Perceptions of social cohesion: Evidence from Kenya

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Abstract

This paper examines the views of Kenyans regarding the concept of social cohesion. A total of 27 focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted nationally with a small group of 8 - 10 knowledgeable community members alongside key informant interviews (KII). Participants were drawn from Government, the private sector, Faith Based Organizations and NGOs. The FGD and KII sessions were used to tease out detailed qualitative information on the status of cohesion in the country. 86% percent of the respondents indicated that they trust people from another ethnic group while 14% said that they 'do not trust at all' members of another ethnic group. 88% of the respondents perceived that religious groups are getting along well while 10% felt that they were not. Kenyans were less optimistic about relations between different socio-economic groups, with about only 16% feeling that they were getting along well and a high of 78% stating that socio-economic groups were getting along poorly. Most of the respondents indicated a relatively high level of trust in the Government of Kenya while 9% of them said that they 'never' trust the government. The paper concludes that Kenyans are increasingly aware of the differences in socio-economic status in society and there is an underlying skepticism on the implementation of the progressive Constitution and other policy initiatives.

Keywords: Social Cohesion; Ethnic Diversity; Inclusion

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1. Introduction

The majority of African countries who were colonized between late nineteenth century and early twentieth century attained independence either in the late 1950s or early 1960s. The Europeans who participated in the so-called "Scramble for and Partition of Africa" created territories whose citizens experienced difficulties living in peace with other ethnic groups (Michalopoulos, 2011). The Organization of African Union (OAU) which was created in 1963 opted not to rationalize the boundaries of its newly independent member states and those of the remaining colonies. The core concern of OAU's was over the likelihood of opening a plethora of claims and counter-claims, in the middle of intellectual debates over the most feasible road-map to a United States of Africa. As a result, newly independent African states inherited fundamental differences that would need consummate statesmanship to transform them into nation states (Huillery, 2009). Nevertheless, the African experience suggests failed statesmanship: the things that have divided have seemed greater than those that unite. This has resulted in weak social cohesion manifested in widespread blood-letting even over issues that are amenable to round-table resolution. A significant number of African states have failed to harmonize their diversity of customs, language and natural heritage, partly because of the mismanagement of independence era opportunities that could have fostered national unity (Englebert et. al, 2002). Thus, instead of such opportunities fostering national social cohesion and growth, they have often bred mistrust, social unrest, weak prosperity and inequality. The resulting suspicions have undermined the scope for economic growth and human welfare enhancement, in turn undermining the scope for nationwide development.

1.1. Study objectives

Over the last few decades, Kenya has experienced a web of violence which is politically instigated. However, the post-election violence witnessed in 2007/2008 general election demonstrated the weaknesses of social cohesion in Kenya and as such, this study sought to examine the status of social cohesion in Kenya with a view of improving the situation. This study was guided by the following primary objective: a) Exploring the perception of Kenya people regarding the concept of social cohesion.

2. Literature review

2.1. The social cohesion concept

There is lack of consensus among scholars regarding the term "Social Cohesion". Markus (2010) is of the opinion that there is an agreed definition of the term as a result of its concentration on intangibles, including the extents of wellness, group attachment as well as belonging and participating in shared outcomes. Drawing on Easterly (2006), social cohesion is in most cases associated with social capital (Easterly, 2006). However, Green et al. (2003) emphasize the possible distinction between the two phenomena, pointing out that the trust and reciprocity that enable collective action and bonds within communities – social capital – do not always exist at higher levels of aggregation of society. This distinction between the community and

society (national) levels is also underscored by Botterman et al. (2012) who distinguish the characteristics of a rural from an urban aspect of cohesion, by implication, questioning the usefulness of a single nationwide cohesion index. Based on a wide literature review, Acket et al. (2011) distinguish analyses of social cohesion based on sociological and psychological concerns with integration and social stability, from those which are policy oriented, seeing the phenomenon as a pre-condition for economic prosperity. Social cohesion is seen to have multiple facets that influence different spheres of human life, as well as different types of social relations.

Mwabu et al. (2013) considers social cohesion and social conflict as two sides of the same phenomenon. Social cohesion has two key aspects: (a) An equilibrium probability of peaceful coexistence; and (b) A stable equilibrium of the probability of peaceful coexistence (Mwabu et al., 2013). When a society is at a stable equilibrium, expectations of individuals and communities are generally being met. The term 'stable equilibrium' denotes the ability of communities to return to a non-conflict state within a 'short' duration after a disturbance. Frequent conflicts of a deliberate nature are incompatible with a cohesive society. Social cohesion is not a static social equilibrium, but rather a dynamic one. It is a stable equilibrium of peaceful desires, attitudes and behaviors'. Change and peace are the norm in a cohesive society, with conflicts occurring rarely and over short durations. The study measured social cohesion as *1-p*: where: *p* is the probability of social conflict; and *1-p* is the probability of peace. Social cohesion is defined as *"peace"* and conflict as *"absence of peace"*

In this case, social cohesion had one component (peace) and one determinant of major policy interest, namely trust – with controls for regional, gender, and education attainment. This model provided a simplified analytical tool but could easily be criticised as being under-parameterized. This simplified framework has since been extended through further reviews discussions. Langer and Stewart (2012) conceptualise social cohesion (good social relations) to be composed of 3 components (a triangle): The extent of equity (fairness); the level of trust among people; and people's propensity to prefer national to their group (or ethnic) identity. When people have a common identity, they tend to trust one another and also remain fair to one another. The relations here are good in the sense that the critical outcome is peace, an instrument for economic prosperity. Based on a review of the literature, the current study extends this triangular conceptualization to a 'hexagon' of six components of social cohesion (good social relations), namely: peace (absence of social conflict); generalised trust (complete confidence or faith in people with whom one coexists irrespective of background or circumstance); equity (just distribution of resources and power across individuals and groups in a society); cultural diversity25 (the extent to which individuals embrace varieties in ethnic backgrounds and heritages, religious beliefs, marriages, political ideologies and associations; national identity (such as whether individuals express preferences for a national identity) and prosperity. Social cohesion, according to this hexagon, is "peace with equity, trust, cultural diversity, national identity and prosperity." (Langer et. al., 2015).

Peace is a necessary but not a sufficient component for social cohesion (peaceful and meaningful coexistence of different communities). Peace is meaningless if it exists, but is inaccessible to communities which consequently hurt needlessly, or to a majority of people steeped in abject poverty. Cultural diversity is a sign of tolerance and appreciation of differences in identity or other characteristic. The ultimate outcome is

sustainable development, which is a function of peace. We note that sustainable development goes beyond mere economic growth to include inclusive development which focuses on the resulting quality of life. The hexagon illustrates how we envisage the assessment and analysis of social cohesion in formulating a social cohesion index. The factors explaining the variation of the index over space and over time will of course not be included in the computation of the respective indices.
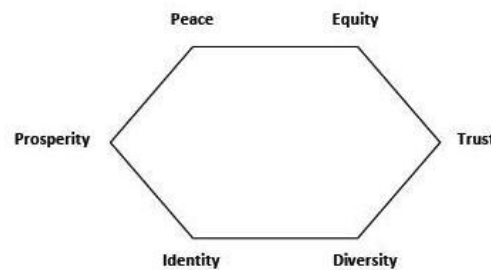

Figure 1. Components of Social Cohesion

2.2. Significance of social cohesion for Kenya

Social cohesion – conceptualised as a social phenomenon whose elements include equity, growth and legitimacy of institutions – is important for its own sake and for creating an environment of peaceful co-existence. But it also has instrumentality in generating the growth of assets and opportunities whose wise management can fuel harmony and improve human welfare. The importance of social cohesion for Kenya can be gleaned from other countries' experiences. In a review of the EU Cohesion Policy, Farole et al. (2010) refer to various growth models that condition performance on the status of human capital, entrepreneurship, innovation and its assimilation, exploitation of scale economies, access to markets, and on institutions. Farole et al (2010) argue that differences in these respects across EU countries undermine the scope for lagging EU economies to tend towards their respective production frontiers, fostering "regional unevenness" that perpetuates "persistent underdevelopment" of the laggards. The Kenyan context is analogous in two ways driving persistent under-development: it under-achieves for each of the conditions listed above; and it has wide internal disparities in the same.

