Agenda

1. **Mercy Corps** — Program design w/ **COALESCE**

2. **Catholic Relief Services (CRS)** — Program monitoring and adaptation w/ **MIRA**

3. **Pact** — Program adaptation and formal assessment w/ **RUMBOS**

4. **Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA)** — Program **IMPACT** evaluation

5. **Breakout Sessions** — **Applying** learnings & **hands on** experience

6. **Comparing Approaches** — Comparing **approaches** and when to use what

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Comparing **approaches** and when to use what

COALESCE

Mercy Corps' Approach to Social Cohesion

Ted Holmquist
Peace & Conflict Director
Technical Resources and Quality Unit

Social Cohesion

TRUST
SHARED PURPOSE
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
COLLECTIVE ACTION NORMS

MERCY CORPS

What is Social Cohesion?

"It is the glue that binds society together."

"It is what keeps society integrated."

"People with a shared narrative. "

"Ubuntu-I am because we are."

"It is the foundation for a cooperative and stable society."

"It is what makes individuals into connected community members with shared interests and motivation to work together for a common good. "

MERCY CORPS

Social Cohesion

TRUST

An individual's
1. Belief that another, individual, group, or institution that could do them harm or betray them will not do so
2. Willingness to take actions that make themself vulnerable to that actor.

SHARED PURPOSE

BELONGING

The degree to which an individual or collective group feel like they "fit" together in a group

IDENTITY

The characteristics that an individual or collective group believe define them.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS OUT-GROUPS

How individuals percieve people with other values, lifestyles or identities within their group or locality.

COLLECTIVE ACTION NORMS

Collectively shared and internalized moral prescriptions that encourage costly actions the primarily benefit others

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The attitudes and behaviours of individuals that result in participation to improve local area conditions for others and/or help shape the areas future.

Social Capital and Social Cohesion Measurement Toolkit for Community-Driven Development Operations

Developed By: Jeeyon Kim, Ryan Sheely, & Carly Schmidt
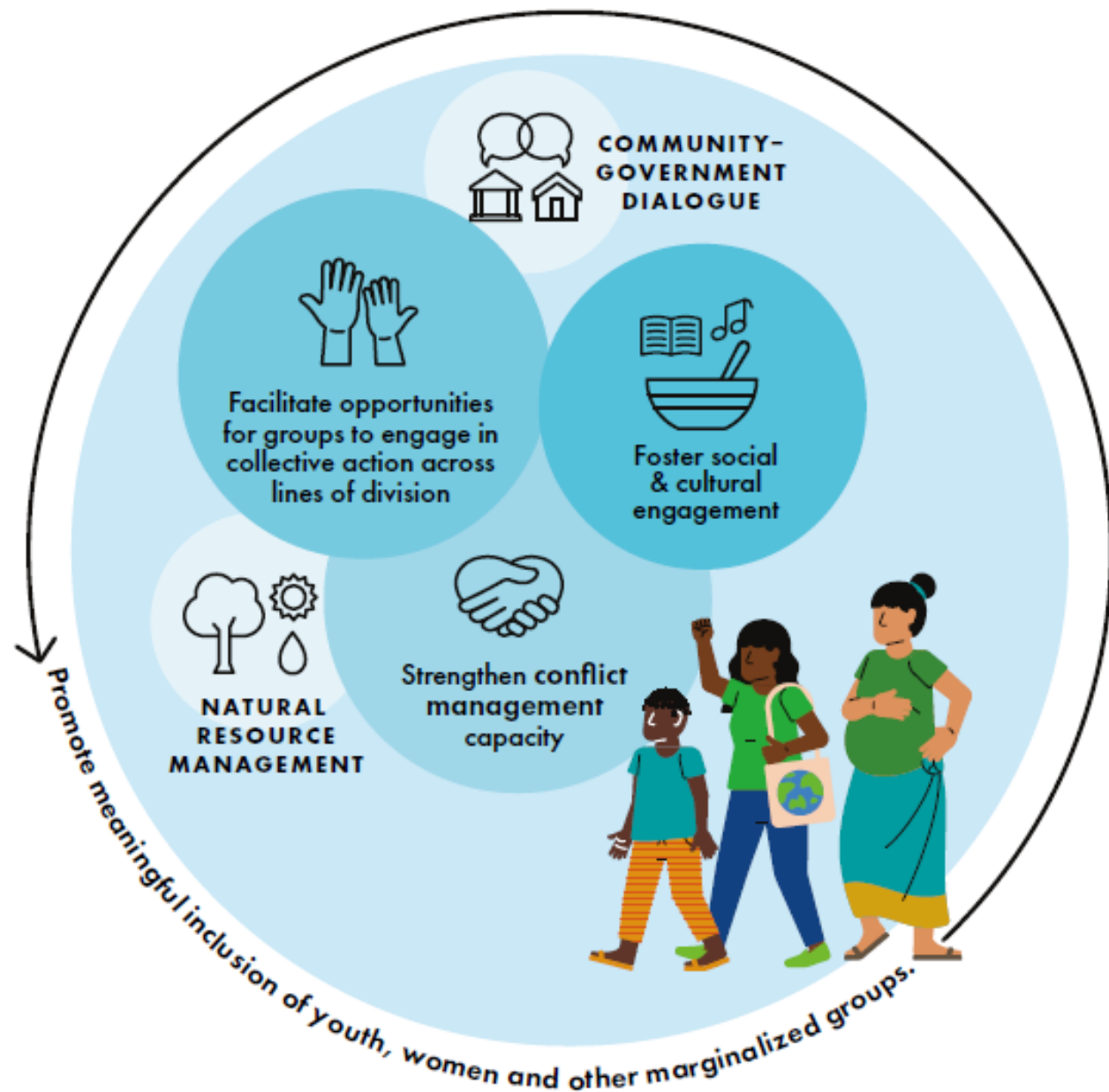
FEBRUARY 2020

MERCY CORPS

WORLD BANK GROUP
Social Development

State and Peacebuilding Fund
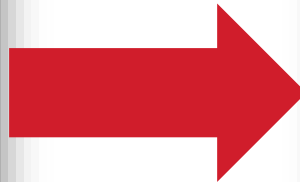
COALESCE: Mercy Corps' Social Cohesion Handbook

MARCH 2024

MERCY CORPS

What is COALESCE?

COMMUNITY–GOVERNMENT DIALOGUE

Facilitate opportunities for groups to engage in collective action across lines of division

Foster social & cultural engagement

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Strengthen conflict management capacity

Promote meaningful inclusion of youth, women and other marginalized groups.

Social Cohesion

TRUST

SHARED PURPOSE

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

COLLECTIVE ACTION NORMS

Four Elements in COALESCE
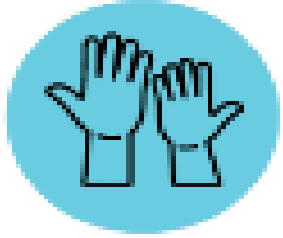
Facilitate Opportunities for Groups to Engage in Collective Action across Conflict Lines

A core element of COALESCE is to provide opportunities for groups to engage across dividing lines in joint community projects. Through this evidence-based approach, different groups can come together to restore trust by working toward a common goal.
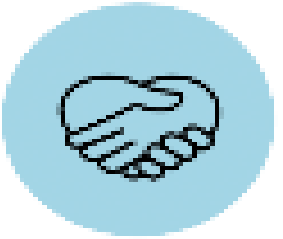
Strengthen Peaceful Conflict Management Practice

While conflict management through negotiation & mediation has its own direct impact on reducing violence, Mercy Corps' evidence finds these interventions also strengthen social cohesion by increasing trust, collaboration, and positive attitudes across groups.

Foster Social and Cultural Engagement

While Mercy Corps generally considers social and cultural interactions to have a limited impact as singular interventions, when layered onto other activities, they can increase the volume of positive social interactions and help consolidate gains made by other initiatives.

Facilitate Meaningful Inclusion of Youth, Women, and Other Marginalized Groups

Facilitating the inclusion of marginalized groups is crucial to strengthening social cohesion. Elevating the role of people who have been excluded should be carried out through dedicated activities and integrated across all other approaches as a cross-cutting piece.

Two Key Programmatic Applications

Facilitating joint natural resource management:

