

# SOCIAL COHESION AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT

A DESK REVIEW TO  
INFORM PROGRAMMING  
AND PROJECT DESIGN





# **Social Cohesion and Forced Displacement**

A Desk Review to Inform Programming and Project Design

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## Acronyms

CDD	Community-Driven Development
DfID	Department for International Development (UK)
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EU	European Union
FCV	Fragility, Conflict and Violence
ICG	International Crisis Group
IDA	International Development Agency
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ITT	Intergroup Threat Theory
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OECD	Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation
SCORE	Social Cohesion and Reconciliation
SFCG	Search for Common Ground
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VALCOS	VALeurs et COhésion Sociale
WBG	World Bank Group

## Executive Summary

Forced displacement changes social relations; the arrival of displaced persons is often associated with social disruption, tension, grievance, social fragmentation and economic upheaval. In this context, host governments are increasingly seeking advice from the World Bank Group (WBG) on how to target and design policy and operations for displaced persons in ways that do not exaggerate social tension and instead promote social cohesion.

This desk review aims to contribute toward a stronger conceptual and practical understanding of social cohesion in the context of forced displacement. The review includes reflection on the current portfolio of WBG forced displacement projects, many of which have a stated aim to improve social cohesion. The review identifies a number of gaps in current practice including a lack of clear definition of social cohesion; a lack of analysis on the political and historical context; (which determine social relations in the context of forced displacement); a lack of coherence in project design with a tendency to be over-optimistic about the extent to which a project by itself can promote social cohesion; and a lack of monitoring and evaluation to establish changes and influences on social tensions.

The review finds that a lack of clarity around the concept of social cohesion is not unique to the World Bank. Indeed, within the wider academic literature, there is variety in how the concept is deployed and understood. Recently, however, investment has been made in clarifying the composite attributes of social cohesion in the context of conflict. The desk review presents three such indexes of social cohesion, which could have application in the context of forced displacement for improved definition of the context.

Similarly, the review finds that literature is thin. What the literature does conclude is that social relations in the context of forced displacement

are mediated by important factors such as pre-existing relationships between the displaced and host communities, perceptions of identity, relative disparity between different groups affected by forced displacement, spatial arrangements and the duration of displacement. How these factors inter-relate and which ones prove more salient is, however, a product of historical and political influences. The literature focusses on social relations between displaced and host and neglects other dimensions such as dynamics within the respective communities, returnees or those who stay behind.

The need for further investment in political and historical analysis of the social dynamics around displacement is a key recommendation of the review. Without clear analysis of the social context, points of pressure and social strain around forced displacement, programming to address social cohesion can be based on assumptions about what works. Two prevailing assumptions are that addressing inequity in service provision between host and displaced persons will produce social cohesion and that community driven development can foster collective action and solidarity. But theories of change, which root choice of these approaches in a clear contextual identification of the problem to be addressed, are often lacking in programmatic and project design, so the logic behind programmatic approaches can remain obscure. In addition, very little monitoring and evaluation has taken place, which would provide evidence of the effectiveness of these approaches.

In general, the review finds that attempts to foster social cohesion at the project level are often over-ambitious. Social cohesion should be identified at the contextual level and addressed through a comprehensive programmatic response, in which project activities make a contribution.

## Context

**There is global momentum directed toward addressing the challenge of forced displacement through development approaches.** The increased caseload of displaced persons has seen resources for governments and humanitarian assistance stretched beyond recognition. And as situations of forced displacement have become ever more protracted, immediate humanitarian assistance needs to be complemented by medium and long-term sustainable development approaches. Such approaches, where policy conditions allow, support the self-reliance of those affected, address the development impacts of displaced persons on the communities in which they settle and promote socio and economic inclusion in a way that can foster poverty alleviation.<sup>1</sup>

**To achieve its twin goals of alleviation of extreme poverty and promotion of shared prosperity, the WBG recognizes that while working with governments and partners, it must play a key role in finding development responses for displacement situations.** Under IDA18, the WBG will significantly scale-up its financing for projects addressing forced displacement and situations of Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV), generally. For example, a new dedicated financing window of \$2 billion will enable governments of IDA-eligible refugee hosting countries to undertake activities that promote greater social and economic inclusion and self-reliance for refugees. Some countries, not eligible for the refugee window, may also have large populations of internally displaced people (IDP) for which they seek solutions under country-allocated IDA. For non-IDA countries, a new Global Concessional Financing Facility will support access to employment and services for refugees. These financing tools, and the projects they support, have the potential to contribute to a significant window of opportunity in changing

global policy toward refugees and other forcibly displaced and more progressive approaches that enable fuller integration.

**Host governments are increasingly seeking advice from the World Bank Group (WBG) on how to target and design policy and operations for displaced persons in ways that do not exaggerate social tension.** The demographic ‘shock’<sup>2</sup> of displacement is often associated with social disruption, tension, grievance, social fragmentation and economic upheaval. The arrival of new people under circumstances of forced movement will affect previous compositions and distributions of ethnicity and race. It may exacerbate political, social and economic differences disrupting previous balances of tolerance, social acceptance and cohesion.

**The protracted nature of displacement has made the issue of long-term integration a pertinent concern for some hosting governments.** Over the last six years, return accounted for only 27 percent of those who exited refugee status globally. Large majorities of forcibly displaced persons are reluctant or unable to return to a place associated with war, trauma and a lack of economic opportunities. Faced with the reality that the displaced may not return in the short to medium term, and that limited options exist for other durable solutions, host governments are confronted with a common dilemma: whether to pursue greater socio-economic inclusion of the displaced knowing that there are societal dynamics that may be affected and made problematic by that very inclusion. Yet recent evidence indicates that not pursuing integration may have negative consequences for some host countries. For example, some countries that struggle to integrate the displaced and migrants have faced residual problems such as civil unrest, citizen anger, xenophobia and a growing distrust of

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank and UNHCR, 2016. “Forcibly Displaced — Toward a development approach supporting refugees, the internally displaced, and their hosts”.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

government. In South Africa, a country that has high rates of unemployment and inequality and is simultaneously the major destination hub for mixed migrants and the forcibly displaced from across the region, has faced challenges with integration since the advent of its democracy. In 2008 and 2015, these challenges culminated in episodes of xenophobic-motivated violence.

**Host countries of all income levels are concerned with how to manage forced displacement in ways that do not compromise the well-being of their citizens or lead to social tension and potentially violence and conflict.** While there are strong signs that there is more open dialogue and cooperation between countries to pursue development responses, host governments will continue to face political risks (often associated with public perception) and continue to bear much of the cost associated with hosting. Social change, tensions and fear of threat from the arrival of displaced people and their inclusion into society are factors that often contribute to public perceptions and the associated policy decisions host governments must make. For host governments and their partners, a key issue is how to ensure the cohesiveness of the communities and societies affected.

**Some of these political-economy challenges may be geographical in nature.** A country's proximity to fragile or conflict-affected countries may mean that it will periodically, or on a protracted basis, take on a disproportionate 'burden' of hosting the displaced; countries such as Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya are some examples of such instances. Many of those countries who most often host displaced persons are predominantly low- and middle-income countries, which typically face a wide array of development challenges to start with—such as high rates of unemployment, low growth levels, inadequate social protection and/or high

levels of inequality.<sup>3</sup> This can place great economic and political pressure on host governments who may not want to be perceived by their constituents as placing the needs of the forcibly displaced above theirs.

**To respond, the World Bank needs a stronger conceptual and practical understanding of how to work with governments to identify and address the social challenges of forced displacement.** This paper will inform senior management undertaking dialogue with client governments and task teams preparing projects on how to understand and contribute toward enhanced social cohesion in situations of forced displacement.

## Methodology

This paper aims to improve understanding of social cohesion to enhance diplomatic, policy and operational responses, which can address social tensions associated with forced displacement. Its findings are drawn from the summary and conclusions of three contributing pieces of work. The first input was a desk review of existing academic and policy literature on the conceptualization of social cohesion. The second was a desk review of the existing academic literature on the impacts of forced displacement on social cohesion. The third was a portfolio review of World Bank projects addressing forced displacement and assessment of how the concept is defined and applied amongst other selected NGO agencies.

## Social Cohesion Definitions

**The topic of social cohesion had until recently largely disappeared from political, economic and academic debate.** Recent economic stresses and migration into wealthier societies has, however, elevated social cohesion back onto the agenda.<sup>4</sup> It is possible that the motivation for

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<sup>3</sup> World Bank and UNHCR, 2016. "Forcibly Displaced — Toward a development approach supporting refugees, the internally displaced, and their hosts".

<sup>4</sup> Ackett, Sylvian et al. Measuring and Validating Social Cohesion: a bottom up approach. OECD, 2011.

intensified interest in social cohesion is perceived threats emanating from immigration and increased ethnic diversity largely in northern countries and particularly those in the European Union (EU) and United States (US). The EU Cohesion Fund is, in fact, now one of the major items featured in the Union annual budget.<sup>5</sup>

**The concept of social cohesion originates from a range of academic disciplines and varies from abstract theoretical definitions to proposed metrics for measurement.** A variety of fields with little cross-fertilization have emphasized different dynamics of social cohesion such as common identity, economic inclusion and trust. Some coherence has been achieved in the more recent and more complex definitions of social cohesion, which have rooted themselves in five dynamics of social cohesion (see Box 1), which have been developed by subsequent key authors.<sup>6</sup> This has included identifying both the vertical and the horizontal interactions among members of society as characterized by a set of attitudes and norms that includes trust, a sense of belonging and the willingness to participate and help, as well as their behavioral manifestations.

**Intergroup Threat Theory (ITT) informs most of the more recent definitions of social cohesion.** ITT has crossovers with theories of ethnicity<sup>7</sup> and community<sup>8</sup>, all of which emphasize that: (i) social groups shape our identities and our lives;

(ii) all groups are characterized by boundaries (imagined and/or real<sup>9</sup>); relationships between groups are more likely to be antagonistic than complementary particularly during dangerous or contentious times; and (iii) while some threats may only be perceived threats, regardless, “perceiving threats when none exist may be a less costly error than not perceiving threats when in fact they do exist. Thus, by default, people may be predisposed to perceive threats from outgroups.”<sup>10</sup> In ITT these threats can be symbolic and realistic, they can be threats to the ingroup as a whole or threats to individual members. The distinctions between symbolic and realistic threats is important for even long-term situations involving displaced populations as is the emphasis on *perceived* threats resulting in exclusionary attitudes.<sup>11</sup>

**Box 1. Five Dimensions of Social Cohesion<sup>12</sup>**

Belonging .....	isolation
Inclusion .....	exclusion
Participation .....	non-involvement
Recognition .....	rejection
Legitimacy .....	Illegitimacy

**In displacement and fragile and conflicted-affected (FCV) contexts, the focus on intergroup perceptions and contact often translates into social cohesion interventions being conceptualized as peace-building and**

<sup>5</sup> Jeannotte, M. S. Social cohesion around the world: an international comparison of definitions and issues', Paper SRA-309. Strategic Research and Analysis Directorate, Department of Canadian Heritage, Ottawa, 2000.

