

## Inclusion: Manifestations and Dilemmas

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*Despite the multiple reflections of language in the context of diversity, inclusion remains a social dream.*

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### ABSTRACT

This article critically explores the concept of inclusion, examining its theoretical, technical, and institutional manifestations across international and national frameworks. Through a review of 168 academic, institutional, and policy-based documents from Colombia and other global sources, it reveals how inclusion is frequently framed within hegemonic systems that reproduce existing inequalities under the guise of equity. The analysis highlights tensions between normative ideals and real-world practices, showing how inclusion often operates as a regulatory tool that assimilates diversity into dominant frameworks, rather than empowering pluralism. Drawing on critical theory, the study questions the effectiveness of inclusion as currently implemented and proposes an alternative vision based on the commons, plurality, and community-based resistance. This transformative approach calls for the redefinition of inclusion beyond the confines of neoliberalism and universalist logic, aiming to build genuinely diverse and democratic social systems.

**Keywords:** Inclusion; Diversity; Pluralism; Hegemony; Neoliberalism; Social Justice; Critical Theory; Social Policy; Marginalization; Power Structures

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The constant reflections on the uses of language with respect to diversity have favored better understandings of the characteristics of population segments. Today, many embrace the concept of a person with a disability or functionally diverse instead of using the disabled, many defenders of the native peoples fight for the use of the reference of indigenous, who at some point were called blacks it is advisable to recognize them as Afro communities, there are important struggles in the distinctions between sex and gender, and we are still discovering how the best way to relate between groups that correspond to different generations is. Despite the multiple efforts of the disciplines to insert new reflections to transform the social world, it is evident that normativized inclusion continues to be a desire.

The Royal Academy of Language defines inclusion as "*the action or effect of introducing, inserting, incorporating, installing, penetrating, placing or publishing*" (2023, n.p.). This concept has been linked to the reflection of the human and social sciences, mobilizing its understanding from a relational perspective between subjects and social groups. In this sense, inclusion is connected to values such as justice, and therefore, it is possible with human action because it is defined as "*attitudes, trends or policies that lead to the integration of all people in a society, with the aim that they can participate, contribute and benefit from it*" (UNESCO, 2009, p. 8).

Various theorists and sectors (Booth & Ainscow, 2011; Slee, 2011; Ainscow, 2007; Armstrong & Barton, 2008; UNESCO, 2017) attribute to the conquest of inclusion benefits such as a more equitable and respectful world, as well as the guarantee of rights and the appreciation of individual contributions in the collective. This is because there is a coincidence of understanding of the inclusion referent as the formula that responds to the problem of exclusion, which leads to the correction of situations that promote individual well-being and that together guarantee, or at least are reflected, in social or collective well-being. This justifies the fact that this word has been introduced into legal, technical and everyday discourses as "something or action] "of everyone".

In spite of the above, in the discourses of inclusion there is a generalized and generalizing imprecision, since, although the word is incorporated in laws and official texts, as well as in technical references that establish formal actions to

achieve it, its complexity and seriousness are easily diluted, since it is expected that technical and theoretical positions move to the relational or everyday with tints of what is considered appropriate (Skilar, 2008), but which is loaded with the hegemonic discourse of exclusion, because in order to talk about inclusion, it is necessary to return to its origin and it is the separation of "I" and the "other" or "us" and "others", only with the obligation to "be together and access the same" as an argument for justice.

Therefore, in normative and public discourses, the recognition of an "other" is suggested, to whom support must be provided so that he or she enters a "majority self", the latter in the public sphere is not recognized as different, because in the hegemonic perspective, the one that should be included is a "minority" categorized, classified and subclassified with variables associated with the violation or vulnerability<sup>1</sup>. The foregoing suggests a conflict in itself with the possibility of moving to the action of the concept, since these ways of understanding the "other" will hardly be able to summon the "majority self" to feel identified to "be or work together", but rather mobilizes perspectives related to feeling that "the majority self" can or must do something for "the other" to be, alive and as far as possible it is configured as a "majority self" in compliance with what is just, even if there is an attempt to recognize the "value of difference".

Precisely, in human groups, inclusion has been complemented by the social, and according to Aguirre et. al. (2009), this has been systematically understood as the antagonistic to social exclusion. According to the author, the configuration of the concept of social inclusion was born in the sixties, as a result of the theories of marginality, in which there were reflections on the negative effect, individually and collectively, of the non-linking of people with the productive force in a territory and therefore mobilized, from developmentalist perspectives, the reproduction of poverty and precariousness. Thus, the political sectors [representing the majority self] designed economic and social planning strategies guaranteeing subsidiary and residual actions for "those groups" that needed to be included in order to mobilize economic growth.

This perspective, without making judgments about good or bad will, places a hegemonic place of a capable "majority self" and consolidates the idea of an incapable "minority other", who requires to be accompanied or intervened, not necessarily understood, and who can stagnate him in the configuration of a discredited imaginary of which he does not want to be. to be or to remain. Thus, within the framework of these legal or technical discourses that mobilize inclusion, "otherness" is made visible as a risk or a state from which it is necessary to leave or mitigate in order to move to ways of life of the "majority self" through the provision of support consolidating "propitious contexts" to avoid the manifestation and reproduction of social exclusion.

In this panorama, the technicalities about inclusion have been consolidated as public discourses of the duty to be that hope to be inserted into the daily life of citizens, since the action of each person is required to make it possible, and therefore, each individual has levels of responsibility for inclusion. However, with the inaccuracies of the concept itself, and its definition as that which is contrary to social exclusion, it indisputably runs the risk of revealing and reproducing the hegemonic relationship of inequality between social groups and domination, since the concept is still unresolved or undefined, and therefore, the framework for action in exclusion and inclusion, they have the same horizon.

In this regard, it is likely that imaginaries, conceptions and representations in inclusion do not differ radically from exclusion, that is, there are no changes in what, although there is a compendium of mechanisms or alternatives that are expected to mobilize people towards inclusion. Therefore, it is presumed that the values, norms, attitudes or ideologies that mobilize citizens towards inclusion, have the same socially shared horizon of exclusion, therefore, inclusion as it is configured reproduces the same forms of symbolic control sedimenting the relationship and action of inequality, with a capable and an incapable self.

Over the years, the concept of inclusion has been linked to the recognition of diversity, however, there are no significant variations on the latter reference that detach it from the unequal or the violated (Ministry of Culture, 2013). That is, it is not very distant from the discussion that began in this document. Under this horizon, cultural groups have been assigned a recognition of "diverse" [very close to what is understood as "other"]. Currently, "the

<sup>1</sup> According to UNESCO, for example, the groups with which inclusion should be worked are abused children, working children, refugee or displaced children, religious minorities, indigenous children, children working at home, migrants, ethnic minorities, linguistic minorities, who are in combat zones, among others.

diverse" has been segmented into groups, and these groups have been forced to initiate social struggles to be "included" to access their rights, and which are configured and administered by the hegemonic.

Although in social imaginaries, talking about diversity is related to a respectful perspective of difference, the concept of diversity is veiled with segmentation, since in technical references it is associated with "positive discrimination" arguing the need for recognition of groups. However, these perspectives and the way in which they have been addressed, have led citizens to polarization and social fragmentation, and in accordance with the statement of Aguirre et. al. (2009) *"the city appears as a disputed territory, but also as a differentiated social space under construction"* (p.25), leading to a sense of progress or conquests in the face of inclusion, without perhaps noticing, or probably validating, that the achievements have been made in a segmented manner.

Despite the above, the segmentation and social identifications of those groups towards the vindication of rights are configured in incapacity, not only in the discourses that have been categorized as exclusive, but also permeate those that have been exalted as inclusive (Díaz, 2021). The foregoing questions the intentions of theorizing, technification and normativization of the concept of "inclusion" that is expected to permeate the daily life of educational, community and public administration scenarios, in which inclusion has been established as the goal and solution to many social problems in which, despite the efforts, and in accordance with the approach of Skilar (cited by Portal @prnder- Entre Ríos, 2022) there is no clarity regarding what "being together" is supposed to be and with less definition *"how and why to be together"*.

