
BTTN Journal

p-ISSN 2958-1214

e-ISSN 2958-1222



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Evaluating Pakistan's Engagement with the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Build Back Better World (B3W): Present and Future Perspectives

Sanwal Hussain Kharl ¹, Arhama Siddiqa ², & Saqib Khan Warraich ³

<i>Article Info</i>	<i>Abstract</i>
<p>Keywords: Geopolitical realism, BRI, B3W, Pakistan, CPEC</p>	<p><i>In contemporary times, the pursuit of a sustainable geoeconomics policy is now a requirement. Launched in 2013, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) aims to enhance economic integration through substantial infrastructure development. Announced in 2021, G7's Build Back Better World (B3W) also concentrates on sustainable development, with a special emphasis on health, climate security and gender equality. Pakistan, positioned at a geopolitical crossroad, as well as a vital component of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), stands to be affected by both BRI and B3W initiatives. In tandem, both initiatives complement each other. This research will do a comparative analysis of both projects and will use geopolitical realism to understand the various strategic facets and outcomes as well as underscore the broader consequences of BRI and B3W for global development. relevant strategic thinkers from different regions who have opined about space being militarized or weaponized in near times.</i></p>

¹ Sanwal Hussain Kharl is Lecturer at Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of Central Punjab, Lahore and is currently pursuing his PhD in Political Science from Aston University. He can be reached at sanwalkharl@gmail.com

²Arhama Siddiqa is currently working as a Research Fellow at Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) and is currently pursuing her PhD in International Relations from Quaid-e-Azam University. She can be reached at arhama.siddiqa@gmail.com

³Saqib Khan Warraich is working as Assistant Professor at Department of political science, Government College University, Lahore. He can be reached at dr.saqibkhan@gcu.edu.pk

Introduction

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a global infrastructural plan established by China in 2013 to accelerate the development of infrastructure and economic integration of nations along the ancient Silk Route. It aims to promote peaceful development, openness, inclusiveness, and mutual benefit. The BRI has attracted significant investment from China and is considered the largest development funding initiative in the world. It is estimated to cost between \$4 and \$8 trillion, and China has already committed \$440 billion to infrastructure projects. It has established international commercial and trade cooperation zones, creating jobs and tax revenue. The rise of China's economy has led to a shift in global power dynamics. The Build Back Better World (B3W) initiative was introduced by the G7 (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States) in June 2021. It aims to meet the infrastructure needs of developing countries and reduce infrastructure gaps through private-sector financing. The B3W initiative focuses on providing health security, climate security, and gender equity. It was proposed by the American President, focuses on developing infrastructure in developing countries and addressing domestic issues such as job creation, poverty reduction, climate change, and healthcare.¹

This study seeks the answers of effectiveness of both the BRI and the B3W for developing nations and their impact on Pakistan. This research outlined the planning and implementation of both initiatives, highlighting the similarities and differences in their approaches. It will also assess the practicality of the BRI and the B3W initiatives and provide a comparative analysis. This article aims to compare and analyze the regional priorities of both initiatives and their respective impacts from Pakistan's perspective.

¹ (The Belt and Road Initiative: A Key Pillar of the Global Community of Shared Future 2023).

Due to Pakistan's dual engagement with the BRI and the B3W, Islamabad is exploring the various economic, political, and strategic dimensions. By delving into the complexities of investments, infrastructural developments, and geopolitical maneuverings, this study aims to illuminate the role of Pakistan in shaping and being shaped by these two competing global initiatives.

What can be called geopolitical realism in international relations (an amalgamation of realist theory and geopolitical thinking) suggests that states are driven primarily by their national interests and the need to accumulate power in an anarchic international system. This is done in a bid to ensure their own security, survival, and dominance. The actions, policies, and international strategies of states can be best understood through the lens of this theory. Applying the theoretical framework of geopolitical realism to analyze China's BRI and the US B3W, particularly in the context of Pakistan, reveals the strategic motivations behind these initiatives. This understanding provides insights into the larger international context, the evolving dynamics between major powers, and the probable consequences for global order and safety in the years ahead.

Both BRI and B3W face advantages and disadvantages, some of which are different while others comparable. The BRI benefits from superior infrastructural and technological capabilities, an early launch advantage, and greater flexibility for experimentation due to its relatively uncontroversial history. B3W, on the other hand, discusses the growth of financial institutions in areas such as climate, health, and health security, digital technology, and gender equity. Countries in the G7 have a general history of colonialism and unfulfilled commitments. By analyzing both initiatives, this study explains the difference between both BRI and B3W for a country like Pakistan and how it will act as a model for the developing countries who are also participating in both these initiatives. The main argument of this study is that Pakistan is a

significant player in the geopolitical chessboard due to its strategic location and historical ties. Both BRI and B3W focus on infrastructure and development investments in specific regions. While BRI concentrates on linking Asia, Europe, and Africa, B3W, with strong backing from the US, is projected to cater to vital sectors across Latin America, Africa, and the perceived Indo-Pacific. This study thoroughly investigates the role and implications of these initiatives for Pakistan. It compares the regional distribution of projects, investments, and collaboration mechanisms, and examine the geopolitical, economic, and strategic consequences of these engagements, particularly in the context of Pakistan.

Historical Background

The "One Belt, One Road" initiative is the updated name for the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. It represents a region proposed by mainland China. Furthermore, the Silk Road Economic Belt is primarily aimed at increasing economic cooperation between mainland China and Central and Western Asia. The Belt and Road connects six coastal provinces with an economic size of US\$2.1 billion. In addition, there are 4.4 billion people and 26 nations along the route, and the regional economy produced is sure to reorganize the global economic and trade sector.² China has announced the "Belt and Road Initiative" as a way of promoting peaceful development, openness, inclusiveness, mutual benefit, along with providing assistance to poorer nations. in improving infrastructure and creating conditions for common development.³

In 2013, China launched BRI to accelerate the development of infrastructure and economic integration of nations along the ancient Silk Route. The BRI report in lieu of this vision predicted

² Vera Schulhof, Detlef van Vuuren, and Julian Kirchherr, "The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): What Will It Look Like in the Future?" *Technological Forecasting and Social Change* 175 (2022), doi:10.1016/j.techfore.2021.121306.

³ Chin et al., "The Impact of Green Finance on Environmental Degradation in BRI Region."

that the global economy would grow by over \$7 trillion per year.⁴ The objective of uniting Asia, Europe, and Africa through dependable connectivity networks was the focus of its design. In over 100 countries, especially emerging markets, BRI is a worldwide infrastructure plan. According to government of China 166 partner countries and international organizations have signed agreements to protect the environment with China as of 2019.⁵ Over \$80 billion has been invested by China directly in more than 70 countries since the initiative was launched, and this investment has increased by 7.2% annually and the BRI is the largest development funding initiative in the world.⁶ With over \$28.9 billion spent, more than 82 international commercial and trade cooperation zones have been established under the BRI and creating more than 244,000 jobs and an additional \$2 billion in tax revenue.⁷ The BRI is estimated to cost between US\$4 and US\$8 trillion. The Chinese Daily reports that, based on data from China's central bank, the People's Bank of China, financial institutions in China have already committed US\$440 billion to BRI infrastructure projects.⁸

⁴ Junaid Ashraf, Liangqing Luo, and Muhammad Asif Khan, "The Spillover Effects of Institutional Quality and Economic Openness on Economic Growth for the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Countries," *Spatial Statistics* 47 (2022), doi:10.1016/j.spasta.2021.100566.

