



# Redefining Philanthropy:

## BRICS and Africa's Sustainable Future



A BRICS Future Skills Challenge was hosted in line with the outcomes of this year's South Africa's chairmanship for BRICS.

In a world that is more interconnected than ever before, philanthropy emerges as a critical tool in addressing the complex challenges faced by humanity. This holds particularly true for the African continent, where a multitude of socio-economic and developmental issues persist. Africa, while rich in potential, grapples with poverty, healthcare disparities, education gaps, and infrastructural limitations. However, amidst these challenges lies an opportunity for transformation through the collaboration between BRICS nations and Africa, ushering in a new era of sustainable philanthropy.

The recent decision to expand the BRICS group from five to eleven member countries by 2024, with two African nations among the newcomers, represents a significant geopolitical shift. This expansion signifies a strategic pivot driven by factors such as monetary de-dollarization, increased local currency trade, regional representation, and geostrategic interests. As BRICS nations assert their global presence, we must ponder how this evolution can be harnessed to catalyse philanthropy across Africa.

Collectively, BRICS nations represent a substantial portion of the global economy. Their growing economic might and financial resources can provide a substantial boost to philanthropic endeavours in Africa. These nations have accumulated diverse experiences in addressing socio-economic challenges within their own borders, offering invaluable insights, best practices, and lessons learned in areas such as infrastructure development, poverty reduction, and public health. Africa can benefit immensely from this wealth of knowledge, enhancing the effectiveness of its philanthropic efforts.

By leveraging their resources, BRICS countries can contribute to initiatives aimed at alleviating poverty, improving healthcare systems, and advancing education across Africa. Establishing strategic partnerships with African governments, NGOs, and local philanthropic organizations can effectively channel these resources. Furthermore, BRICS nations can stimulate economic growth on the continent by promoting investment and trade. Encouraging private sector involvement and facilitating cross-border investments can create jobs and stimulate economic development, reducing the need for aid dependency and fostering self-sustainability.

The BRICS Johannesburg II Declaration, which underscores principles of mutual respect, sovereign equality, solidarity, democracy, openness, inclusiveness, strengthened collaboration, and consensus, offers a powerful vision for international collaboration. These values resonate with the philanthropic ethos of empowering individuals and communities to lead better lives. Philanthropy thrives when the rule of law is upheld, and the Declaration's emphasis on upholding international law and promoting democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms aligns perfectly with philanthropic initiatives aimed at advancing social justice, equity, and inclusion.

Moreover, the rejection of unilateral coercive measures and the reaffirmation of a democratic and accountable international and multilateral system align with philanthropy's mission to address the root causes of global challenges and create a fairer world. In this context, BRICS nations can collaborate on philanthropic efforts to combat issues such as poverty, inequality, and disease in Africa.

Philanthropy in Africa should adhere to the principle of "African solutions for African problems." BRICS nations can support locally driven initiatives that respond to the specific needs of African communities. This approach ensures that philanthropy is not imposed from the outside but rather empowers Africans to take charge of their development.

The spirit of compromise displayed during the BRICS expansion negotiations, where Russia and China agreed to include new members and indicated a willingness to discuss UN Security Council reform, demonstrates the importance of diplomacy and cooperation. This spirit of compromise can also be channelled into philanthropy, where BRICS nations can pool resources,

expertise, and experiences to address Africa's development challenges effectively.

The expansion of BRICS and the principles outlined in the Johannesburg II Declaration offer a unique opportunity to redefine philanthropy in Africa. By aligning their values of mutual respect, democracy, and human rights with philanthropic goals, BRICS nations can support sustainable development in Africa. The emphasis on African solutions and the inclusion of new members further strengthens the potential for collaborative philanthropy that empowers African communities and addresses their unique challenges. As BRICS nations embrace this role, they can become catalysts for positive change, not only in Africa but on the global philanthropic stage.

The BRICS nations have the potential to be transformative partners in philanthropic efforts in Africa. Their financial resources, knowledge, technology, and diplomatic influence can significantly contribute to sustainable development across the continent. By forging strategic partnerships, fostering economic growth, and addressing pressing global challenges such as climate change and healthcare, BRICS nations can help Africa unlock its vast potential and create a brighter, more equitable future for its people. Together, they can redefine the landscape of philanthropy and global development, setting a powerful example for international cooperation and solidarity.

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### **Background:**

The XV BRICS Summit took place in South Africa from August 22 to 24, 2023, and was hosted at the Sandton Convention Centre (SCC) in Johannesburg, Gauteng. During the summit, BRICS leaders engaged in discussions with the business community, including the New Development Bank, BRICS Business Council, and other mechanisms. South Africa organized sessions to connect with leaders from Africa and the global South through a BRICS Outreach and BRICS Plus Dialogue.

Under the theme 'BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development, and Inclusive Multilateralism', South Africa assumed the BRICS Chair on January 1, 2023. This theme laid out five priorities for 2023:

- I. Developing a partnership towards an equitable Just Transition: Addressing climate change and its effects requires transformative changes across all sectors of the economy.
- II. Transforming education and skills development for the future: Investing in education and continuous skills development is essential for long-term development and poverty reduction.
- III. Unlocking opportunities through the African Continental Free Trade Area: BRICS members can support trade and investment in Africa, particularly in infrastructure development.
- IV. Strengthening post-pandemic socio-economic recovery and the attainment of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development: Economic plans and strategies should place BRICS economies at the centre of sustainable global economic growth.
- V. Strengthening multilateralism, including working towards real reform of global governance institutions and strengthening the meaningful participation of women in peace processes: BRICS shares a vision of a fair, just, and representative global system, but faces resistance from vested interests.

Take away from the Five Thematic Areas:

1

**Climate Change:** Opportunities need to be explored to manage the risks associated with climate change while still improving the lives and futures of those people employed under the umbrella of targeted industries.

2

**Transformation of Educations Skills development:** Existing cooperation and initiatives towards knowledge creation and exchange must be strengthened to unlock opportunities for the future.

3

**Opportunities through the Free Trade Area:** The partnership between BRICS and Africa must focus on unlocking mutually beneficial opportunities for increased trade, investment, and infrastructure development towards the operationalisation of the African Continental Free Trade Area in line with its priorities and objectives.

4

**Post-pandemic socio-economic recovery towards Sustainable Development 2023:** Equity, fairness, and a recognition of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities should underly the response.

5

**Strengthening multi-lateralism and reform of governance in Institutions, and Women participation:** Recent reform achievements serve as the foundation for continued efforts to channel the collective BRICS voice and influence where it can make a change. The marginalisation of women in peace processes needs to be addressed. Lasting peace, security and sustainable development cannot be achieved without the inclusion of women in conflict resolution as well as in post-conflict reconstruction.







