



# Systems Transformation through Inclusive Leadership and Human Security


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Transformative change has occurred throughout human history. Revolutions, whether sudden or gradual, have altered the way we deal with the most fundamental issues of how we live, work and associate. The Agrarian revolution changed how we farm and feed ourselves. The Renaissance and the Enlightenment in Europe reshaped the way people in many regions across the world individually and collectively think. How we govern and organise society underwent radical change as a result of the French and American revolutions. How we make things, and how we work have been and are still being transformed by the Industrial and digital revolutions. The fall of dynasties and empires, shifts in the geopolitical order and even natural disasters have contributed to important step changes in our ways of viewing and dealing with the world.

In these booklets we set out ways of managing transformative or system change, using insights from behavioural and political science. We look particularly at how to respond to today's societal challenges, analyse the world around us and apply new methods that are relevant for business, government or everyday society.

These insights and methods are peaceful, constructive and reflective. They rely on inclusive leadership, developing better understandings, healthy conversations and practical solutions in place of dogmatic prescriptions for change. What they share above all is a grounding in people and their everyday lives. They put human beings squarely at the centre of system change, driving new ideas and practices. This might seem like a paradox but the approach in these booklets is that in order to change whole systems, you need concepts, processes, and methodologies which reflect the needs, aspirations and capacities of individuals and the way they act and react in the reality of daily life. You also need leaders that put ego aside and take the time to understand the various perspectives present in any issue or debate that arises. Even in the midst of a digital revolution and the increasing use of artificial intelligence, and machine learning, system change depends on people, to implement it. Moreover, if it is to work, this change must be designed and driven in ways that improve the quality of life and well-being of people. The insights in these courses are intended to enable and empower us as individuals and communities, not to feel helpless in the face of immense change, but to apply tools that can make us better authors of our own futures, better leaders and better team actors. The insights also aim to embolden us to be better leaders for the organisations and people we serve during our lives.



Each booklet describes a different perspective or lens for tackling challenges from climate change to artificial intelligence, conflict, sustainable development, diversity and inclusion, whether globally or at the local and individual level. Specifically, the insights within the booklets are based on behavioural science and human security. Behavioural science is an interdisciplinary field that seeks to understand, predict, and influence human behaviour. It serves as a lens through which we explore why individuals act as they do, shedding light on the puzzling question of why people may struggle to align their actions with their intentions. The behavioural science approach recognises the intricate factors shaping our decisions, acknowledging the presence of complexities, biases, and societal pressures that mould our choices. By focusing on these nuances, behavioural science plays a crucial role in dismantling barriers that perpetuate discrimination and exclusion. Professionals equipped with the ability to understand and change human behaviour can not only accelerate their own professional success but also contribute significantly to creating workplaces and communities that embrace diversity and inclusion. In this way, behavioural science becomes a vital force propelling positive change, both on an individual and societal level.

In contrast to behavioural science, Human security sets out an approach for system change with a macro lens. It describes a concept and methodology increasingly used by government, business and civil society actors to develop policies and strategies that tackle big problems such as migration, equitable development, poverty, ensuring a sustainable ecosystem and peace and justice, using a bottom-up, people-centred and holistic point of view. A human security approach requires organisations to think differently, in order to escape a traditional mindset where only government or financial interests matter, and consider how to solve problems in ways that are more durable and effective if they take into account how they impact people and their communities.

We very much hope you enjoy reading and learning the lessons contained in these booklets.

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# Human Security

## Putting people at the centre of system transformation

Human security is what people and communities need to lead safe and tolerable lives. It consists of three elements: freedom from fear, in other words physical safety, freedom from want, meaning that basic material needs are met, and dignity. Human security is not only an idea, it is also a methodology. This booklet explores what is meant by the term human security and how to move from traditional understandings of security to new ways of acting. It shows how to build a people-centred perspective into policymaking, business, investment and social action, in order to improve how we look at and respond to today's global challenges.

In 6 lessons, the booklet explains how human security has changed the way we think about important issues like conflict, poverty, natural and man-made crises and fragility, and how it is relevant to solving problems for governments, armed forces, development agencies, NGOs, company leaders and the financial world. It offers practical ways in which people-centred approaches can transform our ability to address major global and local issues of our time, from climate change to migration and the digital revolution.

The lessons include case studies, discussion topics and role plays to apply the insights of human security to real-life situations across multiple disciplines and spheres of decision-making. This course offers a critical-constructive look at what has been termed a new 'world-view', enabling students to assess the benefits and be aware of the difficulties involved in applying human security in place of traditional thinking.

**Lessons**

**1** What is human security?

**2** Moving from concept to policy:  
progress and pushbacks

**3** Human security in action:  
global agendas for change

**4** Human security and states

**5** Working collaboratively:  
businesses as key actors of human security

**6** Human security in the digital age – a people-centred  
approach to data and artificial intelligence

**Case studies**

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**The COVID pandemic: identifying inter-connected threats in a global crisis**

**2**

**Navigating a responsibility to protect.  
The emerging discourse of people-centred security**

**3**

**Applying a human security approach to tackle insecurity in Mexico**

**4**

**Human security and people in conflict /crisis:  
Ukraine and Gaza**

**5**

**Building Bridges: Business-Community Partnerships  
for Human Security in Colombia and Mexico**

**6**

**Online dialogues using Whatsapp to engage  
with Tunisian youth**



# What is human security?

## Session questions:

- What is human security?
- How is human security different from 'traditional' understandings of security?
- How and why did human security emerge as concept?
- How can the concept of human security help us face current social challenges?

## Session outline:

- 1 Introduction to lesson
- 2 Concept: what is human security?
- 3 Genesis: why did human security emerge?
  - a Shortcomings of 'traditional' security approaches
  - b United Nations origins



**Case study:** The Covid-19 pandemic's effect on people and communities

## 1.1 Introduction to lesson

This session introduces the concept of human security, how it emerged as a discourse and how it differs from traditional concepts of security. It proposes two class activities for students to start reflecting on the concept of “security” and the type of threats individuals face in their day to day lives. Human security is introduced as an approach to tackle the complex multidimensional security threats that we face today. The historical context for the emergence of the concept and approach are examined.<sup>1</sup>

## 1.2 Concept: what is human security?

Start lesson with [class activity 1](#) & [class activity 2](#)

Human security places individuals at the heart of issues of security the so-called ‘referent object of security’ and emphasises the need to consider the survival, livelihood and dignity of individuals as the fundamental basis for national, regional and international policies and action to support peace, stability and prosperity.

At its most basic level, human security recognises 3 freedoms to be fundamental to people’s lives and aspirations.

- Freedom from fear: Threats to the safety and the physical integrity of people (including all forms of violence).  
NB Violence can be structural as well as physical.
- Freedom from want: Threats to basic needs (i.e. economic, social and environmental aspects of life)
- Freedom to live in dignity: Threats which may be ‘symbolic’ or attack a person’s cultural or emotional life, also access to equal opportunities and social justice

To translate the 3 freedoms into measurable components, human security highlights 7 dimensions.

<sup>1</sup> See as a resource <https://www.unssc.org/courses/human-security-principles-practice-1>

# Dimensions of human security



## 1.3 Genesis: why human security?

### Shortcomings of 'traditional' security approaches

The concept of human security has been driven by the urgency to better respond to people's critical needs in a world of complex and multiple challenges that affect all aspects of their lives. Before the end of the Cold War, security in international relations meant the security of states. It was about defending territory and borders and using methods such as armed force or diplomacy. Violent events such as genocides in Rwanda and the wars of former Yugoslavia in the 1990s led to a rethinking of security in terms of how to protect people from different kinds of harms.

The concept of human security was first introduced in the 1994 Human Development Report entitled "New Dimensions of Human Security" published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The report was groundbreaking for arguing that the narrow focus on military concerns and state-centric security measures was insufficient to address the complex and interconnected challenges that individuals faced in the post-Cold War era. By introducing a holistic and people-centred perspective on development and security, it contributed to a paradigm shift in how policymakers and international organisations approached the challenges of the post-Cold War era, emphasising the interconnectedness of various issues affecting people globally. The Human Development Report positioned human security as distinct (but not mutually exclusive) from traditional security. The differences between both concepts are summarised below according to four criteria.

## Differences between 'traditional' Security and Human Security approaches

	Security	Human Security
<b>i. Primary referent objects</b>	Protection of states and their interest	Protection of individuals and communities
<b>ii. Scope of threats</b>	Conventional military threats	Wide range of threats, including non-traditional challenges such as poverty, disease, environmental disasters, violations of human rights and displacement
<b>iii. Approaches to security solutions</b>	States	Individuals
<b>iv. Decision-making actors</b>	States institutions, some international institutions (eg. United Nations Security Council, NATO)	Encourages an inclusive and collaborative approach involving various stakeholders, including governments, communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector, and international actors.

### **i. Primary referent objects**

- Traditional security focuses on the security and defence of the state. It emphasises protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nation against external threats.
- Human security shifts the focus from the state to the individual. It is concerned with safeguarding the well-being of people and communities.

### **ii. Scope of threats**

- Traditional security considers threats that are typically of a military or political nature, such as military aggression, terrorism, and geopolitical rivalries including nuclear proliferation. It tends to prioritize threats that directly impact the state's security and stability.
- Human security adopts a broader and more inclusive perspective on threats. It encompasses not only traditional security concerns but also non-traditional threats that directly affect individuals. These can include poverty, disease, environmental degradation, food insecurity, human rights violations, and displacement. The focus is on addressing the root causes of vulnerabilities that individuals, communities, and governments face.

### **iii. Approach to security solutions**

- Solutions in the traditional security framework often involve military means, diplomatic negotiations, and strategic alliances. Military capabilities, deterrence, and state-centric approaches are central to addressing security challenges.
- Solutions in the human security approach are more comprehensive and multidimensional. They involve social, economic, environmental, political and military strategies to address the root causes of insecurity. It emphasises a people-centred approach that seeks to enhance the well-being of individuals.

### **iv. Decision-making actors**

- Under the traditional security approach, decisions and actions are primarily taken by state entities. This can take place nationally or internationally in relevant fora such as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) or NATO.
- Human security encourages a more inclusive and collaborative approach involving various stakeholders, including governments, communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs, CBOs, etc), the private sector and international actors.

## United Nations origins

In 2002, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan spoke about 'problems without passports'. This means that many of the complex challenges we face today spill over national borders. Issues like global terrorism, pandemics, climate change and migration flows are not susceptible to traditional state security solutions. By focusing on individuals and communities and their everyday experiences, human security seeks to address both the root causes and the consequences of these new types of problems, which not only harm people but also destabilise societies as a whole.

With [General Assembly resolution 66/290 \(2012\)](#), Member States agreed by consensus that human security is an approach to assist them in identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood and dignity of their people.

The resolution put forward a common understanding on the notion of human security, which includes the following:

- The right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. All individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential;
- Human security calls for people-centered, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented responses that strengthen the protection and empowerment of all people and all communities;
- Human security requires greater collaboration and partnerships among governments, international and regional organizations and civil society.

The added value of human security:

- It focuses on the root causes of these insecurities and emphasises prevention so threats and insecurities do not undo years of development or generate conditions within which grievances can escalate.
- It recognizes that no country can enjoy development without security, security without development, and neither without respect for human rights.

## 1.4 Class activity 1



### Class activity 1

## Word cloud – what does security mean to you?

Use an online tool (eg. survey monkey / kahoot / menti) for students to submit words to create a word cloud around the following question: what does security mean to you? What comes to mind when you picture the word 'security' in your daily lives?

Discuss the words that appear in the word cloud keeping in mind the following learning outcomes:

- When thinking of security, people often focus on 'traditional' understandings of security which has often been associated with the protection of states and their interests. It tends to prioritise the defense against external military threats, territorial integrity, and the stability of political institutions. The focus is on state-centric concerns such as national defence and sovereignty. Words that come up the most are likely to be associated with this understanding.
- When asked what security means, people consider a broad range of issues of importance to their daily lives. Students are likely to submit words that relate to a range of threats, including non-traditional challenges such as poverty, disease, environmental disasters, and violations of human rights.



## 1.5 Class activity 2



### Class activity 2

## Map out potential security threats

Ask students to take a few minutes individually to think about different threats that individuals around the world may face and that may impact their livelihoods and security.

**Tip:** Ask students to put themselves in different people's shoes around the world as different individuals are likely to face different threats.

**Types of threats:** Conflict; Climate change; Hunger; Disease; Financial crisis etc.

Map out the different threats identified by the students and discuss keeping in mind the following learning outcomes:

- In addition to more “traditional security threats” linked to violent conflict, the world now faces relatively new types of threats. Emerging security threats include the rise of cyber threats, the potential misuse of advanced technologies, the challenges posed by climate change, and the increased prominence of non-state actors and hybrid warfare tactics.
- Not only have the number of threats multiplied but because of our interconnected world, they spread faster and wider than ever before
- These threats are multidimensional and together threaten the core of our human security. They often transcend traditional borders and demand innovative and cooperative approaches to address the evolving nature of security challenges
- The human security approach offers a people-centred perspective and methodology to confront these complex threats that people and their communities experience in every-day life.

## 1.6 Group activity



### Group-based activity

## 7 dimensions of human security

Divide the class in 7 groups, assign each group one dimension of human security. Give each group 5 minutes to come up with 4 examples of situations that illustrate how 'their dimension' links to other dimensions of human security. Go around the classroom asking each group to present one example at a time.

**Learning outcome:** For people in crisis and extreme poverty, acting on single issues is not enough. Insecurities must be tackled together, comprehensively. Only then will people begin to feel safe in all aspects of their lives, only then will they enjoy human security.

## 1.7 Case study



### Practice/Case study

## The COVID-19 Pandemic:

## identifying inter-connected threats in a global crisis

#### Context:

- In early 2020, a previously unknown virus causing COVID-19 spread rapidly across the globe, threatening people's lives and putting nations and the global system under unprecedented stress.
- The pandemic demonstrated how a health crisis can rapidly turn into an economic and social crisis, with far-reaching consequences for societies, nations and regions.
- COVID-19, by threatening lives and devastating social and economic systems, has exposed fundamental weaknesses in the availability of and access to quality healthcare, as well as systems of social protection and preparedness.
- As with most crises, those already in vulnerable situations and least able to withstand shocks endured the brunt of the pandemic.
- For people in crisis, acting on a single issue is not enough. Vulnerabilities must be tackled together.

#### A Human security approach:

- Seen through the eyes of a person, COVID-19 reminds us to redouble our efforts to prevent and mitigate shocks that can have devastating consequences on people's survival, livelihood and dignity – on their sense of human security.
- It requires us to consider how health crises can overwhelm economic systems and destroy livelihoods with knock-on effects on every aspect of human security.
- It promotes a combination of protection and empowerment measures that improve early warning and preparedness, strengthen healthcare systems, mobilize and educate the public, and shield those most vulnerable.
- And, human security emphasises that securing people in the face of complex threats can only happen through multilateral cooperation and national partnerships that bring together diverse actors from governments, academia, civil society and the private sector.

## Moving from concept to policy: progress and pushbacks

### Session questions:

- How has the concept of human security spread and been embraced by various actors such as United Nations agencies, regional organisations, states, and NGOs, and what impact has this had on policy development and implementation?
- What role did the emergence of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle play in reshaping notions of sovereignty and state responsibility for protecting civilians from mass atrocities?
- What are some of the main critiques and challenges to the human security concept, including issues related to its definition, resource allocation, operationalisation, etc.?

### Session outline:

- 1 Introduction to lesson
- 2 The global reach of human security: adoption and impact across the globe
  - c United Nations agencies
  - d Regional organisations such as the European Union, African Union
  - e Individual states
  - f NGOs
- 7 Human security's influence on international practices; the emergence and evolution of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.
- 8 Complexities and critiques: conceptual and practical challenges

## 2.1 Introduction to lesson

Human security is not a standalone international legal framework, but the concept has been embraced by policy makers governments, international organisations, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), who have used it to inspire significant and thought-provoking policy initiatives. This session introduces the idea of ‘norms’ in international politics and behaviour.

In the field of international relations, a “norm” typically refers to a widely accepted standard or principle that guides the behaviour of states and other actors in the international system. Human security is an example of an emerging norm. This lesson presents how different actors have translated the norm into policy.

- How have notions of sovereignty and state responsibility for protecting civilians changed to enable people-centred security?
- What is R2P and how does it differ significantly from human security?
- What are some of the main critiques and challenges faced by the human security concept, including issues related to its definition, resource allocation, operationalisation, and potential unintended consequences such as military intervention?



## 2.2 The global reach of human security: adoption and impact across the globe

### a. United Nations agencies

The incorporation of human security into the United Nations' mandate reflects a shift in the understanding of global challenges, and the role of the international organisation. In 1999, the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan presented the report "We the Peoples: The Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century" to renew the vision and priorities of the UN for the 21st century. This paved the way for the concept to be incorporated into various aspects of the UN's work, documents and discussions. The influence of the human security concept on the United Nations' work is unmistakable, evident in the Sustainable Development Goals, the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and resilience efforts vis-à-vis climate change, natural disasters and displacement, pandemics, future of cities and information technology.

