Human Security at the Helm of the Socio-Economic Development

Безпека людини як визначальний чинник соціально-економічного розвитку

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Purpose: The article aims to critically analyze the complex interrelationship between security and socio-economic development. It explores the concept of human security as a driver of peace, security, and sustainable socio-economic development.

Method: The study uses a qualitative approach. It uses an analysis of existing literature to shed light on human security as an approach to safety and the improvement of human life. The study analyzes secondary data with a special emphasis on the contributions of other scholars.

Findings: The article highlights the importance of human security in socio-economic development. It argues that human security should be viewed as a comprehensive and multifaceted approach that takes into account different aspects of human well-being. It also emphasizes the need for clear guidelines and indicators for measuring and achieving human security.

Theoretical implications: The article contributes to the existing literature on human security by providing a critical analysis of the concept and its relationship to socio-economic development. It offers a theoretical framework for understanding the complex dynamics between security and development.

Practical implications: The article offers insights for policymakers, researchers, and practitioners working in the fields of development and security. It highlights the importance of integrating human security into development programs and promoting peace, stability, and social justice.

Paper type: analytical.

Key words: human security, human rights, peace, socio-economic development.

Мета: здійснити критичний аналіз складного взаємозв'язку між безпекою та соціально-економічним розвитком. Вона досліджує концепцію людської безпеки як рушія миру, безпеки та сталого соціально-економічного розвитку.

Метод дослідження: У дослідженні використовується якісний підхід. Він використовує аналіз наявної літератури, щоб пролити світло на людську безпеку як підхід до безпеки та покращення людського життя. Дослідження аналізує вторинні дані з особливим акцентом на внеску інших науковців.

Результати дослідження: У статті підкреслюється важливість людської безпеки у соціально-економічному розвитку. Вона стверджує, що людську безпеку слід розглядати як комплексний та багатогранний підхід, що враховує різні аспекти людського добробуту. Вона також підкреслює необхідність чітких керівних принципів та показників для вимірювання людської безпеки та досягнення її.

Теоретична цінність дослідження: Стаття сприяє існуючій літературі з людської безпеки, надаючи критичний аналіз концепції та її взаємозв'язку з соціально-економічним розвитком. Вона пропонує теоретичну основу для розуміння складної динаміки між безпекою та розвитком.

Практична цінність дослідження: Стаття пропонує розуміння для політиків, дослідників та практиків, які працюють у галузі розвитку та безпеки. Вона підкреслює важливість врахування людської безпеки в програмах розвитку та сприяння миру, стабільності та соціальної справедливості.

Тип статті: аналітична.

Ключові слова: безпека людини, права людини, мир, соціально-економічний розвиток.

Introduction

Development does not stand a chance without security or in the presence of violent conflicts. In the context of sustainable development, various human threats — namely political, economic, social, and ecological — persist and intersect (Bhandari, 2024; Jacobs, 2016).

This paper seeks to provide a critical analysis of the complex relationship between security and socio-economic development. It employs the human security approach and the capability approach as analytical lenses and frameworks for advancing inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development. Human security emerges as a lever for transformative programs aimed at creating an environment conducive to development agendas within developing countries.

In its narrow sense, aligned with the focus of this paper, human security is described "as the security of the human species, or as the security of human individuals" (Gasper, 2010:25). One of the motives guiding this paper, and the approach undertaken herein, is what Krause and Jütersonke (2005) assert: the realization that security and development concerns have seldom been linked.

The security and development nexus relates to a virtuous circle of increasing human well-being and fulfilment. Andersen-Rodgers and Crawford (2018) maintain that peace, security, and development are closely connected and must be viewed as key to effective strategies for addressing the root causes of social unrest and violence. Furthermore, Mastrojeni (2017) identifies a number of persistent and growing threats to peace, security, and development, such as rising financial instability, unemployment, economic inequality, social tension, cultural conflict, competition for scarce resources, ecological destruction, political instability, and other challenges.

Habiyaremye et al. (2022) argue that the process of social organization is key to socio-economic development. Conflict, violence, and the absence of peace tend to undermine a country's security and development.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development states that sustainable development cannot be realised without peace and security, and that both are at risk without sustainable development (United Nations, 2015). The agenda recognizes the need to live in a world free of disruptive conflict, poverty, disease, and unemployment and proposes environments characterized by equitable and universal access to quality education, health care, social protection from violence and repression, and access to reliable and sustainable energy. Furthermore, the Agenda resolves to build peaceful, just, and inclusive societies.

