

Report on maternal and infant deaths

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Context- A recent report by UNICEF, WHO and UNFPA launched at the International Maternal Newborn Health conference (IMNHC)2023 highlights the global account on maternal and newborn deaths.

Key highlights:

- India topped the list of 10 nations that accounted for nearly 60% of Maternal deaths,stillbirths and newborn deaths.
- India accounts for nearly 51% of the world's live births.India is followed by **Nigeria,Pakistan,the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia,Bangladesh,China,Indonesia,Afghanistan and Tanzania.**

Details of the report:

- The report highlights that the year 2020-2021 saw 4.5 million deaths of which 0.29 million were maternal deaths,1.9 million stillbirths and 2.3 million newborn deaths.
- The 10 fragile nations accounted alone for 14% of the world total or 659,000 global maternal deaths,stillbirths and neonatal deaths.
- **Sub-Saharan Africa ,Central and Southern Asia countries** experienced the largest share of deaths,with less than 60% of women receiving even four of WHO's recommended eight antenatal checks.
- India saw 7,88,000 maternal deaths,stillbirths and neonatal deaths in 2020.The primary reason for India leading the chart is owing to its large birth cohort.

- According to the first ever **Every Newborn action plan(ENAP) and Ending Preventable Maternal Mortality (EPMM) progress tracking report** the global progress in reducing deaths of pregnant women , mothers and babies had flattened for the last eight years due to decreased investments in maternal and newborn healthcare.
- The report highlighted that over 4.5 million women and babies die every year during pregnancy,childbirth or during the first weeks after birth i.e 1 death every 7 seconds- mostly from treatable or preventable causes .
- The report emphasized the need for quality care and interventions to target the poorest women and those in vulnerable situations who are more likely to miss life saving care and the need for critical subnational planning and investments to reach the SDG target of 2030.