As the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and later the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) signalled a dedication to addressing the broader well-being of individuals, acknowledging that economic development and social development are mutually reinforcing. This understanding is mirrored in the policies and programmes of various UN agencies, including UNDP, UNICEF, UN Women, and IOM as they actively address cross-cutting issues such as poverty, education, health, gender equality, climate change, displacement and human rights.

Equally, human security significantly impacted UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. It brought attention to the imperative to end humanitarian crises and strengthen the implementation of the humanitarian-development-peace-nexus.



## b. Regional organisations

The European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU) , to name a few, adopted the concept of human security early on and made it a guiding principles for key policies across a wide array of policy areas.

Human security became an important aspect of European foreign and security policy, setting it apart from traditional state-centric approaches. The European Security Strategy (ESS) of 2003 and later the 2016 Global Strategy provide a framework for understanding and addressing the security environment faced by the EU, outlining a distinctively 'human security' oriented approach to the EU's security challenges. These documents recognise the varied and evolving nature of threats (e.g. hybrid threats, cybersecurity challenges, climate change, migration) and place emphasis on the comprehensive nature of responses to these security threats. Human security principles also guide EU policy in other fields. Its approach to humanitarian aid and development assistance for instance is centred on addressing root causes of insecurity by focusing on issues such as poverty reduction, healthcare, education and social well-being. The EU is also a significant actor in global health initiatives combatting infectious diseases and promoting public health in a way that supports health security. The African Union began its road to establishing human security across the continent after 2001, when the AU replaced the Organization of African Unity. The AU human security agenda in the areas of peace and security is clearly expressed in the Constitutive Act (CA) of the African Union. The Act empowers the Union to intervene in the affairs of a member state in order to 'prevent war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity' (Tieku, 2007). In order to facilitate this, the AU established the African Standby Force (ASF). Later, the AU included the African Human Security Index (AHSI) in its vision 2063 (published in May 2023) and its goal to silencing the guns so that sustainable development will be the main priority of the continent.

### **See also:**

For other regional applications of human security see:

<https://www.un.org/humansecurity/global-and-regional-programme/regional-programmes/>

How NATO applies the human security idea to its work as a military alliance:

[https://www.nato.int/cps/ua/natohq/topics\\_181779.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/ua/natohq/topics_181779.htm)

### c. States

Prominent examples of countries which implement a human security policy at the national level are Canada and Japan. Smaller countries such as Costa Rica, Austria and Switzerland have also advanced human security often through groupings such as the 'Group of Friends of Human Security'. ([https://www.un.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr\\_en/pressreleases\\_041223.html](https://www.un.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/pressreleases_041223.html)) Supporters states base their foreign policy on the human security concept, but with important differences. For example Canada, with its Human Security Agenda, paving the way for signing a treaty on banning landmines, tried to position itself as the world leader in this area (Hampson, 2012). The Canadian concept of human security focuses on solving conflicts and providing support for peacekeeping operations. This is so called 'hard human security' with the emphasis on freedom from fear. Although very influential in Canadian policy at the time, the government since scaled back on its commitment to human security policies in favour of supporting the US Global War on Terror after 9/11.

Japan has a holistic approach to human security. It does not separate freedom from fear and freedom from want, but due to its post WW2 history focuses on the development aspects of human security.

### NGOs

A large number of **non-governmental organisations** working internationally dealing with human rights, in an indirect way provide support for human security. Some of the most prominent international NGOs are: **Amnesty International, International Alert, Anti-Slavery International, CARE, Human Rights Watch, International Committee of the Red Cross – ICRC, Save the Children.**

In parallel with the establishment of organisations and funds involved in the promotion of human security, or indirectly contributing to the achievement of human security, there have been initiatives on the definition of instruments that will be important to implement HS programmes on the ground.



## 2.3 Class activity 1



### Class activity 1

## How is the EU Global Strategy inspired by a distinctively human security approach? Has this approach evolved in the past two decades?

#### Preparation:

Divide students into groups. Assign the following readings:

- All groups: A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy 2016
- Group 1: European Security Strategy 2003
- Group 2: A Human Security Doctrine for Europe 2004 (Barcelona Report)
- Group 3: The European Way of Security 2013 (Madrid Report)

#### In class:

- Ask students to identify how each policy relates to the fundamental principles or one of the eight dimensions of human security
- Ask students to identify how the 2016 document reflects the others
- Discuss these findings in class and debate which policy is most 'human security' inspired

Continued on next page

Some components of the ESS that relate to a human security approach include:

- **Comprehensive security approach:** The ESS emphasised a comprehensive understanding of security that goes beyond traditional military considerations. It recognised that security threats include not only armed attacks but also other challenges such as terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, and failed states.
- **Preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention:** The strategy underscores the importance of preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention. It emphasises addressing the root causes of conflicts before they escalate and become more difficult to manage.
- **Effective multilateralism:** The ESS highlights the EU's commitment to effective multilateralism, emphasising the role of international institutions and cooperation in addressing global challenges. It promotes a rules-based international order and collaboration with international partners.
- **Economic and Social Development:** The strategy recognises the connection between security and economic and social development. It highlights the need for policies that address poverty, inequality, and social injustice as part of the broader security agenda.
- **Global Challenges:** The strategy addresses global challenges such as climate change, pandemics, and organised crime. It emphasises the interconnectedness of these challenges and the need for collective action to address them.

## 2.4 Class activity 2



### Class activity 2

## Debate - Are human security principles reflected in the EU's foreign security actions?

- Based on students knowledge of current affairs, debate whether students believe the principles present in the EU's security policy documents studied during class activity 1 are reflected in the EU's security initiatives in the last few years
- The debate can be structured around different issues that the 2016 Global Strategy identifies as "threats" such as migration, climate change, terrorism, cybersecurity threats etc.

## 2.5 Human security's influence on international practices

In the 1990s, the inability of the international community to reach consensus on the appropriate response to humanitarian crises before the loss of an enormous amount of life led to catastrophes including genocide in Somalia in 1993, Rwanda in 1994, and Srebrenica in 1995. This highlighted the need for a well-defined, internationally accepted, and coherent set of parameters to guide the effective international response to imminent or occurring mass atrocity crimes. As different actors gradually adopted the concept of human security, a shift was prompted away from considering security as a strictly state bound concern to considering the security and well-being of individuals throughout the world, challenging the notion of absolute state sovereignty. In this context, the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle developed as an emerging body of soft law. It sets out states' responsibility to protect their own citizens and, where this responsibility is not met, the international community is mandated to intervene to prevent genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity.



The Outcome Document of the 2005 United Nations World Summit (A/RES/60/1, para. 138-140) and the Secretary-General's 2009 Report (A/63/677) on Implementing the Responsibility to Protect laid out the three fundamental pillars of R2P:

- 1 The State carries the primary responsibility for protecting populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing, and their incitement;
- 2 The international community has a responsibility to encourage and assist States in fulfilling this responsibility;
- 3 The international community has a responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other means to protect populations from these crimes. If a State is manifestly failing to protect its populations, the international community must be prepared to take collective action to protect populations, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

R2P was most prominently invoked in Libya in 2011 as the UN Security Council authorised the use of force to protect civilians from the threat of violence (see Case Study). However, the application of R2P remains a controversial issue, highlighting the challenges in striking a balance between the imperative to safeguard civilians with the principles of state sovereignty on the international stage. Since then, human security has diverged from R2P as stated in the UN General Assembly Resolution 66/290 in 2012. This embedded human security as a new norm in international relations while distinguishing it from the responsibility to protect and its implementation.

## 2.6 Critiques and complexities: challenges and controversies surrounding human security

The concept of human security, in broadening the scope of security beyond traditional military considerations, has faced significant critiques. Scholars such as Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver criticise its vagueness, due to its breadth, from economic inequality to environmental issues, the lack of a universally accepted definition (particularly prior to the UN General Assembly Resolution of 2012) and the fact that, because it is not codified in law, is not tied to any form of sanction or action mandate. Critics, can therefore point to the fact that it is not accompanied by specific resource allocation and operationalisation, emphasising the difficulty of translating broad human security principles into concrete policies and measurable actions. Others have raised concerns about an alleged overemphasis on military intervention, with Michael Ignatieff (the Canadian scholar reflecting particularly on the 'hard human security' variant adopted by Canada) cautioning against the potential use of human security to justify external interventions. Other scholars, including Thomas G. Weiss and David Chandler, claim that the concept allows the application of security techniques to human beings and their bodies as a sinister invasion of individual rights and privacies. The lack of consensus and failure to agree a set of uniform human security indicators further complicates efforts to assess progress and effectiveness in enhancing human security.

## 2.7 Case study



### Case study

## The emergence of new norms: From R2P to human security

In Libya in 2011, the R2P principle played a significant role during the civil unrest and armed conflict that occurred as part of the wider Arab Spring uprisings. The situation in Libya escalated as protesters demanded political reforms, and the government responded with violent crackdowns. Concerns grew about the potential for mass atrocities, leading to international intervention.

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed Resolution 1973 in March 2011, authorizing the use of force to protect civilians in Libya. This resolution was framed within the R2P framework, with the goal of preventing further harm to the civilian population. The intervention included airstrikes and other military measures to enforce a no-fly zone and protect civilians from attacks by forces loyal to the Libyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi.

While the intervention received international support, it also sparked controversy. Critics argued that the military intervention went beyond the initially stated goal of protecting civilians and resulted in regime change, contributing to the destabilization of the region. The case of Libya in 2011 highlights both the potential and challenges associated with implementing the Responsibility to Protect principle in complex geopolitical situations.

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### **Protection of Civilians:**

- The R2P principle guided military intervention in Libya with a primary focus on protecting civilians from the risk of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity.

### **Controversies and Criticisms:**

- The intervention in Libya also faced criticism, with concerns that the mission expanded beyond the initially stated goal of civilian protection and ventured into regime change.
- The intervention's outcomes led to ongoing instability and challenges in post-conflict governance, raising questions about the long-term impact on the human security of the Libyan population, suggesting that R2P had undermined the goal of protecting individuals.

Although R2P shows the shift in international security away from states to individuals, it became seen as not merely separate from human security, but at odds with it.

# Human security in action: global agendas for change

## Session questions:

- What does the concept of human security look like in real life?
- What are the core principles of human security action, and how do they inform the design, implementation, and evaluation of policies and programs?
- How does the application of human security principles in real-world contexts, such as the case study in Mexico, challenge traditional top-down approaches to security policy and development initiatives?

## Session outline:

- 1 Introduction to lesson
- 2 A human security framework: five principles of action
- 3 The sustainable development goals: human security in action



**Case study:** applying a human security approach to tackle insecurity in Mexico



### 3.1 Introduction to lesson

This lesson looks at human security as a methodology for action that can help rethink how we advance peace and sustainable development in practice. In today's complex global landscape, traditional approaches to security and development often fail because they do not take enough account of how people experience insecurity, fragility and poverty. This lesson sets out five human security principles of action and shows how these principles create a framework for changing practices of development and peacebuilding. The case study looks at an initiative in Mexico where these principles are being used to transform multidimensional insecurity and come up with workable local, context-specific solutions.

Start the lesson by playing the following video which introduces how to put human security in practice: <https://www.unssc.org/sites/default/files/M1/index.html#/lessons/-eTlzZlNyMZVW9o01ed7PtsmSkbRa-vn>

### 3.2 A human security framework: four principles of action

Human security offers a framework to overcome some of the most difficult deficits in peace and development by advancing joined-up, coherent action to achieve the transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related global agendas such as Agenda for Humanity, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, Global Compact on Refugees, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and twin Resolutions on Sustaining Peace.

From an operational perspective, the human security approach aims to address complex challenges through collaborative, responsive and sustainable protection and empowerment measures that are people-centered, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented.



### **Principal I: In practice, being people-centred means**

- Placing the individual at the centre of analysis and action
- Being informed by the perspectives of individuals/communities
- Being committed to inclusiveness and meaningful participation: people are not engaged solely as beneficiaries but also as agents of change
- Disaggregating data to allow for a nuanced understanding of differential vulnerabilities across groups and particularly of those left furthest behind (Leave No One Behind principle)
- Emphasising empowerment, capacity building and resilience as both objectives and means
- Evaluating impact and measuring success based on outcomes for people (that is actual improvements in aspects of their daily lives)

### **Principal II: In practice, being comprehensive means**

- Considering the full range of challenges facing communities and governments (8 dimensions of human security)
- Unpacking how the various challenges are interconnected and trying to find entry points that have potential for positive multiplier effects across dimensions and levels (local, national, regional, global), while avoiding negative consequences (Do No Harm principle)
- Considering actors at different levels (local, national, regional, global) and in different sectors (public, private, civil society, etc.) that may need to be involved in different ways (advocacy, implementation, coordination, etc.) according to their strengths and mandates (that is, their comparative advantage)
- Seeking integrated solutions based on strong partnerships and common objective settings (collective outcomes)

### **Principal III: In practice, being context-specific means**

- Taking the context as the starting point of analysis (from the ground up) and treating contextual factors as essential information
- Situating the local in its broader context to understand the unique characteristics of the local and its dynamic interaction with national, regional and even global factors
- Identifying capacities, assets and resources at the local level and leverage them

#### Principal IV: In practice, being prevention-oriented means

- Considering both needs and vulnerabilities (that is both people's current and potential status and exposure) for proactive measures and early warning in order to avert downside risks and mitigate their impacts from escalating across insecurities
- Anticipating risks and addressing root causes of the insecurities to the extent possible to ensure sustainability
- Adopting a long-term view to tackle structural and behavioural conditions for insecurity
- Addressing gaps in the protection and empowerment infrastructure (e.g. policies not being enforced, weak community engagement in early warning systems, etc.)
- Building resilience to avoid or mitigate future shocks

#### Principal V: In practice, protection and empowerment means

- Enabling people to participate in making choices about how they can be most secure, now and over the longer term.
- Making people active participants in development and security, not just passive beneficiaries of others' initiatives
- Creating norms and institutions that guarantee basic protections of human progress and safety, such as through good governance, rule of law, early warning mechanisms and social protection schemes

The 5 principles are mutually reinforcing and must be applied together as each component alone does not constitute the human security approach. Together they guide the application of human security in analysing, designing, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating policies and programmes.



### 3.3 The Sustainable Development Goals: Human security in action

The principles of “freedom from want”, “freedom from fear”, and “freedom to live in dignity” inherent in the human security approach are integral to the development agenda outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals.

These principles underscore the importance of addressing not only the absence of violence but also the broader conditions necessary for individuals to lead dignified lives, free from deprivation and discrimination.

Recent peace and development practices – particularly the development agenda outlined in the 17 – [Sustainable Development Goals](#) emphasise the protection and empowerment of individuals including through collaborative initiatives. By prioritising the well-being, safety and dignity of individuals, through addressing freedom from want and the right to live in dignity this approach seeks to address the root causes of deficits in peace, development, and human rights while promoting inclusivity, and fostering international cooperation. The SDG agenda has been called the prime example of human security in action, bridging between development, humanitarian aid and peacebuilding.



## 3.4 Case study



### Practice/Case study

## Applying a human security approach to tackle insecurity in Mexico

This case study exemplifies the application of human security principles in addressing complex issues of violence and insecurity. Contrary to traditional top-down approaches, the study recognises the multiplicity and interconnected nature of threats to well-being and human rights. By helping residents articulate what was wrong in their daily lives, the human security approach identified different sets of priorities for action. Involving local communities in the co-creation of Human Security Local Agendas, the approach not only acknowledged the specific and diverse insecurities faced by individuals but also empowered them to actively participate in defining and implementing solutions.

Mexico is a country where there has been an upsurge in violence since 2009-10. Judged by the number of homicides the country has been experiencing more conflict than other places traditionally seen as at war such as Afghanistan.

A study by a group of LSE researchers in 2016-18 found the situation was more complex than drug violence, and fights between cartels which are usually blamed for high levels of killings, abductions and extortion. Instead, people experience multiple insecurities and types of violence in a context of growing criminal economies, corruption and impunity. This issue cannot be resolved with a unidimensional security policy. In fact, in many Mexican cities, the use of military force by bringing the army or militarised police in to deal with cartels, simply made the situation worse. The human security approach requires recognising the threats, risks, anxieties and fears that affect individual and community well-being and rights in everyday situations, and how people try to defend and protect themselves. Human security captures this interconnection and multiplicity of threat in Mexico, creating not only actual victims but a whole population which is perpetually vulnerable.

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The researchers working with local people created human security agendas for action in 4 Mexican cities across the country. They analysed the problem and possible solutions “from below”, i.e. from the perspectives of those who experience violence and insecurity. In each city they worked with women -young and old-, youths -within and outside academic environments-, adult men, and some members of civil and religious associations. This allowed them to create together with the people, a diagnosis of the problems that affect their human security, to identify ideas and proposals to address them, and to set priorities for action, which residents could either undertake themselves or which could become the basis for local and federal government policy. These action lists were recorded in Human Security Local Agendas.

The agendas are a different way of understanding insecurity and pave the way for a ‘co-construction’ of solutions, actively involving and empowering the people who are most affected by the problems identified. Although the agendas showed common patterns to insecurity in Mexico, at the same time they were very specific and local. The agendas allowed local people to own the problems and its solution, not feel as though they were simply targets or victims of the violence, or passive beneficiaries in attempts to solve it.

