

**‘Social Cohesion’ for Peacebuilding: An Examination of Theory and Practice**

**International Organization for Migration (IOM)**

**Academic Supervisor: Vassily Klimentov**

**Student: Hsin-Yen Kao**

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## **Abstract**

Social cohesion is an important concept used to describe the interdependence and connection between individuals in a society. It is crucial to maintaining stability and harmony in society. Social cohesion enables individuals to feel connected to society and to pursue common goals together. This concept has important implications for sociologists and policy makers.

Social cohesion plays a key role in peacebuilding. Social cohesion reduces conflict and promotes sustainable peace when there are strong relationships within societies, where people trust each other and share common values. However, there are complex relationships between practice and theory of social cohesion that require further research and exploration.

This study aims to assess and test the theory and practice of social cohesion in peacebuilding to gain insight into this topic. The study first reviews the concept and importance of social cohesion, then analyzes the application framework of social cohesion, and explores the associated challenges and limitations. Finally, the research makes some policy and practical recommendations to promote the application of social cohesion in peacebuilding.

Based on an in-depth discussion of the theory and practice of social cohesion, this paper will make some suggestions to promote the application of social cohesion in peacebuilding. This may include enhancing education and awareness raising, encouraging civic engagement and social participation, promoting cultural exchange and respect, establishing effective institutions and policies, etc. These recommendations will help guide practitioners and policymakers in better applying the principles and methods of social cohesion in peacebuilding projects.

## **Introduction**

The concept of social cohesion can be traced back to the 19th century French sociologist Emile Durkheim's book "The Division of Labor in Society" (1893). Durkheim defines social cohesion as "a characteristic of society that shows the interdependence in between individuals of that society, and coins to social cohesion the absence of latent social conflict and the presence of strong social bonds (Durkheim, 1893)". The scholar believes that social cohesion is one of the key factors in maintaining social stability and adaptation, enabling individuals to feel connected and belonging to society, and able to pursue a common goal together. Durkheim's point of view also influenced the research and application of social cohesion by sociologists and policy makers later.

Social cohesion plays an important role in peacebuilding. When relationships within societies are strong, trust is established, and shared values are strengthened, social cohesion exists to help reduce conflict and promote sustainable peace. However, there is a complex relationship between theory and practice of social cohesion that needs to be explored in depth. This study aims to assess and test the theory and practice of social cohesion in peacebuilding in order to deepen the understanding of this topic. The article begins by reviewing the concept and importance of social cohesion. Next, the application framework for social cohesion is analyzed, and the associated challenges and limitations are discussed. Finally, the article will make some policy and practical recommendations for the application of social cohesion in peacebuilding.

Social cohesion is a multilevel and comprehensive concept that involves relationships among individuals, interactions among communities, and shared values and goals. This cohesion helps build a community, enhances mutual trust and cooperation among members of society, thereby reducing tension and conflict. In peacebuilding, social cohesion is seen as a key element that can help resolve deep-rooted social conflicts and promote social justice and inclusion.

However, social cohesion in practice is not a single, quantifiable concept, but a complex process influenced by multiple factors. These include historical and cultural background, level of economic development, political system, social inequality, etc. Therefore, we need a deeper understanding of these influencing factors to more effectively design and implement peacebuilding strategies.

## **I. Literature Review**

### **1.1 Definition of Social Cohesion**

Back to today's society, the international definition and application of social cohesion is becoming more and more extensive, and social cohesion also affects the development of peace building. Therefore, whether to develop a framework for social cohesion becomes one of the quite important questions.

