Recognizing the vulnerability of children, Govt. of India, in the early decades after independence has taken initiatives to protect vast population of its young citizens from life threatening diseases and diseases causing disability for the rest of life. Consequently, Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) was initiated by the Government of India in 1978 with the objective of reducing morbidity, mortality and disability from six of the major Vaccine Preventable Diseases (VPD) by making vaccination services available to all eligible children free of cost through the public health sector. The immunization programme acquired a new name in 1985 and launched as Universal Immunization Programme (UIP). As part of national health policy, UIP is being implemented in the state of Uttar Pradesh and the state Govt. is fully committed for the complete immunization of children as programme has been given further impetus after the launch of NRHM in the state. Several initiatives have been taken to augment and streamline the programme in the state.

SIFPSA which has been supporting private and public sector projects with the main objective to increase access, improve quality and create demand for the reproductive and child health services, had conceptualized an evaluation study of Routine Immunization Programme in collaboration with SPMU-NRHM both at the programme and beneficiary level to have an understanding and evidence of issues and challenges that create impediments in full immunization of the children.

The evaluation of the said project was undertaken at the instance of SIFPSA. On behalf of our organization, we take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the SIFPSA Management, particularly Mr. Amit Kumar Ghosh (IAS), Executive Director, for entrusting us with this important assignment.

Thanks are also due to Dr. Ved Prakash, GM (RI) SPMU-NRHM and Dr. A. P. Chaturvedi, JD (UIP), DoFW, GoUP for their valuable inputs. We also convey our special thanks to Mr. B. K. Jain, GM (R&E), Mr. S. P. Khare, Consultant (R&E) and Mrs. Seema George, PC (R&E) for the necessary cooperation offered during the course of study. We acknowledge the help offered by Mr. K. S. Bisht, DPM (R&E) and Mrs. Mamta Verma, Secretary (R&E). Our appreciation also goes to the health authorities in the districts for their cooperation during data collection.

Board Member of CREATE, Dr. Adeeb Alam Khan (Community Health) and Dr. Aaly Siddiqui, Advisor (Public Health) spent their valuable time, provided inputs on the study and rendered all the possible support that really facilitated in completion of this assignment. We convey our special thanks to both of them. Last but not the least my special thanks are also due to our team of Mr. Surendra Singh Bora (Senior Executive), Ms. Maneesha Johri (Research Executive) and Mr. Lalit Lohani (Jr. Research Executive) and other research and field professionals for excellent efforts in all stages of the study that helped in preparation of this report.

We hope that findings of the evaluation would be quite useful and facilitate SPMU-NRHM/SIFPSA in fine tuning the RI programme and taking policy and programme related decisions to bring in a qualitative improvement in its functioning to achieve the desired results.

September, 2013

Tausif Alam Khan
Director, CREATE