

As a preliminary framework for looking at this new landscape, participants suggested that the following could be considered core components of a human security lens.

- At its most basic, creating foreign policy through the lens of human security is to analyze how any foreign policy initiative either helps or hinders the security of a given people's lives and livelihoods. In any such analysis, there may be a distinction between what people subjectively feel they need to be secure and what an objective analysis of the roots of their insecurity would suggest. Human security should incorporate both of these threads: what people perceive to be threatening and an objective analysis of the sources of the threats to people's security.
- How people define their own security is critical. Different groups will conceive of security in different ways. Indeed one group's sense of security may be at the expense of another group. These conflicting perceptions must be factored in to the analysis of the appropriate action to be taken. Secondly, people's perceptions of insecurity often do not fit the traditional definitions of 'threat' or insecurity in foreign policy. Two recent surveys undertaken in Sri Lanka, and mentioned during the course of our discussions, illustrate this point. In ranking their concerns, displaced Sri Lankans named employment, water, education and food as their most pressing concerns. War ranked last. Thus traditional notions of military security were far from first on their list. Policy makers working with a 'human security' lens must, to the extent possible, encourage, consult, listen to and work with the people, to find out their perceptions of what would make their world more secure. Civil society is an important conduit for such an exchange of views between governments and the population at large.
- Conceptually and strategically, human security can usefully be linked to both human development and human rights. Ensuring one often serves the ends of the other. But while they overlap, they are not synonymous. Threats which may rank high in human security terms may be marginal to, or difficult to articulate in the language of, either of these other two humanitarian principles. On the other hand, including human rights as part of the human security agenda not only places the political impetus of human security into a long established international law tradition around human rights, but it provides an international foundation for challenging states which create insecurity for their own people.
- Human security highlights changing and/or contested conceptions of the relationship between 'security' and 'the state'. In particular, a militarized conception of state security grounded in the Cold War is being challenged. First, because many threats are non-military in either their source or solution. Second, because some forms of human insecurity are the direct result of actions taken by the military or state itself against its own population (internally displaced persons, human rights abuses and intra-state armed conflict).