For Kenya's natural, socio-economic and political heritage, a preferred conception of cohesion would focus initially on institutional legitimacy – such as implied in the Constitution (2010) – which would consequently create the framework for equitable growth. The creation of the Kenyan colonial territory brought more than 40 ethnic groups together, but subsequently balkanised them along those very lines. The country's divergent natural heritage biased colonial era investments in favour of the higher potential parts of the country. Independence era policies and practices have not mitigated that colonial heritage, resulting in extensive regional inequalities that undermine national cohesion. While the frequency of ethnic, social and other resource conflicts is low, their very existence undermines a nationwide view of the country's development potential. Successive independence governments have failed to take advantage of opportunities for equitable interventions that lead the way for private initiatives and promote trust, peace, harmonious

diversity and national identity, and consequent prosperity. In enhancing national social cohesion, such a turn-around would enhance opportunities for economic growth and improved human welfare.

2.3. Theoretical framework

The present study's theoretical framework draws on Rajulton *et al.*, (2007), focusing on the conceptual issues in the relationships between socioeconomic wellbeing, inequalities and social cohesion. In keeping with the perception that social relations revolve around economic, political and/or socio-cultural concerns, Rajulton et al. (2007) develop a framework within which to conceptualize and analyze social cohesion, suggesting various characteristics of the phenomenon. They also suggest the application of a two-stage factor analysis process to select the most suitable observed variables that load most heavily on the unobserved factor, social cohesion. The framework has six dimensions measuring economic, political and socio-cultural factors whose elements are subjected to Principal Components Analysis (PCA), which distinguishes the significant ones to be combined to produce an overall indicator of social cohesion.
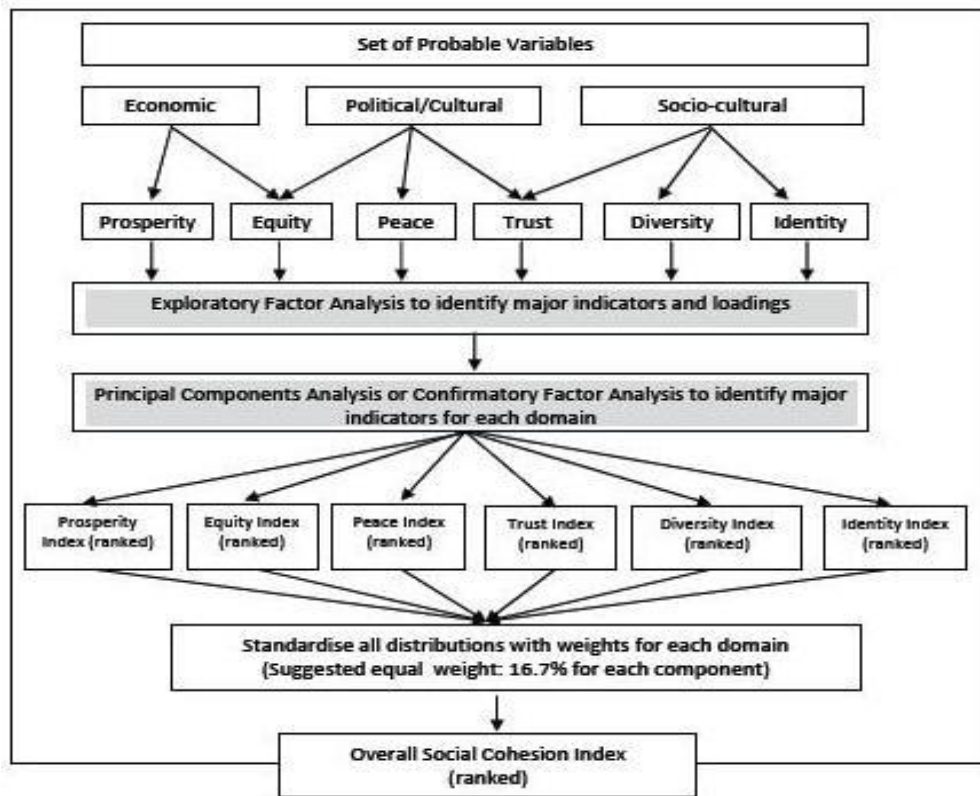
Figure 2. Dimensions of Social Cohesion (Source: Rajulton et al., 2007)

It is important to gauge the direction and extent of social cohesion, especially against the backdrop of realities that divide – as well as unite – society. Yet, as in the case of social capital, there is no universally agreed measure of social cohesion. Thus, it is its tangible, measurable underlying facets that the analyst must consider, rather than the concept itself. Of the facets, too, Markus (2010) argues that the measure must be

based on perceptions of reality – generated from surveys, rather than some objective measure of belonging, pride in or satisfaction with life, mistrust, discrimination and service delivery (infrastructure). The implication of its multidimensionality is that its measure focuses on various indicators rather than a single one (as conceptualised by Mwabu et al. (2013). Such a set of indicators must lend themselves to effective intertemporal/ longitudinal monitoring (Markus, 2010), based on survey and other panel data. However, a combination of both perceptions data and attribute data has been used in other social cohesion studies, such as by Rajulton et al. (2007). Such a framework can also enable the comparison of cohesion across regions, and indeed, across counties.

On transforming variables in the multi-dimensional context, Barcena *et al* (2010) that the function should satisfy two minimum requirements. First, since the attributes are measured in different units, they must be translated into a common scale for aggregation. Second, the functions should avoid assigning high relative importance to extreme values that might exist in the original distribution. One of the most commonly used transformation methods is standardisation based on the range. There is no normative guideline on the most appropriate method, and the different methods can produce different results.

The structure of the weighting factors of the different attributes that make up a multidimensional index is critical. According to Barcena *et al* (2010), any weighting scheme involves a trade-off among the dimensions considered, and therefore represents an implicit value judgment regarding the elements that determine (and to what extent they determine) the numerical value of the indicator being analysed. Various weighting strategies have been discussed in the literature including equal weighting for all attributes, weighting based on data, market prices, or a normative approach.

3. Sampling methodology and survey organization

3.1. Introduction

Data collection for the Social Cohesion Index was undertaken in June to July 2013. The survey instruments were organised in one questionnaire - Focus group discussion (FGD)/key informant interview (KII) guides. There were twenty seven FGD sessions covered involving participants across all the counties. Each of Kenya's former provinces had at least one FGD session.