Below, some reflections are presented, product of the selection and review of a body of 168 texts made up of academic articles, books and international and national technical references (Colombia); in which the reference of inclusion is addressed from theoretical and practical perspectives. The review was aimed at identifying relevant paradigms and technical references that facilitate the understanding of the approaches provided to the topic, highlighting its conceptual evolution and the tensions associated with its implementation. Also, some possibilities are visualized to have understandings of diversity and its value in convergence.

Next, reflections derived from the review of a corpus of 168 texts, made up of academic articles, books and international and national (Colombia) technical references, which address the concept of inclusion from theoretical and practical perspectives, are presented. The review aimed to identify relevant paradigms and technical references that facilitate the understanding of approaches related to the topic, highlighting their conceptual evolution and the tensions inherent in their implementation. Likewise, possibilities are proposed to understand diversity and assess its importance in social convergence.

The selected texts come from academic databases such as Google Scholar, Scielo, Redalyc, Dialnet, Web of Science, ProQuest Social Sciences, SAGE Journals, SpringerLink, Humanities and Social Sciences, and SCOPUS, as well as websites and institutional repositories of international and national organizations. The selection criteria included thematic relevance, geographical diversity, topicality of publications (2013-2023) and academic quality of sources. With the above, this text invites us to reflect on the complexities of inclusion from a critical perspective, highlighting the gaps and contradictions that run through this concept. Its purpose is to provide new perspectives that contribute to building a transformative vision oriented towards renewed understandings of diversity.

## 2. INCLUSION: FROM THE IDEAL TO THE HEGEMONIC IMPERATIVE

Inclusion has been defined in a multifaceted way, encompassing various human spheres such as work, education and other social contexts. This concept promotes reflection and action towards the construction of conceptions, attitudes and practices where people are accepted, valued and fully capable of participating, regardless of their identities or abilities. In this sense, inclusion has gained relevance at the global level, and its understanding is oriented towards a dynamic approach that considers the specific contexts in which it is applied, given that its implementation is deeply conditioned by cultural, legal, and technological factors (Özbilgin & Erbil, 2024).

In this framework, inclusion is perceived as an essential objective, in which social systems must establish clear priorities and guide behaviors towards social cohesion (Özbilgin & Erbil, 2024). This objective even extends to new spatial configurations, such as digital environments, where inclusion is linked to accessibility and the generation of opportunities that promote equitable interaction and participation (Panori, 2023). However, in all contexts, risks and challenges have been identified that, if not addressed in a timely manner, can deepen existing inequality gaps. In

response to this, various cultures have appropriated, at least from the discursive level, the need to promote inclusion based on principles of equity and social justice.

In this regard, inclusion calls on communities to undertake processes that allow historically excluded groups (even referred to as marginalized communities and vulnerable or vulnerable populations) to access the same rights, resources, and opportunities as dominant groups within a society or nation. However, the notion of integrating all social elements under systems of "universal" conception can derive, in the words of Hardt and Negri (2000), "Empire", *which they define as a global system of control*, which translates inclusion into a mechanism for regulating diversity under a hegemonic and homogenizing logic, limiting the possibilities of real autonomy and perpetuating structural inequalities.

In this sense, Empire can be interpreted as a form of inclusion that, paradoxically, perpetuates global inequality and restricts the possibilities of real autonomy for both individuals and communities. Instead of encouraging full and authentic participation, the concept of inclusion within this framework becomes a mechanism of biopolitical production, in which social, political and economic life is managed by a global system that imposes the terms of inclusion. Thus, far from promoting recognition and dialogue between differences, they are identified and aligned with the purpose of being normalized within a dominant system that consolidates its hegemonic logic.

In this sense, the Empire can be framed within the ideas of universal validation, where acceptance is presented as legitimate and promoted as an objective of struggle from the discourse of inclusion, although paradoxically it perpetuates inequalities. This is based on the fact that universal discourses, far from promoting full and authentic participation, are consolidated as mechanisms of biopolitical production, managing social, political and economic life under a global system that unilaterally imposes the terms of inclusion. In this way, instead of promoting recognition and genuine dialogue between differences, they are identified and aligned with the global purpose, generating normalizations that reinforce a dominant system based on hegemonic logics.

From this perspective, inclusion could be interpreted as a form of subjugation that allows the participation of all within an oppressive system, without questioning or challenging the classical logic of power<sup>2</sup>. This is because actions in the name of inclusion tend to mobilize "equitable distributions of power" without radically delegitimizing their existence within the normative configurations of the "must be universal." In this framework, marginalized groups are put in a position where they must "fight and do their best" to integrate and participate in the structures of that system, designed under a perspective of universality. At the same time, other groups assume a role in providing support that balances capacities and facilitates the performance of the former within the system, thus perpetuating the same power dynamics that inclusion aims to overcome.

With the above, the idea of "equitable distributions of power" is revealed as a fallacy. The consolidation of an Empire transforms inclusion into a mechanism that, far from overcoming inequalities, encourages selective exclusions, establishing hierarchies and advances segmented by groups. These segmentations respond to social entities that continue to exert disproportionate influences on cultural and economic constructions. In this context, inclusion is instrumentalized to facilitate more efficient control over population groups, under the premise of ensuring their belonging to a common system, or at least their articulation with it. However, this approach perpetuates structural inequality, reinforcing the foundations of the dominant system rather than questioning or challenging them, and making evident the urgent need to address these dynamics with a critical and transformative perspective.

Thus, true inclusion should not be limited to integrating individuals into existing structures, but also to challenging and subverting those structures. In this sense, the multitude, in its resistance to the Empire, shows that inclusion, as it is currently conceived, is not enough (Hardt & Negri, 2000). Various authors have argued the need to transform systems so that they are truly democratic and participatory; however, this reflection raises the possibility of rethinking this transformation. Rather than reconfiguring the dominant system, it aims to conserve and protect diversity in its own systems, promoting more organic articulations between them and delegitimizing the façade of

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<sup>2</sup> Power is an essential social phenomenon that only manifests itself in the framework of human relationships. It is understood as the ability to influence, condition or determine the behavior of other individuals or groups, either through imposition, persuasion, control or consensus. This capacity can be supported by various resources: authority, force, legitimacy, influence or coercion (Weber, Buchheim, Russell and Burdeau cited by Carpizo (1999)).

participation, freedom, equity or justice within the framework of a global order that minimizes the real valuation and preservation of the dynamics of diverse systems.

### **3. NEOLIBERALISM AS THE DOMINANT SYSTEM AND INCLUSION AS ITS EXECUTIONER**

Neoliberalism has consolidated itself as a dominant force in the political, economic and cultural spheres, presenting itself as the hegemonic model that glorifies individual freedom as the supreme ideal and minimizes the role of the State in economic dynamics. Beyond impacting political and economic systems, it has shaped everyday social practices, homogenizing cultures and traditions under discourses of freedom and meritocracy that perpetuate unequal power relations. This model promotes personal autonomy and individual success, delegitimizing collective actions and strengthening behaviors linked to consumption and personal success, while strengthening mechanisms of systemic control over people's decisions and aspirations (Colussi, 2018). Despite the defense of individualism, massified personalized behaviors linked to consumption, the ethics of personal achievement and the search for individual success emerge.

Numerous reflections have analysed the impact of neoliberalism, highlighting its ability to depoliticise everyday life. This process is understandable because neoliberalism acts simultaneously at various levels, incorporating knowledge systems and mechanisms into community practices and popular tactics. In this way, it not only imposes itself as an external force, but also profoundly transforms social dynamics from within. It fosters the idea of an autonomous individual, solely responsible for its success, while redefining communities as "social capital," shifting economic and productive responsibilities to them that previously fell to the state.

