long term poverty and deprivation which ultimately gets translated into hunger and malnutrition.
- **Politics of Distribution** - According to Amartya Sen, hunger usually arises from food distribution problems, or from governmental policies in the developing world, and not from the insufficiency of food production. This is true for India as well. Corruption, leakages, exclusion-inclusion error etc. makes the public distribution system inefficient in addressing the issue of hunger and malnutrition.
- **Food wastage** – Be it the cold storage of Food Corporation of India or the extravaganza shown in marriages and rituals, food/food grains wastages are the common thing in India. These wastages distort the food availability making difficult for poor and vulnerable to buy food from market.
- **Natural Disaster** – Erratic monsoon, incidence of draughts, unseasonal rainfall, cyclones etc. affects the food grain production and hence affects the food security in India.

Few Suggestions to Improve the Ranking

- Increased political commitment
- Convergence among various initiatives such as related to health, nutrition, agriculture, sanitation, labour etc.
- Improvement in food production and more focused approach towards food processing and food fortification
- Revamp public distribution system with focus on localized procurement, storage, and distribution
- Increased Public participation

World Habitat Day

Syllabus: Urbanization, Their Problems, and Their Remedies

In News

- In 1985, the United Nations designated the first Monday of October every year as World Habitat Day. The idea is to reflect on the state of our towns and cities and the basic right of all to adequate shelter. It is also intended to remind the world of its collective responsibility for the future of the human habitat.

- The focus of this year's World Habitat Day celebrations is taking action to address the municipal solid waste management challenge. This year's theme is **Municipal Solid Waste Management** with a slogan **Waste-wise cities**.
- Solid waste, particularly in urban areas, has the potential, if left unchecked, to pose serious health risks and violate a number of constitutionally enshrined human rights such as the right to clean water and to a clean environment which is harmful to one's well-being and health.
- It thus becomes paramount that waste collection processes are efficient and the disposal of waste is controlled and managed properly.
- On 1 October 2018, and in the period before and after this day, a concerted effort will be made to:
 - raise awareness that Municipal solid waste is a global challenge that all of us need to address
 - facilitate policy dialogue and form partnerships
 - promote innovative solutions to municipal solid waste management
 - mobilize resources to address the municipal solid waste challenges

Nobel Peace Prize

Syllabus: Social Empowerment

In News

- The 2018 Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to campaigners against rape in warfare - **Nadia Murad and Denis Mukwege**. The Committee commended them both for having put their personal security at risk by courageously combating war crimes and seeking justice for the victims.
- Ms Murad endured three months as a sex slave at the hands of IS militants. She was bought and sold several times and subjected to sexual and physical abuse during her captivity.
- After escaping, she became an **activist for the Yazidi people**, campaigning to help put an end to human trafficking and calling on the world to take a tougher line on rape as a weapon of war.
- She is the **first Iraqi to win the award** and was also named the UN's first goodwill ambassador for survivors of human trafficking.
- Mr. Mukwege has spent decades helping rape victims in the **Democratic Republic of Congo**.
- He and his colleagues are said to have treated about 30,000 rape victims, developing great expertise in the treatment of serious injuries sustained during sex assaults that were carried out as a weapon of war.
- He lives under the permanent protection of UN peacekeepers at his hospital and has also previously called for a tougher line on rape as a weapon of war.
- He has won a number of international prizes, including the 2008 UN Human Rights Prize, and was named African of the Year in 2009.