

11 Three Aspects of Radical Inclusion Necessary for a Workable New System for the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes

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Fundamental to the concepts of the significantly enhanced peaceful settlement of international disputes, or an international peace force, is the idea that such a framework would, as a result of strengthening the prohibition on international conflict, serve to further shift the geopolitical balance away from a calculus of military might and towards more just legal, ethical and humanitarian outcomes.

Such designs for global governance, however, have often been called impractical and unworkable. Specifically, they have often been criticised for being unable to mobilise the necessary ‘political will’ of major powers, as well as those seeking to change power balances. This chapter, however, addresses a different, and arguably more important, challenge to ‘workability’—that of inclusion in the form of ‘bottom-up’ incorporation of voices and perspectives from the inception of global designs to their implementation and evaluation.

Ensuring such bottom-up inclusion, I assert, represents a decolonial move that is just as necessary, if not more so, as accommodating the ‘top-down’ political will of states and state leaders. Inclusive and egalitarian dialogues, plans and partnerships are crucial to achieving effective, positive outcomes for ensuring the peaceful settlement of disputes. Too often, however, policy designs and negotiations exclude certain categories of stakeholders and neglect important perspectives and forms of knowledge, thus replicating paternalistic patterns established during successive eras of colonisation. Such colonial patterns in global international organisation have included the Mandate System of the League of Nations and the Trusteeship system of the United Nations, as well as weighted voting systems in the international financial architecture, all of which do not take into account how wealth was created in the first place.

Drawing from my work on global humanitarianism, I discuss three aspects of inclusion in this chapter that are necessary for workable designs for the peaceful settlement of disputes in any revised UN Charter framework. These three aspects are

- stakeholder inclusion, regarding the range of actors affected by conflict from different parts of the world;
- temporal inclusion, regarding when such actors are included; and
- epistemological inclusion, regarding expanding the kinds of knowledge that inform designs for peaceful settlement.

Taken together, these aspects comprise what I call ‘radical inclusion’. Such inclusion not only concerns strengthened peaceful dispute settlement/peace force deliberations (e.g., under a renewed UN Charter framework) but also requires linkages to other UN forums

to address issues underlying conflict, including long-standing patterns of resource extraction and land appropriation that enable inequities in wealth as well as climate change and its impacts. As a result, such inclusion requires, first and foremost, a changed *orientation*, one that enables working across, rather than merely within, the categories of dispute settlement that currently frame the United Nations's structure and that incorporates a reflexive posture allowing for inclusion to be regularly assessed and updated.

The Problem: Whom to Include, When and How

During the past two decades, networks of humanitarian organisations, partially led by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and partially supported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other UN agencies, have increased their efforts to be more inclusive, but with only limited success. What is inclusion, and why is it necessary? Who needs to be included, and when is inclusion necessary for achieving international peace? And what forms of knowledge inform the meaning of peace and the peaceful resolution of international disputes in different contexts? Finally, how can 'limited success' be transformed into more enduring forms of inclusion?

This chapter articulates the need for a radical policy of inclusion in any renewed UN Charter framework for the peaceful resolution of international disputes. I address scholarship that cites the need for inclusion, discuss how inclusion is often practiced, review several attempts to ensure it, and suggest how it must be expanded both temporally and in terms of the actors and ideas involved in constructions of peace. I argue that three aspects of inclusion are essential for any workable strengthening of the UN system: (1) physical and geographic inclusion of stakeholders, (2) temporal inclusion and (3) epistemological inclusion. Taken together, these three types of inclusion, I argue, have never yet been achieved in global international organisation or in frameworks to ensure peace. Moreover, such forms of inclusion challenge the very construction of almost any framework for settling international disputes. In the context of this working group, for example, they may even put questions of an international peace force on the back burner, at least for the time being.

My argument begs a number of questions, which I address briefly here. First, I focus on the need for radical inclusion in planning for and carrying out the range of actions that is now included under the rubrics of 'early warning,' 'peacekeeping' and 'peacebuilding'. In Charter terms, these actions fall under Chapters VI and VII of the current UN Charter. However, I must emphasise that even this type of radical inclusion—as difficult as it is crucial to achieve—does not go far enough in addressing what has popularly become known as the 'root causes' of conflict. To do that, not only is a genuinely representative United Nations General Assembly and/or a Global Parliament necessary, but also an orientation or disposition, as well as a framework, which allows and even expects fluid and reflexive forms of participation.

