



International Panel on Social Progress

2024-2027

Human Security: Health and Wellbeing

Context

The crisis of social-democracy in recent decades seems, in the rich countries, to have generated a decline of hope for a just society. In developing countries, the trend is now to mimic the developed countries, rather than inventing new models and approaches. In spite of reduced poverty in several countries, social hardships reminiscent of the early phase of Western capitalism are widespread. Yet neither the collapse of utopian illusions nor booming capitalism in developing countries should mean the end of the quest for justice. Can we hope for a better society? Social scientists have never been so well equipped to provide an answer, thanks to the development of all the relevant disciplines since WWII.

IPSP's Mission

The International Panel on Social Progress (IPSP) harnesses the competence of hundreds of experts about social issues and will deliver a report addressed to all social actors, movements, organizations, politicians and decision-makers, in order to provide them with the best expertise on questions that bear on social change. As reflected in detail in its Executive Summary – <https://www.ipsp.org/resources> (click on Executive Summary half way down the page) – IPSP seeks consensus whenever possible but will not hide controversies and will honestly present up-to-date arguments and analyses, and debates about them, in an accessible way.

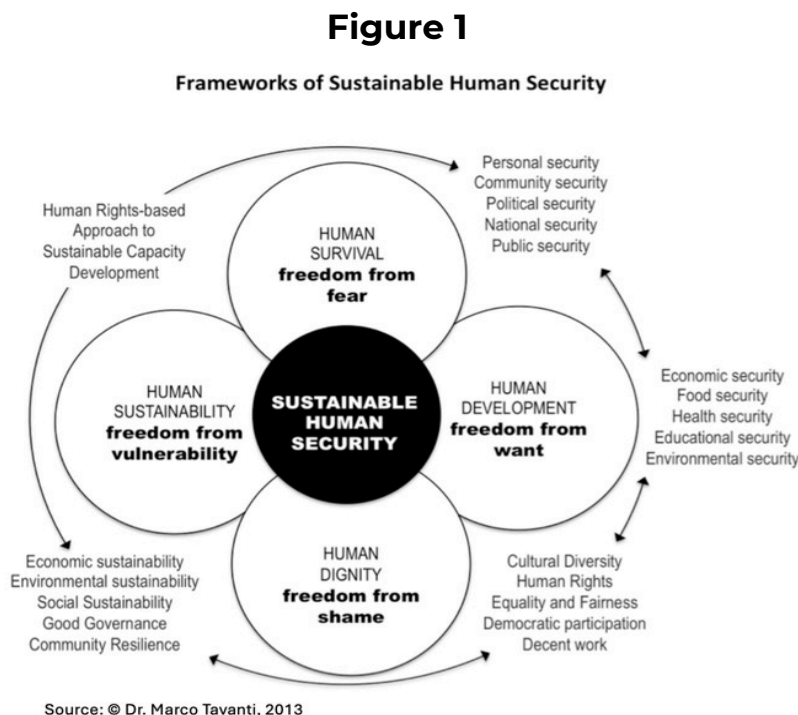
The Panel has no partisan political agenda and aims at restoring hope in social progress and stimulating intellectual and public debates. Different political and philosophical views may conceive of social progress in different ways, emphasizing values such as freedom, dignity, or equality. In addition, the Panel retains full independence from political parties, governments, and organizations with a partisan agenda. Particularly, the Panel will primarily work for the dissemination of knowledge to all relevant actors in society, it will also foster research on the topics it will study and help to revive interest for research in social long-term prospective analysis.

IPSP's Human Rights and Human Security Framework

The United Nations 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights[i] distilled and articulated the binding international standard that recognizes the “inherent dignity and worth of the human person” and “the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family [as] the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.” This Declaration established four foundational freedoms: “freedom of speech and belief” and “freedom from want and fear” while recognizing that these freedoms and inalienable rights are essential to “promote social progress and better standards of life” for every human being.

Moreover, the Declaration stipulated that “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and the security of person” (Article 3) and that “Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status.” (Article 2). In many respects this Universal Declaration serves as the ethical, philosophical, and intellectual foundation of the concept of human security as articulated the United Nations 1994 Human Development Report[ii] and the 2003 Commission on Human Security [iii].

Travanti's framework (Figure 1) aptly captures human security as a “comprehensive concept of interdependent and fundamental freedoms: freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom to live in dignity. The added notion of sustainability aims at identifying long term solutions for the institutional, economic, social and environmental aspects of human security.” [iv]



[i] United Nations, 1948. Universal Declaration of Human Right <https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/03/udhr.pdf>

[ii] United Nations, 1994. Human Development Report. UN, New York.

[iii] United Nations Commission on Human Rights, 2003. Human Security Now. UN, New York.

Why Link Health and Wellbeing to Human Security?

Sustainable human security encompasses health and wellbeing as a global vulnerability. The COVID-19 pandemic has refocused attention on health and wellbeing as a critical actor in human security and emergency preparedness – health, safety, education, and social integration. The global framework of the SDGs provides a comprehensive set of interconnected domains focused on inclusivity, equity, and sustainability.

Localization of the SDGs requires objective indicators of health, economic, social, and environmental to capture the lived experiences of people in communities, cities, municipalities, and countries.



What We Propose

Within the IPSP human security focus, we are proposing an inter-disciplinary examination of the link between human security and health and wellbeing as an important lever in global health and quality of life[v]. Specifically, we propose to:

1. Convene a panel and/or working group of thinkers and doers in the academic, policy, and practice spaces.
2. Prepare a white paper outlining the significance of a systems approach to health and wellbeing as a critical aspect of sustainable human security.
3. Work with the IPSP Advisory Board to carve out a focus on health and wellbeing as an aspect critical to sustainable human security.
4. Develop a theory of action with specific action steps, coalitions for action, and concrete recommendations to catalyze transformational action.
5. Generate a program of work and a series of multi-media and multi-formulated products in contribution to the work of IPSP 2 and beyond. We will prepare a detailed work plan and seek funding to carry out this work.

[iv] Tavanti, M., 2018.

[v] Unhabitat-qualityoflife@un.org; <https://unhabitat.org>