

Abstract

This article examines the implications of the Chinese-led Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) for Africa's connectivity. The BRI seeks to rebuild the ancient Silk Road trade route with the overall goal of opening global markets, thus creating a trade and investment network involving three continents: Africa, Asia, and Europe. Using secondary data, this article assesses the opportunities and potential challenges of the BRI for Africa with a special focus on various BRI national projects. It concludes that China's involvement in infrastructure projects in Africa and the BRI's vision for increased connectivity among beneficiary countries can lead to integrated and streamlined economic and infrastructure development in Africa, while improving China's corporate and product image, generating mutual benefits to both China and Africa. This article also argues that for those BRI-based benefits to materialize, certain challenges need to be dealt with, particularly security risks and corruption, which could increase the long-term costs of infrastructure projects for countries involved.