# Towards developing an African Human Security Index: Practices, methods, and designs

## An overview of human security: Concept and principles

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# *Where we stand …*

- ✓ Human security acknowledges that **people are faced with multitude of insecurities** that not only undo years of development but also generate conditions in which grievances can lead to growing tensions

- ✓ It focuses on the **root causes** of these insecurities and underscores the need to consider the **survival**, **livelihood** and **dignity** of individuals as fundamental to **national**, **regional** and **international** peace and security

- ✓ It **reaffirms the UN Charter** and recognizes that no country can enjoy **development** without security, **security** without development, and neither without respect for **human rights**

- ✓ It **introduces a practical framework to advance a more people-centered notion of security** as defined by the General Assembly where "all individuals are entitled to freedom from fear and want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential"

# Milestones and progress … A 20+ year journey at the UN

**1994**  UNDP Human Development Report

**2000**  UN Millennium Summit and Declaration

**2003**  Human Security Now report by the Commission on Human Security

**2005**  World Summit Outcome paragraph 143 on human security

**2008 - 2010**  General Assembly informal thematic debates on human security

**2010**  First report of the Secretary-General on human security (A/64/701)

**2012**  Second report of the Secretary-General on human security (A/66/763) PLUS GA resolution 66/290

**2013**  Third report of the Secretary-General on human security (A/68/685)
GA debate on human security including the post-2015 Development Agenda

**2014**  Establishment of the Inter-agency Working Group on Human Security

**2015**  70th Anniversary of the UN – all reviews and agendas adopted highlight the importance and added value of the human security approach

**2017**  Vision of the Secretary-General on prevention and UN reforms

# At an analytical level, human security recognizes three freedoms to be fundamental to people' lives and aspirations

**FREEDOM FROM FEAR**

**FREEDOM FROM WANT**

**FREEDOM TO LIVE IN DIGNITY**

❖ **Freedom from fear**

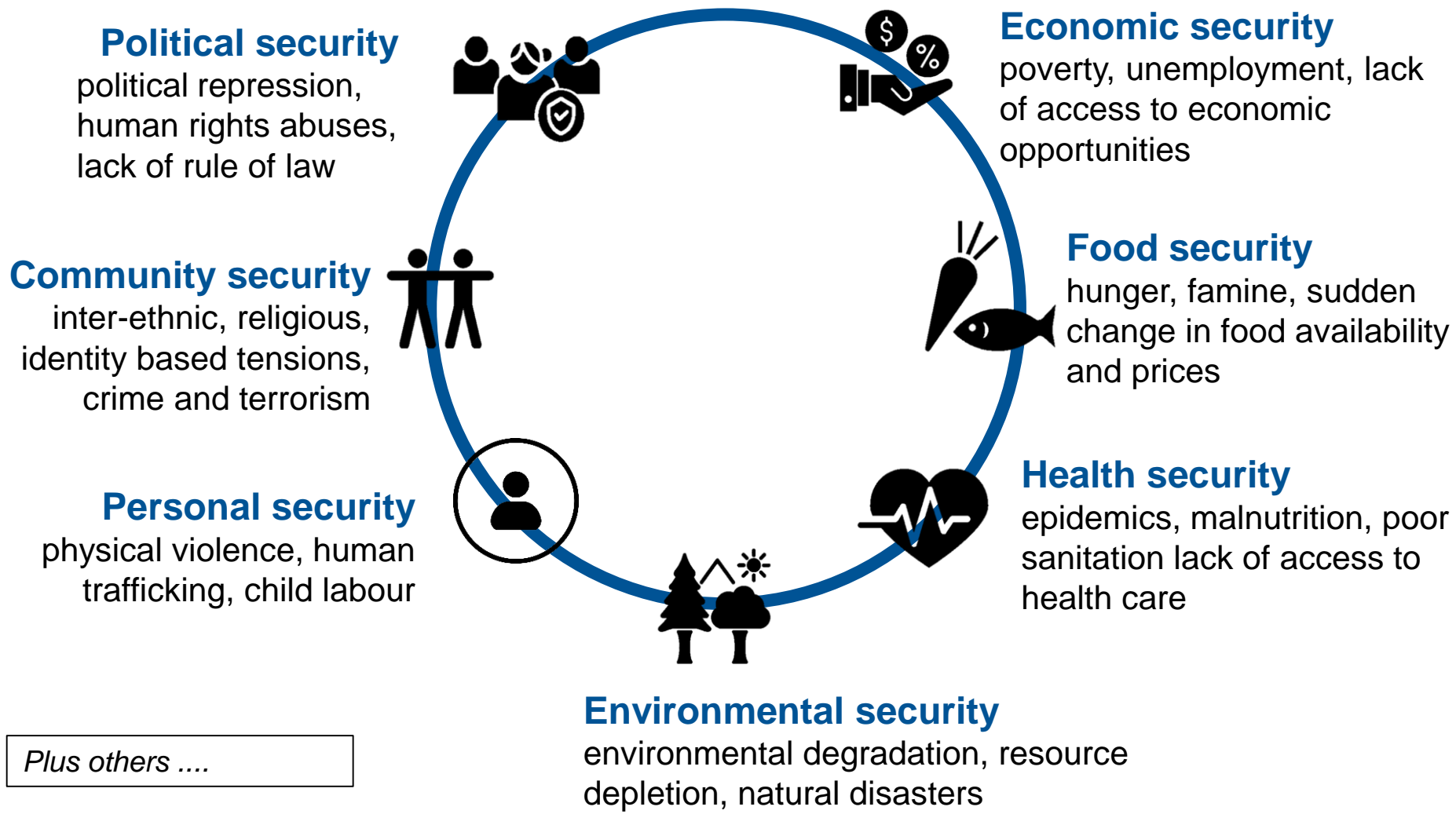Threats to the safety of people (i.e., all forms of violence)

