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The design of this report is intended to imply what global cooperation might feel like in a multipolar world that has successfully overcome division. It was created by Fernanda Rigali, a young designer based in Uruguay.

“I want my design of the Global Solidarity Report 2024 to bring a positive energy that can disrupt the gloomy picture so often painted of our world. I hope it helps to strengthen the important messages of this report and inspire much needed action.”

**Fernanda Rigali**  
**Graphic Designer**

“While the reality of today’s world rightly concerns us, we want to imagine the possibilities for what we can achieve. That’s why we love this design. Humans make progress when they are hopeful.”

**Jonathan Glennie & Hassan Damluji**  
**Co-Founders, Global Nation**

2024

# **Global Solidarity Report**

**OVERCOMING DIVISION IN  
A MULTIPOLAR WORLD**

**Global Nation** is a think-do tank working to build global solidarity and promote dignity to help overcome humanity's biggest challenges. Comprising an agile team of policy experts and change makers, we propose and deliver bold ideas and new approaches that can shape a more collaborative world.

**The Global Solidarity Report** creates an annual global solidarity score using 11 indicators including unique public opinion polling alongside a range of official data on CO2 emissions, conflict deaths, trade, vaccines and more. The report's analysis sets out the greatest challenges and opportunities for global solidarity and calls to action are provided to focus readers on where their efforts can have greatest impact towards strengthening international cooperation. It is produced Global Nation in collaboration with a range of experts from leading organisations, which in 2024 included Ipsos, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Global Citizen, CIVICUS, the International Peace Institute, the Gates Foundation and UN agencies.

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Designed by Fernanda Rigali and edited by Martha Jackson and Rebecca Hills.

With thanks to Patricia Alemañy and Cara Lew in the Global Nation team for their support in the production and launch.



## Riz Ahmed

Actor, producer,  
rapper and activist

“ These are divided times. The Global Solidarity Report puts numbers to that reality. Nothing has us more conflicted than the issue of identities. But the idea that our differences are insurmountable is just a story. We have to discover a story rooted in our shared humanity - that when it comes to the biggest challenges we face and the things we care about most deeply, there is no “us and them”, only us. This is a time to craft new stories that weave us together.”

Riz Ahmed image credit: Gage Skidmore



## Erna Solberg

Norwegian  
politician and 35th  
Prime Minister  
of Norway

“ Global solidarity cannot be built in a world that seems unfair. Globalisation has led to extraordinary wealth, and that is a good thing. But that wealth must be shared more equitably with society, internationally and in every single country. It is no longer possible to ask working citizens to bear all of the burden of building collective action. As the Global Solidarity Report argues, joining its voice with the G20 presidency and many others, we need to come together as a world to ensure that extreme wealth is fairly taxed, so that we can build a stronger, better future.”

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# Forewords



## Winnie Byanyima

UNAIDS Executive Director and United Nations Under-Secretary-General

The crises of our era – including pandemics, climate change, hunger, inequality, conflict, and authoritarianism – can feel overwhelming. And indeed, any country or institution who tries to face them alone *will* be overwhelmed. For as we have seen time and again, it is only when we join together in common cause, across borders and across communities, that global challenges of this magnitude can be overcome. Multilateral cooperation is humanity’s proven problem-solver. Solidarity is our superpower.

That is why it is so vital that we nurture solidarity. This report is a vital help for doing so.

As this report demonstrates, global solidarity is in danger, and this puts *all* progress in danger. Stark warnings can be hard to hear, but it is vital that we recognise the risks of the current moment. The COVID-19 pandemic saw the bonds of solidarity fray at the seams, as low and middle-income countries were pushed to the back of line for vaccines, and prevented from making their own, all to protect the obscene profits of a few big pharmaceutical corporations. In consequence, more than 1.3 million people died needlessly<sup>1</sup> in 2021 alone. World leaders have not yet learnt the lesson of that public health disaster and moral catastrophe. They missed the deadline they had set to agree a framework for a fairer response to future pandemics. They have left developing countries


choking on debt payments that deprive them of the resources they need to ensure the health and education of their people. They have failed to put an end to horrifying wars and to horrific war crimes. They have failed to stop runaway climate change that is already driving disasters. They have failed to stop the spike in hateful attacks on the rights of women and minorities.

For many in Gen Z, who are coming of age in these troubled times – and are seeing the worst impacts play out daily on their phones – it can seem like there is no alternative. In a worrying trend detailed in this report, the emerging generation are becoming less internationalist than their Millennial predecessors.

This report is not a counsel of despair, however. It is an x-ray to help us see what is going wrong, and a guide to help us put things right. Solidarity can be repaired and remade. This report helps set out how we can do just that. It is up to all of us, together, to make use of it.

There is hope to be found if we look in the right places. The global HIV response – which I oversee for the United Nations – has been transformed by global solidarity. It has and continues to be a challenging journey, and an unfinished one, but it is a story of extraordinarily success. Activists around the world mobilized to pressure

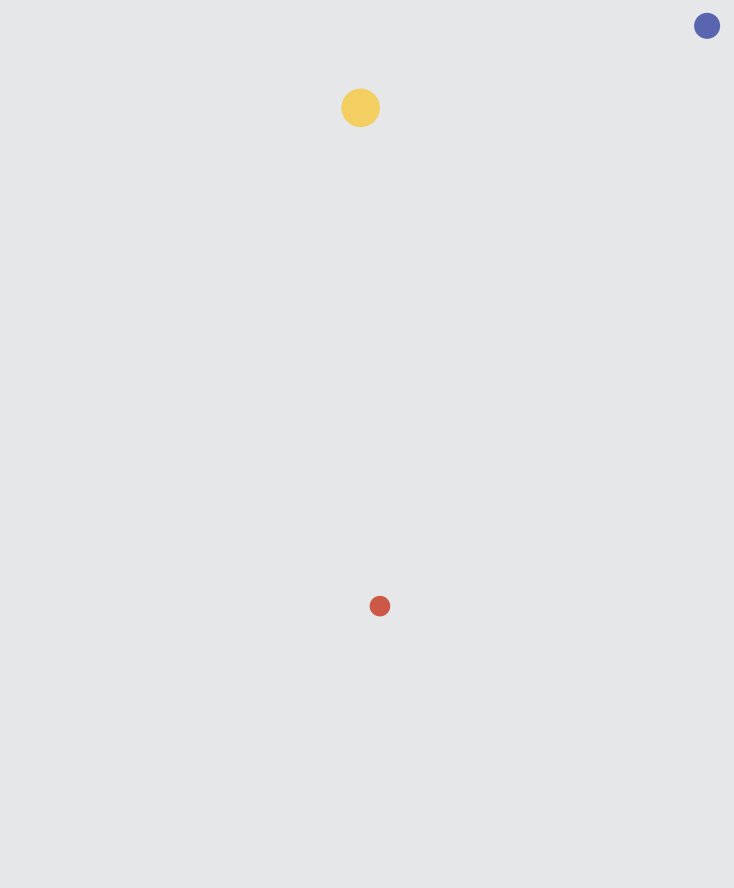




pharmaceutical companies to lower prices and share their technology. Governments overcame patents to secure generics and drive down prices. Global programmes were set up that harnessed resources from the richest to pay for medicines for the poorest. Today, approximately 30 million of the 40 million people living with HIV are on treatment. And the HIV movement is continuing the struggle for a world that works for everyone: campaigners across the world are currently mobilizing to pressure companies and governments so that transformative new HIV prevention medicines which would only need two injections a year can get to everyone who needs them; and they are pressing too for reforms to ensure that laws uphold *everyone's* human rights.

The example of the progress we continue to make towards ending AIDS shows that, through global solidarity, we can remake the fractured social contract. With an agreement on pandemic response, we can enable a fair and effective approach to future health crises. With an agreement to tax wealth, we can address inequality and finance the global public goods that our common future depends on. Through a succession of concrete acts of solidarity, we can overcome the destructive narratives of division and despair and unite communities around the world to improve the world.

Faith in the long arc of justice and inclusion does not mean that the arc will bend itself. It means doing the work so that *we* can bend it – together.





## Helen Clark

**Former Prime Minister of New Zealand who continues to be a strong advocate for inclusive and sustainable development. She is a member of The Elders.**

Global solidarity is integral to the work of The Elders in promoting peace, justice, human rights and a sustainable planet. It is embedded in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which we support as the most effective way to end poverty, protect the planet and tackle inequality.

The more we believe in our common humanity, the better placed we will be to tackle the existential threats of climate change, pandemics and nuclear weapons, and to end the tragedy of violent conflict.

As Prime Minister of New Zealand, head of the United Nations Development Programme, and now as an Elder, I saw time and again how political decisions were taken for short-term gain rather than for the long-term interests of all humanity.

From inadequate donor investment in international development and climate finance to the emergence of 'vaccine nationalism' during the Covid-19 pandemic, there is an alarming lack of global solidarity precisely when it is most needed.

We stand at a moment in history when solidarity and multilateral cooperation has never been more essential to the wellbeing, and even the survival, of humanity. Amid rising geopolitical tensions, major conflicts are raging unchecked and the threat of nuclear proliferation is once again rising. The interlocking crises of climate change, global health

threats and economic turbulence have ushered in a period of profound instability in global affairs.

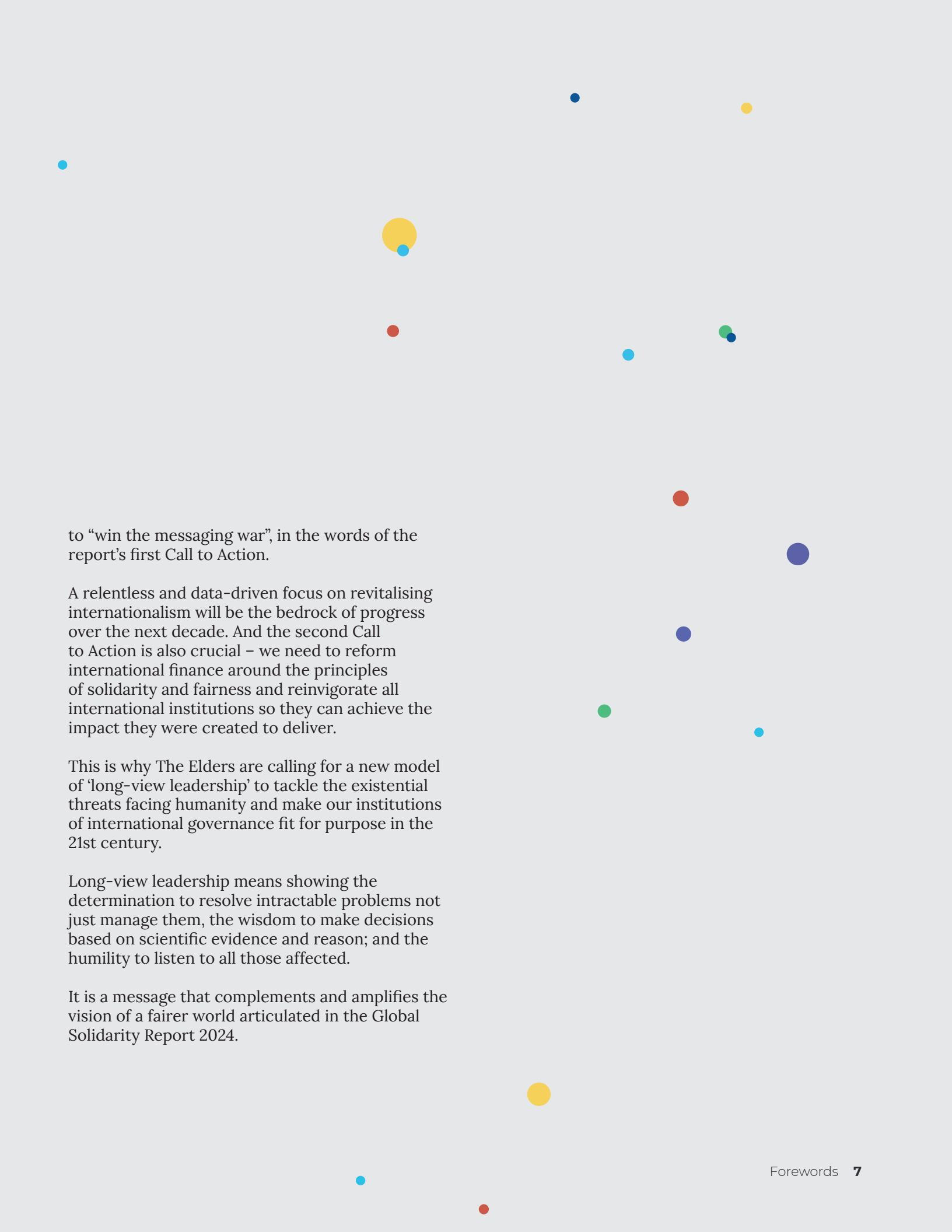
In the current era of heightened geopolitical tensions with populist nationalism rising in many countries, making the case for global solidarity demands courage and persistence.

Building bridges has always been harder than building walls.

This is why I am happy to commend the Global Solidarity Report 2024 – first, for analysing the state of global solidarity this year and, second, for proposing what we need to improve it.

The report highlights the need to come together again at the United Nations and other multilateral forums to reignite the sense of common purpose that led to the adoption of the SDGs in 2015. It urges us to unite to end the tragic conflicts raging in our world – both those with immediate geopolitical impact in Europe and the Middle East and those that are forgotten conflicts on the continent of Africa and elsewhere.

I believe that the people of the world are ready for a new era of global solidarity – and the data in this report backs up my optimism. But we need a concerted effort from all parts of the international community, including the voices of civil society,



to “win the messaging war”, in the words of the report’s first Call to Action.

A relentless and data-driven focus on revitalising internationalism will be the bedrock of progress over the next decade. And the second Call to Action is also crucial – we need to reform international finance around the principles of solidarity and fairness and reinvigorate all international institutions so they can achieve the impact they were created to deliver.

This is why The Elders are calling for a new model of ‘long-view leadership’ to tackle the existential threats facing humanity and make our institutions of international governance fit for purpose in the 21st century.

Long-view leadership means showing the determination to resolve intractable problems not just manage them, the wisdom to make decisions based on scientific evidence and reason; and the humility to listen to all those affected.

It is a message that complements and amplifies the vision of a fairer world articulated in the Global Solidarity Report 2024.

# Acknowledgements

The Global Solidarity Report is an initiative that brings together experts from a variety of disciplines, experiences and geographies. They enrich Global Nation's analysis of the strength and resilience of the international community and highlight a range of important issues for readers to consider as we build our ability to cooperate as a world. We are immensely grateful for the wisdom, ideas and challenge they have so generously brought in the creation of this year's report.

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the following individuals:

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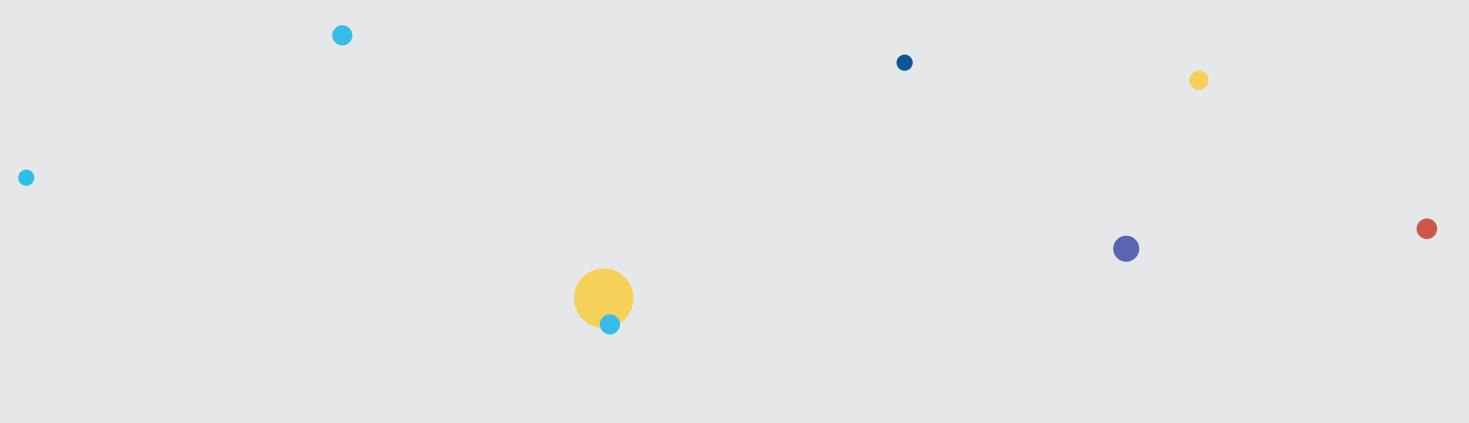
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*Please note that the views expressed in this report represent the perspectives of the authors where they are specifically named, and that the report in its entirety may not necessarily reflect the opinions or positions of all individuals or organisations involved in its development.*

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# Executive Summary

## In 2024, global solidarity is in the Danger Zone.

The findings of the **Global Solidarity Report 2024** issue a stark warning as power shifts continue and divisions between countries seemingly widen. This year, the world has scored just 36 out of a possible 100 on the **Global Solidarity Scorecard**, indicating a dangerously weak level of solidarity that falls far short of that required for effective international cooperation.

With international institutions at breaking point due to tensions between great powers not seen since the Cold War, we ask: **How can we overcome division in a multipolar world?** While sounding a clear warning, this report also suggests that there are actions rooted in the science of solidarity that we can take to build a world of shared purpose, continuing our trajectory towards a united world.