<sup>6</sup> Bernard, P. La Cohesion sociale: a critique d'un quasi-concept. Lien social et Politiques – RIAC 41, 1999. Chan, Joseph et al. Reconsidering Social Cohesion: Developing a Definition and Analytical Framework for Empirical Research. Social Indicators Research, 75(2), 2006.

<sup>7</sup> Bruce, Steve. The Edge of the Union: The Ulster Loyalist Political Vision. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1994. Bringa, Tone. Being Muslim the Bosnian Way: Identity

and Community in a Central Bosnian Village. Princeton UP, 1996.

<sup>8</sup> Cohen, Anthony P. The Symbolic Construction of Community, Social Science, 1985.

<sup>9</sup> Barth, Fredrik. “Boundaries and Connections.” Signifying Identities: Anthropological Perspectives on Boundaries and Contested Values. Ed. Anthony P. Cohen. London, Routledge, 2000.

<sup>10</sup> Stephan, Walter J. et al. Intergroup Threat Theory. Todd D. Nelson (ed). Handbook of Prejudice. New York, 2009.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Jenson, J. Mapping Social Cohesion: The State of Canadian Research. Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc. CPRN Study No F/03, 1998.

**confidence-building measures between social groups.** For example, the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (SCORE) Index<sup>13</sup> Project uses a theory of change that *“social cohesion affects/predicts reconciliation such that higher levels of social cohesion will lead to a higher propensity for reconciliation.”* Reconciliation, inter-group relations and conflict mitigation remain the driving logic in SCORE, which was first developed for application in Cyprus and has subsequently been applied and built upon in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Ukraine.

**When it comes to programming, the overall tendency is for vague definitions of social cohesion to be used (or no definition at all); often with limited systematic analysis, theory of change or defined measurable indicators of impact.** The literature review conducted for this work concluded that the use of the concept of social cohesion in programming is often opaque, incomplete or under-developed. In addition, M&E systems to set a baseline and then measure the impact made by donor programs on social cohesion often are patchy and orientated toward traditional outcome or output measurement rather than impact. Recent work to strengthen the conceptualization of social cohesion, such as the development of the SCORE Index to measure social cohesion in reconciliation contexts, stems from recognition of this weakness:

...donors which are providing resources for ...programs often do so without a systematic application of existing theory and evidence ...Unfortunately

program evaluation results and information on evidence is scarce, and the theory underlying reconciliation programs can often be hard to access or even comprehend.

## Core Indicators

**Initiatives to improve the definition and measurement of social cohesion has involved the development of subjective and objective indicators across the horizontal (intergroup) and vertical axis (person-state).** For example, the horizontal could be evident in the levels of trust in other social groups and the vertical evident in the level of trust in the institutions of the state.

**Outside of these two axes, the configuration of definitions remains quite variable with many different combinations depending upon the bias of the conceptual approach.** Box 2 selectively compares social cohesion indicators in use currently and developed by the UNDP for the Arab region<sup>14</sup>, the VALCOS index developed for the OECD<sup>15</sup> and SCORE, all of which include and encapsulate the findings of key authors (Bernard, 1999 and Chan et al., 2006). Other indices, such as the Scanlon-Monash Index of Social Cohesion or the parameters for measurement proposed by the Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress<sup>16</sup>, offer additional perspective, but the main thrust of others considered for the literature review are largely covered by the UNDP, VALCOS and SCORE tools and methodologies.

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<sup>13</sup> The SCORE Index was developed through a partnership between UNDP-ACT and the Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development with USAID funding. The index is a tool designed to measure social cohesion and reconciliation as two indicators of peace in multi-ethnic societies around the world.

<sup>14</sup> Harb, C. Promoting Social Cohesion in the Arab Region Project. Background Paper, UNDP, 2017.

<sup>15</sup> Ackett, S et al. Measuring and Validating Social Cohesion: a bottom up approach. OECD, 2011.

<sup>16</sup> Stiglitz, Joseph E. et al. Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress. European Commission, 2009.

## Box 2. Comparison of Key Social Inclusion Indices

	UNDP	OECD – VALCOS	SCORE
<b>What to measure – key Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intergroup and attitude to institution</li> <li>• Collective action (social identities, justice perceptions and efficacy)</li> <li>• Socio-political identification</li> <li>• Emotions – intergroup focus: (anger, fear, contempt, hate, respect, empathy, affection)</li> <li>• Trust – horizontal and vertical</li> <li>• Human security threats</li> <li>• Justice</li> <li>• Political participation/rep</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legitimacy/Illegitimacy: Confidence in national distributive systems; Confidence in national organisations; Confidence in authority institutions; Satisfaction and approval of democracy and government</li> <li>• Acceptance/Rejection: Proximal solidarity; distal solidarity</li> <li>• Participation/Passivity: Social associations, political associations, cultural associations, youth and leisure associations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trust in institutions (horizontal)</li> <li>• Human security</li> <li>• Satisfaction with civic life</li> </ul>
<b>What to measure – auxiliary indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional socio-political dynamics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social macro variables such as those in the Spearman rank (employment, work and economy; health and education, demography, and subjective well-being). Others in VALCOS and elsewhere include suicides, life satisfaction, happiness, voting, unemployment rate, at risk of poverty rate, GDP per inhabitant, lifelong learning, levels of internet access, income per capita, minimum wages, happiness, fertility, cinema attendance, emigration rate, life satisfaction, infant mortality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconciliation indicators: stereotypes, intergroup anxiety, social distance, social threats, active discrimination, positive feelings for other groups</li> </ul>

<b>Why measure?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe socio-political dynamics</li> <li>• Geographical mapping (threats, readiness for action etc.)</li> <li>• Change over time in attitudes and perceptions</li> <li>• Map differences between groups</li> <li>• Intervention impact assessment</li> <li>• Modelling social cohesion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping social cohesion in European countries</li> <li>• Change over time in cohesion and underlying socio-macro indicators</li> <li>• Inform European social and economic policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping</li> <li>• Predictive</li> <li>• Connect social inclusion to other development outcomes</li> <li>• Peace building and reconciliation</li> <li>• Transformation of state institutions</li> <li>• Restoration of the legitimacy of the state</li> <li>• Estimate readiness for political compromise</li> </ul>
<b>Measuring methodologies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sampling and quantitative surveying</li> <li>• Multivariate statistical analysis</li> <li>• Descriptive statistical analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Micro socio-economic data (secondary)</li> <li>• Multidimensional scaling</li> <li>• Confirmatory factor analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholder consultation</li> <li>• Systems analysis</li> <li>• Quantitative sampling</li> <li>• Analysis (diagnostic and predictive)</li> <li>• Recommendations</li> <li>• Testing</li> <li>• Scaling</li> </ul>

Based on a basic comparison of these three representative indices, the following can be concluded.

- **There is a lack of consensus conceptually on what constitutes social cohesion.** Some conceptualizations overlap as do the social vectors where cohesion can be observed. Particularly relevant are the horizontal and vertical axis for the measurement of trust, legitimacy, political representation and justice.
- **The concept of social cohesion has plasticity.** Depending on the disposition of the defining agency, there are different emphases placed on the definition. Often emphasis is linked to the context being studied. For example,

the VALCOS index uses more economic peripheral indicators in line with the OECD definition of social cohesion having social mobility and economic vectors. This overlaps with the Council of Europe approach which, while emphasizing social protection, necessarily has a foothold in poverty analysis and poverty alleviation.

- **Specific indicators are needed for particular displacement contexts.** While these indicators can be usefully applied to displacement contexts, there is a need to contribute additional indicators to help elucidate additional pre-existing fault lines in social cohesion in the host and, where possible, the displaced populations. Much of the literature on social cohesion originates in Europe or

North America. This leads to bias, such as focusing on the impact of minority groups on social majorities and the effect of integration (or lack of integration) on social cohesion or theoretical blind spots, such as risks to good governance. While the UNDP index includes human security, it also includes indicators of propensity to collective action, which is in line with the regional socio-political dynamics within which social cohesion is to be measured by that index. The likely consequence is that to measure social cohesion and the impacts upon it by displacement (and then to derive efficient and effective interventions where there is a need and demand), new indicators will be required.

### Forced Displacement and Social Cohesion

**Assessing the reported impact of displacement on social cohesion is challenging.** In recent years, there has been an increase in the amount of literature on displacement, emanating from development actors and traditional knowledge brokers such as universities and think tanks. But a recent WBG anthology of research into the social and economic impacts of displacement accurately summarizes that while there is much written on displacement, research on economic and social impact is characterized by a lack of systematic and rigorous methodologies.<sup>17</sup>

**One of the main weaknesses of the literature on social cohesion and forced displacement is, therefore, that there is simply not very much of it.** Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al.'s (2011)<sup>18</sup> ranking of how literature examines the impacts of

displacement is based on an extensive and detailed literature review of over 3,000 sources. "Social relations" ranks mid-table, detailing the socio-economic impact of displacement; in other words, of all the seventeen identified topics covered in existing literature on forced displacement, social relations is in eighth place. There is no explicit place for the concept of social cohesion per se; and often social cohesion is entirely absent from analysis of the social impact of displacement.<sup>19</sup>

**The limited literature that does explore the relationship between forced displacement and social cohesion has attempted to identify factors that enable the restoration of positive social cohesion or contribute to a deterioration in social relationships.** Some of these factors include:

- the make-up and content of community and narratives about social identity within the host community;
- pre-existing relationships between the displaced and host community;
- capacity or readiness of the government and communities to host, including access to and capacity of infrastructure and services;
- economic deprivation and inequality within the host community;
- the actual duration of the displacement situation and/or the perceived time it will take before the situation is normalized/the displaced return to the places of origin;

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<sup>17</sup> World Bank. Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict. World Bank. 2013. Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead. World Bank, 2015. World Bank. Kurdistan Region of Iraq: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict and ISIS Crisis. World Bank. 2015a.

<sup>18</sup> Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Elena et al. Study on Impacts and Costs of Forced Displacement: state of the art

literature review (Volume 1). University of Oxford and World Bank, 2012.

<sup>19</sup> World Bank. Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead. World Bank. 2015. World Bank. Kurdistan Region of Iraq: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict and ISIS Crisis. World Bank. 2015a.

- patterns of settlement, such as encampment or self-settlement;
- pre-existing stressors including national and regional conflict dynamics;
- perceptions, the relationship between host community and their government, public discourse and political rhetoric, with media playing an important role.

**Patterns of settlement, for example, can impact on social cohesion as settlements can mean total physical separation of the displaced and host community to rural or urban cohabitation.** While cohabitation in an urban or rural space

means close physical proximity, it does not necessarily entail cohesion between social groups. The physical pattern of settlement impacts on social contact, economic activity within the displaced population and between the host and displaced population. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Elena et al. (2011), in their examination of the economic impact of displacement, create a matrix based on a sliding index that depicts the degree of interaction with the host population. Their matrix is useful for understanding the implications settlement patterns have for social cohesion. The following is an adaptation of their matrix to include effect on social cohesion.

