BRICS
INDIA 2026
BUILDING FOR RESILIENCE, INNOVATION, COOPERATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

RIS
Research and Information System for Developing Countries
विकासशील देशों की अनुसंधान एवं सूचना प्रणाली

BRICS THINK TANK NETWORK FOR FINANCE

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

10:00 hrs. (IST), Tuesday, 25 August 2026

Silver Oak, India Habitat Centre,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi, India

Concept Note

Background

Over the years, BRICS has emerged as a useful platform for the emerging markets and developing economies (EMDEs) for fostering cooperation on multilateral issues. The scope of BRICS cooperation has broadened significantly from ‘finance focus’ to a strong ‘development orientation’ in the recent years. In 2026, India assumed the chairship of BRICS for the fourth time which offers opportunities for the country to consolidate and advance the progress made in different areas of cooperation and explore possibilities in the emerging fields. The theme of India’s 2026 chairship is ‘Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability’. This overarching theme forms the basis for the Ministerial Tracks and People-to-People (P2P) mechanisms for comprehensive and deeper deliberations.

The Finance Track of BRICS has been a cornerstone of BRICS economic cooperation since the First Leaders’ Summit in 2009. Over time, the Finance Track has covered a wide range of issues including reform of the global financial architecture, strengthening global financial safety net, financial stability and macroeconomic coordination, SDGs, climate change, digital economy, global governance reforms, among others. Additionally, it has focused on other areas such as crisis financing, access to affordable development finance, trade and investment cooperation, use of local currencies, fintech adoption, and digital payments systems, among others.

The BRICS Think Tank Network for Finance (BTTNF) is newly established People-toPeople (P2P) which started functioning actively since 2024. The BTTNF has been envisaged to serve as a platform to promote joint research, foster debate on different facets of the financial cooperation and facilitate partnerships among the member institutions from the BRICS countries. The Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) is the nodal institution for BTTNF from India.

Themes for BTTNF 2026

As part of its work programme under the BRICS India chairship for 2026, the BTTNF has focused on two themes for deepening understanding and fostering cooperation in the BRICS countries.

Leveraging Fintech for Inclusive Development in BRICS: Financial technology (fintech) and related digital innovation ecosystems are increasingly transforming the delivery of financial and other essential services globally. Along with the traditional financial channels, governments in developing countries are leveraging fintech platforms to promote financial inclusion, improve credit access for underserved populations, and deliver faster and more customized financial services across payments, lending, savings, insurance, and remittances. Women, youth, MSMEs, and informal sector participants are among the major beneficiaries of these digital financial solutions, especially in developing economies with limited traditional banking access.

Fintech has thus emerged not merely as a technological innovation, but as a broader developmental and economic imperative. For the BRICS countries, fintech presents significant opportunities to strengthen financial inclusion, support MSMEs, improve digital public infrastructure, facilitate cross-border payments, and promote innovation-driven and people-centric development. Greater cooperation in interoperable payment systems, digital governance, cybersecurity, and regulatory coordination can support inclusive and sustainable development outcomes.

Financing of Resilient Infrastructure in BRICS: Strengthening infrastructure resilience is no longer merely a sectoral or environmental concern, but a broader developmental and economic imperative. As climate risks, disaster losses and infrastructure vulnerabilities continue to rise, countries are required to rethink how infrastructure is planned, financed, constructed, and maintained. For emerging economies, particularly the BRICS countries, resilient infrastructure is critical not only for protecting economic assets and ensuring continuity of essential services but also for advancing sustainable development, social welfare, and long-term growth.

There is a growing need to examine financing models and approaches for resilient infrastructure, assess the role of public-private partnerships and innovative financing mechanisms, and understand how infrastructure standards can support the mobilisation of finance for resilient infrastructure in BRICS countries. Strong and harmonised standards relating to design, construction materials, engineering practices, and operational quality, along with effective partnerships among stakeholders, can help improve investor confidence, reduce project risks, enhance bankability, and facilitate greater mobilisation of long-term quality finance for resilient infrastructure.

Scope of the Conference

As the nodal institution and the Host for the BTTNF during India's BRICS Chairship in 2026, RIS is organising the BTTNF Annual Conference in New Delhi on 25 August 2026. session.

The Conference will have one Plenary Session, two Technical Sessions on the BTTNF themes viz. Fintech and Inclusive Development and Financing of Resilient Infrastructure respectively besides the Inaugural and Closing Sessions. Delegates from the BTTNF member institutions along with experts and thinkers working on BRICS issues will attend the conference. Findings of research papers on the BTTNF 2026 themes 2026 will be presented in the technical sessions.

The plenary session will focus on *'New Waves in Global Finance: Implications for BRICS'*. The global financial system is shifting rapidly due to rising geopolitical tensions and witnessing faster adoption of new digital technologies, growing concerns for environmental sustainability, unlocking private and institutional investments, reliance on innovative financing mechanisms, trade in local currencies, among others. Withing this changing landscape BRICS is actively focussing on financial innovations including developing independent payment systems and digital currencies towards resilient and sustainable development. This session will delve into deliberations on the emerging challenges facing the BRICS countries and explore the possible direction to promote cooperation among the BRICS countries.

The first technical session, *"Fintech and Inclusive Development: Experiences from BRICS Countries,"* will explore the role of the Fintech in promoting inclusive development while ensuring adequate safeguards against growing risk of cyberfraud and security threats. Financing development in the Global South is undergoing a transformative shift with increased emphasis on self-reliance, leveraging new technologies and AI, and integration of resilience /sustainability aspects across dimensions. Most developing countries stand to benefit from greater financial inclusion and improved credit access in vital sectors of the economy, such as MSMEs. The session will discuss the many dimensions of Fintech and inclusive development.

The second technical session, *"Towards Resilient Infrastructure in BRICS: Financing, Standards and Partnerships,"* will explore how resilient infrastructure can help nations adapt to growing incidence of climate and other disaster risk. Resilient Infrastructure involves not only responding to such disasters but also in prevention and adaptation. Consequently, the session will examine how financing, standards and partnerships can contribute towards developing resilient infrastructure in BRICS countries.

Deliverables

The Annual Conference aims to generate informed debate on key pillars of BRICS financial cooperation involving the BTTNF member institutions, academic experts and the intelligentsia at large.

The key takeaways from the conference will be prepared and published in due course.