Bringing together elements of inter-group collective action and conflict management, this key application supports communities and governance actors to simultaneously address resource-related drivers of conflict while increasing trust and collective action.
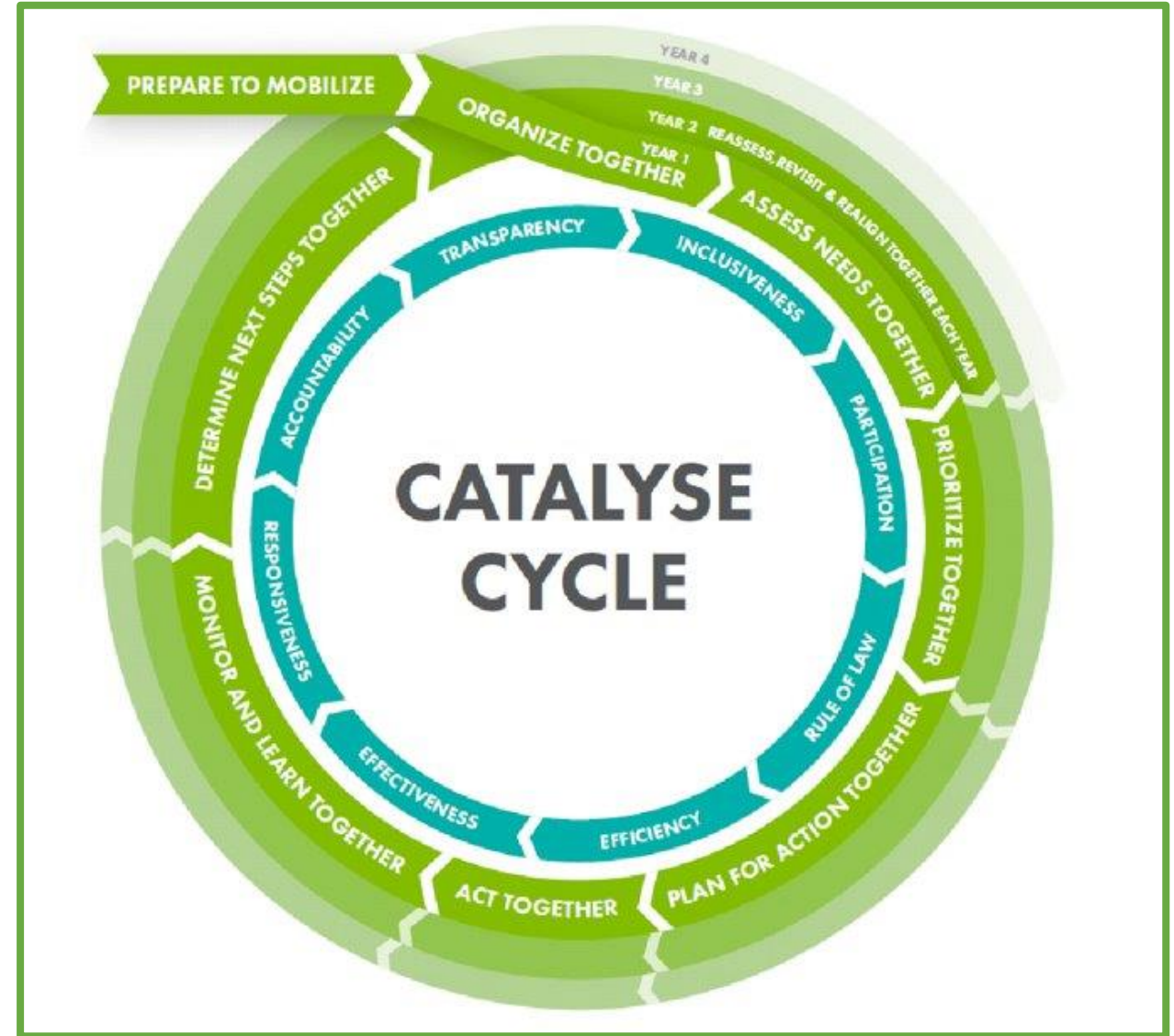
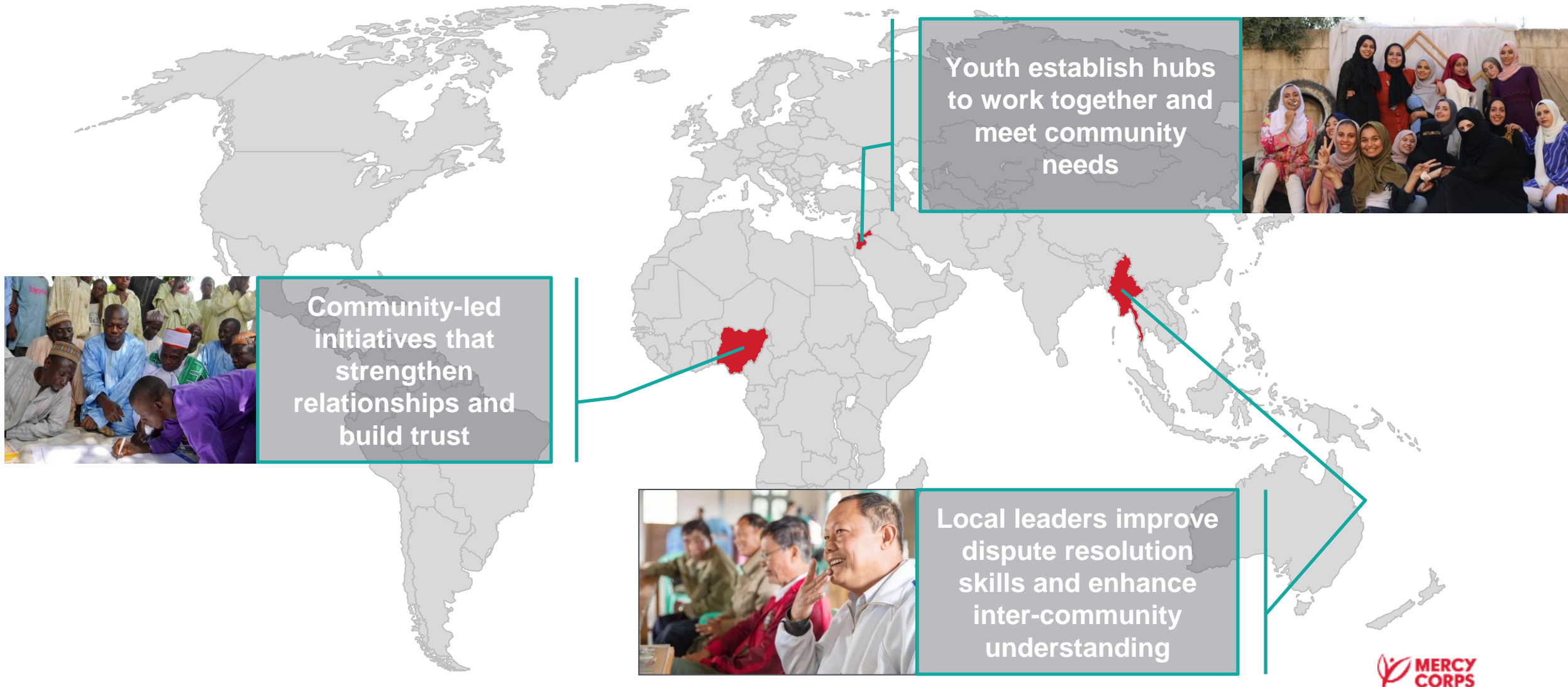**Strengthening dialogue and inclusive planning between communities and governments:** *Drawing on the meaningful inclusion approach, this is a common application that engages marginalized people and groups along with key governance stakeholders to address challenges collectively and engage in participatory decision-making and action.*
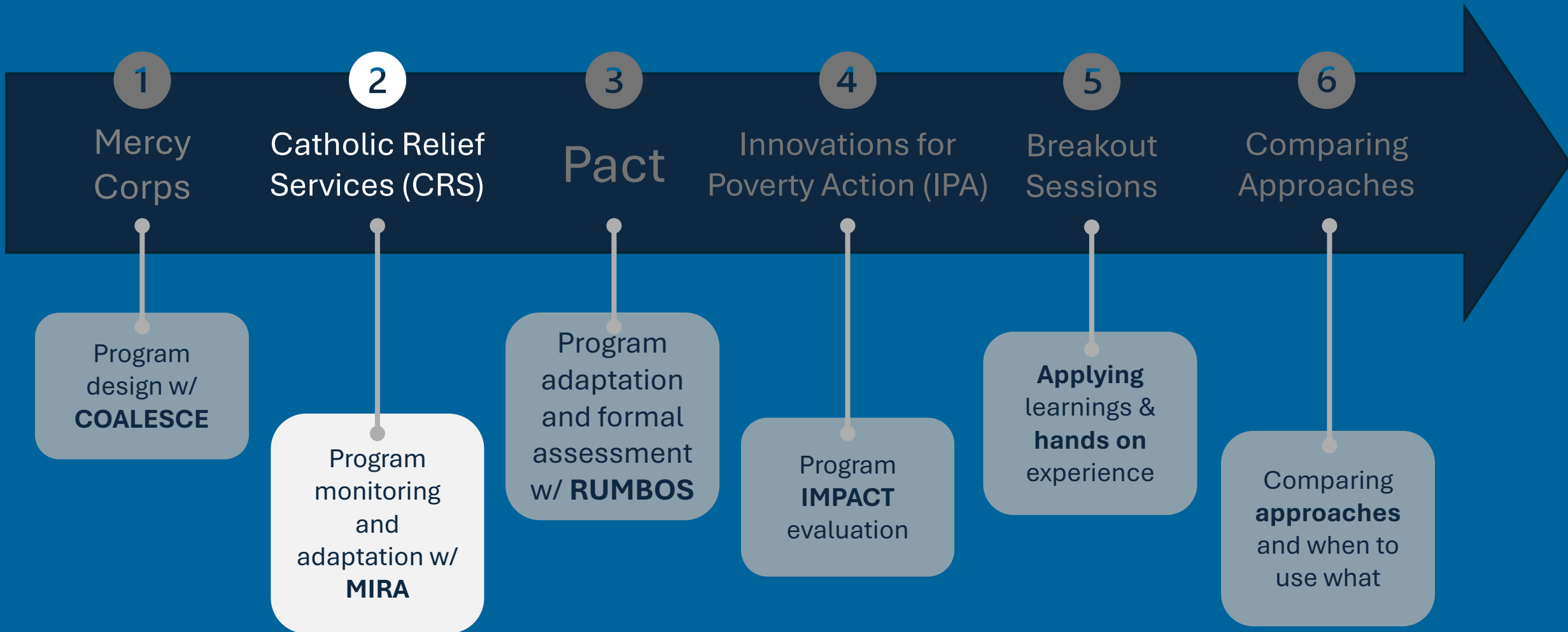
Quick-Start Guide

1. Define the Ultimate Goal

2. Conduct an Assessment to Determine Social Cohesion Dynamics

3. Design the Intervention to Address Social Cohesion Dimensions

4. Adapt "CATALYSE" for Social Cohesion to Develop an Inclusive and Participatory Implementation Plan

5. Design and Implement a Measurement Strategy

COALESCE in Practice

Youth establish hubs to work together and meet community needs

Community-led initiatives that strengthen relationships and build trust

Local leaders improve dispute resolution skills and enhance inter-community understanding

MERCY CORPS

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Integrating a Social Cohesion Perspective to Resilience Context Monitoring

