

BRICS and the Global Agenda: Progress on Sustainable Development

Charvi Shukla¹

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals In 2015, the United Nations introduced a new set of goals named as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals are to be achieved by the year 2030 as a roadmap for attaining a prosperous and sustainable future for the world. 17 such interrelated goals are laid down seeking to address various issues like environmental degradation to poverty, from inequality to climate change and others. Here, BRICS nations- Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa have a big role to play in supporting the world to accomplish these SDGs as they are the anchor for rising economic giants. Their commitment is vital and hence, in this piece a review of BRICS nations role in incorporating SDGs is analyzed from a business perspective. At the larger end, these 17 SDGs are the comprehensive collection of varied objectives set by the UN as an attempt to solve interrelated problems that our world is currently facing. They address many different topics, such as Promoting equitable and sustainable economic growth, full employment, and decent labour are the three pillars of economic growth and development. Reducing disparities, fostering gender equality, guaranteeing high-quality education, and eradicating poverty and hunger are all examples of social inclusion. Environmental sustainability is the preservation of biodiversity, promotion of sustainable energy sources, provision of clean water and sanitation, and defence of the earth against climate change. The SDGs call for an international effort from corporations, governments, and civil society organizations, and they are intended to be accomplished by 2030.

BRICS Nations and the SDGs

The BRICS nations are a varied collection of nations with differing degrees of social difficulties and economic progress. That being said, they are all interested in attaining sustainable development. The BRICS countries have been emphasizing the SDGs' significance and incorporating them into their national development strategies and business policies in the recent years.

- Brazil: The growth of institutions, economic activity, and obtaining decent employment prospects are the main priorities of Brazilian businesses. They pay less attention to things like life below the ocean, gender equality, and high-quality education.
- Russia: Russian businesses place a higher priority on economic expansion and respectable employment than they do on life below the water and high-quality education.
- India: Nearly ten of the seventeen SDGs have been embraced by Indian businesses, with an emphasis on infrastructure and industry innovation. They are less concerned with issues like ending hunger, reducing inequality, and combating climate change, nevertheless.

¹ Doctoral Student at XLRI Jamshedpur

- China: With an emphasis on infrastructure, innovation in the sector, and decent labour, Chinese businesses have embraced 14 of the 17 SDGs. They pay less attention to life below the water, climate action, and high-quality education.
- South Africa: In addition to fair labour conditions and economic expansion, South African businesses place a high value on peace, justice, and robust institutions. They pay less attention to life below the water, climate action, and high-quality education.

Take on the BRICS Nations Role in SDGS

Because the BRICS countries have historically placed a strong emphasis on industrialization and the eradication of poverty, many of their businesses prioritize economic growth and development. Even if social and environmental challenges are being addressed to some extent, business engagement with SDGs pertaining to these areas remains severely lacking. Because of variations in governmental policies, cultural norms, and economic development, the BRICS countries have varying levels of corporate participation with the SDGs.

There are still a number of obstacles to overcome in spite of the BRICS countries' success in incorporating the SDGs into their national development plans. The SDGs are still relatively unknown to many enterprises in the BRICS countries, or their commercial consequences are not fully understood. It can be expensive to implement the SDGs, and many businesses do not have the funds to engage in sustainable practices. Regulatory obstacles occasionally could make it more difficult for businesses to accomplish the SDGs.

Nonetheless, there exist noteworthy prospects for the BRICS countries to constructively contribute to the worldwide endeavour to accomplish the SDGs. The BRICS countries possess the financial clout to propel sustainable development worldwide. An increasing number of creative businesses with the ability to create novel technology and approaches to global problems are based in the BRICS countries. The BRICS countries may expedite the SDGs' progress by collaborating with governments, civil society organizations, and international organizations.

Conclusion

A vital part of accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations lies with the BRICS countries. Despite advancements in incorporating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into national development policies, business participation with these goals remains notably lacking. The BRICS countries must lower regulatory hurdles, promote financial incentives for sustainable practices, and raise corporate understanding of the SDGs in order to meet this challenge. The BRICS nations have the potential to significantly impact the creation of a more sustainable and just future for everyone by cooperating and utilizing their economic might.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ali, S., Hussain, T., Zhang, G., Nurunnabi, M., & Li, B. (n.d.). The Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in “BRICS” Countries. *Sustainability*, 10(7), 2513. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su10072513>

Banerji, N. (2024, June 18). World falling behind on Sustainable Development Goals like reducing hunger & poverty, UN warns. *Down to Earth*. <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/governance/world-falling-behind-on-sustainable-development-goals-like-reducing-hunger-poverty-un-warns>

Bhowmick, S. (2024). Navigating PostPandemic Recovery: BRICS and the SDGs. In *BRICS ACADEMIC REVIEW*. BRICS Academic Review. <https://sabt.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/BAR%20Issue%208.pdf>

India says BRICS nations can play leading role in achieving 2030 SDG goals. (2021, August 27). *Business Standar*. https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-says-brics-nations-can-play-leading-role-in-achieving-2030-sdg-goals-121082701183_1.html

Martin. (n.d.). *The Sustainable Development Agenda - United Nations Sustainable Development*. United Nations Sustainable Development. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/#:~:text=The%2017%20SDGs%2C%20the%20cornerstone,viole%20conflict%2C%20human%20rights%20abuses%2C>

Ofori, E. K., & Appiah-Opoku, S. (2023). Sustainable Development Goals in BRICS and G7 countries: Increasing accomplishments through policy synergies in four dimensions. *Sustainable Development*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.2653>