
The United Nations 2030 Agenda and BRI

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a programmatic document guiding global development cooperation and is highly aligned with the BRI. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the BRI. Over the past decade, China has signed more than 200 Belt and Road cooperation documents with more than 150 countries and over 32 international organizations, focusing on policy coordination, infrastructure connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration, and people-to-people bond, which has enriched the practical content of global development cooperation.¹ The BRI has become a road of solidarity for global partnership, a road of win-win cooperation for enhanced connectivity, openness, and cooperation, and a road of hope for global sustainable development. It is the broadest and largest open international cooperation platform in the world today.

1. The BRI Contributes China's Solution to the UN 2030 Agenda

The 2030 Agenda includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets.² Since it was proposed in 2015, more than half of the process has been completed, and some progress has been made. However, the current situation is unstable and uncertain, the global development deficit is more prominent, and the prospect of achieving the 17 SDGs on schedule is not optimistic.³ As pointed out in the 2021/22 Human Development Report published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), for the first time ever, the Human Development Index (HDI) has declined for two years in a row, back to its 2016 levels.⁴ In July 2023, the United Nations released the SDGs Report 2023: Special Edition, indicating that only about 12 percent of the 140 targets have made significant progress, and 30 percent have either seen no movement or even regressed.⁵ Under current trends, 575 million people will be living in extreme poverty in 2030.

In this context, the BRI, as an important international public good provided by China to the world, has taken on more prominent contemporary significance in the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda.

(1) Inject certainty into sustainable development

The BRI is a practical action to achieve sustainable development. The BRI aims to increase the supply of international public goods, channel more resources to support the sustainable economic and social development of developing countries, and remove development bottlenecks. With the same purposes, principles, and visions, the BRI and the 2030 Agenda bring out the best in each other. At the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in 2017 and 2019, President Xi Jinping announced a series of cooperation initiatives covering many areas, including economic and trade cooperation, science and technology, finance, food security and agriculture, education, health care, climate change, disaster reduction, water resources, capacity building, and people-to-people exchanges. These major measures are effectively aligned with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, forming policy synergy to promote global common development and injecting more certainty into sustainable development.

Box 9.1 Some of the practical cooperation measures announced by China at the two Belt and Road Forums

Finance. China will scale up financing support for the BRI by contributing an additional RMB 100 billion to the Silk Road Fund and encouraging financial institutions to conduct overseas RMB fund business with an estimated amount of about RMB 300 billion. The China Development Bank and the Export-Import Bank of China will set up special lending schemes, respectively, worth RMB 250 billion equivalent and RMB 130 billion equivalent to support Belt and Road cooperation on infrastructure, industrial capacity, and financing. China will also work with the AIIB, the BRICS New Development Bank, the World Bank, and other multilateral development institutions to support Belt and Road-related projects. China will work with other parties concerned to jointly formulate guidelines for financing the Belt and Road-related development projects. China will continue to make good use of the Belt and Road Special Lending Scheme, the Silk Road Fund, and various special investment funds, develop Silk Road theme bonds, and support the Multilateral Cooperation Center for Development Finance in its operation. China welcomes the participation of multilateral and national financial institutions in BRI investment and financing and encourages third-market cooperation. With the involvement of multiple stakeholders, benefits can surely be delivered to all.

Trade investment. China will endeavor to build a win-win business partnership with other countries participating in the BRI, enhance trade and investment facilitation with them, and build a Belt and Road free trade network. These efforts are designed to promote growth both in respective regions and globally. During the first forum, China will sign business and trade cooperation agreements with over 30 countries and enter into consultation on free trade agreements with related countries. China will enter into negotiations with more countries to conclude high-standard free trade agreements and strengthen cooperation in customs, taxation, and audit oversight by setting up the BRI Tax Administration Cooperation Mechanism and accelerating international collaboration on the mutual recognition of Authorized Economic Operators.

