



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

TOWARDS A MEASUREMENT OF SOCIAL COHESION FOR AFRICA

A discussion paper prepared by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation for the United Nations Development Programme





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29 June 2016

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Acronyms

APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EU	European Union
GPS	Governance, Peace and Security
HDI	Human Development Index
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IJR	Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
NCIC	National Cohesion and Integration Commission
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NSO	National Statistics Offices
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
SASAS	South African Social Attitudes Survey
SCI	Social Cohesion Index
SCIVA	Social Cohesion Index Variance-Adjusted
SeeD	Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development
SHaSA	Strategic Harmonization of Statistics in Africa
SMI	Scanlon-Monash Index of Social Cohesion
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Executive Summary

This research was commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and conducted by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR), for the purpose of conceptualising a new measure of social cohesion for Africa.

Social cohesion is a complex subject, and to date there is no single definition that is used internationally. Its theoretical origins are often traced to the early work of theorists including Émile Durkheim and Ferdinand Tönnies, who proposed that social cohesion was an aspect of the quality of life in a society that resulted from solidarity, shared loyalty, and interdependence between people. From an African perspective, there are parallels between social cohesion and Ubuntu and related concepts that pre-date European theory and include values focused on community, altruism, solidarity, and interdependence.

Interest in social cohesion has increased among governments and international governance institutions since the late 1990s. In countries like Canada and Australia, this was in response to deepening social division resulting from, among other factors, economic inequality and insecurity and migration trends. Cohesive societies have been found to achieve stronger economic growth, deter conflict and social instability, support democracy and consensus-based decisions, and offer better quality of life and health outcomes for members.

Despite this growing interest in social cohesion internationally, there are a number of challenges around the concept. First, conceptual and definitional ambiguity confirms the vagueness of the idea of social cohesion, to the extent that it is sometimes referred to as a 'quasi-concept.' Second, as a result of this ambiguity, social cohesion is inherently difficult to measure. Finally, there can be problematic consequences that result from highly cohesive

societies, including exclusionary attitudes and practices and isolation from outside influences and people.

Nonetheless, because of the many benefits associated with social cohesion, a number of international initiatives have been developed to measure social cohesion. These are almost always based on public opinion data, and generally test issues such as interpersonal trust, feelings of acceptance and belonging, identity, perceptions of inequality, civil and political participation, safety from crime and violence, confidence in institutions, and tolerance and approval of diversity. Some measures also include additional, objective data from secondary sources, for example on poverty levels or income inequality.

Based on a high-level literature review and international benchmarking of seven measures used internationally, this paper proposes six provisional dimensions for the measurement of social cohesion in Africa. These are inclusion (social and economic participation, quality of life); belonging (identity, shared norms and values, feelings of acceptance); social relationship (networks, trust, acceptance and value of diversity); participation (in political life); legitimacy (trust in institutions and feel represented); and, security (feelings of safety from violence and crime).

A number of proposed next steps emerge from this research, including conducting a comprehensive literature review focused on indicators and available data and resources; validation of the proposed measurement framework; determining a methodology to be used, including whether or not new primary research should be commissioned; developing and testing a pilot instrument; and finalising a social cohesion measure for Africa.



1. Introduction

The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Regional Service Centre for Africa and the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation have begun discussions on the development of a measurement instrument of social cohesion on a national and regional level across the African continent. These discussions are premised on a shared understanding of the intertwined relationship between inclusive development and social cohesion. The one is not sustainable without the other. A better understanding of this relationship and the variables that affect each component will enable policy makers across the continent to assess the quality of development and the extent to which it promotes greater cohesion within the borders of countries, but also within the regions where they are located.

As described in the Terms of Reference for the project, published in June 2015, the research is aligned with the UNDP's efforts to identify innovative conflict prevention mechanisms and enhance capacity to anticipate, analyse, and foster resilience against shocks and threats in Africa, as well as to promote regional integration within the framework of the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063.

1.1 DEFINING SOCIAL COHESION

From the outset of this research, it is important to state that social cohesion is complex. There is no single accepted definition of the term internationally (Bruhn, 2009; Dragolov *et al*, 2013b; Jenson, 2010). This is despite the expansive body of theory, research and policy that has developed around social cohesion.

The concept of social cohesion is often traced to the work of 19th century sociologists including Émile Durkheim and Ferdinand Tönnies. In these early contributions, social cohesion was posited as part of a society's quality of life (Dragolov *et al*, 2013a, p.12). Theorists proposed that social cohesion consisted of

elements including solidarity, shared loyalty and the interdependence of people (Fenger, 2012: 40).

From an African perspective, there are parallels between social cohesion and Ubuntu – a concept shared across many cultural groups and with variations in multiple languages (Kamwangamalu, 1999).¹ Ubuntu focuses on “the importance of community, altruism, solidarity, sharing and caring.” According to Ngcoya (2015, p. 253), it is a worldview that advocates interdependence, respect, reciprocity, and hospitality, and the idea that “our true human potential can only be realised in partnership with others.” The concept of Ubuntu pre-dates the works of Durkheim, Tönnies, and their peers.

Notably, social cohesion only became a major policy focus and goal for governments and international institutions during the 1990s. As will be discussed in greater depth in later sections of this report, this has prompted new conversations about definitions, research and measurement (Dragolov *et al*, 2013a, p.12).

The UNDP, like other international institutions such as the World Bank and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), has introduced social cohesion into its work globally. Social cohesion is characterised as an “elusive concept—easier to recognise by its absence than by any definition.” According to the UNDP (2009, p. 14), social cohesion has two main dimensions: first, reducing disparities, inequalities, and social exclusion; and second, strengthening social relations, interactions, and ties. It also involves “tolerance of, and respect for diversity (in terms of religion, ethnicity, economic situation, political preferences, sexuality, gender and age)—both institutionally and individually.” When societies lack cohesion, the results may include “increased social tension, violent crime, targeting of minorities, human rights violations, and, ultimately, violent conflict.”

1.2 WHY SHOULD SOCIETIES BE COHESIVE?

It is also important to consider why social cohesion is important and has become a policy concern and goal for many countries and regions around the world.

Nineteenth and twentieth century theory—predominantly within the disciplines of sociology, social psychology, and philosophy—produced some initial answers:

- **Good relationships between people:** cohesiveness leads to stronger, more binding group membership (Festinger *et al.*, 1950, in Bruhn, 2009, p. 32).
- **Group security:** a group creates a 'secure front' when its members accept shared norms, leading to greater security (Cartwright, 1950; Cartwright and Zander, 1953).
- **Consensus:** social cohesion strengthens consensus-based societies, and individuals are more willing to sacrifice individual judgements (Back, 1951; Asch, 1952; Miligram, 1965).
- **Deterring anti-social behaviour:** group cohesiveness reduces the risk of individual alienation from society and anti-social behaviour (LeBon, 1908; Durkheim, 1897)

More recent research also confirms the benefits of social cohesion for contemporary societies and is arguably more grounded and relevant for the UNDP and this study:

- **Economic growth:** cohesive societies tend to grow more quickly and weather economic shocks more effectively; unemployment and slow growth, in turn, may detract from cohesion (Easterly, Ritzan, and Woolcock, 2006, pp. 10-11; Dhéret, 2015, pp. 1; 3; Beauvais and Jenson, 2002).
- **Stability and peace:** social cohesion works against polarisation that sometimes occurs after crises, for example, in the forms of radicalism, riots, political divisions, etc.; society as a whole is perceived as greater than its parts, and differences can be dealt with peacefully rather than through violence or conflict (Dhéret, 2015, pp. 1; 3; Langer *et al.*, 2015, p. 4; UNDP, 2015, p. 20).
- **Bolsters fragile states:** social cohesion

strengthens fragile states and counters violence and conflict (African Development Bank, 2015; UNDP, 2015, p. 20).

- **Quality of life:** more cohesive societies are simply better places to live in; cohesion makes society more liveable and sustainable (Pervaiz, Chaudhary, and van Staveren, 2013, p. 5; Dragolov *et al.* 2013b, p. 8).
- **Support for democracy:** social cohesion provides the basis for a stable democracy and participatory citizenship, including through voting (Cuellar, 2009, p. 3; Dhéret, 2015, pp. 1; 3; Beauvais and Jenson, 2002).
- **Inclusivity:** cohesive societies are accepting and tolerant of diversity and multiculturalism, including migrants (Dhéret, 2015, pp. 1; 3).
- **Better health outcomes:** particularly in relation to the links between health and income inequality, employment, and social support measures (Beauvais and Jenson, 2002, pp. 16-17).

Despite the lack of consensus over a single definition of social cohesion, its potential benefits seem clear.

1.3 PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE PAPER

In conceptualising a measure of social cohesion for Africa, the structure of the paper is as follows:

- Section 2 contains a high-level literature review that includes a review of definitions emerging from theory and used by international institutions and practitioners.
- Section 3 focuses on identifying and assessing existing social cohesion measures already in place.
- Section 4 proposes dimensions and indicators for a new measure of social cohesion for Africa, based on the findings from earlier sections.
- Section 5 draws conclusions and makes practical recommendations for the process going forward.

1.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are several limitations to the current study that need to be addressed.

First, social cohesion is a nebulous concept—even described by some as more of a 'quasi-concept'²

(Jenson, 2010, p. 3). While its qualities and advantages appear evident and clear in theory, its conceptual ambiguity also presents a challenge to applied research. As described by Bruhn (2009, p. 31), although the “concept of social cohesion is intriguing, it has also been frustrating because its multiple definitions prevent its meaningful measurement and application.”

Second, and as clearly documented and evidenced through the work of institutions like the UNDP

and IJR, the African continent is extremely diverse. Profound differences exist between regions that pre-date colonial borders, as well as between and within countries. These differences span history, culture, language, governance systems, economic conditions, and human development status among many other characteristics and features. Social cohesion indicators and measures applicable for the entire African context are important for comparative purposes; but without additional supplementary research they will be unable to capture this complexity and diversity.





2. Understanding Social Cohesion

This section of the paper provides a high-level literature review on social cohesion, starting with its theoretical origins in the disciplines of sociology, philosophy, and social psychology.

2.1 ORIGINS OF SOCIAL COHESION THEORY

Effectively measuring social cohesion requires an understanding of its conceptual origins in theory and research. This section of the paper provides a succinct snapshot of a substantial body of work on social cohesion, which underpins many current definitions, policy and research. More comprehensive reviews of the relevant literature are provided elsewhere (for example, by Bruhn, 2009), and an additional review could be considered at a later stage of the UNDP project.

Most current work on social cohesion traces the origins of the concept to 19th century French sociologist Emile Durkheim. In “The Division of Labour in Society” (1893), Durkheim explores two main concepts central to the idea of social cohesion: solidarity and shared loyalty. He further distinguished between two types of solidarity: mechanical solidarity, referring to ‘the traditional uniformity of collective values and beliefs,’ and organic solidarity, resulting from modern relationships between individuals who are able to work together while developing an autonomous and even critical personality with respect to tradition (Fenger, 2012, p. 40; Hassan, 2013, p. 2). These elements, according to Durkheim, provide the foundation for social order and establish bonds and inter-dependence between individuals (Manole, 2012, p. 128).

Berman and Phillips (2004, p. 4) also locate the origins of social cohesion theory in the work of German sociologist and philosopher Ferdinand Tönnies, who analysed social groups in terms of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, and American sociologist Talcott Parsons’ theory on normative integration. Tönnies observed

the decline of strong traditional interpersonal bonds in small social structures, *Gemeinschaft*, that were replaced with loose, rational, associational bonds in industrialised societies, *Gesellschaft* (Giddens, 2009, p. 8; Beumer, 2010, p. 1). Parsons focused on shared norms and values, which would enable people within a society to “identify and support common aims and objectives, and share a common set of moral principles and codes of behaviour through which to conduct their relations with one another” (Kearns and Forrest, 2000, p. 997; Berman and Phillips, 2004, p. 4).

