

4. Trends in Maternal Mortality

Why in News?

- According to the United Nations' (UN) new report "Trends in Maternal Mortality", has recently estimated 287,000 maternal deaths recorded in 2020, 70 % took place in sub-Saharan Africa.

Highlights

- Every two minutes, a woman dies during pregnancy or childbirth, revealing alarming setbacks for women's health over recent years, as maternal deaths either increased or stagnated in nearly all regions of the world.
- There were an estimated 287,000 maternal deaths worldwide in 2020, which is a slight decrease from 309,000 in 2016 when the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) came into effect.
- Although there has been significant progress in reducing maternal deaths between 2000 and 2015, gains largely stalled, or in some cases even reversed, after this point.
- In 2020, about 70% of all maternal deaths were in sub-Saharan Africa.
- The top three sub-regions in the world with a high or very high MMR were found in sub-Saharan Africa,
- Western Africa at 754, middle Africa at 539 and eastern Africa at 351.
- On the country level, a similar trend was seen with South Sudan (1,223), Chad (1,063) and Nigeria (1,047) recording an extremely high – greater than 1,000 – MMR.
- With approximately 82,000 maternal deaths in 2020, Nigeria accounted for over a quarter (28.5%) of all estimated global maternal deaths in the pandemic year.
- From 2000 to 2020, declines in the MMR stagnated in sub-Saharan Africa, northern Africa, Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand) and western Asia, and eastern and south-eastern Asia.