1. How CRS understands social cohesion

2. MIRA tool: Context monitoring for resilience

3. The social cohesion challenge: Collective action for resilience

4. Integrating social cohesion into MIRA

5. *Breakout: Hands-on exploration of MIRA tool*

CRS /

1.
Social Cohesion: Definition & Resources

Definition of Social Cohesion

CRS defines social cohesion as the strength, quality and diversity of relationships between and among individuals, groups and communities, coupled with connections between society and the state as well as other institutions and markets. These relationships are based on trust, respect, mutuality and equal opportunity, for the dignity and wellbeing of every person and the common good of all.
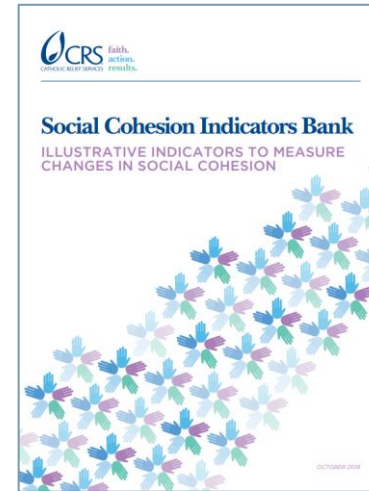
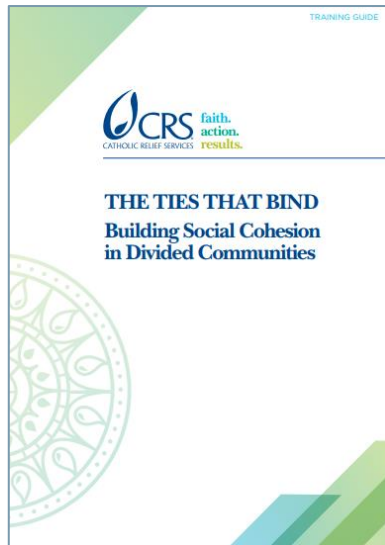# Social Cohesion Conceptual Framework
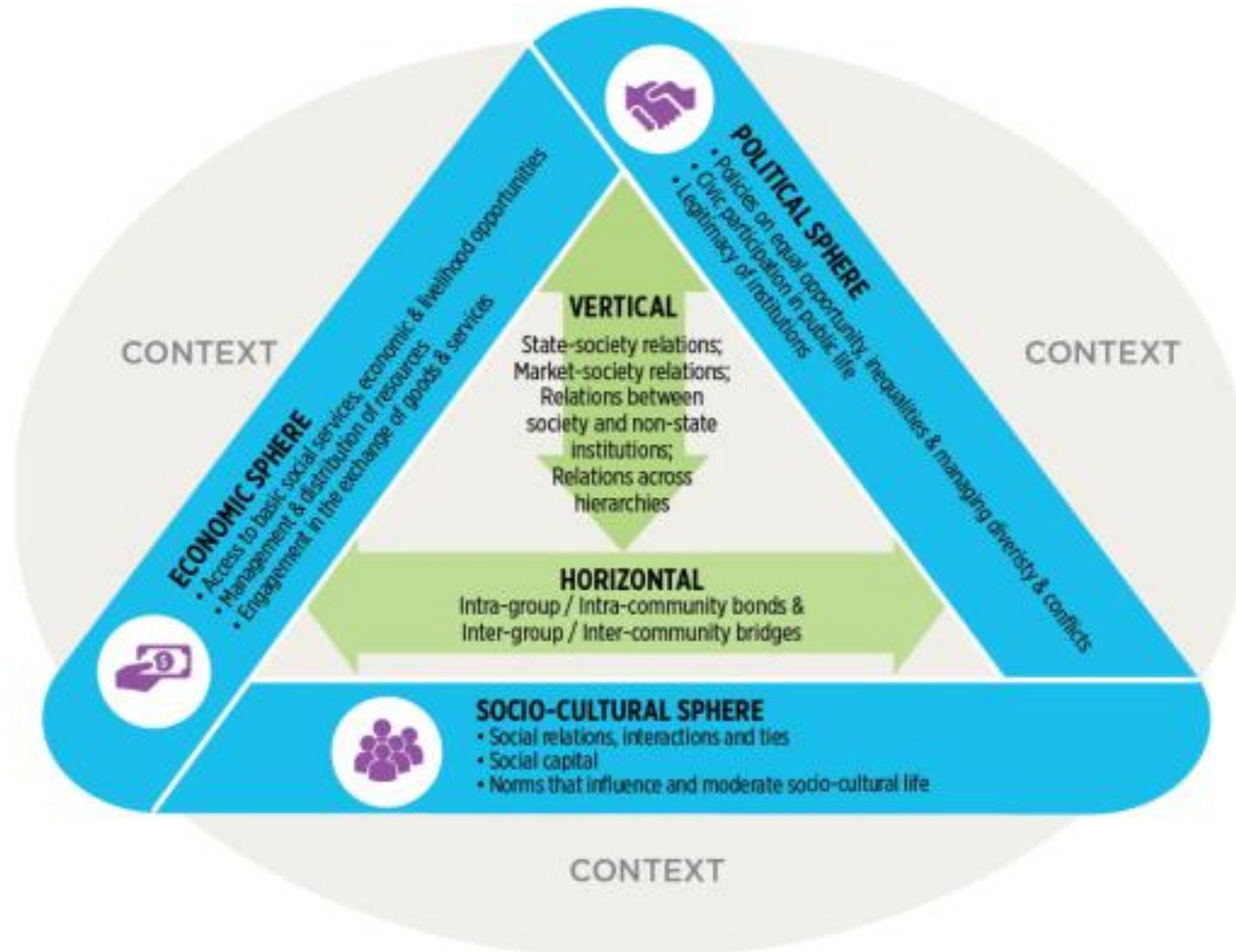
Social Cohesion Technical Resources
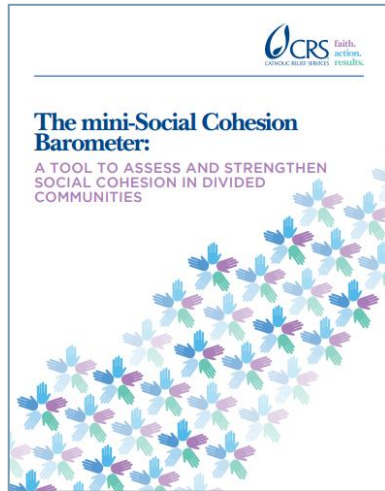
Mini-Social Cohesion Barometer: Context monitoring tool and for MEAL

Social Cohesion Indicators Bank and Social and Power Dynamics Assessments: Tools for measuring social cohesion

Social cohesion training manuals: 3B/4D Ties that Bind, Youth Peace Ambassadors, Finding Your Inner Strength

Social cohesion learning briefs and case studies documenting experience and learning

2.
MIRA:
CRS' Monthly Interval Resilience Analysis Tool

Monitoring food security trends
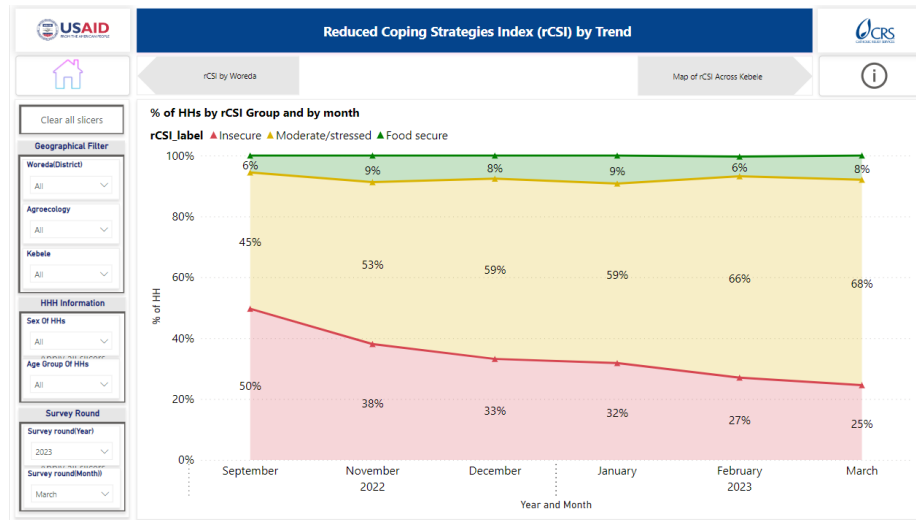
Seasonality
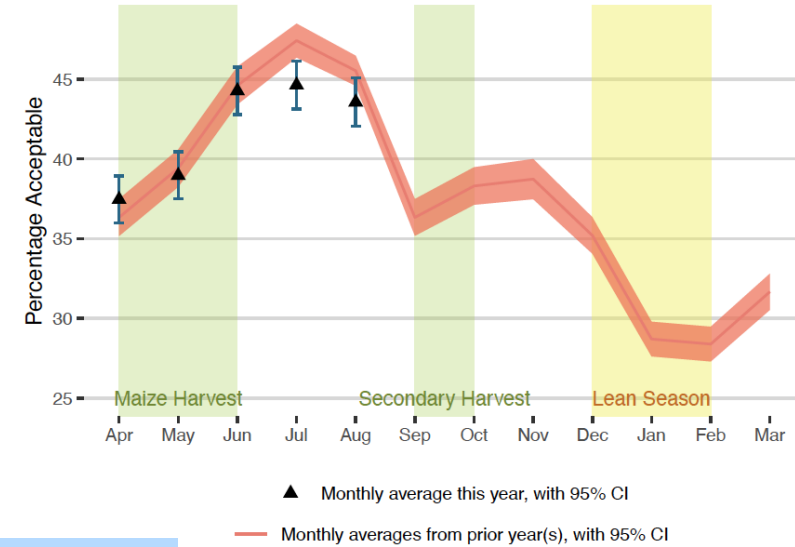
Tracking shocks at scale
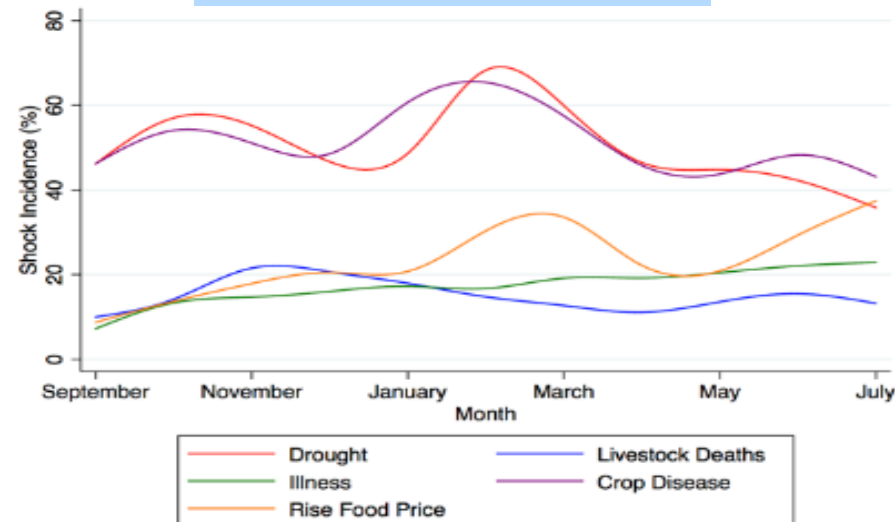
Countries using MIRA

- **Malawi** – *Rapid Feedback Monitoring System* (*RFMS*) project (2020-25)

- **Madagascar** – *Firanga / Maharo / Harea* projects (2020-24; 2024+)

- **Ethiopia** – *Ifaa DFSA* (2021-26)

- **Sudan** – *Conflict & Climate Change* (*Ma'an Aqwa*) project (2022-25)

- **Zimbabwe** – *Restoring Ecosystems and Livelihoods* (*REAL II*) project (2022+)

- **Central African Republic** (2023+)

- **Democratic Republic of Congo** – *DRC RFSA* (2023-28)

- **Guatemala, Honduras, & El Salvador** – *Pathways to Resilience* project (2024-26)

3.
The Social Cohesion Challenge: Collective Action for Resilience

Social Cohesion for Collective Action

Example of problem: Community lacks access to water.

- Water points are constructed but community maintenance is inconsistent, thus community members still lack access.

Social cohesion data may show challenge in, for example:

- Lack of trust in neighbors (***social divisions –** intergroup*)
- Not seeing value in collective action (maybe dysfunctional water committee or ***infighting –** intragroup*), or
- People's lack of ***trust in their leaders** (vertical cohesion concerns)*

CRS /

4.

