



General Studies-2; Topic: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

Impact of Climate Events on Urban Health

Introduction

- There was much media focus on the monsoon season in India this year largely on account of the large-scale devastation.
- It includes cyclonic storm Biparjoy, floods in Assam, and heavy rain and devastation in parts of north India.
- The subject has been a matter of concern especially for policymakers.

Impact of Various Climate Events

- **Common water and vector-borne diseases such as typhoid, cholera, dysentery, malaria, and dengue are likely to impact people in rain-affected areas.**
- Changing climate patterns, along with urbanisation and increased movement of people and goods, have boosted the spread of disease-causing mosquitos.
- Households in less developed parts of a city such as slums and urban settlement colonies, are likely to be the most vulnerable groups.
- A large majority of these people live in poverty, and work in informal sector with no social security benefits.

Concerns / Challenges

- Increasing exposure to unpredictable and extreme climatic events.
- Due to migration between states, controlling the spread of diseases can be a challenge.
- Very little is spent on primary health care and only a tiny fraction goes to urban local bodies.

- The limited ability of urban local bodies in generating revenues constrains progress of National Urban Health Mission.
- Shortage of an adequately trained workforce in health and allied areas.

COVID-19 experience

- The experience during the COVID-19 has shown that public health emergencies need greater coordination across various actors, in terms of knowledge and data sharing, preventive and curative functions.

Way Forward

- Controlling water and vector-borne diseases requires a **coordinated effort not only within but also between two or more States.**
- Need to rebuild the urban primary health-care system and ensure its resilience.
- Focus on the vulnerable urban population, especially those living in urban slums and peri-urban areas.
- Greater public investment with focus on urban areas that are vulnerable to climatic shocks.
- **Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme** needs to be universalised, made comprehensive and strengthened.

Conclusion

- Climate change-led events are only going to be more frequent and intense. Therefore the world needs to be better prepared.