BRICS BUSINESS COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Business Cooperation for an Inclusive and Sustainable Future

BRICS BUSINESS COUNCIL

BRICS BUSINESS COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
2025

BRICS Business Council 2025 Brazilian Presidency Leadership

Francisco Gomes Neto
BRICS Business Council Chair

Constanza Negri Biasutti
BRICS Business Council Sherpa

Ricardo Alban
President, Brazilian National Confederation of Industry

BRICS BUSINESS COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Business Cooperation for an Inclusive and Sustainable Future

BRICS
BUSINESS
COUNCIL

© 2025. BRICS
This work may be reproduced, in whole or in part, provided the source is cited.

CATALOGING IN PUBLICATION

B849b

BRICS.
BRICS business council annual report 2025 / BRICS. – Brasília: BRICS, 2025.

81 p. : il.

1.BRICS 2. Business Council 3. Recomendations I. Title.

CDU: 502.131.1

CONTENTS

FOREWORD 7

SIGNATURES 8

ABOUT BRICS BUSINESS COUNCIL 9

BRICS BUSINESS COUNCIL MEMBERS 10

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS 14

WORKING GROUPS 20

1. Agribusiness 20
2. Aviation 26
3. Digital Economy and Artificial Intelligence 30
4. Energy, Green Economy and Climate 36
5. Financial Services 44
6. Infrastructure, Transport and Logistics 52
7. Manufacturing 58
8. Skills Development, Applied Technology and Innovation 64
9. Trade And Investment 74

ANNEX A – SECRETARIATS AND COORDINATION TEAM 80

FOREWORD

The BRICS Business Council (BBC) is pleased to present the 2025 Annual Report to the governments of the BRICS member countries. This edition marks a pivotal moment for the Council, as it reflects both the momentum of an expanded membership and a renewed sense of purpose that has been redefining our collective agenda.

With the recent inclusion of Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia, the BRICS coalition now accounts for over 48,5% of the global population, nearly 39% of the global GDP and 24% of the total of the world's commercial exchanges[1]. This expansion significantly enhances the group's influence in global trade, energy markets, and investment flows, reinforcing its role as a key platform for shaping a more balanced and multipolar world economy.

The recommendations for the 2025 Annual Report are structured in three integrated sections: high-level recommendation statements that define strategic policy directions for BRICS governments; policy actions that outline concrete steps to implement these recommendations; and 47 private sector initiatives that are action-oriented and designed to leverage the proposed policy recommendations in these areas.

This approach reinforces our commitment to turning strategy into action, leveraging the BRICS countries' collective and complementary strengths to address global challenges and seize emerging opportunities. The future success of BRICS cooperation will rest on the principles of sustainable development, support for innovation, and a balanced consideration of all members' interests.

In this context, the BBC has identified core strategic priorities to deepen economic cooperation. These include improving trade efficiency across BRICS, reducing trade barriers through regulatory cooperation, expanding innovative financial mechanisms to mobilize investment, and enhancing logistics connectivity to stimulate trade and development. We also aim to accelerate the energy transition by diversifying the energy matrix and broader adoption of biofuels, advance industrial decarbonization and circular economy practices, and promote coordinated action to ensure food security in the context of climate change. Furthermore, we are committed to fostering inclusive economic development within the context of digital transformation, cooperating to build trust and governance in the digital economy with a focus on SME's cyber resilience, and strengthening technological cooperation in emerging and high technologies to accelerate innovation.

We invite readers to explore the pages of this Report to gain insight into the achievements and forward-looking initiatives shaping the future of BRICS collaboration. Together, we will continue to make progress in economic integration by promoting ***Business Cooperation for an Inclusive and Sustainable Future***.

1 BRICS Data Portal (2025) and UK Parliament Research Briefing "BRICS group: Overview and recent expansion" (December 2024).

SIGNATURES



Mr. Francisco Gomes Neto
Federative Republic of Brazil



Mr. Liao Lin
People's Republic of China



Mr. Ahmed Al-Wakil
Arab Republic of Egypt



Mr. Taye Leta Elema
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia



Mr. Onkar S Kanwar
Republic of India



Republic of Indonesia



Mr. Majid Ghassemi
Islamic Republic of Iran



Mr. Sergey Katyrin
Russian Federation



Mrs. Busi Mabuza
South Africa



H.E. Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem
United Arab Emirates

ABOUT BRICS BUSINESS COUNCIL

Background

The BRICS Business Council (BBC) was established in 2013 during the Fifth BRICS Summit in Durban, South Africa, with the goal of strengthening economic, trade and investment cooperation among member countries. Initially composed of business leaders from the five founding nations—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—the Council underwent expansion in 2024 with the inclusion of Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates, and in 2025, with Indonesia. This expansion has not only diversified the Council's composition but has also broadened its reach and enhanced its potential for cooperation among emerging economies.

With a clear mission to foster dialogue between the business community and governments, the BBC works to identify and overcome barriers to trade and investment, promoting a more accessible and dynamic business environment for all member countries. The key delivery is the BRICS Business Council's Annual Report, with recommendations approved by the Global Council in the BBC's Annual Plenary Meeting and delivered to the Heads of State at the BRICS Summit.

Governance

The Council consists of 5 executive members per member country and is supported by nine specialized working groups who meet regularly to discuss priority issues and develop strategic recommendations for BRICS leaders. These groups cover critical sectors such as Agribusiness, Aviation, Digital Economy and Artificial Intelligence, Energy, Green Economy and Climate, Financial Services, Infrastructure, Manufacturing, Skills Development, Applied Technology and Innovation, and Trade and Investment. Each working group is chaired by an industry leader and supported by subject matter experts.

The Council convenes twice a year: at the Mid-Term Meeting and the Annual Plenary Meeting. The latter coincides with the annual BRICS Summit, bringing together heads of state, policymakers, and business leaders to present key recommendations and reinforce economic cooperation within the grouping.

Through its structured governance, thematic working groups, and high-level engagements, the BBC continues to serve as a critical institutional mechanism to strengthen the partnership between the business sector and BRICS governments. Its activities contribute to the promotion of a shared vision of sustainable growth, economic integration, and enhanced global competitiveness among emerging markets.

BRICS BUSINESS COUNCIL MEMBERS

BRAZIL

Francisco Gomes Neto
Chief Executive Officer, Embraer

Daniel Godinho
Sustainability and Corporate Affairs Director, WEG

Francisco Lassalvia
Executive Vice President, Banco do Brasil

Bruno Ferla
VP of M&A, International Legal Affairs, Institutional Relations and Sustainability at BRF and Marfrig

Gustavo Pimenta
Chief Executive Officer, Vale

CHINA

Liao Lin
Chairman, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China

Dai Houliang
Chairman, China National Petroleum Corporation

Wan Min
Chairman, China COSCO SHIPPING

Lyu Jun
Chairman, China Datang Corporation

Yu Xubo
Chairman, China General Technology Group

EGYPT

Ahmed Al-Wakil
Chairman, Federation of Egyptian Chambers

Ahmed El Sewedy
Chairman, El Sewedy Electric Group

Mohamed El-Etreby
Chairman, Federation of Arab Banks

Alaa Ezz
Secretary General, Union of African Chambers

Sherif El Gabaly
Chairman, Polyserve Group

ETHIOPIA

Edao Abdi Wosho
President, Ethiopian Pulses, Oilseeds Exporters Ass

Abebe Gebreselassie
Genereal Director, Ethiopian Leather Industries Ass

Gizat Worku Kebede
General Director, Ethiopian Coffee Federation

Dawit Teklemariam
President, Ethiopian Freight Forwarder and Shipping Agents Ass

Taye Leta Elema
Board Member, ECCSA

INDIA

Onkar Kanwar
Chairman, Apollo Tyres Ltd.

Jai Shroff
Global CEO, UPL Ltd.

Anish Shah
Group CEO & Managing Director, Mahindra Group

Pankaj Patel
Chairman, Zydus Lifesciences Ltd

C. S. Setty
Chairman, State Bank of India

IRAN

Majid Ghassemi
CEO, Bank Pasargad

Ali Mousavi Rahimi
CEO, Tunnel Sadd Ariana

Mehdi Ghaem Maghami
CEO, Tidewater Middle East

Hamed Asgari
Deputy Secretary General for International Affairs, Iran Chamber of Commerce

RUSSIA

Sergey Katyrin
President, CCI RF

Igor Shuvalov
CEO, State Development Corporation VEB.RF

Kirill Dmitriev
CEO, Russian Direct Investment Fund

Oleg Belozerov
CEO-Chairman of the Executive Board, JSC Russian Railways

Sergey Chemezov
CEO, Rostec State Corporation

SOUTH AFRICA

Busi Mabuza
Board Chairperson, Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) of South Africa

Ayanda Ntsaluba
Group Executive Director, Discovery Limited

Phuthi Mahanyele-Dabengwa
Group Executive Director, Naspers Limited

Elias Monage
Executive Chairman, Arabela Holdings and President of the Black Business Council

Stavros Nicolaou
Group Senior Executive, Aspen Pharmacare Holdings Ltd and Chairman, Pharmaceuticals Manufactured in SA

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

HE Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem
GROUP CEO & Chairman, DP World

Hana Al Rostamani
Group CEO, First Abu Dhabi Bank

HE Mohamed Saif Al Suwaidi
Director General, Abu Dhabi Fund for Development

HE Helal Saeed Al Marri
Director General, Department of Economy and Tourism

Omar Abdulla Al Futtaim
CEO & Vice Chairman of the Al-Futtaim Group



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Agribusiness

Recommendation 1 – Develop a cooperation agenda among BRICS countries to ensure food security and foster sustainable agricultural development.

- Policy Action 1.1 – Create a cooperation program for investments in logistics and storage infrastructure in BRICS countries, integrating smart tech to reduce post-harvest losses and boost food distribution.
- Policy Action 1.2 – Establish an Integrated Regulatory Framework for Food Security, aiming to harmonize sanitary and phytosanitary standards among BRICS countries.

Recommendation 2 – Establish a BRICS program for regenerative agriculture and degraded land recovery.

- Policy Action 2.1 - Establish a specialized environmental credit market to finance regenerative agriculture practices and ecosystem restoration in BRICS.
- Policy Action 2.2 - Financial support for farmers, especially small and medium-sized properties, to transition to regenerative agriculture, promoting a BRICS label and harmonizing environmental criteria.

Aviation

Recommendation 1 – Increase air traffic routes between BRICS countries.

- Policy Action1.1 – Develop the Multilateral Air Service Agreement (MASA) for BRICS nations.
- Policy Action 1.2 – Promote exchange between BRICS business communities through expedited VISA procedures, particularly for business travelers.

Recommendation 2 – Reduce carbon emissions in the aviation sector using Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF).

- Policy Action 2.1 – Stimulate the increase in SAF production in BRICS countries through cooperation of best practices in applied public policy.
- Policy Action 2.2 – Develop tax incentives for airlines and airports to reduce the acquisition cost of SAF and to develop infrastructure for appropriate SAF storage and distribution.

Digital Economy and Artificial Intelligence

Recommendation 1 – Foster inclusive economic development in the digital economy for individuals and businesses.

- Policy Action 1.1 – Enable robust investment in digital infrastructure and multiple connectivity platforms to support a growing demand for increased data traffic and innovative technological applications, benefiting even remote and underserved areas.
- Policy Action 1.2 – Establish national support systems dedicated to data sharing and defense against cyber-attacks, responsible for developing sector-specific toolkits tailored for MSMEs and offering technical assistance and implementation guidance.

Recommendation 2 – Cooperate to establish trust and governance in the digital economy by fostering public-private partnerships to accelerate digitalization and AI applications.

- Policy Action 2.1 – Foster government collaboration to accelerate digital trade among BRICS countries through secure channels, facilitating customs and logistics processes.
- Policy Action 2.2 – Encourage public-private partnerships to accelerate the digitalization and deployment of scalable technology solutions, including AI applications, in public services with high societal impact, such as health, education and agriculture.

Energy, Green Economy and Climate

Recommendation 1 – Accelerate the adoption of renewable energy sources and drive the clean energy transition across BRICS**.**

- Policy Action 1.1 – Develop a coordinated strategy among BRICS nations to enhance infrastructure scale production of clean energy sources, including joint investments in R&DI and sustainable supply chains.
- Policy Action 1.2 – Create a unified regulatory framework for all clean energy sources, align sustainability criteria, blending mandates, and certification processes across BRICS countries.

Recommendation 2 – Advance circular economy adoption by promoting resource efficiency and integrating renewables and sustainable practices into industrial and urban development.

- Policy Action 2.1 – Develop a harmonized set of policies and regulatory guidelines to standardize circular economy practices across BRICS countries.
- Policy Action 2.2 – Foster innovation and investment in circular solutions and renewables by providing financial incentives, access to green credit, R&DI and development in sustainable technologies.

Financial Services

Recommendation 1 – Strengthen the BRICS financial ecosystem by expanding access to capital for SMEs through innovation and inclusive policy reform.

- Policy Action 1.1 – Broaden access to development finance as well as trade finance for SMEs.
- Policy Action 1.2 – Promote digital financial innovation and regulatory inclusiveness.

Recommendation 2 – Promote expansion of BRICS sustainable finance instruments.

- Policy Action 2.1 – Harmonize taxonomies and standards for sustainable finance instruments, while sustainability-linked bonds and loans should be made interoperable and consistent, to strengthen regulatory alignment, promote cross-border investments, and enhance transparency in disclosures and improve market confidence.
- Policy Action 2.2 – Develop and scale green financial instruments in BRICS countries by enhancing risk mitigation mechanisms and standardization frameworks, to mobilize long-term private and public capital for climate action and sustainable development.

Infrastructure, Transport and Logistics

Recommendation 1 – Improve logistics connectivity among BRICS countries to stimulate trade growth and economic development.