Second, therefore, throughout the chapter, I provide general sketches for how a more responsive global organisation must work across issue areas that are currently demarcated as the province of separate bodies, including the Security Council, General Assembly, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and specialised agencies. I note, however, that my sketches are intentionally unfinished and open-ended, as inclusion must be practiced from the beginning, and those most affected by specific conflicts must take the lead in designing any workable framework for resolving them. I also note that any basis for reforming participation in a new global organisation must not take gross national income

(GNI) and/or current contributions to the United Nations's budget into account, a point to which I will return later.¹

The Three Aspects of Radical Inclusion

Each of the three aspects of radical inclusion is actually quite difficult to fulfil, but each, I argue, is necessary. The notion of gathering 'all stakeholders' at the table is the pithiest shorthand for physical and geographic inclusion. Clearly, a new framework for the peaceful resolution of international disputes will not work if actors who embark on, or are affected by, conflict are not included; clearly, such inclusion needs to be globally representative. Such claims have been made since the very founding of global international organisation, when civil society groups (then called 'voluntary organisations') argued for a place at the table, asking for a League of Peoples instead of a League of Nations.

Historians have gradually revised their assessments to grant these groups a larger role in the formation of the League than previously acknowledged (Lynch 1999: 54). By the advent of World War II, even though many formerly powerful interwar peace groups had been decimated between 1939 and 1941 over debates about whether to support the war, religious, women's, labour, farm, and other groups still took a circumscribed but influential part in the San Francisco Conference that launched the United Nations in 1945. This unofficial 'movement for international organisation' held its own discussions during the early 1940s while the U.S. State Department and British Foreign Office engaged in their official planning processes. This unofficial movement advocated especially for the new organisation to be universalist in membership and pay attention to human rights.

As official plans developed, this movement continued to focus on these two issues while also advocating against the great power veto and against the plan for a trusteeship system. The U.S. State Department, in an unprecedented move, invited 42 unofficial groups (many of them part of this movement) to San Francisco to serve as 'consultants' to the official U.S. delegation. While the movement did not achieve all of its goals by far, it succeeded in institutionalising claims to universal representation, presaging a role for human rights and, to a lesser degree, delegitimising continued colonisation.²

In addition, this movement's efforts ensured the provision granting 'observer status' to non-governmental groups in ECOSOC and the General Assembly (Lynch 1999: 203). During the Cold War, unofficial groups acting as observers, as well as others not granted observer status, pressured governments to engage in disarmament as well as promote human rights. By the early 1970s, environmental issues had gained considerable traction among unofficial groups. The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE), better known as Stockholm 1972, became 'the first major UN conference where nongovernmental organisation (NGO) observers were accredited to contribute' (Dahl 2021).

For the past two generations, habitués of non-governmental assemblies have understood both the importance and the difficulty of making sure all voices are included and served as the impetus for the huge non-governmental forums begun at the Rio Environmental Conference of 1992 and continued since that time (Weiss and Wilkinson 2019). In particular, subsequent NGO forums, including the series of World Social Forums (e.g., Smith *et al.* 2014), have recognised the intersectional impacts of climate and environmental destruction on the propensity for conflict, as well as the harmful gender implications of the use of force. These efforts indicate the interconnectedness among issues that underlie debates about how to renew and reorganise the machinery for the peaceful settlement of international disputes.

This background demonstrates that both civil society groups and many (but not all) official UN representatives acknowledge that all stakeholders should have a say in UN decision-making. This is all the more crucial for any plans to design and implement a new UN framework, from its central principles to its mechanisms for peaceful resolution of disputes. But ‘radical inclusion’ means more than the inclusion of established civil society groups. Indeed, as scholars of humanitarianism have made clear, and as I explain in this chapter, the NGO system has become part and parcel of a layered hierarchy that too often repeats, rather than challenges, top-down forms of conflict prevention, as well as peacebuilding, and that leaves out the very populations it is meant to serve.

Instead of replicating existing structures, then, considerable effort must go into tracking down and forging relationships not only with communities in conflict and at risk of conflict all over the world but also with scholars and others from such areas who have traced the development of these conflicts in their ‘domestic’ as well as transnational forms. These stakeholders must be included from the beginning of new designs for solutions to be workable and durable, as the scholarship and experiences discussed in this chapter make clear.

