

WHO: Global Health Challenges for 2020

CURRENT AFFAIR


- Every year, the World Health Organization releases list of Global Health Challenges of the forth coming year.
- This year, on January 13, 2020, the organization had released the top global health challenges for the year.

What to study?

- For Prelims and Mains: 13 challenges- concerns and measures needed.

DETAILS

- The list included **13 potential threats**. The foremost threat was Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) and climate crisis.
- The 2 threats have been on the top for the previous year, 2019 as well.
- The report says around 7 million people are affected because of climate change.
- More than one-quarter of death is due to stroke, heart attack, chronic respiratory disease and lung cancer.
- The chances of these diseases are increased by raising levels of air pollution.

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- A new entrant to the list of top 13 potential threats is Lack of Access.
 - Shortage of health care workers is also the major global concern. WHO says that another 18 million health workers are required by 2030.
 - Above of all unhealthy food diets is also major threat.

Climate Crisis

- Climate change causes more **extreme weather events, exacerbates malnutrition,** and fuels the spread of **infectious diseases** such as malaria.
- The same emissions that pollute the air and cause global warming are responsible for **more than one quarter of deaths from heart attack, stroke, lung cancer, and chronic respiratory disease.**

Delivering Health in Conflict and Crisis

- Last year, most disease outbreaks that required the highest level of WHO response occurred in **countries with protracted conflict**.
- And the “**disturbing**” trend in which **healthcare workers and facilities are targeted** continued.
- Conflict is also forcing a record number of people out of their own homes, leaving them with little or no access to healthcare, often for years.

Healthcare Inequality

- “Persistent and growing” **socioeconomic gaps** that result in major discrepancies in the quality of people’s health is also an urgent challenge.
- There is not only an **18-year difference in life expectancy between rich and poor countries**, but also a **marked gap within countries and even within cities**.

Access to Medicines

- About **one third of the world's people lack access to medicines, vaccines, diagnostic tools, and other essential health products.**
- Low access to quality health products threatens health and lives and contributes to **drug resistance.**

Infectious Diseases

- Such as HIV, tuberculosis, viral hepatitis, malaria, neglected tropical diseases, and sexually transmitted infections will take the lives of an **estimated four million people in 2020, most of them poor.**

Epidemics

- A pandemic of a new, highly infectious, airborne virus — most likely a strain of influenza— to which most people lack immunity is inevitable.
- And vector-borne diseases like **dengue, malaria, Zika, chikungunya, and yellow fever** are spreading as mosquito populations move into new areas, fanned by climate change.

Dangerous Products

- Lack of food, unsafe food, and unhealthy diets are to blame for nearly one third of the global disease burden.

Global shortage of healthcare workers

- The world will need **18 million more healthcare workers by 2030**, mostly in low- and middle-income countries, including nine million nurses and midwives.

Safety of Teens

- More than one million adolescents aged 10 to 19 years die every year.
- The chief causes are road accidents, HIV, suicide, lower respiratory infections, and interpersonal violence.
- Harmful use of alcohol, tobacco and drug use, lack of physical activity, unprotected sex, and previous exposure to child maltreatment all increase the risks for these causes of death.

Public Trust

- Public health is compromised by the **uncontrolled dissemination of misinformation in social media**, as well as through an erosion of trust in public institutions.
- The **anti vaccination movement** has been a significant factor in the rise of deaths in preventable diseases.

Harnessing New Technologies

- New technologies such as genome editing and artificial intelligence are revolutionizing the ability to prevent, diagnose, and treat many diseases, but raise new questions and challenges for **monitoring and regulation**.

Antimicrobial Resistance

- The rise of **antimicrobial resistance (AMR)** is a persistent and urgent challenge that threatens to send modern medicine back decades to the pre antibiotic era.

Clean Water, Sanitation, Hygiene

- About **one in four health facilities globally** lack basic water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services that are critical to a functioning health system.
- The lack of these basics in health facilities leads to **poor-quality care and an increased chance of infection** for patients and health workers.



WAY AHEAD

- A response from more than just the health sector.
- We face shared threats and we have a shared responsibility to act.
- Governments, communities, and international agencies must work together to achieve these critical goals.



For questions and doubts



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