Bruhn (2009, pp. 32-34) usefully reviews theory and research on social cohesion, spanning from the late 19th century to almost the present day. Focusing on the disciplines of sociology and social psychology, he categorises past studies according to three main methodological approaches:

- **Empirical studies** in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including those led by Gustave Le Bon (1896) on collective behaviour and Durkheim (1897) on the relationship between social cohesion and suicide. These early studies were mostly observational, as investigators “lacked a method for checking and extending their observations” (Bruhn, 2009, p. 35).
- **Experimental studies** in the early- to mid-twentieth century, including those by Jacob Moreno (1934) on sociometry, group communication, and conflict resolution and by Kurt Lewin (1943) on life space and group interdependence, among many others (Bruhn, 2009, pp. 35-36).
- **Social network analysis studies** including those by Barry Wellman (1979) on friendship and kinship ties and Albert Carron and colleagues on social cohesion in sports teams, among many others (see Carron, 1982; Carron and Hausenblas, 1998; Carron and Spink, 1995; Carron, Widmeyer and Brawley, 1985; in Bruhn, 2009, pp. 41-42).

The summary table of this work, which outlines key investigators and their findings, is reproduced in Appendix A.

2.2 REVIEW OF DEFINITIONS IN THEORY

The previous section provided an overview of the theoretical origins of social cohesion. With over a century of theory and research behind us, how have we come to understand and define social cohesion?

The answer is simply that there is no firm consensus. In fact, the only point of agreement seems to be that there is “no single accepted definition of the term internationally” (OECD, 2012, p. 53). For Bruhn (2009, p. 31), this means that the concept is intriguing but also frustrating because “its multiple definitions prevent its meaningful measurement and application.” Bruhn’s own analysis suggests that the variation in approaches and definitions of social cohesion adopted by different investigators are often “based on the theoretical assumptions of their own discipline.” Dragolov *et al* (2013b, p. 4) similarly remark that while social cohesion has become “a ‘hot topic’ in academic and public discourse”, there is “no unified approach, which has led to a fragmentary collection of knowledge on the topic.”

There are, however, commonalities. Many earlier theorists and researchers, including those whose work is reviewed by Bruhn (2009), focused on the connections between individuals and relatively intimate social groups. Definitions of social cohesion included, among others:

- forces holding the individuals within the groups in which they are (Moreno and Jennings, 1937)
- total field of forces which act on members to remain in the group (Festinger *et al*, 1950)
- attraction of membership in a group for its members (Back, 1951)

Each of these definitions emphasises the attributes and benefits of group membership (Norton and de Haan, 2013, p. 11).

More recently, social cohesion has become a concern for entire societies, and not only small groups. Pervaiz, Chaudhary, and van Staveren (2013, p. 5), for

example, define social cohesion as “a phenomenon of togetherness which may work to keep the society united and harmonised.” Dragolov *et al* (2013b, p. 8) refer to it as the “manifestation of an intact society, marked by solidarity and helpfulness, and by a kind of team spirit. It is a desirable quality that makes a society liveable and sustainable.”

Most definitions of social cohesion fundamentally address the quality of horizontal relationships between people. They include reference to the “strength of social relations, shared values and communities of interpretation, feelings of a common identity and a sense of belonging to the same community, trust among societal members as well as the extent of inequality and disparities” (Berger-Schmitt, 2000, p. 3; Woolley, 1998; Jenson, 1998). Maxwell (1996, p. 13) adds that social cohesion also entails generally enabling people to have a sense that they are engaged in a common enterprise, facing shared challenges, and that they are members of the same community.

Many definitions of social cohesion also emphasise its role in terms of conflict management and resolution, of particular relevance for the UNDP. For example, Woolcock (2011) defines social cohesion as the “capacity of societies, not merely groups and networks, to peacefully manage collective action problems.” Langer *et al* (2015, p. 4) suggest that social cohesion incorporates many elements:

At its heart is the notion that relationships among members and groups in society are sufficiently good that all feel a sense of belonging, that they perceive the whole society as greater than the parts, and when differences develop, they can be dealt with peacefully. Thus, social cohesion is not only good in itself, as it improves the quality of the societies in which people live, but also because it is likely to help avoid violent conflict with all its attendant ills.

According to these definitions, social cohesion is a key element of stability and peace.

Others also underscore the importance of social cohesion for healthy democracies. For Cuellar (2009, pp. 3-5) social cohesion provides the basis for a stable democracy, in terms of people’s relationships

and interactions with each other and the role of citizenship. In this sense, social cohesion refers to the “consolidation of plurality of citizenship and reducing inequality and socio-economic disparities and fractures in the society.” Ultimately, this is also linked to prospects for greater productivity and economic growth.

There are several points of divergence between definitions within the literature. One such point is whether social cohesion should be viewed as a process or an outcome. Jenson (2010, p. 5) argues that cohesion is not a characteristic of a society, but rather a process that should be encouraged, fostered, and protected. Conversely, McCracken (1998) treats social cohesion as a “trait of a society...based on links and connections among social units like individuals, groups, organizations and territories” (Manole, 2012, p. 128).

Another point of divergence is whether social cohesion should be addressed in positive or negative terms. Easterly *et al* (2006, p. 4) define social cohesion simply as the “nature and extent of social and economic divisions within a society”, emphasising deficit and fracture. Beauvais and Jenson (2002, p. 1) mention that in early policy discourse social cohesion was referred to “almost exclusively in the context of a lack, a missing element of social life.” Govender (2015) observes that in international policy and governance in particular, there is increasing interest in focusing on the positive traits of societies, rather than problematic missing features and qualities.

2.3 LINKS BETWEEN SOCIAL COHESION AND SOCIAL CAPITAL THEORY

Social cohesion theory is often discussed together with, or even interchangeably (Govender, 2015) with the concept of social capital. The linkages between the two concepts are clear in the following definition:

The social capital of a society includes the institutions, the relationships, the attitudes and values that govern interactions among people and contribute to economic and social development. Social capital, however, is not simply the sum of the institutions which underpin society; it is also the glue that holds them together. It includes

the shared values and rules for social conduct expressed in personal relationships, trust, and a common sense of ‘civic’ responsibility that makes society more than a collection of individuals.” (Manole, 2012, p. 131-132)

This related concept is often traced to the work of Pierre Bourdieu, who focused on “the benefits to individuals that accrue from the participation in groups, and the need for individuals to invest in these relations” (Norton and de Haan, 2013, pp. 7-8). Bourdieu defined social capital as the “aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (Bourdieu 1985, p. 248; 1980; in Portes, 1998, p. 3). This informed the way that later theorists and researchers used social capital to understand individual interaction within broader groups and the benefits of membership (Coleman 1990; Lin, 1999; Granovetter, 2005). Norton and de Haan (2013, pp. 7-8) also discuss the importance of Robert Putnam’s (1993) research on civic traditions in Italy, and how to create strong, responsive, and effective representative institutions.

Social capital is a useful aspect of social cohesion because it addresses issues such as “density and quality of links and interactions among individuals and groups, shared feelings regarding trust and involvement as a consequence of a common set of norms and values, a sense of belonging and solidarity that is fundamental to a society’s internal coherence” (Manole, 2012, pp. 131-132).

From an international governance perspective, the OECD (2007, p. 103) defines social capital as “networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups.” Following a review of social capital theory and literature, the OECD proposes that there are three main categories of social capital:

- Bonds: ties among people based on common identity including family, close friends and others who share culture or ethnicity;
- Bridges: links that reach beyond a shared sense of identity, outward to more distant friends, colleagues, and associates”; and

- Linkages: connections of a more vertical nature reaching up or down through levels of social status.

In terms of measurement, some research treats social capital as a dimension of social cohesion (Berger-Schmitt, 2000). According to Manole (2012, pp. 131-132), others such as the World Bank treat social cohesion with precedent over social capital, because it is seen both as more measurable and as a stronger driver of outcomes such as political change, democratic consolidation, effective rule of law, and diminished conflict.

2.4 REVIEW OF DEFINITIONS BY GOVERNANCE AND POLICY INSTITUTIONS

This paper focuses on prospects for measuring social cohesion by the UNDP, so it is important to look at how it and other governance and policy institutions understand the term. Understandably, with a greater focus on implementation these definitions tend to be more action-oriented.

In 2009, the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery released a report on 'Community Security and Social Cohesion: Towards a UNDP Approach.' Like others, the UNDP finds that "social cohesion is an elusive concept—easier to recognise by its absence than by any definition" (p. 14). The report defines social cohesion as "about tolerance of and respect for, diversity (in terms of religion, ethnicity, economic situation, political preferences, sexuality, gender and age – both institutionally and individually." Conversely, it suggests that a "lack of social cohesion results in increased social tension, violent crime, targeting of minorities, human rights violations, and, ultimately, violent conflict."

The UNDP (2009), drawing on the work of Berger-Schmitt (2000), suggests that there are two main dimensions to social cohesion:

1. **Reducing disparities, inequalities and social exclusion**, in which exclusion can be political, economic, social, and cultural. For this reason, it is important to develop strategies to engage excluded groups, and failure to do so can lead to insecurity and conflict (p. 14).
2. **Strengthening social relations, interactions, and ties**, which requires the development of social capital. This can be achieved through: supporting social networks; developing a common sense of belonging, a shared future vision, and a focus on what different social groups have in common; encouraging participation and active engagement; building trust between people and in institutions; fostering understanding and respect for others, and for the value of diversity; and increasing the responsiveness of a state to its citizenry (pp. 14-15).

Importantly, the report proposes strategies to encourage and build social cohesion, particularly among people and groups from different backgrounds. The UNDP also cautions against the risk that cohesive groups can actually "pose serious risks to the security of others." Therefore, interventions should aim to "transform bonding forms of social capital that can be exclusionary and often conflictual, into bridging social capital that links different groups together in an inclusive approach" (2009, p. 15).

The OECD (2012, pp. 52-53) acknowledges that there is "no single accepted definition of social cohesion although it has become an increasing policy concern in countries such as Australia, Canada, Denmark and New Zealand since the late 1980s" (Ferroni *et al*, 2008). Despite the lack of definitional consensus, the OECD identifies the following common threads throughout the various conceptualisations:

1. Social cohesion is a broad concept that usually includes dimensions of a sense of belonging, active participation, trust, inequality, exclusion and mobility
2. Links to the narrower concept of social capital, which refers to relationships within groups while social cohesion is a more holistic concept extended to the level of the entire society
3. Conceptual differences are often deliberately avoided through negative definitions, referring to a focus on the conditions in which social cohesion is considered absent or undermined

This is largely consistent with the definition and dimensions used by the UNDP (2009).

Canada was one of the first countries in which in-depth research was conducted for policy purposes. Jane Jenson's work for the Canada Policy Research Network and later for the Commonwealth Secretariat and United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (Jenson, 1998; 2010) is widely cited in social cohesion studies internationally. In her 1998 study, Jenson conceptualised social cohesion as consisting of five dimensions: belonging, participation, legitimacy, recognition and inclusion. Manole (2012, p. 129) thus suggests that social cohesion can be defined in five ways, using Jenson's dimensions:

- Shared values and a sense of belonging to a community;
- Society's ability to promote equality among individuals and to prevent marginality;
- Patterns of participation to the decision-making process that include democratic, efficient and inclusive institutions such as political parties, unions and governments;
- Society's capacity to mediate conflicts over access to power and resources;
- Society's ability to mediate different political views.

The Council of Europe (2005, p. 23) defines social cohesion as a "society's ability to secure the long-term well-being of all its members, including equitable access to available resources, respect for human dignity with due regard for diversity, personal and collective autonomy and responsible participation." The Council emphasises the importance of moving away from a 'negative approach' that is overly fixated on inadequate levels of cohesion to a 'positive approach' in which societies can provide a "reasonable or indeed good quality of life" for all members. Ultimately, the Council identifies three main components of social cohesion, each with several core constituents (Council of Europe, 2005):

1. **Quality of life** (well-being of all), including peaceful resolution of conflict at community level and citizen wellbeing at the individual and interpersonal levels (encompassing equity, dignity/recognition, autonomy/personal development and participation/civic commitment).