### Box 3. Displacement Settlement Scenario and Social Cohesion

Scenario of Displacement	Characteristics of the Displacement Scenario Relevant to Impact on Social Cohesion		
<b>Closed Camp</b>	Complete separation. Camp population largely unable to move outside of camp. Access to services consist of humanitarian assistance provided by external actors	Limited contact between displaced and host populations across economic transitions	Lack of opportunity for social connection between internal camp populations and external 'host' populations
<b>Open Camp</b>	Displaced population living in camps, but able to move and trade inside and outside of the camp	Displaced population and some members of host population living in camps. Economic relations. Movement of displaced population	Increased opportunity for social connections. 'Border' between camp and non-camp remains evident
<b>Self Settlement</b>	Displaced population establishes own settlement; may or may not interact with local population	Separate location and separate legal status, but equal economic opportunities with local population	Opportunity for social connection. Access to services dependent upon the normative framework and capacity and availability
<b>Non-urban cohabitation</b>	Displaced population lives in same village as local population	Degree of socio-economic and political interactions will vary across the spectrum	Opportunity for social connection. Access to services dependent upon the normative framework and capacity and availability
<b>Urban cohabitation</b>	Displaced population lives in the same urban context as local population	Degree of socio-economic and political interactions will vary across the spectrum	Opportunity for social connection. Access to services dependent upon the normative framework and capacity and availability

**Social cohesion is context specific.** Critically, the literature concludes that all the factors which influence social cohesion do not function in isolation. Instead, they mediate situations simultaneously and, in some cases, cause seemingly conflictual outcomes within the same context. But the way they intersect and cause mutual influence is context specific. Context can be local, sub-national, country or regional basis but also includes historical narratives, state capacity institutional, governance and service delivery. Therefore, upstream socio-political context, political economy analysis, conflict and demographic analysis are important to better understand the concept and to utilize it in policy and programming. All too often this level of analysis is not undertaken. A rare example of where such an approach has been undertaken is illustrated in Box 4.

**If broad conclusions are possible from this limited literature, one of the most important is that the state of social cohesion must be understood as part of the wider social fabric and not just an issue associated with a particular circumstance or event such as forced displacement.** The tensions, which may arise at the time of forced displacement, may garner increased attention to the topic of social cohesion by hosting governments and the World Bank at a particular time and place. But analysis of these tensions at a certain time should not be divorced from the understanding that social conflict and the navigation of diversity is an intrinsic part of social functioning even under peaceful and less stressful conditions. The key is to understand how forced displacement changes existing social balances, which may already be riven with social fault lines and are always in a constant flux of formation and reformulation, of transition and change as part of historical development.<sup>20</sup>

#### **Box 4. The Historical and Cultural Construction of Narratives Around Refugee Presence in North-east Kenya<sup>21</sup>**

The WBG report undertakes social impact analysis to unpack the historical and cultural construction of narratives around refugee presence in north-east Kenya. The meta-narrative which prevails is that refugees are ‘*other*’ and ‘*violent usurpers*’ of the rights, land and resources of the Turkana hosts and are to be feared. One of the most important contributing narratives to this meta-narrative is the underlying sense of marginalization the Turkana experience from broader development processes in Kenya with a lack of trust in central and local government to include them or address their needs. In this context, refugees are perceived as yet another damaging incursion into an already disadvantaged situation. Meta-narratives of distrust are also enhanced in the event of violent or exploitative interactions between refugee and host. While inter-communal violence is relatively low, there are many first-hand experiences of hosts feeling cheated or threatened by refugees, which perpetuate the meta-narrative. Nevertheless, the report points out that in daily life, this meta-narrative is highly nuanced; it is mediated by the many individual and group inter-actions, which are positive and welcoming in nature, and the perceived opportunities of refugee presence. There are high levels of inter-group exchange, collaboration and mutual benefit and, thus, many sub-narratives prevail around the ‘goodness’ of refugees and their presence. Distance is a key factor; closer to the camps, hosts are more likely to refer to positive sub-narratives and to positive interactions, while further away, hosts are more likely to subscribe to the negative meta-narrative.

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<sup>20</sup> Landau, L. peer review comments.

<sup>21</sup> Refugee Impacts on Turkana Hosts: A Social Impact Analysis for Kakuma Town and Refugee Camp Turkana County, Kenya, World Bank, 2016.

**Nevertheless, there may be distinct characteristics of forced displacement, which have the propensity to exaggerate social tension.** The rapidity of population influx, the large numbers involved, the harrowing images of overwhelming human inflow and ungainly suffering perpetuated by the media can all appear very threatening and can irritate existing social apprehension. In addition, the existence of dedicated and rapid humanitarian intervention toward displaced populations can initiate further social change and garner resentment, when local populations feel bypassed in the process (see below). These specificities of the social impact of forced displacement need to be acknowledged and understood in the light of how they intersect with existing social division.

**Sociological literature does also suggest that in societies with rigid relationships and social identities, there is less capacity to maintain social cohesion under conditions of rapid change such as forced displacement.**<sup>22</sup> Such change can challenge gender roles, generational relationships and the basis of social membership when those identities are tightly prescribed. Rigid boundaries can also contribute to the internalization of injustice. These perceptions of injustice can cause host communities to retreat inward and increasingly define their identities more myopically and likely in opposition to the displaced.<sup>23</sup> Elites and the otherwise politically powerful may also be able to mobilize groups with rigid boundaries more easily, especially if those boundaries are hardened by perceptions of injustice. In parts of Europe, for instance, the rise in chauvinist nationalism has seen some among the political class evoke ever narrowing boundaries of identity in the face of actual or a

potential increase in the forcibly displaced from other regions.

**Pre-existing relationships between the forcibly displaced and their hosts can matter—specifically the narratives of shared identity.** The latter is evidenced in Lebanon, where decades long interactions with Syrian seasonal workers and other economic migrants has been instrumental in shaping how Lebanese hosts characterize Syrian refugees. Stereotypes of Syrians are either military officers or menial workers with low social standing, provide the backdrop against which Lebanese hosts hold negative perceptions of Syrian refugees. However, in a UNHCR study, it was found that these negative stereotypes were influenced by Lebanese media while more positive perceptions were held among Lebanese hosts that interacted more regularly with Syrian refugees.<sup>24</sup> These pre-existing relationships can contribute to positive perceptions and greater inclusion (for example, toward Pashtun Afghans hosted in Pakistan) or negative perceptions and greater tension (for example, Rwandans in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo). It was pre-existing racial and regional prejudices in Colombia that caused tensions between Afro-Colombian and indigenous IDPs and their hosts; some hosts refused to house Afro-Colombians and indigenous IDPs.

**Critically, it is equally possible for conflicting narratives to exist alongside each other.** In Turkey, for example, data from 2015 showed that 66% of refugees reported having a good relationship with their hosting community, 80% reported having ‘no social problems with Turks’ and only 25% felt discriminated against. Meanwhile, 73% of respondents from the

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<sup>22</sup> Bauman, Z. *Liquid Times: Living in an Age of Uncertainty*. Polity Press. 2007; Bauman, Z. *Strangers at Our Door*. Polity Press. 2016 and Wodak, R. et al. *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*. Edinburgh University Press. 2009.

<sup>23</sup> Marc, A. et al. *Societal Dynamics and Fragility: Emerging societies in responding to fragile solutions*. The World Bank Group. 2012.

<sup>24</sup> UNHCR 2014, Harb, C., and R. Saab. 2014. *Social Cohesion and Intergroup Relations: Syrian Refugees and Lebanese Nationals in the Bekaa and Akka*. Beirut, Lebanon: Save the Children.

Turkish community said that while they were sympathetic, on reflection the Syrians should be sent back to Syria.

**The literature is conclusive in finding that social relations are consistently aggravated by perceived and/or real disparities in access to opportunities and by heightened competition over that access.** For example, around the Buduburam refugee camp in Ghana, perceived discrimination over the distribution of land and water created tensions between hosts and refugees—in a context in which resources were scarce to begin with.<sup>25</sup> In Colombia, hostility toward displaced persons was exacerbated by the aid offered by the state: host communities resented the “*special treatment*” provided to IDPs vis-à-vis the non-IDP poor,<sup>26</sup> resulting in accusations that the displaced persons were “*not truly displaced,*” “*bad workers*” or “*people who do not work at all.*” In other cases, even positive objective outcomes remain highly dependent on subjective perceptions, which can in turn affect behaviors and policy outcomes.<sup>27</sup> For instance, a long-term empirical study found some disconnect between reality and perceptions in some Ugandan host communities living close to Congolese refugee settlements: their welfare had improved, but they felt it had deteriorated, which in turn negatively affected their relationship with the refugees.<sup>28</sup>

**The forced displacement literature is, however, inherently limited in that it tends to only consider cases where the majority (the host population) are impacted upon by the minority (the displaced populations).** Often missing is a consideration of what other groups and structures relevant to social cohesion are

involved in displacement contexts and a consideration of whether it is a condition of a society as a whole. In reality, the literature says little about the nature of social cohesion in displacement contexts, the impact upon it by displacement, how that impact is disaggregated, such as by impact upon actors (displaced, host communities, host society), and what is its importance to programming in displacement context.

**Issues of return and repatriation are also largely invisible in the literature that has been reviewed for this paper.** There remains an outstanding question of how to understand the variation of social cohesion impacts across different scenarios: pre-displacement (host and displaced populations), during displacement (host and displaced populations) and post-return (former host populations, displaced populations, returnee populations and receiving populations). This absence weakens a programmatic ability to devise inclusive interventions in return areas (repatriation to site of origin, to neighboring site, to region of origin or to region other than the one of origin).

**Time, or the duration of displacement, is rarely explicitly investigated as a factor in the social influences of forced displacement.** Time can be a critical and cross-cutting dynamic that can affect not just social cohesion but also how indicators of social cohesion can best be utilized and be context specific. For example, the “*historically complicated relationships*”<sup>29</sup> between Lebanese and Syrians and the Lebanese experience of Palestinian displacement where initially a “*short-term resettlement turned into a massive, largely Sunni, long-lasting, militarized*

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<sup>25</sup> Agblorti, S. “Refugee Integration in Ghana: The Host Community’s Perspective.” Research Paper 203. Geneva: UNHCR, 2011.

<sup>26</sup> Lopez, R et al. The Effects of Internal Displacement on Host Communities a Case Study of Suba and Ciudad Bolívar Localities in Bogotá, Colombia. ICRC and Brookings Institute, 2011.

<sup>27</sup> Jacobsen and Bakewell. 2013. Inclusion Matters: The Foundations for Shared Prosperity. New Frontiers of Social Policy. Washington, DC: World Bank.

<sup>28</sup> Kreibaum, Merle. “Their suffering, our burden? How Congolese refugees affect the Ugandan population.” *World Development* 78 (2016): 262-287.

<sup>29</sup> International Crisis Group. Too Close for Comfort: Syrians in Lebanon. Middle East Report No. 141. ICG, 2013.

*presence*<sup>30</sup> compounds the perception in Lebanon of Syrian displacement as a permanent phenomenon with complex demographic, social, political and ethnic threats to the majority population.

**The literature is also weak in acknowledging that the composition of 'local' groups can vary and change.** Missing is an acknowledgement that the composition of local groups can change from situation to situation. In some cases, 'locals' could refer to resident population that may include previous refugees and other previous immigrants. In other cases, 'locals' may just refer to the native-born population or long-term residents<sup>31</sup>. Similar permutations can apply to displaced populations.