By plotting the progress of 11 powerful indicators, we use our **Global Solidarity Scorecard** to assess global solidarity on an annual basis. The novel methodology was developed in consultation with academics, politicians, advocates and leaders of international organisations. It analyses three drivers of solidarity, each with a set of indicators:

**Identities:** *Do people feel part of a global community that they are motivated to contribute to?*

**Institutions:** *Have we built effective mechanisms to tackle shared challenges?*

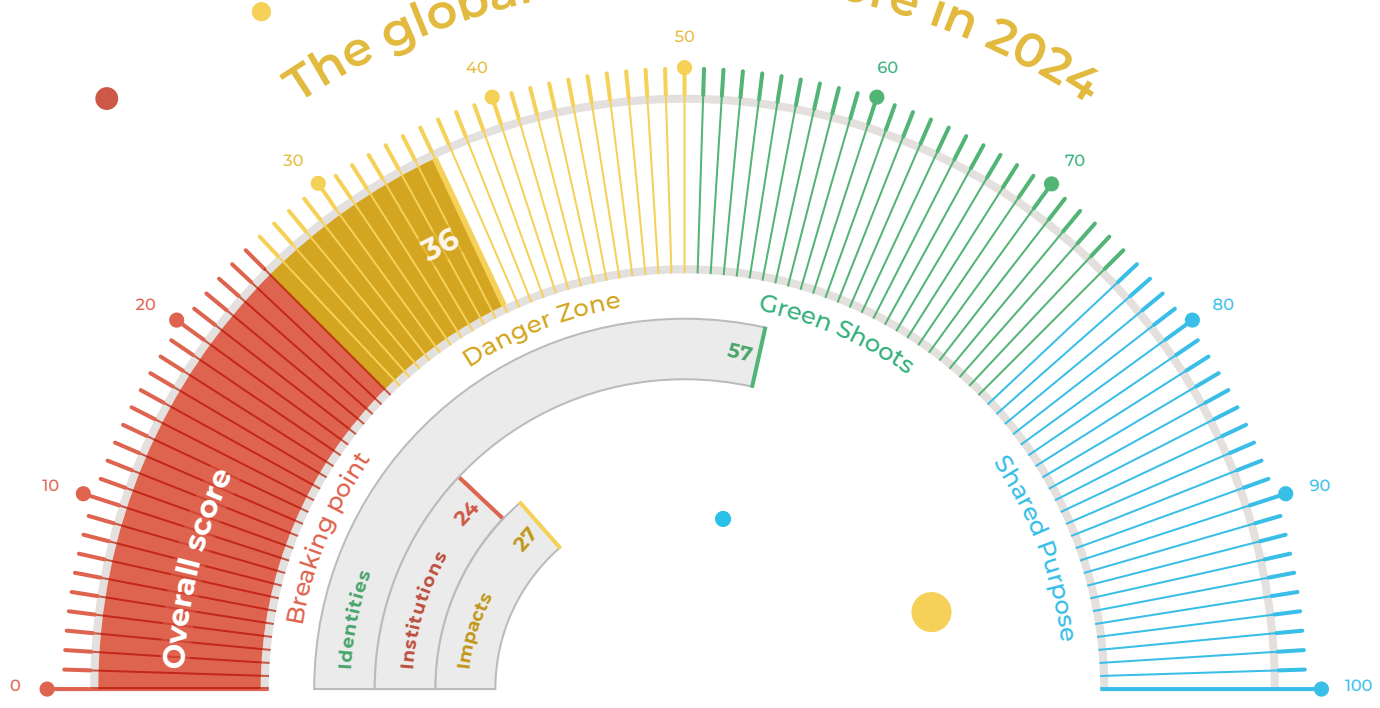
**Impacts:** *Are we making visible progress towards overcoming those challenges?*

### Identities

**Good news is tempered by growing despair among the young**

The public's sense of global **identity** remains steadfast in troubled times and is by far the strongest aspect of global solidarity today, scoring 57/100 in 2024. This puts it in the 'Green Shoots' zone. Over a third of people want their taxes to go towards solving global problems while more than half want international enforcement on issues such as the environment. Less wealthy countries are more supportive of higher levels of funding and enforcement to combat environmental issues than their wealthier peers, highlighting the political opportunity for emerging economies to play a stronger role in the international system. However, Gen Z feel less like global citizens than older

# The global solidarity score in 2024





generations, reversing a trend seen over several decades that younger people tend to be more internationally oriented than older adults<sup>2</sup>. This is true for both richer and poorer countries and is likely linked to rising levels of anxiety among young people.

## Institutions

### Hurting towards a new Cold War?

**Institutions** have weakened since last year, scoring only 24/100 which puts them at 'Breaking Point'. This deterioration has been driven mainly by a lack of agreement within the UN with more vetoes used at the Security Council this year than in any year since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. When the most powerful nations are unable to work together, the world experiences the knock-on effects. These include this year's failure to reach an agreement on a Pandemic Treaty that could protect the most vulnerable people from a repeat of the vaccine hoarding and inequality that we saw during the Covid-19 pandemic. Our analysis supports the prevailing narrative that we are becoming a multipolar world where power is more evenly distributed. Unfortunately, increased division is a clear sign that we have not yet found a way to manage this new reality.

## Impacts

### Back from the brink, but still a cause for concern

The **impacts** of global collaboration – on crucial challenges like climate change, pandemics, conflict and inequality – are in the 'Danger Zone' with a score of 27/100. This is an improvement on last year's historic low point which was driven by the extraordinary levels of violence across the globe. Despite continuing armed conflicts, the number of related deaths has fallen over the last 12 months, partly explained by a decrease in fatalities in Ethiopia<sup>3</sup>. Nevertheless, 2024 remains the third worst year for impacts over the last two decades with only 2022 and 2023 recording lower scores.

## The good news: the world supports solidarity

In 2015, every United Nations member state signed up to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – a broad global agenda designed to deliver a better future for everyone, everywhere. This was a bright moment for global solidarity: we felt and acted like we belonged to a global community in which all people have equal worth, rights and responsibilities.

Such a powerful and transformative vision for our world would have seemed outlandish not long ago. While there is understandable frustration that the commitments made have not yet translated into the concrete impacts that we hoped for, it is still nothing short of incredible that we no longer ask *whether we should have* global solidarity, but instead question *how we build it*.



## Putting the brakes on rising division

Solidarity is a science, not just a principle. If we intentionally apply what we know about building solidarity, we can establish how to get states to solve collective action problems and create the feelings of belonging and hope that are the basis of thriving communities.

The decline of US global dominance and the shift to multipolarity means the *only* way to deliver international cooperation is by raising the reputational costs of being a 'bad actor' and increasing the benefits of being a good one. This can be achieved by building an international system of trust and interdependence where people from different countries see their interests as converging and interconnected. It is unlikely that we will make substantial progress towards combating climate change or pandemics in a world of mistrust and division. But considered together, our many shared interests can form the basis of platform for building trust.

To strengthen that platform and create a stronger international community, we make two calls to action in 2024.

## First, we need to win the messaging war

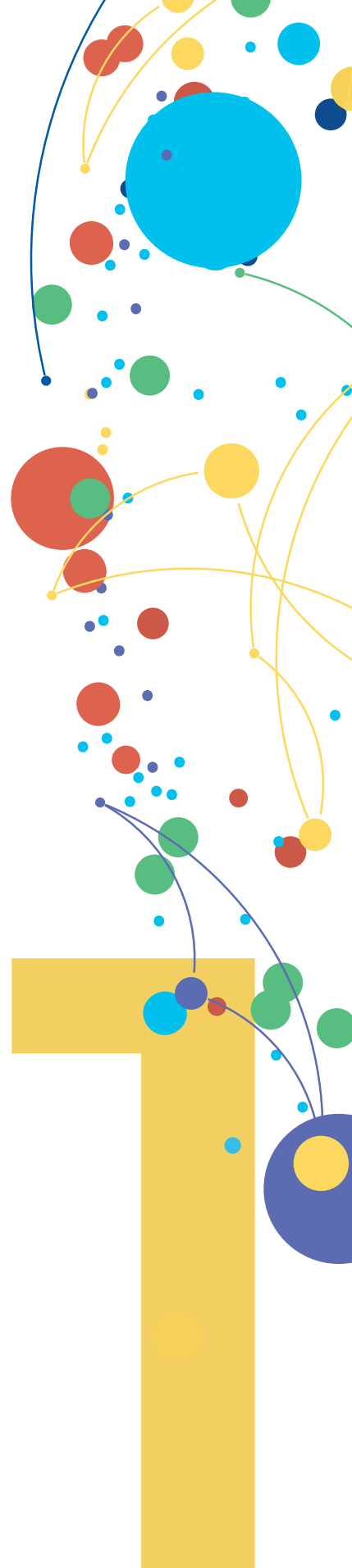
As internationalists, we need to raise our game, escape issue-based siloes and build an overarching campaign for solidarity. We should recognise the interconnectedness of all global issues and the common challenges that imply the interdependence of all countries. The SDGs campaign has shown that it is possible to raise awareness of global goals but continuing challenges necessitate an approach that addresses thoughts and feelings as well. In place of fear of disaster, this campaign must instead inspire hope and turn the rising tide of despair.

## Second, we need to transform global public investment

If we can channel the existing political will, we can help deliver better and more international finance to produce results now while beginning to restore faith in the benefits of a united world. We call for the implementation of a global minimum wealth tax that will capitalise on the considerable momentum towards taxing billionaires. And we call for the replenishment of major global funds such as the World Bank's International Development Association, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis & Malaria and the Gavi Vaccine Alliance as these are among the most effective tools for overcoming global challenges. To create a more equitable basis for raising money, each country's fair-share contribution to multilateral funding could be calculated as a proportion of billionaire wealth.

# Global Solidarity in 2024

Our 2024 Global Solidarity Scorecard makes for sobering reading. Global solidarity remains in the Danger Zone for the second year running. This falls far short of the significant increase in solidarity required to renew and deepen global cooperation.



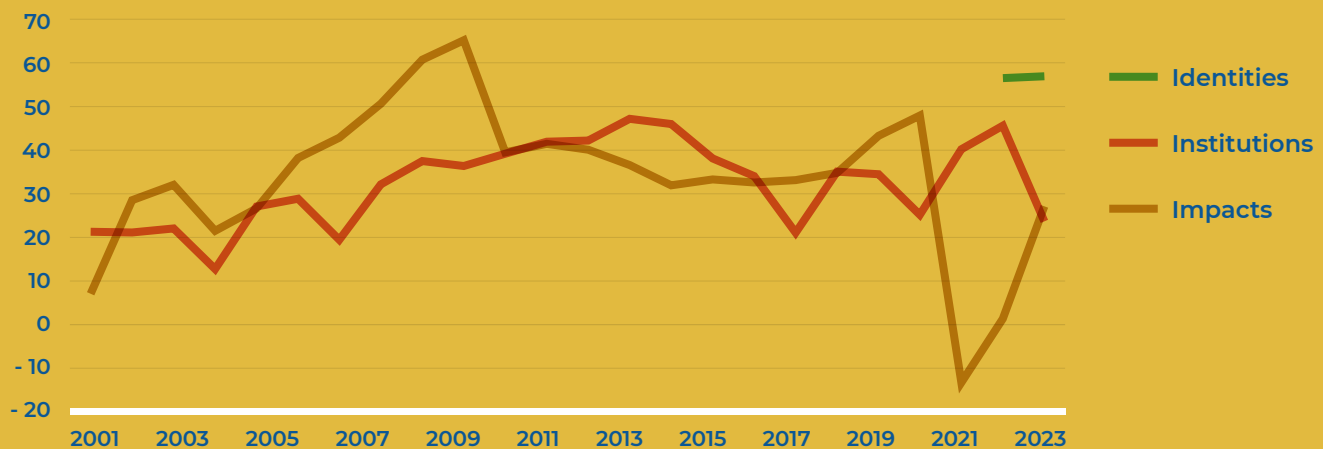


# The score in 2024: Danger Zone

Our 2024 Global Solidarity Scorecard makes for sobering reading. Global solidarity remains in the Danger Zone for the second year running. The world has managed to stay above the lowest segment in the index – Breaking Point – but has stalled at 36 out of a possible 100, an increase of just one point on last year.<sup>4</sup> This falls far short of the significant increase in solidarity required to renew and deepen global cooperation.

Figure 1: Following some good progress over the last two decades, both Institutions and Impacts are now areas of grave concern

(Solidarity score per driver of solidarity, 2000–2024)



Source: Global Nation analysis based on data from Ipsos Global Advisor survey, May 2024, OECD, Stat, United Nations Security Council, Peace & Security Data Hub, Inter-Parliamentary Union Parline Data, World Bank World Development Indicators, WHO WUENIC, International Energy Agency (IEA), and Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP)

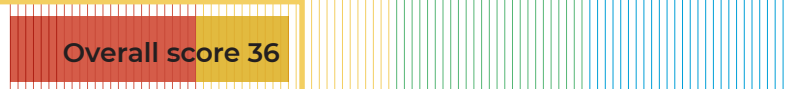
Note: Identities data is only available from 2023 as polling commenced that year.

The three drivers, and the indicators we use to calculate their scores, are discussed in more detail in section 3 of this report.

Breaking point   Danger zone   Green Shoots   Shared Purpose

## Overall score

The overall score is in the Danger Zone at 36/100.



## Identities

The **Identities** driver remains unchanged with a score of 57/100. This puts it in the Green Shoots category and makes it by far the strongest driver of solidarity globally.



Feeling of belonging



Willingness to pay taxes



Support for enforcement



## Institutions

The **Institutions** driver has fallen to Breaking Point, scoring just 24/100, around half the 2023 score of 46. This bucks quite a positive trend of institutional progress this century.



Multilateral funding



Decision-making



Representation



Trade volumes



## Impacts

The **Impacts** driver has risen to 27/100 this year and now sits in the Danger Zone. This driver is no longer at Breaking Point, but has still had one of its worst years this century.



Health security



Environment



Violent conflicts



Economic convergence



0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

# Solidarity in the Restless Decade



## Kelly Beaver MBE

CEO, Ipsos UK

Kelly Beaver MBE is Chief Executive of Ipsos in the UK and Ireland, one of the largest and most innovative research organisations in the UK. She is a regular commentator in national press and broadcast media on public and business leader opinion and holds several honorary academic positions.

2024 is another pivotal year in the 2020s, an era we at Ipsos term 'the restless decade'. Rapid global shifts are driving significant disruption to existing structures: from a realignment of geopolitics, through population shifts in an ageing globe, to what appears to be an acceleration in technological and healthcare breakthroughs. Against the backdrop of a wetter, wilder and more unpredictable environment, new challenges – and solutions – are emerging at a dizzying pace.

This year is particularly noteworthy for being an historical year of democracy. Billions of people have already voted in elections around the world, with more to come in the following months. The fact that so many voters have an opportunity to express their opinions on their rulers naturally heightens the importance of public perceptions of all topics – not least global solidarity.

Our work for the Global Solidarity Report 2024, interviewing over 20,000 people across 31 countries, confirms significant tensions within the sentiments underlying global solidarity. These tensions reflect those seen in our wider work polling the global public, pointing to evolving challenges and opportunities over the course of this restless decade.

One key area of tension is among the citizens of the future. Across the survey we find that the youngest generation – Generation Z – are less likely to identify primarily as world citizens than their elder Millennial siblings. While they are as likely to hold a global identity as the older Generation X and Baby Boomers, this finding highlights a trend, captured in our work for International Women's Day, that an assumption that Generation Z are most aligned with 'progressive' causes can be misplaced.

There is work to do in winning over this generation by combating the rising sense of a 'lost future', especially in – but not limited to – the countries of Europe and North America. Otherwise, we will see rising disaffection with existing systems and greater support for new and more radical voices as our restless decade wears on.

A second tension in the data is between support for global solutions to climate problems and willingness to bear the costs for it. Across the world we find a majority in support of international bodies having the right to enforce solutions for certain problems like environmental pollution. Yet

only a third of citizens agree that their taxes should go towards solving global problems.

This speaks to a finding in our work of a perceived lack of leadership on climate issues from the global public. In this vacuum, while people often profess support for global action on important topics like climate change, their willingness to bear the costs of that action often falters in the face of more urgent, personal issues. This highlights the need to set a direction and identify 'win-win' solutions that help on both the global and personal levels.

In all this it is important to remember that a restless decade need not be a negative decade. Change is a driver of opportunities as well as threats. Our latest Ipsos Global Trends research senses the emergence of a new global consensus: the rapid change we are all experiencing should be seen as an 'unfrozen moment', a unique opportunity for us to reshape our world to make it a better, safer and more prosperous place.

“ **This finding highlights a trend, captured in our work for International Women’s Day, that an assumption that Generation Z are most aligned with ‘progressive’ causes can be misplaced.**

# Collective action in a multipolar world

Look at any newspaper and there will be evidence that the world is becoming increasingly divided and dangerous. Terms like ‘minilateralism’ and ‘friendshoring’ point to the failure of multilateralism and globalisation while conflicts in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere suggest that the relative stability of the last few decades is disintegrating.

In Ukraine, the world saw the inability of US-led hegemony to deter Russian aggression, while in Gaza that very hegemony stand accused of assisting in a massacre. Is it any wonder then that onlookers question whether there is any authority willing to stand up for the fundamental rights of people across the globe?

Geopolitical power shifts are challenging traditional ways of doing things and an emerging ‘multipolar’ world does not fit neatly into the institutional structures and narratives that emerged in the 20th century.

Add to this political soup the most rapid technological change we have experienced since the First Industrial Revolution and the ever-more-visible reality of a changing climate, and we are facing an unknown future. Humans fear the unknown. That is why most analyses of our world today are doom-laden.

