

BPC Policy Brief

# OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF BRICS COOPERATION IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Dr. Tianjiao Jiang



BRICS  
Policy Center  
Centro de Estudos  
e Pesquisas BRICS



**LABRICS**  
Laboratório BRICS de  
Políticas e Governança Global

## Ficha Catalográfica

BPC Policy Brief V.16 N. 01 - Maio/2026.  
Rio de Janeiro. PUC. BRICS Policy Center  
ISSN: 2318-1818

19p .; 29,7 cm

1. Artificial Intelligence; 2. BRICS Cooperation;  
3. Digital Sovereignty

### Autor

Dr. Tianjiao Jiang

### Revisão

Marta Fernández

## Coordenação LABRICS

Marta Fernández

## Design e Diagramação

Vitória Cardoso

## Identidade Visual

Isabelle Bernardes

## Sobre o BRICS Policy Center:

O BRICS Policy Center / Centro de Estudos e Pesquisas BRICS (BPC), think thank vinculado ao Instituto de Relações Internacionais da PUC-Rio (IRI/PUC-Rio), é um centro de reflexão independente, não partidário e sem fins lucrativos na cidade do Rio de Janeiro.

O BPC tem como missão contribuir para o avanço de uma agenda de desenvolvimento, ampliação de direitos e promoção da igualdade nos países do sul global, por meio da produção de conhecimento crítico e relevante para o debate público acerca das transformações em curso no sistema internacional e seus desdobramentos nos planos local, nacional e regional.

As opiniões aqui expressas são de inteira responsabilidade do(a)s autor (a) (es) (as), não refletindo, necessariamente, a posição das instituições envolvidas

## BRICS Policy Center

### Centro de Estudos e Pesquisas BRICS

Casas Casadas, 3º andar, Rua das Laranjeiras 307,  
Laranjeiras, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brasil. CEP 22240-004

## Equipe BPC:

### Diretor do Instituto de Relações Internacionais

Kai Michael Kenkel

### Diretora do BRICS Policy Center

Marta Fernández

### Diretora Adjunta do BRICS Policy Center

Maria Elena Rodriguez

### Coordenadora Administrativa

Lia Frota e Lopes

### Gerente de Projetos

Clara Costa

### Assistente de Projetos

Luana Freitas

### Comunicação

Isabelle Bernardes

e-mail: [bpc@puc-rio.br](mailto:bpc@puc-rio.br)

[bricspolicycenter.org](http://bricspolicycenter.org)



With the booming rise of the digital economy, BRICS countries are increasingly emphasizing the crucial role of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), in driving national innovation, economic competitiveness, and industrial transformation and upgrading. At the 2025 BRICS Summit, [leaders issued a joint statement on AI](#), outlining principles of multi-directional development and governance. In February of this year, India successfully hosted [the AI Impact Summit](#) and will host the BRICS Summit later this year. AI is expected to remain a key focus for all parties.

**Digital infrastructure is a shared concern among BRICS countries and a key area for future cooperation.** The successful implementation of artificial intelligence applications depends on the accessibility of digital infrastructure such as computing power, storage, networks, and cloud services. BRICS countries generally adopt a development strategy of "self-reliance + open cooperation," striving to solidify technological sovereignty while addressing shortcomings in their local ecosystems. For example, [Brazil launched the Artificial Intelligence Investment Plan \(PBIA2024–2028\)](#) in 2024, establishing a dedicated budget of US\$4 billion to support the nationwide deployment of data center clusters and the localization of memory chip production.

China's Longsys Electronics Co., Ltd. invested RMB 859 million to expand its memory chip packaging and testing production line in São Paulo and partnered with the Brazilian Federal Development Bank (BNDES) to establish an AI infrastructure special fund, guiding private capital participation in network upgrades in rural and remote areas.

India's National AI Mission has received \$1.25 billion in government funding to procure NVIDIA GPUs and build a national AI computing platform and establish the "AI Centres of Excellence". Furthermore, the Indian government, through NITI Aayog (National Planning Commission), is collaborating with international cloud service providers such as AWS, Microsoft, and Google to establish joint laboratories, providing computing resources for startups and research institutions.

