

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S PEACEBUILDING FUND

SYNTHESIS REVIEW 2020

Drawing on evaluations
and evaluative exercises
of initiatives supported
by the Fund



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SYNTHESIS REVIEW 2020:
DRAWING ON EVALUATIONS AND
EVALUATIVE EXERCISES OF INITIATIVES
SUPPORTED BY THE FUND

Developed by **Anita Ernstorfer (Untangle LLC)**
UN Peacebuilding Fund Program Support Expert Roster

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DISCLAIMER:

The United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office commissioned this publication as an independent review. The views expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the United Nations, any of its affiliated organizations or their Member States.

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KEY ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

DFID	UK Department for International Development
DM&E	Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation
DPPA	UN Department for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
INGO	International Non-governmental organization
IRF	Immediate Response Facility
JSC	Joint Steering Committee
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GYPI	Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative (PBF)
HDP Nexus	Humanitarian – Development – Peacebuilding Nexus
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NUNO	Recipient Non-UN Organization (of PBF funding)
PBF	UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund
PBSO	UN Peacebuilding Support Office
PCG	Peacebuilding Contact Group
PPP	Peacebuilding Priority Plan
PDA	Peace and Development Adviser
PRF	Peacebuilding Recovery Facility
RC/RCO	UN Resident Coordinator/Resident Coordinator's Office
RUNOs	Recipient UN Organization (of PBF funding)
SG	UN Secretary-General
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the end of the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan, the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) commissioned a Synthesis Review of approximately sixty evaluative exercises conducted at both portfolio as well as project levels during that period. The Synthesis Review report¹ analyzed a range of findings emerging from the evaluative exercises, combined with recommendations for PBF and the wider UN system. In the Strategic Plan 2020-2024, the Fund committed to conduct Synthesis Reviews on an annual basis. This report represents a review of the 2020 evaluative exercises.

The 2020 Synthesis Review includes the review of one portfolio evaluation, three evaluability assessments, one Strategic Review, one Thematic Review on transitional justice, one evaluative exercise, and twenty-four project evaluations. The 2020 review examines those exercises, documents steps that PBF has taken in 2020 to follow-up on the recommendations outlined in the 2017-2019 review, and highlights the new evaluative approaches PBF experimented with in 2020 in light of the travel restrictions due to Covid-19 and other relevant developments at the PBF.

While the evidence base of the 2020 evaluative exercises was not as deep as for the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review, the 2020 evaluative exercises re-confirm the validity of the findings and recommendations of the 2017-2019 review.²

This report analyzes progress made against the recommendations of the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review, as well as new findings emerging from the 2020 evaluative exercises. The analysis in this report results in the following conclusions and recommendations.

The key **conclusions** of the 2020 Synthesis Review of PBF-funded evaluations and evaluative exercises include the following:

- ▲ **The overall findings of the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review are reconfirmed through the 2020 evaluative exercises;**
- ▲ **PBF has taken initial promising steps to act upon the findings of the last Synthesis Review of evaluations, especially through starting the strategic frameworks and five-year eligibility processes in Guatemala and the Balkans to overcome the persisting challenge of short-term funding allocations for expected long-term results;**

1. Anita Ernstorfer: [Synthesis Review of PBF portfolio and project evaluations 2017-2019](#). Link available in Annex I: Key Documents.

2. The recommendations of the 2017-2019 synthesis review report include the following (abbreviated version)

Recommendations for PBF strategic management:

- ▶ I. Provide clearer criteria for when PBF funding will be approved – and when it will not;
- ▶ II. Consider a review of the duration of PBF funding windows and related DM&E requirements to resolve the tension between 'catalytic' and 'long-term impacts';
- ▶ III. Strengthen strategic planning and oversight of PBF portfolios;
- ▶ IV. Make capacity strengthening of UN agencies and national partners a priority;
- ▶ V. Continue the exploration to fund national and local civil society actors directly;
- ▶ VI. Articulate PBF's engagement principles more clearly – peacebuilding as an 'approach' and as a 'sector'.


Recommendations for PBF's design, monitoring, evaluation and learning function:

- ▶ i. Strengthen DM&E (design, monitoring, evaluation) and Learning capacities of RUNOs, NUNOs (and possibly local NGOs in the future), PBF Secretariats, and within PBF;
- ▶ ii. Get serious about results and impact at the portfolio/collective impact level;
- ▶ iii. Connect the "D" with the "M&E" and prioritize learning across portfolios;
- ▶ iv. Strengthen the focus on conflict sensitivity, ongoing conflict and context monitoring, and adaptive management across PBF portfolios;
- ▶ v. Introduce more flexibility into existing DM&E tools and be open to adaptation and experimentation with new evaluative approaches;
- ▶ vi. Select evaluators and facilitators of other evaluative exercises that have a strong peacebuilding and DM&E background.

- ▲ In order to support these ambitions of PBF and its donors for higher-level results and impact at portfolio levels, it will be critical to support the roll-out of these strategic frameworks with adequate resources, a sustainable plan to resource country level backbone support structures for their implementation (such as PBF Secretariats), as well as an ongoing effort to support Recipient UN Organizations (RUNOs) and Recipient Non-UN Organizations (NUNOs) in their efforts to strengthen peacebuilding and design, monitoring, and evaluation capacities and processes.
- ▲ The impact evaluation partnership with the Government of Germany is a promising step towards complementing PBF's efforts to enhance the ability to show results at portfolio levels: starting in 2021, PBF will partner with Germany to launch a special project to test impact evaluation approaches within a number of PBF-funded initiatives.
- ▲ PBF has demonstrated flexibility in its DM&E approach, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic to experiment with remote DM&E support;
- ▲ The Thematic Review on Transitional Justice in 2020 was the first of its kind since 2014. It demonstrates the usefulness of such an exercise to review broader results of PBF in one programmatic area;
- ▲ Even though several UN agencies, and PBF funding recipients, are strengthening their capacities and staff skills in conflict analysis, peacebuilding programming design and conflict sensitivity, a major gap remains between PBF's ambition and related expectations from PBF's donors and what is feasible operationally in country based on existing capacities;
- ▲ While more UNCTs (UN Country Teams), RUNOs and NUNOs now conduct conflict analysis more systematically, conflict-sensitivity and a clearer focus on the relationships between gender and conflict ("gender-sensitive conflict analysis") remain gaps in PBF-funded portfolios that should be addressed;
- ▲ The 2020 evaluative exercises continue to highlight the need for ongoing exploration of funding local and national civil society organizations directly.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PBF


RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF PBF

-  **Facilitate a more proactive process of learning.** Many of the findings that emerge from the evaluative exercises can only be acted upon as joint efforts between PBF, RUNOs and NUNOs. PBF is well placed to act as a convener and facilitator to engage UNCTs and focal points in HQ units in a more active dialogue regarding the learnings and findings from the Synthesis Reviews, the Thematic Review(s) and other relevant reviews as appropriate, and to act upon the findings that lie within the responsibility of specific stakeholders. Facilitating a joint process between PBF and RUNOs and NUNOs about such findings will support a collective approach to learning and improving practice. The DFID 2020 Program Completion Review³ recommends that the 'community of practice' model for PBF recipients at the country-level be replicated at the HQ level to bring together conflict and peace teams across UN agencies. This is one avenue the PBF could use in this regard, leveraging and expanding the use of existing mechanisms like the Peacebuilding Contact Group at the HQ level.



3. DFID Programme Completion Review of the UN Peacebuilding Fund 2020.

 **Formalize the new five-year eligibility process and strategic framework processes, while allowing necessary flexibility based on specific country conditions.** Learning from the two pilot processes for the development of strategic frameworks in Guatemala and the Balkans should inform a formalization of these two experimental processes, including:


-  Developing a clear plan on who is responsible for supporting the strategic framework implementation, including DM&E frameworks, and aligning necessary capacities, skill sets and resources behind those structures;
-  Developing standard processes and methodologies that can be adapted/replicated, such as concept notes and sample agendas for strategic framework priority development workshops, or terms of reference, while allowing necessary flexibility to adapt to each context.


 **Conduct additional Thematic Reviews:** The Thematic Review on Transitional Justice review proved useful for showing higher-level results and learnings in one key area of PBF investment. Therefore, PBF should invest in more Thematic Reviews of program areas in which the PBF has a clear niche and that are innovative, such as UN transition support and cross-border peacebuilding, when the timing seems right for those. There might also be ways to connect this ambition for higher-level learning and results in specific areas to the impact project funded by the Government of Germany. Producing solid Thematic Reviews will require dedicated resources and staffing to produce quality results.

 **Leverage the impact project** with the Government of Germany to the best possible extent through:

-  Feeding the emerging learning from this new partnership into conversations focused on learning about peacebuilding with RUNOs and NUNOs (contributes to Recommendation I above);
-  Informing the processes related to the five-year eligibility and strategic frameworks at country level (contributes to Recommendation II above).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PBF'S DM&E (DESIGN, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION) FUNCTION

 **Conduct Synthesis Review of Evaluations and Evaluative Exercises only every two years.** While this 2020 Synthesis Review was able to document some interesting new insights and nuances, especially in light of new developments in follow-up to the 2017-2019 recommendations, its overall evidence base was limited, compared to the 2017-2019 review. Delaying the next Synthesis Review until 2022 will make it possible to capture insights from key processes that are currently underway, the implementation of five-year eligibility and strategic frameworks in Guatemala and the Balkans (and possibly others by then), and also assess some insights emerging from the impact evaluation project. Waiting two years will provide a richer set of documents for analysis beyond project specific evaluations.

 **Develop clear DM&E processes in support of strategic frameworks and five-year eligibility:** The promising new strategic frameworks and five-year eligibility plans will only be as effective and impactful as the related DM&E frameworks supporting their implementation. This will require independent resources and staffing for PBF Secretariats or other country-level backbone support mechanisms that guide this function strategically for PBF portfolios. These functions need to be strong substantively (peacebuilding program design, M&E, facilitating and convening RUNOs and NUNOs), and there should be clear agreements with RCs and RC offices regarding the importance of these functions, in order to demonstrate results at PBF portfolio levels.



Prioritize the 'D' in DM&E. Putting more emphasis on the 'D' (program design) and not only monitoring and evaluation is still one of the most important recommendations from the 2017-2019 capacities at UNCT level, or by applying more flexibility to existing DM&E mechanisms. For example, rather than investing resources in mandatory evaluability assessments or in evaluations for each project, investing those resources in more in-depth processes of program design and program design quality assurance might lead to better results. Allowing longer eligibility and funding cycles will support this effort if PBF adapts its approval timeframes (contributes to recommendations on five-year eligibility and strategic frameworks, as well as enhanced DM&E processes).



Develop PBF guidance and requirements in relation to conflict-sensitivity. Making conflict-sensitivity a clearer requirement will have the best chances of succeeding if it is embedded within explicit mechanisms for peacebuilding program adaptation and learning. Given the highlighted need in this review to integrate peace and conflict and gender dynamics more directly, an integrated package of guidance and support for conflict-and gender sensitivity could be considered.

1. BACKGROUND




The United Nations Secretary General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) was established in 2006, through General Assembly Resolution A/60/180 and Security Council Resolution S/RES/1645. The PBF is a country-focused global pooled fund that aims to provide timely, risk-tolerant, and flexible funding to peacebuilding initiatives before, during and after conflicts. The Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) is responsible for the overall management of the PBF under the authority of the Secretary General. The Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO) is the PBF's fiduciary agent.

In 2020, the PBF launched a new Strategic Plan that covers the period 2020-2024.⁴ This plan sets an ambitious goal of investing \$1.5 billion in peacebuilding efforts over the five-year plan period, in approximately forty countries, in response to increased global demand.⁵

Through the current Plan, the PBF continues to prioritize projects that align with the **Priority Areas** as outlined in its Terms of Reference:

-  **Support** for the implementation of peace agreements and political dialogue;
-  **Support** for strengthening national capacities to promote coexistence and peaceful resolution of conflict;
-  **Support** to efforts to revitalize the economy and generate immediate peace dividends for the population at large;
-  **Establishment** or re-establishment of essential administrative services and related human and technical capacities.

In addition to these Priority Areas, the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan extends the three **Priority Windows**,

-  Cross-border and regional investments to tackle transnational drivers of conflict;
-  Facilitating transitions between different UN configurations; and
-  Youth and women's empowerment to foster inclusion and gender equality.

Under these priority areas and windows, PBF funds a wide range of different projects and programs, which is reflected in a high level of diversity of projects and portfolios.

