

EDITORIAL**Pandemics Will be More Frequent****Abraham Haileamlak, MD, Professor of Pediatrics and Child Health**Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ejhs.v32i2.1>

Since the first known pandemic- Antonine plague (165-180) which affected about five million people, the world has been hit by several pandemics affecting millions of people. In the current century, these pandemics are happening so frequently, covering wide areas of the world and affecting millions of people (1). Despite huge scientific and medical advances, the potential for diseases to spread is actually increasing, and the risk of outbreaks escalating into epidemics or pandemics. Several factors do play role for the increase in frequency and coverage of pandemics. A huge increase in globalization and connectivity has meant that disease agents can spread from one side of the world to another within a few hours. The major factors contributing to the increased occurrence of pandemics are (2):

1. **Travel:** because of increased ground, water and air transportation connectivity, more people are travelling from one country to another.
2. **Urbanization:** The world is transitioning to being more urban. In many cases this means an increasing number of people living in overcrowded and unhygienic environments in which infectious diseases can thrive, without adequate health systems that can deal with these threats.
3. **Climate Change:** Climate change affects the spread of disease in a number of ways, such as by altering the natural range of disease carrying insects, like mosquitoes.
4. **Increased Human-Animal Contact:** the risk of having outbreaks from zoonotic diseases is increasing because of the changing animal-people interactions. It is well known that when pathogens jump the species barrier, from animals to humans, their ability to spread and the severity of the disease they cause is a potentially lethal unknown.
5. **Shortage of Health Workers:** constant migration of health workers from low- and middle-income countries to high-income countries depleted the health workforce in many nations in the regions where epidemic diseases, with the potential to become pandemics, are

most likely to originate. Countries with inadequate health workforce in the health systems can easily be vulnerable to the increasing threat of disease outbreaks.

While the world is being ravaged by the COVID-19 pandemic, modeling taking several factors in to account shows that the next pandemic could be much closer than we think. Thorough preparedness for timely action and financing for those mitigation strategies are key to ensuring we do not have a repeat of the current pandemic (3). The future is therefore, demands strong collaborations of countries and international organizations in defending the upcoming pandemics

The current issue of the Ethiopian Journal of Health Sciences, the second regular issue for the year 2022, contains an editorial, twenty-six original articles and a report and two letters. Four of the original articles and the two letters in the current issue deal with the current pandemic.

I invite readers to read through these articles and appreciate or utilize the contents. I also urge readers to forward comments and suggestions to the editor or the corresponding authors.

REFERENCES

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3. Zhou P, Yang XL, Wang XG, et al. A pneumonia outbreak associated with a new coronavirus of probable bat origin. *Nature*. 2020;579:270-3.