People-to-people bond. China will enhance cooperation on innovation with other countries. We will launch the Belt and Road Science, Technology, and Innovation Cooperation Action Plan, which consists of the Science and Technology People-to-People Exchange Initiative, the Joint Laboratory Initiative, the Science Park Cooperation Initiative, and the Technology Transfer Initiative. In the coming five years,⁶ China will offer 2,500 short-term research visits to China for young foreign scientists, train 5,000 foreign scientists, engineers, and managers, and set up 50 joint laboratories. China will continue to carry out the Belt and Road Science, Technology, and Innovation Cooperation Action Plan and will work with our partners to pursue four major initiatives, namely the Science and Technology People-to-People Exchange Initiative, the Joint Laboratory Initiative, the Science Park Cooperation Initiative, and the Technology Transfer Initiative. China will also support companies of various countries in jointly advancing ICT infrastructure building to upgrade cyber connectivity. China will put in place the following mechanisms to boost Belt and Road cooperation: a liaison office for the forum's follow-up activities, the Research Center for the Belt and Road Financial and Economic Development, the Facilitating Center for Building the Belt and Road, the Multilateral Development Financial Cooperation Center in cooperation with multilateral development banks, and an IMF-China Capacity Building Center. China will also develop a network for cooperation among the NGOs in countries along the Belt and Road as well as new people-to-people exchange platforms such as a Belt and Road news alliance and a music education alliance. China will, in the coming five years, invite 10,000 representatives of political parties, think tanks, and non-governmental organizations from Belt and Road participating countries to visit China. Together with social organizations of participating countries, China will conduct a number of environmental protection and anti-corruption training courses and deepen human resources development cooperation in various areas. China will continue to run the Chinese government scholarship Silk Road Program and host the International Youth Forum on Creativity and Heritage along the Silk Roads and the “Chinese Bridge” summer camps.

—**Green development.** China will set up a big data service platform on ecological and environmental protection. China proposes the establishment of an international coalition for green development on the Belt and Road, and China will provide support to related countries in adapting to climate change. China will continue to implement the Green Silk Road Envoys Program and work with relevant countries to jointly implement the Belt and Road South-South Cooperation Initiative on Climate Change. China will also deepen cooperation in agriculture, health, disaster mitigation, and water resources, and China will enhance development cooperation with the United Nations to narrow the gap in development.

—**People's livelihood.** In the coming three years,⁷ China will provide assistance worth RMB 60 billion to developing countries and international organizations participating in the BRI to launch more projects to improve people's well-being. China will provide emergency food aid worth RMB 2 billion to developing countries along the Belt and Road and make an additional contribution of US\$1 billion to the Assistance Fund for South-South Cooperation. China will launch 100 “happy home” projects, 100 poverty alleviation projects, and 100 health care and rehabilitation projects in countries along the Belt and Road. China will provide relevant international organizations with US\$1 billion to implement cooperation projects that will benefit the countries along the Belt and Road.

The BRI brings tangible benefits to participating countries. Ten years on since the start of the BRI, more than 3,000 cooperation projects on connectivity and people's livelihood have been carried out in Belt and Road countries, involving nearly US\$1 trillion of investment, creating 420,000 jobs for participating countries and lifting nearly 40 million people out of poverty. As an Australian scholar pointed out, the Belt and Road project has provided employment, exports, tax revenue, and technology for participating countries and regions, trained a large number of technical personnel, and promoted economic and trade exchanges.⁸ According to the research report of Boston University, BRI host countries, to varying extents, have received considerable investment, loans, and infrastructure and gained precious development experience from China.⁹

The BRI attracts worldwide attention for its dynamism and resilience. Despite the impact of COVID-19, no "pause button" has been pressed on BRI cooperation projects. Healthy Silk Road, Green Silk Road, and Digital Silk Road projects are in the ascendant. Trade in goods and non-financial direct investment among BRI countries shows a continuously growing trend. The construction of digital transportation corridors, cross-border optical cable information channels, and information ports has been actively promoted. Kazakhstan International News Agency published a commentary that the BRI, as a global initiative, is a stable, sustainable economic cooperation mechanism that can cope with the negative impacts of the pandemic.¹⁰

The BRI is highly recognized by the international community. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said that jointly building the Belt and Road is an important opportunity to advance the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda, which can not only share development opportunities, help developing countries reduce poverty, but also contribute to environmental construction and social stability and development, thus promoting the realization of sustainable development Goals.¹¹ A British expert on East Asia believed that the BRI is widely welcomed because there are no political strings attached to Chinese investment.¹² A Swedish scholar said that the BRI is of global influence and epochal significance, paving the way for eradicating poverty, promoting sustainable development, promoting international peace and cooperation, and is conducive to global common development.¹³ Kazakhstan's president hailed the BRI as a remarkable initiative for building continental strategic connectivity.¹⁴

(2) Shape a new paradigm for international development cooperation

The BRI follows the vision of global governance, featuring extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits. The BRI upholds the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits and actively aligns with the strategic plans and priorities of developing countries. Taking connectivity as an important means, BRI contrives to seek common interests and cooperation in concentric circles, provide new opportunities for developing countries to better participate in global governance and integrate into GVCs, and promote a new type of development cooperation based on equality and mutual benefit, thus showing a new path and cooperation paradigm for global development.