Developing a Social Cohesion Module for MIRA

MIRA Social Cohesion Module

Community Capacity Scale - Five domains

Social cohesion for collective action

Domain	Example
Social Cohesion (mutual trust)	- <u>Example</u>: People this community help each other in times of need
Participatory Efficacy	- <u>Example</u>: I have the skills, knowledge and ability to help solve problems facing this community
Collective Efficacy	- <u>Example</u>: If people in this community work together, we can find solutions to many of our problems
Leadership	- <u>Example</u>: Our leaders come from diverse identities that match the diversity of our community
Effective Leadership	- <u>Example</u>: Our leaders are good at developing a plan for community activities

CRS /

MIRA Social Cohesion Questionnaire

"As members of this community, we are able to tackle the most difficult situations because we are all committed to the same collective goals."

Responses are scored on a 5-point Likert scale.

| 111	[COLLECTIVE EFFICACY]	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	a. Whenever our community undertakes a project together, we know that we will all work hard until it is accomplished.	a. 1	2	3	4	5
	b. Whenever a community problem arises, I am very confident that community members will be able to solve it.	b. 1	2	3	4	5
	c. As members of this community, we are able to tackle the most difficult situations because we are all committed to the same collective goals.	c. 1	2	3	4	5
	d. If people in this community work together, we can find solutions to many of our problems.	d. 1	2	3	4	5
		e. 1	2	3	4	5

CRS

MIRA CAR: Social Cohesion Module

- Data is collected quarterly

- 1,079 households in two prefectures of the Central African Republic

- 4 cycles of data collection thus far. Most recent was in May 2024

CRS

MIRA: Social Cohesion Module
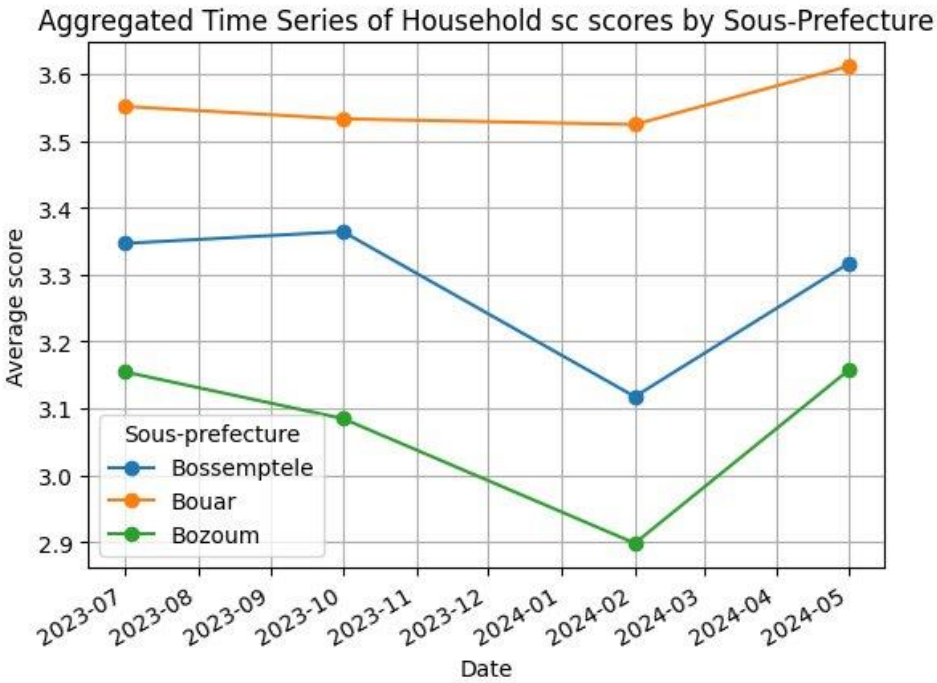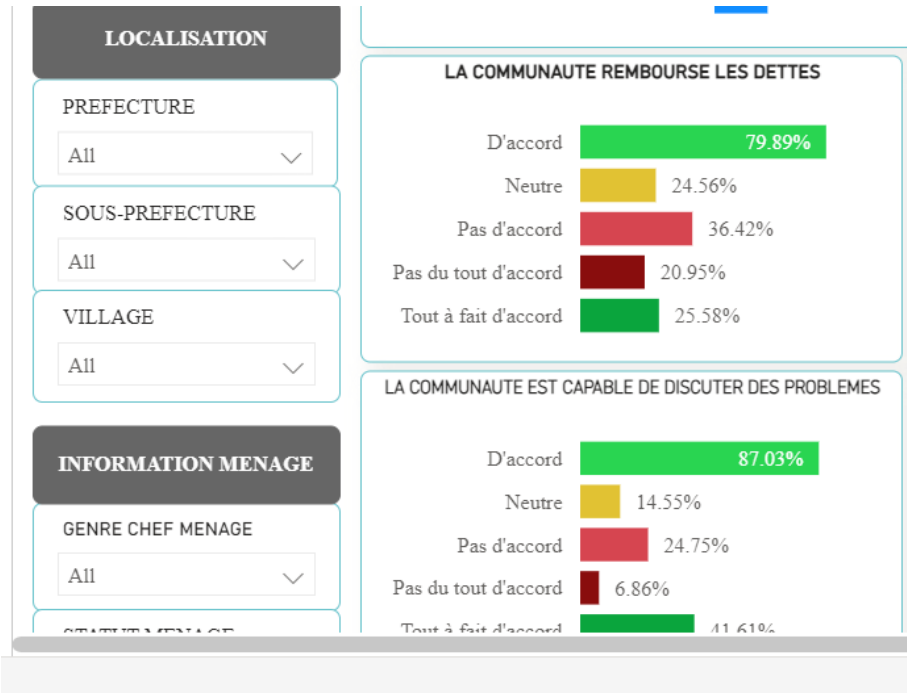
Data Interpretation

- Triangulate with current events
- Community collaboration is essential
- Study relative values and trends in scores

February data collection:
- Increase in prices
- Hunger season
- Transhumance season

SCORE MOYENNE DE LA COHESION SOCIALE

ANNEE_MOIS ● 2023-JUILLET ● 2023-OCTOBRE ● 2024-FEVRIER ● 2024-MAI
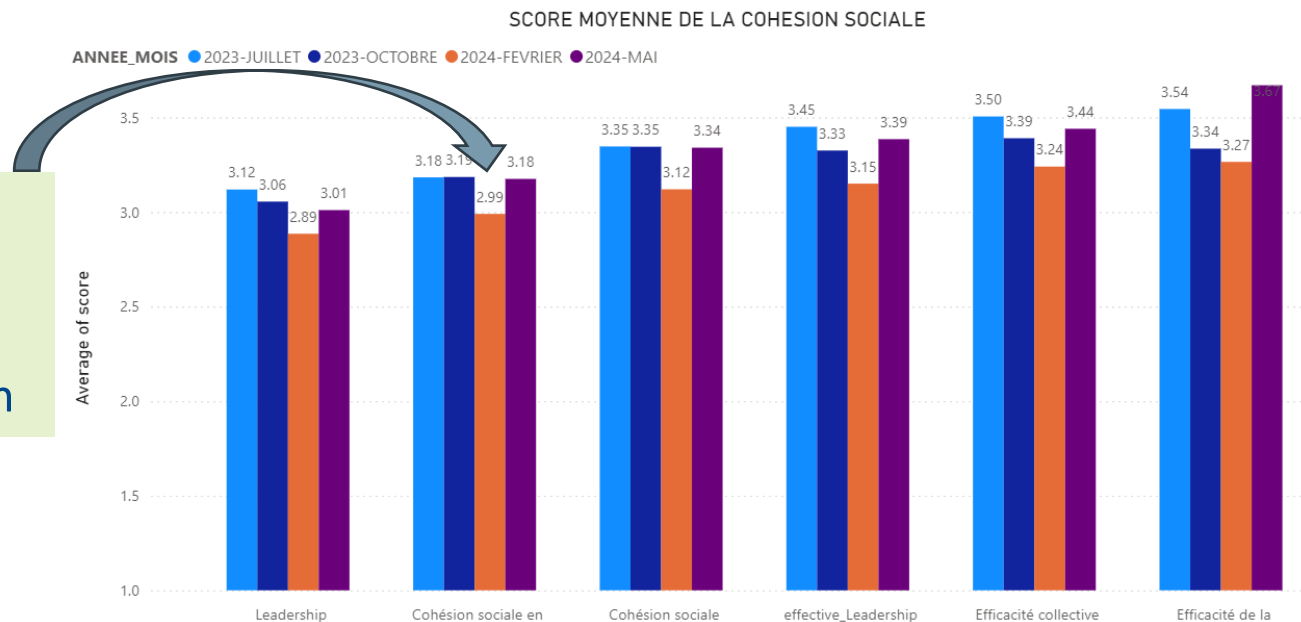
Key Takeaways

- **Social cohesion in resilience**: Social cohesion helps equip communities to mobilize and work together through collective action to respond to shocks and stressors.

- **Social cohesion in resilience monitoring**: Tracking social dynamics in the context of resilience helps to: (1) bring visibility to evolving trends in social dynamics (2) surface social impacts in the aftermath of a shock, and (3) facilitate programmatic decision-making.

- **Data interpretation**: Social cohesion scores take on meaning especially through (1) triangulation with current events and community collaboration and (2) trends over time, considering relative rather than absolute scores.

CRS

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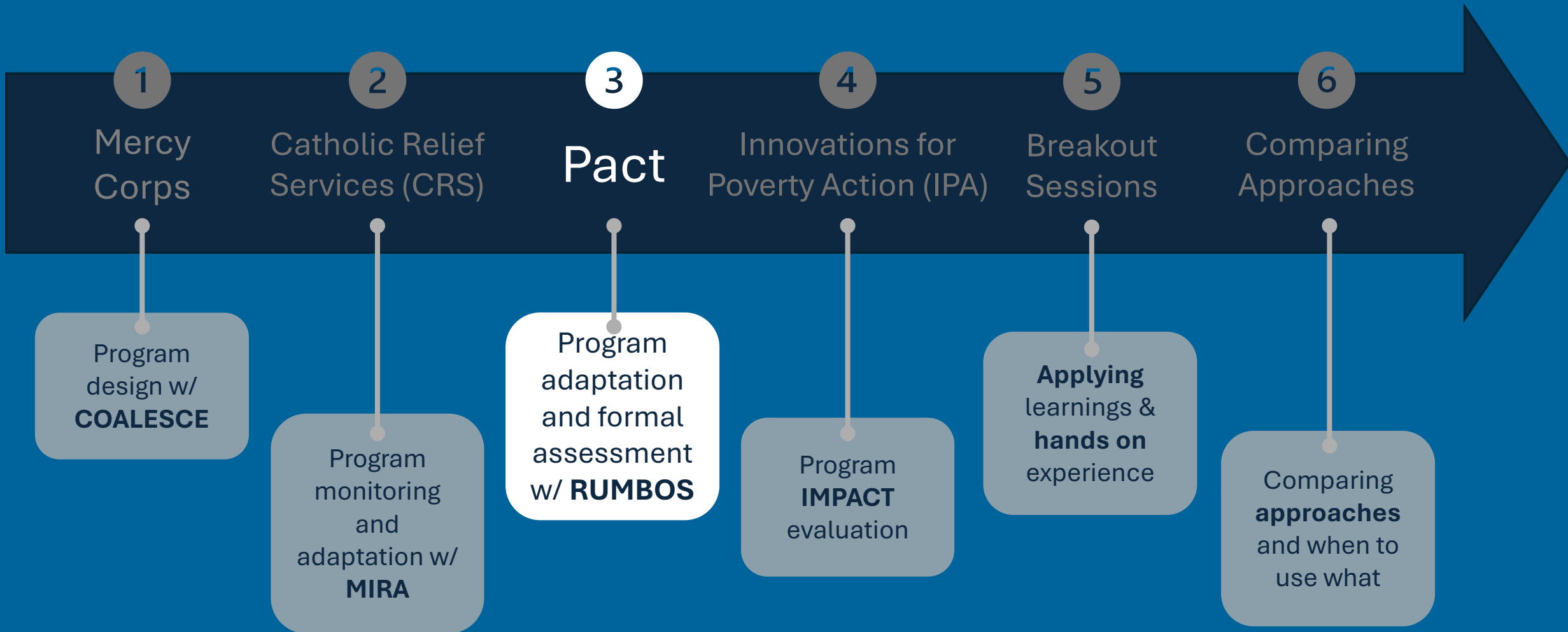
The "RUMBOS" (Pathways) Index