In this context, inclusion risks becoming an instrument that justifies notions of "freedom" and "deregulation," shifting collective responsibilities to the level of individual attitudes and fostering segmentations that aggravate inequalities. Neoliberalism, by consolidating dynamics of power and control, forces people to continuously compete to occupy decision-making spaces. Instead of questioning these power structures, inclusive discourse, raised under ideals of justice and equity, ends up reinforcing them under the guise of "benefiting all" while perpetuating the same logics that sustain structural inequalities.

This model has established schemes that delegitimize or ignore diverse practices, urging people, under the argument of rights, to strive to integrate themselves into hegemonic dynamics. Within the framework of inclusion, adaptation to dominant norms and values is encouraged that, far from respecting the diversity of ways of life, force marginalized communities to conform to these standards in order to obtain recognition and acceptance. Thus, under the banner of inclusion, diversity is redefined within parameters that perpetuate power and homogenization, subordinating local and plural practices to a system of values of a universalist nature.

The modern legal system, by operating within a dichotomy between the legal and the illegal, establishes a universal framework that marginalizes non-Western legal traditions and social norms. This dichotomy reduces and standardizes differences to adjust them to a homogeneous perspective, aligned with a Western vision of rights. This approach finds its roots in colonial processes, where the separation between the true and the false, the legal and the illegal, reflects histories that perpetuate power structures centered on "white" values and hierarchies. Under the premise of equity, acceptance, and social justice, universal ideals of equal opportunities and rights are promoted that, although they appear to mitigate imbalances, end up reinforcing existing power structures (Hinton et al., 2023; Marabelli & Chan, 2024).

Thus, under the banner of inclusion, cultural differences are softened or distorted, promoting a rights-based perspective aligned with Western values. A clear example is the "positivization" of indigenous rights, a process that transforms elements of native cultures into a catalog of norms adapted to a universal legal framework. This approach decontextualizes and reinterprets the original meaning of such rights to fit a "broader" but predominantly Western legal system. As a result, global legal systems draw divisions that marginalize non-Western legal traditions, relegating them to invisibility. This perpetuates the exclusion of these groups while, ironically, they are "included" within a dominant system that distorts and subsumes their cultural particularities.

Inclusion, in this context, implies that diverse groups of people operate towards the recognition of their rights, forcing themselves to navigate and adapt to Western legal structures. This strategic use of legal frameworks can lead to the distortion of their original practices and intentions, generating a circle where inclusion efforts are subordinated to

the need to conform to dominant systems. This process limits the full and respectful recognition of particularities, consolidating a homogeneous perspective of rights.

The notion of rights in neoliberalism, guaranteed mainly through services associated with individual consumption, enters into direct tension with the idea of inclusion that promotes collective participation and interaction. While inclusion, in theory, suggests spaces where diversity is recognized and valued in a framework of equality, neoliberalism mobilizes an individualistic approach that fragments these ideals. By redefining rights as individually accessible goods – and not as collective conquests – this model turns inclusion into an instrument for competition for resources and recognition, which, under this structure, will always be limited.

Thus, instead of generating fertile ground for interaction and solidarity between diversities, dynamics are strengthened that promote segmentation, forcing individuals to group according to common characteristics in order to access rights that are granted or conditioned by the system. Therefore, inclusion ceases to be a means for equity and the recognition of diversity, becoming the executioner that perpetuates logics of exclusion and homogenization, and strengthens contexts of structural inequality.

Since the 1970s, Latin America has been a laboratory for the implementation of neoliberal policies promoted by financial organizations, corporations and international governments. These policies, which include privatizations, cuts in social protection, financial deregulation, and labor flexibilization, have sought to reduce state intervention and expand market mechanisms. As a result, the conditions for participation have been legitimized and limited within schemes defined by these same dynamics, consolidating structures of political control that frame the guarantee of universal rights under a logic functional to the neoliberal model.

In this scenario, the neoliberal model has transformed social services into mechanisms for access to rights conceived as individual goods, subordinating collective participation to the logic of consumption and competition. This has generated a system that legitimizes structural inequalities by shifting the responsibility for inclusion and access to resources to individuals and communities, without questioning the foundations that perpetuate such inequalities. The narrative of "freedom" and "progress" serves, in this sense, as a means to strengthen dynamics of omnipresent and resilient political control.

In this context, it is essential to analyze how inclusion has been technically configured and what are the principles that guide its implementation in international and national policies. The following sections present the technical guidelines for inclusion, identifying whether, in their current configuration, it responds to ideals of equity or perpetuates the logics of control and inequality in the name of universal principles.

#### 4. OF THE PERSPECTIVES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ON INCLUSION AND THEIR ORIENTATION TO NATIONS

To understand how inclusion is conceived from the global technical framework, references of international organizations that act as guides for nations and overseers of global macro agreements were reviewed. This exploration made it possible to identify how inclusion is defined, the actions they propose in their justification, the horizons and objectives they pursue, as well as the actors involved in their implementation. In addition, an exercise of comparison was carried out with the precepts analyzed throughout this text, with the aim of contrasting, distorting or reaffirming the approaches presented. In the **Board 1. International Organizations' Approaches to Inclusion** The documentary findings derived from this analysis are presented.

*Board 1. International Organizations' Approaches to Inclusion*

Organization and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
United Nations (UN)	United Nations (UN). (2018). Achieving inclusion: from	Inclusion as a commitment that involves incorporating diverse voices, especially	Does not relate	The goal of inclusion is that "no one is left behind."	Inclusion is oriented towards population sectors that have	Teams and directors from different UN agencies are considered responsible

Organization and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
	recognition in policies to practice.	those from marginalized and vulnerable groups. It is also understood as a right and a fundamental pillar to achieve peace, as well as a tool that promotes equity, justifying its importance by strengthening institutions and general welfare.			historically faced barriers and have been excluded; These include: women, youth, indigenous communities, people with disabilities, and those affected by conflict.	for mobilizing inclusion, responding to inquiries from civil society organizations and marginalized groups.
Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)	OECD. (2018). Enhancing Social Inclusion in Latin America: Key Issues and the Role of Social Protection Systems. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.	Inclusion as a process that seeks to reduce poverty, inequality and informality, thus promoting greater social cohesion.	The expansion of social protection coverage, the implementation of Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programs such as Familias en Acción in Colombia, and the development of inclusive policies in sectors such as the labor market and digitalization, in order to promote equal opportunities.	To improve the quality of life of all citizens, especially vulnerable groups, and to contribute to sustainable development and economic growth.	The beneficiaries of these initiatives include women, indigenous populations, youth, and informal sector workers, who often face barriers to accessing social protection and economic opportunities.	The main responsible for driving inclusion are government agencies, private sector actors, and international organizations, who must collaborate to design policies that address the region's specific challenges and promote greater social and economic inclusion.



Organization and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2024). Inclusivity in agrifood systems. FAO. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.fao.org/inclusivity-in-agrifood-systems/es">https://www.fao.org/inclusivity-in-agrifood-systems/es</a>	Inclusion as an approach that guarantees the full and active participation of all people, regardless of their social, economic, political or identity status, in agri-food development processes and that allows them to benefit from them.	FAO promotes inclusion in agrifood systems through actions such as improving access to resources, services and technology for excluded groups, strengthening resilience through social protection and fostering platforms for inclusive dialogue.	Aligned with the 2030 Agenda and its objective of "leaving no one behind," it is essential to reduce inequalities in rural areas. These measures seek to eradicate poverty, combat food insecurity and promote equality in agri-food systems, ensuring their sustainability and strengthening the resilience of marginalized rural groups.	The main beneficiaries of these initiatives are women, youth, migrants, people with disabilities and indigenous peoples in rural areas.	The responsibility for promoting inclusion lies with governments, international organizations, and local and community actors, who, together with FAO, implement inclusive policies to reduce inequalities.
International Monetary Fund (IMF)	International Monetary Fund. (2024). 2022–2023 Diversity & Inclusion Report. International Monetary Fund. <a href="https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/Policy-Papers/Issues/2024/06/27/2022-2023-Diversity-Inclusion-Report-551116">https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/Policy-Papers/Issues/2024/06/27/2022-2023-Diversity-Inclusion-Report-551116</a>	Does not relate a definition of inclusion	FMI has implemented a number of initiatives, including setting five-year diversity targets with regular reviews, creating an Interdepartmental Task Force to adjust these targets, and talent development programs that identify and	Consolidate work environments where different perspectives, work styles, cultural norms, skills and competencies are valued and respected and people feel safe in expressing their identity.	Especially those from underrepresented groups	The responsibility for promoting inclusion lies with the IMF's senior management, the Interdepartmental Working Group, and all actors, who are encouraged to actively contribute to an inclusive culture.



