Anti-racism: some personal thoughts on racism and INGOs in the UK

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Many thoughts, reactions and ideas around issues of race and racism are whirling in my head. The INGO sector in the UK is embarking on a new phase for development aid, one where funding cuts, the merging of FCDO and a new strategy for aid that lacks a poverty focus are hitting hard. The COVID-19 pandemic and Black Lives Matter are heavily influencing behaviour and debates and the need for change is everywhere. The terrain is contested, often angry and as elsewhere inequalities have been starkly highlighted. I am wondering whether and how we can usefully look to the past to draw out some learning, framing and issues that will help with understanding this context better and which might add to the ongoing conversations, and even in some ways change them.

Can we build on existing evidence and knowledge about racism in the UK, its history and the history of protest and dissent, on the ideas and thinking of those opposing colonialism and later the neo-colonial structures of development aid, and the partners and communities deeply affected by racism and issues of 'white superiority'? Can flesh be put onto the bones of intersectionality to show the very clear links between race, class and gender in order to work differently to support those facing the greatest inequalities, wherever they are? Can we use the learning to build strong alliances and agree that change is never the responsibility of those coping with the impact of racism or misogyny working alone?

The way the issues and analysis are framed is critical to shaping the understanding of what needs to be done to address them. This contribution is intended especially for those INGO staff, partners and supporters who feel a bit at sea or overwhelmed and have the power of leadership or decision-making. It may also be relevant to some of those who are directly affected, angry, hurt, wanting real change and hoping for support in bringing change. As with issues of all inequality and marginalisation the challenges are personal and political, complex but also simple. The task is huge, the nuances many yet as Everjoice Win, a long term INGO worker and feminist activist, said in an interview at SOAS recently 'blackness travels very differently across the world but the roots of anti-Blackness remain the same.'[i]

Who am I to speak?

I am a white feminist, a category under much scrutiny in the recent writing on race. I am middle class with a mixed European heritage. On what basis do I feel I can or should speak and what contribution can I make?

Firstly, white feminists need to participate actively in the conversations; gender and race are part of an intersectional approach, along with class, and the work cannot be left only to those women of colour most affected. Listening is critically important, hearing the angry and piercing critiques is essential but staying silent is not an option. At some stage we need to participate properly in the debates, working in support of those directly experiencing racism who cannot and should not challenge these realities alone. We need to live the intersectional feminism that we espouse, recognising our role is to step back, learn and find new ways of working to address the deep inequalities.

Second, I have worked on issues of race and institutional racism -especially in the UK - and in the field of immigration since involvement in President Idi Amin's expulsion of the Asian communities from Uganda in the early 1970s. Only some of those entitled to enter the UK were ever allowed to come here. Racism underpinned the limitations placed on getting asylum, it underpinned the black riots and police violence in the UK in 1980s and continues today. Yet these realities are currently largely ignored by development INGOs, focused as they are mainly on those

1 **Attendees** in this instance means everyone on site (delegates/sponsors/exhibitors/speakers/staff/volunteers/press/freebies)

experiencing marginalisation and discrimination 'overseas'. Yet the links need to be made between those receiving aid and the diaspora experience here.

Third, I have long researched the ways in which aid structures and INGOs have increasingly favoured the needs and demands of donors over those of staff, partners and communities working across the Global South. The rigid hierarchical structures of aid, which have so clearly disadvantaged them, have so often bypassed their voices and knowledge. And at each level women are especially discriminated against in practice, irrespective of how much the rhetoric changes. My experiences of working on gender inequality are, I think, relevant to the current struggles.

Finally, I have felt uncomfortable with what feel at times performative statements about race from INGOs and aid organisations. To achieve real change for those excluded from power, decision-making and resources requires far more than changing the rhetoric or even working towards better representation. Racism is embedded in this society and INGOs reflect this reality, both here and in the programmes, they run; confronting this is hard and slow, but essential and it requires radical change not a reformist agenda.

Where to start? With the history of independence and anti-racism in the UK

There are several interesting reading lists circulating. One observation from what I have seen is that the readings are predominantly from USA, and recent. Many are challenging, angry, passionate, and speak to lived experience, testimony to the depths of racism experienced by the writers and their communities; these are critically important. Many are rooted in the narrative of slavery, which largely defines the racial history in USA.