2. **Areas of life** (shared responsibility of all stakeholders), including sharing the objective of wellbeing, practicing shared responsibility (citizenship, associative approach and democratic skills), and gearing the economy towards community and individual well-being.
3. **Basic components** (integrity), consisting of bonds (cutting across tradition and economic and institutional systems), confidence (self and personal relationships; institutions, NGOs and companies; in the future), collective knowledge and sense of belonging (shared knowledge and civic awareness), values (civic, including sense of common good, solidarity and social responsibility, tolerance and interest in those who are different) and feelings (individual satisfaction at leading an autonomous, dignified life and being actively involved in public activities).

Creating these conditions, according to the Council, results in a 'virtuous circle' of social cohesion.

Andrew Norton and Arjan de Haan (2013) also usefully conceptualise social cohesion, in a background paper prepared for the World Bank's World Development Report 2013. To meaningfully address social cohesion in policy, they suggest that the following three main issues need to be taken into account: shared values, identities and norms; fairness and equity (noting that "different societies have different levels of tolerance for inequality and for varying equality of opportunity and social mobility"); and security of access to livelihoods and basic services. They also compiled useful definitions (Table 1).

2.5 UBUNTU AND SOURCES OF COHESION IN AFRICA

Many social cohesion policies and measures worldwide are founded on theory from the industrialized countries, as reviewed in previous sections. However, developing a social cohesion measure for Africa warrants some consideration of related concepts in the regional context.

There are clear parallels between social cohesion and the concept of Ubuntu, an idea found in many African languages although not necessarily by the same name. According to Kamwangamalu (1999) on Ubuntu:

[Ubuntu is a] multidimensional concept which represents the core values of African ontologies: respect for any human being, for human dignity and for human life, collective shared-ness, obedience, humility, solidarity, caring, hospitality, interdependence, communalism, to list but a few.

According to Mthembu (1996, p. 216), it involves both a 'good disposition towards others' and a 'moral nature', and "describes the significance of group solidarity and interdependence in African culture." Ubuntu emphasises shared values, including sympathy and generosity towards others (Makhudu, 1993; Prinsloo, 1996).

Zambara (2015) also observes that, with the proviso of enormous diversity, there are a range of important values and practices that are considered to strengthen societies in social groups in many different African countries and contexts. These include, among many others: traditional ceremonies and rituals, particularly around life events such as rites of passage, marriage and death; shared religious values; and shared cultural values, such as the hospitable treatment of visitors and caring of older people. He also adds that there are shared secrets that may have a cohesive effect, for

example, local practices and outcomes of community conflict resolution.

Participants in an expert focus group conducted at the IJR in October 2015 also made the important observation that within the African context, cohesion and solidarity may also result from shared historical experiences. These include colonization, the aggressive deconstruction of indigenous governance and value systems, oppression and racism, and direct and indirect rule (IJR, 2015).

2.6 LIMITATIONS OF SOCIAL COHESION

Despite the popularity of the idea of social cohesion, the literature contains some important cautions as well. The first echoes a limitation of this study. The lack of consensus, and even ambiguity around the meaning of social cohesion suggests that it is inherently difficult to measure. This challenge becomes much greater when large groups of people are involved—not only is there far greater diversity of values, identities, and social networks, but measurement becomes practically more difficult. Bruhn (2009, p. 45) observes that following up with specific individuals is practically impossible in large, geographically dispersed groups.

Table 1 Definitions of social cohesion by institutions

Institution	Definition
UN DESA – ECSOC	"A socially cohesive society is one where all groups have a sense of belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and legitimacy. Such societies are not necessarily demographically homogenous. Rather, by respecting diversity, they harness the potential residing in their societal diversity (in terms of ideas, opinions, skills, etc.). Therefore, they are less prone to slip into destructive patterns of tension and conflict when different interests collide."
Social Development Department, World Bank 2012	"Social Cohesion describes the nature and quality of relationships across people and groups in society, including the state. The constituency of social cohesion is complex, but at its essence social cohesion implies a convergence across groups in society that provides a framework within which groups can, at a minimum, coexist peacefully. In this way social cohesion offers a measure of predictability to interactions across people and groups, which in turn provides incentives for collective action."
OECD, 2011	A cohesive society is one that "works towards the well-being of all its members, minimising disparities and avoiding marginalisation" and entails "fostering cohesion by building networks of relationships, trust and identity between different groups, fighting discrimination, exclusion and excessive inequalities, and enabling upward social mobility."
European Committee for Social Cohesion, 2004	"Social cohesion is the capacity of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members, minimising disparities and avoiding polarisation. A cohesive society is a mutually supportive community of free individuals pursuing these common goals by democratic means."
French Commissariat General du Plan 1997	"a set of social processes that help instil in individuals the sense of belonging to the same community and the feeling that they are recognised as members of the community."

Source: Norton and de Haan, 2013, p. 11; UNDESA-ECSOC.

Pervaiz, Chaudhary, and van Stavernen (2013, p. 7) note that many social cohesion studies are city-specific and some are country-specific, but few attempt cross-country comparisons.

It is also important to realize that there can be problematic consequences resulting from highly cohesive societies, including what Green and Janmaat (2011) describe as 'social insularity' (Manole, 2012, p. 128). In this sense, highly cohesive societies can be closed off to other individuals, including minority groups and migrants, and become very exclusive.

A final, and related caution that is unresolved in the literature is the question of how to balance and align localized, cohesion-building practices with national or regional values and norms set out in law and by governance institutions. As an example, cohesion within a traditional local community may be strengthened by shared beliefs around the lesser position of women in society, which would in practice be exclusionary and contradictory to most national and international law and policy. Questions remain about how such contradictions and opposing values could be addressed in ways that essentially deconstruct exclusive cohesion but also encourage cohesion around different norms and belief systems.

2.7 KEY FINDINGS

Key findings emerging from this section of the report include the following:

- Social cohesion has been the focus of theory and research since the late 19th century, led by philosophers and sociologists including Emile Durkheim and Ferdinand Tönnies.
- Although there is no firm consensus on a single definition of social cohesion, most focus on the relationships and bonds between people and the qualities that make a society liveable. Social cohesion is also treated alongside the related concept of social capital, which focuses on the quality and value of different types of bonds between people.
- Definitions used by national and international governance institutions pursuing social cohesion tend to be action-oriented; the UNDP's own definition, for example, focuses on reducing disparities, inequalities, and social exclusion and on strengthening social relationships, interactions, and ties.
- Within the African context, the concept of Ubuntu, and comparable terms in numerous countries and languages, is aligned with some aspects of social cohesion, particularly in relation to shared beliefs and values.
- Although social cohesion has become popularised in policy discourse in particular, there are several important cautions that emerge from the literature, including measurement challenges resulting from conceptual ambiguity and potential negative traits and characteristics of highly cohesive societies, including social exclusion.



3. Measuring Social Cohesion

In spite of the conceptual complexity of social cohesion, many researchers, governments, and international institutions have adopted it as a policy goal and worked towards ways of operationalizing and measuring cohesion. These efforts aim at the many benefits associated with cohesive societies, such as peace and stability, economic growth, support for democracy, inclusivity, and a fundamentally better quality of life for members, among others.

Around the world, a number of social cohesion indices have already been developed and implemented with the benefit of robust and well-resourced development, testing, and analysis. In this section of the report, a selection of measures are identified and analysed, for purposes of international benchmarking and to strengthen the ultimate development of a measure for Africa. Section 3.1 focuses on measures developed and implemented outside of Africa, while Section 3.2 focuses on African measures. Appendix B contains a summary table of the data sources used in each of the seven indexes analysed in this section.

3.1 SOCIAL COHESION MEASURES OUTSIDE OF AFRICA

Social cohesion became a policy focus in a number of countries during the late 1990's. Govender (2015) observes that this focus dovetailed with efforts to effectively manage migration and multiculturalism, particularly in OECD member states. This sub-section analyses national and international social cohesion measures developed in Canada, Australia and Germany, and more recently by the UNDP in Cyprus.

3.1.1 CANADA: RESPONSES TO A 'FRAYING SOCIAL FABRIC'

Background

Canada was one of the first countries to include social cohesion in its policy focus, and work to develop measures accordingly. Much early research is credited to Jane Jenson, whose theory and analysis

is frequently used in the conceptual frameworks underpinning social cohesion measures in a variety of different contexts. Jenson (1998, p. 1) located her analysis in a discourse on globalisation: Although the social and economic climate was 'full of excitement and hope' many Canadians were experiencing fear and insecurity over issues such as unemployment, uncertain future prospects for themselves and for their children, and a 'fraying social fabric.' Research found 'mounting differences' between people of different socioeconomic groups, and concerning pockets where "cultural insecurity and nostalgia for 'Old Canada' are reducing tolerance and compassion" (Ekos Research Associates Inc., 1995, 17, in Jenson, 1998, p. 1).

Methodology

Jenson (1998, p. 15) conducted a review of theory, literature, and policy and identified five 'constituent dimensions' of social cohesion that take into account both positive and negative ends of a spectrum. These are:

- **Belonging/isolation:** shared values and identities, commitment to a social group, and feeling part of the same community;
- **Inclusion/exclusion:** economic access, opportunity, and participation;
- **Participation/non-involvement:** governance practices and participation, involvement, and partnerships;
- **Recognition/rejection:** recognition of difference and nurturing of institutions that support rather than undermining this recognition, as well as people's feelings that they are accepted by others; and,
- **Legitimacy/illegitimacy:** ensuring the legitimacy of public institutions, in particular those responsible for mediation.

Paul Bernard (1999, p. 13), a colleague of Jenson's at the University of Montreal, proposed that another important dimension should be added to this framework:

- **Equality/inequality**

Other researchers have taken up this proposal (Jeanotte, 2003, p. 3). These various constituent dimensions have been used and adapted in a range of subsequent studies (Beauvais and Jenson, 2002; Jeannotte, 2003; Toye, 2007; Galabuzi and Teelucksingh, 2010).

Dimensions and indicators

More recently, in 2010 Jenson authored a publication for the Commonwealth Secretariat and United Nations Research Institute for Social Development that focused on updating definitions and measures of social cohesion for international practice. In this updated framework, Jenson focuses on four

over-arching dimensions, as shown in Table 2: social inclusion, cultural and ethnic homogeneity, trust, and participation and solidarity. She also identifies a series of indicators for each of these dimensions, as well as data sources and measures. For the most part, these data can be sourced from national government sources or the databases of international organisations, such as the World Bank and International Labour Organisation (Jenson, 2010, pp. 22-24).

Advantages and limitations

One strength of this approach is the framework for international data collection that is, for the most

Table 2 Indicators of social cohesion, Jenson (2010)

Dimension	Indicators
Social Inclusion	<p>Access to financial resources as measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Gini coefficient (national income distribution/inequality) – Income shares (middle 60%, highest 10% and 20%, lowest 10% and 20%) – Poverty measures (% population below \$1/day and \$2/day poverty line; % below national poverty line; also to be provided for migrant and minority groups) <p>Access to economic activity as measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Unemployment rate (% labour force; also % unemployment among youth, women, minorities, migrants) – Informal sector employment <p>Access to economic activity as measured by access to education and human capital:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Literacy rate (total; male and female) – Population over 15 without complete primary education (total; male and female) – Population over 20 without complete secondary education (total; male and female) – % children of secondary school age enrolled in secondary education – % population 18-24 enrolled in tertiary education – All results for minorities and migrants <p>Access to health as measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Life expectancy (total; male and female; minorities) – Infant mortality rate (total; minorities) – Under-5 mortality rate (total; minorities) – % births attended by skilled health staff (total; minorities) <p>Access to technology as measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – % households with broadband internet access
Cultural and Ethnic Homogeneity	<p>Homogeneity as measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – % foreign-born population – Ethnic fractionalisation (index measuring the probability that two randomly selected people will not belong to the same ethno-linguistic group) – Country is official bi-lingual or multilingual (0 or 1)
Trust	<p>Trust as measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Public opinion survey results (e.g. World Values Survey)
Participation and Solidarity	<p>Participation and solidarity as measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Electoral participation (voter turnout) – Participation in voluntary associations (% membership) – Charitable giving (% making a charitable gift)

Source: Jenson, 2010, pp. 22-24.