Jacobs (2016) and Smith (2024) suggest that disruptive conflict, social unrest, instability, and other challenges are not attributes of a well-functioning society or healthy social organisations. Despite peace and security being fundamental for development, Jacobs (2016) maintains that violence and insecurity persist in developing countries, claiming that the ideal of peace and human security for the majority remains elusive, distant, and utopian. Jacobs (2016:50) states that "the social compact for peace, freedom and prosperity for all enthusiastically embraced in the early 1990s has been replaced by a growing sense of uncertainty and insecurity regarding the future of the human community."

This study followed a qualitative approach, with specific interest in critically analysing human security as a driver for peace, security, and socio-economic development. It draws on a range of studies to shed light on the question of human security as an approach to security and the betterment of human lives. Secondary data was analysed, with a special focus on the contributions of other scholars.

In the first part, the paper explains what constitutes human security in relation to human rights. It then establishes the relationship between human security and socio-economic development, including a critical reflection on the peace, security, and development nexus. The final part concludes by focusing on how human security can serve as a lever for transformative development programmes.

Theoretical background

The discussion on human security as a driver for socio-economic development is anchored in the human security approach and the capability approach. These two approaches play a complementary role as lenses for explaining human security.

On the one hand, the human security approach challenges the state-centric view of security in favour of a people-centred perspective. As Hama (2017:2) asserts, the human security approach regards "individuals as the referent objects of security, with states being viewed as the means to serve such ends." This approach is defined by Dinshak and Danfulani (2018) as a hybrid of critical security theory and the concept of human security. The adopted theory rejects security models that emphasize military primacy, due to their undue focus on threats and the use of force, which are no longer functional given today's realities. Dinshak and Danfulani (2018) argue that the concept of security has broadened and deepened to include individual security, while embracing the importance of analysing inequalities between the rich and the poor, poverty, and other threats to socio-economic development. The broad and multidimensional focus of security recognises freedom, peace, safety, participation in governance, and access to resources and basic necessities for a dignified life and a safe environment.

On the other hand, the capability approach is found relevant in studies related to human development. In this regard, human beings are regarded as playing a critical role in development. The pioneer of the capability approach, Amartya Sen, identified two key concepts — functionings and capabilities — as essential for explaining this approach (Alkire, 2005; Robeyns, 2017). A truly developed society is thus described as one that enables individuals to achieve a sense of being and the ability to live and act in certain valuable ways. Robeyns (2017:45) further identifies conversion factors as those that acknowledge individuals' different abilities to "convert resources into functionings." The capability approach shifts the focus from material indicators to the actual opportunities available to individuals that allow them to live fulfilling and dignified lives.

Results and Discussion

Conceptual Understanding of Security

Security is a contested and ambiguous concept requiring a unique interpretation, particularly when the concept is directly linked to peace and socio-economic development. When narrowly defined, security is conceived as relating to national security, which guarantees protection from external threats. The traditional view of security presents a feeling of being safe from harm or danger and is restricted to military defence, protection and preservation of core values, and the absence of threats to acquired values (Ahsan, 2016).

In addition, Newman (2021) attributes the conception of security to a state-centric and military vision characterised by a failure to recognize the freedoms that human beings are entitled to — that is, freedom from want, freedom from fear, and recognition of human dignity. Security within realist theories emphasises national security, particularly the preservation of the state's territorial integrity and the safety of its inhabitants. The focus is on threats to the nation, which trivialises individual security and ignores the coeval nature of state and individual security.

Recognition of both state and individual security requires a unique interpretation: that state security exists for the sake of individual security. This acknowledges the relationship between state and individual security. While one acknowledges the importance of national security, individual security is equally important, as neglecting it has the potential to pose threats to national security.

Critical human security theory draws attention to the seriousness of threats — whether global, regional, national, or internal — arguing that traditional security claims are often used to justify exclusions and discrimination. Jamshidi (2022) maintains that the way states use security claims often relates to the justification of invasions of other nations, while communities use security claims to protect and defend their human rights. Jamshidi (2022) argues that the security agenda should foster political and socio-economic benefits and opportunities for marginalized and excluded groups. This relates to creating an environment that embraces social justice and prioritizes inclusion, justice, and equality.