Conceptualizing and Operationalizing Social Cohesion in a Colombian Migratory Context

Lina Maria Jaramillo Rojas
Senior Officer, Learning, Evidence and Impact (LEAP), **Pact**

pact
building
local
promise.

1. The challenge of building social cohesion in a migratory context

TREN DE ARAGUA: SIEMBRAN TERROR Y MIEDO

TESTIGO DIRECTO

2. Re-conceptualizing social cohesion to address a migrant crisis

Pact's Social Cohesion Framework

Pact's social cohesion framework considers what needs to be present to promote a **sustained environment** of community **cohesion** and social **integration**.

Conflict Resolution

Human rights

Trust

Community Integration

social COHESION

Citizen SECURITY

Equal access to opportunities and rights

Socio-economic development

Quality social relationships

Shared norms

Access to information

- **Citizen security** beyond a traditional focus on physical security, criminality, and policing.

- Citizen security from a **human rights** perspective.

- Includes **CSO network capacities, trust, collective action, and access to information.**

3.Operationalizing social cohesion through a participatory index
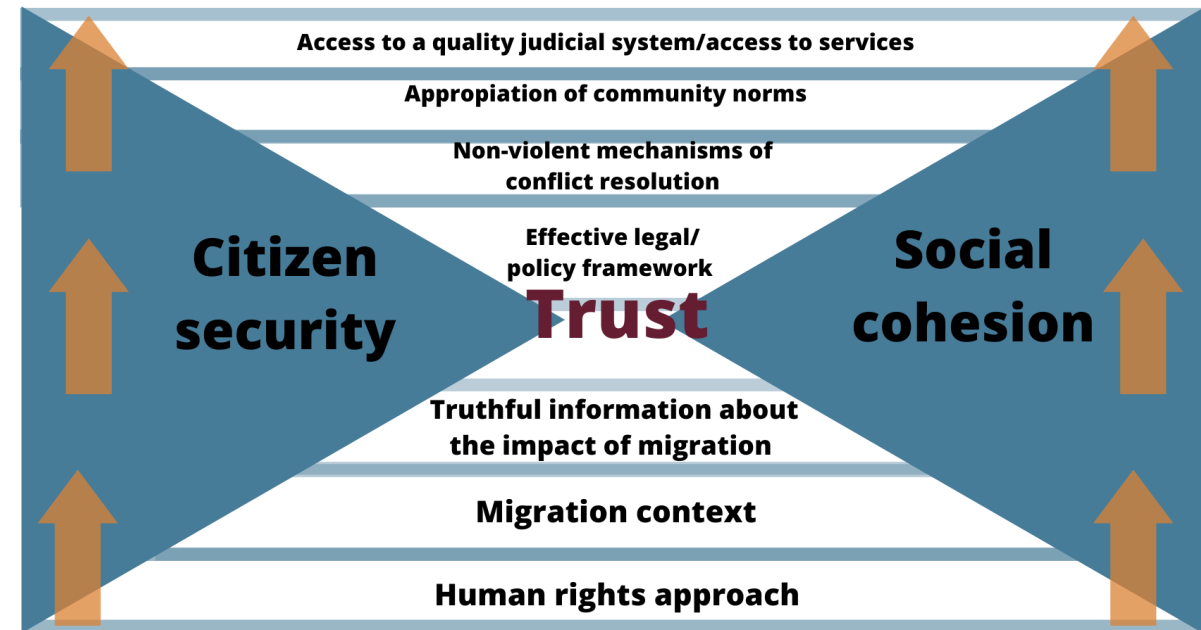
The Challenge

We needed a tool to…

- Inform project **strategy**
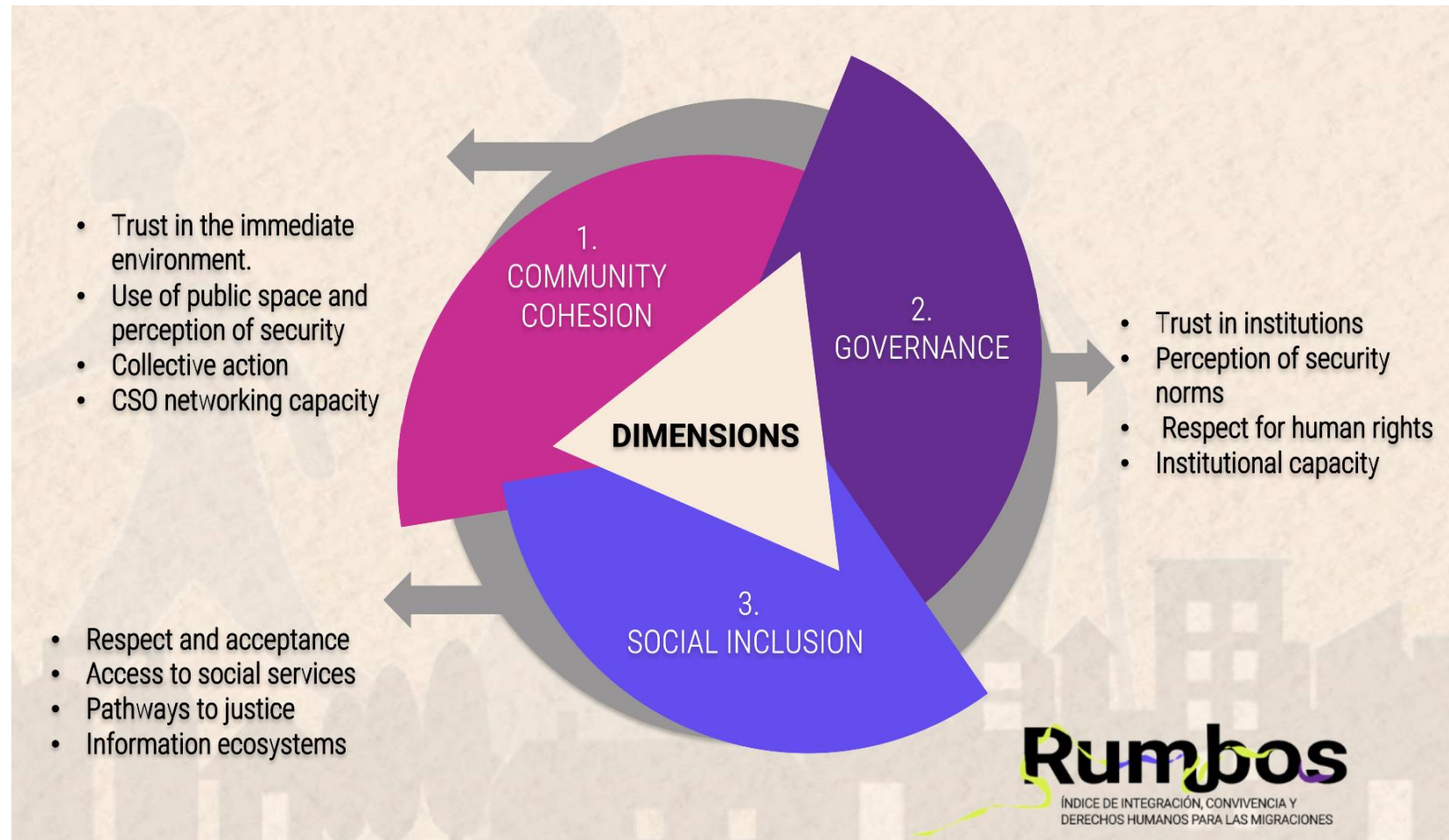- Enable **adaptive** management
- **Measure** change over time