❖ **Freedom from want**

Threats to basic needs (i.e., economic, social and environmental)

❖ **Freedom to live in dignity**

Threats to human rights and by extension access to social services and economic opportunities

# To break down these freedoms into measurable components, human security considers gaps/deficits in the following areas

**Political security**
political repression, human rights abuses, lack of rule of law

**Community security**
inter-ethnic, religious, identity based tensions, crime and terrorism

**Personal security**
physical violence, human trafficking, child labour

**Economic security**
poverty, unemployment, lack of access to economic opportunities

**Food security**
hunger, famine, sudden change in food availability and prices

**Health security**
epidemics, malnutrition, poor sanitation lack of access to health care

**Environmental security**
environmental degradation, resource depletion, natural disasters

*Plus others ....*

# Based on this analyses, human security calls for protection and empowerment strategies
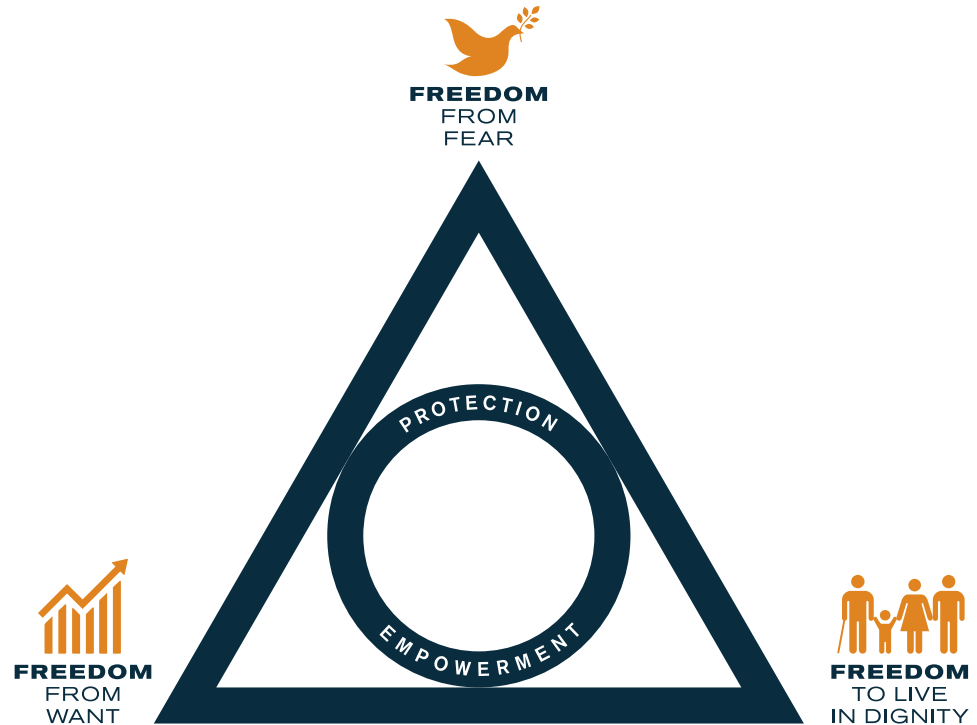
**.. that are interlinked and mutually reinforcing**