Human Security as Complementary to Human Rights

Security within the human context and human-based rights is recognised as providing a platform to relate security to human beings and their rights. Therefore, a multidimensional and broadened view of security includes a reflective synopsis encompassing a human rights and sustainable development explanation of issues such as environmental decline, migration, poverty, natural disasters, deadly diseases, scarcity, and inadequate access to productive resources and services. Ahsan (2016) further maintains that a key element in defining security and transforming how the concept is viewed is the consideration of ownership of key economic resources and economic capability. Literature claims that threats cannot be tackled purely by military means, and cautions that the most important questions to answer when examining security include understanding (Robinson, 2006; Ahsan, 2016; O'Brien and Williams, 2016). These questions arise: Whose security is considered? Security by whom? What security? Robinson (2006) further views development and human rights as end goals, emphasising that the focus must be on the quality and richness of human lives.

Additionally, the concept of security within the human context and human-based rights provides a platform for relating security to human beings and their rights as promulgated in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, which encapsulates human rights, including political and civil rights, as well as social, cultural, and economic rights (Butcher and Hallward, 2017). The Declaration was created on the belief that the violation of human rights threatens the very core of peace and development. Articles 55 and 56 of the United Nations Charter urge states to promote universal respect for human rights, obligating them to ensure that human security is prioritised.

Other instruments and legislative frameworks, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which entered into force in 1976, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) of 1976, promote human rights and prohibit all forms of discrimination, whether political, property-based, racial, gender-based, class-based, national, religious, or social in origin. The founding values of the South African Constitution of 1996 also include human dignity, equality, and freedom. Similarly, Chapter 2 of the Bill of Rights encapsulates socio-economic rights that relate to issues such as education, healthcare, food, housing, water, and social security, while also emphasising humanity, human dignity, and human rights.

According to Taylor (2002) and Fuo and Du Plessis (2014), the issue of core obligations of states with regard to socio-economic rights requires critical engagement with certain fundamental human needs considered non-negotiable.

Sustainable Development Goal 16 promotes peace, justice, and the development of strong institutions, maintaining that all countries must strive towards realising the goal of peaceful, just, and inclusive societies (United Nations, 2022). A country cannot develop, and people cannot achieve food security, access better education, secure employment, or raise families in disruptive conditions without peace. Furthermore, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognises the need to build peaceful, just, and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice based on respect for human rights, including the right to development (United Nations, 2015). The agenda highlights factors giving rise to violence, insecurity, and injustice — including inequality, corruption, poor governance, and illicit financial and arms flows — as threats to the advancement of development.

Butcher and Hallward (2017) argue that there is no shortcut to peace and development without considering the rights and well-being of people. Likewise, Ngira (2018) and Pavleski (2023) view human rights as fundamental attributes, entitlements, or necessities that human beings are inherently entitled to, and whose violation demands intervention. These rights, including dignity, life, freedom, and equality, are inherent and must be fulfilled by the state; they stem from being human and cannot be taken away. However, Butcher and Hallward (2017) and Jacobs (2016) claim

that many signatories to peace and human rights treaties, declarations, and covenants — particularly in developing countries — continue to violate the political and civil rights of their citizens. The authors assert that threats to peace, security, and development persist and continue to grow unabated.

The United Nations Report (United Nations, 2019) on progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals worldwide indicates significant but slow and uneven progress in establishing legal and institutional frameworks for the defence of human rights. The Report notes that in 2018, only 39 percent of all countries were found to have successfully achieved compliance, meaning that 50 percent of all countries are projected to have compliant National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) by 2030 (UN Report, 2019). Furthermore, the Report states that realising the goal of peaceful, just, and inclusive societies remains elusive, as millions of people continue to be deprived of security, rights, and opportunities, which in turn holds back development.

Conflicts and various forms of violence pose significant challenges to sustainable development; the Report also notes an increase in the number of people fleeing war, persecution, and conflict, with the global number exceeding 70 million (UN Report, 2019).