The sources of racism and racist thought in the UK, however, are different and deeply rooted in colonialism and migration as well as the slave trade. Racism plays out in this country 'of Empire' differently from USA in many ways. And as Dr Miriyam Aouragh talking about 'White Privilege and Shortcuts to Anti-Racism' pointed out in a SOAS talk (2nd December 2020) what is circulating from USA is often selective and focused on whiteness, and does not go into many of the areas of the race struggle in USA based on race and class and radical anti-capitalist agendas.

One of the core issues that I see as very relevant to understanding the thinking and action around race in the UK includes learning from the anti-colonial struggles of the ex-colonies and the thinking and action that shaped these. Analysing these can increase an understanding of what racism is in the UK, how deeply it is embedded and what has been done to combat it before.

The fight for independence

There are many sources that could usefully contribute to the current debates within the UK INGOs. In the struggles for independence there is much to learn, for example, from the works of a multitude of anti-colonial thinkers and activists from around the world, including Franz Fanon, Walter Rodney, Paulo Friere, Andre Gundar Frank and Mahmood Mamdani[ii]. The experiences from the Caribbean, closer in many ways to the USA experience, are encapsulated in this piece in the writings of those who came to the UK following World War 2 (see below).Their deep analyses of the role of racism in underpinning and promoting slavery and then colonialism highlight these issues and show a deep continuity of thinking still strong in the UK today.

Writing from across the global South over decades has highlighted the brutal nature of colonialism, which builds on racial hierarchies of knowledge, labour, power and control and undermines local structures, languages and cultures. The role of racism as an ideology upholding colonial structures provides a rich source of analysis about how this plays out in widely differing contexts. Many African writers published novels – in English as well as in their own languages- about these issues from 1960s onwards; these include the famous writing of Chinua Achebe and Ngugi wa Thiongo, who both wrote about the damage done to indigenous cultures, materially and ideologically, by

colonial rule.[iii] The courts and the position of District Commissioner in *Things Fall Apart* by Achebe, for example, clashed with the traditions of the Igbo, and removed their ability to participate in structures of decision-making.

Without requiring a huge study, I think some of the core ideas and perspectives – in an annotated bibliography perhaps- could well illuminate current debates. Some of the conversations I have heard to date feel strangely disconnected from the history of British colonialism, and the resistance, protests and dissent that led to independence across much of Africa, Asia and the Caribbean.

Black protest, resistance and dissent in the UK

The history of resistance to racism in the UK is clear in a wide range of research, thinking and writing, as well as activism, around race and anti-racism, especially from 1960s onwards.

Myriad books, films, pamphlets and protest materials illustrate the depth of the problems faced by newly arrived and arriving immigrants from the colonies following the Second World war, and provide us with a rich history of the issues and challenges that people are still grappling with now. The current films by Steve McQueen, Small Axe on BBC TV, clearly link race and class and vividly capture some of the early experiences of discrimination, violence and harassment of the Windrush generation and their push back and dissent against their treatment by the police and the courts.

There is so much evidence of discriminatory attitudes and practices out there already, which could be useful for informing and framing current debates around where racism came from, what fuels it, how is shapes lives, and how it has been challenged and continues to be. The writings of Paul Gilroy, Stuart Hall, Darcus Howe, Ambalavner Sivanandan, among many others[iv] provide rich narratives about the theories of race and the challenges that different people of colour faced and continue to face now. Reni Eddo-Lodge[v] clearly shows these continuities in her recent writing, which draws heavily on this history to show what structural racism is and why ignoring it matters. The novel Queenie[vi] is a recent example of a female narrative showing how the oppressive history of race, class and gender inequalities inter-relate to impact directly on a young black girl growing up in London.

Racism in the UK today is rooted in British post-colonial history, fed by the long history of colonialism and by discriminatory laws - around immigration especially - as well as by the policies and ideologies of racial hierarchies that have shaped policing, housing, access to education and other key resources, and employment opportunities.

The role of immigration in reproducing racist ideology and practice

The UK history of race has been characterised by different waves of migration, and immigration from the ex-colonies. Immigration policies are key to understanding the structures of racial exclusion, which determine who can and who cannot come to the UK, under what conditions, and whether they can stay permanently. These policies are often brutal. The mechanisms of immigration include refusal of visas, turning back migrants at sea, incarceration on arrival, years of court procedures, deportation and building external borders for the UK in other countries such as Libya, Turkey, and sub-Saharan Africa. Potential migrants are now being held in camps and holding centres in these countries with support from the UK and other European funds.