First of all, let's understand the definition of social cohesion by the federal government organizations and the methods they use to define social cohesion.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) defines social cohesion as the “extent of trust in government and within society and the willingness to participate collectively toward a shared vision of sustainable peace and common development goals (UNDP, 2020)”. The agency

uses quantitative research methods such as questionnaires and statistics analysis to understand the current status and influencing factors of social cohesion. In addition to quantitative research methods, UNDP also uses mixed research methods to study social cohesion on indicators such as community participation, social trust, and social justice. For example, the agency combines methods such as questionnaires and focused interviews to understand the participation and trust of community residents.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) “puts children at the center, building relationships between communities and governments, and supporting individuals themselves – including children and young people – to participate in forging peace and development in their communities (UNICEF, 2021)”. UNICEF through qualitative research methods, such as focus groups and in-depth interviews, to understand the participation and cohesion of children and adolescents in different social settings. In addition, UNICEF uses literature research methods, such as reviewing international and domestic policy documents, to understand effective strategies and practices that promote social cohesion.

UNESCO promotes social cohesion through its programs that focus on education, culture, and communication. The organization also works towards promoting intercultural dialogue and understanding. Through literature research methods to understand the impact of different cultures on social cohesion. The agency also examines the role of education, culture and the media in promoting social cohesion.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) uses quantitative research methods to examine the role of social cohesion in rural development. FAO mainly believes that “social cohesion underlines the relationships between the mechanisms of social inclusion and exclusion and the citizens’ perceptions and reactions to them (CEPAL and EUROsociAL, 2007)”.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) regularly collects and analyzes data, publishes evaluation reports and invites expert consultations, defining social cohesion as “works towards the well-being of all its members, fights exclusion and marginalization, creates a sense of belonging, promotes trust, and offers its members the opportunity of upward social mobility (OECD, 2012)”.

As noted above, the definitions of social cohesion by various agencies and the ways in which they are defined are very broad. While different definitions may in some cases facilitate innovation, fostering innovation and developing ideas, bringing new perspectives and insights,

thus making it more resilient and malleable to respond to different situations and needs. However, different definitions can cause confusion and difficulties in communication and understanding, especially when communicating using this term. It may lead to misunderstanding and wrong conclusions due to different understandings of the same concept. In addition, different definitions can hinder communication, especially when communicating across borders or across cultures. Therefore, whether there should be a unified definition of social cohesion is still one of the issues we should think about.

## **1.2 Framework for Social Cohesion**

Different organizations and institutions have different frameworks and understandings of social cohesion, which will have different impacts on the promotion and practice of social cohesion.

For example, the United Nations sees social cohesion as one of the key elements in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and believes that “the belief held by citizens of a given nation-state that they share a moral community, which enables them to trust each other (Larsen, 2013)”. The United Nations’ promotion and practice of social cohesion, usually by promoting the formulation and implementation of policies and programs by governments to ensure human rights and equality, reduce poverty and inequality, and provide education and employment opportunities. The advantage of this framework is that it can promote social cohesion on a global scale and promote cooperation and coordination among countries. The disadvantage is that it lacks specific implementation plans for specific countries or regions. An example of a breakdown in social cohesion due to a lack of country-specific implementation is the Syrian civil war that has erupted since 2011. The fierce conflict between the government and armed opposition forces and the intervention of foreign forces have led to serious divisions in Syrian society. Contradictions and antagonisms among different sects and ethnic groups have intensified, leading to the breakdown of social cohesion, and the United Nations cannot effectively solve this problem.

In the case of NGOs, the framework for their social cohesion is usually achieved by promoting community participation and cooperation, increasing community awareness and participation, and establishing community infrastructure and mechanisms. The advantage of this framework is that it emphasizes community participation and spontaneous action, is flexible and innovative, and can better adapt to local realities. However, some NGOs are unable to promote social cohesion on a global scale due to lack of global vision and strategy. Certain NGOs may hinder

dialogue and cooperation between different communities because of conflicting values and interests. Such an approach is not only difficult to improve social cohesion, but may exacerbate social division. For example, in the refugee crisis that began in 2016, human rights defenders and civil society groups helping refugees in European countries have been subject to baseless criminal proceedings, inappropriate restrictions on their activities, intimidation, harassment and defamation. Their actions in solidarity with and assistance to refugees have put them on a path of conflict with European immigration policy, while also exacerbating social divisions in European countries (Amnesty International, 2020).