❖ **Protection (top-down)**
institutional strategies that protect people in a systematic, comprehensive and preventative way, including the establishment of the rule of law, good governance, social safety nets, etc.
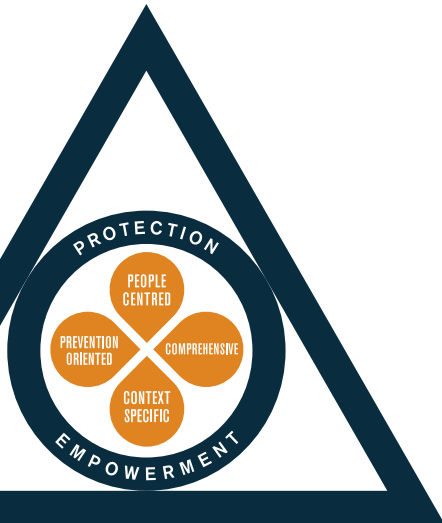
❖ **Empowerment (bottom-up)**
capacity building interventions that empower people so as to develop their resilience to mitigate, respond to, and prevent current and future crises wherever possible

# These strategies are grounded in four principles

❖ **People-centered** (focuses on the individual and their empowerment, and highlights the universality and primacy of the 3 freedoms)
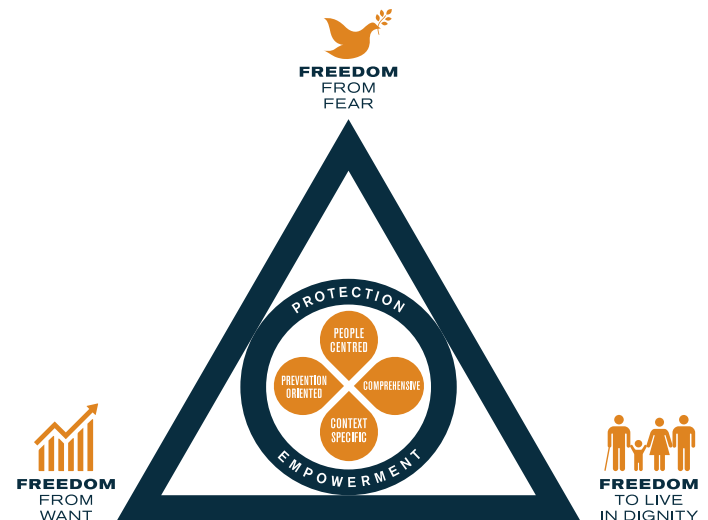
❖ **Comprehensive** (looks at the totality of people's sense of security — economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, political, etc., … and brings together the expertise of different actors)

❖ **Context-specific** (no 'one-size fits all' but based on the specific context and its relation to local, national, regional and global factors)

❖ **Prevention-focused** (not just fixing things but making lasting change — looks at root causes and considers sustainable solutions – comprehensive, capacity building, early warning and proactive)

