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HUMAN SECURITY – BUILDING THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Theoretical
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Abstract

This article approaches the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals agenda through the human security paradigm. It suggests that the human security paradigm represents “the missing link” from the development agenda. Therefore, this analysis explains the necessity for extending the development agenda by including the human security doctrine. The first part of the article discusses the relation between human security and development. The next section analyzes the values of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals. The last part evaluates the improvements that the inclusion of the human security on the post-2015 development framework may bring. The results of this analysis present illustrate the opportunity of deepening the MDGs agenda with a more realistic and ethical approach, through the inclusion of the human security paradigm within the development agenda.

“We will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights” (UN Secretary-General, 2005).

Introduction

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) target year - 2015, requires the revisal and reform of the past 15 years' development framework. The development challenges that were acknowledged in 2000 remained in large proportion unsolved (Koehler, Gasper, Jolly, & Simane, 2012, p. 4). The MDGs targets were only partially reached at the beginning of 2015. A series of weaknesses of the development cooperation became visible, among which the default to approach issues regarding peace, security, human rights and justice. Therefore, academic and political consultations are ongoing for improving the post-2015 development agenda. This article joins the current debate on the post-2015 development goals. The human security framework represents a more realistic and ethical approach of development being also highly needed for the post-2015 development goals. This input in the development roadmap is highly needed because “the world cannot afford another generation of inaction” (Koehler, Gasper, Jolly, & Simane, 2012, p. 6). The UN Secretary-General affirmed, in 2005, that it was the time to increase the international community's efforts for ensuring development. After a decade, analyzing the progress of the MDGs and the vulnerability and risks that the individual faces, this article reinforces the allegation that *“At this defining moment in history, we must be ambitious”* (UN Secretary-General, 2005, p. 7), in order to reframe the post-2015 development agenda.

The relation between human security and development

The human security paradigm considers that the individual should be at the core of the security matters. The principle can be summarized on the axis that meets the human rights and liberal principles, focusing on the essential dimension of freedom: “freedom from want and freedom from fear” and dignity of the individual. In fact, the human security conceptual umbrella encompasses a wide area of domains: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security (UNDP, 1994). Human security calls for people-centered, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention oriented responses (General Assembly, 2012). The human security thinking aggregates the awareness of interconnectedness, vulnerability and human rights and it proposes agendas for operationalizing actions in order to cope with risks and threats. This multi-sectorial paradigm became an important threshold for many UN agencies, universities and civil society in the fields of social security, employment, public health,

environment and peace (Koehler, Gasper, Jolly, & Simane, 2012, p. 12).

The multifaceted concept of human development, and the separation from a minimalistic term of development as economic growth was one of the triggers that determined the conjugation between the human development paradigm and the idea of human security (MacFarlane & Weiss, 1994, p. 140). The link between human security and development is indivisible and was defined from the official genesis of the human centered security, in the UNDP 1994 Human Development Report: “progress in one area enhances the chances of progress in the other (...) Human security is a critical ingredient of participatory development” (UNDP, 1994, p. 23). The UNDP 1994 Report presented the principle of human security as the guarantor for human development and as a guarantee for safeguarding the achievements of human development. Therefore, “human security is at the sharp end of development” (Beebe & Kaldor, 2010, p. 156). With this condition, human security emerged as a complementary dimension of development (Tigerstrom, 2007, p. 16), while development became a precondition to avoid human insecurity. The relation between human security and development was broadly debated within literature. It varies from the conception that human security criteria expedites human development and ensures the protection of human development approach, to the idea that human security analysis represents the basic threshold levels for development, as underlined in the MDGs (Gomez & Gasper, 2013).

The relation between development and security was emphasized in the majority of documents which advocated the challenges that the international community and the individual face. The UN Secretary-General synthesized this relation declaring that *“Not only are development, security and human rights all imperative; they also reinforce each other”* (UN Secretary-General, 2005, p. 5).

MDGs – responding to “the challenges of a changing world”

At the Millennium Summit held at the UN in September 2000, the largest gathering of world leaders in history, was adopted the UN Millennium Declaration. The participant countries engaged to work for “a more peaceful, prosperous and just world” (UN, 2000), principles that create the base ground for the Millennium Development Goals. The aim of conference was to reduce extreme poverty and setting out a series of time-bound targets, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with the deadline 2015.

The Millennium Summit proclaimed the main the MDGs by 2015:

1. *Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger;*
2. *Achieve Universal Primary Education;*

3. *Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women;*
4. *Reduce Child Mortality; Improve Maternal Health;*
5. *Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other Diseases;*
6. *Ensure Environmental Sustainability;*
7. *Develop a Global Partnership for Development;*
8. *Develop a global partnership for development.*

One of the driving principles of the United Nations Millennium Declaration was to act based on shared responsibility between states that should be “managing worldwide economic and social development, as well as threats to international peace and security” and operate multilaterally (UN, 2000). Moreover, the document (re)affirmed the responsibility of the international community for ensuring human rights worldwide: “we have a collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level” (General Assembly, 2000). The United Nations Millennium Declaration endorsed the outcomes of the Millennium Report of the Secretary-General “We The Peoples. The Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century” (Annan, 2000). The Report centered the challenges that the international community faced on the human security components - freedom from want and freedom from fear. This Report merged the agendas of security and development under the premises of prevention for updating the traditional methods to the needs of the “new era”(Annan, 2000, p. 44). In the same time, the document admitted the fact that other means apart from prevention might be needed due to the fact that the preventive and deterrence strategies might fail (Annan, 2000, p. 46).