Table 3 SMI Domains, Sub-Concepts, and Questions (Australia)

Domain	Sub-concepts	Questions
Belonging	Shared values; identification with Australia; trust	Indication of pride in the Australian way of life and culture; sense of belonging; importance of maintaining Australian way of life and culture.
Social justice and equity	Evaluation of national policies	Views on the adequacy of financial support for people on low incomes; the gap between high and low incomes; Australia as a land of economic opportunity; trust in the Australian government.
Political participation	Voluntary work; political and co-operative involvement.	Voted in an election; signed a petition; contacted a Member of Parliament; participated in a boycott; attended a protest.
Acceptance and rejection, legitimacy	Experience of discrimination; attitudes towards minorities and newcomers.	The scale measures rejection, indicated by a negative view of immigration from many different countries; reported experience of discrimination in the last 12 months; disagreement with government support to ethnic minorities for maintenance of customs and traditions; feeling that life in three or four years will be worse.
Worth	Life satisfaction and happiness; future expectations	Satisfaction with present financial situation and indication of happiness over the last year.

Source: Markus, 2014

part, readily available and allows for country-to-country comparison of indicators such as inequality, employment levels, voter turnout, and others. However, this framework relies heavily on quality of life indicators, with relatively few measures of perceptions or experiences of social relationships. Jenson does refer to trust, as measured primarily through public opinion studies such as the independent, non-profit association based World Values Survey. Unfortunately, many African countries are not included in the World Values Survey.

3.1.2 AUSTRALIA: A FOCUS ON MULTICULTURALISM

Background

Like Canada, Australia is an industrialized democracy. It has undergone a “prolonged period of sustained and significant immigration” (Markus, 2014, p. 13) and accordingly, has adopted social policies on multiculturalism that entail “actively supporting and maintaining diversity, an equal emphasis on rights and responsibilities, and a focus on democratic values of participation, inclusion, fairness, and justice” (Australian Multicultural Council, 2013, p. 3).

Methodology

The Scanlon-Monash Index of Social Cohesion (SMI) is a joint initiative of the Scanlon Foundation, the Australian Multicultural Foundation, and Monash

University. A comprehensive literature review and national benchmark study exploring aspects of social cohesion in Australian society was first conducted in 2007. Thereafter, a national survey was developed for the purposes of determining public opinion; identifying social tension, particularly in areas with high concentrations of migrants; and identifying shifts that could require policy attention or other interventions (Markus, 2014, pp. 5, 13; Social Research Centre, 2011). The survey has been conducted on an annual basis since 2009.

Dimensions and indicators

The SMI measures social cohesion according to five core domains: belonging; worth; social justice and equity; participation; and acceptance, rejection, and legitimacy (Markus, 2014, p. 2). These domains, as well as related sub-concepts and survey items, are shown in Table 3.

Strengths and limitations

The SMI aligns with Jenson's original model of five constituent dimensions of social cohesion with the 1999 update from Bernard. A closer look at the survey questionnaire shows a strong focus on migration themes, including relationships between Australians and migrants, approval of policy related to migration and the preservation of cultural rights, and the relative strength of national and group identities. Unlike Jenson's (2010) later framework, the SMI relies on public opinion

data and perceptions, rather than objective measures, such as the Gini coefficient or unemployment rates. Further, the SMI adds an additional dimension drawn from social psychology measures, focusing on indicators such as satisfaction with life, individual happiness, and expectations for the future.

3.1.3 BERTELSMANN FOUNDATION: A NARROW SOCIAL FOCUS

Background

The Bertelsmann Foundation is based in Germany, and takes a very different approach to measuring social cohesion than those used by Jenson (1998, 2010) or in the SMI. The Foundation has developed a Social Cohesion Radar, which forms part of a larger social reporting initiative that “aims to provide the general public with a conceptually and methodologically sound overview of the levels and trends of cohesion as well as an in-depth understanding of its determinants and outcomes” (Dragolov *et al*, 2013b). Like the SMI, the Social Cohesion Radar focuses on perceptions rather than objective measures, but uses a very narrow definition of the concept for very targeted measurement.

Methodology

As in the framework proposed by Jenson (2010), the Bertelsmann Social Cohesion Radar relies on secondary data collected from a variety of international sources. The Radar is a cross-country comparison that involves analysis data from 34 ‘advanced societies’ including 27 European Union (EU) member states and seven other OECD countries (Australia, Canada, Israel, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, and USA). Sources include data collated by international institutions, expert assessments, and the results of numerous international studies on topics including quality of life, values, democracy, and justice³ (Dragolov *et al*, 2013a, p. 20). Analysis spans four time periods, all occurring between 1989 and 2012 (Dragolov *et al*, 2013b).

Dimensions and indicators

Unlike other measures analysed in this section of the report, the Social Cohesion Radar uses what is referred to as a ‘streamlined definition’ of social cohesion. According to investigators Dragolov *et al* (2013a, p. 13), within the framework of the Radar a cohesive society consists of three main elements:

- **Resilient social relations:** horizontal networks between individuals and groups in society.
- **Emotional connectedness:** the positive ties among individuals, their country, and its institutions
- **Focus on the common good:** actions and attitudes of members of society that demonstrate responsibility for others and for the community as a whole.

In contrast with the framework proposed by Jenson in 2010 (see Table 2), the Bertelsmann study “consciously excludes material wealth, social inequality and well-being”. Dragolov *et al* (2013a, p. 13) explain that this decision is “intended to simplify the concept; for our purposes, measures of cohesion should capture a specific quality of a society, rather than favourable living conditions in general.” They argue that by excluding material resources and distribution from their definition, they are better able to analyse the extent to which these affect social cohesion.

Other distinct features of the Radar include:

- Measuring perceptions of fairness rather than actual inequality or fairness,
- Measuring acceptance of diversity rather than actual diversity,
- Excluding shared or homogenous values, because of uncertainty regarding relevance in modern societies, and
- Avoids equating cohesion and homogeneity and specifies that cohesion among the majority cannot also exclude minorities.

The three main elements and related dimensions⁴ tested in the Bertelsmann Social Cohesion Radar are captured in Table 4.

Strengths and limitations

The main strength of the Bertelsmann Social Cohesion Radar is its narrow analytic focus on testing very targeted elements of social cohesion. In this sense, as a purely ‘social’ study it is conceptually distinct from other types of measures, such as those that focus on quality of life, democracy, or social capital. While there is overlap in the concepts and measures used in many different studies across disciplines—for example, comparative strength of national and group

Table 4 Social Cohesion Radar

Element	Dimensions
Social Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Strength of social networks – Degree to which people trust one another – Acceptance of diversity
Connectedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Strength of people's identification with their country – Degree of trust in institutions – Perceptions of fairness
Common Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Level of solidarity and helpfulness – People's willingness to abide by social rules – Extent of participation in society

Source: Dragolov et al, 2013a, pp. 14-15

identity is an indicator commonly used in studies on a variety of topics, including social values, reconciliation, or democracy—the conceptual ambiguity of social cohesion brings inherent measurement challenges and as a result it can become a diffuse and empty idea.

However, such a narrow focus also means excluding potentially important indicators, which would be particularly inconsistent with the goals of organisations such as the UNDP and IJR. For example, in the context of a country like South Africa—where the results of the IJR's Reconciliation Barometer survey show that economic inequality is considered to be the largest source of social division in the country—omitting wealth and quality-of-life measures would create an incomplete picture of the state of society.

3.1.4 SCORE: MEASURING PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

Background

The Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index (SCORE) was originally developed in Cyprus as part of the Action for Cooperation and Trust programme, supported by the UNDP and USAID. Initially, the focus of the Index was on peace-building and conflict prevention in Cyprus (UNDP, 2015, p. 9). Consultations were also held with the IJR during the development of the index. Following its implementation in Cyprus, the SCORE methodology was also rolled out in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Nepal, and the Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development (2015) announced that the index may be implemented in Kenya, Israel, and the Palestinian territories in the future.

Methodology

Rather than a singular focus, the SCORE measures both social cohesion and reconciliation, which are construed as the two main pre-conditions necessary for peace in a society. The SCORE methodology uses a primary data collection approach, through face-to-face interviews, notably using an open-ended survey questionnaire (UNDP, 2015, pp. 17; 28).

Dimensions and indicators

The SCORE defines its two main dimensions (UNDP, 2015, p. 17):

1. **Social cohesion** is defined as the “nature of the coexistence between individuals within a given social group and the institutions that surround them”
2. **Reconciliation** is defined as “on-going efforts to establish peace between groups which were previously engaged in a dispute or conflict”

The Index works to quantify and measure these two concepts in three ways: “as a people-to-people relationship-building process”; as an “institution-transforming and state-building process”; and as an “engine for development” (UNDP, 2015, p. 12). The main indicators used to test the dimensions of social cohesion and reconciliation are shown in Table 5.

Strengths and limitations

Like the SMI, the SCORE relies on primary data collection. This allows for richness and nuance in data collection, particularly through its use of open-ended survey items. While such an approach is ideal in a very diverse national or regional context, it also brings

Table 5 Main Indicators, SCORE Index

Dimensions	Indicators
Social Cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Perceived corruption – Trust in institutions (including judicial system, parliament, police) – Feeling represented by institutions (parliament, politicians; inclusion in decision-making processes) – Human security (safe from violence, secure income, meeting needs, free association, expression of views) – Civic life satisfaction (administration of justice, state of economy, direction of peace talks)
Reconciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Negative stereotypes (perceptions of adversarial groups, for example as violent, lazy, or unfriendly) – Intergroup anxiety (experienced when with members of an adversarial group) – Social distance (acceptance of social relationships with members of an adversarial group) – Social threats (extent own way of life considered to be under threat) – Active discrimination (explicit discriminatory behaviours) – Positive feelings (warm feelings towards members of other groups)

Source: UNDP, 2015, pp. 22; 32-33.

practical and resource challenges around sampling, fieldwork, and data management and analysis. Notably, the SCORE focuses on post-conflict societies, but many of the indicators used to measure reconciliation are also aligned with social cohesion indicators used in the studies described in earlier sections, for example in relation to migrants in the SMI.

3.2 AFRICAN MEASURES

Dedicated social cohesion indices are relatively new within the African context, although several have been developed and implemented. This sub-section of the paper analyses social cohesion measures in Kenya and South Africa as well as an index developed recently in Belgium that uses cross-continental data from the Afrobarometer survey.

3.2.1 KENYA: MONITORING ETHNIC CONFLICT

Background

During late 2007 and early 2008, Kenya experienced widespread post-election violence, in which more than 1,500 people were killed (Cox *et al.* 2015, p. 1). Subsequently the Kenyan government established the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) that focuses on promoting sustainable peace and development through “deliberate normative, institutional and attitudinal processes of constructing nationhood, national cohesion and integration” (NCIC 2011). Research in Kenya has linked levels of social cohesion to issues of human security—social, economic, and physical—and to strong ethnic group affiliation (Cox *et al.* 2015, p. 1).

Methodology

The NCIC developed a survey-based Social Cohesion Index, a project that involved a series of consultations with the IJR. The Social Cohesion Index was implemented through a nationally representative survey conducted in 2013 that included 4,860 rural and urban households. Principal component analysis was then used to determine the main variables that explain social cohesion. Fieldwork also included focus groups and expert interviews (NCIC, 2014, p. 11; 20). The overall national result was a social cohesion score of 56.6 percent with variation across districts, but the NCIC notes that “variations in context and data mean that it is not very useful to compare Kenya’s SCI ... with others available in the literature, including other Kenyan SCIs” (NCIC, 2014, p. 22). It is unclear at this stage whether or not further survey rounds will be conducted.

Dimensions and indicators

The Index conceptualises social cohesion in terms of six main dimensions, and maintains that in such measures “moving from less to more dimensions improves the quality of the index” (NCIC, 2014, p. 11). These dimensions are: prosperity, equity, trust, peace, diversity and identity. Greater detail about the measures associated with each dimension is provided in Table 6.