The agendas represented a different path and process for security policy and development initiatives than traditional top-down action by politicians and aid agencies. This example illustrates that different social sectors can offer important contributions to national debates on security.

See: Abello-Colak, Alexandra and Pearce, Jenny (2018) [Security from below in contexts of chronic violence](#). IDS Bulletin, 49 (1A). pp. 11-19. ISSN 0265-5012

## 3.5 Class activity



### Class activity

## Migration and human security solutions

Global migration flows have reached historic levels, fuelled by conflict, political upheavals and overwhelmingly by people's search for improved livelihoods, and an escape from poverty.

In this exercise, divide into 3 groups:

- 1 Migrants (choose a region e.g. from sub-Saharan Africa into Europe; from Asia to Europe, central and south America into the US)
- 2 Policymakers
- 3 Local (indigenous) residents

First, each group after discussion among themselves sets out their analysis of the challenge to the whole class – e.g. the migrants say why they want to leave their own country and settle in country or region X; the policymakers say how they will react to this tide of migration; local residents identify their concerns and priorities.

Secondly, in each group relate this situation to the human security principles. What might a solution look like in terms of the human security approach? Use these questions to guide your discussion:

- What kind of migration is this – what are migrants fleeing from and to?
- What are their needs? How might they contribute to the destination country. Who should be involved in finding a solution?

## Human security and states

### Session questions:

- What are a state's responsibilities for human security?
- How does human security differ from human rights?
- How does human security come into play during inter-state conflict? How can human security guide approaches to reconstruction?

### Session outline:

- 1 Introduction to lesson
- 2 States' Responsibility for Human Security
- 3 Human security and human rights



## 4.1 Introduction to lesson

Norms such as international humanitarian law ( the laws of war) and international human rights legislation have highlighted the responsibility of states in protecting their citizens, but also setting out provisions for what the international system could and should do to enforce the protection of civilians when their own government fails. Central to this idea is the question of who holds the primary responsibility for ensuring human security. Traditionally, this responsibility has been attributed to national governments. Security is usually seen as a public good, something that everyone has access to, and which is not subject to competition between those who enjoy or consume it. Other examples include clean air or street lighting. This lesson explores the role of states in providing the public good of human security, for national, regional and global security, examining how states deliver human security, comparing these responsibilities with those under human rights frameworks, and using a case study of Ukraine to illustrate the application of human security principles in the case of crisis or conflict.

## 4.2 States' responsibility for human security

At the heart of the human security paradigm lies the well-being and safety of people. In the relationship between governments and citizens, states have a responsibility to ensure this, including going beyond traditional notions of national security, to include aspects of material wellbeing. This is captured in the idea of the welfare state and social safety nets. States are the first line in the protection and empowerment of people. Comprehensive and integrated responses to ensuring human security begin at the state level. However, human security, like human rights, is a 'universalist' concept. This means that every person, whatever their nationality, creed, race , culture or gender, is owed a duty of protection and care by virtue of their humanness. This means that responsibility for human security extends beyond the borders of states particularly where these fail in their duties, and where the threats to people cross borders and national territory.

States can deliver human security through various means, including:

- Legislative measures: Governments enact laws and policies to protect individuals from threats such as violence, poverty, disease, and environmental degradation.
- Security provision: States maintain law enforcement agencies and security forces to ensure the safety of their citizens from internal and external threats.
- Social welfare programmes: Governments implement social welfare programmes to address socio-economic vulnerabilities, such as unemployment, homelessness, and lack of access to healthcare and education.
- Diplomacy and international cooperation: States engage in diplomacy and international cooperation to address transnational threats and promote peace and stability regionally and globally.

### 4.3 Human security and human rights

While few states have human security policies or indicators in place, human rights policies have gained increasing prominence over the past three decades, with various measures enacted to safeguard individual liberties, such as protections for employees, laws combating human trafficking, and legislation promoting diversity and inclusion to combat gender discrimination.

Human security and human rights represent distinct yet interconnected approaches to addressing issues of individual well-being and protection. It is important to consider the differences between the two in order to develop more comprehensive and effective strategies for promoting and protecting human well-being.

Human security and human rights differ in their scope, focus, the nature of threats they consider and the responsibilities of non-state actors.



- **Scope:** the human security approach adopts a broader and more inclusive perspective, addressing a wide range of threats beyond traditional security concerns. Conversely, the human rights approach focuses specifically on protecting and promoting fundamental rights and freedoms, such as civil and political rights (e.g. freedom of speech, right to a fair trial) and economic, social, and cultural rights (e.g. right to education, right to health).
- **Preventive vs. Remedial Focus:** the human security approach emphasises preventive measures to address the root causes of insecurity, aiming to prevent crises and protect individuals from harm before situations escalate. Conversely, the human rights approach often takes a remedial focus, seeking to address violations that have already occurred. While preventive measures are essential, human rights mechanisms often come into play after rights have been infringed, advocating for justice, accountability, and redress.
- **Nature of threats:** human security recognises a diverse array of threats, encompassing both traditional and non-traditional sources of insecurity, such as poverty, environmental disasters, and pandemics. In contrast, the human rights approach primarily addresses threats emanating from state actions, such as actively violating individuals' or communities' rights through torture or discrimination, and state failures to take steps to progressively realise people's basic economic, social and cultural rights by providing free education for instance.
- **Responsibilities for Non-State Actors:** at its core, the human security approach acknowledges the role of non-state actors, including businesses, communities, and international organisations, in ensuring security. States are not solely responsible and multi-stakeholder approaches are emphasised. In contrast, human rights obligations have traditionally been primarily linked to state actions, with states held responsible for protecting rights within their jurisdiction. However, this approach is evolving with the unanimous endorsement of United Nations Guiding Principles of Business and Human Rights by the UN Human Rights Council in June 2011, which established businesses' responsibility to respect human rights and highlighted the importance of corporate accountability in safeguarding human dignity. This recognition signifies a shift towards a more multi-stakeholder approach to human rights, acknowledging the role of non-state actors, particularly businesses, in upholding human rights standards. As a result, there is a growing emphasis on promoting corporate social responsibility and encouraging businesses to integrate human rights considerations into their operations and supply chains.

## 4.4 Case study



### Practice/Case study

## Human security and people in conflict /crisis: Ukraine and Gaza

The two major conflicts of 2022-2024, Ukraine and Gaza demonstrated the overwhelming threats to people in terms of the three pillars of human security: freedom from fear, want and dignity. Violations of human rights and the breaking of the laws of conflict (International Humanitarian Law) may eventually provide avenues for redress and remedy to those affected. Humanitarian assistance is being provided and sought in both conflicts in an attempt to alleviate suffering. Between the immediate (humanitarian) and the potential long-term response through human rights and law of conflict prosecutions, how can we understand and address conflicts like Ukraine and Gaza from a human security perspective, where the individual state responsibility to ensure security is inadequate or impossible?

When Russia invaded Ukraine the war was presented as an example of traditional inter-state violent conflict where Russia's goals were:

- The acquisition of territory
- the suppression of Ukrainian sovereignty
- and seizure of state resources.

The classic form of warfare, as defined by the Uppsala Conflict Data Center, the world's leading source of information on battle-related deaths, is: *'a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in one calendar year.'*

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Where the Ukraine-Russia war deviates from this understanding – and thus is a **human security conflict** -is through the deliberate targeting by Russia of civilian infrastructure, the harming of non-combatant civilian populations and population displacement as tools of war.

This case study illustrates how human insecurity can be leveraged to prosecute a war of aggression to weaken a state. It also shows how human security can guide a state's efforts to recover from conflict as a state seeks to rebuild.

### **Dimensions I: Russia's use of insecurity to prosecute the war against Ukraine**

Human security can form a central element of an inter-state conflict where an aggressor state – in this case Russia – leverages the fear, material needs and dignity of non-combatant individuals to weaken its enemy. Amnesty International has documented many of the violations of human rights and international humanitarian law which it is claimed Russia has perpetrated in Ukraine. Some examples of how human insecurity has been used by Russia to prosecute the war include:

- The Bucha massacre: in March 2022, Russian armed forces committed mass murder of Ukrainian civilians and prisoners of war during the fight for and occupation of the city of Bucha, north of Kyiv. According to local authorities, 458 bodies have been recovered from the town, including 9 children under the age of 18; among the victims. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights documented the unlawful killings, including summary executions, of at least 73 civilians in Bucha.
- Child abductions: Media reports in the US and UK have documented cases of Ukrainian children who have been abducted by Russia after their parents had been arrested by Russian occupation authorities or killed in the invasion, or after becoming separated from their parents in an active war zone. Children have also been abducted from Ukrainian state institutions in occupied areas, and through children's "summer camps" on Russian territory. The abducted children have been subject to Russification; raising children of war in a foreign nation and culture may constitute an act of genocide if intended to erase their national identity.
- The Kakhova Dam destruction: The Kakhovka Dam in Ukraine was breached by Russia on 6 June 2023 causing extensive flooding along the lower Dnipro river, leading to loss of farmland and livelihoods and creating an environmental disaster.

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## Dimension II: The potential role of human security in guiding reconstruction efforts

As human security is often targeted during conflicts, it should also be used to guide a state's efforts to recover from conflict as it seeks to rebuild.

Even while the fighting continued, Ukraine and its western allies sought to prepare for eventual recovery and a post-conflict period, through addressing the human security needs of the country and its people. Beyond ensuring state security and bringing perpetrators to justice for violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law, the recovery planning is driven by the human perspective and ensuring a safe, prosperous and dignified environment for Ukrainians. The post-war planning also takes a bottom-up approach where Ukraine's communities are active participants in determining what is needed to rebuild the country.

This is evident in the following objectives for the country's rebuilding efforts agreed at the Ukraine recovery conference which first met in 2022:

- 1 Resilience: 'Provide economic, social and environmental resilience in the marathon to victory'
- 2 Recovery: 'Find efficient solutions for the soonest recovery of the crucial economic and social processes, and natural ecosystems '
- 3 Modernisation and growth: 'Develop a modernization plan to ensure expedited sustainable economic growth and wellbeing of the people '.

The recovery plans recognise **interconnected needs** such as:

- Security from violence
- The need for new infrastructure
- Livelihoods and new jobs
- Reformed governance

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As well as addressing the elements of **freedom from fear and freedom from want**, Ukraine's post conflict effort will also need to address **dignity** through :

- A reconciliation and justice initiative – possibly through recourse to the International Criminal Court to prosecute alleged war crimes. The ICC and the UN Human Rights Council have both launched investigations into alleged war crimes and violations of humanitarian law during the conflict.
- Cultural recovery – the conflict has already seen people change from Russian to Ukrainian symbols and language in daily use. For example, the capital formerly know as Kiev, is more often now referred to in the Ukrainian spelling Kyiv. Officially Ukraine now celebrates Christmas on 25th December as in the Roman calendar, rather than the Russian orthodox Christmas on 6th January. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC), which had retained formal subordination to the Moscow Patriarchy, amended its statutory documents in May 2022 to remove all subordination clauses.

The Ukraine recovery plan relies on multi-actor partnership to deliver holistic and comprehensive solutions to insecurity. This is evident in the 'Lugano Principles' (named after the Swiss city where the first recovery conference took place in 2022) which emphasise collaborative effort with various actors, including other governments, the private sector, academia and civil society as well as sub-national level partners such as cities, hospitals or others.

## 4.5 Class activity



### Class activity

## Conflict analysis and human security: Gaza, Sudan and Beyond

Using the example above from Ukraine, analyse other conflicts such as Gaza and Sudan in terms of the human security principles. Applying the methodology outlined in Lesson 3, what steps should international agencies such as the UN or neighbouring states (e.g. the African Union, the Arab League) take to address the conflict from a human security perspective. How should the principles of action be integrated into diplomatic processes?



# Working collaboratively: businesses as key actors of human security

## Session questions:

- How do business activities contribute to both positive and negative impacts on human security, and what are some common examples of these impacts?
- What are the main components of the movement for responsible business conduct, and how are they influencing corporate behaviour and accountability?
- What strategies can businesses employ to enhance human security in their operations, and what are the potential benefits of adopting responsible business practices?

## Session outline:

- 1 Introduction to lesson
- 2 Business activities and impacts on human security
- 3 Evolving standards: the movement for responsible business conduct
- 4 Strategies for enhancing human security in business operations
- 5 Human security and business partnerships
- 6 The benefits to businesses: avoiding reputational, legal and financial harm



**Case study:** Building Bridges: Business-Community Partnerships for Human Security in Colombia and Mexico

### Optional class preparation:

Listen to this clip from Alaa Murabit, the global head of advocacy for healthcare at the Gates Foundation and a UN special advocate for the SDGs: LSE IDEAS, Women in Diplomacy Podcast Episode 8 (available on Spotify).

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/1wIQ4XDCanYtm8P4MRQVf0?si=p1ewGIGkRkS3WLWcljca4w>

## 5.1 Introduction to lesson

An important part of a human security approach is for different actors to work together. This is in order to find solutions that are comprehensive and holistic. Multi-actor collaboration can mean that the answers to problems of under-development, threats to lives and livelihoods and environmental challenges are more realistic and durable because they draw on different perspectives and skills.

Human security solutions do not only come from government or aid agencies. Business and investment have an important role to play. Companies and investors are important actors in devising and delivering those solutions, both because they often have specialist knowledge and problem-solving skills from working on the ground in fragile areas and because their business activities may be at the root of communities' insecurity.



## 5.2 Business activities and potential impacts on human security

While businesses contribute to economic development and job creation, both core elements to ensure freedom from want and freedom to live in dignity, they can also have negative impacts on individuals and communities. The impact of business activities on human security can vary widely. Some common human insecurities associated with business activities include:

- **Exploitative Labour Practices:** such as low wages, poor working conditions, and lack of workers' rights, can lead to exploitation and undermine the well-being of workers.
- **Environmental Degradation:** Some business activities, particularly those related to industries like mining, manufacturing, and energy production, can contribute to environmental degradation. This may result in health risks, loss of livelihoods, and disruptions to local ecosystems.
- **Unequal Distribution of Wealth:** Business activities can contribute to economic inequality when wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few individuals or corporations, leaving others marginalized and struggling with limited resources.
- **Displacement and Land Rights:** Large-scale business projects, such as infrastructure development or agribusiness ventures, can lead to the displacement of local communities. This displacement often involves loss of land, homes, and traditional livelihoods, leading to a range of insecurities.
- **Corruption and Unethical Practices:** Corruption in business transactions and unethical practices can undermine the rule of law, contribute to social injustice, and erode public trust. These issues can lead to broader insecurities within a society.
- **Market Volatility and Economic Crises:** Business activities can contribute to economic volatility, leading to market crashes, recessions, and financial crises. These events can have widespread impacts on employment, housing, and overall economic well-being.
- **Product Safety and Public Health:** Issues related to the safety and quality of products can pose risks to public health. Contaminated or unsafe products can lead to health crises, affecting individuals and communities.
- **Social Discrimination:** Business practices, knowingly or unknowingly, can perpetuate social discrimination and inequality, leading to insecurities related to access to opportunities, resources, and fair treatment.
- **Digital Insecurities:** With the increasing reliance on technology and digital platforms, issues such as data breaches, identity theft, and cybercrimes associated with business activities can contribute to insecurities related to privacy and personal information.

In conflict and crisis contexts, business may also be a conflict driver, thus fuelling not just 'want' but also 'fear' in the terms of the human security pillars. Examples of this include revenues from mining companies paid to armed groups in return for access and products. In the film 'Blood Diamond' the links between diamond sales and wars in Africa are exposed. The NGO Global Witness (<https://www.globalwitness.org/en/>) is known for detailing how illegal logging activities helped finance civil war in Myanmar .

## 5.3 Evolving standards: the movement for responsible business conduct

As globalisation continues to intertwine economies and societies worldwide, the impacts of business activities on human security have become increasingly prominent and complex. Amidst this backdrop, there has been a growing movement for corporate accountability, fuelled by heightened awareness of the social and environmental consequences of business practices. As stakeholders become more interconnected and information becomes more accessible, there is a heightened expectation for businesses to operate ethically and transparently, taking into account their impacts on individuals, communities, and the environment. This includes encouraging both prevention of harms but also identifying opportunities where business can contribute positively to transforming the pillars of human security.

### a. Changing societal expectations

This began in the early 2000s with protest movements in the US and Europe (Occupy and Greenpeace) motivated by corporate disasters such as human rights abuses by Shell in the Niger Delta and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. These led to calls for greater transparency by companies and their reporting. The UN Global Compact was established as a voluntary organisation which sets standards and principles for business behaviour. It now has over 20,000 members worldwide. This movement also emerged in the backdrop of decreased state power and ability to provide essential services and protection.

Since 2015 the relationship between the private sector and society has changed further with agendas such as the SDGs, Black Lives Matter and its agenda of diversity and inclusion and the Build Back Better campaign following the COVID19 pandemic. Ideas of stakeholder capitalism in which all those impacted by business not just its financial shareholders should be part of corporate strategy are key elements of that new relationship.

