



Secretary-General Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)

Strategic Plan 2017-2019

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I. Introduction

At the request of the General Assembly and the Security Council¹ the Secretary-General of the United Nations established in 2005 a multi-year standing Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). Its [Terms of Reference](#)²—enacted by the General Assembly—were updated in 2009 following a consultative process with Member States and UN entities. More recently, the 2016 Sustaining Peace Resolutions called for a comprehensive approach to tackling violent conflict.³ The Fund is the organisation’s financial instrument of first resort to sustain peace in countries or situations at risk of affected by violent conflict. It addresses critical gaps for sustaining peace before, during and after conflict.

The [PBF](#)—renewed in 2019, the third of its kind since three-year planning cycles commenced in 2013, sets a higher level of ambition than previous plans.** The aim is to invest at least \$500 million in at least 40 countries over this period. This will serve as a stepping-stone to the objective set in the forthcoming Secretary-General’s Report on Sustaining Peace of \$500 million per year for the PBF.**

This aim is driven by increased demand and the context of the Secretary-reform efforts, in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Financing will retain a critical role to improve coherence across the Development, Peace and Human Rights Pillars. The PBF will build on its unique role as a timely, catalytic and risk-tolerant financing instrument to reinforce the reforms in three ways: i) driving cohesion of UN strategies in conflict situations in support of nationally-led efforts, through joint analysis, planning and implementation; ii) enabling strong integrated support from the broad set of organizational tools at HQ and in the field; and iii) strengthening partnerships, particularly with the [PBC](#), the WB, the EU, the AU, ECOWAS and other (sub-)regional organizations.

Investing in sustaining peace and sustainable development is mutually reinforcing: sustainable development is an end in itself but also the best defence against risks of violent conflict. The PBF will help emphasize the conceptual linkages between the 2030 Agenda and sustaining peace, including country responsibility and national ownership; the people-centered approach; and the comprehensive approaches required to address the complex, interdependent issues that both drive conflict and undermine development gains.

The PBF will continue to efforts

security and development instruments for prevention to be effective at local, national and regional levels.

-19 will have three additional investment windows. They will allow the PBF to focus and track those investments while also helping to strengthen the Fund's expertise and delivery networks. They are: i) cross-border and regional investments to help tackle transnational drivers of conflict; ii) facilitating transitions between different UN configurations and

Financial shortfalls notwithstanding, the PBF sought to innovate and respond to new challenges, including by investing more in prevention of violent conflict, a key commitment of the past Business Plan. This approach was strongly affirmed by Member States, not least through the historic resolutions on Sustaining Peace. These have signalled a shift from the narrower view of peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict to recognition that peacebuilding is about effective action before, during and after conflict.

The annual [Reports of the Secretary-General](#) provide

Strengthened partnerships: For the first time, CSOs could access PBF funds directly through its 2016 Gender and Youth Promotion Initiatives, providing a total of \$6,204,218 directly to seven CSOs

Upsurge in violent conflict: The joint United Nations and World Bank study, *Pathways for Peace*, summarizes how the number of major violent conflicts had tripled since 2010.⁹ By 2016, more countries were experiencing violent conflict than at any time in nearly 30 years.¹⁰

Whilst a few high-intensity conflicts lead the headlines, with Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria accounting for 76 percent of all fatalities in 2016,¹¹ both the number and intensity of conflicts in Africa and Asia have escalated since 2010. Many of these conflicts are likely to remain unresolved in the near term, contributing to a growing trend of protracted conflicts and heightened risks of new outbreaks, particularly in already vulnerable regions.

Although much of this violence remains entrenched in low-income countries, some of today's deadliest conflicts

security, justice and opportunity. Discrimination and inter-group inequalities can be powerful drivers of human rights violations. Some of the most virulent extremist groups particularly in North Africa and the Middle East have exploited inter-group divisions linked to inequality and competition for power, connecting them to transnational ideologies. Many of the recruits to these conflicts are coming from borderlands, marginalized from development progress for generations.

Non-state armed groups, including violent extremist groups, while not new, have taken advantage of instability in many countries and are exploiting grievances against states seen as largely exclusive or illegitimate to greatly expand their depth and reach.¹⁶ In fact, violent extremists have emerged as actors in many of the conflicts since 2010, and in some cases have expanded from terrorist fringes, to mount large-scale insurrections.¹⁷ The picture is further complicated in instances where such groups claim legitimacy, and within a territory under its control, provides social, security and governance services, sometimes with a reasonable degree of popular support.