3.2. The FGD and KII interviews

The focus group discussions (FGDs) were administered to a small group of a minimum of eight (8) knowledgeable community members. The members were selected with the assistance of the National Cohesion Integration Commission (NCIC) which in turn mainly relied on its extensive local network of Cohesion Monitors. The FGD and KII sessions were used to tease out detailed qualitative information on the status of cohesion in the country. A total of 27 FGD were conducted nationally. Nairobi region had one FGD while each of the other regions (former provinces) had 3 to about 12 FGD sessions each. There were a similar

number of key informant interviews (KII) interviews. Participants in the FGD and KIIs were drawn from Government, the private sector, faith based organisations, and NGOs.

4. Result presentation and analysis

4.1. Perception on social cohesion in Kenya

There are strong linkages between social cohesion and the socio-economic status of a country, government effectiveness, and the predictability of the policy environment, including the quality of policies. Among the important factors that threaten social cohesion in contemporary society include the widening social and cultural gaps, weakening institutional and governance structures, the erosion of traditional sources of a sense of belonging, and levels of trust for political institutions. This section of this report uses data collected by the 2013 household survey to provide a snapshot of where the country is with respect to cohesion. It is worth repeating at this stage that the survey questionnaire was standard across a country with wide differentials in human welfare and other development indicators. Such a standard questionnaire approach runs the risk of inadequately capturing the key local issues in the regions, undermining the strength of regional findings. Yet, such an approach is vindicated in the search for a *national* index; regional issues have been gleaned separately through focus group discussions (FGD) and key informant interviews.

4.2. Characteristics of survey respondents

Table 1 below presents the age distribution, education characteristics and employment status of the sampled respondents during the national cohesion household survey. Nearly half of the respondents (about 49%) were aged between 18 and 35 years, while another 35% were aged between 36 and 55 years. With respect to educational status, about 14% of the respondents stated that they had no education, while 48% and 28%, respectively, had primary and secondary level education as their highest attainments. The remaining 11%either had tertiary college or university education.

Table 1. Age, education and employment characteristics of survey respondents Source: SCI survey, 2013

Age(Years)		Education Status		Employment Status	
18-35	48.6%	None	13.8%	Paid Employee	24.1%
36-55	34.8%	Primary	47.5%	Working employer	2.6%
56-65	9.3%	Secondary	27.9%	Own account worker	44.2%
66-above	7.3%	Tertairy college	7.6%	Unpaid family worker	27.7%
		University	3.1%	Apprentice	1.5%
Observations(N)	4,553		4,566		3,303

The respondents were mainly 'own account workers' – self-employed – who made up about 44% of the sample, followed by unpaid family workers (27.7%) and paid employees (24%). Working employers (2.6%) and apprentices (1.5%) accounted for about 5% of the worker sample.

4.3. Trust

The survey enabled an investigation of the extents of trust of other groups, such as family and ethnicity. Nationwide, the levels of reported generalised trust for people of another ethnic group are relatively high. Eighty six (86) percent of the respondents indicated that they either 'trust completely' or 'trust somewhat' 'people from another ethnic group', as shown in Table 2 Respondents who stated that they 'do not trust at all' members of another ethnic group were about 14% in 2013.

Table 2. Trusting another Ethnic Group

	Trust completely	**Trust somewhat**	**Do not trust**
National	**38.3**	**48.0**	**13.7**
Region			
Rural	42.8	43.4	13.9
Urban	31.8	54.8	13.4
Gender			
Male	41.2	44.8	14.0
Female	36.5	50.0	13.5
Education			
None	41.8	41.4	16.8
Primary	41.2	45.7	13.1
Secondary	35.0	51.8	13.2
Tertiary college	34.9	51.7	13.4
University	23.0	62.0	15.1
Age(Years)			
18-35	35.0	48.9	16.0
36-55	39.7	48.3	12.0
56-65	42.8	46.7	10.5
66-above	48.4	42.4	9.2

Source: SCI Survey, 2013

A larger proportion of males than females 'trust completely' compared to the larger share of females who 'trust somewhat' members of another ethnic group. The share of those who 'trust completely' declines with education, while that of those who 'trust somewhat' grows, and the respective shares increase and decrease consistently across age groups. Complete trust is also greater in rural areas.

4.3.1. Relations

The perceptions of Kenyans were gauged on the "nature of relationships" among certain groups, such as whether these groups are getting along well, including family members, neighbours, different ethnic groups, races, religious groups and socioeconomic groups. Across all the categories inquired about, the shares of respondents feeling that the various groups were getting on 'very well' or simply 'well' stood above 70%.Perceptions of good relations were highest for the family (96%) and least high for races (76%). Indeed,

the largest share of non-commitment among the respondents was the 17% on the race question. About 88% of the respondents perceived that religious groups are getting along well. One out of every ten Kenyans (10%) and 78% of the respondents perceive that people of different religions and socio-economic groups were getting along well, respectively. In relative terms, Kenyans are less optimistic about relations between different socio-economic groups, with about 78% feeling that different socio-economic groups were getting along "very well" or "somewhat well" – with a high of 16% respondents stating that socio-economic groups were getting along "poorly" or "very poorly." About 7% did not respond to this particular issue.
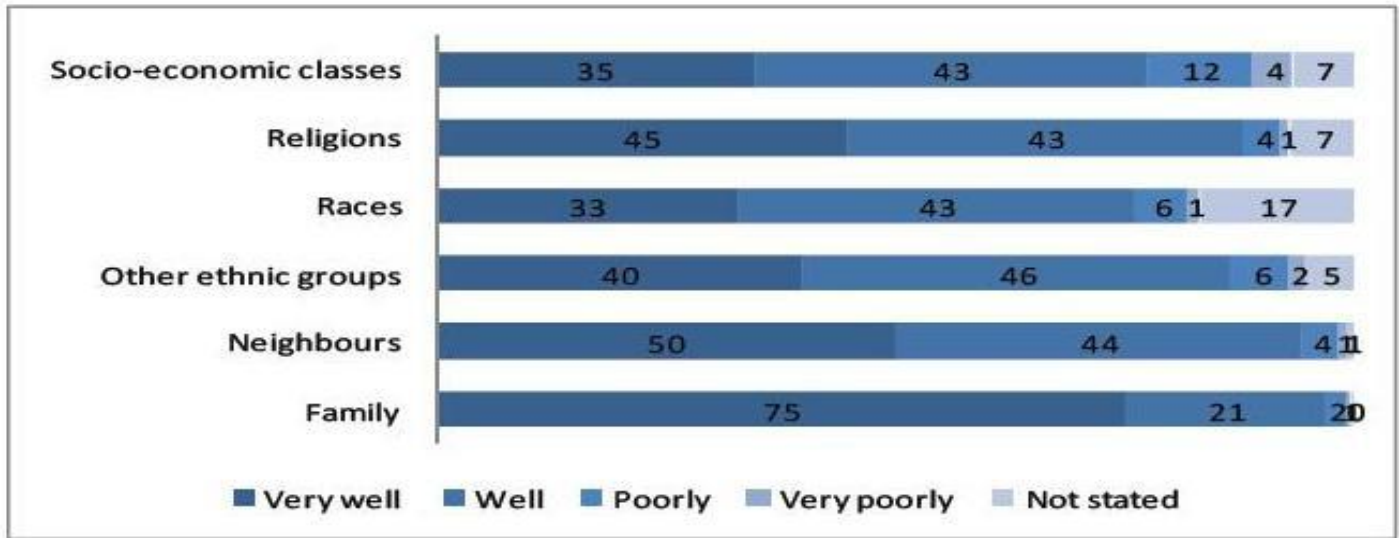
Figure 3. Perception on nature of groups relations "these days" (% of respondents)

4.3.2. Trust in Institutions

There was relatively high support for government policy and administration of justice. However, this perception varied between rural and urban areas, with residents in urban areas having higher perception on performance of political institutions relative to the rural counterparts. Perhaps this is due to higher level of information sharing in urban areas relative to rural areas. There was marked low level of perception response in relation to confidence in government. Majority of the respondents indicated confidence that the government will always or most of the time do what is right to improve the lives of Kenyans.

