



Global South Matters

DAKSHIN

Global South Centre of Excellence

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IN FOCUS



Agroecology Takes Centre Stage at COP30: A Turning Point for Climate-Resilient Agriculture in the Global South

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At the COP30 in Belem, Brazil, agriculture emerged as one of the most prominent themes of the climate negotiations, marking a notable shift in the global climate policy landscape. For the first time, the COP Presidency appointed a Special Envoy for Family Farming and placed food and agriculture at the centre of its deliberations. This prominence reflects a growing recognition that the agrifood sector, which accounts for nearly one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions, must transition toward ecological and climate-resilient pathways. For the Global South, this moment is particularly relevant, as smallholder farming dominates rural livelihoods and climate impacts increasingly threaten food security. At the COP30, family farming and agroecology, long overshadowed by industrial agribusiness, became key pillars of the climate conversation, reinforcing that sustainable food systems must be rooted in ecological principles, community engagement, traditional knowledge, and diversified production systems.

Agroecology stands out because it bridges climate adaptation, mitigation, food security, and rural livelihood resilience within a single integrated framework. Across the Global South, farmers are increasingly adopting agroecological practices such as Integrated Farm Systems, Indigenous seed systems, multi-cropping, natural farming, agroforestry, watershed restoration, soil water conservation, and ecological sync practices. These practices were highlighted at COP30 as tangible solutions capable of addressing both climate and agricultural crises. Representatives from Brazil, India, Kenya, Nepal, and Southeast Asia emphasised that ecological farming is not merely a traditional method but a scientifically grounded approach that aligns agricultural production with natural ecosystem processes, reducing vulnerability to droughts, floods, and erratic weather patterns. Agroforestry systems in the Amazon, millet-based dryland farming in India, rice fish systems in Vietnam, and community watershed models in Ethiopia demonstrate how ecological practices can tackle climate resilience and improve rural livelihoods.

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India Urges G20 to Amplify Global South's Voice

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi praised South Africa's G20 presidency in his speech at the first gathering of the diverse bloc's leaders, calling it admirable and a major factor in the decisions made at the 2023 New Delhi Summit. He pointed out that a lot of work has been done on topics including women's empowerment, the digital economy, skilled migration, tourism, food security, artificial intelligence, and innovation. He noted that the G20 has influenced global finance and economic growth over the past few decades. However, he added that the growth parameters established thus far have deprived a large population of resources and encouraged overexploitation of nature, with Africa being one of the most affected regions in this regard.

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PM Modi Moots IBSA Fund for Climate Resilient Agriculture at Johannesburg Meet

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi proposed the setting up of an IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa) Fund for Climate Resilient Agriculture to further advance South-South cooperation. In his address at the IBSA leaders meeting here, the Prime Minister appreciated the IBSA Fund's work in supporting projects across forty countries in sectors like education, health, women's empowerment and solar energy. The meeting was hosted by South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and attended by the President of Brazil, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. Describing the meeting as timely, PM Modi said that it coincided with the first G20 Summit on African soil and marked the culmination of four consecutive G20 presidencies by Global South countries, out of which the last three were by the IBSA members. This, he noted, has resulted in several important initiatives focused on human-centric development, multilateral reform and sustainable growth.

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Union Environment Minister Shri Bhupender Yadav Emphasises Need for a Just Transition Mechanism for Developing Countries at the COP30

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav, addressed the Third Annual High-Level Ministerial Roundtable on Just Transition under the UAE Just Transition Work Programme during UNFCCC CoP30 in Belém, Brazil. He welcomed the opportunity to contribute to the ministerial deliberations, noting that the four dialogues held so far have been engaging and a good platform to put across views. The Minister underlined that the dialogues have firmly established that a just transition extends far beyond the energy sector, calling it “an economy-wide, all-inclusive, people-centred transformation that must respect national circumstances, ensure equity, and secure social justice”. He emphasised that such a transition must enable all countries to contribute their fair share to global mitigation efforts without compromising developmental imperatives.

