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Deutsches Institut für
Entwicklungspolitik



German Development
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Social Cohesion

A new definition and a proposal for its measurement in Africa

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Launch of the Webinar Series „Social Cohesion – Why, what and how?“

virtual, September 28, 2021



What to expect from this presentation?

- 1. Motivation:** Why social cohesion and development?
- 2. Objectives:** Why an adapted definition and a new measurement?
- 3. Definition:** What is social cohesion?
- 4. Measurement:** How measure social cohesion?
- 5. Empirics:** What are patterns of social cohesion in Africa?
- 6. Outlook:** What are next steps in development cooperation and research?



Why social cohesion and development?

- Social cohesion is key for sustainable development
- Cohesive societies deal better with crises and uncertainty
- Societies are drifting apart in global North and South (re-enforced by effects of Covid19 pandemic)
- Protecting and strengthening social cohesion has increasingly become a policy goal



2. Objectives

Why an adapted definition and a new measurement?

- Long **tradition** of studying social cohesion
- Often rather **expansive concepts** with a long list of attributes
- But: common ground on essentials of definition identifiable
- **Few attempts to systematically *measure*** social cohesion
 - regional focus (mainly Europe, Asia and high income countries) & case studies
 - Focus on one element of social cohesion
 - inclusion of development outcomes
- Lean definition & measurement = **precondition for empirical analysis of relationships** between SoCo and development outcomes (in particular inequality and wellbeing)
- Basis for identifying patterns and explaining **causes and effects of social cohesion**
- Longer term: **informing theories of change** in development cooperation



Social Cohesion Hub

Knowledge website with concepts, data, library and development projects on social cohesion: www.socialcohesion.info

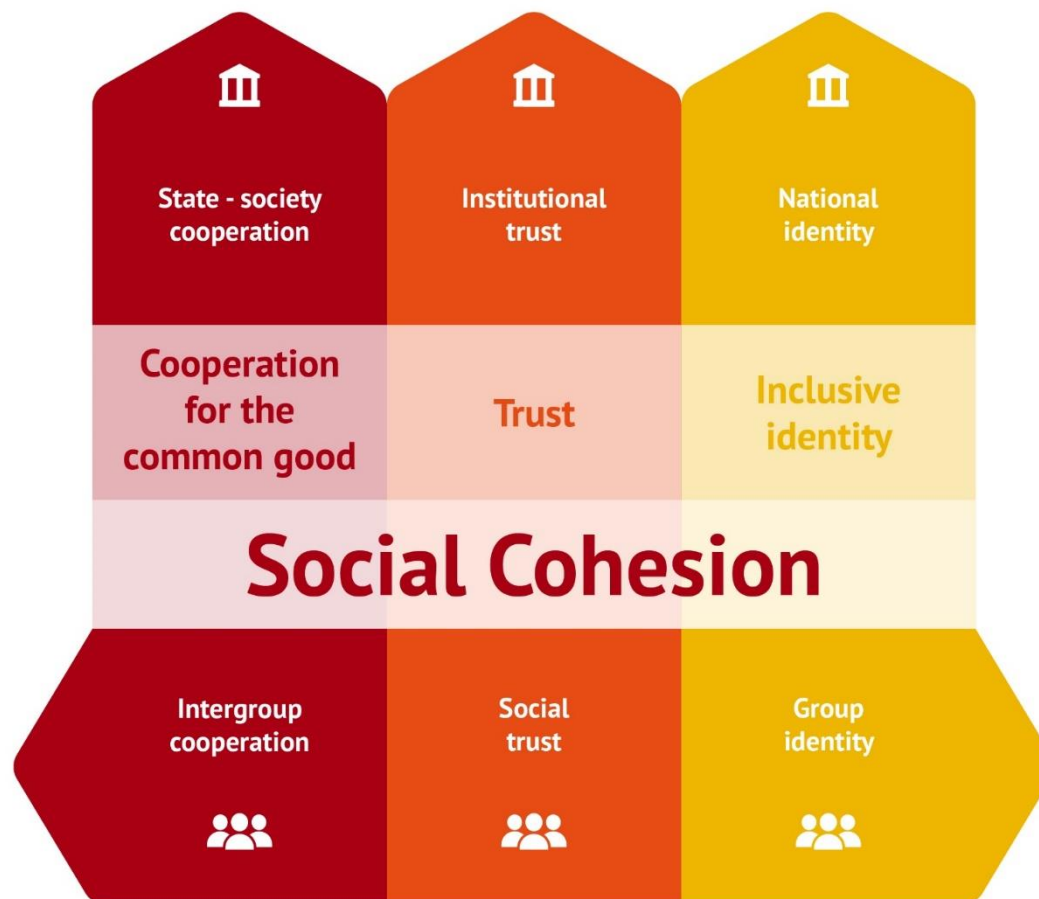


What is social cohesion?