### Social Cohesion Programming and Policy: Analysis and Assumptions

**Social cohesion programming tends to be designed on the basis of loose conceptualization and many implicit assumptions.** The lack of a coherent agreed understanding on social cohesion and weak substantiation in the literature of the impacts of forced displacement on socio-economic realities are two factors for this. For example, at times social cohesion is used in programming as a synonym for community relations, and in others it is an output in the form of new constituted voluntary or community organizations (brought together and given technical assistance by a set of donors or national government). Equally, the prospect of development can be conceptualized as an incentive for communities to be cohesive, achieved by investing in leadership, engaging with youth and bringing together host and refugees or IDPs based upon a common vision for the development of an area or region. What is often missing is an in-depth contextualization of displacement impact that includes historical narratives and attitudinal evidence, to inform

the programmatic design and to validate the relevance of some of these assumptions.

**The sensitive political nature of much situational analysis, particularly where the displacement is large and into an already fragile state, does pose restrictions on donors and implementing partners.** This may include the complex political context they need to negotiate and which may constrain the candidness of the analysis and subsequent policy and practice. Fragile states, states emerging from conflict, or those that have significant political or institutional instability have major challenges to their social cohesion. In displacement contexts, particularly where displacement is into states that are fragile, conflict-affected or have significant political or institutional instability, policy targeting social cohesion can shy away from explicitly defining it given its links to possible pre-existing fault lines in the receiving country. Arguably this is the case with the Syria Regional Response Plan which shies away from an analysis of the fragility in host countries and does not question assumptions about displacement into Lebanon and its neighbor countries, such as the permanency of displaced populations.

**Strategizing about fostering social cohesion is highly sensitive, particularly when the reality is that much displacement will be long term.** This may not be accepted by host governments or even by the normative frameworks used to provide status. Examples of challenges in the normative frameworks include the reservations of countries in Africa that host displaced populations. For example, while being party to the 1951 Convention and Protocol, Angola, Egypt, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zambia have significant reservations that restrict the protection granted to refugees. These include reservations limiting access to education

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid:

<sup>31</sup> Christophersen, Mona et al. *Ambivalent Hospitality: Coping Strategies and Local Responses to Syrian Refugees in Lebanon*. Fafo, 2013.

and employment, thus undermining both horizontal and vertical axes of social cohesion. It is often unclear how rooted the programmatic intervention is in a true understanding of these national, regional and local political constraints.

**Lack of rigorous methodology to establish baseline analysis means some policy and strategy is built on secondary analysis and qualitative consultations from which findings are generalized to a national or regional situation.** In much of the literature, it is challenging to locate an in-depth analysis that considers the reality of displacement from the perspectives of host and displaced populations, that is informed by a nuanced understanding of the internal politics of the receiving country and that understands any legacy of conflict, displacement or social disharmony that may or may not be exacerbated by the arrival of large-scale displacement. Thus, it is difficult to gauge to what extent any such analysis really informs the understanding and the change model in an intervention or strategy targeting social cohesion and displacement. Yet the varying composition of host and displaced communities, the changing permeability of its community over time in response to social, economic, political and ethnic stresses and the influence of historical and social context requires a nuanced understanding. Arguably only an explicit theory of change with coherent indices and measure of social cohesion indicators can really tackle these nuances.

**In absence of such analysis, the prevailing assumptions about social cohesion are many.** One prevailing base assumption is that 'social cohesion' is self-evident whether considered an end-in-itself or as a pathway to development. Social cohesion is assumed to be interchangeable with a host of other concepts or socio-economic dynamics, such as a stable peaceful relationship between host and refugee populations, effective social protection mechanisms or trust. The analysis then turns to the stresses placed on a wide variety of social protection services and mechanisms, markets

and natural resources (and occasionally on the functioning of government itself) and concludes that any strain on services or shocks in the ecosystem are therefore likely to lead to a breakdown in social cohesion or are evidence of negative impact on social cohesion.

**This is the tautology at the heart of much analysis where increasing social cohesion or preventing the deterioration of social cohesion is considered a development goal.** Effectively any broad intervention targeting socio-economic stresses of host and displaced communities is considered as contributing to social cohesion which in turn is a foundation for future development.

**Of the many synonyms for social cohesion, trust is possibly the most coherent and has roots in the more well-defined indices of social cohesion and its location in inter-group relations.** Where social cohesion is emphasized as trust (trust among members of society, trust between displaced communities and host communities, trust between members of society and the institutions of the state), it is often the case that the social change model emphasizes a multi-faceted approach to building trust in society but shies away from considering economic drivers of change (such as equal pay, equal access to employment opportunities etc.). For example, in the context of the widespread displacement in the Arab region, the UNDP's Promoting Social Cohesion in the Arab Region (PSCAR) project names economic factors that influence social cohesion but chooses to focus on building trust between groups in society, including displaced people, and between members of society and the institutions of the Arab states as the means to secure social cohesion. The fundamental assumption is that by addressing limited "*pluralistic participation in social, economic and political life*", and in some cases, "*the limited respect for cultural diversity*," the project will address the fundamental drivers of "*social discontent*" and group dissatisfactions.

**Assumptions are also made about community and the capacities of host and displaced communities to integrate.** Often community-driven development (CDD), participative decision making (including creating grass roots volunteer organizations such as Village Committees<sup>32</sup>) employment programs and social protection programs are assumed to bring communities closer together, increase understanding and positively impact on social cohesion. This is without clear definition of the entities being engaged (communities) or the measurement of impact on social cohesion. Community is a 'fuzzy concept'<sup>33</sup> with boundaries that have varying degrees of permeability, depending on a multitude of external and internal factors. Host communities and the displaced are not static entities. Movement of people in and out of the community, or the locations where there is a majority of one or the other, can be influenced by many factors including new economic opportunity at the arrival of displaced populations and new demand for services and services providers.

**Finally, underpinning all these assumptions is an often-unspoken objective, in which programs seek to create greater social homogeneity.** All too often social cohesion interventions incorporate activities trying to support community-based adherence to the same values and priorities. When unpacked, this assumption can look naïve. It ignores the fact that social tension is inherent to human society and is often necessary for communities to move forward in achieving collective goods. It presumes that full incorporation and membership is what displaced persons are seeking. Many displaced persons use their marginalization and outsider status as a coping strategy, to avoid detection and social control or to facilitate ongoing mobility. A more sophisticated definition of social cohesion

should avoid this assumption and acknowledge that the aim is to manage conflict without it being harmful or exclusionary rather than to prevent it at all.<sup>34</sup>

## World Bank Projects

**The issue of social cohesion is not new to the WBG.** The World Bank has an established history of working on social cohesion, particularly in the social development sector where social cohesion is one of three pillars of the Social Development Strategy. The WBG's Social Development Strategy of 2005 defines "*cohesion*" as follows: "*cohesive societies enable women and men to work together to address common needs, overcome constraints and consider diverse interests. They resolve differences in a civil, non-confrontational way, promoting peace and security.*" Whilst the 2011 Mid-Cycle Implementation Review of that strategy defines it as "*cohesive institutions enable individuals and communities to overcome social and economic divisions and prevent the exposure and exacerbation of fault lines and occurrence of violent conflict.*" What is required, however, is a stronger ability to apply these concepts in the context of forced displacement, at a time when there is new expectation and incentive to address the issue.

**World Bank teams often consider tackling social cohesion as an important part of their engagement on forced displacement.** As part of this report, a portfolio review was conducted which found 30 World Bank financed projects addressing forced displacement across different regions. Of the projects considered, 24 (86%) make mention of the term '*social cohesion*' several times where it is framed as an important issue in project documents and one which project interventions may affect. See Annex 1 for list of projects identified. There is a common perception among project teams (based on the

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<sup>32</sup> UNHCR.

<sup>33</sup> Cohen, Anthony P. *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, Social Science, 1985.

<sup>34</sup> Landau, L. peer review comments.

framing in project documents) that social cohesion is a pertinent issue within the context of forced displacement. This speaks to the level of demand amongst client countries for tackling the social tensions and upheaval associated with the arrival of displaced persons. It also speaks to an intuitive sense that social inclusion is a fundamental part of a development response to forced displacement. See Box 5.

**Social cohesion as a concept and what a given project is attempting to address is, however, usually weakly articulated.** None of the project documents reviewed explicitly defined social cohesion. Defining social cohesion within the context of forced displacement interventions appears to not be recognized as a necessity for project teams or may be viewed as too complex a task.

#### **Box 5. Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTPs)**

The current work between the WBG and the Government of Turkey is piloting an assessment of the socio-economic impact of Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTPs) on Turkish Hosting Communities, lies within the paradigm that impact is by the minority community on the majority. At the time of writing there is no explicit focus on social cohesion although attitudinal surveys are to be used as part of the analytics. An earlier (2013) assessment by the Bank on Turkey's response to Syrian Refugees identifies that social cohesion is one of five "*socio-economic pressures and displacement responses*" in Turkey as a result of Syrian displacement (the others are: (i) labour market and skills; (ii) welfare; (iii) education and health, and (iv) housing and municipal services). The assessment which locates the impact of displacement first in these five pressure zones conflates '*social cohesion*' and '*social tensions and vulnerabilities*' social protection and international support.

**Systematic identification of what social cohesion challenges may exist are rarely conducted.** Instead, most projects make what appear to be largely intuitive deductions about the likelihood that tensions may exist and why. These deductions are either assumptions or firsthand anecdotal observations. For example, reasons for stating that social tensions may exist and why include: i) an observed disruption in peace and security in the given context; ii) the observed detrimental socio-economic consequences of a refugee crisis or conflict with particular emphasis on access to social services; iii) the presence of refugees/IDPs within host communities; iv) the manner in which international organizations have responded to a crisis; and v) a lack of government capacity to respond to a conflict/displacement crisis. Specific observations in project documents include: "*the socio-economic consequences of the refugee crisis have led to increasingly fragile inter-communal relations and social tensions*"; "*the fact that Syrian refugees have been the main beneficiaries of international and government assistance remains a source of tension between communities*"; "*high population density, combined with cycles of forced displacement and conflicts undermine social cohesion, contribute to tensions between communities and ethnic groups, and perpetuate deep social and economic inequalities*"; and "*current patterns of population displacement and the lack of government capacity to mediate and manage land ownership disputes could constitute points of contention*".

**Only four projects out of 30 (13%) have specific interventions that seek to address social cohesion challenges.** These projects ascribe to common themes identified about the type of interventions or approaches that will affect social cohesion outcomes, namely: i) community-based or participatory approaches; and ii) a strengthening of community structures to resolve conflicts/enhance peaceful coexistence with an emphasis on increased interaction and collaboration within and between communities.

**Only two projects specify indicators to monitor social cohesion outcomes.** A project in Mauritania<sup>35</sup> has the following indicator: “decrease in proportion of target households reporting cases of conflict in previous 12 months”. It was reported that “30% of communities noted that the project has resulted in reinforced social cohesion or strengthened conflict mitigation.” In the second project in Cote D’Ivoire<sup>36</sup>, the indicator was, “number of social cohesion projects realized: # of houses built, including for IDPs.” No report on actual outcomes was reported.