At the end of the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan, PBF commissioned a Synthesis Review⁶ of evaluative exercises conducted at both portfolio as well as project levels (referenced as the "2017-2019 Synthesis Review" in the remainder of this document). The resulting 2017-2019 Synthesis Review analyzed PBF's performance and results through approximately sixty evaluative exercises (eight portfolio evaluations, forty-six project evaluations, two lessons learned reviews, and three evaluability assessments) of PBF-funded initiatives that assessed peacebuilding results across PBF country portfolios.

In the Strategic Plan 2020-2024, the Fund committed to conduct Synthesis Reviews on an annual basis. Following on this commitment, the Design, Monitoring and Evaluation team in PBSO engaged Anita Ernstorfer from PBF's Program Support Team, who was also the author of the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review, to conduct a Synthesis Review of PBF evaluations carried out in 2020. Tammy Smith, Kyle Jacques, and Nigina Khaitova were the focal points for the Synthesis Review on the PBF side.

4. UN Secretary General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) [2020-2024 Strategy](#)

5. PBF's ability to meet this target is contingent on available funding from donors.

6. Anita Ernstorfer: [Synthesis Review of PBF portfolio and project evaluations 2017-2019](#)

2. OBJECTIVES, METHODOLOGY, AND ANALYSIS OF THE BODY OF EVIDENCE REVIEWED

2.1 OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The 2020 Synthesis Review:

- ▲ Examines the evaluative exercises conducted in 2020;
- ▲ Documents steps PBF has taken in 2020 to follow-up on the recommendations outlined in the 2017-2019 review; and
- ▲ Highlights the new evaluative approaches PBF experimented with in 2020 in light of the travel restrictions due to Covid-19 and other developments at the PBF.


The following documents constitute the core body of evidence reviewed⁷:

SEVEN PORTFOLIO LEVEL EVALUATIVE EXERCISES 2020

One **portfolio evaluation**:

-  Guatemala


Three **Evaluability Assessments**:

-  Liberia,
-  Burkina Faso,
-  Madagascar (Madagascar included a DM&E support process with RUNOs and NUNOs)

One **Strategic Review Exercise**:



-  Kyrgyzstan

One **Evaluative Exercise**:

-  Niger which included DM&E support to the UNCT, and self-assessment guides

Thematic Review on Transitional Justice

TWENTY-FOUR PROJECT-LEVEL EVALUATIONS 2020

-  Bosnia & Herzegovina: PBF/IRF 190, Social Cohesion & Diversity
-  Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger: PBF/IRF

-  Burkina Faso, PBF/IRF-164: Security sector
-  Burundi, PBF/IRF 225: Sustainable reintegration
-  Central African Republic, PBF/IRF-183: Political participation of women
-  Côte d'Ivoire, PBF/IRF-199: Conflict Management
-  DRC, PBF/COD/A-2: Ensemble pour la paix
-  DRC, PBF/COD/A-3: Land conflicts and social cohesion (partially funded by PBF)
-  El Salvador, PBF/IRF-179, Post-conflict peacebuilding
-  Gambia, PBF/IRF-173, Security Sector Reform
-  Guinea-Bissau, PBF/IRF-208: Support to Political Dialogue
-  Haiti, PBF/IRF 227, Youth Promotion
-  Kyrgyzstan, PBF/IRF 239: Photography with youth
-  Kyrgyzstan/Tajikistan cross border project, PBF/IRF 131/132: Cross-border cooperation
-  Lebanon, PBF/IRF: Employment and Peacebuilding, youth at risk
-  Liberia, PBF/IRF 228: Human rights promotion
-  Liberia, PBF/IRF 170: Youth Participation in the presidential electoral process
-  Myanmar, PBF/IRF 242: Strengthening women in Rakhine State
-  Myanmar, PBF/IRF 226: Empowering women for peacebuilding in Myanmar
-  Papua New Guinea, PBF/IRF 204: Youth and women promotion for a violence-free referendum
-  Philippines, PBF/IRF 188: Peacebuilding in Mindanao
-  Sri Lanka, PBF/IRF 138: Transitional Justice
-  Sri Lanka, PBF/IRF 215: Economic empowerment of women
-  Yemen, PBF/IRF 202: Women, peacebuilding, and water management

7. All relevant documents are available on <http://mptf.undp.org/>

OBJECTIVES, METHODOLOGY, AND ANALYSIS OF THE BODY OF EVIDENCE REVIEWED

The focus areas of the 2020 Synthesis Review were determined jointly between PBF and the author during the inception period.⁸ As a result, the review was to include:

- ▲ Observations on PBF's progress against recommendations made in the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review, including expressed intentions to take the recommendations forward in PBF's management response.
- ▲ An analysis of how the evaluative exercises address relevance, effectiveness and longer-term impacts (to the extent possible) of projects across the PBF portfolio and across PBF's thematic focus areas and priority windows (as outlined in Section 1 above), including
 - ▲ A review of how the evaluative exercises assess the validity of the theories of change underpinning PBF projects and initiatives;
 - ▲ Recurring lessons-learned from project and portfolio evaluations of PBF-funded projects on improving the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and conflict-sensitivity of PBF-funded peacebuilding activities.
- ▲ An overview analysis, as much as the information is provided in the evaluations to be reviewed, of the degree to which PBF-funded initiatives that were evaluated in 2020 met their stated outcomes, and how those outcomes were assessed as relevant by the evaluative exercises reviewed.
- ▲ Successes and challenges highlighted in the evaluative exercises in leveraging the PBF's intended niche-value, notably providing funding that is timely, risk-tolerant, and catalytic of peacebuilding processes and additional funding.
- ▲ Insights that emerge from the evaluative exercises for PBF monitoring and evaluation activities, including ensuring improved conflict analyses, results frameworks, data collection, and monitoring and evaluation frameworks for PBF-funded projects.

8. Inception report as of November 25th, 2020.

- ▲ Insights and lessons emerging from the evaluations on further driving cohesion of UN strategies in conflict situations in support of nationally-led efforts, through joint analysis, planning and implementation. This includes, as much as information is available, the role that PBF Secretariats play in coherence and strategic orientation of PBF portfolios.
- ▲ Recommendations of other approaches and methodologies that can be useful to evaluate impact of PBF-funded programming and higher-level changes in conflict situations, particularly in light of challenges to conducting evaluations during the global pandemic that prevailed in 2020. Reflect, as much as the information is available, on how Covid-19 has impacted PBF-funded projects, prompted some innovations, and highlighted the degree to which current approaches are context adaptive.

It should be noted that the review did not find a sufficient evidence base for all of these questions in the 2020 evaluative exercises. Therefore, certain areas are analyzed and highlighted more in this report than others.

METHODOLOGY

The review included primarily a review of key PBF documentation including the following:

- ✓ Project-level and portfolio-level evaluative exercises of PBF-funded projects as outlined above;
- ✓ The PBF 2020-2024 Strategy and PBF's own key insights on the 2017-2019 Strategy implementation;
- ✓ DFID's Programme Completion Review of the PBF (2016-2020);
- ✓ PBF's Management Response to the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review;
- ✓ The PBF Thematic Review on Transitional Justice finalized in 2020;
- ✓ Relevant PBF programming guidance documents, both public documents and internal documents and drafts;

- ✓ TOR of evaluative exercises that are currently under development;
- ✓ Other reviews and guidance notes – or drafts thereof – developed in 2020;
- ✓ Communication and guidance that the PBF issued in response to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020;
- ✓ Wider UN peacebuilding documents that are of relevance for PBF and this review.

🔍 Gaps emerging from the document review. A comparative assessment of the collected data and patterns was conducted, including gaps in data and evidence.

Single issues or insights that might emerge as particularly relevant for one project or country portfolio are only reflected in this Synthesis Review if they have broader relevance for other PBF initiatives.

2.2. ANALYSIS OF THE BODY OF EVIDENCE REVIEWED

2.2.1 ANALYSIS OF OVERALL FINDINGS COMPARED WITH THE 2017-2019 SYNTHESIS REVIEW

In general, and not surprisingly, at programmatic and operational levels, many of the findings documented in the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review were also found in the 2020 evaluative exercises—as they relate to effectiveness and impact, UN coordination and coherence, the systematic application of conflict analysis, peacebuilding theories of change, or conflict sensitivity. The 2020 analysis also reconfirms the remaining tension and frequent lack of clarity between what is ‘good development programming’ and what is relevant from a peacebuilding perspective—an issue that has emerged in various prior PBF reviews ¹⁰.

At the same time, the evidence base for identifying patterns of a more generalizable nature was much thinner for the 2020 review. The overall body of evaluative exercises in 2020 was different from the 2017-2019 review, as it consisted of a majority of decentralized project-level evaluations, and only one portfolio evaluation. While the three evaluability assessments, the Strategic Review, the one evaluative exercise and the Thematic Review on Transitional Justice also provide some insights into PBF portfolios beyond specific projects, the overall evidence base in

Annex I provides a more detailed overview of Key Documents reviewed, as well as links to those that are publicly available. A small number of key informants were interviewed for the purposes of this Synthesis Review, as listed in Annex II.

APPROACH TO ANALYSIS

As overarching guiding principles on how to understand relevance and effectiveness in peacebuilding engagements, this Synthesis Review applies the 2012 OECD/DAC criteria “Evaluating Peacebuilding Activities in Settings of Conflict and Fragility – Improving Learning for Results.”⁹ The Synthesis Review applied a qualitative analysis approach to distill patterns that emerged across the different evaluations, in line with the focus areas outlined in the ToRs and the inception report for this assignment.

The patterns examined included the following:

- 🔍 Statements and findings that occur more than once or twice in relation to the focus areas of this Synthesis Review;
- 🔍 A qualitative analysis of those statements and their meaning in relation to the focus areas of the review;
- 🔍 Conflicting accounts of events or processes; and

9. <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/evaluatingconflictpreventionandpeacebuilding.htm> This guidance includes criteria around Relevance, Effectiveness, Impact, Coherence, and Sustainability, and Conflict Sensitivity in peacebuilding - and how to design for peacebuilding results, including theories of change.

10. See Beijnum, Mariska: *Challenges and Opportunities to Peacebuilding: Analysis of Strategic Issues identified by Country-specific PBF evaluations*. Clingendael/Conflict Research Unit Report, The Hague, July 2013, and Anita Ernstorfer: *Synthesis Review of PBF portfolio and project evaluations 2017-2019 (May 2020)*.

2020 provides a more limited view of higher level trends at PBF portfolio level, as compared to the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review. This is partly due to the fact that the period of review was only one year, during which a global pandemic was happening, which made conducting some of the portfolio level evaluations and higher level evaluative exercises more challenging.

The 2020 Synthesis Review also considered the findings and recommendations of the DFID Programme Completion Review (2016-2020), and its findings reconfirm several—but not all—of the recommendations of the DFID review. Where there is alignment with the findings and recommendations from the DFID review, select references are provided throughout this report.

Similar to the findings of the 2017-2019 review, the quality of 2020 project-level evaluations varied greatly. Different evaluation teams applied different criteria and approaches to understanding peacebuilding relevance and effectiveness. Many of the project evaluations found it challenging or impossible to come to firm conclusions regarding the relevance and effectiveness of PBF-funded projects, given limited monitoring and evaluation data, as well as short funding timeframes.

Several of the project evaluations provided specific project-level thematic recommendations, which were useful for those individual country projects, but of more limited use for the 2020 Synthesis Review. However, some of the stronger project-level evaluations¹¹ demonstrated a clear understanding of how the evaluation teams understood and assessed the particular PBF contribution as part of the wider peace and conflict dynamics in given settings, even though the focus was on assessing a specific project. This level of analysis was not common across all project evaluations, and provided, where available, a much deeper foundation for understanding the particular contribution of PBF-funded initiatives at the project level.

For example, the evaluation of an FAO/IOM

¹¹ For example, this includes 2020 evaluations of the following PBF projects: *Kyrgyzstan cross-border engagement (PBF/IRF-131/132)*; *the Lebanon employment and peacebuilding project (PBF/IRF-214)*, *the Liberia youth and elections project (PBF/IRF-170)*; and *the economic empowerment of women in Sri Lanka project (PBF/IRF-215)*; *the women and natural resource project in Yemen (PBF/IRF-202)*.

implemented women's empowerment and water management project in Yemen provides a sharp and solid analysis of the particular PBF-funded contributions, recognizing the limited impact of such initiatives on the overall political conflict.