## b. Evolving legislation

In 2011 the UN Human Rights Council unanimously agreed proposals by Harvard professor John Ruggie for the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs). Central to these principles was the idea that while states have a primary duty to protect the human rights of their citizens, business has a responsibility to respect human rights, while there should also be access to remedy for the victims of abuses. The UNGPs made human rights a shared obligation between the public, private and civil society sectors.

Legislation by governments particularly in Europe and the EU attempts to re-set the relationship and force increased business accountability with new regulations requiring companies to identify, mitigate and report on their **social and environmental impacts**.

As a result of this movement, environmental, social, and governance (ESG) goals have become a key strategy for many companies as their shareholders pressure them to create and demonstrate positive social impacts as well as avoiding committing abuses or unwittingly fuelling conflicts and social divisions.

## 5.4 Strategies for enhancing human security in business operations

This evolving landscape underscores the need for businesses to proactively address human security concerns and embrace responsible business conduct to navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by globalisation.

Companies and investors can participate in creating sustainable, inclusive, and more equitable economies through action and strategies at the local level, working in and with communities and alongside governments and civil society.

Responsible business practices working to enhance human security can:

- Adopt standards within business operations that promote individual wellbeing, often going beyond minimum legislative requirements of host countries:
  - decent working conditions
  - living wage rather than minimum wage
  - zero tolerance of corruption
  - proper data protection rules and safeguards

- Intervene where the government may be too weak or unwilling to provide important public services and goods. However, this must recognise that – as in lesson 4 – it is the state’s duty to be the primary protector of people and provider of security. Business interventions need proper governance and oversight to avoid accusations that they are social or greenwashing.
  - E.g. protection local communities: In Mexico, where workers are at risk of violence from drug cartels, employers such as Unilever have made changes such as ending shifts in daylight or putting cameras in delivery trucks to keep people safe
  - Engage in CSR initiatives: e.g. company providing free meals at local school to encourage parents to send their children to school and avoid child labour in the communities around the company (Madagascar)
- Participate in multi-stakeholder initiatives aimed at enhancing human security:

The opportunities from involving the private sector in development, climate change solutions, migration, peacebuilding and other social goods are not only financial: they include the resourcefulness of companies, knowledge, logistics, problem-solving abilities, the power to convene other people and mobilise collective action, and above all the capacity of many businesses and supply chains to reach down to the smallest and most remote villages, to ensure that sustainable development is accessible to everyone. At the global level, the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals have prompted widespread engagement by the private sector, helping to foot the bill for an ambitious agenda which tries to make the lives of people better across the world.



## 5.5 Human security and business partnerships

Human security can be an important strategic approach for companies and investors. Human security provides a bridge between human rights, sustainable development, and stakeholder engagement. It is also important for making sure that corporate responsibility and accountability reach to the most local level, and across all parts of a supply chain. CEOs and senior executives use annual reports and conversations with government to claim their credentials as responsible and sustainable businesses, but these claims need to link to the realities of everyday life

Partnerships or collaboration between business and local communities are a way for business to understand the effects it has on the ground, to prevent human rights abuses and design and implement positive changes.

In 2020 LSE IDEAS working with the UN developed a guidance model for companies and investors called Human Security Business Partnerships.<sup>1</sup> HSBPs are designed to help business meet its own interests such as profitability and a secure operating environment while also paying attention to the needs of communities.

HSBPs are based on the core ideas of human security. They are comprised of 3 pillars – principles, processes and tools, that help companies and investors create new long-term relationships with people at community level.<sup>2</sup>

### The Human Security Business Partnership Framework

Principles	Processes	Tools
<b>L</b> Locally driven	<b>Map participants</b>	<b>Consultation methodology</b>
<b>I</b> Inclusive		<b>Action checklist</b>
<b>F</b> Forward-looking	<b>Dialogues to</b> • Identify needs and risks • agree baseline and target objectives • assess capacities/ available resources	<b>ICT-enabled communication and information sharing</b>
<b>T</b> Trust	<b>Management protocols</b>	<b>Training</b>
<b>S</b> Sharing	<b>Joint monitoring and evaluation</b>	<b>Documentation</b>
	<b>Review and grievance process</b>	<b>Monitoring and evaluation metrics</b>

1 The views expressed in this document are of LSE, as the authors, and not the United Nations Human Security Unit as the focal entity of the United Nations on human security and responsible for the management of the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security.

2 See <https://www.un.org/humansecurity/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Final-HSBP-Institutional-Manual-for-web.pdf>

## 5.6 The benefits to businesses: avoiding reputational, legal and financial harm

Many companies see ESG indicators as a chance to set new targets which help to make their businesses more cost efficient. Their motivation may be purely selfish – what critics call ‘Green or social washing’. However, enthusiasm for sustainability also reflects the evolution taking place from a financial model – where there is limited regulation of business and a clear dividing line between financial and economic issues and social policy towards a new model of **responsible business, corporate accountability** for company and investor actions and impacts on people and the environment. Businesses are increasingly ready to get involved in wider issues than just profitability and return on investment.

Companies are motivated to manage reputational, financial and legal risk in their operation and in their supply chain. Accidents and disasters that happen in remote producing locations can cause reputational legal and financial harm. For instance, the 2013 collapse of the Rana Plaza [clothing factory](#) which supplied garments to companies like Zara, Benetton and Primark, led to these companies facing legal actions related to their alleged negligence in ensuring working conditions, financial liabilities related to compensation for victims and their families, and severe damage to their reputations.

Due to their international operations, companies are also increasingly caught up in geopolitical crises around the world such as the war in Ukraine which has prompted over 1000 companies to withdraw from operations in Russia. Businesses can no longer stay silent in the face of these crises, potentially facing legal charges for continuing operations in war-torn areas such as [Lafarge in Syria](#), or facing reputational and financial losses for expressing views or acting in a way that does not promote human security, such as Starbucks and McDonalds being boycotted for what some see as corporate support for Israel after its attacks on Gaza.

Most simply, a motivation to use their power to generate positive social impacts on poverty, health development, peace, migrant populations and climate challenges comes from companies’ need to respond to pressure from customers and employees. People want to buy products and work for companies that are seen as ethical, authentic and responsible.



## 5.7 Case study



### Practice/Case study

# Building Bridges: Business-Community Partnerships for Human Security in Colombia and Mexico

In Colombia restaurant chain Crepes and Waffles and coffee producers Urbania were among the companies who initiated partnerships with local farming communities to develop new markets in local goods in the wake of a peace agreement in 2016 to end Colombia's civil war. Some of these communities were remote, unused to dealing with big business. Their challenges were not just about being able to have decent and legitimate livelihoods in areas heavily affected by the drug trade; they also faced environmental, health, education and political challenges. The human security partnerships helped communities overcome their mistrust of big business and government, helped familiarise themselves with how the companies buying their products operated – the kind of quality standards they required. By strengthening the relationship between business through looking at all the challenges and problems that people faced on the ground, the partnerships were more than just commercial negotiations. They provided the basis for a long-term collaboration between business and the community to improve conditions on the ground as well as the prospects for business and the economy.

Continued on next page



### Optional resource

[Human Security Business Partnerships in Colombia](#)

In northern Mexico, Monterrey is home to some of the richest communities in Mexico thanks to the area's long history of industry, but also the poorest. Campana Altamira is a shanty town that has grown up in the middle of the city, where there is no electricity or running water and a record of crime and poverty. Big companies in the area such as CEMEX, Coca-Cola and Heineken joined in an initiative to help develop Campana Altamira. Using a human security approach meant listening to the real concerns of the people who live there, recognise that they face multiple different threats which are all connected, and that involving them in the solution means that addressing these threats is likely to be more realistic and durable.



This is an example of one outcome of business working with the community – with very little financial investment, just pots of paint, the residents painted their houses on the hillside. This created a new sense of ownership and pride. Instead of Campana Altamira being seen in the city as a stain, it is now regarded very differently and has hopes of becoming a tourist attraction. For the companies involved, the Campana Altamira Initiative is an example of how to do social investment well. It has improved relations with the local residents, crime has diminished and a new ecosystem has taken root in the city where they live and do business.

Human security approaches can be a win-win solution for companies needing to grow and flourish and for the people who produce goods and services and those who want to buy their goods but are concerned about unethical business behaviour such as modern day slavery, the use of raw materials which fuel conflicts and environmental damage.

## 5.8 Class activity



### Class activity

Debate what to do faced with the Russian invasion of Ukraine:

- one half of the class works for Company X and is arguing a case for continuing to operate in Russia
- one half works for an NGO outraged at what it regards as funding the war in Ukraine,

What are the human security arguments for both types of business strategy?

See <https://som.yale.edu/story/2022/over-1000-companies-have-curtailed-operations-russia-some-remain> for a resource to inform this activity.

# Human security in the digital age – a people-centred approach to data and artificial intelligence

## Session questions:

- How can a human security approach be applied to the collection and use of data, ensuring that information gathering respects people's dignity and empowers them, especially in the context of emerging technologies like machine learning and algorithms?
- What are some examples of how human security principles have been integrated into data collection methodologies, such as combining quantitative and qualitative data, consulting with local communities, and ensuring their participation in the research process?
- In what ways can technologies, particularly those encompassed within the field of Peacetech, be leveraged for peacebuilding and sustainable development initiatives?

## Session outline:

- 1 Introduction to lesson
- 2 Applying a human security lens to the collection and use of data
- 3 Leveraging technologies for peacebuilding and sustainable development



**Case study:** Online dialogues using Whatsapp to engage with Tunisian youth

## 6.1 Introduction to lesson

In this lesson we will look at human security and the digital revolution. Machine learning, algorithms and virtual reality applications might appear to remove the need for people to manage both routine and complex processes of information, situational analyses and policy and strategy-making. We will look at two areas where it is desirable to insert the core principles of a human security approach – people-centred and dignity, plus protection and empowerment – in order to make both ethical and effective use of artificial intelligence and digitisation. These areas are the collection and use of data and Peacetech, the emerging technological tools for peacebuilding and sustainable development.

## 6.2 Applying a human security lens to the collection and use of data

Sound action and constructive dialogues require evidence and the use of scientific facts. The information we gather for research, as the basis for business and economic decisions, diplomatic and military action or as civil society actors, is now more accessible and widespread thanks to the use of search engines and machine learning. Classic sources of data tend to be aggregated and highly generalised. A human security approach is to combine both quantitative and qualitative data and seek information which reflects people's lived experiences. An example is the UN's Human Development Reports (HDRs), which are produced annually and cover 'a core of insecurities' that exist in individual countries. The HDRs show what this core looks like and draw attention to cross-cutting issues, such as how urban development relates to health or how terrorism is destroying the natural environment. Attaining human security in Afghanistan on this analysis involves addressing human rights, poverty and transnational crime. In Nigeria individual and community experiences highlight information about regional conflict and public health issues such as HIV/AIDS among others.

In contrast, most economists and other public policy planners use a country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as a benchmark for measuring wealth and change. There are relatively few local data sets particularly covering remote, rural communities so their needs and aspirations are overlooked by national statistics. Perceptions studies are useful in a human security approach, yet many social scientists and policy makers dismiss these as unreliable.

As a result human security research needs careful sources of data and evidence and an ethical approach to gathering information that respects people's dignity (the 3rd pillar of HS) and protects and empowers them. By choosing investigative tools and research methods that focus on people's lived experiences and incorporate protection and empowerment features means we can provide better definition to what human security means in practice.

An example would be searching for quantitative data and empirical (factual and scientific) observations of harms such as poverty, unemployment, human rights abuses, but also combining this with a consultative process in which the people affected by these phenomena are invited to validate the data and add layers of interpretation to the raw data. In the Balkans in 2012 LSE researchers gathered data on insecurity from local researchers who went door to door asking a standardised set of questions. This survey information was then discussed between the international and the local researchers and the summary of the findings was then presented to local residents and debated with them. This approach not only provided more depth and detail to the data that could be obtained nationally on development and security but gave the people at the heart of the research – the local researchers and those they questioned – a degree of control over any findings. This is important if policy and processes are then based on this information.



The United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security projects baseline assessment is another illustration of this. The human security approach goes beyond quick responses and is prevention-oriented. By drilling down to ascertain the real causes of challenges, it enables policy-makers, NGOs and business to take informed decisions about what is likely to work and be a durable solution to challenges. A baseline assessment is an important tool to provide a comprehensive and contextual account of peoples' concrete needs and the factors endangering their survival, livelihood and dignity. The aim is to provide a starting point (a baseline) for assessing current situations and capacities from which to implement actions for change and to be able to assess the impact of those policy or practice changes. A human security baseline assessment is distinguished both by the kind of information gathered and the means by which the data is collected: it selects an initial range of potential harms which correspond to the seven components of human security [ see Lesson 1]; these are key indicators. This raw data which can be collected from available statistics can be checked and expanded through direct consultations with local people, using tools such as focus groups and surveys. An important feature of the baseline assessment is that the different potential harms can first be verified and then see how and under what circumstances they might interconnect. For example questions about health can investigate whether there is a link to environmental factors, housing, poverty, education and so on. Another important way in which human security research methods can be transformative is in using more up to date information than is available from just sets of statistics which may be over-generalised and historic.

### **6.3 Leveraging technologies for peacebuilding and sustainable development**

Peacetech is the term used to describe the application of digital tools for peacebuilding. These tools are used by NGOs and government agencies to help mitigate or prevent conflict. They include the use of SMS messaging, social media platforms in order to perform important elements of peacebuilding such as a prohibition on hate speech, the dissemination of pro-peace messages and information, the inclusion of marginalised communities.

Peacetech in a human security approach is not just about making use of information technologies (hardware and software) but understanding how ordinary people use or experience these tools in their lives to make sure that digital solutions are adapted to everyday realities. A term for this is 'affordances'; it means what information technology enables people to do and how it can transform processes. Peacetech in a human security approach is about being aware of both the threats and opportunities that digital tools create for people – there are risks as well as gains.

## 6.4 Case study



### Practice/Case study

## Online dialogues using Whatsapp to engage with Tunisian youth

Under the heading “A vous la parole”, this project was a pilot for a youth-centered approach to digital conversations, using WhatsApp as a platform that is more informal, engaging, and overall more popular than other chat applications in the region. The consultations engaged a total of 65 Tunisian youth from 17 different governorates. The objective of these online dialogues was to corroborate perspectives and opinions from youth on their current role in public life, the barriers to their participation, and the needs that arise when envisioning platforms and processes that can bring diverse Tunisian youth together to discuss public matters that affect their futures. The larger goals were to test the viability of the platform for gathering larger numbers of youth for an engaging and agile virtual exchange and other forms of sectoral dialogues, and to incorporate the findings of the conversations into UN plans and initiatives.

Digital technologies can be used in two ways – for research and information gathering, and to implement solutions. Peacetech covers both these aspects. By integrating human security as a people-centred concept and methodology which seeks to both protect and empower individuals and their communities, technology can be used to enhance the goals of human security – freedom from fear and want and human dignity, rather than contribute to undermining them.



## 6.5 Class activities



### Class activity 1

#### Guided reading of the National Human Development Reports e.g. UNDP report 2021

- 1 Divide into groups
  - Group 1 is a business or investor
  - Group 2 is a public sector international organisation
- 2 Each group has a task to design a human security baseline assessment for [a specific location].

What questions would they ask? How would they get the information. How would they check it? Who would they work with?



### Class activity 2

#### Peace Tech

Explore the Digital Peacebuilders Guide  
<https://howtobuildup.stonly.com/kb/guide/en/digital-peacebuilders-guide-X49wcx4IFi/Steps/1469015>

Choose a section and discuss how this can improve human security and how this fits with the methodology of human security.

# Inclusive Leadership

## Lessons

1

Principles of behavioural science

2

Inclusive leadership

3

Behavioural biases and effective decision-making

4

An experimental approach to becoming an inclusive leader

5

Collaborating with team members

6

Cultivating psychological safety

7

Driving your future success through inclusivity

# Principles of behavioural science

In this lesson, we delve into how behavioural science helps us understand the complexities of human decision-making. By examining the interplay between rational and irrational choices and the influence of biases and errors, this lesson sets the groundwork for exploring how our cognitive processes impact everyday actions and decisions. Through the lens of System 1 and System 2 thinking, we aim to enhance our understanding of why we think, choose, and act the way we do.

### Session questions:

- How does behavioural science explain the difference between rational and irrational choices?
- How do System 1 and System 2 Thinking differ, and what are some examples of each in action?
- How do biases and errors manifest in decision-making?

### Session outline:

- **Introduction to behavioural science:** Importance in understanding human behaviour
- **Rational vs. irrational choices:** Discussion on irrational decision-making and its causes
- **Dual process theory:** System 1 and System 2: Examples and implications of each system in daily life
- **Errors and biases:** Discussion on how biases and errors manifest in decision-making



**Case study:** Application of dual process theory in a real-life scenario

# 1.1 Fundamental concepts of behavioural science

## What is behavioural science?

Behavioural science is an interdisciplinary field that seeks to understand, predict, and influence human behaviour. It draws from various disciplines such as psychology, economics, sociology, and neuroscience to examine how individuals and groups make decisions, respond to incentives, and interact with their environment. Its overarching aim is to identify patterns, biases, and underlying principles that drive human actions.

## Rational choice vs. irrational choice

In social science, the concept of rational choice assumes that individuals make decisions based on a careful evaluation of available information and seek actions that maximise their utility or well-being. This rational choice theory of human behaviour posits that people consistently make choices in accordance with their preferences and desires.