Challenges to settlement: The increased complexity and reach of today's violent conflict contributes to its intractability. While conflicts that ended in 1970 tended to last an average of 9.6 years, conflicts that ended in 2014 had lasted an average 26 years.¹⁸ Furthermore, societies affected by conflict today are more likely to experience periods of peace punctuated by episodes of recurring violence than in previous decades.

The proliferation of non-state armed groups challenges state-based models of conflict prevention, mediation, and peacekeeping. Many such armed groups are too fragmented or diffuse for traditional, approaches to negotiated political solutions to be effective.¹⁹ Some such groups explicitly reject international humanitarian law as well as the international institutions established to uphold it,²⁰ placing themselves outside the ambit of traditional peacemaking processes.

Because violent conflict tends to persist once it takes root, its impacts accumulate. Infrastructure and institutions are quickly destroyed and take decades to rebuild. Exposure to violence can have devastating, lifelong impacts on psychosocial well-being. Drops in investment, together with the cost of responding to violence, divert resources and political attention from development. Countries at war lose an average 8.5 percentage points in economic growth in the first year of civil war and 4.5 percent in subsequent years. These effects persist for years following the end of hostilities.

groups at risk of being left behind by development progress, for example populations displaced by violent conflict, without state identity, or growing up affected by conflict.²²

Conflicts affect people differently, often depending on gender and age. While men make up the majority of combatants during conflict and are more likely to die from the direct effects of violence, women also face a continuum of violence and insecurity before, during, and after conflict.²³ Sexual and gender-based violence tends to be higher in conflict and post-conflict settings, as does recruitment of girls into trafficking, sexual slavery, and forced marriage.²⁴ For children and youth, the long-

they can be an important partner

and Resident Coordinators to emphasize conflict prevention and peacebuilding in planning processes and catalyse programmatic integration with peace

Specific commitments for this cycle include:

Timely and flexible. The Fund will systematically introduce mechanisms to better support project development. This will include a diversified partnership strategy to have the right set of implementing partners on the ground, including CSOs and regional organisations; and new surge capacity and start-up support to help country teams improve the quality and timeliness of new strategy and project development.

Catalytic. The fund will further expand its role as investor of first resort ensuring all its investments are catalytic. This means supporting programmes that enable peace processes to become unblocked, accelerate existing efforts, or kick-start longer-term change.³⁴ Throughout, national ownership will be a key criterion to increase the likelihood of sustained peacebuilding change. The Fund will moreover continue to fill critical gaps, and provide seed investments to incentivize larger funding. As an indicative measuring stick, the Fund will aim to convert each dollar of its investment into ten from other sources.

prevention. These windows will allow the PBF to focus and track those investments but will also help us strengthen our expertise and network to deliver.

i. Cross-border and Regional Window

Violent conflict today is rarely contained within national borders and requires regional approaches to sustain peace. Both *Pathways for Peace* and the Report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the review of the peacebuilding architecture emphasised this. Cross-border conflict dynamics are characterized by weak national authorities and state institutions; displacement, transnational crime and illicit trade; as well as competition for access to land and water that is exacerbated by effects of climate change. Addressing them requires regional collaboration and new initiatives, e.g. to strengthen local domains of governance in borderlands, that can be challenging for a system geared to work within national boundaries.

The PBF is uniquely placed to support such initiatives focusing on providing catalytic funding ue2841.92 re

support programming that leads to inclusion of the most marginalized, promotes gender equality and strengthens the role of young people, women and girls in peacebuilding.

This cycle will continue the successful previous practices of the special Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative combined with improving the mainstreaming of gender across the portfolio. This means, for example, that the PBF will continue the policy of not approving projects with a Gender Marker of 0 and discourage Gender Marker 1 projects. More emphasis will be placed on standardizing the tracking of financial allocations in proposal templates, improving monitoring and capturing of results, and increasing allocations to gender in large and medium scale programming investments. At the same time, the PBF will stimulate youth-inclusive peacebuilding programming informed by best practices and lessons learned garnered from a thorough portfolio analysis.

6. Strengthening Existing Programme Facilities

The PBF will continue to operate through the two programme facilities established in its Terms of Reference for short- and medium-term support, but decision-making about the levels of investment and which facility to utilize will be refined and simplified. Shorter-term support is provided through the Immediate Response Facility (IRF), and medium-term support through the Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility (PRF). The different options are as follows:

All countries

Eligibility criteria and duration remain unchanged. Once the Secretary-General has approved it, a country will remain eligible for five years. After that, or following suspension

³⁸ As of December 2018, countries with valid eligibility are: Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea- Bissau, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Myanmar, Niger, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka and Yemen.

of programming, or more than a year without active PBF projects, a country will need to re-submit its eligibility application. Countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission will remain automatically eligible. Countries moving away from the Commission's agenda will be eligible for an additional two years from the date of the end of the configuration. Detailed procedures for eligibility will be spelled out in the revised PBF Guidelines.

