



# CURRENT AFFAIRS



Argasia Education PVT. Ltd. (GST NO.-09AAPCAI478E1ZH)  
Address: Basement C59 Noida, opposite to Priyagold Building gate, Sector 02,  
Pocket I, Noida, Uttar Pradesh, 201301, CONTACT NO:-8448440231

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## ONE HEALTH APPROACH

*This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "One Health Approach". The topic "One Health Approach" has relevance in the Public Health section of the UPSC CSE exam.*

### **Relevance:**

#### **For Prelims:**

*What is One Health Approach?*

*Facts about One Health Approach?*

#### **For Mains:**

*GS 2: Public Health*

*Benefits of One Health Approach?*

*Limitations of One Health Approach?*

*India on One Health Approach?*

### **Why in the News?**

The Council of the European Union (EU) adopted a set of recommendations on June 13, 2023 to strengthen action against antimicrobial resistance (AMR). It recommended prudent use of antimicrobials such as antibiotics in human and animal health for reducing the risk of microorganisms becoming resistant to medical intervention.

These recommendations were part of a proposal submitted by the European Commission to the European Council on April 26, 2023. The commission submitted the proposal for a recommendation on stepping up EU actions to combat AMR in a One Health approach.

### **What is One Health Approach?**

The One Health approach is a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach that recognizes the interconnectedness of human health, animal health, and the environment. It emphasizes the importance of addressing health issues at the interface of humans, animals, and ecosystems, considering their interdependencies and shared risks.

The core principle of the One Health approach is that the health of humans, animals, and the environment are closely linked and should be considered together when addressing health challenges. By recognizing these interconnections, the One Health approach aims to promote holistic solutions that benefit all three sectors.

## Facts about One Health Approach?

- **Zoonotic Diseases:** Approximately 75% of emerging infectious diseases in humans are zoonotic, meaning they originate from animals. The One Health approach recognizes the need to monitor and control zoonotic diseases to prevent outbreaks and pandemics.
- **One Health Commission:** The One Health Commission is an international organization that promotes and facilitates the adoption of the One Health approach. It focuses on fostering interdisciplinary collaborations and advocating for policies that support One Health initiatives.
- **Rabies Elimination:** The One Health approach has played a significant role in the global efforts to eliminate rabies. By integrating human and animal health strategies, countries have made substantial progress in controlling and eradicating this deadly disease.
- **Food Safety:** One Health emphasizes the importance of safe and sustainable food production. By integrating the efforts of farmers, veterinarians, food processors, and public health officials, risks associated with foodborne illnesses can be minimized.
- **Environmental Conservation:** The One Health approach recognizes the impact of environmental degradation on human and animal health. It emphasizes sustainable practices that protect ecosystems and promote biodiversity conservation for the benefit of all species.
- **Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR):** The One Health approach addresses the growing threat of antimicrobial resistance. It emphasizes responsible use of antibiotics in both human and veterinary medicine, aiming to preserve the effectiveness of antimicrobial drugs for future generations.
- **Disaster Response:** The One Health approach is crucial in disaster response and management. It recognizes the interconnectedness of humans, animals, and the environment during and after natural disasters, enabling coordinated efforts to protect and restore health in affected communities.
- **Education and Research:** One Health education and research programs have been established in various universities and institutions worldwide. These initiatives promote interdisciplinary learning and research, preparing future professionals to tackle complex health challenges effectively.
- **Global One Health Day:** Global One Health Day is celebrated on November 3rd each year. It serves as an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of the One Health approach and its impact on global health.
- **International Collaboration:** The One Health approach has gained recognition and support from international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). These organizations actively promote and facilitate the implementation of One Health principles worldwide.

## Benefits of One Health Approach?

- **Improved Disease Surveillance and Control:** By integrating surveillance systems and sharing information across human and animal health sectors, early detection, and control of diseases can be enhanced. This leads to better preparedness for disease outbreaks and more effective response strategies.
- **Enhanced Public Health:** The One Health approach focuses on prevention rather than just treatment. By addressing health risks at their source, such as identifying and mitigating zoonotic disease transmission pathways, public health can be improved. This approach also helps in managing antimicrobial resistance, which is a global health concern.
- **Holistic Understanding of Health:** The interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health is acknowledged in the One Health approach. This holistic understanding allows for a more comprehensive assessment of health risks and the development of integrated strategies to address them.

- **Environmental Sustainability:** The One Health approach recognizes that the health of humans and animals is closely linked to the health of the environment. By considering ecosystem dynamics and promoting sustainable practices, such as responsible agriculture and habitat conservation, the approach supports environmental sustainability.
- **Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing:** One Health encourages collaboration among different disciplines and sectors, fostering knowledge sharing and interdisciplinary research. This collaborative approach can lead to innovative solutions and the discovery of new insights that benefit all sectors involved.
- **Economic Benefits:** Investing in One Health approaches can result in long-term economic benefits. By preventing and controlling disease outbreaks, the approach reduces healthcare costs, economic losses from animal diseases, and productivity losses in agriculture. It also promotes sustainable practices that contribute to long-term environmental and economic well-being.
- **Resilience to Emerging Challenges:** The One Health approach provides a framework to address emerging health challenges effectively. Whether it's the emergence of new infectious diseases, climate change impacts on health, or food security issues, the holistic and interdisciplinary nature of One Health enables a proactive and adaptive response.