Indonesia, leveraging the Palapa Ring submarine cable project and nationwide 4G/5G base station upgrades, is collaborating with Microsoft and Alibaba Cloud to build local cloud computing and AI data centers. Saudi Arabia and the UAE are pioneering the deployment of green supercomputing in the Middle East.

The Shaheen-3 supercomputer, supported by the Saudi Public Investment Fund (PIF), is equipped with tens of thousands of GPUs and collaborates with Saudi Energy to integrate solar and wind power into its data center cooling and power supply systems. The UAE's G42 Group has invested hundreds of billions of dollars to build GPU clusters in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, creating a global AI cloud service network.

**In their AI development strategies, BRICS countries focus on AI applications in key areas, launching demonstrative projects in crucial sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, finance, and energy.**

For example, Ethiopia emphasizes applications in agriculture and primary healthcare. The Ethiopian Artificial Intelligence Institute (EAI), in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, uses Landsat satellite remote sensing imagery and drone data to input into machine learning models, enabling crop growth monitoring, yield prediction, and pest and disease identification. In rural healthcare, Chinese experts have provided training to Ethiopia regarding the application of AI in medical imaging modalities such as CT, PET-CT, and MRI. This technical assistance enables local clinics to identify the risk of stroke more rapidly.

India is comprehensively advancing the application of AI in smart agriculture, intelligent transportation and online education. Supported by [the "Digital India" platform](#), the government is collaborating with IRRI (International Rice Research Institute) to develop smart irrigation and pest control systems. [Online education platforms like Byju's](#) utilize recommendation algorithms to provide personalized courses to millions of students.

The Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), in partnership with Masdar (local renewables company), launched an AI-based carbon emissions monitoring and optimization platform. At this year's BRICS summit, member countries and partners are expected to achieve more practical cooperation results regarding AI's application in agriculture, healthcare, finance, and energy.

**Focusing on talent development is also crucial.** The sustainable development of the AI ecosystem requires multi-level, interdisciplinary talent support. BRICS countries generally build talent ecosystems from four aspects: basic education, vocational training, university research, and international cooperation, attempting to construct a "full-chain" talent ecosystem from general training to high-end scientific research, thus reserving a talent dividend for the high-quality development of the AI industry.

Brazil not only launched the AI Professional Certification Program in 2024 under the PBI framework, but also in cooperation with Microsoft and IBM, providing [ConectAI training](#) for free digital literacy and AI engineering skills courses to 5 disadvantaged urban and rural residents.

India has leveraged its ["FutureSkills" program](#), establishing national scholarships and doctoral funding schemes to encourage students to pursue advanced studies on AI. The government has partnered with Google and Amazon to establish local training bases, and has trained over millions of digital skills learners.

China has spearheaded the establishment of the ["China-BRICS Artificial Intelligence Development and Cooperation Center"](#), aiming to promote collaborative work in AI policy dialogue, technology exchange, and talent development. The BRICS New Industrial Revolution Partnership Xiamen Innovation Base collaborates with other BRICS countries on projects related to human resource training and skills enhancement in digitalization and intelligent manufacturing, and offers the ["Golden Egret" scholarship](#). China also cultivates AI talent with international collaboration capabilities by hosting AI capacity-building workshops and the BRICS Skills Innovation Competition.

**However, in-depth cooperation among BRICS countries on artificial intelligence also faces some structural challenges.** Based on different national security needs, industrial layouts, and governance preferences, countries have different understandings of "digital sovereignty" and "intelligent sovereignty." Disagreements in domestic regulatory rules regarding data security will hinder in-depth cooperation within BRICS on cross-border data flows and computing power sharing. Brazil's General Data Protection Law (LGPD) equates digital sovereignty with "data localization + cross-border compliance," protecting individual privacy while allowing for data mutual recognition and flow with the EU, the US, and other countries, provided data protection agreements are reached. It also advocates for building a shared computing power and de-identified data exchange platform at the BRICS and G20 levels.