The BRI aims to be high-standard, sustainable, and people-centered. First, promote internationalization and localization in both directions, introducing rules and standards that are widely supported by all parties. The construction, operation, procurement, bidding, and other aspects of projects are carried out in accordance with generally accepted international rules and standards while respecting various laws and regulations in different countries and deeply exploring local conditions. Second, coordinately develop the economy, society, and environment, focusing on the mutual adaptability of project construction with local society and environment, thus coordinating economic growth, social development, and environmental protection to ensure commercial and financial sustainability. Third, put people first, centering on eradicating poverty, increasing employment, and improving people's livelihood, and implement more projects that are "handy and practical with fast and remarkable effects on people's livelihood" so that the fruits of the BRI can benefit people of all countries.

(3) Enrich global development partnerships

The BRI opens up a new way for South-South cooperation. China has set up the Global Development and South-South Cooperation Fund and the China-UN Peace and Development Trust Fund, enriching and diversifying financial models. By June 2023, China, in cooperation with the UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Health Organization, and other international organizations, has implemented more than 130 projects in more than 50 developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, benefiting more than 20 million people. At the same time, fruitful South-South cooperation has been carried out under the BRICS Plus, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and Lancang-Mekong cooperation mechanisms. As a shared model of South-South cooperation, BRI becomes an example of new South-South cooperation that supports diverse actors such as international organizations, multilateral institutions, enterprises and the private sector, and non-governmental organizations to leverage their comparative advantages through participating in South-South cooperation and expanding cooperation space.

The BRI promotes high-level regional cooperation. The BRI connects regional development plans and cooperation initiatives such as the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025, Agenda 2063 of the African Union, the Eurasian Economic Union, and the Europe-Asia Connectivity Strategy of the EU, reaching a consensus for improving connectivity and supporting economic integration among regions in the world. The China-Laos Railway has linked to Thailand's railway network, creating an economic belt that extends to Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Steady progress has been made in projects such as the Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway and the East Coast Rail Link in Malaysia. Greater Mekong Railway Association was formally established; the China-Europe Railway Express has been connected to the New Land-Sea Corridor in the western region. The above cooperation measures have effectively implemented the ASEAN-China Joint Statement on Synergising the MPAC 2025 and the BRI. The BRI has enriched plans for co-building regional cooperation

among countries, promoting broader, higher-level, and deeper regional cooperation.

The BRI actively expands trilateral cooperation. China has signed third-party market cooperation documents with France, Japan, Italy, and the United Kingdom and carried out tripartite cooperation programs with the US, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand to meet local needs in agriculture, health, and other areas. For example, China worked with the US to train health officials for African countries, joining hands to support African countries in fighting the Ebola virus. China cooperated with the UK in implementing pilot projects on cassava industrial chain in Uganda and tilapia industrial chain cooperation in Malawi. In cooperation with Australia, China carried out a malaria prevention and control program in Papua New Guinea and helped the country to found a network of provincial-level malaria laboratories, thus enhancing its capabilities in routine malaria diagnosis and monitoring. Through cooperation, all parties have drawn from each other's successful experience and enhanced mutual understanding and trust, hence building a results-oriented cooperation mechanism and a more inclusive global governance model.

2. The BRI Helps Achieve the 2030 Agenda Goals

The BRI focuses on policy coordination, infrastructure connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration, and people-to-people bond. A large number of development projects in infrastructure, digital communications, energy and electricity, people's livelihood, poverty reduction and benefits, public governance, and climate change have been launched, and new platforms for international trade and investment have been created. Being a new contributor to improving people's well-being in all countries, BRI has played an important role in accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