Linking human rights to security and development is the concept of human security, defined by the UN Commission on Human Security (2003) as the protection of the vital core of all human lives with the aim of enhancing human freedom and human fulfilment. Appiah (2018) describes human security as encompassing not only the narrow traditional conceptualisation of security but also a broader, human-oriented conceptualisation. O'Brien and Williams (2016) argue that human security as an approach seeks to shift the focus from the state-centric traditional approach to a people-centred one, expanding the security agenda to include the perspectives of individuals and communities.

Brownlee and Cruft (2024) and Robinson (2006) view human rights as ethical claims on behalf of all human beings and human security as an important class of human rights, as it demands both ethical force and political recognition. The idea of human security can be traced back to dissatisfaction with the notions of security and development in the 1960s–1980s (Acharya, Singhdeo, and Rajaretnam, 2011).

Through the **Human Development Report** (1994), the United Nations recognised the need to broaden the traditional notion of security, which focused on state security and military defence, to include other dimensions such as environmental, food, health, and personal security, and other challenges affecting individuals daily.

Human security places greater emphasis on human well-being, while acknowledging the interconnected nature of the peace-security-development nexus. It entails several dimensions, including food security, personal security, community security, environmental security, economic security, and health security.

However, Homolar (2015) highlights the need for a clear set of guidelines specifying what these dimensions of human security encompass, as well as indicators to map the major signposts of insecurity within each dimension.

Ngira (2018) points out that the security of the individual is multifaceted, incorporating physical, psychological, social, and economic dimensions. Therefore, human security offers a more comprehensive and multidimensional approach that better serves the survival and conditions of human existence. The concept is grounded in morality or humanity, the promotion of rights (legal), and considerations of self-interest (Kaldor and Salmon, 2006).

However, Jacobs (2016) and Asaka (2018) argue that human security is often treated as a complementary "add-on" to security policies, rather than being considered an integral part of state security. Jacobs (2016) contends that this conception reflects a negative and narrow focus, failing to address the basic human needs of people, which, in turn, sparks social unrest and violence.

The author's claims resonate with the assumption that peace refers merely to the absence

of violence and that health refers simply to the absence of disease. Within a multidimensional lens, human security requires a much broader description, encompassing both physical and material security, including protection of individuals from political and economic threats.

Conceptualising Human Security within the Socio-Economic Development Context

Scholarly literature has demonstrated varied arguments about the link between security, conflict, and socio-economic development. Among such scholars are Stewart (2004), Jooma (2005), and Boshkoska (2017), who argue that poverty, characterised by inadequate or lacking income, education, food, shelter, and health, constitutes an assault on human dignity.

Ngira (2018) and Newman (2021) reason that underdevelopment could be caused by instability (both political and financial), poverty, unemployment, inequality, and other socio-economic factors. Jooma (2005) and Alence and Pitcher (2019) support the idea of the interconnectedness of poverty, underdevelopment, and civil strife, arguing that conflict and civil war often reflect not merely a development problem, but rather the failure of development itself.

Economic stagnation and high levels of poverty serve as preconditions for conflicts, violent protests, and physical insecurity. Development promotes lasting peace, whereas a lack of development leads to various forms of frustration, discontent, and violence.

Esterhuyse (2016), however, seems to be an opponent of human security and a proponent of the traditional approach to security, arguing that military power remains an essential element of security. The suitability and appropriateness of human security as an organising framework for the armed forces is viewed as problematic. With reference to South Africa, Esterhuyse (2016) argues that human security has become a sanctuary for avoiding tough questions and decisions about defence. The defence sector and its leadership appear to be unclear about how a military should be organised, trained, and equipped for human security operations.

Conversely, Article 1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights proclaims the freedom of individuals to pursue economic, social, and cultural development, while Article 3 obliges State Parties to take reasonable and appropriate measures to ensure the realisation of economic, social, and cultural development, recognising the equal rights of men and women to enjoy all economic, social, and cultural rights.

The Convention, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, recognises the ideal of freedom from fear and want, which can only be achieved when everyone enjoys economic, social, and cultural rights. Article 55 of the United Nations Charter stipulates that the UN shall promote higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development.

The Charter acknowledges that peace and global security cannot be achieved without focusing on individual well-being and emphasises promoting various forms of security, including economic, social, political, environmental, and developmental security (Scanlon and Murithi, 2006; Vietti and Scribner, 2013).