Strengths and limitations

The Kenyan Index developed by the NCIC is one of the first survey-based, dedicated national studies on social cohesion in Africa. As is clear from Table 6, many of the components and dimensions it tests are aligned

with those found in other studies discussed here. It also takes into account both objective and subjective measures. For example, it includes national data on poverty and inequality as well as individual livelihood evaluations and perceptions.

However, as with the framework proposed by Jenson in 2010, much of the focus of the Kenyan Index is on issues of basic wellbeing, including levels of education, health outcomes, and access to basic services. As discussed earlier, the risks of a very broad measure include diffuse results and a lack of clear focus on the complex social realities that are greater than just the 'sum of relevant indicators' (Struwig *et al*, 2011, p. 1).

3.2.2 SOUTH AFRICA: SOCIAL COHESION ON THE POLICY AGENDA

Background

As in many other countries, social cohesion has become the focus of increasing interest by the South African government. Led by the Department of Arts and Culture, the government has convened a series of Social Cohesion Summits, and Cabinet adopted a Social Cohesion Strategy in 2012 (Department of Arts and Culture, 2015). The Strategy identified a number of social cohesion targets for the medium-term, up to 2019 (Jack, 2015).

Table 6 Kenyan Social Cohesion Index

Component	Dimensions	Elements
Prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population wellbeing Disparities Marginalization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GDP index Share non-poor population Education index Life expectancy index Access to clean and safe drinking water Can afford to buy all things
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality Access Participation Solidarity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good road infrastructure and fair distribution Share households with access to water, electricity, and sanitation Importance of sharing government jobs Perceptions about gap between rich and poor
Peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peaceful coexistence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National security, law and order No social tension or ethnic violence No social issues (family breakdown, drugs, lack of social direction) People of different socioeconomic groups Relationships with people of different ethnic groups after post-election violence No conflict with neighbours No experiences of crime No problems with poverty, food insecurity, or youth unemployment
Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social bonds in a diverse context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicating, spending time and friendship with people of other ethnic groups Support for intermarriage Social protection Pride in ethnic customs
Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tolerance National identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of ethnicity in defining identity Importance of belonging to an ethnic group Strong community identity Proud to be Kenyan Importance of voting in national elections
Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpersonal Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People of other ethnic groups People of different religions Institutions (courts, government, religious, financial, educational, human rights, media)

Source: NCIC, 2014



Methodology

In 2011, researchers at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) worked to develop a Social Cohesion Barometer for South Africa, using secondary data collected through the South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS). For the purposes of operationalizing the concept, researchers used a definition of social cohesion as “the property by which whole societies, and the individuals within them, are bound together through the action of specific attitudes, behaviours, rules and institutions which rely on consensus rather than pure coercion” (Green, Janmaat, and Han, 2009; (Struwig *et al*, 2011, p. 3). Researchers Struwig *et al* (2011, p.1) emphasise that social cohesion is a “larger, overarching quality or condition in society” and not just the “sum of relevant indicators, such as jobs, education and hiring patterns”.

Dimensions and indicators

To measure social cohesion, Struwig *et al* (2011, p.4) conceptual framework was multi-dimensional and took into account three domains: economic, socio-cultural, and civic. Measures were both subjective (attitudinal) and objective (behavioural), with the goal of aggregating individual responses into group findings. Indicators are captured in Table 7.

Strengths and limitations

Like the Kenyan Social Cohesion Index, the HSRC’s Barometer uses a very broad base of both objective and subjective indicators. As such, there are similar trade-offs and risks in terms of focused or diffuse results. The HSRC Barometer also benefits from the extensive data available within South Africa, but this is not the case in other African countries.

Table 7 HSRC Social Cohesion Barometer Domains and Indicators

Indicators	Survey items
Economic domain	
Employment status	– Current employment status
Income	– Total household income before tax and deductions
Health	– Personal health rating at present
Education	– Highest level of education
Household needs index	– Household access to housing, transport, healthcare, clothing, amount of food
Redress of basic services index	– Supply of water, electricity, refuse removal, affordable housing, access to healthcare
Government responsibility index	– The government should spend more money on creating jobs even if it has to increase taxes – The government should spend more money on social grants for the poor, even if it leads to higher taxes – The government should provide more chances for children from poor families to go to university
Health redress	– Is it right or wrong for people with higher incomes to buy better health care than people with lower incomes?
Education redress	– Is it right or wrong for people with higher incomes to buy better education than people with lower incomes?
Socio-economic conflict index	– Conflict between rich and poor; working class and the middle class; management and workers; people at the top of society and people at the bottom
Labour market redress action index	– Redistribute land to black South Africans – Preferential hiring and promotion of black South Africans – Preferential hiring and promotion of women
Affirmative action index	– Affirmative action policy in South Africa is contributing to a more skilled workforce – Affirmative action policy in South Africa is creating a society that is more unified
Socio-cultural domain	
Social network	– Membership in social groups, e.g. burial society, informal trade association, labour union, political party, etc.
Personal wellbeing index	– Satisfaction with: life as a whole; standard of living; health; life achievements; personal relationships; personal safety; feeling part of a community; future financial security; spirituality or religion
Discrimination	– On what ground is your group discriminated against?

Table 7 Cont.

Indicators	Survey items
Tolerance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Racial tolerance – Tolerance towards: same-sex partners; immigrants – Religious tolerance – Gender tolerance – Tolerance towards the disabled
Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fear of crime
Interracial contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Frequency of contact between different race groups
Civic domain	
National identities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Intensity of feelings of national pride
Evaluations of regime performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Satisfaction with the way that the government is handling: supply of water and sanitation; providing electricity; affordable housing; access to health care; treatment for sexually transmitted infections; job creation; land reform; social grants; education; satisfaction with the way democracy works; Batho Pele (People First) principles with Batho Pele Index – self-rated performance of municipalities
Confidence in regime institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Trust in: national and local government; courts; electoral commission; national broadcaster; police; Parliament; traditional leaders/authorities; churches; defence force
Approval of incumbents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – President; provincial premier; elected local government councillor
Participation in legal and illegal political activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Actions in the last year including: signed a petition; taken part in a protest march or demonstration; contacted a politician, government or local government official; contacted a traditional leader; contacted radio, TV, or a newspaper; worked in a political party or action group
Political interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Interest in politics – Frequency of: read the political content of newspaper; watch political news on TV; listen to political news on the radio; use the internet to obtain political news or information
Citizenship norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – To be a good citizen, how important is it for a person to: support people who are worse off than themselves; vote in elections; always obey laws and regulations; form own independent opinions; be active in voluntary organisations; be active in politics

Source: Struwig *et al*, 2011

3.2.3 AFROBAROMETER: SOCIAL COHESION ACROSS AFRICA

Background

The Afrobarometer survey is a cross-continental study on public attitudes about democracy and governance, associated with the IJR. It is conducted in 36 countries and, in most recent rounds, represents the opinion of 76 percent of the population of the entire continent (Afrobarometer, 2015). The survey tests attitudes on 12 core topics, outlined in Table 8, as well as a range of special topics including: access to justice, conditions of citizenship, perceptions about China, issues related to energy supply, and Pan-Africanism/regionalism.

Methodology

As is evident from Table 8, many of the concepts tested in the social cohesion measures analysed in

earlier sections are also used in the Afrobarometer. Earlier in 2015, researchers at the Centre for Research on Peace and Development at Leuven University in Belgium released a new study that measures social cohesion in 19 African countries using Afrobarometer data from 2005 to 2012 (Langer *et al*, 2015, p. 2).

Langer *et al* (2015, p. 2) limit their social cohesion analysis to three dimensions: perceived inequality, as in the Bertelsmann Social Cohesion Radar, but with actual inequality measures such as GDP data or Gini coefficients excluded; levels of societal trust; and the strength of association with national identity. Using Afrobarometer data, the authors have developed two social cohesion indices: a national average Social Cohesion Index (SCI) and a Social Cohesion Index Variance-Adjusted (SCIVA). The latter, they explain, “takes into account the level

Table 8 Core Afrobarometer topics

Topic	Description
Conflict and crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How safe do people feel? – What has been their experience with crime and violence? – Do they report crimes to the police?
Democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Popular understanding of, support for, and satisfaction with democracy. – Desire to return to, or experiment with, authoritarian alternatives.
Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Participation in campaigns and elections. – Citizens' voting intentions and their opinions on the quality of electoral processes.
Gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Women's position in society. – Should women have the same rights as men? – Should there be more female leaders in politics and public institutions?
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The demand for, and satisfaction with, effective, accountable, and clean government; – Judgments of overall governance performance and social service delivery.
Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How do people see themselves in relation to ethnic and class identities? – Does a shared sense of national identity exist?
Macroeconomics and markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Assessments of national and personal economic and living conditions. – Evaluations of government performance in economy management and creating jobs.
Political participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – To what extent do ordinary people join in development efforts, comply with the laws of the land, vote in elections, and engage in protest?
Poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How often do individuals experience shortages of basic essentials – food, water, medical care – in their daily lives? – Indicators of basic living conditions.
Public services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The availability of public services and how often it is accessed. – Public services include piped water, health clinic, cell phone service, and postal systems.
Social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Whom do people trust? – How much do they rely on informal networks and associations? – Evaluations of the trustworthiness of various institutions.
Tolerance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How accepting are people of those who are socially or politically different?

Source: <http://afrobarometer.org/surveys-and-methods/survey-topics>

of variation across different ethnic groups within countries." This is because in "multi-ethnic societies, relationships among ethnic groups are particularly relevant" to social cohesion. The study also analysed the "relationship between countries' levels of social cohesion and the occurrence of a range of conflict events," finding that "countries with low levels of social cohesion in a particular year ... are more likely to experience a range of different conflict events in the subsequent year" (Langer *et al*, 2015).

Dimensions and indicators

The three dimensions used in the SCI and SCIVA are shown in Table 9. Langer *et al*'s (2015, pp. 9, 22) analysis shows that these three dimensions are independent, although interconnected, and this is substantiated by low correlations across individual indicators. Therefore, they find that none

of the dimensions would singularly capture social cohesion in a country. Findings include that of the three dimensions, "the trust component was the lowest in half or more of the countries." The specific Afrobarometer survey questions used in the SCI are shown in Table 10.

Strengths and limitations

The Afrobarometer-based SCI represents a very important advance in the development of multi-country social cohesion measures across Africa. It is conducted in 37 countries, with far greater reach than studies like the World Values Survey. The concepts it measures are aligned with most other indices analysed previously in this section of the paper, although its narrow focus excludes important indicators about the quality of social relationships and peace and stability.

Table 9 Afrobarometer-based Social Cohesion Index

Dimension	Items
Inequality	Perceived inequalities, horizontal and vertical; political, social, cultural, and economic; perceptions of fair treatment by government.
Trust	Among people generally, and particularly across groups and in relationship to the state
Identities	Strength of adherence to national identity in relation to group identity

Source: Langer et al, 2015, pp. 7 – 9

Table 10 Afrobarometer survey items used in the SCI

Question	Indicator
Inequality	
1. In general, how do you rate your living conditions compared to those of other [citizens]?	1. Proportion of respondents who believe their living conditions is the 'same' compared to other compatriots.
2. How often are ____ [respondent's ethnic group] treated unfairly by the government?"	2. Proportion of respondents who believe their ethnic group is 'never' treated unfairly by the government.
Trust (Interpersonal and Institutional)	
1. How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? The President, Parliament, Police, Courts of Law	1. Proportion of respondents who trust 'A Lot'
2. How much do you trust each of the following types of people? Your relatives, Other people you know, Other [citizens]	2. Proportion of respondents who trust 'A Lot'
Identity	
1. Let us suppose that you had to choose between being a [citizen] and being a ____ [respondent's ethnic group]. Which of the following best expresses your feelings?	1. Proportion of respondents who feel 'More [citizen] than [ethnic group]' or 'Only [citizen]'

Source: Langer et al, 2015

3.3 KEY FINDINGS

Key findings emerging from this section of the report include the following:

- Canada was among the first countries to adopt a dedicated policy focus on social cohesion. Early measures conceptualised by Jenson (1998) identified five main constituent dimensions, with a sixth subsequently proposed by Bernard (1999), which have formed the foundation for many subsequent social cohesion measures: inclusion/exclusion (primarily economic), participation/non-involvement (political and civic), recognition/rejection (accepting others and feeling accepted), legitimacy/illegitimacy (institutional), and equality/inequality. Jenson's later work (2010) proposes a methodology for measuring social cohesion at the national level that primarily relies on secondary objective measures, as well as some public opinion data on trust in particular.
- The Australian SMI measures social cohesion according to five dimensions: belonging; social justice and equity; participation; acceptance, rejection, and legitimacy; and worth. Developed following a baseline study, its focus is on critical social and policy issues in Australia, including public opinion about migration, multiculturalism, and the relative strength of national and ethnic identities. The SMI is based on primary survey data, rather than objective measures.
- The Bertelsmann Social Cohesion Radar takes a narrow, "streamlined" approach, measuring only three distinct dimensions: resilient social relations,

emotional connectedness, and a focus on the common good. There are conceptual advantages to such a focused measure, but also risks that important objective and subjective issues are excluded, such as inequality.