# Therefore, the key characteristics of the HS approach are

- ✓ Places the **individual as the referent object** of security – fundamental shift

- ✓ Deepens the relationship between **state security** and the **security of people**

- ✓ Allows for a **broader examination of factors** typically peripheral to state security

- ✓ Recognizes that **threats and insecurities** are **interconnected**, **transversal** and often **compounding**

- ✓ Highlights the need for a broad range of actors and aims for **multi-sectoral, comprehensive and integrated solutions**

- ✓ Focuses on the **long-term,** with a view towards **prevention**

| 3 | FREEDOMS |
|---|---|
| 7+ | COMPONENTS |
| 2 | STRATEGIES |
| 4 | PRINCIPLES |

FREEDOM FROM FEAR

PROTECTION

PEOPLE CENTRED

PREVENTION ORIENTED

COMPREHENSIVE

CONTEXT SPECIFIC

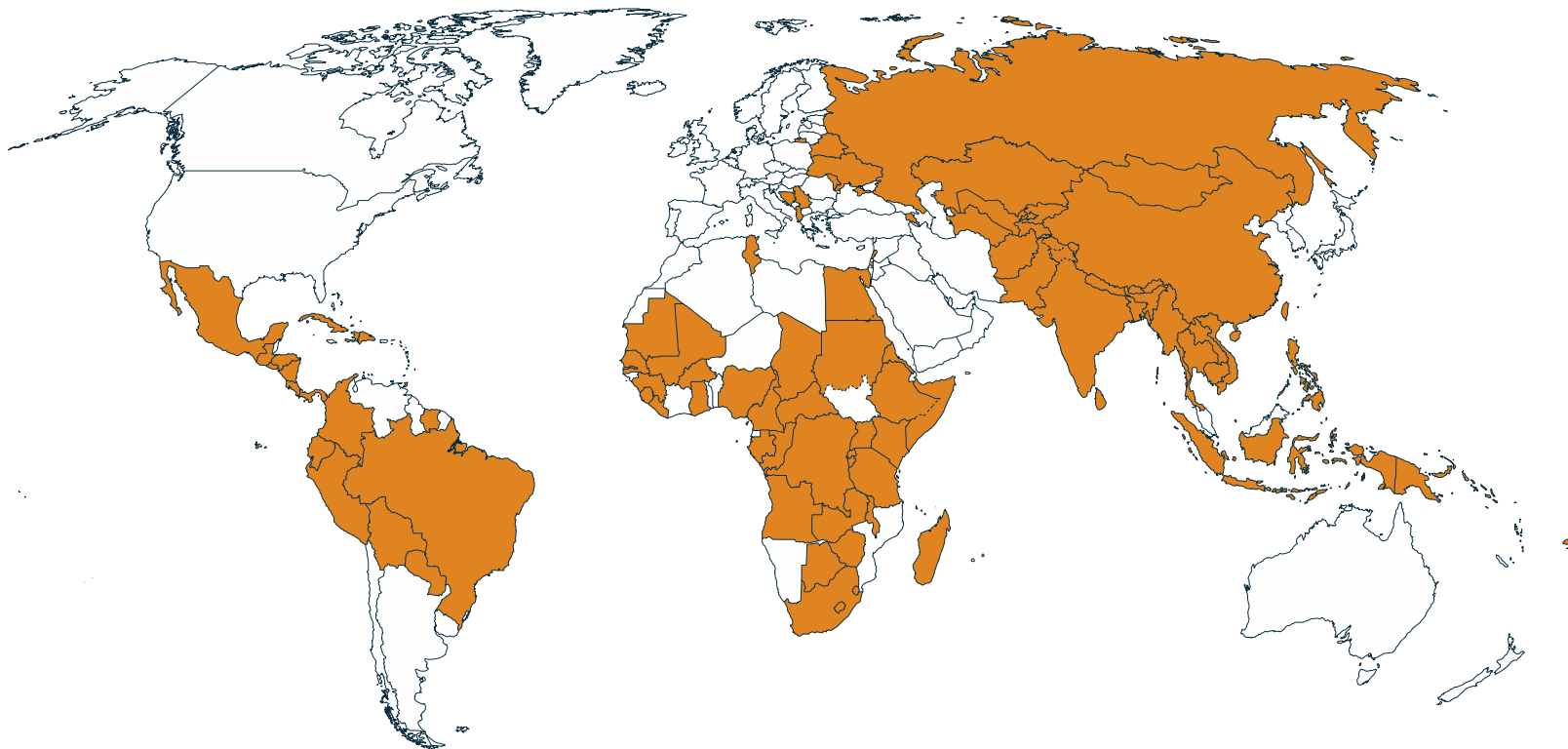EMPOWERMENT

FREEDOM FROM WANT

FREEDOM TO LIVE IN DIGNITY

