

## **Covid-19, Vaccine Inequality and Global South**

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### **Abstract:**

This Paper charts the impact Covid-19 had on Global South. Though losses and deaths happened in the whole world but Global South suffered in a disproportionate manner. Case in point is Vaccination, viewed as a necessary shield against the disease. Inequitable distribution, limited access to raw materials, Vaccine nationalism were some impediments the Global South faced in Vaccine administration. It is thereby concluded if these inequities are not addressed, issues like Covid-19 will continue to test North-South cooperation in future.

Keywords: Covid-19, Global South, LDCs, Pandemic etc.

### **Introduction**

Covid-19 struck the world in a disastrous way. There have been marked differences in how the Pandemic was managed by the nations. There is also the question of how successful nations were able to handle the fall-out of the Pandemic. Huge loss of life and livelihood affected millions across the Globe. But for the Global South- a term used for Developing World-its impact was many times higher than the Global North. Global South includes nations of Africa, Asia, and South America that were previously more or less under Colonial Rule of the erstwhile Colonial Powers. But it does not act just as a synonym for less preferred terms like Third World. It also indicates the resilience and resistance of these nations and their desire to cooperate as legitimate and dignified participants in the World, like the Global North- a term used for developed nations. This shows that Global South carries different connotations. Most of the nations in this part of the world are Low-Income Countries (LICs) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) that rely on the Global North for much of the economic development. Pandemic hit this part of the World in a stronger way. People lost their lives, and economies took a hit. Developed Nations have also been affected and suffered huge losses; in fact, the reported fatality rate has been higher in the Western world. But it is not just about the losses; it is also about the potential to recover from these losses. In this case, also Global South suffers from challenges. And Not only Pandemic, but its aftermath is also different for the Global South.

In addition, to protect the population against the virus, the vaccine has been dubbed as the most plausible solution. Vaccination against Covid-19 accelerated as it has been one of the rarest occasions where both the Global South and Global North have been confronted with a more or less similar challenge. Every nation understands the need for rapid vaccination; however, Vaccination campaigns in this part of the World also suffer from a number of anomalies and shortcomings. Vaccine Inequality has made vaccination in many developing nations a tough affair.

### Covid19 and the Global South

Covid-19 or Sars-CoV-19 emerged as the latest and huge threat to Global Health. The disease is caused by a group of novel coronaviruses. The first case came in December 2019 in Wuhan town of Hebei Province of China. It is primarily a respiratory problem. Highly infectious, this virus can spread from one person to another by touching or inhaling droplets of infected persons. It was shown to be caused by a novel coronavirus that is structurally related to the group of viruses that cause severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). Transmission is by air and person to person.

Coronavirus outbreak, however, is not the first occurrence of its kind. As stated, at least two instances of a previous outbreak in the form of MERS and SARS reported in the Middle East and China can be traced to these coronaviruses.

The Covid-19 outbreak proved to be one of the greatest challenges of the 21st Century. The Covid-19 outbreak has posed critical challenges for the public health, research, and medical communities. The fatality rate of this virus is, however, low compared to the 10% and 36% of SARS and MERS. For Covid-19, the fatality rate till now has been reported to be around 1%.

Moreover, many of the deaths reported included other cases of co-morbidities. It was also shown that in many cases of Covid-19 related deaths, people suffered from other additional severe ailments like Diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular problems, and other respiratory problems. The virus is Zoonotic. It means that this virus is carried by animals. The first case of Novel coronavirus-caused disease originated from an illegally operating wet market in Wuhan, China. Scientists and Virologists have also identified this virus as a fast mutating one. Many variants of Coronaviruses have been identified. So far, more than two hundred million cases have been reported, including those who recovered successfully, and more than four million people have lost their lives worldwide since the first case in December 2019. Many nations suffered more severely than the others; for instance, nations of Africa usually reported low cases while nations like Italy, the USA, the UK, Brazil, and India suffered some of the worst losses in terms of human cost. In fact, these nations also have the bulk of the caseload.

Covid-19 includes a number of symptoms like fatigue, sustained fever, body ache, pneumonia, and persistent cough. Owing to its fast mutation, new variants of the Covid-19 virus cause new types of symptoms. After-effects of Covid-19 also vary. In cases where the Delta Variant became the dominant, cases of many mucormycotic ailments were reported as a post-Covid-19 complication.