- The SCORE was developed with the support of UNDP. It measures social cohesion and reconciliation as two necessary preconditions for social peace. Using a methodology of open-ended survey questions allows for significant nuance and depth in data but may also pose practical and resource challenges. Although the two dimensions are distinguished conceptually, there is alignment between indicators of reconciliation used in the SCORE and those of social cohesion used in other measures, such as discrimination or social distance.
- The Kenyan SCI is among the first dedicated studies of its kind in Africa. It measures a very broad range of items, including quality of life and relations between ethnic groups following the post-election violence in 2008.
- The South African Social Cohesion Barometer extensively analyses secondary data from the SASAS study and other HSRC sources. The Barometer focuses on three main domains: economic, including a wide range of items measuring perceptions about wellbeing; socio-cultural, including questions on race relations; and civic, including citizenship norms and trust in institutions.
- Langer *et al* (2015) have taken an innovative approach by constructing a Social Cohesion Index, with a related index that takes ethnic diversity into account, using Afrobarometer data. Using the numbers from relevant Afrobarometer datasets allows for rigorous, multi-country comparative analysis with a wide reach across the continent. Its discrete, narrow focus, however, excludes measures on the quality of social relationships and peace and stability.



4. Developing a New Measure for Africa

The previous sections of this paper have provided a high-level review of literature and definitions of social cohesion and of models for measurement used internationally and in Africa. This section focuses on developing a conceptual framework for a future social cohesion measure for Africa, drawing on the results of the literature review and international benchmarking.

4.1 CONFIRMING AN OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

The literature review provides clear evidence of agreement on a single definition of social cohesion. This lack of conceptual clarity makes measurement challenging and problematic.

It is possible that new definitions may emerge in the course of this project, particularly as future research reveals new findings in the African context in particular. These may, for example, take into account distinctly African concepts such as Ubuntu, but this is a challenge for the project at a later stage, after further research has been conducted.

To achieve progress towards a new measure, and taking into account the importance of organisational consistency and potential value of future comparative analysis, this paper proposes using UNDP's (2009, pp. 14-15) conceptualization of social cohesion—again, drawn from the work of Berger-Schmitt (2000)—as the main foundation for a future measure. Through this model, cohesive societies are achieved by:

1. **Reducing disparities, inequalities and social exclusion**, in which exclusion can be political, economic, social and cultural.
2. **Strengthening social relations, interactions, and ties** that require the development of social capital. This can be achieved through supporting social networks; developing a common sense

of belonging, a shared future vision, and a focus on what different social groups have in common; encouraging participation and active engagement; building trust between people and in institutions; fostering understanding and respect for others, and for the value of diversity; and increasing the responsiveness of a state to its citizenry.

This definition positions social cohesion as an outcome, or a 'dependent variable,' and in essence posits that societies characterized by low levels of inequality and strong relationships between people are more likely to be cohesive.

4.2 BENCHMARKING DIMENSIONS AND INDICATORS

The next step requires review of all the main dimensions tested in the social cohesion measures analysed as international benchmarks, including all of the related sub-dimensions and indicators in each of these measures. Results are contained in Appendix C. Notably the most common indicators—although not analysed to the level of specific survey items—shared across all of the measures reviewed include:

- Inter-personal and inter-group trust
- Feelings of belonging and social inclusion
- Strength/value of national identity
- Approval of social support measures
- Perceived inequality
- Safety from violence/crime
- Civic and political participation
- Trust in institutions
- Acceptance of diversity
- Experiences and practices of discrimination

Overall, there is substantive alignment between most of the dimensions and indicators. The main differences

across dimensions and indicators include, in general terms:

- Whether or not quality of life indicators are included
- Whether or taken societal homogeneity (as measured by the extent of ethnic difference, percent foreign born population, etc.) into account
- Inclusion of indicators of personal self-worth

In terms of these dichotomies, this paper proposes that quality of life indicators should be included in the measure, in keeping with the operational definition of social cohesion as discussed in the previous section. Further, societal homogeneity also should be taken into account in the new measure, based on both migration trends and ethnic conflict within many different country contexts, as does the measure developed by Langer *et al*, (2015). However, indicators of personal self-worth have been excluded.

These results were taken into account in developing the measurement framework presented below.

4.3 MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

Based on the findings of the analysis conducted in previous sections, this paper proposes that a new measure of social cohesion for Africa should consist of six main dimensions, as follows:

- **Inclusion:** primarily access and participation in economic and social life, including quality of life indicators
- **Belonging:** identity, shared norms and values, and feelings of acceptance and belonging in society
- **Social relationships:** social networks, trust in individuals, and the acceptance and value placed on diversity in a society
- **Participation:** active involvement in political life
- **Legitimacy:** trust in institutions and feelings of representation
- **Security:** feelings of safety from political or social violence and crime

These dimensions are captured in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 Proposed dimensions and sub-dimensions of social cohesion measure

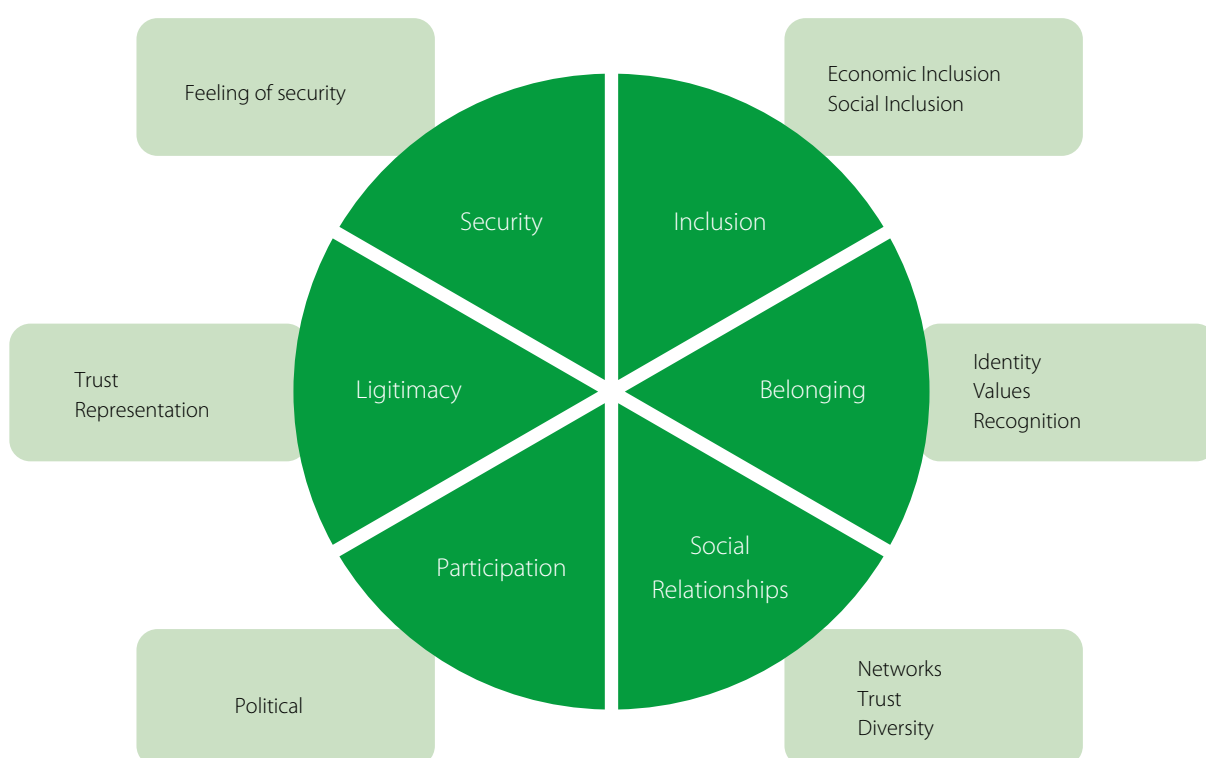


Table 11 provides an overview of these dimensions and sub-concepts, which are largely aligned with the international measures benchmarked previously. Quality of life indicators have been included, and are particularly important from the organisational perspective of UNDP – which also has rich secondary data that can be used to strengthen a social cohesion measure. Indicators of individual worth have largely been omitted, with the exception of ‘feelings of acceptance and belonging.’

Table 11 also includes two different types of data sources: subjective indicators, which are perception-based, public opinion measures that need to be

derived from primary research, and objective indicators, which include population and quality of life data and can be accessed through a number of reliable sources, including UNDP and UN databases (<http://data.un.org/>) or the World Bank (<http://data.worldbank.org/>), among other possible sources.

This measurement framework is intended as a first iteration. It is intentionally lean, and rather than attempting to include all of the diverse indicators used in other studies (see Appendix C) or available through international data, focuses on the minimal measures required to determine the presence and extent of social cohesion.

Table 11 Provisional Measurement Framework for Africa

Dimension	Sub-dimension	Subjective indicators (self-reported opinion data)	Objective indicators (secondary sources)
Inclusion	Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceptions of economic equality Perceptions of access to economic opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gini coefficient Population income share Unemployment/employment rates Poverty levels Average household income Workforce equity policies in place Economic participation of women
	Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feeling that basic needs are met Perceptions of social equality Approval of social protection measures (income support, redistribution) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy levels Educational participation/achievement Health outcomes (life expectancy, infant mortality, HIV/AIDS prevalence,) Access to food and clean water Access to basic services (electricity, housing, sanitation, transport) Access to the internet All data differentiated according to gender
Belonging	Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strength and importance of national identity Strength and importance of group identity/identities 	
	Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared norms and values 	
	Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feelings of acceptance and belonging Feeling that culture/way of life is recognised 	
Social Relationships	Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strength of social networks Civic organisation membership Emotional ties and feelings of interconnectedness 	
	Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpersonal trust Trust between groups (ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, language) 	
	Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acceptance of diversity (ethnic, racial, religious, gender, sexual orientation, migrants, people with disabilities) Approval/perceptions of the value of diversity Perceptions/experiences of discrimination Approval of social distance (communication, friendships, intermarriage) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % Foreign born population National data/reports of discrimination

Table 11 Cont.

Dimension	Sub-dimension	Subjective indicators (self-reported opinion data)	Objective indicators (secondary sources)
Participation	Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceptions/experiences of political participation Perceptions of political freedom Approval/participation in protest Political participation during/outside of election time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voter turnout at elections Elections considered to be free and fair
Legitimacy	Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust in institutions (government, police, justice system, conflict mediation) 	
	Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceptions of state responsiveness Feelings of being represented 	
Security	Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feelings of safety from violence or crime (political, ethnic, social) Perceptions about rule of law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National crime statistics Media reports

4.4 METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES

The findings of the literature review and international benchmarking exercises confirm that public opinion data are a critical part of any valid measure of social cohesion, because such a measure needs to incorporate how people feel in a society. Consistent with Jenson's (2010) approach, this paper suggests that there is also value in using objective indicators for purposes of comparison. Such indicators will strengthen a continental measure, particularly given the enormous diversity between countries.