Langenhove (2004) alludes to the notion of the "securitisation of development", arguing that human security is becoming increasingly linked to sustainable development. The question raised by this assertion concerns the interpretation and operationalisation of development as a security issue.

Evidently, insecurities and underdevelopment contribute to instability, armed conflicts, and wars, particularly in developing countries. Langenhove (2004) describes the human security approach as ideal for creating an environment conducive to freedom from want and fear, where protection against poverty, hunger, inequality, and other related social ills exists.

Human security enhances access, protection, and empowerment of individuals regarding both the material and non-material dimensions of human existence, namely food, clothing, shelter, education, health, freedom, liberty, and participation in decision-making processes.

The security of the individual is the primary focus of human security, with significant

implications for democratic participation and empowerment (Ahsan, 2016). Furthermore, the broader understanding of human security relates to the notion of freedom from want and fear, amounting to sustainable security, and offers much to the field of sustainable development with its three major pillars: economic, social, and environmental sustainability (ibid.).

Broadly, human security addresses the challenges individuals experience daily, including unemployment, job security, educational opportunities, access to health and other services, and cultural freedoms.

The question raised concerns the extent to which human security is viewed as a framework for analysing the protection of all human lives in ways that advance human freedoms and fulfilment, as well as the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the different dimensions of human security.

Economic Security Dimension

Ongoing literature embraces the multidimensional conceptualisation of human security and its holistic approach in identifying the greatest areas of individual vulnerability and insecurity (Langenhove, 2004; Homolar, 2015; Boshkoska, 2017).

Zondi (2017) also maintains that a comprehensive approach to peace and security must take into consideration social and economic opportunities, as well as political rights. The author argues that there can be no effective and lasting solution to promoting peace and human security if opportunities for gainful employment or alternative means of social welfare are not considered.

Jacobs (2016) maintains that access to employment is the principal means through which individuals acquire the purchasing power to meet basic human needs and fulfil their rising aspirations. Without adequate access to facilities, employment, and freedom, conflict and violence erupt, making development unattainable.

However, Homolar (2015) reflects on critical concerns relating to the concept, pointing to the elusive explanations and lack of specificity regarding what exactly constitutes the interlinked components of human security, how to establish indicators for measuring success and failure, and the implicit standards involved.

Leaning and Arie (2000) also noted a tendency to theorise about the nature of human security without attempting to recognise or identify the situations that support or undermine it. Homolar (2015) further argues that each component of the human security framework suffers from vagueness regarding conceptualisation and operationalisation. Furthermore, it is claimed that the selected indicators are based on unexplained, value-laden assumptions about factors contributing to individual security across different dimensions of human security.

For example, human security focuses on the creation of opportunities for the eradication of income poverty (material dimension) and human poverty (promotion of human dignity). Economic security, for instance, highlights important markers such as insecure working conditions, underemployment, a decrease in the value of nominal wages, and lack of or inadequate social security.

Homolar (ibid.) states that the main challenge could be linked to data limitations regarding the conversion of various constituent elements of income insecurity into a set of applicable measurable economic security indicators.

Linked to economic security is the health security dimension, measured as the ability of individuals, communities, and societies to avoid premature deaths. Key sources include common infectious and parasitic diseases, lifestyle diseases, and diseases caused by environmental degradation.

O'Brien and Williams (2016) allude to the link between health and security, stating that health is a critical component of well-being, and that poor health has implications for the quality of life an individual may attain. The authors maintain that a country could be directly or indirectly affected by the prevalence and spread of communicable diseases, as these may undermine state capacity and foster economic and political discord.

The impact of poor health threatens the stability and prosperity of a country and can become

both a political and economic threat.

Within the South African context, the government has proposed mechanisms to ensure equal access to the healthcare system. This is demonstrated through the National Health Insurance (NHI) Bill, which provides South Africans, particularly poor and vulnerable groups (children, women, and the elderly), with an opportunity to address the disequilibrium in access to healthcare services that exists within the health sector.

In principle, the bill should be welfare-enhancing, as it is aimed at providing access to quality healthcare for all citizens, regardless of their income level or status.

Harris et al. (2011) maintain that the present system fails to promote equal access to health services, as only 16 percent of the population have health insurance and medical aid, enabling them to access quality services in the private sector. Meanwhile, the majority of the population are relegated to the inefficient public healthcare system, which skews healthcare supply in favour of individuals with higher incomes.

