Fact Sheet on Health and Human Security Approach
FACT SHEET ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SECURITY APPROACH

This document has been developed by Chestrad International as a part of dissemination and advocacy action to promote Human Security in the Global Development agenda. Chestrad acknowledges the contribution of the Human Security Unit, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (HSU/OCHA), Japan Centre for International Exchange (JCIE), Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Social Affairs Department, African Union Commission.

Disclaimer:

This document highlights publicly available statements that demonstrate support of global leaders, implementers and communities for the human security approach. The inclusion of these statements does not imply that these leaders or their institutions have endorsed this document.

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The Human Security Approach (HSAp)\(^1\) presents both a conceptual and an operational framework that focuses on the multitude of challenges faced by vulnerable people and communities. It highlights the dynamic relationship that exists between the agendas of peace and security, development, and human rights. Tailored to country contexts, HSAp aims to advance the development of integrated solutions that together yield much greater force in strengthening the resilience of nations and consolidating their aspirations to achieve freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom to live (and die)\(^2\) in dignity for all. These aspirations are affirmed in the global consultations on the Post-2015 development agenda as well as the vision of the African Union as it celebrates its 50 years of existence.

\[\text{Without a sense of security everything else is remote..... The Human Security Approach is not just a moral issue but also a political imperative and the cornerstone of human dignity and development}\]

\[\text{President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf}\]
\[\text{President of the Republic of Liberia}\]
\[\text{(Jan 16, 2006 – Date)}\]

Support for human security at the United Nations is set out in the 2012 UN General Assembly resolution 66/290 which states that ‘human security is an approach to assist Member States in identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood and dignity of their people … and that it recognizes the interlinkages between peace, development and human rights’. As noted in A/RES/66/290, Human Security does not entail the threat or the use of force, nor does it replace State Security.

\[\text{We must ensure that the gains of today are not lost to the crises of tomorrow. And so our actions must focus on people centred comprehensive, context specific and preventive strategies at every level. This is the Human Security approach.}\]

\[\text{Ban Ki Moon}\]
\[\text{UN Secretary General}\]
\[\text{(Jan 1, 2008 – date)}\]

\(^1\) Information on the human security approach is based on literature provided by the Human Security Unit at the United Nations.

\(^2\) ‘to die’ has been added as this has real significance in the African region where the burden of morbidity and mortality due to direct health threats has put extreme pressure on already weak health systems to provide quality palliative care.
The Human Security Approach provides a framework that aims to bolster our actions and galvanize our efforts towards meeting our global commitments to current and future development targets. It complements existing development frameworks such as human rights based, sustainable and human development approaches, by considering the broad range of conditions that threaten the survival, livelihood and dignity of people, in particular, the most vulnerable. Recognizing that the causes and manifestations of threats vary considerably within and across countries, HSAp promotes solutions that are embedded in local realities and are based on the actual needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of Governments and people. By combining top-down norms, processes and institutions, including the establishment of early warning mechanisms, good governance and social protection instruments, with a bottom-up focus in which participatory processes highlight individuals’ roles in defining and implementing their essential freedoms and responsibilities, HSAp improves local capacities, strengthens social networks, and ensures coherence in the allocation of resources and policies. As such, the Human Security approach complements existing development frameworks by underscoring the importance of inclusive, targeted and comprehensive solutions to widespread and cross-cutting challenges.

‘... Human security has to do with food security. When you are being well fed, you are secured. When you are in a good state of health; when you have education, you are secure. When your environment is conducive, you are secure. Human security is a spectrum.’

Chief Olusegun Obasanjo
President, Federal Republic of Nigeria
(May 29, 1999 – May 29, 2007)

Chairman, Olusegun Obasanjo Foundation for Human Security
It is increasingly recognized that the post-2015 Global development agenda must provide for longer-term horizons with more flexibility and contextual relevance along four key dimensions: (i) inclusive social development; (ii) inclusive economic development; (iii) environmental sustainability and (iv) peace and security. These dimensions are firmly rooted in the principles of human security and its application. As set out in the following simplified theory of change, the Human Security Approach can provide the methodology for the analysis and development of policies and programmes in the delivery of the Post-2015 development goals. By considering the context, the root causes and the manifestation of threats on the needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of individuals and communities, the HSAP provides a flexible and responsive framework for the design and implementation of interventions that can be applied to any sector including those related to improvements in the health status of all people and communities.

The Human Security (HS) framework offers a basis on which the African Common Position (ACP) can emphasise the lessons from the implementation of the MDG goals that are of great value to the operational success of the current bold and ambitious goals proposed by the High Level Panel. HSAP provides the lens of multi-sector analysis of threats, context, root and direct causes, keeping in focus the rights of communities, households and the vulnerable to protection and empowerment and highlighting the fundamental importance of partnership, leadership accountability and governance to the shared vision of resilience, dignity and well-being. This emphasis can address a gap in the current thinking of the High Level Panel (HLP), and target ways of working that are fit for the dynamics of the post-2015 world. The HS framework provides a flexible, conceptual basis on which needs or threats can be assessed, using protection and empowerment as core concepts, and through which solutions can both be identified and addressed across all sectors.

