The Social Cohesion Barometer

HOW TO USE THE SOCIAL COHESION BAROMETER FOR MONITORING, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING

November, 2023

This guide is designed to help teams understand the complexities of measuring social cohesion and become familiar with the CRS Social Cohesion Barometer (SCB) adapted for quantitative measurements. It provides a detailed, step-by-step process for using the SCB as a survey tool for Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) practices and research.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CAR	Central African Republic
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IEP	Institute for Economics and Peace
IHD	Integral Human Development
IR	Intermediate Result
KII	Key Informative Interviews
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning
MPP	Monitoring Policies and Procedures
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
PQ	Project Quality
SCB	Social Cohesion Barometer
SECC	Secured, Empowered, and Connected Communities
SO	Strategic Objective
SSI	Semi-Structured Interviews
The Mini-SCB	The mini-Social Cohesion Barometer

Glossary of key terms

Acceptance: The act of welcoming or embracing others without judgment or prejudice.

Action Planning: Action planning is the process of developing specific steps and strategies to address identified challenges or opportunities based on research or evaluation findings.

Belonging: The sense of being part of a group or community.

Civic values: Shared beliefs and principles that guide responsible citizenship and community engagement.

Community: A group of people living in the same area and sharing common interests or characteristics.

Contextualization: Contextualization involves adapting a program or tool to fit the specific cultural, social, and environmental factors of a particular community or setting.

Data Analysis: Data analysis involves examining collected information to identify patterns, relationships, and trends, enabling researchers to draw meaningful conclusions from the data.

Data Quality Assurance: Data quality assurance refers to the measures taken to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and completeness of data collected during a research or evaluation process.

Decent living conditions: Basic conditions necessary for a comfortable and dignified life.

Dignity: A feeling of worthiness and respect for oneself and others.

Dissemination: Dissemination involves sharing research findings or evaluation results with stakeholders, communities, and other relevant parties to increase awareness and promote informed decision-making.

Diverse groups: Different social, cultural, or ethnic groups coexisting within a community.

Employment: Engaging in work or occupation to earn a living.

Enumerators: Individuals responsible for collecting data during surveys or research projects.

Equal access: Providing fair and equitable access to resources or opportunities for all.

Fair environment: A setting where people are treated justly and equitably.

Fear: An emotional response to perceived threats or dangers.

Formal opportunities: Opportunities provided through official channels or organizations.

Government institutions: Organizations or bodies responsible for governing and providing public services.

Government representatives: Individuals who act on behalf of the government in various capacities.

Identity group: A group of individuals who share common characteristics, often forming part of their identity.

Identity: A sense of who one is and how they relate to a particular group or community.

Informal opportunities: Opportunities that arise through personal networks or social interactions.

Livelihood: Means of earning a living or supporting oneself and their family.

Manage fairly: Ensuring resources or opportunities are distributed impartially and justly.

Peacebuilding: A process of promoting sustainable reconciliation, cooperation, and resilience in conflict-affected communities

Political processes: Activities and procedures related to governance and decision-making.

Public officials: Individuals holding positions in government or public institutions.

Public resources: Goods or services available to the general public.

Sampling: Sampling is the process of selecting a representative subset of a larger population to collect data, allowing researchers to make inferences about the entire population.

Shared community concerns: Issues or challenges that affect the entire community.

Social capital: The resources, trust, and supportive connections that exist within a community, fostering cooperation and shared social norms.

Social problems: Issues affecting the well-being of a community or society.

Social services: Programs or support provided to meet the needs of individuals or communities.

Social ties: Connections and relationships among individuals or groups within a community.

Survey Tool: A survey tool is a structured instrument used to collect data through questionnaires or interviews to gather specific information from individuals or groups for research or evaluation purposes.

Tolerance: The acceptance and respect of different beliefs, opinions, or practices.

Trust: Confidence in the reliability, honesty, or sincerity of others.

Introduction

This Guide explains the purpose, administration and use of CRS's Social Cohesion Barometer (SCB) for Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL).

In 2014, CRS technical staff conceived the mini-SCB to serve as a workshop discussion tool. The aim was to stimulate debate around perceptions of national social cohesion. Some 1,500 individuals from government, civil society, media and the private sector in the Central African Republic (CAR) participated in the workshops. Importantly, the discussions and debates revealed that the violent conflict in CAR was not about religion; rather it was about economic disparity and inequity between major identity groups[1]. It was during these training programs that the need to develop an instrument to assess social cohesion arose.

Subsequently, CRS staff began experimenting with the mini-SCB as an evaluative tool to establish baselines, midlines and endlines, and to conduct context monitoring in specific projects. These tests included the Secured, Empowered and Connected Communities (SECC) and Ita na Ita (People to People) projects in CAR, and Stabilization and Reconciliation in Lake Chad Region (STaR) project in northeast Nigeria. Over time the SCB has evolved to various applications including context monitoring, internal staff reflections and special policy studies.

These newer applications are not without pitfalls and potentialities, and therefore merit guidance of their own. Hence, the purpose of this document is to help those who want to use the SCB for MEAL to do so in a way that ensures reliability and validity of the results. The document provides MEAL, technical staff and decision-makers with step-by-step guidance on applying the SCB and collecting, analyzing, interpreting data and using SCB results.

In 2022, CRS commissioned the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) to examine the SCB. IEP's study validated the appropriateness of the SCB as a measure of social cohesion based on the CRS definition. It identified the large potential of the SCB and clarified how the tool can be implemented across a range of different cases including context analysis, various stages of the program or project design cycle and as a core to CRS's MEAL practice. The IEP report also emphasized that the SCB is applicable for systematically comparable measures of social cohesion, whether by CRS project, by the country of operations or other geographic grouping, or even by different demographic use.

This document builds on the existing knowledge and experience of CRS in Social Cohesion and MEAL, and explores the linkages and synergies between them. It also refers to different CRS's frameworks and tools adapted to the needs of this document.

Also, a subset of the hyperlinks within this document are tailored for CRS staff, and as a result, external viewers may encounter non-functional links.

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1 Data from SECC SO4: Final evaluation

How do we understand Social Cohesion?

Binding:
Promotes personal transformation for positive agency.

Bonding:
Facilitates intra-group introspection in preparation for positive engagements with the "other."

Bridging:
Fosters constructive interactions between divided or conflicted groups to strengthen social ties and address issues of mutual concern (Horizontal Bridging) while building strategic linkages with relevant organizational actors (Vertical Bridging).

CRS views social cohesion as the strength, quality and diversity of relationships between and among individuals, groups and communities, coupled with linkages between society and the state, markets and other institutions, all based on trust, respect, mutuality and equal opportunity, for the dignity and wellbeing of every person and the common good of all. CRS's methodology for advancing social cohesion is binding, bonding and bridging - the 3Bs.

In characterizing social cohesion, CRS considers horizontal and vertical dimensionality, and the social-cultural, economic and political spheres of society.

Horizontal social cohesion refers to the quality of relationships between and among equals or near equals for both individuals and diverse groups within a society; that is, to levels of solidarity, trust, acceptance, reciprocity, mutuality, and multiplicity of links. Horizontal social cohesion is important both within identity or affinity groups (bonds) and across multiple groups of diverse identities and characteristics (bridges).

Vertical social cohesion refers to linkages that knit relationships across hierarchies, e.g. levels of leadership, authority, power and influence. It concerns the degree to which state and non-state institutions – e.g., the market, cultural/traditional, religious, civil society groupings, NGOs, etc.— interact with communities and individuals inclusively, equitably, transparently and accountably.

In a civic sense, vertical social cohesion refers to state-society linkages and the social contract between citizens and the state. In the marketplace, it refers to relationships between and among consumers, producers and other market actors including policymakers.

The three spheres relate to the assets found in the Integral Human Development (IHD) framework. The social and spiritual assets relate to the socio-cultural sphere, the financial, physical and natural assets to the economic sphere, and the political assets to the political sphere. Human assets (skills, abilities, expertise, talent, etc.) can be associated with all three spheres.

More specifically, **the socio-cultural sphere** focuses on social relations across divides such as coexistence, tolerance and acceptance of differences; group identity and belonging within a larger whole; social capital which encompasses mutual trust, reciprocity and other assets that accrue from networks and associational life and facilitate cooperation around shared goals; and norms that moderate and influence socio-cultural life.

The **economic sphere** encompasses equity in the sharing, distribution and management of resources (financial, natural and physical); and equal opportunity in the access of basic social services, economic and livelihood opportunities and advancement in life (upward social mobility). It also encompasses mutual self-help as well as the norms of the market concerned with fairness in access to markets and the exchange of goods and services, including the labor market.

The **political sphere** concerns the degree of confidence and trust in state institutions, inclusive civic engagement to influence decision-making processes affecting public

life, and effectiveness of state institutions to ensure equal opportunity, reduce inequalities and divisions in society, and provide policy frameworks responsive to the needs of all citizens.

CRS' Social Cohesion Conceptual Framework
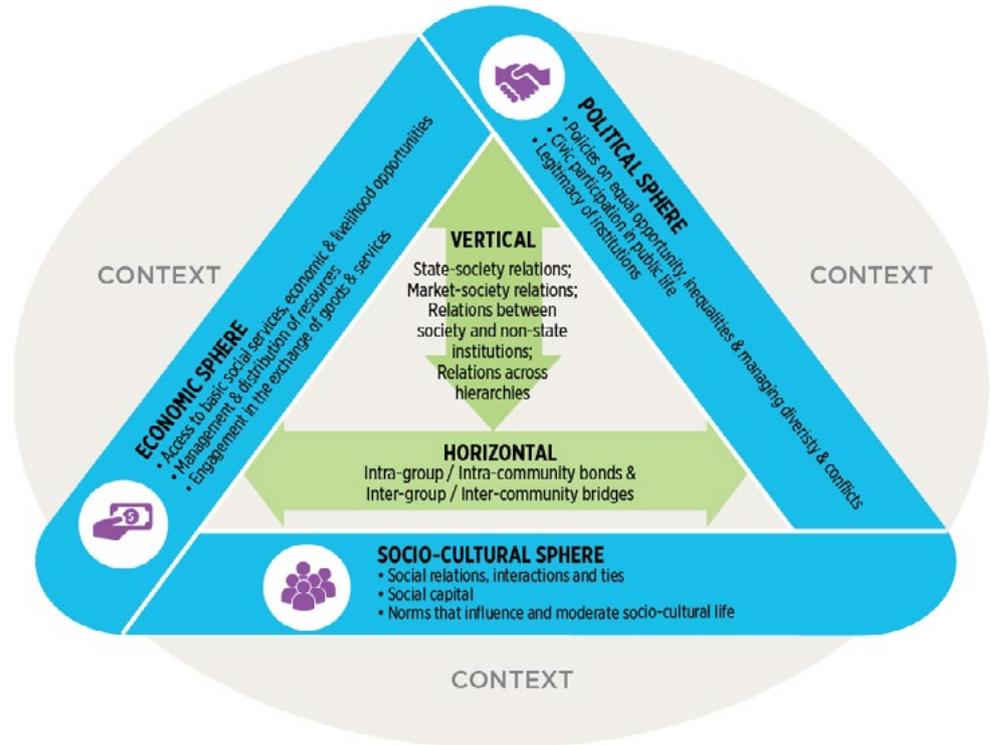
Peacebuilding activities other than social cohesion can raise levels of social cohesion in a geography or demography, but the reverse can also be true. Social cohesion strengthening can also be a peacebuilding approach that reduces violence, prevents latent conflict from escalating, and builds healthy, right relationships over the long term. In its work, CRS has focused on social cohesion as a preferred technique for building peace in standalone and integrated peace projects.

Why is Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning important for Social Cohesion?

CRS recognizes the critical role of Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) in program quality and impact to respond to stakeholder information needs and guide strategic program design and adaptive management. CRS believes that MEAL systems must be grounded in project design; start up, implementation and project close out activities.

