Society & Social Justice · GS - II

Professor Amartya Sen has advocated important reforms in the realms of primary education and primary health care. What are your suggestions to improve their status and performance?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2016	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
12.5	~200 words

Answer Hint

Human capabilities; universal primary education; public health; teacher accountability; primary healthcare; preventive care; public investment; equity

Model Answer

Introduction

Amartya Sen emphasises that education and healthcare expand human capabilities and enable people to participate meaningfully in economic and social life. Improving their quality and accessibility is essential for inclusive development.

Measures to Improve Primary Education

- **Strengthen foundational learning:** Focus on literacy, numeracy and age-appropriate learning outcomes.
- **Improve teacher capacity:** Recruit qualified teachers, provide continuous training and reduce non-teaching duties.
- **Ensure adequate infrastructure:** Provide functional classrooms, sanitation, drinking water, electricity and accessible facilities.

- **Support disadvantaged children:** Address malnutrition, disability-related barriers, gender gaps and digital exclusion.
- **Community participation:** Strengthen school management committees and transparent monitoring.
- **Assess learning outcomes:** Use regular assessments to identify gaps and provide remedial support.

Measures to Improve Primary Healthcare

- **Strengthen local facilities:** Ensure sufficient staff, essential medicines, diagnostics and referral services.
- **Prioritise prevention:** Expand immunisation, nutrition, sanitation, health education and screening.
- **Improve affordability:** Reduce out-of-pocket expenditure through effective public services and financial protection.
- **Expand human resources:** Improve rural postings, training and retention of health professionals.
- **Use technology appropriately:** Support telemedicine and digital health records while protecting privacy.
- **Monitor performance:** Track service quality, patient satisfaction and health outcomes.

Cross-Cutting Reforms

Increase predictable public funding, strengthen local accountability, use reliable data and coordinate education, nutrition, sanitation and healthcare services.

Conclusion

Primary education and healthcare should be treated as essential public capabilities rather than merely private commodities. Equitable access, quality provision and accountable institutions are central to improving human development.