“The focus of the PBF project design and implementation on local peace prospects is highly relevant in Yemen. The overall conflict shows no sign of resolution, and while peacebuilding efforts happen at national level, communities in the rural areas remain key to the repair of the social fabric and the improvement of their own livelihoods for a sustainable and lasting peace. FAO and IOM took a calculated risk to work on behaviour/social change to increase the prospects of local peace through natural resource governance in high-risk and hard-to-access contexts.

PROJECT-LEVEL EVALUATION, FAO/IOM PBF PROJECT IN YEMEN, 2019, P. 35

Hence, in summary, many of the higher level findings of broader relevance for PBF are based on the portfolio level exercises and the stronger project level evaluations that include higher-level findings.

2.2.2 THE CHALLENGE OF DEMONSTRATING IMPACTS AT PORTFOLIO LEVELS AND ACROSS SECTORS AND COUNTRIES

For PBF initiatives, impacts can be considered—and assessed—at two levels: country-level portfolios and thematic program areas. Theoretically, it would be feasible to assess outcomes and longer-term impacts resulting from the full portfolio of funded efforts at a country level—although this remains difficult to date, as will be further outlined below. Also, projects that address a similar programmatic area or priority could be assessed across countries, comparing and contrasting the specific approaches used, with appropriate deference to contextual factors. However, such higher-level considerations face significant constraints.

First, the sheer diversity of PBF-funded initiatives under its priority areas and windows presents a real challenge to measuring results, especially as most PBF country-level efforts lack an overarching strategic framework that could guide such an assessment. This issue is discussed later in this report and was reflected in the 2017-19 Synthesis Review. The current efforts to develop strategic frameworks for Guatemala and the Balkans, and

the recently started impact partnership with the Government of Germany represents potential progress in this regard.

Second, the recipient RUNOs and NUNOs exhibit quite diverse levels of skill in DM&E practices, including coherence of project design, development of M&E frameworks, and actual collection of data. Again, this issue has been discussed in previous reports, leading to recommendations for DM&E capacity building.

Third, project and portfolio level evaluations do not yet follow consistent approaches and standards, including what constitutes relevant peacebuilding programming. Even the term “peacebuilding” itself is not understood in an agreed manner by all participating organizations, resulting in evaluation reports that cannot be easily compared or combined to achieve a higher-level demonstration of impact – as noted in earlier reports and PBF reviews¹².

It will be the role of the planned renewed focus on Thematic Reviews to assess results within and across a specific thematic area of work. So far, the Transitional Justice Thematic Review was finalized in 2020 (see section 4.1). A Gender and Peacebuilding Thematic Review is underway and will be completed in 2021, and PBSO is also planning a Thematic Review on Local Peacebuilding.

¹². See past DFID evaluations of PBF as well as See Beijnum, Mariska: *Challenges and Opportunities to Peacebuilding: Analysis of Strategic Issues Identified by Country-specific PBF Evaluations*. Clingendael/Conflict Research Unit Report, The Hague, July 2013, and Anita Ernstorfer: *Synthesis Review of PBF portfolio and project evaluations 2017-2019* (May 2020).

3. OVERALL CONTEXTUAL DEVELOPMENTS IN 2020 RELEVANT FOR THIS SYNTHESIS REVIEW

This section briefly highlights select developments at PBF in 2020 that are important for understanding the overall context in which the 2020 Synthesis Review took place.

3.1 PBF'S 2020-2024 STRATEGY

In March 2020, PBF published its 2020-2024 Strategy.¹³ The Strategy reconfirms PBF's commitment to its thematic focus areas and priority windows, renews its commitment to conflict prevention, supporting countries undergoing transitions from peace operations, commits to scaling up support for cross-border and regional approaches, and makes a pitch for medium-sized financial peacebuilding interventions (as opposed to small-scale). The Strategy commits PBF to exploring how to expand partnerships to provide more direct and flexible funding to local-level organizations. It also makes a clear commitment to making learning a clear component of monitoring and evaluation. Both of these issues were raised in the 2017-2019 Synthesis Report.

PBF's 2020-2024 Strategy sets out its most ambitious fundraising target for the PBF to date, with the goal of raising USD 1.5 billion for the 2020-2024 period. During the period 2017–2019, PBF approved USD 531 million for support to fifty-one countries, which means that the PBF doubled its approvals compared the previous three-year strategic plan cycle, and exceeded its target of USD 500 million during this period. In 2020, PBF invested approximately USD 173 million in 39 countries. In January 2021, PBF mobilized USD 439 million through a high-level 'replenishment conference'.¹⁴

However, according to the Secretary General's 2020 Report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace,¹⁵ the 'quantum leap' the Secretary General

had called for in support of the Fund has not been achieved, and PBF was therefore not able to respond to all requests received from countries.¹⁶ At the end of 2020, PBF also published, for the first time, a report summarizing the key highlights of its 2017-2019 Strategy implementation.¹⁷

3.2 UN PEACEBUILDING ARCHITECTURE REVIEW

The above referenced 2020 Secretary General's Report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace was the principal input into the 2020 Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture. This third review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture was requested in the twin resolutions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (2016).¹⁸ The new twin resolutions on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace¹⁹ were adopted in December 2020 based on the 2020 Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture.

The entire UN system was engaged in the 2020 Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture, led by a core group of UN entities. PBSO played a key role facilitating some of the UN system wide consultations, including through the Peacebuilding Contact Group (PCG) and Peacebuilding Strategy Group. UN thematic papers on various aspects of peacebuilding and sustaining peace were received from across the UN system.²⁰ Many entities also provided evaluation materials to ensure a focus on results and impact in the field. Extensive field inputs were also gathered.

The Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace report summarizes the self-reported peacebuilding results by different UN organizations and agencies across the UN system. It also makes a strong funding pitch for predictable and sustained

13. UN Secretary General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) 2020-2024 Strategy

14. PBF *Investing in Leadership for Peace: Strategic Plan Results 2017-2019*, p. 1/2. The 2020 figures and the numbers in relation to the 2021 replenishment conference were provided by PBF.

15. Secretary General's *Report 2020 on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace* (A/74/976-S/2020/773), July 30, 2020

16. See *Secretary General's Report 2020 on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace* (A/74/976-S/2020/773) p. 17/18

17. See footnote #11 above: *Investing in Leadership for Peace*.

18. General Assembly resolution 70/262 and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016)

19. A/RES/75/201 (December 28th, 2020) and S/RES/2558 (December 21st, 2020)

20. Thematic papers: <https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/thematic-papers.1>

resources and funding for peacebuilding, including the Secretary General's Peacebuilding Fund. It recognizes the role that the UN Peacebuilding Fund plays on different levels, including through blended finance mechanisms with private sector investments (such as in Colombia), complementing other types of Funds, such as the Central Emergency Response Fund or the UN Covid-19 Response and Recovery Fund. The PBF related insights in the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace report are based on a more detailed analysis of achievements and funding needs outlined in the Secretary-General's Report on the Peacebuilding Fund,²¹ published in February 2020, a few months before the UN Peacebuilding Architecture Review.

“The Peacebuilding Fund continues to serve an important integration function between country teams and missions. In 2019, 30 per cent of the Fund's investments supported transition settings, 39 per cent supported peacekeeping settings and 12 per cent supported countries with special political missions. [...] The Fund's strategy for the period 2020–2024 represents its most ambitious plan to date, maintaining core focus areas while scaling up support for cross-border and regional approaches, transition contexts and inclusion of women and youth in political and peacebuilding processes.”

SG REPORT ON PEACEBUILDING AND SUSTAINING PEACE, 2020, P. 8

3.3 INCREASING PEACEBUILDING CAPACITIES OF UN AGENCIES, FUNDS AND PROGRAMS

Triggered by the Sustaining Peace Agenda, the Humanitarian-Development-Peacebuilding (HDP) Nexus, and the fact that a majority of development and humanitarian assistance happens in contexts of violent conflict and fragility, several UN agencies have been strengthening their approaches to peacebuilding over the past few years. This includes hiring staff with relevant peacebuilding skills and expertise, and launching new internal processes and mechanisms, such as improved conflict analysis, a greater focus on conflict-sensitivity, and/or additional steps towards more direct peacebuilding programming.

Such processes will not lead to enhanced peacebuilding results on the ground

21. [Report of the UN Secretary General on the UN Peacebuilding Fund, A/74/688, February 10th, 2020](#)

automatically or overnight. They require long-term organizational commitment, an alignment of organizational incentive structures (development and humanitarian engagement often follows different types of intervention logic as compared to peacebuilding), a commitment at all levels of UN agencies, funds and programs, and a commitment to adaptive programming and ongoing learning, among others.²²

PBF-funded initiatives are often one element of larger strategies and portfolios of UN agencies, funds and programs. In some instances, they fund the peacebuilding components of larger development or humanitarian portfolios; in others they fund a particular peacebuilding component as part of wider peacebuilding engagement. In any case, the effectiveness and impact of PBF-funded initiatives are highly dependent on available peacebuilding programming and the peacebuilding design, monitoring and evaluation skills of RUNOs and NUNOs. The fact – as outlined in greater detail below - that RUNOS and NUNOS are strengthening their peacebuilding capacities is an encouraging development for peacebuilding overall - and also for the PBF.

Some UN entities have peacebuilding at the core of their mandates, such as the Department of Peace and Political Affairs (DPPA) and UNDP. Most multi-mandate UN agencies, however, do not have peacebuilding as a central concern, including FAO, UNFPA, WFP, WHO, IOM, ILO, and UNICEF, all of which are fund-recipients of PBF. Several of these agencies have taken steps towards increasing their understanding and capacities in peacebuilding in recent years, and are making efforts to make sense of the Sustaining Peace and Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus agendas in practice for their organizations. Complementing these UN-led capacity building initiatives, Interpeace launched a new initiative in 2020, the Peace Responsiveness Facility, to support the operationalization of the Sustaining Peace agenda of the development and humanitarian system, and to support UN agencies

22. [For a more in-depth discussion on lessons, challenges, and opportunities related to institutionalizing and operationalizing the Sustaining Peace Agenda in multi-mandate UN agencies, see a recent Interpeace working paper on this topic \(publication forthcoming\). Also the 'conflict-sensitivity integration review' by Rachel Goldwyn \(commissioned by USAID, MSI, and CDA\) provides valuable insights on what makes conflict-sensitivity sustainable within organizations.](#)

in their efforts to increase and strengthen their work in peacebuilding.

Engaging with and/or supporting those nascent efforts will be strategic for the PBF to further leverage these UN system-wide efforts going forward.

 **EXAMPLE**

FAO'S STEPS TOWARDS INCREASED PEACEBUILDING RESULTS AND LEARNING IN PEACEBUILDING

FAO has taken several steps in recent years to increase its agency-wide contributions to peacebuilding – from improved conflict analysis to programming support for peace (theories of change) across FAO's technical sectors.

FAO's office of evaluation has launched a two-year process (2020 – 2022) to conduct a series of final evaluations of PBF-funded projects for which FAO is the lead agency. The individual project evaluations will be reviewed under an umbrella evaluative framework that will be developed through a participatory process between FAO and a range of partners. This joint framework is expected to ensure coherence, to allow for the development of broader lessons across individual project evaluations, and inform future FAO and partner-led peacebuilding interventions and related design, monitoring, and evaluation practice. This is a promising example of how a UN agency that implements PBF funding uses the formal evaluations that are required by PBF to inform and feed into a larger participatory process of learning for the organization, and for interventions in agriculture and food and nutrition security more widely.

FAO is also finalizing an evaluation of the organization's contribution to the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (2014-2019, forthcoming), which assesses FAO's footprint and highlights particular contributions of the agency in this regard. These include the areas of developing guidance and implementing codes of conduct for negotiated access to natural resources, or the area of technical diplomacy at a regional level, using FAO's technical mandate as an entry point to build relationships between countries to address common challenges, such as transboundary animal and plant pests and diseases.

Beyond the FAO example highlighted in the text box, several other UN agency efforts would be worth highlighting in this regard. In addition to enhancing internal skills and capacities, some agencies are also engaging in research partnerships regarding peacebuilding,²³ conducting internal evaluative reviews of their peacebuilding contributions,²⁴ articulating joint positions on peacebuilding,²⁵ or engaging in the joint articulation of the particular peacebuilding role and contributions of development and humanitarian actors.²⁶

²³. For example, *WFP's partnership with SIPRI – Stockholm International Peace Research Institute to better understand WFP's contribution to peace Institute* (2019)

²⁴. For example, *UNICEF partnered with Interpeace in 2019/2020 to conduct an internal evaluative review of UNICEF's contributions to peacebuilding and conflict-sensitivity across its global portfolio*

²⁵. Such as the joint *ILO, WHO, Interpeace, and PBSO paper on responding to the health, employment and peacebuilding challenges in times of Covid-19* (2020)

²⁶. Such as through a joint movie of FAO, Interpeace, and IOM on *'Visualizing the 'P' in the Humanitarian, Development, Peacebuilding Nexus'* (2020).

4. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2020 SYNTHESIS REVIEW

4.1 TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE THEMATIC REVIEW

Building on past efforts²⁷ PBF has renewed its commitment to conducting Thematic Reviews of specific sectors that receive a significant share of PBF funding within and across PBF's priority areas and countries. PBSO is now approaching this in a more structured way and aims to conduct two Thematic Reviews per year, with a focus on areas that might represent a particular gap in knowledge both internal and external to the UN. In 2020, the first Thematic Review under this renewed focus was published: the Thematic Review on Transitional Justice developed under the leadership of Salif Nimaga from PBF's Program Support Team.

The Thematic Review on Transitional Justice identifies good practices and lessons learned in an effort to inform future PBF investment decisions and to help inform programmatic approaches in support of transitional justice initiatives. The review analyzed twenty-two transitional justice projects from eleven countries. Even though transitional justice is not an explicit priority area of the PBF, and rather a broader encompassing framework, many projects especially under the PBF Priority Area 2 (dialogue and peaceful coexistence) are focused on transitional justice, and/or reconciliation. Select key findings from the [Thematic Review on Transitional Justice](#)²⁸ are highlighted throughout this report where they speak to key areas of insights for the 2020 Synthesis Review.

The Thematic Review proves to be a useful mechanism for understanding effectiveness and results beyond specific projects in one key area of PBF funding, to distill lessons and good practices, and to inform future PBF funding decisions.

4.2 PBF MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE 2017-2019 SYNTHESIS REVIEW

The 2017-2019 Synthesis Review included findings and recommendations directed at PBF, as well as recommendations that lie within the area of

responsibility of RUNOs and NUNOs for which PBF can only play a supporting role.

PBF generally welcomed and supported the Synthesis Review findings and recommendations. Despite the short time period between the finalization of the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review and the 2020 review, PBF had already started to take concrete steps to act upon the findings. As can be expected against this background, many proposed steps are still under consideration, spearheaded by the monitoring and evaluation team at PBF; they are not yet approved changes in PBF policy and practice. Hence, they will be described in this Synthesis Review but cannot yet be assessed as to their effectiveness in implementation.

The 2017-19 Synthesis Review was finalized in May 2020, around the same time as PBF's new 2020-2024 Strategy was launched. In August 2020, PBF convened a workshop with PBF staff and the Synthesis Review author to discuss the findings in greater detail, including implications of the conclusions and recommendations for PBF, RUNOs and NUNOs.

PBF also developed an internal management response to the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review, which was included in the 2020 Synthesis Review. This report highlights only the concrete actions that PBF has taken in 2020 to act upon the findings of the 2017-2019 report recommendations. It does not list all the expressed commitments for possible future PBF actions in the management response.

RECOMMENDATION

2017-2019 SYNTHESIS REVIEW RECOMMENDATION:

Strengthen the strategic planning and oversight of PBF portfolios, including the development of processes that fulfill the function of strategic planning at UNCT portfolio levels.

27. Such as, for example the PBSO *Peace Dividends Report (on the role of social and administrative services in peacebuilding)*, or the PBSO report on *DDR and peacebuilding*, both developed in 2012.

PBF has launched two processes to develop **five-year eligibility cycles** and corresponding

strategic frameworks at the portfolio level for Guatemala and the Balkans, both of which were underway during the drafting of this Review. Initial insights from these two processes are highlighted in section 5.2 of this report (effectiveness and impact).

RECOMMENDATION

2017-2019 SYNTHESIS REVIEW RECOMMENDATION:

Develop and experiment with new design, monitoring, evaluation and learning approaches at portfolio levels

PBF launched several initiatives in 2020 in response to this recommendation:

First, In Kyrgyzstan, PBF commissioned a high-level **'Strategic Review'** of PBF's portfolio in early 2020 against the background of approximately ten years of PBF funding, in order to determine the basis for a renewed eligibility request and outline possible priority areas of investment. Instead of doing another portfolio evaluation, PBF engaged a consultant to facilitate a higher-level Strategic Review with a focus on understanding possible areas of focus for the future. This Strategic Review had less of an evaluation focus, but rather distilled key insights from almost ten years of PBF investments.

Second, triggered also through the Covid-19 pandemic, PBF commissioned two evaluative exercises at the portfolio level **remotely**, as further outlined in section 4.3 ('staying relevant during a global pandemic'). Initial process lessons from these first remote engagements are highlighted in section 6 of this report (insights for PBF's design, monitoring, evaluation and learning approach).

Third, a joint project has been started between PBF and the German Federal Foreign Office to conduct **impact evaluations** of PBF-funded projects during the last quarter of 2020. This joint project builds on the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review, and a report commissioned by the German Federal Foreign Office on innovative financing. As per the concept note for this project examined for this review, the joint initiative has two objectives: **(i)** Strengthen the evidence base regarding what

works and what does not in commonly supported areas within peacebuilding programs funded by the PBF; and **(ii)** Test the viability and cost-effectiveness of PBF independently conducting impact assessments of its investments. The project will be implemented through a partnership between the International Security and Development Center (ISDC), and the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie). Future reviews (like this Synthesis Review and others) will be able to document initial results and insights from this joint impact partnership and what those mean for PBF more widely.

4.3 STAYING RELEVANT DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

The Covid-19 pandemic has represented significant challenges for international organizations, including for the UN, PBSO and PBF. In many countries, the pandemic has introduced new or increased existing tensions related to socio-economic difficulties, equal access to social services, or domestic violence. At country level, RUNOs and NUNOs were asked to adapt and respond to those new challenges, also related to new funding demands or shifting existing funding. At headquarter levels, PBSO and PBF had to adapt in their support to program design and implementation. External evaluators were not able to travel post-March 2020, which prompted PBF to test remote evaluation and other types of long-distance monitoring and evaluation support.

The PBF reached out proactively to Resident Coordinators in April 2020 to express support for possible adaptations required at country level to adapt PBF-funded initiatives to new needs emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic. While making it clear that the PBF cannot fund humanitarian response, PBF management communicated a clear commitment to addressing the social and economic impacts of the pandemic. According to this communication, this might entail such measures as crisis management and communications, supporting dialogue on response and recovery strategies, and inter-community social cohesion and border management.

This Synthesis Review did not include a country-level assessment of how these measures

by PBF in New York were taken up by RUNOs and NUNOs or what their impact on program implementation might have been. This could be the subject of future reviews, if considered useful.

PBF also published a briefing note on the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic in September 2020,²⁸ with the following four principles 'to integrate peacebuilding in the Covid-19 response': conflict-sensitivity, inclusion, integration and flexibility (see text box).

distance exercises. PBF also published initial questions to consider when determining whether the proposed evaluation exercise can take place in the current context of Covid-19.²⁹

Section 6 in this report provides an initial overview of some of the experiences with these long-distance experiences. The few evaluative exercises that were conducted long distance are too few in number to provide a comprehensive overview of lessons from these processes. Assuming that remote support for such program design and evaluative processes will continue in 2021, the evidence base for learning will grow.

- **CONFLICT-SENSITIVITY**
Responses are informed by multidimensional risk analysis and a do-no-harm approach
- **INCLUSION**
Dialogues with communities and marginalized groups help build trust and enhance social cohesion. Strong engagement with women's groups is essential
- **INTEGRATION**
The approach is integrated and coherent through collaboration across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus
- **FLEXIBILITY**
The peacebuilding approach is adaptable and tailored to the pandemic context



The 2020 Secretary General's Report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace recognizes the PBF's role in mitigating the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic, in collaboration with other UN actors and other funding mechanisms.

PBF has positively embraced the challenge of providing program design, monitoring and evaluation support long-distance, after international travel was halted in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The evaluative exercises commissioned by PBF in New York before February 2020 were conducted through field trips by members of PBF's program support team (such as the Guatemala portfolio evaluation, the Burkina Faso evaluability assessment, or the Kyrgyzstan Strategic Review). Subsequent HQ-commissioned exercises—namely the Madagascar evaluability assessment and DM&E support and the Niger evaluative exercise and related self-assessment—were supported by PBF program support team members through long

28. UN PBF Briefing Note on the Covid-19 pandemic, September 2020

29. UN PBF Guidance on Assessing Readiness for Remote Evaluation, 2020

5. ANALYSIS OF 2020 EVALUATIVE EXERCISES

5.1 PEACEBUILDING RELEVANCE

The 2020 exercises show an improvement in how RUNOs and NUNOs use conflict analysis more systematically to inform PBF-funded initiatives, and how they have responded to past gaps in conflict analysis.

For example, the 2020 Guatemala portfolio evaluation documents a clear gap in conflict analysis, as there was no recent joint UN conflict analysis when the portfolio evaluation was conducted. It documents that 90% of RUNOs and NUNOs participating in PBF implementation recognized the need to have an updated analysis as the foundation for programming, and also to have a common analytical framework in place, as the foundation for a common strategic framework at portfolio level. As part of the ongoing efforts in Guatemala to develop a strategic framework for PBF-funded interventions, a conflict analysis was conducted in 2020 as the basis for a new eligibility request by the Guatemalan government and joint identification of priorities and outcomes.

The Thematic Review on Transitional Justice, noted earlier, analyzed a range of different transitional justice and reconciliation projects across countries. It came to the conclusion that the projects under review were relevant, and that conflict analysis was included in all project documents, with some strong analyses highlighted.³⁰ The review further states that some transitional justice initiatives fail to present a proper analysis of the situation on the ground and the consequences of past human rights abuses for populations in the current context but that those are exceptions³¹.

Other evaluative efforts point out ongoing limitations in how conflict analyses are conducted

³⁰. A strong peace and conflict analysis includes a clear analysis of key drivers of conflict, capacities for peace, key stakeholders for peace/conflict and related dynamics and relationships between those factors and actors. It also requires a sound process on how the peace and conflict analysis is being conducted, involving a range of stakeholders through a participatory and inclusive process, including local partners.

³¹. Transitional Justice Thematic Review, p. 14/15

and used. The main gaps in this regard highlighted in the 2020 exercises include the following, many echo findings from the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review:

⚠️ **Conflict and gender analysis often stand next to each other but are not integrated.** A better integration and understanding of how gender dynamics play out in relation to peace and conflict dynamics is required. Even though the PBF [project document template](#) (2020) asks for the conflict analysis to be “gender and age-responsive” and the 2019 PBF [Guidance Note on gender marker scoring](#) asks for “gendered conflict analysis”, RUNOs and NUNOs do not have sufficient knowledge and guidance on how to do this in practice.

“*Bien qu'ils puissent puiser dans un riche répertoire d'analyses de conflits à travers les années – le PCIA de 2010, le CDA de 2014 et la mise à jour du CDA de 2019, ainsi que l'étude anthropologique dans le Sud de 2017 - certaines analyses se concentrent plus sur un examen du contexte et de certains problèmes spécifiques abordés sans faire des liens très explicites avec les principales dynamiques conflictuelles dans le pays.*”

MADAGASCAR EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT, P. 46

Understanding the dynamics and relationships between gender and conflict dynamics better during the analysis stage could be conducive to more integrated programming if used systematically during implementation.³² Similar to the findings and recommendations related to conflict sensitivity elsewhere in this review, PBF might consider developing clearer guidance and support on this question.

⚠️ The Transitional Justice Thematic Review points to the need for more robust stakeholder analysis (which is one important element of a conflict analysis):

³². As highlighted in the 2017-2019 review, there are dedicated resources available to guide the integration of conflict and gender dynamics in analysis and programming, see for example *Conciliation Resources: Gender and Conflict Analysis Toolkit*. London 2015.

“One aspect that currently is underdeveloped in the conflict analyses reviewed relates to a robust stakeholder analysis. Transitional justice is a politically contested field and a better understanding of who the actors with their respective interests and intentions are, is crucial in finding allies in the local context to provide targeted support for a strengthened human rights and transitional justice agenda.” (TJ Thematic Review, p. 15/16).

