



Sustainable Development Goal-2

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Dear Friends,

This month we shall discuss the most basic necessity for any living being – food, and prolonged deprivation of food leading to hunger. We have seen that the MDG #1 had attempted to address the scourge of poverty and hunger together. Those who framed the SDGs preferred to separate them into two distinct goals, 1- poverty eradication and 2 – feeding the hungry. Even after 15 years of MDG and 4 years of SDGs implementation, the world has approximately 1 billion people who are hungry, and ***an estimated 400 million (40 crores) of them live in our own country – India.***

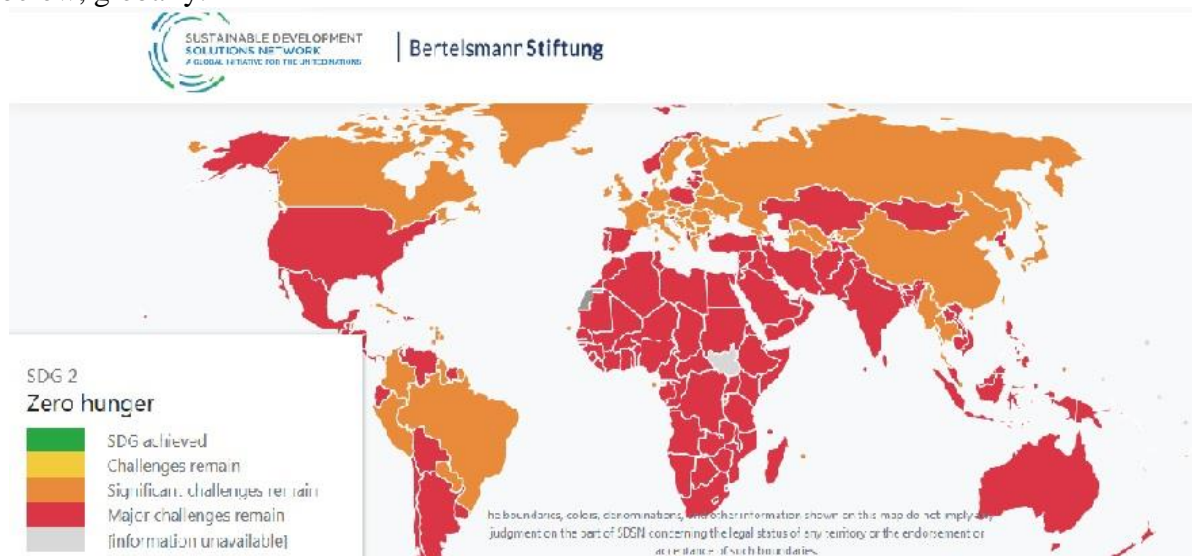
In this blog, we shall try to explain:

- What it is and why is this relevant
- What are its indicators
- What are the targets
- Where do we stand in India
- What can we do to support the goal

As stated earlier, I have little to contribute on my own. I have attempted to provide a few references, so that if anyone is interested in probing deeper, you could do so.

What is SDG 2 and why is this relevant

There is no country completely free from hunger, as we can see, there is no green in the map below, globally:



Source: Sachs, J., Schmidt-Traub, G., Kroll, C., Lafortune, G., Fuller, G. (2019): Sustainable Development Report 2019. New York: Bertelsmann Stiftung and Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN). The above map shows the status in 2019.

Hunger: Facts and Figures [1]

- An estimated 821 million people were undernourished in 2017.
- The majority of the world's hungry people live in developing countries, where 12.9 per cent of the population is undernourished.
- Sub-Saharan Africa remains the region with the highest prevalence of hunger, with the rate increasing from 20.7 per cent in 2014 to 23.2 per cent in 2017.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, the number of undernourished people **increased** from 195 million in 2014 to 237 million in 2017.
- Poor nutrition causes nearly half (45 per cent) of deaths in children under five – 3.1 million children each year.
- 149 million children under 5 years of age—22 per cent of the global under-5 population—were still chronically undernourished in 2018.

Food security

- Agriculture is the single largest employer in the world, providing livelihoods for 40 per cent of today's global population. It is the largest source of income and jobs for poor rural households.
- 500 million small farms worldwide, most still rain fed, provide up to 80 per cent of food consumed in a large part of the developing world. Investing in smallholder women and men is an important way to increase food security and nutrition for the poorest, as well as food production for local and global markets.
- Since the 1900s, some 75 per cent of crop diversity has been lost from farmers' fields. Better use of agricultural biodiversity can contribute to more nutritious diets, enhanced livelihoods for farming communities and more resilient and sustainable farming systems.
- If women farmers had the same access to resources as men, the number of hungry in the world could be reduced by up to 150 million.
- 840 million people have no access to electricity worldwide – most of whom live in rural areas of the developing world. Energy poverty in many regions is a fundamental barrier to reducing hunger and ensuring that the world can produce enough food to meet future demand.

What are its indicators and targets [1]?

2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.

2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons.

2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.

2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.

2.5 By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed. *(Note SB: Vandana Shiva is doing exemplary work in creating and promoting seed banks.*



Food Security

Our traditional ritual of filling the vessels on top of temples with good seeds was a way of having seed banks. Being at the highest point, they are safe from being inundated in case of floods.)

