



CROSS COUNTRY DIALOGUE ON **UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE**

Hosted by the Centre for Social and Economic Progress



Tuesday, January 30, 2024



9:00 am - 5:00 pm



DIWAN-I-AM, Taj Mahal Hotel, Man Singh Road, New Delhi - 110011

CONFERENCE AGENDA

BACKGROUND

India's approach to Universal Health Coverage (UHC) has focused on the two pillars of demand-side financing of secondary/tertiary healthcare and strengthening primary healthcare services.

The Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), a government-subsidised health insurance, was launched in 2018 to provide health coverage to the economically lower 40 per cent of India's population; the largest tax-funded health insurance program globally. This complemented other risk pools such as those for existing and former government employees, defence personnel, railway personnel, and formal sector employees earning less than a prescribed salary. Several states have, additionally, introduced state-level tax-financed insurance over a period of time.

Primary healthcare received attention through the National Health Mission (NHM, previously National Rural Health Mission) and more recently in the form of the Health and Wellness Centres (now rebranded Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, AAM), with a focus on the integration of digital infrastructure. NHM focused on strengthening primary health infrastructure and fostering community engagement, while the AAMs seek to provide comprehensive primary healthcare, in response to the previous limited focus on maternal and child healthcare.

Together, the two provide a foundation for universal health coverage, offering the potential to cover primary, secondary and tertiary levels of care. They constitute a continuum of care approach under the Ayushman Bharat program, a flagship scheme of the Government of India, emerging from the recommendations of the National Health Policy 2017, to achieve the vision of Universal Health Coverage (UHC). Ambitious in their vision, these have witnessed gains: innovations leading to progress on many fronts, increase in footfall at the primary level in some contexts and reduced patient load on higher-level services for primary care needs.

While progress has been visible, access, quality and affordability of healthcare services remain inequitable and incomplete. Despite multiple risk pools, approximately 35 per cent of the population continues to remain without health cover and out-of-pocket expenditure on health, though improved, remains high. India's mixed health system remains heterogeneous and fragmented across public and private providers, across states and levels of services, leading to rural-urban and cross-class divides, and inequities resulting from variable benefits across schemes. Despite the technological and organisational shifts, access to health services, both physical and financial, remains a challenge for sections of the population. Concerns about quality and efficiency are evident with respect to both the public and private systems, leading to inefficiencies in use of public resources and a lower than desired health status.

Deriving the full value of policy interventions will require addressing current challenges in the form of gaps in healthcare cover, inequities across a range of axes, fragmented financing and provision, and gaps in quality, accountability and regulation, to name a few. Efforts to achieve UHC therefore, will require ongoing assessment of policy and its implementation and the re-imagining of policy informed by innovations and successes in different contexts, both within India and beyond. Experience of health systems design and implementation across comparable countries provides the opportunity to draw insights and inform thinking both in India and elsewhere.

It is in this context and with a view to identifying gaps, assessing the barriers to realising the full potential of reforms undertaken, and examining broader experience (both in country and beyond), for its applicability to inform thinking on UHC, that the Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP), in discussion with NITI Aayog, is organising a day-long deliberation on the dual theme of demand-side health financing and primary healthcare.