Finally, conventional internationalist thought needs to broaden to include new epistemological frameworks, especially from a range of religious traditions and Indigenous communities. We know, for example, that Indigenous peoples have been better stewards of the earth and its resources than industrialised countries and that they also have long understood the impact of climate change on livelihoods, as well as the likelihood of conflict. Yet their forms of knowledge are only now beginning to be recognised in relevant debates (e.g., WHO 2013). Likewise, scholarship has begun to catch up with the need to enlarge our epistemological frameworks through exploring concepts such as ‘worlding’ and ‘the pluriverse’ (Agathangelou and Ling 2009; Escobar 2018; Reiter 2018).

Radical inclusion, in this sense, becomes a reflexive and mobile orientation for the different bodies that make up global international organisation in either its current form or any future one, targeting especially those who are at the margins of decision-making but who are most affected by conflict resolution, as well as economic and social mechanisms. In our contemporary historical time, radical inclusion necessitates especially the participation of previously marginalised groups, including refugees, internally displaced persons, Indigenous actors, persons of diverse sexual and gender identities and expressions, and scholars from affected areas, instead of multinational corporations, arms dealers and military leaders.

For example, in addition to the framework currently available under Chapters VI–VII of the Charter, peaceful settlement also requires revamped procedures under what is currently the domain of ECOSOC, including, but not limited to, incorporating the voices of NGOs and of perspectives emanating from a proposed Global Parliament (e.g., Falk and Strauss 2001). Moreover, temporal inclusion requires an orientation towards mobility that is currently lacking such that all bodies interested in an updated global organisation reach out broadly to these actors when such categories are being discussed and debated rather than after they have been established.³ Finally, epistemological inclusion requires foregrounding the ideas and contributions of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (e.g., ECOSOC 2012) as well as the UN Permanent Forum on the People of African Descent (United Nations Human Rights 2021). Each of these forums brings to light extreme forms of past violence that continue to have implications for conflict in the present; each also suggests forms of knowledge that are essential for human and ecological health and, hence, conflict prevention and peaceful dispute resolution.

Scholarship in Favour of Inclusion

The demands of radical inclusion may appear to be too daunting, but considerable scholarly and practitioner research and experience from the early 2000s to the present supports my argument. One important strand of scholarship on various aspects of peacebuilding has for some time advocated in favour of a ‘turn to the local’. Such a turn is based on an alleged binary between ‘global’ or ‘international’ frameworks, supported by the work of UN agencies and ‘international’ non-governmental organisations (INGOs), and ‘local’ populations. Over and over again, scholars have argued that affected communities are ignored in designing, funding and implementing peacebuilding programmes. As Oliver Richmond states (Richmond 2014: 67) about the liberal state-building enterprise of international organisations,

It has failed to capture the associative dimensions of historical social and community-level frameworks. Instead, it indicates a securitised, privatised, contractual praxis: governance occurs through the state, led by international actors, to produce a limited, conservative form of peace. In these terms, peace rests upon an externally designed social contract. Civil society should comply with this contract rather than be constitutive of it.

While Richmond zeroes in on the links between the ‘international community’ and states (new or old), other scholars have developed the idea of ‘critical localism’ to highlight ‘everyday lived experiences’.⁴ Still other scholar-practitioners of peacebuilding note additional ways in which exclusion is practiced, even by well-meaning NGOs. Séverine Autesserre, for example, asserts that ‘international’ peacebuilders’ ‘everyday practices’ ingrain and reproduce inequitable relations with populations they are meant to serve. She touches on, but in my view does not sufficiently develop, the epistemological dimension of inclusion by emphasising the need to incorporate ‘local knowledge’ instead of simply the ‘technical knowledge’ that international peacebuilders come equipped with. For Autesserre, the result is that peacebuilders *want* to ensure durable peace but fail to do so time and time again (Autesserre 2014).