⁵ Lina Liu, "Beyond the Status Quo and Revisionism: An Analysis of the Role of China and the Approaches of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to the Global Order," *Asian Journal of Political Science* 29, no. 1 (2021): 88–109, doi:10.1080/02185377.2020.1837193.

⁶ Karen P. Y. Lai, Shaun Lin, and James D. Sidaway, "Financing the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): Research Agendas beyond the 'Debt-Trap' Discourse," *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 61, no. 2 (2020): 109–24, doi:10.1080/15387216.2020.1726787.

⁷ Peng Zhang et al., "Research on Carbon Emission Standards of Automobile Industry in BRI Participating Countries," *Cleaner and Responsible Consumption* 8 (2023), doi:10.1016/j.clrc.2023.100106.

⁸ Jiatao Li et al., "The Belt and Road Initiative and International Business Policy: A Kaleidoscopic Perspective," *Journal of International Business Policy* 5, no. 2 (2022): 135–51, doi:10.1057/s42214-022-00136-x.

Group of Seven (G7) has introduced the B3W in June 2021 during its 47th conference and its aim is to meet the infrastructure needs of worth \$40 trillion in developing countries. With private-sector financing its goal is to reduce infrastructure gaps in developing countries and the project promises to integrate low- and middle-income nations and is aimed at providing health security, climate security, and gender equity. Under the United States leadership, G7 introduced B3W project to develop infrastructure in developing countries. President of United States, Joe Biden indicated that there might be a more equitable way to satisfy the requirements of developing countries. He even called the action a challenge to China's geo-economics dominance. Unlike the B3W initiative, which had significant domestic ramifications in the United States, Competition with China was characterized by public opinion. The White House issued a statement emphasizing that Joe Biden met with G7 leaders to "discuss strategic issues" compete with China" and "address the infrastructural needs of low-middle-income countries."⁹ The main goals include producing 2.5 million new jobs in the first five years and eliminating poverty. The strategy mentioned cross-border climate change and lowering childcare costs.¹⁰ B3W plan was announced in the opening months of the following year; social spending package required for the care of children and the elderly, climate change, health care, and the environment financial assistance was also defined for middle-income household.

Those familiar with the BRI and B3W initiatives can recognize that both rival states are engaged in economic competition, seeking to secure investments from their allies to strengthen and sustain their respective economies. In place to

⁹ Arif Khan and Shah Nawaz Khan, "Bri Vs. B3w: A Rivalry For Economic Hegemony: An Archival Research," *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 61, no. 1 (2022): 31–44, doi:10.46568/jssh.v61i1.596.

¹⁰ Ibid.

improve regional economic growth, integration, and commerce, China announced the BRI¹¹ in September 2013. The BRI aims to connect Africa with Asia and Europe through Maritime and Land networks. However, the B3W effort, which was started by the G7 in June 2021, is a different project. In addition to helping low- and middle-income nations develop their infrastructure, this US Project is essentially a competition with BRI.¹²

Pakistan, due to its strategic geographic location, shares a unique and vital relationship with China. CPEC is considered as a flagship project of BRI, worth over \$60 billion, seeks to link Gwadar Port in Pakistan's Balochistan province with China's Xinjiang region, giving China a shorter path to the Arabian Sea. This corridor is more than a transportation route; it includes a variety of infrastructure projects, such as highways, trains, renewable energy projects, and special economic zones. These projects promise to bring significant economic growth and employment opportunities to Pakistan, fostering closer economic ties between China and Pakistan.¹³ The US B3W initiative, although broader in scope is not country specific. It also aims to provide a transparent, sustainable, and values-driven alternative to China's BRI, Pakistan can get benefit from diversified foreign investments, especially in sectors prioritized by B3W such as digital technology, health, and climate change. However, it remains to be seen how Pakistan, with its established commitments to the BRI, positions itself in relation to the B3W and how the US tailors its B3W strategies in the context of

¹¹ Irfan Ali and Rubina Ali, "Rise Of China: Growing Strategic Competition Between The Us And China," *Margalla Papers* 25, no. 1 (2021): 103–14, doi:10.54690/margallapapers.25.1.55.

¹² Axel Dreher et al., "Banking on the Belt and Road," in *Banking on Beijing*, 2022, 282–302, doi:10.1017/9781108564496.009.

¹³ Kunze Li, Kai Qi, and Qinhu Xu, "'Green Race': The Performance, Reasons and Response to China-U.S. Climate Competition," *Quanqiu Nengyuan Hulanwang* 5, no. 4 (2022): 409–15, doi:10.19705/j.cnki.issn2096-5125.2022.04.011.

Pakistan.¹⁴ This research paper covers Pakistan's engagement with both project in present and in the coming future.

Theoretical Framework

Geopolitical realism, a distinct framework within the broader realist tradition in international relations, emphasizes the role of geography, strategic resources, and territorial imperatives in shaping state behavior. While grounded in the realist principles of power and national interest, geopolitical realism specifically highlights how spatial and resource-based factors influence competition and conflict in an anarchic international system. This is in a bid to ensure their own security, survival, and dominance. As such, the actions, policies, and international strategies of states can be best understood through the lens of this theory.¹⁵ China's BRI is emblematic of this realistic approach. It is an ambitious project aimed at enhancing China's economic and geopolitical influence, particularly in strategic regions. By investing heavily in infrastructure projects across various countries, China seeks to bolster its economic connectivity, trade dominance, and geopolitical prominence. The United States, in response to China's BRI, introduced the B3W strategy. On the surface, the B3W appears to be guided by the US normative interests – the promotion of democratic principles, human rights, and good governance globally. However, beneath this altruistic facade, the B3W is also a strategic maneuver. It seeks to consolidate ties, foster political and economic stability in allied nations, and counterbalance China's growing influence. By applying the theoretical framework of geopolitical realism to the analysis of China's BRI and the US B3W, especially in the context of Pakistan, one can discern the strategic motivations behind these initiatives and Pakistan involvement with both initiatives as beneficiary and by

¹⁴ Khan and Khan, "Bri Vs. B3w: A Rivalry For Economic Hegemony: An Archival Research."

¹⁵ LY, "China and Global Governance: Leadership through BRI."

understanding her strategic position – Pakistan’s motives to engage both great powers by utilizing geopolitical realism.

Methodology

This comparative study examines the goals, implementation, and impacts of two major global infrastructure development initiatives: China's BRI and the United States's B3W on Pakistan. To gain thorough understanding, this study uses a qualitative methodology that includes in-depth research of key documents, scholarly articles, and government reports. It identifies and characterizes the stated aims of both projects using content analysis, considering their economic, geopolitical, and developmental dimensions. The effects of these initiatives are assessed using a multifaceted perspective. Economic implications are evaluated by examining changes in trade patterns, investment flows, and economic growth in the affected regions. The socio-cultural impacts are considering issues such as job creation, skill development, and cultural interaction. To ensure data dependability and validity, the qualitative methodology comprises triangulating information from several sources. A comparative study allows the discovery of similarities and contrasts between the BRI and B3W, providing nuanced analysis on each initiative's potential strengths and drawbacks. The study findings add to a more nuanced understanding of these programs' broader consequences for global development, collaboration, and competition.