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The Second Regional Open Digital Health Summit (RODHS) 2025, hosted by India Successfully Concludes

India opened the second edition of the Regional Open Digital Health Summit (RODHS 2025) in New Delhi, bringing together senior government officials, global health bodies and technology innovators from across South-East Asia to chart the future of digital health in the region. Organised jointly by the National e-Governance Division (NeGD) under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), the National Health Authority (NHA), the World Health Organisation's South-East Asia Regional Office, and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The three-day programme sought to strengthen cooperation on Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), open standards, interoperability, and the role of emerging technologies like Generative AI in accelerating Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

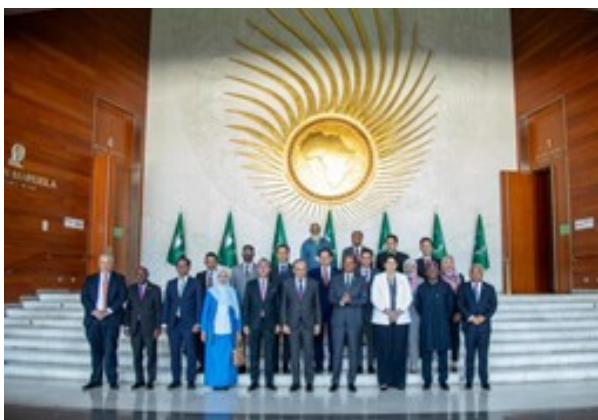
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Ministers Launch Global South–South Effort to Cut Methane and Nitrous Oxide from Agriculture

Ministers and global agriculture leaders launched a landmark effort to reduce methane and nitrous oxide emissions from the agriculture sector, two potent greenhouse gases that together account for 40 percent of human-emitted methane and 75 percent of nitrous oxide. The new Farmers’ Initiative for Resilient and Sustainable Transformations (FIRST) and Belém Declaration on Fertilisers was launched at the Scaling Up Practical Solutions for Resilient Agri-Food Systems Joint Ministerial Meeting co-hosted by the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), the Food and Agriculture for Sustainable Transformation (FAST) Partnership and Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) at the COP30.

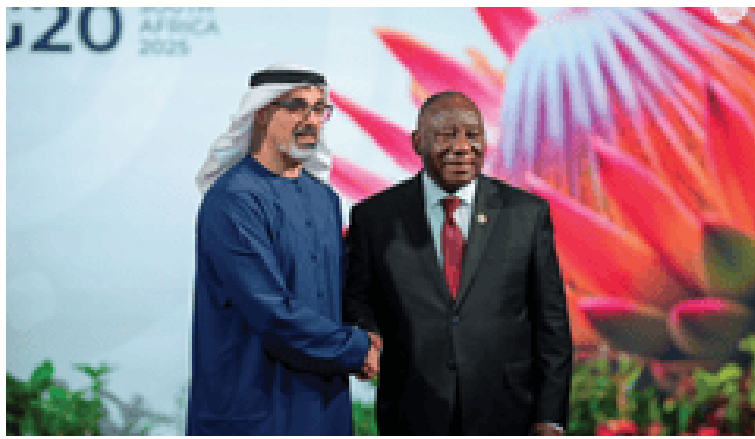
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Prime Minister of Malaysia Highlights South-South Trade on Historic Visit to the African Union Commission

Prime Minister Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim paid a historic official visit to the African Union Commission (AUC), where he was received by H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the AUC. This is the first-ever visit by a Malaysian Prime Minister, marking a significant milestone in Africa–Malaysia relations. Welcoming the Prime Minister, the Chairperson expressed confidence that the engagement would open new pathways for strategic cooperation. The discussions reaffirmed a mutual commitment to deepen cooperation in South–South trade, digital innovation, investment promotion, agro-industrial development, education, and capacity-building. Both leaders recognised the potential to leverage Malaysia’s development experience alongside Africa’s dynamic markets and the continental integration agenda under the African Continental Free Trade Area.