Figure 1: CRS project management cycle
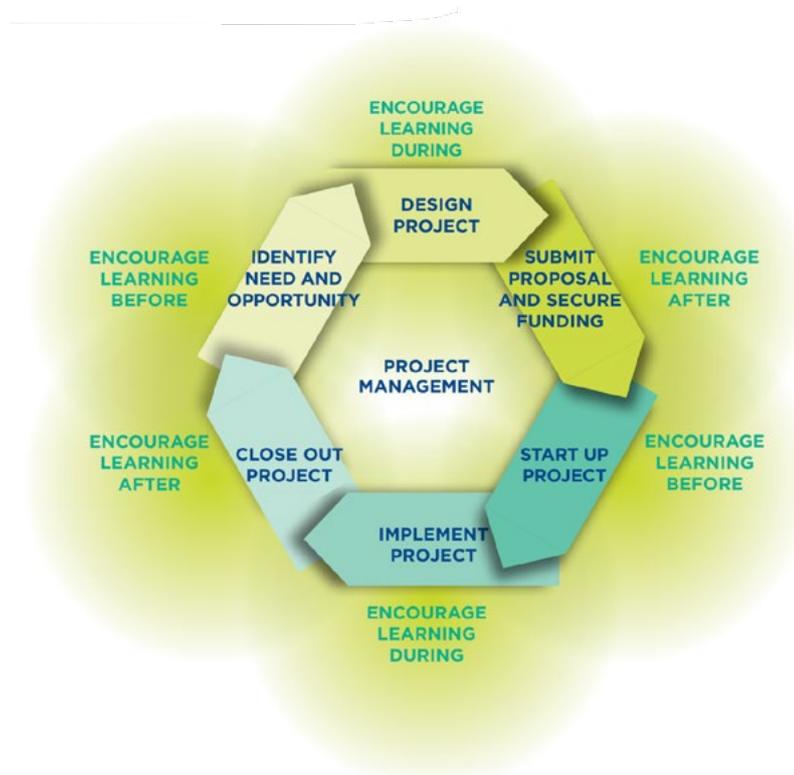
In the humanitarian and development sectors, measuring intangible benefits like positive social change resulting from social cohesion and peacebuilding interventions can be a challenging task. However, CRS utilizes a robust MEAL system to demonstrate the contribution of these interventions to positive social changes over time. A strong MEAL system aids CRS to demonstrate that social cohesion and peacebuilding interventions have contributed to positive social changes over time and positively affect other sectors outcomes. The following Table 1. MEAL approaches and Social Cohesion Implication, shows these relationships:

Table 1: MEAL Approaches and Social Cohesion Implication

MEAL ELEMENT	DEFINITION	SOCIAL COHESION IMPLICATIONS
Monitoring	Monitoring is the continuous collection, analysis reflecting upon and utilizing data to inform ongoing adaptive management, being responsive to community feedback, and to meet donor requirements.	Regularly measuring social cohesion serves as a compass for project management, tracking of changes in a community's social fabric over time. The SCB and other monitoring tools can be used to check levels of trust, cooperation, and social networks. An SCB baseline assessment plus periodic data collection, ideally annually, allows us to track social cohesion indicators, unearth trends, and identify patterns.
Evaluation	Evaluation is the periodic, rigorous, and utilization-focused assessments on relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability which optimize equitable community and stakeholder participation	Using the SCB in project evaluations illuminates the project's influence on community relationships and the extent to which the project has engendered favorable developments in social cohesion, with particular attention directed towards community relationships, economic prospects, and political dynamics. The evaluative process can encompass a rigorous comparison of pre- and post-project social cohesion data, gauging the project's impact. Also important in evaluation nis exploring causality, and the degree to which shifts in social cohesion can be attributed directly to the project's activities as well as how they relate to other sector outcomes.
Accountability	Accountability gives voice to the people we serve through open and respectful communication, and feedback, complaints, and response mechanisms which are responsive to community preferences and in line with the CRS Safeguarding Policy and Safe and Dignified Programming framework.	Measuring social cohesion extends accountability toward project participants, emphasizing the social dimensions of work. It serves as a mirror reflecting whether the project is nurturing positive social outcomes and pinpointing areas for improvement. The results of this measurement can guide decision-making processes, enabling scaling up or replicating activities that consistently enhance social cohesion.
Learning	Learning engages the communities CRS serves and its partners and other stakeholders to enhance project and agency knowledge management and learning and to contribute to larger systems change and influence initiatives. This is done through holding reflection events, posting evaluation reports, and utilizing reports from other agencies.	Social cohesion data empowers us to fine-tuneproject strategies for better results. Like a compass, it can guide us to make adjustments in real-time or during regular reviews to stay aligned with the community's evolving needs. Sharing these findings with stakeholders, including donors, government agencies and the community promotes transparency and encourages projects to take necessary actions.

The SCB is an innovative tool that program teams can utilize as a quantitative measure of the perceived level of social cohesion among specific populations, supporting project MEAL efforts. This tool can be included in quantitative surveys administered to representative samples of targeted populations for different purposes as a standalone tool or as a part of a bigger measuring kit. Furthermore, the integration of the SCB into project monitoring or evaluation activities yields notable benefits in terms of cost and time efficiency. For instance, pairing the SCB with routine or annual participants surveys presents an efficient approach to simultaneously gauge trends in social change and assess sector-specific outcomes.

In addition, SCB serves as a valuable tool to align the program with the criteria outlined in PQ Standard 5, ensuring adherence to established standards. For more details, please see the Table 2: PQ Standard 5 and the SCB.

Table 2: PQ Standard 5 and the SCB

PQ5.1: ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS INVESTIGATE THE BROADER SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT, INCLUDING THE STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS THAT MAY CONSTRAIN OR ENHANCE PEOPLE'S INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. THIS INCLUDES BASIC CONFLICT AND PROTECTION ANALYSES.
The SCB tool aids in conducting comprehensive assessments and analyses of the broader social environment, including structures and systems that impact people's integral human development. It can encompass basic conflict and protection analyses, providing valuable insights for program planning and implementation.
PQ5.2: PROJECTS AIM TO ADDRESS THE SOCIAL DYNAMICS THAT AFFECT THE POOR AND VULNERABLE, MITIGATE THE RISK OF HARM OR CONFLICT, AND ENHANCE DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES.
By utilizing the SCB, program teams can effectively assess the level of social cohesion within targeted communities, providing valuable insights into specific social dynamics that may impact the poor and vulnerable. When combined with qualitative and other inclusion assessments, the SCB becomes a valuable tool in tailoring interventions to mitigate risks of harm, bias or exclusion.
PQ 5.3: PROJECT APPROACHES RECOGNIZE THE LINKAGES BETWEEN THE INDIVIDUAL, HOUSEHOLD, COMMUNITY AND BROADER SOCIAL STRUCTURES, AND AIM TO GENERATE STRONGER TIES WITHIN AND ACROSS GROUPS, AND BETWEEN CITIZENS AND GOVERNMENT.
The SCB proves valuable when used in conjunction with context analysis as it helps to recognize linkages between individuals, households, communities, and broader social structures. By doing so, it informs programming about the state of relationships across different groups, citizens, and governments and helps creating more effective and inclusive project approaches.
PQ 5.4: PROJECTS ESTABLISH OR STRENGTHEN EFFECTIVE, INCLUSIVE AND REPRESENTATIVE SOCIAL STRUCTURES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES.
The SCB serves as a valuable tool for comprehending both horizontal and vertical social relationships within communities. It provides insights that inform projects about pathways to strengthen effective, inclusive, and representative social structures.

What is the SCB, its Structure and How to Use it?

The SCB is a measurement tool consisting of **18 statements** that assess the degree to which respondent population(s) agree or disagree with the current state of social cohesion in their communities. These statements align with **CRS's Social Cohesion Conceptual Framework** assessing perceptions related to the sociocultural, economic, and political spheres, as well as two dimensions, horizontal and vertical.

Statements **S1 to S6** reflect participants' perceptions of social relationships, social norms, and social capital, **E1 to E6** assess access to basic social services, economic and livelihood opportunities, management of the distribution of resources, and goods and services exchange, while statements from **P1 to P6** measure perceptions of institutional legitimacy and civic participation in public life.

Out of 18 statements, ten reflect the horizontal dimension, and eight reflect the vertical dimension of social cohesion. Statements **S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, E1, E2, P1, and P3** provide insight into respondents' perception of intergroup relationships on a community level, while statements **E3, E4, E5, E6, P2, P4, P5, and P6** are related to respondents' perception about the relationships among community members and authorities. Please see Table 3. SCB Statements, Detailed Descriptions, Rationale, Spheres and Dimensions below for more information on each statement's definition and rationale.

The SCB assesses the level of agreement with the statements and uses a 5-point Likert scale (not at all, a little bit, moderately, mostly, completely). Respondents could also choose to refuse to answer a specific question or declare that they do not know enough about the statements to provide a relevant answer.

It is important to note that the six statements E1, P1, P3, P4, P5, and P6 differ from the original mini-SCB version intended for use in workshop settings. This is because the factor analysis[2] conducted during IEP's validation study showed that these statements did not significantly measure the expected sphere of cohesion. Revisions were made to the wording, and in some case the substance, of these statements in order to make them clearer for the general audience and more aligned with their intended sphere.

An integral part of the SCB survey instrument are preambles intended to clarify specific terminology. These preambles can be adapted to different contexts without changing the statements themselves. Please see Annex 1: SCB Tool (Statements, Response Options and Codes).

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2 The SCB Final report: Validation, Standardization, Analysis and Usage (document available upon request)

Table 3. SCB Statements, Detailed Descriptions, Rationale, Spheres and Dimensions

	STATEMENT	DESCRIPTION	RATIONALE	SPHERE	DIMENSION
S1	I have strong social ties across diverse groups in my community.	This statement aims to assess the quality of the relationships that the respondent has with members of identity groups other than their own.	Having social ties with others who are different from you indicates respect for diversity and appreciation of mutual support and interdependency which are key elements of a socially cohesiveness society.	Socio-cultural	Horizontal
S2	Members of my community trust each other regardless of identity differences.	This statement intends to assess the extent to which people feel they can rely on each other across identity groups such as those based on ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, gender, age/generation, etc.	Mutual trust between individuals and groups is a basis for sustainable relationships and facilitates cooperation and connectedness across diverse social groups.	Socio-cultural	Horizontal
S3	Everyone is treated with dignity regardless of who they are.	This statement is about the sense of being respected and respecting others' inherent value.	Respect of dignity in diversity makes a society livable for all people and promotes humaneness (that is, humane interactions).	Socio-cultural	Horizontal
S4	People belonging to different identity groups accept and tolerate each other.	This statement assesses the respondent's perception of the extent to which members from different identity groups are open to others and embrace differences.	Acceptance and tolerance of each other regardless of identity shows respect for diversity, a key attribute of social cohesion.	Socio-cultural	Horizontal
S5	In my community, there are formal and informal opportunities where people belonging to different identity groups connect and interact.	This statement asks the respondent to assess the collaboration among different identity groups in their community.	An environment supportive of all people where interactions and contact with people belonging to different groups exists nurtures mutual understanding, respect and co-existence.	Socio-cultural	Horizontal

S6	**My community has the capacity to peacefully manage social problems.**	This statement invites respondents to reflect on how their community responds to interpersonal, intra and intergroup conflict.	Existence of mechanisms of resolving social problems including conflicts between individuals and groups is essential for maintaining constructive relationships in a society.	Socio-cultural	Horizontal
E1	**Everyone in my community has decent living conditions.[3]**	This statement explores the extent to which all members of the community are able to meet their basic needs (for shelter, food, clothing, etc.) with dignity.	Societies with relative equality of wealth, and in which all groups are able to meet basic needs, are better insulated from the grievances and tensions associated with horizontal inequalities, or differences of wealth [and power] among identity groups without regard for those groups' needs and capacities.	Economic	Horizontal
E2	**People in my community help one another in times of need.**	This statement is about the level of mutual aid in the community to ensure people in need are taken care of.	Sharing, caring and showing solidarity are actions and attitudes oriented towards the common good.	Economic	Horizontal
E3	**People have equal access to livelihood and employment opportunities regardless of who they are.**	This statement is to assess the extent to which social identity affects access to jobs and economic development.	A society that offers equal access to livelihood and economic opportunities allows for social mobility and has potential to reduce economic inequalities and disparities.	Economic	Vertical
E4	**Public resources are managed fairly for the benefit of all people.**	This statement is to assess the degree of fairness and equity in the management of community resources.	The capacity of a society to ensure the socio-economic wellbeing of all its members through inclusive, transparent and accountable management of its resources exemplifies good governance, an important contributor to a cohesive society.	Economic	Vertical