Organization and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
			support individuals from diverse backgrounds for leadership positions. In addition, it fosters an inclusive organizational culture through training and awareness campaigns.			
World Bank	World Bank. (2013). Inclusion Matters: The Foundation for Shared Prosperity. Washington, DC: World Bank. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-0010-8">https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-0010-8</a>	inclusion as the integration of all individuals, especially the marginalized, into social, economic, and political participation, ensuring that all people have equal opportunities to contribute to and benefit from shared prosperity, regardless of their social background or economic status.	Policies and programs that reduce structural barriers that limit equitable participation, implementing strategies aimed at improving education, access to health services, and employment, and guaranteeing the full participation of vulnerable groups in society and the economy.	Ensure that all people have equitable opportunities to contribute to and benefit from shared prosperity, regardless of their social background or economic status.	The main beneficiaries of these initiatives are traditionally marginalized groups, such as the poor, women, racial and ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities.	The responsibility for fostering inclusion lies with national and local governments, which are responsible for implementing inclusive policies, as well as with civil society and international organizations that support these initiatives. In addition, the role of educational institutions, companies and community actors in promoting greater equity and inclusion in various areas is

Organization and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
						underlined, thus contributing to a more equitable and cohesive society.
International Labour Organization (ILO)	International Labor Organization. (2020). ILO Policy and Strategy for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities 2020-2023. International Labor Organization.  International Labor Organization. (2023). Transforming companies through diversity and inclusion. International Labor Organization.	Inclusion as the meaningful and equitable integration of people with disabilities at all levels and activities of the organization, promoting a work environment that respects diversity and equal opportunities.  Inclusion in the ILO implies both a sense of belonging and freedom of individuation, allowing people to be valued for their skills and experiences without the need to hide aspects of their identity.	Does not relate	Ensuring physical and digital accessibility	The main beneficiaries of these measures are people with disabilities, as well as other ethnic, racial, religious and LGBTQI+ minority groups, who experience an inclusive and identity-respecting work environment.	The responsibility for promoting inclusion lies with the ILO, its senior management and tripartite constituents (governments, employers and workers), who play a crucial role in implementing inclusive policies and promoting a culture of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.
World Health Organization and Pan American Health Organization	Pan American Health Organization. (2024). Social and Environmental	WHO and PAHO define inclusion as the process of ensuring that all people,	WHO and PAHO implement actions aimed at improving equitable	All people should participate equitably in society, including	All people, especially those from historically marginalized groups.	The main responsible for promoting inclusion in the field of health are

Organization and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
	<p>l Determinants for Health Equity. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.paho.org/es/determinantes-sociales-ambientales-para-equidad-salud">https://www.paho.org/es/determinantes-sociales-ambientales-para-equidad-salud</a></p> <p>Pan American Health Organization. (2024). Health Equity. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.paho.org/es/temas/equidad-salud">https://www.paho.org/es/temas/equidad-salud</a></p>	regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, or disability, have equal opportunities and access to health and wellness services.	access to health services for persons with disabilities, integrating these groups into emergency preparedness and response measures, and implementing intersectoral public health interventions that allow equitable health standards to be achieved.	making decisions about aspects that affect their lives and health.		WHO Member States, civil society organizations and WHO staff in each country, who collaborate together with other international entities, such as the UN, OAS, ECLAC, IDB, UNICEF AND UN Women, to coordinate inclusive policies and programs that remove barriers to access and foster a more equitable society in terms of of health.
World Tourism Organization	World Tourism Organization. (2016). Tourism for All - Promoting universal accessibility: Good Practices in the Accessible Tourism Supply Chain. UNWTO.	Inclusion as the effort to make tourism universally accessible.	The organization promotes actions such as the creation of accessible transportation and accommodation, the training of staff on accessibility issues, the adaptation of websites to universal design and	<p>To design tourist environments, services and experiences that can be used and enjoyed by all people, including people with disabilities, seniors and families with children.</p> <p>Ensure equal opportunities for all people</p>	All people, including people with disabilities, seniors, and families with children.	Key drivers of these practices are policymakers, industry leaders and tour operators, who must work together to set standards and implement practices that promote accessibility in all tourism services.

Organization and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
			the use of assistive technologies to improve the visitor experience.	to participate in tourism experiences, thereby promoting social equity and economic growth through a more inclusive visitor base.		
The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	United Nations Development Programme (2024). Inclusive growth and poverty reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.undp.org/es/latin-america/inclusive-growth-poverty-reduction">https://www.undp.org/es/latin-america/inclusive-growth-poverty-reduction</a> .	UNDP understands inclusion as a goal to reduce multidimensional poverty and vulnerability, empowering poor and marginalized populations in Latin America and the Caribbean.	It implements actions that include the development of poverty analyses, social registries to identify vulnerable populations, and universal social protection policies that promote resilience to risks. It also focuses on strengthening the productive capacities of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and on the creation of inclusive business ecosystems.	The objective of these actions is to ensure that people can overcome the poverty line and prevent them from falling back into it, promoting productive and sustainable inclusion.	People below the poverty line	Governments in the region, in collaboration with UNDP and other local partners, are responsible for implementing these strategies, working together to reduce inequalities and promote social equity.
United Nations Environment Programme (NUMA)	United Nations Environment Programme. (2024).	Does not relate a definition of inclusion	UNEP implements actions such as the development	The aim of these actions is to reduce inequalities and promote	Women	The responsibility for driving inclusion lies with UNEP,

Organization and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
	<p>Gender and Environment - UNEP Actions in Latin America and the Caribbean. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.unep.org/es/genero-y-medio-ambiente-acciones-del-pnuma-en-america-latina-y-el-caribe">https://www.unep.org/es/genero-y-medio-ambiente-acciones-del-pnuma-en-america-latina-y-el-caribe</a></p> <p>United Nations Environment Programme. (2024). UNEP projects in Latin America and the Caribbean show an integrative approach to gender. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.unep.org/es/proyectos-del-pnuma-en-america-latina-y-el-caribe-muestran-un-enfoque-integrador-en-materia-de">https://www.unep.org/es/proyectos-del-pnuma-en-america-latina-y-el-caribe-muestran-un-enfoque-integrador-en-materia-de</a></p>		of successful checklists and case studies to integrate the gender approach into environmental projects, ensuring that inclusion is present in all phases of initiatives, from identification to monitoring and evaluation.	fair and meaningful participation of all social groups, especially the marginalized, in decision-making and access to resources, strengthening environmental justice through gender integration.		which works in collaboration with gender and environmental organizations to integrate this inclusive approach into their initiatives.
United Nations Educational,	United Nations Educational,	UNESCO defines inclusion as a	UNESCO proposes actions such	The objective of these actions is to	All students	Those responsible for

Organization and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).	Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (2017). Guide to Ensuring Inclusion and Equity in Education. Paris: UNESCO.	process that ensures that all students can access, participate in, and achieve learning within the education system, valuing their differences and individual contexts to democratize and enrich learning for all.	as evaluating and improving existing education policies, mobilizing human and financial resources, training teachers to respond to diversity, and encouraging the participation of families and communities in the inclusive education process.	ensure that all students have equal opportunities to learn and develop, promoting a more equitable and cohesive society that respects and values individual differences.		implementing inclusion are governments, teachers, families, communities, and policy administrators, who collaborate and coordinate efforts to create an inclusive educational environment, mobilizing resources and forming alliances between different sectors.
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	UNICEF. (2024). Social inclusion and children's rights in Colombia. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.unicef.org/colombia/inclusion-social">https://www.unicef.org/colombia/inclusion-social</a>  UNICEF. (2024). Equity and inclusion in education. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.unicef.org/lac/equidad-e-inclusion-en-la-educacion">https://www.unicef.org/lac/equidad-e-inclusion-en-la-educacion</a>	Inclusion as the guarantee of the rights of children and adolescents, promoting equal access to basic services and quality education without discrimination.	Technical assistance to government entities, programs such as "Child-Friendly Territories" and the "Facts and Rights" strategy to promote transparency in children's rights. In addition, it supports intercultural education and the inclusion of people with disabilities, promoting the active	Ensure that all children and adolescents have access to development and learning opportunities, reducing inequalities.	All children	Local and national governments, together with UNICEF, are responsible for implementing these policies to achieve more inclusive education systems in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Organization and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
			participation of young people, even in emergencies.			

