



BRICS 2018 Presidency planning

Planning for the BRICS Civil 2018 Presidency is in full swing. In an effort to make great strides for a combined BRICS South Africa 2018 Presidency planning, the South African BRICS Think Tank (SABTT) on 06 September working in collaboration with the South African Networks of Inequality (SANI) brought together civil society organisations, BRICS Labour and youth under one roof.

The long day event was chaired by SANI's Simon Vilakazi. Attendees exchanged ideas on how they can effectively organise themselves to form the Civil BRICS Forum that speaks in one voice to address South Africa's agenda as well as echoes Africa's civil societies wish list and priorities. Amongst those invited as special guests include representatives from Brazil who shared insights on the African Regional Centre and the New Development Bank.

They outlined how civil society Africa can engage the bank to ensure that they secure funding, as well as have greater understanding of the meaning of infrastructure development and its implications for civil society. After a long discussion and deliberations, civil organisations in attendance reached a conclusion to identify at least ten thematic areas and ten thematic group leaders to champion their priorities.

The thematic group leaders are experts in their respective fields. These are some of the themes the BRICS Civil Forum will explore between January-May 2018:

- Food Security and agriculture
- Urbanisation, urban property and rural development
- Gender and inequality
- Tax Justice
- Entrepreneurship development
- New Development Bank
- Sustainable development goals
- Inclusive development
- Environment and energy (extractivism)
- Youth

The ten working groups have been tasked to use their networks to promote the BRICS Africa Outreach Programme in several parts of the continent. In 2013, this programme was spearheaded by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) when South Africa hosted the BRICS interstate in Durban. This time around, the BRICS Civil Forum plans to take full ownership of the Africa Outreach Programme in partnership with the NIHSS.