Literature Review

China's BRI initiatives will benefit trade and the delivery of goods and services to the country. The primary goal of these BRI projects was to facilitate international trade, access to energy and generating demand for China's current industries.¹⁶ To counter China's growing

¹⁶ Xian Chun Tan et al., “Bibliometric Research on the Development of Climate Change in the BRI Regions,” *Advances in Climate Change Research* 12, no. 2 (2021): 254–62, doi:10.1016/j.accre.2021.03.010.

influence, the G7 leaders proposed the B3W. The BRI are perceived as China's attempt to control international trade, foreign policy, and international affairs through debt trapping. BRI initiatives reflect China-centric goals for the world economy. China has seen an increase in FDI outflows since the BRI's launch in 2013. Due to the BRI, there has been a sharp increase in investment from 2013 to mid-2020. Additionally, when comparing BRI projects to non-BRI projects after 2013, there has been a rise in infrastructure investment. Also, since 2013, China has increased the quantity of contracts.¹⁷ According to Liu and Wang, the G7 must catch up to China's BRI infrastructure if they hope to compete with its B3W infrastructure.¹⁸ Contrary to BRI, investors participate in short-term investments in B3W.¹⁹ B3W generates unpredictability among the Middle Eastern countries. Initiatives pertaining to health, women's empowerment, education, and the forecast of economic strength through foreign investment and various humanitarian projects are the focus of the build back better. The G7 can strive to sort out these disparities by utilizing tactics that allow for solutions that are beneficial to both parties.²⁰

According to Sanger and Landler Biden brought the G7 together to counter China's influence. To give the world alternatives to the BRI, he asked wealthy nations to contribute. The B3W infrastructure was suggested, but he did not specify how the funding would be provided. It will place a strong emphasis on the environment, fighting corruption, and being transparent about the

¹⁷ Sheraz et al., "The Dynamic Nexus among Financial Development, Renewable Energy and Carbon Emissions: Moderating Roles of Globalization and Institutional Quality across BRI Countries."

¹⁸ Yazhen Liu and Rong Wang, "Research on the Environmental Effects of China's Outward Foreign Direct Investment (OFDI): Empirical Evidence Based on the Implementation of the 'Belt and Road' Initiative (BRI)," *Sustainability (Switzerland)* 14, no. 19 (2022), doi:10.3390/su141912868.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Park, "The Roles and Strategies of ASEAN in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)."

terms of financing that help nations avoid incurring excessive debt. Since most of the G7's member nations have embraced the BRI at some point and are currently involved in it, there are differences among them, and they do not all speak with the same voice in regard to this situation.²¹ According to the World Bank, over \$1.5 trillion infrastructure investment gap in developing nations must be filled to facilitate the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Therefore, the BRI program can play an important role in closing this gap by offering financing and expertise for infrastructure projects in these developing countries. They lack the prerequisite resources to fund such mega projects independently.²²

BRI has facilitated numerous infrastructure and development projects across the globe - supporters of the initiative point to the significant benefits it has delivered to numerous participating countries. The infrastructure developments have improved these nations' transportation networks, enhanced connectivity, and increased trade and investment.²³ The CPEC, part of the BRI, has seen increased construction of new highways, ports, and railway systems in Pakistan. Such has enhanced Pakistan's fiscal growth and improved its access to the world market. The funding has been part of rescue lending received by countries like Pakistan, Argentina, and Sri Lanka, amounting to \$32.8 billion since 2017. Another example is the BRI funded project, the Nairobi-Mombasa railway in Kenya, which has helped reduce transportation

²¹ Julián F. Calderón-García et al., "Effectiveness of Body Roundness Index (Bri) and a Body Shape Index (Absi) in Predicting Hypertension: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Observational Studies," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 18, no. 21 (2021), doi:10.3390/ijerph182111607.

²² Anna Visvizi, Miltiadis D. Lytras, and Peiquan Jin, "Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): New Forms of International and Cross-Industry Collaboration for Sustainable Growth and Development," *Sustainability (Switzerland)* 12, no. 1 (2020), doi:10.3390/SU12010193.

²³ Enyu Zhang and Patrick James, "All Roads Lead to Beijing: Systemism, Power Transition Theory and the Belt and Road Initiative," *Chinese Political Science Review* 8, no. 1 (2023): 18–44, doi:10.1007/s41111-022-00211-x.

costs and enhanced trade between the two cities. Other example is the infrastructural inroads made in Greece through the majority acquisition of the port of Piraeus.²⁴

Following the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, the term "Building Back Better" (BBB) gained popularity. The phrase led to the awareness that the optimum time to implement commuting reforms is after a calamity. The restoration and recovery period following a disaster presents a unique chance to implement new ideas, technologies, and approaches to improve a community's pre-disaster conditions. This knowledge led to the development of the BBB concept. BBB refers to the use of the window of opportunity offered by a tragedy to instill toughness in communities and eliminate weaknesses. As a result, BBB may be characterized as a holistic concept that uses post-disaster rebuilding and recovery to improve a community's economic, social, environmental, and physical situations to create a more resilient community in an efficient and effective manner. BBB attempts to decrease the likelihood of disasters occurring, enhance community recovery, and ensure effective implementation of relevant legislation, regulations, and institutional structures. Pakistan's geostrategic location, serving as a link between Central Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East, it has become a focal point in world geopolitics. Historically, its strategic importance has been recognized by both regional and global powers. The CPEC, a flagship project of the BRI, is a testament to this strategic alliance, aiming to provide China with direct access to the Arabian Sea via the Gwadar port, bypassing the Malacca Strait. Scholars have argued that CPEC is not just an economic corridor but has significant strategic and security dimensions. It is believed that the success of the BRI is intrinsically

²⁴ Li et al., "The Belt and Road Initiative and International Business Policy: A Kaleidoscopic Perspective."

linked CPEC's success is dependent on its importance in the endeavour.²⁵

The US and Pakistan share a complex relationship, historically oscillating between being allies in the Cold War and the War on Terror to experiencing strains due to various geopolitical reasons. The introduction of the B3W has the potential to recalibrate this relationship. While the B3W is still in its nascent stage, Pakistan's potential involvement could be seen as a counterbalance to its deepening ties with China through the BRI. As pointed out by Markey, the US approach towards Pakistan in the context of the B3W will be critical in deciding the future trajectory of US-Pakistan relations, especially considering the strategic rivalry between the United States and China.²⁶ Comparative analyses have illustrated that while China's BRI, particularly CPEC, promises infrastructural development and energy projects for Pakistan, it also brings challenges, including debt sustainability and governance issues. On the other hand, the B3W's emphasis on transparency, good governance, and sustainable development offers an alternative model. However, how Pakistan navigates its way between these two initiatives, balancing its strategic ties with China while engaging with the B3W, will be crucial in shaping its future geopolitical and economic landscape. To connect Africa, Asia, and Europe. This will enable the BRI countries to achieve balanced and sustainable development. Over 140 countries, comprising 40% of the global population and accounting for over one-third of global GDP, the BRI encompasses 2,500 projects with a cumulative value of \$3.6

²⁵ Shengbing He, Huilin Yao, and Zhou Ji, "Direct and Indirect Effects of Business Environment on Bri Countries' Global Value Chain Upgrading," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 18, no. 23 (2021), doi:10.3390/ijerph182312492.

