

► BRICS - ILO Cooperation

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► BRICS and ILO's Development Cooperation

In recent years, development cooperation between governments, social partners, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and private partners from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (the BRICS) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) has been increasingly active. The BRICS have shown that their large, fast-growing economies equip them to facilitate dialogue and cooperation, strengthening the concept of partnership for common development and advancing cooperation under the principles of openness, inclusiveness, solidarity and mutual assistance.

Brazil

In the past fifteen years, Brazil has invested over US\$20 million in development cooperation through peer-to-peer approaches and over US\$15 million in [Direct Trust Fund projects](#) that have a strong South-South element, while reinforcing fundamental principles and rights at work. In 2010, Brazil and ITCILO signed an agreement on capacity building for humanitarian crises and natural disasters. In October 2013, in cooperation with the ILO, Brazil hosted the [III Global Conference on Combatting Child Labour](#). The Brazilian cooperation has promoted the sharing of expertise with Portuguese speaking countries in Africa as well as Caribbean countries, MERCOSUR countries, the occupied Palestinian territories, Peru, Timor-Leste, and Tanzania. The Brazilian government is also an active contributor to SSTC through the [Regional Initiative to Combat Child Labour](#).¹

¹ The regional initiative has helped transform South-South cooperation into a primary modality for regional development cooperation.

► Promoting decent work in cotton producing countries in Africa and Latin America (2015-2021)

Currently Brazil is supporting South-South cooperation for the promotion of decent work in cotton-producing countries (2015-2021) in Africa and Latin America as an umbrella programme, which aims to contribute to the promotion of decent work in cotton-producing developing countries through the systematization, sharing and adaptation of Brazilian experiences in four countries: two in Latin America and two in Africa. These actions are aligned with national priorities and country development strategies and integrated with other South-South cooperation initiatives between the Brazilian Government and other nations. One of the largest South-South Cooperation projects, the initiative has dedicated US\$ 6.8 million for cooperation between Southern countries, mainly combating child labour and forced labour in the cotton sector.



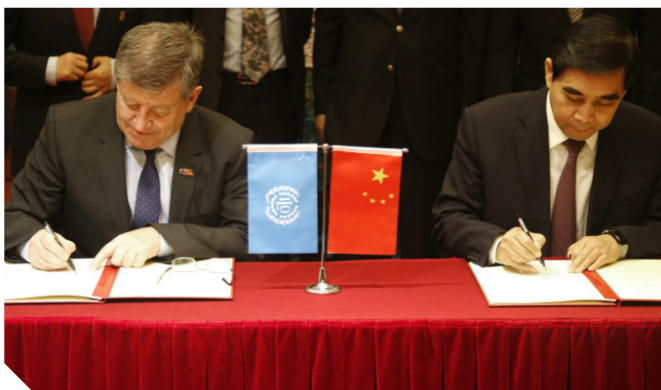
Russia

Since 2012, Russia has contributed [US\\$ 20 million for the implementation of the ILO-G20 training strategy](#), which included projects on skills and peer learning for Commonwealth of Independent States countries, Vietnam and Jordan, as well as South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC), sharing knowledge with a wider group of countries. This agreement was renewed in 2018, and the G20 project's second phase is extended until July 2021, with a strong focus on triangular cooperation in the CIS. The projects also strengthened skills and employability development systems as well as addressed country-specific priorities. In January 2016, the Labour and Employment Ministers of [BRICS Nations met in Ufa, Russia to deliberate on core labour and employment issues](#) such as - informality, labour mobility, social security and ensuring decent work, and achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

India

In November 2018, the Ministry of Labour and Employment, and the V.V Giri National Labour Institute, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with ITCILO to collaborate on research, training, education, publication and consultancy on labour related issues (renewal its 2012 MoU). The agreement covered: a) implementation of collaborative training programmes and research into training methodologies and techniques; b) development of training modules; c) exchange of faculty members for skills upgrading, knowledge and information-sharing; and d) implementation of joint courses on labour studies. This collaboration is also supporting the development of training modules and faculty member exchanges for skills upgrading and recognition. India also cooperates with the ILO through the India Fund and the IBSA Fund, in cooperation with the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), with a particular focus on climate change and apprenticeships in the Caribbean.

China



and June 2019, the ILO signed three MOUs with the Government of China and one with the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), establishing a solid foundation for expanding development cooperation. In addition, the ITCILO, in close collaboration with the All-China Federation of Trade Unions, are engaged in the capacity building of trade unions on labour relations, collective bargaining and labour movements.

► Global partnership agreement between the ILO and OAO Lukoil



In 2017, the Director-General of the ILO, Guy Ryder, and the President of the Russian oil company LUKOIL, Vagit Alekperov, [signed an agreement in Moscow](#) to continue cooperation on youth employment initiatives from 2018 to 2022. The second phase of this project aims to further improve the effectiveness of policies and programmes promoting decent jobs for young people, based on broad and sustainable partnerships and informed policy frameworks in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

LUKOIL also cooperates with the ILO's Bureau for Employers' Activities on training programmes, and to start a close collaboration for sharing expertise initially on corporate social responsibility, occupational safety and health at International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin. The ITC-BRICS Programme conducted a training and study tour for LUKOIL trade unions' and management representatives on Enhancing tripartite social dialogue: newest trends and best practices at international level that took place in Turin in 2017.