As elucidated in the NHI Bill and other studies (Harris et al., 2011; Mayosi and Benatar, 2014), there is a need for a comprehensive public health framework capable of delivering equitable universal healthcare. However, the dilemma again relates to the lack of clarity on the unit of analysis, which tends to be defined at the national level, thereby overshadowing individual well-being when the focus remains on aggregate national outcomes such as mortality and fertility rates.

Security and Development Nexus in the African Context

Johansson (2015) argues that a link exists between security and development and that the concepts are connected in a mutually reinforcing relationship. If the link is weakened, the mutuality is destroyed, meaning that development cannot be attained without peace and security. However, it is sometimes difficult to establish the existence of this link because of the broadness of the concepts. This has implications for the understanding and interpretation of the concepts and for determining or setting guidelines to measure the achievement of freedom.

Scanlon and Murithi (2006) suggest that the United Nations' Seminal Report of 2006 reveals that conflicts and inter-state tensions have plagued the African continent, creating ongoing security challenges. The Report further highlights a series of humanitarian crises and wars in Africa, noting an increase in the number of refugees — approximately 6 million refugees outside the continent and more than 12.7 million internally displaced persons across 20 countries. The Report also notes the growing disparities between rich and poor inhabitants, health insecurity, and wars, all of which dramatically impact children's health and education.

Esterhuyse (2016) and Cohen (2019) argue that underlying assumptions and speculations about the role and utility of the military influenced the broadening of the security agenda. For some, it meant the end of war; for others, it signified the loss of military relevance.

The relationship between security and development within the African context was captured in the seminal 1991 Kampala Document, which argued that insecurity and instability were major impediments to economic integration and socio-economic transformation in Africa. Areas identified as requiring attention included security, stability, development, and cooperation.

Africa (2015) notes that the concept of security went beyond military considerations and included economic, political, and social dimensions. Furthermore, the author claims that the security of a nation must be construed in terms of the security of individual citizens — their ability to live in peace, have access to basic necessities of life, fully participate in societal affairs, and enjoy fundamental human rights (Africa, 2015:179).

According to Appiah (2018) and Zondi (2021), the promotion of peace, security, and stability is a prerequisite for implementing Africa's development agenda. This must be considered in light of the fragility and failure to provide essential services for development in most African states. However, fragility is not unique to Africa; it also affects developed countries. State fragility and

failure to meet basic human needs can pose peace and security threats (Tardy, 2019).

In South Africa, the policy proposals of 1994 were also informed by the Kampala Document, emphasising the need to shift from a state-centric to a people-centred approach to security (Africa, 2015). The principles associated with democratic civil-security relations and the broadening of the concept of security permeated negotiation discourses and discussions on the role of security.

Esterhuyse (2016) argues that the history of armed conflict, human rights violations, and societal dysfunctions provided a conducive environment for adopting the human security approach. Accordingly, Section 198 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996) outlines the principles governing the country's national security. This section makes provision for security to reflect the resolve of South Africans, as individuals and as a nation, to live as equals, in peace and harmony, free from fear and want, and to seek a better life.

In South Africa, national security relates to the state's ability to ensure the well-being of its people, including physical protection, development, freedom, prosperity, and social justice. The responsibility for maintaining and promoting peace, stability, development, and progress lies with both the government and society.

Africa (2015) presents a mixed record regarding human security in South Africa. Massive socio-economic and political gains are noted, such as government programmes that have enabled individual participation in governance and improved the lives of millions. However, weaknesses are observed in implementing the original policy framework.

The policy proposals particularly focused on achieving a proper balance between security and development. Yet, unexpected consequences — including violent protests, service delivery tensions, destruction of infrastructure, and the persistent issues of gender-based violence, homicide, and violence against foreign nationals — seemingly reflect feelings of insecurity in daily life.

Esterhuyse (2016:29) is of the view that the human security paradigm has not prevailed in South Africa and may even be a waning value in the country's political and social fabric. The author further contends that the notion of human security provided the South African military leadership with a safe haven, allowing them to avoid presenting a clearly defined and explicitly motivated military mandate. The leadership's messaging suggests that the problems experienced in the country are primarily socio-economic and non-military in nature.

