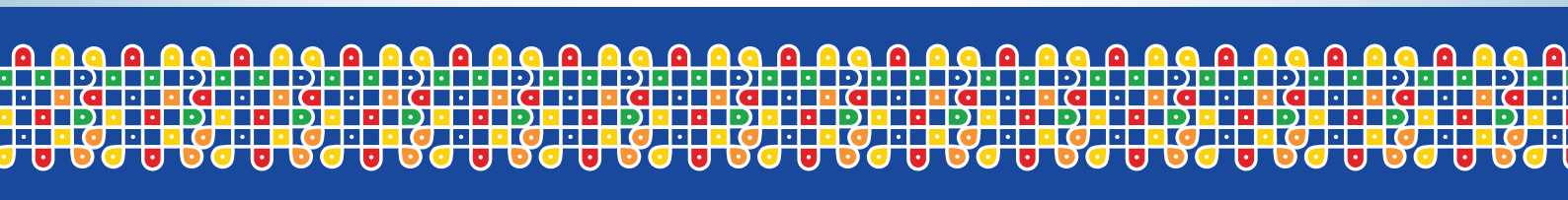




BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE WORLD *for* ALL CHILDREN: TEN PRIORITIES *for* BRICS







THE BRICS CHILD FUTURES FORUM convened in Lucknow, India, comes at a time of great uncertainty, increasing climate anxiety, rapid technological development, escalating geopolitical conflict and a slowing down of human and social development progress. In this reality, the Forum brought together policymakers, BRICS Academic Forum delegates, experts, partners, and youth representatives to advance a shared agenda for children.

For the over billion children in BRICS nations, investments made today in social protection, health, nutrition, education and care will determine the future strength, productivity, resilience and prosperity of our societies. Child development is therefore not only a social imperative but also a strategic investment in human capital, economic transformation and sustainable development.

1

Center inclusive child development as foundational to sustainable and equitable growth of nations. The evidence on the cost of inaction on child policy shows how underinvestment in children leads to massive foregone social and economic opportunities.



2

Invest adequately and equitably to reach the most vulnerable children, ensuring a rights-based approach, emphasizing articles of non-discrimination and indivisibility of children's rights. Particular focus should be accorded to children in low-income and rural households, children facing gender discrimination, migrant children, children with disabilities, and other marginalized groups.

3

Inform public spending decisions through up-to-date evidence on what works for all children across the life-course. An integrated policy portfolio across social protection, health, nutrition, education, and care is needed to achieve holistic child wellbeing outcomes. Progressive policy models that combine universal coverage with additional public resources, directed to children from marginalized groups, are most effective.

4

Prioritize early childhood as the critical window of opportunity to break intergenerational cycles of disadvantage and promote holistic child development. Government budgets must ensure that the needs of children under school age are met by allocating greater proportions of new spending towards young children, without cutting existing spending on older children.

5

Tailor policies for older children and adolescent girls and boys informed by evidence on their age-specific developmental needs. Ensure the full and meaningful participation of adolescents and young people in decisions that affect their lives. Recognize mental health and psychosocial well-being as a core priority, alongside their social, cognitive, and emotional needs, and address external stressors such as climate change, gender norms, and social media.



6

Accelerate youth employment pathways through future ready skills across digital, green, and care economies, including capacity building, entrepreneurship and meaningful school to work transitions. Deliberate and targeted policies should be adopted to promote young women in work, including equal access to skilling in emerging sectors, safe and enabling work environments, and support to overcome structural and social barriers holding back their economic participation.

7

Advance inclusive and rights-based digital public infrastructure for children. Emerging technologies should be safe, transparent, and rights-respecting by default, closing the digital and AI divide within and between countries, embedding child rights impact assessments in technology governance, and building AI literacy for children, parents, and caregivers alike. Children must be recognized not only as users of these systems but also as participants in shaping them.

8

Build a risk-resilient future for children by integrating child-centered disaster risk management into sustainable development. Strengthen early warning systems, forecasting tools, and adaptive capacities with children explicitly accounted for in preparedness and response planning against disasters, pandemics, conflict, displacement and other emerging risks, protecting hard won gains in childhood wellbeing.



9

Mobilize public, private, and whole-of-society partnerships to deliver better child outcomes. Human development gains for children cannot be achieved by any single actor alone, and therefore, governments, private sector, civil society, and communities must work in concert, each bringing distinct capacities, resources, and reach. Deepening these partnerships are vital across the child development continuum, from co-financing and co-designing programmes to embedding communities as active partners in implementation and accountability, ensuring that innovation, investment, and local knowledge move together.

10

Institutionalize a sustained BRICS platform for dialogue, evidence, and action on children. To build on this first convening, anchor a recurring mechanism within BRICS architecture, carrying forward the momentum of this Presidency year into future cycles, generating comparable evidence across member states, and translating dialogue into concrete, trackable commitments for stronger international cooperation for children, adolescents and youth.

Invest early and equitably. Empower children and young people. Build resilient and inclusive human capital. Act together through cooperation and shared learning. Make child and adolescent development a defining pillar of the BRICS vision for sustainable prosperity and human development.





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