9:00 – 9:15 am	Registration
9:15 – 9:25 am	Welcome and context setting Sandhya Venkateswaran , Senior Fellow, CSEP
9:25 – 9:30 am	Locating Healthcare in CSEP's Vision Laveesh Bhandari , President, CSEP
9:30 – 9:45 am	Transforming Primary Healthcare in India L.S. Changsan , Additional Secretary & Mission Director, MoHFW
9:45 – 10:00 am	Healthcare Assurance for Secondary/Tertiary Care TBD
10:00 – 10:10 am	Special Address: B.V.R. Subrahmanyam , CEO, NITI Aayog (TBC)
10:10 – 10:25 am	Opening Remarks: Emerging Policy Issues Vinod Paul , Member, NITI Aayog
10:25 – 10:30 am	Expected Outcomes from the Deliberation Rajib Kumar Sen , Sr. Advisor (Health), NITI Aayog
Session 1: Demand-Side Financing Through Health Insurance <i>Moderator: Nachiket Mor</i> , Visiting Scientist, Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health & Member, Health Advisory Council, CSEP	
10:30 – 11:00 am	Universal Cover: Covering the Missing Middle <i>Speaker:</i> Winnie Yip , Professor of the Practice of Global Health Policy and Economics, Department of Global Health and Population, Harvard School of Public Health <i>Discussant:</i> Nachiket Mor , Visiting Scientist, Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health & Member, Health Advisory Council, CSEP
11:00 – 11:30 am	Quality/Performance of Secondary and Tertiary Healthcare: Opportunities for Performance Improvement <i>Speaker:</i> Ajay Tandon , Lead Economist, The World Bank <i>Discussant:</i> Indu Bhushan , Former CEO, National Health Authority
11:30 am – 12:00 pm	Defragmenting Health Financing: Opportunities for Merging Risk Pools, Expanding and Deepening Health Coverage - Experience from Thailand <i>Speaker:</i> Somsak Chunharas , President, National Health Foundation of Thailand and Former Deputy Minister, Public Health, Thailand <i>Discussant:</i> Nachiket Mor , Visiting Scientist, Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health & Member, Health Advisory Council, CSEP
12:00 – 12:45 pm	Audience questions and comments
12:45 – 1:45 pm	LUNCH BREAK

Session 2: Primary Healthcare

Moderator: **Girija Vaidyanathan**, Former Chief Secretary,
Government of Tamil Nadu & Member, Health Advisory Council, CSEP

1:45 – 2:15 pm	<p>Delivery Models for Primary Healthcare: Delivery Models Effective in Moving from Patient-Initiated to System-Initiated Primary Healthcare</p> <p><i>Speaker:</i> Enis Baris, Professor, Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluations (IHME), Department of Health Metrics Sciences, University of Washington</p> <p><i>Discussant:</i> Girija Vaidyanathan, Former Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu & Member, Health Advisory Council, CSEP</p>
2:15 – 2:45 pm	<p>Quality of Primary Healthcare: Identifying and Executing the Processes and Institutions Needed for Improving Quality of Primary Healthcare</p> <p><i>Speaker:</i> Jishnu Das, Professor, McCourt School of Public Policy and the Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University</p> <p><i>Discussant:</i> Sapna Desai, Senior Fellow, Population Council Institute</p>
2:45 – 3:15 pm	<p>Urban Primary Healthcare: Challenges and Opportunities</p> <p><i>Speaker:</i> Indrani Gupta, Professor, Institute of Economic Growth & Visiting Senior Fellow, CSEP</p> <p><i>Discussant:</i> Girija Vaidyanathan, Former Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu & Member, Health Advisory Council, CSEP</p>
3:15 – 3:45 pm	<p>Leveraging Private and Non State providers: Mechanisms that can Enable Effective Collaborations with Non-State Actors for Primary Healthcare</p> <p><i>Speaker:</i> Sarang Deo, Professor and Executive Director, Max Institute of Healthcare Management, Indian School of Business</p> <p><i>Discussant:</i> Ajay Nair, CEO, Swasth Alliance</p>
3:45 – 4:30 pm	Audience questions and comments
Concluding Session	
4:30 – 4:50 pm	<p>Closing Address and Key Takeaways Vinod Paul, Member, NITI Aayog</p>
4:50 – 5:00 pm	<p>Wrap up and Thanks Priyadarshini Singh, Fellow, CSEP</p>

SPEAKERS

In order of the programme



L.S. CHANGSAN

Lamchonghoi Sweetey Changsan belongs to the 1994 batch of the Indian Administrative Service of Assam-Meghalaya cadre. She is presently serving as Additional Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. In her present capacity, she holds the charge of Additional Secretary and Mission Director, National Health Mission. In addition to this, she is also looking after the work on Policy, NHM-Finance, NIMHANS, Public Health, National Health System Resource Centre, Mother and Child Tracking System, ASHA Programme, Universal Health Coverage, Thalassemia, Haemophilia, Sickle Cell Anemia, Maternal Health, Immunization & Pulse Polio Programme, Family Planning, Cancer, Rare Disease etc. Before coming on Central Deputation, Government of India (GOI), she worked in several capacities including District Magistrate of Jorhat, Tezpur, Morigaon, and Dima Hasao districts in Assam. She has done extensive work in School Education in Assam as Secretary, Education and State Project Director (SPD) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan. She served as Commissioner & Secretary, Tourism I&PR and was the first woman Principal Secretary, Home & Political Department, Government of Assam, and Additional Secretary, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India.