*Social cohesion refers to both the **vertical and the horizontal relations** among members of **society and the state**, which hold societies together. It is characterized by a set of attitudes and behavioral manifestations that includes **trust**, an **inclusive identity**, and **cooperation for the common good**.*

Adapted and modified version by Leininger et al. (2021) of Chan et al. (2006).
For further references see Bertelsmann (2017); Langer et al. (2017); Schiefer & van der Noll (2016); UNDP (2016); Green et al. (2011); Friedkin (2004); Jenson (1998)

3. Definition



Source: J. Leininger, F. Burchi, Ch. Fiedler, K. Mross, D. Nowack, A. von Schiller, C. Sommer, C. Strupat & S. Ziaja (forthcoming): *Social cohesion. A new definition and a proposal for its measurement in Africa*; will be published as DIE Discussion Paper and Afrobarometer Working Paper



How to measure social cohesion

- **Goal:** measurement applicable worldwide, first applied to Africa
- **Data:** Afrobarometer and Varieties of Democracy Index (V-Dem)
- **Indicators:** vertical and horizontal dimension of three attributes (inclusive identity, trust, cooperation for the common good)
- **Sample:** based on 36 African countries



How to measure inclusive identity

Social cohesion attribute	INDICATOR-BUILDING		
	Question (Afrobarometer)	Calculation	Aggregation
INCLUSIVE IDENTITY	<p>Let us suppose that you had to choose between being a [national identity] and being a [respondent's ethnic group]. Which of the following statements best expresses your feelings?</p> <p>Answers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (1) I feel only [national identity]. • (2) I feel more [national identity] than [ethnic identity]. • (3) I feel equally [national identity] and [ethnic identity]. • (4) I feel more [ethnic identity]. • (5) I feel only [ethnic identity]. • (7) Don't know (Do not read) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider individuals who respond (1) or (2) 2. Calculate proportion of positive answers for different ethnic groups (>5% of population; < 5% of population merged to one group, which must not exceed 25% of population) 	<p>Unweighted arithmetic mean to aggregate group means (penalize countries with large disparities between group values)</p>



How to measure trust

Social cohesion attribute		INDICATOR-BUILDING		
		Questions (Afrobarometer)	Calculation	Aggregation
TRUST	Social	“Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you must be very careful in dealing with people?”	Binary coding: Respondents who trust most people as trusting (1) and (0) otherwise.	Trust Score $= \sqrt{gen_Trust * inst_Trust}$
	Institutional	Combine 3 indicators measuring trust in the parliament, the police and the courts of law. Answers: “not at all” (0), “just a little” (1), “somewhat” (2), “a lot” (3).	1 st : Trust in each institution was calculated by taking the arithmetic mean across all households in a given country and a given year; 2 nd (unweighted) arithmetic mean of trust in the three institutions = overall measure of institutional trust. $\text{Institutional Trust} = \frac{\text{trust}_{\text{parliament}} + \text{trust}_{\text{courts}} + \text{trust}_{\text{police}}}{3}$	