²⁶ Visvizi, Lytras, and Jin, "Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): New Forms of International and Cross-Industry Collaboration for Sustainable Growth and Development."

trillion.²⁷ President Xi announced the move in 2013 while on official visits to Indonesia and Kazakhstan. The two main pillars of the plan were the overland Silk Road Economic Belt and the Maritime Silk Road. The One Belt, One Road initiative was the collective name for the two initiatives before they were renamed as the Belt and Road Initiative.²⁸ The project aimed to improve trade and economic relations, increase People-to-people relationships across countries along the BRI can strengthen regional connectivity. There was also a strategic element, which Xi characterized as a group of like-minded countries that would jointly form a more cohesive bloc, bound together by geography, principles of sovereignty, and a shared opposition to extremism, terrorism, and separatism.²⁹ One of Xi's most significant initiatives is the BRI. It displays several unique qualities of his leadership, such as his confidence and ambition.³⁰ By all measures, the BRI is massive in scope. It encompasses several dozen nations with differing levels of political stability and entails coordination between numerous Chinese party organizations and government ministries.³¹

In terms of land routes, transportation networks will be constructed to facilitate development in cities along the route, with economic and trade industrial parks serving as platforms for

²⁷ Cecilia Tortajada and Hongzhou Zhang, "When Food Meets BRI: China's Emerging Food Silk Road," *Global Food Security* 29 (2021), doi:10.1016/j.gfs.2021.100518.

²⁸ Hiro Katsumata and Shingo Nagata, "ASEAN and the BRI: The Utility of Equidistant Diplomacy with China and the US," *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* 7, no. 2 Special Issue (2019): 333–48, doi:10.18588/201911.00a088.

²⁹ Przemysław Osiewicz, "The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): Implications for Iran-China Relations," *Przegląd Strategiczny* 11 (2018): 221–32, doi:10.14746/ps.2018.1.16.

³⁰ Yu Xiao and Fabio Massimo Parenti, "China–Italy BRI Cooperation: Towards a New Cooperation Model?," *Area Development and Policy* 7, no. 2 (2022): 204–21, doi:10.1080/23792949.2021.1985397.

³¹ Muhammad Salam and Yingzhi Xu, "Trade Openness and Environment: A Panel Data Analysis for 88 Selected BRI Countries," *Environmental Science and Pollution Research* 29, no. 16 (2022): 232, 49–63, doi:10.1007/s11356-021-17037-w.

cooperation.³² Taiwan will build Asia-Europe land routes, China, Mongolia and Russia, Mainland China-Central Asia-West Asia, Mainland China-Indochina, and other regional economic cooperation corridors; at sea, it will use key ports as hubs to collectively, create a seamless, safe, and efficient transportation system. connecting economic corridors such as China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar, and promoting regional integration.³³ The regional cooperation in the Plan focuses on five major aspects: policy communication, facility connection, trade facilitation, financial integration, and social connectedness. The content is briefly described as follows:

Policy communication level

Strengthen exchanges of economic strategies and countermeasures among countries, jointly create regional cooperation models, address relevant challenges, and implement practical cooperation and development plans, defensive measures, and policy incentives for large-scale ventures.³⁴

Facility connectivity level

To maintain the sovereignty and national security of various countries, jointly build transnational transportation trunk lines, establish compatible transportation system, encourage the organic integration of cross-border clearance of customs, shipping, and inter-modal transportation. and realize the convenience of cross-border transportation.³⁵ Promote sea-land combined transport,

³² Frank Mouritz, “Implications of the Covid-19 Pandemic on China’s Belt and Road Initiative,” *Connections* 19, no. 2 (2020): 115–24, doi:10.11610/Connections.19.2.09.

³³ Lauren A. Johnston, “The Belt and Road Initiative: What Is in It for China?,” *Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies* 6, no. 1 (2019): 40–58, doi:10.1002/app5.265.

³⁴ Dara Conduit and Shahram Akbarzadeh, “Great Power-Middle Power Dynamics: The Case of China and Iran,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 28, no. 117 (2019): 468–81, doi:10.1080/10670564.2018.1542225.

³⁵ Salam and Xu, “Trade Openness and Environment: A Panel Data Analysis for 88 Selected BRI Countries.”

strengthen port construction and maritime logistics cooperation, and improve air transport infrastructure. In addition, we will build electricity, oil, natural gas and other transportation pipelines to jointly maintain transportation safety and upgrade regional power transmission networks to promote the interconnection of energy infrastructure. In addition, jointly build cross-border optical fiber networks, prepare for the construction of intercontinental submarine optical fiber networks, improve satellite communication systems, etc., and promote communication interconnection.³⁶

Trade facilitation

Remove cross-border investment and trade barriers, build a good business and trade environment for regional countries, encourage free trade zones, increase customs collaboration, and recognize one another and cooperation in inspection and quarantine, accreditation, standard measurement, and statistical information, etc.³⁷ Reduce non-tariff barriers to technical trade, develop e-commerce and other emerging service trade models, promote mutual investment, promote cooperation in emerging industries, combine investment and trade, strengthen the establishment of industrial supply chains, and promote investment-driven trade, etc.³⁸

Financing level

Strengthen financial cooperation and expand exchange and settlement; prepare for the formation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) Development Bank and Silk Road Fund promotes

³⁶ Osiewicz, "The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): Implications for Iran-China Relations."

³⁷ Lee Jones, "Does China's Belt and Road Initiative Challenge the Liberal, Rules-Based Order?" *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 13, no. 1 (2020): 113–33, doi:10.1007/s40647-019-00252-8.

³⁸ Jean Marc F. Blanchard, "The United States — China Rivalry and the BRI," *Vestnik RUDN. International Relations* 21, no. 2 (2021): 288–303, doi:10.22363/2313-0660-2021-21-2-288-303.

global financial cooperation. in consortium lending and credit extension, and guide funds to participate in key construction projects; Issue RMB bonds or foreign currency bonds; build a regional financial early warning system, strengthen exchanges and cooperation in cross-border financial risks and crisis management, etc.³⁹

People-to-people bonds

Expand exchanges of international students, strengthen tourism cooperation, epidemic information and prevention and control exchanges, and scientific and technological cooperation, etc., and conduct extensive exchanges and cooperation in culture, academics, talents, media, youth and women, etc., to solidify the foundation of regional cooperation.⁴⁰

Table 1: BRI funding

Silk Road Fund	China led the establishment of the Silk Road Fund in 2014 with an investment of US\$40 billion. The fund's primary objectives are to find investment possibilities during the "Belt and Road" development process and to offer medium- and long-term equity finance to carry out the program.
Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank	In 2016, the AIIB was officially opened. It was started by China and is the first multilateral financial institution in history. Through medium- and long-term debt financing, it gives money to governments in

³⁹ Liu and Suk, "Influencing Factors of Azerbaijan and China's Sustainable Tourism Development Strategy under the One Belt One Road Initiative."