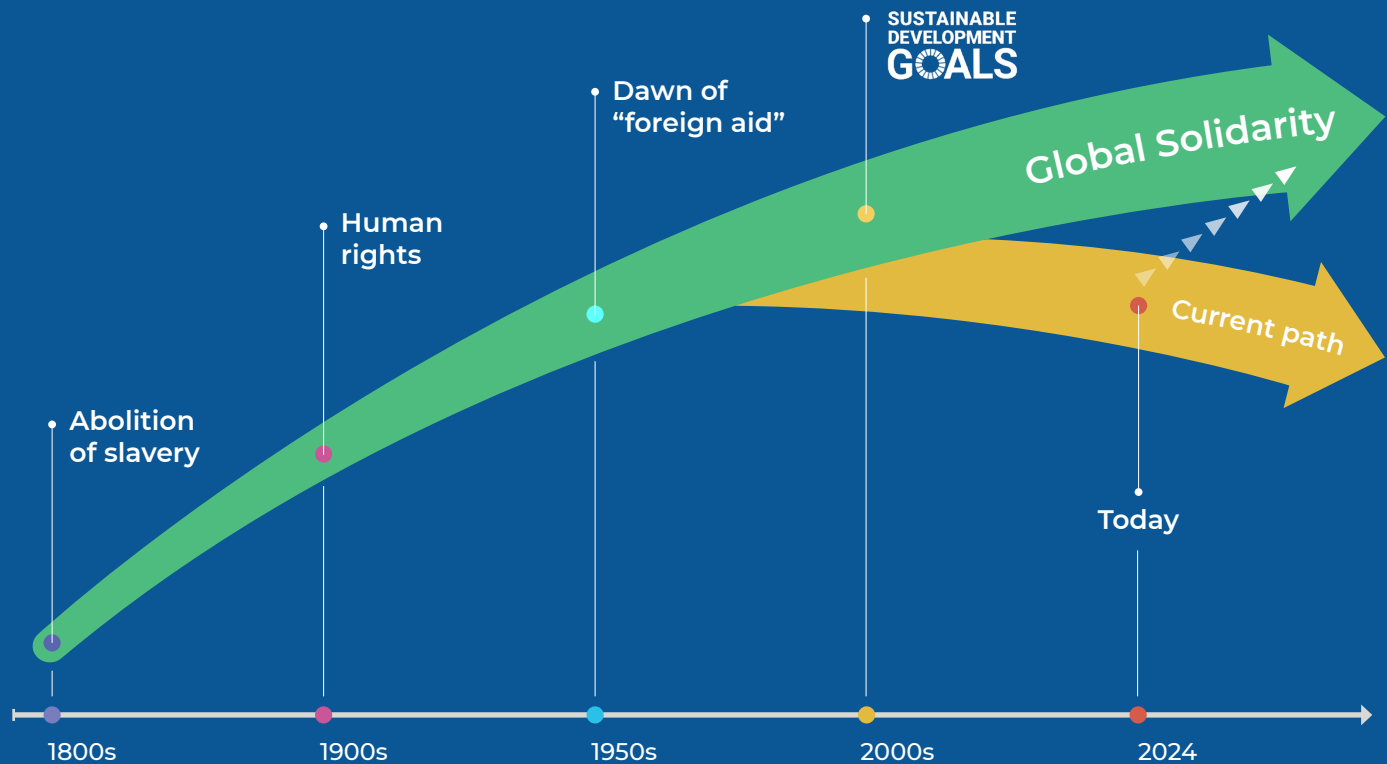
And indeed, our metrics broadly back up this story of division and sense of profound concern. According to our **Global Solidarity Scorecard**, global solidarity is in the Danger Zone.

But conflict and division are not inevitable. The challenge of this era is to respond to tensions, change and threats by building a new approach to global cooperation based on sober analysis of the evidence and emboldened by stories of progress which demonstrate what we are capable of.

We should start by reminding ourselves how far we have come. Humans are not always good at recognising progress, let alone celebrating it. We adapt quickly to the new normal and start to question why we aren’t doing *even* better. Humanity has made great strides in the past 100 years: improving the quality of life for billions of people, establishing shared global values, and building global structures to manage conflict and support human progress. Despite the many conflicts during that time and major wrong turns (from



# The arc of a slowly uniting world



● **Abolition of slavery**

There are limits on how badly you can treat another human. But still an age of empire and racism.

● **Human rights**

All people seem to deserve a basic set of freedoms and possibilities. Minimal system for making that happen.

● **Dawn of "foreign aid"**

Rich countries have a duty to help ensure all humans have basic needs met. Still a world of "us and them", marked by colonial legacies.

● **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

For the first time, all countries at the table. Global threats like climate change acknowledged. Gender equality agreed by all countries (in theory). Insufficient money and will to implement, political incentives still not in place.

● **Today**

The international system is under strain, and we have gone backwards on health, education, conflict and poverty, while the climate rapidly changes.

**But there is an opportunity to return to an upward trajectory, by reigniting global solidarity.**



environmental degradation to the rise of inequality), we can justifiably sketch out the arc of a slowly uniting world.

Progress has never been easy nor a foregone conclusion; it has required vision and perseverance. Now is no different. Our outrage at continuing inequality and frustration at backsliding are not signs we are failing, but that we have new and higher levels of ambition for our world. In fact, much geopolitical stress is a direct consequence of economic development across the world and the gradual levelling of global power – a target that so many of us have been working towards for decades. These shifts may lead to nervousness and political backlash in the countries that have become used to having things their own way, but they are a sign of progress.

Remembering what we have achieved through solidarity – things many thought impossible at the time – should embolden us as we look ahead to a new era.

## We can fix our collective action problem<sup>5</sup>

The term ‘collective action problem’ describes a situation in which conflicting interests prevent cooperation towards an outcome that would be beneficial for all.

For example, the Climate Crisis is consistently ranked by voters as the greatest threat to our world, yet we have failed to produce the collective action needed to halt it. None of us aspire to a warming world, but why jeopardise our own quality of life (by reducing air travel or leaving oil in the ground) when greenhouse gases continue to rise because of the activities of other countries and businesses?

So far, so depressing. But what about the occasions where we *have* worked together to achieve a common goal? What went right?

## There are three ways to solve collective action problems

The first is through **hegemony (or oligopoly)**. If a few participants have greater influence within a group, they may have an incentive to solve a problem regardless of the participation of the rest. For example, the US and its core allies have the resources that allow them to maintain collective global security which has (at least in theory) benefitted many other countries.

But there are obvious problems. First, having the most powerful players set the agenda is clearly not a sustainable situation in the 21st century where quasi-imperial power is increasingly challenged. Second, solutions provided by a

few rather than the many will be weaker – achieving greater impacts requires participation from all parties. And third, what happens when hegemony dissipates? In a multipolar world, the US and its allies have less ability and are less willing to shoulder costs.

For these reasons, bypassing proper collective action in favour of the hegemonic route is not an option, especially when tackling issues like climate change which require *all* countries to play their part.<sup>6</sup>

The second solution to collective action problems is **enforcement** – making people change. Our polling research finds a high proportion of those surveyed (56%) agreed that “for certain problems, like environmental pollution, international bodies should have the right to enforce solutions”.<sup>7</sup> For example, a benign enforcement mechanism that supported a just global energy transition could make a considerable impact on climate change.

Unfortunately, this approach remains a pipe dream. Countries simply do not trust each other enough to enable enforcement. As we highlighted in our 2023 report, around half the people who voice support for international enforcement also agree with the statement: “my country should never be forced by an international organisation to change any policy”. Policing for others, it seems, but not for us. Enforcement is not going to work either.

The final option for solving collective action problems is through **indirect reciprocity**. This means that those who do their bit for the group on one particular issue will benefit in other ways as well. Social scientists agree that where there is no enforcement, the primary means of enabling collective action is through this kind of indirect reciprocity with *reputation* playing a key role. That means that those people or countries with a reputation for doing the right thing are socially rewarded, while those with a reputation for failing to contribute are excluded from the range of other benefits that group membership can provide.

In a poorly functioning community where having a good reputation bears little weight, people are more likely to feel alienated and engage in antisocial behaviours – littering is a good example of this. But in well-functioning communities, people do take care of their environment, pay their taxes and so on, not only because they fear government enforcement, but because they feel part of the group and want to be seen as contributing to common goals in order to benefit from social institutions.

It is the same at the global level. Continuing the climate example, why do countries make commitments to net-zero (even those whose economies are dependent on fossil fuels<sup>8</sup>)? Because they worry about the consequences of being harmed or excluded in some way if they do not. Will acting in this way lead to a more favourable trade deal with another country that also wants to be seen as supporting public interest? Conversely, will a lack of commitment to

tackle climate change result in a bad reputation and negative outcomes? Will they receive less private investment? Will fewer tourists visit? Will countries vote with them less frequently at the UN? Will there be a sense of diminished respect – not an unimportant factor for many communities and leaders?

Given our increasingly multipolar world – where **hegemony** is dissipating and **enforcement** is a non-starter – **indirect reciprocity** is our only option. The question then is, how can international relations be managed in a way that incentivises countries to want to maintain a reputation for contributing to global goods?

## First, we need to increase the benefits of being a good actor (and the costs of being a bad one)


Indirect reciprocity already exists in many ambits of international relations; reputation already matters. But incentives are often not yet strong enough to turn words into overwhelming action. How do we strengthen them?

The answer to this question is a simple phrase: **build global solidarity**. Where people feel that they are part of a shared community, where they knit themselves together through effective institutions and have successful experiences of collective action in their communal memory, they have a high degree of solidarity and the conditions for enhanced indirect reciprocity are in place. The more we can build solidarity between countries and peoples, the more likely we are to work together to solve our common problems.

## Second, we need to connect apparently disparate international issues

We have grown used to working on issues in isolation. Funders, advocates and academics often treat issues related to nutrition, climate, trade or conflict as domains unto themselves. But if indirect reciprocity is the key to effective collective action, then all international issues are interconnected. It is only in the connections between them that we will succeed in making meaningful progress on any of them.

According to this approach, we cannot collaborate on some issues while mistrust deepens in others. Any action that reduces interdependence between countries actively harms our ability to respond to all our common objectives – from climate action to global inequality to health security – because countries become less concerned about their reputations, making them less likely to act for the common good. Countries are incentivised to cooperate when there are a thousand other dependencies between them that raise the costs of being a bad actor.



It's about making reputation relevant. If the US and its allies lose the respect of other countries over the Israel/Palestine conflict for example, or if China and the US economically decouple, or if voters increasingly buy into a worldview where other countries are a threat... all of these things will make countries' reputations *less* relevant which will make cooperation on common global goals *less* likely.

So, counterintuitively, it could be argued that stepping back from the brink of escalating armed conflict in various parts of the world is as important for climate action in 2024 as resolving funding and governance issues at the annual Conference of the Parties. It is a lot harder to make reputation matter in a world at war.

Therefore, global solidarity is not just a principle of engagement. It is the firmest foundation on which to build collective action in our complex and newly multipolar world. While humanity is capable of catastrophic wrong turnings, we are equally capable of transformational progress. The strength of our global solidarity will determine to what extent we represent the very best of humanity in this era of tension and challenge.

Each one of us has a part to play.

# Imagine global solidarity



## Evan Lieberman

Director, Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

Evan Lieberman is the Total Professor of Political Science and Contemporary Africa and Director of the Center for International Studies at MIT. He conducts research on the political-economy of development, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, and is the author of *Until We Have Won Our Liberty: South Africa after Apartheid*.

The world confronts a set of profound problems with origins and consequences that traverse international boundaries, such as climate change, pandemic spread, widespread poverty and human trafficking. Tackling these problems will demand much more coordination of public and private action, including increased sharing of resources from where they are currently concentrated. As this report makes clear, this will require a much greater degree of global solidarity.

But building a vibrant global nation in which individuals perceive a true sense of connection with others from different countries, cultures and contexts is easier said than done. Not all of us naturally worry about those outside our purview. It's hard enough to solve local challenges, let alone what might seem insurmountable on a global scale.

Those who have tried to build solidarity even with the best intentions have not always succeeded. The prevailing strategy among international organisations, of continuously reminding people of the extent of the problems we share on planet Earth, has sometimes contributed to sentiments of despair without sufficiently communicating *why* we ought to believe we are all in this together.

But there are examples of solidarity-building that offer clues about what might work while also identifying cautionary tales about what doesn't. What are the components of narratives that might contribute to 'fellow feeling' on a planetary scale?

First, we need to think of ourselves as a community. Given there are approximately eight billion people on the planet, some might view this metaphor as a silly one. But it is no sillier than the audacious-yet-successful strategy of nation-building that has prevailed in much of the world, including in mega-states such as China and India and throughout Western Europe and in the United States. Only with a strong sense of community can actors see that our fates are truly linked rather than in zero sum competition.

Large-scale imagined communities have been built on symbols and narratives. As the renowned scholar of nation-building, Benedict Anderson, highlighted, the sharing of maps, the process of census enumeration and value of national museums and, more generally, the spread of information through the print media all contributed to the collective imagination of national communities throughout very large territories. Nationhood

compelled citizens to pay taxes, go to war, and take actions for the larger good.

By contrast, at the global level, the messages we receive in the varied media landscapes focus disproportionately on what divides rather than what unites – borders, wars, economic rivalries and so on. These are real features of our global experience. Nonetheless, if we are to act not just with local but also with global perspectives, we need to be reminded of the stories of common origins and shared destinies that knit us together, and to develop more compelling symbols of unity.

Just as it did with nation-building at the state level, imagination can play a key role here as well. Cultural creators can offer music, movies, books and art that make tangible the ways in which our past and future are interlinked, the shared opportunities and constraints we face, and examples of characters who act selflessly with and for those in other corners of the world.

Second, we require narratives of the likelihood – or perhaps even the inevitability – of *success*. Think of the tools used by teams, companies, militaries, neighbourhood organisations and so on that work together to achieve their goals. Inspirational speeches rarely dwell on failures and shortcomings. People seek to be associated with groups that connote a positive self-image.

A good place to start is the re-telling of success stories of global action. Young people have often led the way in solidaristic expressions, and one of the most powerful was the global anti-apartheid movement that contributed to the toppling of a profoundly unjust regime. More recently, the willingness of billions of people around the world to alter their behaviours and lives during the Covid pandemic was fuelled, at least in part, by a desire to arrest a shared problem. Expressions of gratitude for front-line workers during the early months of the Covid lockdown were reminders of the benefits of mutual action. Support for development aid in many countries reveals concerns for other humans across the world. One could find reasons to be cynical about all three of these expressions, but there are also lessons to be learned.

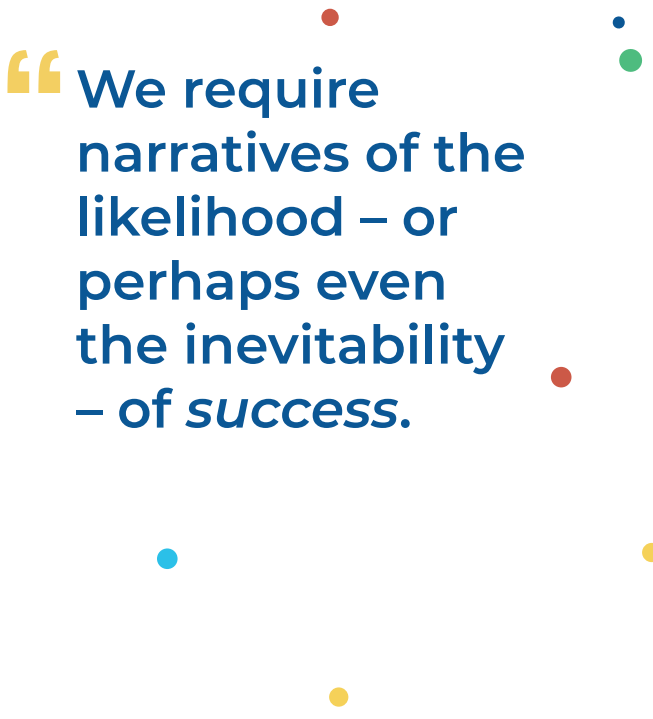
Third, perhaps ironically, we need to creatively harness the power of ‘us–them’ thinking. Most modern nations have reinforced the rules that distinguish insiders from outsiders, because humans have a tendency to think in group terms,

and nation-building strategies have relied on such tools to the detriment of our collective wellbeing. So we need to approach this tool with great caution and avoid hateful solidarities that exclude people of particular races, beliefs or orientations.

But Nobel-prize-winning economist Elinor Ostrom highlighted the role of exclusion as a strategy for successfully governing common pool resources. If that’s the case, who is the ‘them’ that might reinforce a sense of ‘us’ when it comes to a global nation? Without an interstellar attack, there is no obvious counterpart to the human species.

So, again, we will need to be creative. Some narratives might highlight a rejection of aspects of a global history that pre-dated solidarity. Others might, within reason, reject those anti-social behaviours that act against human prosperity, clarifying what it means to be not just a good American or a good Brazilian but a good *Human*. Cultural leaders can help valorise examples of the latter.

Imagining global solidarity will be an iterative process, uncontrollable from any centre. Creative thought leaders will need to draw on the shared psychologies of humans to find an optimistic common purpose that will knit us together sufficiently that the case for global action will appear self-evident.



“ We require narratives of the likelihood – or perhaps even the inevitability – of *success*.

# Drivers of Solidarity

The success of cooperation is directly correlated with the level of solidarity – in a home, a neighbourhood, a country, a world. If we can place solidarity at the centre of our systems, structures, policies, actions and thinking, we could see our multipolar world becoming a place where we cooperate to achieve common goals, managing disputes and tensions more effectively than before.

This Global Solidarity Report is a tool to help us on that journey. Firstly, by assessing the state of global solidarity based on the evidence, not the news reports. And secondly, by setting out how we can build more global solidarity as the basis for human progress in the 21st century.

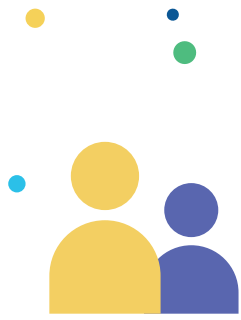
The drivers of solidarity – identities, institutions and impacts – work together in a virtuous or vicious cycle; building each other up or pulling each other down. Without a stronger sense of shared **identity**, our international **institutions** will remain frustrated, and without strong **institutions**, we won't deliver the **impacts** we need to tackle global challenges. If we do not deliver these impacts, our sense of shared **identity** will fray.

We will not resolve the challenges we face as a world without investing in all three drivers. In this section we look at each one in more detail.