**The remaining two projects monitor social cohesion outcomes but do not have specific interventions.** The IDP Living Standards and Livelihoods Project in Azerbaijan<sup>37</sup> has as its objective to improve living conditions and increase the economic self-reliance of targeted internally displaced persons. It has the following indicators: i) “% of targeted beneficiaries who feel socially excluded in the wider society”; and ii) “% of targeted beneficiaries whose social map of trusted relations includes non-IDP as well as IDP.” In the DRC Eastern Recovery Project<sup>38</sup>, the objective is to improve access to livelihoods and socio-economic infrastructure in vulnerable communities in the eastern provinces of that country. The project has the following single indicators: i) “improvement in social cohesion among beneficiaries of community subprojects”. It is noted that social cohesion will be measured using a composite index that will include: level of acceptance of others into the community; level of trust in other community members; and propensity to work collectively to address development challenges.

**Within WBG projects, it is notable that community-based or participatory processes<sup>39</sup>**

**are commonly referenced as the means to achieve social cohesion.** Some examples include: “the first way to promote social cohesion through the Project will be through a participatory process”; “if citizens participate and engage in the process of identifying and prioritizing their developmental needs.....social cohesion will improve”; and “a community-driven approach and or a ‘whole of community’ approach in tackling the reintegration of displaced populations [will] help foster a sense of social cohesion” and “participatory modalities [will] help build strong local ownership and thereby foster community resilience and social cohesion.” Markedly, few projects provide evidence—either drawing from the context or from other similar contexts or literature—such approaches will necessarily lead to improved social. It may be the case that some literature or other projects that have used this approach have indicated positive contributions to social cohesion, however, this is not explicitly cited.

**Assumptions are also made about community and the capacities of host and displaced communities to integrate.** Often, community-driven development, participative decision making, employment programs and social protection programs are assumed to bring communities closer together and positively impact on social cohesion. This is without clear delineation of the stakeholders being engaged (often communities) or the measurement of impact on social cohesion.

**A limited number of projects appear to have done some assessment that substantiate why community-based or participatory approaches are appropriate. For example, the Emergency Services and Social Resilience Project<sup>40</sup>** has as its objective to help Jordanian municipalities and

<sup>35</sup> Sustainable Livelihoods for Returnees and Host Communities in The Senegal River Valley Project in Mauritania (P132998), SURR, AFR.

<sup>36</sup> Cote d'Ivoire: Post Conflict Assistance Project – AF (P144762/P0828817), SURR, AFR.

<sup>37</sup> IDP Living Standards and Livelihoods Project (P122943), SURR, ECA.

<sup>38</sup> DRC Eastern Recovery Project (P145196), SPL, AFR.

<sup>39</sup> Such approaches usually consider the inclusion of marginalized groups such as ethnic minorities, women, youth and refugees/returnees/IDPs.

<sup>40</sup> Emergency Services and Social Resilience Project - AF (P161465/P147689), SURR, MNA.

host communities address the immediate service delivery impacts of Syrian refugee inflows and strengthen municipal capacity to support local economic development. It aims to foster “social cohesion through voice and participation”. In substantiating this approach, “initial analysis of previous or existing projects using participatory mechanisms indicate a high satisfaction with this method of decision-making and its ability to increase the sense of agency in locations removed from the center. International experience in a range of conflict affected countries, from Cambodia to Sri Lanka and Sierra Leone, is consistent with this approach”.

**Assumptions are made about what interventions will affect social cohesion outcomes.** Although they vary and depend on the project objectives and sector focus, common examples include: i) greater access to livelihood opportunities/self-reliance for both refugees and host communities; ii) increased access to social services and improved quality in those services (e.g., education, health); and iii) access to mechanisms that can restore or address issues of injustice and access to social infrastructure where different communities can meet and discuss/resolve pressing problems. Some projects indicate a sensitivity around communication of project intentions and the assumed links to social cohesion outcomes. For instance, “undertaking communication, harmonization and sensitization campaigns within host communities” and “other special measures” about the intentions of the project will “improve social cohesion”.

**In some cases, evaluations point to positive outcomes.** The Emergency National Poverty Targeting Project<sup>41</sup> has an objective to expand coverage of the social assistance package of the National Poverty Targeting Program (NPTP) to Lebanese citizens affected by the Syrian crisis.

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<sup>41</sup> Emergency National Poverty Targeting Program—AF (P158980), SPL, MNA.

<sup>42</sup> Henderson, M. and S. Pietzsch (2008). Direct Cash Transfer to Post Election Violence Affected Host

The project document notes that “social protection initiatives have proven to reduce the potential for social tensions/unrest, insecurity, and crime by reducing poverty and inequality”. The project document goes on to reference an evaluation of a cash transfer program in Kenya as an evidence base for this claim. “In Kenya, a direct cash transfer program<sup>42</sup> was implemented in communities hosting the displaced following the violence that erupted in 2007, and which led to the large-scale destruction of buildings, disruption of labor markets and displacement of around 300,000 individuals. The evaluation found that, “in terms of social cohesion, the program reduced tensions, allowed people to feel safer again, re-established trust and led to participants reporting higher encouragement to restart their lives.”

## NGO Approaches

**Beyond the WBG the increasing significance of social cohesion in forced displacement contexts is recognized.** As part of this report, feedback was received from a limited number of external partners: the Danish Refugee Council (DRC); Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC); Zimbabwe Community Based Planning Program; Search for Common Ground (SFCG); and the Myanmar Social Cohesion Framework and Lebanon’s Social Cohesion Programming. All agencies acknowledge the growing significance of social cohesion in the context of forced displacement and are beginning to develop systematic ways to address it. The exception is SFCG where addressing conflict is its core mandate and as such it has developed systematic approaches to address social cohesion challenges. Other partners, including development agencies, were approached, but feedback was not received within the timeframe of the report.

**All the agencies sampled are further along than the WBG in the systematic use of a definition of**

Community: Nakuru, South Rift Valley, Kenya. Action Contre la Faim (ACF) International Network.

**social cohesion.** Both the DRC and SFCG have definitions of social cohesion which are grounded in a review of various sources of literature, but they also have more specific definitions that apply to specific country contexts. NRC, however, does not have an organizational definition but rather considers social cohesion to be implicitly recognized/embedded in terms such as “*community resilience and self-reliance*” or “*coexistence*”, which are terms commonly used to describe the activities it engages in. See Box 6.

**Assumptions about what interventions might work are varied.** The NRC places emphasis on community-based approaches whilst DRC’s approach is rooted in addressing both vertical and horizontal governance issues; access to basic service, security and economic development, all within the context of a respect for human rights and rule of law. SFCG’s approach aims to transform the way individuals and societies deal with conflict by building capacities, relationships and systems that prevent the resort to violence by using “*dialogue, media and community*” to provide safe spaces for different people across dividing lines to dialogue as well as challenging public discourse that may contribute to social tensions using popular media. Critically, as quite distinct from DRC, SFCG stresses that while ensuring improved access to services (i.e., health, schools, sanitary) is important, it “*does not necessarily result in better relations [between Lebanese and Syrians], as it does not address the existing negative perceptions between the two groups.*” This was reflected in Search’s conflict analysis in Lebanon where resentment toward Syrian refugees was often based on the perception that refugees are, for example, stealing jobs and causing housing prices to rise, whereas when asked to point out specific examples, few respondents were able to.

## **Box 6. Danish Refugee Council and Search for Common Ground Definitions of Social Cohesion**

### **DRC’s Addressing Root Cause (ARC) platform**

Social cohesion references two features of society for which specific indicators can be developed as per the relevant context.

- i) “*the absence of latent conflict* – whether in the form of income/wealth inequality; racial/ethnic tension; disparities in political participation; or other forms of polarization; and
- ii) “*the presence of strong social bonds*” – measured by levels of trust and norms of reciprocity; the abundance of civic-society associations and the presence of institutions of conflict management (i.e., responsive democracy, and independent judiciary, and independent media).

DRC notes that “*despite the existence of these definitions, numerous DRC programs make reference to social cohesion without explicitly defining it, assuming that there is a commonly agreed definition of it that is based on social cohesion as the ‘glue’ that binds together different groups within a given society*”. For DRC, the mere existence and recent rise of the concept denotes there is a real and/or perceived deficit of social cohesion, i.e., that forced displacement puts social cohesion under pressure.

### **SFCG**

Social cohesion is regarded as “*the glue that bonds society together, essential for achieving peace, democracy and development*”. This ‘glue’ is made up of four key components: Social relationships, Connectedness, Orientation toward the common good, and Equality. These components in turn require good governance, respect for human rights and individual responsibility. Social cohesion is not an ideal, but rather an attainable objective requiring the active and constant commitment of all levels of society and is critical to the process of building a peaceful society and nation.

**NGOs are developing diagnostic tools though little systematic diagnosis has been made within the humanitarian sector.** The NRC is in the nascent stages of developing diagnostic tools to identify what social cohesion problems may be in particular contexts. The development of the Social Cohesion Framework for Myanmar, with a multitude of stakeholders from across that country, was designed to inform the UNDP and SFCG joint initiative Social Cohesion for Stronger Communities project. Thorough analysis was undertaken to determine what might be the “*dividing factors*” of social tensions. The analysis covered the country context, economic development and inequality, gender, democratic governance and decentralization. Examples of the dividing factors identified included: “*mutual mistrust between the government and civil society*”; “*poverty and rising social inequality exacerbate tensions and increase potential for the escalation of conflict, as people compete over resources and opportunities*”; and “*media propaganda in Myanmar negatively portrays various minorities and social groups, particularly on the basis of gender, ethnicity and religion*”. Similarly, in Lebanon, SFCG at the end of 2013 conducted a wide conflict assessment in the 11 target communities to reveal the real and perceived factors fueling resentment and misperceptions and to identify potential positive factors on which to build social cohesion. The assessment allowed programming to be tailored to the specific social and political contexts of each community. DRC Jordan has a forthcoming study on social cohesion which highlights “*tensions in its three areas of intervention, whether between refugee and local populations, within refugee communities, and amongst host community populations. Frequently mentioned sources of tension between refugee and host community members include perceived lack of equal opportunities, lack of acknowledgement and respect for diversity and competition for*

*employment*”. For the DRC, where Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) initiatives assess social cohesion effects, it attempted to quantify them by: frequencies and types of contacts between hosts and refugees; mapping of potential support networks; feelings of safety and tensions; etc. However, DRC notes that “*in the absence of a clear definition of social cohesion, DRC applies a set of ‘home-grown’ indicators to concretize, and facilitate M&E activities.*”

**Despite some progress, the plasticity of the concept means that the proposed impact of displacement on social cohesion continues largely to depend on the bias of the author, program or development agency.** For example, of the three examples referenced in Box 6, none contain a definition of social cohesion or a coherent set of indicators through which the impact either of displacement, or of programming and policy on social cohesion, can be measured.

**The challenge with measuring impact upon social cohesion in displacement contexts is that once again there is a fundamental lack of definition of social cohesion either conceptually or via measurement matrices.** Non-program literature examining the impact of interventions on social cohesion tend to either replicate the lack of definition in donor policy and programming<sup>43</sup> or draw attention to the lack of baseline data, lack of program-related indicators of social and the lack of a rigorous methodology. Other issues arise even within reviews of studies on programmatic impact of social cohesion. One such assessment for DfID<sup>44</sup> cites Beath et al.’s 2012 study on CDD in Afghanistan<sup>45</sup> as an example of a study finding positive or neutral effects of CDD on social cohesion in conflict settings. However, the authors of that CDD study never mention social cohesion but rather look at

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<sup>43</sup> Beath, A., Christia, F. and Enikolopov, R. “Winning Hearts and Minds? Evidence from a Field Experiment in Afghanistan.” Princeton. 2012.