The 2013 survey data shows that about 63% of respondents indicated that the government of Kenya can be trusted 'always' and another 29% stated that the government can be trusted 'most of the time' indicating a relatively high level of trust for the government. Respondents who indicated that they 'never' trust the government were about 9%. With respect to region of residence, rural residents are more likely to 'always' trust the government relative to urban residents.

Table 3. How often do you think the government can be trusted to do the right thing for Kenyans? 2013

	Always	**Most of the time**	**Some of the time**	**Never**
National	**35.6**	**29.3**	**25.7**	**9.4**
Region				
Rural	38.8	27.1	25.7	8.5
Urban	31.0	32.5	25.8	10.7
Gender				
Male	36.8	28.1	25.2	9.9
Female	34.8	30.1	26.0	9.1
Education				
None	39.8	30.8	21.2	8.3
Primary	38.0	28.7	24.3	9.1
Secondary	34.2	28.4	26.8	10.6
Tertiary college	25.4	31.6	33.7	9.3
University	24.3	34.0	33.3	8.4
Age group (Years)				
age18-35	33.8	29.4	27.0	9.7
age36-55	36.2	29.5	24.0	10.2
age56-65	36.6	29.9	25.6	7.9
age66-above	43.7	25.7	25.0	5.6

Source: SCI Survey, 2013

Table 4. How often do you think human rights institutions can be trusted to do the right think for Kenyans? 2013

|	**Always**	**Most of the time**	**Some of the time**	**Never**
National	**42.7**	**31.1**	**20.8**	**5.3**
Region				
Rural	46.9	28.8	19.0	5.3
Urban	36.8	34.4	23.4	5.4
Gender				
Male	43.1	30.3	20.2	6.4
Female	42.5	31.6	21.2	4.6
Education				
None	48.0	31.0	14.0	7.0
Primary	45.7	30.2	19.9	4.2
Secondary	40.4	30.2	23.4	6.0
Tertiary college	34.8	33.5	25.0	6.6
University	26.0	42.9	25.3	5.9
Age group (Years)				
age18-35	43.8	30.2	20.4	5.6
age36-55	40.8	31.9	22.1	5.3
age56-65	41.7	33.6	19.2	5.5
age66-above	47.1	29.8	19.3	3.8

Source: SCI Survey, 2013

A larger proportion of Kenyans always 'trust' and trust 'most of the time' human rights institutions than they do the government. In 2013, about 43% of respondents indicated that human rights institutions can be trusted 'always' while another 31% stated that these institutions can be trusted 'most of the time'.

Levels of trust bestowed upon the judiciary appear to be relatively high. About 42% of Kenyans trust the judiciary 'always' and another 29% trusts the judiciary 'most of the time.' Only 7.5% 'never' trust the judiciary, with urban and rural rates of about 10% and 6%, respectively. Females have higher levels of trust than males. Education also seems to dampen the proportion of those who trust 'always' (Table 5).

Table 5. How often do you think the courts (judiciary) can be trusted to do the right thing for Kenyans? 2013

	Always	Most of the time	Some of the time	Never
National	**42.3**	**29.0**	**21.2**	**7.5**
Region				
Rural	48.0	26.6	20.0	5.5
Urban	34.0	32.5	22.9	10.4
Gender				
Male	40.3	28.9	21.6	9.2
Female	43.6	29.1	20.9	6.4
Education				
None	44.1	32.8	18.0	5.1
Primary	47.6	27.8	19.1	5.4
Secondary	38.2	27.7	22.9	11.2
Tertiary college	33.6	30.9	26.4	9.0
University	22.3	36.8	31.8	9.2
Age group (Years)				
18-35	41.2	29.5	20.6	8.7
36-55	41.5	29.4	22.8	6.4
56-65	47.8	25.7	20.5	6.0
66-above	48.6	26.4	19.1	5.9

Source: SCI Survey, 2013
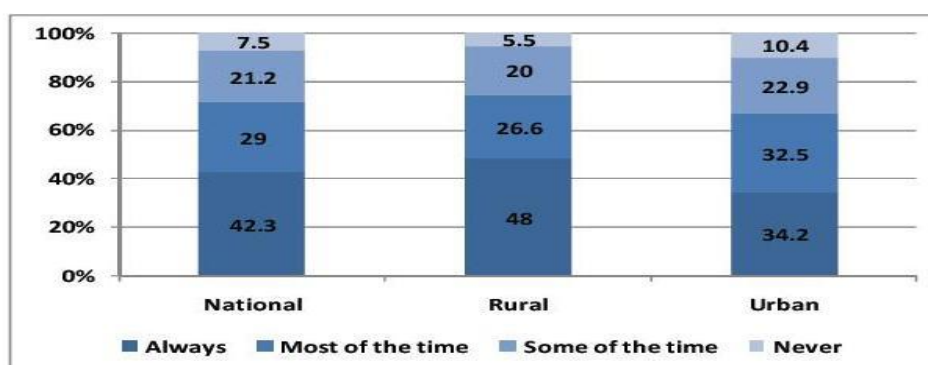
Source: SCI Survey, 2013

Figure 4. How often do you think the courts (judiciary) can be trusted to do the right thing for Kenyans? 2013

4.4. Political participation

The level of political participation in decision making (such as voting) and social networks are important in promoting coordination and cooperation for mutual benefits of a community. The level of sense of belonging was high among Kenyans, and discomforts arising out of one's race or religion seem to be rare in Kenya with regard to feeling uncomfortable or out of place in the recent past when participating in any function or activity in Kenya because of one's ethnic, racial or religious background. A majority of the respondents were not uncomfortable about their ethnic background, race and religion.

When asked if the individuals felt uncomfortable or out of place in any function of activity because of one's ethnicity, race or religion, 88%, 98% and 95% did not feel uncomfortable because of their ethnic background, race and religion, respectively.

About 12% had, however, felt some discomfort or felt out of place due to their ethnicity. About 2% stated that they felt uncomfortable or out of place in any function or activity due to their race, while only about 5% stated that they felt uncomfortable or out of place due to their religion. This finding is consistent with the fact that 11% and 6% were optimistic about ethnic and religious relations and indicated that inter-ethnic relations and inter-religious relations, respectively, will get worse in the next 10 years. Further, questions on voting and status of institutions were asked during the survey and the results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. State of political participation

	Voted in general elections	Signed a petition	Written or spoken to an MP, Senator or Governor	Attended a protest, march or petition
Yes	87.4	1.4	6.4	3.2
No	12.6	98.6	93.6	96.8
Total	4,527	4,509	4,508	4,502

Table 7. Reasons for not voting

Polling station was far	8.9%
Incapacitated	11.5%
Sold national identity	1.2%
No party represents my interest	0.8%
Candidate represented my interest	3.3%
Too busy	10.6%
Did not register as a voter	61.5%
No identity card	2.2%
Observations (N)	586

While over 87% had voted during the last election, most Kenyans rarely participate in social activities such as attending a protest, signing a petition and communication with a Member of Parliament (MP), Senator or Governor. Only a small proportion had signed a petition (1.4%), written to any politician (6.4%) and participated in a protest (3.2%), respectively.