⁴⁰ Jones, "Does China's Belt and Road Initiative Challenge the Liberal, Rules-Based Order?"

	Asian nations and the surrounding areas to support the building of infrastructure.
--	--

Planning of Build Back Better World (B3W) Initiative

B3W is an retake of the Blue Dot Network (BDN), a collaboration between the United States, Japan, and Australia to encourage high-quality, private-sector-led initiatives. The B3W is "new" since it brings together the G7 countries, while also inviting additional democracies such as Australia, India, the Republic of Korea, and South Africa. B3W seeks to make investments in infrastructure projects in developing nations, particularly in energy, transportation, digital technology, and telecommunications. Planning involves identifying critical areas needing development and selecting projects that align with sustainable and inclusive growth goals.⁴¹This Initiative was launched on June 12, 2021, when the US President met with leaders of G7 countries and came up with this idea of partnership. B3W focuses on providing infrastructure funding for low- and middle-income countries, prioritizing projects that promote sustainability, transparency, and adherence to labor standards. It aims to address infrastructure gaps, especially in areas like climate, health, digital technology, and gender equality.⁴²

The Biden Administration intends to employ financial instruments, such as the US Trade and Development Agency, the USAID, the EXIM, Development Finance Corporation, and Millennium Challenge Corporation, to actively involve US companies in the project. Furthermore, the United States intends to expand the range of tools it has available for financing so that combined efforts can produce hundreds of billions of dollars. The B3W project will span Latin America, Africa, and Asia-Pacific, with

⁴¹ Johnston, "The Belt and Road Initiative: What Is in It for China?"

⁴² Lea Shih and Wei Cao, "The Impact of the 'Belt and Road Initiative' on International Scholarship Students," *Frontiers in Sociology* 7 (2022), doi:10.3389/fsoc.2022.793018.

a global reach. The G7 partners will have different geographic orientations, but low- and middle-income nations will make up most of this initiative.⁴³ Followings are the guiding principles of B3W:

Values-Driven

Recipient nations and communities will benefit more from infrastructure development that is transparent and sustainable in terms of finances, the environment, and society.

We will present nations with a constructive outlook and a transparent, long-term funding source to address their infrastructure requirements.

Good Governance and High Standards

At a point in time when countries confront difficult decisions about how to address climate change, revitalise local economies, allocate limited funding, and increase jobs in an equitable manner, high standards have become even more crucial. We are dedicated to giving the residents of recipient areas the long-term advantages that they are entitled to and anticipate from infrastructure projects. Our activity will be founded on high standards and values, such as those promoted by the revised Blue Dot Network, in the areas of climate change and the environment, labour and human safeguards, transparency, funding, construction, anticorruption, and others. The investments are expected to be done in a way that aligns with the Paris Climate Agreement's objectives.

Strong Strategic Partnerships

Infrastructure that is created in collaboration with its beneficiaries will endure longer and have a greater influence on development. As real partners, communities will be consulted and local requirements will be evaluated in order to construct infrastructure under the B3W. Together with other groups, we will form a

⁴³ Conduit and Akbarzadeh, "Great Power-Middle Power Dynamics: The Case of China and Iran."

taskforce as the G7 to coordinate, harmonize, and expand our reach and influence.

Mobilize Private Capital Through Development Finance

The massive infrastructure deficit in low- and middle-income nations cannot be addressed by the finance and financing methods now in use. In order to support and stimulate a substantial increase in private investments to address infrastructure demands, we are dedicated to enhancing the development financing tools at our disposal. High standards and openness in public finance, along with infrastructure investment from a responsible and market-driven private sector, are essential for the sustainability and efficacy of development over the long term.

Enhancing the Impact of Multilateral Public Finance

International Financial Institutions (IFIs), including multilateral development banks, have established strict guidelines for project design, execution, social and environmental protection, and analytical skills. To assist guarantee the proper and efficient use of US taxpayer funds, the US will implement certain guidelines and protections. In order to improve the public and private capital mobilisation required for significant and sustainable infrastructure investment, we will collaborate with the IFIs to strengthen their catalytic effect.

Similarities and Differences in Planning

The importance of developing high-quality, environmentally friendly infrastructure is emphasized in both the G7's B3W and the recently formed BRI Green Partnership. The G7 members commit to providing and raising funds to bridge the infrastructure deficit of US\$40 trillion. Their aim is to synchronize their outbound investments with the Paris Agreement and construct infrastructure according to standards that have been agreed upon by multiple

parties.⁴⁴ The BRI and B3W both are loan-oriented projects.⁴⁵ Raising private capital has been a key component of both the G7's B3W and the BRI Green Partnership. The state-owned financial institutions and project developers in China may give the BRI an advantage by creating a clear line of Accountability between industry and the government. However, private investors and developers in the G7 countries are largely motivated by their own economic goals, with little to no input from government agencies. Table 2.2 compares the aims of the BRI Green Partnership with the G7's B3W program. with respect to broad objectives, principles, funding, standards for the environment, and other aspects to better understand the similarities and differences.

Table 2: Similarities and differences in BRI and B3W

Aspect	BRI Green Partnership	Build Back Better World (B3W)
Scope	BRI countries	Countries with low and middle income.
Partners	29 countries and “looking forward to the participation of more partners”	G7 “and other like-minded partners”
Financing	Local & International financing organizations	Institutions mobilize the private capital
Duration	Not specified	Not specified

Source: SDPI Report

⁴⁴ Jeffrey B. Nugent and Jiaxuan Lu, “China’s Outward Foreign Direct Investment in the Belt and Road Initiative: What Are the Motives for Chinese Firms to Invest?” *China Economic Review* 68 (2021), doi:10.1016/j.chieco.2021.101628.

⁴⁵ Xiao and Parenti, “China–Italy BRI Cooperation: Towards a New Cooperation Model?”

Comparative Effectiveness Analysis

B3W has theoretical significance in terms of soft outcomes because it is not yet implemented, BRI, which is already operational in 140 countries, is broader in terms of scope and has a wider scope.⁴⁶ Large-scale infrastructure projects like dams, power plants, ports, telecommunications, highways, etc. are the main focus of the BRI, whereas the B3W addresses concerns like health, technology-based ship control, and climate change. BRI is dependent on dual loans and investments held by the Chinese government as well as policy banks such as the Export-Import Bank of China and the China Development Bank. The private sector is prepared to contribute hundreds of billions of dollars to B3W's infrastructure projects, and the company intends to use double loans.⁴⁷ The G7's leaders are also eager to create partnerships between nations and investors that are transparent, high standards, and value driven.⁴⁸ Many countries have unmanageable debt because of the BRI. They are utilizing this infrastructure because they believe that many nations are still behind and that taking this action will contribute to the success of those nations as well. However, the G7 leaders cannot agree on this choice.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Yan and Sautman, "China, Ethiopia and the Significance of the Belt and Road Initiative."

