

PERFORMANCE OF ASEAN MEMBER STATES IN THE GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY INDEX 2018-2022

Food systems are weakening and the global food environment is deteriorating. These are the major findings of the *Global Food Security Index (GFSI)* based on its 11 years of data. The Index offers a benchmarking model to assess the level of food security in 113 countries. Food security is defined as the state in which people at all times have physical, social and economic access to sufficient and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs for a healthy and active life.

The Index designed by the Economist Impact with the support of Corteva Agriscience,TM measures food security in four dimensions: affordability, availability, quality and safety, and sustainability and adaptation (previously named as natural resources and resilience). The 2022 edition also introduced 14 new indicators. The 2022 report recognized the peak global performance in 2019 and the downward trend thereafter, amidst high prices of commodities and rising cases of hunger.

GFSI Rankings of the ASEAN in the last five years.

Singapore is on a league of its own among ASEAN member states (AMS), besting all countries worldwide in 2018 to 2019, though significantly dropping in rank in the last three years (*Table 1*). The country which inched closest was Malaysia, at 28th in 2019. Lao PDR, on the other hand, was consistently in the last spot, followed by Cambodia. The Philippines had an uneven performance, improving in 2019 by six spots from its 70th rank in 2018, only to go down to 73rd by 2020 and bouncing back to 64th and 67th in 2021 and 2022, respectively.

TABLE 1
OVERALL FOOD SECURITY ENVIRONMENT IN AMS,
GFSI RANKINGS 2018-2022

Country	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Singapore (SG)	1	1	19	15	28
Malaysia (MY)	40	28	43	39	41
Vietnam (VN)	62	54	63	61	46
Indonesia (ID)	65	62	65	69	63
Thailand (TH)	54	52	51	51	64
Philippines (PH)	70	64	73	64	67
Myanmar (MM)	82	77	70	72	72
Cambodia (KH)	85	90	81	81	78
Lao PDR (LA)	95	92	90	91	81

There is no data for Brunei Darussalam.
Source: GFSI 2018-2022 Index Model.

Facts in Figures

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GFSI Scores. The highest scores for the last five years were mostly recorded in 2019, except for Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Lao PDR, which received their top scores in 2022 (*Table 2*). Note that scores range from 0 to 100, where 100 is the most favorable condition. Looking at averages across the years, the gains earned in 2019 from the AMS performance were negated from 2020 onwards. In fact, the AMS 2019 average has so far not been surpassed since then.

Consistent with *Table 1*, Singapore recorded the highest scores for all five years, ranging from 73.1 (2022) to 87.4 (2019). Lao PDR's scores ranged from 38.3 (2018) to 53.1 (2022). Of the nine countries, only Cambodia showed minimal but steady increases from 2018 to 2022. The Philippines which received its highest ever score in 2019 (61.0), dropped by 5.3 points to 55.7 in 2020, recovered in 2021, only to slightly fall again in 2022.

TABLE 2
AMS' SCORES IN GFSI, 2018-2022

Country	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Ave.
Singapore	85.9	87.4	75.7	77.4	73.1	79.9
Malaysia	68.1	73.8	67.9	70.1	69.9	70.0
Vietnam	56.0	64.6	60.3	61.1	67.9	62.0
Indonesia	54.8	62.6	59.5	59.2	60.2	59.3
Thailand	58.9	65.1	64.0	64.5	60.1	62.5
Philippines	51.5	61.0	55.7	60.0	59.3	57.5
Myanmar	45.7	57.0	56.6	56.7	57.6	54.7
Cambodia	42.3	49.4	51.5	53.0	55.7	50.4
Lao PDR	38.3	49.1	46.4	46.4	53.1	46.7
Average	55.7	63.3	59.7	60.9	61.9	60.3

Note: Scores are normalized (0-100), 100 as the highest. Average computed by author.

Source: GFSI 2018-2022 Index Model.

Affordability refers to the ability of consumers to purchase food, their vulnerability to price shocks and the presence of support interventions when shocks occur. Table 3 shows the effect of the drop in scores on affordability in the ranking of Singapore for 2020 and 2021. From 1st or 2nd, it went down to 19th (2020) and 23rd (2021) before making a comeback, ranking 2nd in 2022.

In 2020, affordability scores were lower for five countries compared to 2019. Nonetheless, scores picked up in 2021 to 2022, with only the Philippines having both a decline in 2022 score and rank compared to 2021. In contrast, Indonesia displayed a clear improvement in ranking and scores in the last five years.

**TABLE 3
AMS' SCORES (RANK) FOR AFFORDABILITY, 2018-2022**

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
SG	94.3 (1)	95.4 (2)	87.3 (19)	87.9 (23)	93.2 (2)
MY	71.4 (36)	81.7 (28)	85.5 (25)	85.6 (28)	87.0 (30)
VN	58.9 (56)	75.1 (48)	66.7 (63)	68.9 (64)	84.0 (38)
ID	55.2 (63)	70.4 (58)	73.5 (55)	74.9 (54)	81.4 (44)
TH	64.5 (51)	77.1 (42)	82.8 (32)	81.8 (40)	83.7(39)
PH	46.3 (74)	68.9 (62)	66.5 (64)	74.3 (57)	71.5 (60)
MM	37.0 (85)	59.1 (78)	58.1 (73)	58.9 (75)	62.1 (72)
KH	39.4 (82)	56.7 (83)	57.5 (75)	68.8 (65)	74.3 (55)
LA	32.9 (89)	55.5 (85)	45.8 (86)	47.7 (84)	59.7 (79)
Ave	55.5	71.1	69.3	72.1	77.4

Source: GFSI 2018-2022 Index Model. Average computed by author.