► **Signature of new MoUs between the Government of China and the ILO**

In April 2019, ILO and the Government of China signed three MOUs that will provide a solid basis for an expanded programme of development cooperation:

- “South-South Cooperation under the Framework of the Belt and Road Initiative” (signed by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security - MOHRSS)
- “Cooperation for the Promotion of the Effective Implementation of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (as amended, MLC, 2006) through the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative” (signed by the Ministry of Transport)
- “South-South Cooperation on Work Safety Under the Framework of the Belt and Road Initiative” (signed by the Ministry of Emergency Management - MEM)

► **Strengthening Skills Development in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar through South-South and Triangular Cooperation**

Prioritizing reinforcing the skills development capacity of the three program countries, the project financed and supported national Skills Needs Surveys in Lao PDR and Cambodia as well as commissioned an international study, identifying skills and employment placement gaps in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar.

Based on robust consultation with tripartite constituents, the project carried out a package of technical activities that included organizing national skills development law consultation workshops, sponsoring national skills competitions, participating in global curriculum development on quality apprenticeships (with ITCILO), organizing a skills innovation challenge call for the digitalization of skills in TVET institutions and raising awareness about skills standards.



South Africa

Since March 2014, South Africa has financed three [ILO Programmes in public infrastructure](#) and employment policy planning focusing on the development and promotion of appropriate employment intensive investment policies for Skills/Capacity Development through Direct Trust Funds with a total budget of US\$ 32 million.

► **Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic**

Recently the ILO Office in Pretoria mobilized resources to support the Government and Social Partners' efforts to mitigate the health and socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on enterprises and workers in the informal economy, and transitioning to formalization. ILO is also supporting the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) and the Compensation Fund (CF) in developing guidelines to enhance mitigation of COVID-19 in different sectors as well as prevention and documentation of COVID-19 exposure incidents in teleworking arrangements.

BRICS Network of Labour Research Institutes

The BRICS Network of Labour Research Institutes was endorsed by the BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers in Chongqing in 2017. Its mandate is to produce knowledge and put forward recommendations to inform the policy discussions of the BRICS Employment Working Group on current and emerging labour, employment and social security issues, the future of work as well as on decent work goals and strategies for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The leading research institutes of the Network are the Brazilian National Labour Market Observatory of the Ministry of Labour, the All-Russia Research Institute for Labor of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, the Indian V.V. Giri National Labour Institute of Ministry of Labour & Employment, the Chinese Academy of Labour and Social Security of Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and the South African University of Fort Hare.

► Skills sharing and BRICS cooperation

12th BRICS summit, Russia (Nov 2020) – Emphasised the role of education for enhancing human capital, re-skilling and up-skilling workers in the post-COVID-19 recovery, achieving sustainable development and supporting inclusive economic growth. Government leaders committed to enhancing cooperation, particularly on TVET and higher education, through exchanges of best practices, knowledge and expertise, including on digital technologies for distance and blended learning.

11th BRICS summit, Brazil (Nov 2019) – Supported the conclusion of the BRICS Trade Ministers that bold, coordinated international action is required to increase economic growth and sustainability. This includes sustainable investment in digital infrastructure, youth skills and local basic services as well as external investment in areas of high potential growth, including the African continent.

10th BRICS Summit, South Africa (July 2018) – Acknowledged that skills development is critical to addressing the mismatch between the skills demanded by a changing global economy and those of many workers. Leaders committed to supporting G20 policy recommendations on quality apprenticeship and the BRICS Action Plan for Poverty Alleviation and Reduction through Skills, as well as to facilitating vocational training and lifelong learning.

9th BRICS Summit, China (Sept 2017) – Recognized the importance, opportunities and challenges of labour market transformations. The Summit noted progress in BRICS cooperation on human resources, employment and social security and fostering strong labour market information systems and welcomed a BRICS common position on governance in the future of work. The Summit also agreed to further strengthen exchanges and cooperation to promote full employment, decent work as well as poverty alleviation through skills development and universal and sustainable social security systems.

BRICS SKILLS Policy recommendations:

To address mismatch in BRICS countries, policies should target specific forms of mismatch and improve the alignment of educational supply with the demands of employers. This means increasing the vocational content and practical experience for all fields of study as well as helping firms more flexibly harness the skills of their workforce. Improving educational attainment and continued GDP per capita growth will also attract investments in quality jobs.

To address skills demand, BRICS countries should improve retention, validation and recognition of all forms of learning and utilization of skills, improve working conditions, and put in place relevant policies and regulations (national and sectoral). **To address skill supply deficiencies**, lifelong and workplace learning should be encouraged. Labour migration and mobility should be managed and regulated to help further cooperation between countries.

► BRICS and the ILO: Opportunities

BRICS and social security: The BRICS share a number of common characteristics, but social security extension efforts respond to the unique cultural, institutional and demographic characteristics of the five countries. Challenges remain, but the BRICS and ILO could collaborate to scale up existing social security programmes. The conditional cash-transfer programme *Bolsa Família* in Brazil, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in India and the rights-based approach to social security in South Africa could be adapted to other contexts

Knowledge sharing: BRICS could benefit from the ILO's experience in facilitating knowledge and information sharing on skills development, social protection floors and labour standards as they work on national priorities.

BRICS summits and Decent Work: The integration of the Decent Work Agenda as one of the items of BRICS Summits would allow the exchange of knowledge and experiences on this topic. It would also pave the way to further mainstreaming the Decent Work Agenda into existing BRICS platforms and structures.

Capacity-building: The ILO's technical knowledge and experience with the BRICS can facilitate capacity-building activities that benefit ILO's constituents from the Global South, including with the BRICS Network of Labour Research Institutes. SSTC and PPPs can support the achievement of BRICS social and economic development priorities.

Building on joint IBSA-ILO successes: The close collaboration between India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) and the ILO on the Decent Work Agenda has shown positive results that can be scaled up through greater cooperation in the broader BRICS context and could include agreeing joint positions on different items during the ILO Governing Body.

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