India emphasizes "computing sovereignty," highlighting self-sufficiency in infrastructure. This was reflected in the Global AI Impact Summit hosted by India this past February, as well as in the Delhi Declaration. Simultaneously, its Digital Personal Data Protection Act (2023) incorporates algorithm transparency and explainability into the scope of digital sovereignty, requiring the local filing of "impact assessment reports" and "algorithm specifications," and imposing strict approvals on cross-border access to

local data services.

Russia focuses on intelligent sovereignty through a combination of "technological autonomy and data protection." By supporting the development of domestically produced AI chips and models, Russia aims to achieve closed-loop autonomy across the "hardware-software-algorithm" chain. Furthermore, at the data sovereignty level, the [Russian Federation's Personal Data Law](#) requires all public and sensitive data to be stored domestically and establishes VPN censorship, encrypted channels, and security audit mechanisms for external access.

South Africa, Indonesia, and Ethiopia all emphasize that digital sovereignty should include citizens' rights to know, participate in, and be held accountable regarding data and algorithms, as well as respect for inclusive social development. Saudi Arabia and the UAE highlight a digital sovereignty model that combines green energy with computing power. All countries hope to extend their development and governance models to their respective regions and even the broader international arena, but the coordination and integration of these different concepts and practices will pose a significant challenge to the BRICS cooperation mechanism.

The effective advancement of cooperation on AI governance among BRICS nations requires making better use of the existing resources and platforms of member states. In addition to China's "Belt and Road Initiative," each member country possesses its own regional economic cooperation strategies that can play a pivotal role in bridging the digital infrastructure divide. Furthermore, it is essential to establish—within the BRICS framework—more fluid and multi-tiered mechanisms for multi-dimensional communication, information sharing, and collaboration regarding AI. This collective effort will enable the BRICS nations to jointly project a distinct "BRICS voice" within the arena of international governance and work in concert to dismantle obstacles hindering the inclusive development of artificial intelligence.

# I. Governance and Regulation

First, establish a BRICS mechanism for strategic dialogue and mutual trust regarding AI. Currently, BRICS nations face multifaceted obstacles to collaboration, including divergent expectations regarding strategic positioning, significant disparities in reliance on technology from the developed countries, and a lack of consensus regarding the potential risks associated with AI systems. Consequently, establishing a comprehensive and robust mechanism for dialogue and mutual trust serves as the foundational basis for cooperation in the development of AI technologies.

- Establish an "AI Strategic Dialogue Committee" to facilitate regular exchanges focused on key issues such as governance principles, standards and regulations, and data flow.
- Promote the formulation of "BRICS Guidelines for AI Security Assessment and Certification," and jointly develop cross-border risk identification tools and emergency response platforms.

Second, refine the BRICS framework for AI regulation and data collaboration. The BRICS nations exhibit significant disparities in their legal approaches and technical capabilities regarding AI regulation and data governance; while these differences offer advantages in terms of localized adaptation, they also present obstacles to cross-border cooperation.

- Regarding regulation, unify frameworks for AI algorithm auditing and risk assessment, and establish technical guidelines that are mutually recognized by all member states; encourage nations to share regulatory checklists, enforcement case studies, and key technical standards; convene a "BRICS AI Governance Forum" to foster talent development and facilitate exchanges.
- Regarding cross-border data mechanisms, promote the mutual recognition of rules and the coordination of processes. This entails fostering the development of a unified classification and tiered review mechanism for cross-border data flows, and formulating "BRICS Guidelines on Cross-Border Data Flows," supported by accompanying security assessment and compliance protocols.

- Establish a "BRICS Data Compliance Mutual Recognition Platform" to facilitate the international interoperability of data review processes, assessment methodologies, and compliance documentation.
- Promote the development of infrastructure for cross-border data element transactions. Centering on three categories of data elements—government data, public data, and commercial data—construct secure "sandboxes" to encourage pilot initiatives in sectors such as digital health, intelligent manufacturing, and cross-border e-commerce, thereby gradually fostering the formation of a common market for data flows within the BRICS framework.