Lao PDR again performed poorest among the AMS in affordability for the five years, as well as in *Availability* (Table 4) from 2018 to 2021. **Availability** looks at food supply sufficiency, supply disruptions risks, capacity to disseminate food, and agricultural research. Indonesia incurred a large score decline in 2022, putting it at the bottom spot. The Philippines performed weaker in the rankings for 2021 to 2022 compared to the previous three years.

**TABLE 4
AMS' SCORES (RANK) FOR AVAILABILITY, 2018-2022**

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
SG	81.0 (15)	83.0 (2)	75.8 (2)	82.9 (1)	77.8 (3)
MY	64.1 (42)	67.7 (26)	58.8 (56)	64.0 (36)	59.5 (56)
VN	53.9 (72)	59.7 (55)	61.3 (48)	60.4 (48)	60.7 (49)
ID	58.2 (58)	61.3 (48)	64.7 (34)	63.7 (37)	50.9 (84)
TH	54.7 (65)	58.7 (59)	55.3 (67)	57.3 (59)	52.9 (77)
PH	55.6 (63)	57.7 (65)	57.6 (61)	53.9 (67)	55.2 (70)
MM	51.4 (78)	57.2 (69)	53.9 (69)	52.2 (73)	53.5 (76)
KH	47.8 (90)	48.1 (92)	57.4 (62)	48.7 (83)	54.5 (72)
LA	45.1 (96)	47.6 (96)	47.8 (89)	46.1 (93)	51.8 (81)
Ave	56.9	60.1	59.2	58.8	57.4

Source: GFSI 2018-2022 Index Model. Average computed by author.

Quality and Safety deals with variety and nutritional quality of average diets and food safety. Singapore maintained its rank dominance in this dimension except for 2022, with Malaysia ranking highest at 38th (Table 5). On the opposite end is Cambodia, ranking 100th and beyond between 2019-2021. Interestingly, there is an apparent uptrend for Cambodia and Lao PDR in terms of score. The Philippines improved its scores in 2021 and 2022 which can be partly attributed to efforts on improving dietary diversity.

**TABLE 5
AMS' SCORES (RANK) FOR QUALITY AND SAFETY, 2018-2022**

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
SG	78.1 (24)	79.4 (25)	82.3 (36)	79.1 (43)	69.7 (54)
MY	70.5 (38)	70.6 (42)	72.5 (50)	76.3 (46)	74.7 (38)
VN	54.2 (65)	51.7 (77)	61.4 (68)	64.3 (61)	70.2 (53)
ID	44.5 (84)	47.1 (84)	49.6 (89)	48.5 (95)	56.2 (78)
TH	56.6 (58)	52.6 (75)	59.5 (71)	59.5 (73)	45.3 (102)
PH	52.9 (69)	50.3 (80)	52 (85)	61.5 (68)	65.3 (61)
MM	51.7 (72)	51.3 (78)	59.3 (72)	63 (66)	64.4 (65)
KH	34.5 (97)	34.6 (100)	40.1 (105)	44.3 (100)	54 (85)
LA	33.1 (99)	37.4 (97)	46.2 (95)	49.2 (91)	51.7 (91)
Ave	52.9	52.8	58.1	60.6	61.3

Source: GFSI 2018-2022 Index Model. Average computed by author.

Sustainability and Adaptation evaluates exposure to climate change impacts, susceptibility to natural resource risks, and adaptation to these risks. Myanmar and Malaysia (2022) led in the AMS whereas Indonesia and Cambodia (2022) came in last (Table 6). The Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia and Vietnam advanced in their rankings in the latter years but declined for Cambodia and Lao PDR. Overall, the Philippines' weakest performance was for this dimension and the strongest for *Affordability*.

**TABLE 6
AMS' SCORES (RANK) FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND RESILIENCE, 2018-2022**

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
SG	50.3 (103)	42.4 (109)	47.4 (53)	46.7 (65)	44.3 (92)
MY	51.9 (97)	52.8 (74)	47.5 (52)	46.6 (66)	53.7 (57)
VN	55.0 (85)	48.2 (94)	45.9 (67)	44.9 (78)	52.2 (67)
ID	43.9 (111)	40.7 (110)	34.1 (109)	33.0 (113)	46.3 (83)
TH	66.4 (40)	59.0 (46)	50.0 (43)	50.8 (50)	51.6 (69)
PH	51.0 (101)	42.5 (108)	35.8 (107)	43.6 (88)	41.8 (97)
MM	69.6 (25)	68.5 (15)	56.3 (20)	54.7 (33)	49.0 (76)
KH	61.3 (59)	53.3 (70)	41.2 (96)	40.7 (102)	33.9 (111)
LA	69.0 (28)	62.1 (38)	45.1 (75)	42.0 (97)	47.0(80)
Ave	57.6	52.2	44.8	44.8	46.6

Source: GFSI 2018-2022 Index Model. Average computed by author.