Further, respondents who did not vote were asked to provide a reason for not voting. Surprisingly, majority of those who did not vote (62%) had not registered as voters. This constitutes the proportion of respondents who were not willing to participate in a political process such as voting.

4.5. Diversity

Most respondents (65%), 'strongly agreed' that intermarriage across ethnic groups promotes ethnic complementarities. Only about 10% either 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed.' When the proportion of those who 'strongly agree' or 'agree' are amalgamated, the variations across sex and education are small.

Table 8. How proud are you of your community (customs)? 2013

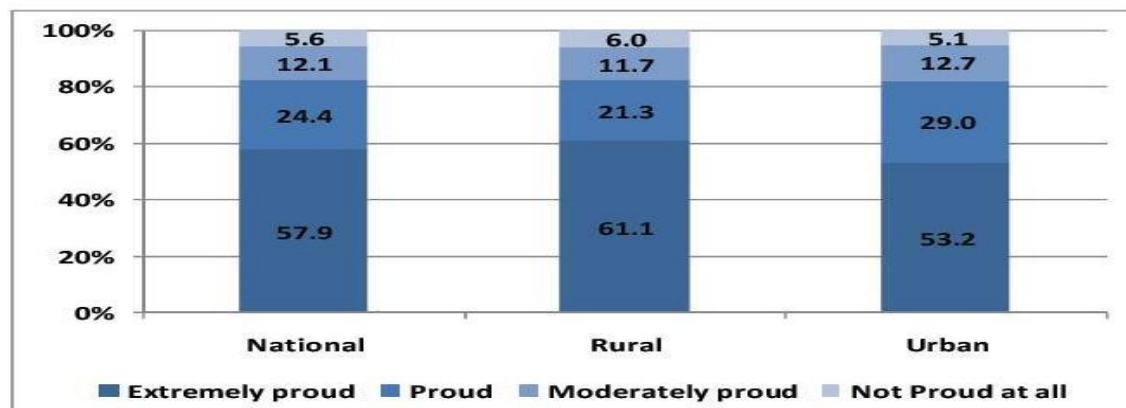|	Extremely proud	Proud	Moderately proud	Not proud at all
National	**57.9**	**24.4**	**12.1**	**5.6**
Region				
Rural	61.1	21.3	11.7	6.0
Urban	53.2	29.0	12.7	5.1
Gender				
Male	59.1	22.4	12.8	5.7
Female	57.1	25.7	11.6	5.6
Education				
None	60.6	25.2	8.8	5.4
Primary	60.5	23.4	11.0	5.2
Secondary	56.7	24.2	12.2	6.8
Tertiary college	49.3	28.2	17.7	4.7
University	44.0	28.1	23.2	4.7
Age group (Years)				
18-35	57.1	25.4	11.8	5.8
36-55	56.9	24.0	13.4	5.7
56-65	60.5	22.0	11.7	5.8
66-above	65.1	21.2	9.4	4.3

Source: SCI Survey, 2013

Figure 5. How proud are you of your community (customs)? 2013

It appears many respondents have close friends who have other ethnic identity (rather than their own). About 79% stated that they 'always' have close friendship with people of other ethnic identity. Urban residents (about 89%) are more likely to have close friendship than rural residents (about 71%). Education also increases the proportion of those who are likely to 'always' have close friendship with people of other ethnicity. Even with the stated levels of friendship among Kenyans, the levels of interactions across ethnicities may be modest given that most Kenyans (47%) spend 'only some of the time' with people of other ethnicity rather than 'most of the time' (about 28%). Besides other factors, the levels of interactions may be determined by area of residence.

Table 9. How often do you spend your free time with people of other ethnic groups? 2013

	Extremely proud	**Proud**	**Moderately proud**	**Not proud at all**
National	**57.9**	**24.4**	**12.1**	**5.6**
Region				
Rural	61.1	21.3	11.7	6.0
Urban	53.2	29.0	12.7	5.1
Gender				
Male	59.1	22.4	12.8	5.7
Female	57.1	25.7	11.6	5.6
Education				
None	30.6	25.2	8.8	5.4
Primary	60.5	23.4	11.0	5.2
Secondary	56.7	24.2	12.2	6.8
Tertiary college	49.3	28.2	17.7	4.7
University	44.0	28.1	23.2	4.7
Age group (Years)				
18-35	57.1	25.4	11.8	5.8
36-55	56.9	24.0	13.4	5.7
56-65	60.5	22.0	11.7	5.8
66-above	65.1	21.2	9.4	4.3

Source: SCI Survey, 2013

Individuals were asked to describe their frequency of communication with people of other ethnicities'. Most of the respondents (44%) communicated with people of other ethnicity 'only some of the time' followed by 29% who communicated 'most of the time', while about 16% communicated 'always.' Only 10% indicated that they never communicated with people of other ethnicity.

4.6. Identity

Identity is measured using pride one has over the national identity as well as other social identities. Respondents were asked to state their levels of pride at being Kenyan. Most respondents (about 91%) were either 'extremely proud' or 'proud' to be Kenyan. Only under 2% were 'not proud at all' while about 7% were moderately proud. Rural and urban rates are not conspicuously different.

Table 10. How proud are you to be Kenyan?

	Extremely proud	**Proud**	**Moderately proud**	**Not proud at all**
National	**72.0**	**18.9**	**7.3**	**1.7**
Region				
Rural	71.4	18.6	7.8	2.1
Urban	72.9	19.5	6.5	1.1
Gender				
Male	73.8	17.2	6.4	2.6
Female	71.0	20.0	7.9	1.2
Education				
None	60.9	27.3	9.1	2.6
Primary	73.6	17.6	7.6	1.2
Secondary	74.8	17.4	6.1	1.7
Tertiary college	70.0	19.8	8.3	1.9
University	72.6	17.7	4.6	5.1
Age group (Years)				
18-35	71.8	19.7	7.1	1.4
36-55	71.3	18.4	8.3	2.1
56-65	73.5	16.9	8.0	1.6
66-above	75.2	19.2	3.6	1.9

Source: SCI Survey, 2013

Table 11. To what extent do you agree with the view that "your community has a strong sense of identity? 2013

	Always	**Most of the time**	**Sometimes**	**Never**
National	**60.5**	**27.8**	**9.4**	**2.3**
Region				
Rural	64.6	25.8	8.2	1.4
Urban	54.4	30.6	11.3	3.7
Gender				
Male	62.4	27.1	9.0	1.5
Female	59.3	28.2	9.7	2.8
Education				
None	64.7	29.8	4.4	1.1
Primary	60.0	27.9	9.8	2.2
Secondary	59.3	26.3	11.3	3.1
Tertiary college	6.9	28.3	7.2	1.5
University	55.2	30.3	11.8	2.8
Age group (Years)				
18-35	59.0	28.4	10.5	2.2
36-55	61.3	26.2	9.1	3.3
56-65	61.5	30.1	7.8	0.6
66-above	66.0	27.0	6.4	0.5

Source: SCI Survey, 2013

4.7. Peace

In earlier sections, peace was defined as the absence of conflict. Questions to gauge the state of peace in the country revolved around both individual and group variables and characteristics. With respect to ethnic groups, respondents were asked to rate how people of different ethnic groups get along. At the national level, most respondents stated that different ethnic groups get along 'very well' (40%) or 'well' (47%). Only about 9% said the ethnic groups were getting along either 'poorly' or 'very poorly.' A larger proportion of rural respondents (about 88%) than the urban residents (about 84%) stated either that ethnic groups were getting along 'very well' or 'well'. Relative to their views on how people of different ethnic groups were getting along, respondents were generally less optimistic about how people of different socioeconomic class were getting along. Most respondents stated that peoples of different socio-economic class were getting along 'well' (43%) followed by 'very well' 34%, 'poorly' (12%) and 'very poorly' (5%).

