

## MESSAGE

Two monumental public health milestones have been achieved recently with India completing five years of being Polio free and the WHO certification of India having eliminated Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus. I commend the hard work and commitment of medical officers and all health workers on achieving these commendable milestones.

The Universal Immunization Program has grown from strength to strength over the years and has also responded to the public health challenges across the country. With an attempt to bridge the gap in immunization, Mission Indradhanush has made tremendous gains towards this goal. This special countrywide initiative has been successful mainly due the unstinted support and active involvement of the state governments, health staff at all levels, partner agencies and other stakeholders.

While Mission Indradhanush has resulted in immediate gains, it is imperative that the routine immunization planning and delivery mechanism are also strengthened. This will build up sustainable capacity to ensure that every single pregnant woman and child are immunized, thus preventing the avoidable loss of precious lives and the burden of health care costs.

The Immunization Handbook 2016 will provide guidance to the officers in the field and prove to be a source of reference to support their efforts to provide quality immunization services. I congratulate the Immunization Division of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the partner agencies who have contributed to bringing out this important document.



(B.P. Sharma)