Most recently, following the Brexit vote, they include building internal borders within schools and hospitals, turning medical and teaching staff into watchdogs for the border force. Even landlords are expected to check papers and report possible illegal migrants to the police. These barriers continuously feed into the on-going racist narratives about the threats of immigrants to UK values and their illegality, as well as seriously curtailing the lives and security of many communities living in the UK whose right to remain is often under threat.

The purpose and mechanism of immigration laws cast a long shadow over everyone, building a story of 'alienness', of taking what belongs to white people, and the supposed potential criminal inclinations of some black populations. The experiences of immigration are painful, often dehumanizing, and directly touch the lives of so many black and Asian communities today. They are especially terrifying for refugees and asylum seekers[vii], people often forgotten in these debates yet under constant threat of detention and removal. For the host population these increasingly hostile narratives around migration have negatively shaped understanding and beliefs about the rights and role of black and ethnic minority communities in this country. Fear of 'the other' has been created and stoked through these policies. Enoch Powell, a Conservative MP, had his 'rivers of blood' speech on 20 April 1968, which was vehemently anti-immigration and anti-the Race Relations bill proposing anti-discrimination laws and Community Relations Commission. He had strong popular support at the time and his speech may have contributed to the Conservative re-election in 1970. Several stronger Equalities Acts were subsequently passed but since austerity, UKIP and the Brexit vote there have been growing echoes of this openly hostile racism from the far right.

The problems facing the British state in relation to providing services and wellbeing for its citizens have been framed as problems caused by too many migrants and the threat of black populations. This history, resulting most graphically in Theresa May's hostile environment continued by Priti Patel, is often grim and unrelenting, and stoked by a willing media. It reinforces the belief that only some people in the UK have a right to be here and to enter freely into all areas of public life; some people clearly have more value than others.

The history of struggle against racism in the UK

Interestingly, the resistance and dissent from black people about the way they were treated has been largely glossed over in recent debates. Yet there have been years of struggle since WW2 by both the black and white working class within the Trade Union movement together fighting for better working conditions and wages. There were many years of black riots, protests and dissent in e.g. Toxteth, Liverpool, St Paul's, Bristol, Brixton and Southall in London[viii]. The Scarman report (1981)[ix], rightly critiqued by black activists such as Darcus Howe for falling short in many ways, was compelled by the evidence he saw from the riots, to call out the racism in British society, focused especially within the police and the courts. The negative effects on black and Asian communities of living in deprived inner-city areas were highlighted, and much research and analysis showed that the deep poverty was often closely aligned with race[x]. These protests continued, for example in early 2000s when the National Front were active and Asian communities protested the racism and violence against their communities. Later Muslim voices have been repeatedly raised about the Islamophobia to be open seen after 9/11 and repeated in the media, the Tory party and even by the current Prime Minister.

The experiences of very poor housing, sub-standard education provision, lack of access to key services, and of intense and often violent policing have led to many communities where 'unemployment was high, and hopes were low'. Black and Asian people have shown their anger and refusal to accept the status quo in many violent and non-violent protests over decades, something seen more recently in the peaceful demonstrations around the Stephen Lawrence murder, Grenfell, and the Black Lives Matter movement, which focused especially on removing symbols of colonialism and slavery in the form of statuary - white men on pedestals.

The many anti-racist policies, equality statements and commitments over the past decades, designed to change these realities and developed in response to demands and analysis from black thinkers and analysts in the UK as well as multiple activists both black and white, sadly have not resulted in the kind of radical changes hoped for. Equal opportunities have not been achieved – far from it- and the problems of discrimination, marginalisation, poor provision of services continue to impact strongly on the health, education, welfare and employment opportunities of those communities and racist attitudes continue to be embedded in the curricula, the media, the Parliament, and the law and shape us all in different ways.

The laws around equal access designed to redress discrimination on the basis of colour have proved a blunt instrument. As a result people of colour[xi] have not been protected from the harsh impact of the COVID-19 crisis.

Poverty in the UK remains heavily racialised, as do the geographies of deprivation and poor housing in UK cities today. Policing has continued to focus on these communities, especially black young men, and the prisons disproportionately house large numbers of them. Concerns about the targeting of black people in stop and search are again rising, as are the deportations of asylum seekers often without due process, including those from the Windrush generation. The inequalities seen in employment, and reflected within the INGO sector, are stark where few people of colour sit on Boards, are CEOs or SMT leaders, and are often bundled into low and poorly paid, insecure work. This reality fails to acknowledge the huge contribution those coming from other countries to the UK have made to the economy, the culture, and to key services.