*Source: Own elaboration*

Taking into account the information provided by international organizations, inclusion is presented as a global commitment that integrates historically marginalized people and groups, promoting principles such as equity, active participation and access to opportunities in various areas. However, as can be seen in the definitions and proposed actions, this vision is mainly framed in the regulation of services and in specific systems, such as education, health, tourism and work. This approach, although well-intentioned, aligns with the operational logics of the neoliberal model, perpetuating dynamics that consolidate structural inequalities instead of transforming them.

The narrative of inclusion as a "global commitment" tends to homogenize local experiences and needs under a universalist model, which, as explained above, leads to the subsumption of cultural and contextual particularities in systems regulated by global dynamics of control and normalization. By adopting a technical and administrative perspective, focused on service management and functional integration, the transformative potential of inclusion in this socially proposed dream is blurred. Organizations reinforce a vision of rights and opportunities managed from institutional frameworks that operate under the logic of individual consumption and competition.

The way of approaching inclusion constitutes an instrument that legitimizes the integration of "marginalized" groups within a hegemonic system, but without questioning or altering the bases that generate exclusion. The findings clearly show that the populations that require inclusion are grouped and labeled as people with disabilities, women, LGBTQ+, children, older adults, people in poverty; while governments, companies and organizations have the power to include, without those responsible for undertaking actions that favor the "marginalized" of the system. That is to say, agency and beneficence are located in the hegemonic places of the classical understanding of power.

On the other hand, the tensions between the global and the local are invisible in the definitions of inclusion proposed by international organizations. Although concepts such as equity and social justice are highlighted, these narratives do not address how global guidelines can conflict or dialogue with local practices and perspectives. On the contrary, they align themselves with Western and neoliberal values that reinforce the hegemony of the dominant system, leaving little room for autonomy and real emancipation of these groups.

## 5. INCIDENCE OF INCLUSION IN COLOMBIA

In 1948, as a result of the United Nations General Assembly, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was proclaimed, a document that Colombia adopted in 1966 and ratified in 1969. However, it was only until 1991, with the emergence of the Political Constitution, that discrimination was formally prohibited in the country. Article 5 of the Constitution, in addition to enshrining this principle, configured Colombia as a Social State of Law, laying the foundations for a regulation that would protect diversity and reject exclusionary attitudes. This legal framework promoted the enactment of norms, decrees, and technical references with the aim of safeguarding the rights of historically marginalized populations and fostering a more equitable society (Puyana, 2023).

Despite these legislative and technical advances, inclusion does not seem to be understood under integrative approaches such as those proposed by Guédez (2005, cited by Puyana, 2023). This author argues that inclusion should be conceived as the ability to live together based on what makes us equal and different, recognizing the essence of human dignity and the collective goals that drive us to work together. On the contrary, current dynamics have segmented the population through labels that, far from promoting respect and equity, have consolidated attitudes of exclusion, violation, romanticization, folklorization or invalidation towards the various groups that have been historically made invisible.



In this context, these labels and categorizations have contributed to reinforcing practices that hinder the full recognition of the rights of marginalized populations. In addition, they have generated barriers for these communities to be an active and significant part of the territorial, social and cultural fabric. Rather than fostering a transformative and emancipatory approach, the strategies implemented seem to perpetuate structures that hinder authentic participation and reinforce the inequalities they initially sought to overcome. In the **Board 2. National Agency Approaches to Inclusion** the perspectives of the entities that guide the schemes of social functioning in Colombia are recovered.

*Board 2. National Agency Approaches to Inclusion*

Organizational and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
Department for Social Prosperity (DPS)	Department for Social Prosperity. (2024). Social Inclusion Sector - Social Prosperity: Building an Equitable and Protective Society in Colombia. Retrieved from <a href="https://prospereidadsocial.gov.co/la-entidad/el-sector-de-la-inclusion-social/">https://prospereidadsocial.gov.co/la-entidad/el-sector-de-la-inclusion-social/</a>	It conceives it as the comprehensive development of people in situations of poverty, vulnerability and victims of the armed conflict, with a differential approach that considers gender, disability and ethnicity.	Its actions include mobilizing an inclusive social offer to improve socioeconomic conditions, guarantee the right to food, contribute to the comprehensive reparation of victims, and strengthen families and communities towards an inclusive society.	The objective is to build an equitable society that guarantees the effective enjoyment of rights and promotes a cultural transformation towards Total Peace in Colombia.	Victims, families and communities.	The DPS and other government entities, together with social and territorial actors, are responsible for promoting these social inclusion policies.
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia. (2024). Disability. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.cancilleria.gov.co/internacional/politica/sociales/discapacidad">https://www.cancilleria.gov.co/internacional/politica/sociales/discapacidad</a>	Does not relate	participates in the process of updating the National Public Policy on Disability and Social Inclusion that covers the period 2013 to 2022.  actions focused on the inclusion of people with disabilities and the integration of a gender approach, promoting equity	Does not relate	People with disabilities and gender diversity.	Does not relate

Organization and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
			and equal access to rights and opportunities.			
Ministry of Justice and Law	Ministry of Justice and Law. (2024). Weaving Justice: Inclusion and Equity in Access to Justice in Colombia. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.minjusticia.gov.co/programas-co/tejiendo-justicia">https://www.minjusticia.gov.co/programas-co/tejiendo-justicia</a>	Inclusion as an approach that seeks equal opportunities and respect for functional and gender diversity in the field of justice.	Actions for inclusion include the creation of the "Weaving Justice" network, initially focused on people with disabilities and later expanded to gender and transparency issues; the strengthening of management in legal clinics for inclusive access; and the training and generation of educational materials on inclusive justice.	The goal is to build an equitable and accessible society in which all people, regardless of their status, have fair opportunities to access justice.	Beneficiaries include people with disabilities, women and other vulnerable groups, such as ethnic communities and people in situations of social vulnerability, ensuring fair and equitable access to justice services.	The main responsible for promoting these actions are the Ministry of Justice and the universities participating in "Tejiendo Justicia," extending the commitment to social and governmental actors in Colombia, in compliance with the Constitution and international conventions.
Ministry of National Defense - The Directorate of Veterans and Inclusive Rehabilitation (DIVRI)	Ministry of National Defense. (2024). Functions of the Minister of National Defense. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.mindefensa.gov.co/ministerio/ministro#:~:text=Definir%20y%20dirigir%20todo%20lo,el%20%C3%A1mbito%20nacional%20como%20internacional.">https://www.mindefensa.gov.co/ministerio/ministro#:~:text=Definir%20y%20dirigir%20todo%20lo,el%20%C3%A1mbito%20nacional%20como%20internacional.</a>	Does not relate	It promotes inclusion through awareness programs and the adaptation of physical spaces for people with disabilities.  DIVRI implements attitudinal awareness programs and adapts physical spaces to ensure an inclusive and accessible environment.	Its objectives include promoting inclusion and reducing levels of discrimination in the military and social spheres.	People with disabilities.	The Directorate of Veterans and Inclusive Rehabilitation (DIVRI)