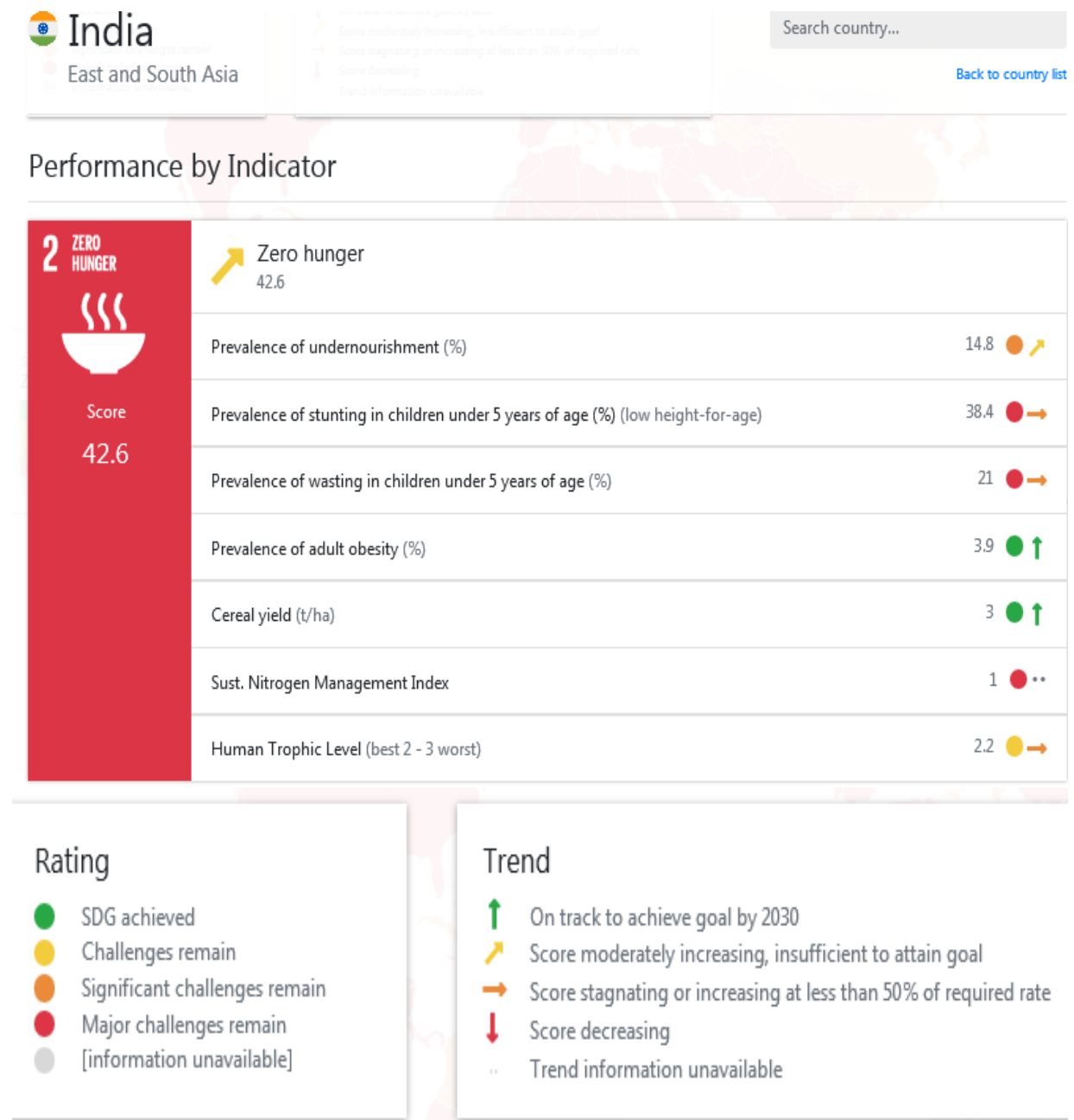
2.A Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries.

2.B Correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets, including through the parallel elimination of all forms of agricultural export subsidies and all export measures with equivalent effect, in accordance with the mandate of the Doha Development Round.

2.C Adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives and facilitate timely access to market information, including on food reserves, in order to help limit extreme food price volatility.

Where do we stand in India?

There are 3 SDGs in which India's performance is rather poor: SDG 2 – Zero Hunger, SDG 5 – Gender Equality and SDG 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure. The following picture [5] shows our position in 2019.



Source: Sustainable Development Report Dashboards 2019

What can we do to support the goal?

Do not waste any food. Try to recycle excess food to the hungry. Buy locally grown vegetables as against packaged items. Try to shift away from meat-heavy food. Enjoy sustainable, climate-conscious and delicious food. Conserve water as much as possible.

In addition to the above, the UN web [3] suggest the following:

What can we do to help?

You can make changes in your own life—at home, at work and in the community—by supporting local farmers or markets and making sustainable food choices, supporting good nutrition for all, and fighting food waste.

You can also use your power as a consumer and voter, demanding businesses and governments make the choices and changes that will make Zero Hunger a reality. Join the conversation, whether on social media platforms or in your local communities.

You can join the Global Movement for Zero Hunger by joining the Zero Hunger Challenge: www.zerohungerchallenge.org

To find out more about Goal #2 and other Sustainable Development Goals, visit: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment>

Another useful link <https://www.un.org/en/actnow/>[3] shows many ways and I reproduce an interesting one below.

“Food

“What we eat has major implications for climate change. The destruction of rainforests to create land for agriculture, along with growing demand for meat, are major contributors to the increasing greenhouse gases which are taking a significant toll on climate and global food security. To top it off, we waste about one-third of the food that is produced. But more people are taking a closer look at what they are eating and the impacts of their diets on their health and on the environment. More and more chefs and other food suppliers are focusing on local and organic produce and shifting away from meat-heavy meals and fast food. They are joined by a growing movement of people changing the way they cook and eat. The UN’s ActNow campaign aims to inspire even more people to enjoy sustainable, climate-conscious and delicious food”.

References

1. Goal 2: Zero Hunger
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2. Why it matters?
<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/2.pdf>
3. Act Now
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