

# A GUIDE TO THE ECONOMIST INTELLIGENCE UNIT'S GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY INDEX

## What Is It?

The Global Food Security Index is a dynamic benchmarking tool that deepens the dialogue on food security by examining the core issues of food affordability, availability, as well as quality and safety in more than 100 countries. The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) developed this tool in 2012 with sponsorship from DuPont.

Food systems today are under increasing strain from population pressures, high input prices, changing consumer patterns, dramatic weather, and price shocks. In this context, the Index looks at the underlying factors and key risk areas affecting food security within a structured, rigorous framework.

While many organizations conduct food research, the Index is distinctive for a number of reasons.

- 1) The Index assesses food security across three broad dimensions: **affordability** that measures consumer's ability to purchase food; **availability** that measures the sufficiency of the national food supply; and **quality and safety** that measures variety and nutritional quality of average diets as well as the safety of the food supply.
- 2) To keep the data current, the Index employs a quarterly adjustment for food commodity price fluctuations to examine the risk that countries face throughout the year.
- 3) The EIU has created a number of unique quality indicators for the Index, many related to governmental policies, in order to capture the drivers of food security not currently measured in any other international database. The Index is updated each year, at which time the EIU issues a new findings report.

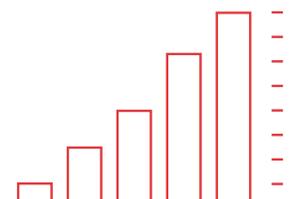
## Why Create an Open Access Food Security Index?

As DuPont talked to governments, NGOs, and farmer organizations around the world, we came to realize that while people shared a common goal of food security, not everyone shared a common language for understanding the drivers of food security or assessing vulnerabilities country by country. And, while literally billions of dollars were being spent to address global food challenges, there was no comprehensive way to measure food security and the impact of investments and collaborations at the local level. By creating a global index and providing open access to the data, we believe it will promote conversation and collaboration among all stakeholders across the food value chain, generate insights into how food security can be advanced and stimulate action to feed a growing population.

## Role of the Economist Intelligence Unit

DuPont turned to the EIU for its expertise in research and analysis and for its proven success in developing economic forecasts and country reports. While DuPont had input into the development of the Index and continues dialogue with the EIU on its evolution, the EIU has full and final editorial control over all content, including data gathering, analysis and forecasting.

*Welcome to the Global Collaboratory.™ Together we can feed the world.*



## Features of the Index

The Index can be accessed at <http://foodsecurityindex.eiu.com>. The online tool provides an easy way to access summary findings and reports. To access all the indicators and the raw data, click on “Explore the Index” and fill out the registration form to download the model. Index features include:

- A ranking function that gives a snapshot of global food security and those countries most at risk.
- Analysis of key findings that help tailor food security solutions.
- An interactive heat map that presents overall scores by country and detail of category results.
- Country profiles that use a “traffic-light” approach to display findings, showing clearly where countries do well and where they struggle, and suggesting where interventions are most needed.
- The ability to compare multiple countries simultaneously and adjust rankings by indicators.
- A regional filter that allows comparisons within geographies or among economically similar countries.
- Definitions of the multiple global indicators that measure specific aspects of food affordability, availability, nutritional value and safety.
- Adjustable data weighting to allow for scenario planning.

*The Global Food Security 2014 Findings & Methodology* report is found on the Index website and provides a wealth of information that can add context and depth to the data within the Index. The report explains the relevance of nearly every indicator in the Index. It also provides anecdotes within specific countries about programs and policies that have succeeded in advancing food security.

## Ways Stakeholders Use the Index

**Policy makers and governments** – can use the Index to identify areas of strength and weakness related to food security; to identify areas for policy interventions; and to track progress on policy reforms. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), for example, uses the Index to add information to its country profiles.

**Non-profit organizations** – can use the strengths and weaknesses categories to identify areas for program development and, in discussions with government leaders, to provide motivation for reforms in areas that show weaknesses.

**Academics** – can use in curriculum to demonstrate how a variety of factors, from agriculture output to diet diversity and political corruption, can impact a county’s food security rating.

**Private Sector** – can use the Index to help identify areas for collaboration; determine potential opportunities or risks for investment; and initiate dialogue with governments and local partners to address vulnerabilities.

