

The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World
PANEL DISCUSSION - REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES
0900 hrs, 20 October 2025

SOFI report 2025 shows significant decline in undernourishment and share of people unable to afford a healthy diet in India.

What have been most effective policies driving this progress and how does India plan to sustain it

Good morning Excellencies and Distinguished delegates

It is a privilege to share India's perspective about the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the world at the Committee on World Food Security.

From food-deficient beginnings, India transformed into a food-surplus nation that feeds 1.4 billion and contributes significantly to global food security. The 2025 SOFI report highlighted that declining global trends in hunger and improvement in affordability of healthy diets are attributable to India's contribution. In 2025 the World Bank acknowledged that in the past decade, India lifted millions out of extreme poverty.

Today I would like to highlight some of the policies which were instrumental in reducing hunger, undernourishment and malnutrition.

First – a food social safety net.

Under the National Food Security Act a Targeted Public Distribution system distributes free food grains every month to over 800 million people. This is one of the world's largest such programs. Nationwide food portability supports migrant and vulnerable populations. As people spend less from their budgets on staple foods, they buy more of high-quality and nutrient dense food, which improves nutrition.

Second - ensuring price stability and affordability.

Amidst global disruptions, strategic market interventions, targeted subsidies and direct benefit transfers ensure that the vulnerable segments do not suffer.

We are increasing productivity in agriculture, dairy, livestock, seafood, horticulture sectors through sustainable agriculture, innovative agricultural technologies and better price discovery mechanisms – the cumulative effect is increased income in rural areas.

Third - dietary diversity and sustainability

We support crop diversification and cultivation of pulses, millets, fruit, high yield crops and vegetables. Millets are distributed through the food public distribution system. The International Year of Millets led by India in 2023 was impactful in increasing awareness and increasing millet consumption. To address micro-nutrient deficiencies we distribute fortified rice – a program developed in partnership with WFP India. India's

latest Household Consumption Expenditure Survey confirms that diets are more diverse and nutritious across all income groups, especially the poor.

Fourth - Maternal and child health

Special schemes are in place for ante-natal care coverage, iron and folic acid supplementation, institutional delivery, timely and age-appropriate complementary feeding. National missions for Clean India and supply of clean drinking water significantly improved sanitation and hygiene, and reduced malnutrition.

Fifth – inclusive approach, no one to be left behind

All programs and initiatives are inclusive and benefit all sections of society. In fact women, children and vulnerable sections of society are emphasised as beneficiaries. One success story – in more than 100 districts with lowest development indicators some of our best and young civil servants led efforts to improve socio-economic indicators including health and nutrition.

How will India sustain these efforts

India has a vision of *Viksit Bharat* or developed India by 2047 the centenary of our independence. The strategy includes food security as a foundational element, and the crucial role of strengthening food security programs.

India also believes that ending hunger is not only a mission of equity and empowerment, but requires collaborative action and strong partnerships. We stand ready to work with FAO as we collectively work towards global food security and nutrition.

Thank you.