To sum up the above, in order to promote and realize social cohesion, collaboration and cooperation between different organizations and institutions are needed to form a comprehensive and effective social cohesion promotion and practice mechanism.

To this end, many scholars have also proposed a unified framework to define and measure social cohesion. For example, using a three-dimensional model of social cohesion and a method of measuring social cohesion, including questionnaires and statistical analysis, to measure each dimension and its related factors. Define it as a relationship involving interaction and trust between individuals and groups, and an ideological commonality (Jenson, 2002). However, due to differences in different regions, this method may not be applicable to the situation in other countries and regions. Furthermore, the framework and measurement methods focus on quantitative analysis, ignoring the importance of qualitative research.

Other frameworks such as social cohesion should be considered as a multi-dimensional concept, including aspects such as social connection, trust, shared values and joint action, through the method of social network analysis, used to measure social connection and trust (Fonseca, Lukosch & Brazier, 2018). However, the new definitions and measurement methods proposed in this paper are based on social network analysis and thus may not fully cover all aspects of social cohesion. In addition, the study did not provide specific empirical analysis cases, so further research is needed to verify the feasibility and effectiveness of its new definition and measurement method.

Based on the above, many proposed frameworks for social cohesion still have regional or domain limitations, so it is still a challenge to come up with a comprehensive framework.

## **II. Methodology**

The research uses the literature research method, comparative research method and document analysis method to deeply explore the definition, research and application of social cohesion from different perspectives. We can understand the concept, development and evolution of social cohesion and peacebuilding through the literature research method; through the comparative research method, we can understand the differences in social cohesion between different institutions or countries.

First of all, this research will use the literature research method to collect and review past relevant research literature, including academic papers, reports, books, journals and other resources, in order to understand the definition, concept, related theories and international organizations, governments and non-governmental organizations of social cohesion. The organization's views on relevant issues. In addition, the experience and practice of social cohesion in different countries will also be collected, and the differences and similarities between countries will be understood through comparative research methods, and the factors that affect social cohesion in different political, social, and economic environments will be explored.

Secondly, use the document analysis method to collect relevant policy documents, reports, research papers, meeting minutes and other documents; secondly, read and organize these documents, and extract relevant information about social cohesion, including definitions, goals, Measures, effects, etc.; and finally, a comparative analysis based on this information to understand the differences and similarities of different government and NGOs on social cohesion, and the reasons for their success or failure.

Next, analyze relevant policy documents, declarations, agreements, etc. to understand the policies, measures and effectiveness of each country in terms of social cohesion. At the same time, this study will also analyze the relevant reports, declarations, guidelines and other documents of international organizations, governments and non-governmental organizations to understand their suggestions and practices on promoting social cohesion, as well as the effectiveness and challenges of these suggestions and practices. By collecting relevant documents, including government gazettes, reports, white papers, news reports, etc., to understand the definition, research and application of social cohesion by governments or NGOs. Among them, special attention is paid to reports and documents issued by relevant United Nations agencies, and their views and measures on social cohesion are explored.

The document analysis method of this study adopts a qualitative analysis method. By collecting and sorting relevant documents, further content analysis is conducted to understand the positions and opinions of governments or NGOs on issues related to social cohesion. Among them, the main purpose of the qualitative analysis is to understand the views and information presented in the document, and then summarize the similarities and differences among countries on issues related to social cohesion, and explore the possible reasons.

In addition, this study will use comparative analysis to compare and analyze different government and NGO perceptions and practices on social cohesion to understand the differences and similarities of different policies. Comparative analysis will be conducted from multiple perspectives, such as policy objectives, measures, effects, etc., to comprehensively evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of different policies.

