

Brief on India-Burkina Faso Relations

Political Relations

Burkina Faso, a former French Colony, gained Independence as Upper Volta in 1960. The name Burkina Faso, which means “Land of Incorruptible People”, was adopted in 1984. India and Burkina Faso enjoy cordial and friendly relations. Burkina Faso highly values its friendship with India. Burkina Faso established its Resident Mission in New Delhi in 1996 and upgraded to Ambassadorial status in 2011. India maintained its Resident Mission in Ouagadougou from November 1996 until its closure in July 2002. India reopened its Resident Mission in Ouagadougou in March 2019.

Visits from Burkina Faso to India

The exchanges of high-level visits from both sides reflect the growing interest in expanding cooperation in diverse areas.

High-level Visits

- President Thomas Sankara visited India in 1983 for the NAM Summit.
- President Blaise Compaore's visits in 1993 and 1994, during which India offered economic assistance. President Compaoré visited India again in 1997.
- Former Prime Minister Tertius Zongo visited New Delhi in April 2008 to attend the first India-Africa Forum Summit, and also held bilateral talks with Indian Prime Minister Dr. Man Mohan Singh.
- President Roch Marc Christian Kabore participated in the plenary of International Solar Alliance in 2018 and handed over instrument of Ratification of Framework Agreement of ISA to PM Modi.

Ministerial-level visits

- Burkina Faso's Commerce and Industry Minister led a delegation to sign an Economic and Technical Cooperation Protocol in 1976.
- The current Prime Minister, Mr. Rimalba OUEDRAOGO attended the World Heritage Committee hosted by India in July 2024 in capacity of then Minister for Communication, Cultural, Art and Tourism of Burkina Faso.

Participation in CII-India Africa Business Conclaves:

Mr. Lene Sebgo, Minister of Health, led the Burkinabe delegation to the 9th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave held in Delhi in March 2013. Mr. Yacouba Barry, Minister of Housing & Urbanization, Mr. Mahama Zoungrana, Minister of Agriculture and Food Security and Mr. Jean Koulidiati, Minister of Development of Digital Economy and Post were part of the delegation.

An official Burkinabe delegation comprising of the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security and Minister of Mines and Energy participated in the 10th EXIM Bank – CII Conclave held in New Delhi in March 2014.

In August 2024, four Ministers - (1) Minister of Industrial Development, Commerce, handicrafts and Small and Medium Enterprises Mr. Gnaniodem SERGE PODA, (2) Minister of Economy, Finance and Forwarding Planning, Aboubakar NACANABO, (3) Minister of Digital Transitions and Electronic Communications. Dr. Aminata ZERBO/SABNE and (4) Foreign Affairs Minister Delegate **Bêbgnasgnan Stella Eldine KABRE/KABORE** attended the 19th CII-Africa Summit in August 2024. Dr. Zerbo/Sabane also attended the World Telecommunications Standardization Assembly (WTSA) organized in India in October 2024.

Visits from India to Burkina Faso:

High Level Visits:

- Prime Minister Shri Narasimha Rao's impactful state visit in November 1995. PM met with the Burkinabe President, addressed the country's Parliament, and was conferred Burkina Faso's highest civilian award. During his visit, PM also inaugurated the Embassy of India in Ouagadougou.

Ministerial-level visits:

- A visit by MOS for External Affairs occurred in 1987.
- Another notable visit was made by Shri M.J. Akbar, Minister of State for External Affairs, leading the Indian delegation in July 2018 for the 4th Joint Commission meeting.

Other visits:

- A 3-member Indian delegation led by Shri Arvind Kaushal, Additional Secretary, Department of Agricultural Research and Education visited Burkina Faso in December 2013 in connection with the establishment of Water & Soil Tissue Test Laboratory under IAFS decisions.
- Shri Mohanbhai Kundaria, Special Envoy to PM, visited Burkina Faso to hand over the IAFS-III Summit invitation to Burkina Faso's President in July 2015.

Bilateral Mechanism

India and Burkina Faso maintain diplomatic relations through regular political dialogue and consultations.

Joint Commission: Bilateral relations were bolstered during President Blaise Compaore's visit to India in May-June 1993. During the visit, India and Burkina Faso established a Joint Commission after signing an agreement in October 1994. The commission focuses on economic, cultural, political, and technical collaboration. Four Joint Commission meetings have taken place so far. The fourth JCM was held in Burkina Faso, led by Shri M.J. Akbar, the then Minister of State for External Affairs, and Mr. Alpha Barry, the then FM of Burkina Faso.

Economic and Commercial Relations:

Bilateral trade figures over the last five years are as follows:

(in US \$ millions)

Sl. No.	Item	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1	Exports	153.94	207.87	196.64	176.78	120.82
2	Imports	542.67	359.94	425.44	116.34	203.05
	Total Trade	696.61	567.81	622.08	293.12	323.87

India imports gold, cotton, cashew nuts and soya beans from Burkina Faso and exports pharmaceuticals products, vehicles and spare parts, iron and steel articles, machinery and mechanical appliances, rubber and rubber articles etc.

Burkina Faso has many minerals, including gold, Zinc, Manganese, phosphate and limestone. The country also has reserves of other minerals, such as diamonds, bauxite, nickel, and vanadium. There is vast potential for Indian investors in Burkina Faso, especially in mining, infrastructure, pharmaceuticals. Some Indian companies are involved in projects executions under world bank funds and other international organizations.

Burkina has no known investment enterprises in India. Burkina Faso, being Least Developed Country (LDC), is beneficiary of India's Duty Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) Scheme which provides market access for atleast 97% of the products originating from LDCs.