Similarly, Swedish peacebuilder/scholar Pernilla Johansson argues that not only are the intentions of ‘internationals’ good but also that aid workers are frequently devastated by the lack of sustainable results of their hard work (Johansson 2022; see also Martini and Jauhola 2014). Johansson asserts that international peacebuilders (the complex of UN and international NGO staff working on implementing designs for peace) do not fully ‘listen’ to their interlocutors. Moreover, they hide their own emotional reactions (lack of knowledge, frustrations, etc.) due to a belief that ‘objectivity’ is required for ‘professionalisation’. This attempt at objectivity inevitably fails at producing peace but succeeds (unfortunately) in reinforcing hierarchies of power and knowledge that downplay the insights of recipient communities.

Additional scholarship points to the numerous ways that affected communities are ignored in conceptualisations of development, emergency aid and peacebuilding programmes while also demonstrating that communities not only want to be included but also have important perspectives, experiences and knowledge to offer, as pointed out by Anyidoho (2012), Fast (2017) and Mahmoud (2019), among others. But one critical perspective that I wish to highlight, that of Oheneba Boateng (2021), dispenses with the notion of a turn to ‘the local’ altogether, showing instead how the ‘homegrown’ nexus of

development, humanitarianism and peace is actually *restorative* of pre- and anti-colonial modes of knowledge and action.⁵ I return to this perspective later, but for now, I note that the concept of restorative action gestures both to forms of knowledge and kinds of practices in affected societies that remain available for inclusive forms of preventive diplomacy and peacebuilding today.

Two Examples of Limited Inclusion in International Governance: Women and Faith Communities

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, feminist activists and scholars argued that women needed to be included in peace mechanisms, producing the United Nations Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS).⁶ Beginning with UNSCR 1325, which ‘called for women’s increased participation in initiatives to prevent and resolve conflict, as well as their protection during conflict and post-conflict situations, ultimately making gender a component of every Security Council action’ (Reiling 2024; UN Women 2000), the WPS agenda eventually included a number of additional resolutions specifying mechanisms for inclusion of women in decisions about how to address the kinds of violence affecting them. Transnational and national women’s organisations had been at the forefront of advocating for such an agenda, especially given its recognition at the highest level (the Security Council) of the UN peace and security apparatus. The WPS agenda, therefore, theoretically represents a major, though still limited, way for many of those most affected by conflict both to challenge gendered forms of militarism and have a say in peacebuilding. Cohn, Kinsella and Gibbings (2004) describe the process by which women’s organisations claimed a place at the table while also foregrounding one of the main concerns that would become heightened over the next two decades: the ‘worry that the Security Council could be “manufacturing the consent” of women and NGOs to suit its purposes’. This worry of top-down imposition—of the roles women could take and of the meaning of security for them—has remained salient. Cohn, Kinsella and Gibbings (2004) noted women’s experiences in the words of one of their interlocutors:

Women are reduced to getting on their knees, literally, outside the discussions they were barred from. ... ‘Whatever the code words, let us in [the Security Council]! Peacebuilder, decision-maker, whatever argument works, let us in! Let us in so we can wrestle with the discussion at least; contest the parameters and react, in real time and not after the fact’.

Over the next two decades, implementation of the WPS became increasingly controversial, primarily for remaining too ‘top-down’ in its conceptualisation of women’s security and the means to address it (Basu and Confortini 2017; Olonisakin, Hendricks and Okech 2015; Shepherd 2016). Specifically, the WPS agenda has focused too much, in the view of critics, on the creation of National Action Plans that sometimes result merely in increasing gender quotas in specific areas and normalising instead of challenging the militarisation of societies themselves (Reiling 2017, 2024; Shepherd 2016). In addition, the WPS agenda too often equates women’s security with reductions in sexual violence.

While reducing and eliminating sexual violence against women is, of course, critically important, women activists and scholars, especially from the Global South, have argued in favour of broader conceptions of security, including economic, political and environmental, as well as sexual, that must be addressed through communal transformation

(Abdullah and Fofana-Ibrahim 2010; Reiling 2024).⁷ As a result of these and additional issues with the WPS agenda (including operationalising a focus on ‘women’ instead of more inclusive notions of ‘gender’), feminist scholars from different parts of the world charge the WPS agenda with heightening instead of diminishing differential gender treatment in the Global North and South. In sum, as Soumita Basu and Akhila Nagar (2021) argue, ‘there are concerns that the WPS agenda has lost its transformative potential due to its absorption into the ‘business-as-usual’ approach to peace and security policies’ (213). The WPS agenda thus demonstrates the ease by which potentially innovative forms of inclusion can become ossified by UN and related bureaucracies and highlights the need to develop ongoing reflexivity in forms of inclusive participation.