## II. Industrial Development

First, advance the construction of a BRICS collaborative network for computing infrastructure. Promote the formulation of a "BRICS Collaborative Development Plan for Computing Infrastructure" to clearly define the computing development stages and cooperation priorities for each member state.

1 Establish "BRICS Computing Nodes" in regions such as the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Africa, and South America, supported by corresponding universal standards, technical access protocols, and energy consumption guidelines.

- Focus on aligning demand with supply and facilitating the integration of practical applications; establish a "Computing Supply-Demand Matching Platform" centered on real-world AI implementation scenarios across sectors.
- Promote the development of green computing capabilities. Leveraging the abundant renewable energy resources of nations such as South Africa and Brazil, construct integrated bases that combine wind power, solar power, energy storage, and computing capabilities as a benchmark for green and intelligent infrastructure cooperation among developing nations.

Second, implement a joint BRICS AI talent development program. Promote the establishment of a collaborative training framework encompassing basic education, specialized training, and advanced scientific research.

- Design a "BRICS AI Education Life-cycle Coordination Mechanism" to introduce introductory courses at the primary and secondary school levels, jointly establish transnational research laboratories within higher education institutions, and facilitate the implementation of practical training cooperation projects within the corporate sector.
- Cultivate an ecosystem for AI talent development. Create a "BRICS AI Youth Exchange Platform" to encourage young scientists and technologists to participate in short-term visits, project incubation, and entrepreneurship competitions, supported by the establishment of an "AI Youth Scholarship" and a "BRICS Entrepreneurship Incubation Fund." Additionally, regularly host a "BRICS AI Youth Summit" to foster talent exchange ideas.

Third, establish a cooperative mechanism for a BRICS AI investment and financing platform.

This entails building a multi-tiered system of joint funds, creating a comprehensive network that spans the entire life-cycle.

- BRICS nations can collaborate to form a cross-border venture capital alliance; drawing upon the successful partnership model between Saudi Arabia and Silicon Valley venture capital firms, they can integrate existing specialized funds and investment channels from member states to construct a unified funding platform covering various stages, including technology R&D, business incubation, and the commercialization of research outcomes.
- The policy environment for investment and financing should be synergistically optimized by harmonizing policy standards across BRICS nations and facilitating the alignment of regulatory frameworks. Policy dialogue should be strengthened to lower the barriers to cross-border investment.
- A diversified investment and financing ecosystem should be jointly cultivated. Through resource sharing, international collaboration, and market development, the aim is to attract global capital to participate in the growth of the BRICS AI industry, thereby enhancing the vitality of the investment and financing ecosystem.

### III. Global Dialogue

First, to better promote global inclusivity and technological equity, the BRICS countries should establish new mechanisms and create a dialogue platform for policy and industrial coordination.

- BRICS members should forge a consensus—and jointly formulate countermeasures—on issues such as technology export controls and the setting of international norms.
- By eliminating divergences in their respective policies, technological cooperation, and participation in international standards-setting, and by strengthening internal policy synergy, they should engage in deep cooperation with the broader Global South to collectively advocate for the establishment of fair and inclusive technological rules within the international governance system.

Second, the BRICS countries should accelerate cooperation in the realm of global AI governance, thereby projecting a distinct "BRICS voice" within the international governance arena.

- Reinforce BRICS influence within existing international multilateral organizations. Actively participate—under the auspices of the BRICS cooperation mechanism—in the activities of international standards bodies such as the United Nations, International Telecommunication Union and the International Organization for Standardization.
- Intensify efforts to encourage and support research institutions and technical experts within BRICS member states to participate in—and organize—conferences and events hosted by professional societies such as the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), and to publish joint research findings.
- Jointly formulate global governance initiatives and standards to project a unified image within the international governance arena, thereby securing greater opportunities for equitable development in the age of intelligence for developing nations and emerging markets.



**PUC**  
**RIO**



**BRICS**  
Policy Center  
Centro de Estudos  
e Pesquisas BRICS



**LABRICS**

Laboratório BRICS de  
Políticas e Governança Global