3 Red font indicates statements that differ from previously published versions of the SCB.

E5	**People enjoy equal access to basic services of a reasonable quality (e.g., health and education) regardless of who they are.**	This statement focuses on equity in accessing social services such as health and education without discrimination.	When people regardless of who they are have equal opportunity to access quality basic services, they experience equal life chances to live a quality life, resulting in less discontent and greater cohesiveness.	Economic	Vertical
E6	**Goods and services are exchanged in a fair environment.**	This statement examines how open, inclusive, equitable, transparent and accountable market systems and structures are.	Vertical linkages in which market systems and institutions interact with groups and members of society in an inclusive, transparent and accountable manner foster the cohesiveness of a society.	Economic	Vertical
P1	**I actively participate in activities that address shared concerns of the community.**	Assesses respondents' engagement and willingness to get engaged in finding solutions to shared concerns – with benefit to the wider community.	Active involvement in community improvement initiatives demonstrates readiness and commitment to work for the common good, and a sense of civic responsibility to do one's part in building and maintaining social cohesion.	Political	Horizontal
P2	**All people in my community are treated fairly by public officials.**	This statement assesses whether government representatives interact with people without bias based on identity (religion, ethnicity, gender, etc.)	Where public officials use the same standard to treat all people— without discrimination or favoritism—people feel equally valued. They are more likely to support a system that demonstrates concern for the wellbeing of all its members regardless of status.	Political	Vertical
P3	**We share civic values as residents of the same country, regardless of our identity group.**	This statement aims to assess the respondent's perceptions of the degree of consensus around the norms and rules that govern collective life.	Wide consensus on norms and values enables a society to commit to, support and defend common goals.	Political	Horizontal

P4	**Everyone can participate in political processes without fear.**	This statement gauges respondents' sense of liberty to engage in decision-making that affects life in the society without being threatened or facing repercussions.	Freedom to express political views, to choose leaders and to shape public policy reduces public discontent and disaffection, encourages healthy debate, and promises greater stability and cohesiveness.	Political	Vertical
P5	**Government representatives listen to people.**	This statement examines how participatory, inclusive and responsive government decision-making processes are.	A democratic culture with citizen participation at its center promotes transparent, inclusive and accountable governance necessary for a cohesive society.	Political	Vertical
P6	**People have confidence and trust in government institutions.**	This statement is to gauge how respondents perceive the legitimacy of the government; that is, its alignment with the will of the people. The legitimacy could be related to any local or national government level.	Government and public institutions and structures shape the social, economic and political environment in which citizens relate and interact. Trust in these institutions and structures strengthens their legitimacy, confers credibility on governance outcomes, builds public confidence and encourages acceptance of the rules of the game.	Political	Vertical
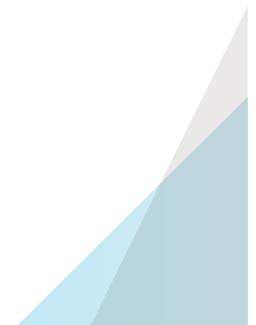
There are two distinct ways in which project teams can utilize the SCB. Firstly, the SCB can serve as a powerful workshop tool, facilitating group discussions and promoting open dialogue among community members. By using the SCB in this manner, project teams can delve deeper into the social dynamics of the community, understanding various perspectives, and identifying potential areas for improvement. Workshops conducted with the SCB can help build consensus among stakeholders, foster a sense of ownership in the project, and encourage collective problem-solving to address challenges related to social cohesion.

Secondly, the SCB can be employed as a quantitative measurement tool for MEAL purposes. By administering the SCB as a survey, project teams can gather structured data on social cohesion perceptions from a representative or purposeful sample of the community depending on project MEAL focus or needs (Please see Section: How to use the SCB for MEAL). This quantitative data allows for objective analysis and tracking of changes in social cohesion over time, enabling evidence-based decision-making and programmatic adjustments to enhance the impact of social cohesion interventions.

How to use the mini-SCB as a Workshop Tool?

Depending on purpose, using the mini-SCB in its original form in workshop settings combined with the 3Bs (Binding - Bonding - Bridging) methodology and the 4Ds (Discover - Dream - Design -Deliver) of Appreciative Inquiry is still recommended. When used in the workshop settings the mini-SCB helps participants gauge the level of social cohesion in their communities, sparks reflection and debate around critical issues of common concern, and mobilizes commitment and action toward a desired state: the participants' vision of a cohesive society.

If you are looking to use the SCB in a workshop, please consult The Ties That Bind: Building Social Cohesion in Divided Communities and the original mini-SCB the mini-Social Cohesion Barometer.

How to use the SCB for MEAL?

The timing and frequency of deploying the SCB as a survey tool within a project cycle for MEAL purposes should be carefully considered, with a focus on the intended use of the SCB data. Aligning the use of SCB with specific needs and project management standards, as well as following Compass guidance, ensures its effective integration throughout the different stages of the project. Whether during the design phase, start-up, implementation, or even outside the project cycle, the SCB can play a valuable role in gathering insights and promoting data-driven decision-making for more successful project outcomes. Table 4: Use the SCB through CRS Compass Stages provides a quick summary of possible options, with more details below.

Table 4: Use the SCB through CRS Compass Stages

USE	CRS COMPASS STAGES	TARGET POPULATION	SUB-GROUP ANALYSIS
Pre-Design Assessment	Design	Community members of expected project area	Sex Age Identity group Location (geography, rural, urban) IDP status Employment Status Other relevant categories such as: non-participants, disability, key stakeholders (such as political, religious and other community leaders, etc.)
Context Monitoring	Start-up, Implementation, or outside project cycle		
Baseline study; mid-term or final evaluation	Start-up, Implementation and Close-Out	Project participants and/or community members	
Project Monitoring	Implementation		

The SCB is most effective when used as an indicator at the **outcome** (Intermediate Result) level or higher within the project's results framework. It provides valuable insights into the impact of social cohesion interventions, measuring changes in unity, cooperation, and positive relationships among different groups, markets and stakeholders over time. By focusing on outcome-level measurements, program teams can assess the success of their strategies and make necessary adjustments to achieve broader project objectives.

Using the SCB as an output indicator, which typically measures specific project activities or outputs, is not recommended. The SCB's strength lies in capturing the more intangible aspects of social cohesion, such as changes in perceptions and attitudes within the community. By leveraging the SCB at the outcome level and above, project teams can gain a comprehensive understanding of the project's impact on social cohesion. This information can be used to inform adaptive management, to target specific project interventions, for resource allocation and strategy improvements to better serve to better serve the needs of the communities they work with.

SCB in pre-design assessment

As described in the existing mini-SCB guide, knowledge gained from the deployment of the SCB at an initial project design stage enables CRS to act on these findings to design and implement social cohesion strengthening activities that are aligned with local priorities and realities on the ground.

Conducted at the beginning of the design phase, SCB analysis can elucidate the current state of social cohesion within the three spheres (political, economic, social), and along the two dimensions (horizontal and vertical). The SCB analysis can reveal potential disparities in perceptions of social cohesion within and between different groups and analyzing the SCB data by different demographic groupings (for example, by gender, by age group, by ethnic or tribal affiliation). Understanding these variations provides valuable information for designing programming that can effectively address the identified needs. By tailoring interventions to specific requirements and realities

revealed by the SCB data, CRS can implement projects that are better equipped to foster social cohesion and contribute to positive social change.

Furthermore, conducting the SCB in the pre-design phase allows for the identification of potential challenges to consider and key stakeholders that CRS needs to engage with. For instance, if the survey indicates a lack of trust in local or national leaders, this finding could highlight the importance of addressing and building vertical social cohesion as a priority in the program. By gaining these insights early on, CRS can proactively plan for and address critical issues, ensuring that the project is better equipped to navigate potential obstacles and foster positive social relationships within the community.

Additionally, it is important to note that the SCB is not intended to be used in isolation to inform project design. Instead, it should be employed alongside other methods and assessments if possible. By strategically sequencing the SCB with other data collection approaches, CRS can obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the community's social cohesion dynamics.

Combining the SCB with qualitative assessments (focus group discussions, key informative interviews, and other analysis) enhances the richness of the data and provides a deeper context for interpreting the findings. These complementary methods offer valuable insights into the community's perceptions and needs, guiding the design of more effective and contextually relevant interventions.

Moreover, applying the SCB in the project pre-design phase enables CRS field teams to set more realistic targets for programming and create relevant indicators.

SCB for context monitoring

When the SCB is utilized for context monitoring beyond the scope of a specific project, two sampling approaches can be considered: sampling from the general population of interest to CRS or purposive sampling of respondents. While data collection is typically conducted annually, in the event of a significant contextual change or shock, such as an election, outbreak of violence, natural disaster, or other sudden event, applying the SCB at shorter intervals may be appropriate. This allows the project to adapt to the evolving dynamics in the local context and make informed decisions accordingly.

In the context of a specific project, using the SCB to support context monitoring may help prepare teams to use a crisis-modifier component. It may also help advocate for a shift in donor resources to different interventions in response to a deterioration in social cohesion.

SCB for baseline studies and evaluations

Similar to its application for pre-design assessment, a larger-scale implementation of the SCB in the project start-up phase (across a community or communities) can generate a representative picture of the state of social cohesion to inform project design and serve as a baseline measure against which project progress can be measured. This larger scale implementation would involve random sampling of expected project participants (who are 15 years of age or older), with sample size

sufficient to detect statistically significant differences between groups if desired by the project (and resources permit).

If utilized as a baseline or endline outcome measure, it is advisable to align the SCB data with results at the Intermediate Result (IR) or Strategic Objective (SO) level for clearer analysis and reporting of the project's impact on social cohesion.

If using the SCB internally and as a donor-reported indicator, projects may choose to use the overall index, or one of the sub-indices (sociocultural, economic, political) if the project interventions anticipate only seeing improvements in one sphere. In this instance, it is still recommended to collect the full set of SCB data, as it may help with contextual analysis and understanding. It is not recommended to use the horizontal or vertical dimension only as a project indicator, as there is some overlap in those dimensions.

Another option for a project indicator is to focus on a particular statement and measure the percent of project participants for whom that statement improved over time. For example, if most participants did not think a statement at all reflected their experience, and by project end most did think the statement improved, this could be a measure of project progress.

It is also acceptable to use the SCB for impact evaluations, where endline values are tested for statistical differences between the treatment and control group.

Finally, depending on a project's results framework or theory of change, social cohesion improvements may be hypothesized to improve other project outcomes. Often, the social cohesion changes would come before the final project outcome and would likely themselves be an intermediate outcome. For example, improved social cohesion would improve community support for a community-led school feeding program. At the analysis stage, correlations between index values and other or higher-level outcomes could be tested.

SCB for project monitoring

The SCB may also be appropriate for monitoring purposes during the life of the project. As monitoring indicators are outcome-level indicators, handling the SCB results cautiously and complementing them with other intermediate measurements is essential to ensure accurate and meaningful data.

When utilized for monitoring, the SCB can effectively provide insights into the progress of social cohesion improvements within the project's targeted communities. Still, to capture the evolving nature of social cohesion, measuring SCB values no more than annually is recommended since measurable changes may take time to manifest.

When using SCB for project monitoring purposes, it is important to consider the intended use of the data, as the SCB results may or may not represent a complete sample of all project participants. For instance, if the focus is on assessing improvements in specific geographic areas or sub-groups, the data may be limited to those particular groups.

When reporting data to donors, using a representative sample of project participants is always advisable for credibility and accuracy. Additionally, certain sub-indicators or statements from the SCB can serve as useful monitoring indicators for donor reporting purposes.

Ready to Use the SCB for Meal?

This section provides valuable insights and step-by-step guidance on effectively utilizing the SCB for MEAL purposes. It emphasizes the importance of a well-structured survey protocol to ensure a successful data collection process that aligns with project objectives and theory of change, providing accurate and meaningful insights. The guide also highlights the significance of contextualizing the tool, piloting the survey to fine-tune the approach, selecting and training field staff and enumerators to conduct surveys, and implementing a quality assurance plan for reliable and valid results. With a strong focus on data analysis, the section covers techniques to draw meaningful conclusions.

Become familiar with the SCB and Assess Relevance

Before starting to apply the SCB, teams who intend to use it must familiarize themselves with the tool in general – its statements, spheres, and dimensions – and must have a clear idea, based on their operating environment, of how the SCB will be helpful for their purposes.

Therefore, is recommended for the relevant team[4] to discuss questions about SCB relevance. Please see the Table 5: SCB discussion guiding questions.

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4 That should include CRS and partner staff and local stakeholders where possible

Table 5: SCB discussion guiding questions

1. Will the project be implemented for more than six months? (Specify the expected duration and any potential impacts on social cohesion)

2. Will the interventions be implemented in fragile contexts? (Discuss details or examples)

3. How are the interventions related to social cohesion, peace, and justice? (Discuss the connections or links)

4. How important is it for program teams to learn about perceptions of relationships among different groups in the community, economic opportunities, and relationships between citizens and the government? (Discuss participants insights or thoughts)

5. Why is screening the general population or project participants' perceptions about social cohesion relevant for specific project interventions or country programs? (Elaborate on the relevance or significance)

6. Are there any program goals, objectives, or outcomes that aim to maintain or build social cohesion or peace? (If yes, please describe these goals and their relevance)

7. Are there any program goals, objectives, or outcomes to influence social cohesion to strengthen other project outcomes or support resilience? (Discuss details on how social cohesion contributes to these outcomes).