Table 12. Overall, how would you say people of different socio-economic class are getting along these days? 2013

	Very well	Well	Poorly	Very poorly	Don't know
National	**34.3**	**42.7**	**12.1**	**4.8**	**6.2**
Region					
Rural	37.2	42.1	11.6	3.8	5.3
Urban	30.0	43.5	12.8	6.3	7.4
Gender					
Male	35.6	41.0	13.8	4.4	5.2
Female	33.5	43.7	11.0	5.1	6.7
Education					
None	42.0	43.0	6.6	3.2	5.2
Primary	35.3	41.9	11.7	4.7	6.5
Secondary	30.9	42.9	13.8	5.6	6.7
Tertiary college	32.8	39.0	17.8	5.6	4.9
University	24.5	57.1	9.6	4.4	4.4
Age group (Years)					
18-35	32.9	43.7	12.5	5.6	5.3
36-55	36.0	40.9	12.0	4.6	6.6
56-65	36.8	42.5	11.3	3.2	6.2
66-above	34.0	42.9	10.3	3.2	9.6

Source: SCI Survey, 2013

Most respondents seem to attest that they relate 'very well' (44% or 'well' (43%) with people of other ethnic groups even after the effects of the post-election violence of 2007. The rural proportion is slightly higher than the urban proportion among those whose response was "very well". The relatively high levels of good relations are supported by peoples' experiences on conflicts. Asked whether they had constant conflicts with their neighbours', most respondents (95%) stated that it was 'not true' that this was the case. This applied in approximately equal measure across rural and urban areas.

Table 13. You have constant conflicts with your immediate neighbours?

	True	Somewhat true	Not true
National	**1.3**	**3.9**	**94.9**
Region			
Rural	1.4	3.8	94.8
Urban	1.1	4.0	94.9
Gender			
Male	1.2	3.2	96.6
Female	1.3	4.3	94.4
Education			
None	1.6	7.2	91.2
Primary	1.1	3.5	95.5
Secondary	1.6	2.6	95.8
Tertiary college	0.4	6.2	9.34
University	2.2	2.5	95.3
Age group (Years)			
18-35	1.1	4.2	94.7
36-55	1.6	3.6	94.7
56-65	1.1	4.4	94.5
66-above	0.8	2.2	96.9

Source: SCI Survey, 2013

Only about 13% of the respondents stated that they have been victims of crime over the last one year. The proportion of those who have been victims of crime is larger in urban (about 17%) than rural areas (about 10%). With respect to sex, males and females have proportions of about 15% and 12%, respectively – suggesting slightly higher levels for males being victims of crime.

Table 14. Have you ever been a victim of crime in the last one year?

	Yes	No
National	**13.0**	**87.0**
Region		
Rural	10.4	89.6
Urban	16.6	83.4
Gender		
Male	14.5	85.5
Female	12.0	88.0
Education		
None	10.0	90.0
Primary	12.6	87.4
Secondary	13.5	86.5
Tertiary college	15.3	84.7
University	18.7	81.3
Age group (Years)		
18-35	13. 6	86.4
36-55	13.2	86.8
56-65	10.2	89. 8
66-above	11.8	88.2

Source: SCI Survey, 2013

4.8. Prosperity

Respondents were asked to describe the status of socio-economic problems facing their society during the study period. Youth unemployment, food insecurity, income inequalities, poor access to public services, including poor road infrastructure and access to clean and safe water were characterised or perceived as greater problems facing the country.

4.8.1. Youth unemployment

Youth unemployment affects service delivery to under-represented groups and/or regions. Further, employment inequities also undermine the capacity of underrepresented groups to resort to successful self-provisioning in the face of failed service delivery. Employment inequities also undermine employment potential for the under-represented, affecting their scope for remittances and contributing to poverty alleviation. A majority (92%) of the respondents rate youth unemployment to be one of the major challenges affecting their communities, and hence has implications on social cohesion of their community.

4.8.2. Inaccessibility to water

Access to clean and safe water is an important aspect of socio-economic status of any community, and has implications on status of social cohesion. However, access to water can be limited by factors such as long distance to water source, environmental factors and unaffordable costs. Poor access to water is a source of conflict especially in arid and semi-arid lands, thus perpetuating peaceful coexistence among the affected communities. Access to safe and clean water was ranked the fifth in the list of the most critical challenges affecting communities. About 47% of the respondents had indicated that access to safe and clean water was a problem. During the survey, the respondents were further asked to rate the state of access to safe and clean water resource. From the study findings, safe and clean water was accessible to about 52% of the respondents; 38.6% accessed water but with difficulty, while 10% did not access water at all (Figure 6).
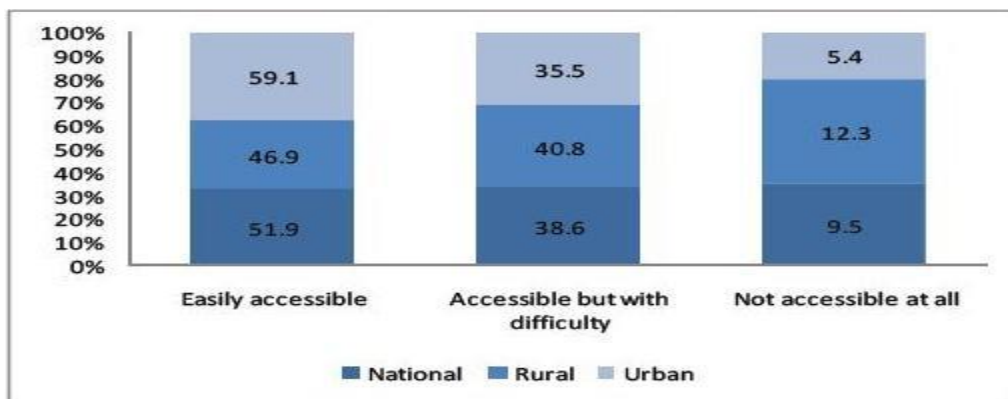

Figure 6. How do you rate of access to clean and safe drinking water?

Majority of the respondents in urban areas (59%) had access to this basic commodity compared to 47% of respondents in rural areas. More urban residents compared to rural residents had access to clean and safe water. Extinction of cultural practices (19%) and extinction of ethnic identities (18%) were not characterised as major problems.