4. Measurement

How to measure cooperation for the common good

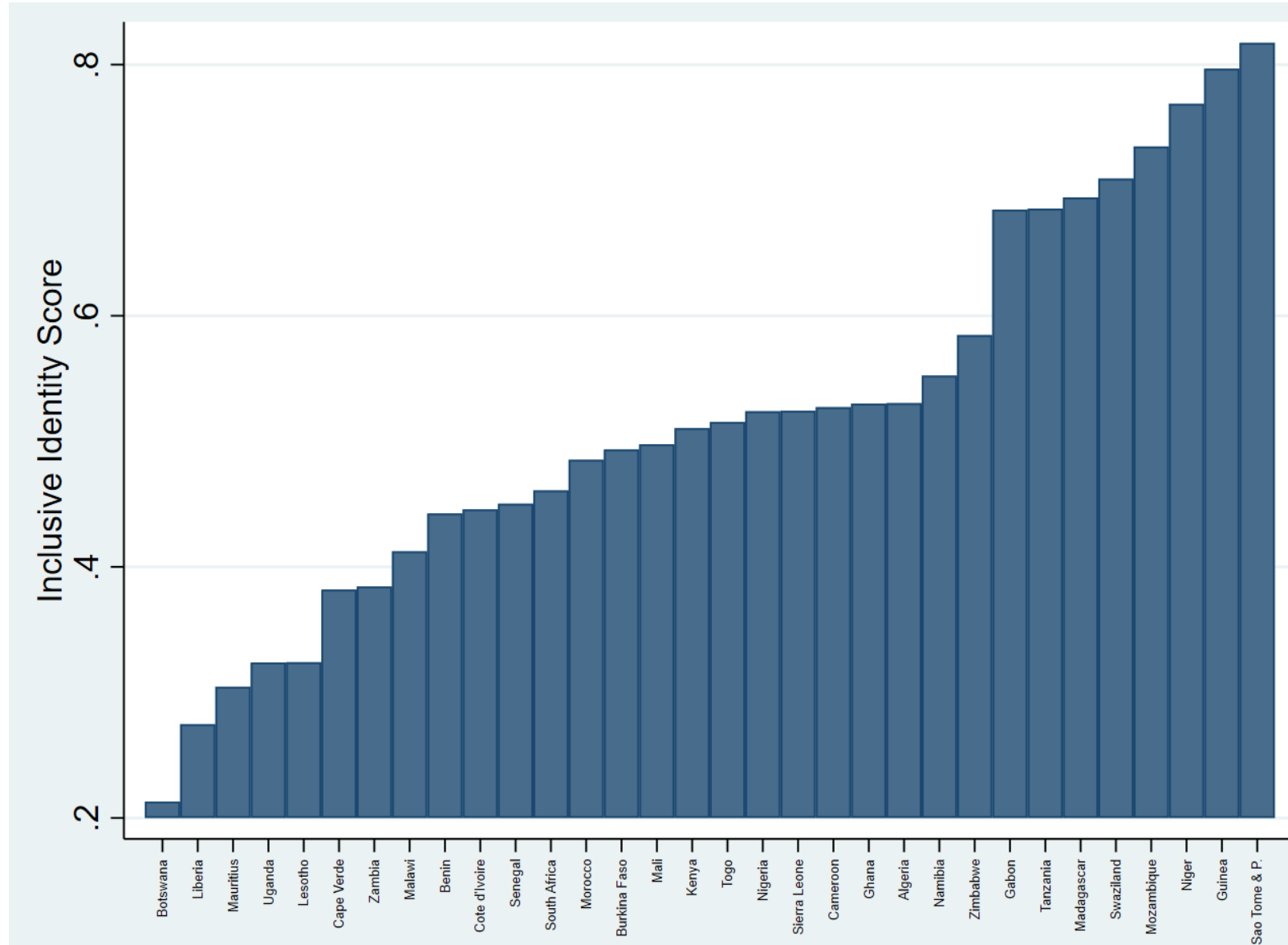
Social cohesion attribute		INDICATOR-BUILDING		
		Questions	Calculation	Aggregation
COOPERATION FOR THE COMMON GOOD	Inter-group	<p><u>Perception data</u> (AB) Q1: membership in voluntary associations or organizations Q2: joined others to raise an issue (homogeneity-corrected diversity-weighted measure) <u>Expert data</u> (V-Dem) Q3: rate how participatory the CSO environment is in each country</p>	<p>1. harmonize scale of all indicators to 0 and 1 2. aggregate Q1 and Q3 through simple arithmetic mean 3. aggregate derived measure with Q2 through arithmetic mean</p> $coop_horiz = \frac{\left(\frac{member_org + CSOenviron}{2} + raise_issue \right)}{2}$	<p>Geometric mean: $coop_score = \sqrt{coop_horiz * coop_vert}$</p>
	State-society	<p><u>Perception data</u> (AB) Q1: frequency of attending community meetings Q2: frequency of contacting the officials: (1) local government councilors; (2) Members of Parliament; (3) officials of a government agency/ministry, (4) traditional leaders/rulers 4-item scale from 0 ("never") to 3 ("often"); use maximum value. <u>Expert data</u> (V-Dem) Q3: level of state repression toward CSOs Q4: extent to which CSOs consulted by policymakers</p>	<p>Aggregation through arithmetic mean</p> $coop_vert = \frac{community_meeting + contact_official + \frac{CSO_No_repression}{4}}{3}$	