(1) Promote connectivity

The BRI has enhanced infrastructure links. In participating countries, the need for infrastructure is huge. The ADB estimates that developing countries in Asia need to invest US\$26 trillion in infrastructure from 2016 to 2030.¹⁵ Under the BRI framework, by September 2022, China had signed 22 agreements on international road transportation facilitation with 19 countries and 70 bilateral and regional shipping agreements with 66 countries and regions, providing shipping services to all coastal countries along the Road. China has also signed bilateral inter-governmental air transport agreements with 100 countries. A general connectivity framework consisting of six corridors, six connectivity routes, and multiple countries and ports has been constantly improved. Major corridors such as the China Railway Express, the China–Laos Railway, and the New Land-Sea Corridor injected new impetus into the joint construction of economic and trade exchanges between countries. For instance, by July 2023, more than 74,000

China-Europe freight trains had transported 6.9 million twenty-foot equivalent unit (TEU) containers of goods, providing services for 216 cities in 25 European countries. Infrastructure is the bedrock of connectivity. High-quality, sustainable, resilient, affordable, inclusive, and accessible infrastructure projects can help countries fully leverage their resource endowment and better integrate into the global supply, industrial, and value chains.

Box 9.2 Silk road shipping

In December 2018, “Silk Road Shipping” set off from Xiamen Port. Starting from scratch, a whole new “Belt and Road” maritime integrated logistics service brand went from strength to strength. As of April 2023, the shipping routes named after the brand “Silk Road Shipping” had reached 100, connecting 117 ports in 43 countries around the world. China supported the construction of the Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka and assisted with the Friendship Port expansion project in Mauritania, which improved the handling capacity of the ports, turning them into important trade and logistics nodes along the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. China also supported Ethiopia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Togo, Guyana, Antigua and Barbuda, Samoa, and other countries in upgrading and expanding their airports, thereby improving operational capacity and safety and promoting local tourism.

The BRI has promoted digital connectivity. In Kenya, the national fiber optic cable network, built with China’s assistance, marks a great leap in the development of the local information and communications industries. In Bangladesh, the third-phase project of Bangladesh’s e-government network extended the network to more than 2,600 administrative unions at the lowest level, covering 62 percent of the country’s territory and population. In this way, the “information superhighway” stretched from the capital to all parts of the country, benefiting about 100 million people. China supports participating countries in building a high-speed information connectivity network to set the stage for local development of the digital economy and information society, narrow the digital divide, and promote digital connectivity so that the fruits of the digital economy are beneficial to all the people.

The BRI has expanded financial integration. China has been increasing its support for the BRI and for investment and financing in bilateral and multilateral connectivity. With the joint efforts of all parties, the AIIB and other multilateral institutions were established one after another. As of January 2023, AIIB membership had increased from 57 in the early days to 106, second only to the World Bank, covering six continents. AIIB had approved 202 projects in 33 countries, with a total investment of more than USD 38.8 billion and nearly USD 130 billion of capital generated, helping infrastructure construction, promoting local economic and social development, and improving people’s lives. As an important pillar of the BRI, financial connectivity has been pivotal in reducing the cost of capital circulation, fending off financial risks, and improving the international competitiveness of the regional economy.

Box 9.3 Silk road e-commerce

In recent years, the network of “Silk Road E-commerce” partners has continued to expand, showing strong vitality and resilience and ushering in new opportunities for development. So far, with partners across five continents, “Silk Road E-commerce” has become a new channel and highlight of economic and trade cooperation. China has inked MoUs on e-commerce cooperation and established bilateral e-commerce cooperation mechanisms for cooperation in policy exchange, planning coordination, industry promotion, sub-national cooperation, capacity building, and other fields with 29 countries. Coffee and pepper from Rwanda are coming to China via e-commerce platforms; the online retail sales of Iceland have significantly improved; thousands of enterprises from the countries along the Belt and Road have upgraded their products and services through e-commerce cooperation. Today, “Silk Road e-commerce” is seeing fruitful results. “Silk Road e-commerce” has promoted the BRI’s high-quality development, as it can facilitate trade between China and countries along the route, help these countries with the development of many industries, including logistics, payment, and digital development, and facilitate trade sector along the BRI route through digital and internet technologies.