In addition, the PBF will consult countries with programmes at the end of their cycles to prepare a clear exit strategy, especially for those that have received multiple PBF investments. To

countries at the Commission. The Chair of the Advisory Group will brief the PBC at least once a year, while PBSO will brief the expert-level group of the PBC on a regular basis. Additionally, PBSO will ensure the PBC is informed consistently about new approvals and countries declared eligible.

To improve **timeliness** of its engagement, the Fund will:

- x Establish partnerships with the top ten AFP recipients to increase the support structure for UNCTs and Missions for programme development, monitoring and outreach.
- x Provide project development or start-up surge support with partners such as Peace Nexus Foundation or funding UN entities missions or temporary deployments TJ ET Q q 0.000008

To increase **learning**, the Fund will:

- x Partner with specific AFPs, DPA, DPKO and other UN entities as well as key CSOs and networks to develop programmatic guidance notes on each focus area of the Fund.
- x Develop with specific AFPs, DPA, DPKO and other UN entities as well as key CSOs model projects which can be quickly adapted in the top 6 areas of PB engagement.
- x Partner with DPKO, DPA and AFPs to develop its new reporting and knowledge management system to ensure it complements existing systems.
- x Provide at least two inter-agency learning initiatives per year focused on thematic issues faced by RUNOs and NUNOs.

VII. Monitoring, evaluation and learning:

Enhanced PBF capacity helped provide greater upfront support in the design and implementation stages of programming, which yielded better outcomes for both programme management and evaluation. In addition, PBF's decision to invest in a comprehensive but centralised evaluation function for its programmatic investments resulted from the need to fill a clea

and contribute to PBF's knowledge management system and the larger evaluation community's consideration of peacebuilding issues.

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Group and the subsequent Resolutions on Sustaining Peace, PBF will roll out a multi-tiered training programme aimed at sustainable capacity building among our in-country partners. PBF commits to biannual training workshops to be developed around the outcomes of the UN capacity assessment undertaken by the Overseas Development Institute in 2017 and managed by the MPTFO. An indicator of the training effort's success will be reduced demand for in-

will be focused on Permanent Representatives and their Deputies, heads of the peace and security pillar in the Missions to the UN, heads of relevant departments in donor Governments, Members of Parliament, and peacebuilding CSOs.

To reach the audience with the above objective the Fund will use targeted instruments including monthly newsletter and LinkedIn including tailor made (for focus country and language) stories for each country and key alliances with their own communications methods to ensure PBF stories are on their newsletter, social media to engage Member States to spread the word of the work of the PBF while highlighting how their contribution contributes to their policies and objectives. A survey of member states will be rolled-out to create a base line and focus stories and order of priority countries to engage with.

A second objective will aim at ensuring the PBF is a widely recognized for its peacebuilding impact, excellence, relevance and partnership by communicating human impact stories. The target audience here will be opinion leaders and institutions, including governmental, academic, think tanks, CSOs and CSO networks working in peacebuilding as well as UN staff across the pillars.

To reach the audience with the above objective the Fund will use wide reach instruments including social media, particularly Facebook and Twitter, based on standardized PBF products (approvals, progress updates, impact, linked with the news or the UNSC and SG agenda, evaluations).

This aspect will include a using a simplified version with the basic reference information about the Fund in general including approval process, how to apply, and country briefs and pages. Effort will be devoted to develop a communications tool box to guide RUNOs and NUNOs along with a support network for communication officers in RUNOs and NUNOs. RUNOs and NUNOs will also need to commit on providing key products at a certain frequency as a condition for funding. A final aspect of the efforts will be to convert existing key documents including Annual SG reports, PBC and PBF Friends updates in regular user-friendly products for wide distribution.

IX. Management, Accountability and Transparency:

Thanks to its ongoing partnership with the MPTFO and its investment model, the PBF can remain a non-operational entity and focus on strategic management and project approvals, support to the RUNOs and NUNOs as well as monitoring and evaluation, learning and outreach. The PBF team in New York will remain small, flexible and responsive in all scenarios. This said, a critical role