# IDENTITIES

## A young generation in need of hope

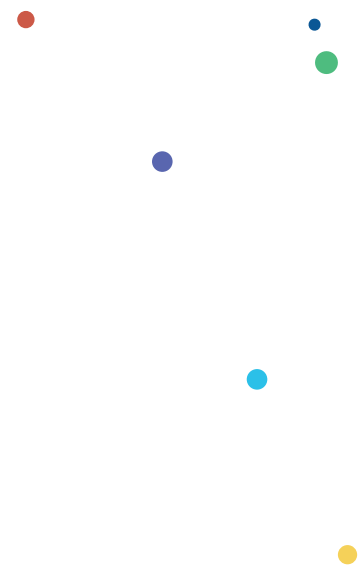
International cooperation can feel very far removed from the day-to-day lives of citizens, but attitudes dictate how that cooperation unfolds, especially in the long term.

All governments – democratic or authoritarian – listen intently to their citizens’ preferences. Governments do have considerable room for manoeuvre on international issues given the scant attention paid to them by many citizens, but their actions are limited to a range of *politically acceptable* options. In the United States for example, ex-US President Donald Trump’s decisions to withdraw from the World Health Organization and the Paris Climate Agreement were only possible because they fell within that range. In other countries, citizens’ attitudes would render such decisions inconceivable. Similarly, even a strongly internationalist government cannot increase international spending or deepen cooperation beyond what is considered acceptable by its citizens.

This means that significant, long-term improvements in international cooperation can only take place if public attitudes change. But unlike some of the other indicators on the Global Solidarity Scorecard (like conflict fatalities, which vary widely each year), public attitudes change very slowly. People’s worldviews are shaped by their upbringing and the major events that impact their early lives and tend not to fluctuate much throughout their lifetimes.

It is not surprising then, that the 2024 scores for the Identities pillar are very similar to last year’s<sup>9</sup>. Even in this notable ‘year of elections’ – many of which involve far-right parties hostile to internationalism – there is a bedrock of support for global solidarity. And perhaps our most surprising pro-cooperation finding remains in place this year: **the majority of people (61%)** agree that “for certain problems like environmental pollution, international bodies should have the right to enforce solutions”.

However, this support cannot be taken for granted. The decades-long trend that saw younger voters holding consistently more internationalist opinions than their forebears appears to have reversed.<sup>10</sup> **The youngest generation of voting age – Gen Z – whose identities have been forged in this tumultuous century, feel less like citizens of the world than millennials.** This worrying finding holds true in both richer and poorer countries. Indeed in the poorer countries.



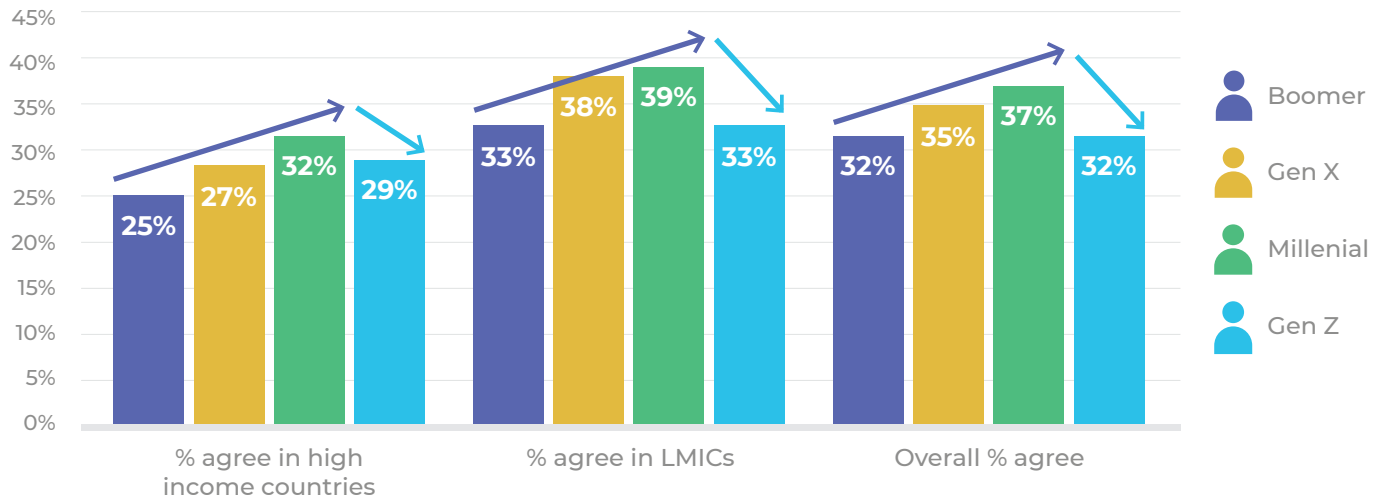
What is it about the experiences of young adults that has produced these attitudes? Perhaps – as we suggested in the 2023 Global Solidarity Report – it is the perceived failure of international *Institutions* to deliver tangible positive *Impacts* (such as reducing carbon emissions or conflict-related deaths). Or perhaps it is a more generalised sense of despair among young people as suggested in the *Glocalities* essay accompanying this chapter. Despair tends to undermine solidarity – global or otherwise – pushing people to political extremes as they search for change wherever they can find it.

Our data also reveals insights into the relationship between wealth and global solidarity, in a world where power is shifting. **People in the richest countries are significantly less likely to support solidarity statements than those in less wealthy countries.** This correlation is most pronounced in relation to whether international bodies should have the right to enforce solutions (figure 3).

Our analysis shows that this correlation also exists in relation to support for tax. When we disaggregate by region, we see that there are higher levels of public support for taxes to address global problems in the Middle East, Asia Pacific and Latin America than in Europe and North America.

**Figure 2: A lower proportion of Gen Z consider themselves citizens of the world than millennials.**

(Proportion of respondents who agree with the statement “I consider myself more a world citizen than a citizen of the country I live in”)



Source: Global Nation analysis based on Ipsos Global Advisor survey, May 2024

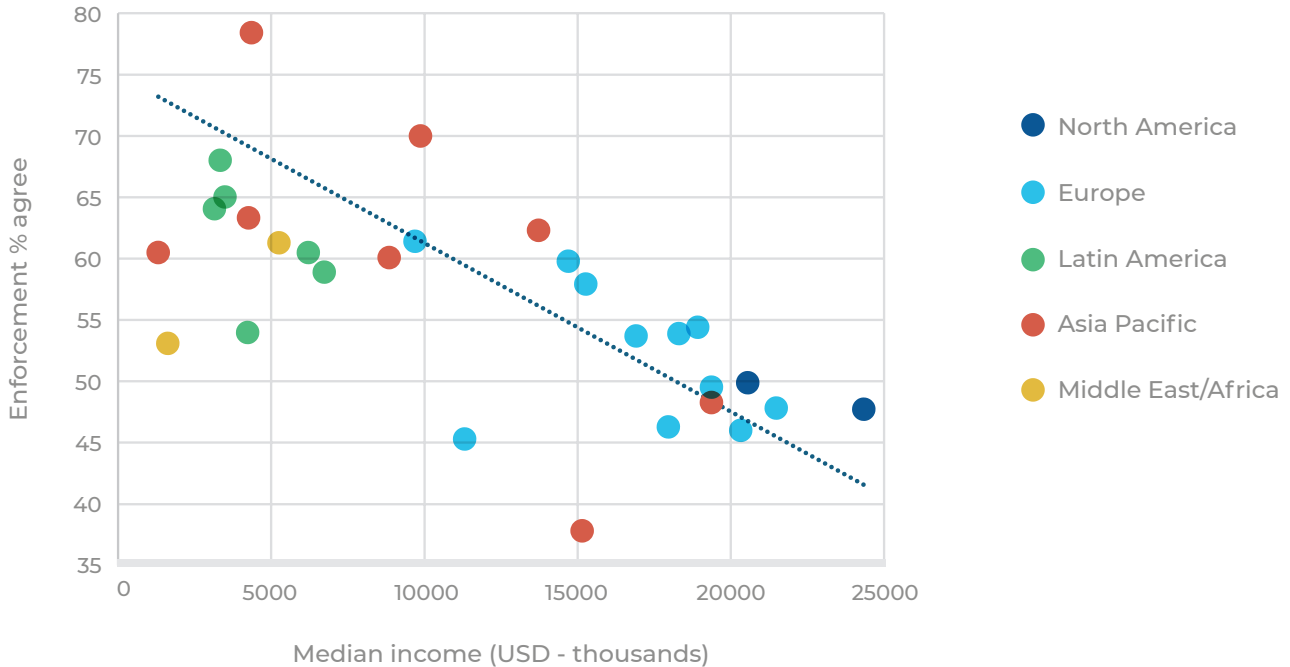
Notes: Data is based on 21,000 survey responses across 31 countries. The overall % agree accounts for the population sizes of the countries surveyed so that the 'global' total does not over-represent the views of high-income countries.

It may be that the citizens of the fading global powers that set the rules of the game after World War II, and again after the Cold War, feel that the international system they have built no longer serves them. Conversely, those citizens of less wealthy and historically marginalised countries may think their global status has been boosted in recent decades. Or perhaps those in high-income countries – which provide the majority of international public finance – believe they are paying too much while those in low- and middle-income countries think they could pay more.

There is a clear need to reignite enthusiasm for international cooperation in North America and Europe. Global progress requires the input of wealthy nations, as much as ever, even as power is rebalanced across the globe. Without these countries’ willingness to use their resources, military power and

**Figure 3: In countries with lower median incomes, there is more support for international enforcement on issues like the environment**

(% of respondents who agree with the statement supporting enforcement versus the median income in their country)



Source: Global Nation analysis based on Ipsos Global Advisor survey, May 2024, and the World Population Review, median income by country 2024 dataset

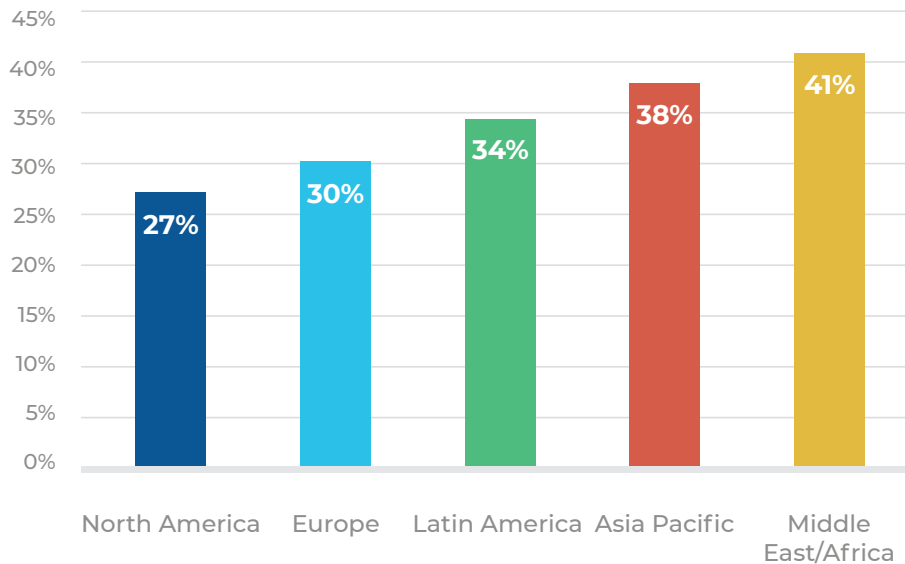
Notes: Chart shows the median income of countries surveyed (except Saudi Arabia where 2024 data was unavailable) versus the proportion of survey respondents who agreed with the statement “For certain problems, like environmental pollution, international bodies should have the right to enforce solutions”.

diplomatic presence in the global interest, we will not see the kind of action we need to mitigate the impact of the changing climate, prevent devastating conflicts and ensure human development.

At the same time, growing support for internationalism in other regions of the globe should be nurtured and channelled. There seems to be sufficient public support in emerging economies to allow for a stronger political case for larger contributions to the international system.

**Figure 4: Levels of support for taxes addressing global issues varies considerably by region**

(% of respondents in each region who either agree or strongly agree that 'my taxes should go towards solving global problems')



Source: Global Nation analysis based on Ipsos Global Advisor survey, May 2024

Note: Regions shown do not include all countries within those regions, but the regions within which the 31 countries surveyed are situated. For a full break down of countries please see the full methodology note available at [globalnation.world/global-solidarity-report](https://globalnation.world/global-solidarity-report).

# Tackling rising despair is vital for a cooperative world



**Martijn Lampert**

Research Director,  
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Martijn Lampert leads the Glocalities values, cultures, and trends research program covering 63 countries, based on more than 400,000 completed surveys. He is fascinated by people's inner and outer drivers, structures of meaning and world mythology. Martijn has more than 2 decades of experience in conducting values-based research and helping organizations connect with audiences at a deeper level. Lampert's mission is to contribute to a higher level of understanding between people, organizations and cultures.

Panos Papadongonas is Senior Research Consultant at Glocalities. He has a background in the social sciences and international development studies. Panos has an innate interest in different cultures and helps organizations understand what drives people around the world. In this way, organizations can effectively position themselves to resonate with and mobilize citizen audiences.

Glocalities' research over the past decade has provided insights into what drives support for international cooperation within a global society. Importantly, we believe international cooperation can be better communicated to align with the values and orientations of more conservative segments of society, broadening public support. *Put another way, building support for global cooperation is about appealing to people's values and igniting hope across the political spectrum, not winning a debate.*

**According to our analysis of a decade of international Glocalities' research, despair is increasing among younger generations and there is growing polarisation between men and women.**<sup>11</sup> While young women have significantly strengthened their embrace of liberal and anti-patriarchal values over the last decade, young men have not. In fact, while in 2014 older men were the most conservative and younger men were significantly more liberal, almost 10 years later that has reversed.

At the same time, during the past decade, there has been a surge in feelings of hopelessness and societal discontent among younger men and women (under 24). At the same time, older people (above 55) have generally become more hopeful and content with society as it is. Increasing feelings of despair and disillusionment are also present among citizens aged 25–34 and to a lesser extent among citizens aged 35–54. The following figure summarises these trends.

Please see the chart available via the link provided in the end notes, which visualises this trend.<sup>12</sup>

Feelings of hopelessness, societal disillusionment and rebelling against cosmopolitan values partly explain the rise of radical right anti-establishment parties in many countries. Their message increasingly resonates with disillusioned young men, who are veering from liberal to conservative, and who do not feel that establishment parties are serving their interests.

**When mapped onto support for international cooperation, these trends are a cause for concern.** We find that pro-cooperation people generally have a hopeful outlook on life and are also strongly freedom oriented<sup>13</sup>, while anti-cooperation people tend to be much more pessimistic and control oriented<sup>14</sup>.

When people despair, they tend to shift their focus to their immediate environment and locus of control. Little wonder that the radical right parties benefiting from this despair are generally much less inclined to support multilateral institutions or promote international cooperation. With younger age cohorts increasingly despairing over the past decade, and younger age cohorts of men stagnating in progress towards liberal values, support for cooperation may be increasingly under threat.

**Clearly, then, countering despair is a crucial aspect of building support for global cooperation. But rather than trying to shift conservative attitudes, we should instead appeal to them.**

Societies and population segments the world over will always have a range of attitudes based on culture, upbringing and other factors, and so giving every person a reason to want global cooperation irrespective of their value base is far more realistic than attempting to shift the world to one set of values.

Over the last decade, studies of moral reframing – which involves presenting a position in a way that aligns with an individual's moral values – have shown its effectiveness across a wide range of polarised topics.<sup>15</sup> To quote from our original trend survey report, *“The capacity to navigate a polarized environment through a lens of shared values is paramount for leaders, policymakers, and communicators alike. This necessitates the ability to empathize with various national and international citizen groups and perceive the world from their perspectives.”*

At Glocalities, we measure the appeal of archetypes for storytelling.<sup>16</sup> Archetypes are universally recognised patterns and symbols deeply embedded in human culture, such as the hero, rebel or explorer. They tap into universal feelings and instincts, making stories more resonant. For example, Nike's 'Just Do It' slogan embodies the hero archetype.

Let's look at an example. The ruler archetype typically resonates with people who value strong governance and stability. While it can be (mis)used by autocratic and authoritarian leaders to promote narratives denigrating international cooperation, it is also possible to use it to foster a constructive narrative for international cooperation. There are two dimensions in particular that we must build into narratives to foster support for global

cooperation among these groups who favour control over freedom.

First, we must emphasise the importance of strong governance, strategic alliances and international law to prevent conflict, reduce risks and maintain order. International cooperation enhances a nation's ability to lead on the global stage, setting standards for security, growth and stability. By collaborating with international allies, national interests and global stability can be safeguarded much better than by attempting to do so independently.

Second, we must highlight the value of efficient structures created by multilateral agreements and international partnerships. These frameworks reduce risk and promote fair trade, economic growth and innovation. Such collaborations foster an environment where businesses and economies can grow responsibly, offering opportunities for an ambitious young generation to develop and thrive.

With a deeper understanding of how people's attitudes and values foster or undermine support for global cooperation, we can craft narratives to increase support – a far easier task than shifting the attitudes themselves (in the short term at least). Coupled with a universal desire to counter rising despair, there is an opportunity here to strengthen global identities.

“While in 2014 older men were the most conservative and younger men were significantly more liberal, almost 10 years later that has reversed.”

# To strengthen global solidarity, we must protect and expand civic space



## Mandeep Tiwana

Chief Officer – Evidence and Engagement, CIVICUS

Mandeep Tiwana is chief of evidence and engagement plus representative to the UN headquarters at global civil society alliance, CIVICUS. Since joining CIVICUS in 2008, Mandeep has engaged in global efforts to advance civic space and civil society participation. He has written extensively on the intersection between civil society, sustainable development and international affairs. Previously, Mandeep advised the New Delhi Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross. He has also worked with the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative and the Punjab State Human Rights Commission, as well as on projects related to governance and gender justice at the grassroots level in India.