The BRI has improved smooth trade flows. As of June 2023, China had signed Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) mutual recognition agreements¹⁶ with 26 economies, such as Singapore, Rep. of Korea, and the EU, covering 52 countries (regions). Both the number of mutual recognition agreements signed and the number of countries (regions) in mutual recognition rank the first in the world. Among them, there are 35 countries jointly building the “Belt and Road.” Since 2013, China has provided customs container testing equipment to Bangladesh, Mongolia, Djibouti, Guyana, Vanuatu, and other countries, helping them improve their terms of trade. China held seminars on special topics related to trade development to build an exchange platform for enhancing the docking of trade standards and technologies. China’s trade in goods with Belt and Road countries doubled from US\$1.6 trillion to US\$2.9 trillion, with an average annual growth rate of 6.4 percent. According to a World Bank report, the BRI will greatly boost global growth. During 2013–2030, the BRI will increase trade among BRI countries by 2.8 percent to 9.7 percent, global trade by 1.7 percent to 6.2 percent, and global real income by 0.7 percent to 2.9 percent, and real income in BRI countries by 1.2 percent to 3.4 percent.¹⁷ The smooth flow of trade, as the focus of the BRI, is an effective driver of sustainable economic growth in all countries.

(2) Focus on people’s livelihood and poverty reduction

The BRI helped with poverty reduction. By 2021, the 98.99 million Chinese people in rural areas who were living below the current poverty threshold all shook off poverty. China has shared its valuable experience on poverty reduction with countries jointly building the “Belt and Road.” China took practical steps to implement the Cooperation Initiative on Poverty Reduction, providing RMB100 million in 2014 to launch a rural poverty alleviation plan and set up East

Asia poverty reduction cooperation demonstration sites. At the same time, the China-Africa poverty reduction plan was launched. China has actively organized various training programs and participated in seminars organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to share ideas and actions in targeted poverty alleviation with other developing countries. Over the past decade, being an active participant in global poverty governance, China has carried out international cooperation on poverty reduction, fulfilled its international responsibility for poverty reduction, and built the BRI into a pathway to poverty alleviation and growth, so that all countries can share the fruits of development.

Box 9.4 East Asia poverty reduction demonstration cooperation technical assistance projects

To help accelerate the poverty reduction process in rural areas of countries jointly building the BRI, China has explored and conducted international poverty reduction cooperation in some areas. China has implemented “East Asia Poverty Reduction Demonstration Cooperation Technical Assistance Projects” in rural communities in Laos, Cambodia, and Myanmar. The project, launched in March 2017, is the first comprehensive village-level poverty reduction demonstration project implemented by China. Based on the successful experience of “whole-village pushing forward” in poverty alleviation and development in China, China constructed infrastructure and public service facilities such as water supply, bridges, roads, and electricity for the six demonstration villages, organized planting and breeding technology demonstration, increasing villagers’ income through multiple channels and enhancing the independent development capacity of the villages. The project totally covered over 2,900 households in six villages. Ouk Rabun, Minister of Rural Development of Cambodia, spoke highly of China’s contribution to social development and poverty reduction in ASEAN countries, claiming that China’s experience could serve as a useful reference for social development and poverty reduction in ASEAN countries.

The BRI helped with agriculture development. With a focus on hybrid rice and Juncao, China has formed a brand of core agricultural aid technology to assist other developing countries to leverage their own strengths to accelerate agricultural progress. China has sent agricultural experts to these countries and regions, filling the gaps in local agricultural technology by combining improved seed breeding, experimental planting, demonstration planting, and technology promotion. China has assisted Kyrgyzstan, Chad, Niger, Fiji, and other countries to build their irrigation systems and offered agricultural machinery and supplies. China has helped East Timor, Zambia, Cuba, and Cape Verde build granaries, grain processing facilities, corn flour production plants, and pig and cattle slaughterhouses. The above measures have helped relevant countries to improve their agro-industrial chains, enhance agro-productivity, and promote sustainable agricultural development.

Box 9.5 China-Aid Juncao and Upland Rice Technology Project to Papua New Guinea

In order to help accelerate the process of poverty reduction in rural areas of BRI countries, China has explored the implementation of Juncao technology cooperation in some areas and promoted Juncao projects. Since 2001, when the first China-aided Juncao technology demonstration base overseas was established in Papua New Guinea, this technology has sown its seeds in over 100 countries in the world.

The Chinese government has launched technical assistance projects for Juncao and upland rice in the Eastern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea, which have effectively increased the income of local farmers and enhanced the sustainable development capacity of local agriculture. Juncao and upland rice are among the three pillar industries of agriculture in the province, together with coffee. James Marape, prime minister of Papua New Guinea, said that Juncao technology has opened a new pathway to sustainable development for Papua New Guinea and other developing countries, and the Juncao program is an epitome of China's great achievement in poverty alleviation and a gift China sent to the world.

