

The Elders commend Indian leaders for ambitious healthcare reforms

AHMEDABAD, 8 September 2018

The Elders concluded a visit to India by commending the country's leaders at national and state level for a series of ambitious health reforms which have the potential to improve the health and wellbeing of hundreds of millions of people.

Gro Harlem Brundtland, Acting Chair of The Elders, former Prime Minister of Norway and Director-General of the World Health Organization, visited Delhi and Gujarat together with **Ban Ki-moon**, Elder and former Secretary-General of the United Nations.

They enjoyed constructive discussions with Health Minister **Jagat Prakash Nadda** and NITI Aayog Vice-chairman **Rajiv Kumar** and his senior officials to learn more about the *Pradhan Ayushman Bharat* health reforms announced by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** that will be launched on 25 September.

The Elders welcomed the ambitions of these reforms and encouraged all stakeholders to ensure they are implemented effectively, with a particular emphasis on securing 65 percent of public financing on health for primary health care services.

At a state level, the Elders visited a “**Mohalla**” neighbourhood clinic in Delhi with Chief Minister **Arvind Kejriwal** and Health Minister **Satyendra Jain** and expressed their admiration for the scheme and its positive impact on the health of poor and vulnerable populations.

In Gujarat, they met Chief Minister **Vijay Rupani**, Health Minister **Nitinbhai Patel** and senior officials, and visited an impressive **Health and Wellness Centre** near Ahmedabad to hear directly from medical staff.

In all their meetings, the Elders reiterated the four key messages of their [new report](#) on Universal Health Coverage in India:

- 1. Increase public financing for health to 2.5% of GDP by 2021**
- 2. Focus on reaching full population coverage and prioritising the needs of the poor and vulnerable**
- 3. Focus additional resources on primary healthcare services including vital public health services**

4. Guarantee universal access to free essential medicines and diagnostic services

The Elders urged leaders at every level in Indian society to work together and forge a cross-party consensus to deliver lasting, equitable health reforms that will improve the lives of their people for generations to come.

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About The Elders

The Elders are independent leaders using their collective experience and influence for peace, justice and human rights worldwide. The group was founded by Nelson Mandela in 2007.

The Elders are [Martti Ahtisaari](#), [Kofi Annan](#) (1938-2018), [Ban Ki-moon](#), [Lakhdar Brahimi](#), [Gro Harlem Brundtland](#) (Acting Chair), [Hina Jilani](#), [Ricardo Lagos](#), [Graça Machel](#), [Mary Robinson](#) and [Ernesto Zedillo](#).

[Ela Bhatt](#), [Fernando Henrique Cardoso](#), [Jimmy Carter](#) and [Desmond Tutu](#) are Elders Emeritus.

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For biographies of the Elders, blogs, photos, videos and more information about their work please go to www.theElders.org.

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