B.V.R. SUBRAHMANYAM

B.V.R. Subrahmanyam is the Chief Executive Officer of NITI Aayog. An Indian Administrative Service Officer of 1987 batch (Chhattisgarh cadre), he has held important assignments over the last three decades in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Jammu & Kashmir, along with the World Bank. He has been Secretary in the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Chief Secretary, Jammu & Kashmir, Principal Secretary, Government of Chhattisgarh, and has held positions in the Prime Minister's Office.



VINOD PAUL

Vinod Paul is a globally recognised medical scientist and a public health exponent. He is currently a member of the National Institution for Transforming India, NITI Aayog, where he leads the Health, Nutrition and Education verticals. He has played a pivotal role in formulating the Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY, the Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centre Scheme and POSHAN Abhiyaan. He is a member of the core team of the Government of India for COVID-19 pandemic response and chairs the Empowered Group on Emergency Management Plan and Strategy, Empowered Group on Vaccination, the National Task Force on COVID-19 as well as the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for COVID-19 (NEGVAC). He previously served on the faculty of the Department of Paediatrics, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, from 1985 to 2020, and was Head of the Department for nearly a decade. He also served as the Chairman of the Board of Governors in supersession of the Medical Council of India in 2018-20.



RAJIB KUMAR SEN

Rajib Kumar Sen is an Indian Economic Service Officer of the 1993 Batch, currently holding the charge of Senior Adviser, NITI Aayog, looking after Health and Women & Child Development. He graduated from Presidency College, Kolkata and has done a Masters in Economics from Calcutta University. He has also done an MSc from the London School of Economics in Public Management and Governance. Over a career spanning almost 30 years, he has served in the Ministry of Finance (Department of Economic Affairs, Department of Expenditure, Department of Investment and Public Asset Management), Ministry of Defence (Department of Defence and Department of Defence Production), Ministry of Education (Department of School Education), Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, XIIth Finance Commission and the erstwhile Planning Commission. He has also worked in the state of Goa (Finance Department).



NACHIKET MOR

Nachiket Mor is trained as an economist. His current work is principally focused on the design of national and regional health systems. He is a Visiting Scientist at The Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health and a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Information Technology and Public Policy at IIT Bangalore. He is also a Commissioner on the Lancet Citizens' Commission on Reimagining India's Health System. He is a member of the CSEP Health Advisory Council.



WINNIE YIP

Winnie Yip is currently Professor of Global Health Policy and Economics in the Department of Global Health and Population at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, and serves as the Faculty Director of the Harvard China Health Partnership. Her research focuses on rigorous health system evaluations and the design and testing of innovative health system interventions to improve equitable access to healthcare. She examines the use of national and state-level policy levers—including financing, provider payment, strategic purchasing, governance, and regulation—to develop viable and effective models of population health-based integrated delivery systems in China and India. She has also advised healthcare reforms in the wider Asia region, including Hong Kong, Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam. She has extensive experience in teaching executive training courses on “Sustainable Healthcare Financing and Delivery for Universal Health Coverage” for senior health policymakers. She holds a PhD in Economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



AJAY TANDON

Ajay Tandon is Lead Economist with the World Bank's Global Practice on Health, Nutrition, and Population for the South Asia Region. He received his bachelor's degree from St Stephen's College (India) and a PhD in economics from Virginia Tech (USA). Previously, over 2004-2007, he worked with the research department of the Asian Development Bank in Manila where he worked on human development. He was an economist with the Evidence and Information for Policy department of the World Health Organization in Geneva from 1998-2003 working on issues related to

measurement and analysis of cross-country health system performance. He has held visiting research appointments at both Oxford University and Harvard University. He has written several publications on the issues of statistical methodology, health financing, fiscal space for health, and universal health coverage. He is co-author of several books, including most recently 'Going Universal: How 24 Countries Are Implementing Universal Health Coverage from the Bottom-Up'.