<sup>44</sup> Iffat, Idris. Building Social Cohesion in Post-Conflict Situations. GSDRC, 2016.

<sup>45</sup> Idris, Iffat (2016): 2.

## Box 7. Current Examples of Approaches to Social Cohesion in Displacement Settings

### Turkana County, Kenya

Within the Turkana County development strategy<sup>46</sup> social cohesion is given limited conceptualization as sitting somewhere within work on peace building and conflict management. The indicators of impact on social cohesion in the strategy are a mix of outcomes from largely mainstreamed peace-building measures. These include “*strengthening peaceful co-existence*” through peace meetings at multiple levels in the county and between it and others in Kenya.<sup>47</sup> Implicitly in the plan the concept of social cohesion is linked to democracy, good governance, social unity, peace and cultural heritage but how is not made apparent.

### Pakistan

The RAHA program in Pakistan conceptualizes social cohesion as a means to promote co-existence between Afghan refugees and the wider Pakistani community and to “*provide Afghans with a predictable means to a temporary stay*”.<sup>48</sup> Explicitly the RAHA targets social cohesion through the program as it is delivered in Refuge Hosting Areas (RHAs), specifically by promoting “*peaceful co-existence and social cohesion among refugees and their Pakistani host communities*”.<sup>49</sup> Implicitly it aims to consolidate social cohesion by rehabilitating areas that were heavily populated by Afghani refugees but have since been depopulated through returns, and by compensating “*the Pakistani communities for the economic, and environmental impact of past displacement*”.<sup>50</sup> Under the project remit and as documented in its evaluations<sup>51</sup> the indicators and so the observable manifestation of social cohesion lies in cross-community cooperation (such as cross-community driven development, cross-community management of local infrastructure rehabilitation) and the establishment of voluntary of community structures through which cooperation occurs.

### MENA Syria Regional Response Plan (RPP6)

The RPP6 and the Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) targeting refugees (2.85 million Syrians) and host communities in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey (2.5 million host community members) focuses on “*early recovery, social cohesion interventions and a transition from assistance to development-led interventions*”.<sup>52</sup> In the RPP6 narrative conceptually social cohesion is located in the space between economic inclusion and service delivery. It is defined through the negative impacts on the host communities by the influx of displaced Syrians. The context in which these negative impacts are to be addressed is the transition from humanitarian assistance to development. Alongside the humanitarian concern for the increasing, multi-dimensional vulnerability of the 10 million displaced Syrians (both the refugees and the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), there are severe current and longer-term impacts on the developmental and economic strategies of the host countries, their social cohesion and service delivery capacities which were already fragile in pre-crisis conditions.<sup>53</sup>

vectors that might be considered relevant to the horizontal axis of social cohesion such as security and population attitudes toward government.<sup>54</sup>

A study in Liberia<sup>55</sup> can be seen as an example of the study of program impact on social cohesion. The author charts the importance of social

<sup>46</sup> Government of Kenya/Turkana County Government, 2013.

<sup>47</sup> Government of Kenya/Turkana County Government (particularly pp221f), 2013.

<sup>48</sup> Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees to support Voluntary Repatriation, Sustainable Reintegration, and Assistance to Host Countries (RAHA) Pakistan. UNHCR, 2013.

<sup>49</sup> Refugee Affected and Hosting Areas Programme. UNHCR, 2016.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Beath, A., Christia, F. and Enkolopov, R. “Winning Hearts and Minds? Evidence from a Field Experiment in Afghanistan.” Princeton. 2012.

<sup>55</sup> King, E. “Can Development Interventions Help Post-Conflict Communities Build Social Cohesion? The Case of the Liberia Millennium Villages.” CIGI-AI Discussion Paper No. 9. Africa Initiative Discussion Paper Series, Africa Initiative and The Centre for International Governance Innovation. 2013.

cohesion to development generally but bemoans lack of baseline data and the tendency to assess interventions after completion. This coupled with the challenges of measuring changes in a social phenomenon and ensuring context specific assessment make measuring social cohesion per se (not just in a displacement setting) highly challenging. The assessment of Liberia Millennium Villages tracks indicators that are reflected in the more dedicated social cohesion measurement tools, particularly SCORE index and UNDP's Social Cohesion Index for the Arab Region.

## Utilizing Social Cohesion in Strategy, Policy and Programs: A Way Forward

The challenge for programs and projects aiming to address social cohesion is to utilize a clear and concise concept of social cohesion, to base its application in a full assessment and observation of contextual social and economic dynamics and to utilize indicators and methodologies that are suited to that specific context.

In addition, this need to be done at several levels of intervention. At the micro-level this is the individual—the community member from whom quantitative or qualitative data will be solicited in order to assess the situation on the ground. At the meso-level this is the data aggregated to the community level. At the macro-level this is national or regional/transnational context. The extent to which each level is emphasized is variable, but at all times the unit of observation must be tied to a coherent, nuanced and substantiated situational analysis that in many

ways has to reach beyond the kind of situational analysis that is often presented in strategy, policy and programming in displacement contexts.

**The 'ideal scenario' for utilising Social Cohesion is first to define it.** Given the findings in the accompanying literature review, the theoretical roots of conceptualisations of social cohesion, the semantic debates over what constitutes social cohesion and the plasticity of the concept, it is advisable to apply a basic definition. Based on this literature review, a proposed working definition of social cohesion for World Bank interventions is support to the management of social conflict in ways so as to prevent that conflict resulting in violent repercussions and harmful social marginalisation.

**Once defined, the most effective application of a definition is to a longer-term strategic approach rather than to discreet activities and project interventions.** Programming and strategy then "*holistically contribute*"<sup>56</sup> to social cohesion within a given society as a whole.

**This longer-term approach requires measurement and assessment of the social cohesion context via social cohesion indices, such as those used in the SCORE and UNDP initiatives.** Additional indices such as measurement of poverty or deprivation, can add nuance to the data collected in a social cohesion index. Similarly meta-analysis from social media usage (which is utilized to good effect in tracking transactions between irregular migrants (including asylum seekers) and people smugglers<sup>57</sup>) can also assist in profiling social

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Beath, A., Christia, F. and Enikolopov, R. "Winning Hearts and Minds? Evidence from a Field Experiment in Afghanistan." Princeton. 2012.

<sup>55</sup> King, E. "Can Development Interventions Help Post-Conflict Communities Build Social Cohesion? The Case of the Liberia Millennium Villages." CIGI-AI Discussion Paper No. 9. Africa Initiative Discussion Paper Series, Africa Initiative and The Centre for International Governance Innovation. 2013.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> See Schapendonk, Joris. "Turbulent Trajectories: African Migrants on Their Way to the European Union." *Societies* 2. (2012): 27-41. For media analysis see: The Facebook Smugglers Selling the Dream of Europe. <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-32707346>. Accessed March 7th 2016. Re-accessed November 16<sup>th</sup> 2017.

cohesion stresses and the attitudes and intentions in communities caught-up in displacement.<sup>58</sup> In some cases (as see with the European focused indices) the European Values Survey can provide primary data from which analysis about social inclusion can be made (depending upon the theoretical underpinning of the analysis), and at any time a variety of attitudinal surveys can contribute to the analysis including those conducted at the micro and meso levels.

**The first step is a nuanced political economy study which should guide the understanding of the situation.** In displacement contexts and beyond, political economy analysis provides understanding that institutions and ideas shape political action and development outcomes. It lays out the interests and incentives facing different (possibly conflicting) groups in society and how these generate outcomes, barriers and opportunities that may encourage or hinder development and development interventions. It clearly analyzes the role that formal institutions (legal and judicial, for example) play in shaping interaction at the community, sub-national and national levels as well as political, economic and social competition. Finally, it maps the impact of values, ideas, beliefs and perceptions including political ideology, religion, cultural beliefs, ethnic and national identity on political and public behaviour and policy.

**History is crucial to the understanding of cohesion in a displacement context regardless of the geographical location.** Analysis of the historical context does not need to be overly extensive but can be succinct and rooted in the horizontal and vertical axes of inclusion as is exemplified by the background analysis by ICG on Syrian displacement into Lebanon. *“Past events, sectarian and political identities, the role of the media and profile of particular geographic region”*<sup>59</sup> are important factors when understanding stresses on social cohesion and

copied mechanisms for dealing with breakdowns or weaknesses. History will play an important role in the formation of inter-communal attitudes and perceptions which are measured during a social cohesion assessment or the assessment of other community dynamics.

**Any bias the recipient or implementing partner has, which might affect such analysis, should be made transparent.** For example, where the operational or policy focus is on health and disability. Access to health services might impart a bias both in quantitative and qualitative tools and data toward subjective and objective indicators of health on horizontal and vertical lines, such as self-reported health status, impact of health status on perceived trustworthiness or social capital, official health classification (including disability status), self-reported access to health services and trust in public service providers.

**Tools and analysis could also have a bias toward indicators of propensity to collective action.** This might include peaceful protest, violent protests, self-defence, pervasiveness and effect of perceptions of ethnic or other identity-based bias, indicators of identity, threat perception and trust in institutions (particularly judicial, security and access to resources). At the level of assessing community dynamics, there may not be sufficient resources to dig deep into identity and the role it has in conflict or perceived intergroup threat. In that case assessment of emotional response to other groups or scenarios as well as perceptions of trust could help compensate for the study limitations.

**Once a longer-term strategic approach to supporting social cohesion has been defined, project preparation and design should be done with a view to influencing key aspects of this.** Critically, in displacement, it should be remembered that social cohesion is greater than refugee-host community dynamics. Projects are

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<sup>58</sup> UNHCR. Big Data Analytics: Syria Return Intentions Monitoring. UNHCR Innovation, July 2017.

<sup>59</sup> Guay, Joseph. (2015): 16.

likely to only influence certain elements of a more complex whole. Despite the challenge of feasibility, the approach, methodology and indicators applied at the project and strategy/policy level can (and arguably should) have coherence. There can be a correlation between the analysis and how this feeds into monitoring project progress and social impact. Hence the importance of vertical and horizontal axes of analysis and whether they are those mapped out in political economy analysis or those presented in a particular social cohesion index—such as UNDP’s core, medial and peripheral indicators.

### The SCORE Index

**The SCORE index applies a country-level focus that can be distilled down to inform project selection and targeting.** In practical terms, at present the collaborative analytical work of the SCORE index can be completed in six months, at which point project design and beneficiary selection can be guided by the findings. The vision is for SCORE to be further refined and to become implementable in a three-month time period. The index begins with a country-specific outcome (essentially, the ‘what are we trying to change’) that is decided upon through a collaborative process including with potential recipient partners. The analytics then derive the programming to achieve the outcomes (the ‘what we need to do’). The index draws on a library of indicators to monitor performance and, if required, augments these with new indicators created for the specific country of operation. The index uses statistical regression to test the development hypothesis for the country, to better target beneficiaries and to be more efficient in development programming, particularly where there is an inter-group dynamic such as in displacement. By being rooted in an evidence base and on-going country-specific monitoring of progress toward a development objective, the SCORE index is useful to test assumptions in development.