This finding is aligned with the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review finding that many PBF-funded interventions rather focus on ‘doing good’ versus ‘stopping the bad.’ In other words, programs tend to work predominantly with stakeholders willing to engage with the international community, rather than also trying to engage perpetrators of violence and/or possible key players that have the potential and power to undermine important peacebuilding gains.

5.2 PEACEBUILDING EFFECTIVENESS & IMPACTS

Similar to the body of evaluative exercises reviewed for the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review, the 2020 evaluations (a majority of which were at the project level as noted above), demonstrate a wealth of promising project-level results. The PBF report on programmatic results from 2017-19, published in December 2020,³³ provides a solid summary of project-level achievements across PBF's priority areas and windows. Furthermore, the Transitional Justice Thematic Review provides an excellent example of a deeper assessment of specific project-level or programmatic thematic sectors that the PBF is funding.

However, as noted earlier in this report, it is not possible to measure higher-level results of impact at country level beyond specific projects in the absence of a strategic peacebuilding framework at the portfolio level. The 2017-2019 Synthesis Review had revealed a clear gap that was left

behind by the abandonment of the Peacebuilding Priority Plans (PPPs), as it led to an even greater ‘atomization’ of the PBF portfolios in country in the absence of higher-level impact-oriented strategic frameworks at UNCT portfolio levels.

For example, the Guatemala 2020 portfolio evaluation documents good project-level results in the areas of institutional support at national government level, strengthening of governance systems, transitional justice, and prevention of violence against women. At the same time, the portfolio evaluation states that it is impossible to measure their impacts beyond the specific project level, as there is no wider strategic peacebuilding framework at the portfolio level. *“No es decir, que los proyectos individuales no lograron resultados, pero que no se pueden medir dentro de un marco de consolidación por la paz.”* (Guatemala portfolio evaluation, p. 10)

At the same time, there are growing demands from PBF's donors, its Advisory Group, as well as within the larger UN system to demonstrate higher-level and longer-term ‘impacts’ of PBF-funded portfolios. For example, the 2020 Peacebuilding Architecture Review called for evidence of impact, which PBF can only possibly demonstrate with strategic frameworks in place combined with portfolio level monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

The current steps towards developing **5-year strategic frameworks** are an important milestone for PBF to commit to longer time horizons. In 2020, PBF has started to support the development of two strategic framework processes that were both underway at the time of writing of this report: Guatemala and a regional framework for the Balkans. The overall idea behind these processes is to develop a framework at the portfolio level (with participation from RUNOs, NUNOs, government and civil society to varying degrees) to provide an overall strategic orientation for PBF portfolio in country, beyond specific projects and programs. The general priorities are identified through the eligibility processes and then translated into strategic outcomes over a five-year period.

The strategic framework developments that are currently underway in Guatemala and the Balkans

33. PBF Report: *Investing in Leadership for Peace: Strategic Plan Results 2017-2019, December 2020*

are important steps towards a clear peacebuilding strategy at portfolio level. They are also important 'process precedents' as they prioritize the final deliverable as much as the participatory multi-stakeholder process on how to get there.

“ It is important to encourage a joined-up approach at portfolio level to support PBF-funded projects to contribute towards a joint peacebuilding aim and have a collective impact on conflict dynamics. ”

DFID PROGRAMME COMPLETION REPORT OF THE PBF, 2020, P. II

PBF recognizes that the process of developing such strategic frameworks is as important as the final product. This is demonstrated through the participatory workshops and multi-stakeholder engagements that were underway in Guatemala and the Balkans during the writing of this report in order to develop a common understanding of the situation in country, key peacebuilding priorities, and higher-level theories of change at strategy and priority level.

REQUIREMENTS

AS PER THE DRAFT INTERNAL GUIDANCE OF PBF IN RELATION TO THE NEW FIVE-YEAR ELIGIBILITY PROCESS, THE FOLLOWING TEN STEPS ARE REQUIRED:

- ✓ 1. (Updated) Conflict Analysis
- ✓ 2. Identification of Strategic Priorities
- ✓ 3. Five-year Strategic Framework (ideally costed)
- ✓ 4. Five-year Eligibility Request
- ✓ 5. Project development and approval within the Strategic Framework
- ✓ 6. Portfolio baseline data collection
- ✓ 7. Portfolio Evaluability Assessments (optional; individual consultants)
- ✓ 8. Midterm data collection
- ✓ 9. Midterm Review (to be done at the two-year point)
- ✓ 10. Portfolio Evaluation (to be started at four-year point, so that indicative findings are available four-six months before eligibility expires)

While some of these steps are already included in existing PBF eligibility guidance, the list above is not formal PBF policy at this point.

The development of five-year strategic frameworks could also be an opportunity to address the issue of short-term funding for expected long-term results. According to the PBF Management Response to the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review, these five-year strategic frameworks will now be required for countries' eligibility and re-eligibility declarations. The process of granting funding and renewals offers an opportunity to plan phased projects over the next five-year timeframe, and countries will be required to submit a strategic framework, which is expected to allow for the achievements of more robust peacebuilding results.

As both the Guatemala and Balkans regional frameworks are under development while this Synthesis Review is being produced, it is too early to distill firm conclusions either regarding the process of developing such strategic frameworks or on the effectiveness of their implementation. Both of these exercises are supported by external consultants. They include bilateral consultations as well as multi-stakeholder workshops, facilitated in both cases remotely with some in-country face-to-face engagements among those based in-country, as deemed feasible given the Covid-19 pandemic.

The following points summarize a few emerging insights from the early stages of strategic framework development that can be documented at this stage:

An updated peace and conflict analysis is essential as a foundation for the identification of priorities for PBF investments in the country or region. For Guatemala, an updated conflict analysis was produced as part of the PBF eligibility process as a follow-up to the recommendations in the Guatemala 2020 portfolio review to produce an updated conflict analysis to inform re-eligibility. An updated conflict analysis is also useful to test assumptions of the UNCT and RUNOs and NUNOs about what is most relevant for peacebuilding in a given context and go beyond 'business as usual' and already established sector priorities.

It is critical to have clear and strong focal points responsible for guiding the strategic framework development process on behalf of the UNCT. In Guatemala, this is the role of the staff in the PBF Secretariat, with inputs from the PDA (Peace and Development Adviser). In the Balkans (where there are no PBF Secretariats), the PDAs in the region play a vital function during the process, working with the external consultant. It seems key in those functions to combine strategic planning skills with peacebuilding and DM&E expertise, and locate these functions in the RC offices, in order to generate UNCT-wide buy-in. It is important that these functions are perceived as independent and not hosted (and/or funded) by a particular UN agency, but located in direct reporting line to the RCs and in support of all RUNOs and NUNOs. Ensuring consistent funding of these functions throughout the process is key to supporting a strong process.

Clear and consistent messaging from PBF in New York about the importance, purpose and process of a strategic framework is important to ensure buy-in from the RCs, NUNOs and RUNOs. In addition, guidance on the process and how to articulate higher-level priorities and outcomes is critical. If PBF continues these five-year eligibility and strategic framework processes in other countries, it should formalize these processes, based on integration of initial lessons from the Guatemala and Balkans processes.

Without sufficient capacity and financial resources to monitor and coordinate throughout the eligibility life span, strategic frameworks will be of limited relevance in practice. Strategic frameworks and related monitoring, evaluation and learning plans will require data collection at the appropriate levels and frequency, as well as Secretariat staffing capacity – and specifically adequate M&E capacity.

Inclusion of local and international civil society in the development of strategic

frameworks is critical and beneficial on a number of levels:

It is important to include other perspectives and perceptions about key conflict and peace dynamics into the UN processes to challenge possible UN 'group think'. Hence, for example, civil society organizations will be invited by the Guatemala teams to participate in related workshops inform the development of priority outcomes;

Engagement of key stakeholders in the process can further establish relationships and trust with and amongst key national and local groups and possible partners for PBF implementation;

In both Guatemala and the Balkans, there are strong civil society organizations that can participate in as well as lead the implementation of PBF interventions. Involving them in the development of strategic priorities is a useful step of engagement, and is also aligned with PBF's expressed commitment in the 2020-2024 strategy to continue the exploration of direct funding of local organizations.

Strategic frameworks and related M&E processes at portfolio levels also have the potential to make it easier for UNCTs to link up with other UN-wide and national level strategic planning frameworks. For example, the Liberia Evaluability Assessment 2020 documents how the PBF-related UNCT-wide results framework is tied proactively to broader Sustainable Development Goal processes (see text box).

“To enhance monitoring and ensure effective quality assurance and support the M&E functions of the projects, the LMPTF [Liberia Multi-Partner Trust Fund] Secretariat has developed a Fund Level Results Framework which will compare data at project level to M&E data collated at Fund level. This will ensure alignment to the UNSDCF [United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework]. Frequency of data analysis and reporting at the Fund level will largely depend on the frequency of the UNSDCF data generation and reporting mechanism, for the purpose of validation. The Fund Level Results Framework is based on a results chain that aligns project outcomes and associated indicators with that of the UNSDCF that feeds into the Government's Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development Framework as well as the Sustainable Development Goals and Sub-goals. Data will be collated and compared in a sequential approach to measure and determine results.”

LIBERIA EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT 2020, P. 11/12

5.3 UN COHERENCE

As documented in earlier PBF reviews, coordination amongst RUNOs and NUNOs at the individual PBF-funded project level is, on average, quite solid in many contexts.

The 2020 evaluations reveal a few examples regarding how strategic collaboration between implementing RUNOs and NUNOs not only increases project effectiveness, but also increases the likelihood for follow-up, and sustainability, in line with PBF's ambition to be catalytic. The example from the FAO/IOM PBF-funded women and peacebuilding in water management project is a good example in this regard (see text box).

“Following a geographical split with FAO in the North and IOM in the South, the good collaboration between the two agencies, the complementarity of the project with their respective broader operations in the areas of intervention, and the project's alignment with wider and longer-term strategies and approaches both in Yemen and at global level for sustainable peace and transition and recovery contributed to the success of the project with important findings and lessons learned.”

FAO/IOM EVALUATION YEMEN, 2019, P. 35

At the same time, several areas remain in which coherence and joint approaches have been an ongoing challenge in PBF-funded interventions, including:³⁴

- ⚠ Joint analysis and joint planning at the UNCT level for PBF portfolios, beyond specific projects, remains a challenge. For example, the 2020 Transitional Justice Thematic Review documents that most projects reviewed were implemented by more than one organization (RUNO, NUNO), which has been beneficial in harnessing the comparative advantage of each organization. At the same time, it documents room for improvement through further investments in joint analysis, planning and strengthening not only joint implementation within projects, but also among projects³⁵.

34. These summary findings are pulled mainly from the seven portfolio level exercises that were part of the 2020 review, as well as five project level evaluations with relevant information, as per footnote 11.

35. Transitional Justice Thematic Review 2020, p. 8




- ⚠ Overcoming and aligning different programming and operational approaches amongst UN agencies that jointly implement PBF-funded projects remains a priority: “WFP has its own manner of operationalizing project inputs in Sri Lanka and this is carried out only through the Government, ILO on the other hand works directly with agencies, and stakeholders.” (Sri Lanka women's empowerment evaluation, p. 36);

- ⚠ More strategic planning of projects and interventions in the same area as part of an overall strategic framework is required in order to measure higher-level results and impacts at PBF portfolio levels (as currently being developed in Guatemala and the Balkans).

THE ROLE OF PBF SECRETARIATS




PBF Secretariats can play a very positive role to increase coherence and lead steps towards effectiveness at portfolio levels.

Several of the 2020 evaluative exercises³⁶ document the useful and strategic role that PBF Secretariats, if resourced and staffed appropriately, can play. If Secretariats are resourced and staffed appropriately, with the appropriate mix of skills (peacebuilding thematic, coordination, M&E), strong positioning within UNCTs and RC offices, and strong and trusted relations with NUNOs and RUNOs, they play the following roles effectively, as evidenced through above mentioned evaluations:

-  Coordinate and convene the larger UN system regarding PBF contributions;
-  Facilitate the implementation of a more strategic portfolio beyond projects;
-  Provide key thematic expertise that is of particular relevance to a particular

36. Such as the Guatemala portfolio evaluation, the Liberia youth and election project evaluation, and the Transitional Justice Thematic Review.

relevance to a particular PBF-funded portfolio;³⁷

-  Serve as a bridge between PBF, RUNOs, NUNOs, government, and local civil society;
-  Increase the DM&E functions of PBF-funded portfolios significantly, if equipped with the necessary DM&E capacities and skills; and
-  Support financial and narrative reporting of PBF portfolios.

