Why Focus on Inclusion and How is it Connected to Security?

GCSP Inclusive Security Policy Brief Series

Security is a basic human right to be free of fear to one's life from injury or death in the daily conduct of life. During the Cold War, perceptions of security were shaped by narratives of a threat from an 'other', principally a state actor. Whilst geopolitical tensions are currently heightening risks of weapons of mass destruction being deployed, wars are increasingly fought within states and transnationally and, involve violence targeted primarily against civilians.[1]

In today's globalised world, the nature of security has evolved and eludes narrow, state-centred definitions. Many risks transcend boundaries as evidenced by the Covid-19 pandemic. Environmental disasters induced by climate change, cyberattacks and terrorism are now consistently rated as most the most significant likely threats to global peace and security, along with economic and political polarisation leading to social instability.

WHY FOCUS ON INCLUSION?

Evidence shows that political, economic and social inclusion fosters more peaceful societies. It contributes to a lasting state of non-violence that is not imposed by force but maintained by positive institutions, structures and attitudes (such as ecological sustainability and social justice). When accompanied by accountability and transparency, it is a core component of good governance which allows for broader political representation and participation. By contrast, discrimination and exclusion create conflict, war and displacement, and inequality is a contributing factor to terrorism and social instability.

Inclusion is about leveraging the potential of diverse members of society in building sustainable and positive peace, and resilience to crises. Inclusion supports the United Nations Secretary General's 'Prevention' Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of Agenda 2030. 193 Global Leaders agreed to ensure that 'no one is left behind' as we advance peace and prosperity for people and the planet. Despite the goals, we are not on the path to inclusion. The Covid-19 Pandemic and responses to it are exacerbating inequalities, exposing the vulnerabilities in our social, political and economic systems.

'Everything we do during and after the COVID-19 crisis must aim to build more equal, inclusive and sustainable economies and societies. This is perhaps the clearest lesson emerging from the pandemic.'

United Nations Policy Brief:
The Impact of Covid-19 on Women

'BUILD BACK BETTER'

At the beginning of 2020 United Nations Secretary General launched a 'Decade of Action' to accelerate action to advance the SDGs, and at the same time identified global mistrust, lack of confidence in political establishments, fear, anxiety and hostility against refugees and migrants amongst the challenges to be overcome.

https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2020-01-22/remarks-general-assembly-priorities-for-2020

As the Covid-19 pandemic unfolds, our ecosystem becomes increasingly fragile and more global crises are predicted, there are increased calls to 'build back better'. However, we first need to see and the barriers to inclusion and understand how inequality manifests before we can respond effectively and close the gaps.

Sustainable Development Goals icons 1–17: 1 No Poverty, 2 No Hunger, 3 Good Health, 4 Quality Education, 5 Gender Equality, 6 Clean Water and Sanitation, 7 Clean Energy, 8 Good Jobs and Economic Growth, 9 Innovation and Infrastructure, 10 Reduced Inequalities, 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities, 12 Responsible Consumption, 13 Protect the Planet, 14 Life Below Water, 15 Life on Land, 16 Peace and Justice, 17 Partnerships for the Goals.

1 K. Dupuy, S. Gates, H. Nygard et al., 'Trends in Armed Conflict: 1946-2016, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Dupuy%20et%20al%20-%20Trends%20in%20Armed%20Conflict%201946-2016%2C%20Conflict%20Trends%202-2017.pdf

HOW DOES A GENDER LENS HELP?

Much data has already been gathered on the discriminatory and exclusionary impact of laws, policies and social norms on women. An intersectional lens helps to deepen and extend that analysis to more nuanced vulnerable groups whose identity is shaped by age, race, ethnicity, disability, nationality as well as education and socio-economic status and many other factors often hidden from public view or consciousness.

CASE STUDY

In their book, Why Nations Fail, D. Acemoglu and J. Robinson describe the town of Nogales, which is split into two by the US-Mexico border. North of the fence, Nogales is a prosperous American town. South of it, Nogales is a run-down place with much higher criminality. The geography is identical, the culture the same and the ethnic makeup of the population similar. So, what makes the difference? Acemoglu and J. Robinson argues inclusive institutions underpin the economic prosperity and stability in the North, while corrupt, 'extractive' institutions create poverty and criminality in the South of the city.[8]

[8] D. Acemoglu & J. A. Robinson, 'Why Nations Fail', 2012

FACTS AND STATS:

A More Unequal World

According to the IMF, **53% of countries** saw a significant increase in income inequality over the past three decades.

Inequality has now overtaken lack of economic growth as a cause of mistrust in institutions, particularly in developing countries.[1]

Covid-19 and lockdowns could drive up to 420m people into absolute poverty, **living on less than $1.90 a day.**

Who Is Hit Hardest and Who Has Control?

Inequality particularly impacts young people, women and minority groups in Europe.

42% of the world's population are under 25, of whom **70 million** are unemployed.

357 million children live in conflict zones. Of the world's **25.9 million refugees,** more than half a under the age of 18.[2]

Many young people are socially engaged and politically disconnected – they care more than ever before, but their views are not considered before important decisions are taken.[3]

In many regions, the majority of women in employment are part of the informal sector without health and social security protection.

Women are under-represented in high-status, high-power roles in governments and businesses. Women make up just **5% of the CEOs** of the world's largest companies.[4]

Across Europe, minority groups remain disadvantaged, earning lower salaries, and being more likely to be unemployed than the national average.[5]

Research in the UK found that Black, Asian and other minority groups were **3 times more likely** to die of the virus.[6]

Lessons from Covid-19

Countries with higher trust in government were more able to tackle the pandemic effectively. These countries were more likely to have inclusive governments – including women leaders.

When governments set an example of transparency and accountability people tend to follow.

But – still just **30% of leaders** in the global health sector are women. A lesson from Covid-19: this needs to change.[7]

[1] Edelman, 'Trust Barometer 2020', https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/440941/Trust%20 Barometer%202020/2020%20Edelman%20Trust%20Barometer%20Global%20Report.pdf?utm_campaign=Global:%20Trust%20Barometer%202020&utm_source=Website

[2] UNHCR, 'Figures at a Glance', https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html

[3] World Economic Forum, What You Need to Know About the World's Youth, in 7 Charts, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/08/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-worlds-young-people-in-7-charts/

[4] V. Zarya, 'The Share of Female CEOs in the Fortune 500 dropped by 25% in 2018', https://fortune.com/2018/05/21/women-fortune-500-2018/

[5] ENAR, Racism & Discrimination in Employment in Europe 2013-2017, p.4-5

[6] M. Godin, 'Black and Asian People Are 2 to 3 Times More Likely to Die of COVID-19, U.K. Study Finds', https://time.com/5832807/coronavirus-race-analysis-uk/

[7] World Economic Forum, '7 out of 10 Global Health Leaders are Men: Study', https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/04/global-health-leadership-gender-equality-report/

FIRST IN A SERIES...

This is the first part of a series of inclusive security policy briefs, produced by GCSP staff and fellows that will cover a wider range of topics, from AI and gender to the rule of law. We will unpack some of the key concepts and provide some concrete actions of steps we can all take to integrate inclusive behaviours and practices into our lives and work, overcome biases and narrow perspectives, and harness the collective intelligence of diverse voices. We aim to highlight the positive potential of behavioural change and technology to gather disaggregated data and identify patterns and opportunities to generate more responsive policies and programmes, systems and structures.