The BRI has improved public health conditions. First, basic medical service capacity has been improved. China supports BRI countries in building hospitals, clinics, and other health infrastructure and provides medical equipment, drugs, and medical consumables. In January 2023, the Africa Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) Headquarters, a China-aided project for the African Union, was officially completed, effectively improving the speed of disease prevention, monitoring, and emergency response in Africa. Second, human resources for medical services have been strengthened. China sent 30,000 medical aid workers to 76 countries and regions in Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe, and Oceania, treating 290 million patients. In Sri Lanka, Sudan, Cameroon, and other countries, China launched short-term medical services such as the “Brightness Action program” for cataract surgery, the “Smile Action program” for cleft lip and palate surgery, and the “Heart to Heart program” for heart surgery. China has carried out cooperation with Central and Eastern European countries and ASEAN countries in traditional medicine, making breakthroughs and exemplary achievements in many fields. Third, in the face of the epidemic and other public health crises, humanitarian aid has been provided. During the global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, China provided emergency humanitarian aid to more than 150 countries with anti-epidemic supplies, technical assistance, and vaccines. The above measures have effectively improved the level of medical services in BRI countries with strengthened public health systems and capacity, thus enhancing their sense of fulfillment.

The BRI has improved education conditions. Education is the key to preventing the transmission of intergenerational poverty. China assisted BRI countries in the construction of a number of primary and secondary schools and offered computers, lab equipment, stationery, and sporting goods. China has provided technical cooperation and other soft assistance to BRI countries to help them develop modern education. To help Sudan build a national vocational

training base for teachers, China sent more than a dozen experts to Omdurman Friendship Center for Vocational Training, offering guidance in teaching, operation, and management and training teachers and administrators. These measures by China have helped BRI countries to improve teaching conditions, cultivate teachers, and create more high-quality and fair education opportunities, thus effectively promoting the balanced and sustainable development of education in BRI countries.

Box 9.6 China-Aided Technical Cooperation Project of Education in South Sudan

The China-Aided Technical Cooperation Project of Education in South Sudan is China's first comprehensive educational assistance project. Founded on July 9, 2011, South Sudan is currently the world's youngest country, and its education is listed as a priority area of development, second only to defense. In this context, the first phase of the China-Aided Technical Cooperation Project of Education in South Sudan was officially launched in January 2017. Based on the characteristics of South Sudan's national conditions and current educational conditions, the project included five modules: top-level education planning, textbook development, teacher training, the construction of an ICT teacher training center, and textbook printing. At present, the project results have been officially put into use, benefiting nearly 150,000 local teachers and students. 1.29 million first-grade math, English, and science textbooks specially designed and printed for the project have been introduced to local primary schools. 200 South Sudanese teachers who have completed capacity-building training sessions in China are active in teaching positions. The ICT teacher training center built in China has become a popular digital platform window for South Sudanese teachers. The second phase of the China-Aided Technical Cooperation Project in Education, officially launched on December 6, 2021, has been carried out in various aspects, such as the construction of the South Sudan teaching material system, the training of educators, and the cultural exchanges between the two countries. The project brings China's advanced educational concepts and valuable experience to South Sudan and integrates them with the innovative development of local education, providing strong support for the local development of a new curriculum for primary and secondary schools and other educational plans. Also, capacity-building training for South Sudanese teachers and education administrators will help them better engage in national education.

The BRI has improved public welfare facilities. China supports BRI countries in building public welfare infrastructures such as social housing and rural water supply. China helped Belarus build government-subsidized housing in six provinces and one city, benefiting a group of orphans, multiple-child families, the disabled, and other vulnerable poor people. China assisted with the Mongolian Disabled Children Development Center, providing modern, fully functional places for the treatment and rehabilitation of disabled children. China backed Cambodia, Laos, Algeria, and other BRI countries in building sports, cultural, and artistic infrastructure projects. These measures have effectively improved public welfare facilities in BRI countries and greatly facilitated local social and public activities.

(3) Share development experience

The BRI has strengthened communication and coordination. The BRI has actively connected with the development plans of international and regional organizations such as the United Nations, ASEAN, the African Union, the EU, and the Eurasian Economic Union, and carried out capacity-building cooperation through bilateral and multilateral cooperation mechanisms to build consensus for interconnected development. China has held over 4,000 training sessions for officials from participating countries on Belt and Road topics, including more than ten planning projects such as Cambodia's national road network plan, Bangladesh's flood control plan, Pakistan's Gwadar City Master Plan, China-Myanmar Economic Corridor, China-Belarus (Russia) Industrial park. The above cooperation measures have effectively enabled BRI countries to better know and understand China's policies and measures, enhanced the vision and ability of participating officials in planning and formulating policies, and helped these countries pursue sustainable development paths suited to their national conditions.