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United Arab Emirates Launches \$1 billion ‘AI for Development’ Initiative to Drive Growth in African Countries

The United Arab Emirates has unveiled a groundbreaking \$1 billion initiative, 'AI for Development,' aimed at harnessing artificial intelligence to drive economic, social, and infrastructural growth in African nations. The program underscores the UAE's commitment to innovative, technology-driven international development and global cooperation. The announcement was made by H.H. Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, during his speech at the G20 summit, where he reaffirmed the UAE's dedication to sustainable growth through international partnerships and innovative financing solutions tailored for emerging economies. Implementation of the initiative will be led by the Abu Dhabi Exports Office (ADEx), part of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, in collaboration with the UAE Foreign Aid Agency. This partnership reflects the UAE's strategic role in enabling developing nations to leverage advanced AI technologies to tackle critical developmental challenges.

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World Bank Digital Leadership Team Begins High-Level Mission to Accelerate Ghana’s Digital Transformation

A high-powered delegation from the World Bank has begun a working visit to Ghana to deepen collaboration on key digital transformation initiatives under the Ghana Digital Acceleration Project (GDAP). The visit was to underscore the Bank’s continued commitment to supporting Ghana’s efforts to build a competitive, inclusive, and future-ready digital economy. The delegation is led by Michel Rogy, Regional Practice Director for Digital and AI, and includes Jana Kunicová, Practice Manager for Digital in Africa West and Central; Steve Davenport, Senior Digital Specialist; and other senior members of the Digital Global Department at the World Bank.

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Asian Development Bank Funds \$50 Million Program to Boost Cambodia's Financial Stability and Digital Infrastructure

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$50 million policy-based loan to strengthen Cambodia's financial sector. Under a programmatic approach, the investment will support both banking and nonbanking institutions, as well as digital finance infrastructure and sustainable finance capabilities. The Inclusive and Sustainable Finance Development Program aims to enhance the sector's capacity, stability, and performance, positioning Cambodia for more inclusive and resilient economic growth. "Cambodia's journey toward inclusive and sustainable growth is rooted in its vision to become an upper-middle-income country by 2030 and a high-income country by 2050. Through this investment, ADB supports the country in boosting its financial sector, laying the foundation for resilient growth, expanding financial inclusion, and unlocking private sector potential," said ADB Acting Country Director for Cambodia Anthony Gill.

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World Health Organization Africa Endorses Roadmap for Safeguarding Communities in Health Emergency Operations

The World Health Organization (WHO) in the African region, Member States and partners have agreed on a roadmap to protect communities during public health emergencies, becoming the first region to formally establish systems that hold both governments and WHO jointly accountable for preventing and addressing sexual misconduct in their shared operations. The milestone—designed, led and delivered by WHO— signifies a transformative shift in operational safeguarding and public health. For the first time, national governments are taking responsibility for ensuring that health responses uphold dignity, safety, and trust. It is the first occasion that an international agency and national leadership have collaborated, with shared accountability, to mitigate the risk of sexual misconduct by their respective workforces, partners and all responders.

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The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention Unveils a New Vision for Health Security and Sovereignty across the Continent

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) unveiled a renewed vision for Africa's Health Security and Sovereignty (AHSS) Agenda to safeguard the continent against rising health threats while reducing dependency on external systems, manufacturing, procurement, supply chains, and financing. The AHSS Agenda builds on the foundations of the New Public Health Order (NPHO), endorsed by African Heads of State in 2022. While the NPHO drove major progress in institution building, workforce development, and regional collaboration following COVID-19, Africa now faces a more complex and constrained global health landscape.

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Morocco Reaffirms Commitment to South–South Cooperation at United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's Annual Trade and Development Session

Morocco took part in the opening of the 72nd session of the Trade and Development Board of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva, placing development partnerships and economic solidarity at the heart of global dialogue. Ambassador Omar Zniber, Morocco's permanent representative to the UN Office in Geneva, represented the country at the session's launch. He highlighted two areas the country considers essential for progress. The first is strengthening South–South commercial partnerships, which he described as a powerful engine for regional integration and shared growth. The second priority concerns deepening regional cooperation, particularly among countries of the Global South. According to Zniber, South–South initiatives have become indispensable for addressing challenges that disproportionately affect developing nations — from infrastructure gaps to market access barriers.

