

## Acute food insecurity mars all eastern ghat districts in Orissa

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With low agricultural productivity, all the districts in the eastern ghats and the adjoining coastal districts in Orissa face an acute food insecurity.

And within the eastern ghats of Orissa, four districts such as Kandhamal, Malkangiri, Gajapati and Rayagada had been described as the "geography of hunger", which required an urgent and sustained attention, according to Food Security Atlas of Rural Orissa.

The Atlas, prepared by the Institute of Human Development on behalf of the United Nations World Food Programme(WFP), had also claimed that the districts with poor food security also have the low rates of women literacy, poor connectivity, high proportion of agricultural labourers and low wage rate.

Nearly 15 million people in rural Orissa live below poverty line, constituting 47 per cent of the state's rural population, which was considerably higher than any other states.

As many as five million people in the state suffer from calorie undernourishment, while protein consumption in the state was as low as 48 gm against the national average of 57 gm.

In general, the districts of Orissa fare poorly on the nutritional outcome and as a result 46 per cent children under three are found underweight, 40 per cent stunted and the remaining 20 per cent children are wasted.

Two third of the children in the state also suffer from mild to severe aneamia and every 11th child in the state dies before reaching the age of five.

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