THE VALUE ADDED OF THE HSAP TO THE AFRICAN COMMON POSITION ON THE POST MDG DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

The Human Security (HS) framework offers a basis on which the African Common Position (ACP) can emphasise the lessons from the implementation of the MDG goals that are of great value to the operational success of the current bold and ambitious goals proposed by the High Level Panel. HSAP provides the lens of multi-sector analysis of threats, context, root and direct causes, keeping in focus the rights of communities, households and the vulnerable to protection and empowerment and highlighting the fundamental importance of partnership, leadership accountability and governance to the shared vision of resilience, dignity and well-being. This emphasis can address a gap in the current thinking of the High Level Panel (HLP), and target ways of working that are fit for the dynamics of the post-2015 world. The HS framework provides a flexible, conceptual basis on which needs or threats can be assessed, using protection and empowerment as core concepts, and through which solutions can both be identified and addressed across all sectors.

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3 Including Equity, Quality, Effective systems, Universality, Access, Coverage by Services, Sustainability, Inclusive growth, Peace, Citizen’s engagement and Empowerment, Protection and Rights, Innovation, Partnership, Leadership, Accountability and Governance.
Improvements in health not only depend on our continued commitment to enhance the availability of health care and to strengthen our disease prevention systems, they are also shaped by social, economic and environmental conditions, which, if not addressed, can impede our progress in this critical area. By promoting a multi-dimensional analysis (perhaps based on the analytic wheel below), the Human Security Approach is able to highlight the specific cluster of factors that contribute to ill health and establish the mechanism for bringing together the needed variables and actors for achieving targeted and effective improvements in the overall health status of people and their communities.

‘Human Security in its broadest sense embraces far more than the absence of violence and conflict. It encompasses human rights, good governance, access to education and health care, and ensuring that each individual has opportunities and devices to fulfil his or her potential. Every step in this direction is a step towards reducing poverty, achieving growth and preventing conflict. Freedom from want, freedom from fear and the freedom of future generations to inherit a natural environment – these are the inter-related building blocks of human- and therefore national security’

Kofi Annan
UN Secretary General
(Jan 1, 1997 – December 31, 2006)

Chairman, Kofi Annan Foundation
Throughout history people everywhere have aspired to be free from fear, free from want and free to live (and die) in dignity. What the human approach provides is a distinct set of principles and tools that allow for the analysis of any context, the examination of root causes, and the identification of both direct and indirect consequences of threats on individuals and communities. The United Nations Trust Fund on Human Security (UNTFHS) has applied this approach across regions and thematic areas. UNTFHS funded projects have contributed to transitioning to peace and sustainable development in fragile and conflict-affected communities; protecting and empowering people exposed to persistent poverty, income inequality and social exclusion; responding to the multidimensional consequences of natural disasters and extreme weather conditions, as well as health-related threats, among others. By promoting protection and empowerment strategies that are people-centred, comprehensive, context-specific and preventive, projects funded by the UNTFHS have helped to address some of the most pervasive and critical challenges to human security and have shown that they are best addressed through stronger and more integrated responses from the international community, Governments, and local participants.4

‘Several key elements make up human security. [First] is the possibility for all citizens to live in peace and security within their own borders... [Second] is that people should enjoy without discrimination all rights and obligations... [Third] is having equal access to the political, social and economic policy making processes, as well as to draw equal benefits from them. [Fourth] is that of the establishment of rule of law and the independence of the justice system... These basic elements which are predicated on the equality of all before the law, effectively remove any risk of arbitrariness which so often manifests itself in discrimination, abuse or oppression.’

Sadako Ogata
UN High Commissioner for Refugees
(1990 – 2000)

LEARNING FROM PROJECTS THAT HAVE USED THE HUMAN SECURITY APPROACH (HSAP) FOR THEIR WORK

- The HSAP is relevant and is being applied in the African continent even if existing projects do not necessarily label their work as Human Security. Its importance is increasingly recognised by policymakers and practitioners.
- The HSAP approach brings value to existing and new projects by providing the framework, the language and the tools to give greater recognition to the realities on the ground and to advance comprehensive solutions that are targeted, effective and sustainable and that provide more tangible improvements in the daily lives of people.
- Concepts of protection and empowerment, accountability and development effectiveness, as articulated in the aforementioned theory of change, are principles that are rooted in the Human Security approach. They provide a flexible framework for the analysis, design and implementation of comprehensive and multisectoral programmes in the area of health.
- The Human Security Approach should be considered an overarching framework in the application of the post-2015 development agenda.

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4 [https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/HSU/Outreach/UNTFHS%20Booklet%20-%20FINAL%20March%202013.pdf](https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/HSU/Outreach/UNTFHS%20Booklet%20-%20FINAL%20March%202013.pdf)
Empowerment requires dialogue and community awareness to demand health rights, policies and accountability that protect individuals, communities and nations. This is the human security approach.  
-Dennis Odwe  
AGHA (Uganda)

Protection and empowerment can guide and inform community-provider partnerships and be the bedrock of responsive accountability - people empowered to participate in, and demand for health as both a right and a responsibility.  
- Lola Dare (CHESTRAD)

Small is beautiful but large is essential. The human security approach has the potential for scale up and sustainability of health projects.  
- Mohammed A. Alam  
BRAC (Bangladesh)
Without political will and commitment, our future and planet remains insecure. National security is individual security. The human security approach can provide the framework for joint action.