The 2005 Report of the Secretary-General – “*In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all*” recognized the need to enlarge the area of cooperation in order to deal with “the challenges of a changing world” (UN Secretary-General, 2005, p. 4). The report reasserted the need to approach the components of human security – freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to live in dignity as essential pillars of international community’s agenda. In 2010 the states reaffirmed their commitment to respect and achieve MDGs by the declaration “*Keeping the promise. United to achieve the Millennium Development Goals*”, which focused on coming closer to the objectives of MDGs until 2015, highlighting the issue of the poorest people that need urgent aid. In the same time, the declaration recognized that the progress of MDGs was uneven and that several MDGs were likely to be missed (UN, 2010).

The Millennium Development Goals Report 2014 presents the main accomplishments of the MDGs one year before the target deadline (UN, 2014). It shows that the world has met some of the MDGs (e.g. it reduced extreme poverty by half; efforts in the fight against malaria and tuberculosis have

shown results; access to an improved drinking water source became a reality for 2.3 billion people), whereas in other areas supplemental effort is needed for reaching the targets (e.g. hunger continues to decline, but immediate additional efforts are needed; chronic under nutrition among young children declined, but one in four children is still affected) (UN, 2014, pp. 4-5). Despite the failure to accomplish the MDGs until the established deadline, there is a continuous effort to achieve a world of prosperity equity, freedom, dignity and peace, expressed in the efforts to build a post-2015 development agenda (UN, 2013, p. 4). Although improvements have been made in these areas, people worldwide still face these challenges and perilous situation which are not encompassed in the MDGs. For example, as the Report presents, every day in 2013, 32,000 people had to abandon their homes to seek protection due to conflict (UN, 2014, p. 8).

Thus, although the constitutive documents affirmed that human development is relying on the human security doctrine, the MDGs did not operationalize the security dimension in their targets.

Reframing the post-2015 development agenda – human security as the missing link

The MDGs framework was designed on the premise that poverty represented the greatest threat to peace and the longer-run wellbeing of all (Smillie, 2007, p. 69). It was assumed that, by tackling this social problem, peace and security would be ensured. This fact was a serious drawback for dealing with the challenges of development and insecurity. The international circumstances changed dramatically after the MDGs targets were formulated. The wave of non-state actors’ violence – international terrorism, 9/11, ISIS, natural disasters, conflict, instability and violence increased. On the one hand these factors constituted obstacles to the implementation of MDGs, and on the other hand proved the narrow approach of the MDGs.

In order to prepare the development agenda beyond 2015, the UN Secretary-General took several initiatives. Among these, he established the UN System Task Team on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda, which emphasized that the narrow focus of MDGs ignored the interrelations between security, justice and development. The UN System Task Team underlined that the post-2015 agenda should be more comprehensive, by extracting the core values of freedom from fear of violence, oppression or injustice from the Millennium Declaration. These values should be combined with specific goals on peace, security and disarmament, democracy and good governance, in addition to the current development framework (UN System Task Team, 2012).

Brack observes that the promotion of sustainable development is essential to achieving peace and security (Brack, 2007, p. 5). Aid is considered an important vehicle for supporting good governance, democratization, empowerment of communities and individuals and a catalyst for preventing conflict and to improve post-conflict recovery (Brack, 2007, p. 12). Thus, aid cannot be effective in achieving these issues while it is not properly channelized. In terms of costs, it is cheaper to address “the root causes of human insecurity rather than its tragic consequences” (UNDP, 1994, p. iii) than to invest in post-conflict reconstruction and in the broad aspects of human underdevelopment resulted from insecurity situations. Progress cannot be reached in the context of conflict and insecurity, because this situation affects simultaneously the capacity of institutions to work, the empowerment of individuals and communities, the educational and sanitation infrastructures (Axworthy, 2007, p. xiii). Therefore, a new development roadmap should focus more on the insecurity aspects affecting individuals.

The human security doctrine, which was one of the fundamental principles that drove the Millennium Declaration, was reinvigorated in the broad discussion regarding the post-MDGs development agenda. It is a vehicle that can encompass and motivate the efforts of “updating, continuing and deepening the MDGs agenda” (Koehler, Gasper, Jolly, & Simane, 2012). The General Assembly emphasized in 2012 that human security should contribute to achieving sustainable development and the as the internationally agreed development goals, as the MDGs (General Assembly, 2012).