However, behavioural science acknowledges that human decision-making is frequently affected by biases, emotions, and cognitive limitations, often resulting in what is perceived as “irrational” decision-making. This distinction between rational and irrational choices is pivotal in comprehending why individuals occasionally make decisions that appear counterintuitive or contrary to their best interests.

Bounded rationality, a concept often used in behavioural economics and psychology, serves as a crucial bridge to understanding the complexities of human decision-making. Bounded rationality suggests that individuals do not always make decisions in a purely rational manner due to cognitive limitations, information constraints, and the sheer complexity of many real-world decisions<sup>1</sup>.

## Dual process theory (System 1 vs. System 2 Thinking)

The division between rational and irrational choices finds a deeper explanation in the dual process theory, which suggests that human thinking can be divided into two systems – System 1 Thinking and System 2 Thinking<sup>2</sup>. This division serves as a framework for understanding how our cognitive processes function and influence our decision-making. Here’s how Daniel Kahneman distinguished between the two types of thinking in his book “Thinking, Fast and Slow”<sup>3</sup>.

- 1 Kahneman, “Maps of Bounded Rationality.”
- 2 Stanovich and West, “Advancing the Rationality Debate.”
- 3 Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*.

**System 1 thinking:** This is fast, intuitive, and automatic thinking. It relies on heuristics and is often associated with instinctive, emotional, or gut reactions. Key features of System 1 thinking include:

- Automatic and intuitive, operating swiftly and effortlessly (often without conscious awareness).
- Heuristic-based, using mental shortcuts to make rapid judgments and decisions. These heuristics are often efficient but can lead to cognitive biases and errors.
- Low cognitive load, suitable for routine tasks and immediate actions.

For instance, System 1 comes into play when you effortlessly navigate your daily route to school without consciously thinking about it, recognise a familiar face in a crowd without conscious effort, or experience the fight-or-flight response. It is the system that handles these quick, intuitive, and emotional responses.

**System 2 thinking:** This is slower, more deliberate, and analytical thinking. It involves conscious reasoning, and careful evaluation of information, and is generally associated with logical decision-making. System 2 thinking is more effortful but can lead to more rational choices. Key attributes of System 2 thinking include:

- Slow, deliberate and analytical, with conscious thought and logical reasoning.
- Promotes critical thinking, decision-making, and making rational choices. It helps to overcome biases and errors.
- Demands cognitive effort and resources, engaged in complex tasks that require careful consideration, concentration, and cognitive control.



System 2 is engaged when you tackle complex math or logic problems, engage in critical thinking and decision-making, or attempt to learn a new skill. These activities necessitate deliberate, conscious effort and logical reasoning, making System 2 the system responsible for more thoughtful and analytical aspects of cognition.

When we consider ourselves, we typically associate with System 2, the conscious and rational aspect of our self. However, System 1 takes the lead the majority of the time, guiding our everyday decisions and reactions. System 1 runs automatically, and System 2 is normally in a comfortable low-effort mode, in which only a fraction of its capacity is engaged.

## Errors and biases

In addition to its role in complex cognitive processes, System 2 serves as a vigilant overseer of System 1's thinking, wielding the authority to rectify, endorse, or override it<sup>4</sup>. System 1 consistently generates suggestions for System 2, including impressions, intuitions, intentions, and emotions. When System 2 approves these suggestions, impressions and intuitions transform into beliefs, and impulses translate into deliberate actions. In most cases, things proceed smoothly, and System 2 adopts System 1's suggestions with minimal alteration.

However, it's important to note that System 1 isn't infallible and can introduce biases and errors<sup>5</sup>. Its reliance on simple heuristics for intricate decision-making can lead to biased judgments. System 1 often generates biased intuitions swiftly and effortlessly, while System 2 may lag behind or fail to correct these biased intuitions. This simultaneous failure of both System 1 and System 2 can result in errors in judgment.

Consider when you're picking a group for a class skit. You might instantly want to team up with your close friends (System 1 thinking) because it feels comfortable and they readily come to your mind. But if you stop to consider (System 2 thinking) who can actually contribute best to the skit's success, you might choose classmates based on their stage skills. Ignoring this careful thought and going with your initial instinct could lead to a less efficient group, demonstrating how quick, biased decisions can affect outcomes.

We will learn more about errors and biases in judgements and decision-making in Lesson 3.

4 Kahneman and Frederick, "Representativeness Revisited: Attribute Substitution in Intuitive Judgment."

5 Tversky and Kahneman, "Judgment under Uncertainty."

## 1.2 Learning by example



### Case study

Zoya, an American tourist, excitedly arrived in London to explore the city's rich history and culture. As she stepped onto the bustling streets of London, she was greeted by the iconic red double-decker buses and the black cabs zipping by. Eager to cross the road and start her sightseeing adventure, Zoya approached a pedestrian crossing.

However, when she looked to her right, she instinctively expected to see oncoming traffic. Her System 1 thinking, influenced by her experience of traffic in the United States, led her to look in the wrong direction. Unknown to her, the traffic in the UK flows in the opposite direction to what she's used to back home.

Luckily, Zoya noticed the puzzled expressions of other pedestrians and the helpful road markings on the ground. These markings, designed for tourists like her, indicated the direction from which traffic would approach. They directed her to look left. System 2 thinking kicked in as she consciously processed this new information, and she promptly corrected her gaze to the left, ensuring her safety as she crossed the road.

In this scenario, Zoya's initial System 1 intuition, influenced by her American traffic experience, could have led to a potentially dangerous situation if her System 2 had not processed the informative road markings intended to assist tourists in the UK.

## 1.3 Read at leisure



### Read at leisure

To delve deeper into the realm of behavioural science, two recommended readings are:

#### **'Nudge' by Richard Thaler and Cass**

**Sunstein:** This book discusses how subtle changes in the presentation of choices (nudges) can influence decision-making and promote better outcomes. It explores the concept of libertarian paternalism, where choices are structured to help people make better decisions while maintaining their freedom.

#### **'Thinking, Fast and Slow' by Daniel**

**Kahneman:** This book delves into the two thinking systems (System 1 and System 2) and provides insights into how they shape our judgments and choices. It also explores various cognitive biases and their impact on decision-making.

## 1.4 Class activity



### Class activity

**Objective:** To enhance students' understanding of System 1 and System 2 thinking by categorising a variety of everyday activities based on the cognitive processes they primarily involve.

**Activity description:**

- Provide students with a list of common activities and ask them to categorise each activity as primarily System 1 or System 2 thinking. Examples of activities might include:
  - Deciding what to eat for breakfast.
  - Solving a complex mathematical problem.
  - Clapping automatically when everyone else starts to clap.
  - Choosing a movie to watch with friends.
  - Reacting to a startling noise during a quiet study session.
  - Figuring out how to divide tasks for a group project.
  - Laughing at a funny joke during lunch.
  - Preparing for a debate on a current events topic.
  - Singing along to a familiar song that comes on the radio.
  - Choosing courses for the next school year based on college and career goals.
- Ask students to also provide a brief reasoning for their categorisation based on the characteristics of each cognitive system we discussed in this lesson. This allows for discussion and debate about the nature of each activity and the cognitive processes involved.
  - For example, “Deciding what to eat for breakfast” might be categorised under System 1 if the decision is made quickly based on a craving or habit. Conversely, “ Figuring out how to divide tasks for a group project” would fall under System 2 due to the detailed planning and consideration involved.
- Conclude the activity with a discussion on how this understanding can help in managing one’s own thinking and decision-making processes more effectively. Discuss instances where it might be beneficial to switch from one type of thinking to the other.



## 1.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, Lesson 1 provided a foundational understanding of the principles of behavioural science, emphasising how our decisions are influenced by a complex interplay of rational and irrational choices. Through exploring System 1 and System 2 thinking, we have seen how biases and errors can significantly affect our decision-making processes. This insight not only highlights the importance of awareness in our everyday choices but also stresses the need for strategies to mitigate these biases. The case study of Zoya illustrated a practical application of dual process theory, showing us how understanding these concepts can have real-world implications. As we move forward, let's apply these valuable insights to enhance our ability to think critically and make decisions that are both informed and reflective of our true intentions and goals.



# Inclusive leadership

The second lesson introduces inclusive leadership and how it can be harnessed to drive systemic change and enhance decision-making effectiveness.

### Session questions:

- What does inclusive leadership entail, and why is it important?
- How does fostering a diversity mindset contribute to effective inclusive leadership?
- What role does psychological safety play in inclusive environments?
- How can leaders demonstrate their commitment to inclusivity beyond mere virtue signalling?
- What are the tangible benefits of inclusive leadership within an organisation?

### Session outline:

- **Introduction to inclusive leadership:** Importance of inclusive leadership and characteristics of inclusive leaders
- **Fostering a diverse mindset:** Exploring the benefits of diversity in team dynamics
- **Creating psychological safety:** Understanding psychological safety and its importance
- **Leading by example vs. virtue signaling:** Analysing the effects of each approach
- **Benefits of inclusive leadership:** Review of research findings on the outcomes of inclusive leadership



**Case study:** Comparing and contrasting the leadership styles and their impacts

## 2.1 Inclusive leadership

Inclusive leadership goes beyond mere social responsibility. It's about fostering a team environment where all voices are not just heard but valued equally, where team members actively listen to one another, irrespective of their differences. Doing so allows for better discussion and more critical debate. It also enables team members to voice their outlier ideas. Ultimately it allows teams to be more innovative, and creative and to assess risk better.

### Fostering a diversity mindset

At its core, a positive diversity mindset drives inclusive leaders. When leaders have a diversity mindset, they perceive the diversity within their teams as one of their strengths. They acknowledge the great benefits of diversity on team dynamics and performance, and because of this have an unwavering commitment to actively manage their team in a way that creates a diversity mindset among all team members.

Overall, inclusive leaders embrace a positive diversity mindset, recognising the immense value of a highly diverse team. Inclusive leaders are also aware of the diversity that may be absent from their teams and take proactive steps to rectify this at every stage, from hiring diverse talent to growing them within their organisations<sup>1</sup>. They consider not only demographic factors like gender and race but a spectrum of diverse factors including skills, backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.

### Psychological safety

Along with a diversity mindset, inclusive leaders aim to create a psychologically safe environment where all team members feel secure even when their ideas are challenged. Psychological safety is the shared belief among team members that they can express their ideas, questions, and concerns, or acknowledge mistakes without fear of punishment or humiliation<sup>2</sup>, contributing to opportunities for learning and growth. Inclusive leaders promote a sense of belonging among group members while also preserving their individual uniqueness<sup>3</sup>.

1 Bourke and Titus, "The Key to Inclusive Leadership."

2 Shore and Chung, "Inclusive Leadership."

3 Randel et al., "Inclusive Leadership."

## 2.2 Inclusive leadership for enabling culture change

Inclusive leadership is essential for enabling culture change as inclusion is not guaranteed by merely increasing diversity alone. When a team has an inclusive leader, women are not heard less than men, nor are certain groups of individuals granted fewer opportunities, because the leader corrects for these dynamics. Inclusive leaders empower their team members by openly acknowledging their own mistakes, prioritising team unity, and fostering an environment where team members can freely voice their thoughts and concerns<sup>4</sup>.

### Demonstrating commitment through leading by example

Leaders demonstrate their commitment to inclusion in two primary ways: through virtue signalling or leading by example.

Virtue signalling involves publicly expressing support for diversity without accompanying actions. For instance, an individual engages in virtue signalling when they express concern for diversity in hiring but consistently select candidates who closely resemble themselves. However, it's crucial to note that virtue signalling can inadvertently hinder inclusion efforts. When employees detect a misalignment between their leader's words and actions, it can lead to adverse workplace outcomes. Virtue signalling by senior leaders may also cause diversity fatigue, which is the weariness towards efforts surrounding enhancing diversity in firms. This fatigue arises from a growing perception that diversity initiatives are superficial, merely for optics, and lack a deeper understanding of the genuine value of fostering a diverse workforce.

In contrast, leading by example involves aligning words with actions, where leaders actively seek out diversity and set an example for their colleagues. This not only improves organisational inclusivity but also inspires others to follow suit, creating a positive ripple effect that can lead to systemic change. Inclusive leaders lead by example and are aware of the issues created by virtue signalling.

To enable a real culture change, you need to lead by example as an inclusive leader and actively take steps to improve diversity and inclusion within your team. Both your words and actions together should emphasise your commitment to fostering an inclusive culture for your team members.

<sup>4</sup> Boris, "How to Empower Everyone You Lead."

## 2.3 Benefits of inclusive leadership

Research has underscored numerous advantages associated with inclusive leadership. It is important to recognise that a diverse team alone does not guarantee the presence of an inclusive environment; rather, it is inclusive leadership fosters such an atmosphere within diverse teams<sup>5</sup>. The actions and words of leaders play a pivotal role, as research has shown that they can account for up to 70% of an individual's sense of inclusion<sup>6</sup>.

Moreover, an inclusive workplace has been consistently linked to noteworthy outcomes, including heightened self-esteem and increased job satisfaction among employees<sup>7</sup>. The inclusive leadership style, through building an individual employee's psychological safety, serves as a catalyst for encouraging creativity, fostering innovation, and nurturing work commitment, thereby, enhancing overall productivity<sup>8</sup>. In essence, inclusive leadership emerges as a cornerstone in the pursuit of a more equitable, productive, and harmonious work environment.



- 5 Ashikali, Groeneveld, and Kuipers, "The Role of Inclusive Leadership in Supporting an Inclusive Climate in Diverse Public Sector Teams."
- 6 Bourke and Titus, "The Key to Inclusive Leadership."
- 7 Kuknor and Bhattacharya, "Inclusive Leadership."
- 8 Shore and Chung, "Inclusive Leadership."

## 2.4 Learning by example

Let's consider two contrasting organisational cultures exemplified by Company A and Company B.

In Company A, the CEO champions the importance of fostering a diversity mindset as they actively seek out talent from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, creating a dynamic team rich in skills and perspectives. They always try to solicit the views of their team and often acknowledge their own mistakes when their decisions falter.

As a result, employees at Company A feel valued and psychologically safe. Jai, a team member, praises the company culture, saying, "I feel like my voice truly matters here. Our CEO actively seeks our opinion, encouraging us to speak up and challenge ideas, even when they're different from theirs. This environment encourages me to perform at my best and continuously grow."

In this scenario, we can see that the CEO is an inclusive leader.

In contrast, Company B's CEO regularly engages in virtue signalling, publicly professing support for diversity without translating those words into meaningful actions. While they speak about diversity, their hiring practices primarily involve selecting individuals from their own network whom they have an affinity with. Furthermore, the CEO is not receptive to dissenting opinions, creating an atmosphere where constructive feedback is discouraged.

Employees at Company B do not feel valued in their organisation. Lisa, a team member, expresses her frustration, "Our team has a toxic atmosphere where I do not feel either belonged or valued. I feel hesitant to voice my views, fearing potential repercussions. I do not envision a long-term future with this firm."

In company B the CEO does not exhibit the traits of an inclusive leader. Rather, they are a virtue signaller.

This short case study highlights the impact of inclusive leadership on workplace culture, employee satisfaction, and psychological safety. It shows the pivotal role leadership plays in shaping an organisation's ethos and the well-being of its workforce.

## 2.5 Class activity



### Class activity

**Objective:** Based on the case study discussed in 2.4, critically evaluate and compare the leadership styles of the CEOs of Company A and Company B to understand the impact of inclusive versus non-inclusive leadership on organisational culture and employee well-being.

**Activity description:**

- First, ask students to read the case study in 2.4.
- Ask students to discuss the leadership qualities displayed by the CEOs of Company A and Company B. They should focus on:
  - Inclusive Leadership Traits: Identify and discuss the actions taken by the CEO of Company A that demonstrate inclusive leadership, such as actively seeking diverse talent, soliciting team views, and acknowledging mistakes.
  - Non-Inclusive Leadership Traits: Analyse the behaviours of the CEO of Company B that indicate a lack of inclusivity, such as virtue signalling, favouring familiar networks in hiring, and discouraging dissent.
- Conclude with a reflection on why the actions of Company A's CEO are effective for driving inclusion and why the actions of Company B's CEO are not.

## 2.6 Conclusion

Inclusive leadership is not a destination but an ongoing commitment to creating diverse, inclusive, and high-performing teams. In the upcoming chapters, we will learn how behavioural biases come in the way of inclusive leadership and how can inclusive leaders mitigate them.

# Behavioural biases and effective decision-making

In this lesson, we will delve into how cognitive biases manifest themselves in decision-making. We will explore the essential role that inclusive leaders play in mitigating these biases by actively seeking diverse perspectives, challenging preconceived notions, and fostering an inclusive environment.

### Session questions:

- What are cognitive biases, and how do they affect decision-making?
- How can understanding biases improve overall decision-making and promote a more inclusive environment?
- In what ways can inclusive leadership mitigate the effects of cognitive biases in the workplace?