Human Security as a Lever for Transformative Programmes in Socio-Economic Development

Security, peace, and development are fundamental attributes of society. Jacobs (2016) proposes that a comprehensive approach to peace and human security must take into account economic opportunity and political rights. Orago (2017) recognises that poverty, conflict, social injustices, social exclusion, and marginalisation of certain sectors are sources of insecurity and root causes of conflict.

Socio-economic development is viewed as a cornerstone of social stability, peacebuilding, and peacekeeping. Human security is seen as holistic, comprehensive, and prioritises the security, welfare, safety, and well-being of individuals. Without peace and security, there is no development; and without development, peace and security are threatened. Jacobs (2016) contends that the relationship between peace and development, though subtle, holds the key to effective strategies for addressing the root causes of unrest and violence.

Specifically, security within the socio-economic development context embraces basic social security, including access to basic services, food, shelter, health care, and employment opportunities. This reflects the concepts of freedom from want, freedom from fear, and freedom to live in dignity. The approach aims to promote human well-being by embracing psychological, physical, social, and economic aspects.

Tschirgi (2006) notes the interdependence and interconnectedness between security and

development, stating that this link is self-evident and most directly experienced through physical security and socio-economic development.

On the other hand, Langenhoven (2004) and Orago (2017) regard human insecurity as the greatest obstacle to peace and development, arguing that a commitment to promoting access, protection, and empowerment will enhance development and prevent underdevelopment. Socio-economic insecurity, as an internal threat, exposes individuals to uncertainty, anxiety, and the anticipation of difficult living conditions. Insecurity has the potential to exacerbate inequalities.

Human security is viewed as a lever for transformative programmes due to its approach and the priority it gives to individual security against violence and deprivation, with a focus on basic needs and rights for all. Gasper (2010) and Mawdsley (2019) argue that human security is not merely a single concept but a broader discourse. Accordingly, it provides a comprehensive and holistic perspective, focusing on human needs, human development, and human rights.

The approach is rooted in people-centred principles and promotes cooperation between the nation and the state to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. It enhances the capabilities of individuals and communities, empowering and protecting them to survive and to cope with threats and conditions that inhibit their ability to live in freedom, peace, and safety.

Jacobs (2016) also maintains that the concept of peace must be based on a comprehensive, integrated, and human-centred approach.

Conclusion and recommendations

Development signifies progress and positive change in the living standards of people. The links between security and development are closely related to the connections between poverty, underdevelopment, and civil strife. Conflict and violent protests erupt when basic human needs are not met and when people are unable to generate livelihoods. Development promotes lasting peace, sustains security, and ensures political stability.

That being said, establishing the nexus is complicated due to the broadness of the concept of 'human security' and the ambiguity inherent in its definition. However, without security and peace, progress in human well-being will never be realised. The narrow view of security is being challenged by ever-increasing and changing socio-economic development systems, and this calls for a multifaceted approach.

Human security, as an approach and lever for transformative programmes, creates opportunities for protection and freedom from pervasive threats to people's rights, safety, and well-being. Human security, as the helm for peace, security, and socio-economic development, entails adopting measures that prevent exposure to risk and vulnerability, and emphasises taking remedial action to prevent conflicts and other social ills. The approach views both the individual and the state as role players in the attainment of security, peace, and development.

Human security prioritises individuals and recognises the role of the state in peacebuilding, conflict management, and resolution. These are seen as critical in processes aimed at developing communities and implementing poverty reduction programmes. As a steering mechanism for peace, security, and socio-economic development, human security is considered a capability-based approach that empowers and enhances people's ability to achieve self-worth and self-respect—the core of human dignity.

However, it is noted that the notion of human security is difficult to put into practice, particularly in policy formulation and implementation. A clear set of guidelines, including measures and indicators, is needed to establish a broader and more effective means of achieving security, such as in health, economics, food, and other basic human needs. Shortcomings noted include the demystification of the concept and the need for a clearer definition. More needs to be done in terms of measurement and monitoring, rather than just theorising about the nature of security.

A sustainable and effective national security strategy must consider human security as a multidimensional and multifaceted approach. Threats to human security are diverse and dynamic, changing with time, space, and context. Therefore, more research still needs to be conducted to determine the value of the human security approach within the peace and socio-economic development context.

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