

Extreme Heat & Urban Inequality crisis in Africa

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | International relations

Why in news?

Recent studies suggest that extreme heat is becoming an urban inequality crisis across Africa.

- Researchers screened 96,608 records using PRISMA 2020 guidelines.
 - Studies covered South Africa - 7, Kenya - 6, Tanzania - 4, Cameroon, Egypt, Nigeria and Ghana - 1 each.
- 17 studies examined heat-related illness. 4 studies examined mortality.

Kibera slum, Africa's largest slum in the heart of Nairobi, Kenya.

Health Impacts of Extreme Heat

- **Direct Effects**
 - Dehydration and heat exhaustion
 - Heatstroke
 - Headache and dizziness
 - Muscle cramps and fatigue
 - Sleep disturbances
 - Respiratory symptoms
 - Fainting and irritability
- **Indirect Effects**
 - It can worsen cardiovascular and respiratory diseases.
 - It influences diseases such as malaria, cholera and tuberculosis.
 - It can aggravate diarrhoea, hypertension, pneumonia and malnutrition.
 - It is linked with mental health and reproductive health problems.
- **Vulnerable Groups** - Children, Pregnant women, People with existing health conditions, Residents of informal settlements.
- **Factors increasing heat vulnerability**
 - Poor-quality housing
 - Overcrowding
 - Inadequate ventilation
 - Limited access to water
 - Poverty
 - Insecure employment

- Weak healthcare and public infrastructure
- Limited adaptive capacity.
- **Way forward** - Effective adaptation requires addressing both heat exposure and underlying socioeconomic vulnerabilities.

PRISMA 2020 guidelines

- PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses) are an updated reporting standard.
- **Purpose** - To help authors transparently explain why a systematic review was done, what methods were used, and what results were found.
- PRISMA 2020 reflects decades of modern advancements in data synthesis, risk-of-bias tools, and digital automation software.

Reference

[Down To Earth| Extreme Heat & Urban Inequality crisis in Africa](#)