The issues of race that underpin the development project

There are many books and articles that explore the nature and meaning of the whole development project [xii], highlighting the continuing racial hierarchies and the dominance of the global North in the structure, functioning and even ideology of development aid. Arturo Escobar from Columbia, a great analyst of development and its meaning, long ago described development as the west's convenient "discovery" of poverty in the 'third world' for the purposes of reasserting its moral and cultural superiority in 'supposedly post-colonial' times.[xiii] "Development planning was not only a problem to the extent that it failed; it was a problem even when it succeeded, because it so strongly set the terms for how people in poor countries could live". One illustration of this is found in the stark visual images of white superiority where UK celebrities (almost all white) go to poverty stricken places to raise funds for this work; the visual representation of the white saviour approach. It is only now in Autumn 2020 that Comic Relief, for example, has finally committed to change this; a strong multi-racial advisory committee requested this in the 1980s, but it took another 30 years for the organisation to acknowledge the problems with this depiction of development.

It's not that the sector has not been told many times. I well remember invited refugees from some of the world's poorest camps in Africa being horrified, at a gathering in Birmingham University in 1990s, on seeing some of the fundraising images used by INGOs to promote public giving. They said they would rather go without food than be the subject of such degrading narratives. They did not want their dignity traded for handouts. Research by Nikki Van der Gaag[xiv] in 1980s on images has been recently written up again and shows clearly how racism underpins many of the images in use by INGOs, especially for fundraising. It was an issue of concern in 1990s[xv], but has only recently been reinserted into the agenda within INGOs.

There is in fact a great deal of knowledge about the experiences and the nature of colonialism and the negative aspects of the neo-liberal development project, which builds on racial hierarchies of knowledge, labour, power and control. Writing from across the global South over decades highlight the role of racism in upholding colonial structures and ideology, keeping them as the objects of development – dependent, lacking agency and in need of capacity building from the north. Again, without investing in a huge study I think that some of the core ideas and perspectives already recorded could be pulled together and really help to illuminate some of the current debates.

What else is essential to widening the debates?

Exploring the hierarchies of aid shaped by race

Following on from these complaints and arguments coming from many in the global South about their dealings with INGOs in the North a 'localisation agenda' and a 'shift the power' debate has taken place in some INGOs. Many would argue that the issues of racial exclusion and discrimination have not been adequately incorporated in these discussion, which are held largely within an inclusion and diversity agenda. The core issues are not, however, about inclusion or representation in the current structures as they stand, but rather to demand that these structures be changed significantly to enable people of colour to participate fully and effectively, to lead and perform using their strengths and skills. The requirement is not that they become adept at the skills valued by the dominant community, but that organisations are recreated to enable them to bring their own knowledge, perspectives and skills to the

table and to enable them 'to change the conversation'. The issues of race need to be properly presented, analysed and addressed centering race in these debates rather than marginalising the issues by overlooking what is really required to address racial inequality.

The full engagement of the staff, partners and communities with whom INGOs work across the Global South are central to these debates about reform, representation, shifting power, localization and change. Deep racial hierarchies mark relations between the offices in Africa, Asia and Latin America and HQ. The hierarchy of the knowledge and decision making structures of aid, where funding is sought and who controls the disbursement and accounting of funds, who defines success and in what terms, remains firmly in the UK for most INGOs. The tools, procedures and requirements around planning, implementation, assessment, measuring and reporting projects and programmes are generated in HQ, where people of colour are under-represented. These procedures are focused on concepts and language coming increasingly from the State and institutional donors, via, for example, contract funding or tight results frames that require compliance with ever changing concepts and language generated in HQ. These are often reinforced by external consultants and experts shipped in from the North to the South to ensure the rules are properly implemented. To date staff and partners in the Global South in many INGOs are largely missing from the current debates.

Most UK INGOs are highly influenced by their donors and trustees in the north, very few of who are people of colour or from the Global South. There has been in fact a significant move away from the language and practice of reversing these hierarchies, evident in the works of Robert Chambers[xvi] and those practicing participatory approaches two or more decades ago[xvii], and a consolidation of power and control in the North, cemented in place by the language (English), by the professionalization of INGOs and accountability systems to donors and trustees, and the increasingly complex computer formats and fast moving development jargon required for securing aid funding. Who now recalls that the key criteria for DFID funding in the past was the commitment to shift the structures of Government to respond properly to the needs of the poor, or that actively engaging communities in project design had to be evidenced? Who is currently working with economic definitions of value for money, drawn often from the private sector, and who is actually asking communities what had most value to them in their lives?

