



## Africa at Centre of India's Vision for Global South

**For Prelims:** [Global South](#), [India-Africa Relations](#), [Voice of Global South Summit](#), [United Nation Security Council](#), [Brandt Line](#), [Group of 77](#), [African Union](#), [Horn of Africa](#).

**For Mains:** India's Vision for the Global South, Prioritizing Africa in its Global South Vision.

**Source:** [IE](#)

### Why in News?

India's increased emphasis on [Africa](#) has been highlighted during various state visits. This shift is significant as it reflects India's growing stature as a major global power, providing an opportunity to champion the interests of the [Global South](#).

### What is India's Vision for the Global South?

- **Giving Voice to the Global South:** India sees itself as a representative for developing countries, ensuring their issues are heard at forums like [G20](#).
  - This includes initiatives like the ["Voice of Global South Summit"](#) aimed at creating a platform for developing countries to discuss common challenges.
- **Advocacy and Reform:** India advocates for reforms in global institutions to better reflect the interests of developing countries.
  - This could involve changes in areas like international taxation, climate finance or giving greater decision-making power to developing nations within organisations like the [United Nations Security Council](#).
- **South-South Cooperation:** India promotes cooperation among developing countries by sharing best practices, technologies, and resources.
  - The **India-UN Development Partnership Fund**, launched in 2017 aids Southern-led [sustainable development](#) projects, prioritising **least developed countries and small island developing States**.
- **Climate Change Mitigation:** India's vision for the Global South includes collaborative efforts to address [climate change](#).
  - Through initiatives like the [International Solar Alliance \(ISA\)](#), India aims to promote renewable energy adoption in countries across **Asia, Africa, and Latin America**, contributing to sustainable development and climate resilience.

### What is Global South?

- **About:** Global South refers to a group of countries generally characterised as **developing, less developed, or underdeveloped**.
  - The term Global South is not **geographical**. Rather, its usage denotes a mix of political, geopolitical and economic commonalities between nations.
  - It encompasses countries **with lower GDPs, higher poverty rates, and less developed infrastructure** than the "Global North."

- These nations are typically located in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia (**excluding high-income countries like Japan, South Korea and Australia**).

//



#### ▪ History:

- The term Global South appears to have been first used in **1969** by political activist **Carl Oglesby**.
- The **Brandt Line**, introduced by former **German Chancellor Willy Brandt** in the 1980s, visually represents the global north-south economic divide using per-capita GDP as a measure.
- The **Group of 77 (G-77)** was established in 1964 during the first UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) session in Geneva, making it the largest intergovernmental organisation of **developing nations at that time**.

## How can India Benefit from Prioritising Africa in its Global South Vision?

- **Economic Potential:** Africa represents a vast economic opportunity for India. With Indian investments in Africa reaching **USD 98 billion in 2023** and trade totaling **USD 100 billion**, the continent serves as a crucial market for Indian businesses.
- **Enhanced Strategic Ties:** Africa's influence in global forums is rising, making it a strategic partner for India's global aspirations.
  - India's advocacy for **African representation in forums like the G20 and UNSC** reflects the shared vision for inclusive global governance.
  - In this regard, India has achieved several diplomatic victories, such as the **African Union's (AU) inclusion** in the G20 in September 2023.
- **Tapping Youthful Demographics:** Africa's young population, with **60% under the age of 25 years**, presents immense potential for collaboration in **education, technology, and innovation**.
  - India's experience in skill development and education initiatives can be leveraged to empower African youth and foster sustainable development.
- **Potential Resource Collaboration:** Africa's rich reserves of critical minerals essential for industries like **renewable energy and technology** offer a significant opportunity for collaboration.
  - India's expertise in sectors like renewable energy can be combined with Africa's resources to drive innovation and sustainable development.
- **Stronger Geopolitical Influence:** A strong partnership with Africa enhances India's strategic standing on the world stage.
  - It allows India to play a more influential role in shaping global governance and addressing issues critical to the Global South.
  - India's growing ties with Africa can help counterbalance China's rising influence on the continent (especially in the **Horn of Africa**).

## What are the Challenges for India as a Leader in the Global South?

- **Internal Development Issues:** Critics argue India should prioritise its domestic development issues like **unequal wealth distribution, unemployment, and inadequate infrastructure**, before leading others.
  - India's vast rural population lacks access to quality healthcare and education, raising questions about its capacity to address similar issues in other developing nations.
- **Diverse Needs and Priorities:** The Global South is not a **homogenous group**. Different countries have varying needs and priorities. Balancing these diverse demands can be difficult.
  - African nations might prioritise debt relief, while Southeast Asian nations might focus on technology transfer.
  - India needs to find ways to address these distinct needs while promoting a unified front.
- **Balancing Global Partnerships:** India enjoys strong **economic ties with developed nations like the US and Japan**. This can create a conflict between advocating for the Global South and maintaining these vital relationships.
  - India might shy away from pushing for stricter trade regulations that could potentially harm its exports to developed countries.
- **Credibility on Climate Change:** India is the world's **third-largest emitter of CO<sub>2</sub>**, despite low per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. This weakens its position when advocating for stricter climate action within the Global South.

## Way Forward

- **Frugal Tech Innovation:** India can leverage its expertise in frugal innovation by establishing labs focused on developing low-cost, scalable tech solutions for common challenges in the Global South, like **mobile health diagnostics or remote learning platforms**.
- **Rotating Leadership:** Instead of a single leader, India could champion a rotating leadership council with representation from different regions within the Global South. This fosters a more

collaborative and inclusive approach.

- **Global South Satellite Network:** India can lead the development of a network of **low-cost satellites** launched by and operated by a consortium of developing nations. This network can provide essential data and services for areas lacking traditional infrastructure and internet facilities.
  - India can also utilise advanced satellite technology like **RISAT** to develop a quick disaster response network within the Global South.
- **South-South Vocational Training Centers:** Setting up **vocational training** centres in strategic locations across the Global South, offering skill development programs relevant to local needs.
  - This equips individuals with the skills necessary to thrive in the job market and contribute to their economies.

**Drishti Mains Question:**

Q. What strategies and initiatives can India prioritise as a leader of the Global South to address common development challenges, promote regional cooperation, and enhance South-South partnerships?

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

### **Prelims**

**Q. In which one of the following groups are all the four countries members of G20? (2020)**

- (a) Argentina, Mexico, South Africa and Turkey
- (b) Australia, Canada, Malaysia and New Zealand
- (c) Brazil, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam
- (d) Indonesia, Japan, Singapore and South Korea

**Ans: (a)**

### **Mains**

**Q. 'The long-sustained image of India as a leader of the oppressed and marginalised nations has disappeared on account of its new found role in the emerging global order.' Elaborate. (2019)**