Box 9.7 Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development

President Xi Jinping announced the establishment of the Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development at the UN Round-table on South-South Cooperation in September 2015. The institute, established at the National School of Development of Peking University, offers master's and doctoral programs in national development and recruits students through the selection of foreign embassies and consulates. At present, it has enrolled more than 200 master's and doctoral students from more than 60 countries.

The Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development systematically summarizes and distills China's experience in economic development and national governance, helps developing countries cultivate high-end government management personnel, and provides talents to advance developing countries to realize the modernization of national governance system and governance ability. This is the result of China's more high-end and meritocratic human resources cooperation in foreign aid, which reflects China's desire and determination to further share its governance experience and also provides important international public goods that support the endogenous growth of developing countries. In 2017, after the first 26 master's students of the institute graduated, President Xi replied to their letter of thanks, congratulating them on completing their studies and wishing them to put what they have learned into practice and become leaders of reform in their respective countries and practitioners of global South-South cooperation to facilitate the development and prosperity in developing countries.¹⁸

The BRI has taught people how to fish rather than just give them fish. China aims to share with other developing countries its experience in governance, industrial innovation and upgrading, ecological and environmental governance, and targeted poverty alleviation and eradication, carrying out capacity building through bilateral and multilateral cooperation

mechanisms. Under the “Green Silk Envoys Program,” China supported and actively assisted BRI countries in training personnel for green development. As of January 2023, the program had trained 3,000 people from more than 120 BRI countries. Committed to sharing development experience with BRI countries, China helps to train talents and improve governance capacity, promoting the realization of the 2030 SDGs.

(4) Respond to global challenge

The BRI has responded to major natural disasters. As an important international public good, humanitarian aid is essential in achieving long-term sustainable development. When other countries are hit by natural disasters such as earthquakes, cyclones, mudslides, floods, and droughts, China donates tents, clean water, food, portable power generation equipment, and other disaster relief materials, dispatches search and rescue and medical teams, providing emergency assistance in accordance with the actual situation and relief needs of the affected countries. Since 2022, China has provided emergency humanitarian assistance in response to Tonga’s volcanic eruption, Pakistan floods, and the Turkiye-Syria earthquake. The Chinese government immediately activates the assistance mechanism, sends Chinese rescue teams, and delivers relief supplies to the disaster-hit areas, strengthening international coordination to promote sustainable development with all countries.

Box 9.8 China carried out emergency humanitarian assistance to Turkiye and Syria

On February 6, 2023, Turkiye and Syria were hit by the strongest earthquake in a century when the Chinese government immediately launched the emergency humanitarian assistance mechanism, sent a Chinese rescue team to participate in the rescue, and delivered relief materials to the disaster-hit areas. On February 8, the Chinese government announced that it would provide Turkiye with the first batch of aid worth 40 million yuan, including a heavy urban rescue team, a medical team, and disaster-relief supplies the country urgently needs. After arriving in the affected area on February 8, the Chinese rescue teams carried out search and rescue operations in the province of Hatay, one of the worst-hit areas, according to the scope proposed by the Turkish side. China sent a total of 308 rescuers in 21 batches, who rescued six trapped survivors and located 11 people who had died in the disaster. At the same time, China declared to provide emergency aid worth 30 million yuan to Syria, which includes assistance of US\$2 million and relief materials. On February 15, China-aided emergency humanitarian assistance supplies to Syria arrived in Damascus with a total weight of 80 tons. The supplies include nearly 30,000 first-aid kits, 10,000 sets of cotton clothes, 300 cotton tents, 20,000 blankets, and 70,000 adult pull-up diapers, as well as emergency medical equipment and supplies such as ventilators, anesthesia machines, oxygen generators, and LED shadowless lamps.