Development Partnership

The Government of India has extended several Lines of Credit (LOCs) to Burkina Faso for its socio-economic development. The details of the development projects in Burkina Faso under various schemes of GOI are as follows:

(I) Projects under Lines of Credit (LOC)

(a) An LOC of US\$ 30 million was signed on 11.10.2005 for agricultural projects, including acquisition of harvesters, tractors,

agricultural processing equipment etc. The project has been completed and an amount of US\$ 29.42 million was utilized.

(b) The LOC of US\$ 25 million was signed on 29.03.2013 for Rural Electrification. The project has been completed and US\$ 24.28 million was utilized.

(c) A Line of Credit of US\$ 184 million was signed on 18 December, 2014 for Hydroelectric Power Plant and Transmission network project. The project has not been started yet.

(II) IAFS Projects under Grants: Under IAFS following five projects were proposed, out of which, only the first two projects (a) & (b) have been completed:

(a) Vocational Training Centre/Incubation Centre (VTC/IC) (under IAFS-I) commissioned by National Small Industries Corporation Limited, New Delhi on November 03, 2016 at a cost of Rs.5 crores and handed over to a local agency under the Burkinabe Ministry of Youth, Professional Employment and Training on 3 November 2016. The VTC/IC trains Burkinabe in industrial nail cutting, oil extraction, plastic extrusion and packaging, water filtering, toilet paper and tissue making, tomato processing, juice extraction, mobile phone repairing, brick making and hardware networking.

(b) Vocational Training Centre of Barefoot College (Under IAFS-II) – Agreement signed on 11.04.2014 – The project was set-up at a cost of Rs.2.48 crores and imparts training in developing and using low-cost technology like solar cookers, etc.

(c) Pilot Project under ISA - Pilot Project for 20 solar pumps and street lights (to cover 100 households each in 3 villages) etc. undertaken by NISE under ISA. The NISE is engaged in discussions with Burkinabe agencies to implement solar home lights and water pumping systems, but the project was delayed due to the security situation in the country.

(d) Construction of ‘Mahatma Gandhi Convention Centre’ (MHICC) - GOI's offer of setting up a MGICC through grant assistance was accepted by the Burkinabe side.

(III) India-UN Development Partnership Funded Project

Construction of a dam and its perimeter in the village of Niangdo (Rural Poa commune) - India contributed US\$ 1 million (48.7% of the total expenditure) for the UNDP-supported Project PAMED towards the construction of this dam and perimeter development in the rural commune of Poa in the Niangdo Province of Burkina Faso. This project was completed on 17 July 2023.

Grants and Humanitarian Aid

The details of Grants and Humanitarian assistance provided to Burkina Faso are as under:

(a) During the visit of President Comapaore to Delhi in July 1994, India extended Rs. 250 million aid to Burkina Faso in the agricultural field, comprising a package of agricultural aid under the Integrated Agricultural Project. The aid included 200 tractors, seeds, implements, water pumps and several other accessories.

(b) India dispatched a consignment of medicine to help people affected by floods in Burkina Faso on 18 June 2008,

(c) India also donated nearly \$213,356 for flood relief assistance in September 2009.

(d) In April 2020, following a request from Burkina Faso's former President, India supplied COVID-19 medicines to Burkina Faso. The Mission delivered hydroxychloroquine and paracetamol tablets in May 2020. An additional shipment of medicines was also received from India in August 2020.

Capacity Building

Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme

Burkina Faso is beneficiary of Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme and ICCR's Scholarships. So far India has trained 225 Burkinabe in various fields under ITEC Programme. Despite language barrier, Burkina Faso utilized 12 out of 15 ITEC slots offered during 2024-25.

Scholarships under ICCR

Two Burkinabé students joined Engineering UG courses at Andhra University in 2022.

Others:

Five Burkinabe scientists were awarded CV Raman Fellowships for carrying out research activities in India between June and December 2013.

TEAM-9 Initiative and the Pan Africa e-Network Project :

Burkina Faso was one of the nine West African countries included in the TEAM-9 initiative and the Pan African e-Network Project. Under TEAM-9, the Indian Government provided a line of credit worth \$30.97 million for agricultural projects and for construction of a National Post Office in Burkina Faso.

ISA : Burkina Faso was among the first 19 countries to join the International Solar Alliance, proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on 15 November 2016.

Cultural Relations:

India and Burkina Faso have a strong cultural connection that includes festivals, dance, and yoga. The two countries have also collaborated on cultural events and programs.

The Cultural performances, including a dance troupe from Rajasthan and Odissi Dance Troupe, marked significant occasions.

Yoga is well known in Burkina Faso. International Day of Yoga (IDY) celebrations started in Burkina Faso in 2015. The Mission also held International Day of Yoga in 2022, 2023 and 2024 in partnership with Hatha Yoga Club.

Burkina Faso is member of UNESCO and participated in the 46th session of World Heritage Committee held by UNESCO from July 21-31, 2024 in New Delhi.

Indian Community:

As of now, about 600 Indians reside in Burkina Faso. Some members of the community own companies engaged in Manufacturing - Cement, Beer, Plastics, Leather. Services- Hotels & restaurants, Ticketing and travel agencies, water well drilling, Retailing & Trading, pharmaceutical imports and exporters of cotton, cashew nuts, sesame, peanuts and gold. while the rest of the community are employees of these Indian owned businesses. The Indian community celebrates Indian festivals like Holi, Diwali in Burkina Faso.

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