

**Shri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister
Government of India
New Delhi 110001**

20th April 2023

Subject: Re-thinking the G-20 Health Agenda

*Dear Prime Minister,
Namaste*

India's Presidency of G-20 has come at a critical time when the world is passing through a historical moment. Given your stature as the world's most sought-after statesman and the leader of G-20, the world is looking at India as defining the pathway for the world to pass through a churn. World peace, health, education, and digital infrastructure remain the overarching themes; among them, health occupies an important position. India released as its G-20 priorities:

- Health emergencies, prevention and preparedness, and response
- Strengthening cooperation in the pharmaceutical sector
- Digital health innovations and solutions to aid Universal Health Coverage

While these priorities are a good start, given the ground realities and our experience during COVID-19, it will be good to reconsider and re-calibrate some of the priorities.

One Health: Major global disease outbreaks over the past two decades have come from animals, and environmental factors will be a key reason for significant health challenges in these decades. This should spotlight 'One Health' as an essential topic. Without One Health, there is no healthcare. We must focus on 3S- Scientific Research, Surveillance, and Supply chains. We have seen how few global companies ramped up R&D to develop a COVID vaccine in a record time and supplied the world to save millions of lives, so the world needs to focus on global supply chains. All such agenda falls under 'One Health,' which needs to be added to the G-20 agenda.

Mental Health: At Health Parliament, we studied among students across India. We were shocked to learn that 99% of those surveyed had issues with mental well-being; we recommended the mental health helpline. As the world moves ahead with generative AI and automation, job losses and economic disparities will result in aggravating mental health issues, and this will affect every family and bring down human productivity. According to UNICEF's State of World's Children 2021- 20 % of children have mild mental health impairments. Mental health issues will increase with time, and addressing mental well-being should be a focused topic of G-20. Mental Health is missing in the central theme of G-20.

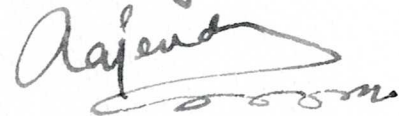
Children's Health: For this generation, we are already late, and aging Japan has a lesson for the world; if we don't address the issues of children's health now, we are inviting an irreversible health disaster; we need to focus on the 'pre-emptive care model' to pre-empt the occurrence

of diseases starting with school health as mentioned in India's National Health Policy 2017, and move one step ahead of preventive care; pre-emptive care. Investment in children's health has a disproportionately high financial return regarding productivity and enhanced wages of adults, so the world needs to move the needle to child health. Children's health needs to be added to the G-20 agenda.

Primary Care & Digital Health: 45 years ago, at Alma Ata, healthcare leaders worldwide promised 'Primary care for all by 2000', and we are far from it. In 2028, when we celebrate 50 years of Alma Ata, what do we tell the world – that we failed to deliver even primary care to all? It is time that we at least pledge to provide 'Digital Health for All by 2028', and India has shown the world how to do it. So, we must take primary care from physical centres to the hands of the population through mobile phones. India was the first country to have put a comprehensive resolution on mHealth at the WHO Executive Board in 2016, which was unanimously adopted. Now, India is a world leader in Digital Health through Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission. The world can learn from India's success story, so primary care and digital health should be joint priorities for the G-20 Health agenda, not just digital health alone.

When you speak, the world listens, and rightly you have set the mission of India's G-20 Presidency to '**One Earth. One Family. One Future**', and so, when you deliver your Presidential address, the world would like to see a pathway for the future. G-20 Health working group needs to set an agenda that is inclusive and will help address the basics with the five-point agenda to focus on 1) One Health, 2) Mental Health, 3) Children's Health, 4) Primary Care, and 5) Digital Health. India must set up a billion-dollar fund to help LMICs in scoping and scaling up primary care through digital health. This five-point agenda will have a lasting impact on improving health and addressing how WHO defines health, i.e., 'health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'. Hope you will take these suggestions in a positive manner. I will share two ideas on 'Space' & the 'Economic Model' in a separate email.

With best regards



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