INDU BHUSHAN

An ex-IAS Officer of the 1983 batch, Indu Bhushan has a career path spanning more than 40 years across a multitude of sectors, from serving as an IAS Officer to Director General, East Asia Department of Asian Development Bank, and as the first Chief Executive Officer of the National Health Authority.



SOMSAK CHUNHARAS

Somsak Chunharas is a medical doctor and President of the National Health Foundation and Thai Geriatric Research Institute. He graduated from Ramathibodi Medical School, Mahidol University, followed by an MPH from the Royal Tropical Institute, the Netherlands. He started work in 1978 as a practising physician and director of community hospitals in rural Thailand, moving on to Deputy Minister of Health (2015). He is the founding Director of the Thai Health Systems Research Institute (1992) and a Thailand HITAP Board member (2016-present). He was also executive board member of the Thailand Sciences and Research Institute (2018-2023). He is a member of the Global Advisory Commission on Health Research (ACHR) of WHO HQ, a board member of the Council on Health Research and Development (COHRED) and the Alliance for Health Policy and System Research (APHSR).



GIRIJA VAIDYANATHAN

Girija Vaidyanathan is a career civil servant and has wide experience in implementation and financing of development sector schemes, having spent nearly fifteen years in various leadership positions in the Health, Nutrition and Environment sectors. She retired as Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu. As Principle Secretary, Health, she was responsible for health policy formulation and played an important role in system improvement in functional areas such as maternal and child health, TB control, public funded insurance, data systems, food and drug safety and in the design and sanction of the Tamil Nadu Health Systems Project. During her years in the Finance Department, she was responsible for the financing of health, education and other social sector schemes. She has numerous academic publications to her name and serves on the governing bodies of various academic and non-governmental organisations. She is a member of the Health Advisory Council at CSEP.



ENIS BARIŞ

Enis Bariş is a global health policy and systems scholar who has provided intellectual leadership in global health policy and systems and high-level policy dialogue. He is currently Professor of Practice at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), University of Washington, USA, and an Adjunct Professor at McGill University, Montreal, Canada. Previously, he has held numerous senior positions, including Senior Advisor at the Global Fund; with the World Bank; Director of Country Health Systems at the Regional Office for Europe (EURO) of the World Health Organization; and Chief Scientist and Senior Scientific Advisor at the International Development Research Centre. He brings rich and diverse insights from his work in more than sixty countries in Europe, Latin America, Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa. He is the author and co-author of many peer-reviewed publications and gray literature as well as several books and book chapters, including the World Bank's flagship publication "Reimagining Primary Health Care: Walking the Talk" published in June 2021.



JISHNU DAS

Jishnu Das, is a distinguished professor of public policy at the McCourt School of Public Policy and the Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. Jishnu's work focuses on health and education in low- and middle-income countries. He has co-developed one of the largest and longest-running cohort studies on learning outcomes in low-income countries and leads an agenda on the quality of healthcare in low-income countries. His research led to the widespread adoption of a training program for informal providers (in West Bengal), health facility inspections (in Kenya), networks for private sector providers (in India), the scale-up of quality measurement tools in health (global) and the development of financial products for private schools (global). He was also part of the team that developed India's federal inpatient health insurance scheme, the RSBY, which reached 150 million people in 2016. Jishnu helped write the World Development Report on Gender and Development (2012) and in 2015 he was the Flander's Visiting Professor at McGill University. He has been the recipient of several global awards and honours. He was a member of the Lancet Commission on COVID-19 in India and a member of the state of West Bengal's global advisory board for COVID-19. He holds degrees in economics from St. Stephen's College (Delhi), Cambridge (UK) and Harvard University (USA).



SAPNA DESAI

Sapna Desai is a public health specialist focused on women's health and health systems in India. She currently leads studies on the use of hysterectomy and the health system response to women's health in three states; Meghalaya's health systems strengthening reforms; and pathways between primary healthcare and Universal Health Coverage in Karnataka and Jharkhand. She is Senior Fellow at the Population Council Institute, Senior Advisor to the Self-Employed Women's Association on social protection in the informal economy, and Adjunct Faculty, BRAC JPG School of Public Health. She is also Commissioner on the Lancet Commission on Reimagining India's Health System. She holds a PhD from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and MS from Harvard University.