At the level of community dynamics (which is a useful level to inform project design and M&E), generally indicators will include the following and will be applied to an appropriate sample of the populations being assessed:

- **Demographic profile** (structured on sample parameters and potentially including non-core demographic indicators such as health status);
- Economic indicators (depending on bias can include at least the following: access to material goods, tendency to migrate, economic status, financial security, perceptions of employment discrimination, perceptions of access and barriers to assets, and household dynamics); and
- Social indicators (depending on bias can include at least the following: belonging, contentment, inter group perceptions including threat and trust, quality and quantity of intergroup contact, social networks, empowerments, respect, identity and safety as well as value statements).

#### Box 8. The SCORE Application in Liberia

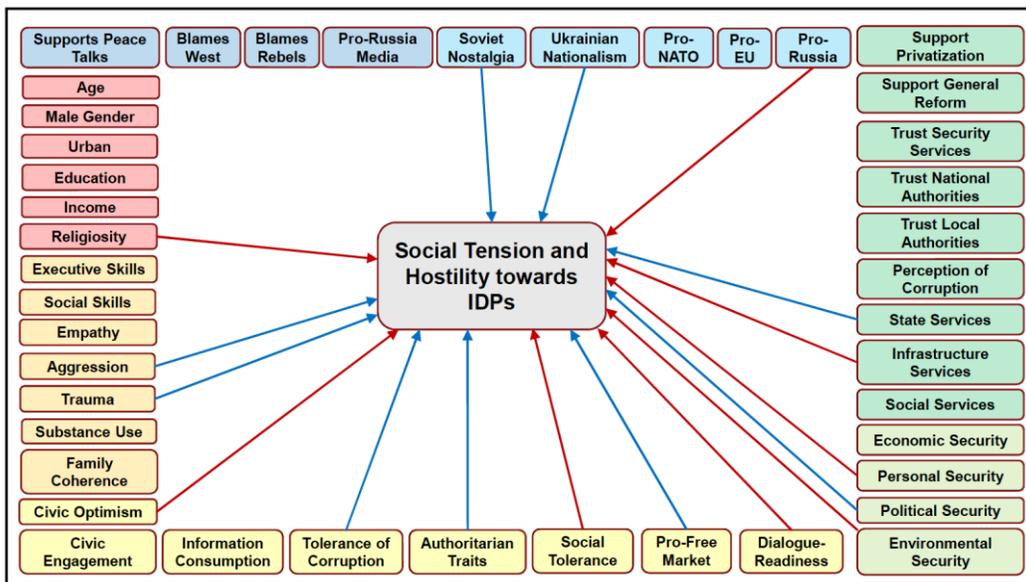
In Liberia SCORE was used through analyzing the economic behaviour of citizens to map the development orientation of key groups in particular parts of the country. The index found that carers, that is: people who care for those only partially able to care for themselves or not at all, had low development orientation (tended to give away their financial resources rather than invest them for themselves). Thus, despite providing an essential service for the vulnerable, carers were among the poorest and least resilient population group. Furthermore, this had a regional pattern. Essentially carers were locked in a cycle of poverty. Based on this programming could be orientated toward increasing the developmental orientation of carers and so positively impacting not only the lives of carers and their families but also the lives of those for whom carers provided essential services outside the reach of the State.

**There may be extenuating situations where neither social cohesion assessments or community dynamics assessments are feasible.** Yet there may be reported stresses along the vertical or horizontal axes, testimony or indications of breakdown in trust, incidences of exclusion or increased tension, perception of threat and propensity to take harmful collective action. In such conditions non-traditional approaches can be useful, such as incident reporting, perhaps via key focus people in communities, via social media or via mobile communications technology. However, the limitations and risks of these more limited approaches to cohesion and particularly propensity to conflict must be managed. Issues such as reliability of data, reliability of reporting mechanisms, lack of political economy analysis and lack of control factors for the data collected may influence the reliability of reporting and the accuracy of any assessment. These risks may also be relevant where displaced populations are

difficult to access, perhaps newly arrived but dispersed throughout urban or rural settlements. In such context piggy-backing data collection on existing communications networks can in part overcome challenges in data collection but not replace more in depth surveying and analysis.

**Globally, there is a growth in the connectivity of displaced populations.** In 2015 mobile phone ownership rates among displaced populations rivalled that of the world’s overall population.<sup>60</sup> Increasingly mobile phone technology and analysis of social media is being utilized not just in humanitarian assistance (cash transfers, for example) but also for data collection in displaced populations. In that way rapid and light alerts related to community dynamics can be tracked in the wider context of development interventions with displaced and host communities.

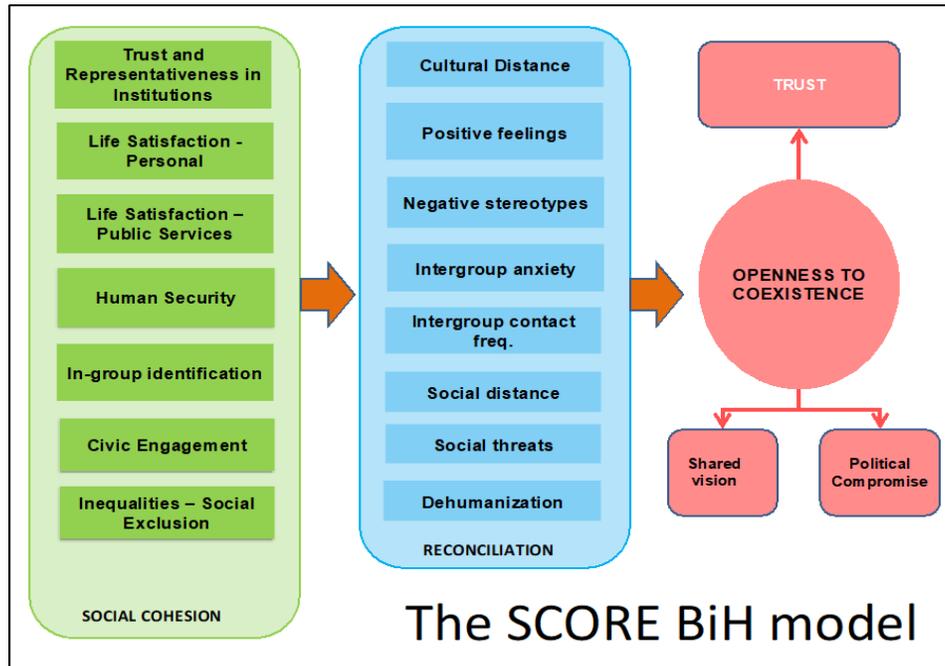
**Box 9. SCORE Ukraine IDP Metrics**



Source: USAID Presentation SCORE Ukraine. 11th February 2016.

<sup>60</sup> GSMA. Landscape Report: Mobile Money, Humanitarian Cash Transfers and Displaced Populations. May 2017: 5.

## Box 10. SCORE Bosnia and Herzegovina Overview



Source: USAID Presentation SCORE Index BiH October 2014.

## Conclusions

This paper found that there are a number of conceptual, methodological and programmatic challenges with the concept of social cohesion. These challenges are:

- **Lack of definition.** A literature review concluded that when used in the context of forced displacement, the concept of social cohesion is rarely coherently defined and that its usage is elastic with different scope and application across those who use it;
- **Weak analysis.** Current social analysis of the impacts of forced displacement is only very partial. As discussed further below, particular gaps are assessment which place the substantiation of the social dynamics of social cohesion in historical and political context. In

addition, what analysis exists has focused on the social nexus between displaced persons and host communities, with little consideration of the potential social fissures and changes within groups of displaced persons, within the hosting society, or in the context of the return of displaced persons back to their places of origin; and

- **Lack of evaluation.** Finally, the ability to make authoritative recommendations on what works to address social tension in the context of forced displacement is undermined by a lack of evaluation of how existing programmatic attempts have worked or made a difference. Where evaluation does exist, it is focused on outcome or output measurement rather than on impact and on longitudinal change.

Given these challenges, this work can only be seen as a first step toward strengthening the evidence base and on issuing guidance on policy and programming that can inform senior management undertaking dialogue with client governments and task teams preparing projects on how to understand and enhance social cohesion in situations of forced displacement.

**Valuable work has been undertaken to define the concept of social cohesion more coherently and to identify its composite variables.** This work identified three more considered versions of a definition of social cohesion and its constituent variables. These are:

- the indexes of social cohesion developed by Charles Harp and applied by UNDP across the Middle East;
- the VALCOS index applied by the OECD;
- the SCORE index applied in Ukraine and Bosnia and Herzegovina

With these more deliberate attempts to define the concept, it is clear that social cohesion is a composite concept that encompasses a range of vectors including the attitudinal and emotional (for example, acceptance, empathy and trust), the collective (for example, identity and propensity for joint action), the institutional and systemic (for example, political participation) and the socio-economic (for example, relative deprivation and access to opportunities). Moreover, these vectors run both horizontally (between persons and groups) and vertically (between persons, communities and institutions). Truly understanding the impact of forced displacement on social relations and social cohesion requires an understanding of the impact of forced displacement across all these variables and across several axes of society, which makes it a complex and as yet, incomplete, undertaking.

**Social cohesion is an attribute of a group or a society not of individuals.** This has relevance when considering the World Bank's proposal that social cohesion in displacement is first

between receiving communities and migrants and second within migrant groups. Accepting that social cohesion is an attribute of a society as a whole, it is not located between host and displaced populations (inter-communal relations).

## Recommendations

The opportunity presented by social cohesion for strategy, policy and programming in displacement contexts is to coherently root development interventions in a common understanding of the value of social cohesion to communities and to achieving development outcomes. The following recommendations apply for those designing projects and engaging in policy dialogue with a view to addressing social tensions in the context of forced displacement:

### 1. Exercise some caution on framing the issue.

There may be no urgency to '*fix the problem*'. Understand that social conflict and the navigation of diversity is an intrinsic part of social functioning even under peaceful and less stressful conditions.

### 2. Be realistic about what is achievable.

In crisis situations, for example, it is reasonable to ask to what extent social cohesion can be measured in a large traumatized population in transit or recently received by the host country.

### 3. Understand the context.

- A short nuanced political economy study will provide understanding of the interests and incentives facing different (possibly conflicting) groups in society and how these generate outcomes, barriers and opportunities that may encourage or hinder development and development interventions. It should analyze the role that formal institutions (legal and judicial, for example) play in shaping interactions at the community

and national levels as well as political, economic and social competition. Finally, it should map the impact of values, ideas, beliefs and perceptions, including political ideology, religion, cultural beliefs, ethnic and national identity on political and public behaviour and policy.

- History is key to the understanding of cohesion in a displacement context regardless of the geographical location of the host and refugee communities, and so must inform any political economy or situational analysis of social cohesion and displacement. This does not need to be overly extensive and can be succinct and rooted in the horizontal and vertical axes of inclusion as is exemplified by the background analysis by International Crisis Group (ICG) on Syrian displacement into Lebanon. Past events, sectarian and political identities, the role of the media and profile of particular geographic regions are important factors when understanding stresses on social cohesion and coping mechanisms for dealing with breakdowns or weaknesses.
- Spatial variances are important. Including but not limited to urban and rural locations and variances within urban settings such a camp settlement (closed or open), urban and non-urban settlement patterns, concentration or dispersed settlement.