#### **Limitations of One Health Approach?**

- **Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** Collaboration among different disciplines, such as human medicine, veterinary medicine, and environmental science, can be challenging due to differences in terminology, methodologies, and priorities. Effective interdisciplinary collaboration requires dedicated efforts to bridge these gaps and establish effective communication channels.
- **Institutional Barriers:** Existing institutional structures and policies often operate in silos, making it difficult to implement integrated approaches like One Health. Overcoming bureaucratic and regulatory barriers to facilitate coordination and collaboration between sectors can be a significant challenge.
- **Limited Funding and Resources:** Adequate funding and resources are essential for successful implementation of the One Health approach. Limited financial support and competing priorities may hinder the allocation of sufficient resources to fully implement and sustain One Health initiatives at local, national, and global levels.
- **Data Sharing and Integration:** Integrating data from different sectors, such as human health, animal health, and environmental monitoring, can be complicated. Variations in data collection methods, standards, and privacy concerns may hinder the seamless sharing and integration of data necessary for effective One Health decision-making.
- **Cultural and Behavioral Factors:** Cultural, social, and behavioral factors can influence the acceptance and adoption of the One Health approach. Changing established practices and attitudes, as well as fostering behavioral changes in communities and stakeholders, may require extensive education, awareness campaigns, and community engagement efforts.
- **Governance and Policy Coordination:** Coordinating policies and governance mechanisms across sectors can be challenging. Effective leadership, cooperation, and coordination are needed to ensure that policies and regulations support the One Health approach and facilitate its implementation at various levels.
- **Complexity and Scale:** The One Health approach deals with complex issues involving multiple interconnected systems. Scaling up One Health initiatives from local to regional or global levels can be logistically challenging and require extensive coordination, harmonization, and standardization efforts.

## India on One Health Approach?

- **National One Health Strategic Plan:** In 2018, India launched the National One Health Strategic Plan as part of its commitment to the One Health approach. The plan focuses on addressing zoonotic diseases, antimicrobial resistance, and environmental health through integrated surveillance, research, and capacity-building initiatives.
- **Zoonotic Disease Control:** India faces significant challenges related to zoonotic diseases such as rabies, leptospirosis, brucellosis, and avian influenza. The One Health approach in India emphasizes collaboration between human health, animal health, and wildlife sectors to enhance disease surveillance, prevention, and control.
- **Veterinary Public Health:** The One Health approach recognizes the role of veterinarians in safeguarding public health. In India, veterinary public health professionals play a crucial role in monitoring food safety, conducting disease surveillance, and promoting responsible antimicrobial use in animal husbandry practices.
- **One Health Units:** India has established One Health units at various levels, including national, state, and district levels. These units facilitate collaboration and coordination among different sectors, enabling a more integrated approach to health challenges.
- **Wildlife Conservation:** India is home to a rich diversity of wildlife, and the One Health approach recognizes the importance of wildlife conservation in maintaining ecological balance and preventing zoonotic disease transmission. Efforts are being made to integrate wildlife health surveillance and conservation with public health strategies.
- **Research and Capacity Building:** Indian institutions and organizations are actively involved in One Health research and capacity-building initiatives. These efforts focus on interdisciplinary training, research collaboration, and knowledge sharing to address emerging health challenges.
- **One Health Programs:** Several government programs and initiatives in India incorporate the One Health approach. For example, the National Rabies Control Program emphasizes coordinated efforts between human health and animal health sectors to eliminate rabies by 2030.
- **One Health Awareness:** Awareness about the One Health approach is gradually increasing in India. Various workshops, seminars, and awareness campaigns are being conducted to educate stakeholders, professionals, and the general public about the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health.
- **International Collaboration:** India actively participates in international forums and collaborations related to One Health, including partnerships with organizations like the WHO, FAO, and OIE. These collaborations facilitate knowledge exchange, technical support, and capacity-building opportunities.
- **Policy Integration:** The Government of India has recognized the importance of the One Health approach and is working on integrating One Health principles into policies related to health, agriculture, environment, and disaster management. This integration aims to promote a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to health challenges.

**Source:**

<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/health/one-health-approach-european-union-strengthens-action-to-combat-antimicrobial-resistance-90084>

### Q.1 Which of the following best describes the One Health approach?

- (a) A healthcare approach that focuses solely on human health and well-being.
- (b) An interdisciplinary approach that recognizes the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health.
- (c) A strategy to control and eradicate zoonotic diseases through vaccination programs.
- (d) A framework for promoting sustainable agriculture practices and food security.

**Answer: (b)**

**Q.2 Which of the following sectors are integrated in the One Health approach?**

- (a) Human health and environmental science.
- (b) Animal health and agricultural practices.
- (c) Public health and wildlife conservation.
- (d) All of the above.

**Answer: (d)**

**Q.3 Discuss the significance of the One Health approach in addressing emerging health challenges and achieving sustainable development. Illustrate with relevant examples from India.**

**Rishabh**



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