The world faces a confluence of crises that are threatening to roll back decades of progress on rights, justice and equality. In several regions, armed forces are violating the laws of war with impunity, indiscriminately attacking civilians and torturing prisoners. Polluting industries are causing environmental destruction. Fewer than a hundred billionaires own more wealth than half of humanity.<sup>17</sup> Corrupt autocrats are undermining the legitimate aspirations of young people and future generations by clinging to power through repression and divisive politics. The rights of women and LGBTQI+ people are under attack from powerful anti-rights groups.

In this scenario, it's vital that concerned citizens and justice-oriented civil society organisations can act. History shows us that resolute protest movements and creative voluntary efforts can usher in significant transformations, even within a short period of time, as recently evidenced in Bangladesh.<sup>18</sup> But success is more likely when civil society has the space to operate and act – known as civic space.

Simply put, civic space means the right to speak out, organise and take action. Civic space is predicated on the fundamental freedoms of peaceful assembly, association and expression that are enshrined in the constitutions of almost every country and are part of customary international law.

But civic space isn't being respected. More than 85% of the world's population live in highly constrained civic space environments according to the CIVICUS Monitor, a participatory civil society research collaboration that tracks the health of civic space in every country.<sup>19</sup> Fewer than 40 countries have adequately enabling civic space conditions in line with international norms.

For more than 30% of the world's population, the situation is so bad that even the slightest public criticism of those who hold power can get someone thrown into prison for a long time, physically attacked or forced into exile.

Civic space also means online space. Although technological advancements in the online sphere have aided the exercise of civic freedoms and enabled the rapid spread of global solidarity across borders, repressive regimes are increasingly using censorship, disinformation, internet shutdowns and illicit surveillance to weaken civic space.

All of this is undermining the actions and global solidarity needed to achieve the universal Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The UN's 2024 SDG progress report, while recognising critical data gaps, laments that just 17% of targets are on track.<sup>20</sup> Almost two-thirds of targets have seen only marginal progress, stagnation or regression since they were adopted in 2015 with much fanfare by world leaders.



Civil society shows its value daily. As we speak, it is offering vital responses to some of the world's gravest problems. It is providing life-saving humanitarian aid, leading reconstruction efforts, collecting evidence of human rights abuses and urging the international community to act to end impunity. These are just a few of the ways civil society is advancing global solidarity, especially with oppressed people.

Citizen journalists are providing crucial firsthand information about Israel's atrocities against civilians,<sup>21</sup> helping build international momentum for accountability and an end to the carnage in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. In Ukraine, voluntary initiatives are a huge contributor to resilience, with activists supporting people displaced by Russia's invasion and helping root out corruption from supply chains.<sup>22</sup> Sudanese youth groups are delivering humanitarian aid in the worst-hit conflict zones and offering solutions to restore democratic civilian rule.<sup>23</sup>

Even as regressive forces are gaining political power through the ballot box in some countries, civil society mobilisations ahead of elections have brought positive results for rights and justice. In Guatemala, a new party born from mass anti-corruption protests led to the inauguration of a president untainted by discredited institutional politics.<sup>24</sup> When economic and political elites tried to scuttle the outcome, Indigenous communities led a widespread mobilisation to defend democracy. In Poland, a unity government pledging to restore civic freedoms came to power after eight years of right-wing nationalist rule that undermined sexual and reproductive freedoms.<sup>25</sup> Women's groups were mobilised in large numbers ahead of the elections, offering new potential for civil society to partner in retrieving democratic values and respecting human rights.

Civil society lawsuits have led to the decriminalisation of same-sex relations in Mauritius, striking down colonial era legislation.<sup>26</sup> In Estonia, the Parliament legislated in favour of marriage equality following a decades-long struggle by human rights groups.<sup>27</sup> Similar positive changes are being won in countries as diverse as Dominica,<sup>28</sup> Namibia<sup>29</sup> and Nepal.<sup>30</sup>

With global temperatures on track to rise by close to three degrees on preindustrial levels by the end of the century,<sup>31</sup> climate activists are working in all regions of the world to build public opinion against unsustainable patterns of consumption and production and expose the malevolent power of the fossil fuel industry. International solidarity movements like Fridays for Future are urging decision makers to act to avert catastrophic tipping points.<sup>32</sup> In Belgium,<sup>33</sup> Switzerland<sup>34</sup>

and the USA,<sup>35</sup> among other countries, courts recently intervened to hold states and companies to account over climate commitments. People's mobilisations are also pressuring institutions such as universities to divest from fossil fuel investments. At the global level, civil society forced the COP28 climate summit to acknowledge the need to cut fossil fuel emissions, unbelievably for the first time.<sup>36</sup>

Despite – and because of – their notable achievements, civil society activists and organisations across the world are facing a fiery backlash. Documentation by groups such as Front Line Defenders shows that numerous human rights defenders continue to lose their lives because of their work and beliefs.<sup>37</sup> Many within our orbit at the CIVICUS alliance are being subjected to arbitrary imprisonment.<sup>38</sup>

Fearful autocrats in places as diverse as Venezuela<sup>39</sup> and Zimbabwe<sup>40</sup> have attacked protesters and critics as part of their strategy to stay in power. Many governments are using foreign agents or foreign contributions laws to prevent civil society organisations that expose high-level corruption and rights violations from receiving vital funds from credible international sources.<sup>41</sup> Georgia and Kyrgyzstan are among the governments that have recently introduced such discriminatory laws.<sup>42</sup> These funding restrictions stand in stark contrast to government policies on private sector foreign investment.

Despite the many constraints, success stories, including those mentioned above, demonstrate that global solidarity across civil society is still alive and well. A youthful generation increasingly connected by online activism is emerging to lead today's impressive intersectional civic movements, demanding progress on contemporary scourges such as economic inequality, gender-based violence and climate change. But they need to be supported.

States must take their responsibilities seriously by creating safe and enabling environments for civil society groups to operate freely, starting with repealing laws and policies that interfere with the exercise of civic freedoms. They must encourage other states to follow suit. Multilateral institutions need to enhance their focus on accountability and respect for international norms in relation to civic freedoms and civil society participation. The private sector too must align its policies with international human rights standards. Funders and supporters of civil society need to mainstream civic space considerations. To overcome the current cascade of crises threatening people and our planet we have no choice but to invest in civic space.



# INSTITUTIONS

## Time to build back better

**Institutions** lie at the heart of global solidarity. Built predominantly in the wake of the Second World War, international institutions have contributed to the delivery of important *impacts* for global citizens, from a decline in childhood mortality to increased rights for women, to important environmental accords.

But our analysis shows that Institutions are in trouble with the driver posting its third lowest score since 2006. While indicators for funding, trade and representation are stable, there has been a **huge decline in countries' ability to reach consensus**, epitomised by the rise in veto use among members of the UN Security Council (UNSC). This level of discordance has not been seen at the UNSC since 1989 and has put institutions at **'breaking point'**.

Unless we strengthen the effectiveness and accountability of international institutions, we will be unable to deliver the impacts necessary to convince people of the value of international solidarity. **By transitioning from systems that no longer work for today's world, we may be able to reverse the divisive narrative taking hold in some countries.**

### Powerful countries are failing to reach consensus

The most worrying news this year is the huge dip in major powers reaching agreements in international arenas. Not since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 have members of the UN Security Council reached this level of disagreement.

Compare this to the heady days of 2015 when UN Member States succeeded in working together to establish the Sustainable Development Goals. Only nine years ago but already a distant memory. Conflict and competition are making it harder for countries to come together in their mutual interests. Some politicians even question the very concept of mutual interest, preferring to cast other countries as enemies, rather than potential collaborators.

We use two data points to measure the extent to which countries agree with each other: the proportion of UN Security Council resolutions that are vetoed and the proportion of UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions that pass unanimously. In the year 2023–2024, over 20% of UN Security Council resolutions were vetoed, almost double that of this century's previously worst

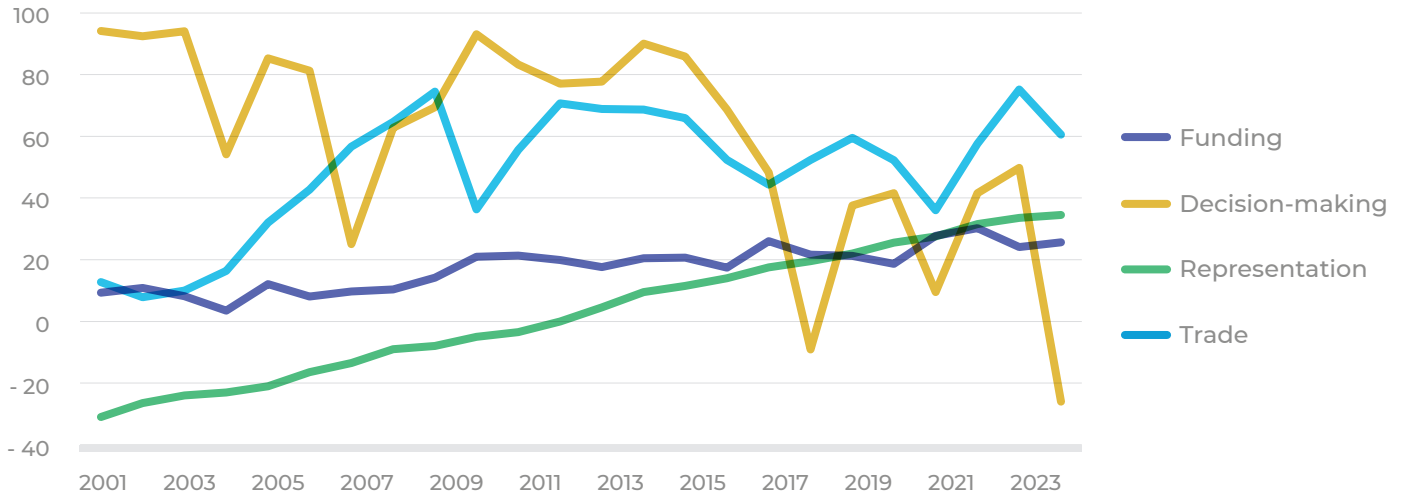
performing year: 2017–2018. By way of comparison, most years only 5% of resolutions or less are vetoed. On a more positive note, unanimity on UNGA resolutions is more stable. The data suggests that **it is the “great power rivalry” between security council members that is driving the weakening of institutions**, rather than divisions between most countries.

### Funding is stable, but is still far from sufficient

It is clear that global institutions are struggling to rise to new challenges. However, **there are still promising signs** as international funding for multilateralism – another crucial indicator of solidarity – has increased marginally since last year and remains well above the figures of the 2000s and 2010s. This demonstrates a continued commitment to finding the money for international institutions, despite worldwide economic strain and growing calls for aid spending cuts in key “donor” countries.

**Figure 5: UN member states are struggling to reach consensus while international trade has fallen dramatically, but official development assistance holds firm and institutions are becoming more representative.**

(Solidarity score per institutions indicator, 2001–2024)



Source: Global Nation analysis based on data from OECD.Stat, United Nations Security Council, Peace & Security Data Hub, Inter-Parliamentary Union Parline Data, and World Bank World Development Indicators.

Notes: ‘Funding’ refers to the % GNI of OECD DAC members provided to support multilateral organisations; ‘Decision-making’ refers to the proportion of decisions agreed by consensus rather than going to a vote or veto; ‘Representation’ refers to the proportion of seats in national parliaments held by women; ‘Trade’ refers to exports of goods and services as a proportion of GDP.

Nevertheless, funding remains in the Danger Zone. Why? Because according to all the data and analysis, it is still falling far short of needs. Hundreds of billions more dollars are required to respond to global challenges and build on current opportunities. These **billions are within reach**, as the Call to Action later in this report makes clear. But so far, we are not seeing the step-change in political will required to invest in our world.

So on these two important measures – *decision-making* and *funding* – our global institutions are in serious trouble. However, there is some good news. The *representativity* of institutions worldwide which we measure by looking at a proxy – namely **gender balance in national parliaments** – **continues to gradually but consistently improve**. This matters: who is in the room forms the basis of which decisions get made. We are still not where we need to be, but the trajectory is positive.

We also measure global *trade* because trade depends on trust and collaboration and is therefore in some ways the antithesis of division and conflict. Global trade is down on last year – though not by much – and remains slightly above the average of the previous 10 years. For this reason, we place it in Green Shoots territory.

“The most worrying news this year is the huge dip in major powers reaching agreements in international arenas. **Not since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989** have members of the UN Security Council **reached this level of disagreement.**”

Jonathan Glennie

# Moving beyond zero-sum thinking

How a global public goods lens can support the world in addressing shared global challenges



## Pedro Conceição

Director, Human Development Report Office, UNDP

Pedro Conceição is Director of the Human Development Report Office, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Prior to that he was Director, Strategic Policy, at the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support of UNDP, where he co-led the UN's participation in the G20 Finance and Central Bank Governors Meetings, managed UNDP's engagement in the Financing for Development processes, and contributed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

“The natural effect of commerce is to lead to peace,” wrote Montesquieu, a French thinker of the Enlightenment. He went on to explain why “Two nations that trade with each other become reciprocally dependent; if one has an interest in buying, the other has an interest in selling, and all unions are founded on mutual needs.”<sup>43</sup> This reasoning encapsulates the notion of what became known as ‘doux commerce’, or, later in political science and international relations, ‘interdependence theory’: closer economic interactions between countries prevent, or at least mitigate, the risks of those countries going to war.

The hypothesis that economic interdependence prevents war has been shown several times not to be valid, perhaps most tragically with World War I, which led to the collapse of what has been described as the first era of economic globalization.<sup>44</sup> But even if economic interaction cannot inoculate countries from going to war, the opposite situation – in which countries have no economic links – is certainly more damaging.

One way of shedding light on the question is to ask not just what economic interaction does to the relationship between states but also how it affects how people relate to each other. Several academic disciplines suggest that when people interact with each other in markets it tends to make them more prosocial and to have a more universalist disposition.<sup>45</sup> But maybe it is the other way around: people with such dispositions trade with each other more. A recent carefully conducted empirical study provides convincing evidence that the causality runs from market integration to universalist dispositions: there seems to be something to the ‘doux commerce’ idea after all.<sup>46</sup>

But how far does the universalist disposition extend? To everyone in a community? In a country? In a region? To the entire world? It turns out that people hold different views on these questions: some are more parochial (meaning they care about people socially close to them but not those that are distant), while others have a more universalist disposition (they value the welfare of others even if they are far away).<sup>47</sup> How do we deal with this diversity when so many of the challenges that we confront today are global in nature and require collective action by all countries in the world?

One possibility, explored in the 2023/24 Human Development Report, is to identify challenges that

require global collective action using a lens of global public goods provision.<sup>48</sup> Global public goods are not zero-sum, meaning that they benefit all countries – it is hard to exclude any country from their benefits. Examples include the eradication of smallpox and reversing the thinning of the ozone layer. Countries will compete on many things, particularly those that are zero-sum, but a global public goods lens allows for the identification of those that are not. It asks what needs to be put in place for countries to come together to provide these global public goods.

Sometimes cooperation is required, but much can be achieved with simpler agreements to coordinate. Coordination involves agreeing on things such as which side of the road to drive on. It does not matter which side is chosen, but once it is chosen nobody has an incentive to deviate and start driving on the other side. Many international arrangements that successfully provide global public goods (like standards for air travel or international communications) have these characteristics. One challenge going forward is to find ways of reshaping how international challenges are seen, so that we move beyond viewing all global challenges as zero-sum<sup>49</sup> when many are actually about providing global public goods. And, once we get there, we can see if incentives can be put in place to turn cooperation challenges into coordination problems – which countries seem to find much easier to agree upon.<sup>50</sup>

“Several academic disciplines suggest that when people interact with each other in markets it tends to make them more prosocial and to have a more universalist disposition. But maybe it is the other way around: people with such dispositions trade with each other more.

# Reimagining global solidarity: It's time to embrace politics



## Minh-Thu Pham

Co-founder & CEO, Project Starling

Minh-Thu Pham is a political and policy entrepreneur, nonprofit leader, and activist. She is co-founder and CEO of Project Starling, a think-and-do tank working to shift power to those most affected by connecting ideas, people and politics, and she is a Nonresident Scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

We stand at a critical crossroads. In a world where crises no longer confine themselves to borders, the interconnected nature of our challenges demands unprecedented global cooperation. But, trust in political leadership and institutions is eroding. Widespread discontent has recently led to historic political shifts worldwide, signalling a tremendous demand for change. Will we respond effectively to regain public confidence – or will we succumb to the temptation to play it safe, stick to what we know, and avoid taking risks to do things differently? I think we must embrace risk and develop better ways to problem-solve together. That means embracing politics.

Despite being an inherently political institution, the United Nations is not a place where we like to talk about politics – at least explicitly. And yet politics – which determines how our societies are governed, what the rules are for making decisions, and who determines the rules – plays a major role in how we manage problems together. Those of us focused on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), addressing climate change, or any number of global challenges must reexamine the state of our politics and figure out how to harness it to deliver results for people.

Our collective failure to act has destabilised domestic politics and eroded the foundations of global governance. As a result, we are witnessing increasing suspicion and mistrust of those in power, the decline of long-established institutions, and the rise of populist movements that offer simplistic, regressive solutions to complex global challenges.

In 2024, about half the world held national elections, and so far, these elections have been marked by widespread dissatisfaction with the status quo, as voters reacted to economic inequality, rising costs of living, and the perception that leaders are out of touch with ordinary people's realities. Economic strains have made the perceived costs of the green transition<sup>51</sup> less politically palatable, weakening the position of progressive governments and driving a return to unsustainable energy sources. These trends have fuelled a belief that global cooperation and solidarity could make us worse off – a fear that many politicians exploit to their advantage.

Countries across the world are dealing with rising debt, as politicians propose tax cuts or increased government spending to gain electoral support.



Geopolitical tensions and security concerns are prompting governments to spend more money on defence and less on social programmes or sustainable development.