Approximately a decade later, in the early 2010s, representatives of religious organisations active in refugee work, peace and conflict resolution, and humanitarianism in general argued in favour of including religious actors and organisations in the design and implementation of peace mechanisms. This activism, like women’s activism previously, resulted in a new programmatic emphasis, this time located in the UNHCR, especially in its annual consultations with NGOs. The 2011 Report of these annual consultations outlined the epistemological rationale for inclusion of religious communities in humanitarian efforts worldwide (UNHCR 2011):

NGOs recognised the importance that faith plays in the lives of conflict and disaster-affected communities, and the role and influence of faith communities and faith-based organisations in protection. Faith runs deep in the veins of conflict and disaster-affected communities and plays a major role in their lives. It helps people cope with trauma; it validates their humanity; it informs their decisions; and it offers guidance, compassion, consolation and hope in their darkest hours. At-risk or affected communities turn to FBOs for physical protection, material assistance, guidance and counselling, spiritual confirmation, compassion and understanding.

Then High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres (now UN Secretary-General) established a dialogue with faith leaders in December 2012, noting that the international legal framework granting the right to asylum was grounded in teachings from multiple religious traditions. Subsequently, ‘Faith and Protection’ became the theme of the 2012 annual consultations between UNHCR and NGOs. A range of representatives from major faith traditions, Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, and Sikh, collaborated in drawing up the forum’s background document.⁸ The document focused on demonstrating how religious traditions support the right to asylum and specifying ways that the UNHCR could better work with faith communities. The document also noted, more specifically, that faith-based organisations frequently had deep and long-standing ties to communities riven with conflict and that spiritual values and the recognition that human dignity included spiritual and religious connections are critical for peaceful integration of refugees. In these ways, the UNHCR was acknowledging the need to broaden the actors it involved in addressing both sites of conflict and the flow of refugees as a result of conflict. It was also acknowledging, without explicitly naming it, the necessity of epistemological openness in its understanding of humanitarian action and human dignity (UNHCR 2012).

The following year (2013), I attended the UNHCR-NGO annual consultations, where one of the major products of this collaboration was launched. Called ‘Welcoming the Stranger, Affirmations for Faith Leaders,’ this document, according to panellists who described its genesis and development, represented a carefully crafted non-denominational

appeal to generally-accepted religious tenets as a primary basis for the right to asylum. The document begins with the following statement:

A core value of my faith is to welcome the stranger, the refugee, the internally displaced, the other. I shall treat him or her as I would like to be treated. I will challenge others, even leaders in my faith community, to do the same.

The document then outlines 16 ways that signatories will respect refugees and different faith traditions, offer hospitality and speak out for justice. It was designed for distribution to faith leaders and congregations of all kinds and was translated into Arabic, French, English, Russian, Spanish, German, Hebrew, and Turkish. The ‘Affirmation of Welcome’ was to be disseminated through the Religions for Peace World Assembly ‘in coordination with a wide array of faith-based organisations, governments, and international organisations’. In addition, participants recognised that faith actors who could and should be partners with UNHCR and NGOs often fell ‘outside of the traditional humanitarian system’, and these actors needed to be included in their efforts (UNHCR 2013: 31).

It is unclear just how widely the ‘Affirmation of Welcome’ was read or taken up for discussion in faith communities in different parts of the globe.⁹ Certainly, the Rapporteur’s Report inadvertently described an important paradox in the collaborative effort in noting the gap between the costs borne by the ‘international humanitarian community’ vis-à-vis communities that are tasked with doing the welcoming of refugees, as the following statement indicates (UNHCR 2013: 31):

NGO representatives explained their advocacy in relation to the Affirmation of Welcome and indicated that this document is directed at receiving communities across the world who often sacrifice much more than the international humanitarian community when they welcome the stranger. ... The ... event closed by highlighting the recent UNHCR-NGO initiative to better understand the contributions to protection outcomes across the world of FBOs, local faith communities and faith leaders.

In other words, the event was explicit in recognising the work done by faith communities and the possibilities for peaceful integration that a better integration of their views and religious orientations in peaceful resettlement could engender (Ager and Ager 2015). Yet the quote also implicitly notes that the receiving communities were not the ones who wrote the document and decided on the means of its dissemination. As a result, temporal inclusion—that is, incorporation of those doing the work of welcoming or at least accommodating refugees—was lacking; instead, inclusion would be *post facto*.

