Annual Estimate of Global Vaccine Coverage

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance.*

Why in News?

Recently, the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF released their annual estimates of global vaccine coverage.

Recent Findings

- **Zero-dose children -** More than 14 million children did not receive a single vaccine last year, about the same number as the year before.
- **Geographic concentration -** 9 countries accounted for over half of these unvaccinated children, including Nigeria, India, Sudan, Congo, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Yemen, Afghanistan, and Angola.

  Sudan has the lowest reported coverage against diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough.

- **First dose of vaccines** - **89%** of children under one year old got a first dose of the diphtheria, tetanus, and Whooping cough vaccine in 2024, the same as in 2023.
- About **85%** completed the three-dose series, up from 84% in 2023.
- **Coverage against measles** - Rose slightly, with 76% of children worldwide receiving both vaccine doses.

Issues Associated with vaccination

- **Collapse of international aid** - Due to ongoing conflicts and worldwide tensions.
- **Withdrawal of assistance** - U.S. President Trump withdrew the country from the WHO, *froze nearly all humanitarian aid,* and later moved to close the U.S. AID Agency.
- **Misinformation -** About the safety of vaccines, threaten to unwind decades of progress.
- **Unequal access** - Vaccine access remained “deeply unequal” and that conflict and humanitarian crises quickly unravelled progress.
- **Measles outbreak** - 60 countries reported big measles outbreaks in 2024.
- **Cases of measles** - U.S. is now having its worst measles outbreak in more than three decades.
- It has also surged across Europe, with twice as many as the previous year.
- **Need for measles vaccine coverage** - Need to reach 95% to prevent outbreaks of the extremely contagious disease.
- Even an adult can get vaccinated. It is the only way to stop measles spreading.

- **Safety of vaccines** - The diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough vaccine has proven to be *safe and effective* after years of study and real-world use.
- **Significance of Vaccines -** It *prevents 3.5 million to 5 million deaths* a year, according to U.N. estimates.

Quick facts

Measles
• It is an ***RNA viral disease.***
• **Infection** - Virus infects the respiratory tract, then spreads throughout the body.
• **Transmission** - Through direct contact and air.
• **Symptoms** - High fever, runny nose, cough, red and watery eyes, rash erupts after several days, usually on the face and upper neck.
• **Treatment** - No specific antiviral treatment exists for measles.
• **Prevention** - Measles can be prevented through a two-dose vaccine.
• **Global Initiatives**
- The Measles & Rubella Initiative
- Measles-Rubella (MR) Vaccination

Reference

The Hindu| WHO- Global Vaccine Coverage

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