But the real danger to global stability lies not in the loss of power by political incumbents but in how we interpret their losses. Did politicians lose support because their constituents want them to focus solely on national interests and withdraw from the globe? Or because they failed to address transnational problems that have domestic consequences, including making people worse off? Extraordinary times demand extraordinary actions. What if politicians chose to invest in global cooperation and solidarity? Perhaps one day this could win elections.

At these crossroads, the UN Summit of the Future taking place among heads of state and government this September offers a blueprint for renewing global governance – how we work together, on what issues, and who gets to help determine the rules – which are essentially political questions. Importantly, it will help determine whether we move towards a more equitable and collaborative global order or retreat into narrow, nationalistic agendas that further fracture our shared future. In sum, this Summit is important for achieving the SDGs and paving the way for rebalancing political power. History shows us that moments of crisis can become occasions of opportunity. The last significant wave of global governance reform emerged from global conflict when political moods had shifted and people viewed humanity more expansively. After division and devastation, they were ready to collaborate.

Today, we may be on the brink of another such moment. Urgency demands us to think of politics not as a source of division and cynicism but as a way to solve problems – to bring more actors in, unite, and inspire hope in a way that shifts power to those bearing the brunt of global crises. Giving people a voice so they can take part in making collective choices is what politics is about – and if we do it meaningfully, we will secure better outcomes that can lead to transformative change.

That's what "Leaving No One Behind" has to mean as 2030 approaches. We can't achieve the SDGs without taking into account the desire of the public for a different kind of politics. Instead, we must respond to public discontent by changing how we make decisions and who we give power to

and include in decision-making – by confronting politics head on because we know it can deliver positive change.

Recent successes in multilateralism may offer a blueprint for moving forward. Political alliances between states, NGOs and think tanks have proven to be powerful drivers of change, capable of building political support for the necessary bold reforms. They have achieved advances such as the Sustainable Development Goals, Paris Climate Agreement, Global Plastics Treaty, High Seas Treaty and, most recently, the UN framework convention on global tax cooperation. These breakthroughs demonstrate that multilateralism can deliver for people and planet even amid global division. They show potential for improved global solidarity when we practice a different kind of politics – when states and civil society work together.

We must learn from and build on these successes. NGOs and think tanks can work in coalition with champion governments to make it clear that a lowest common denominator outcome is unacceptable – and they can do so in a few ways.

First, they can provide operational support to states that may lack the capacity, staff or expertise to fully engage in complex negotiations, elevating their positions within international forums, ensuring their interests are better represented. Second, NGOs and think tanks can use their public influence to mobilise grassroots support for the negotiating positions of champion states, strengthening their bargaining power and underscoring the legitimacy of their demands. Third, NGOs and think tanks can facilitate informal dialogues by providing neutral spaces, ideas and technical expertise to help overcome difficult negotiations and develop evidence-informed policies. In doing so, these groups make progressive outcomes more likely and in doing so, improve global solidarity.

Achieving systemic reform will require difficult decisions that governments won't be able to make alone. Civil society must channel the global public's demand for change to pressure governments and multilateral institutions to adopt meaningful reforms. We must respond to public discontent by embracing politics to change how we make decisions and who we give power to – to give voice to those most affected and work together to deliver for people. The time for unprecedented action is now.



# IMPACTS

## Back from the brink

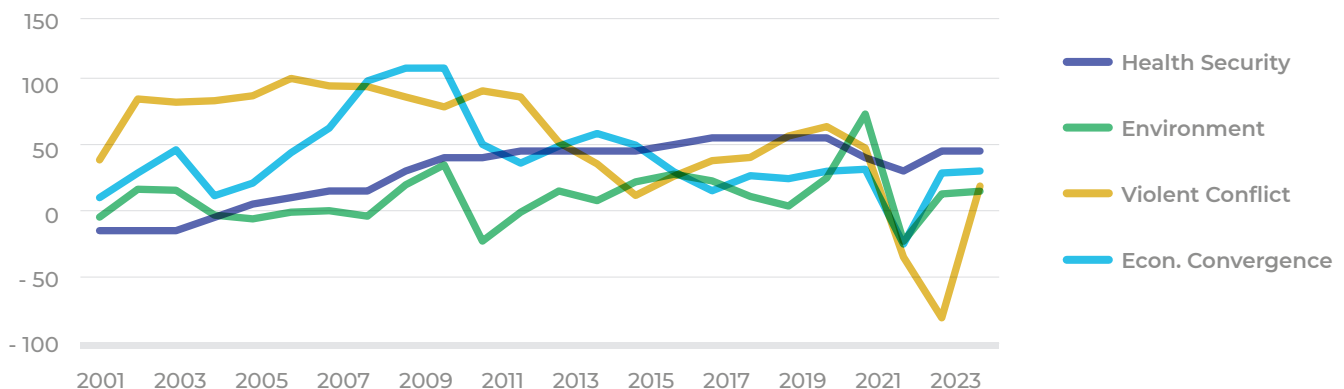
Global solidarity has a purpose – to build better lives for humans and to safeguard our planet. It is therefore crucial to measure the **impacts** of international collective action and to communicate them effectively to build a sense of global identity – the bedrock of sustainable international institutions.

Despite the bad news we see constantly on our TV screens, the evidence presented in this report shows that Impacts have improved in 2024. With a score of 27, the driver now sits in the Danger Zone. However, this follows two historically low years (2022 and 2023), and 2024 is still among the worst five years for Impacts this century.

Overall, we still lack the conditions needed for global solidarity to flourish. Progress on humanity’s greatest challenges is stalling. This is not only concerning in itself, but also presents a high risk to the global identities we know are a vital component to global solidarity. **Unless cooperation yields tangible results, it will be a challenge to convince the public to support it.**

**Figure 6: While the impacts driver has shown signs of recovery, trends in inequality, the environment and violent conflict mean it is still at a historic low.**

(Solidarity score per impacts indicator, 2001–2024)



Source: Global Nation analysis based on data from WHO WUENIC, International Energy Agency (IEA), Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) and World Bank World Development Indicators.

Notes: ‘Health Security’ is indicated by the proportion of infants fully vaccinated with DTP3; ‘Environment’ is indicated by the reduction in CO2 emissions; ‘Violent Conflict’ is indicated by conflict deaths per 100,000 population; ‘Economic Convergence’ is indicated by the difference in percentage in annual GNI per capita growth of LDCs vs HICs.

The Health Security score has not changed in the past year. This is bad news as it indicates that vaccination rates for children are still not on track to return to pre-pandemic levels, but have instead stalled at the level reached in the mid-2010s. After decades of progress on global health – much of which was reversed during the pandemic – hopes of an equally rapid return to the previous levels are slim.

Meanwhile the world is still producing more CO2 emissions, but at a slower rate than last year, hence the marginal increase in score. Economic convergence between nations has also improved slightly, meaning that low-income countries grew at a slightly faster rate than their high-income peers.

The biggest improvement is seen in conflict-related deaths. This may seem somewhat counterintuitive given the seemingly endless media coverage of war and conflict over the past 12 months. However, the deadly conflict in Ethiopia has subsided – at least for the time being – resulting in 50% fewer conflict deaths than last year.<sup>52 53</sup>

## The conflict conundrum

The improvement in the violent conflict indicator is the reason that the Impacts driver has moved from Breaking Point up to Danger Zone. That trend bodes well – the opposite would have been catastrophic.

But there are important caveats. Firstly, as noted by the Global Peace Index 2024, while the total number of deaths from organised violence worldwide was half that of the previous year (falling from 310,000 to 154,000), 2023 – from which we draw data for this report – was still one of the deadliest years for decades. In fact, the past three years have seen the most conflict-related deaths since the Rwandan genocide in 1994<sup>54</sup>.

Secondly, the number of armed conflicts actually rose this year, even if fewer people were killed. In fact, there are more armed conflicts now than at any time since records began just after the Second World War<sup>55</sup>. Countries and communities are being affected by violence and conflict in a way we should all find alarming.

The third reason why 2023 was a notable year for conflict is not so much the statistics as the geopolitics. While some conflicts – such as those in Ethiopia, Sudan and Democratic Republic of the Congo – elicit nearly universal (if impotent) calls for peace, other conflicts expose deep rifts in global power politics. Two in particular seem most relevant to global solidarity in 2024.

The Russian army invaded Ukraine in February 2022 and has continued its offensive ever since. The deadly war has seen tens of thousands of deaths on both sides and exposed deep geopolitical fissures. More than any other event,

the Ukraine conflict has shed light on the demise of the unipolar world that has revolved around the United States since the end of the Cold War. The US is neither willing nor able to impose its will decisively and Russia has found allies – active or passive – in other major powers. These have notably included China and India as well as a vast swathe of Global South countries which no longer feel the need to back the West, often citing the US's own unacceptable violence in conflicts such as the 2003 invasion of Iraq. This dynamic has created stark dividing lines between a G7 that wants to rally the world against Russia and a Global South that does not wish to be rallied.

Then there is Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Tens of thousands of Palestinians have been killed in Israeli attacks on Gaza following the Hamas-led massacre of around 1,200 Israelis in early October 2023. Many more Palestinians have been injured and face disease, starvation and homelessness. Most of the world – particularly the Global South – has called for an immediate ceasefire and return of hostages, but a handful of countries, led by the US, are actively arming Israel in their continued assault on Gaza. Yet again, stark dividing lines have been drawn between a set of powerful countries who support Israel, and a global majority that predominantly sees the conflict through a different lens.

Consequently, despite the reduction in annual deaths, **conflict continues to be the factor that most undermines faith in the international system** – and is the major reason for the explosion in Security Council vetoes which are the standout 'negative score' in this year's report. Conflict makes cooperation impossible, and more and more countries are expressing their dissatisfaction with a military agenda dominated by countries that have set themselves up as the guardians of global security.

“Despite the reduction in annual deaths, **conflict continues to be the factor that most undermines faith in the international system** – and is the major reason for the explosion in Security Council vetoes.

Hassan Damluji

# Connecting climate with health requires global solidarity... and local leadership



## Manisha Bhinge

Vice President for Health, The Rockefeller Foundation

Manisha Bhinge serves as Vice President for Health The Rockefeller Foundation where she leads program strategy and manages the portfolio of implementation partners for The Rockefeller Foundation's Precision Public Health Initiative. She has over a decade and a half of experience in social innovation and implementation science in global health and has worked extensively across Africa and South Asia on community-based service delivery and women's health and empowerment.

One of the most resounding messages of this year's Global Solidarity Report is: it's all connected. We cannot face any global challenge in isolation. Viewed independently, each collective action problem faces the 'tragedy of the commons,' where collective action is not delivered, to the detriment of us all. But when issues are connected, interesting opportunities emerge for making progress on many of them at the same time.

Nowhere is this truer than in the issues of climate change and health. If we ignore one, we will fail on the other. But there is an opportunity to make progress on both, based on a solidaristic partnership of global actors, empowering local leadership at the city level.

Climate change is no longer a future risk. It is here, and it is having devastating consequences throughout the world. While climate change has many effects, the hard edge of its impact is in the severe repercussions on people's health. Climate change is making people sicker and resulting in more deaths. Heatwaves and droughts in 2021 were associated with 127 million more people experiencing moderate or severe food insecurity compared with 1981 to 2010. Heat-related deaths of people older than 65 years have increased by 85% from 1990 to 2000. That is why it is often said that "the climate crisis is a health crisis".

The inextricable link between climate change and ill health is now widely recognised, and it was elevated politically with the Declaration on Climate and Health, launched during the inaugural COP Health Day at COP28 in Dubai. Still, we remain far from developing effective systems that can combat the health risks that climate change creates and amplifies.

This needs to change fast if we are to hold onto the incredible health gains the world has made in recent decades. In every country, at every income level, people are living longer and fewer children are dying than in previous decades. This progress is under threat, however, because health systems are not equipped to adapt to a complex, compounding set of risk factors that are likely to grow exponentially as the planet warms.

Climate change is a global problem but its health implications are highly local, and cities are often at the front lines. By 2050, nearly 70% of the world's population is expected to live in cities, each with a unique climate risk profile. Some cities, like Delhi or Ouagadougou, already experience unprecedented

heatwaves. Others, like Dhaka, Miami and Dubai have seen a rise in the frequency and severity of extreme flooding incidents. Elsewhere, cities like Rio de Janeiro and Ho Chi Minh City, have seen significant growth in cases of dengue fever driven by a changing climate.

In all of these instances, a dense concentration of people over a small area of land amplifies existing, often extreme, vulnerability. These are often hyper-local as a result of variations in demographic makeup and urban infrastructure across cities. For example, different parts of the same city can experience huge differences in temperature depending on the presence of cooling factors like vegetation and water or heat traps created by building materials like corrugated iron.

Today, most cities are 'flying blind' to the climate-health connection. Too often, climate implications are not taken into account in public health priorities, climate and health professionals are in limited dialogue, and local governments are poorly equipped to use insights about the rapidly changing climate to improve decision making. To illustrate the scale of the challenge, a recent survey supported by The Rockefeller Foundation found that while nearly 70% of cities recognise the health threats posed by climate change, less than a third have any plans that integrate climate and health, only 28% have specific resources such as early warning systems, and the majority of cities say there is insufficient cross-departmental coordination in tackling climate-health issues.

To close these gaps, and overcome the hyper-local vulnerabilities created by climate change, local leadership is needed to drive collaboration between health, climate and other sectors of the government and society. That local leadership needs the support of enhanced national, sub-national and international support systems.

Over the last two years the Rockefeller Foundation has been consulting, funding and convening partners working at the intersection of climate, health and local resilience. This year, the UN General Assembly High-Level Week, has provided a key moment for launching its perspective on how a coalition of global partners can accelerate progress in addressing these multifaceted challenges.

Achieving people-centred impact at scale requires a local delivery system led by a leader, such as a

mayor, who is prepared to prioritise addressing the health impacts of climate change. Lessons from around the world provide a clear, resounding message: little can be achieved without local political will and prioritisation.

But for these and other successes to be amplified, and replicated, local leadership requires national and global solidarity. At the national level, government agencies must work together across departments. Health surveillance and climate monitoring services need to be effective, and their data should similarly be linked and shared through national digital infrastructure. These sound like easy things to do, but they require a level of trust and cooperation between ministries that is often elusive.

And these country-level supports will only be realised equitably if they are backed by international efforts. These may include providing financing, creating peer-learning networks that disseminate best practices and standards, developing digital public infrastructure and tools that can be customised to each country's context, and conducting globally applicable research and science.

Effective linkage of climate and health to save lives requires innovation and collaboration between areas of government that do not always work together, or even speak the same language. And it requires funders, multilateral agencies and academia from across the world to come together in solidarity.

To this end, The Rockefeller Foundation is calling for a global coalition of actors from across government, academia, civil society, philanthropy and multilateral agencies, to rapidly scale up the ambition, and the impacts, of climate and health action. On the first ever Health Day at COP28 in November 2023, the Foundation committed US\$100 million to this area of work over the next five years. If that were leveraged by various forms of international capital – philanthropies, bilateral donor and development banks – this could in turn unlock sufficient domestic financing to protect millions of people globally.

The World Economic Forum predicts that business as usual will lead to 14.5 million excess deaths due to climate change by 2050. Alongside mitigation efforts to reduce global temperature rises, investing in climate-informed health action is essential to minimise the toll. There has never been a more urgent time to invest.

# Solidarity: An act of rebellion and a pathway to ecological peace



## Dr. Youssef Mahmoud

Senior Advisor, International Peace Institute

Dr. Youssef Mahmoud is a former UN Under-Secretary-General and has headed peace operations in Burundi, the Central African Republic and Chad. He has held several other senior United Nations positions, notably as UN Resident Coordinator in Guyana and Director in the Department of Political Affairs at the UN headquarters in New York. In 2015 he served as a member of the UN Secretary-General High Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and a member of the High Level Advisory Group for the Global Study on Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. In 2019, he led an independent strategic review of the UN peace operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in response to a UN Security Council Resolution.

He is currently a Visiting Professor at the African Leadership Centre in Nairobi, Kenya and King's College, London and serves as Co-Chair of Home for Humanity, a citizen-led movement for planetary regeneration.

Dr. Mahmoud has a PhD in Linguistics from Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

Much has been written about solidarity as a world changing idea<sup>56</sup> as the foundation for social, economic and cultural rights<sup>57</sup> and a means for addressing climate emergencies.<sup>58</sup> It is a lived relationship that engenders transformative collective hope in times of adversity.<sup>59</sup> Many African societies find the roots of solidarity in the Ubuntu philosophy of existence: “I am because we are.”<sup>60</sup> Solidarity for them is the bond that binds one human to another beyond laws and social institutions.<sup>61</sup>

And yet as we witness the gradual collapse of the world we have made, solidarity seems to be missing in action. Whether in Ukraine, Gaza or Sudan, violent conflicts are on the rise as a means for settling old and emerging disputes. They also seem increasingly difficult to end – traditional UN peacemaking tools don't seem to be of much help.<sup>62</sup> In many societies under stress, nationalistic and exclusionary policies, along with the demonisation of others, have sucked the oxygen out of solidarity, giving further impetus to those who have been advocating for ‘belonging without othering’.<sup>63</sup>

Multilateral and national institutions, which are expected to encourage cooperation in the face of these and many other challenges, have not measured up to expectations. This year's Global Solidarity Report finds that while public solidarity is more widespread than assumed, the institutional response has so far failed to match the gravity of the moment.

In addition to stagnation in the area of peace and security, institutions entrusted with international development cooperation have also struggled, largely because they find it hard to move beyond the ‘aid’ narrative.<sup>64</sup> Steps taken by the UN General Assembly to promote a social and solidarity economy<sup>65</sup> haven't had the desired effect. Time will tell whether the proposed reforms in the much awaited UN Pact for the Future<sup>66</sup> will help restore faith in multilateralism as a custodian of international solidarity.