# *What does this achieve?*

- ✓ **Provides a risk-informed perspective** by comprehensively assessing the level of threats (local, national, regional and/or global), their root causes and their manifestations on different human security components

- ✓ **Identifies interlinkages** (e.g., how a human security challenge might be due to  local, national, regional and/or global factors) and as a result calls for short, medium and long-term strategies that are proactive and preventive

- ✓ **Shows how a single threat can have** (and often has) **negative consequences** on different human security components

- ✓ **Assesses the stress level and proposes priority interventions** that are integrated and have the **highest multiplier impact** with tangible improvements in people's daily lives

- ✓ **Promotes multi-stakeholder partnerships** that build on **existing capacities** and **strengthen the resilience** of people and communities
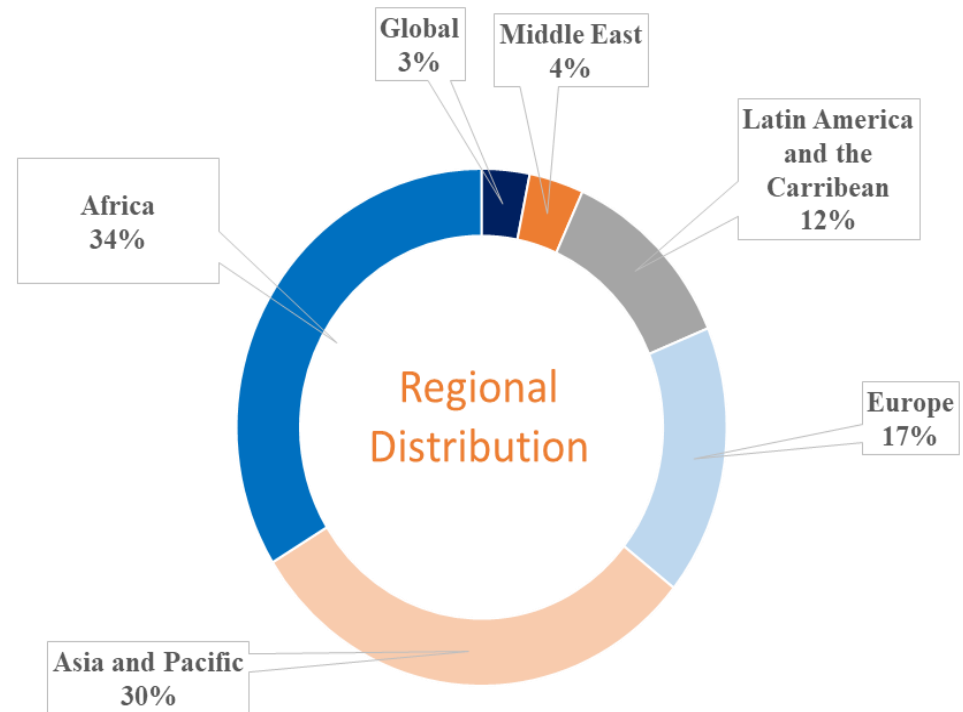
# HS in Action – UN Trust Fund for Human Security



*Since 1999, more 250 programmes have been funded in almost 100 countries worldwide.*

