

RURAL MATTERS

Social Cohesion Matters

The NRE Household survey examined field sites in terms of their levels of social cohesion which was represented in 2 ways:

Do communities work together?

Do the respondents perceive the community to be cohesive?

This perspective suggests that:

- Social cohesion is manifested in different ways (through bureaucratic, market, associative, and communal relations)
- Social cohesion varies by level (within households, communities, regions, nations)
- Social cohesion in a community may vary over time (community cohesion may ebb and flow over seasons or years)
- Social cohesion is manifested in particular events (a community may be cohesive when it comes to fighting fires, but may lack cohesion when it comes to deciding zoning regulations).
 - Social cohesion may be positive for some while negative for others (a strongly cohesive group in the community may serve to exclude others).

The NRE survey results show:

- Those households that reported working together had higher incomes and a higher labour force participation rate.
- Those households that reported feeling together were less likely to be separated or divorced and had a greater chance of being below the low income cut off.

Social Cohesion is: The extent to which people respond collectively to achieve their valued outcomes

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