5. Empirics I: Which patterns of social cohesion in Africa? (snapshot)



Inclusive identity, by country (Round 6, 32 countries)

(Other attributes see forthcoming publication)





5. Empirics II: Which patterns of social cohesion in Africa?

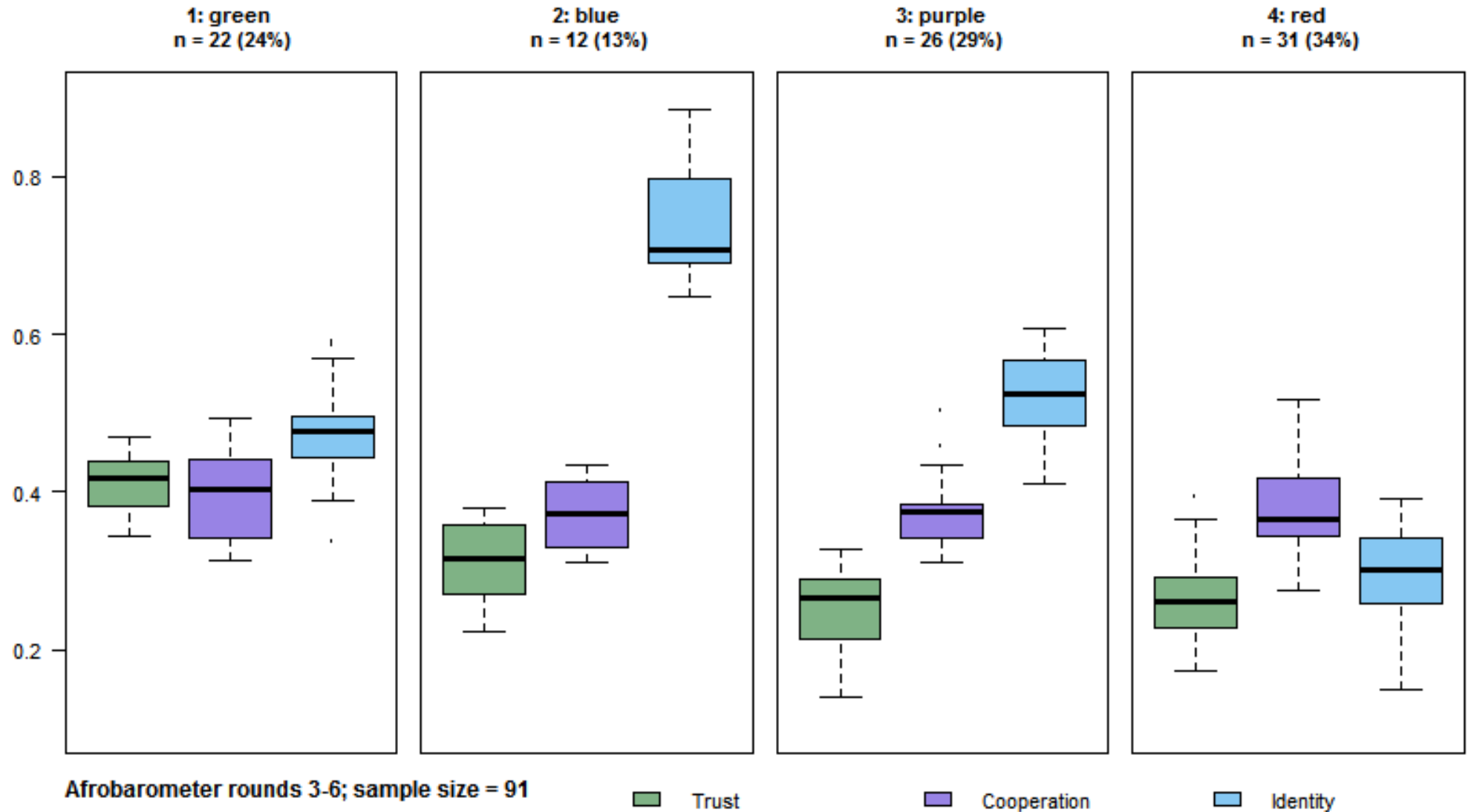
Correlations between attributes of social cohesion

