



## Health for All: WHO

**For Prelims:** Health for All, [WHO](#), [Climate Change](#), [Covid-19](#), [World Health Assembly](#), [Paris Agreement](#), [Universal Health Coverage](#).

**For Mains:** Health for All: Transforming economies to deliver what matters.

### Why in News?

Recently, the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) in its 76<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly (WHA) has released a report titled- **“Health for All: Transforming economies to deliver what matters”**, recommending a roadmap to link health with sustainable growth.

- The **76<sup>th</sup> WHA** was held in Geneva, Switzerland and the theme was - **“WHO at 75: Saving Lives, Driving Health for All”**.
- The report was launched by the **WHO Council on the Economics of Health (WCEH) for All**, which was formed in November 2020 in response to the [Covid-19 Pandemic](#).

**Note:** **WCEH for All** was established to provide new economic thinking — reassessing how health and well-being are valued, produced and distributed across the economy.

### What are the Highlights of the Report?

- **Covid-19 a Global Failure:**
  - The Covid-19 pandemic was a preventable disaster resulting from a global failure to prioritize the well-being of humanity. Despite clear warnings, the importance of proactive measures to safeguard against pandemics was neglected **causing significant crises worldwide**.
    - In 2020 alone almost 100 million were pushed into poverty.
    - Even the scientifically remarkable achievement of rapidly developing an effective vaccine against Covid-19 failed to prioritize the common good.
  - Covid-19 exposed deep-seated inequities, emphasizing the need to **reshape the economy for Health for All**.
- **Shortage of Health Workers:**
  - There remains a huge shortage of health workers globally and especially in **low-income countries**.
    - Health workers, 70% of whom are women, unduly suffered on the frontline in the treatment of Covid-19 for **lack of decent protective equipment and support**.
  - While Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean are the regions most in need, many countries **struggle with constraints on their ability to invest in staff**.
- **Climate Change:**
  - Given the disastrous consequences [Climate Change](#) is already having on health.

- The [Paris Agreement](#), aimed at combating climate change, is considered a crucial public health agreement. However, the **goal of limiting temperature rise to 1.5°C by 2050** may be surpassed within this decade.
- Worldwide, air pollution from burning fossil fuels is responsible for a global total of 10.2 million premature deaths, roughly the population of Bangkok or Hyderabad.
  - Climate change may cause **83 million excess deaths by the end of the century** due to rising temperatures caused by [Greenhouse Gas Emissions](#).
- **Health Expenditure:**
  - Short-term austerity measures threaten health expenditure, undermining long-term benefits and **stability in healthcare provision**.
  - Insufficient long-term investments lead to **increased reliance on aid and Out-of-Pocket Payments**, hindering [Universal Health Coverage](#).
- **Health as a Human Right:**
  - At least **140 countries recognize health as a human right** somewhere in their constitution but only four countries mention how to finance it.
    - 52 of these countries do **little in practicing health as a human right**.

## What are the Recommendations?

- **Valuing Health for All:**
  - **Valuing the Essential:** Treat health and wellbeing, health workers and health systems as a **long-term investment**, not a short-term cost.
  - **Human Rights:** Use legal and financial commitments to **enforce health as a human right**.
  - **Planetary Health:** Restore and protect the environment by upholding international commitments to a regenerative economy which links the planet and people.
  - **Dashboard for Healthy Economy:** Use a range of metrics that track progress across core societal values, above and beyond the narrow, static measure of GDP.
- **Financing Health for All:**
  - **Long term Finance:** Adopt a comprehensive, stable approach to funding Health for All.
  - **Quality of Finance:** Redraw the international architecture of finance to fund health equitably and proactively, including an effective and inclusive crisis response.
  - **Funding and Governance:** Ensure WHO is properly funded and governed to play its key global coordinating role in Health for All.
- **Innovating for Health for All:**
  - **Collective Intelligence:** Build symbiotic public-private alliances to maximize public value, sharing both risk and rewards.
  - **Common Good:** Design knowledge governance, including intellectual property regimes, for the common good to ensure global equitable access to vital health innovations.
  - **Outcomes Orientation:** Align innovation and industrial strategies with bold cross-sectoral missions to deliver Health for All
- **Strengthening Public Capacity for Health for All:**
  - **Whole-Of-Government:** Recognize that Health for All is not just for health ministries but for all government agencies.
  - **State Capacity:** Invest in the dynamic capabilities of the public sector, institutionalizing experimentation and learning, to lead effectively in delivering Health for All.
  - **Build Trust:** Demonstrate transparency and meaningful public engagement to hold governments accountable for the common good.

## What is the World Health Assembly (WHA)?

- **About:**
  - **The World Health Assembly (WHA)** is WHO's decision-making body attended by delegations from all of **WHO's member states**.
  - It is held yearly at the HQ of WHO, i.e., **Geneva, Switzerland**.
  - A specific health agenda prepared by the Executive Board remains the focus of this assembly.
  - Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, 2022's assembly is the first in-person assembly.
- **Functions of WHA:**

- Deciding on Organization's policies.
- Appointment of the Director-General of WHO.
- Administration of financial policies.
- Review and approval of the proposed programme budget.

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

### **Mains**

**Q.** Appropriate local community-level healthcare intervention is a prerequisite to achieve 'Health for All' in India. Explain. (2018)

**Source:** DTE

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