Human Security in Development Practice

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The world agreed on the SDGs at last year's UN General Assembly, namely, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 17 goals and 169 targets always matter; however, GA resolution 70/1 of Agenda 2030 has its core message in its preamble, referring to the notion of freedom from fear and freedom from want, with human dignity. Overall, the approach of SDGs is characterized as human-centered development.

I aim to align these SDG principles with the notion of human security, considering my field experiences of UN missions and UNDP field offices for peace consolidation, livelihood recovery, and sustainable human development. These are the core competencies of the UN operational activities.

Most of my UNDP field duty stations were in conflict-affected areas, such as Iraq, Timor-Leste, Kosovo, and Chad. I served in these missions during a particular planning phase called "transition."

The communities affected by conflict have common problems of institutional disorder that deprives people of public services: education, health and safety, and security.

For me, having served in the United Nations, our responsibility is to restore a community's functions rather than to just provide humanitarian supplies. I regret to say that the UN's intervention is not an ideal solution because it will always be needed when the national administration capacity is lowered and requires help in order to support the people affected.

Threats and Risks

In many cases, people affected by conflict find themselves in the best position to define human security needs because they know exactly what kind of threats and wants affect them, and also what is specifically needed to ensure a sustainable livelihood. We, from the UN, help to identify the threats and risks that they are facing and to plan solutions.

Last year, on this same occasion of the Japan Association for Human Security Studies, Professor Kinhide Mushanokoji gave keynote remarks that were very enlightening. He explained the meaning of the word "security" with the verb "secure," which is composed of the prefix "se- (without)" and the stem "-cure (care)," saying that security is a condition under which people do not need to be cared for. Therefore, to establish or ensure human security is an action to eliminate threats and mitigate risks that disable people from living without worrying about danger to their lives.

Opportunities

The UNDP Human Development Report in 1994 presented an approach to providing sustainable solutions to people with need of international care. A new way of thinking after the Cold War when massive military expenditure was no longer required provided such an opportunity. The idea of human security opened this opportunity for people to use the savings from the "dividend of peace."

Twenty years later, this idea is still valid because a global goal of Agenda 2030, SDGs, has its bedrock in human security and sustainable development. The preparation process for SDGs was guided by local experiences and global debates recalling the concept "Act locally and think globally."

Tools

In the history of human beings, the world agreed to establish the League of Nations after WWI, and the United Nations after WWII. These international institutional collaborations were a response to the need for global governance. Their aims have been to maintain peace and uphold human rights.

The UN's role has been evolving over time. Now, the UN places greater focus on sustainable development. The key issue here is the best way to connect peace, human rights, and sustainable development. In my observation, this is "human security."

Conflict and Violent Extremism

The UNDP HDR 1994 indicates that, without peace, there may be

no development but that, without development, peace is threatened. It points to the idea that a war deprives people of human rights and all types of security: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security.

Moreover, international security has been becoming increasingly fragile as globalization advances. A clear and present danger for the sustainability of the world at this point of time is violent extremism.

There has been no effective solution that directly addresses the root causes of extremists' hostility towards human beings, which on earth is never acceptable. The UNDP report in 1994 already clearly stated that the causes of violence lie in poverty and inequality.

Environment

Japan went through an environmental crisis after WWII when it showed miraculous economic performance. A book written in 1975 by Dr. Michael Reich *Island of Dreams* illustrated this crisis with such diseases as marine water pollution diseases known as *Minamata,* mercury-polluted fishermen's plight, or Yokkaichi air pollution that caused asthma syndromes or other ailments. Japan has not been engaged in any military conflicts after WWII, but this crisis arose. And this is not considering countries affected by war.

The important point here is that Japan is a learned country that has overcome the environmental crisis by the strong initiatives of local communities of their own, by local governments, and by the private sector. Now, Japan supports many developing countries with its experiences and know-how in order to eliminate pollution. The media and civil society also played an essential role. I think this experience

of self-recovery from environmental crisis pushed Japan to become one of the most vocal advocates for environmental sustainability.