INDRANI GUPTA

Indrani Gupta is Professor and Head of the Health Policy Research Unit of the Institute of Economic Growth (IEG), Delhi, India. She received her PhD in Economics from the University of Maryland, College Park, USA. She set up a centre for health economics and policy research in her institute, the first of its kind in India. Her work experience has been diverse, including teaching and affiliation with academic institutes, the World Bank and the Government of India. Her areas of interest cover a wide range of topics in the area of health economics and policy, and include demand for health and healthcare, health financing, poverty and health, economics of diseases, costing and cost-effectiveness. She is Visiting Senior Fellow at the Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP).



SARANG DEO

Sarang Deo is Professor of Operations Management at the Indian School of Business, where he also serves as the Deputy Dean for Faculty & Research and as the Executive Director of the Max Institute of Healthcare Management. His primary area of research is healthcare delivery systems. He is interested in investigating the impact of operations decisions on population-level health outcomes. Some of the healthcare contexts that he has studied include the influenza vaccine supply chain and the phenomenon of ambulance diversion in the US, HIV early infant diagnosis networks in sub-Saharan Africa, and formal and informal pathways for TB diagnosis in India. He currently serves as a member of the WHO Strategic and Technical Advisory Group on TB (STAG-TB). Prior to joining the ISB, he was Assistant Professor at the Kellogg School of Management. He obtained a PhD from UCLA Anderson School of Management, an MBA from IIM Ahmedabad, and a B. Tech. from IIT Bombay. Before entering academics, he worked with Accenture as a management consultant.



AJAY NAIR

Ajay Nair is CEO of Swasth Alliance, a non-profit health collective that builds digital health infrastructure and standards for the public good. He has been an advisor to digital health innovators, non-profits and governments after co-founding and leading one of India's first telemedicine networks, MeraDoctor. Prior to his startup journey, he was a social impact investor at Acumen Fund in New York and Nairobi focusing on Health & Energy. As a doctor, he has also helped set up and run HIV/STD clinics for male and female commercial sex workers in Mumbai. He has an MBBS from Grant Medical College and an MPH from Harvard University. He is also a fellow of the seventh class of the Kamalnayan Bajaj Fellowship within the Aspen Global Leadership Network.



LAVEESH BHANDARI

Laveesh Bhandari is President and Senior Fellow at CSEP. He has published widely on subjects related to sustainable livelihoods, industrial, economic, and social reforms in India, economic geography, and financial inclusion. He received his PhD in economics from Boston University for which he was awarded the Best Thesis in International Economics. He has taught economics at Boston University and IIT Delhi. Apart from applied economics research, he has built, seeded, and exited

from three companies in the research, analytics, and digital domains, including Indicus Analytics, a leading economic research firm. Currently, he is conducting research on issues of inclusion, India's energy transition, and how it will impact the government as well as the economy.



SANDHYA VENKATESWARAN

Sandhya Venkateswaran is Senior Fellow at CSEP and leads the Human Development work at CSEP, with a specific focus on Health Policy. Spanning a career over three decades, she has worked on a wide range of issues in the social sector including health, nutrition, gender, natural resources, urban development and others, and has authored books, multiple articles and other publications on varied social sector issues. Over the last 15 years her focus has been on policy issues, developing and leading the policy and advocacy portfolio in organisations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition and CARE. She has worked with grassroots campaigns and civil society organisations, as well as with government and international organisations. She is currently a member of the Lancet Citizens Commission on Reimagining India's Health System.



PRIYADARSHINI SINGH

Priyadarshini Singh is Fellow with the Human Development research program at CSEP. She has previously worked with the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, Ashoka University and PwC-India. She completed a PhD at the Department of Politics and International Relations at SOAS, University of London as a Felix Scholar. Her research work focuses on political economy of policymaking with a focus on education, history of public institutions and grassroots political ideas and politics. Her recent publication is 'Ideas, Policies and Practices: Tracing the evolution of elementary education reform from 1975' (2023 PE05- RISE program at University of Pennsylvania).

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