In order to be more efficient, the post 2015 roadmap of MDGs should specifically entail the human security principles and should be guided by its values. This approach would help to identify more specifically the priorities to address in terms of the triad of freedoms: freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to live in dignity. Moreover, the human security doctrine could make the development agenda more flexible and responding to particular local and individual needs (IDS, 2012). In addition, the human security based aid emphasizes the ethical responsibility of the donors. In order to have a positive impact, the assistance driven by human security would be conducted by the centrality of human being in aid interventions, as well as keeping in the strategic plan a holistic approach of the situation. In addition, a human security perspective of development would tackle a long-term view and would facilitate efforts to strengthen the state-society links, without neglecting a political economy approach (Tadjbakhsh & Chenoy, 2007, pp. 230-3).

Discussions about the broadening of development agenda encompass critics on the human security

doctrine – as being too loose and not specifically different from the current MDGs targets (Denney, 2012, p. 2). These opinions focus on including armed conflicts and violence as a specific area for development agenda, in the detriment of human security (Ikejiaku, 2009, p. 16). Although these opinions are correct in emphasizing the question of quantification and indicators, the current analyze embeds the conflict and violence among the targets that the human security doctrine tackle.

Human security doctrine aims to fulfill basic rights (founded on basic needs) for every person. Koehler et al. (2012, 14-5) underline the fact that human security is realistic on addressing the real life of individuals and that it is centered on tackling vulnerabilities and enhancing capabilities, completing the human development thinking. Moreover, it represents the link between economy, conflict, distribution, environment and health (Koehler, Gasper, Jolly, & Simane, 2012, p. 15), as well as a merging point of the human rights and human development agenda.

The human security paradigm is appropriate for the post-2015 development goal due to the fact that it encompasses and extends the current MDGs targets. Thus, the concept brings systematization and interconnection in the development approach, by emphasizing the political stakes, as economic security/employment security, political security, cultural and psychological security, and environmental security (Koehler, Gasper, Jolly, & Simane, 2012, p. 18). Moreover, human security drives for building effective, legitimate, accountable and participatory political institutions (Tadjbakhsh & Chenoy, 2007, p. 232) and viable economies. In addition, the human security paradigm equally values the people and the institutions. It also analyzes objective situations and subjective perceptions, within the framework of human development and social cohesion (Koehler, Gasper, Jolly, & Simane, 2012, p. 19). This fact could generate more accountability and locally sustainable governance and participation. Therefore, through a multidimensional, holistic approach, the human security paradigm as the driver of the human development agenda might enhance empowerment and inclusion. This process will lead to “securitability” – the ability of the individuals and communities to avoid, to cope and to overcome insecure situations (UNDP Latvia, 2003, p. 4). Moreover, the international community would become the large extent of “security constellations” (UNDP Latvia, 2003, p. 24), through adopting the development agenda established on the human security principles.

The human security paradigm complements and enlarges the development agenda. Moreover, as presented above, the human security principles overpass some of the limitation of the MDGs targets. The security-centered development

aggregates all levels of actors, from the individual, family and household, community, to national government, regional organizations and international community. Acknowledging the fact that insecurity represents a worldwide problem, the development framework founded on human security overpasses the North-South dichotomy or developed-developing country distinction (Koehler, Gasper, Jolly, & Simane, 2012, p. 11).

The human security approach can overcome the negative externalities of the international aid: dependency, underdevelopment or increased conflict (Tadjbakhsh & Chenoy, 2007, pp. 225-9). It focuses on the individual and enlarges the accountability of donors. Aid becomes the vehicle for ensuring human development and for approaching insecurity situations.

Conclusions

In summary, the human security paradigm enlarges and enriches the Millennium Development Goals. It represents an appropriate framework for creating the Sustainable Development Goals for the post-2015 MDGs agenda. Human security interconnects and enlarges all the development issues and reactivates the principles declared in the Millennium Declaration. It broadens the number of the involved actors and stakeholders: from the individual, community, national actors to the international actors. In addition, a human security based development agenda can increase participation and accountability (Koehler, Gasper, Jolly, & Simane, 2012, p. 21). Moreover, the inclusion of the human security principles on the post-2015 development framework is particularly important due to the fact that it brings the security-related issues, with focus on the individual, on the public-political agenda (Denney, 2012, p. 20).

The UNDP 1994 Report declared that “it is time for humanity to restore its perspective and redesign its agenda”. Two decades later, the efforts to include and to implement the human-centered doctrines within the international agenda and to increase the prospects of human beings proved to have made small steps. The UN Global Conversation for redefining the development agenda revealed that people desire that their governments to be more honest, responsible and to be more involved in preventing insecurities (United Nations Development Group, 2014, p. 1). Hereby, the time has come to redesign a more comprehensive, accountable and inclusive development framework. It is high time to be ambitious in establishing development targets and to be realistic in evaluating the challenges of our changing world.

This article represents a contribution to the debates regarding the post-MDG development agenda. It reiterated and supported the idea regarding the positive aspects of including the human security agenda within the new development agenda. Thus,

this analysis was not exhaustive. Further research is needed for determining the measurability of the human security objectives. Moreover, the compatibility between the results of the Global Conversation for the new development agenda and the academic research on the possible development frameworks with the human security agenda should be more specifically approached. Nevertheless, according to the theoretical correlations and the analysis realized, the results of this research are optimistic on the capacity of the human security doctrine to be the link that can complete the development agenda.

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