At 55.9 percent, Burundi’s child stunting level is the second highest of all countries covered in this report, 5.1 percent of children in Burundi experience wasting, and 6.1 percent die before the age of five.

Approximately 1.7 million Burundians out of a population of 11 million were estimated to face crisis or emergency levels of food insecurity in 2018 (FSIN 2019).

Burundi is ranked 185th out of 189 countries on the 2018 Human Development Index (UNDP 2018), and its rate of poverty is extremely high at over 70 percent (World Bank 2019a).

More than 340,000 refugees have fled Burundi in recent years, most since 2015 (UNHCR 2019b).

Climate shocks, political instability, and structural economic issues all contribute to food insecurity, while poor child feeding practices, food insecurity, a high burden of disease, and inadequate water, sanitation, and health facilities all contribute to poor child nutrition (FSIN 2019).
The GHI score incorporates four component indicators: undernourishment, child wasting, child stunting, and child mortality. Using this combination of indicators to measure hunger offers several advantages.

The indicators included in the GHI formula reflect caloric deficiencies as well as poor nutrition. The undernourishment indicator captures the nutrition situation of the population as a whole, while the indicators specific to children reflect the nutrition status within a particularly vulnerable subset of the population for whom a lack of dietary energy, protein, and/or micronutrients (essential vitamins and minerals) leads to a high risk of illness, poor physical and cognitive development, and death.

The inclusion of both child wasting and child stunting allows the GHI to document both acute and chronic undernutrition. By combining multiple indicators, the index reduces the effects of random measurement errors.