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Press Release

Importance of Strategic Partnerships to Build Health Innovations for Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

Bengaluru 12 June 2018: In an endeavour to encourage health innovations in India and Africa, a conclave was organised by the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), Amref Africa, the Institute of Development Studies, UK (IDS UK), Indian Institute of Public Health Gandhinagar in partnership with NITI Aayog. This event was hosted at the GE Healthcare Centre in Bengaluru. The conclave deliberated on ways to leverage the transformational potential of these innovations and accelerate progress towards achieving UHC in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) in Asia and Africa. Professor Vinod Paul, Member, NITI Aayog, Shri. Alok Kumar, Advisor (Health), NITI Aayog, Professor K Srinath Reddy, President, PHFI, Ms Desta Lakew, Director, Amref Africa and Mr. Nalinkanth Golagunta, CEO, GE – India was present for the inaugural session.

Speaking at the inaugural session **Professor Vinod Paul, Member NITI Aayog said**, “The Government of India’s AYUSHMAN BHARAT is committed to the wellbeing of our citizens. The focus of the health and wellness centers is to ensure disease is prevented and detected early, care that is accessible and closer to home, better health outcomes at lower costs and a platform for health, nutrition, wellness and sanitation. Under the Ayushman Bharat, there will be opportunities for health innovators under various areas to contribute to building stronger health systems for the country.”

Shri. Alok Kumar, Advisor (Health) in his address said, “We are encouraging health innovations which can improve healthcare in our country. We are looking at providing opportunities for innovations which can improve improve access, delivery and affordability of healthcare services.”

Professor K. Srinath Reddy, President, PHFI said, “The Sustainable Development Goals have positioned Universal Health Coverage as a target to be delivered by 2030. For India, encouraging and supporting healthcare innovations that enable health services to reduce the burden of diseases at different levels of the health system and prevent disease at the population level are a high priority. These innovations must have relevance, affordability and scalability for impact. Building partnerships in health is also essential so that research explores, science discovers, technology develops, and the health system delivers. India can become the creative crucible of frugal, functional innovations that can transform health care.”

Dr Gerry Bloom, IDS UK, summarising the highlights of the conclave said, “ The conclave highlighted how governments, innovators, researchers and funders of innovation can work together and create a supportive ecosystem and how people and communities can benefit from new technologies and how its reach be maximised to populations.”

Ms Desta Lakew, Director Amref Africa said, “The conclave established the need of a working collaboration between India and Africa aimed at documenting factors and facilitating development and integration of innovations into service delivery. We look forward to welcoming some of the discussions and learnings between both the countries as well as steps forward at a follow up meeting in Kigale at the Africa Agenda Summit.”

Dr Priya Balu, Director UHC, PHFI said, “The conclave focused on the need to build and scale up health innovative multi –sectoral partnerships. Cross - Learning and Knowledge sharing involving different types of organizations and different sectors will augment the learning process for health innovators in India and the need to build meaningful partnerships across partners to help accelerate universal health coverage.”

Health Innovators like Selco Foundation – Solar energy solutions for health facilities, Jana Care – Aina Smartphone –based diagnostic for chronic diseases, I Kure Techsoft, Commcare (Dimagi) – Data collection software, CCDC (Centre for chronic disease control), Neurosynaptic Communications, Aravind Eye Care Systems – Aurolab, Tricog Health, UE Life Sciences, Meduplay Systems, Medtronic India Pvt Ltd Call Health showcased the innovations.

The Health Technology Assessment Regional Resource Centre (HTARRC) at IIPH Gandhinagar contributed in assessing scalable and replicable models that can be integrated in the health system. The deliberations from the conclave will help frame consensus on scalable models of innovations in healthcare as well as the need for rigorous analysis, not just technical but also on cost-effectiveness of technologies and their fit to advance the agendas of Ayushman Bharat initiative. The HTA RRC intends to create sensitization and evidence-base on uptake of innovations in health technologies in order to make progress towards Universal Health Coverage in India.

The conclave brought together technology innovators, investors, government officials, public and private sector health service providers from India and Africa to share insights and strategies to encourage health innovation and for transforming health care delivery in Asia and Africa. The deliberations of the conclave will be documented to a white paper to be submitted to NITI Aayog. The conclave explored socially driven health innovations can potentially address the Indian Government’s commitment to achieving Universal Health Coverage through Ayushman Bharat and more specifically its roll-out in States. The role of sectoral innovation to bridge gaps in public sector provision in health care access and delivery will also be highlighted.

The experts on the conclave discussed explored how the creation of new kinds of partnership between public and private sectors covering the following areas of Integrating/ bundling discrete innovations to improve access, delivery and affordability of healthcare services, the role of regulations and regulators in encouraging the development and application at scale of innovations for meeting the health care needs of vulnerable populations. Understanding demand for different kinds of health services, its

implications for types of services provided and alternative approaches for financing access to these services; Private-Public sector collaborations that accelerate the adoption of new healthcare delivery models and new models of health financing; Investment and finance for the development of innovations and their integration into the provision of services at scale.

The other supporters of the event were CAMTech, Villgro, IIPH Bengaluru Campus and Results of Development (R4D).

For more information, please contact:

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