Both of the aforementioned initiatives, for inclusion of women and faith-based groups in issues of peace, security and peaceful incorporation of refugee populations fleeing from conflict, were and are laudable. Nevertheless, actual mechanisms for including them have had limited success, at best. At worst, they have resulted in performative activities that have achieved insufficient support from affected communities and possibly even reinforced systems that gave rise to violence to begin with.

What Is Being Done to Ensure Inclusion? What Can Be Done to Enact Inclusion?

Seminars and webinars I attended virtually in the fall of 2022 on conflict resolution, humanitarian action, and inclusion of faith actors have all taken up the call for ‘localisation’

previously outlined by scholars, as well as the more recent call for ‘decolonisation’. Each of these terms has moved from academic buzzword to practitioner circles as shorthand for ‘inclusion’. One seminar was called ‘Supporting Community Stakeholder Engagement’; the moderator introduced the session as an ‘opportunity to delve into the “localisation agenda”’. Another recent seminar noted that ‘localisation’ is ‘about transferring power to local and national actors’ and that this kind of transfer ‘became a foundational piece of the “grand bargain” struck six years ago at the Humanitarian Summit’. Each of the webinars included ‘international’ participants from NGOs and international agencies; each participant outlined what their organisation was doing to ‘localise’ and what obstacles remained for doing so. Still, participants noted, ‘[t]he Humanitarian system is very dysfunctional in engaging community members’. A panellist in a webinar run by the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities (JLI), an outcome of the 2011–13 UNHCR/NGO annual consultations on faith and protection discussed earlier, noted that local actors are ‘doing a lot of work, but are still not represented in global power dynamics’ ... ‘Southern voices are still marginalised’.

Participants in these forums are trying to include the ideas of recipient populations—for example, in spreading awareness of conflict and aid provision through the development of digital apps—and in revising training programmes for women and faith groups to meet their needs in Information, Communications Technology, health care and information sharing. Participants in these 2022 panels noted the value of ‘harnessing local knowledge’, noting that the ‘capacity ... is there’; that it would make their efforts ‘more sustainable’, and that it would be instrumental in ‘reflecting the dignity of local communities’. At the same time, both scholars and these ‘internationals’ continue to cite obstacles to inclusion, such as donor unwillingness to trust, and therefore fully incorporate the participation of community participants; the resulting fact that programmes are still designed without recipient community input (and therefore without their buy-in), making later implementation difficult; and the fact that ‘local knowledge’ is insufficiently appreciated and incorporated (Harvard Humanitarian Webinar 2022; Madani 2022).

In addition, these examples show that NGOs themselves still conceptualise inclusion in limited ways, as, for example, ways to increase the sustainability of NGO efforts rather than as the means to make their own efforts subservient to the ideas and needs of affected communities.

Yet another example concerns the 2015 UNHCR/NGO annual consultations, whose theme was ‘In Pursuit of Solutions’. Two main ideas dominated the panels I attended: (a) incorporating refugees into decisions about their own care, protection and futures, and (b) promoting ‘community-based protection, support and care’, the notion that local communities that are either sites of conflict or sites of refugee settlement should be listened to and included in designs for security, employment, health, and social services, etc. As I wrote in a blog post at the time, ‘One might think that both would be all too evident, but in the humanitarian international today, one would be mistaken’ (Lynch 2015). Nevertheless, the panel discussions were extremely interesting and productive, as UNHCR and NGO personnel had clearly reached out to numerous refugees and affected communities around the world.

One of these included an activist from southern Sudan, who detailed several very concrete protection measures her women’s network (made up of women of different faith traditions) has taken in order to survive government bombings, which disproportionately injured and killed women and children. Such concrete measures included instructions for women on how to make emergency shelters in caves or by digging foxholes, how to store

provisions and when and how to run for cover. These ideas were critical because otherwise, in the event of air raids, children would run for their mothers and mothers for their children, getting injured or killed along the way. These are only some of the kinds of measures that are critical to survival but which need to be thought through ‘from the ground up’ by those who are living through crises on a daily basis.