Proposed components of the Social Cohesion Measure may include:

1. Public opinion data from African countries:

This should be in the form of both nationally-representative surveys and qualitative research (focus groups, biographies, case studies) that can be used to explore specific situations and topics within each country; for example, by following particular crises or conflicts and tracking marginalization of specific social groups. If a new bespoke opinion survey was developed for the purposes of this project, additional country-oriented items could also be included. Such research should, as far as possible, be repeated regularly over time to allow for an consistent

longitudinal dataset. Issues of the extent of political freedom also need to be evaluated when conducting public opinion surveys.

There are existing public opinion polls that include some of the indicators contained within the proposed Measurement Framework contained in Table 11. These include:

- **Afrobarometer:** includes questions on conflict and crime (feelings of safety and experiences of crime and violence); participation in elections; political participation; identity (national, ethnic, shared); poverty (basic living conditions and shortages); public services; social capital (trust and involvement in networks and associations); and tolerance (see Table 8).
- **World Values Survey:** since 2000, rounds have been conducted in 16 African countries (including Libya and Rwanda, which are not covered in Afrobarometer). Relevant topics (some items differ per country) include trust; membership in organisations; social distance and tolerance; social equality; political participation; income inequality; confidence in institutions; and discrimination.
- **Pew Research Centre:** conducted in 12 African countries and include questions on democracy, discrimination and prejudice, economics and personal finances, health, income inequality, migration, security, political attitudes, protest, race

and ethnicity, trust in government, and violence, among many others. Datasets are embargoed for public access for a two-year period.

- **Gallup World Poll:** Gallup also conducts surveys in 12 African countries, including on topics such as citizen engagement, government and politics, health, social issues, and well-being. This is available on a subscription basis.
- **Strategic Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA):** SHaSA is a programme of 43 national statistical offices in Africa that has begun collecting public opinion data on governance, peace and security (GPS). The GPS-SHaSA surveys have already been conducted in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Malawi, Mali, and Uganda.
- **African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM):** The APRM is a self-assessment tool used by African States to promote good governance, and was initiated in 2002 by the African Union within the implementation framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The APRM tool incorporates both primary and secondary data in four thematic areas: democracy and political governance; corporate governance; economic governance and management; and socioeconomic development.

2. Secondary data from national and international sources: this can be sourced from international databases, such as UN Statistics and the World Bank, as well as national statistics agencies, electoral commissions, media reports, and the like. Importantly, this should also include the UNDP Human Development Index (HDI).

3. Expert Assessments: many international studies also incorporate expert assessments, such as the corruption-focused Global Integrity study, the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, the Freedom House Freedom in the World report, and the Mo Ibrahim Index on

African Governance. Results can be triangulated with primary public opinion data and secondary indicators for a more robust measure.

Future work in developing a Social Cohesion Index for Africa will require consideration of the merits of using existing data sources, or conducting new research.

4.5 KEY FINDINGS

Key findings emerging from this section of the report include the following:

- For purposes of progress towards a new measure, and taking into account issues of organisational consistency and the value of future analysis, this section of the reports recommends using the conceptualisation of social cohesion used by the UNDP (2009) that focuses on reducing disparities, inequalities, and social exclusion and on strengthening social relations, interactions, and ties.
- Using this conceptualization, together with findings of the literature review and international benchmarking, six main dimensions of social cohesion were identified, to be included in a new measure for Africa: inclusion, belonging, social relationships, participation, legitimacy, and security.
- These dimensions are broadly aligned with many international social cohesion measures. Proposed indicators include measures of quality of life, but exclude indicators of personal worth.
- This section of the paper proposes that a Social Cohesion Index for Africa should take into account three types of data: public opinion data, both quantitative and qualitative; secondary, objective data on quality of life in particular; and expert assessments.



5. Conclusions and Recommendations

As described at the outset of the paper, the purpose of this paper is to start to conceptualize a measure of social cohesion in Africa. The main findings and recommendations emerging from the research follow.

5.1 There is no definitional consensus on social cohesion and this presents measurement challenges.

The results of the high-level literature review conducted during the development of this paper find that, despite more than a century of dedicated research and study, there is no single, clear definition of social cohesion. Some theorists and researchers understand social cohesion as a particular characteristic or quality of a society that should be encouraged and fostered; others posit social cohesion as the outcome, or 'dependent variable,' of a numerous processes and conditions. Rather than providing a clear definition, many describe social cohesion in negative terms; for example, as a lack of division and conflict.

As a result, measuring social cohesion is fundamentally challenging. Although many social cohesion measures have been developed, they risk becoming simply a 'sum of relevant indicators' (Struwig *et al*, 2011) rather than really examining the so-called 'glue' that holds communities together or that makes it more meaningful to live in a group than in isolation.

5.2 Highly cohesive societies perform better than non-cohesive societies in terms of economic growth, social stability, deterring conflict, support for democracy, and quality of life.

Despite the definitional and conceptual challenges, the literature review finds evidence to suggest that cohesive societies are—simply put—better and

more sustainable places for people to live (Pervaiz, Chaudhary, and van Staveren, 2013; Dragolov *et al*, 2013b). Cohesion has been linked to positive economic performance; stronger consensus; support for democracy, stability, and conflict prevention in times of crisis; and better health and livelihood outcomes. For this reason, increasing numbers of countries and international organisations have introduced policies, programmes, and measures that aim to encourage greater cohesion.

5.3 Despite conceptual challenges, a number of successful models exist for measuring social cohesion.

Research confirms that social cohesion measures have been developed and implemented in a number of countries worldwide, including Canada, Australia, Cyprus, Kenya, and South Africa. Several cross-country studies have also been developed using public opinion data, such as the Bertelsmann Foundation for OECD countries and the Afrobarometer survey data for Africa (Langer *et al*, 2015).

Most international measures have identified and tested different dimensions of social cohesion. However, despite conceptual and semantic differences, there is considerable alignment across these dimensions, as well as related indicators. Most commonly, these indicators include measures of interpersonal trust, feelings of belonging, identity, perceptions of inequality, safety from violence and crime, civic and political participation, trust in institutions, and tolerance and approval of diversity.

Major differences in the various measures reviewed centred around whether or not to include or exclude categories of data sources—empirical quantitative/objective data, alongside qualitative/subjective self-reported public opinion data; quality of life indicators;

indicators on the homogeneity (ethnic, racial, nationality) of a society; or indicators on individual self-worth.

5.4 Six dimensions of social cohesion were provisionally identified for a new measure of social cohesion in Africa.

Based on the UNDP's operational conceptualisation of social cohesion, as well as the results of the literature review and international benchmarking, six provisional dimensions of social cohesion were identified for a new measure for Africa. These are inclusion (social and economic participation, quality of life); belonging (identity, shared norms and values, feelings of acceptance); social relationship (networks, trust, acceptance, value of diversity); participation (in political life); legitimacy (trust in institutions and feel represented); and security (feelings of safety from violence and crime).

A series of sub-dimensions and related indicators are also provisionally identified, but will require further consideration, discussion, and testing going forward. This report recommends that any new measure of social cohesion in Africa should include multiple data sources. These need to include public opinion data, both quantitative and qualitative, but this may be triangulated against objective empirical data from other sources and expert assessments.

5.5 Important cautions emerge from the research and need to be taken into account.

Despite the popularity of the concept in research and policy circles, it is particularly important to bear in mind that highly cohesive societies can also have negative consequences. For example, groups can be strengthened through practices that are exclusive or oppressive. This needs to be taken into account in measurement, as well as in any other future programming or interventions.

5.6 There are a series of important next steps to be considered going forward.

These next steps may include:

- **Comprehensive literature review:** while this paper provided the results of a high-level literature review, consideration should be given to a more comprehensive review that includes detailed analysis of indicators and survey questions, identification of other resources, and a more detailed assessment of potential unique indicators within the African context.
- **Measurement framework, including domains:** discussion, validation, and updating of the proposed measurement framework.
- **Determination of resources and methodology to be used:** the most significant consideration will be whether or not to conduct new primary research, or whether to use existing data available from other sources, or whether these choices are mutually exclusive.
- **Develop and test a pilot instrument:** this should include any new research instruments, as well as components such as secondary data and/or expert assessments.
- **Finalising social cohesion measure:** following on these previous steps.

5.7 Consideration should be given to collaboration with the Afrobarometer project, as an existing network with wide geographic scope, considerable in-country resources, and a proven track record.

Commissioning additional survey items, and analysing these together with current Afrobarometer items, may provide a rigorous, methodologically robust, and cost-effective solution for the development of a social cohesion measure for Africa.

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APPENDIX A: Selected summary of social cohesion theory and research

Investigator	Findings
G. Le Bon (1896)	Solidarity of the crowd is due to its uniformity of action, which, in turn, is largely due to its anonymity and contagion. Antisocial motives are released through suggestion. (Ref: <i>The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind</i>)
E. Durkheim (1897)	Different rates of suicide reflect differences in social integration; categories of people with strong social ties had low suicide rates, whereas individualistic categories of people had high suicide rates (Ref: <i>Suicide: A Study in Sociology</i> , New York: Free Press)
C.H. Cooley (1909)	A primary group is a small social group whose members share personal and enduring relationships, in contrast to secondary groups that are large and impersonal whose members pursue a specific goal or activity (Ref: <i>Social Organization: A Study of the Larger Mind</i> , New York: Charles Scriber's Sons)
S. Freud (1921)	Primary identification explains loyalty and attachment to the group leader and to group members by intense emotional ties which represent the social bonds of groups activity (Ref: <i>Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego</i> , Vienna: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag)
W. MacDougall (1921)	The group is more than the sum of individuals; it has a life of its own, a collective soul, or group mind, a common mode of feeling, and reciprocal influence among members. (Ref: <i>The Group Mind: A Sketch of the Principles of Collective Psychology</i> , Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
J. L. Moreno (1934)	Founder of sociometry; deals with the inner structure of social groups and the forms emerging from forces of attraction and repulsion among group members. Selective relations among individuals give social groups their reality. Social configurations can be determined by measurement of choices and patterns of the degree of group reality (Ref: <i>Who Shall Survive? A new Approach to the Problem of Human Interrelations</i> , New York: Beacon House)
K. Lewin (1943)	The essence of a group is the interdependence of its members. A group is a dynamic whole; a change in any subpart changes the state of any other subpart. The degree of interdependence depends upon the size, organization, and intimacy of the group. (Ref: <i>Defining the 'field at a given time'</i> , Psychological Review, Vol 50(3))
R. Lippett and R. White (1943)	The cohesiveness of a group is higher under conditions of democratic leadership. Cohesiveness and high morale are largely the result of having one's expectations met (Ref: <i>The 'social climate' of children's groups</i> , in R. G. Barker, J. Kounin, & H. Wright (Eds.), <i>Child behaviour and development</i> . New York: McGraw-Hill.)
M. Deutsch (1949)	Provided analysis of group problem-solving and interaction process when members of groups are placed in a situation where cooperation is to their mutual benefit. Group members rewarded on a cooperative basis were more cohesive than members rewarded on a competitive basis (Ref: <i>A Theory of Co-Operation and Competition</i> , Human Relations Vol 2 No 2)
G. C. Homans (1950/1961)	Social behaviour is an exchange of more or less valuable rewards. Cohesiveness refers to the value of the rewards available in a group. The more valuable the rewards, the greater the cohesiveness. (<i>The Human Group</i> , New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich; <i>Social Behaviour</i> , New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich)
L. Festinger <i>et al.</i> (1950)	Formalized a theory of group cohesiveness. Cohesiveness is a key phenomenon of membership continuity – the 'cement' binding together group members and maintaining their relationships to one another. Investigated how face-to-face small, informal, social groups exerted pressure upon members to adhere to group norms (<i>Social Pressure in Informal Groups</i> , California: Stanford University Press.
K. W. Back (1951)	In experimental groups Back found that in more cohesive groups, members made more effort to reach agreement and were more influenced by discussion than in less cohesive groups (<i>Influence through social communication</i> , Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology)
S. Schachter (1951)	Schachter produced clubs with high cohesiveness by grouping students who expressed moderate or high interest in their activities; he created clubs with low cohesiveness by grouping students who expressed little or no interest in their activities (<i>Deviation, Rejection, and Communication</i> , Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 46)