To contain the spread of the virus, many nations, including India (Kumar, Poddar & Yadav, 2020) imposed a stifling Lockdown. Global Air travel was stopped. Vigorous screening Tests at airports and

at least a 14-day quarantine of visiting people have become mandatory in different nations. The shock of the Pandemic was similar in terms of sentiment, but for some nations for it became even more upsetting because it toppled the economic balance and exposed underneath lying inequality.

This caused a number of nations in Global South to worry about what the future holds. Unlike the developed nations, the worries of developing nations were not restricted to containing the virus only. In many of the developing nations, economic and other Human Development indices were not already in good shape. Many of the nations in the Global South suffer from problems like Hunger and abject poverty. Pandemic has fastened the degeneration in many of the nations, and the chaos caused to point to an uncertain future. Daily cases in many nations of Global South remained around 20,000 like in Malaysia and India (Abiad, A., et al. 2020). There are also questions about the disparity between the officially reported figures and actual figures on the ground.

To understand the impact of the Pandemic on the Global South, a brief understanding of the term itself is important.

### Understanding Global South:

Global South is an all-encompassing term used for denoting nations of Asia, Africa, and South America. These nations are not grouped based on a common history or shared culture. This grouping is more based on the difference between the developing and developed nations in terms of economic and socio-political indicators. This term, however, is not uniform and represents nations like giants like China and India (Kumar, S., et al. (2020) and economically marginalized nations like Sudan and Somalia. Using Global South is not necessary; however, it is representational in case of circumstances these nations face. It is about the similarity of disproportionate representation and influence these nations have on the global stage in comparison to the Western nations. Even though this grouping has economically different nations, one thing that binds these nations together is the fact that most of these nations have been under the colonial and imperial rule of the Western powers from time to time and have faced a similar pattern of exploitation. Another reason this term is used is because of the rise of notions like South-South Cooperation and North-South cooperation. So, this term indicates a certain level of commonality, cooperation, and shared experiences. It is not being talked about as a homogenous unit or group.

Global South is not a mere geographical demarcation. It is a term of geopolitical significance. It tends to represent low-income, developing, and industrializing nations. It is an allegorical category based on economic inequality, but it means things beyond that.

The idea of a Global South is a confrontational as well as cooperative one. For nations forming this part of the World, this term is a source of identity. Bound by a shared experience of colonialism, the notion of a united or socio-politically aligned Global South is not without its share of potentials. This idea can be used for strategic partnerships also. It is a mobilizing strategy that is often presented as a critique of inequalities of the current global order. For instance, China, a rising Power, often draws on this rhetoric to strengthen the discourse around the need for inclusivity and an equity-based non-western global system.

South-South solidarity is the slogan of this post-colonial discourse. This represents the increased necessity to call for Global Development in the truest sense. This has been backed by leaders of Multilateral institutions like the World Bank as well. This term is not accepted by every indicated nation. However, it is much more acceptable than the Third World, which feels like the voluntary backwardness of the non-western world that did not become developed in Western ways. The idea of the Global South is much more politically and academically accepted.

It is not about South-South cooperation only. A well-meaning and well-organized Global south is also key to the success of North-South Cooperation. For this, a narrative around North-South dialogue is gaining traction with respect to pending issues. But for the Global South and its promises of win-win cooperation to succeed, mutual trust is also necessary. Nations of Global South are not always on friendly terms. There are unresolved issues and episodes of intense conflict and high friction between the nations. Also, these nations still rely very much on developed nations for key resources.

The inequality existing between the two is not that easy to eliminate. These inequalities are present at various levels. This fact, more than anything else, was exposed by the Covid-19 Pandemic. Nations were left gasping for breath and aid. It highlighted the lack of coordination between various actors of the global community.

To get a clearer idea, the impact of Covid-19 on the Global South is being presented more in detail in the following section.

### Impact Of Covid19 Pandemic on Global South

In terms of the suddenness of the disease and loss of life and livelihood, both the richer nations and poorer nations suffered in more or less the same terms. People lost their near and dear ones, industries and factories were closed down, workplaces were shut down, and millions of people lost their jobs permanently or temporarily. However, the economic implications of the Pandemic are not similar for every nation. Even if the short-term losses look similar for both the developing and developed nations, medium-term and long-term losses will be considerably varied.