The tool also needed to…

- Measure **subnational and national** units
- Work with existing **monitoring** data
- Be understandable to **technical** teams
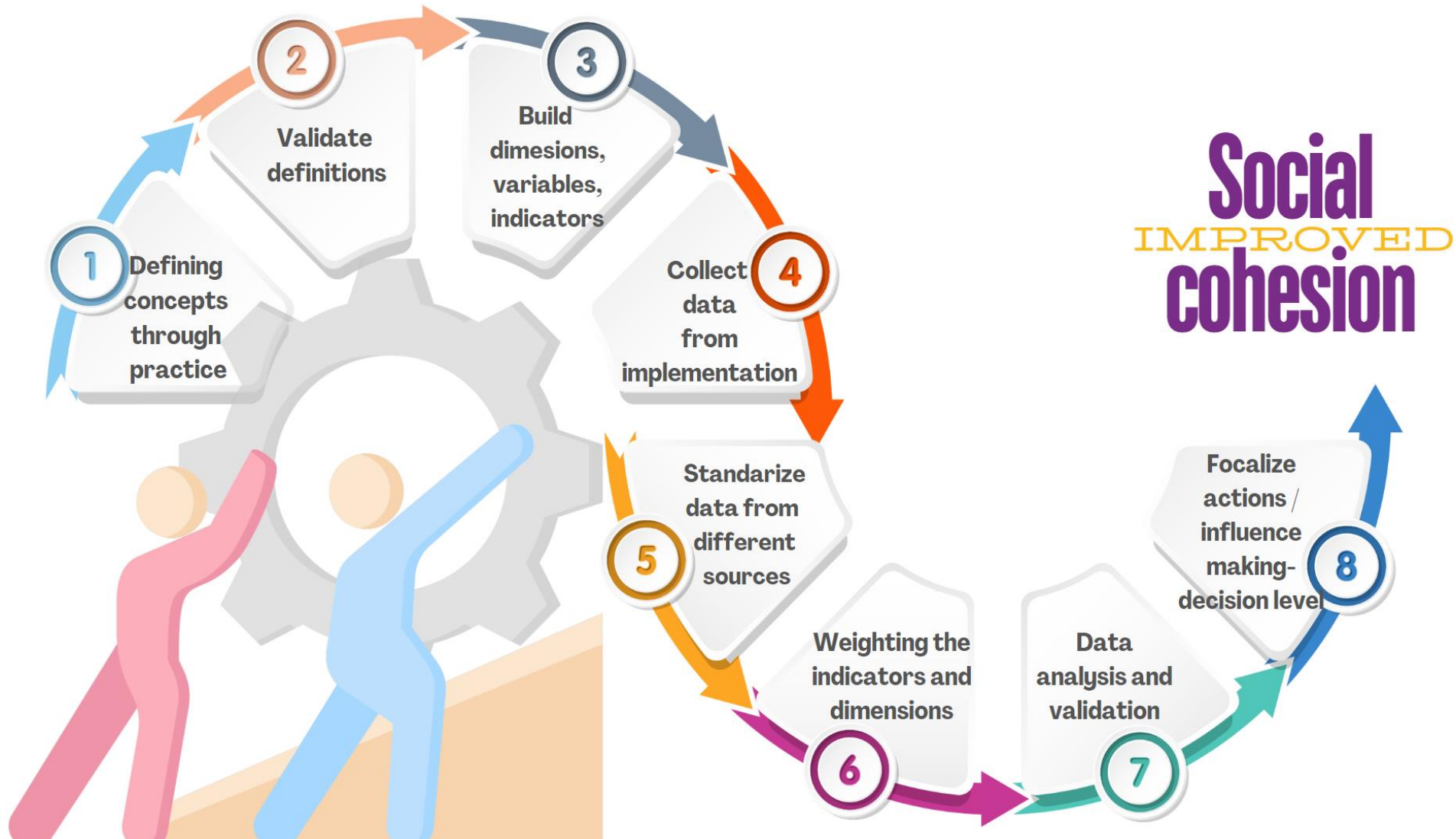- **Empower** and enable stakeholders

What We Developed: RUMBOS ("Pathway")

RUMBOS is a **participatory index** that evaluates the relationship between concepts associated with the improvement of **social cohesion** and **citizen security** from a **human rights** perspective.

- Trust in the immediate environment.
- Use of public space and perception of security
- Collective action
- CSO networking capacity

1. COMMUNITY COHESION

2. GOVERNANCE

- Trust in institutions
- Perception of security norms
- Respect for human rights
- Institutional capacity

DIMENSIONS

3. SOCIAL INCLUSION

- Respect and acceptance
- Access to social services
- Pathways to justice
- Information ecosystems

Rumbos

ÍNDICE DE INTEGRACIÓN, CONVIVENCIA Y DERECHOS HUMANOS PARA LAS MIGRACIONES

Developing RUMBOS

Data Sources and Instruments
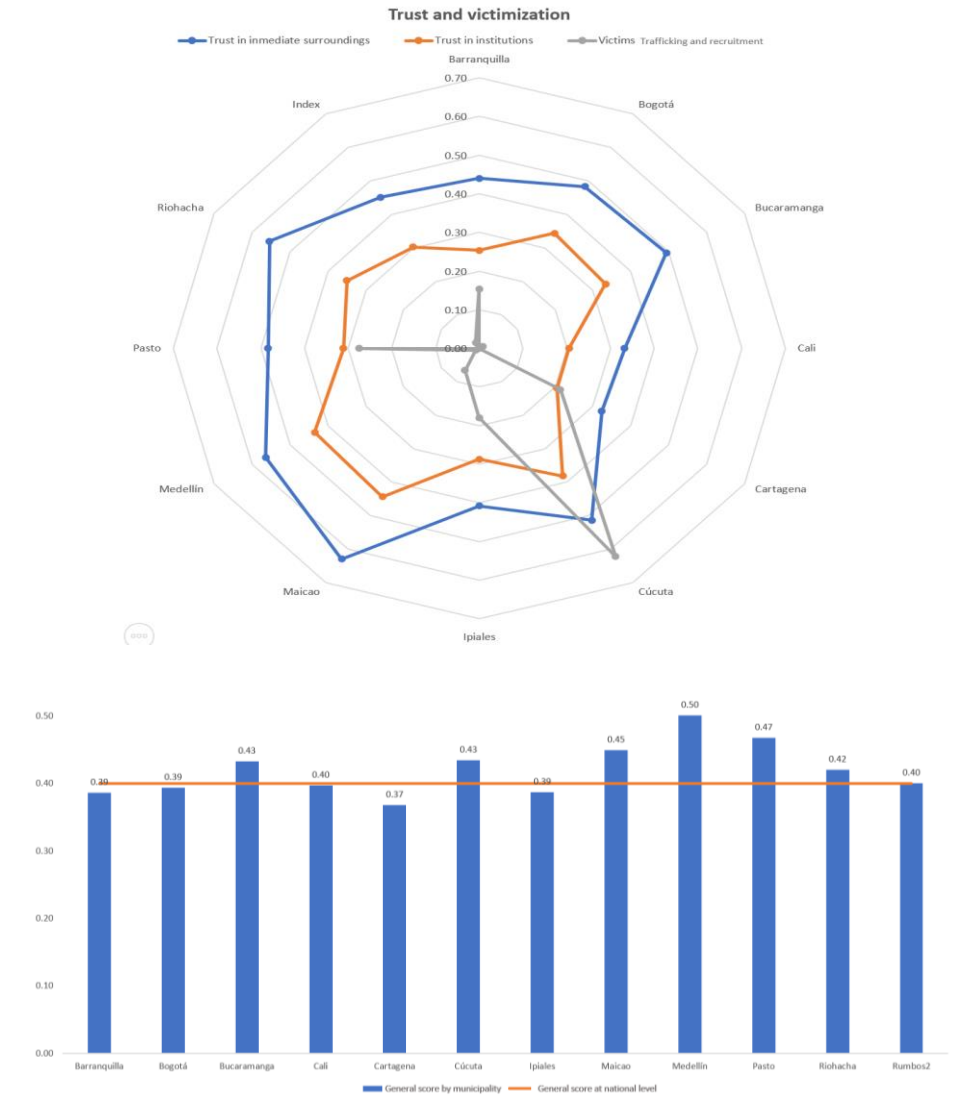
- **Surveys** fielded to public officials and local government entities.

- **Baseline** completed in host and recipient communities.

- **Information ecosystem** assessment applied to communities.

- **Human rights violations** diagnosed, and risk factors mapped.

- **Interviews** and **focus groups** completed with key actors.

4. Using the Rumbos Index

In the migration context, it was key to embed social cohesion under a human rights approach, which gave citizen security and social cohesion a totally new perspective.
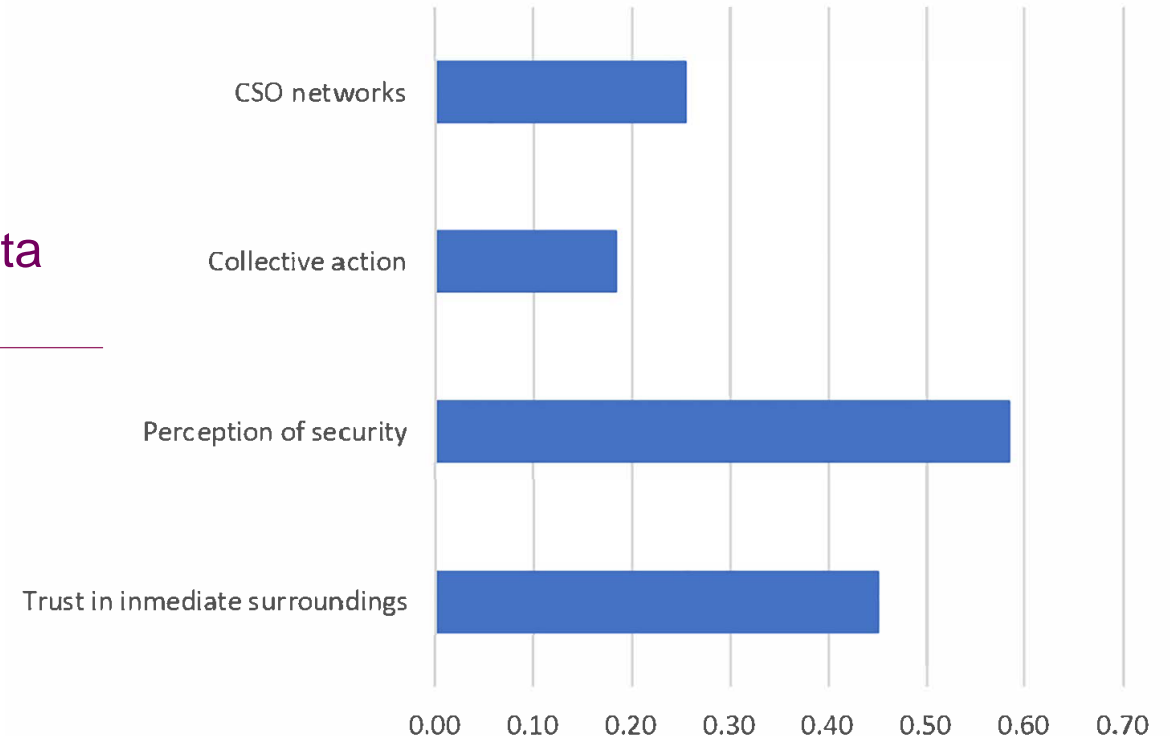
Rumbos Findings and Applications

FINDINGS

- Social cohesion increased from 51% to 66% across 11 municipalities.
- There was strengthened trust between institutions and communities in solving issues.
- Increased human rights awareness led to more community integration (e.g., gender protection networks).
- Improved national government capacity to use data for migration policy and decision-making.

APPLICATION

- Prevention, protection, and response to human rights violations as part of social inclusion.
- Legal assistance for status regularization to promote social cohesion.
- Behavioral studies to reduce xenophobia.
- Technical alliance with the Colombian government to improve data integration into the national index.

