

**Room: Ostasien - East Asia
(Ground Floor)**

**15.-16.11.2022
Bonn, Germany**



Social cohesion in context - perspectives from Africa

WORKSHOP



**Social
Cohesion
Hub**



IDOS | German Institute
of Development
and Sustainability

Social cohesion in context – perspectives from Africa

Workshop
15 – 16 November 2022, Bonn Germany

Rationale: Social cohesion (SoCo) is increasingly recognised as an important condition for the resilience of societies and the wellbeing of its members. At the same time, rising inequality, decreasing acceptance of hitherto shared societal values, as well as citizens’ growing discontent with public institutions suggest that social cohesion may be eroding in many societies. Thus, it is now more important than ever to understand the patterns of the “glue that holds societies together”. In order to gain such insights, it is first necessary to understand how different societies conceive social cohesion.

Objectives: The overarching objective of this workshop is to **enhance our conceptual and empirical understanding of social cohesion in selected African countries**. Having advanced the measurement of social cohesion and working primarily on cross-national comparisons, we are now devoting more attention of our research project to the contextualization of social cohesion in different settings. The question is how non-European societies conceptualize social cohesion. So far, the mainstream literature is still heavily influenced by the realities and currents of thought of European scholars (e.g. Durkheim)¹. In this regard, this workshop will discuss research results on relevant concepts of African country cases, and a comparison of them with the concept and measurement of social cohesion as outlined in Leininger et al. 2021 (“IDOS concept”). Among the objectives, the workshop aims to:

- Detect commonalities and differences between concepts, and across African countries.
- Detect conceptual dimensions from African countries that deviates from the main stream literature.
- Subsequently, it shall provide fresh insights to serve as a starting point for further conceptual developments and empirical analyses of SC in African contexts.

All together, the workshop brings together (co-)authors of seven (7) country case studies in Africa, scholars of social cohesion in Asia as well as all relevant partners of IDOS’ Social Cohesion project. The co-authors will present their findings from the respective country case as part of the comparative case study paper, “**Exploratory analysis of localized concepts of social cohesion in selected African contexts.**” Participants will subsequently engage in in-depth discussions of the research findings, as well as critical reflection on the findings in comparative perspectives to other regions with a particular focus on Asian contexts. In doing so, we hope to be able to formulate a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the concept of SC in non-European/’Western’ contexts.

Date: 1.5 days; 15th and 16th of November in Bonn, Germany

¹ Attempts to capture understandings of social cohesion in Asia are an exception. For an example see Croissant, A., & Walkenhorst, P. (Eds.). (2019). *Social Cohesion in Asia: Historical Origins, Contemporary Shapes and Future Dynamics*. Routledge.

15.11.2022
Workshop – First Day

12:00	Arrival of participants, Registration and light lunch
13:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Welcome Introductions of participants <i>IDOS</i></p> <p>Enhancing conceptual and empirical understandings of social cohesion in non-European contexts <i>Julia Leininger, IDOS</i></p> <p><u>Moderator:</u> <i>Armin vonSchiller, IDOS</i></p> <p><u>Guiding questions:</u> Why contextualization of social cohesion in different settings? Why compare localized concepts with the “IDOS concept and measurement” of social cohesion as outlined in Leininger et al. 2021? <u>Goal:</u> Set the pace for the rationale of contextualizing social cohesion in different country contexts and the relevance of comparing localized concepts with the IDOS and the main stream “non-European/Western concepts” of social cohesion. <u>Content:</u> This session is an introductory session meant to shine a spotlight on the background of the SoCo project and to serve as a platform to exchange on the relevance of the topic, particularly, the importance on the contextualization of social cohesion in Africa and Asia.</p>
14:00 – 15:00	<p>Literature review of African concepts of social cohesion: overarching results <i>Eli Wortmann-Kolundžija</i></p> <p><u>Moderator:</u> <i>Francesco Burchi, IDOS</i></p> <p><u>Guiding questions:</u> What relevant concepts of social cohesion can be located in African societies? Which (if any) conceptual dimensions and insights about determinants of social cohesion deviate from the mainstream? <u>Goal:</u> To gain a better sense of the academic discourses on social cohesion in Africa by analyzing the concepts, determinants, origins, and context of the social cohesion theories, as well as the risk of Western bias identified concepts of social cohesion in the African context. <u>Content:</u> The role of traditional sources of knowledge in the study of social cohesion in Africa. African socialism and African humanism and</p>

their (potential) relevance for modern social cohesion studies.
Determinants of social cohesion in the identified concepts.

Coffee Break

15:30 – 17:00

Country cases - South Africa and Malawi

Guiding questions: What are related core concepts of origin from South Africa, Ivory Coast and Malawi that capture the key attributes of social cohesion (trust, inclusive identity, cooperation for the common good) as outlined in Leininger et al. 2021? What are the main commonalities and differences between the concepts identified in the respective case study? Are the three attributes of the IDOS concept interpreted in the academic and public debates of your country? Do they add new ideas to the mainstream understanding of social cohesion in “Western” academic debates?

Goal: The goal here is to shed light on our understanding of the core concepts and main attributes of social cohesion as reflected in the respective country cases.

Content: Authors will present their findings from the respective country cases and we discuss it. The focus should be on in-depth discussion and exchange that will lead to a collective constructive feedback with the spirit of how to advance and improve the measurement of social cohesion.