The majority of the world's population resides in the Global South. Many of them belong to Low Income Nations (LICs) with little to no financial backup from their governments, and much of the unorganized and informal sector is hit hardest. Many nations face increased poverty and increasingly dismal human development indices. Pandemic proved to be a wrecking ball for economic, social, and political aspects of the society. The impact of the pandemic is going to stay for a long time. Global economic growth hit rock bottom for many nations. Increasing economic inequality accelerated by Capitalist hierarchy and free-market system proves dangerous for political stability. Many Nations like Thailand, Cuba, Brazil, South Africa saw some of the largest anti-government demonstrations during the Pandemic. So, the impact and aftermath of the pandemic become two different and challenging scenarios for the Global South. People there have gone through a number of voluntary and involuntary changes. There has been a tectonic shift in how people, businesses, and international organizations interact. In the wake of the pandemic, governments across the globe were forced to enter partial and full lockdown, issue stay-at-home orders, and implement strict curfews.

The gap between developed and developing countries in terms of relief and rescue also became apparent. For instance, developed nations such as the US, the UK, Canada, Australia were able to help their citizens in terms of considerable financial assistance, their industries with financial aid, and secure vaccines for the almost entire population. For the developing nations, handling the crisis at many levels proved to be a difficult task. In these nations, income equality soared significantly. This is true for developed nations as well. Both the UK and the USA saw millions of people losing their means of employment temporarily or permanently. But in the same period, the top five billionaires (Bezos, Gates, Buffet, Zuckerberg, and Ellison) increased their wealth by 26% (to the amount of \$102 billion), bringing the combined wealth of American billionaires to \$3.6 trillion and this amount is comparably higher than the wealth of Africa's 54 countries combined.

Historically, an outbreak of pandemic level disease shows no partiality in terms of casualties and infection. It is other determinants that get affected variedly for developed and developing nations in these times. This difference, in turn, prolongs the harmful results for the vulnerable in developing nations more than in the developed world.

It is not fair to say that the governments in Global South didn't do enough against the Pandemic. Nations like India (Arora & Gupta, 2020). and Malaysia put forth strict and manifold measures to control the spread of the virus. Developing nations also brought economic relief measures for their citizens. But It is not just about granting relief. It is also about the nature and structure of relief. For the unemployed in the Global South, relief is temporary and timebound. There hasn't been any significant long-term economic assistance scheme or policy in place for most of the nations. Also, the benefits of these temporary steps do not reach the target sections completely. It is because of the rampant corruption, elitist disregard, and internal social inequality in many of these nations. It leaves the poorer sections and labour with little financial security and little wages.

Besides the economic and the health impact of the Pandemic on the Global South, the political impact of the Pandemic has also been serious. It was widely reported that in the name of enforcing Covid-19 protocols, governments have been indulging in political suppression. This has been true for both Global North and Global South. Accusations of governments abusing their power and taking advantage of the restrictions to silence critics, weaken opposition and important institutions, and undermining the available accountability systems in place all in the name of public health safety became widespread. In the case of the developing world, where the political system is still not mature and suffers from lots of problems, this became even more serious. Journalists and other media persons were stopped from reporting from Covid19 hotspots and containment zones in the name of Covid-19 measures and SOPs (Standard Operating Protocols). On a broader level, however, this was seen as an attempt to stop Media from reporting on the flaws of Health infrastructure and Covid-19 mismanagement. Many protests were held against the government inaction and malpractices, and they were brutally handled by the ruling sections in the guise of Covid19 restrictions.

Pandemic also worsened the Human Rights Violations in many regions of the world. It particularly became bad insensitive and conflict zones of the world most of which are present in Global South. According to a report, young and fragile democracies reported a spurt in the number of human rights violations. These violations varied according to society's structure and the presence of vulnerable groups affected. For instance, in many nations, a rise was noticed in gender-based violence and

domestic violence. It also exposed the digital gap between the North and the South, along with other gaps. While every nation faced challenges in accommodating Work From Home Culture and shifting from Classroom education to Online, it was more glaringly evident in the case of developing nations. In India alone , it has been estimated that millions of schoolchildren had to drop out of school either because of a lack of sufficient electronic devices to carry out online classes or because of a lack of money (Sahoo, P., & Ashwani, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has had varied impacts on both sides, but the North is likely to have a relatively easier time recovering from it compared to the South (Acosta, Mendez, Evans and David, 2021).

Also, before the Pandemic, many nations in the Global South were already in high foreign debts. Many of them were suffering from weakening currencies and high unemployment. In many nations of Africa and South America, high fiscal deficits were recorded before the start of the Pandemic. So, it is going to be a daunting and high-stakes recovery for the nations of the Global South.

