

Innovative solutions to bridge unmet healthcare needs in Asia

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More than 100 people from 15 Asian countries participated in the fourth Novartis Social Business stakeholder dialogue in Singapore on November 20.



Singapore- More than 100 people from 15 Asian countries who represented global public health, healthcare industry, digital tech, finance, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), government and international media, came together on November 20 to discuss and identify solutions during the fourth Novartis Social Business stakeholder dialogue, held in Singapore. This year's panellists brought multiple perspectives to each issue.

During the first panel discussion on public-private partnerships (PPPs), Deborah Gildea, Cluster Head, Novartis Social Business, Asia, underlined the need to include local communities in the design of healthcare solutions to increase the likelihood of success.

Dhawal Jhamb of IFC highlighted the need for projects to have clear commitments and for information to be provided in a language that the patient can understand. "The easiest way to measure performance may be through patient satisfaction matrices, and there should be clear penalties for failure, including termination of contracts", he said.

According to Nguyen Khanh Phuong of the Ministry of Health of Vietnam, patients need to be involved in governance. She suggested inviting members of patient or consumer associations to represent the rights of patients in communities where their voices may be weak.

Panel 2 addressed how the challenge of NCDs will require innovative financing solutions as well as traditional methods, such as insurance schemes. Vijay Mahajan of the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation quoted, "Yet the somewhat counterintuitive nature of insurance plans, whereby money is paid regularly but can only be used when someone has an illness, makes them hard to implement."

During the session, some important schemes were also mentioned. Hasbullah Thabrany of ThinkWell said, "The mandatory national health insurance scheme in Indonesia, launched five years ago, has ensured much greater healthcare access for all citizens." Jeremy Lim of Oliver Wyman maintained that the healthcare industry can learn lessons from the auto and banking industries, which have been forced to deliver products and services more efficiently. He believed that there are many opportunities resulting from unmet needs and the waste generated from late diagnosis and excessive care and technology can help generate key insights and lead to solutions that appeal to investors.

Panel 2 concluded with a consensus that there is not one model for innovative financing. Several models can change the

face of health services. These models should deliver both the funding and the tools that financial markets use to assess progress against defined goals.

The event ended with the closing remarks of Harald Nusser, Head, Novartis Social Business. He concluded, "Focus needs to be on treating people and not diseases. Monitoring and evaluation is important, considering outputs as well as outcomes, and transparently sharing data. Technology can bring not just greater efficiency but insights that will make sure that services are delivering an impact."