A close relationship between the RC and PBF Secretariats, as well as between PBF Secretariats and other RC office roles (such as Peace and Development Advisers) helps to leverage the strategic roles of PBF Secretariats across UNCTs.

Strong and strategically positioned PBF Secretariats have the potential to act as strong conveners and 'backbone' support for PBF portfolios. For example, the PBF Secretariat in Guatemala plays a critical role in convening RUNOs, NUNOs, government counterparts, civil society organizations and key academics as part of a facilitated process for the development of the new 5-year eligibility and strategic framework. It is able to do that based on a combination of strong substantive skills in peacebuilding, monitoring and evaluation, coordination – and because it is a trusted entity by the RC and the UNCT.

“The MPTF/PBF Secretariat leadership, monitoring and evaluation, and operations funded through [the] project was seen as effective in working to mainstream peacebuilding in UN agencies and their IPs and in serving as the bridge between PBSO and UN agencies and Liberian CSOs in developing proposals for PBF funding, implementing PBF-funded projects, monitoring and evaluation on these projects, and financial and narrative reporting to PBF on these projects.”

LIBERIA YOUTH AND ELECTIONS PROJECT EVALUATION, P. 20

The Liberia youth and elections project evaluation

37. For example, the 2020 Transitional Justice Thematic Review stated that it was beneficial for the PBF Secretariat in Guatemala to have staff with specific transitional justice expertise and that remains a high priority in the country (p. 27).

as highlighted in the quote, documents the utility and effectiveness of the MPTF/PBF Secretariat in mainstreaming peacebuilding in UN agencies and their implementing partners – and for serving as an important connector between PBSO, UN agencies, and Liberian civil society.

5.4 CONFLICT-SENSITIVITY IN PBF-FUNDED PEACEBUILDING ACTIVITIES

“Acerca del empoderamiento de los grupos de pueblos indígenas y especialmente de los grupos de mujeres, algunas entrevistadas mencionaron que han sido amenazadas por expresar sus derechos y exigir que se les devuelva sus tierras. Un análisis de estos riesgos con un enfoque de sensibilidad al conflicto podría mejorar la comprensión de lo que implica para estas personas, la participación en procesos como los acompañados por los proyectos y ayudar a las OSC y las Agencias de la ONU a desarrollar acciones para minimizar los riesgos.”

GUATEMALA PORTFOLIO EVALUATION, P. 57

As reflected in the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review, attention to conflict sensitivity remains a gap in the 2020 evaluative exercises in two ways.

First, in most cases, conflict-sensitivity is not an explicit category or line of inquiry in evaluative exercises. Second, it is also not a prominent element in PBF program designs in the first place. In some instances³⁸ this neglect of conflict sensitivity parallels a limited risk analysis for PBF-funded projects. At the same time, ongoing context monitoring and understanding the intended and unintended impacts of (peacebuilding) interventions are critical for effective peacebuilding in volatile environments. The few evaluative exercises in 2020 that refer to unintended impacts that were observed in the implementation of PBF-funded initiatives (like the Guatemala portfolio review quote above illustrates) refer to those more as anecdotal evidence, and not the result of a systematic monitoring of how PBF-funded initiatives interact with the conflict context.

The 2020 evaluative exercises reveal that, even when conflict-sensitivity was a deliberate and articulated strategy within PBF-funded portfolios, UN interventions can cause unintended harm, as

38. For example documented in the 2020 Sri Lanka women's empowerment project evaluation, p. 36.

it was documented, for example in the 2020 Kyrgyzstan PBF cross-border evaluation.

The Strategic Review conducted for the PBF portfolio in Kyrgyzstan in 2020 provides further interesting insights in relation to conflict-sensitivity, program adaptation and prevention of violent extremism (PVE), which was a funding priority of PBF in the country in recent years.

The Kyrgyzstan Strategic Review documents that PBF-funded PVE initiatives were problematic on a number of levels. “Softer” PVE issues co-exist with security-focused counter-terrorism efforts, and the review documents concerns about the legitimization of human rights abuses through the heightened focus on PVE. Furthermore, UN staff and their governmental and non-governmental implementing partners define and understand fundamental terminology and strategies of PVE interventions in different ways.

“These challenges translate into serious issues during the implementation of projects. For example, the hesitation of government representatives in charge of social policies to participate in coordination meetings for PVE indicates a lack of understanding of their role. Or consider the reluctance of female religious leaders to attend trainings relating to PVE because they were afraid to be labeled as extremists. One important issue to consider is that while UN officials may be able to differentiate between their counterterrorism and PVE initiatives, local populations often cannot.”

KYRGYZSTAN STRATEGY REVIEW 2020, P. 20

Partly triggered by the specific conflict-sensitivity concerns around the PVE agenda, PBF (with the support of PeaceNexus) developed a Learning and Adaptation Strategy in 2018.³⁹

While this can serve as a great example for other PBF-funded (and other peacebuilding) portfolios, the Kyrgyzstan Strategic Review also documented some limitations around the implementation of this strategy—and actually adapting based on learnings from programming and/or changes in context: *“It needs to be pointed out, though, that while the workshops were attended by most RUNOs follow-up actions were undertaken with sporadic success and consistency. L&A [Learning*

and Adaptation] strategies only make sense when implementing partners have the possibility to make ad hoc changes during the implementation. And yet, many agencies’ internal procedures do not allow for adaptations after the projects have been logged into their internal systems. If L&A strategies are only partially applied, agencies are missing important opportunities for joint learning, conflict sensitive reality checks, and inter-agency cooperation. This also shows that once PBF projects have been approved and the money has been transferred to RUNOs, the PBF has limited influence on the implementation process.” (Kyrgyzstan Strategic Review 2020, p. 21)

The need to monitor consciously for unintended impacts is even greater in times when more pressures are put on local communities—for instance during the Covid-19 pandemic, when many contexts witnessed a rise in local conflict and violence dynamics. The PBF Briefing Note on the Covid-19 pandemic as of September 2020 renews the PBF’s commitment to conflict sensitivity (“responses are informed by multi-dimensional risk analysis and a do no harm approach”, p.1). However, conflict sensitivity remains one of the biggest gaps in the implementation of PBF-funded initiatives.

Conflict-sensitivity was also a major recommendation in the 2020 Program Completion Review by DFID, including the recommendation that future UK support to the PBF should insist that conflict-sensitivity plans are a requirement in all PBF funding applications.⁴⁰

In summary, as also noted in the 2017-2019 review,

40. “The PBF’s approach to conflict sensitivity could be strengthened through specific guidance on what the PBF considers a ‘conflict sensitive peacebuilding programme’ (particularly to support implementing agencies new to peacebuilding) and a requirement that applicants develop and submit a conflict sensitivity plan to complement the risk matrix already required. Such plans should outline an assessment of the implementing agency’s own position within conflict dynamics and any related risks and their mitigation; a context-specific process for monitoring conflict dynamics and the project’s (positive and negative) interaction with them; and a process for adjusting plans to respond to change. Ongoing reporting to the PBF should refer back to the conflict sensitivity plan and update on any adjustments made throughout programme implementation. [...] Future UK support to the PBF should insist that conflict sensitivity plans are a requirement in all PBF funding applications and that clear guidance on conflict sensitivity is provided to applicants.” (DFID Program Completion Review of PBF, 2016-2020, p. xiv, xv)

39. United Nations in the Kyrgyz Republic, in collaboration with Peace Nexus: *Learning and Adaptation Strategy, Peacebuilding Priority Plan 2018-2021*, published 2018.

PBF would be well advised to make conflict-sensitivity a more prominent part of its guidance and requirements, including explicit steps to be followed during program design, ongoing monitoring/adaptive management, and evaluative exercises and learning strategies⁴¹. PBF might also use funds to strengthen NUNO and RUNO capacities in this area. As outlined in the previous Synthesis Review, seeking synergies between conflict- and gender-sensitivity, where possible and useful, might be a practical way forward.

5.5 GENDER IN PBF-FUNDED INITIATIVES

PBF supports gender and women's empowerment related programming through PBF's priority windows and areas, including through PBF's Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative (GYPI). The 2020 evaluative exercises included a few project-level evaluations that focused on gender, women's empowerment, and women and youth-related PBF-funded projects (Yemen, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Liberia). While there are some useful project-level findings, most of them were project-specific and did not provide a rich foundation regarding higher-level findings for this review in relation to gender. Hence, the upcoming Gender Thematic Review in 2021 will be very useful to provide higher-level insights into PBF's contributions towards gender and peacebuilding.

For example, according to the project evaluation, the FAO/IOM joint PBF project in Yemen seems to have been quite successful in strengthening the participation of women in conflict resolution mechanisms in relation to natural resource management (land and water) at the local community level, with a longer-term goal of enhanced social cohesion. The project evaluation documents a transformative change related to the institutionalization of the role of women through the Water User Associations, so that women gain further acceptance within their communities. However, a two year project does not allow for a higher-level assessment of the institutionalization, or how it is linked and related to

implementation and effectiveness of such other peacebuilding efforts in the area.

In terms of ongoing gaps and challenges, broadly speaking, the more limited insights that emerge from the 2020 evaluative exercises seem to match the more comprehensive findings from the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review. That review found that, while there is a large volume of 'gender' and 'gender-sensitive' projects funded under such headings, there is also confusion around several questions:

- ▲ Under what conditions are specific gender programs relevant from a peacebuilding perspective?
- ▲ What is the difference between gender- and peacebuilding-specific programming, in which some aim to address underlying drivers of conflict, while others address women's exclusion or empower women in peacebuilding processes?
- ▲ What does gender-sensitive programming entail in practice (similar to the gap found in relation to conflict-sensitivity, suggesting that teams might be aware of the principle but do not have the capacities to implement in programming)?

For example, the 2020 Guatemala portfolio evaluation confirms that women's empowerment is used without conceptual clarity in its relation to peacebuilding, and what is funded by PBF is quite diverse. The Madagascar evaluability assessment and the Yemen project evaluation reconfirm the need for a more integrated approach to conflict and gender analysis and M&E system: *"FAO and IOM should have better gender analyses and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems in place, and should insert the project in longer term gender equality programming that can provide a framework to sustain its gains."* (Yemen project evaluation, p. viii).

The Yemen project evaluation also provides interesting insights in relation to the GYPI funding window. It documents that 'combining' youth and women in the same category of beneficiaries can backfire, since each population group has its

41. At the time of writing of this report, there is draft UN guidance being developed on conflict sensitivity for the UN system. The UN System Staff College (UNSSC) is also planning to develop a new online conflict-sensitivity training in 2021.

specific roles, needs and capacities that need to be understood. This is often a challenge in peacebuilding programming - beyond the particular PBF funding modalities. In particular, in this instance, youth in Yemen have played quite a specific role in peacebuilding, a perspective that the evaluation analyzed as not sufficiently leveraged and built upon through a joint 'women and youth' approach.⁴²

5.6 SUSTAINABILITY OF PBF INVESTMENTS

In relation to the sustainability of PBF investments, there are, in principle many factors to be discussed. The 2020 evaluative exercises reveal two main issues in relation to sustainability, which also reinforce findings from past reviews.

First, there is a need to resolve the tension between short-term and long-term funding to achieve sustainable peacebuilding results. Second, there is the question of how best to engage national and local civil society actors as peacebuilding initiatives can ultimately only be successful and sustainable if owned and driven by national and local partners.

SHORT-TERM FUNDING WITH THE AMBITION TO ACHIEVE LONG-TERM RESULT

As noted in the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review, and as illustrated through the quotes below, the PBF's short funding timeframes were seen again as an impediment to longer-term impacts and sustainability in several of the 2020 evaluative exercises.

“Given the relatively short duration of PBF-projects (12-36 months), expectations regarding impact-level results were limited. Some countries, such as Mali, Guatemala, Sri Lanka and Guinea-Bissau did, however, report some contributions of projects to aspects such as recognition of victims, increased trust in state institutions, reconciliation and the strengthening of the Rule of law.”

UN PBF TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE THEMATIC REVIEW, 2020, P. 2

“The PBF should consider developing funding instruments with longer time frames - or making it clear that sequential awards are envisioned - as peacebuilding problems and opportunities in Bougainville are not of short duration.”