⁴⁷ Azzhary Muhammad Rio and Hilfi Biyan Firza, "BRI as International Norm Construction of China's Green Development Strategy in Asia," *Indonesian Journal of International Relations* 5, no. 1 (2020): 1–14, doi:10.32787/ijir.v5i1.143.

⁴⁸ Isyana Adriani, "Indonesian Sub-Majors at Chinese Universities and Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)," *AEGIS: Journal of International Relations* 3, no. 1 (2019), doi:10.33021/aegis.v3i1.730.

⁴⁹ Isyana Adriani, "Indonesian Sub-Majors at Chinese Universities and Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)," *AEGIS: Journal of International Relations* 3, no. 1 (2019), doi:10.33021/aegis.v3i1.730.

Table 2: BRI VS B3W

Indicator	B3W	BRI
Inclusivity	Human rights and democratic conditions attached to funding	All nations are included, no restrictions
Capacity	Infrastructure deficit/imports.	Technology and infrastructure excess
Labor Protection	Supports	Not mentioned
Cohesive	Bureaucratic decision-making and G7 countries have different stances.	Only China heading the initiative.
Debt Trap	Remains to be seen.	Increases debt in countries
Focus	Soft outcomes, mostly gender equity and equality, digital technology, and health	power, ports, and transportation. incorporates digital technology and health as well.
Sustainability	strives to improve green technologies and lower carbon emissions	backs green finance

BRI's Impact on Pakistan

The people of Pakistan get the opportunities of employment, enhancing livelihoods, eliminating poverty, and modernizing distant locations.

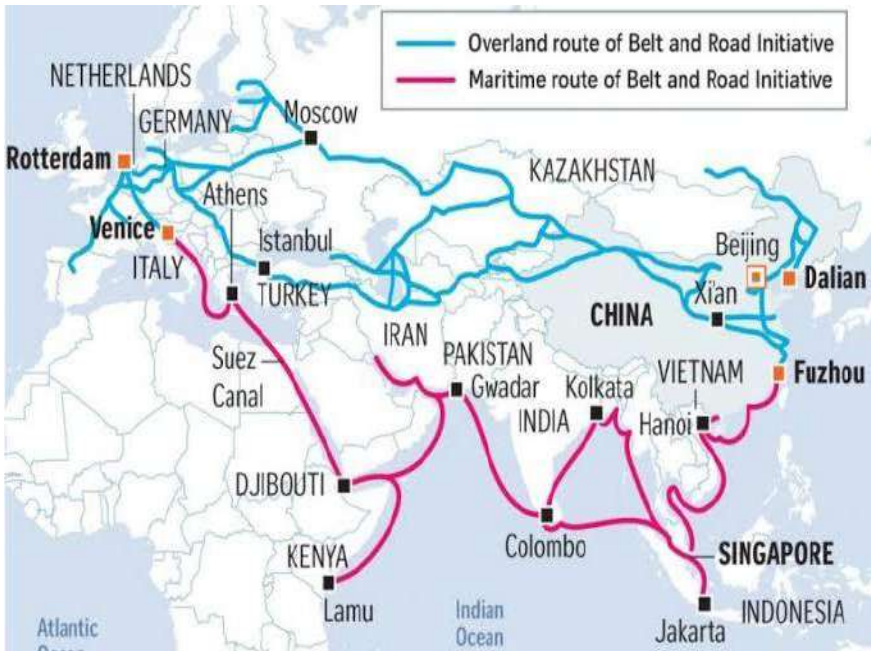


Figure 1: Belt and Road Initiative map⁵⁰

Currently, the Pakistan Planning Commission has established 27 Special Economic Zones (SEZs) under the CPEC. The first SEZ, Gwadar SEZ, is 3000 acres in size. As part of this project, eight SEZs in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, seven in both Punjab and Balochistan separately, three in Sindh, one in Gilgit-Baltistan, and one in Islamabad are being proposed.⁵¹ Moqpondass is the site of Gilgit-Baltistan's 250-acre Special Economic Zone for mining and food processing. Pind Dadan Khan is the biggest of these SEZs. It will be Commercial City in Punjab, which will cover 9,000 acres and have industrial facilities for agriculture, textiles, processing of food, livestock, production, and power.

⁵⁰ Mercator institute for China Studies.

⁵¹ Mui Yin Chin et al., "The Impact of Green Finance on Environmental Degradation in BRI Region," *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 2022, doi:10.1007/s10668-022-02709-5.

Table 4: CPEC project details and their estimated cost

Project Details	Estimated Cost (U.S. \$ billion)
Energy Sector	33.793
Transport Infrastructure	9.79
Gwadar Port including city and Gwadar region socio-economic development	0.793
Mass Transit Lahore	1.6
Fiber Optic Project	0.044
Total Cost	46.013

Source: CPEC Authority

Employment

It is anticipated that the industrial estates being constructed to support CPEC projects in Bahawalpur, Dera Ghazi Khan, and Rahim Yar Khan, will generate thousands of jobs. In 2016, three further SEZs were announced. Projects connected to the CPEC are creating thousands of jobs now, and thousands more are anticipated. These projects employ a huge number of Pakistanis as well 10,000 Chinese laborers who are presently in Pakistan under a work permit.

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO) predictions, CPEC is expected to create approximately 400,000 fresh employment opportunities. According to the Applied Economics Research Centre (AERC), CPEC has the potential to produce over 700,000 direct employments between 2015 and 2030. This could lead to an annual increase in economic growth of 2.5%. According to reports, CPEC has created more than 70,000 direct jobs for Pakistani laborers and technicians, with 16,000 of those jobs

being in the power industry that contributed one to two percentage point to GDP growth.⁵²

Road & Railway

The main aim of BRI is to create a well-organized and interconnected road and railway mechanism. China and Pakistan will collaborate in the field of information network infrastructure by building and running local communication and broadcast networks, which will increase information connectivity.⁵³ Seaports in Gwadar and Karachi will relate to different towns and northern region of Pakistan. Additionally, these roads will connect farther north with western China and Central Asia. As part of the CPEC, a 1,100-kilometer motorway would be constructed between Karachi and Lahore. In addition, there are plans to develop and rebuild the Karakoram Highway (N-35), which connects the Chinese region of Xinjiang and Rawalpindi. Pakistan's railroad network, including the Karachi–Peshawar part, will be improved and broadened to include China's Xinjiang Railway in Kashgar. Low-interest loans will be used to pay for the estimated \$11 billion in road network modernization costs.