4.8.3. Perceptions of distribution of public goods

Asked on their perceptions on whether they agree or disagree that public goods are distributed fairly across Kenya's regions (where public goods were defined to include public schools, public hospitals, law enforcement, and roads) about 65% of the respondents either "strongly disagreed" (26%) or "disagreed" (39%) that there was a fair distribution of public goods. On the other hand, nearly 35% "agreed" (20%) or "strongly agreed" (15%) that the distribution of public goods was fair. A clear majority of Kenyans (64%) in rural areas "disagreed" or "strongly disagreed" that public goods were fairly distributed across Kenya's regions. Only 14% of respondents in urban areas strongly agreed that public goods were equitably distributed.
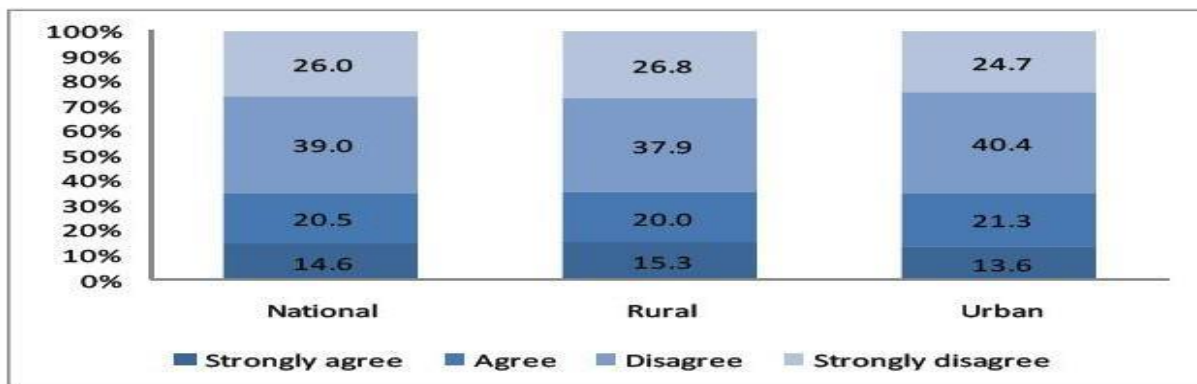

Figure 7. Public goods are distributed fairly across Kenya's regions

There was a major variation across gender with about 65% of respondents either "disagree" (39%) or "strongly disagree" (26%) that public goods were equitably distributed. Nearly 34% of the youth aged 15-35 years either "strongly agree" or "agree" that public goods were equitably distributed. On the other hand, about 66% of respondents with university education either "disagree" or "strongly disagree" that public goods were equitably distributed. This observation could imply inherent perceptions of existence of inequalities, which could be stemmed by a more equal distribution of public resources. About 65% of the respondents had indicated that poor road infrastructure was a major problem.

4.9. Equity

Respondents were asked to respond to a question on the extent to which they agreed with the following statement: "Extent to which respondents agreed with the statement: the gap between those with high income and those with low income is too large". The findings show that about 93% of respondents either "strongly

agreed" (65%) or "agreed" (28%) with the statement. There was no major variation among respondents in urban and rural areas, with over 95% of the respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement.

Table 15. Perceptions on distribution of public goods by region, age, gender and education

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
National	**14.6**	**20.5**	**39.0**	**26.0**
Region				
Rural	15.3	20.0	37.9	26.8
Urban	13.6	21.3	40.4	24.7
Gender				
Male	16.5	19.4	38.1	26.0
Female	13.3	21.2	39.5	25.9
Education				
None	12.7	19.9	43.6	23.8
Primary	16.2	21.1	36.8	25.8
Secondary	13.9	20.3	40.4	25.4
Tertiary college	9.9	20.0	40.5	29.5
University	15.7	18.1	35.1	31.1
Age group (Years)				
18-35	14.5	19.8	39.7	26.0
36-55	15.0	20.9	38.3	25.8
56-65	16.2	21.7	37.8	24.2
66-above	11.5	21.1	38.3	29.1

About nine to every 10 Kenyans aged 18-35 years and 36-55 years (about 93.7%), either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that the gap between the high and low income groups was too large. In slight contrast, about 93.7% of Kenyans aged 66 years and above stated that the gap was too large. 69% of the respondents indicated that income inequalities were a major problem affecting their communities.

In response to the sentiments that Kenya is a land of economic opportunity where in the long run, hard work brings better life, 93% of the respondents either strongly agreed (70%) or agreed (23%) with the statement. At the same time, 93% of the respondents either strongly agreed (65%) or agreed (28%) that the gap between those with low incomes and those with high incomes was too large. With regard to access to social services among the low income groups, 74% were of the opinion that people living on low income were not receiving adequate financial support from government, with 38% disagreeing with the statement that low income groups receive adequate financial support from government and 37% strongly disagreeing with the statement.
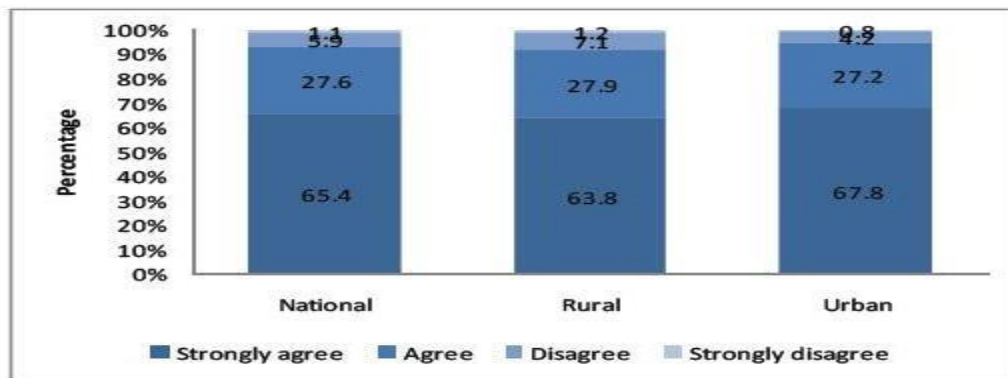
Figure 8. Extent to which respondents agree with the statement: the gap between those with high income and those with low income is too large

Table 16. Indicate the extent to which you agree with the various statements

	Kenya is a land of economic opportunity	Large gap exist between rich and poor	Low income group receives adequate financial support	Support programmes have contributed to peaceful community coexistence
Strongly agree	70.3	65.4	10.0	30.4
Agree	22.9	27.6	15.7	34.8
Disagree	5.5	5.9	37.8	21.4
Strongly disagree	1.3	1.1	36.5	13.3
Observations (N)	4,395	4,390	4,390	4,381

Further, 64% of the respondents either strongly agreed (30%) or agreed (35%) with the statement that social government programmes have contributed to peaceful coexistence in their communities.

4.9.1. Food security

Another major challenge affecting Kenyans was food insecurity, with 76% of the response rate. About 38% of the households were either never (9%) or only some of the time (30%) able to afford three meals per day. This is a disturbing finding and could have implications on the overall social cohesion of the country.

4.10. Future expectation

Individual expectations about the future are important in analysing the level of individual satisfaction with life, and hence indication of potential sustainability of measured social cohesion levels across various socio-economic groups. During the survey, respondents were asked to indicate their level of expectation of life in the next ten years with respect to relations with other ethnic groups, races and religions. The results are presented in Table below.