### Session outline:

- **Introduction to cognitive biases**
- **Exploring common biases and heuristics:** Detailed examination of key biases and their real-world implications of these biases on decision-making and inclusion
- **Inclusive leadership's role in mitigating biases:** Strategies for leaders to recognise and counteract biases within their teams



**Case study analysis:** Identification of biases in the decision-making process and alternative approaches



### 3.1 Cognitive biases

A cognitive bias can be thought of as a systematic error in our thought process, leading us to reach conclusions that diverge from formal logic or normative rationality<sup>1</sup>. In simpler terms, it's a glitch in our thinking.

To understand this better, let's revisit our first lesson. Remember that System 1, our quick-thinking process, can introduce biases and errors<sup>2</sup>. It relies on simple rules even for complex decisions, which often leads to biased judgments. System 1 easily generates these biased intuitions, while System 2, our deliberate thinking process, may struggle to rectify these initial biases. These unconscious and implicit cognitive biases lead us to falter in our decisions.

The danger lies in the fact that these biases can silently impact our decisions without us even realising it. They can sneak into our thought processes, quietly influencing our perceptions and behaviours. This tendency has major ramifications for decision making. It causes individuals to under-estimate costs, over-estimate benefits and under-estimate risks for the route of travel their 'gut feeling' tells them they should take. The opposite will occur – over-estimate costs, under-estimate benefits and over-estimate risks – for the route of travel their 'gut feeling' tells them they should avoid. This is because as humans, we naturally gravitate towards information that aligns with our existing beliefs and views over data that contradicts them<sup>3</sup>.



- 1 Science Direct, "Cognitive Bias - an Overview."
- 2 Tversky and Kahneman, "Judgment under Uncertainty."
- 3 The Decision Lab, "Confirmation Bias."

## 3.2 Common biases and heuristics

Let's now dive into comprehending common behavioural biases and understand their impact on inclusion.

### Representative heuristic

The representative heuristic is a cognitive bias in which people make judgments or decisions by gauging how closely an individual or situation matches a prototype or stereotype. Let's say you meet a person dressed in a suit and tie and carrying a briefcase. It's tempting to believe they're a banker simply based on their appearance because they fit the stereotypical image of a banker.

#### In the context of inclusive leadership

In recruitment and promotions, the representativeness heuristic often favours candidates who share traits with successful employees from the past. Unfortunately, this can result in the underrepresentation of diverse talent within organisations. More specifically, those who have aspects of visible diversity that is lacking in the firm may be unfairly judged as lacking skills or talent simply because they don't match the prototype of individuals who currently dominate the workforce<sup>4</sup>.

To address this bias, inclusive leaders need to take proactive steps to hire and promote under-represented talent in their organisation. By doing so, they can showcase these talented individuals as role models, helping to challenge and correct biased perceptions.

4 Brodnock and Lordan, "Transparent: Creating Organisations Inclusive of Black Women in Finance, Professional Services and Big Technology."

## Availability heuristic

The availability heuristic is a cognitive bias where people make judgments or decisions based on the ease with which information or examples come to mind. Imagine you're trying to assess the safety of flying after hearing about a recent plane crash on the news. Because the plane crash is easily accessible in your memory due to its recent coverage, you might overestimate the likelihood of such incidents occurring.

### In the context of inclusive leadership

Upon witnessing successful inclusion initiatives aimed at women, organisational decision-makers might overestimate the effectiveness of similar initiatives for other underrepresented groups. This can lead to a neglect of the distinctive challenges faced by other groups of under-represented talent, ultimately resulting in inadequate and biased inclusion strategies<sup>5</sup>.

To mitigate the availability heuristic in inclusion efforts, inclusive leaders should make a concerted effort to understand the unique experiences of various diverse groups to design more equitable inclusion strategies<sup>6</sup>.

## Status-quo bias

Status quo bias is a cognitive tendency to prefer things as they are or to maintain the current state of affairs. It reflects a resistance to change or a preference for sticking with the familiar or the status quo. This bias was evident when in the 1980s, 'New' Coke, a healthier and improved version, was introduced. Despite its identical taste to the original, loyal Coke drinkers strongly opposed the change, opting instead for the comforting familiarity of Coke Classic<sup>7</sup>.

### In the context of inclusive leadership

Status quo bias can hinder the adoption of new ideas within organisations and impede improvements to their policies and culture. Stemming from a desire for stability, status quo bias is the tendency to prefer maintaining the current state, even when better alternatives exist. It often leads leaders to accept suboptimal defaults<sup>8</sup>.

To tackle this bias, inclusive leaders should counter the tendency to dismiss new and unconventional ideas by consistently using a framework to assess the costs, benefits, and risks associated with any new idea brought forward.

5 Tulshyan, "Do Your Diversity Efforts Reflect the Experiences of Women of Colour?"

6 Zheng, "The Failure of the DEI-Industrial Complex."

7 Samuelson and Zeckhauser, "Status Quo Bias in Decision Making."

8 Nikita and Lordan, "Why Leaders Must Keep Their Ego in Check."

## Confirmation bias

Confirmation bias is a cognitive bias where individuals tend to search for, interpret, and remember information in a way that confirms their preexisting beliefs while ignoring or discounting contradictory evidence. Taking advantage of this tendency, social media and search engines are cleverly designed to present you with content and search results that align with your existing beliefs. So, when you and your friend search for the same thing online, you could end up with completely different results!

### In the context of inclusive leadership

Due to confirmation bias, leaders too often (perhaps unintentionally) overlook information that contradicts their own beliefs. They tend to seek, remember, and prioritise information that aligns with their existing viewpoints. In such situations, decision-makers tend to only heed team members who validate their perspectives, completely disregarding dissenting opinions<sup>9</sup>.

To conquer confirmation bias, inclusive leaders should actively seek diverse perspectives, engage with dissenting viewpoints, and remain open to reevaluating their beliefs in light of fresh insights.



<sup>9</sup> Nikita and Lordan, "Why Leaders Must Keep Their Ego in Check"

### 3.3 Learning by example

In a pivotal decision for a tech startup, biases played a significant role as the hiring manager had to choose an engineer. The finalists were Alex, highly qualified with a prestigious degree, and Taylor, with unconventional but impressive problem-solving skills.

Influenced by “confirmation bias” and “status-quo bias,” the hiring manager favoured Alex due to their shared alma mater and more traditional qualifications. This commonality made Alex seem like a familiar and safe choice, leading the manager to actively seek information that confirmed their preconceived belief in Alex’s superiority as a candidate.

The “availability heuristic” also played a role as the manager gave more weight to easily accessible information, such as Alex’s well-documented qualifications. Taylor’s potential, despite exceptional problem-solving skills, wasn’t immediately evident to the hiring manager.

Ultimately, this bias-driven decision resulted in Alex’s selection, missing out on Taylor’s innovative thinking and diverse background, which could have enriched the team. This case highlights how biases and heuristics can impede high-stakes decisions, affecting both individuals and the organisation’s success.



## 3.4 Class activity



### Class activity

**Objective:** Students explore and understand different cognitive biases and their implications for decision-making in diverse settings.

**Activity Description:**

**1** Introduction and Setup:

- Assign students into small groups and provide each group with a list of cognitive biases from this list: <https://thedeclaration.com/biases>

**2** Bias Analysis:

- Each group selects one bias to focus on. They discuss how this bias might manifest in everyday decision-making in schools and could negatively impact decisions.

**3** Avoiding the bias:

- Groups brainstorm and outline strategies that could mitigate their selected bias in their given scenarios.
- Facilitate a class discussion on the common themes and the practicality of proposed strategies in real-world settings.

**Tip:** Use this resource <https://thedeclaration.com/biases> - it lists the definition of various biases as well as how to avoid biases.

## 3.5 Conclusion

Recognising how biases and heuristics can manifest and disrupt inclusive decision-making, is the first step to creating a more inclusive workplace that embraces diversity and fosters a culture of equity and collaboration.




# An experimental approach to becoming an inclusive leader

This lesson will cover how to design, evaluate, and assess the effectiveness of changes and interventions implemented by inclusive leaders. Our focus will be on the IDEA framework, a structured approach while underscoring the pivotal role of context in determining the success of an intervention.

### Session questions:

- What is the importance of an experimental approach in promoting inclusivity within organisations?
- How can the IDEA framework facilitate the design and evaluation of effective EDI interventions?
- Why is context significant in determining the success of an intervention?

### Session outline:

- **Introduction to experimental approaches in leadership:** Overview of the IDEA framework by Dr Grace Jordan.
  - **Deep dive into the IDEA framework**
  - **The role of context in EDI interventions**
-  **Case study:** Detailed case study analysis using the IDEA framework to close a communication gap in an organisation.

## 4.1 The necessity of an experimental approach to inclusion

In today's ever-evolving landscape, leaders are continuously faced with a host of challenges in uncertain environments. These challenges span from the future of their organisations to the dynamics of their workforce, even extending to broader societal issues. To navigate change effectively at multiple levels, leaders must adapt their strategies to fit the specific contexts and challenges they encounter. Embracing an experimental mindset equips leaders with the tools to navigate workplace transformations strategically.

In the realm of inclusivity, despite significant investments in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives, progress has been slow, and numerous persistent challenges persist<sup>1</sup>. It is crucial to examine whether an organisation's commitment to EDI is translating into tangible, positive outcomes. In this pursuit, an experimental approach offers an efficient method for designing customised inclusion interventions to address specific issues and evaluate their effectiveness. This approach involves a thorough assessment of diverse interventions, enabling the thoughtful selection of strategies and actions that align with the organisation's unique circumstances.



<sup>1</sup> Dixon-Fyle et al.,  
"Diversity Wins: How  
Inclusion Matters."



## 4.2 The IDEA framework

The IDEA framework, created by Dr Grace Lordan<sup>2</sup>, is a systematic approach to addressing EDI challenges within organisations. It emphasises taking an experimental and evidence-based approach to create more inclusive workplaces. The IDEA framework comprises four key steps:

### I Identify the problem

The first step is to recognise and understand the specific EDI issues within the organisation. This awareness may stem from an inclusive leader's personal observation or be raised by a team member. A comprehensive assessment is essential to uncover the root causes of these issues, and this may involve data collection, surveys, and discussions to gain insights. Also, it's crucial to establish a clear outcome that will measure or proxy the problem at hand.

### D Design an intervention

Once the problem is recognised, the next step is to design an intervention or solution. In this phase, leaders develop the intervention (strategies, policies, and/or initiatives) that target the identified EDI challenges.

### E Evaluate the intervention

This step entails data collection and ongoing monitoring of the intervention to assess whether the solution is effective and cost-effective. Evaluating the intervention's effectiveness involves comparing it to the cost incurred. In addition, inclusive leaders should plan to periodically evaluate the intervention using the identified proxy for the problem.

### A Assess the intervention

Based on the results of the evaluation phase, inclusive leaders will assess whether to continue, modify, or discontinue the intervention. The evaluation and assessment stages should be conducted regularly, as employees may adapt to the interventions over time.

Overall, an evaluative approach not only demonstrates the progress of the actions but also prevents investment in ineffective interventions. Thus, this approach allows organisations to make informed decisions and adapt their strategies to create more inclusive and equitable work environments.

<sup>2</sup> Lordan and Almeida, "How to Use Science to Know Whether the Change You're Making Is Really Working."

## 4.3 The importance of context

The broader context plays a crucial role in shaping the effectiveness of interventions. Organisations can exhibit significant variations based on factors such as their size, hierarchy, culture, industry, and location. These contextual elements have a substantial impact on how well interventions work. By applying the IDEA framework, inclusive leaders can ensure that the implemented intervention aligns perfectly with their organisation's unique needs and circumstances.

Now consider two different workplace contexts to understand why the impact of a hypothetical intervention may vary across these two contexts:

In Company A, employees of all levels are highly valued. There is a culture of transparency, employees actively participate in shaping workplace processes, knowing their input counts. This fosters happiness and productivity. Employees feel encouraged to share their ideas, and open and respectful discussions are the standard. This positive work environment fosters employee happiness, which, in turn, bolsters productivity. The company acknowledges potential unconscious biases and takes proactive measures to address them. Any instances of bias or discrimination are promptly addressed, and proactive measures are taken to prevent their occurrence.

Conversely, Company B exhibits favouritism from senior management, leading to a lack of diversity. Meetings are often dominated by this exclusive group, causing others to feel apprehensive about speaking up. Diverse employee ideas are often dismissed, resulting in dissatisfaction and reduced productivity. Discussions about inclusion are rare in Company B, leaving little room for awareness of cognitive biases and their repercussions. Instances of discrimination or bias are seldom reported, and when they are, they are typically overlooked by senior management, resulting in no follow-up actions.

In Company A, the impact of introducing an EDI initiative like quotas for diverse hires may somewhat be limited due to the organisation's existing inclusive culture and hiring practices. Nevertheless, the complete elimination of cognitive biases remains a challenge. Hence, this intervention could still be successful in increasing the diversity of new hires. Once these diverse employees join, they will benefit from the inclusive culture already in place, which will enable them to thrive in their roles.

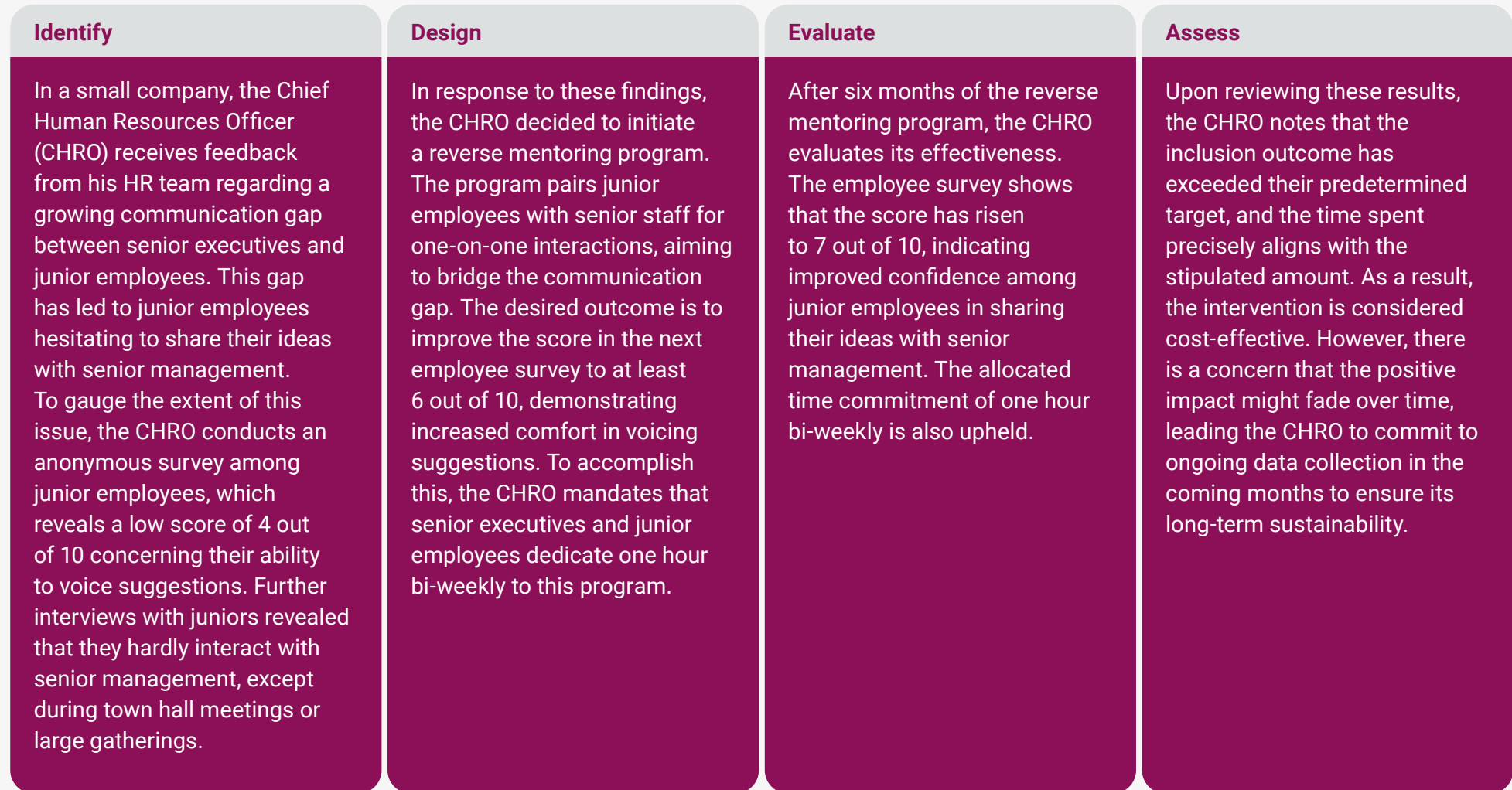
In Company B, diverse hiring quotas would likely have a more substantial impact due to a clear need for improvements due to the prevailing biased culture. However, Company B's culture also discourages employees from addressing their unconscious biases inside the organisation. Those who do wish to confront their biases may become disheartened and might need to adjust their expectations regarding fairness or consider leaving. Ideally, this intervention should be supplemented with additional inclusive practices when new employees join the company.

## 4.4 Learning by example

Now let's delve into a practical example to see how the IDEA framework can be applied to address real-world challenges within an organisation. The below case study exemplifies the framework in action, showcasing how each phase plays a pivotal role in driving inclusive change.