## Solidarity as an act of rebellion

In societies where governing structures are influenced by ruling elites focused on power than effective governance, a new grassroots radical form of solidarity is appearing.<sup>67</sup> In these societies, people are calling for social, economic and ecological justice, equality and dignity, often risking much to convey their messages. In North America,<sup>68</sup> Africa<sup>69</sup> and South Asia<sup>70</sup> these protests



are spearheaded primarily by a disillusioned, post-millennial generation, ‘Gen Z’, who are seeking an end to politics as usual.<sup>71</sup>

Referred to by some as the solidarity generation,<sup>72</sup> these hyperconnected digital activists<sup>73</sup> are increasing pressure on ineffective leaders<sup>74</sup> and reimagining solidarity<sup>75</sup> both within and between nations. Their efforts often blur artificial borders, reflecting that the causes driving their struggles transcend national boundaries. The recent youth-led anti-corruption street protests in Kenya and other parts of Africa<sup>76</sup> provide an eloquent demonstration of this transnational phenomenon. A great deal of co-learning has taken place across countries, particularly with the use of crowdsourcing as a solidarity mechanism for mobilising financial resources. In Kenya these solidarity funds have been used to pay hospital bills and funerals brought on by the state’s violent response.<sup>77</sup>

At a time when democracy is in retreat and authoritarianism and global inequalities are on the rise, taking a stand – often at a personal cost – appears to have become the choice for a growing number of citizens from the emerging generations. For many who want to be a voice rather than an echo, rebellion is not just about challenging authority or breaking the rules; it is an act of citizenship in solidarity with justice<sup>78</sup> and, increasingly, with nature.<sup>79</sup> And for such an act to be transformative, inter-generational solidarity is critical. It helps leverage the diverse perspectives and life experiences of youth and of good ancestors<sup>80</sup> for the purpose of co-tomorrowing<sup>81</sup> a more equitable future for all, while avoiding elite cooptation.<sup>82</sup>


## Solidarity as making peace with nature

For centuries humans have considered themselves separate from and superior to nature. This ideology has been used to justify the extensive extraction of Earth’s resources for ever-increasing consumption on a finite planet. The resulting ecological overshoot has placed humans as an endangered species.<sup>83</sup> To help reverse this trend and prevent disputes over natural resources from fuelling more conflicts, some have called for ecological solidarity<sup>84</sup> as a key step to make peace with nature.<sup>85</sup> This means making room for a new type of peace that has been excluded from the dominant

discourse,<sup>86</sup> a peace that transcends human relations<sup>87</sup> and involves being empathetic with all living beings, human and non-human.

This ecological interbeing<sup>88</sup> involves embracing different understandings of solidarity<sup>89</sup> and drawing inspiration from indigenous communities that have maintained healthy social and ecological relationships with the environment, where humans are integral but not central to planetary ecosystems. Many educators have turned to the Earth Charter<sup>90</sup> and the Earthwise Constitution<sup>91</sup> as a resource for nurturing this type of solitary relationship with the Earth and are devising curricula that can catalyse the co-creation of a regenerative future<sup>92</sup> for generations to come.

The primary aim of these reflections is to contribute to a pluriversal<sup>93</sup> understanding of solidarity as an evolving paradigm for managing the collapse of an anthropocentric, exploitative system of governance and laying the foundations for compassionate, just and peaceful futures for both the planet and people.



“ For many who want to be a voice rather than an echo, rebellion is not just about challenging authority or breaking the rules; it is an act of citizenship in solidarity with justice.


# Calls to Action

Global solidarity has never been more urgent. But our current ways of operating in this increasingly multipolar world have led to faltering progress and growing division. Despite the monumental shifts we have seen in the last hundred years, such as the establishment of universal human rights, reductions in global poverty, and progress on racial and gender equality, we are coming to realise how fragile our achievements are and how quickly progress can be reversed.

Building global solidarity needs to be intentional, not a by-product of pursuing other goals. Renewing our multilateral system so that it can effectively deliver the kind of collective global action that leads to the delivery of public goods – security, health, climate, biodiversity, social protection, equality – will mean pulling on all the levers we have discussed in this report: identities, institutions and impacts.

We cannot continue as we are. We need a new approach.

To this end, this year we make two Calls to Action.



Win the messaging war



## Transform Global Public Investment

### First, let's win the messaging war

The data and analysis presented in this report demonstrate the urgency of instilling hope in the minds of the global public – particularly the younger generations – so that they are not persuaded by voices that seek to divide. By rooting intentional messaging in the science of solidarity, we can turn the tide and promote a new confidence in international cooperation, which will underpin policy progress on the full range of global issues.

### Second, let's transform global public investment

No amount of public statements and well-written speeches will be enough without better money and more money at the international level for the common objectives we all share. In spite of hamstrung budgets, there are opportunities this year and next to make transformational shifts to the benefit of *all* countries, in particular by taxing wealth and developing fairer formulae for replenishing global funds.

# Win the messaging war

*Let's build a persistent and well-targeted public campaign for international cooperation using the science of solidarity.*

International action to tackle humanity's great challenges and build a new era of global progress is ultimately dependent on the instincts, opinions and feelings of individuals and the communities they belong to. If we see citizens of foreign countries as 'other', if we allow narrow self-interest to dominate our approach to geopolitics, and if we view international organisations as a threat to our freedom rather than a tool to enhance it, then we will fail to support communal action on global problems.

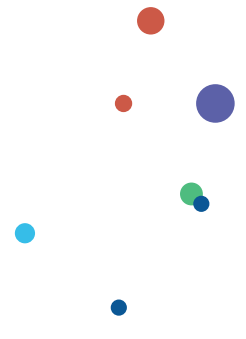
If the public is not sufficiently supportive, governments will not take the action that is needed. They may take some action. They may show up at international gatherings with fine words. They may make meagre investments in struggling institutions. But we won't see the strong collective action we need to emerge from global polycrisis without consistent, insistent demands from the public. Unless we turn the tide, new generations will be ever more pessimistic about our ability to tackle global crises and will not support collective global action.

## Coherent communication

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were born less than a decade ago. They represent one of humanity's most memorable moments of togetherness, where every country signed up to one set of goals for humanity. A successful communications campaign then created awareness of the goals which are now well known across the planet.

However, people are now being told a more cynical story of the world, reinforced by a 24-hour news cycle that often fuels fear and despair. The global pandemic, wars in Europe and the Middle East, and a range of economic and political shocks, have all contributed to a narrative that undermines our belief in a world that can work together.

Furthermore, our recent history has been shaped by a hegemonic world order that has led some to feel growing resentment towards the 'international system'. The fallout as our world becomes more multipolar is a logical consequence of this, and one we must now navigate with confidence.



Those supporting advocacy and communications efforts must draw on the success of the SDGs campaign as they regroup. But this time, engagement with citizens must extend beyond awareness. We need to build *community*. We can no longer afford to treat solidarity as an isolated issue that is paid occasional lip service in international advocacy efforts. Instead, we need an intentional messaging campaign that will help build global solidarity as the foundation for those very efforts.

Furthermore, we need to break out of our bubbles and meet people where they are at. This means nurturing strong global identities and bolstering weakening ones to reignite people's excitement for what we can achieve together as a world. A coherent set of messages will reduce the ability of divisive populism to dominate public narratives and pit countries and peoples against each other.

## Evidence underpins narrative

This new, coherent messaging approach necessitates a patient exercise to compile and strengthen the evidence base for how global belonging can be intentionally built across the world, in a way that will resonate across generations, gender, culture and values. It should test and learn, with the most promising approaches being scaled – this is what we call the science of solidarity.

Shifting narratives and perspectives mean we have to consistently publish positive stories on global issues, making the case for solidarity. Everyone who believes in international cooperation has a role to play. We can equip them through a campaign that sets out what we need to do and how, offering evidence people can use as well as guides to action.

In place of fear of disaster, this campaign must instead inspire hope and turn the rising tide of despair. We need to bolster the resolve of the internationalists and win over the waverers. Only an intentional, well-funded, fact-based campaign can change the narrative and make a compelling case for global solidarity and cooperation.

# Why and how we need to become a Larger Us



## Alex Evans

**Founder and Executive Director, Larger Us**

Alex Evans is the founder and Executive Director of Larger Us; a community of change-makers who share the aim of using psychology for good – to bridge divides, build broader coalitions and bring people together. He is a Visiting Professor in Practice at Newcastle University's School of Arts and Cultures, a Senior Fellow at New York University's Center on International Cooperation, and the author of *The Myth Gap: What Happens When Evidence and Arguments Aren't Enough?* (Penguin, 2017), a book about the power of deep stories to unlock systemic social and political change and how to address a world of increasing them-and-us identity.

It's a hundred years since the poet WB Yeats wrote "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold...The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity."<sup>94</sup>

He might have been talking about today. In too many places around the world, we're succumbing to polarisation, tribalism and sectarian thinking, as authoritarianism and populism surge.

And this erosion of common ground is hampering us from responding to some of the toughest and most urgent challenges we've ever faced, like climate breakdown, hyper inequality and mass extinction.

I started thinking about this a lot back in 2018, when I was running a national campaign in the UK to oppose and try to prevent Brexit.

I was acutely aware of how my work might be contributing to the intense polarisation that had erupted on the issue, and of how conventional wisdom in the change-making world believes that the most effective campaigns usually pit a good 'us' against a bad 'them'.

I was also working to try to counter the influence of Cambridge Analytica<sup>95</sup> and became fascinated by how it sought to use psychology as a way to amplify division – and how it might be possible to inoculate citizens, communities or even whole societies against this kind of mass trolling.

All of these questions led me to found Larger Us,<sup>96</sup> a non-profit organisation that works with change-makers and activists to explore ways to use psychology to bridge divides, build broader coalitions and bring people together.

At the heart of our work is the recognition that our states of mind and the state of the world are intimately connected – and that we all need to get better at both recognising and acting on that fact.

We usually think of the problems we're facing in the real world – climate breakdown, mass extinction, inequality, poverty – in a different category from our crises of mental health, like our epidemics of depression, loneliness, anxiety and self-harm, especially among the young.

But, actually, our inner and outer crises *aren't* separate.

Take depression or anxiety. We used to think that they are caused by imbalances in brain chemistry, and that

the way to treat them is simply to take drugs to redress the imbalance.

Increasingly, though, we're realising that they have deep roots in how our ways of living fail to meet the psychological needs of many – and maybe most – of us.<sup>97</sup>

And if the state of the world 'out there' affects our inner states of mind, our states of mind have tangible impacts on the state of the world too.

Why? Because whether we feel hopeful or fearful, calm or furious, in control or overwhelmed, all of it shapes how we show up as citizens, whether online, in our communities, or in polling booths at election time.

So it turns out that, ultimately, both our mental health *and* the health of the democracies we're part of depend on our ability to manage our mental and emotional states, especially during our 'polycrisis' of intensifying turbulence and uncertainty.

What then can we do to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem? Here are six suggestions for ways we can be the change we want to see in the world.

**1. Steady yourself.** Our automatic fight-flight-freeze mode is great for keeping us safe from physical danger, but *terrible* for political events. We get overwhelmed. Less empathetic. Worse at critical or imaginative thinking. More aggressive. Locked into our in-groups.

So, while it's natural to feel grief, anger and fear at the state of the world, we need to process these feelings as healthily as we can and then do our best to come to steadiness. With practice, we can build our ability to make conscious choices about how to respond to things we find threatening.<sup>98</sup>

**2. Curate your media diet.** So many players in our information environment have both the motive and the means to keep us in a fight-flight-freeze state. Populist politicians. Terrorists. Conspiracy theorists. Social media or news media companies wanting to monetise our attention.

When we make intentional choices<sup>99</sup> about the sources and stories we use to make sense of the world, it has both personal and political impact. Do your best to avoid doomscrolling. Try to get out of your echo chamber and find thoughtful voices who challenge you.

**3. Change your perspective.** In-group bias is hardwired into all of us: whenever we see ourselves as part of a group, we view it more favourably. That's fine

in lots of contexts, but it tends to be disastrous where anything political is concerned because it only gives us half the picture.

Perspective taking<sup>100</sup> – being able to see a situation through someone else's eyes and empathise with what they're thinking and feeling – is fundamental if we want to help bridge divides and build broader coalitions.

**4. Listen before you speak.** All of us reach for the megaphone when we feel passionate. But if we make people feel judged or talked at, then the chances of any kind of real encounter evaporate – because, as the writer Amanda Ripley says, "humans need to be heard before they will listen".

Instead, ask open-ended questions – and listen to the answers. Having 'curious conversations', where both sides are open to an encounter in which they change their mind, is a profoundly hopeful act. It's one that can drive deep political change, too.<sup>101</sup>

**5. Call in, don't call out.** As great as it feels to shame people for things they've said or shared, it usually makes them dig into their positions (which may well be unconscious or performative) and it can also ignite 'mutual radicalisation', where each side acts contemptuously or threateningly towards the other, steadily widening the divide.

We'll usually find we can change more if we call people in<sup>102</sup> rather than out. Take a breath – then do it privately, gently and respectfully.

**6. Tell different stories.** The stories we use to make sense of crises can easily become self-fulfilling prophecies when we believe them and then behave accordingly. Think of what happens during a bank run, when a sudden surge of people withdrawing money through fear that it *may* fail can cause it to collapse, even if it was stable before the panic withdrawals.

But there's also deep power in moral imagination that creates different stories of more hopeful futures. Refusing the extremists' call to see the world as a 'them-and-us' and instead telling stories of a 'larger us' – where 'us' is defined by what we share, not who's excluded – can have big effects, as campaigns like Radical Love<sup>103</sup> in Istanbul in 2019 show spectacularly.

Driving change in ways that bring people together rather than dividing them isn't just possible, it's also necessary if we want to achieve victories that last. The good news is that a growing number of change-makers are showing how it's done.



# Transform global public investment

*Let's tax wealth as the basis for fairer spending at home and substantial increases in global public investment, allowing for the replenishment of crucial global funds.*

Many actions are required to shift our world back towards a path of global cooperation and solidarity. These actions encompass everything from public outreach campaigns to rebuilding global institutions to delivering global public goods like climate stability and biodiversity, and development outcomes on hunger, health and education. But none of these are possible without money. Money is the true test of resolve when it comes to mitigating the impact of the Climate Crisis, eradicating extreme poverty and vaccinating the world's children.

Estimates on the scale and type of investment required vary but there is one thing on which all analyses agree: we need a step change in the quantity of money available at the international level if we are to come close to achieving the objectives we have set ourselves. Trillions not billions of dollars. Development, progress and survival all require substantial investment.

There has long been a need for governments to radically alter the way they think about international financing for development and global public goods (GPGs) but recent campaigns for increased funding have failed to transition towards mutuality in both narrative and actual spending. Now that the hegemonic world order is weakening and international divisions are spiralling, it is becoming ever more urgent and increasingly possible to make the case for change.

Global Citizen estimates that implementing a set of already-costed proposals could generate at least US\$675 billion per year in grants. To make progress, we need to move on from the us-and-them, developed/developing language which dominated 20th century development finance debates and couch proposals in terms of mutual benefit, shared outcomes and reparations for damage already done.

In this report, we call for special emphasis on two particular issues which present opportunities for transformational steps forward this year:



## Taxing wealth

No one can more easily afford to contribute to resolving our world's challenges than the billionaire class. No one has benefited more from globalisation, with wealth held in hundreds of jurisdictions and protected by laws and freedoms that the international system underpins. And no one has contributed more to global 'bads', with billionaires' carbon footprints equal to thousands of those of regular citizens.<sup>104</sup>

Astonishingly, billionaires currently pay less tax than most ordinary people. A globally coordinated minimum tax on just 3,000 high-net value individuals worldwide would raise hundreds of billions of dollars.

Just 20 years ago, this suggestion would have marked you out as a radical with few governments taking the idea seriously. But what seemed impossible then is now on the agenda of the world's major governments, led by Brazil as the chair of the G20. From Sri Lanka and Spain to Argentina Bolivia and Colombia, countries are making progress towards taxing the wealth of the richest. In fact, 260 millionaires and billionaires themselves signed a letter in early 2024 demanding to be taxed more.

This progress is testament to the persistent and persuasive campaigning of civil society and thinktanks across the world, exemplifying global solidarity in action. We must now double down on campaigning and advocacy to get this transformational proposal over the line.

## Global public investment for critical replenishments

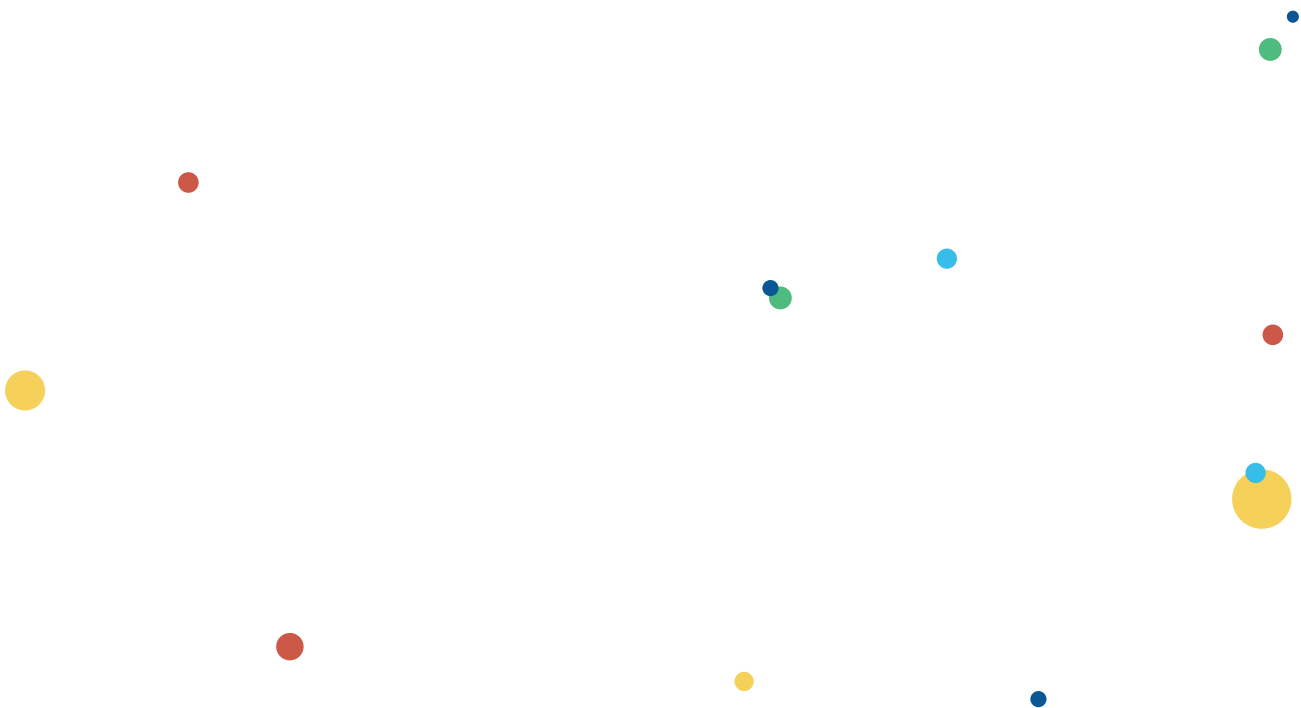
The world has already developed a means of paying for the things we collectively care about via global funds that are used to tackle a range of critical issues. 2024 and 2025 will be key years for the replenishment of major global funds, including the World Bank's IDA, the African Development Bank's African Development Fund, the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the Gavi Vaccine Alliance, among others. We need to ensure that existing international funds are well financed and that new ones are established to address other global priorities, including social protection, biodiversity, climate loss and damage, and digital inclusion.