The BRI has responded to global climate change. To actively address climate change, China has worked with other countries to build a Green Silk Road, jointly built the Belt and

Road Sustainable Cities Alliance, formulated the Green Investment Principles (GIP) for the Belt and Road, set up a big data service platform on ecological and environmental protection, and implemented the Green Silk Road Envoys Program and the Belt and Road South-South Cooperation Initiative on Climate Change. In recent years, China has implemented more than 200 cooperation projects to address climate change, mainly including climate change mitigation projects and climate change adaptation projects, including the solar power supply project at the Parliament Building of Pakistan, the green development project for the Addis Ababa river bank in Ethiopia, and others. China has also conducted 80 seminars on climate change topics and trained nearly 2,000 relevant personnel to help developing countries improve their capacity in climate governance.

The BRI has protected biodiversity. As one of the core ecological and environmental issues of global concern, biodiversity protection is also one of the essential construction concepts in the “Belt and Road” transportation and other infrastructure projects. For example, during the construction of the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway, 14 large animal passages, 61 bridges, and more than 600 culverts were set up along the line to ensure the free movement of animals, and wildlife protection materials were provided by China to Cambodia, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Zambia, and other countries, effectively improving the equipment level of relevant countries to combat poaching and illegal wildlife products trade. At the same time, China actively carried out international cooperation on biodiversity conservation. China initiated the Green Supply Chain Platform for Belt and Road cooperation, established the BRI International Green Development Coalition, announced China’s initiative to establish the Kunming Biodiversity Fund, and set up cooperation and dialogue mechanisms with many countries.

3. The BRI Promotes the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda

Looking ahead, the BRI will fully consider the priority needs for progress in BRI countries, continue to enrich the supply of international public goods, and vigorously promote global sustainable development to make greater contributions to the realization of the 2030 Agenda.

(1) Further enhance development efficiency

Greater emphasis will be placed on the inclusiveness of development cooperation. The World Bank estimates that investment in Belt and Road infrastructure projects could lift 7.6 million people out of extreme poverty and 32 million out of moderate poverty globally. The BRI will adhere to the goals of high-standard, sustainable, and people-centered, implement more projects that are “handy and practical with fast and remarkable effects on people’s livelihood,” and reach more people in developing countries, with special attention to socially vulnerable groups and vulnerable population in developing countries.

Greater emphasis will be placed on the sustainability of development cooperation. The BRI will pay more attention to the environmental, ecological, and social impact of projects so that the development projects will work for a long time on a sustained basis. It will help improve the capacity of participating countries to cope with debt risks and provide guidance for BRI financing cooperation through balancing development and security, preventing systemic financial risks, and making good use of the Debt Sustainability Framework for Participating Countries of the BRI. Also, it will strengthen the “soft assistance” intellectual support for participating countries to help them achieve sustained, resilient, and sustainable development by cultivating local talents.

Greater emphasis will be placed on the openness of development cooperation. The BRI will further leverage the institutional strengths of different entities, forming a more dynamic global development partnership through innovative means such as the Global Development and South-South Cooperation Fund, the China-UN Peace and Development Fund, the establishment of special funds in multilateral institutions, and tripartite cooperation with relevant stakeholders. At the same time, it will mobilize private institutions, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, and other entities to participate in development cooperation so as to stimulate the vitality of market entities at all levels for more effective sustainable development.

(2) Further focus on key areas

Promote the construction of digital intelligence. China will pay more attention to the development of intelligent manufacturing. Through deeply integrating the new generation of information and communication technology with advanced manufacturing technology, efforts will be made to set up a digital cooperation platform and narrow the digital divide, making the fruits of the digital economy beneficial to all people and promoting the sustainable development of BRI countries.

Build the Green Silk Road at a faster pace. China is ready to step up cooperation in such areas as green infrastructure, green energy, and green finance, improve multilateral cooperation platforms like the Belt and Road Initiative International Green Development Coalition, uphold the Green Investment Principle, and accelerate to converge and integrate with international norms and standards. China will earnestly develop more high-standard projects for participating countries.

Deepen global cooperation in healthcare. The cause of global health is an important part of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In the future, the BRI will continue to share China’s successful experience in solving public health incidents, comprehensively improve the quality and level of Traditional Chinese Medicine participating in BRI, bring the health conditions in participating countries to a new level to build a community of common health for mankind.

Strengthen talent cultivation and exchange. Relying on the the Belt and Road Vocational and Technical Cooperation Alliance, cooperation in talent training will be deepened. People-to-

people and cultural exchanges and cooperation along the “Belt and Road” will be innovatively promoted. Extensive international cooperation in science, education, culture, health, think tank dialogue, people-to-people exchanges, and other fields will be helpful in pooling more wisdom and strength for sustainable development.

NOTES

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