Organizational and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
Ministry of Finance and Public Credit	Intersectoral Commission on Financial Inclusion. (2016). National Strategy for Financial Inclusion in Colombia. Draft for public comment.	Financial inclusion as a means to facilitate access to and use of financial services, promoting greater participation of the population in the financial system and contributing to economic development and poverty reduction.	The ministry's strategy proposes actions such as the creation of specific financial products for vulnerable sectors, the promotion of digital payments, support for microcredits, and the implementation of inclusive insurance.	The objective of these actions is to improve the quality of life, reduce poverty, formalize the economy and ensure that a greater proportion of the population has access to services that promote their economic stability.	People in the informal economy	The Intersectoral Commission on Financial Inclusion, led by the Ministry of Finance, coordinates efforts between public and private entities, with the active participation of the private sector, to expand and strengthen financial inclusion in the country.
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. (2024). Rural Development with Equity Program - DRE. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.minagricultura.gov.co/ministerio/programas-y-proyectos/Paginas/Borrar_Programa-Desarrollo-Rural-con-Equidad-DRE_Borrar.aspx">https://www.minagricultura.gov.co/ministerio/programas-y-proyectos/Paginas/Borrar_Programa-Desarrollo-Rural-con-Equidad-DRE_Borrar.aspx</a>	Does not relate	Through the "Rural Development with Equity Program - DRE," it promotes the inclusion of small and medium-sized producers in the rural sector through economic support and access to incentives. Among the actions for inclusion are the Rural Capitalization Incentive (ICR), which finances investments by these producers; Rural Technical Assistance, which covers the costs of	The objective of these actions is to increase productivity and competitiveness in the agricultural sector, contributing to rural development and reducing economic inequalities.	Small and medium-sized producers in the rural sector (Campesinos).	Implementation responsibilities lie with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, in collaboration with technical assistance entities, producer associations and organizations that support rural development.

Organizational and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
			assistance plans to strengthen their capacities; and the adequacy of land and infrastructure financing to improve rural productivity.			
Ministry of Health and Social Protection	Ministry of Health and Social Protection. (2024). Inclusive Colombia Strategy. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.minsalud.gov.co/proteccion-social/promocion-social/Discapacidad/Paginas/colombia-inclusiva.aspx">https://www.minsalud.gov.co/proteccion-social/promocion-social/Discapacidad/Paginas/colombia-inclusiva.aspx</a>	It defines inclusion as a collective effort to ensure that persons with disabilities in Colombia can fully exercise their rights and access equal opportunities in society.	The Ministry of Health and Social Protection Among the actions to promote inclusion are the creation of spaces for dialogue, cooperation and agreement between public and private actors; the exchange of experiences and results that strengthen disability and social inclusion policy; and the promotion of projects that make visible and strengthen the capacities and rights of people with disabilities.	The objective is to build an inclusive society that values the skills and potentialities of all, guaranteeing an equitable Colombia where all people can enjoy their rights.	People with disabilities	Those responsible for promoting these actions include the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, along with non-governmental organizations, civil society, the private sector, and academia, who collaborate in the development of inclusive experiences.
Ministry of Labor	International Organization for Migration. (2019). Protocol for Care with a Psychosocial Approach in the Employability Route of the Public Employment Service – SPE. Retrieved	inclusion in the context of access to financial and labor services, equal opportunities and the integration of vulnerable groups.	The National Financial Inclusion Strategy promotes access to financial services through public policies, simplification of requirements for savings accounts, and the creation of entities such as the Specialized Companies in Electronic Deposits and	Integrate vulnerable groups.	Beneficiaries of these programs include low-income individuals, small and medium-sized agricultural producers, microentrepreneurs, rural communities, and people	Those responsible for implementing these initiatives are the Ministries of Labor, Finance and Agriculture, together with financial institutions such as the Agrarian Bank

Organization and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
	<p>from <a href="https://www.serviciodeempleo.gov.co">https://www.serviciodeempleo.gov.co</a></p> <p>Ministry of Labor. (2024). Labor Inclusion of People with Disabilities. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.mintrabajo.gov.co/web/guest">https://www.mintrabajo.gov.co/web/guest</a></p> <p>Ministry of Labor. (2024). Equipares: Labor Equity Seal with a Gender Approach. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.mintrabajo.gov.co/web/guest">https://www.mintrabajo.gov.co/web/guest</a></p> <p>Ministry of Labor. (2024). Labor Equity with a Gender Approach. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.mintrabajo.gov.co/web/guest">https://www.mintrabajo.gov.co/web/guest</a></p>		<p>Payments (SEDPES). In addition, the Rural Development with Equity Program (DRE) offers capitalization incentives and technical assistance in rural areas, facilitating access by small producers to financial resources and training in new technologies. The Inclusive Colombia Strategy, for its part, facilitates spaces for dialogue and cooperation between public and private actors to integrate people with disabilities and improve their living conditions.</p>		with disabilities.	and Finagro, microfinance guilds and cooperatives, as well as the Intersectoral Commission for Financial Inclusion and private actors that participate in their execution and coordination.
Ministry of Environment and	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable	The Ministry of Environment and	Actions for inclusion include intersectoral and multisectoral	The objective of these actions is	The beneficiaries are both local communities	Those responsible for driving inclusion

Organizational and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
Sustainable Development	Development. (2024). Colombia's Biodiversity Action Plan to 2030. Bogotá, D.C., Colombia: Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development.	Sustainable Development does not provide an explicit definition of inclusion, but highlights the importance of integrating various participation schemes in territorial planning and management, considering perspectives from different economic and social sectors.	initiatives focused on collaborative governance involving national, local and community actors, in order to strengthen capacities, promote transparency and traceability, and improve governance in the use of biodiversity.	to ensure the participation and equitable access of all actors in decisions on biodiversity, promoting sustainable development, the well-being of communities and environmental conservation.	and the environment at large	include multiple government sectors, local communities, NGOs, indigenous groups, Afro-descendants, peasants, and academia.
Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation	Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation. (2021). Public Policy for the Social Appropriation of Knowledge in the Framework of Science, Technology and Innovation. Bogotá, D.C.: Author.	Encourage the participation of citizens, scientists, businessmen and politicians, recognizing diversity and local needs.	Through its Public Policy for the Social Appropriation of Knowledge in the framework of Science, Technology and Innovation (STeI), it promotes inclusion through participation and equitable access to STeI processes, fostering the democratization of science and the dialogue of knowledge.	Democratize access to science, allowing various social sectors and territories to benefit from scientific and technological knowledge, promoting development and social transformation for	The policy is aimed at all citizens, especially traditionally excluded groups, and seeks to broaden their participation through a differential and inclusive approach.	The Ministry leads these initiatives in collaboration with local and national entities, social organizations and academic institutions to ensure inclusive practices in STeI projects.

Organizational and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
				well-being and equity in Colombia.		
Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism	Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism. (2021). Management in disability. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.mincit.gov.co/ministerio/gestion/gestion-en-discapacidad">https://www.mincit.gov.co/ministerio/gestion/gestion-en-discapacidad</a>	Does not relate	Through its Disability Management initiative, it promotes inclusion through the incorporation and effective accessibility of people with disabilities in its procedures and services, as well as in those of its related entities. The actions include the adoption of inclusion measures and strategies, affirmative actions and reasonable accommodations, in order to ensure that these people can exercise their rights under conditions of equality. These actions are aimed at eliminating barriers and promoting equal opportunities, equity, respect and participation, allowing people with disabilities to have equitable access to the services and resources of the sector, respecting human diversity.	Does not relate	Beneficiaries include people with disabilities, their caregivers and family members	The Ministry's Disability Management work team.