Finally, the study will analyze the status quo, problems and challenges of social cohesion through comprehensive literature research, comparative research and document analysis, and propose relevant policies and recommendations. These policies and suggestions will be based on the information and results obtained by literature research, comparative research and document analysis, and will be analyzed and evaluated according to their feasibility and implement ability, so as to put forward specific and feasible suggestions and policies to promote social cohesion.

In summary, through the application of these methods, this study will understand social cohesion, and explore the positions and views of governments and NGOs on issues related to social cohesion, so as to propose feasible policy recommendations and countermeasures and promote the realization of social cohesion.

### **III. Case Study: Syrian Civil War**

The Syrian civil war that started in 2011 caused tens of thousands of casualties and displacements of the Syrian people, making Syria the focus of international concern. In this era, the importance of peacebuilding should be understood as a process based on dialogue, building trust and seeking consensus to resolve, transform or manage conflicts through non-violent means. With the beginning of reconstruction, peace-building is possible even under conditions of fierce state or authoritarian peace. However, in the context of rebuilding the country and fragile states after armed conflict, it is more difficult to build peace in Syria. In order to recognize the opportunities for peacebuilding, policymakers need to establish an understanding of free peacebuilding as part of the post-Cold War era. They also need to recognize the challenges that

accompany social cohesion for peacebuilding. There are four points regarding the plight of Syria's social cohesion for peacebuilding:

### **3.1 Difficulty in the Concentration of Political Power**

Political reconstruction is mainly a question of establishing an effective political order. After years of war, the primary task of Syria's post-war reconstruction is to re-establish political order and government authority in the country. It mainly involves challenges from both the central and local political forces. However, at the level of national construction policy, the dilemma is related to the concentration of power and its limitations. The more concentrated administrative powers are successfully established in nation-building, the stronger the nation's ability to carry out effective actions. In the past four years, as President Bashar Al-Assad's regime gradually regained control of this area, Syria has transformed from a deadlock to an authoritarian peace. However, what remains of the vital interests of the security department or the regime seems to be a shell country with almost no functional capabilities to provide services (Wang, 2019).

On the one hand, in view of the current patchwork of stable areas, on the other hand, areas that are actively fighting, the Syrian government and local warlords have no incentive to promote and commit to a formal political solution. First, once the war is over, maintaining power will become more difficult. To some extent, this is due to the absolute necessity of providing important services such as education, work, transportation, and the operational challenges of providing these services, including the required institutional capacity, human resources, and budget resources. If the war is over, the people will judge the government, warlords, or opposition groups based on their ability to execute and execute, thereby establishing legitimacy.

The reconstruction of Syria in the next few years may be carried out under the conditions of "no war, no peace". The various opposition political groups in Syria are not only connected to each other, but also have serious differences in personnel relations, attitudes to the Syrian government, and attitudes to violent methods, and it is difficult to form a unified opinion. Although the Syrian government and opposition political forces have heatedly discussed the issue of Syria's political reconstruction, its direction is mainly influenced by the battlefield situation. At present, the Syrian opposition political groups still have loose relations with each other and have not formed a unified political group. They have not yet reached an agreement on key issues such as the

attitude of the Syrian government, the prerequisites for participating in the Syrian peace talks, and the specific path for the future political opinion and construction of the Syrian state.

### **3.2 Economic and Financial Collapse**

Economic reconstruction is an important foundation for political reconstruction, an important goal of political stability and social development in Syria, and an important prerequisite for the Syrian people to live and work in peace. No matter how the Syrian reconstruction process unfolds, economic reconstruction will be the top priority. At present, Syria's economic reconstruction is facing many problems.

When Syrian security forces opened fire on peaceful demonstrators in the southern city of Dera on March 18, 2011, few observers were able to predict the beginning of this process, which would lead to an armed rebellion and make Syria a Competing proxy battlefield region. Despite the "Arab Spring" popular uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen, Syria's economic problems have been deepening due to natural drought and human factors (Hof, 2016).