Social cohesion by sub-domain

5. Looking ahead
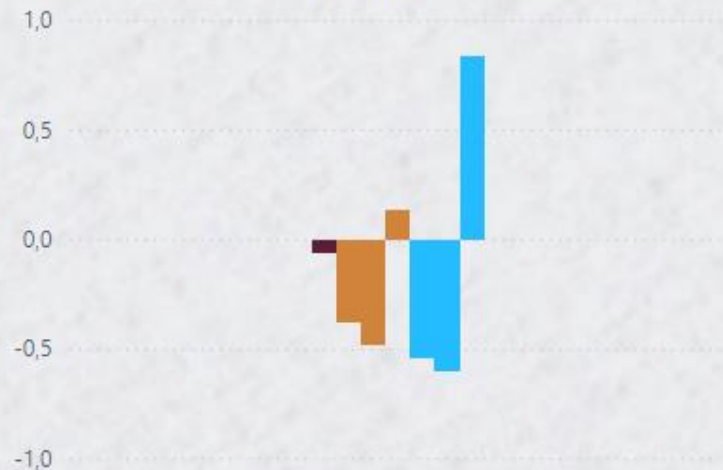
Main Takeaways

1. **Engage communities in measurement approaches.** Social cohesion must be understood from the perspective of local communities.

2. **Embrace complexity.** Measurement methods can adapt to the needs of the project.

3. **Take a gender perspective.** Essential to measure social cohesion inclusiveness component.

Community integration activity-Cibercaminantes

Co-creation processes to discuss and identify the risks faced by migrants

Agenda
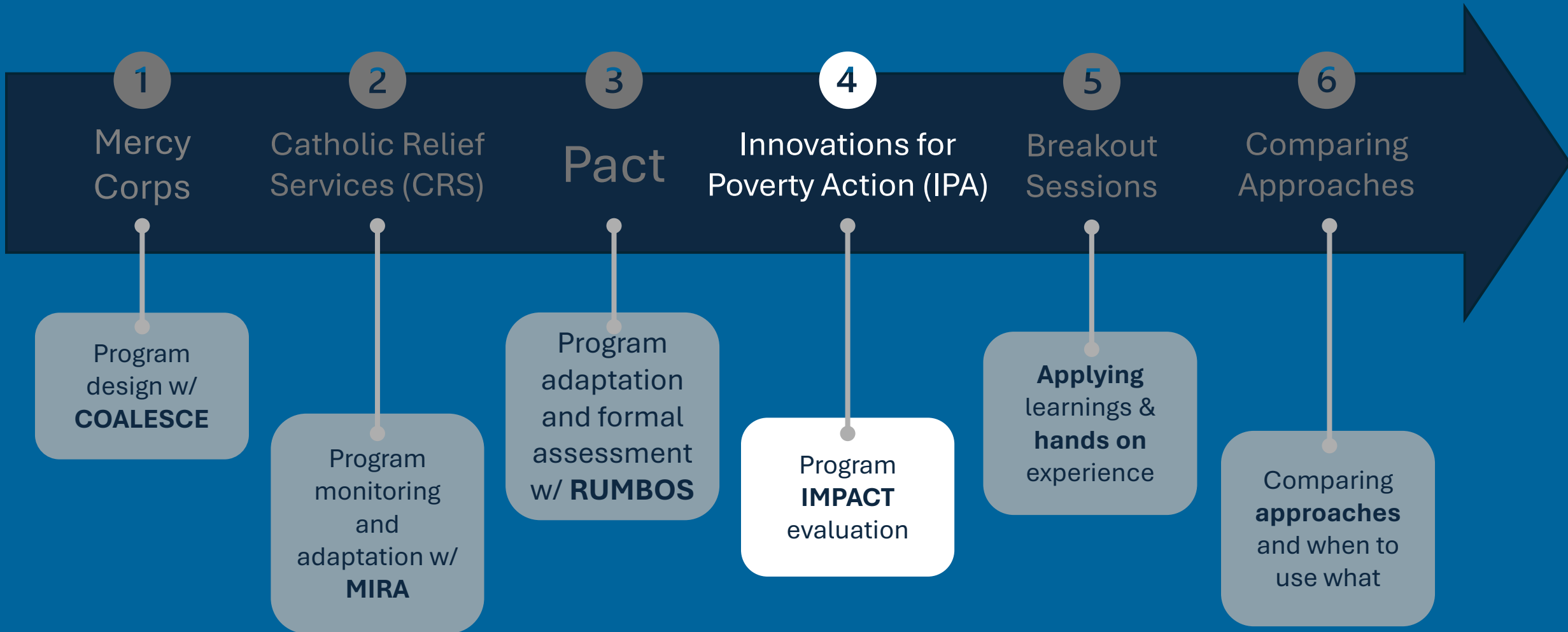
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Defining social cohesion

"...a sense of shared purpose, trust and willingness to cooperate among members of a given group, between members of different groups, and between people and the state."

Chatterjee, Gassier, & Myint, 2023

Why evaluate social cohesion programs?

To assess effectiveness and unpack mechanisms

- Understand what drives that impact
- Assess program cost-effectiveness
- Test fundamental theories of behaviour and attitude change

To produce generalizable learning

- Identify and test underlying mechanisms driving outcomes
- Assess if these mechanisms are likely to apply in different settings

Glennerster and Bates (2017)

Building social cohesion across divides can

- Prevent violence
- Promote prosocial norms
- Address conflict
- Foster inclusive societies

Yet, rigorous research on social cohesion programs in fragile settings is limited.

ipa

Challenges

Limited measurement of **social cohesion** through **impact evaluations** until recently

- **Conflict-affected contexts**: insecurity, instability, population mobility
- **Short implementation** timelines and lack of research infrastructure
- Reliance on **self-reported answers**

However, this is beginning to change...

Photo Credit: Glenna Gordon - Sierra Leone, 2011

Impact Measurement: What

Outcomes	Indicators	Dimensions	Programs
- Trust - Belonging - Willingness to participate - Willingness to help - Acceptance of diversity	**Attitudinal**: subjective perceptions and beliefs **Behavioral**: actual or intended actions or reactions	**Horizontal**: ties between individuals & groups **Vertical**: individual trust in government and institutional processes	- Intergroup contact - Intergroup dialogue - Perspective-taking - Peace education - Media-based interventions - Reconciliation

Sonnenfeld et al., 2021

IPA & J-PAL, 2021

Impact Measurement: How

Data sources include:

- **Administrative**: gov data, hh surveys
- **Survey**: self-reported attitudes and behaviors, donation measures
- **Observational**: behavioural games, real-world behaviours
- **Qualitative**: focus groups, open-ended interviews

Important for survey data & questions to be:

- **Comparable**
- **Context-adapted** through piloting
- **Right tools**

Snapshot: IPA-supported Impact Evaluations

Study Title	Data	Indicator	Trust	Belonging	Acceptance	Willingness to	
						Participate	Help
Intergroup Contact Interventions							
Interreligious soccer team, post-ISIS Iraq	s	A, aiB					
Empathy education & refugee-native integration, Lebanon	s, o	A, aiB					
Intergroup Dialogue Interventions							
Farmer-Herder contact and dialogue, Nigeria	s	A, iB					
Mediation and community dialogues, Nigeria	s	A, iB					
Perspective Taking Interventions							
Classroom empathy curriculum for refugee integration, Turkey	s, o, a	A, aiB					
Perspective-taking to reduce prejudice towards refugees, Uganda	s, q	A, iB					
Reconciliation Interventions							
Pro-peace radio message: militant returnee acceptance, Nigeria	s	A, iB					
Training & traditional bonfire ceremony, Sierra Leone	s	A, iB					

s = Survey data; o = Observational data; q = Qualitative data; a = Administrative data

A = Attitudinal; iB = Intended Behavior; aiB = Intended and Actual Behavior

RCT: Reconciliation in Sierra Leone

Question

Can reconciliation programming restore social cohesion after civil war?

Intervention

Community-level reconciliation forums in Sierra Leone (bonfire ceremonies)
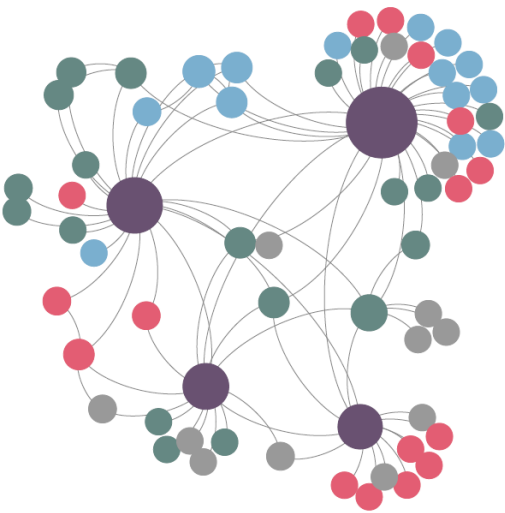
Peace trees

Measures

- **Trust**: Attitudes towards forgiveness (individual)
- **Willingness to participate**: Community participation
- **Willingness to help**: Public good contributions

Social networks

...measured through **surveys**

Cilliers et al., 2016

ipa

Peace measurement: Social cohesion

Variables

Index of participation in community groups

Index of participation in community groups, without women's membership or meetings

Indicators

PTA membership

Village development committee membership

Youth group membership

Women's group membership

Secret society membership

Religious group membership

PTA meeting attendance

Village development committee meeting attendance

Youth group meeting attendance

Women's group meeting attendance

Secret society meeting attendance

Religious group meeting attendance

Community meeting attendance

Table 2. Reconciliation and social networks. Each row represents a separate assignment. All specifications are cross-sectional because we do not have baseli section pair fixed effects and the second round indicator. SEs are clustered at the level, and * is significant at the 10% level. The control mean is the mean in the co

Variables

Index of network strength

Indicators

Number of people respondent would approach for advice / help

Number of people respondent would ask to collect money for them

Number of times respondent listed as good friend

Number of times respondent listed as someone to ask for advice / help

Cilliers et al., 2016

Results:
Reconciliation in Sierra Leone

The program:
- Increased **forgiveness** and **trust** towards perpetrators
- Strengthened **social capital**

However, the program also:
- **Worsened psychological well-being** (PTSD, depression, anxiety)

Effects persisted for 3 years

© J. Steinberg

Cilliers et al., 2016

ipa

RCT: Intergroup Contact in Iraq

Question	Intervention	Measures
Can intergroup contact create trust after conflict?	A soccer league in Iraq, where players are randomly assigned to to all-Christian or mixed Christian-Muslim teams	• **Attitudes** & **behaviours** towards the out-group … measured through **surveys** and real world **behavioural measures**

Mousa, 2020

Peace Measurement:
Social Cohesion

On-the-field outcomes:
- Train with Muslims
- Vote for Muslim to get sportsmanship prize
- Sign up for mixed team next season

Off-the-field outcomes:
- Attend mixed social event
- Patronizing a business in Muslim neighborhood
- Donating to an NGO vs Church