Investigator	Findings
D. Cartwright (1950); D. Cartwright and A. Zander (1953)	A group in which norms are well institutionalized will be able to present a secure front to the outside world. When a group member accepts and conforms to group norms his security is enhanced by the supportive power of the group (<i>Group Dynamics: Research and Theory</i> , London: Tavistock Publications)
Asch (1952)	Showed the power of groups to generate conformity. In an experiment, he showed that group members are willing to compromise their own judgment to avoid being different even from others they do not know
French (1956)	Proposed a theory of social power that defined seven sources of power for changing conditions inside or outside a social group
Miligram (1965)	Studied pressures of conformity – in an experiment demonstrated that people are likely to follow directions from not only legitimate authority figures but from groups of ordinary individuals, even when it means inflicting harm on another person
Lott and Lott (1966)	Cohesiveness is that property which is inferred from the number and strength of mutual positive attitudes among the members of a group where the primary condition for the development of mutual positive attitudes among group members is seen as the attainment of goals or receipt of rewards in one another's presence.
Sherif and Sherif (1969)	Cooperative interdependence in the pursuit of shared goals, which cannot be achieved by an individual alone, results in a well-defined group structure. Mutual need satisfaction through cooperative interaction imbues group members with positive valence and so makes the group attractive and encourages members to remain in it.
Janis (1972)	'Groupthink' is a term coined by Janis. Groupthink occurs when a group makes faulty decisions because group pressures lead to a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgment
Granovetter (1973)	Most network models deal with strong ties in small, well-defined groups. Granovetter suggests the power of weak ties in linking micro and macro levels of sociological theory. Personal experiences of individuals are bound up with larger scale aspects of social structure. Weak ties are a bridge to parts of the social system that otherwise might be disconnected
Stokes et al. (1983)	Studied the relationship between self-disclosure and intimacy in groups. Intimate self-disclosure more desirable in the early life of a group to create cohesion
Piper et al. (1983)	Studied group dynamics in member learning groups where participants assessed cohesion. Responses yielded a five item factor authors called 'commitment to the group,' which they said represented their conception of group cohesion
Friedkin (1984)	Examines the use of network cohesion for studying the emergence of consensus among group members
Wellman (1979); Wellman et al. (1988)	Studied residential area in central Toronto with a tradition of cohesion. The community ties they found did not fit sociological criteria for community. Only some ties provided strong support, only a few were part of densely knit solidarities. Treated networks as personal communities, ways in which networks fit persons. Treating communities as networks helped in understanding how resources were channelled to members and how small interpersonal ties fit into larger social networks
Braaten (1991)	Proposes a multidimensional model of group cohesion based on an extensive literature review. Two factors are generic in models of cohesion namely attraction and bonding, and self-disclosure and feedback
Wellman and Wortley (1990)	Different types of ties provide different kinds of supportive resources. Not all types of ties are supportive. Most relationships provide specialized support. Strong ties provide emotional aide, small services, and companionship. Physically accessible ties provide services. Friends, neighbours, and siblings provide about half of all supportive relationships
Bollen and Hoyle (1990)	Propose that individual group members' perception of their cohesion is important for the behaviour of the individual and the group. They say that perceived cohesion has two dimensions: a sense of belonging and feelings of morale. They use a Perceived Cohesion Scale to test and confirm their theory in two random samples.
Carron and Hausenblas (1998)	Defined cohesion as a dynamic process that reflects a group's tendency to stick together and remain united in satisfying member needs. They believed this definition applies to most groups such as sports teams, military units, fraternities, and friendship groups.
Moody and White (2003)	Focused on the basic network features of social cohesion. They differentiate relational togetherness from a sense of togetherness. They believe cohesion is a property of relationships. They examine the paths by which group members are linked

Source: Bruhn, 2009, pp. 32 – 34.

APPENDIX B: Data Sources for Social Cohesion Measures

The table below shows the source of data used in the construction of each of the social cohesion indexes analysed in section III.

Index	Data		Sources
	Prim	Sec	
JN		X	World Bank, International Labour Organisation (ILO), World Values Survey
SMI	X		Public Opinion survey (annual)
BN		X	European Quality of Life Survey, Expert Assessments, World Values Survey (WVS or WEVS), European Values Study (EVS or WEVS), Gallup World Poll (GWP), European Social Surveys (ESS), European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS), International Social Survey Program (ISSP), International Social Justice Project (ISJP), Eurobarometer (EB), International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS), International Country Risk Guide (ICRG), Shadow Economies in Highly Developed OECD Countries (S&B), Measures of Democracy 1810–2010 (VAN)
SCO	X		Public Opinion surveys (using open-ended questionnaire)
NCIC	X		Public Opinion surveys (once-off)
AFR		X	Afrobarometer surveys (analysis of existing data)
HSRC		X	SASAS survey (analysis of existing data)

Abbreviations:

[JN]	Commonwealth Secretariat and UNRISD (Jenson, 2010)
[SMI]	Scanlon-Monash Index of Social Cohesion (Australia)
[BN]	Bertelsmann Social Cohesion Radar
[SCO]	SCORE Index
[NCIC]	National Cohesion and Integration Commission, Kenya
[AFR]	Langer et al, 2015
[HSRC]	HSRC (South Africa)

APPENDIX C: Main Dimensions and Indicators of Social Cohesion

Table C1 Main Dimensions of Social Cohesion Measures

Investigator	Main Dimensions
Jenson, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusion - Trust - Cultural and Ethnic Homogeneity - Participation and Solidarity
Scanlon-Monash Index (Australia)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Belonging - Social justice and equity - Participation - Acceptance and Rejection; Legitimacy - Worth
Bertelsmann Social Cohesion Radar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resilient social relations - Connectedness - Common good
SCORE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social Cohesion - Reconciliation
Kenya Social Cohesion Index	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prosperity - Equity - Peace - Diversity - Identity - Trust
HSRC Social Cohesion Barometer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic - Sociocultural - Civic
Langer et al, 2015 (Afrobarometer-based)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inequality - Trust - Identity

Table C2 Main Indicators of Social Cohesion

DIMENSIONS	CS	SMI	BN	SCO*	NCIC	AFR	HSRC
Social relationships							
Strength of social networks			X				
Interpersonal trust (other people)	X		X			X	
Intergroup trust (ethnic, racial, religious, socioeconomic, etc.)	X			X	X	X	X
Levels of solidarity (helpfulness, common good)	X		X				
Relationships between people of different socioeconomic groups					X		X
Belonging							
Shared values/norms	X	X					X
Shared identities	X	X					
Strength/value of national identity		X	X		X	X	X
Strength/value of ethnic identity					X	X	
Commitment to social group	X						
Feeling of belonging/inclusion	X	X			X		
Social equality						X	X
Cultural equality						X	
Inclusion							
Access to economic opportunities	X				X		
Perceived economic opportunity		X					
Approval of socioeconomic support (affirmative action, social protection, land redistribution, income assistance)		X			X		X
Economic security				X			
Economic participation	X						
Levels of in/equality	X				X		
Perceived inequality		X			X	X	
Perceived fairness			X			X	
Population wellbeing					X		
Access to basic services	X				X		
Human security							
Feeling safe from violence/crime				X	X		X
Feeling that needs are met				X	X		
Political freedom (association, expression)				X			
Importance of culture/way of life (group or national)		X			X		
Participation							
Participation in decision-making	X			X			
Civic participation	X		X				X
Participation in elections	X	X			X		
Participation in protest/boycott		X					X

DIMENSIONS	CS	SMI	BN	SCO*	NCIC	AFR	HSRC
Contact with representatives		X					X
Contact with media							X
Interest in politics							X
Legitimacy							
Trust in institutions	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Feeling represented by institutions				X			
Approval of representatives							X
Perceived corruption				X			
Satisfaction with government performance (economy, justice)				X			X
Political equality					X		
Diversity							
Acceptance/recognition of diversity	X		X				X
Tolerance (migrants, same-sex relationships, religion, gender, disability)		X					X
Homogeneity of population	X					X	
Discrimination/stereotypes (experience, practice, grounds)		X		X			X
Approval of institutions/policy supporting diversity	X	X					
Feeling of acceptance by others	X						
Social distance (intergroup communication, inter-marriage, friendships, relationships)				X	X		X
Positive feelings towards others				X			
Fair treatment of ethnic group by government						X	
Personal outlook							
Optimism about the future		X					X
Level of happiness		X					X
Future personal economic outlook		X					X
Personal wellbeing							X
Peace and security							
Satisfaction with conflict mediation				X			
Law and order; abiding social rules			X		X		
Free from threats of social violence				X	X		X
DIMENSIONS	CS	SMI	BN	SCO*	NCIC	AFR	HSRC

Abbreviations:

[JN]	Commonwealth Secretariat and UNRISD (Jenson, 2010)
[SMI]	Scanlon-Monash Index of Social Cohesion (Australia)
[BN]	Bertelsmann Social Cohesion Radar
[SCO]	SCORE Index
[NCIC]	National Cohesion and Integration Commission, Kenya
[AFR]	Langer et al, 2015
[HSRC]	HSRC (South Africa)

APPENDIX D: Samples of Data Sources

1. Public opinion data from African countries

Afrobarometer:

<http://www.afrobarometer.org/>

World Values Survey:

<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org>

Pew Research Centre:

<http://www.pewresearch.org/methodology/international-survey-research/>

Gallup World Poll:

<http://www.gallup.com/services/170945/world-poll.aspx>

Strategic Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA):

http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/AfDB,%20SHaSA_web.pdf;
<http://en.dial.ird.fr/content/view/full/52830>

African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM):

<http://aprm-au.org/>

2. Secondary data from national and international sources

UNDP Human Development Reports:

<http://www.hdr.undp.org/en>

UN Statistical Division:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/default.htm>; <http://data.un.org/>

World Bank Open Data

<http://data.worldbank.org/>

IndexMundi

<http://www.indexmundi.com/>

3. Expert Assessments

Global Integrity Study:

<https://www.globalintegrity.org>

Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index

<http://www.transparency.org>

Freedom in the World Report:

<https://freedomhouse.org>

Mo Ibrahim Index on African Governance

<http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org>

Endnotes

- 1 Kamwangamalu (1999) defines Ubuntu as an Nguni term “which translates as ‘personhood’ [or] ‘humanness’” and is “found in many African languages though not necessarily under the same name.” The concept “has phonological variants in a number of African languages: umundu in Kikuyu and umuntu in Kimeru, both languages spoken in Kenya; bumuntu in kiSukuma and kiHaya, both spoken in Tanzania; vumuntu in shiTsonga and shiTswa of Mozambique; bomoto in Bobangi, spoken in the Democratic Republic of Congo; gimuntu in kiKongo and giKwese, spoken in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola, respectively.
- 2 Jenson (2010, p. 3) cites Bernard (1999, p. 2), who refers to social cohesion as a hybrid concept, and McNeil (2006, p. 335), who discusses the “diffusion of various concepts in the development community”: both emphasise the ‘utility, if not the necessity’ of social cohesion remaining an ambiguous concept.
- 3 Studies used as sources for the Bertelsmann Social Cohesion Radar include: European Quality of Life Survey, World Values Survey, European Values Study, Gallup World Poll, European Social Surveys, European Quality of Life Survey, International Social Survey Program, International Social Justice Project, Eurobarometer, International Crime Victims Survey, International Country Risk Guide, Shadow Economies in Highly Developed OECD Countries, and Measures of Democracy 1810–2010.
- 4 Different terms are used by the different investigators for the components that make up each social cohesion model, including dimensions, domains, constituent domains, and elements.



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