Another panel featured a university dean, a local imam and a Pentecostal bishop from the Adamawa Peace Initiative in Nigeria, who had worked together for several years to feed and shelter hundreds of thousands of people displaced by the fighting with Boko Haram. One of the fascinating things about their presentation was the description of how difficult it was to attract outside funding in the early stages of their work, given how community-based they were. When larger NGOs did notice, however, mostly after the highly publicised kidnappings of the girls from Chibok, they wanted to reinvent the wheel by redesigning the work of the already-successful local network rather than simply supporting its painstaking efforts. While these examples show community actors directly involved in saving lives and providing food and shelter in a very immediate sense, the expertise and experience of these actors would be invaluable in deciding whether and what kind of eventual UN peace force or other reframed peaceful resolution measures could be useful in their contexts. They would also be invaluable in providing input directly to the Security Council or, in the framework outlined by Lopez-Claros, Dahl and Groff (2020), Executive Council decision-making.

Two additional contemporary examples demonstrate how working across currently demarcated UN agencies and other UN bodies is necessary for any future framework for the peaceful settlement of disputes and also how all three aspects of radical inclusion are crucial to incorporate in a reflexive manner. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, colonial-era theft of land and resources set up ongoing forms of wealth extraction that not only destroyed an independent democracy in the early 1960s, but that also continue to destabilise Congolese society, as noted in the statements of Pope Francis during his 2023 visit to the country (Murhula 2023; see also Wakesho and Gutbi 2018). Today, the conflict remains international, with both Western multinational corporations (MNCs) and neighbouring governments (Rwanda and Uganda) heavily involved. Networks of Congolese religious scholar-activists in Eastern DRC experience rebel incursions as well as the arrival of new groups of refugees on an almost weekly basis. These scholar-activists—involved in the Anglican and Catholic Churches’ respective peace networks—should be included in assessments of the historical-contemporary ties, forms of intervention and reparations that might enable peaceful settlement of the conflict.

Similarly, French and U.S. commitments to the slave trade not only decimated numerous African communities but also prevented the Haitian Revolution—the first successful national human rights rebellion against chattel slavery—from being able to emerge from debt, impoverishing the Haitian people to the present day. A 2022 *New York Times* series traced the specific links of Haiti’s contemporary problems from the Haitian Revolution to the present, replicating the work of international relations scholars such as Siba Grovogui (2011) and Robbie Shilliam (2008). The series shows that this is not merely a ‘domestic’ conflict about a ‘failed state’ (Porter *et al.* 2022). Instead, it is one in which French banks and the U.S. military have been culpable over generations, rendering UN peacekeeping efforts ineffective. As a result, civil society groups in Haiti, along with critical legal scholars, should be involved in revising the very definition of ‘international’ disputes, as well as determining an equitable resolution for the country’s dire economic situation.

Additional Measures to Ensure Radical Inclusion

Designing and implementing a radically inclusive new framework for the peaceful resolution of international disputes is not easily accomplished. But if the experience of women in the Good Friday and Liberian peace accords are any indication, this difficulty is primarily because of entrenched practices that bypass affected communities rather than ensuring the availability of their expertise. As the examples throughout this chapter demonstrate, marginalised voices are, in fact, fairly easily found and are critically important. Yet even NGOs are still calling for increased inclusion for themselves in global decision-making (InterAction 2023).

Radical inclusion takes time. As Boateng (2021) demonstrates, when transnational NGOs and international actors do develop ‘new’ forms of action, they frequently disregard, rename, or even erode ‘homegrown’ practices. More significantly, these transnational actors need to confront and learn from ‘their own historical relationship with colonialism before reform can proceed’ (Boateng 2021: 3–4). This is why I have called for ‘centering global humanitarianism in Africa’ for both geographical and onto-epistemological reasons (Lynch 2022). It is also why both JLI and the Critical Investigations into Humanitarianism in Africa (CIHA) blog have engaged in efforts for inclusion that span more than a decade. CIHA, for example, has developed an online course that explores the relationship between past colonising and missionising and contemporary humanitarian efforts. The course also includes students and NGO representatives from across the African continent, as well as across the University of California system, to focus together on how to reverse the lens on humanitarian aid.¹⁰ The JLI has re-envisioned much of its regional work in order to enact a ‘fair & equitable approach’; to ‘shift power, resources, and leadership to local, national, and regional levels’; and to become more ‘inclusive and accessible’ (Madani 2022). While each of these initiatives is ongoing, they indicate ways that inclusion is possible and can inform a new framework for the peaceful resolution of international conflict.