Health

Health sector support requires scientific, evidence-based planning to find solutions. Human security assistance programming, in which I have been involved, is always based on analysis, mapping, and planning. Therefore, the global health initiatives implemented as part of the MDGs in the last 15 years are, by definition, human security goals. Dr. Peter Piot, a role model for me as an international civil servant, wrote in his memoir *No Time to Lose* that when he was engaged in HIV retroviral treatment with President Mbeki, his approach was exactly a human security approach. At that time, South Africa was facing a serious crisis of HIV infection and the situation was out of control. There was a tendency for African political leaders to deny the Western approach to finding solutions to African problems. Dr. Piot, through his face-to-face dialogue with the president, strongly emphasized the point that scientific data must be considered essential in policy planning.

This year, year one of the SDGs, Japan took strong initiatives to address the global health agenda, namely health emergency response, antimicrobial resistance, and universal health coverage, by assuming the G7 Ise-Shima Summit presidency and co-organizing TICAD VI. In the past, it was in 2000 that Japan chaired the G7 Kyushu-Okinawa Summit on the eve of the Millennium Summit at the UNGA, which addressed the eradication of infectious diseases such as HIV, malaria, and tuberculosis. This initiated the process of establishing the Global Fund for ATM. Overall, MDG Goal 6 on HIV has made substantive

progress in most affected areas.

Experiences in a UN Country Team

The role of the United Nations in the field as a UN country team is to help member states tackle humanitarian and development challenges. It then has to identify opportunities to obtain international support to address the remedies, without damaging the environment and national identity but delivering noticeable impact. I worked on cases in Kosovo and Chad to provide multi-sectoral solutions in these post-conflict situations.

During the relief phase, the UN country team forms a humanitarian coordination team and works using a cluster approach. As the crisis phase evolves, a recovery and normalization program is applied with the UNDP as the lead agency. When the government recovers its normal capacity, policies under the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) shall be formulated. The value of human security is an overarching guideline in operating the entire process.

Kosovo in 2008

In 1999, the Kosovo conflict disrupted essential social services, stifled economic development, and exacerbated the growing hardships faced by an already vulnerable and distressed population after the demise of the former Yugoslavia. After NATO military intervention, the Serbian government and Kosovo-Albanian Liberation Army ceased fire.

But, when I arrived in 2007 as deputy resident representative of the UNDP, there was an absence of effective administration in Northern

Kosovo where the Kosovo-Serbian population was a majority due to a vacuum of sovereign institutions. The UN agencies on the ground collectively programmed a human security project and applied to the UN Trust Fund for Human Security for funding.

 The approach was to form a local action group consisting of three parties, Kosovo-Serbian, Kosovo-Albanian, and the UN, to identify local needs in healthcare, education, and employment creation. The program was a full success and nearly 1,000 victim populations gained access to long-time-missing public services.

Chad in 2014

 My subsequent assignment as country director of the UNDP was in Chad in the Sahel African region. Despite its abundant natural resources, Chad remains one of the poorest countries in the world. Thirty years of constant violence and conflict have resulted in massive international displacement that has spurred tensions between host communities and internally displaced persons (IDPs)

 One of the most conflict-affected areas was the eastern region vulnerable to drought, water scarcity, climate change, competition over scarce resources, and growing tension among communities. Lack of local administration aggravated the living conditions of the population with frequent violence against women.

 The program funded by the UN Trust Fund focused on three areas: access to drinking water and food with little infrastructure; job training for IDPs, especially women, to achieve a sustainable income; and protection of women from gender-based violence.

 The national association of women's empowerment partnered with the UNDP, UNICEF, and UNFPA to provide technical support to

the beneficiaries. Approximately 12,000 of the local population were given the opportunity to keep hunger and insecurity away from their communities.

Conclusions

Such projects as formulated and implemented jointly by UN agencies in different development contexts show examples of concrete actions to address human security. The threats faced by people in Northern Kosovo and Sahelian Chad were quite different in appearance and are again quite different from the environmental crisis in Japan in the 1960-70s and the HIV fatal health hazards in 1990.

We do not talk about force or coercion as a solution to the problem but instead employ a human-centered approach with sustainable and preventive solutions globally supported and understood. This means the affected population recovering access to freedom from fear and freedom from want with human dignity.

Thank you for your attention.