After the domestic turmoil in Syria in 2011, the domestic economy experienced a sharp drop in consumption, a sharp drop in taxes, high inflation and high unemployment, a serious fiscal deficit, and a stagnant economy. The war severely hit the Syrian economy, and the manufacturing, oil industry, and agriculture declined sharply. Although the domestic situation in Syria has gradually stabilized, economic reconstruction still faces severe challenges. In the agricultural field, on the one hand, agricultural production suffered heavy losses due to the destruction of the war.

The Syrian war has greatly damaged domestic infrastructure and brought huge financial pressure. At present, Syria's domestic economic foundation is weak and lacks of sufficient funds to restart the economic reconstruction process. Syria's foreign exchange reserves have been declining after years of war, from 19 billion U.S. dollars in 2010 to 1.896 billion U.S. dollars in 2013, and to 407 million U.S. dollars in 2017. It is estimated that Syria's reconstruction will require as much as \$1 trillion in funding. This is undoubtedly an astronomical figure for Syria, where the war is not extinguished, and it is in urgent need of external international investment and assistance.

On the other hand, the European Union's sanctions on Syria initially targeted key political figures and state institutions. Since 2011, the EU has imposed sanctions on more than 200

Syrians and nearly 70 countries and private institutions. After the "Caesar Act" of the United States in 2020 takes effect, trade that is already on the brink of collapse will be further hit. The bill will expand the scope of punishment from officials and companies already sanctioned by the United States and the European Union to companies that do business with them. This is expected to have a devastating effect on any international willingness to invest in the country's reconstruction, making it more difficult to rebuild the road to peace.

### **3.3 Complex Foreign Relations**

Creating an external environment conducive to peace and stability is an important external condition for Syria's reconstruction process. For Syria, which has been suffering from war for many years, on the one hand, it is necessary to carefully handle its relations with Iran and Russia. While ensuring a stable domestic situation, it also urges the "allies" to withdraw as soon as possible to defend the Syrian government's independent diplomatic image. The Syrian government needs to properly handle relations with the United States, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and other countries, while seeking economic assistance from these countries, to expand the legitimacy of the Syrian reconstruction process. Historically, the relations between Syria and the United States, Saudi Arabia and Turkey have always had many difficulties. The Syrian war can be seen as a continuation and escalation of the tension between these countries and Syria. Considering the delicate relationship between the United States, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia and other countries regarding the Syrian anti-government political and military groups, how to use the opportunity of the reconstruction of Syria in the future to promote the reshaping and adjustment of the relationship between the Syrian government and the United States, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, not only involves the diplomatic aspect but also involves Syria's political and economic reconstruction.

These developments are accompanied by international discussions on reconstruction. A discourse on the cost of war, which emphasizes that post-conflict reconstruction will require a lot of resources. In the context of these needs, neither the Syrian government, Russia nor the Iranian government can provide tangible prospects and sustainable vision for post-conflict reconstruction, and cannot carry out highly localized efforts in their privileged areas (Wennmann, 2019). Some participants believe that Western countries and institutions should bear this burden. However, as the EU's Anti-Syrian Committee has expressed, these clearly indicate that "only in a comprehensive, true and inclusive political transition, the Syrian parties have carried out the

conflict in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 2254 and the Geneva Communiqué.” This statement is in sharp contrast with the local reality, which is characterized by the increase in the Syrian regime’s control over the territory.

At the level of the entire international order, there is a dilemma between the world international community and the establishment of peace through nation-building. The root cause of the conflict involves the fragility of governance, which requires nation-building activities and even the leadership of international participants. The loophole was caused by the lack of good social and economic infrastructure in decolonized countries. In addition, there is a dilemma between establishing freedom and peace and local ownership. In this process, it is always difficult to achieve external implantation and internal local development (Shinoda, 2018). In the era of world international society, this new nation-state has no room for expansion in the external realm of physics. They have strengthened their national capabilities, but they have no chance to exert their enhanced national capabilities.