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Brazil and Mozambique Sign Nine Bilateral Agreements

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and Mozambican President Daniel Chapo signed nine bilateral cooperation agreements, covering humanitarian assistance, health, education, food security, agriculture, biofuels, defence, trade, and investment. The visit, held as Mozambique celebrates 50 years of independence, was framed as a symbolic “restart” of the relationship between the two nations, a partnership that Lula described as having “slept for too long.” “In the words of the great Mozambican writer Mia Couto, our friendship has wandered in a somnambulant state for many years,” Lula said. Lula said the purpose of his visit was to “awaken once again” and ensure the partnership does not fade.

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South Africa Seals Key Agricultural Trade Deal with Vietnam

South Africa’s agricultural sector has achieved a major diplomatic and trade milestone, following the finalisation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, a move expected to strengthen bilateral cooperation and unlock new opportunities for South African producers in one of Asia’s fastest-growing markets. The agreement was signed by Deputy Minister Nokuzola Capa and Vietnam’s Deputy Minister Nguyen Hoang Hiep, ahead of the official opening of the G20 Leaders’ Summit. It lays the foundation for expanded collaboration in crop production, plant protection, animal husbandry, veterinary services, research and development, technology transfer, and agricultural trade.

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Angola and Ethiopia Seek Deeper Farm Ties with Indonesia, Says Minister Airlangga Hartarto

Indonesia has drawn strong interest from Angola and Ethiopia to expand agricultural cooperation, Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs Airlangga Hartarto said after a round of bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in South Africa. He said both countries signalled plans to send official delegations to Indonesia next year. “Angola and Ethiopia expressed their desire to visit Indonesia, possibly next year,” he said in an online briefing from Johannesburg. Jakarta, he added, will prepare technical steps through relevant ministries and brief President Prabowo Subianto to advance the potential partnerships. Hartarto noted that several Indonesian companies already operate in Ethiopia, but a new cooperation framework—especially for agriculture—is needed to deepen investment links.

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The Asian Food and Agriculture Cooperation Initiative and the International Rice Research Institute Member Countries Begin Scaling Stress-Tolerant Rice across Asia

The Asian Food and Agriculture Cooperation Initiative (AFACI), the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), and partners have launched Phase 3 of the project “Accelerate Variety Registration and Seed Distribution of Stress-Tolerant Rice Varieties.” This new phase aims to strengthen partnerships across ten AFACI member countries to accelerate the release and distribution of improved rice varieties that meet the preferences of both farmers and consumers. It supports faster adoption of climate-resilient varieties through reliable seed systems and shared technical capacity. Phase 3 focuses on scaling newly released varieties selected from Phases 1 and 2, testing elite lines with new demanded traits, and capacity-building initiatives in target areas.

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Smart Africa Validates Digital Health Framework to Connect Health Systems across 42 Countries

The Smart Africa Board of Heads of State has officially validated the Smart Africa Digital Health Blueprint, marking a historic step toward creating a Single Digital Health Market (SDHM) across the continent. The announcement was made during the Transform Africa Summit 2025 in Conakry, Guinea, and positions the blueprint as the definitive framework for building interoperable, people-centred health systems in Africa. This validation aims to transform fragmented national health systems into a cohesive, secure, and continent-wide Africa Health Data Space. The urgency of this initiative stems from Africa's pressing health challenges. Life expectancy across the continent averages just 64 years, compared to the global average of 72, while infant mortality stands at 47 deaths per 1,000 births, nearly double the worldwide average.