8. Would using the SCB gather data for specific project indicators? How might the data collected through the SCB inform broader program strategy and decision-making?

The discussion should lead to well-founded conclusions, utilizing sound judgment and a shared understanding of both the community's and project's needs and priorities. In addition, this dialogue can be highly valuable in developing the theory of change, offering insights and perspectives that are instrumental in project design and serve as information when developing the MEAL system.

Contextualization and translation

If the project team aims to use the SCB for MEAL or research purposes, in general, CRS does not recommend changing or adapting the meaning, intent or wording of the 18 SCB statements. Changing the meaning of a given statement could change what the instrument measures (i.e., it is no longer measuring social cohesion as described in the introduction).

Tool contextualization

To ensure the relevance of the SCB tool in different contexts, specific terms highlighted in gray can be adapted to suit the particular setting. Please see Annex 1: SCB Tool (Statements, Response Options And Codes). For instance, the word "community" can be replaced with a more appropriate term, such as county, village, hamlet, etc., based on the project's needs and the local context. This flexibility allows the tool to be tailored and applied effectively in diverse environments.

Additionally, the sample survey instrument provides short descriptions (preambles) prior to select statements. These short descriptions are included to clarify the statement for respondents; therefore key terms in these descriptions can be adapted for a project or context. CRS recommends that all changes or adaptations are validated by both program and MEAL staff involved in the project and data collection activity.

While CRS does not recommend modifying the 18 SCB items, project teams may need to include additional statements in their survey questionnaire if there are any contextually relevant concepts missing from the SCB. Consulting with participants, program staff and other key stakeholders can help project teams determine whether important, contextually relevant aspects of social cohesion are missing. The tool is relevant for measuring social cohesion in communities composed of different ethnicities and religions, but it can also be deployed in homogeneous communities. The intent of the SCB measures should be clearly explained to enumerators and participants through preambles. Similarly, in the context of specific political processes, SCB could be used to measure the perception of levels of social cohesion at the local community or state level. Depending on project needs, both levels could be applicable, but it is essential to use preambles to describe the intended purpose of these measurements. Note that any additional statements added by project teams should not be included in the calculation of overall SCB index scores (See Section: How to analyze SCB data?)

Tool translation

When administering the SCB for use in another language, CRS strongly recommends carefully translating the tool from the official CRS languages (English, French, Spanish and Arabic) into the appropriate language(s) for a given data collection activity. Incomplete or inaccurate translations can change the meaning of a question. An accurate written translation of the tool into relevant local languages helps ensure the consistent application of the SCB across enumerators and data collection activities (e.g., baseline and endline surveys). It is critical to avoid having enumerators translate the tool while they are administering the survey to limit the enumerator effects, which arise because each enumerator shares a different translation of the same statement with different respondents. If feasible, CRS also recommends that project teams plan and budget for back translation or translating the tool from the local language version back into original English-language version. A back translation can identify critical errors and subtle changes in meaning between languages, which might affect the respondents' understanding of the statements. Note that translations should be validated during enumerator training and field testing, and it is recommended to use this approach to ensure language appropriateness. CommCare also has the option to add audio files to each statement. This approach proves valuable when dealing with languages that are more narrative in nature and when the subject matter requires a more detailed and descriptive explanation of certain terminologies.

Table 3. SCB Statements, Detailed Descriptions and Rationale and the Glossary of key terms contain key information to support the translation process. These resources further describe the SCB statements and key terms, allowing translators to understand the intent and meaning behind each item. CRS recommends having

For example:
In different communities, people may or may not share a common set of beliefs that guide their behaviors, support the common good and help their community to function well. These beliefs are called civic values and may include respect for the community, support of your neighbors, participation in community action, etc. To what extent do the following statements reflect your experience?.

enumerators review, practice and confirm all translations during the training. Enumerator training should ensure that the meaning and intent of each item is clear to data collectors. A final validation of the translation will come during field testing the survey instrument with individuals who are similar to the target population. Editing and refining the translations several times can often lead to version control issues. It is important to date and label your tools with version numbers to ensure that team members are working from the latest version of the tool.

Develop a clear detailed survey protocol

Survey protocols explain in detail how the SBC will be implemented. A survey protocol should include description of the main and specifics research question/ theory of change, description on type of survey, full methodology description which states clear sampling design (who is target for a survey and how participants should be sampled), data collection instruments, data collection plan and plan for data analysis.

Sample Design

The sampling approach and sample size used when collecting data for the SCB will depend on the intended use of the SCB data. Reviewing Section 4.3 of MEAL DPro can help users determine how they will be able to take a random sample from the target population (who are 15 years of age or older) regardless of intended use, and limitations and sample bias resulting from non-random samples. Users should also determine if they would like a representative sample of population segments (a representative sample of men, and another representative sample of women), in addition to the overall target population.

MEAL DPro can also help users determine if the data collection will be clustered, which will inform sample size calculations. Reviewing the internal CRS Samples guide can help users understand why different sample size equations are needed if data collection is clustered, or if statistical comparisons between population segments will be made. Note that the indices resulting from the SCB are always continuous, and thus the relevant CRS Samples equations are Equation 1, 2, 5, or 6. When calculating samples sizes, several index specific parameters are needed. Please reference Annex 2: Sample Size Calculation, for sample size calculation parameters, choosing the reference location most like where data will be collected.

All demographic data should be contextualized. Please see Annex 3: Standard Demographic Questions, for standard demographic questions.

Conduct a comprehensive survey pilot

Pilot the SCB before deploying in the field to confirm that survey questions are worded correctly and have the correct meaning. Piloting the tool also ensures that enumerators are well-trained and that the data collection process, whether manual or computerized (for example, through CommCare or other software), runs smoothly. As part of the pilot the survey protocol should also be tested.

Selecting field staff and training enumerators

Enumerators play a crucial role in SCB data collection; therefore, teams should ensure that all enumerators can speak local languages, are well-trained before the data collection process begins, both in the survey protocols and the SCB tool itself. The enumerators' educational backgrounds can provide added value. For instance, enumerators with degrees in the social sciences, such as sociology, psychology or geography can be especially valuable contributors.

Moreover, in order to maintain high-quality standards, it may be beneficial to consider implementing a test to assess the enumerators' familiarity with the tool and their overall competencies in the field.

To the extent possible, it is advisable not to have the same CRS program staff implementing a project also directly involved in conducting evaluations. Where resource constraints do not permit the contracting of independent enumerators, ideally, CRS has to ensure that "internal" enumerators are at least one step removed from the day-to-day implementation of a specific program. For more information on enumerator training, please see the recommendations and proposed training agenda in Annex 4. Enumerator Training.

Creating and implementing data quality assurance plan

While field data is being collected, a focal point (either within CRS or the externally hired enumeration team), should be responsible for ensuring that data collection is done correctly and in a consistent way across enumerators. It also involves ensuring that any translations of responses (if relevant) are done correctly. If data is being collected using paper-based surveys, then data quality assurance also involves making sure that the paper-based surveys are being correctly 'translated' into the relevant software or database (generally Excel).

Administering the SCB

After the timeline for tool administration is defined, trained enumerators start data collections. It is important that enumerators know where to go, how to track down the participants, and how many revisits/re-attempts to reach participants are necessary before participant must be replaced. Enumerators should adhere to ethical principles described in Section: The SCB Best Practices: Ethic, Safeguarding, Conflict Sensitivity and Inclusion and engage with survey participants professionally.

Whether the data is collated via digital platforms or in some other way, enumerators should maintain confidentiality and teams should run ongoing data quality checks.

How to analyze SCB data?

Once data collection is complete, data entry, cleaning and analysis can begin. If data collection was done via tablet in CommCare using the global template, and enumerator field test data was not fused with response data, then data cleaning is likely unnecessary. CRS recommends looking at histograms of data initially, before moving to this scoring section. Response scores will also already be assigned via CommCare.

If using paper-based data collection tools, if the global CommCare template was not used, or the CommCare template was significantly modified, data entry and/or cleaning may be necessary. As a reminder, responses should be coded as follows:

Not at all = 1	Do not know = DNK
A little bit = 2	Refused to respond = NA
Moderately = 3	
Mostly = 4	
Completely = 5	

Summary statistics

Summary statistics of the SCB can be calculated among the sample population or sub-groups at different levels, including individual statements, spheres (i.e., socio-cultural, economic, political), dimensions (vertical and horizontal) and the overall index. Where possible, CRS recommends gender and age disaggregation in analysis. Other potentially relevant categories for disaggregation may include survey wave (baseline/endline), community or other geographic grouping and ethnicity or religion.

If SCB data was collected from a non-representative sample, such as with purposive sampling, it may be best to only examine histogram data. Calculating averages, or estimating differences between groups, is not useful when the underlying data was not meant to fully represent a group.

Summary Statistics for Individual SCB statements

As a first step in examining collected survey data, prior to constructing the index, CRS recommends that project teams analyze the results for each of the 18 SCB statements. This analysis allows teams to gain a detailed understanding of each response, which may have important programmatic implications.

Histograms – Distribution of Responses

A common way to summarize the distribution of results for individual statements is a histogram. This summary statistic calculates the number and percent of survey participants who responded "completely", "mostly", "moderately", "a little bit", "not at all", "refused" or "do not know" to the statement. It is important to include the number and percentage of respondents who answered with "refused" and "do not know".[6] The total percentage calculated with the histogram should sum to 100%. For example, Figure 2 shows the distribution of responses to item My community has the capacity to peacefully manage social problems.

Figure 2: Example - Percent distribution of responses: My community has the capacity to peacefully manage social problems (N=450)
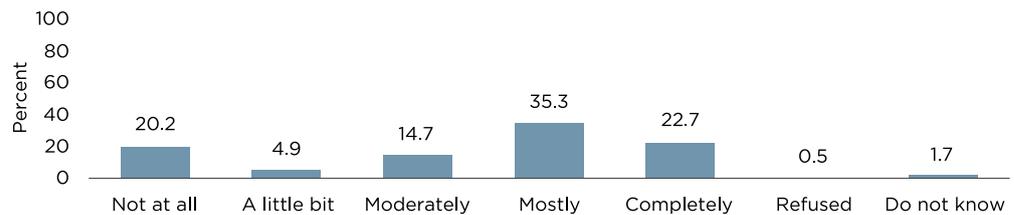
Table 6. Example – Percent distribution of responses: My community has the capacity to peacefully manage social problems (N=450)

	(n)	%
Not at all	(91)	20.2
A little bit	(22)	4.9
Moderately	(66)	14.7
Mostly	(159)	35.3
Completely	(102)	22.7
Refused	(2)	0.5
Do not know	(8)	1.7

Project indicators created from individual SCB statements

Depending on the project's objectives, it is also possible to collapse response options and look at the precent distribution of respondents who indicate that an individual statement "completely" or "mostly" reflect their experience. For example, if a project's objective was to increase the intragroup trust in their program area, they could calculate the percentage of participants who reported the statement "S2 – Members of my community trust each other regardless of identity differences" either mostly or completely reflected their experience.

A histogram can also be generated to compare groups or sub-groups, such as sex, location, religion, etc. For example, Figure 3 shows the distribution of responses to SCB statement S1 across three program districts. (See sub-section Summary Statistics for sub-groups or disaggregates for more information on determining statistically significant differences between comparison or sub-groups.)

Figure 3: Example – Percent distribution of responses, by program district
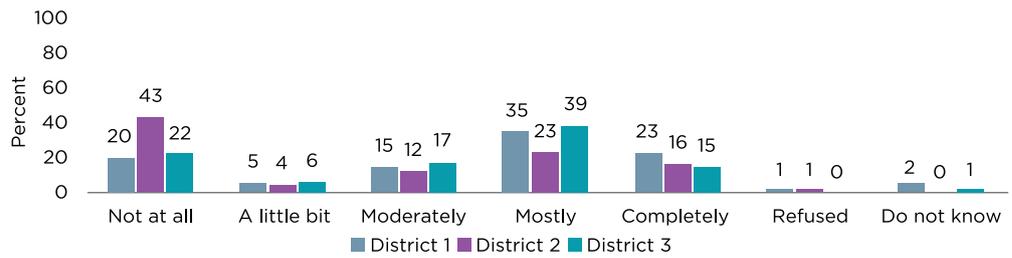
Various histograms or sub-groups can be compared using a stacked column graph. For example, Figure 4 shows the distribution of responses for statements S1, S2 and S3.