- Policy Action 1.1 – Establish a joint Task Force between BBC Secretariat and competent government authorities to identify the development of new Infrastructure for logistical routes.
- Policy Action 1.2 – Guarantee continuous work between the governments involved in creating and maintaining logistic routes to improve connectivity between BRICS countries based on tangible freight and/or passenger demand studies across BRICS presidencies.

Recommendation 2 – Cooperate with NDB and other institutions to facilitate financing for infrastructure projects.

- Policy Action 1.1 – Create a fund for private companies in the infrastructure sector within the New Development Bank.
- Policy Action 2.2 – Create a fast-track process for low carbon emission projects to obtain financing within NDB.

Manufacturing

Recommendation 1 – Accelerate the green transition across BRICS production chains through the adoption of circular economy principles and decarbonizing technologies**.**

- Policy Action 1.1 – Establish a collaborative BRICS framework for sustainable manufacturing development, leveraging a dedicated financial mechanism and harmonized regulatory standards to accelerate the transition to renewable energy and climate-resilient infrastructure.
- Policy Action 1.2 – Accelerate the adoption and development of green technologies within BRICS nations through strategic collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Recommendation 2 – Strengthen technological cooperation between BRICS companies to drive innovation, accelerate manufacturing modernization, and ensure equitable access to key technologies.

- Policy Action 2.1 – Secure technological advancement and enhanced autonomy through strategically negotiated intellectual property agreements and collaborative research funding.
- Policy Action 2.2 – Enhance the digital economy within BRICS nations, particularly for SMEs, through robust digital infrastructure development and targeted digital adoption programs

Skills Development, Applied Technology and Innovation

Recommendation 1 – Expand reskilling initiatives in high technologies and green transformation areas to support workforce adaptation to future skills.

- Policy Action 1.1 – Enhance workforce skills in high technologies and green transformation areas expanding capacity-building initiatives and consolidating training foundations through collaboration between Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), higher education system and the productive sector.
- Policy Action 1.2 – Develop financing mechanisms for large-scale roll-out of workers' reskilling and upskilling programs, and improve educational technological infrastructure.

Recommendation 2 – Promote business-government collaboration in TVET, higher education and employability agendas, focusing on skills development in emerging fields and high technologies.

- Policy Action 2.1 – Strengthen applied research programs by fostering partnerships between industry and academic institutions, with a focus on high technologies and emerging fields.
- Policy Action 2.2 – Bringing TVET, higher education system, and the economic sectors together to enhance the formulation of labour policies, orienting them towards employability and cross-sector reallocation of workers.

Trade and Investment

Recommendation 1 – Reduce trade barriers among BRICS countries through regulatory cooperation and digitalizing trade processes.

- Policy Action 1.1 – Promote regulatory cooperation among BRICS countries to reduce unnecessary trade barriers by aligning non-tariff measures, increasing regulatory convergence and fostering sustainable trade, in line with international commitments and in support of revitalizing the multilateral trading system.
- Policy Action 1.2 – Advance the digitalization of trade processes across BRICS countries to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and facilitate seamless cross-border transactions.

Recommendation 2 – Facilitate investments and transfer of results among BRICS countries.

- Policy Action 2.1 – Promote negotiation and adoption of Investments Agreements
- Policy Action 2.2 – Facilitate FDI and business result transfers across BRICS by ensuring smooth profit repatriation, strengthening IP protections, promoting technology and capacity building cooperation, and fostering regulatory convergence to create a stable, transparent investment environment.



WORKING GROUPS

1. AGRIBUSINESS

Context

The agri-food system employs approximately 40% of the global workforce[2] and plays a key role in food security and trade. BRICS countries, including recent additions, produce around 5 billion tons of food[3], accounting for over 50% of global production. They are crucial not only to the global food supply but also to the trade of agricultural commodities, positioning the group as a strategic player in addressing the world's growing food demand. Their crop diversity and varying levels of system development present unique opportunities for cooperation and innovation.

With over 2.3 billion people facing moderate or severe food insecurity globally[4], BRICS countries are uniquely positioned to strengthen global food security through more resilient and diversified supply chains. Fostering the inclusion of small and medium-scale farmers is essential to increase production capacity, reduce vulnerabilities, and ensure more stable access to food at both local and global levels.

Global trade has faced growing instability due to rising protectionist measures, such as a 70% increase in non-tariff barriers in the agri-food sector over the past decade. In this context, cooperation among BRICS countries becomes even more critical to mitigate disruptions, safeguard food security, and ensure sustainable development.

Agricultural innovation is a strategic priority for this group, and progress is expected from emerging technologies, sustainable methods, and increased market integration. Regenerative practices and biotechnology have the potential to increase production by 40%[5] and improve environmental outcomes. At the same time, stronger regulatory alignment and better access to key inputs can fast-track value chain integration and enhance global competitiveness.

The BBC Agribusiness Working Group aims to position this forum as a platform to advance a coordinated agenda across innovation, trade, sustainability, and food security. By aligning priorities and fostering collaboration, the Council seeks to translate shared ambitions into concrete outcomes that benefit producers, consumers, and the broader agri-food system.

2025 Working Group Composition

Leader:
Helena Araújo – BRF – Brazil

Co-Leaders:
Mikhail Sterkin – PhosAgro – Russia
Sagar Kaushik – UPL Ltd. – India
Chen Gang – COFCO Corporation – China
Wandile Sihlobo – Agbiz – South Africa
Abdulla bin Damithan – DP World – United Arab Emirates
A. Torknezhad – Modalal Group – Iran
Helmy Aly Eisa – Nahdet Misr – Egypt

Number of members: 120

2 UN FAO Statistics, Estimating Global and Country-Level Employment in Agrifood Systems 2023
3 UN FAO Statistics, Crops and Livestock production quantity in 2023
4 FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2024
5 World Economic Forum, What are the benefits of regenerative agriculture?

Recommendation 1

Develop a cooperation agenda among BRICS countries to ensure food access, quality, and safety, promoting research and the use of smart agricultural technologies, focusing on increasing productivity, reducing waste, and fostering sustainable agricultural development.

Policy action 1.1

Create a cooperation program for investments in logistics and storage infrastructure in BRICS countries, integrating smart technologies to reduce post-harvest losses and enhance food distribution efficiency.

Suggestions for governments:

- Develop smart logistics corridors and digital trading platforms, leveraging data and automation to improve the flow of production and access to regional and international markets.
- Support for small and medium-sized producers through access to innovative storage solutions, real-time tracking systems, and efficient, technology-enabled transportation networks.
- Promote public-private partnerships to finance infrastructure projects, using instruments such as investment funds, blended finance, and targeted credit lines with a focus on agritech-driven solutions

Policy action 1.2

Establish an Integrated Regulatory Framework for Food Security, aiming to harmonize sanitary and phytosanitary standards, ensuring greater predictability and facilitating food trade among BRICS countries.

Suggestions for governments:

- Align Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards, developing a common certification system for agricultural products, based on international standards, to facilitate trade flows and reduce non-tariff barriers.
- Mutual Recognition of Inspections and Certifications, adopting an equivalence protocol among BRICS regulatory agencies to avoid duplication of processes and expedite product clearance.
- Establish a “Green Channel for Agricultural Products” whitelist system under the BRICS Customs Cooperation Strategy Framework. Enterprises meeting the harmonized certification standards to be included in the whitelistfor faster customs clearance.
- Create a Shared Regulatory Database, developing a digital platform to integrate information on food safety standards, sanitary risks, and best regulatory practices.

Initiatives

Pro Agro Lectorium (Russia)

About: ProAgro Lectorium is an open-access educational platform designed to promote responsible and sustainable agriculture across BRICS countries. Developed in partnership with leading universities, the initiative aims to qualify a new generation of farmers and agricultural professionals equipped with advanced agritechnologies and sustainability principles. The platform offers high-quality video lectures delivered by renowned scientists and agri-industry experts, focusing on cutting-edge topics such as fertilizer production, nutrient management, silicon in agriculture, soil and plant health, carbon sequestration, heavy metals in soils, climate-smart farming, and livestock management throught a digital hub.

Expected outcomes: Foster the dissemination of agricultural knowledge and accelerate the adoption of climate and environment-smart technologies across the BRICS region. Continued engagement from BRICS members is anticipated, with an annual contribution target of 15 new lectures per country.

Know more:

Recommendation 2

Establish a BRICS program for regenerative agriculture and degraded land recovery, enabling member countries to adopt an environmental and financial compensation system to incentivize sustainable practices in agriculture and livestock farming.

Policy action 2.1

Establish a specialized environmental credit market to finance regenerative agriculture practices and ecosystem restoration in BRICS, enabling companies and countries to offset emissions.

Suggestions for governments:

- Develop a Common Legal and Regulatory Framework to harmonize standard sharing technical and environmental criteria for regenerative agriculture and ecosystem restoration projects across BRICS countries.
- Mobilize public-private partnerships to provide capacity building, technical assistance and training to farmers, cooperatives, and communities to develop eligible projects.
- Develop a BRICS-wide model for carbon credit generation by smallholder farmers, including data collection, verification, and analytics, to incentivize low-carbon practices and support agricultural decarbonization.

Policy action 2.2

Financial support for farmers, especially small and medium-sized properties, to transition to regenerative agriculture, promoting a BRICS label and harmonizing environmental criteria.

Suggestions for governments:

- Request the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) and other development banks create or expand specific financing lines for small and medium-sized producers interested in adopting regenerative agriculture practices.
- Encourage the creation of a BRICS label for regenerative products, with harmonized environmental criteria among member countries, in order to promote sustainable practices in both intra-BRICS and international trade.
- Partnerships among research institutes, universities, and productive sectors to disseminate knowledge on soil regeneration, agroforestry, and sustainable land use.
- Explore a BRICS-wide framework for targeted subsidies to support sustainable practices such as organic agriculture, efficient irrigation, and carbon-smart solutions. A coordinated subsidy approach could accelerate adoption, reduce transition costs, and contribute to long-term agricultural resilience across different markets.

Initiatives

CEFENP – Center of Excellence in Fertilizers and Plant Nutrition (Brazil)

About: CEFENP is a strategic initiative under Brazil's National Fertilizer Plan, aimed at transforming the fertilizer sector through innovation, sustainability, and enhanced self-sufficiency. Coordinated by Sinprifert and MAPA, CEFENP promotes a national and international platform for collaboration on sustainable inputs, bridging science, industry, and government. The initiative combines a centralized coordination hub in Rio de Janeiro with a network of eight thematic regional hubs focused on specific fertilizer innovation areas (e.g., phosphate, potash, bioinputs, circular economy). It also includes a Digital Innovation Hub to foster connections among startups, researchers, and producers, and offers shared infrastructure for technology scaling and validation.

Expected outcomes: CEFENP is expected to deliver tropical solutions to reduce fertilizer-related emissions and enhance a country's autonomy in agricultural inputs. It will foster regional value chains, applied innovation, and capacity building through a virtual academy. Its transferable model supports South-South cooperation in soil health, bio-based inputs, and low-emission agriculture. The initiative contributes to resilient food systems in the Global South, aligned with climate goals and Brazil's COP 30 leadership.

Know more:

Centre Of Excellence (COE) for Water Conservation in Agriculture (India)

About: Establish Centre of Excellence (COE) for Water Conservation in Agriculture. COE to focus towards developing & up-scaling technologies which help reduce water consumption in key water guzzling crops (Sugarcane & Rice). Collaboration between agriculture university, sugar mills, private sector, farmer producer organization. Develop best practices with quantified outcome in reduction of water use in the crops. An integrated initiative in the form of sustainable practice to be shared with BRICS member countries.

Expected outcomes: About 30% reduction in water during the crop cycle with yield penalty. Based on data verified by government research institutes.

Know more:

India-BRICS Agri-Tech Corridor (India)

About: In 2021, under India's BRICS presidency, this initiative was launched to enhance collaboration across BRICS nations in the field of agricultural technology and innovation. Since its inception, it has been regularly featured in BRICS annual reports, underscoring its strategic importance in advancing agricultural development and cooperation. Exploring possible BRICS collaborations in this area will be beneficial for all countries, bringing technology solutions to various challenges through shared innovation, technology exchange, and support for emerging agri-tech enterprises in BRICS economies.

Expected outcomes: Explore setting up of BRICS regional corridors for broad basing tech Innovations in solving multitude of challenges prevalent in the agricultural value chain. And building such regional corridors can provide catalytic support for cross border engagements, promote research and knowledge sharing and build cross border incubation support for Agritech Start-ups.

Know more: Mr. Vikramjit Singh Sahney (Chair), vssahney@sungroupindia.com and sarita.koli@ficci.com



WORKING GROUPS

2. AVIATION

Context

The aviation sector of BRICS plays a crucial role in the global economy, but faces significant logistical and sustainability challenges, such as: 1) the lack of direct flights between the member states; 2) the extremely low supply of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAFs), necessary for the sector to achieve its carbon reduction targets; and 3) the increasing need of human capital development for both the industrial and commercial aviation sectors.

BRICS countries need more direct flights to improve the efficiency of the aviation sector and the integration of businesses and individuals. Direct flights reduce travel time and carbon emissions, making aviation more sustainable, and increasing connectivity, economic development, and tourism among BRICS countries. However, many destinations in the region are still not served by direct flights, resulting in longer travel times and more carbon emissions. Air services agreements, investments in new routes and more efficient aircraft can help to address this issue.

Furthermore, the current production of SAFs is insufficient to meet the demand of the BRICS aviation sector, which is projected to grow significantly in the coming decades. According to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)[6], SAFs can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to 80% compared to conventional aviation fuels, a necessary solution for the sustainability challenge of the aviation sector. Adequate policies and incentives can stimulate the production of SAFs, helping to reduce their elevated costs. In addition, Investments in infrastructure, such as fuel storage and distribution facilities, are needed to enable wider use of SAFs.