# *Overview of UNTFHS programming*

- To date, the Fund **finances activities** carried out **by the UN system**, in **partnership with others**, to **deliver comprehensive, integrated and preventive** responses to **complex** and **multidimensional challenges**

- UNTFHS programmes cut **across sectors**, are **grounded in local realities**, **address the root causes of needs and vulnerabilities**, **build resilience**, and **adopt multi-stakeholder partnerships**



Regional Distribution

- Global 3%
- Middle East 4%
- Latin America and the Carribean 12%
- Africa 34%
- Europe 17%
- Asia and Pacific 30%

- **Thirty-four percent (34%)** of the Fund's resources have supported programmes in Africa, including **multi-country** and **sub-regional** initiatives. These programmes address the intersections of **poverty and inequality, climate change and natural disasters, migration and displacement, conflict and violence**, among others.

# *Examples from the continent*

**Coastal West Africa –** Following an inclusive, multi-stakeholder Exchange Forum in Banjul in October 2019, the UNTFHS is working with national and local governments, local champions and the UN system in Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Senegal and Sierra Leone to **advance a new model for accelerating progress on the SDGs**.  By emphasizing comprehensive yet localized responses**, programmes will help design locally-led and nationally supported to fast-track SDG action within communities and provide the foundation and buy-in for replication and scale-up**.



**Minya, Upper Egypt -** The programme addressed the **underlying drivers of poverty and underdevelopment** by **establishing participatory planning forums** at the community level**, engaging the private sector in local development, expanding employment** and training **opportunities, particularly for women and youth, improving social services,** and **enhancing trust between national, district-level governments and local communities.** The programme is being replicated in other governates by the Government of Egypt.



**Turkana, Kenya -** The programme responded to the **nexus between climate change-migration-conflict-development** in Turkana by **strengthening climate-sensitive pastoral production systems and enhancing food security**, particularly among the most vulnerable; advancing skills **training in alternative livelihoods and expanding employment opportunities**; ensuring **access to basic health care**; improving access to **basic education for nomadic children and youth**, including girls; and, **fostering social cohesion, early warning and communal conflict management to prevent recurring resource-based conflicts.**

# Considerations for designing a policy index …

*How can the key characteristics of human security inform the development of the African Human Security Index, recognizing data and other constraints or limitations?*

- ✓ **Broad set of dimensions** – encompass the **totality of conditions** that can give rise to insecurity and crises in Africa across peace and security, socioeconomic development, and human rights and dignity (e.g. see Lusaka Roadmap)

- ✓ **Comprehensive** – consider how to integrate **existing data sources and tools** as relevant (e.g. early warning, AU Country Structural Vulnerability and Resilience Assessment, etc.)

- ✓ **Inclusive and localized** – **disaggregated** data (women, youth, persons with disabilities, etc.) at the local level, allowing for a nuanced understanding of differential need and vulnerabilities across groups

- ✓ **Needs and vulnerabilities** – For a **risk-informed**, forward-looking tool that can support planning across **short, medium and long-term** time horizons, consider both current status (need) and potential future insecurity (vulnerability)

- ✓ **Capacity gaps** – consider how to capture capacity gaps at institutional and local level to enable decision-making that supports **empowerment, capacity development** and **resilience**

- ✓ **Informed by people** – qualitative data and perspectives of communities, as feasible

# *Ultimately*, such an index can help

- ✓ Bring together the dimensions of **governance and human rights, peace and security, and socioeconomic development** (or the political, economic, social, environmental and legal dimensions of the Lusaka Roadmap)

- ✓ Guide the development of a **practical policy tool** at the national and local level (not comparison across countries) to **evaluate threats and risks**, **identify areas of stress, foresee emerging crises, analyze the causes of discord** and **propose targeted solutions**

- ✓ Such a tool can also support **capacity development** of institutions and facilitate political leadership on advancing Silencing the Guns initiative and Agenda 2063

- ✓ Encourage assessment and planning across **short, medium and long term** time horizons

- ✓ Facilitate **participation, inclusion and empowerment** of citizens

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