Figure 4: Example – Percent distribution of responses for statements S1, S2 and S3
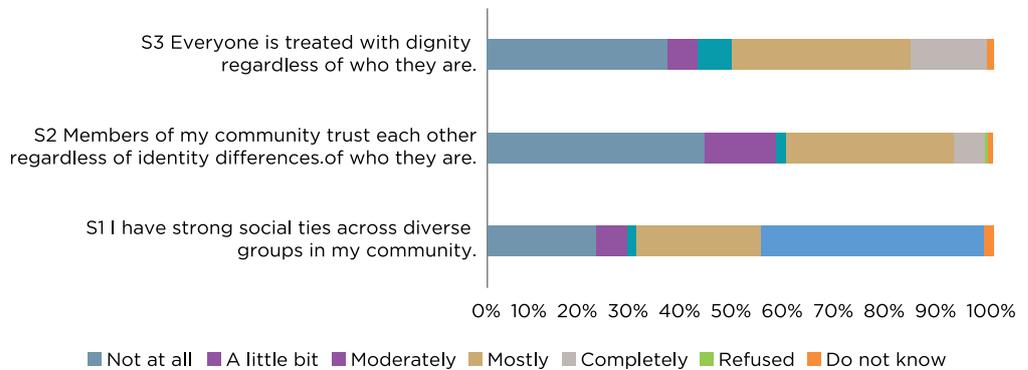
Average score

Teams can calculate the average score for a given statement among all respondents. These averages range from 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Completely). Note that responses of "refused" and "do not know" should be excluded from the calculation of the average statement score. CRS recommends that average values are compared for multiple statements, over multiple rounds of data collection and/or among sub-groups. For example, Figure 5 depicts the average score of statements E3 and E4 by respondent sex (men / women).

Figure 5: Average score for statements E3 and E4, by respondent sex
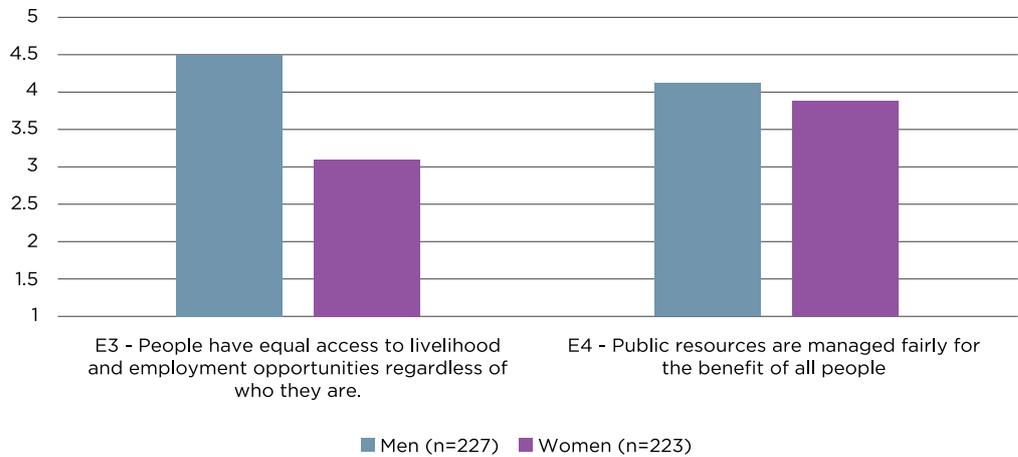
Summary Statistics for Overall SCB Index

Average score

Whenever summarizing and analyzing SCB data, CRS recommends presenting results on a 1-5 scale which correlates to initial scoring. To do this manually (in Excel – See Annex 5: Summary Statistic), please follow these steps:

1. Sum the score for each respondent. In Excel, this would typically be done as an additional column in the spreadsheet using the SUM function. The column can be labelled "SumIndividual_Scores(all)". For each respondent, their score will be between 1 x 18 = 18 and 5 x 18 = 90.

   A. If a respondent answers **ANY** question with "Do not know" or "Refused to respond", they must be excluded from the analysis overall index. See the Excel spreadsheet for ways to mark these cells as #N/A, and account for #N/a

   B. If 5% or more of respondents must be excluded, include in your analysis a description of those respondents. (Men, women, certain ethnic groups, etc.)

   C. If you feel too many people have been excluded, still follow point b, but impute or "fill-in" their value for the missing statements using their average response to other statements.

2. Calculate the sum of the column created in step 1 above.

3. The individual value will be divided by the number of respondents (that were not excluded), multiplied by 18.This value will fall between 1 and 5 and is the Average Overall Index value per respondent. We recommend communicating this value with 2 decimal places (e.g., 3.29).

CRS recommends that project teams compare average values of the overall SCB Index among sub-groups, such as appropriate demographic groups (e.g., age groups, sex, ethnic groups, etc.) or baseline/endline values. For example, Figure 6 depicts the average overall SCB index by project baseline and endline values among male and female participants.

Figure 6: Example - Average Overall SCB Index by baseline and endline values

Baseline (n=653)   Endline (n=623)
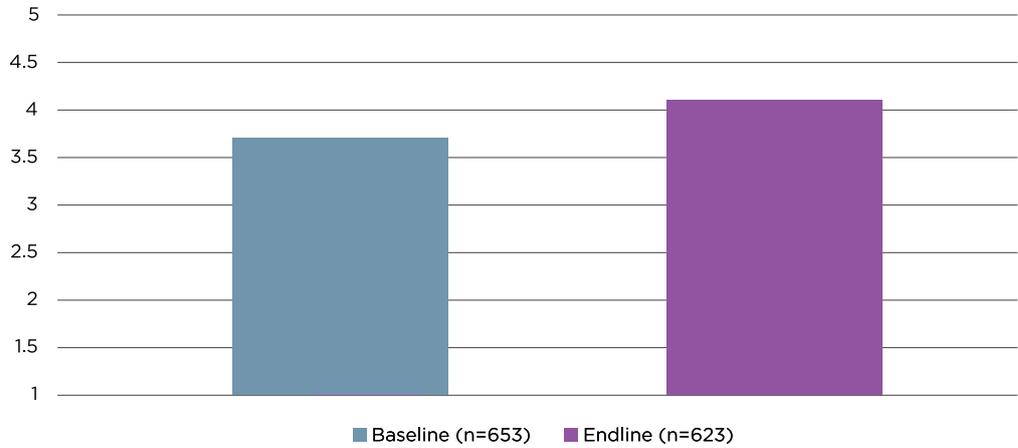
Summary Statistics for SCB Spheres and Dimensions

Average score

Steps 1 through 3 above can be repeated for each of the sub-indices (Sociocultural, Economic, or Political) or the dimensions (Vertical or Horizontal), as desired. In step 1, only questions that apply to the respective sub-index or dimension would be used in the calculations. In step 1, if a respondent answered all statements for the sub-index, they should be included, even if they have a missing response for another sub-index. Column headers and index values should be labelled accordingly. For example, if calculating the Sociocultural sub-index, label the column as "SumIndividual_ Scores(sc)".

As with other averages, CRS recommends that these values are compared by sphere, dimension, demographic sub-group and/or baseline and endline values. For example, Figure 7 depicts the average Socio-cultural sphere index by program area.

Figure 7: Average Socio-cultural Sphere Index by program area

Program area 1   Program area 2   Program area 3
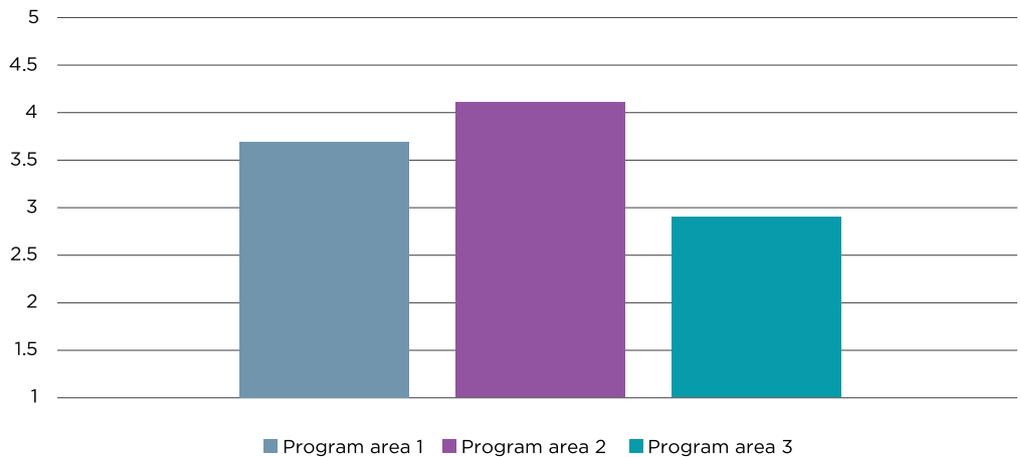
Summary Statistics for sub-groups or disaggregates.

Steps 1 through 3 can above can also be repeated for disaggregates, as desired. In step 1, only respondents for to whom the desired disaggregate applies would be used in the calculations, and again column headers and index values should be labeled accordingly. For example, if calculating the Average Male-index, label the columns as "SumIndividual_Scores(all_male)".

Statistical testing

If choosing to report confidence intervals or conduct a t-test to test if the difference in means between groups is not zero (e.g., the difference in mean index values between men and women is statistically different from zero), create the individual indices per respondent. To do this for men vs. women, do the following:

- In the initial example, after step 1 has been completed for men, create an additional (2nd) column for each (male) respondent. Using this 2nd column, for each (male) respondent, divide the "Sum_Scores" by 18 to create each (male) respondent's index, which can be labeled "Individual_Index(all_male).

- Do the same for each female respondent.

To calculate the confidence interval of an overall index, a sub-index, or a disaggregate, first recall these indices are continuous (e.g., the number of decimal places is infinite) and thus the t-distribution (not the normal distribution) should be used. If using Excel, the correct formula is CONFIDENCE.T. You'll need the standard deviation, for which you'll need to recall these values come from a sample, not the entire population. See Excel spreadsheet (Annex 5: Summary Statistics) for example formulas, that account for any #N/A values. See CRS Samples for more details behind confidence interval calculations. Confidence intervals can be presented as [Index value ± confidence interval].

A t-test can also be run. In Excel, use the T.TEST command, selecting all the "male" index values as array 1, all the "female" index values as array 2, then select 2 tails and option 3 [=T.TEST(male cells, female cells, 2, 3)]. The result of the t-test is a p-value. For interpretation of t-test results, remember that the null hypothesis is there is no difference between the mean of 2 groups (men and women). Any $p < 0.10$ weakly rejects the null hypothesis, thus the difference between the 2 groups is significantly different from zero (but the difference could be positive or negative; hence why it is important to use a 2-tailed test). Any $p < 0.05$ rejects the null hypothesis, and $p < 0.01$ strongly rejects the null hypothesis. If $p > 0.10$, in the social sciences, we say there that the difference between male and female index values is not statistically significant.

For summary statistics, it always recommended to add sample weights prior to calculating any summary statistics. Please see CRS Samples Annex 2: Sample Size Calculations if you need more information on how to calculate sample weights. No other weighting is recommended when using the SCB.

How to interpret SCB data?

Interpretation of SCB results benefits from a variety of perspectives, and therefore should be done by as diverse a group as possible, inclusive of project staff, partners, and social cohesion technical advisors. Please see below for key recommendations of whom to involve in interpretation depending on the purpose for which the SCB was used. Whenever possible, incorporate participatory interpretation activities with project participants and/or community stakeholders. When participatory interpretation is not possible, it is advisable to incorporate this into validation workshops (see Section: Accountability and Learning).

Interpretation and use of the findings will depend on the purpose for which the SCB was used.

Pre-Design Assessment

Whom to involve: Ideally, programming staff from a mix of sectors including but not limited to social cohesion will be involved in interpretation alongside MEAL staff. Partner representatives should be involved as well.

Regardless of whether the proposed project will be a standalone or integrated social cohesion initiative, the SCB findings will be valuable for understanding the context and operating responsively within that context. In the pre-design stage, interpretation can guide the focus of the eventual design, as follows:

- Which aspects of social cohesion (by sphere, dimension and/or by specific statement) are particularly strong? How does the perception of social cohesion differ by identity group, and why may this be? What does this suggest as a starting point for community engagement and initial activities? Which activities can help maintain or guard against erosion of cohesion?