At a time when contracts are the major way of disbursing aid money, replacing more trust based grant making, tight contract compliance rules keep the control from the budgets to evaluation with those who have specialist skills based in the UK. The separation between the command and control of INGOs and those who implement the work has widened, with private sector companies often managing projects and accountability, with staff and partners locally increasingly becoming subcontractors. There are myriad examples where they do not even know what the project documents they are working to actually say. Policies, concepts and practices of development are all too frequently developed far from where the work takes place in programmes and communities.

This has been documented and there is abundant research and practice that shows the negative and disempowering effects of these working practices, and the systems of privileging whose knowledge is valued, on people across the global South[xviii]. Those who want to 'succeed' have to perform well in English, in report writing, in computer skills, in grasping the ever-evolving concepts coming from the top. The skills of local and cultural knowledge, understanding multiple languages and the politics of the context, bringing in perspectives of those who are marginalised and unheard are very often deeply undervalued.

This 'aid chain' hierarchy is highly racialised leaving the face of poverty globally as 'female and black' (Amanda Mukwarsi, CEO of Christian Aid).

The plethora of reports, blogs, and evidence within INGOs of the stress and discomfort caused to those lower down the aid chain whose knowledge and experience is often ignored; those most directly affected by the work are rarely heard. They have no recourse to call those at the top to account for their attitudes and behaviour or for the failures of aid that do not meet the actual needs of those being supported.

As far as I understand it, in the current response to the need to address anti-racism and decolonization, where the people in the Global South have been 'consulted' this is most often through staff surveys, which are a very blunt tool for learning about exclusion, and the complexities and impact of discrimination and racism. Only a few have allocated funds and time to staff and partners in the South to enable them to do their own analysis and develop their own recommendations for the future.

Why does this matter?

I believe the discussions and the approaches being developed would sound and look very different if this work was better informed by the history and reality of racism experienced by local staff, partners and communities. They are highly articulate about their position well down the aid chain where 'white skills' including writing emails, report writing in English, computer skills and management skills highly rated in the West count for more than their knowledge of the context of the work, and an understanding of the complex constraints people are facing. The unequal power relations would have to be directly addressed if they were brought into the discussions.

There is a risk that over time the current preferred processes will morph into a series of well-choreographed moves, known to gender equality staff during the 80s and 90s and seen again recently around safeguarding. In no particular order the answers will lie in recruiting specialist staff or adding new roles to those already working in Diversity and Inclusion. In commissioning experts on race or existing specialist staff – who have been largely overlooked on these issues up to now- to do training, to draw up clear policies, guidelines, checklists, and training manuals and to develop plans, which need to be SMART, costed and with clear indicators. The job then quickly becomes monitoring and measuring progress against these.

These are of course useful and no doubt needed. But they are a very partial approach and risk largely overlooking the deep issues of power inequality and the way racism shapes the structures and functions of INGOs, especially at the level of the work across the global South. They will not answer the questions of how to promote greater voice and different knowledge, or how power can be better shared, or how to redress the deep inequalities of race, class and gender that have skewed the work for so long.

Having worked for over 35 years in the field of gender equality and intersectional feminism I see that all the work, energy, heartache and ideas of so many women and some men did achieve change in some places, for some people and that work is continuing with some great individuals, often still battling against institutional blocks. But I also see that change is easily reversed. At this time of COVID-19 I see gender staff being moved aside and gender funding cut; I see that many organisations felt that managing the crisis was men's business and 'gender is not relevant for now'. Some women leaders have been marginalised or ignored, disregarding the reality that women have carried the main burdens of the care and support for families and communities, and are being pushed into poverty in great numbers all over the world. Intersectional feminism is being ignored with senior leaders saying there is no place for gender just now, what with Covid and racism to consider. The issues are still being understood as separate compartments, unrelated or too complex for many agencies to handle at this time of challenges and great uncertainty.

All these issues of inequality and marginalisation are fundamentally issues of power. And who has and who has not got access to power is racially defined, deeply gendered, and grounded in class. Boosting representation or improving reporting procedures do address some of the symptoms but by-pass the fundamental issues that require radical rethinking and joint action.

