

TUM's activities in the **Global South**

**Three questions for Prof. Juliane Winkelmann,
Senior Vice President for International Alliances & Alumni**

Prof. Winkelmann, why does TUM engage in an array of multifaceted partnerships with institutions in the Global South?

As a leading university operating on a global scale, TUM is responsible for promoting and advancing technical progress, knowledge and entrepreneurial skills, not only here in Bavaria, but also together with our partners in the interests of spreading scientific knowledge in other parts of the world. This includes, of course, the Global South, which – depending on how you define it – is home to up to 85% of the world's population. It has become a truism that only through global cooperation will we be able to find solutions to the major challenges of our time. In our efforts to live up to our responsibilities, we want to empower and encourage talented scientific minds to create the technological and economic conditions for shared prosperity in the Global South.

Our magazine reports on research at TUM. However, TUM also participates in education and exchange programs in the Global South. What part does research play in this?

TUM is committed to the Humboldtian ideal of excellent teaching and research – and I would like to emphasize that it is difficult to conceive of excellent teaching without excellent research. In this respect, research is obviously an essential element of our cooperation with the Global

South, and this issue presents a wide range of fascinating examples. What is particularly exciting about research collaborations with the Global South is that research often aims to have a direct, tangible impact. It can be very gratifying to see how solution-oriented, practical research can have an immediate impact on the ground. One example is SEED's Living Labs, which are bringing electricity to communities for the first time and studying the impact.

What can TUM researchers learn from conducting research together with colleagues from the Global South?

Research thrives on the inclusion of diverse perspectives and knowledge – and this is the absolute top priority in our cooperation activities with the Global South. In the past, however, the perspectives and knowledge of the Global South have been marginalized in scientific collaborations, and researchers have not always worked together on an equal footing. Today, we have moved on: we understand that we can – and must – learn a great deal from our colleagues and communities in the Global South, from local sociocultural and economic conditions to natural circumstances, the relevance of different issues and what data we should collect, where and how. It is only together that we can explore complex issues, so everyone has a lot to contribute. ■



What exactly is the Global South?

The term Global South is used to describe the situation of countries in our globalized world in the most neutral, non-hierarchical way possible. Countries considered part of the Global South are politically, economically or socially deprived states. By contrast, countries in the Global North are described as having a position of privilege in terms of their prosperity, political freedom and economic development. These terms only correspond to geographical location to a limited extent. For example, Australia and New Zealand are considered part of the Global North, while countries like Afghanistan and Mongolia are assigned to the Global South.