Energy

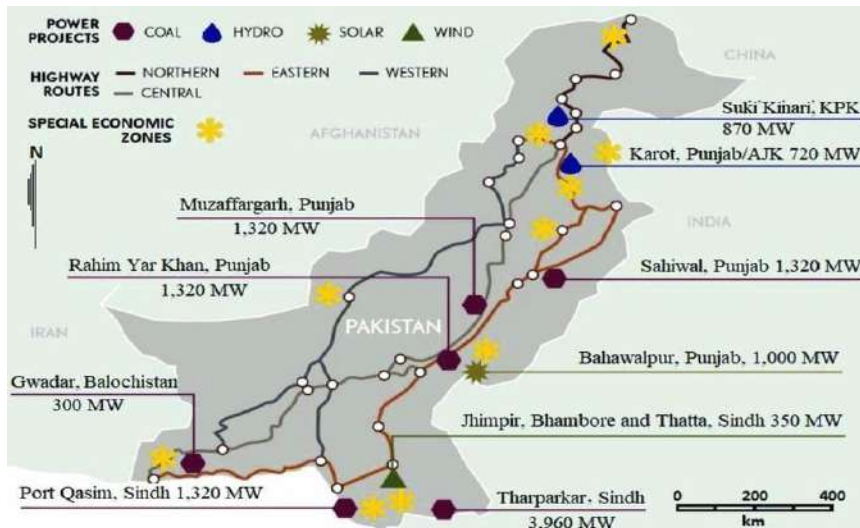
To alleviate Pakistan's acute energy shortage, private consortiums will build energy infrastructure valued at over \$33 billion. These shortages, which frequently total more than 4,500 MW (and up to 7,000 MW during the peak season) are predicted to reduce Pakistan's yearly GDP by 2-2.5%. Pakistan's economy lost PKR1,439 billion (7 percent of the gross domestic product, in 2015). Due to CPEC Pakistan can generate 10,400MW energy from

⁵² Benjamin Mwadi Makengo et al., "Understanding the Strategic Opposition between the Build Back Better World [B3W] and Belt and Road Initiative [BRI]," *Academia Letters*, 2022, doi:10.20935/al5202.

⁵³ Murat Güneylioğlu, "The Turkey-China Rapprochement in the Context of the BRI: A Geoeconomic Perspective," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 76, no. 5 (2022): 546–74, doi:10.1080/10357718.2022.2076805.

different projects. Eventually, 15,300MW of power will be produced by CPEC-related energy projects. In addition, a \$2.5 billion pipeline will connect Gwadar and Nawabshah and be expanded westward to import gas from Iran. As part of CPEC, hydropower and solar energy projects are also planned and implemented; nonetheless, the major source of electricity generation through these projects will still be fossil fuels.⁵⁴ China and Pakistan are collaborating in the energy – related domains of oil and gas, power grids, and electricity. To alleviate Pakistan's current power shortages, CPEC is primarily focused on building new power plants – hydraulic, wind, solar, and hybrid. Additionally, there is collaboration on pipeline projects and the development of oil and gas resources.

Figure 2: Road and Railway map initiatives under CPEC in Pakistan⁵⁵



⁵⁴ Irfan Ali, "Importance of Cpec A Crown Jewel of Belt And Road Initiative (BRI) for China and Pakistan," *Pakistan Journal of Social Research* 04, no. 02 (2022): 552–58, doi:10.52567/pjsr.v4i2.506.

⁵⁵ <https://www.cpicglobal.com/cpec-map/>

Sahiwal Coal-Fired Power Plant with a 1320 MW capacity. The plant was built and put into service by China's Huaneng Shandong Rui Group at an estimated cost of US\$1600 million. After completion in 2017, the project was linked to the national grid. Similarly, Hydro China Dawood used wind turbine technology to commission a 50MW wind farm in Gharo, Thatta (Sindh). The project was started and carried out by M/s Hydro China Dawood Power Pvt limited (HDPPL). with an estimated cost of US\$ 125 million, under the direction of the Alternative Energy Development Board (AEDB) and in cooperation with the Ministry of Water and Power.⁵⁶

Communication

Along the Belt and Road, efforts are also being made to strengthen and enlarge the communication infrastructure. In May 2016, work on the \$44 million, 820-kilometer Pakistan-China Fiber Optic Project got underway. The project's goal is to enhance communication in the Gilgit-Baltistan region and give Pakistan access to a fifth telecommunications route.

Investments

Global investors have the chance to collaborate with Chinese businesses by contributing funds and investments through the BRI, which includes CPEC. Since the Chinese government typically supports these projects, the risk-return ratio is often improved. Furthermore, these governments will be more cautious to minimize disruptions because China and multilateral banks have provided significant financing to Pakistan and other host governments. China gives a grant of more than \$750 million to Pakistan for Gwadar project. In addition to the \$140 million Expressway that links

⁵⁶ Minpeng Chen et al., "Climate Technology Transfer in BRI Era: Needs, Priorities, and Barriers from Receivers' Perspective," *Ecosystem Health and Sustainability* 6, no. 1 (2020): 1–12, doi:10.1080/20964129.2020.1780948.

Gwadar with the Makran Coastal Highway. Among the other projects planned for the area are a \$350 million thermal coal power plant, a \$31 million dredging berth project in Gwadar Port, a \$135 million investment in breakwaters, and a \$100 million, 200-bed hospital. The government of Pakistan do not have to pay \$230 million grant that government use to construct an international airport in Gwadar. CPEC has been the source of the nation's largest financial investment. Chinese organization intended to invest an additional \$4.5 billion in infrastructure of Pakistan, which includes hotels, highways, electricity, and other amenities. This would be among the biggest foreign direct investments in Pakistani history.⁵⁷

Economy

Pakistan's economy is anticipated to be revitalized by CPEC, which will connect China's Xinjiang province with Pakistan's ports of Gwadar and Karachi, as well as modernize the country's air, ground, and rail transportation networks. In addition to lowering costs, this would speed up the process of moving goods and services between China and Pakistan. As a result, by 2020, Pakistan's GDP is predicted to increase by more than 5%. According to Price water house Coopers, Pakistan's GDP might grow to \$4.2 trillion by the year 2050. The GDP of the nation is currently estimated at \$318 billion (2017 est.). CPEC may share some of the blame for the anticipated growth in the future. A lot of BRI projects in countries that are developing, including Pakistan, have been criticized and labeled as a 'Debt Trap.' Even prior to the BRI, Pakistan's economy was dealing with numerous difficulties. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Pakistan's debt has expanded, and its current-account deficit has widened due to the billion-dollar imports of project inputs that Pakistan made. Pakistan eventually experienced a balance-of-payments crisis and requested a \$6.3

⁵⁷ Tahir Afaqi and Muhammad Usman Askari, "China Pakistan Economic Corridor (Cpec) Regional Integration and Challenges," *Khaldunia - Journal of Social Sciences* 2, no. 1 (2022): 21–35, doi:10.36755/khaldunia. v2i1.35.

billion, three-year bailout package from the IMF. The COVID-19 pandemic made matters worse.

B3W's Possible Impact on Pakistan

B3W has the potential to transform Pakistan in many ways while includes its economic trajectory, diplomatic ties, and socio-environmental landscape. As a result of B3W, Pakistan stands at the brink of a paradigm shift economically, as it promises substantial capital injections into critical infrastructure. The development of transportation networks, energy systems, and water management projects could serve as catalysts for economic growth, and it has offered a tangible path for the nation to overcome long standing developmental challenges. In addition to reducing unemployment, these infrastructure projects can help to build a more dynamic and a resilient workforce as well as creating jobs that are associated with them.⁵⁸ Additionally, an increased Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has presented a compelling economic opportunity and the international investors who are seeking opportunities that are embedded within a framework of sustainable and inclusive development are likely to be attracted to B3W's global prominence. Capital influxes such as these not only support specific projects, but it also bodes well for Pakistan's economy. As a result of the initiative's emphasis on technology transfer, Pakistan is positioned to leapfrog technologically that has gained an access to advanced know-how and expertise that would catalyze the innovation and modernization in various fields.