Thus Covid-19 and its after effect is a different scenario for both the Global North and Global South. Both of them found themselves in the same sea in different boats and facing different intensities of storms.

Another area where this inequality is going to hurt the prospects of the Global South in this pandemic is the Vaccination Programme. This becomes significant given the inevitability of using the vaccine as the most secure protection against the Pandemic of the present and future. This is, however, fraught with disparities and conflictual self-interests of nations indulging in Vaccine Nationalism even if pandemic acts as a clarion call for global collaboration. The same has been discussed in the next section.

#### Covid-19 Vaccination, Vaccine Inequality, and Vaccine Nationalism

A Vaccine helps the body's Immune System<sup>1</sup> in fighting against pathogens<sup>2</sup>. A Vaccine helps a person to develop immunity against a germ or virus. It works by introducing a less harmful part of the pathogen into a person's body by injecting it. It can also work by injecting something that is created to behave or look like the pathogen. Then the body's immune system develops antibodies to fight that particular germ and keep the person from getting sick from it. And if the person encounters that germ again, their immune system can "recognize" it and "remember" how to fight it off.

Vaccination prevents many diseases. The WHO-led a successful vaccination campaign against Polio disease, which has been now officially eradicated. There has been DTaP Vaccine against Tetanus, Flu Vaccine against Influenza, and Hepatitis Vaccine against Hepatitis B.

There is also a global alliance for successful vaccination and extending its reach to poorer nations. GAVI, officially Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance (previously the GAVI Alliance, and before that the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization) is a public-private global health partnership with the goal of increasing access to immunization in poor countries. This Alliance includes the WHO, the UNICEF,

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<sup>1</sup> Immune System is part of body that helps fighting against diseases by making antibodies against the foreign harmful particles and microorganisms.

<sup>2</sup> Pathogens A pathogen is defined as **an organism causing disease to its host**, with the severity of the disease symptoms referred to as virulence. Pathogens are taxonomically widely diverse and comprise viruses and bacteria as well as unicellular and multicellular eukaryotes

the World Bank, the Vaccine Manufacturers, Research and Technical agencies, Civil Society, and private philanthropists.

For Covid-19, no prescribed drug has been there as a cure. It is mainly because this virus is still evolving in medical terms.

National regulatory authorities have granted emergency use authorizations for twenty-two COVID-19 vaccines. Six of those have been approved for emergency or full use by at least one WHO-recognized stringent regulatory authority-Oxford–AstraZeneca, Pfizer–BioNTech, Sinopharm–BBIBP, Moderna, Sinovac, and Janssen (Johnson&Johnson). Covaxin and Covishield are developed in India.

The World Health Organisation and Various other Health Experts at National and International levels describe Vaccination as the only “effective protection” against the virus. The magnitude of the loss caused by the Pandemic, spread of the virus, and the Capitalist market need an accelerated Vaccination program. Vaccination has become mandatory in many nations for travelling inside and outside a country. Within a nation, vaccination is being carried out on a priority basis.

### Vaccine Inequality in Global South

The top ten nations that have administered the most cumulative doses per hundred people are Global North-Israel, the U.K, U.S.A., Spain, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Canada, France, and the Netherlands. Covid-19 pandemic swept across a world that was already unequal. According to a report, half of the global population earns less than \$5 a day. But what is worrisome is the fact that Covid19 has the potential to increase inequality in almost every nation at once. The Pandemic also exposed the institutional incapacity of the global organizations and institutions to weed out inequalities exacerbated by the virus. The impact is not the same for various workers across the social spectrum, even within a nation. The outbreak of this virus disproportionately affects paid and unpaid care workers, precarious workers, frontline workers, and women.

In Global South, the lack of vaccines is not the only problem. There have been logistical difficulties with less than sufficient health infrastructure, delivery, and hesitancy of public towards the vaccination (Vaccine hesitancy is not specific to Global South, it could be seen in developed Nations also where it became the target of a number of conspiracy theories).

One of the main reasons responsible for this inequality has been Vaccine Nationalism adopted by some nations.