The development of human capital is becoming increasingly critical for both the industrial and commercial aviation sectors. The rapid evolution of technology, the growing demand for operational efficiency, and the need to enhance customer experience are driving the need for more advanced and specialized skills. Moreover, safety remains a top priority in aviation, requiring rigorous and ongoing training. Human capital development not only boosts productivity and efficiency but also fosters innovation and competitiveness. Therefore, investing in human capital development is key to sustainable growth and long-term success in the industrial and commercial aviation sectors.

2025 Working Group Composition

Leader:
José Serrador – Embraer – Brazil

Co-Leaders:
Alexey Ivanov – Rostech – Russia
Ahmed Adel – EgyptAir Holding Company – Egypt
Rajesh Arora – GMR Airports Limited – India
Hou Soung – Commercial Aircraft Corporation of China – China
Mpumi Mpofu – Airports Company South Africa – South Africa
Seyed Reza Mousavi – Iran Air Tour – Iran

Number of members: 94

6 Source: ICAO ENV Report, 2022.

Recommendation 1

Increase air traffic routes between the BRICS countries.

Policy action 1.1

Develop the Multilateral Air Service Agreement (MASA) for BRICS nations.

Suggestions for governments:

- Supporting the proposed MASA and increasing the viability of adding direct flights between BRICS countries, the Tourism and Trade promotion bodies of BRICS nations should collaborate to drive passenger and cargo demand among BRICS countries. Boosting demand can expedite the operationalization of direct flights.

Policy action 1.2

Promote exchange between BRICS business communities through expedited VISA procedures, particularly for business travelers.

Initiatives

Route Pipeline Task Force (Brazil)

About: Create a private sector-led task force on a voluntary basis to identify a route pipeline with potential routes among BRICS countries, currently not operated and that could benefit with strong air travel demand.

Expected outcomes: Regularly meet to discuss new routes that can be created between BRICS countries and foster greater alignment between their respective aviation companies.

Skills Development Aviation Academy (Brazil)

About: Cooperation project between Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) providers and aviation industry to revisit the curricula and enhance professional human capital for the industrial and commercial Aviation sector.

Expected outcomes: Participation in the Auditorium of the Skills development Working Group held on the 27th of May, presenting the priorities of upskilling and re-skilling of the human capital of the aviation sector.

Recommendation 2

Reduce carbon emissions in the aviation sector using Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF).

Policy action 2.1

Stimulate the increase in SAF production in BRICS countries through cooperation of best practices in applied public policy.

Policy action 2.2

Develop tax incentives for airlines and airports to reduce the acquisition cost of SAF and to develop infrastructure for appropriate SAF storage and distribution.

Suggestions for governments:

- Identify BRICS countries which produce scalable quantities of feedstock to produce SAF and engage with global SAF producers to explore opportunities for technology and best practices transfers.
- Enable feedstock producers to increase input volume for biobased SAF by effective regulation framework (a.o. eligibility of crops), incentives and easy to access certification-system (book & claim-system).



WORKING GROUPS

3. DIGITAL ECONOMY AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Context

The rapid pace of technological change is significantly reshaping the digital economy landscape, impacting the wways we interact in society and work, and access services. According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)[7], in 2024 around 68% of the global population used the internet and a recent Soho Survey[8] revealed that up to 50% of Micro, Small and Medium Entreprises (MSMEs) IT budget has been allocated to cloud computing services. n that context, the swift adoption of Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) is particularly remarkable, especially as it garnered over one million users in five days after its launch. However, most large language models (LLMs) often fail to capture the cultural and linguistic differences that exist in BRICS countries, reason why it is essential to cultivate national capabilities in AI development and training.

This rapid uptake underlines the immense potential of emerging technologies and demonstrates how AI is driving a fast-changing scenario across various economic sectors and public services. Such accelerated changes necessitate continuous adaptation and learning for both individuals and businesses, especially MSMEs, to keep up with the evolving technological trends and leverage these advancements to their full potential.

To harness the potential of digital transformation, it is necessary to increase investment in connectivity infrastructure and clean energy generation, as well as in research and development (R&D) in cutting-edge technologies. This is essential to meet the growing demand for increased data storage and faster data flow, thereby facilitating AI deployment even in remote and underserved areas. Prioritizing R&D ensures continuous innovation, enabling the development of advanced technologies and innovative solutions that enhance infrastructure efficiency and promote long-term sustainability, supporting economic growth and development across BRICS countries.

GSMA research[9] reveals that in 2024 around 350 million people still live in areas not covered by mobile broadband. Bridging the digital divide also requires rolling-out broad digital literacy programmes and assure device affordability, as the majority of individuals who remain offline live in areas with connectivity infrastructure, but simply do not use the technology. Equally important is the readiness of businesses to adopt robust cybersecurity measures and data protection protocols, which are essential for maintaining the integrity and trustworthiness of digital operations. IBM's Cost of Data Breach Report for 2024[10] reveals that it still takes around 204 days to identify and contain a breach. In this scenario, it is imperative that MSMEs are supported to implement a safe digital transformation.

Furthermore, businesses and governments need to collaborate to accelerate the digitalization and deployment of AI applications, especially in public services with high societal impact. Education, health, trade, logistics, agriculture, rural development and supply chain resilience are core areas that affect businesses and individuals. Having clear ethical principles for AI, ensuring cultural values of BRICS countries are considered, can effectively harness the benefits of digital transformation in society and contribute to an inclusive economic development.

2025 Working Group Composition

Leader:
Ailtom Nascimento – Stefanini Group – Brazil

Co-Leaders:
Andrey Neznamov – Sberbank – Russia
Mohamed Nasr – Telecom Egypt – Egypt
Himanshu Kapania – Aditya Birla Group/ Vodafone Idea Ltd – India
Meng Shusen – China Unicom – China
Ziaad Suleman – Cassava Tech – South Africa
Pradeep Desai – DP World – United Arab Emirates
Majid Ghassemi – Bank Pasargad – Iran

Number of members: 137

7 ITU. Statistics. Individuals using the internet. Available at: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/pages/stat/default.aspx

8 Business Today. IT and cloud Investments are on the rise as MSMEs tackle digital challenges. Available at: https://www.businesstoday.in/technology/news/story/it-and-cloud-investments-are-on-the-rise-as-msmes-tackle-digital-challenges-finds-zoho-survey-434861-2024-06-27

9 GSMA. The State of Mobile Internet Connectivity. Report 2024. Available at: https://www.gsma.com/r/somic/

10 IBM. Cost of Data Breach Report for 2024. Available at: https://www.ibm.com/reports/data-breach

Recommendation 1

Foster inclusive economic development and prepare a resilient and dynamic workforce for a growing digital economy, including individuals and businesses, capable of enhancing efficiency and productivity with security and trust.

Policy action 1.1

Enable robust investment in digital infrastructure and multiple connectivity platforms, including 5G, fiber, microwave, fixed wireless access and satellite communication networks, to support a growing demand for increased data traffic and innovative technological applications, benefiting even remote and underserved areas.

Suggestion for governments:

- Adopt enabling regulatory frameworks and financial regimes tailored for cutting-edge technologies, incentivizing public-private investment in digital infrastructure and considering bandwidth spectrum allocation for different sectors, to optimize performance and ensure critical areas, such as health, education and trade, fully leverage technological advancements.
- Invest in 5G infrastructure deployment and technology adoption to bridge the digital divide by addressing coverage and usage gaps, ensuring affordable internet-enabled devices and services.
- Foster public-private partnerships to enhance multiple skillsets including soft skills, digital literacy and intellectual capital formation in high technologies and emerging areas.
- Strengthen policy frameworks to drive industry-university-research collaboration, prioritizing funding for cross-disciplinary R&D to advance digital technologies and general-purpose large models, enabling the integration of country-specific priorities, including legal, ethical, and social considerations.

Policy action 1.2

Establish national support systems dedicated to data sharing and defense against cyber-attacks, responsible for developing sector-specific cybersecurity toolkits and resources tailored to MSMEs capabilities, taking into account digital maturity and budget constraints, and offering broad technical assistance and implementation guidance.

Suggestion for governments:

- Establish a national support center to combat cyber threats, including defense readiness, attack reporting and accelerated responses to cyber-attacks, bringing public-private stakeholders together to develop guidelines and standards, fostering a collaborative ecosystem for real-time defense strategies across industries.
- Share with international partners best practices on cyber threats, coordinate on handling threats and defense.
- Develop cloud solutions and funding mechanisms for MSMEs to adopt digital technologies and AI, enhancing productivity growth and cybersecurity.
- Deploy training programs tailored to varying digital maturity levels and business sizes to boost cyber resilience.

Initiatives

BRICS Digital Lab (Brazil):

About: The digital lab is envisioned as a strategic platform that connects businesses, innovators and researchers across the BRICS countries with a focus on facilitating exchange of knowledge on high technologies applications, foster collaborations and partnerships to leverage technological and intellectual capabilities.

Expected Outcomes: The initiative aims to foster technology transfer opportunities between BRICS countries and share sector specific solutions aimed at increasing productivity and efficiency in allocating resources.

Know more: Ailtom Nascimento (abnascimento@stefanini.com)

BRICS Cybersecurity Talent Accelerator and Multinational Solutions Hub (South Africa):

About: As a joint initiative from STI WG and the Digital Economy and AI WG, the talent acceleration purpose is to maximize skills training, hackathons and competitions' results to support intelligence sharing and combat cyber threats. Based on standardized curricula and certifications on topics related to cross-border AI, IoT, encryption solutions, among others, the initiative aims to build a digital firewall and bridge talents across BRICS countries, contributing to secure frameworks for the digital economy.

Expected Outcomes: The initiative expects to endorse CTAM-SH as a flagship initiative, launch a Cyber Curriculum Committee, and pilot activities in South Africa and Brazil. It will also include the organization of an R&D Architecture Meeting and the hosting of a BRICS Cyber-Hackathon in the fourth quarter of 2025.

Know more: Tshepho Nkoe (tshephonkoe@gmail.com) or Zinhle Mncube (zmncube@edgegrowth.com)

Recommendation 2

Cooperate to establish trust and governance in the digital economy by fostering public-private partnerships that accelerate the digitalization and roll-out of AI applications, fully harnessing the benefits of digital transformation.

Policy action 2.1

Foster government collaboration to accelerate digital trade among BRICS countries through secure channels, facilitating customs and logistics processes.

Suggestion for governments:

- Develop frameworks, standards and protocols in close coordination with the private sector, enabling the implementation of blockchain or other secure channels, and smart contract-based applications in digital trade, logistics and supply chain tracking.
- Implement pilot projects for digital trade and logistics in key sectors, like health and agriculture, leveraging Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) to transact internationally and record essential information, ensuring that trade stakeholders have access to information.
- Conduct research on the Web3 landscape across BRICS countries to gain a clear understanding of the regulatory environment, blockchain technologies, and crypto-digital asset markets.

Policy action 2.2

Encourage public-private partnerships to accelerate the digitalization and deployment of scalable technology solutions, including AI applications, in public services with high societal impact, such as health, education and agriculture.

Suggestion for governments:

- Formulate multilingual and high-quality shareable generative AI training datasets, thereby protecting and enabling open-source ecosystems.
- Implement regulatory sandboxes for AI applications, including areas of data governance and intellectual property, incorporating the promotion of a positive regulation that incentivizes public-private partnerships and incorporates robust governance, ethical guidelines and human oversight protections.
- Invest in clean energy power grids and cost-effective digital infrastructure and green data centers to support a sustainable, widespread, deployment of AI applications, focusing on expanding local data centers that facilitate efficient data storage and processing, AI models training and inference, and access across public services.
- Support and finance the adoption of low-cost technologies by MSMEs, customized by startups, thereby enhancing the spread of digitalization in smaller businesses.
- Develop a BRICS Ethical Framework for Artificial Intelligence to ensure that the development and implementation of AI are aligned with unique socio-economic contexts.

Initiatives

AI Alliance Network (Russia):

About: The Alliance provides the opportunity to exchange views, share information and expertise, and enhance cooperation in the field of artificial intelligence. Its goals are to accelerate the development and deployment of AI technologies in the BRICS through collective development of their competences in the field of AI to enhance sustainable long-term prosperity, social and economic development.

Expected outcomes: The initiative includes education efforts, with information on 60 AI training programmes from 14 countries available on the Alliance website. In terms of AI governance coordination, it focuses on facilitating the exchange of regulatory experience and collaborating with international bodies such as the UN and BRICS to drive harmonized and effective AI governance. Additionally, the "AI Horizons" Research Initiative aims at identifying and prioritizing research topics with significant medium- and long-term impact, fostering innovation that addresses global challenges.

Know more: https://aianet.org/, Andrei Neznamov (Neznamov.A.V@sberbank.ru)

BRICS Ethical Framework for AI (Russia):

About: The proposal is to create a unified ethical framework for artificial intelligence, using as a foundation the AI Ethics Code developed in Russia with the active participation of the professional community. The Russian Code, signed by over 900 organizations, covers all stages of the AI lifecycle: from development and testing to deployment and use. It is based on core principles such as human-centricity, transparency, fairness, accountability, and safety.

Expected outcomes: The initiative will develop a harmonized international document aligning ethical principles across countries, foster a global culture of responsible AI that accounts for both universal human rights and regional specificities, and support the institutionalization of AI ethics within corporate and professional practices.

Know more: https://ethics.a-ai.ru/, Andrei Neznamov (Neznamov.A.V@sberbank.ru)

Develop a digital trading and logistics platform that allows importers and exporters to access products and logistics services in all BRICS countries (United Arab Emirates and South Africa):

About: A new proposal is being discussed to develop a cross-border digital trading and logistics platform, connecting traders across BRICS countries to access products and logistics facilities. The goal is to evolve towards a platform to increase trade, facilitating a marketplace to buy and sell goods, and a connection of importers and exporters, including solutions for SMEs. The concept is designed to consider the use of blockchain technology and other technology solutions, and requires agreements on common data sharing, in special concerning data privacy.

