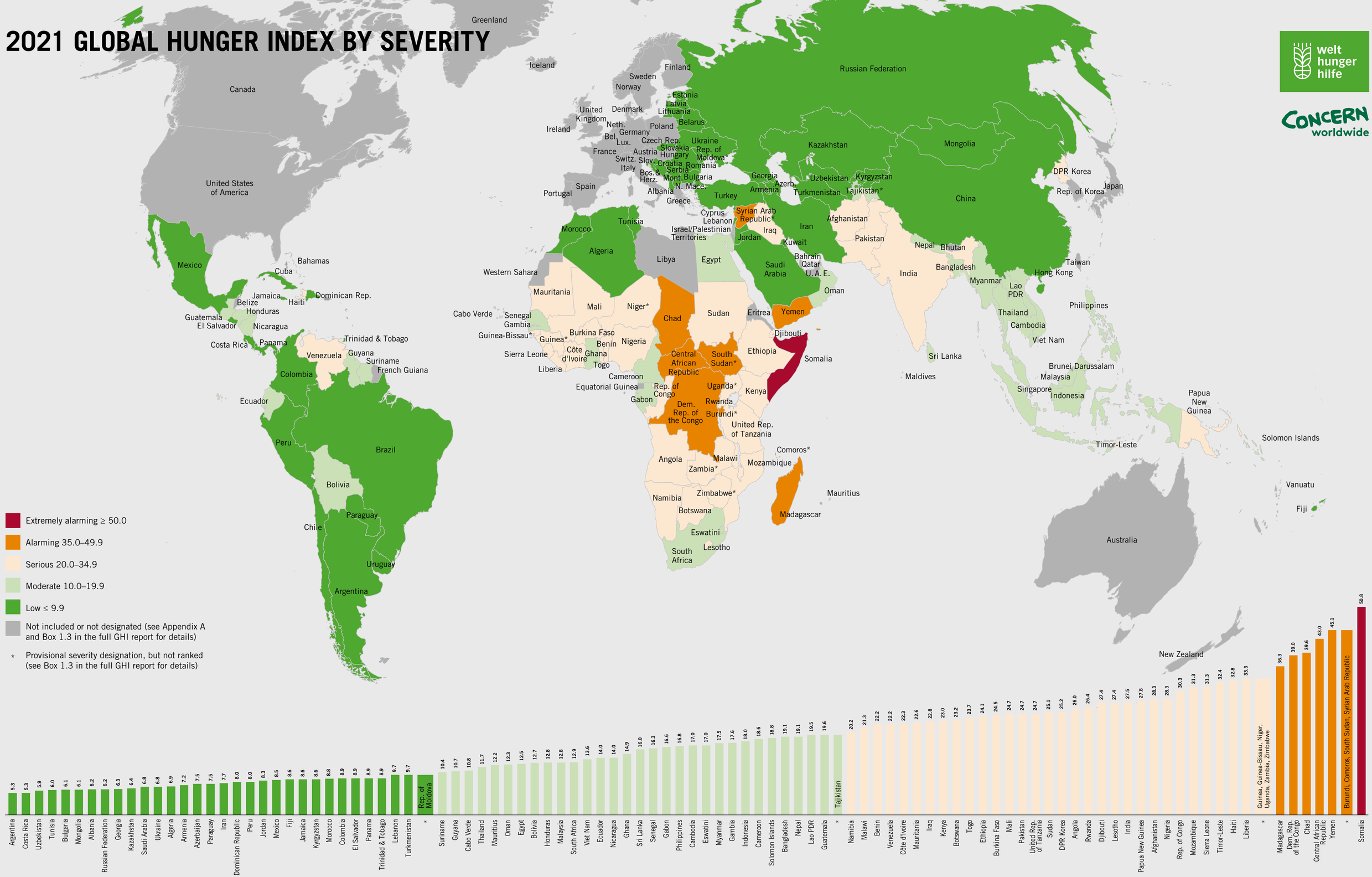
2021 GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX BY SEVERITY



Source: Authors.

Note: For the 2021 GHI, data on the proportion of undernourished are for 2018–2020; data on child stunting and wasting are for the latest year in the period 2016–2020 for which data are available; and data on child mortality are for 2019. GHI scores were not calculated for countries for which data were not available and for certain high-income countries, countries with small populations, and non-independent territories; see Appendix A for details. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by Welthungerhilfe (WHH) or Concern Worldwide.

Recommended citation: von Grebmer, K., J. Bernstein, C. Delgado, D. Smith, M. Wiemers, T. Schiffer, A. Hanano, O. Towey, R. Ní Chéilleachair, C. Foley, S. Gitter, K. Ekstrom, and H. Fritschel. 2021. "Figure 1.6: 2021 Global Hunger Index by Severity." Map in *2021 Global Hunger Index: Hunger and Food Systems in Conflict Settings.* Bonn: Welthungerhilfe; Dublin: Concern Worldwide.

CONCEPT OF THE GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX

The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is based on four component indicators:

- **UNDERNOURISHMENT:** the proportion of undernourished people as a percentage of the population (reflecting the share of the population with insufficient caloric intake)
- **CHILD WASTING:** the proportion of children younger than age five who suffer from wasting (low weight-for-height, reflecting acute undernutrition)
- **CHILD STUNTING:** the proportion of children younger than age five who are stunted (low height-for-age, reflecting chronic undernutrition)
- **CHILD MORTALITY:** the mortality rate of children younger than age five (partially reflecting the fatal synergy of inadequate nutrition and unhealthy environments)

Combining the proportion of undernourished in the population with the indicators relating to children under age five ensures that both the food supply situation of the population as a whole and the effects of inadequate nutrition on a physiologically very vulnerable group are captured. Children's nutritional status deserves particular attention because a deficiency of nutrients places them at high risk of physical and mental impairment and death. For many children in low- and middle-income countries who die from infectious diseases, the indirect cause of death is a weakened immune system due to a lack of dietary energy, vitamins, and minerals. Since the first three indicators—the proportion of undernourished and the prevalence of wasting and stunting in children—do not capture premature death as the most tragic consequence of hunger, the under-five mortality rate is also included.

The Global Hunger Index goes beyond dietary energy availability to reflect the multidimensional causes and manifestations of hunger. Inequitable resource allocations between households and within households are also taken into consideration since the latter affect the physical well-being of children. Sufficient food availability at the household level does not guarantee that all members benefit from it in equal measure. The GHI varies between the best possible score of 0 and the worst possible score of 100. Higher scores indicate greater hunger—the lower the score, the better the country's situation. GHI scores above 20 are considered *serious*; scores greater than 35 are *alarming*; and scores exceeding 50 are *extremely alarming*.

The GHI is calculated for countries where data on all four indicators are available and measuring hunger is most relevant. Of the countries that met the criteria for inclusion in the GHI, 19 had insufficient data to allow for calculation of a 2021 GHI score. For those countries, provisional designations of the severity of hunger were assigned where possible. Most higher-income countries are not included because the indicators used to calculate the GHI are best suited to reflect the hunger and nutrition circumstances in low- and middle-income countries and because many of these data are not collected regularly for higher-income countries. In addition, GHI scores are not calculated for certain countries with small populations or for certain non-independent entities or territories.

For more information please visit:
www.globalhungerindex.org
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