Mousa, 2020

Behavioral Outcomes

1. Attend mixed dinner event (five months post-intervention; three weeks for pilot)

2. Train with Muslims at least once a week (six months post-intervention)

3. Patronize restaurant in Mosul (one to four months post-intervention)

4. Donate $ survey compensation to Church vs. neutral NGO (two weeks to five months post-intervention)

5. Vote for Muslim player to receive sportsmanship prize (two weeks to five months post-intervention)

6. Register for mixed team in the future (two weeks to five months post-intervention)

Attitudinal Indices

1. Coexistence

   1.1 Believe that Iraq would be a better society if Iraqis treated each other as Iraqis first
   1.2 Believe that dividing Iraq into ethnic and religious groups is arbitrary
   1.3 Believe that life these days is unpredictable and dangerous

2. Intergroup Attitudes

   2.1 Sharing at least "a little" in common with Muslims
   2.2 Proud or very proud to be Iraqi
   2.3 Comfortable going to noncoethnic areas
   2.4 Some or most of friends are non-Christians
   2.5 Reject claim that most Sunni Arabs approve of ISIS

3. Muslims as Neighbors

   3.1 Comfortable with Shi'ite Shabak as Neighbor
   3.2 Comfortable with Sunni Arab as Neighbor
   3.3 Comfortable with Sunni Shabak as Neighbor
   3.4 Willing to sell land to non-Christians

4. Blaming Muslims

   4.1 Believe that Shi'ite Shabak are responsible for Christian suffering
   4.2 Believe that Sunni Arabs are responsible for Christian suffering

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Results:
Intergroup Contact in Iraq

- Increased **tolerance on the field**.
  More likely to:
  - Train with Muslims 6 months later
  - Vote for a Muslim player (not on their team) to receive a sportsmanship award

- Personal beliefs proved harder to modify (**null effects off the field**)
  - Stereotypes persist
  - Empathy didn't increase

Mousa, 2020

Notable Design Considerations

When designing measurement, consider the following:

- **Behavioral Change**: Behaviours may be easier to shift than attitudes, at least in the short term
- **Potential Adverse Effects:** Post-conflict programs and research can have negative impacts (worsening psychological wounds), these need to be designed carefully
- **Differential Impacts:** Interventions may affect different groups in varying ways
- **Study Duration**: The length of the study can influence the detection of program effects

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Thank you!

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Additional Resources: Survey Tool Design

- Social integration roster of questions from the IPL 12 (shorter version) / 24 (longer version)
- Prejudice Reduction Evidence Database
- UNHCR Data and Analysis on standardized education and employment modules
- UNHCR Forced Displacement Survey
- EGRISS recommendations
- JIPS Durable Solutions Indicators and Guide
- IPA Remote Surveying in a Pandemic

Additional Resources: Snapshot of Open Research Areas

Key actors and factors

- Role of **civil society** organizations and **grassroots movements**
- Role of **media**
- Role of **social networks**, **education** programs, and **community-based** initiatives
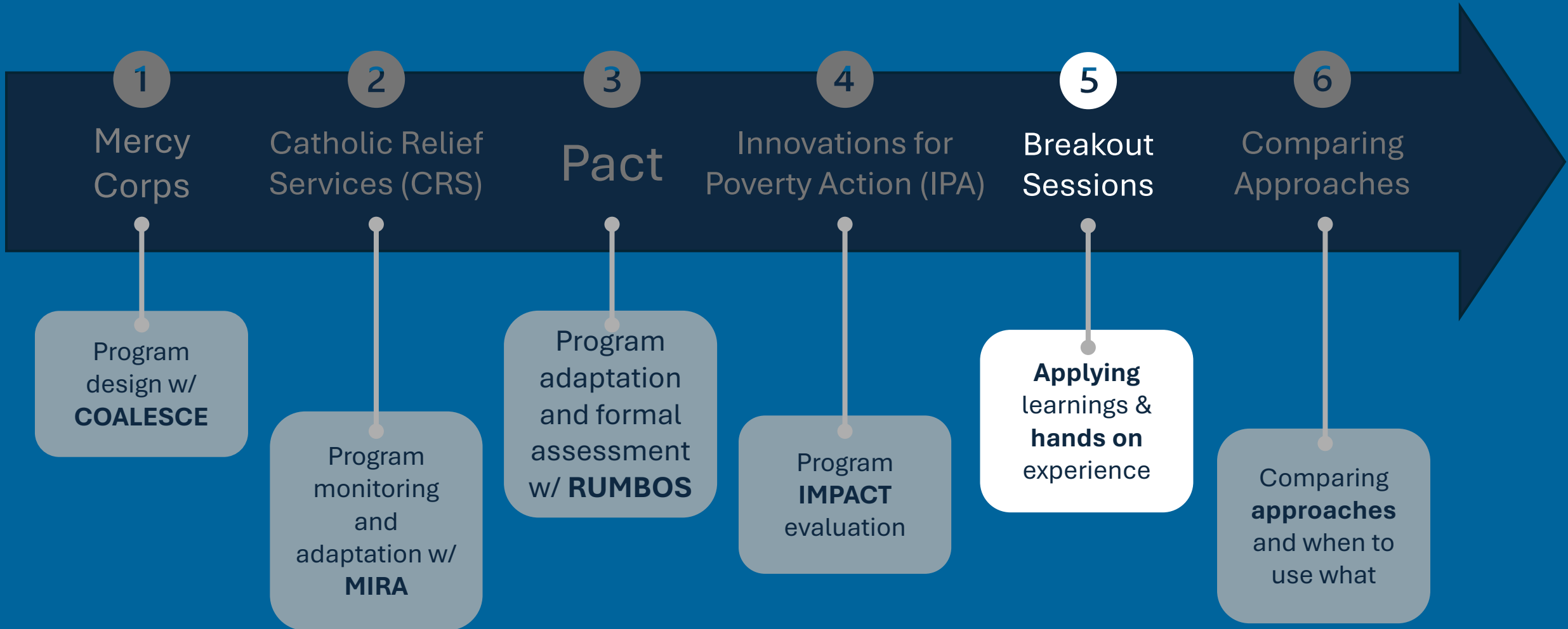
Mechanisms

- Trigger **mechanisms**
- **Effects over time**: short, medium, and long-term

Programming

- Types of **institutional or group-based** interventions
- Types of **intergroup contact** interventions
- Design to **improve attitudes**, in addition to behaviors, and create **spillovers**
- **Development programs and policies**

Agenda

1 Mercy Corps
Program design w/ **COALESCE**

2 Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
Program monitoring and adaptation w/ **MIRA**

3 Pact
Program adaptation and formal assessment w/ **RUMBOS**

4 Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA)
Program **IMPACT** evaluation

5 Breakout Sessions
Applying learnings & **hands on** experience

6 Comparing Approaches
Comparing **approaches** and when to use what
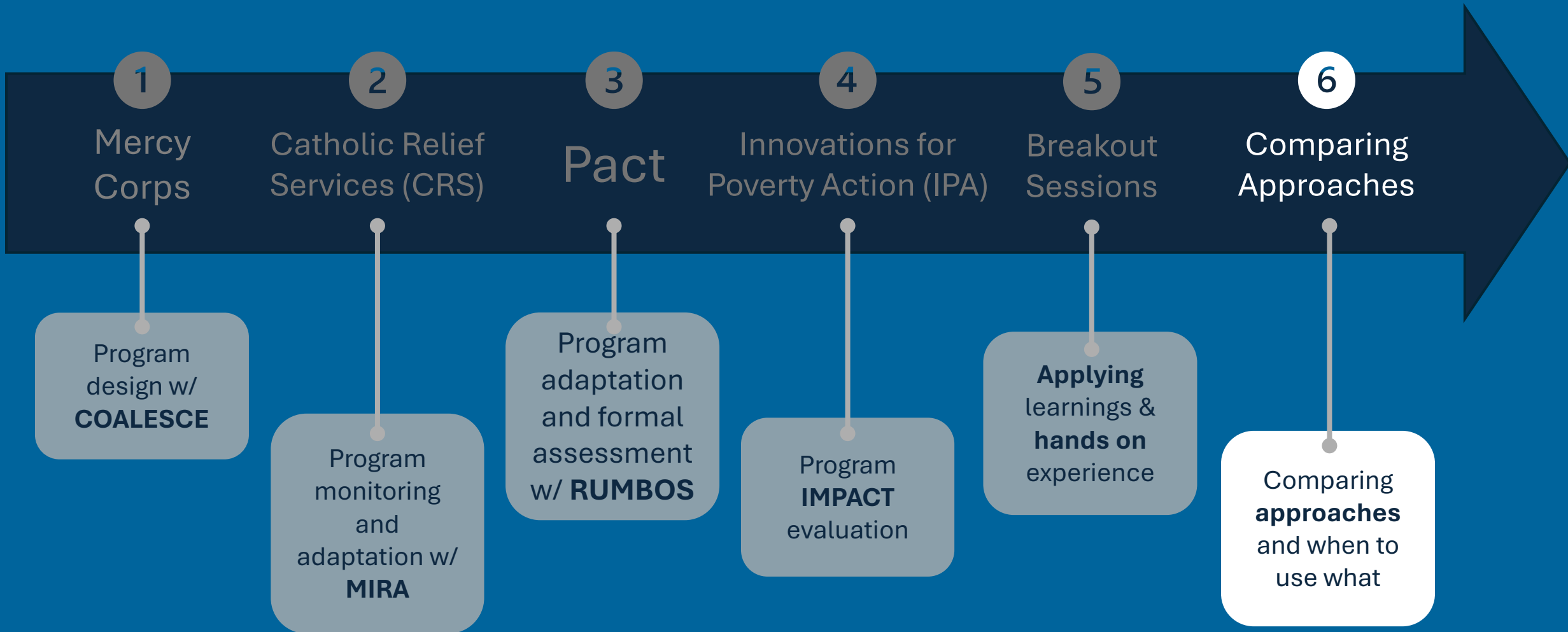
Breakout Sessions

- We will now separate into **breakout sessions** led by one of the 4 presenters
- These sessions aim to help you **apply the knowledge** you have learned and come away with **hands on experience**!
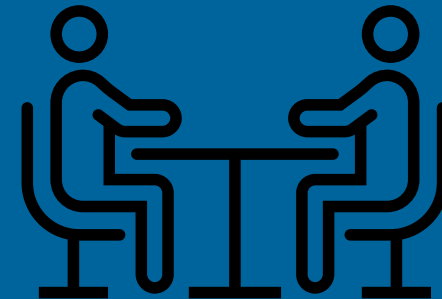
Breakout Session Summaries

Comparing Approaches

Understanding Social Cohesion

1. *Similar definitions* of Social Cohesion

2. But, each organization *operationalized the concept differently* for practical application in programming

3. Each organization embraced the *complexity* of the concept while making it *operationally useful* to improve impact

Using the Different Approaches

1. Each approach targets different phases of the project lifecycle: design, implementation, adaptative management, assessment, and evaluation

2. These are not mutually exclusive phases: design contributes to evaluation, and vice versa. Adapt approaches to your needs!

3. Underlying concepts and indicators are useful across all phases.

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THANK YOU!

Please **contact us** *with further questions:*

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