Timing: 40 minutes per country case (15 minutes for each presentation, 5 minutes for comments and 20 minutes for discussions)

Findings from South Africa

Fundiswa Khaile, School of Government, University of the Western Cape

Comments by *Tekalign Sakketa, IDOS*

Findings from Malawi

Joseph Chunga, Centre for Social Research, University of Malawi

Comments by *Christoph Strupat, IDOS*

Moderator: *Julia Leininger, IDOS*

17:00 – 18:30

Country cases – Ethiopia and Ivory Coast

Findings from Ethiopia

Yitagesu Zewdu, National Democratic Institute

Comments by *Yabibal Walle*, IDOS

Findings from Ivory Coast

Francis Mbawini Abugbilla, Jackson School of International Studies,
University of Washington, Seattle

Comments by *Karina Mross*, IDOS

End of Day One

15.11.2022

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN US FOR DINNER @ 19:30
(COSTS COVERED BY ORGANIZERS)

DELIK'ART
COLMANTSTRASSE 14 - 16
D-53115 BONN

16.11.2022
Workshop – Second Day

Country cases - Ghana, Guinea, and Rwanda

Guiding questions: What are related core concepts of origin from **Ghana, Guinea and Rwanda** that capture the key attributes of social cohesion (trust, inclusive identity, cooperation for the common good) as outlined in Leininger et al. 2021? What are the main commonalities and differences between the concepts identified in the respective case study? Are the three attributes of the IDOS concept interpreted in the academic and public debates of your country? Do they add new ideas to the mainstream understanding of social cohesion in “Western” academic debates?

Goal: The goal here is to shed light on our understanding of the core concepts and main attributes of social cohesion as reflected in the respective country cases.

Content: Authors will present their findings from the respective country cases and we discuss it. The focus should be on in-depth discussion and exchange that will lead to a collective constructive feedback with the spirit of how to advance and improve the measurement of social cohesion.

Timing: 40 minutes per country case (15 minutes for each presentation, 5 minutes for comments and 20 minutes for discussions). *Note* for Rwanda, 15 minutes for presentation, 10 minutes for comments and 15 minutes for discussions.

09:00 – 11:00

Findings from the Ghanaian case

Ghadafi Saibu, German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)

Comments by *Eli Wortmann-Kolundžija*

Findings from the Guinea case

Sagnane Saïkou Oumar, University of Bayreuth

Comments by *Kasper Vrijolik*, IDOS

Findings from the Rwandan case

Peter Gutwa Oino, Department of Sociology, Gender & Development Studies, Kisii University

Comments by *Erika Dahlmans*, Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence an der Universität Bayreuth

Moderator: *Daniel Nowack*, IDOS

Coffee Break

Beyond individual countries: regional perspectives

Guiding questions: How do individual cases compare to other regions, and Afrobarometer's understanding of social cohesion? What are related concepts of origin from other regions that capture the key attributes of social cohesion as outlined in Leininger et al. 2021? What are the main commonalities and differences of concepts identified in other regions compared to Africa?

Goal: The goal here is to compare the core concepts and attributes based on the findings from Africa to the Afrobarometer and to other regions, in particular Asia (South, East or Central) in order to improve our understanding of conceptual commonalities and differences across these regions.

Content: Experts from other regions, including South, East and central Asia will present overviews and reflections of localized concepts of social cohesion in these regions. The focus should be on broad review/presentation on how social cohesion is conceptualized in the respective societies. This will then follow by in-depth discussion and exchange that will lead to a collective constructive feedback with the spirit of how to advance and improve the measurement of social cohesion.

11:30 – 13:30

Timing: 40 minutes per each presenter (20 minutes for each presentation, and 20 minutes for discussions).

Overarching perspective: Afrobarometer's understanding of social cohesion

Alfred Torsu, Afrobarometer

Reflections on Asian contexts

Klaus Boehnke, Professor of Social Science Methodology – Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS)

Social Cohesion in Modern China

Man Zhang, Universität Leipzig & FGZ

Moderator: Ghadafi Saibu

Lunch Break

Follow up: comparative analysis

14:30 – 17:00

Guiding question: What are the next steps towards a joint publication?

Goal: Identify the main insights and gaps and define the next steps towards a publication.

Content: Structured discussion (pinboards etc)

Moderator: Julia Leininger

End of Workshop

List of participants Workshop

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Surname	Name	Institution/Affiliation
Abugbilla	Francis Mbawini	Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, Seattle
Boehnke	Klaus	Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS)
Burchi	Francesco	German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)
Chunga	Joseph	Centre of Social Research, University of Malawi
Dahlmanns	Erika	University of Bayreuth
Khaile	Fundiswa Thelma	School of Government, University of the Western Cape
Leininger	Julia	German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)
Mross	Karina	German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)
Nowack	Daniel	German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)
Oino	Peter Gutwa	Kisii University
Sagnane	Saïkou Oumar	Bayreth Academy for African Advanced Studies
Saibu	Ghadafi	German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)
Sakketa	Tekalign	German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)
Strupat	Christoph	German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)
Torsu	Alfred	Afrobarometer
vonSchiller	Armin	German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)
Vrolijk	Kasper	German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)
Walle	Yabibal	German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)
Wortmann-Kolundžija	Eli	Consultant SoCo
Zergawu	Yitagesu Zewdu	National Democratic Institute
Zhang	Man	Institut gesellschaftlicher Zusammenhalt
Jaji	Rose	German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)

Organisation



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