Expected outcomes: The initiative aims to design an architecture for the digital platform, design a roadmap for the implementation of the digital platform, offer SMEs customized services and solutions, and deliver data-driven insights for digital trade.

Know more: Pradeep Desai (pradeep.desai@dpworld.com) and Zinhle Mncube (zmncube@edgegrowth.com)



WORKING GROUPS

4. ENERGY, GREEN ECONOMY AND CLIMATE

Context

The BBC Green Economy Working Group aims to advance climate and energy priorities across BRICS. As climate change intensifies, BRICS countries—home to 40% of the global population and manufacturing output—face growing energy demand, fossil fuel dependency, and unequal access to clean technologies. Strengthening cooperation is essential to support a just and effective transition, tackling energy insecurity while modernizing outdated infrastructure and expanding access to low-carbon alternatives[11].

Meeting decarbonization targets by 2050 is critical to limiting global warming below 1.5°C. The IPCC warns that emissions must decline by 43% by 2030, or global temperatures could exceed 1.5°C as early as 2031[12]. BRICS countries, responsible for approximately 40% of global GHG emissions, must lead this effort. However, internal disparities, such as varying levels of technological maturity, policy coordination, and access to climate finance, pose obstacles to such an effort. Coordinated leadership is therefore essential for delivering on the Paris Agreement, ensuring shared accountability, and mitigating the worst climate outcomes[13].

The Working Group promotes an integrated approach to decarbonization, focusing on expanding renewables, advancing sustainable biofuels, and boosting energy efficiency through smart grids, electrification, and storage systems. IPCC reports emphasize the urgency of scaling these technologies, along with hydrogen, carbon capture (CCUS), and carbon dioxide removal (CDR). However, fragmented regulations and limited investment in low-carbon R&D still hinder progress. Unlocking climate solutions at scale will require harmonized regulatory frameworks, technology sharing, and stronger public-private partnerships.

Progress toward circular economy goals also faces setbacks due to underdeveloped recycling infrastructure and inconsistent regulations. UNEP estimates that over 2 billion people lack access to waste collection, a challenge mirrored in several BRICS countries. Policy tools such as eco-design, extended producer responsibility (EPR), and sustainable public procurement can promote resource recovery and reduce material waste. A coordinated approach will be key to building scalable, resilient circular systems across BRICS[14].

The transition to a green economy is closely linked to development priorities. Strengthening domestic markets for biofuels, circular products, and clean technologies not only supports emissions reduction but also creates jobs, enhances competitiveness, and drives inclusive growth. Food security—a strategic concern for all BRICS members—is also intertwined with climate resilience. Sustainable biofuels, when tied to agricultural diversification and improved land use, can enhance productivity without threatening ecosystems or expanding deforestation. By aligning regulations, mobilizing joint financing, and investing in cross-border R&D, BRICS can lead the global shift toward sustainable and equitable development.

2025 Working Group Composition

Leader:
Luciana Brum – Vale – Brazil

Co-Leaders:
Andrey Sapozhnikov – En+ Group – Russia
Khaled Abu Bakr – Taqa Arabia – Egypt
Kolluru Krishan – CVC-IIP – India
Dou Lirong – CNPC – China
Dan Marokane – Eskom – South Africa
Tiemen Meester – DP World – United Arab Emirates
Majid Ghassemi – Bank Pasargad – Iran

Number of members: 144

11 Frontiers in Environmental Science (2022) – "Energy Transition in BRICS: Challenges and Strategies" and World Bank Data, Manufacturing, value added (current US$) in 2023

12 IPCC AR6 WGIII Report (2022) – "Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change";

13 IPCC AR6 WGIII Summary for Policymakers – "Mitigation Pathways Compatible with 1.5°C in the Context of Sustainable Development"

14 UNEP (2024) – Global Waste Management Outlook;

Recommendation 1

Accelerate the adoption of renewable energy sources, including biofuels, and drive the clean energy transition across BRICS through policy alignment, knowledge exchange and technological cooperation.

Policy action 1.1

Develop a coordinated strategy among BRICS nations to enhance infrastructure scale production of biofuels and other clean energy sources, such as hydroelectric, photovoltaic, geothermal energy, onshore and offshore wind, green hydrogen, and carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS) technologies linked to bioenergy. This includes joint investments in R&D and in the development of more sustainable supply chains that offer competitive advantages. This framework will facilitate public-private partnerships, unlock international financing, and promote cross-border clean energy projects in bioenergy.

Suggestions for governments:

- Reduce financial barriers to the development and deployment of emerging clean energy technologies and innovative solutions, including biofuels and green hydrogen infrastructure, and green steel technology.
- Enhance energy security by diversifying energy sources and reducing dependency on fossil fuels.
- Accelerate the creation and operationalization of the BRICS Clean Energy Fund (BCEF), with a focus on supporting sustainable energy projects, fair energy transition, strengthening small businesses to increase the capillarity of technologies, and clean technologies of common interest. This includes R&D initiatives to discover and develop advanced biofuel, hydrogen, and green steel technologies.

Policy action 1.2

Create a unified regulatory framework for all clean energy sources, align sustainability criteria, blending mandates, and certification processes across BRICS countries. This will facilitate trade, increase market confidence, and ensure compliance with global environmental commitments.

Suggestions for governments:

- Facilitate intra-BRICS trade and partnerships in clean energy by harmonizing regulatory frameworks and removing existing barriers.
- Encourage the adoption of biofuel production processes aligned with robust sustainability certifications, such as the Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials (RSB), International Sustainability & Carbon Certification (ISCC), and other recognized systems.
- Strengthen legal certainty consumer and investor trust in clean energy sources and technology by ensuring sustainability and quality standards.
- Position BRICS as a global leader in clean energy policy harmonization and innovation.

Initiatives

Densification of collaborative networks in renewable energies (Brazil)

About: The SEBRAE Renewable Energy Hub is a vibrant and dynamic ecosystem that drives the clean energy sector in Brazil, being a reference point for entrepreneurs, small businesses and startups that operate or wish to operate in the wind energy, solar photovoltaic and biogas sectors.

Expected outcomes: Expansion of national governance and exchange among BRICS countries.

Know more:

BRICS Energy Cooperation Forum (I) (China)

About: The BRICS Energy Cooperation Forum was established as a platform for in-depth dialogue between governments and the business community. It aims to facilitate strategic discussions, act as a crucial bridge for identifying potential partnerships, and promote collaboration on energy transition and sustainability priorities.

Expected outcomes: The first edition of the Forum, held under China's coordination, enabled structured exchanges on energy security, infrastructure modernization, and technological cooperation. It laid the groundwork for long-term partnerships between public and private stakeholders across BRICS countries.

Know more:

Bridging Leadership for Young Engineers through Renewable Energy Development and Climate Justice in BRICS Member Countries (Indonesia)

About: A transformative program by IBEKA and Indonesian ministries to train young engineers from BRICS countries in community-based renewable energy and climate justice through hands-on learning, including practical implementation, fostering South-South cooperation and sustainable development.

Expected outcomes: The initiative will train BRICS engineers in implementing renewable energy and climate justice, foster community-based projects in their home country, build a cross-border network for collaboration, and promote energy-driven rural development and equity across underserved regions.

Know more:

BRICS Energy Skills Atlas (Russia)

About: To combine efforts of the BBC WG on Energy, Green Economy and Climate initiative on Energy Skills Atlas and the BRICS Energy Research Cooperation Platform skills work-streams and relevant reports and activities, mapping skills and training needs in energy transition fields to identify gaps and align workforce development strategies.

Expected outcomes: In light of the recent expansion of the BRICS, to assess the current landscape regarding new job opportunities in high-impact areas in energy sector. This could create new opportunities for professionals to transition between job roles within BRICS countries.

Know more: Andrey Sapozhnikov, sapozhnikovai@enplus.ru

Hub for the Integration of Voluntary Carbon Markets[15] (Russia)

About: The Hub is being developed as a common cross-border infrastructure to facilitate the seamless transfer of carbon offsets between national voluntary carbon registries, thereby enhancing the fluidity of local carbon markets while preserving their independence.

Expected outcomes: The expected outcomes of a voluntary carbon offset trading initiative among BRICS countries include more cost-effective emissions reductions by enabling countries and companies to purchase offsets from regions with lower mitigation costs, thus reducing the overall cost of climate action.

Know more:

15 Note: We suggest considering alignment of BRICS voluntary carbon market rules with Article 6 of the Paris Agreement to support coherence and facilitate intra-BRICS emissions trading.

Recommendation 2

Advance circular economy adoption by promoting resource efficiency and integrating renewables and sustainable practices into industrial and urban development.

Policy action 2.1

Develop a harmonized set of policies and regulatory guidelines to standardize circular economy practices across BRICS countries. This framework should include environmental standards, incentives for circular and renewable products and processes, and common criteria for certification and traceability of recyclable and renewable materials.

Suggestions for governments:

- Facilitate intra-BRICS trade in circular materials and sustainable products, ensuring it does not create loopholes for transboundary movement of waste.
- Provide regulatory predictability for companies adopting circular economy models.
- Reduce waste generation and enhance energy and resource efficiency, aligning with global environmental commitments.
- Strengthen BRICS' position as a global leader in integrating the circular economy into economic development.
- Promote a coordinated BRICS strategy for circular economy practices, based on benchmarking, good practice exchange, as well as standardized certification and shared traceability where relevant.
- Strengthen cleaner production practices and energy efficiency as key enablers of the circular economy.

Policy action 2.2

Foster an enabling environment for innovation and investment in circular solutions and renewables by providing financial incentives, access to green credit, and support for research and development in sustainable technologies.

Suggestions for governments:

- Expand access to financing for innovative companies and sustainable and circular projects.
- Expand the circular economy market, generating new employment opportunities, new circular business models, intra-BRICS trade of circular products and economic growth.
- Lower the environmental impact of production and consumption, aligning BRICS with global sustainability goals.
- Accelerate the adoption of emerging technologies in recycling, material efficiency, and energy optimization.
- Disseminate the various scales of biogas generation and promote the emergence of biorefineries to generate higher value-added products.

Initiatives

BRICS Energy Cooperation Forum (II) (China and Brazil)

About: Building upon the outcomes of the initial edition, the second BRICS Energy Cooperation Forum is a joint initiative by China and Brazil. It seeks to deepen prior discussions while integrating circular economy as a cross-cutting theme, highlighting its relevance to energy innovation and sustainability.

Expected outcomes: The upcoming forum will feature a dedicated workshop on circular economy, fostering technical dialogue and experience-sharing among BRICS stakeholders. In light of its expanded agenda, the Forum is also expected to adopt a revised name reflecting its broader thematic focus.

Know more: Luciana Brum (luciana.brum@vale.com) and Mariana Gomes (mariana.firmo.gomes@vale.com)

BRICS voluntary carbon market development[16] (Russia)

About: The initiative was supported at the level of BRICS countries' leaders and governments in 2024. The ultimate goal is to create BRICS liquid cross-border VCM to stimulate BRICS companies to fulfill their climate goals and reduce the carbon footprint.

Expected outcomes: New demand drivers for carbon assets; Removing barriers for VCM; Facilitating the goals of the Paris Agreement

Know more:

UAE Initiatives as a Blue Print (United Arab Emirates)

About: This initiative highlights UAE initiatives like the Zayed Sustainability Prize, World Utilities Congress and Masdar City as models for BRICS. These platforms foster innovation among youth and SMEs, and promote collaboration with industry to accelerate sustainable solutions.

Expected outcomes: In 2025, the initiative aims to inspire BRICS nations to launch similar initiatives that drive innovation in decarbonization and sustainability, engaging youth and SMEs. Expected outcomes include using UAE initiatives as a blueprint for similar events.

Know more: Andy Tam (andy.tam@dpworld.com)

16 Note: We suggest considering alignment of BRICS voluntary carbon market rules with Article 6 of the Paris Agreement to support coherence and facilitate intra-BRICS emissions trading.



WORKING GROUPS

5. FINANCIAL SERVICES

Context

BRICS countries are central to global economic growth and sustainability, but SMEs across these nations continue to face barriers to affordable, accessible financing. Over 50% of SMEs in BRICS economies report limited access to credit, with borrowing costs often exceeding global averages. Tackling this challenge requires not only expanding access to capital but also lowering its cost through financial innovation and ecosystem diversification.

Emerging models can reduce intermediation costs and improve reach, especially in underserved regions. Converged regulations and clear guidelines for alternative financing instruments such as crowdinvestment and IP pledge financing, can further unlock new sources of capital. To scale impact, a blended approach is needed: while institutions like the New Development Bank (NDB) currently provide long-term capital and risk-sharing instruments, national development banks, export credit agencies, fintechs, credit cooperatives, and guarantee schemes must also play a complementary role tailored to local contexts.

The role of financial services is equally crucial to closing the sustainable finance gap. It is estimated that developing countries will need $387 billion annually through 2030 for climate adaptation, with Least Developed Countries facing the highest needs relative to GDP. Taking into consideration the fact that BRICS countries have a high concentration of carbon-intensive industries with significant potential for low-carbon modernization, transition finance may become a significant tool for the technological low-carbon modernization of such industries.

A unified sustainable finance framework—including transition instruments such as taxonomies and financial mechanisms, including loans, bonds, and equity—can enhance regulatory alignment and attract private investment. Green finance mechanisms such as carbon taxes and emissions trading already cover over 20% of global GHG emissions, demonstrating the potential of financial mechanisms in supporting global sustainability efforts and the growing role of private actors, such as through voluntary carbon markets and ESG frameworks.

Digital sustainable finance infrastructure can improve transparency, efficiency, and impact measurement. By advancing innovation and coordination in financial services, BRICS can lead in building a more inclusive, resilient, and climate-aligned financial architecture.

