ANY COUNTRY CAN USE COWIN FREE

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: E-governance - applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential incl. Aadhaar & Digital power

Click of a button:A file photo of a healthcare worker registering the name of a beneficiary on the CoWIN app.

Any country interested can avail itself of the CoWIN platform free of cost, R.S. Sharma, Chief Executive Officer of the National Health Authority, said.

"Selected vendors by the country will be trained on CoWIN technology to customise it for their requirement. Usually, since the vaccination cycle is almost the same in all countries, the customisation will be limited to changes in field and master data configuration. Complete revamp of the application by any country is not expected," he told *The Hindu* on Saturday while speaking about CoWIN, which provides digital support for the COVID vaccination drive in the country.

MoU signed

Dr. Sharma said India had signed a memorandum of understanding with Guyana for sharing CoWIN. "We are in advanced talks with a couple of other nations to share CoWIN with them," he said.

India crossed a milestone of administering 2 billion vaccine doses a week ago.

Talking about the app's continued importance, Dr. Sharma said that as CoWIN was repurposed, it could also help achieve the vision of Universal Vaccination against COVID-19 and further be repurposed for use in the healthcare sector.

On July 5, 2021, the Central government organised the CoWIN Global Conclave with the endeavour to share experiences and expertise on the CoWIN platform with the global community.

Over 140 countries participated in the event and nearly a dozen expressed interest in learning from the platform and were considering adopting it.

Stating that CoWIN has also become the world's biggest digitally verifiable vaccination certificate generating platform, Dr. Sharma said that today, the app was highly configurable and adaptable.

"It has evolved based on the changing policy landscape and the requirements of the beneficiaries. The platform was developed at a record speed with ample consideration to its scalability, modularity and interoperability," he said.

Security measures

The CEO also spoke about the security measures that have been put in place to ensure data safety and the prevention of leaks.

"CoWIN platform does not store or share any personal data. It is for vaccination purposes and is the single source of truth to determine whether the person has been vaccinated or not," he said. He added the platform had deployed state-of-the-art data security systems to safeguard user data against any possible intrusion.

"Despite all these security features, CoWIN's architecture still allows it to be open and interoperable. The capability to digitally authenticate these details with Aadhaar has also been provided to vaccinators. Otherwise, during vaccination a vaccinator could validate these details through a physical ID," he explained.

He added that besides the OTP feature, the government has limited the number of slot searches per user (restricted to 15-20) on the portal which prevents bots, browser extensions or hack attempts. Also even the API's shared to third parties by CoWIN is through a thorough scrutiny process, ensuring proper security and audit.

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