### Vaccine Nationalism

When a country manages to secure doses of vaccines for its own citizens or residents and prioritizes its own domestic markets before they are made available in other countries, it is known as ‘vaccine nationalism’. This is done through pre-purchase agreements between a government and a vaccine manufacturer.<sup>3</sup>

Global cooperation has often become prey to national self-interest in health emergencies like this. Richer nations like the USA, Canada, France, the UK spent billion of dollars booking the Vaccines for

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<sup>3</sup><https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/what-is-vaccine-nationalism-how-does-it-impact-the-fight-against-covid-19-6561236/>

their citizens. Working in National Interest is not the problem. The thing is, most of the poorer nations lack financial and human resources to book vaccines for themselves. They, along with other things, depending upon the Richer Nations for Vaccination as well. Also, a global emergency didn't stop profiteering. For example, the European Union booked some millions of doses of AstraZeneca for itself. It also threatened to put restrictions on the borders so that this vaccine doesn't travel out of the UK before reaching them. Richer Countries also hoarded vaccines despite having the highest inoculations in the world. By the end of 2021, many of the developed nations eased their restrictions, and some lifted them completely. Israel, the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, to name a few. But for poorer nations, vaccination has been dismally low. For example, South American Nations, according to a report, had 15% of the global Covid19 caseload, but the vaccination there remains below 3%. Africa also faces a challenge in terms of successful inoculation as over 90 percent population there had yet to receive a single dose of the vaccine by the middle of 2021.

Vaccine Nationalism has put poorer and less resourceful countries at a disadvantage. They are unable to secure vaccines in considerable numbers given their dependence on foreign help. These nations continued to suffer as the cases disrupt normal day-to-day functions. Some nations like Iran, India, and Pakistan developed indigenous vaccines, but it also required help from other nations. For example, in Pakistan, PakVac is being developed with the help of China.

To mitigate the hindrances posed by Vaccine nationalism, the World Health Organisation launched a global vaccine facility mechanism called COVAX. The economically weaker nations have been ensured of a cooperative mechanism in which it would be made sure that at least 20% of the population is vaccinated in every nation. However, this is a voluntary platform. It means that the commitment to Multilateralism is not having a firm ground in COVAX. Also, it hasn't prevented nations from seeking self-interest from time to time. Canada left the COVAX on the issue of procurement. India, (Delen, Eryarsoy, & Davazdahemami, 2020). itself a developing nation, diverted vaccines to other nations under the COVAX banner. As a result, India faced shortages of vaccine dosages at home in spite of its Serum Institute being the largest Vaccine manufacturer in the Globe.

#### TRIPS and Issue of Global Collaboration for Vaccination

Developing nations asked for more access to vaccines because of the shortcomings they faced. In light of this, in October 2020, India and South Africa had submitted a proposal to the World Trade Organization (WTO), suggesting a waiver of certain provisions of the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement for the "prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19". The proposal seeks the waiver of "the implementation, application, and enforcement of sections 1, 4, 5 and 7 of part II of the TRIPS agreement", which are stipulations referring to copyright, industrial design, patents, and undisclosed information (trade secrets). The main reason given for this was to ensure greater access to vaccine manufacturing and vaccine development. The WHO supported it and called it imperative for successful global vaccine administration. However, this elicited sharp reactions from the pharmaceutical giants of the Western nations who termed waiving of patent rights and copyright terms unacceptable. The reason given was the protection of intellectual property rights against infringement, but the actual reason has been the threat these waivers pose to the global domination of these Pharma companies.

Inability to produce and manufacture vaccines has been one of the most obstructing points in erasing vaccine inequality. It is important to note a TRIPS waiver does not mean smooth vaccine manufacturing. But it is an important step to increase the manufacturing capacity worldwide. Besides the issue of manufacturing, exporting Covid-19 vaccines, and other related chemical formulations, a seamless restriction-free mechanism needs to be in place. It means no IP restrictions at importing and exporting end.

The blockages on Vaccine materials, including reactor bags, filters, culture media, and other ingredients, hamper the supply chains. No TRIPS restriction will mean more investments from the governments and industries. This will stimulate the other related facilities.

In light of the issue around patency regarding Vaccine manufacture, the agenda of Global Collaboration also stands in the dock. Global Collaboration in Global Emergency is the sensible path to be taken to resolve the crisis. Along with questions being raised on effective dealing of Covid19, there are also concerns regarding preparation for the future public health crisis on the scale of Covid-19. It is not in the interest of the world; therefore, that nations should play politics.

Vaccine Nationalism is a costly business. It does not help in a global crisis; rather, it increases the loss. The most recent example of this is the refusal of the Bill Gates Foundation to share the vaccine formula Vaccine being developed by it. India (Lewnard, & Lo, 2020).and South Africa sought a waiver of TRIPS from the World Trade Organization but not much headway has been made in this regard.