Strengthening regional reinsurance capacity will lower dependence on external markets, improve coverage affordability, and support risk-sharing for infrastructure and agriculture projects to ensure greater economic robustness and food security for the world, in general, and BRICS nations, in particular. Converging credit assessment methodologies can improve accuracy, consistency, and predictability in investment decisions, ensuring risk ratings reflect the unique economic realities of emerging markets[17]. By doing so, BRICS will position itself as a driver of inclusive, sustainable, and future-ready global growth.

To that end, the FSWG has agreed to develop a Feasibility Study on BRICS Reinsurance Capacity, with the objective of mapping the reinsurance capabilities of BRICS member countries to ensure adequate protection, reimbursement, and continuity of coverage. The group has also agreed to facilitate discussions and assess the feasibility of implementing decentralized financial tools and technologies as a means to strengthen and deepen financial integration among BRICS countries. Both initiatives have received the support of BRICS Leaders, as reflected in the Kazan Declaration of the BRICS Summit and in the Joint Statement of the Ministers of Finance and Central Bank Governors in 2024.

2025 Working Group Composition

Leader:
Vinícius Botelho – National Confederation of Financial Institutions – Brazil

Co-Leaders:
Valery Belyakov – Russian Direct Investment Fund – Russia
Tarun Sharma – Exim Bank – India
Zhang Yue – Industrial and Commercial Bank of China – China
David Jarvis – Industrial Development Corporation – South Africa
Raj Jit Singh Wallia – DP World – United Arab Emirates
Majid Ghassemi – Bank Pasargad – Iran

Number of members: 198

17 Bhogal, P. (2017). Rethinking the relevance of existing credit rating agencies to BRICS. Observer Research Foundation

Recommendation 1

Strengthen the BRICS Financial Ecosystem by Expanding Access to Capital for SMEs Through Innovation and Inclusive Policy Reform.

Policy action 1.1

Broaden Access to Development Finance as well as Trade Finance for SMEs.

Suggestions for governments:

- Revise New Development Bank (NDB) eligibility criteria, particularly financial thresholds, credit parameters, and trade finance rules, to strengthen financial inclusion and operational sustainability, while also enabling SMEs to scale and trade more effectively across borders.
- Assess the feasibility, on a voluntary basis, of expanding credit reinsurance and insurance capacity to support SME financing.
- Promote the exchange of methodologies and data practices among BRICS countries to strengthen credit risk and insurance assessment frameworks for SMEs.
- Launch dedicated financing vehicles (e.g., SME funds, government partner-backed programs) to enhance capital access for SMEs. Leverage IP pledge financing, financing with receivables as collateral, revenue-based financing, and structured crowdfunding as credible alternative mechanisms.

Policy action 1.2

Promote digital financial innovation and regulatory inclusiveness.

Suggestions for governments:

- Promote alternative underwriting using payment data, behavioral analytics, and digital collateral instruments (e.g., e-Bills of Lading and e-Promissory Notes) to provide lenders with greater control over security and collateral.
- Encourage the development of technology-based platforms to enhance the efficiency and transparency of regulatory and credit-related processes.
- Develop regulatory frameworks for DeFi, open finance, and alternative instruments.
- Create and strengthen existing SME support agencies to help businesses navigate compliance requirements and get better access to appropriate finance.

Initiatives

Establishment of a BRICS SME Fund

About: Engagement with the NDB on the establishment of the BRICS SME Fund to pilot the projects with financial support from the NDB.

Expected outcomes: Expanded access to finance for SMEs through innovative, collateral/ asset backed loans. Pilot testing of IPPF with credit institutions in BRICS countries. Crowdfunding model development and scaling up for promising SMEs.

BRICS Reinsurance Capacity Feasibility Study

About: Conducting a feasibility studying on BRICS Reinsurance Capacity among BRICS countries under the principle of commercial voluntariness.

Expected outcomes: A clear roadmap for the design and implementation of a support mechanism that ensures reinsurance protection, reimbursement, and continuity of reinsurance coverage and business operations for insured parties, based on the principle of commercial voluntariness. Identification of opportunities to develop and strengthen common competencies and expertise related to the risk landscape and (re)insurance markets across BRICS countries, promoting enhanced cooperation, knowledge sharing, and market stability.

Recommendation 2

Promote the expansion of BRICS sustainable finance instruments.

Policy action 2.1

Harmonize taxonomies and standards for sustainable finance instruments, including green, transition, social, while sustainability-linked bonds and loans should be made interoperable and consistent, to strengthen regulatory alignment, promote cross-border investments, and enhance transparency in disclosures and improve market confidence.

Suggestions for governments:

- Create a BRICS Sustainable Bond Index and Climate change Indexes and respective ETFS aligned with national laws, rules, policies and regulations and shared MRV framework to boost transparency and credibility.
- Foster dialogue regarding BRICS rating agencies and explore common approaches for assessing the "ESG" parameters associated with sustainable finance instruments.
- Hold regulator–private sector dialogues to align sustainability reporting standards.
- Expand Climate Finance beyond taxonomy standardization to include risk mitigation instruments that enhance project bankability and unlock capital for high-risk and capital-intensive climate investments, keeping an integrated and balanced approach between climate mitigation and adaptation.

Policy action 2.2

Develop and scale sustainable financial instruments in BRICS countries by enhancing risk mitigation mechanisms and standardization frameworks, in order to mobilize long-term private and public capital for climate action and sustainable development.

Suggestions for governments:

- Expand standardized public guarantees, including regional mechanisms for risk coverage in sustainable projects, engaging the NDB to test and scale innovative financing structures.
- Integrate forward-looking risk evaluation frameworks to improve credit perception, attract institutional investors, and enable future scalability in green asset markets.
- Foster coordinated action among BRICS development banks to crowd in private capital and act as early-stage risk partners using blended finance models, climate bonds and sukuk, keeping an integrated and balanced approach between climate mitigation and adaptation.
- Build de-risking tools (e.g., credit guarantees, blended finance) and integrated investment vehicles to channel capital into green, transition, and social impact projects.
- Expanded focus and supporting for Social Governance aspects such as special support to women led businesses, startups, governance (e.g. board level support to SMEs for strategic positioning), growth, etc.

Initiatives

BRICS Sustainable Development Network

About: International Platform for regular dialogue and cooperation between business and expert communities of the BRICS countries in Sustainable Development.

Expected outcomes: In 2025, the group expects to facilitate the onboarding of national members and engage key stakeholders which represent business and/or expert communities, such as companies, industrial associations, financial institutions and key expert organizations of the main sectors of the economy who are the key market players in the field of sustainable development and just transition.

Once the platform is established, it will allow the exchange of experience and best practices, development and/or harmonization of existing methodologies in specific areas of sustainable development, support for elaboration of common approaches and standards, development of sustainable financial and investment instruments.

Under Discussion

Consensus on these topics and initiatives has not been reached within the Financial Services Working Group.

Insurance and Reinsurance

The Task Force focuses on deepening and developing integration processes within the BRICS+ through enhanced insurance and reinsurance cooperation. Discussion aim to focus on creating a BRICS Reinsurance Company as an interstate entity with private and government insurer participation on a voluntary basis and forming a BRICS Reinsurance Pool to coordinate existing re/insurance companies on a subscription basis.

The Taskforce is also discussing the relevance of a dedicated BRICS Reinsurance Sub-Track. This sub-track could bring together representatives from BRICS Ministries of Finance (Treasuries), Central Banks, insurance market regulators, academic and research institutions (think tanks, as needed), as well as members of the Task Force on (Re)Insurance Cooperation under the FSWG. Its mandate would be to carry out the BRICS Reinsurance Capacity Feasibility Study (the "Report") and submit it to BRICS governments for consideration and decision-making.

Alliance of BRICS Credit Rating Agencies

In 2024, The Russian Chapter presented proposals on possible harmonization of the methodologies of the participating CRAs in order to facilitate mutual recognition of credit ratings within BRICS.

Initiatives:

Create an alliance among the credit rating agencies of BRICS countries (Alliance of BRICS CRAs), inviting the members to join the proposed Goals and Principles of the Alliance, and take this as a platform for technical exchanges

Creation of an interstate organization that would make fair assessments of the institutional quality of the countries or endowment of such functionality to an existing interstate organization.

BRICS Payment and Fintech

The Payments and Fintech Task Force has been discussing the feasibility of implementing decentralized financial tools and technologies as a means to strengthen and enhance financial integration among BRICS countries.

Initiatives:

Initiatives include BRICS Pay, an entrepreneurial system that allows to make cross-border payments to provide standardized connectivity between national and commercial payment methods in BRICS+ countries; BRICS Clear - an independent decentralized cross-border securities settlement and depositary Platform, an initiative to complement the existing financial market infrastructure with participation on a voluntary basis and to explore appropriate formats for further technical dialogue on settlement and depositary infrastructure among relevant stakeholders. In 2024, The Russian Chapter presented proposals on BRICS DCMS, a decentralized cross-border messaging system.

Establishment of the BRICS Investment Platform

In 2024, the Russian Chapter presented for discussion the concept of the BRICS Investment Platform with a mandate for equity financing of investment projects aimed at strengthening technological and economic development of BRICS nations.

Initiatives:

Interested National Chapters should identify and engage financial institutions and large non-financial organizations willing to take part in detailed discussions on the BRICS Investment Platform.

Joint sessions should be considered with key financial and corporate stakeholders to address coordination challenges and to discuss aspects highlighted in the 2024 Annual Report, including investment strategy, governance structure, and target sectors.

The concept of the platform, with a mandate for equity financing of investment projects in BRICS countries, should be jointly finalized, followed by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding among interested entities.

Develop a Transition Finance Roadmap for BRICS

In 2024, the FSWG agreed to establish the BRICS Transition Finance Framework, as reflected in Annex I of the Annual Report.

As part of this broader initiative, the group is now working towards developing a roadmap proposal with 13 key actions to advance transition finance across BRICS economies. Among these actions is the development of a toolbox for transition finance, including best practices and a suite of financial products to support climate goals and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

BRICS Green Unity

In 2025, UAE Chapter proposed to create a digital green bond platform leveraging blockchain, climate analytics, and AI-driven impact verification to finance climate projects across BRICS countries.



WORKING GROUPS

6. INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS

Context

Improving logistics and infrastructure between BRICS countries is crucial for stimulating growth and economic development. According to the World Bank, efficient logistics and robust infrastructure are key drivers of economic growth and competitiveness. They facilitate trade, enhance connectivity, and promote regional integration. For the BRICS countries, which collectively account for about 35% of the global GDP[18], improving logistics and infrastructure can significantly boost their economic performance. For instance, a study by the Asian Development Bank found that improving transport infrastructure alone could increase GDP by up to 5% in the Asia-Pacific region.

Cooperation with the New Development Bank (NDB) and other financial institutions to finance infrastructure is another important task for the Infrastructure, Transport and Logistics Working Group in the BRICS Business Council. Infrastructure investment needs in BRICS countries are substantial. The Global Infrastructure Hub estimates that these countries will require around $4.5 trillion in infrastructure investment by 2040[19]. The NDB, with its focus on infrastructure and sustainable development projects, can play a significant role in meeting these needs. Since its establishment in 2014, it has already launched support for 120 infrastructure projects across member countries, with a total CAPEX over 38 billion USD (loans for over 20 billion USD were provided).

Prioritizing sustainable projects is also essential given the urgent need to address climate change and promote sustainable development. According to the United Nations, investing in sustainable infrastructure is one of the most cost-effective ways to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For BRICS countries, many of which are grappling with environmental challenges, prioritizing sustainable projects can help them transition to a low carbon, resilient, and sustainable economy. Moreover, sustainable infrastructure projects can also attract more investment. A report by the Business and Sustainable Development Commission suggests that sustainable infrastructure could unlock $12 trillion in business savings and revenue by 2030[20].

2025 Working Group Composition

Leader:
Nathanael Mota – EGTEC – Brazil

Co-Leaders:
Sergey Pavlov – JSC Russian Railways – Russia
Vimal Kejriwal – KEC International Ltd. – India
Li Jianping – China Railway Group Limited – China
Medhat El Kady – Egyptian International Freight Forwarding Association – Egypt
Zeph Nhleko – DBSA – South Africa
Rizwan Soomar – DP World – United Arab Emirates
Ali Mousavi Rahimi – Tunnel Sadd Ariana – Iran

Number of members: 198

18 Banco do Brasil - The BRICS. https://www.bcb.gov.br/en/about/brics-en

19 Global Infraestructure HUB - Globbal infraestructure investment need to reach USD 97 trillion by 2040.

20 Business & Human Rights Resource Centre - Davos study says business can unlock $12 trillion via key development goals. https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/davos-study-says-businesses-can-unlock-12-trillion-via-key-development-goals/#:~:text=Companies%20could%20unlock%20at%20least,%2C%20the%20study%20said...

Recommendation 1

Improve logistics connectivity among BRICS countries (including development of infrastructure according to the updated Guide for BRICS Transport Barriers) to stimulate trade growth and economic development.

Policy action 1.1

Establish a joint Task Force between BBC Secretariat and competent government authorities to identify the development of new Infrastructure for logistical routes.

Suggestions for governments:

- Update the Guide for BRICS Transport Barriers (based on results of the real shipments on existing BRICS routes).
- To develop various transport modes (road, rail, air, and sea) for multimodal connections.
- Initiate discussions regarding a unified BRICS logistics consignment note (sea, rail, road) on intergovernmental level.
- Initiate discussions on approaches and principles of the use of electronic data interchange for multimodal transportation between BRICS countries.

Policy action 1.2

Guarantee continuous work between the governments of the countries involved in creating new, as well as maintaining existing, logistic routes to improve connectivity between BRICS countries based on tangible freight and/or passenger demand studies throughout different BRICS presidencies.

