



## Addressing AMR in the Draft Pandemic Treaty

**For Prelims:** [World Health Assembly](#), [antimicrobial resistance \(AMR\)](#), [“Zero Draft”](#), [World Health Organization](#), [pandemics](#), [vaccines](#), [COVID-19 pandemic](#)

**For Mains:** Addressing antimicrobial resistance (AMR), Challenges Posing Risk to the Health Sector.

### Why in News?

The [Draft Pandemic treaty also known as “Zero Draft”](#), is currently under negotiation by **Member States at the World Health Assembly**.

- However, there is growing concern that the provisions **addressing [antimicrobial resistance \(AMR\)](#) are at risk of being removed from the final text.**
- **Civil society and research organizations** provided analysis and recommendations on addressing AMR.
- A special edition of the **Journal of Medicine, Law and Ethics** emphasized the importance of including AMR in the Treaty.

### What is the Draft Pandemic Treaty?

- **About:**
  - The draft pandemic treaty, is an **international agreement** proposed to prevent, prepare for, and respond to **pandemics and global health emergencies**.
  - It is being negotiated by the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) and member states.
  - The treaty aims to **strengthen global cooperation and solidarity in addressing health threats**.
  - It covers aspects such as **surveillance, detection, notification, access to health technologies, collaboration, and accountability**.
  - The treaty is based on principles of **human rights, equity, and solidarity, while respecting each state's sovereign right** to determine its health policies.
  - It establishes a **global health threats council, a global health threats fund, and an independent review and evaluation mechanism**.
  - The draft pandemic treaty is a response to the **lessons learned from the [COVID-19 pandemic](#)**.
- **Principal Components of the Draft:**
  - **Global Cooperation:**
    - It calls for **increased global coordination and cooperation** in the preparation for and response to pandemics and **other global health emergencies**.
  - **Strengthening of Health Systems:**
    - It emphasizes the **need to strengthen health systems in all countries, particularly in low- and middle-income countries**, to ensure they are better prepared to respond to pandemics and other global health emergencies.
  - **Investment in Research and Development:**
    - It calls for **improved access to essential health technologies**, such as

[vaccines](#), diagnostics, and treatments, during pandemics and other global health emergencies.

- It calls for **increased investment in research and development** of health technologies, particularly for diseases that pose a significant threat to global health.
- **Transparency in Sharing of Information:**
  - It calls for **increased transparency and sharing of information about pandemics** and other global health emergencies, including data on the spread of diseases and the effectiveness of interventions.
- **Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing System (PABS):**
  - The constitution of **PABS** has been constituted under the WHO, making Genomic sequences of all pathogens with the pandemic potential **to be shared on an “equal footing” in the system.**
    - The PABS system is an important tool for ensuring the responsible and equitable use of pathogens and their genetic resources in the research and development **of new medicines and vaccines**, while also recognizing the rights and interests of the countries and communities that provide these resources.
- **Addressing Gender Disparities:**
  - In addressing gender disparities in the healthcare workforce, the draft aims to **“ensure meaningful representation, engagement, participation and empowerment of all health and care workers”** by stressing equal pay and addressing barriers specific to women in taking leadership roles.

## Why is AMR Crucial in the Pandemic Treaty?

- **Reasons to Include:**
  - AMR is the process by which infections caused by **microbes become resistant to the medicines developed to treat them.**
    - Microbes include [bacteria](#), [fungi](#), [viruses](#) and [parasites](#).
    - **Bacterial infections alone cause one in eight deaths globally.**
  - **Not all pandemics are caused by viruses, and past pandemics have been caused by bacterial diseases.**
  - AMR is fueling the rise of [drug-resistant infections](#), including **drug-resistant tuberculosis**, [pneumonia](#) and **drug-resistant Staph infections** (caused by bacteria called **staphylococcus**) such as [methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus \(MRSA\)](#).
  - **Secondary bacterial/ fungal infections** are a serious concern during viral pandemics, requiring effective antibiotics.
    - Research from Northwestern University suggests that many of the **deaths among hospitalized COVID-19 patients** were associated with **pneumonia — a secondary bacterial infection** that must be treated with antibiotics.
    - **Black fungus** is a fungal infection caused by [Mucorales fungi](#), primarily affecting **immunocompromised** individuals with conditions like **COVID-19** or [diabetes](#).
- **Impact of Excluding AMR Measures:**
  - Removal of AMR-related measures would **hinder efforts to protect people from future pandemics.**
  - Measures at risk of removal include **access to safe water, infection prevention, surveillance, and antimicrobial stewardship.**
    - Antimicrobial stewardship is the **effort to measure and improve** how antibiotics are prescribed by **clinicians and used by patients**. It **aims to improve clinical outcomes** and **minimize adverse events** related to antibiotic use, including the development of antibiotic resistance.
  - **Weakening the language of the Treaty** could allow countries to **opt-out of preventive actions.**
- **The Urgency of Addressing AMR in the Pandemic Treaty:**
  - AMR requires **global political action and collaboration to mitigate its impact.**
  - Safeguarding **antimicrobials is crucial for pandemic response** and preparedness.
  - **Failing to address AMR** in the pandemic treaty **undermines its broader goals of protecting nations and communities from future health emergencies.**

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

### **Prelims**

**Q. Which of the following are the reasons for the occurrence of multi-drug resistance in microbial pathogens in India? (2019)**

1. Genetic predisposition of some people
2. Taking incorrect doses of antibiotics to cure diseases
3. Using antibiotics in livestock farming
4. Multiple chronic diseases in some people

**Select the correct answer using the code given below.**

- (a) 1 and 2  
(b) 2 and 3 only  
(c) 1, 3 and 4  
(d) 2, 3 and 4

**Ans: (b)**

### **Mains**

**Q. What is the basic principle behind vaccine development? How do vaccines work? What approaches were adopted by the Indian vaccine manufacturers to produce COVID-19 vaccines? (2022)**

**[Source: TH](#)**

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/addressing-amr-in-the-draft-pandemic-treaty>