Table 17. How often did your household afford buying food for three meals a day in the last 1 month?

	Always	**Most of the time**	**Only some of the time**	**Never**
National	**33.1**	**28.1**	**30.1**	**8.6**
Region				
Rural	28.2	25.9	36.1	9.8
Urban	40.3	31.3	21.6	6.8
Gender				
Male	33.2	27.5	30.7	8.6
Female	33.1	28.5	29.8	8.6
Education				
None	11.8	24.3	48.9	15.1
Primary	26.2	29.2	34.3	10.3
Secondary	42.8	28.1	23.2	5.9
Tertiary college	55.7	29.2	14.2	1.0
University	65.5	25.8	6.1	2.6
Age group (Years)				
18-35	37.2	29.4	25.7	7.7
36-55	32.9	26.0	31.5	9.6
56-65	24.6	31.3	34.7	9.3
66-above	17.7	24.7	49.1	8.5

Table 18. Future expectations about relationships across social groups (%)

	Inter-ethnic relations	**Intra-ethnic relations**	**Race relations**	**Inter-religious relations**	**Intra-religious relations**
Improve very much	40.6	43.5	34.9	42.2	44.8
Improve slightly	33.3	31.5	28.7	29.7	28.1
Remain unchanged	15.4	20.2	31.8	22.3	23.5
Get worse	10.7	4.8	4.5	5.8	3.6
Observations (N)	4,510	4,510	4,497	4,511	4,506

The findings indicate that a moderate proportion of the respondents were optimistic that inter- ethnic (41%), intra-ethnic relations (45%), inter-religious (42%) and intrareligious relations (45%) will improve in the next 10 years, respectively. About 32% were of the perception that relations among races in the country will remain unchanged.

As depicted in the following table, 74% of Kenyans are not worried of becoming victims of crime due to their ethnic background. With respect to possibilities of becoming victims of crime, one's socio-economic status and religion offers less worries for Kenyans (than ethnic background). About 78% and 85% of Kenyans were "not worried" of becoming victims of crime because of their socio-economic background and religion, respectively.

Table 19. How worried are you about ethnic becoming a victim of crime in Kenya because of your ethnicity, socio-economic status and religion?

	Ethnic background	Socio-economic status	Religion
Very worried	11.6	9.2	6.5
Worried	13.7	12.6	8.3
Not worried	74.7	78.2	85.2
Total	4,536	4,532	4,532

5. Discussion and policy implications

The objective of the study was to explore the perception of Kenyans regarding the concept of social cohesion. This objective has been met in the preceding pages to the extent permitted by existing information. In various parts of Kenya, the FGDs showed that unemployment is a major cause of socio-economic disquiet. The discussions pointed to idle youth with varying levels of education who are unable to find work and consequently elide into delinquency and crime. In some parts of the country, the importation of social values was upsetting communities, as such values overshadowed traditions and religious beliefs. While class has never been a core area of contestation, it was clear from the FGDs that people were increasingly aware of the differences in socio-economic status in society. There was also an awareness of inequity in the government's sharing out of employment opportunities and general service delivery. There is an underlying cynicism that neither the spirit of the Constitution nor initiatives such as the Truth Justice and Reconciliation Commission's report will receive adequate attention. The literature emphasises the role of social cohesion in *national* development (Ferroni et al. 2008; Markus, 2010). For Latin America, it was quite clear that rising social cohesion is associated with various desirable circumstances for national development: political stability enabled the development of good policies and their effective delivery, which in turn enabled technological change for economic growth.

The current study's correlation matrix also pointed to the potential benefits of improved social cohesion, including improved access to water and sanitation, electricity, literacy, school enrolment and incomes. Many of these are interventions whose supply is an *obligation* of the government, especially to the extent that the regions that already have them also got them from the government.

But the government must also be interested in their supply as a means of enhancing social cohesion, including safe water, human capital, and physical infrastructure (for improved access). Additionally, fidelity to evidence of underlying tensions – such as are in the TJRC and Ndung'u reports– would also enhance prospects for local and indeed national cohesion.

Chapter 11 of the Constitution provides for the equitable devolution of development, but the political will with which to achieve this has been lacking, hence the persisting vertical and horizontal inequalities. Secondly, the starting inequalities mean that the leading areas are better placed in multiple respects to reap the benefits of devolution than the lagging hitherto marginalised areas.

Vision 2030 on the need for equitable development that reduces marginalization, and makes the provision of key basic needs a right whose denial the government is mandated to explain to the courts (Articles 20 and

21).Meanwhile, Article 201 creates the Equalization Fund to "to provide basic (social and infrastructure) services to marginalized areas to the extent necessary to bring the(m)… to the level generally enjoyed by the rest of the nation, so far as possible," the Fund's one-half percent of national revenue pales in comparison to Kenya's extents of poverty, inequality and marginalization. Therefore, more decisive national and sub-national political wills are necessary to ring-fence the resources required for substantive remedies to the factors that undermine national and sub-national social cohesion.

Policy suggestions emerging from the study include the need to address the following areas:

- Horizontal and vertical inequalities, including access to public services and Opportunities;

- Poverty through a growth, redistribution and productivity oriented strategy.

- This is critical for improved livelihoods and prosperity;

- Social cohesion is imperative for sustainable development of the country;

- There is need to promote social values, trust, peace and positive management of ethnic diversities in the county. Investing in systems for early warning, conflict management and peace building is critical;

- Sustained human capital development by investing in health and education, and targeting counties with low human capital outcomes;

- Establish a social cohesion data and information system and ensure regular data and information collection. This would ensure effective monitoring of social cohesion in the country;

- Human and infrastructure capital development should also be strengthened, notwithstanding devolution of service delivery;

- At the national level, Equity and Peace are the worst dimensions of social cohesion; and

- Mitigating the harsh environments among pastoralists;

In concluding, we point out some possible areas of action going forward:

- The interest in social cohesion in Kenya has been the product of the post-2007 election violence, inevitably so given the findings especially of the Waki Report (GoK, 2008). However, the current report has illustrated that social cohesion is important even in contexts where there is no violence.

- Consequently, there is need for a national debate on what focus Kenya's cohesion debate should take, providing appropriate guidance to which social cohesion should be estimated with which indicators, based on what sequencing of interventions. A national database should be created for such data. It is likely most suitable to estimate sub-national cohesion based on sub-national priorities, while a national cohesion index is estimated using nationwide indicators.

- Meanwhile, there is still baggage from the 2007/08 violence, the Ndung'u Report and indeed from various other historical injustices such as are reported in the TJRC report. Consequently, initiatives should continue in the direction of resolving the same.

- Cohesion initiatives should be harnessed across the country. The grassroots cohesion initiatives should be strengthened to diminish the risk of local in cohesion. However, the national initiatives that drive development – e.g. human and infrastructure capital development – should also be strengthened, notwithstanding devolution of service delivery. This is because of the wide development statuses across counties at the March 2013 onset of devolution.

- At the national level, Equity and Peace are the worst dimensions of social cohesion. At the sub-national level, the ASAL counties invariably have the weakest cohesion indices. While these findings are based on the indicators entered into the PCA analysis, the Gini coefficients showed the country to have wide (spending) inequalities. Additionally, pastoralist livelihoods are insecure and conflict prone, and more must be invested into mitigating the harsh environments in which such people live.

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