Suggestions for governments:

- To improve document flow on transportation, including acceptance of electronic forms of veterinary and phytosanitary certificates between BRICS countries.
- BRICS governments may consider giving preferential logistics status for BRICS government state-owned ocean services (for eg, flagged vessels of BRICS countries may get preferential port-related costs in partner BRICS countries).
- Special status for partner BRICS government-owned assets will give a competitive edge among the BRICS partnership (typically given that the port and vessel-related costs are high across the globe).

Initiatives

Global Logistics Platform (United Arab Emirates)

About: The Global Logistics Platform Office aims to establish the world's pre-eminent global hub for fostering collaboration among nations, businesses, and academic institutions. Its core mission is to build resilient supply chains and enhance global trade connectivity by leveraging technology for innovation and promoting sustainable transport and logistics solutions.

Expected outcomes: The platform will advance research and knowledge exchange to support innovation and best practices in logistics and supply chain management, facilitate the development of new trade corridors to enhance access to emerging markets, and facilitate strategic collaboration through global forums and summits, encouraging partnerships that enhance trade and logistics development.

Know more: 

Recommendation 2

Cooperate with NDB and other institutions to facilitate Financing for infrastructure projects, prioritizing sustainable projects that adhere with the state's SDG and NDCs, and are climate resilient.

Policy action 2.1

Create a fund for private companies in the infrastructure sector within the New Development Bank.

Suggestions for governments:

- Ensure projects adhere to environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards.
- Create international working groups to study issues of infrastructure construction in BRICS countries.
- Create dedicated funding instruments within the NDB that can be disseminated through national development banks to public and private institutions to facilitate financing of resilient infrastructure projects.

Policy action 2.2

Create a fast-track process for low carbon emission projects to obtain financing within the New Development Bank.

Suggestions for governments:

- Encourage public-private partnerships (PPPs) to attract private sector investment (for boosting syndicated loans).
- Expand funding of joint international infrastructure projects.
- Creation of a financing program for bioenergy infrastructure, targeting projects in ethanol, biodiesel, biogas, and green hydrogen, with a focus on expanding sustainable mobility and exporting technology to other BRICS countries.
- Credit guarantee and insurance mechanisms for decarbonization infrastructure, reducing financial risks and encouraging private investments in renewable energy, clean transportation, and sustainable industrial modernization.
- Priority financing line for Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in green infrastructure, including highways with infrastructure for hybrid (biofuel + EV) and/or electric vehicles, as well as logistics corridors with a low carbon footprint.



WORKING GROUPS

7. MANUFACTURING

Context

Manufacturing remains a cornerstone of global economic growth, contributing 16% of global GDP[21] and employing 14% of the global workforce[22]. Its economic impact extends far beyond the factory floor, with each manufacturing job generating an estimated 2.2 additional jobs across supply chains and services[23]. As the engine of export performance, manufactured goods represent nearly 70% of global merchandise exports[24], driving foreign exchange earnings and improving trade balances. A strong manufacturing base boosts productivity, fosters innovation, and delivers broad multiplier effects essential to long-term economic resilience.

Technological progress is closely linked to manufacturing, which serves as both a driver and a recipient of innovation. The sector accounts for a significant share of R&D investment, advancing materials science, advanced automation, and green technologies. As a key channel for technological diffusion, manufacturing enables broader productivity gains and sustainable development across the economy. The emergence of advanced manufacturing, powered by robotics, AI, and clean tech, is reshaping industries and unlocking new growth opportunities. This dual role positions manufacturing as a core pillar of economic transformation.

While manufacturing accounts for 24% of greenhouse gas emissions in emerging economies (IEA[25]), it also plays a central role in enabling decarbonization. As the producer of key low-carbon technologies like renewable energy components and electric vehicles, the sector is essential to the low-carbon transition. Its capacity to innovate, reduce waste, and scale solutions such as additive manufacturing and smart automation are key to supporting sustainable development.

Sustainable economic growth relies on the continued advancement of manufacturing, supported by technologies that enable its carbon neutrality. However, the current landscape of low technological maturity of disruptive solutions and high capital costs to modernize long-lived assets remain key barriers. Overcoming them will require innovative financing models and coordinated action among leading industrial economies to validate and accelerate the deployment of low-emission production at scale.

2025 Working Group Composition

Leader:
Fabrício Silveira – Brazilian National Confederation of Industry – Brazil

Co-Leaders:
Alexey Ivanov – Rostec – Russia
Sullajja Motwani – Kinetic India – India
Yang Xuegui – Sinomach – China
Nizam Kalla – AMKA – South Africa
Abdulla Al Hashimi – JAFZA – United Arab Emirates
Sherif El Gabaly – Federation of Egyptian Industries – Egypt
Hamed Asgari – Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture – Iran

Number of members: 128

21 United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). International Yearbook of Industrial Statistics 2023 – Highlights
22 UNIDO. SDG 9 Progress Report 2023 – Overview
23 UNIDO, Industrial Innovation & Digitalization (IID) Policy Brief No. 18: "The multiplier effect of industrial jobs"
24 United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). International Yearbook of Industrial Statistics 2023 – Highlights
25 International Energy Agency (IEA) - Net-Zero Emissions by 2050 Roadmap

Recommendation 1

Accelerate the green transition across BRICS production chains through the adoption of circular economy principles and decarbonizing technologies, supported by technical cooperation frameworks and targeted investments in energy transition and climate-resilient infrastructure.

Policy action 1.1

Establish a collaborative BRICS framework for sustainable manufacturing development, leveraging a dedicated financial mechanism and harmonized regulatory standards to accelerate the transition to renewable energy and climate-resilient infrastructure.

Suggestion for governments:

- Create and capitalize a "BRICS Green Transition Fund" with public and private funding, managed by the New Development Bank (NDB), to provide concessional financing projects that establish and expand renewable energy production chains and climate-resilient infrastructure, while also prioritizing the sustainable extraction and processing of critical minerals.
- Explore a unified BRICS Green Public Procurement Policy, to incentivize the adoption of low-carbon technologies and circular economy practices across all member states, ensuring a consistent and supportive market for sustainable industries

Policy action 1.2

Accelerate the adoption and development of green technologies within BRICS nations through strategic collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Suggestion for governments:

- Facilitate the creation of joint ventures, licensing agreements, and co-development programs among BRICS entities, focusing on technological transfer, standardization, and localized production of key green technologies like EVs and use of biofuels, solar panels, carbon capture utilization and storage (CCUS), battery storage and any other electronic equipment related to, through targeted academic and industry R&D partnerships.

Recommendation 2

Strengthen technological cooperation between BRICS companies to drive innovation, accelerate manufacturing modernization, and ensure equitable access to key technologies.

Policy action 2.1

Secure technological advancement and enhanced autonomy within BRICS through strategically negotiated intellectual property agreements and collaborative research funding.

Suggestion for governments:

- Implement comprehensive intellectual property agreements among BRICS countries, focusing on the streamlined sharing and protection of IP, particularly in strategically important production chains, to encourage joint innovation and reduce dependence on external proprietary technologies.
- Establish and expand common funding mechanisms and grant programs to support joint research through R&D clusters within mature industrial zones and develop projects between BRICS companies, fostering higher technological integration and collaborative innovation across member states in strategic sectors such as health tech, AI, and clean technologies.

Policy action 2.2

Enhance the digital economy within BRICS nations, particularly for MSMEs, through robust digital infrastructure development and targeted digital adoption programs.

Suggestion for governments:

- Invest in and develop a resilient and sustainable digital infrastructure shared across BRICS nations, focusing on expanding broadband access and digital platforms to drive innovation and increase digital adoption, especially among MSMEs.
- Implement targeted digital literacy programs and establish fair financing instruments to accelerate the adoption of digital technologies by MSMEs, boosting their competitiveness and fostering inclusive economic growth.

Initiatives

World Health Innovation Forum (India)

About: The BRICS Health Innovation Track, part of the World Health Innovation Forum (WHIF), is designed to address the unique health innovation needs of BRICS countries through south-south cooperation. It focuses on accelerating local health technologies, regulatory alignment, and capacity building. The Track operates via three main mechanisms: BRICS Technical Working Group on Health Innovation – aligns priorities and creates collaborative frameworks; 2. Annual BRICS Roundtable at WHIF – connects regulators, innovators, and investors to co-design scalable solutions; 3. BRICS Health Innovation Insights Report – annual publication with policy recommendations, investment opportunities, and case studies.

Expected outcomes: The initiative aims to support the development of cost-effective local solutions, improving policy alignment and cross-border innovation; drive institutional convergence on health technology assessment, licensing, and deployment across BRICS; and support the establishment of a BRICS HealthTech Innovation Network.

Know more:



WORKING GROUPS

8. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, APPLIED TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Context

Reskilling employees is crucial for BRICS countries, particularly in high-technologies and emerging professional fields. Developing technological skills in areas such as AI, big data, machine learning, quantum computing and cybersecurity is essential to drive sustainable growth in a rapidly evolving digital economy. Emerging fields are also becoming increasingly important on the global stage, with future trends pointing to high-growth sectors like biotechnology, brain-computer interfaces, bioeconomy, smart farming, new materials, artificial intelligence, machine learning, quantum computing, robotics and airspace technologies.

It is estimated that 60% of employers expect digital transformation to affect their business model by 2030, still only 45% of individuals currently possess basic digital skills according to the International Telecommunications Union[26]). This technological gap negatively impacts businesses' productivity, and individuals face significant barriers in accessing and retaining formal employment, often finding themselves relegated to the informal economy[27].

Workforce readiness is a key challenge, as technological and environmental shifts are outpacing skills development. The lack of access to modern education, digital tools, and continuous learning opportunities leave many workers unprepared for emerging job markets. The World Economic Forum (WEF[28]) projects a net shift in the employment landscape, with an estimated 92 million job displacements (8% of total) and 78 million new job opportunities (7% of total) being created in the next five years. This transition underscores a significant mismatch between skills needed and those currently possessed by the workforce. Urgent upskilling efforts are required, with proactive investment and collaboration between governments, businesses, and educators to ensure a balanced transition and sustainable employment.

It is essential to target reskilling and upskilling initiatives in high technologies and economic sectors with high-growth and skills-constraints to boost business productivity. Initiatives may include preparing teachers for future skills education, investing in continuous professional development, and creating robust training programs to upskill and reskill workers. Equally important are structured programs for job reallocation, such as job secondments, rotational assignments and career guidance, facilitating a smoother transition into emerging jobs.

Just as important is addressing applied technology and innovation, which is key for achieving industry transformation. It is essential to tackle funding constraints and create policy incentives aimed at expediting technological changes, alongside the development of human capital. In this scenario, the New Development Bank (NDB) can play an active role in expanding BRICS countries' relevance in emerging markets by addressing workforce readiness in high-tech and green transformation across industry sectors.

2025 Working Group Composition

Leader:
Felipe Esteves Pinto Morgado – Brazilian National Service of Industrial Training – Brazil

Co-Leaders:
Alina Singh (Doskanova) – Union Young Professionals (WorldSkills Russia) – Russia
Ahmed El Sewedy – El Sewedy Electric – Egypt
Rajinder Gupta – Trident Group – India
Liu Zhenying – Beijing ARC Xinxing Science & Technology Co., Ltd. – China
Mapule Ncanywa – Digital Ascent – South Africa
Latifa Mohammad – DP World – United Arab Emirates
Gholamreza Zamani – Technical and Vocational University – Iran
Tri Mumpuni – IBEKA – Indonesia

Number of members: 122

26 ITU. Proportion of Youth and Adults with ICT Skills, by type of skills. Available at: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/SDGs-ITU-ICT-indicators.aspx

27 Global Finance. Unemployment Rates Around the World 2024. Available at: https://gfmag.com/data/economic-data/world-unemployment-rates/

28 https://www.weforum.org/press/2025/01/future-of-jobs-report-2025-78-million-new-job-opportunities-by-2030-but-urgent-upskilling-needed-to-prepare-workforces/

Recommendation 1

Expand reskilling initiatives in high technologies and green transformation areas to support workforce adaptation to future skills.

Policy action 1.1

Enhance workforce skills in high technologies and green transformation areas by expanding capacity-building initiatives and consolidating training foundations through collaboration between technical and vocational education and training (TVET), higher education (HE) systems, and the productive sector.

Suggestion for governments:

- Implement collaborative digital platforms to inform TVET and HE policies focused on mapping sectoral skills, prospecting future technological trends, and establishing a framework for TVET Mutual Recognition of Qualifications (MRQ) across BRICS countries.
- Develop collaborative capacity building programs in TVET and HE institutions, considering faculty development, new methodologies and curricula design in strategic sectors.
- Roll-out training programmes and competitions.

Policy action 1.2

Develop financing mechanisms for large-scale roll-out of workers' reskilling and upskilling programs, and improve educational technological infrastructure, ensuring workers have access to modern learning resources aligned with the evolving job market.

Suggestion for governments:

- Implement policies and positive regulations that incentivize businesses to invest in reskilling and upskilling programs, including the decentralization of educational initiatives which are traditionally concentrated in major urban centers.
- Create national funds to support educational technological infrastructure – such as future skills centers, digital learning platform, training hubs and BRICS Workshops – and deliver large-scale reskilling initiatives in high technologies and emerging fields.
- Include a clause in the New Development Bank (NDB) contracts that allocates a percentage of funds to upskilling and reskilling initiatives in the contractor's country, aligned with strategic goals for workforce development in high technologies and green transformation areas.