The question of efficacy is also there. Developing nations are finding procurement tricky. The Western countries want to cut a deal that is geopolitically as well as economically beneficial. This was seen in the case of the US-China rivalry. By selling some batches of the homemade vaccine to some nations on a priority basis, the USA wanted to disrupt China's Influence. The consistency for this priority-based relation, however, has a short shelf life. Power politics, even in cases of Health emergencies, doesn't bode well for global prosperity and negates the essence of Global Cooperation.

### Challenges of Future

There are many challenges that remain to be addressed for a safe and secure future. The world and its inherently unequal distribution of wealth and resources were brought to the fore by the Covid19 pandemic, and its effect on everyone is felt differently. This inequality was also present in terms of capacities and capabilities. Responses towards the Pandemic were based on the availability of material and resources.

Interventionism pursued by the Powerful also causes many problems. Power equations being appropriated in the name of fair prices remains a serious challenge World needs to address. Pandemic showed the need for both the developing and developed Nations to collaborate. It underlined the need for a multifaceted global level inclusion If the pandemic has to be brought under control everywhere. To prevent this in the future and mitigate global economic prosperity, a farsighted approach is needed towards the raging global inequality. It is not just about economically facilitating the poorer nations; it is about the need to have efficient disaster response in place.

Global Supply chains will be severely hit. Though the blow is heavier for the poorer nation, richer nations are also going to suffer huge losses.

Prevention of future diseases is another major challenge. The way systemic flaws of the health infrastructure of even the richer nations were brought to the fore increased the need for overcoming these challenges. A globally coordinated production and distribution of medical assistance are needed to prevent further catastrophe.

The current global crisis has brought to the fore fault lines of economic disparity and resource deprivation between nations. The impact of the pandemic on peace and security is also a challenge.

This is a worrying signal for the state of multilateral institutions that lack coordination and cooperation. The true character of a person, they say, is only revealed in a crisis. These days, the same can be said about the true state of the multilateral system.

There are many things that need to be done in order to tackle the emerging and present issues prudently. Some of the steps are listed as :

- It is important that the overdependence of the Global South upon the Global North for aid and support must be severed. By this point, one also expects no adventure of interventionism by the developed nations. One way by which it can be done is to allow regions like Africa to have increased policy and decision-making control over their resources. The interaction between the Global South and Global North must be based on principles and the spirit of equitable development and shared humanity.
- Within the Global South, accountability needs to be increased and strengthened. It involves making system empowering. And this can be done by investing more in Public infrastructure, keep corruption and mismanagement in check, and developing political, economic, and social structures that are humane, sensible, and free from any malevolent influence.
- Also, the Global South needs to formulate an inclusive policy that gives a firm shape and direction to South-South Cooperation. Nations need to expand their horizons and interact with each other in a holistic environment, and sought out the issues creating an obstruction in the achievement of this. South-South Cooperation presents exciting prospects for these developing nations in trade and development. This can also help in rebuilding a post-pandemic world on the basis of economic and social justice. This is also an encouraging way to demonstrate solidarity in uncertain times. It can give voice to these nations to put forth their views in front of the powerful nations.
- There is a need for the Global South to develop mutual trust across areas of cooperation and conflict. And this trust should not be limited to the governmental and societal levels but should be cultivated across states too.

## Conclusion

Covid-19 Pandemic is once in a century event. The world has seen deadlier outbreaks like that of H1N1 flu and Ebola. But these diseases presented a more localised challenge. Moreover, it was the developing world usually where these diseases occurred. Unlike political conflicts made deliberately global, Covid-19 is in a true sense a Global Issue. It has exposed systemic fallacies of Global Healthcare and thrown open the fault lines between the economically prosperous North and

economically weaker South. The idea of the Global South as a unifying platform for often neglected nations of the Southern Hemisphere faces its greatest test. It also reveals the complexity of interaction between the North and the South. The developed world also needs an economically prosperous South because of its supply chains and markets. A prosperous Global South will also work well for global stability. It is, however, facing a number of challenges and bitter realities. Vaccine inequality is one of the cases that became an evident example of this. It showed that even a global medical emergency could not stop nations from profiteering at each other's expense. On the flip side, it also emphasised the need for global cooperation to minimise these inequalities. While the pandemic rages on, this is the moment for finely thought global action to save humanity and a lesson into what the future looks like if the Global community did not react with sincerity.

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