In the 2010 review of the United Nations Program and Budget Committee, it can be noted that although some progress has been made since the establishment of the Committee. It is essential that peacebuilding work must be tailored to specific circumstances and strengthen local autonomy. The capabilities of international peacebuilding actors are often more valued than the capabilities of local peacebuilding actors. Therefore, local peacebuilding actors often complain in interviews and federal government investigation teams that although they have specific background knowledge and methods adapted to local conditions, they are often described as lacking capabilities (Hellmüller, 2014).

Since the 1960s, there has been a wave of independence, and many colonial countries have begun to seek national independence. However, since the Second World War, many developing countries, especially the third world countries, have established relatively slowly. On a fragile basis, they cannot build their own country on their own, which leads to inseparability from external aid. Although on the surface, the recipient countries may slightly improve their current situation, after leaving the aid, do they have sufficient self-rescue ability? This is indeed a questionable issue.

### **3.4 Insufficient Influence of International Organizations**

The UN Security Council unanimously passed a resolution in December 2015 agreeing to promote the Syrian peace process. The resolution requires that the United Nations should facilitate peace negotiations between the Syrian government and the opposition in January 2016, and a ceasefire should be achieved at the same time as the negotiations. However, the actions of various countries against terrorist organizations will not be affected by peace resolutions, and peace negotiations have not made any progress in the end.

In fact, in the past three decades, the United Nations and other international actors have concentrated their efforts to end armed conflicts through peace agreements. These agreements will be implemented through a series of peacekeeping operations, nation-building and peacebuilding plans, and the United Nations has been in contact with fragile countries afflicted by conflict. However, it was not until 2005 that the General Assembly and the Security Council recognized peacebuilding as a major component of United Nations peace operations and created the peacebuilding architecture now known as the United Nations: The Peacebuilding Commission (Schulenburg, 2014). Peacebuilding, constitutes a profound change in the way the United Nations pursues the core mission of maintaining global peace and security. However, unlike peacekeeping, the United Nations has never been able to turn peacebuilding into the organization's core concept and operational tool, thus reducing its influence in intervening in fragile states plagued by armed conflict.

International organizations place too much emphasis on efficiency rather than effectiveness when designing peacebuilding interventions; and despite principles and policies, they lack meaningful local ownership in the transformation process (Coning, 2010). Peacebuilding efforts must be reformed to allow for a more people-centred approach to social justice and social cohesion, rather than the current focus on institutional efficiency.

Based on the above, the international community should really need to fully understand and assist in improving these problems. Vulnerability is not caused by one person; a series of dysfunctional events are caused by the evolution of the basic structural nature of the "world international society". The only way to avoid war is to seek the most fundamental problem, not to blame the war itself. In addition, if we believe that universal values apply to fragile states, it may only lead to worse situations. Just as the Syrian civil war has not stopped so far, excessive

external intervention has also complicated the incident. The peace actions considered by developed countries eventually evolved into struggles between groups of nations, making the road to fragile nation-building more difficult and the goal of establishing a zone of peace more distant. These series of interventions all carry the word "peace", but they actually violate the "UN Charter" and reduce the purposes and principles of the "UN Charter" to empty talk.

At the same time, this also makes the self-determination of third-world countries gradually become a favorable opportunity for developed countries to be manipulated under the guise of state-building. Liberal democracy should not be equated with peace, because it has not yet become a true universal value. There are inherent differences between countries, which also means that excessive implantation of liberal democracy in a short period of time may not be suitable for establishing peace in certain regions. In addition, restricting fragile states in various ways and reasons is the fundamental issue leading to the failure to achieve peacebuilding and social cohesion. The sovereignty of post-conflict countries and fragile countries needs to be taken seriously by the international community. The international community should strengthen the sense of responsibility of United Nations agencies and programs, bilateral donors, and companies involved in Syria's humanitarian or reconstruction work in order to improve problems and achieve the international community's peacebuilding goals more effectively.