- Which aspects of social cohesion (by sphere, dimension and/or by specific statement) are particularly weak? Again, how and why may this differ by identity group, and what do different groups see as the priority areas for change? Will the project be able to address these gaps and areas of tension directly? If so, which activities could be proposed to strengthen these aspects of social cohesion? If not, how will the project design account for these weaknesses?

- What do findings suggest about targeting?

Context monitoring

Whom to involve: If the context monitoring is tied to a specific project, interpretation would include whoever is usually involved in project reflection events; if the monitoring is for broader strategic or prepositioning purposes, involve CP leadership and partners in interpretation.

Interest in interpretation for context monitoring is for adaptive management, pre-positioning, strategizing, and/or future planning. Therefore, interpretation should seek to focus on patterns in any shifts by sphere, dimension, or specific statement of the SCB, with particular attention to any surprises (that may need further explanation) and consideration of broader contextual changes that may be affecting results. Context monitoring will be most useful at 12-month intervals of data collection, or potentially more frequently if significant shocks have occurred. Interpretation and use questions include:

- Where have negative shifts been observed? What broader factors may affect this change? What conflict sensitivity adaptations may be needed?

- Which aspects of social cohesion are particularly weak, or strong? What does this suggest about strategic focus?

- What are the variations by geography or demographic group? What are the strategic implications of these variations?

Project Evaluation

Whom to involve: If the SCB is being used in an integrated project, involve technical staff from the relevant sectors in addition to social cohesion. It is also recommended to call on a social cohesion technical advisor at regional or global level during the interpretation. Partners should be involved as well; see MPP Procedure 3.7. Involvement of community members in interpretation is encouraged whenever possible.

For evaluation purposes, interpretation focuses on measuring the state of SC in geographic areas targeted by project activities, with a view to measuring the effects of those activities on social cohesion. Interpretation of results will need to be relevant to the level of change being measured, per the project MEAL plan and indicators. Note that changes in levels of social cohesion cannot be expected to shift significantly in short periods of time; one year is the minimum recommended time between SCB measurement, with 2-3 years being preferred.

- Baseline: Are results different for different demographic groups or across geographic areas? What does that suggest about tailoring activities to different groups? What do results suggest about how the state of social cohesion can be characterized at project start-up? What should be monitored for changes going forward?

- Mid-term or Endline: How have results changed over time, by sphere, dimension and/or specific statements? Why, in the views of community members, have these changes occurred? Are changes different for different demographic groups or geographic areas? Do results indicate that the project is hitting its targets?

For impact evaluations, when results are examined for statistical differences between treatment and control groups, interpretation may include the above questions, with particular focus on the following (note that participatory interpretation and validation should only take place in treatment communities):

- For longitudinal studies: Detecting trends and trajectories in the state of social cohesion over time, in or across geographic areas or demographic groups.
- For comparative studies across locations: Examining similarities and differences by jurisdiction, region, or country.
- For comparative studies by demographic group: Probing the similarities and differences of findings across disaggregated groups.
- For comparison by type of program intervention: Examining the correlations between social cohesion scores and other project outcomes or comparing social cohesion results depending on whether other sectoral interventions have been conducted.

For other special reports such as policy studies, interpretation will seek to understand the state of social cohesion and the factors that have influenced it, with a view to generating policy recommendations. In this case, additional data may need to be collected, and a participatory, consultative approach to interpretation is highly relevant.

Project monitoring

Whom to involve: Interpretation can be done by whomever is involved in regular project reflection events (see MPP Procedure 2.4); consider involving donor representatives as well, to strengthen their engagement in the project.

Interpretation in monitoring (and at mid-term) serves the purpose of course-correction, and therefore involves:

- Looking for low scores or score decreases, and then correlating this with output data to reflect on whether the project has been engaging the right people, in the right numbers, in the right activities.
- Looking also for score increases, to stimulate reflection on whether or how the project has contributed to these changes, and how these community strengths can be leveraged in program strategies.
- Do results indicate any significant patterns or trends? How may this differ by geography or demography? If so, how would the project act on that knowledge? Which shifts indicate a need to adapt program strategies, activities or targeting?

SCB Limitations

The SCB has its limitations, some of which are general to surveys, and others of which are specific to the social cohesion conceptual framework. Those are as follows:

General survey limitations

1. The SCB is a survey with closed-ended questions and as so it may have a lower validity and accuracy rate. This is because closed-ended questions limit respondents to select from pre-defined answer choices, which may not fully
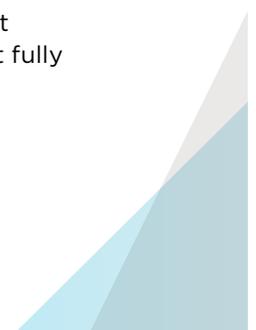
capture the diversity and nuances of their responses. To strengthen its validity and accuracy, it is recommended to interpret the SCB data together with qualitative data.

2. A five-point Likert scale cannot measure a wide range of response options and, therefore, cannot capture all respondents' opinions. The wording, order, number of statements, context, and culture influence responses. Finally, respondents might lean toward neutral answers or toward the most extreme options.

3. While using the SCB, teams could experience agreement bias, where respondents tend to select positive response options. It is recommended to train enumerators about confidentiality to minimize respondents' bias.

Social Cohesion and Justice Conceptual Framework Limitations

1. Social cohesion is a complex construct and has many interpretations. SCB measures concepts related to the CRS Social Cohesion Framework and cannot measure all factors influencing social cohesion.

2. The SCB statements are high-level and could be understood in widely different ways, depending on context and respondents' cultural background. Explaining statements to enumerators and respondents should be done using the description and rationale table (Please see Table 3. SCB Statements, Detailed Descriptions, Rationale, Spheres and Dimensions).

3. The SCB explores respondents' perceptions of social cohesion and justice, which might not represent the accurate state of social cohesion in a community or region. Still, the respondents' perceptions are valuable measures in informing programming.

4. The SCB can measure social cohesion perceptions locally and globally. In complex social systems, it is necessary to ensure that participants understand to what level the SCB is referring.

5. Adapting to different languages and dialects might not ensure an in-depth understanding of social cohesion.

6. Level of education and age can influence understanding of the social cohesion statements. In specific cases, the teams might use complementary or other tools to ensure relevant results interpretation.

Qualitative Tools to Better Understand the SCB Results

Semi-structured interviews (SSI) are used to gather more in-depth information from diverse stakeholders relevant to programming. SSI could be done with project participants, but most usually are done with relevant champions or gatekeepers who have valuable insights into the context.

A comprehensive MEAL framework and toolkit for understanding perceptions of social cohesion will also include qualitative data collection tools to complement quantitative data collection through the SCB.

Qualitative research seeks for more in-depth, free-form answers from respondents that are usually gathered through focus group discussions, key informant interviews, participant observations, secondary research data, or the application of the mini-SCB in a workshop setting. The scope of qualitative data gathering will depend on budget and participant access.

Qualitative data collection involves purposefully selecting participants in line with the MEAL plan, focusing on small but diverse groups. To ensure comprehensive insights, it is essential to involve a broad range of stakeholders, including potential or current project participants, community leaders (traditional, religious, women's, youth, or elders), local or regional government authorities, and civil society organizations. The composition of the participants will be tailored to match the research question(s) or project theory of change, allowing for a holistic and inclusive understanding of the context and project impact.

Qualitative data may be collected concurrently with SCB survey data to complement, triangulate and aid SCB result interpretations:

- **In pre-design phase** qualitative tools could provide better understanding of the context where the project will operate and provide stronger insights into social norms and dynamics, to inform program design.
- **In project implementation baseline, mid-term and endline**, as well as for impact evaluations, qualitative data collection and analysis is important to triangulate SCB survey data, and to better understand the "how and why" of outcomes associated with programing.
- **For project and context monitoring**, qualitative data could be useful to better understand specific social phenomena influencing program implementation and to inform adaptive management decisions or for in-depth analysis of existing activities. Likewise for special studies, qualitative data can add depth and nuance to SCB findings.

Focus Group Discussions (FGD) involve gathering a small group of stakeholders with similar backgrounds or characteristics to discuss their opinions on various programming-related questions. FGD allows exploring ideas or views on a specific topic of interest and gives insight into inconsistencies or variations within and across particular groups regarding beliefs, experiences, and practices.

Example of some qualitative questions to better understand SCB data

When collected after analysis of the survey data, qualitative data collected to aid in interpretation and validation should seek to explore questions and compare across different perspectives, such as:

- Why are the levels of social cohesion within this community (or between these communities), at the levels they are?

- Why are levels of cohesion different in the three different spheres (political, economic and socio-cultural)?

- Why are levels of cohesion different along horizontal or vertical dimensions?

- What are some of the major challenges or roadblocks to building or increasing social cohesion within or between communities?

- Who are the key stakeholders to engage; are there key gatekeepers or champions with whom programs can work or should target?

- Under what conditions are peoples' attitudes and behavior likely to be open to change or persuasion?

- Which aspects of programming are working well, which are not, and why?

- Which aspects of social cohesion are important for other longer-term outcomes (for example, a commonly assumed theory of change skips from social cohesion to reduction in violence; others may seek to progress from improved cohesion to better development outcomes).

Accountability and Learning

Once a preliminary analysis and interpretation has been completed, the results should be submitted to the members of the communities concerned to give them opportunity to comment on the data collected and to gauge their endorsement of the analysis made. This exercise could be done at the community level as a community validation workshop or during a public report-back.

Community validation workshop

The validation process is crucial for ensuring the accuracy and relevance of the evaluation results at the community level. It involves engaging with randomly selected participants from the communities being evaluated to gather feedback and validate the findings. Randomly select participants from the target communities, ensuring representation from different categories based on the sampling selection. Include both interviewees and non-interviewees to gather diverse perspectives. Conduct either a focus group discussion or a one-day workshop with the selected participants. Provide them with consolidated data, graphical representations of the results, and key recommendations from the evaluation.

Use guided question prompts to help participants evaluate the following aspects: 1) Relevance of the collected data, 2) Accuracy of the data analysis in reflecting

the community's reality, 3) Timeliness of the recommendations provided, and 4) Adherence to the survey report and its alignment with community experiences. Organize small groups within the workshop setting for more focused discussions. Each group should report back on their level of satisfaction with each aspect and provide suggestions for improvement, if needed. Engaging the community in the validation process ensures their input is considered, enhancing the credibility and usefulness of the evaluation findings. Use the feedback obtained during validation to make informed decisions for program improvements and to ensure that future actions are better aligned with community needs and aspirations.

Public report-back

Public report-back sessions aim to disseminate survey results to a wider audience, including community members and key stakeholders involved in promoting social cohesion within the locality. This broader audience may consist of policymakers, religious and traditional leaders, NGOs, and local civil society representatives. To ensure effectiveness, the report-back meeting should be a half-day event, carefully identifying and inviting the relevant individuals and organizations.

To enhance strategic impact, it is beneficial to initially share the assessment results with a select group of influential people who can then lead the public report-back ceremony. They can welcome participants, introduce and conclude the process. During the session, a team member who was part of the survey's execution will present the results and moderate the ensuing discussion. The focus will be on reviewing the data's relevance, the alignment of data analysis with the environment's reality, the timeliness of recommendations, and adherence to the survey report. By engaging key stakeholders in these discussions, we can foster a deeper understanding of the survey findings and promote collective efforts towards strengthening social cohesion in the community.

Community validation workshop and/or public report-back is a vital step that strengthens the evaluation process and fosters ownership among stakeholders, leading to more impactful program outcomes. However, it is crucial to approach both actions with sensitivity to the context and potential risks. Before conducting community validation, carefully assess the context and ensure that it will not put programming or community members in harm's way. If there are any doubts or concerns, it is better to refrain from conducting community validation workshop and/or public-report back.

When including key government stakeholders in validation efforts, please consult Engaging Government: A CRS Guide for Working for Social Change.
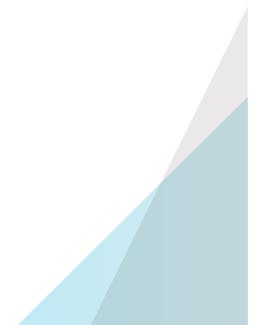
The SCB Best Practices: Ethics, Safeguarding, Conflict Sensitivity and Inclusion

Ethical principles when using the SCB for MEAL

When administering the SCB tool, it is required that all team members (project, MEAL, and contracted external parties) follow high ethical standards and be aware of the context where a survey is deployed.