Initiatives – Competitions

BRICS Future Skills and Technology Challenge (BRICS Skills Competition) (China)

About: Since 2017, BRICS Future Skills and Technology Challenge has been held continuously as an important deliverable to the BRICS Business Council. With more than 450,000 participants in competitions and relevant activities, the competition evolved into a long-term mechanism for future skills development, innovative technology exchanges, skilled talents training and educational reform for the development of BRICS countries.
China STIWG has continuously organized the BRICS Future Skills and Technology Challenge (BRICS Skills Competition), establishing a high-standards competition platform with distinct vocational education characteristics, facilitating in-depth cooperation on the education and people-to-people exchanges among BRICS countries, pragmatically promoting the collaboration between schools and enterprises and advancing the international integration of industry and education.
Expected outcomes: Entrusted by Brazil STIWG, the China STIWG will take the lead in organizing and implementing the 2025 BRICS Skills Competition in China, from November to December. Experts and contestants from BRICS countries are invited to participate in the competition either in person or online. This competition will feature 256 skills, with a focus on intelligent manufacturing, artificial intelligence, digital technical skills, and new industries. It aims to level up the capabilities of young professionals and students in technological innovation and skills development, enrich cooperation between TVET institutions and enterprises, and cultivate high-quality technical and skilled talents for BRICS countries.

Know more:

Contacts: jiakexinxing@126.com or bricsfsc@vip.126.com

BRICS International High Tech Future Skills Competition (Russia)

About: This is an annual skills and technology competition designed to develop and benchmark cutting-edge skills and technologies. Its mission is to foster technological collaboration and workforce development to address global technological challenges. Key objectives are to advance employee qualifications, integrating cutting-edge technologies into production and facilitating knowledge exchange among enterprises, experts and government bodies. Participants will gain valuable recognition and opportunities for career advancement, including: i. a Skills Passport, certifying world-class competency levels in high-demand future skills ii. opportunities for professional growth through global benchmarking and industry collaboration. The competition is backed by the International Professional Development Platform, ensuring alignment with global standards and fostering lifelong learning.
In 2025, the Competition will be held online and on-site in Russia, from 10-14 of November. The goals are to: i. mature scalable methodologies for skills and technology development, and productivity improvement, integrating digital tools and innovative practices into industrial workflows; ii. create 20 prospective future skills & tech frameworks; and iii. Build cross-sectoral expert networks involving more than 100 organizations from BRICS countries.
Expected outcomes: The initiative will focus on the identification and prioritization of key industry development trends and future skill requirements to align workforce training with global technological advancements. It will promote the accelerated adoption of advanced technological solutions through cross-sector collaboration, pilot projects, and the dissemination of best practices among BRICS nations. Additionally, it will support the establishment of a research-driven framework utilizing forecasting, foresight analytics, and sectoral trend modeling to identify emerging technological trends and disruptive innovations, informing targeted strategies for workforce development and industry adaptation.

Know more:

Contacts: Alina Singh (alina.singh@arpm.pro) or Aleksei Skorniakov (skorniakov.a@arpm.pro)

Initiatives – Standardization

BRICS Standardization Working Committee for Skills and Technology, issuing Skills Passports as certificates of skill accreditation and issuing Engineer Passports as technical level evaluation certificates (China)

About: The BRICS Standardization Working Committee was one of the key deliverables highlighted in the 2022 Annual Report of the BRICS Business Council. The Committee's work plays a significant role in advancing standardization in the fields of skills and technology. Leveraging from the Future Skills and Technology Challenges, the Committee has actively engaged in the development of group standards in areas such as Machine Learning and Big Data, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), and the Internet of Things (IoT). Based on these standards, it has issued Skills Passport Certificates, laying a solid foundation for the mutual recognition and application of skills and technology standards among BRICS countries.

Expected outcomes: The initiative will develop BRICS group standards in fields such as New Energy, Cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, and Healthcare, and issue Skills Passport Certificates based on these standards. It will also conduct research on the mutual recognition mechanism of standards among BRICS countries and promote the BRICS Group Standards Publishing Platform. Additionally, the initiative will organize training workshops on standard development to cultivate professionals specializing in the development of BRICS group standards.

Know more:

Contact: standard@bricsfuture.org.cn

Initiatives – Auditorium

BRICS Auditorium of Skills Development, Applied Technology and Innovation (STI) (Brazil)

About: The BRICS Auditorium consists of discussions forum organized regularly by the BRICS STI Working Group chair. During the Brazilian presidency, SENAI is organizing 6 auditorium sessions addressing the following topics: i. upskills and reskill policy benchmarks from new BRICS members and traditional members, ii. skills development for employability; iii. competencies for applied technology and innovation; and iv. dialogue among BRICS working groups addressing upskill and reskill needs to explore technological trends, skills gaps, and opportunities for businesses and educational providers to work collaboratively.

Expected outcomes:

- Inclusion of new BRICS members into the STI WG activities.
- Comprehension of global trends and policy benchmarks for upskilling and reskilling of workers in high technology sectors and green transformation areas.
- Strengthening of employability skills and approaches in the TVET and higher education agenda.

Know more:

Recommendation 2

Promote collaboration between the business community and the government in TVET, higher education and employability agendas, focusing on skills development in emerging fields and high technologies.

Policy action 2.1

Strengthen applied research programs by fostering partnerships between industry and academic institutions, with a focus on high technologies and emerging fields.

Suggestion for governments:

- Align investments in science and technology with research priorities that tackle practical needs of industries and society.
- Support R&D infrastructure for innovation projects, mitigating risks in investing in high technologies and emerging fields.
- Build a network of industry representatives and employers in economic sectors with high-growth across BRICS countries to support economic collaboration and development of sector-specific strategies for applied technology and innovation projects.
- Expand the provision of public and private applied research scholarships for graduate and postgraduate students, supporting the preparation of researchers and innovators across academic and professional training stages.

Policy action 2.2

Bringing technical and vocational education and training (TVET), higher education (HE) system, and the economic sectors together to enhance the formulation of labour policies, orienting them towards employability and cross-sector reallocation of workers.

Suggestion for governments:

- Implement digital platforms to connect workers with job opportunities, especially talented professionals from BRICS countries in high technologies and emerging fields.
- Promote cross borders' skills mobility, including job-matching platforms powered by AI, to enable individuals to acquire intercultural skills and enhance technical capabilities aligned with labour market demands, acting as a gateway to employment.

Initiatives – Applied Research and Innovation

BRICS Technology Innovation Competition and Exhibition (China)

About: Launched in 2024 in China, Brazil and South Africa, the BRICS Technology Innovation Competition attracted 658 project submissions. Nearly 100 projects competed in on-site finals, with several of them already entering the incubation phase in host countries.

Expected outcomes: The 2025 BRICS Technology Innovation Competition will feature 10 specialized tracks covering cutting-edge fields such as Advanced Manufacturing, Digital Health, Green Energy, and Artificial Intelligence. Competitions and exhibitions will be held across six international divisions and within China, adopting an integrated "competition + exhibition" format. Brazil, South Africa, ASEAN, the Middle East, and China are expected to host synchronized innovation showcases. As of May, the China division has already received nearly 1,400 project submissions, with international participants registering continuously.

Know more: competition@bricsfuture.org.cn

Construction of BRICS Alliance of Science and Technology Innovation, including the intellectual property protection service offering (China)

About: Established in 2024 based on the initiative of "Launching a dialogue on technological cooperation, incubation and innovation", the alliance counts with more than 180 members, covering enterprises, universities, scientific research institutions and other entities in the field of science and technology innovation.

Expected outcomes: The initiative will solicit innovation projects in frontier technology fields and organize technology innovation competitions across BRICS and BRICS countries. It will provide incubation support for top-performing projects by leveraging national science and technology innovation hubs across BRICS to ensure effective matchmaking with industrial needs. A digital collaboration platform for the BRICS Science and Technology Innovation Alliance will be developed, integrating four core functions: Project Showcasing, Technology Transfer, Policy Intelligence, and Intellectual Property (IP) Services. This platform will support member countries in promoting innovative outcomes, finding partners, and accessing international market insights. The initiative will also support engineer capacity building and promote mutual recognition of engineering qualifications across BRICS. Additionally, it will establish an IP service system tailored to the needs of BRICS science and technology innovators and create a dedicated exchange mechanism among national centers for the cross-border transfer of innovation outcomes.

Know more: activities@bricsfuture.org.cn

BRICS New Technological Platform (Russia)

About: An independent joint platform aimed at mutual support in acquiring and deploying complex technologies, as well as facilitating collaboration in nascent solutions and their joint development. A joint technological cooperation platform will enable open multi-party discussions on key topics including digital transformation, digital services, communications, unmanned aerial vehicles, health care and biotech, production, energy, etc. The Platform includes different working formats, including: i. Joint scientific research; ii. Academic exchanges and cooperation of higher education institutions; iii. Joint projects; iv. Industrial cooperation; v. Design of new common standards; and vi. Establishment of BRICS Quality Mark.

Expected outcomes: The initiative includes signing cooperation agreements with major technological players of the BRICS countries aimed at structuring governmental and business relationships and complementing national interests. In March 2025, the Agreement for Establishing Long-Term Technological Cooperation between the Agency for Strategic Initiatives and the BRICS Alliance for Scientific and Technological Innovation was signed. It also promotes the dissemination of the Technological Sovereignty methodology to advance the concept of "Shared Technology – Shared Sovereignty." Additionally, a Joint Vision Report is being formulated to unify national views on technological cooperation with BRICS partners, including visionary sessions at forums such as the AIM Congress and Archipelago 2025. The initiative also involves holding the annual project and educational forum Archipelago 2025 (07–17 August, Moscow), which will serve as a venue for international expert discussion and the design of joint cooperation projects in promising areas. Furthermore, technological competitions will be organized to build a joint pool of tech practices, including the BRICS International High Tech Future Skills Competition and the BRICS Solutions Awards.

Know more: Andrey Siling, NTI Platform (a.siling@nti.work)

BRICS Biotechnology Innovation Hub (Russia)

About: The Biotechnology Innovation Hub aims to establish a collaborative research platform consolidating BRICS nations scientific potential in medical biotechnology (vaccine development, personalized medicine, gene therapy), agricultural biotechnology (sustainable GMO crops, plant bioprotection, synthetic biology for agri-sector), and industrial biotechnology (biodegradable materials, biofuels, enzyme technologies).

Expected outcomes: The initiative will support the establishment of a collaborative research platform and promote regulatory standards harmonization for biotechnology products, including the development of protocols for clinical trials, biopharmaceutical approvals, GMO safety and bioethics, and certification of biotech products for cross-border trade. It will also include startup support programs, offering mentorship, networking opportunities, partnerships for pilot projects, and connections with international accelerators.

Know more: Vladimir Andrianov (andrianov@rpharm.ruo)

BRICS Cybersecurity Talent Accelerator and Multinational Solutions Hub (South Africa)

About: As a joint initiative from STI WG and the Digital Economy and AI WG, the talent acceleration purpose is to maximize skills training, hackathons and competitions' results to support intelligence sharing and combat cyber threats. Based on standardized curricula and certifications on topics related to cross-border AI, IoT, encryption solutions, among others, the initiative aims to build a digital firewall and bridge talents across BRICS countries, contributing to secure frameworks for the digital economy.

Expected outcomes: The initiative will endorse CTAM-SH as a flagship initiative, launch a Cyber Curriculum Committee, and pilot activities in South Africa (UJ, CSIR) and Brazil (UFMG). It will also include holding an R&D Architecture Meeting and hosting the BRICS Cyber-Hackathon in the fourth quarter of 2025.

Know more: Tshepho Nkoe (tshephonkoe@gmail.com) or Zinhle Mncube (zmncube@edgegrowth.com)

Initiatives – Employability Platform

Hire-me (Contrate-me) (Brazil)

About: This is a SENAI digital platform that aims to connect companies with qualified professionals, simplifying the search for job vacancies, internships and training programs. Using artificial intelligence, the tool analyzes the profile of candidates and the opportunities available to promote the ideal match.

Expected outcomes: The initiative aims to increase employability, especially among young people, by providing access to job and internship opportunities in industrial and technological sectors throughout Brazil. It seeks to strengthen the bridge between the productive sector and qualified professionals by using technology to optimize the recruitment and selection process. Additionally, it promotes career development by offering a space for registering and updating CVs, as well as access to job openings that align with current market demands.

Know more: 

Digital Future (Brazil)

About: An initiative by SENAI, positioned as the largest professional education marketplace in Brazil. Its main objective is to democratize access to quality vocational education, connecting students and professionals to a wide range of courses (technical, undergraduate, postgraduate, free, short and long term) in distance learning, face-to-face and semi-presential modalities. The platform emphasizes preparation for the professions of the future and the demands of industry 4.0, offering a modern educational experience with virtual laboratories, augmented reality, and interactive content. In addition to training for individuals*, Futuro.Digital* also offers corporate solutions for team development.

Expected outcomes: The initiative will continuously expand the range of courses on offer and access to vocational education in technological and digital areas. It aims to strengthen the qualification and re-qualification of the Brazilian workforce to meet new demands from industry and the market, with an emphasis on digital skills, Artificial Intelligence, and the future of work. Additionally, it seeks to increase the number of professionals trained and certified through the platform, contributing to the country's employability and economic development.

Know more: 

BRICS Future Skills Training Base (BRICS Workshop) (China)

About: Established in 2020, BRICS Workshop serves as a platform for BBC STIWG to carry out future skills training, certification, competitions, talent cultivation and people-to-people exchanges, enabling enterprises, educational and training institutions to jointly cultivate the technical skilled talents with international vision.

China STIWG and China Center for International People-to-People Exchange of Ministry of Education have jointly conducted the BRICS International Training Base for Future Technical Skills and People-to-People Exchange Talents. So far, a total of 106 projects of training base have been jointly built by Chinese educational institutions and enterprises, promoting an integration of industry and education.

