

International advisory panel meets Ramadoss

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International Advisory Panel (IAP) of National Rural Health Mission led by Professor Jeffrey Sachs met the Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr. Anubmani Ramadoss, here today.

The panel expressed happiness over the strides made by NRHM, particularly in the areas of Reproductive and Child Health, Development of Health Infrastructure and revamping the health system.

Describing NRHM as a 'revival of hope in the world for the public health sector', Professor Sachs called for more investment in health sector.

'Investment in health is always a sound growth strategy....hitherto public health sector was not able to deliver because of lack of investment, you cannot over spend in health sector' he said.

Ramadoss briefed the panel about the status of NRHM and the steps taken by the Ministry in various health sectors.

'NRHM signals a restoration of faith in public system for delivery of health services' said Ramadoss.

Ramadoss also informed the panel about the imminent launch of School Health Programme and a special programme for neonatal care to bring down infant mortality rates. He offered India's expertise and willingness in contributing for development of vaccines for Tuberculosis and Malaria.

The panel pressed for giving NRHM a bigger international profile. It suggested that in the next meeting of the panel, Health Ministers from some key countries may be invited to share the NRHM experience. Dr. Sachs who is Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General, said that he will flag NRHM at the World Millennium Development Goals Day i.e. 25th September as the biggest public intervention in the health sectors

Sachs emphasized the need for collection of innovations. He said the proper documentation of innovations will enable us to quickly replicate the success stories on a sustained basis. He also mooted out the idea of model districts where management and evaluation process for health service delivery will be developed to deliver health services. These districts will enable development and dissemination of good practices at a larger level.

Sachs emphasized the need to strengthen management skills and Training for health workers. He said that a sound management system will be able to leverage the initiatives taken at the ground level. He emphasized the need to develop a concept of Public Health Manager as integral part of NRHM architecture. He once again stressed for role clarity at the various levels of health workers in the NRHM pyramid.

With regard to evaluation and monitoring, Dr. Sachs emphasized outcome based local management system rather than local reporting system. He offered the expertise of his Earth Institute for data analyses for finding various patterns from the wealth of data collected under NRHM.