## Closing the communication gap



In essence, by addressing the communication gap between senior executives and junior employees, the CHRO successfully improved inclusivity within the organisation. The positive outcomes indicate that the framework can be a potent tool in fostering a more inclusive workplace.

## 4.5 Class activity



### Class activity

**Objective:** To quickly apply the IDEA framework to a pre-identified problem, focusing on designing, evaluating, and assessing an EDI intervention. Students will engage with a practical application of the IDEA framework, enhancing their ability to think strategically under time constraints.

**Scenario:** In a technology company, a recent internal survey has revealed that female employees feel significantly underrepresented in senior leadership roles. This sentiment has been further supported by data showing that only 15% of senior positions are held by women, despite women making up 40% of the workforce in the company. This disparity has been identified as a critical issue that needs addressing to improve gender diversity at higher levels of the organisation. As the problem is identified, now using the IDEA framework, we need you to design, evaluate and assess the impact of an intervention to solve this problem.

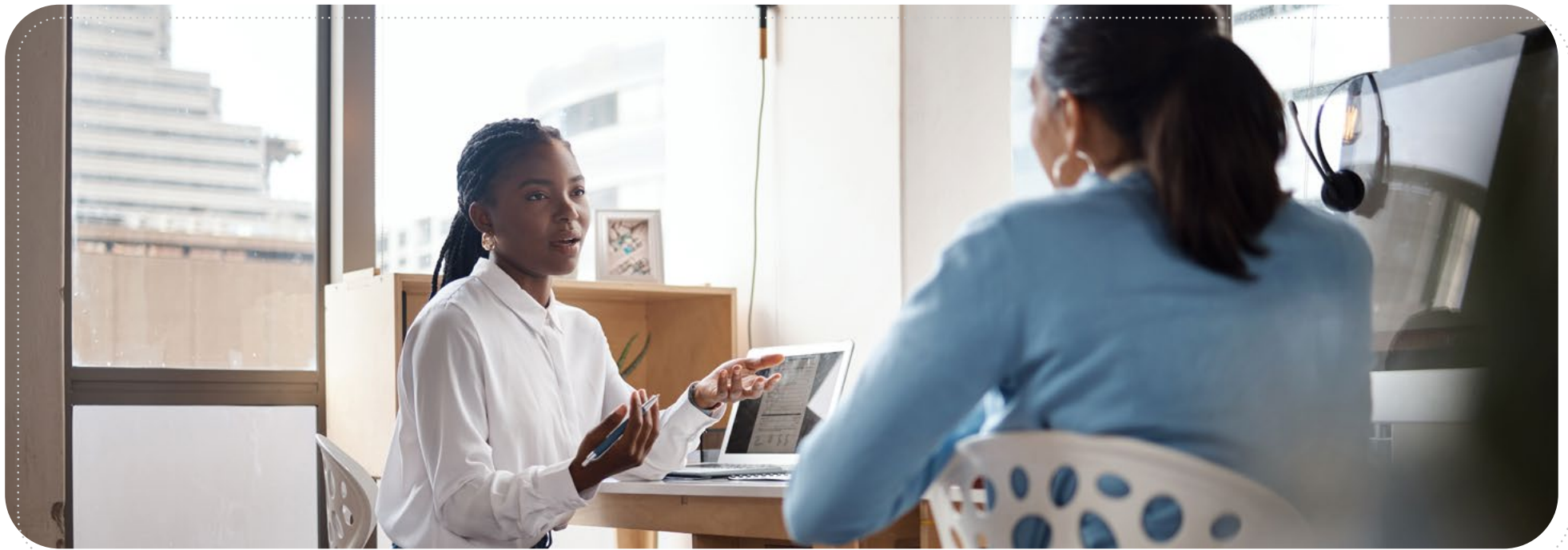
#### Activity description:

- 1 Design an Intervention (D)
  - In groups, ask students to brainstorm one actionable intervention that could help bridge the gender gap in leadership roles. Consider simple strategies like leadership training for potential female leaders or revising criteria for promotion.
- 2 Evaluate the Intervention (E)
  - Ask students to briefly outline key metrics or indicators that would demonstrate the success of the intervention, such as the number of women applying for and obtaining leadership roles within a year.
- 3 Assess the Intervention (A)
  - Ask students to propose a quick follow-up step to assess the intervention's impact after one year.

**Tip:** End with a brief discussion highlighting the potential of such interventions and the importance of the IDEA framework in making informed decisions

## 4.6 Conclusion

The IDEA framework serves as a definitive compass for inclusive leaders, helping them confidently determine the success of their implemented changes. This not only saves time and resources but also prevents the pursuit of ineffective interventions. The framework acknowledges the significance of context, demanding a unique and tailored approach for each specific setting.



# Collaborating with team members

Exploring the dynamics of teamwork reveals both the potential for enhanced innovation and the risks of suboptimal outcomes. In this lesson, we delve into the benefits of diversity and underscore the crucial role of inclusive leadership in realising the full potential of diverse teams.

### Session questions:

- How does team diversity enhance creativity and innovation?
- What is groupthink, and what are its potential drawbacks in team settings?
- What strategies can be employed to prevent groupthink and promote healthy team dynamics?

### Session outline:

- **Introduction to team diversity:** Benefits of having diverse teams in terms of creativity, innovation, and decision-making quality.
- **Understanding Groupthink:** Understand groupthink and analyse the negative consequences of groupthink on team performance and outcomes.
- **Strategies to prevent Groupthink:** Introduce practical strategies to combat groupthink.
- **Role of inclusive leadership:** Discuss the critical role of leaders in fostering a culture that values diversity and open communication.



#### Case study:

Addressing Groupthink

## 5.1 Benefits of team diversity

Individuals from diverse backgrounds can play a transformative role within a group's social majority as they bring a wide range of experiences, perspectives, skills, and networks to the table. Diverse teams are more likely to regularly review facts, maintaining objectivity and encouraging rigorous scrutiny of each member's contributions<sup>1</sup>. This continuous assessment sharpens their collective cognitive abilities and encourages vigilance. Research confirms that diverse teams tend to be more innovative<sup>2</sup> and creative<sup>3</sup>.

However, the advantages of diversity within a team may remain untapped if individuals don't feel included or are unable to express their opinions freely. Groupthink and a lack of psychological safety are two significant barriers that can hinder the full potential of diverse individuals and teams. In this lesson, we'll explore the concept of groupthink, and the subsequent lesson will delve into the topic of psychological safety.



- 1 Rock and Grant, "Why Diverse Teams Are Smarter."
- 2 "Why Don't More Organizations Understand the Power of Diversity and Inclusion?"
- 3 Johansson, "Why Diverse and Inclusive Teams Are the Engines of Innovation."



## 5.2 Groupthink

Groupthink<sup>4</sup> is a phenomenon where people in a group make decisions without critically assessing consequences or alternatives. Succumbing to the desire for conformity and/or harmony, members feel compelled to avoid dissent and to agree with the group decision at all costs. While groupthink minimises conflict, it typically leads to unchallenged decisions, which are more likely to be suboptimal<sup>5</sup>.

The tendency to form social groups (in-group and out-group) and the development of biases based on group membership influences group dynamics. Out-groups are often perceived as having differing ideologies, beliefs, and behaviours from the in-group, leading to less favourable attitudes and negative stereotypes. Conversely, in-groups are social groups where members strongly identify with one another. For example, a visiting cricket team in a school can be perceived as an out-group, while the home team becomes the in-group. However, even within a single team, subgroups may emerge, and members from the in-group may regard some other team members as the out-group.

In meetings where members aim to address complex issues, analyse decision costs and benefits, or devise new strategies, groupthink can present a significant challenge. Developed by social psychologist Irving Janis<sup>6</sup> in 1972, the theory of groupthink highlights several causes, including:

- **Overconfidence:** Group members overestimate their power and invincibility, leading to excessive optimism and a dismissal of warning signs.
- **Collective rationalisation:** Group members construct rationalisations to justify their beliefs, ignoring conflicting arguments.
- **Stereotyped view of others:** Dissenters or out-group members are unfairly stereotyped as biased, incompetent, evil, or irrational.
- **Pressure to conform:** Dissenting members face direct pressure to conform, discouraging them from presenting their arguments.

4 Sunstein and Hastie, "Making Dumb Groups Smarter."

5 Rose, "Diverse Perspectives on the Groupthink Theory – A Literary Review."

6 Hart, "Groupthink, Risk-Taking and Recklessness."

## Impact of groupthink

Neglecting to address groupthink in meetings can result in suboptimal outcomes for teams, particularly in knowledge-based endeavours like product creation, innovation, and risk assessment. Groupthink introduces harmful dynamics that inclusive leaders must avoid, such as overemphasis on shared information and group polarisation, as we explain below.

**Overemphasis on shared information:** Shared information refers to the knowledge or data that is known by all members of a group. Groupthink amplifies the “common knowledge effect<sup>7</sup>,” where information held by all members carries more weight in decisions than information held by a few. This is because common knowledge is more frequently shared and comprehended, particularly in familiar topics, hindering the presentation of innovative ideas. Those sharing shared information are viewed more favourably, while dissenting voices may self-censor to avoid damaging their reputation.

Withholding information in a group results in subpar collective knowledge, leaving diverse perspectives unheard and preventing the group from acquiring accurate information.

**Group polarisation:** Group polarisation is the tendency of a group to make decisions that lean towards more extreme positions than the initial inclinations of its individual members. The dominance of in-groups can intensify group polarisation, especially within tightly-knit groups with strong shared identities<sup>8</sup>. Group members conform to the group norm and the social pressure from the group. This makes it challenging to dissent against the in-group norms.

The group’s initial predisposition influences its final stance, with risk-takers becoming more risk-inclined and risk-averse members becoming more cautious after discussion, leading to polarisation. Group polarisation occurs because initial predispositions receive more attention than opposing arguments, pushing deliberations toward extremes.

Therefore, addressing groupthink is vital to ensure well-informed decisions in team settings.

<sup>7</sup> Sunstein and Hastie, “Making Dumb Groups Smarter.”

<sup>8</sup> Sunstein and Hastie.

## 5.3 Addressing groupthink

### Identifying groupthink

Beyond organisational contexts, groupthink can manifest in any team discussion. Here are three key indicators that inclusive leaders employ to recognise groupthink, which you can also apply to identify the presence of groupthink within your teams when collaborating on school projects.

- **Silent participants:** Ideally, all group members should actively participate to reach optimal decisions and prevent cascading. Pay attention to members who are not speaking and inquire about the reasons for their silence. They may have previously experienced their ideas being unheard or fear dissent. Can you assure them that if they speak up in your group their voice will be heard? Can you assure them that their ideas will be given recognition?
- **Overly vocal members:** Evaluate whether certain individuals dominate the discussion by speaking excessively. This dominance can heavily influence group decisions, potentially indicating groupthink. Identify who consistently speaks the most and whether their beliefs steer the group. Can you politely interrupt a colleague that is dominating the conversation and make space for other voices to be heard?
- **Inclusivity:** Recognise if the group systematically overlooks the views of members who appear different from the majority or differ from the group's common perspective. Reflect on whether specific individuals or people with particular characteristics (e.g., introverts, those with visible disabilities, or individuals with differing political ideologies) are being ignored in discussions. Can you step in and help all individuals get voice and visibility?

## 5.4 Learning by example

Now let's discuss the interventions that inclusive leaders apply in team settings to promote diversity of thought, healthy debate, and well-informed decision-making. You can also apply these in your teams in school the next time you have a team project to do together. Here is the story of Latonya, who effectively combated groupthink using three interventions.

Meet Latonya, a high school student and a member of the student council. Their council was working on a proposal for a school-wide event, but during a brainstorming session, they found themselves caught in the trap of groupthink. The group discussions were heavily influenced by the ideas put forth by the two senior council leaders, who proposed organising a dance and a music festival as the event. Consequently, the quieter students hesitated to voice their alternative opinions, and a sense of conformity began to overshadow the creative exchange of ideas.

Latonya, recognised for her inclusive leadership skills, decided to break free from this conformity and ensure all voices were heard. She implemented three interventions to combat groupthink.

First, she suggested the creation of a **"Devil's Advocate"** role within the council. She volunteered to be the first to take on this position and provide constructive criticism and dissent without fear. The Devil Advocate's responsibility is to challenge prevailing ideas and assumptions, promoting healthy debate. The role rotated among members to allow different team members to voice dissenting views.

Simultaneously, Latonya proposed an "Idea Box", for **Anonymous Idea Generation**, where council members could submit their respective event ideas anonymously. This approach allowed everyone to feel comfortable expressing their views without fear of reprisal. Fresh ideas started to float in like a community service day, a talent show, and an outdoor hike day.

To add an external perspective to their deliberations, Latonya also suggested creating a “**Red Team**” for the council, comprised of students who weren’t part of the student council but had a fresh perspective. The external review by the Red Team helped to critically assess the council’s decisions and challenge the status quo. For instance, the external students highlighted that an outdoor hike may not be inclusive for school members with disabilities and also suggested a collaboration with local artists to create an art installation.

The result was a school-wide event proposal that combined elements of a talent show, a bake sale for charity, and an art exhibition.

Latonya’s story demonstrates that combating groupthink and addressing groupthink requires embracing dissent and fostering an open and inclusive team culture. Whether you’re in a student council or any other team, remember that diversity of thought and well-informed decision-making are within your power to create.



## 5.5 Class activity



### Class activity

**Objective:** To enhance critical thinking and reduce the risk of groupthink by incorporating the role of a Devil's Advocate in team discussions. The activity will help students practice debating and defending their ideas in a constructive manner, enhancing their critical thinking skills.

**Activity Description:**

- Divide the students into two groups and assign one as 'Council Members' and the other as 'Devil's Advocate' and explain the roles as below:
  - Council Members: Support the proposed theme and prepare to defend their viewpoints while considering the criticisms presented by the Devil's Advocate. Council Members to outline their reasons for choosing the "Retro Rewind" theme, discussing potential benefits such as increased engagement and nostalgia appeal.
  - Devil's Advocate: Appointed to challenge the prevailing idea and propose alternative perspectives or potential drawbacks. The Devil's Advocate to raise concerns and potential issues with the "Retro Rewind" theme. For example, they might question whether the theme would truly resonate with younger students or pose concerns about the cost and availability of appropriate decorations and activities. The Devil's Advocate can also suggest alternative themes.
- Stage encourages a back-and-forth debate between groups 'Council Members' and 'Devil's Advocate' to explore the depth of the original decision.
- Discuss as a class the effectiveness of having a Devil's Advocate. Was it useful? Did it change anyone's opinion or strengthen the original idea?
- Reflect on how the role of the Devil's Advocate can help prevent groupthink and encourage more thorough consideration of different options.

## 5.6 Conclusion

This lesson has shed light on the importance of diversity in teams and the detrimental effects of groupthink. By understanding the causes and impact of groupthink, and by implementing inclusive leadership strategies, inclusive leaders combat groupthink effectively.

# Cultivating psychological safety

In this lesson, you will explore the concept of psychological safety within a team. You'll discover how inclusive leadership is crucial for creating psychological safety in a team, which, in turn, encourages open communication and collaboration, leading to collective growth.

### Session questions:

- What is psychological safety and why is it important in a team setting?
- How does inclusive leadership contribute to psychological safety?
- What specific actions can leaders take to foster psychological safety daily?

### Session outline:

- **Introduction to psychological safety:** Significance of psychological safety in a team.
- **Role of inclusive leadership in fostering psychological safety:** How inclusive leaders can create an environment where team members feel safe to express themselves without fear of negative consequences.
- **Practices to enhance psychological safety:** Explore everyday actions and leadership behaviours that contribute to a psychologically safe workplace.



**Case study:** Analyse a case study to illustrate the practical application of psychological safety practices in a team setting.

## 6.1 Psychological safety

Psychological safety means that team members share a belief that it's safe to take interpersonal risks. They can freely speak up with ideas, questions, and concerns, or admit mistakes without fear of punishment or humiliation<sup>1</sup>.

In teams with a strong sense of psychological safety, members feel at ease sharing their ideas, voicing questions, and expressing concerns, even if they challenge the status quo or question leadership. Dissenting opinions are valued and team members don't shy away from asking for help when needed, confident that their requests will be heard and respected. When mistakes happen, team members feel comfortable admitting them, understanding that errors are opportunities for learning. Teams that foster psychological safety strive for excellence and celebrate each other's successes.

### **The relationship between psychological safety, inclusive leadership, and team success**

Inclusive leadership is a cornerstone for establishing psychologically safe work environments. It's defined by leaders who openly acknowledge their limitations and mistakes while valuing their team members. This not only promotes a sense of inclusion but also encourages team members to freely express their true selves, confident that their differences won't lead to rejection. Inclusivity nurtures a culture of openness, growth, and change, where team members willingly share knowledge and contribute ideas.

An inclusive leader ensures then makes sure that all team members are engaged and included in the process, recognising their inherent value within the team. They champion inclusive practices in both everyday interactions and critical decision-making processes. By doing so, they foster an environment where team members feel psychologically safe to voice their opinions, share innovative ideas, and express concerns without fear of reprisal.

<sup>1</sup> McKinsey, "What Is Psychological Safety?"