Organizational and/or Guidance Program	Fountain	Concept of inclusion	Suggested actions	Objective	Who is included	Who is responsible for including
Ministry of National Education	Ministry of National Education. (2018). Inclusive education. Retrieved November 11, 2024, from <a href="https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/micrositios-preescolar-basica-y-media/Direccion-de-Calidad/Gestion-Institucional/374740:Educacion-inclusiva">https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/micrositios-preescolar-basica-y-media/Direccion-de-Calidad/Gestion-Institucional/374740:Educacion-inclusiva</a>	The Ministry of National Education defines inclusive education as a continuous process that recognizes and responds to the diversity of characteristics, interests, and needs of students of all ages.	Actions to achieve this include removing barriers in the educational environment, implementing reasonable accommodation, and promoting inclusive practices, policies, and cultures that facilitate access to and participation in education. These actions are framed in human rights and ensure that all students, including those with disabilities and other groups facing barriers, can develop alongside their peers.	This process seeks to promote development, learning and participation in a common learning environment, free from discrimination and exclusion.	All students	Those responsible for implementing these policies are the Ministry of National Education, the secretariats of education, the educational establishments, the families and the students themselves, who collaborate to ensure a progressive and effective implementation of inclusive education.

Source: Own elaboration

National agencies, while adopting inclusion as a central axis in their policies, present generic and, in some cases, even absent definitions, which limits their transformative potential. As with international organizations, inclusion is framed within technical-administrative approaches, such as the regulation of services or the elimination of specific barriers, treating it as an operational objective rather than a structural goal that confronts the systemic inequalities that underlie exclusions.

In Colombian references, the population is segmented under labels such as "victims," "people with disabilities," or "small rural producers," which, although useful for targeting policies, tends to reinforce dynamics of exclusion. These labels place groups as recipients of benefits rather than recognizing their agency to collectively construct social dynamics and territory. In this way, inclusion becomes a tool of subordination rather than a mechanism for recognizing and strengthening community forms of social fabric.

Most organizations focus inclusion on specific areas such as education, justice, rural development or finance, evidencing a sectorization that seeks to guarantee rights through specific and delimited interventions. However, this approach ignores community systems of functioning, legitimizing a structure that prioritizes individual access to services over the transformation of structural dynamics. In addition, the fragmented approach, even on the dynamics of the validated system, ignores that exclusions are multidimensional and require systemic and intersectoral articulation to address them comprehensively. This lack of articulation also explains why some sectors show greater "progress" in guaranteeing rights for certain population groups, while others remain lagging behind.

In the national system, definitions and actions on inclusion reflect dynamics similar to those of international organizations, in terms of conception, objectives, actions, beneficiary groups with limited agency, and teams responsible for implementing inclusive policies within a hegemonic structure. The technical guidelines, for the most

part, lack a transformative approach that confronts the structures of systemic exclusion, since inclusion is treated as a technical and operational object that facilitates access to existing systems, without questioning or redesigning the bases that perpetuate inequalities.

## 6. THEORIZING INCLUSION: IS IT CONFIGURED DIFFERENTLY?

On the other hand, when reviewing theoretical reflections on inclusion (*See* Aguirre Rodríguez, 2009; Alzugaray, 2011; Duk, 2016; Ramírez, 2017; Camargo Muñoz, 2018; Padrós Tuneu, 2018; Ríos, 2018; López-Ruiz, 2019; Martínez, 2019; Pérez, 2019; González, 2020; León, 2020; Andretich, 2021; Díaz Barrera, 2021; Giménez, 2021; Estévez, 2022; Flores-Meza, 2022; Puyana Mejía, 2023), the panorama diversifies, finding mostly validations of the concept, which are based on being understood as a continuous process that leads to the participation of all, focusing on the diversity of origins, interests, knowledge, and skills; a state of equal opportunities for equal access and guarantee of rights, especially for those who have been excluded from the systems; a transformative practice towards the dismantling of barriers that prevent participation; a strategy that recognises and values diversity by taking advantage of differences as advantages; a component of social justice that seeks to ensure representation, participation, and celebration of differences by mobilizing equity in different contexts; and as an equitable belonging where all people feel valued and heard.

In theory, inclusion, as in technical bets, inclusion is associated with areas, scenarios or services, highlighting those that are part of the dominant system. That is, schools, social services, corporations, academia and the labor market, in which opportunities must be equalized, barriers must be built and interaction must be facilitated to guarantee access, equality, participation and minimize or eliminate the violation. That is to say, the explanation of inclusion, despite historical evolution, has perpetuated the search for recognition of diversities in or for the dominant system.

The actors, are described in the theory, in the first place, they are those who are violated, marginalized or made invisible by the system and, therefore, the sense of inclusion is concentrated in efforts and obligations to be recognized by the system, although the recognition of conceptions and practices of the groups is advocated, in no case was the consideration of maintaining the systems in their very essence suggested. In this way, even in the literature, the need to think about inclusion for children, children with diversities, people with disabilities or physical abilities, marginalized from systems, groups excluded by culture, ethnicity, class, gender, age, language, deprivation of liberty, economic disadvantage, researchers from minority regions or contexts, among others, is segmented.

In articulation with the above, there are key agents that are recognized as responsible for or favoring inclusion, in the literature figures such as educators, leaders of organizations, government actors, social organizations, foundations, institutions providing services and the corporate sector are related. In many cases, a responsibility of citizens is suggested as favoring inclusion within the framework of schemes that are justified in access and legitimate participation. The literature indicates that in action, inclusion is reflected in the reduction of exclusionary pressures, the transformation of disabling practices, the elimination of ableist attitudes, the elimination of barriers to social participation, the visibility of diversity, the use of diversity, the implementation of reforms that promote equal participation that, in all cases, have as their horizon the guarantee of universal rights.

Under these premises, in the academic literature, inclusion is presented as an effort to expand participation and guarantee equitable access to rights, resources, and spaces. However, this process is not without tensions. In its eagerness to integrate people into existing systems, inclusion is theorized from the risk of becoming a mechanism that reinforces the dynamics of exclusion that it seeks to overcome. In other words, both technically and theoretically, an "inclusion loop" is configured, since the structures that generate ignorance of diversity remain intact, and can even be reinforced, by inclusive discourses.

This is explained by the fact that inclusive initiatives do not question the underlying structures of power, but seek to integrate the excluded under the same rules that marginalized them, and therefore, inclusion becomes a process of absorption that makes differences invisible and reinforces existing hierarchies that is reflected in segmented analyses of groups. arguments around the adaptation of subjects or contexts, equalization of opportunities to reach places of power or participation, among others. Under these arguments, technically and theoretically, inclusion runs the risk of being an empty discourse that, to the extent that it continues to develop on a single system, will continue to eliminate other ways of being, thinking, doing and living. That is, the diverse.

## 7. INCLUSION, DIVERSITY AND PLURALISM IS IT POSSIBLE TO WEAVE THEM GENUINELY?

As noted, inclusion is a multifaceted concept, associated with a transformative intent, which has been the subject of important studies highlighting the tensions between its theoretical and practical application. Although criticisms of the concept have been made, contemporary approaches continue to defend its potential as a framework for addressing epistemological pluralism (Olivé et al., 2009). From this perspective, a transformative view of inclusion could promote equitable participation, respect for cultural diversity, and the construction of fairer societies. These societies, conceived as plural and democratic spaces of knowledge, would allow decisions that legitimately represent all social groups.

However, despite the criticisms and its multifaceted horizon, inclusion tends to operate under a universalist framework that seeks to be applied at the global level. This framework, initially based on a value system validated by a cultural group, has gained legitimacy in other cultures, although with high costs in terms of the elimination of particularities. In this sense, inclusion, conceived as a partner of justice and equity, intrinsically leads to generalizations that perpetuate its connection with exclusion. This phenomenon creates a "loop" in which the structures that marginalize remain intact or even strengthen under the guise of inclusion.