The wealth analysis necessary to implement a wealth tax on the global elite could serve a dual purpose. As well as providing the platform for an important new form of national taxation, billionaire wealth could also be used to help calculate a fair-share contribution to international financing even before a wealth tax is actually introduced (just as there is no hypothecated tax to raise the 0.7% of GNI that OECD member countries are currently expected to provide in official development assistance, commonly known as aid). Simultaneous progress on implementing both the taxation of wealth and

the norm of global public investment would be a mutually reinforcing cycle that could contribute to strengthening and modernising our global public finance system.

Given its longstanding mandate on development and growing authority on taxation, the United Nations is in a unique position to advance progress towards setting powerful norms linking extreme wealth to national contributions to tackle global problems.

We are all affected by global threats like pandemics and climate change, and every region has pockets of extreme wealth. As we build a new system of global public investment based on mutuality – in which all contribute, all benefit and all decide – a crucial part of the formula for establishing country contributions could be through a percentage of the wealth held by the very richest.



“ We are coming to realise how fragile our achievements are and how quickly progress can be reversed. Building global solidarity needs to be intentional, not a by-product of pursuing other goals.

Jonathan Glennie

# Tax solidarity is essential—and it's doable!



## Jayati Ghosh

**Professor of Economics, University of Massachusetts Amherst**

Jayati Ghosh taught economics at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, and is currently Professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA. She is Co-Chair of the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation, Member of the Club of Rome and Member of the UN High Level Advisory Board on Economic and Social Affairs.

Rampant inequality, and the associated ability of elites and big multinational corporations (MNCs) to game legal and regulatory systems and shape economic policies for their own benefit, is creating dysfunctional economies and polarised populations across the world. This is happening even as the world currently faces multiple crises that are greater, deeper and potentially more catastrophic than ever before.

Everyone knows that things have to change. Popular anger against governments and elites is expressing itself in many ways, but the revanchist tendencies that push countries back into inward-looking and xenophobic strategies are only likely to make things worse. Instead, it is possible to envision a different future in which governments make policies for the benefit of their people and the planet, rather than pander to the short-term interests of private profits and elite enrichment.

One of the most obvious ways in which things can change is through reforming the international tax architecture. The current system came into place around a century ago, when MNCs were rare and when the rich in each country could not park their wealth easily in tax havens. This system barely acknowledges the possibility of companies and wealthy people moving their profits, incomes and assets to low tax jurisdictions to avoid being taxed where they are resident. Yet such practices are now so common that the largest global corporations and the richest individuals in the world pay hardly any tax on their incomes or assets.

The EU Tax Observatory's Global Tax Evasion Report 2024<sup>105</sup> describes some of the ways this occurs, including by clearly illegal practices such as concealing income from offshore bank accounts. 'Grey-zone' tax-saving practices, such as shifting profit to foreign shell companies and creating holding companies or trusts to manage personal wealth to avoid individual income taxes, are also common. Global billionaires have effective tax rates equivalent to as little as zero to 0.5% of their wealth, while analysis of the country-by-country reporting of profits by MNCs showed that about 35% of foreign profits amounting to US\$1 trillion were shifted to tax havens in 2022.

Recently, there have been some positive steps to deal with this. To enable the taxation of extreme wealth, the simple sharing of banking information across countries has been a breakthrough. The US Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA),

implemented in 2014, required all banks everywhere to report on the account holdings of US taxpayers under threat of penalties. From 2017, the automatic exchange of banking information through the OECD's Common Reporting Standard (CRS) grew to involve more than 110 jurisdictions (although excluding the US!). These have made it harder for very wealthy individuals to avoid reporting offshore financial wealth. In 2022 alone, around US\$12.6 trillion in offshore wealth was reported to foreign tax authorities through these mechanisms.

This does not mean, however, that those assets and incomes are then taxed; many governments have been reluctant to do so fearing resistance and capital flight, and they are being unduly influenced by powerful lobbies of wealthy individuals and large companies. Offshore tax evasion has also not disappeared; it is estimated that about 25% of global offshore financial wealth remains untaxed. Not all offshore financial institutions comply with the reporting requirements and the US, which contains several tax haven states, does not participate in the CRS. Furthermore, the very rich can choose to hold non-financial assets such as real estate.

One remedy for this is to institute a global minimum wealth tax only on dollar billionaires. Even a relatively low tax rate of 2% (barely noticeable for those who hold such enormous wealth) would generate significant tax revenues: close to US\$250 billion annually from less than 3,000 people. In a recent report commissioned by Brazil Presidency of the G20, Gabriel Zucman<sup>106</sup> has provided a blueprint on how this can be done, showing clearly that all that is required is political will, which citizens must force their governments to show.

The other major weakness in the global tax system is the ability of MNCs to manipulate their profits by shifting them to other countries, which is possible because the system treats each subsidiary of a corporation as an individual separate entity. By shifting profits to low tax jurisdictions, MNCs typically pay only a fraction of what domestic companies have to pay. This can easily be prevented if MNCs are treated as a single entity and taxed accordingly, based on their sales and employment in each country to determine their share of global profits. This would have to be combined with a global minimum tax floor to fight tax competition and the race to the bottom in tax rates.

The international initiative to deal with this, the OECD Base Erosion and Profit Sharing (BEPS)

'inclusive process', has had only limited success. One major result of prolonged negotiations over seven years was the agreement in 2021 to enforce a minimum corporate tax rate. The principle was important, but the rate finally agreed upon was much lower than the 25% proposed by the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation, of which I am part, which could generate US\$500 billion a year. Furthermore, a number of exceptions (known as 'carveouts') have undermined the process further, reducing possible revenue.

The other 'pillar' of the OECD BEPS negotiations is unitary taxation, which involves treating MNCs as one entity and apportioning taxable profits fairly across all countries in which they have an economic presence. Again, however, the OECD diluted the measure, reduced its coverage and introduced unnecessary complications. As a result, the revenue potential is very limited. Developing countries would get negligible additional taxes, in return for giving up digital service taxes and submitting to problematic dispute processes.

The good news is that there are new opportunities for significant movement on taxing both individual wealth and MNCs. Countries in the Global South, led by the African Union, have successfully called for a new intergovernmental process at the United Nations. Negotiations towards a Framework Tax Convention on International Tax Cooperation have now started, and this provides a platform to rework the current defective international tax rules more comprehensively. The UN is a body with a rules-based decision-making process, universal membership, and participation of all member countries, so it is likely to be more democratic and genuinely inclusive than the OECD-led process.

This is a tremendous opportunity to advance global solidarity in a relatively painless way, with huge advantages to citizens and costs only to MNCs and ultra-rich people. Unsurprisingly, some governments have been influenced by elite lobbies to go slow and hinder this process, which is all the more reason for a people's movement to push back. This opportunity for reforming international taxation under the aegis of the UN should be enthusiastically supported and demanded by citizens of every country.

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5 Mancur Olson established ‘The Logic of Collective Action’ in 1965 and this section draws on his groundbreaking thinking and that of experts that followed him.

6 The concept of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities was developed for precisely this reason.

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# Appendix: Methodology

The innovative framework used in this report was developed by Global Nation, in consultation with a range of academics, leaders and advocates at MIT, LSE, NYU, Gates Foundation, UN Agencies and national governments. It proposes global solidarity as consisting of three drivers; Identities, Institutions, and Impacts. To produce a scorecard based on these drivers, a set of eleven indicators was identified after a careful process of research, validation, and consultation. These indicators have been selected because they are powerful in providing relevant evidence, simple to understand, available in public data sources, and recent (covering the last 12 to 18 months). They highlight some of the most important success factors in the difficult task of effectively measuring global solidarity and are used to establish a benchmark against which to assess the state of global solidarity each year. For each indicator, there are 'goalposts.' On one end an upper bound indicates high solidarity that will enable successful international cooperation and at the other end, a lower bound represents a failure of solidarity that jeopardises the global community.

Each indicator's bounds allow us to translate actual data values into a score, plotted between 0 and 100 (noting there are instances that fall 'off the charts'). These scores can then be weighted and aggregated into an overall score.

This final score can sit in one of four categories:

**75 to 100: "Shared Purpose,"** reflecting the high levels of global solidarity we need to solve our collective action problems

**50 to 74: "Green Shoots,"** where levels of solidarity set us on a hopeful, albeit precarious path to tackling shared challenges

**25 to 49: "Danger Zone,"** reflecting worryingly low levels of solidarity that threaten to make international crises far worse

**0 to 24: "Breaking Point,"** a catastrophic failure of solidarity that risks creating a tailspin towards the breakdown of international society, with tragic outcomes for people and planet

This approach to goalpost-setting has been designed to provide a realistic, meaningful range within which each year's data points can be scored.

A full methodology note with further information is available online at [globalnation.world/global-solidarity-report](https://globalnation.world/global-solidarity-report)

## A summary of our scorecard indicators

### Identities

Issue	Indicator	Rationale
<b>1a Belonging</b>	Proportion of respondents agreeing with the statement: “I consider myself more a world citizen than a citizen of the country I live in.”	<p>A shared group identity is central to solidarity and is the fundamental tool for solving collective action problems: we can put aside our selfish interests only when we feel that we are part of something bigger. This question has a “strong” formulation, as it asks people if they feel <i>more</i> like citizens of the world than of their own country.</p> <p>Identity is not an “either... or...” Identities are built on top of each other like layers. This is proven by the survey data, which shows that people who agree with this statement on global citizenship typically also feel very proud of their country. The reason for the strong formulation is to ensure that it captures those who truly feel committed to internationalism. For this reason, the same formulation has been used in a large number of surveys in the past, which means this 2023 data can be compared with historical levels of agreement with the same statement.</p>
<b>1b Taxes</b>	Proportion of respondents agreeing with the statement: “My taxes should go toward solving global problems.”	This question is designed to test how meaningful the “world citizen” identity measured in the previous question really is. For a group of humans to solve collective action problems, requires its members to make sacrifices for the good of the group. The most basic sacrifice that political groups require of their members is paying tax. Are people willing for their taxes to solve global problems or do they insist that someone else picks up the bill?
<b>1c Enforcement</b>	Proportion of respondents agreeing with the statement: “For certain problems, like environmental pollution, international bodies should have the right to enforce solutions.”	This third question also tests how meaningful global citizenship really is. In addition to making individual sacrifices for the good of the group, the other fundamental requirement of citizens is that they agree to rules being made, and enforced, collectively. This question tests not only whether people think that countries should be compelled to live up to their obligations to protect the planet, but also the level of trust that people have that such enforcement can be achieved by international organisations.

#### Data

The polling was carried out by Ipsos on its Global Advisor online platform, between Friday, April 19 and Friday, May 3, 2024. For this survey, Ipsos interviewed a total of 21,023 adults aged 18 years and older in India, 18-74 in Canada, Republic of Ireland, Israel, Malaysia, South Africa, Turkey, and the United States, 20-74 in Thailand, 21-74 in Indonesia and Singapore, and 16-74 in all other countries.

The sample consists of approximately 1,000 individuals each in Australia, Brazil, Canada, mainland China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy,

Japan, Spain, and the U.S., and 500 individuals each in Argentina, Belgium, Chile, Colombia, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Thailand, and Turkey.

Samples in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, and the U.S. can be considered representative of their general adult populations under the age of 75. Samples in Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, and Turkey are more urban, more educated, and/or more affluent than the general population. The survey results for these countries should be viewed as reflecting the views of the more “connected” segment of their population.

Global Nation aggregated the surveyed countries into High Income (HIC) and Low/Middle Income (LMIC) and attributed a weight to both groups based on their share of the total population of those 31 countries. Once processed, HIC respondents contribute 23.30% to the 31-country weighted average, while LMIC respondents contribute 76.70%.

In 2024, due to the polling data being subject to a different methodology than in 2023 when a different polling company conducted the survey for the identities data, the bounds were slightly adjusted to reflect this.

## Institutions

Issue	Indicator	Rationale
<b>2a Funding</b>	Proportion of donor countries’ total economy, measured in the GNI of members of the OECD DAC, that is dedicated to supporting multilateral organisations	<p>For the global community to operate well and achieve impact, it requires well-functioning institutions, and these in turn require adequate funding. This indicator measures the extent to which the public opinion question about “my taxes should go toward solving global problems” is being put into practice by governments.</p> <p>Ideally, there would be data from all countries in the world on their contributions to all multilateral organisations, including global funds. However, the best data available to cover most countries and most international organisations was the OECD’s dataset on Official Development Assistance (ODA) contributed by members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC).</p>
<b>2b Decision-Making</b>	Proportion of decisions at the UN agreed by consensus rather than going to vote (UN General Assembly) or veto (UN Security Council)	For a group to solve collective action problems, its members need to agree. This also applies globally. For international institutions to function well, they need not only money, but also a clear sense of direction. That direction is provided most of all by national governments. There are many different types of agreement and cooperative action that governments may undertake, inside and outside the UN. This indicator by no means covers all of these, but it does provide a very useful gauge of whether countries are agreeing with each other more, or less, when it comes to solving international problems.



<b>2c Representation</b>	Proportion of seats in national parliaments held by women	Neither true solidarity, nor effective decision-making, are possible when excluding wide swathes of the population because of their gender, race, or identity. While gender is not the only important measure of representation, it is a crucial one, and progress on gender representation in the world's most powerful political organisations is a useful gauge of institutional representation.
<b>2d Trade</b>	Exports of goods and services as a proportion of global GDP	<p>Despite the critical role in international affairs of governments and the multilateral organisations they have created, most cross-border interactions are through private individuals and companies. Each of them requires some level of trust and cooperation. What is the thickness of the web of private interactions that bind countries to each other? Trade volumes do not capture all of these interactions, but they are a powerful gauge of non-governmental cross-border cooperation.</p> <p>Trade implies the opposite of conflict, violent or otherwise, and trade sanctions are often the precursor or result of violent conflict. Indeed, it has often been said that the thick economic ties and interdependence of China and the US are the most powerful force preventing war between them.</p>

#### Data

The data sources used for these indicators are: OECD.Stat, United Nations Security Council, Peace & Security Data Hub, Inter-Parliamentary Union Parline Data, and World Bank World Development Indicators.

## Impacts

Issue	Indicator	Rationale
<b>3a Health Security</b>	Proportion of infants fully vaccinated with DTP3	<p>Infectious disease is one of the most important and complex cross-border challenges facing the world today. Already high on the list of global threats before 2019, the risk of cross-border transmission was made painfully clear to all by the COVID-19 pandemic. The most important system the world has for health security is the system by which vaccines are developed, manufactured, funded, and distributed so that they reach everyone. All four elements of the system are truly global efforts. And as the recent pandemic showed, the last one is the hardest.</p> <p>The proportion of young children that has access to the most basic and important life-saving vaccines is a critical indicator, not only of our preparedness for the next pandemic, but also the level of solidarity we have mustered to ensure that children everywhere do not die from easily preventable diseases.</p>

<b>3b Environment</b>	Reduction in CO <sub>2</sub> emitted into the atmosphere	Global warming, climate change, biodiversity loss, and other environmental challenges are the main risk to human survival and wellbeing. If global solidarity is going to achieve anything, it must include a reduction in our hugely negative impact on the natural environment on which our survival depends. Of all the environmental threats, climate change and its consequences are the greatest. Reducing CO <sub>2</sub> levels is the most important way to combat climate change, and would also likely indicate strong cooperation on other environmental indicators.
<b>3c Violent Conflict</b>	Conflict deaths per 100,000 population	Conflict is the opposite of cooperation, and violent conflict is the most devastating situation for human society to find itself in. Whether between countries or between factions within a country, the international community has the duty to minimise conflict and the tragedy and destruction that comes with it. Each death is a tragedy, and the number of deaths is a good indicator of the size and nature of a conflict. Given the growing number of non-formal violent conflicts, this figure includes deaths in non-state violence and one-sided violence, as well as state-based violence.
<b>3d Economic Convergence</b>	Difference in percentage in annual GDP growth of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) versus High-Income Countries (HICs)	A community cannot survive if inequality is unbearable. A sustainably effective global community needs to ensure that the vast inequality that currently exists between and within countries is reduced over time. Reducing inequality is a signifier of growing solidarity. There are many measures of inequality and convergence, and it is possible for national economies to converge while the poorest in society get poorer (for instance, if in-country inequality increases). However, global responsibility, while extensive, is limited in its oversight of in-country inequality, so it is most appropriate to measure the gaps between countries.

### Data

The data sources used for these indicators are: OECD.Stat, United Nations Security Council, Peace & Security Data Hub, Inter-Parliamentary Union Parline Data, and World Bank.