## **Conclusion**

This study explores the theory and application of social cohesion in peacebuilding practice. This includes discussing definitions and frameworks of social cohesion, while at the same time analyzing the limitations and difficulties facing social cohesion. For example, many proposed frameworks for social cohesion are flawed. Building social cohesion takes time and effort, and peacebuilding projects often face time pressures and resource constraints. In addition, there may be disagreements and antagonisms among different communities and stakeholders, which may affect the formation and maintenance of social cohesion.

The importance of this research is to help bridge the theoretical and practical gap between social cohesion and peacebuilding. Past research has largely focused on single aspects, such as peace agreements, governance systems, or economic development, while the role of social cohesion has often been overlooked. However, social cohesion is not only an important component of peacebuilding, but also the key to its long-term success and sustainability.

Practicing social cohesion is not easy. Diversity and difference in societies can be a challenge to achieve social cohesion. Different values, beliefs and opinions can lead to disagreements and conflicts. Therefore, policy makers and social workers need to take measures to establish a platform for dialogue and consultation to promote mutual understanding and respect among different communities. In addition, by exploring the theory and practice of social cohesion in depth, we can better understand the mechanism by which social cohesion affects peacebuilding. This will help develop more effective policies and strategies for the development and maintenance of social cohesion.

Following are a few strategies:

1. **Education:** Education is one of the key factors in fostering social cohesion. Shared values and common identity among members of society can be fostered by providing a comprehensive and inclusive education that fosters citizenship, multicultural understanding and human rights values. Reduce social inequalities and divisions by providing equal educational opportunities and promoting social justice and inclusion.
2. **Democratic participation:** Democratic participation is also an important means of building social cohesion. In the peacebuilding process, mutual trust and cooperation among members of society can be promoted by establishing mechanisms for cross-community dialogue and shared decision-making. Improving citizen participation in policy formulation and decision-making processes, ensuring equal representation of diverse voices and interests, will help build trust and consensus, and enhance social cohesion.
3. **Establishing a just system and the rule of law:** Ensuring fair opportunity and resource allocation and maintaining the equal enforcement of laws can reduce social inequality and injustice, and enhance the trust and sense of identity of members of society.

In summary, understanding the concept, application framework, and related challenges of social cohesion, and formulating corresponding policy and practical measures can help promote mutual trust, communion, and harmony among members of society, thereby achieving sustainable peaceful development.

However, this research also faces some challenges and limitations. First, social cohesion is an abstract concept that is difficult to define and measure concretely. Therefore, researchers need to

use a variety of methods and indicators to assess the level and impact of social cohesion. Second, the development and maintenance of social cohesion is a long-term process that varies across cultures and social contexts. Therefore, research needs to take into account regional and cultural specificities and avoid limiting the understanding of social cohesion to a single framework and perspective.

Nevertheless, through in-depth research on the theory and practice of social cohesion in peacebuilding, we can gain a more comprehensive perspective and promote more effective peacebuilding. This will help to build a more harmonious, stable and inclusive society and make substantial contributions to the realization of global peace.

In addition, this study reviews actual peacebuilding projects to explore the application and effects of social cohesion. This will help provide an empirical basis and practical experience to further support the importance and value of social cohesion in peacebuilding. At the same time, this article also focuses on the difficulties and challenges that may arise in practicing social cohesion, such as divisions between communities, power inequality, and resource constraints. This will help to come up with recommendations and solutions to overcome these challenges and maximize the development of social cohesion.

Ultimately, through this research, it is expected to gain a deeper understanding of the role and impact of social cohesion in peacebuilding, and provide valuable insights and guidance for policymakers, practitioners, and academia. This will help to establish more effective and sustainable peace-building strategies, thereby promoting social harmony, stability and development. This paper believes that, by bringing together the strengths of theory and practice, social cohesion will be one of the key elements for achieving sustainable peace.

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