"The G20 can play a significant role in forming global consensus on collective policy making in the Global South."

—Prateek KUKREJA, Rehan Kunal JAGOTA

Quote from the article "Creative Jobs Will Drive the Post-pandemic World of Work" in Intersecting Vol. 10 by Prateek Kukreja and Rehan Kunal Jagota (Indian Council for Research on International Economics Relations ICRIER, India). Image Source: During the World Conference on Creative Economy (WCCE) in Bali, October 5-7, 2022. Display of clothing by Bali-based 'Superlative Secret Society' (creators of NFT collectibles, superlative art gallery and designers). Image by courtesy of WCCE, 2022, all rights reserved ©.

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Cooperation Remains Indispensable for Tackling Global Challenges [1]

For several years now, the state of the world has been characterized as a "perma-crisis." One crisis supersedes the next, before it is even possible to adequately deal with its consequences. In the last decade, the number of violent conflicts has more than doubled. The UN's Human Development Index (HDI) 2022 has recorded a decline in global prosperity for two successive years for the first time in its 30-year history.[2] According to the UNDP, 70 million people have fallen into extreme poverty because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, the number of long-term challenges is constantly growing: from food insecurity and regional fragility to the widening gap between rich and poor, the decline in biodiversity, and the impacts of climate change. At the same time, geopolitical tensions are intensifying, and a great competition for power is driving the fragmentation of international governance.

Given the difficult current situation in the world, there is an even greater need to tackle global problems and provide global public goods. Consequently, international cooperation for sustainable development is more important than ever. No country or single organization can effectively confront these numerous crises and global challenges alone. They call for joined-up thinking and action. We need to respond holistically and develop cross-sectoral and cross-border solutions together. What is required is nothing less than a fundamental and sustainable transformation with a view to bringing about ecological change, overcoming inequalities, and advancing global well-being.

For this, the 2030 Agenda serves as the primary framework. However, halfway through, the future prospects are rather

bleak; many Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) seem out of reach. That is why we need to double down on our efforts to achieve the SDGs in the spirit of Goal 17, "Partnerships for the Goals." In these challenging times, a robust modus operandi must be established between states that may compete or disagree in other areas to find global solutions to the most pressing challenges. Only strong global partnerships and multistakeholder cooperation will help achieve the SDGs.

Perhaps the main challenge that transcends different policy areas and can only be addressed at a global level is climate change. Yet, the impacts and costs of adapting to the climate crisis are distributed unevenly, with the poorest countries and most vulnerable people being the most affected. In other words, people and states that historically have contributed least to climate change will be hit especially hard by the impacts of global warming. In this regard, the issue of climate justice will be pivotal for the fight against climate change. Only collectively we can find possible paths to a global future with fewer emissions and, at the same time, more equitably distributed prosperity.

Furthermore, linking the green and digital transformations is crucial in order to tackle global challenges. We can leverage the enormous potential of the digital transformation regarding social, economic, and environmental progress. Improving access to technology and knowledge via international cooperation is an important way to share ideas and foster innovation. Working with local partners and end users to take

account of the impact of those technologies on specific local conditions is central to mitigating the risks and consequences of digital technologies while at the same time preventing rebound effects. The Principles for Digital Development offer an adequate toolset to utilize digital technologies mindfully and sustainably.

Our last foresight journey has shown that a more inclusive and equitable multilateralism is needed to recouple an increasingly fragmented world and cooperate for global solutions. Effective, open, and rules-based alliances as well as like-minded clubs are viable options. The basis of such cooperation must be the mutual respect for each country's policy space and responsibility when finding solutions. The so-called Global North should adopt a humbler attitude and give due consideration to the needs and interests of its partner countries. Especially in development projects, cooperation has to be on equal terms, with decision-making power distributed more evenly. Practice shows that development projects with local contact structures working at eye level with partners are especially successful. This approach also includes the further strengthening of partnerships that are characterized by their openness to new ideas, mutual trust, and cultural sensitivity. South-South and triangular cooperation are very promising ways to learn about each other's experiences and good practices.

For future-proof and sustainable collaborations, major multi-donor projects are just as vital as multi-stakeholder

partnerships with state and non-state actors. Effective public-private cooperation can mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology, and financial resources to support the achievement of the SDGs. In particular, environmental and climate issues, such as energy efficiency, waste management, transport infrastructure, industry 4.0 and the circular economy, present considerable potential for cooperation with the private sector. Seeking new partnerships with civil society organizations, research institutions, think thanks and foundations on the ground will further enhance a locally led development approach. Here, it is paramount that it is made clear who is to do what. Oftentimes, activities of different agencies, ministries or countries overlap, creating confusion for each of the actors involved and thus increasing transactional costs. For joint strategies to succeed, it is of utmost importance to clarify mandates before engaging.

The world we live in demands multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approaches and a renewed commitment to respectful and constructive international cooperation. As the following articles show, there are plenty of encouraging solutions, projects and ideas from all around the world. Now, we must reconnect relevant actors, their ideas and solutions by working together to address today's problems, respond faster and become more resilient. Therefore, we should see this era not only as a time of multiple crises, but also of opportunity for more localized, long-term and systemic development cooperation to build our common future.

References

1. Disclaimer: This article reflects the personal opinion of the authors.

2. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Index 2022, available at (link)