PAPUA NEW GUINEA PROJECT EVALUATION, P. V

42. Yemen project evaluation 2020, p. 38

“The PBF is meant to serve as a flexible [mechanism] to support the UN's broader objectives in countries at risk of relapsing into conflict. However, in Sri Lanka, the PBF modality for the EMPOWER project is a short term financing instrument linked to a long term results framework and impact. One of the greatest challenges of programme management is for teams to build programming elements around financing modalities that have a short term duration and look to define long term impact and long term solutions.”

SRI LANKA ILO WOMEN EMPOWERMENT EVALUATION 2020, P. 35

As PBF engages in the same country through a series of short-term IRF⁴³ and/or PRF funding cycles, it becomes clear that the frequent short-term financial contributions without an indication, from the beginning, about medium-term to longer-term funding are counter-productive for peacebuilding results and impacts.

Some of the evaluative exercises also recommend a more explicit development of a sustainability strategy during initial program design.

ENGAGEMENT OF NATIONAL AND LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS

Several of the 2020 evaluative exercises stress the need for more involvement of and/or better coordination with national and local civil society actors. For example, the Guatemala portfolio evaluation recommends that PBF-funded initiatives involve civil society organizations more, to leverage collective experiences in peacebuilding in the country. In early 2021, the Guatemala PBF Secretariat is planning to engage civil society actors in consultations and workshops related to the PBF Strategic Framework development.

The Kyrgyzstan Strategic Review points out the need for a partnership between the government and civil society, particularly at the local level in PBF-funded engagement. It states that cooperation and political will at national level does not necessarily trickle down to local municipalities, and that a need for closer coordination and more effective communication between local and national levels was highlighted during the Strategic Review workshop⁴⁴.

43. The 18 months term limit for IRF contributions are based on the 2009 PBF terms of reference. If that were to be changed, PBF would need to change its TOR.

44. Kyrgyzstan Strategic Review, 2020, p. 24

Similar to the 2017-2019 exercise, 2020 evaluative reviews reconfirm that often local civil society organizations have a different kind of reach and footprint in peacebuilding work and ultimately sustainability, compared with what UN agencies can do themselves. For example, the Myanmar 'empowering young men and women' 2020 evaluation states: "There is value addition in working with local CSOs and other partners whose capacity is strong and have a wider geographic reach. The local CSOs were able to reach far, and hard to reach areas, where security restrictions would not allow UNFPA and UNICEF staff to reach." (p. 20).

It is local and national organizations who are often the sustained and long-term champions for peacebuilding in the country, independent of international funding; hence close partnerships with local and national organizations are critical for sustainability.

These observations reconfirm the stated principle in the 2020-2024 PBF strategy to continue funding local civil society organizations directly. The 2021 Thematic Review on local peacebuilding that PBSO will be conducting is expected to provide further valuable insights into this question.

6. INSIGHTS FOR PBF'S DESIGN, MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING APPROACH

As already stated in other parts of this Synthesis Review, the key findings from the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review in relation to PBF's design, monitoring, evaluation, and learning approach are supported by the 2020 findings.

OBSERVATION

An overall observation from the author in relation to the project-level evaluations reviewed is that those might be useful to conduct if there is a clear process of facilitated learning from them. However, some of the evaluations themselves are quite weak, or basically document weak results based on weak DM&E systems. Thus, they do not add much to the overall knowledge base for the respective project. It is not clear how useful those evaluations are, and if it was the best use of resources to conduct those—or whether an investment to strengthen the DM&E skills of UNCTs, RUNOs and NUNOs would have been a better use of PBF funds.

The 2020 evaluative exercises reconfirm improvements in M&E practices and useful experimentation with new M&E approaches (such as community-based monitoring in Liberia), but also note that there is still a long journey ahead for PBF, RUNOs and NUNOs to improve project-level DM&E and to design and monitor systematically for portfolio-level results.

DESIGN, DESIGN, DESIGN: WHAT YOU DO NOT DO DURING DESIGN, YOU CANNOT FIX THROUGH YOUR 'M&E'

The 2017-2019 Synthesis Review recommended a clearer link between the “D” (Program Design”) with “M&E” (monitoring and evaluation). This need is reconfirmed in 2020 evaluative exercises: a rigorous investment in design processes at project and program levels is required, in order to establish a strong foundation for portfolio-level insights regarding results or impacts. If DM&E capacities are weak, and if projects are weak in design and implementation, this is a strong predictor of a weak evaluation.

As part of its efforts to strengthen the quality of project designs, the 2020 Review highlights two additional options for consideration for PBF:

OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Possible further exploration to not insist on mandatory evaluations for each project, but rather use those resource, in some cases, to invest in initial design and insuring program quality and strong M&E systems throughout implementation (“investing in the front end instead of at the end”);
2. Another level of flexibility could be introduced by investing more in capacities for upfront program design, rather than stressing the ‘evaluability’ (hence, accountability) aspect of PBF-funded interventions. For example, given the often significant delays in starting PBF-funded projects (until partner consultations are conducted, staff are hired, etc.), conducting mandatory evaluability assessments might not always be the best approach, as it is often too early to assess ‘evaluability’ when projects have only recently started implementation. Instead, the time allocated for program design could be extended before funding is approved by PBF.

“The ability to identify project-level peacebuilding impact is undermined when projects fail to clearly articulate peacebuilding targets and indicators at outcome level. Greater support for implementing agencies in developing thorough conflict analysis and using findings to develop peacebuilding-specific outcomes will enable greater impact (and measurement of impact) on conflict drivers. [...] Inconsistent M&E capacity at project and portfolio levels undermines the accuracy of Fund-level reports that measure impact and gather and share learnings across contexts. The PBSO commissioned an independent Synthesis Review of all projects between 2017-2019 (‘Synthesis Review’) which goes some way in addressing the need for cross-context learning but also highlighted the importance of further investment in M&E capacity across implementing agencies.”

DFID 2020 PROGRAMME COMPLETION REVIEW OF PBF, P. II

Should that not be possible, given country level urgencies or bureaucratic requirements (e.g. the difficulties to extend IRF life cycles under PBF's

Again, the often short-term nature of PBF funding is not necessarily conducive for this, so this finding should be reviewed in light of the other review findings regarding short timeframes and actions taken on that level.

As was also noted in the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review, there sometimes seems to be a gap in understanding and expectations between what PBF aims for in terms of data collection, results at portfolio levels, and the level of DM&E processes and skills available at country level. The alignment seems to be greater in places with clearly resourced structures in place, such as strong and resourced PBF Secretariats, that are able to focus on PBF implementation, provide a clear liaison with PBF in New York, ensure related alignment in expectations, and provide the skills and capacities for follow through.

EXPERIENCES WITH LONG-DISTANCE DM&E SUPPORT FROM PBF

Circumstances during 2020 have forced many organizations and donors, including the PBF, to experiment with different approaches to remote evaluation management and support. Similar to the five-year eligibility and/or strategic framework processes, it is too early to document a full set of experiences with such long-distance DM&E support and evaluations.

The following points represent initial indicative insights from the available experiences:

- ▲ Long-distance engagements might allow in-country colleagues more time to reflect on specific DM&E processes and steps and to do more background work—as compared to doing it ad hoc during in-person meetings—therefore represent an advantage.
- ▲ It is important to clearly articulate the role of the external consultant, and to differentiate the consultant's role from the responsibilities of the PBF, PBF Secretariats, and RUNOs and NUNOs. For example, it is helpful to clarify if the role of the adviser is to provide actual technical support and to fulfil certain functions that are usually the responsibilities of UNCTs/RUNO/NUNO (such as developing an M&E framework). Or is the advisor more of

a coach or 'critical friend' who provides feed-back on products produced by UNCTs/RUNOs and NUNOs, while RUNOs and NUNOs take the lead in developing them?

- ▲ The nature and boundaries of each support process must be clear, including the scope and roles. For example, both of the remotely supported evaluative processes in Madagascar and Niger had an evaluative or evaluability assessment component (including self-assessment), but also included a component of strengthening DM&E systems and skills of the involved RUNO and NUNO teams. While such hybrid models and the related flexibility related to them are useful, in principle, to respond to the different needs in-country, they also have the potential to expand into unwieldy assignments for involved members of the Program Support Team. Hence, putting clear boundaries around these engagements is critical.
- ▲ Much of the PBF support, even though framed around more technical DM&E questions, cuts across more strategic portfolio questions (overall priorities, higher level theories of change, etc.), as well as more technical issues around DM&E. It is important to involve the right people at the country level—such as the PBF coordinator AND the M&E specialist—in the critical steps, and to align strategic questions with technical support.

Many of these points are also critical for in-person engagements, but seem even more important for long-distance/remote support. This is because in-person engagements tend to be focused on perhaps one or two concentrated weeks in country, during which progress is made on specific assignments, with some remote preparation and follow-up work. Virtual engagements tend to stretch over a longer period of time and thus have a greater tendency to turn into 'never ending stories'. Therefore, it is necessary to clarify roles and to sustain momentum around key processes. This is a particularly important point for DM&E exercises that have capacity development components.

PBF has not yet conducted a portfolio evaluation remotely. It appears that this could be a more

daunting task than other types of evaluative exercises, given the scarcity of in-country data. For instance, it is challenging to interview government and local civil society counterparts remotely and receive the same quality of information compared to in-person engagements. Other evaluative exercises seem easier to do, and DM&E capacity development activities may also be relatively easy using online platforms.

The self-evaluation elements of some of these remote engagements worked well to a certain extent. If and how this can work is related to broader questions of organizational culture and how much willingness there is, more broadly speaking beyond PBF, to reflect on lessons, successes and failures.

PBF can contribute to strengthening a learning mindset and culture of learning by deliberately facilitating learning exercises and encouraging NUNOs and RUNOs to engage in an open learning feedback loop with PBF. Again, doing this remotely from New York alone seems challenging and the role of in-country structures such as strong PBF Secretariats with the right skill sets seems important to convene and facilitate such processes at country level, including the establishment of trust and long-term relationships that are necessary for any open learning process.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The key [conclusions](#) of the 2020 Synthesis Review of PBF-funded evaluations and evaluative exercises include the following:

! The overall findings of the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review are reconfirmed through the 2020 evaluative exercises;

! PBF has taken initial promising steps to act upon the findings of the last Synthesis Review of evaluations, especially through starting the strategic frameworks and five-year eligibility processes in Guatemala and the Balkans to overcome the persisting challenge of short-term funding allocations for expected long-term results;

! In order to support these ambitions of PBF and its donors for higher-level results and impact at portfolio levels, it will be critical to support the roll-out of these strategic frameworks with adequate resources, a sustainable plan to resource country level backbone support structures for their implementation (such as PBF Secretariats), as well as an ongoing effort to support Recipient UN Organizations (RUNOs) and Recipient Non-UN Organizations (NUNOs) in their efforts to strengthen peacebuilding and design, monitoring, and evaluation capacities and processes.

! The impact evaluation partnership with the Government of Germany is a promising step towards complementing PBF's efforts to enhance the ability to show results at portfolio levels: starting in 2021, PBF will partner with Germany to launch a special project to test impact evaluation approaches within a number of PBF-funded initiatives.

! PBF has demonstrated flexibility in its DM&E approach, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic to experiment with remote DM&E support;

! The Thematic Review on Transitional Justice in 2020 was the first of its kind since 2014. It demonstrates the usefulness of such an exercise to review broader results of PBF in one programmatic area;

! Even though several UN agencies, and PBF funding recipients, are strengthening their capacities and staff skills in conflict analysis, peacebuilding programming design and conflict sensitivity, a major gap remains between PBF's ambition and related expectations from PBF's donors and what is feasible operationally in country based on existing capacities;

! While more UNCTs (UN Country Teams), RUNOs and NUNOs now conduct conflict analysis more systematically, conflict-sensitivity and a clearer focus on the relationships between gender and conflict ("gender-sensitive conflict analysis") remain gaps in PBF-funded portfolios that should be addressed;

! The 2020 evaluative exercises continue to highlight the need for ongoing exploration of funding local and national civil society organizations directly.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF PBF

1. Facilitate a more proactive process of learning. Many of the findings that emerge from the evaluative exercises can only be acted upon as joint efforts between PBF, RUNOs and NUNOs. PBF is well placed to act as a convener and facilitator to engage UNCTs and focal points in HQ units in a more active dialogue regarding the learnings and findings from the Synthesis Reviews, the Thematic Review(s) and other relevant reviews as appropriate, and to act upon the findings that lie within the responsibility of specific stakeholders. Facilitating a joint process between PBF and RUNOs and NUNOs about such findings will support a collective approach to learning and improving practice. The DFID 2020⁴⁵ Program Completion Review recommends that the 'community of practice' model for PBF recipients at the country-level be replicated at the HQ level to bring together conflict and peace teams across UN agencies. This is one avenue the PBF could use in this regard, leveraging and expanding the use of existing mechanisms like the Peacebuilding Contact Group at the HQ level.