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El Salvador and Costa Rica Issue the First Digital Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificates

El Salvador and Costa Rica have made the Americas the first region in the world to issue digital yellow fever vaccination certificates in accordance with the standards of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Digital Health Certification Network. This achievement marks a milestone for the region and reflects its leadership in adopting digital innovations in public health. However, while the WHO completes the consultation processes for the implementation of digital certificates, the international paper certificate continues to be required for travellers entering certain countries, ensuring the continuity and safety of international travel. Yellow fever is a potentially fatal viral disease transmitted by mosquitoes, but it can be prevented with a single dose of vaccine that offers lifelong protection.

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Sierra Leone Validates First Open-Source Software Policy

The Ministry of Communication, Technology, and Innovation (MoCTI) hosted a national validation workshop to review and refine Sierra Leone's first Open-Source Software Policy for the public sector. Over fifty ICT officers, system administrators, and digital practitioners convened at the Ministry's Conference Room in Freetown for the event. Permanent Secretary Stevenson Kakpaetae Kamanda emphasised the significance of the policy, stating, "By adopting open-source as the foundation for public sector technology, we are choosing solutions that are affordable, secure, and built for Sierra Leone's long-term future. This policy sets the stage for digital services that are reliable, sustainable, and truly owned by the country."

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Mauritania Advances Blockchain Policy to Modernise Digital Public Services

Mauritania is advancing a national blockchain policy to modernise its digital infrastructure, aiming to create more transparent and efficient public services through secure data systems. The initiative moved forward as the Ministry of Digital Transformation and Administration Modernisation held a consultative forum to develop the framework. The event, organised in partnership with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), brought together experts from government, finance, and academia to shape the policy. This initiative is part of Mauritania's "National Digital Transformation Agenda 2022-2025." The country currently ranks 165th globally on the UN E-Government Development Index (EGDI) with a score of 0.3491, below both African and global averages.

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DAKSHIN Meeting with the International Institute for Primary Health Care (IIPHC)

DAKSHIN – The Global South Centre for Excellence engaged in a productive online meeting with the International Institute for Primary Health Care (IIPHC), Ethiopia, on Thursday, 20 November 2025. Dr. Pankaj Vashisht, Dr. Monika Kocchar, Mr. Patrick Omegere, and Mr Amit Arora represented DAKSHIN, while IIPHC was represented by Ms. Luidina Hailu, Head of Advocacy and Partnership. Dr. Pankaj initiated the discussion and provided an overview of DAKSHIN. He highlighted that DAKSHIN aims to promote knowledge and technology sharing across the Global South, with key focus areas including Agriculture, Digital Public Goods, and Health. Following this, Ms. Luidina presented an overview of IIPHC, noting that it was established in 2016 under Ethiopia’s Ministry of Health in response to strong interest from the African nations in Ethiopia’s Health Extension Program. She pointed out that IIPHC is positioned to become a Global PHC Centre of Excellence aligned with the Astana Declaration and UHC 2030. She outlined four strategic pillars of IIPHC, such as the National PHC Support (system strengthening, capacity building, district-level innovations), Global PHC Support (training, immersion visits, TA for LMICs), PHC Knowledge Generation (research, case studies, 88,000+ open-access resources), and PHC Advocacy & Partnerships (UHC advocacy, multisectoral strategies, audiovisual toolkits, international conferences). She also shared that IIPHC is progressing toward becoming the World Health Organization’s first Collaborating Centre for PHC in Africa and is drafting a new five-year strategy, creating opportunities for new partnerships.

In addition, Dr Kochar emphasised the importance of partnerships that translate into tangible development impact. She proposed organising a joint brainstorming session on India–Ethiopia best practices, and identifying collaborative PHC projects suitable for development cooperation, as some of the joint ventures that could be explored. She further suggested three immediate collaboration opportunities; inviting an IIPHC/Ministry of Health expert to speak at the DAKSHIN webinar on 12 December on “Digital Innovations in Global South Health Security”, exploring joint participation in the February “Artificial Intelligence Digital Impact Summit” in India with Johns Hopkins and ICMR, focusing on AI workforce readiness in primary health and also contributing as speakers in IIPHC’s webinar series.

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