As in most professional codes of ethics, SCB administration will be guided by the following five ethical responsibilities towards survey participants:

1. **Voluntary participation**: Survey participants need to be informed of the SCB survey, the purpose of the survey and procedures, and any risks and benefits, including incentives or a lack thereof, for participation. No survey participant is coerced into taking the survey, or, even after giving consent to participate, answer any particular question if they do not want to.

2. **Informed consent**: The process of obtaining informed consent must be sensitive and adopted to the norms, customs, local environment, and literacy levels. The information about survey, roles and responsibilities of CRS and participants rights must be delivered in an understandable way. Informed consent is an integral part of acknowledging an individuals' autonomy and protecting those with diminished autonomy. Once a person is provided with all required information, it is assumed that he or she can make a free decision as to whether to participate or not. It is not intended that the SCB is administered to children and youth under 15 years. If they are youth over 15, parental consent is recommended; if they are youth over 15 and over the age of consent for that country, e.g. 18, then parental consent would not be needed. All data collection activities must document written or verbal consent or an alternative lawful basis for processing data. See Annex 6: Informed Consent Instruction and Example.

   Informed consent with persons with disabilities requires additional considerations and steps. Please plan accordingly and ensure research teams have the skills to adhere to the following guidance from WHO's Disability-Inclusive Health Toolkit and UNICEF's Essential Actions on Disability-Inclusive Humanitarian Action:

   • Assume persons with disabilities can provide consent, unless there is evidence to indicate otherwise. Do not assume people with intellectual disability are unable to provide consent.

   • Adapt the consent process to check whether a person with intellectual/ cognitive impairment understands the information provided and can retain and use it to make decisions. Be sure the individual can repeat back information in their own way and that they understand their options.

- Ensure that persons with disabilities are provided necessary information in accessible formats.
- Plan for additional time when collecting data from persons with disabilities so that they are not rushed and have time to understand what is being asked of them.
- Allow persons with disabilities to ask a trusted person to support them in deciding whether they want to consent and in answering questions. However, check whether they are being coerced.

3. **Confidentiality and anonymity**: Survey participants must be assured that their answers will be either anonymous or confidential. As part of the process of obtaining informed consent it should be clear to respondents how their responses will be treated and what measures CRS is implementing to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

4. **Privacy:** While the principles of voluntary participation and confidentiality are partly based on the principle of a person's right to privacy, the right to privacy extends beyond these matters. Privacy can also mean that people can expect to be free from intrusion; that is, they do not want survey researchers contacting them (for example for follow-up surveys at mid- and end-line), unless permission for such contacts has been given.

5. **Incentives**. Unless determined by CRS otherwise, it is important to explain that there is no material (or other) reward for participating in the survey. It is also important to emphasize that the individual respondents' answers will not affect program decisions.

Safeguarding

The teams using SCB for MEAL purposes must strictly adhere to and uphold safeguarding standards, policies and procedures. Incorporating the safeguarding focal point's involvement is highly recommended when contracting external consultants and conducting enumerator' training or contracting. Their role is to comprehensively explain and present the safeguarding standards to ensure that all individuals engaged in the project fully understand and uphold the principles, ensuring the safety and protection of all involved.

By safeguarding CRS means that all organizations have to ensure that their program staff, and those engaged by or in service to the organization, honor and protect the rights and dignity of all people, especially children and vulnerable adults, to live free from abuse and harm. More information about safeguarding can be found at CRS Policy for Safeguarding.

Conflict Sensitivity

Conflicts can affect research results. For example, sensitive social settings, restricted movement, political views, and others could influence the methodology and sampling.

SCJ tools could generate more conflict, depending on how the tool is administered; the enumerator's identity in relation to respondent identity, inclusion or lack of inclusion of diverse groups of respondents, staff, and partners engaged in MEAL activities.

While conducting research or any other action that aims to evaluate a program related to social cohesion, the research / MEAL team has to acknowledge that research is part of the context where it takes place. Sometimes MEAL activities and research are conducted in peaceful settings, and the potential adverse effects of MEAL and research actions are low. However, special considerations apply when planning MEAL activities and research in sensitive social settings.

By recognizing the context for the use of the SCB, teams must consider the following:

1. Power and conflict dynamics

2. Participants and enumerators safety

3. Raising community expectation

4. Aggravating patterns of exclusion related to sampling and voice selection

5. Risk of re-traumatization

The same conflict sensitivity approach is needed during dissemination of the results to local community members or local or national governments where MEAL activity or research was conducted.

Before taking any steps in data collection or result dissemination, it is highly recommended that the all data collection teams ensure that they included conflict sensitivity lenses and that dignity of every individual, group, and community will not be endangered or negatively influence social dynamics. Please see the recommendations in Annex 7: Conflict Sensitivity Lenses in MEAL & Research: Practical Tips.

Inclusion

Research teams should ensure they attempt to include a wide variety of identity groups in the data collection process. Identify which identity groups in the community are marginalized or vulnerable due to ethnicity, religious, age, gender, or disability status. Keep in mind that these groups are not homogenous, making an effort to sample from intersectional identities (i.e. older men with disabilities vs young women with disabilities; younger women from an ethnic minority group vs older men). Consult and engage organizations for persons with disabilities and other CSOs comprised of marginalized populations in the creation of sampling strategies, consent protocols, data collection, and analysis.

Involving persons with disabilities throughout the SCB field management process can help ensure SCB results reflect their experience. Teams should seek input from a wide variety of persons with disabilities of different ages, genders, impairments, and severity. Ways to do this include:

- Ensure appropriate sampling practice to include diverse groups.
- Provide SCB enumerators with disability awareness and etiquette training, involving persons with disabilities in the design and facilitation of training. While

the training need not be long--it can be as short as an hour-- it is necessary to reduce bias and discrimination.

Collect data using accessible formats in accessible locations and communicate information to the community in a variety of formats. Reference Commitment 5 of this accessibility guidance for more information. All SCB teams should collect disability status from all respondents and disaggregate results accordingly. The Disability Inclusive MEAL guidance and the guidance note on using CFM and WGQs should be referenced to select a standardized disability data collection tool and support data analysis.

Using SCB data

Inform programming

The SCB results should, when gathered in the pre-design phase, as project monitoring and/or for a baseline, be used as evidence to inform about program needs and guide responses. This can include how to address specific social, political, and economic phenomena, how to strengthen the project's peacebuilding or social cohesion and justice component(s), whom to include in programing and how to formulate project indicators. SCB results could be applied to develop specific set(s) of activities aiming to strengthen a program's positive impact, which could be identified during the community feedback sessions and/or the CRS and partner team's reflection sessions.

Adaptive management

Using the SCB in any project cycle phase, including for context monitoring, provides community-based data that allows management and leadership to make strategic decisions within the project scope and more broadly. It also supports integration of social cohesion approaches with other humanitarian and development sectors such as agriculture, food security, homes and communities, global climate change, and others.

Advocacy purposes

Evidence generated through the SCB could also be used to demonstrate to relevant stakeholders, policymakers, and donors both the needs and priorities on the ground, as well as program impacts. Thus, SCB data could be used to influence formal and informal policies and decision-making. When using SCB results for advocacy purposes, ensure that the data presented is relevant and adapted to the specific stakeholder to whom it is presented.

ANNEX 1:
SCB Tool (Statements, Response Options And Codes)

Note: The SCB tool allows for the modification of the words highlighted in gray, adapting them to the specific requirements of the context, which may include substituting them with terms such as 'state', 'municipality', or any other administrative unit.

#	Statement and preamble	Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Mostly	Completely	Refused	Do not know
Preamble: **[READ ALOUD]** I am going to read you a series of statements, and I want to know the extent to which they reflect your experience. I will read you the statements whether they reflect your experience either *completely, mostly, moderately, a little bit* or *not at all*. I want to remind you that there are no right or wrong answers. Please be open and honest. Everything you tell me will be kept confidential, and we will not share your individual responses. Your responses will not affect your participation in the project.							
Preamble: **[READ ALOUD]** In your daily life you may meet people of different identity groups. By identity groups I mean people from different religions, ethnic groups, genders, age groups, etc. To what extent do the following statements reflect your experience?							
S1	I have strong social ties across diverse groups in my community.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
S2	Members of my community trust each other regardless of identity differences.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
S3	Everyone is treated with dignity regardless of who they are.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
S4	People belonging to different identity groups accept and tolerate each other.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
S5	In my community, there are formal and informal opportunities where people belonging to different identity groups connect and interact.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
S6	My community has the capacity to peacefully manage social problems.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
Preamble: **[READ ALOUD]** People in your community may experience different living conditions, including access to food, water, income, and different types of housing. To what extent do the following statements reflect your experience?							
E1	Everyone in my community has decent living conditions.*	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
E3	People have equal access to livelihood and employment opportunities regardless of they are.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
E5	People enjoy equal access to basic services of a reasonable quality (e.g. health and education) regardless of who they are.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
E6	Goods and services are exchanged in a fair environment.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
E4	Public resources are managed fairly for the benefit of all people.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
Preamble: **[READ ALOUD]** In different communities, people may or may not share a common set of beliefs that guide their behaviors, support the common good and help their community to function well. These beliefs are called civic values and may include respect for the community, support of your neighbors, participation in community action, etc. To what extent do the following statements reflect your experience?							
P3	We share civic values as residents of the same country, regardless of our identity group.*	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
P1	I actively participate in activities that address shared concerns of the community.*	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
E2	People in my community help one another in times of need.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
P2	All people in my community are treated fairly by public officials.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
P4	Everyone can participate in political processes without fear.*	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
P5	Government representatives listen to people.*	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK
P6	People have confidence and trust in government institutions.*	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DNK

Please note that statements marked with an asterisk (*) have been updated and may differ from those in previous versions of SCB.

ANNEX 2:
Sample Size Calculation

Index	Location	Cluster	ICC	Baseline value*^	Endline value*+	SD
SCB Sample Size Calculation Parameters						
Overall	Bosnia	School	0.024	3.265		0.609
	Chad	- - - - - - - -		3.692	3.800	0.319
	DRC	Village	0.064	2.497		0.505
	Ghana	Region	0.028	3.281		0.633
	Niger	- - - - - - - -		4.057	4.154	0.665
	Nigeria	- - - - - - - -		4.367	3.651	0.751
	Mali	School	0.261	4.160	4.160	0.472
	Madagascar	Cooperative	0.11	3.853		0.445
	Philippines	Barangay	0.327	3.819		0.533
Sociocultural	Bosnia	School	0.063	3.599		0.586
	Chad	- - - - - - - -		4.034	3.941	0.316
	DRC	Village	0.090	2.674		0.505
	Ghana	Region	0.005	3.818		0.642
	Niger	- - - - - - - -		4.141	4.198	0.743
	Nigeria	- - - - - - - -		4.434	3.917	0.832
	Mali	School	0.233	4.477	4.466	0.528
	Madagascar	Cooperative	0.075	4.068		0.519
	Philippines	Barangay	0.339	3.894		0.564
Economic	Bosnia	School	0.009	3.248		0.752
	Chad	- - - - - - - -		3.749	3.733	0.481
	DRC	Village	0.065	2.247		0.689
	Ghana	Region	0.03	2.999		0.782
	Niger	- - - - - - - -		4.091	4.173	0.699
	Nigeria	- - - - - - - -		4.298	3.636	0.812
	Mali	School	0.197	3.755	3.748	0.547
	Madagascar	Cooperative	0.071	3.711		0.564
	Philippines	Barangay	0.249	3.802		0.633
Political	Bosnia	School	0.011	2.947		0.719
	Chad	- - - - - - - -		3.428	3.791	0.506
	DRC	Village	0.053	2.527		0.587
	Ghana	Region	0.029	3.06		0.805
	Niger	- - - - - - - -		3.974	4.112	0.720
	Nigeria	- - - - - - - -		4.308	3.424	0.849
	Mali	School	0.250	4.246	4.259	0.582
	Madagascar	Cooperative	0.12	3.784		0.482
	Philippines	Barangay	0.244	3.76		0.625
Horizontal	Bosnia	School	0.040	3.469		0.545
	Chad	- - - - - - - -		3.888	3.879	0.313
	DRC	Village	0.059	2.469		0.491
	Ghana	Region	0.016	3.548		0.621
	Niger	- - - - - - - -		4.110	4.182	0.683
	Nigeria	- - - - - - - -		4.369	3.771	0.770
	Mali	School	0.246	4.184	4.188	0.455
	Madagascar	Cooperative	0.091	3.871		0.481
	Philippines	Barangay	0.352	3.855		0.526

Vertical	Bosnia	School	0.008	2.944		0.792
	Chad	- - - - - - - -		3.383	3.676	0.418
	DRC	Village	0.085	2.551		0.594
	Ghana	Region	0.033	2.86		0.803
	Niger	- - - - - - - -		3.973	4.108	0.704
	Nigeria	- - - - - - - -		4.364	3.464	0.841
	Mali	School	0.230	4.130	4.120	0.582
	Madagascar	Cooperative	0.119	3.829		0.459
	Philippines	Barangay	0.242	3.762		0.644

*For Mali, these were control (baseline) and treatment values after 1 year of implementation using the updated SCB. Although the cluster was schools, the SCB was conducted with adults connected to the schools (parents, parent-teacher groups, etc.).
+For Niger, Nigeria, and Chad, these were midterm values.
^For Bosnia, these are values for youth respondents aged 15-17.