2. Formalize the new five-year eligibility process and strategic framework processes, while allowing necessary flexibility based on specific country conditions. Learning from the two pilot processes for the development of strategic frameworks in Guatemala and the Balkans should inform a formalization of these two experimental processes, including:

- ▲ *Developing a clear plan on who is responsible for supporting the strategic framework implementation, including*

DM&E frameworks, and aligning necessary capacities, skill sets and resources behind those structures;

- ▲ *Developing standard processes and methodologies that can be adapted/replicated, such as concept notes and sample agendas for strategic framework priority development workshops, or terms of reference, while allowing necessary flexibility to adapt to each context.*

3. Conduct additional Thematic Reviews. The Thematic Review on Transitional Justice review proved useful for showing higher-level results and learnings in one key area of PBF investment. Therefore, PBF should invest in more Thematic Reviews of program areas in which the PBF has a clear niche and that are innovative, such as UN transition support and cross-border peacebuilding, when the timing seems right for those. There might also be ways to connect this ambition for higher-level learning and results in specific areas to the impact project funded by the Government of Germany. Producing solid Thematic Reviews will require dedicated resources and staffing to produce quality results.

4. Leverage the impact project with the Government of Germany to the best possible extent through:

- ▲ *Feeding the emerging learning from this new partnership into conversations focused on learning about peacebuilding with RUNOs and NUNOs (contributes to Recommendation I above);*
- ▲ *Informing the processes related to the five-year eligibility and strategic frameworks at country level (contributes to Recommendation II above).*

⁴⁵ DFID Programme Completion Review of the UN Peacebuilding Fund 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PBF'S DM&E (DESIGN, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION) FUNCTION

1. Conduct Synthesis Review of Evaluations and Evaluative Exercises only every two years.

While this 2020 Synthesis Review was able to document some interesting new insights and nuances, especially in light of new developments in follow-up to the 2017-2019 recommendations, its overall evidence base was limited, compared to the 2017-2019 review. Delaying the next Synthesis Review until 2022 will make it possible to capture insights from key processes that are currently underway, the implementation of five-year eligibility and strategic frameworks in Guatemala and the Balkans (and possibly others by then), and also assess some insights emerging from the impact evaluation project. Waiting two years will provide a richer set of documents for analysis beyond project specific evaluations.

2. Develop clear DM&E processes in support of strategic frameworks and five-year eligibility.

The promising new strategic frameworks and five-year eligibility plans will only be as effective and impactful as the related DM&E frameworks supporting their implementation. This will require independent resources and staffing for PBF Secretariats or other country-level backbone support mechanisms that guide this function strategically for PBF portfolios. These functions need to be strong substantively (peacebuilding program design, M&E, facilitating and convening RUNOs and NUNOs), and there should be clear agreements with RCs and RC offices regarding the importance of these functions, in order to demonstrate results at PBF portfolio levels.

3. Prioritize the 'D' in DM&E.

Putting more emphasis on the 'D' (program design) and not only monitoring and evaluation is still one of the most important

recommendations from the 2017-2019 Synthesis Review. This could be done by either using some PBF funds to enhance program design capacities at UNCT level, or by applying more flexibility to existing DM&E mechanisms. For example, rather than investing resources in mandatory evaluability assessments or in evaluations for each project, investing those resources in more in-depth processes of program design and program design quality assurance might lead to better results. Allowing longer eligibility and funding cycles will support this effort if PBF adapts its approval timeframes (contributes to recommendations on five-year eligibility and strategic frameworks, as well as enhanced DM&E processes).

4. Develop PBF guidance and requirements in relation to conflict-sensitivity.

Making conflict-sensitivity a clearer requirement will have the best chances of succeeding if it is embedded within explicit mechanisms for peacebuilding program adaptation and learning. Given the highlighted need in this review to integrate peace and conflict and gender dynamics more directly, an integrated package of guidance and support for conflict-and gender sensitivity could be considered.

ANNEX I: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 2017-2019 SYNTHESIS REVIEW OF PBF-FUNDED EVALUATIVE EXERCISES

Recommendations of 2017-2019 Synthesis Review of evaluations and evaluative exercises of PBF-funded initiatives (report published in May 2020)⁴⁶

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PBF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT:

1. Provide clearer criteria for when PBF funding will be approved – and when it will not;
2. Consider a review of the duration of PBF funding windows and related DM&E requirements to resolve the tension between 'catalytic' and 'long-term impacts';
3. Strengthen strategic planning and oversight of PBF portfolios;
4. Make capacity strengthening of UN agencies and national partners a priority;
5. Continue the exploration to fund national and local civil society actors directly;
6. Articulate PBF's engagement principles more clearly– peacebuilding as an 'approach' and as a 'sector'.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PBF'S DESIGN, MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING FUNCTION:

1. Strengthen DM&E (design, monitoring, evaluation) and Learning capacities of RUNOs, NUNOs (and possibly local NGOs in the future), PBF Secretariats, and within PBF;
2. Get serious about results and impact at the portfolio/collective impact level;
3. Connect the "D" with the "M&E" and prioritize learning across portfolios;
4. Strengthen the focus on conflict sensitivity, ongoing conflict and context monitoring, and adaptive management across PBF portfolios;
5. Introduce more flexibility into existing DM&E tools and be open to adaptation and experimentation with new evaluative approaches;
6. Select evaluators and facilitators of other evaluative exercises that have a strong peacebuilding and DM&E background.

⁴⁶. *PBF Synthesis Review 2017-2019, May 18th 2020, Recommendations (summary version of the recommendations as per the Abstract in the full report).*

ANNEX II: KEY DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

EVALUATIONS AND OTHER PBF DOCUMENTS

PORTFOLIO LEVEL EVALUATIONS AND PORTFOLIO LEVEL EXERCISES the documents available on the PBF webpage at the time of writing have corresponding hyperlinks):

- ▲ 1 portfolio evaluation (Guatemala, 2020)
- ▲ 3 Evaluability Assessments: Liberia, Burkina Faso, Madagascar (Madagascar included an DM&E support exercise)
- ▲ 1 [Strategic Review Exercise](#) (Kyrgyzstan, 2020) ^s
- ▲ 1 Evaluative Exercise: Niger with DM&E support and self-assessment guides
- ▲ [Thematic Review on Transitional Justice](#) (by Salif Nimaga, 2020) ^s

PROJECT-LEVEL EVALUATIONS FINALIZED IN 2020:

- ▲ Bosnia & Herzegovina: PBF/IRF 190, Social Cohesion & Diversity
- ▲ Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger: PBF/IRF 180/181/182: Community security and social cohesion
- ▲ Burkina Faso, PBF/IRF-164: Security sector
- ▲ Burundi, PBF/IRF 225: Sustainable reintegration
- ▲ Central African Republic, PBF/IRF-183: Political participation of women
- ▲ Côte d'Ivoire, PBF/IRF-199: Conflict Management
- ▲ DRC, PBF/COD/A-2: Ensemble pour la paix
- ▲ DRC, PBF/COD/A-3: Land conflicts and social cohesion (partially funded by PBF)
- ▲ El Salvador, PBF/IRF-179, Post-conflict peacebuilding
- ▲ Gambia, PBF/IRF-173, Security Sector Reform
- ▲ Guinea-Bissau, PBF/IRF-208: Support to Political Dialogue
- ▲ Haiti, PBF/IRF 227, Youth Promotion
- ▲ Kyrgyzstan, PBF/IRF 239: Photography with youth
- ▲ Kyrgyzstan/Tajikistan cross border project, PBF/IRF 131/132: Cross-border cooperation
- ▲ Lebanon, PBF/IRF: Employment and Peacebuilding, youth at risk
- ▲ Liberia, PBF/IRF 228: Human rights promotion
- ▲ Liberia, PBF/IRF 170: Youth Participation in the 2917 legislative and presidential electoral process
- ▲ Myanmar, PBF/IRF 242: Strengthening women in Rakhine State
- ▲ Myanmar, PBF/IRF 226: Empowering women for peacebuilding in Myanmar
- ▲ Papua New Guinea, PBF/IRF 204: Youth and women promotion for a violence-free referendum
- ▲ Philippines, PBF/IRF 188: Peacebuilding in Mindanao
- ▲ Sri Lanka, PBF/IRF 138: Transitional Justice
- ▲ Sri Lanka, PBF/IRF 215: Economic empowerment of women
- ▲ Yemen, PBF/IRF 202: Women, peacebuilding, and water management

Above documents are publicly available on the [Multi-donor Trust Fund Gateway webpage](#).^s

REVIEWS AND REPORTS OF/ON THE PBF:

- ▲ DFID Programme Completion Review of the UN Peacebuilding Fund 2020, finalized in September 2020, reviewing the period 2016-2020. July 2020 (not public at the time of writing)
- ▲ 2019 [SG Report on the PBF](#), A/74/688, February 10th 2020 [↗]
- ▲ Anita Ernstorfer: [Synthesis Review](#) of PBF portfolio and project evaluations 2017-2019 [↗]
- ▲ Beijnum, Mariska: [Challenges and Opportunities to Peacebuilding: Analysis of Strategic Issues identified by Country-specific PBF evaluations](#). Clingendael/Conflict Research Unit Report, The Hague, July 2013 [↗]

WIDER UN DOCUMENTS

- ▲ Secretary General's [Report 2020 on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace](#) (A/74/976-S/2020/773), July 30, 2020 [↗]
- ▲ [Thematic papers](#) by various UN agencies, submitted by UN agencies in the context of above SG Report 2020 on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace [↗]

PBF BACKGROUND AND GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS - PUBLIC (ON WEBSITE)

- ▲ PBF [Strategic Plan 2020-2024](#) [↗]
- ▲ PBF [Investing in Leadership for Peace- Strategic Plan Results 2017-2019](#) [↗]
- ▲ PBF Guidelines on PBF funds application and programming, 2018
- ▲ PBF Guidance Note on [Gender Marker Scoring, 2019](#)
- ▲ 2020 SG Report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace
- ▲ Salif Nimaga: [Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund: Thematic Review - PBF-supported projects on Transitional Justice](#) (Apr 28th, 2020) [↗]
- ▲ PBF [Guidance note on PBF cross-border and regional programs](#), January 2020 [↗]
- ▲ PBF [Climate Security and Peacebuilding Brief](#), July 2020 [↗]
- ▲ Assessing [readiness for remote evaluation](#) for PBF [↗]
- ▲ UN [PBF Briefing Note on the Covid-19 pandemic](#) (September 2020) [↗]

All of the above PBF guidelines are available under:
<https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/fund/documents/guidelines> [↗]

PBF BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS – INTERNAL TO PBF

- ▲ DPPA/PBSO/PBF Management Response to Synthesis Review of PBF project and portfolio evaluations 2017-2019 (internal PBF document)
- ▲ TOR of the gender Thematic Review, internal PBF document, Thematic Review to be implemented in 2021
- ▲ Concept Note: German FFO and PBSO Joint Impact Project to Conduct Impact Evaluation of PBF-funded programs (internal PBF document, as of Nov 2nd, 2020)
- ▲ PBF Project Assessment Scorecard (PBF internal management document)
- ▲ PBF Draft Guidance Document on theories of change, 2020
- ▲ PBF Lessons Learned document on Ebola response, 2020
- ▲ Email Message from PBF's Senior Management to PBF focal points on the initial PBF Covid-19 response (April 3rd, 2020)

ANNEX III: KEY INFORMANTS INTERVIEWED

In alphabetical order by last name. The list below does not include PBF staff that have guided this Synthesis Review overall (Tammy Smith, Kyle Jacques, Nigina Khaitova).

- ▲ Jenin Assaf, Evaluation Officer, FAO Evaluation Office
- ▲ Marta Bruno, Knowledge Management and Evaluation Office, FAO Evaluation Office
- ▲ Christof Kurz, Independent expert, member of PBF's Program Support Team
- ▲ Bautista Logioco, Independent expert, member of PBF's Program Support Team
- ▲ Salif Nimaga, Independent expert, member of PBF's Program Support Team
- ▲ James Rogan, Managing Director, Exterior
- ▲ Lucy Turner, Senior Coordinator, PBF Secretariat, Guatemala



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SYNTHESIS REVIEW **2020**

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