B3W's engagement with Pakistan opens an opportunity for multifaceted collaboration on a diplomatic level and Pakistan can foster a spirit of cooperation on the global stage by participating in joint infrastructure ventures with other nations which will strengthen

⁵⁸ TJMa 2021, Roundtable: Will the G7's B3W Initiative change the game of global infrastructure development?, *Panda Paw Dragon Claw*, viewed 17 August 2021, <https://pandapawdragonclaw.blog/2021/06/29/roundtable-will-the-g7s-b3w-initiative-change-the-game-of-global-infrastructure-development/>

diplomatic ties. Consequently, Pakistan's geopolitical standing may be elevated, and its international and regional role could be shaped by this diplomatic engagement and the collaborative nature of B3W are aligned with Pakistan's aspirations for constructive engagement and partnerships and it has transcended traditional geopolitical confines. B3W's commitment to sustainability could lead Pakistan into a new era on the socio-environmental front and the emphasis on environmentally friendly infrastructure projects are aligned with global imperatives for addressing climate change and environmental degradation. In addition to contributing to global sustainability, Pakistan's participation in these initiatives may also position the nation as a responsible and forward-thinking international player. In addition, B3W's inclusivity offers Pakistan a platform for addressing social disparities and it has ensured that infrastructure development benefits all segments of society equally.

Despite these promises and prospects, there are also challenges and risks awaiting and implementing a B3W project in Pakistan has required overcoming bureaucratic complexities, corruption pitfalls and logistical hurdles. The seamless execution of B3W initiatives in the region may be impacted by geopolitical considerations, including regional dynamics and evolving international relations. Moreover, B3W was initiated in 2021 and till 2024 there is no such development that has taken place to collect funds or to invest in other developing countries. This initiative is still on paper despite US and G7 has agreed on multiple projects, yet both are unable to initiate any project related to B3W. To enhance the impact and legitimacy of the B3W, it is suggested that the initiative could benefit from increased engagement with multilateral partners, including specialized UN agencies. This approach could benefit from leveraging global expertise, filling knowledge and resource gaps, and aligning with international standards such as those of the Blue Dot Network, which promotes quality and sustainable infrastructure development.

In conclusion, B3W initiative has the potential to be a catalyst for positive change in Pakistan. Pakistan's active and strategic participation in B3W underscores its significant impact on economic development, diplomatic relations, and socio-environmental sustainability. Through navigating the complexities of implementation and embracing the opportunities presented by the initiative the nation has the potential to reinvent its trajectory and become a key player in sustainable development.

Conclusion

BRI is a comprehensive plan for economic and infrastructural growth that spans Asia, Africa, Europe, and beyond. Building infrastructure such as ports, railroads, highways, and energy projects is its main goal to improve trade and connection amongst the member nations. The United States and its allies have proposed the B3W initiative as a replacement for the BRI. It places a strong emphasis on transparent, high-quality, sustainable infrastructure projects with a particular emphasis on digital technologies, gender equity, health, and climate change. BRI prioritizes economic growth, commerce, and connectivity through infrastructural developments. B3W adheres to principles of social inclusion, responsibility for the environment, and openness to promote high-quality, environmentally friendly buildings. By setting stricter requirements for infrastructure construction, it hopes to counter some of the critiques leveled by the BRI. The BRI has been perceived by China as a means of expanding its worldwide influence, sparking debates over the geopolitical ramifications and worries about China's increasing economic and strategic sway among other powerful nations. The goal of the B3W initiative is to counterbalance China's influence and advance democratic principles and norms in infrastructure development in response to BRI.

Both projects seek to satisfy the needs for infrastructure and development, but they differ in terms of strategy, importance, and practical effects. Pakistan has seen considerable progress with BRI,

which is mostly concentrated on building projects that improve connectivity and spur economic growth. BRI has aided in Pakistan's economic connectedness and infrastructural development. However, the US-led B3W seeks to offer a substitute for BRI, placing a strong emphasis on environmental sustainability, openness, and top-notch infrastructure. Despite being a promising effort, its success hinges on money, worldwide support, and practical implementation. Most BRI projects in Pakistan have been financed by Chinese investments and funds. China has contributed significantly to the infrastructure projects of CPEC in several areas of the Pakistani economy. Pakistan, the country where these activities come together, offers both opportunities and challenges. Even if the country would benefit from increased investment and connectivity, concerns about the debt's sustainability, the geopolitical repercussions, and ensuring that these projects are in line with the country's development objectives all pose significant challenges. In Pakistan, BRI initiatives have led to a major growth in infrastructure. A key project under the BRI, CPEC, include building ports, highways, railroads, and energy facilities. Through increased communication between Pakistan and the surrounding area, these developments hope to boost commerce and economic expansion. Pakistan's economy has grown faster, and more jobs have been created thanks to the BRI's significant financial inflows. The energy projects and infrastructure upgrades have corrected long-standing issues, promoted industrial growth and increased Pakistan's appeal to foreign investors. Power constraints in Pakistan have been mitigated by BRI energy projects. Numerous power facilities, including solar, hydroelectric, and coal projects financed by the BRI, have improved access to electricity nationwide and helped to close the energy gap.

It could be suggested that the collaboration of the B3W and BRI initiatives would contribute to the stability and prosperity South Asia especially Pakistan. To accomplish this, the United States and

its B3W partners should create a distinct identity for the initiative, independent from the BRI framework, while avoiding positioning it as a substitute. Currently, the political atmosphere and geopolitical tensions between the US and China are not favourable. However, as the B3W project moves from a statement of purpose to more specific objectives, there is hope that the adversarial nature of great-power relations will change. This might allow for the cohabitation of US-led and Chinese development agendas that benefit the area. It is important to acknowledge the potential challenges and differences in approach, but ultimately, a collaborative effort towards shared goals can benefit all parties involved. To derive maximum benefit, Pakistan must adopt a pragmatic and strategic approach, leveraging the strengths of both initiatives. Balancing economic gains from BRI with the sustainable and transparent practices promoted by B3W can create a comprehensive development framework for the country. This duality also presents an opportunity for Pakistan to negotiate favorable terms, foster healthy competition between the initiatives, and enhance its own infrastructure resilience. Moreover, the lessons learned from Pakistan's experience can serve as a guide for other developing countries engaged with BRI and B3W. The key lies in maintaining a delicate equilibrium, where economic development is pursued without compromising environmental and social considerations. Collaborative efforts, information sharing, and regional coordination can facilitate a harmonious coexistence of the two initiatives, fostering a more robust and inclusive global infrastructure network. All in all, the success of these initiatives depends on continuous dialogue, adaptability, and a commitment to addressing the unique needs of each participating country. As Pakistan and other developing nations navigate the complexities of BRI and B3W, they can shape a transformative era in global infrastructure development – one that is characterized by sustainable growth, shared prosperity, and improved living standards.