	Identity score	Trust score	Cooperation score	Trust people	Trust institutional	Cooperation horizontal	Cooperation vertical
Identity score	1						
Trust score	0.34	1					
Cooperation score	-0.13	0.16	1				
Trust people	0.37	0.95	0.21	1			
Trust institutional	0.09	0.56	0.02	0.29	1		
Cooperation horizontal	-0.10	0.15	0.96	0.21	-0.05	1	
Cooperation vertical	-0.18	0.15	0.92	0.17	0.11	0.79	1



5. Empirics III: Constellations of social cohesion (4 groups)

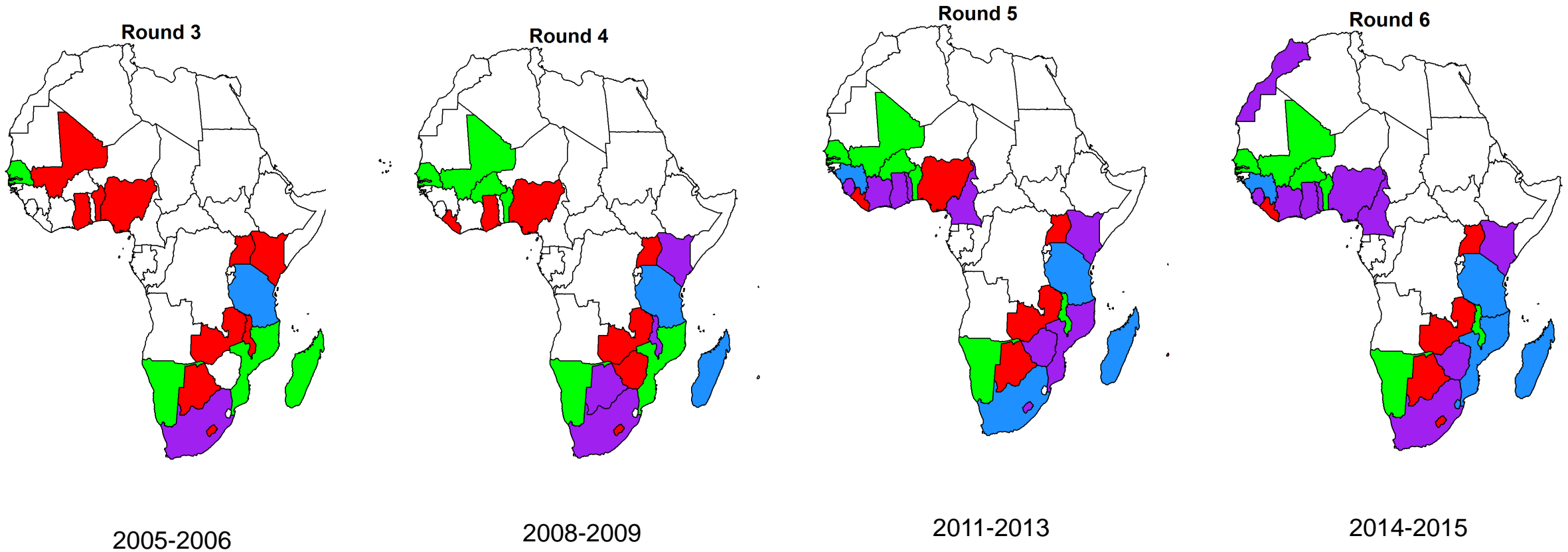
Distribution of dimension scores by group



5. Empirics IV: Constellations of social cohesion (maps)



Maps of social cohesion clusters across rounds 3 to 6 of Afrobarometer





6. Outlook

What are next steps in research and development cooperation?

- Improve measurement of concept of social cohesion as a whole to advance theory-building
- Improve measurement of „cooperation for the common good“ (data collection and indicator-building)
- More generally, develop comparable datasets to achieve global coverage for indicators (DIE developed battery of questions)
- In particular Africa: increase sample/datapoints (Round 9/Afrobarometer)
- Contextualize findings of cross-national analysis
- Establish science-policy interface for knowledge exchange & best practices
- Development projects: build indicators for M&E and develop theories of change (longer run)



Thank you!

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Table 2: Number of countries covered, by attribute and Afrobarometer survey round

Attribute	Round 3 (2005-2006)	Round 4 (2008-2009)	Round 5 (2011-2013)	Round 6 (2014-2015)
Inclusive identity	17	20	28	32
Trust horizontal	18	20	34	0
Trust vertical	18	20	34	36
Cooperation horizontal	17	20	28	32
Cooperation vertical	18	20	34	36