

UPSCprep Free Daily Answer Writing Initiative

Subject: GS 2

Syllabus: Social Justice

Questions

Q1. The socio-economic benefits of Universal Health Coverage are plenty, but for it to be a reality the government must learn core lessons from pandemics and rebuild trust in public health.

Comment.

(250 words)

15

Q2. Examine the significance of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in India's developmental journey. In your opinion, are the current legal and regulatory systems sufficient to ensure the efficient functioning of NGOs?

(250 words)

15

Model Structures

Q1. The socio-economic benefits of Universal Health Coverage are plenty, but for it to be a reality the government must learn core lessons from pandemics and rebuild trust in public health. Comment. (250 words)

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Introduction:

- India with mass poverty, geographically distant communities, absence of healthcare infrastructure and shortage of healthcare professionals, needs a robust universal health coverage programme.

Main Body:

Socio-Economic benefits of Universal Healthcare Coverage

- **Social:**

- **Enhance accessibility:** every individual should have access to services that address the causes of disease and death.
- **Improve health:** UHC ensures that quality of health services are good enough leading to improved health of people
- **Formation of human capital:** affordable and good quality health services to women, children, adolescents and people suffering from mental health issues, would **enhance human capital.**
- **Economic:**
 - **Reduction of financial distress:** it protects people from spending on healthcare services out of their own pockets.
 - **Reduction of poverty:** it will cut down the risk of people being pushed into poverty due to huge amounts of spending on unexpected diseases.
 - **Economic development:** In the long run, good health will allow children to learn and adults to earn.
 - Building a foundation of economic development in the country.

To provide UHC-core lessons of the pandemic

- **Human Resources:**
 - **Shortage of healthcare professionals:** especially in rural and small cities.
 - Only 45 doctors per lakh population are available, against WHO recommendation of 100.
 - **Compulsory Rural Stint:** To enhance availability and accessibility.
 - Maharashtra's step to stop doctors avoiding rural stint after paying 10 lakhs fine.
- **Affordability:**
 - **Price Regulation:** Need to regulate rates and quality in the private sector.
 - **Insurance coverage:** Increase insurance penetration and also the spectrum of treatments covered and PMJAY's hospital coverage.
 - **Decrease out of pocket expenditure:** Report by Pew Research Center states that the pandemic pushed 32 million out of the middle class.
- **Structural changes:**

- **Increase vaccination infrastructure:** to tackle mass vaccination on lines of Polio eradication programme.
- **Network of laboratories:** Robust testing infrastructure, with hub and spoke model.
- **WHO's framework of six healthcare system building blocks:** Study the lessons learnt post pandemic and create actionable points.
- **Innovative Approach:**
 - **Behavioral change campaigns:** On lines of Swachh Bharat Mission to instill hygiene habits like hand washing.
 - **Focus on NCDs:** NCD burden was highlighted by comorbid complications of COVID-19. They account for 2/3rd deaths in India.
 - **Technology leverage:** Tele-medicine, mobile-health, and digital platforms should be used for healthcare delivery at remote locations.

Steps to rebuild trust in healthcare:

- **Increase public spending on health:** By at least 3% by 2024.
- **Expand healthcare workforce:** multilayered, multi skilled teams that can deliver the needed services must be made available.
- **Address regional disparities:** incentivising rural areas for healthcare infrastructure.
- **Reduce out-of-pocket expenditure:** essential drugs and diagnostics at public health care facilities should be made free, especially in rural areas.

Conclusion

- In the pandemic era, it is the public system, with all its problems, that has risen to the occasion.
 - There is a need to transform the fractured healthcare to a single healthcare system for everyone involving both public and private sectors.
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Q2. Examine the significance of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in India's developmental journey. In your opinion, are the current legal and regulatory systems sufficient to ensure the efficient functioning of NGOs? (250 Words) 15

Introduction

- A non-governmental organization (NGO) is a group that functions independently of any government. It is usually non-profit.
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play an integral role in India's development trajectory. Acting as critical drivers of civil society, NGOs not only facilitate service delivery but also foster innovation, voice underrepresented groups, and shape policy discourse.

Main Body

Their role becomes critical, especially in areas where government mechanisms may not reach efficiently.

Significance of NGOs in India's developmental journey

- **Service Delivery:** NGOs often fill gaps in public service delivery, especially in inaccessible and underserved regions. For example, organizations like **Goonj** have made noteworthy contributions to disaster relief efforts, filling in gaps left by official relief measures
- **Representation and Advocacy:** NGOs serve as a voice for marginalized and vulnerable sections of society, advocating for their rights and welfare. For instance, PRADAN has been instrumental in empowering rural women through self-help groups.
- **Policy Influence:** Many NGOs actively contribute to policy discourse and reforms.
- **Innovation:** NGOs have pioneered innovative development models. The **Akshaya Patra** Foundation's mid-day meal program exemplifies an NGO initiative scaling up to national importance.

Current Legal and Regulatory Systems for NGOs

The present legal and regulatory mechanisms present a **mixed picture**. While they do provide a structured framework for NGO operations, they also pose some stringent constraints.

- **Regulatory Acts:** The functioning of NGOs in India is governed by various acts like the Societies Registration Act, 1860; the Indian Trusts Act, 1882; and the Companies Act, 2013 (Section 8).
- **FCRA Regulations:** The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010, regulates the acceptance and utilization of foreign contributions. The 2020 amendment to FCRA has been viewed by some as restrictive, potentially constraining the NGO sector.
- **Accountability Mechanisms:** Mechanisms like the Darpan portal of NITI Aayog, and the NGO Darpan portal managed by the Ministry of Electronics and IT aim to ensure transparency and accountability.

Conclusion

- To enhance the efficiency of NGOs, it is paramount to ensure a balance between accountability and autonomy.
- A conducive regulatory environment characterized by ease of compliance, transparency, and proportionate controls on malpractices, can truly leverage the potential of NGOs in India's socio-economic development.

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