#### **4. Be prepared to take a long-term approach.**

There is no 'social cohesion' programming or project activity that can fully address the social tensions associated with forced displacement. Rather social cohesion is an approach to development interventions whether in displacement contexts or elsewhere.

#### **5. Use a precise working definition.**

Teams should utilize a clear and concise concept of social cohesion. It is advisable to apply a basic

definition such as that proposed by World Vision as derived from UNDP and USAID analysis: *"the set of relationships between and individuals and groups in a particular environment and between those individuals and groups and the institutions that govern them in a particular environment."*

#### **6. Don't make assumptions.**

- It cannot be assumed that forced displacement upsets a prior and static configuration of social relations or state-citizen connections. All too often interventions incorporate activities trying to support community-based adherence to the same set of values and priorities.
- All indicators, approaches and methodologies are conditional on the particular context and any bias the World Bank, recipient or implementing partner has and any bias should be made transparent.
- Tools and analysis could have a bias toward indicators of propensity to collective action (including perhaps peaceful protest, violent protests, self-defense); pervasiveness and effect of perceptions of ethnic or other identity-based bias; indicators of identity; threat perception; trust in institutions (particularly judicial, security); and perceived threat over access to resources.
- At the level of assessing community dynamics, there may not be sufficient resources to dig deep into identity and the role it has in conflict or perceived intergroup threat. In that case assessment of emotional response to other groups or scenarios as well as perceptions of trust could help compensate for these limitations.

#### **7. Use indicators and methodologies that are suited to the specific context.**

The level can be a higher level (such as country partnership strategy) or community level (such as in project preparation and impact assessment). At the level of community dynamics (which is a useful level to inform project design and M&E), generally indicators will include the following and will be applied to an appropriate sample of the populations being assessed:

- Demographic profile (structured on sample parameters and potentially including non-core demographic indicators such as health status).
- Economic indicators (depending on bias can include at least the following: access to material goods, tendency to migrate, economic status, financial security, perceptions of employment discrimination, perceptions of access and barriers to assets, and household dynamics).
- Social indicators (depending on bias can include at least the following: belonging, contentment, inter group perceptions including threat and trust, quality and quantity of intergroup contact, social networks, empowerments, respect, identity and safety as well as value statements).

In this approach to examining community dynamics, quantitative data and analysis must be tested and explored in qualitative consultations with key informants and with sub-groups, such as those identified as particularly vulnerable to active and passive social exclusion or perhaps those that have a propensity to general or particular forms of collective action. While assessing community dynamics can be a once-off analytical exercise, the real value is in a

longitudinal application and one integrated with project M&E and social impact assessment.

The most effective and efficient application of the social cohesion is through the indicators of either/both of the SCORE and Harp indices as they applied to a longer-term strategic approach to partnership and programming. The index begins with a country-specific outcome (essentially, the 'what are we trying to change') that is decided upon through a collaborative process including with potential recipient partners. The analytics then derive the programming to achieve the outcomes (the 'what we need to do'). The index draws on a library of indicators to monitor performance and, if required, augments these with new indicators created for the specific country of operation. By being rooted in an evidence base and on-going country-specific monitoring of progress toward a development objective, the SCORE index is useful to test assumptions in development.

Additional indices, such as measurement of poverty or deprivation, can add nuance to the data collected in a social cohesion index. Similarly meta-analysis from social media usage (which is utilized to good effect in tracking transactions between irregular migrants (including asylum seekers) and people smugglers<sup>61</sup>) can also assist in profiling social cohesion stresses and the attitudes and intentions in communities caught-up in displacement.<sup>62</sup> In some cases (as seen with the European focused indices), the European Values Survey can provide primary data from which analysis about social inclusion can be made (depending upon the theoretical underpinning of the analysis), and at any time a variety of attitudinal surveys can contribute to the analysis including those conducted at the micro and

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<sup>61</sup> See Schapendonk, Joris. "Turbulent Trajectories: African Migrants on Their Way to the European Union." *Societies* 2. (2012): 27-41. For media analysis see: The Facebook Smugglers Selling the Dream of Europe. [http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-](http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-32707346)

[32707346](http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-32707346) . Accessed March 7, 2016. Re-accessed November 16, 2017.

<sup>62</sup> UNHCR. Big Data Analytics: Syria Return Intentions Monitoring. UNHCR Innovation, July 2017.

meso levels. These lower-tier analyses can be more feasible when the emphasis is on project preparation rather than the country-level strategy or beyond. Despite the challenge of feasibility, the approach, methodology and indicators applied at the project and strategy/policy levels can (and arguably should) have coherence. There can be a correlation between the analysis and how this feeds into monitoring project progress and social impact.

#### **8. Be aware of accessibility challenges.**

Displaced populations may be difficult to access, perhaps newly arrived but dispersed throughout urban or rural settlements. In such context piggy-backing data collection on existing communications networks can in part overcome challenges in data collection but not replace more in depth surveying and analysis. Globally, in correlation with growth in displaced populations, there is a growth in connectivity of displaced populations to the extent that by 2015 mobile phone ownership rates among displaced populations rivalled that of the world's overall population. Increasingly and including within the UN agencies, mobile phone technology is being utilized not just in humanitarian assistance (cash transfers, for example) but also for data collection in displaced populations. In that way rapid and light alerts related to community dynamics can be tracked in the wider context of development interventions with displaced and host communities.

There may be extenuating situations where neither social cohesion assessments or community dynamics assessments are feasible. In such conditions non-traditional approaches can be useful, such as incident reporting perhaps via key focus people in communities, via social media or via mobile communications technology, however, the limitations and risks of these shallow approaches to cohesion and particularly propensity to conflict must be managed. Issues such as reliability of data, reliability of reporting mechanisms, lack of political economy analysis and lack of control factors for the data collected may influence the

reliability of reporting and the accuracy of any assessment.

#### **9. Regardless of the level of intervention, units of observation remain the same.**

Regardless of whether certain aspects are emphasized over others (such as indicators of trust or instances of inter-personal conflict), at the micro-level the unit of observation is the individual from whom quantitative or qualitative data will be solicited. At the meso-level this is the data aggregated to the community level. At the macro-level this is national or regional/transnational context. The extent to which each level is emphasized is variable, but at all times the unit of observation must be tied to a coherent, nuanced and substantiated situational analysis. This has to reach beyond the kind of situational analysis that is often presented in strategy, policy and programming in displacement contexts.

#### **10. Partnerships are key for common understanding, programming and M&E.**

Given the plasticity of the concept, the proposed impact of displacement on social cohesion depends on the bias of the author, program or development agency. Working in partnership can be a way to identify and circumvent such biases.

## Annex 1 – Review of World Bank Projects

Project Code	Project Name	Region	Country/ Sub-region	Practice Area	Task Team Leader (s)
P160941/P154278	Additional Financing of Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) Temporarily Displaced Persons Emergency Recovery Project	SAR	Pakistan	SPL	Amjad Zafar Khan, Ali Nadeem Qureshi
P163895	Great Lakes Region Displaced Persons and Border Communities Project Additional Financing	AFR	Central Africa	SURR	Joanna Peace De Berry
P161591	Service Delivery and Support to Communities Affected by Displacement Project	AFR	Central African Republic	SURR	Ana Paula Fialho Lopes Giuseppe Zampaglione
P161670	Employment Support Project for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Host Communities	ECA	Turkey	SPL	Abla Safir, Mirey Ovadiya
P162004	Education Infrastructure for Resilience (EU Facility for SuTP)	ECA	Turkey	SURR	Elif Ayhan, Joel E. Reyes
P163387	Jordan Emergency Health Project	MNA	Jordan	HNP	Aakanksha Pande
P158066	Sustainable Livelihoods for Displaced and Vulnerable Communities in Eastern Sudan: Phase 2	AFR	Sudan	SURR	Abderrahim Fraiji, Rahmoune Essalhi, Faizaa Fatima
P161067	Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project (DRDIP) in the Horn of Africa	AFR	Eastern Africa	SURR	Varalakshmi Vemuru, Gandham N.V. Ramana
P163468	Citizen Charter Afghanistan Project - Emergency Regional Displacement Response Additional Financing	SAR	Afghanistan	SURR	Janmejaya Singh
P161465/P147689	Emergency Services and Social Resilience Project AF	MNA	Jordan	SURR	Sima W. Kanaan
P159470	Reaching All Children with Education in Lebanon Support Project	MNA	Lebanon	EDU	Noah Bunce Yarrow

P152822	Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project in the Horn of Africa	AFR	Djibouti, Ethiopia, Uganda	SURR	Varalakshmi Vemuru, Michael Mutemi Munavu, Teklu Tesfaye Toli
P152821	AFCC2/RI-GLR: Displaced Persons & Border Communities	AFR	Central Africa (Zambia)	SURR	Natacha Caroline Lemasle, Joanna Peace De Berry
P157861	Piloting Delivery of Justice Sector Services to Poor Jordanians and Refugees in Host Communities	MNA	Jordan	GOV	Paul Scott Prettitore
P154278	FATA Temporarily Displaced Persons Emergency Recovery Project	SAR	Pakistan	SPL	Amjad Zafar Khan
P152898	Emergency Education System Stabilization	MNA	Lebanon	EDU	Noah Bunce Yarrow
P148552	Colombia: Collective Reparation for Victims through Social Reconstruction Project	LAC	Colombia	SURR	Marcelo Jorge Fabre
P149724	Lebanon Municipal Services Emergency Project	MNA	Lebanon	SURR	Guido Licciardi
P149242	Emergency Nat'l Poverty Targeting Project	MNA	Lebanon	SPL	Haneen Ismail Sayed
P145865	Mitigate the Impact of Syrian Displacement on Jordan	MNA	Jordan	SPL	Haneen Ismail Sayed
P145196/ P157303	DRC Eastern Recovery Project	AFR	DRC	SPL	Maurizia Tovo
P144762/P0828817	CI: Post Conflict Assistance Project - AF	AFR	Cote d'Ivoire	SURR	Nicolas Perrin
P132998	Sustainable Livelihoods for Returnees and Host Communities in The Senegal River Valley Project in Mauritania	AFR	Mauritania	SURR	Daniel P. Owen
P122943/ P155110	IDP Living Standards and Livelihoods Project	ECA	Azerbaijan	SURR	Robert Wrobel Nijat Valiyev Rebecca Emilie Anne Lacroix

Projects with no mention of “social cohesion”					
P160223	Roads and Employment Project	MNA	Lebanon	T&I	Ziad Salim EL Nakat
P159522	Economic Opportunities for Jordanians and Syrian Refugees P4R	MNA	Jordan	T&C	John F. Speakman
P159307	Third National Solidarity Project	SAR	Afghanistan	SURR	Naila Ahmed
P127079	Local Governance and Service Delivery Project	AFR	South Sudan	SURR	Zishan Faiza Karim
P127949	AFCC2/RI Horn of Africa Emergency Health and Nutrition Project	AFR	Kenya, Ethiopia	HNP	Sheila Dutta
P089751/ P107613	IDP Economic Development Support Project	ECA	Azerbaijan	SURR	Joanna Peace De Berry