



Guwahati BRICS Youth Summit 2016 Call to Action

Preamble

We the Ministers, Officials and Youth of the Delegations from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, assembled in Guwahati, India from 1-3 July 2016 on the occasion of the 2nd BRICS Youth Summit to share experiences of policies and programmes implemented in our countries. We discussed the challenges and identified opportunities to address the needs of the youth and recognised areas of cooperation based on mutual interest.

Reaffirming the recommendations from the 1st BRICS Youth Summit held in Kazan, Russia in 2015, we further deliberated on the four thematic areas of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Social Inclusion, Youth Volunteerism and Youth Participation in Governance.

Youth in BRICS

We recognise the diversity and magnitude of the youth populations of our countries, as well as their needs and aspirations. We commit to make all efforts to develop the potential of young people and contribute to the overall development of our countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Over 720 million young people are in the age group of 10-24 years in the BRICS nations. Brazil, Russia and China are more advanced in their demographic transition than South Africa and India. Nevertheless, all the BRICS nations still have a relatively large number of people of working age who are critical to achieve the SDGs. Education, employment, entrepreneurship and skills training are critical for young people to be socially and economically empowered. Noting that many countries are supporting apprenticeships and providing incentives and opportunities for entrepreneurship, there is a further need to create an enabling environment for fostering innovation by young people.

Noting the progress the BRICS nations have made in Secondary School enrolment, we recognise that engagement of youth at tertiary level education in some countries remains low. The number of illiterate youth in the countries is on the decline but the number of girls out of school remains high.

The BRICS nations have shown improvements in combating communicable diseases, but some communicable diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis are showing an increasing trend. The incidence of non-communicable diseases is gradually on the rise. Adolescent fertility rate also continues to be high, denoting a lack of full access to reproductive health services.

All the BRICS nations recognise the importance of volunteerism towards youth development and as a means to contribute to social and economic development. Youth have expressed interest in addressing important issues related to education, crime, violence and governance. However they are insufficiently and inadequately represented in formal governance institutions in some countries.

Skills Development & Entrepreneurship

Key Recommendations

1. Create and strengthen apprenticeship programmes in the existing BRICS institutions
2. Document and disseminate success stories among the BRICS nations
3. Facilitate transfer of skills between mentors and mentees among the BRICS nations
4. Ensure access to decent jobs¹ for youth across the BRICS nations
5. Promote and replicate the Know About Business (KAB) entrepreneurship programme within the BRICS nations
6. Provide training to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) on business development services, business plans and website development
7. Create and promote regular expositions of young people and youth entrepreneurs to facilitate exchange of best practices, new technologies and seek financial support

Social Inclusion

Key Recommendations

1. Social inclusion is a cross-cutting concern within the BRICS nations. Initiatives must, therefore, prioritise marginalised and vulnerable young people to ensure access to education, healthcare, including reproductive health and social protection services
2. Initiate capacity building programmes for professionals who work with young people in the BRICS nations.
3. Create a BRICS Social Science Youth Research Network

¹ Decent work involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.

Youth Volunteerism

Key Recommendations

1. In order to raise the value of youth volunteering:
 - Facilitate cross-learning to access opportunities for leadership development
 - Accredite and recognise youth volunteer programmes for acceptance across the BRICS nations
 - Establish online platforms to highlight best practices, opportunities and recognise good work
2. In order to promote exchanges on volunteerism among the BRICS nations through structured volunteering and civic service projects:
 - Design and facilitate volunteer exchange programmes with a unified set of standards
 - Provide volunteers with opportunities to have mutually enriching learning experiences including internships with official institutions
 - Develop capacities of professionals managing volunteer programmes

Youth participation in Governance

Key Recommendations

1. In order to create and systematise a road map for youth exchange programmes between the BRICS nations, promote model of BRICS Summer School in respective countries and offer opportunities for youth to participate
2. Coordinate existing and create new opportunities for youth participation in governance and decision making
3. Facilitate the capacities and participation of youth in public policy, programme formulation and monitoring & evaluation
4. Advocate for incorporation of lessons on public policy, governance and civic engagement in school curricula
5. Explore the possibility of creating a BRICS Youth Council (BYC) with a minimum of two thirds representation of youth

Means of Implementation

1. Appeal to the New Development Bank to provide financial support for youth initiatives as proposed by the BRICS nations
2. Design and facilitate exchange programmes in the four thematic areas
3. Establish the BRICS Youth Secretariat initially in virtual form, consisting of one government official and one youth representative from each nation to ensure the realisation of youth initiatives agreed upon at the BRICS Youth Summits
4. Create an online platform to share best practices and opportunities
5. Report on the progress made at the next BRICS Youth Summit