While inclusive leadership sets the tone, each individual within the team holds a pivotal role in cultivating an inclusive workplace that prioritises psychological safety. Inclusive individuals actively demonstrate empathy and respect towards their colleagues, embracing diverse backgrounds and perspectives in their team. Advocating for inclusive practices, these individuals actively collaborate with colleagues, serving as allies to those who encounter barriers or challenges. This collective commitment of inclusive individuals not only strengthens the team but helps to create a safe space for colleagues to express their true self.

When psychological safety is fostered, through the help of inclusive leaders and individuals, it empowers diverse teams to excel and reach their full potential.<sup>2</sup> With every team member finding their tasks meaningful, demonstrating competence, embracing self-determination, and believing in the positive impact of their efforts, they become more receptive to fresh perspectives and innovative approaches, leading to team success. This elevated openness and support from leadership creates the ideal conditions for nurturing creativity and achieving team success through unconventional and innovative means.<sup>3</sup>

## 6.2 Strategies for cultivating psychological safety in daily leadership.

Cultivating psychological safety needs to be embedded in the everyday practices of inclusive leaders. Inclusive Leaders can build psychologically safe teams in several ways<sup>4</sup>:

- **Advocating a diversity mindset:** As we learnt in Lesson 2, inclusive leaders acknowledge the great benefits diversity can confer on team dynamics and performance. This is why inclusive leaders promote a diverse mindset to encourage team members to value unique perspectives and information. They create a work culture where diversity is appreciated, and team members feel comfortable challenging ideas.
- **Stimulating team information elaboration:** “Team information elaboration” means that when a group of people works together, they talk and share their thoughts and information in a way that deepens their understanding by discussing and adding context. Inclusive leaders can play a crucial role in this process by being open to different viewpoints and encouraging the team to consider ideas from various angles. When leaders support and promote diversity in the team, it improves the team’s grasp of different viewpoints.

2 Bresman and Edmondson, “Research: To Excel, Diverse Teams Need Psychological Safety”  
3 Khan et al., “Does Inclusive Leadership Affect Project Success?”  
4 Edmondson, “Psychological Safety and Learning Behavior in Work Teams.”

- **Encouraging team reflexivity:** Team reflexivity is a concept that involves a team's ability to reflect on its own performance, processes, and dynamics. In simpler terms, it means that a team takes the time to think about and discuss how they are working together and what they can do to improve. This self-awareness helps the team become more effective and efficient over time. In team reflexivity conversations, inclusive leaders should talk about what the team has learned from diverse team members and diverse perspectives, and how to further use everyone's skills and knowledge effectively.

In addition to the essential actions mentioned, here are some traits that can help inclusive leaders improve psychological safety in their teams:

- **Positive mood:** A leader's positive mood has been shown to boost team inclusivity. People tend to catch the emotions of their leader, and this can impact their sense of psychological safety<sup>5</sup>. If an inclusive leader is in a poor mood, they should recognise the potential impact on team dynamics. They can choose to be vulnerable in this scenario and acknowledge their mood with a sense of humour, which can lessen the negative impact. Being vulnerable about their feelings also signals openness, which boosts psychological safety.
- **Belonginess:** We all have a natural need to belong and feel valued. This is crucial for leading teams that are engaged and productive. A key to success is asking the team how they want to build these connections, like organising team lunches, sharing highlights in a newsletter, playing online games, or participating in activities outside of work. Taking the time to listen to your team members can make a big difference in how the team works together.
- **Playful attitude:** Playing games and using appropriate humour can make the team feel more at ease and perform better as it allows team members to interact in a genuine, enjoyable, and relaxed way, which helps create a comfortable team environment<sup>6</sup>.

5 Skakon et al., "Are Leaders' Well-Being, Behaviours and Style Associated with the Affective Well-Being of Their Employees?"  
6 Almeida and Josten, "Not a Joke."

## 6.3 Learning by example

A new team, Team Lisbon, came together for a special project, but they faced the challenge of coming together as a team. These skilled diverse individuals, strangers to one another, held back their true selves and ideas, creating a void of psychological safety and belonging within the team.

Amidst this uncertainty, Teresa, an inclusive team member, recognised the hesitancy and decided to lead by example. They understood that psychological safety required more than just meetings and rules – needed a playful and curious attitude.

They introduced one-on-one coffee sessions among team members, providing a chance for everyone to get to know each other beyond work. In a workplace filled with people from various backgrounds, this personal connection created an atmosphere of acceptance.

Teresa also organised inclusive team activities that catered to everyone's interests and abilities, ensuring that every team member had opportunities to participate in the team activities. Additionally, they suggested kicking off their long office meeting every week with a light-hearted 15-minute game that allowed everyone to engage and bond.

As the team embraced these opportunities to connect and understand each other, a profound sense of belonging began to grow. Team members felt increasingly at ease expressing their ideas and doubts, knowing that they would be met with empathy and acceptance.

Teresa's approach created a safe and lively environment where Team Lisbon not only thrived but also became more innovative, collaborative, and closely-knit. Team Lisbon showed that creating belongingness and having a playful attitude can turn a group of strangers into a united, inspired, and psychologically safe team, ready to conquer any challenge that comes their way.

## 6.4 Class activity



### Class activity

**Objective:** To encourage students to think critically about additional strategies for improving psychological safety in a team setting, using Teresa's efforts as a starting point.

**Activity steps:**

- Recap Teresa's initial efforts to improve psychological safety in her team.
- **Discussion prompt:** What else could Teresa do to enhance the psychological safety of her team? Consider additional activities, policy changes, or leadership behaviours that could further foster an environment where team members feel safe and valued.
- **Examples for discussion:**
  - Could Teresa implement regular feedback sessions where team members can discuss what is working and what isn't in a safe, structured environment?
  - Might setting up a mentorship program within the team help newer or quieter members feel more integrated and valued?
  - What if Teresa introduced a role rotation system where each team member takes turns leading the weekly meetings, ensuring all voices are heard and everyone is included?
- Summarise the key ideas proposed, emphasising the importance of continual effort and adaptation in cultivating psychological safety.

## 6.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this lesson highlights the critical connection between psychological safety, inclusive leadership, and team success. When teams foster psychological safety through inclusive leadership, they create an environment where diverse team members can express themselves, leading to open communication, innovation, and collective growth.

# Driving your future success through inclusivity

Throughout this course, the focus has been on utilising insights from behavioural science to enhance inclusion and team outcomes. However, these insights can also be applied to your personal development. To improve one's own development, it is crucial to acknowledge your progress in your career journey and establish clear goals to reach your full potential. By intentionally cultivating good habits, seeking support from networks and available resources, and engaging in critical System 2 thinking, you can set yourself up for success as you strive towards your personal career goals.

### Session questions:

- How can reflecting on your past progress influence your future goal-setting?
- How can System 2 Thinking enhance personal and career development?
- What role do diverse mentors and advisors play in personal growth?
- How can you apply inclusivity principles to cultivate good habits and achieve career goals?

### Session outline:

- **Introduction to inclusivity in personal development:** Importance of inclusivity in personal growth and career advancement.
- **Reflecting on the past to inform the future:** Understand the common tendency to underestimate future achievements.
- **The Role of System 2 Thinking:** How to employ System 2 Thinking in setting and achieving personal and professional goals.
- **Seeking Support:** The importance of building a diverse network of mentors and advisors.



**Case study:** Analyse a case study that illustrates the successful application of inclusive leadership and behavioural science principles in achieving personal growth.

## 7.1 Achieving your objectives

To begin, take a moment to reflect on who you were five years ago and consider any significant life changes that have occurred since then. These changes need not be solely related to education; they can encompass friendships, relocation, hobbies, or even involvement in school clubs. Have you noticed any shifts in your personality? How about your ability to handle different situations? Have you made any changes to your physical appearance or style? Make a list of all the notable changes you can recall. Next, outline the changes you anticipate making in the next five years.

Dr Lordan often does this exercise while she is teaching behavioural science to executive students. On each occasion, the lists produced through reflection are noticeably lengthier and more ambitious than those focused on thinking ahead to the next five years.

There is a common tendency for individuals to underestimate their potential achievements within the medium term, despite acknowledging significant progress made in the past<sup>1</sup>. Rather than solely striving for the next assignment or exam, it is advisable to aim for what one truly aspires to become. Individuals who envision themselves as senior leaders at the beginning of their careers tend to progress at a much faster rate compared to those who solely dream of their next promotion<sup>2</sup>.



- 1 Lordan, *Think Big*.
- 2 Groysberg, Kelly, and MacDonald, "The New Path To the C-Suite."

## Leverage the power of System 2 thinking

The key lies in continuously taking small strides towards your objective. By slowing down, employing System 2 thinking, and incorporating relevant good habits, you can grant yourself a valuable gift. If you are already planning to adopt this approach to being an inclusive leader, why not apply it to achieve your own goals as well? Just like inclusive leadership, these habits will require conscious and deliberate execution initially, using System 2 thinking. Eventually, these habits will become ingrained in your System 1, effortlessly integrated into your identity.

Here are two actions you can take to maximise your chances of realising your goal:

**Journal your habits, milestones, and future intentions:** It is crucial to make your progress noticeable by evaluating your habits and acknowledging any milestones you achieve. Dedicate an hour to document the behaviours you practised during the past week that moved you closer to your goal. This is also an appropriate moment to set intentions for the upcoming week.

**Find mentors who are aligned with your goal:** Mentors can be a valuable source of motivation and support, helping you overcome obstacles along your journey. It is important to seek out at least one mentor who understands and shares your vision. Take some time to reflect on the qualities this person should possess, whether it's someone who is sensitive and empathetic or someone who can toughen you up. Furthermore, if you're able to seek out multiple mentors who can offer different perspectives and insights, their diverse vantage points will be very beneficial, just like how diverse teams benefit businesses.

## 7.2 How to have a diverse set of advisors?

When you start working or even think about seeking career advice, seek out individuals who bring diversity to your circle of advisors in your future job or within your extended network. This could include colleagues, clients, or even those you admire on professional platforms like LinkedIn. Take the initiative to connect with these individuals and ask for their guidance and insights to foster your personal growth. How can you go about this? Generally, most of us are hesitant to ask for help or reach out to people we don't know well. Why is that? It's because we fear rejection and the possibility of embarrassing ourselves<sup>3</sup>. The pain associated with potential rejection stems from the uncertainty of whether the person will say yes, and our tendency to overestimate the likelihood of them saying no. It is this anticipation of their response, rather than the actual discomfort of being turned down, that often holds us back from asking for help.

Don't worry, the chances of receiving a favourable response are quite high. Studies indicate that we often significantly underestimate our likelihood of receiving a positive reaction<sup>4</sup>. So, go ahead and select your preferred group of mentors, put yourself out there, and ask for the assistance you require. Next, seek out mentors among individuals you have yet to meet. There's a significant benefit in stepping out of your comfort zone and connecting with new people. This refers to in-depth conversations that can take place either in person or online. One of the major takeaways from the COVID-19 pandemic is how the technology available to us enables us to establish connections even without physical contact. Research reveals that broader social networks lead to more and improved career prospects<sup>5</sup>.

3 Sandstrom and Boothby, "Why Do People Avoid Talking to Strangers?"

4 Boothby et al., "The Liking Gap in Conversations."

5 Stroebe and Kuchler, "The Economic Effects of Social Networks."



As a leader who values inclusivity, you now understand that having a diverse set of perspectives fosters creativity and drives innovation. Make a conscious effort today to incorporate the same diversity into your personal life and ensure that your own group of career mentors is composed of individuals from various backgrounds. Keep in mind that you're not alone in your career journey. As you progress in your career and promote inclusive leadership, bear in mind that the people you encounter are also working on developing their skills and succeeding in life.

Whenever you meet new individuals, you're unaware of the challenges they may be facing in their personal or professional lives. They could be dealing with a hostile work environment, encountering barriers because they don't belong to the in-group, or falling prey to the biases and blind spots that we've been striving to overcome in our own team. They may lack resilience or have never had the opportunity to be guided by an inclusive leader like yourself.

Therefore, when you come across someone for the first time, take a moment to consider that there may be an opportunity for you to offer assistance. Instead of jumping to negative conclusions, try to be patient and attentive. It's important to slow down and pay attention to the people around you. While our fast brain (System 1) allows us to function efficiently on autopilot, it can also cause us to overlook important moments when others outside of our immediate focus need our attention. Taking the time to notice these moments can be valuable.



## 7.3 Learning by example

Harpreet was a high school student who had always been focused on academic achievement and extracurricular involvement. However, they had never taken the time to reflect on their personal goals and aspirations beyond school. This lack of clarity made Harpreet feel uncertain about their future and anxious about making decisions.

One day, Harpreet's teacher introduced a lesson on setting clear goals for personal development. The lesson emphasised the importance of acknowledging progress, establishing clear objectives, and incorporating good habits into daily routines. Harpreet realised that they had been underestimating their potential and decided to take action.

They started by reflecting on who they were a year ago and the changes they had gone through since then. They noticed that they had become more confident in their academic abilities but had neglected their personal interests and passions. Harpreet then outlined the changes they wanted to make in the next year, such as improving their public speaking skills, getting involved in community service, and exploring their creative side through art and writing.

Harpreet also learned about the importance of incorporating good habits into their daily routine. They decided to start journaling their habits and milestones, dedicating time each week to reflect on their progress and set intentions for the upcoming week. They also made a conscious effort to practice mindfulness and self-care, recognising that their mental and emotional well-being was crucial to their overall success.

To further maximise their chances of achieving their goals, Harpreet sought out mentors who were aligned with their interests and aspirations. They reached out to teachers, counsellors, and professionals in fields they were interested in, asking for guidance and insights. Harpreet was nervous about asking for help, but they soon realised that most people were happy to offer support and advice. They also made sure to seek out mentors from diverse backgrounds and experiences, recognising the value of different perspectives and insights.

To further maximise their chances of achieving their goals, Harpreet sought out mentors who were aligned with their interests and aspirations. They reached out to teachers, counsellors, and professionals in fields they were interested in, asking for guidance and insights. Harpreet was nervous about asking for help, but they soon realised that most people were happy to offer support and advice. They also made sure to seek out mentors from diverse backgrounds and experiences, recognising the value of different perspectives and insights.

As they continued to cultivate good habits and seek out mentorship, Harpreet noticed a shift in their mindset and confidence. They felt more empowered to take on new challenges and pursue their passions. They also became more aware of the biases and blind spots that had been holding them back, such as their tendency to underestimate their own abilities and their fear of failure.

Harpreet learned that driving their future success through inclusivity was not just about promoting diversity and inclusivity in their community, but also about incorporating those values into their personal growth and development. They realised that having a diverse set of advisors and mentors was crucial to gaining unique insights and that practising inclusivity in their daily life could help them become a more empathetic and effective leader.



## 7.4 Class activity



### Class activity

**Objective:** To help students reflect on their past experiences and set informed goals for their future.

#### Part 1: Reflection and planning (During section 7.1)

Instead of simply telling the students about the reflection exercise discussed in 7.1, you can ask students about it in the class itself.

#### Activity description:

- **Individual reflection:** Students spend a few minutes writing down significant changes in their lives over the past five years. Ask them to consider various dimensions of their life, such as personal growth and academic achievements. Encourage them to think about changes in their personality, skills, hobbies, physical appearance and relationships.
- **Future planning:** Students then outline their aspirations for the next five years, They should think about their academic and career aspirations, hobbies they want to take up, and personal development goals.
- **Comparing the lists:** After creating both lists, students should compare their past changes with their future goals. This comparison aims to highlight the potential underestimation of their future growth, as discussed in the session.

#### Part 2: Enhancing future goals (after completing the lesson)

After going through the lesson, you can ask students to do the following.

#### Activity description:

- **Sharing session:** Students share their past reflections and future plans with a partner or small group. Encourage them to consider how different viewpoints could provide new insights or highlight overlooked opportunities.
- **Group reflection:** Conclude the activity with a group reflection where students can discuss common themes and surprises in their earlier discussions. This session should focus on how understanding the lesson could modify or enhance their approach to future goal-setting. For example, ask how can journalling help them or having a diverse set of mentors help them?

## 7.5 Read at leisure



### Read at leisure

To explore the integration of behavioural science in personal and professional development, consider the following recommended reading:

**“Think Big” by Dr Grace Lordan:** This book offers a practical guide to achieving big life goals by harnessing the power of behavioural science. Dr Lordan provides insights into how small, deliberate actions can lead to substantial changes in your life. She emphasises the importance of setting clear objectives, overcoming biases through self-awareness, and leveraging System 2 thinking to make thoughtful, calculated decisions. The book is particularly useful for those looking to apply behavioural science to drive success in both their personal lives and careers, encouraging readers to think bigger and act strategically to realise their potential.

## 7.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, driving your future success through inclusivity involves applying insights from behavioural science to your personal development. By reflecting on your past and setting clear goals for the future, cultivating good habits, seeking support from diverse mentors, and engaging in critical System 2 thinking, you can overcome biases and blind spots that may hold you back. Harpreet’s story illustrates the power of taking intentional steps towards personal growth and the importance of having a diverse set of advisors. By incorporating inclusivity into your personal and professional life, you can unlock your full potential and achieve your aspirations.

## Human Security



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### Inclusive Leadership



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