These examples provide models which, in conjunction with seeking out knowledge from Indigenous and Diasporic populations, can also inform both human and planetary well-being. While this chapter has not focused on climate change or epidemics and pandemics, humanitarian actors increasingly note that addressing these issues through genuinely equitable means is critical for preventing future crises and resolving disputes through peaceful means. Expanding access to discussion of ‘the problem’ and the design of alternative systems, soliciting the views of recipient communities in different geographic regions with different identities, forms of representation and epistemological orientations will be increasingly necessary as environmental threats to peace take a more central position in global debates.

In sum, each of the three aspects of radical inclusion discussed in this chapter is necessary for any revised global approach to the peaceful settlement of international disputes. Such radical inclusion requires a changed orientation towards fluidity and reflexivity, as well as a framework that either synthesises or cuts across current boundaries between currently demarcated UN bodies and agencies. Let the openings begin.

Notes

- 1 I very much appreciate the careful work done by Schwartzberg and Clark and Sohn, both discussed in Lopez-Claros, Dahl and Groff (2020: chs. 4 and 5) as well as the proposals by Lopez-Claros, Dahl and Groff in the same chapters about voting systems that take into account GNI, but these systems do not account for how wealth has been created in Europe and the United

- States over generations literally on the backs of slaves, nor does it account for wealth from property and resources across the Global South claimed by actors in the Global North, from states and imperial companies to contemporary multinational corporations (MNCs) and preferential French and British trading systems. Contemporary studies of reparations across a number of domains address the ongoing ramifications of these histories of wealth inequalities. For a review of thoughtful proposals for revised voting, see Augusto Lopez-Claros, Dahl and Groff (2020: chs. 4 and 5 especially). For debates regarding the contours of reparations, see, for example, United Nations Human Rights (2019).
- 2 I detail this process from the early 1940s through Dunbarton Oaks and Yalta to San Francisco, based on extensive archival work, in Lynch (1999: 192–208; see also Robins 1971).
 - 3 This includes broader inclusion in any future discussions of the working groups gathered by the Global Governance Forum, among other interested parties.
 - 4 See the organisation Everyday Peace Indicators (EPI), led by Pamina Firchow and Roger MacGinty, which seeks to work with communities from California to Colombia to Sri Lanka.
 - 5 I have also demonstrated the problematic nature of ‘the local’ in two relatively recent talks in Finland and Poland, entitled, respectively, ‘Banish the Local!’ (University of Jyväskylä conference on ‘The West’, June 2019) and ‘The Need to Reframe “Internationalism” and “Localism”, for ‘Modern Internationalism: Chance, Fantasy or Reality?’ (Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland, online, January 25, 2022).
 - 6 Two important precursors were the example of women activists in the forging of the Good Friday Peace Agreements in Northern Ireland and the Liberian women’s peace movement. See, for example, Racioppi and O’Sullivan (2006: 189–208) and African Women and Peace Support Group (2004). In each of these cases, however, women had to force themselves into negotiations that tried hard to keep them out. See, for example, Donahoe (2018).
 - 7 The Global Governance initiative has an extensive gender equality programme (LINKS) that demonstrates how and why gender equality is necessary for peace and well-being, especially connected to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Here, I focus on the need for inclusion, not only of women but of perspectives that understand the gendered nature of security and its intersectional implications.
 - 8 Representatives from the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Office, Islamic Relief UK, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), Oxfam UK, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), Lutheran World Federation (LWF), United Sikhs, Interfaith Hindu Forum of Britain, Hindu Christian Forum UK, and Tearfund UK were involved in drawing up the Background Document, with assistance from the World Council of Churches in Geneva (UNHCR 2012).
 - 9 In my subsequent interviews in different parts of the Middle East, for example, groups I met with had not heard of the document. Such a task of distribution is immense, of course, and the fact that my interlocutors were not aware of it cannot be taken as a negative evaluation of its effectiveness.
 - 10 The notion of ‘reversing the lens’ comes from the work of Ngūgī wa Thiong’o (2009), who asserts that we should stop asking how much the West gives to Africa, and instead recognise that African has been giving to the West—of its people, labour and resources—for hundreds of years.

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