This dynamic has allowed inclusion to become, in many cases, a functional tool for neoliberalism. Rather than being an instrument of emancipation, inclusion has been established as a subtle mechanism of control and regulation. In this context, marginalized segments of the population fight for the vindication of their rights while diversity is transformed into a commodity managed by dominant systems. Currently, inclusion operates from technical and administrative approaches that facilitate an unequal dialogue between "marginalized" and "executors or responsible," all subsumed in the same system of functioning.

In this sense, it is important to emphasize that *the legitimization of plurality cannot be achieved through inclusion*. This is because diversity cannot be fully understood or integrated within a single system, even when it is presented as plural and respectful of differences. The universalization of values, by trying to impose itself as a global standard, inevitably threatens the existence of other values and forms of knowledge. Plurality, on the other hand, recognizes the coexistence of identities, bodies, communities, territories and regions that operate in diverse systems and not within a single homogeneous system. Its articulation should be organic and natural, and not necessarily forced or universalized. This perspective invites us to reflect on the possibility of eliminating borders and the controls that have been created from the perspectives of scale, perhaps there are still alternatives to revitalize pluralism and its authenticity.

Identity is reflected through the body (Porto-Gonçalves, 2009), which, in essence, constitutes an expression of cultural and biological diversity. Despite multiple attempts, this diversity cannot be reduced to universalist and homogenizing narratives. From systems of control and domination, narratives based on inclusion have been woven, in which it is emphasized that bodies must "be respected in their difference." However, historically, bodies have been marked and classified according to hierarchies related to race, function, gender, and class (Porto-Gonçalves, 2009). This system has built a perfect scenario to perpetuate inequality, promoting discourses of equity that, in reality, legitimize constant struggles within the framework of the same dominant system.

These individual identities, when they encounter others configured from corporeality, have the potential to build community. The community, understood as a collective and social space, allows diversity to be affirmed (Porto-Gonçalves, 2009). These communities are configured organically, since they are not homogeneous, but the product of social relations that allow them to construct common meanings (Mosquera, 2018; Montoya, 2007). In this sense, communities inhabit and transform the territory, creating "cultural worlds" that reflect their values, knowledge and internal dynamics. These dynamics, being meeting points between identities, generate both tensions and agreements.

However, inclusion, within the framework of the dominant system, has imposed ideas of community that are hybridized with notions of law, extending their tentacles towards the control of community dynamics. At the same time, it blinds communities by making them fight for rights defined and regulated by the very system that oppresses them. From critical theories, communities have been configured as spaces of resistance to domination, with an intrinsic nature of social and territorial transformation (Montoya, 2007). The risk of resistance to domination (without awareness of the inclusive bias) is that it is established in the same logics of the system and that communities accept the universality of rights and/or inclusion as an achievable principle.

Territory, defined as the appropriate and socially constructed space, is the means through which communities can assert themselves (Porto-Gonçalves, 2009). It represents the reflection of *community praxis*, a place where social, cultural and political dynamics materialize. The territory is attributed a double dimension: a space of conflict and creation. This ambivalence lies in the fact that the territory reflects community identities and pluralities, but it also becomes a scenario of power, where relations of control are exercised and disputed. In this context, the dominant system has driven communities to initiate struggles for access and rights over their territories. However, in many cases, the territories under these arguments have been "flattened" by transforming them into functional spaces for the hegemonic system, which makes them fertile places for the consolidation of control and subordination.

The dominant system has perfected its ability to operate and control at different scales, taking advantage of the interconnection between local, regional, national, and global levels (González, 2005; Jessop, Brenner & Jones, 2008). These scales are not mere physical containers, but dynamic structures shaped by relations of power and capital, which allow the continuous reconfiguration of territories and territorialities. From this perspective, the system uses scale as a mechanism to legitimize its control, adapting to local specificities while maintaining its global hegemony. This tiered approach not only facilitates capital accumulation, but also creates new forms of exclusion and marginality by reinforcing hierarchies within different scales.

In this context, borders emerge as key instruments for consolidating systemic control. Far from being natural elements, borders are social constructions that delimit spaces, separate identities and regulate social relations (Porto-Gonçalves, 2009; Montoya, 2007). Under today's capitalism, these borders are constantly reconfigured to serve the interests of the global system, establishing zones of access and exclusion that respond to economic and political needs (González, 2005). Thus, borders become tools of domination that reinforce colonial and neoliberal dynamics, preventing the self-determination of territories and the communities that inhabit them.

Despite their divisive function, borders also reflect inherent tensions between integration and resistance. While the dominant system seeks to homogenize territories and communities under a discourse of inclusion and rights, regions and their cultural and territorial pluralities offer resistance to these dynamics (Porto-Gonçalves, 2009; Mosquera, 2018). These struggles not only question the legitimacy of the system, but also show how communities, through their territorial praxis, create their own meanings and challenge power structures. However, by articulating these struggles in terms recognized by the system, such as access to rights within imposed borders, there is a risk of perpetuating the very dynamics they seek to subvert.

The legitimate articulation between inclusion and pluralities seems to be a profound challenge, and even an impossibility. Inclusion, in its current configuration, has been instrumentalized by the dominant system, perpetuating dynamics of control, exclusion and homogenization under the appearance of equity and respect for diversity. In contrast, pluralities constitute an organic, diverse, and dynamic resistance that transcends the universal and technical frameworks imposed by inclusion. Sustaining these pluralities requires overcoming the tendency of inclusion to subsume diversity into a single system, which, by its very nature, runs the risk of generating homogenizations of identities, territories and communities, all of them reduced to a single scheme of values. An authentic pluralism demands territories and systems with their own dynamics, which can be organically articulated with each other, although they do not necessarily have to do so.

## **8. REFLECTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES TO OTHER WAYS OF UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY**

While inclusion tends to function within technical-administrative, regulated and fragmented frameworks, the common is proposed as a profoundly democratic political principle, oriented towards the co-construction of social relations and the redistribution of power. In this sense, the place cannot be only inclusion, understood as an adaptation of diversities to a hegemonic system, but the encounter in the common, where differences are recognized, dialogued and articulated collectively. The Place of the Commons offers an alternative and transformative approach to the limitations inherent in the traditional approach to inclusion.

The common, as defined by authors such as Dardot and Laval (2019), represents a dynamic and relational principle that overcomes the neoliberal logics of privatization and biopolitical control. This approach is not limited to "including" those who have been marginalized within dominant structures, but invites us to rethink those same structures. That is why it is suggested that a new objective be projected that transcends categories that segment the population (such as "victims," "people with disabilities" or "small producers") to create meeting spaces where differences can be articulated without being subsumed or normalized by a prevailing system.

Inclusion, as has been pointed out in previous chapters, runs the risk of operating as a mechanism for regulating diversity, where people and communities are treated as passive beneficiaries of policies designed from pre-established frameworks or struggle from their agency to be included. This approach tends to reinforce structural inequalities by perpetuating the logics of access and control that dominate educational, labor and social systems. We must strive for the creation of spaces for active and horizontal participation. Instead of seeking to integrate people into pre-existing systems, it proposes to build new forms of relationship and collective action. That is, it must strive for a continuous practice that allows the co-construction of the social from a perspective that respects and values plurality, even without pretensions to bring it together.

As has been pointed out, by sustaining oneself in the paradigm of inclusion can lead to homogenizing diversities to adapt them to a system, it is necessary to work on a proposal that integrates cultural, social and economic differences as essential components for dialogue and collective transformation, resignifying the idea in which diversities are regulated and exploited as parts of the global system. Instead, an instituting practice must be mobilized that creates new forms of social relations based on solidarity and autonomy Hardt and Negri (2000).

Therefore, it is necessary to think of alternatives that make it possible to rethink social relations and build diverse futures crossed by values and values that are not necessarily shared, that is, to transform the "inclusion" of diversities within a pre-existing system, but to create the conditions for these diversities to become protagonists of their own destiny. articulating itself in a common fabric that respects and values its singularities. For, according to Hardt and Negri (2000), the multitude is not a homogeneous mass, but a network of singularities capable of acting together.

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