There is much goodwill and commitment within INGOs for sure but this fight will be hard and long, alliances will be needed, and the work must be rooted in the UK and INGOs own history about how to confront deeply rooted inequalities and how change really happens. A lot is at stake here for all players and the wider context, which in many countries is increasingly hostile to civil society, activism, and an equalities agenda.

Looking forward

What might usefully add to the work already being done?

- It might be useful and perfectly possible to produce ***some annotated bibliographies*** based on key issues of history, including the anti-colonial struggles and analyses of the racism underpinning colonialism and 'the Empire'. Similarly a summary of some of the history of racism and anti-racism in the UK could add depth and understanding to the problems being addressed now, especially in relation to race and class, protest and dissent, and the areas where racism has hit so hard and continues to hit through the law, the police, immigration, lack of access to core services, and a media that whips up race hate in different ways.

- We could use the learning from these ***to explore different ways to understand and frame the current crises of race, exclusion and discrimination*****?** What has changed and how, what is needed for real lasting change, and what has continued unchanged over the past 4 decades. Where are the barriers structural and rooted in institutions and where are they personal and related to individual behaviours?

- ***Immigration, refugees, and the machinery of state and the media that 'other' people*** is an integral part of the story of racism in the UK and could be brought into the debates. How can the problems of lack of power and racial discrimination be better linked from the UK to the work in the global South? For some INGOs this happens but for others racism in the UK appears quite separate from experiences in the global South, yet the ideology, structures, attitudes and behaviour are deeply inter-related.

- ***The voices of those most affected by racism and poverty need to be brought into the debate, centre stage.*** New ways of generating knowledge, listening and responding are needed, for example resources can be shared to enable staff and partners in the Global South to discuss and think together what matters most to them, in their own terms, without guidance or checklists from HQ. Voices previously ignored in the UK and the Global South could well inform the change processes they need.

- ***Much of the learning should fall to senior managers*****. They** have the power and authority needed to lead, fund and support change processes. It cannot fall to e.g. young black women to push for change alone - the exhaustion and hurt of some of those shouldering this burden are already being heard.

- ***Decolonisation needs to be defined, unpacked and addressed at a structural level***. One of the mechanisms that holds the power of HQ, largely led and run by white staff, at the top of the aid chain is the funding. Many INGOs have moved from taking little or no funding from institutional sources to receiving the bulk of their programme funding from such donors over the last 30 years. This has changed everything about the relationships, who holds the power, how work is judged over this period. To really decolonize will require very hard decisions about where to look for funding, what kind of funding will allow different ways of working and shift the balance of power from the UK to those living and working in the South?

Many of these issues feel similar to the questions and responses made over 30 years ago when INGOs were being asked to take on gender equality and women's rights. The onus was on the women working in Gender Units to find the evidence, explain why women's rights and gender inequality matter for poverty and development, and to explain how to do it. Yet they were not the decision makers, they lacked budgets and their role was always advisory, and whichever approaches were taken – confrontational, conciliatory, educational – many barriers to change proved very hard to tackle and overcome.

As with gender so with race- the evidence is abundant and continuous. So why has this issue apparently come as a surprise to many INGO staff and why is more data being sought? As one activist recently noted 'racism has been on the doorsteps of INGOs but they have largely chosen ignore it'

A short selective bibliography on the issues raised in this paper.

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[xiii] Escobar, Arturo,1995. Encountering development: the making and unmaking of the third world. Princeton University press.

[xiv] Van der Gaag, Nikki, 2020, Does international development still have a problem with racism? New internationalist, https://newint.org/features/2020/10/23/does-international-development-still-have-problem-racism

[xv] Interestingly debates about race in some INGOs in 1980s were lively, heated, strong and closely related to the work on gender and addressing women's inequality. It was not a 'heroic time' for INGOs but it was a time when some staff came from the south to work in HQ for periods of time and partners came in significant numbers to visit and speak in UK. They highlighted the awkward issues of pay gaps, differential valuing of skills, and the distance between the language and rhetoric of UK agencies and the realities being faced by the poor in the global south.

[xvi] Chambers, Robert, 1989. Farmer first: farmer innovation and agricultural research. ITDG publishing, Rugby.

[xvii] PRA practitioners notably include authors who wrote for IIED Participatory Learning and Action Notes, published over many years, and Whose knowledge counts a PRA course run by IDS, Sussex from 2007, with extensive references and examples presented. The literature on PRA and the value of participatory approaches is very extensive but less often referred to in recent years.