Expected outcomes: The initiative will continue to cooperate with BRICS partners and promote the active participation of Chinese enterprises and institutions in the construction of BRICS Workshops, providing equipment support, talent support, and technical guarantees. It calls upon multinational enterprises in BRICS countries to implement localized talent training aligned with regional industrial development and talent demands. The initiative will also carry out skills development and technology innovation

competitions, host international training camps in remote formats, undertake the BRICS Auditorium of Skills Development and Technology Innovation, and promote the joint development of standards and curricula, as well as international people-to-people exchanges based on the BRICS Workshops. Additionally, it will organize teacher training focused on advanced and cutting-edge technologies to cultivate a high-quality teaching team, and jointly develop training curricula and conduct short-term training. Relying on the BRICS Workshop framework, a multi-level cooperative education mechanism will be established with educational institutions and enterprises across BRICS countries, including student exchanges, joint training, mutual recognition of credits, and joint degree awarding.

Know more: iasdbr@126.com

BRICS Global Remote Employment Platform (Russia)

About: Since 2024, the initiative "International Platform for Remote Employment for BRICS Countries" has been implemented in partnership with national and international institutions. The platform creates a unified digital space for effective distribution of human capital, inclusive development and strengthening of BRICS technological leadership in the AI era. Special attention is paid to the three-tier model of human capital application: i. Highly skilled professionals; ii. Specialists in the professional use of AI technologies; and iii. Autonomous AI agents.

The platform overcomes language, cultural and regulatory barriers, facilitating transnational cooperation and sustainable partnerships. The project will reduce the need for labor migration, contribute to the growth of household incomes, and increase tax revenues for the budgets of BRICS countries. For 2025, the goals are to Publish a White Paper on: Tackling the Skills and Tech Shortages in BRICS; launch an Auditorium on Employability; complete Prototyping of the Platform; and sign Partnership Agreements with international institutions, universities, and associations in BRICS countries, determining the organizational and legal form, as well as the investment partner for developing the platform.

Expected outcomes: The initiative will launch a platform for intelligent contractor selection and transparent cross-border settlements, taking into account the national regulatory specificities of the BRICS countries. It will also focus on increasing access to international remote work and expanding cooperation opportunities for BRICS professionals and organizations. Additionally, the initiative will establish mechanisms for the ethical and human-centered use of artificial intelligence, ensuring data protection and building trust among all market participants.

Know more: Nikolay Dolgov (Dolgov.NYu@gazprom-neft.ru)

Cross Border Upskilling Experience (United Arab Emirates)

About: This initiative is designed to enhance workforce capabilities, promote knowledge exchange, and strengthen collaboration across key sectors such as logistics, digital trade, renewable energy, port operations, marine, and shipyard. A customized cross-border program is designed upon the needs of BRICS countries, allowing participants to be exposed to hands-on experience in diverse cultural and business environments, develop cross-cultural leadership skills, increase adaptability, and build strong professional networks. This exposure not only fosters innovation and shared learning but also supports the development of high-potential employees within the mid-management level / junior level, contributing to building future leaders. Former experiences have been held with Russia, Iran and China, collecting positive results and experiences.

Expected outcomes: The initiative promotes skill diversification, enabling employees to gain diverse skills, become more adaptable, and improve performance. It enhances global expertise by providing exposure to various markets and cultures, which in turn boosts strategic decision-making and problem-solving. Innovation and efficiency are also fostered through knowledge exchange, leading to improved processes. Additionally, the initiative supports leadership development by helping employees cultivate essential leadership qualities and prepare for future roles. Finally, increased adaptability is achieved as employees gain experience across functions and geographies, allowing them to thrive in a changing global economy.

Know more: Latifa Mohammad (latifa.mohammad@dpworld.com)



WORKING GROUPS

9. TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Context

Regulatory misalignments and administrative complexities continue to impact trade costs, creating inefficiencies that hinder the flow of goods and services. Over the last 5 years, harmful trade interventions rose 500%[29]. Divergent regulations and elaborate administrative processes add to compliance burdens, limiting the pace of economic integration and affecting overall competitiveness. The World Bank estimates that reducing border red tape could boost global income by over 6x more than eliminating all tariffs[30]. Progressing towards regulatory cooperation and digital trade facilitation measures that streamline customs procedures could enhance efficiency, reduce processing times, and strengthen BRICS competitiveness.

Similarly, the lack of harmonized standards – covering environmental, health, and economic aspects – creates challenges to trade. Non-tariff measures (NTMs), such as technical and sanitary regulations, now generate over twice the trade costs of tariffs, particularly in agriculture and manufacturing[31]. BRICS exporters face compliance challenges due to fragmented sustainability frameworks and overlapping product standards. Harmonizing NTM-related requirements – like carbon metrics, labour conditions, and traceability – would help BRICS firms access global markets more easily and participate competitively in sustainable value chains[32]. Streamlining trade regulations and certification processes would generate significant economic opportunities and strengthen cooperation among BRICS nations.

Facilitating investment across BRICS is key to unlocking capital flows, enabling technology transfer, and accelerating shared economic development. However, investment procedures remain fragmented, with varying levels of digitalization, legal protection, and institutional coordination[33]. Differences in dispute resolution mechanisms, profit repatriation rules, and intellectual property protections limit investor confidence and cross-border business scalability[34]. Streamlining investment frameworks, adopting transparent reporting standards, and promoting mutual recognition of legal norms can improve policy predictability, reduce transaction costs, and strengthen BRICS' collective capacity to attract and retain high-quality foreign direct investment.

2025 Working Group Composition

Leader:
Marcelo Siegmann – Seara/JBS – Brazil

Co-Leaders:
Alaa Ezz – ICC – Egypt
Aleksei Kechko – VEB – Russia
Anshuman Khanna – FICCI – India
Kang Hubiao – Genertec International - China
Mtho Xulu – SACCI – South Africa
Beat Simon – DP World – United Arab Emirates
Hamed Asgari – Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture – Iran

Number of members: 130

29 Global Trade Alert Database, 2024; WEF, 5 ways businesses can navigate global trade in today's fragmented geoeconomic landscape
30 World Bank, Trade Costs and Inclusive Growth
31 UNCTAD, Trade and Investment Report 2023
32 OECD, Trade Facilitation and the Global Economy
33 OECD Report, Mapping of Investment Promotion Agencies; UNCTAD, Investment Policy Monitor 2023
34 WTO, Investment Facilitation for Development

Recommendation 1

Reduce trade barriers among BRICS countries through regulatory and standards cooperation and digitalizing trade processes.

Policy action 1.1

Promote regulatory cooperation among BRICS countries to reduce unnecessary trade barriers by aligning non-tariff measures, increasing regulatory convergence and fostering sustainable trade, in line with international commitments and in support of revitalizing the multilateral trading system.

Suggestions for governments:

- Foster cooperation and alignment on non-tariff measures, such as sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) requirements, technical barriers to trade (TBT), and green certification frameworks, by leveraging international standards, technical regulations, and voluntary sustainability standards (VSS) as practical tools for regulatory convergence.
- Enhance collaboration between BRICS standardization bodies through knowledge exchange and regular dialogues to address regulatory divergences—particularly in digital, green, and sustainability-related standards. Expand the use of mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) and promote regulatory compatibility, with special attention to key sectors such as energy, health, agriculture, services, culture, and digital trade.
- Strengthen BRICS cooperation to revitalize the rules-based multilateral trading system by reviewing and updating the existing multilateral trade rulebook and reforming the WTO Dispute Settlement Body (DSB).

Policy action 1.2

Advance the digitalization of trade processes across BRICS countries to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and facilitate seamless cross-border transactions.

Suggestions for governments:

- Facilitate the cross-border flow of electronic trade transaction data by establishing interoperable digital systems and creating a dedicated platform to integrate technical regulations, digital standards, and certification requirements, that enable seamless information exchange, while adopting digital solutions such as artificial intelligence, secure channels, and data-sharing platforms to enhance customs procedures.
- Reduce complex licensing requirements and excessive documentation by encouraging adoption of standardized digital document formats and implementing fast-track clearance programs to improve processing efficiency.

Initiatives

BRICS Non-tariff Trade Barriers Report (Brazil)

About: The initiative aims to collect and give visibility to non-tariff barriers (NTBs) identified among BRICS members. It will support technical dialogue and information-sharing, helps identify and analyze recurring challenges, and shapes cooperative approaches within BRICS.

Expected outcomes: The initiative aims to facilitate evidence-based discussions that could inform future policy and reduce trade challenges, while also helping to channel structured inputs into government dialogues, thereby strengthening the BRICS collective voice and impact.

Know more:

Trade Development and Standards Cooperation Initiative (China)

About: The initiative aims to collaborate with the Organization for Trade Development and Standards Cooperation (ODCCN) to promote the establishment of the ODCCN/BRICS Cooperation Committee (ODCCN/BCC)—jointly initiated by BRICS national trade promotion organizations (TPO), business support organizations (BSO), national standards bodies (NSB), standards development organizations (SDO), technical committees and subcommittees (TC/SC), and other international entities.

Expected outcomes: The initiative aims to build a multi-dimensional collaborative mechanism among BRICS to facilitate standards cooperation, trade and investment promotion, technology exchange, cultural exchange, and talent development. It also seeks to promote the BRICS Action Plan (2025–2026) of the Trade Development and Standards Cooperation Initiative.

Know more:

BRICS–ICC OneClick for SME Trade Facilitation (India-ICC)

About: The initiative aims to support SMEs from BRICS countries in enhancing their export readiness and integration into BRICS and global value chains (GVCs), in joint cooperation with ICC and its Centres of Entrepreneurship. It leverages the ICC OneClick platform — which offers trade tools like model contracts, financing solutions, and dispute resolution mechanisms — to equip SMEs with practical resources. The initiative also foresees the promotion of tailored capacity-building activities, such as trainings and workshops, to strengthen SME capabilities across BRICS countries.

Expected outcomes: The initiative aims to strengthen BRICS SMEs' participation in international and intra-BRICS trade, expand their access to trade facilitation tools, financing solutions, and legal resources to support compliance and risk reduction, and enable them to navigate trade processes more effectively, contributing to resilient and diversified trade across BRICS markets.

Workshop on Green Trade in Low-carbon Goods (Russia)

About: The Workshop on Green Trade in Low-carbon Goods seeks to bolster the Trade and Investment WG by establishing a dialogue between BRICS producers to reduce barriers for goods with low carbon footprint, present the variety of the products with low carbon footprint and discuss potential standards for low carbon production. The proposed workshop could take place as an online or in-person event, preferably on the sidelines of the BRICS Business Forum when possible. It could also be considered as an annual initiative, providing a recurring platform to foster dialogue and cooperation in green trade.

Expected outcomes: The initiative aims to launch dialogue between producers of low-carbon goods across BRICS countries, strengthen cooperation in the field of green trade, and reduce trade barriers for low-carbon goods.

Recommendation 2

Facilitate Investments and transfer of results among BRICS countries.

Policy action 2.1

Promote negotiation and adoption of Investments Agreements.

Suggestions for governments:

- Establish standardized reporting mechanisms to track progress on FDI competitiveness, including improvements in the rule of law, free trade zones, infrastructure, and human capital.
- Streamline regulatory and legal procedures to accelerate the adoption of investment agreements, including exploring mutual recognition mechanisms for conformity assessment systems (inspection, testing, certification, accreditation), strengthen consensus on technical, standards, and trade (TST) and mutual recognition of dispute prevention and resolution mechanisms, and standardized provisions for investor rights.

Policy action 2.2

Facilitate FDI and business result transfers across BRICS by ensuring smooth profit repatriation, strengthening intellectual property protections, promoting technology cooperation, and fostering regulatory convergence to create a stable, transparent investment environment.

Suggestion for governments:

- Ensure smooth profit repatriation by simplifying foreign exchange procedures, reducing capital restrictions, and strengthening bilateral agreements, including reliable dispute resolution mechanisms to safeguard investor rights.
- Advance regulatory convergence in investment policies and intellectual property protections to reduce legal uncertainties and facilitate the transfer of technology, expertise, and successful business models.
- Establish a BRICS platform for standardization capacity building through information sharing, expert networks, training programs, and dedicated research funds to support regulatory alignment and technology cooperation.
- Enhance proactive engagement in international standardization organizations by setting joint goals for proposals and collaborative standards development.



ANNEX A – SECRETARIATS AND COORDINATION TEAM

BRICS Business Council Executive Secretariats

Name	Institution	Country
Stephanie Dominicalli	Brazilian National Confederation of Industry	Brazil Chapter
Anastasia Baisheva	Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation	Russia Chapter
Anshuman Khanna	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry	India Chapter
WANG Wei	Industrial and Commercial Bank of China	China Chapter
Sharmayne Venkatsamy	South Africa BRICS Business Council	South Africa Chapter
Alaa Ezz	Federation of Egyptian Chambers of Commerce	Egypt Chapter
Roman Geda	Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Associations	Ethiopia Chapter
Didit Ratam	Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Indonesia Chapter
Amir Mehran	Bank Pasargad	Iran Chapter
Leila Alagroobi	DP World	United Arab Emirates Chapter

BRICS BBC 2025 Brazilian Presidency Coordination Team

Name	Title
Constanza Negri Biasutti	Sherpa
Gabriela Leoni Furtado	Working Groups Coordinator
Carlos de Souza Andrade Neto	Project Management Officer for Aviation, and Infrastructure, Transport and Logistics
Cristina Elsner de Faria	Project Management Officer for Digital Economy and AI, and Skills Development, Applied Technology and Innovation
Francieli Covatti Souto	Project Management Officer for Agribusiness, and Energy, Green Economy and Climate
Sabrina Sabatowicz Paiva	Project Management Officer for Financial Services, Manufacturing, and Trade and Investment
Victor Bethonico Foresti de Oliveira Castro	Working Groups Support
Fernanda Tadei Oliveira	Sponsorship Support
Rubens Porto dos Anjos	Sponsorship Support
Fernando de Freitas Moreira	Communications – Journalism
Vanessa Araujo Pessoa	Events Lead
Taís Francisco Araujo	Events Support
Hanri Benício Nunes	Events and CRM
Maria Clara Rezende Avelino	Workspace
Arthur Maximus Ribeiro Dutra	Intern



BRICS
BUSINESS
COUNCIL