ANNEX 3:
Standard Demographic
Questions

All demographic data should be contextualized, as appropriate.

Required demographic questions:

- Respondent Sex (male, female, no response)
- Age (15-29 years old, 30+ years old)
- Respondent's education status (no education, primary, secondary, etc.)

Optional demographic questions, depending on identified use.

- Identity Group (ethnicity; religion; political affiliation; socio-economic status, etc.)
- Location (geography; rural/ urban)
- IDP status (refugee; IDP; host-country national)
- Employment Status (employed; self-employed; unemployed)

Projects or studies wishing to collect information on disability status should be informed by CRS' Disability Inclusive MEAL Guidance.

ANNEX 4:
Enumerator Training

Enumerator training is an essential part of the research process. The users must select appropriate enumerators for the research to mitigate conflict sensitivity issues, if any, and train them to minimize any effect on data collection or respondents' answers.

To ensure standardization of the tool application, users must organize enumerators training to ensure that enumerators:

1. Understand the research purpose.

2. Are familiar with survey protocols. The field manual should include clear research protocol with examples.

3. Are familiar with the tools including research questions and research procedures.

4. Understand enumerators' roles and responsibilities.

5. Are trained in research ethics and know how to present the informed consent form to respondents.

6. Understand CRS Safeguarding policies and procedures.

7. Are trained to use operate and use tablets during data collection process.

8. Other topics as applicable.

Important notes:

Enumerator training must be organized prior to any data collection processes. It is not recommended for the enumerator training to be shorter than three days. Always train more enumerators than needed to ensure that there is more than one group of trained enumerators available.

During the training give as many opportunities as possible for enumerators to practice tool usage.

Enumerators must understand the statements and key terms that are used in the questionnaire, as well as throughout the field manual. Key terms include common acronyms like SCB, open data kit (ODK), or other technical terms. Use this opportunity to check SCB translations.

Enumerators are not allowed to interpret the statements for respondents. They should be instructed to repeat the statement and read its description for more clarity if the respondent requests additional clarification. If the respondents could not rate the statements as expected, the enumerators should mark "do not know" as a response option.

Use quizzes and tests to evaluate level of enumerators' understanding of the tool, statements, vocal skills and data collection approach! Always have more than one enumerator trainer to avoid being biased.

Proposed Agenda for Enumerator Training

TIME	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
1hr45min	Welcome and Introduction • Purpose of the research/data collection • Research main and specific objective • Understanding enumerators roles and responsibilities.	• Enumerators' feedback on tool questions and final preamble / translation adaptation (if needed). • How to ask the statement? How should I explain if something is not clear enough to respondent? • What not to do during data collection.	• Practice use of SCB survey instrument + other survey tools • Practice FG and KII • Feedback from trainers.
15min	Morning Break	Morning Break	Morning Break
1hr45min	• Research ethics • Safeguarding • Informed consent (practical exercise)	• Debrief and update SCB	• Practice use of SCB survey instrument + other survey tools • Practice FG and KII
1h	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break
1hr45min	• SCJ theoretical framework	• Practice use of the tool in CommCare[5] • Practice in pairs	• Field planning • Sampling methods and • Logistics
15min	Afternoon Break	Afternoon Break	
1hr45min	• SCB (introduction to tool structure and items) • SCB (going through the statements, description and rationale)	• Introducing other tool if used. • Collecting qualitative data: FGD and Interviews	

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5   CommCare is recommended, but team can use other tools.

ANNEX 5:
Summary Statistics

CLICK HERE TO OPEN DOCUMENT FROM SCP1 CENTRAL RESOURCE LIBRARY

ANNEX 6:
Informed Consent Instruction and Example

CRS Suggested Informed Consent Language

Directions: As per CRS MEAL Policy and Procedure 9.1, all evaluation events and research activities must document written or verbal consent or an alternative lawful basis for processing data from adult respondents prior to data collection in accordance with local regulations and institutional review board (IRB) or ethics committee approval as relevant. At a minimum the assent and consent forms must state:

- *Purpose(s) and objective(s) of evaluation or research;*
- *Purely voluntary nature of participation;*
- *Potential risks related to participation in data collection, if any;*
- *Potential benefits related to participation in data collection, if any;*
- *What data is being collected;*
- *How this data will be used;*
- *How long data will be kept;*
- *Who data will be shared with; and*
- *How respondent confidentiality will be maintained.*

The following language is recommended prior to efforts to obtain consent.

Introduction:

Hello. My name is _____. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. We are a research team from CRS and (insert consultant team or partner name).

Purpose(s) and objective(s) of evaluation or research:

We are conducting a (survey, focus group discussion or interview) to learn about the impact of engaging youth in governance and decision-making processes. You have been selected to participate in a (survey, focus group discussion or interview) that includes questions on topics such as your perspectives of intergroup relationships on a community level and relationships among community members and authorities.

What data is being collected:

The (survey, focus group discussion or interview) will include questions about your participation and/or perspective of involving youth in governance and decision-making processes. These questions in total will take approximately 1 hour to 90 minutes to complete and your participation is entirely voluntary.

Purely voluntary nature of participation:

If you agree to participate, you can choose to stop at any time or to skip any questions you do not want to answer.

Potential risks related to participation in data collection, if any:

The are no known risks for participating in this (survey, focus group discussion or interview).

How respondent confidentiality will be maintained:

CRS and (insert consultant team or partner name) is required by law to maintain the confidentiality of your information and your privacy is important to us. Private information like your name will not be shared with anyone.

How this data will be used:

Information about your responses will be shared with researchers who will use it to gain a better understanding of the perspectives of people from your community.

With whom data will be shared:

These researchers are legally responsible to protect your information. Your answers will be completely confidential; we will not share information that identifies you with anyone.

How long data will be kept:

After entering your responses into a database, we will remove all information such as your name that could link these responses to you before sharing with others for the sake of research. This data will be maintained for a period of XXX.

Some responses may be shared with other audiences, but no information will be shared that can link you to the study.

Potential benefits related to participation in data collection, if any:

Some responses will be shared to help improve other programming designed to engage young people in civic action and decision-making processes. That is why the program is developing reports and publications to share our results.

Do you have any questions about the survey or what I have said? If in the future you have any questions regarding survey and the interview, or concerns or complaints we welcome you to contact CRS, by calling by (insert appropriate contact and number/ email address).

We will leave one copy of this form for you so that you will have record of this contact information and information about the study.

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Project Name or Research Project Name_____

City/District/Community/Neighborhood_____

Date____/_____/_____

Certificate of Consent by Respondent

I have read the preceding information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have asked were answered to my satisfaction.

I consent voluntarily to participate in this study.

_____   _____   ____/_____/_____

Name of Participant   Signature   Date
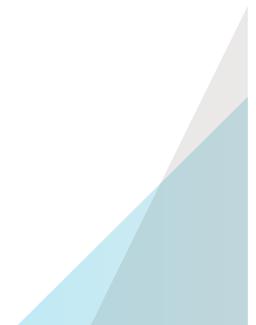
INFORMED CONSENT FORM
(For participants who have low levels of literacy)

If participant has low a level of literacy, a witness with a higher level of literacy selected by the participant without connection to the research team must sign. Participants who have low levels of literacy will thumb print as well. Alternatively, one of the enumerators can sign as witness of consent.

Certificate of Consent by Witness

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

_____
_____

Print name of witness   Signature of witness

Thumb print of participant

Date_____/_____/_____

Certificate of Consent by Witness the Researcher, Enumerator or Person Taking the Consent

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that the participant understands what is involved. I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.
A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been provided to the participant.

Print Name of Researcher/Person Taking the Consent_____

Signature of Researcher /Person Taking the Consent_____

Date ___/_____/_____

ANNEX 7: Conflict Sensitivity Lenses in MEAL & Research: Practical Tips
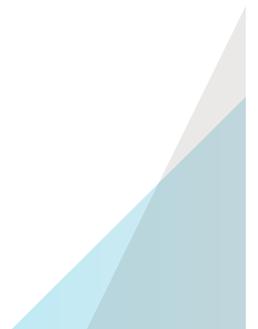
In addition to standard guidance on conflict sensitivity, special consideration applies when using the SCB for MEAL. This includes:

Ensure you mitigate power imbalances and conflict dynamics appropriately. In a specific context, power and conflict dynamics might influence research results and research administration can impact security. To address this:

- Organize a discussion to make sure that all relevant staff included in MEAL/research are aware of existing social dynamic in areas where activities/research will take place.

- Be aware of how any other research tools being used in addition to the SCB may potentially influence power and conflict dynamics.

- Consider buy-in from appropriate government institutions and/or representatives before setting up any MEAL/research stage, if results dissemination could negatively influence power dynamics or create risks.

- Be attentive to power dynamics within communities and even within seemingly similar groups, and further disaggregate as needed to ensure that the voices of those with lower power are heard.

Equal opportunities and bias: In a conflict setting, for example, a MEAL/research team composed primarily of people from one identity group is subject to bias and blind spots. Youth, meanwhile, may be far more likely to open up to enumerators from their own cohort, and in some settings it is inappropriate for women to speak with men who are not part of their families. To address this:

- Include diverse viewpoints and identities on the assessment team. Pay attention to the composition of the team leading the assessment as well as the enumerator cohort, if any.

- Aim to match the gender, age, and ethnic/religious/geographic affiliation of the interviewer/facilitator to that of the respondent(s), to generate greater trust and more reliable data.

- Collect information from those most affected by a given issue: youth assessments need to seek youth voices; gender assessments should include men's, women's, boys' and girls' perspectives, and so on.

Ensure participants and enumerators safety: Sometimes it can be risky for citizens living under an oppressive political regime to speak about governance and conflict issues, or sometimes people may not be able to participate in research due to ongoing armed conflict in or near their communities. To address this:

- Both for participants' and enumerators' safety, make sure that research activities are not being undertaken in active conflict zones.

- For participants, practice informed consent emphasizing strong confidentiality measures, including ensuring data collection forms will be closely held, and data will be anonymized before being viewed by a wider audience (even internally).

- For enumerators, ensure that they have all they need to travel safely, such as repellents, masks or any other relevant equipment.

Avoid raising community expectations. Sometimes the presence of other people in a community (CRS staff, expats, officials, or others) could implicitly raise community members' expectations of tangible benefits as a result of research processes. To address this:

- Make sure to communicate research objective(s) to participants in a clear and understandable way.

- Make sure that during data collection there are no significant political events, or any other event that could raise expectation of the participants.

Avoid aggravating patterns of exclusion. Administering the SCB in an inclusive way and collecting input from all social groups may run counter to social norms in the research area. A more inclusive research approach could create friction with dominant groups or leaders in the community, while adhering to local norms could aggravate patterns of exclusion. To address this:

- Carefully select the sample for the data collection.

- Ensure that enumerators are equipped with talking points to explain how respondents are being selected.

- Ensure that enumerators are trained in working with marginalized groups.

Avoid re-traumatization. Some of the SCB statements address sensitive issues, and the presentation of findings has the potential to be inflammatory or possibly traumatic for some individuals. Normally, it is not expected that an SCB-based assessment would harm participants, but it is good practice to:

- Be aware that some of the statements could trigger trauma responses with certain people.

- Train enumerators to recognize trauma signs and how to stop the research process in an appropriate, responsible way.

- Follow the Safeguarding protocol and ensure that respondents' wellbeing is supported as much as possible, and in accordance with local regulations.
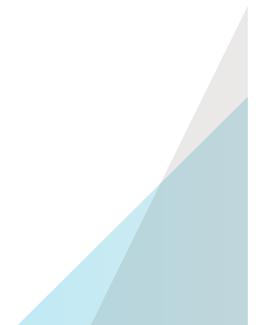
Women part of PROSPERAMOS project during a Soil Visual Evaluation activity, Guatemala.
Photo credit: Dinorah Lorenzana